

Michaels Cuebid for the Majors

Michaels Cuebid is a direct cuebid (1C-2C, not 1C-Pass-Pass-2C) of the opponent's opened suit showing:

- Over a 1C/1D opening, a Michaels Cuebid (1C-2C or 1D-2D) shows both majors (Hearts and Spades).
- Over a major-suit opening, a Michaels Cuebid (1H-2H or 1S-2S) shows the other major *and* an unspecified minor. If you can't support partner's major but have at least 3-card length in both minors, bid 2NT to ask partner to bid their minor.

Strength requirements – Most people play Michael's as either weak or strong:

- Weak Michaels (7-11 HCP) – most of your points must be in your suits such as:
 - ♠KQ983 ♥Q10942 ♦85 ♣7
 - ♠QJ1083 ♥KQ642 ♦K5 ♣7
 - After partner bids their preference you will pass.
- Strong Michaels (16+ HCP) – Over an opponent's 1D opener, for example, you can bid 2D Michaels with:
 - ♠AKQ98 ♥KQJ92 ♦K5 ♣7
 - ♠KQJ98 ♥KQJ92 ♦A5 ♣7
 - After partner bids you must bid again to show your strong Michaels hand. If the suit bid by partner is a major, often you will be going to game.
- **What about 11-15 HCP 5-5 Hands?** Bid the highest ranking suit first and then rebid the other suit later to show this range. Do not use a Michaels Cuebid.

When Not to Use Michaels Cuebid

- If there is great disparity in the strength of your two suits, it may be better to overcall one of them instead. Over a 1H opener if you have ♠KQJ98 ♥A ♦106542 ♣43, a 1S overcall is a better description than a Michaels cue bid.
- Be careful if your high-card strength is outside your suits. With a hand like ♠K8532 ♥J8642 ♦K5 ♣Q your suits are too weak for a Michaels Cuebid.
- *Vulnerable* Michaels Cuebid should promise more playing strength.

Responding bids

- If your right hand opponent (RHO) passes after your partner makes a Michaels Cuebid, **you cannot pass**. You will want to pick the better of partner's suits. The level of your bid depends on your strength and trump support:
 - With a weak-to-intermediate hand, bid at the lowest level available.
 - With a stronger hand (12+ support points), you can jump in one of partner's suits to invite game or jump directly to game.
- If RHO makes an intervening bid, you should compete if you have some strength and support (3+ cards) for one of partner's suits.
- If you're not vulnerable and you have a weak hand with strong support, you may want to sacrifice if you are confident opponents can make game.

Worksheet – Michaels Cuebid

What is your bid after your right hand opponent opens 1C?

Hand #1: ♠QJ952 ♥KJ983 ♦A4 ♣6 Bid _____

Hand #2: ♠AKJ62 ♥J7432 ♦2 ♣73 Bid _____

Hand #3: ♠KQJ32 ♥AJ763 ♦J6 ♣6 Bid _____

What is your bid after your right hand opponent opens 1S?

Hand #4: ♠7 ♥KQJ83 ♦QJ754 ♣62 Bid _____

Hand #5: ♠42 ♥AKQ92 ♦2 ♣AKJ73 Bid _____

What is your response after the auction: 1♣ by LHO -- 2♣ by partner -- Pass by RHO?

Hand #6: ♠432 ♥AJ ♦Q754 ♣Q532 Bid _____

Hand #7: ♠KJ72 ♥Q2 ♦A9642 ♣73 Bid _____

Hand #8: ♠K2 ♥AJ93 ♦A976 ♣A62 Bid _____

Answers

Hand #1: Bid 2C.

Hand #2: Bid 1S. 2C is not wrong, but 1S is better given the extra strength in spades. Most of the time you will be on defense and you want partner leading a spade not away from the King of hearts!

Hand #3: Bid 1S. We show 12-15 HCP 5-5 hands by bidding our highest suit first and then rebidding the lower suit.

Hand #4: Bid 2S. You have a weak Michaels Cuebid.

Hand #5: Bid 2S. You have a strong Michaels Cuebid.

Hand #6: Bid 2S. Partner's has both majors and we have more spades than hearts. Do not be tempted to bid 2H with two good hearts. Do not bid 2NT either. Partner likely has a weak hand and NT will fail miserably.

Hand #7: Bid 3S. You can make this invitational bid on 12 support points for spades (10 HCP, 1 for the club doubleton, 1 for the extra trump). Partner will raise to 4S if they are at the upper end of a weak Michaels Cuebid (10-11 HCP or extra length in their suits).

Hand #8: Bid 4H. Even if partner has only 7 HCP, we expect only 1 minor suit loser (remember partner is 5-5) and likely only 1 or 2 losers in the majors. Give partner just a king and two queens in the majors and we are likely making 11 tricks.