



**Presents:**

# **4<sup>th</sup> SUIT FORCING**

The **4<sup>th</sup> Suit Forcing** bid is a useful tool that creates a game forcing auction at relatively low levels.

4<sup>th</sup> Suit Forcing will occur in non – competitive auctions, after our side has bid 3 different suits with our first 3 bids. The bid of the 4<sup>th</sup> suit in this situation is agreed to be **Artificial and Game Forcing**.

The 2 Diamond bid, in the auction to the right, is **4<sup>th</sup> suit forcing**. Notice some key things that make this a 4<sup>th</sup> suit forcing bid:

**1. The opponents are not bidding**

1. 4<sup>th</sup> suit forcing only exists in non – competitive auctions.

**2. Both North and Scubapro are unpassed hands**

1. 4<sup>th</sup> suit forcing only exists when both hands have not passed during the auction.

**3. Neither side of the partnership has game forced before the bid of the 4<sup>th</sup> suit:**

In the auction to our right the 2H bid is not 4<sup>th</sup> suit forcing because the 2 Club bid by south was already a game forcing bid. In this auction 2H would just be a natural bid.

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
	1♠	Pass	2♣
Pass	2♦	Pass	2♥

**NOT 4<sup>TH</sup> suit forcing**

WEST	NORTH	EAST	scubapro
			1♣
Pass	1♥	Pass	1♠
Pass	2♦	Pass	

**4<sup>th</sup> Suit Forcing**

**Note:** 4<sup>th</sup> Suit Forcing is what is called an **alertable** bid. The 2 Diamond bid is completely artificial (says nothing about the diamond suit) so we have to alert our opponents to this. When North puts their 2D bid on the table, Scubapro would say “Alert”.

Let's take a look at 4<sup>th</sup> suit forcing in action. South in this hand knows that it's partnership has enough for game, but the location of that game is still unknown (No – Trump and Spades are still possibilities).

Let's break a second and talk about what our potential bids are without using 4<sup>th</sup> suit forcing:

- **2 Spades:** This shows a weak hand (6 – 9) and 6+ Spades
  - This is **not a forcing bid** and is the most common mistake made by students of the game
- **3 Spades:** Should show 6+ Spades and invitational values.
  - Not working here because this bid can also be passed and shows too many spades.
- **3 NT:** This will get us to game, but when partner has 3 cards in the Spade suit we are frequently missing our best game of 4 Spades.

Enter **4<sup>th</sup> Suit Forcing**. Instead of guessing what might be right with this hand we get to use the 4<sup>th</sup> suit forcing bid to explore our options without the fear of being passed.

The screenshot shows a bridge bidding interface. At the top, the bidding sequence is displayed in a table:

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
	1♥	Pass	1♠
	Pass	2♦	

Below the bidding sequence, the hand for South is shown. The cards are: A♠, J♠, 10♠, 9♠, 2♠, A♥, 10♥, K♣, 10♣, 8♣, Q♦, 9♦, 2♦. The hand is labeled 'South - Click to Sit' and 'Robot'.

So the bid of **3 Clubs** by South will be the **4<sup>th</sup> suit** of the auction and will establish a game force. This bid gives our side more room to describe our hands and find the best contract.

# When responding to 4<sup>th</sup> suit forcing the opener has two clear priorities:

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
	1♥	Pass	1♠
Pass	2♦	Pass	3♣
Pass	3♠		
<b>3S = 3 Cards in Spades</b>			

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
	1♥	Pass	1♠
Pass	2♦	Pass	3♣
Pass	3NT		
<b>3NT = Stopper in Clubs denies 3 Spades</b>			

EAST	SOUTH	WEST	scubapr
			1♥
Pass	1♠	Pass	2♦
Pass	3♣	Pass	3♦
<b>3D = No Stopper in Clubs denies 3 Spades</b>			

**Priority 1:** Show 3 card support for responder's 1<sup>st</sup> bid suit by bidding that suit now.

- This is especially important if responder bid a major suit with her first bid.
- Opener has already denied 4 card support by not raising responder's suit originally.

**Priority 2:** Show a stopper in the 4<sup>th</sup> Suit by bidding No-Trump.

- This will deny 3 card support in partner's originally bid suit
- 3NT here denies 3 card Heart Support

**Priority 3:** When you do not have support or a stopper in the 4<sup>th</sup> suit just make the most descriptive bid for you hand.

- This failure to bid No – Trump or partner's original suit will always deny 3 card support AND a stopper in the 4<sup>th</sup> suit.
- 3D in the auction to our left would show at least a 5 x 5 hand with Hearts and Diamonds

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
	1♥	Pass	1♠
Pass	2♦	Pass	3♣
Pass	3♠		

A♠	J♠	10♠	9♠	2♠	A♥	10♥	K♣	10♣	8♣	Q♦	9♦	2♦
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S South - Click to Sit Robot

So after our 4<sup>th</sup> suit bid of 3 Clubs partner bid 3 Spades. This we now know shows **3 card Spade support**. Our best game is now revealed and we can confidently bid 4 Spades with our cards.

Teaching Board 1

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
	1♥	Pass	1♠
Pass	2♦	Pass	3♣
Pass	3♠	Pass	4♠

A♠	J♠	10♠	9♠	2♠	A♥	10♥	K♣	10♣	8♣	Q♦	9♦	2♦
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S South - Click to Sit Robot

Success!! We used 4<sup>th</sup> suit forcing to find our best contract and never risked ending up below the game level.

Notice that 3 No – Trump could be a disaster on a club lead especially if we end up losing a Spade trick.

Let's look at some more 4<sup>th</sup> suit situations...

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
	1♦	Pass	1♥
	Pass	2♣	Pass

K♠	J♠	2♠	A♥	K♥	10♥	9♥	6♥	2♥	2♣	K♦	4♦	3♦
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S South - Click to Sit Robot

With this hand, South needs to take her time to make sure she finds the right game for her side. Sounds like a perfect job for 4<sup>th</sup> Suit Forcing...

WEST	NORTH	EAST	scubapro
	1♦	Pass	1♥
	Pass	2♣	Pass
	Pass	2NT	Pass

K♠	J♠	2♠	A♥	K♥	10♥	9♥	6♥	2♥	2♣	K♦	4♦	3♦
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S scubapro 7

So we bid 2S (4<sup>th</sup> suit Forcing) and partner responds 2NT. This denies 3 card heart support but shows a stopper in the Spade suit.

What's Next??

Did you bid 3 Hearts with the South Hand?

As South we know partner does not have 3 card support for Hearts, but that does not mean we still can't have a heart fit. The beauty of 4<sup>th</sup> suit forcing is that it is a Game Forcing bid. So South can comfortably bid 3 Hearts without fear of being passed.

**Rule:** After partner has denied 3 card support for our suit, the rebid of this suit shows 6+ cards.

After we show 6+ cards in the Heart suit our partner correctly places the contract in 4 Hearts.

*Note: We might have underbid this hand slightly but will discuss how we investigate slam in later slides.*

Teaching Board 1

WEST NORTH EAST SOUTH

Pass	1♦	Pass	1♥
Pass	2♣	Pass	2♠
Pass	2NT	Pass	3♥
Pass	4♥	Pass	Pass
Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass

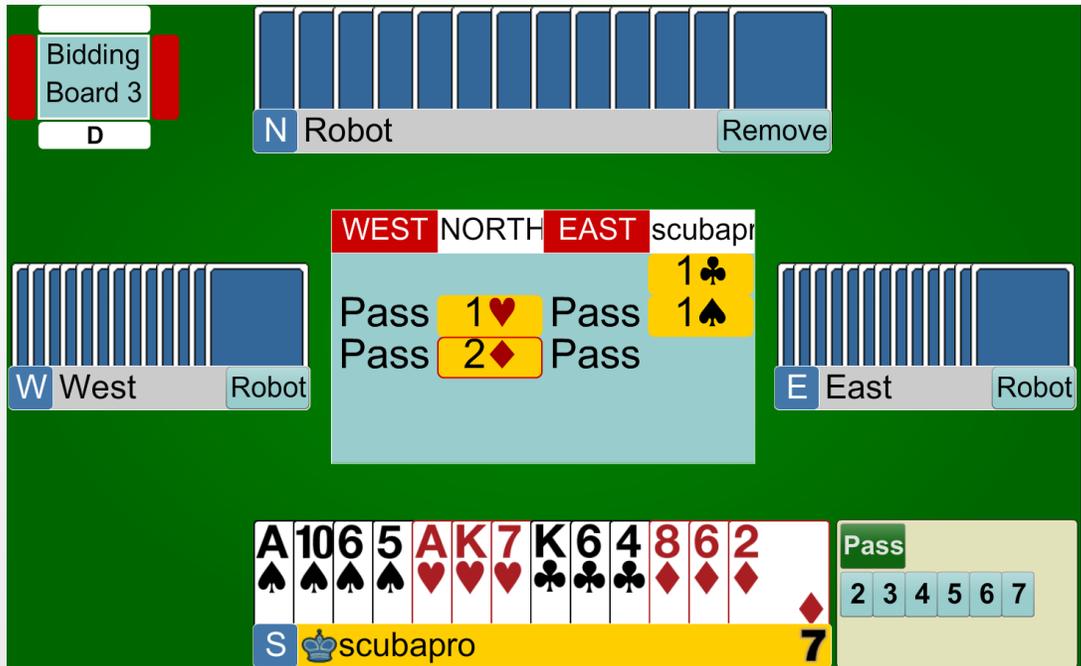
N North - Click to Sit Robot

W West - Click to Sit Robot

E East - Click to Sit Robot

S South - Click to Sit Robot

4♥ S NS 0 EW 0



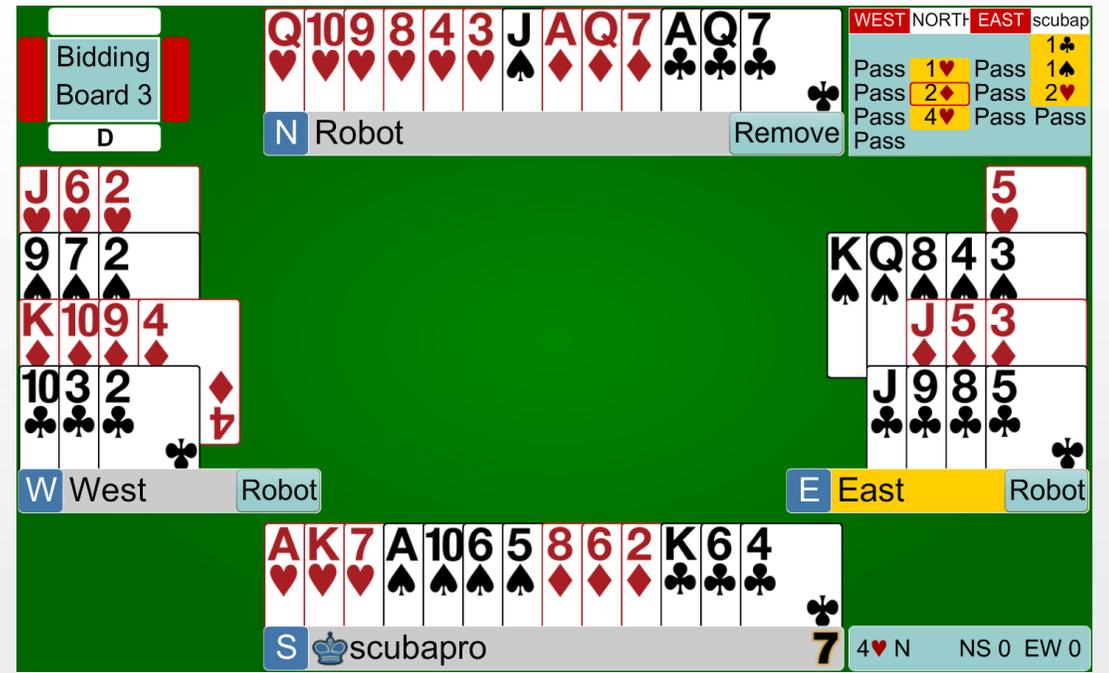
Here our partner has made the 4<sup>th</sup> suit forcing bid of 2 Diamonds.

Remember your priorities:

1. With 3 card support in partner's originally bid suit we show it.

### **STOP**

Our 1<sup>st</sup> priority is always to show 3 card support for partner's suit so when we do have this support we show it no matter what.



After we show our 3 card Heart support partner knows which game is best for us and correctly bids 4 Hearts.

WEST NORTH EAST scubapro

Pass 1♥ Pass 1♣  
 Pass 2♦ Pass 1♠

Robot

E F

J 7 4 2 Q 7 A K J 7 2 Q 5  
 ♠ ♠ ♠ ♠ ♥ ♥ ♣ ♣ ♣ ♣ ♣ ♦ ♦

S ♠ scubapro 7

Remember our priorities:

1. 3 Card Support
2. Stopper in the 4<sup>th</sup> Suit
3. Make a descriptive bid without the above.

So without the 1<sup>st</sup> two priorities met we will bid 3 Clubs with our hand.

***This will always deny 3 card support and a stopper in the 4<sup>th</sup> suit.***

Bidding Board 3

D N Robot

WEST NORTH EAST scubapro

Pass 1♥ Pass 1♣  
 Pass 2♦ Pass 3♣  
 Pass 3NT Pass Pass

4-5♥; 4-♠; 14-21 HCP; likely stop in♦

Q 10 8 6 5  
 ♠ ♠ ♠ ♠ ♠

6 3 2  
 ♥ ♥ ♥

8 6  
 ♣ ♣

10 9 6  
 ♦ ♦ ♦

A 9 3  
 ♠ ♠ ♠

K J 5 4  
 ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥

10 5  
 ♣ ♣

K 4 3 2  
 ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

W West Robot

E Robot Remove

J 7 4 2 Q 7 A K J 7 2 Q 5  
 ♠ ♠ ♠ ♠ ♥ ♥ ♣ ♣ ♣ ♣ ♣ ♦ ♦

S ♠ scubapro 7

3NT N NS 0 EW 0

Partner chose to bid 3NT after our 3 Club bid. Interesting choice by the Robot on this hand as they could have bid 3NT directly over 1 Spade also. I guess the Robot know we were discussing 4<sup>th</sup> Suit Forcing in this weeks **LearnBridge.nyc** Focus!



**Learn**Bridge**.nyc**

**Advanced Auction Ahead!**

WEST	NORTH	EAST	scubapro
	1♣	Pass	1♥
Pass	1♠	Pass	

7♠	6♠	A♥	K♥	Q♥	8♥	3♥	A♣	5♣	2♣	K♦	10♦	8♦
S scubapro												7♦

Looks like a perfect opportunity for 4<sup>th</sup> suit forcing here...

WEST	NORTH	EAST	scubapro
	1♣	Pass	1♥
Pass	1♠	Pass	2♦
Pass	2♥	Pass	

7♠	6♠	A♥	K♥	Q♥	8♥	3♥	A♣	5♣	2♣	K♦	10♦	8♦
S scubapro												7♦

Partner shows 3 card support for Hearts so now we know we have a fit and want to play Hearts. So do we just bid 4 Hearts and end it?

**NO!**

4H may very well be our best spot, but we are in a game forcing auction so we have time to investigate slam possibilities...

WEST	NORTH	EAST	scubapro
	1♣	Pass	1♥
Pass	1♠	Pass	2♦
Pass	2♥	Pass	3♥
Pass	3♠	Pass	

7♠	6♠	A♥	K♥	Q♥	8♥	3♥	A♣	5♣	2♣	K♦	10♦	8♦
S scubapro												7♦

The 3 Heart bid by Scubapro shows extra values.

**Reminder:** When in game forcing auctions the slower approach to game always shows a hand with extra values and potential slam interest.

3 Spades by North shows 1<sup>st</sup> round control in the Spade suit.

	WEST	NORTH	EAST	scubapro
		1♣	Pass	1♥
obot	Pass	1♠	Pass	2♦
	Pass	2♥	Pass	3♥
	Pass	3♠	Pass	4♣
	Pass	4♦	Pass	

7♠	6♠	A♥	K♥	Q♥	8♥	3♥	A♣	5♣	2♣	K♦	10♦	8♦
S	♠	scubapro										7♦

So after partner's control bid of 3 Spades we know they also have slam interest. We have plenty of room left in our auction so we can show 1<sup>st</sup> round control in the Club suit by bidding 4 Clubs. They follow this up with another control bid of 4 Diamonds!

	WEST	NORTH	EAST	scubapro
	Pass	1♠	Pass	2♦
obot	Pass	2♥	Pass	3♥
	Pass	3♠	Pass	4♣
	Pass	4♦	Pass	4NT
	Pass	5♥	Pass	

7♠	6♠	A♥	K♥	Q♥	8♥	3♥	A♣	5♣	2♣	K♦	10♦	8♦
S	♠	scubapro										7♦

After 4 Diamonds we probably have enough information to just bid 6 Hearts.... But then we would miss practicing our 1430 Keycard Skills. 4NT is our Keycard bid and partner shows 2 Keycards without the Queen of Trumps. **Reminder:** Keycard Blackwood is usually still available after a control bidding sequence.

So... yuk!! Our Robot friend has bid a lot with a very balanced minimum hand. As a result we find ourselves in a very tough slam.

Can we make it??

Well to find out, tune in to our 4<sup>th</sup> Suit Forcing Video presentation on this Tuesday March 8<sup>th</sup> to find out how to take 12 tricks on this hand.

And Join us this Thursday March 10<sup>th</sup> for our two Focus Duplicate Games:

- 9:45 AM at Cavendish
- 6:30 PM at Aces

**(Evening at Aces is still only \$10!!)**

The screenshot shows a bridge game interface with the following details:

- Bidding Board 1:** A table with columns for West, North, East, and South (scubapro). The bidding sequence is: West Pass, North 2♥, East Pass, South 3♥; West Pass, North 3♠, East Pass, South 4♣; West Pass, North 4♦, East Pass, South 4NT; West Pass, North 5♥, East Pass, South 6♥; West Pass, North Pass, East Pass.
- North (Robot):** 10♥, 9♥, 5♥, A♠, K♠, 4♠, 3♠, A♦, 7♦, 5♦, K♣, 10♣, 4♣.
- West (Robot):** J♥, 4♥, Q♠, J♠, 10♠, 8♠, 2♠, J♦, 4♦, Q♣, J♣, 7♣, 3♣.
- East (Robot):** 7♥, 6♥, 2♥, 9♠, 5♠, Q♦, 9♦, 6♦, 3♦, 2♦, 9♣, 8♣, 6♣.
- South (scubapro):** A♥, K♥, Q♥, 8♥, 3♥, 7♠, 6♠, K♦, 10♦, 8♦, A♣, 5♣, 2♣.
- Score:** 6♥ S, NS 0, EW 0.

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