

“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-No-Trump. 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.

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

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

. 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 suit. That lets partner evaluate his/her hand for a no-trump contract. If Partner has the alternate enemy suit under control, Partner can bid 3 no-trump; confident that both suits are protected.

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