

Bidding After 1NT Forcing/Semi-forcing/Hybrid? By Neil H. Timm

Playing the 2/1 game Force System, many partnerships when opening 1♠/1♥ play 1NT* forcing which says responder has 7-12 dummy points without a fit. Others play both major suit bids as semi-forcing as recommended for example by Larry Cohen. And still others allow for a hybrid option where after 1♠ 1NT* is always forcing so one may show hearts and over the bid of 1♥ 1NT as semi-forcing, which allows one to **pass** the 1♥ bid when 5332; without this distribution opener usually bids again.

When opening 1♥/1♠, what kind of hand does opener have? There are three possibilities:

1. Minimum, 11-14HCP - if partner has a similar hand, game is possible.
2. Intermediate, 15-17HCP - game is likely only if partner is 5-5 in the majors.
3. Strong hand, 18-21HCP - game is possible with as few as 7 HCP.

Having defined the opener's hand, let's now look at responders' hand. The range may be 7-10 or perhaps 11-12. With 7-10 responder has a minimum and game is unlikely; however, with 10-12 it is not.

What sequence of bids do you employ after bidding 1NT (forcing/semi-forcing/hybrid)?

With a Minimum/Invitational hand (11-17):

Opener	Responder
1♠	-1NT*
2♥/2♦ - 4+card side suit	- 2♠ to play - 2NT agrees to second suit and is a Game Try Bid
2♣* - Artificial Option 1	- 2♦* no spade support with less than 4-hearts - 2♥ no spade support with 4+hearts - 2♠ to play
2♣* - Artificial Option 2	- 2♦* automatic relay bid - 3♣/3♦ invitational hand and 7+HCP - 2NT 10-12 HCP & ≤2♠ and ≤4♥ - 2♠ 8-10 constructive followed by a Game Try (SS/HS/LS) - 2♥ 8-10 constructive followed by a Game Try (SS/HS/LS)
2♥=Min with 3♥'s	- 3♦/3♥ is HSGT ♦/♣ and agree hearts
2♠=Denies 3-hearts	- 3♣/3♦=6-card suit to play - 2NT=5-5 in the minors

With a Strong hand (18-21):

Opener

1♠

Responder

-1NT*

2NT=strong hand with 4-hearts

-3♣=asking bid

3♦=5+diamonds

3♥≤3hearts

3♠≤3clubs

3NT=5422 (invites 4♥/pass)

-3♠=10-12 with 3-spades

-3♦=4+hearts with slam interest

-3♥ agrees diamonds and slam interest

2♣* - artificial relay

-2♦*relay bid

2NT=5♠-4♥

-3♣=ask

3♥=5+♥

3♦≤3

3♠*≤4♦

3NT=5=4-x-x

-3♠=3-card 10-12

-3♦ agrees hearts and slam try

3♣=5♠-5/4♣

-3♦= shortness ask with none opener bids 3NT

-3♥=slam try in clubs

-3♠=3+spades

-3NT=to play

3♦*=ask

-3♠=3+spades

-3NT=to play

-4♣/4♦/4♠=slam tries

3♥*=ask

-3♠=3+spades

-3NT=to play

-4♣/4♦/4♠=slam tries

3♠=6+spades

starts cue bidding controls

3NT 6+spades (6322)

pass or cue bid controls

With a Minimum (11-14):

Opener

Responder

1♥	1♠=6+points
1NT	May pass or use XYZ or 2-way NMF

With a Minimum/Invitational hand (11-17):

Opener	Responder
1♥	-1NT
2♦=4-diamond	-2♥=to play -3♣=10-12 with 4-hearts -2NT=10-11 no fit -2♠=GT agrees diamonds
2♣* - Artificial Option 1	- 2♦* no heart support <4-spades - 2♠ to play
2♣* - Artificial Option 2	- 2♦* automatic relay bid -3♣/3♦ invitational hand and 7+HCP -2NT 10-12 HCP & ≤ 2♠ with 5♥ -2♥ 8-10 constructive followed by a Game Try (SS/HS/LS) -2♠ 8-10 constructive and 5+clubs
2♥=Min Opener	-2♠ 10-12 with 5+diamonds -3♣/3♦ to play -2NT= 5-5 in minors

With a Strong hand (18-21):

Opener	Responder
1♥	-1NT*
2♠	Lebensohl over reverse
2NT with 4+diamonds	-3♣=ask
3♦=5+diamond	
3♠≤3♠	
3♥≤3♣	
3NT=5-2-4-2	-3♥=3-card support 10-12 -3♠ agrees diamonds and slam try
2♣*= artificial relay	-2♦*=relay bid

GF bids follow

2♠*=4+clubs ≤2♠

2NT=4+clubs ≤2♦

3♣=5♥or 4/5♣

3♥=6+hearts

3NT=6322

-3♦ asks for shortness

-3♥ agrees hearts

-3♠ slam try in clubs

3NT=to play

start cue bidding controls

pass or cue bid control