


## Fourth Suit Forcing

When the first three bids of an uncontested auction show three different suits then a bid of the remaining suit is 'fourth suit forcing'. It is artificial and game forcing and asks opener to make their most descriptive call. If you actually hold the fourth suit you can make a descriptive call in no trumps.

After Fourth Suit Forcing opener can show secondary (3-card) support for responder's suit, or bid no trumps with a stopper in the fourth suit, or rebid one of their own suits to show extra length.

Examples:

♠ A K 7 4 3			
♥ J 7			
♦ K Q 9			
♣ 4 3 2			
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
		1 ♥	Pass
1 ♠	Pass	2 ♦	Pass
?			

West has a strong enough hand to drive to game once partner opens the bidding, but they have no clearcut action when partner opens 1 ♥ and rebids 2 ♦. Bidding no trumps is out because there is no club stopper, there is no guaranteed fit in either of opener's suits, and rebidding spades is not forcing. The best solution is a bid of 3 ♣, fourth suit forcing. Opener can show 3-card spade support by bidding 3 ♠, or bid no trumps with a club stopper, or rebid one of the red suits to show extra length.

♠ 4 3		♠ K Q 10
♥ J 3		♥ A 10 7 6 5
♦ K J 3		♦ A 9 7 6
♣ A K J 9 7 6		♣ 10

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
		1 ♥	Pass
2 ♣	Pass	2 ♦	Pass
2 ♠	Pass	2 NT	Pass
3 NT	All pass		

West has an obvious 2 ♣ response to East's 1 ♥ opening, but does not have a convenient bid when their partner rebids 2 ♦. They should bid 2 ♠, fourth suit forcing. Once East shows a spade stopper by bidding 2 NT West can raise to game,

♠ A Q 10 9 6		♠ K J 5
♥ K 3		♥ A J 8 6 4
♦ A 9 7		♦ K J 8 6
♣ 5 4 3		♣ 2

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
			1 ♥
Pass	1 ♠	Pass	2 ♦
Pass	3 ♣	Pass	3 ♠
Pass	4 ♠	All pass	

West doesn't have a clear action over partner's 2 ♦ rebid so they bid 3 ♣, fourth suit forcing. East can now show 3-card spade support, and West bids the spade game,