

“Western Cue-Bid”

The **Western** (California) **Cue-Bid** is a cue-bid of the Opponent's suit, and is one of the most confusing and most-asked about conventions. It refers to when your side bids the Opponent's suit and is used only in *contested competitive* auctions, *below* Game level. This bid is also known as "*Who's got the Stopper?*" It is *forcing*, and *asks* Partner for a full stopper (**Qxx** or better) in the Opponent's bid suit. Holding one, Partner bids **3-NT**. Lacking one, Partner bails out to the Partnership's suit or by making any other non-forcing, natural suit bid. The bid is fairly common, and is *not alertable* as the Opponent's are presumed to recognize calls in their own suit. The **Western Cue-Bid** works to one's advantage because if the final contract **3-NT**, the lead then comes up to the hand with the stopper, rather than through it. The Cue-Bidder can be looking for a stopper in the Opponent's suit for a possible 3-NT contract, or even hold a Slam interest, if a stopper is uncovered.

Any bid of Opponent's suit at a level higher than **3-NT** is *not* considered a **Western Cue-Bid**. It, alternatively, means something else, usually showing a control with Slam interest in the suit previously agreed-upon by the Partnership. Western Cues are commonly used when an Opening Bidder and his Partner are both bidding different suits in a contested auction but cannot locate a playable, Game, suit contract. A **Western Cue-Bid** is not a jump to the 3-level – you must already be at the 3-level; and it does not apply when you side has found a Major suit fit in which to play.

	<u>N</u>	<u>E</u>	<u>S</u>	<u>W</u>
<u>Example 1:</u>	1C 3C	1H P	1S “ 3H ”(?)	2H (Opener is being asked to bid 3-NT with a Heart stopper)
<u>Example 2:</u>	1S 3C	2D P	2H “ 3D ”(?)	P (“North, bid 3-NT with a Diamond stopper.)

Western Cue-Bids can also be utilized by the overcalling team once the Opponents have previously opened the bidding.

	<u>N</u>	<u>E</u>	<u>S</u>	<u>W</u>
<u>Example 1:</u>	2H P	Dbl 3-NT	P (East holds a Heart stopper and complies with a 3-NT call)	“ 3H ”
<u>Example 2:</u>	1H P	Dbl “ 3H ” (?)	2H (“West, Please bid 3-NT with a Heart stopper.”)	2S

. If the Opponents have bid two suits, a cue-bid does not *ask*, it *tells*. When looking for **3-NT** after the Opponents have bid two suits, a cue-bid, by either Partner *shows*, rather than *asks* for, a stopper in the Opponent's bid suits. That lets Partner evaluate his/her hand for a potential No-Trump contract. If Partner has the alternate enemy suit under control, Partner can bid **3-NT**, confident that both suits are protected.

You Hold: AK1095 KQ10 J3 QJ9			
<u>Partner</u>	<u>Opponent</u>	<u>You</u>	<u>Opponent</u>
1C 3C	1H P	1S “ 3H ”	2D (A telling control: Asking Partner for a Diamond stopper Seeking a potentially-successful 3-NT contract”)