

This is the bridge system used by Jeff Yutzler and Rick Bingham. It is a 2 over 1 game force (no exceptions) with a number of commonly used conventions. It is suitable for Flight B players. For more information on this document, see <https://github.com/jyutzler/Bridge-Systems>.

Table of Contents

1. General Approach	5
2. Notrump Opening Bids	6
2.1. 1NT 15-17	6
2.1.1. Basic Responses	6
2.1.2. Non-forcing Stayman	6
2.1.3. 3 \heartsuit Puppet Stayman	7
2.1.4. Jacoby Transfer	7
2.1.5. Single-suited Major Hands	8
2.1.6. 2-level:	9
2.1.7. 3-level: 5-5 hands	9
2.1.8. 4-level	9
2.1.9. Smolen 5-4 or better in the Majors	9
2.1.10. Minor Suit Transfer Bids	10
2.1.11. When Opponents Double	10
2.1.12. Lebensohl	11
2.2. 2NT and 3NT	11
3. Major Openings	12
3.1. 1 \heartsuit Over 1 \heartsuit	12
3.1.1. After any Non-Supporting Rebid by Opener	12
3.1.2. After 1NT Rebid	12
3.1.3. After 2 \heartsuit or 2 \spadesuit Rebid	12
3.2. NT Responses	12
3.3. 1NT Forcing	12
3.3.1. Rebids	13
3.3.2. Over Interference	13
3.4. Raises	13
3.4.1. General	13
3.4.2. Bergen Raises	14
3.4.3. Passed Hands	14
3.4.4. In Competition	14
3.4.5. Jacoby 2NT	14
3.4.6. 3NT	14
3.4.7. Splinter Raises	14
3.4.8. Two Way Reverse Drury	15
3.5. Jump Shifts	16
3.5.1. Weak Jump Shift	16
4. Minor Openings	17
4.1. Raises	17

4.1.1. In Competition	17
5. One Over One	18
5.1. 1♣	18
5.2. 1♣ or 1♦	18
5.3. 1♣-1♦; 1♦-1♣	18
5.4. Opener Rebids	19
5.5. Responder Rebids	19
5.5.1. Sign-off	19
5.5.2. Inviting Game	20
5.5.3. Forcing to Game	20
5.5.4. New Minor Forcing	20
6. Two Over One	21
6.1. Opener's Subsequent Bids	21
7. Game Tries	22
7.1. Help Suit Game Try	22
8. Strong Rebids	23
8.1. Jump Rebid	23
8.2. Jump to Game	23
8.3. Reverses (with Lebensohl)	23
8.4. Opener Jump to 2NT	23
8.4.1. 1m - 1M; 2NT...	23
8.4.2. 1♣ - 1♦; 2NT...	24
8.5. Opener Jump Shift	24
9. Strong 2♣	25
9.1. Over Interference	25
10. Weak Two Bids of 2♣, 2♦, or 2♥	26
11. Slam Bidding	27
11.1. Roman Key-Card Blackwood 0314	27
11.1.1. With (Useful) Voids	27
11.1.2. 5NT	27
11.2. Gerber 0314 First/Last	27
11.3. 5NT Pick a Slam	28
12. Defensive Bidding	29
12.1. Doubles	29
12.1.1. Lebensohl after Doubling a Weak-Two	29
12.1.2. Responsive Doubles	29
12.2. Suit Overcalls	30
12.2.1. Advances of Suit Overcalls	30
12.2.2. Jump Overcalls	30
12.2.3. vs. Opening Preempt	30
12.2.4. Responses	31

12.3. NT Overcalls	31
12.3.1. Direct Position (1X-?)	31
12.3.2. Balancing Position (1X-p-p-?)	31
12.3.3. 2-Level (2X-? or 1X-p-2X-?)	31
12.3.4. 3-Level (3X-? or any-p-3X-?)	31
12.3.5. Unusual 2NT	32
12.3.6. Unusual 4NT	32
12.4. Michaels Cuebid	32
12.4.1. Responses to a Minor Cuebid	32
12.4.2. Responses to a Major Cuebid	32
12.4.3. Rare Responses to Either Cuebid	33
12.4.4. Overcaller Rebids	33
12.5. After Opponents Bid Two Suits	33
12.6. Meckwell vs. Strong 1NT	33
12.7. Cappelletti vs. 1NT	34
12.7.1. Unpassed Hand	34
12.7.2. Passed Hand	34
12.8. Overcalls of Strong Openings	35
13. Preemptive Bids	36
14. Competitive Bidding	37
14.1. Negative Doubles	37
14.2. Support Doubles	37
14.3. New Suits	37
14.4. Cue Bids	38
14.5. Jump Raise	38
14.6. With Conventions	38
14.6.1. Examples	38
14.7. Against Conventions (Unusual over Unusual)	38
14.8. Vs. Takeout Doubles	39
14.9. Card-Showing Doubles	39
14.10. Penalty Doubles	39
14.10.1. Lightner Doubles	40
14.10.2. Lead-Directing Doubles	40
14.11. Redoubles	40
15. Defensive Leads and Signals	41
15.1. Carding	41
15.2. Leads	41
15.3. Signals (Upside-Down Count and Attitude)	41

Chapter 1. General Approach

Two-over-one game forcing with five-card majors

Strong forcing opening: 2♣;

Chapter 2. Notrump Opening Bids

Balanced hands have either 4-3-3-3, 4-4-3-2, or 5-3-3-2 distribution. This includes five-card majors unless the major is particularly strong. Semi-balanced hands with either 5-4-2-2 or 6-3-2-2 distribution may be treated as balanced if the doubletons are Qx or better.

A hand may be upgraded 1 point for a long suit with good texture (e.g., QJT9x) and downgraded 1 point for a 4-3-3-3 hand with poor texture (e.g., AJx-KJx-Axx-Qxxx).

The bidding structure for balanced hands is as follows:

- 12-14 (weak NT): Open 1 of a suit, rebid NT
- 15-17 (strong NT): Open 1NT
- 18-19 (1.5 NT): Open 1 of a suit, jump NT
- 20-21: Open 2NT
- 22-24: Open 2♣, rebid NT
- 25-27, 4-3-3-3: Open 3NT
- 24+: Open 2♣, jump NT unless response promises a game force

2.1. 1NT 15-17

2.1.1. Basic Responses

- 2♣: Stayman (also for invitational hands)
- 3NT: sign-off
- 4♣: Gerber, asking for aces. (See Slam Bidding)
- 4NT: natural, quantitative invite to 6NT. 4NT is slam invitational only because 4♣ is available as Gerber (to ask about aces).

2.1.2. Non-forcing Stayman

2♣ is “non-forcing” Stayman, meaning that the bidding can stop in two of a suit (Garbage Stayman). Usually responder will have a decent 8+ HCPs (assuming a 15-17 1NT range).

Opener rebids:

- 2♣: no four-card major
- 2♥: four or five hearts and less than five spades
- 2♠: five spades (possibly with four hearts) or four spades

Responder’s rebids after 2♣ or 2♥:

- 2♠ (over 2♣): four spades, denies four hearts
- 3♣ (over 2♣) or 3♥ (over 2♥): forcing raise, slam interest, requests cue bid

- 3 of that major: invitational
- 4 of that major: signoff

Responder's rebids after any response:

- 2NT: invitational, not necessarily with an unbid major
- 3♣, 3♦: five cards, slam interest
- 3NT: signoff with an unbid major (choice of games)
- 4♣: Gerber (key card if over a major)
- 4♣, 4♦ (over 2♦): unused
- 4NT: quantitative

2.1.3. 3♣ Puppet Stayman

3♣ is a game-forcing artificial bid that is used when responder has a three and/or four card major and is looking for an eight card fit with opener. It is on over 1NT and 2NT openings.

Opener rebids:

- 3♣: no five-card major and at least one four-card major
- 3♦ or 3♥: five of that major
- 3NT: no four-card or five-card major

After 3♣:

- 3♦ or 3♥: four of the other major
- 3NT: to play
- 4♣: Gerber
- 4♦: 4 of both majors
- 4NT: quantitative

After 3 of a major:

- 3NT: to play
- 4♣/4♦: Splinter
- 4♦: Mild slam try
- 4 of that major: to play
- Other major: Strong slam try, requests cue bids
- 4NT: quantitative

2.1.4. Jacoby Transfer

The Jacoby Transfer shows a five-card major. After a 1NT opening (or overcall if systems are on -

see Defensive Bidding):

- 2♥: transfer to hearts
- 2♠: transfer to spades

Opener accepts the transfer, though he can jump to the three level with 17 points and four-card support for responder's major. For example:

1NT — 2♥

- 2♥: normal acceptance of the transfer
- 3♥: 17 points and four-card heart support

If, after the transfer is accepted, responder bids a new suit, that is natural and game forcing. Possible calls after the accepted transfer are:

1NT — 2♥; 2♠

- Pass: content to play 2♥
- 2NT: invitational with a five-card suit
 - Pass or 3♥: minimum
 - 3NT or 4♥: maximum
- 3♥, 3♠: natural (4+), slam interest
- 3NT: asking for a choice between 3NT and 4♥
- 4NT: quantitative invitation to 6♥ or 6NT with a five-card suit
- 5NT: pick a slam (6♥ or 6NT)
- 6♥: to play

2.1.5. Single-suited Major Hands

The Texas Transfer shows a six-card major. After a 1NT or 2NT opening or overcall (if systems are on):

- 4♥: transfer to hearts
- 4♠: transfer to spades

Opener must accept the transfer.

When used in conjunction with the Jacoby Transfer, the Texas Transfer gives you a way to show a range of single-suited hands while reducing the risk of unwanted interference from the opponents. The following shows how they are used with strong NT (15-17) openings.

- Bust (would pass a 1-bid): Jacoby, pass
- Invitational with a six-card suit (would make a 1 over 1 bid): Jacoby, raise to 3; Opener rebids:
 - pass: minimum

- 3NT: to play (rare - usually requires three cards and a balanced hand)
- 4M: maximum
- Game signoff (weak 2 strength): Texas, pass
- Slam invitation (opening strength): Two options:
 - Jacoby, raise to 4 in suit (balanced)
 - Jacoby, jump in another suit (splinter)
- Slam (stronger-than-minimum opening): Two options:
 - Texas, 4NT (Blackwood) OR
 - Jacoby, other major (requests cue bids)
- Pick a Slam: Texas, 5NT

It is rare, but a direct bid of 4♣ or 6♣ is to play and is only used when your hand is not amenable to transferring (for example, an unprotected king).

2.1.6. 2-level:

A transfer at the 2-level is used with certain hands with the majors.

- Transfer to the weaker major and pass: bust
- 2♥(transfer) followed by 2♠: 6 hearts, slam try (request to cue bid)
- 2♥(transfer) followed by 3♠: 6 spades, slam try (request to cue bid)

2.1.7. 3-level: 5-5 hands

The 3-level is used to show most 5-5 hands.

- 3♣: 5-5 minors, game forcing
- 3♠: 5-5 majors, invitational
- 3♥: 5-5 majors, choice of games

2.1.8. 4-level

- 4♣: Gerber, asking for aces. (See Slam Bidding)
- A direct raise of 1NT to 4NT is natural and invites 6NT. 4NT is slam invitational only because 4♣ is available as Gerber (to ask about aces).

2.1.9. Smolen 5-4 or better in the Majors

If responder is weak, transfer to the five-card major and pass. Otherwise use a Stayman to show 5-4 in the majors as follows:

1NT — 2♣; 2♦:

- 2♣ or 2♦: that major, invitational

- 3♣ or 3♦: the other major, game-forcing

Over 2NT, a similar system applies but there are no invitational bids:

2NT — 3♣; 3♦:

- pass: weak (5-4=4=0 distribution)
- 3♣ or 3♦: the other major, game-forcing

Smolen does not apply over 3NT.

2.1.10. Minor Suit Transfer Bids

Transfers are used to show hands with a long minor.

- 2♣: transfer to clubs
 - 2NT: preacceptance (good support)
 - 3♣: normal response
- 2NT: transfer to diamonds
 - 3♦: preacceptance (good support)
 - 3♦: normal response

After the transfer, responder can bid again to show extra length or strength:

- New suit: shortness, mild slam try
- 3NT: balanced, mild slam try
- Raise to 4: invitational
- Raise to 5: sign-off

When using this treatment, responder bids 2♣ (Stayman) with any game invitational hand. A rebid of 2NT over a 2♣ or 2♦ response shows an invitational hand that may or may not have a four-card major.

2.1.11. When Opponents Double

If an opponent doubles, all conventional responses are "on." For example:

- 1NT — (Double) — 2♣: Stayman
- 1NT — (Double) — 2♦: transfer to hearts

With a bad hand and a long minor, redouble for SOS.

- 1NT — (Double) — Redouble: Rescue - weak with a long minor (opener bids 2♣, pass or correct).

Otherwise pass and let opener reopen the bidding.

- 1NT — (Double) — pass - (pass): Forcing - opener must either bid a 5-card suit or redoubles.

Responder passes the redouble with 7+ (possibly less) or bids a 4-card suit to attempt to scramble to safety.

2.1.12. Lebensohl

When the opponents interfere with a 1NT opener, a conventional 2NT response is used to show a wider range of hand types.

1NT(2 \clubsuit or higher):

- Double:
 - Penalty (if the opponent's bid showed that suit)
 - Systems on (if the opponent's 2 \clubsuit bid did not show clubs)
 - Penalty in at least one shown suit (if the opponent's bid was artificial)
 - Negative if the opponent's bid is 3 \clubsuit or higher (since Responder rarely has a true Penalty Double here)
- 2Y:
 - sign-off (if the suit is unshown)
 - takeout (if the suit is shown)
- 2NT: Relay to 3 \clubsuit ; followups:
 - pass: to play
 - 3Y, below opponent's suit: sign-off
 - 3X (Cue): Stayman, showing a stopper
 - 3Y, above opponent's suit: natural, invitational
 - 3NT: Game values, showing a stopper
- 3Y: Natural, 1 round force (GF if suit is higher than opponent's suit)
- 3X (Cue): Stayman, denying a stopper
- 3NT: Game values, denying a stopper
- 4 \clubsuit /4 \spadesuit : Texas through 3 \clubsuit . (In other words it must be a jump.)

2.2. 2NT and 3NT

Systems are off for 3NT opening bids, rebids over 2 \clubsuit , and [overcalls](#).

- 4 \clubsuit : Gerber
- 4 \clubsuit : GF with diamonds or both minors
- 4 \clubsuit , 4 \spadesuit : To Play
- 4NT: Quantitative for 6NT
- 5NT: Pick a slam

Chapter 3. Major Openings

Normally open five-card majors in all seats.

Open the higher of long suits of equal length: 5–5 or 6–6.

3.1. 1♠ Over 1♣

Since the immediate objective is to support with support, 1♠ must be skipped in favor of heart support without invitational values.

3.1.1. After any Non-Supporting Rebid by Opener

- pass: minimum, 4 or 5 spades
- 2♣: minimum, 6+ spades
- 2NT: 4 spades, 11-12 HCP
- 3♣: invitational, 3-card limit raise, usually 5 spades
- 3♣: As per 1 over 1 system
- 3NT: 4 spades, 13-15 HCP
- 4♣: Game-forcing, minimum hand
- 4♣: To play, 7+ spades
- 4NT: quantitative, 16-17 HCP

3.1.2. After 1NT Rebid

- 2♣ or 2♦: See New Minor Forcing below
- 2♥: preference (rare, 2 hearts and concern about NT)

3.1.3. After 2♣ or 2♦ Rebid

- raise minor: invitational
- other minor: See Fourth Suit Forcing below
- 2♥: preference (2 hearts and no more than 3 of the minor)

3.2. NT Responses

3.3. 1NT Forcing

1NT typically shows 6–12 points and is used in a number of circumstances:

- No support for the major opened
- A three-card limit raise

- A bust hand with otherwise good trump support (too weak for a direct raise)

It also denies four spades after a 1♠ opening.

3.3.1. Rebids

1NT is 100% forcing by an unpassed hand. With a good hand, see [\[strong-rebids\]](#). Otherwise rebid as follows:

- 2m: 3+ cards
- 2M: 6+ cards (rarely a good 5)

Responder can sign off or invite game with the rebid:

- other 2-level bid: weak hand, sign-off (opener may raise 1♠-1NT; 2m-2♠ with 5=4-0-4 distribution and a good hand)
- 2M: to play (2-card support or hand too weak for a constructive raise)
- 2♠ after 1♠-1NT; 2m: good support of minor (impossible spade)
- single raise of minor: good support (could be a minimum especially if 2♠ is available)
- 2NT: balanced invite (11-12)
- 3♠ after 1♠-1NT; 2♠: invitational
- 3X: invitational (usually a 6-card suit)
- 3 of major: three-card limit raise
- 4 of other major: to play (preemptive, too weak for a 2/1 bid)

3.3.2. Over Interference

Double is for penalty (requires a trump stack). Generally bid a 4-card or longer suit at the 2-level if possible. Otherwise pass and wait for further developments. Bidding a new suit at the 3-level requires at least two of the following:

- significant extras
- at least 5-5 distribution
- non-vulnerable

3.4. Raises

The following assumes a 1♠ opening but the system over 1♠ is similar.

3.4.1. General

- 2♠: three-card support, 7–10 dummy points (strong enough to accept at least one game try).
- 4♠: usually five+ cards, a singleton or void, and fewer than 10 HCP.

3.4.2. Bergen Raises

- 3♥: mixed raise (7-10 dummy points with four or more hearts).
 - 3♥: game try
- 3♦: limit raise (11–12 dummy points with four or more hearts).
- 3♣: weak raise (6 or fewer dummy points with four or more hearts).

3.4.3. Passed Hands

Bergen Raises are off. See Drury section if applicable.

3.4.4. In Competition

Bergen Raises are on over a double (Redouble implies no fit) but off in competition. After an overcall:

- 3♥: weak raise (10 or fewer dummy points with four or more hearts).
- 4♥: usually five+ cards, a singleton or void, and fewer than 10 HCP.
- Cue: Limit Raise or better (at least a good 10 dummy points and three hearts)

3.4.5. Jacoby 2NT

As an unpassed hand, a 2NT bid over a 1♥ or 1♦ opening is a game-forcing raise (13+ dummy points, 4+ trumps, generally balanced and/or extras) that asks opener to describe his hand to help responder evaluate slam prospects. For example, over 1♥:

- 3♥, 3♦, 3♣: singleton or void in that suit.
- 4♥: minimum hand.
- 3NT: medium hand (15–17).
- 3♠: maximum hand (18+).
- 4♥, 4♦, 4♣: 5-card suit with two of the top three honors.

This treatment is off in competition and as a passed hand. Unless otherwise stated, 2NT is natural.

2NT: 11-12 HCP, balanced hand with two-card support for partner.

3.4.6. 3NT

3NT: 13-15 HCP, balanced hand with two-card support for partner.

3.4.7. Splinter Raises

Over a 1♥ or 1♦ opening, a double jump shows 13+ dummy points, 4+ card support, and shortness in the suit bid (either a singleton or void). Opener can explore slam by bidding controls or attempt to sign off by bidding game. For example:

1♣ — 4♣: game forcing, club shortness

- 4♣, 4♦: slam interest, first round control (usually ace)
- 4♣: to play

Responder shows a void by rebidding the splinter suit:

1♣-4♦;4♦-5♦: void

Opener can also self-splinter with a strong distributional hand. 1♣ — 2♦:

- 4X: game forcing, shortness

In competition, splinters are off except for jumps in the opponent's suit.

Note: This is the treatment recommended by Richard Pavlicek as described in this quiz[<http://www.rpbridge.net/cgi-bin/quiz.pl?5h4100>].

3.4.8. Two Way Reverse Drury

In third or fourth position, a 1♣ or 1♦ opening may be light (equivalent to an overcall). To prevent the contract from getting too high, responder may bid the following:

- 2 of a minor shows a limit raise
 - 2♦: 3 card support
 - 2♣: 4+ card support

These bids also apply after a double by the opponents.

Opener clarifies strength with the rebid:

- 2 of the major: to play
- 3 of the major: good hand, requests cue bid
- 4 of the major: to play
- 2♦ over 2♣ or 2♣ over 2♦: full opener, game try
- 2♦ over 1♣-2♦: 4 hearts, game try or better
- 2♣ over 1♦-2♣: 4 spades, game try or better

Other passed hand bids by responder:

- 2♦ (after 1♣ opening): natural, 10-11 points (non-forcing)
- 2M: courtesy raise (may be less than constructive)
- 3X: fit jump – 4-card support, good 5+ cards in new suit
- 3M: 5+ card support, unbalanced (rare)

3.5. Jump Shifts

3.5.1. Weak Jump Shift

A jump shift in the other major shows a weak hand (less than invitational values) and 6+ cards. Opener must pass without good support.

1♠:

- 3♠: weak

To show an invitational hand in the other major or a minor, bid 1NT and then jump or reverse.

1♠ — 1NT; 2♠:

- 3♠, 3♥, 3♣: invitational

With a weak hand and a minor, you must pass if you have a singleton or void in opener's suit. With a doubleton, you can bid 1NT and pass, correct, or sign off in opener's suit.

Chapter 4. Minor Openings

A 1 \heartsuit opener suggests a four-card or longer suit, since 1 \heartsuit is preferred on hands where a three-card minor suit must be opened. The exception is a hand with 4=4=3=2 shape which should be opened 1 \heartsuit . With 9+ cards in the minors, generally open the longer minor first. Opener should take care to ensure that a suitable rebid is available after partner's response.

4.1. Raises

Responder needs more trumps to raise (four to raise 1 \heartsuit ; five to raise 1 \spadesuit). Since four card majors should be bid up-the-line, a raise denies a four card major. Once a minor is raised, the bidding must end in that suit or NT. Raises are inverted so a raise to two is strong (limit raise or better) and a raise to 3 is weak (preemptive). When vulnerable, a jump raise should be sound (8-9 dummy points) but when non-vulnerable it is much more wide-ranging.

1 \heartsuit

- 2 \heartsuit : limit raise or better (limit raise as passed hand)
 - 2 \heartsuit , 2 \spadesuit , 3 \heartsuit : stopper
 - 2NT: balanced minimum, side suits stopped
 - 3 \heartsuit : unbalanced minimum
 - 3 \heartsuit , 3 \spadesuit , 4 \heartsuit : extras, splinter
 - 3NT: 18-19, side suits stopped
 - 4/5 \heartsuit : to play
- 3 \heartsuit : preemptive

4.1.1. In Competition

Inverted raises are off in all competition.

- 2m: courtesy (3-4 card support)
- 3m: preemptive
- cue: good support (redouble if interference is a double unless another convention described elsewhere is in effect)

Chapter 5. One Over One

5.1. 1 \heartsuit

A 1 \heartsuit response to 1 \heartsuit shows one of the following hand types:

- Rebiddable diamonds
- A game force with 4+ diamonds (does not deny a 4-card major)
- A balanced 6 HCP (responder will pass any subsequent non-forcing bid)

Opener rebids 1NT with a balanced minimum. With an unbalanced hand, opener makes the cheapest logical bid.

Responder's second round bid of 2 of a major is game-forcing and natural.

5.2. 1 \heartsuit or 1 \spadesuit

A major response to a minor opening promises 4+ cards and 6+ dummy points and is forcing for one round.

- With four hearts and four spades or more hearts than spades, bid hearts first.
- With more spade than hearts or an equal number (5+), bid spades first.

Opener must support a major with four-card support. Opener may support a major with three-card support, particularly with a side singleton or weak doubleton. Without support, opener bids 1NT with a balanced hand or a stiff honor in responder's suit. If this is not possible either, opener must rebid a minor even with only five cards in the opening suit.

5.3. 1 \heartsuit -1 \spadesuit ; 1 \spadesuit -1 \heartsuit

The sequence is an artificial, one-round force showing one of the following hand types (non-exhaustive?):

- 4 spades, 6 diamonds, non-game-force
- tolerance for either minor (for example, 3=2=5=3)
- NT interest, but ambivalence about declaring (i.e., no tenaces)

Opener should respond in this priority:

- 2 \heartsuit : 4 spades (4=4=0=5 or 4=4=1=4 distribution)
- 2 \spadesuit : extreme distribution like 1=5=0=7
- 1NT: shortness in diamonds but stoppers elsewhere
- 2 \heartsuit : 3+ diamonds
- 2 \spadesuit : 6 clubs or a strong 5

NT responses show a balanced hand with no four-card major.

- 1NT: 7-10 HCP (over 1 \heartsuit), 6-10 HCP (over 1 \spadesuit)
- 2NT: 11-12 HCP
- 3NT: 13-15 HCP
- 4NT: 16-18 HCP

These bids are not forcing, but opener is expected to bid again with a suitably strong and/or unbalanced hand.

5.4. Opener Rebids

Opener's rebids are natural and standard. Unless the hand qualifies for a [Strong Rebid](#), make one of the following bids.

- pass: partner is a passed hand, you have a minimum with 3-card support or a sub-minimum with 4-card support
- 1NT: balanced with 2 or 3-card support for partner, or unbalanced with a stiff A or K in partner's suit and no other alternative
- rebid suit: 6-cards or strong 5
- new suit (non-reverse): 4-cards
- raise to 2: minimum, usually 4-cards, though good 3-card support is acceptable if notrump is not
- jump raise: invitational, 17-18 dummy points
- 3NT: to play, usually long running minor
- double jump shift: game force, splinter
- jump to game: 18-19 balanced

5.5. Responder Rebids

If responder has bid a suit at the one level, he next determines whether he wishes to sign off in a partscore, invite game, sign off in game, or force to game and get more information about opener's hand.

5.5.1. Sign-off

Bids available for a sign-off in partscore: Pass, 1NT, 2 of a previously bid suit.

Example: 1 \heartsuit -1 \heartsuit ;2 \heartsuit :

- Pass
- 2 \heartsuit : 2-3 hearts, likely misfit
- 2 \spadesuit : 6+ spades

There is one exception to the rule that new suits are forcing: 1 \heartsuit —1 \heartsuit ;1NT:

- 2 \heartsuit : sign-off - opener must pass or correct (bust with 5-4 or better distribution)

5.5.2. Inviting Game

Bids available for inviting game: 2NT, jump in a bid suit, new minor:

Example: 1♣-1♦;2♣:

- 2NT, 3♣, 3♦, 3♥: 11–12 points, inviting game.

5.5.3. Forcing to Game

Bids available for forcing to game:

- Fourth suit
- Jump or reverse in new suit
- New Minor Forcing followed by a rebid of previously bid suit
 - For example, 1♣-1♦;1NT-2♦;2♥-2♣ shows a game-forcing hand and a 6-card suit

Opener can sign off in game or make a slam try. 4NT is Blackwood (see [Slam Bidding](#slam-bidding)) only if suit agreement has been established. Otherwise it is quantitative, asking responder to proceed with a maximum. Suit bids usually show controls.

5.5.4. New Minor Forcing

A new minor suit at the responder's second bid or later is forcing for one round and thus is invitational at the 2-level and game forcing at the 3-level. When more than one minor is available (1♣-1♦;1NT-2m), it tends to show a stopper for NT.

Example: 1♣-1♦;1NT (or 2♦)-2♣ (forcing)

After New Minor Forcing, opener must describe his hand further.

- 2 of responder's suit: 3-card support, minimum
- 3 of responder's suit: 3-card support, extras (preacceptance)
- 2 of other major: 4 cards, minimum
- 3 of other major: 4 cards, extras (preacceptance)
- 2NT: minimum
- 3NT: to play (maximum)

If opener has rebid 1NT, rebids should be designed to find a suit contract.

- raise new minor: extras, stopper, forcing to 3NT or higher

If opener has rebid his suit, rebids should be designed to find a 3NT contract.

- raise other minor: 4-cards, extras
- rebid opener's suit: retreat (minimum, no stopper in new minor)

Chapter 6. Two Over One

By an unpassed hand, a two-over-one response shows 13+ points and 4+ cards or support for opener's major. It is forcing to game.

2♣ over 1♣ shows 5+ cards.

2♣ over 1♠ shows 5+ cards and does not deny a 4-card major.

6.1. Opener's Subsequent Bids

Opener responds naturally to clarify the hand.

- 2NT: balanced minimum, misfit minimum (generally with stoppers in the unbid suits), or balanced maximum
- 3NT: intermediate hand (15-17)
- New suit: 4+ cards (reverse implies extra strength)
- Jump shift: splinter support of previously bid suit
- Rebid of original suit: no better response

Chapter 7. Game Tries

7.1. Help Suit Game Try

Once any major suit is raised from 1 to 2 (declaring suit agreement), a new suit is a game try. It suggests a suit JTx or better that would benefit from fitting honors (Qxx or better). One may bid game, sign off, or make another game try.

When this treatment is used, other bids change their meanings.

- 2NT shows a balanced hand
- 3 of the trump suit is preemptive/blocking (1-2-3-stop)

Chapter 8. Strong Rebids

8.1. Jump Rebid

After an opening at the 1-level and nearly any response by partner, a jump rebid shows at least 16 total points and a good six card suit. The suit should be strong enough to play opposite a small singleton. Responses:

- pass: bad fit, bad hand
- 3NT or raise to game: to play
- Other suit: cue bid in support of opener's suit
- 4NT: Ace/keycard asking (see [Slam Bidding](#))

8.2. Jump to Game

After a 1-level bid and any response by partner:

- a direct jump to game in opener's suit shows a one-suited hand that is too strong to preempt and too weak to jump rebid, reverse, or jump-shift. Responder is expected to pass without support and/or excellent controls.
- a direct jump to game in responder's suit shows a strong balanced hand (18-19 HCP), generally with 4-card support and a side doubleton or stiff honor. Responder is expected to continue with a limit hand or better.

8.3. Reverses (with Lebensohl)

After a 1/1 bid, a reverse shows a good 15+ HCP, an unbalanced hand, and at least five cards in the first suit. (HCP strength can be lowered in cases of extreme distribution.) Bidding 2NT is the only weak response. It is a relay to 3 \heartsuit (pass or correct). In cases of extreme strength and/or distribution, Opener may bypass the relay.

All other bids by responder are natural and forcing to game. A rebid of a major shows a decent 5+ card suit.

8.4. Opener Jump to 2NT

Opener's jump to 2NT shows a stronger-than-1NT opening (18-19 HCP). Responder's rebids are mostly natural.

8.4.1. 1m - 1M; 2NT...

- pass: weak hand, 4-card suit
- rebid suit: weak hand (signoff), 5+card suit
- retreat to opener's minor: weak hand (signoff), 4-card major, 5+ cards in opener's suit (or 4-4-4-

1 distribution)

- new minor: 5 card suit and/or unbid four card major, game-forcing
- 3 \heartsuit : 5-5 or better, game-forcing or better (if 6-5 then looking to signoff at game)
- 3NT/4NT/5NT/6NT: natural (signoff/quantitative/pick-a-slam/signoff), 4-card suit
- 4 \heartsuit : Gerber
- 3 \heartsuit , 4 \heartsuit , 4 \spadesuit : 6-5 distribution or better, slam interest
- raise to 4: 6+ cards, signoff

8.4.2. 1 \heartsuit - 1 \heartsuit ; 2NT...

Same as the above with the following addition:

- 3 \heartsuit , 3 \spadesuit : 4-card major, game-forcing

8.5. Opener Jump Shift

After a 1/1 or 1NT/1 bid, a jump shift shows 19+ total points and an unbalanced hand. Usually it shows 5+ cards in the first suit and 4+ in the second suit, although it can also show 6-3-3-1 or 4-4-4-1 distribution if the second suit is a minor. It is forcing to game.

Responses:

- A rebid at the two-level: 5+ cards in the suit
- 3NT: denies support, extra length, or shape
- new suit: natural, extras, often a first round control
- support of either suit below game: sets trumps and shows extra shape; responder rebids:
 - Suit: first round control
 - Exception: return to first suit (major only): 6-3-3-1 distribution (warning responder from a 4-3 fit)
 - Jump new suit: splinter
- game in either suit: signoff

Chapter 9. Strong 2

A 2 opening shows at least 22+ points balanced, 8 1/2+ tricks in a major, or 9 1/2+ tricks in a minor.

Responses:

2:

- 2: conventional, could be “waiting” with a good hand not suited to a positive response
- 2, 2, 3, 3: natural and game forcing with a minimum of 8 HCP and a five-card suit with two of the top three honors
- 2NT: 8+ HCP, balanced (systems off)

After a 2 response, opener rebids naturally:

- 2, 2, 3, 3: natural, forcing to 3 of opener’s major or 4 of opener’s minor
- 2NT: 22-23 points (see responses for 2NT opening above)
- 3NT: 24-25 points (see responses for 3NT opening above)
- 4NT: 28+ points

In response to a suit rebid, responder indicates strength.

2 — 2; 2:

- 2, 3: natural, game force
- 3: artificial (cheaper minor), very weak (0-4, not an ace)
- 3NT: 5-7 points, balanced
- 3: positive support, requests cue bid sequence
- 4: fair support, discouraging slam

2 — 2; 3:

- 3: "cheaper minor" (instead of 4)
- others: same as above

9.1. Over Interference

The 2 opening automatically creates a forcing auction. All bids are natural and positive, all doubles are for penalty, and all passes are forcing.

Chapter 10. Weak Two Bids of 2♣, 2♦, or 2♥

A weak two-bid shows a six-card suit of reasonable quality and 5–11 HCP. On rare occasions it may be a very good five-card suit. It is possible to open a weak two with a poor seven-card suit (not good enough to open with at the three level).

Responses:

A 2NT response is forcing, showing game interest. (This applies also if the opponents intervene with a double or a bid.) Opener rebids his suit with a minimum weak two (5–8 points). With a maximum hand opener bids another suit to show a “feature” (ace or king in that suit); with a solid suit (AKJxxx or better) he raises to 3NT.

Any raise of opener’s suit is to play and could be preemptive.

A 3NT response is also to play.

“RONF” on the card means “Raise Only Non-Force.” A new-suit response is forcing one round and shows at least a five-card suit. Opener should raise a major suit response with a three-card fit, or perhaps with a doubleton honor.

With no fit for responder’s suit, opener rebids:

- With a minimum weak two-bid (5–8 points), rebid the suit at the lowest level.
- With a maximum weak two-bid, name a new suit or bid notrump.

Chapter 11. Slam Bidding

11.1. Roman Key-Card Blackwood 0314

Once suit agreement has been reached, 4NT is used to ask for keycards - the 4 aces and the king of trump. It can also be used to ask for "Queen or Extra Length" (queen: queen of trump, extra length: enough trump to promise 10 total).

4NT KC Asking:

- 5♣: 0 or 3 keycards
- 5♦: 1 or 4 keycards
- 5♥: 2 keycards, no QOEL
- 5♠: 2 keycards, QOEL

After a 5♣ or 5♦ response, the Blackwood initiator may ask for QOEL by bidding the next step:

- (heart suit agreement)-4NT;5♥-5♠: Queen ask
 - 5♥: no QOEL
 - 5♥, 6♥, 6♠: QOEL, that king, and no lower kings
 - 5NT: QOEL, no kings

11.1.1. With (Useful) Voids

After 4NT, responder can show voids with at least one keycard:

- 5NT: even number of keycards (never zero)
- 6 of void suit: odd number of keycards
- 6 of trump suit: odd number of keycards, void is in higher suit

11.1.2. 5NT

5NT guarantees the partnership holds all five keycards and QOEL and is invitational to grand. A 6-level bid shows the king in that suit.

11.2. Gerber 0314 First/Last

4♣ is Gerber over first or last NT. In the case of first NT, it is key card for the last bid suit. Responses show the number of aces, by steps, just as over a plain Blackwood 4NT.

Ace Asking:

1NT — 4♣

- 4♣: 0 or 4 aces

- 4♣: 1 or 4 aces or key cards
- 4♦: 2 aces or key cards

If the player using Gerber makes any bid other than 5♣, that is to play (including 4NT).

5♣ is used to ask for kings. King Asking:

1NT — 4♣ — any — 5♣

- 5♣: 0 or 3 kings
- 5♦: 1 or 4 kings
- 5♥: 2 kings

11.3. 5NT Pick a Slam

A voluntary bid of 5NT is forcing and asks partner to try to pick the best slam available. There are no hard-and-fast rules here, but possibilities include:

- bidding a new 4-card suit (looking for a 4-4 fit)
- showing secondary support (looking for a good 7-card fit)
- rebidding a previously bid suit with unannounced length and/or strength
- returning to 6NT with no better options

The asker may continue to bid up the line if completely displeased with the response.

Chapter 12. Defensive Bidding

12.1. Doubles

A double is for takeout over a partscore bid (4 \spadesuit or lower). In the direct position over a 1-level bid, it shows support for the unbid suits and enough strength to warrant getting into the auction (usually 10+ points with shortness in opener's suit OR 18+ points and any distribution). In the balancing position it can be 2-3 points lighter.

Advancer is expected to bid after a takeout double. The Rule of 9 (#cards + #honors + bid level \geq 9) is a reasonable guideline to determine when to convert the double to penalty. With insufficient strength and no compelling suit, a 1NT bid is permissible. Unlike in other bidding situations, bid four-card suits highest first. In some cases this will allow you to show your second suit and give partner a choice of places to play.

A below-game jump response to a takeout double is invitational (9-12 declarer points). To force for one round, responder cuebids opener's suit. This is forcing to game by an unpassed hand.

Any subsequent bid by doubler shows significant extras and is strongly invitational to game. If advancer has jumped, then a new suit or NT bid by doubler is forcing to game.

Over opening game bids (4 \spadesuit or higher), a double is for penalty. However, advancer may pull the double with undisclosed distribution and/or poor defensive values.

12.1.1. Lebensohl after Doubling a Weak-Two

After a Weak-Two by the opponents followed by a Takeout Double and a pass by responder, 2NT is a conventional response, requesting (but not insisting) on a relay to 3 \spadesuit . This allows Advancer to distinguish between minimum, intermediate, and maximum hands.

(2 \spadesuit)X(p):

- 2NT: Relay to 3 \spadesuit
 - pass, 3 \spadesuit , 3 \heartsuit : to play (7 or fewer HCP)
 - 3 \spadesuit : 4 hearts, spade stopper, GF
 - 3NT: to play, no heart suit, stopper
 - *The 3 \spadesuit Relay may be bypassed with 22+ HCP or 9+ playing tricks*
- 3 \spadesuit , 3 \heartsuit , 3 \diamondsuit : semi-positive (8-11 HCP)
- 3 \spadesuit : game values, 4 hearts, no stopper
- 3NT: game values, no heart suit, no stopper

12.1.2. Responsive Doubles

After an opponent bids at the one level, partner doubles for takeout, and the other opponent raises, a double by advancer is responsive. This allows the original doubler to be declarer and to pick the

preferred suit.

Responsive Doubles are on through 4 \spadesuit but off after a preemptive opening.

12.2. Suit Overcalls

Suit overcalls show 8–16 points (double and bid the long suit with a stronger hand). A reopening bid means much the same as a direct seat bid, but it may be made with about a king less. Versus an opening preempt, an overcall is natural.

12.2.1. Advances of Suit Overcalls

The only forcing response is a cuebid of opener's suit, asking the overcaller about the quality of his overcall:

(1 \spadesuit) — 1 \spadesuit — (Pass) — 2 \spadesuit :

- (Pass) — 2 \spadesuit : minimum overcall.
- (Pass) — other: extra strength (11 or 12 points minimum).

New suit advances are non-forcing but constructive.

12.2.2. Jump Overcalls

Jump overcalls are preemptive, showing the same value as an opening bid at the same level:

(1 \spadesuit):

- 2 \spadesuit : a hand that would open a weak two-bid in spades.
- 3 \spadesuit : a hand that would open 3 \spadesuit .

A cuebid overcall when the opponents have bid two suits is natural in the second suit but Michaels in the first suit.

12.2.3. vs. Opening Preempt

Versus an opening preempt, an overcall is natural.

- Two-level: any opening hand with a five-card suit
- Three-level: extras: 15+ total points
- Four-level: significant extras: 17+ total points
- Jump overcall over a Weak-Two: significant extras, but non-forcing (with a Strong-Two hand, double first then jump to game.)
- Jump overcall to game is to play and is semi-preemptive
- *In the balancing seat, an overcall can be a king lighter*

12.2.4. Responses

Raises are natural and generally preemptive. A new suit is non-forcing but constructive.

A cuebid of opener's suit by an unpassed hand shows any good hand and is forcing for one round. Advancer will return to Overcaller's suit to show a limit raise or better. A cuebid of opener's suit by a passed hand shows good support (limit raise or better).

Examples: (1♣) — 1♦ — (Pass) — 2♦:

- (Pass) — 2♦: minimum overcall.
- (Pass) — other: natural, game-forcing.

12.3. NT Overcalls

With appropriate strength and a stopper in the opponent's suit, you may make a NT overcall. All systems are on - effectively the opening bid is ignored.

12.3.1. Direct Position (1X-?)

- 10-14 HCP: pass or double then pass
- 15-18 HCP: 1NT
- 19-21 HCP: double then bid NT
- 22-24 HCP: double then jump NT

12.3.2. Balancing Position (1X-p-p-?)

- 12-15 HCP: 1NT
- 16-18 HCP: double then bid NT
- 19-21 HCP: double then jump in NT
- 22-24 HCP: 3NT
- 2NT is unusual (see below)

12.3.3. 2-Level (2X-? or 1X-p-2X-?)

- 15-18 HCP: 2NT
- 19-21 HCP: 3NT
- 22-24 HCP: double then 3NT

12.3.4. 3-Level (3X-? or any-p-3X-?)

- bad 16 HCP or less: pass or double then pass
- good 16 HCP or more: double or 3NT

12.3.5. Unusual 2NT

A jump overcall of 2NT shows at least 5–5 in the lower two unbid suits. (It may show 2=2=4=5 distribution but in that case it should be a king stronger.)

(1♣) - 2NT: hearts and clubs

The strength is either weak or very strong/distributional. (Any subsequent bid by the overcaller shows extra strength or distribution.) With an normal opening hand it is better to bid the higher suit then rebid the lower suit if needed.

Note: Unusual 2NT may be off in the reopening seat (see NT Overcalls above).

12.3.6. Unusual 4NT

In a highly competitive auction, 4NT is also unusual.

Over an opening 4♣ bid, 4NT is takeout, showing at least two places to play.

12.4. Michaels Cuebid

A cuebid overcall when the opponents have bid only one suit is a Michaels cuebid, showing a 5–5 two-suiter (or more distributional).

- If the opening is in a minor suit, the cuebid shows the majors;
- If the opening is in a major, the cuebid shows the other major and an unspecified minor.

The strength is either weak or very strong/distributional. With an normal opening hand it is better to bid the higher suit then rebid the lower suit if needed. When vulnerable, it is best to avoid very weak hands. (This also makes it easier for advancer to decide to bid game.) When non-vulnerable, the low-end range is much wider.

12.4.1. Responses to a Minor Cuebid

1. Major at lowest level: Preference (usually 3)
2. 2NT: Invitational
3. Opponent's suit: Game or slam try

12.4.2. Responses to a Major Cuebid

1. Major at lowest level: Preference (usually 3)
2. Jump in major: Weak if below game
3. 2NT: asks for overcaller's minor.
 - If advancer then returns to the major, this is invitational.
 - If there is further interference, 4NT may also ask for the minor.

12.4.3. Rare Responses to Either Cuebid

1. Jump in major: Good support, but weak if below game
2. Unbid minor (no further interference): Weak
3. 3NT: To play

12.4.4. Overcaller Rebids

Overcaller will normally have a weak hand and will pass or make a minimum response. With a strong hand or freakier distribution, overcaller will make some other bid.

12.5. After Opponents Bid Two Suits

After the opponents show two suits, it is often prudent to show the other two suits.

- Double: 4+ cards in each unbid suit and/or extra strength
- Cheapest unbid suit: Standard overcall; Continuations by overcaller:
 - Pass: Minimum
 - Fourth suit (if first suit is not supported): Opening strength, two-suited
 - Fourth suit (if first suit is supported): More than opening strength, game try
- Lower bid suit: Michaels (5-5 distribution expected)
- Higher bid suit: Natural
- 2NT: 5-5 or more in the two unbid suits, preemptive

12.6. Meckwell vs. Strong 1NT

Meckwell features multiple ways to show single-suited or 5-4 hands.

- double: long minor or both majors or 18+ HCP
- 2♣: clubs and a major
 - 2♣, 2♦: natural, to play
- 2♦: diamonds and a major
 - 2♦: natural, to play
- 2♣: natural, rebiddable
- 2♦: natural, rebiddable
- 2NT: minors

After double, advancer is expected to relay to 2♣ but may break the relay with a 6-card suit. Responses to 2♣:

- pass: single-suited with clubs
- 2♦: single-suited with diamonds

- 2♣: both majors
- 2♦: both majors, but spades are stronger
- 3♣: natural, rebiddable

After 2♣ or 2♦, Advancer may pass or bid 2♣. Overcaller may pass or correct to 2♣.

12.7. Cappelletti vs. 1NT

12.7.1. Unpassed Hand

Cappelletti (AKA Hamilton) is a common defense to 1NT (especially weak). Unpassed hand responses:

- double: penalty
- 2♣: single-suited
 - pass: 6 clubs
 - 2♦: relay (pass or correct)
 - 2NT: 4 diamonds, 6 clubs
- 2♣/2♦: 5-card suit, weak
- 2NT: Invitational (11+), balanced
- 2♠: majors (5-5 when vulnerable, may be shorter when non-vulnerable)
 - Pass: 6 diamonds
 - 2♣/2♦: Unconstructive preference
 - 2NT: Minors
 - 3♣: 6 clubs
- Raise to 3: Invitational
- 2♣/2♦: that major and a minor
 - pass: Fit, unconstructive
 - 2NT: Asking for minor
 - Responder may return to major to show 10-12
 - Raise to 3: Invitational 8-9
- 2NT: Minors (5-5 or better)
 - 3♣/3♦: Unconstructive preference
- 3♣/3♦: six cards, no interest in minors
- 4♣/4♦: Invitational

12.7.2. Passed Hand

By a passed hand, the system changes slightly:

- double: clubs or red suits (pass or correct)

12.8. Overcalls of Strong Openings

Against any strong opening (usually 2♣ or 1♣), an overcall is a transfer to the next higher suit.

Chapter 13. Preemptive Bids

Opening suit bids at the three level and higher are preemptive and based on playing tricks (the number of tricks you expect to take if your long suit is trumps). Overbid based on the rule of 2-3-4:

- vulnerable vs. nonvulnerable: overbid by 2 tricks
- equal vulnerability: overbid by 3 tricks
- nonvulnerable vs. vulnerable: overbid by 4 tricks

Preempts are generally not made in first or second position with:

- more than one outside trick
- a four-card major Q-x-x-x or better
- a void in a minor

Responses in new suits or NT are natural and forcing if below game.

Chapter 14. Competitive Bidding

14.1. Negative Doubles

The negative double is used through 4♣ promising four cards (at least) in an unbid major. Bidding a major in competition shows a five-card or longer suit and strength suitable to the level. With insufficient high-card strength for a free bid, double may also be used with a five-card or longer suit.

- 1♣ — (1♣) — Double: 4-4 or better in the majors.
- 1♣ — (1♣) — Double: exactly four spades (1♣ promises at least five).
- 1♣ — (1♥) — Double: four hearts and 6+ points or five hearts and 5-6 points.
- 1♣ — (4♥) — Double: four hearts and 10+ points or five hearts and 8-10 points.

If both majors are bid, then a double shows both minors.

- 1♣ — (1♠) — Double: 4-4 or better in the minors.

When the opponents overcall a minor over a minor at the two-level or higher, a double shows at least one four-card major and at least two places to play.

- 1♣ — (2♣) — Double: at least one four-card major.
- 1♣ — (2♥) — Double: at least one four-card major.

If opener bids the a major you cannot support, rebid opener's first suit or NT to imply the other major.

14.2. Support Doubles

Unless overruled elsewhere, after opener bids a suit and responder bids another suit:

- if RHO overcalls, a double shows 3-card support for responder
- if RHO doubles, a redouble shows 3-card support for responder

Eschewing the support double shows 4-card support.

Support Doubles are on through 2♣. At a higher level, doubles in competition are card-showing.

NOTE	This is the Washington Standard treatment.
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14.3. New Suits

In a competitive sequence, new suits by an unpassed hand are forcing. (To make a constructive, non-forcing bid, consider a Negative Double.) New suits by a passed hand are constructive but non-forcing.

Jump shifts are weak, showing a similar hand to a preempt.

14.4. Cue Bids

Cuebidding right-hand opponent's suit shows a limit raise or better:

- 1 \heartsuit — (2 \heartsuit) — 3 \heartsuit : limit raise or better.

Note: If playing inverted minors ON in competition, then that treatment supercedes this one.

14.5. Jump Raise

When using this treatment, a jump raise is weak / competitive.

- 1 \heartsuit - (2 \heartsuit) - 3 \heartsuit : weak, 4+ card support

Note: if you pass a suit bid and bid it later, it is natural, not a cue bid:

- (1 \heartsuit) - p - (1 \heartsuit) - p; (1 \heartsuit) - 2 \heartsuit : natural, 6+

14.6. With Conventions

Unless otherwise noted elsewhere, any bid or double by an opponent cancels a convention intended for non-competitive sequences.

14.6.1. Examples

- 1 \heartsuit — (2 \heartsuit) — 2NT: natural (11-12 HCP).
- 2 \heartsuit — (Double) — 2 \heartsuit : natural and positive.

14.7. Against Conventions (Unusual over Unusual)

After partner opens in a suit and a conventional bid by the opponents shows one known suit, a cue bid shows a good raise, a double shows a good hand without support, and other bids are weak. For example:

1 \heartsuit — (2 \heartsuit : Michaels)

- 3 \heartsuit , 3 \spadesuit , 3 \clubsuit : weak
- 3 \heartsuit : Limit raise or better in spades.
- Double: at least 10 HCP, possibly willing to make a penalty double.

If the conventional bid shows two known suits, there are two cue bids available and the second shows the fourth suit. For example:

1 \heartsuit — (2NT: Unusual)

- 3 \heartsuit , 3 \spadesuit : weak

- 3♣: Limit raise or better in clubs.
- 3♠: 10+HCP, 5+ spades
- Double: at least 10 HCP, possibly willing to make a penalty double.

14.8. Vs. Takeout Doubles

If RHO makes a takeout double:

1♣ — (Double)

- 1♣, 1♦: forcing, point count not limited.
- 2♣: non-forcing (6–10 points, usually a six-card suit).
- 2NT: limit raise (at least 10 points) — or better.
- Redouble: 10 points or more, but it is better to make a more descriptive bid of 1♣, 1♦, or 2NT with the appropriate hand.
- 3♣: preemptive, good trump support but fewer than 10 points.

A responder's jump shift after a double is to play:

1♣ — (Double) — 2♣, 2♦, 3♣: six-plus card suit, like a weak two-bid or preemptive three-bid.

14.9. Card-Showing Doubles

In a competitive auction below game where no other double applies, a double is card-showing. Partner is requested to do something intelligent, such as:

- Show secondary support for a previously bid suit
- Rebid an extra-long or extra-strong suit
- Bid a previously unbid four-card suit
- Bid NT with at least one good stopper
- Convert to penalty (usually with a decent four cards)

14.10. Penalty Doubles

A double is unequivocally for penalty in the following cases:

- After a game contract by the opponents
- After a natural NT bid by any player
- After two previous doubles by either partner
- After partner has bid or doubled over an opposing preempt and preempter's partner has raised

14.10.1. Lightner Doubles

A double of a NT or slam contract is Lightner, asking for a specific lead such as:

- dummy's first bid suit
- a suit doubler has not shown

14.10.2. Lead-Directing Doubles

In fourth position or after a pass, double of an artificial bid is lead-directing. To make the bid, doubler must be confident that:

- the lead will be helpful
- the opponents will not be able to make the contract redoubled

14.11. Redoubles

A redouble can have one of three meanings:

To play if:

- your side is at the four level or higher:
 - 4 \heartsuit — (Double) — Redouble: Penalty
- the opponents double a conventional bid:
 - 1NT — (Pass) — 2 \heartsuit — (Double) — Redouble: Penalty, good diamond suit;

A good hand if:

- their double is for takeout:
 - 1 \heartsuit — (Double) — Redouble: 10+ points;

SOS, requesting a different suit if:

- your side is doubled for penalty in a trump suit at the three level or lower:
 - 1 \heartsuit — (Pass) — Pass — (Double); Pass — (Pass) — Redouble: SOS, responder can support at least two of the unbid suits.

Chapter 15. Defensive Leads and Signals

15.1. Carding

First discard is attitude for that suit. (See "Signals" below.)

15.2. Leads

Leads are:

- top of touching honors and interior sequences.
- A from A-K-x-(x...)
 - Q from partner either is singleton or promises J
- K from A-K tight or A-K-J-(x)
- Q from A-K-Q-x-(x...) - requests count
- Q from K-Q-T-9 against NT - requests unblocking J
- Top of all doubletons (including honors)
- 2nd best from x-x-x-x or x-x-x-x-x (show original 4th best at next opportunity)
- 4th best from H-x-x-x or H-x-x-x-x
- Bottom from H-x-x, top from x-x-x (BOSTON)

15.3. Signals (Upside-Down Count and Attitude)

When signaling, defender must first determine what information is most useful. Signals are made in this priority:

1. Attitude (low encourages)
2. Count (low: even)
3. Suit preference (high: higher suit)