

Openings

| | 0-5 | 6-8 | 9-12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23+ |
|--|--------|------|------|----|----|-----|----|-----------------------|----|----|-----|----|----|-----------------|
| balanced | | | | | | 1NT | | | | | 2NT | | | |
| openable suit* | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 2♣ ^a |
| 6 card suit | | 2♦♥♠ | | | | | | 1♣♦♥♠ | | | | | | |
| 7 card suit | ≥3♣♦♥♠ | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| solid minor, 2 outside stoppers [†] | | | | | | | | Acol 3NT ^a | | | | | | |

3rd and 4th seat

Open one of a suit with fewer points. Bid weak two with shorter suit or more points.

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* Opening a suit requires 5 of a major or 4 of a minor

† 7-card minor (sometimes 6), usually all 3 outside suits stopped, never a singleton or void

1 | Suit openings

1.1 Responses to 1 of a suit

| | 2–6 | 6–10 | 11–12 | 13+ |
|---------------------------|------------|------------------------------|-------------------|------------------------------|
| three-card major suit fit | | | | 1/1 or 2/1 |
| four-card major suit fit | | single raise (2M) | limit raise (3M) | Jacoby 2NT ^{ag} |
| ... + singleton/void | | | | splinter bid ^{* ag} |
| four-card minor suit fit | | jump raise (3m) [†] | single raise (2m) | |
| new suit [‡] | jump shift | 1NT [§] | 2/1 ^f | |
| | | | 1/1 ^f | |

1.2 Major suit fits

Fit in major is 3 cards, since 5 are required to open. With a minimal response (6–10 points), bid a **single raise** at the 2-level. With an invitational response (11–12), bid a **limit raise** at the 3-level. With a good fit (4+ trump) and a strong response (13+ points), game is required and slam is possible. There are two strong (artificial and forcing) responses: a **splinter bid** (double jump shift to a new suit[¶]) showing a singleton or void, or **Jacoby 2NT** without such a feature, which asks partner to further explain his hand. With only a 3-card trump fit, bid a **new suit** at the cheapest level.

Single raises and game tries

After a single raise, opener may **pass**, **bid game**, **invite game** by reraising to 3, or bid a game try by bidding a **new suit** at the cheapest level showing 5-cards and allowing responder to reevaluate his hand.

Splinter bids

Splinter bid is a *telling* bid, placing opener in charge. After a splinter bid, ... (cuebid controls? place game/slam? ask for aces?)

* Splinter bid is a double-jump (non-game) bid in new suit, showing a singleton.

† Prefer 1NT with a bare 10-point raise

‡ All new suits require at least 4 cards. After a minor suit opening, prefer bidding 4-card suits up the line at the 1-level. 2♥ requires a five-card suit. Weak jump preempts require roughly 6 cards at the 2-level and 7 at the 3-level.

§ 1NT response/rebid denies a biddable 1-level major

¶ The one exception to splinter bids is 1♠–4♥, which shows instead an independent heart suit and discourages further bidding

Jacoby 2NT

Jacoby 2NT is an *asking* bid, requiring opener to further describe his hand, according to the following: **new suit @3** shows a 5-card suit, **new suit @4** shows a splinter, **agreed major @4** is weak (13–16 points), **agreed major @3** is strong (17+ points), **3NT** is ?

1.3 Minor suit fits

With a minor suit fit, raises are *inverted*: With game-going strength, the extra room allows exploring for a notrump fit, while weaker hands can block opponents from finding a major suit fit by jump raising.

1.4 New suits

Standard rebids apply after a 1/1 or 2/1 response and are confusing. We will explain them here.

2 | Notrump openings

Promise balanced hand (at most 1 doubleton).

| 13–14 | 15–17 | 18–19 | 20–22 | 23+ |
|---------------------|-------|--------------------------|-------|--------------|
| open suit, rebid NT | 1NT | open suit, jump rebid NT | 2NT | 2♣, rebid NT |

2.1 Responses to 1NT

| | 0–8 | 8–10 | 11–12 | 13–15 | 16–17 | 18+ |
|-------------------|---------------------|------------|-------|-------|-------|-----|
| (semi)balanced | | 2NT | 3NT | 4NT | 6NT | |
| five-card major | Jacoby transfer 2♦♥ | | | | | |
| four-card major | 2♣–Pass* | Stayman 2♣ | | | | |
| 5 or 6-card minor | 3♣♦† | | | | | |

2.2 Responses to 2NT

| | 0–3 | 4 | 5–7 | 8–10 | 11+ |
|-------------------|---------------------|------------|-----|------|-----|
| (semi)balanced | | | 3NT | 4NT | |
| five-card major | Jacoby transfer 3♦♥ | | | | |
| four-card major | | Stayman 3♣ | | | |
| 5 or 6-card minor | | | | | |

2.3 Stayman

There are three very different situations a responder can bid Stayman. In any case, opener has exactly three rebids: 4♥ with a four-card heart suit (and maybe four spades), 4♠ with four spades (and <4 hearts), or 4♦ with no four-card major.

Weak Stayman after 1NT

After a 1NT opening, with a weak hand (≤ 8 points) and a very specific shape (4-4-4-1 with short clubs), game is impossible and opener will typically have 3–4 diamonds with a negative 2♦ rebid, so responder may pass the rebid.

Strong minor suit

A strong minor suit can be shown by rebidding the minor regardless of opener's response. Obviously after a 2NT opening, it requires a slightly better suit, since it blocks a 3NT exit.

* only pass Stayman response with 4441 shape, 0–8 points

† minor suit bust requires 6 cards

Four-card major

Most typically $2\clubsuit$ is bid with 8+ points and a four-card major.

2.4 Jacoby transfers

3 | Artificial openings

3.1 Strong 2♣

Opener should open 2♣ with 23 high card points and a balanced hand. With an unbalanced hand, 21 high card points is sufficient. With a one-suited hand, opener must have within one trick of game and at least 17 high card points. This bid is artificial and absolutely forcing, asking for at least two responses from partner (unless bidding reaches game).

Responses

| | 0–7 | 8+ |
|------------------|-----|--------|
| good 5-card suit | 2♦ | 2M, 3m |
| balanced | | 2NT |

Special responses: with a 6+ card major or 7+ card minor headed by two of the top three honors, bid **3M** or **4m**. With an undisclosed solid suit headed by A-K-Q, bid **3NT**.

Opener's rebids (all forcing)

| | 23–24 | 25–27 | 28–30 | 31–32 | 33+ |
|--------------|--------|-------|-------|-------|-----|
| 5-card suit* | 2M, 3m | | | | |
| balanced | 2NT | 3NT | 4NT | 5NT | 6NT |

After a positive 2NT response, Stayman 3♣ is on. After a positive suit response, **shift** with a new 5-card suit, **raise** with support, or bid **NT** with a balanced hand.

Responder's rebids

| | 0–3 | 4+ |
|----------------------|---|---------|
| after first negative | cheaper minor ^a or 3NT ^a after 3♦ | natural |

Opener's rebids after second negative

Opener may **raise first suit** ^s as only non-game-forcing rebid. All else is natural and game-forcing.

After interference

If 2♣ is **doubled**, **pass** with 4 clubs, **redouble** with 5 clubs (or 4 good clubs), **normal responses** on.

If 2♣ is **overcalled through 4♦**, responder may bid a **five-card suit** with 5+ HCP, bid **NT** with a balanced 8 points and a stopper, **cue-bid** ^a with 8 points and a singleton/void in enemy suit, **double** for penalty, or **pass** otherwise (negative response).

If 2♣ is **overvalled beyond 4♦**, responder may **double** ^a with a *minimum* hand to warn against any rebidding, **pass** ^a to encourage opener to bid his suit, or **bid a good 6-card suit**.

For interference after response, **normal rebids** are on, **double** or **redouble** for penalty, **cue-bid** to show other three suits, or **pass** ^f to force responder to act.

* strong 4-card suit if 4441

3.2 Weak two-bids

2♦, 2♥, and 2♠ are weak preemptive bids requiring at least a six-card suit and 5–12 high card points. Responder should generally pass unless he has something constructive to add, and should absolutely not attempt to rescue. Another suit should only be bid as a better preempt with no help from opener.

Responses

Any **raise** (2♦—3♦) or **game bid** (2♣—3NT, 2♥—4♠) is a further preempt and *must be passed*. A **nonjump shift** (2♣—2♠, 2♥—3♦) shows 6 cards, no fit, and presumes a better preempt. A **jump shift** (2♦—3♥) is natural and invitational, showing an independent suit one trick short of actual bid. After either shift, opener should *usually pass* but *may raise*. **2NT**^a is the only forcing response, showing 14+ points.

Weak 2-bidder's rebids after a 2NT response

| | 5–8 | 8–12 |
|------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------|
| A-K-J or better in long suit | rebid original suit | 3NT ^a |
| A, K, or Q in side suit | | 3 of side suit ^f |
| 5-card* minor side suit | | 4m ^f |

2NT responder's rebids

Responder should know enough to place final contract. Responder may **pass** a weak rebid, or 3NT with stoppers. A **rebid of the opened suit** is a sign-off, but mildly invitational if below game. Any **game bid**^s is a natural sign off. Any other **new suit bid**^f shows a 5-card suit and is forcing (opener should *raise* with three card support or a doubleton honor, or otherwise *return* to opened suit).

Interference

If weak two-bid is **doubled**, **redouble** shows a defensively oriented hand with at least 14 high card points. If weak *two-bid is overcalled*, normal responses are on, **double** is for penalty, or **cue-bid** for an all-purpose slam try (except ♦, which may be an attempt at 3NT, asking for enemy stopper).

If **2NT response is overcalled**, opener may **pass** with minimum, **double** to show feature (A, K, or Q) in enemy suit, bid **3 of original suit** to show feature in an unavailable suit, or make any other normal rebid.

* or a good 4-card minor headed by at least Q

3.3 Acol 3NT

Acol 3NT opening is a gambling 3NT, promising 16–21 points, a 7-card (or good 6-card) minor, at least two (usually 3) outside stoppers, and no singleton or void. Responder must never attempt to rescue and only bid with a better game or to attempt to find a slam.

Responses

4♣ is a slam try, promising 9 points, including an ace and king, or three kings (opener may bid *4NT* or *5m* to deny slam try, or *cue-bid* a major suit ace, or bid *4♦* Gerber). **4♦^a** at any time by either player is Gerber, asking for aces. **4M** is nonforcing, showing a good 6-card or longer suit, denying an outside ace. **4NT** is natural slam invite, showing 11–13 points but insufficient controls for **4♣**. **5♣** or **6♣** at any time (including after asking Gerber) by responder requests sign-off in opener's minor suit (pass or correct).

Interference

If 3NT is *doubled*, **4♣** is a rescue bid, **pass** with a few scattered values, **redouble** to show normal **4♣** response, or any **normal response**.

If 3NT is *overcalled*, **4NT** is competitive, **double** is for penalty, **normal responses** are still on (including **pass** with minimum).

If *responder passes* overcall, **bid** or **double** with maximum, **pass** with minimum.

4 | Defensive bidding

| | 0–8 | 9–10 | 11–12 | 13–14 | 15–17 | 18+ |
|------------------|-----|---|-------|-------|-------|-------------|
| 5-card suit | | nonjump overcall | | | | double |
| all unbid suits | | double* | | | | |
| two-suited | { | double w/ 5-card minor and 4-card major | | | | |
| balanced | | Michaels | | | | Michaels |
| independent suit | | Unusual 2NT | | | | Unusual 2NT |
| | | | | 1NT | | |
| jump overall | | | | | | |

With 21 or more points and any shape, double then cue-bid.

4.1 Overcalls

After partner's direct (nonjump) overcall

| | 5 | 6-7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13-14 | 15+ |
|------------------------------------|---|--------------|----------------------------|---|----|------------|---------|--------------|-----|
| 3+ trump fit | | | | | | | | | |
| 4+ trump + singleton/void | | single raise | | | | cue-bid | | jump cue-bid | |
| new 5-card suit | | | nonjump shift [†] | | | | cue-bid | | |
| new 6-card suit | | | | | | jump shift | | | |
| stopper in enemy suit [‡] | | | 1NT | | | | 2NT | | 3NT |
| 4+ trump fit | | jump raise | | | | | | | |

After two-suited overcall

4.2 Takeout doubles

Asks partner to bid a (typically) 4-card suit, with preference for majors. After RHO opens 1 of a suit, it means opening strength with support (3-card) for the other three suits, or a strong hand (17+) with any distribution.[§]

If partner has not bid or doubled, the double of a *natural suit* bid through $4\Diamond$ is for takeout.

* lower point limit depends on quality of shape (lower with eg 5440), major honors, and vulnerability, and may pass with high as 13

[†] need longer suit for higher level

[‡] suggests (semi)balanced and stoppers in all unbid suits; points given for 1-level overcall—reduce by 2–3 after 2-level overcall

[§] Points may be shaded slightly with 4-card support for all other suits. Meaning is same after 1NT response to LHO's opening suit. After two suits, requires 4-4 in unids (fewer points with more distribution). After a strong action, shows freak distribution and a few honors. After a previous double, shows strong hand (17+). After previous overcall of opponents, shows more strength (15+) and at least 3-3 in other suits. After a free pass (no previous bids), shows maximal passed hand and support for unbid suits. After a non-free pass, if new information has come since the passed-up chance to double, then shows support for the two unbid suits ($1\spadesuit$ -P-1NT-P- $2\clubsuit$ -X); otherwise, with no new information, is for penalty ($1\spadesuit$ -P-1NT-P- $2\spadesuit$ -X).

Responses

It is important to show strength with the response, since doubler is captain.

| | 0-5 | 6-9 | 10 | 11-12 | 13-16 | 17+ |
|----------------|-------------|-----|------|-------|---------|-----|
| 6-card suit | double jump | | jump | | cue-bid | |
| longest suit | minimum | | | | | |
| 4-4 majors | | | | | | |
| enemy stopper* | 1NT | | 2NT | | 3NT† | |

A takeout double may only be passed with five trump, from which three must be winners.

Responses in Competition

After a redouble, pass shows no clear preference between unbid suits. After an overcall, pass shows 0-5 points, double is for penalty (keeping in mind partner's promised length).

Rebids by doubler after minimal response

| | 9-15 | 16-17 | 18 | 19-20 | 21-22 | 23+ |
|-----------------|---------------------------|-------|-----------|-------|-----------------------|------------------|
| enemy stopper | pass | | 1NT | | 2NT [‡] | 3NT [§] |
| 5-card new suit | | | new suit | | cue-bid | |
| 4-card support | single raise [¶] | | jump to 3 | | | |

Rebids by doubler after non-minimal response

After jumped response (game invite), natural bid accepts, pass rejects. After cue-bid (game-forcing), all bids natural. After 1NT (6-10 points), 2NT invites, 3NT signs off, 5-card suit nonforcing at 2-level, forcing at 3-level, cue-bid invites game and asks for a suit, pass is to play.

* denies 4-card unbid major

† slightly less with a long minor for extra tricks, but must have minimal doubt

‡ nonjump 2NT with 19-21

§ must expect to take 9 tricks

¶ single raise to 3 requires 18-20

|| responder should jump bidding with any values

5 | Offensive bidding

5.1 Negative doubles

5.2 Overcalls

6 | Slam bidding

6.1 Blackwood and Gerber

6.2 Cue-bidding

| Extra crap

Opener's rebids after 1/1

| | 13-16 | 17-19 | 20-22 |
|----------------------|------------------|---------------|---------------------|
| fit (4 trump) | single raise | jump raise | reverse, jump shift |
| balanced | 1NT [§] | 2NT (w/stops) | |
| 4-card unbid suit | non-reverse | | jump shift |
| | | reverse | |
| 6-card original suit | rebid suit | jump rebid | |

1/1 bidder's rebids after opener's single raise

6-10 points: Pass

11-12 points: Invite game in suit only at 3-level. Invite game in either suit or notrump with 2NT. An unbid suit invites game in agreed-upon suit, but shows side honors or length. 3 of opener's original suit shows only 4-cards in own suit, but good fit in opener's suit, invites game.

13+ points: Bid game, or bid or investigate slam

1/1 bidder's rebids after opener rebids 1NT (minimum)

6-10 points: Scramble for a safe part-score (non-reverse, non-jump)

11-12 points: 2NT, or over/under-bid

13+ points: Reverse or jump bidding

1/1 bidder's rebids after opener's nonjump rebid of original suit

6-10 points: Pass, unless ≤ 1 trump *and* a 6-card suit to escape to

11-12 points: Show another (4-card) suit (forcing one round), or 2NT with unbid suits stopped, or raise with as meager as 2-card major or 3-card minor support

13+ points: Bid game if known, or forcing new suit otherwise

1/1 bidder's rebids after opener's non-reversing shift to unbid suit

6 points: Pass

7-10 points: 1NT if balanced and no fit, or show preference for one of opener's suits at 2-level

11-12 points: (non-jumping) 2NT with last suit stopped, fourth suit (forcing), invite game in one of opener's suits with non-jump to 3-level; jump from a passed hand

13+ points: jump

1NT responder's rebids after opener's non-reversing shift

Prefer second suit with 4-card support, bid 6-card suit at 2-level, or 7-card suit at 3-level.

1/1 bidder's rebids after opener's reverse

6–8 points: 2NT with last stopper, or nonjump in either of first two suits

9+ points (game-forcing): fourth suit, raise third suit (4 trump), jump first suit, 3NT

1/1 bidder's rebids after opener's jump bid

After opener's jump raise, jump rebid, or 2NT

Pass with 6–7, bid suit or NT game with 8+.

After opener's jump shift

Bid naturally to show strength. Game is required.

Opener's rebids after 2/1

| | 13–14 | 15–16 | 17–19 | 20+ |
|----------------------|--------------|------------|---------------------|------------|
| fit (4 trump) | single raise | jump raise | reverse, jump shift | |
| balanced | 1NT | | 2NT (w/stops) | |
| 4-card unbid suit | non-reverse | | | jump shift |
| | | reverse | | |
| 6-card original suit | rebid suit | jump rebid | | |