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# 1. General Principles

## 1.1. System Outline

'The Methods' is a natural system based on aggressive four-card major openings on minimum values (11-13/12-14) and a medium/strong no-trump at all but favourable vulnerability first and second seat (9-12, mini-no-trump). Two-openers are multi-way enabling weak-twos in all suits except clubs, three-level pre-empts and higher are natural with 3NT 'gambling' (solid minor with limited outside strength).

Considerable investment is made to protect opener's light initial action with artificial strength-showing rebids after one-major. Relays via a two-club response are possible after all one-level suit-openings and can discover precise distribution, honour strength and location. Other two-over-ones are two-way, game-forcing or six-card invitational, and some suit-swapping occurs.

Slam-bidding outside relay sequences is relatively standard but 4-minor is often an optional key-card ask, nicknamed 'Deadwood'.

Competitive auctions are much influenced by options that show degree-of-fit (the Segal/Robson approach) but are otherwise standard. In general we express hand-type first, for example in two-suited situations, and worry about strength later.

Systemic agreements are unchanged by form of scoring.

### 1.1.1. Opening Bids

Natural one-level openings are in principle Rule-of-19 and aspire to 11 HCP.

- 1♣ Natural (5+ or 4-4-4-1) or balanced (as 1.1.2)
- 1♦ Mostly 4+♦ or unbalanced/single-suited
- 1♥ 4+♥ natural, 5+♥ unless minimum balanced
- 1♠ 4+♠ natural, 5+♠ unless minimum balanced
- 1NT 9-12 HCP 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> NV v Vul / 15-17 HCP 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> / otherwise 14-16 (as 1.1.2)
- 2♣ Weak-two in diamonds / 22-23 balanced / game-forcing types excluding those in 2♦
- 2♦ Weak-two in a major / 24-25 balanced / game-forcing diamonds with hearts/clubs
- 2♥ Weak, 5♥ with 4+ minor
- 2♠ Weak, 5♠ with 4+ minor
- 2NT 20-21 Balanced
- 3L Pre-empt
- 3NT Solid 7+ minor, no outside king or ace
- 4♣/♦ Pre-empt
- 4♥/♠ Pre-empt

### 1.1.2. Balanced Hands

The 'Rn' nomenclature, borrowed from Zebra, describes the ranges of balanced hands which depend on vulnerability and position.

Rn	1 <sup>st</sup> /2 <sup>nd</sup> Vul and NV v NV		3 <sup>rd</sup> /4 <sup>th</sup> All		1 <sup>st</sup> /2 <sup>nd</sup> NV v Vul	
R0		<b>Pass</b>		<b>Pass</b>	9-12	<b>1NT</b>
R1	11-13	<b>1L</b>	12-14	<b>1L</b>	12-14	<b>1♣/1M</b>
R2	14-16	<b>1NT</b>	15-17	<b>1NT</b>	15-17	<b>1♦</b>
R3	17-19	<b>1♣</b>	18-19	<b>1♣</b>	18-19	<b>1♣</b>

When selecting a suit at 1-level with only four-card suits, prefer majors over minors, hearts with 4-4 in majors, and personal preference with 4-4 in minors (but 1♣ obligatory when 1NT = 9-12).

A 1♣ opener describes R1 by completing a one-level transfer (including 1NT after 1♠) or with other suits, rebidding 1NT or the cheapest bid after a two-over-one. A 1♣ opener describes R3 by rebidding 1NT or, after a 1♠ response, 2♦. Note that when R0 is opened, there is no weak NT rebid after 1♦.

Stronger balanced hands:

20-21	2NT
22-23	2♣ then 2NT
24-25	2♦ then 2NT
26-27	2♣ then 3NT
28-29	2♦ then 3NT

Responder's options are identical after all the above 2NT bids (without regard, for example, to having bid hearts over a 2♦ opening).

## 1.2. Partnership Style

### 1.2.1. We open constructively

a) Four-card majors:

- i. Only opened on minimum hands, consistent with weak-NT values (all positions and colours).
- ii. No suit is considered unbidable.
- iii. Permissible on 4-4-4-1s but generally opened 1-minor, especially first/second seat with sound values or better.

b) One no-trump:

- i. Some up-rating but not routine.
- ii. 5M-3-3-2 very common but HCP maximums are often up-rated.
- iii. No agreement to have singletons, not even major honours.
- iv. Other off-shapes: 4♥-5m-2-2 and 6m-3-2-2 (more common in mini-NT), 4♠-5♣-2-2 possible but others rare.

c) One-minor when opening 1NT is 14-16 or 15-17:

- i. 1♣ on all strong balanced hands (17-19/18-19, no 5-major): in this case only can 1♣ be a 2-card suit and might include five diamonds. We frequently respond light to 1♣ to reach 1NT when opener is strong balanced and clubs is an uncertain strain and/or arranging to play responder's long suit is attractive. Outside the strong balanced component 1♣ promises four-plus clubs but might be a weak-NT, 4-3-3-3.
- ii. 1♦ is always 4+ but might be a weak-NT, 4-3-3-3. It cannot be a strong-NT or better with 4/5♦. There is no natural 2NT rebid after 1♦ – 1M.

d) One-minor when 1NT is 9-12:

- i. 1♣ on balanced with 12-14 or 18-19 as above (with same constraints). However 1♣ might be only three cards with 3=3=4=3.
- ii. 1♦ when 5♦-3-3-3 (rebid 2♦) also on 15-17 (no 5-major) and possibly 3=3=2=5; these hands rebid 1NT.

e) We open some hands at the one-level many would consider very strong, preferring to develop complicated shapes after a natural start to beginning with an artificial (and ambiguous) force.

### 1.2.2. We open defensively

a) Pre-empts and weak components of multi-way openings (2♣ and 2♦) are aggressive but not wild. Vulnerability is more important than position and a maximum weak two in first position, NV against Vul would be ♠AKJxxx ♥Jx ♦xx ♣Jxx. Possession of a side 4-card major does not prohibit a pre-empt but is one among a number of inhibitory factors (overall strength, quality of main suit, position etc.).

- b) Pre-empts in third position may have extra defence so partner should be cautious if raising. In fourth seat three-level pre-empts are minimum opening bids with good suit as main/only feature, a 2♣ opener no longer includes weak hand so 2♥ is negative ('Heart Murmur') and second negatives do not apply over opener's rebids.
- c) A four-major opener can bid again with extreme shape or double with two-way values suggesting partner bid on or pass with a defensive holding in the opponents' suit.

### **1.2.3. They open**

- a) One-level suit overcalls may be very light with values concentrated in the suit. This is especially so when either of us has passed. It is advancer's responsibility to establish combined strength.
- b) Weak single- and double-jump overcalls may be wide range in terms of strength and length according to the latitude allowed by position and prevailing vulnerabilities.

### **1.2.4. Card Play**

- a) When signalling we give priority to attitude in suits we have led.
- b) Against trump contracts when attitude is known or not relevant, suit preference has a higher priority to count.
- c) Against no-trump contracts, in partner's led suit when not showing attitude, length has a higher priority.

## 2. 1♣ Opening, Responses and Competition

Responses may lack classical values with poor clubs or 4M. With (4-1)-4-4 open 1♣ if minimum (TRF complete) or 17-19 (rebid 1NT). Responder has forcing moves after opener completes a red-suit transfer and Transfer Checkback [2.2] over opener's stronger 1NT rebid.

### 2.1. Responses to 1♣

Historically the ranges given are when a 14-16 NT is in force, that is R3 = 17-19. With other ranges attached to 1NT, R3 = 18-19.

<p>1♣ - 1♦ 4+ hearts All responding hands 5+ hearts except 8-11 and 6♥ (2♦). With game values and only 4♥, responder often relays with 2♣.</p>	<p>1♥ = weak NT values, denies 4♠, may be 4♦/5♣ in range, 3=1=4=5 possible with singleton honour.</p> <p>1♠ = ART, 5+ hearts initially constructive "part-score choice" but FG when responder continues other than with 2♥ or 2NT. Opener shows heart-length; 2♦/♥ = 3♥ max/min; 1NT/2♣ without and normal/good clubs; 2♠/3♦ fragments in fitting 6-3-3-1/5-4-3-1; 3♣ = 6♣-3♥-2-2 typically 13-14.</p> <p>1NT = NAT NF. Opener normally passes but may continue naturally: 2♣ = 5♣&amp;3♥; 2♦ = 1-3-4-5 min (else 2♥ rebids) and 2♥ shows 3 hearts &amp; extras.</p> <p>2♣/♦/♥ = Nat, expecting to be passed</p> <p>2♠ = 5=6 F3♥</p> <p>2NT = NAT INV, discouraging hearts (else, 1♠ then 2NT)</p> <p>3L = FG natural</p> <p>1♠ = 4♠&amp;5♣, less than FG value. Now 2♦ is ART INV+.</p> <p>1NT = 17-19 BAL, fewer than 4 hearts. Now Transfer Checkback [2.2]</p> <p>2♣ = 6+♣, no major Now 2♦ = ART FG; 2♥ = INV; 2♠ = NAT, FG; 3♣ = INV; 3♥ = FG and 3♦/♠ = SPL, agreeing clubs.</p> <p>2♦ = NAT, reverse.</p> <p>2♥ = 11-14 usually 4♥, always with clubs, possibly 5♣/3♥ with shortage and not absolutely minimum.</p> <p>2♠ = NAT, FG. (No Blackout, 2NT NAT waiting etc.).</p> <p>2NT = 6+♣ and 3♥, 15+. Now 3♣ = NF. 3♦ = TRF, INV+; 3♥/♠ = stoppers; 4♣ = DWD; 4♦ = MST in ♥.</p> <p>3♣ = 6+ clubs, extras [not solid suit]. NAT FG continuations.</p> <p>3♦ = 17-19 BAL with 4 hearts. Tight for space here so now 3♥ is NF; 3NT = COG; 3♠ = MST with shortage (3NT? NGF); 4♦ = RETRF; 4♣ = Last Train, no shortage; 4♥ to play (for some reason); 4NT KCA; 4♠/5m Exclusion.</p> <p>3♥ = extras, 4+ clubs &amp; unbalanced</p> <p>3♠/4♦ = SPL, 4 hearts and 4+ clubs</p> <p>4♣ = Super-fit, raise to game+</p> <p>4♥ = 5-6/4-6 type lacking controls</p>
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<p>1♣ - 1♥  4+ spades  Similar to 1♣ - 1♦</p>	<p>1♠ = weak NT, may have 4♥ in 2=4=2=5, occasionally 1=4=3=5 with singleton honour, perhaps 1=4=4=4 (though 1♦ an option). Also 4♦/5♣ not strong enough reverse when 2♣ is unattractive.</p> <p>Opener's rebids and responder's continuations as 1♣ - 1♦. Exceptions due to rank of suits:</p> <p>1♣ - 1♥; 3♥ = Natural, 6-5, with concentrated values but lacking high-card requirements for 2♥ reverse (same as 1♦ - 1♠; 3♥).</p> <p>1♣ - 1♥; 2♣ - 2♥ = INV, 4+ hearts, longer spades (stronger hands force to game with 2♦).</p> <p>1♣ - 1♥; 3♦ - 3♥ = TRF, to play 3♥/4♥ or slam-try with 4♠ (others show 5+♠), opener may not break; 3NT = COG; 3♠(!) = MST with shortage (and 5♠); 4m/♥ = second suit; 4♠ to play (for some reason); 4NT KCA; 5L Exclusion.</p>
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<p>1♣ - 1♠</p> <p>At best a minimum raise of a weak-NT to game, usually weak or INV.</p> <p>Either,</p> <p>a) Balanced</p> <p>b) Weak club raise</p> <p>c) Weak 5+♦</p> <p>d) 5♦/4M, INV-only</p>	<p>1NT = weak NT. Now,</p> <p>2♣ = To play, club partial expected to be better</p> <p>2♦ = To play, long diamonds</p> <p>2♥/♠ = 4♥/♠ &amp; 5♦, INV NF</p> <p>2NT = INV, BAL</p> <p>3♣ = INV club raise</p> <p>3NT = Right-siding 3NT</p> <p>2♣ = NAT, min, 5+ clubs. May be 4M-5. Now,</p> <p>2♦ = NF, long diamonds</p> <p>2♥/♠ = 4M-5♦, INV</p> <p>2NT = NAT, INV</p> <p>3♣ = NF, INV</p> <p>3L = stopper showing, 3NT values</p> <p>3NT = To play</p> <p>2♦ = Either R3 (17/18-19) or club diamond reverse. Responder has a pseudo-Blackout 2♥. Others are FG, including a waiting 2♠.</p> <p>Pass = OK with weak diamonds</p> <p>2♥ = Weak scramble, insufficient values for 3NT. Opener has:</p> <p>2♠ = Reverse with no extra lengths (2NT, 3m natural)</p> <p>2NT = R3 values</p> <p>3♣ = 6♣, typically 6-4</p> <p>3♦ = 5♦-6♣</p> <p>3M = Fragments in hands worth a 2♣ opener</p> <p>2♠ = Balanced and values for 3NT with no great fit and preferring opener to declare with R3.</p> <p>2NT = R3</p> <p>3♣ = Reverse type, nothing special</p> <p>2NT = Values for 3NT, major stoppers (but no 4M)</p> <p>3m = Natural, FG, but denying 4M</p> <p>3M = Original 5♦/4M hand with values (4♦ DWD, 4NT KCA(M))</p> <p>2♥/♠ = Reverse, F1. Blackout applies.</p> <p>2NT = Super 19-counts.</p> <p>3♣ = extras, 6+ clubs</p> <p>3♦/♥/♠ = auto SPL, v good clubs. Now 4♣ = DWD</p> <p>3NT = extras, very good clubs. Now 4♣ = DWD.</p>
<p>1♣ - 1NT</p> <p>Sound, right-siding.</p> <p>NF opposite R1, game opposite R3; 8-11/7-10, varying with lower-R3 and upper-R1.</p>	<p>2♣ = To play.</p> <p>2♦/♥/♠ = NAT, extras, standard reverse with 2♥/♠/NT Blackout.</p> <p>2NT = 15-16 with clubs; responder passes or bids 3NT</p> <p>3♣ = NF, 3NT possible with club help</p> <p>3♦/♥/♠ = SPL, clubs, 5♣ possible. 4♣ = DWD</p> <p>3NT = 17-19 BAL</p>



1♣ - 2♣ ART, FG a) 5+ diamonds b) Balanced	See Responder Relays [sec. 6]  In that section "responder's minor is diamonds" and opener's distributional hands show clubs and immediate jumps for shape show diamonds.
1♣ - 2♦/♥ TRF: 6 cards in ♥/♠ 8-11 HCP	2M = NAT, not forward going, responder may bid again with extra shape 2NT = Enquiry: Ogust style: HCP/suit-quality; min-poor; min-good; max-poor; max-good; 4L SPL in max-good (3NT = OM). 3♣ = NAT, to play 3♦/♥ = Retransfer (for some reason). 3M = NAT, defensive raise 3OM = Asking for shortage (NGF) 3NT = NAT 4♣ = Deadwood
1♣ - 2♠ INV (10-12) with clubs, unbalanced no major. Same as 3♣ response but stronger.	Typically 5♣-4♦-3-1, 6♣-3-3-1 or 5-5 minors. Weak-NT hands rebid 3♣. Responder's last try is 3L = shortage. 2NT = R3. Now 3♣ = min (3♦? shortage NGF), others shortage. At any stage, 4♣ is Deadwood as is 4♦ if responder 'admits' to 4+♦ (4♥ = no!). 3♦ = FG, asking for shortage; 3M = min SPL, 3NT = min ♦ SPL; 4♣ = max ♦ SPL; 4♦ = 5-5 minors; 4M = voids.
1♣ - 2NT Two-way: a) Weak 5+ clubs b) FG, 5-5 clubs + another	The weak component is to play 3♣ opposite opener's strong-NT (R3) and therefore usually six clubs. Opener bids 3♣ on all but freak club hands (4♣) and magic R3s (3NT). Responder passes or continues with second suit in FG 5-5. If a strong type emerges: 3NT is weak-NT, no major fit 4NT is R3 with 2-3 in responder's suit and slam negative 4♣ is Deadwood (and 4♦ if responder has minors) New suit 4♦ and above agrees opener's second suit (inferring R3)
1♣ - 3♣ Mixed raise (7-9) Not short diamond	Usually 5+ clubs and sufficient values for game if opener has R3. When R3 = 18-19 might be ♠xx ♥xx ♦Q10xxx ♣KQxx. 3♦ asks for shortage, NGF (3♥ = none; 3♠ = ♠; 3NT = ♥)
1♣ - 3♦, 9-11, INV	Similar to hands that would make 3-level invitation after weak-NT Continuations NAT & FG.
1♣ - 3♥/♠ SPL in bid suit.	Continuations as 1NT - 3M; [7.2]
1♣ - 3NT 13-15 BAL with 3+ clubs.	Now 4♣ = Deadwood. New suit = SPL.
1♣ - 4♣/♦	As 4m opener.

## 2.2. Transfer Checkback

Occurs after:

- a) 1♣ - 1♦; 1NT
- b) 1♣ - 1♥; 1NT

c) Equivalent transfer auctions after opener's 1♣ is doubled or overcalled 1♦

### 2.2.1. Overview

Aim: retain transfer to strong balanced hand, safe terminations for hands with less than classical responding values. Responder's rebids:

1. 2Red is transfer; new suits complete-with fit, old suits obligatory completion
2. 2NT/3NT show no extra length
3. 2♠ is clubs, only 4M, at least invitational
4. 2♣ accounts for other types; weak majors, two-suited major-minor (weak/invitational or FG diamonds only)

#### 2.2.1.1. Weak hands

All these start with 2♣:

- 1) Both majors: 2♥ NF: 5/5 with *either suit bid first*, 4-5 and 5-4
- 2) 4M-5+♦: Pass 2♦
- 3) 4M-6♣: play 3♣ (2♠->pass/convert)

#### 2.2.1.2. Invitational major-minor

- 1) 4M-5♦: use 2♣->2♠ and play 2NT/3♦ (raise 3♣ to game).
- 2) 4M-5♣: respond 2♠ and play 2NT/3♣

#### 2.2.1.3. Invitational majors

- 1) 4-4 respond 1♦, rebid 2♥. Opener's 2♠ forcing with fit, else 2NT/3NT (with some specials)
- 2) 5-4 show longer first, then 2♣->2NT - "2♣ adds a major"
- 3) 5-3-3-2 transfer back to major, 2NT

#### 2.2.1.4. Invitational 5-5s

Able to play 3-level in either suit; all via 2♣

#### 2.2.1.5. Strong hands

Mainly developed as over 1NT opener, transferring to show 5+M and bidding a second suit FG. The exception is that immediate jumps are 5-5 FG.

### 2.2.2. Responder's Rebids

Starting 1♣ – 1Red; 1NT; responder's major is 'M'.

2♣	<p><b>Two-suited</b></p> <p>Opener rebids 2♦ (no breaks).</p> <p>Weak paths</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Pass 2♦</li> <li>b) Rebid 2♥ (to play 2♥/♠)</li> <li>c) 2♠ then 3♣ (to play)</li> </ol> <p>Others are invitational and only a game force opposite no extra values if responder has a good diamond canapé.</p> <p>Responder's 2NT/3NT on third round shows 5-4 in majors. 3NT shows more NT disposition than transfer-new-suit approach.</p>	<p>After mandatory acceptance <b>responder</b> has:</p> <p>Pass = Weak ♦</p> <p>2♥ = 4/5=5 (1♦ response) or 5-4/5 (1♥), NF</p> <p>2♠ = minor canapé: to play clubs (4-6) or INV+ diamonds, opener now,</p> <p>2NT = min no ♦ fit. Now responder's 3♣ to play; 3♦ NAT, NF; 3L shortage.</p> <p>3♣ = Max or ♦ fit; Now responder's Pass is weak clubs; 3♦ to play opposite min; 3L shortage.</p> <p>2NT = 5-4 majors, INV</p> <p>3m = 5-5 INV</p> <p>3M = 6M INV</p> <p>3OM = Natural, INV, distributional NF</p> <p>3NT = 5-4</p>
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2M-1	<b>Re-transfer</b> 1. 1♣ - 1♦ 1NT - 2♦ 2. 1♣ - 1♥ 1NT - 2♥ Opener always accepts (responder may be very weak)	After mandatory acceptance <b>responder</b> has: 2♠ = 4=5, FG 2NT = 5-3-3-2 INV 3m = NAT, FG 3M = MST 3NT = 5-3-3-2 choice of games
2♦	<b>4+ Hearts</b> 1♣ - 1♥ 1NT - 2♦	<b>Opener</b> continues: 2♥ = Fit (4 cards), NF 2♠ = Fit (3 cards), NF 2NT = No fit, minimum 3M = As 2M with Max, FG
2♥	<b>4-4 Majors</b> 1♣ - 1♦ 1NT - 2♥	<b>Opener</b> continues: 2♠ = Fit (4 cards), NF 2NT = No fit, minimum 3♠ = Fit (4 cards), Max, FG
2♠	<b>Long clubs</b> , only 4M, INV+	<b>Opener</b> continues: 2NT = No club card 3♣ = Min fit Over 2NT/3♣ responder continues: Pass/3♣ = Play 3♣ 3L = Shortage 3L = club fit showing stops (with worries elsewhere). 3NT = Max
2NT/3NT	Natural, no extra major length(s)	
3m	Natural, FG, 5-5	
3M	Natural, FG, MST	

### 2.3. Responder is a Passed Hand

Bidding mostly unchanged.

- 1♣ - 2♣ = 5+ Diamonds and invitational. Bidding is natural over 2♦ by opener showing a 11-15 hand.
- 1♣ - 2♦ = shows an invitational hand with both minors. Bidding as before

### 2.4. Responder Passes 1♣

Responder will try to respond if short in clubs.

#### 2.4.1.1. Reopening double

Pass = BAL with at least 3 clubs.

Redouble = Good clubs, to attract a lead; most likely five (so not 2♣).

1L = 4+ clubs & 4+L

1NT = 18-19 BAL.

2♣ = 6+ clubs.

#### 2.4.1.2. Reopening 1♦/♥/♠

Double = takeout, not min but may be shape suitable rather than strong

1♥/♠ = 4+♥/♠ &amp; 4+ clubs

1NT = 18-19, BAL

2♣ = 6+ clubs

**2.4.1.3. Reopening 1NT**

Double = 18-19 BAL

2♣ = 6+ clubs

**2.5. They Intervene Over 1♣**

In 'system on' situations where we make a transfer response we promise sufficient values for opener with a weak-NT to rebid 1NT safely (possibly in competition). Where a transfer-complete is also possible, that shows 3-card support for responder's major.

Double	System ON	Redouble = values, say 9+, subsequent doubles penalty unless opponents jump or express support. Opener's pass forcing. 1Red = ♥/♠ as uninterrupted BUT with sufficient values to allow opener to bid 1NT with a weak-NT – even in competition (e.g. if fourth-hand bids 1♠). If TRF-complete available, that is 3-card support and weak-NT values, <b>1NT is a weak-NT, 2NT a strong-NT.</b> 2♣ = clubs NF 2♦/♥ = 6+ ♥/♠ any strength
1♦	System ON	Double = hearts as 1♦ but with values as above. 1♥ = spades but with values etc. 2♣ = clubs NF 2♦/♥ = 6+ ♥/♠ any strength 2♠ = Constructive club raise 2NT = NAT, INV
1♥	System OFF	Double = 4/5♠ 1♠ = Takeout with at most 3♠. 2♣ = Clubs, NF. 2♦ = NAT, F2N; Opener's 2♥ cue-bid is weak-NT WITHOUT stop 2♥ = 6+ spades 2♠ = good raise to 3♣ 2NT = NAT, INV
1♠	System OFF	Double = 4 hearts or 5+ hearts insufficient strength for 2♥. 2♣ = Clubs, NF. 2♦/♥ = F2N. Opener's 2♠ cue-bid is weak-NT WITHOUT stop. 2♠ = good raise to 3♣. 2NT = NAT, INV
1NT Natural	Natural 2-suit	2L = NAT, NF 2NT = two suiter, FSA. Responder assumes that 2NT bidder has about 5 losers, 5/5. Jumps to game with 2/3 working features.

2-suit Jump or NAT 2♣	TRF from cue- bid onwards 3♠ always fit and shortage in overcalled suit	This is similar, though simpler, than after 1NT. Transfers begin at the cue-bid 2M NF 2NT NAT, INV 3♣ Club raise, might be stretched 3♦ Diamonds, F1 or over diamonds, hearts INV+ 3♥ Hearts, F1 or over a red suit, spades INV+ 3♠ club raise, short in overcaller's suit 3NT NAT 4♣ Deadwood for clubs
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## 2.6. They Intervene Over our Response

Double of 1Red If X = Red, 'stop' is that suit, if X = takeout, 'stop' is other major	Redouble = strong-NT without stop Pass = typically weak-NT without 3M (XX request TRF complete) Completing transfer remains as weak-NT but with 3M 1NT = strong-NT with stop
Double of 1♠	Redouble = strong-NT without spade stop Pass = weak-NT with/without stop (responder's XX = "bid 1NT") 1NT = strong-NT with stop
Double of 1NT Takeout of clubs	Redouble = extras, looking to PENALTY. Pass = min, no extra club length
Complete 1R to our major Likely to be takeout	double = 3CR 1NT = strong-NT, stopper in other-major Pass and subsequent double = strong-NT, stopper worries

### 3. 1♦ Opening, Responses and Competition

1♦ promises 4+ diamonds except when the mini-NT is in force when it may be a doubleton on a balanced 15-17 (when the 1NT rebid shows that range). In all situations, there is no strong balanced rebid, with or without a fit. Therefore it is a system encouragement to prefer 1♣ with 5♦-3-3-2 on 17-19.

Despite the potential of a doubleton diamond in some situations, in principle all responses retain their meaning.

#### 3.1. Responses to 1♦

1M = 4+, may be light with 5+ cards. Prefer FG 2♣ with only 4M but all 5+M with INV+ values begin 1-major.

1NT = 5-10 standard; no special treatments

2♣ = FG, clubs or balanced (see Responder Relays [6.])

2♦ = Inverted, only partial is 3♦, bid by either side.

2♥ = Exactly 5♠ with 4+♥, less than INV.

2♠ = Mixed raise = ♦Hxxx plus ace or king outside

2NT = NAT NF, INV no major; only other partial is 3♦

3♣ = Natural invitational, no major, classic values for 1♦ – 3♦.

3♦ = Weak, distributional. If 1♦ could be 15-17 and 2+♦, then 6+♦.

3M = shortage, 4+ diamonds; typically 3OM-1-4-5

3NT = Natural NF, 13-15, no major, 3+ diamonds.

4NT = Ace-asking (NOT key-cards)

#### 3.1.1. 1-Major: Opener's raises

This is broadly analogous to 1♣ – 1R; but there is no balanced raise and, when the mini-NT is possible, jump support does not promise long diamonds (or even four).

2M 3/4-card raise	MIN, if 3CR then shortage. Responder can continue with 2♠ (catering for 4=3=1=5) or artificially invite with 2NT, opener rebids as natural as possible: 3♣ 3CR, min, 4♣ (so 1=3=5=4) 3♦ 3CR, min, not 4♣ (so 4=3=5=1 / 6♦-3♥-2-2 / 6♦-3♥-3-1) 3M 4CR, min 3OM 4CR, max 5-4-2-2 3NT 4CR, max 5-4-2-2, values in doubletons 4♣ 4CR, SPL clubs 4♦ 4CR, SPL OM 4M 4CR, long diamonds
2NT ART: 'Nightmare', 3CR, 6+ diamonds, 15+ unlimited.	3♦ NF opposite most openers. 3♣ ART FG, usually only 4M, initiates stopper-showing. 3M 5M FG. 3OM Suggests diamonds 3NT NAT, values in other suits
3M 4CR	If 1♦ could be 15-17 balanced, diamond length unknown otherwise 4+ diamonds
3♥ (after 1♠) NAT, NF, 5♥-6♦	Natural continuations

3♠ (after 1♥) 4CR, Splinter	
3NT Natural	
4♣ 4CR, Splinter	
4♦ Very strong, game+ raise	
4M 4+ raise, distributional, min high-card values	

### 3.1.2. Two-Level and Higher

1♦ - 2♣	FG, BAL or ♣.	See Responder Relays [6.]
1♦ - 2♦	4+♦, no major Invitational – may be stronger.	Only way to stay below game is if opener shows min by bidding 3♦ or if responder rebids 3♦ over 2M rebid by opener. 2NT is FG as we will play 3♦ instead. 2M = may be min, shows values in bid suit. 2NT = either 15-17 or 17-19 (semi) BAL. Responder's 3NT is slam-negative opposite stronger hand. 3♣ = FG, NAT may have stop in M. 3M/4♣ = SPL showing about 14-16 HCP 4♦ at any point is Deadwood, 1♦ - 2♦; 3m - 4♣ = SPL
1♦ - 2♥ 5♠ & 4+♥ 5-9, NF	Never 6=4, less than INV opposite min opener.	2NT = Signoff in a minor or a slam try in a major. Responder gives minor preference and opener rectifies with long diamonds. After 3M (slam try), responder shows shortages, NGF (step-1 = none). 3♣ = Asks for further description; usually game-try for major or FG with minor(s). Responder rebids: 3♦ = 5=4=2=2 min: opener's 3M=NF 3♥ = Short club, any strength: opener's 4m NAT 3♠ = Short diamond, any strength: opener's 4m NAT 3NT = 5=4=2=2 MAX 4♣ = At least 5/5, club shortness 4♦ = At least 5/5, diamond shortness 4♥ = 6=5=1=1 or 5=6=1=1 4♠ = 5=5=3=0, MAX; opener's 4NT ♦ slam try 3♦ = INV (else 2NT for diamond signoff) 3M = INV, real fit, but near min HCP in context 3NT = NAT 4♣ = FG (5/5+) 4♦ = Deadwood for diamonds
1♦ - 2♠ Mixed raise	Typically ♦Hxxx plus outside ace or king.	Only partial is 3♦; Opener's 2NT is NAT F1, balanced in context).

1♦ - 2NT	NAT, NF. No major	Only NF rebid is 3♦. 1♦ - 2NT; 3♣ - 3♦ = NF. 1♦ - 2NT; 3M = FG, shortage.
1♦ - 3♣	ART INV diamond raise	3♦ End, others FG, 3M initially stopper showing.
1♦ - 3♦	4+♦, NF	Usually 4-9, no major. Any try shows values in bid suit.
1♦ - 3M	FG, SPL, 11-14	No major: new suits natural slam tries.
1♦ - 3NT	13-15, no M	BAL but 3+♦.
4NT	Asks for specific aces	5♣ = no ace. 5NT = 2 aces, 6♣ = ♣A

### 3.2. Responder is a Passed Hand

Mostly unchanged:

2♦ = Invitational only

2♣ = Invitational with 5+♣

### 3.3. They Intervene Over 1♦

All special system-bids (2♥ = majors etc.) are OFF.

Double	<p>Redouble = values, say 9+, subsequent doubles penalty unless opponents jump or express support. Opener's pass forcing.</p> <p>Above the one-level responses change in line with general agreements:</p> <p>2♣ = clubs F1</p> <p>2♦ = Weak obstructive raise</p> <p>2♥/♠ = Fit-jump</p> <p>2NT = Constructive diamond raise</p> <p>3♣ = Fit-jump</p> <p>3♦ = Pre-emptive raise; more mixed-type than super light</p> <p>3♥/♠ = shortage 1M-3OM-4-5 - as without interference</p>
1♥	<p>Double = Exactly 4♠</p> <p>1♠ = 5+ spades</p> <p>2♣ = Clubs, F1.</p> <p>2♦ = NAT, NF</p> <p>2♥ = Good raise to 3♦+</p> <p>2♠ = Fit-jump, F3♦</p> <p>2NT = NAT, INV</p> <p>3♣ = Fit-jump, F3♦</p> <p>3♦ = Weak, pre-emptive raise</p> <p>3♥ = SPL raise</p> <p>3♠ = Fit-jump</p>



1♠	Double = 4 hearts or weak hand with 5+ hearts. 2♣ = Clubs, F1. 2♦ = NAT, NF 2♥ = Hearts, F1 2♠ = Good raise to 3♦+ 2NT = NAT, INV 3♣ = Fit-jump 3♦ = Pre-emptive raise; more mixed-type than super light 3♥ = Fit-jump 3♠ = SPL raise
1NT Natural	2L = NAT, NF 2NT = two suiter, FSA. Responder assumes that 2NT bidder has about 5 losers, 5/5. Jumps to game with 2/3 working features.
NAT 2♣	Double = Almost always 4-4 majors. 2M NAT, F1 2NT NAT, INV 3♣ Good raise to 3♦ 3♦ Diamonds, F1 or over diamonds, hearts INV+ 3♥ Hearts, F1 or over a red suit, spades INV+ 3♠ club raise, short in overcaller's suit 3NT NAT 4♣ Deadwood for clubs
2M Jump overcall	As after 1♣ but only TRF sequence is 1♦ (2♥) 3♥ 2♠ NAT, NF 2NT NAT, INV 3♣ Clubs, F1 3♦ Diamond raise, might be stretched 3♥ Hearts, or over 2♥, spades INV+ 3♠ Diamond raise, short in overcaller's suit 3NT NAT 4♣ Fit-jump 4♦ Deadwood for diamonds

## 4. Constructive Agreements

These appear after 1♣ and 1♦ because, starting from a lower base, they occur more frequently after 1-minor rather than 1-major and are less perturbed by two-over-ones and artificial moves.

### 4.1. Reverses

Specifics:

1. At least five cards in the first suit
2. A shorter second suit
3. Enough overall strength to commit to the 3-level (or, in some cases, 2NT).

The reverse is forcing and promises a rebid.

Included are:

1. 1♣ – 1♦; 2♦ (4.1.2.1)
2. 1♣ – 1♥; 2♦ (4.1.2.2)
3. 1♣ – 1♥; 2♥ (4.1.3.1)
4. 1♣ – 1♠; 2♥ (4.1.3.3)
5. 1♣ – 1♠; 2♠ (4.1.3.3)
6. 1♣ – 1NT; 2♦/M (4.1.2.3, 4.1.3.3, 4.1.4.1)
7. 1♦ – 1♠; 2♥ (4.1.3.2)
8. 1♦ – 1NT; 2M (4.1.4.2, 4.1.4.3)
9. 1♥ – 1NT; 2♠ ( ) significant extras because of path after 2♣ rebid with 4♠-5♥ and 15-17)
10. Excluded are sequences where game-values are already established (e.g. 1♥ – 2♦; 2♠) and those that have multiple meanings (e.g. 1♣ – 1♠; 2♦).

#### 4.1.1. Blackout

**Blackout Signal:** responder uses the lower of 2NT and the lowest unbid suit as a weak sign-off attempt – but not in his own suit.

This signal subsequently referred – in this section only – as 'BLACKOUT'.

Responder's own-major rebid (whether cheaper than BLACKOUT) is a one-round force showing 5+ length and does not promise extra values. Responder's subsequent non-jump bids are non-forcing so with FG values, 5+ own suit and a fit (but unsuited to picture treatments) he should first show the fit by a game-forcing suit agreement.

BLACKOUT followed by 3NT after opener shows no extras is typically 8-10 and weaker than an immediate 3NT (11-13, non-fitting soft values).

### 4.1.2. Opener reverses into diamonds

#### 4.1.2.1. Responder has hearts

<p>1♣ - 1♦; 2♦ - 2♥ F1, 5+♥ If enough to FG, not 5♥+4♦/3♣ (instead direct 3♦/3♣)</p>	<p><b>Opener rebids:</b> 2♠ = FG, no better bid to make 2NT = NF, 3145 more likely than 2245 (3♣/3♦/3♥ by responder=NF; 3♠ ART FG) 3♣ = NF, NAT (3♦/3♥ by responder=NF; 3♠=artificial FG) 3♦ = F1, 5/6+ (can pass responder's 4♣ or 4♥ so responder's 3♠ ART FG) 3♥ = NF; 2245/2236, either no ♠ stopper or great doubleton ♥ 3♠ = SPL, 3-card ♥ support, does not imply extra values beyond normal reverse 3NT = NAT, stoppers, extras 4♣ = Deadwood 4♦ = 6♦/7♣, FG (responder's 4♥=NF, 4♠=1 cover card, 4NT=2 cover cards, 5m weak) 4♥ = Typically: xx AQx AKx AKxxx (2NT opening not necessary) 4♠ = KCA♥</p>
<p>1♣ - 1♦; 2♦ - 2♠ Sign-off signal (but not in hearts)</p>	<p><b>Opener rebids:</b> 2NT = NF, typically 3145, minimum (3♣/3♦=NF; 3M=FG, values there) 3♣ = NF, a common action (responder's 3♦=NF; 3M=FG, values there) 3♦ = F1, 5/6+ (can pass responder's 4♣ or 4♥) 3♥ = FG, roughly 1345, although responder won't have five hearts (else 2♥ not 2♠) 3♠* = FG, no better bid to make (2245/3145 unsuitable for 3NT/6+♣/etc) 3NT = Extras, much more likely to be 3145, 3136 or 2236 than 2245 4♣ = FG, enough to go past 3NT (else 3♠) 4♦ = 6♦/7♣, FG (responder's 4♥=NF, 4♠=1 cover card, 4NT=2 cover cards, 5m weak) 4♥ = 0445/0436/♠A=4=3=5, huge hand with 4♥ too good for SPL</p>
<p>2NT</p>	<p>FG, some genuine values and stoppers, unsuitable for jump to 3NT</p>
<p>3♣</p>	<p>FG, NAT, usually 3+ cards</p>
<p>3♦</p>	<p>FG, NAT, 4+ cards</p>
<p>3♥</p>	<p>FG, NAT, one-loser suit at worst</p>
<p>3♠</p>	<p>FG, SPL raise of diamonds (best reserved for 5-card support)</p>
<p>3NT</p>	<p>4432, about 11-13 HCP, slow cards, solid stoppers/genuine NT orientation</p>
<p>4♣</p>	<p>Typically: xx AKxxx xx Qxxx (picture jump)</p>
<p>4♦</p>	<p>Typically: xx AKxxx QJxx xx (picture jump)</p>
<p>4♥</p>	<p>Solid 6/7-card suit, no ♠ control, not much else, defined as NF</p>

**4.1.2.2. Responder has spades**

When responder has spades BLACKOUT is lower than his same-suit rebid. There is a slight change of emphasis: responder's 2♥ allows him to play lower so is preferred with weak hands with 5♠ and 2♠ implies modest values (but only a one-round force). Most higher bids are unchanged, the only exception is that 3♥ shows 5-5 in the majors.

<p>1♣ - 1♥; 2♦ - 2♥ Sign-off signal (but not in spades)</p>	<p><b>Opener rebids:</b> 2♠ = Typically 3145, NF (responder's 2NT/3♣/3♦ NF) 2NT = NF, typically 1345, minimum (3♣/3♦=NF; 3M=FG, values there) 3♣ = NF, a common action (responder's 3♦=NF; 3M=FG, values there) 3♦ = F1, 5/6+ (can pass responder's 4♣ or 4♦, 3♥ only FG) 3♥ = FG, no better bid to make (2245/1345 unsuitable for 3NT/6+♣/etc) 3♠ = FG, roughly 3145, although responder won't have five spades (else 2♠ not 2♥) 3NT = Extras, much more likely to be 1345, 1336 or 2236 than 2245 4♣ = Deadwood 4♦ = 6♦/7♣, FG (responder's 4♥=NF, 4♠=1 cover card, 4NT=2 cover cards, 5m weak) 4♠ = 4045 / 4036 / 4=♥A=3=5 huge hand with 4♠ too good for SPL</p>
<p>1♣ - 1♥; 2♦ - 2♠ F1, 5+♠ Moderate values, else 2♥ (resting in 2♠/NT/3m) If enough to FG, not 5♠+4♦/3♣ (instead direct 3♦/3♣)</p>	<p><b>Opener rebids:</b> 2NT = NF, 1345 more likely than 2245 (3♣/3♦/3♠ by responder=NF; 3♥ ART FG) 3♣ = NF, NAT, opener's default action (3♦/3♠ by responder=NF; 3♥=artificial FG) 3♦ = F1, 5/6+ (responder's 4♣/♦ NF so 3♠ ART FG) 3♥ = FG, no better bid (2245/1345 unsuitable for 3NT/6+♣, etc.) 3♠ = FG, roughly 3145 3NT = NAT, extras, more likely to be 1345, 1336 or 2236 than 2245 4♣ = Deadwood 4♦ = 6♦/7♣, FG (responder's 4♠=NF, 4♥=1 cover card, 4NT=2 cover cards, 5m weak) 4♥ = SPL, 3-card support, not necessarily extras 4♠ = Typically: AQx xx AKx AKxxx (2NT opening not necessary) 4NT = KCA♠</p>
<p>3♥</p>	<p>FG, 5♠-5♥</p>
<p>3♠</p>	<p>FG, NAT, one-loser suit at worst</p>

**4.1.2.3. Only opener has bid suits**

When responder has not bid a suit both majors are available: cheaper (2♥) is still BLACKOUT and 2♠ is used to show a good hand unsuitable for other action. Over 2♥ opener rebids 2♠ artificially to show minimums and allow responder to describe.

1♣ – 1NT; 2♦ – 2♥ Sign-off signal	<b>Opener rebids:</b> 2♠ = Expected with normal minimums 2NT = NAT, NF 3♣ = NAT, NF 3M = FG, stopper, game not slam 3NT = NAT, about 8-10, not as good as 2NT 2NT = FG, extras 3♣ = FG, 6+ clubs 3♦ = FG, 5/6+ 3M = FG, FRAGMENT 3NT = NAT, stoppers, extras, poss. 2=2=3=6 4♣ = Deadwood 4♦ = FG, 6♦/7♣
2♠	FG, ART, good balanced hand with no obvious direction.
2NT	FG, NAT, good hand: reason to bid no-trump (tenaces, values)
3♣	FG, NAT, usually 3+ cards
3♦	FG, NAT, 4+ cards
3M	FG, SPL raise of diamonds (best reserved for 5-card support)
3NT	NAT, Slam negative
4♣	Typically: xx xx AKxxx Qxxx (picture jump)
4♦	Deadwood

### 4.1.3. Opener reverses into hearts

Unlike reverses into diamonds, when responder has spades, 2NT is BLACKOUT. In the two-suit cases this is like 1♣ – 1♠; 2♦ with 2♥ as BLACKOUT but there is no convenient call meaning 'game force, nothing better' (as 2♠ in previous section).

NOTE: as a corollary of an immediate response showing limited values with 5♠ and 4+♥ [which we only have after 1♦...], responder cannot bid 2♠/2NT and then support hearts! These sequences show good hands with the other minor. We cannot play 3♥ unless opener rebids 3♥ – responder has no non-forcing route to 3♥.

#### 4.1.3.1. Responder has spades

1♣ – 1♥; 2♥ – 2♠ F1, 5+♠ If enough to FG, not 5♠+4♥/3♣ (instead direct 3♥/3♣)	<b>Opener rebids:</b> 2NT = NF, most often 1435 (responder's 3♣/3♠ = NF; 3♦ = 5♠/5♦ NF, 3♥! = 5♠/5♦ FG) 3♣ = NF, NAT, sixth club 3♦ = FG, unwilling to bypass 3NT 3♥ = NF, 5/6+ (responder's 4♣/3♠ NF) 3♠ = NF, 2425 or so, strong doubleton spade, no diamond stopper 3NT = NAT, extras, more likely to be 1345, 1336 or 2236 than 2245 4♣ = Deadwood 4♦ = SPL for spades, not necessarily extra values 4♥ = 5/6+ (contrast with lesser 3♥ = NF) 4♠ = Typically: AQx AKx xx AKxxx
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1♣ - 1♥; 2♥ - 2NT Sign-off signal (but not in spades)	<b>Opener rebids:</b> 3♣ = NF, a common action (responder's 3♦=NF canapé; 3♥! = 5+♦ FG; 3♠=FG, values there) 3♦ = FG, unwilling to bypass 3NT 3♥ = NF, 5/6+ (responder's 4♣/3♠ NF) 3♠ = FG, 3415 (descriptive even though responder won't have 5♠) 3NT = NAT, extras, more likely to be 1435 or 1426 than 2245 4♣ = Deadwood 4♦ = SPL for spades, not necessarily extra values 4♥ = 5/6+ (contrast with lesser 3♥ = NF) 4♠ = 0445/0436/♠A=4=3=5, huge hand with 4♠ too good for SPL
3♣	FG, NAT, usually 3+ cards
3♦ FG, ART, typically 4342 no ♦ stopper, may be too strong for jump to 3NT.	<b>Opener rebids:</b> basically natural but: 4♣ = Deadwood 5♣ = A rare "fast arrival" case (two diamond tricks missing) 4♠ = Forcing (no ♦ wastage!): the huge four-trump ♠ raise with 4=4=0=5; 4NT=KCA♠ 4NT = NAT/UNBAL, 22-23 value (expect responder to have 9+ HCP)
3♥	FG, 5♠&4+♥, not a picture raise
3♠	FG, one-loser suit at worst
3NT	4342, about 11-13 HCP, slow cards, solid stoppers/genuine NT orientation
4♣	Typically: AKxxx xx xx Qxxx (picture jump)
4♦	SPL raise for hearts
4♥	Typically: AKxxx QJxx xx xx (picture jump)
4♠	NF, solid 6/7-card suit, no diamond control

**4.1.3.2. 1♦ - 1♠; 2♥**

This is the same as 1♣ - 1♥; 2♥ with obvious substitutions. 2NT is BLACKOUT and opener is still expected to bid 3♣ on all minimums (responder might want to play there with a spade/club canapé).

NOTE: Again, we can't play in 3♥ when responder has weak 4-card support - at least we have 1♦ - 2♥ as weak 5♠-4♥.

1♦ - 1♠; 2♥ - 2NT Sign-off signal (but not in spades)	<b>Opener rebids:</b> 3♣ = NF, expected with all minimums (responder's Pass = NF canapé, 3♦=End; 3♥! = 5+♣ FG; 3♠=FG, values there) 3♦ = FG, 6+ 3♥ = NF, 5/6+ (responder's 4♦/3♠ NF) 3♠ = FG, 3451 (descriptive even though responder won't have 5♠) 3NT = NAT, extras, more likely to be 1435 or 1426 than 2245 4♣ = Deadwood 4♦ = SPL for spades, not necessarily extra values 4♥ = 5/6+ (contrast with lesser 3♥ = NF) 4♠ = 4405/4306/4=3=♦A=5, huge hand with 4♠ too good for SPL
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**4.1.3.3. Only opener has bid suits**

Three sequences

- a) 1♣ - 1♠; 2♥
- b) 1♣ - 1NT; 2♥
- c) 1♦ - 1NT; 2♥

In (a) responder is wide-range, in (2) and (3), less so. Responder's 2♠ is BLACKOUT all others are game-forcing. There are some special sequences to cater for (a), they simply do not apply in other auctions.

1♣ - 1♠; 2♥ - 2♠ Sign-off in 3♣ or feelers for 3NT	<b>Opener rebids:</b> 2NT = Expected with all minimums (3♣ to play, all others site of values for no-trump) 3♣ = NAT, FG 3♦/♠ = FRAGMENT, FG 3♥ = NF, 5/6+ (responder's 4♣ NF) 3NT = NAT, extras 4♣ = Deadwood 4♦ = 0=4=4=5 4♥ = 5/6+ (contrast with lesser 3♥ = NF)
2NT	FG, NAT, good hand: reason to bid no-trump (tenaces, values)
3♣	FG, NAT, usually 3+ cards
3♦	FG, NAT, 5+ cards
3♥	FG, NAT, typically a hand that was initially INV with 4♥ and 5♦, either short club or 2=4=5=2
3♠	SPL ♥ raise, typically a hand that was initially INV with 4♥ and 5♦
3NT	
4♣	Typically: xx xx AKxxx Qxxx (picture jump)

**4.1.4. Opener reverses into spades****4.1.4.1. 1♣ - 1♠; 2♠ and 1♣ - 1NT; 2♠**

As 1♣ - 1♠; 2♥, this is equivalent to 1♣ - 1NT; 2♠ in standard methods. 2NT is BLACKOUT.

1♣ - 1♠; 2♠ - 2NT Sign-off in 3♣ or tries for 3NT	<b>Opener rebids:</b> 3♣ = Expected with all minimums (3♣ to play, all others site of values for no-trump) 3♦/♥ = FRAGMENT, FG 3♠ = NF, 5/6+ (responder's 4♣ NF) 3NT = NAT, extras 4♣ = Deadwood 4♦ = 4=0=4=5 4♥ = 4=4=0=5 4♠ = 5/6+ (contrast with lesser 3♠ = NF)
3♣	FG, NAT, usually 3+ cards
3♦	FG, NAT, 5+ cards
3♥	FG, NAT, typically a hand that was initially INV with 4♥ and 5♦

3♠	FG, NAT, raise, typically a hand that was initially INV with 4♠ and 5♦ but short club or 4=2=5=2
3NT	NAT, good hand: reason to bid no-trump (tenaces, values)
4♣	Typically: xx xx AKxxx Qxxx (picture jump)
4♥	SPL spade raise, typically a hand that was initially INV with 4♠ & 5+♦

#### 4.1.4.2. 1♦ – 1NT; 2♠

As 1♣ – 1NT; 2♠. 2NT is BLACKOUT.

1♦ – 1NT; 2♠ – 2NT Sign-off in 3♣ or tries for 3NT	<b>Opener rebids:</b> 3♣ = Expected with all minimums (Responder might have 6♣) 3♦ = 6♦-4♠, some extras 3♥ = FRAGMENT, FG 3♠ = NF, 5/6+ (responder's 4♦ NF) 3NT = NAT, extras 4♣ = 4=0=5=4 4♦ = Deadwood 4♥ = 4=4=0=5 4♠ = 5/6+ (contrast with lesser 3♠ = NF)
3♣	FG, NAT, 5+ cards
3♦	FG, NAT, usually 3+ cards
3M	??
3NT	NAT, good hand: reason to bid no-trump (tenaces, values)
4♣	Typically: xx xx Qxxx AKxxx (picture jump)

#### 4.1.4.3. 1♥ – 1NT; 2♠

Despite the use of rebids to express some 4♠=5♥ hands (14-16) [5.3.1], this sequence is natural and a classic reverse, but with real extras as 2♣.

As in standard, 2NT is BLACKOUT.

Unlike all earlier sequences which were informed by the writings of Kokish, this sequence is simpler as (a) it is rare demanding values in excess of standard and (b) distributional types where opener takes a risk to introduce spades catered for by Kokish have an expression via 2♣.

1♥ – 1NT; 2♠ – 2NT Sign-off in 3m or weak way to 3M	<b>Opener rebids:</b> 3♣ = Expected with all 'minimums' – in context. Now Pass/3♦ to play, 3M NF preference, 3NT COG, usually 2♥. 3♦ = FRAGMENT, FG 3♥ = FG 3♠ = FG, 5/6+ 3NT = NAT, extras 4♣ = 4=5=0=4 extras 4♦ = 4=5=4=0 extras 4♥ = 4=7 4♠ = 6=7
3m	FG, NAT, 5+ cards
3M	FG, NAT



3NT	NAT, good hand: reason to bid no-trump (tenaces, values)
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## 4.2. Fourth Suit Forcing

## 5. 1-Major Opening, Responses and Competition

### 5.1. Responses

Responder's options are very similar but differences arise from suit-rank;

- Wide-range 1NT
- Relays via 2♣
- Ambiguous two-over-one in diamonds (FG/6-card invite) via 1♥ – 2♦ / 1♠ – 2♥.
- 1♠ – 2♦ is hearts, wide-range
- Non-forcing fit-jumps in other-major and both minors
- Limit raise or better via 2NT (including singleton splinter with 4-card support)
- Void splinters
- Singleton splinter with 5+ support via portmanteau cheapest double jump-shift.

#### 5.1.1. After 1♥

1♠ = Natural, 4+, may be light, with FG values and only 4♠, 2♣ usually preferred

1NT = Natural, 5-11(12) unsuitable for any other action.

2♣ = FG, clubs or balanced; artificial rebids by opener, relays may continue

2♦ = Diamonds; FG or 6+ INV

2♥ = NAT, NF

2♠ = Fit-jump, NF, 3♥ and 5/6♠

2NT = Limit raise or better [LROB]

3m = Fit-jump, NF, 3♥ and 6m

3♥ = 'Mixed raise'

3♠ = 5-card splinter (3NT? NGF)

3NT = Void spade

4m = Void SPL

4♥ = Shapely, few controls

#### 5.1.2. After 1♠

1NT = Natural, 5-11(12) unsuitable for any other action.

2♣ = FG, clubs or balanced; artificial rebids by opener, relays may continue

2♦ = Hearts, may pass 2♥ (min, not short heart)

2♥ = Diamonds; FG or 6+ INV

2♠ = NAT, NF

2NT = Limit raise or better [LROB]

3m = Fit-jump, NF, 3♠ and 6m

3♥ = Fit-jump, NF, 3♥ and 6m

3♠ = 'Mixed raise'

3NT = 5-card splinter (4♣? NGF)

4m/♥ = Void SPL

4♠ = Shapely, few controls

## 5.2. Major Suit Raises

### 5.2.1. Summary

- 1M – 2M is a wide-range 4/3-card raise, usually nine losers.
- 1M – 3M is mixed raise, usually with shortage, four trumps an outside card and 8 losers.
- 1M – 2NT is LROB 4+ support and includes some singletons.
- 1M – 3m, 1♥ – 2♠, 1♠ – 3♥ are non-forcing fit jumps with exactly 3-card support.
- 1♥ – 3♠ and 1♠ – 3NT show 5-card support with a singleton.
- 1M – 4m, 1♥ – 3NT, 1♠ – 4♥ are void splinter with 4+ support.
- Passed hand 1M – 2M-1 is an stronger two-level raise

No special continuations apply to (4), (5) and (6).

### 5.2.2. 1M – 2M

Opener has:

- Next-step non-disclosing game-invitation
- Natural, non-jump slam tries
- Void-showing jumps (follow up with exclusion key-card)

Example after 1♥ – 2♥;

2♠ = Invites responder to make a natural, long suit game try (3♥ = sorry, 2NT = ♠)

2NT = Slam-try in with secondary spades

3m = Slam-try in with bid minor

3♥ = Constructive, based on good trumps

3♠ = Void spade

3NT = Natural

4m = Void m

### 5.2.3. 1M – 3M

Opener has:

- Next-step asks for shortage
- Own shortages

Example after 1♥ – 3♥;

3♠ = Asks for shortage (NGF: 3NT [step-1] = none, 4m = named SPL, 4♥ = spade SPL)

3NT = Spade shortage

4m = Shortage in minor

### 5.2.4. 1M – 2NT; 'Scanian', limit raise or better

Also same system after 1M (X) 2NT

3♣ Strong slam try	3♦ Slam positive; almost forcing to slam unless controls missing. 3♥ Sound limit raise. 3♠ Slam negative, no shortage. 3NT/4m Shortage (NGF) in limited (12-14) game raise
3♦ Two-way a) Void (undisclosed) b) Game acceptance	3M Declining (need only sound limit-raise to accept) 3♠/NT (over ♥/♠) game acceptance, allowing opener to show to show void (NGF). Others are natural slam try opposite opener's 'suitable minimum'

3M Declining INV raise	3NT Game choice. Others are natural slam try opposite opener's 'suitable minimum'
3OM 17-19 Balanced	Responder shows shortage if slam possible, NGF. Note that when hearts are agreed, 3♠ does not allow easy description but splinters are like to be 12+ so that 4♠ a spade shortage is probably OK.
4m Natural 5-5 or better	4M Misfitting; opener only goes on with extras e.g. AKJxx, x, AQxxx, Kx – 5 level is safe. Others are first-round controls; MST below game, searching for missing controls above.
3NT	5-5 or 6-4 in majors – conditions as above.
4NT KCA	Taking control on assumption that responder is min limit raise.
5L and 4♠ (over ♥) Exclusion	Also via 3♦, void disclosure and 4NT

### 5.2.5. Passed hand raises

Higher level responses are in line with general agreements; single jumps are fit, double jumps are splinters (fit-jumps in competition): there is 4-/5-card splinter differentiation.

#### 5.2.5.1. After 1♥

2♣ = NAT, NF

2♦\* = ART, 8-10, constructive heart raise. Opener's continues as if responder had bid 2♥

2♥ = Weak raise

2♠ = Fit-jump

2NT = LROB (continuations unaffected by passed-hand status)

3m = Fit-jump 4CR

3♥ = Mixed raise

3♠/4m = SPL

\* = On if they are legal: that is Pass – 1♥; (X) 2♦ is a constructive raise, same had the intervention been 1NT, etc.

#### 5.2.5.2. After 1♠

2♣ = NAT, NF

2♦\* = Hearts, usually 8-10 with 5♥

2♥\* = ART, 8-10, constructive heart raise. Opener's continues as if responder had bid 2♠

2♠ = Weak raise NF

2NT = LROB (continuations unaffected by passed-hand status)

3m = Fit-jump 4CR

3♥ = Mixed raise

3♠/4m = SPL

\* = On if they are legal: that is Pass – 1♠; (2♣) 2♦ is hearts, same had the intervention been 1NT, etc.

### 5.3. Artificial Rebids; Häxan, Hecate and Trondheim

Opener uses 2♣ and 2NT to show strong hands, 2♥\* (clubs) and 2♦ (natural) are limited. Jumps are shapely with modest extras but a heart-spade reverse is 'full values'.

These are:

a) 1♠ – 1NT; 2♣ – 'Hecate'

- b) 1♥ - 1NT; 2♣ - Håxan  
 c) 1♥ - 1♠; 2♣ - Håxan again  
 d) 1M - 1NT; 2NT - 'Trondheim', artificial game-force, slam potential  
 e) 1♥ - 1♠; 2NT; - 'Nightmare' type, extra values 6♥ + 3♠

To cope with more types after 1♠, **responder's rebids after 1♥ and 1♠ openings differ.**

Auctions revert to natural if fourth-hand doubles or overcalls. Double is 3-card support of responder's spade suit or take-out after a 1NT response. Redouble is value-showing and switched subsequent doubles by both sides to penalty.

### 5.3.1. 1♠ - 1NT; 2♣: 'Hecate':

An artificial three-way 2♣ rebid:

- 1) Natural rebid in hearts (4+♥), minimum values.
- 2) Awkward hand-types with modest extra values: 5-3-3-2 14-16 HCP (mini-NT positions).
- 3) Any 16+.

#### 5.3.1.1. Opener's alternatives

2♦	11-15, 4+ diamonds	2♥ (after 1♠ - 1NT) = NF, implies six
2♥ CLUBS	11-15, 4+ clubs	2♠ (after 1♥ - 1♠ and 1♠ - 1NT) = NF 2♠ (after 1♥ - 1NT) = Strong club raise, F3♣ only 2NT = NAT, NF 3♣ = End 3♦ (4 <sup>th</sup> suit) = FG, improved cards, no clear fit
2♠	11-14, 6+♠	
2NT	UNBAL FG	Trondheim (see below)
3m/♥	Nat NF, 5-5	
3M	14-15, 6+	
3NT	Solid major, one outside card	Usually 7-card major
4L	14-15, SPL	Usually 7-card major

#### 5.3.1.2. Responder's rebid

Whereas after 1♥ responder had a binary strong-signal (2♦ = 8+), after 1♠ responder decides whether he is in one of three ranges:

**RED** - roughly 0-7

**AMBER** - 8-9

**GREEN** - 10+

2♦	ART 2-way: 1) RED - any 2) GREEN without hearts	Opener rebids as if facing the RED option: 2♥ = hearts, weak (11-15) or some extras (possibly 3♥ in 5-4-3-1) – if responder is GREEN he will bid again. 2♠ = not 4♥, NF maybe only 14-15. 2NT = 18-19, NF 3L = FG (inc. 3M?) When responder is GREEN (therefore without hearts) he generally continues with 2NT. This is NF after 2♥ (potentially 5-4 and 11 HCP) but forcing after 2♠ (which, not having hearts, shows 14+).
2♥ or 2♠	AMBER: to play opposite minimum 5♠=4♥.	2♠ = NF, 'medium' hand (others FG) 2NT = 17-19 FG 3m = NAT, FG 3♥ (2♠) = 5-5 3♥ (2♥) = INV 3♠ = NAT, FG
2NT	GREEN: exactly 4 hearts	3♥ NF, others FG
3♣	AMBER: minors 5-5 (5-4?)	Pass/3♦ to play, 4m DWD, others FG
3♦	GREEN: exactly 5 hearts	3♥ NF, others FG
3♥	GREEN: 6+ hearts	Pass possible else FG

### 5.3.2. 1♥ – 1NT; 2♣: Häxan

Opener's alternatives are as 1♠ – 1NT; except for a strong reverse into spades (typically 18+, simple Blackout applies).

Opener's 2♣ rebid is three-way;

- 1) Natural rebid in hearts (6+♥), minimum values, not worth jump to 3♥ (13-15).
- 2) Awkward hand-types with modest extra values: 5-3-3-2/4♠=5♥, 14-16 HCP.
- 3) Any 16+.

Responder's 2♦ rebid shows 8+, excepting the special 2♠ (minors) others show weak hands.

2♦	ART, 8+, FG opposite 16+, may play 2NT/3m opposite 14-15 types.	2♥ = 11-15 6♥ 2♠ = 14-16 4♠=5♥ (may play 2NT) 2NT = 14-16 NF 3L = NAT, FG
2♥	To play opposite minimums.	Opener continues naturally with 18+, as per classic FG jump shifts. Some BAL 18 HCP will pass, most bid 2NT. A jump to 3NT is solid hearts, choice of games.
2♠	<b>11-12, minors, short heart</b>	2NT/3m/3♥/3NT = weak-type, NAT, NF 3♠ = strong-type, no minor fit 4m = strong-type, DWD
2NT	5+/5+ minors, 5-7, short heart	

3♣/♦	Nat, NF, limited	
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### 5.3.3. 1♥ – 1♠; 2♣: Häxan again

This is similar to 1♥ – 1NT. Note 1♥ – 1♠; 2NT is ART, extras, 6♥ and 3♠ (not Trondheim).

Opener uses 2♣ with 16+ hands (jumps are natural and limited). Unless opener rebids 2♥ (long hearts) all other actions are FG. Opener never has 4-card support.

2♦	ART, 8+, FG opposite 16+, may play 2NT/3m opposite 15-16 types.	2♥ = 11-15 6+♥ 2♠ = 3♠=5♥ F1, 15+ (may play 2NT) 2NT = 15-16 NF 3L = NAT, FG
2♥	To play opposite minimums.	Opener continues naturally with 18+, as per classic FG jump shifts. Some BAL 18 HCP will pass, most bid 2NT. A jump to 3NT is solid hearts, choice of games.
2♠	Long weak spades 0-7	2NT = strong, NF, misfit Others = natural and forcing;
2NT	Scramble with short hearts	
3♣/♦	Nat, NF, limited	

### 5.3.4. 1M – 1NT; 2NT: Trondheim

ART game-force, hands with great potential, only after 1M – 1NT;

#### 5.3.4.1. After 1♥ – 1NT; 2NT

3♣	5+ clubs	Natural continuations, 4♣ DWD
3♦	5+ diamonds	Natural continuations, 4♦ DWD
3♥	1=2=5=5	Min or max; opener's 3♠ is MST
3♠	3=2=4=4	
3NT	2=1=5=5	Min
4♣	2=1=5=5	Max
4♥	3♥	4-3-3-3 (usually min HCP)

#### 5.3.4.2. After 1♠ – 1NT; 2NT

3♣	5+ minor	3♦? 3♥ = clubs, 3♠ = diamonds; DWD follow-up
3♦	4 hearts	3♥? 3♠ = 2♠, 3NT = 1=4=4=4, 4m = 5m
3♥	5+ hearts	
3♠	2=3=4=4	
3NT	5-5 minors	

Opener uses 2♣ and 2NT to show strong hands, 2♥\* (clubs) and 2♦ (natural) are limited. Jumps are shapely with modest extras but a heart-spade reverse is 'full values'.

### 5.3.5. 1♥ – 1♠; 2NT: Nightmare type

6♥ and 3♠, modest extras or better

## 5.4. Two-Over-Ones

### 5.4.1. Summary

The game-forcing 2♣ [6.] apart, there are only three two-over-ones

1. 1♥ – 2♦; diamonds, FG or INV 6+ without 3♥
2. 1♠ – 2♦; hearts but could be light
3. 1♠ – 2♥; diamonds, FG or INV 6+ without 3♠

**5.4.2. 1♥ – 2♦; Diamonds****5.4.3. 1♠ – 2♦; Hearts****5.4.4. 1♠ – 2♥; Diamonds****5.5. Responder Passes 1-Major**

Either 1M (P) Pass or 1M (Any) Pass.

If they bid in 4th position after partner has passed, double is takeout with extras. 1NT is NAT but 2NT is always WEAK2NT (competing with extra length or five lower-ranking suit).

If a jump overcall is passed back to opener: Double = takeout and 2NT is WEAK2NT as above.

**5.6. Second-Hand Intervenes Over 1-Major**

A fit-jump is a jump in a new suit and the caller's first non-pass action. It shows 4+ support with length and values in the named suit. Fit-jumps define level: thus, if 3♣ and 4♣ are both available, 3♣ shows support equivalent to the 3-level, 4♣ support to the 4-level. Fit-jumps do not apply to higher-ranking games; thus 1♠ (3♦) 5♣ is clubs, even though 4♣ would be forcing.

Fit-jumps have priority over splinters as first (non-pass) actions and therefore splinters are only possible in these circumstance in an opposing suit. This does not apply to actors who have not previously passed; thus 1♦ (1♥) 1♠ (2♥); 4♣ is a club splinter in support of spades.

1M (X)	XX = Values, 9+, subsequent doubles are penalty 2NT = 4 card raise to 3-level+ (but 'Scanian' continuations are ON) All jumps in new suits are fit and define level Jump raises are mixed-raise type
1♥ (1♠/2m) 1♠ (2m/♥) Natural	2NT = 4 card raise to 3-level+ (but 'Scanian' continuations are OFF) Cue above 2M = 3CR, FG Jump-cues are splinters – these are the ONLY splinters Fit jumps define level: including to 4♥ but excluding higher games.
1M (1NT)	2M = Raise (all ranges) 2L = NAT NF 2NT = constructive 4+ raise. 3L = Fit jump
1♥ (2♠)	2NT = 4-card constructive raise 3L = NAT, F1
1M (3m) 1♠ (3♥)	New suits NAT, F1. 3NT Natural Jumps = Fit (including to 4♥ but excluding higher games).
1♥/♠ (2♥/♠)	2♠/3♥ = 3CR to 3-level+; 2NT = 4CR
1♥ (2NT*) 1♠ (2NT*) Both minors	3♣ = good raise in ♥; 3♦ = ♠, F1; 3♥ = stretched raise; 3♠ = NAT, NF 3♣ = ♥, F1; 3♦ = good raise in ♠; 3♥ = NAT, NF; 3♠ = stretched raise Double = values.



## 6. Responder Relays with 2♣

### 6.1. Definitions

After 1-major, game-forcing, clubs or balanced

After 1♦, may be 6+ clubs 9-11 when responder's relay-break of 3♣ is NF.

After 1♣, game-forcing, *diamonds* or balanced.

In this section after 1♣ – 2♣, rather than obstruct the text with 'responder's minor' or similar, it is assumed that the reader can make the obvious substitutions.

Responder's balanced types may include 5♦-3-3-2 or 5♦-4-2-2 and may have a shortage in the opened suit. Over 1♠ responder may be 5♥-3-3-2 but 1-other – 2♣ denies 5M.

2♣ initiates relays which can discover opener's exact shape when he has a side-suit of four or more cards. Lesser precision applies to single-suited hand-types but shortage (or absence thereof) is located and singleton/void clarified. Responder need not continue relaying and may break early to show specific types. Continuing to relay typically shows a fit and/or balanced type.

After shape is known, responder may ask for size, calibrated in slam points (3-2-1 points), via a slam-point ask (SPA) or set suits artificially requesting keycards.

#### 6.1.1. Playable strains

Only those suits in which an eight-card fit or better is possible *opposite a balanced hand* may be agreed (subject to common-sense leaps to slam).

Single-suiters are imperfectly defined (e.g. 6-3-2-2/7-2-2-2 or 6-3-3-1/7-3-2-1). No suit other than the main length is considered playable as any other might be a doubleton.

Bids in suits that are not thus qualified and are not part of the asking mechanisms are subject to last train and common-sense interpretations. For example, 5♣ may be natural even opposite a shortage whereas 4♠ opposite fewer than three cards will never be. Especially after 1-minor, when an unexpectedly high reveal of shape occurs, 4NT is often natural and non-forcing.

#### 6.1.2. 3NT

3NT is non-forcing in all but one sequence, when opener shows 5-5 see 6.3.3.1.

If opener bids on over responder's attempt to play 3NT he shows SPs beginning at 9 but when opener is known to have a six-card or longer major, 4M is natural and a contract correction.

##### 6.1.2.1. 3NT after opener's 3♣

Opener has 5-4-2-2 or 6-5-1-1/7-4-1-1. The wilder types correct to 4m showing 6-5-1-1 or 7-4-1-1 without extra values (responder's actions are as after immediate 4m showing 6-5/7-4 and identical to the reveal of those shapes following a SPA).

Extra SPs thus begin at 4♥. As that would have been the response over a 3♦ SPA and is, presumably, a reply responder was keen to avoid, opener needs considerable extra HCP (17+) as well as SPs to bid on. For simplicity however the starting-value of 9 for SPs is unaltered.

## 6.2. Artificial Moves and Slam Tools

### 6.2.1. Overview

Slam approach is appropriate to opener's revealed shape; that is, mechanisms depend on opener's hand-type:

- Balanced (5-3-3-2, 4-4-3-2, 4-3-3-3): **CONFI**, **Deadwood** (only ♣)
- Single-suited (6+ without side 4+ length): **SPA**, **Key-card** (long suit), **Deadwood** (♣)
- Two-suited (at least 5-4): **SPA**, **Key-card** (3-card suits or longer), **End-Signal** (4♦)
- Three-suited (5-4-4-0, 4-4-4-1): **SPA**, **Key-card**, **End-Signal** (4♦)

### 6.2.2. Slam points

The most flexible tool – and cheapest to employ – is the size ask.

#### 6.2.2.1. Slam Point Ask (SPA)

Slam Points are '3-2-1-points', A=3, K=2, Q=1. The cheapest bid, not 3NT, not 4♦ or above, asks for SPs. The highest a SPA can occur is 4♣ when opener revealed his shape at 3♠ or 3NT.

Opener responds numerically:

1. Count starts at six and increments by one
2. Singleton aces = 3, other honour-singletons = zero.

### 6.2.2.2. Special SPA after 5-4-2-2 / 6-5-1-1 / 7-4-1-1

In the two-suited scheme where 3♣ shows two equal shortages, opener can have significantly different shapes (5-4-2-2/6-5-1-1/7-4-1-1). Here special arrangements are made.

After 3♣, 3♦ is a SPA assuming 5-4-2-2 opposite, responses:

3♥ = 5-4-2-2, 6 SPs

3♠ = 5-4-2-2, 7 SPs

3NT = 5-4-2-2, 8 SPs

4♣ = 6-5-1-1 now treat as per 6-5-2-0 (4♦ end-signal, 4M KCA)

4♦ = 7-4-1-1 now treat as per 7-4-2-0 (Nat sign-offs, non-suits are KCAs)

4♥ = 5-4-2-2, 9 SPs

4♠... = 5-4-2-2, 10 SPs etc.

4♣/♦ show the same hand-types (with same follow-ups) as immediate 6-5-2-0 and 7-4-2-0.

### 6.2.2.3. Signing off after a SPA

Asking for SPs does not set a trump suit and there is no artificial end signal. After the response, responder can only play a suit-contract by bidding a game contract, subject to it being **either**:

- Not the cheapest suit and one in which opener has promised 3+ cards
- Opener's known six-card or longer suit (even though it might be cheapest call)

### 6.2.2.4. Locating slam points (singly)

After the ask responder may request location of honours (ace, king or queen) with cheapest bid (excluding 3NT to play) or sign off in any fit according to playable strain rules.

Honour placement is shown via 'Spiral Scan' or 'Denial Cue-bidding' (DCB):

- Suits order long to short: **ties and unknown lengths are addressed high rank first.**
- **Proceed** if suit includes 1/2 SPs.
- **Halt** if suit includes 0/3 SPs.

Subsequent passes ask for a second control in suits known to have 1 or 2 and the Jack in those with 0/3 controls.

### 6.2.2.5. Locating slam points (multiply)

As an alternative to finding 1 or 2 honours in each suit as above, responder may immediately ask for 2 or 3 honours.

The next-cheapest bid that is not a playable contract asks as above in the same fashion, except:

- **Proceed** if suit includes 2/3 SPs.
- **Halt** if suit includes 0/1 SP.

After suits for multiple asks are exhausted, subsequent asks locate jacks.

## 6.2.3. Keycards

### 6.2.3.1. Keycard asks

It is always possible to ask for key-cards in any playable strain (that is, an established length of 3+ cards in opener's hand). Keycard asks are the next artificial bids after a SPA (if present).

The lowest KCA is 3♠ (over 3♦ = 5-5) and all others are at least 4♣.

A KCA sets trumps and, subject to common-sense leaps to slam in another suit, fix strain.

### 6.2.3.2. Recognition of fits

KCAs are made artificially and at a higher level than asking for overall strength (SPA). When there is more than one possible fit (that is, only in two- and three-suited cases) two length-rules specify (and set) the trump suit.

1. Order opener's suits of 3+ cards longest to shortest.
2. Length-ties are broken by cheaper game ('sigma order': ♠/♥/♣/♦)

Note that after 1♠ opening with 5-5 in majors, cheapest ask is in *hearts* by sigma ordering. The same consideration affects minor 5-5s and same-rank 4-4s in 3-suited patterns.

### 6.2.3.3. Keycard responses

Keycard for indicated suit, in steps:

**0 or 3 | 1 or 4 | 2 | 2 + Q**

Follow-up asks locate trump queen (if unknown), kings, then queens in side suits in DCB fashion as in SPA – *with the same suit-rules*.

### 6.2.4. Deadwood

Deadwood is available only in clubs and only when opener is single-suited without a club shortage or balanced. The mechanism is the same as outside the relay structure.

### 6.2.5. CONFI

CONFI first establishes that sufficient controls (2-1-points) are present before searching for fits. It is available only when opener is balanced. The mechanism is the same as outside the relay structure, after 1NT and in the 2NT family.

### 6.2.6. Sign-Offs and End-Signals

Without slam ambition, responder can attempt to signoff after opener's shape is complete but before any further investigations. This is done,

- Artificially via end-signal (4♦) when opener establishes multiple 3+ lengths, that is when he is two- or three-suited.
- Naturally when opener is balanced or single-suite; only the opened suit and no-trumps are viable strains.

If responder commences slam investigation via SPA, KCA etc. sign-offs are particular to those methods.

#### 6.2.6.1. Artificial end-signal

Any suit in which opener has 3+ cards is a playable strain. To permit KCAs in each, 4♦ is set aside to be an **end-signal**, a puppet to 4♥. Two conditions must be met:

1. Opener is playable in more than one strain
2. Opener must have made his last response to shape-enquiries (3♣ and 3♦ qualify)

When the last shape response is 4♦ (7-5-1-0) or higher natural sign-offs apply.

#### 6.2.6.2. Breaking an End-Signal

Where opener has enough to make a slam try opposite minimum 2♣ response he may decline to bid 4♥ over 4♦; this will typically be about 17 HCPs or 9+ SPs.

- 1) 'Soft' – to a NF 4♠ when 4♥ was not playable (opener has <3) showing great spades and modest extras.
- 2) 'Hard' – show key cards with respect to longest suit by not bidding 4♥.
- 3) 'Wait and see' – where (1) was possible, bidding 4♥ and showing keycards over responder's choice of strain. (We don't have an agreement for immediately bidding above 4♠ when 4♥ not playable).

## 6.3. Showing Shape

### 6.3.1. Symmetric Relay

Opener reveals his distribution by artificial rebids. The majority of shapes are shown via symmetric relays: the end-point shows a pattern, the intervening bids show which suits are second-longest and shortest. For shortages in single- and three-suited patterns, a more natural approach is used.

The initial responses after 1L – 2♣:

2♦ = Balanced or 3-suited or hearts second-longest (or, if opener was 1♥, diamonds)

2♠ = 3-suited or balanced

3♣ = Balanced or 4-4-4-1 after 1m opener

3♦/♥/♠ = 5-4-4-0 naming shortage (NGF)

3NT = Balanced minimum

4♣... = Balanced maximum, control-showing

2NT... = as below

2♥ = Spades second-longest (or, if opener was 1♠, diamonds)

2NT... = as below

2♠ = Single-suited (6+, no side 4-card suit)

2NT = Clubs second-longest, lower-ranking shortage

3♣ = 5-4-2-2 / 6-5-1-1 / 7-4-1-1 "two equal shortages"

3♦... Continue to show patterns in the two-suited scheme (which began at 2NT)

### 6.3.2. Natural Goes First (NGF)

Shortages in 3-suiters and 1-suiters are shown *Natural Goes First*. The next (three) bids are used in a natural sense if they can be but if one or more calls do not make sense they are filled in order of ascending rank (clubs first).

#### 6.3.2.1. Example – one impossible designation

Opener bids 3♣ showing a **diamond** single-suiter and a shortage, responder relays with 3♦:

3♥ = Short heart

3♠ = Short spade

3NT = Short club – because 'NT' doesn't make sense

#### 6.3.2.2. Example – two impossible designations

Opener bids 3♣ showing a **heart** single-suiter and a shortage, responder relays with 3♦: only 3♠ can be filled naturally, that leaves 3♥ and 3NT.

3♥ = Short club – cheaper bid for cheapest unplaced option

3♠ = Short spade

3NT = Short diamond – next impossible bid for next higher unplaced option.

### 6.3.3. Two-suiters

With a side suit of 4+ cards, opener uses the 'main sequence' to show exact pattern, starting at 2NT. This same sequence appears when first-rebids of 2♦ and 2♥ are inserted. The 2♦/♥ bids are pseudo-transfers, that is, transfers to second suits if they can be.

Opener's immediate bids of 2NT and above show clubs. Explicitly:

1. 1L – 2♣; 2♦ – 2♥; 2NT+ – hearts second-longest or, if opener was 1♥, diamonds.
2. 1L – 2♣; 2♥ – 2♠; 2NT+ – spades second-longest or, if opener was 1♠, diamonds.
3. 1L – 2♣; 2NT+ – opener's second-longest is clubs.

#### Main Sequence:

2NT = lower shortage

3♣<sup>1</sup> = 5-4-2-2 / 6-5-1-1 / 7-4-1-1 (3M now stopper showing, 3♥ = low, 3♠ = high)

3♦<sup>2,3</sup> = 5-5-2-1 / 5-5-3-0 or 6-4-3-0 with higher-ranking 4-card

3♥ = 5-4-3-1

3♠ = 6-4-2-1

3NT<sup>3</sup> = 6-4-3-0 (minimum with higher-ranking 4-card)

4♣ = 6-5-2-0

4♦ = 7-4-2-0

4♥ = 7-5-1-0

4♠ = 6-6-1-0

- 1) Responder may make a SPA with 3♦ when 4♣/♦ = 6-5-1-1/7-4-1-1. Alternatives: after a 1M opener, 3♥/♠ show stoppers (clubs/fourth suit); again 4♣/♦ reveals extreme shapes, with 5-4-2-2- and unable to bid 3NT, opener reverts to 4M. The same applies after 1m.
- 2) Responder can resolve shapes with 3♥ SPA and can guarantee to play 3NT opposite a minimum 6 SPs.
- 3) When 5-5 in the indicated two suits is impossible both 3NT and 3♦ show 6-4-3-0:
  - a) 3NT = 6-4-3-0 minimum (6/7 SPs), values outside long suit, less encouraging than 3♦
  - b) 3♦ = 6-4-3-0 and 3♥ is a SPA, 3♠ KCA in longest, etc.

**6.3.3.1. Slam tools: SPA, KCA and End-signal.**

NOTE: With 5-5 in the majors, opener's primary suit (s1) is HEARTS by sigma ordering (6.2.3.2) and with a minor 5-5 it is CLUBS despite the opening bid in each case.

	3♣	3♦	3♥	3♠	3NT	4♣	4♦
	'5-4-2-2'	5-5	5-4-3-1	6-4-2-1	6-4-3-0	6-5-2-0	7-4-2-0
3♦	SPA <sup>1</sup>						
3♥	Stops lower <sup>2</sup>	SPA <sup>3</sup>					
3♠	Stops higher <sup>2</sup>	KCA (s1)	SPA				
3NT	To play	To play	To play	To play			
4♣	KCA (s1)	KCA (s2)	KCA (s1)	SPA	SPA		
4♦	End-signal	End-signal	End-signal	End-signal	End-signal	End-signal	
4♥	KCA (s2)	KCA (s3) <sup>5</sup>	KCA (s2)	KCA (s1)	KCA (s1)	KCA (s1)	NAT/KCA <sup>4</sup>
4♠			KCA (s3)	KCA (s2)	KCA (s2)	KCA (s2)	NAT/KCA <sup>4</sup>
4NT							KCA

1. Over 3♣, 3♦ asks for SPs normally (3♥/♠/NT = 6/7/8) but 4♣ and 4♦ are reserved for 6-5-1-1 and 7-4-1-1 respectively, count of SPs resumes at 4♥ = 9 etc. The wild shapes of 4-minor are treated as those in the table (with voids).
2. Over 3♣ responder can show stops by rank. This has the advantage that 3♥ shows clubs, the suit responder is most likely to hold which in turn allows opener to prevaricate with 3♠, asking for help in fourth suit and deferring declarer-siding.
3. Over 3♦, the SPA responses are such that responder can declare 3NT opposite 6 SPs:
  - 3♠ = void, now 3NT is NF opposite 6 SPs, otherwise 4♣ forces SP with 4♦ = 6 etc.
  - 3NT = 6 SPs, 5-5-2-1
  - 4♣ = 7 SPs, 5-5-2-1
  - 4♦ = 8 SPs etc.
4. Over 4♦, 4M is natural if it is a long suit, a KCA if it is not.
5. KCA in s3 only available when 3♦ is 6-4-3-0

**6.3.4. Single-suiters**

Single-suiters respond 2♠ to 2♣. Responder relays with 2NT.

1any - 2♣; 2♠ - 2NT; Opener has 6+ suit	3♣ = 6+ cards any singleton (not void), 3♦? NGF as 3♥... below 3♦ = 6+ no shortage 3♥/♠/NT = Min, 7+ void NGF 4♣/♦/♥ = MAX. 7+ void NGF, 9+ SPs
--	--

It is not possible to identify opener's 3 card suits when,

- a) He might be 6-3-3-1 or 7-3-2-1 (both respond 3♣)
- b) He might be 7-3-3-0 or 8-3-2-0 (both bid shortage immediately, subject to range)
- c) He is 6-3-2-2

**6.3.4.1. Slam tools: SPA, KCA, Deadwood (♣). No end-signal.**

Excepting 3NT and long suit, step-1 is SPA, step-2 is KCA in opener's suit and (opener not short in clubs), step-3 is Deadwood for clubs.

- SPA limits are 9 for majors, 10 for minors
- KCA in long suit only.
- Deadwood (DWD) only in clubs opposite non-shortage
- When opener has long major, game is to play, when opener has a minor, 4m is ART.

	3♦	3♥	3♠	3NT	4♣	4♦	4♥
	6+ no shortage	6+ shortage Limited SP	As 3♥	As 3♥	6+ shortage 9/10+ SP	As 4♣	As 4♣
3♥	SPA						
3♠	KCA	SPA					
3NT	To play	To play	To play				
4♣	DWD (♣)	KCA	SPA	SPA			
4♦		DWD* (♣)	KCA	KCA	KCA		
4♥ NAT			DWD*	DWD*	DWD*	KCA*	
4♠ NAT			DWD*	DWD*	DWD*	KCA*	KCA*
4NT							KCA

DWD\* is available only when 4M is not natural and opener does not have club shortage.

KCA\* is available only when 4M is not natural.

**6.3.5. Three-suiters**

Three-suiters (4-4-4-1 after 1♦ or 5-4-4-0) rebid 2♦ then 2♠.

1Major opener	3♦/♥/♠ = 5-4-4-0, void-showing NGF
1♦ opener	3♣ = 4-4-4-1, now 3♦? 3♥/♠/NT = Shortage, NGF, < 10 SPs 4♣ = Shortage, 10+ SPs 3♦/♥/♠ = 5-4-4-0, void NGF

**6.3.5.1. Slam tools: SPA, KCA, End-signal**

Note unlike single-suiters where min/max have separate shortage-showing schemes, three-suited hands which require more potential KCAs, do not. They use 3NT/4♣ as NF/extras in response to the singleton ask.

	3♦	3♥	3♠	3NT	4♣
	5-4-4-0	5-4-4-0 4-4-4-1	5-4-4-0 4-4-4-1	4-4-4-1m < 10 SPs	4-4-4-1m 10+ SPs
3♥	SPA				
3♠	KCA (s1)	SPA			
3NT	To play	To play	To play		
4♣	KCA (s2)	KCA (s1)	SPA	SPA	
4♦	End-signal	End-signal	End-signal	End-signal	End-signal
4♥	KCA (s3)	KCA (s2)	KCA (s1)	KCA (s1)	KCA (s1)
4♠		KCA (s3)	KCA (s2)	KCA (s2)	KCA (s2)
4NT			KCA (s3)	KCA (s3)	KCA (s3)

**6.3.6. Balanced**

Balanced types (5-3-3-2) rebid 2♦ then 2♠ then 3♣ (majors), 3NT or, with 18-19, 4-level.

Full path: 1M – 2♣; 2♦ – 2♥; 2♠ – 2NT

<p>1Major opener</p> <p>Two ranges, Weak-NT = 12-14, MAX-NT = 18-19. Higher range shows 2-1-controls at 4-level.</p>	<p>3♣ = Weak NT. Now,</p> <p>3♦ = CONF</p> <p>3M = NAT</p> <p>3♥ (after 1♠) = NAT, choice of games.</p> <p>3NT = 'Uninteresting weak NT'</p> <p>4♣ = MAX-NT, 0-5 controls</p> <p>4♦ = MAX-NT, 6 controls etc.</p>
<p>1♦ opener</p> <p>Strong variant unusual – but still chance for diamond dominant weak-NT.</p>	<p>3NT = 'Uninteresting weak NT'</p> <p>4♣ = MAX-NT, 0-5 controls</p> <p>4♦ = MAX-NT, 6 controls etc.</p>

**6.3.6.1. Slam tools: CONF**

**6.4. Breaking Relays**

Relay breaks are natural with the exception of 1any – 2♣; 2♦ – 2♠. All breaks deny strength to continue relaying; that is, when responder relays two or more times, he implies sound values.

**6.4.1. After 1 Major**

If responder has sufficiently good clubs to envisage playing that strain without 3-card support, he must not relay after his first response.

<p>1M – 2♣; 2♦</p> <p>Opener is two-suited with hearts/diamonds <i>or</i> any 3-suiter <i>or</i> balanced.</p>	<p>3M = min 3CR, usually with clubs (but not 6+), often lacking sufficient stoppers to declare no-trumps.</p> <p>2♠ = ART, 3CR with clubs, possible shortage (2NT waiting)</p> <p>2NT = Clubs, no shortage, usually doubleton major.</p> <p>3♣ = 6+ clubs and 3M</p> <p>3♦ = clubs and diamonds</p> <p>3OM = clubs and other-major</p> <p>You don't have to show a 3CR raise immediately – but that's what the calls mean if you do. Presumably, because this will wrong-side no-trumps opposite a weak NT, responder won't have any tenaces to protect.</p>
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1M - 2♣; 2♥ Opener is two-suited with spades/diamonds.	2NT = Clubs, no shortage, usually doubleton major. 3♣ = 6+ clubs, distributional, often short major 3♠/♦ [fit] = clubs and short major 3♦/♠ [4 <sup>th</sup> suit] = clubs and suit, short major
1M - 2♣; 2♠ Opener is single-suited and with a balanced hand, responder will invariably check opener's shortages.	3♣ = 6+ clubs, distributional, often short major 3M = 3CR, usually soft values in other suits 3♦/OM = At least 6-4, possibly 6-5, short major.

### 6.4.2. After 1♦

In the Weak NT path there is no major-suit alternative to unravel so opener simply raises (2NT relay) to 3NT. The 3♣ response is used for 4-4-4-1s. Both R3 (18-19) a and possible R2 (15-17) use control-showing responses.

1♦ - 2♣; 2♦ Opener is two-suited with hearts <i>or</i> any 3-suiter <i>or</i> balanced.	2♠ = ART distributional with clubs and diamonds (2NT?) 2NT = Clubs FG, no shortage 3♣ = 6+ clubs, shapely 3♦ = Both minors (fit for opener), stopper worries 3M = Clubs and major, pure
1♦ - 2♣; 2♥ Opener is two-suited with spades.	2NT = Clubs FG, no shortage 3♣ = INV type, 9-11, 6+ clubs 3♦ = Both minors (fit for opener), stopper worries 3♥ = Clubs and hearts, pure 3♠ = Clubs and spades, short diamonds
1♦ - 2♣; 2♠ Opener is single-suited.	3♣ = INV type, 9-11, 6+ clubs 3♦ = Both minors (fit for opener), stopper worries 3M = Mainly about stoppers

## 6.5. Fast Arrival Fit-Finding in balanced types (FAFF)

### 6.5.1. Rationale

This mechanism caters for responder's less-good 2♣ relay hands, where an above-3NT control-showing reply would be awkward in the auction: 1m - 2♣; 2♦ - 2♥; 2♠ - 2NT; 4L. Instead of 2NT responder makes a suit-specific weak relay of 3♣/♦, effectively saying "treat strong NT as a weak NT".

In mini-position we certainly open 1M on 5M-3-3-2 with strong-NT values. We also have the option to open 1M with 16+ and control 1M - 1NT; via a 2♣ rebid. Again though responder relays with 2♣, he might not be willing to see opener bid above 3NT.

### 6.5.2. Principle

The FAFF mechanism occurs after 1L - 2♣; 2♦ - 2♥; 2♠. At this point opener might be either balanced or three suited, 5-4-4-0 and after 1♣/♦, 4-4-4-1. Responder has a strong relay of 2NT but that risks opener bidding out controls above 3NT on R3 values (or even R2 in mini-position).

Responder (artificially) shows the major in which an 8-card fit might be possible:

- 3♣ = hearts, and maybe spades
- 3♦ = spades
- 3♥ = hearts and clubs (typically 5)
- 3♠ = spades and clubs



In the 'minor case' interest implies a 4-card suit, in the 'major case' 3-card support or 4-cards in unbid major. In the 'spade case', 3♣ shows 5♥ and looks for 5-3 hearts.

### 6.5.3. Opener's reaction

Over 3♣/♦ if responder has a fit (excepting some super-maximums) he bids 4♥/♠ - fast arrival. If he thinks 3NT the best spot from his side, he bids it: **Fast Arrival Fit-Finding**.

The common balanced hands only ever bid 3M ("don't know" / super-max) or end with 3NT/4M. Recall that 1L - 2♣; 2♦ - 2♥; 2♠ includes 3-suiters, 5-4-4-0 in both cases and additionally, 4-4-4-1 after 1m.

The 3-suited hands bid step-1 (we need the space to find/assess fits). **Bad news / good news**: usually a void in the responder's suggestion but where that is an opened suit, a 5-4-4-0 hand with extra values.

#### 6.5.3.1. Over 3♣: 'hearts',

3♦ = short in hearts OR if impossible, 5♥-4-4-0 extras (3♥? NGF).

3♥ = No fit, suggesting 4♠ or 3NT from responder's side OR bal-super-max (4♥)

3NT = NAT

4♥ = FIT, balanced or 3-suited, minimum

After 1♥ there are void-showing splinters 3♠/4♣/4♦ all showing extras (say 9+ SP) all natural!

After 1m only two are required, the cheapest (3♠) is used for 4-4-4-1 with extras plus fit (3NT? NGF); 4♣/♦ SPL by NGF 5-4-4-0

#### 6.5.3.2. Over 3♦: 'spades',

3♥ = short in spades OR if impossible, 5♠-4-4-0 extras (3♠? NGF).

3♠ = No fit, suggesting 3NT from responder's side OR bal-super-max (4♠)

3NT = NAT

After 1♠ there are void-showing splinters 4♣/♦/♥ all showing extras (say 9+ SP) all natural!

After 1m only two are required, the cheapest (4♣) is used for 4-4-4-1 with extras plus fit (4♦? NGF); 4♣/♦ SPL by NGF 5-4-4-0

## 7. 1NT Opening, Responses and Competition

Same system whether 1NT is 14-16, 15-17 or 9-12.

Same system when we overcall 1NT in direct seat (15-18), subject to 'they have a suit' considerations.

### 7.1. Modified Sheldon; 2♣, 2♦ and 2♥

#### 7.1.1. Approach

*Modified Sheldon* was invented by Edward Lockhart and responder (advancer) shows holdings rather than asks.

The name itself is something of an insider's joke; the then Ed Sheldon created an alternative to Stayman when he developed *The Way Forward* at Cambridge in the eighties though this version is quite different. Ed has changed name since, so calling this 'Modified Sheldon' has a certain charm.

There are a number of options available to anyone deploying the convention. In original form all major suit hand types were catered for by 2♣ through 2♠ and it is on adherent's ingenuity to design their own or select off-the-peg conventions to cover minor suit hands. Though 4-major and longer minor are in MS, single-suited minors of all strengths and minor two-suiters remain outside. The variation below puts all 5♠ invitational hands via 2♣ in order to employ the 2♠ response for minor hands.

#### 7.1.2. General observations

Note that it is not possible to respond 2♣ (or 2♦) without promising major length; there is no equivalent of 'Stayman and 2NT' to show an invitational raise without a four-card major and no way of getting to a major with a weak hand with both majors. You can, however, stage an escape from 1NT with four (exceptionally three) spades and long diamonds.

#### 7.1.3. Structure

- 2♣ 4+ Spades, may have longer hearts; weak (5♠), INV (any) or FG (any)
- 2♦ 4+ Hearts, ordinarily denies 4 spades; weak, Bal INV (4♥) or FG
- 2♥ 5+ Hearts, NF, INV (balanced/unbalanced), may have 4♠

#### 7.1.4. Memory Guides

- 4-4-4-1 hands:
  - jump to a major to name shortage (looks like a splinter...)
  - bid a minor 'naturally' after showing both majors (looks natural...)
- When responder shows two suits (a major and a minor) only when the minor is diamonds is 3M a stopper showing bid.
- In the same position, opener always uses the other minor to show support for the major with the jump to game in the major (most expensive call) showing support for both suits.

#### 7.1.5. Over 2♣

Opener's responses are just:

- 2♦ Denies 4 spades
- 2♥ 4+ spades and a maximum
- 2♠ 4+ spades and a minimum

##### 7.1.5.1. Over opener's 2♥/♠ rebid

There are *no game tries* over the 2♥/♠ response to 2♣ - all continuations look towards game choice or slam except 3♥ over 2♥ which is a retransfer (for right-siding considerations only). Whilst 3NT offers choice of game, 2NT shows 4 major and allows opener to assess the trick taking capabilities. Jumps are splinter; immediately showing five trumps, via 2NT, four. To start control bidding, opener bids 3M or retransfers. A delayed 3NT by either side is poor trumps.

**7.1.5.2. Over opener's 2♦ rebid**

Over 2♦, responder can continue:

2♥ Transfer, opener almost always bids 2♠, FG except pass/2NT:

2NT INV NF, might be unbalanced - no equivalent heart sequence

3m Natural FG, 5♠+4+minor

3♥ 5-5

3♠ 6+ spades FG

3NT 5-3-3-2 game choice

4L SPL

2♠ Both majors, INV+. Opener bids with respect to hearts:

2NT Min, no fit, NF:

3♣ ART INV, 3♦ looks for fifth heart (3♥ = yes)

3♦ ART, 4=4=4=1 or 4=4=1=4, opener relays with 3♥

3♠ Diamond splinter, 4=4=1=4

3NT Club splinter, 4=4=4=1 - pass possible

4♣ Club splinter, 4=4=4=1 - Max

3♥ Smolen, therefore 4♥ and 5♠

3♠ Smolen, therefore 4♠ and 5♥

3NT Nat, most likely 4-4 majors

4♣ 6♥-4♠ - 'Super Smolen'

4♦ 6♠-4♥

3♣ Max, no fit, ART, all s above (no 'last chance' for majors)

3♦ As above, i.e. 4=4=1=4 / 4=4=4=1

3♥ etc. As above Smolen etc.

3♦ Max, heart fit

3♥ Min, heart fit

2NT Four spades natural, INV, NF

3minor Natural, 5+ minor only four spades, FG

3♥ Splinter, FG, 4=1=4=4

3♠ 6+ spades, INV, NF

3NT Natural

4m SPL

**7.1.6. Over 2♦**

Opener almost always bids 2♥ as invitational heart hands are excluded. If opener thinks he has such a good hand game might be good when responder might not bid again, he has 3♥. However this does mean that four card support is often present. There is considerable symmetry with 2♣. After 2♥ responder can pass or continue:

2♠ Five hearts, FG, all others show only 4 hearts (except 3♥ or taking control):

2NT Normal, no four card fit

3minor Natural, no four card fit

3♥ Four card support

3♠ Natural 5♠

3NT Best contract

4minor Control bid

4♥ Good trumps (4+), minimum

2NT INV, NF, only four hearts

3minor Natural, 5+ minor only four hearts, FG

3♥ 6+ hearts, INV, NF

3♠ Splinter, FG, 1=4=4=4

3NT Natural

4m SPL

**7.1.7. Over 2♥**

Natural rebids; with only two hearts but support for both minors opener can try 2NT. With 4=2=(34) 2♠ is a possibility if happy to play some 4-3 spade fits. With many hands that would pass a classic transfer then 2NT auction, opener should probably pass.

**7.1.8. After Responder Shows Two Suits**

In no-fit auctions opener should indicate stopper in unbid suits. Many many situations require no special agreements:

- 1NT 2♦
- 2♥ 3♣ 4♥ 5+♣
- 3♦ Diamond stop, no spade stop
- 3♥ Heart support, 3-cards when responder has shown five, min 4CR
- 3♠ Spade stop, no diamond stop
- 3NT Both spades and diamonds stopped
- 4♣ Club support
- 4♦ 4 card (or good) heart support
- 4♥ Support both hearts and clubs

However, if responder has diamonds, there is not enough room to bid naturally and 3-level support for responder's major is sacrificed for stopper-showing.

- 1NT 2♦
- 2♥ 3♦ 4♥ 5+♦
- 3♥ Club stop, no spade stop
- 3♠ Spade stop, no club stop
- 3NT Both spades and clubs stopped
- 4♣ Heart support
- 4♦ Diamond support
- 4♥ Support both hearts and diamond

**7.2. 2♠ Responses and Higher**

**7.2.1. Summary**

- 2♠ = Clubs single-suited, any strength
- 2NT = Diamonds single-suited, any strength; if FG not short clubs.
- 3♣ = 5-Card Stayman, possible balanced slam approach
- 3♦ = Diamonds, FG, either short club (...3♠) or both minors (others)
- 3M = SPL, 3OM, 5-4 minors
- 3NT = END
- 4♣ = Both majors, game only
- 4♦/♥ = TRF to ♥/♠, either game-only or taking control with KCA or Exclusion-ask.
- 4♠ = Punchy raise to 4NT, typically 5m-3-3-2 providing tricks opposite max and controls.
- 4NT = Sterile raise to 4-3-3-3 but requisite HCP

**7.2.2. Continuations**

<p>1NT - 2♠ (♣)                  1NT - 2NT (♦)                  Poss. HHxxxx                  when opener                  needs fitting top                  honour plus                  controls to                  ACCEPT.</p>	<p>Step-1                  DECLINES 3NT                  Step-2 ACCEPTS                  3NT</p>	<p>Unless responder passes or converts an ACCEPT to his suit or 3NT, new suits are shortage. Note with long diamonds, only major-shortage.                  Responder's or opener's 4♣ is DWD.                  Responder's jump to 4L is Exclusion.                  Responder's 3NT after a DECLINE is a MST.</p>
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1NT – 3♣ 5-CARD STAYMAN	FG, at most one 4-card major.  Balanced slam approach	3♦ = No 5-card major, now:  3♥ = 4♠ (opener bids 3♠/3NT with/without fit) 3♠ = 4♥ (opener bids 4♥/3NT with/without fit)  3M = 5-card suit  Responder may follow (in any sequence) with:  4♣ = CONFI. Control ask (0-4/5/6/7...) 4♦ = SUPERCONFI. Controls as above, F6NT
1NT – 3♦ DIAMONDS FG '3=3=6=1' or both minors	FG	3♥ usual when:  3♠ = ALL short-club hands (3NT = stops clubs; 4♣ = OK not great; 4♦ = DWD)  3NT = Both minors, min  4m = Both minors, good hand; 4NT playable. 4M = Void  3♠ = Good clubs: now 3NT = short club NF; 4♣ = DWD; 4♦ = still interested despite short clubs. 4M = Exclusion.  3NT = short club stop and values in the majors (e.g. ♠AJx ♦HKQ10xx ♦xx ♣KQx)  4♣ = 4-4 minors, great hand
1NT – 3M SPL	3=1=5-4 or 1=3=5-4  Seldom 5-5-3-0	3NT = Stops hearts  4m = Deadwood 4M = Pure hand, no heart wastage, 4-4 minors
1NT – 4♣ Both majors	GAME ONLY	Opener may prevaricate with 4♦.
1NT – 4♦/♥ Major TRF	Game only or strong slam try	
1NT – 4♠	QUANTITATIVE	Aggressive invitation (low HCP) but with productive suit; most likely 5-3-3-2.
1NT – 4NT	QUANTITATIVE	Sterile invitation (joint HCP = 33) but with 4-3-3-3

## 7.3. Opponents Intervene

### 7.3.1. With 2♣

Over a 2♣ intervention we play double = 4+ spades ("I would have bid 2♣...") and full system on – 2♦ = hearts etc., no matter what their 2♣ means. If 2♣ implies spades (either single suited or one of two or more), then X can be the start of a penalty taking auction.

If there is no anchor suit, e.g. 'any single suiter' or three suited (whether it includes clubs or not, from experience this can be a three card suit) then all our sequences are intact.

When 2♣ promises an anchor suit –likely to be clubs or hearts, possibly diamonds – the same scheme should apply as when 1NT is an overcall.

2♣ is "hearts and another" (whatever the relative lengths) including "both majors".

1NT	(2♣)	X	Four+ spades, system on
		2♦	Natural NF
		2♥	No-major invitation (replaces club length)
		2♠...	Clubs...

2♣ is clubs(!)

1NT	(2♣)	X	Four+ spades, system on
	2♦		Hearts as before
	2♥		Heart invite as before
	2♠		No-major invitation (replaces club length)
	2NT		Diamonds
	3♣...		5-Card Stayman...

2♣ is a transfer (diamonds):

1NT	(2♣)	X	Four+ spades, system on
	2♦		Hearts as before
	2♥		Heart invite as before
	2♠		Clubs as before
	2NT		No-major invitation (replaces diamond length)
	3♣...		5-Card Stayman...

### 7.3.2. Higher Overcalls

When opponents Intervene with 2♦ or more we're in transfer territory:

#### 7.3.2.1. Natural 2-level overcall:

1NT	(2L)	X	Negative
	2M		Non-forcing
	2NT		Weak, competitive in a lower-ranking suit OR clubs, FG (cue, high suit)
	3♣*		Diamonds, INV+
	3♦*		Hearts, INV+ (FG if 2♥ available)
	3♥*		Spades, INV+ (FG if 2♠ available)
	3♠		3-suiter, typically 5-4-4-0
	3NT		To play
	4m		'Leaping Michaels'

\* = transfer to opponents' suit shows a stopper and four cards in the other major (both majors if they bid diamonds?). When they are a long suit, these bids (and 2NT=clubs) are invitational or better.

#### 7.3.2.2. Artificial 2-level overcall (e.g. 2♦ = spades, or 2♥ = hearts):

1NT	(2L)	X	Takeout of anchor-suit
	2M		Non-forcing
	2Anc		No-major invitation
	2NT		Weak, competitive in a lower-ranking suit OR clubs, FG (cue, high suit)
	3♣*		Diamonds, INV+
	3♦*		Hearts, INV+ (FG if 2♥ available)
	3♥*		Spades, INV+ (FG if 2♠ available)
	3♠		3-suiter, typically 5-4-4-0
	3NT		To play
	4m		'Leaping Michaels'

\* = transfer to opponents' anchor-suit shows a stopper and four cards in the other major

**7.4. They intervene over our 2♣ response:**

We behave as if 2♣ was a transfer to spades: double is three cards, bidding the suit showing four (but 2♦ is three). Thus it would be reasonable for opener to bid above 2♣ with fit and good cards. Over X and 2♦ however (which take up no space), we may as well retain our agreements for 2M.

1NT	(Pass) 2♣	(X);	Pass	Neutral with 2♠
			XX	Good clubs
			2♦	Three spades
			2♥/♠	Four spades as before
	(2♦);	Pass	Denies 3+ spades	
		X	3♠	
			2♥/♠	Four spades as before
	(2♥);	Pass	Denies 3+ spades	
		X	3♠	
			2♠	Four (min – 'transfer' breaks possible)
	(2♠!);	Pass	denies 3+ spades	
		X	3+♠	
			3L	Four spades - non min
	(2NT+);	Bidding at 3L shows four spades, X = 3♠ and values		

If opener passes and this goes back to responder, then if 2♥ (or a X of 2♥) is available all systemic continuations are intact (2♥/X-of-2♥ is a transfer, 2♠ both majors, immediate 3L bids show 4-5 etc.). If 2♦ is available it is natural (consistent with responder running with 4♠ and longer diamonds). A double of 2♦ is takeout and consistent with 4-4 majors.

**7.5. They intervene over our 2♦ response:**

And we'll do the same over 2♦, treating it as a regular transfer despite the guarantee of a heart fewer than normal.

1NT	(Pass) 2♦	(X);	Pass	Normally 2 hearts
			XX	Something good in diamonds
			2♥	3+ hearts
	(2♥!);	Pass	Denies 3+ hearts	
		X	3+♥	
			2NT/3L	Four hearts
	(2♠+);	2NT/3L	Four hearts	
		X	3♥ and values	

## 8. Two-Level Openings

### 8.1. Opening 2♣

In first three seats, three-way:

- BAL 22-23 (2NT rebid, NF)
- Other FG hands (balanced 26-27) except primary diamonds and secondary clubs or hearts (developed via 2♦ opener)
- Weak 2♦

In fourth seat, no weak type, other ranges and restrictions remain.

#### 8.1.1. Responding to multi-way 2♣

After 2♣ opener:

2♦ To play opposite weak 2♦	2NT = 22-23 NF All others NAT, FG 3NT = 26-27	Cheapest suit [not 2NT] is second-negative, 2NT = positive [5+ suit, at least 2 working cards] in suit of negative. See 2NT Family For 3NT as 2NT but level higher. After 2M Helgemo's favourite convention: "I have to mention the <b>Mandarin Kitchen Splinter</b> . That was invented by Simon Gillis during one of many dinners at the exquisite Chinese restaurant in London. The convention gives you the opportunity to differentiate between a weak splinter [...] by jumping to 3♠ over 2♥ and to 3NT over 2♠, and 'good' splinters (5+ points for all other jumps)."
2M Good 6-card suit, 11-14 HCPs	NF opposite weak type.	Weak opener raises (3/4M) with Hx/3+ trumps if game is possible or 3♦ with bad misfit. Strong types bid anything except 3♦ or raise.
2NT RELAY	3♣ = min weak-two 3♦ = non-min weak-two Others = strong type.	Now 3♦ is END. Others are NAT, FG  F6L, NAT continuations
3♣/♥/♠ NAT F4L	Weak hands raise	New suit or 3NT [responder bids suits up-the-line] shows strong type and is F4NT.
3♦ To play opposite weak-type	Limited to 8-11 to avoid problem if strong type.	Strong type bids 3M or 3NT.

#### 8.1.2. Intervention over 2♣

Assume weak option. 2NT still relay. If bid or Double passed to strong hand, Double/Redouble = strong BAL. Continuations NAT. 2NT = strong BAL, good stop, not interested in penalty. Now as 2NT opener. 3NT = to play, may not be BAL. 2♣ (X) XX is a top diamond honour.

#### 8.1.3. Fourth-seat 2♣

2♣ opener in 4th position can only include strong type.

Responses: 'Heart Murmur'; 2♥ = 0-2 Slam Points [3-2-1], 2♦ = 3+ SP.



## 8.2. Opening 2♦

Weak two in a major or BAL 24-25 or FG, two-suited with primary diamonds and secondary clubs or hearts.

### 8.2.1. Responding to Multi 2♦

2♥ Pass/correct to weak major	2NT = BAL 24-25 3♣ = Diamonds & 4+♣ 3♦ = Diamonds & 4♥ 3♥ = Diamonds & 5♥ 3♠ = Diamonds & 5♣	Continuations as 2NT opener.
2♠ Pass/correct but maybe INV in hearts	2NT = BAL 24-25 3♣ = Diamonds & 4+♣ 3♦ = Max weak 2♥ 3♥ = Min weak 2♥ 3♠ = Diamonds & 4+♥	
2NT Relay, INV+ opp. 2M-type Opener <b>never</b> names his major. Strong hands start at 4-level	3♣ = minimum weak 2M	3♦ = asks for suit in flipped order 3♥/♠ = Pass/correct
	3♦ = weak 2♥, good suit 3♥ = weak 2♠, good suit	3♥ FG, shortage next, NGF (3♠ = none). 3♠ FG, continuations as above
	3♠ = weak 2♥, max hand 3NT = weak 2♠, as above	
	4♣ = Diamonds & 4+♣ 4♦ = Diamonds & 4♥ 4♥ = Diamonds & 5♥ 4♠ = Diamonds & 5♣ 4NT = BAL 24-25 5♣ = Diamonds and clubs	F6L so responder can bid 'psychic' 2NT but needs to be careful not to bid it with less than a positive to '2♣' type opener.
3♣/♦ Asks for holding in ♥/♠ Strong hands start at 4NT	Opener shows length in steps, e.g. after 2♦ - 3♣: 3♦ = 0/1 Hearts 3♥ = 2 3♠ = 3 3NT = 4 4♣ = 5/6 no shortage/♣ 4♦ = 5/6 short ♦ 4♥ = 5/6 short ♥	3♥/♠ to play  3NT for shortage (4♣ = none) 4♣ for shortage 4♦ accept with club shortage
3♥ Pass/correct	3NT = 24-25 4♣/♦ with ♦+♣/♥	
3♠ NAT INV	Pass or 4♦ with weak 2♥ others show strong type.	

4♣ TRF to major	4♦ = weak hearts 4♥ = weak spades 4♠ = Diamonds and hearts 4NT = Strong BAL 5♣ = Diamonds and clubs	Sets up forcing pass Strong hands bid 4NT, 5♣/♦
4♦ End-signal with own suit	4♥ on weak-types	Strong hands bid 4NT, 5♣/♦
4♥ Pass/correct		No forcing pass
4♠ NAT	End	No forcing pass
4NT Blackwood	Zero / 1 / 2 / 3	

### 8.2.2. Second-hand intervenes

We switch off the constructive 3-minor (they become natural NF) but retain as far as possible other responses:

- i. 2NT as a constructive ask
- ii. 4♣ is "bid by transfer"
- iii. 4♦ puppets to 4♥
- iv. Pass/correct 3♥ and 4♥
- v. 3♠ is natural
- vi. 3NT is natural

Additionally

- vii. Double of majors is negative (to avoid inferring the wrong suit)
- viii. Double of minors is penalty
- ix. Responder's 3-level cue is a stopper ask
- x. Opener's cue in response to any action is a strong type
- xi. If responder passes, opener bids strong types naturally
- xii. If responder doubles:
  - Pass Diamond contract possible
  - XX "Name your suit"
  - 2♥ Pass/correct but compete in spades
  - 2♠ Pass/correct but compete in hearts
  - 2NT Constructive ask (system on)
  - 3♣/♦ Non-forcing
  - 3♥ Pass/correct
  - 3♠ Natural, INV
  - 3NT Natural
  - 4♣ "Bid suit by transfer"
  - 4♦ "Bid 4♥", pass next
  - 4♥ Pass/correct

**8.3. Opening 2M**

5-9 HCPs, two-suited, 5M and 4+ minor; usually five in exposed positions and, in first second position, denies (working) strength for a Rule-of-19 opener.

**8.3.1. Responding to 2M**

2♠ Natural NF	2NT = 0=5=4=4 3m = 5-5 spade misfit	
2NT Relay "Bid other minor"	3♣ = Diamonds 3♦ = Clubs 3M = 4-4 minors!	Unless responder passes or converts 3♣ to 3♦, a game-force is created: 3M = Slam try 3OM = Initially choice-of-games 3NT = End 4m = DWD in opener's minor 4om = DWD in responder's minor
3♣ Pass/correct		
3♦	ART, INV raise in major	
3M	Not constructive	
3OM	INV in other major	
3NT	End	
4M	End (no forcing pass)	
4♣/♦	Pass/correct	
4♥ (over 2♠)	NAT	
4♠ (over 2♥)	NAT	
4NT	Blackwood	Zero / 1 / 2 / 3

**8.3.2. Intervention over 2M**

2M (overcall below 3M) double = PENALTY

2M (X) system ON

**8.4. Opening 2NT**

Standard, 20-21 HCP, frequent upgrading, all 5-3-3-2s, most 6m-3-2-2s, most 5m-4m-2-2s.

Responses as 2NT family

If they bid over 2NT opener, Double is takeout and all bids are NAT and FG. Cue-bid is Michaels style.

## 9. 2NT Family

System applies whenever 2/3NT is the first NAT bid by our side.

### 9.1. Summary of Strong Balanced Hands

20-21, open 2NT

22-23, open 2♣, rebid 2NT

24-25, open 2♦, rebid 2NT

26-27, open 2♣, rebid 3NT

28-29, open 2♦, rebid 3NT

### 9.2. Responses to 2NT

Standard treatments of major fit-finding via 3♣ and 3♦/♥, minor-suit Stayman, natural 3NT.

- 3♣ Major fits for game and balanced slam approach via CONFI
- 3♦/♥ Transfer to 5 major, choice of games and slam-going two-suiters with long major.
- 3♠ Minor-suit Stayman
- 3NT Nothing special
- 4♣ Clubs, single-suited, Deadwood replies
- 4♦/♥ Transfer to long major, no slam or KCA next (new suit is exclusion)
- 4♠ 5-5/6-5 minors, no slam ambitions except opposite obvious accepts.
- 4NT A flat raise based on point-count

#### 9.2.1. Fit-finding and slam tries after 3♣

##### 9.2.1.1. General approach

Balanced and semi-balanced slam-tries should be developed via CONFI which is invoked via responder's 4♣ after an initial 3♣. First checking for a 4-4 or 5-3 major fit and skipping CONFI to show a minor implies a shapely hand and usually a misfit for opener's shown major.

##### 9.2.1.2. Responder's follow-ups

4♣ is ALWAYS CONFI.

- Inside CONFI, when responder could have checked for 4-4 spades (over 3♦), a subsequent 4♠ is 'impossible spades' and indicates amber status (see 1NT – 3♣ etc.).
- After CONFI, 4M is a place to play (in addition to 4NT) when that major is a known 4-4 fit or matches opener's 5-card suit (e.g. 2NT – 3♣; 3NT – 4♣; 4♦ – 4♥ also 2NT – 3♣; 3♦ [one major] – 3♥ [spades]; 3NT [not spades] – 4♣; 4♦ – 4♥).

4♦ is ALWAYS artificial and, in priority order, is:

- 1) A transfer to 4♥ of opener's 5-card hearts
- 2) 4-4 majors if that interpretation ensures a fit
- 3) 4-4 minors if a 4-4 minor-fit is possible
- 4) A 4-card raise of opener's 5-card spades

4♥ Shows five clubs UNLESS opener shows a 5-card major (raise/3CR MST).

4♠ Shows five diamonds UNLESS opener shows 5♥ or 4+♠ (undefined/raise).

4NT is:

- 1) A KCA if opener's last bid showed a suit at or below 3NT (and therefore CONFI was available).
- 2) Natural if opener has shown no suit or fit-finding has failed.

**9.2.1.3. Sequences after 3♣**

3♦ = No 5-major, at least one 4-card major	<p>3♥ = 4♠, not 4♥ unless slam-invitational. If opener confirms spades with 3♠, 4♣ is CONFI, 4NT a KCA(♠). Over 3NT,</p> <p>4♣ = CONFI (responder's 4♥ is END)</p> <p>4♦ = 4=1=4=4</p> <p>4♥/♠ = 5♣/♦</p> <p>3♠ = 4♥, not 4♠. After 3NT, 'failed Stayman' as above. Opener can bid 4♣/♦ with extras, responder's 4NT is KCA(♥)</p> <p>3NT = End</p> <p>4♣ = CONFI, not 4♠ (hence 'impossible spades')</p> <p>4♦ = 4-4 Majors, not a slam-try</p> <p>4♥/♠ = 5♣/♦, typically (3-1)-5m-4</p>
3♥ = No 4/5-card major	<p>3♠ = 5 spades. After 3NT, similar scheme as after 'failed Stayman' except minors are 4-card in 5-4-2-2.</p> <p>3NT = End</p> <p>4♣ = CONFI</p> <p>4♦ = 4-4 minors</p> <p>4♥/♠ = 5♣/♦</p>
3♠ = Five spades	<p>3NT = End</p> <p>4♣ = CONFI</p> <p>4♦ = MST, 4 spades</p> <p>4♥ = MST, 3 spades</p> <p>4♠ = End</p> <p>4NT = KCA(♠)</p>
3NT = Five hearts	<p>4♣ = CONFI</p> <p>4♦ = Re-transfer</p> <p>4♥ = MST, often 4♥</p> <p>4♠ = ??</p> <p>4NT = KCA</p>

**9.2.2. Red-suit Transfers****9.2.2.1. Completion and breaks**

Opener breaks transfers to:

- 1) To 4M with 4-card support when control-rich (nine 2-1-controls in 20-21) denying opponents opportunity to take two fast winners. Responder places contract.
- 2) To 3♠ or 4L with 4-card support (HHxx+) and a very strong holding in bid suit, KQJx or better. Responder places contract, 4NT key-card.
- 3) To 3NT otherwise. This includes other hands with 4-card support and exceptional hands with 3-card support (typically 5-3-3-2 with good side suit and HHx support). Responder can show shortage whilst retaining re-transfers:
  - a. 4R retransfers, after 4M cheapest step is short in suit of TRF ('R')
  - b. 4m = short in minor
  - c. 4M = short in OM, NF MST, not as strong as immediate 4♠ (over hearts) or RETRF and 4NT (over spades)

All other hands complete transfer (even with 5OM etc.).

<p>3♦ Hearts</p>	<p>Breaks into another suit show 4+ trumps and concentration. Jump to 4M with 4+ trumps and great controls. 3NT is other non-bad 4-card support plus some excellent 3-cards.</p> <p>Re-TRF always has priority</p> <p>Responder's 4NT usually KCA except immediately after simple complete.</p>	<p>After TRF-completion:</p> <p>3♠ = 4♠/5♥ FG</p> <p>3NT = Choice of games</p> <p>4m = 4+m, minimum is 5-5, Kxxxx/QJxxx</p> <p>4♥ = MST (else immediate 4♦)</p> <p>4♠ = ??</p> <p>4NT = 5-3-2-2 punchy [other 4NTs, KCA]</p> <p>After TRF-break to suit:</p> <p>3NT = Balanced MST</p> <p>Retransfer and last train</p> <p>After 3NT:</p> <p>4♣ = Short ♣</p> <p>4♦ = re-TRF (then 4♠ = short ♦)</p> <p>4♥ = Short ♠, NF, MST</p> <p>4♠ = Short ♠ stronger than above</p> <p>4NT = KCA</p>
<p>3♥ Spades</p>	<p>Breaks and completions as above.</p>	<p>As above, after 3NT break:</p> <p>4m = Short m</p> <p>4♥ = re-TRF (then 4NT = short ♥)</p> <p>4♠ = Short ♥, NF, MST</p> <p>4NT = KCA</p>

**9.2.3. 3NT and above**

<p>3NT</p>	<p>To play</p>	
<p>4♣</p>	<p>Clubs</p>	<p>Initial response as Deadwood for clubs</p>
<p>4♦/♥</p>	<p>Transfer to ♥/♠</p>	<p>Completion obligatory, 4NT follow-up KCA, 5-level an exclusion ask.</p>
<p>4NT</p>	<p>Quantitative raise.</p>	<p>Usually 4-3-3-3 with textbook HCP</p>
<p>5NT</p>	<p>Raise to 6NT, INV to 7NT</p>	<p>Usually 4-3-3-3 with textbook HCP</p>

**9.3. They Intervene Over our Response**

If they double responder's ART action: redouble suggests place to play, **pass shows a stop** and denies a fit of a suit shown by red-suit transfer. Responder can ask again with redouble. Immediate bids deny a stop and show the same reply as usual.

## 10. Higher-Level Openings

3 level pre-empts NAT, may be very weak 1<sup>st</sup> seat favourable vul but will be sound in 2<sup>nd</sup> seat.

3L	NAT, may be undisciplined in 1st seat. Sound 6+ suit in 2 <sup>nd</sup> . 3 <sup>rd</sup> may have extras In 4th seat INV, bid 3NT with BAL 10-11 or 4M with equivalent of 3 working cards.	Cheapest minor at 4L is DWD. (4♣ over 3♦/♥/♠, 4♦ over 3♣) Other new suits F1, Now opener bids NAT feature or 3NT with stop in lower ranking suit. 3NT = NAT but if responder removes when doubled, invites save.
3NT	Solid minor No outside ace or king	
4♣/♦	NAT, standard	4♦ = DWD
4♥/♠	NAT. Normally 7/8 playing tricks, ma2.x of 1 defensive tricks outside suit.	4NT = KCA, New suit asks for shortage in suit above [Note: 4♥ – 4♠ asks in clubs]. With singleton bid 6M, with first-round control cue-bid, with Kx bid 4/5NT
4NT	Asks for specific aces.	5♣ = no ace. 5NT = 2 aces, 6♣ = ♣A.

### 10.1. Competition Over High-Level Openings

We open at 3 level and they overcall – double is penalty

## 11. Slam Bidding

### 11.1. Control-Bids

We bid 1st/2nd round controls, so skipping a suit denies any control in it.

**Exceptions:** A cue-bid in partner's suit promises a high card, A, K occasionally Q. We can only cue a shortage in partner's suit at our second turn, when we had the chance to cue a high card earlier and did not take it.

When we have agreed a major and not bid another suit naturally, the 1st cue-bid below 4M will be a shortage and 3NT shows a MST with no shortage.

### 11.2. CONFI and SUPERCONFI

#### 11.2.1. CONFI

See examples at <http://www.dubiouslogic.com/bridge/system/macc/docs/confi.htm>.

CONFI is a mechanism used by balanced hands opposite balanced openers. Currently it is available only in these situations:

- 1) 1NT opener (1NT – 3♣; Any – 4♣; and 1NT – 3♣; 3♦ – 3♥; 3♠/NT – 4♣;)
- 2) 2NT family (2NT – 3♣; Any – 4♣)
- 3) 1M – 2♣ opener describes weak-NT (1M – 2♣; 2♦ – 2♥; 2♠ – 2NT; 3♣/NT – 3♦/4♣;)
- 4) 1♦ – 2♣ opener describes weak-NT (1♦ – 2♣; 2♦ – 2♥; 2♠ – 2NT; 3NT – 4♣;)
- 5) In (3) and (4) Opener gives a CONFI response with an 'R3 NT' after 2NT relay.

In all cases the invariant rule for starting the control count is:

**Step one = zero to one HCP fewer than the published range of the NT bid divided by 3, discarding fractions.**

Example: when 1NT = 15-17 the starting range is 0-to-14 divided by 3, that is 0-4.

Responder continues according to these principles:

1. If 10 controls for a small slam are impossible, he signs off in 3/4NT or, if opener had earlier shown a long major, 4-known-major.
2. If opener gave a non-ambiguous reply (not step-1) he continues to show suits but 3/4NT indicates no fit and minimum HCP.
3. If opener gave a step-1 reply responder may show a suit if the highest control-value would be sufficient for slam; opener will sign off in no-trumps with a lower control-count (even with a fit) else show suit or fit.
4. The minimum suit-quality for showing (or raising) a suit is Qxxx

#### 11.2.1.1. 'Impossible spades'

Very often responder by-passes establishing a spade fit at a lower level and this denies spades (e.g. 1NT – 3♣; 3♦ – 4♣; 3♥ [=spades] would have been cheap and not interfered with a CONFI 4♣). A subsequent 4/5♠ by responder is 'impossible' and, in George Rosenkranz's terminology, AMBER, either worried about controls (priority) or HCP.

Examples:

1NT – 3♣; 3♦ – 4♣; 4♦ [0-4] – 4♠; Responder doesn't have 4 spades (failure to bid 3♥ at second turn) or 4 hearts (else 4♥ at third) but has 6 controls. Opener needs 4 controls to proceed, otherwise 4NT.

1NT – 3♣; 3♦ – 4♣; 4♥ – 4♠; Responder knows of 10+ combined controls but has minimum HCP. Opener may continue to show suits but sign off with 4NT and 4-3-3-3/minimum.

#### 11.2.2. SUPERCONFI

Examples also at (end of) <http://www.dubiouslogic.com/bridge/system/macc/docs/confi.htm>.

SUPERCONFI is a mechanism used by balanced hands opposite balanced openers when 6NT is available on power and a seven-level contract may be possible if a 4-4 can be found. Currently it is available only in one situation:

- 1) 1NT opener

4♦ is the control-ask and step-1 (4♥) is calculated as per the CONFI rule for base-line controls.



The only difference is that the suit-quality restriction is relaxed (see link above).

'Impossible spades' also applies but the auction is forcing to 6NT

### 11.3. Meanings of 4NT

4NT can be natural, a two-suited takeout or keycard.

Keycard: only when we have agreed trumps, or partner has pre-empted and there is no room for a forcing raise below game, or when no other meaning makes sense, e.g. 1♥ (4♣) 4NT.

Two-suited takeout, for example over their 4M, e.g. 1♠ (4♥) 4NT or (4M) 4NT. Also over their 3M, offering both minors opposite a takeout double of 2M/3M/4M.

Natural: e.g. (2♠) 3♦ (P); 4NT = NAT, a slam try with fit would start with 3♠.

#### 11.3.1. Quantitative

4NT is quantitative in NT auctions even when suits have been bid naturally:

- a) 1/2NT – 4NT;
- b) 1NT – 2♣; 2♦ – 4NT
- c) 2NT – 3♣; 3♦ – 4NT
- d) 2NT – 3♣; 3NT – 4NT

Opener will pass with a minimum. With a maximum he may jump to slam in a 5+card suit, offering a choice, or bid 6NT.

With 4432 and not minimum he bids 4-card suits upwards at the 5-level, looking for a fit.

If no fit is found the auction may die in 5NT. [NB this is the ONLY time we can play in 5NT]

4NT quantitative in no fit auctions where someone has just bid 3NT naturally 1♠ – 2♣; 2♠ – 3♦; 3NT – 4NT. Similarly, if bidding on, we can show extra distributional features.

#### 11.3.2. In competition

In competitive auctions 4NT is asking only as a last resort when no other interpretation makes sense. Priorities are:

- a) Finding a fit in cramped auctions, often "two places to play".  
e.g. 1♠ (4♥) 4NT = both minors  
or (4M) 4NT = both minors  
or (1♠) 2♥ (4♠) P; (P) 4NT = hearts and subsidiary minor (6-4 etc.)  
or 1♣ (P) 1♦[♥] (4♠); 4NT = clubs and diamonds (or heart support and better than 5♥)
- b) If both partners have called and a natural interpretation is possible.  
e.g. 1♦ (3♠) X (P); 4NT = 16-17  
or (2♠) X (P) 4NT = 16-18  
or 2♠ (3♥) 3NT (4♥); P (P) 4NT = always to play if following up on a natural 3NT
- c) If it could be Last Train it is.  
e.g. 1♣ (2♠) 3♣ (4♠); 4NT = "Strong 5♣ bid"
- d) We have clear suit-agreement and have space to cue-bid or a suit for Last Train.  
e.g. 1♠ (3♣) 3♠ (4♣); 4NT is key-card as 5♣ cue available

### 11.4. Vanilla Keycard Asks (KCA)

#### 11.4.1. Agreed suit

When a major is clearly agreed 4♠/4NT is KCA in hearts/spades.

If we have bid both majors, 4NT may be a KCA for hearts.

In cramped auctions or where a much weaker hand gives grudging support to a minor, 4NT may be a KCA for the agreed minor.

A jump to 4NT by responder when no suit has been directly agreed and that cannot be quantitative, sets responder's suit. Ex: 1♠ – 2♥; 2♠ – 4NT sets ♥ (as a forcing 3♠ was available). If jump to 4NT by opener, this sets last bid suit UNLESS 4m is available to ask in partner's minor. e.g. 1♠ – 2♥; 4NT = KCA in ♥ BUT 1♠ – 2♣; 4NT = KCA in ♠.

### 11.4.2. KCA responses

Keycards ('keys') are the 4 aces + the king of the agreed trump suit. Responses initially steps but suit-specific above 5<sup>th</sup> step:

- c) Step-1 = 1 or 4 keycards
- d) Step-2 = 0 or 3 keycards
- e) Step-3 = 2 keycards, no trump queen
- f) Step-4 = 2 keycards + trump queen or extra length to believe we have a 10+ card fit
- g) Step-5 = 0 or 2 keycards + useful void (this will be 4♠/4NT). Asker can bid suit below 6-agreed-suit to ask if this is void suit – bid grand with that void.
  - 6L = 1/3 keycards + void in the suit bid:
  - 5NT = When trumps are hearts and ask was 4♠, 1/3 keycards + spade void
  - 6 of trump suit = 1/3 keycards + higher-ranking void (e.g. 4NT asked in hearts).

### 11.4.3. KCA continuations

Continuation after response to KCA

First response	0-3 or 1-4	2 with/without queen
1st step	Queen-ask	Specific king-ask
2nd step	Specific king-ask	Strong grand slam try, stronger than king-ask
3rd step	Strong grand slam try, stronger than king-ask	3rd Round control ask in bid suit: bid grand slam with 3rd round control
4th step onwards, if possible	3rd round control-ask in bid suit:	Bid grand slam with 3rd round control

### 11.5. Exclusion KCA

A repeat of a suit in which we have already splintered, is an Exclusion KCA. Also a double-jump is Exclusion if single-jump would have been a splinter and a lower level would be natural.

In Romex try situations, Jumps to 4-level are SPL NOT Exclusion even though 3♣ would have been shortage ex 1♠ – 2♠; 4♣ is SPL & slam try.

Examples:

1♦ – 2♦; 3♥ = splinter, 4♥ = Exclusion. With hearts bid 2♥ followed by 3/4♥.

1♠ – 2NT; 5m = Exclusion – only possible trump is spades.

1♦ – 2♦; 4♠ = Exclusion – only option to diamonds is NT and 4♠ is above that level.

Responses to Exclusion are as Deadwood, but we do not count the ace of the excluded suit.

### 11.6. Deadwood

4m is Deadwood in all strong sequences where minor agreed or implied.

Unlike KCA, because Deadwood is cheaper, asker's **5NT always offers a choice of slams**.

Responses are the as 'Artificial Deadwood' that follow the relays after 1♦/M – 2♣.

- h) Step-1 = Unsuitable hand – includes all hands with zero keycards. Now 4NT is sign off & next step restarts KCA. Intermediate spots that are not playable suggest a repeat keycard ask is unsafe and answerer should proceed only with sufficient keys (that is, a number in at least one step in excess of the responses to the 'restart').
- i) Step-2 = ODD keys
- j) Step-3 = TWO keys
- k) Step-4 = TWO keys plus QUEEN or extra length
- l) Step-5 = FOUR keys
- m) Step-6 = FOUR keys plus QUEEN or extra length

### 11.7. Interference over KCA

As we have several schemes extant, we always treat pass as the container for zero, thus typically;

Pass = 0 or 3

X = 1 or 4

Cheapest-call = 2

Cheapest-call+1 = 2 + Q

If answerer passes, double or redouble is next ask.

If response to KCA is doubled, pass is next ask, and then redouble shows step-1 etc.

### 11.8. Meanings of 5NT

5NT: In a contested auction 5NT is usually "two places to play", and only GSF if it is a jump and we have clearly agreed trumps, or we would have a natural bid available with any possible two-suiter, e.g. 1♠ (3♥) 5NT.

#### 11.8.1. Grand Slam Force

Responses assume asker has at least one top honour (A, K or Q) and two more will be sufficient for 7-level: 6-agreed-suit is worst holding, 6♣ the best.

5NT?	Clubs	Diamonds	Hearts	Spades
6♣	0/1 Honours	A, K or queen	A or K	A or K, long
6♦		No honours	Queen	A or K
6♥			No honour	Queen
6♠				No honour
7 Level	2 Honours	2 Honours	2 Honours	2 Honours

#### 11.8.2. Pick a Slam

5NT is "Pick a slam". Where 4NT is quantitative, 5NT is NF. The only time we can play in 5NT is when we have bid suits upwards over a quantitative 4NT and not found a fit.

## 12. They Open, We Intervene

### 12.1. They Open Naturally

#### 12.1.1. Principles

- At the 1-level we strain to overcall 5-card majors, preferring an overcall to double unless the suit is very weak or the hand is very strong.
- We will also overcall 4-card majors with no support for the OM, but only with a very good suit, e.g. AKJx or KQ109. This is more likely NV and when partner has already passed.
- 2-level overcalls are sound, normally 6-cards and good suits; if only 5 cards probably 5-4 with good suit.

#### 12.1.2. We Overcall 1NT

Our agreements here for '1NT in competition' are on if and only if:

- 1NT suggests a balanced hand
- 1NT bidder had only passed or doubled
- His partner had only passed

##### 12.1.2.1. They have one suit

Our constructive methods are still based on Modified Sheldon. We try to keep as much ON as possible and retain meanings of ALL BIDS (2♣ = spades, 2♦ = heart) except those that show length in a promised opposition suit. The highest such bid (two when they have hearts) is a no-major invite. However,

- Ignore opener's minor if it can be two or fewer in a weak hand

When they have 'real' clubs or diamonds (though perhaps only 3+), the no-major invite is 2♠ or 2NT respectively, when they have spades it is 2♣, when they have hearts, it is 2♥ (and 2♦ is natural).

It is not that opener's minor is fearsome, it's more useful that we can use 2♠/NT as range-asks unless there's a real possibility that we might want to declare in that strain.

(1m\*) 1NT When their minor is potentially two or fewer with weak-NT values:

2♣... All systems on

(1♣) 1NT

2♠ No-major INV

(1♦) 1NT

2NT No-major INV

(1♥) 1NT

2♦ Natural NF

2♥ No-major INV

(1♠) 1NT

2♣ No-major INV

##### 12.1.2.2. They bid two or more suits

In addition to the rule about short minors,

- Ignore responder's suit whether 1♦/♥/♠.

##### 12.1.2.2.1. We have all the two level

(1♣\*) Pass (1♥) 1NT

(Pass)

Here all systems are on - including looking for a heart fit with all our kit - they have no suits.

(1♣) Pass (1♥) 1NT

(Pass)

But here, clubs are live for them, not hearts.

When they have both majors, we can locate a fit in responder's unsupported suit but not opener's:

(1♥) Pass (1♠) 1NT  
(Pass)

So here, 2♣ would show 4+ spades but 2♥ would be a no-major invite and 2♦ NAT, NF.

#### 12.1.2.2.2. Situations analogous to single suit interventions

(1♣\*) Pass (1♥) 1NT  
(2♣)

This is the same as 1NT (2♣ Nat)

(1♣\*) Pass (1♥) 1NT  
(2♥)

And here, like 1NT (2♥ Nat)

#### 12.1.2.2.3. They get to the two level with two real suits

There are many auctions here and we revert to a basically natural approach: with a takeout double of their major (promising 4OM) and 2NT as an invite.

- Double is takeout, even of RHO's 2♣ (in contrast to when they have one suit).

If a two-level red-suit transfer is sensible, then that's what it means, even at the expense of a natural 2♦:

- The TRF route is weak or strong
- The direct route is invitational

##### 12.1.2.2.3.1. They have one major

If there is just one unclaimed minor and the cheapest level is three, then that is non-forcing and competitive. With a decent hand (INV+) advancer has to improvise. And that might include a cue-bid of 2♠ which is a weak route to 3m.

Examples:

(1♦)	1NT	(2♥)	X	Takeout – with 4♠
			2♠	Spades, NF
			2NT	No-major invitation
			3♣	NAT, clubs, NF
			3♦	COG, 4♠ and heart stopper
			3♥	TRF, Spades, INV+
			3♠	3-suited short heart
			3NT	To play
(1♥)	1NT	(2♣)	X	Takeout – with 4♠
			2♦	NAT, NF
			2♥	Spades, weak or strong
			2♠	Spades, INV
			2NT	No-major invitation
			3♣	TRF, Diamonds, INV+
			3♦...	As above
(1♥)	1NT	(2♦)	X	Takeout – with 4♠
			2♥	Spades, weak or strong
			2♠	Spades, INV
			2NT	No-major invitation
			3♣	NAT, clubs, NF
			3♦...	As above

(1♣)	1NT	(2♠)	X	Takeout – with 4♥
			2NT	No-major invitation
			3♣	NAT, diamonds, NF
			3♦	TRF, hearts, INV+
			3♥	COG, 4♥ and spade stopper
			3♠	3-suited short spade
			3NT	To play

When they have spades and we can cue-bid 2♠, it serves as a weak way to 3-our-minor.

(1♠)	1NT	(2♦)	X	Takeout – with 4♥
			2♥	Hearts, NF
			2♠*	Weak clubs
			2NT	No-major invitation
			3♣	NAT, clubs, FG
			3♦	TRF, hearts
			3♥	COG, 4♥ and spade stopper
			3♠	3-suited short spade

12.1.2.2.3.2. *When they have both majors, we worry less about finding a fit*

(1♠)	1NT	(2♥)	X	Values
			2♠	Competitive with minor
			2NT	INV
			3m	NAT, FG (because of 2♠)
			3M	Shortage
			3NT	To play
(1♥)	1NT	(2♠)	X	Values
			2NT	INV
			3m	Diamonds, INV, NF
			3M	Shortage
			3NT	To play

12.1.2.2.3.3. *They have both minors*

If they've bid 2♣ we can just play system on; if they've bid 2♦ we can double for the majors ('Staymanic') and use 2M as NF, with 2NT = NAT, INV.

**12.1.3. We overcall their 1-suit opening**

1. A single raise of an overcall is normally 3-card support, scattered values
2. A 2NT advance of a major shows a 4-card raise to at least 3M
3. When advancing a minor, if a value-showing cue is available, 2NT is NAT but NF, showing either stoppers and a fit or a better hand with limited fit. Overcaller should remove to 3m if minimum, raise to 3NT if he fancies it. When a cue is unavailable, e.g. (1♠) 2♣ (2♠), 2NT does service as a stronger raise and overcaller should check stops before 3NT.
4. Single jump raise show mixed raise types unless 'mixed-raise cue' (10.d below) available when it is weaker.
5. Jump to game to play, normally PRE, but if opponents compete and we double we have unexpected defensive values
6. New-suit advances F1. Either equivalent of intermediate jump overcall OR good(ish) suit and some fit. Overcaller raises or rebids own suit; unbid suit NAT and F1; 2NT NAT and FG.
7. 1NT advance about 8-11(12), suggests a misfit. Overcaller's rebid of a second suit does not show extras if below original suit; with extras raise to 2NT or jump.
8. In strained situations, e.g. (1♠) 2♣ (2♠), X shows general values usually with some club support (approx. 10 HCP). Overcaller stretches to show unbid major (hearts in example) and 2NT is value raise.
9. If overcall is doubled, redouble shows an honour in partner's suit, A/K/Q, for the lead. Later raise of partner's suit probably a doubleton with a good hand – prefer to raise immediately with 3+cards.
10. Advancing a major with a cue-bid promises support. Below 'to 2-level', 'to 3-level' etc. means the level advancer's action obliges our side to play.
  - a) Cue to 2-level is almost always only 3CR (4-3-3-3 possible). Overcaller shows hand-type and avoids a simple rebid except with a minimum in context.
  - b) Non-jump cue to 3-level is 3CR raise when 2NT available
  - c) When two cues available to same level, default is highest (to limit opponents' options) but with values in lower-level cue, choose that.
  - d) Jump cue to 3-level is a mixed raise (4CR, typically Hxxx trumps and A/K value outside)
  - e) A jump cue to the 4-level (single or double) is a splinter
11. Advancing a minor with a cue bid shows some support but is not length discriminating. Only when we have diamonds and they have clubs are our cue bids a level below or level. That case is treated like a major over a minor (above), here we concentrate on our cue 'at 2-level' obliging our 3-minor.
  - a) When advancer makes 2-level cue (constructive values for 3-minor), overcaller's 2NT is forcing and shows a stop, not necessarily any extra values.
  - b) A jump cue is a splinter.
  - c) With a choice of cues that force to the same level, cue the suit in which you have values (e.g. (1♦) 2♣ (2♠) 3♦/3♠; locate high cards in case of 3NT)
12. If next player does not pass:
  - After double: pass weakest; our-suit at minimum level is good suit but minimum values.
  - After bid: pass weakest, further competition not obligatory; our-suit min-level is good suit; intermediary bids stronger.

**12.1.4. We double their 1-suit opening**

Style: 3-suited or too strong for any alternative action. We try to avoid using doubling with 2-suiters or (semi-)BAL 16-18 [so 1NT overcall may have tenuous stop].

Always 3+card support for any unbid majors except the strong types which can control the later auction. We may prefer a 4-card 1M overcall of 1m when short in the other major.

We may double 1m with 4-4 majors even when short in the other minor. Also double 1♠ with 5 hearts in 1=5=4=3 or 2=5=4=2 shapes.

Equal level conversion applies after (1M) Dbl (Pass) 2/3♣; when 2/3♦ does not show extras.

When we have a 5-card major we can bid at the 1-level we prefer to overcall unless strong enough to bid again freely. Double followed by a new suit is stronger than bid then double.

### 12.1.5. Our 2-suited overcalls over 1-suit

Two-suited overcalls show 5-5+ in two unbid suits. Strength is wide-range.

#### 12.1.5.1. Unusual no-trump

(1M) 2NT = minors

(1m) 2NT = hearts + other minor

After an opening and two passes, by an unpassed hand, 2NT is NAT, 19-21 BAL.

#### 12.1.5.2. Michaels cue-bid

(1m) 2m = majors

(1M) 2M = other major + unknown minor

(2♣ [NAT]) 3♣ = majors

##### 12.1.5.2.1. When both suits are known

Bids in NT or the one unbid suit are NAT, to play

When third hand doubles, pass says you have the same length in the suits, bids show a positive preference.

After (1♦) 2♦ (dbl) Pass; (Pass) overcaller's redouble shows 3 clubs.

After (1♣) 2♣ (dbl) Pass; (Pass) overcaller's 2♦ shows 3 diamonds.

When third hand raises opener, (1♦) 2♦ (3♦) dbl = values. Weak hand can compete/show 2nd suit if unknown and strong hand should cue-bid.

When third hand bids a new suit or no-trump double is PEN

##### 12.1.5.2.2. When only one suit is known

Bids in partner's known M are to play, jumps show a fit regardless of strength.

Cue-bid of opener's M agrees partner's M

Bids in either minor are pass/correct. To play in your own minor bid 3m, then rebid 4m.

2NT is a game try, overcaller shows minor: 3m with a minimum, 3♥/♠ with extras, linked ♣/♦

Or when an opponent has made a weak opener with one known suit:

Ex 2♦ (WK2♥) 2♥ = spades +m; 3♦ (transfer Pre-empt) - 3♥ = spades +m

Other Michaels situations:

(1NT) P (2♦ = heart TRF) 2♥ = spades + minor: (1NT) P (2♥ = spade TRF) 2♠ = hearts + minor:

(1♣ - agreed as SHORT) - 2♦ = majors; (1♦ - agreed as SHORT) - 3♣ = majors

Over any artificial weak/Multi opening where there is only one known suit in the weak option, a cue

overcall of that suit is Michaels.

#### 12.1.5.3. Other 2-suited overcalls

In 4th position when both opponents have bid different suits:

1. Double is takeout with at least opening cue strength, shows the other two suits or a very strong BAL hand
2. 2NT is a 2-suiter in the unbid suits, 5+/5+, like Michaels
3. A bid of RHO's suit is NAT e.g. (1♥) P (1♠) 2♠; 6+ cards, sound overcall.



4. A bid of LHO's suit is a strong unbalanced 2-suiter, greater length in the lower-ranking suit
5. 1NT after both opponents have bid a suit is NAT 17-20. All responses NAT.

In 4th seat when opponents bid and raise a suit, 2NT shows a non-specific 2-suiter, like the protective cue.

In 4th seat when responder bids 1NT, 2-opener's-suit is Michaels, e.g. (1m) P (1NT) 2m\*.

### 12.1.6. Our jump cue-bid

A jump cue overcall asks for a stopper in their suit, shows a solid suit with outside stoppers BUT may be very strong single suiter (strength akin to 2♣ opener). In additional sequence the 3-level need not be a jump.

- a) (1L) 3L
- b) (1M) P (2M) 3M – here, 4m would be Michaels for OM + m
- c) (1L) P (1NT) 3L
- d) (1Y) P (1Z) both 3Y and 3Z

Advancer's options:

1. 3NT = stop
2. Pass/correct calls with no stop
3. Game bids are to play.
4. A cue-bid is a slam try with a good hand
5. If opponents DOUBLE, pass denies a stop, 3NT shows stop as before, redouble shows a half-stop, e.g. Qx/Jxx.
6. If third hand raises to 4M responder's 4NT shows a stop and hopes of making 10 tricks opposite a solid suit.

### 12.1.7. Our 4-level cue of their 1-suit

(1♥) 4♥ = powerful 4♠ bid.

(1m) 4m = good 4M bid, either major; 4M = Pass/correct.

### 12.1.8. We double a weak 1NT

Definition: a maximum of 16 HCPs

FP and takeout doubles applies. After (1NT) ♦ (P) – 2♣ is either weak 5+ clubs or BAL 0-6 HCPs.

### 12.1.9. Defence to Pre-Empts

#### 12.1.9.1. Two Level

NOTE: Leaping Michaels over 2♥ and 2♠, 'unspecified major' Michaels after 2♦..

Double Takeout	At least opening bid values but lower minimum in 4th seat.	WEAK2NT introduces advancer's weak hands
2NT	16-18	SYSTEM ON
2M/3L	NAT NF but reasonable values	New suit = F1. Cue-bid = MST, usually with fit
3NT	Either BAL hand, 18+ or long suit & stop in their suit.	<p>4♣ = Enquiry:            4♦ = 18-19; 4♥ = 20-21; 4♠ = 22+ BAL;            4NT = long suit &amp; stop.</p> <p>If opponents double: xx = single suiter; 4L = named suit &amp; higher suit,</p> <p>4♦ = to play in game only. Partner bids 4♥ (or cheapest viable suit) and passes correction.</p> <p>4M/5m = slam interest; 4NT = both minors.</p>

4M	Single-suited 7/8 playing trick type hands with average plus ODR	New suit response is control
Cue-bid	Stopper seeking but could be introduction of very strong 1-suiter	
(2M) 4m	Bid minor & other-major	
(2♦) 4♣	Clubs & unknown major	4M = Pass/correct
(2♦) 4♦	Both majors	

**12.1.9.2. Three Level**

NOTE: Non-leaping Michaels over 3♥ and 3♠.

Double Takeout	At least opening bid values but lower minimum in 4th seat. Or strong flexible hand (17+) [SFH] Or very strong single suited hand [SSS]	5m follow-up may have second suit SFH bids suit over response, SSS will jump
3L	NAT, will have reasonable values	New suit = F1. Cue-bid = MST, normally has fit
3NT	Either BAL hand, 15-19+ or long suit & stop in their suit.	If opponents double: xx = single suiter; 4L = named suit & higher suit, 4♣ = Enquiry: 4♦ = 15-16; 4♥ = 17-18; 4♠ = 19+ BAL; 4NT = long suit & stop. 4♦ = to play in game only. Partner bids 4♥ and passes correction. 4M/5m = slam interest; 4NT = both minors.
4M	Single-suited 7/8 playing trick type hands with average plus ODR	New suit response is control
(3♥/♠) 4♣/♦	2-suited, bid minor and other major	
(3m) 4m	2-suited, both majors, <6 losers.	
(3m) 4om	2-suited, bid minor and unknown major	4M = Pass/correct
(3M) 4M	2-suited, OM & a minor	4NT shows values & asks for minor. 5♣/♦ = Pass/correct, game only.

**12.1.9.3. Four-level and above**

(3NT*) Artificial	Double = strong-NT equivalent 4M = NAT Pass then Double is takeout	If (3NT) shows a major, 4m = that suit & 'OM', 4♦ asks for major. 4NT = NAT(?)
4L [NAT]	Double = strong-NT equivalent Over 4♥[NAT], Double will have 3+ spades.	Partner should only take it out if think they can make something, ex 5m = 6+ suit 4NT with two suiter, e.g. 3145 shape Over (4♥) X, 4♠ may only have 4 spades (may even bid with 4333 shape)

4♣/♦* Artificial, linked major	X = Strong NT type 4♦ = Natural 4♥/♠ [their suit] = Two suiter: other M and a minor Pass & Double = Takeout their suit	4NT asks what the minor is
5♣	Double shows values and suggests defending.	Responder should only remove to a making contract.

## 12.2. They Open Conventionally

### 12.2.1. They open 'short' club

Definition: 1♣ is short when it shows a doubleton in a weak no-trump. This can be established by prior agreement or if 1♣ is alerted/announced and is NF and can include min BAL (opponents have higher 1NT range).

When immediate club bids would be artificial then a subsequent 2/3♣ is NAT e.g. (1♣) X (1♥) X; (P) 1♠ (1NT) 2♣ [NAT].

Double	12-15, (semi) BAL or 19+, may be unbalanced	If 3rd hand passes: 1♦ = like Stayman, assuming partner has weak NT. 1♥/♠ = 5M, NF 2♣ = FSA If 3rd hand bids naturally, Double is takeout, bids are NAT assuming partner has weak NT.
1NT	16-18 BAL	SYSTEM ON
1M	Standard Light actions more likely	Advancer's 2/3♣ retain their cue-bid interpretation as after natural 1m. However, in those cases, subsequent bids in clubs are natural.
2♣	Limited 5-4, 6-10 HCP	2♦ "Choose", Landy style
2♦	Michaels 5-5, any strength	

#### 12.2.1.1. They use TRF responses:

Different treatments for 1♦ (♥) and 1♥ (♠):

- Double of 1♦ (♥) is a takeout of hearts; cue (1♥) shows 4♠ and longer minor; 1♠ = 5♠, wide-ranging; 1NT = NAT, 15-18; 2♥ = Michaels (♠+m); 2♠ = WJO.
- Double of 1♥ (♠) shows hearts; cue (1♠) is a takeout; 1NT = NAT, 15-18; 2♥ = sound 2-level overcall; 2♠ = Michaels (♥+m).

### 12.2.2. They open 1♣ strong

Also applies after (1♣) P (1♦).

- Double = majors - can be very weak & 4/4 at favourable.
- 1NT = minors, normally 5/4.

### 12.2.3. They open Multi 2♦

'Standard defence' but 4♣/♦ = that minor & unknown major.

### 12.2.4. They open Ekrens 2♦/♥ – weak both majors

- Over 2♦/♥, Double = 13-15 BAL. Advancer's 2NT = Lebensohl.
- 2♥ [over 2♦] & 2♠ = NAT, good suit and equivalent to intermediate jump-overcall.
- 2NT = 16-19 BAL. SYSTEM OFF (because 2 suits shown by opponents)
- 3♣/♦ = NAT, may be up to minor-jump-rebid type.
- 4♣/♦ = Good suit but not much defence. Partner will bid 5m with some fit.

6. 3♥/♠ = Both minors, implied suit better/longer.

Same meanings in 4<sup>th</sup> seat after (2♦/♥) P (2♠).

After (2♦/♥) P (2NT) Double is 16+, BAL

### 12.2.5. Their opening shows two or three suits

Example, 2♣ = 3 suiter.

In principle, Double = 13-15 BAL and 2NT = 16-19 BAL. Pass and bid is weaker than immediate bid. If they use a relay response, Double = 16+ type.

### 12.2.6. They open artificially at the 3-level or higher

3NT* Artificial	Double = equivalent strong NT 4M = NAT Pass then Double is takeout	If 3NT shows a major, 4m = bid minor & a major. Then 4♦ asks for major, 4NT = NAT.
4♣/♦* Artificial, linked major	X = Strong NT type 4♦ = Natural 4♥/♠ [their suit] = 2-suited, OM and a minor Pass & Double = Takeout of their suit	4NT asks for minor

## 13. Other Competitive Auctions

### 13.1. General Rules

1. All jumps to game on 1st round in competition are to play except in a suit bid/IMPLIED by opponents. In obvious situations, jump to game in opponent's also NAT. ex (1L) P (1M) 4M.
2. Single jumps in a new suit are fit jumps.
3. Cue-bids of opponent's suit show sound 3-card raises (may be 4 with flat distribution).
4. Jumps cues are SPL at 4 level or above. Repeat of SPL is Excl. Jump above splinter level is void.
5. Jump cue at 3 level (where available) is mixed raise.
6. In competition when we have bid majors 2NT is always a 4-card raise: it is natural only when we have opened or overcalled in a minor.
7. When opponents have bid 2 suits naturally a cue-bid of one suit shows a stopper when we are in constructive auction; partner may bid 3NT with a stopper in the other suit. In non-constructive situations, normally cue-bid in opener's suit. Ex: (1♦) 1♠ (2♣) 2♦ = UCB; 3♣ = Mixed raise.
8. We do not use short suit tries in competitive auctions: new suits are NAT.

### 13.2. Doubles

Low-level doubles are almost always takeout (support, lead-directing, game-try).

#### 13.2.1. Doubles of artificial bids

- 1) ART bids NOT guaranteeing a primary fit: DOUBLE = that suit
- 2) ART bids guaranteeing a primary fit: DOUBLE = takeout
- 3) SPL bids: DOUBLE = LEAD lowest suit

#### 13.2.2. Doubles of natural bids

Other than opening bids (see 12.1.4). In almost all auctions where partner has done nothing but pass, double of a natural suit is takeout.

1. Where opponents have bid two suits naturally double shows the other 2 suits or a strong BAL hand.
2. Where they have bid only one major [e.g. (1♦) P (1♠)], double promises 4 cards in the other major or very strong hand.
3. When we have made a takeout double of a suit, a second double of the same suit is also takeout, cannot be PEN.
4. A delayed takeout double in a live auction suggests you could not double first time because of a shortage in an unbid suit, and length in the suit bid on your right. e.g. (1♦) P (1♥) P; (2♥) double with ♠K10xx ♥x ♦AQJx ♣KJxx
5. Similarly a double in the pass out seat of a 1NT response asks partner to pass and lead dummy's suit e.g. (1♦) P (1NT) P; (P) double with ♠xx ♥KJx ♦AQJxx ♣Kxx. NOTE: (1♦) Pass (1NT) double = takeout of diamonds.
6. When double forces a bid, 2NT is Lebensohl. e.g.: (1♠) Double (2♠) P; (P) Double (P) 2NT = is weak (WEAK2NT).
7. Scrambling only takes priority when game is not on -ie: both hands have already passed once

### 13.3. Redoubles

We do not play in redoubled contracts at low-levels except in specific situations.

#### 13.3.1. Raising Partner

##### 13.3.1.1. Conventional support

Relatively rare since introduction of transfer after opponents' double.

- 1♣ (X) XX = 4-card raise, 7-11 HCP

Support Redouble: double shows a 3-card raise of partner's major and distinguishes it from the direct raise which promises 4 cards.

1m (P) 1M (X); XX = 3-card raise, 2M = 4-card support

### 13.3.1.2. Rosenkranz Redouble

Short top-honour in partner's suit (alternative to pass – not raise). Examples:

(1♣) 1M (X) XX; or...

2M (X) XX

Shows A/K/Q in M, often singleton or doubleton.

### 13.3.1.3. SOS redouble

Classic rescue mechanism, examples:

1♥ (P) P (X); P (P) Responder cannot have a strong hand! 1♥/2♣/2♦ to play with a single-suiter so redouble is takeout. With length in both minors responder bids 1NT. If that is doubled, 2♣ with longer clubs, redouble with longer diamonds.

(1♥) 1♠ (P/X) P; (P/X) P (P)

Redouble keeps all 3 suits open, including hearts. 1NT = minors

### 13.3.1.4. Alternative place to play

Other strains suggested in (mainly) artificial auctions. Examples:

1NT (P) 2♣ (X); XX Shows 5 clubs, possible place to play, pass denies stop (may have major).

1NT (P) 2♦/♥ (X); XX Shows 5-cards in bid suit, doubleton support for partner. Opener's Pass denies 3 hearts – if passed round to responder 2M = to play, new suit FG with short diamonds, XX suggestion to play opposite 3cards

2NT (P) 3♣ (X) 3M still 5cards, 3♦ promises 4cardM, 3NT solid double club stopper, no M XX shows good clubs, suggestion to play. Pass = nothing to say

2NT (P) 3♦/♥ (X) Same as after 1NT opener

(1♦) 2♦ (X) P; (P) Overcaller's XX shows 3 clubs [Compare, (1♣) 2♣ (X) P; (P) 2♦ = 3♦]

2♦ (X) Responses unchanged but pass shows a short major and good diamonds, XX shows 5-5 in the minors.

### 13.3.1.5. They make a lead directing double

e.g. 1♥ – 1♠; 1NT – 3NT (X = spade lead): XX by opener is "I have this under control", XX by responder is "looks dodgy".

### 13.3.1.6. Taking charge

Occurs when we have made an artificial 2-suited overcall and an opponent has doubled.

Examples:

(1♣ [strong]) CRO (X) Responder usually bids cheapest suit where he is prepared to play (on pass/correct basis). To play in your own suit redouble = puppet to the cheapest call. When (if) that is doubled bid your own suit, to play.

(1NT) 2♣ (X) Redouble = puppet to diamonds. Pass suggests playing in clubs, else normal responses 2♦ = asks for better major, etc.

(1♥) 2♥ (X) Any number of spades is to play. Minor suit bids are pass/correct and 2NT shows equal length in the minors. Redouble is taking charge with a long minor of your own.

The situation is different when both suits are known (redouble is UNDEFINED):

(1♦) 2♦ (X) Responder normally bids his better M. 3♣, the unbid suit, is to play. Pass shows no preference between the majors, invites partner to choose.

(1♥) 2NT (X) Responder normally bids her better minor. 3♠, the unbid suit, is to play, taking charge. Pass shows no preference between the minors, invites partner to choose.

The 'taking charge' redouble also occurs when our opening 1NT is doubled

**13.3.1.7. Strength-showing redouble**

1♠ (P) P (X); XX      Opener shows a strong hand – cannot want to run from a 5-card major. bidding a new suit shows 5-5+, better second suit, often more lead-worthy.

(1♥) 1♠ (X/P) P;

(X/P) XX      Overcaller shows extra strength: start rescue operation with 1NT or by bidding second suit (2m probably longer, 4-card major)

1♠ (P) 2♠      If either defender doubles either partner may redouble to show a maximum, suitable for defending.

1NT (X\*) XX      Values, other bids = system on.

These redoubles are made on hands that wish to penalise opponents who have entered the bidding at the wrong time.

## 14. Carding Agreements

### 14.1. Signals

**Attitude:** Low to encourage

**Count:** Upside-down (high-low = odd)

**Suit-preference:** Standard (high for higher-ranking of – usually – two remaining suits)

### 14.2. Opening Leads

4th highest, 2nd highest from small cards. The ten is an honour at no-trump, not suits.

A suit belongs to partner if,

- i. He has bid it
- ii. He has doubled for a lead
- iii. He has made a takeout double showing only two suits

Different leads in partner's suit: if unsupported, 3<sup>rd</sup> from even, lowest from odd. If we have supported, top of xxx, second from xxx, otherwise low/4<sup>th</sup> (Hxx, Hxxx, Hxxxx).

#### 14.2.1. Leads v no-trump contracts

Mostly top of honour sequences but lower-honour for unblock (knave or higher without creating a trick for dummy). If not unblocking then attitude signal. Exceptions is bid suit: ace is an unusual lead in a suit in which lead has promised length.

Tens and nines show a higher card when from length. From honours we lead fourth, from small cards, second-highest. As the ten is an honour, we might well lead fourth from 10xxxx(+) but from 10xxx it will depend on whether we were seeking safety and we want to suggest a switch.

In partner's unsupported suit, we lead 3<sup>rd</sup> from even, lowest from odd. From supported suits we lead attitudinally (top of three-low). From our own suit we lead fourth.

##### 14.2.1.1. Honours

Ace UNBID	AKJx; AKx(x); Rare AQ+	Signal: attitude; may be looking for third-hand's suit and signal may depend on possibility of switch.
Ace BID SUIT	Strong: <b>AKJ10x</b>	Signal: unblock or COUNT
King	KQJ(+); KQ10(+) Strong: <b>AKJ10(+)</b> ;	Signal: unblock queen or attitude
Queen	QJ10+; QJ9+ Interior: AQJx(+) Strong: <b>KQ109(+)</b>	Signal: unblock jack or attitude
Jack	J109+; J108+ Interior: AJ10x(+); KJ10x(+) Strong: <b>QJ98(+)</b>	Signal: unblock 10 or attitude Overtake with king or ace
10 Interior seq.	A109+; K109+; Q109+	Signal: overtake or COUNT
9 Higher card from length	Q98(x); J98(x); 109x+ 9x; 9xx	Signal: overtake or COUNT

#### 14.2.2. Leads v suit contracts

King for count signal; other honours for attitude



Typically lead King from KQxx; though the queen is an option, we do not fret unduly about 'weak king-queen holdings'. Signals change when dummy's holding makes this clear.

Otherwise mostly as NT leads, including tens and nines and partner's suit.

#### 14.2.2.1. Honours

Ace	AKx(x); Axxx(+); Ax; AK From suits with 5+ length, denies king	Signal: attitude, encourage with king or queen.  If dummy tables length or queen, count or SP as appropriate (but discourage if ace from length).
King COUNT	AKx(+); KQx(+)	Signal: count.
Queen	QJ+; KQx (rare); Qx	Signal: attitude
Jack	J10+; KJ10+; Jx	Signal: attitude
10 Interior seq.	K109+; Q109+; 10x	Signal: attitude
9 Higher card from length	Q98(x); J98(x); 109x+ 9x; 9xx	Signal: overtake or COUNT

#### 14.3. Discards

First discard only: Even parity encourages, odd discourages.

We tend to show where our high cards are in the context of the deal, rather than instruct the defence. However, where partner may need to find an entry for a lead through, encouragement is for that purpose.

After first discard, subsequent discards will be suit-preference or remainder count, depending on what partner needs to know. If it is clear that partner does not need info, discards random.

Suit-preference when discarding from a suit about which partner knows all details (specified in auction, declarer ruffs etc.).

#### 14.4. WBF System Card Layout