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[Jeff Goldsmith,RIP](https://www.jeff-goldsmith.com/#bridge) Quirky page

# I . Opening bids and rebid plans with balanced hands



Shapes: 4-3-3-3, 4-4-3-2, 5-3-3-2 (even with 5-card major).

* 5-4-2-2 is OK if one doubleton is stopped.
* 6-3-2-2 is OK if both doubletons are stopped.
* Two doubleton majors NOT OK.
* No voids or singletons, but stiff A ok. Doubleton may be worthless, especially in minor.
* **If balanced, almost always prefer NT to a major opening**
* Prefer ♠s to NT with 5=4. Prefer ♥s to NT with 4=5.

12-14 hcp Open 1 of a suit, planning to rebid 1NT (or 2NT after 2/1)

15-17 hcp Open 1 NT Sometimes, 14 hcp & good 5-card Announce range

OK with 5-card major if no worthless doubleton

18-19 hcp Open 1 of a suit, planning to jump rebid 2 NT (or 3NT after 2/1)[[1]](#footnote-1)

20-21 hcp Open 2 NT No worthless doubleton Announce range

22-24 hcp Open 2**♣**, then rebid cheapest NT

25-27 hcp Open 3NT if not playing Namyats or Gambling (solid 7-card minor, no A/K)

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## Responses to 1NT open or overcall (or 2NT or 2C-2D-2NT), no comp

* **2NT[[2]](#footnote-2)** 8-9 hcp, balanced or 7-9 hcp w/ long minor: invitational [BridgeWeb](https://www.bridgewebs.com/ocala/Stayman%20with%20Smolen%20Crawling%20and%20Extended%20Stayman.pdf) [bm](https://wordpress.lehigh.edu/bm05/files/2024/02/Stayman-with-Smolen-Crawling-and-Extended-Stayman-83feae01ef0d5adf.pdf) [Pattaya](https://www.pattayabridge.com/NTbiddingindex.htm) [bm](https://wordpress.lehigh.edu/bm05/files/2024/02/NoTrump-Bidding-index-c2bf63269ae661cf.pdf)
* **3NT** 10-15 hcp, balanced **6NT** = 18-21 **7NT** = 22+

Consider suppressing a good 6+ card minor in favor of NT

* **4 NT** 16-17 hcp, balanced, quantitative, invitational

*Opener responses*: Pass with 15 hcp; 5 NT with 16 hcp; 6 NT with 17 hcp

* **2♣** Stayman[[3]](#footnote-3): 8+ pts, 4+ card major(s), **but not 4-3-3-3** [brief](http://web2.acbl.org/documentLibrary/play/Commonly_Used_Conventions/stayman.pdf) [wiki](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stayman_convention#Checkback_Stayman) [bm](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stayman_convention#Checkback_Stayman 	https://wordpress.lehigh.edu/bm05/files/2024/02/Stayman-convention-Wikipedia-52065a4d530aace0.pd)

*Rebids by opener*:

* 2♦ = no 4+ card major

This whole section needs work

*Rebids by responder*: 2♥[[4]](#footnote-4)/2♠ mini-Smolen: 4=5= / 5=4= in majors, invitational (8-9)

2NT Invitational

3♣/3♦ 5++ card & slam int. (15+pts). **Not Stayman**, no major

*Rebid by opener:* minor raise or cuebid = slam interest

**alert!** 3♥/3♠ Smolen: 4=5= / 5=4= in majors, game force (10+ )

3NT/4NT Sign-off / Quantitative, invitational, 16-17 hcp

4♥/4♠ 4=6= / 6=4= in majors, sign-off **alert!**

* 2♥ = 4+ hearts, maybe 4 spades

*Rebids by responder*: 2♠ 5 spades, probably shapely, mild invitation (7-8 hcp).

2NT 4 spades, not 4 hearts, game invite (8-9 pts)

3♣/3♦ 5++ card & slam int. (15+pts) **Not Stayman**, no major

**3**♥ 4+ hearts, invite (8-9 pts)

3♠ “Impossible major”: artificial, 4 hearts, gf, slam int.

3NT/4♥ Sign-off

4♣/4♦ Splinter, game force (10+ pts)

4♠ Kickback, RKCB: heart support With Gary

4NT No heart support, quantitative, invitational to slam

* 2♠ = 4+ spades, not 4 hearts

*Rebids by responder:* 2NT Invitational, no spade support

3♣/3♦ 5++ card & slam int. (15+pts) **Not Stayman**, no major

**3**♥ “Impossible major”: artificial, 4 spades, gf, slam int.

3♠ 4 spades, invite (8-9 pts)

3NT/ 4♠ Sign-off

4♣/4♦ Splinter, game force (10+ pts)

4♥ Kickback, RKCB: support, slam interest With Gary

4NT No spade support, quantitative invite to slam

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* **2♦, 2♥** Jacoby Transfer: 0+ hcp, 5+ card [ACBLl](http://web2.acbl.org/documentLibrary/play/Commonly_Used_Conventions/jacobytransfers.pdf) [Tx vs. Jacoby](https://www.larryco.com/bridge-learning-center/detail/66) Announce transfer

**NOTE: Use Texas Transfer not Jacoby Transfer if intending to use RKCB**

**NOTE: With 5-5 and weak hand (0-7) transfer to *weaker* suit**

*Rebids by responder after opener completes the transfer*:

* Pass 0-7 pts
* 2NT 5 card major, invitational (8-9 hcp)
* Raise to 3♥/3♠ 6+ card major, invitational (8-9 pts)

Kickback and/or Minorwood?

* New suit, 3 level two-suiter, major is 5 card, invitational (8-9 pts)
* New major, 4 level two-suiter, 5-5 in majors, game force (10+ pts)
* 3NT 5 card major, choice of game (10+ pts)
* Raise to 4♥/4♠ 6+ card major, slam interest (15+ pts)
* Jump in minor alert! 6+ card major, **splinter**, slam interest (15+ pts)
* 4NT **Quantitative**, invitational, choice (16-17 pts)
* **2**♠ Jacoby Transfer: 0-7 hcp, 6+ card minor Announce transfer

*Opener must bid 3C. Responder will correct if suit is Diamonds*

* **3**♣ Puppet Stayman: game force, 10+ pts, asking for five card major alert!
* Note: Use Puppet with at least one 3-card major rather than settling for 3NT
* **Note: 3♣ after 2NT is Puppet Stayman**

*Rebids by opener in response to Puppet:*

* 3♦No five card major, but does have one or two four card major(s)

*Responder rebids:*

* 3♥/3♠ = 4 cards in opposite major (Smolen) alert!
* 3 NT = no four card major
* 4♦ = both four card majors: opener chooses best
* 3♥/3♠ Five card major
* 3 NT No four or five card major

*Responder* can then transfer to a six-card major

* **3♦**/**3♥/3**♠ [Splinter](http://www.davelegrow.com/Splinters%20Over%201NT%20Opener.pdf): void or single, 4441/5440/5431, game force alert!

**Note: 3♠ promises 4-card major (hearts); others do not.**

Splinters seldom arise. Maybe we should play 3D as a 5-5 major invite, or natural and forcing

*Opener rebids:*

* 3 NT = double stopper in short suit
* Game bid = cutoff
* Bid below game = natural; forcing; mild slam interest

*Responder rebids* are controls or 4 NT = Blackwood

* **4**♣ Gerber
* **4♦/4♥** [Texas Transfer](http://web2.acbl.org/documentLibrary/play/Commonly_Used_Conventions/texastransfers.pdf): 6+ card, 10-14 pts or intent to use RKCB **Announce transfer**

**Note: Subsequent 4 NT is RKCB 1430**  [top](#Contents)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Summary of Responses to 1NT with various holdings in the majors** | | |
| **Major holdings** | **8-9 hcp** | **10-~14 points** |
| **1 or 2 3-card suits** | 2NT | Puppet Stayman alert! |
| **1 or 2 4-card suits** | Stayman, then invite | Stayman, then game |
| **4-3-3-3** | Bid as if 3-3 in the majors | |
| **4-3** | Stayman, then invite | Puppet Stayman, Smolen |
| **4-4 w/ void or single** | Stayman, then invite | Splinter alert! |
| **5-4** alert! | Stayman, mini-Smolen | Stayman, Smolen |
| **5-x** Announce | Jacoby transfer, then 2NT | Jacoby transfer, then 3NT |
| **5-5** Announce | 2♥, then 3♥ | 2♥, then 4♥ |
| **6-4** | Stayman, then 4 of major | Stayman, then 4 of major |
| **6-x** Announce | Jacoby transfer, then raise | Texas transfer |

## Responses to opening 1 NT in competition

**AFTER COMPETITION BUT NOT INTERFERENCE**

Double is NOT interference[[5]](#footnote-5). Ignore it. All systems on.

*Redouble =* 7+ hcp, generally balanced.

*Pass = 0-6. Opener’s* redouble is SOS, asking responder to bid long suit.

2♣ does not really interfere. All systems on, except Double is Stayman

**After Penalty Double** (Do we want to play this?)

Meckwell Escapes (Meckwell bids except Pass= Dbl (minor/both majors) and XX is natural)

**AFTER DIRECT OVERCALL ABOVE 2♣**

Texas transfers ON after overcall through 3♣ [AG](http://www.betterbridge.com/misc/StandardArticles/Standard200406.pdf)

Jacoby transfers and splinters OFF

* Double [[6]](#footnote-6) Penalty, 8+ hcp, likely 2++ trump tricks
* New suit, 2 level 5+ card, 0-7 pts, sign-off
* New suit, 3 level[[7]](#footnote-7) 5+ card, 10+ pts, game force
* 3 NT 10+ pts, natural, no major, no stopper (FADS) [[8]](#footnote-8)
* Cue bid Stayman, 10+ pts, no stopper (FADS)

*Opener may then stop in 4 of a minor if w/o stopper or 4-card major* ♣♦♥♠ ♣♦♥♠

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* **2 NT is lebensohl: Opener MUST bid 3♣ puppet. *Meaning varies*** **alert!**

***Rebids by Responder after Lebensohl 2NT and opener’s 3*♣*:*** [**LC**](https://www.larryco.com/bridge-learning-center/detail/541)

* Pass/new suit below overcall = Signoff
* New suit above overcall = Invitational
* Cue bid = Stayman, stopper (FADS)
* 3 NT = Natural, stopper (FADS)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **HCP** | **Responding to 1 NT after interference with 5+ card suit** | |
|  | **If two level is available (e.g. ♠ over 2♥)** | **If forced to three level (e.g. ♦ over 2♠)** |
| **0-7** | 2♠ | 2NT, then pass (3♣) or bid (3♦ or 3♥)  **alert!** |
| **8-9** | 2 NT, then bid (3♠) | Must guess whether to invite or force game |
| **10+** | Jump to 3♠ | Bid at 3-level (♣,♦, or ♥) |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Responding to 1 NT after interference with 10+ hcp and no 5-card suit** | |
| **NT** | 2 NT, then 3 NT promises stopper of ops suit | 3 NT denies stopper of ops suit |
| **Stayman** | 2 NT, then cue bid promises stopper of ops suit | Cue bid denies stopper of ops suit |

## Opener rebids after responder bids and subsequent competition

**AFTER RESPONDER’S 2♣ (STAYMAN) IS DOUBLED OR OVERCALLED**

* After Double, Stayman is off. *Opener rebids* are natural. Pass/Redouble is to play.

*Responder rebids* are natural. Pass/Redouble is to play. 2**♦** is SOS with short clubs

* After overcall, Stayman is off. *Opener rebids* are natural. Double is for penalty. 3 level bids require a maximum and a good suit.

**AFTER RESPONDER’S 2♦/2♥/2♠ (TRANSFER) IS DOUBLED/ OVERCALLED**

* After Double, *Opener rebids* are natural.
  + Redouble is for penalty.
  + Pass discourages transfer.
  + Complete the transfer shows 3+ trump, minimum
  + Jump the transfer (Superaccept) shows 4+ trump, maximum
* After overcall, *Opener* usually passes.
  + Complete transfer with good support.
  + Double is penalty

## Responses to opening 2 NT after direct competition

All Systems OFF (No Stayman, splinters, or transfers)

* Double negative
* New suit natural, forcing
* 3 NT 10+ pts, not necessarily a stopper [top](#Contents)

# II. Auctions after opening with one of a major

## Opening with one of a major and rebid plans



* Opening requirements: 5+ card suit and *either* [*GB*](https://taigabridge.net/articles/web_open.htm)[*bm*](https://wordpress.lehigh.edu/bm05/files/2024/02/Opening-bids-26db72aabf74ece2.pdf)

1. Rule of 20 (hcp + # of cards in two long suits ≥ 20) + 2QT
2. *or* 13 points valued by [Pavlicek’s](http://www.rpbridge.net/3t00.htm) method plus …….

* honors are in long suits
* more aces and tens than jacks and queens
* having an easy rebid and 1 ½ - 2 quick tricks
* Rebid plans by opener [LC: F or NF 1](https://www.larryco.com/bridge-articles/f-or-nf-part-1-of-5)

Pts Suits Rebid plans

**Minimum**

12-15 6+ card suit Rebid suit

Partner support Raise partner (usually 4 card)

Balanced Bid lowest NT

Unbalanced New suit, nonforce, may be 3card

16-18 6+ card suit Jump rebid suit

**Invite**

Partner support Jump raise

18-19 Balanced Jump in NT (requires half-stop in unbids and stop in ops)

**Force**

17+ Unbalanced Reverse in new suit (forcing one round +)[[9]](#footnote-9) [LC: Rev & JS](https://www.larryco.com/bridge-learning-center/detail/843)

19-21 Jump shift (game force), may be short

### Differences when opening a major in 3rd position

[Gordon Bower on 3rd/4th seat opening](https://taigabridge.net/articles/web_open2.htm)  [bm](https://wordpress.lehigh.edu/bm05/files/2024/02/TaigaBridge-Opening-Bids-Third-Seat-179e26badce3bde3.pdf) M. Lawrence, Passed Hand Bidding

* Light opening is OK to preempt/suggest lead. HCP/pts as low as 9/10, especially in majors.
* Light opening in minor only with good reason, having a rebid and 7+ cards in majors
* Opening a very good 4 card (KQJx) major is OK if no higher suit is short.[[10]](#footnote-10)
* Weak twos can be decent (KJTxx) 5-card suits, especially with a short higher suit.
* Any second bid by opener suggests a full opener. Pass pard’s one-level response with Hx +.

### Differences when opening a major in 4th position

* Rule of 15: Open if HCP + # of spades ≥ 15
* Don’t preempt: Pass! A 2- or 3-level bid should make opposite one winner
* Weak 2: 10-13 hcp, good 6-card suit, quacky enough to refuse a Drury invitation

♣♦♥♠ ♣♦♥♠ [top](#Contents)

## Responses to one of a major when 2/1 game force is ON

**Game Force ON in 1st or 2nd position, no interference** [LC 2/1](https://www.larryco.com/bridge-learning-center/detail/435) [PFDubois](https://pfdubois.com/bridge-books) [KW](http://kwbridge.com/2over1.htm) [LC, F/NF](https://www.larryco.com/bridge-articles/f-or-nf-part-2-of-5)

### Responders first bid

* New suit, 1 level 6+ pts., 4+card suit, forcing

*Opener second bids:*

* For most, see above. Prefer to raise partner rather than NT or new suit.
* Reverse shows 17+ with 5+ in opener and 4+ in second suit. One round force.
  + *Responder rebids*: see Responder Rebids Over Opener’s Reverse ***Lebensohl***
    - 4th suit or cheap NT is weak relay (<8 pts) to 3♣ or 2NT(to play)
    - Rebid own suit shows 5-7 pts.
    - All others are 8+ points. Game force
* New suit is often minimum, but could be 17-18, NF

*Responder’s second bids* include **reverse** (13+) and [#Fourth suit forcing](#_Fourth_Suit_Forcing)

***Note:***Show preference for 2-card support in 1st suit over poor 3-card in 2nd suit

* New suit, 2 level = 12+ pts, 5+card major or 4+minor, **game force**

***Opener rebids usually show distribution not strength:*** [LC1](https://www.larryco.com/bridge-learning-center/21-gf) [LC2](https://www.larryco.com/bridge-articles/unifying-21-gf)

* 2 NT = Half-stop + in unbids (maybe xxx), 12-14 or 18-19 hcp
* Raise partner = May be 3-card support, especially if too unbalanced for 2NT
* Rebid suit = 6+ card suit (except 2**♦** can be 5-card)
* Jump rebid = AKQJxx+, sets trump (*responder* may show cheapest control)
* Jump shift = Splinter, 4+card support, void or single
* 1 NT = 6-12 pts, semi-forcing (opener *may* pass w/ balanced or Flannery dead min)

*Opener* [*rebids*](http://tommybridgeblog.blogspot.com/2013/08/bidding-continuations-after-1nt-forcing.html)*: see above… and* E. Rodwell, BT1, ch. 5

* 2NT = 17-18 hcp
* 3NT = 19+ hcp
* Jump shift = 19+ (could be 3-card minor with strength and 6-card major. GF
* New suit = 13-18 pts; 2♣ could be a 2-card suit if too strong to pass

*Responder’s* raise of 2nd suit is 4+card, 8-10 pts, invitational

* Rebid **♥** with 6=4=x=x, but rebid ♠ with 6=x=4, unless spades too weak opposite stiff

**Notes:** *Responder* should rebid 2♠ after 1♠- 1NT - 2**♥** with two spades and three hearts.

*Responder’s* “impossible” rebid of 2♠ (1**♥**-1NT denies ♠) is forcing, maybe artificial

* Reverse shows 17+ with 5+ in opener and 4+ in second suit. One round force.
  + *Responder rebids*: see Responder Rebids Over Opener’s Reverse ***Lebensohl***
    - 2 level 4th suit or 2 NT is weak relay (<8 pts) to 3♣ or 2NT (to play)
    - Rebid own suit shows 5-7 pts.
    - All others are 8+ points. Game force

♣♦♥♠ ♣♦♥♠ [top](#Contents)

* Responses with trump support: ***see chart below for detail[[11]](#footnote-11)and section on Opener’s rebid***
  + 1 NT, then support 6-7 pts, 3-card support
  + Raise to 2 8-9 pts, 3+card support or 6-9 pts w/ 4+
  + 1 NT, then jump support 10-12 pts, 3-card support
  + Raise to 3 10-12 pts, 4+card support
  + Raise to 4 0-5 pts, 5+card support
  + New suit, dbl jump Splinter, 4+card support, 12+ pts, game force
  + 3 NT 13-15 pts, 4333, 3card support, choice of games
  + 2 NT (Jacoby) 13+ pts; 4+card support, no splinter

*Opener rebids:* see below, Opener’s Rebids after Jacoby 2 NT

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **1 ♥** | **Responding to 1♥ with trump support** | | | |
| **Pts** | **2-card support** | **3-card** | **4-card** | **5+card** |
| 0 - 5 | pass | pass + 2♥ | pass ++ 3♥ | 4♥ |
| 6 - 7 | 1 suit or NT | 1 NT, then 2♥ | 2♥ + 3♥ | 2♥ ++ 4♥ |
| 8 - 9 | 1 suit or NT | 2 ♥ | 2♥ + 3♥ | 2♥ ++ 4♥ |
| 10-12 | 1 suit or NT | 1 suit or 1NT,then 3/4♥ | 3♥ | 3♥ ++ 4♥ |
| 13-15 | 2 suit | 2 suit, then 3♥ | Jacoby 2NT | Jacoby 2NT |
| 13-15, 4333 | | 3 NT | Jacoby 2NT |  |
| 13-15,void or single | |  | 3♠/4♣/4♦ | 3♠/4♣/4♦ |

+ means “but prepared to raise one more following the LAW”. E.g. (see chart), with 4-card support and 8-9 points, make a single raise to 2♥(Standard), but later raise to 3♥(LOTT).

* New major, jump to 2-level = **Soloway jump shift**, 5+ card suit, slam invitational, 3 types

1. Balanced, 18-19 hcp or more
2. One-suited, Strong 6+card suit (one loser or less), 15-18 pts
3. Two suited with support for opener (honor-third or 4-card minor), 15-18 pts

*Opener rebids: almost always relay to the next highest suit, or …*

* + Rebid own suit: Solid or semi-solid suit
  + New suit (or NT): Splinter, honor-third+ support for responder
  + Raise responder: Honor-third+ support, definite slam interest

*Responder re-bids after relay indicate which of 3 types*

* 1. Balanced: cheapest no trump (or 4NT=20-21, etc.)
* 2. One-suited: rebid suit
* 3. Two-suited: bid new suit as splinter
* 3. Two-suited: bid opener’s suit
* New minor, jump to 3-level = Invitational, good 6+card suit, 9-11 hcp. [top](#Contents)

### Opener’s rebids after responder’s raise

After a sequence such as 1♥-P-2♥-P- Opener’s rebids are ..…

* 3♥ Competitive, not invitational, no additional values
* 2♠/3♣/3♦ [Help suit game try](http://www.bridgebum.com/help_suit_game_try.php): 15-18 pts., invitational. Suit is 3+card with 2 or 3 losers.
* **Note:** 1♠-P-2♠-P-3♥ is a help suit game try, but also promises 4+ hearts.
* Responder bids 4♥ with ….
* 0 or 1 loser in “help” suit or
* maximum raise with 2 losers in “help” suit
* Otherwise responder signs off in 3♥
* 3♠/4♣/4♦ Splinter: singleton or void, slam interest
* 2 NT Invitational: 15-18 pts, may be weak in trump
* Responder bids 4♥ w/ maximum and good trump
* Responder bids 3NT w/ maximum and weak trump
* Responder bids 3♥ w/ minimum

Alternative (Not Playing): Kokish game try. See [AdvinBridge](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5127d3d2e4b0b304f0b6db24/t/58dd4157893fc044430af76e/1490895192734/%28108%29+Kokish+Game+Tries.pdf) [bm](https://wordpress.lehigh.edu/bm05/files/2024/02/KokishGameTries-028c24356c97fcc4.pdf) for details

2♠ asks “In which suit(s) would responder accept a **help suit** game try?” 3♥ none, 4♥ all

2NT/3♣/3♦ are **short suit** game tries (2NT is void or single in ♠)

### Opener’s rebids after responder’s Jacoby 2NT

[Jacoby 2NT](http://web2.acbl.org/documentLibrary/play/Commonly_Used_Conventions/jacoby2NT.pdf) = 13+ points, 4+ trump, no splinter. Game force. Possible slam interest.

**OFF in competition or by passed hand** [LC advanced](https://www.larryco.com/bridge-learning-center/detail/45) alternative [BridgeHands](https://www.bridgehands.com/J/Jacoby_2_Notrump.htm)

* Jump to game = Sign off. Minimum hand, 12-14 pts., no shortness
* 3 NT = 16+ hcp, no shortness, flat, choice of games
* Rebid major, 3 level = 16+ pts, slam interest, no shortness
* New suit, 3 level = Splinter, singleton or void
* New suit, 4 level = Natural, good five-card side suit.

If an opponent interferes **after** responder’s Jacoby 2NT:

* Pass = Shortness in the overcalled suit
* New suit = Shortness in that suit
* Double = Minimum, balanced
* Bid game = Minimum, unbalanced
* 3 NT = Medium/maximum, slam interest

### Responder Second bids over opener’s minimum rebid [AG](https://www.betterbridge.com/misc/StandardArticles/Standard200905.pdf)

* 6- 9 pts. **Sign off** with pass or 1 NT, or raise major to 2 level with 2+ support
* 10-11 pts. **Invite** with 2 NT or raise major to 3 level (jump or not)
* 12+ pts. **Force** one round: New Minor or new suit at 2 level
* **GF** Reverse or jump in new suit or Fourth suit forcing

### Responder Rebids Over Opener’s Reverse [Lebensohl](https://www.d16acbl.org/Teaching_Material/Lebensohl%20-%20After%20Reverses.pdf#:~:text=Lebensohl%20may%20be%20used%20after%20partner%20reverses%20to,she%20shows%20a%20bad%208%20points%20or%20less.)

* With a bad 8 points or less, [No game unless opener has extras]
* Rebid own suit = 5+card, 6-7 pts, not forcing **or**
* Initiate a **Lebensohl** relay to 3♣ by bidding the cheaper of 2NT or the 4th suit
* *Opener* finishes the relay with 16-18 points by bidding 2NT or 3♣ (willing to play)
* *Opener* forces with any other 3rd bid. (Otherwise responder may pass)
* With a good 8 points or more, force to game
* Jump rebid own suit (Probably shows 6+)
* Three level bids are natural
* Preference for opener’s suits shows 3+ for 1st suit or 4+ for 2nd suit)
* Lebensohl followed by 3NT shows 8-12
* Direct 3NT or jump support shows 12-15

## Bidding after one of a major when 2/1 game force is OFF

### Responses by **passed hand** to an opening major

Responses by a passed hand are the same as unpassed except …. M.Lawrence, Passed Hand Bidding

* Jacoby 2 NT and Fourth Suit Forcing are OFF
* New suit, 1 level = 6 - 9 pts, 4+ card, NOT FORCING
* New suit, 2 level = 10-12 pts, 5+ card, NOT FORCING

*Opener rebid requires* 15+ pts for the 3-level and 17+ for reverse

* New suit, jump shift = 10-12 pts, 5+card suit, ***4+card support for opener***
* 1 NT = 6-10 pts, NOT FORCING
* 2 NT = 11-12 hcp, balanced, natural (NOT Jacoby)
* 2 ♣/2♦*(Two-Way* ***Reverse*** [***Drury***](https://bridgeplay.webs.com/drury%20.pdf)*)* = 10-12 pts, 3/4 card support **alert!**
* **ON** in competition if available, except
* If ops overcall opener’s first bid with a strong NT, 2♣ is natural, NOT DRURY

*Opener rebids after responder’s 2*♣(Same after 2♦except 2NT, not 2♦ shows full opener)

* Rebid own major = Sub-minimum opening (<13 pts)
* Jump rebid of major = Slam try, asks responder to cue bid
* 2♦ **alert!** = Full opener, no extras (13-14 pts), forcing, mild invite
* *Responder’s second bid* of new suit is now splinter
* Jump to game = 15+ pts, no slam interest (14-19?)
* Other major, 2-level = Full opener, Natural or help suit game try, forcing
* EXCEPT = Game forcing if reverse
* New suit, 3-level = Natural, game force, slam try (20+ or so)
* EXCEPT = Splinter NOT NATURAL if reverse
* 2 NT = Balanced: 16+ hcp, game force, slam interest
* New suit, 4-level = Splinter, 19+ pts, slam try, forcing [top](#Contents)

### Responses to an opening major **in competition**

Responses are the same in competition except ….

* Splinters, Reverses, Fourth Suit Forcing, and Jacoby 2 NT are OFF
* See Bidding over two-suited overcalls for Unusual vs. Unusual and Michaels
* Jump raise to 3/4 = 0-6 pts, 4/5 card support ([LOTT](https://www.larryco.com/bridge-learning-center/detail/229))
* Cue bid ops = 10+ pts, 3+card support
* 2 NT (after overcall) = 10-12 hcp, natural, partial stop
* 2 NT (after double) = 10+ pts, 4+ support (Jordan/Truscott)
* Redouble = 10-12 hcp, maybe no support, will clarify
* Subsequent raise shows 3-card support
* 3 NT = 13-17 hcp, stopper, no fit
* New suit, 2 level = 10+ pts, 5+suit, forcing one round

*Opener rebids:* 2NT or rebid own or simple raise shows minimum (13-15) [top](#Contents)

* New suit, jump 2-5 hcp, 6+ card suit (4-7 hcp vul)

*Opener rebids:* (pass w/o game interest or partner fit)

* + 2 NT 2+card, forcing (*Responder* rebids suit with min)
  + Any jump or raise to 4 of minor is invitational
  + All others natural & non-forcing, expecting responder to pass
* Double (after 1 NT overcall) = penalty
* [Negative double](http://www.jazclass.aust.com/Bridge/brbg_basic/bgp13.gif) over suit overcall ***through 4***♥***,*** forcing
  + 6 (or 8/10/12) + pts if response must be at the 1 (or 2 or 3 or 4) level
  + At least one 4+card unbid suit but hand too weak to bid it
  + Tolerance for 2nd unbid suit or having another rebid. No support for pard.
  + If no major is unbid: 4+-4+ in minors

*Opener rebids*: 13-16 pts, low level; 16-19, jump; 19+, game or cuebid (gf); dbl = support

### Opener’s rebids after responder’s pass

* If a **direct non-jump suit overcall** is passed around to opener, no additional strength is required to reopen since pard may have trap-passed, hence his strength is not limited. [RP](http://www.rpbridge.net/7g01.htm#13)
* Pass = Minimum, usually 3-card in ops suit
* Double = Takeout, usually short (1-2) in ops suit
* New minor, 2 level = Natural, NF. Extreme shape or ops void. Else double is preferred.
* New major, 2 level = Natural, 17+, NF.
* New suit, 3 level = Natural, 19+, invitational
* Cue bid = 6+ strong own suit, 19+, forcing
* 1NT = 18-19, stopper, NF
* 2NT = 16-19, stopper, 6+ own suit, invitational

[top](#Contents)

* If LHO passes and RHO **balances with a double**, all bids are non-forcing, but show extras
* Pass = 13-18
* Redouble = 18+
* New suit, non-jump= 16+, Natural, at least 6-4 or 5-5
* New suit, jump = 19+, Natural, 17+, NF.
* Rebid own suit = 16+, own suit is 6+ strong
* 1NT = 18-19
* 2NT = 18-19, own suit is 6+ strong
* If LHO passes and RHO **balances in a suit**, all bids are non-forcing, but show extra strength
* Double = 16+, takeout
* Cue bid = 19+, 3-suiter, void in ops, forcing

# III. Opening with one of a minor and rebid plans

1♣/1♦ Open longer minor, 1D if 4-4, 1C if 3-3 [guide](http://www.jazclass.aust.com/Bridge/brbg/bgp05.gif)

**For 3rd/4th seat opening, see** Responses by **passed hand** to an opening major [GB: 3rd/4th posn](https://taigabridge.net/articles/web_open2.htm)

**Sequences not listed follow the pattern of major opening**

## Responses to one of a minor, No Competition

* New suit, 1 level (usually “up the line”): 6+ pts, 4+ card suit

*Opener rebids:*

* Passed Hand Opener can pass only with suit tolerance.
* Raise to 3 with 17+ hcp and 4+ support
* Raise to major game with 18-19 pts and 4+support
* 1NT =12-14 hcp. *Responder’s* new minor is New Minor Forcing
* 2 NT shows 18-19 hcp, balanced, but does not deny a 4-card major
* Raise responder’s suit with 4+. With 3, raise only if you hold …
  + a 9x doubleton (or less) elsewhere (can’t bid 1NT) *or*
  + less than AJ9xxx in minor (can’t rebid minor w/o tricks for NT) *or*
  + 12-14 hcp and 4 spades (can’t plan to support hearts on 3rd bid with min)
* New suit, 2 level **(**[**reverse**](https://www.hamiltonbridge.com/Articles/RespondingToReverses.html)**):** 17+ pts, second suit shorter than first, one round force

*Responder rebids*: see Responder Rebids Over Opener’s Reverse ***Lebensohl***

* + - 4th suit or cheap NT is weak relay (<8 pts), asking opener to bid 3♣
    - Rebid own suit shows 5-7 pts, 5+card.
* All others are 8+ points, Game force

***Responder second bids*** *after opener makes minimum or ambiguous rebid:*

* Bids show 6-10 pts. unless they are a jump (invitational) or forcing
* New suit, responder’s reverse: 4+card, 12+ pts, game force
* **Fourth suit forcing** to game
* **Spiral raise** [top](#Contents)
* New suit, 2 level: 12+ pts, 5+ card suit, game force
* By passed hand = 10-12 pts, not forcing.

*Opener rebid requires* 15+ pts for the 3-level and 17+ for reverse

* New major, single jump to 2-level (no competition) : See Soloway jump shift
* New major, single jump to 2-level (by passed hand) : 5+, also fit with pard, max pass.
* New suit, double jump: splinter, 5+card
* 1 NT: 6-10 hcp, No 4-card major; balanced or 4- minor support or too weak for 2 level, nf
* 2 NT: 10-12 hcp, balanced; no 4-card major
* 3 NT: 13-15 hcp, balanced; no 4-card major, partial stop in unbids
* **Inverted minor raises** deny 4-card major alert! ( [BB](http://www.bridgebum.com/inverted_minors.php) [LC](https://www.larryco.com/bridge-learning-center/detail/546) [BW](http://bridgewinners.com/article/view/1m-2m-now-what/)) E. Rodwell: BT1, ch.6

ON by passed hand; OFF in competition

* Criss-cross with Gary: Simple raise=13+ pts; Jump in other minor= 10-12
* Raise to 3 : 0-6 hcp, 5+ card support

**Note:** *Responder* cannot raise directly with 4+ support and 7-9 hcp

* Raise to 2 : 10+ hcp, 5+[[12]](#footnote-12) card support, (or 8+ hcp with 6+)

*Rebids by opener after responder’s strong raise to 2*:

* Raise to 3 = dead minimum, 4+ trump
* Major bid (no jump) shows stopper/concentration
* *Responder’s rebid* of 2NT is then one-round force
* Bid of the other minor bid is natural, not dead min, forcing
* Jump shift = Splinter, 15+ hcp, game force
* Jump raise to 4 is Minorwood (RCKB)
* 3NT = 18-19, not good for minor slam (probably only 3-card)
* 2NT shows stoppers in unbids; one round force, not dead min

*Responder rebids:*

* 3 of minor is minimum
* 3NT is to play
* New major is game force splinter
* New minor is artificial game force in initial minor
* Ignore ops double, except Redouble shows extras with defense

## Responses to 1 of a minor in Competion

Splinters, Soloway, and Inverted minors OFF see Bidding over two-suited overcalls  [RP](http://www.rpbridge.net/2z12.htm) [bm](https://wordpress.lehigh.edu/bm05/files/2024/02/Coping-with-Interference-93d2755b4411e627.pdf)

* Pass *After ops bid, Opener rebids:* 1NT = 18-19, stop
* Redouble 10+hcp with defense, no support
* Raise to 2 6-10 pts, 3++card support
* Raise to 3 4-9 pts, 5+card support [top](#Contents)
* Cue bid Limit raise or better, 4+card support
* Jump cue bid Relay to 3NT, 13+ hcp, stopper+ in ops suit
* New suit, jump 2-5 hcp, 6+ card (4-7 hcp vul)
* **No trump bids** Stop of ops suit; **points as no comp:** (6-10, 10-12 [Truscott], 13-15)
* New suit, 1-level 6-10, 4+card, forcing. Usually 5+card; Negative dbl with most 4-card
* New suit, 2-level 9+pts, 5+card suit OR 11+pts,4-card suit, forcing
* New suit, 3-level 11+pts,4-card suit, forcing
* [Negative double](http://www.jazclass.aust.com/Bridge/br19.htm) ***through 4***♥, forcing [AG](https://www.betterbridge.com/misc/StandardArticles/Standard200807.pdf)
  + 6 (or 9/11/12) + pts if response must be at the 1 (or 2 or 3 or 4) level
  + At least one 4+ card unbid major **but hand or suit too weak to bid it** (<10 pts)
  + Tolerance for 2nd unbid suit or having another rebid
  + Specifically, 1♣-1**♦**-X shows 4+-4+ in majors. ***Note:*** 1**♦**-2♣- X may be only 1 major

*Rebids by opener in response to negative double*:

13-16 pts, lowest level; 17-18 pts, jump or reverse; 19+, dbl jump, game or cuebid

* “Raise” of pard’s implied suit shows 4+card support, but (support) double shows 3
* Unbid suit shows 4+card suit, but as last resort can be 3-card w/ 13-15 pts
* Rebid own suit should be 6+card, but may be 5-card
* No trump stop in ops suit (1NT=12-14hcp; 2NT=18-19hcp), no 4-card maj
* Cue bid of ops shows strong balanced hand (19+), but no stopper

# IV. Assorted bids

## New minor forcing (One way) **[not playing]**

alert! [LC](https://www.larryco.com/bridge-learning-center/detail/108) [BH](http://www.bridgehands.com/N/New_Minor_Forcing.htm) [ACBL](http://web2.acbl.org/documentLibrary/play/Commonly_Used_Conventions/newminorforcing.pdf) After a sequence beginning 1m – 1 M – NT, responder’s second bid of a new minor shows that his first-bid major is 5+card. It is **at least invitational and a one round force**. It asks for, in priority order, (1) 3 card support for his major (jump if max), (2) four card other Major, (3) 3 NT with a max and stoppers in the two “unbid” suits,(4) 2 NT with a min and stoppers in the two “unbid” suits,(5) cheapest available bid.

OFF… If either hand is passed or if opponents compete. [top](#Contents)

## New minor forcing (Two way)

alert! After 1m–1M– NT, responder’s second bid of a minor is artificial & forcing

*Also ON after 1♣-1****♦*** *or 1♥-1♠.* [BH](http://www.bridgehands.com/N/New_Minor_Forcing.htm) [Advd](http://bridge-tips.co.il/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/Two-Way-New-Minor-after-a-1NT-Rebid.pdf) E.Rodwell, BT1, ch. 2

*OFF If either hand is passed or in competion*. [top](#Contents)

* 2♣ (usually invitational, 11-12 pts) requires opener to rebid 2**♦.**

After 1m-1M- NT-2♣-2**♦**, *Responder’s third bids …*

* + Pass = Weak, 4+ diamonds if opener was 1**♦.**
* Rebid major = 11 hcp, 5 card major

*Opener rebids* are natural: 2NT is sign-off (min); 3 of major is invite

* Jump rebid major = 11 hcp, 6 card major
* Other major = 5-4 in the majors
* 2NT = balanced, 11-12 hcp, 4-card support for opener
* 3NT = balanced, 5-card major, choice of games
* 3**♥**(after 1m-1♠-1NT-2♣-2**♦**) = 5-5 in the majors
* 3 of a minor = 5-5 in the major and the bid minor
* 2**♦** is an artificial game force (13+ pts) by Responder. It asks opener for, in priority order,

1. 3 card support for responder’s major

*Responder rebids* are natural, but 2NT is “waiting” to hear distribution

(2) Four cards in the other major,

(3) 5++ card minor

(4) 2 NT with neither major

## Third suit forcing

alert! Identical to New Minor Forcing. Occurs after 1m – 1M – 2m ……

## Fourth suit forcing

alert! [LC](https://www.larryco.com/bridge-learning-center/detail/550) [ACBL](http://web2.acbl.org/documentLibrary/play/Commonly_Used_Conventions/4thsuitforcing.pdf) After a **1 over 1 sequence** and opener’s suit rebid, responder’s second bid of the fourth suit is an artificial **game force**. It asks for, in priority order,

(1) Raise of responder's first bid suit with 3-card/honor doubleton support,

(2) Bid notrump with values (stopper) in the fourth suit,

(3) Raise the fourth suit with four cards in that suit,

(4) A natural rebid, including rebidding first suit with no extra length.

* OFF… If either hand is passed, if opponents compete, or after a reverse.
* A jump in the fourth suit is natural (5-5) and strongly invitational.
* Exception: After 1♣-1**♦-**1**♥,**
  + **1**♠ is forcing, but natural.
  + 2♠ is forcing (4th suit forcing) but denies spades. [top](#Contents)

## Spiral raise

alert! After the sequence 1m–1 M–2 M, responder bids 2NT, asking opener to clarify the strength of his support and his hand.

*Opener’s responses:*

* 3♣ 3 card support, 11-13 hcp
* 3♦ 3 card support, 14-15 hcp
* 3♥ 4 card support, 11-13 hcp
* 3♠ 4 card support, 14-15 hcp

## Ace-asking and other slam bidding



Principles:

1. All ace-asking bids use KC 1430. The 5th keycard is the K of the suit agreed or last bid.
2. Do not ask if you don’t have enough *strength* for slam or if it may put you too high.
3. In control bidding, what you bypass you deny.

### Control bids, serious 3NT, and “Last train”

Cue bids above 3 of the *firmly agreed* suit generally show 1st or 2nd round control.

Needs work

* Exception for Last Train: suit just below game shows slam interest, not specific control.
* Control bid does not show extras or slam interest. For that, bid “serious 3NT” first.

**NOT PLAYING** **either Serious 3NT or Last Train**. E.Rodwell, BT1, ch.8&9

### 4NT: Roman Key Card Blackwood 1430

**4NT is RKCB only when a suit has been agreed. No after Jacoby transfers or Stayman; Yes after Texas transfer.** [EK](http://csbnews.org/conventions-roman-key-card-blackwood-1430-by-eddie-kantar/?lang=en) [details/extensions](http://www.d17acbl.org/index.php?page=rkc-part-1-basics) ERodwell, BT1, ch. 7

***Responses to “asker”******Responses With a Useful Void***[[13]](#footnote-13)

5♣ 1 or 4 key cards

5♦ 3 or 0 key cards

5♥ 2 or 5 key cards, no trump queen

5♠ 2 or 5 key cards plus trump queen[[14]](#footnote-14)

6♣ 1 or 4 key cards plus a void

6♦ 3 or 0 key cards plus a void

5NT 2 key cards plus a void

*After interference below suit*: DOPI (Dbl = 0/3; Pass = 1/4; one step = 2/5)

*After interference above suit*: DEPO(Dbl = even #; Pass = odd #)

*After double*: ROPI (Redbl = 3/0; Pass = 1/4; one step = 2/5)

*Rebids by “asker” after 4NT and responses:*

* Any bid in agreed upon suit is cutoff
* After 5♣/5♦, the cheapest non-trump bid asks for queen. If yes show K or bid slam
* Any bid in another suit requests responder to bid 5NT (for cutoff)
* 5NT asks for kings **outside** trump suit. Show 0 to 3 in steps
* 5NT asks for cheapest K outside trump. If none, bid slam **With Gary** [top](#Contents)

### Other ace-asking conventions (1430 responses) **With Gary and Paul**

**Exclusion Keycard Blackwood** After a trump suit is agreed, jumping to another suit at the 4- or 5-level announces a void in that suit and asks for keycards (1430) excluding that suit.

***Note:*** *If at the 3-level or not a jump, it is a cue bid, not Exclusion*

**Kickback** When hearts are agreed suit, 4♠ is 1430 RKCB. Then, 4NT is Exclusion for S. [bm](https://wordpress.lehigh.edu/bm05/files/2024/02/Kickback2-7f7136dc656e407f.pdf)

Needs discussion. 4suit kickback may be simpler than Minorwood or Redwood.

[**Minorwood**](https://wordpress.lehigh.edu/bm05/files/2024/02/Minorwood-d760e6a848fcb506.pdf)When a minor suit is agreed suit, a jump to 4 of either minor is 1430 RKCB [bm](https://wordpress.lehigh.edu/bm05/files/2024/02/Minorwood-d760e6a848fcb506.pdf)

**Gerber** **4♣ has many meanings; Gerber is among the least likely.** It is Gerber ONLY when …

* 4♣ is a jump bid, and
* No suit has been agreed upon *or* the previous bid was NT

**When is 4 No Trump Quantitative? Basic rules:**

* 4NT is quantitative directly over any NT; 4C is Gerber directly over any NT
* 4NT is takeout if over 4 of a major by the opponents
* 4NT is to play if over 4 of a minor by the opponents
* 4NT is RKCB after Texas Transfers; It is quantitative after Jacoby Transfers

### Grand slam force

With a known suit fit, a JUMP to 5NT asks partner to bid 7 of the agreed suit with two of the top three trump honors. Otherwise, partner should bid 6 of the suit. GSF is not used after RKCB/Gerber or if partner has opened 1NT.

## Various Doubles Reviewed

[Cue bid guide](https://www.santacruzbridge.org/info/learn/Cuebids (Seminar Notes).pdf)

### Responsive double

See Responsive double under Competitive Bidding [BB](http://www.bridgebum.com/responsive_double.php) [ACBL](http://web2.acbl.org/documentLibrary/play/Commonly_Used_Conventions/responsivedoubles.pdf) Takeout double by advancer

### Support double

See Support double under Competitive Bidding [LC](https://www.larryco.com/bridge-articles/doubles-part-3) Opener double shows 3-card support

### Game-try (“Maximal”) double

See Game-try (“Maximal”) double under Competitive Bidding

In competition, after responder has raised opener’s suit, opener doubles to show invitational strength where a simple raise would be Law-like competitive.

♣♦♥♠ ♣♦♥♠ [top](#Contents)

### Lead-directing double

* The double of an artificial suit bid (e.g., Opening 2♣ ,Stayman, Gerber, or a control-bid) shows defensive strength and asks partner to lead that suit.
* The double of any notrump bid by the non-leader requests the lead of (1) a suit bid by your side, or (2) dummy’s first bid suit.
* The double of a voluntarily bid suit slam by the non-leader asks for the lead of (1) dummy’s first bid suit, or (2) leader’s longest suit *not bid* by your side.

### Penalty or take out?

**Takeout**

1. Direct negative double of overcall through 4♥
2. Reopening double by opener after first overcall through 2♠. (Mandatory if opener is short in overcalled suit – does NOT show additional values.)
3. Double of preemptive opening/response through 4♦ (e.g. 4♦ or 2♦-P-4♦)

**Penalty**

1. If either you or your partner has made a natural No Trump bid.
2. **I**f either you or partner has made/converted an earlier penalty double or redouble.
3. Double of preemptive opening/response above 4♥ (e.g. 4♠ or 3♠-P-4♠)

# V. Two-level and higher opening



## Strong artificial 2♣

22+ pts or 8.5+ tricks or LTC<=4 (w/ 3 defense tricks and 17+ hcp[[15]](#footnote-15)) [AG1](http://www.betterbridge.com/misc/StandardArticles/Standard200505.pdf) [AG 2](http://www.betterbridge.com/misc/StandardArticles/Standard200507.pdf) [AG3](http://www.betterbridge.com/misc/StandardArticles/Standard200509.pdf) [LC](https://www.larryco.com/bridge-articles/two-club-opening)

*Note:* With one-suiter and poor defense, consider Namyats or 4♥/4♠ instead

♣♦♥♠ ♣♦♥♠ [top](#Contents)

**Response*s (no interference)[[16]](#footnote-16):***

* **2**♦ Waiting: 0-7 pts. or no other bid (unbalanced but no good suit)

*Opener rebids:*

2 NT 22-24, non-force, balanced, 5-card major or 4441 OK. Systems on. 3♣=Stayman

3 NT 25-27, non-forcing, balanced. 5-card major or 4441 is OK. Systems on

4 NT 28-30, non-forcing, balanced. 5-card major or 4441 is OK.

New suit 5+card major or 4+card minor, forcing

*Responder rebids:* Cheapest minor or 3NT shows < 3 hcp. Others GF

Jump raise to game = 4+card, no A, K, single, or void

***Any 3rd bid by opener*** *is game force except rebid of suit*

* **2 NT** 8-12 hcp, balanced, mostly quacks

*Rebids by opener* are natural. Systems OFF

* **3 NT** 11+ hcp, balanced
* **New suit** 8+ pts, 5++card suit (2 of top 3, or 2/4 w/6), GF, slam interest

**Responses after overcall:**

* Pass = gf
* Double = weak (0-3 pts)
* New suit = 8+ hcp; 5++ (good) suit
* Cue bid =stiff ??

**Control Responses with Gary** (K=1;A=2):

**2**♦= 0-1 control; **2**♥= 2 controls; **2**♠= 3 (AK); 2NT = 3 (KKK); 3♣ = 4; etc.

After interference: double/redouble (0-1), pass (2), cheapest (3), etc

## Preempts

**Preempt** to a level equal to playing tricks[[17]](#footnote-17) + 2/3/4 with vulnerability [RP](http://www.rpbridge.net/3j00.htm)

1. No side 4 card major Q-x-x-x or better
2. In second seat, relatively sound
3. In third seat, relatively weak if vul (may be good 5-card). Very weak if non-vul (decent 5-card suit)
4. In fourth seat, sound (pass with less than 10 hcp). Bid one more trick than you can take with your own hand. [Gordon Bower](https://taigabridge.net/articles/web_open3.htm) [bm](https://wordpress.lehigh.edu/bm05/files/2024/02/TaigaBridge-Opening-Bids-Fourth-Seat-54443bedffaddbad.pdf)
5. In 3rd/4th seat, game level preempt may exceed 10 hcp.
6. Once you preempt *do not bid again* unless forced to do so by your partner.
7. A new suit response below game is six-card suit and forcing by unpassed hand

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**2**♦**/2**♥**/2**♠ **Weak Two**:5-9 hcp, 6-card (QT9xxx or better if vulnerable)

* In 3rd position, often a decent 5-card suit, especially with favorable vulnerability.
* In 4th position, 9-13 pts, good 6-card suit. (Enough for 1-level, but no game interest)

*Responses to weak two (no interference):*

* **2NT** is invitational (14+ pts) and asks for feature (ace or king, NOT single or void)[[18]](#footnote-18)

*Opener rebids:*

* Rebid suit with minimum
* Show A or K with non-minimum (after overcall, dbl shows feature in ops suit, rebid shows some other feature)
* 3NT (with AKQxxx)
* **New suit** = 6-card, one round force (RONF: Raise Only Not Forcing)
* **3NT** is cutoff (But 2NT, then 3NT is correctable to 4 of major)
* **Raises** according to the Law of Total Tricks [LC](https://www.larryco.com/uploaded/product/4522b055-d4d2-4af2-a8f4-463ad1b3cb8f.pdf)
* **Raise to game** with 15 hcp and 2 card support (or any other 17 total) [Mel’s](http://fourseasonsbridge.com/harold/TOPICS/mel_rules.pdf)

*Responses (after overcall)*: Double is for penalty

*Responses (after take-out double):*

* Redouble = Defense (14+ hcp)
* Cuebid = Slam interest

*Responses (after take-out double):* **McCabe** **with Gary and Susan**

* Redouble demands opener bid cheapest so responder can show one-suiter
* New suit is fit-showing and lead-directing

**3♣/3♦/3♥/3♠ Preempt**:Usually 7 card, QJTxxxx

Notes: 3♣ may be good 6 card, like weak two.

In 3rd position and favorable vulnerability, 9 losers is OK.

In 4th position, good suit, expecting to make if pard has average values

**4♣/4♦** **Namyats:** Transfers to 4H/4S, forcing [LC](https://www.larryco.com/bridge-learning-center/detail/214) alert!

Usually 8 card, ~8.5-9 tricks with slam interest.

*Responses:* Completing transfer is cut off

Intermediate suit (artificial) and any other bid shows slam interest

**4♥/4♠ Preempt**:Usually 8 card, QJTxxxxx (7-8 tricks)

**3 NT[[19]](#footnote-19) Minor suit preempt (necessary because of Namyats)**

*Responder* must bid 4**♣**. Opener will correct to 4D if necessary. [top](#Contents)

♣♦♥♠ ♣♦♥♠

# VI. Overcalls and takeouts

## Overcalls and takeouts after one-level suit bids

### Simple overcalls, direct position

* **One level suit overcall:** 8-17 hcp, 5+card. Stretch to show lead.
* Can be four card suit only if nearly opening strength, good suit (KQJ9 or AQT7), and no better bid (e.g. double).
* Unless forced or invited, overcaller should pass with 10-12; may act again with 13-15, and should act with 16-18.
* A second-round re-bid by overcaller in opener’s minor is a cue-bid only if partner has acted; otherwise it is natural showing a 2-suiter.

*Responses to overcall by advancer:*

* Single raise = 6-10 pts, 3+ support
* Cue bid (limit raise+) = 10+ pts, 3+ support
* Jump raise (preempt) = 0-6 pts, 4+ support
* Jump cue bid (mixed raise) = 7-9 pts, 4+ support [in response to **1-level** overcall]
* Double jump cue (splinter) = slam interest, 4+ support
* New suit = 8-9 pts, 5+ card suit, non-forcing
* New suit jump (invitation+) = 10+ pts, 5+ card suit, forcing
* New suit dbl jump (invitation+) = 12+ pts, 5+ card suit
* 1NT = 8-11 hcp, balanced, stopper
* 2NT = 12-14 hcp, balanced, stopper
* 3NT = 15+ hcp, balanced, stopper
* **Double** Responsive double = 8/10/12 pts; 4++support for unbids
* After partner overcalls/doubles, & responder raises
* Redouble (after neg. dbl) = 11+ pts. No Fit
* **Two level suit overcall: 13-16 hcp,** QJxxx++ card suit[[20]](#footnote-20)

*Responses by advancer same as after one-level overcall except:*

* Jump raise (preempt) = 4-7 pts, 4+ support
* 2NT = 9-11 hcp, balanced, stopper
* 3NT = 12-14 hcp, balanced, stopper
* **1 NT: 15-18 hcp,** balanced, stopper in ops suit. *Systems ON*
* **Jump overcall:** 6-10 hcp, 6+ card suit (akin to weak 2)

♣♦♥♠ ♣♦♥♠ [top](#Contents)

### Takeouts after one-level suit bids

* **Double:** 13+ dummy pts, 3+ card support for unbids or 18+. Forcing. **[[21]](#footnote-21)**

Doubleton in unbid minor OK

*Responses to double by advancer:* [ACBL](http://web2.acbl.org/documentLibrary/play/Commonly_Used_Conventions/takeoutdouble.pdf)

* + Simple suit = 4+ card suit, 0 to 8 pts (6-8 for free bid)

*Rebids by doubler:*

* + - * Pass 13-15 pts
      * Raise 16-18 pts, 4-card support
      * Jump raise 19+ pts
      * New suit 18+ pts, 5+card (No Equal Level Conversion)[[22]](#footnote-22)
      * 1 NT 19-20 hcp, with stopper
      * Jump in NT 21-24 hcp, with stopper
      * Cue bid 21+ pts
  + Jump in suit = 9-11 pts, 4+maj/5+minor
  + Jump to three = 6-9 pts, 6+card, non-forcing
  + Jump to game = 12+ pts, 5++card
  + Cue bid = 12+ pts
  + Jump cue (splinter) = 13+ pts, 3-suiter, game force
  + 1 NT = 6-10 hcp, stopper
  + 2 NT =11-12 hcp, stopper
  + 3 NT = 13+ hcp, stopper
  + Responsive doubl**e** *=* 6+ pts, support for unbids
  + **Pass (for penalty)** only if #cards + #honors in suit + level >=9 [Mel’s Rule of 9](http://fourseasonsbridge.com/harold/TOPICS/mel_rules.pdf)
* **Jump in no trump** [Unusual NT](http://www.bridgebum.com/unusual_2nt.php), 5-5+ w/ honor in lowest 2 unbids, 4.5-7 losers, 6+ hcp.

NOTE: After ops bid and raise a major, 2NT **IS** Unusual even without a jump.

*Responses to Unusual No Trump:*

* + Bid longest (not strongest) of two suits. With equal length, cheapest.
  + Jumps are preemptive
  + Cue bid shows support for at least one suit and game or slam interest. Requests that No Trump Bidder re-bid cheapest suit with < 10 points
  + 4th suit bid is natural, non-forcing with decent hand & very good suit (6+)

**Rebids by 2 NT bidder**

* + - Raises or new suit are natural, not forcing but good.
    - Cheapest response shows < 10 pts.

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* **Cue bid** [Michaels](http://www.bridgebum.com/michaels_cuebid.php), 5-5+ in two suits, 5-4 with favorable vul or with both majors

**This section requires elaboration**

**Either** 7-10 pts OR 11-15 pts [more](http://www.bridgeguys.com/Conventions/michaels_cuebid.html)

* Over minor, it shows both majors
* Over major, shows the other major and a minor

*Responses to Michaels:*

* + Simple preference = Cutoff (Best of equal length)
    - Show of second suit = 18+ pts
  + Jump preference = Preemptive
  + “Re-cue bid”[[23]](#footnote-23) = Game interest in one of two promised suits
  + “4th” suit = Natural, 6+, non-forcing
  + 2/3/4 NT as necessary = Asks for minor. Preferable to showing one’s own minor
* **Sandwich 1 NT** : weak (5-10 pts.) two-suit (5-5) takeout

*Note:* Bypassing 1NT to bid Michaels or Unusual No Trump shows 11+ pts.

### Overcalls and takeouts in balancing position

Michaels ON; Unusual No Trump OFF E.Rodwell, BT2, ch4

* 1 NT = 11-15 hcp (16 if opener is a major), does **not** promise stopper

*Advancer’s responses:*

* Systems on, except …
* 2**♣** is “Rangefinder Stayman”: 11+ hcp.

*Overcaller’s* responses to “Rangefinder” 2**♣**:

* 2♦/2♥/2♠ are normal Stayman responses, 11-13 hcp
* 2 NT shows 14-16 hcp, any shape.
* *Advancer’s* 3♣ is now Stayman
* 2 NT = 19-20 hcp, balanced
* One level suit overcall = 6-11 hcp, 4+card.

*Responses by advancer* require 1 point more than after direct overcall

* Two level suit overcall = 10+ hcp, decent 5+card suit (AJTxx)
* Double = 6++ hcp w/ 4441 or 8++hcp w/ doubleton in ops (15++ to rebid)

*Responses by advancer* require 1 point more than after direct double.

* Jump overcall = 12-15 hcp, good 6+card

*Responses by advancer:*

* New suit is natural, forcing
* 2NT is natural, forcing
* Cue bid is strong game try. ♣♦♥♠ ♣♦♥♠ [top](#Contents)

## Overcalls and takeouts after preempts

### Overcalls and takeouts after weak two bids

[Karen Walker](http://kwbridge.com/preempts.htm) [LC guide](https://www.larryco.com/bridge-articles/versus-opponents-preempts) [Mike Lawrence guide](http://www.fifthchair.org/archive/bidding/Bidding%20Against%20Preempts.pdf)

***Guideline: Expect partner to hold 7 ordinary hcp and 2-card support***

**Two- or Three-level simple suit overcall:** 13-16 hcp, 5++ card suit (5+ if balancing) [Jeff Goldsmith](https://www.jeff-goldsmith.com/" \l "bridge)

*Responses by “advancer”:*

* + Single raise = 7-10 points, support
  + Double raise = Minimum opening strength, support
  + Cue bid (if overcall is major) = Limit raise
  + Cue bid (if overcall is minor) = Asks for stop (Western Q bid)
  + ****New suit = 5+card, forcing

**Jump overcall:** 16-19 hcp, 6++ card, 3+ def. tricks, ~5 losers

*Advancer responses*: suit bids are forcing cue bids.

Raise to game shows 7+pts & 2+ support

**2NT overcall:** 15-19 pts, balanced, full stopper in ops

*Responses* are the same as after 2 NT opener, including transfers and Stayman

**2NT overcall, if passed hand:** Unusual No Trump

**3NT overcall:** to play, akin to Gambling 3 NT, probably a solid 6+ card suit, full stop + a trick

* Note: Prefer Gambling 3NT to 4 of a minor. You can correct to the minor if doubled.
* Note: With a balanced hand > 19 hcp, double first then 3NT

**Cue bid =** Western cue bid asks partner to bid 3NT with a stop

**Balancing Cue bid against weak 2***♦*  **=** Michaels, 12+ hcp, 5-5.

*Advancer* bids game with 4+support, 10+ pts or 3, 12+

**Double:** Takeout, 13+ pts with 3-suiter or 19+ pts. Good 11+ when balancing. 3+card in majors

Note: If close between overcall and double, prefer double so pard can convert to penalty

*Responses to takeout double by advancer:*

* Free bids require 6+ pts, 4+ card
* Cue bid is Western; asks doubler to bid 3NT with stop
* Responsive doubleon through 4♥
* **2 NT is Lebensohl: Doubler MUST bid 3♣ relay. *Meaning varies; see below.* alert!**  [top](#Contents)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Responding to takeout double of weak 2 opening bid with 4+ card suit** | |
| *Pts* | *If two level bid is available (e.g. ♠ over 2♥)* | *If forced to three level (e.g. ♦ over 2♠)* |
| 0-7 | 2♠ | **2NT**, then pass (♣) or bid (♦ or ♥) |
| 8-11 | **2 NT**, then bid (3♠) | Bid at 3-level (♣,♦, or ♥) |
| 12+ | Jump to 3♠ | Bid at 4-level (♣,♦, or ♥) |
|  | **Responding to takeout double of weak 2 opening bid with balanced hand** | |
| 12+ | **2 NT**, then 3 NT promises stopper of ops suit | 3 NT denies stopper of ops suit |

**Leaping Michaels** schema over a weak two With Gary and Susan: [See guide](http://www.bridgewebs.com/alton/EBU%20-%20Stage%202%20Conventions%20-%20Leaping%20and%20Non-Leaping%20Michaels.pdf) [bm](https://wordpress.lehigh.edu/bm05/files/2024/02/79e106c3-5797-49c8-8314-c3199b52f66f-1e8869d33e56c077.pdf)

* Cue bid = Western cue bid. Asks partner to bid 3NT with a stopper
* 3 level Major = 6-card natural, 16+hcp
* Leap to 4♣/4♦ is 5-5 in ♣/♦and an unbid major, <=5 losers **[2♦-4♦ is both majors]**

### Overcalls and Takeouts after three-level preempts

Non-Leaping Michaels NOT PLAYING

* 4♥/4♠ = natural
* 4 NT = minor two-suiter
* Cue-bid = both majors, or other major + a minor, <=5 losers
* 4♣/4♦ = ♣/♦ + a major, <=5 losers
* **Bob Hamman, “If three notrump is a sane bid, it is probably the right bid"**

## Overcalls and takeouts after strong 1 (or 2 NT)

* All systems ON in direct or balancing seat, but OFF if **both** ops have already bid.
* Bids usually show 6+ HCP, but regardless of HCP one should balance w/ 2+ shortness points
* Two-suit bids (below) show 4-4, 5-4, or 5-5 based on position and vulnerability

**MECKWELL**

* Double = Long minor (6+) or both majors (4++-4++, but usually 5-5) **or a strong hand**;

***Advancer MUST bid 2C*** *so intervenor can*

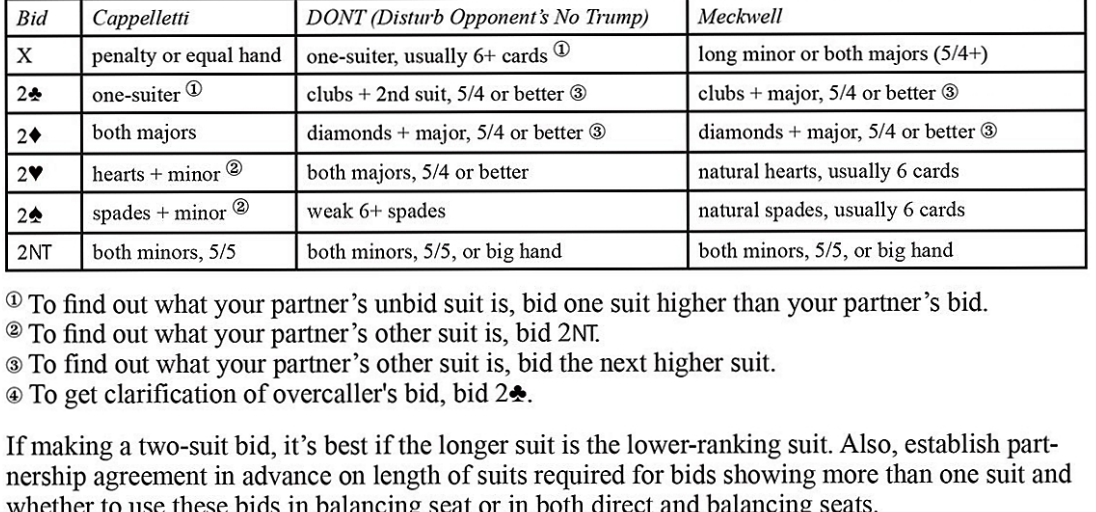
* + Pass or bid *2*♦ to show the long minor
  + *2*♥for both majors. *Advancer* passes or corrects
  + 2♠ to show a strong hand

***But*** *Advancer may instead bid own strong six-card suit*

* 2♣/2♦ = Two-suiter: ♣ or ♦+ a major. (4++-4++)

*Advancer passes w/ minor support or bids 2*♥ *to ask for major.*

*In competition, Advancer’s double or redouble asks for major.*

* 2♥ = 5++ ♥, Cut-off
* 2♠ = 5++ ♠. Cut-off
* 2NT =Both minors (usually 5-5)  *Advancer* chooses

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[**DONT**](https://www.larryco.com/bridge-learning-center/detail/83) We no longer play

* Double = one suited (good 6+)
  + *Advancer* bids 2♣ or Double to ask for suit
  + Any other suit bid is long suit, to play
* 2♣♦♥ = two suited hand[[24]](#footnote-24), ♣♦♥ and some higher suit

*Advancer responses*:

* Pass with 3+ card support for bid suit
* Bid cheapest suit to play in second suit (DONT bidder will correct suit)
* Any other suit bid shows good 5+ or 6 card suit.
* Raise of overcaller’s suit is mildly invitational and usually passed
* 2 NT forcing shows a good hand and asks for shape and range
* 2♠ = 5+ spades, preempt, weaker than double
* 3♣♦♥♠ = 7+, preempt  [top](#Contents)

**CAPPALETTI** **Against weak no trump with Gary** E. Rodwell, BT1, ch.4

* Double shows a strong hand which partner may treat as a penalty double.
* Rodwell requires a good 13/14/15 hcp against weak (12-14), medium (13-16), or strong no trump (15-17+) OR …
* a running suit that will beat the contract can substitute for hcp.

*Advancer responses (with no subsequent competition or after a redouble):*

* Pass confirms willingness to defend with 6+ hcp
* With < 6 hcp, pull the double with a 5+card suit or a semi-artificial 2♣ if none.

*Advancer responses (after subsequent interference):*

* Double of a natural bid is negative, 5+ hcp
* Simple suit overcall is 5+card natural, 5-9 hcp, non-forcing
* Jump suit is 5+card natural, > 9 hcp
* 2NT is 7-9 hcp with a stopper
* Double of an artificial bid shows 6+ hcp
* 2♣ = any single suiter (decent 6+card), 8+ hcp.
  + *Pard must bid* 2♦(“show your suit” relay) or his own good 6+ suit.
  + *Jump* is invitational. 2NT (relay) shows 13+, inv. or better, forcing
  + *After ops (Responder) double*, 2♦is natural. Pass is relay. Redbl to play.
  + After *ops (Responder) bid*, Double is “Show your suit” relay.
* 2♦ = two suiter in majors (5-4 OK), 8+hcp but 13+pts if 5-4 and vul.
  + *Pard* chooses longest or 2NT
* 2♥ = two suiter, with 5 hearts and a 4+ minor (13+ if 5-4 and vul)
* 2♠ = two suiter, with 5 spades and a 4+ minor (13+ if 5-4 and vul)
* 2NT= two suiter in the minors

# VII. Competitive bidding

**SEE ALSO OVERCALLS AND BIDDING WITH INTERFERENCE**

* If you hold 23+ HCP, you should *never* allow ops to play undoubled.
* **Forcing pass**: When you *both* know you have 23+ hcp, an immediate pass is *forcing.*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Point Range** | **Should Win** |
| 6-9 pts | 1 trick |
| 10-12 pts | 2 tricks |
| 13-15 pts | 3 tricks |
| 16-18 pts | 4 tricks |
| 19-22 pts | 5 tricks |

* If each side holds 18 to 22 HCP, you should double only if you expect at least a *two-trick* set. You must count tricks that you expect *partner* to win.
* Opener should **re-open** (with a suit bid or double) in balancing position after ops overcall if holding a doubleton or less in ops suit.

## Law of total tricks

* *In a competitive auction and an unbalanced hand*, bid to a number of tricks equal to the number of trumps you and your partner hold, **eventually**. [LC](https://www.larryco.com/bridge-learning-center/detail/130)
  + When the balance of HCP is unfavorable, the bid will act as a useful sacrifice.
  + When the balance of HCP is favorable, the bid will achieve a makeable contract.
  + *Use LOTT only when you don't have game or slam interest.*
* Example: Responses to 1♥ (*The bids in italics are affected by the LAW*)
* If right-hand opponent **passes**:

2♥ 6–10 points and 3+card support.

3♥ 11–12 points and 4+card support.

*4♥ 0– 6 points and 5+card support.*

* If right-hand opponent **doubles**:

2♥ 6–10 points and 3+card support (*with 4+, bid LAW later*).

*3♥ 0–6 points and 4-card support.*

Redouble 11+ points and 4+card support.

2NT 13+ points and 4+card support artificial.

*4♥ 0–6 points and 5+card support.*

* If right-hand opponent **overcalls:**

2♥ 6–10 points and 3+card support(*with 4+, bid LAW later*).

3♥ *0–6 points and 4-card support.*

Cuebid ops 11+ and 4+card support.

*4♥ 0–5 points and 5+card support.*

* Don’t let the opponents play in their eight-card fit at the two level.
* Balance with 6+ points and shortness in the opponents’ suit. [**LC**](https://www.larryco.com/bridge-learning-center/detail/131)
* Opponents Bid And Raise, Balance in Direct Seat (OBAR, BIDS) [top](#Contents)

## Western cue bids

A non-jump, 3-level cuebid ***asks*** partner to bid 3NT with a stopper in ops suit. [LC](https://www.larryco.com/bridge-learning-center/detail/233) [LCbm](https://wordpress.lehigh.edu/bm05/files/2024/02/WesternCueBids_Larry-Cohen-4fee9ff95e6b3f0a.pdf)

* BUT, *If Cuebidder bids after 3NT, the meaning changes to* ***show*** *control & slam interest*
* **If ops have bid two suits, the cue bid *shows* a stop in that suit.**
* A bid of ops suit is NOT a Western Cuebid when
* It is below the three level. (That shows a limit raise or better)
* It is above the three level. (That shows a control and slam interest).
* It is a jump. (Usually, that is a splinter and shows slam interest.)
* A major suit fit has been found. (That shows a control and slam interest.)
* We opened 1NT. (That is Stayman, without a stopper, as part of Lebensohl scheme).

## [Support double/redouble](http://www.bridgeguys.com/doubles/SupportDouble.html)

In comp, **opener** doubles/redbls w/ *exactly* three card support for responder’s *one-level* major 🗸 ON thru 2♠, but don’t force to 3-level with a dead minimum. [LC](https://www.larryco.com/bridge-learning-center/detail/730) E. Rodwell, Bid. Topics 1, ch.1

* Thus, a direct raise by opener shows 4-card support, and any other bid denies support.
* Why double? In comp, bidding 1 NT before showing support shows a stop in ops suit.

*Second bids by responder after 1 level support double:*

* 1NT (no stop required) or any suit shows <11 hcp, non-forcing
* Jump in NT or in suits of opener or responder is invitational
* Cue-bid of ops suit or jumps in new suit is game force

*Second bids by responder after 2 level double:*

* Rebid of either suit at 2-level is non-forcing (may be 4-card)
* New major shows 4-4, forcing one round, invitational+
* 2NT or 3-level rebid is invitational
* Cue-bid of ops suit is game force

## Game-try (“Maximal”) double

Double as invitational raise by opener. [LC](https://www.larryco.com/bridge-articles/doubles-part-3)

In comp, after responder’s single raise of opener, opener’s double shows invitational strength

* Thus, if opener raises directly, it is (Law-like) competitive, not invitational
* Note: Why double? In comp, opener can’t bid a new suit or 2 NT as an invitational raise

## Responsive double

[ACBL](http://web2.acbl.org/documentLibrary/play/Commonly_Used_Conventions/responsivedoubles.pdf) Takeout double by advancer. **ON through 4♥**

After ops opening bid, partner’s takeout double or overcall, and ops simple raise, a double is similar to a negative double (6+ hcp at 2 level or 9+ hcp at 3 level and support for unbid suits).

* After an overcall, it usually shows 5-5.
* After a double of a major; it shows both minors, usually 4-4.
* After a double of a minor, both majors, usually 4-4, but may be 3-card with good hand.

## Snapdragon double

After the first three players bid new suits, a double by the fourth player (advancer) shows 5 cards in the unbid suit, plus tolerance (2+) for pard’s suit and enough strength for the level.

## [Scrambling 2 NT](http://fourseasonsbridge.com/harold/TOPICS/sc2nt.pdf)

After ops opening bid-and-raise and Intervenor's subsequent takeout double, advancer bids 2NT to show two unbid 4-card suits.

* In strength it has no lower boundary (it can have 0 hcp) because Intervenor's double is forcing. Its upper boundary is defined by previous pass(es).
* It asks Intervenor to bid his 4-card suits up the line.
* It promises that Advancer will then bid his own 4-card suits until an 8-card fit is found. (He may pass Intervenor's first suit.)

## Trap pass

If you have a normal penalty double of an enemy suit-over-suit overcall, you should *pass*, anticipating opener will re-open and you will convert to penalty.

## Re-opening

If a suit overcall is passed back to opener, he *must reopen* with two cards or fewer in ops suit. He should usually double (for takeout) unless his hand is freakish in shape.

## Bidding over two-suited overcalls

**Unusual vs. Unusual**: when ops have bid Unusual No Trump or Michaels [LC](https://www.larryco.com/bridge-articles/versus-michaels-or-unusual-notrump)

*Responder bids:*

* Pass = 0-8 points
* Double = 7++ hcp, penalty oriented, but may not be able to beat both suits
* Single raise = 7-10 pts, support (3+ in major; 4+ in minor)

**If both ops suits are known** (Unusual NT or Michaels over a minor opening)

* Cuebid of ops higher ranked suit = limit raise or better (10+ pts, good 3+ card)
* Cuebid of ops lower ranked suit = 5+card in 4th suit, 10+ pts, forcing
* Jump cue-bid = splinter, good 3+card support for opener
* Bid 4th suit, natural = 6+card suit, weak two strength, not forcing

**If only one ops suit is known** (Michaels over a major opening)

* Cue bid of ops known suit = limit raise or better (10+ pts, good 3+ card)
* Bidding an unbid suit is natural = 5+card, forcing
* Pass or double could be a “waiting” bid until advancer and doubler show suits

♣♦♥♠ ♣♦♥♠ [top](#Contents)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Goals | Points required |
| Open | 13 |
| 3NT | 25 |
| 2♥♠ | 22-23 |
| 3♥♠ | 23-24 |
| 4♥♠ | 24-26 |
| 5♣♦ | 29 |
| 6 | 33 |
| 7 | 37 |

# VIII. Hand evaluation

[Excellent Wiki](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hand_evaluation) [[25]](#footnote-25)

## Pavlicek point count adjustments

* Short suit honors count either hcp or shortness, not both
* Aces add .50; tens count .25
* When partner has bid no trump, add 1 point for each card beyond 4
* When partner raises your 5-card suit, add 1 if you have not shown 5, 2 for each over 5, and 1 for each side suit over 3

## Losing trick count

**Subtract losers in the two hands combined from 24 to calculate likely winners.**

**Only use soundly with 9-card or 4-4 fit (add 1 loser for 5-3 or 6-2 without honor)** [Ron Klinger](http://www.bridge.ee/tihas/iesaac/ltc.pdf)

**Counting losers**

* Count losers only in the first three cards of each suit
* Count A,K,Q as winners; anything lower is a loser
* With two cards in suit: anything lower than K is a loser
* With one card in suit: anything lower than A is a loser
* Q unsupported (e.g. Q9x or worse) is 2.5 losers; Q10x or better is 2 losers [top](#Contents)

**Expected losers in partner’s hand**

**Points Hand description Expected Losers**

Suit Openers Openers

13-15 Sound minimum opening 6-7

16-18 Strong opening: reverse [5] / jump rebid [5-6] 5-6

19-21 Very strong opening (jump shift) 4

22+ Forcing opening (2C) 3.5-4.5

6-10 hcp Weak two (or weak jump overcall) 7-8

6-10 hcp Preemptive three (varies w/ vulnerability) 6-7

……………………………………………………………………………..

No Trump

Openers

15-17 1 NT 6 (maybe 7)

18-19 suit, then jump to 2NT 5-6

20-21 2 NT 5

*………………………………………………………………………………*  [top](#Contents)

6-7 1 NT, then support 10

Responses to Suit Openers

7- 9 Simple raise or one level new suit 9 (maybe 8)

10-12 Invitational, limit raise or similar 8

6-10 hcp Jump to major game 7

11+ hcp Jacoby 2 NT or Splinter 7

13+ Two over one game force 7 [top](#Contents)

*……………………………………………………………………………*

13+ Takeout double 7

Takeout Doubles and Responses

19+ and then bid again 5 (4 if jump)

*Responses*

Cheapest level suit or NT 9 or more

Jump in suit or NT 8

Bid game or cue bid 7

*……………………………………………………………………………*

Overcalls

8-15 hcp One level overcall 6-8

10-15 hcp Two-level (non-jump) overcall 6-7

**Expected Cards in Partner’s Hand**

**HCP Expected Controls**

5 1

7-8 2

10 3

12-13 4

15 5

17-18 6

20 7**HCP Expected Cover Cards**

0-6 1 if lucky

7-9 2

10-12 3

13-15 4

16-18 5

19-21 6

22-24 7

25-27 8 [top](#Contents)

# IX. Defensive play

## Opening leads against suit

* Follow CC above, including low from xxx and K from AKx
* From xxxx, lead second-best, then play third best (*despite CC above*).
* Lead or discard according to “current count” (e.g. high from two *remaining*).
* When leading a suit bid by partner, follow standard leads on Convention Card, but with xxx(x), lead the highest if you have supported the suit.
* Exceptions: Against five+level contract, or against a 3+level preempt, A asks partner for attitude (denying K), K asks for count (affirming A or Q)

**Guidance from David Bird and Taf Anthias, *Winning Suit Contract Leads*, 2012**

|  |
| --- |
| Priorities |
| 1. Singleton |
| 2. Ace-king |
| 3. Three honor sequence |
| 1. Doubleton |
| 5. Two honor sequence |
| 6. Worthless three cards |
| 7. Long suit *w/o* A or K |
| 8. Safe trump lead |
| 9. Long suit w/ A or K |

* Singleton almost always best, even an honor or w/ natural trump tricks or dummy’s suit.
* Doubleton leads are good, even dummy’s suit. OK from an honor (but not Kx). xxx > xxxx
* Passive leads (e.g. xxx) are generally better than aggressive (e.g. Hxx or HHx). Kxx is the worst and xxx best. Jxx is almost as good as xxx.
* Leading from honors is risky, but best is KQxx, then Kxxx, KTxx. KJxx is worst.
* Among risky honors leads, longer suits risk less: e.g. Kxxxxx is better than Kxx.
* Trump leads are OK only when other suits are worse, even if trump is AKx. Don’t lead a singleton trump. From Axx, usually lead low. [top](#Contents)
* Trump leads are good when you have a good holding in dummy’s long suit. Bad when you have xxxx in opener’s first suit.
* When dummy prefers opener’s second suit, usually lead trump (low from A..)
* “Forcing” defenses – leading a long suit to force declarer to ruff -- require Hxxx in trump and KQ9xx or better in long suit.
* Unsupported aces are *sometimes* OK in order to see dummy and receive signal.
* Lead an ace against a slam, especially against dubious auctions. Else, passive.
* Do not lead from a suit you have bid and partner has raised unless you hold two or more touching honors.
* Don’t assume partner has the high missing honor in the suit he has opened.
* Against a splinter auction, lead a side suit.
* When ops have bid three suits, usually lead the unbid suit.
* Against a sacrifice, lead your pair’s suit.

♣♦♥♠ ♣♦♥♠

## Opening leads against no trump

[Standard leads AG](http://www.betterbridge.com/misc/StandardArticles/Standard200909.pdf)

Lead-directing doubles ask for partner’s suit or dummy’s first bid

**Guidance from David Bird and Taf Anthias, *Winning No Trump Leads*, 2011**

Needs a lot of work

* Major leads are MUCH better than minor leads.
* 4th best from 5 is much better than from 4.
* Low doubleton better than Kxxx
* Passive from xxx is better than QJx.
* Lead touching honors over low card in that suit from 4 (or 5?).
* A asks for attitude; K asks for count (and requests that you unblock an honor)
* Partner should usually unblock a doubleton honor on first trick.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Priorities |  |
| 1. Partner’s suit | Highest from doubleton, or 2-card sequence (K-10) or 3-card sequence. Otherwise, low |
| 2. Safe honor sequence | Top 3+card solid or broken (e.g. QJ9); interior (2+) |
| 3. Five-card or longer suit | 4th best |
| 3. Four cards *without* ace or king |  |
| 4. Worthless three cards | Top, then middle (“Present count”) |
| 5. Worthless doubleton | Top |
| 6. Unsafe honor sequence |  |
| 7. Four cards with ace or king | 4th best |

[Standard leads (Audrey Grant)](http://www.tebelius.se/Bridge/Articles/Grant Standard 39.pdf)

## Signalling

[Summary](https://www.bridgeguys.com/conventions-carding-summary_of_defensive_signals/) from BridgeGuys, many of which we do not play

**Principles:**

* Signals are only *opinions* based on what you can see. They are *not* commands.
* Signals often indicate an immediate winner, but show opinion based on the whole hand.

**Rules:**

1. On partner’s lead(s), show attitude, count, and suit preference in that order. E.g., if attitude is obvious or already shown on previous trick, the signal shows count.
2. On declarer’s or dummy’s lead(s), show count, then suit preference.
3. Attitude: Following with a high card encourages a continuation; low discourages.
4. Count: Following with a high card shows an even number; low, odd. With four, play the second highest and then the third highest.
5. Suit preference: Following with a high card requests higher of the other suits; low, lower
6. Suit preference: Following with the higher of touching honors or a hi-low in trump.
7. Signaling with an honor is emphatic and promises the next lower card or more.
8. On your own lead, show attitude, count and suit preference in that order.
9. Attitude leads: a low card suggests you want the suit returned; a high spot denies it.
10. Discards show attitude in discarded suit, then count, then suit preference.
11. Attitude discards: a high card shows preference for the discarded suit; a low card discourages the discarded suit.
12. Smith Echo (against NT): On declarer’s first suit, show attitude toward the opening lead.
13. After the opening lead, leads show current count: highest shows two remaining. [top](#Contents)

# X. Distributions and probabilities

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| N |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 2 | 2-0 | .48 | 1-1 | .52 |  |  |  |  |
| 3 | 3-0 | .22 | 2-1 | .78 |  |  |  |  |
| 4 | 4-0 | .10 | 3-1 | .50 | 2-2 | .41 |  |  |
| 5 | 5-0 | .04 | 4-1 | .28 | 3-2 | .68 |  |  |
| 6 | 6-0 | .01 | 5-1 | .15 | 4-2 | .48 | 3-3 | .36 |
| 7 | 7-0 | .01 | 6-1 | .07 | 5-2 | .31 | 4-3 | .62 |

## Suit divisions

For example, 2 cards will divide equally 52% of the time, and divide 2-0 48% of the time.

* Play for the K to drop with 11+ cards.
* Play for the Q to drop with 9+ cards: 53.1%.

It is 40.6% to be 2-2, but Q will also be single 12.5%.

* Play for the J to drop with 7+ cards: 55% (3-3, 36%; single, 3%; double, 16%).

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Number outstanding | Single  ton | Double  ton |
| 2 | 52.4% | 48.0% |
| 3 | 26.0% | 52.0% |
| 4 | 12.4% | 40.7% |
| 5 | 5.7% | 27.1% |
| 6 | 2.4% | 16.2% |
| 7 | 1.0% | 8.8% |
| 8 | 0.4% | 4.3% |

**When to forego a finesse (initially)**: How often will a missing honor be a singleton or doubleton?

For example, with three missing cards, you should finesse a K because it will drop only 26.0% of the time if you play from the top. But play a Q to drop because it will be a singleton or doubleton 78.0% of the time (26+52). With *four* missing cards the Q will drop 53.1% of the time – thus, “nine never”. With *five* missing cards – “eight ever” – the Q will drop only 32.8% of the time.

**When to forego a finesse (after one round of play)**:

If you are missing two equivalent honors in the suit and on the first lead you see one of them, bet that it is a single and take the finesse (if available) against the other opponent. (for 9 cards, the odds are 2:1; for 8, 5:3; for 7, 3:2)

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Probability of opponents ruffing** | | | |
| Number outstanding | 1st round | 2nd round | 3rd round |
| 2 | 48%. | 100% | 100% |
| 3 | 22% | 100% | 100% |
| 4 | 10% | 60% | 100% |
| 5 | 4% | 32% | 100% |
| 6 | 2% | 17% | 65% |
| 7 | 1% | 8% | 38% |

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Probability of drop** | | | | |
| Number outstanding | K | Q | J | 10 |
| 2 | 52%. | 100% | 100% | 100% |
| 3 | 26% | 78% | 100% | 100% |
| 4 | 12% | 52% | 90% | 100% |
| 5 | 5% | 31% | 73% | 96% |
| 6 | 3% | 19% | 54% | 87% |
| 7 | 1% | 9% | 38% | 71% |

[Guidance on some common finesse situations](http://austinbridge.org/sbruce/lecture/WhenHowFinesse20131207.pdf)

[More advanced](http://tommybridgeblog.blogspot.com/2007/09/odds-and-ends-of-bridge-part-2.html) [Data](https://www.bridgehands.com/P/Probability_of_Card_Distribution.htm)

[More on finesse probabilities](http://www.rpbridge.net/4b73.htm)

[How to play card combinations](http://www.rpbridge.net/4a00.htm)

[Computer calculator for “vacant spaces”](http://www.automaton.gr/tt/en/OddsTbl.htm)

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## Hand distributions

If you hold X number of cards in a suit, the percentage chance that pard holds Y number

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **X/Y** | **0** | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** | **6** | **7** | **8** | **9** | **10** | **11** | **12** | **13** | **Total** |
| **0** | 0.13 | 1.55 | 7.42 | 18.70 | 27.50 | 24.75 | 13.90 | 4.86 | 1.04 | 0.13 | 0.01 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 100.00 |
| **1** | 0.25 | 2.57 | 10.59 | 22.85 | 28.56 | 21.65 | 10.10 | 2.89 | 0.49 | 0.05 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | – | 100.00 |
| **2** | 0.46 | 4.12 | 14.54 | 26.66 | 28.06 | 17.68 | 6.73 | 1.53 | 0.20 | 0.01 | 0.00 | 0.00 | – | – | 100.00 |
| **3** | 0.84 | 6.39 | 19.17 | 29.59 | 25.89 | 13.32 | 4.04 | 0.70 | 0.07 | 0.00 | 0.00 | – | – | – | 100.00 |
| **4** | 1.47 | 9.58 | 24.21 | 31.07 | 22.19 | 9.08 | 2.11 | 0.26 | 0.02 | 0.00 | – | – | – | – | 100.00 |
| **5** | 2.54 | 13.90 | 29.19 | 30.58 | 17.37 | 5.44 | 0.91 | 0.07 | 0.00 | – | – | – | – | – | 100.00 |
| **6** | 4.28 | 19.46 | 33.36 | 27.80 | 12.09 | 2.72 | 0.29 | 0.01 | – | – | – | – | – | – | 100.00 |
| **7** | 7.06 | 26.21 | 35.74 | 22.79 | 7.12 | 1.03 | 0.05 | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | 100.00 |
| **8** | 11.42 | 33.76 | 35.22 | 16.14 | 3.23 | 0.22 | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | 100.00 |
| **9** | 18.18 | 41.09 | 30.82 | 9.04 | 0.87 | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | 100.00 |
| **10** | 28.45 | 46.23 | 22.19 | 3.13 | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | 100.00 |
| **11** | 43.86 | 45.61 | 10.53 | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | 100.00 |
| **12** | 66.67 | 33.33 | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | 100.00 |

[Richard Pavlicek’s data](http://www.rpbridge.net/8j17.htm) [Probability of 8-card trump fit](http://trpd.webcrow.jp/saveHTML/Prob.htm)

# XI. Assorted Ideas

**To do at first trick**

**A**nalyze the lead  
**R**eview the bidding  
**C**ount your winners and/or losers

**H**ow am I going to play the hand?

**If you find yourself not knowing how to play, COUNT SOMETHING**. Trump, points, distributions, losers. Anything. Just count.

**WARM-UP TIPS from Eddie Kantar**

21 As declarer, being able to take a trick with one of two equal cards, take the trick with the higher equal.

22 As declarer when leading a suit that has equal honors, lead the higher or the highest if you want it covered, lead the second highest if you don't want it covered. It works like a charm.

23 As declarer, play cards you are known to hold if it cannot cost you a trick.

24 Defend passively if side suit tricks cannot get away; defend aggressively if they can. Reread this tip!

25 Be on the lookout to double artificial bids (Stayman, Jacoby Transfers, cuebids, Blackwood responses) to help partner out on opening lead. However, low level doubles of artificial bids require both length and strength (typically five or six card length with 3+ honor cards in the suit). The higher the level of the artificial bid, the shorter your length must be-but you still must have honor strength in the suit (KQx, for example).

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1. 2 NT requires a half-stop in unbid suits and full stop in ops suits. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. If using four-suit transfers, 2NT forces a 3♦ rebid. The invitational raise is then shown with 2NT after 2♣. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Or Garbage Stayman, 0-7 pts, 4=4=4=1 or 4=4=5=0. Or strong minor, game force. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Alternatively, 2♥ can be Crawling Stayman, asking opener to show best major by passing or bidding 2♠. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Double is “competition”, but not “interference”. “Compete” means “bid anything”. “Interfere” means “bid anything EXCEPT double” [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. With 4+ cards in the opponents' suit we should double instead of inviting or bidding 3NT (particularly at favorable vulnerability) when (a) too weak to invite game, but strong enough to collect a penalty, (b) when too unbalanced to invite game, or (c) when a penalty double looks more profitable than game. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Whether jump or not [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. FADS = Fast Always Denies Stopper [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Nearly a game force, but responder can stop in a misfit. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. A short suit is an honorless doubleton or less. Don’t open a 4-card heart suit if spades are short. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. We don’t play Bergen raises with 4-card support, which Larry likes: 3C (10-12), 3D (7-10), 3H (4-6), 3S (0-3). [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Often 4-card diamond support, but with balanced hands no trump bids are preferred over minor raises. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. A useful void is **any** void **not** in a suit bid naturally by pard. Ignore a void in one of pard’s suits. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. When a 10+ card fit is known, bid as if you held the trump queen. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Good play for game opposite “the right queen”. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. We don’t play STEPS responses: **2**♦= 0-3 hcp; **2**♥ = 4-6 hcp; **2**♠=7-9 hcp; 2NT=10+ hcp. Nor **2**♥ = 0-2 pts.. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Estimate how many tricks your *honor* cards will win, then add 1 trick for each card over 3 in any suit. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. We might consider using Ogust 2NT: responses 3♣ (bad hand, bad suit),3♦ (bad hand, good suit), 3♥(good hand, bad suit), 3♠ (good hand, good suit). KQ++++ is good; maybe AJTxxx. 8-9 hcp is good. E. Rodwell, BT2, ch.8 [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. If playing Gambling 3NT, responder passes with unbids all stopped, otherwise bid 4♣ (Opener will correct) [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Requirements are identical whether the opening bid is at the 1 or (weak) 2 level. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Requirements are identical whether the opening bid is at the 1 or (weak) 2 level. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Equal Level Conversion, which we ***don’t*** play: After (1M)-X-(P)-2C-(P)-2D does NOT show extras. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. “Re-cue bid” means a repeat of the cuebid. e.g. 3♣ in response to 2♣ cuebid of 1♣ [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Two-suited hands should be 5-5 in direct position and/or vulnerable. Otherwise 5-4 is OK. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. AG: 1 pt for each card beyond 4. Roth: 1 pt for each card beyond 5 of major, 5 of minor if 2 of 3 top honors. Also 3-2-1 for shortness. Kaplan-Sheinwald: Like Roth but 2-1-0. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)