

COSL Precision Bidding System

Sudhir

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1 Opening Bids

All strong hands ([with one exception](#)¹) are opened 1♣ which is forcing for one round. In general, a major suit opening shows 5+-cards and the higher ranking suit is opened with suits of equal length. A no-trump opening shows a balanced hand with a possible 5-card minor. A 1♦ opening normally shows a 3-card holding but could sometimes be made with a doubleton when bidding 1NT or 2♣ is unattractive e.g., ♠AQJ10 ♥KQ ♦76 ♣J7642 or ♠AK109 ♥AK98 ♦432 ♣32.

1♣	16+HCP and any distribution, <u>forcing</u> . 🐼
1♦	11-15HCP, at least 2 cards in ♦, no 5-card major and less than 6 clubs. 🐼
1♥/♠	11-15HCP, 5-cards in suit bid. Any other opening bid below 2♥ (except 1♣) denies a 5-card major. 🐼
1NT	13-15HCP, balanced. 6-3-2-2 / 5-4-2-2 in a minor ok with stoppers in both doubletons. 🐼
2♣	11-15HCP, Either a good 5-card club suit with 4-card major or a 6+-card club suit (7SQ hand). 🐼
2♦	11-15HCP, 5-4-3-1, 4-4-4-1 or 5-4-4-0 shape with short ♦ (5-card suit if present is ♣), <u>forcing</u> . 🐼
2♥/♠	8-10HCP, 6+-card suit (SQ of 8 when vulnerable and 7 non-vulnerable). With 6 or less losers, open 1♠/♥/♦. 🐼
2NT	22-23HCP, balanced hand (no 5-card suit) . 🐼
<i>3 of suit</i>	8-10HCP, 7+-card suit (SQ of 9 when vulnerable and 8 non-vulnerable). Apply rule of 2/3/4. 🐼
3NT	≈10HCP, solid 7+-card minor suit. Any side suit has limited strength. 🐼

2 Responses to 1♣

The responses to 1♣ can be negative, constructive or positive. All positive responses are forcing to game unless both hands are minimum and no fit is found.

<i>Negative Response</i>	
1♦	0-7HCP, <u>forcing</u> . 🐼
<i>Constructive Responses</i>	
2♥/♠	4-7HCP, 6+-card suit, two of top four honours (not AK) . 🐼
<i>Positive Responses (forcing to game)</i>	
1♥/1♠,	8+HCP, 5+-cards in suit, can stop short of game if no fit. 🐼
2♣/♦	
1NT	8-13HCP, no five-card suit. 🐼
2NT	14+HCP, balanced hand. 🐼
3NT	Solid 6/7-card suit and 1+ side control (if 7-carder, maybe no side control)

¹Balanced 22-23 point hands are opened 2NT.

3♣	8-10HCP, 4-4-4-1 shape with a black singleton. 3♦ is a relay and 3♥/3♠ would show ♣/♠ singleton respectively. A rebid in the singleton suit is a <i>control asking bid</i> . 🐼
3♦	8-10HCP, 4-4-4-1 shape with a red singleton. 3♥ is a relay and 3♠/3NT show a ♦/♥ singleton respectively. A rebid in the singleton suit is a <i>control asking bid</i> . 🐼
3♥/♠, 4♣/♦	11+HCP, 4-4-4-1 shape with singleton in suit above the one bid. A rebid in the singleton suit is a <i>control asking bid</i> . 🐼

2.1 Handling intervention over 1♣

If an opponent doubles 1♣, the responses other than 1♦ remain the same. However, the additional possible responses of *Pass* and *Redouble* are used to provide more granular information. Over an opponent's overcall in a suit at the 1-level (or a 1NT overcall), different responses are used as in the table below.

<u>After 1♣-Double</u>	
<i>Pass</i>	0-4HCP.
1♦	5-7HCP, forcing.
<i>Redouble</i>	8+HCP, 4-4 in the major suits.
<i>Others</i>	Same as over 1♣ without intervention.
<u>After 1♣-1♦/♥/♠</u>	
<i>Pass</i>	0-4HCP.
<i>New suit</i>	5-8HCP, 5+-card suit.
<i>Jump in new suit</i>	8-10HCP, 6+-card suit.
1NT	9-11HCP with stopper in opponent's suit.
2NT	12-14HCP with one or two stoppers.
<i>Double</i>	5-8HCP or 9+HCP, no 5-card suit, <u>takeout</u> . Cue bid on next round clarifies hand as 9+HCP.
<i>Cue Bid</i>	9+HCP, <u>game forcing</u> .
<u>After 1♣-1NT</u>	
<i>Pass</i>	0-4HCP.
<i>New suit</i>	5-8HCP, 5+-card suit.
<i>Double</i>	5+HCP.
<u>At 2-level</u>	
<i>Pass</i>	0-4HCP or 9+HCP with strength in opponent's suit.
<i>New suit</i>	5-8HCP, 5+-card suit.
<i>Double</i>	5+HCP.
<u>At 3-level</u>	
<i>Double</i>	5+HCP, takeout.
<u>At 4-level</u>	
<i>Double</i>	Weak hand.
<i>Pass</i>	<u>Forcing pass</u> , ask opener to take action.

2.2 Bidding after a negative response 1♣-1♦

Opener rebids 1NT, 2NT or 3♥ with balanced hands (16-18, 19-21 or 25+HCP respectively); minimum suit bids with 16-21HCP; and a jump in a suit with

22+HCP. Further bidding is largely natural.

1NT	16-18HCP, balanced hand, no 5-card major. Responder's rebids are: <i>Pass</i> 0-4HCP. 2♣ 5-7HCP, <i>Stayman</i> ♠ with at least one 4-card major. 2♦ 0-7HCP, transfer to 2♥. 2♥ 0-7HCP, transfer to 2♠. 2♠ 0-7HCP, transfer to 3♣. 2NT Weak with both minors or ♦. 4♣ <i>Gerber ace-asking.</i> ♠ 4♦/♥ <i>Texas</i>] transfers to 4♥/♠ respectively.
2NT	19-21HCP, balanced hand, no 5-card major. Responder's rebids are: <i>Pass</i> 0-3HCP. 3♣ 4-7HCP, <i>Stayman</i> (implies 4-card major). ♠ 3♦/♥ <8HCP, transfer to 3♥/♠ respectively. 3♠ Transfer to minors. 3NT 4-5HCP, sign-off. 4♣ <i>Gerber ace-asking.</i> ♠ 4♦/♥ <i>Texas</i> transfers to 4♥/♠ respectively.
1♥/♠	4+-card suit, non-forcing. Responder's rebids are: <i>Pass</i> 0-3HCP. 1♠ 4-7HCP, 4+-cards, may have three ♥. 1NT 5-7HCP, no 5-card suit, no 4-card spade after 1♥. May have 3-card support. 2♣/♦ 5-7HCP, 5-card suit, denies 3-card support. <i>Single raise</i> 2-4HCP with 3+-card support. <i>Double raise</i> 5-7HCP with 4+-card support <i>Game raise</i> 8+HCP, good hand, 4+-card support.
2♣/♦	5+-card suit, may have a 4-card major, non-forcing. Responder's rebids are: <i>Pass</i> 0-3HCP. 2♥/♠ 4-7HCP, 5+-cards. 2NT 5-7HCP, balanced hand, no 5-card suit. 2♦, 3♣ 5-7HCP, 6+-card suit. <i>Single raise</i> 3+-card support, non-forcing. 3♥/♠ 5-7HCP <i>Splinter</i> showing singleton or void in suit bid with 4+-card support for partner's suit.
2♥/♠, 3♣/♦	22+HCP, 5-card suit— <u>game force</u> . Responder's rebids are:

	<i>Lowest NT</i>	0-3HCP, minimum, no support.
	<i>Raise</i>	0-3HCP, minimum, 3+-card support.
	<i>Jump raise</i>	4-7HCP, maximum, 3+-card support, no specific values in other suits.
	<i>New suit</i>	4-7HCP, values in suit, does not deny support for partner's suit. <u>forcing</u> .
	<i>Jump NT</i>	4-7HCP maximum, spread values, no support.
3♥	24+HCP, balanced hand, <u>forcing</u> .	Responder's rebids are:
	3♠	0-4HCP, puppet to 3NT. Opener rebids 3NT after which 4♣/♦/♥/♠ will show 6+-cards and 5-6HCP.
	4 of suit	5-6HCP, 5+-cards. Opener bids one above suit (4♦/4♥/♠ or 4NT) to show fit and start <i>Roman Key-Card Blackwood</i> . 🐼
	4NT	5-6HCP, no 5-card suit, quantitative.
3NT	Running suit, to play.	

2.3 Bidding after a constructive response 1♣-2♥/2♠

Since responder is showing a strictly limited hand with a long suit, the opener needs to decide the best contract. If there is no chance for game or slam, he should pass with a tolerance for responder's suit.

	<i>Pass</i>	Game unlikely.
	3NT, 4♥/♠	Raise to game is a sign-off.
	<i>New suit</i>	<u>One-round force</u> . Responder's rebids are:
	<i>Raise</i>	3+-card support (or Qx).
	<i>Rebid ♥/♠</i>	Minimum, no support.
	3NT	Maximum, no support.
	<i>Cue bid under 3NT</i>	Maximum with support, singleton or void in suit bid.
2NT	Support for suit, <u>game force</u> .	Responders's rebids are:
	<i>Rebid ♥/♠</i>	Minimum.
	<i>New suit</i>	Singleton or void in bid suit.
	3NT	AQ or KQ in suit.
	4NT	<i>Roman Key-Card Blackwood</i> . 🐼

2.4 Bidding after a positive no-trump response 1♣-1NT/2NT

Responder is showing a balanced hand with 8-13HCP(1NT) or 14+HCP(2NT).

1♣-1NT-2♣

A 2♣ rebid after a response of 1NT is *Transfer Stayman* (other rebids are shown subsequently) and responder rebids as below:

2♦	8-10HCP, 4 card ♥, may have 4 card ♠. Opener's rebids are:
----	--

	2♥	♥ fit assured; responder should then bid 2NT with 4-3-3-3 or a second suit at 3-level.
	2♠	4-card ♠, no 4-card ♥.
	2NT	No 4-card major.
2♥		8-10HCP, 4 card ♠, denies 4-card ♥.
	2♠	Spade fit confirmed, relay; responder bids 2NT with 4-3-3-3 else second suit at 3-level.
	2NT	No 4-card ♠, may have 4-card ♥.
2♠		8-10HCP, no 4 card major. Opener then bids 2NT to ask for a further description. Responder's rebids are:
	3♣/♦	4-3-3-3 with 4-card ♣/♦.
	3♥	4-4 in minors with three hearts.
	3♠	4-4 in minors with three spades.
	3NT	5-card minor.
2NT		11-13HCP, 4-3-3-3 shape with a 4-card minor. 3♣ by opener is then a relay asking responder to bid his suit or 3NT with clubs.
3♣		11-13HCP, 4-4-3-2 shape with 4 clubs. Opener bids 3♦ as a relay and responder bids 3♥ with spades, 3♠ with hearts and 3NT with diamonds.
3♦		11-13HCP, 4-4-3-2 shape with ♦ and ♥.
3♥		11-13HCP, 4-4-3-2 shape with ♥ and ♠.
3♠		11-13HCP, 4-4-3-2 shape with ♠ and ♦.
3NT		11-13HCP, 5-card minor suit. 4♣ by opener is then a relay asking responder to bid his suit.

1♣-1NT-Suit Bid

A bid of 2♦/♥/♠ or 3♣ over a response of 1NT shows a good suit and asks responder to show strength and fit in steps as below. *This is the Ω support asking bid and in this context, a minimum is 8-10HCP with <4 controls, a maximum is 11+HCP with 4+ controls and support is Hxx, xxx or better.*

1 step	Minimum and no support.
2 steps	Minimum with support.
3 steps	Maximum and no support.
4 steps	Maximum with support.

Any new suit bid by the 1♣ opener that is not a relay and is under the level of game is a *trump asking bid* and responses are in steps as below:

1 step	None of the top three honours.
2 steps	One of the top three honours.
3 steps	Two of the top three honours.
4 steps	AKQ of suit.

1♣-1NT-Raise NT

A direct raise in no-trumps over responder's 1NT bid shows some slam interest but a direct raise to game is a sign-off.

<i>Raise in no-trumps after 1♣-1NT</i>	
2NT	5+-card club suit, natural bidding until game or slam is reached.
3NT	Minimum 1♣ hand - sign-off (to play).

1♣-2NT

Over a 2NT response to 1♣, the bidding is simpler due to the lack of bidding room at this level.

<i>Opener's rebids after 1♣-2NT</i>	
3♣	<i>Baron</i> : asking responder to show 4-card suits upwards (3NT after 3♣ shows 4-3-3-3 with four cards in ♣).
3♦/♥/♠	5+-card suit (3NT shows ♣). Subsequent bidding is natural until game or slam is reached.
4♣	Shows 6+-card ♣ suit.

2.5 Bidding after a positive suit response 1♣-1♥/1♠/2♣/2♦

Opener may use the β control asking bid with a fit in responder's suit or bid a new suit or no-trumps with no fit. With no chance of slam, the principle of fast arrival should be used to bid the appropriate game contract.

<i>Opener's rebids after a positive major suit response 1♣-1♥/1♠</i>									
<i>New suit</i>	5+-card suit, denies 3-card support for responder's suit. Subsequent bids are natural to find the correct game contract. Forcing for one round. Responses are: <table> <tr> <td><i>New suit</i></td><td>4-card suit.</td></tr> <tr> <td><i>Raise</i></td><td>3+-card support.</td></tr> <tr> <td><i>Rebid suit</i></td><td>6+-card suit, semi-solid if minor.</td></tr> <tr> <td><i>Lowest NT</i></td><td>5-3-3-2 shape, values in unbid suits.</td></tr> </table>	<i>New suit</i>	4-card suit.	<i>Raise</i>	3+-card support.	<i>Rebid suit</i>	6+-card suit, semi-solid if minor.	<i>Lowest NT</i>	5-3-3-2 shape, values in unbid suits.
<i>New suit</i>	4-card suit.								
<i>Raise</i>	3+-card support.								
<i>Rebid suit</i>	6+-card suit, semi-solid if minor.								
<i>Lowest NT</i>	5-3-3-2 shape, values in unbid suits.								
1NT	β control asking bid. 🐼								
<i>Single raise</i>	Suit fit but not a great hand since β wasn't used.								
<i>Double raise</i>	18-19+HCP balanced, good trumps (<i>xxxx</i> or <i>HHx</i>).								
<i>Game raise</i>	Minimum, balanced, 4-card fit.								
2NT	Natural, no 5-card suit.								
3♠, 4♣/♦/♥	<i>Splinter</i> bid 4-card fit promised.								
4NT	<i>Roman Key-Card Blackwood</i> . 🐼								

Bidding after a 2♣ or 2♦ response is only slightly different from the above.

<i>Opener's rebids after a positive minor suit response 1♣-2♣/♦</i>	
<i>New suit</i>	5+-card suit, denies 3-card support for responder's suit. Subsequent bids are natural to find the correct game contract.
2NT	No 5-card suit and no slam interest.
<i>Raise to 3♣/♦</i>	β control asking bid. 🐼
3NT	To play (by principle of fast arrival).

3 Responses to 1♦

Even though a 1♦ opening may be made on a hand with a doubleton diamond, it is non-forcing and partner can pass with a weak hand. Opener must clarify his shape at the earliest if no 4-card major fit is found.

<i>Pass</i>	0-7HCP.
1NT	8-10HCP, balanced, no 4-card major.
1♠	8-15HCP, 4-card ♠, denies 4-card ♥, <u>forcing</u> for one round. Opener's rebids have the same structure as over 1♥.
1♥	8-15HCP, 4-card ♥, may have 4-card ♠, <u>forcing</u> for one round. Opener rebids:
1♠	11-14HCP, 4-card ♠, no 4-card ♥. Responder rebids:
	1NT Sign-off.
	2♣ 4th-suit- <u>forcing</u> ("do something clever").
	2♠ 8-9HCP, 4-card ♠.
1NT	11-14HCP, balanced, denies 4-card fit. Responder can rebid
	2♣ New minor— <u>one-round force</u> .
	2♦ 8-9HCP, 4-card ♠.
2♣	Unbalanced, 5-4 in minors, no 4-card major. Responder can rebid
	2♦ Weak hand, to play.
	2♥/♠ 6-card heart suit (or spade suit after original 1♠), to play.
	3♣ 8-9HCP, keep bidding alive.
	3NT To play.
2♦	6+-card ♦ suit, non-forcing.
2♥	3-4 card support, if 3-card promises a singleton in a side suit.
2♠	14-15HCP, 5+-♦ and 4+-♠.
2NT	14-15HCP, 5-4-2-2 shape with ♠/♣ stopper.
<i>Double raise</i>	15HCP, 4-card support.
3♦	15HCP, 6+-card ♦ suit, no 4-card major.
3♣	15HCP, unbalanced, at least 5-5 in minors, no 4-card major.
2♣/♦	11-15HCP, 4+-card suit, no 4-card major, <u>forcing</u> . Opener's rebids are:
	2♥ 11-14HCP, ♥ stopper, no ♠ stopper.
	2♠ 11-14HCP, ♠ stopper, no ♥ stopper.
	2NT 11-14HCP, stopper in both majors.
	2♦/3♦ No stopper in majors, genuine ♦ suit.
	3♥ 15HCP, <u>game force</u> , ♥ stopper, no ♠ stopper.
	3♠ 15HCP, <u>game force</u> , ♠ stopper, no ♥ stopper.
	3NT 15HCP, stopper in both majors.
	3♣ No stopper in majors.

2♥/♠	Weak jump shift, 5+-card suit, non-forcing. Opener's rebids are:
2NT	11-12HCP, no 4-card major.
3♣	Shows both minors and asks responder to choose between 3♣, 3♦ and 3NT.
2NT	15+HCP, balanced, no 4-card major.
3♦	Up to 10HCP, preemptive, 5+-cards in ♦.
3♥/♠	6-9HCP, 7+-card suit, invitational to game with fit.
3NT	13-14HCP, balanced, no 4-card major.
4♦	Preemptive.

3.1 Intervention over 1♦

If opponent doubles 1♦, the responses are:

<i>Pass</i>	0-4HCP or 9-10HCP.
<i>New suit</i>	5-8HCP.
1NT	6-8HCP, balanced.
2♦, 3♦	<8HCP, 4+-card support, preemptive.
<i>Redouble</i>	11+HCP.

After an overcall by opponent up to the 2♠ level, the responses are:

<i>Double</i>	8-10HCP, 4+-cards in other major, negative.
<i>New suit</i>	5-card suit if major, 4-card otherwise.
2♦	6-9HCP, support for major.
3♦	10-11HCP.
1NT	8-10HCP, stopper in opponent's suit, balanced.
2NT	11-13HCP, stopper in opponent's suit, balanced.

4 Responses to 1♥ or 1♠

Responses to a major opening include *Bergen* raises, *Splinter* bids, weak jump shifts, new-minor forcing bids and 4th-suit forcing approaches.

<i>Pass</i>	0-7HCP and poor support.
<i>Single raise</i>	7-10HCP with 3-card support, constructive.
<i>Double raise</i>	0-6HCP with 4-card support (preemptive <i>Bergen</i> raise). 🐼
3♣	6-8HCP with 4-card support (<i>Bergen</i> raise). 🐼
3♦	9-11HCP with 4-card support (<i>Bergen</i> raise). 🐼
<i>Game raise</i>	0-7HCP with 5-card support, to play. If opener bids a new suit, it is a cue bid ace and slam try.
1♠	See below for 1♠ over 1♥.
1NT	8-15HCP, balanced hand with mild support for opener's suit or unbalanced hand with insufficient HCP to justify a 2-over-1 response. <u>Forcing</u> —Opener's rebids are:

	<u>With 11-13HCP</u>
2♣/♦/♥	11-13HCP, 4-card suit (or 3-card better minor).
<i>Rebid of suit</i>	11-13HCP, 6-card suit.
	<u>With a maximum 14-15HCP</u>
<i>Jump rebid of suit</i>	14-15HCP, 6-card solid suit.
2NT	5-3-3-2 distribution.
<i>Jump in new suit</i>	5-5 distribution.
2♣/♦/♥	8-15HCP, 4-card minor or 5-card heart suit (after 1♠).
	Opener's rebids are:
	2♥ (following 1♠) Natural, 4-card+ suit.
	2♠ (following 1♥) 14-15HCP, reverse. <u>forcing</u> .
	<i>Rebid suit</i> Minimum, not necessarily a 6-carder.
	2NT 11-13HCP, stoppers in unbid suits
	<i>Raise</i> 11-13HCP, good support, non-forcing.
	<i>Jump in new suit</i> 14-15HCP, good support, control in bid suit.
	<i>Jump in own suit</i> 14-15HCP, very good 6-card suit.
	3NT 15HCP, stoppers in unbid suits.
2NT	13+HCP, <u>forcing to game</u> , <i>Jacoby 2NT</i> . See 13.6 for responses.
<i>Double</i>	<i>Splinter</i> bid, singleton or void in bid suit, 4+card support.
<i>jump shift</i>	<u>Forcing to game.</u>
3NT	14-15HCP, usually 4-card support for opener's major, responder lacks a void or singleton, minimum 4 controls.

A response of 1♠ over 1♥ shows 8-15HCP with a 4-card suit and is forcing for one round. Opener's rebids are:

1NT	11-13HCP, minimum.
2♣/♦	11-15HCP, non-forcing.
2♠	11-13HCP, 4-card support.
2NT	14-15HCP, balanced, stoppers in both minors.
3♣/♦	13-15HCP, 5-card suit.
3♥	13-15HCP, 6+-card suit.
3♠	13-15HCP, 4-card spade support.
3NT	To play with running suit.
4♣/♦	<i>Splinter</i> bids, <u>game forcing</u> .
4♥	To play—distributional hand.
4♠	To play—maximum hand with 13-15HCP and distributional.
4NT	<i>Roman Key-Card Blackwood</i> ♠ with agreement in ♠.

4.1 Intervention over a major suit opening

If an opponent doubles, responder can bid:

<i>Pass</i>	0-4HCP or 9-10HCP.
<i>Raise</i>	<8HCP, preemptive, 3+-card support following the <i>Law of Total Tricks</i> .
<i>New suit</i>	5-8HCP, 5+-card suit.
1NT	6-8HCP, balanced.
2NT	<i>Jacoby 2NT</i> —see 13.6 for responses.
<i>Redouble</i>	12+HCP, support for opener's suit.

If an opponent overcalls:

<i>Pass</i>	0-7HCP or 8+HCP and waiting for penalty if opener reopens with a double.
<i>Double</i>	7-9HCP, 4-card suit in other major.
1NT	8-10HCP with stopper in opponent's suit.
2NT	11-12HCP with stopper in opponent's suit.
<i>Cue bid</i>	15+HCP with singleton or void in opponent's suit. <u>Forcing</u> .

5 Responses to 1NT

A 1NT opening shows a 13-15HCP balanced hand without a 5-card major holding but could be a 6-3-2-2 or 5-4-2-2 hand with a long minor suit in which case opener must hold stoppers in both doubletons. Responses are as below:

<i>Pass</i>	0-7HCP, poor support.
2♣	8-11HCP, <i>Stayman</i> . ♠
2♦/♥	<i>Jacoby</i> transfers to ♥ and ♠ respectively. See 13.5 for rebids.
2♠	8+HCP—Minor suit <i>Stayman</i> , denies 4-card major and asks opener for a 4-card minor. Shows a minor 2-suiter (5-4 or better).
<i>3 of suit</i>	Good suit, <u>game forcing</u> .
4♣	<i>Gerber</i> ace-asking. ♠
4♦/♥	<i>Texas</i> transfers to 4♥ and 4♠ respectively. Denies slam values.
4NT	17-18HCP, balanced, quantitative.
5NT	22-23HCP, balanced, <i>Grand Slam Force</i> .
6NT	19-21HCP, balanced.

5.1 Intervention after 1NT

If an opponent doubles 1NT, responder can bid:

<i>Pass</i>	Weak or 6-11HCP, balanced.
<i>Redouble</i>	5-card suit, asking partner to bid 2♣ and then pass or rectify.
2♣	4-card suit (or good 3-card clubs).
2♦	Short in clubs.
2♥	Tolerance for majors (at least 4-3).
2♠	12+HCP, <u>forcing</u> .

3 of suit 6+-card suit, invitational.

After an opponent's overcall, responder has the following choices:

<i>Double</i>	Penalty double.
<i>Suit at 2-level</i>	0-6HCP, natural and non-forcing.
2NT	<i>Lebensohl</i> —partner must bid 3♣. See 13.8.
<i>Suit at 3-level</i>	Natural, Forcing to game.
<i>Cue bid</i>	Asks opener to bid a 4-card major if he has one, denies a stopper in opponent's suit.
3NT	<i>Lebensohl</i> —denies stopper in opponent's suit. See 13.8.

6 Responses to 2♣

Since a 2♣ opening may be either a 6+-card suit or a 5-carder with a 4-card major, the 2♦ response is conventional to ask opener to clarify his hand.

<i>Pass</i>	0-7HCP, poor support.
2♦	11+HCP, conventional and <u>forcing</u> (with club fit, may be made with only 8HCP). Opener's rebids are: 2♥/♠ 11-13HCP, 4-card suit. 2NT 11-13HCP, 6-3-2-2 balanced hand with stoppers in two suits. Responder then bids 3♦ to enquire about stoppers and opener's rebids are: 3♥ ♥ and ♦ stoppers. 3♠ ♠ and ♦ stoppers. 3NT ♥ and ♠ stoppers. 3♣ 11-13HCP, 6 clubs with 1 outside stopper. Responder bids 3♦ to enquire about the stopper and opener's rebids are: 3♥ ♥ stopper. 3♠ ♠ stopper. 3NT ♦ stopper. 4♦ 5-card suit (6-5 in ♣ and ♦) 3NT 14-15HCP, 6-3-3-2 balanced hand, good club suit. 3♥/♠ 14-15HCP, 4-card suit.
3♦/♥/♠	16+HCP, good 5-card suit. Opener rebids are: 3NT Less than 2-card support. <i>Raise</i> Minimum, 3-card support. <i>New suit</i> Maximum, 3+-card support, cue bid ace, slam try.
2♥/♠	8-10HCP, non-forcing, invitational. Opener may pass with a minimum and mild support.
2NT	10-11HCP, invitation to 3NT.
3♣	8-10HCP, 3+-card support, no 5-card major, non-forcing. Opener may pass with a minimum or bid 3NT with a maximum.

6.1 Intervention over 2♣

<i>Negative double</i>	Through 3♠.
<i>Redouble</i>	10+HCP.
<i>Cue bid</i>	12+HCP, singleton or void in opponent's suit.

7 Responses to 2♦

A 2♦ opening describes a three suited hand with shortness in diamonds and the responder can place the contract fairly easily in most cases. The only positive response is 2NT which is forcing to game.

<i>Pass</i>	6+ diamonds, no interest in other suits or bidding higher.
2♥/♠, 3♣	Natural, sign-off.
2NT	11+HCP, artificial game-force asks opener to further describe his hand. Opener's rebids are: 3♣/♦ 3=4=1=5 or 4=3=1=5 shape respectively. 3♥ 11-13HCP and 4=4=1=4 shape. 3♠ 14-15HCP and 4=4=1=4 shape. 3NT 14-15HCP, 4=4=1=4 shape and ♦A or ♦K. 4♣ 11-13HCP, 4=4=0=5 shape. 4♦ 14-15HCP, 4=4=0=5 shape.
3♦	6+-card ♦ suit, invitation to 3NT.
3♥/♠	7-9HCP, preemptive, 5+-card suit.
4♥/♠, 5♣	Sign-off, to play.

7.1 Intervention over 2♦

If opponents double 2♦, responder can either *Pass* if he wants to play in diamonds or *Redouble* asking partner to bid a major.

8 Responses to 2♥ or 2♠

Opener shows a 6+-card major with 8-10HCP and a good suit with a minimum suit quality of 8 when vulnerable or 7 when non-vulnerable.

<i>Pass</i>	No game, no fit.
<i>Raise to 3 or 4</i>	Natural, sign-off.
<i>New suit</i>	Natural, <u>forcing</u> . Opener's rebids are: <i>Raise</i> 3-card support. <i>Rebid own suit</i> Forcing.
2NT	<u>Forcing</u> . Opener is asked to bid suit where he has a singleton or void or rebid his own suit lacking either.

9 Responses to 2NT

Opener is showing a balanced hand with 22-23HCP and no 5-card suit—this is the only 16+HCP hand that is not opened with 1♣. Responses are:

<i>Pass</i>	Very weak, no suit to escape to.
3♦/♥	Weak hand that doesn't want to play in no-trumps. <i>Flint</i> convention—asks for a transfer to ♥/♠ respectively.
4♦/♥	Transfer to 4♥/♠ respectively. 6+-card suit, to play.
3NT	To play.
3♣	<i>Smolen Stayman</i> —asking for majors. Game-going with slam interest. Responses are:
3♦	No 4-card major—responder can now rebid:
3♥	4-card ♥ and 5-card ♠ (allows for 5-3 fit).
3♠	4-card ♠ and 5-card ♥ (allows for 5-3 fit).
3NT	To play.
4♣	Transfer to diamonds.
3♥/♠	4-card major.
3NT	4 cards in both majors. Responder bids:
<i>Pass</i>	To play.
4♣/♦/♥	Transfer to ♦/♥/♠ respectively.
3♠	Transfer to clubs with a correction to diamonds. <i>Minor suit slam try</i> .

10 Responses to 3♣/3♦/3♥/3♠

After a preemptive opening of three of a suit, responder's rebids are:

<i>Raise</i>	Preemptive.
<i>New suit</i>	<u>Forcing for one round.</u>
<i>Others</i>	Natural.

11 Responses to 3NT

Responses to the gambling 3NT are:

4♣	Escape—asks opener to pass or bid 4♦ if that is his suit.
4♦	Asks opener to bid his short suit(s).
4NT	Quantitative, asking opener if he has an 8+-card suit.

12 Competitive Bidding

12.1 Overcalls

At the one level, overcall with a 5-card suit and 8-15HCP. At the two-level, overcall with at least 11-15HCP. Responses to a suit overcall are:

<i>Pass</i>	<8HCP.
<i>Raise</i>	9-10HCP with 3-card support.
1NT	9-10HCP, balanced with a stopper in opponent's suit.

A 1NT overcall should be 13-15HCP with a stopper in the opponent's suit.

A jump suit overcall is a weak preemptive bid with a 6+-card suit.

A cue bid is *Michael's* showing a 2-suiter in the highest unbid suit and another.

12.2 Doubles

A direct double over opponent's opening is either 13-15HCP (takeout) or a power double with 16+HCP.

A *takeout* double over opponent's minor opening bid usually promises a 4-card suit in both majors. Over a major suit opening, it promises a 4-card suit in the other major. A response is requested even with a blank hand unless the other opponent bids.

<i>Pass</i>	Long and solid holding in opponent's suit
<i>1-level</i>	5-8HCP.
<i>2-level</i>	7-11HCP.
<i>3-level</i>	9-13HCP.
1NT	8-10HCP with stopper in opponent's suit.
<i>Jump</i>	9+HCP.

If the doubler rebids or raises, it indicates a power hand of 16+HCP.

Doubles of an opponent's overcall are *negative* doubles indicating a lack of a biddable 5-card suit and no fit with partner's bid suit. Interest in one of the unbid suits is strongly indicated.

At the one-level, the *negative* double shows 8-15HCP; at the two-level, it shows 11-15HCP. Over an opponent's overcall in a major, it promises a 4-card holding in the other major.

A double in a competitive auction is a *responsive* double indicating 3-card support in partner's suit.

A double of a slam contract is a *Lightner* double requesting an unusual lead from partner.

13 Gadgets and Conventions

13.1 Stayman Convention

The *Stayman* convention is used to find a 4-4 major suit fit after a 1NT opening by bidding 2♣. Opener responds with one of:

2♦	No four card major.
2♥	4-card heart suit, may have 4-card spades.
2♠	4-card spade suit, no 4-card heart suit.

13.2 Roman Key-Card Blackwood

A *Roman Key-Card Blackwood* bid of 4NT is used to enquire about the number of key cards (any ace or the trump suit king) in partner's hand.

RKCB should not be used when you have a void or two fast losers.

The responses to the bid of 4NT are in steps and differ depending on whether opponents have bid over 4NT. Note that the 3rd and 4th steps show only 2 key cards if opponents have intervened since the 5 key card response is shown by step 2 in such cases.

<i>Holding</i>	<i>Silent</i>	<i>Double (R0P1)</i>	<i>Overcall (D0P1)</i>
<i>1/4 key cards</i>	5♣	<i>Redouble</i>	<i>Double</i>
<i>0/3 key cards</i>	5♦	<i>Pass</i> (0/3/5 key cards)	<i>Pass</i> (0/3/5 key cards)
<i>2/5 key cards without queen of trumps</i>	5♥	5♣ (two key cards)	<i>Cheapest suit</i> (two key cards)
<i>2/5 key cards and queen of trumps</i>	5♠	5♦ (two key cards)	<i>Second-cheapest suit</i> (two key cards)

When holding a void, after a trump suit is agreed, jumping to another suit at the 4 or 5 level in the void suit initiates a *key card exclusion* asking bid. Partner shows his key cards *excluding* any in the void suit in steps.

<i>1 step</i>	1 or 4 key cards.
<i>2 steps</i>	0 or 3 key cards.
<i>3 steps</i>	2 or 5 key cards without trump Q.
<i>4 steps</i>	2 or 5 key cards with trump Q.

13.3 Gerber Ace-asking Convention

An immediate response of 4♣ to any no-trump bid (or overcall) is the *Gerber* ace-asking convention. A jump rebid of 4♣ in response to a natural no-trump bid is *Gerber* as also when a trump suit has not been identified and no-trumps has been rebid. Gerber should not be used holding a void.

Opener shows number of aces in steps as follows:

4♦	Zero or four aces.
4♥	One ace.
4♠	Two aces.
4NT	Three aces.

13.4 β Control Asking Bid

A β control asking bid can occur either after a 1NT rebid by the 1♣ opener over a positive suit response or by cue bidding a singleton suit after a positive response of 3♣, 3♦, 3♥, 3♠, 4♣ or 4♦ over 1♣.

The number of controls held ($A=2$, $K=1$) are shown in steps as below:

<i>1 step</i>	0-2 controls. A relay bid by opener in the cheapest suit over the 1-step response will then ask for clarification and again the responses are in steps: <i>1 step</i> No controls. <i>2 steps</i> 1 control. <i>3 steps</i> 2 controls.
<i>2 steps</i>	3 controls.

<i>3 steps</i>	4 controls.
<i>4 steps</i>	5 controls.

13.5 Jacoby Transfers

After a 1NT opening, responder bids 2♦ with a 5-card or better heart suit and 2♥ with spades. Opener will bid 2♥ or 2♠ so that the strong hand becomes declarer. Responder's rebids are:

<i>Pass</i>	A weak hand with 5+-card ♥ or ♠.
2♠	Invitational with 5-5 in the majors after 1NT-2♦-2♥.
2NT	Balanced or semi-balanced hand with 5-card ♥ or ♠. Invitational—partner can pass or sign-off in 3 of major or bid 3NT.
3♣/♦	4-card suit in addition to 5-card major, <u>game forcing</u> .
<i>Raise</i>	6-card suit, invitational.
3♥	(After 2♠) 5-5 in the majors with slam interest. Stronger than an immediate jump to 4♥.
3♠	(After 2♥) Singleton or void with slam interest.
3NT	Balanced or semi-balanced hand. Partner can pass or correct to 4 of major.
4♥	(After 2♠) 5-5 in majors with no slam interest. Partner can pass or correct to 4♠.
<i>Double raise</i>	6+-card major, sign-off.
4NT	Quantitative, inviting slam in major or no-trumps.

13.6 Jacoby 2NT

A 2NT response over an opening of 1♥ or 1♠ is conventional and shows 13+HCP with 4+-card support of partner's suit. It is forcing to game. Opener's rebids are:

<i>New suit</i>	Singleton or void in suit bid.
<i>Rebid of suit at 3-level</i>	Maximum strength hand.
<i>Jump shift</i>	Good 5+-card side suit.
<i>Game in original suit</i>	Minimum opening, sign-off.
3NT	12-13 HCP, medium strength hand.

13.7 Bergen Raises

After a 1♥ or 1♠ opening, responses of 3♣, 3♦, 3♥ and 3♠ show different types of 4-card support. The mnemonic *CLAP* (Constructive, Limited and Preemptive) helps to remember the order of the bids.

1♥-3♣	Constructive, 7-10HCP, 4-card ♥.
1♥-3♦	Limited, 10-12HCP, 4-card ♥.
1♥-3♥	Preemptive, 0-6HCP, 4-card ♥.
1♠-3♣	Constructive, 7-10HCP, 4-card ♠.
1♠-3♦	Limited, 10-12HCP, 4-card ♠.

$1\spadesuit$ – $3\heartsuit$	<i>Spare bid</i> —used to show a strong 12+HCP hand with 4-card support and an undisclosed singleton/void.
$1\spadesuit$ – $3\spadesuit$	Preemptive, 0-6HCP, 4-card \spadesuit .

13.8 Lebensohl

The *Lebensohl* convention is used by responder after an opponent overcalls partner's opening 1NT bid in order to compete further without necessarily committing to game. It is initiated after the right-hand opponent makes a suit overcall at the two-level.

<i>2 in new suit</i>	Natural and non-forcing.
2NT	A puppet bid requiring opener to bid $3\clubsuit$. After opener's forced $3\clubsuit$ bid, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — 3 of a lower ranking suit than overcaller's is natural, to play. — 3 of a higher ranking suit than overcaller's is natural and invitational. — 3 of the opponent's suit is artificial asking opener to bid a 4-card major and showing a stopper in opponent's suit. — 3NT is natural, to play, and shows a stopper in the opponent's suit.
<i>3 in new suit</i>	Natural, forcing to game.
<i>Cue bid</i>	Artificial—asks opener to bid a 4-card major and denies a stopper in opponent's suit.
3NT	Natural, to play, and denies a stopper in opponent's suit.

14 Miscellaneous

High-card Points (HCP) are assigned as follows—Ace=4, King=3, Queen=2 and Jack=1. Once a trump-fit has been found, distribution points can be assigned—Void=3, Singleton=2, Doubleton=1.

Singleton honours should be counted only once (either HCP or shortness).

Suit Quality (SQ) is calculated as suit length plus number of honours in the suit. The Jack or Ten should be counted only if a higher ranking honour is held. For example, a holding of K-J-9-5-4 would have 7SQ but J-10-9-5-4 would have 5SQ.

For an overcall, the SQ should equal or exceed the number of tricks bid (e.g., SQ of 8 for a 2-level overcall).

When preempting, the SQ should equal the level of preempt when vulnerable and can be one less when non-vulnerable.

The *Losing Trick Count* (LTC) is used only once a trump suit has been established. Count losers only in the top three cards of the suit holding—there are never more than 3 losers in a suit. With three or more cards, A/K/Q are not losers but any lower card is a loser. With two cards, only A or K are not losers.

Add your and partner's loser count and subtract from 24 to estimate the number of tricks that can be won. You can estimate your partner's LTC as follows:

HCP	<i>Expected Losers</i>
<i>7-9</i>	8-9 losers (9)
<i>10-12</i>	7-8 losers (8)
<i>13-15</i>	6-7 losers (7)
<i>16-18</i>	5-6 losers (6)
<i>19-21</i>	4-5 losers (5)
<i>22+</i>	4 losers or less