

A "cue-bid" is a bid of a suit that has already been bid by opponents. This bid in the enemy suit does not suggest that suit as trump but forces Partner to bid.

(A slam-investigatory bid made during the auction's later rounds might be called a "cue-bid". This use of the term "cue-bid" is old-fashioned; the modern term is "control-bid".)

1] After an overcall, it promises a fit for Opener's suit and at least game-invitational strength. <Alternative agreement: game-forcing strength> A new suit bid by Responder would have been forcing, so the cue-bid promises a fit:

| Opener | Overcaller | Responder |
|--------|------------|---|
| 1♥ | 1♠ | 2♠ (Responder's cue-bid promises a fit) |

2] After we open 1NT, the cue-bid is Staymanic and asks Opener to bid a four-card major-suit.

| Opener | Overcaller | Responder |
|--------|------------|---|
| 1NT | 2♠ | 3♠ (asks Opener to show a four-card Heart suit) |

3] After we overcall, the cue-bid shows a hand with at least game-invitational strength. <Alternative agreement: game-forcing strength> A new suit bid by Advancer would not have been forcing, so the cue-bidder might have a game-forcing hand without a fit:

| Opener | Overcaller | Responder | Advancer |
|--------|------------|-----------|---|
| 1♥ | 1♠ | Pass | 2♥ (cue-bidding Advancer may have either a fit or big hand lacking a fit) |

4] After our takeout double, a cue-bid advance shows a hand with at least game-invitational strength <Alternative agreement: game-forcing strength>:

| | | | |
|--------|---------|-----------|----------|
| Opener | Doubler | Responder | Advancer |
| 1♥ | Dbl | Pass | 2♥ |

A takeout double followed by a cue-bid shows a very strong hand:

| | | | |
|--------|-------------------------|-----------|----------|
| Opener | Doubler | Responder | Advancer |
| 1♥ | Dbl | Pass | 1♠ |
| Pass | 2♥ (at least 19 points) | | |

5] Cue-bid rebid by Opener or Responder after a Negative Double shows game-forcing strength

| | | | |
|-------------------------|------------|-----------|----------|
| Opener | Overcaller | Responder | Advancer |
| 1♣ | 1♥ | Double | Pass |
| 2♥ (at least 19 points) | | | |

| | | | |
|--------|------------|-------------------------|----------|
| Opener | Overcaller | Responder | Advancer |
| 1♣ | 1♥ | Double | Pass |
| 2♣ | Pass | 2♥ (at least 13 points) | |

Partner of cue-bidder usually shows a stopper if one is held.

6] Immediate cue-bid (Michaels)

A Michaels cue-bid is made directly over the enemy one-of-a-suit opening bid or 1NT response. It shows at least 5-5 in two unbid suits.

Deal 1

North Deals ♠ 8
 ♥ K 8 7 2
 ♦ 8 7 6
 ♣ A K Q 6 2

None Vul

♠ K Q 5 4 ♠ A J 3 2
 ♥ A 10 6 3 ♥ Q 5 4
 ♦ Q J ♦ A K 10 3
 ♣ 10 8 7 ♣ 9 5

12 ♠ 10 9 7 6
 12 14 ♥ J 9
 2 ♦ 9 5 4 2
 ♣ J 4 3

| | | | |
|------|----------|------|-------|
| West | North | East | South |
| | 1 ♣ | Dbl | Pass |
| 2 ♣ | Dbl | 2 ♦ | Pass |
| 2 ♥ | Pass | 2 ♠ | Pass |
| 4 ♠ | All pass | | |

4 ♠ by East
 Lead: ♣ 3
 Made 4 – EW +420

Bidding Commentary:
 West's 2 ♣ cuebid shows a good (10 points or more) advancing hand. After the cuebid, the partnership bids four card suits up-the-line, looking for a 4-4 fit. After East bids 2 ♠, West raises to game. A wimpy 3 ♠ raise after the cuebid would have been only invitational.

Defensive Commentary:
 Against a suit contract, lead low from three cards (exceptions: a sequence or the Ace). North plays three top clubs.

Play Commentary:
 Declarer ruffs the third club low. From the low ♣ lead, it is safe to ruff low.

Deal 2

East Deals ♠ A Q 4
 ♥ Q 8 2
 ♦ 6 4 3 2
 ♣ Q J 8

N-S Vul

♠ 10 9 7 3 2 ♠ J 8 6 5
 ♥ 5 4 3 ♥ A
 ♦ 10 7 ♦ A J 9 8
 ♣ 10 6 3 ♣ A 5 4 2

11 ♠ K
 0 14 ♥ K J 10 9 7 6
 15 ♦ K Q 5
 ♣ K 9 7

| | | | |
|----------|-------|------|-------|
| West | North | East | South |
| | | 1 ♦ | 1 ♥ |
| Pass | 2 ♦ | Pass | 4 ♥ |
| All pass | | | |

4 ♥ by South
 Lead: ♦ 10
 Made 4 – NS +620

Bidding Commentary:
 North's 2 ♦ cuebid shows a hand too strong to raise to 2 ♥, at least eleven points. A raise to 2 ♥ would have been an underbid and a jump to 3 ♥ would have been merely preemptive. Jump raises in competition are preemptive.

Defensive Commentary:
 From East's point of view, looking at the ♦ 9, the lead is from shortness. East goes up with the ♦ A and returns the ♦ 4, suit preference for Clubs in case West ruffs.

Play Commentary:
 South postpones drawing trump to discard a ♦ (overtaking the ♠ K to dump the ♦ Q on the ♠ Q).

Deal 3

South Deals ♠ J 10 7
 ♥ A K J 9 7 2
 ♦ K 2
 ♣ 10 8

E-W Vul

♠ K Q 6 4 3 ♠ A 8 5 2
 ♥ 6 3 ♥ Q 10 4
 ♦ A 7 ♦ J 9 8 6
 ♣ K Q 4 3 ♣ A 2

12 ♠ 9
 14 11 ♥ 8 5
 3 ♦ Q 10 5 4 3
 ♣ J 9 7 6 5

| | | | |
|------|----------|------|-------|
| West | North | East | South |
| | | | Pass |
| 1 ♠ | 2 ♥ | 3 ♥ | Pass |
| 4 ♠ | All pass | | |

4 ♠ by West
 Lead: ♥ A
 Made 4 – EW +620

Bidding Commentary:
 East's 3 ♥ cuebid shows trump support and a limit raise or better. A jump to 3 ♠ in competition would be merely preemptive. West has enough to accept and bids game.

Defensive Commentary:
 South starts a high-low signal with the ♥ Eight at trick one. North continues with another high Heart. The ♥ Q in dummy is an established winner. In order to kill the ♥ Q, North leads a third heart. South ruffs the third ♥ with the ♠ 9.

Play Commentary: As East, do not over-ruff South's ♠ 9! It is safer to discard the ♦ loser.