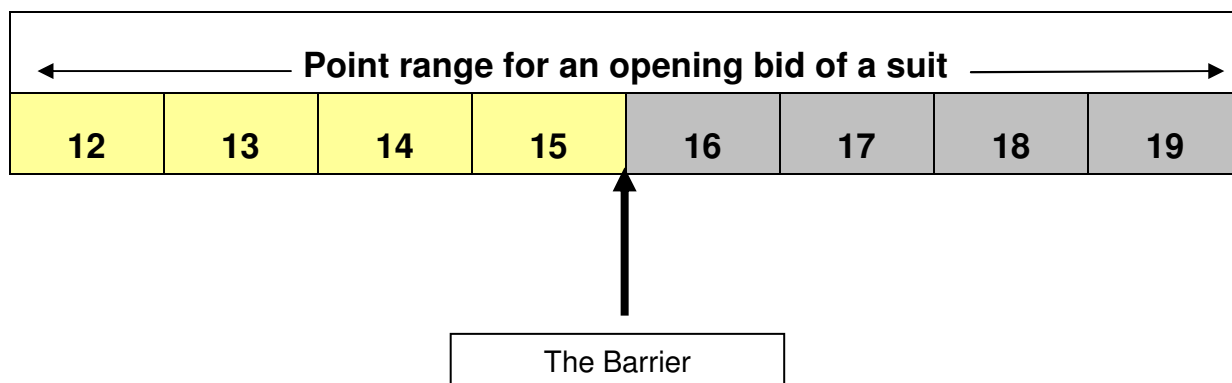


Cardiff Bridge Tutors

How to use the Barrier.

Reverse bids explained.



What is the Barrier or a Reverse bid?

When we open we try to show the shape and strength of our hand.

No Trump bids do this quite precisely

- 1NT is a balanced hand 12-14 points.
- 2NT is a balanced hand 20-22 points.

Suit openings are less precise, as initially they show a four plus card suit and 12-19 points

We need a second bid as Opener to define our shape and point range more precisely.

The Barrier helps to define the point range to within 3 points.

So where is the Barrier?

The barrier is 16 points and opener says whether their hand is 12-15 or 16-19 with their second bid.

The Barrier is two times the opening bid.

- If I open 1♣ then the barrier for this hand is 2♣.
- If I open 1♦ then the barrier for this hand is 2♦.
- If I open 1♥ then the barrier for this hand is 2♥.
- If I open 1♠ then the barrier for this hand is 2♠.

Rebidding below the barrier tells your partner that you have 12-15 points.

Rebidding above the barrier tells your partner that you have 16-19 points.

Bids and rebids.

When you open a suit you are telling your partner that you have 4+ of that suit and 12-19 points.

You plan your rebid before you open.

Your rebid describes the shape and strength of your hand.

- **Shape is defined by the suit that you rebid**
- **Strength is defined by bidding above or below the Barrier**

Defining the shape of your hand.

Here is a bidding sequence.

West	North	East	South
1♣			

West's opening bid says that they have 4 or more ♣s and 12-19 points

West	North	East	South
1♣	Pass	1♦	

East's reply promises 6+ points and 4 or more ♦s

West	North	East	South
1♣	Pass	1♦	Pass
1♠			

West's second bid says that they have 5 or more ♣ and 4 or more ♠s

A rebid says that you have at least one more card in your opening suit and promises four or more in your second suit.

Sometimes you have to rebid your first suit.

West	North	East	South
1♦	Pass	1♥	Pass
2♦			

West's second bid says that they have 5 or more ♣.

They do not have four ♥ or they would have supported them.

They have no other four card suit that they can bid

Every time that you rebid a suit you are saying that you have one more in that suit than last time.

Defining the strength of your hand.

You define the strength of your hand by using the Barrier (Reverse bid).

Remember your barrier is two times your opening suit. If you make a bid higher than that you are showing 16-19 points. A bid below or at your barrier is showing 12-15 points.

Some examples

West	North	East	South
1♣	Pass	1♦	Pass
1♠			

West's second bid says that they have 5 or more ♣ and 4 or more ♠s.
As they did not bid above 2♣ they are defining their point range as 12-15.

West	North	East	South
1♣	Pass	1♠	Pass
2♦			

West's second bid says that they have 5 or more ♣ and 4 or more ♦s
As they have bid above 2♣ they are showing 16-19 points.

Why is the Barrier important?

It gives a more precise definition of points held.

Keeping below your Barrier will stop your bidding getting too high and your contract failing
Bidding above your Barrier (correctly!) gives your partner an indication of points held if they are considering a NT or slam attempt.

Why not play safe and bid below my Barrier?

West	North	East	South
1♣	Pass	1♦	Pass
2♥			

In the example above West could bid 1♥ but it would misinform East and game or even a slam might be n but it would misinform East and game or even a slam might be missed.
Don't play safe bid your hand!

Be aware of your Barrier. It may affect your rebid.

Don't reverse by accident!

You are Dealer and you have this hand

♠ Q 7
♥ Q 10 9 3
♦ K 7
♣ A Q 10 7 6

13 points and you plan to open ♣s and rebid ♥s to show a 5-4 shape.

The bidding goes

West	North	East	South
1♣	Pass	1♠	Pass
??			

You now cannot rebid 2♥s as this would be above your barrier!
(Remember too that bidding a new major at the two level is promising 5 of that suit.)
You have to rebid 2♣

If the bidding had gone

West	North	East	South
1♣	Pass	1♦	Pass
??			

You could happily rebid 1♥