Pavlicek System
by Richard Pavlicek
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Latest revisions: 8-25-19 #524 (if 2 N response to weak two doubled); #601 (showing natural enemy suit after our overcall); #972 (Case 2: SP only if leader wins trick, no matter card led)

**General Approach**

Strength requirements, unless specifically stated as HCP, are presumed to be HCP for natural notrump bids, or total points (distributional values included) for all other bids. Unusual treatments are denoted with a bullet. Abbreviations used:

- F forcing
- AF artificial force
- DJ double jump
- NF nonforcing
- I invitational
- GF game forcing
- ST slam try

**Opening Bids**

Basic approach is five-card majors, strong notrumps and weak two-bids. When opening a minor with 3-3, bid the stronger unless the difference is close, then 1 ; similarly with 4-4, although rebid considerations may be a factor.

1 ♠ 1 ♠ 13-22, 3+ cards 1
1 ♠ 1 ♠ 13-22, 5+ cards
1 N 15-17, balanced
2 ♠ 23+, AF
2 ♠ 2 ♠ 2 ♠ 5-10 HCP, weak two-bid
2 N 20-22, balanced
3+ suit weak
3 N •ace ask, good 1-suiter, 9+ tricks, F
4 N 5 N •minors, extreme shape

**Notrump Structure**

An opening bid of 1 N shows 15-17 HCP and balanced distribution. Hands with a 5 card major or off-shape pattern are acceptable if each doubleton contains an ace, king or queen, or per judgment.

1 N P ?
2 ♠ Stayman
2 ♠ 2 ♠ Jacoby transfer
2 ♠ minor-suit Stayman
2 N 3 ♠ minor-suit transfer
3 ♠ •5-5 majors
3 ♠ 3 ♠ •splinter, 3-suited ST
3 N 4 ♠ sign-off
4 ♠ Gerber
4 ♠ 4 ♠ Texas transfer

An opening bid of 2 N shows 20-22 HCP, similar in nature to 1 N.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2 N</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3 ♠</td>
<td>Stayman</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 ♠ 3 ♠</td>
<td>Jacoby transfer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 ♠</td>
<td>minor-suit Stayman</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher</td>
<td>same as above</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Stayman**

After a 1 N or 2 N opening the cheapest club bid is Stayman. No HCP are promised, nor is the presence of a major suit.

1 N P 2 ♠ P analogous for 2 N opening
? 31
2 ♠ no 4+ card major
2 ♠ 4+ hearts, may have 4 spades
2 ♠ 4+ spades, denies 4 hearts

1 N P 2 ♠ P 32
2 ♠ P ?
2 ♠ weak, at least 4-4 majors or 3=4=1=5
2 ♠ sign-off
2 N does not imply major, I
3 ♠ 3 ♠ 5+ cards, GF
3 ♠ •5+ spades, 4 hearts, GF
3 ♠ •5+ hearts, 4 spades, GF
Any game sign-off
4 ♠ 4 ♠ •splinter, 3-suited ST

Note that Gerber and transfer bids do not apply immediately after Stayman.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2 N</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>3 ♠</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
3 ♠ P ? 33
3 ♠ •5+ spades, 4+ hearts, GF
3 ♠ •5+ hearts, 4 spades, GF
Any game sign-off
4 ♠ 4 ♠ •5+ cards, ST

1 N P 2 ♠ P analogous for 2 ♠ rebid 34
2 ♠ P ?
2 ♠ •4 spades (checkback), F
2 N 3 ♠ no interest in spades, I
3 ♠ 3 ♠ 5+ cards, 4 spades, GF
3 ♠ •agrees hearts, ST
3 ♠ 4 spades, game sign-off
4 ♠ 4 ♠ •splinter, ST
4 ♠ 5 ♠ 5 ♠ sign-off

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2 N</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>3 ♠</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
3 ♠ P ? 35
3 ♠ •agrees hearts, ST
3 ♠ 4 spades, game sign-off
4 ♠ 4 ♠ •5+ cards, ST
4 ♠ 5 ♠ 5 ♠ sign-off
Jacobý Transfer

After a 1N or 2N opening the cheapest diamond bid shows at least 5 hearts, and the cheapest heart bid shows at least 5 spades. Opener typically completes the transfer by bidding the shown major.

1N P 2♦ P 51
2♥ P ?

2♥ P • 5-5 majors, I (NF)
2N 5 hearts, I
3♥ 3♦ 4+ cards, GF
3♥ 6+ hearts (rare 5), I
3♥ 5 hearts (rare 6), choice of game
3♥ • agrees hearts, ST
4♥ 4♦ self-splinter, agrees hearts, ST
4♥ agrees hearts, slam I (NF)

1N P 2♥ P 52
2♥ P ?
3♥ • agrees spades, ST
4♥ 4♦ 4♥ self-splinter, agrees spades, ST
Other analogous to above

2N P 3♥ P 53
3♥ P ?

3♥ • agrees hearts, ST
4♥ 4♦ 4+ cards, ST
4♥ agrees hearts, slam I (NF)
3♥ 5 hearts (rare 6), choice of game

2N P 3♥ P 54
3♥ P ?

4♥ • agrees spades, ST
Other analogous to above

Note that responder’s rebid of 3 or 4 in the unshown major artificially agrees the major shown, not only after Jacobý but also after Stayman.

Opener’s third bid

1N P 2♦ P analogous for all major-minor 55
2♥ P 3♠ P 2-suiters

? 3♦ 3♠* strength, implies club fit
3♥ heart fit
3♥ no fit or wrong cards
4♦ 3♥ good fit, right cards
4♠ super Gerber

*not a shown suit for super Gerber rule

2N P 3♥ P analogous for all major-minor 56
3♥ P 4♣ P 2-suiters

? 4♦ strength, implies club fit
4♥ heart fit
4♠ super Gerber
4N no fit or wrong cards
**Responder’s third bid**

1N P 2♦ P analogous for similar sequences

2♦ P 3♠ P

3♦ P ?

3♥ 6+ hearts or strong 5

3♠ ace or shortness

3 N 4♥ 5♠ no slam interest, NF

4♥ 5-5, GF

4♦ ace or king

4♠ super Gerber

Note that if responder bids a suit he has not shown it is super Gerber if 4 of the other major, ace or king if opener showed strength, else ace or shortness.

2N P 3♦ P analogous for similar sequences

3♥ P 4♣ P

4♦ P ?

4♥ 5♣ no slam interest, NF

4♠ super Gerber

4 N natural, NF

**Transfer bypass**

Opener may jump in responder’s major to show an exceptional fit and maximum values, typically a hand that revalues to greater than the indicated range. The meaning of responder’s rebids are then changed:

1N P 2♦ P

3♥ P ?

3♠ 4♥ 4♦ self-splinter, ST

3 N no splinter, ST (F)

4♥ sign-off

4 N Blackwood

2N P 3♦ P

4♥ P ?

4♠ 5♥ 5♦ ace or void, ST

4 N Blackwood

5♥ no ace or void, slam I

**After interference**

If an opponent interferes after the transfer, rebids are adjusted to obtain a penalty or put the active opponent on lead. Same principles apply after a 2N opening.

1N P 2♦ X analogous for 2♥ doubled

P P ?

Pass normal action

Rdbl 4+ strong diamonds, suggests to play

2♥ fit, happy with diamond lead

3♦ normal bypass

3♥ bypass, happy with diamond lead

**Minor Suit Stayman**

After a 1N or 2N opening the cheapest spade bid shows both minor suits. Only 4-4 is required with slam interest, but otherwise at least 5-4 (either way). Over 1N strength is game invitational or better; over 2N it is game forcing.

1N P 2♠ P

2 N P ?

2N 3♠ 3♦ minimum, NF

3♥ 3♠ strength in suit, GF

3 N maximum, NF

4♥ 4♦ maximum, pure values, GF

1 N P 2♠ P

2 N ?

3♠ 3♦ 5+ cards, NF

3♥ 3♠ shortness, GF

3 N sign-off

4♥ 4♦ 5+ cards, ST

1 N P 2♠ P analogous for 3♦ rebid

3♠ P ?

3♦ 5+ cards, GF

3♥ 3♠ shortness, GF

3 N choice of game, NF

4♥ at least 5-5, I

1 N P 2♠ P analogous for 3♠ rebid

3♥ P ?

3♠ shortness, ST

3 N sign-off

4♥ 4♦ 5+ cards, F (may be original I)

4♥ 3 hearts, suggestion to play, NF
Three Diamonds Majors

After a 1 N opening, a response of 3 ♦ shows at least 5-5 in the majors and GF values. This does not apply over 2 N.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 N</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>3 ♦</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>better fit, normal action</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3 ♦</th>
<th>3 ♠</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>extreme minor strength, NF</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 N</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>3 ♦</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>analogous for 3 ♠ rebid</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3 ♠</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>two singletons, ST</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3 N</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>honors in short suits, NF</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4 ♦ 4 ♦</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>shortness, ST</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4 ♤</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>no slam interest, NF, correctable</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4 ♤</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>sign-off</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After a double

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 N</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>3 ♦</th>
<th>X</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pass | no diamond control |
Rdbl | 5+ strong diamonds, suggest to play |
Other | unchanged |

Splinter Responses

After a 1 N opening, a response of 3 ♢ or 3 ♠ shows a 3-suited hand (4-4-4-1 or 5-4-4-0) short in the major bid with interest in slam. This does not apply over 2 N.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 N</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>3 ♢</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3 ♢</th>
<th>4 ♣ 4 ♦</th>
<th>fit-showing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3 ♤</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>discouraging slam</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4 ♤</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>heart fit, good hand</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4 ♤</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>void</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4 ♤</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>minimal ST (NF)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Minor Suit Transfers

After a 1 N opening, a response of 2 N shows 5+ clubs, and 3 ♠ shows 5+ diamonds. No strength is promised (may be a bust). Responder should not have a second suit if he plans to bid again. Opener almost always completes the transfer but may gamble 3 N with an exceptional fit and stoppers. This does not apply over 2 N.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 N</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>2 N</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3 ♠</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>self-splinter, agrees clubs, ST</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3 N</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>mild ST (NF)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4 ♤</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>shapely, I</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5 ♤</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>shapely, slam remote, NF</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note that to invite game in notrump it is necessary to use Stayman and rebid 2 N.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 N</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>3 ♠</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3 ♠</th>
<th>3 ♢ 3 ♠</th>
<th>self-splinter, agrees clubs, ST</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3 N</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>mild ST, NF</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4 ♤</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>shapely, I</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5 ♤</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>shapely, slam remote, NF</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note that all suit rebids by responder confirm 6+ cards in his minor; notrump rebids can be 5-3-3-2.

Interference after the transfer should be handled like Jacoby transfer interference.
Natural overcalls

If an opponent overcalls in a natural suit (4+ cards in suit bid) the general scheme is that responses of 2♦ through 3♥ are transfers to the next higher suit or Stayman if the next higher suit was bid by the opponent. Texas also applies unless the major above was bid by the opponent, then it shows shortness with slam interest.

1N 2♥ ? analogous for natural 2♣, 2♦ or 104

Dbl penalty, creates force
2♣ 5+ spades, weak, NF
2N 5+ clubs
3♣ 5+ diamonds
3♦ •Stayman
3♥ 5+ spades, I+
3♠ •asks for heart stopper
3N 4♠ sign-off
4♣ Gerber
4♦ •heart shortness, ST
4♥ Texas

If the natural overcall shows a second suit:

Dbl penalty, creates force
2♣ 5+ spades, weak, NF
2N 5+ clubs
3♣ 5+ diamonds
3♦ •Stayman
3♥ 5+ spades, I+
3♠ •asks for heart stopper
3N 4♠ sign-off
4♣ Gerber
4♦ •heart shortness, ST
4♥ Texas

To show a minor on the previous two auctions, responder can bid 3♠ (stopper ask) then his minor (GF). The stopper information may also be helpful in judging slam prospects.

Dbl penalty, creates force
2♣ 5+ spades, weak, NF
2N 5+ clubs
3♣ 5+ diamonds
3♦ •Stayman
3♥ 5+ spades, I+
3♠ •asks for heart stopper
3N 4♠ sign-off
4♣ Gerber
4♦ •heart shortness, ST
4♥ Texas

After a double

1N P 3♥ X analogous for 3♠ doubled 105

Pass no 4+ fit, doubts about 3N
Rdbl 4+ strong hearts, desire to play
Other unchanged

Texas Transfer

After a 1N or 2N opening a jump to 4♦ shows 6+ hearts, and a jump to 4♥ shows 6+ spades. Opener must complete the transfer, and responder usually passes. If responder does bid again:

1N P 4♦ P analogous for spade transfer 106

Rdbl rescue with one minor*
Other unchanged

After a double

1N P 4♦ X analogous for 4♥ doubled 107

Pass normal action to put doubler on lead
Rdbl diamond ace
4♥ happy with diamond lead

Note that a redouble beyond 3N is not a suggestion to play but indicates control.

Notrump Interference

If an opponent doubles our 1N opening there is one addition:

1N X ? 108

Dbl negative
3♥ 5+ hearts
3♥ 5+ spades
3♠ •asks for club stopper
3N 4♠ sign-off
4♣ Gerber
4♦ •heart shortness, ST
4♥ Texas

To show a minor on the previous two auctions, responder can bid 3♠ (stopper ask) then his minor (GF). The stopper information may also be helpful in judging slam prospects.

Dbl negative
3N sign-off
4♣ Gerber
4♦ Texas
4♥ •spade shortness, ST

*Opener bids 2♠ then responder passes or corrects.
### Rebids by opener

```
1N  2♣  3♦  P  analogous for other transfers

?  
3♥  normal action
3N  max, good spade stopper
4♥  max, good heart fit
```

### Artificial overcalls

If an opponent overcalls artificially (not 4+ cards in suit bid) the following structures apply:

```
1N  2♠i  ?  analogous for any artificial 2-bid

1. whatever

Dbl  8+ HCP, creates force
2 shown takeout, may be just competitive
2 unshown 5+ cards, NF
2N 3 ♠ 3 ♥  5+ cards in next higher suit
3 ♠  *asks for stopper in shown suit(s)
3N  sign-off
4 ♠  Gerber
4 ♦ 4 ♠  Texas
```

After an artificial overcall note that transferring to a shown suit is the same as any other.

```
1N  2N1  ?  1. minors

3 ♠  Stayman
Other  same as above
```

### Opening One of Suit

General strategy is to respond up-the-line with 4-4 majors. A 5 card minor may be suppressed to bid a 4 card major at the 1 level, but with good hands tend to bid in natural order unless greatly biased by strength.
Rebids by Opener

1♣ P 1♦ P

? 13-18, 4+ cards
1N* 12-14, balanced
2♠ 13-15, 6+ clubs (rare 5)
2♦ 13-15, 4 diamonds
2♥ 19+, 4+ cards (rare 3), GF
2N* 18-19, balanced, I
3♠ 16-18, 6+ clubs, I
3♦ 16-18, 4+ diamonds, I
3♥ 19+, splinter
3N 16+, 6+ strong clubs
4♣ • 19+, 6+ clubs, 4 diamonds
4♦ 19+, 6+ clubs, 5 diamonds

*preferable to 1♥ or 1♠ with both majors stopped

1♣ P 1♥ P 1♠ P analogous for other minor-major starts

? 13-18, 4+ spades
1N 12-14, balanced, not 4 spades
2♠ 13-15, 6+ clubs (rare 5)
2♦ 17+, 4+ diamonds (rare 3), F
2♥ 13-15, 3+ hearts (usually 4)
2♥ 19+, 4+ cards (rare 3), GF
2N 18-19, balanced, I
3♠ 16-18, 6+ clubs, I
3♦ • 19+, 6+ clubs, 4 diamonds, GF
3♥ 16-18, 4 hearts, I
3♥ 4♦ 19+, splinter
3N 16+, 6+ strong clubs
4♣ • 19+, 6+ clubs, 4 hearts, F
4♥ 19+, 4 hearts, no splinter

Rebids by Responder

After a 1-level suit response and opener’s nonjump, non-reverse rebid, all jumps and raises to three of a minor are GF. Responder usually must bid a new suit (third or fourth) to effect an invitation.

1♣ P 1♥ P 1♠ P

? 6-10, NF
2♥ 11+, AF
2N 10-12, I
3♠ 3♥ 3♠ • 13+, GF
3♥ 5+ hearts, 5+ spades, GF
3N 13-16

1♥ P 1♠ P

? 6-10 with 4 spades or 11+, AF
2♠ 4 spades, 6+ diamonds, GF
3♠ 4♠ splinter, ST

Other analogous to above

1♣ P 1♥ P 1♠ P

? 6-10, NF
2♥ 11+, semi-natural, F
2N 10-12, I
3♠ 3♥ 3♠ • 13+, GF
3♥ 5+ diamonds, 5+ hearts, GF
3N 4♠ 4♠ 4♥ sign-off attempt
4♥ 4♦ splinter, ST

1♥ P 1♠ P

? 6-10, NF
2♥ 11+, AF
2N 10-12, I
3♠ 3♥ 3♠ • 13+, GF
3♥ 5+ hearts, 5+ spades, GF
3N 13-16

1♥ P 1♠ P

? 6-10, NF
2♥ 11+, semi-natural, F
2N 10-12, I
3♠ 3♥ 3♠ • 13+, GF
3♥ 5+ diamonds, 5+ hearts, GF
3N 4♠ 4♠ 4♥ sign-off attempt
4♥ 4♦ splinter, ST

1♥ P 1♠ P

? 6-10, NF
2♥ 11+, AF
2N 10-12, I
3♠ 3♥ 3♠ • 13+, GF
3♥ 5+ hearts, 5+ spades, GF
3N 13-16
Opener’s Third Bid

After a third- or fourth-suit force, opener should describe his hand as naturally as possible. Bidding at or below 2 N (except new suit, or 2 ♠ after 1 ♠ rebid) or the same suit three times explicitly rejects an invitation and is NF. Other non-jumps are ambiguous strength (F); jumps are GF.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 P</th>
<th>1 ♠ P</th>
<th>171</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 ♠</td>
<td>2 ♠ P</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 ♠ 2 ♠ 2 N</td>
<td>reject, NF</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 ♠</td>
<td>4 good/decent spades, ambiguous, F</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 ♠</td>
<td>4 clubs, ambiguous, F</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 ♠ 3 ♠ 3 N</td>
<td>accept</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 ♠</td>
<td>5 spades, 6+ diamonds, GF</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*undesirable to bid notrump; could be 5-6 bare minimum</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 ♠ P</th>
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<tr>
<td>2 ♠</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 ♠</td>
<td>reject, NF</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 ♠ 3 ♠ 3 ♠</td>
<td>ambiguous, F</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 ♠</td>
<td>ace*, GF</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 ♠</td>
<td>accept</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*because 4 spades were denied (else would show 4)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 ♠ P</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>2 ♠</td>
<td>2 ♠ P</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 ♠</td>
<td>4 hearts or ace, ambiguous, F</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 ♠ 2 ♠ 3 ♠</td>
<td>reject, NF</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 ♠</td>
<td>4 diamonds, ambiguous, F</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 ♠ 3 N</td>
<td>accept</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 ♠ P</th>
<th>1 ♠ P</th>
<th>174</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 ♠</td>
<td>3 ♠ P</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 ♠</td>
<td>reject, NF</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 ♠ 4 ♠</td>
<td>ambiguous, F</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 ♠</td>
<td>ace, F</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 N</td>
<td>accept</td>
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Special cases

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<tr>
<td>1 ♠ P</td>
<td>1 ♠ P</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonjump</td>
<td>13-15, NF</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jump</td>
<td>16-18, I</td>
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<table>
<thead>
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<td>3 ♠ P</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 ♠*</td>
<td>reject, not 3 spades, NF</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 ♠ 3 N</td>
<td>accept</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 ♠</td>
<td>ambiguous, F</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*does not show 5+ diamonds</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After 2NT invitation

If opener bids the same suit consecutively, or a third suit below his rebid first suit, it is nonforcing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>1 ♠ P</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 ♠ P</td>
<td>2 N P</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 ♠ ♠</td>
<td>natural, NF</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 ♠</td>
<td>natural, F</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 ♠</td>
<td>strength (short clubs), F</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 ♠ P</th>
<th>1 ♠ P</th>
<th>178</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 ♠ P</td>
<td>2 N P</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 ♠ ♠</td>
<td>natural, NF</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 ♠ ♠ 3 ♠ ♠</td>
<td>natural, F</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 ♠ ♠</td>
<td>•AF, 5-5 minors</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Responder’s Third Bid

After a third- or fourth-suit force, responder need not bid again if opener’s third bid was a rejection. If responder does bid again, he names the final strain; if this is a nonjump below game, he shows invitational values. Any jump bid below game is forcing.

If opener raises the third or fourth suit, or shows a preference for responder’s first suit, this does not determine the final strain but merely describes opener’s hand. It is still responder’s duty to bid the final strain next.

Rebidding the third or fourth suit shows at least 5-5 shape; invitational at 3 level, unless opener showed a preference for responder’s first suit then GF; GF at 4 level.
Rebids after 1NT Rebid

When opener rebids 1N, responder’s rebids follow a similar structure but substituting “new minor forcing” for the previous third-suit force. All jumps are GF.

1♠ P 1♥ P analogous for 1♦ opening

1N P 2 P
2♣ 2♥ 6-10, NF
2♦ 11+, AF
2♠ 13+, 4 spades, 5+ hearts, GF
2N 11-12, I
3♠ 3♥ 13+, GF
3♦ 13+, at least 5-5, GF
3♣ 4♠ 4♦ •self-splinter, agrees hearts, ST
3N 4♥ sign-off
4♠ •super Gerber

1♦ P 1♣ P analogous for 1♠ opening

1N P 2 P
2♣ 11+, AF
2♦ 6-10, NF
2♠ 11-12, I
3♠ 3♥ 13+, at least 5-5, GF
3♦ 3♠ 13+, GF
3N 4♣ sign-off
4♦ 4♠ •self-splinter, agrees spades, ST
4♥ •super Gerber

1♠ P 1♦ P

1N P 2 P
2♣* •11+, AF
2♦ 6-10, NF
2♥ 2♠ 4 cards, 5+ diamonds, GF
2N 11-12, I
3♠ 3♥ 13+, GF
3♥ 3♠ 4♣ •self-splinter, agrees diamonds, ST
3N sign-off
4♠ •super Gerber

*no sign-off in clubs on this auction

Opener’s third bid

1♥ P 1♦ P
1N P 2♦ P
?
2♥ 2N reject
2♠ ace*, ambiguous
3♠ 3♦ ambiguous
3♥ 3N accept

*because 4 spades denied

1♥ P 1♠ P
1N P 2♣ P
?
2♦ 2♥ 2N reject
2♦* 4 hearts, ambiguous
3♣ 4 clubs, ambiguous
3♥ 3♥ 3♠ 3N accept

*priority bid if also holding 3 spades

1♥ P 1♦ P
1N P 2♦ P
?
2♥ 2♠ 2N reject
3♠ 3♦ ambiguous
3♥ 3♥ 3♠ 3N accept

In the previous four auctions, bidding a minor suit at the 3 level implies a weak holding in the unbid suit, hence warning against notrump.

Responder’s third bid

After new minor forcing, responder need not bid again if opener’s third bid was a rejection. If responder does bid again, he names the final strain; if this is a nonjump below game, he shows an invitational-range hand. Any jump bid below game is forcing.

If opener raises the new minor or shows a preference for responder’s first suit, this does not determine the final strain but merely describes opener’s hand. It is still responder’s duty to bid the final strain next.

Rebidding the new minor shows at least 5-5 shape; invitational at 3 level; GF at 4 level.
Rebids after 2NT Rebid

When opener jumps to 2N (18-19) after a 1-level suit response, the only way to stop below game is to pass; i.e., all continuations are GF. General structure is to use “new minor forcing” on game-only hands, so other bids can be used to suggest slam.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1♥</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>1♥</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>211</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2N</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3♣ 3♥ 3♠</td>
<td>natural, ST</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3♦</td>
<td>AF, checkback</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3N 4♥</td>
<td>sign-off</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4♠ 4♦</td>
<td>•self-splinter, agrees hearts, ST</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4♥</td>
<td>super Gerber</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>P</th>
<th>1♠</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>212</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2N</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3♣</td>
<td>AF, checkback</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3♥ 3♥ 3♠</td>
<td>natural, ST</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3N 4♥</td>
<td>sign-off</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4♠ 4♦</td>
<td>•self-splinter, agrees spades, ST</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4♥</td>
<td>super Gerber</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*if followed by 4♥ is natural ST

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1♥</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>1♠</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>213</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2N</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3♣*</td>
<td>•AF, checkback</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3♥ 3♥ 3♠</td>
<td>natural, ST</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3N</td>
<td>sign-off</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4♠ 4♥</td>
<td>•self-splinter, agrees diamonds, ST</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4♥</td>
<td>super Gerber</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Subsequent bidding

If responder has both majors and no slam interest, he must go through “new minor forcing” even with 5-5 shape.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1♠</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>1♠</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>214</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2N</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3♥ 3♦*</td>
<td>•seminatural, checkback</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3♥ 3♠</td>
<td>natural, ST</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3N 4♥ 4♠</td>
<td>sign-off</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4♠ 4♥</td>
<td>•self-splinter, agrees spades, ST</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*if followed by 4♠ or 4♥ is 5-5 ST

Notrump Responses to Minor

After a 1♣ or 1♦ opening, a 1N response shows 6-10 HCP, and 3N shows 13-14 HCP. Both show balanced hands (except 1N over 1♦ necessitated by long clubs) and no 4 card major, but may have one if flat (4-3-3-3) with the other unbid suits stopped.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1♥</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>1N</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>analogous for 1♣ opening</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>most common</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2♣</td>
<td>13-18, NF</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2♦</td>
<td>13-15, NF</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2♥ 2♣</td>
<td>17+, 4+ cards (rare 3), F</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2N 3♦</td>
<td>16-18, I</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3♣</td>
<td>19+, 4+ clubs (rare 3), GF</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3♥ 3♠</td>
<td>•4+ cards, 6+ diamonds, GF</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3N</td>
<td>sign-off</td>
<td></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1♥</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>3N</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>analogous for 1♦ opening</th>
<th>222</th>
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<td>Pass</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4♣ 4♦ 4♥</td>
<td>natural, ST, F</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4♠</td>
<td>super Gerber</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

See also “Two Notrump Response” which is the same over a minor or major.
One Notrump Forcing

After a 1♥ or 1♠ opening, a response of 1N shows 6-14 HCP (rarely less with a fit) and denies 4 spades after 1♥. Obviously it is forcing.

1♥ P 1N P

2♥ 2♦ 13-18, 3+ cards, NF
2♦ 13-15, 6+ hearts, NF
2♠ 17+ with 6+ hearts else 19+, F
2N 16-18, I
3♣ 3♦ 19+, 4+ cards (rare 3), GF
3♥ 16-18, 6+ hearts, I
3♠ 4+ spades, 6+ hearts, GF
3N 19+, NF
4♦ 4♥ •19+, splinter, 6+ hearts
4♥ 19+, 6+ hearts

Rebids by responder

1♥ P 1N P

2♣ 6-10, 6+ diamonds (rare 5), NF
2♦ 6-10 with 2 hearts or 4-7 w/3+, NF
2♠ •11+, agrees clubs
2N 11-12, I
3♣ 8-10, 5+ clubs (rare 4), NF
3♦ 3♠ •13+, club raise, values in bid, F
3♥ 11-12, 3 hearts, I
3N 13-14, NF
4♣ 10-12, 6+ clubs, I
4♦ •13+, heart raise, diamond values
4♥ 13+, 3 hearts, NF

When opener shows extras

1♥ P 1N P

2♥ 6-10, 5+ hearts, NF
2♦ 6-10 with 2 spades or 4-7 w/3+, NF
2♠ 11-12, I
3♣ 6-10, 6+ clubs, NF
3♦ 10-12, 5+ diamonds (rare 4), I
3♥ •13+, diamond raise, heart values
3♠ 11-12, 3 spades, I
3N 13-14, NF
4♣ 4♥ •13+, spade raise, values in bid
4♥ 10-12, 6+ diamonds, I
4♠ 13+, 3 spades, NF

Note that responder’s jump shifts always show support for opener’s second suit, unless beyond 3N when second suit is a minor, then opener’s first suit. Value jumps (not splinters) are used because if responder has a splinter it is almost always in opener’s original major.

1♥ P 1N P

2♥ 6-10 with 2 spades or 4-7 w/3+, NF
2♦ 11-12, I
3♠ 6-10, 6+ cards, NF
3♥ 9-11, 4+ hearts, I
3♣ 11-12, 3 spades, I
3N 13-14, NF
4♥ 4♦ •13+, heart raise, values in bid
4♦ 12+, 4+ hearts, NF
4♣ 13+, 3 spades, NF

*limit bidding follows

When opener shows extras

1♥ P 1N P

2♥ 8+, at least 5-5 minors, F
2♦ •13+, heart raise, values in bid, GF
2♠ 11-12, 2 hearts, I
4♥ 13+ with 2 hearts or 11+ w/3+

Other same as above

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Two over One of Major

After a 1♦ or 1♣ opening, a 2-over-1 response shows 5+ cards (rarely strong 4 card minor) and 13+ points, or 6+ cards with 11-12 points. This is GF unless responder bids his suit next, then invitational. Opener rebids naturally, with no extra strength required for any nonjump bid. Jumps in unbid suits are always splinters: raises if below 4 of responder's suit, self-splinters if above.

Rebids by responder

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Subsequent bidding

If either player has shown a dual range and next bids voluntarily past game, this shows the upper range, except a raise to $4\heartsuit$ or $4\spadesuit$, which implies x-x-x support.

\[
\begin{array}{cccc}
1\heartsuit & p & 2\heartsuit & p \\
2n & p & 3n & p \\
? & & & \\
\end{array}
\]

Pass = most common

\[
\begin{array}{l}
4\heartsuit 4\diamondsuit & 18+, heart raise, values in bid \\
4\diamondsuit & 13-17, 3 small hearts \\
4\spadesuit & 18-19, 5+ strong spades, NF \\
\end{array}
\]

\[
\begin{array}{cccc}
1\heartsuit & p & 2\heartsuit & p \\
2\spadesuit & p & 2n & p \\
3n & p & ? & \\
\end{array}
\]

Pass = most common

\[
\begin{array}{l}
4\spadesuit & 18+, 6+ clubs \\
4\diamondsuit & 18+, 4+ diamonds (rare 3) \\
4\heartsuit & 13-17, 3 small hearts \\
4\clubsuit & super Gerber \\
\end{array}
\]

Two Clubs over One Diamond

After a 1\diamondsuit opening, a 2\clubsuit response shows 5+ clubs (rarely strong 4) and 11+ points. If opener has a minimum (not enough to force to game) he must rebid 2\clubsuit, which is artificial; any other rebid shows 15+ (good 14) and is GF.

\[
\begin{array}{cccc}
1\diamondsuit & p & 2\diamondsuit & p \\
? & & & \\
\end{array}
\]

\[
\begin{array}{l}
2\diamondsuit & any minimum, AF \\
2\heartsuit 2\diamondsuit & 15+, 4+ cards, 5+ diamonds \\
2n & 15+ (good 14) \\
3\heartsuit & 15+, 3+ clubs (not 3 small) \\
3\diamondsuit & 15+, 6+ diamonds \\
3\heartsuit 3\diamondsuit & 15+, splinter, club raise \\
3n & 18-19, NF \\
4\diamondsuit & 15+, 5-5 minors \\
\end{array}
\]

Rebids by responder

\[
\begin{array}{cccc}
1\diamondsuit & p & 2\diamondsuit & p \\
2\spadesuit & p & ? & \\
2\heartsuit 2\diamondsuit 3\heartsuit & 13+, natural, GF \\
2n 3\heartsuit & 11-12, natural, NF \\
3\heartsuit 3\diamondsuit & 17+, self-splinter*, agrees clubs \\
3n & 13-17, NF \\
4\diamondsuit & 17+, 6+ clubs, solid or K-Q-J-10 \\
4\spadesuit & 17+, 5-5 minors \\
\end{array}
\]

Inverted Minor Raises

After a 1\diamondsuit or 1\heartsuit opening, responder’s single raise show 10+ (11+ if balanced), 4+ trumps and no 4 card major; forcing for one round.

\[
\begin{array}{cccc}
1\diamondsuit & p & 2\diamondsuit & p \\
? & & & \\
\end{array}
\]

\[
\begin{array}{l}
2\heartsuit 2\diamondsuit & 15+, natural or stopper, F \\
2n & 12-14, often 3 clubs, NF \\
3\spadesuit & 12-14, 4+ clubs, NF \\
3\diamondsuit 3\heartsuit 3\diamondsuit & 17+, splinter, GF \\
3n & 18-19, NF \\
4\diamondsuit & 17+, 6+ clubs, no splinter, F \\
\end{array}
\]

Subsequent bidding

If either player bids 3 or 4 of the agreed minor (nonjump) it shows minimum values for the previous bidding and is NF. Exception: Removing 3 N to 4 of the minor is a slam try (F) unless the same player made a NF bid.

\[
\begin{array}{cccc}
1\diamondsuit & p & 2\diamondsuit & p \\
? & & & \\
\end{array}
\]

\[
\begin{array}{l}
2\spadesuit 3\spadesuit & strength, F \\
2n & natural, F \\
3\diamondsuit & minimum, NF \\
3\heartsuit & natural (good 3), F \\
3\diamondsuit 4\spadesuit & 13+, splinter, GF \\
3n & 12-14, NF \\
\end{array}
\]

Weak jump raise

Conversely, jump minor raises are weak, typically 6-9 with 5+ trumps.

\[
\begin{array}{cccc}
1\diamondsuit & p & 3\diamondsuit & p \\
? & & & \\
\end{array}
\]

\[
\begin{array}{l}
Pass = most common \\
3\heartsuit 3\spadesuit 4\spadesuit & 4+ cards or strength, F \\
3n & 18-19, NF \\
\end{array}
\]

Higher minor raises (1\spadesuit 4\spadesuit or 1\diamondsuit 5\diamondsuit) are also weak (6-9) but indicate wilder distribution.
**Weak Jump Shifts**

After an opening bid of 1 of a suit, all jumps in unbid suits to any level are weak, except for a double jump-shift response to a major, which is defined as a splinter bid. Typical holdings depend on the level.

1♣ P  ?
2 ♦ 2 ♦ 2 ♠  2-5 HCP, 6 cards or good 5
3 ♦ 3 ♦ 3 ♠  2-7 HCP, 7 cards or good 6
4 ♦ 4 ♦ 4 ♠  2-7 HCP, 8 cards or good 7
5 ♦ 5 ♦ 5 ♠  schizoid on parole?

When jumping to 3 or 4 in a suit below game, playing tricks are more important than HCP or suit length. Responder should have 4 tricks less than his bid, so opener can judge when to bid game.

**Rebids by opener**

1 ♦ P 2 ♦ P  281

Pass  well advised
2 ♠ 3 ♠ 3 ♦  natural, extreme shape, no fit, NF
2N*  • AF, game try
3 ♦  blocking, NF
3 ♠ 4 ♠ 4 ♦  natural, extreme shape, no fit, I
3 N (rare)  natural, no fit, based on own hand
4 ♦  good fit, may be blocking

*same structure as after weak two-bids

1 ♠ P 3 ♦ P  282

Pass  well advised
3 ♦ 3 ♠ 4 ♠  natural, extreme shape, no fit, NF
3 ♦*  natural, ♦ K-x or better, NF
4 ♦  diamond fit, I
4 ♦ 4 ♦  natural, extreme shape, no fit

*responder should pull with no ace or king anywhere

**Two Notrump Response**

After an opening bid of 1 of a suit, a 2N response shows a balanced hand of 15-17 HCP, usually with no 4 card major biddable at the 1 level, but may contain one if flat (4-3-3-3) with the other unbid suits stopped. This bid neither shows nor denies support for opener’s suit.

1 ♦ P 2 N P  291

3 ♦ 3 ♦ 3 ♦ 4+ cards, usually 5+ diamonds
3 ♦  6+ diamonds
3 N  12-14, NF
4 ♦ 4 ♦ 15+, self-splinter, agrees diamonds
4 ♦  15+, agrees diamonds
4 ♠  super Gerber

**Major Suit Game Tries**

Whenever we raise a major from 1 to 2, whether an opening bid, a 1-level response or a 1-level rebid, game tries are launched by the cheapest bid (2♠ or 2N) to ask about dummy’s hand. Purpose is to allow effective game tries without revealing information about the closed hand. Other suit bids become slam tries.

1 ♦ P 2 ♦ P  292

3 ♠ 3 ♦ 3 ♦ 4+ cards
3 ♠  6+ spades
3 N  12-14, NF
4 ♦ 4 ♦ 4 ♦ 15+, self-splinter, agrees spades*
4 ♠  15-16, agrees spades*

*hence responder’s 4 N is then Blackwood

**Rebids by responder**

Responder is presumed to have 15-17 HCP, so with 18+ he must bid beyond game. Bidding an unbid suit shows strength and implies support for opener’s last shown suit, unless opener bid a major that responder bypassed at the 1 level, then opener’s first suit.

1 ♠ P 2 N P  293

3 ♦ P  ?
3 ♦ 4 ♦  strength in suit, club fit
3 N  15-17, NF
4 ♦  working cards, club fit
4 ♦  15-17, 4 hearts, 4-3-3-3
4 ♠  super Gerber

1 ♦ P 2 N P  294

3 ♦ P  ?
3 ♦  3+ hearts
3 ♠ 4 ♠  strength in suit, diamond fit
3 N  15-17, NF
4 ♦  working cards, diamond fit
4 ♦  15-17, working cards, 3+ hearts, NF
4 ♠  super Gerber

1 ♠ P 2 N P  295

3 N P  ?
Pass  15-17
4 ♦ 4 ♦ 4 ♦ 18+, strength in suit, spade fit
4 ♠  15-17, spade fit

*only way to show spades, so 3 ♠ is not a splinter.
After the artificial ask, if dummy has a suit with secondary values (3+ cards with king or queen, or both) he should show it regardless of strength; otherwise he defines his strength.

When dummy shows secondary values, asker may base his decision on that or inquire further.

**Subsequent bidding**

If dummy is asked if min or max, he simply bids (or passes) 3 of the major with a minimum.

If asker bids a suit between 3 and 4 of the raised major, it is a slam try with a 1-suited hand.

**After interference**

If an opponent bids after our raise from 1 to 2, the relay structure is off; game tries are then made in the traditional manner by bidding a different suit. Note that early interference (before our raise to 2) and doubles of any kind change nothing.

**Opener’s Reverse Bid**

After a 1три, 1оп or 1з opening and a non-touching 1-level response, opener’s 2-level bid in a suit between (i.e., higher than suit opened but nonjump) shows 17+ points and is forcing. Opener shows 9+ cards in his two suits, typically 5-4, but 6-3 is plausible on awkward hands.
P1 P1
P2 NP

1 ♠ P 1 ♥ P
2 ♦ P 2 ♦ P

ace or shortness, GF
ace or shortness, GF
ace or shortness, GF
aced or shortness, GF

2 N 17-18, NF
3 ♦ 17-18, 5+ clubs, NF
3 ♦ 5 diamonds, 6+ clubs, GF
3 ♦ 17-18, at least Q-x, NF
3 ♢ splinter, heart raise, ST
3 N 4 ♣ natural, NF
4 ♣ 7+ clubs, F

1 ♦ P 1 ♠ P
2 ♦ P 2 N P

ace or shortness, GF
ace or shortness, GF
ace or shortness, GF
ace or shortness, GF

3 ♢ 3 ♦ 3-4 cards, GF
3 ♥ 17-18, 6 hearts*, NF
3 ♦ 5 hearts, 6+ diamonds, GF
3 ♣ at least Q-x-x, GF*
3 N natural, NF
4 ♣ 4 ♦ self-splitter, agrees diamonds, ST
4 ♦ agrees diamonds, F

*forcing because responder denied 5 spades

1 ♥ P 1 N P
2 ♣ P 2 N P

3 ♢ 3 ♦ 3-4 cards, GF
3 ♥ 17-18, 6 hearts*, NF
3 ♦ 5 hearts, 6+ diamonds, GF
3 ♣ at least Q-x-x, GF*
3 N natural, NF
4 ♣ 4 ♦ self-splitter, agrees diamonds, ST

Fourth Suit Bids

Except the usual “fourth suit forcing” and cases specifically described, bidding the fourth suit (for the first time) shows the ace or shortness. If below 3 N, partner assumes the ace and may bid 3 N without a stopper, which fourth-suit bidder removes if based on shortness.

1 ♥ P 1 ♠ P
2 ♠ P 3 ♠ P

ace or shortness
ace or shortness

3 ♦ 17-18, NF
3 ♦ 5 diamonds, 6+ clubs, GF
4 ♣ 7+ clubs, F

*with 5 hearts opener would not bid 2 ♠ with 17-18

Passed Hand Changes

If partner is a passed hand, a number of changes apply, most of which are obvious. Opening bids of 1 of a suit may be light (10+) and 1 ♥ or 1 ♠ may be a good 4 card suit.

Normally forcing responses (1-over-1, 1 N response to major, 2 ♣ over 1 ♣, 2 ♦ over 1 ♦, inverted minors) are now limited. Opener should pass with 12 or less, and may pass with 13. If opener does bid again, his rebids retain their normal meaning, including F/NF status.

A 2 N response to a minor shows 11-12 HCP, invitational. Any rebid by opener below game (including 3 of his minor) is forcing.

A 3 ♢ response to 1 ♠, 1 ♥ or 1 ♦ shows 8-11 HCP and 6+ clubs, NF of course, but any rebid by opener below game is forcing. (This only applies in clubs because other suits would have been opened a weak two-bid.)

Cue-bid (P P 1 ♠; 2 ♠) shows stopper but opener’s 2 N or same suit says no game.

Subsequent bidding

Responders second-round jump bids and raises to 3 of a minor (normally forcing) are now invitational.

Fourth suit forcing and new minor forcing still apply; being a passed hand just allows more ways to invite.

Third suit forcing does not apply.

P 1 ♠ P 2 ♦ P

2 ♥ 9-12, 4+ hearts, NF
2 ♦ 11+, 3 hearts
2 ♥ 11+, 4 hearts
2 ♦ 7-10, 3+ hearts
3 ♢ 9-12, 5+ clubs, NF
3 ♦ 3 ♠ 11-12, I

Two-Way Reverse Drury

After a 1 ♥ or 1 ♠ opening in third or fourth seat, responses of 2 ♦ and 2 ♠ are artificial raises.

P 1 ♥ P analogical for 1 ♠ opening

2 ♥ 11+, 3 hearts
2 ♬ 11+, 4 hearts
2 ♦ 7-10, 3+ hearts
3 ♦ 11-12, 5 hearts
4 ♦ weak, extreme shape

Rebids by opener

P 1 ♥ P same as 2 ♠ Drury less 2 ♦ rebid

2 ♤ P game interest
2 ♥ no game interest
Other game try structure
Follow-up bidding

If opener shows game interest, it may still be possible to stop in 2 of the major.

After interference

The artificial 2 ♠ and 2 ♥ raises do not apply in competition. If an opponent interferes after the bid, the usual countermeasures apply.

After Takeout Double

If our opening bid of 1 of a suit is doubled for takeout, the following changes apply.

Subsequent bidding

A takeout double in itself does not affect our rebid structure after any response that is unchanged. If either opponent bids after the double, then we revert to a “limit structure.”
After Suit Overcall

If our opening bid of 1 of a suit is overcalled in a natural unbidded suit, the following changes apply.

After a minor opening

1 ♠ 1 ♦ ?

- Dbl 6+, at least 4-4 majors
- 1 N 7-10, stopper
- Cue 13+, balanced, stopper, GF
- 2 N 11-12, stopper, I
- Jump cue 13+, splinter raise
- 3 N 9-12, natural, based on fit
- Other unchanged

1 ♠ 1 ♥ ?

- Dbl 6+, 4 spades
- 1 ♥ 6+, 5+ spades, F
- 2 ♦ 10+, 5+ diamonds, F
- Other same as above

1 ♠ 1 ♦ ?

- Dbl 7+, 4+ hearts
- 2 ♦ 2 ♥ 10+, 5+ cards, F
- Other same as above

1 ♥ 2 ♠ ?

- Dbl 7+, at least 1 major
- 2 ♦ 2 ♥ 10+, 5+ cards, F
- 2 N 10-12, stopper, I
- Other same as above

Note that inverted minor raises and weak jump shifts are unchanged.

After a major opening

1 ♥ 1 ♠ ?

- Dbl 7+, at least 4-4 minors
- 1 N 7-10, stopper
- 2 ♦ 2 ♥ 10+, 5+ cards, F
- Cue 13+, balanced, stopper, GF
- 2 N 11-12, stopper, I
- Jump cue 13+, splinter raise
- 3 N 13+, 3+ hearts, no spade control
- 4 ♠ 4 ♦ weak, natural
- Other unchanged

1 ♥ 2 ♥ ?

- Dbl 7+, 4+ spades
- 2 ♥ 2 ♠ 10+, 5+ cards, F
- 2 N 10-12, stopper, I
- 3 ♠ 4 ♦ weak, natural
- Other same as above

1 ♥ 2 ♠ ?

- Dbl 7+, at least 4-4 minors
- 1 N 10+, 3+ cards, F
- 2 ♥ 10-12, Q-x or better, I
- 3 ♠ 13+, splinter raise
- 3 N 13+, stopper, NF

Other unchanged

Note that splinter bids in competition only apply in enemy suits.

Rebids after a negative double

After a negative double it is opener’s duty to select the contract. With no clear bid it is better to bid a 3 card suit that responder might have than to rebid a 5 card suit already shown. Opener should rebid at the cheapest level with 13-15, jump with 16-18 (invitational below game) or cue-bid as the only force (GF). Passing for penalty is also a viable option at the 2 level with 4+ trumps.

1 ♦ 1 ♥ X P analogues for many sequences

- 1 N 2 ♥ ♠ 13-15, natural, NF
- 2 ♥ 19+, nondescript, GF
- 2 N 3 ♠ ♦ 16-18, I
- 3 N 19+, NF

*may be off-shape hence 16-17 is possible

If responder bids again after a negative double, assuming opener has not shown extras, only a cue-bid is forcing (GF). Preferences and new suit bids are NF; 2 N, raises, and jumps below game are invitational.

1 ♥ 1 ♠ X P analogues for many sequences

- 1 N 2 ♥ ♠ 13-15, natural, NF
- 2 ♥ 19+, nondescript, GF
- 2 N 10-12, stopper, I
- 3 ♠ 10-12, Q-x or better, I
- 3 ♥ 13+, splinter raise
- 3 N 13+, stopper, NF

Rebids after a 2-over-1 response

Competitive 2-over-1 responses (10+) are forcing for one round (think Acol). If opener rebids his original suit, bids 2 N or raises responder’s suit, it is NF and confirms minimum values. New suits are forcing for another round. Only a cue-bid or jump below game creates a GF.
If responder bids again when opener has not shown extras, similar principles apply. Bidding 2 N or any of our previously bid suits is NF and confirms minimum values. A new suit, cue-bid or jump below game is GF.

- **2 ♠ 2 ♠ 2 ♠ P** analogous for many sequences
- 2♥ 2♥ minimum, Q-x or better, NF
- 2 N 3 ♦ 3 ♦ minimum, NF
- 3 ♠ minimum, Q-x-x or better, NF
- 3 ♦ 3 ♠ 13+, 3+ spades, GF
- 3 N 13+, NF
- 4 ♦ 4 ♦ 13+, extreme shape, F
- 4 ♦ 4 ♦ 13-15, NF

Note that responder’s preference or raise of a forcing bid does not promise a normal trump fit.

### After Jump Suit Overcall

After our opening bid of 1 of a suit, if an opponent jumps in a natural suit, the following changes apply.

#### Two-level jump overcalls

- **1 ♠ 2 ♠ 2 ♠ P** analogous for many sequences
- 2 ♠ 16+, nondescript, GF
- 2 N 3 ♦ 3 ♦ any strength, 4+ clubs, F
- 3 ♠ 16+, splinter raise
- 3 ♦ 15-19, NF
- 4 ♠ 4 ♦ 16+, extreme shape, F
- 4 ♦ 15-17, NF

#### Three-level jump overcalls

- **1 ♠ 3 ♠ ?** analogous for 1 ♠ opening
- 1 ♠ 3 ♠ 8+, at least 4-4 minors
- 2 ♠ 10-12, stopper, I
- 2 N 10-12, stopper, I
- 3 ♠ 3 ♠ 10+, 5+ cards, F
- 3 ♦ 7-10, 3+ hearts, NF
- 3 N 13+, balanced, stopper, GF
- 3 N 13+, balanced, stopper, GF
- 4 ♠ 4 ♦ 13+, 3+ hearts, no spade control
- 4 ♦ 4 ♦ *weak, natural
- 4 ♦ 11-12, 3+ hearts, NF

#### Four-level jump overcalls

- **1 ♠ 4 ♠ ?** analogous for 1 ♠ opening
- 1 ♠ 4 ♠ 10+, at least 1 major
- 2 ♠ 10+, 5+ cards, F
- 2 N 10+, 5+ cards, F
- 3 ♠ 10-12, 4+ diamonds, NF
- 3 ♦ 10-12, 4+ diamonds, NF
- 3 N 10-15, stopper
- 3 N 10-15, stopper
- 4 ♠ 4 ♦ weak, natural, NF
- 4 ♦ 10-12, 4+ clubs, NF
- 4 ♦ 13+, balanced, stopper, GF
- 4 ♦ 13+, balanced, stopper, GF
- Other *same as above
- Other *same as above
- Other *same as above
- Other *same as above
- Other *same as above

Subsequent bidding is mostly common sense.
### After Two-Suited Overcall

After our opening bid of 1 of a suit, these structures apply if an opponent makes an overcall that shows two suits, at least one of which is known. Michaels and unusual 2 N are the most common, but many others exist.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bid Structure</th>
<th>Interpretation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1♦ 2♣</td>
<td>1. both majors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2♣</td>
<td>•11+, diamond raise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2♦</td>
<td>•11+, 5+ clubs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3♠ 3♦</td>
<td>7-10, 6+ clubs, NF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3♣ 4♣</td>
<td>weak, natural, NF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3♥ 3♠</td>
<td>13+, splinter raise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3♣</td>
<td>7-10, 4+ diamonds, NF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3♥</td>
<td>12-14, based on fit, NF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3♥ 4♥</td>
<td>unchanged</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Subsequent Bidding

After the higher cue, if opener rebids in notrump or his original suit, this confirms a minimum and is NF. A “raise” of responder’s indicated suit is forcing below game.

After doubling, if responder next bids a new suit or a suit shown by the enemy, it is natural and forcing below game.

If responder passes the two-suited overcall and later bids a suit shown by the enemy, it is natural and NF.

### After One Notrump Overcall

After our opening bid of 1 of a suit and a natural 1N overcall (regardless of strength) the following changes apply.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bid Structure</th>
<th>Interpretation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1♥ 1N</td>
<td>analogous for 1 ♦ opening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2♥ 3♥ 4♥</td>
<td>•weak, natural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3♥</td>
<td>11+, spade raise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3♠</td>
<td>7-10, 6+ spades</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4♠ 4♥ 4♥</td>
<td>weak, natural, NF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4♥</td>
<td>13+, splinter raise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4♥ 3♥ 4♥</td>
<td>unchanged</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5♥ 5♥ 5♥</td>
<td>10-16, natural, NF</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note that cheaper cue is always a raise of opener, and higher cue (if both suits known) shows the fourth suit.
**Competitive Doubles**

Many doubles below 3 N, while traditionally penalty, are better played as competitive to show a desire to compete without clear direction. Unfortunately, these situations can’t be chosen at whim, because penalty doubles are important too. Firm agreements are essential to avoid misunderstandings.

A prerequisite for any competitive double is that we are not in a force, i.e., we have not redoubled or otherwise indicated partnership assets of 23+ HCP where a pass would be forcing.

Given the above, all doubles at the 1 level are competitive unless defined otherwise.

For a double at the 2 or 3 level to be competitive, four more conditions must be met:
1. All four players have acted (bid or doubled)
2. We have not bid notrump
3. We have not raised a suit
4. No enemy action was in balancing seat

Competitive doubles are often misused, so counter examples are more beneficial:

1.\[1 \diamondsuit P 1 \clubsuit 2 \spadesuit\] penalty (only one opponent acted)
2.\[1 \diamondsuit P 1 \heartsuit 1 \spadesuit\] penalty (we bid notrump)
3.\[1N 2 \spadesuit X\]
4.\[1 \heartsuit 2 \spadesuit 2 \heartsuit 3 \spadesuit\] penalty (we raised a suit)
5.\[1 \spadesuit X 1 \spadesuit P\] penalty (opponent balanced)
6.\[2 \spadesuit P P 2 \heartsuit\]

Minimum strength for a competitive double is about 3 points more than previously shown. There is no upper limit, so the double is also useful on game-going hands.

**Subsequent bidding**

Partner of competitive doubler should choose the contract from alternatives suggested by the bidding. Any nonjump (even a new suit) is NF; jumps below game are invitational. Passing the double is a viable option with 4 trumps, or three trumps at the 3 level.

**Maximal double**

An exception to Condition 3 occurs when we have raised a major and cannot make a game try because the enemy bid the touching lower suit. Condition 1, however, is not changed (both opponents must have acted).

1.\[1 \clubsuit X 2 \spadesuit 3 \heartsuit\]
2.\[2 \spadesuit\] game try
3.\[3 \clubsuit\] competitive

---

**Cooperative Doubles**

A cooperative double is a penalty suggestion at the 2 or 3 level. Doubler typically has 3+ cards in the suit doubled but not a trump stack. The following doubles are cooperative:

1. After eschewing a redouble or force-double
2. After partner redoubled or made a force-double
4. Of a suit in which 4 cards were denied
5. After a competitive double at previous turn

A cooperative double is a penalty suggestion at the 2 or 3 level. Doubler typically has 3+ cards in the suit doubled but not a trump stack. The following doubles are cooperative:

1.\[1 \spadesuit X P 1N \] cooperative
2.\[P 2 \heartsuit X\]

The failure to redouble does not limit responder’s strength but rules out a trump stack.

1.\[1 \spadesuit X R 2 \spadesuit \] cooperative
2.\[1 \diamondsuit P 1 \spadesuit 2 \spadesuit \] cooperative
3.\[1 \spadesuit P 1N X \] cooperative
4.\[P 2 \spadesuit X\]
5.\[1 \spadesuit P 1 \heartsuit 1 \spadesuit \] cooperative
6.\[X P 2 \spadesuit 2 \spadesuit\]

**After a cooperative double**

Partner should remove a cooperative double with a singleton or void in the enemy suit, or with a shapely hand unsuitable for defense. Limit bidding principles apply.

**Opener’s Competitive Rebids**

After our 1-over-1 response, opener’s competitive rebids retain their usual meaning provided opener is not restricted because a cheaper bid in the same strain is eliminated by the interference. If opener is restricted, a nonjump bid that would otherwise be a jump may be shaded to compete. Jump shifts and cue-bids are GF.
**Competitive Limit Style**

After our 1-over-1 response, the system dictates a “forcing style” without interference (or if the only interference is a takeout double) in that responder’s second-round jumps in previously bid suits and raises to 3 of a minor are GF. Once an opponent bids this reverts to a “limit style” where all such bids are invitational, and a cue-bid becomes a general GF.

1 ♠ 1 ♥ 1 ♠  P  analogous for many auctions  471
2 ♦  ? 11+, 4+ diamonds (rare 3), F
2 ♥ 13+, nondescript, GF
2 ♣  6-10, 6+ spades, NF
2 N 10-12, stopper, I
3 ♠ 10-12, Q-x or better, I
3 9 13+, at least 5-5, GF
3 9 15+, splinter raise, GF
3 ♣ 11-12, 6+ spades, I
3 N 13-16, stopper, NF
4 ♠ 10-12, great fit, I

New minor forcing applies in competition, but alternative rebids follow the limit style.

1 ♠ P 1 ♥ 1 ♠ P  analogous for similar auctions  473
1 N P  ?
2 ♦ 2 ♥ natural, sign-off attempt
2 ♦ 11+, AF, checkback
2 ♣ 13+, nondescript, GF
2 N 3 ♣ 3 ♥  natural, I
3 ♦ 13+, at least 5-5, GF
3 ♣ 16+, self-splinter, agrees hearts, GF
3 N 4 ♥ sign-off
4 ♣ 11-12, extreme shape, I
**Higher Opening Bids**

**Two Club Opening**

An opening bid of 2♣ is strong, artificial and forcing, typically 23+ points or within a trick of game in hand.

Responder must either categorize his HCP range or show a suit headed by K-Q or better.

2♣ P 2 Queen heart (no ace) or 8+ HCP or A+K
2♥ 2 5-7 HCP or an ace (no A+K)
2♠ 2 any 5 card suit, 2 of top 3
2♥ 2 any 5 card suit, A-K-Q
3 suit 6 cards, 2 of top 3
3♥ 2 any 6 card suit, A-K-Q
4 suit 7 cards, 2 of top 3
4♥ 2 any 7 card suit, A-K-Q

**After two-diamond response**

Responder is presumed to have 0-4 HCP for all rebids. With 8+ HCP (or ace + king) he bids the same as with 0-4 under game but must continue voluntarily past game to show it.

2♣ ♦ P 2 P 2 ♦ P
2♥ ♠ P 2 ♠ P
2♥ 2 ♦ P 2 ♦ P
3♥ ♠ 3 spades, 5+ cards
3♥ ♦ 3 diamonds, 5+ hearts
4♥ 2 ♠ 4 ♠ 6+ spades
4♥ ♣ 4 ♣ 6+ diamonds
4♥ ♠ 4 ♠ 6+ spades, NF
4♥ ♦ 4 ♦ 6+ spades, NF

**After two-heart response**

2♣ P 2♥ P
2♥ P ?
2♥ 2 P 2 P
3♥ ♠ 3 hearts, GF
3♥ ♦ 3 diamonds, GF
4♥ 2 ♠ 4 ♠ 6+ diamonds
4♥ ♦ 4 ♦ 6+ diamonds

Note that responder's cheapest bid is always waiting, and 3♥ shows 5+ cards in the waiting suit.
**After suit-showing response**

2 ♠ P 2 ♠ P  
2 N 23+ HCP balanced, GF (system on)  
3 suit 5+ cards  
3 N 6+ card minor, game in hand, NF  

If opener rebids in a suit, responder bids his suit at the 3 level if possible.

2 ♠ P 2 ♠ P  
3 ♠ P  
3 ♦ 3 ♠ my suit  
3 N no fit, my suit is clubs, NF  
4 ♦ 3+ diamonds, clubs are A-K or A-Q  
4 ♦ 3+ diamonds, clubs are K-Q  

2 ♠ P 2 ♠ P  
3 ♠ P  
3 ♠ my suit  
3 N no fit, my suit is a minor, NF  
4 ♦ 4 ♦ 3+ hearts, suit is A-K or A-Q  
4 ♦ 3+ hearts, minor suit is K-Q, NF  

2 ♠ P 3 ♠ P analogical for any suit response of 3 or 4  
Other suit 5+ cards, F below game  
3 N misfit, NF  
Raise F below game  

2 ♠ P 2 N P analogical for 3 N or 4 N response  
Any suit* fit or 5+ cards, F  
Notrump* natural, F  

*Opener is presumed to know responder’s A-K-Q suit, and slam must be reached.

**After interference**

2 ♠ X ?  
Pass 3+ clubs  
Rdbl 4+ clubs (Q-10-x-x or better)  
Other unchanged  

2 ♠ 2 ♠ ? analogous for other overcalls  
Dbl penalty (Q-10-x-x or better)  
2 N 5+, stopper  
3 ♠ 3 3 ♢ 5+ HCP, 5+ cards  
3 ♠ 5+ HCP, 3-suiter, short spades  

2 ♠ 2 ♠ P P analogous for other overcalls  
Dbl penalty  
2 N 23-24, balanced, NF  
3 ♠ 3 ♢ 3 ♢ 5+ cards, F  
3 ♠ 3-suiter, short spades  
3 N* 25-28, balanced, NF  
4 N* 29-30, balanced, NF  

*if responder bids again, follow opening 2 N structure 1 or 2 levels higher.

All doubles by opener or responder are penalty, and all direct passes are forcing.

If opener bids an enemy shown suit that he could not double for penalty, it is natural (enemy bid was probably a psych).

If responder has not acted, a suit bid by opener below game is forcing, and the cheapest response is an artificial waiting bid.

**Opener’s suit jumps**

If 2 ♠ opener jumps in a suit at his second turn (including an enemy shown suit that he could not double for penalty) it is natural and sets trumps.

Below game F, partner should bid any control  
Game NF, no slam opposite expected range  

Note that previous use as a “specific ace ask” is now abolished, as any such hand should open 3 N.
Weak Two Bids

An opening bid of 2♦, 2♥ or 2♠ shows 5-10 HCP. Style is undisciplined but sensible. Good 5 cards suits (typically 3 of top 5 cards) are acceptable at any vulnerability, and decent 5 cards suits when nonvulnerable.

2♦ P 2♠ 12-17, 6+ cards (rare 5), NF
2♥ 15+, AF
3♣ 12-17, 6+ cards, NF
3♦ 4♦ 5♦ blocking, NF
3♥ 3♠ self-sufficient suit, I
3N natural, NF
4♦ •trump ask
4♥ 4♠ 5♠ sign-off

2♦ P 2N P* analogous for 2♥ or 2♠ opening 521

3♣ only 5 diamonds, AF
3♦ minimum
3♥ 3♠ stopper in bid, max
3N no major stopper, max
4♥ 4♦ natural, extreme shape

2♥ P 2N P* ? 522

3♦ only 5 hearts, AF
3♥ average or max, AF
3♥ worst hand
3♠ 4 spades
3N A-K-J-x-x-x or better
4♥ 4♦ natural, at least 6-4
4♥ 4♦ self-sufficient suit

2♠ P 2N P* ? 523

3♥ 4 hearts
3♠ worst hand
Other analogous to above

*If opponent doubles: 3♠ = 5-cader with 4 clubs; pass (min) or redouble (max) = 5-cader without 4 clubs.

Rebids by responder

2♥ P 2N P analogous for 2♦ opening 525
3♦ P 2N P
3♥ AF, asks if min/max*
3♥ 3N sign-off
3♠ 4♦ 5+ cards, F
4♦ •trump ask
4♥ 4♠ 5 m sign-off

*opener returns to his suit if minimum

Competitive agreements

2♦ X ? analogous for 2♥ or 2♠ opening 528

Pass* 0+ (unlimited)
Rdbl strong, creates force
New suit natural, may be weak, NF
Other unchanged

*if followed by double below 3 N it is cooperative

2♥ 2♠ ? analogous for similar sequences 529

Dbl penalty
Cue control, ST
Other unchanged

2♥ P 2N 3♦ analogous for similar sequences 530

Pass minimum
Dbl reasonable defense
Bid natural, offense oriented

Preemptive Openings

Opening suit bids of 3♠ thru 5♦ are weak, roughly by the rule of 2, 3 or 4+ per vulnerability.

3♠ P 2♥ 2♠ 3♥ 5+ cards, F
3♥ 4♦ 5♠ blocking
4♥ •trump ask
4♥ 4♠ 5 m sign-off

*opener may pull with no ace or king

3♥ P ? 542
4♥ •trump ask
Other analogous to above
Three Notrump Opening

An opening bid of 3 N is forcing, showing any self-sufficient suit with 9+ playing tricks. If suit is a minor, shape is usually extreme since 3 N is ruled out as a contract. Strength is typically 11-16 HCP but unlimited; many one-suiters usually opened 2 ♠ are better opened 3 N.
Defense to One of Suit

After an enemy opening bid of 1 of a suit, immediate actions are summarized below.

1 ♠  ?

Dbl 13+, takeout
1 ♦ 1 ♠ 1 ♠ 10-18, 5+ cards
1 N* 15-18, balanced, stopper
Cue both majors
Jump cue strong 1-suiter
DJ cue both majors, extreme shape
Other suit jump weak
2 N two lowest unbid
3 N 15-20, based on long suit
4 N two lowest unbid, extreme shape

*Respond as to 1 N opening, including interference agreements if next opponent acts.

1 ♦  ?

2 ♦  13-18, 5+ cards
Other same as above

1 ♥  ?

2 ♥ 2 ♥ 13-18, 5+ cards
Cue spades + minor
DJ cue spades + minor, extreme shape
Other same as above

1 ♠  ?

2 ♠ 2 ♠ 2 ♥ 13-18, 5+ cards
Other analogous to above

Takeout Doubles

After an enemy opening bid of 1 of a suit, a takeout double shows 13-18 points with 3+ cards in each unbid suit, or 19+ points. With major-suit hopes it is permissible to have only a doubleton in an unbid minor.

1 ♠ X P  ?

1 ♠ 1 ♠ 1 ♠ 0-9, 4+ cards (rare 3)
1 N 6-10, stopper
Cue 10+, F until raise or game
2 ♥ 10-12, 5+ cards, I
2 ♠ 2 ♥ 10-12, 4+ cards, I
2 N 11-12, stopper, I
Jump cue •13+, splinter, 3-suiter, GF
3 ♥ 3 ♠ 3 ♥ 6-9, 6+ cards, NF
3 N 13-16, stopper
DJ cue •10+, 5-5 majors
4 ♦ 6-9, 7+ cards
4 ♠ 4 ♠ 13-16, 5+ cards
5 ♦ 13-16, 7+ cards

Rebids by doubler

After a redouble

1 ♠ X P  ?

1 ♠ 2 ♥ 19+, 5+ cards, NF
1 N 18-20, stopper
Cue 21+, no rebid promised
2 ♥ 16-18, 4+ cards
2 ♠ 3 ♥ self-make, 6+ strong cards, NF
2 N 21-22, stopper
Jump cue •19+, splinter raise, game try
3 ♥ 19-21, 4+ hearts, I
3 ♠ 4 ♥ self-make, 6+ strong cards, NF
3 N self-make

After a redouble

1 ♠ X P  ?

2 ♠ 2 ♥ 19+, 5+ cards, NF
Cue 21+, no rebid promised
2 N 18-20, stopper
3 ♠ 18-20, 4+ clubs
3 ♥ 3 ♠ 3 ♥ self-make, 6+ strong cards, NF
Jump cue •19+, splinter raise, game try

1 ♦ X P  ?

2 ♦ 2 ♠ 19+, 5+ cards, NF
Cue 21+, no rebid promised
2 N 18-20, stopper
3 ♠ 18-20, 4+ clubs
3 ♥ 3 ♠ 3 ♥ 5+ cards, GF

Pass no preference or 10+
Unbid suit weak (any level)
Other unchanged

Pass followed by a voluntary action shows 10-12 range.
After a bid

If our takeout double is followed by any bid below 2N, including a new suit, 1N or raise, the following agreements apply.

Dbl  responsive*  589
Suit bid 6-9
Suit jump 10+, 1 below game

*minor takeout if both minors unbid

Note that bidding RHO’s suit (1♣ Dbl 1♥ 2♦) is natural like any other. Only opener’s suit is a cue-bid.

After a major raise, responsive doubles are extended thru 3♠, which includes any enemy bid that shows a fit.

Suit Overcalls

After an enemy opening bid of 1 of a suit, a nonjump suit overcall shows 10-18 points (13-18 at 2 level) and a 5+ card suit. A strong 4 card suit may be bid at the 1 level with 13-18 points if no other action is appropriate.

1♣ 1♥  P  ?  analogous for any 1-level overcall  601
1♥ 2♦  8-12, 5+ cards, NF
1N* 8-11, stopper, NF
Cue** 11+ if fit, 13+ if not
2♥ 7-10, 3+ cards
2♠ 3♦ 12-14, 6+ cards, I
2N 12-14, stopper, I
Jump cue 11+, 4+ hearts
3♥ weak (4-7), 4+ cards
3♠ 4♦ 12-14, 7+ cards, I
3N 15-18, stopper
DJ cue splinter, ST

*Subsequent cue is natural and NF (jump invit)
**Re-cue is forcing, natural if minor; major is general force (presumed) or natural (NF) if repeated or game

1♣ 2♦  P  ?  analogous for any 1-level overcall  602
2N 9-11, stopper, I
3♦ 7-10, 3+ cards
Jump suit natural, F below game
3N 12-15, stopper
4♦ weak (4-7), 4+ cards
Other analogous to above

Rebids by overcaller

Unless forced or invited, overcaller generally should pass with 10-12; may act again with 13-15, and should act again with 16-18.

A second-round bid in opener’s minor is a cue-bid only if partner has acted; else natural showing a 2-suiter.

1♣ 1♠  P  2♥ analogues for cue-bid response to 603
P  ?  any overcall

Same suit minimum, nondescript, NF
Below same ambiguous, natural, F
Above same accept, natural, F (below game)

After a negative double

1♣ 1♥  X  ?  analogous for any 1-level overcall  604
Rdbl 11+, implies no fit, creates force
Cue 11+, shows fit
2N 8-10, 4+ card fit
Other unchanged

1♣ 2♥  X  ?  analogous for any 2-level overcall  605
2N unchanged
Other analogous to above

After an enemy bid

If our nonjump suit overcall is followed by any bid below 2N (including 1N and new suits) the following agreements apply.

Dbl responsive*  606
Cue 11+, shows fit, stopper if choice of cues
Other unchanged

*implies doubleton support if only 1 unbid suit

After a major raise, or any bid showing a major fit:
Responsive doubles are extended thru 3♠  607

After a cue-bid of our overcall, double is:
1. Responsive if unpassed hand and cue is not GF  608
2. Lead-directing if passed hand or cue is GF

Weak Jump Overcalls

After an enemy opening bid of 1 of a suit, all jumps in unbid suits are weak, roughly by the rule of 2, 3 or 4+ per vulnerability.

1♣ 2♥  P  ?  analogous for any 2-level jump overcall  611
Cue asks for stopper
Other weak two-bid structure

Also use weak two-bid structure if RHO acts.

1♥ 3♦  P  ?  analogous for any 3-level jump overcall or 4♠  612
Cue below 3N asks for stopper
Other preemptive opening structure

Note that 4♣ or 4♦ trump ask still applies.

1♣ 4♦  P  ?  analogous for any 4♥ or 4♠ overcall  613
4♠ cue control ask
Other preemptive opening structure

Note that 5-level control ask still applies.
Two-Suited Overcalls

After an enemy opening bid of 1 of a suit, a cue-bid (Michaels) shows both majors over a minor, or the unbid major plus either minor over a major; an overcall of 2 N (unusual) shows the two lowest unbid suits. Shape is at least 5-5 (5-4 after cue of minor) and strength is either weak (5-11 HCP) or strong (16+ HCP). With in-between hands (12-15 HCP) overcall in one suit and bid the other.

1 ♠ 2 ♠ P ?
2 ♦ 6+ cards, NF
2 ♦ 2 ♦ preference
2 N game or ST, F
Cue asks for stopper
3 ♦ 6+ cards, I
3 ♦ 3 ♠ weak, 4+ cards
3 N natural, NF
4 ♦ 4 ♠ weak or to make
1 ♦ 2 ♦ P ?
3 ♠ 6+ cards, NF
4 ♠ 6+ cards, I
Other analogous to above

1 ♠ 2 ♠ P ?
2 ♠ preference
3 ♠ pass or correct to 3 ♦
3 ♦ 6+ cards, NF
4 ♦ 4 ♦ 6+ cards, I
Other analogous to above

Note that only the cheapest club bid is “pass or correct.”

1 ♠ 2 ♠ P ?
3 ♠ preference
Other analogous to above

1 ♦ 2 N P ? analogous for any suit opening
3 ♠ 3 ♠ preference
Cue asks for stopper
3 ♠ 6+ cards, NF
3 N natural, NF
4 ♦ 4 ♦ 5 ♠ weak or to make

Rebids by two-suited overcaller

1 ♠ 2 ♠ P 2 N analogous for 1 ♦ 2 ♦
P ?
3 ♠ longer hearts
3 ♦ longer spades
3 ♦ worst, 5-5
3 ♦ not worst, 5-5, F
1 ♦ 2 ♦ P 2 N analogous for 1 ♦ 2 ♦
P ?
3 ♠ 3 ♠ worst, natural, NF
3 ♠ not worst, clubs
3 ♠ not worst, diamonds, F

If two-suited overcaller bids again when not forced or invited:

1 ♦ 2 ♦ P 2 ♦ analogous for similar auctions
P ?
3 N stopper (in cue)
Cheapest real worst
Other not worst

After a double

1 ♦ 2 ♦ X ? analogous for any two-suited overcall
Pass no clear preference
Rdbl strong, creates force
3 ♦ •6+ cards, NF
Other unchanged

After a bid

1 ♦ 2 ♦ 3 ♦ ? analogous for cases with both our suits known
Dbl penalty*
Shown suit competitive, NF
Other suit 6+ cards, NF
Cue asks for stopper (below 3 N)
Cue past 3 N control, ST
Jump shown 1 if below game
*lead directing if cue of our suit

Showed major competitive, NF
Cheapest minor competitive, pass or correct
Other analogous to above
Three-Level Cue Overcall

After an enemy opening of 1 of a suit, a 3-level cue-bid as our side’s first action shows a 1-suited hand (not suit bid) with 9+ playing tricks and at most 1 loser in the long suit. Typically this is to seek a stopper for 3 N. If overcaller bids 4 or 4 next, he confirms a splinter in the cue-bid suit, else start with double.

1♥ 3♣ P ?
3♦ •no ace, no stopper
3♥ 3♣ 6+ cards, F
3N stopper
4♥ •1 ace, no stopper
4♦ •2 aces*
4♥ 4♠ 7+ cards, NF
4N •king stopper + 1 ace, NF

Balancing Actions

If an enemy opening bid of 1 of a suit is passed:

1♦  P  P  ?  analogous for all suit openings
Dbl  11+, takeout
1♥ 1♠  8-15, 5+ cards (rare 4)
1N  11-15 (system on)
2♥  10-15, 5+ cards
Cue  two-suited overcall
Jump suit 6+ strong cards, 1 trick less than bid
2N  19-21 (system on)
Jump cue three-level cue overcall
3N  16-21, based on long suit

After interference

1♥ 3♥ X ?  analogous for any opening
Pass  no stopper, no values
Rdbl  ace in that suit
Other* unchanged
*except cheapest minor shows at least a king, else pass

After Two Enemy Bids

After an enemy opening bid of 1 of a suit and an enemy response, most actions are the same as immediately over the suit opened, in which case responding structures would be the same too. The following differences apply.

1♥ P 1♥ ?  analogous for any suit response of 1
2♥  13-18, 5+ good hearts
2N  same as 2 but more shape
3♥  same as 3 but related to hearts

Respond to any of above with related structures.

1♣  P  2♣  ?  analogous for any forcing response of 2
2♥ 3♥  11+, 5+ good cards
Other analogous to above

1♥ P 2♥ ?  analogous for any raise thru 3♥
Nonjump suit 11+, 5+ good cards
Jump 3 suit 6+ cards, 8 tricks, I
Jump 4♥ 4♦ natural + lower unbid major
Cue 4 level highest + other
Artificial responses

An artificial response is literally ignored. The meaning of our actions is based on the strain it showed.

1 ♢ P 1 ♣ ? 1. spades 664
Dbi 1 ♣ 2 ♠ takeout of clubs and spades
1 ♣ ♠ 2 ♣ ♠ hearts + diamonds
2 ♠ weak (rare)
3 ♠ ♠ 3 ♠ 3-level cue overcall
3 ♣ ♠ 3 ♣ weak

Subsequent bidding

After a takeout double with two enemy suits shown:

1 ♢ P 1 ♣ X analogous for 1 ♣ opening 665
P ?
Any club bid natural
Other unchanged

Responsive doubles do not apply.

If two cue-bids are available, the one chosen shows a stopper.

Additional Agreements

After an enemy opening bid of 1 of a suit, the following structures (defined earlier) apply in full if the conditions are met.
1. Major suit game tries
2. Competitive doubles
3. Cooperative doubles

Belated doubles

If opponents have made at least two bids (but not all four suits) and we have not acted, our second-round or later double is:

Raised suit takeout thru 4 ♣ 672
Natural suit takeout thru 2 ♠
1 N direct takeout
1 N passout takeout if both majors unbid

Otherwise a second-round or later double is penalty (implying previous trap pass) or lead-directing.

Passed hand changes

Any action by a passed hand keeps its normal shape context, but strength is limited by failure to open.

Exception: Direct 1 N overcall shows the two lowest unbid suits (at least 5-4).

Other Defensive Bidding

Defense to Notrump Openings

After an enemy 1 N opening bid, regardless of strength, a modified version of Astro is used.

1 N ? 691
Dbi 16+ HCP, optional
2 ♠ *hearts + any other
2 ♣ spades + any other
2 ♠ 2 ♠ 6+ cards
2 N *both majors or both minors
3 ♣ 3 ♣ 6+ cards
Higher suit 6+ strong cards, 1 trick shy of bid

All bids suggest 9-15 HCP, but this is flexible per shape and vulnerability.

Two-suiters imply at least 5-4 shape (either way) but may be 4-4-4-1 (three suits).

With both majors bid 2 ♠ with only 4 spades; 2 ♣ with 5+ spades and 4+ hearts; or 2 N with at least 5-5 and decent game prospects.

1 N X P ? 692
Pass 5+ HCP or no 5+ card suit
Suit bid weak, 5+ cards
2 N any 2-suiter, F until raise or game
Jump suit 5-7 HCP, 6+ cards, I

1 N 2 ♠ P ? 693
Pass 6+ clubs, misfit expected
2 ♠ not 3 hearts
2 ♣ 3+ hearts
2 ♠ 6+ spades
2 N only force, game try
3 ♠ 3 ♠ 3 ♠ 6+ cards, I
3 ♣ 5-7 HCP, 4+ hearts, I

1 N 2 ♣ P 694
3 ♣ not 3 spades
2 ♠ 3+ spades
3 ♠ 6+ clubs
3 ♦ 6+ cards, I
Other analogous to above

1 N 2 ♦ any ? analogous for 2 ♦ overcall 695
Pass 6+ clubs, misfit expected
Suit bid weak, 5+ cards
2 ♦ not 3 hearts
2 ♠ 3+ hearts
2 ♣ 6+ spades
2 N only force, game try
3 ♠ 3 ♠ 3 ♠ 6+ cards, I
3 ♣ 5-7 HCP, 4+ hearts, I
Other analogous to above

Any call weak two-bid structure

3 ♠ 3 ♠ discouraging, assuming minors
3 ♣ 3 ♣ discouraging, assuming majors
3 N *AF, asks definition and range *
4 ♠ 4 ♠ natural, I, assuming minors
4 ♣ 4 ♣ to play, assuming majors

*lower real suit = minimum, higher = extras

If 2 N bidder has unassumed genre he must bid again; suit bids logical; 3 N (forcing) shows extras.
Rebids by Astro bidder

1N 2♣ P 2♦ 697
P ?

Pass diamonds
2♥ 5 hearts, 2nd suit black
2♠ •3-4 spades, only 4 hearts, 4+ minor*
2N •both minors (3 suits)
3♦ 5+ clubs
3♥ 5+ diamonds, I
3◆ 4♣ 4♦ 6+ cards, I

*usually clubs but may be good 4=4=4=1

1N 2♦ P 2♥ 698
P ?

Pass hearts
2♠ 5 spades, either minor
2N both minors (3 suits)
3♣ 3♦ 5+ cards
3♥ •4 hearts, 5+ spades, I
3◆ 4♥ 4♦ 6+ cards, I

1N 2♦ P 2N 699
P ?

3♣ 3♦ minimum, natural
3♥ •minimum, 4 spades
3♠ •extras, 3-4 spades
3N •extras, clubs or diamonds
4♣ 4♦ extras, natural, extreme shape

1N 2♥ P 2N 700
P ?

3♣ 3♦ 3♥ minimum, natural
3♠ •extras, 4 hearts
3N •extras, clubs or diamonds
4♥ 4♦ extras, natural, extreme shape

Rebids by Astro responder

1N 2♠ P 2♦ 701
P 2♥ P ?

2♠ •3+ spades, seeking other suit
2N •both minors, please choose
3♦ 3♦ 6+ cards, NF

1N 2♥ P 2♥ 702
P 2♠ P ?

3♥ 6+ cards, NF
Other same as above

In balancing seat

If an enemy 1N opening is followed by two passes, Astro structure still applies, but minimum strength is lowered.

1N P P ? 703
Dbl 14+ HCP, optional
All bids 7-15 HCP

After interference

1N 2♦ X ? analogous for 2 ♦ Astro 704
P

Pass willing to play if second suit
Relay unwilling to play minor doubled
Rdbl* •5+ cards in relay suit
Other unchanged

*allows Astro bidder a rescue there with 2-3 cards

1N 2♦ X P 705
P ?

Rdbl •4315 shape (allows rescue to 2 ♠)
Other logical

1N 2♠ 2♣ ? analogous for other bids 706
Dbl penalty
2N unchanged
Known suit competitive
Cheapest suit pass or correct
Other suit 6+ cards, NF
Cue asks for stopper (below 3 N)
Cue past 3 N control, ST (known fit)
Jump suit 6+ cards, I below game

1N 2N X ? 707
Pass weak (normal)
Rdbl at least 1 ace
3 suit •1-suited rescue (misfit expected)
Other unchanged

1N 2N 3♣ ? analogous for other bids 708
Dbl penalty (assumes opposite genre)
3 suit competitive, NF, fit exists somewhere
Other unchanged

Other Astro applications

Astro also applies, direct or balancing, in the following situations provided no specific suit has been shown.
1. 2 N or 3 N opening 709
2. 1 N, 2 N or 3 N response to artificial opening
3. 1 N, 2 N or 3 N rebid after two artificial bids

Cases 1 and 2 suggest great shape, few HCP. Case 3 shows full HCP from failure to act previously.

Note that bidding 3 N over 2 N, or 4 N over 3 N, still shows majors or minors, albeit unlikely.

Unusual 2NT opening

2 N1 ? 1. both minors 710
Dbl strength-showing
3 ♣ majors, weak or strong
3 ♦ majors, in-between (12-15 HCP)
Defense to Weak Openings

The following agreements apply when an opponent opens with a natural, nonforcing suit bid from 2♣ thru 5♦, regardless of the strength shown by opener.

2♣ ? analogous for 2♦ opening 721
Dbl 13+, takeout
Unbid suit 13-18, 6+ (good 5) cards
2N 16-18 (system on)
Cue three-level cue overcall
3N* 15-20, usually based on long suit
Jump cue ♠spades + other
4 other minor ♠natural + hearts, NF
Jump suit ♠natural, 1 trick shy of bid
4N two lowest unbid

*Responses to 3N are natural (no transfers). Minor suits forcing; majors nonforcing. Cue-bid shows shortness in their suit with slam interest.

2♥ ? analogous for 2♠ opening 722
4♠ 4♦ ♠natural + unbid major, NF
Jump cue ♠unbid major + minor
Other same as above

3♦ ? analogous for 3♣ opening 723
Dbl 14+, takeout
Unbid suit 13-18, 6+ (good 5) cards
3N 15-20, varied (natural responses)
Cue ♠spades + other
4♥ over 3♠ ♠diamonds + hearts
4N two lowest unbid
Jump suit ♠natural, 1 trick shy of bid

3♥ ? analogous for 3♦ opening 724
Cue ♠other major + minor
Other same as above

4♣ ? analogous for 4♦ opening 725
Dbl 15+, takeout
Cue ♠spades + other, slam I
Other same as above

4♥ ? analogous for 4♣ 5♠ 5♦ openings 726
Dbl 15+, optional*
Unbid suit 13-20, 6+ cards
4N over 4♥ ♠minors
4N over 4♣ ♠any 2-suiter; rarely 3-suiter with void
Cue ♠highest unbid + another, slam I+

*Usually pull with 6+ suit (5+ spades) or 5-5.

Responding agreements

2♥ X P ? analogous for all natural 2-bids 727
2♠ 0-8
2N Lebensohl; relay to 3♣
3♣ 3♦ 9-11, I
3♥ 12+, usually no stopper, GF
3♦ 9-11, 5+ spades, I
3N 10-15, confident stopper
Jump cue 12+, splinter, 3-suiter

2♥ X P 2N analogous for all Lebensohl cases 728
P 3♣ P ?
3♦ or pass 0-8, respective minor
3♥ 4 spades, heart stopper, GF
3♠ 9-11, 4 spades, I
3N 10-15, tentative, not 4 spades
4♦ 4♦ ♠shapely, I

Competitive agreements

If we act and opener’s partner bids:
2♥ X 3♥ ? analogous for all takeout doubles 730
Dbl penalty
Unbid suit 6-9 below game; 6-15 if game
Cue 10+, general force (below 3N)
Raise 8-10 below game; 8-15 if game
Cue past 3N 13+, fit + control
Jump suit self-playable, slam I
Jump raise 11-15 if game
Jump cue 13+, splinter raise

Responsive doubles do not apply after weak openings.

If we pass and opener’s partner bids:
2♥ P 3♥ ? analogous for similar auctions 732
Any as over opening bid*

*except only cue is opener’s suit. Bidding responder’s suit is natural and may expose a psych.

In balancing seat

2♥ P P ? analogous for higher suit openings 733
Any same but all ranges 2 points less

For example, 2N would show 14-16 instead of 16-18.
Responing structure is the same (including Lebensohl after double) with ranges upped by 2 points.
Defense to Artificial Openings

Over a strong (16+) artificial 1♣, 1♦, 2♣ or 2♦ opening, all initial actions show weak hands, typically 5-11 HCP.

1♣¹? 1. 16+, artificial 741
Pass* unlimited
Db1 clubs
1 suit natural
1 N •majors or minors
2 ♣ •hearts + any other
2 ♦ •spades + any other
2 ♣ 2 ♠ natural
2 N •majors or minors
3+ suit natural

*With a good hand, compete next round as if all artificial bids did not exist; e.g., 1♣ P 1 P; 1 N 2 ♣ is Astro.

With both majors follow Astro rules regarding shape.

Choice between 1 N and 2 N is simply a matter of safety vs. preemption.

After a 2♣ opening everything is the same but one level higher.

After a strong, artificial 1♦ or 2♦, only change is that double = diamonds.

The same structure applies after a response to the forcing opening (thru 2 N) provided no specific suit has been shown; double shows the suit doubled, or both majors if the response is 1 N or 2 N.

Responses

If our bid shows a 2-suiter, follow the Astro structure for all responses and rebids.

Otherwise, all suit responses (including jumps) are natural and NF, usually weak. A response of 1 N or 2 N (cheapest available) is the only force, like an invitational cue-bid; 3 N is always NF to play.

Defense to Transfer Bids

If the enemy opening bid is artificial but shows one specified suit (transfer preempts, Namyats) the following agreements apply.

3 ♦¹? analogous for other openings 751
Pass unlimited
Db1 11+, takeout of real suit
Other as if real suit were bid

Pass and double can be further defined on the next round:
Pass then dbl 15+, optional 752
Db1 then dbl 15+, takeout

Transfer responses

If the enemy opening is 1 N, 2 N or 3 N, and the response is artificial showing one specified suit (Jacoby, minor-suit transfer, Texas) the following agreements apply.

1 N P 2 ♦¹? analogous for other responses 753
1. spades
Pass unlimited
Db1 lead-directing
Cue 2 level two-suited overcall
Nonjump suit 11+, 5+ good cards
Cue 3 level three-level cue overcall
Jump 3 suit 6+ cards, 8 tricks, I
Jump 4 ♣ 4 ♦ natural + lower unshown major
Cue 4 level highest unshown + other

Pass and double can be further defined on the next round:
Pass then dbl takeout thru 4 ♦ 754
Db1 then dbl takeout thru 4 ♦ with emphasis on first suit doubled

Junkyard Defense

Applies to opening two-bids that do not show 5+ cards in the suit bid nor a specific one-suited hand. Current list includes:

1. Flannery 2 ♦ (5+ hearts, 4 spades) 761
2. Roman 2 ♡ 2 ♦ (3 unknown suits)
3. Precision 2 ♦ 2 ♡ (3 known suits)
4. Meckwell 2 ♠ (3 suits, 2 of which known)
5. Meckwell 2 ♣ (weak preempt any suit)
6. Multi 2 ♦ (unknown major, may include strong option)

Note that Flannery 2 ♣ (not included) would be treated as a natural two-bid.

2 ♦¹? analogous for all such 2-bids 762
1. on junk list
Pass unlimited
Db1 15+ HCP, nondescript
Cue 2 level two-suited overcall
Cue 3 level three-level cue overcall
Cue 4 level highest + other
Suit 13-18, 6+ (good 5) cards
2 N 15-18, usually 5+ minor (system on)
Jump suit 6+ strong cards, 1 trick shy of bid
3 N 15-20, usually long suit (natural responses)

Suit is a “cue-bid” only if opener showed 5+ cards in it, which for the current list would be only hearts for Flannery.

Pass followed by a double of a natural suit is takeout thru 4 ♦.
After enemy response

2 ♦️ P 2 N ? analogues for all such 2-bids
1. on junk list

Any same as above

2 ♦️P 2 ♠️2 ? analogous for any NF suit response
1. on junk list
2. nonforcing

Db1 takeout thru 4 ♦️
Other same as above

Lead-Directing Doubles

Doubles of artificial suit bids are lead-directing unless otherwise defined or one of the exceptions below. Double by an unpassed hand of:
1. 2 ♠️ response to weak 1 N* is strength-showing
2. Artificial response (thru 3 ♦️) to a natural suit opening is takeout of the suit opened
3. Splinter bid as our first action shows length and suggests sacrifice
   *defined as 15 HCP maximum

Double of notrump

Unless otherwise defined, the double of a notrump bid by non-leader is penalty and requests, in order of priority:
1. Leader’s suit if both of us have shown suits
2. Dummy’s shown suit unless leader has strong safe lead
3. Leader’s shown suit
4. Doubler’s shown suit
5. Leader’s weaker major

Double of suit slam

Double of a voluntarily bid suit slam by non-leader requests, in order of priority:
1. Side suit shown by the opponents
2. Leader’s longest suit not bid by our side

Runout Defense

Applies if an opponent is the first to run after our strength-showing double in the following situations:
1. Double of any notrump bid where Astro applies
2. Double of 2 ♠️ response to weak 1 N opening
3. Double of junkyard two-bid or 2 N response to same
4. Double of unusual 2 N opening

1 N X 2 ♠️1 ? analogues for any runout
1. clubs + other

Pass weak or 3+ cards in runout
Double takeout of runout, usually doubleton
Suit 5+ cards, NF
Jump suit 6+ cards, I
Cue shortness in runout

“Runout” is defined as the actual suit bid, unless it showed another specified suit and not 4 cards in the bid suit, then the specified suit.

1 N X 2 ♠️1 P analogues for any runout
1. both majors

Pass 3+ cards in runout*
Other same as above
   *inferring weakness from partner’s pass

1 N X P P analogues for any runout
2 ♦️ ?
Pass 3+ cards in runout
Other same as above

1 N X P P analogues for any runout
2 ♦️ P ?
Pass weak
Other same as above

Further notes

The runout defense applies thru 4 ♦️ and after multiple runouts, provided we have only passed after the first runout and not passed the same suit twice. In other words, if we bid, double for takeout, or one of us meets a suit he passed at a lower level, all doubles are penalty.

Slam Bidding Methods

General Approach

Most slam auctions begin with suit agreement, which can occur in four ways, all agreeing the suit bid or the last shown suit:
1. Raise, including artificial fit-showing bids
2. Preference, even if not ensuring an 8+ fit
3. Splinter bid, including self-splinters*
4. Advance control-bid
   *but excluding pattern splinters to show a 3-suiter or the remaining shape of a 2-suiter

After suit agreement in a strong auction (game tries nonexistent) our next bid has the following meaning:
Notrump natural (except 4 N if Blackwood)
Showed suit natural
Enemy suit ace or shortness
Unshown suit control-showing*

*except after a preference that did not show normal support, then natural; e.g., 1 ♠️ 1 N; 3 ♥️ 3 ♠️; 4 ♠️ = 3-4 clubs, and 5 ♠️ or 6 ♠️ is a potential contract.

Note that two suits can be agreed, but if it happens that’s the limit; a bid in either remaining suit is control-showing.
**Control-showing auctions**

A control-showing auction can be started only after suit agreement. Typically this requires about an ace better than a minimum GF, or suitable values if suit agreement was issued by a splinter or advance control-bid.

Once a control-showing auction is started, bids have the following meanings:

- Notrump* natural, discouraging
- Agreed suit natural, discouraging
- Other suit control-bid (even if shown by our side)

*excluding 4 N if Blackwood and 5 N

A control-bid below game does not require extra strength (just suitable values).

Bypassing a suit does not deny that control, i.e., it may be planned to save bidding space at next turn.

A control-bid beyond 5 of the highest agreed suit confirms all suits are controlled and that a grand slam is possible.

**Control-bids**

Guidelines for the meaning of the first control-bid in a particular suit:

- Unshown of 3 ace or king, 4+ cards (rare 3)
- Unshown of 2 ace or king* or shortness
- Only unshown ace or shortness
- Enemy shown ace or shortness
- Splinter suit ace or void
- Partner’s showname or king
- Your shown ace

*With ace in one suit and king in the other, prefer to show the king below game.

Modification: If beyond the game level of the highest agreed suit, a control-bid shows first-round control.

A second control-bid in the same suit, or a redouble of doubled control-bid, shows:

1. Ace or void if prior bid could be shortness
2. Ace or king if prior bid showed ace or king
3. King or shortness if prior bid showed ace

**Gerber**

A bid of 4 ♠ is Gerber only as an immediate response to 1 N or 2 N when “system on” applies. This holds with or without interference; so if it is possible to respond 4 ♠, it is Gerber.

Gerber does not apply after Stayman, notrump rebids, or anywhere else.

Answers to Gerber:

- 4 ♠ 0 or 4 aces
- 4 ♠ 1 ace
- 4 ♠ 2 aces
- 4N 3 aces

Continuations by Gerber bidder:

- 5 ♣ asks for kings*, confirms all 4 aces
- Other sign-off

*Answer as above but 1 level higher.

**Over interference**

If Gerber 4 ♠ is doubled:

- Pass* no club control
- Other as usual with club control

*Asker may redouble to re-ask for aces.

DOPI if an opponent bids below 5 N:

- Dbl 0 or 4 aces
- Pass 1 ace
- Cheapest bid 2 aces
- Next bid 3 aces

DEPO if an opponent bids 5 N or beyond:

- Dbl 0, 2 or 4 aces
- Pass 1 or 3 aces

**Four Notrump Meanings**

Four notrump is natural if no major suit is agreed and we have bid notrump naturally. The following notrump bids are not considered natural:

1. Forcing 1 N response to a major opening
2. Responder’s 2 N rebid after opener’s reverse bid
3. Responder’s 2 N waiting after a 2 ♠ opening

Despite both majors bid, neither is agreed.

**Takeout 4NT**

Four notrump is takeout if partner has not acted, or if all of the following are true:

1. You have not previously acted
2. Partner has bid or doubled at cheapest available level
3. Last bid is 4 ♢ or 4 ♠ by an opponent
4. At least two unbid suits exist not counting spades

Despite both majors bid, neither is agreed.

Answers to Gerber:

- 4 ♠ 0 or 4 aces
- 4 ♠ 1 ace
- 4 ♠ 2 aces
- 4N 3 aces

1 ♠ P 2 N P natural

3 ♣ P 4 N

Despite both majors bid, neither is agreed.

1 N P 2 ♠ P natural
2 ♠ P 3 ♣ P
4 ♠ P 4 N

1 ♦ 4 ♠ 4 N takeout

But if opponent bid 4 ♣, it would be Blackwood.

1 ♦ 1 ♠ 4 ♣ 4 N takeout

But if partner bid 2 ♠, it would be Blackwood.
Blackwood

If 4 N does not meet either of the natural or takeout conditions, it is Blackwood.

Key suit determination

When 4 N is Blackwood there is always one key suit, determined by this priority:
1. Agreed suit, higher if two
2. Last shown suit, higher if simultaneous
3. Highest implied suit

1 ♠ 2 N P 4 N diamonds key (higher of simultaneous) 832

1 ♠ X 3 ♠ 4 N hearts key (highest implied) 833

Key-card responses

Standard Roman key-card steps:
5 ♠ 0 or 3 key cards 834
5 ♠ 1 or 4 key cards
5 ♠ 2 or 5 key cards
5 ♠* 2 or 5 key cards, QOEL

*Eliminate if key suit is hearts to allow Blackwood use with 1 key card.

Continuations

Blackwood bidder may next sign off in 5 of any agreed suit (or shown suit if key suit was inferred without an explicit raise), any shown suit beyond 5 of agreed suit, or 6 N. Exception: If Blackwood responder has 4 or 5 key cards, there are no sign-offs at the 5 level.

Non-sign-off bids by Blackwood bidder:
Cheapest suit QOEL ask
Other suit relay to play 5 N (rare)
5 N king ask, confirms 5 key cards + QOEL

Responses to QOEL ask:
Key suit denies QOEL
Other suit QOEL, that king
5 N QOEL, asking suit king*

*or no king if key suit sign-off is at 6 level

Responses to 5 N specific king ask:
Key suit no king
Other suit that king
6 N two kings, doubts about seven
7 any natural, source of tricks, NF

Continuations after QOEL or 5 N ask:
Unshown suit grand ST, nonspecific
Other sign-off

Showing a void

A void may be shown (optional) over Blackwood:
5 N 2 key cards + void 839
6 of suit* 1 or 3 key cards + void

*Below key suit shows void unless obvious (e.g., from splinter) then a specific king. Key suit means void (or king) is higher ranking.

After 5 N, asker may continue with 6 ♠ (if not key suit) to inquire similarly.

Exclusion Blackwood

Five of a suit is exclusion Blackwood if and only if:
1. Jump bid that is a splinter by system agreement 840
2. Repeat splinter by player who previously splintered

Normal step responses but do not count the splinter ace.

Note that 4 N is never exclusion Blackwood now, even by a player who just previously splintered.

Over interference

If an opponent doubles 4 N:
Rdbl 0 or 3 key cards, desire to play 4 N 841
Pass 1 or 4 key cards, desire to play 4 N
Other unchanged

DOPI if an opponent bids below 6 of key suit:
Dbl 0 or 3 key cards 842
Pass 1 or 4 key cards
Cheapest bid 2 or 5 key cards
Next bid* 2 or 5 key cards, QOEL

*Eliminate if cheapest bid is key suit.

DEPO if an opponent bids 6 of key suit or beyond:
Dbl 0, 2 or 4 key cards 843
Pass 1, 3 or 5 key cards

Super Gerber

Super Gerber is a way to ask for key cards with 4 ♠ or 4 ♦ when 4 N would be inconvenient or natural.

Four of the highest unshown major is super Gerber if all of the following are true:
1. We opened 1 ♦, 1 ♦, 1 ♠, 1 N, 2 ♠ or 2 N 851
2. We did not make a weak jump shift response
3. No opponent has bid (double is not a bid)
4. We have shown at least one minor suit
5. We have not raised or agreed a major suit

1 ♠ P 3 N P super Gerber 852
4 ♦

Note the rule prevails over possible natural interpretation.
Corollary: When super Gerber applies, 4 N is natural.

\begin{align*}
1\spadesuit & \ P \ 2\heartsuit & \ P \ \text{quantitative slam invitation} \quad 853 \\
3\clubsuit & \ P \ 4\ N \quad (4 \heartsuit \ would \ be \ super \ Gerber)
\end{align*}

“Shown” suits are generally obvious, but some gray areas exist. The following are considered to be shown suits:

1. Value jump after 1 N forcing response \quad 854
2. Opener’s rebid after inverted minor raise
3. Opener’s major rebid after minor-suit Stayman
4. Fit-implying rebid by notrump bidder unless the only unbid major

\begin{align*}
1\spadesuit & \ P \ 2\heartsuit & \ P \ \text{super Gerber} \quad 855 \\
2\spadesuit & \ P \ 3\heartsuit & \ P \ \text{(heart suit not shown)} \\
3\ N & \ P \ 4\spadesuit
\end{align*}

**Key suit determination**

Super Gerber always has a key minor suit:

1. Agreed minor, diamonds if both \quad 856
2. Last shown minor

**Key-card responses**

Standard Roman key-card steps:

\begin{align*}
\text{Step 1} & : \ 0 \ or \ 3 \ key \ cards \\
\text{Step 2} & : \ 1 \ or \ 4 \ key \ cards \\
\text{Step 3} & : \ 2 \ or \ 5 \ key \ cards \\
\text{Step 4*} & : \ 2 \ or \ 5 \ key \ cards, \ \text{QOEL}
\end{align*}

*Eliminate if 3rd step is key suit.

Super Gerber bidder may then sign off in 4 N, 6 N, or 5-7 of any shown suit.

Continuations by super Gerber bidder:

**Asking major**

King ask, confirms 5 KC + QOEL \quad 858

Unshown suit*QOEL ask

5 N choice of slam, F

*If responder holds 4 or 5 key cards, this can be an agreed or shown suit, since asker could not wish to sign off.

Responses to QOEL ask:

Key suit denies QOEL \quad 859

5 N QOEL, no king or option not to show*

Other suit QOEL, that king

*Showing a king beyond 6 of key suit is discretionary.

Responses to specific king ask:

Key suit no king \quad 860

5 N king in asking major

Other suit that king

6 N two kings, doubts about seven

7 any natural, source of tricks, NF

Continuations after QOEL or specific king ask:

Unshown suit*grand ST, nonspecific \quad 861

Other sign-off

*If beyond 6 of key suit, rejection is 6 N.

---

**Over interference**

If super Gerber is doubled:

Pass* no control in major doubled \quad 862

Other *as usual with control in major doubled

*Asker may redouble to re-ask for key cards.

**DOPI** if an opponent bids below 6 of key suit:

Dbl 0 or 3 key cards \quad 863

Pass 1 or 4 key cards

Cheapest bid 2 or 5 key cards

Next bid* 2 or 5 key cards, QOEL

*Eliminate if cheapest bid is key suit.

**DEPO** if an opponent bids 6 of key suit or beyond:

Dbl 0, 2 or 4 key cards \quad 864

Pass 1, 3 or 5 key cards

**Trump Asking Bid**

A bid of 4 ♠ (or 4 ♦ if partner bid clubs) is a trump ask in the following situations:

1. Response to weak two-bid \quad 871
2. Rebid by 2 N responder to weak two-bid
3. Response 3 of suit or 4 ♠ opening or jump overcall

Exception: If RHO doubles or bids over partner’s last bid, trump ask must be a jump (else natural).

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{l}
2 ♠ & 4 ♠ & trump ask \quad 872 \\
2 ♦ & P & 2 N & trump ask \quad 873 \\
3 ♠ & P & 4 ♦ & \\
3 ♠ & P & 4 ♠ & trump ask \quad 874 \\
1 ♦ & 3 ♠ & 3 ♠ & 4 ♠ & natural \quad 875
\end{tabular}
\end{center}

**Responses and follow-ups**

Responses are by steps, skipping over the trump suit:

Trump suit worst \quad 876

Step 1 ace or king

Step 2 A-Q or K-Q

Step 3 A-K

Step 4 A-K-Q

Continuations by asker:

4 N Blackwood (regular key-card) \quad 877

Other sign-off

**Over interference**

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{l}
3 ♠ & P & 4 ♠ & X & analogous for double of any trump ask \quad 878 \\
\end{tabular}
\end{center}

Pass ace or king, terrible hand

Rdbl ace or king, splinter in suit doubled

Other unchanged
Voluntary Bid of Five

A voluntary bid of 5 in a major invites slam:
1. If we have not made a weak bid, or
2. If we are at 4 or 4 with no enemy action, or
3. On the second round of bidding or later

\[ 1 \heartsuit 4 \heartsuit 5 \spadesuit \] slam I

\[ 4 \diamondsuit P 5 \heartsuit \] slam I

Note that 5 \heartsuit would be blocking if opening were 2 or 3, or if next hand bid or doubled.

A jump to 5 in a minor invites slam if a bid of 4 would be natural and forcing.

\[ 1 \spadesuit P 2 \heartsuit P \] slam I

\[ 3 \clubsuit P 5 \spadesuit \]

Continuations

The slam invitation asks for one of the following, in order of priority:
1. Unshown suit control if we have shown 3 suits
2. Enemy suit control if not already shown
3. Good trumps relative to the bidding

If the bid asks for control:
Pass no control
5N guarded king
Trump suit control, usually singleton
Other suit control-bid, ace or void in asked suit

If the bid asks for good trumps:
Pass poor trumps
Step 1 ace or king
Step 2 A-Q or K-Q
Step 3 A-K
Step 4 A-K-Q
Trump suit accept, no interest in 7

Note steps are identical to the trump asking bid.

Five Notrump Meanings

Five notrump, when not part of another convention such as Blackwood, can have one of four meanings: takeout, invitation to 7N, trump ask (GSF) or “pick a slam.” In all cases it is forcing.

Takeout 5NT

Five notrump is for takeout, asking lower suits first:
1. If partner has not acted, or
2. If a nonjump on the first round of bidding

\[ 3 \heartsuit 3 \spadesuit 5 \diamondsuit 5N \] takeout for minors

Invitation to 7NT

Five notrump invites 7N if we have shown a balanced hand and no specific suit has been shown.

\[ 2 \spadesuit P 2 \heartsuit P \] 7N invitation
\[ 2 \diamondsuit P 2 \spadesuit P \]
\[ 2N P 5 N \]

Opener may bid 6 of a suit (forcing) to suggest 7 in that suit. Bidding cannot end below 6N.

Grand slam force

Five notrump is a trump ask:
1. If a major (and no other) suit is agreed, or
2. If our only shown suit is a major by partner* excluding the first-round nonjump takeout case

Responses are by steps (same as trump asking bid):
Step 1 ace or king
Step 2 A-Q or K-Q
Trump suit worst
Step 3 A-K
Step 4 A-K-Q

Pick a Slam

In all other cases, 5N asks partner to choose a slam:
1. Between two previously shown suits, or
2. Between one previously shown suit and 6N

Control Asking Bid

A response of 5 ♦ or 5 ♣ (or 5 ♠ to 4 ♠) is a control ask, provided RHO passes over partner’s:
1. Opening bid of 4 ♦ or 4 ♣
2. Double or triple-jump overcall of 4 ♦ or 4 ♣

\[ 4 \diamondsuit P 5 \spadesuit \] control ask
\[ 1 \heartsuit 4 \spadesuit P 5 \heartsuit \] control ask

Responses and follow-ups

Responses are by steps, skipping over the trump suit:
Trump suit no control
Step 1 king or singleton
Step 2 ace or void
Continuations by asker:
5N trump ask
Other sign-off
Over interference

4♦ P 5♦ X  analogus for double of any control ask

Pass  king or singleton, terrible hand
Rdbl  king or singleton, excellent trumps
Other  unchanged

4♣ P 5♣ 5♡  analogus for any bid over any control ask

Dbl  no control
Pass  king or singleton
Bid  ace or void

Another implementation of DOPI.

Defensive Carding

Notrump Opening Leads

Honor leads:

A K Q 10 x, A K J 10 x, A K x x x (or better)
A K Q x, A K J x, A K 10 x, K Q J x, K Q 10 x
K Q 10 9 x, A Q J x, Q J 10 x, Q J x
A J 10 x, K J 10 x, J 10 9 x, J 10 8 x
A Q 10 9, A 10 9, K 10 9, Q 10 9, 10 9 8 x, 10 9 7 x
Doubleton or tripleton A K, K Q, Q J, J 10, 10 9

Spot leads:

A J x x x, K 9 8 7 x, Q J x x, J 10 x x, etc.
K x x x (optional depending on hand)
A x x, K x x, Q x x, J x x, 10 x x
K x x* (or weaker), x x (any doubleton)

*Lead low if partner showed 5+ cards (including suspect third/fourth major openings) and you have not raised.

Suit Opening Leads

Honor leads:

A K x* (thru 4 ♠), A K x (above 4 ♠), K Q x
Q J 10 x, Q J 19 x, K J 10 x, J 10 9 x, J 10 8 x
K 10 9, Q 10 9, 10 9 8 x, 10 9 7 x
Doubleton or tripleton A K, K Q, Q J, J 10, 10 9

*except in partner`s suit always lead king from A-K

Spot leads (3+ cards):

Lowest from odd lengths
Second* or third from even lengths

*If affordable, which is always presumed true in partner`s shown suit. For blind leads from four cards, lead second if you have a touching card (J 9 8 2, 8 7 4 2) or if the six or lower (Q 6 4 2); else prefer third (Q 7 4 2).

The purpose of second-best is to allow suit preference on the next round.

Leads After Trick One

Second honor lead in the same suit:

Short holding  top card*  941
4+ cards  bottom of sequence

*warns partner not to overtake or unblock

Second lead in the same suit, spot card:

Odd residue  lowest
Even residue  highest affordable

Exception: At notrump lead original fourth best if there could be any ambiguity.

Honor leads in another suit:

Ace  denies king
King  unchanged
Queen  unchanged
Jack  J 10 (denies higher)
Ten  A J 10, K J 10, A 10 9, K 10 9, Q 10 9
Nine  10 9 (except doubleton)

Exceptions occur for technical necessity, such as from K-J-9 thru dummy’s Q-x-x.

Note that a 10 lead promises a top honor unless doubleton.

Spot leads in another suit at notrump:

Fourth best  encourages return of suit
High or seconddiscourages return of suit

From 9-x-x with the 10 not in view, lead middle to avoid confusion with showing the 10.

Spot leads in another suit at suit contracts are unchanged

Exception: Do not lead a nine (e.g., K-J-9-x) if it could be confused with showing 10-9-x-(x).

Honor Signals

Honor signals (following suit or discarding) are standard showing strength:

Ace (discard)  solid suit
King  solid except ace
Queen  A Q J, Q J (usually 10 too)
Jack  A J 10, K J 10, J 10*
Ten  A Q 10, A 10 9, K 10 9, Q 10 9, 10 9*

*ambiguous so avoid if partner would expect better

When splitting honors as second hand, play as above if intention is to inform partner.

Exception: Second-hand hop with a king shows nothing in particular (just like winning an ace) because it may be necessary to gain the lead.
Count Signals

General strategy against all contracts is to show count, both in following suit and discarding, regardless of who led the suit. Tend to discard first from the suit(s) you do not want led; hence partner can infer positive attitude from a suit not discarded, or discarded last.

Standard count signals:
- 3, 5, 7 cards: lowest
- 4 or 8 cards: second highest (if affordable)
- 2 or 6 cards: highest affordable

The distinct plays from even lengths can be helpful, e.g., if partner sees the highest outstanding card he knows you have a doubleton or 6.

Tens and jacks may also be count signals, provided the play is safe and won’t be confused with strength-showing.

Queens and higher are never count signals.

Modifications and exceptions

Notrump opening leads with special requests:
- Ace: unblock K, Q or J, else count attitude
- King: jack, hop ace, else attitude
- Queen: unblock 10, hop ace or king, else count

Regardless of the lead at notrump, if dummy wins a blank ace, king or queen, signal attitude.

Other leads with special requests:
- Ace not A-K*: attitude

*Beyond 4 ♠, after trick one, or with king in dummy

Residual count

If count is not shown on the first round of a suit, either because an honor had to be played, or because another signal had priority, count is shown on the second round:
- Odd residue: lowest
- Even residue: highest affordable

Note that an odd residue indicates an original even number of cards, and vice versa.

Suit Preference Signals

Suit preference is routinely shown after count with the next play. Assume the underlined card was played first:
- 6 4 2: 6 shows high SP, 4 shows low 971
- 10 6 4 3: 4 shows high SP, 3 shows low
- Q 9 7 5 2: 9 shows high SP, 5 shows low
- 2 9 7 6 5 2: 8 shows high SP, 2 shows low

Suit preference may be negligible, since you must go one way or the other with 3-4 cards. Neutral possibilities exist with 5+ cards, but readability is doubtful, so general strategy should be to choose.

Overriding cases

Suit preference applies immediately on the suit led in the following cases:
1. Opening lead is partner’s shown 5+ card suit*
2. Opening lead is dummy’s singleton at suit bid and leader wins trick
3. Ace lead at suit bid with K-x, K-Q-x (or longer) in dummy and third hand marked with 3+ cards
4. Opening lead is an obvious singleton and third hand has a choice of plays
5. Leading or following to suit partner is expected to ruff
6. Removing declarer’s last stopper at notrump
7. Choice of insignificant cards in a suit declarer is out of (or will be on current trick)

*Suit preference is strong if leader wins the trick, i.e., an immediate shift is usually desired.

A jack is defined as low suit preference if leader could have the queen and need to force second hand to cover.

In the above seven cases a middle card shows no preference but may have other implications:
- Case 1: Continue my suit 973
- Case 2-3: Continue suit led or shift to trumps
- Case 4-5: My entry may be in trumps
- Case 6-7: No preference or nondisclosure

Trump Signals

The only trump signal is the traditional echo (or non-echo) to show the number of trumps held. This is routine and does not imply the ability to ruff.
- 2 or 4 trumps: up-the-line 981
- 3 or 5 trumps: high-low (if affordable)

Exception: Do not high-low with A-x-x or K-x-x.

When echoing from equal trumps, play the higher card first. This may reveal to partner whether your trump holding is promotable.