

Partnership Agreements

We have a convention card for Wednesday morning play. You can find it on the website at: [Link](#). This lists the conventions and general approach you have agreed to take. It is important that both you and your partner agree and use the same rules - indeed it is against the laws of duplicate bridge not to. The convention card can look a bit daunting at first - it is intended to cover all levels of player. What you have learnt so far is standard Acol and there are relatively few additional things that it is essential to agree with with your existing partner or any new partner.

2♠ Response to 1NT

When we use Stayman and red suit transfers a specific meaning is applied to the responses 2♣, 2♦ and 2♥. This leaves 2♠ as a “spare” bid. There are two common uses for the 2♠ response

South	West	North	East
1NT	Pass	2♠	

This can show exactly 11 points with 2NT showing exactly 12, splitting the standard 2NT bid into two. This is useful if the player who bid 1NT has exactly 13 points. If 2NT shows 11 or 12 points it is a guess whether to bid game or not. If you know whether partner has 11 or 12 you can pass in response to the 11 and bid game in response to the 12.

The alternative use is as transfer to a minor. The sequence will be:

South	West	North	East
1NT	Pass	2♠	Pass
3♣	Pass	Pass or 3♦	

The second bid by North is “pass or correct”. If their suit is clubs they pass and if it is diamonds they bid them. This is usually used for a weak hand with a long minor suit - one that has enough high cards missing that it won't run. If you have a strong suit it will score better to stay in no-trumps. If you have a solid, long minor suit then you could chance a 3NT bid.

1NT opening - system off or on after double or overcall

Your partner opens 1NT and the next person either overcalls or doubles. You need to agree with your partner whether you are still using stayman and red suit transfers if this happens. It is difficult to use red suit transfers because any bid may have made it impossible to do what you want. It is easier to use conventions over a double.

1NT Overcall - system off or on

Similarly you need to agree whether you are using stayman and red suits transfers after a 1NT overcall, for example:

South	West	North	East
1♠	1NT	Pass	?

Discard system

Our system card shows HELD - high encouraging, low discouraging. It has the benefit of being a simple system. For example, discard a high card in a suit you want partner to lead, discard a low card in a suit where you have no interest. Other discard systems are available - e.g. Reverse HELD, McKenney, Revolving discards, Dodds. The most important thing is to have agreed it with your partner. It doesn't work as well against no-trumps as you usually cannot afford a high card to encourage. The exception is KQJT653, where you can play the king to get your partner's attention! Otherwise all you can do is discourage the other suits.