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Krzysztof Jassem

Translated from Polish by Tomek Brus

Polish Club 2020 Standard

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2020

Standard



By Krzysztof Jassem

**Translated from Polish by
Tomek Brus**

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Tomek Brus,

Translator's note.

I acknowledge that as many women as men play Bridge. There are no neutral pronouns in English, and constantly putting s/he, her/him, her/his is clumsy and distracting. I have therefore used the male version for simplicity.

CONTENTS

Small dictionary of bridge terminology.....10

Introduction to the system POLISH CLUB 2020
STANDARD.....30

Opening bids.....31

The 1♣ Opening32

 Description of the opening.....32

 Table of responses.....33

 1♦ response34

 1♥ response42

 1♠ response65

 1NT response66

 2♣ / 2♦ responses68

 2♥ response71

 2♠ response73

 2NT response74

 3♣ / 3♦ responses76

 3♥ / 3♠ responses78

 4♥ / 4♠ responses78

Bidding after intervention.....	79
Competitive bidding after our 1♣ opening.....	85
The 1♦ Opening	90
Description of the opening.....	90
Table of responses.....	91
1♥ response	92
1♠ response	97
1NT response	99
2♣ response	99
2♦ response	101
2♥ response	102
2♠ response	104
2NT response	105
3♣ / 3♦ responses	105
3♥ / 3♠ responses	106
4♦ response	107
Bidding after intervention.....	107
The 1♥ Opening	111

Description of the opening.....	111
Table of responses.....	111
1♠ response	112
1NT response	116
2♣ response	118
2♦ response	121
2♥ response	122
2♠ response	122
High level responses with a fit.....	123
<i>Mini – Splinter and Splinter</i>	125
<i>Drury</i>	126
The 1♠ Opening	128
2♥ / 3♥ / 4♥ responses	128
Bidding after intervention over our 1♥ / 1♠ openings.....	129
The 1NT Opening.....	135
Description of the opening.....	135
<i>Stayman</i> 2♣.....	136
2♦ and 2♥ Transfers.....	139

2♠ Transfer.....	142
2NT – invitation to 3NT.....	144
Bidding with diamonds.....	144
3♥ / 3♠ responses	145
Bidding after intervention.....	147
The 2♣ Opening	151
Description of the opening.....	151
Table of responses.....	151
2♥ / ♠ responses	154
2NT response	155
Bidding after intervention.....	156
The 2♦ Opening	157
Description of the opening.....	157
Table of responses.....	157
2♥ response	158
2♠ response	158
2NT response	159
3♣ response	160
3♦ response	162

3♥ response	162
3♠ response	162
3NT response	162
4♣ response	163
4♦ response	164
4♥ / 4♠ responses	165
Bidding after intervention.....	165
The 2♥ / 2♠ Openings	168
Description of the openings.....	168
Counter-indications.....	168
Table of responses.....	168
2NT response	170
Bidding after intervention.....	173
The 2NT Opening	176
Description of the opening.....	176
Table of responses.....	176
Development of the auction.....	177
Openings at the three level.....	180
Non-vulnerable openings.....	180

Vulnerable openings.....	181
Development of the auction.....	181
The 3NT Opening	182
Description of the opening.....	182
Table of responses.....	182
Openings at the four level.....	184
Slam bidding.....	185
Types of slam hands.....	185
<i>Cue bids</i>	191
<i>Keycard Blackwood 1430</i>	193
<i>Keycard Blackwood 5NT</i>	196
5NT Grand Slam Force.....	197
Exclusion <i>Keycard Blackwood</i>	198
Asking about trump queen.....	198
Asking about number of kings.....	200
Competitive bidding conventions	201
Overcalls at the one level	201
<i>Drury</i> convention.....	202
Overcalls at the two level	203

Bidding when an opponent opens 1NT.....	204
Defence to strong NT (15-17 or 14-16)....	204
Defence to weak NT (13-15 or weaker)...	206
Overcalling in NT.....	207
1NT overcall	207
2NT overcall	208
Two-suited overcalls.....	209
<i>Michaels cue bid</i>	209
<i>Leaping Michaels</i>	212
Defence to opponent's Multi opening.....	213
Defence to 2♥ / 2♠ openings	214
Bidding in the protective position.....	217
Re-opening double at higher levels.....	218
Competing when both opponents are bidding.....	218

SMALL DICTIONARY OF BRIDGE TERMINOLOGY

AMERICAN DOUBLE

A type of double (also called two-way double), which may be either *penalty* or *take-out*. It is assumed that partner will be able to determine which by examining the auction and his own hand.

ARTIFICIAL BID

A bid which is not a *natural bid*.

BALANCED DISTRIBUTION

A shape of a hand which does not contain a *shortage* or a *six card* (or longer) suit.

CHECKBACK

Artificial, *forcing bid* by responder on level two in a minor, who previously bid a major. There are two types of checkback: weak *checkback* 2♣ and strong *checkback* 2♦.

COMPETITIVE BIDDING

Auction with both partnerships bidding.

CONTROL

A combination of honour cards in a particular suit, which prevents opposition from winning tricks in that suit. In no trump contracts controls are made of honour cards. In suit contracts a control can also be a shortage.

CONVENTION 5-4-3-1

Response of 3♥ or 3♠ to a 1NT opening, which shows a *shortage* in the suit bid and at least a 5-4 shape in the minors.

COPING WITH INTERFERENCE

Auction which has been opened by our pair, and at least one of the opponents enters the bidding.

COVER CARDS

Honour cards in a suit bid by partner, when another suit has already been chosen as trumps.

CUE BID A slam try which shows either a *first round control* (Ace or void) or a *second round control* (King or singleton) in the suit bid. [The phrase *cue bid* is also used in other situations, such as *Michaels cue bid*].

DEFENDER / OPPONENT

A name of any opponent in a situation when we have *opened the bidding*. An opponent sitting next to *opener* is called **first defender (left-hand opponent; LHO)**, his partner is called **second defender (right-hand opponent; RHO)**.

DEFENSIVE BIDDING

Auction which has been opened by the opponents.

DRURY

Artificial response of 2♣ used to check the strength of overcall, or opening third or fourth in hand.

EXCLUSION BLACKWOOD

A version of the *Keycard Blackwood* convention, which asks for a number of key cards out of four: King of trumps and three Aces, excluding the Ace in the suit bid.

EXTRAS

Positive aspects of the hand, not thus far shown in the bidding. Extras may mean **extra points**: “I have more points” or **distributional**: “I have a better shape”.

FIRST-ROUND CONTROL

First round control in a suit is either an Ace, or, in a suit contract an Ace or a void.

FIT

At least three card support for partner's suit.

FIT SUPPORT DOUBLE

A double of *second opponent's overcall* which informs partner about a three card fit in his suit.

FIVE-CARD SUIT

A suit consisting of five cards.

FORCING BID

A bid which partner must not pass.

FORCING 2NT

Responder's 2NT rebid, which follows a *two-over-one* sequence. This bid forces to game.

FOURTH HAND OPENING

An *opening* bid after three passes.

FOURTH SUIT FORCING

A bid in the suit not bid thus far by the partnership in which three suits have already been bid; it is

assumed that *fourth suit* bid is *artificial* and *forcing*.

FREE POSITION

A position immediately after an opponent who has made a bid in a competitive auction. The reason it is called “free” stems from the fact that a “pass” still leaves an opportunity for partner to bid.

GAMBLING 3NT

Conventional opening of 3NT showing a solid seven card minor suit without *honour cards* (Ace, King or Queen) in the other suits.

GAME

A contract high enough to guarantee a game premium: 3NT, 4♥, 4♠, 5♣, 5♦.

GAME-FORCING BID

A bid which forces both partners to continue bidding until at least a game is reached.

GAME TRY

A bid inviting partner to bid *game* if he holds hitherto unexposed *extra values*.

HAND

A *hand* describes position of a player in bidding or defence. In bidding the term **second hand** refers to the position of the player on the left of opener, and in defence **third hand** refers to the position of the player who plays his card third in a sequence. Alternatively, a *hand* refers to quality or shape of player's cards, for instance, **weak hand**, **unbalanced hand**.

HELP SUIT GAME TRY

A bid of a new suit after a suit agreement is asking partner for support (either honour cards or shortage) in this suit. With support partner bids game in the original suit.

HONOUR CUE BID

A slam try which shows an Ace or a King in the suit bid.

JOSEPHINE; GRAND SLAM FORCE

5NT bid asking for the number of *top honours* (Ace, King, Queen) in the trump suit. In the Polish school the responses are as follows: 6♣ - no honour cards, 6♦ - one honour card, 6♥ - two honour cards, grand slam in the agreed suit – three honour cards (in the original convention there were only

two responses : six in the agreed suit promised zero or one honour cards, seven in the agreed suit showed two top honours).

KING ASK

Asking for the number of Kings is done after the response to *Keycard Blackwood*. The asking bid is the next suit up omitting the trump Queen ask and the agreed trump suit. The responses are: the lowest step shows no Kings, the next step up shows one King, etc.

KEYCARD BLACKWOOD

4NT bid asking how many key cards out of five: the four Aces and the King of trumps.

KEYCARD BLACKWOOD 1430

The most popular version of *Keycard Blackwood*, in which the lowest response (5♣) shows 1 or 4 key cards, and 5♦ shows 0 or 3 key cards.

LEAPING MICHAELS

A jump bid showing the bid minor and a five card major. It is used, for instance, after an opponent has opened 2♥ / 2♠ - then a 4♣ bid shows a five card club suit and five cards in the other major.

LEBENSOHL

A convention which is used when opponent opens the bidding with a 2♥ or 2♠ bid, partner makes a *take-out double*, and next opponent passes. Then 2NT is *artificial*: it shows either a weak hand, or a strong hand with the other major.

MICHAELS CUE BID

A bid in the opponent's suit (e.g. they 1♥, we 2♥) showing at least a 5 – 5 shape in suits different from the one bid by the opponent and containing a major.

MINI-SPLINTER

Response (in the system Polish Club Expert this is 3♦) to an opening 1♥ or 1♠, which promises a fit in partner's suit, any shortage, and strength 9-12 points.

MIXED RAISE

A bid meaning: a hand that is too strong for a pre-empt, but too weak to invite. In the system Polish Club Expert this role is served, for instance, by a 3♣ response to opening bids 1♦, 1♥ or 1♠, which promises a fit in opener's suit.

MULTI

2♦ opening, which shows a six card suit in hearts or in spades and strength below a one level opening (Originally this opening could have other meanings with a strong hand – hence the name of the convention). Because of this, the modern way of using this convention is sometimes known as “*Mini Multi*”.

NATURAL BID

A bid which promises at least four cards in the suit bid or a *fit* in a suit previously bid by partner.

NEGATIVE BID

A bid which shows minimal values given the current auction (for instance 1♦ response to a 1♣ opening).

NEGATIVE DOUBLE

A double of opponent’s *overcall* which is basically takeout orientated, informing partner of the possibility of playing in the unbid suits.

NON-FORCING BID

A bid which partner may pass.

ODWROTKA (“Artificial Reverse”)

Rebid 2♦ after a 1♣ opening and a major suit response. This bid promises a strong variant of the 1♣ opening and at least a three card fit in partner’s suit.

ONE OF THE TOP THREE HONOURS

Queen, King or Ace.

ONE ROUND FORCE

A bid which forces partner to bid at least once more.

ONE-OVER-ONE

Response at the one level after a one level *opening*.

OPENER

The first player who makes a bid other than pass in the auction.

OPENING

First bid in the auction which is not a pass.

OPPONENT'S UNFAVOURABLE HOLDING

Unfavourable position of honour cards in a suit bid by an opponent (for instance, honour cards are lying offside for a finesse).

OPTIONAL DOUBLE

A double which partner should leave in with a standard hand, but bid on with an unusual hand.

OVERCALL

A bid different from pass or double after an opponent has opened the bidding, or a bid other than pass or double by an opponent when we have opened the bidding.

PARTSCORE

A contract below game level.

PENALTY DOUBLE

A double which partner must pass regardless of his holding.

POINTS

Throughout the book by "points" I mean High Card Points (Ace=4, King=3, Queen=2, Jack=1).

PRECISION

Bidding system based on a Strong Club opening; In Poland this term describes a 2♣ opening which promises an unbalanced hand with a Club suit.

QUASI-NATURAL; SEMI-NATURAL BID

A bid which promises honour(s) in the suit bid, but does not promise four cards.

REBID

A second bid of a particular player. Unless otherwise stated, rebid is the second bid by *opener*.

RE-OPENING DOUBLE

A take-out double after two passes.

RE-OPENING POSITION

A position in a bidding sequence when opponent has opened the bidding and two passes follow.

RESPONDER

Partner of *opener*.

RESPONSE

A first bid by *responder* or a response to partner's conventional bid, for instance, a "response to an Ace asking bid".

RESPONSIVE DOUBLE

Double of opponent's agreed suit after partner's *take-out double*. It suggests length in the unbid suits, and generally denies four cards in a major implied by partner's previous double.

REVERSE BID

A bid in a suit higher ranking than the suit bid in the previous round; in most bidding sequences a *reverse* promises *extra strength*.

SECOND-ROUND CONTROL

Second round control in a suit is a King or, in a suit contract, a King or a singleton.

SELF-SPLINTER BID

A bid of the type *Splinter* showing a shortage in the suit bid and setting the last suit bid by the author of this bid as the trump suit.

SHORTAGE

Singleton or *void*

SHORTAGE CUE BID

Cue bid that shows singleton or void.

SIGN OFF BID

A bid which asks partner to pass.

SINGLETON

Exactly one card in a particular suit.

SIX CARD SUIT

A suit of six cards.

SLAM

Contract at the six level guaranteeing a small slam premium, or contract at the seven level guaranteeing a grand slam premium.

SLAM BIDDING

A part of the auction where partners investigate the possibility of bidding a *slam*.

SLAM TRY

A bid inviting partner to bid a *small slam* if he holds hitherto unexposed *extra values*.

SOS REDOUBLE

An SOS redouble is a redouble asking partner to find another suit to play in, rather than the original trump suit bid by the partnership. It is used in unusual situations (for instance, when opponents have used the convention *trap pass*).

SPECIFIC KING ASK

It is possible to ask for particular Kings. Originally this question was the 5NT bid, and the responder bid the suit of his lowest King (for instance, with both minor suit Kings the response was 6♣). The variant of this convention used in this book allows the responder to show suits of both of his Kings.

SPLINTER

A slam try showing a *shortage* in the suit bid; Splinter is bid with a jump.

STAYMAN

An ask for four card majors (2♣) after a 1NT opening.

STRENGTH-SHOWING DOUBLE

A double describing a hand too strong to overcall. This double promises at least 17 points with an

unbalanced hand and at least 19 points with a *balanced hand*.

STRONG CHECKBACK

2♦ *rebid* by *responder*, who has previously bid a major, it means: *artificial bid forcing to game*.

SUPPORT DOUBLE

A double of *second opponent's overcall* which shows a three card fit in partner's suit.

SUPPORT REDOUBLE

A redouble by *opener*, when *responder* bid a major at the one level, and opponent doubled. This redouble promises a three card fit in responder's suit.

TAKE-OUT DOUBLE

This type of double is used by the partnership to find their own contract. It promises at least three cards in each *major* unbid by the opponents, and at least two cards in each *minor* unbid by the opponents.

THIRD HAND OPENING

An *opening* bid after two passes.

THIRD SUIT

Semi-natural bid during a bidding sequence in which partners have already bid two suits; the bid aims to check whether the partnership have a stop in the unbid suit.

TO OPEN THE BIDDING

To make a first bid in the auction which is not a pass.

TOTAL STRENGTH

The sum of points held by partnership.

TOTAL STRENGTH BIDDING

Auction based on the total number of points so far shown by partnership.

TRANSFER

A bid which promises length in another suit, usually to the next higher suit (for example, 2♥ - transfer to Spades). A bid which forces partner to make a specific bid (for example, 2♣ - transfer to 2♦). Not all transfers force partner – if you play super accepts.

TRAP PASS

To pass after a bid by an opponent when we have a *good honour holding in his suit*, and we are hoping that partner will *re-open with a double*.

TRUMP SUIT SLAM TRY

A bid inviting partner to bid a *small slam* if he holds a strong trump suit.

TRUMP QUEEN ASK

An ask about a trump Queen used after a *Key Card Blackwood*. You ask by making the lowest possible bid other than the agreed trump suit. The lowest response denies the trump Queen, the next step up promises: the trump Queen without an outside King, the next suit up shows: the trump Queen with one outside King, etc.

TRYBULA TRANSFER BID

After 1NT opening and *Stayman* – forcing suit agreement made with a bid one step below the selected trump suit (3♦ agrees Hearts, 3♥ agrees Spades).

TWO-OVER-ONE

Non-jump response in a new suit at the two level after a level one opening. Also used as a shorthand for a bidding system where such a bid is forcing to game.

UNBALANCED DISTRIBUTION

A shape of the hand which is not *balanced*.

UNCONTESTED AUCTION

Auction in which only one pair is bidding.

UNUSUAL 2NT

A 2NT bid after opponent has opened the bidding at the one level, which shows the two cheapest unbid suits, for example, clubs and diamonds after a 1♥ opening, and clubs and hearts after a 1♦ opening.

VOID

No cards in a particular suit.

VULNERABILITY

The state of scoring is predetermined for every deal: we distinguish **favourable vulnerability**: we are non-vulnerable, they are vulnerable;

unfavourable vulnerability we are vulnerable, they are non-vulnerable; **non-vulnerable**: both sides non-vulnerable; **vulnerable**: both sides vulnerable.

WEAK CHECKBACK

Responder's artificial 2♣ *rebid*, who initially bid a major, is known as a *weak checkback*. Opener is forced to bid 2♦, and responder either passes with a weak variant of the bid, or bids on with an *invitational hand*.

Introduction to the system

Polish Club 2020 Standard

The bidding system *Polish Club Standard* has been created as the result of a questionnaire among the potential users of the system. The questionnaire was published on the internet page www.jassem.pl in September and October 2019.

The structure of the system reflects the preferences of the responders of the questionnaire. *Polish Club 2020 Standard* consists of arrangements that have proved most popular.

In one aspect of the system I have been unable to find solutions, which would meet all the preferences of the readers. After an opening of one of a major, the 1NT response was supposed to be non-forcing, *two-over-one* responses were forcing to game, and a jump in a new suit would be an artificial raise with a fit in opener's suit. I found it impossible to combine these three features consistently within the structure of the system as a whole because it would become impossible to show an invitational hand with a minor. I decided

to adopt a scheme, where a *two-over-one* response does not force to game.

TABLE OF OPENING BIDS

Opening	Meaning
1♣	12 – 14; balanced 12 - 17; 4-4-1-4 15+; 5+ Clubs 18+; any
1♦	12 – 17; 5+ suit
1♥, 1♠	12 – 17; 5+ suit
1NT	15 – 17 balanced or semi-balanced
2♣	11 – 14; 5+ clubs and a 4 card major or 6+ clubs (<i>Precision</i>)
2♦	6 – 11; 6+ major
2♥	6 – 11; 5+ hearts and a 4+ minor
2♠	6 – 11; 5+ spades and a minor
2NT	6 – 11; minors (5 – 5)
3 any suit	Pre-empt, 6+ suit
3NT	1 st , 2 nd hand – <i>gambling</i> 3 rd , 4 th hand – to play
4♣, 4♦	Natural, pre-empt

The 1♣ Opening

Description of the opening

This opening has four possible meanings.

In the weak variant of the opening (balanced hand) the range of the opening is 12 – 14.

12 – 17; 4-4-1-4, singleton diamond.

In the “Club” variant (at least 5 clubs and an unbalanced distribution) the bid promises 15 – 17 points.

In the strong variant the opening promises strength of at least 18 points or equivalent.

The lower limit of the strong variant (18+) can be approximately defined as follows: **If an average fit with King and Queen of the trump suit being in partner’s suit, it is sensible to open with a strong version of the 1♣ opening.**

Table of responses

Response	Meaning
1 	0 – 6(7); any distribution; (7)8 – 11; with a minor (or both minors) not 8-10 balanced
1  / 1 	7+; at least a four card suit
1NT	8 – 10; no four card major, balanced
2  / 2 	12+; 5+ suit; game force
2 	7 – 9; 5+ spades; 4+ hearts
2 	13+; no four card major; game force; no 5 card minor
2NT	11 – 12; no four card major; invitational to 3NT
3  / 3 	9 – 11; good 6 card suit; non- forcing
3  / 3 	0 – 6; promising 7 card suit
4  / 4  / 4  / 4 	0 – 6; distributional pre-empt

1♦ response

Meaning

- 1) 0 – 6(7) any distribution;
- 2) 8 – 11 unbalanced distribution, no four card major.

Explanation

1♦ response shows a weak hand – up to 7 points. With 7 points we should choose a response in a major, if we hold a four card major – otherwise bid 1♦. With 8 – 11 points we also bid 1♦, if we do not have a four card major, and the hand is unbalanced (for instance, we have a 6 card minor, or 5 – 4 in the minors).

Opener's rebids after 1♦ response

The 1♦ response is forcing. With a weak variant (12-14) opener selects one of two rebids: 1♥ or 1♠, indicating his **longer major** (in extreme cases it can be a three card suit).

With 15 – 17 points opener either bids one of a major, or 2♣ if he does not have a four card major (this hand contains 5+ clubs).

With 18+ points opener has a wide choice of rebids: 1NT and 2NT show strong balanced hands. 2♦ is an artificial bid showing the strongest hand – forcing to game. Jump rebids in a new suit show hands with at least twenty points and a five card suit. With a slightly weaker hand (18-19 points) opener bids his suit without a jump (e.g. 1♥ or 1♠) hoping that partner will continue bidding.

Let us look at all opener's rebids.

1♣	1♦
?	

- 1♥ / 1♠ - 1) 12-14; longer major
 - 2) 15-17; 4 card suit and 5+ clubs
 - 3) 18-19; 5 card suit
- 1NT - 18-20; balanced
- 2♣ - 15+; 5+ clubs no 4 card major unless 20+
- 2♦ - game force; any distribution

2♥ / 2♠ - 20+; five card suit

2NT - 21-23; balanced

3♣ / 3♦ - 18+; 6+ suit

Opener's major suit rebid

West	East
1♣	1♦
1♠	?

East has shown either a negative hand (up to 7 points), or a reasonable hand (8-11) with minors.

West has stated that his Spades are better than Hearts, but has not disclosed his strength. **East** should continue the bidding, if he has more than four points:

1NT - 5-7 without four spades

2♣ / 2♦ - 5-11; five card suit

2♠ - 4-6; four spades

3♣ / 3♦ - 8-11; six card suit

Opener's strength is revealed in the next round of bidding:

1♣	1♦
1♠	1NT
?	

With a weak variant (12-14) opener passes. With a club suit and strength 15-17 opener bids 2♣, and all other bids show a Strong Club with 18-19 points:

- Pass - 12-14
- 2♣ - 15-17; four spades and five clubs
- 2♦ - 18-19; four spades and five diamonds
- 2♥ - 18-19; five spades and four hearts
- 2♠ - 18-19; five spades
- 3♦ / 3♥ - 18-19; five spades and five diamonds / hearts

If after opener's 1♠ rebid, responder bids 2♣, the auction will continue along similar lines: opener

passes with a weak variant, other bids show stronger hands:

1♣	1♦
1♠	2♣
?	

Pass - 12-14

2♦ - 18-19; four spades and five diamonds

2♥ - 18-19; five spades and four hearts

2♠ - 18-19; five spades

3♣ - 15-17; four spades and five clubs

3♦ / 3♥ - 18-19; five spades and five diamonds / hearts

The bidding will develop analogously if after a 1♦ negative, opener rebids 1♥.

Bidding quiz

1♣	1♦
1♥	1NT
?	

Your hand

Spades	Hearts	Diamonds	Clubs	Your bid
A4	KQJ87	A753	A3	2♥
A4	KQJ8	87	KQT87	2♠
A4	KQT8	KQT87	A3	2♦
A	KQT87	KQT87	A3	3♦

After a 1NT rebid (18-20) or 2NT rebid (21-23) the bidding structure is very similar to the bidding methods after a 1NT opening:

1♣	1♦
1NT	?

2♣ - Stayman (0 - 6 points)

2♦ / 2♥ / 2♠ / 3♣ - transfers to next suit (0
- 6 points)

3♦ - invitation to game with diamonds

3♥ / 3♠ - convention 5-4-3-1 (game force)

The precise description of these sequences is contained in the chapter on the 1NT opening. It is important to stress that in the sequences discussed here both *Stayman* and transfers to Hearts and Spades limit responder's hand to 6 points (with a stronger hand responder would not have started with the 1♦ bid). Consequently, responder's next bid does not force to game, for instance:

1♣	1♦
1NT	2♥
2♠	3♣ (4-6; non-forcing)

The 5-4-3-1 convention and transfers to minors limit responder's strength to 11 points. The 5-4-3-1 convention forces to game.

After a 2NT rebid there is not enough bidding space for similar arrangements. Only the following conventions are available:

1♣	1♦
2NT	?

- 3♣ - Stayman (0 - 6 points)
- 3♦ / 3♥ - transfers to next suit (0 - 6 points)
- 3♠ - 5-4 either way in the minors (6-11)
- 4♣ / 4♦ - natural, forcing (8-11)

Opener’s 2♦ rebid

The rebid of 2♦ is artificial and game forcing. With a weak hand responder gives a second negative response of 2♥. Other bids by responder show an interesting hand (in the context of a negative 1♦).

1♣	1♦
2♦	?

- 2♥ - nothing interesting
- 2NT - 5-6; balanced
- 2♠/3♣/3♦/3♥ - good five card suit with two top honours

Opener's remaining rebids

The 2♥ and 2♠ rebids show a hand with 20-22 points and a five card or longer suit (with 18-19 opener bids just 1♥ or 1♠). These bids are not forcing, but responder should keep the auction alive whenever possible.

The 3♣ and 3♦ rebids show a strong variant of the Club opening (18+) and a six card suit.

1♥ response

Meaning. 7+ points, 4+ suit.

Explanation. There exists a borderline decision between 1♦ and 1♥ when responder holds 6 points and an interesting hand. With a single suited hand choose to respond 1♦. This bid better describes responder's strength, and often allows

the stronger hand to be declarer (when opener rebids 1NT or 2NT and responder transfers). However, with a two suited hand (e.g. 5-5) it is better to bid 1♥ in order to be able to show both suits.

Your hand

Spades	Hearts	Diamonds	Clubs	Your bid
32	KQJT8	654	432	1♦
3	KJ986	QT865	42	1♥

Development of the auction

With a weak variant of the Club bid (12-14) opener has three choices of rebids: 2♥ (four card fit), 1♠ (four spades, without four hearts) and 1NT (no four card major). 2♣ shows a hand with 15+ points, without four spades. Remaining bids show a Strong Club (18+).

All opener’s rebids are shown in the following table:

1♣	1♥
?	

- 1♠ - 12+; 4+ spades; forcing for one round
- 1NT - 12-14; no four card major
- 2♣ - 15+; five clubs; denies four spades
- 2♦ - ARTIFICIAL *REVERSE* -
"ODWROTKA" (18+ with a heart fit)
- 2♥ - 12-14; four hearts
- 2♠ - 18+; 6+ good spades
- 2NT - 18+; denies three hearts or four
spades
- 3♣ / 3♦ - 18+; six card suit
- 3♥ - 15-17; four hearts, unbalanced
- 3♠/4♣/4♦ - *Splinters*: 18-20 with a four
card fit and shortage in the suit
bid
- 3NT - 7 solid Clubs and a stopper outside
of hearts

1♠ rebid

The 1♠ rebid describes various hands – including a Strong Club:

- 1) 12-14; balanced
- 2) 15+; four spades, five clubs
- 3) 18+; five spades

Responder must not pass. The hand type is revealed in the next round of bidding, for instance:

1♣	1♥
1♠	1NT
?	

- 2♣ - 15+; four spades and 5+ clubs, forcing
- 2♦ - 18+; four spades and 5+ diamonds (with 12-17 and this shape open 1♦)
- 2♠ - 18+; five spades
- 3♣ / 3♦ - 18+; five spades and five clubs / diamonds
- 3NT - 18-22; four spades, balanced

Two checkbacks

This convention is used after a response of one of a major and opener's rebid of 1♠ or 1NT.

1♣	1♥
1♠ (12+, 4+ spades)	?

2♣ - weak *checkback*; strength below game force

2♦ - strong *checkback*; game force

3♣ - 7-9; 6+ clubs, non-forcing

Weak *checkback* has the following meaning: "I want to play in 2♦ or invite game". Opener is obliged to bid 2♦ - unless he holds a Strong Club:

1♣	1♥
1♠ (12+; 4+ Spades)	2♣ (weak <i>checkback</i>)
?	

2♦ - 12-14 or 15-17 with clubs

2♥ - 18+; 5+ spades, 3 hearts

2♠ - 18+; 5+ spades without 3 hearts

2NT - 18+; 4 spades

3♣ - 18+; 4 spades, 5+ clubs

After opener's 2♦ second rebid, responder passes if he intends to play in 2♦. Other bids invite game (except the 3NT bid):

1♣	1♥
1♠ (12+; 4+ spades)	2♣
2♦ (12-14)	?

2♥ - 10-11; 5 hearts

2♠ - 10-11; 4 spades

2NT - 11-12; 5 hearts, balanced

3♣ / 3♦ - 10-11; 4 hearts, 5+ clubs / diamonds

3♥ - 10-11; 6 hearts

3NT - 13-15; shape 5-3-3-2

Strong *checkback* has the following meaning:
 “game force with any distribution”.

Opener bids naturally and economically, giving information to responder as cheaply as possible:

1♣	1♥
1♠ (12+, 4+ spades)	2♦ (strong <i>checkback</i>)
?	

- 2♥ - 12-14; 3 hearts
- 2♠ - 18+; 5 spades, without 4 hearts
- 2NT - 12-14; without 3 hearts
- 3♣ - 15+; 4 spades, 5+ clubs
- 3♦ - 18+; 4 spades, 5+ diamonds
- 3♥ - 18+; 5 spades and 3 hearts

The 1NT rebid

Opener's 1NT rebid shows a hand of strength 12-14 without a four card fit in responder's suit (and without 4 spades after a 1♥ response). Opener may have 5 clubs.

Responder has an opportunity to invite game with a 2♣ rebid (weak *checkback*) or force to game with a 2♦ bid (strong *checkback*).

Let us look at the list of responder's rebids:

1♣	1♥
1NT	?

- 2♣ - weak *checkback*

- 2♦ - strong *checkback*
- 2♥ - *sign off* – opener must pass
- 2♠ - natural, forcing
- 3♣ - *sign off* – opener must pass
- 3♦ - game force, 5-5 shape
- 3♥ - invitational with a good suit
- 3♠/4♣/4♦ - *Self-Splinters* (hearts agreed suit)

Self-Splinters agree responder's heart suit, since this is the only suit shown in the auction.

Bidding has to be slightly modified after a strong *checkback* (it is different from the situation when opener rebids 1♠):

1♣	1♥
1NT(12-14, no 4 card major)	2♦ (strong <i>checkback</i>)
?	

- 2♥ - four hearts
- 2♠ - three spades (without four hearts)
- 2NT - without four hearts or three spades
- 3♣ - 5 clubs (without four hearts or three spades)

2♣ Rebid

Opener's rebid of 2♣ is natural and forcing with at least 5 clubs.

After a response of 1♥ the 2♣ rebid denies four spades, but after a response of 1♠ it does not deny four Hearts.

1♣	1♥
2♣	?

- 2♦ - artificial bid, one round force
- 2♠ - natural and forcing
- 2♥/2NT/3♣ - 7-8; non-forcing
- 3♥ - natural and forcing

After responder's artificial 2♦ opener's bids are natural, except for the 2♠ bid (second major) which shows 18+.

1♣	1♥
2♣	2♦
?	

2♥ - 15-17; three hearts; hand not interested in a slam

2♠ - artificial, 18+; game force; the rest of the auction is natural

2NT/3♣ - 15-17; natural

3♦ - 15-17; 5 clubs and 4 diamonds

3♥ - 15-17; three hearts; hand interested in a slam

2♦ rebid - ARTIFICIAL *REVERSE* ("*Odwrotka*")

"Odwrotka" is an artificial rebid 2♦ by opener after a response 1♥ or 1♠ to the opening 1♣. This rebid promises a strong version of the 1♣ opening (18+) and at least a three card fit in responder's major.

"Odwrotka" does not agree responder's suit – in the subsequent auction it is possible that the partnership will choose another suit as trumps.

Responses to *"Odwrotka"*

The basic purpose of this convention is to determine if partnership is strong enough to bid a slam. Therefore, responder in his first reply to *"odwrotka"* informs his partner about this issue. We will use a term "weak hand", when within the limits of a positive 1♥ or 1♠ response (7+ points), the hand does not look promising for slam purposes. By a "strong hand" we mean a hand which looks promising for slam purposes.

The following criteria should help to distinguish these types of hands. A hand can be classified as "strong" if:

- You have a hand with which you would have opened the bidding at the one level, or
- You have a slightly weaker hand (9-11), but the major suit you have bid is of high quality, and honour cards are grouped in the long suits.

The responses to *“odwrotka”* are as follows:

1♣	1♥ / 1♠
2♦	?

- 2♥ - weak hand with a 4 card major suit
- 2♠ - strong hand with a 4 card major suit
- 2NT - weak hand with a 5 card major suit
- 3♣ - strong hand with a 5 card major suit
- 3♦ - weak hand with a 6 card major suit
- 3♥ - strong hand with a 6 card major suit
- 3♠ - weak hand with a 7 card major suit
- 3NT - strong hand with a 7 card major suit

Bidding quiz

Partner has opened 1♣, and after your 1♥ response, he applies “*odwrotka*”. What are you going to bid with the following hands?

Your hand

Spades	Hearts	Diamonds	Clubs	<i>Your bid</i>
QJ9	J432	KJ2	K76	2♥
32	QJ98	KJ32	KJ7	2♠
Q3	Q874	KJ543	Q8	2♥
3	QJ87	KQT875	32	2♥
3	QJT7	KQJ875	32	2♠
Q3	T8532	KJ32	KJ	2NT
3	KQT83	AT92	875	3♣
Q3	J86532	QJ3	KJ	3♦
3	KQ9832	AT2	875	3♥

Development of the auction after the 2♥ and 2♠ responses

When responder has shown that his major suit contains only 4 cards, partnership may have to look for another suit to serve as trumps or to play in no trump.

Opener may, for instance, try to agree Spades four – four fit (if Hearts were bid initially), by bidding 2♠. Opener could also bid his own five card suit at the three level if he does not have a four card fit in responder's suit. He could also bid 2NT, to find out more about responder's hand.

All the sequences are listed below:

1♣	1♥
2♦ (“ <i>odwrotka</i> ”)	2♥ (weak, 4 card suit)
?	

2♠ - natural, four spades and three hearts

2NT - “tell me more”

3♣ / 3♦ - five card suit and three hearts

3♥ - strong agreement of hearts with at least a four card fit

3♠/4♣/4♣ - *Splinters* with a four card heart fit, strength 20-22

After opener's 2NT bid responder can show a five card or longer minor. The rebid of his own suit shows both four card minors.

1♣	1♥
2♦ (<i>"odwrotka"</i>)	2♥
2NT (<i>"tell me more"</i>)	?

3♣ / 3♦ - five plus card suit

3♥ - both four card minors

3♠ - four spades

3NT - balanced

4♣ / 4♦ - very strong six card suit

After a response "strong hand with a four card suit", the structure of the bidding is similar, but the 3♣ / 3♦ bids can be used to show four card suits (after a strong response the chances for a slam increase, therefore it is a good idea to try to find a minor suit fit). After responses which promise a five card suit (2NT, 3♣) opener can show his own five card suit naturally. When responder shows a

six card suit it is assumed that responder’s suit has been agreed, and every new suit by opener is a *cue bid*.

***“Odzwrotka”* in competitive auctions**

If, after our 1♣ opening, either defender intervenes with a take-out double, opener’s 2♦ rebid is still *“odzwrotka”* and the structure of responses remains the same, for instance:

We	They	We	They
1♣	double	1♥	pass
2♦ <i>(“odzwrotka”)</i>			

After opponent makes a suit overcall, and we show a major suit with a double or *transfer*, 2♦ is still *“odzwrotka”*, for instance:

We	They	We	They
1♣	1♦	double (4+ hearts)	pass
2♦ (<i>“odzwrotka”</i>)			

In defence, when an opponent has opened 1♣, and we have made a take-out double, we still use the 2♦ *“odwrotka”*:

They	We	They	We
1♣	double	pass	1♥
pass	2♦ (<i>“odwrotka”</i>)		

A strength showing double with diamonds (18+ with a diamond suit) is shown by a 3♦ or 2NT bid.

Hands unsuitable for *“odwrotka”*

The *“odwrotka”* should be avoided when opener holds 5 cards in the other major, because it may become difficult to agree this suit.

With a 5-4-3-1 shape (5 card minor, 4 cards in other major, 3 card fit in responder’s major) – it is better to proceed naturally – *“odwrotka”* may make it difficult to find the best trump suit.

2♥ rebid (raise of responder's suit)

The 2♥ rebid shows 12-14 points with a balanced or unbalanced shape and a four card fit in Hearts.

1♣	1♥
2♥	?

2♠/3♣/3♦ - asking for cover cards in the suit bid (help suit game try)

2NT - progressive bid, forcing for one round

3♥ - invitational to 4♥

3NT - suggestion to play, 4-3-3-3 with 4 hearts)

3♠/4♣/4♦ - *Splinters*

After the cover cards asking bid opener has to assess his hand according to his holding in

responder's second suit. Opener can reply positively (4♥) or negatively (3♥) depending on the quality in responder's second suit: if he holds honour cards or a ruffing potential (doubleton) he should bid game.

The progressive 2NT bid is used by responder to gain information about a possible second suit held by opener. Opener may decline this exchange of information by bidding 3♥. Any other bid by opener forces the auction to game.

2♠ rebid

The 2♠ rebid shows a Strong Club with a good spade suit. Responder can support his partner with as little as a doubleton honour.

2NT rebid

The 2NT rebid shows a hand with 18+ points without a three card fit in responder's major. After a 1♥ response this bid also denies four spades.

The rest of the auction is natural:

1♣	1♥
2NT	?

3♣ - 10+; 4+ clubs

3♦ - 10+; 4+ diamonds

3♥ - 7+; 6+ hearts

3♠ - 10+; 5 hearts, 4 spades

3NT - 7-11; balanced

4♣/4♦/4♠ - 10+; 6+ hearts, *Self-Splinters*

4NT - 12+; balanced

1♣	1♥
2NT	3NT (7-11, balanced)

4♣ / 4♦ - 22+; five card suit

4NT - 22-24; balanced

3♣ rebid

The 3♣ rebid is artificial! It shows a Strong Club (18+) with 5+ diamonds and 4+ clubs. It denies a three card fit in responder's suit. (Remember that with 5 clubs and 4 diamonds, opener can simply rebid 2♣. This bid shows 15+ points and is forcing).

1♣	1♥
3♣ (18+; 5+ diamonds, 4+ clubs)	?

3♦ - agrees diamonds; forcing

3♥ - 6+ hearts

3♠ - *forth suit*

3♦ rebid

The 3♦ rebid promises a Strong Club (18+) and a six card suit. With only five cards opener has the following options:

- 2♦, if we have a three card fit in responder's suit
- 1♠, with four spades after a 1♥ response

- 2NT in all other cases, even with a 5-4 shape

3♥ rebid

The 3♥ rebid promises 15-17, unbalanced distribution, and a four card fit in hearts. If responder wants to investigate a slam, he can do it as follows:

1♣	1♥
3♥	?

3♠ - asks for shortage; opener's 3NT shows spade shortage

3NT - spade *cue bid*

4♣ / 4♦ - *cue bid*

3NT rebid

The 3NT rebid shows a solid seven card club suit and one outside stopper.

3♠ / 4♣ / 4♦ rebids

These rebids promise a four card heart fit, shortage in the suit bid, and 18-20. With a stronger hand, opener starts with a *reverse* and then makes a *Splinter*.

Bidding quiz

Suppose you have opened the bidding 1♣ and partner has responded 1♥. What do you bid next?

Your hand

Spades	Hearts	Diamonds	Clubs	<i>Your bid</i>
J3	3	AK5	AKJ7543	2♣
J3	3	AJ5	AKQT765	3NT
A32	3	AKJ53	AKT7	3♣
A32	3	AKJ5	AKT72	2♣
3	A32	AKJ53	AKT7	2♦
A43	32	AKJ53	AK7	2NT
AKJ32	T85	KQ3	AQ	1♠
AKJT32	85	KQ3	AQ	2♠
3	AQ65	AJ5	KQ432	3♥
3	AQ65	AQ5	AQT76	3♠
3	AKQ4	AJ5	AQJ65	2♦

1♠ response

Bidding after the 1♠ response is very similar to bidding after the 1♥ response. In this section we will only explain the differences.

1♣	1♠
2♣ (15+)	?

2♦ - artificial forcing bid without four hearts

2♥ - 10+; 5+ spades, 4+ hearts

With 5 spades and 4 hearts, but only 7-9 points, respond 2♥ directly to the 1♣ opening, that is why 2♥ on the second round of bidding shows 10+ points.

After responder's artificial 2♦ rebid, 2♥ by opener (second major) is artificial and shows a strong hand:

1♣	1♠
2♣ (15+)	2♦ (artificial, forcing, no 4 hearts)
?	

2♥ - artificial 18+

Others - 15-17

1♣	1♠
3♠	?

3NT - asking for shortage

4♣/4♦/4♥ - *cue bids*

1NT response

8-10, balanced, no four card major.

Bidding quiz

Partner has opened 1♣. What do you bid?

Your hand

Spades	Hearts	Diamonds	Clubs	<i>Your bid</i>
Q	Q65	KJ543	Q873	1♦
Q3	Q5	KJ543	Q873	1NT
Q3	K5	KJ543	QT73	2NT

Development of the auction

Opener's 2♣ rebid shows 15+ and is forcing for one round.

All other rebids by opener are natural and promise a Strong Club (18+). Opener can try to agree a four card minor (that is why the 2♣ and 2♦ rebids show only a four card suit).

1♣	1NT
?	

2♣ - 15-17; 5+ clubs or 18+, 4+ clubs

2♦ - 18+; at least four diamonds

2♥ / 2♠ - 18+; at least a five card suit

2♣/2♦ responses

The 2♣ and 2♦ responses promise a five card or longer suit and are forcing to game.

The 1♣ - 2♣/2♦ auction is different from other openings and *two-over-one* responses :

- A raise of responder's suit does not promise extra values
- A new suit by opener says nothing about the strength of the opening (it may be a weak or a strong variant of Club).
- Jump in a new suit is a *Splinter*.

1♣	2♣
?	

2♦/2♥/2♠ - 12+; 4+ suit

2NT - 12+; no four card major

3♦/3♥/3♠ - 15+; *Splinter* with a club fit

In the next round of bidding, responder's bids are semi-natural:

1♣	2♣
2♥	?

2♠ - *third suit*: four spades or a spade stop (no diamond stop)

2NT - forcing; stops in spades and diamonds

3♣ - 6+ suit

3♦ - natural; 4+ diamonds

If opener rebids his suit in the next round, this is a five card suit and a Strong Club:

1♣	2♣
2♥	2NT
?	

3♣ - 12-14; 3+ clubs

3♥ - 18+; 5+ hearts

Some problems may be created after a *third suit* bid:

- A raise of the *third suit* shows a four card suit without a stop in the unbid suit,
- A jump to 3NT shows four cards in the *third suit* and a stop in the unbid suit.

1♣	2♣
2♥	2♠ (<i>third suit</i>)
?	

- 2NT - 12-14; diamond stopper; without four spades
- 3♣ - 12-14; 3+ clubs
- 3♥ - 18+; 5+ hearts
- 3♠ - 12+; 4 spades, no diamond stopper
- 3NT - 12-14; 4 spades, diamond stopper

Bidding after the 2♦ response proceeds along analogous lines.

2♥ response

Meaning. The method of strong jump shifts has not survived the test of time. Most bidding systems have moved away from this convention, and jump shifts now describe hands which are difficult to describe in the second round of bidding. One such hand is a not very strong holding (up to 9 points) with five spades and four hearts. This shape is awkward to describe after a 1♦ opening (and a 1♠ response, with a rebid of either 2♣ or 2♦), but it creates similar problems after a 1♣ opening and a club rebid. Therefore, the following arrangement has become very popular: the 2♥ response describes a hand with 7-9 points and at least five spades and at least four hearts.

With six spades and four hearts you choose the response according to the quality of the two suits.

Bidding Quiz

What do you respond to a 1♣ opening bid by partner?

Your hand

Spades	Hearts	Diamonds	Clubs	<i>Your bid</i>
QJ876	AQ65	54	32	2♥
QJT76	AQJ6	54	32	1♠
QJ876	AJ654	5	32	2♥
KQJT76	J854	5	32	1♠
J87654	KQJ3	5	32	2♥

Development of the auction

With a weak hand (12-14) opener either passes or corrects the contract to 2♠. With three hearts and two spades, statistically it is better to pass.

With a slightly stronger hand (15-17) opener may decide to play at the two level, or to invite game.

With a Strong Club (18+) opener bids his own suit at the lowest level possible, or bids 2NT which is game forcing.

1♣	2♥ (7-9; 5+ spades, 4+ hearts)
2NT (18+; forcing with a strong hand and support in one of partner's suits)	?

- 3♣ - 5-4 in majors, three clubs
- 3♦ - 5-4 in majors, three diamonds
- 3♥ - five hearts
- 3♠ - six spades
- 3NT - 5-4-2-2

2♠ response

The 2♠ response is used as an artificial game forcing bid, without a four card major, with 13+ points. Opener bids 3NT with a weak hand (12-14). Other rebids show either a Strong Club or a hand with a club suit:

1♣	2♠
?	

2NT - 18+; balanced

3♣ - 15+; club suit

3♦/3♥/3♠ - 18+; five card or longer suit

3NT - 12-14

2NT response

The 2NT response is invitational to game without a four card major, 11-12 points.

Bidding quiz

Your partner has opened 1♣. What do you respond?

Your hand

Spades	Hearts	Diamonds	Clubs	<i>Your bid</i>
Q3	KT5	KJ54	QT73	2NT
Q3	KQ5	KJ54	QT73	2♠
Q3	KT5	KJ543	QT7	2NT
Q3	KT	KJ543	QT74	2NT
Q3	KT5	KJT43	AT7	2♦
AJ	KT5	J6543	AT7	2♠

After a 2NT response, opener, with a weak hand (12-14), either passes or accepts the invitation. Other bids show a Strong Club.

1♣	2NT
?	

Pass - 12-13

3♣ - 15+ with clubs

3♦/3♥/3♠ - 18+; five card or longer suit

3NT - 13-14 or 18-19 balanced

4NT - 20-21; balanced

3♣ / 3♦ responses

These responses are invitational to game. They show a good quality suit of at least six cards, 9-11 points. With the same strength and a poor suit responder starts with 1♦, and then jumps in his minor. Opener with a weak variant of the Club opening has two possible rebids: pass or 3NT.

Other opener's rebids show a Strong Club. Initially such a rebid promises a five card suit. Responder can raise opener's suit with as little as a doubleton honour, and if he has a very good fit, he should make a *cue bid* in a side suit.

However, if opener returns to responder's suit, it implies that his rebid was aiming to find stoppers for 3NT.

Examples of auctions

1♣	3♦
3♥	?

3♠ / 4♣ - *cue bid* with a three card heart fit

3NT - suggestion of final contract

4♦ - natural (dislike of 3NT, usually 7 diamonds)

4♥ - suggestion of final contract, if opener has 5 hearts

1♣	3♦
3♥	4♥
?	

4♠ / 5♣ - *cue bid*, hearts agreed suit

4NT - *Blackwood*, hearts agreed suit

5♦ - final contract, "I don't have five hearts"

3♥ / 3♠ responses

The 3♥ and 3♠ responses are pre-emptive in nature. They promise a seven card suit and a negative hand (generally fewer than 6 or 7 points).

Bidding quiz

Your hand

Spades	Hearts	Diamonds	Clubs	<i>Your bid</i>
QJT8765	5432	3	2	3♠
QJT876	5432	32	2	1♦
QJT9765	3	KT97	2	1♠

4♥ / 4♠ responses

The 4♥ / 4♠ responses are pre-emptive (weaker than any positive 7+ response). Opener should pass even with a Strong Club, if the hands do not fit.

Your hand

Spades	Hearts	Diamonds	Clubs	<i>Your bid</i>
QJT87654	2	3	J85	4♠
QJT8765	32	32	J8	3♠
QJT8765	3	J7653	-	4♠

Bidding after intervention

Bidding after a take-out double

Pass shows a negative hand but does not promise any length in clubs – opener should not accept a contract 1♣ doubled, if second defender passes.

Redouble shows a hand of strength 10+ with a balanced hand (interest in doubling the opposition), and promises at least three clubs (opener may pass).

The 1♦ response shows a weak hand with diamonds and is not forcing. Responses 1♥ / 1♠ are natural and forcing. It follows that with a strong hand and only a few clubs responder must not redouble.

The 2♣ and 2♦ responses show a five card suit and 7-11. The 1NT and 2♥ responses have exactly the same meaning as if there was no double.

We	They	We
1♣	double	?

Pass - 0-6; no diamond suit

Redouble - 10+; balanced

1♦ - 0-6; natural, 5+ diamonds

1♥ / 1♠ - 7+; natural, forcing

1NT - 8-10; no four card major

2♣ / 2♦ - 7-11; natural, non-forcing

2♥ - 7-9; 5+ spades, 4+ hearts

Higher bids - same as without double

Bidding after a 1♦ or 1♥ overcall

After a 1♦ or 1♥ overcall we use transfers into the majors and no trumps. This method puts the contract in the hand which is not in danger of

attack on its honour cards in the opponents' suit. A response in a new suit at the two level without a jump is not forcing.

We	They	We
1♣	1♦	?

- Double - 4+ hearts
- 1♥ - 4+ spades
- 1♠ - transfer to no trumps
- 2♣ - 7-11; natural, non-forcing
- 2♦ - asking for diamond stopper, no four card major
- 2♥ - 12+; 5+ hearts, forcing to game
- 2♠ - 12+; 5+ spades, forcing to game
- 2NT - natural, invitational
- 3♣ - 12+; 6+ clubs, forcing for one round

After a transfer into a major, opener accepts the transfer with a three card fit. Without a fit he does not accept the transfer, and with a four card fit he accepts the transfer with a jump:

We	They	We	They
1♣	1♦	double (4+ hearts)	pass
?			

- 1♥ - 12-14; exactly 3 hearts
- 1♠ - 12+; natural, forcing, without 3 hearts
- 1NT - 12-14; without 3 hearts
- 2♣ - 12-17; 5+ clubs
- 2♦ - *“odwrotka”*
- 2♥ - 12-14; exactly 4 hearts
- 3♥ - 15-17; exactly 4 hearts

Opener acts analogously after responder's 1♥ bid which shows Spades.

The 1♠ response — a transfer to 1NT — makes the stronger hand declarer. It is possible to bid like this without a stopper in opponent's suit, or with the kind of stopper where it is more convenient to have opener as the declarer. A 1NT response

(rather than 1♠) describes a hand where responder is not afraid of a lead in opponent's suit.

We	They	We	They
1♣	1♦	1♠ (transfer)	pass
?			

- 1NT

- 12-14; does not promise a stopper in opponent's suit
- 2♣

- 15+; natural, forcing
- 2♦

- 18+; without a diamond stopper
- 2♥ / 2♠

- 18+; five card suit
- 2NT

- 18+; with a diamond stopper

After a 1♥ overcall the bidding is largely similar:

We	They	We
1♣	1♥	?

- Double

- 4+ spades

- 1♠ - transfer to no trumps
- 1NT - natural
- 2♣ - 7-11; natural, non-forcing
- 2♦ - 7-11; natural, non-forcing
- 2♥ - asking for a stopper, without 4 spades
- 2♠ - 12+; 5+ spades, forcing to game
- 2NT - natural, invitational
- 3♣ - 12+; 6+ clubs, forcing

Bidding quiz

We	They	We
1♣	1♥	?

What will you bid?

Your hand

Spades	Hearts	Diamonds	Clubs	<i>Your bid</i>
KJ3	K32	632	QT32	1♠
KQT	AQ2	Q32	JT32	1♠
KJ3	QJ92	QT3	632	1NT
KJ3	AJ98	QT3	632	2NT

Bidding after other overcalls

After other overcalls we use standard methods. A double is negative (it shows four hearts after a 1♠ overcall). A non-jump new suit at the two level is not forcing, but forcing at the three level.

Competitive bidding after our 1♣ opening

Bidding after a 1♣ opening and a response of pass or 1♦

When our partner passes (after first defender overcalls), or when partner responds 1♦, and second defender bids, we use the following methods:

- With 12-14 we pass

- Other bids show a Strong Club, and their meaning is analogous to the meaning of overcalls

Let us look at this situation with an example:

We	They	We	They
1♣	pass	1♦	1♥
?			

Double - 1) 15+; 5+ clubs and 4 spades, or

- 2) 18+; take-out

1♠ - 18+; 5 spades

1NT - 18-20; natural

2♣ - 15+; natural

2♦ - 18+; natural

2♥ - 18+; *Michaels cue bid*: 5-5 shape with spades and a minor

2NT - 21-23; natural

Bidding after a 1♣ opening and a 1♥ / 1♠ response

If the second defender comes in at the two level below responder's suit, double promises a three card or better fit in partner's suit in a weak no trump or 5+ clubs 15-17 hand, and 2♦ is a *reverse*. A cue bid of the opponent's suit – below 3♠ - shows a Strong Club without a fit in responder's suit.

A cue bid in the opponent's suit at, or above, the 3♠ level is a *Splinter*: shortage in the suit bid and a four card fit.

We	They	We	They
1♣	pass	1♥	1♠
?			

Pass - 12-14; without three hearts

Double - 12-17; 3 hearts

1NT - 12-14; good spade stopper

2♣ - 15+; natural, without three hearts, forcing for one round

2♦ - *"odwrotka"*

- 2♥ - 12-14; four hearts
- 2♠ - 18+; asking for a spade stopper, without three hearts
- 2NT - 18+; natural with a spade stopper
- 3♣ / 3♦ - 18+; natural
- 3♠ - 18+; *Splinter* with a four card fit in hearts

We	They	We	They
1♣	pass	1♥	2♦
?			

- Double - at least a three card fit in Hearts; says nothing about strength (could be weak or strong variant)
- 2NT - 18+; natural, without three hearts, with a diamond stopper
- 2♠ - 18+; 5+ spades
- 3♣ - 15+; forcing, without three hearts
- 3♦ - 18+; without three hearts and without a diamond stopper

If the opponent overcalls at a level higher than the two level of responder's suit, the Support Double

convention does not apply. Double shows a Strong Club.

We	They	We	They
1♣	pass	1♥	2♠
?			

- Double

- 18+; says nothing about a fit in responder’s suit
- 2NT

- 18+; natural
- 3♣

- 15+; natural, forcing for one round
- 3♠

- 18+; *Splinter* with a four card heart fit

We	They	We	They
1♣	pass	1♠	3♥
?			

- Double

- 18+; says nothing about a fit in partner’s suit
- 4♥

- 18+; *Splinter* with four card spade fit

The 1♦ Opening

Description of the opening

The suit openings 1♦, 1♥, 1♠ contain more information than the 1♣ opening. They offer responder an opportunity to pre-empt the opposition with a fit in opener's suit. Whereas in the case of the 1♣ opening the main criterion for the opening is strength, in the suit openings the quality of the suit is paramount.

The 1♦ opening usually promises five cards. A four card suit is permitted when opener holds a 4-4-4-1 shape, or when he has four diamonds and five clubs and 12-14 points.

Personally, I prefer to avoid opening 1♦ with a four card suit. If it is possible, I prefer to open 1♣. For instance, with a 4-4-4-1 shape with a singleton in a major suit I open 1♣. If I hold a hand with 5 clubs and 4 diamonds which is suitable for no trumps (i.e. with protected doubletons in the major suits), I open 1♣ and after a major suit response, I rebid 1NT.

In the table below I present examples of opening bids according to "my school":

Your hand

Spades	Hearts	Diamonds	Clubs	<i>Your bid</i>
QJ	Q432	K8753	KJ	Pass
QJ3	543	AQJT2	J93	1♦
AJ43	J432	AQJ3	2	1♦
AJ43	2	T875	AQJ3	1♣
AJ43	J532	AQJ3	K	1NT
AJ4	J532	AQJ32	K	1♦
Q3	K3	A432	KJ532	1♣
A32	2	AQJ3	QT975	1♦
AK2	2	AQJ3	QT975	1♣

Table of responses

The responses to the 1♦ opening are shown in the table below:

Response	Meaning
1♥ / 1♠	5+; natural
1NT	7-10; no four card major
2♣	10+; 5+ clubs
2♦	10+; 4+ diamonds
2♥	5-9; 5+ spades, 4+ hearts

2♠	13+; no four card major, forcing to game
2NT	11-12; no four card major, invitational to 3NT
3♣	6-9; 4+ diamonds, unbalanced, no 4 card major
3♦	0-6; 4+ diamonds, unbalanced, no 4 card major
3♥ / 3♠ / 4♣	13-16; Splinter, 4+ diamonds, shortness bid
3NT	13-16; no four card major
4♦	0-6; 5+ diamonds, very unbalanced, no major
4♥ / 4♠	Long weak suit, pre-emptive
5♦	Pre-emptive

1♥ response

It is assumed that the 1♥ and 1♠ responses do not promise anything more than the suit bid – especially non-vulnerable. But bidding with a weak hand has to be compensated with a long suit.

Bidding quiz

Partner opens 1♦. What do you respond?

Your hand

Spades	Hearts	Diamonds	Clubs	<i>Your bid</i>
432	KQT87	42	432	1♥
432	KQ32	42	5432	Pass
KJT8643	32	32	32	1♠
KJT3	5432	32	432	pass

Development of the auction

Opener faces difficult choices when he has a strong hand (15-17), a long diamond suit (6+) and a three card fit in responder's major. I suggest that after a 1♥ response this hand should be described by an artificial rebid of 2♠.

1♦	1♥
?	

1♠ - 12-17; four spades; forcing for one round

1NT - 12-14

2♣ - 12-14; 5 clubs and 4 diamonds, or
12-17; 5 diamonds, 4+ clubs

2♥ - 12-14; 4 card hearts

- 2♠ - 15-17; 6 diamonds, 3 hearts (!)
- 2NT - 15-17; 6 diamonds, without 3 hearts, “no trump” hand
- 3♣ - 15-17; 5+ diamonds, 5+ clubs
- 3♦ - 15-17; 6+ diamonds, without 3 hearts, “suit contract” hand
- 3♥ - 15-17; 5 diamonds and 4 hearts

Bidding quiz

You have opened 1♦ and partner responds 1♥. What are you going to bid next?

Your hand

Spades	Hearts	Diamonds	Clubs	<i>Your bid</i>
2	KJ3	AJT652	K43	2♦
2	KJ3	AKJ765	K43	2♠
J32	3	AKQJ76	A32	3♦
Q3	Q3	AKQ762	KJ2	2NT

After a response in a major the convention two *checkbacks* is used (after a 1♦ opening this

convention can easily lead to misunderstandings if it is not remembered well):

1♦	1♥
1♠ / 1NT	?

- 2♣
- weak *checkback*: strength below game force
- 2♦
- strong *checkback*: game force (!)
- 3♣
- 7-9; 6+ clubs; to play

After *checkbacks* the bidding continues in the same way as after a 1♣ opening. After a weak *checkback* opener is almost obliged to bid 2♦. Following a strong *checkback* partners exchange additional information, economically, i.e. at the lowest possible level.

Opener’s rebid of 2♣ shows a shape at least 5 diamonds and 4 clubs 12-17, or 4 diamonds and 5 clubs 12-14.

1♦	1♥
2♣	?

- Pass - 5-9; clubs longer than diamonds
- 2♦ - 5-9; diamonds longer than clubs, or equal length
- 2♠ - 13+; *fourth suit*; game force
- 2NT - 10-12; invitational
- 3♣ / 3♦ - 10-12; invitational

After the *fourth suit* opener bids 3♣ with five clubs. Other bids show four clubs.

1♦	1♥
2♣	2♠ (<i>fourth suit</i>)
?	

- 2NT - 12-14; 5 diamonds and 4 clubs, spade stopper
- 3♣ - 12-17; 5 clubs
- 3♦ - 12-14; 5+ diamonds, 4 clubs, no spade stopper
- 3♥ - 12-17; 5 diamonds, 4 clubs, 3 hearts

3♠ - 15-17; without a spade stopper or three hearts

3NT - 15-17; spade stopper

1♠ response

In relation to the response 1♠ it is important to consider a sequence when opener holds a strong hand (15-17) with six diamonds and a spade fit. With such a hand opener rebids 2♥ - an ambiguous bid:

1♦	1♠
?	

2♥ - 15-17; 5 diamonds, 4 hearts or 6 diamonds and 3 spades

2NT - 6 diamonds, without three spades, “no trump” hand

3♦ - 15-17; 6+ diamonds, without three spades, “suit contract” hand

After opener's ambiguous 2♥ rebid, responder's 2NT rebid is forcing.

1♦	1♠
2♥ (15-17; 5♦, 4♥ or 6♦, 3♠)	?

2♠ / 3♦ - 5-9; non-forcing

2NT - 10+; forcing, asking for shape

3♣ - 10+; asking for a club stopper

After a 2NT question opener bids 3♠ with the diamond – spade variant. All other bids say that 2♥ rebid was natural.

1♦	1♠
2♥ (15-17; 5♦, 4♥ or 6♦, 3♠)	2NT (10+; forcing)
?	

3♣ - 5 diamonds, 4 hearts, 3 clubs

3♦ - 6 diamonds, 4 hearts

- 3♥ - 5 diamonds, 4 hearts, 3 spades
- 3♠ - 6 diamonds, 3 spades
- 3NT - 2-4-5-2 shape with 4 hearts

1NT response

The 1NT response shows 7-10 and no four card major. Opener's rebids are natural: 2♥ and 2♠ promise 15-17, 3♣ shows a 5-5 shape and 15-17 points – responder should not pass (with a very weak hand he should bid 3♦), 3♦ is invitational, but not forcing.

2♣ response

The 2♣ response shows an at least invitational hand with five clubs. Opener with a lower range opening either rebids diamonds or bids 2NT to show a three suiter with a singleton Club. With an upper range hand opener must bid differently:

1♦	2♣
?	

2♦ - 12-14

2♥ / 2♠ - 15-17; four hearts / spades

2NT - 12-14; 4-4-4-1, singleton club

3♣ - 4 clubs, extra values, no shortage

3♥ / 3♠ - *Splinter*, 4+ clubs, extra values, shortage in the suit bid

3NT - 15-17; 4-4-4-1, singleton club

Bidding quiz

You have opened 1♦ and partner responds 2♣.
What do you rebid?

Your hand

Spades	Hearts	Diamonds	Clubs	<i>Your bid</i>
A32	654	AQJ65	J3	2♦
QJ3	Q3	AQJ65	J53	2♦
A3	32	AK875	QJ43	3♣
A32	2	AK875	K432	3♥
A432	KT98	AJ87	3	2NT
A432	KT98	AKJ7	3	3NT

There is just one way to stop below game: it is when responder rebids clubs after a weak rebid by opener (2♦ or 2NT).

After a 3NT rebid we agree a major suit with a transfer:

1♦	2♣
3NT (4-4-4-1, singleton ♣)	?

4♦ - strong agreement of hearts

4♥ - strong agreement of spades

2♦ response

The 2♦ response promises a four card or longer fit and 10+ points. Opener continues by showing his shape, and responder shows his stops. This is due to the fact that opener's hand is more or less known, but responder's shape is limited by the fact that he does not possess a four card major.

In the next round of bidding responder can show a minimum hand with a 3♦ bid which is not forcing.

Other bids by responder (including 2NT) are forcing.

1♦	2♦
?	

2♥/2♠/3♣- four card suit

2NT - 12-14; hand suitable to “take over”
no trumps

3♦ - 12-14; hand unsuitable to “take
over” no trumps

3♥/3♠/4♣- 15-17; *Splinter*

2♥ response

The 2♥ response has a similar meaning as after the 1♣ opening. It shows a hand with at least five spades and at least four hearts. The strength of the bid has a slightly wider range (5-9), as it is possible to make this bid with a weak hand which is more distributional.

Bidding quiz

Partner has opened 1♦. What do you respond?

Your hand

Spades	Hearts	Diamonds	Clubs	<i>Your bid</i>
QJ876	AQ65	54	32	2♥
QJT76	AQJ6	54	32	1♠
QJ876	AJ654	5	32	2♥
QJT76	QT954	5	32	2♥
QT765	Q954	52	32	pass

The rest of the auction is natural:

1♦	2♥
?	

- Pass/2♠ - places the contract
- 2NT - 16-17; invitational to 3NT
- 3♣ - 16-17; *fourth suit* ("tell me more")
- 3♦ - natural, non-forcing

Development of the auction after *fourth suit* 3♣:

1♦	2♥ (5-9; 5+ ♠, 4+ ♥)
3♣ (<i>fourth suit</i>)	?

3♦ - nothing exciting, doubleton diamond

3♥ - five hearts

3♠ - good spades

3NT - natural with a club stopper

2♠ response

The 2♠ response is forcing to game without a four card major. With most hands opener rebids 3NT. Other opener's rebids are natural.

1♦	2♠ (13+, no 4 card major, game force)
?	

2NT - natural, opener sees slam possibilities

3♣/3♥/3♠ - 12-17; four card suit

3♦ - 12-17; six diamonds

3NT - 12-14; nothing interesting

2NT response

The 2NT response is invitational to 3NT with no four card major, 11-12 points. Opener's 3♦ rebid is non-forcing, but the 3♣ rebid is forcing to 3♦.

3♣/3♦ responses

The 3♣ response shows a hand with a diamond fit too strong for a pre-empt (3♦), but too weak for an invitational 2♦.

The 3♦ response shows a pre-emptive hand with a four card fit.

Bidding quiz

Partner opens 1♦. Choose your response:

Your hand

Spades	Hearts	Diamonds	Clubs	Your bid
A32	65	QJ63	A432	2♦
32	65	QJ63	J6532	3♦
A2	65	QJ63	J6532	3♣
3	65	QJ632	J6532	4♦

3♥/3♠ responses

These responses are *Splinters*. They promise a four card fit in Diamonds and are forcing to game.

The fundamental difference from the use of the *Splinter* convention after a major suit opening is the fact that after a 1♦ opening, a contract of 3NT may be selected, if opener holds honour cards opposite responder's shortage.

4♦ response

This is a pre-emptive bid. Opener should usually pass.

Bidding after intervention

Bidding after a take-out double

Redouble shows a hand with 10+ points, and says nothing about diamonds. The 1♥, 1♠ and 2♣ responses are natural and not forcing (they may show a good suit without any outside honours).

After a 1♦ opening and opponent's take-out double, there is no need to have major suit responses as forcing (as is the case after the 1♣ opening), since with a strong hand it is possible to redouble even with diamond shortage (but it is not possible to redouble after opening 1♣ with club shortage).

The 2♦ response is a weak raise with a three card fit. All other bids have the same meaning as if there had been no double.

Bidding after an overcall

After a 1♥ overcall we use transfers to spades and no trumps. A bid of the opponent's suit (2♥) shows a hand with 10+ points and a diamond fit.

We	They	We
1♦	1♥	?

- Double - 4+ spades
- 1♠ - transfer to 1NT
- 1NT - natural
- 2♣ - 7-11; natural, non-forcing
- 2♦ - 6-9; natural, non-forcing
- 2♥ - 10+ with a diamond fit
- 2♠ - 12+; 5+ spades, game force

- 2NT - natural, invitational
- 3♣ - 12+; 6+ clubs, forcing for one round
- 3♦ - 0-6; natural, pre-emptive

After a 1♠ overall we do not use transfers. The 2♠ response does not promise a diamond fit.

We	They	We
1♦	1♠	?

- Double - 4+ hearts
- 1NT - natural
- 2♣ - 7-11; natural, non-forcing
- 2♦ - 6-9; natural, non-forcing
- 2♥ - 7-11; natural, non-forcing
- 2♠ - 10+ with a diamond fit, or 12+ asking for a stopper
- 2NT - natural, invitational

- 3♣ - 12+; 6+ clubs, forcing
- 3♦ - 0-6; natural, pre-emptive

The 1♥ Opening

Description of the opening

This opening shows 12-17 points and at least five Hearts.

Table of responses

The responses to 1♥ opening are shown in the table below:

Response	Meaning
1♠	5+; natural
1NT	7-11; without three hearts
2♣	10+; 2+ clubs
2♦	10+; 5+ diamonds
2♥	6-10; with a 3+ heart fit
2♠	10-12; at least 5-4 in the minors
2NT	10-12; invitational to game with a heart fit
3♣	6-9; 4+ hearts, unbalanced
3♦	9-12; 4+ hearts, any shortage (<i>Mini-Splinter</i>)

3♠ / 4♣ / 4♦	13-16; 4+ hearts, shortage in suit bid (<i>Splinter</i>)
3NT	10-13: good raise to 4♥ without shortage
4♥	0-7; pre-emptive raise to 4♥
4♠	To play; long suit, weak hand; pre-emptive

1♠ response

The 1♠ response is similar to the same response to the 1♦ opening.

Let us examine some of the sequences:

1♥	1♠
?	

1NT - 12-14; 5-3-3-2

2♣ / 2♦ - 12-17: four card or longer suit

2♥ - 12-14; six hearts

2♠ - 12-14; four spades

2NT - 15-17; 5-3-3-2

3♣ / 3♦ - 15-17; five card suit

1♥	1♠
1NT	?

2♣ - weak *checkback*

2♦ - strong *checkback*

2♥ - 6-9; five spades, three hearts

2♠ - *sign off*

1♥	1♠
2♣	?

2♦ - 12+; *fourth suit*

2♥ - 6-10; 2 or 3 hearts

2♠ - 6-10; natural

2NT/3♣/3♥/3♠ - 9-12; natural,
invitational

Bidding after *fourth suit* develops as follows:

1♥	1♠
2♣	2♦ (<i>fourth suit</i>)
?	

- 2♥ - 12-14; without three spades or a diamond stopper
- 2♠ - 12-14; three spades
- 2NT - 12-14; diamond stopper
- 3♣ - 12-14; 5 clubs
- 3♦ - 15-17; without three spades or a diamond stopper
- 3♥ - 15-17; 6 hearts
- 3♠ - 15-17; 3 spades
- 3NT - 15-17; without three spades, with a diamond stopper

After opener's 2♥ rebid responder can ask for shortage by bidding 2NT:

1♥	1♠
2♥	2NT (asking for shortage)

- 3♣ - club shortage
- 3♦ - diamond shortage
- 3♥ - three spades(!)
- 3♠ - spade shortage
- 3NT - no shortage, without three spades, with a diamond stopper

Rebids with a jump show 15-17 points:

1♥	1♠
3♣ (15-17; 5 clubs)	?

- 3♦ - *fourth suit*
- 3♥ - heart fit, forcing
- 3♠ - natural, forcing

Bidding is a bit different (because of the lack of space) after opener's jump rebid of 3♦:

1 ♥	1 ♠
3 ♦ (15-17; 5 diamonds)	?

3 ♥ - 2 or 3 hearts; forcing

3 ♠ - natural, forcing

1NT response

The 1NT response is not forcing, 7-11 points, without a heart fit or four spades. Note that it excludes the following hand types:

With an invitational hand and 5-4 or longer minors, responder bids 2 ♠.

With an invitational hand with one minor suit, responder bids *two-over-one* and then repeats his suit on the next round.

Bidding quiz

Partner opens 1 ♥. Choose your response:

Your hand

Spades	Hearts	Diamonds	Clubs	<i>Your bid</i>
QJ8	J6	J632	J653	Pass
QJ84	J6	QJ32	653	1♠
QJ8	J6	QJ432	653	1NT
QJ8	J6	AQJ43	653	1NT
QJ8	J6	AQJ432	65	2♦
32	3	AQJ43	QJT32	2♠

After a 1NT response opener is obliged to keep the auction alive with an unbalanced distribution:

1♥	1NT
?	

Pass - 12-14; 5-3-3-2 shape (or shape with 4 spades)

2♣ / 2♦ - 12-17; 5+ hearts, 4+ clubs / diamonds

2♥ - 12-14; 6+ hearts

2♠ - 15-17; 5+ hearts, 4 spades

- 2NT - 15-17; 5-3-3-2 shape
- 3♣ / 3♦ - 15-17; 5+ hearts, 5+ clubs / diamonds
- 3♥ - 15-17; 6+ hearts

After opener's rebid in a minor suit at the two level, responder has the opportunity to show a maximum hand with a fit by bidding 2♠.

1♥	1NT
2♣	?

- 3♣ - 8-11; 4+ clubs
- 2♠ - 10-11; 5+ clubs

2♣ response

The 2♣ response promises 10+ points, and can have one of two meanings:

- 1) Natural clubs with 10+ points;

- 2) 12+, game forcing without a five card suit or four spades

The 2♦ response promises 5+ diamonds.

Therefore, in an extreme case, the 2♣ response can be made with just two Clubs. For this reason, it must be alerted.

Bidding quiz

Partner opens 1♥. Choose your response:

Your hand

Spades	Hearts	Diamonds	Clubs	<i>Your bid</i>
AQ84	J6	Q32	AQ32	1♠
AQ84	J6	32	AQJ53	2♣
K84	J6	32	AQT532	2♣
K84	A6	A2	AQT532	2♣
T84	A6	AKT2	A532	2♣
T84	A632	AKT2	A5	2♣
T84	A6	AKT32	A53	2♦

Opener's rebids above 2♥ show extra values:

1♥	2♣
?	

- 2♦ - 12-17; 4+ diamonds
- 2♥ - 12-14; without four diamonds, does not specify shape
- 2♠ - 15-17; 4 spades
- 2NT - 15-17; balanced
- 3♣ - 15-17; exactly 4 clubs
- 3♦ / 3♠ - 15-17; *Splinter*, 4+ clubs, shortage in the suit bid
- 3♥ - 15-17; 6+ hearts

After rebids do not promise more than 12 points it is possible to stop in 3♣. All other bids are game forcing:

1♥	2♣
2♦ / 2♥	?

- 2♠ - 12+; *third suit*

2NT - 12+; *forcing 2NT*

3♣ - 10-12; 6+ clubs, non-forcing

After a bid of the type *third suit* the bidding continues analogously to the sequences when 2♣ and 2♦ are bid in response to a 1♣ opening.

After responder's "forcing 2NT" rebid opener continues to describe his hand, for example:

1♥	2♣
2♦	2NT
?	

3♣ - 3 clubs

3♦ - 5+ diamonds

3♥ - 6+ hearts

3♠ - 4 spades

2♦ response

The 2♦ response shows 10+ points and at least 5 diamonds.

Bidding sequences are analogous to those after the 2♣ response .

2♥ response

The 2♥ response shows 6-10 points with a fit in opener's suit (usually a three card fit; with a longer fit responder has a wide choice of alternative bids).

In the rest of the auction opener can invite game by making a trial bid in a side suit, or by bidding a direct 3♥.

2♠ response

The 2♠ response shows a hand with both minor suits which is too weak for a *two-over-one*, but too strong for a non-forcing 1NT (however, usually these are more distributional hands).

Bidding quiz

Partner has opened 1♥. What do you respond?

Your hand

Spades	Hearts	Diamonds	Clubs	<i>Your bid</i>
32	3	AQJ43	QJT32	2♠
32	32	AQT43	QJ32	1NT
32	32	AQJ43	KJT2	2♠
K2	3	AQJ43	QJT32	2♦

1♥	2♠
?	

2NT - forcing: show me your longer suit

3♣/3♦/3♥ - non-forcing (with equal length bid clubs)

3NT - to play

High level responses with a fit

All responses at the three level (and almost all at the four level) promise a fit in opener's suit. The idea is that since a jump response consumes a lot of bidding space, it must contain as much information as possible.

Supporting partner at the two level usually promises a three card fit.

2NT is invitational to game with at least a three card fit.

Jump support (three in opener's suit) is pre-emptive – opener should pass.

3♣ shows a distributional hand too strong for a pre-empt, but too weak for an invitation (sometimes called a *mixed raise*).

With a hand without a shortage but strong enough to bid game we bid 3NT.

4♥ is pre-emptive (usually with a five card fit).

With a fit in partner's suit and a shortage there are two possible approaches: either show the shortage directly (3♠, 4♣, 4♦), which promises a hand with 13-16 points; or bid 3♦ which shows a weaker hand (9-12) with any shortage.

Bidding quiz

Partner has opened 1♥. What do you respond?

Your hand

Spades	Hearts	Diamonds	Clubs	<i>Your bid</i>
2	Q32	KJ75	J5432	2♥
65	K32	AJ74	KT62	2NT
53	K632	A74	KT62	2NT
3	K653	KJ54	6532	3♣
53	Q632	AT854	32	3♣
3	K653	J542	6532	3♥
32	Q632	QT854	32	3♥
53	K653	Q4	AJ532	3NT
53	QJT76	KJ3	A32	3NT

Mini-Splinter and Splinter

The *Mini-Splinter* is a response of 3♦ to the 1♥ or 1♠ openings . It shows a game forcing hand with a four card fit in opener's suit and a shortage in any side suit and with 9-12 points.

Bidding quiz

Partner has opened 1♥ . What do you respond?

Your hand

Spades	Hearts	Diamonds	Clubs	<i>Your bid</i>
A765	K875	KJ75	3	3♦
3	A7653	AJ654	32	3♦
KQ65	A643	AQ52	4	4♣
3	A8765	AJ654	K2	3♠
KJ65	A865	-	AT653	4♦

After a *Mini-Splinter* opener can ask where the shortage is by rebidding 3♥.

1♥	3♦
3♥	?

3♠/4♣/4♦ - shortage in the suit bid

Drury

The Drury convention is the artificial response of 2♣, by a player who has initially passed, to the 1♥ or 1♠ openings. This response promises at

least a three card fit in opener's suit and at least a good 9 points. This convention is also used in competitive bidding when partner has overcalled with a major suit. In this situation the condition that the user of the convention must be a passed hand does not apply.

The weakest reply to the *Drury* convention is a return to the original suit. Other bids show extra values, and a 2♦ rebid is artificial – it describes a hand with standard opening strength but does not specify distribution.

Pass	1♥
2♣	?

2♦ - hand of standard strength (11-14)

2♥ - weakest hand, unlikely to produce game

Other bids - trial bids; invitational to game

The 1♠ Opening

We only discuss bidding sequences that differ from the 1♥ opening.

2♥/3♥/4♥ responses

The 2♥ response is natural (5+ hearts, 10+ points), but does not force to game.

Opener must show a heart fit even with a minimum opening.

1♠	2♥
?	

- 2♠ - 12-14; without three hearts
- 2NT - 15-17; balanced (may have three hearts); game forcing
- 3♥ - 12-14; with a heart fit
- 3NT - 12-14; *Splinter* with a heart fit; responder's 4♣ asks for the shortage;

4♦ shows diamond shortage and 4♥ shows club shortage

4♣/4♦ - 15-17; *Splinter* with heart fit

4♥ - stronger than 3♥ (15-17), four hearts

Bidding after intervention over our 1♥ / 1♠ openings

Bidding after a take-out double

After a take-out double of our major suit opening, responder shows his suit using transfers. These bids show a good suit, but do not specify strength.

There is one exception: the response of 1♠ after a 1♥ opening is natural (5+ spades) and non-forcing.

We	They	We
1♥	double	?

Redouble - 10+; hand suitable to double the opposition

1♠ - 5-10; 5+ spades, non-forcing

- 1NT - 5+; transfer to clubs
- 2♣ - 5+; transfer to diamonds
- 2♦ - 0-6; weak raise with heart fit
- 3♣ / 3♦ - 8-11; 5+ cards with 2+ honours in suit bid and heart fit; forcing to 3♥
- Others - as if there was no double

After a 1♠ opening the bidding is very similar:

We	They	We
1♠	double	?

- Redouble - 10+; hand suitable to double the opposition
- 1NT - 5+; transfer to clubs
- 2♣ - 5+; transfer to diamonds
- 2♦ - 5+; transfer to hearts
- 2♥ - 0-6; weak raise with spade fit
- 2♠ - 7-10; standard raise with spade fit
- 3♣ / 3♦ - 8-11; suit bid and spade fit

Others - as if there was no double

Since the transfers are forcing they can be made with a variety of hands:

- A weak hand with a long suit
- A strong distributional hand (to protect against a pre-emptive bid by the opposition if we were to redouble)
- With a fit in partner's suit when we want to request a lead

Bidding quiz

Partner has opened 1♠, and the next opponent has made a take-out double. What are you going to respond?

Your hand

Spades	Hearts	Diamonds	Clubs	<i>Your bid</i>
62	T7	Q75	KJT764	1NT
6	Q752	Q65	KJ976	Pass
6	Q752	AJ5	KJ976	Redouble
3	32	KQ95	QJT975	1NT
432	43	T954	KQJ2	1NT
Q2	QJT7	2	AQJT97	1NT
QT7	42	K75	KQT76	3♣

Partner is normally obliged to complete the transfer – any other bid shows a very distributional hand.

We	They	We	They
1♠	double	1NT (transfer to clubs)	pass
?			

2♣ - says nothing about a club fit (may have a singleton)

2♦ / 2♥ - natural, 5-5 shape

2♠ - natural, 6 spades

3♣ - nice hand with at least three card fit in clubs

Bidding after an overcall

A cue bid in opponent's suit by responder invites game with a fit in opener's suit, and 2NT is forcing to game with a fit. A jump raise is pre-emptive.

A negative double includes hands invitational to 3NT.

A new suit at the two level is non-forcing, but at the three level is forcing.

We	They	We	They
1♠	2♦	?	

Double - negative with four hearts, or invitational to 3NT

2♥ - natural, non-forcing

2NT - game force with spade fit

3♣ - natural, forcing

3♦ - invitation to game with spade fit

3♥

- natural, forcing

3♠

- pre-emptive with spade fit

The 1NT Opening

Description of the opening

The 1NT opening shows 15-17 points and a balanced distribution. It is possible to open 1NT with a five card minor (even with a four card side suit, as long as short suits are guarded with honours) or a weak six card minor. It is not advised to open 1NT with a five card major.

Bidding quiz

Choose an opening bid.

Your hand

Spades	Hearts	Diamonds	Clubs	<i>Your bid</i>
AKT76	KT5	Q3	QT5	1♠
Q3	KT5	AKT76	QT5	1NT
Q3	KJ	AKT86	QJ43	1NT
32	J2	AKT86	AQJ4	1♦
QT	KJ5	A98754	KQ2	1NT
T5	K5	AQJ875	KQ2	1♦

Stayman 2♣

The 2♣ response to a 1NT opening asks for four card majors. The strength of this bid is not determined – it is possible to use *Stayman* even with zero points, and then pass when opener rebids a major suit, or bid 2♥ over 2♦.

1NT	2♣
?	

- 2♦ - no four card major
- 2♥ - four (or five) hearts, may have four Spades
- 2♠ - four (or five) spades, denies four hearts

After a 2♦ rebid, responder can continue in the following ways:

- 2♥ - 0-8; 4+ hearts, 4 spades
- 2♠ - 0-8; 5+ spades, 4 hearts

- 2NT - 8-9; invitational to 3NT (with one or both four card majors)
- 3♣ - 9+; natural, forcing (with unspecified four card major)
- 3♦ - 9+; natural, forcing (with unspecified four card major)
- 3♥ / 3♠ - 9+; the *Smolen* convention

The *Smolen* convention

In this convention responder shows a game forcing hand with 5-4 in the majors by bidding the four card major at the three level: 3♥ shows five Spades, and 3♠ shows five hearts. The idea is to make sure that the declarer is the stronger hand.

After opener's 2♥ rebid responder can continue bidding naturally. There is only one artificial bid, namely 3♠ which strongly agrees Hearts.

1NT	2♣
2♥	?

- 2♠ - 0-8; 4 spades, unbalanced
(2NT now asks for a minor)
- 2NT - 8-9; 4 spades, invitational to 3NT
- 3♣ - 9+; natural, forcing
- 3♦ - 9+; natural, forcing
- 3♥ - 8-9; invitational to 4♥
- 3♠ - 10+; strong agreement of hearts

After responder strongly agrees hearts, opener may suggest a 3NT contract.

1NT	2♣
2♥	3♠ (strong ♥ agreement)

- 3NT - proposal of contract
- 4♣/4♦ - *cue bid*; maximum opening
- 4♥ - minimum opening

After opener's 2♠ rebid responder can continue bidding naturally. There is only one artificial bid, 3♥ which strongly agrees spades.

1NT	2♣
2♠	?

- 2NT - 8-9; without 4 spades (with 4 hearts), invitational to 3NT
- 3♣ - 9+; natural, forcing (with 4 hearts)
- 3♦ - 9+; natural, forcing (with 4 hearts)
- 3♥ - 10+; strong agreement of spades
- 3♠ - 8-9: invitational to 4♠

2♦ and 2♥ Transfers

The 2♦ and 2♥ responses are transfers – they promise at least five cards in the suit directly above the one bid (2♦ shows five or more Hearts, 2♥ shows five or more Spades). The strength of these bids is not determined.

We will look at the rest of the auction by considering the sequence 1NT - 2♥.

1NT	2♥
?	

- 2♠ - most hands
- 2NT - very good spade fit, maximum opening, balanced
- 3♠ - very good spade fit, maximum opening, unbalanced

When we consider a bid other than 2♠, after a transfer to Spades, we have to ask ourselves the following question: will an average 7 points in partner's hand be enough for game? If the answer is positive, then it is worth risking bypassing the 2♠ bid.

Bidding quiz

You have opened 1NT and partner has transferred to spades. What is your next bid?

Your hand

Spades	Hearts	Diamonds	Clubs	<i>Your bid</i>
Q3	AKQ3	KJ2	QT53	2♠
AK3	Q32	KJ2	K53	2♠
AKJ3	KT5	QJ7	QJ2	2♠
KQ6	AJ9	KT9	AT76	2NT
KT85	A3	AJ65	AT93	3♠
AQ3	32	AK865	AT2	3♠

After standard acceptance of the transfer responder can invite game with a 2NT bid or by rebidding his suit. A new suit bid forces to game. After a new suit by responder opener can strongly agree a major suit at the three level, or negatively just bid game. Without fits and with good stoppers in the unbid suits opener can bid 3NT. Other bids show extra values in the suit bid and uncertainty about the final contract:

1NT	2♦
2♥	3♣
?	

- 3♦ - without three hearts, values in diamonds
- 3♥ - forcing agreement of hearts
- 3♠ - without three hearts, values in spades
- 3NT - good stops in diamonds and spades
- 4♣ - forcing agreement of clubs
- 4♥ - poor hand with heart fit

2♠ Transfer

The 2♠ transfer shows a six card club suit. The reasons for this bid could be as follows:

- To play in 3♣
- To check whether 5♣ is not a better contract than 3NT
- To begin a slam auction

Opener has two choices: 2NT: a good hand with a good club fit; and 3♣ - all other hands. To decide between the two rebids, opener has to ask himself a question: will an average 7 points in responder's

hand be enough for 3NT? If the reply is positive, then opener can bid 2NT.

Bidding quiz

You have opened 1NT and partner has transferred to clubs. What do you bid next?

Your hand

Spades	Hearts	Diamonds	Clubs	<i>Your bid</i>
KQ6	AJ9	KT9	AT76	2NT
A75	AT7	AT5	KT76	2NT
KJ65	AK3	AQ65	95	3♣
QJ5	KJ7	KQJ3	Q32	3♣

In the next round of bidding responder with a game forcing hand can show a shortage or bid 3NT. It is assumed that if responder is considering a contract different from 3NT, but does not have a shortage, then his hand must be really strong:

1NT	2♠
3♣	?

3♦/3♥/3♠ - shortage

3NT - no shortage, invitation to slam

2NT – invitation to 3NT

2NT shows 8-9 points with no four card major, it invites partner to bid 3NT.

Bidding with diamonds

If responder holds 6 diamonds he first has to qualify his hand into one of three categories:

- Weak hand
- Hand invitational to game
- Game forcing hand

1NT	?
-----	---

3♣ - transfer to diamonds; either a weak hand, or a game force

3♦ - invitational to game hand

After the 3♣ response opener must bid 3♦.
 Responder then passes with a weak hand, and shows shortage with a game going hand, or bids 3NT to invite slam.

After the 3♦ response opener either passes or bids 3NT. The decision is usually dependent on the quality of the Diamond fit.

3♥/3♠ responses

The 3♥ and 3♠ responses show 9+ points and are forcing to game. They promise shape at least 5-4 in the minors and show shortage in the suit bid.

1NT	?
-----	---

3♥ - 9+; at least 5-4 in the minors, short hearts

3♠ - 9+; at least 5-4 in the minors, short spades

Opener now has to consider whether or not a 3NT contract is desirable. This is the case whenever opener holds honour cards in responder's short suit.

Otherwise opener has to decide whether to choose a contract of five in a minor, or, alternatively, four in the other major suit (on a four – three fit). When opener does not have wasted honour cards in responder's short major, he may investigate slam possibilities.

1NT	3♥
?	

- 3♠ - four good spades – proposal to play with seven trumps
- 3NT - to play – “I have honour cards in hearts”
- 4♣ / 4♦ - strong agreement of this suit
- 4♥ - four card fits in both minors, slam interest
- 4NT - four card fits in both minors, no slam interest

Bidding after intervention

Bidding after a conventional double

Usually a double by the opposition has a conventional meaning (e.g. a four card major and a five card or longer minor). All our subsequent bids have the same meaning as if there was no double.

Redouble shows 8+ points. The plan is to double the opposition. After a redouble all passes by us are forcing (we never allow the opponents to play in an undoubled contract).

We	They	We	They
1NT	double	redouble	Pass
pass	2♦	Pass (forcing)	Pass
?			

Opener cannot pass responder’s forcing pass. With four diamonds he doubles, otherwise he bids his lowest suit, or bids 2NT.

If opponents’ double is for penalties – for instance, when our 1NT was an overcall, not an opening bid

– all bids by responder are natural, and redouble is for rescue, for example:

They	We	They	We
1♠	1NT	Double (penalty)	?

2♣/2♦/2♥ - natural, non-forcing

Redouble - SOS – “I have two suits. Let’s run”

They	We	They	We
1♠	1NT	double (penalty)	Redouble (SOS)
pass	2♣ (your suit?)	double	?

Pass - “Yes, I have clubs”

2♦ - “No, I have diamonds and hearts”

Redouble - “No, I have diamonds and hearts,
hearts are longer”

Bidding after natural overcalls at the two level

After a natural overcall at the two level we use the *Lebensohl* convention, in which bids at the two level are not forcing, 2NT is artificial, and bids at the three level are forcing:

We	They	We
1NT	2♥	?

2♠ - 0-8; natural

2NT - *Lebensohl*

3♣/3♦/3♠ - 9+; natural, forcing

3♥ - asking for a heart stopper, without four spades

2NT shows either a hand with fewer than 8 points with one suit, or a game forcing hand with four cards in the other major. Opener must bid 3♣.

We	They	We	They
1NT	2♠	2NT (<i>Lebensohl</i>)	pass
3♣ (forced)	pass	?	

Pass - 0-8; club suit

3♦ / 3♥ - 0-8; diamond / heart suit

3♠ - 9+; four hearts, no spade stopper

3NT - 9+; four hearts, spade stopper

Bidding after artificial overcalls at the two level

Double shows 8+ points and a desire to double the opposition for penalties. It does not show length in the suit doubled. Overcalls are natural and not forcing at the two level, but forcing at the three level.

Bidding after overcalls at the three level

Double is negative, other bids are natural and forcing

The 2♣ Opening

Description of the opening

The 2♣ opening in Polish Club Standard shows a hand with six clubs or five + clubs and a four card (or occasionally a poor five card) major. The strength of the bid is 11-14 points.

Table of responses

Response	Meaning
2♦	Asking for a four card major
2♥ / 2♠	7-11; natural, non-forcing
2NT	4-8 with a club fit, OR 12+ two-suited hand, game force
3♣	9-11; natural, invitational
3♦ / 3♥ / 3♠	9-11; natural, invitational with a six card or longer suit
4♣	Pre-emptive

Bidding after the 2♦ question

2♣	2♦ (asking for 4 card major)
?	

2♥ - four hearts

2♠ - four spades

2NT - six clubs; hand suitable to play in NT

3♣ - six clubs; hand not suitable to play in NT

The rest of the auction is natural, except for responder's forcing 2NT rebid.

2♣	2♦ (asking for 4 card major)
2♥	?

2♠ - 12+; 5+ spades, game force

2NT - forcing question

3♣ - 8-11; non-forcing

3♦ - 12+; 5+ diamonds

3♥ - invitational to 4♥

2♣	2♦ (asking for 4 card major)
2♥	2NT (forcing)
?	

3♣ - six clubs

3♦ - three diamonds

3♥ - six clubs, five poor hearts

3♠ - three spades

3NT - 5-4-2-2

After opener's 2♠ rebid the bidding continues analogously.

After opener's 3♣ rebid, responder can ask about shortage with a 3♦ bid:

2♣	2♦
3♣	3♦ (asking for shortage)
?	

3♥ / 3♠ - shortage in hearts / spades

3NT - no shortage in a major suit

2♥/2♠ responses

These responses are not forcing. They promise at least a five card suit and 7-11 points.

Opener can support partner with a fit. Without a fit opener has to decide if it is better to pass or to bid on.

Bidding quiz

You have opened 2♣ and partner has responded 2♥. What do you bid now?

Your hand

Spades	Hearts	Diamonds	Clubs	<i>Your bid</i>
AQJ8	43	42	AQT87	Pass
AQJ8	4	42	AQT873	2♠
AJ8	4	42	AQT8732	3♣
A8	QJ4	42	AQT873	3♥
A84	QJ43	4	AQT87	4♥
A84	QJ4	4	AKT875	4♥

2NT response

The 2NT response shows either a weak hand (strength 4-8 points) with a club fit, or a two suited hand forcing to game. Opener is obliged to rebid 3♣, and responder clarifies the type of his original bid.

2♣	2NT (ambiguous)
3♣ (forced)	?

Pass - 4-8; with club fit

- 3♦ - 12+; 5+ diamonds, 5+ hearts
- 3♥ - 12+; 5+ hearts, 5+ spades
- 3♠ - 12+; 5+ diamonds, 5+ spades

Bidding after intervention

Take-out double

If opponents use a take-out double, we bid as though there was no double (redouble is for penalties).

Suit overcall

Negative doubles apply to 4♦. 2NT is natural. A new suit at the three level is forcing.

The 2♦ Opening

Description of the opening

The 2♦ opening shows a hand with a six card major suit not strong enough for a one level opening: 6-11.

Table of responses

Response	Meaning
2♥ / 2♠	Pass or correct
2NT	Game forcing question
3♣	“transfer into your suit”
3♦	Invitational with fits in both majors
3♥	Pre-emptive, fits in both majors
3♠	Natural, invitational to four spades
4♣	“transfer into your suit”
4♦	“bid your suit”
4♥ / 4♠	Natural, responder’s own suit

2♥ response

This is the most common response. It means: “pass with Hearts, bid 2♠ with spades”. Responder should not bid higher than 2♥ even with a strong hand, when he has a heart shortage.

2♠ response

This bid means: “pass with spades, bid on with hearts”.

Opener passes 2♠, if he has spades. Otherwise he bids 2NT (maximum opening with hearts), or 3♥ (minimum opening with Hearts).

Therefore, responder has to be prepared to play at the three level if opener has Hearts.

To sum up: when partner has opened 2♦, if you have a fit in only one major, bid the suit in which you DON'T have a fit.

Bidding quiz

Partner has opened 2♦. What do you respond?

Your hand

Spades	Hearts	Diamonds	Clubs	<i>Your bid</i>
J3	J3	KQ764	QJT7	2♥
KJ3	J3	KQ76	QJT7	2♥
AJ3	3	KQ765	AQ97	2♥
KQT3	-	KQ765	AQJ7	2♥
3	K873	K32	AK432	2♠
32	K87	K32	AK432	2♠
32	K87	KQ93	A432	2♠

2NT response

The 2NT response is forcing to game.

There is no need to have 2NT as an invitational bid, since this purpose is served by the 3♣ or 3♦ responses.

Opener shows a maximum opening by rebidding 3♣, and a minimum opening by rebidding 3♦ or 3♥, according to which suit he holds.

2♦	2NT
?	

3♣ - 9-11; either suit

3♦ - 6-8; hearts

3♥ - 6-8; spades

After the 3♣ rebid, 3♦ by responder is the next question:

3♥ - spades

3♠ - hearts

The rest of the auction is forced to game.

Responder can begin a slam inquiry by strongly agreeing opener's suit at the three level.

3♣ response

The 3♣ response has the meaning: "transfer into your suit". It has one of two meanings:

- Invitation to game
- Giving opener a choice between 3NT and 4 of the major

2♦	3♣ ("transfer into your suit")
3♦ (hearts)	?

3♥ - invitational to 4♥

3NT - "choose between 3NT and 4♥"

With a 6-4 shape or with seven Hearts opener should correct the contract. If opener wants to remove 3NT it is best done with a transfer, to make sure the stronger hand is the declarer.

Bidding quiz

Partner has opened 2♦. You have responded 3♣, and partner shows spades with a 3♥ bid. What do you bid now?

Your hand

Spades	Hearts	Diamonds	Clubs	<i>Your bid</i>
AJ3	J3	KQ764	KJT7	3♠
AJ3	J3	KQ764	AJT7	4♠
AJ3	KJ3	QJ76	AQ7	3NT

3♦ response

This bid is invitational to game with fits in both majors. We use this bid if we want partner to be declarer.

3♥ response

This is a tactical bid with fits in both majors. Opener must pass with hearts, or correct to 3♠ with spades.

3♠ response

This response is an invitation to 4♠. It is based on responder's own strong Spade suit.

3NT response

The 3NT response sets the final contract based on responder's own solid suit. Opener must pass.

Bidding quiz

Partner has opened 2♦. What do you respond?

Your hand

Spades	Hearts	Diamonds	Clubs	<i>Your bid</i>
K2	K2	K2	AKQJ532	3NT
K2	3	AJ3	AKQJ532	2NT

4♣ response

This bid asks opener to show his suit via a transfer. Opener rebids 4♦ when he holds hearts, and 4♥ when he has spades. The difference from the 2NT response is that this bid can be made with a weak hand in order to increase the level of auction, and so make it difficult for opponents to come in.

4♦ response

This response asks opener to bid his suit. It is rather rare that we receive a hand which plays better from the side of the weaker hand (but it does happen). But it is easier to imagine a hand with which we would bid 4♦ because of a fear that 4♣ might get doubled.

Bidding quiz

Partner has opened 2♦. What do you respond?

Your hand

Spades	Hearts	Diamonds	Clubs	<i>Your bid</i>
K32	K32	K2	AQ932	4♣
K432	K432	3	5432	4♣
A53	A53	AK543	32	4♦
K532	K532	JT43	3	4♦

4♥ / 4♠ responses

Both of these responses are natural – responder's own suit. We must remember that opener must pass the 4♥ response.

Bidding after intervention

Bidding after a take-out double

We	They	We
2♦	double	?

Pass - "let's play in diamonds"

Redouble - "show me your suit"

2♥ / 2♠ - "this is my suit"

Others - as if there had been no double

Bidding after an overcall

When an opponent makes a suit overcall our doubles are for penalties:

We	They	We
2♦	2♥	?

Double - penalties

2♠ - to play (expecting opener to have spades)

Others - as if there had been no overcall

We	They	We
2♦	2♠	?

Double - penalties

3♥ - to play; partner's presumed suit

Others - as if there had been no overcall

We	They	We
2♦	3♦	?

- Double - penalties
- 3♥ - seeking partner's suit (pass or correct)
- 3♠ - responder's own suit
- Others - as if there had been no overcall

The 2♥ / 2♠ Openings

Description of the openings

These openings show two suited hands: five cards in the suit bid, and at least four cards in a minor when not vulnerable, or at least five cards in a minor when vulnerable.

Contra-indications

The key contra-indication is when opener holds three cards in the other major, because of the danger of missing game in that suit. In particular I do not recommend this opening with three cards in the other major when partner is not a passed hand.

Table of responses

The table below contains all the responses to the 2♥ (or 2♠) opening:

Response	Meaning
2♠ after 2♥	Natural, non-forcing
2NT	Strong question about the minor
3♣	Searching for the minor: “pass with clubs”
3♦	Invitational to 4 hearts (after 2♥ opening)
3♥	Pre-emptive (after 2♥ opening)
3♠	Invitational to 4 spades (after 2♠ opening)
4♥	To play

The 3♥ and 4♥ bids are aimed at making life difficult for the opposition. The first of these two bids usually shows a three card fit and a hand without much hope for a game contract. The range can be quite wide – depending on vulnerability it can vary from zero to more than ten points. Similarly, the 4♥ response may be made when this contract is possible (with a strong hand), or for pre-emptive purposes (with a weak hand and a long fit).

It is important to remember that the 2NT response is strong – with a weak hand and desire to play in a

minor rather than hearts, responder must start with 3♣.

The 3♦ response is invitational to game with hearts – it is better not to ask opener about his minor as this may make the opening lead easier for opposition.

2NT response

The 2NT response is a strong question about the minor.

2♥	2NT (asking for the minor)
?	

- 3♣ - lower range with clubs
- 3♦ - lower range with diamonds
- 3♥ - upper range, 5 clubs
- 3♠ - upper range, 5 diamonds

Replies to the 2NT question are dependent on vulnerability. When vulnerable opener is obliged to hold 5 cards in his minor, therefore his choice of bid is based purely on the strength of his hand. When not vulnerable opener may have only 4 cards in his minor, so it is vital to differentiate between the two cases. Rebids 3♥ and 3♠ promise a solid opening (6-9) and a five card minor.

Development of the auction

After the 3♣ and 3♦ rebids, responder may pass. If he does not do this, then the sequence is game forcing.

2♥	2NT
3♣	?

- 3♦ - natural, game forcing
- 3♥ - strong agreement of hearts
- 3♠ - natural, game forcing
- 4♣ - strong agreement of clubs

After responder's 3♥ and 3♠ rebids the sequence is forcing to game. To strongly agree a major a *cue bid* in the other minor is used.

2♥	2NT
3♥ (max, 5-5 hearts & clubs)	?

- 3♠ - natural, forcing
- 4♣ - strong agreement of clubs
- 4♦ - strong agreement of hearts

After a 2♠ opening the bidding proceeds analogously.

Bidding quiz

Partner has opened 2♠, and next opponent passes. What do you bid?

Your hand

Spades	Hearts	Diamonds	Clubs	<i>Your bid</i>
Q32	T865	Q32	432	3♠
Q32	765	AQ2	K987	3♠
J2	AJ632	KJ8	KJ8	Pass
2	AQ632	KJ83	KJ8	3♣
2	AK63	KJ83	KJ83	2NT
Q432	7	6542	K987	4♠
Q432	AK7	A2	K987	4♠
AQ32	AK7	A2	K987	2NT
J43	AK7	A2	Q987	3♦
J43	KQ7	A2	QJ87	pass

Bidding after intervention

After a take-out double by an opponent, we bid as if there had been no double. Our double of opponent's overcall is for penalties. A bid of a new suit at the lowest available level is seeking partner's suit. A redouble looks for a penalty.

We	They	We
2♥	2♠	?

- Double - penalties
- 2NT - question about shape and strength
(as if there had been no overcall)
- 3♣ - “pass with clubs or correct”
- 3♦ - invitational to 4♥
- 3♥ - to play
- 3♠ - asking for the minor

We	They	We
2♥	3♣	?

- Double - penalties
- 3♦ - partner's suit
- 3♥ - natural, own suit, non-forcing
- 3♠ - non-forcing

We	They	We
2♥	3♦	?

- Double - penalties
- 3♠ - own suit
- 4♣ - partner's suit
- 4♦ - *cue bid* with heart fit

After a 2♠ opening and intervention the bidding is analogous.

The 2NT Opening

Description of the opening

The 2NT opening promises a hand with 6-11 points and two five card minor suits.

Table of responses

The table below contains all the responses to the 2NT opening.

Response	Meaning
3♣ / 3♦	Choice of a minor – to play
3♥	Artificial question about shape
3♠	Artificial invitation to game or slam in a minor
4♣ / 4♦	Pre-emptive
4♥ / 4♠	To play
4NT	Pre-emptive, choose your better minor
5♣ / 5♦	To play

Development of the auction

In the most common sequence responder simply chooses a minor to play at the three level.

The 4♣ and 4♦ responses are pre-emptive – opener should pass.

If responder has a strong hand he has two ways of proceeding: either through a 3♥ question, or via an artificial invitational 3♠.

3♥ - shape question

The 3♥ response is a question about shape. It is game forcing. This bid can also be used when responder wants to examine the possibility of a slam.

2NT	3♥
?	

3♠ - spade shortage

3NT - heart shortage

4♣/4♦

- six cards in the suit bid, two singletons

4♥/4♠

- void in the suit bid (e.g. shape 6520 or 6610)

After rebids at the three level (3♠ or 3NT), 4♣ and 4♦ strongly agree the suit – preparing to ask for Key Cards by bidding 4NT next.

After rebids at the four level it is impossible to agree a suit, therefore 4NT *Blackwood* asks for 4 aces.

3♠ - invitation with a minor

To invite game or slam we use a 3♠ response. Opener is obliged to rebid 3NT, and responder chooses his better minor: the 4♣ and 4♦ bids invite game, and bids 5♣ and 5♦ invite slam.

Bidding quiz

Partner has opened 2NT. The next opponent passes. What do you bid?

Your hand

Spades	Hearts	Diamonds	Clubs	<i>Your bid</i>
5432	5432	AJ2	J4	3♦
KQ32	KJT2	AJ2	J4	3♦
5432	543	AJ32	J4	4♦
65432	5	AJ432	J4	5♦
A432	A432	AJ2	J4	3♠ (and 4♦)
A432	A432	AJ2	A4	3♠ (and 5♦)
AK32	5432	AKJ3	Q	3♥

The same rules apply when we overcall 2NT to show both minors.

Openings at the three level

Non-vulnerable openings

Opening at the three level three when not vulnerable does not require anything more than a long suit. Opening a major suit usually promises seven cards (with six it is possible to open 2♦). It is a good idea to agree with partner the range of the bid by defining a minimum and maximum opening. For instance, a minimum opening could be:

♠ JT87653 ♥ 3 ♦ 432 ♣ 32

A maximum opening could be:

♠ KQT5432 ♥ 3 ♦ 432 ♣ 32

It is permitted to open with a six card suit, if one also holds a side four card suit, for example:

♠ QJT876 ♥ 3 ♦ QT32 ♣ 32

A three level minor suit opening promises only six cards in the suit, for example:

♠ 6 ♥ 876 ♦ 432 ♣ KQT932

Vulnerable openings

Openings at the three level when vulnerable require a seven card suit whether it is a major or a minor.

A minimum opening could be:

♠ QJT7653 ♥ 3 ♦ Q32 ♣ 32

A maximum opening could be:

♠ KQJT765 ♥ 3 ♦ J32 ♣ 32

Development of the auction

After a minor suit opening:

- 3 in a new suit forces for one round
- 4 in the other minor strongly agrees opener's suit
- 4 in a major is to play

After a major suit opening:

- 3♠ over 3♥ is natural and forcing
- 4♥ over 3♠ is to play
- 4♣ / 4♦ are *cue bids* agreeing opener's suit

The 3NT Opening

Description of the opening

Opening 3NT shows a solid seven card minor suit with no high honour cards (ace, king or queen) in any of the side suits.

Table of responses

The table below contains all the responses to the 3NT opening.

Response	Meaning
pass	Acceptance of 3NT contract
4♣ / 5♣	Searching for partner's suit ("pass or correct")
4♦	Asks for shortage
4♥ / 4♠	natural

3NT	4♦ (asking for shortage)
?	

- 4♥ / 4♠ - shortage in the suit bid
- 4NT - shortage in the other minor
- 5♣ / 5♦ - suit bid, no shortage

Attention: if an opponent doubles 3NT, pass by responder accepts the contract. This implies he has stoppers in the side suits, and at least one card in opener's minor.

Opening 3NT when partner is a passed hand (i.e. third or fourth in hand) need not be standard – opener may have stops in other suits. In this situation pass by responder after a double by an opponent does not promise stops – opener has to defend himself. Responder can help by redoubling to say “I have stops in some side suits”.

Openings at the four level

Openings at the four level make life difficult for the opposition. I recommend to use such bids with an unbalanced shape.

Bidding quiz

Your hand

Spades	Hearts	Diamonds	Clubs	<i>Your bid</i>
AKQJ765	32	32	Q2	1♠
KJT7654	Q2	32	Q2	2♦
QJ87543	2	T85	32	3♠
KQJ8754	2	T852	2	4♠
QJT87543	43	432	-	4♠

Slam bidding

Types of slam hands

It is possible to distinguish a number of possible slam hands.

Slams based on combined strength

These slams are justified mainly on the combined strength of the two hands. In order to make such a small slam, it is necessary to have a total of at least 33 points in the two hands.

	AKJ8			Q53
	J94			AKT6
	AJ3			K54
	A93			K82

In the example above partners hold a total of 33 points. A small slam can be made if the finesse of the queen of hearts, or the queen of diamonds succeeds (75% of cases).

The lower limit of strength necessary for a Grand Slam is 36 points.

	AKJ8			Q53
	KJ4			AQT6
	AJ3			K54
	AK3			J42

In this example partners have a total of 36 points in the combined hands. Grand Slam will be made if the finesse of the queen of diamonds succeeds, or the queen of diamonds is a doubleton (approximately 60% chance).

If there is an agreed suit, the necessary total strength necessary for a slam can be lowered by 1 or 2 points.

	AKJ8			Q532
	J94			AKT6
	A43			K5
	A93			K82

The partnership has 32 points. Small slam in Spades is practically certain, and a Grand Slam depends on a successful Heart finesse.

Slams based on long suits

These are slams which succeed because of tricks in long suits.

	53			AK42
	AKT5432			Q87
	K32			QJ5
	2			A54

In the hand above it is easy to make 12 tricks (seven hearts, two spades, two diamonds and one club). Success with this type of hand depends on a fit in the longest suit of one of the partners. If this condition is satisfied, then the total strength of the combined hands can be drastically reduced – 28 points will be enough to make a small slam.

	A32			54
	AJT53			KQ4
	K32			AQJ65
	32			A54

In this hand the success of the small slam is based on two long suits: hearts (5 tricks) and diamonds (5 tricks). The remaining two tricks are guaranteed by black aces. The reason for the success of this slam are good fits opposite a long suit held by partner. If this condition is met, then the necessary combined strength of the two hands, relative to hands based on total strength, is greatly reduced – 28 points is enough for a small slam.

Slams based on ruffing values

These slam contracts are based on additional tricks made by ruffing.

	432			5
	AJT53			KQ43
	KQ3			AJ6
	63			AK542

In the hand above, the small slam in hearts is almost certain.

But if we change slightly the position of the honour cards in the **West** hand:

	KQ2			5
	AJT53			KQ43
	732			AJ6
	63			AK542

the small slam has practically no chance of succeeding. The strength and shape of the two hands have not changed. The difference lies in the fact that in the first example **West** holds three small cards opposite his partner's shortage, and in the second example **West** holds honour cards there. The objective of slam bidding is to find out whether one partner has no wasted honour cards opposite shortage in the other partner's hand. Conventions such as *Splinter* are used to discover this.

In order to bid a slam when one of the partners holds a void, there are two other conventions: *Exclusion Blackwood* and *six in partner's short suit*.

To bid a small slam based on a shortage it is usually enough to have 27 points outside the short suit. A similar number of points outside a void suit is usually enough to make a Grand Slam.

When do small slams fail?

In order to make a small slam it is necessary to have the possibility of cashing 12 tricks. This a necessary condition, but not sufficient.

A small slam will fail if we are missing two aces (or the Ace and King of trumps). To avoid this problem we use a convention called *Keycard Blackwood*.

We will not make a small slam if there is a suit in which we are missing the Ace and King, and we do not have a shortage in that suit. To deal with this problem we use *cue bids*. We will not make a slam based on ruffing tricks, if we have wasted honour values opposite the shortage. To verify this situation we use a convention called *Splinter*.

Cue bids

A *cue bid* is a bid which shows a first or second control in the suit, and suggests a possibility of a slam contract.

A *cue bid* must be made in response to partner's *cue bid* below game level:

1NT	2♥
3♠	4♣ (<i>cue bid</i> , spades agreed)
?	

- 4♦ - diamond control
- 4♥ - heart control, no diamond control
- 4♠ - no controls in diamonds or hearts

There is no obligation to make a *cue bid* above game level of the agreed suit.

1NT	2♦
3♥	4♦
?	

4♥ - no slam interest, does not deny club or spade controls

4♠ - spade control (and club control), slam interest

There is no obligation to make a *cue bid* below game level after a *Splinter*:

1♠	4♣ (<i>Splinter</i>)
?	

4♦ - diamond control, slam invitation

4♥ - heart control, no diamond control, slam invitation

4♠ - no interest in a slam, says nothing about diamond or heart controls

There is no obligation to make a *cue bid* immediately after a strong suit agreement by partner:

1♠	2♣
2♠	3♠ (strong agreement of spades)
?	

4♣/4♦/4♥ - control in the cheapest suit
bid, slam interest

4♠ - no slam interest

Keycard Blackwood 1430

Avoid misunderstandings

When using the *Blackwood* convention, the greatest danger lies in a possible misunderstanding about the meaning of the 4NT bid.

I propose to introduce rigid rules which state when this bid is not asking for Aces.

When 4NT is not *Blackwood*

1. A direct raise of a NT call, for example:

1♣	2NT
?	

4NT - 18-20; invitational to 6NT

2. Directly after a 1NT opening and *Stayman* or transfer:

1NT	2♣
any	?

4NT - invitation to small slam with a four card major

1NT	2♦
2♥	?

4NT - invitation to small slam with five hearts

3. If no suit has been agreed at the three level, and opener has not specified his strength, for example:

1♥	2♣
2♦ (doesn't specify strength)	2NT
3♣/3♥/3♠ (doesn't specify strength)	?

4NT - general slam invitation (opener has not specified his strength)

4. In the sequence:

1♣	1♥ / 1♠
2NT (18+; unlimited)	Any bid on level three
?	

4NT - 22-24

In all remaining sequences 4NT is *Keycard Blackwood 1430*.

Responses to *Keycard Blackwood 1430*

Keycard Blackwood 1430 asks for the number of key cards out of five: the four Aces and the King of trumps. Responses are as follows:

- 5♣ - 1 or 4 key cards
- 5♦ - 0 or 3 key cards
- 5♥ - 2 or 5 key cards without the queen of trumps
- 5♠ - 2 or 5 key cards with the queen of trumps

Keycard Blackwood 5NT

If the bidding is at the five level, then 5NT is *Key Card Blackwood 1430*.

1♠	4♣ (<i>Splinter</i>)
5♣ (Club <i>cue bid</i> , no ♦ or ♥ control)	?

5NT - asking for 5 key cards

Responses are analogous to those to *Keycard Blackwood 1430*.

5NT Grand Slam Force

When it is bid with a jump 5NT asks about the number of honours in the trump suit, for example:

1♠	4♣ (<i>Splinter</i>)
?	

5NT - question about the number of honours in the trump suit

The responses are as follows:

6♣ - no honours

6♦ - one honour

6♥ - two honours

Grand Slam - three honours

Exclusion Keycard Blackwood

Exclusion Blackwood is a question about the number of key cards out of four: the three aces other than the ace of the suit of the question, and the trump king.

The responses are as follows:

- One step - 1 or 4 key cards
- Two steps - 0 or 3 key cards
- Three steps - 2 key cards without the queen of trumps
- Four steps - 2 key cards with the queen of trumps

Exclusion Blackwood is used when the trump suit has been chosen unambiguously.

Asking about trump queen

After the 5♣ or 5♦ response to *Keycard Blackwood* (which say nothing about trump queen), the next step up, not including the agreed trump suit, asks about the trump queen. In response, the lowest step denies the trump queen,

and the following steps show the trump queen and the number of kings.

Let us assume that spades is the agreed trump suit.

4NT (<i>Blackwood</i> for spades)	5♦ (0 or 3 key cards)
?	

5♥ - question about the queen of trumps

5♠ - to play

4NT	5♦
5♥ (trump queen question)	?

5♠ - no trump queen

5NT - trump queen, no kings

6♣ - trump queen, one king

6♦ - trump queen, two kings

6♥ - trump queen, three kings

Asking about number of kings

The next step up, apart from the agreed trump suit and the question about queen of trumps, asks about the number of kings.

Spades agreed:

4NT	5♣
5♥ (asking for number of kings)	?

- 5♠ - no kings
- 5NT - one king
- 6♣ - two kings
- 6♦ - three kings

Competitive bidding conventions

This chapter deals with auctions which have been opened by the opposition.

Overcalls at the one level

Overcalls at the one level promise a five card suit. The maximum strength is 17 points (the same as one level openings). The lower limit depends on vulnerability and whether partner is a passed hand: if partner is not a passed hand, the lower limit is 10 points, if he is a passed hand, the lower limit is 6 points. Continuations are as follows:

- A new suit without a jump is non-forcing, but with a jump it is forcing
- 2♣ after a major suit overcall is the *Drury* convention
- No trump overcalls promise a stopper in the opponent's suit and don't promise a fit – 1NT: 8-12, 2NT: 13-15.

Drury convention

When partner makes an overcall in a major, the 2♣ response promises a fit in his suit:

They	We	They	We
1♦ / 1♥	1♥ / 1♠	pass	?

2 in opponent’s suit - 12+; without a fit

2♣ - 10+; with a fit

Drury can also be used after our overcall in fourth position – when one or both opponents have bid.

Auction after Drury

They	We	They	We
1♦	1♥	pass	2♣
pass	?		

2♦ - 11-13; says nothing about diamonds

Rebid of suit - 6-10; weakest overcall

Opponent's suit - 14+; attempt to play in NT

New suit at the 2 level - natural, invitational to game

New suit above the 2 level - natural, invitational to slam

Overcalls at the two level

In contrast to level one overcalls, overcalls at the two level promise a good suit (usually at least six cards) and predetermined strength – at least 12 points if partner is not a passed hand (at least 10 points when partner is a passed hand).

Continuations are shown below:

They	We	They	We
1♥	2♣	pass	?

2♦ / 2♠ - natural, forcing

2♥ - opponent's suit, general force, does not promise fit

3♣ - 7-10; with fit, raise

Bidding when an opponent opens 1NT

Defence to strong NT (15-17 or 14-16)

They	We
1NT	?

Double - a five card or longer minor and a four card major

2♣ - both majors

2♦ - a six card major

2♥/2♠ - five hearts/spades and a four card minor

2NT - 5-5 in the minors, strength unlimited, forcing for one round

3♣/3♦ - natural, six card suit

3♥/3♠ - pre-emptive

The strength of overcalls depends on vulnerability. With favourable vulnerability overcalls can be made with 8 or more points. When vulnerable overcalls should be at least as strong as an opening bid (12+).

They	We	They	We
1NT	double	pass	?

2♣ - seeking partner's minor ("pass with clubs, bid 2♦ with diamonds")

2♦ - asking for the four card major

2♥/2♠ - own suit

Bidding in the *re-opening* position

They	We	They	We
1NT	pass	pass	?

Double - a five card or longer minor and a four card major

2♣ - both majors

2♦/2♥/2♠ - natural (!)

Defence to weak NT (13-15 or weaker)

They	We	They	We
1NT (weak)	?		

Double - 13+; balanced, invites partner to bid or pass for penalties

2♣ - both majors

2♦ - a six card major

2♥/2♠ - five hearts/spades and a four card minor

2NT - both minors (strength unlimited – depending on vulnerability)

3♣/3♦ - natural, constructive

3♥/3♠ - pre-emptive

After a weak 1NT opening all our bids (except for pre-empts) promise at least opening strength (12+).

Bidding in the *re-opening* position

They	We	They	We
1NT (weak)	pass	pass	?

Double - 13+; balanced, invites partner to bid
 or pass for penalties

2♣ - both majors

2♦/2♥/2♠ - natural (!)

Overcalling in NT

1NT overcall

The 1NT overcall in second position shows 15-17 points and a stopper in the opponent's suit.

The 1NT overcall in protective (fourth) position shows 11-16 points and does not promise a stopper in the opponent's suit.

Development of the auction

The same rules apply when we overcall in second position and in protective position (only the strength changes). We bid exactly the same as when we have opened 1NT. In a sandwich position 1NT is natural.

They	We	They	We
1♥	1NT	pass	?

- 2♣ - Stayman
- 2♥ - transfer to spades
- 2♠ - transfer to clubs
- 4♥ - transfer to spades

2NT overcall

The 2NT overcall after an opponent's two level opening shows 15-18 points and a stopper in the opponent's suit.

Development of the auction

We use analogous methods as with a 1NT overcall.
2NT in the 4th seat over one level opening shows
18-20.

They	We	They	We
2♠	pass	pass	2NT
pass	?		

- 3♣ - *Stayman*
- 3♦ - transfer to hearts
- 3♠ - both minors
- 4♣/4♦ - natural, slam interest

Two-suited overcalls

Michaels cue bid

Michaels cue bids are used to show two-suited hands with at least one major. The lower limit of strength of this bid is dictated by considerations of

danger. With favourable vulnerability the bid does not promise any defensive tricks, but when vulnerable the bid should show either opening strength or very good distribution.

This convention is complemented by the two-suited 2NT overcall, which promises at least 5-5 in the two lowest unbid suits. Unlike the 2NT opening this overcall (similarly to *Michaels cue bid*) has no upper limit in strength.

They	We
1♥	?

2♥ - 5+ spades, 5+ in a minor

2NT - at least 5-5 in the minors

They	We
1♠	?

2♠ - 5+ hearts, 5+ in a minor

2NT - at least 5-5 in the minors

They	We	They	We
1♥	2♥	pass	?

- 2♠ - negative, often a doubleton
- 2NT - positive question about a minor
- 3♣ - negative, “pass or correct to diamonds”
- 3♦ - invitational to 4 spades
- 3♥ - forcing to game with a spade fit
- 3♠ - four card fit, weaker than invitation to four spades

After the 1♣ and 1♦ openings the 2♦ overcall unambiguously promises a two-suiter with both majors.

They	We
1♣ / 1♦	2♦ (5-5 in majors)

The strength of the bid has no upper limit. The lower limit depends on vulnerability.

Leaping Michaels

To show a two-suiter after openings at higher levels we use the *leaping Michaels* convention, which specifies the two suits.

They	We
2♥ / 2♠	?

- 4♣ - 5-5 in clubs and the unbid major
- 4♦ - 5-5 in diamonds and the unbid major

Leaping Michaels is forcing to game.

They	We	They	We
2♥	4♣ (5♣ + 5♠)	pass	?

- 4♦ (other minor) - good hand with club fit
- 4♥ (other major) - good hand with spade fit
- 4♠ - negative

4NT - *Key Card Blackwood 1430*
 minor agreed

5♣ - negative, club fit

They	We	They	We
2♥ / 2♠	4♣/4♦ (minor + other major)	4♥ / 4♠	?

4NT - *Key Card Blackwood* for the minor

Cue bid - agrees major

Defence to opponent's Multi opening

They	We	They	We
2♦	?		

Double - 13+; take-out of spades (spade
 shortage possible)

2NT - 15-17 (at least half stoppers in both
 majors)

They	We	They	We
2♦	pass	2♥	Pass
pass	?		

Double - take-out of hearts (heart shortage possible)

2NT - 12-15

They	We	They	We
2♦	pass	2♠	Pass
pass	?		

Double - take-out of hearts(!) – it may be passed as it promises 3+ spades

2NT - 12-15

Defence to 2♥ / 2♠ openings

We use the same methods in defence to openings based on one suit as to openings based on two-suiters, in other words, after partner's double, we

use the *Lebensohl* convention in response to both a direct and a protective position double.

They	We	They	We
2♥	double	pass	?

2♠ - 0-8; natural

2NT - *Lebensohl*

3♣/3♦/3♠ - 8-11; natural

3♥ - asking for a heart stopper, denies four spades

4♣/4♦ - natural, invitational

They	We	They	We
2♥	double	pass	2NT (<i>Lebensohl</i>)
pass	?		

3♣ - forced unless 20+ points

3♦/3♠ - 20+; natural

3NT - 20+; with a heart stopper

They	We	They	We
2♥	double	pass	2NT (<i>Lebensohl</i>)
pass	3♣ (fewer than 20)	pass	?

- Pass - 0-7; club suit
- 3♦ - 0-7; diamond suit
- 3♥ - 4 spades, no heart stopper, game force
- 3♠ - 5 spades, game force
- 3NT - 4 spades, with a heart stopper
- 4♣/4♦ - natural, forcing
- 4♠ - natural, invitation to slam

They	We	They	We
2♠	double	pass	2NT (<i>Lebensohl</i>)
pass	3♣ (fewer than 20)	pass	?

- 3♦/3♥ - to play

- 3♠ - 4 hearts, without a spade stopper, game force
- 3NT - 4 hearts, with a spade stopper
- 4♣ / 4♦ - natural, forcing
- 4♥ - natural, invitation to slam

Bidding in the protective position

They	We	They	We
1♥	pass	pass	?

- Double - 9+; take-out
- 1NT - 11-16; balanced
- 2♠/3♣/3♦ - constructive(!): 11-15, six/seven card suit
- 2♥/3♥ - same as in second position

They	We	They	We
1♥	pass	pass	double
redouble	?		

Pass - penalty (“I want to play 1♥ redoubled”)

Principle: After a redouble, pass “over a suit” is penalty. Pass “below a suit” is not penalty – it shows the lack of an own suit.

Re-opening double at higher levels

To make a protective double at the two or three levels requires opening strength, if the bidder is not a passed hand.

If the bidder is a passed hand, the double may be weaker (9+ points), as long as the doubler has shortage in the opponent’s suit.

Competing when both opponents are bidding

If both opponents are bidding, our bidding depends on whether the opening was a suit or 1♣.

They	We	They	We
1♦ / 1♥	pass	1♠	?

Double - two unbid suits, or strength showing (18+)

1NT - 15-17; standard (stoppers in both opponents' suits)

2♦ - both majors

2♠ - natural, 5+ good spades

They	We	They	We
1♣ (Polish Club or <i>Precision</i>)	pass	1♠ (natural, positive)	?

Double - take-out of spades

1NT - both minors

2♣ - natural

2♠ - *Michaels cue bid*: 5-5 hearts and a minor

Bidding is analogous when the opponent has opened 1♣ and has received a 1♥ response.

The Polish Club bidding system is based on an ambiguous 1C opening, limited one-level openings, 5 card majors and a Strong No Trump. The concept makes it possible to find partner's total strength on a lower level than in all-natural systems. In the Standard version, a 2C opening is Precision, 2D is Multi, and remaining two-level openings are weak Polish two-suiters.

One of the key original features of the system is the concept of the artificial reverse ("odwrotka" in Polish), which occurs in the sequence: 1C – 1H / 1S – 2D – ? The convention lets players quickly find the fit in the major and determine whether the hands are worth slam investigation.

The latest version of the system, Polish Club 2020, has been based on a questionnaire among potential users of the system. It adapts most popular treatments used in various contemporary bidding systems.

A 1D opening is now almost always 5 cards, and the two-level opening bids are more aggressive than in earlier versions. The introduction of modern conventions to both uncontested and competitive auctions makes the system more attractive to expert players.



KRZYSZTOF JASSEM (Poland) is a well-known international player whose successes include winning the Vanderbilt Cup and a silver medal in the World Olympiad Teams. He is professor of computer science at Poznan University.



TOMEK BRUS (Translator) was born in Warsaw, Poland and emigrated to Great Britain in 1972, where he obtained a PhD in theoretical Statistics. He has worked at the University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Bristol University, Pfizer Pharmaceutical Company and Oxford Brookes University.

