

New Minor Forcing

After opener opens one of a minor and rebids 1NT or 2NT, the bid of the other minor is best used for a convention we call **New Minor Forcing (NMF)**. Here are some auctions with the bid of the other minor in bold – the first four are the most common.

1♣-1♥; 1NT - **2♦**

1♦-1♥; 1NT- **2♣**

1♣-1♠; 1NT- **2♦**

1♦-1♠; 1NT- **2♣**

1♣-1♥; 2NT- **3♦** (etc.)

- Think of new minor forcing like Stayman. We give up the natural bid of a minor to get more information on partner's majors. It is well worth it!
- New minor forcing is a powerful tool. It helps:
 - Find 5-3 major suit fits (its most common use)
 - Find 4-4 major suit fits
 - Provides a more sensible exploration of playing 3NT
 - Creates far more sequences for inviting game
 - Helps responder show invitational hands with six card suits
 - Provides a way to sign off at the two level when responder is weak with both majors

What does responder need to make the NMF bid?

1. The first requirement opposite a rebid of 1NT in HCP is 11+ HCP.

- a. If responder has 11-12 HCP she will invite game, and if responder has 13+ HCP she will bid game. In the latter case, NMF is used to get to the **best** game.
2. The second requirement is a need to check back with partner about his major suit holdings when there still might be a 5-3 or 4-4 major suit fit.

Auction begins **1C-1S; 1NT** – should responder use NMF and bid 2♦?

♠ KQ873 ♥T4 ♦A94 ♣Q95

Answer: Yes. Partner would almost always bid 1NT with three spades. Bid 2♦ and hope that partner can now bid spades. If partner bids 2♥, you can rebid 2NT which partner will pass with a minimum and raise with a maximum.

♠KQ87 ♥QJ9 ♦K84 ♣JT6

Answer: No. Once partner bid 1NT, he denied four spades as he would have bid 2♠ with that hand. Bid 2NT directly over 1NT to invite game. Once you start playing NMF, this auction denies having a fifth spade.

♠AJT64 ♥KQ83 ♦AT3 ♣T

Answer: Yes. Your 14 point hand was always bidding game after partner opened the bidding. NMF will let you explore both majors and

no-trump. If partner bids spades, you will bid a spade game in your 5-3 fit. If partner bids 2♥, you can bid a heart game and play in your 4-4 fit. If partner rebids 2NT or 3♣ (showing 5), you can bid 3NT.

♠J8543 ♥K765 ♦KT ♣Q2

Answer: No. The correct bid is pass; with only 9 points, game is not in the picture and your spades are not good enough to sign off in 2♠. A 2♠ bid here should show six spades and 6-9 HCP; a very good 5 card suit such as KQJT5 would be acceptable for a 2♠ bid. You may miss a 5-3 spade fit by passing, but 1NT should be an acceptable spot. If you bid 2♠ and partner has 2 small or a singleton honor opposite J8543, you'll lose too many trump tricks to get a good score.

OK – now over to opener's side. The auction starts 1♣-1♠; 1NT-2♦! What do we rebid?

♠ K63 ♥AJ3 ♦T76 ♣KJT3

Answer: Bid 2S. Partner is asking if we have 3 spades, and we do. Partner would not have bid NMF if she only had four spades so we know she has at least five.

♠ KQ7 ♥AT5 ♦97 ♣ KQ873

Answer: On this one, bid 3♠. Yes, you are allowed to jump with 14! 1NT showed 12-14 HCP, but you were maximum for that bid. This

hand has great spades, a five card suit on the side, and prime values. Tell partner how good you are for your 1NT call.

♠ KT6 ♥AJ54 ♦J7 ♣KJ73

Answer: This one offers two possible options and experts differ in how they like to handle it. Some feel that the first priority should be partner's suit and bid 2♠. Some prefer to bid 2♥ just in case partner has 5 spades and four hearts; a 4-4 fit plays slightly better than a 5-3 fit all things being equal. I slightly prefer 2♥, but either will work – just make sure you and your partner have discussed it.

Do we need to alert this?

Answer: Yes. The bid of the new minor should be alerted as your partner may or may not have clubs or diamonds. All subsequent bids do not need to be alerted as they are natural.

What if we have the minor and want to bid it naturally?

In my experience, this doesn't happen too much but we can still do that one of two ways if we have 5 in the major and 5+ in the minor:

1C-1H;1NT-2D!;2NT-3D --- 5 hearts, 5 diamonds, forcing

(or)

1C-1H; 1NT-3D

You might pick one of the above sequences as forcing, and one as invitational or nonforcing (I prefer the first sequence to be forcing myself).

If you have an invitational + hand and the minor is longer than the major, you should bid the minor first.

1C-1D; 1NT-2H; responder has 5+ diamonds, 4+ hearts and 11+ HCP. 2H is forcing.

MIT Board 14 from October 4th

♠ 42	♠ AKQ73
♥ JT82	♥ AQ7
♦ AQT6	♦ 9843
♣ AQ2	♣ 9

Auction with NMF used:

1♦-1♠

1NT-2♣!

2♥-3♠

3NT-pass

The 2♣ bid feels unnatural by East with a singleton, but East is trying to get partner to show three spades if she has them. Once partner bids 2♥, East should now jump to 3♠ to show a game forcing hand with powerful spades. East is worried about clubs which is the unbid suit. When partner bids 3NT, East should feel she showed her hand and trust partner. 3NT is easy on a club lead; West can win the trick and play a heart to the queen. If it loses, West still has nine tricks (3

spades, 3 hearts, 2 clubs and one diamond). 4♠ is not a bad contract but proved difficult when spades didn't break and the red suit finesses failed.