



## The Importance of the 4-4 Major Suit Fit

More game contracts are played in 3NT than any other denomination.

Next most popular is 4 of a major – the extra trick can often be made by ruffing.

5 of a minor is rare, and we generally prefer 3NT to a 4-4 minor suit fit.

These hands illustrate the power of the 4-4 fit in a major. Why does 3NT fail on a heart lead while 4♠ makes?

♠ AQ83  
♥ Q2  
♦ AQ65  
♣ 852

N		E
W		
	S	

♠ KJ76  
♥ 54  
♦ KJ1073  
♣ A3

♠ KQ107  
♥ A7  
♦ Q10952  
♣ A6

N		E
W		
	S	

♠ J985  
♥ 92  
♦ KJ5  
♣ K98

**Because the 4-4 fit in a Major is so important, our bidding is geared towards finding these fits.**

*Any 4-card major is biddable, no matter how weak*

- | West    | East  |   |
|---------|-------|---|
| • 1NT   | 2♣    | When partner opens 1NT use Stayman to look for a 4-4 major suit fit   |
| • 1♥/1♠ |       | With a 4-4-3-2 hand too strong for 1NT open a 4-card major whenever you have one  |
| • 1♥    | 1♠    | With two 4-card majors open 1♥.<br>Partner raises with 4-card support, or bids 1♠ with 4 cards in spades.<br>Which means we always find a 4-4 major fit when we have one.   |
| • 1♣/1♦ | 1♥/1♠ | Respond in a 4-card major whenever you can. Even with 4-card support for a minor<br><b>Note</b> that over 1♣/1♦ a 1NT response <i>denies</i> a 4-card major.<br>Opener will not now bid hearts or spades with only 4 cards<br>With two 4-card majors we respond 1♥.<br>(Just as when we open 1♥ this makes it easy for partner to raise with 4-card support, or bid 1♠ with 4 of the other major.)<br>A 1♠ response does not <i>deny</i> 4 hearts – you may have 5+ spades and 4 hearts.<br>But opener assumes that you do not have 4 hearts until you actually bid them. |
| • 1♥/1♠ |       | When partner opens a major we raise to 2/3/4♥/♠ with 4-card support.  |
| • 1♣/1♦ | 1♥/1♠ | When responder bids a major we raise to 2/3/4♥/♠ with 4-card support.   |
| • 1♣/1♦ | 1♥    |   |
| • 1♠    |       | Responder raises spades with 4-card support, just as he would over an opening bid   |

*Whenever raising partner's major is an option – raise him!*

**We prefer to have at least an 8-card fit when we play in a trump suit.**

The suit may be divided 4-4, or 5-3, or even 6-2.

- |         |     |  |
|---------|-----|--|
| • 1♥/1♠ | 1NT | By bidding a new suit opener promises a 5-card major   |
| 2♣/2♦   | ?   | Responder can support him with 3-cards   |
| • 1♠    | 2♣  | Similarly, responder can bid 2♠/3♠/4♠ as a limit raise with 3-card support   |
| 2♦      | ?   | (He cannot have 4-card support – he would raise spades last time with that)  |
| • 1♠    | 2♣  | Opener's 2NT rebid shows 15-19 HCP balanced.   |
| 2NT     | 3♠  | He may have 5 spades if he is 5-3-3-2<br>Responder bids 3♠ with 3 spades in case opener has 5 and 4♠ may play better |