

ALWAYS, SOMETIMES OR NEVER?

Decide whether each statement below is always true, sometimes true or never true in an auction that starts with an opening bid of one of a suit.

1) A new suit by responder is forcing. Always, Sometimes or Never?

Sometimes! Even though we teach this as a fact to new players and it is true most of the time, the reality is that there are some exceptions. Find out what they are in the What's Forcing? course.

2) Opener's new suit bids are *NOT* forcing. Always, Sometimes or Never?

Sometimes. This is another guideline we give to new players that has some exceptions, which we'll explore in What's Forcing?

3) Jump bids are forcing. Always, Sometimes or Never?

Sometimes again. We know that opener's jump shift into a new suit is forcing. In fact, a jump shift is forcing all the way to game. However, jumps in old suits (suits that have already been bid in your auction) are generally not forcing. Learn more in What's Forcing?

4) Responder's 2NT bid is forcing. Always, Sometimes or Never?

Sometimes as a first response, usually not as a later response. We'll discuss this more in What's Forcing?

5) Notrump rebids are *NOT* forcing. Always, Sometimes or Never?

Almost Always but there is at least one exception so Sometimes is the answer yet again. Find out what the exception is in our What's Forcing? course.

6) Be polite to your partner and opponents. Always, Sometimes or Never?

Always. Finally, a rule you can quote without fear of there being any exceptions!

Isn't it interesting that it's so difficult to come up with statements of simple bidding rules that always work? It's no wonder it takes time to become a good player. Rather than worrying about rules that usually have exceptions, focus on learning the meanings of opener's and responder's bids and rebids. Try to put what partner has told you about her hand together with what you see in your hand. Then focus on the two questions of every auction:

- How High? (Partscore? Game? Slam?)
- What Denomination? (Do we have a fit? With a major suit fit and enough for game, bid game in that major. With a minor suit fit, 3NT is often your best game.)