

## Slam Bidding – From A to Z

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### Slam Bidding Quiz 1

So far this series has primarily focused on a few specific slam bidding tools:

- Asking for key cards, kings and the queen of trumps.
- Cue bidding.

Although there are many more tools, it would be wise to focus on these, as they are by far the most common methods used in slam investigation.

One thing that I have not covered is when to try for slam, and how to go about it. This is where judgement and experience come into play. So I am going let you try a short quiz. Here is an opportunity for you test your comprehension, judgement and application of the principles covered in the first three slam bidding instalments. You are South in all of the problems, you **play 2/1 game forcing, 1430, splinters, and Redwood**. You are playing teams, **IMP scoring**.

1. You hold ♠A9432 ♥K743 ♦K6 ♣A6. The bidding starts:

North	South
-	1♠
2♦	2♥
3♦	?

What do you bid?

2. You hold ♠AK82 ♥AKQ983 ♦6 ♣K6. The bidding starts:

North	South
1♠	?

What do you bid?

3. You hold ♠K42 ♥A73 ♦96 ♣AQ1096. The bidding starts:

North	South
1♠	2♣ Game forcing.
2♦	2♠
3♣	3♥
4♦	?

What do you bid?

4. You hold ♠A2 ♥K3 ♦K6 ♣AQ10954. The bidding starts:

North	South
1♦	2♣
2♦	2NT
3♥	4♦
4♥	?

What do you bid?

5. You hold ♠Q42 ♥3 ♦K63 ♣AK10976. The bidding starts:

North	South
1♠	2♣ Game forcing.
2♠	?

What do you bid?

6. You hold ♠2 ♥53 ♦AKQ10876 ♣K53. The bidding starts:

North	South
1♠	2♦

2♠

What do you bid?

7. You hold ♠J2 ♥AQ43 ♦KQ6 ♣AQ96. The bidding starts:

North	South
-------	-------

1♠	2♣
----	----

2♦	2NT
----	-----

3NT	?
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What do you bid?

8. You hold ♠Q2 ♥K3 ♦A65 ♣AK10964. The bidding starts:

North	South
-------	-------

1♠	2♣
----	----

2♦	3♣
----	----

3♥	?
----	---

What do you bid?

9. You hold ♠KQ ♥A9843 ♦KQJ3 ♣65 The bidding starts:

North	South
-------	-------

1♣	1♥
----	----

1♠	2♦ <sup>4th suit forcing</sup>
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2♥	?
----	---

What do you bid?

10. You hold ♠72 ♥A1043 ♦A73 ♣KQ93. The bidding starts:

North	South
-------	-------

1♣	1♥
1♠	2♦ 4th suit forcing
2♥	3♣
3♠	

What do you bid?

### Solutions

1. You hold ♠A9432 ♥K743 ♦K6 ♣A6. The bidding starts:

North	South
-	1♠
2♦	2♥
3♦	?

What do you bid?

Partner's 3♦ usually shows a minimum of a good six card, and denies spade support. It also denies a club suit. It is at least somewhat encouraging. (The only other hand that partner can have where he has a minimum 2/1 is one where they do not have a club stopper to bid notrump. Maybe something like ♠x ♥AJx ♦AQJxxx ♣xxx.)

You have an excellent hand for diamonds. You have the ace in the suit you know partner is short in, a very good minimum, diamond support, with working aces and kings. You want to signal this to partner, showing your enthusiasm (Green, green light!). The best way to do this is to cue bid 4♣. This cannot be some 5-4-1-3 shape as opener would simply bid 3NT, even without a club stopper (the diamond hand is marked with some clubs on this auction, and the opponents have not bid clubs). 4♦ setting trumps, inviting partner to key card, as well as 4♥ Redwood, are also decent choices.

### Scores (out of 10)

4♣	10
4♦	9
4♥	8

3NT 7

5♦ 6

3♠ 3

2. You hold ♠AK82 ♥AKQ983 ♦6 ♣K6. The bidding starts:

North	South
-------	-------

1♠	?
----	---

What do you bid?

This one is easy, 4NT, Key card for spades. You have tons of tricks, just depends if you are off an ace or the queen of trumps.

Although some people might still think 4NT asks for aces, this is an inferior treatment. Sure you could bid 2♥ or a Jacoby 2NT, but LHO might bid 5♦, and now you can't find out if partner has the three key high cards you need for 7♠. There is one hand where a 2NT might gain, and that is when partner is void in a minor.

Partner's hand is ♠QJ765 ♥52 ♦AJ109 ♣A3, and an easy grand is reached. At IMPs it is silly to bid 7NT, in case the hearts don't run.

Scores (out of 10)

4NT 10

2NT 9

2♥ 8

3. You hold ♠K42 ♥A73 ♦96 ♣AQ1096. The bidding starts:

North	South
-------	-------

1♠	2♣ Game forcing.
----	------------------

2♦	2♠
----	----

3♣	3♥
----	----

4♦	?
----	---

What do you bid?

Bid 4♠. You have shown your game forcing hand, spade support and at least moderate interest in slam with your 3♥ cue bid. That is enough for now. Time to slow down the auction, saying, *'I don't have significant extra values, so am willing to stop in game'*. Partner will pass with ♠QJxxx ♥xxx ♦AQ ♣Kxx, but will key card with ♠QJxxx ♥Kxx ♦AQ ♣Kxx.

Scores (out of 10)

4♠ 10

4NT 8

5♣ 7

4. You hold ♠A2 ♥K3 ♦K6 ♣AQ10954. The bidding starts:

North	South
-------	-------

1♦	2♣
----	----

2♦	2NT
----	-----

3♥	4♦
----	----

4♥	?
----	---

What do you bid?

The 2NT bid is forcing, hoping partner can show delayed club support. It also protects ♥K3 in case you end up in notrump. By bidding 3♥ partner is either showing extra values, or lacking a spade stopper. Even though you have a spade stopper, your hand is way too good to simply sign off in 3NT. In response to your natural 4♦ partner bid 4♥, Redwood. Show three cards by bidding the 2<sup>rd</sup> step, 4NT.

Scores (out of 10)

4NT 10

Other 2. Not remember key card invariably comes at a very high cost.

5. You hold ♠Q42 ♥3 ♦K63 ♣AK10976. The bidding starts:

North	South
-------	-------

1♠	2♣ Game forcing.
----	------------------

2♠            ?

What do you bid?

Partner has rebid 2♠. Depending on your partnership this may or may not be promised at least six spades. I much prefer that it does. With any other hand you can bid your 2<sup>nd</sup> suit, raise clubs, or bid 2NT with none of the above.

The main choice is between 4♥ and 3♠. The former is very informative showing short hearts with spade support, but taking up an extra level of bidding. 3♠ sets trumps one level lower. Which is better? I much prefer 4♥.

Your hand is way too good to jump to a discouraging 4♠. This is what a 4♠ looks like: ♠xxx  
♥KJx ♦KQ ♣QJxxx.

Scores (out of 10)

4♥      10

3♠      9

4♠      5

6. You hold ♠2 ♥53 ♦AKQ10876 ♣K53. The bidding starts:

North	South
-------	-------

1♠	2♦
----	----

2♠	
----	--

What do you bid?

A jump in your suit in a game forcing auction shows a solid suit, and asks partner to cue bid or key card. Here 4♥ would be key card in diamonds.

Scores (out of 10)

4♦      10

3♦      7

7. You hold ♠J2 ♥AQ43 ♦KQ6 ♣AQ96. The bidding starts:

North	South
-------	-------

1♠	2♣
2♦	2NT
3NT	?

What do you bid?

Here you had no choice other than to bid 2♣ at your first turn. Bidding 2♥ is wrong with a four card suit. Partner is probably 5-2-4-2 or 5-3-4-1 shape. It looks like you belong in notrump, but are worth an invite, inviting partner to bid slam if they have a non-minimum, or very good playing strength, such as ♠AKQxx ♥xx ♦AJ10x ♣xx.

Passing is wrong as partner can easily have as many as 16 HCPs.

Scores (out of 10)

4NT 10

Pass 7

4♠ 3

6NT 3

8. You hold ♠Q2 ♥K3 ♦A65 ♣AK10964. The bidding starts:

North	South
1♠	2♣
2♦	3♣
3♥	?

What do you bid?

Partner is showing extra value, as with a heart stopper and a minimum, they would simply bid 3NT. You also have extras, and likely belong in slam, it's not clear which one. Bid 5NT saying you think we belong in slam, pick the one you think is best. 4NT by you is natural (no suit has been agreed on), inviting slam.

With ♠AKJ10x ♥Axx ♦KJxx ♣x partner will bid 6♠.

With ♠Kxxxx ♥Axx ♦KQJxx ♣- they will bid 6♦.

With ♠AKxxx ♥Axx ♦Kxxx ♣Q they will bid 6♣.



Scores (out of 10)

5NT 10

3♠ 9

4NT 8

4♣ 9

3NT 5

9. You hold ♠KQ ♥A9843 ♦KQJ3 ♣65 The bidding starts:

North	South
1♣	1♥
1♠	2♦ <sup>4th suit forcing</sup>
2♥	?

What do you bid?

This is a good news, bad news hand. On the plus you have found an eight card fit, and you have extra values. On the minus your diamond values are likely not great. The other issue is your heart suit, it is not good. The best strategy is to bid 2NT. This denies five hearts, a lie, but notrump should be safer. Imagine partner having ♠J10xx ♥xxx ♦Ax ♣AKQx, and hearts split 5-0, offside! Now you are down in 4♥, where 3NT is always cold.

If partner bids 3NT pass. If partner bids 4NT now you can bid slam.

Scores (out of 10)

2NT 10

3♥ 9

4♥ 8

3NT 7

4♣ 2

10. You hold ♠72 ♥A1043 ♦A73 ♣KQ93. The bidding starts:

North	South
1♣	1♥
1♠	2♦ <sup>4th suit forcing</sup>
2♥	3♣
3♠	

What do you bid?

Here partner has shown three hearts. If you had wanted hearts to be trump you must bid 3♥ over 2♥, or cuebid 3♦ or 3♠. But here you want to show game forcing with at least four clubs. Partner's 3♣ either is worried about diamonds for notrump, or is slammish with the ace of spades. Your bid is 4♣. This says, *'ok partner I don't think 3NT is right, so let's play in clubs. I could have bid 5♣ with a worse hand, so my 4♣ is still encouraging to slam.'* You are hoping partner can ask for key cards. Your 4♣ saves you from forcing to a bad slam, when partner holds something like, ♠KQxx ♥QJx ♦x ♣Axxxx.

Despite holding only 13 HCPs for your game force, you have a fantastic hand! Three key cards and the queen of trumps!

Scores (out of 10)

4♣	10
4♦	8 (key card)
5♣	6
3NT	5

Hopefully this quiz gives you some feedback on your slam bidding skills.

***Next month I will continue with this slam bidding series. Article 5, will get back to exploring other slam tools at our disposal.***