

Fourth Suit Forcing

Rationale

1D 1S ♠AKT42
 2C ? ♥963
 What should you rebid ♣A7
 with this hand? ♣KT2

- 2S is a gross underbid and will be dropped.
- 3S promises a six carder which you don't have.
- 3NT promises a stopper in hearts which will be led. What should be the final contract?
- 3NT played by partner if he has the stopper/s.
- 4S if he has 3 card support
- 5C if he is 5-5 in the minors

The answer to responder's torture is to bid 2H!
 Since hearts is the 4th suit, it is alerted that it may not be natural. This bid, called Fourth Suit Forcing (4SF) asks opener for a further description of his hand. It is sometimes called "Clayton's Bid" – the bid you make when you haven't got a bid".

1C 1D This is **not** a 4SF sequence - just
 1H 1S bidding up-the-line at the one level

FAQ: What does responder need in order to use 4SF

ANS: He needs a plan to cope with all likely answers from partner. Sometimes, he may have only a 4 card suit but be unclear as to where to go. Sometimes, he will have a stopper but may be more interested in a suit contract. If made at the two level, it is forcing for one round. If made at the three level, it is FTG.

FAQ: What are partner's priority in answering 4SF?

- ANS:** 1.. Raising the 4th suit to the 3 level if hold 4 card support and partner's bid could be natural.
 2..Bidding 3NT stopper/s in the 4th suit
 3..Giving 3 card support to partner's first bid suit
 4..Making a descriptive rebid of one's own hand.

What would you expect from opener after each of the following auctions? You have responded with the hand above. *What will be your next bid?:-*

1D 1S Opener is 5/4 either way with a
 2C 2H! stopper and a minimum.
 2NT Responder rebids 3NT

1D 1S Opener is 5/4 either way with a
 2C 2H! stopper and 15 – 17 HCP.
 3NT Responder could pass a 2NT rebid with only 10 – 11 HCP. So, opener doesn't chance that happening. *Here, responder passes 3NT.*

1D 1S Opener is 5/4 either way with 3
 2C 2H! spades.
 2S Responder rebids 4S

1D 1S Opener has 4 hearts but opened
 2C 2H! 1D and rebid 2C. He must be 1444
 3H Responder rebids 3NT

1D 1S Opener has 4 or 5 diamonds, 5 clubs
 2C 2H! no heart stopper and not 3 spades.
 3C Responder rebids 5C

1D 1S We're in some bother here. Opener
 2C 2H! has 5 diamonds, 4 clubs, no heart
 3D stopper. Plenty of HCP but no game

obvious. Responder tries 3S not forcing. 4S contract opposite Qx might have chances.

1D 1H ♠A72
 1S 2C! ♥AJT2
FAQ: Why would responder use 4SF
 here when 3NT seems "obvious" and ♠A83
 he doesn't even hold 5 hearts! ♣A95

ANS: This is a very good hand. 3NT could be bid on much less than this. 4SF gives us a chance to explore slams! Remember opener's rebid of 1S was forcing and his hand unlimited.

What do you expect from opener's hand after each of the following auctions? You have responded with the above hand. *What will be your next bid?:-*

1D 1H Opener may well be just 4-4 in his
 1S 2C! suits with 3 hearts. Responder rebids
 2H 3NT.

1D 1H Opener may well be just 4-4 in his
 1S 2C! suits with a club stop and minimum.
 2NT Responder rebids 3NT

1D 1H Opener has about 15 – 17 HCP and
 1S 2C! didn't open 1NT because 4153 or
 3NT 4053 shape. Responder rebids 4C
 (gerber) the 5C(gerber) finally deciding whether to
 settle in 5D or 6D.

1D 1H Opener has 5 spades but opened 1D
 1S 2C! His is probably 6-5 and not enough
 2S to reverse. Should we chase a slam?
 Yes! Which one? If your going to bid thinnish slams,
 always bid the safest one – the one with the most
 trumps. Responder rebids 6D

1D 1H Opener has 5-4 in his suits and
 1S 2C! 12 – 14 HCP. Go for the cheapest
 2D game. Responder rebids 3NT

1D 1H Opener has 5 diamonds, 4 spades,
 1S 2C! no heart stop. He may well have 6
 3D diamonds and about 15 HCP. On a
 brave day, responder rebids 6D.

1D 1H Responder raises clubs since he has
 1S 2C! 4 and 2C could be natural. Opener
 3C is 4144 or 4054 or 4045
 Responder rebids 3NT

Opener may also use 4SF

1D 1S Here, opener has limited his hand with
 2D 2H 1D then 2D. He has no club stopper
 3C! ? Yet, he can't pass a change of suit by
 an unpassed responder. Here we go again...where
 will we land?

1D 1H This is a strong sequence. Clearly
 3C 3H opener is looking for a spade stopper
 3S! responder is promising precious little
 besides 6 hearts, bad minors. Hopefully, opener has
 some spade values to help responder with say QTx
 For more details on 4SF, see Ron Klingner's
 intermediate text "Guide to Better Bridge"p92, 93