

SOS

A Natural Bridge Bidding System

Notes and Variations by Bruce Watson

System Complies with the Open Chart of the ACBL

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Preface

These notes contain a complete bridge bidding system. **SOS** is a “Standard American” based system using 15-17 notrump openings and five-card majors. **SOS** is a mnemonic for Standard on Steroids.

Care has been taken to ensure that everything complies with the Open Chart of the ACBL. This means that, except for novice or other special restricted events, it can be played in an open game at the club level or above without any special permission or pre-alerts.

Counting Points

For the opening bid use HCP only. Thereafter use your favourite method of counting “dummy” points. For a potential suit contract, I add 3-2-1 shortness points to HCP with expected support (usually 3-card) and 5-3-1 points with unexpected support (4+ card).

Notation

A distribution symbol like 3=1=5=4, for example, indicates a hand with precisely 3 spades, 1 heart, 5 diamonds and 4 clubs. But 3-1-5-4 indicates any of the 24 possible distributions with a 5-card suit, a 4-card suit, a 3-card suit and a singleton. The symbol 3-1=5-4 shows 3-1 either way in the majors and 5-4 either way in the minors.

GF means forcing to game. **QGF** = quasi-game force and means forcing to **3NT** or four of the obvious minor. **WQGF** = weak quasi-game force and means forcing to **2NT** or three of a minor.

SOS System

Overview

- 1NT** 15-17 HCP. May include a 5-card major (**M**). Balanced or semi-balanced distribution. Balanced is 4-3-3-3 or 4-4-3-2. Semi-balanced is 5-3-3-2 or 2-2-4-5 with 4 of one minor (**m**) and 5 of the other minor (**om**). Some 5-4-2-2 hands with a 4-card major and a 5-card minor may be opened with **1NT**. Although, there are often good alternatives with those. **Transfers** and **Puppet Stayman (TAPS)** are used over an opening **1NT**.
- 1M** 10+ HCP. Guarantees a 5+ card suit. A minimum opening bid of **1M** (10-11 HCP) will usually have some additional feature like most points in the long suit(s), extra length or lack of "quacks."
- 1m** 11+ HCP unbalanced or 12+ HCP balanced. Guarantees at least 3 cards in **m**.
- 2♣** Strong, artificial and forcing.
- 2♦** Modified Roman.
- 2M** Weak. 6-9 HCP.
- 2NT** 20-21 HCP. Balanced or semi-balanced. For a **2NT** opening, semi-balanced means 5-3-3-2 with any 5-card suit or 2-2-4-5 with 4 of one **m** and 5 cards in **om**. Use transfers and Puppet Stayman (TAPS).
- 3m or 3M** Pre-emptive. Usually a 7 card suit. "Aggressive Rule of 123."¹
- 3NT** Shows an unspecified 8 card minor. Rule of two or three.
- 4m** Namyats
- 4M** Pre-emptive. Shows an 8 card suit. Rule of two or three.

¹ This means not wild. Closer to the classic rule of 123 than to the modern style.

1NT Opening and Responses

The opening one notrump bid in all seats and vulnerabilities shows 15-17 HCP with balanced or semi-balanced distribution. May include a 5-card major (**M**). Balanced is 4-3-3-3 or 4-4-3-2. Semi-balanced is 5-3-3-2 or 2-2-4-5 with 4 of one minor (**m**) and 5 of the other minor (**om**). With both a 4-card major and a 5-card minor a reverse is often available. But if not, 2-4-2-5 is an acceptable **1NT** opening bid. **Transfers** and **Puppet Stayman** (TAPS) are used over an opening **1NT**.

Transfers after 1NT:

2♦, 2♥: Transfers (weak, invitational or game-forcing) to the next higher suit. They guarantee 5+ cards in the implied suit.

2♠: Either a transfer to clubs (any strength) or an invitational hand with diamonds.

2NT: The standard invitational raise.

3♣: Weak or game-forcing transfer to diamonds.

3♦: 5=5 in the minors and game-forcing.

3♥: 3=1=5=4 or 3=1=4=5. Game force.

3♠: 1=3=5=4 or 1=3=4=5. Game force.

3NT: To play, with no major suit interest.

4♣: Gerber.

Puppet Stayman after 1NT:

2♣ is Puppet Stayman asking the notrump bidder if he has a 5-card major. It shows at least invitational strength. Opener responds as follows.

2♦: Shows a 4-card major or 3 spades (a 4-card major or 3=2 or 3=3 in the majors).

2♠: Shows 5 spades.

2NT: Shows 5 hearts.

2♥: Shows none of the above; so, 2=2 or 2=3 in the majors.

After a **2♦** response, responder's bids show the following.

2♥: Responder either has 4 spades but not 4 hearts or a balanced raise to **2NT** or **3NT**. Opener bids **2♠/3♠** with four or **2NT/3NT** otherwise. Responder then raises spades to **3♠/4♠** or bids **2NT/3NT**. If opener rebids **2NT** then responder passes or raises to **3NT**.

2♠: Shows 4 hearts but not 4 spades. Opener bids **2NT** or **3NT** without hearts. He bids **3♥** or **4♥** with that suit. Responder can still raise a signoff with game-going strength.

2NT: Shows 4=4 in the majors, invitational. Opener places the contract.

3♦: Shows 5=4 or 5=5 in the majors, invitational or better. Opener places the contract.

3NT: Shows 4=4 in the majors, game forcing. Opener places the contract.

4NT: Shows 4=4 in the majors. Invites slam.

5NT: Shows 4=4 in the majors. Opener picks a slam.

Some Specific TAPS Auctions After 1NT

1NT - 2♣ 2♥ - ?	2♣ shows 5=5 in the majors, invitational or better and forcing to 2NT. 2NT is invitational and 3NT is to play. Over 2♣ or 2NT opener places the contract.
1NT - 2♣ 2♠ - ?	3♠ is invitational and 4♠ is to play. 2NT is invitational and 3NT is to play.
1NT - 2♣ 2NT - ?	3♦ is an invitational or better transfer to opener's hearts.
1NT - 2♦ 2♥ - 2NT	Shows 4=5 in the majors, invitational. Over 2♦ opener should accept the transfer. Over 2NT opener places the contract.
1NT - 2♦ 2♥ - 3NT	Shows 4=5 in the majors. Opener places the contract.
1NT - 2♦ 2♥ - 2♠	Shows 5 hearts and fewer than 4 spades. Invitational or better. Forcing to 2NT.
1NT - 2♣ ?	Opener can only bid 2NT or 3♣. 3♣ shows a hand which would accept an invite in clubs. 2NT shows anything else.
1NT - 2♣ 3♣ - ?	Pass is weak with clubs. 3♦ is invitational with diamonds. 3M is game-forcing with clubs plus shortness in M. 3NT is to play and confirms clubs.
1NT - 2♣ 2NT - ?	3♣ is to play. 3♦ is invitational with diamonds. 3M is game-forcing with clubs plus shortness in M. 3NT confirms clubs.
1NT - 3♣ 3♦ - ?	Pass is weak with diamonds. 3M is game-forcing with diamonds plus shortness in M. 3NT is a slam try in diamonds.

When the Opponents Compete over 1NT with a Natural Overcall in a Suit

1NT - (O'call) - X	Penalty. It's our hand. Responder has a trump trick (or two) behind the overcaller.
1NT - (O'call) - {2♦ or 2M}	To play.
1NT - (O'call) - 2NT	This is lebensohl . Asks opener to bid 3♣ and responder will then pass or correct.
1NT - (O'call) - {3m or 3M}	Forcing. Natural or a transfer depending on your version of lebensohl.
1NT - (O'call) - Cue Bid	This is Stayman without a stopper in the overcalled suit. " Direct Denies. "

1NT - (O'call) - 2NT - (Pass) 3♣ - (Pass) - <u>Cue Bid</u>	This is Stayman with a stopper in the overcalled suit. " Slow Shows. "
1NT - (O'call) - <u>3NT</u>	This denies a stopper in the overcalled suit with no interest in a major. " Direct Denies. "
1NT - (O'call) - 2NT - (Pass) 3♣ - (Pass) - <u>3NT</u>	This shows a stopper in the overcalled suit but no interest in a major. " Slow Shows. "
1NT - (Pass) - Pass - (O'call) Pass - (Pass) - <u>X</u>	This balancing double is takeout showing values to compete. Opener could convert it to penalty with trump tricks behind the overcaller.
1NT - (Pass) - Pass - (O'call) Pass - (Pass) - <u>2NT</u>	lebensohl . Responder has a 5+ card minor suit.
1NT - (Pass) - 2♣/2♦ - (X) <u>?</u>	With a lead-directing double of 2♣ or 2♦ , Pass shows a stopper, your normal response shows no stopper and XX shows 4+ cards and a willingness to play there doubled. Responder decides what to do. After a Pass , XX by responder restarts the Stayman inquiry. (Does not apply to Option 3.)
1NT - (Pass) - 2♣/2♦ - (O'call) <u>?</u>	With an overcall of Stayman, Slam-try Stayman, Transfer Stayman or Hitchhiker, X is penalty. Systems off. (Does not apply to Option 3.)
1NT - (O'call) - Pass - (Pass) <u>X</u>	This double is takeout. But opener is not forced to reopen!

Use RIPCORD When the Opponents Double Our 1NT

1NT - (X) - <u>?</u>	With poor hands and a suit we bail out and pull the Ripcord . Responder can Pass or transfer to a 5+ card suit. XX/2♣/2♦/2♥ are transfers to 2♣/2♦/2♥/2♠ respectively. Alert everything including Pass . If asked explain: " Pass is not forcing but I'm obliged to keep the auction alive unless I'm four-triple-three".
1NT - (X) - Pass - (Pass) <u>?</u>	Responder is either weak and balanced or strong. Opener must keep the auction alive unless he is 4-3-3-3. Pass shows any 4-3-3-3; XX shows two suits and 4-4-3-2 or 2-2=4-5; 2m shows a 5-card suit and 5-3-3-2.
1NT - (X) - Pass - (Pass) <u>XX</u> - (Pass) - <u>?</u>	Responder can leave the redouble in with a strong hand or start scrambling. Responder bids up the line although 2♣ might be only 3 cards. Better than even odds that we locate a 4-4 fit.
1NT - (Pass) - Pass - (X) <u>?</u>	Opener will usually Pass . But, he could show a 5-card minor here.

<p>1NT - (Pass) - Pass - (X) Pass - (Pass) - ?</p>	<p>Responder is balanced or would not have passed 1NT originally. But, he could have a 5-card minor. Options are Pass, XX or bid 4+ card suits up the line. XX is not Ripcord. XX shows exactly 3 clubs. Lacking exactly 3 clubs, bid a suit. No transfers. 2♣ or 2♦ show 4+ cards. By inference, 2♥ shows both majors.</p>
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When the Opponents Use a Convention Showing One or Two Suits

The strategy is as follows. Doubles made in position show length in the advertised, or one of the advertised, suits. Doubles in front of the advertised length are takeout. For example, if their conventional bid shows at least one known suit then **X** says you can double their known (advertised) suit or one of their known suits for penalty. If their call shows one or two unspecified suits then we ignore it and bid as if there was no interference.

1. In the first scenario, the opponent's overcall of our **1NT** opening shows a specific suit or one specific suit and one unknown suit. Examples: a transfer overcall, **2♣** or **2♦** DONT, etc.

X This says responder can double their advertised suit for penalty.
Cue Bid Stayman without a stopper. The cue is in their advertised suit.
2NT lebensohl. Bid as if the overcall was made in the specific suit.

2. The opponent's overcall shows two specific suits. For example: Landy **2♣**, **2♥** DONT, etc.

X This says responder can double at least one of their advertised suits for penalty. If their overcall was not made in one of their suits then the double is sometimes called a **pre-penalty double**. If the overcall was made in one of their suits then you are doubling that suit for penalty.
Cheaper Cue Shows the other two suits. Takeout. Like a negative double. Competitive values. For example after **1NT - (2♥ DONT) - ?**, then **2♠** shows 4-4 or 5-4 in the minors. Opener can take a preference or bid **2NT** with equal lengths in the minors.
Higher Cue A general game force. If the opponents have not shown both majors then it is Stayman without a stopper.
2NT lebensohl. Opener bids **3♣** even if clubs is one of their suits. Responder will correct to his suit, cue bid or bid **3NT**. A cue bid follow-up is Stayman with a stopper in the cue bid suit.

3. The opponent's call (usually **X**) shows one unspecified suit. Suppose the opponents use **DONT** and the auction has gone **1NT - (X) - ?**.

Pass Ripcord. Either content to play one notrump doubled or strong and waiting for their suit to be identified. Once their suit is identified, bid as if RHO had made a natural overcall in his suit originally.
XX/2♣/2♦/2♥ Ripcord. Requests opener to bid **2♣/2♦/2♥/2♠** respectively.

4. The opponent's call shows two unspecified suits. For example, in Pivot, **2♣** shows two suits excluding clubs. Calls, other than **X** and **2♣**, showing two unknown suits are not common. But over **2♣** or any bid showing two unknown suits:

X Double is Stayman. Other calls are normal. Responder could be waiting for a suit to be identified.

1NT Exercise Set

The auction has started as shown. At the point where the question mark appears, what is your call with the indicated hand? Our recommendations follow on the next page.

Opener 1NT	Opp1 Pass	Responder ?	Opp2		Opp2
1 ♠ AK86 ♥ 7432 ♦ A83 ♣ 43		2 ♠ KQ1086 ♥ J1072 ♦ 975 ♣ 9	3 ♠ J64 ♥ Q73 ♦ AJ97 ♣ J53		4 ♠ AK6 ♥ AKJ105 ♦ 97 ♣ K53
5 ♠ AKQ74 ♥ 86 ♦ K1083 ♣ Q4		6 ♠ AK106 ♥ J10742 ♦ 97 ♣ 95	7 ♠ 1086 ♥ J74 ♦ 9 ♣ AQJ532		8 ♠ Q873 ♥ 105 ♦ J10973 ♣ 52
9 ♠ A86 ♥ 7 ♦ KQJ5 ♣ A8643		10 ♠ KQ653 ♥ 72 ♦ 974 ♣ 952	11 ♠ KQ6 ♥ 973 ♦ AJ973 ♣ J5		12 ♠ AQ6 ♥ 108 ♦ KJ9753 ♣ A5

Opener 1NT	Opp1 2♣ ¹	Responder ?	Opp2	
				1: Both majors
13 ♠ AK86 ♥ 74 ♦ Q1032 ♣ 943		14 ♠ 106 ♥ 862 ♦ K952 ♣ K1093	15 ♠ 1063 ♥ 4 ♦ Q73 ♣ AJ9752	16 ♠ AK6 ♥ 10 ♦ KJ9754 ♣ Q53

Opener 1NT	Opp1 2♥ ¹	Responder ?	Opp2	
				1: Natural
17 ♠ K108732 ♥ 32 ♦ 983 ♣ 64		18 ♠ KQ10864 ♥ 72 ♦ Q975 ♣ 9	19 ♠ J1063 ♥ 1073 ♦ AQ73 ♣ K5	20 ♠ K73 ♥ 10 ♦ 975 ♣ QJ7532

Answers to 1NT Exercise Set

1. Start with Stayman **2♣**. If opener rebids **2♦**, bid **3NT** to show a game forcing hand with 4=4 in the majors. Over a **2♥** rebid you will bid **3NT** to play. If opener rebids **2NT**, which shows five hearts, you will transfer to hearts and raise to game. Over **2♠** you will also raise to game.
2. You *could* just transfer to spades. But that seems a bit timid to us. We would bid **2♣**. Then over a **2♦** response we will bid **3♦** to show both majors. Over a **2♥** rebid by opener we would try **2NT** and hope we don't get too high.
3. Bid Stayman. You want to know if opener has a 5-card major. Over a **2♦** response bid **2♥**. If opener bids **2♠** showing a 4-card suit you will rebid an invitational **2NT**.
4. You want to be in slam. The only question is which one. Transfer to your hearts then invent a rebid of **3♣**. This sequence is a game force showing 5+ hearts and 4+ clubs. Opener's next bid should determine the strain whether hearts, notrump or, possibly, spades.
5. As in #4, you will transfer to your major and then bid your minor.
6. Bid **2♦**, a transfer to hearts, and then rebid **2NT** (not **2♠**!). This shows an invitational hand with 4=5 in the majors. Opener places the contract.
7. Respond with **2♠**. Opener will rebid either **2NT** or **3♣**. Over **2NT** you will sign off in **3♣**. You will convert **3♣** to **3NT**.
8. **Pass** (unless you use Scramble Stayman).
9. Bid **3♥**. This is a game force that shows your 3=1=5-4 pattern.
10. Go with the odds. Transfer to **2♠** with **2♥** and play it there.
11. This is like #3 except that you will rebid **3NT** instead of **2NT** to make sure that you play in game.
12. Bid **3♣** to transfer to diamonds. Then rebid **3NT** – a mild slam try.
13. It is your hand and you have good spades so start with **X**. This tells your partner that you can double at least one of their suits for penalty. If the opponents select hearts, maybe opener can double that suit.
14. Make a cue-bid of **2♥**. With two cue-bids available, the cheaper one is like a takeout (or negative) double. Opener rates to have a minor suit he can bid.
15. Bid a lebensohl **2NT**. Most pairs play that lebensohl does not apply over a natural **2♣**. But when **2♣** shows both majors, lebensohl should apply. You do not need Stayman. But you do need a way to stop in **3♣**. Opener will bid **3♣** which you can pass comfortably.
16. You want to be in at least game. Start with **3♦** (or **3♣** if you use transfer lebensohl). This is forcing to at least game. You should know how to proceed after opener's response.

17. Bid **2♠**. This is to play.
18. Bid **2NT**, lebensohl. Over opener's **3♣** you can try an invitational **3♠**. Alternatively, with transfer lebensohl you can bid an immediate **3♦**.
19. Bid **3♥**. This cue-bid is Stayman without a stopper. **Direct denies**.
20. Bid a lebensohl **2NT** and then pass opener's **3♣**.

Notes on the 1NT Opening and Responses

Opening **1NT** with a 5-card major was never done fifty years ago. But, it is becoming very popular now especially if the suit is a little ratty. TAPS will uncover all the 4-4 and 5-3 major fits. It is memory intensive. But mostly the same structure is used over **2NT**.

1M Opening and Responses

The opening bids of **1♥** and **1♠** show a 5+ card suit and 10+ HCP. Maximum for **1M** is up to a **2♣** opening bid. A response of **2♣** to **1M** is an artificial Game Force. It is made with one of three possible hands: a 3-card fit for **M**, a good suit of its own (which may or may not be clubs) or a big notrump hand which may want to investigate other places to play.

1♥ - <u>1♠</u>	Shows 4+ spades, 6+ HCP. Forcing.
1M - <u>1NT</u>	6-11 HCP. Not Forcing.
1M - <u>2NT</u>	Jacoby-style raise of M . For the entire major suit raise structure see below. Requires an alert.
1M - <u>2♣</u>	15+ HCP. Artificial Game Force. Requires an alert. May or may not have clubs. Opener's rebids below. 2m is Modified Drury after a 3 rd or 4 th seat 1M .
1M - <u>2♦</u>	12-14 HCP, 3+ diamonds. May include 3-card support for M . Responder's clubs may be longer than diamonds (e.g. 2=4=3=4 or 3=2=3=5). One round force. A subsequent new suit rebid by responder is forcing to game. Requires an alert. If asked explain "Normally 12-14 HCP. Natural but may have longer clubs than diamonds."
1♠ - <u>2♥</u>	12-14 HCP. Usually shows 5+ hearts but may only be a 4-card suit if responder has 3-card spade support. One round force. A subsequent new suit rebid by responder is forcing to game.
1M - <u>3♣</u>	One round force. Natural with 12-14 HCP. Usually shows a 6+ card suit. But it may be only a 5-card suit if responder has 3-card support for M or exactly 2=4=2=5 if partner has opened 1♠ . Requires an alert.
1M - <u>4M</u>	[raise] To play. Usually 5+ card support. Could be tactical.
1M - <u>3NT</u>	To play. Shows 15-17 HCP. With a 12-14 balanced hand start with 1♠ , 2♦ , or 3♣ .
1♥ - {<u>3♠</u> or <u>4m</u>}	Splinter. Shows 4+ card support for the major with a singleton or void in the bid suit. 15-17 dummy points. With less, just bid 4M directly or invite with 2NT . With more, bid 2NT .
1♠ - {<u>4♥</u> or <u>4m</u>}	

Opener's Rebid

1M - <u>2♣</u> ?	A repeat bid of 2M shows a 6+ card suit. A rebid of 2oM shows 4+ cards there. 2NT shows a balanced 13+ HCP. 3♣/3♦ shows 4+ cards. 2♦ is the catchall and requires an alert.
1M - <u>2♣</u> 2♦/2M/2oM - ?	2NT asks opener for a 3-card fragment. Opener shows the lower ranking with two 3-card fragments. A new suit by responder, including 3♣ , shows 6+ cards.

1M - 2♦ <u>?</u>	A repeat bid of 2M shows exactly 5 cards and a balanced 10-12 (may have a suit unstopped). A rebid of 2oM shows 4+ cards there. 2NT shows a 6+ card suit in M . 3NT shows 13-14. 3♣/3♦ shows 4+ cards.
1M - 2♦ 2M/2oM/2NT - <u>3♣</u>	Natural, 5=5 in the minors. Game force.
1♥ - 1♠ 1NT - <u>?</u>	This specific auction is included in XYZ and discussed in the section on 1m openings and responses.
1♠ - 2♥ <u>?</u>	A repeat bid of 2♠ shows exactly 5 spades and a balanced 10-12 (may have a suit unstopped). 2NT shows a 6+ card spade suit. After 2♠ or 2NT , a 3♥ rebid by responder may be passed. Opener's 3NT shows 13-14, a doubleton heart and stoppers in the minors. 3♥ shows 3+ heart support. 3♣/3♦ is a GF with 12-14 HCP and 4+ cards.
1M - 3♣ <u>?</u>	3M by opener shows 6+ cards, 3oM is natural and 3NT is to play. Otherwise, opener rebids 3♦ .
1M - {1♠, 2♦, 2♥, 3♣} x - <u>?</u>	5-5 or better responding hands can be awkward to show after a game forcing 2♣ start. So, responder's new suit rebids and 4 th suit rebids are natural and forcing after a 1M opening. This excludes 1♥ - 1♠ - 1NT - <u>2m</u> . These two are XYZ.
Pass - 1M <u>2m</u>	Constructive raises showing 9-11 points. 2♣ shows 4+ card support for M and 2♦ shows 3-card support. Opener rebids 2M with no game interest. Other opener rebids are game tries needing fitting cards.
1♠ - 1NT <u>2♣</u>	2♣ is Gazzilli. Opener has either 10-14 HCP with his major and clubs or any 15+ except a hand with 6+ cards in his major. Responder bids an artificial 2♦ with any hand that can force to game if opener has 15+; so, 2♦ shows about 10+ HCP. Any other call shows 6-9 HCP. See the Gazzilli section below.
1♥ - 1♠ <u>2♣</u>	
1♥ - 1NT <u>2♣</u>	
1♥ - 1♠ <u>?</u>	1NT shows 10-14 HCP and some 5-3-3-2. 2♦ shows 10-14 HCP and 4+ diamonds. 2♠ shows 10-14 HCP and 3+ spades. None of these is forcing.
1♥ - 1♠ <u>2♥/3♥/2NT</u>	2♥ shows 10-14 HCP and 6+ hearts; not forcing. 3♥ shows 15-17 HCP and 6+ hearts; not forcing. 2NT shows 18+ HCP and 6+ hearts; forcing to game.
1M - {1♠ or 1NT} <u>3m</u>	This jump shows a longer second suit. Canapé. So, typically it shows a 5-card major and a 6-card second suit. Not forcing . But it could be a powerful hand in terms of playing tricks.
1♠ - {1NT, 2♣, 2♦} <u>3♥</u>	

Major Suit Raise Structure

Responder's various raises of **M** are distinguished by dummy points and number of cards in **M**. A 4-3-3-3 hand counts as 3-card support even when the "4" is opener's major.

1M - 1NT 2x - 2M	Usually a preference with a doubleton but could also be 3-card support with 6-7 dummy points.
1M - 2M	Shows 8-11 dummy points and 3-card support for M.
1♠ - 3♥	"3M-1" raise. Shows 6-8 dummy points and 4-card support.
1♥ - 3♦	
1M - 3M	3-5 dummy points with 4+ card support for M.
1♠ - 3♦	Constructive raise. 9-11 dummy points and 4+ card support. For memory purposes, these responses are "3M-2" except that, after 1♥, responder must skip over 3♣ and 2NT.
1♥ - 2♠	
1M - 2NT	Jacoby 2NT. Shows 4+ card support for M and either (i) a limit raise with 12-14 dummy points (ii) a 15-17 forcing raise or (iii) 18+ with slam interest.
1M - 2NT ?	3♣: opener would accept a limit raise invite. Game forcing; 3♦: opener would not accept a limit raise invite; 3oM or 4m: opener has 10+ cards in the two suits. Needs filler cards for slam. Not a minimum.
1M - 2NT 3♣ - ?	Responder can show or ask for shortness. 3♦ (next unbid suit) asks for shortness; 3NT, 4♣ and 4♦ show shortness in clubs, diamonds and oM respectively; 3M: responder has no shortness but has 15+; 4M: limit raise and to play.
1M - 2NT 3♣ - 3♦ ?	3NT, 4♣ and 4♦ show shortness in clubs, diamonds and oM respectively; 3M: 5-3-3-2; 3oM: 5-4-2-2. 3NT now by responder asks for the 4-card suit. Opener rebids 4m with 4 cards in m or 4♥ with oM; 4M by opener shows a 6-3-2-2 or 7-2-2-2.
1M - 2NT 3♦ - ?	3M is to play with the limit raise; 4M is to play; Responder can show or ask for shortness. 3oM (next unbid suit) asks for shortness; 3NT, 4♣ and 4♦ show shortness in clubs, diamonds and oM respectively. 3NT or 4m promises more than a splinter. 18+.
1M - 2NT 3♦ - 3oM ?	3NT, 4♣ and 4♦ show shortness in clubs, diamonds and oM respectively; 3♠, when M is spades, or 4♥, when M is hearts, shows no shortness.

The assumption in the following table is that partner has opened 1M in first or second seat.

Support Length \ Dummy Points	3-5	6-7(8)	(8)9-11	12-14	15+
3 or 4-3-3-3	Pass	1NT	2M	1♠, 2♦, 2♥, 3♣	2♣
4+	3M	3M-1	1♠ - 3♦ or 1♥ - 2♠	2NT	2NT or Splinter

Table: Major Suit Raise Structure

Gazzilli

<p>1♠ - 1NT 2♣ - ?</p>	<p>Opener has one of two possible hand types. Either 10-14 HCP with 4+ clubs (and five spades) or 15+ without a 6+ card spade suit. 2♦ by responder is artificial. It shows 10+ HCP and is forcing to game if opener shows 15+. Any other call shows 6-9 HCP. 2♥ shows 5+ hearts; 2♠ shows a doubleton spade; 2NT shows some support for both minors. Something like 3-5, 4-4, 4-5 or 5-5; 3m shows a 6+ card suit. Responder's bids showing 6-9 HCP are not forcing.</p>
<p>1♠ - 1NT 2♣ - 2♦ ?</p>	<p>2♠ shows 10-14 HCP and 5 spades, 4+ clubs; not forcing. Any other call shows 15+. For example, 2♥ shows 5 spades and another 4-card suit (see next). 2NT is a game forcing waiting bid with no clear action. 3m show 5 spades, 5 cards in m (and 15+). Similarly with 3♥. 3NT shows 18-19 HCP and some 5-3-3-2.</p>
<p>1♠ - 1NT 2♣ - 2♦ 2♥ - ?</p>	<p>2♥ shows 5 spades and another 4-card suit with 15+. Responder bids 2♣ to ask. Then opener bids 2NT with 4 clubs, 3♣ with 4 diamonds and 3♦ with 4 hearts.</p>
<p>1♠ - 1NT <u>2♦/2♥</u></p>	<p>10-14 HCP with 5 spades and 4+ of the suit bid. Not forcing.</p>
<p>1♠ - 1NT <u>2♠/3♠/2NT</u></p>	<p>2♠ shows 10-14 HCP and 6+ spades; not forcing. 3♠ shows 15-17 HCP and 6+ spades; not forcing. 2NT shows 18+ HCP and 6+ spades; forcing to game.</p>
<p>1♥ - 1NT 2♣ - ?</p>	<p>Opener has 10-14 HCP with 4+ clubs (and five hearts) or 15+ without a 6+ card heart suit. 2♦ by responder shows 10+ HCP and is game forcing if opener shows 15+. Any other call shows 6-9 HCP. 2♥ shows a doubleton heart; 2♠ shows 5-3 or 4-4 in the minors and is forcing to 2NT; 2NT shows 5-4 or 5-5 in the minors; 3m shows a 6+ card suit. Responder's bids showing 6-9 HCP are not forcing.</p>
<p>1♥ - 1NT 2♣ - 2♦ ?</p>	<p>2♥ shows 10-14 HCP and 5 hearts, 4+ clubs; not forcing. Any other call shows 15+. For example, 2♠ shows 5 hearts, a 4-card minor and 15+ HCP. 2NT is a game forcing waiting bid. It shows 15+ with no clear action. 3m show 5 hearts, 5 cards in m and 15+. 3NT shows 18-19 HCP and some 5-3-3-2.</p>
<p>1♥ - 1NT 2♣ - 2♦ 2♠ - ?</p>	<p>2♠ shows 5 hearts, a 4-card minor and 15+ HCP. Responder bids 2NT to ask. Then opener bids his minor.</p>
<p>1♥ - 1NT <u>2♦</u></p>	<p>10-14 HCP with 5 hearts and 4+ diamonds. Not forcing.</p>
<p>1♥ - 1NT <u>2♠</u></p>	<p>Normal 15+ HCP reverse with 5+ hearts and 4+ spades.</p>
<p>1♥ - 1NT <u>2♥/3♥/2NT</u></p>	<p>2♥ shows 10-14 HCP and 6+ hearts; not forcing. 3♥ shows 15-17 HCP and 6+ hearts; not forcing. 2NT shows 18+ HCP and 6+ hearts; forcing to game.</p>

1♥ - 1♠ 2♣ - ?	Opener has 10-14 HCP with 4+ clubs (and five hearts) or 15+ without a 6+ card heart suit. Opener has denied 4-card spade support. 2♦ by responder shows 10+ HCP and is a GF if opener shows 15+. Any other call shows 6-9 HCP. 2♥ shows a doubleton heart; 2♠ shows 5+ spades; 2NT shows support for both minors; 3m shows a 6+ card suit. Responder's bids showing 6-9 HCP are not forcing.
1♥ - 1♠ 2♣ - 2♦ ?	2♥ shows 10-14 HCP and 5 hearts, 4+ clubs; not forcing. Any other call shows 15+ . For example, 2♠ shows 15+ and 3-card spade support. 2NT is a game forcing waiting bid. It shows 15+ with no clear action but may contain a 4-card minor. 3m shows 5 spades, 5 cards in m and 15+. 3NT shows 18-19 HCP and some 5-3-3-2, 2=5=4-2 or 1=5=4-3.

When the Opponents Compete over 1M

Over a double, the raise structure above is retained except for the strength showing bids of **2♣**, **2♦**, **2♥** and **3♣**. **XX** replaces those bids. After a suit overcall we use a transfer structure.

Partner opens 1M; they double

1M - (X) - ?	[Raises] 2M is 6-11 with exactly 3-card support. The two auctions 1♠ - (X) - 3♦ and 1♥ - (X) - 2♠ show 9-11 dummy points with 4-card support. 2NT is Jacoby with the same continuations. 3M-1 is a 6-8 point 4+ card raise. 3M is pre-emptive with 4+ card support. 4M is 3-way. Splinters apply.
1M - (X) - ?	[Non-raises] XX shows 12+ HCP. 1NT shows 9-11. Non-jump new suit bids are negative free bids showing up to 11 HCP. They are non-forcing.

Partner opens 1M; they overcall a strong 1NT

1M - (1NT) - X	Penalty. It's our hand.
1M - (1NT) - <u>2m/2oM</u>	New suit bids are to play over standard notrump bids by opponents. Good 6- or 7-card suit.

Partner opens 1M; they overcall in a suit below 3M

When partner opens **1M**, we sacrifice the negative double and put it to better use. Responder's first priority is to let opener know whether his support is 3-card or 4+. After that, responder wants to be able to show a new suit and/or invite game.

Simple Overcall. When second hand makes a simple overcall in a suit, the overcall creates an ascending "chain" of possible calls starting with **X** and ending with **2M**. The call just below **2M**,

whether **X** or **2M-1**, is always a constructive 4-card raise. And, **2M** is always a courtesy 3-card raise. Other suit bids in the chain, if any, are transfers.

Jump Overcall. When second hand makes an overcall of at least **2M** but below **3M**, the chain created starts with **X** and ends with **3M**. The call just below **3M**, whether **X** or **3M-1**, is always a constructive 4-card raise. And, **3M** is always a courtesy 3-card raise. Other suit bids in the chain, if any, are transfers.

Here are some examples to clarify.

<p>1♠ - (2♣) - ?</p>	<p>The chain consists of X, 2♦, 2♥ and 2♠. The calls X and 2♦ are the possible transfers. 2♥ and 2♠ are raises. All are forcing and require an alert.</p> <p>X: transfer to diamonds showing a real suit. 2♦: transfer to hearts again showing a real suit. 2♥: constructive 4-card raise (2M-1) of spades. 2♠: 3-card spade raise showing up to 11 support points. 3♣: Cue-bid, outside the chain, shows 12-14 support points and 4-card support for spades. May also have any 15+ Game Force.</p> <p>Jump Raises are pre-emptive.</p> <p>With 12-14 points and 3-card spade support, transfer to an unbid suit or bid a new suit outside the chain. Then raise opener's major as appropriate. A cue-bid is always an option.</p>
<p>1♥ - (2♦) - ?</p>	<p>In this case the chain consists only of X and 2♥.</p> <p>X: constructive 4-card raise (2M-1) of hearts. 2♥: 3-card raise.</p> <p>2♠: Above 2M so a one round force. Invitational+ raises (12+ support points) go through new suit bids, transfers, the cue-bid or leap to game.</p>
<p>1♥ - (3♣) - ?</p>	<p>X: transfer to diamonds. 3♦: 4-card heart raise with values to compete to the 3-level. 3M-1. 3♥: 3-card competitive heart raise. 4♣: Cue-bid.</p>
<p>1M - (1NT) - <u>X</u></p>	<p>Penalty. No transfers here. New suit bids are to play over standard notrump bids by opponents.</p>
<p>1M - (2s) - <u>3M</u></p>	<p>[Jump raise] Pre-emptive. 6-8 dummy points with 4+ card support.</p>
<p>1M - (2s) - <u>4M</u></p>	<p>3-way. To make, pre-emptive, or tactical.</p>
<p>1M - (2s) - <u>3NT</u></p>	<p>To play. Balanced 15-17 or a source of tricks.</p>

1♥ - (X/2s) - { <u>3♠</u> or <u>4m</u> }	Splinter when a jump. Even jump cue-bids are splinters. Should have 4+ card support.
1♠ - (X/2s) - { <u>4♥</u> or <u>4m</u> }	
1♥ - (1♠) - ?	X and 2♣ are transfers to clubs and diamonds respectively. 2♦ is the constructive heart raise and 2♥ is the 3-card raise.
1♥ - (1♠) - <u>1NT</u>	Minimum notrump bids are standard and show 9-11 HCP. A jump to 2NT is 12-14, invitational but not forcing. Shows a doubleton heart.
1M - (2♣) - 2M - (3♣) X	Card-showing doubles through 3♦. These doubles apply when our side has opened 1M and the opponents have found a fit (bid and supported). X says opener is maximum for his bidding so far and willing to compete or defend.
1♠ - (2♣) - 2♥ - (3♣) X	
1♥ - (Pass) - 1♠ - (2m/X) ?	Support doubles and redoubles through 2♥.
1M - (Pass) - 2NT - (X or O'call) ?	Systems off. Bidding reverts to natural. 3M by opener replaces the 3♣ response. Pass by opener replaces 3♦. A new suit is natural. A subsequent 3M by responder shows a limit raise.

1M Exercise Set

The auction has started as shown. At the point where the question mark appears, what is your call with the indicated hand? Our recommendations follow on the next page.

Opener 1♠	Opp1 Pass	Responder ?	Opp2	
1 ♠ Q86 ♥ K432 ♦ 83 ♣ KQJ2		2 ♠ KQ1086 ♥ J1072 ♦ 975 ♣ 9	3 ♠ KQ106 ♥ Q73 ♦ AJ97 ♣ 53	4 ♠ AK63 ♥ KQJ ♦ 974 ♣ 853
5 ♠ KQ43 ♥ 86 ♦ KQ83 ♣ AK4		6 ♠ KQ6 ♥ A4 ♦ AK9754 ♣ 93	7 ♠ K106 ♥ J74 ♦ 9 ♣ AQJ532	8 ♠ K3 ♥ 7 ♦ AK973 ♣ KJ532
Opener 1♠ ?	Opp1 Pass	Responder 2NT	Opp2 Pass	
9 ♠ AK862 ♥ 4 ♦ QJ983 ♣ K3		10 ♠ KQJ96 ♥ J72 ♦ A754 ♣ 9	11 ♠ KJ862 ♥ 73 ♦ AJ73 ♣ J5	12 ♠ AQ632 ♥ 84 ♦ 5 ♣ KJ953
Opener 1♠ 2♠ ¹	Opp1 Pass Pass	Responder 1NT ?	Opp2 Pass	1: Gazzilli
13 ♠ A6 ♥ 7432 ♦ A832 ♣ 843		14 ♠ 6 ♥ AJ1072 ♦ 953 ♣ K975	15 ♠ J3 ♥ K7 ♦ AJ973 ♣ Q542	16 ♠ 4 ♥ J964 ♦ KJ10983 ♣ Q5
Opener 1♥	Opp1 2♠ ¹	Responder ?	Opp2	1: Weak
17 ♠ AK106 ♥ 7 ♦ K853 ♣ 8643		18 ♠ KQ ♥ 72 ♦ QJ953 ♣ K742	19 ♠ J106 ♥ J73 ♦ AJ973 ♣ J5	20 ♠ J ♥ KJ107 ♦ AQ54 ♣ Q532

Answers to 1M Exercise Set

1. Bid **2♥** planning to either pass partner's **2♠** rebid or to raise spades with your next bid. That sequence shows a 12-14 point 3-card raise.
2. There are arguments for either **4♠** or **3♦**. We prefer the constructive raise of **3♦**.
3. A perfect Jacoby **2NT**. Over **3♣** we will jump to **4♠** but over **3♦** we will retreat to **3♠**.
4. Bid **2♥** as in #1. In a 4-3-3-3 hand, 4-card support counts as 3-card support!
5. Bid **2NT**. If opener rebids **3♦** you will be content with **4♠**. But over **3♣** you will bid **3♦** which asks for shortness.
6. Bid **2♣**. This is an artificial game force showing a hand with 15+ HCP but without 4+ card spade support. After opener's rebid you plan to show your diamond suit keeping the spade support in reserve.
7. Bid **3♣**. This shows 6+ clubs and 12-14 points. You may, as here, have 3-card support for opener's major.
8. Bid **2♦** planning to follow up with **3♣**. This sequence is game forcing with 5-5 or better in the minors.
9. You have a very nice hand for partner. Jump to **4♦** now to show 10+ cards in the two suits without two losers off the top in either of the other two suits.
10. It is a close call between **3♣** and **3♦**. We like the more aggressive **3♣** bid. Your points are in your two suits.
11. Bid **3♦**. No question this time. You would not accept a limit raise invite.
12. Bid **3♣**. With two quick losers in hearts you cannot bid **4♣**.
13. Bid **2♠**. This shows a doubleton spade and 6-9 HCP. You do have two aces but it is still only 8 HCP.
14. Try **2♥**. You have a decent 5-card suit.
15. Bid **2♦**. Not because you have a diamond suit but because you have 10+ HCP.
16. Bid **3♦**. This shows 6-9 HCP and a 6+ card suit.
17. **Pass** and hope partner can re-open with a double. **2NT** is a distant second choice.
18. With no negative double available, we would transfer to diamonds with **3♣**.
19. We like **Pass** with **3♥** as second choice.
20. Cue-bid **3♠** showing a limit raise or better.

Notes on the 1M Opening and Responses

There are two things I have never understood about 2/1 when responding to **1M**. The first is the forcing **1NT**. Why should we leave our last playable spot to try to make eight tricks in a 5-2 or 4-3 fit in a suit? The second is why do we need so many two-over-one bids to be game forcing? Why not just use the **2♣** response?

We really like the **2♣** artificial game force response to **1M**. And, we think that knowing early in the auction whether opener has a 5- or 6-card suit is important for game and slam decisions. In fact, showing a 6-card major has priority over showing another 4+ card suit when responding to **2♣**, **2♦** or **3♣**.

During any Jacoby **2NT** sequence, a bid of **4NT** is RKB even if **3NT** was the last response.

I think that the most difficult hands to bid in 2/1 or Standard are the unbalanced ones with about 15-17 HCP. This is especially true of 5-4 hands when the longer suit is a major so that a reverse is unavailable. Part of the problem is that the range of the opening bid of one of a suit is just too great. This is one reason why Gazzilli is gaining in popularity. Plus, with SOS's light opening bids in the majors, if we extend the lower limit of **1M** to 10+ from 12+ then it becomes even more important to have some tools available to distinguish 15+ HCP hands from the minimum 10-14 hands.

After a suit overcall, we put the negative double to better use as part of a transfer structure. Usually responder will just want to make some sort of raise or show his own suit. With a fit in opener's major, our first priority is to let opener know whether it is 8- or 9-cards. After that we want to be able to show a new suit and/or invite game.

1m Opening and Responses

A **1m** opening guarantees 11+ HCP if the hand is unbalanced; otherwise, 12+. I would not open a 4-3-3-3 hand with exactly 11 HCP. But a lot of top pairs do now. Open your longer minor when you have one. With 3=3 in the minors open **1♣**. With 4=4 (5=5 or 6=6) open **1♦**. These agreements mean a **1♦** opening promises at least 4 cards unless opener is specifically 4=4=3=2. A **1♣** opening guarantees at least 3 cards.

1m - 1M	6+ HCP and a 4+ card suit. With a hand too weak to reverse, bypass a diamond suit (4, 5 or even 6 cards) after 1♣ to show a 4+ card major.
1m - 1M 2M	Raise shows 4-card support and 12-14 support points. This is non-standard but only slightly so.
1m - 1♥ 1♠	Shows 4 spades and 4+ cards in m .
1m - 1M 1NT	11-14 HCP. May have 4 spades if M was 1♥ and opener is 4=3=3=3. May have 3-card support for M .
1♣ - 1NT	8-11 HCP.
1♦ - 1NT	6-10 HCP.
1♦ - 2♣	Not a game force. Shows 11+ HCP if balanced and 10+ if unbalanced. A 3♣ rebid by responder may be passed.
1m - 2NT	13-15 HCP. Tends to deny a 4-card major. Game force.
1m - 3NT	16-17 HCP. Tends to deny a 4-card major.
1m - 3m	Limit raise shows 12-13. Not 11. And a 5+ card suit.
1m - {1♦ or 1♥} {1♥ or 1♠} - ?	Opener shows at least as many cards in m as in M . 1NT shows 9-11 HCP. See XYZ below for 2-level and higher follow ups.
1m - 1M 1NT - ?	See XYZ below for 2-level and higher follow ups.
1m - {1♦ or 1M} 2NT	18-19 HCP. Game force. Denies 4-card support for M but does not deny 4 cards in oM . Responder's rebid of 3♣ is Checkback Stayman . Opener rebids as follows: 3M shows 3-card support for M and denies 4 cards in oM ; 3oM shows 4 cards in oM but denies 3 cards in M ; 3♦ shows both; 3NT neither.
1m - 1y 3NT	To play. You hope to make 9 tricks. Based on a solid suit m .
1♦ - 1♠ 2♣ - 2♥	Fourth Suit Forcing . Forcing for one round if not a reverse. Otherwise to game. Applies in other auctions starting with 1m where all suit bids are natural. Opener's priorities: bid NT with a stopper, support responder's first suit, finish hand description, raise the fourth suit.
1m - Jump Shift	Strong, 16+. Game Force. Good hand, good suit or good fit.

1♦ - 1♥ 1♠ - <u>3m</u>	After 1x - 1y - 1z , responder's jump suit rebids in a minor are invitational only. See XYZ below.
1♣ - 1♥ <u>2♦</u>	Opener's reverse. Shows 15-18. One round force.
1♦ - 1♥ 1NT - <u>2♠</u>	Responder's reverse . Shows 13+. Game forcing.

XYZ

XYZ applies at responder's rebid if, with silent opponents, opener has bid one of a suit, responder has bid one of a suit and opener has rebid at the one-level (including one notrump). These three bids are called **X**, **Y** and **Z**, respectively. The **XYZ** convention uses responder's rebids of **2♣** and **2♦** artificially. Essentially, **XYZ** replaces, with a single treatment, each of Checkback Stayman, New Minor Forcing and Fourth Suit Forcing when the fourth suit is a minor. **XYZ** is "off" in competition except for the auctions in the section on handling interference.

XYZ can occur in ten different ways. In six of those the "**Z**" is **1NT** while **Z** is **1M** in the remaining four. Because of the slightly differing inferences available, it is useful to break the ten sequences into three groups. The first group is **1m - 1M - 1NT**, the second is **1m - Y - 1M** and the third has just the two sequences **1♣ - 1♦ - 1NT** and **1♥ - 1♠ - 1NT**.

1x - 1y 1z - ?	In all ten auctions, 2♣ is forcing and a true puppet. It asks opener to bid 2♦ after which responder will pass or make a follow-up bid which is usually invitational. With XYZ , a contract of exactly 2♣ cannot be played. But with a special sequence, called the double relay , the partnership will be able to stop in 3♣ . 2♦ by responder is a Game Force. 2M , either when responder rebids his major or bids 2♥ after starting with 1♠ , is non-forcing. If 2M is a normal reverse it is forcing to game. 3m is invitational with a 5-5 hand.
1m - 1M 1NT - 2♣ 2♦ - ?	For 1m - 1M - 1NT there are four possible auctions. The 2♣ bid requires an alert. Explain "Artificial and forcing. Asks me to bid 2♦ which can be passed. But if he bids again it usually shows invitational values." The forced 2♦ rebid is also alertable. Responder's 3 rd bid: If responder now rebids two of his major it shows 11-12 HCP and 5+ cards in the major. Not forcing. If responder rebids two of the other major it shows 11-12 HCP with a 4-card suit. Responder's 2NT rebid is the " double relay ." it asks opener to rebid 3♣ which can be passed. If responder rebids 3m it shows invitational values with 5+ cards in the minor and only 4 cards in his major. If responder rebids three of his major it shows 11-12 HCP and a very good 6-card suit. Not forcing.

1m - 1M 1NT - 2♦ <u>?</u>	The 2♦ bid requires an alert. Explain "Artificial Game Force." Opener's first priority is to show 3-card support for responder's major. Second priority is to show a 4-card major that he could not bid or had to bypass. Third priority for opener is to rebid his minor if he has a good 5-card suit. If unable to do any of the above he rebids 2NT .
1m - 1♦/1♥ 1♥/1♠ - 2♣ 2♦ - <u>?</u>	Four possible auctions. Alertable. Mostly the same responder rebids as in the case when opener rebids 1NT including the double relay.
1m - 1♦/1♥ 1♥/1♠ - 2♦ <u>?</u>	Same alerts as above. Opener's first priority is to show 3-card support for responder's major. Since more is known about 4-card majors, opener's second priority is to show a stopper in the unbid suit. Third priority for opener is to rebid his minor if he has a good 5-card suit. Responder may have slam aspirations in opener's minor.
1♣ - 1♦ 1NT - 2♣ 2♦ - <u>?</u>	The third group consists of exactly two auctions. Same alerts as above. Mostly the same responder rebids after 2♦ in the first auction. But, there are small differences in responder's rebids when opener has a 5-card heart suit and 10-14 HCP as in the second auction. In that one case: 2♥ by responder is invitational with 12-14 dummy points and 3-card support. 2NT is the double relay in both cases. And a direct 2NT instead of 2♣ would be invitational.
1♥ - 1♠ 1NT - 2♣ 2♦ - <u>?</u>	
1♣ - 1♦ 1NT - 2♦ <u>?</u>	Same alerts as above. In the first auction, responder usually has support for clubs or very good diamonds and is interested in slam. In the second auction, opener's first priority is to show 3-card support for spades. 3NT is weaker than 2NT when the auction is forcing to game.
1♥ - 1♠ 1NT - 2♦ <u>?</u>	

Some specific XYZ auctions

1♣ - 1♠ 1NT - <u>2♥</u>	To Play. 5=4+ in the majors.
1♣ - 1♠ 1NT - <u>2♠</u>	To play. 5+ card suit.
1♣ - 1M 1♠/1NT - <u>3m</u>	Invitational. In each case responder is 5-5 in the two suits.
1♦ - 1♠ 1NT - <u>3♥</u>	
1♣ - 1♠ 1NT - <u>3♠</u>	When responder jump rebids his own major or opener's major it is a game force . Not invitational like the jumps above. The direct jumps show better suit quality than showing the same hand via 2♦ would.
1♦ - 1♥ 1♠ - <u>3♠</u>	

1♦ - 1♠ 1NT - 2♣ 2♦ - <u>2♠</u>	Invitational with 5 spades. 3♠ would show an invitational hand with a 6-card suit.
1♦ - 1♠ 1NT - 2♣ 2♦ - <u>2♥</u>	11-12 HCP with 5 spades and 4+ hearts.
1♦ - 1♥ 1NT - 2♣ 2♦ - <u>2♥</u>	Shows 11-12 HCP and 5+ hearts. Not forcing. But responder could still have 4 spades in a 4=5 hand. And opener could have bypassed a 4-card spade suit of his own. Opener with four spades and two hearts can bid 2♠ showing a 4-card suit on his way to 2NT or 3NT. With 6 hearts, responder can still retreat to hearts.
1♦ - 1♥ 1NT - 2♣ 2♦ - <u>Pass</u>	Weak with diamonds.
1♠ - 1♥ 1NT - 2♣ 2♦ - <u>2♠</u>	This shows 11-12 HCP and 4=4 in the majors. Not forcing. With no fit, opener bids 2NT or 3NT. Memorize this sequence. Responder does not have 5 hearts!
1♦ - 1♥ 1NT - 2♣ 2♦ - <u>2♠</u>	This is different. By opening 1♦ and not raising hearts, opener cannot hold 4 spades. 2♠ shows a stopper and 11-12 HCP. Invites 3NT.
1♦ - 1♥ 1NT - 2♣ 2♦ - <u>2NT</u>	This is the double relay . Opener rebids 3♣ which responder may Pass with a weak hand and a suitable club suit. This is the only way responder has to stop in clubs.
1♦ - 1♥ 1NT - 2♣ 2♦ - <u>3m</u>	This shows invitational values with 5+ cards in the minor and only 4 cards in his major. Compare with the direct 3m.
Pass - 1x 1y - 1z ?	2♣ is still the relay to 2♦. But there is no need for the game forcing 2♦ rebid by a passed hand. In this case 2♦ is to play.
1♦ - 1♥ 1NT - 2♣ 2♦ - 2NT 3♣ - <u>3♥</u>	When responder uses the double relay but then pulls 3♣ to his own suit, it shows an invitational hand with a nearly solid 6+ card suit (which will be a source of tricks). The suit is a card or two better than it would be if responder had rebid it after opener's 2♦.

Handling Interference over 1m

<p>1m - (X) - XX - (1M) 1♠/1NT - (Pass) - ?</p>	<p>XYZ is "on" in these sequences. There have been three bids and we are still at the 1-level. We have made two of the suit bids and the opponents have made the other. In the third sequence the X was a support double.</p>
<p>1m - (1M) - X - (Pass) 1♠/1NT - (Pass) - ?</p>	
<p>1m - (Pass) - 1♥ - (1♠) X/1NT - (Pass) - ?</p>	
<p>1♣ - (X) - ?</p>	<p>Pass: Weak or no good bid. XX: shows 4+ diamonds and 6+ HCP. 1♦: shows 4 or 5 hearts, 6+ HCP. 1♥: shows 4 or 5 spades, 6+ HCP. 1♠: Denies any 4-card suit except clubs, 6-11 HCP unsuitable for 1NT, invites a 1NT rebid by opener. 1NT: shows 9-11 HCP. 2♣: a 6-10 point club raise. 2♦: shows 6+ hearts. 2♥: shows 6+ spades. 2♠: shows a 11-12 point limit raise in clubs. 2NT: Game Force with 12+ HCP. 3♣: pre-emptive raise in clubs.</p>
<p>1♦ - (X) - ?</p>	<p>Pass: Weak or no good bid. XX: shows 4 or 5 hearts and 6+ HCP. 1♥: shows 4 or 5 spades, 6+ HCP. 1♠: Denies a 4-card major, shows clubs plus diamond tolerance, 6-11 HCP unsuitable for 1NT, invites a 1NT rebid by opener. 1NT: shows 9-11 HCP. 2♣: a 6-10 point diamond raise. 2♦: shows 6+ hearts. 2♥: shows 6+ spades. 2♠: shows a 11-12 point limit raise in diamonds. 2NT: Game Force with 12+ HCP. 3♣: pre-emptive. 3♦: pre-emptive raise in diamonds.</p>
<p>1♣ - (1♦) - ?</p>	<p>Pass: Weak or no good bid. X: shows 4 or 5 hearts and 6+ HCP. 1♥: shows 4 or 5 spades, 6+ HCP. 1♠: Denies a 4-card major, shows club tolerance, 6-11 HCP unsuitable for 1NT, invites a 1NT rebid by opener. 1NT: shows 9-11 HCP. 2♣: a 6-10 point club raise. 2♦: shows 6+ hearts. 2♥: shows 6+ spades. 2♠: shows a 11-12 point limit raise in clubs. 2NT: Game Force with 12+ HCP. 3♣: pre-emptive. After X, 1♥, 2♦, 2♥ announce: "transfer."</p>
<p>1m - (1♥) - ?</p>	<p>Pass: Weak or no good bid. X: a transfer showing a 4- or 5-card spade suit with 6+ HCP. 1♠: Denies 4+ spades, shows m tolerance, 6-11 HCP unsuitable for 1NT, invites a 1NT rebid by opener. 1NT: shows 9-11 HCP. 2m: a raise shows 6-10 points; a new suit is natural and forcing. 2♥: shows 6+ spades. 2♠: shows a 11-12 point limit raise in m. 2NT: Game Force with 12+ HCP. 3m: pre-emptive. After X, 2♥ announce: "transfer to spades."</p>
<p>1m - (1♠) - ?</p>	<p>Pass: Weak or no good bid. X: a transfer showing a 4- or 5-card heart suit with 6+ HCP. 1NT: shows 9-11 HCP. 2m: a raise shows 6-10 points; a new suit is natural and forcing. 2♥: shows a 11-12 point limit raise in m. 2♠: shows 6+ hearts. 2NT: Game Force with 12+ HCP. 3m: pre-emptive. After X, 2♠ announce: "transfer to hearts."</p>

1m - (1♦/1M) - X - (Pass) <u>?</u>	Opener accepts the transfer with queen-third or better support. With 4-card support and top of range opener can jump. 1NT shows less than queen-third and is to play.
1m - (2m/2M/3m) - <u>X</u>	Negative through 3♦ .
1m - (O'call) - <u>Min NT</u>	A non-jump bid of 1NT or 2NT shows 9-11 HCP.
1m - (O'call) - <u>2NT</u>	A jump to 2NT shows 12-14. Game Force.
1m - (O'call) - <u>New Suit</u>	Excluding the transfers after (1M) as above, a non-jump free bid shows a 5+ card suit and 8+ at the two-level and 10+ at the three-level.
1m - (O'call) - <u>Jump Shift</u>	Strong. Normal jump shift unless a (1M) transfer as above.
1m - (O'call) - <u>?</u>	Direct jump raises of m are preemptive.
1m - (X) - <u>?</u>	
1m - (O'call) - <u>Cue</u>	Limit raise (12-13) or better in m except when the overcall was (1♦) or (1M) .
1♦ - (2♣) - 2♦ - (3♣) <u>X</u>	Competitive doubles through 3♦ . These doubles apply when our side has opened and the opponents have found a fit (bid and supported). X says you are maximum for your bidding so far and willing to compete or defend.
1♦ - (2♣) - X - (3♣) <u>X</u>	
1♦ - (2♣) - 2♥ - (3♣) <u>X</u>	

1m Exercise Set

The auction has started as shown. At the point where the question mark appears, what is your call with the indicated hand? Our recommendations follow on the next page.

Opener 1♣	Opp1 Pass	Responder ?	Opp2
1 ♠ J86 ♥ K432 ♦ A83 ♣ QJ2		2 ♠ KQ1086 ♥ J1072 ♦ 975 ♣ 9	3 ♠ KQ106 ♥ Q73 ♦ AJ97 ♣ 53
			4 ♠ 6 ♥ KQ3 ♦ J754 ♣ KQ853
5 ♠ KQ43 ♥ 864 ♦ K10983 ♣ 4		6 ♠ KQ106 ♥ J ♦ AK9754 ♣ 93	7 ♠ K106 ♥ J74 ♦ AQJ532 ♣ 9
			8 ♠ KQ3 ♥ Q107 ♦ 973 ♣ J532

Opener 1♦ 1NT	Opp1 Pass Pass	Responder 1♠ ?	Opp2 Pass
9 ♠ AK862 ♥ 4 ♦ QJ983 ♣ K3		10 ♠ KQJ963 ♥ J72 ♦ A7 ♣ 94	11 ♠ KJ862 ♥ AK973 ♦ 73 ♣ 5
			12 ♠ A1063 ♥ K82 ♦ K85 ♣ Q73
13 ♠ AQ86 ♥ K32 ♦ 983 ♣ K103		14 ♠ KQ1086 ♥ AQ72 ♦ 95 ♣ 92	15 ♠ J1063 ♥ J7 ♦ AJ973 ♣ 105
			16 ♠ J764 ♥ 9 ♦ Q3 ♣ KJ10983

Opener 1♣	Opp1 1♠	Responder ?	Opp2
17 ♠ 7 ♥ AK1062 ♦ K843 ♣ 863		18 ♠ KQ ♥ 72 ♦ QJ953 ♣ K742	19 ♠ J106 ♥ J73 ♦ AJ973 ♣ J5
			20 ♠ J ♥ KJ107 ♦ AQ54 ♣ Q532

Answers to 1m Exercise Set

1. You will bid **1♥**, of course. Then, if opener rebids **1♠**, rebid an XYZ **2♣** followed by **2NT** over the forced **2♦**. This invitational sequence shows a top three honour in opener's minor and 11-12 HCP.
2. Respond **1♠**. Then if opener rebids **1NT** you can safely bid a non-forcing **2♥**.
3. Our preference is to bypass the diamonds and respond **1♠**. But, with five diamonds, four spades and a hand strong enough to reverse, we "pattern out" and bid diamonds first.
4. Bid **3♣**, a limit raise.
5. As in #3, respond **1♠**. The hand is not strong enough to reverse. If you bid **1♦** and opener rebids **1NT** you may lose a 4-4 spade fit.
6. This time bid **1♦**. The hand is just good enough to show spades later.
7. Start with **1♦**. If opener rebids **1M**, you are not strong enough to rebid **3♦**. But you can try an invitational XYZ **2♣** followed by **3♦** over the forced **2♦**.
8. Bid **1NT**. Raising clubs is a distant second choice.
9. Bid **2♦** followed by **3♦**. Responder's jump suit rebids at the 3-level are invitational only.
10. Bid **2♣** followed by a non-forcing **3♠** over the forced **2♦**. You are showing an almost solid suit. You are not quite strong enough to force to game.
11. A nice invitational 5-5 hand! Rebid a direct **3♥**.
12. Rebid a direct **2NT**.
13. Same as #12. **2NT** is the call.
14. Bid **2♣** followed by **2♥** over the forced **2♦**. Compare with #11.
15. Bid **2♣** then **Pass** the forced **2♦**.
16. Bid **2♣** followed by **2NT** over the forced **2♦**. Then you will **Pass** opener's forced **3♣**. **2NT** is the double relay and this sequence is a weak signoff showing a 4-6 hand.
17. **X**. This shows 4 or 5 hearts.
18. The choices are **Pass**, **1NT** or **2♥**. The latter is a limit raise in clubs but you only have 4-card support. **Pass** seems a little timid so we would try **1NT**. This is right for values.
19. The only call you have is **Pass**.
20. Start with **X**. This leaves all strains open.

2♣ Opening and Responses

The 2♣ opening is strong, artificial and forcing to game except in certain situations after a second negative. Requirements are 25+ dummy points with a 5 card suit, 23+ with a 6 card suit or 21+ with a 7+ card suit.

2♣ - 2♦	Negative or waiting. The usual response. Denies the ability to make a specific positive response.
2♣ - 2M	5+ card suit to 2 of top 3 honours plus an outside ace or king. Game Force.
2♣ - 3M	Weak 7+ card suit. 0-5 HCP. At most a doubleton in oM.
2♣ - 3m	5+ card suit to 2 of top 3 honours plus an outside ace or king. Game Force.
2♣ - 2NT	10-12 HCP. 3NT instead would be 13+.
2♣ - 2♦ 2M	2♠ is a 5+ card suit. Forcing for one round. 2♥ is Birthright. Responder must bid 2♠ regardless of spade holding. Details below.
2♣ - 2♦ 2♠ - ?	3♣ is a second negative and the weakest rebid. If opener rebids 3♠ then responder may pass. Raise to 4♠ is next weakest response. A raise to 3♠ is the strongest response and is game forcing. 2NT is a game forcing waiting bid with 6+ HCP. It gives opener a chance to show a second suit.
2♣ - 2♦ 3M	Game force with a one-suited hand. Asks for outside aces.
2♣ - 2♦ 3M - ?	A cue-bid is "either/or." It shows either the ace of the bid suit or both aces of the other two side suits. Bid 3NT with no outside ace but at least one outside king. Otherwise bid 4M. If responder indicates an outside ace or king, a new suit bid asks about top three honours. Response is in steps. 1 st : none of the following, 2 nd : doubleton ace, king or queen, 3 rd : at least three to a top three honour, 4 th : two of top three.
2♣ - 2♦ 2♥ - 2♠ ?	2♥ was Birthright and 2♠ was forced. 2NT/3NT now by opener shows a balanced hand with 24-25 HCP or 28+ respectively. It may include a 5-card major. TAPS applies over 2NT. Any other bid by opener cancels Birthright and shows a normal strong hand with at least 5+ hearts. If opener's 3 rd bid is 3♣/3♦ then 3♦/3NT is the second negative, respectively.
2♣ - 2♦ 2NT	Shows 22-23 HCP and a balanced hand that may include a 5-card major. Use Transfers and Puppet Stayman (TAPS) now.
2♣ - 2♦ 3NT	26-27 HCP. Responder can pass, transfer or use Baron now. So 4♣ is a request to bid four-card suits up the line. A subsequent 4NT by either partner is to play.
2♣ - 2♦ 3m	A 6+ card suit or a very good 5-card suit. Forcing for one round. See next.

2♣ - 2♦ 3m - ?	3♦ is the second negative to 3♣ . 3NT is the second negative to 3♦ . Then a repeat bid of 4m may be passed. Otherwise game forcing.
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When the Opponents Compete over 2♣

2♣ - (X or O'call) - <u>Pass</u>	Negative or waiting. Forcing.
2♣ - (O'call) - <u>X</u>	Low level doubles, through 3♦ , are penalty. Higher doubles show cards.
2♣ - (Pass) - 2♦ - (O'call) <u>Pass</u>	Forcing.
2♣ - (O'call) - <u>Non-jump suit</u>	Shows a good suit. May not have the outside ace or king required in an uncontested 2♣ auction.
2♣ - (O'call) - <u>Cue</u>	Kantar Cue-bid. Shows shortness in the overcalled suit. 4+ HCP. Game Force.

Summary of Balanced and Semi-balanced Notrump Sequences

HCP Range	Opening Bid or Sequence	Response Method
11-14	1m - 1M 1NT	XYZ
10-14	1♥ - 1♠ 1NT	XYZ
15-17	1NT	TAPS
15-17	After Gazzilli	Natural
18-19	1m - 1M 2NT	Checkback 3♣
18-19	After Gazzilli	Natural
20-21	2NT	TAPS
22-23	2♣ - 2♦ 2NT	TAPS
24-25	2♣ - 2♦ 2♥ - 2♠ 2NT	TAPS
26-27	2♣ - 2♦ 3NT	Baron
28+	2♣ - 2♦ 2♥ - 2♠ 3NT	Baron

2♦ Opening and Responses

An opening bid of 2♦ is modified Roman. It is forcing and shows 17+ HCP in a 4-4-4-1 hand with any singleton or 4-4-5-0 with a 5-card minor. Any high card points in the singleton suit are not counted except for singleton ace. Roman 2♦ does two things. First, it provides a way to bid the strong, but awkward, 4-4-4-1 hands. Second, it means when partner opens 2♣ and makes a minimum rebid in a suit he will always show at least 5 cards in the suit.

Responses

2♦ - <u>2♠</u>	The underlined bid shows a preference for that suit and is an attempt to sign off with a weak hand of 0-5 HCP. 2NT shows a preference for hearts and opener will convert to 3♥ if hearts is one of his suits and he is a minimum. Otherwise, opener rebids the next suit if responder has shown a preference for his short suit; so with 17-19 HCP, 3♣ over either 2♠ or 2NT, 3♦ over 3♣ and 3♥ over 3♦. Opener bids the same suit at the four-level with 20+.
2♦ - <u>2NT</u>	
2♦ - <u>3♣</u>	
2♦ - <u>3♦</u>	
2♦ - <u>2♥</u>	Game force. Asks for the short suit and HCP range of opener.
2♦ - 2♥ <u>?</u>	2♠ shows major-suit shortness and 17-19 HCP. 2NT shows club shortness and 17-19. 3♣ shows diamond shortness and 17-19. 3♦ shows heart shortness and 20+ HCP. 3♥ shows spade shortness and 20+. 3♠ shows club shortness and 20+. 3NT shows diamond shortness and 20+.
2♦ - 2♥ 2♠ - 2NT <u>?</u>	2NT asks for the major-suit shortness. 3♣ shows heart shortness. 3♦ shows spade shortness.

After interference, double by either partner is penalty. Responder assumes the overcall is in opener's short suit.

2♦ - (O'call) - <u>X</u>	This says " They overcalled in my only suit. Let's defend. "
2♦ - (O'call) - <u>Cue</u>	Responder has a place to play. Opener rebids suits up the line. 3NT by opener is to play.
2♦ - (2♥) - Pass - (Pass) <u>X</u>	Takeout with heart shortness.

2M Opening and Responses (Weak Two-bids)

Openings bids of **2♥** and **2♠** show 8-11 HCP and 5+ cards in the suit. **They deny the following distributions: 5-3-3-2, 5-4-2-2 and any hand with both majors.** In 1st or 2nd position there are three possibilities. A weak two shows a six card suit, a 5-4-3-1 hand with a 5-card major and a 4-card minor or some 5-5 major/minor hand. In 3rd position two of a major should show a 6 or 7 card suit. The opponents know the hand belongs to them. The opportunity for a weak two bid in 4th position should not arise.

There are two response options here: simple and modified Ogust.

Option 1 (KISS) The only forcing response to an opening **2M** is **2NT** which asks for an outside feature like an Ace or King.

Option 2 (Ogust)

In the responses below, a *good* suit has either two of the top three or three of the top five honours.

2M - 2NT	Modified Ogust. At least invitational strength so 14+ HCP.
2M - 2NT ?	3♣ = bad 5-card suit; 3♦ = good 5-card suit; 3♥ = bad 6-card suit; 3♠ = good 6-card suit; 3NT = AKQ+; 4m = 5-5 max.
2M - {2oM or 3m or 3oM}	At least invitational. Asks for a stopper in the suit (A, Kx or QJx) or, if no stopper, the number of cards held in the suit.
2♥ - {2♠ or 3m} ?	NT shows a stopper. Otherwise, opener responds in steps excluding NT . 1st step = 0-1 cards; 2nd step = 2 cards; 3rd step = 3 cards; 4th step = 4 cards.
2♠ - {3m or 3♥} ?	NT shows a stopper. Otherwise, opener responds in steps excluding NT . 1st step = 0-1 cards; 2nd step = 2 cards; 3rd step = 3 cards; 4th step = 4 cards.
2M - 4M	Either to make, preemptive or tactical. Only responder knows.
2M - 3M	Single raise is not forcing. Either preemptive or tactical.
2♥ - {3♣ or 4m}	Splinter.
2♠ - {4♥ or 4m}	Splinter.

Option 3 – Flexi Two-Bids

This option, from the September 2018 Bridge World, is by Tuomo Väliäho of Finland.

2♥ - 2♠	Natural with invitational or better values. A one round force.
2♥ - 2♠ ?	3m is natural implying a 5-card heart suit with 4- or 5-cards in m . 3♥ shows a 6-card suit and a minimum. 2NT shows six hearts and a maximum.
2M - 2NT	Asking. Described later. At least invitational strength so 15+ HCP.

2M - 3M	Single raise is not forcing. Either pre-emptive or tactical.
2M - 3m	Shows 5+ cards in m . Game forcing.
2♥ - {3♠ or 4m}	Splinter in support of opener's major.
2♠ - {4♥ or 4m}	
2M - 2NT ?	3m is natural. 3♣ shows 5-4, 5-5 or 6-4. 3♦ shows 5-4 or 5-5 pattern. 3M shows a one-suited minimum and 3oM shows a one-suited maximum. 3NT shows 6-4 with diamonds. 4m shows 6-5 with m .
2M - 2NT 3♣ - ?	3♦ asks for opener's pattern. Opener rebids using up the line numerical responses. 3♥ , 3♠ , 3NT show 5-4, 5-5, 6-4 respectively. 3M agrees opener's major and asks for opener's short suit.
2M - 2NT 3♦ - ?	3♥ asks for opener's pattern. Opener rebids using up the line numerical responses showing 5-4, 5-5 respectively. 3♠ agrees opener's major and asks for opener's short suit.

When the Opponents Compete over 2M

From the section on transfer advances in Competitive Bidding, both the **No Double** and **Double Versions** of "transfers" apply. Over a double by the intervener, the "chain" starts with **2NT** and ends at **3M**. After a suit overcall below **3M**, the chain starts with **X** and ends at **3M**. All calls in either chain show better hands than the corresponding call would show after interference over **1M**. In practice, assume responder has about 12-14 HCP for "chain" calls.

2♥ - (X) - ?	2♠ is natural and to play. 2NT shows 5+ clubs, 3♣ shows 5+ diamonds and 3♦ shows 4-card heart support (3M-1). 3♥ is a 2- or 3-card competitive raise and not a game try. 4♥ is pre-emptive, to play or strategic.
2♠ - (X) - ?	2NT shows 5+ clubs, 3♣ shows diamonds and 3♦ shows hearts. 3♥ is the 4-card spade raise, 3M-1 . 3♠ is a 2- or 3-card competitive raise and not a game try. 4♠ is pre-emptive, to play or strategic.
2M - (2NT) - ?	Assuming 2NT is strong then bidding reverts to natural. X is penalty.
2♥ - (3♣) - ?	Chain starts with X showing diamonds. 3♦ is 3M-1 showing 4-card heart support. 3♥ is a 2- or 3-card competitive raise. 4♥ is 3-way as above.
2♠ - (3♥) - ?	Only two calls in the chain. X is 3M-1 showing 4-card spade support. 3♠ is a 2- or 3-card competitive raise. 4♠ is 3-way as above.
2♥ - (3♣) - X - (Pass) 3♦ - (Pass) - 3♥	A transfer followed by a raise is a game try with a source of tricks. Responder has a diamond suit, 2- or 3-card heart support and a 14-15 point hand.

Three- and Four-level Preemptive Openings

All opening bids of **3♣** through **4♠** are preemptive.

- 3♣, 3♦, 3♥, 3♠** These are “Rule of Two and Three”. A 7-card suit is expected.
- 3NT** Shows an unspecified 8-card minor. Rule of Two and Three.
- 4♣** **Namyats**. Shows a 7, 8 or 9 card heart suit and a hand that is no more than a trick or trick and a half short of making game.
- 4♦** **Namyats**. Shows a 7, 8 or-9 card spade suit and a hand that is no more than a trick or trick and a half short of making game.
- 4♥, 4♠** Shows an 8-card heart or spade suit respectively. Rule of Two and Three so a weaker hand than Namyats shows.

3NT - <u>?</u>	4♣ and 5♣ are Pass or Correct. 4♦ says pass with diamonds but if you have clubs I want to be in game.
4♣ - <u>?</u>	4♥ is to play. 4♦ is a re-transfer. Responder has no kings to protect. 4NT is RKB (if playing it). Otherwise, 4NT is regular Blackwood.
4♦ - <u>?</u>	4♠ is to play. 4♥ is a re-transfer. Responder has no kings to protect. 4NT is RKB (if playing it). Otherwise, 4NT is regular Blackwood.
{3m or 3M} - <u>?</u>	3NT and all raises are to play. A new suit is natural and forcing showing a 5+ card suit except that 4♥ over opener's 3♣ is to play. A jump to 5m in a new suit is to play.

Transfers and Puppet Stayman (TAPS)

In **SOS**, TAPS is used in the following auctions.

<u>1NT</u>	15-17 HCP.
<u>2NT</u>	20-21 HCP.
2♣ - 2♦ <u>2NT</u>	22-23 HCP.
2♣ - 2♦ 2♥ - 2♠ <u>2NT</u>	24-25 HCP.

After **2NT**, any response is a game force in principle (responder *could* transfer to a major and then pass). But, over **1NT** we can show a variety of invitational hands in addition to the game-forcing ones.

Transfers after 1NT:

2♦, 2♥: Transfers (weak, invitational or game-forcing) to the next higher suit. They guarantee 5+ cards in the implied suit.

2♠: Either a transfer to clubs (any strength) or an invitational hand with diamonds.

2NT: The standard invitational raise.

3♣: Weak or game-forcing transfer to diamonds.

3♦: 5=5 in the minors and game-forcing.

3♥: 3=1=5=4 or 3=1=4=5. Game force.

3♠: 1=3=5=4 or 1=3=4=5. Game force.

3NT: To play, with no major suit interest.

4♣: Gerber. But, it should not arise after a **1NT** TAPS sequence.

Puppet Stayman after 1NT:

2♣ is Puppet Stayman asking the notrump bidder if he has a 5-card major. It shows at least invitational strength. Opener responds as follows.

2♦: Shows a 4-card major or 3 spades (a 4-card major or 3=2 or 3=3 in the majors).

2♠: Shows 5 spades.

2NT: Shows 5 hearts.

2♥: Shows none of the above; so, 2=2 or 2=3 in the majors.

After a **2♦** response, responder's bids show the following.

2♥: Responder either has 4 spades or a balanced raise to **2NT** or **3NT**. Opener bids **2♠** with four or **2NT/3NT** otherwise. Responder then raises **2♠** to **3♠/4♠** or bids **2NT/3NT**. If opener rebids **2NT** then responder passes or raises to **3NT**.

2♠: Shows 4 hearts but not 4 spades. Opener bids **2NT** or **3NT** without hearts. He bids **3♥** or **4♥** with that suit. Responder can still raise a signoff with game-going strength.

2NT: Shows 4=4 in the majors, invitational. Opener places the contract.

3♦: Shows 5=4 or 5=5 in the majors, invitational or better. Opener places the contract.

3NT: Shows 4=4 in the majors, game forcing. Opener places the contract.

4NT: Shows 4=4 in the majors. Invites slam.

5NT: Shows 4=4 in the majors. Opener picks a slam.

Transfers after 2NT:

3♦, 3♥: Transfers to the next higher suit. They guarantee at least 5 cards in the implied suit.

3♠: 5-4 either way in the minors or a 6+ card minor. Slam try. Opener puppets to **3NT**.

3NT: To play, with no major suit interest.

4♣: Gerber

4♦: 5=5 in the minors. Slam try.

5m: To play.

Puppet Stayman after 2NT:

3♣ is Puppet Stayman asking the notrump bidder if he has a 5-card major. It is forcing to game. Opener responds as follows.

3♦: Shows a 4-card major or 3 spades (a 4-card major or 3=2 or 3=3 in the majors).

3♠: Shows 5 spades.

3NT: Shows 5 hearts.

3♥: Shows none of the above; so, 2=2 or 2=3 in the majors.

After a **3♦** response, responder's bids show the following.

3♥: Responder either has 4 spades or a balanced raise to **3NT**. Opener bids **3♠** with four spades or **3NT** otherwise. Responder then places the contract.

3♠: Shows 4 hearts but not 4 spades. Opener bids **3NT** without hearts.

3NT: Shows 4=4 in the majors. Opener places the contract.

4♦: Shows 5=4 or 5=5 in the majors. Opener picks a game.

4NT: Shows 4=4 in the majors. Invites slam.

5NT: Shows 4=4 in the majors. Opener picks a slam.

Some Specific TAPS Auctions

In the following auctions, ... **1NT** or ... **2NT** means that opener has bid or rebid **1NT** or **2NT** and the sequence is one of the eight situations where **TAPS** applies.

... 1NT - 2♣ 2♥ - ?	2♣ shows 5=5 in the majors, invitational or better and forcing to 2NT . 2NT is invitational and 3NT is to play. Over 2♠ or 2NT opener places the contract.
... 1NT - 2♣ 2♠ - ?	3♠ is invitational and 4♠ is to play. 2NT is invitational and 3NT is to play.
... 1NT - 2♣ 2NT - ?	3♦ is an invitational or better transfer to opener's hearts.
... 1NT - 2♦ 2♥ - 2NT	Shows 4=5 in the majors, invitational. Over 2♦ opener should accept the transfer. Over 2NT opener places the contract.
... 1NT - 2♦ 2♥ - 3NT	Shows 4=5 in the majors. Opener places the contract.
... 1NT - 2♦ 2♥ - 2♠	Shows 5 hearts and fewer than 4 spades. Invitational or better. Forcing to 2NT .
... 1NT - 2♠ ?	Opener can only bid 2NT or 3♣ . 3♣ says opener would accept an invite if responder has clubs. 2NT shows anything else.
... 1NT - 2♠ 3♣ - ?	Pass is weak with clubs. 3♦ is invitational with diamonds. 3M is game-forcing with clubs plus shortness in M . 3NT is to play and confirms clubs.
... 1NT - 2♠ 2NT - ?	3♣ is to play. 3♦ is invitational with diamonds. 3M is game-forcing with clubs plus shortness in M . 3NT confirms clubs.
... 1NT - 3♣ 3♦ - ?	Pass is weak with diamonds. 3M is game-forcing with diamonds plus shortness in M . 3NT is a slam try in diamonds.

... 2NT - 3♣ 3♥ - ?	3♠ shows 5=5 in the majors. 3NT is to play.
... 2NT - 3♣ 3♠ - ?	3NT and 4♠ are to play.
... 2NT - 3♣ 3NT - 4♦	Transfer to opener's 5-card heart suit.
... 2NT - 3♦ ?	Opener normally bids 3♥ to accept the transfer. But, with exactly five spades and two hearts opener can bid 3♠ in case responder is 3=5. 4m is a superaccept for hearts.
... 2NT - 3♦ 3♥ - 3NT	Shows 4=5 in the majors. Opener places the contract.
... 2NT - 3♦ 3♥ - 3♠	Shows 5 hearts and fewer than 4 spades. Forcing to 3NT .

... 2NT - 3♥ <u>?</u>	Opener normally bids 3♠ to accept the transfer. But, with exactly two spades and five hearts opener can bid 3NT in case responder is 5=3. 4m is a superaccept for spades.
... 2NT - 3♠ 3NT - <u>?</u>	4♣ shows 5=4 minors; 4♦ shows 4=5 minors; 4♥ shows 6+ clubs; 4♠ shows 6+ diamonds with at least one keycard.
... 2NT - 3♠ 3NT - 4m <u>?</u>	Next suit is RKB for responder's longer minor. 4NT says "we don't have a great fit. Maybe we should stop here."
... 2NT - 3♠ 3NT - 4M <u>?</u>	Next suit (not 4NT) is RKB for responder's minor. 4NT says "we don't have a great fit. Maybe we should stop here."
... 2NT - 4♦ <u>?</u>	4♥ is RKB for clubs. 4♠ is RKB for diamonds. 4NT says "we don't have a great fit. Maybe we should stop here."

If the Opponents Interfere

The opponents may compete during a Transfers and Puppet Stayman (TAPS) or a Transfers and Relay Checkback (TARC) auction.

Suppose the opponents double a TAPS transfer bid. Opener can **Pass**, **XX** or **bid**. **Pass** shows the least support possible, a doubleton, in responder's suit. Bidding shows the best support possible and **XX** shows 3-card support exactly. The latter is like a support redouble.

Assume they double the TAPC transfer in either of our auctions: **1♣** - **1♥**; **1NT** - **2♥** or **1♣** - **1♠**; **1NT** - **2♦**. In each case opener is known to have only two- or three-card support. With more he would have bid the flip suit on the previous round instead of rebidding **1NT**. Over the **X**, opener's **Pass** shows a doubleton and bidding the suit shows 3-card support. The auction **1♣** - **1♥**; **1NT** - **2♦** is different. Responder is showing five hearts and five spades. In this case, **Pass** shows 2=2 in the majors, **XX** shows 2=3 or 3=3. Bidding **2♠** shows 3=2 and **2♥** shows four hearts. Similarly if opener has rebid **2NT** and they double the 3-level transfer bid. If the opponents bid a suit over the transfer then **X** replaces the **XX**.

Suppose they double the **2♣** or **3♣** Puppet Stayman or Relay Checkback bid. As over the 12-14 notrump, **Pass** guarantees a club stopper and our normal response denies a stopper. **XX** shows 4+ cards and a willingness to play there doubled. Responder decides what to do. After a **Pass**, **XX** by responder restarts the Puppet Stayman or Relay Checkback inquiry.

Finally, suppose they bid over our **2♣** or **3♣** Puppet Stayman or Relay Checkback. **Pass** shows no clear action and **X** is penalty.

Notes on Transfers and Puppet Stayman (TAPS)

There is a lot of memory work involved with TAPS. I wanted a system of responses that would let the strong hand declare as much as possible, uncover all the 4-4 and 5-3 major-suit fits and work more-or-less the same over either **1NT** or **2NT**. And then, the system had to allow for the possibility that the notrump bidder could be 2-2 in the majors.

You would think that the **2♥/3♥** response to Stayman showing 2-2 or 2=3 in the majors gives the opponents a lot of distributional information. It does, of course, but it almost never arises. And, when it does, the opponents were going to lead a major anyway.

Balanced hands with a four-card major and a four-card minor or with two four-card minors are a problem. We have no Baron-type mechanism for investigating game or slam in the minor with those.

Various Conventions and Defences

1. Pivot - When the Opponents Open a Strong Notrump

A notrump opening is “strong” if the lower number in the range is 14 or more; so, 14-16, 15-17, 16-18, etc. In direct or balancing position after a strong **1NT** opening, **2♦**, **2♥**, **2♠** are all natural and one-suited.² Two-suited hands are shown using **Pivot** which works as follows.

X (Double) shows two suits **including clubs** as one of the suits.

2♣ shows two suits **excluding clubs** as one of the suits.

Clubs is the ***pivot*** suit.

Continuations by Advancer

If partner’s bid was **X** then advancer can bid:

2♣ to play or

2♦ which says pass or correct.

If partner overcalled **2♣** then advancer can **Pass** with 6+ clubs or bid **2♦** which says pass with diamonds or bid **2♥** (with Hearts and Spades). Advancer can then correct to spades if necessary. A **2♥** response to **2♣** says pass or correct to spades. Responder has no diamond interest.

If advancer happens to have a really good hand he bids **2NT**. If partner’s bid was **X** then he now bids his second suit. If he overcalled **2♣**, now he bids the suit he doesn't have among diamonds, hearts and spades.

With a very strong two suiter, a pass by Advancer may be a concern. Overcaller can bid **2NT** over 1NT with a huge two suiter. Advancer then bids his better minor. If this is not one of overcaller’s suits, he bids his cheapest suit. The auction continues until a playable spot is found.

You lose the direct penalty double of **1NT** (only a small loss against a strong notrump) and the ability to bid **2♣** naturally (not much of a loss). But, against a weak notrump we retain penalty doubles in either direct or balancing position.

2. When the Opponents Open a Weak Notrump

A notrump opening is “weak” if the lower number in the range is 13 or less.

² Optionally, **2♦**, **2♥**, **2♠**, **3♠** may be transfers in direct position and natural in balancing seat.

2a) Modified HELLO

Devised by Jerry Helms, Hello is an improvement over Cappelletti. In direct or balancing position, modified Hello against weak notrump works as follows.

- X:** Penalty. Shows 15+ HCP if **1NT** was 12-14. (13+ if a 10-12 **1NT**.)
- 2♣:** Relay to **2♦**. Shows a one-suiter with diamonds or a major-minor two-suiter.
- 2♦:** Transfer to hearts.
- 2♥:** Shows both majors. 5-5 or better in direct position. Could be 5-4 in balancing position.
- 2♠:** Shows spades.
- 2NT:** Promises both minors
- 3♣:** Shows clubs.
- 3♦:** Shows both majors and a better hand than **2♥**.

After **X**, advancer should leave it in with any normal hand of 6+ HCP. After **2♣**, advancer will usually accept the relay to **2♦**. Intervenor will pass with diamonds or bid his major when his minor is clubs. If intervenor bids his major at the three-level then that is invitational.

2b) Transfer Landy (◄)

This defence to weak notrump, which retains penalty doubles, is also designed to get the notrump opener on lead.

- X:** Penalty. Shows 15+ HCP if **1NT** was 12-14. (13+ if a 10-12 **1NT**.)
- 2♣:** Shows both majors in either direct or balancing position.
- 2♦:** A transfer to hearts in direct position. Natural in balancing position.
- 2♥:** A transfer to spades in direct position. Natural in balancing position.
- 2♠:** Shows 4 spades and a 5+ card minor in direct position. Natural in balancing position.
- 2NT:** Promises both minors.

Extensions after a **2♣** balance. If the auction goes **(1NT) - Pass - (Pass) - 2♣; (Pass) - ?** then both **2♦** and **2♥** now by advancer are transfers.

When partner doubles a weak notrump and RHO bids a minor naturally, some special agreements are in order. Assume the **1NT** showed 12-14 so intervenor is showing 15+. The idea is that advancer should bid with poor hands and do something else with average+ hands.

(1NT) - X - (2♣/2♦) - ?	2♦ or 2M is to play with 0-5 HCP. X shows 6-9 HCP and may not be sure what to do. Pass is forcing. It shows 8+ and is either game forcing or trapping, hoping for a reopening X . <i>Weak hands must bid.</i>
(1NT) - X - (2♦) - Pass (Pass) - X - (Pass) - ?	Advancer passes if trapping or looks for a game otherwise. 2M is a game force and 3♦ would be Stayman.

3. Ghestem - When the Opponents Open One of a Suit

Ghestem is a method of describing 5-5 or better hands when the opponent on your right opens one of a suit. All six possible two suiters can be shown. Normal range is about 8-14 HCP.

1. The underlined jump overcall in each of the four auctions **1♣ - 2♦**, **1♦ - 3♣**, **1♥ - 3♣** and **1♠ - 3♣** is an **exclusion bid** that shows the other two suits.
2. Over any of **1♣, 1♦, 1♥, 1♠**, a **Cue Bid** shows the top and bottom unbid suits.
3. Over any of **1♣, 1♦, 1♥, 1♠**, a jump to **2NT** shows the two lower ranking unbid suits.
4. In balancing position everything is natural.

4. Defence To Weak Two-Bids and other Preemptive Openings

When the opponents open with a preempt, occasionally we will have to take some risks. Intervenor starts by assuming that partner will hold about 7 points, on average. Not the perfect 7 points either but a random 7 points. Lawrence calls this the Rule of Seven. To compete at the 2-level, intervenor will need about 14 dummy points. Enough so that, with advancer's assumed 7, the partnership has about 21 combined points. At the 3-level 23 total points are needed and 25 at the 4-level. Then you need some sort of fit. You won't always find your best spot. That's why preempts work!

(2♦) - ?	X is takeout showing a good 14+ dummy points. 2NT shows 16-18 HCP. Suit overcalls show enough, with partner's assumed 7 points, to sustain the level. A 6+ card suit is expected. 3NT is to play with a running suit and a stopper in diamonds. A 3♦ cue-bid shows 5-5 in the majors and a good hand. 4NT is regular Blackwood.
(2M) - ?	As over a weak 2♦ , X is takeout and 2NT shows 16-18 HCP. Overcalls are natural and a 6+ card suit is expected. A cue-bid says bid 3NT with M stopped. 4m is Leaping Michaels . It shows 5+ cards in m , 5+ cards in oM and a good hand; about 18+ dummy points. Requires an alert. A jump cue-bid of 4M shows both minors with 5-5 or better and a good hand (20+); 4NT is regular Blackwood.
(2s) - X - (Pass) - ?	Suit bids at the 2-level are to play. Suit bids at the 3-level are invitational (or transfers, depending on your version of lebensohl). 2NT is lebensohl. An immediate cue-bid is Stayman without a stopper. Following lebensohl, doubler bids 3♣ . Then a cue-bid or 3NT is the same as regular lebensohl. Direct Denies and Slow Shows .
(2s) - Pass - (Pass) - ?	X is takeout and 2NT shows 16-18 HCP. Both X and non-jump suit bids may be lighter than normal.
(3m) - ?	Rule of Seven still applies. Suit overcalls show enough to sustain the level with 6+ cards in a decent suit. X is takeout and 3NT is to play. A cue-bid of 4m shows 5-5 in the majors and a good hand. 4NT is Regular Blackwood.
(3M) - ?	Same as over 3m except that the cue-bid shows both minors.

(4m) - ?	Even though the auction has started at a high level, the Rule of Seven still applies. Suit overcalls show enough to sustain the level with 6+ cards in a decent suit. X is takeout and 4NT is Regular Blackwood.
(4M) - ?	If they open 4♥ then X is takeout and 4NT shows both minors. If they open 4♠ then X is takeout and 4NT shows two suits.

Using **4NT** to show two places to play can be extended to other situations where the opponents pre-empt to **4♠**. Here are some examples.

(1♠) - X - (4♠) - 4NT	In each case, 4NT shows two places to play with appropriate length and strength. Against high-level pre-emption, finding a good game has a higher priority than bidding a slam via Blackwood. Show suits up the line in response to the 4NT bid.
(4♠) - 4NT	
1♥ - (4♠) - 4NT	

5. When the Opponents Open with Flannery 2♦

X shows a strong notrump hand. **2♥** is a takeout double of hearts. **2NT** shows both minors. **Other suit bids** are natural including **2♠**.

6. Defence to Big Club Systems

Suppose the opponents open a strong club (Precision or SCUD, for example). So the auction has gone (1♣) - ?. Try one of the following choices.

6a) Modified Truscott (◄). **X**: spades and diamonds, **1NT**: hearts and clubs, **2♦**: red suits, **2♥**: majors, **2♠**: black suits, **2NT**: minors. Suit lengths are 5-5 or better and range is about 6-12. Intervenor could have some stronger hands since he usually gets a second call. Advancer determines suit and level. An overcall of **1♦**, **1M** or **2♣** by intervenor is a normal overcall. After a **1♦** or **1M** overcall, advancer's **1NT** is a cue-bid and **2♣** is to play. This defence could also be used after (1♣) - Pass - (1♦) - ? or, up a level, over a strong, artificial and forcing **2♣**.

6b) CRASH. The three calls **X**, **1♦** and **1NT** show two suits of the same **Colour**, same **Rank** or same **Shape** respectively. So **X** shows either both red suits or both black suits, **1♦** shows either both majors or both minors and **1NT** shows either both "pointed" suits (spades and diamonds) or both "rounded" suits (hearts and clubs). Ghestem is not played over a strong club. With Crash, overcalls of **1♥**, **1♠**, **2♣** and **2♦** are natural and lead directing. Overcalls of **2♥** and **2♠** are intermediate. After Crash, advancer will bid a suit based on his hand. If intervenor has the other pair he corrects. If advancer makes a pre-emptive jump he should have support for one of the suits in the other pair for safety.

6c) SDI. Better get this one approved in advance by the tournament committee. SDI is supposed to be legal under the GCC since any defence to conventional calls is OK. But the 13+ pass might be regarded as a forcing pass system. It's not though. Worse, SDI might be regarded as primarily destructive (which, like any defence to a big club, it pretty much is!). SDI carries more than the usual risks. But, it has some theoretical merit and works as follows.

Pass: 13+ balanced. Not forcing. If it goes **(1♣) - Pass - (Pass) - ?**, it could easily be right to let opener play **1♣**. (If SDI is being played against you, responder must not pass!)

1♦: More cards in minors than majors and tends to be balanced. 0-12 HCP.

1♥: More cards in majors than minors and tends to be balanced. 0-12 HCP.

1♠: Spade-diamond two-suiter; any strength.

1NT: Heart-club two-suiter; any strength.

2m or 2M: That suit and the next higher ranking; any strength.

X: Unspecified 6+ card suit; any strength. Advancer bids **1♦** as "**Pass or Correct.**"

At low levels, the two-suited hands can be 5-4.

6d) Mathe. With this defence, **X** shows the majors and **1NT** shows the minors. Distribution is at least 4-4. Can also be used after **(1♣) - Pass - (1♦)**. A popular treatment that some players will use with any strength.

7. Defence to Two-Level Jacoby Transfers

7a) Standard (◀)

X of a transfer bid shows that suit and is primarily lead directing. **Pass** followed by **X** is takeout of the opponents' real suit. Bidding the transfer suit shows a good one-suited hand.

7b) Two-Suited

This defence applies only against **(1NT) - Pass - (2♦) - ?** or **(1NT) - Pass - (2♥) - ?**. Advancer can compete **directly** or **delay** by passing and awaiting developments. With a big notrump hand he will pass and wait.

Bidding directly borrows from Ghestem. A **2NT** bid shows both minors. **Cue bidding** their known suit, hearts or spades respectively, shows the top and bottom suits of the remaining three. **X** of the transfer suit shows the top two suits excluding their known suit. Other suit bids are natural.

There is only one strong bid in this defence and advancer must delay to use it. If advancer does delay bidding then **X** is **penalty**. So, **X** shows a strong hand which partner should pass. Partner needs a good reason to pull. The only time I can imagine a delayed double arising is when

opener has psyched **1NT**. Other delayed bids are weak. In fact, they are weaker than the corresponding direct bids. For example, against **(1NT) - Pass - (2♦) - Pass; (2♥) - Pass - (Pass) - ?**, advancer can bid **2♠** to play, **2NT** to show both minors, **3♣** to show clubs and spades or **3♦** to show diamonds and spades. If the auction was a transfer to spades then **3♣** and **3♦** show the bid suit and hearts. **3♥** is to play. Advancer cannot delay and then bid a one-suited hand with a minor.

8. Lebensohl and Transfer Lebensohl

Lebensohl applies when partner opens **1NT** and **RHO overcalls**. In addition, it can be used in other situations by agreement. For example, I use lebensohl after **LHO opens with a weak two-bid and partner makes a takeout double**. And, it is handy when **partner overcalls 1NT** and your **RHO raises** his partner or bids a new suit at the two-level.

8a) Lebensohl

In lebensohl, responder's bids at the two-level are weak and at the three-level are strong. **2NT** is a relay to **3♣** and could show a variety of hands. **X** is penalty.

For example, suppose the auction has gone **1NT - (2♥) - ?**. Then **2♠** is weak and any three-level suit bid is a natural game force. To compete in a suit lower ranking than that of the overcall, responder bids **2NT**. This is a relay to **3♣** after which responder may **Pass** with clubs or rebid a lower ranking suit, in this case **3♦**, to play. A rebid of **3♠** would be invitational since responder had **2♠** available initially for weak hands. After the relay, responder can also cue-bid or bid **3NT**. A cue-bid after the relay is Stayman while **3NT** denies interest in a major. These indirect, but strong, bids guarantee a stopper in the overcalled suit. **Slow Shows**. Direct cue bids or direct bids of **3NT** deny a stopper with analogous meanings about majors. **Direct Denies**. If RHO overcalls **2♣** then lebensohl only applies if **2♣** was conventional. If **2♣** was natural then a **3♠** cue bid is Stayman (with or without a stopper) and **X** is penalty. If **2♣** was conventional then **X** is Stayman.

Standard lebensohl has flaws. Depending on the overcall, most invitational hands cannot be shown. In addition, the contract is often played from the wrong side. Transfer lebensohl attempts to fix some of these problems.

8b) Transfer lebensohl (◀)

As in lebensohl, suit bids at the two-level are to play and **2NT** is the relay with a weak hand including a 5+ card suit which is lower ranking than the overcalled suit. But in transfer lebensohl, suit bids at the three-level are transfers to the "next" higher ranking suit with invitational or better values. The "next" suit excludes their overcalled suit. A simple acceptance of the three-level transfer by opener shows a minimum. The direct cue bid is not a transfer. It is Stayman without a stopper. **Direct Denies** here also. Immediate cue bids and bids of **3NT** deny stoppers in transfer lebensohl. In transfer lebensohl, **Slow Shows** as it does in our standard lebensohl. Some sample auctions follow. Assume the overcall is natural. To handle conventional overcalls over our **1NT**, see that section.

1NT - (2♦) - ?	2♥ and 2♠ are weak. 2NT is a relay to 3♣ and usually to play. If responder then rebids 3♦ that is Stayman with a stopper; a 3NT rebid after the relay is to play with a diamond stopper but no major interest. A direct 3♣ is an invitational or better transfer to the “next” suit which is hearts. You skip their suit. A direct cue-bid of 3♦ is Stayman without a stopper. 3♥ is a transfer to spades also showing an invitational or better hand. 3♠ shows an invitational+ hand with clubs.
1NT - (2♥) - ?	2♠ is to play and 2NT is a relay to 3♣. After opener’s 3♣, responder can Pass or rebid 3♦ which is to play; a rebid of 3♥ is Stayman with a stopper; a rebid of 3NT is to play with a heart stopper but no major interest. A direct 3♣ is an invitational or better transfer to diamonds. 3♦ is an invitational+ transfer to spades, the next suit. 3♠ shows an invitational+ hand with clubs. A direct cue-bid of 3♥ is Stayman without a stopper. A direct 3NT is to play with no stopper.
1NT - (2♠) - ?	2NT is a relay to 3♣. After opener’s 3♣, responder can Pass, rebid 3♦ or rebid 3♥ both of which are to play; a rebid of 3♠ is Stayman with a stopper; a rebid of 3NT is to play with a spade stopper but no major interest. A direct 3♣ is an invitational or better transfer to diamonds and 3♦ is a transfer to hearts also invitational or better. 3♥ shows an invitational+ hand with clubs. A direct cue bid of 3♠ is Stayman without a stopper. A direct 3NT is to play with no stopper.

9. Heart Attack

Here is a defence against our “0+” Unbalanced Diamond or, for example, against a “2+” 1♦ as used in Precision.

- X: Strong. Shows 15+ HCP, balanced or unbalanced. Subsequent doubles by intervenor or advancer are penalty.
- 1♥: Weak takeout. A limited, 11-14 HCP, non-forcing takeout double. Shows 3+ cards in each major and 4+ in a minor. 2♣ by advancer says pass or correct to your minor. Otherwise, advancer bids as if responding to a takeout double except that 1♥ can be passed.
- 1♠, 2♣, 2♦: Standard overcalls. To play. Since we play a cue-bid as top and bottom normally, 2♦ must be alerted and described as natural.
- 1NT: Shows a heart overcall.
- 2♥, 2♠: Shows 5+ cards in the bid major and a 5-card minor. 2NT by advancer asks for the minor. 3♣ by advancer is pass-or-correct.
- 2NT: Shows 5-5 in the minors.
- 3♣: Shows 5-5 in the majors.

With two changes this can be used against a “Could Be Short” 1♣. Use 1♦ as natural and 2♦ instead of 3♣ as Ghestem showing 5-5 in the majors. Use a different defence to a big club.

10. Ripcord

When our weak notrump is doubled, either for penalty or conventionally, responder has two options. He can **Pass** or **transfer** to a 5+ card suit. After the double, a bid of **XX/2♣/2♦/2♥** is a transfer to **2♣/2♦/2♥/2♠** respectively.

If the opponent's double is passed around to the **1NT** opener he is obliged to keep the auction alive unless he is 4-3-3-3. His three options are to **Pass** with any 4-3-3-3, **XX** with either 4-4-3-2 or 2-2-4-5 or bid **2m** with a 5-card minor. If opener is 2-2-4-5 he has a choice of **XX** or **2m**.

If opener redoubles in pass out position after **1NT - (X) - Pass - (Pass)**, responder can leave it in with appropriate values or start scrambling. A bid of **2♣** now could be a 3- or 4-card suit. Other suit bids, with the possible rare exception of **2♦**, will normally show four cards. The partnership should be able to scramble to, at worst, a 4-3 fit and frequently a 4-4 fit will be available.

11. Defence against a "Multi" 2♦

Multi, which shows a weak two-bid in a major, is Mid-Chart. But, it is so popular that it may be allowed at some clubs (or in some events) which only allow GCC methods normally.

(2♦) - ?	X is a takeout double of a weak 2♠ . 2♥ is a takeout double of a weak 2♥ . 2♠ is natural and not forcing. 2NT shows 16-18 HCP. 3m and 3M are natural with 6+ card suits but not forcing. 4m is Leaping Michaels with 5+ cards in m and a 5+ card major.
(2♦) - Pass - (2♥) - ?	X is takeout of the bid major. In the second auction, remember that responder usually has some heart support. Other bids, including 2♠ and 2NT , are as above.
(2♦) - Pass - (2♠) - ?	
(2♦) - Pass - (2♥) - Pass (2♠) - Pass - (Pass) - X	Takeout of spades. With shortness in spades, 4 th hand could not double on the previous round.
(2♦) - Pass - (2♥) - X (2♠) - ?	Partner has made a takeout double of hearts and opener has corrected to spades. X is penalty, 3♥ shows 6+ hearts; 3♠ asks for a spade stopper.
(2♦) - 4m - (Pass) - ?	Over a Leaping Michaels 4m , 4♥ says Pass or Correct .
(2♦) - Pass - (Pass) - ?	Bid as if responder had opened a weak 2♦ .

Competitive Bidding

The opponents will open the bidding about half the time. When they do we are on the defensive. Bidding becomes more dangerous and much less accurate. Our goals in bidding are very different. We may still have a game. But more often we will bid to suggest a lead, find a part score, disrupt their auction or uncover a cheap sacrifice. The main tools are the **overcall** and the **takeout double**. In the sample auctions below, the opponents' bids are shown with brackets. Calls like **1s**, **2s**, ... stand for one of a suit, two of a suit, etc. The partner who makes the first bid or double (not a Pass) for our side is the **Intervenor**. His partner is the **Advancer**. This section deals only with the case where they open with one of a suit.

They open; we double

(1s) - <u>X</u>	Takeout Double. Forcing (usually) on advancer if responder passes. Shows 13+ HCP. Advancer initially assumes a minimum, 13-15, takeout double which guarantees 4 cards in the other major if only one is available and 4 cards in a least one major if the opening bid, 1s , was a minor. But, with 16+, intervenor may not necessarily have 4 cards in an unbid major.
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They open; we double; responder passes

(1s) - X - (Pass) - <u>?</u>	Advancer must bid unless he knows he can beat 1s with a trump lead. A non-jump bid in a new suit shows 0-8 HCP. Advancer may have to bid a 3-card suit occasionally in the cheapest such suit available. A single jump in a new suit is invitational and shows about 9-11 HCP. Intervenor should assume a 5+ card suit unless he has guaranteed 4 cards himself. A cue bid of s by Advancer promises 12+ HCP and is a game force.
(1s) - X - (Pass) - NJS (Pass) - <u>?</u>	If advancer makes a 0-8 non-jump suit response (NJS), opener cannot continue without extra values beyond a minimum 13-15 takeout double. A single raise or new suit bid would show 16-18, a cue-bid or minimum NT bid shows 19-21.
(1♥) - X - (Pass) - 2♠ (Pass) - <u>3♠</u>	This single raise by intervenor is a Game Force and a mild slam try. The jump to 2♠ was invitational. Same thing applies any time advancer invites two below game in a suit and intervenor makes a single raise. There is no need for intervenor to re-invite after advancer's invitation.
(1s) - X - (Pass) - <u>1NT</u>	9-11 HCP. A bit more than Standard. Usually includes a stopper in s .
(1s) - X - (Pass) - <u>2NT</u>	12-15 HCP. Guarantees a stopper in s . Game Force.

(1♠) - X - (Pass) - 2♣ (2♠) - Pass - (Pass) - 2NT	2NT is takeout. Advancer has 6-8 HCP and a diamond suit that he could not bid over 2♣ and risk forcing the partnership to the four-level. This only arises when the opponents open a major, we make a takeout double and advancer bids his longer club suit first.
(1♥) - X - (Pass) - 2♣ (2♥) - Pass - (Pass) - 2NT	
(1♥) - X - (Pass) - 2♣ (2♥) - X	Also takeout. More than a minimum so 16+. Only 3-card club support so looking for spades or diamonds from advancer.

They open; we double; responder does not pass

(1♥) - X - (2♥) - 2♣	When advancer makes a free, non-jump, bid in a suit he is showing about 6-8 support points. 3♣ would be invitational.
(1♥) - X - (1♠) - 2♥	Cheaper cue shows 9-11. Higher cue, 2♠, is a game force.
(1♥) - X - (1♠) - X	Penalty. Suggests responder has psyched our suit.
(1s) - X - (2s) - X	Responsive (takeout) through 4♦ when only one suit, s, is involved. If s is a minor, X shows both majors. If s is a major, X shows oM and one minor.
(1m) - X - (3m, 4m) - X	
(1M) - X - (2M) - ?	X shows oM and a minor. 2NT shows both minors.
(1M) - X - (3M) - X	Shows the minors in each case.
(2M) - X - (3M) - X	
(1♥) - X - (XX) - 2♣	Preemptive jumps after redoubles.

They open; we overcall

(1s) - {1♦, 1M, 2m, 2♥}	A non-jump direct overcall shows 6-15 HCP and a good 5+ card suit. Lower range overcalls are lead directing and the suit should be headed by the Ace or King. If partner will be asked to lead from an honour he should have some expectation of not giving up a trick.
(1s) - 1NT	Shows 16-18 HCP.
(1s) - Jump O'call	A single jump overcall, excluding 2♦ or 3♣, is intermediate. It shows 12-15 HCP and a 6-card suit. Jumps to 2♦ and 3♣ are Ghestem exclusion bids showing the other two suits.
(1s) - 2NT	Shows the two lower ranking unbid suits. Part of Ghestem.
(1s) - Cue Bid	Shows the top and bottom unbid suits. Part of Ghestem.

They open; we overcall in a suit; responder makes a call

The next two sections need some introduction. They deal with **Advancing Suit Overcalls**. That is, what do various calls by the fourth player in the auction mean when partner has overcalled in a suit?

Bergen-style raises have improved constructive bidding considerably. After a **1M** opening bid, they allow responder to distinguish between 3- and 4-card support and show different strength raises. The idea here is to do the same thing after our suit overcall using transfer advances. These advances were first discussed by Jeff Rubens in the April, 1981 Bridge World. His scheme started with the cue-bid of opener's suit and went up to the next level of intervenor's suit. It did not distinguish between 3- and 4-card support – information that is important for competitive situations. The cost of our approach is the loss of the natural **1NT** advance in the **No Double** scheme. With our sometimes light **1M** overcalls, playing exactly **1NT** has usually turned out badly!

If an opponent opens the bidding his partner becomes the responder. Then, if we overcall our partner becomes the **advancer**. The next two sections deal with advancer's calls when the opponents open with a suit bid, partner overcalls in a suit at the 1- or 2-level and responder makes some call below three of partner's suit. Ghestem overcalls (**2♦** in particular) are excluded. With our overcalls limited to about 15 HCP, advancer will rarely want to make a negative double (Snapdragon). Usually, he will just want to make some sort of raise or show his own long suit. The idea is to distinguish between 3- and 4-card support in overcaller's suit, show new suits and invite game. The two versions depend on responder's call.

No Double: (1s) - 1y/2y - (Pass/X) - ?

Double: (1s) - 1y/2y - (Bid) - ?

In the **No Double** version it is assumed that, after an opening bid followed by an overcall by partner, responder has either passed or made a negative double. At this point, a double by advancer is not a legal call. In the **Double** version it is assumed that, in the same situation, responder has bid something, either a suit or notrump, so that double is allowed.

In **No Double**, if partner has overcalled **1y**, advancer has a chain of bids available starting with **1NT** and ending with **2y**. If the overcall was **2y** the chain starts with **2NT** and goes to **3y**. The chain may be short in the sense that it may consist only of **1NT**, **2y-1**, **2y** or even **2NT**, **3y**. In the **Double** version, **X** replaces the notrump bid at the lowest position in the chain. It may be that only **X**, **2y** or **X**, **3y** are free for use. In the **Double** version, minimum notrump bids retain their normal meaning and are to play.

In either version, a transfer to the opened suit is always a cue-bid and a transfer to an unbid suit is two-way. It shows a 4+ card suit and exactly 3-card support for partner's overcall or a 5+ card suit with or without support. If only a 5- or 6-card suit, advancer will have tolerance (a doubleton or better) for the overcall. Lacking tolerance, advancer should be prepared to play in his suit one level higher. Most importantly, in either version **2y** (or **3y**) shows exactly 3-card support for **y**

and the bid in the chain just below **2y** (or **3y**) whether **2y-1** (or **3y-1**), **1NT** (or **2NT**) or **X** is a constructive raise with 4-card support.

They open; partner overcalls 1y or 2y; responder passes or doubles; (No Double version)

<p>(1♣) - 1♠ - (Pass) - ?</p>	<p>The chain is 1NT, 2♣, 2♦, 2♥, 2♠. All but 2♠ require an alert.</p> <p>1NT: The transfer to the opened suit is a cue-bid showing 12-14 HCP with 4-card spade support or any 15+.</p> <p>2♣: Transfer to diamonds. Any transfer to an unbid suit is two-way. It shows either length (5+) in the suit or 3-card trump support for partner's suit and lead directing for the transfer suit.</p> <p>2♦: Transfer to hearts. Two-way as above.</p> <p>2♥: This is 2y-1; a constructive spade raise showing, in this case, 9-11 support points with 4-card support.</p> <p>2♠: The 2y raise shows up to 11 support points with exactly 3-card spade support.</p> <p>Jump raises are pre-emptive. With 12+ points and 3-card spade support, transfer to an unbid suit, if available, and then raise or cue-bid. 2y, 2y-1 and the cue-bid will always be available. If there is no unbid suit then improvise; the constructive raise has priority. XX is neutral and discussed later. New suit bids outside the chain are forcing for one round.</p>
<p>(1♦) - 1♥ - (X) - ?</p>	<p>1NT is two-way showing clubs. 2♣ is the cue-bid. 2♦ is 2y-1, the constructive raise. 2♥ is the 3-card raise, 2y. 1♠ is outside the chain so is natural and forcing with 12+ HCP. Advancer may have 3-card heart support.</p>
<p>(1♣) - 1♦/1M - (Pass) - 1NT</p>	<p>Transferring to their suit is always the cue-bid. It shows 12-14 dummy points and 4-card support or 15+. The cue-bid may not always be available as a transfer in No Double.</p>
<p>(1♣) - 1♠ - (Pass) - 1NT (Pass) - ?</p>	<p>If overcaller "accepts" the transfer cue-bid by bidding 2♣ it shows a sound overcall; so, 12-15. A rebid of 2♠ shows less than a sound overcall. Advancer may Pass.</p>
<p>(1♦) - 1♠ - (X) - ?</p>	<p>1NT and 2♦ are two-way transfers to clubs and hearts respectively. Either advancer wants to play in his suit or he has 3-card support for spades. Depending on advancer's next call, new suit transfers show one of three ranges: up to about 11 support points, 12-14, or 15+. In all cases, advancer has less than 4-card spade support.</p>
<p>(1♣) - 1♦ - (Pass) - ?</p>	<p>1NT is the cue-bid, 2♣ is the constructive raise and 2♦ is the 3-card raise. Subsequent notrump bids by either partner are to play. 1♥ and 1♠ are outside the chain and are forcing.</p>
<p>(1♦) - 1♥ - (Pass) - 1♠</p>	<p>Outside the chain. Natural and a one round force. Shows 5+ spades and 12+ HCP but usually 12-14. Advancer may have 3-card heart support. Transfers don't start until 1NT.</p>

<p>(1♦) - 1♥ - (Pass) - 1NT (Pass) - ?</p>	<p>Overcaller accepts the transfer to clubs with a doubleton or better support. Support doubles/redoubles apply through 2♥ if opener does not pass. In that case, a support double confirms a doubleton club and raising shows 3+.</p>
<p>(1♣) - 2♠ - (Pass) - ?</p>	<p>3♠ shows about 7-9 support points with exactly doubleton spade support. Remember, 2♠ is intermediate with a 6-card suit so all bids are adjusted. 3♥ is the constructive raise with 3-card support and 2NT is the cue-bid transfer to the opened suit. 3♣ and 3♦ are two-way showing diamonds and hearts respectively.</p>
<p>(1♦) - 2♣ - (Pass) - 2♥</p>	<p>Forcing. Outside the chain. Transfers don't start until 2NT. New suit bids by advancer below 2NT show very good hands. Overcaller assumes that advancer has 5+ hearts and 12-14 HCP. The constructive club raise is 2NT.</p>
<p>(1♠) - 2♣ - (Pass) - ?</p>	<p>Here is another case where the constructive raise, 3y-1, is 2NT and there are no transfers to unbid suits available. 2♦ and 2♥ are natural and forcing for one round. 2♣ is the cue-bid. A raise to 3♣ shows 3-card support.</p>
<p>(1♦) - Pass - (1♥) - 1♠ (Pass) - ?</p>	<p>No Double applies here also. 1NT shows clubs, 2♣ is the cue-bid and 2♥ is the constructive raise.</p>
<p>(1s) - 1y - (X) - <u>XX</u></p>	<p>Neutral redouble after their negative double. Advancer's redouble announces that, opposite a normal overcall, it is our hand. It shows a good hand (9-14 HCP), a doubleton in intervenor's suit and no good bid. Neither side may have an 8-card fit. We may be able to extract a penalty if intervenor's overcall was upper range, say 10-15 HCP, and we each have the suit bid/advertised on our right. Not Snapdragon.</p>
<p>(1♦) - 1♥ - (Pass) - Pass (X) - Pass - (Pass) - <u>XX</u></p>	<p>In this and other low-level situations where an opponent has trapped and then converted a takeout double to penalty, XX by us says "I think we are in trouble in this contract. I have some support for the unbid suits if you have another place to play." There is a good chance this won't end well so use with discretion.</p>

They open; partner overcalls 1y or 2y; responder bids; (Double version)

<p>(1♦) - 1♠ - (2♣) - ?</p>	<p>The Double version applies if responder bids a new suit, raises or bids notrump. In this version, X replaces the 1NT bid as the lowest call in the chain.</p> <p>X: shows the suit above responder's. In this case it is the diamond cue-bid showing 12-14 with 4-card support for spades or any game force of 15+.</p> <p>2♦: two-way showing either long hearts or a lead-directing 3-card spade raise.</p> <p>2♥: shows a 9-11 point constructive raise with 4-card support. This is 2y-1.</p> <p>2♠: shows up to 11 points with 3+ card support. This is 2y.</p> <p>Jump raises are pre-emptive.</p>
<p>(1♦) - 1♥ - (1NT) - ?</p>	<p>X: two-way transfer to clubs.</p> <p>2♣: the cue-bid.</p> <p>2♦: the constructive 4-card raise.</p> <p>2♥: the 3-card raise.</p>
<p>(1♦) - 1♥ - (1♠) - ?</p>	<p>On this auction, 1NT is normal and to play. Otherwise, it is the same as above.</p>
<p>(1♠) - 1♦ - (1♥) - ?</p>	<p>As above, 1NT is normal and to play. X is a two-way transfer to spades, 1♠ is the cue-bid, 2♣ is the constructive 4-card diamond raise and 2♦ is the 3-card raise.</p>
<p>(1♥) - 2♦ - (2♥) - ?</p>	<p>X: Shows 5+ spades. 2♠: Shows clubs. 3♣: Constructive diamond raise. 3♦: 3-card raise.</p>
<p>(1♦) - 1♥ - (3♦) - ?</p>	<p>X: The constructive 4-card raise. 3♥: the 3-card raise. In both cases, advancer should be strong enough to sustain the level. The only cue-bid available here is 4♦.</p>
<p>(1♦) - Pass - (1♥) - 1♠ (2♥) - ?</p>	<p>The Double scheme applies. X is the constructive raise and 2♠ is a 3-card raise.</p>
<p>(1♦) - 1♥ - (4♦) - <u>X</u></p>	<p>Penalty. Any double of a bid above 3y is penalty.</p>

The following apply in either the **No Double** or **Double** version:

1. If advancer cue-bids by transferring to the opened suit and the overcaller accepts the transfer by bidding that suit it has a special meaning. The acceptance creates a game force and says overcaller has a maximum or near maximum overcall.
2. If advancer transfers to an unbid (real) suit and the next player bids or doubles then support doubles and redoubles apply but show a doubleton instead of 3-card support.

They open; we overcall 1NT; responder makes any call

(1s) - 1NT - (Pass) - ?	Systems off. Bids at the two-level are weak; bids at the three-level are strong; a cue bid is Stayman.
(1s) - 1NT - (2s) - ?	Bids at the two-level are weak; bids at the three-level are invitational; a cue bid is Stayman. Lebensohl, including transfer lebensohl, is on and shows a weakish hand unless followed with a cue bid or 3NT . Slow Shows . Lebensohl is on if your RHO raises opener or bids a new suit at the two-level.

They open; we pass; they respond; we compete

(1♠) - Pass - (1♥) - Pass (1♠) - <u>X</u>	Takeout double of spades. Announces a trap pass over 1♣. Here shows clubs, diamonds and heart tolerance.
(1♠) - Pass - (1♥) - Pass (1♠) - X - (Pass) - <u>2♣</u>	To play.
(1♠) - Pass - (1♥) - Pass (1♠) - <u>1NT</u>	Unusual for minors. First auction shows a trap pass with clubs and diamonds. Second is just competing after they have found a fit.
(1♥) - Pass - (2♥) - Pass (Pass) - <u>2NT</u>	
(1♠) - Pass - (2♠) - Pass (Pass) - X - (Pass) - <u>2NT</u>	"Two places to play." In this case, both minors. The double promised hearts and a minor so partner bids his minor now.
(1♦) - Pass - (1NT) - Pass (Pass) - <u>2♦</u>	Takeout showing both majors. Not strong enough for a takeout double on the first round.
(1s) - Pass - (1M) - O'call (X) - <u>XX</u>	If opener made a support double then our XX is a neutral redouble . It shows 9-11 in this case, a doubleton in intervenor's suit and no good bid. Subsequent doubles are penalty.
(1M) - Pass - (1NT) - ?	This applies whether the 1NT is forcing or standard. X , 2♣ , 2♦ are 5+ card transfers to clubs, diamonds and oM respectively. 2oM shows a very good 3-suited takeout hand. 2M , as in Ghestem, shows the top and bottom unbid suits; that is, oM and clubs. 2NT shows both minors. 3♣ is an exclusion bid showing oM and diamonds. Expected distribution and range for the Ghestem-type bids is 5-5 with two decent suits and 11-15 HCP. Bidding in front of the opening bidder carries more risk.

They open; we have a 6-4 hand

If the opponents open with one of a suit, handling a single-suited hand is relatively straightforward; we overcall or make a takeout double. And, with Ghestem, we have a way to show 5-5 or better hands. But 6-4 suited hands can present problems. With a weak 6-4 we usually just overcall in the 6-card suit. With a decent 6-bagger and 12-14 HCP we can make an intermediate single-jump overcall (except that a jump to **2♦** or **3♣** is still Ghestem). It is the 15-17 HCP 6-4 hands that present the most difficulty. Many of these will be too weak for an initial

double and not strong enough to bid both suits. The strategy is to overcall in the 6-card suit and then hope to show the second suit later with a takeout **X**.

(1♦) - 1♥ - (X) - Pass (1♠) - <u>X</u>	Intervenor's double is takeout showing a good hand and four clubs in this auction. Even if opener had rebid 1NT , it shows clubs since responder's X implied spades.
(1♠) - 2♦ - (2♠) - Pass (3♣) - <u>X</u>	This shows a good hand with four hearts.

They open; we balance

(1♦) - Pass - (Pass) - <u>X</u>	A reopening X of a suit bid is always takeout. At the one-level, as here, it could be made with as few as 7 HCP if the shape (4-4-4-1) and vulnerability are right. Requirements increase with level, vulnerability, etc.
(1♦) - Pass - (Pass) - <u>1♥</u>	A balance at the one-level could be on a 4-card suit. Always 5+ at the 2-level and higher.
(1♥) - Pass - (2♥) - Pass (Pass) - ?	Balancing (double or overcall) depends on degree of opponents' fit, level and vulnerability. There are Green, Yellow and Red Light situations. The first one shown is green light. The opponents have a fit. Go ahead and balance with a suitable hand. Passing rates to get you a poor board anyway. When one of the opponents takes a preference it is yellow light time. See the middle example. The last situation is a red light. You may not even have a spade fit.
(1♥) - Pass - (1NT) - Pass (2♦) - Pass - (2♥) - Pass (Pass) - ?	
(1♥) - Pass - (2♦) - Pass (2♥) - Pass - (Pass) - ?	
(1s) - Pass - (Pass) - <u>1NT</u>	
(1s) - Pass - (Pass) - <u>2NT</u>	19-21 HCP.

Raising as Advancer

The assumption in the following table is that the opponents have opened in a suit, partner has overcalled **1y** or **2y** (where **y** is a suit) and responder has made a call below **3y**. Either the **No Double** or the **Double** scheme may apply but advancer has 3+ card support for the overcaller.

Dummy Points Support Length	6-8	9-11	12-14	15+
3	Single raise	Single raise or transfer then support	Transfer or bid a new suit. Then support	Transfer or bid a new suit. Then cue-bid
4+	Jump raise	"2y-1" or "3y-1"	Start with a cue-bid	Start with a cue-bid

Table: Raising Partner's Overcall

Advancing Overcalls Exercise Set

The auction has started as shown. Assume neither side is vulnerable. For each auction state the version of transfer advances in use and give the calls in the chain. Then, at the point where the question mark appears, give your call with the indicated hand. Our answers follow on the next page.

Opp1 1♦	Intervenor 1♥	Opp2 X ¹	Advancer ?	1: Negative
1 ♠ 86 ♥ K43 ♦ A832 ♣ 7643		2 ♠ 9 ♥ J1072 ♦ QJ5 ♣ KQ1086	3 ♠ 106 ♥ Q2 ♦ AJ97 ♣ KQ532	4 ♠ AK6 ♥ KJ10 ♦ 9754 ♣ 1053
5 ♠ 74 ♥ QJ982 ♦ 83 ♣ K832		6 ♠ ♥ K1073 ♦ Q975 ♣ KJ1052	7 ♠ K106 ♥ J74 ♦ 9 ♣ AQJ532	8 ♠ KQ3 ♥ KQ107 ♦ 97 ♣ K532

Opp1 1♥	Intervenor 2♦	Opp2 2♥	Advancer ?
9 ♠ AK832 ♥ 76 ♦ J83 ♣ K43		10 ♠ KQ6 ♥ J72 ♦ 9754 ♣ 962	11 ♠ 964 ♥ 9 ♦ AJ973 ♣ J542
			12 ♠ AQ62 ♥ 108 ♦ KJ97 ♣ J54

Opp1 1♣	Intervenor 1♠	Opp2 2♥	Advancer ?
13 ♠ AK86 ♥ 74 ♦ A832 ♣ 843		14 ♠ K1086 ♥ 9 ♦ AJ1072 ♣ 953	15 ♠ J106 ♥ J7 ♦ AJ973 ♣ J53
			16 ♠ 76 ♥ J106 ♦ AQ9754 ♣ J3

Opp1 1♣ X ¹	Advancer Pass ?	Opp2 1♥	Intervenor 1♠	1: Support double
17 ♠ KJ63 ♥ 32 ♦ K83 ♣ AQ98		18 ♠ Q108 ♥ 72 ♦ KQ1086 ♣ Q96	19 ♠ J1096 ♥ AJ73 ♦ Q73 ♣ J5	20 ♠ Q74 ♥ KJ10 ♦ 9754 ♣ Q53

Answers to Advancing Overcalls Exercise Set

No Double version. Calls in the chain are **1NT**, **2♣**, **2♦** and **2♥**.

1. All you are worth is a 3-card competitive (courtesy) raise to **2♥**. Tell partner what to lead.
2. Bid **2♦**. This is the constructive raise with 4-card support and about 9-11 support points.
3. **XX**. A “neutral” redouble showing a doubleton heart and a fair hand. **1NT** showing clubs is also possible.
4. Not as good a hand as it looks. Square shape and defence instead. Just bid **2♥**.
5. You should raise pre-emptively to **3♥** or **4♥**. **3♥** feels about right.
6. We would bid **1NT** even with the 4-card support. If partner raises clubs we have a double fit. Expect some spade bids.
7. Bid **1NT**, showing your clubs, then raise hearts.
8. Bid **2♣**. This is the cue-bid showing a 4+ card heart raise (or any 15+ hand).

Double version. Calls in the chain are **X**, **2♠**, **3♣** and **3♦**.

9. Double to show your spades.
10. You have four diamonds but just bid **3♦** showing a 3-card raise.
11. This is a pre-emptive raise to **4♦**. Partner will know what to do when they bid game.
12. Treat this as a constructive raise with four trumps. Bid **3♣**.

Double version. The only calls in the chain are **X** and **2♠**.

13. Just enough for a **3♣** cue-bid.
14. **X** showing a 4-card constructive raise.
15. **2♠** is plenty here.
16. A tough one and probably not our hand. We would just **Pass**. Partner may know to lead the unbid suit.

No Double version. Calls in the chain are **1NT**, **2♣**, **2♦**, **2♥** and **2♠**.

17. Bid **1NT**. This transfer to clubs is a cue-bid. You have spade support and a trap pass.
18. Bid **2♣** to show your diamonds. You will support spades if you get a chance.
19. **2♥** is the call. This is not a cue-bid but a 4-card constructive raise of partner’s spades.
20. You could pass. But we would make a courtesy raise to **2♠**.

Notes on Conventions, Defences and Competitive Bidding

Transfer Landy doesn't show as many hands as Modified Hello but it does get the stronger opponent on lead more frequently.

There is not much to choose between our Modified Truscott and CRASH. In Truscott, the two suits are known immediately and it has more pre-emptive value. But the partnership can be a level higher when there is no fit.

Transfer lebensohl has some clear advantages over standard lebensohl. Except that showing an invitational hand with clubs carries some risks. The partnership could get too high or be in clubs when notrump is better (or vice-versa). But, on balance, transfer lebensohl is an improvement over ordinary lebensohl. Forcing the overcaller to make the opening lead is a gain.

Transfer advances to overcalls were discussed by Jeff Rubens in the April, 1981 Bridge World. His scheme started with the cue-bid of opener's suit and went to **2y-1**, the suit one below that of intervenor. It did not distinguish between 3- and 4-card raises which, we think, is important for competitive situations but not as important if advancer is strong enough for a game try. Giving up the natural **1NT** in the **No Double** scheme may be regarded as a loss. With our light **1M** overcalls, playing exactly **1NT** has usually turned out badly! In any case, this whole area is a work in progress. Ideally, we would like a **2♣** advance to a **1M** overcall to be a one round force. It would essentially ask how good is your overcall? Unfortunately, that usage is not GCC-compliant unless it is a game force, a cue-bid or advancer is a passed hand. Basically, our proposal gives up on the preferred **2♣** usage and sacrifices the natural **1NT** instead. Insanity, I know.

Slam Bidding

There are, basically, only two kinds of slams. First, there are slams based on power. All the partnership has to do is make sure that it is not down off the top. Most systems can bid those. The other kind requires the two hands to have perfectly fitting cards. These are harder to bid and are often played in a suit as opposed to notrump.

For a suit-based small slam, here are the partnership's priorities.

1. Identify a trump (key) suit and, more generally, a potential source of 12 tricks.
2. Make sure the opponents do not have a cashing ace and king in a single side suit.
3. Make sure the partnership does not have two aces or one ace plus a trump trick to lose.

In almost all cases the partnership will get this info from the auction in the order above. The last one is the easiest. For it you will need a tool like Blackwood. We use Roman Keycard Blackwood (RKB).

There are many forms of RKB. But, no matter which ace-asking option is selected, there are questions that need answers before you even start. If **4NT** is your default ace-asking bid, when is **4NT** quantitative? Next, if **4NT** would be quantitative, how do we check for aces when we really want to? And then, if we are going to use an ace-asking method based on key cards, when is the key suit for trump purposes agreed? We discuss our answers to those questions first.

SOS Auctions Where 4NT is Quantitative

First, we eliminate those auctions where **4NT is quantitative and not Blackwood**. They only occur when opener has shown a notrump hand with a defined point count range. There are three areas. First are some of the jumps to **4NT** after an opening **1NT**. Then there are auctions where transfers and Puppet Stayman (**TAPS**) are available to be used whether actually used or not. The third class of auctions are those using **Checkback Stayman**.

1NT - <u>4NT</u>

In any of the above notrump auctions, the **4NT** bid is quantitative. But, if the **4NT** bid is replaced by **4♣** then that would be Gerber with the standard responses. When the **2♦** bidder follows up with a second inquiry instead (like **2NT** or **3♣** for example) then **4NT** is Blackwood, even over a **3NT** response, and **4♣** is natural.

Next, quantitative **4NT** and Gerber bids when TAPS is available.

2NT - <u>4NT</u>	2♣ - 2♦ 2NT - <u>4NT</u>	2♣ - 2♦ 2♥ - 2♠ 2NT - <u>4NT</u>
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The direct jump to **4NT** in all of the above is quantitative. Replacing **4NT** with **4♣** would be Gerber.

2NT - 3♣ 3X - <u>4♣</u>	2♣ - 2♦ 2NT - 3♣ 3X - <u>4♣</u>	2♣ - 2♦ 2♥ - 2♠ 2NT - 3♣ 3X - <u>4♣</u>
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The **4♣** call in each of the above is Gerber. **4NT** instead would still be quantitative.

The remaining quantitative/Gerber bids arise after Checkback Stayman sequences.

1m - 1M 1NT - 2♣ Deny - <u>4NT</u>	1m - 1M 2NT - 3♣ Deny - <u>4NT</u>	1♥ - 1♠ 1NT - 2♣ Deny - <u>4NT</u>	1♥ - 1♠ 2NT - 3♣ Deny - <u>4NT</u>
--	--	--	--

When opener has denied three card support for responder's major, **4NT** is quantitative and **4♣** is Gerber.

The first option for checking on aces is classic Blackwood.

Option 1 – KISS. **4NT** is regular "0123" Blackwood (zero or four, one, two, three) when not quantitative. When **4NT** is quantitative use regular Gerber.

The remaining options are all based on an agreed **key suit**. How a suit gets agreed as key is discussed next.

Sequences Agreeing the Key Suit in SOS

We list the cases when the trump suit is agreed starting from the opening bid.

1. **1NT.** When the opening bid is **1NT**, the key suit is set immediately after Stayman or immediately after a transfer.
2. **1M.** After the one of a major opening bid, the key suit can be set after a splinter bid, a limit raise or a **2NT** forcing raise. Otherwise, the key suit must be bid naturally and raised.
3. **1m.** The key suit must be bid naturally and raised or set implicitly by a splinter.
4. **2♣.** If opener rebids **3M** the key suit is implicitly set. Otherwise, the key suit must be bid naturally and raised.
5. **2♦.** The key suit must be bid naturally and raised.
6. **2M.** Key suit must be set after an asking sequence or bid naturally and raised.
7. **Three- and Four-level preempts.** The suit pre-empted is implicitly the key suit.
8. **After Checkback Stayman,** if opener confirms 3 card support for responder's major then that major is the key suit.

9. In **competitive auctions**, where our first bid has been an overcall or takeout double, one partner must explicitly or implicitly (e.g. splinter) support partner's suit in a game forcing situation.

If the key suit is set as above we use an ace-asking method based on key cards. A bid of **4NT** that is not quantitative and for which no key suit is set as above is ordinary Blackwood by default.

Option 2 – Roman Keycard Blackwood³ (◀)

In RKB, the king of the key suit counts as an extra ace. So there are **five keycards** and **four possible responses** which increase in consecutive steps. The two popular versions of RKB are **RKB (1430)** and **RKB (3014)**. Here are the responses to a keycard ask of **4NT** for each one.

RKB (1430)

- 5♣**: One or four keycards.
- 5♦**: Zero or three keycards.
- 5♥**: Two (or Five) keycards without the trump queen.
- 5♠**: Two (or Five) keycards plus the trump queen.

RKB (3014)

- 5♣**: Zero or Three keycards.
- 5♦**: One or Four keycards.
- 5♥**: Two (or Five) keycards without the trump queen.
- 5♠**: Two (or Five) keycards plus the trump queen.

The only difference is in the **5♣** and **5♦** responses. If the asker signs off in the key suit after either a **5♣** or **5♦** response but the teller actually has the greater number of keycards, he must bid on as described later.

The lowest response is **5♣** since responses start in the denomination one above the keycard ask; namely, **4NT** when the key suit is a major. Unfortunately, the keycard ask will not be **4NT** necessarily when the key suit is a minor. But, in those cases, the same four steps are used starting one above the denomination of the ask.

“1430” or “3014”?

So which do we use? The answer is **we use both**. The idea is to try to maximize the **5♣** response where possible. If the asker is stronger than the teller we use 1430. But, if the asker is weaker than the teller we use 3014. If you haven't noticed, I don't like leaving things to chance. Our agreement is based on the first bid for our side in the auction.

³ The best reference is Eddie Kantar's book entitled RKB. I have the 5th (final) edition.

First Bid By Us	Asker	Version
1♣, 2♣, 2♦ or 2NT	Opener	1430
	Responder	3014
We open anything else	Opener	3014
	Responder	1430
Any Overcall	Intervenor	3014
	Advancer	1430
Takeout Double	Intervenor	3014
	Advancer	1430

The RKB Asking Bid

If the key suit is one of the **majors** then the keycard ask is **4NT**. If the key suit is **clubs** then **4♦** is the RKB ask **even if diamonds have been bid naturally**. If the key suit is diamonds it is more complicated. When **diamonds** is the key suit the keycard ask is **4♥ unless hearts was the first suit bid naturally by either partner**. Then **4♥** is to play and **4♣** is the keycard ask *unless hearts was the first suit bid naturally by one partner and spades was the first suit bid naturally by the other*. Then both **4♥** and **4♣** are to play and **4NT** is the keycard ask. That is the only case where **4NT** will be the RKB ask when the key suit is a minor.

If the key suit is a minor and partner bypasses the asking suit of **4♦, 4♥** or **4♣** and bids **4NT** then that **4NT** bid is just an ordinary cue bid in the ask suit!

The Queen Ask: When the Key Suit is a Major

The trump Queen will only be an issue when the response to RKB **4NT** is either **5♣** or **5♦** and the asker is not looking at the Queen in his hand. The rule is that after **5♣** the queen ask is **5♦** (either hearts or spades agreed) and after **5♦** the queen ask is **5♥** (either hearts or spades agreed). No exceptions.

Suppose that the asker continues with the queen ask. From the teller's point of view, even a small slam may still be in doubt. If the teller does not have the trump queen, with one exception, he signs off in five of the agreed major. The queen ask of **5♥** when hearts is the agreed key suit is the special case. If the teller has the smaller number of keycards (either 0 or 1 as shown by the **5♦** response) then the teller *must* pass the bid of **5♥**. But, if teller has the larger number (3 or 4) of keycards then he responds as normal to the Queen ask. Failing to hold the queen of hearts teller must bid six hearts. From the other side of the table, asker cannot bid **5♥** over **5♦** with hearts agreed when he knows there is a small slam. If he wants to bid a slam he must do it without asking about the Queen of hearts. **With hearts agreed, the asker must have at least two key cards.**

The teller **confirms** possession of the trump queen (or confirms the partnership has at least a ten card fit) by doing one of three things. (1) He bids a suit, lower ranking than six of the agreed suit, in which he holds an outside king or the cheaper suit with two outside kings. (2) Lacking a king, teller bids **5NT** with third round control (queen, doubleton, singleton) of any side suit. (3) With neither the king of a lower ranking suit nor a third round control of a side suit, teller jumps

to slam at the six-level of the agreed suit (or to the grand slam for the exception where the ask was 5♥ with hearts agreed).

The Queen Ask: When the Key Suit is a Minor

If the key suit is clubs then assume teller has responded 4♥ or 4♠ to asker's bid of 4♦. The queen ask is the next denomination; that is, either 4♠ or 4NT. Teller signs off in 5♣ lacking the queen. Otherwise he has the same three options as when the key suit is a major; that is, show a side king, show a third round control by bidding 4NT/5NT or sign off in 6♣.

If the key suit is diamonds there is a danger of getting too high. **Asker should have at least two keycards for safety.** After hearing teller's response to the RKB ask, if the next available denomination is either 4NT or 5♣ then that becomes the queen ask. Teller now responds as before. A problem occurs if the keycard ask was 4♠ or 4NT and the response was 5♣. If asker now bids 5♦, it is like the situation with hearts agreed where asker bids 5♥ as a queen ask. Teller passes with zero or one keycards but responds normally with the larger number of keycards. Another problem, more unlikely to occur, is when the keycard ask was 4NT and the response has been 5♦. The asker will have to infer from the auction, and his own hand, whether the teller has the smaller or larger number of controls and act accordingly. There is no queen ask in this case.

After a positive response to the Queen Ask

Suppose that the Teller has indicated he holds both the queen of the key suit and either the king of an outside suit or third round control of an outside suit. If the asker does anything but sign off in small slam it is a grand slam try. The partnership has all five key cards plus the trump queen. If the Teller has shown an outside king then any bid at the six-level in a suit lower ranking than the key suit is a **second king ask**. Without that second king, Teller signs off in six of the key suit. Holding that king, Teller responds in steps excluding the agreed suit. The first step shows Kxx, the second step shows Kx and raising the ask suit shows KQx.

If Teller has bid 5NT showing third round control of a side suit then any bid at the six-level in a lower ranking side suit is asking for **third round control (3RC)** of that suit. With the queen or a doubleton (or a singleton), the teller should bid the grand. Otherwise he signs off in six.

Continuations When the Queen Ask is Not Used (SKA and 3RC)

If asker does not need to inquire about the queen of trump, or if the response has clarified its location, he can make a grand slam try. A continuation, other than a signoff in the agreed suit, confirms possession of all five keys plus the trump queen. Asker can make a **Specific King Ask (SKA)** or a **third-round control (3RC)** ask.

SKA asks teller if he holds one or more of the side-suit kings. The ask is one level higher and in the same denomination as the keycard ask. For example, if the keycard ask was 4NT then the SKA is 5NT. If the keycard ask was 4♦ then the SKA is 5♦. Similarly, if the ask was 4♥/4♠ then the SKA ask is 5♥/5♠. Teller signs off in six of the agreed suit with no king. Teller bids "either/or" with one or two kings. That is, with one side-suit king he bids that suit (or the minimum notrump

if the suit of the king is the ask suit). With exactly two kings teller bids the suit of the king he does not hold (again bidding the minimum notrump if that suit is the ask suit). If teller holds all three side-suit kings he bids **6NT**.

Asker can inquire about third round control of a side suit (**3RC**) by bidding any suit that is not the queen-ask suit. Teller responds as before. With the queen or a doubleton (or a singleton), the teller should bid the grand. With three small or worse he signs off in six of the key suit.

If the Opponents Interfere

The opponents come in after we have started a keycard ask but before teller has answered. We use **DOPI** if the interference is below the six-level. Use **DEPO** at the six-level and above. DOPI means double shows zero keycards, Pass shows one and we bid something else with two. At the six-level or above, DEPO means double shows an even number and Pass shows an odd number of keycards. If they double our ask at any level use **ROPI**. The redouble replaces the double and shows zero keys while Pass shows one and we bid with more.

The opponents double teller's RKB response. If this happens **asker cannot pass**. He makes his normal bid except **XX** says "my **RHO** has made a mistake. Let's play this redoubled."

Exclusion Keycard Blackwood (EKB)

There are hands where one partner has a good fit with partner but he also has a void. He would like to check for keycards but if partner has only one it might be the wrong one; that is, the keycard might be the Ace of the void suit. The answer is for the asker to let the teller know that he should exclude that Ace when responding. The asker uses Exclusion Keycard Blackwood. EKB starts with the asker making an unnecessary jump in the void suit. **The jump is one more than a splinter**. The auctions (with silent opponents), **1♠ - 5♦** or **1♣ - 1♠; 5♦** are examples. In each case the key suit is spades and **5♦** is EKB with a diamond void. **Teller excludes the Ace of the void suit and responds as follows. 1st step = zero keycards, 2nd step = 1 keycard, 3rd step = 2 without, 4th step = 2 with and 5th step = 3 keycards.**

There are two things to remember about EKB. The first is that if you hold a long minor you cannot jump to game in your suit if it is one level higher than a splinter. And, if your partner jumps to game in a suit, one more than a splinter, he will not be best pleased with you if he is playing in his void!

Responding to RKB With a Void

Kantar has a method in his book. I regard it as risky and optional. I would not add it to the system without serious discussion. Kantar's suggestion is to bid **5NT** (the 5th step) with an even number of keycards (0 or 2) plus a void and jump to six of the void suit with an odd number of keycards. In practice the odd number will only ever be 1 or 3. When the key suit is not spades, our modification is to bid exactly one level above the ask (the 5th step) with an even number of keycards plus a void. With an odd number plus a void respond above the 5th step in the void suit or bid **5NT** if the void is in the ask suit. Follow Kantar when the key suit is spades.

5NT: Grand Slam Force or “Pick-a-Slam”

There are two popular uses for a bid of **5NT** that is not a Blackwood continuation. The first is the Grand Slam Force which applies when a key suit has been agreed. If there is no agreed trump suit then **5NT** means that the partner of the **5NT** bidder should choose the slam to play. To use either it is imperative that both partners understand when a key suit has been agreed. This was described earlier in this section on slam bidding.

Grand Slam Force: We use the simple version of this classic. Once a key suit has been agreed, a jump to **5NT** asks partner if he holds any two of the top three trump honors. He bids the grand if he does and the small slam otherwise.

Pick-a-Slam: Here, no key suit has been agreed when **5NT** is bid. We give a few examples.

<p>1♣ - (Pass) - 1♥ - (Pass) 1NT - (Pass) - <u>5NT</u></p>	<p>No agreed suit. Responder has five spades and wants to be in a slam. He is asking opener to choose between 6♠ and 6NT. If opener had a 5-card suit he could suggest it on the way to 6NT.</p>
<p>1♠ - (Pass) - 2♣ - (Pass) 2♥ - (Pass) - 3♦ - (Pass) 3NT - (Pass) - <u>5NT</u></p>	<p>Responder’s shape is something like 2=3=6=2. He is asking opener to choose from 6 diamonds, hearts, spades or notrump.</p>
<p>1♣ - (Pass) - 1♠ - (Pass) 1NT - (Pass) - 2♦ - (Pass) 2♥ - (Pass) - 3♦ - (Pass) 3NT - (Pass) - <u>5NT</u></p>	<p>Responder has five hearts and four diamonds. He is asking opener to select either six diamonds, hearts or notrump. Holding five clubs, opener could offer 6♣ as a slam to play.</p>

RKB Summary

The first table summarizes RKB when a keycard ask is followed by the queen ask.

Key Suit	RKB Ask	Teller's Bid	Queen Ask	Teller's Bid	3RC Ask/5NT
M	4NT	5♣	5♦	5M, 5♠, 5NT, 6m, 6M	6 of a lower ranking suit.
		5♦	5♥	If M is hearts, teller only answers holding max # of keycards.	
♣	4♦	4♥	4♠	4NT, 5♣, 5♦, 5M, 5NT, 6♣	None
		4♠	4NT		
♦	4♥	4♠	4NT	5♣, 5♦, 5M, 5NT, 6♦	6♣
		4NT	5♣	5♦, 5M, 5NT, 6♣, 6♦	
	4♠	4NT	5♣	5♦, 5M, 5NT, 6♣, 6♦	
		5♣	5♦	Over 5♦, teller only answers holding max # of keycards.	
	4NT	5♣	5♦		
		5♦	None		

This table summarizes RKB when the queen ask is skipped and asker makes a **SKA**.

Key Suit	RKB Ask	Teller's Bid	SKA Ask	Teller's Bid
M	4NT	5m or 5M	5NT	Signoff in six of the key suit without an outside king. "Either/Or" with exactly one or exactly two kings. 6NT with all three. With either/or, 5NT subs for the king of the SKA ask suit.
♣	4♦	4♥, 4♠, 4NT, 5♣	5♦	
♦	4♥	4♠, 4NT, 5♣, 5♦	5♥	
	4♠	4NT, 5♣, 5♦, 5♥	5♠	
	4NT	5♣, 5♦, 5♥, 5♠	5NT	

This last table summarizes RKB when the queen ask is skipped and asker makes a **3RC** in any non-queen-ask side suit.

Key Suit	RKB Ask	Teller's Bid	3RC Ask	Teller's Bid
M	4NT	5m or 5M	Any suit bid below 6 of agreed other than the SKA and queen ask suits.	6M signoff without 3RC. 7M with 3RC
♣	4♦	4♥, 4♠, 4NT, 5♣		6♣ without 3RC. 7♣ with 3RC
♦	4♥	4♠, 4NT, 5♣, 5♦		6♦ without 3RC. 7♦ with 3RC.
	4♠	4NT, 5♣, 5♦, 5♥		
	4NT	5♣, 5♦, 5♥, 5♠		

Option 3 – Kickbo and RKB

Overview:

1. When a **key (trump) suit has been agreed and there has been at least one cue bid below four of the agreed key suit** then we use **Kickbo**. RKB is never an option in this case.
2. When a **key suit has been agreed but neither partner has made a cue bid below four of the agreed key suit** then we cue bid only or use **RKB** to check for keycards. Kickbo is never an option in this case.
3. When **no key suit has been agreed** we use regular **Blackwood** unless **4NT** would be quantitative. In that case we use regular **Gerber**. Neither RKB nor Kickbo is an option if no agreed suit.

Kickbo

When a trump (or key) suit has been agreed and the auction is forcing to game, a bid in a non-trump (side) suit is a cue bid. I prefer the Italian style where cue bids below game show either an Ace, King, singleton or void of the bid suit. Actually, I prefer that the first cue bid not be a singleton or void but I'm not strict about it. And, for the record, a splinter bid is not a cue bid. Nor is a bid showing a limit raise or better a cue bid for slam bidding purposes. Both bids do set the key suit however. The first cue bid is made in the cheapest available side suit and shows extra values beyond what have been shown by that partner up to that point. Then, his partner's cue bids are cooperative and do not guarantee extras.

Kickbo is a hybrid of Kickback and Turbo – hence the name. Turbo is a method of showing keycard parity during a cue bidding sequence. Kickbo also shows keycard parity and applies when **both** of the following conditions are satisfied: **a key suit has been agreed and there has been at least one cue bid below four of the agreed key suit**. Then, a bid of the denomination **one above** four of the agreed trump suit (called the **Kickbo denomination**) tells partner that the teller has an even number of keycards; so, 0, 2, or 4. If the teller bypasses (bids above) the Kickbo denomination he shows an odd number of keycards; so, 1, 3 or 5 and has a control in the bid suit. If the Kickbo denomination is not **4NT**, then a bid of **4NT** shows an odd number of keycards and a control in the Kickbo denomination. Either partner can be the teller. Consider these auctions.

1♥ - 2♣; 2♥ - 2♣; 3♠ - 4♣; 4♥ - 5♦. In this auction responder has shown at least 15 HCP and at least 5 spades. Opener has shown 6+ hearts and agreed spades as trump. There have been two cue bids below **4♠**. So **5♦** is Kickbo and shows an odd number of keycards (opener can assume three) and a diamond control. Had responder bid **4NT** instead of **5♦** he would show an even number of keycards (opener assumes two on the auction).

1♥ - 4♣; 4♥ - 4NT. This is RKB. Hearts have been agreed implicitly via the splinter but there has been no cue bid below **4♥**.

1♦ - 2♣; 3♣ - 3♥; 3NT - 4♦. Clubs have been agreed. The 3♥ bid, initially assumed to be a notrump probe, must now be taken as a cue bid which was under four of the agreed suit. This makes 4♦ Kickbo showing an even number of keycards. It asks opener to cooperatively investigate slam. Had responder bid 4♣ instead of 4♦ then that would have shown an odd number of keycards and a spade control. And 4NT would show an odd number of keycards and a control in the Kickbo suit, diamonds in this case.

With Kickbo, the partner of the teller becomes captain for the rest of the auction. The captain adds his number of keycards to the teller's. Missing two keycards, the captain usually⁴ signs off in game at the five-level in the key suit. If the captain signs off in game, the teller bids on holding more than the expected number of keycards. Missing just one keycard, the captain will jump to slam or cue bid further if there is room. The trump Queen is now the important card from the captain's point of view. If the captain can account for all five keycards he can jump to the appropriate slam or bid on to investigate a grand. In any Kickbo grand slam investigation, a bid of the denomination one above five of the agreed trump suit denies possession of the trump Queen. If the denomination one above five of the agreed trump suit is bypassed it guarantees possession of the trump Queen (or extra length).

To summarize, suppose we have agreed on a key suit. If a cue bid has been made below the four level of our key suit we use **Kickbo**; otherwise, **RKB**. If no key suit has been agreed we use ordinary **Blackwood** or, in some specific auctions where 4NT would be quantitative, ordinary **Gerber**.

The cue bidding rules, when a key suit has been agreed, are summarized as follows.

1. The first cue bid shows extra values beyond what have been shown by that partner up to that point.
2. The only exception to (1) is a specific situation where the partner of the cue bidder is unlimited and the partnership has agreed, in advance, that a cue bid in that situation is mandatory. An example is: 1NT - 3♥; 4♣ - . Here responder is an unpassed hand, opener is implicitly agreeing hearts with 3 or 4 card support and showing a club control on the way to 4♥. Opener need not have extras. Responder needs extras to cue bid in return.
3. After the first cue bid, additional cue bids must be made as long as the level of the contract is not increased. This does not apply to the exception in (2). In the auction, 1NT - 3♥; 4♣ - 4♥, responder does not want to go past game but could have a diamond control. But in, 1NT - 3♥; 4♣ - 4♦, the 4♦ is a cue bid showing extras and slam interest.
4. After the first cue bid, cue bids that raise the level of the contract show extra values.
5. If the opponents double partner's cue bid: **XX** shows the Ace of that suit; an immediate cue bid by you says we don't have two fast losers in that suit; **Pass** shows doubt and asks partner to decide what to do.

⁴ Slam *could* be on a finesse for the trump King or a void *could* cover a missing Ace.

Option 4 – Kickback (KRKB)

Kickback is RKB where the asking bid is one above four of the agreed key suit. The four steps immediately after the asking bid are the usual RKB steps. The specific king ask is one full level above the asking bid while the queen ask is one step above the teller's 1st or 2nd step response.

The key suit must be agreed as outlined earlier for Kickback to apply. If no key suit is agreed then **4NT** is either quantitative or classic Blackwood (0, 1, 2, 3 responses).

If clubs is the key suit then **4♦** is RKB unless diamonds have been bid naturally. If diamonds is the key suit then **4♥** is RKB unless hearts have been bid naturally. If hearts are agreed then **4♠** is asking unless spades have been bid naturally. If spades are agreed then **4NT** is asking.

Rule: If either asker or teller has bid the asking suit naturally (indicated 5+ cards in the suit) and a second suit has been agreed then the ask is the next denomination above the normal ask. For example, suppose asker or teller has shown 5+ hearts and diamonds have been agreed. Then **4♠** is asking with key suit diamonds and **4♥** is to play.

With no key suit agreed, for **4NT** to be quantitative partner must have shown a balanced notrump hand with a defined point count range and there must have been a jump to **4NT**. There are two exceptions. If responder used Puppet Stayman then a jump to **4NT** showing 4=4 in the majors has priority. The other exception is when we are in the middle of a Relay Checkback auction. Then **4NT** over **3NT** is quantitative. With no jump, if neither Puppet Stayman nor Relay Checkback is involved, then **4NT** over **3NT** is always regular Blackwood (not quantitative).

If a key suit is agreed but **4NT** is not Kickback, then **4NT** is a cue-bid in the ask suit.

Example Hands: Slam Bidding with RKB

1. Bridge on the Edge, May 2, 2017

Opener	Responder	
♠ KQ853	♠ A742	
♥ A975	♥ 8	
♦ Q32	♦ AKJ6	
♣ Q	♣ J985	
1♠	2NT¹	1: Jacoby 2NT
3♣²	3♦³	2: Would accept a 12-14 raise
3NT⁴	4♦	3: Shortness ask
4♥	4NT	4: Club shortness
5♠⁵	6♠⁶	5: Two with spade queen
		6: Should have a play

2. Bridge on the Edge, May 2, 2017

Opener	Responder	
♠ AK842	♠ Q976	
♥ 72	♥ AK1054	
♦ AQ6	♦ KJ87	
♣ 543	♣	
1♠	2NT¹	1: Jacoby 2NT
3♣²	3NT³	2: Would accept a 12-14 raise
4♦	4♥	3: Club shortness
4NT	6♣⁴	4: Void plus odd # of keycards
6♠⁵	Pass	5: Too much to discover for grand

Defence

I can tell you two things about the game of bridge true beyond any shadow of doubt. Defending is the hardest part of the game and it gets the least attention from bridge writers. That is not to say that there are no good books on defence. For opening leads there are Ewen (Opening Leads, 1970) and Rosler/Rubens (Journalist Leads, 1988). Other books I have found useful include Bird (Defensive Signalling at Bridge, 2010), Kantar (Defensive Bridge Play Complete, 1974), Izdebski/Krzemien/Klinger (Deadly Defence, 2011), Woolsey (Modern Defensive Signalling in Contract Bridge, 1981) and Vinje (Defensive Play in Bridge, 1980).

Every card played by the defenders from the opening lead to their last card of the final trick carries a message. Most of the time, the message (or signal) is 1) **attitude**, 2) **count** or 3) **suit preference**. Each situation during the play has a default signal. The problem is that each situation has exceptions too. If the default, for example, is attitude then the bridge logic of the situation may dictate that count or suit preference should apply instead. Recognizing exceptions is part of being a good defender.

The defence begins with the opening lead. Choosing an opening lead consists of selecting a suit and then picking a card from the selected suit. Picking the suit is harder. More on this topic at the end of the section. But, assuming the suit has been selected, here are my preferences for the card chosen from the lucky suit.

Option 1 – Standard Leads (◀)

Standard Leads against a notrump contract.

Card Led	Shows	Comment
A	Something like AKJxx or AKQ10x	Asks for unblock of K, Q or J. Otherwise give count
K	AKx or KQx	Asks for attitude especially against gambling 3NT
Q	QJ10, QJ9 or KQ10	Asks for unblock of J. Otherwise, give attitude
J	10	Top of a sequence or interior sequence
10	9	Top of a sequence or interior sequence
High Spot	Top of nothing	Lead high from 2 or 3 small. If three play the middle card next. From 4 or 5 small lead top or second from top
Low Spot	Three to an honour or fourth best from a suit with an honour	Low spot lead guarantees an honour (or a singleton). The honour is usually A, K or Q. Rarely J or 10.

Standard Leads against a trump contract.

Card Led	Shows	Comment
A	AKx or A alone	Assume AKx to avoid ambiguity
K	KQJ or KQ10	Top of sequence or near-sequence or AK doubleton
Q	QJ10, QJ9	Top of sequence or near-sequence
J	10	Top of a sequence or interior sequence
10	9	Top of a sequence or interior sequence
High Spot	Usually a doubleton (or singleton). But, could be 3 rd best from KJ9x or bottom from K97.	Spot card leads are 3 rd best from an even number (4 or 6) and bottom from an odd number (3, 5 or 7). For 3 rd best the “rule of 12” applies. For 5 th best apply the “rule of 10”. Showing count is more important versus suit contracts where cashing the correct number of winners in the suit later may be crucial.
Low Spot	3 rd from even (4 or 6) or bottom from odd (or a singleton).	

Standard opening leads work reasonably well versus notrump. But, they have weaknesses against suit contracts. For starters, anytime you lead an ace without the king, partner will think you have the king and send the wrong message when he has the queen or a doubleton. Next, it is difficult to distinguish top of a sequence leads from interior sequence leads. Rusinow leads were the first attempt to improve things and then, in the mid-sixties, Journalist leads extended Rusinow. An improved scheme of Hybrid Leads appears at the end of this section.

When leading partner's suit, leads are standard. Ace denies the king. King shows AK or KQ or a doubleton. Queen shows the jack or a doubleton, jack shows the 10 or a doubleton. Otherwise lead top of nothing or low from an honour which could be the jack or 10 this time. There are exceptions here too. If declarer is known to be short in partner's suit, leading an honour from three or four through dummy could help partner or pin an important card in declarer's hand.

Against a slam or gambling 3NT we may lead an unsupported honour; in particular, the ace or king. As the leader's partner, you should not assume the leader has the usual honour sequence. Show attitude when holding the touching card.

Later Leads

Your leads later in the play are standard unless you are returning a suit partner has led. In returning partner's suit the card to lead depends on the number of cards you held originally. For example, consider four different holdings of K3, K73, K642, and K8654. Further, suppose you played the king on his first lead of the suit. Return the 3, 7, 2 and 5 respectively. With a doubleton there is no choice and with an original 3-card suit return the middle card. With four or more return original fourth best. In the last case, the original 5-card suit holding, you return the 5. There is an argument for returning the 8 to distinguish an odd from an even number originally.

There is one exception. When you are returning a suit you know or suspect that partner can trump then return a low card if you want him to return the lower ranking suit after he ruffs. Conversely, return a high card if you want the higher ranking suit returned. This is suit preference.

Defensive Signals

There are three principal signals. **Attitude** involves either encouraging or discouraging partner's lead or continuation of some suit. Giving **count** involves indicating either an even or odd number of cards in a suit. A **suit preference** signal is the play of a card which shows a preference for the higher ranking or lower ranking of two other suits. In every situation there is a **default signal**. It is often attitude. But, in many cases, the default signal will be overridden and another will apply. The exceptions need to be memorized or learned by experience.

First, my preferences for attitude and count are "upside-down." An abbreviation for upside down count and attitude is **udca**. Suit preference is normal; high for the higher ranking suit and low for the lower ranking suit. Upside-down attitude and count have huge technical advantages over normal when signalling from four-card suits. And, there is an advantage playing both together as opposed to, say, upside-down attitude with normal count which some pairs do. For signalling purposes, a spot card is any between 2-10 inclusive.

Upside-Down Attitude: "Low-like; High-hate." Playing the lowest card you hold in the suit encourages. Playing the highest spot card you can spare discourages.

Upside-down Count: Playing the lowest card in the suit shows an even number. You may, or may not, complete the count signal later by playing a higher spot card. Playing the highest spot card you can afford followed, possibly, by a lower card shows an odd number.

In these notes attitude or count always means upside down attitude or count even if the upside down part is unstated. And, the assumption is that you are not trying to win the trick or force a high card from declarer.

Defaults

- I. When partner leads a suit the default signal is **attitude**.
- II. When declarer leads a suit the default signal is **count**.
- III. When discarding, the default is **attitude**.

Exceptions in I.

Partner has led the Ace and the Queen is in dummy.

Assume a trump contract and partner has led the ace of a side-suit. He will usually want your attitude towards the lead. But, with the queen in dummy, he wants to know how many tricks are cashing in the suit and if you can get a ruff. Count has a higher priority.

Rule : When the Queen is in dummy give count. Always.

Dummy has winners in the suit led.

Suppose partner leads the ace which sets up the king and queen in dummy. Your signal is suit preference now. With shortness in dummy, attitude still applies. It may be important to tap dummy's trumps.

Partner leads and you cannot beat the dummy.

If it is clear that you do not hold an honour in the suit led then show count.

Against a Slam or Gambling 3NT.

Partner has led an ace against a "gambling 3NT." Declarer usually has a running minor but may also have an unstopped suit. If control of partner's suit appears in dummy he will want to switch. Give suit preference now. He wants to know where declarer's weakness is. Against a slam, be aware that partner may lead an ace without the king.

When in doubt.

When the default signal cannot logically apply, the question is: what does apply? Trust partner. If you need to know attitude, assume partner is signalling attitude. But if count or suit preference is more important assume you are getting that from partner. That's the only way defence can be successful.

At these times, the **guiding principle** of defensive signalling can be stated in two ways.

Assume that partner is giving you the signal you need.

Or, looking at the principle from the other side of the table,

work out what partner needs to know and give him that signal.

Declarer has led and you are playing second or fourth.

These are **count** situations by default. There are situations where the defence cannot succeed without the count. For example, if there is a long suit in dummy missing one or more honours (that partner could have) and dummy has no outside entry (or maybe just one outside entry) then give count so partner will know when to win his ace.

Experts disagree on whether count should routinely be given. The argument is that good declarers will take advantage. And, that is true. The rebuttal is that many declarers will neither notice nor trust the defenders' counts so you might as well give true count anyway. Or, vary your pattern of giving honest count at least when the true count is of no use to partner. My recommendation is to always give true count.

With an odd number, the rule is to play the highest spot card you can afford. You want to give the clearest count possible. But, you should be aware that playing the ten or nine from three to the ten or three to the nine could cost a trick. Play the second highest card if there is any danger.

The First Card Played in a Count Signal. What Does It Tell You?

A complete count signal is two cards played either low-high or high-low. The question is: what information can be reliably obtained from just the first card played in the pair? You can never be 100% sure from one card about partner's original parity, even or odd. But there are some strong inferences available. Specifically, suppose declarer has led from either dummy or hand and partner has played a spot card. First order of business is to count the number of spot cards that you **cannot see** that are **below** the one partner has just played.

After the trick is complete, if there are no missing spots below the one partner played then he played his lowest card and almost certainly started with an even number. It *is* possible that partner has played low from three because his other two cards were honours, he thinks that it is a suit preference situation or he wanted you on lead for some reason. But an even number is the most likely case.

If there is exactly one missing spot below the one played by partner then there are two possibilities. Partner could have three to an honour or three to the nine. If he wasn't trying to win the trick then he will play his middle card. The other possibility is that declarer has concealed the missing spot and partner has an even number. I think it is slightly more likely that partner holds three cards in the suit. But, some declarers are sneaky. Especially when they know your methods!

If there are two or more missing spots below that played by partner then it is highly likely that partner started with an odd number of cards in the suit.

Completing the Count Signal

The second card you play when completing the count signal can be suit preference. This could arise when declarer is running a suit to which you are following. After showing count with your first card, your next spot card played in the suit can be suit preference. For this to work you need to hold more than a low doubleton.

Here is another situation where completing the count can be suit preference.

<p>♠ A1053 ♥ J76 ♦ Q65 ♣ Q65</p>		<p>Both Vul</p>											
<p>♠ 84 ♥ KQ1082 ♦ KJ9 ♣ KJ9</p>		<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td colspan="2" style="text-align: center;">North</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">West</td><td style="text-align: center;">East</td></tr> <tr><td colspan="2" style="text-align: center;">South</td></tr> </table>	North		West	East	South		<p>♠ 76 ♥ 543 ♦ 872 ♣ A8732</p>	<p>South 1♠ 3♠</p>	<p>West 2♥ Pass</p>	<p>North 2♠ 4♠</p>	<p>East Pass All Pass</p>
North													
West	East												
South													
<p>♠ KQJ92 ♥ A9 ♦ A1043 ♣ 104</p>													

Partner makes the unfortunate lead of the king of hearts. Since you can't beat dummy, following exception #2 you show count with the five. Declarer draws two rounds of trump and leads a heart from his hand. Partner wins the queen and you play the heart three. Since partner knows that you had a choice of which heart to play, the three is clearly suit preference. Partner should switch to the club jack.

Suppose we change the hand slightly as follows.

	<p>♠ A1053 ♥ J76 ♦ Q65 ♣ Q65</p>		<p>Both Vul</p>										
<p>♠ 8 ♥ KQ10852 ♦ KJ9 ♣ KJ9</p>	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td colspan="2" style="text-align: center; padding: 2px;"><i>North</i></td></tr> <tr><td style="width: 50%; padding: 2px;"><i>West</i></td><td style="width: 50%; padding: 2px;"><i>East</i></td></tr> <tr><td colspan="2" style="text-align: center; padding: 2px;"><i>South</i></td></tr> </table>	<i>North</i>		<i>West</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>		<p>♠ 764 ♥ 43 ♦ 872 ♣ A8732</p>	<p>South 1♠ 3♠</p>	<p>West 2♥ Pass</p>	<p>North 2♠ 4♠</p>	<p>East Pass All Pass</p>	
<i>North</i>													
<i>West</i>	<i>East</i>												
<i>South</i>													
	<p>♠ KQJ92 ♥ A9 ♦ A1043 ♣ 104</p>												

Again partner leads the king of hearts. You show count as before with the heart three this time. Declarer draws trump and leads a heart from his hand. Partner wins the queen but, with no choice of heart to play, you are unable to show a preference. Partner is on a guess as to which minor to try. The only solutions, not totally satisfactory, are for your original three of hearts to be suit preference or to show suit preference with your trump plays.

Discarding

The default is **attitude** when discarding. There is no need for either Lavinthal or odd-even discards. These "dual message" signals only apply on your first discard anyway. Attitude applies on any discard. In most situations partner has led a suit and declarer is playing some other suit in which you become void. To show strength in a third suit you have two choices. You can discard your lowest spot-card in the third suit. If you can't afford to throw away a card from the suit you want partner to lead then you can discard a high card from the other suit.

There is an exception to attitude here too. Against a **suit contract**, suppose partner has led top of a sequence in a suit he has bid. Subsequently, if he discards in his suit, he is showing his current count in his suit using **standard remainder count**; not upside down. It may be important to know which tricks can be cashed when the defence obtains the lead. But, against a notrump contract attitude still applies. Standard remainder count is used by either partner in showing the remaining number of cards held in a suit previously played but in which count was not given.

Reverse Smith Echo (Optional)

Partner leads a suit against notrump. Declarer wins and starts playing a second suit. Each defender can signal their attitude toward the suit led by partner when following to declarer's suit. A low spot is encouraging and a high spot is discouraging; "low-like; high-hate."

I don't use Reverse Smith Echo since knowing count in declarer's suit is frequently more important.

Signals in the Trump Suit

Option 1 – Standard (◀).

The most common signal in the trump suit is to use a high-low echo to show three trumps **and** the ability to get a ruff in a side-suit. The high-low is given with the middle and low cards, reserving the top card.

Option 2 – The Distribution Signal⁵.

It is a mathematical fact that every bridge hand of 13 cards must contain either (i) one suit with an even number of cards and the other three suits all having an odd number or (ii) one suit with an odd number of cards and the other three suits all having an even number. For example, a 4-3-3-3 hand has one even, three odd and its **parity** is said to be **even**. A 4-4-3-2 hand has one odd, three even and **odd parity**. Voids count as even for this. The one even suit in an even parity hand or the one odd suit in an odd parity hand is called the **unique suit**. The Distribution Signal works as follows.

When defending against a suit contract: when declarer leads trump if a defender plays a high spot card it shows one even suit (and three odd). If a defender plays a low spot card it shows one odd and three even suits. **An opening trump lead from two or three small cards is the start of a high-low or low-high parity indicator.**

When defending against a notrump contract the signaling suit is the first suit initially led by declarer or dummy. If a defender plays a high spot card and later a low one it shows even parity. If a defender plays a low spot card and later a high one it shows odd parity.

This assumes the defender signalling has a second spot card to complete the high-low or low-high signal. And it assumes that a count signal is unnecessary. Count has priority over the distribution signal with a long suit in dummy, for example.

You will be unable to give the distribution signal every time. You may have to win the first or second trick. Or you may have only one spot card to play. But, *when you can signal distribution*, partner will know everyone's distribution as soon as the one even or one odd suit is identified. Declarer will know too so good declarers will take advantage. In the long run though, the distribution signal should help the defence more often.

For reasons involving playing in tempo, what is needed is a quick way to deduce declarer's unique suit and parity once we know partner's unique suit and parity. One method is concealed in the table below. But, it requires some memory work. Let **A** represent either odd or even parity and let **B** represent the parity opposite of **A**. After you receive partner's parity signal, the only possibilities for the three known parities among you, partner and dummy are **AAB** or **AAA**. With

⁵ Legal under the General Convention Chart of the ACBL.

declarer's parity added the only possibilities are **AABA**, **AABB**, **AAAA** or **AAAB**. Borrowing some poker terminology, **AABA** and **AAAB** are three-of-a-kind or a "set," **AABB** is two pair and **AAAA** is "quads." We use some other poker terms for the unique suit pattern. Four of the same suit is a **flush**. Four different suits is a **rainbow** and two of one suit and two of a different suit is **double suited**.

# of Unique Suits Known	Unique Suit Pattern	Parity Pattern
1	Flush	Set
2	Double Suited	Set
3	Rainbow	2 Pair or Quads

Table 1: Entries Include Declarer's Unique Suit and Parity

After getting partner's odd or even parity signal you next deduce his unique suit from the play. At that point you know how many unique suits are represented among you, partner and dummy. Then look at the table. Find the row corresponding to the number of known unique suits. Declarer's unique suit is given by the descriptor to the right in that row. The entry in the rightmost column of that same row gives declarer's parity.

For example, suppose partner shows even parity and you discover his unique suit is hearts. If your unique suit is clubs and dummy's is hearts then two suits are represented; hearts twice and clubs once. From the "2" row of the table, the entry in the middle (green) column shows that declarer's unique suit must be clubs because the unique suit pattern must be double suited. If your parity is even and dummy's is odd then, with partner's even parity which he signaled, declarer's parity must be even since the third (orange) column indicates that the four parities must form a set.

POST

Both defenders must count every single hand. They have to count **PO**ints, **S**uits and **T**ricks. The acronym is **POST**. This counting starts with estimates formed during the auction and early play and is refined as play continues. Hopefully you will have an exact count before it's too late to do something about it. Every time I get lazy with counting it seems to cost me.

Counting Points. This part is straightforward arithmetic. For example, suppose that, during the auction, declarer opened a 15-17 notrump and the final contract was **3NT**. Say you have 8 HCP and when dummy comes down it has 9 HCP. This means partner has 6-8 HCP (unless declarer was being untruthful). Many players will work out declarer's range but fail to get specific about partner's. During the play you should keep track of declarer's known points and also your partner's.

Counting Suits. During the auction and early play, you estimate and gradually revise your estimate of declarer's and partner's distributions. There are many inferences you can draw from

bids made or not made. If declarer opened in a major and ended in game in that suit you should assume he has five even if they play four-card majors. Or maybe he showed (or failed to show) a four-card major in response to Stayman. It helps to know a bit about their methods. But, for example, if you figure declarer might be 5-3-3-2, ask yourself what partner's shape is if you are correct. And don't get wedded to one particular distribution. Be prepared to revise your estimate if declarer turns up with a singleton in a side suit.

Here is an exercise to improve your distribution estimation technique and keep you focused on the task. For no good reason it's called the **3-2-1 Exercise**. During the time interval beginning with the auction and ending when dummy comes down, give declarer **three** possible distributions he could have consistent with what you have heard and seen. Don't get too fixated on the most likely of the three! Within the first three tricks, try to reduce declarer's possible distributions to **two**. Then, during the next two tricks, try to get declarer's exact distribution. It won't always be possible but you have to be trying to work it out before it's too late.

Counting Tricks. While the opening lead is on the table or even before that you should ask yourself where your defensive tricks and declarer's offensive tricks are coming from. At IMPs you need a plan to capture enough tricks to beat the contract. At matchpoints you would also like to set the contract but you need a plan that avoids the loss of any tricks that should be coming your way.

Option 2 – Hybrid Leads

Hybrid opening leads are a combination of Standard and Rusinow leads.

Hybrid Leads against a notrump contract.

Card Led	Shows	Comment
A	Something like AKJxx or AKQ10x	Asks for unblock of K, Q or J. Otherwise give count
K	AK or KQ	Asks for attitude especially against gambling 3NT
Q	QJ10, QJ9 or KQ10	Asks for unblock of J. Otherwise, give attitude
J	10 and no higher	Denies an interior sequence
10	J or 9 and one of A,K,Q (but not QJ10).	Lead 10 from interior sequences
9	10 or top of nothing	Denies an interior sequence. Otherwise, could be ambiguous.
High Spot	Top of nothing	Lead high from 2 or 3 small. Avoid leading the 9 from 9xx. If three play the middle card next. From 4 or 5 small lead top or second from top
Low Spot	Three to an honour or fourth best from a suit with an honour	Low spot lead guarantees an honour (or a singleton). The honour is usually A, K or Q. Rarely J or 10.

Hybrid leads against a trump contract.

Card Led	Shows	Comment
A		Denies the K unless AK doubleton
K	A	Rusinow
Q	K	Rusinow
J	Q	Rusinow
10	J10x(x), KJ10	Rusinow
9	109x(x), K109, Q109	Rusinow
High Spot	Usually a doubleton (or singleton). But, could be 3 rd best from KJ9x or bottom from K97.	Spot card leads are 3 rd best from an even number (4 or 6) and bottom from an odd number (3, 5 or 7). For 3 rd best the “rule of 12” applies. For 5 th best apply the “rule of 10”. Showing count is more important versus suit contracts where cashing the correct number of winners in the suit later may be crucial.
Low Spot	3 rd from even (4 or 6) or bottom from odd (or a singleton).	

Selecting the Suit for the Opening Lead

Possession of the opening lead is a big advantage. The defence gets the first opportunity to try to set up tricks. It also sends a message on whether the leader wants to conduct an active or passive defence. Active defences include looking for ruffs, preventing ruffs, setting up high card winners, promoting intermediate cards into winners, forcing declarer to ruff in the long hand and setting up length winners. A passive defence might mean just trying to avoid giving tricks to declarer that he could not win on his own. That is, let declarer do all the work.

In Kantar’s 1974 book, *Defensive Bridge Play Complete* (Wilshire), the first two chapters list factors to consider when selecting a suit to lead versus a suit or a notrump contract. Toward the end of the book, Kantar identifies some dummy types that may guide the opening leader when the opponents are playing a trump contract. Assume that dummy has shown trump support during the auction and that partner has not overcalled. Otherwise, lead his suit. The dummy types to listen for and identify during the auction include the following.

1. Dummy is likely to be balanced.
2. Dummy has a ruffing value but nothing else.
3. Dummy is likely to have a long side suit.
4. Declarer has a hidden two-suiter.

Type 1 suggests a passive defence. Select an opening lead in a suit that should not cost a trick. Top of a sequence or even a trump lead could qualify. For Type 2 a trump lead or switch may be right. With Type 3 be passive if the long suit is unusable to declarer. You may have control, for example. Otherwise, you will need to be active to get your tricks before they disappear on the long suit in dummy. With Type 4, a more active or forcing defence could prevail.

Appendix 1: Selected Tables

Some of the tables dotted throughout the Notes are repeated here for easier reference.

1. Major Suit Raises

(i) Partner opens **1M** and RHO passes.

Dummy Points Support Length	3-5	6-7(8)	(8)9-11	12-14	15+
3 or 4-3-3-3	Pass	1NT	2M	1♠, 2♦, 2♥, 3♣	2♣
4+	3M	3M-1	1♠ - 3♦ or 1♥ - 2♠	2NT	2NT or Splinter

Table: Major Suit Raise Structure

(ii) Partner opens **1M** and RHO doubles.

Dummy Points Support Length	3-5	6-8	9-11	12-14	15+
3 or 4-3-3-3	Pass	Pass or 2M	2M	XX then support	XX then support
4+	3M	1♠ - 3♥ or 1♥ - 3♦	1♠ - 3♦ or 1♥ - 2♠	2NT	2NT or Splinter

(iii) Partner opens **1M** and RHO overcalls.

Dummy Points Support Length	6-8	9-11	12-14	15+
3 or 4-3-3-3	Pass or 2M	Single raise or transfer to a new suit then support	Transfer to a new suit then support	Transfer cue-bid then support
4+	Jump to 3M	2M-1 if available; otherwise 2M or 3M	Transfer to their suit then support	Transfer to their suit then cue

(iv) LHO opens **1m**, partner overcalls **1M** and RHO passes or makes a negative double.

Dummy Points Support Length	6-8	9-11	12-14	15+
3 or 4-3-3-3	Pass or 2M	2M	Transfer to a new suit then support	Transfer cue-bid then support
4+	3M	2M-1	Transfer to their suit then support	Transfer cue-bid then cue

(v) LHO opens **1m**, partner overcalls **1M** and RHO bids **1NT** or higher.

Support Length \ Dummy Points	6-8	9-11	12-14	15+
3 or 4-3-3-3	Pass or 2M	2M	Transfer to a new suit then support	Transfer cue-bid then support
4+	Jump raise - 3M	2M-1	Transfer to their suit then support	Transfer cue-bid then cue

2. Standard Leads against a notrump contract.

Card Led	Shows	Comment
A	Something like AKJxx or AKQ10x	Asks for unblock of K, Q or J. Otherwise give count
K	AKx or KQx	Asks for attitude especially against gambling 3NT
Q	QJ10, QJ9 or KQ10	Asks for unblock of J. Otherwise, give attitude
J	10	Top of a sequence or interior sequence
10	9	Top of a sequence or interior sequence
High Spot	Top of nothing	Lead high from 2 or 3 small. If three play the middle card next. From 4 or 5 small lead top or second from top
Low Spot	Three to an honour or fourth best from a suit with an honour	Low spot lead guarantees an honour (or a singleton). The honour is usually A, K or Q. Rarely J or 10.

3. Standard Leads against a trump contract.

Card Led	Shows	Comment
A	AKx or A alone	Assume AKx to avoid ambiguity
K	KQJ or KQ10	Top of sequence or near-sequence or AK doubleton
Q	QJ10, QJ9	Top of sequence or near-sequence
J	10	Top of a sequence or interior sequence
10	9	Top of a sequence or interior sequence
High Spot	Usually a doubleton (or singleton). But, could be 3 rd best from KJ9x or bottom from K97.	Spot card leads are 3 rd best from an even number (4 or 6) and bottom from an odd number (3, 5 or 7). For 3 rd best the "rule of 12" applies. For 5 th best apply the "rule of 10". Showing count is more important versus suit contracts where cashing the correct number of winners in the suit later may be crucial.
Low Spot	3 rd from even (4 or 6) or bottom from odd (or a singleton).	

Appendix 2: SOS Auction Index

O1	R1	Description
1♣		3+ card suit. 11+ HCP unbalanced, 12+ balanced.
	1♦	Natural, 4+ card suit. May bypass diamonds to show a major with weakish hands.
	1♥/1♠	Natural, 4+ card suit.
	1NT	8-10 HCP, non-forcing, denies a 4-card major.
	2♣	Raise with 5+ card support and 6-10 HCP.
	2♦/2♥/2♠	Game Force with 5+ card suit. 16+ HCP.
	2NT	Game Force with 13-15 HCP.
	3♣	Limit. 11-12 HCP (not 10).
1♦		4+ card suit or exactly 4=4=3=2 distribution. 11+ HCP unbalanced, 12+ balanced.
	1♥/1♠	Natural, 4+ card suit.
	1NT	6-10 HCP, not forcing, denies a 4-card major.
	2♣	11+ HCP, 4+ card suit. Forcing to 2NT.
	2♦	Raise with 4+ card support and 6-10 HCP.
	2♥/2♠	Game Force with 5+ card suit. 16+ HCP.
	2NT	Game Force with 13-15 HCP.
	3♦	Limit. 11-12 HCP (not 10).
1♥		5+ hearts, 10+ HCP.
	1♠	4+ spades, 6+ HCP. One round force.
	1NT	6-11 HCP. Not forcing. May have 3-card heart support with 6-7 support points.
	2♣	Artificial game force, 15+ HCP, at most 3 hearts.
	2♦	3+ diamonds, 12-14 HCP, one-round force. May have 3 hearts or longer clubs with, for example, 3=2=3=5.
	2♥	[raise] 8-11 support points, 3-card support exactly. 3=4=3=3 counts as 3-card support.
	2♠	Constructive raise. 9-11 support points, 4+ card support. " 3M-2 " raise.
	2NT	Jacoby. 4+ card support. Either a 12-14 point limit raise, a 15-17 forcing raise or 18+ with slam interest.
	3♣	6+ clubs, 12-14 HCP, one round force. May have 3 hearts.
	3♦	" 3M-1 " raise. 6-8 support points and 4-card heart support.
	3♥	Weak raise. 3-5 support points with 4+ card support.
	3♠/4♣/4♦	Splinter raise. 15-17 support points.
	3NT	15-17 HCP, balanced.
	4♥	To play. Weak or tactical.
1♠		5+ spades, 10+ HCP. Responses: 2♥ shows 12-14 HCP and is a one-round force; 3♦ is the constructive (3M-2) 4-card raise and 3♥ is 3M-1 . Otherwise as in the 1♥ opening adjusted for spades. 4♥/4♠ are splinters over 1♠.
1NT		15-17 HCP, balanced or semi-balanced. 4-3-3-3, 4-4-3-2, any 5-3-3-2 or 2-2=5-4 with 5-4 in the minors. TAPS by responder.
2♣		Artificial and forcing. A 2♦ response is negative or waiting.
2♦		Modified Roman. Any 4-4-4-1 or 4-4-5-0 with a 5-card minor and 17+ HCP.
2♥/2♠		Weak: 6-9 HCP, usually a 6-card suit, 2NT asks for a feature.
2NT		20-21 HCP, balanced or semi-balanced. Includes 5-3-3-2 with any 5-card suit and 2=2=5-4 hands with 5-4 in the minors.
3m/3M		Rule of two and three more or less. 7-card suit expected.
3NT		Pre-empt with an unspecified 8-card minor. Not forcing. Club responses are pass-or-correct.
4♣/4♦		Namyats. A strong pre-empt to 4♥/4♠ respectively.
4♥/4♠		Rule of two and three. 8-card suit expected. Weaker than Namyats.

O1	R1	O2	R2	O3	R3	Description
1♣	3+ card suit.	11+ HCP unbalanced, 12+ balanced.				
	1♦	Natural, 4+ card suit.				
		1♥/1♠/1NT	1M shows 4+ cards. At least as many clubs as the major.			
			1♠	One round force. 4 th suit forcing.		
			1NT	To play		
			2♣	XYZ. Opener bids 2♦. Responder can Pass or invite.		
				2♦	Forced.	
				Pass	Responder wants to play in ♦s.	
				2♥/2♠	Support of opener's major shows a 4-card limit raise with 11-12 HCP.	
				2NT	Double Relay. A puppet to 3♣. Responder may want to play in clubs.	
				3♣	5-card club support and 11-12 HCP. Longer clubs than diamonds.	
				3♦	Good 6-card suit and 11-12 HCP	
			2♦	XYZ. Artificial Game Force.		
				2♥/2♠	A 4-card suit that could not be shown earlier.	
				NT	3NT is weaker than 2NT.	
				3♣	5-card suit.	
				3♦	3-card support.	
		2♣	6+ card suit.			
		2♦	Raise with 4-card support.			
		2♥/2♠	Natural Jump Shift. Game Force.			
		2NT	18-19 HCP.			
		3♣/3♦	Good suit or good raise. 15-17 HCP. Non-forcing.			
		3♥/3♠	Splinter in support of diamonds.			
		3NT	To play. Good hand and a source of tricks.			
	1♥/1♠	Natural, 4+ card suit. May bypass diamonds to show a major with weak hands.				
		1♠/1NT	1♠ shows 4+ cards. At least as many clubs as spades.			
			1NT	To play		
			2♣	XYZ. Opener bids 2♦. Responder can Pass or invite.		
				2♦	Forced.	
				Pass	Responder wants to play in ♦s.	
				2♥/2♠	Support of opener's major shows a 4-card limit raise with 11-12 HCP.	
				2NT	Double Relay. A puppet to 3♣. Responder may want to play in clubs.	
				3♣	5-card club support and 11-12 HCP. Longer clubs than M.	
				3♦	5+ diamonds and 11-12 HCP. Longer diamonds than M.	
			2♦	XYZ. Artificial Game Force.		
				2♥/2♠	A 4-card suit that could not be shown earlier.	

O1	R1	O2	R2	O3	R3	Description
1♣	1♥/1♠	1♠/1NT	2♦	NT		3NT is weaker than 2NT.
				3♣		5-card suit.
				3♦		Stopper for NT.
		2♣		6+ card suit.		
		2♦		Normal reverse.		
		2♥/2♠		[Raise] Shows 4-card support.		
		2NT		18-19 HCP.		
		3♣		Good suit. 15-17 HCP. Non-forcing.		
		3♥/3♠		[Double Raise] Shows 4-card support and 15-17.		
		3NT		To play. Good hand and a source of tricks.		
		1NT		8-10 HCP.		
		2♣		Standard raise with 4-card support.		
		2♦/2♥/2♠		Normal Jump Shift. Game Force. 16+ HCP.		
		2NT/3NT		13-15 HCP/16-17 HCP. Both deny a major. Game Force.		
		3♠/3M		Splinter for clubs.		

O1	R1	O2	R2	O3	R3	Description		
1♦		3+ card suit only if 4=4=3=2. Otherwise 4+. 11+ HCP unbalanced, 12+ balanced.						
	1♥/1♠	Natural, 4+ card suit. 6+ HCP.						
		1♠/1NT	1♠ shows 4+ cards. At least as many diamonds as spades.					
			1NT	To play				
			2♣	XYZ. Opener bids 2♦. Responder can Pass or invite.				
				2♦	Forced.			
			Pass		Responder wants to play in ♦s.			
			2♥/2♠		2♥/2♠ rebid shows a 5+ card suit. New suit 2♥ shows 5+ spades and 4+ hearts. 11-12 HCP.			
			2NT		Puppet to 3♣. Responder may want to play there.			
			3♣		5+ diamonds and 11-12 HCP. Longer diamonds than M.			
			3♦		5-card diamond support and 11-12 HCP. Longer diamonds than M.			
			2♦	XYZ. Artificial Game Force.				
		2♥/2♠		A 4-card suit that could not be shown earlier.				
		NT		3NT is weaker than 2NT.				
		3♣		Stopper for NT.				
		3♦		5-card suit.				
		2♣	4+ card suit.					
		2♦	6+ card suit.					
		2♥/2♠	[Raise] Shows 4-card support.					
		2NT	18-19 HCP.					
		3♣	Jump Shift. Natural. Game Force.					
		3♥/3♠	[Double Raise] Shows 4-card support and 15-17.					
3NT	To play. Good hand and a source of tricks.							
1NT	6-10 HCP.							

O1	R1	O2	R2	O3	R3	Description
1♦	2♣	Standard. 11+ HCP. Forcing to 2NT.				
	2♦	Min raise. 4+ card support.				
	2♥/2♠	Normal Jump Shift. Game Force. 16+ HCP.				
	2NT/3NT	13-15 HCP/16-17 HCP. Both deny a major. Game Force.				
	3♣	Normal Jump Shift. Game Force. 16+ HCP.				

O1	R1	O2	R2	O3	R3	Description
1♥/1♠	10+ HCP and a 5+ card suit. But a 5-3-3-2 hand with only 10 HCP may be passed.					
	1♠	1♠ is a one round force showing 4+ spades and 6-14 HCP. 1NT shows 6-11 HCP and is not forcing. Opener's 2♣ rebid to either response is Gazzilli.				
	1NT					
		1NT	To play. May be weak.			
			2♣	XYZ. Opener bids 2♦. Responder can pass or invite.		
				2♦	Forced.	
					Pass	Responder wants to play in ♦s.
					2♥	Shows a 12-14 point limit raise with exactly 3 hearts.
					2♠	Shows 12-14 HCP with 5 spades.
					2NT	12-13 HCP with a doubleton honour in hearts. A direct 2NT is similar with two small hearts.
			2♦	XYZ. Game Force.		
				2♠	3-card spade support.	
				NT	3NT is weaker than 2NT.	
		2♣	Gazzilli. Either 15+ HCP without 6+ cards in M or 10-14 with clubs.			
			2♦	Artificial. Shows 10+ HCP and is game forcing if opener has any 15+ HCP hand.		
			2♥	6-9 HCP. If M = hearts then it shows a doubleton. If M = spades it shows 5+ hearts.		
			2♠	6-9 HCP. If M = spades then it shows a doubleton. If M = hearts it shows 5+ spades.		
			2NT	6-9 HCP, support for either minor (4-4, 3-5, 4-5, 5-5).		
			3m	6-9 HCP. 6+ card suit.		
			2♦	4+ card suit. Not forcing.		
			2♥	If 1♠ was opened then a 4+ card suit. Not forcing.		
			2M	A repeat bid of 2M shows 6+ cards in M and 10-14 HCP.		
			3m	Longer minor. Canapé.		
		2♣	Artificial game force, 15+ HCP. Shows a good suit (which may or may not be clubs), slam interest with a big balanced hand or a 3-card fit for M.			
			2♦	Catch-all, nothing else to say.		
			2♥	[new suit] natural, 4+ card suit.		
			2♥/2♠	[repeat of suit opened] 6+ cards. 1 st priority.		
			2♠	[new suit] natural, 4+ cards, does not promise extra values.		
			2NT	Natural, non-minimum, stoppers.		
			3♣/3♦	Decent 4+ card suit.		
		2♦	12-14 HCP, 3+ diamonds, one round force, may have longer clubs (2=4=3=4 over 1♠ or 3=2=3=5 over 1♥).			
			2♥/2♠	[repeat of major] 5-card suit exactly. 10-12 HCP. Not forcing.		

O1	R1	O2	R2	O3	R3	Description	
1♥/1♠	2♦	2NT	6+ cards in M.				
		3m	Natural. 4+ cards in suit.				
		3NT	13-14 HCP. To play.				
	2♥	[Over 1♠] 12-14 HCP, 5+ card suit, at most a doubleton spade, 1 round force.					
		2♠	Rebidding M shows a 5-card suit exactly. 10-12 HCP. Not forcing.				
		2NT	6+ cards in M.				
		3NT	13-14 HCP and exactly 2 hearts.				
	2♥/2♠	[raise] 8-11 support points with exactly 3-card support. Lead directing if minimum.					
	2♠	[over 1♥] Constructive raise. 4-card support and 9-11 support points.					
	2NT	Jacoby 2NT . 4+ card support. Either a 12-14 point limit raise, a 15-17 forcing raise or 18+ with slam interest.					
		3♣	Opener would accept a limit raise.				
			3♦	Asks opener for shortness. Then opener's 3NT/4♣/4♦ show shortness in ♣/♦/oM respectively. With no shortness: 3M shows 5-3-3-2, 3oM shows 5-4-2-2, 4M shows 6-3-2-2 or 7-2-2-2. 3NT over 3oM asks for the 4-card suit.			
			3NT/4m	Shows shortness in next suit.			
			4M	[raise] To play.			
		3♦	Opener would not accept a limit raise.				
			3oM	Asks for shortness. Then 3NT/4m show shortness in next suit. Opener bids 3M or 4M with no shortness.			
			3M	To play with the limit raise.			
			3NT/4m	Shows shortness in oM and m respectively.			
			4M	[raise] To play.			
		3oM/4m	Opener has 10+ cards in the two suits. Needs fillers. Denies two small in either side suit.				
		3♣	6+ clubs, 12-14 HCP, one round force. May have 3 hearts.				
		3♦	[Over 1♠]: Constructive raise. 9-11 support points, 4-card support for spades.				
	3♦	[Over 1♥]: 3M-1 raise. 6-8 support points, 4-card support for hearts.					
3♥	[Over 1♠]: 3M-1 raise. 6-8 support points, 4-card support for spades.						
3♥	[Over 1♥]: Weak raise. 3-5 support points, 4+ card support for hearts.						
3♠	[Over 1♠]: Weak raise. 3-5 support points, 4+ card support for spades. [Over 1♥]: splinter, 15-17.						
4m	Splinter, 15-17 support points.						
4M	[raise]: To play. Weak, strong or tactical. But 4♥ over 1♠ is a splinter.						

O1	R1	O2	R2	O3	R3	Description	
1NT	15-17 HCP. Balanced or 5-3-3-2 or 2-2=5-4.						
	2♣	Puppet Stayman. Promises invitational strength or better.					
	2♦	2♥	Shows a 4-card major or 3 spades (3=2 or 3=3, majors).				
		2♥	Responder has 4 spades (without 4 hearts) or a balanced raise to 2NT or 3NT. Opener bids 2♠ with four or 2NT/3NT otherwise.				
		2♠	Shows 4 hearts but not 4 spades.				
		2NT	4=4 majors. Invitational.				
		3♦	5=4 or 5=5 in the majors. Opener picks a contract.				
		3NT	4=4 majors. Game force.				
		4NT	4=4 majors. Invites slam.				
		5NT	4=4 majors. Opener picks a slam.				
		2♥	Shows 2=2 or 2=3 in the majors.				
			2♠	Shows 5=5 majors, forcing to 2NT.			
		2NT/3NT	Invitational/To play.				
	2♠	Shows 5 spades. Responder invites with 2NT, 3♣ or bids game with 3NT, 4♠.					
	2NT	Shows 5 hearts. Now, 3♦ is an invitational or better transfer to hearts.					
	2♦	Transfer to hearts. 5+ card suit. Any strength.					
	2♥						
		Pass	Weak hand with 5+ hearts.				
		2♠	Shows 5 hearts and fewer than 4 spades. Forcing to 2NT.				
		2NT	4=5 majors. Invitational.				
		3NT	4=5 majors. Game force.				
	2♥	Transfer to spades. 5+ card suit. Any strength.					
	2♠						
		Pass	Weak hand with 5+ spades.				
		2NT	Invitational.				
		3m	Natural. Game force.				
		Games	To play.				
	2♠	Either a transfer to clubs (any strength) or an invitational hand with diamonds.					
	2NT	Opener would not accept an invite in clubs.					
		3♣	To play. Weak.				
		3♦	Invitational with diamonds.				
		3M	Shortness in M, confirms clubs, game forcing.				
		3NT	To play. Confirms clubs.				
	3♣	Opener would accept an invite in clubs.					
		Pass	Weak with clubs.				
		3♦	Invitational with diamonds.				
		3M	Shortness in M, confirms clubs, game forcing.				
		3NT	To play. Confirms clubs.				
	2NT	Standard invitational raise.					
	3♣	Weak or game forcing transfer to diamonds. Opener accepts transfer. Then, responder's Pass, 3M and 3NT as above but confirming diamonds.					
	3♦	5=5 minors. Game force.					

O1	R1	O2	R2	O3	R3	Description
1NT	3M	3♥ is 3=1=5=4 or 3=1=4=5. 3♠ shows 1=3=5=4 or 1=3=4=5. Game force.				
	3NT	To play.				
	4♣	Regular Gerber.				

O1	R1	O2	R2	O3	R3	Description	
2♣	Strong and artificial. "Almost" a game force.						
	2♦	Negative or waiting.					
		2♥	Kokish. Either 24+ or real hearts. Responder bids 2♠.				
			2♠	Forced.			
			2NT	24-25 HCP. Use 2NT responses.			
			3m	5+ hearts and 4+ cards in m. Forcing.			
			3♥	6+ hearts. Forcing.			
			3♠	5=6. Forcing.			
			3NT	28+. Pass, transfer or 4♣ Baron.			
	2♠	5+ card suit. Forcing one round.					
		2NT	Mark time waiting bid. Game Force. May have clubs.				
		3♣	Second negative. 0-5 HCP.				
		3♦/3♥	New suit is natural. Game Force. Maybe no support for M.				
		3♠/4♠	[Raise] 4♠ is to play. 3♠ is a slam try.				
		4m	Splinter raise.				
	2NT	22-23. Use 2NT response structure.					
	3♣/3♦	Natural, 6+ or good 5-card suit. One round force. 3♦ is a second negative to 3♣ and 3NT to 3♦.					
	3♥/3♠	Sets the suit and asks for outside aces.					
		3NT	No outside ace but at least one outside king.				
		Min suit bid	"Either/Or." Shows either the ace of the bid suit or both aces of the other two outside suits.				
		4M	No outside ace or outside king.				
	3NT	26-27 HCP. Pass, transfer or 4♣ Baron.					
	2♥/2♠	5+ card suit plus an outside ace or king. Game force.					
	2NT	10-12 HCP. 3NT shows 13+.					
	3♠/3♦	5+ card suit plus an outside ace or king. Game force.					
	3♥/3♠	Very weak 7+ card suit. 0-5 HCP.					

O1	R1	O2	R2	O3	R3	Description	
2♦	Modified Roman. Shows any 4-4-4-1 or 4-4-5-0 with a 5-card minor. 17+ HCP.						
	2♥	Game Force. Asks for shortness and range.					
		2♠	Shows shortness in a major and 17-19 HCP.				
			2NT	Asks for major shortness.			
			3♣	Short in hearts.			
			3♦	Short in spades.			
	2NT	Club shortness and 17-19.					
	3♣	Diamond shortness and 17-19.					
	3♦	Heart shortness and 20+ HCP.					
	3♥	Spade shortness and 20+ HCP.					

O1	R1	O2	R2	O3	R3	Description
2♦	2♥	3♠	Club shortness and 20+ HCP.			
		3NT	Diamond shortness and 20+ HCP.			
	2♣	Shows a preference for that suit and a very weak hand of 0-5 HCP. 2NT shows a preference for hearts. If opener has hearts he converts 2NT to 3♥. Otherwise, opener can pass, bid game or bid up the line if responder has shown a preference for his short suit.				
	2NT					
	3♣					
3♦						

O1	R1	O2	R2	O3	R3	Description	
2NT	20-21 HCP. Balanced or 5-3-3-2 or 2-2=5-4.						
	3♣	Puppet Stayman. Game forcing.					
	3♦	3♦	Shows a 4-card major or 3 spades (3=2 or 3=3, majors).				
		3♥	Shows 4 spades (without 4 hearts) or a balanced raise to 3NT. Opener bids 3♣ with four or 3NT otherwise.				
		3♠	Shows 4 hearts but not 4 spades.				
		3NT	4=4 majors.				
		4♣	Regular Gerber.				
		4♦	5=4 or 5=5 in the majors. Opener picks a contract.				
		4NT	4=4 majors. Invites slam.				
		5NT	4=4 majors. Opener picks a slam.				
		3♥	Shows 2=2 or 2=3 in the majors.				
		3♠	3♠	Shows 5=5 majors. Opener picks a contract.			
	3NT		To play.				
	3♣	Shows 5 spades. Responder bids 3NT or 4♠.					
	3NT	Shows 5 hearts. Now, responder's 4♦ is a transfer to hearts.					
	3♦	Transfer to hearts. 5+ card suit. Any strength.					
	3♥	3♥	Opener normally accepts the transfer. But, with a doubleton heart and 5 spades, opener can bid 3♠ here in case responder is 3=5 in the majors. 4m is a superaccept of hearts.				
		Pass	Very weak.				
		3♠	Shows 5 hearts and fewer than 4 spades. Forcing to 3NT.				
		3NT	4=5 majors. Opener places the contract.				
		4m	Natural. Game force.				
	4♥	To play.					
	3♥	Transfer to spades. 5+ card suit. Any strength.					
	3♠	3♠	Opener normally accepts. 4m is a superaccept.				
		Pass	Very weak.				
		4m	Natural. Game force.				
		Games	To play.				
	3NT	This shows 2 spades and 5 hearts in case responder is 5=3.					
3♣	Relay to 3NT. Shows 5-4 either way in the minors or a 6+ card minor. Slam try.						
	3NT	Forced relay.					
	4♣	5=4 minors.					
		4♦	RKB for diamonds				
	4NT	To play.					

O1	R1	O2	R2	O3	R3	Description
2NT	3♣	3NT	4♦	4=5 in minors. Then, opener's 4♥ is RKB for clubs and 4NT is to play.		
			4♥	6+ card club suit. Then, 4♠ is RKB for clubs and 4NT is to play.		
			4♠	6+ card diamond suit. Then, 5♣ is RKB for diamonds and 4NT is to play.		
	3NT	To play.				
	4♣	Regular Gerber.				
	4♦	5=5 minors. Game force. Then, opener's 4♥ is RKB for clubs, 4♠ is RKB for diamonds and 4NT is to play.				
	5m	Hope we can make this!				

Ripcord and Interference after a One Notrump Opening

O1	I1	R1	A1	O2	I2	R2	A2	Description
1NT	X	Could be a penalty double or conventional. Same responses. Ripcord kicks in now.						
		Pass	If Advancer passes then opener must keep the auction alive unless he is 4-3-3-3.					
			Pass	Advancer passes.				
			Pass	Any 4-3-3-3.				
			XX	Any 4-4-3-2.				
	2m	5-card minor.						
	XX	Transfer to clubs.						
	2♣	Transfer to diamonds.						
	2♦	Transfer to hearts.						
2♥	Transfer to spades.							
1NT	Pass	Pass	X	Pass	Pass			
						XX	Exactly 3 clubs. Otherwise, bid 4-card suits up the line.	
1NT	2m/2M	Natural Overcall.						
		2♦/2M	To play.					
		2NT	lebensohl (except over 2♣). Opener relays to 3♣. Cue and 3NT follow ups show stoppers. 2NT invitational over 2♣.					
		3m/3M	Transfer lebensohl.					
		Cue	Stayman. No stopper. Game force.					
		3NT	To play. No stopper.					
1NT	Pass	Pass	2m/2M	Pass	Pass			
						2♦/2M	To play.	
						2NT	lebensohl. Opener bids 3♣.	
1NT	2m/2M	X	Penalty.					
1NT	2m/2M	Pass	Pass	X	Takeout. But opener is not forced to reopen.			

Interference after a One of a Minor Opening

O1	I1	R1	A1	O2	I2	R2	A2	Description
1♣	X	Takeout or conventional X. Same responses.						
		Pass	Weak or no good bid.					
		XX	4+ diamonds and 6+ HCP.					
		1♦	4 or 5 hearts. 6+ HCP.					
		1♥	4 or 5 spades, 6+ HCP.					
		1♠	Denies any 4+ card suit except clubs, 6-11 HCP but unsuitable for 1NT, invites a 1NT rebid by opener.					
		1NT	9-11 HCP.					
		2♣	Club raise, 6-10 points.					
		2♦	6+ hearts.					
		2♥	6+ spades.					
		2♠	11-12 HCP limit raise in clubs.					
		2NT	12+ HCP, GF.					
		3♣	Pre-emptive.					
1♦	X	Takeout or conventional X. Same responses.						
		Pass	Weak or no good bid.					
		XX	Transfer. Shows 4 or 5 hearts and 6+ HCP.					
		1♥	Transfer. Shows 4 or 5 spades, 6+ HCP.					
		1♠	Denies a 4+ card major, shows clubs plus diamond tolerance, 6-11 HCP but unsuitable for 1NT, invites a 1NT rebid by opener.					
		1NT	9-11 HCP.					
		2♣	Diamond raise, 6-10 points.					
		2♦	6+ hearts.					
		2♥	6+ spades.					
		2♠	11-12 HCP limit raise in diamonds.					
		2NT	12+ HCP, GF.					
		3♣	Pre-emptive.					
		3♦	Pre-emptive diamond raise.					
1♣	1♦	Natural overcall.						
		Pass	Weak or no good bid.					
		X	Transfer. Shows 4 or 5 hearts and 6+ HCP.					
		1♥	Transfer. Shows 4 or 5 spades and 6+ HCP.					
		1♠	Denies a 4+ card major, shows club tolerance, 6-11 HCP but unsuitable for 1NT, invites a 1NT rebid by opener.					
		1NT	9-11 HCP and a stopper.					
		2♣	Club raise. Shows 6-10 HCP.					
		2♦	Transfer. Shows 6+ hearts.					
		2♥	Transfer. Shows 6+ spades.					
		2♠	Shows a 11-12 point limit raise in clubs.					
		2NT	Game force. 12+ with a stopper or two.					
		3♣	Pre-emptive club raise.					

O1	I1	R1	A1	O2	I2	R2	A2	Description
1m	1♥	Natural overcall.						
		Pass	Weak or no good bid.					
		X	Transfer. Shows 4 or 5 spades and 6+ HCP.					
		1♠	Denies 4+ spades. Shows tolerance for m and 6-11 HCP in a hand unsuitable for 1NT. Invites a 1NT rebid by opener.					
		1NT	9-11 HCP with a stopper.					
		2m	[raise] Shows 6-10 HCP. [new suit] Natural and a one round force.					
		2♥	Transfer. Shows 6+ spades.					
		2♠	Shows a 11-12 point limit raise in m.					
		2NT	Game force. 12+ with a stopper or two.					
3m	A 3m raise of opener is pre-emptive. Otherwise, 3m is a 7+ card suit and weak.							
1m	1♠	Natural overcall.						
		Pass	Weak or no good bid.					
		X	Transfer. Shows 4 or 5 hearts and 8+ HCP.					
		1NT	9-11 HCP with a stopper.					
		2m	[raise] Shows 6-10 HCP. [new suit] Natural and a one round force.					
		2♥	Shows a 11-12 point limit raise in m.					
		2♠	Transfer. Shows 6+ hearts.					
		2NT	Game force. 12+ with a stopper or two.					
		3m	A 3m raise of opener is pre-emptive. Otherwise, a 7+ card suit and weak.					
1m	1NT	Normal notrump overcall. Not conventional.						
		Pass	Weak or no good bid.					
		X	Penalty.					
		Other	To play.					
1m	2m	Natural overcall. Not Michaels or other conventional call.						
		Pass	Weak or no good bid.					
		X	Negative through 3♦.					
		2♦	[raise] Shows 6-10 HCP. Natural and one round force if not a raise.					
		2M	Natural. 5+ card suit. 8+ HCP at the 2-level, 10+ at the 3-level. Forcing.					
		2NT	9-11 HCP with stopper(s).					
		3m	[raise] Shows 8-11 points.					
1m	2M/3m	Natural overcall.						
		Pass	Weak or no good bid.					
		X	Negative through 3♦.					
		2♠	Natural. 5+ card suit. 8+ HCP. Forcing.					
		2NT	9-11 HCP with stopper(s).					
		3♣ /3♦	Natural. 5+ card suit. 10+ HCP. Forcing.					
		3M	Natural. 5+ card suit. 10+ HCP. Forcing.					
1m	3M+	Natural overcall.						
		Pass	Weak or no good bid.					
		X	Shows cards. "Transferable" values. Can help offence or defence.					
		3NT	To play.					
		3♠/4m+	New suits below game are forcing and natural.					

O1	I1	R1	A1	O2	I2	R2	A2	Description
1m	Pass	1M	O'call/ X					
				X/XX				Support doubles and redoubles through 2♥.
				2M				Raise guarantees 4-card support.
1m	Pass	1♥	2♠					
				X				Takeout double. Both minors. Auction is above 2♥.
				2NT				18-19 HCP.

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