

SAYC

Expanded System Summary

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Opening Bids

SAYC OPENING BIDS

High-Card Points

- High-card points (HCP) provide an initial evaluation of the strength of a hand
 - Ace: 4 HCP
 - King: 3 HCP
 - Queen: 2 HCP
 - Jack: 1 HCP
- In SAYC, a one-level opening bid normally requires 12+ HCP

Opening Bids of 1 in a Suit

- With 12+ HCP and a hand that cannot be opened 1NT/2NT:
 - Open 1 in the longest suit
 - With two (or three) suits of equal length, open 1 in the highest-ranking suit
 - However, 1♥/♠ openings require 5+ cards in the suit (***no exceptions!***)
 - As a consequence, certain hands without a 5-card major suit must be opened 1♣/♦

Opening Bids of 1 in a Suit

- With 12+ HCP, no 5-card major suit and a hand that cannot be opened 1NT/2NT:
 - Open 1 in the longer *minor* suit (♣ or ♦)
 - With both minor suits of equal length, open 1 in the higher-ranking minor (♦)
 - **Exception:** With exactly 3 cards in both ♣ and ♦, open 1♣
 - **Never** open in a suit shorter than 3 cards!

Notrump Opening Bids

- Open 1NT with a hand that satisfies *both* following conditions
 - 15–17 HCP
 - Hand distribution is 4333, 4432 or 5332 with a 5-card *minor* suit (♣ or ♦)
- Open 2NT with 20–21 HCP and the same hand distributions
- Do ***not*** open 1NT/2NT if holding a 5-card (or longer) major suit (♥ or ♠)

Opening Bids

Hands				Opening bid
♠ AKJ75	♥ A964	♦ J6	♣ 82	1♠
♠ K96	♥ KJ102	♦ 6	♣ AQJ97	1♣
♠ AQ95	♥ J9	♦ Q65	♣ QJ97	1♣
♠ AQ95	♥ A9	♦ Q65	♣ QJ97	1NT
♠ AK1076	♥ 86	♦ AKQ52	♣ 3	1♠
♠ AK65	♥ 7	♦ Q982	♣ KJ65	1♦
♠ AKQJ	♥ –	♦ K9742	♣ Q532	1♦
♠ KJ7	♥ A9	♦ J65	♣ AQJ82	1NT

Opening Bids

RULE OF 21/22

Quick Tricks

- Quick Tricks (QT) are an estimate of how many tricks you can expect to win in a suit the first two rounds in which that suit is played

QT Count	
AK: 2	A: 1
AQ: 1½	Kx: ½
KQ: 1	

Rule of 21

- Add the high-card points, the total length of the two longest suits and the number of quick tricks to obtain the HLQT count:

$$\mathbf{HLQT = HCP + Length + QT}$$

- In first or second seat, open 1 in the appropriate suit if

$$\mathbf{HLQT \geq (A \text{ number between } 21 \text{ and } 22)}$$

Rules for Opening 1 in a Suit

- Open all hands with 13+ HCP
- Open all hands with 12 HCP except those listed below
- Use the rule of 21 to decide whether to open hands with < 12 HCP or hands with 12 HCP and the following distributions:
 - 4333
 - 4432 or 5332 without a 4-card (or 5-card) major

DUPLICATE BRIDGE SCORING

Duplicate Bridge Scoring

- The declaring pair (i.e. the pair that won the auction) gets a positive score if they make their contract (i.e. if they take at least the number of tricks they contracted for), a negative score otherwise
- The other pair (the defending side) gets the opposite of the declaring pair's score (zero-sum scoring)

Duplicate Bridge Scoring

- If the declaring pair makes their contract, they get a positive score given by the sum of
 - The value of the contract
 - The value of overtricks, if any
 - Bonus points

Duplicate Bridge Scoring

- The value of the contract is computed on the basis of the number of tricks stated in the contract (which may be less than the number of tricks actually taken)
 - No trump contracts: 40 pts for the first trick, 30 pts for each trick after that
 - Major suit (♥/♠) contracts: 30 pts per trick
 - Minor suit (♣/♦) contracts: 20 pts per trick
- The value of a doubled contract is ... doubled!

Duplicate Bridge Scoring

- If the contract has not been doubled, overtricks are valued in the same way as in the computation of the contract value (30 pts for notrump or major suit contracts, 20 pts for minor suit contracts)
- Bonus points
 - Partial contract bonus
 - Game bonus
 - Slam bonus

Duplicate Bridge Scoring

- Partial contract (part score) bonus (50 pts)
 - Awarded to contracts worth less than 100 pts
- Game bonus (500/300 pts)
 - Awarded to contracts worth 100 pts or more
- Slam bonus (1,500/1,000/750/500 pts)
 - Awarded to contracts at the 6 (“small slam”) or 7 (“grand slam”) level, in addition to the game bonus.

Duplicate Bridge Scoring

- Minimum-level game contracts
 - 3 NT (40 + 30 + 30 = 100 pts)
 - 4♥/4♠ (4x30 = 120 pts)
 - 5♣/5♦ (5x20 = 100 pts)
- For this reason, major suit or notrump contracts are preferable to minor suit contracts

Duplicate Bridge Scoring

- If the contract is set (i.e. not enough tricks are taken), the declaring pair gets a negative score. If the contract has not been doubled:
 - If the declaring side is not vulnerable, 50 pts for each undertrick
 - If the declaring side is vulnerable, 100 pts for each undertrick

Duplicate Bridge Scoring

- If a doubled contract is set:
 - If the declaring side is not vulnerable
 - (100/300/500) pts for each (1/2/3) undertricks
 - 300 more pts for each additional undertrick
 - If the declaring side is vulnerable, 200 pts for the first undertrick, plus 300 pts for each additional undertrick

Scoring Examples

- Contract: 2 ♥, total tricks taken: 9
 - Contract value: 60
 - Overtricks: 30
 - Bonus: 50
 - Total score: 140 pts
- Contract: 3 ♥, total tricks taken: 9
 - Contract value: 90
 - Overtricks: 0
 - Bonus: 50
 - Total score: 140 pts

Scoring Examples

- Contract: 3 ♥, total tricks taken: 10
 - Contract value: 90
 - Overtricks: 30
 - Bonus: 50
 - Total score: 170 pts
- Contract: 4 ♥, total tricks taken: 10
 - Contract value: 120
 - Overtricks: 0
 - Bonus: 300/500
 - Total score: 420/620 pts

Scoring Examples

- Contract: 2♥, total tricks taken: 8
 - Contract value: 60
 - Overtricks: 0
 - Bonus: 50
 - Total score: 110 pts
- Contract: 2♥ doubled, total tricks taken: 8
 - Contract value: 120
 - Overtricks: 0
 - Bonus: 300/500 + 50
 - Total score: 470/670 pts

Match Points

- Each board is played at multiple tables
- At the end of the game, a pair gets a number of points for each board equal to the number of pairs that they beat on that particular board (match points)
- The final ranking is determined by the total number of match points won by each pair

GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR CONTRACTS

Contract Guidelines

- A combined holding of 8+ cards in the prospective trump suit for suit contracts
- A minimum combined holding of
 - 25 HCP (High Card Points) for 3NT contracts
 - 26 pts for 4♥/4♠ contracts
 - 28 pts for 5♣/5♦ contracts
 - 33 pts for all contracts at the 6 level (small slam)
 - 37 pts for all contracts at the 7 level (grand slam)

Key Points

- In general, potential contracts should be explored in this order of preference
 - Major suit contracts (♥/♠)
 - No trump contracts
 - Minor suit contracts (♣/♦)
- Suit contracts require a minimum combined holding of 8 cards in the trump suit
- Minimum combined strength for game contracts
 - 25 HCP for 3NT
 - 26 pts for 4♥/4♠
 - 28 pts for 5♣/5♦

DEFENSIVE BIDDING

Defensive Bidding

- Simple (non-jump) suit overcalls
- Jump suit overcalls
- Take-out doubles
- Power doubles
- Simple NT overcalls
- “Unusual” NT overcalls
- Michaels cue-bids

Simple Suit Overcalls

- After an opening bid *in a suit* by an opponent
- General requirements:
 - At least 8 HCP (but no more than 16)
 - A minimum of 5 cards in the suit chosen for the overcall (***no exceptions!***)
 - A “good hand” and/or a “good suit”, depending on the level of the overcall
- “Good hand”: Opening-level strength (12+ HCP)
- “Good suit”: Two of the top three honors, or three of the top five


Simple Suit Overcalls

One-level overcalls

- A “good hand” *or* a “good suit” is required
- Examples:
 - a) ♠ AQJ107 ♥ J986 ♦ 74 ♣ 95
 - b) ♠ KQ983 ♥ 86 ♦ KQ4 ♣ 985
 - c) ♠ J10632 ♥ AK6 ♦ KQ4 ♣ 63
- All the hands above are suitable for a 1♠ overcall

Simple Suit Overcalls

Two-level overcalls

- **Both** a “good hand” **and** a “good suit” are required
- Examples:
 - a) ♠ 83 ♥ AJ6 ♦ A74 ♣ KQ1098
 - b) ♠ Q983 ♥ 8 ♦ 74 ♣ AKJ987
 - c) ♠ KQ3 ♥ A5 ♦ A63 ♣ J8643 
- (a) and (b) are suitable for a 2♣ overcall, but (c) is not

Takeout Doubles

- Made after an opening bid in a suit by an opponent
- Requirements:
 - Shortness (no more than two cards) in opponents' suit
 - At least three cards in each of the unbid suits (ideally, four cards in any unbid major suit)
 - Opening-level strength (12+ pts)

Takeout Doubles

- Examples:

a) ♠ QJ83 ♥ KJ64 ♦ 5 ♣ K972

b) ♠ AQ83 ♥ K1064 ♦ 52 ♣ A97

c) ♠ A73 ♥ KJ64 ♦ 52 ♣ A972

- All the hands above are suitable for a takeout double after a 1♦ opening bid (but not after opening bids of 1♣/♥/♠)

1NT Overcalls

- Made after an opening bid of 1 in a suit by an opponent
- Requirements:
 - 15–18 HCP
 - A balanced distribution (distribution requirements are looser than in the case of 1NT openings)
 - *A stopper in opener's suit*





1NT Overcalls

- Note: With a 5-card major suit (or longer), it is generally preferable to overcall in the major suit, even if the hand qualifies for a 1NT overcall

Preemptive Opening Bids

WEAK TWO-LEVEL OPENING BIDS

Weak Two-Bids

- Weak two-level opening bids are 2  /  /  (but not 2 )
- Requirements:
 - 5–10 HCP
 - A 6-card suit (occasionally a 7-card suit, never a 5-card suit) of reasonable quality:
 - If vulnerable, a “good suit” (two of the top three or three of the five honors)
 - If not vulnerable, a somewhat weaker suit is acceptable (e.g. KJ8742)

Weak Two-Bids

- Examples:

a) ♠ 83 ♥ KQJ964 ♦ 76 ♣ 1097

b) ♠ 97 ♥ AQ10643 ♦ Q102 ♣ 42

c) ♠ Q53 ♥ KJ8764 ♦ 5 ♣ 852

d) ♠ KJ2 ♥ J97642 ♦ K85 ♣ 6

- (a) and (b) can be opened 2♥, vulnerable or not. (c) can be opened 2♥ if not vulnerable. (d) should not be opened 2♥ at any vulnerability.
- **Note:** Do not open with a weak two-bid if you are strong enough to open at the 1 level

DEFENSIVE BIDDING

Defensive Bidding

- Simple (non-jump) suit overcalls
- Jump suit overcalls
- Take-out doubles
- Power doubles
- Simple NT overcalls
- “Unusual” NT overcalls
- Michaels cue-bids

Two-level Jump Overcalls

- Roughly equivalent to a weak two-level opening bid, with some qualifications about the strength of the hand (see the following slides)
- Requirements:
 - 5–10 HCP
 - A 6-card suit (occasionally a 7-card suit, never a 5-card suit) of reasonable quality:
 - If vulnerable, a “good suit” (two of the top three or three of the top five honors)
 - If not vulnerable, a somewhat weaker suit may be acceptable (e.g. KJ8742)

Two-level Jump Overcalls

- If a hand qualifies both for a simple one-level overcall and a jump two-level overcall, the one-level overcall should generally be preferred unless at least two of the following conditions are satisfied:
 - Partner is a passed hand
 - The hand contains no more than 9 HCP
 - The majority of HCP are in the long suit

Two-level Jump Overcalls

- In practice, with 10+ HCP a two-level jump overcall should be considered only in very particular situations, e.g.

♠ 97 ♥ AKQJ86 ♦ 752 ♣ 42

when partner is a passed hand

- On average, a two-level jump overcall will be near the lower end of the requirements for a corresponding weak two-level opening bid

RESPONSES TO OPENINGS OF 1 IN A SUIT

Responses to Openings of 1 in a Suit

SUPPORT (“DUMMY”) POINTS

Support Points

- In some cases, the strength of a hand can (and should!) be upgraded by adding support points (“dummy points”) to HCPs
- This is based on the fact that in a trump suit contract, trump cards in the hand that is shorter in the trump suit (typically dummy) can be profitably used to ruff losers belonging to the hand with the longer trump suit

Support Points

- Support points should be added to HCPs under (and only under) the following conditions
 - A fit (combined holding of 8+ cards) in partner's suit has been found
 - The final contract is expected to be in that suit
 - The number of trump cards held in the shorter hand is sufficient for ruffing (usually a minimum of three trumps is required)

Support Points

- Support points should not be counted when evaluating hand strength for the opening bid
- However, support points should be included in hand strength evaluation for the purposes of making a take-out double

Support Points

- With 3-card trump support when partner has 5+ trumps, or with 4-card support when partner has 4 trumps:
 - Add 1 point for a doubleton
 - Add 2 points for a singleton
 - Add 3 points for a void
- With 4-card trump support (or longer) when partner has 5+ trumps:
 - Add 1 point for a doubleton
 - Add 3 points for a singleton
 - Add 5 points for a void

THE FIVE COMMANDMENTS OF OPENING LEADS

The First Commandment

*Thou shalt mentally review the
bidding before choosing thy
opening lead*

The Second Commandment

*Thou shalt lead the suit bid by
thy partner*

The Third Commandment

*Thou shalt not lead the suits
bid by thy opponents*

The Fourth Commandment

*Thou shalt not underlead thy
aces against a suit contract*

The Fifth Commandment

*Thou shalt obey thy own
conventions for the choice
of the card to lead*

Responses to Openings of 1 in a Suit

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

Key Points

- In general, potential contracts should be explored in this order of preference
 - Major suit contracts (♥/♠)
 - No trump contracts
 - Minor suit contracts (♣/♦)
- Suit contracts require a minimum combined holding of 8 cards in the trump suit
- Minimum combined strength for game contracts
 - 25 HCP for 3NT
 - 26 pts for 4♥/4♠
 - 28 pts for 5♣/5♦

Responder Strength Classification

- Hand strength classification when responding to openings of 1 in a suit

Responder's strength		
	6–9 pts	Minimum
Intermediate / Limit / Invitational	10 pts	
	11–12 pts	
	13+ pts	Game forcing

General Rules for Responses to Openings of 1 in a Suit

- With fewer than 6 pts, responder should generally pass
- 1♥/1♠ *responses* generally promise a *minimum* of *only 4 cards* in the suit (not 5!)
- With *very limited* exceptions, a *non-jump* bid by an *unpassed responder* in a *new suit* is forcing for 1 round. This means that opener should not pass at his next turn to bid, unless opener's RHO intervenes in the auction

Responses to Openings of 1 in a Suit

RESPONSES TO 1♥/1♠ OPENINGS

Responses to 1♥/1♠ Openings

- General rules for responses with minimum hands (6–9/10 pts)
 - Responder should not bid above the 1NT level, except in direct support of opener's suit
 - Exception: To introduce a new suit at the two level after responder's RHO intervenes in the auction with a TO double
 - Responses should be chosen in this order of priority:
 - Support opener's suit (with 3+ card fit)
 - Show 4+ cards in the other major suit
 - Bid 1NT

Responses to 1♥/1♠ Openings

Responses with minimum hands (6–9/10 pts)

Responder's holding in opener's suit	RHO's bid		
	Pass	Take-out double	Suit overcall
3+ cards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single raise (2♥/♠) • 4♥/♠^[1] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single (2♥/♠) or double (3♥/♠) raise^[4] • 4♥/♠^[1] 	
< 3 cards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1♠ (over 1♥) [F]^[2] • 1NT^[3] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1♠ (over 1♥) [F]^[5] • 2 in a new suit^[6] • 1NT^[7] • Pass^[8] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Double (neg.) [F]^[9] • 1NT^[7] • Pass^[8]

Responses to 1♥/1♠ Openings

- Explanatory notes on responses with 6–9/10 pts
 1. In any type of auction, a direct jump to game (4♥/♠) is essentially preemptive. It should be made with a relatively weak hand (max ~7 HCP) that has very good distributional values in support of opener's suit (*5+ card support* and at least a singleton or a void in a side suit), e.g. (after 1♥)

♠ 6 ♥ K9832 ♦ A8764 ♣ 93
 2. 1♠ (over 1♥) shows 6+ pts and 4+ ♠

Responses to 1♥/1♠ Openings

3. In an uncontested auction, a 1NT response shows 6–9/10 pts. It specifically denies a fit (3+ cards) in opener's *major* suit. If made over a 1♥ opening bid, it also denies holding 4+ ♠
4. In a competitive auction, a double raise shows a weak hand (3–6 HCP) with 4+ card support for opener's suit and distributional values (at least a singleton or a void in a side suit), e.g. (after 1♥)
♠ 5 ♥ K932 ♦ 8764 ♣ 10973
5. After a TO double, 1♠ (over 1♥) shows 6+ pts and 4+ ♠, *but is forcing only if responder is an unpassed hand*

Responses to 1♥/1♠ Openings

6. After a TO double by RHO, a *non-jump* bid of a new suit at the *two level* is not forcing. It shows a weak hand (< 10 pts) and a reasonably good suit with 6+ cards (or even just 5 cards in exceptional cases) and usually a singleton or a void in opener's suit.
7. After interference by RHO, a 1NT response shows 8–10 HCP. In the case of a suit overcall, it should also show a (possibly weak) stopper in RHO's suit.
8. If responder's RHO interferes (whether with a TO double or an overcall), responder should tend to pass with 6–7 pts, no support for opener's suit and fewer than 4 cards in the other major suit.
9. A negative double shows 8+ points and 4+ cards in the unbid major. After 1♥-(1♠), it can be made with 6+ pts; in this case it shows 4+ cards in *both* minors.

Responses to 1♥/1♠ Openings

Examples of “weak freaks”

a) ♠ 6 ♥ J9863 ♦ Q10973 ♣ 86

b) ♠ 9 ♥ Q9842 ♦ K1085 ♣ 1032

c) ♠ 2 ♥ K9865 ♦ A8764 ♣ 95

d) ♠ 4 ♥ KJ832 ♦ A87654 ♣ 9

(d) is too strong to be considered a “weak freak”
(use a splinter raise instead of 4♥)

Responses to 1♥/1♠ Openings

- With 10–15 pts, responses should be chosen in this order of priority:
 - Support opener’s suit (with 3+ card fit), except in an *uncontested* auction and with exactly 3-card support. In this case, responder should delay support and first bid another 4+ card suit at the 1- or 2-level, if possible.
 - Show 4+ cards in the other major suit
 - Show 4+ cards in a minor suit
 - Bid 3NT (with 15–17 HCP)

Responses to 1♥/1♠ Openings

- In an uncontested auction, a non-jump 2-level response to a 1♥/♠ opening is *forcing to 2 of opener's suit*

Responses to 1♥/1♠ Openings

Responses with limit/game-forcing hands (10+ pts)	
Responder's holding in opener's suit	(RHO passes)
4+ cards (13+ pts)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2NT [GF]^[1] • Splinter raise [GF]^[2]
4+ cards (10–12 pts)	Double raise (3♥/♠) ^[3]
≤ 3 cards (10+ pts)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1♠ (over 1♥) [F] • 2♥ (over 1♠), with 5+ cards [F]^[4] • 2♣/♦ [F]^[5] • 3NT (15–17 HCP)^[6]

Responses to 1♥/1♠ Openings

Responses with limit/game-forcing hands (10+ pts)		
Responder's holding in opener's suit	RHO's bid	
	Take-out double	Suit overcall
4+ cards	2NT [F] ^[7]	Cue-bid [F] ^[11]
3 cards	Redouble ^[10]	
< 3 cards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1♠ (over 1♥) [F]^[8] • 3NT (13–15 HCP)^[9] • Redouble^[10] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2♥/♠ (free bid) [F]^[12] • Double (neg.) [F]^[13] • 2NT/3NT^[14] • 2♣/♦ (free bid) [F]^[15]

Responses to 1♥/1♠ Openings

- Explanatory notes on responses with 10+ pts
 1. In an uncontested auction, a 2NT response is conventional and *forcing to game* (Jacoby 2NT). It shows 13+ pts and *4+ card support* for opener's suit. Opener's rebids are conventional:
 - a) Opener's first priority is to show a *good* 5-card or longer side suit by bidding it at the 4-level.
 - b) Opener's second priority is to show a singleton or void in a side suit by bidding it at the 3-level.
 - c) If neither of the above applies, opener shows the strength of his/her hand by bidding
 - 4 in the opening suit (4♥/4♠) with a minimum opening hand (12–14 HCP).
 - 3NT with an intermediate hand (15–17 HCP).
 - 3 in the opening suit (3♥/3♠) with 18+ HCP. Note that this rebid is virtually forcing to slam.

Responses to 1♥/1♠ Openings

- Explanatory notes on responses with 10+ pts
 2. A splinter raise is a jump bid in a new suit at a level higher than a double raise of opener's suit. It shows 13+ pts, *4+ card support* for opener's suit and a singleton or void in the suit bid.

After a 1♥ opening bid, the splinter raises are 3♠, 4♣ and 4♦. After a 1♠ opening bid, the splinter raises are 4♣, 4♦ and 4♥.
 3. In an uncontested auction, an immediate limit raise (3♥/♠) should be made preferably when
 - a) Responder has 4+ card support for opener's suit, or
 - b) Responder has good 3-card support for opener's suit with additional distributional values (a singleton or void in a side suit).

Responses to 1♥/1♠ Openings

4. 2♥ (over 1♠) shows 10+ pts and 5+ ♥
5. 2♣/♦ shows 10+ pts and 4+ ♣/♦
6. In an uncontested auction, a 3NT response shows 15–17 HCP and a balanced hand *with exactly 2-card support* for opener's major suit. It specifically denies 4+ cards in the other major.
7. After a take-out double by RHO, a 2NT response indicates a limit raise (or better) with *4+ card support* in opener's suit, and is forcing for 1 round (Jordan 2NT). With 13+ pts, at the next round responder will bid game (4♥/♠) or make a slam try, if appropriate.

Responses to 1♥/1♠ Openings

8. After a TO double, 1♠ (over 1♥) shows 6+ pts and 4+ ♠, *but is forcing only if responder is an unpassed hand*. With 10+ pts, this bid should be preferred to a redouble when the goal is to show quickly a good suit (typically 5+ cards).
9. After a TO double, a 3NT response is natural and shows 13–15 pts. It implicitly denies both support for opener's suit and 4+ cards in the other major.
10. After a TO double, a redouble shows 10+ pts. It should be made with exactly 3 card support in opener's suit, or when more descriptive bids are not available.

Responses to 1♥/1♠ Openings

11. After a suit overcall by RHO, a cue-bid of RHO's suit indicates a limit raise (or better) with 3+ card support in opener's suit, and is forcing for 1 round. With 13+ pts, responder will bid game (4♥/♠) at the next round.
12. After a suit overcall by RHO, a free bid is a non-jump bid of a new suit at the two level. When made in a major suit, it shows 10+ pts and 5+ cards in the suit bid. It should be preferred to a negative double when holding 5+ cards in an unbid major.

Responses to 1♥/1♠ Openings

13. With 10+ pts, a negative double should be used only when holding exactly 4 cards in the unbid major. With 5+ cards, an explicit bid in that suit should be preferred to a negative double
14. After a suit overcall by RHO, a 2NT (resp. 3NT) response is natural. It shows 11–12 pts (resp. 13–15 pts) and guarantees 1-2 stoppers in RHO's suit. It implicitly denies both support for opener's suit and 4+ cards in an unbid major.
15. A free bid in a minor suit shows 10+ pts and 5+ cards in the suit bid.

Responses to Openings of 1 in a Suit

RESPONSES TO 1♣/1♦ OPENINGS

Responses to 1♣/1♦ Openings

- General rules
 - With less than 6 pts, responder should pass
 - With 6+ pts, responses should generally be chosen in this order of priority:
 - With 4+ ♥/♠, start describing your hand by bidding a new suit. See the following slides for the rules to follow in selecting the suit to bid.
 - Bid 1NT/2NT/3NT with a hand suitable for notrump play
 - Support opener's suit

Responses to 1♣/1♦ Openings

- General rules (contd.)
 - Responses at the 1 level (1♦/♥/♠) generally show 4+ cards in the suit
 - A notrump response at any level denies holding a 4+ card major suit
 - In a non-competitive auction, a direct raise of opener's minor suit tends to show a hand not well-suited for notrump play

Responses to 1♣/1♦ Openings

- Selecting a new suit to bid
 - Without a 5-card (or longer) suit, bid the first 4-card suit “up the line” (lowest-ranking suit first)
 - With one 5-card (or longer) suit, bid that suit, unless restrictions dictated by the strength of the hand prevent it
 - With two 5-card suits, bid them “down the line” (higher-ranking suit first)

Responses to 1♣/1♦ Openings

- With 6–9/10 pts, responder should not bid above 1NT except in direct support of opener's suit

Responses with 6–9/10 pts		
RHO's bid		
Pass	Take-out double	Suit overcall
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1♦/♥/♠ [F]^[1] • 1NT^[2] • Single raise (2♣/♦)^[3] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1♦/♥/♠ [F]^[4] • 1NT^[5] • Single (2♣/♦) or double (3♣/♦) raise^[6] • 2♣ (over 1♦)^[7] • 2♦ (over 1♣), 2♥/♠^[8] • Pass^[9] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1♥/♠ [F]^[10] • Double (neg.)^[11] [F] • 1NT^[5] • Single (2♣/♦) or double (3♣/♦) raise^[6] • 2♥/♠ (jump shift)^[8] • Pass^[9]

Responses to 1♣/1♦ Openings

- Explanatory notes on responses with 6–9/10 pts
 1. 1♦/♥/♠ shows 6+ pts and 4+ ♦/♥/♠
 2. In an uncontested auction, a 1NT response shows 6–10 pts. It specifically denies holding 4+ ♥/♠. It tends to show a hand suitable for notrump play
 3. An immediate raise of opener's minor suit specifically denies holding 4+ ♥/♠. It tends to show a hand not well suited for notrump play. It should be made with 6–10 pts and 5+ ♣ or 4+ ♦.
 4. After a TO double, 1♦/♥/♠ has the same meaning as in an uncontested auction, *but is forcing only if responder is an unpassed hand*

Responses to 1♣/1♦ Openings

5. After interference by RHO, a 1NT response shows 8–9/10 pts. In the case of a suit overcall, it should also show a (possibly weak) stopper in RHO's suit
6. In a competitive auction, a double raise shows a relatively weak hand (4–7 HCP) that is ill-suited for notrump play, with 5+ card support for opener's suit and distributional values (at least a singleton or a void in a side suit)
7. After a TO double by RHO, a *non-jump* bid of a new suit at the *two level* is not forcing. It shows a weak hand (< 10 pts) and a reasonably good suit with 6+ cards (or even just 5 cards in exceptional cases) and usually a singleton or a void in opener's suit

Responses to 1♣/1♦ Openings

8. After a TO double by RHO, a *jump* response in a new suit (jump shift) has the same meaning as a weak jump overcall at the same level. In particular, a jump bid in a new suit at the two level is equivalent to a weak two-level overcall.
9. If responder's RHO interferes (whether with a TO double or an overcall), responder should tend to pass with 6–7 pts, fewer than 4 cards in either major suit and no support for opener's suit
10. After a suit overcall by RHO, 1♥/♠ generally has the same meaning as in an uncontested auction. However, the particular sequence 1♣/♦-(1♥)-1♠ shows 5+ ♠ (a negative double is used to show 4♠)

Responses to 1♣/1♦ Openings

11. A negative double shows 6+ pts and 4+ cards in the unbid major suit(s) (8+ pts if the overcall is made at the two level in a minor suit). The sequence 1♣-(1♦)-Dbl shows *both* 4+♥ *and* 4+♠.

Responses to 1♣/1♦ Openings

Examples

- Opening bid: 1♣

♠ KJ963	♥ QJ62	♦ 65	♣ Q7	1♠
♠ K753	♥ A964	♦ 865	♣ 82	1♥
♠ AQ95	♥ 97642	♦ Q65	♣ 7	1♥
♠ A965	♥ 97	♦ 82	♣ KJ963	1♠
♠ K53	♥ A8	♦ Q984	♣ 10754	1NT
♠ J86	♥ 7	♦ K762	♣ QJ963	2♣

Responses to 1♣/1♦ Openings

Examples

- Opening bid: 1♦

♠ 1053	♥ J964	♦ AK65	♣ 82	1♥
♠ A965	♥ 97	♦ 82	♣ KJ963	1♠
♠ K53	♥ A8	♦ J10984	♣ 1087	1NT
♠ 53	♥ J8	♦ QJ984	♣ K1087	2♦

Responses to 1♣/1♦ Openings

Responses with 10–15 pts			
Responder's strength	RHO's bid		
	Pass	Take-out double	Suit overcall
10–12 pts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1♦/♥/♠ [F]^[1] • 2♣ (over 1♦) [F]^[2] • 2NT (11–12 HCP)^[3] • Double raise (3♣/♦)^[4] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1♦/♥/♠ [F]^[5] • 2NT [F]^[6] • 3NT (13+ HCP)^[7] • Redouble^[8] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1♥/♠ [F]^[9] • Double (neg.)^[10] [F] • 2♥/♠ (free bid) [F]^[11] • 2NT/3NT^[12] • 2♣/♦ (free bid) [F]^[11] • Cue-bid [F]^[13]
13–15+ pts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1♦/♥/♠ [F]^[1] • 2♣ (over 1♦) [F]^[2] • 3NT^[3] 		

Responses to 1♣/1♦ Openings

- Explanatory notes on responses with 10–15 pts
 1. 1♦/♥/♠ shows 6+ pts and 4+ ♦/♥/♠
 2. In an uncontested auction, 2♣ (over 1♦) shows 10+ pts and 4+ ♣. However, with exactly 10 pts and 4 ♣ responder should bid 1NT (or possibly 2/3♦)^[*].
 3. A 2NT (resp. 3NT) response shows 11–12 (resp. 13–15) HCP and a hand suitable for notrump play. It implicitly denies 4+ cards in either major suit
 4. An immediate double raise of opener's minor suit (3♣/♦) specifically denies holding 4+ ♥/♠. It tends to show a hand not well suited for notrump play. It should be made with 10–12 pts and 5+ ♣/♦.

[*]This is to avoid ending in a 2NT contract after 1♦ - 2♣ - 2NT when opener holds minimum values.

Responses to 1♣/1♦ Openings

5. After a TO double, 1♦/♥/♠ has the same meaning as in an uncontested auction, *but is forcing only if responder is an unpassed hand*
6. After a TO double, a 2NT response indicates a limit raise (or better) with 5+ card support in opener's suit, and is forcing for one round (Jordan 2NT)
7. After a TO double, a 3NT response is natural and shows 13–15 pts. It implicitly denies 4+ cards in either major suit
8. After a TO double, a redouble shows 10+ pts but does not necessarily deny support for opener's minor suit^[*]. This bid should be made when more descriptive bids are not available

[*]A redouble generally denies support for opener's major suit.

Responses to 1♣/1♦ Openings

9. After a suit overcall by RHO, 1♥/♠ generally has the same meaning as in an uncontested auction. However, the particular sequence 1♣/♦-(1♥)-1♠ shows 5+ ♠ (a negative double is used to show 4♠)
10. With 10+ pts, a negative double should be used only when holding exactly 4 cards in the unbid major. With 5+ cards, a (non-jump) bid in that suit at the two level should be preferred to a negative double. Furthermore, after 1♣-(1♦), responder should explicitly bid a 5-card major suit at the one level (instead of using a negative double) when holding 9+ cards in the majors and opening strength.

Responses to 1♣/1♦ Openings

11. After a suit overcall by RHO, a free bid is a *non-jump* bid of a new suit at the two level. When made in a major (resp. minor) suit, it shows 10+ pts and 5+ cards (resp. 4+ cards) in the suit bid. It should be preferred to a negative double when holding 5+ cards in an unbid major.
12. After a suit overcall by RHO, a 2NT (resp. 3NT) response is natural. It shows 11–12 pts (resp. 13–15 pts) and guarantees 1-2 stoppers in RHO's suit. It implicitly denies 4+ cards in any unbid major suit.
13. After a suit overcall by RHO, a cue-bid of RHO's suit indicates a limit raise (or better) with 5+ card support in opener's minor suit, and is forcing for 1 round. It implicitly denies 4+ cards in any unbid major suit.

Responses to 1♣/1♦ Openings

WALSH RESPONSES TO 1♣ OPENINGS

Responses to 1♣/1♦ Openings

- Standard rules
 - If the hand contains at least one suit of 5 cards or longer:
 - Bid the longest suit first
 - With two suits of equal length, bid the higher ranking suit first
 - With no 5-cards suits, bid your 4-card suits “up the line” (lowest ranking suit first)

Walsh Responses to 1♣ Openings

- Walsh responses apply to hands in which
 - One major suit is exactly 4 cards long
 - The other major suit is no more than 4 cards long
- With such hands
 - Always skip a 4-card ♦ suit in favor of the major suit(s), regardless of strength
 - Skip also a 5 or 6-card ♦ suit, unless holding game-forcing values (13+ HCP)
 - Never skip a 7-card ♦ suit

Walsh Responses to 1♣ Openings

- Under Walsh rules, a 1♦ response indicates (with very rare exceptions) one of only two possibilities
 - Responder has no 4-card major suit
 - Responder has one (rarely two) 4-card major suit(s) with game-forcing values. In such case responder will show the major suit at his next bid

Walsh Responses to 1♣ Openings

- Opener's rebids after a 1♦ response
 - With a balanced hand (4333, 4432 or 5332) opener should rebid 1NT (or 2NT), skipping over any 4-card major suits
 - **Exception:** It is advisable for opener to bid a 4-card major instead of 1NT with a bad doubleton (Jx or worse) in the other major
 - With a 5-card ♣ suit and 4♥/♠, opener should rebid in his major suit(s) “up the line”
 - With a 6-card ♣ suit, opener should generally rebid 2♣, regardless of any holdings in the majors suits

Walsh Responses to 1♣ Openings

Responder's 2nd bid with 4♥/♠ and 4♦

- Responder's 1st bid was 1♥/♠
- If no major suit fit has been found and a rebid is necessary, responder should generally rebid in notrump at the appropriate level (1/2/3NT)
- In some cases, if opener has shown 5+ ♣ responder may choose to rebid in ♣ instead of notrump (e.g. 1♣ – 1♥ – 1♠ – 2♣)

Walsh Responses to 1♣ Openings

Responder's 2nd bid with 4♥/♠ and 5♦

- With game-forcing values (13+ HCP), responder should bid his major suit (responder's 1st bid was 1♦)
- With less than game-forcing values, responder should generally follow the same guidelines as when holding 4♦ (i.e. ignore the ♦ suit and rebid in notrump or ♣)

Walsh Responses to 1♣ Openings

Responder's 2nd bid with 4♥/♠ and 6♦

- With game-forcing values (13+ HCP), responder should bid his major suit (responder's 1st bid was 1♦)
- With invitational values (10–12 HCP), responder should generally rebid 2NT (responder's 1st bid was 1♥/♠)
- With minimum values (6–9 HCP), responder should bid 3♦ (sign-off). **Note:** 2♦ (after opener's 1NT rebid) would be NMF.

Responses to 1♦ Openings with 4♥/♠ and 5+♣

- With game-forcing values (13+ HCP), responder should bid 2♣ first, then bid ♥/♠ on the 2nd round (responder's reverse)
- With invitational values (10–12 HCP), responder should bid 1♥/♠ first, then generally rebid 2NT on the 2nd round (if no major suit fit is found)
- With minimum values (6–9 HCP), responder should bid 1♥/♠ first, then bid 3♣ (sign-off).
Note: 2♣ (after opener's 1NT rebid) would be NMF.

Walsh Responses to 1♣ Openings

Responding without a 4-card major

- Response should be in notrump or ♦, depending on the hand. General guidelines:
 - Reserve the 1NT response for hands with 8–10 HCP. This means you may have to respond 1♦ with 6–7 HCP and only 3♦.

♠ A53 ♥ J64 ♦ A85 ♣ 9752 (bid 1NT)

♠ 653 ♥ 864 ♦ AQ5 ♣ 9752 (bid 1♦)

Walsh Responses to 1♣ Openings

Responding without a 4-card major

- General guidelines (cont.)
 - In all other cases, give priority to notrump responses over ♦ responses, unless the hand is ill-suited for notrump play. Examples:

♠ Q103 ♥ KJ6 ♦ J6543 ♣ Q9 (bid 1NT)

♠ A103 ♥ K6 ♦ K843 ♣ J972 (bid 2NT)

♠ KJ6 ♥ 10 ♦ A6543 ♣ QJ85 (bid 1♦)

1♣/♦ - 1♥ Sequences

- By partnership agreement, Walsh-style rules may also be followed after a 1♣/♦ opening bid and a 1♥ response (opener skips over a 4-card ♠ suit and bids 1NT with a balanced hand). However, this has some (minor) drawbacks.
- To avoid misunderstandings, partnerships should have very clear agreements about whether Walsh-style rules apply or not to 1♣/♦ - 1♥ sequences.

Responses to 1♣/1♦ Openings

NEW MINOR FORCING

New Minor Forcing

- An artificial (and alertable) bid by responder after the sequence $1\clubsuit/\diamond - 1\heartsuit/\spadesuit - 1NT/2NT$ in an uncontested auction
- Normally used to find a major suit fit, but can also be used (less frequently) to create a forcing auction in other cases
- After a 1NT rebid by opener, responder must have at least invitational strength (11+ HCP)
- After a 2NT rebid by opener, NMF is necessarily forcing to game

New Minor Forcing

After 1NT Rebid by Opener

- Opener's third bid (in order of priority)
 - 2 in the unbid major
 - Shows 4 cards in the suit, does not deny 3 cards in responder's major (**Note:** this bid is independent of opener's strength)
 - 2 (12–13 HCP) or 3 (14+ HCP) in responder's major
 - Shows 3-card support in the suit, denies 4 cards in the other major
 - 2NT (12–13 HCP) or 3NT (14+ HCP)
 - Denies both 3 cards in responder's major and 4 cards in the other major

New Minor Forcing

After 1NT Rebid by Opener

- Responder's third bid
 - All 3-level (and higher) rebids are game-forcing, except for simple raises of opener's 2-level major suit bids (which show invitational strength)
 - 1♣ – 1♠ – 1NT – 2♦ – 2♠ – 3♠ (5 ♠, inv.)
 - In particular, a rebid by responder of his previously bid major (that is not a raise) shows 6+ cards in the suit and game-forcing values
 - 1♣ – 1♠ – 1NT – 2♦ – 2♥ – 3♠ (6+ ♠, GF)
 - 1♦ – 1♥ – 1NT – 2♣ – 2NT – 3♥ (6+ ♥, GF)
 - Similarly:
 - 1♣ – 1♠ – 1NT – 2♦ – 2NT – 3♥ (5 ♥, 5 ♠, GF)

New Minor Forcing

After 1NT Rebid by Opener

- Responder's third bid (cont.)
 - If opener has shown 4 cards in the unbid major, a notrump rebid by responder implicitly shows 5 cards in the first-bid major (and denies 4 cards in opener's major)
 - 1♣ – 1♠ – 1NT – 2♦ – 2♥ – 2NT (5 ♠, inv.)
Opener can correct to 3♠ (4♠) with 3 ♠ and a min (max) opening, or to 3NT with a max opening and < 3 ♠
 - 1♣ – 1♠ – 1NT – 2♦ – 2♥ – 3NT (5 ♠, GF)
Opener can correct to 4♠ with 3 ♠

New Minor Forcing

After 1NT Rebid by Opener

- Responder's third bid (cont.)
 - If Walsh-style rebids by opener are used after 1♣/♦ – 1♥, NMF can be used to try to locate a 4-4 fit in ♠. In this case, after opener has shown 3-card support for responder's major (♥), a notrump rebid by responder implicitly shows a 4-4 holding in the majors
 - 1♦ – 1♥ – 1NT – 2♣ – 2♥ – 2NT (4♥, 4♠, inv)

New Minor Forcing

After 1NT Rebid by Opener

- Related sequences
 - $1\clubsuit - 1\heartsuit/\spadesuit - 1NT - 3\heartsuit$ (4 \heartsuit/\spadesuit , 6+ \heartsuit , 6–9 HCP)
 - $1\heartsuit - 1\heartsuit/\spadesuit - 1NT - 3\clubsuit$ (4 \heartsuit/\spadesuit , 6+ \clubsuit , 6–9 HCP)
 - $1\clubsuit/\heartsuit - 1\spadesuit - 1NT - 2\heartsuit$ (5+ \spadesuit , 4+ \heartsuit , 6–10 HCP)
 - “Pass or correct” – Opener should generally pass 2 \heartsuit or correct to 2 \spadesuit . Exceptionally, opener can invite to game by raising to 3 \heartsuit or 3 \spadesuit with a fit and maximum values and/or a particularly favorable distribution. With 5-4 distribution in the majors (either way) and 11+ HCP, responder should bid the 5-card major first and then use NMF.

New Minor Forcing

After 1NT Rebid by Opener

- Related sequences (cont.)
 - $1\clubsuit/\diamond - 1\heartsuit/\spadesuit - 1NT - 2\heartsuit/\spadesuit$
(6+ \heartsuit/\spadesuit , 6–9 HCP)
 - $1\clubsuit/\diamond - 1\heartsuit/\spadesuit - 1NT - 3\heartsuit/\spadesuit$
(6+ \heartsuit/\spadesuit , 10–12 HCP)
 - $1\clubsuit/\diamond - 1\spadesuit - 1NT - 3\heartsuit$ (5 \spadesuit , 5 \heartsuit , 10–12 HCP)
 - $1\clubsuit/\diamond - 1\heartsuit - 1NT - 2\spadesuit$ (5+ \spadesuit , 4+ \heartsuit , 13+ HCP)
 - Reverse by responder

New Minor Forcing

After 2NT Rebid by Opener

- The overall structure remains essentially the same, except that a NMF bid necessarily forces to game.
- Specific differences:
 - Opener should not jump to 2NT with a singleton: it is better to use other bids, (e.g. a reverse) to show strength. Therefore a jump to 2NT always guarantees at least 2 cards in responder's major suit.

New Minor Forcing

After 2NT Rebid by Opener

- Specific differences (cont.):
 - After $1\clubsuit/\diamond - 1\heartsuit$, if opener does not have 4 \heartsuit he should jump to 2NT even with 4 \spadesuit . If responder is 4-4 in the major, he should use NMF (if strong enough) to check for a possible fit in \spadesuit . This means that the sequence
 $1\clubsuit/\diamond - 1\heartsuit - 2NT - 3\diamond/\clubsuit - 3\heartsuit - 3NT$
shows a 4 \heartsuit -4 \spadesuit holding by responder.

New Minor Forcing After 2NT Rebid by Opener

- Related sequences
 - $1\clubsuit/\diamond - 1\heartsuit/\spadesuit - 2NT - 3\heartsuit/\spadesuit$
 - 6+ \heartsuit/\spadesuit , slam interest. Opener should respond by cue-bidding aces up the line.

Responses to Openings of 1 in a Suit

	1♥/1♠			1♣/1♦					
Resp. holding	RHO's bid			RHO's bid					
	Pass	T.O. dbl	Suit overc.	Pass	T.O. dbl	Suit overc.			
Responses with 6–9/10 pts									
3+ cards	2♥/♠	2/3 ♥/♠		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1♦/♥/♠^[F] • 1NT • 2♣/♦ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1♦/♥/♠^[F] • 1NT • 2/3 ♣/♦ • 2♦/♥/♠ • Pass 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1♥/♠^[F] • Dbl.^[F] • 1NT • 2/3 ♣/♦ • Pass 			
< 3 cards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1♠^[F] • 1NT 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1♠^[F] • 1NT • Pass 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dbl.^[F] • 1NT • Pass 						
Responses with 10–15+ pts									
3+ cards (10–12 pts)	3♥/♠	2NT ^[F]	Cue-bid ^[F]	10–12 pts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1♦/♥/♠^[F] • 2♣^[F] • 2NT (11–12 HCP) • 3♣/♦ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1♦/♥/♠^[F] • 2NT^[F] • 3NT (13+ HCP) • Redbl. 			
3+ cards (13–15 pts)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2NT^[GF] • 4♥/♠ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2NT^[F] • 4♥/♠ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cue-bid^[F] • 4♥/♠ 				12–15+ pts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1♦/♥/♠^[F] • 2♣^[F] • 3NT 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1♥/♠^[F] • Dbl.^[F] • 2♥/♠^[F] • 2NT/3NT • 2♣/♦^[F] • Cue-bid^[F]
< 3 cards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1♠/2♥^[F] • 2♣/♦^[F] • 3NT (15–17 HCP) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1♠^[F] • 3NT (13–15 HCP) • Redbl. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2♥/♠^[F] • Dbl.^[F] • 2NT/3NT • 2♣/♦^[F] 						

NEGATIVE DOUBLES

Negative Doubles

- A negative double is a conventional bid made by responder (opener's partner) after an opening bid of 1 in a suit and an overcall in a different suit by RHO
- Therefore a double by responder is **not** negative if:
 - The opening bid is not 1 in a suit
 - The overcall is in opener's suit (e.g. Michaels cue-bid) or in notrump

Negative Doubles

- A double by responder is also not negative if the overcall is above a predetermined level set by partnership agreement
- SAYC sets the upper limit for a negative double at 2♠, but most players use a higher threshold (e.g. 3♠)

Negative Doubles

- In general, a negative double shows 4+ cards in both of the two remaining unbid suits
- In most cases, however, responder may choose to make a negative double with 4+ cards in only one of the unbid suits. Nevertheless:
 - If only one of the unbid suits is a major, a negative double always guarantees 4+ cards in that suit
 - Responder should have a contingency plan with an “escape bid” to be used if opener rebids in the “wrong” suit

Negative Doubles

- The most common “escape bids” are:
 - A bid in opener’s first suit. This bid does not necessarily indicate support, only suit preference.
 - A notrump bid, showing a stopper in overcaller’s suit. Responder should make sure to have sufficient strength for such bid
 - A 2-level rebid of one of the original unbid suits. This shows 6+ cards in that suit and a minimum hand (6–10 HCP)

Negative Doubles

- The minimum strength required for a negative double depends on the level of RHO's overcall

RHO's overcall	Minimum strength (HCP)
Through 1♠	6
2♣/♦	8–9
2♥/♠	9–10
3♣/♦	10–11

- A negative double sets no upper bound on the strength of responder's hand

Negative Doubles

- Responder should prefer an explicit bid in a suit to a negative double:
 - When holding game-forcing values (13+ HCP) and a 5-4 (or 5-5) distribution in the unbid suits
 - If only one of the unbid suits is a major and responder holds 5+ cards in that suit and sufficient strength to bid it explicitly
- After a 1♥/♠ opening bid, a negative double denies 3-card support of opener's suit

Negative Doubles

1♣ — (1♦) — X

- This negative double always guarantees 4+ cards in both majors (***no exceptions!***)

- Do not double with:

♠ AQ965 ♥ KQJ64 ♦ 65 ♣ 7 (bid 1♠)

♠ 8653 ♥ KQ10965 ♦ 74 ♣ 2 (bid 2♥)

Negative Doubles

$1\clubsuit/\diamond - (1\heartsuit) - X$

- This negative double shows *exactly* 4 ♠
 - An explicit bid of 1 ♠ shows 5+ cards in the suit
 - This double says *nothing* about responder's holding in the unbid minor suit, and opener should make no assumptions about such holding

Negative Doubles

Examples

- Bidding: 1♣ — (1♥)

♠ A752 ♥ 64 ♦ AQ1075 ♣ 72 (double)

♠ A752 ♥ 64 ♦ AQ1075 ♣ A2 (bid 2♦)

- Bidding: 1♦ — (1♥)

♠ A752 ♥ 64 ♦ AQ1075 ♣ 72 (double)

♠ A752 ♥ 64 ♦ AQ1075 ♣ A2 (double)

Negative Doubles

1♣/♦ — (1♠) — X

- This negative double shows 4+ ♥
 - An explicit bid of 2♥ should be made instead of a negative double when holding 5+ ♥ and 10+ HCP
 - This double says *nothing* about responder's holding in the unbid minor suit

Negative Doubles

Examples

- Bidding: 1♦ — (1♠)

♠ 986 ♥ AJ54 ♦ KJ9 ♣ A52 (double)

♠ 986 ♥ A8654 ♦ KJ ♣ 852 (double)

♠ 64 ♥ K75432 ♦ KQ ♣ 1098 (double)

(rebid 2♥ on the next round)

♠ 86 ♥ KQJ94 ♦ A1087 ♣ 97 (bid 2♥)

Negative Doubles

1♥ — (1♠) — X

- In principle this negative double shows 4+ cards in *both* minors
- If responder chooses to double with 4+ cards in only one minor, he should have an “escape bid” ready in case opener rebids in the other minor

Negative Doubles

- If responder holds 4+ cards in only one minor, a bid other than a negative double will often (although not always) be available:
 - A NT bid at the appropriate level with a spade stopper
 - A direct 2♣/♦ bid with 10+ HCP and 5+cards in the suit (or just 4 cards and 11+ HCP in a pinch)
 - A weak jump shift (normally with 7+ cards, since it will have to be at the 3-level)

Negative Doubles

- Even with 4+ cards in both minors, another bid (e.g. in notrump) may be more descriptive and therefore should be preferred to a negative double.

Negative Doubles

Examples

- Bidding: 1♥ — (1♠)

♠ 96	♥ K4	♦ Q9653	♣ K852	(double)
♠ 865	♥ J6	♦ A743	♣ Q1074	(double)
♠ KQ5	♥ 76	♦ K743	♣ J1087	(bid 1NT)
♠ AJ7	♥ K6	♦ J842	♣ K765	(bid 2NT)
♠ 64	♥ KQ	♦ A963	♣ A10964	(bid 2♣)

Negative Doubles

Examples

- Bidding: 1♥ — (1♠)

♠ 954 ♥ A6 ♦ KJ ♣ 987543 (double)
(bid 2♥ if opener's response is 2♦)

♠ 9765 ♥ A ♦ Q87543 ♣ Q10 (double)
(bid 2♦ if opener's response is 2♣)

Negative Doubles

1♥/♠ — (2♣/♦) — X

- In principle this negative double shows 4+ cards in *both* unbid suits
- Responder guarantees to have 4+ cards in the unbid major
- If responder chooses to double without 4+ cards in the unbid minor, he should have an “escape bid” ready

Negative Doubles

Examples

- Bidding: 1♥ — (2♣)

♠ KJ94	♥ A6	♦ J8752	♣ 73	(double)
♠ AQ42	♥ A6	♦ AQ87	♣ 763	(double)
♠ QJ654	♥ Q6	♦ QJ87	♣ J3	(double)
♠ AK1076	♥ 86	♦ K852	♣ 93	(bid 2♠)
♠ A965	♥ K	♦ AQ9852	♣ 65	(bid 2♦)
♠ 6532	♥ —	♦ KQ98742	♣ K5	(bid 3♦)

Negative Doubles

Examples

- Bidding: 1♥ — (2♣)

♠ QJ9754 ♥ A ♦ J86 ♣ 743 (double)
(bid 2♠ on the next round)

♠ KQ65 ♥ 98 ♦ K87 ♣ KJ107 (double)
(bid 2NT on the next round if opener doesn't bid ♠)

Negative Doubles

1♦ — (2♣) — X

1♣ — (2♦) — X

- In principle these negative doubles show 4+ cards in *both* majors
- If responder chooses to double with 4+ cards in only one major, he should have an “escape bid” ready in case opener rebids in the other major

Negative Doubles

Examples

- Bidding: 1♦ — (2♣)

♠ KJ75 ♥ A964 ♦ J65 ♣ 82 (double)

♠ AQ96 ♥ KJ102 ♦ 65 ♣ A97 (double)

♠ AQ95 ♥ KQJ64 ♦ Q65 ♣ 7 (bid 2♥)

♠ AK1076 ♥ 86 ♦ 52 ♣ KJ93 (bid 2♠)

♠ A965 ♥ K7 ♦ Q982 ♣ 65 (bid 2♦)

♠ 6532 ♥ — ♦ KQ98742 ♣ K5 (bid 3♦)

Negative Doubles

Examples

- Bidding: 1♦ — (2♣)

♠ QJ9754 ♥ A ♦ J86 ♣ 743 (double)

(bid 2♠ on the next round)

♠ AJ65 ♥ Q7 ♦ K1082 ♣ 65 (double)

(bid 3♦ on the next round if opener bids 2♥)

♠ AJ65 ♥ KQ7 ♦ 1082 ♣ 865 (double)

(accept that you may end up playing in a 7-card fit)

Negative Doubles

Opener's Rebids

- A minimum-level rebid indicates a minimum opening (≤ 15 HCP)
- A jump rebid below game level is invitational
- A cue-bid of overcaller's suit is forcing to game
- A notrump bid promises a stopper in overcaller's suit

Negative Doubles

- However, in the absence of better alternatives opener may be forced to:
 - Rebid a **strong** 5-card suit at the 2-level
 - Bid 1NT without much of a stopper in overcaller's suit (a 2NT rebid should always promise a solid stopper and it shouldn't be made unless the partnership's combined strength is at least 22 or 23 HCP)
 - Bid a new (**strong**) suit that is only 3-card long (try to do this only at the 1-level and only if partner's negative double guarantees 4+ cards in that suit)

UNUSUAL OVER UNUSUAL

Defense against Unusual NT and Michaels Cue Bids

- Opening bid is 1 in a suit
- RHO interference
 - Michaels cue bid
 - Unusual NT
- Defense is essentially the same in either case. However, some defensive bids by responder depend on whether only one or both of RHO's suits are known

Defense against Unusual NT and Michaels Cue Bids

- Weak responses (7–10 pts, not forcing)
 - Simple raise
 - Shows support for opener's suit (3+ cards for a major suit, usually 5+ cards for a minor suit)
 - Game-level raise
 - Shows length in opener's suit and distributional values, with overall strength less than a limit raise (analogous to a “weak freak”)
 - Minimum-level bid of a new suit.
 - Shows a hand roughly equivalent to a weak-two opening bid (6+ card, good quality suit). It usually denies support for opener's major suit.

Defense against Unusual NT and Michaels Cue Bids

- Responses with invitational strength or better (10+ pts)
 - When both of RHO's suits are known two indirect cue bids (“invisible cue bids”) are available:
 - The cheaper cue-bid is conventionally linked with opener's suit
 - The other cue-bid is linked with the “fourth suit”
 - Other conventions about the meaning of the invisible cue-bids exist

Defense against Unusual NT and Michaels Cue Bids

- Invitational and game forcing responses
 - Cue bid of RHO's cheaper suit
 - Invitational raise or better of opener's suit
 - Jump cue bid of either of RHO's suits
 - Splinter bid, slam try
 - Cue bid of RHO's other suit
 - Shows 5+ cards in the "fourth suit" with invitational values. It usually denies support for opener's major suit.
 - 2NT (over Michaels cue bid) / 3NT
 - Shows stoppers in *both* of RHO's suits with invitational/game forcing values. Denies support for opener's major suit.

Defense against Unusual NT and Michaels Cue Bids

- Invitational and game-forcing responses
 - Double
 - A waiting bid, showing 10+ HCP, usually denying support for opener's major suit. After advancer's bid, opener may bid to convey additional useful information about his hand:
 - Rebid the opening suit, showing 6+ cards
 - Bid a new suit to show a fairly strong two-suited hand
 - Bid 3NT, with suitable values and a stopper in opponents' chosen suit
 - Double (penalty)

Defense against Unusual NT and Michaels Cue Bids

- Invitational and game-forcing responses
 - After initial double, if opener passes responder rebids
 - Double (penalty)
 - New suit, showing 5+ cards with game-forcing values
 - 3NT, with a stopper in opponents' chosen suit (does not necessarily promise a stopper in opponents' other suit)
 - Delayed cue bid of opponents' chosen suit, showing game-forcing values, but **denying** a stopper in opponents' suit (Western cue bid). Opener should bid 3NT with a stopper.

Defense against Unusual NT and Michaels Cue Bids

- When only one of opponents' suit is known
 - The only available “invisible cue bid” denotes a limit raise or better of opener's suit
 - 2NT / 3NT shows invitational / game-forcing values with a stopper in opponents' known suit. It denies support for openers' (major) suit
 - The meaning of all other responses remains unchanged

RESPONSES TO 1NT OPENINGS

1NT Opening Bid

- 15–17 HCP
- Hand distribution is 4333, 4432 or 5332 with 5-card minor suit
- It is usually convenient to open 1NT a 5422 hand with 15–16 HCP, a 5-card minor suit and a 4-card major suit (with 17+ HCP, open 1 in the minor suit and then reverse)

Responses to 1NT Opening

- General rules
 - Only HCP are used to evaluate hand strength in notrump contracts
 - With less than 8 HCP, responder should generally pass
 - Exception: With 5+ cards in a major suit or 6+ cards in a minor suit, responder may transfer to that suit even with less than 8 HCP
 - With 8+ HCP, priority should be given to looking for a fit in a major suit, using the Stayman or the Jacoby Transfers conventions

Responses to 1NT Opening

- General rules (contd.)
 - The Stayman convention is used with
 - 8+ HCP
 - Exactly 4 cards in a major suit
 - Up to 5 cards in the other major
 - Jacoby transfers are used with 5+ cards in a major suit and any number of points

Responses to 1NT Openings

JACOBY TRANSFERS

Jacoby Transfers

- Used by responder when holding 5+ cards in one or both majors and any number of points
- With exactly 5 cards in one major suit and 4 cards in the other, responder
 - Transfers to the 5-card major suit with fewer than 8 HCP
 - Uses the Stayman convention with 8+ HCP

Jacoby Transfers

- Responder initiates the transfer by bidding the suit immediately below the suit targeted for the transfer. Specifically, after a 1NT (2NT) opening bid
 - 2♦ (3♦) is a transfer to ♥
 - 2♥ (3♥) is a transfer to ♠
- Opener responds by bidding the target suit, usually at the cheapest level
 - After 2/3♦ opener bids 2/3♥
 - After 2/3♥ opener bids 2/3♠

Jacoby Transfers

- After opener's forced rebid, responder indicates both the strength of his hand and the length of his suit
 - A notrump rebid by responder shows *exactly 5 cards* in the target suit
 - A rebid by responder in the target suit shows 6+ cards in the suit
 - The strength of responder's hand is indicated by the rebid level

Jacoby Transfers

Subsequent bidding

Responder's rebid after opener's transfer					
Responder's holding	0–7 HCP	8–9 HCP	10–15 HCP	16–17 HCP	18+ HCP
5 cards	Pass	2NT	3NT	4NT	5NT
6+ cards	Pass	3♥/♠	4♥/♠	5♥/♠	Do not transfer Bid 3♥/♠

Jacoby Transfers

Openers's rebid after responder's 2 nd bid				
Responder's 2 nd bid	Opener's holding			
	2 cards in target suit		3+ cards in target suit	
	Min (15–16 HCP)	Max (16–17 HCP)	Min (15–16 HCP)	Max (16–17 HCP)
2NT	Pass	3NT	3♥/♠	4♥/♠
3NT	Pass		4♥/♠	
4NT	Pass	6NT	5♥/♠	6♥/♠
5NT	6NT		6♥/♠	
3♥/♠	Pass	4♥/♠	Pass	4♥/♠
4♥/♠	Pass		Pass	
5♥/♠	Pass	6♥/♠	Pass	6♥/♠

Jacoby Transfers

- With 5 cards in both major suits and 8+ HCP, responder
 - Transfers to ♥ (i.e. bids 2♦) and then rebids 2♠ over opener's 2♥ response with an invitational hand (8–9/10 HCP)
 - Transfers to ♠ (i.e. bids 2♥) and then rebids 3♥ over opener's 2♠ response with a game-forcing hand (10/11+ HCP)
- Opener places the final contract. Note that an 8-card fit in one of the majors is guaranteed (unless opener's distribution is 5422 with doubletons in the major suits)

Responses to 1NT Openings

STAYMAN CONVENTION

Stayman Convention

- Used to uncover a 4-4 fit in a major suit
- Normally responder must have 8+ HCP and also hold 4 cards in at least one major suit
 - Some variants of the convention (e.g. “garbage” Stayman, “crawling” Stayman) allow for its use with fewer than 8 HCP
 - Other variants allow the convention to be used even without a 4-card major

Stayman Convention

- It is generally advised not to use the Stayman convention when responder's distribution is 4333. The reason is that such distribution is unlikely to generate any ruffing tricks, and therefore a suit contract will probably take the same number of tricks as a no trump contract

Stayman vs. Jacoby Transfers

- With exactly 4 cards in one or both majors and 8+ HCP, responder uses Stayman
- With 5+ cards in one or both majors responder uses Jacoby transfers, regardless of point count
- With exactly 5 cards in one major suit and 4 cards in the other, responder
 - Transfers to the 5-card major suit with fewer than 8 HCP
 - Uses the Stayman convention with 8+ HCP

Stayman Convention

- To use the Stayman convention, responder bids 2♣ (3♣) after a 1NT (2NT) opening bid
- Opener responds (over 2♣):
 - 2♦ without a 4-card major
 - 2♥/♠ with 4♥/♠. With both 4♥ and 4♠ opener bids 2♥
- Responder's subsequent rebid clarifies both his holding and the strength of his hand

Stayman Convention

- After a 2♥/♠ response by opener, responder:
 - Raises opener's suit with 4+ card support in that suit.
 - Makes a no trump bid without 4-card support for opener's suit. *Such bid indicates implicitly that responder holds 4 cards in the other major suit.*
- In either case, the strength of responder's hand is indicated by the level of his rebid

Stayman Convention

- After a 2♦ response by opener, responder normally rebids in no trump. However, with 5 cards in one major suit and 4 cards in the other, responder:
 - Bids his 5-card major suit at the two level with an invitational hand (8–9/10 HCP)
 - Bids his 5-card major suit at the three level with a game-forcing hand (10/11+ HCP)

Stayman Convention

Subsequent bidding

Responder's rebid after opener's response					
Opener's response	Responder's holding in opener's major suit	8–9 HCP	10–15 HCP	16–17 HCP	18+ HCP
2♦		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2NT • 2♥/♠ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3NT • 3♥/♠ 	4NT	6NT
2♥/♠	< 4 cards	2NT	3NT	4NT	5NT
	4+ cards	3♥/♠	4♥/♠	5♥/♠	6♥/♠

Responses to 1NT Opening

Response	0–7 HCP	8–9 HCP	10–15 HCP	16–17 HCP	18+ HCP
Pass					
2♣		Stayman			
2♦/♥	Jacoby transfers				
2♠ ^[1]					
2NT ^[2]					
3♣/♦ ^[3]					
3♥/♠ ^[4]					
3NT ^[5]					
4♣				Gerber	
4♦/♥			Texas transf.		
4NT ^[6]					

Responses to 1NT Opening

1. Transfer to minors, to be used with 6+ cards in the target suit
2. Invitational to 3NT, it denies holding 4+ cards in a major. Opener passes with a minimum or bids 3NT with a maximum
3. Indicates 6+ cards in the named suit, with 2 of the top 3 honors. It is invitational to 3NT
4. Indicates 6+ cards in the named suit, with slam interest
5. Sign-off bid, it denies holding 4+ cards in a major

Responses to 1NT Opening

6. Invitational to 6NT. When made in direct response to a 1NT opening bid, it denies holding 4+ cards in a major

Responses to 1NT Openings

COMPETITIVE BIDDING

Competitive Bidding

- If the opponents interfere after a 1NT opening by your partner
 - Make sure you understand what the interference indicates (if necessary, ask)
 - Check vulnerability (both yours and the opponents')
 - Check your HCP count
 - Check your holding in the opponents' suit(s)
 - Decide your best course of action

Defenses against 1NT

	Cappelletti	DONT	Landy
Double	Penalty	Unknown single-suited hand	Penalty
2♣	Unknown single-suited hand	♣ and a higher-ranking suit	♥ and ♠
2♦	♥ and ♠	♦ and a major	Natural
2♥	♥ and a minor	♥ and ♠	Natural
2♠	♠ and a minor	♠	Natural

Competitive Bidding

- After a double
 - The meaning of all responses remains unchanged
- After a 2♣ overcall
 - A double is the Stayman convention
 - All other responses remain unchanged
- After 2♦ / ♥ / ♠ overcalls
 - Use the Reverse Lebensohl convention

Defense against 1NT Openings

ASPTRO CONVENTION

1NT Opening Ranges

- Weak NT
 - Any range with an upper bound ≤ 15 HCP
 - Most common range is 12–14 HCP
- Strong NT
 - Any range with a lower bound ≥ 14 HCP
 - Most common range is 15–17 HCP

Against Weak NT

- Double shows 15+ HCP and a generally balanced hand, typically without a 5+ card major suit (similar to a 1NT overcall)
- Advancer should treat partner's double as "optional"
- If advancer decides to remove the double, the same conventions apply as when responding to a 1NT opening bid ("systems on")

Against Weak NT

- Overcalling with one-suited hands
 - 2♥/♠ generally show a good suit^(*) with 6+ cards and 10+ HCP
 - Suit quality is more important than HCP strength
 - Overcalling with a 5-card suit should be considered only with a particularly good suit (partner is entitled to expect 6+ cards, and may raise with only 2-card support)
 - A raise by advancer is invitational and shows 11+ pts

(*)Two of the top three honors or three of the top five

Against Weak NT

- Overcalling with one-suited hands
 - 3 ♣/♦/♥/♠ generally show a good suit with 7+ cards
 - Suit quality is the most important consideration

Against Weak NT

- Overcalling with two-suited hands
 - 2 ♣/♦ show a two-suited hand, at least 5-4, with at least one major suit and 11+ HCP (± 1 HCP depending on suit length and quality, vulnerability, range of opponents' NT opening, etc.)
 - 2 ♣ promises 4+ ♥
 - 2 ♦ promises 4+ ♠
 - In general, the known major suit (“anchor major”) can be shorter/of equal length/longer than the other unknown suit
 - 2NT shows a 5-5 distribution in the minors (unusual notrump)

Against Weak NT

- Overcalling with both majors
 - If one suit is longer than the other, anchor to the shorter major
 - If the two suits are of equal length (at least 5-5!), anchor to the weaker major
- When holding both a 6-card major and a 4-card minor, it is generally preferable to overcall 2♥/♠ (unless the major suit is particularly weak)

ASPTRO Responses

- Minimum-hand responses (0–10 HCP)
 - 2♥/♠ (known major), with 3+ card support
 - Step response (2♦ over 2♣, 2♥ over 2♦)
 - Asks overcaller to show his longest suit
 - Ideally, it should be made with no singletons or voids
 - 2♠ (over 2♣) with 6+ cards
 - Pass, with 6+ ♣/♦

ASPTRO Continuations after a Step Response

- Overcaller's bid
 - Pass, if the suit bid is overcaller's longest (or of equal length to the other)
 - Bid longest suit
- After overcaller's response, advancer may ask for overcaller's 2nd suit by bidding 2NT

ASPTRO Responses

- Responses with invitational or better hands (11+ HCP)
 - 3♥/♠ (known major), with 4+ card support and 11–14 HCP
 - 4♥/♠ (known major), with 4+ card support with 15+ HCP
 - 2NT (natural) with 11–14 HCP

Against Strong NT

- The meaning of ASPTRO overcalls and responses remains the same. However, the minimum strength required for overcalls should be adjusted accordingly.
- A double should be made only with 90% certainty that the contract can be defeated (to protect against responder's redoubling for penalty)
- When overcalling with one-suited hands (2♥/♠), suit quality is of particular importance

Against Strong NT

- One-suited overcalls with 5-card suits should be made only with *extremely good suits* and reasonable overall hand strength (~12+ HCP)
- Two-suited overcalls should generally be made with both reasonably good suits and reasonable overall hand strength (~12+ HCP)

Competitive Bidding

- If the opponents interfere after a 1NT opening, make sure you understand what the interference indicates (if necessary, ask)
- After a double
 - The meaning of all responses remains unchanged
- After a 2♣ overcall
 - A double is the Stayman convention
 - All other responses remain unchanged
- After 2♦/♥/♠ overcalls
 - Use the Lebensohl convention

Responses to 1NT Openings

RUBENSOHL CONVENTION

Rubensohl Convention

- It applies after a direct 2♦/♥/♠ overcall that shows
 - A known single-suited hand
 - A two-suited hand with one known suit
- It also applies to delayed responses after responder passes an overcall (or double) that shows an unspecified single suit, e.g.
1NT – (2♣) – P – (2♦) – P – (P) – ?

Rubensohl Convention

- However, the convention is off when the opponents' suit is clubs, e.g.

1NT – (X) – P – (2♣) – P – (P) – ?

Rubensohl Convention

- Overview
 - 2♥/♠ bids are natural and weak
 - Bids of 2NT through 3♠ inclusive are ostensibly transfers to the next higher denomination (must be alerted). They promise at least invitational values (8+ HCP) and 5+ cards in the suit of the attempted transfer (other than the opponents')
 - Attempted transfers to opponents' suit are Stayman asking bids. They promise game-forcing values.
 - 3NT is natural

Rubensohl Convention

Natural Responses

- 2♥/♠ bids are competitive. They generally show a suit with 6+ cards and a weak hand (< 8 HCP)
- 3NT promises game-forcing values and a stopper in opponents' suit. It denies 4 cards in any unbid major suits.

Rubensohl Convention

Transfer to 3NT

- 3♠ is an attempted transfer to 3NT. It promises game-forcing values but denies both a stopper in opponents' suit and 4 cards in any unbid majors.
 - Opener bids 3NT with a stopper in opponents' suit
 - Without a stopper, opener bids his cheapest 4-card suit

Rubensohl Convention

Transfers to an unbid minor suit

- These transfers promise invitational values or better and 5+ cards in the target suit. They do not necessarily deny 4 cards in an unbid major suit.
- Opener responds in this order of priority
 - Opener completes the transfer with less than a maximum or without a stopper in opponents' suit
 - With both a maximum and a stopper in opponents' suit, opener bids his cheapest 4-card unbid major suit (or 3NT)

Rubensohl Convention

Transfer to opponents' minor suit

- This bid promise game-forcing values and 4 cards in at least one major suit. It neither promises nor denies a stopper in opponents' suit.
- Opener responds in this order of priority
 - Opener completes the transfer without a stopper in opponents' suit.
 - With a stopper in opponents' suit, opener bids his cheapest 4-card major suit (or 3NT).

Rubensohl Convention

Transfers to an unbid major suit

- These transfers promise invitational values or better and 5+ cards in the target suit. They neither promise nor deny a stopper in opponents' suit.
- Opener responds in this order of priority
 - Opener bids game (4♥/♠ or 3NT) with maximum values and suitable fit or stopper in opponents' suit.
 - Otherwise opener completes the transfer

Rubensohl Convention

Transfer to opponents' major suit

- This bid promises game-forcing values and 4 cards in the unbid major suit. It neither promises nor denies a stopper in opponents' suit.
- Opener responds in this order of priority
 - Bids 4♥/♠ with an appropriate fit
 - Bids 3NT with no fit but with a stopper in opponents' suit
 - Otherwise opener completes the transfer.

Rubensohl Convention

Responder's double

- A double by responder shows a generally balanced hand with invitational values and the following features:
 - Four cards in an unbid major suit
 - Three or four cards in the other unbid major suit, if there is one
 - Preferably at least two cards in opponents' suit

Responses to 1NT Openings

LEBENSOHL CONVENTION

Lebensohl Convention

- Overview

- A double of opponent's overcall is for penalty
- A two-level bid of a suit is natural and generally shows minimum values (< 8 HCP)
- An immediate three-level bid of a suit (other than the opponents') shows 5+ cards and game-forcing values (10/11+ HCP), whether or not it is a jump bid

Lebensohl Convention

- Overview (cont.)
 - An immediate cue-bid of opponents' suit is Stayman. It shows game-forcing values and denies a stopper in opponents' suit
 - 2NT is a conventional relay to 3♣
 - An immediate 3NT bid shows game-forcing values but denies a stopper in opponents' suit
 - 4♦/♥ bids are Texas transfers, with or without a jump

Lebensohl Convention

- Responder's rebids after opener's 3♣ relay
 - Pass (to play in 3♣)
 - A three-level bid of a suit (other than the opponents') shows 5+ cards and
 - Invitational values (8-10 HCP) if the suit could have been bid at the two level
 - Minimum values, if the suit could not have been bid at the two level (sign-off)
 - A cue-bid of opponents' suit is Stayman. It shows game-forcing values and also a stopper in opponents' suit
 - A 3NT bid shows game-forcing values and also a stopper in opponents' suit

Lebensohl Convention

- Key features to keep in mind
 - Three different bidding sequences are possible for new suits ranking higher than the overcall suit
 - 1NT–(2♥)–2♠
This sequence shows minimum values by responder
 - 1NT–(2♥)–2NT–(P)–3♣–(P)–3♠
This sequence shows 5+ ♠ and invitational values by responder
 - 1NT–(2♥)–3♠
This sequence shows 5+ ♠ and game-forcing values by responder

Lebensohl Convention

- Key features to keep in mind
 - Only two different bidding sequences are possible for new suits ranking lower than the overcall suit
 - 1NT–(2♠)–2NT–(P)–3♣–(P)–3♥
This sequence shows 5+ ♥ and only minimum values by responder
 - 1NT–(2♠)–3♥
This sequence shows 5+ ♥ and game-forcing values by responder
 - There is no invitational sequence in this case

Lebensohl Convention

- Key features to keep in mind
 - There are two different ways to reach Stayman or 3NT bids
 - “Fast” sequences
 - 1NT–(2♥)–3♥
 - 1NT–(2♥)–3NT
 - “Slow” sequences
 - 1NT–(2♥)–2NT–(P)–3♣–(P)–3♥
 - 1NT–(2♥)–2NT–(P)–3♣–(P)–3NT
 - The “fast” sequences deny a stopper in opponents’ suit, while the “slow” sequences show a stopper in opponents’ suit (Slow Shows Stopper)

Lebensohl Convention

- Key features to keep in mind
 - Sequences, whether fast or slow, that end with a new suit generally say nothing about the presence or absence of a stopper in opponents' suit
 - There is no sequence that replaces the original meaning of a 2NT response
 - The Stayman convention can be used only with game-forcing values

Lebensohl Convention

Responses after two-level overcalls	
Responder's holding	Responses
0–9/10 HCP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 (new suit) • 2NT–3♣–3 (new suit) • Pass
10/11+ HCP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 (new suit) • 2NT–3♣– cue bid (Stayman) • Cue-bid (Stayman) • 2NT–3♣–3NT • 3NT • 4♦/♥

Responses to 1NT Openings

REVERSE LEBENSOHL CONVENTION

Reverse Lebensohl Convention

- Overview
 - A double of opponent's overcall is for penalty
 - A two-level bid of a suit is natural and generally shows minimum values (< 8 HCP)
 - An immediate three-level bid of a suit (other than the opponents') shows 5+ cards and invitational values (8–10 HCP), whether or not it is a jump bid

Reverse Lebensohl Convention

- Overview (cont.)
 - An immediate cue-bid of opponents' suit is Stayman. It shows game-forcing values (10/11+ HCP) and promises a stopper in opponents' suit
 - 2NT is a conventional relay to 3♣ and shows game-forcing values
 - An immediate 3NT bid shows game-forcing values. It denies 4 cards in any unbid major suit and promises a stopper in opponents' suit

Reverse Lebensohl Convention

- Responder's rebids after opener's 3♣ relay
 - A three-level bid of a suit (other than the opponents') shows 5+ cards
 - A cue-bid of opponents' suit is Stayman. It denies 4 cards in any unbid major suit and also denies a stopper in opponents' suit
 - A 3NT bid shows game-forcing values but denies a stopper in opponents' suit
- All rebids show game-forcing values

Reverse Lebensohl Convention

- Key features to keep in mind
 - Three different bidding sequences are possible for new suits ranking higher than the overcall suit
 - 1NT–(2♥)–2♠
This sequence shows minimum values by responder
 - 1NT–(2♥)–3♠
This sequence shows 5+ ♠ and invitational values by responder
 - 1NT–(2♥)–2NT–(P)–3♣–(P)–3♠
This sequence shows 5+ ♠ and game-forcing values by responder

Reverse Lebensohl Convention

- Key features to keep in mind
 - Only two different bidding sequences are possible for new suits ranking lower than the overcall suit
 - 1NT–(2♠)–3♥
This sequence shows 5+ ♥ and invitational values by responder
 - 1NT–(2♠)–2NT–(P)–3♣–(P)–3♥
This sequence shows 5+ ♥ and game-forcing values by responder
 - There is no minimum values sequence in this case

Reverse Lebensohl Convention

- Key features to keep in mind
 - There are two different ways to reach Stayman or 3NT bids
 - “Fast” sequences
 - 1NT–(2♥)–3♥
 - 1NT–(2♥)–3NT
 - “Slow” sequences
 - 1NT–(2♥)–2NT–(P)–3♣–(P)–3♥
 - 1NT–(2♥)–2NT–(P)–3♣–(P)–3NT
 - The “fast” sequences promise a stopper in opponents’ suit, while the “slow” sequences deny a stopper in opponents’ suit

Reverse Lebensohl Convention

- Key features to keep in mind
 - Sequences, whether fast or slow, that end with a new suit generally say nothing about the presence or absence of a stopper in opponents' suit
 - There is no bid or sequence that replaces the original meaning of a 2NT response
 - The Stayman convention can be used only with game-forcing values

Reverse Lebensohl Convention

Responses after two-level overcalls	
Responder's bid	Responder's holding
2 ♥/♠	0–7 HCP, 5+ cards
3 ♣/♦/♥/♠ (new suit)	8–10 HCP, 5+ cards
Cue-bid	10+ HCP, Stayman for the unbid major(s). Promises a stopper in opponents' suit.
3 NT	Denies 4 cards in any unbid major suit. Promises a stopper in opponents' suit.

Reverse Lebensohl Convention

Responses after 2NT - 3♣	
Responder's bid	Responder's holding
3♦ (new suit)	10+ HCP, 5+ cards
3♥/♠ (new suit)	10+ HCP, 5 cards
Cue-bid	10+ HCP, Stayman for the unbid major(s). <u>Denies</u> a stopper in opponents' suit.
3 NT	Denies 4 cards in any unbid major suit. <u>Denies</u> a stopper in opponents' suit.

Reverse Lebensohl Convention

- A 2NT response followed by 3NT or a cue bid of opponents' suit specifically deny a stopper in that suit. If opener also does not have a stopper:
 - Opener should consider playing in a 4-3 fit, even at the 4 level
 - Opener may have to bid his best minor suit at the 4 level (hopefully with 4+ cards, but in some cases it could be a 3-card suit)

Reverse Lebensohl Convention

- If opponent's 2-level overcall is conventional and shows one known and one unknown suit, the rules for responder's bids remain unchanged, except that cue-bids should be made against opponent's known suit (whether or not it is the suit actually bid).

Reverse Lebensohl Convention

- If opponents overcall at the 3 level, responder bids as follows:
 - Doubles are for takeout
 - Bids in a new suit below game level are natural and forcing
 - Game-level bids are sign-offs (3NT shows a stopper in opponents' suit)
 - A cue-bid of opponents' minor suit is either
 - Stayman, or
 - Slam try

REBIDS

Definitions

- A *rebid* denotes a bid made by a player after his/her first non-pass bid. In most cases it refers to the player's second bid.
- A *new suit* denotes a suit that has not been bid previously by any player in the auction.
- *Responder* is opener's partner. A *response* is a bid by responder.
- A *simple* response/raise/rebid means a non-jump (that is, a minimum-level) response/raise/rebid.

Rebids by Opener

- When opener rebids a new suit:
 - The second suit is generally at least 4-cards long
 - The second suit is never longer than the first suit bid by opener (but it can be of equal length as opener's first suit)
 - Opener's first suit is at least 5-cards long except in the case of a 4441 distribution
 - The most common lengths of opener's first and second suits are 54, 64 and 55, respectively

Rebids by Opener

- The tables that follow summarize the conventional meanings of the most common types of rebids by opener after an opening of 1 in a suit in the context of traditional Standard American
- The auction is assumed to be uncontested (opponents always pass)
- All responses to opening bids are assumed to be simple (i.e. non-jump)
- Opener's rebids are also assumed to be simple, except where otherwise indicated

Rebids by Opener

Opener rebids 1NT

Generally a balanced hand with minimum opening strength (12–14 HCP). Occasionally 5422 or 5431 distribution with singleton in responder's suit.

Example auction	Opener's hand
1♣ – 1♥ – 1NT	♠ KJ84 ♥ AQ2 ♦ J10 ♣ Q1087
1♦ – 1♠ – 1NT	♠ 4 ♥ KQJ3 ♦ KQ742 ♣ A86
1♥ – 1♠ – 1NT	♠ 84 ♥ AJ876 ♦ AJ5 ♣ K96

Opener rebids the same suit at the two-level

Generally 6+ cards in the suit and minimum opening strength (12–15 HCP).

Example auction	Opener's hand
1♣ – 1♠ – 2♣	♠ Q84 ♥ A7 ♦ J10 ♣ AQ10874
1♥ – 1NT – 2♥	♠ 5 ♥ KJ10965 ♦ AJ8 ♣ KQ6

Rebids by Opener

Opener jump-rebids the same suit at the three-level

Intermediate opening strength (16–18 HCP) and 6+ cards in the suit

Example auction	Opener's hand
1♦ – 2♣ – 3♦	♠ 2 ♥ Q109 ♦ AKJ975 ♣ AK5
1♠ – 1NT – 3♠	♠ AKQ1075 ♥ K10 ♦ QJ7 ♣ Q6

Opener makes a simple raise of responder's new suit

Generally 4+ cards in responder's suit and minimum opening strength (12–15 HCP).

Example auction	Opener's hand
1♥ – 1♠ – 2♠	♠ K1072 ♥ AQ1094 ♦ 85 ♣ A5
1♠ – 2♣ – 3♣	♠ AQ1075 ♥ 7 ♦ QJ7 ♣ QJ96

Rebids by Opener

Opener jump-raises responder's new suit to the three-level

Generally 4+ cards in responder's suit and an intermediate hand (16–18 pts)

Example auction	Opener's hand
1♦ – 1♥ – 3♥	♠ 10 ♥ KJ94 ♦ AQJ85 ♣ A65
1♣ – 1♠ – 3♠	♠ KJ75 ♥ KQJ7 ♦ 7 ♣ AJ96

Opener rebids a new lower-ranking suit at the two-level

Wide-range opening hand (12–18 HCP). First suit is always of equal length or longer than the second. First suit is 5+ cards long except with 4441 distribution.

Example auction	Opener's hand
1♥ – 1♠ – 2♣	♠ 9 ♥ AQJ85 ♦ Q85 ♣ KJ65
1♠ – 1NT – 2♥	♠ AKJ75 ♥ KQJ8 ♦ 74 ♣ K6
1♥ – 2♣ – 2♦	♠ 76 ♥ KJ1085 ♦ KQJ65 ♣ A
1♦ – 1♠ – 2♣	♠ 8 ♥ K1085 ♦ AJ105 ♣ AQ98

Rebids by Opener

Opener rebids a new higher-ranking suit at the two-level after a one-level response

This **reverse** by opener shows an intermediate to strong hand (17–21 HCP). The first suit is always strictly longer than the second except with 4441 distribution.

Example auction	Opener's hand
1♣ – 1♠ – 2♦	♠ 43 ♥ A4 ♦ AQJ5 ♣ KQJ52
1♦ – 1NT – 2♠	♠ AJ75 ♥ KQ9 ♦ AKQJ4 ♣ 6
1♦ – 1♠ – 2♥	♠ 8 ♥ AK85 ♦ AJ105 ♣ KQJ8

Opener jump-rebids 2NT or bids 2NT after a 1NT response

A strong (18–19 or 17–19 HCP) balanced hand.

Example auction	Opener's hand
1♣ – 1♠ – 2NT	♠ K43 ♥ A64 ♦ AJ10 ♣ KQJ2
1♦ – 1♥ – 2NT	♠ AK75 ♥ KQ9 ♦ AQ74 ♣ J6
1♥ – 1NT – 2NT	♠ A8 ♥ AK985 ♦ Q105 ♣ KJ8

Rebids by Opener

Opener jump-rebids a new lower-ranking suit

This sequence shows a strong opening (19–21 HCP) and is forcing to game. The first suit is always at least 5-cards long and of equal length or longer than the second.

Example auction	Opener's hand
1♥ – 1♠ – 3♣	♠ 2 ♥ AKQJ85 ♦ AQ ♣ KJ65
1♠ – 1NT – 3♥	♠ AKQ75 ♥ KQ85 ♦ A4 ♣ K6
1♥ – 2♣ – 3♦	♠ A6 ♥ AJ1085 ♦ KQJ65 ♣ A

SIMPLIFIED OPENING LEADS

Leads against Suit Contracts

- If the suit is headed by an honor sequence (two or more consecutive honors), lead the top honor of the sequence
 - Examples: AKxx, KQJxx, QJx
 - **Exception:** If the suit consists of *exactly two consecutive honors*, lead the lower honor:
AK, KQ, QJ
- From a suit with 3+ cards containing one or more honors not in sequence, lead the fourth highest card (4th best), or the lowest card with only three cards (**Bottom Of Something**)
 - Examples: Kxxxx, Q10xxxx, Qxxx

Leads against Suit Contracts

- If the suit does not contain any honors (i.e. no cards higher than 9), lead the highest card (**Top Of Nothing**)
 - Examples: 754, 8632, 543
- Always lead the top card from a doubleton.
 - **Exception:** With a doubleton consisting of two honors in sequence, lead the *lower* honor
- In general, leading from a doubleton containing honor(s) is *strongly discouraged*, unless the suit has been bid by partner

Honor Sequences

- In the definitions of honor sequences (and *only* for that purpose), the 9 is considered to be an honor if it is the last card of an honor sequence
- A (solid or perfect) sequence consists of 2+ consecutive honors (e.g. AK, KQJ, J109)
- A broken sequence is a 3+ honor combination headed by 2 consecutive honors, with exactly a 1-card gap between the 2nd and 3rd honor (e.g. AKJ, KQ10, QJ9)
- An interior sequence consists of 2+ consecutive honors separated by a gap (1-card or longer) from an isolated higher honor (e.g. AQJ, KJ10, AJ10, K109)

Leads against No Trump Contracts

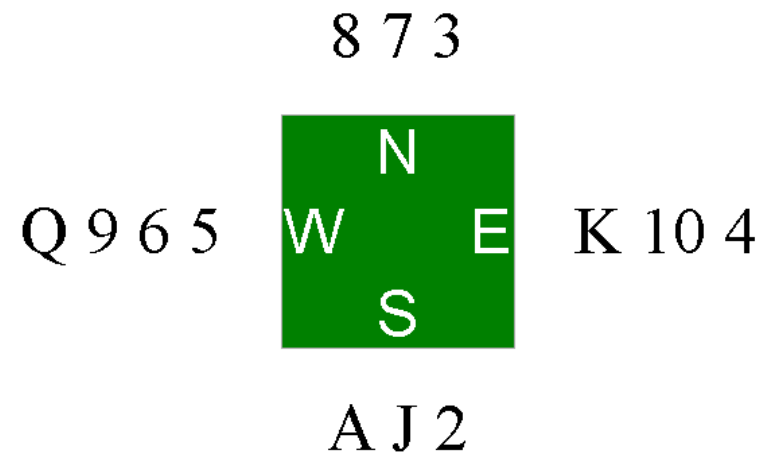
- From a long suit (4+ cards) headed by a (solid, broken or interior) honor sequence, lead the top card of the sequence if the sequence contains a total of at least 3 honors
 - Examples: AKQx, AKJx, KQ10x, AQJx, AJ10x, K109x

Leads against No Trump Contracts

- From a long suit (4+ cards) containing a combination of one or more honors that does not fall in one of the previous cases, lead the fourth highest card (4th best) (Bottom Of Something)
 - Examples
 - AKxx, KQxx, QJxxx, 109xx
 - AJxx, Q10xx, Kxxxx, Qxxx, 10xxxx

Third Hand Play

- If your partner leads a low card (Bottom Of Something), you should be prepared to sacrifice your honors in order to promote partner's
- Example: Your partner leads the 5, you should play the K

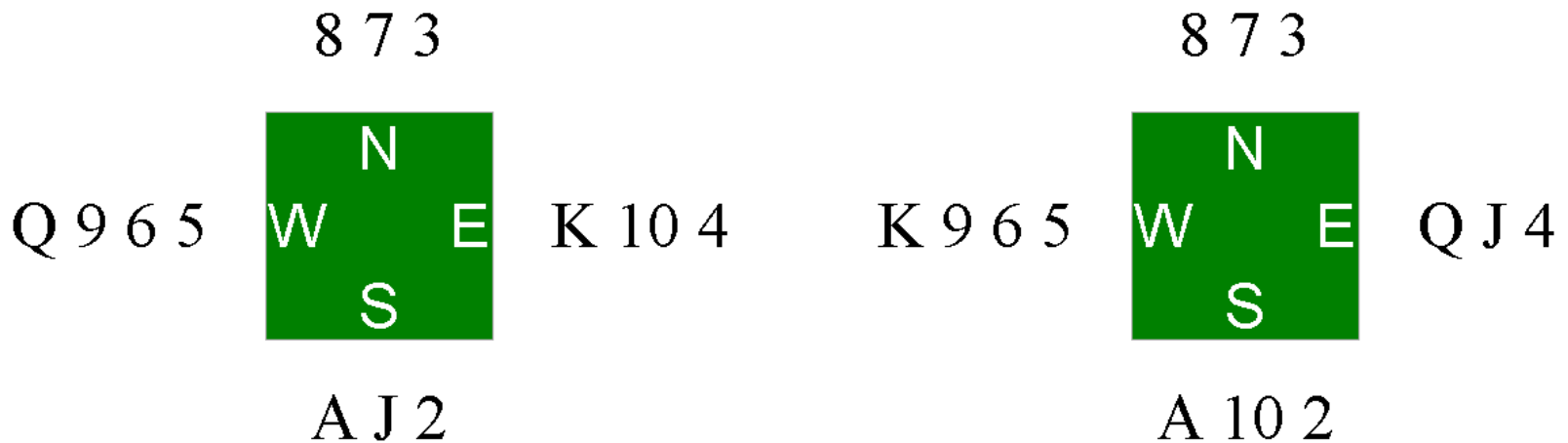


Third Hand Play

- Your partner leads (what you believe to be) a low card (suggesting that he/she holds honors in that suit), and
- You can cover the card that is played from dummy, then
- You should generally play *the lowest card that is equivalent to the highest card you hold in that suit*

Third Hand Play

- W leads the 5 (declarer is S)

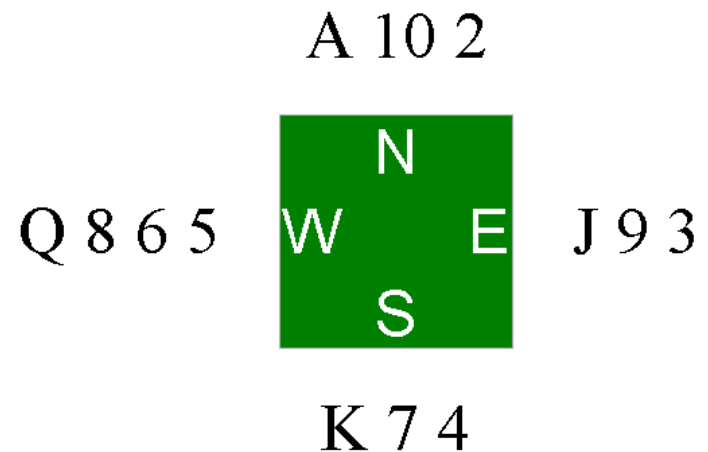


- E should play the K

- E should play the J

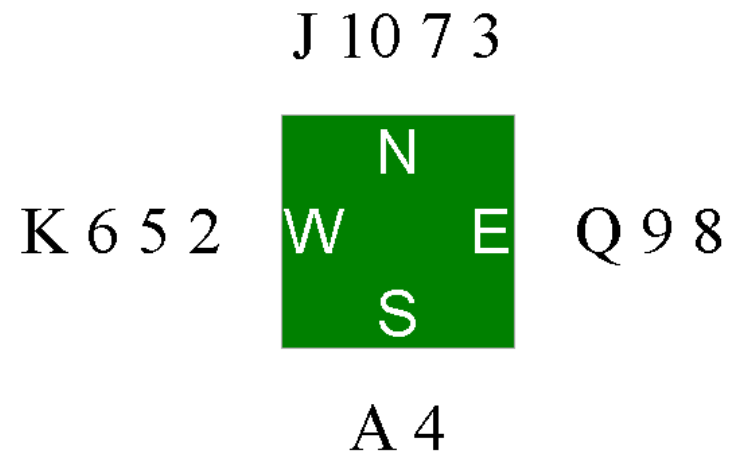
Third Hand Play

- W leads the 5 (declarer is S)
- If declarer plays the 10 from dummy, E should play the J
- If declarer plays the 2 from dummy, E should play the 9



Third Hand Play

- W leads the 2 (declarer is S)
- If declarer plays the J or the 10 from dummy, E should play the Q
- If declarer plays the 7 or the 3 from dummy, E should play the 8



Third Hand Play

- If your partner leads a low card and you *cannot* cover the card that is played from dummy, you should give an *attitude* signal, unless it will be clear *to your partner* that you cannot have a card in that suit higher than the J, in which case you should give a *count* signal

Signals

- A *signal* is a way to convey information by a defender to his/her partner through the card(s) the defender plays in a particular context
- There are three (main) types of signals:
 - Attitude
 - Count
 - Suit preference

Signals

- The default signal on opening leads is *attitude*
 - If using standard signals, a low card discourages while a high card encourages continuing the suit led. The meaning is reversed if using upside-down signals.
- Default means that the card played in 3rd seat is intended to convey an attitude signal, except in specific circumstances previously agreed upon by defenders.

Signals

- There are three exceptions to signaling attitude on an opening lead
- First exception:
 - The opening lead is a low card (Bottom Of Something)
 - 3rd seat defender does not cover the card played by dummy
 - After all four players have played to the first trick, it will be clear to the opening leader that partner cannot have a card in the suit led higher than J
 - In this case, defender in 3rd seat should signal *count*

OPENING LEADS

Conceptual Framework

- In principle, the opening lead choice should be the result of a risk/benefit analysis
- The results of this analysis depend on a multitude of factors, e.g.:
 - Contract level (part score, game, slam)
 - Type of contract (suit or notrump)
 - Strength of each side relative to the contract
 - Expected suit holdings of each player
 - Form of scoring (match points, IMPs, ...)
 - And more ...

The First Commandment

*Thou shalt mentally review the
bidding before choosing thy
opening lead*

General Guidelines

- Review the auction in your mind
- Estimate partner's HCP strength
 - Update your estimate after seeing dummy
- Choose which suit to lead
- Choose which card to lead from the selected suit

Preferred Suits for Leads against No Trump Contracts

- Lead a suit of your own that is both long and headed by a strong honor sequence
 - Examples: KQJ10x, KQJxxx
- Lead a suit bid by partner
- Lead your longest (4+ cards) and strongest suit that has not been shown by the opponents
 - With two suits of equal length (4+ cards), lead the stronger^[*]
 - With two suits of unequal length, generally lead the longer unless the shorter suit is significantly stronger than the longer
- Lead a suit containing no honors that has not been shown by the opponents
 - Give preference to longer suits over shorter suits

^[*]A suit headed by a honor sequence is generally stronger than a suit containing only scattered honors

Disfavored Suits for Leads against No Trump Contracts

- Do not lead a suit that has been shown (explicitly or implicitly) by the opponents, unless it is *both* long *and* headed by a strong honor sequence (e.g. KQJxx)
- Do not lead a singleton, except in a suit bid by partner
- Except in particular circumstances, do not lead a short suit (≤ 3 cards) containing honors (e.g. Axx, KQx, KJx, Kx), unless the suit has been bid by partner

Preferred Suits for Leads against Suit Contracts

- Lead a suit of your own that is both long and headed by a strong honor sequence
 - Examples: KQJ10x, KQJxxx
- Lead a suit bid by partner
- Lead a suit headed by a honor sequence
 - Give preference to suits headed by stronger sequences, regardless of the overall length of the suit (e.g. prefer KQJ to QJxx)
 - Leads from solid sequences are generally safer than leads from broken or interior sequences
 - See leads to avoid for exceptions

Preferred Suits for Leads against Suit Contracts

- Lead a suit of 3+ cards with one or more scattered honors that has not been shown by the opponents
- Lead a suit containing no honors that has not been shown by the opponents
 - Give preference to longer suits over shorter suits
- In special cases, lead a singleton or a trump

Disfavored Suits for Leads against Suit Contracts

- Do not lead a non-trump suit that has been shown (explicitly or implicitly) by the opponents, unless it is headed by a strong, solid honor sequence (AKQ or KQJ)
- Do not lead a suit headed by an unsupported ace (i.e. without the king)
- Do not lead doubletons containing one (or two) honors, except if
 - The doubleton is AK, or
 - The suit has been bid by partner
- Do not lead singleton honors, unless the suit has been bid by partner

The Fifth Commandment

*Thou shalt obey thy own
conventions for the choice
of the card to lead*

Opening Leads

OPENING LEADS AGAINST NOTRUMP CONTRACTS

Opening Lead Conventions

- Just like bidding conventions, conventions about opening leads convey to your partner (and your opponents!) information about your hand
- The conventional rules for opening leads described here can be divided into three classes:
 - General leads
 - Leads of suits bid by partner that you have supported
 - Leads of suits bid by partner that you have not supported, or that you have supported after partner has shown 6+ cards in the suit

Honor Sequences

- In the definitions of honor sequences (and *only* for that purpose), the 9 is considered to be an honor if it is the last card of an honor sequence
- A (solid or perfect) sequence consists of 2+ consecutive honors (e.g. AK, KQJ, J109)
- A broken sequence is a 3+ honor combination headed by 2 consecutive honors, with exactly a 1-card gap between the 2nd and 3rd honor (e.g. AKJ, KQ10, QJ9)
- An interior sequence consists of 2+ consecutive honors separated by a gap (1-card or longer) from an isolated higher honor (e.g. AQJ, KJ10, AJ10, K109)

General Leads against No Trump Contracts

- From a long suit (4+ cards) headed by a (solid, broken or interior) honor sequence, lead the top card of the sequence if the sequence contains a total of at least 3 honors
 - Examples: AKQx, AKJx, KQ10x, AQJx, AJ10x, K109x

General Leads against No Trump Contracts

- From a long suit (4+ cards) containing a combination of one or more honors that does not fall in one of the previous cases, lead the fourth highest card (4th best) (Bottom Of Something)
 - Examples
 - AKxx, KQxx, QJxxx, 109xx
 - AJxx, Q10xx, Kxxxx, Qxxx, 10xxxx

General Leads against No Trump Contracts

- From a 3-card suit containing one or more honors^(*)
 - If the suit is headed by two consecutive honors, lead the top honor
 - Exception: lead K from AKx
 - If the suit contains a single honor, lead the lowest card
 - Leads in other cases depend on the specific situation

[*] Except in particular cases, leading from this card combination should generally be avoided unless the suit has been bid by partner

General Leads against No Trump Contracts

- From a suit of 3+ cards containing no honors (i.e. no cards higher than 9), lead
 - The highest card from a 4-card or shorter suit (Top Of Nothing)
 - The fourth highest card (4th best) from 5-card or longer suit
- Always lead the top card from a doubleton. However, leading from a doubleton containing honor(s) is *strongly discouraged* unless the suit has been bid by partner

Choice of Lead Cards against No Trump Contracts

- Exceptions and special cases
 - If you are leading a suit bid (or shown) by partner that you have not supported, lead:
 - Top of a doubleton (xx, Qx)
 - Lowest card from 3 cards, with or without honors (xxxx, Qxx)
 - 4+ cards (???)
 - If you have supported partner's suit, follow the general rules

Choice of Lead Cards against No Trump Contracts

- Exceptions and special cases
 - From a suit of exactly 4 cards headed by the 9, lead second best
 - From a suit of exactly 4 cards headed by the 10, lead second best if you would like to encourage partner to switch to another suit, or if you have no particular interest in partner's returning that suit
 - From a 3-card suit headed by the 10 or 9, follow the general rules (lead 9xx or 10xx)

General Leads against No Trump Contracts

Although the 10 is considered an honor, partner usually expects a little more than just a 10 when you lead low. If you have another suit you want partner to return, lead second highest from 10xxx.

West (You)	North	East	South	You hold:
			1♦	♠ 10 7 3 2
pass	1♥	pass	1NT	♥ 10 8 5
pass	2NT	all pass		♦ Q 6
				♣ A Q J 7

Clubs is your stronger suit, but leading from AQJx usually gives up an unnecessary trick to declarer's king. What you really want is for partner to switch to a club. In order to maximize your chances for a shift, lead your second highest spade, the 7, hoping partner can read it as a discouraging card. **If you lead a low spade, partner is sure to return spades for all eternity.**

Choice of Lead Cards against No Trump Contracts

- Exceptions and special cases
 - From a suit of 5+ cards containing no honors, lead
 - The top card (or another suit) without a side entry
 - Fourth best with a potential side entry (however, consider where it may be better to lead another suit which partner may hold length and/or strength in)

Choice of Lead Cards against No Trump Contracts

Leading from strong 3-card suits

Opponents' bidding suggests that a long suit is about to be rammed down your throat

West (You)	North	East	South	You hold:
	1♦	pass	1♥	♠ J 7 4 3 2
pass	3♦	pass	3NT	♥ 9 8 7
all pass				♦ Q 4
				♣ K Q 8

The bidding, plus your death holding in diamonds, indicates that an attacking lead is called for. When the opponents are likely to have a running six or seven card suit, strong short suits leads from AKx or KQx or even AQx, take precedence over longer, weaker, suits. Lead the ♣K.

Choice of Lead Cards against No Trump Contracts

- Exceptions and special cases
 - If your best suit is AQxx or AQxxx
 - Lead fourth best from AQxxx
 - With AQxx, consider leading high (top of nothing) in another suit to encourage partner to switch to your suit when on lead

Opening Leads

OPENING LEADS AGAINST SUIT CONTRACTS

The Fourth Commandment

*Thou shalt not underlead thy
aces against a suit contract*

Choice of Lead Cards against Suit Contracts

- From a suit with 3+ cards headed by an honor sequence, lead the top honor of the sequence
 - Examples: AKxx, KQxx, KQ10, AQJx, AJ10x, K109x
- From a suit with 3+ cards containing one or more honors not in sequence, lead the fourth highest card (4th best), or the lowest card with only three cards (Bottom Of Something)
- However, be weary of leading from a 3-card suit containing honors that has not been bid by partner

Choice of Lead Cards against Suit Contracts

- From a suit of any number of cards containing no honors (i.e. no cards higher than 9), lead the highest card (Top Of Nothing)
- Always lead the top card from a doubleton.
 - **Exception:** With a doubleton consisting of two honors in sequence, lead the lower honor
- In general, leading from a doubleton containing honor(s) is strongly discouraged unless the suit has been bid by partner

Choice of Lead Cards against Suit Contracts

- Exceptions and special cases
 - If you are leading a suit bid by partner that you have not supported, or that you have supported after partner has shown 6+ cards in the suit, special rules apply.
 - If you have supported partner's suit, follow the general rules (but see other exceptions next)

Choice of Lead Cards against Suit Contracts

- Exceptions and special cases
 - Lead **K** from AK(...)
 - After the first trick
 - Against a contract at the 5-level or higher
 - From AK doubleton
 - If leading a suit bid by partner, whether or not you have supported it
 - If leading a suit that you have bid and that partner has supported

Special Opening Leads

- Modified rules for opening leads apply when leading a suit bid or otherwise shown by partner that you have not supported, or that you have supported after partner has shown 6+ cards in the suit
 - Against all suit contracts
 - Against no trump contracts, provided that partner is known to hold 5+ cards in the suit

Special Opening Leads

- Follow the usual rules for leads in partner's suit when leading
 - From a doubleton
 - The higher card is led
 - The lower honor is led from a doubleton consisting of two consecutive honors
 - From 3+ cards headed by a honor sequence
 - The top honor in the sequence is led
 - **K** is led from AKx(...)

Special Opening Leads

- From 3+ cards not headed by a honor sequence, lead
 - The 3rd highest card, from an even number of cards
 - The lowest card, from an odd number of cards
- These leads help partner get a count of the suit, especially when the card led is recognized to be the lowest possible card that can be held by the opening leader

Special Opening Leads

- To compute the number of cards higher than the card led that are not in opening leader's hand, use
 - The rule of 12, for 3rd-best leads
 - The rule of 10, for 5th-best leads
- It should be kept in mind that the lead of a low card does not necessarily show an honor in the suit

Special Opening Leads

Continuations

- When starting with an even number of cards, on the second round of the suit the opening leader should play a lower card than the opening lead, unless common sense dictates otherwise

Special Opening Leads

Continuations

- When starting with an odd number of cards
 - If you're leading the suit, follow the standard rules for leads
 - With two remaining cards, lead the higher
 - With four remaining cards , lead the lowest
 - If you are following suit
 - With two remaining cards, play the lowest
 - With four remaining cards, play the highest card you can afford

Defensive Bidding

RESPONSES TO SIMPLE SUIT OVERCALLS

Simple Suit Overcalls

- A simple suit overcall is a minimum-level (i.e. non-jump) bid in a suit that is made over an opening bid *in a different suit* by an opponent
- Requirements:
 - A minimum of 5 cards in the suit chosen for the overcall (***no exceptions!***)
 - Suit quality and hand strength requirements that depend on the level of the overcall


Simple Suit Overcalls

One-level overcalls

- 8–16 HCP
- A “good hand” or a “good suit” is required
 - “Good hand”: opening-level strength (12+ HCP)
 - “Good suit”: two of the top three honors, or three of the top five
- All the following hands are suitable for a 1♠ overcall
 - a) ♠ AQJ107 ♥ J986 ♦ 74 ♣ 95
 - b) ♠ KQ983 ♥ 86 ♦ KQ4 ♣ 985
 - c) ♠ J10632 ♥ AK6 ♦ KQ4 ♣ 63

Simple Suit Overcalls

Two-level overcalls

- Generally 12–16 HCP
- Both a “good hand” and a “good suit” are required
- Examples:
 - a) ♠ 83 ♥ AJ6 ♦ A74 ♣ KQ1098
 - b) ♠ Q983 ♥ 8 ♦ 74 ♣ AKJ987
 -  c) ♠ KQ3 ♥ A5 ♦ A63 ♣ J8643
- (a) and (b) are suitable for a 2♣ overcall, but (c) is not

Simple Suit Overcalls

Higher-level overcalls

- Simple (non-jump) overcalls at the three-level and higher generally require sound opening values and a solid suit. The higher the level of the overcall, the more important the quality of the suit becomes in comparison to overall HCP strength.

General Guidelines for Advances

- Broadly speaking, the following factors favor somewhat aggressive bidding:
 - You have a fit for partner's suit (the longer the fit, the more aggressively one can bid)
 - You are short in the opponents' suit(s) (≤ 2 cards)
 - Your HCPs (outside partner's suit) consist of high honors (aces and kings)
 - You have favorable vulnerability

General Guidelines for Advances

- Conversely, the following factors suggest somewhat cautious bidding:
 - You don't have a fit for partner's suit
 - You are long (≥ 3 cards) in the opponents' suit(s)
 - Your HCPs (outside partner's suit) are made up of minor honors (queens and jacks)
 - You have unfavorable vulnerability

General Guidelines for Advances

- Except as otherwise noted, the meaning of advancer's responses is not affected by responder's bidding

Advancing 1-Level Overcalls

Advance			6–7	8–9	10–12	12+
With support	Direct raise		6–9 pts			
	Jump cue-bid			~8–9 pts		
	Cue-bid				10+ pts	
	Splinter					
Without support	New suit				~8–10+ HCP	
	Jump shift				10+ HCP	
	1NT			8–11 HCP		
	2NT					12+ HCP
	Resp. double			~8+ HCP		
	Redouble				10+ HCP	

Advancing 1-Level Overcalls

Advances with support (3+ cards)

- With a minimum hand (6–9/10 pts):
 - Raise partner's suit
 - Jump cue-bid opener's suit (mixed raise)
- With an invitational hand or better (10+ pts):
 - Cue-bid the opponents' suit(s)
 - Jump directly to game
- Remember to add support (“dummy”) points to your HCPs!

Advancing 1-Level Overcalls

Minimum-hand support

- As a rule of thumb, you should consider raising partner's suit to a level such that the total number of tricks in the contract equals the combined number of cards you and your partner hold in the trump suit (**law of total tricks**)
 - 3-card support → raise to the 2-level
 - 4-card support → raise to the 3-level
 - 5-card support → raise to the 4-level

Advancing 1-Level Overcalls

D		N North	W	N	E	S
		♠ A ♥ 72 ♦ KQ76 ♣ K86543	1♣ 4♠ P P	1♠ P 4NT P	1♥ P P P	2♥ X 5♣
W West	♠ 98754 ♥ 9 ♦ A32 ♣ QJ107	E East	♠ KJ10632 ♥ Q1054 ♦ J104 ♣			
		S South				
		♠ Q ♥ AKJ863 ♦ 985 ♣ A92				
		5♣ N		NS: 0 EW: 0		

Advancing 1-Level Overcalls

Minimum-hand support

- This particular form of the law of total tricks is useful primarily as a pre-emptive tool. It should not be relied upon if advancer has an invitational hand or better.
- The level of the raise is to some extent independent of the HCP strength of advancer's hand. However, one should be mindful of factors (e.g. vulnerability, hand shape, etc.) that may suggest caution in the bidding.
 - With only 3-card support, raise to the two-level with 6–10 HCP (pass with fewer than 6 HCP)
 - Treat a 4333 distribution as if you had just 3-card support

Advancing 1-Level Overcalls

Invitational-hand support

- With 10+ pts and 3+ cards in partner's suit, cue-bid the opponents' suit

Example: (1♥) — 1♠ — (1NT) — 2♥

- If the opponents bid two suits, the lower-level cue-bid shows 3-card support, the higher-level cue-bid shows 4-card or longer support

Example: (1♥) — 1♠ — (2♣) — 2♥/3♣

Advancing 1-Level Overcalls

Mixed raises

- A mixed raise is made with a hand with the following characteristics:
 - At least 4-card support
 - Hand distribution other than 4333
 - Overall strength at the top of the range for a minimum raise (~8–10 pts) with $\frac{1}{2}$ QT at the very minimum (1 QT is better)
- Example (after 1♠ overcall):
 - ♠ KJ107 ♥ A986 ♦ 74 ♣ 965

Advancing 1-Level Overcalls

Mixed raises

- A mixed raise is indicated by a jump cue-bid at the three-level of opener's suit. Examples:

(1♦) — 1♠ — (P) — 3♦

(1♦) — 1♥ — (1♠) — 3♦

(1♥) — 1♠ — (X) — 3♥

- The following is not a mixed raise

(1♦) — 1♠ — (2♦) — 3♦

Advancing 1-Level Overcalls

Effect of responder's raises

- A bid by responder below 2 of overcaller's suit does not affect the meaning of advancer's support bids

(1♦) — 1♥ — (1♠) — 2♥ (minimum raise)

(1♥) — 1♠ — (1NT) — 3♠ (pre-emptive)

(1♥) — 1♠ — (2♥) — 3♥ (inv. raise or better)

Advancing 1-Level Overcalls

Effect of responder's raises

- A bid by responder at or above 2 of overcaller's suit (e.g. a jump raise or a weak jump shift) does change the meaning of advancer's support bids

(1♥) — 1♠ — (3♥) — 3♠ (min./pre-empt. raise, 3–9 pts)

(1♥) — 1♠ — (3♥) — 4♠ (inv. raise or better, 10–15 pts)

(1♥) — 1♠ — (3♥) — 4♥ (strong hand, 16+ pts)

Advancing 1-Level Overcalls

Advancing without support

- General considerations
 - If responder (advancer's RHO) makes any non-preemptive bid, opponents probably have a minimum of ~18 HCP. This leaves a maximum of ~22 HCP for the other side.
 - In order to bid without support for overcaller's suit, advancer should have 8 HCP at the very minimum. Thus opponents have at most 24 HCP (usually not enough for game).

Advancing 1-Level Overcalls

Advancing without support

- Non-jump bid in a new suit
 - General requirements are similar to those for an overcall at the same level
- Jump bid in a new suit (jump shift)
 - Good 6-card suit and 12–15 HCP
- No trump bids
 - 1NT (8–11 HCP) or 2NT (12–15 HCP)

Advancing 1-Level Overcalls

New suit bids

- A 5-card suit or longer of good quality
- For 1-level bids:
 - 8+ HCP
 - Suit quality requirements may be relaxed somewhat for hands approaching opening-level strength
- For 2-level bids:
 - 10+ HCP
 - HCP strength can be somewhat less with particularly long/strong suits

Advancing 1-Level Overcalls

New suit bids

- Bidding a minor suit in response to an overcall in a major suit implicitly denies support for overcaller's suit
- Bidding the other major in response to a major suit overcall does not necessarily deny support. It may just indicate that advancer has a particularly long/strong suit

Advancing 1-Level Overcalls

New suit bids

- New suit bids are **not** forcing, but they should be constructive, that is, overcaller should make an effort to bid again in response to a bid in a new suit by advancer
- Overcaller **should** bid again when the overcall was made with a non-minimum hand (i.e. above approximately opening strength)

Advancing 1-Level Overcalls

Jump shift bids

- Requirements:
 - 12–15 HCP
 - A 6-card suit or longer of good quality
(exceptionally a 5-card suit if the suit is extremely good or the hand is very strong)
- Jump shifts are highly invitational but not forcing

Advancing 1-Level Overcalls

Notrump bids

- Notrump bids implicitly deny support for major suit overcalls. They also deny possession of a biddable major suit
- Caution should be used in making notrump bids when responder does not pass (thus showing 6+ HCP)

Advancing 1-Level Overcalls

1NT bid

- If responder passes, it shows 8–11 HCP and a stopper in opener's suit. The stopper may be weak at the upper end of the range (10–11 HCP)
- If responder does not pass, a 1NT advance should be made only with 10–11 HCP.
- If responder bids a new suit, advancer should have a solid stopper in responder's suit (he may or may not have a stopper in opener's suit)

Advancing 1-Level Overcalls

2NT bid

- This bid shows 12–15 HCP and a stopper in the opponents' suit.

Advancing 1-Level Overcalls

Responsive double

- A double by advancer is responsive if and only if it is made after responder raises opener's suit

(1♥) — 1♠ — (2♥) — X

(1♦) — 1♥ — (3♦) — X

(2♥) — 2♠ — (3♥) — X

- The following are not responsive doubles

(1♥) — 1♠ — (1NT) — X

(1♦) — 1♥ — (1♠) — X

Advancing 1-Level Overcalls

Responsive double

- A responsive double shows length (ideally 5-5) in the two remaining unbid suit
- In practice, it is often made with a 5-4 distribution, and occasionally even with a 4-4 distribution
- It implicitly denies support for overcaller's major suit

Advancing 1-Level Overcalls

Responsive double

- The maximum level for a responsive double is a matter of partnership agreement
- A common agreement is to use the same threshold (e.g. 3♠) both for negative and responsive doubles

Advancing 1-Level Overcalls

Responsive double

- Requirements
 - 8+ HCP with a 5-5 distribution, if at least one of the suits can be bid by partner at the 2-level
 - 10+ HCP with a 5-4 or 4-4 distribution or if partner must respond at the 3-level
 - **Any suit that must be bid at the 3-level must be at least 5-card long**

Advancing 1-Level Overcalls

Responsive double

- Suits must be of reasonable quality
 - At least one top honor (A,K,Q) for a 5-card suit
 - At least two honors (A,K,Q,J,10) for a 4-card suit
- Unlike a negative double, a responsive double should be preferred to a direct bid of a 5-card major suit, unless one of the suits is considerably weaker than the other

Responsive Doubles

None vul.

➤ (1♣) — 1♦ — (2♣) — ?

♠ QJ654

♥ K10652

♦ 3

♣ 65

Advancer: **Double**

(The ideal responsive double)

None vul.

➤ (1♦) — 1♥ — (2♦) — ?

♠ KJ103

♥ 8

♦ 865

♣ A10932

Advancer: **Double**

(A 5-4 distribution. Note the 3 honors in the ♠ suit)

Responsive Doubles

Our side vul.

➤ (1♦) – 2♣ – (2♦) – ?

♠ AQ95

♥ KJ103

♦ 865

♣ 32

Advancer: **Double**

(A 4-4 distribution. Note the strength of the ♠/♥ suits and the relatively high HCP count)

Both vul.

➤ (1♣) – 1♠ – (3♣) – ?

♠ Q2

♥ J10875

♦ AQ642

♣ 3

Advancer: **Double**

(A reasonable bid in light of responder's weak 3♣)

Responsive Doubles

None vul.

➤ (1♣) — 1♥ — (2♣) — ?

♠ Q1087

♥ Q54

♦ A7652

♣ 2

Advancer: 2♥

(A responsive double would deny support for partner's major suit)

None vul.

➤ (1♣) — 1♥ — (2♣) — ?

♠ AQJ75

♥ 3

♦ 10765

♣ J54

Advancer: 2♠

(The ♦ suit is significantly weaker than the ♠ suit)

Advancing 1-Level Overcalls

Responsive(?) redouble

- A redouble made by advancer after responder makes a negative double. It shows:
 - 10+ HCP
 - *Exactly* 2 cards in overcaller's suit
 - Inability to make a more descriptive bid (including a NT bid, thereby indicating the lack of a stopper in opener's suit)

General Guidelines

- Classify responses by advancer according to the following bids by advancer's RHO:
 - Pass
 - Raise of opener's suit
 - Cue bid of overcalled suit (limit raise)
 - Double (negative)
 - Bid of a new suit or NT

Defensive Bidding

RESPONSES TO TAKEOUT DOUBLES

Takeout Doubles

- Made after an opening bid in a suit by an opponent
- Requirements:
 - Shortness (no more than two cards) in opponents' suit
 - At least three cards in each of the unbid suits (ideally, four cards in any unbid major suit)
 - Opening-level strength (12+ pts)

Takeout Doubles

- Examples:
 - a) ♠ QJ83 ♥ KJ64 ♦ 5 ♣ K972
 - b) ♠ AQ83 ♥ K1064 ♦ 52 ♣ A97
 - c) ♠ A73 ♥ KJ64 ♦ 52 ♣ A972
- All the hands above are suitable for a takeout double after a 1♦ opening bid (but not after opening bids of 1♣/♥/♠)

Advancing Takeout Doubles

Responder passes

- Bid a new suit that is
 - At least 4-card long
 - A major suit
 - Your longest suit
- Bid 1NT
 - Ideally, with a stopper in opener's suit
- Pass (rare)

Advancing Takeout Doubles

Responder passes

- Advancing by bidding a new suit
 - A minimum level bid with 0–9 HCP
 - A jump bid with 9–12 HCP
 - A game-level bid (4♥/♠) with 13+ HCP

Advancing Takeout Doubles

Responder passes

- Advancing by bidding a 1NT
 - No suitable 4-card major suit to bid
 - A fairly balanced distribution
 - A stopper in opener's suit, if at all possible

Advancing Takeout Doubles

Responder passes

- Pass (converting takeout double to penalty)
 - Generally, with substantial assets in opener's suit and no alternative bids available
- Example: (1♥) – X – P – ?

♠ 83 ♥ QJ1084 ♦ AJ2 ♣ J97

Advancing Takeout Doubles

Responder bids

- Advancer may pass
- If advancer chooses to bid, it shows sufficient values to compete at the current level of the auction
 - When bidding a new suit
 - 6–9 HCP at the 2 level
 - 10–12 HCP at the 3 level
 - 13+ HCP at the 4 level
 - When bidding 1NT
 - 9–12 HCP
 - Stopper(s) in opponents' suit(s)

Advancing Takeout Doubles

Responsive double

- A double by advancer is responsive if and only if it is made after responder raises opener's suit

(1♥) — X — (2♥) — X (responsive)

(1♦) — X — (3♦) — X (responsive)

(2♥) — X — (3♥) — X (responsive)

- The following are not responsive doubles

(1♥) — X — (1NT) — X

(1♦) — X — (1♠) — X

Advancing Takeout Doubles

Responsive double

- When the opening bid is in a minor suit, a responsive double shows 4+ cards in both major suits (except if advancer holds game-forcing values)
- When the opening bid is in a major suit, a responsive double shows 4+ cards in both minor suits *and denies 4 cards in the unbid major*

Advancing Takeout Doubles

Responsive double

- In either case advancer
 - Shows enough values to compete at the level of the auction (~6+ HCP at the two level, ~9+ HCP at the three level)
 - Expresses no clear preference between the two suits
- The maximum level for a responsive double is a matter of partnership agreement
- A common agreement is to use the same threshold (e.g. 4♦) both for negative and responsive doubles

Advancing Takeout Doubles

Responsive double

- After a responsive double, a bid of a suit by doubler guarantees 4+ cards in that suit
- After a responsive double over a minor suit opening
 - Doubler should give priority to showing a 4-card major
 - Consequently, a bid by doubler of the other minor suit denies 4 cards in either major
 - Doubler is allowed to jump with 4 cards in a major suit and extra values

Advancing Takeout Doubles

Responsive double

- After doubler bids a suit in response to a responsive double, a bid of a new suit by advancer shows 4+ cards in that suit and game-forcing values
- If doubler and advancer have not yet agreed on a major suit, a cue bid of opener's suit after a responsive double shows game-forcing values and asks for a stopper in that suit (Western cue bid)

Responsive Doubles

➤ (1♣) — X — (2♣) — ?

♠ J743

♥ KJ93

♦ Q10

♣ J65

Advancer: **Double**

A minimum responsive double:
partner may bid a major suit at the 2,
3 or 4 level. Advancer should pass
any response by partner, including
2♦

➤ (1♣) — X — (2♣) — ?

♠ KQJ3

♥ AQ63

♦ J65

♣ 103

Advancer: **Double**

Game-forcing values: jump to game
after a 2♥/♠ response by partner. If
partner bids 2♦, you may pass or try
3♣ (western cue bid).

Responsive Doubles

➤ (1♣) – X – (2♣) – ?

♠ 74

♥ KJ93

♦ A1073

♣ 965

Advancer: 2♥

A responsive double would show both majors.

➤ (1♣) – X – (2♣) – ?

♠ AKJ7

♥ J52

♦ AJ108

♣ 107

Advancer: **Double**

If partner's response is 2♥, bid 2♠, showing 4♠ and game-forcing values. Bidding 4♠ directly risks having to play in a 4-3 fit, when 3NT may be a better contract.

Responsive Doubles

➤ (1♥) — X — (2♥) — ?

♠ 87

♥ 943

♦ AJ73

♣ QJ108

Advancer: **Double**

The responsive double shows both minors and denies 4♠.

➤ (1♥) — X — (2♥) — ?

♠ 76

♥ 93

♦ AQ73

♣ Q9652

Advancer: **Double**

A responsive double can still be used with 5-4 distribution in the minors

Responsive Doubles

➤ (1♥) — X — (2♥) — ?

♠ J3

♥ 84

♦ KJ1085

♣ AKJ4

Advancer: **Double**

If partner responds 3♦, bid 3♥ to ask for a stopper (western cue bid).

Advancing Takeout Doubles

Cue bid of opener's suit

- A cue bid of opener's suit by advancer is a forcing bid showing, at a minimum, interest in game
- The exact conventional meaning of the cue bid depends on a number of factors, including responder's bid

Advancing Takeout Doubles

Cue bid of opener's suit when responder passes

- A cue bid by advancer generally indicates one of the following:
 - Advancer identifies two (or more) viable options for the final contract. Usually the choices will be
 - Between part score or game contracts in one of the two major suits
 - Between game contracts in a suit or in notrump
 - Advancer wants to create a forcing auction, usually to investigate the possibility of slam

Advancing Takeout Doubles

Cue bid of opener's minor suit: Responder passes

- After a minor suit opening, a cue bid shows invitational values or better (~10+ HCP)
 - With exactly invitational values (~10–12 HCP), advancer should have 4+ cards in both majors
- A cue bid promises another bid by advancer below game level. Therefore there is no need for doubler to jump to show extra values

Advancing Takeout Doubles

Cue bid of opener's minor suit: Responder passes

- Doubler should respond in this order of priority
 - Bid a 4+ card major suit up the line
 - Bid 2NT (or 3NT). This shows a stopper in opener's suit and is forcing to game
 - Bid the remaining minor suit (usually this shows 5 5-card suit)

Advancing Takeout Doubles

Cue bid of opener's minor suit: Responder passes

- If advancer's rebid is
 - A simple raise of the suit bid by doubler, it shows 4+ card support and invitational values (non-forcing)
 - A new suit, it denies 4-card support for doubler's major suit, shows 4+ cards in the suit and game-forcing values
 - 2NT, it denies 4-card support for doubler's major suit, shows a stopper in opener's suit and game-forcing values

Advancing Takeout Doubles

Cue bid of opener's major suit: Responder passes

- After a major suit opening, a cue bid shows game forcing values
- Doubler responses in order of priority

Bidding sequence	
(1♥) — X — P — (2♥)	(1♠) — X — P — (2♠)
2♠ (4+ cards)	2NT (shows ♠ stopper)
2NT (denies 4♠, shows ♥ stopper)	?
3♣/♦ (4+ cards, denies 4♠ and ♥ stopper)	?

Cue Bids

♠ AQ73
♥ J1074
♦ K3
♣ 963

➤ (1♣) — X — (P) — 2♣

Raise a 2♥/♠ response to 3♥/♠, showing invitational values. Note that a 2-level response by doubler does not necessarily show a minimum: partner may raise to game with a sufficiently strong hand.

♠ AQ73
♥ KJ107
♦ K3
♣ 965

➤ (1♣) — X — (P) — 2♣

Raise a 2♥/♠ response to 4♥/♠ with game forcing values. A 3-level raise is not forcing and may be passed by partner.

Cue Bids

♠ KJ43

♥ 3

♦ AJ76

♣ A1094

➤ (1♣) — X — (P) — 2♣
(P) — 2♥⁽¹⁾ — (P) — 2♠⁽²⁾
(P) — 3♠⁽³⁾ — (P) — 4♠⁽⁴⁾

- 1) Shows 4♥, may have 4♠
- 2) Shows 4♠, denies 4♥
- 3) Shows 4♠ support
- 4) Signoff

This hand has game forcing values, so it is OK to cue bid with only one four-card major. This makes it unnecessary to jump directly to 4♠ after partner's TO double. Instead, use the cue bid to find out if you have an 8-card fit in ♠. If not, you know from the start that you can always sign off in 3NT, because you have a ♣ stopper.

Cue Bids

♠ AK73

♥ KQ5

♦ Q73

♣ 872

➤ (1♣) — X — (P) — 2♣
(P) — 2♥⁽¹⁾ — (P) — 2♠⁽²⁾
(P) — 2NT⁽³⁾ — (P) — 3NT⁽⁴⁾

- 1) Shows 4♥, may have 4♠
- 2) Shows 4♠, denies 4♥
- 3) Denies 4♠ support, shows a ♣ stopper
- 4) Signoff

In this auction partner's 2NT bid denies 4♠ support but shows a ♣ stopper, so you can safely sign off in 3NT. Had partner bid 3♦ instead of 2NT, it would have denied a ♣ stopper. In such case you can bid 3♥, also denying a ♣ stopper, but showing 3-card support in ♥ (your previous 2♠ bid over partner 2♥ denies 4-card support). Partner may still raise to 4♥, fully aware that the contract will be played in a 7-card fit.

Cue Bids

♠ QJ92
♥ AJ854
♦ 975
♣ 6

➤ (1♦) — X — (P) — 2♦

Raise a 2♥/♠ response to 3♥/♠. If partner bids 2NT (game forcing), bid 3♥ to show 5♥. Partner will choose between 3NT and 4♥.

♠ KQ102
♥ QJ72
♦ 732
♣ 63

➤ (1♣) — X — (P) — ?

Although this hand has two four-card majors, it is not strong enough for a cue bid. Bid 1♠, hoping to be able to show the four-card ♥ suit later if necessary.

Cue Bids

♠ AJ
 ♥ 75
 ♦ 1087
 ♣ AQJ982

➤ (1♦) — X — (P) — 2♦
 (P) — 2♥ — (P) — 3♣⁽¹⁾
 (P) — 3♠⁽²⁾ — (P) — 4♣⁽³⁾

- 1) Game forcing: shows 4+ ♣, denies both 4 ♥ and 4 ♠, asks for a ♦ stopper
- 2) Shows 4 ♠, denies a ♦ stopper
- 3) Shows 5+ ♣ and a preference for ♣ as trump suit

This is an example of a cue bid used to create a game forcing auction. The 3♣ rebid by advancer denies 4 cards in either major, so doubler's first priority at this point is to show a ♦ stopper. Consequently, his 3♠ rebid implicitly denies such stopper. Advancer's 4♣ rebid indicates a preference for ♣ as the trump suit. Doubler can bid 5♥/♠ with 5 cards in the suit: advancer should pass (with 3-card support) or correct to 5♣. Alternatively, doubler can raise to 5♣ directly.

Cue Bids

♠ QJ97542

♥ A

♦ KQ8

♣ K10

➤ (1♦) — X — (P) — 2♦
(P) — 2♥ — (P) — 3♠⁽¹⁾

- 1) Game forcing and a slam try: sets the trump suit to ♠, regardless of partner's holding in the suit

This is another example of a cue bid used to create a game forcing auction. The jump is forcing to game and a try for slam: it sets the trump suit to ♠, independently of partner's holding in the suit. This means that the suit should be playable in a game contract even opposite the minimum possible support by partner (3 small cards in this case). Partner will normally continue by cue bidding controls in the other suits.

Advancing Takeout Doubles

Cue bid of opener's suit when responder raises

- If responder raises opener's (major or minor) suit, a cue bid by advancer asks for a stopper in opener's suit (western cue bid)
- However, in some particular circumstances advancer may simply be trying to create a forcing auction
- Doubler's first priority is to bid 3NT with a stopper in opener's suit

Advancing Takeout Doubles

Equal Level Conversion

- A convention whereby, after advancer bids a suit in response to a TO double, a bid by doubler of another suit at the same level does not show extra values over those expected for an ordinary TO double

Advancing Takeout Doubles

Equal Level Conversion

- Advantages
 - More flexibility in the use of TO doubles, which can now be used to show many two-suited hands
- Disadvantages
 - Partial loss of power doubles
 - Specific agreements are needed to manage possible jumps by advancer in the “missing suit”

Advancing Takeout Doubles

Equal Level Conversion

- ELC is applicable to the following
 - Takeout doubles made over an opening bid at the two level or higher, whether in the direct or balancing seat
 - Takeout doubles made after responder raises opener's suit to the three (two?) level or higher

Advancing Takeout Doubles

Equal Level Conversion

- After a TO double, advancer should always assume it to be a regular TO double until partner indicates otherwise
- Doubler indicates that ELC is in effect by converting advancer's suit to the next higher suit (excluding opener's suit) at the same level as advancer's bid
- The conversion bid by doubler is not forcing

Advancing Takeout Doubles

Equal Level Conversion

- ELC applies with the following restrictions
 - The “missing suit” must be a minor
 - The conversion must be made to a suit with 5+ cards
 - The length of the other suit must be
 - 4+ cards if the suit is a major
 - 5+ cards if the suit is a minor

Advancing Takeout Doubles

Equal Level Conversion

- When responding to a TO double to which ELC may apply, advancer should avoid jumping in a minor suit, because it could be doubler's "missing suit." Instead, with a sufficiently strong hand and/or suit, advancer should consider other alternatives (e.g. a cue bid of opener's suit)

Advancing Takeout Doubles

Equal Level Conversion

➤ (2♦) — X — (P) — 3♣ — (P) — 3♥

- Doubler promises 5+ ♥, 4+ ♠

➤ (2♥) — X — (P) — 3♣ — (P) — 3♦

- Doubler promises 5+ ♦, 4+ ♠

➤ (2♥) — X — (P) — 3♦ — (P) — 3♠

- Doubler promises 5+ ♠, 5+ ♣

Advancing Takeout Doubles

Equal Level Conversion

➤ (2♠) — X — (P) — 3♣ — (P) — 3♦

- Doubler promises 5+ ♦, 4+ ♥

➤ (2♠) — X — (P) — 3♦ — (P) — 3♥

- Doubler promises 5+ ♥, 5+ ♣

➤ (3♣) — X — (P) — 3♦ — (P) — 3♥

- Doubler promises 5+ ♥, 4+ ♠

Defensive Signaling

SIGNALS AFTER OPENING LEADS

Signals after Opening Leads

- A signal must *always* be given in response to an opening lead, except:
 - When it is necessary to play “third hand high”
 - When the opening lead is a trump
- The default signal on opening leads is attitude
- The signal on the opening lead does not indicate attitude:
 - Against a suit contract, when dummy has a singleton or a void in the suit led (suit preference)
 - Against any contract, when the opening lead is “bottom-of-something” and third hand’s attitude is “clearly negative” (count)

Signals after Opening Leads

- Standard attitude signals
 - A high card encourages continued play of the suit
 - A low card discourages continued play of the suit
- In general, the determination of whether to encourage or discourage should be based on a global assessment of the hand, as opposed to the possession (or lack thereof) of specific card(s)
- Attitude signals are *suggestions*, not commands

Signals after Opening Leads

Equal Honor

- Assumption: the opening lead is the top of an honor sequence
- Opening leader's partner holds an equal honor if that honor forms an unbroken sequence with the honors that are implicitly shown by the opening lead

Signals after Opening Leads

Opening lead	Against no trump contracts		Against suit contracts	
	Implied sequences	Equal honors	Implied sequences	Equal honors
A	AKQ AKJ	J Q	AK	Q
K	KQJ KQ10	A / 10 A / J	KQ	A / J
Q	QJ10 QJ9	K / 9 K / 10	QJ	K / 10

Signals after Opening Leads

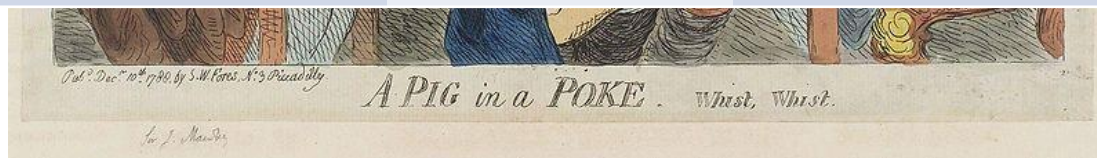
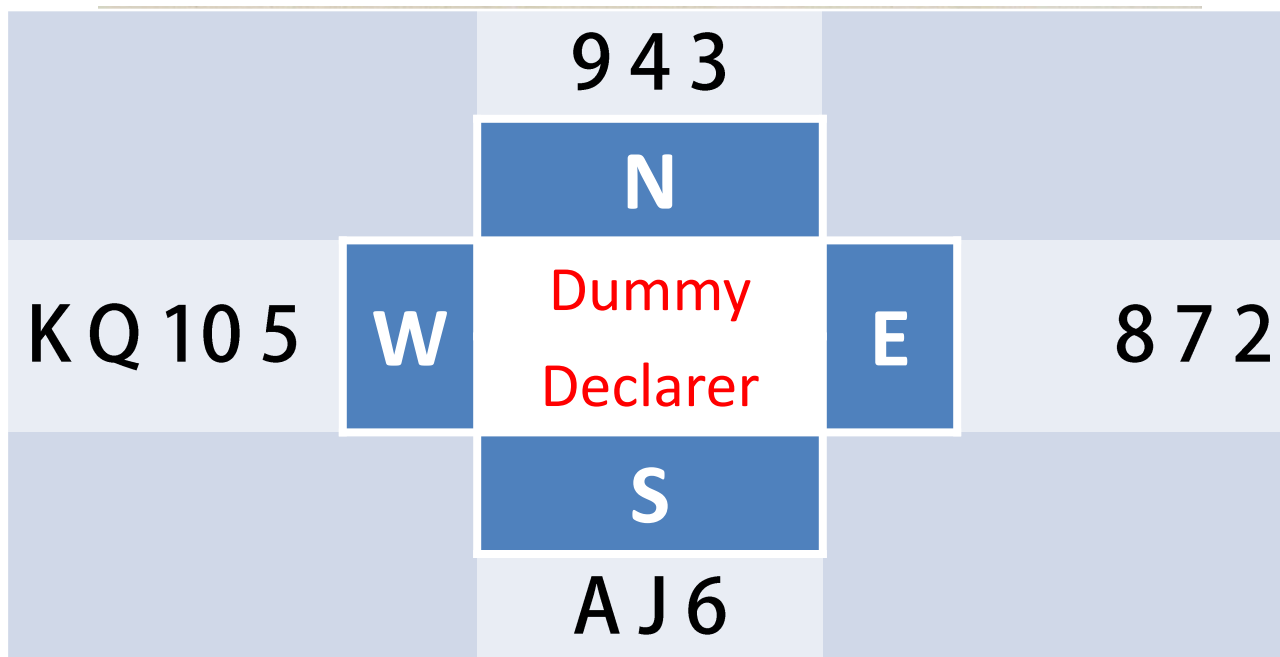
- The concept of equal honor can be a useful guideline to show attitude after an opening lead of an honor that is believed to be the top of an honor sequence
- Signal attitude based on possession of an equal honor (equal honor signal)
 - Encourage with an equal honor
 - Discourage without an equal honor

Signals after Opening Leads

- The (lack of) possession of an equal honor is especially important in determining what attitude signal to give in the following cases:
 - When K is led against any contract (suit or notrump)
 - When A is led against a suit contract

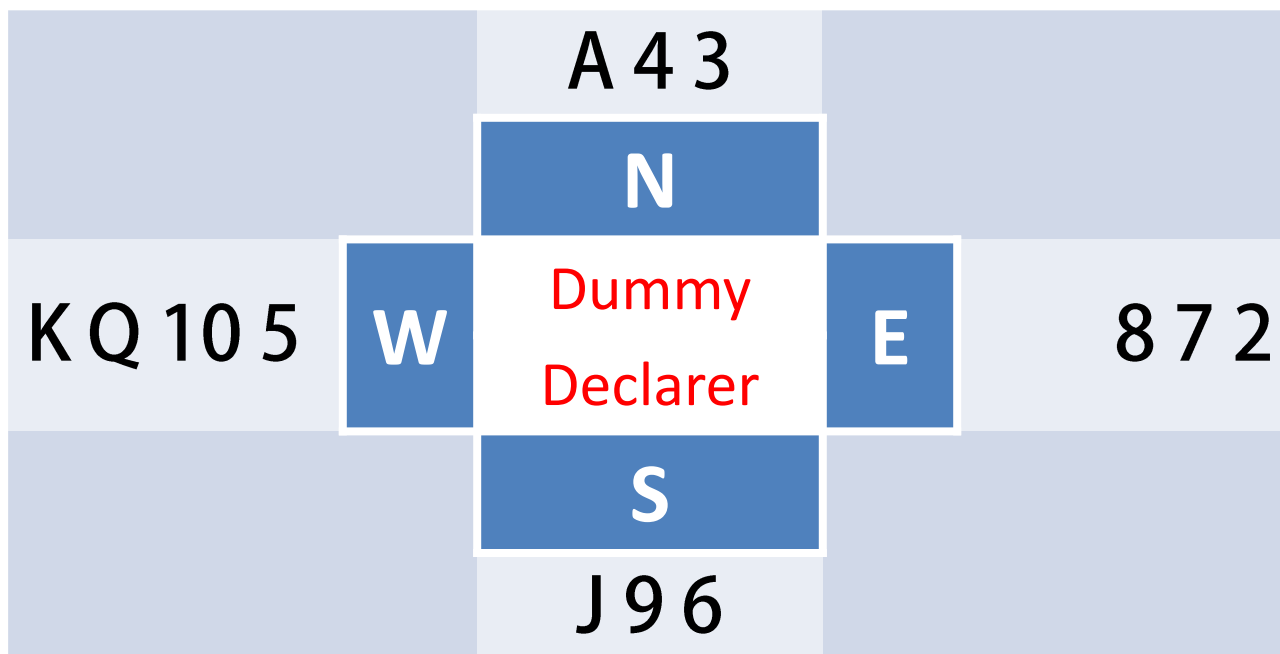
Signals after Opening Leads

Bath Coup



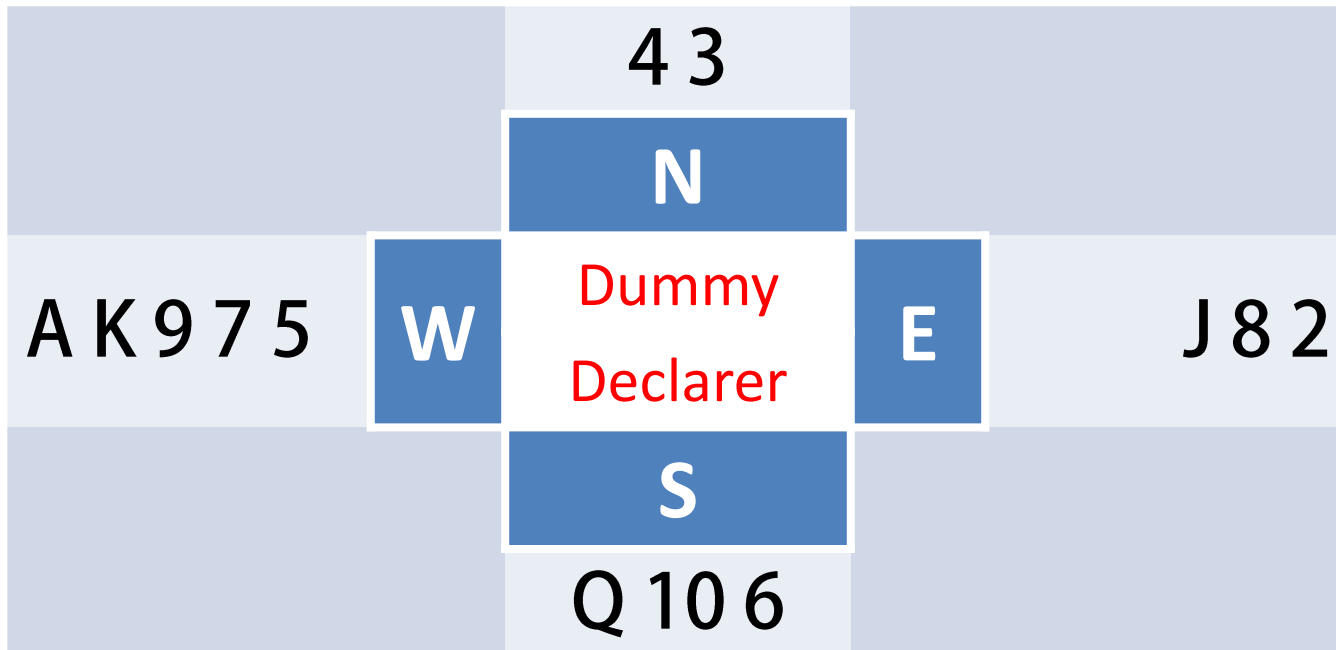
Signals after Opening Leads

Bath Coup



Signals after Opening Leads

Lead of A against a suit contract



Signals after Opening Leads

- When giving a (standard) attitude signal:
 - Discard the highest card you can afford to encourage (be careful about discarding the 10, especially if you don't have the 9!)
 - When encouraging, discard the highest of equal cards
- If the opening lead is the top of an honor sequence, use the equal honor concept as a guideline for your attitude signal, especially if the opening lead is:
 - K against any contract (suit or notrump)
 - A against a suit contract

Signals after Opening Leads

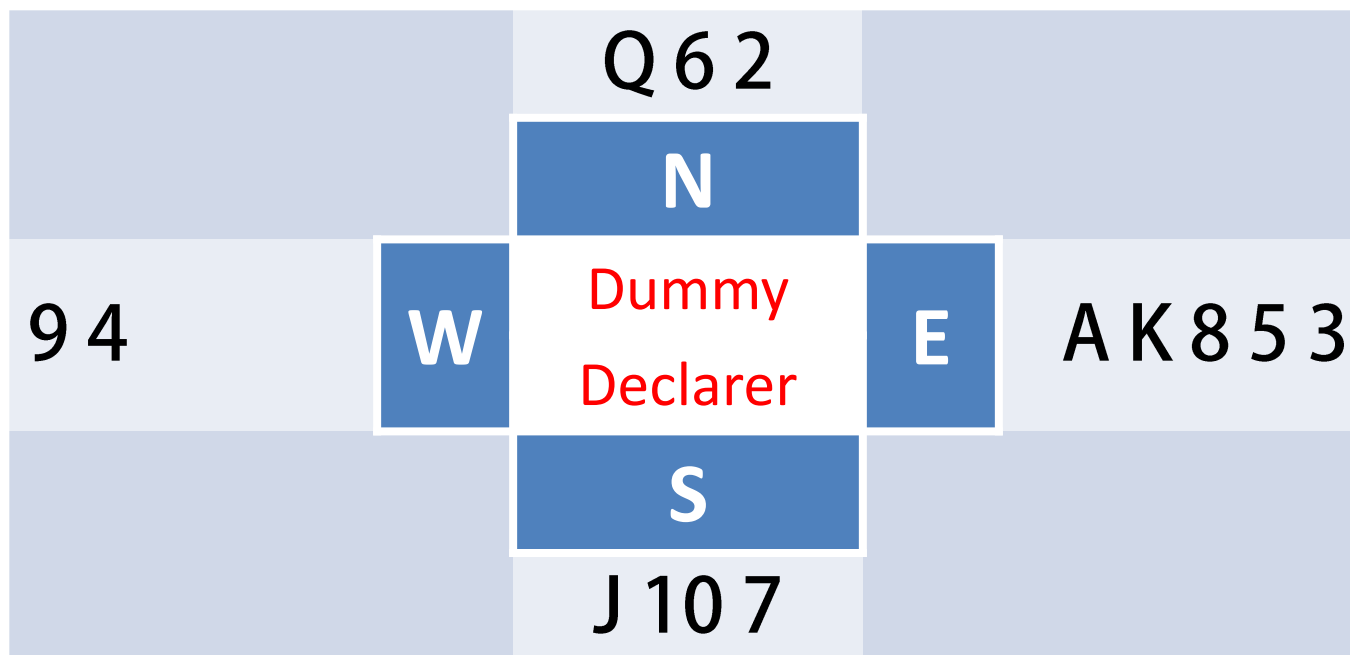
- When A is led against a suit contract:
 - If dummy has Qx, signal attitude based on your (lack of) possession of the J
 - You *may* choose to encourage with a doubleton. However, give due consideration to how the third round will play out, especially if dummy also holds a doubleton in the suit
 - Remember that if dummy has a singleton or a void in the suit led, your signal indicates suit preference, not attitude

Signals after Opening Leads

- Non-attitude signals on opening leads
 - Against a suit contract, when dummy has a singleton or a void in the suit led, third hand's signal indicates suit preference
 - Against any contract, after a “bottom-of-something” opening lead, third hand's signal indicates count when his/her attitude is “clearly negative”

Signals after Opening Leads

Attitude signals after “top-of-nothing” leads



Signals after Opening Leads

- Standard count signal
 - High-low discards indicate an even number of cards
 - Low-high discards indicate an odd number of cards
- A signal on the opening lead indicates count only if *both* of the following conditions are satisfied:
 - The opening lead was “bottom-of-something”
 - Third hand’s attitude is “clearly negative”

Signals after Opening Leads

- Third hand's attitude is "clearly negative" when:
 - It can be unambiguously inferred from the cards played that third hand cannot have a card higher than J in the suit led
 - Equivalently, when dummy plays Q or a lower card on the opening lead, and third hand fails to cover

Defensive Bidding

RESPONSES TO 1NT OVERCALLS

UNUSED SLIDES

Hand Strength Classification

- Hand strength classification for openings of 1 in a suit and subsequent bidding

Opener	
12–15 pts	Minimum
16–18 pts	Medium/Intermediate
19–21 pts	Maximum/Strong
Responder	
6–9 pts	Minimum
10–12 pts	Intermediate/Limit/Invitational
13+ pts	Game forcing

General Rules for Responses to Openings of 1 in a Suit

- With less than 6 pts, responder should generally pass
- With 6–9/10 pts, responder should not bid above the 1NT level, except in direct support of opener's suit
 - Exception: ~~To introduce a new suit at the two level after responder's RHO intervenes in the auction with a TO double~~
- 1♥/1♠ *responses* generally promise a *minimum* of *only 4 cards* in the suit (not 5!)
- With limited exceptions, a *non-jump* bid by an *unpassed responder* in a *new suit* is forcing for 1 round. This means that opener may not pass at his next turn to bid, unless opener's RHO intervenes in the auction

Responses to 1♥/1♠ Openings

- General rules
 - With less than 6 pts, responder should pass
 - With 6–15 pts and a fit (3+ cards) in opener's suit, priority should be given to responses expressing support for opener's suit
 - Exception: In an *uncontested* auction, with 10+ pts and exactly 3 cards in opener's suit, responder may delay support until the second round of bidding and, if possible, bid another suit first at the 1- or 2-level

Responses to 1♥/1♠ Openings

- General rules (contd.)
 - A *non-jump* bid by responder in a *new suit* is forcing for one round (unless opener's RHO subsequently interferes)
 - Exception: A *non-jump* bid in a new suit *at the 2 level* is not forcing if it is made immediately after a take-out double by responder's RHO

Responses to 1♥/1♠ Openings

Responses with limit/game-forcing hands (10+ pts)			
Responder's holding in opener's suit	RHO's bid		
	Pass	Take-out double	Suit overcall
3+ cards (10–12 pts)	Double raise (3♥/♠) ^[1]	2NT [F] ^[7]	Cue-bid [F] ^[11]
3+ cards (13–15 pts)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2NT [GF]^[2] • 4♥/♠^[3] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2NT [F] + 4♥/♠^[7] • 4♥/♠^[3] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cue-bid [F] + 4♥/♠^[11] • 4♥/♠^[3]
≤ 3 cards (10–15+ pts)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1♠ (over 1♥) [F] • 2♥ (over 1♠), with 5+ cards [F]^[4] • 2♣/♦ [F]^[5] • 3NT (15–17 HCP)^[6] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1♠ (over 1♥) [F]^[8] • 3NT (13–15 HCP)^[9] • Redouble^[10] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2♥/♠ (free bid) [F]^[12] • Double (neg.) [F]^[13] • 2NT/3NT^[14] • 2♣/♦ (free bid) [F]^[15]

Responses to 1NT Opening

Responder's holding	RHO's bid		
	Pass	Double	Suit overcall
0–7 HCP		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2♦/♥^[1] • 2♠^[2] • 3♣/♦^[3] • Pass 	
8–9 HCP		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2♣^[4] • 2♦/♥^[5] • 2NT^[6] 	
10–15 HCP		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2♣^[7] • 2♦/♥^[8] • 3NT^[9] 	

Choice of Lead Cards

- If the suit has been bid by partner
 - Lead the higher card from a doubleton
 - Otherwise follow the general rules
- General rules
 - If the suit is headed by a (solid, broken or interior) sequence, lead the top card *of the sequence* (e.g. AKQx, KQx, KQ10, AQJ, AJ10x, K109x)
 - Exception: Against *no trump* contracts, if leading a 4-card (or longer) suit headed by a 2-honor sequence, lead the fourth highest card (4th best) (e.g. AKxx, QJxx)

Choice of Lead Cards

- General rules (cont.)
 - If the suit contains isolated or scattered honors, lead
 - The smallest of a 3-card suit (e.g. KJx, Qxx)
 - The fourth highest card (4th best) from a suit of 4+ cards (e.g. K10xx, Qxxx, AJxxx)
 - If the suit contains no honors (i.e. no cards higher than 9), lead
 - The highest card from a 4-card or shorter suit
 - The fourth highest card (4th best) from 5-card (or longer) suit