

EÉPAR 3 NT Opening

[Pete Matthews Jr](https://3nt.xyz) - <https://3nt.xyz> - © March 26, 2023

EÉPAR (pronounced “A-par”) is a modification of the NAMYATS convention. In NAMYATS, 3 NT shows an opening preempt to four of a minor suit; 4 ♣ and 4 ♦ are released to become strong preempts to 4 ♥ and 4 ♠, respectively. In EÉPAR, the preempts to four of a minor are unmolested, and 3 NT shows a strong preempt to four of an undisclosed major.

EÉPAR 3 NT occupies a space between an opening bid of

2 ♣ A hand with a long major suit and at least nine tricks in hand.

4 M A hand very long in the bid major suit. Playing rule of 2-3-4 preempts, the bidder expects to be down 3 at equal vulnerability - 7 tricks in hand.

So EÉPAR 3 NT should provide about 8 or 8½ tricks in hand, at equal vulnerability. Here are the continuations:

Responder normally bids 4 ♦, asking opener to name that major, which responder often passes. However, the next step (4 NT or 4 ♠) asks for key cards, or responder may initiate control bidding. This is the method to use when we know what to do, once opener bids the major - responder remains in control.

Responder's 4 ♣ invites a slam in the major. Opener usually bids the suit below the major. Responder's 4M *denies* a high trump honor (A/K/Q) and is non-forcing. 4 NT (or 4 ♠) asks for key cards (sounds like opener showed responder's better major). Any other bid by responder shows the cheapest control (ace, king, singleton or void), and *promises* a high trump honor.

Over 4 ♣, opener's 4 ♠ rebid is kickback, showing hearts and asking for keycards; similarly, opener's 4 NT shows spades and asks for keycards.

Responder's 4 ♥ or 4 ♠ is a splinter: singleton or void in the bid suit and at least 3-card support for the other major. Opener passes, cue bids or asks for key cards. Similarly, 5 ♣ or 5 ♦ is a splinter with at least three cards in each major suit.

If they act over 3NT, responder's double or redouble is penalty; pass requires opener to bid 4 M, if possible. Otherwise, we ignore a double of 3 NT (systems on). If they bid a minor suit, bidding a major is still a splinter. If they bid 4 ♥, 4 ♠ is a slam try without a top spade honor.

Backstory

The Stayman convention was invented by George Rapée (pronounced “rah-PAY”), whose client, Sam Stayman, was the first to write about it. Vic Mitchell invented NAMYATS, reversing his client’s name for this convention.

EÉPAR was proposed to Richard Lee by late Long Island pro Alan Tucker, whose continuations are lost to posterity. As with Tucker over one heart, I started with the bald description and provided all the details. Instead of calling it modified NAMYATS, or tapping Mitchell or Tucker, I decided to reverse Rapée’s name for my work – Rapée was an all-time great – I hope he would have been pleased.

In May 2022, I laid out the continuations as they appear here, but never published them or played them. They look powerful, but might not be worth the memory drain to play. I’m publishing them now, so I can point to them from my upcoming book, *Advanced Bidding Tools*.