

1 / IF THERE IS A MISFIT, IT IS FOR BOTH SIDES – AND YOU WANT TO DEFEND

This is certainly one of the most important bidding understandings there is. If one side has an eight-card fit, it is almost certain that the other will have an eight-card fit also (there is a very small possibility of three seven-card fits instead). Even more significantly, if your opponents do not hold a fit, then nor do you, and defending is the way to win.

<i>South</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>E</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>W</i>
♠ 8	1S	2D	2H	3C
♥ KJ8643	NB	3D	?	
♦ K42				
♣ A63				

If you are tempted to bid 3H here, think again. Your partner has opened with a suit in which you hold a singleton; your opponents are arguing after an overcall (the fact that West was prepared to suggest another minor suit at the 3-level, when you know East-West hold limited points) and this all sounds like a significant misfit. At Duplicate Pairs, you might double for penalties; at Teams or Rubber bridge, a pass is modest, but far better than bidding on.

Conversely, when one side holds a fit, you are almost certain to hold one also and you should be keen to compete aggressively.

<i>South</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>E</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>W</i>
♠ 8	—	—	1H	1S
♥ AQ864	NB	2S	?	
♦ K86				
♣ AJ98				

This is a clear-cut take-out double. Your opponents hold eight spades; your side will hold an eight-card fit in one of the other suits; doubling allows your partner to choose which one. If your opponents continue to 3S, leave them there. You may have done enough to push them a level too high.

<i>South</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>E</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>W</i>
♠ KQJ8	—	1H	DbI	4H
♥ 4	NB	NB	?	
♦ AJ106				
♣ AQ63				