

Learning: Help-Suit Game Tries

A help-suit game try is a bid designed to allow you and your partner to bid to the game level when your points for game are close, but you will be able to make enough tricks if your hands are fitting together well.

The only requirement is that you and your partner have bid and raised a major suit. Once you have bid and raised a major suit – you are playing that suit. If you now bid a new suit that is not a request to play that suit, but an attempt by you to find out if partner's hand is going to fit well with you. You are asking partner if they have any help in that suit (Ace and any, King and any, Queen and only one more, Singleton, Doubleton with four trumps, etc etc). If partner has help, they bid to game in your major suit.

If they do not they can make one of two bids.

With a minimum hand they simply return to the major suit at the cheapest level. With a good hand they can bid a new suit of their own (as long as it is below the trump suit), which would say to you, "I don't have any help in your suit, but I have a good hand and I have some values here. How do you like my suit?"

Remember, a major suit must have been bid and raised!

Examples:

Hand 1

<i>North</i>	<i>South</i>
1 ♠	2 ♠
3 ♣	?

3 ♣ asks South if he has some fitting cards in the club suit that would allow them to make 4 ♠. To bid 4 ♠ South would need something like this:

♠ Q x x x ♥ x x x ♦ K x x x ♣ Q x

Hand 2

<i>North</i>	<i>South</i>
1 ♥	2 ♥
2 ♠	?

2 ♠ asks South if he has some fitting cards in the spade suit that would allow them to make 4 ♥. To bid 4 ♥ South would need something like this:

♠ A x x ♥ x x x ♦ K x ♣ x x x x x

If South had the following hand he would simply return to their trump suit (hearts) at the lowest level:

♠ x x x ♥ A x x ♦ Q x x ♣ Q J x x

Hand 3

<i>North</i>	<i>South</i>
1 ♠	3 ♠
4 ♦	?

4 ♦ is NOT a Help Suit Game Try. Once North bid past the three level in their trump suit, he forced their side to game. 4 ♦ is a cue bid, showing first round control of diamonds and looking for a slam....not a game try.

Hand 4

<i>North</i>	<i>South</i>
1 ♠	2 ♣
2 ♥	?

2 ♥ is NOT a Help Suit Game Try. North/South have not bid and raised a major suit. 2 ♥ is simply showing North's second suit.