

1 No-Trump and After

Overview

The ranges for responder's actions have been left deliberately vague so the reader may adopt these for any range of no-trump opener. In truth, however, they work best when the opening range is strongish, say 14-16/15-17.

As a memory aid, the following principles apply.

- Two no-trump by responder is always natural and non-forcing.
- Two no-trump by opener is always artificial - usually waiting for further description.
- A new suit at the three level forces to game
- A raise of an existing suit is non-forcing
- Immediately after a response to Stayman or a transfer, 4♣ is ace-asking and 4♦ shows the majors, 4NT is natural
- After opener has a bid one major - even as a transfer completion - responder's bid of the other shows an unknown shortage and sets the first suit (self agreeing if necessary).

Responses

Overview

- 2♣ Stayman. Either
Weak, both majors - follow with pass or 2♥
INV with 5+ spades - follow with 2♠
FG both majors - over 2♦ jump in *shorter* major (Smolen)
FG 4M longer minor - continue with 3m
BAL slam try with a major - 4NT
- 2♦/♥ Transfer. Either
Weak - pass
UNBAL INV with 5♥ - bid 2♠*
BAL INV 5M - bid 2N
UNBAL FG - bid new suit
- 2♠ FG, 3-suited, opener either bids 2NT or 3M (5) and responder names shortage.
- 2NT Natural, NF
- 3L Slam try essentially single suited. Opener bids
3NT / minor to show lack of fit
4M / 3M to without interest
4m/3N show reasonable hand not able to cue
- 3N Natural
- 4♣ Ace asking
- 4♦ Both majors - principally game only
- 4M Natural
- 4N NF, opener bids suits
- 5m Natural

Stayman

- 1NT 2♣
- 2♦ No 4/5 Major
 - 2♥ Both majors, up to INV values, P-C
 - 2♠ INV, 5+ spades NF UNBAL (else 2♥..2N)
 - 2NT A waiting move, responder continues with another suit
 - 3m NF, seeking best partial
 - 2N Natural, implying 4M
 - 3m Natural and FG
 - 3♥ 4♥5♠, 'Smolen transfer'. The advantages of this (over bidding the longer suit) are that it give another bid in this exact sequence and it ensures the NT hand becomes declarer.
 - 3♠ Normal with 3♠, no fast arrival as such
 - 3N Natural
 - 4L Picture, MAX & source of tricks and spade fit
 - 4♠ 3♠ fewer than base level controls.
 - 3♠ 4♠5♥, Smolen responses
 - 3N Natural, implying 4M
 - 4♣ Ace asking
 - 4♦ Both majors - 5+5+ no voids possible slam
 - 4M 6+M4OM, slam try
 - 4N NF, opener bids suits
- 2♥ Four plus hearts may have 4♠
 - 2♠ As over 2♦, INV, 5+ spades NF UNBAL (else 2♥..2N) except
 - 3♥ 5♥, F3♠
 - 2N Natural, implying 4M
 - 3m Natural and FG, almost always no fit
 - 3♥ Natural NF
 - 3♠ ART, heart fit and unknown SPL
 - 3N Natural, implying 4♠
 - 4♣ RKCB(♥)
 - 4♦ Smolen hand five card fit, 5♥4♠
 - 4♥ Natural
 - 4♠ 6+S4♥ slam try, NF
 - 4N NF, opener bids suits
- 2♠ Four plus spades denies 4♥
 - 2N Natural, implying 4M
 - 3m Natural and FG, almost always no fit
 - 3♥ ART, heart fit and unknown SPL
 - 3♠ Natural NF
 - 3N Natural, implying 4♥

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- 4♣ RKCB(♠)
- 4♦ Smolen hand five card fit, 5♠4♥
- 4♥ 6+H4♠ slam try, NF
- 4♠ Natural
- 4N NF, opener bids suits

Transfers

- 1NT 2♦
- 2♥ Only 2/3 hearts or 4 and MIN
 - 2♠ ART INV, 5+ hearts UNBAL (else 2♦..2N)
 - 2NT A waiting move, responder continues with another suit
 - 3m NF, seeking best partial
 - 3♥ MIN but all four card support should bid game
 - 4♥/3N To play
 - 2N Natural, implying 5♥332
 - 3m Natural and FG
 - 3♥ INV 6+ hearts
 - 3♠ ART, hearts and unknown SPL, 3N waits for reveal
 - 3N Natural, implying 5♥332
 - 4♣ RKCB(♥)
 - 4♦ Both majors, 5+5+, ♣ void (linked major)
 - 4♥ Natural
 - 4♠ Exclusion KCB
 - 4N NF, opener bids suits
 - 5m Exclusion KCB
- 2♠/N/3♣ Non-MIN with feature in ♠/♦/♣
 - 2N NF - 'what he would have bid anyway' but with poor hearts
 - 3♣ Natural, FG, see note next
 - 3♦ Re-transfer. When responder wants to proceed over a transfer break, he may bid immediately in which case all the responses are unchanged in meaning or he may retransfer and cue bid. Re-TRF and 3N is strong, poor hearts but NF
 - 3♥ Forced
 - 3♠/4m Cues, subsequent 4N is RKCB
 - 3♥ To play - weak hand with distributional surprise
 - 3♠ Unknown SPL
 - 3N Poor hearts, NF
 - 4♣ RKCB(♥)
 - 4♦ Club void, both majors
- 3♦ No! Not allowed to bid 3♦ to allow for re-transfer - 2N shows feature in cipher suit.
- 3♥ Max, 4CR, no feature.

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- 3♠ Unknown SPL
- 3N Poor hearts, NF
- 4♣ RKCB(♥)
- 4♦ Club void, both majors
- 1NT 2♥
- 2♠ Only 2/3 spades or 4 and MIN
 - 2N Natural, implying 5♠332
 - 3m Natural and FG
 - 3♥ ART, spades and unknown SPL, 3N waits for reveal
 - 3♠ INV 6+ spades
 - 3N Natural, implying 5♠332
 - 4♣ RKCB(♠)
 - 4♦ Both majors, 5+5+, ♦ void (linked major)
 - 4♥ Natural, both majors, slightly stronger than 1N - 4♦, partner requires very good (as opposed to exceptional) hand to proceed.
 - 4♠ Natural
 - 4N NF, opener bids suits
 - 5L Exclusion KCB
- 2/N/3m Non-MIN with feature in ♥/♣/♦
 - 3m Natural, FG, see note next
 - 3♥ Re-transfer. When responder wants to proceed over a transfer break, he may bid immediately in which case all the responses are unchanged in meaning or he may retransfer and cue bid. Re-TRF and 3N is strong, poor hearts but NF.
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- 3♥ Max, 4CR, no feature.
 - 3♠ Unknown SPL
 - 3N Poor hearts, NF
 - 4♣ RKCB(♥)
 - 4♦ Club void, both majors

Three Suited Actions

Two spades shows a 3-suiter. To opener's 2NT rebid (waiting), the responses are shortage showing with the distinction that 3NT denies 4♥. Responder need not be 4441 but must be able to handle opener's fit finding below 3NT. If responder moves past 3NT it shows a fit. The bid shows a principally game going hand but responder may cue bid - the shortage suit does not promise a void - with a suitable hand.

1N	2♠
2N	Almost always, opener can bid a 5 card suit.
	3♣ 4441, (43)51, 3361
	3♦ 4414, (43)15, 3316
	3♥ 4144, 41(35), 31(45)
	3♠ 1444, 14(35)
	3N 13(45)

Strong Single Suiters

These are introduced by immediate jump shifts. They effectively set the suit, to sign off in a major, raise to game, in a minor bid 3NT. To show support but no useful cue, over a major bid 3NT, raise a minor to the four level.

1NT	3m
	3L Either xxx, Qx or better, concentration of values, 3N may still be passed.
	3N No fit, 4m is now RKCB(m)
	4m Support but no feature
	3M, likely to be BAL or with xx/xxx (consider TRF and SPL)
	3♠ Support and feature
	3N Support but no feature
	4M Support and feature

Intervention

Generally the initial double by either partner is take-out and two no-trump is artificial, both in response to a double and as a first move.

Immediate

1NT X	P	Either to play 1NT redoubled on an escape based upon spades and another. This commands a XX under normal circumstances and responder takes out to the suit other than spades or passes as appropriate
	XX	A single suited hand. Opener bids 2♣ (2♦=own suit, exceptionally) and passes responder's next action.
	2♣	Escape: clubs and a red suit, opener can scramble for fit
	2♦	Escape: hearts and diamonds
	2M	Nat, NF and reasonable, opener may raise with fit in competition.
	2N	ART, 2-suited

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		3L	Nat, Pre-empt
1NT	2L	X	Take out, opener's 2N is 'two places to play'. Responder's 3NT denies a stop, delayed cue bid promises 4OM.
		2L	Nat, NF
		2N	FG, opener usually bids 3♣ and hears responder's suit.
		3L	If non-jump then Nat, NF, jumps are INV
		3Q	Shortage, offensive hand, unwilling to risk a pass of a TO X.
		3N	Natural, no information about stops
1NT	3L	X	Take out still

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