



The Royal Viking SYSTEM RVS 2017

Copy curt källström

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| International Convention Card | |
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ROYAL VIKING SYSTEM - SUMMARY

| Opening | Cards | Points | Conventions | Remarks |
|---------|-------------|-------------------------|---|--|
| 1♣ 1♦ | 3 + | 11 + | 1♣ - 1NT = 8 – 10 HCP, 1♦ - 1NT = 6 – 10 HCP 1♣ - 1♦ = Walsh, no 4 card M, 6 – 8 HCP 2 NT = 11 – 12 HCP | |
| 1♥ 1♠ | 5 + | 11 + | 2/1 GF, 1NT Forcing, 2NT Jacoby, Splinter Reversed Bergen, Drury, Check-backs | |
| 1 NT | | 15 – 17 | Stayman, Smolen, Major Transfers ♦=♥, ♥=♠ Minor transfers 2♠ = ♣ / 2NT = ♦ | |
| 2♣ | | 23+ or 4 + 4 rule | Gameforce Except responder can pass 2NT with 0 hand | Italian Controls 4♣ asking Queen/Jack Re-bid 2 NT 23-24 HCP |
| 2♦ | | 5 – 22 | Multi Puppet Stayman over 2NT | Weak Major 6-suit Strong minor +18 HCP 2NT (20-22HCP) |
| 2♥ | ♥ + another | 5 – 11 | Weak | 2 NT semi forcing Respond 3♥ if second ♠ 2♠ asking second suit |
| 2♠ | ♠ + minor | 5 – 11 | Weak | 2 NT semi forcing 3♣ asking second suit |
| 2 NT | Minors | 5 – 11 | Weak | 3♣ or 3♦ to play 4♣ or 4♦ invite 3♥, 3♠ - F1 |
| 3 NT | Solid 7+ | 10 – 14 | Gambling 1/2 side entry | 4th position stronger 12-17 HCP and side entry |

1 – RVS – 2/1 – 1NT FORCING – BETTER MINOR

Principles for Openings

- 1 and 2 seat openings promise 12 HCP (occasional exceptions with 11 HCP)
- 3 seat openings 1♥ and 1♠ may be made with shaded values as long as the suit is decent and has 1 ½ defensive tricks
- 4 seat opening only contemplated with at least 15 Cansino Count Points
- 1♥ and 1♠ promises 5 cards in the bid suit
- We open 1 NT with 15 – 17 HCP that may have an unstopped suit and with a weak 5 card major, balanced 5 – 3 – 3 – 2 to avoid rebid problems
- Holding 5 – 5 in any two suits open the higher ranked
- 6 – 4 – 6. With 6 – 4 bid second suit before re-bidding 6 card suit
- We are willing to play game or slam with a 5 – 2 fit if we *know* that our side has +4 honours in that suit.
- Any suit with 4 honours can be treated as it has an extra card
- If you have an independent major headed by AKQJ insist on this as trump

Better Minor Openings

The **Better Minor** focuses on the Majors. It would be better named as “*Longer Minor*” since the *quality* of the minor is not relevant.

- With 4-4 in the minors, open 1♦
- With 3-3 in the minors open 1♣
- With 3-2 in the minors open the 3 card suit
- In response to 1♣ show a Major rather than diamonds unless having five diamonds, a four card major and enough strength to show the major on the next round. For that Responder will need an opening hand and 5-4.
- 1♣ – 1♦ denies a 4 card Major unless strong enough to show it on the next round. Opener will *not* rebid 1 Major unless holding 5 clubs and a 4 card Major. This convention is commonly called *Walsh*. However, after 1♣ – 1♥, opener will show a spade suit.
- An opening bid of 1♦ and a rebid of 2♣ is a minimum and can be 5-4 either way. Responder is expected to pass or correct with 3-2 in the minors.
- It follows that - When opening 1♣, diamonds will rarely be held unless opener is prepared to rebid them on the next round.
- A rebid of a minor usually promises 6 cards
- Openers 1♣ and rebid of 2♦ is a reverse.

Responses over 1♣ - The Walsh Diamond

- Immediately bid your Major with a minimum hand
- With GF values and long diamond suit but 1♦ and then the Major on your own
- With no 4 cards Major and balanced respond 1♦ with 6-8 HCP. Opener need not to bid 4-card Major (unless un-balanced hand) but can simply bid 1NT
- With no 4 cards Major and balanced respond 1NT with 8-10 HCP

| Opener | Respon | Opener | Respon | Meaning |
|--------|--------|--------|--------|--|
| 1♣ | 1♠ | | | 4-2-5-2 minimum or invitational – passing 1 diamond bidding the 4 cards Major |
| 1♣ | 1♦ | | | 3-3-5-2 lacking 4 card Major – less then 8 HCP |
| 1♣ | 1NT | | | 3-3-5-2 lacking 4 card Major with good 8 – 10 HCP |
| 1♣ | 1♦ | 1NT | 2♣ | Unbalanced minimum (say 2-1-5-5) sign-off even though Opener might hold 4-card Major(s) |
| 1♣ | 1♦ | 1NT | 2♦ | Unbalanced minimum (say 2-3-6-2) Sign-off in 2 diamond is usually best in case suit lacking honor entries |
| 1♣ | 1♦ | 1NT | Pass | Opener assumes Responder not holding 4-card Major and with balanced (4-3-2-4) minimum bid 1NT. With balanced minimum Responder passes or unbalanced rebids minor |
| 1♣ | 1♦ | 1NT | 2♠ | With GF values (4-2-5-2) Responder „reverse“ |
| 1♣ | 1♦ | 1♥ | 1♠ | Opener show unbalanced hand (say 2-4-2-5). 1 Spade by Responder is natural and GF (4+ diamonds – 4 spades) |
| 1♣ | 1♦ | 1♠ | 2♠ | Sign-off with minimum unbalanced hand and 3 spades |

2 over 1 response over Major + 12 HCP Game-force

- The 2 over 1 response to an opening bid of 1♥ / 1♠ or 2♣ over 1♦ by an un-passed hand is 100% forcing to game.
- Does not apply if there is intervention – even X – over the opening bid.

- 2♣ or 2♦ usually 4 cards (rarely 2 clubs). With equal length in minors bid 2♣
- 2♥ promises at least 5 hearts

Opener's Rebids After a 2/1 Response

Does not apply if there is intervention – even X – over the opening bid.

Key Principles For Opener's Non-Jump bids

- Game force agreed – bid economically
- Opener's rebid says nothing about the strength of his hand
- First priority to show an un-bid 4 card major. 2♠ is not a reverse situation

Opener Rebids His Major

- Usually show +6 cards, could be 5 lacking other bids, like stoppers for NT bid
- Lacking good bid could rebid 5 card suit with 3 of 5 honours
- Strive to rebid 5 card suit with +4 of 5 honours

Opener Raises Responder's Major

- Show a 3-card support.
- But with 3 small cards and an attractive alternative use the most economical

Opener Raises Responder's Minor

- Responder don't promise 5 card suit – could be 3 with honor
- Prefer rebid on 2 level and we usually don't want to play in 5♣ or 5♦
- With a soft balanced hand and stoppers in other suits bid 2NT
- With a singleton or void in bid minor a rebid of major with 3 to 5 honours is usually the best alternative
- Usually promise +4 cards ... but with 3 cards and +2 honors in minor and a hand full of quacks could be only alternative

Opener Shows A New Suit On 2 Level

- Show +4 cards. Could be very weak
- Does not deny 6 card major – we bid 6 – 4 – 6

Opener Shows A New Suit On 3 Level

- Not an economical bid – show good hand with 5 card suit or quality 4 card suit

Opener Rebids 3 NT

- Balanced 15 – 17 HCP

Examples on bidding sequences

- 1♥ / 2♣ / 2♥ - minimum opening, could be 5 lacking other bid
- 1♥ / 2♦ / 3♣ - not economical – extra values – minimum good 14 HCP
- 1♥ / 2♣ / 3♣ / 3♦ - stopper showing – seeking 3NT
- 1♥ / 2♣ / 4♣ - good support – extra values - 14+ HCP 5/5

Responder's Non-Jump Rebids

The theme is common sense more important than rules

- Support Opener's major with 3 trump
- If Opener rebids major – raise with doubleton honour
- Re-bid of the first suit with a good 6 card suit
- Be eager to bid 2NT when lacking fit, but with stoppers in un-bid suit(s)
- Raise Opener's second suit but think twice before continue over 3 NT
- Any 4 card suit can be bid, but consider
 - When opener has not bid 4 card major he denies
 - Opener could have 4 cards in un-bid minor
 - If three suits already bid, the forth suit do no promise a true suit

When in doubt about the correct trump suit, make the cheapest reasonable bid

1 NT Forcing Response to a Major

Made by an un-passed hand and no interference even double

- 5 – 12 HCP (both 5 is rare and 12 are very rare)
- Forcing for one round – do not promise a rebid
- Balanced or unbalanced distribution
- Denies 4 card support for opener's major
- 1NT response to 1♥ denies 4 spades
- Includes support for opener major with *very weak hand* or a 3 card limit raise
- With 3 cards in openers major and 8 to bad 10 HCP raise to 2 of major

Opener rebids after 1♠ - 1 NT

| | | |
|-------|------------------------------------|------------|
| 2♣ 2♦ | 3+cards (except 2♣ over 1♥ page 9) | At most 17 |
| 2♥ | 4 hearts | At most 17 |
| 2♠ | 6 spades | At most 14 |

| | | |
|--|---|--------------------|
| 2 NT | Usually 5 – 3 – 3 – 2, but could be imperfect | 17 – 18 |
| 3 ♣ 3 ♦ | 4 cards | 18 + forcing |
| 3 ♥ | 4 cards | 18 + forcing |
| 3 ♠ | Strong 6 card suit 7 card suit | 15 – 17 12 - 14 |
| 3 NT | 5 – 3 – 3 – 2 | 18+ |
| 4 ♠ | Strong 7 card suit Strong 8 card suit | 14 + 12 + |
| After 1 ♥ – 1NT all concepts are identical but in addition | | |
| 2 ♥ | 6 hearts | At most 14 |

| | | |
|--|---|-----------------------|
| Responder's Rebids after Opener Rebids 2 of a minor | | |
| Pass | No good bid | 5 – 8 |
| Preference to Openers Major | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doubleton • With 3 cards | Less than 11 5 – 7 |
| 2 NT | No fit – Stopper in other suits | 11-ish (10 to bad 12) |
| Raising Openers Minor | 5 card support (usually) | 11-ish (10 to bad 12) |
| Jump raise Openers Major | 3 card limit raise | 11-ish (10 to bad 12) |
| New suit 2 level | 6 card suit or good 5 card | 5 – 9 |
| New suit 3 level (non-jump) | 6 card suit | 9 – 11 |
| New suit 3 level (jump) | 6 card suit | 11-ish (10 to bad 12) |

| | | |
|--|-------------------|--|
| Responder's Rebids after Openers' Reverse (17+ HCP) Bid - 1♥ - 1NT - 2♠ | | |
| Responder can hold a weak hand with support ♠ 54 - ♥ KQ8 - ♦ 7654 - ♣ 6532 or a weak hand with own long suit ♠ 54 - ♥ 8 - ♦ KQ76543 - ♣ 532 | | |
| Responder | Opener | |
| 2 NT "Lebensohl" | 3 ♣ Obligatory | Responder will show his weak hand by drop-bid. If opener bid new suit after after drop - bid show 19+ HCP |
| Any other bid by Responder except 2NT is Game Force | | |

1 NT is not Forcing

By a Passed Hand

- Logically Semi-forcing - Balanced or unbalanced distribution
- 5 – 11 HCP
- Might still be a very weak 3 card raise
- DO NOT respond 1 NT with a 3 card limit raise instead use 2♣ Reverse Dury

Partner Opens 1♥ RHO Overcalls 1♠

- Either a passed or unpassed hand
- 7 – 10 HCP
- Guarantees a Stopper in RHO spade suit
- No singleton or void – expect rarely in Partners suit
- Denies 3 card heart support

After RHO doubles

- Either a passed or unpassed hand
- 7 – 9 HCP / **Redouble with 10 HCP**
- No singleton or void – expect rarely in Partners suit
- Denies 3 card support

Over minor Opening

- 6 – 10 HCP
- No 4 card major
- No support in Opener's minor
- Can be unbalanced even with void.
- After 1♦ a response of 1NT (6 – 10 HCP) can include long club suit. If holding a 6+ card club suit and 11-ish points a jump shift to 3♣ is made

Finding Hearts after Spades – Check-back

When Opener bids Spades and responder NT it is difficult to find a 3 – 5 heart fit when Responder hold a 5 card ♥ suit and 11-ish HCP

| Opener | Responder | Opener | |
|--------|-----------|--------|--|
| 1♠ | 1 NT | 2♣ | Opener showing second suit |
| | 2♥ | | NOT possible – show 6 cards and can be passed out |
| | 2 NT | | 11-ish stoppers in other suits, could include 5 card ♥ suit |
| | | 3♥ | If opener wish to pursue to game he bids 3♥ if holding 3 card heart suit. Responder sets contract in 4♥ or 3NT |

Two Way Check-back (TWCB) after 1m – 1M – 1NT

The basic notion is that responder's rebid of 2♣ shows exactly invitational values and 2♦ game forcing values. Almost all other bids are natural and either a natural signoff or a natural game force. You lose the ability to play in a contract of 2♣, but in exchange you get many advantages on stronger hands. The TWCB applies in 1X – 1Y – 1NT situation including when opponent X. It does not apply after opponents bid a suit

- 2♣ shows exactly invitational values 11-ish (or a diamond signoff).
- 2♦ shows GF values.
- 2NT is natural 11-ish
- Jump Rebids are GF showing excellent suits with +2 honors and 6+cards
- Jump in Openings minor is GF with +5 cards and deny 5 card Major

| | |
|---------------|--|
| Responder | |
| 2♣ | Shows invitational values. Relays to 2♦. Could be diamond sign-off |
| 2♦ | GF – Asking |
| 2M | To Play – Drop |
| 2 other Major | If ♠ 4-4 Reverse GF, if ♥ 5-4 NF |
| 2 NT | Natural 11-ish, invitational, NF, 4M |
| 3m | 5m-4M purish – GF (Purish means most of high cards in long suits) |
| 3 other m | 5om-5M purish – GF |
| 3 other Major | If ♥ 5-5 purish – GF If ♠ 5-6 purish – GF |
| 3 M | Excellent suit with min 6 cards and at least 2 honors – GF |
| Game | To Play |

| Responder | Opener | Responder | |
|-----------|--------|-----------|--|
| 2♣ | 2♦ | 2M | 6+ cards, invitational, NF |
| | | 2 other M | If ♥ 5-4/5, invitational, NF If ♠ 4-5, invitational, NF |
| | | 2NT | Show 5M invitational, NF |
| | | 3♣ | To play |
| | | 3♦ | Natural, Invitational |
| | | 3M | 6+ strong invite |
| | | 3 other M | If ♥ 5-5, strong invite, if ♠ 4-5, strong invite |
| | | 3NT | 5 card M, Choice of game 4M or 3NT |

| Responder | Opener Bids in Priorities |
|-----------|----------------------------|
| 2♦ | 1. 4 of other Major |
| | 2. 3 of Responder's Major |
| | 3. Re-bid 6 card suit |
| | 4. Show 2-2-5-4 or 2-2-4-5 |
| | 5. Re-bid 2NT |

Two Way Check-back (TWCB) after 1 ♥-1 ♠; 1 NT and 1 ♣-1 ♦; 1 NT

All

sequences are what one might expect, but here are some examples:

1 ♥-1 ♠ ; 1 NT-2 ♦ (GF) -?

2 ♥ = good 5-card Heart suit

2 ♠ = two good Spades, say Q10 or better

2 NT = nothing special

3m = solid stopper, weak doubleton in other minor

1 ♣-1 ♦ ; 1 NT – Natural – TWCB Not recommended for minors

Exceptions after 1 ♥ opening

1 NT Forcing can be Semi-forcing after 1 ♥

We open 1 ♥ with a minimum hand like KJ10 / J7542 / 432 / AK. Partner responds 1 NT denying suit. The only available bid for Opener is 2 ♦ which feels wrong. As Opener has no interest in game the right bid is Pass.

To avoid unlikely game with good shape, 11-ish HCP and 3 card support a Bergen raise of 3 ♣ must be considered instead of Semi-forcing 1 NT

1 ♥ - 1NT - 2♣ (can be 2 cards only)

Opener can hold a hand like ♠ AQ96 ♥ Q9765 ♦ 87 ♣ AQ and bidding 2 spades would show a reverse +17 HCP so have to bid 2 Clubs.

Examples on Forcing versus Non-forcing sequences

| W | N | E | S | | Forcing | Non-forcing |
|----|-----|------|----|--|--------------------------|-------------|
| - | 1♠ | 2♥ | 3♦ | | GF | |
| - | 1♥ | 1♠ | 2♦ | | | NF |
| - | 1♥ | 1NT | 2♦ | | | NF |
| - | 1♥ | X | 2♦ | | | NF |
| 1♣ | 1♥ | Pass | 2♦ | | | NF |
| 1♣ | 1♥ | 1♠ | 2♦ | | | NF |
| 1♣ | 1♥ | 1NT | 2♦ | | | NF |
| 1♥ | 1♠ | 2♣ | 2♦ | | | NF |
| 1♣ | 1♠ | 2♥ | 3♦ | | | NF |
| 1♠ | 1NT | 2♥ | 3♦ | | GF – System on Lebensohl | |
| - | 1♣ | 2♠ | 3♠ | | GF in ♣ or NT +14 HCP | |
| | 1♥ | 3♦ | 4♦ | | GF in ♥ +14 HCP | |

Interference and defense

Opponents interfere in our 2/1 situation

- Pass is always a forcing pass
- Double is always for penalty (expect better results than game)

RHO Overcalls (or Jump Overcalls)

- Double – takeout – willingness to compete – can be strong
- Bid – Distributional Hand – Not necessary strong.
- Double after Jump Overcall – takeout – Show “Cards” and strong hand
- Cue-bid Opponents suit – Game force

RHO make 1NT bid after Partners Opening bid

- If Partner bid minor - 2♣ is for Major (holding min 5-4)
- Double is for penalty.
- 2NT +11 HCP with fit
- Raise to 3 preemptive
- New suit with jump – void / doubleton – 4 card fit 11-ish HCP
- Other bids natural

2 – NT CONVENTIONS

| 1 NT Opening 15 – 17 HCP | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Respon | Description |
| 2♣ | Relay |
| 2♦♥♠NT | Transfer bids |
| 3♣♦♥♠ | 15+ HCP Solid / Semi-solid 6 card suit, slam interest. If Opener bid new suit show fit and control. 3NT – no fit and minimum |
| 3NT | 10 – 14 HCP Balanced hand, no interest in Major suit or slam |
| 4♣ | 5 – 5 in Majors, no Slam interest. With Slam interest use Stayman |
| 4♦♥ | Texas Transfer |
| 4NT and 5NT | Quantitative – details page 12 |

| Stayman – over 1NT - 2♣ Relay | | |
|---|--|--|
| Opener | Responder | Weak Responses 0 – 7 HCP |
| 2♦ 2♥ 2♠ | Pass | Garbage Stayman Responder weak–holding similar to 4-4-4-1. The objective is to reach a better contract than 1NT. |
| Opener | Responder | Mild Invitation 7-ish |
| 2♦ | 2♥ or 2♠ | Crawling Stayman - 5 cards in the bid Major and 4 cards in other Major. |
| | 3♦ | 5 + 5 in Majors. Opener fix final contract |
| Opener | Responder | Invitational Responses 8 – 9 HCP and Game 10+ HCP |
| 2♦ | 2NT - 3NT | 2NT (8 – 9 HCP) invitational and 3NT (10+ HCP) |
| | 3♣ | Check-back for minors – see separate description |
| | 3♥ or 3♠ | Smolen 3♥ show 4♥ and 5♠ - 3♠ show 5♥ or 4♠ |
| 2♥ or 2♠ | 3♥ or 3♠ | Invitational (8 – 9) HCP) |
| Deny other M | 4♥ or 4♠ | Game no slam (10+ HCP) |
| | 3 of minor | 5+ cards GF – possible slam interest |
| 2NT 3♠ | 4 - 4 Majors – minimum 4 - 4 Majors - Maximum | Responder to fix final contract by TRANSFER |
| Opener | Responder | Slam interest |
| 2♦ | 4♣ or 4♦ | Singleton, 5 – 5 Majors, Slam interest |
| 2♥ or 2♠ | 3♠ or 3♥ | Bid other Major 3 level – Artificial – Slam interest |
| 4NT over 2♥ or 2♠ or after finished transfer is acceptance and Quantitative – Slam invitational | | |

Transfers Majors after Opener bids 1NT

| Responder | Opener | Responder | Meaning |
|-----------|----------|-------------|--|
| 2♦ 2♥ | 2♥ 2♠ | | Transfer to ♥ respective ♠ at least 5 card suit |
| | | 2NT | Invitational – pass or correct to final contract |
| | | 3 NT | Pass or bid 4 of Major |
| | | 3 new minor | Second suit – game force, could be slam interest |
| | | Jump | Splinter – also with single jump – slam interest |
| | 3♥ 3♠ | | Super accept minimum (THE LAW) |
| | 2 NT | | Super accept maximum 4-3-3-3 |
| | New suit | | Super accept maximum with bid doubleton |

- 4NT over 2♥ or 2♠ or after finished transfer is Quantitative (Invitational)

Summary 5 - 4 and 5 – 5 Major respons

5-4 weak – 7-ish HCP
 5-4 and 4-5 invite
 5-5 invite – 7-ish
 5-4 and 4-5 GF
 5-5 Game – No slam interest
 5-5 Slam interest (single)

Crawling Stayman
 Transfer - 2♦ - 2♥ - 2♠ 2NT // 2♥ - 2♠ - 2NT 3♥
 Stayman - 2♦ - 3♦
 Smolen - 2♦ - 3♠ // 2♦ - 3♥
 1NT – 4♣
 Stayman 2♦ - 4♣ or 4♦ (show single or void)

Quantitative 4 and 5 NT

After 1 NT or over 2♥ or 2♠ or after finished transfer is Quantitative (Invitational)
 Used as a bid to denote that the initiator of a final contract in 4,5,6 or 7 NT

| Opener | Responder | Opener |
|--------|-----------|---|
| 1NT | 4 or 5 NT | If opener holds minimum 15 or 16 HCP and no source of tricks – pass over 4NT and over 5NT bid 6NT |
| | | If opener holds maximum 16 HCP with 5 card suit or 17 HCP he responds with number of Aces by 1430. Valid over both 4 and 5NT. Responder bids final contract |

Transfers minors after Opener bids 1NT, including showing 5 – 5 in minors

| Responder | Opener | Responder | Meaning |
|-----------|--------|-----------|--|
| 2♣ | | | Transfer to ♣ (min. 6 cards) |
| 2 NT | | | Transfer to ♦ (min. 6 cards) |
| 2♣ | 3♣ | | No top-honour (A,K or Q) in ♣ |
| | | 3♦ | Show +5 card diamond suit – at least 5 – 5 in minors |
| | 2 NT | | At least one top-honour in and connecting cards in ♣. No need to show any 5 card diamond suit as fit in clubs. Instead show singleton for interest in game / slam |
| | | 3♣ | Sign-off weak suit |
| 2 NT | 3♦ | | No top-honour (A,K or Q) in ♦ |
| | 3♣ | | At least one top-honour and connecting cards in ♦ |
| | | 3♦ | Sign-off weak suit |

Thereafter any 3 level bid shows singleton or void and interest in game/slam in shown minor

Puppet Stayman – over 2NT - 3♣

| Opener | Responder | |
|---------|-----------|---------------------------------------|
| 3♥ or ♠ | | Show 5 card suit |
| 3♦ | | Hold one or both Majors |
| | 3♥ | Show 4 card ♠ suit |
| | 3♠ | Show 4 card ♥ suit |
| | 4♣ | Hold 4 – 4 in Majors – Slam interest |
| | 4♦ | Hold 4 – 4 in Majors – Pick your suit |
| 3 NT | | Deny any 4 card Major |
| | 4♣ | Hold 5 – 5 in Majors – Slam interest |
| | 4♦ | Hold 5 – 5 in Majors – Pick your suit |

Major Transfers with same principle as over 1 NT

Check-back for Majors – 2 NT Re-bids

1 minor – 1 Major – 2NT re-bid 18-19 HCP balanced, could be 5-3-3-2

| Responder | Meaning | |
|------------|--------------------------------|---|
| 3 ♥ or 3 ♠ | 5 – 6 cards, 5-6 HCP – to pass | |
| 4 ♥ or 4 ♠ | 6 cards, 7-8 HCP – to pass | |
| Responder | Opener | Meaning |
| 3 ♣ | | Check-back / Game force |
| | 3 of Bid Major | Up the line 3 card support of bid Major |
| | 3 of New Major | 4 cards – not more than 2 card support |
| | 3 ♦ | 5 card minor – not more than 2 card support |
| | 3 NT | 3 2 x x Hand with none of above |

Check-back for Minors

Used after a Stayman bid, when opener denies 4 card major suit

| Opener | Responder | Meaning |
|--------|-----------|---|
| 1 NT | 2 ♣ | Stayman |
| 2 ♦ | 3 ♣ | Check-back for minors, possible interest in slam Game-force, shape with strength in minors |
| 3 ♦ | | 5 card Minor |
| | 3 ♥ | Relay asking for minor |
| | | 3 ♠ 5 Clubs |
| | | 3 NT 5 Diamonds |
| 3 ♥ | | 4m – 4m – 3H – 2S |
| 3 ♠ | | 4m – 4m – 2H – 3S |
| 3 NT | | 4m – 3 – 3 – 3 |

Gambling 3 NT

- Running solid minor AKQxxxx with 7+ cards
- 1, 2 and 3rd position could have half outside stopper Qxx 10 – 14 HCP
- 4th position 1-2 stoppers – 4th position is constructive 12-17 HCP and to play.
- When holding top range 2♦ opening could be preferred
- Vulnerability must be considered. You might be force to play doubled on 4 level

| Response | Meaning |
|----------|--|
| 4 ♣ | Weak - Pass or Correct – Mainly when opener in 1 or 2 nd position |
| 4 ♦ | Slam interest – asking for singleton |
| 4 ♥ 4 ♠ | Singleton |
| 4NT | None |
| 5 ♣ 5 ♦ | Singleton in other minor |
| 4 ♥ 4 ♠ | To Play |
| 5 ♣ 6 ♣ | Pass or Correct – Could be pre-emptive |

NT in balancing 4th seat

After a 1 of a suit opening and 2 passes, the bid of 1NT is a balanced hand in the 11-14 HCP. Additionally the bid promise a stopper in the opened suit and deny a 5 card major suit, and tends to deny the ability to make a balancing takeout X. Vulnerability must be considered.

After 1♥ followed by 2 passes:

| | | |
|--------|-------|-------|
| ♠QJ2 | ♠AT76 | ♠J543 |
| ♥AJ3 | ♥K3 | ♥KJ9 |
| ♦K7542 | ♦QJ43 | ♦KJ43 |
| ♣JT | ♣A76 | ♣QJ |

Bid 1NT Bid X Bid 1NT

Although the 2nd hand above meets the HCP and stopper requirements for a balancing 1NT a takeout double is preferred as it will make partner aware of your spade suit holding.

To show a balanced hand in the 15-18 HCP range we should X first, then bid NT as the 2nd call.

Any response by Partner is Natural and Non-forcing – except
 Cue bid of minor is Stayman and Cue bid of Major show other Major

No Trump in balancing Pass-out seat

When both opponents have limited their hands, the balancing 1NT bid can be used in the pass out seat. It shows a balanced hand with 10 – 13 HCP and promise stopper(s) or length in bid suits.

| | | | | | |
|---------------|------|---------|-------|------|-------|
| North Holding | | Bidding | | | |
| ♠ KJ4 | | West | North | East | South |
| ♥ Q76 | | - | - | Pass | Pass |
| ♦ K76 | | 1♦ | Pass | 1♥ | Pass |
| ♣ KJ63 | Pass | 1NT | | | |

Any response by Partner is Natural and Non-forcing

NT Overcalls

| 2 nd and 3 rd position | | 4 th Position Balancing | |
|--|-------------|------------------------------------|-----------|
| Overcall one level | 16 – 17 HCP | Overcall 1NT | 11-14 HCP |
| X and then bid 1NT | 18 – 19 HCP | X and then bid 1NT | 15-17 HCP |
| X and then bid 2NT | 20 – 22 HCP | Overcall 2NT | 18-19 HCP |
| | | X and bid 2NT | 20-22 HCP |

Defence Multi Landy against 1NT

| | | |
|----------|---|---------------------------------|
| X | 5 minor + 4 Major | |
| 2♣ | Pass or Correct | |
| 2♦ | Bid Major | |
| 2♥ or 2♠ | To Play | |
| 2♣ | Both majors – at least 5 – 4 | |
| 2♣ | 2♦ by partner | Pick your suit |
| 2♦ | +6 Card Major | 2♥ by partner – pass or correct |
| 2♥ 2♠ | Bid Major plus unknown minor 5 – 5 | |
| 2 NT | Both Minors at least 5 - 5 | |
| 3♣ 3♦ | Solid 6 card / semi-solid +7 card minor (consider pass for penalty) | |

Interference over our 1NT

Their overcall promises both Majors

Most conventions' over 1NT have a way to show MAJORS. If the opponents do show majors (with some contraption that is below 2♥), I suggest:

2♥ = GF in ♣

2♠ = GF in ♦

2NT = Lebensohl (see below) -- Relay to 3♣

3 of a minor = Natural, Invitational

3 of a MAJOR = GF, Shortness (0 or 1) in that MAJOR

3NT = To Play or minor game, Neither MAJOR stopped

Use the 2NT mechanism to show stoppers -- after the Relay to 3♣ : 3 MAJOR shows only that major stopped; 3NT shows both MAJORS stopped. Relaying to 2NT also lets you sign-off in 3-minor (either pass the relay with ♣ or sign-off in 3♦ with ♦)

NOTE: Using this method, when they show MAJORS, you can show either minor (Weak, Invitational, or Forcing) and can show which MAJOR(s) are stopped, and also can show both minors and shortness in a major.

They Double

If they make an artificial DOUBLE, just ignore it--system 100% on (Stayman, Transfers, etc.).

If they make a penalty DOUBLE, pass or transfer REDOUBLE to 2♣ and 2♣ to 2♦ and further.

They overcall 2♣

Don't care what it shows (unless it is BOTH MAJORS) in which case you Double as a stolen bid "Stayman." Otherwise all other actions are as if they passed. Just ignore them. 2♦ is what it would have been without their interference. All bids (even 2NT) transfer are treated as if the Opponent Passed

They overcall 2♦ or higher

Again, it is best not to start asking questions and getting involved with which convention they use. Treat them all the same (unless 2♦ is specifically BOTH MAJORS). No matter what they bid, no matter what it means (other than MAJORS), here is the schedule:

BIDDING A SUIT (on the 2-level) = NATURAL, NF

BIDDING A SUIT (on the 3-level) = see below (Lebensohl) GF

BIDDING 2NT – Relay 3♣ (see below – Lebensohl)

BIDDING 3NT (Lebensohl) To Play or minor game, Neither MAJOR stopped

BIDDING A SUIT (on the 4-level) = all jumps to 4, are "Front of Card" -- Texas

Comments by Larry Cohen - What about Doubling their Overcall?

I was afraid you'd ask. Again, I like to separate it into 2 classes, and not get overly complicated. First, let's say they promise BOTH MAJORS. I like to use DOUBLE as penalty-oriented. It says you can double at least one of their suits, and give partner a chance to double as well. It sets up a force. If you pass and then DOUBLE, that should be a lightish takeout. For example:

1NT (2♣=MAJORS) X = penalty oriented (says nothing about ♣) Passing and then doubling their 2MAJOR = takeout of that MAJOR

If their interference is anything else (on any level), use X as cards/negative. It doesn't "promise" the other major(s), but you try your best. Think of double as just saying, "partner, I have values to act, but no suit to bid and nothing else fits." For example, let's say partner opens 1NT and they bid 2♦ to show ♦ and either MAJOR. I would DOUBLE with each of these hands:

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

Again, pass and then double is just a lightish takeout, competing. I'd use these "negative doubles" over NATURAL overcalls as well as CONVENTIONAL overcalls. If you have a true penalty pass of their known suit, you can pass and hope partner reopens with a double.

| Lebensohl - interference over 1NT 15 -17 HCP | | | | | |
|---|----------|-----------|--------|-----------|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New suit (min 5 cards) on 2 level over interference – to pass - New suit (min 5 cards) on 3 level over interference – GF | | | | | |
| Opener | Opponent | Responder | Opener | Responder | Meaning |
| 1NT | 2♥ | 2NT | 3♣ | pass | weak ♣ (+5 suit) |
| 1NT | 2♥ | 2NT | 3♣ | 3♦ | weak ♦ (+5 suit) to pass |
| 1NT | 2♠ | 2NT | 3♣ | 3♥ | weak ♥ (+5 suit) to pass |
| 1NT | 2♥ | 3♥ | | | denies stopper (DD direct denies) but have other major (4 suit) |
| 1NT | 2♥ | 2NT | 3♣ | 3♥ | Show stopper (SS slow show) but have other major (4 suit) |
| 1NT | 2♥ | 3NT | | | denies stopper (DD direct denies) sufficient points for game |

| | | | | | |
|-----|----|-----|----|-----|--|
| 1NT | 2♥ | 2NT | 3♣ | 3NT | Show stopper (SS slow show) sufficient points for game |
|-----|----|-----|----|-----|--|

Defence (Cappelletti) against penalty double of 1NT overcall

1x – 1NT – double - ?

| | |
|--|---|
| Responder | |
| Pass | No preference – usually weak with 4333 distribution (4 in any suit) |
| Redouble Show single-suited hand | Force 2♣ by Over-caller and Responder pass or correct |
| Suit bid – show bid suit 4 cards and another higher suit | Over-caller pass with tolerance (3-card support) or bid next higher suit trying to establish at least 7-card fit |

1x – 1NT – double – pass – pass – ?

| | |
|--|--|
| Over-caller | |
| Redouble Show 5 cards suit | Force 2♣ by Responder and Over-caller pass or correct |
| Suit bid – show bid suit 4 cards and another higher suit | Responder can pass with tolerance (3-card support) or bid his 4 card suit if not risking to miss 7 card fit |

Defence against weak 1NT

| | | | |
|---|--|---------|---------|
| Double | Good Opening Hand – Responder continue natural | | |
| 2♣ | Holding both Majors – minimum 5 – 4 | | |
| 2NT | Holding both minors 5 – 5 | | |
| An overcall of a suit is always made in transfer – reason is to facilitate for bidder to make a second bid. | | | |
| 2♦ → 2♥ | 2♥ → 2♠ | 2♠ → 3♣ | 3♣ → 3♦ |

Defence against Balancing NT and Gambling 3NT

Double is Penalty. Others Natural

3 – CONVENTIONAL OPENING BIDS

| | |
|--|---|
| 2 Clubs Opening + 23 HCP or maximum 4 losers and minimum 4 quick tricks | |
| Game force except after 2NT showing 23-24HCP | |
| Responses | Respond with Italian Controls (Ace = 2, King = 1) |
| 2 ♦ | 0 or 1 King |
| 2 ♥ | 1 Ace or 2 Kings (2 Controls) |
| 2 ♠ | 1 Ace and 1 King – different suits (3 Controls) |
| 2 NT | 3 Kings (3 Controls) |
| 3 ♣ | 1 Ace and 1 King – same suit (3 Controls) |
| 3 ♦ | 4 Controls or more |
| Direct bid of 4 ♣ after response is Queen (2) / Jack (1) ask using Italian Controls as above | |

| | | |
|---|------------------------|-------------------------|
| 2 Clubs Opening – Responses after interference | | |
| Double by opponents | Pass | 0 Control |
| | 2 ♦ | 1 King (1 Control) |
| | Continuation as ignore | |
| Overcall by opponents | Pass | 0 – 1 Control |
| | Double | 2+ controls |
| | Free bid | 2+ controls – good suit |

| | |
|---|--|
| Defence against Opener 1 ♣ (and 1♦) strong artificial Club | |
| Basis Mathe and Multi Landy | |
| Pass | Pass followed by bid or X (take-out) show good opening |
| 1♦, 1♥, 1♠, 2♣ | At least 5 of bid suit |
| X | Both Major suits. Min 5 / 4 by equal vulnerability and preferably 5 / 5 by equal vulnerability. |
| 1 NT | Both Minor suits. Min 5 / 4 by equal vulnerability and preferably 5 / 5 by equal vulnerability. |
| 2♦ | 6+ in any Major |
| 2♥, 2♠ | Major + any minor. Min 5 / 4 by equal vulnerability and preferably 5 / 5 by equal vulnerability. |
| 3 – 4 level | Pre-emptive 7+ cards. Use Losing Trick count. |

| | |
|--|--|
| Defence against 2♣ strong artificial Club | |
| X | 4+/4+ in Majors |
| 2♦, 2♥, 2♠, 3♣ | Natural – good suit – lead directing (promise no extra values) |
| 2 NT | 5+/5+ in minors |
| Jump Bid | TWERB - A TWERB jump overcall is showing the suit above bid suit or a two suited holding, minimum 5 – 5 below bid suit. A bid of 4 ♦ is showing a longer Heart suit or a two suiter with Clubs and Spades. |

2 Diamonds Multi – Opener bid 2 ♦

- Weak 2 opening of 6-card major 4 – 13 HCP (Definition following page)
- Strong solid +6 card minor opening + 18 HCP
- Strong 2NT opening 20 – 22 HCP

| Responder | Opener | Responder | Meaning | |
|-----------|--------|--|--|---|
| 2♥ | | | Relay <15 HCP and / or no shape for invite | |
| 2♠ | | | Invitational if Partners suit ♥ with + 4 cards / shape / 12-14 HCP | |
| 2♥ or 2♠ | Pass | | Weak 2♥ or 2♠ opening | |
| 2♥ | 2♠ | | Weak 2♠ opening | |
| 2♥ | 2♠ | 3m | No fit +7 card minor – to play | |
| 2♠ | 3♥ | | Weak 2♥ opening – corrected' - responder fix contract | |
| 3♥ | | | Extended pre-empt – Pass or correct | |
| 4♣ | | Bid your suit in transfer, strong (13-15 HCP) 15+ points | | |
| 4♦ | | Bid your suit, strong (13-15 HCP) 15+ points | | |
| 2♥♠ | 3♣♦ | | Solid +6 card minor + 18 HCP | |
| | | Pass | Maximum 4 HCP | |
| | | 3NT | To Play | |
| | | Raise | Invitational 5 - 8 HCP +2 card support | |
| | | New | Natural – GF | |
| 2♥♠ | 2NT | | Balanced hand 20 - 22 HCP | |
| | | 3♣ | Puppet Stayman / Description under NT Conventions | |
| 2 NT | | | +15 HCP semi forcing or invitational with fit | |
| | | | 3♣ | Weak 2♥ opening lower range |
| | | | 3♠ | Weak 2♥ opening higher range – game force |
| | | | 3♦ | Weak 2♠ opening lower range |
| | | | 3♥ | Weak 2♠ opening higher range – game force |
| | 4♣♦ | Solid +6 card minor + 18 HCP slam interest | | |

Actions against interference – Opener 2♦

| Interference | Actions – bid and holding by Responder | |
|---------------|--|---|
| 3 of minor | X | Penalty |
| 2 of major | X | +11 HCP support +3 of other Major |
| X | Pass | Have good diamond suit |
| X | XX | Have good other suit(s) |
| X | 2♥ | Neglect – Pass or correct |
| X or overcall | 4♣ | Bid your suit in transfer |
| X or overcall | 4♦ | Bid your suit |
| 2 – 3 any | 2 - 3 any | Pre-emptive strong +7 card suit - to pass |

2 Diamonds Multi - Definition of Weak 2 major openings
Similar considerations should be given to 2-suited openings

The perfect hand is a weak hand with a long, strong suit with little defense

- The hand has no aces, and does not include any honors outside the long suit
- With strength in long, strong suit, you are not considering any other trump suit
- You prefer good distribution, which rules out a hand like 6 - 3 - 2 - 2
- Have 2 of 4 top honors or 4 of 6 top cards, meeting the singleton test

The complete “Perfect Hand” will rarely occur, but most important is the “Quality”

The weak 2 opening can be made with

- Usually a 6 card suit
- 7 card suit – too weak to open on 3 level – usually in 3rd position
- Strong 5 card suit – 3 of 4 top honors
- With another weak 4 card major
- With a void

Quality, Position, Zone is more important than HCP

Beware of Flaws

- Lacks 2 of 3 top honors or 4 of 6 top cards
- Lacks texture
- A second suit which might make a good trump suit
- Several honors in other suits
- 6 – 3 – 2 – 2 distribution

In 1st and 2nd seat and/or the vulnerability is unfavorable your should pass hands with weak suits or multiple flaws

For the Convention Card

| Position | Non vulnerable | Vulnerable |
|-------------------------|----------------|-------------|
| Dealer – Aggressive | 4 – 10 HCP | 5 – 10 HCP |
| 2nd - Sensible | 5 – 10 HCP | 6 – 10 HCP |
| 3rd – Super aggressive | 3 – 10 HCP | 4 – 10 HCP |
| 4th – Strong 10 -13 HCP | 10 - 13 HCP | 10 - 13 HCP |

Defence – Meck-Well - against 2 Diamonds Multi Opening

Direct seat

| Action | Description |
|--|---|
| X | 13 – 15 relative balanced OR a strong hand |
| Pass | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Followed by X is takeout - Followed by a new suit is weaker than an initial overcall - Followed by 2NT is for minors - Followed by 4♣ or 4♦ is 5+ / 5+ with other Major 4-5 loser hand |
| Single Overcall | Natural |
| Pass | Followed by a new suit is weaker then an initial overcall |
| Jump Overcall | Good suit – good intermediate hand |
| 2NT | Shows 16-18 HCP |
| 4NT | Show minors – strong |
| 4 Seat | |
| Opponents make a “Pass or Correct” bid | |
| 2♦ - P - 2♥ - X | Double is takeout for Spades |
| 2♦ - P - 2♠ - X | Double is take-out for Hearts |
| Pass | Followed by double is take-out of bid Major |
| Overcall | Natural |
| Jump Overcall | Show strong one-suited hands |
| 2NT | Show 15-18 HCP |
| 3NT | To Play |

2 Suited Opening Bids

The Opening Bids of 2♥, 2♠ and 2NT show a 2 suited holding

- The point count is 5 - 12 HCP
- The majority of the points are in the 2 suits
- In 1st or 2nd position the length is at least 5 – 5 and point count in the higher range
- In 3rd position and favourable vulnerability 4 – 5 and lower point count is possible
- In 4th position position the length is at least 5 – 5 and point count in the high range
- With a strong holding a normal opening bid on one level is often to prefer

| Opener | Responder | Meaning |
|--------|-----------------|---|
| 2♥ | | Show ♥ and another suit |
| | 2♠ | Asking for second suit. Opener to pass or correct |
| | 2NT | Semi-forcing. Opener to bid second suit. If second suit Spades opener bid 3♥. Responder to pass or bid final contract |
| | 3♥ | Pre-emptive |
| | New suit or 3NT | Responder having +6 card suit or strong NT holding – to Pass |
| 2♠ | | Show ♠ and a minor |
| | 3♣ | Asking for second suit. Opener to pass or correct. |
| | 2NT | Semi-forcing asking for second suit - Opener bid; 3♣ - Weak with Clubs 3♦ - Weak with Diamonds 3♥ - Strong with Clubs 3♠ - Strong with Diamonds |
| | 3♠ | Pre-emptive |
| | 4♣, 3♦, 3♥, 3NT | Responder having +6 card suit or strong NT holding – to Pass |

Defence against weak 2 Openings (including 2 suited)

(Examples based on 2♥ opening)

Immediate position after weak 2 bidder

| | Responder | Description |
|------------------------------|--|---|
| Double | | Sound opening, support in all un-bid suits, defensive strength OR NT distribution with stopper 19 – 21 or 22+ HCP. Re-bid 2 NT or 3 NT depending on response. |
| | Pass | Penalty |
| | Bid 2-level | Less than 7 HCP |
| | 2NT Lebensohl | Less than 7 HCP, re-bid 3♣ - any response to pass |
| | Min bid 3 level | 7 – 10 HCP |
| | Jump 3-level | Strong game invitation (opening hand) |
| | Jump 4-level | Strong game invitation in minors or to play if major |
| Overcall | | Minimum overcall + 5 card suit – 7 losers Jump overcall + 6 card suit – 5 – 6 – 7 losers (red/green) 4 level overcall + 6 cards – 4 – 5 – 6 losers (red/green) With a 4 loser hand X and then bid suit |
| 2 NT | | 15 – 18 HCP with good stopper(s) |
| | 3♣ / 3♦ / 3♠ | Transfer to 3♦ / 3♠ / 4♣ |
| | 3♥ | Stayman (asking 4 cards spade suit) if not bid 3 NT |
| 3♥ | | Western cue-bid asking partner to bid 3NT with stopper. Usually holding 7 sure running tricks. If not responder bids lowest suit for pass or correct. |
| 4♣ | | 5 + 5 with other major, 4 – 5 loser hand |
| 4♦ | | 5 + 5 with other major, 4 – 5 loser hand |
| 4 NT | | 5 / 5 minors, strong |
| Balancing position | | |
| Double | Minimum 10 HCP – support in other suits. Realize that partner might pass | |
| Minimum bid | + 5 card, weak opening hand | |
| Jump bid | + 5 card strong suit, good opening | |
| Other bids same as immediate | | |

Defence against high level pre-empts. Usually 3 level

- Double
1. Take-out with at least 3 cards in unbid suits
 2. Sound opening strength
 3. The more HCP the less perfect support need be – but support for any un-bid major(s) is essential

OR

4. A hand too strong for a simple over-call. You will bid at next turn.

- Responses*
1. Simple response is non-forcing.
If doubler introduces a new suit, he shows a hand too STRONG for a simple over-call
 2. Bidding game – to play
 3. Cue-bid – game-force
 4. Pass – penalty

- Overcall**
1. Sound opening bid with a good suit
 2. Extra values at 4-level
 3. Jump overcall – even stronger hand
 4. 3NT is a strong balanced hand 16-20 HCP. If 21+ HCP double first
OR
A long running suit with a stopper in opponent's suit
 5. Cue-bid in minor show good distributional take-out for majors
 6. Cue-bid in major show good two-suiter with other major and unspecified minor

- Responses*
1. New suit is forcing for one round
 2. Game-bid show game-going values and is to play
 3. Over 3NT – 4♣ is Stayman and with transfers on but with 4♠ for minors. 4NT is Quantitative with 13 – 15+ HCP. Blackwood responses if interest in slam
 4. 4NT over suit bid is Blackwood
 5. Over Partner's cue-bid of major – 4NT is asking for unspecified minor

Balancing Position It is reasonable to reduce some of the requirements in the balancing seat. The strength for double and overcall can be lowered. The strength of the 3NT should not be reduced

| 2 NT Showing both minors | | |
|---|-----------|--|
| <p>This opening is effective but also dangerous. It is important to observe the parameters related to strength, shape, position and vulnerability.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The point count is 5 – 11 HCP and with 5-5 distribution - The majority of the points are in the 2 suits - In 1, 2, 4 position point count in the higher range - In 3rd position and favourable vulnerability a lower point count is possible - In 4th position position the length is at least 5 – 5 and point count in the higher range | | |
| Opener | Responder | Meaning |
| 2NT | | Show both minors – Always minimum 5 – 5 |
| | 3♣, 3♦ | To Play |
| | 4♣, 4♦ | Invitational |
| | 3♥, 3♠ | Exceptional 5 card suit or +6 card suit – F1 |
| | 3NT | To Play |

| | | |
|--|----------------|--|
| | 5♣, 5♦, 4♥, 4♠ | To Play |
| | 4NT | Blackwood with 6 Key Cards including club and diamond K. Opener responds 5♣ for 0, 5♦ for 1, 5♥ for 2, 5♠ for 3. The next bid suit asks for minor Queens – 1 step for 0, 2 steps for Q♣, 3 steps for Q♦, 4 steps for both. |

| Defense after 2 NT Opening showing both minors | |
|---|---|
| Bid | Meaning |
| X | Good Opening Balanced Partner respond as over 1NT with Stayman – Transfer or can Pass for Penalty |
| 3♣ | 5 /+4 in Majors 10-15 HCP |
| 3♦ | 5 /+4 in Majors +16 HCP |
| 3♥, 3♠ | Single suited opening hand |

5 – SLAM BIDDING

Roman Key Card Blackwood (NT and Major suits)

- 5 Aces used (including King of triumph) only after full agreement of trump suit
- 4 Aces for NT Contracts

Avoid Blackwood with two or more cards in unbid suit when not holding Ace or King

When no trump agreed and NT contract likely – Blackwood 4 NT

| Reply | Initiator | Meaning |
|-------|-----------|--|
| 5 ♣ | | 1 or 4 Aces |
| 5 ♦ | | 0 or 3 Aces |
| 5 ♥ | | 2 Aces |
| | 5 ♠ | Responder to sign-off in 5NT |
| | 5 NT | Asking for Kings – responses 0 – 1 – 2 - 3 |

When trump agreed – Blackwood 4 NT – RKC 143052

| | |
|-----------|--|
| 5 ♣ | 1 or 4 KC |
| 5 ♦ | 0 or 3 KC |
| 5 ♥ | 2 KC and No Queen |
| 5 ♠ | 2 KC and Queen |
| 5NT | 2KC and USEFUL VOID |
| 6 of suit | 1 or 3 KC and USEFUL VOID in mentioned suit. Don't pass 6 level over trump suit |

Queen ask (or extra length +10 combined)

After 5♣ 5♦ - next new suit except agreed trump

- No – Queen – Partner returns to agreed trump suit.
- Yes – Queen – Partner bids the cheapest outside King or jumps in the trump suit with no outside King. Could have King higher than trump suit

5NT after Ace response – Confirming all KC and King Ask (excl. trump K)

- Bid Kings up-the-line
- No King below trump suit return to trump suit, but can hold King in higher suit.

Roman Key Card Minorwood (minor suit agreed)

Using 4NT Blackwood when aiming to reach a slam often brings the bidding too high when realizing the no slam is possible.

1♥ (pass) 2♣ (pass) 3♣ agree to trump (pass) 4♣ **RKCB for minor**

| Reply | Meaning |
|-------|---|
| 4♦ | 1 or 4 KC |
| 4♥ | 0 or 3 KC |
| 4♠ | 2 KC |
| 4NT | 2 KC plus Queen |
| 5♣ | To play. Responder must pass as Opener realize that slam not possible |

If responder bid 4NT after KC the responder his recommendation is to play i4NT

If ♦ is the agreed trump the same principle will apply 4♦ **RKCB for minor**

| | |
|-----|---|
| 4♥ | 1 or 4 KC |
| 4♠ | 0 or 3 KC |
| 4NT | 2 KC |
| 5♣ | 2KC plus Queen |
| 5♦ | To play. Responder must pass as Opener realize that slam not possible |

If responder bid 4NT after KC the responder his recommendation is to play i4NT

King ask

If the partnership discovers that all Key Cards are accounted for, and the player must know which side Kings are held by partner, then the King-Ask is initiated. The King-Ask is **one level higher than the Minor trump suit**, which has been established as the trump suit as shown in the following auction

| Opener | Responder | Meaning |
|--------|-----------|----------------------------------|
| 1♣ | 2♣ | Inverted minor |
| 4♣ | 4♦ | Minorwood / Showing 1 or 4 KC |
| 5♦ | | King Ask |
| | 5♥ | 1 King (trump king already shown |
| | 5♠ | 0 or 3 Kings |
| | 5NT | 2 Kings |

Queen Ask

To ask for Kings the partnership will bid just *one level higher than the Minor suit*, which is the established trump suit. To ask for the Queen of the established trump suit, then the partnership will bid *one step over the response* to the Keycard-Asking bid. For example:

| | | |
|----|----|-------------------------------|
| 4♣ | 4♦ | Minorwood / Showing 1 or 4 KC |
| 4♥ | | Queen ask |
| | 4♠ | Have Queen |
| | 5♣ | No Queen |

Exclusion Key Card Blackwood

In Exclusion Keycard Blackwood there are only four Keycards. *The Ace of the void suit is not counted.* Therefore, only the other 3 Aces and the King of the trump suit count as the four Keycards. This conventional method is initiated:

1. After establishing a trump suit
2. By a jump bid HIGHER than game level in an unbid suit
3. Or is a suit bid by Opponents

The suit of the jump bid is then *excluded* by partner from any response bids. The responses to the Keycard Asking bid is accomplished in the following manner:

Partner opens 1♠ and you hold ♠K2 ♥AQJ62 ♦KQ842 ♣-. You respond 2♥ and partner raises 3♥. The answer is EKCB – after trump has been agreed – a new suit jump-bid beyond game – show a void and asks for key cards outside that suit.

| | | |
|-----------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| Responses to 5♣ | Meaning KC outside clubs | Final contract in example |
| 5♦ | Nil | 5 Hearts |
| 5♥ | 1 KC | 5 Hearts |
| 5♠ | 2KC | 6 Hearts |
| 5NT | 3KC | 7 Hearts |

| Interference over Blackwood – DOPI | | |
|---|-----------|---|
| They bid | Pass | 1 – 4 Key Cards |
| | Double | 0 - 3 Key Card |
| | 1 step | 2 Key Cards no Queen |
| | 2 steps | 2 Key Cards with Queen |
| After Pass or Double - next suit is Queen ask | | |
| They double a suit bid | Pass | No control is suit double |
| | Re-double | 1 st round control in suit doubled |
| | Bid | 2 nd round control in suit doubled and control in suit bid |

Control Bids

Ace or void is 1st round controls and K or singleton 2nd round controls

Following Rules apply

- A trump suit with adequate trump has been agreed
- The auction must be in a game force situation
- Bid 1st and 2nd round controls up-the-line
- If a suit is bypassed a control in that suit is denied
- If Opponents double a control bid and Partner pass – a re-double show 1st round control
- Avoid Blackwood when holding a void or singleton – use Control -bids

Examples

| | | | |
|--|---|---|---|
| West ♠6 ♥A86432 ♦K92 ♣A84 West ♠KQ8764 ♥AQ3 ♦K2 ♣98 | East ♠A32 ♥KQ97 ♦QJ ♣KQ93 East ♠A1063 ♥9 ♦AJ964 ♣KQ2 | West 1♥ 3♠ Singleton 4♦ Cue-bid 5♥ 2 Controls West ♠A1063 ♥9 ♦AJ964 ♣KQ2 | East 2 NT Jacoby 4♣ Cue-bid 4 NT Blackwood 6♥ East 1♣ 3♠ 4♥ Cue-bid – with control in clubs otherwise sign off in 4♠ 5♥ 2 Controls |
|--|---|---|---|

Interference over Control Bid

| | | |
|---|--------------------|--|
| They bid or double our control bid | Pass | No Control in that suit |
| | Double & Re-double | 1 st round control in that suit |
| | Bid | First or second round control in their suit plus control bid in bid suit |

Splinter Bids

A splinter bid is a jump bid in a new suit that makes no sense as a natural bid.

A Splinter bid is artificial and show

- A Singleton or void in the bid suit
- A good fit (combined 9 cards) in trump – 4+ cards in Major, 5+ cards in Minor
- Is forcing to game and suggest the possibility of slam

Recommendations

- Because the Splinter Bid is game-forcing, the amount of strength needed to splinter can be obtained by subtracting the number of points partner has promised from 26.
- Imperfect to splinter suit with high honor, but sometimes best choice
- With stronger hand Jacoby 2NT is preferred to keep the auction on lower level

Rule of 26 - If your partner makes a splinter bid and you can add up all your points outside the splinter suit and it is 26 HCP or more you should consider bidding a slam

Examples of Splinter Bids - double jump raise

| Opener | Responder | Splinter bid |
|--------|-----------|---------------------------|
| 1 ♥ | 3 ♠ | ♠ 10 ♥ KJ76 ♦ KQ6 ♣ K8752 |
| 1 ♥ | 4 ♣ | ♠ AQJ3 ♥ Q876 ♦ Q8632 ♣ - |

Examples of Splinter Bids – single jump raise

| Opener | Responder | Opener | Responder | Meaning |
|--------|-----------|--------|-----------|---------------------------|
| 1 ♠ | 2 ♥ | 4 ♦ | | ♠ AK632 ♥ A763 ♦ 7 ♣ K82 |
| 1 ♦ | 1 ♥ | 2 ♦ | 4 ♣ | ♠ A762 ♥ AJ107 ♦ A875 ♣ 6 |
| 1 ♠ | 1NT | 2 ♥ | 4 ♣ | ♠ A5 ♥ A87653 ♦ 8764 ♣ 2 |
| 2 ♣ | 2 ♥ | 2 ♠ | 4 ♦ | ♠ K965 ♥ K642 ♦ 7 ♣ 8652 |
| 1NT | 2 ♣ | 2 ♥ | 3 ♠ | ♠ 5 ♥ K642 ♦ AQJ7 ♣ 8652 |

Openers Responses after Splinter Bid

- Re-bid Major (sign-off – bad fit)
- Italian Control Bid (slam interest)
- 4NT – 1430 RKC

Jacoby 2NT +13 HCP 4 cards – GF – 1♥ – 2NT

Examples are same for the other Major

| Opener | Meaning |
|------------|--|
| 3♥ | Strong (< 6 losers), thereafter cue-bid or 4NT |
| 4♥ | Minimum opening – no slam interest |
| 3 new suit | Void or singleton, thereafter cue-bid, |
| 4 new suit | Strong 2 nd suit, + 4 cards, 2 of 3 top honours |
| 3NT | Balanced – asking for Cue-bids |

Josephine – Slam Try

A Major suit is agreed as trump or you show support to Partners Major suit on 5 level

| | |
|------|------------------------|
| 5♥ | Josephine Slam Try |
| Pass | 0 – 1 Top Honours |
| 6♥ | 2 top honours in trump |
| 6NT | 3 top honours in trump |

6 – CUE BIDS

Limit Raise or Better when Partner Overcalls

Opponents open and partner overcalls

| | | | | | |
|---------|---------|------|-------|------|-------|
| West | East | West | North | East | South |
| ♠ KJ7 | ♠ AQ642 | - | 1♦ | 1♠ | pass |
| ♥ KJ3 | ♥ Q8 | ? | | | |
| ♦ 64 | ♦ 752 | | | | |
| ♣ QJ852 | ♣ J106 | | | | |

East has overcalled and does not promise an opening hand. In fact he could have anything from 6 to 16 points. With this actual East holding (a decent 1-level overcall) a 3♠ contract would be too high.

So if West cannot bid 3♠ then how does he show the values for a 3♠ raise should partner have a good overcall? The answer is the Limit Raise Cue Bid. Playing this convention West cue bids the opener's suit to show a sound raise to 3♠ (or better). So playing the Limit Raise Cue Bid we can stop at the two level if partner has a minimal overcall. And playing this treatment has additional advantages in that direct raises of partner's overcall are pre-emptive.

Note that the cue bid still applies if RHO bids over partner's overcall. So after -

| | | | |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| West | North | East | South |
| - | 1♦ | 1♠ | 2♥ |

a 2♠ bid by West would simply be competitive, 3♠ or 4♠ would be pre-emptive and 3♦ would show the limit raise or better. You would have to agree what 3♥ means, it's probably best to use it to show 4 card trump support but some players simply cue whichever suit they are stronger in and make a jump cue bid to show 4-card support..

The Jump Limit Raise Cue Bid

♠ KJ73
 ♥ KJ3
 ♦ 64
 ♣ Q985

This hand is very similar to previous hand but the 4th trump, however, is very important, Therefore make a jump cue bid of bid 3♦ to show a sound raise to the three level or better. Note that this situation is not a Splinter.

This bid forces the partnership to the three level, but even if partner has a minimum there is a total of nine trumps and the Law of Total tricks applies.

Limit Raise when the Opponents Overcall

The limit raise cue-bid is used in the following situations

| North Partner | East | South | Meaning |
|---------------|------|-------|---|
| 1♠ | 2♥ | 3♥ | Limit raise or better in Spades |
| 1♣ | 1♦ | 2♦ | Limit raise or better in Clubs or Game Force stopper asking |
| 1♣ | 2♠ | 3♠ | Game Forcing +14 HCP in Clubs or NT |
| 1♥ | 3♦ | 4♦ | Game Forcing +14 HCP in Hearts |

Raises without using the limit cue-bid

| North Partner | East | South | Meaning |
|---------------|------|-------|---------------------------|
| 1♠ | 2♥ | 2♠ | 6 – 9 HCP 3 card support |
| 1♠ | 2♥ | 3♠ | 4 – 8 HCP 4 card support |
| 1♥ | 3♦ | 3♥ | 6 – 10 HCP |
| 1♥ | 3♦ | 4♥ | 10 – 13 HCP or good shape |

Western Cue Bid

Bidding the opponents suit on 3 level is not natural. Does it ask for a stopper (Western Cue bid) – the answer is yes but not always

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| 1♣ | Pass | 1♥ | 1♠ |
| 3♣ | Pass | 3♠ | |

East's 3♠ is obviously not natural. Is it a spade stopper or asking for a spade stopper or a control bid? It can be any of above – but West must assume that East is looking for a spade stopper and bid 3NT with spades stopped.

Alert as Artificial and Forcing

Forcing or Non-forcing

The principle is that a Cue-bid by responder after a double is Game Forcing

Examples

| North Partner | East | South Responder | West | |
|---------------------|--------------------|--------------------|----------------------|---|
| 1♣ 1♠ | 1♥ Pass | Double 2♥ | Pass | Game Force |
| 1♣ 2♣ | 1♦ Pass | 1♠ 2♦ | Pass | Forcing |
| - 1♥ | 1♦ Pass | Double 2♦ | Pass | Forcing – Strong - same as 2♣ opening |
| - 2♥ | 1♥ | Double | Pass | Forcing +12 HCP – can be passed later if South has light double |
| - 2♥ 2NT | 1♥ Pass | Double 2♠ | Pass Pass | As above but non-forcing as minimum and lacking shape |
| - 2♥ 3♣ | 1♥ Pass | Double 2♠ | Pass Pass | Forcing |
| - 2♥ 3♣ 4♣ | 1♥ Pass Pass | Double 2♠ 3♠ | Pass Pass Pass | Non-forcing – Lacking Fit |
| - 2♥ 3♠ | 1♥ Pass | Double 2♠ | Pass Pass | Forcing |

7 – DOUBLES

Take-out Doubles

A take-out double usually show a hand worth opening – but does not promise it

- A. When short (0-1) in opponents suit strive to take actions – like double below
♠ A1084 ♥ K1085 ♦ K975 ♣ 4
- B. With a moderate hand that qualifies for a double or an overcall in a Major – prefer the overcall. Double followed by a bid show at “big” double.
- C. A take-out double of a Major does not guarantee 4 cards of other Major – opponents opens 1♠
♠ 86 ♥ KQ8 ♦ AQ43 ♣ A653
- D. An off-shape double is asking for trouble. Even with a big hand don’t double if short in unbid major. Best bid on below holding is 2♦
♠ 64 ♥ AJ ♦ KQ862 ♣ AK85
- E. The Rank of RHO suit is very relevant when considering a double with boarder-line hand. An aggressive double of 1♣ is safer then of 1♠
- F. A bid of a new suit after a take-out double when the responder made a minimum response show +17 HCP and a good 5 card suit
- G. A bid of 1NT after take-out double when the responder made a minimum response show a balanced hand with 18-19 HCP
- H. A bid of 2NT after take-out double when the responder made a minimum response show a balanced hand with 20-22 HCP

Responses after a take-out double

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| Pass | Penalty – Good holding in Opponents suit. Expecting better score then own likely Contract |
| Lowest suit bid | Weak hand. No good suit - Can be 3 card suit. |
| Suit bid | Maximum 7 HCP. Preference to Major – even with 5m and 4M |
| 1 NT | 7 – 10 HCP – Stopper in Opponents suit |
| Jump Bid | 8 – 10 HCP. Show 4 cards. Preference to Major |
| Double Jump | 8 – 10 HCP. Show +5 cards. Preference to Major |
| Cue bid | +12 HCP any holding or +10 HCP with +4 – 4 in Majors. |
| 3M or 4M | Sufficient points or shape with +5 card Major for invitation or game |

If Partner bid new suit or raise Partners Suit this show +16 HCP

Other Doubles

Card Showing Doubles; are made on many actions where it is likely that our side has the balance of power. They are especially necessary after an enemy pre-empt. Because this doubles do not promise shortness in the opponent's suit partner is welcome to pass when he doesn't have a good alternative.

Responsive Doubles; are takeout doubles after the opponents bid and raise a suit, and partner bids or doubles. Because the opponents have found a fit partner is unlikely to leave to double in at the two or three level.

Support Doubles; are made by the opening bidder with a 3-card support after partner responds 1♥ or 1♠ after RHO overcalls at a low level. A Support Double says nothing about the strength of opener's hands, his distribution or the quality of his trump. If opponents double responders bid a re-double has the same meaning as a support double.

Balancing Doubles; are made when a pass would end the auction. Because it's "now or never" for you side they can be made with a weak hand, especially when you are short in opponents suit. Example below.
When partner makes a "trap-pass" a balancing double can result in a lucrative penalty.

| | | | |
|--------------|----------------------------|--------|--------|
| ♠ J953 | ♥ 4 | ♦ Q854 | ♣ A964 |
| (1♥) Pass | Pass Double (Balancing) | (2♥) | Pass |

Lead-Directing Doubles; is a double of opponent's artificial suit which suggests that partner lead the suit you doubled. It promises both length and strength.

Maximal Overcall Double; can be made by either side. They are usually made by the Opener after responder raises his major to the two level and your RHO bids the suit under it. In the example of 1♠ - (2♥) - 2♠ - (3♥) an overcall Double is a game try, while a bid of 3♠ is competing

Snapdragon double; is a competitive double after the first three players bid three different suits. A Snapdragon double by the fourth player is artificial and forcing. It advertises length in the lone unbid suit (5+ cards), at least 8 points but too little for a bid on the 2 level, and tolerance in Partners suit (at least 2 cards with 1 honor)

Negative doubles; description on following pages

Negative Doubles

- Made by Responder after partner opens and RHO overcalls (or jump-overcalls) in a suit.
- A negative double followed by a bid in a suit is weak (opposite to a take-out double)
- A negative double is valid up to 4♦ - thereafter it is treated as optional either negative or penalty promising 10 HCP and tolerance for partner's suit.

Strength required

+6 HCP – Good shape

+8 HCP – No shape

+8 HCP

+9 HCP

+10 HCP

Level

One

One

Two of a minor

Two of a major

Three or higher of a suit

Bidding Sequences

1♣ - (1♦) – Double

1m – (M) – Double

1♦ - (2♣) – Double

1♥ - (1♠) or 1♠ - (2♥) –
Double

Always promise 4 cards in both Majors

Always promise the other Major

Promise at least one Major

Promise at least one minor – denies support in Major

Use Aggressive actions when

- Short in Opponents suit and/or
- You know you have a fit and/or
- You have tolerance for openers suit and/or
- You have ideal distribution in unbid suits and/or
- You have prime cards (Aces and Kings)

Discretion is recommended with

- Length in the Opponent's suit and/or
- Shortness in Partner's suit and/or
- Flawed distribution in unbid suits and/or
- A hand with Quacks

Opener's re-bids after responders negative double

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| Cue-bid | Game-force – Nothing else about opener's hand |
| All Jump-bids | Invitational |
| Jump to game | Weaker than cue-bid |
| 3NT Double-Jump | Strong un-balanced hand with long minor |
| Reverse | Round-forcing |

Opener may be stuck and forced to

- Rebid a 5 card suit OR
- Bid a suit with 3 cards OR
- Bid 1NT without stopper

Minor Openings – Doubles and Cue Bids

| | | | |
|--------------------|----|------|--|
| 1♣ | 1♦ | X | Always 4 – 4 in Majors |
| Opener's responses | | | 1M → 3 cards |
| | | | 2M → 4 cards – minimum |
| | | | 3M → 4 cards – invitational |
| | | | 4M → 4 cards – good hand |
| Opener respond 2♦ | | | • Asking for stopper |
| Game Force | | | • Strong in Clubs |
| | | | • Fit in Major – very strong |
| 1♦ | X | Pass | 2♦ Show 4 – 4 in Majors 8 – 10 HCP or 11+ any distribution |

Opener's bread and butter issues after responders negative double

| | |
|---|-----|
| Can Opener introduce a 3 card minor | Yes |
| Can Opener introduce a 3 card Major | Yes |
| Can Opener re-bid a 5 card minor | Yes |
| Can Opener re-bid a 5 card Major | Yes |
| Does a 1NT re-bid guarantee a stopper in the enemy suit | No |
| Is Opener's jump shift forcing to game | No |
| Is 4NT unusual by responder after a 4♥ - 4♠ overcall? | Yes |

Partnership – Bread and Butter Issues

| | |
|---|-------------------|
| Negative Doubles – How high? | 4♦ optional to 5♦ |
| After 1♣ - (1♦) – can you respond with 4 cards Major? | Yes |
| After 1 minor – (1♥) – does 1♠ promise 5 cards? | Yes |
| Does a negative double guarantee both unbid suits? | |
| 1♣ - (1♦) – Double | Yes |
| 1m – (M) – Double | No |
| 1♦ - (2♣) – Double | No |
| 1♥ - (1♠) or 1♠ - (2♥) – Double | No |
| Is a jump shift weak after a simple overcall? | Yes |
| Is 4NT unusual by responder after a 4♥ - 4♠ overcall? | Yes |

Over Opponents take-out double (1 of a suit – double - ???) NEW 2

...there are many options

PASS doesn't say that he has (or don't) have support. It just shows a weak hand – usually about 0-6 HCP (but it could be more)

REDOUBLE is another option showing +10HCP and no support in Opener's suit. With +2,5 defensive tricks Opener is forced to pass leaving further actions (possible penalty double) to responder. All further doubles are for penalty.

ONE LEVEL RESPONSES 1X “Double – 1Y

Usually he will have less than 10 HCP – but he could actually have more. With ♠ A K 8 6 5 ♥ 3 ♦ Q J 8 6 ♣ 6 5 bid 1♠ over the double. Rather start to describe your suits than to redouble and risk the auction getting too high. If instead you hold ♠ A Q 7 6 ♥ K Q ♦ J 10 9 8 ♣ 10 4 3 redouble and hope to penalize the opponents. 1-level suit bids are therefore FORCING. I want to be able to bid 1♠ on the hand above without the risk of being passed out.

A 1NT response after a double shows 6-9, balanced.

TWO LEVEL SUIT RESPONSES like 1♥ - Double - 2♣ or 1♠ - Double - 2♥

Recommend that a **2-level bid after a double is natural and NOT FORCING**. Since you can redouble with 10 HCP, a 2-level response is assumed to be less than 10 HCP. For example, on the first auction, East could have

♠ 4 2 ♥ 4 2 ♦ 7 6 5 ♣ A Q J 9 8 7 and on the second
♠ 7 ♥ K Q 10 9 7 6 ♦ J 5 4 ♣ 9 8

JUMPS TO 2 LEVEL like 1♦ - Double - 2♠ are weak and 6+

JUMPS TO 3 LEVEL are Bergen

2NT / TRUSCOTT over a Major is used to show a limit raise with 3 cards support. Opener bids 3 of Major to show minimum and a new suit is invitational Help suit.

SUMMARY OF MOST COMMON AGREEMENTS AFTER TAKEOUT DOUBLE:

PASS= WEAK (Usually)

REDOUBLE = 10+ HCP

ONE-LEVEL SUIT BIDS = Natural, Forcing one round (Usually less than 10, but could have more)

TWO-LEVEL SUIT BIDS (not jumps) = Natural, Not Forcing (Less than 10)

TWO-LEVEL JUMP BIDS are weak

THREE-LEVEL JUMP BIDS are Bergen

2NT limit bid or better – 3 card support

8 – SYSTEM ON – OR SYSTEM OFF

| Opening bid / Convention | Double | Overcall |
|---------------------------|---|---|
| 2 over 1 and 1 NT Forcing | 1NT – Non-forcing Un-passed hand – New suit 8 – 11 HCP constructive and round forcing Passed hand – new suit non-forcing | 1NT – Non-forcing Un-passed hand – New suit 10-ish constructive and round forcing Passed hand – new suit non-forcing |
| 1 NT | On | Lebensohl |
| 2♥ 2♠ 2 NT | On | Off |
| 2♣ | System Convention | System Convention |
| 2♦ | System Convention | System Convention |
| Two Way Check-back | On | Off |
| Bergen Raises | On | On – 1 level |
| Drury Reversed | On – 3rd position | Off |
| Inverted Minors | System Convention | System Convention |
| Jacoby | On | On – 1 level |
| Splinter | On | On |

9 – LEADS AND SIGNALS

Alternative 1

Leads: Small is positive

Discards / Signals in trump contract: small is positive

Discards / Signals in NT contracts: Lavinthal

Count signals: when declarer plays, small / high is odd, high / low is even number of cards

Doubleton in suit Contracts: When Partner leads Ace or King – high - low

Doubleton When leading and or discarding – high – low

Alternative 2 (Fernando Piedra)

Leads:

- Both suit and NT contract; 3 – 5th (even with 3 small cards)
- Exception – when leading against NT in partners suit – with 3 cards lead highest,
- with +4 cards lead second highest
- Top of sequence

Discards / Signals

- In trump contract: small is encouraging
- In NT contracts: Lavinthal
- When Partner leads high card – the first discard is always attitude
- Count from second card played in the suit
- Honour shows sequence (or “wake-up”)

Count signals:

- Low / High is odd
- When enemy plays show count
- When Partner plays – if you are unable to beat dummy – show count

Doubleton

- When Partner leads or discarding – Low / High
- When leading and High / Low

Guide lines - Opening leads against trump contracts

1. When declarer pre-empts, try to make an aggressive lead – including an Ace
2. Analysing the enemy auction can allow to find the killing lead
3. If Partner had the chance to make a lead-directing double, lead a different suit
4. Lead an honor in Partners bid suit, when you have a sequence, or short suit or other good reason
5. If you raised Partners suit without honor in it and lead the suit – lead top of nothing
6. If the Opponents have the balance of power and a fit, you only hope may be to lead a strong short suit
7. If an Opponent jumps to slam without bidding Blackwood, he is likely to have a void.
8. Try to make an aggressive lead against a small slam – even leading an Ace
9. When you have a void, try to „wake-up“ Partner by intentionally making „wrong“ lead.
10. If Partner doubles their slam (called Lightner double) assume he has a void and try to „find“ him

When leading a trump?

1. When declarer has a two-suited hand, a trump lead is often best.
2. When the opponents bid 1 of a Major – 1NT – 2 of a minor – Pass. Lead a trump – responder is short in opener's major
3. With a strong holding in declarer's longest side suit – lead a trump
4. When the Opponents have limited strength and no outside source of tricks – lead a trump
5. When dummy is known to have a short suit – a trump lead is usually best
6. Never lead a trump just because you cannot find another lead

Guide lines - Opening leads against NT contracts

1. A sequence in NT requires 2 ½ consecutive cards QJ9, J108, 1097
2. When leading from strength in opponents suit, lead an honor only if you have a 4 card sequence
3. When Partner is known to be weak you should often NOT make a textbook lead
4. If declarer must be short in a suit, strive to lead it and „use up the honors from the short side first“
5. Unless Partner promises that suit, avoid leading 4 card suits which have the Ace but lack the King
6. With 4 cards headed by AK don't lead low
7. Leading declarer's 4 cards suit is sensible when you have length and strength in that suit
8. A NT response to 1 diamond usually includes 4+ clubs
9. Going passive is usually best after 2NT – 3NT,
10. Unless Partner bid that suit, it is usually not good to lead from a 4-card minor
11. After an artificial bid Partner pass is significant.
12. On many hands Partners' pass can provide valuable negative inferences
13. When you need to make an aggressive lead – a 3 card suit with 2 touching honors is attractive
14. Leading from strength thru dummy's length will often give up a trick by „finessing yourself“
15. Against 6NT when opponents has promised a long suit, lead aggressive
16. Partner's „out of the blue“ double shows a long Major – so lead your shortest Major.
17. If your side did not bid, Partners' penalty double demands a lead in dummy's first bid suit.

Leading a 9 or 10 show 0 or 2 higher cards. This is particular useful against NT contracts but also against suit contract or when leading a new suit after trick 1 in any contract

The 9 = 0 or 2 higher, 2 higher it promises the 10

The 9 = None or 2 higher
2 higher it promises the 10

| | | | |
|------|--------|--------|--------|
| ♠987 | ♥Q1098 | ♦K1098 | ♣A1098 |
|------|--------|--------|--------|

The 10 = None or 2 higher
2 higher it promises the Jack

| | | |
|-------|--------|--------|
| ♠1098 | ♥KJ109 | ♦AJ109 |
|-------|--------|--------|

The Jack shows the 10
and denies a higher honour

- J1087 J108

The Queen shows the Jack

- QJ98 QJ10 AQJ10

The King shows the Queen

- KQ10 KQJ

The Ace shows the King

- AK AK10 AK109 AKJ AKQ

If Opener leader has a very strong suit where he is eager to locate an honor, he should play the honor directly above it – “Partner if you got it – Play it.”

With KQ109 – play the Queen to demand the Jack

With AKJ10 – play the King to demand the Queen. If Partner don’t have the Queen he should give count

|

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