

Bridge Convention

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1 Introduction

1.1 Named conventions that we use

In short, our system is based on:

- ACOL (4 card majors)
- Strong **2♣**
- Three Weak Twos
- Weak **NT**
- Stayman and Transfers
- Ogust convention
- Jacoby **2NT**
- Gerber **4♣** for **NT** contracts
- Blackwood (1430 Roman Key Card) **4NT** for suited contracts

1.2 Notation

This is how the suits are displayed. ♠♥♦♣.

We write **T** instead of **10**.

This is how a hand is displayed. **KJ2♥ AT98♠ KQ532♦ 7♣** (13).

These are annotations.

2 Hand Analysis

Points. Ace - 4, King - 3, Queen - 2, Jack - 1.

Shape.

No voids, no singletons, at most one doubleton is **balanced**. Anything else is **unbalanced**.

The probability of a balanced hand is ~ 0.47 , and the most probable hand, 4-4-3-2 is balanced.

Notice that all unbalanced hands have a 5-card suit, except for a 4-4-4-1 split.

3 Opening Bids

3.1 1 level bids

3.1.1 1♣♦♥♠

- Balanced, 15-19 HCP.
- Unbalanced, 12-19 HCP.

The above is a simplified summary of 1 level suit bids. The following rules also apply.

- Always bid your longest suit.
- If you have two longest suits of equal length, do the following.
 - If there are 4 of each, bid the cheaper suit.
 - If there are 5 or 6, bid the higher, unless they are hearts and spades.
- If 4441 distribution, do the following.
 - With a red singleton, bid the suit below.
 - With a black singleton, bid the middle suit.
- For unbalanced hands, you may open if you have less than 12 HCP, using *Rule of 20*. If the length of your two longest suits added to your point count is 20 or more, you may make a 1 level opening.

3.1.2 1NT

- Balanced, 12-14 HCP.

3.2 2 level bids

3.2.1 2♣

- Balanced, 23-37 HCP.
- Unbalanced, 20-37 HCP.

3.2.2 2♦♥♠

To make a weak 2 level bid, you should have at least 3 HCP in the suit you bid. If you have two 6 card suits bid the major. With both majors, bid the suit with the most HCP. If you have two 7 card suits, remember to count your cards before you look at them.

- 6-9 HCP, 6 card suit.
- 4-5 HCP, 7 card suit.
- 3-2 HCP, 8 card suit.

3.2.3 2NT

- Balanced, 20-22 HCP.

3.3 3 level bids

3.3.1 3♣♦♥♠

To make a 3 level bid, you should have at least 3 HCP in the suit you bid.

- 6-9 HCP, 7 card suit.
- 4-5 HCP, 8 card suit.

3.3.2 3NT

- 7 card minor, headed by AKQ, no other aces or kings.

3.4 4 level bids

3.4.1 4♣♦

- Some sort of pre-emptive bid.

3.4.2 4♥♠

- Can make game in a major with minimal help from partner, who might pass an opening at the 1 level. Works as a pre-emptive too.

3.4.3 4NT

Not used

3.5 7 level bids

- Opener can make grand slam by themselves.

4 Responses to Opener

4.1 Responses to 1 level suit openings

When responding with a suit, the priorities are as follows.

- Bid the longest suit first
- With 5 or 6 of each bid the higher ranking suit
- With multiple 4 card suits, bid them up the line.

4.1.1 Weak responses

If you have 6-9 HCP, you must make a weak response as follows.

After a minor opening

- Bid a new 1 level suit
- Raise opener's minor
- Bid 1NT

After a major opening

- Raise opener's major
- Bid 1♠ over 1♥
- Bid 1NT

Shut-out Jump Raises If you are weak, but have 5 of opener's major and a singleton or void, you may raise immediately to $4\heartsuit$ or $4\spadesuit$. The opener should then pass.

4.1.2 Stronger responses

If you have 10 or more HCP, you may respond with a new suit at the 2 level. You should only make a 2 level response if you can't make a 1 level suit response, unless you are bidding your partner's suit. The same rules about suit preference apply here.

Rule of 14 You may bid at the 2 level with fewer than 10 HCP using *Rule of 14*. If the length of your longest suit plus your points is 14 or more, you may respond with a new suit at the 2 level.

Jacoby 2NT If the opening bid was $1\heartsuit$ or $1\spadesuit$, bid **2NT** if you have at least 4 cards in that suit and 13 points.

Natural 2NT If the opening bid was $1\clubsuit$ or $1\diamondsuit$, bid **2NT** if you have 10-12 HCP and cover in the unbid suits. This takes preference over raising opener's minor to $3\clubsuit$ or $3\diamondsuit$, as it shows cover.

4.1.3 Super strong responses

Jump Shifts If you have 16 HCP or more, then you should skip a level of bidding and change suit.

4.1.4 Over interference

Negative Doubles If the opponents interfere, you have 6 or more HCP and there is no bid you can make, then double.

4.2 Responses to 1NT

The **1NT** opener is very precise, so the aim of the responses is to find game or to minimise damage. They are as follows, in order of priority.

- If you have a 5 card major suit, bid $2\diamondsuit$ for hearts, and $2\heartsuit$ for spades. This is called a transfer bid.
- If you have a 4 card major suit and 11-28 HCP, bid $2\clubsuit$. This is the Stayman convention.

- With exactly 11 HCP, bid **2♠**.
- With exactly 12 HCP, bid **2NT**.
- With 13-17 HCP, bid **3NT**.
- With 18-26 HCP, bid **4♣**.
- With 27-28 HCP, bid **7NT**.

4.3 Responses to **2♣**

- With 0-8 HCP, bid **2♦**.
- With 9+ HCP, bid your cheapest longest suit **2♥♠** or **3♣♦**.

4.4 Responses to **2♦♥♠**

- With 6-9 HCP, and 3 of opener's suit, raise to **3♦♥♠**.
- With 10-14 HCP, pass.
- With 15-16 HCP, and opening bid was **2♦**, also pass.
- With 15-38 HCP, bid **2NT**. This is a relay bid for the Ogust convention.

4.5 Responses to **2NT**

- If you have a 5 card major suit, bid **3♦** for hearts, and **3♥** for spades. This is a transfer.
- If you have a 4 card major suit and 4-20 HCP, bid **3♣**. This is Stayman.
- With 4-11 HCP, bid **3NT**.
- With 12-20 HCP, bid **4♣**.

4.6 Responses to **3♣♦♥♠**

- With 6-9 HCP and 3 card support, raise to **4♣♦♥♠**.
- With 10-15 HCP, pass.
- With 16-36 HCP, bid game in partner's suit, or bid **3NT** if you have all side suits covered and opener was a minor.

4.7 Responses to 3NT

When the responder bids clubs, the opener can always correct to diamonds if necessary.

- With cover in both majors and a minor, and at least one card in the other minor, pass.
- With a weak hand and no cover, bid $4\clubsuit$.
- With a strong unbalanced hand, bid $5\clubsuit$.
- With 5 quick tricks including enough aces/kings, bid $6\clubsuit$.
- With 6 quick tricks including 3 aces, bid **7NT**.

5 Opener's rebids

5.1 After an unbalanced $1\clubsuit\spadesuit\heartsuit$ opening

Opener has 12-15 HCP

- Raise responder's suit. Except after a $1\diamondsuit$ response.
- Bid a new 1 level suit, cheapest first. (Skipping over a suit denies 4 cards.)
- Rebid $2\clubsuit\spadesuit\heartsuit$ with 5 in that suit.

Opener has 16-18 HCP

- Jump raise responder's suit.
- Bid a new suit.
- Rebid $3\clubsuit\spadesuit\heartsuit$ with 6 cards in that suit.

Opener has 19 HCP

- Jump to game in responder's suit.
- Skip a level and bid a new suit.
- Jump to game in the opened suit with strong 6 cards or 7 cards in that suit.

5.2 After a balanced 1♣♦♥♠ opening

After a 1♣♦♥♠ response

- With 15-16 HCP, bid **1NT**.
- With 17-18 HCP, bid **2NT**.
- With 19 HCP, bid **3NT** or 4♥♠ with a fit.

After a 1NT response

- With 15 HCP, pass.
- With 16-17 HCP, bid **2NT**.
- With 18-19 HCP, bid **3NT**.

After a 2♣♦♥♠ response

- Bid **3NT** or 4♥♠ with a fit.

After a natural 2NT response

- With 12-13 HCP, pass.
- With 14-19 HCP, bid **3NT**.

After a Jacoby 2NT response

- With 12-14 HCP, bid 4♥♠.
- With 15-16 HCP, bid **3NT**.
- With 17-19 HCP, bid 3♥♠.

5.3 After a 1NT opening

After a 2♣ response

- With 4 hearts, bid 2♥. This does not deny 4 spades.
- With 4 spades, bid 2♠. This denies 4 hearts.
- Otherwise, bid 2♦.

After a 2♦♥ response

- After 2♦, bid 2♥.
- After 2♥, bid 2♠.

After a 2♠ response

- With 12-13 HCP, bid 2NT.
- With 14 HCP, bid 3NT.

After a 2NT response

- With 12 HCP, pass.
- With 13-14 HCP, bid 3NT.

After a 3♣♦♥♠ response

- Pass.

After a 3NT response

- Pass.

After a 4♣ response

- Use responses for the Gerber convention.

5.4 After a 2♣ opening

- With 23-24 HCP, bid 2NT, if you can.
- After a 2♦ response, bid 2♥♠ if you can, otherwise bid your longer minor 3♣♦.

5.5 After a 2♦♥♠ opening

After a 3♦♥♠ response

- Pass, unless the opponents bid and vulnerabilities are favourable for a sacrifice.

After a 2NT response This is the Ogust convention.

- With low points and most of your points outside the suit first bid, bid **3♣**.
- With low points and most of your points in the suit first bid, bid **3♦**.
- With high points and most of your points outside the suit first bid, bid **3♥**.
- With high points and most of your points in the suit first bid, bid **3♠**.
- With AKQ in the suit bid, bid **3NT**.

5.6 After a 2NT opening

After a 3♣ response

- With 4 hearts, bid **3♥**. This does not deny 4 spades.
- With 4 spades, bid **3♠**. This denies 4 hearts.
- Otherwise, bid **3♦**.

After a 3♦♥ response

- After **3♦**, bid **3♥**.
- After **3♥**, bid **3♠**.

After a 3NT response

- Pass.

After a 4♣ response

- Use responses for the Gerber convention.

- 6 Responder's rebids
- 7 Overcalls
- 8 Responses to Overcall
- 9 Probabilities
- 10 High Card Points vs Game points probabilities
- 11 Vulnerability
- 12 Match Points vs IMPs
- 13 Other