

“Help Suit Game Try” & “Long Suit Game Try”

A “**Help Suit Game Try**” and a “**Long Suit Game Try**” are two conventions which allow an opening bidder to show an interest in seeking a Major suit game, asking Partner’s assistance in making the ultimate decision. These are offensive conventions designed to seek a possible game-level contract, even though one of the two Partners professes to have minimal values. These two conventions are *mutually exclusive* and their use, *one or the other*, is by Partnership agreement. Once the suit is established, the bid of a new suit initiates the chosen convention.

For example: If Opener, with around 16-17 HCP’s, bids **1H** or **1S** and Partner responds **2H** or **2S**, respectively, (showing 6 – 9 support points) Opener is in a quandary: If Responder has a maximum strength hand, with well-positioned high cards, then game will probably make; but the information revealed so far is not accurate enough for either Partner to decide whether to play in game or only in a part score. Without any other way to make this decision, Opener would make a game try by bidding **3H** or **3S**, respectively, inviting game, and Responder would then bid game with maximum (8-9) points or “**pass**” with a minimum (6-7) points.

Help Suit Game Try: Following a simple raise by Partner (e.g. **1H – 2H**), Opener bids a new suit to show extra values. By Partnership agreement, Responder will then evaluate the additional information and make one of the following choices: sign off at the 3-level in the agreed-upon suit; or jump to game in the agreed-upon suit (see below). When Opener bids a new suit, invoking the Help-Suit Game Try, it implies that he/she has three or more cards in this newly-bid suit and this suit contains two or three immediate losers. Regardless of point count, Responder then bids game with zero or one loser in that suit, and signs off with three losers in that suit. With two losers in that suit, Responder bids according to his/her point count.

Example 1:	North (1S, “3D”)	South (2S, 4S)
	KQT986	7543
	KQ9	T8
	A76	KQJ5
	8	652

North obviously opens **1S** and South’s **2S** response (6-9 pts) is equally obvious. North wants to invite game (**4S**) and the traditional method is to bid **3S**, invitational. But a Help Suit Game Try is much more effective. and a bid of “**3D**” here asks Partner to bid game (**4S**) if he/she can help in the Diamond suit. (2) South’s hand is minimum (just 6 points) but that is not important. The important factors are 4-card Spade support and excellent Diamonds (1-Loser). Partner has asked for Diamond help and South has two important cards (three even) for Opener – so that’s enough to go to game. **Note** that without the “Help Suit Game Try,” North would bid **3S** and South would obviously “**pass**” with this minimum count. **4S**, here, is easily made with this well-fitting 20 HCP count.

<u>Example 2:</u>	<u>North</u> (1H, "3C")	<u>South</u> (2H, 4H)
	87	432
	AQJ97	K852
	A6	9753
	A842	K3

By bidding **3C**, North is informing Partner that he/she has two to three losers in the Club suit and is asking for assistance. The guidelines for the responses of the Partner are, in general, as follows:

1. If the Partner has zero-losers in the bid suit, then the Partner should bid game.
2. If the Partner has 1-loser in the bid suit, then the Partner should bid game, as in the example above.
3. If the Partner has 2-losers in the bid suit but has the maximum values for a single raise, then the Partner should also bid game.
4. If the Partner has 2-losers in the bid suit but has the minimum values required for a single raise, then the Partner should sign off on the 3-level in the trump suit.

Long Suit Game Try: Following a simple raise by Partner (e.g. **1H – 2H**), Opener bids a new suit to show extra values. By Partnership agreement, Responder will then evaluate the additional information and make one of the following choices: (1) promote length and/or high-card values in that suit, or shortness combined with an extra trump, and jump to game. (2) Conversely, Responder, with weakness in Opener's second suit, should sign off at the 3-level.

<u>Example 1:</u>	<u>North</u> (1H, "3C")	<u>South</u> (2H, 4H)
	86	7542
	AQJ75	K864
	A6	985
	A853	K7

So, in summary, when using a Help Suit Game Try or a Long Suit Game Try, you end up in game when you can most likely make it and stop short at the 3-level when game is unlikely.