

IMprecision

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Contents

1	Openings	2
2	Relay Structure	3
2.1	Shape Resolution	3
2.2	Strength Resolution	5
2.3	Interference During Relay Auctions	6
2.4	Relay Breaks	7
3	1♣ Opening	8
3.1	Continuations after 1♣-1♦	9
3.2	Continuations after 1♣-1♥	11
3.3	Continuations after 1♣-1♠+	13
3.4	Interference over 1♣ (P) 1♦	17
3.5	Interference over 1♣ (P) 1♥+	18
3.6	Interference over 1♣	18
4	1♦ Opening	21
4.1	Continuations after 1♦-1M	21
4.2	Continuations after 1♦-1NT and 1♦-1♥-1♠-1NT	29
4.3	Continuations after 1♦-2m	29
4.4	Interference over 1♦	30
5	Major Openings	33
5.1	Continuations after 1♥-1♠	34
5.2	Continuations after Semi-forcing NT	36
5.3	Continuations after Two-over-one	37
5.4	Continuations after Raises	41
5.5	Interference over 1M	43
6	Notrump Opening	44
6.1	Continuations after 1NT-2♣	45
6.2	Continuations after 1NT-2♦	48
6.3	Continuations after 1NT-2♥	49
6.4	Continuations after 1NT-2♠	50
6.5	Continuations after 1NT-2NT and 1NT-3♣	50
6.6	Continuations after Splinters	51
6.7	Over a penalty double	51
6.8	Interference over 1NT	52
6.9	System after Natural 2NT	52

7	2♣ Opening	53
7.1	Bidding after 2♣-2♦	53
7.2	Bidding after 2♣-2M	54
7.3	Bidding after 2♣-2NT	54
7.4	Bidding after two-suited jumps	55
7.5	Interference	55
8	2♦ Opening	55
8.1	Interference	56
9	Preempts	56
9.1	Responses to 2M	56
9.2	Responses to 2NT	58
9.3	Responses to 3X or 4X	58
9.4	Responses to 3NT	58
10	Slam Bidding	58
10.1	Serious and Non-serious Slam Try	58
10.2	Splinters and Point Count	59
10.3	Cuebidding Style and 5NT Inquiry	59
10.4	Kickback 1430 Keycard	60
10.5	Competitive Bidding	61
11	Defensive Bidding	62
11.1	Defense to Natural One of a Suit	62
11.2	Auctions where Both Opponents Bid	63
11.3	Balancing and Pre-Balancing Actions	65
11.4	Jump Shifts When Partner Opened or Overcalled	65
11.5	Advances of Overcalls	66
11.6	Continuations after Doubles of Notrump Probe	68
11.7	Defense to Opponents Notrump	68
11.8	Defense to Natural Preempts	70
11.9	Defense to Artificial Strong Bids	74
11.10	Defense to Polish/Swedish Club	74
11.11	Defense to Artificial Two-Bids with a Known Suit	75
11.12	Defense to Multi 2♦	75
11.13	Defense to Artificial Responses	75
12	Leads and Carding Agreements	76
12.1	Leads vs NT	76
12.2	Leads vs Suit	76
12.3	Leads in the middle of the hand	76
12.4	Signals	76

1 Openings

- 1♣ strong, 16+ points or 17+ if balanced
- 1♦ 11-15 hcp, no 5-card major, no 6-card minor (except 6-5 minors)
- 1♥ ♠ natural 5+ cards, 10-15 hcp but 11-13 if balanced
- 1NT 14-16 balanced may include a major; 14⁺-17 3rd/4th seat

- 2♣ ♦ 6+ cards, 10-15 hcp intermediate
- 2♥ ♠ weak two bids
- 2NT 5-10 hcp, both minors
- 3NT 8.5+ tricks in ♥/♠

2 Relay Structure

Our relay structure is based in parts on symmetric relay. It is used primarily after 1♣ opening. For sequences after 1♦ and 2♣ openings, the shape resolution is sometimes different due to space availability. They are discussed in the corresponding sections.

2.1 Shape Resolution

The shape resolution depends on whether responder's hand type:

1. One-suited (5+ in one suit and no side 4-card suit)
2. Two-suited (4+ in two suits, and 9+ together)
3. Three-suited (4+ in three suits)
4. Balanced (4333, 4432, or 5m332)

For each of the hand types, there is a default "entry point," i.e., where the relay responses start. When we refer to a relay sequence being "on track," "up a step," etc. These are relative to these defaults.

The basic idea in symmetric relay is to use the same bids to show the same *relative* shape. For example, 3♦ always show some 5431 shape in two-suited sequences. Generally, cheaper bids show high shortages or low length, and the shapes are resolved according to decreasing frequency. The details are as follows.

2.1.1 One-suited Structure

The default entry point is 2♠. The responses are as follows:

- 2♠ high shortage, or 6223 shape with doubleton in high suit
- 2NT middle shortage
- 3♣ equal shortage, if reached directly 7222 or 6322 (3 in high suit)
- 3♦ 5332, if reached directly then low shortage
- 3♥ 6331
- 3♠ 7321
- 3NT 7330, 2-3 RP
- 4♣+ 7330, 4 RP, etc.

Note that if responder has single-suited minor, then 5332 is ruled out, so 3♦ will show 6331, etc.

2.1.2 Two-suited Structure

The default entry point is 2♥. However, when we know the primary suit (5+ cards) in an uneven two-suiter (5+ in one and exactly 4 in the other), the entry point is 2NT. The entry point for a 55 two-suiter is 2♠.

2♥ reverser, 4 cards in the higher suit and 5+ in the lower

2♠ 5-5 or longer two suiter

2NT high shortage

3♣ 5422

3♦ 5431

3♥ 6421

3♠ 6430

3NT+ 7420, 2-3 RP, etc.

Note that 7411 is missing. To show 7411, responder first show high shortage, then 3NT. 7420 is then shifted up one step.

In some cases after 1♣-1♦ (specifically 1♣-1♦-2♣-2♦-2♥ or 2♠, or 1♣-1♦-2♦-2♥-2♠), opener will not have a 5422 shape. In those cases, the low shortage sequences will be a step lower, and the 7411 shape will be resolved directly rather than go through high shortage.

After 2♠ showing 5-5, 2NT is the next relay, over which

3♣ high shortage

3♦ 5611 or 6511 (resolved in that order)

3♥ 5521

3♠ 5530

3NT 5620

4♣+ 6520, 2-3 RP, etc.

2.1.3 Three-suited Structure

Three-suited hands are shown by first showing the shortness, then in order of 4441, then 5440 with the five-card suit from the lowest to the highest. Responder shows shape as follows:

♣ 2♠, then 3♦+ (3♣ is the relay)

♦ 1♥, then 1NT, then 2♦, then 2NT, then 3♦+

♥ 1♥, then 1NT, then 2♦, then 2♠, then 3♦+

♠ 2♥, then 2NT+

Opener shows shortness as follows:

♣ 1♥, then 2♥, then 2NT, then 3♦+

♦ 1♠, then 2♣, then 2♥, then 3♣, then 3♥+

♥ 1♠, then 2♣, then 2♥, then 2NT, then 3♥+

♠ 1♥, then 2♦, then 2♠, then 3♣+

2.2 Strength Resolution

Once describer has shown complete shape, the lowest relay asks for number of RPs (Ace = 3, King = 2, Queen =1). The steps are:

Describer Hand	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4 and on
Responder	2-3	4	5	6 and zoom
1♣ Opener	9-10	11	12	13 and on
Strong Bal 1♣	12-13	14	15	16 and on
1♦/2♣ Opener	5-6	7	8	9 and on
Min 1♦/2♣ Open	5-6	7	8	9 and zoom
Max 1♦/2♣ Open	7-8	9	10	11 and zoom

Note that we have a higher range if opener is describing a strong balanced hand, since minimum balanced hands rebid 1NT. This applies only to (4432), (4333), and 5m-(332) patterns; with other semi-balanced patterns (including 5M-(332)) we will often describe our shape naturally as this leads to better slam auctions and to better partials opposite a possible weak responder hand. For 1♦ and 2♣ openings, we will sometimes be able to distinguish strength in general terms prior to starting relays. In these cases we can get a tighter range of 5-9 RP (for a minimum hand) or 7-11 RP (for a max); otherwise we must cope with a full 5-11 range.

As a general rule, we try not to zoom directly past 3NT without a specific RP ask (i.e. we don't just zoom from shape past 3NT). We make an exception when strong ♣ opener is describing, because we have already lost a step and because these are very slammish auctions. In some cases when 3♠ is the last "pattern" bid we will use 3♠ to show the lowest RP step and 3NT for all others (so as not to zoom past 3NT).

2.2.1 Is it a Relay?

The cheapest step is normally a relay after shape resolves, and relays continue as we diagnose RP and location of values. The exceptions are 3NT (which is not a relay) and 6NT-plus (which are never relays). Note that we will play relays at the six-level (looking for jacks usually by that point).

2.2.2 Follow-ups to RP ask

Once RPs are shown we show parity of top three honors in each suit by stopping if even parity and skipping if odd parity. All suits will be scanned (excluding voids but including singletons) in order of length in describer's hand with higher suits first in case of ties. In the case where RPs are shown with the first step (which has two possibilities), we stop with the minimum, and zoom into answering parity.

After showing all parities, we next shows the number of RP in the first suit with only one honor, if such suit exist, and stop if odd (A or Q) or skip a step if even (K). We may zoom into answering this, but we never zoom beyond this ask. This step is *excluded* if the 1♣ opener is the relay responder.

After answering the parity question, if responder shape is 7(32)1, we resolve the shape fully (stop if high doubleton, skip if low doubleton), and next we scan for jacks in the usual order.

2.2.3 4♣ Trump Quality Ask Opposite 6-card Suit

When responder shows a 6-card suit, sometimes the decision whether to go to slam depends both on the suit quality and general strength. This is especially so when relayer has a good hand (in context) but xx in the potential trump suit.

If shape is resolved at 3♥ or lower, then we use 4♣ for this purpose (other relay breaks below 3N continues to be stopper ask). We define a good suit as one that has good play for 1 loser opposite xx. In response to this, responder bids

4♦ Bad suit, or minimum RP (2-3 / 5-6 / 9-10 for semi-positive, opener, 1♣ opener). 4♥ reasks

- 4♠ Good suit, absolute min in RP.
- 4NT Bad suit. All bids are now sign-offs, including 5♣.
- 5♣+ Good suit, slightly better RP, zoom.

4♥+ Good suit, next RP.

2.2.4 4♦ end-signal

When the relay is below 4♦, then 4♦ will be used as an all-purpose signoff. This bid puppets to 4♥, after which opener can sign off in any suit. Bidding 3NT is always a signoff as well. These signoffs should usually be respected, but there are a few exceptions.

Pulling a signoff is allowed with substantial extras. For a semi-positive hand type, a pull shows a full 6 RPs and at least 12 hcp (this is *very* rare). For opener, a pull shows at least 12 RPs. If shape is fully resolved, then continue relaying as if partner had asked (so for a semi-positive pull, move on to parity, for opener pulling show controls via steps with the first step being 12). If shape is not fully resolved, then pulls are essentially natural bids (but see the above guarantees).

2.2.5 The 4♥ signoff

If hearts have never been named in the auction, then relayer may want to become declarer in a 4♥ contract. In this case, whenever 4♥ is not the relay it's to play. This avoids the 4♦ end-signal and potentially right-sides the contract. Control asks (see below) will then start at 4♠. Note that if either partner has already bid hearts this method is off and 4♥ is an control ask.

2.2.6 Control Asks

If 4♦ is available to be the end-signal for signoff, then other non-relay bids above 3NT (except possibly 4♣ when there is a 6-card suit or 4♥ when ♥ have not been bid yet) are used to ask for controls outside a specific suit. These are most useful when holding shortness, but can also be used in some cases where we really want to focus on controls rather than RP. If relayer has previously shown a particular shortness (via a *relay break*) then the cheapest such bid (usually 4♥) asks for controls outside the short suit. If relayer has not indicated a short suit, then we ask the suits in describer's length order (higher suit first as tie-break, as usual). Describer simply shows number of controls outside the suit by steps. For responder to a strong club, the first step is zero controls. For a 1♦ opener, the first step is 0-1 controls. For a strong club opener, the first step is 0-2 controls.

Further relays ask number of very top honors (ace or king) in each suit (stop for even, run-on for odd) again in length order and ignoring the short suit. When the number of controls is ambiguous, the first step shows the minimum number of controls (in the case of 1♣ opener, first step will be 0-1 controls, a reask will clarify), and the second step onwards zoom to location of controls. The honor scanning is done analogous to TOSR: as soon as all controls are known, we scan for Qs then Js (skip if possess, stop if not). We zoom to Q but not to J. We assume relayer will be able to tell between AK vs none in a suit, but not necessarily between K and A.

In the case where responder has already answered to a RP ask and the 4♦ end signal is still available, skipping the parity ask asks for number of controls. Further skips ask for controls outside of specific suits under the same rule as above. In the case where relayer has shown shortness, the cheapest control ask will skip the suit as above.

2.3 Interference During Relay Auctions

If opponents interfere in a relay sequence, then doubles and redoubles by the person doing the asking are for business. The general rule is that relays are still on as long as we have not lost more than two steps. An

alternative view of this rule is that relays are on as long as opponent's bids have not taken an entire level. Of course, these are cumulative.

If opponents interfere in front of the relayer, pass takes the step of the relay, and in "response" to this, double is first step by responder. If opponents interfere in front of the responder, pass is the first step and double is the second step, and so on; after the pass, relayer can double to continue relaying.

2.4 Relay Breaks

Failing to relay has a number of possible meanings depending on the auction. We have the following situations, presented in order of how early in the auction they tend to occur:

2.4.1 Less-than-game-force Relay Break

These occur immediately after the initial response to 1♣, or after 1♣-1♥-1♠ and responder's rebid below 2♥. Most breaks of this sort are natural and non-forcing, although there are a few exceptions (most particularly after 1♣-1NT). After such a break, responder can pass, bid notrump at the lowest level, raise opener's suit one level, or bid his already-shown suit at the lowest available level as non-forcing calls. Other bids are generally forcing. In some cases we have more specific agreements which are summarized in the appropriate sections.

2.4.2 Keri-style Relay Break

Relay breaks after responder shows a balanced (or 3-suited) hand via 2♦. In this case we play relay breaks which mirror our structure over 1NT. Bidding 2NT is natural and game forcing, mostly to right-side NT. Continuations are:

3♣ not 4333
3♦ ask, promises at least one four-card major
3M 4M
3NT deny 4M
3M 5M
3♦ any 4333
3M ask partner to raise with 4M
3NT To play

Three-level relay breaks show three-suited hands with splinters in the suit of the same rank (just as we play directly over our 1NT opening).

2.4.3 Shortness-showing Relay Break

These occur when we are *already in a game forcing* relay sequence (and responder hasn't just bid 2♦ to show a balanced hand). The lowest relay break shows shortage in opener's first-shown suit, the next break in the next suit, and so forth. If responder has shown two suits at once (like 1♣-2♦, then ties broken by length). After this relay break, we continue normal description of shape (losing a step or two). However, certain signoff bids will change meaning. An attempt to sign off in 3NT is conditional on strength opposite the short suit, and a "control asking" bid excludes the king and the queen of the short suit. The number of RP promised for each step is *subtracted by two*.

2.4.4 Stopper asks

These must be below 3NT, and apply only when either shape is fully resolved, or when relay has bypassed a previous opportunity to use a relay break to show shortness. Stopper asks are only about three-card or two-card fragments. The order of the suits are all three-card suits from ♠ to ♣, then all two-card suits from ♠ to ♣. If there are some suits for which the relative length is either two or three (for example over 6322 shapes but without full clarification), they are considered after the three-card suits but before the two-card suits, essentially treated as 2.5.

In response to the stopper ask, the responses are:

3NT min (2- bad 5/9-11RP), suit stopped (Qxx or Kx or better); Cheapest step asks for number of RPs, whereas 4NT invites 6NT.

Step 1 min, suit not-stopped; Cheapest step asks for number of RPs outside of the unstopped suit, new suits are natural NF

Step 2 max, suit not-stopped; Cheapest step asks for number of RPs outside of the unstopped suit, new suits are natural NF

Step 3+ good 5 / 12RP, suit stopped, zooming to RP then parity

2.4.5 Signing off and Control asks

These have been described in the previous section. If the auction is sufficiently high such that the relay would be 4♦ or above, then *any relay break* is a signoff in the suit bid.

3 1♣ Opening

Our 1♣ structure is based on a mix of relay and natural bidding. The design goal is to better cater for intermediate (semi-positive and weak-positive) hands opposite 1♣. We will initially break responder's hand into four categories, which are defined as follows:

1. Super-positive hands containing 7+R (A=3, K=2, Q=1)
2. Weak-positive hands with game forcing values and 2-6R
3. Semi-positive hands with 2-6R and less than game values
4. Negative hands which don't fit this requirement

All hands in the negative or super-positive category will always respond 1♦. Balanced positive and hands that responder would prefer to ask rather than tell also starts with 1♦. The other responses are shape-showing. The initial responses to the 1♣ opening are as follows:

1♣ 16+H, 17+H if Bal

- 1♦ Negative or Super-positive, any shape; or Balanced positive; or hands prefer to ask
- 1♥ 4+♠ (may have longer side suit), balanced semi-positive or unbalanced
- 1♠ 5+♦ or balanced semi-positive without 4♠
- 1NT 5+♥; denies 4♠ or 5+♣
- 2♣ 5+♣, not balanced, no 4-card major
- 2♦ 5+♣ and 4+♥
- 2♥ 3-suited, short in ♠

- 2♠ 3-suited, short in ♣
- 2NT Game force with 6♣ and no singleton, 3-6R
- 3♣ Game force with a 7-card minor and no singleton, 3-6R
- 3♦ Game force with 2263 shape, 3-6R
- 3♥ Game force with 2362 shape, 3-6R
- 3♠ Game force with 3262 shape, 3-4R
- 3NT Game force with 3262 shape, 5-6R

3.1 Continuations after 1♣-1♦

Most of the time opener will rebid at the one level. The 1NT rebid is natural, showing about 17-20 balanced (not enough for game opposite a flat 0-4). The 1♠ rebid is also natural, showing 4+♠ with potentially a longer minor (but not longer hearts except 4504). Rebidding 1♠ is wide-ranging and forcing one round; if bid *on a balanced hand* it guarantees a hand too strong for the 1NT rebid (so 21+). The 1♥ rebid is two-way, either natural or a balanced 21+ *without four spades*. Rebidding 1♥ may be hearts and a longer diamond suit, but will not be hearts and a longer black suit (except 5440 or 0445). Three-suited hands bid the major *of the opposite color as the shortage*. Opener's other rebids include natural 2m bids on a minimum strong club (these deny four spades, but the 2♣ call could include four hearts with longer clubs) and other specialized rebids. The main idea is that *responder* will relay when holding a game-forcing hand, and otherwise will scramble (or pass if opener's rebid is not forcing).

The relay continuations after 1♣-1♦-1M-1NT are designed to be similar to the sequences 1♣-1♥-1♠, except that one-suiters have been swapped with major two-suiters (so one-suiters resolve directly) and that we lose a step on all non-one-suited sequences.

1♣-1♦ Negative or Super-positive; any shape

- 1♥ Either of:
 1. 4+♥ unbalanced; may have longer ♦ but rarely longer black suit
 2. 21+ hcp in a balanced hand without 4♠ (with or without 4♥)
- 1♠ Double negative
 - 1NT 21-23 balanced without 4♠; systems on
 - 2♣ 5+♥; still wide range of values; forcing
 - 2♦ 4+♠
 - 2♥ 16-20, 5+♥ and a 4+card minor
 - 2♠ 16-20, 4♠ and 5+♥
 - 2NT 5+♥ and 4+♣, 21+ hcp (only 3♣ or 3♥ is NF now)
 - 3♣ 5+♥ and 4+♦, 21+ hcp (only 3♦ or 3♥ is NF now)
 - 3♦ 6+♥, 21+ hcp (only 3♥ is NF now)
 - 3♥ 4♠ and 5+♥, 21+ hcp (only 3♠ is NF now)
 - 2♥ 2-3♥, not worth single raise, not 2♥ and 4+♠
 - Pass Minimum hand
 - New Suit Natural, 21+, forcing one round
 - 2NT or 3♥ Game try, natural, not forcing (21-23ish)
 - 2♠ 6+♠, suggest playing here
 - 2NT 3♥, values and a side singleton (decent single raise)
 - 3♣ ♦ Six card suit, usually 0-1♥
 - 3♥ Four+ hearts, but very weak hand

- 2♦ 4♥ and 5+♦, 16-20, not forcing
 2♥ 6♥, 16-20, not forcing
 2♠ 4♥ and 5+ diamonds, 21+ hcp but less than GF
 2NT balanced game force; systems on
 3♣ 5♥, 5+♣, game force
 3♦ 4♥, 5+♦, game force
 3♥ 6+♥ and game force, setting trumps
 1NT GF relay
 2♣ Hearts and diamonds, or balanced without 4♠
 2♦-2♥ balanced; continuations like 1♣-1♠-2♣-2♦ but up one step
 2♦-2♠+ Two-suited, up one step
 2♦ ♥+♣; rebid 2♠ is 3-suited, else up one step no reversers
 2♥ ♥+♠; rebid 2NT is 3-suited, else up one step no reverser/long 2-suiter
 2♠+ one-suited ♥, regular track
 2♣ Negative 0-1♥, 3-4♠, 4+♣ (starts a scramble). Opener continues naturally, with 3-level bids showing extras (21+), and 3♣ does not promise ♥. A reasonable scrambling priority would be:
 - Pass with 4+♣
 - 2♠ with 4♠
 - 2♥ with 6+♥
 - 2♦ with 5+♦
 - Pass with 3♣
 - 2♦ otherwise
 2♦ Negative with 5+♦ and 4+♠
 2♥ Negative with 4+♥ and decent values
 2♠ Asking location of values (game try in ♥)
 2NT 21+ balanced, no 4♥, systems on
 3♣ ♦ Short suit game tries for ♥
 3♥ General game try for ♥
 2♠ Negative with 5+♠ and 5+♣
 2NT Negative with 5+♦ and 5+♣
 1♠ 4+♠ unbalanced; may have longer minor (but not longer ♥)
 1NT GF relay
 2♣ Spades and diamonds, or balanced, or 3-suited short in a red suit
 2♦-2♥ Balanced or 3-suited, same as 1♣-1♥-1♠-1n-2♣-2♦, but lose a step
 2♦-2♠+ ♠+♦, losing a step
 2♦ ♠+♣ (2♥ relay and lose a step)
 2♥ 5+♠ and 4+♥ (2♠ relay, lose a step, no reversers)
 2♠+ One-suited spades, regular track
 2♣ Negative, 0-2♠, 3+♣ (2443 is okay)
 2♦ Negative, 0-2♠, 5+♦
 2♥ Negative, 0-2♠, 5+♥
 2♠ 3-4♠
 2NT Splinter spade raise, non-GF (3♣ asks and high/mid/low); 9 losers typical
 3♣ ♦ ♥ 6-card suit with 3♠ also, something like 9 losers

- 3♠ 4+♠, 9 losers, no singleton (i.e. Kxxx xx Jxxxx xx)
- 1NT 17-20 balanced or nearly so; systems on
- 2♣ Natural, 16-20 and either 6+♣ or 5+♣ and 4♦ or 4♥, not 2245 or 2425
 - 2♦ GF relay
 - 2♥ 5+♣ and 4♥, skip 2425
 - 2♠ 5+♣ and 4♦ (lose a step), skip 2245
 - 2NT+ 6+♣, one-suited table but skip 5332
- 2♦ Natural, 16-20, no 4cM, either 6+♦ or 5♦ and 4♣, not 2254
 - 2♥ GF relay
 - 2♠ 5+♦ and 4♣ (lose a step), skip 2254
 - 2NT+ 6+♦, one-suited table lose a step, skip 5332
- 2♥ 4♥ and 5+♣, 21+ hcp, forcing one round
 - 2♠ relay, GF, regular track
 - Else Natural with 0-4 hcp
- 2♠ Both minors at least 5-5, unlimited
 - 2NT GF relay (regular track)
 - 3♣ ♦ to play (negative hand)
- 2NT 6+ in a minor, no 4cM, 21+hcp. If unbal, less than a GF.
 - 3♣ Pass or correct (3♥+ semi-natural and announces a GF)
 - 3♦ Asks the minor (3♥ shows clubs, 3♠ shows diamonds)
 - 3♥ ♠ Natural, forcing, at least a good five card suit
- 3♣ ♦ GF, short in om
- 3♥ ♠ GF, short in OM, one or both minors

3.2 Continuations after 1♣-1♥

Here we can make use of a 1♠ relay which is not necessarily game forcing. This bid normally shows either game force values, or a 5-card heart suit, or 3+♠. If 6+♥ then spade tolerance is implied as well. Non-relay bids are natural and tend to deny the hands described. Non-gameforcing hands will normally break relays in a natural way after responder's rebid.

1♣-1♥ 4+♠

- 1♠ Relay; if not GF will be 5+♥ or 3+♠
 - 1NT either balanced, or ♠+♦ two-suiter, or three-suited short in a red suit
 - 2♣ GF relay
 - 2♦ balanced or three-suited
 - 2♥ 4♠+5+♦ (reverser)
 - 2♠ 5+♠ and 5+♦
 - 2NT+ 5+♠ and 4♦ (two-suited)
 - 2♦ Natural, 5+♥, 4+♦, less than 3♠, about 16-18
 - 2♥ 5+♥ and 4+♣, about 16-18
 - 2♠ 3♠, about 16-18
- 2♣ ♠+♣ two-suiter
 - 2♦ GF relay normal two-suited track

- 2♥ 5+♥, 4+♦ about 16-18
- 2♠ 3♠, about 16-18
- 3♣ 5+♥, 4+♣, about 16-18
- 2♦ 5+♠ single suited
- 2♥ GF relay (one-suiter table)
- 2♠ NF, 2-3♠
- 2NT NF, typically 5♥ and a singleton spade
- 3♣ ♦ ♥ Shortness, agreeing spades
- 3♠ GF in spades, ask for cue
- 2♥ both majors; reverser
- 2♠ 5+♠ and 5+♥
- 2NT+ 5+♠ and 4♥ (regular track)
- 1NT 17-19 natural; systems on
- 2♣ Natural
 - 2♦ Relay; GF or 4♥; always GF if opener has ♥
 - 2♥ Clubs only
 - 2♠ Diamonds
 - 2N Hearts, high shortage
 - 3♣ Hearts, equal shortage (1417)
 - 3♦ Hearts, low shortage, void (2407)
 - 3♥ Hearts, low singleton (2416), 9-10 RP (zoom)
 - 2♥ 6+♠
 - 2♠ 5+♥
 - 2N Natural invite, NF
 - 3♣ Natural invite, NF
- 2♦ Natural, systems on as if 2♦ opened, except with 2♥ and 2♠ flipped
- 2♥ One-suited with 6+♥, tend not to be interested in spades
 - 2♠ GF relay, now one-suiter table (lose a step, but skip 5332)
 - 2NT invitational, not a good heart fit
 - 3♣ ♦ natural, 5+ card suit, may have 5 spades or not, no heart fit
 - 3♥ invitational, often doubleton
- 2♠ both minors (any strength)
 - 2NT GF relay
 - Else NF natural
- 2NT not-quite GF, long minor and wanting to declare NT
- Else Natural, single suited, close to game values

The balanced and three-suited hands resolve relays as follows:

1♣-1♥-1♠-1NT-2♣-2♦ balanced or three-suited

- 2♥ relay
- 2♠ high (♥) shortage; 0-2♥ (now 3♣ shows 42(34) and 3♦+ 3-suited)
- 2NT mid (♦) shortage and three-suited; 0-1♦ (4414 first, then numeric)
- 3♣ mid (♦) shortage and balanced; 4324 or 4423 (numeric)
- 3♦ 4333 exactly
- 3♥ 4342
- 3♠ 4432

3.3 Continuations after 1♣- 1♠+

The relay is always the minimum *suit bid*; over 1♠ and 2♠ we will use the lowest notrump bid as natural and not forcing. The relay will establish a game-force, and continuations are symmetric style on the usual track. In general after the first relay we will show suits in the order *diamonds-clubs-hearts*. Most relay breaks are natural. The details are as follows:

1♣-1♠ 5+♦ or balanced without 4♠

- 1NT 17-19, maybe a little offshape. Non-standard follow-ups, see below.
- 2♣ Game forcing relay
 - 2♦ balanced hand, no 4♠
 - 2♥ relay
 - 2♠ doubleton ♠, symmetric with below
 - 2NT 4333 without 4♠, resolve numerically
 - 3♣ five clubs with three spades; relay for shortness
 - 3♦ five diamonds with three spades; relay for shortness
 - 3♥ three spades and high shortage (so 3244)
 - 3♠ three spades and mid shortage (so 3424)
 - 3NT three spades and low shortage (so 3442)
 - 2NT Right-siding notrump; Keri continuations
 - 3♣ ♦ ♥ ♠ three-suited short in other suit of same rank; Keri-style splinter
 - 2♥ 4♥ and 5+♦
 - 2♠ 4♣ and 5+♦, losing one step from two-suited table
 - 2NT+ 6+♦ single-suited; losing a step but skipping 5332
- 2♦ 16-19, 6+ in either M, or 4♥+ longer suit or 1444
 - Pass Very min (5-6), 6+♦, can't stand the majors
 - 2♥ min, ≤ 3♥
 - 2♠ min, 3+♥, ≤ 3♠
 - Pass 6+M
 - 2♠ (over 2♥) 6+♠
 - 2NT 1444
 - 3m 4♥+ 5+m
 - 3♥ (over 2♠) min, 6♥
 - 2NT max, asking
 - 3m 4♥+ 5+m
 - 3M 6+M
 - 3NT 1444
 - 3m Natural and forcing (3♣ promises ♦ as well)
 - 3M P/C, not max but with good fit for majors
- 2M 16-19, 5+M + 4+ side suit
 - Pass min, 2-3M (very min if 3M)
 - 2M+1 asking for second suit (natural responses, 2NT = ♠)
 - 2NT max, 2♥
 - 3M min, 3M
 - New suit natural, GF

2NT 16-19, 54+ minors
3m 16-19, 6+m

1♣-1♠-1NT 17-19, maybe a little offshape

2♣ Puppet to 2♦, weak or GF with 5+♦. Over 2♦, responder shapes out as if over the relay sequence of 1♣-1♠-2♣-2♥+.

2♦ Stayman-like, inv or better.

2♥ 4-5♥.

2♠ 3♥, inv+ and interested in finding a 5-3♥ fit.
2NT min, 4♥.
3X max, small doubleton X.
3♥ min, 5♥.
3NT, 4♥ to play.

2NT inv.
3X GF, small doubleton X.
3M , inv.

2♠ 5♠. Follow-ups same as 2NT+ above.
2NT min, deny 4♥ and 5♠. 3X now shows small doubleton X.
3X max, small doubleton X.
3NT max, to play.

2♥ inv, 5+♦+4♥.

2♠ inv, 5+♦+4♣.

2NT inv.

3♣ inv, 6+♦.

1♣-1NT 5+♥, denies 4♠ or 5+♣

2♣ GF relay

2♦ 4+♦, not a reverser, then into two-suited table

2♥ 5+♥ and 4♣, then into two-suited table

2♠+ 5+♥ single suited, high shortage (etc one-suited table)

2♦ 5+♠ and less than GF

2♥ 0-1♠ and minimum values (NF)

2♠ 2♠ and minimum values (NF)

2NT 2♠ and game force values

3♣ 0-1♠, 4♣, game force values

3♦ 0-1♠, 4+♦, game force values

3♥ 0-1♠, 6+♥, game force values

3♠ 3♠, minimum values (NF)

3NT 36xx, choice of game, game forcing

4♣♦ splinter with 3♠, game forcing

2♥ minimum hand, usually 2♥ exactly

Pass Non-game force, not extra hearts

2♠ 5♥ and 5♦ invitational values (choice of contract)

- 3♥ Re-invite with 6+♥
- Else Natural and game force
- 2♠ at least 5-5 in the minors
- 2NT GF relay; symmetric
- 3♣ ♦ ♥ non-forcing suggesting a contract
- 3♠ ask for spade help for 3NT
- 2NT 3-suited short ♥, not forcing
- 3♣ 6+♣ and 0-1♥, not forcing
- 3♦ 6+♦ and 0-1♥, not forcing
- 3♥ 3♥ but very minimum hand

1♣-2♣ 5+♣ unbalanced, no 4cM

- 2♦ Relay; GF
- 2♥ 4♦ (reverser)
- 2♠ 5+♣ and 5+♦
- 2NT+ 6+♣ one-suited, lose a step but skip 5332s
- 2♥ 5+♥, but not eager to play hearts opposite shortage
- Pass 2♥ and minimum values
- 2♠ Maximum with 2♥
- 2NT both minors short in ♥, minimum, not forcing
- 3♣ 6+♣ and minimum, 0-1♥, not forcing
- 3♦ Short/weak diamonds, 6+♣, 0-1♥, game force
- 3♥ 3♥ and a minimum, not forcing
- 3♠ Short/weak spades, 5+♣, 0-1♥, game force
- 3NT Suggests a contract, 0-1♥
- 4♣ 3♥ and very good clubs, game force
- 4♦ 3♥ and singleton or void diamonds, game force
- 4♥ 3♥ and a maximum
- 2♠ 5+♠, but not eager to play spades opposite shortage
- Pass 2♠ and minimum
- 2NT both minors short in ♠, minimum, not forcing
- 3♣ 6+♣ and minimum, usually 0-1♠
- 3♦ Short/weak diamonds, 6+♣, 0-2♠, game force
- 3♥ Short/weak hearts, 5+♣, 0-2♠, game force
- 3♠ 3♠ and minimum, not forcing
- 3NT Suggests a contract, less than 3♠
- 4♣ 3♠ and very good clubs, GF
- 4♦ 3♠ and short diamonds, GF
- 4♥ 3♠ and short hearts, GF
- 2NT No 5-card major, 1-2♣, not forcing
- 3♣ 3-4♣, not forcing
- 3♦ ♥ ♠ Very good six-plus card suit, not forcing but very invitational

1♣-2♦ 5+♣ and 4+♥

- 2♥ GF relay; two-suited table
- 2♠ 5+♠, but not eager to play spades opposite shortage
 - Pass 2♠ and minimum
 - 2NT typically 1435 or 1525 minimum
 - 3♣ 6+♣ and minimum, usually 0-1♠
 - 3♦ Short/weak diamonds, 5+♣, 4♥, 0-2♠, game force
 - 3♥ 5+♥, 0-2♠, game force
 - 3♠ 3♠ and minimum, not forcing
 - 3NT Suggests a contract, less than 3♠, only 4♥
 - 4♣ 3♠ and very good clubs, GF
 - 4♦ 3♠ and void diamonds, GF
 - 4♥ 3♠ and very good hearts, GF
- 2NT No major fit, 1-2♣, not forcing
- 3♣ 3-4♣, not forcing
- 3♦♠ Very good six-plus card suit, not forcing but very invitational
- 3♥ Four hearts but very minimum, often slow cards in ♠+♦

1♣-2♥ 3-suited, short in ♠

- 2♠ GF relay
 - 2NT 1444
 - 3♣ 0445
 - 3♦ 0454
 - 3♥ 0544
- 2NT Natural NF, often 5+♠
- Else Natural and NF

1♣-2♠ 3-suited, short in ♣

- 2NT Natural and NF
- 3♣ GF relay
 - 3♦ 4441
 - 3♥ 4450
 - 3♠ 4540
 - 3NT 5440
- Else Natural and NF

1♣-2NT game force with 6♣, no singleton, 3-6R

- 3♣ Relay
 - 3♦ 2236 shape
 - 3♥ 2326 shape
 - 3♠ 3226 and 3-4R
 - 3NT 3226 and 5-6R
- 3♦ Relay with short clubs

1♣-3♣ game force with a 7-card minor, no singleton, 3-6R

3♦	Relay
3♥	2227
3♠	2272 and 3-4R
3NT	2272 and 5-6R

3.4 Interference over 1♣ (P) 1♦

If opponents interfere after 1♣ (P) 1♦, we play

- Over Dbl: systems on, except we pass with minimum balanced hands.
- Over 1♥: systems on, double shows 4+♥ or 21+ balanced.
- Higher interference: systems off, revert to natural bidding.

Under higher interference, opener's 1N and 2N rebids are natural and system on (for 2N, if there is a known suit, we treat it as if the bidding has started with (2X) 2N).

Opener's natural cheapest suit bids are natural and non-forcing. Responder continues with

- With a double negative, raise or jump raise, or jump in a new suit to the 3-level, or pass.
- With a balanced GF, rebid cheapest NT or bid the cheapest 4-card suit lacking a stopper.
- With a super-positive, bid a new suit or cue-bid with support.

With a hand too good to make a non-forcing rebid, opener can jump in NT or a new suit to show a GF hand, or start with a double with a flexible hand. Jumps to 4m are leaping Michaels.

Cue-bids show two-suiters not covered by leaping Michaels. We make an exception after 1♣ (P) 1♦ (1♠), where 2♠ is natural and shows a hand with too good to risk a pass-out defending 1♠.

If opener passes, responder (in balancing position) can

- With a double negative, make a natural NF bid at the 2-level. In the specific auction 1♣ (P) 1♦ (1♠) P (P), bid 1N as an artificial takeout.
- With a balanced GF, re-open with a double, unless with too much length in the suit, in which case bid 2N (unlimited in strength).
- With a super-positive, bid a new suit at the 3-level, or double. Cue-bid and jumps to 4m are used to show various two-suiters. Note that double always guarantees GF values and establish forcing pass.

If opener doubles for takeout, responder can

- With a double negative, make the cheapest suit, or bid 2N lebensohl to show a suit that cannot be shown at the 2-level, or pass. If the opponents preempt to the 4-level, responder can bid games even with the double negative hand, as he has been invited by opener to act.
- With a balanced GF, double for penalty, bid 2N then 3N, jump to 3N (11-13). If the bidding is above 3N, responder will always double with a balanced GF.
- With a super-positive, bid a new suit at the 3-level (if lebensohl is on) or jump to the 4-level, double for penalty, or cue-bid. A cue-bid usually shows two places to play.

3.5 Interference over 1♣ (P) 1♥+

If opponents double after a semi-positive or better response, we play system on, with the exceptions that

- Pass is now the relay.
- Redouble is to play.
- The relay step becomes a natural bid.

If opponents bid over the response, we play a natural defense. Double by either partner is takeout. Pass by opener is not forcing, but responder will generally try to balance if reasonable. New suits by opener is natural and non-forcing. With a more than minimum hand, opener starts with a double, jump, or cue. Jumps to 4m continue to be leaping Michaels.

3.6 Interference over 1♣

3.6.1 Classification of Overcalls

We classify opponents overcalls based on the following criteria:

- If the overcall is likely to be passed out, we treat it as natural. This includes natural overcalls, 2- or 3-suited overcalls including the bid suit, multi-meaning overcalls including natural one-suited in the overcalled suit (e.g., psycho suction).
- If the overcall promises a known 2-suiter that does not include the overcalled suit, we play unusual vs unusual defense if the overcall is 1♠ or higher.
- If the overcall promises an anchor suit (1-, 2-, or 3-suited) in another suit, we will treat it as if that other suit is overcalled when we consider t/o doubles.
- If the overcall promises an unknown 2-suiter, we treat as if no suit is overcalled.

3.6.2 Low-level Interference: Up to 1♥

If the opponents bid 1♥, then we basically play systems on. A double shows a 1♥ response (so 4+♠ or a balanced semi-positive) and higher bids have the same meaning as if the opponents had passed. A pass of 1♥ is forcing and shows either a very weak or very strong hand, after which opener's balancing double shows 4+♥ (this double is sometimes passed, but otherwise our normal methods apply). If the opponents bid 1♦, then double shows the *strong* 1♦ response (game forcing) and pass shows either a very weak response or a penalty pass (but only penalty pass if 1♦ was natural). This pass is *not forcing* but opener will normally balance anyway. Higher bids after the 1♦ overcall are the same as if opponents had passed. After a double:

Redouble game forcing values with some club length; often this is desire to penalize

Pass 0-4 hcp, natural bidding

1♦ the game forcing 1♦ bid (7+ relay points) with systems on

1♥+ normal responses as if opponents had passed

3.6.3 Mid-Level Interference: 1♠ to 2♦

For this level of interference, we will define a suit X for the opponents. If their call is natural then X is simply the suit they bid. If their call shows a particular known suit (i.e. a transfer bid) then X is that suit. If their call includes the suit they bid (i.e. that suit and another) or even *might* include the suit they bid and will be often passed (psycho suction or inverted psycho suction) then X is the suit they bid. If their call is effectively forcing and one of the options is a single-suited hand then X is the single-suited option (i.e. suction). If their call shows one of several possible two-suiters (i.e. CRASH) then there is no suit X and we will use option (2) as described below (where doubles are just a general game force).

The general principles for handling mid-level interferences are:

- Relays are off.
- Two-level suits are shuffled. We play transfers that are semi-positive or better. Transfers that cannot be accepted naturally at the two-level are GF.
- Doubles are take-out for the known suit, emphasizing the majors.

In responding to the non-GF transfers, further developments are as follows.

- If opener cannot force to game:
 - Accept the transfer: could be on doubleton
 - 2Y: natural, forcing one round. Responder non-forcing continuations are 2NT, raise, rebid. All others are GF.
 - 2NT: Lebensohl, over which new suit below responder's suit is sign-off.
- If opener can force to game:
 - 2Y then cue-bid; or 3Y
 - Jump raise: natural and GF. If in a major, serious-non-serious applies.
 - 2N then raise: flexible hand, usually unclear in direction.
 - 2N then higher: flexible hand, indicating 3N is possibly a good contract.

After non-GF takeout doubles, the following rules apply:

- Lebensohl is on for 2♦/♥/♠ overcalls.
- Jump to 3-suit is GF with 5+suit (with 4, cue or Leb)
- Dbl then new suit by responder is NF; bidding a major that could have been shown at the 2-level via a non-GF transfer could be a punt.

We cover specific sequences below.

1♣-(1♠) : X = suit opponents hold (or are likely to hold); if no suit X then use meaning (2).

Pass	0-4, or 5-8 with length in X.
Dbl	5+, takeout of X. If (2) 8+, bal GF, interest in penalty, usual t/o rules.
1NT	8+, more or less bal, stopper in X. System on. If (2) takeout with both majors.
2♣	5+, 5+♦
2♦	5+, 5+♥
2♥	5+, 5+♠
2♠	8+, 5+♣

- 2N 4-6, 55 in two suits including 5+♣
- 3♣ 4-7, constructive jump shift in ♣
- 3♦ 4-7, 55 in two suits including 5+♦
- 3♥ 4-7, 55 majors
- 3♠ 8-10 or 14+, anti-positional NT.

Further bidding under (1) is that X is a cue-bid. Under (2) there are no artificial forces. New suits are natural and forcing.

After 1♣-1NT, same as 1♣-1♠, except now Dbl includes bal GF even if 1NT has a single-suited option.

1♣-(2♣) : Same rules as after 1♣-(1♠) for determining suit X.

- Dbl 5+, takeout of X. After this, 2NT by opener natural GF. If (2), 8+, bal GF
- 2♦ ♥ ♠ 5+, transfer to next non-X. If suit will be shown at the 3-level, GF
- 2NT GF, bal
- 3m if there is no transfer to m at the 2-level, natural, GF; otherwise 4-7, constructive
- 3♥ 4-7, 55 majors
- 3♠ 8-10 or 14+, anti-positional NT.

1♣-(2♦) : If multi or shows ♠, use multi defense. Else determine X as above.

- Dbl 5+, takeout of X. Lebensohl applies. If (2), 8+, bal GF
- 2♥ 5+, 5+♠
- 2♠ GF, 5+♦ or 5+♥ (the suit not shown).
- 2NT GF, bal
- 3♣ GF, natural
- 3♦ constructive in highest non-♠
- 3♥ 4-7, 55 majors
- 3♠ 8-10 or 14+, anti-positional NT.

3.6.4 High-Level Interference: 2♥ or above

Over 1♣-(2♥), dbl is 5+, takeout of X or bal GF without another clear call. New suits are natural GF, unless X is ♠, in which case 2♠ shows GF with 5+♥, and 3♥ is constructive in ♥.

Over 1♣-(2♠), dbl is the same. New suits are natural GF, unless X is ♣, in which case 3♣ shows GF with 5+♠, and 3♠ is constructive in ♠.

Over higher overcalls, dbl is takeout with GF strength.

3.6.5 Lebensohl 2NT

If we double their call at the two-level for takeout and have not already established a game-force, then 2NT is Lebensohl. So for example 1♣-(2♥)-Dbl and Lebensohl is on by opener (i.e. 2NT shows a min opener wanting to bid 3x in response to the takeout double, a direct 3x is forcing; suggest that 2N..3♠ here is also forcing but suggests a choice of contracts with only four spades, since distinguishing "invite" here is kind of silly). Also 1♣-(2♠)-Pass-Dbl and Lebensohl is on by responder (here direct three-level bid is about 5-7 and 2NT shows less).

Lebensohl also applies after 2-level transfers by responder.

If someone bids Lebensohl in these auctions and partner doesn't accept the puppet it's always GF. Mostly just try to bid naturally here, but 3♦ (the cheapest non-accept) can be used as a punt. For example 1♣-(1♠)-2♦ [hearts] - 2NT [leb usually min with long minor of my own] - 3♦ [I have a GF, not always diamonds].

4 1♦ Opening

The 1♦ opening shows either 11-13 balanced or 11-15 points with any three suited hand (no 5-card major) or 11-15 points with both minors. In any case it denies a five-card major and denies a six-card minor unless holding 6-5 or better in the minor suits. Responses to 1♦ are basically natural:

- 1♥ ♠ 4+ cards in the suit, may have longer minor
- 1NT about 6-11 hcp, no 4-card major, no game opposite balanced max
- 2♣ 4+♣, 12+ points, no 4-card major, may have longer ♦ suit
- 2♦ 4+♦, usually single-suited, 12+ points
- 2♥ ♠ natural and weak, deny game interest unless a big major suit fit
- 2NT both minors; normally not interested in game
- 3m a decent 6+ card suit, less than game-invitational values

4.1 Continuations after 1♦-1M

After a one-of-a-major response, most of opener's rebids are natural. The bid just below partner's major good raise of the major, the step just above shows a min raise with a side void, the next three shows a maximum hand with 4-card support and a side 5-card minor, in numeric order, and the next four a max raise with a side void in numeric order.

1♦-1♥ Natural and forcing

- 1♠ 4♠, no 4♥, could be a balanced hand
- 1NT 11-13 balanced, not 5♦ and 4♣; may have singleton ♥ if 3145
- 2♣ 11-15, 5+♦ and 4+♣, or 14-15, 5+♣
- 2♦ good raise of hearts, 11-13 unbalanced with 4♥, or 14-15 unbalanced with 3♥
- 2♥ normal heart raise, not 4♥ and 5431 shape
- 2♠ 4-card heart raise with a side void
- 2NT 14-15 hcp, 4♥ and singleton ♠ (1444|1435|1453)
- 3♣ 14-15 hcp with at least 6/5 minors (either way)
- 3♦ 14-15 hcp, 4♥ and singleton ♦ (4414|3415)
- 3♥ 14-15 hcp, 4♥ and singleton ♣ (4441|3451)

1♦-1♠ Natural and forcing

- 1NT 11-13 balanced, not 5♦ and 4♣; may have singleton ♠ if 1345, 1444, 1435, 1453.
- 2♣ 11-15, 5+♦ and 4+♣, or 14-15, 5+♣
- 2♦ 11-15, 0445 or 0454, or 14-15, 1453
- 2♥ good raise of spades, 11-13 unbalanced with 4♠, or 14-15 unbalanced with 3♠
- 2♠ normal spade raise, not 4♠ and 5431 shape
- 2NT 4-card spade raise with a side void
- 3♣ 14-15 hcp, 5+♣ and 5+♦
- 3♦ 14-15 hcp, 4♠ and singleton ♥ (4144|4135|4153)
- 3♥ 14-15 hcp, 4♠ and singleton ♦ (4414|4315)
- 3♠ 14-15 hcp, 4♠ and singleton ♣ (4441|4351)

4.1.1 1♦-1M-2M

Depending on strength and length in M, responder's options are:

2NT 4M and inv, non-forcing

3M 5+M and inv, non-forcing

3NT 4M and choice-of-game

New suit 4+M, values in new suit, game-forcing

Jumps 5+M, splinters, slam try

Over 2NT, opener passes with 3M and a min, bids a new suit with 3M and a max, bids 3M with 4M and a min, or bids 4M with 4M and max.

Over a new suit, opener bids 3M with 4M and a fitting hand, bids a new suit with 3M and suggesting weakness in the 4th suit, 3NT with shortage opposite responder's suits and usually with only 3M (discouraging), or jump in a new suit to splinter.

4.1.2 Checkback after 1♦-1M-1NT

After opener's 1NT rebid, we use 2♦ as a game forcing relay. The other bids are used to describe various signoffs, invites, and splinters. Note that we frequently raise on three-card support for the major (except for 4333 hands). Here are responder's followups after 1♦-1♠-1NT:

1♦-1♠-1NT Natural 11-13, could be singleton spade

2♣ either ♦ signoff, or any invite

2♦ GF relay

2♥ 4+♥ and 5+♠, less than invite

2♠ Usually 5♠ with a singleton, less than invite

Pass 2-3♠

2NT 1♠, at least 44 minors (1444 or 1345 or 1354)

3♣ 1453

2NT balanced invite, 4♠ only, no 5-minor

3♣ signoff in clubs

3♦ ♥ (high) splinter

3♥ ♦ (middle) splinter

3♠ ♣ (low) splinter

3NT to play

The splinters are normally assumed to show a three-suited pattern with only four cards in the original major. Opener's first responsibility is to bid 3NT with a suitable holding opposite the shortness. If this is not possible, opener can bid his best fit, or cue the shortness to show a hand with no wasted values. Responder can occasionally make a splinter bid on a two-suited pattern looking for the best game (relaying can be awkward there) in which case he will correct opener's back to one of his own suits if necessary. Slam auctions in this sequence should only happen if responder has the "true three suiter" and are based mostly on point count and the no-wastage bid.

After the 2♣ puppet, opener will normally bid 2♦. This guarantees holding at least three clubs (note that doubleton club is rare anyway since we often raise spades with 3442 shape). Opener can "super-accept" the puppet by bidding 2♥ (2452) or 2♠ (3442/3352). Each of these denies three clubs and shows a really good fit for diamonds in case responder has the signoff. After 1♦-1♠-1NT-2♣-2♦:

1♦-1♠-1NT-2♣-2♦ Almost forced rebid by opener

- 2♥ 4+♥ and 5+♠, invitational
- 2♠ 5+♠ invitational
- 2NT 4♠ and either 5♦ or 4144, invitational
- 3♣ 4♠ and 5+♣, invitational
- 3♦ 4♠ and 6♦, invitational
- 3♥ 5+♥ and 5+♠, invitational
- 3♠ 6+♠ with a good suit, invitational
- 3NT Choice of games with a 5332 hand

1♦-1♥-1NT Natural 11-13; denies 4♠, can be 3145

- 2♣ either ♦ signoff, or any invite
- 2♦ GF relay
- 2♥ usually 5♥ with a singleton, less than invite
 - Pass 2-3♥
 - 2♠ 3145
- 2♠ exactly invitational with 4441 shape (don't bid 2♣ with this)
- 2NT balanced invite, 4♥ only, no 5-minor
- 3♣ signoff in clubs
- 3♦ ♠ (high) splinter
- 3♥ ♦ (middle) splinter
- 3♠ ♣ (low) splinter
- 3NT to play

When the auction goes 1♦-1♥-1NT, there's usually no reason to super-accept the puppet. This is because the notrump rebid pretty much denies holding four spades or four hearts, and therefore usually guarantees three in each minor. A 2♥ super-accept is possible though, and shows 3352 shape. After 1♦-1♥-1NT-2♣-2♦:

1♦-1♥-1NT-2♣-2♦ Almost forced rebid by opener

- 2♥ 5+♥ invitational
- 2♠ 4414 invitational
- 2NT 1444 invitational
- 3♣ 4♥ and 5+♣ invitational
- 3♦ 4♥ and 5+♦ invitational
- 3♥ 6+♥ with a good suit, invitational
- 3NT Choice of games with 5♥-332

4.1.3 Relays after 1♦-1X-1Y

There are no direct relays after the 1♦ opening. However, we do play relay continuations after a major suit response to 1♦ and opener's natural rebid. If the auction begins 1♦-1X-1Y, then we play the "XYZ" convention (also known as 2-way new minor force). Responder's 2♣ bid requests 2♦ from opener, either a diamond signoff or the start of an invitational sequence. Responder's 2♦ is game force relay. Once shape resolves, we can continue to ask for RP as in our strong club auctions. For a 1NT rebid or any other hand in the 11-13 range, we expect 5-9 RP. For a 1♠ rebid (which has the full 11-15 range) we can have from 5-11 RP.

After the 2♦ GF relay, opener bids as follows:

- 2♥ three card support for partner's major
- 2♠ honor-doubleton in partner's major
- 2NT if directly over 2♦, it shows singleton in partner's major; if reached via 2♥ then some 4333 shape.
- 3♣ five clubs
- 3♦ five diamonds
- 3♥ (4432) with high shortage
- 3♠ (4432) with middle shortage
- 3NT (4432) with low shortage

In general make the lowest descriptive bid. Note that some of the inferences from these calls are different based on the auction. After a relay, shapes generally distinguish in order of frequency (most nearly balanced is first), or in numeric order where frequency is unclear. To be complete, here are the different shapes and relay groupings for the three possible auctions.

1♦- 1♥- 1♠- 2♦ GF relay

- 2♥ 4333, 4315, 4351, 4324, 4342
- 2NT 4144, 4135, 4153
- 3♣ 4225, 4045
- 3♦ 4252, 4054
- 3♥ 4234
- 3♠ 4243

1♦- 1♥- 1N - 2♦ GF relay

- 2♥ (3334, 3343), (2335, 3325), (2353, 3352), 2344
- 2NT 3145
- 3♣ 3235, 2245
- 3♦ 3253
- 3♥ 3244

1♦- 1♠- 1N - 2♦ GF relay

- 2♥ (3334, 3343, 3433), (3235, 3325), (3253, 3352), 3244, 3424, 3442
- 2NT 1345, 1444, 1435, 1453

3♣ 2335, 2245, 2425
 3♦ 2353, 2452
 3♥ 2344
 3♠ 2434
 3NT 2443

Before shape is fully resolved, responder can continue by making natural relay breaks. Relay breaks to the shown major sets trumps and asks for cue-bids. If shape is fully resolved, we continue with RP asks and relay breaks much like in our relays over 1♣.

4.1.4 Continuations after 1♦-1M-2♣

The 2♣ bid is natural and non-forcing. Usually this implies 5+♦ and 4+♣, so responder will usually take a preference to diamonds; however if opener is maximum(14-15) it's possible that the clubs will be longer than diamonds (even 1435 is possible).

1♦-1M-2♣ Natural, 5+♦ and 4+♣ unless extras

Pass 9-H, 4+♣ or (3♣ and 1-♦)
 2♦ 10-H, 2+♦
 2♥ If M = ♥, max with a doubleton. If M = ♠, max, 1444 or 1435
 2♠ If M = ♥, max, 3145. If M = ♠, max with a doubleton
 2NT max, (13)(45). If M = ♥, must be max 3154
 3♣ max, 5♦ and 5+♣
 3♦ min, 6♦ and 5+♣
 2OM relay, see below
 2M, 2N, 3m inv
 3M natural, forcing with a strong suit

The fourth suit (other major) is an artificial game force which starts a relay sequence. At this point opener's bids are:

1♦-1♥-2♣-2♠ Game force relay

2NT 5-4 in the minors
 3♣ Relay
 3♦ 2254 (most balanced)
 3♥ 3154
 3♠ 2245 (always extras since not 1NT rebid, 7-11 RP)
 3NT 3145 (always extras since not 1NT rebid, 7-11 RP)
 3♣ 5-5 in the minors, high shortage (symmetric with below)
 3♦ 11(56)
 3♥ 2155
 3♠ 3055
 3NT 2056
 4♣ 2065

1♦-1♠-2♣-2♥ Game force relay

2♠	5-4 in minors.
2NT	Relay
3♣	2254 (most balanced)
3♦	1354
3♥	2245 (always extras since not 1NT rebid, 7-11 RP)
3♠	1345 (always extras since not 1NT rebid, 7-8 RP)
3NT	1345 (zoom but not past 3NT); 9-11 RP
2NT	shows four hearts and max (1444 or 1435)
3♣	Relay
3♦	1444 (first three-suiter)
3♥	1435 and 7-8 RP
3♠	1435 and 9 RP (zoom)
3NT	1435 and 10-11 RP (zoom, but not past 3NT)
3♣	five-five minors, high shortage
3♦	11(56)
3♥	2155
3♠	3055
3NT	2056
4♣	2065

Notice that the bids 3♣ and above are symmetric with the two suited table in our normal relays. The 6/5 hands should be 5-9 RP because of the failure to jump to 3♣ at opener's second turn, whereas 5/5 hands are in the 5-11 RP range.

4.1.5 Continuations after 1♦-1♠-2♦

This bid shows 4♥ and an awkward shape for other sequences (04(45), max 1453). Since it is fairly well-defined, the follow-ups are mostly natural with 2♠ as an invitational or better relay.

1♦-1♠-2♦ 04(45) or 1453 and too strong for 1NT

2♥, 3♣	natural, non-forcing
2♠	inv with 33 minors or 4+♣, or GF; relay
2NT	0445
3♣	inv
3♦	relay for RP
3♣	min (5-9RP), 0454, non-forcing
3♦	to play
3♥	relay for RP
3♦	max (7-11RP), 1453, GF
3♥+	max (7-11RP), 0454 zoom
2NT, 3♦ ♥	inv
3♠	natural and forcing

4.1.6 Jump raises

All of opener's jumps after 1♦-1M promises 4+ support and shapely hands. Responder can bid the next step other than the trump suit to find out opener's precise shape; three of the agreed major is always to play. The resolution is in numeric. Note that asking for exact shape is always the start of a slam-try sequence, so we should feel free to zoom to controls (even past 3NT is fine since we are slammish and usually playing in responder's major anyway). Also, if 3NT is the next step of the ask, it is a relay as well as we have found a major fit (However, if 3NT is not the next step, it is still a sign-off). For example:

1♦-1♥ Natural and forcing

1♦-1♥-2NT-3♣ :
3♦ 1444
3♥ 1435
3♠ 1453 and 7-8 RP
3NT 1453 and 9 RP (zoom)

1♦-1♥-3♦-3♠ :
3NT 4414
4♣ 3415 and 7-8 RP (zoom)

1♦-1♥-3♥-3♠ :
3NT 4441
4♣ 3451 and 7-8 RP (zoom)

If the auction starts with 1♦-1M and opener showing a void, then there are many steps available below three of the major. The lowest bid is a general relay and this is game forcing opposite a maximum with a void (but not necessarily min with void). The other bids exist primarily to reduce information to the opponents:

1♦-1♥-2♠ Heart raise with a void

2NT relay for shape; GF opposite max with void
3♣ high (♠) void; 0445 or 0454 (3♦ asks and zoom to RP)
3♦ mid (♦) void; 4405 (3♥ NF, 3♠ relay for RP)
3♥ low (♣) void; 4450; minimum values and not forcing
3♠ low (♣) void; 4450; maximum values and game forcing
3♣ ask for shape only if max
3♦ high (♠) void; 0445 or 0454 (3♥ asks) and max
3♥ mid (♦) void; 4405 and max
3♠ low (♣) void; 4450 and max
4♥ minimum values with any void
3♦ asks for game bid only if max
3♥ to play

4.1.7 The good raise

After $1\heartsuit-1M$, bidding one below $2M$ serves as a good raise. This is a hand not good enough to make one of the aforementioned jump raises, but better than a normal 11-13 balanced. The possibilities are a shapely three-card raise with max values (like 14-15 high) and a shapely four-card raise lacking a void or the strength to jump (around 11-13 high). Opposite these hands we will virtually never want to play in $2NT$ (the only hand with three trumps is very maximum in high cards). So we will use $2M+1$ as an artificial inquiry, starting game-forcing relays. Continuations look as follows:

$1\heartsuit-1\heartsuit-2\heartsuit$ Good raise of hearts

- $2\heartsuit$ Signoff, virtually never remove this
- $2\spadesuit$ At least a game try
- $2NT$ High (\spadesuit) shortness, four-card raise, symmetric with $1\heartsuit-1\heartsuit-2NT$
- $3\clubsuit$ Max, $3\heartsuit$, $1\spadesuit$, resolve as 1345, 1354 (with minor shortness, opener will have $4\spadesuit$)
- $3\diamond$ Mid (\diamond) shortness, four-card raise, symmetric with $1\heartsuit-1\heartsuit-3\diamond$
- $3\heartsuit$ Low (\clubsuit) shortness, four-card raise, symmetric with $1\heartsuit-1\heartsuit-3\heartsuit$
- $3\spadesuit$ 0355
- $2NT$ Spades and game forcing
- $3\clubsuit \diamond$ Natural and game forcing; minor perhaps longer than \heartsuit
- $3\heartsuit$ General game try
- $3\spadesuit$ Splinter
- $3NT$ Choice of games; usually pass this with balanced hand or 3-card raise
- $4\clubsuit \diamond$ Splinter
- $4\heartsuit$ To play

$1\heartsuit-1\spadesuit-2\heartsuit$ Good raise of spades

- $2\spadesuit$ Signoff, virtually never remove this
- $2NT$ At least a game try
- $3\clubsuit$ $3\spadesuit$, singleton somewhere, over $3\diamond$, shows HML, goes into relay follow-ups.
- $3\diamond$ High (\heartsuit) shortness, four-card raise
- $3\heartsuit$ Med (\diamond) shortness, four-card raise
- $3\spadesuit$ Low (\clubsuit) shortness, four-card raise
- $3NT$ 3055
- $3\clubsuit \diamond \heartsuit$ Natural and game forcing
- $3\spadesuit$ General game try
- $3NT$ Choice of games; usually pass with balanced hand or 3-card raise
- $4\clubsuit \diamond \heartsuit$ splinter
- $4\spadesuit$ To play

4.2 Continuations after 1♦-1NT and 1♦-1♥-1♠-1NT

If opener rebids a minor, it shows five cards there. This is not specific about strength and does not promise length in the other minor. Responder should strive to bid on if game is possible opposite 14-15 hcp from opener. If opener bids a major in which he could have four cards, it shows a maximum 4441 hand short in the other major. If opener raises to 2NT, it shows a maximum hand (14-15) short in a minor. If opener bids 3♣ it shows both minors.

1♦-1NT Responder denies 4M, about 6-11 hcp

- Pass most hands with no game interest
- 2♣♦ natural, 5-card suit, need not have length in other minor
- 2♥ maximum, 4414 (high shortage)
- 2♠ maximum, 4441 (low shortage)
- 2NT either 1444 or 4144 and 14-15 hcp (with a 5cm, bid 2m)
 - 3m To play
 - 3♥ Asking shortness (3♠ =high, 3NT=low)
- 3♣ 4+ in each minor and major suit shortage, mostly preemptive

After 1♦-1♥-1♠-1NT Responder has about 6-11 hcp, 4-5♥

- Pass most hands with no game interest
- 2♣♦ natural, 5-card suit, 41(35) or 42(25) type
- 2♥ shows 3♥, does not particularly promise extras
- 2♠ a 4144 or 40(45) hand with 14-15 hcp
- 2NT 43(15) with 14-15 over which 3♣ is pass/correct, 3♦ asks, 3♥ to play

4.3 Continuations after 1♦-2m

1♦-2♣ Natural and inv+, no 4M, maybe longer ♦

- 2♦ minimum hand, if unbalanced will not have 4+♣
- 2♥ 4+♣ and three-suited hand
- 2♠ maximum, 0-1♣
 - 2NT Shape relay, GF, resolved as 4441 / 3451 / 4351 / 4450, relay followups
 - 3♣ NF if directly over 2♠, F after 1♦-2♣-2♦-2♥-2♠
 - 3♦ Set ♦ as trumps
 - 3M shortness in M with ♦ agreed
- 2NT maximum, balanced 2-3♣
- 3♣ maximum, balanced 4+♣. For both 2NT and 3♣,
 - Next step Sets ♣ as trumps
 - Higher stoppers.
- 3♦ maximum hand with 5-5 or better minors.
 - 3♥ asks for shortness, with a subsequent 4♥/4♠ RKC for ♣/♦ just like a 2NT opening
 - 3♠/NT ♠/♥ singleton
 - 4♣/♦ ♠/♥ void

- 3♥ 4153 exactly (splinter with three-card support), maximum, relay followups
- 3♠ 1453 exactly (splinter with three-card support), maximum, relay followups

1♦-2♣-2♦ Opener shows a minimum without a shapely club fit

- 2♥ game force relay, symmetric with the above
- 2♠ minor suit stayman, usually signing of with 4-4 or better minors
- 2NT to play, but opener should correct to 3♣ holding 4+♣
- 3♣ to play, conceivably opener can bid on with a good fit for clubs
- 3♦ ♥ ♠ game forcing splinter

1♦-2♣-2♥ Opener shows 4+♣ with side shortness

- 2♠ GF relay. Opener shows shortness hi-mid-lo. Natural cuebidding afterwards.
- 2NT asking max or min, not always GF (opener's 3♣ = min, else shortage)
- 3♣ nonforcing invite, starts stopper showing if opener has 13+ points

The auctions after 1♦-2♦ are similar.

1♦-2♦ Natural and invitational or better; no other 4-card suit

- 2♥ minimum values; if diamond fit will not be three-suited (2♠ GF relay; others NF)
- 2♠ 4+♦ and a three-suited hand (2NT GF ask shortage; 3♣ range ask)
- 2NT maximum, 0-2♦
 - 3♣ Slammish with ♦. Opener bids 3N to deny fit, otherwise cue-bid M or bid 3♦
 - 3♦ NF if directly over 2NT, after 1♦-2♦-2♥-2♠-2NT
 - 3M short M, single-suited ♦.
- 3♣ balanced maximum, 3+♦
 - 3♦ set ♦ as trumps
 - Higher stoppers
- 3♦ maximum hand with both minors, at least 5-5. Same followup as above.
- 3♥ 4135 exactly (splinter with 3-card support), maximum, relay followups
- 3♠ 1435 exactly (splinter with 3-card support), maximum, relay followups

4.4 Interference over 1♦

4.4.1 Vs doubles

We play transfer responses starting from the redouble. In other words,

1♦ (Dbl) Takeout double

- Rdbl 4+♥.
- 1♥ 4+♠.
- 1♠ Transfer to NT. Over 1NT rebid, continuations are natural. The bid is usually made with 8-11, although responder may have more. Subsequent doubles by opener is takeout.
- 1NT Transfer to ♣.
- 2♣ Transfer to ♦.
- Higher Preemptive. Notrumps other than 3NT are unusual.

If opener accepts the major suit transfer at the one-level (opponents passing), this shows 1-3 cards in the major. We play our usual two-way new minor force methods if the auction continues without interference. Also note that the various raises are still on, so for example 1♦-X-XX-P-2♦ is a good heart raise.

4.4.2 Vs simple overcalls

We play transfer responses when sensible. This allows us to introduce suits cheaply (a la negative free bids) while not compromising our constructive bidding by too much.

In general, when the opponents make a non-jump natural suit overcall we will use our two-level suit bids as transfers. The basic rule is that the biddable (non-jump, non-cue) suits at the two-level are always shuffled. The lowest (non-jump and non-cue) bid will show the second-lowest suit and so forth. Suits which *could not be naturally introduced at the two-level* are not part of the transfer scheme; bidding such a suit at the three-level is natural. Note that accepting the transfer will place us at the two-level in each case *except the highest transfer bid*. This highest transfer must show “serious” values (normally enough for game opposite a balanced max). Other transfers are not normally “garbage” but could easily be the equivalent of a weak two bid.

Bidding notrump is natural, a cuebid is a stopper ask, and jumps in suits are preemptive (but not total junk usually). A jump-cue transfers to 3NT. Here are the specific sequences:

1♦ (1♥) Natural overcall

- Dbf 4+♠. Opener bids 1♠ with 3♠, 1NT rebid does not guarantee stoppers.
 - 1♠ NFB+ with 4+♣.
 - 1NT 8-11 hcp, natural.
 - 2♣ NFB+ with ♦.
 - 2♦ NF, 3♠+ 4+♦+ 4+♣, like a negative double without 4♠.
 - 2♥ weak or GF, 6+♠.
 - 2♠ Stopper ask for ♥.
 - 2NT Natural invitational, about 12 hcp
 - 3♥ Transfer to 3NT; anti-positional 3NT bid
- Other Jumps Preemptive. Notrumps other than 3NT are unusual.

1♦ (1♠) Natural overcall

- Dbf 4♥. System on, 1NT rebid does not guarantee stoppers.
 - 1NT 8-11 hcp, natural.
 - 2♣ NFB+ with ♦.
 - 2♦ NFB+ with ♥.
 - 2♥ inv+, 5+♣ unless GF
 - 2♠ Stopper ask.
 - 2NT Natural invitational, about 12 hcp
 - 3♣ Semi-constructive (like a good 3♣ preempt)
 - 3♠ Transfer to 3NT; anti-positional 3NT bid
- Other Jumps Preemptive. Notrumps other than 3NT are unusual.

1♦ (2♣) Natural overcall

- Dbf At least one 4M; if only one then inv+ values
- Pass Defending, a good club holding
- 2♦ ♥ ♠ Natural, bid a major if possible
- 2NT Maximum weak notrump, normally with a club control

- 3♣ 14-15 hcp; either both 4M, or one 4M with a club stop; opener will not pass below game
- 3M 14-15 hcp with this 4M; denies the other major
- 2♦ NFB+ with ♥.
- 2♥ NFB+ with ♠.
- 2♠ inv+, 5+♦ unless GF
- 2NT 11-12, natural inv
- 3♣ Stopper ask.
- 3♦ Semi-constructive.
- Other Jumps Preemptive.

1♦ (2♦) Natural overcall (if Michaels, unusual vs unusual defence)

- Dbl At least one 4M; if only one then inv+ values
- Pass Defending, a good diamond holding
- 2♥ ♠ Natural
- 2NT a maximum weak notrump normally with a diamond control
- 3♣ Natural, not suited to any other call
- 3♦ 14-15 hcp; either both 4M, or one 4M plus stopper; opener will not pass below game
- 3M 14-15 hcp, this 4M, denies the other major
- 2♥ NFB+ with ♠
- 2♠ inv+, 5+♥
- 2NT 11-12, natural inv
- 3♣ GF with ♣.
- 3♦ Stopper ask.
- 3♥ Semi-constructive (good NFB)

When responder is a passed hand, we revert to natural bidding after the 1♦ opening and overcalls 1♠ and above. The reasoning is that all our bids are now non-forcing, and by bidding naturally we are able to get out in one additional suit. So for example:

P-(P)-1♦-(2♣) Natural overcall of 3rd seat 1♦ opening

- Dbl Takeout, both majors (although 4-3 is possible)
- 2♦ Natural *not transfer* and non-forcing
- 2♥ Natural *not transfer* and non-forcing
- 2♠ Natural *not transfer* and non-forcing

4.4.3 Vs 1NT overcalls

We basically play our defense to weak notrump here, except that 2NT shows both minors instead of clubs and a major.

1♦ (1NT) Natural strong NT overcall

- Dbl Penalty
- 2♣ Both majors
- 2♦ Diamonds and a major
- 2M, 3♣ Semi-constructive
- 2NT Both minors, 4+♦ and 5+♣

4.4.4 Followups after Transfer Bids

Generally, after responder make a transfer bids, systems are *off*. With a balanced hand, opener generally accepts the transfer. Bidding a new suit at the lowest level shows a distributional hand short in the suit transferred to (usually this is the three-suiter, but a club bid could be both minors). After a *major suit* transfer that doesn't guarantee values, bidding notrump at the lowest level shows an inconvenient three-suiter (for example $1\heartsuit-(X)-1\heartsuit-(P)-1NT$ or $1\heartsuit-(2\clubsuit)-2\heartsuit-(P)-2NT$). At times (especially at the two-level) it will be better to accept the transfer with a minimum three-suiter. In response to a *minor suit* transfer, the lowest notrump call shows a "super-accept" (it's easy enough to bid a cheap major suit with the three-suiter short in partner's suit). This is a balanced hand that would accept a suited invite. In any case, jumps in response to a transfer show good fitting hands (new suit jumps are fit-showing). In response to the transfer where responder's suit is at the three-level (the special transfer that guarantees values), opener's non-forcing options are 2NT (min with a stopper) and three of the suit transferred to. Other continuations are basically natural and game-going.

After an *accepted* transfer, responder can pass. Other non-forcing options include raising the suit transferred to one level (six-plus invite) or bidding notrump. Other bids are forcing (and natural, except cuebid is a stopper-ask). After a transfer which opener has *rejected*, showing a misfitting hand, non-jump continuations other than cuebid are *not forcing*. This lets us get out in a variety of auctions.

4.4.5 Vs higher overcalls

After higher interference, most bidding is natural including negative doubles (up to $4\heartsuit$), weak jump shifts (fit showing makes no sense since the $1\heartsuit$ opening doesn't show a suit), and new suits natural and forcing to game. After a takeout double of 2M overcall, opener may bid 2NT to ask responder to pick a minor.

4.4.6 Subsequent bidding

If opponents interfere after the response, we play support redoubles to show three-card support. The various raises are still on in competition, since these bids otherwise have no natural meaning. We play a version of optional support doubles; for example $1\heartsuit$ -pass- $1\heartsuit$ - $2\clubsuit$ -Dbl is effectively takeout of clubs. The normal distributions for this double are 4351, 4342, 3352 (in other words, exactly 3-card support with at most two cards in the opponents' suit and 3-5 cards in each of the remaining suits). Responder considers such a double as takeout (so minimum bids in the "unbid suits" are not forcing). Note that a pass by opener in these situations *does not deny three-card support*.

If opponents double after opener's raise (or good raise) of responder, then opener's redouble shows desire to compete to the three-level. This implies four-card support and not a completely flat hand. Again, a failure to redouble does not imply holding only three trumps. We bid this way because responder sometimes bids on very poor hands opposite our $1\heartsuit$ opening and we don't want to commit to the three-level or to defending doubled; a "natural" redouble showing a defensive-oriented hand would also leave us poorly placed if responder is broke.

5 Major Openings

Major suit openings show five cards. If balanced the range will be 11-13. Balanced hands in the notrump range will always open 1NT. If unbalanced, light openings are possible and the range becomes 10-15. Use judgement when opening hands with values outside the main suits. Hands with a good six-card major and less than 11 hcp normally open with a weak two bid.

Responses to $1\heartsuit$ are:

$1\spadesuit$ natural, forcing one round

1NT up to a bad 12 hcp, *not forcing* will not include $3+\heartsuit$

- 2♣ ♠ natural and 12+ hcp, forcing but not always to game
- 2♥ normal single raise, could be up to 11 hcp if 4333 and many losers
- 2♠ limit+ raise, with shortage if limit values, GF opposite 12+
- 2NT balanced limit raise
- 3♥ preemptive
- 3,4♠ preemptive
- 3NT, 4m fit-jumps (3NT=OM)
- 4M Not necessarily preemptive. If opponents interfere, double by opener shows a hand interested in competing to 5M opposite a shapely raise.

Responses to 1♠ are similar, except that 2♠ is the single raise, 2NT is the limit+ raise, 3♣ is the balanced limit raise, and 4♥ is natural and preemptive.

Responses by passed hand is similar, except 2-over-1 responses are now of similar strength to a weak-two bid, and 2♦ is an artificial good raise with about 8-11 hcp (reverse Drury).

5.1 Continuations after 1♥-1♠

After 1♥-1♠, we play some artificial continuations.

1♥-1♠ natural forcing

- 1NT 2533 or 4+♦, wide range of shapes and values, essentially forcing
- 2♣ 4+♣, tends to deny 3♠
- 2♦ good raise of spades, 3+♠
- 2♥ natural, guarantees 11+ hcp
- 2♠ 3+♠ and a bad hand
- 2NT five hearts and longer clubs, max values
- 3♣ ♦ 6-5 or better, max values
- 3♥ 7+♥ and a good hand

The idea is to maintain two different ways to invite: a *good invite* which is typically 13-14 hcp, and a *bad invite* which is typically 11-12 hcp (either can be shaded especially with a good fit). This is necessary because our opening range is both wide and fairly light. When opener rebids 1NT or 2♣, the lowest bid is artificial and asks opener's strength. This bid is usually made on invitational hands. If responder rebids 2NT directly or jumps to the three-level (i.e. 1♥-1♠-2♣-2NT or 1♥-1♠-1NT-3♦) it is natural and game forcing (since virtually all invites go through the fourth suit). The main rules about fourth suit auctions are below:

1. Opener's third bid is a step response; cheapest step is 8-12, next is 12-15, beyond is natural and GF with extra shape
2. If responder rebids the fourth suit, that is always a stopper/pattern ask and a GF.
3. If responder makes the cheapest available call in one of the three suits already "bid" after opener makes one of the first two steps, that is never forcing and generally shows a bad invite. Note however that if opener makes the first step, *pass* is an option for responder with a suitable bad invite, so raising opener's rebid will be a better hand.

4. If responder bids 2NT after opener's third call, that is always forward-going. That means it shows a "good" invite if opener is 8-12, and a "bad" invite if opener is 12-15. Holding a flat bad invite opposite 8-12, responder should try to play in one of opener's suits.
5. Other calls (raising opener's third bid, jumping in a suit) show the good invite, and are GF opposite 12-15.

1♥-1♠-1NT ♠ or 2533

- 2♣ asking; any invite or a GF stopper ask in clubs
- 2♦ 8-12 hcp
 - Pass "bad" invite with diamonds
 - 2♥ "bad" invite, often doubleton
 - 2♠ "bad" invite, normally 6♠
 - 2NT "good" invite, still forward-going but NF
 - 3♣ stopper ask; the one GF that routinely bids 2♣
 - 3♦ "good" invite (bad invite would pass 2♦), forward-going but NF
 - 3♥ "good" invite, will be 3-card support
 - 3♠ "good" invite with 6+♠
 - 3NT to play; some implication of quantitative slam interest
- 2♥ 12-15 hcp, now 3♣ stopper ask or GF ♠ raise, 3♠ choice of games, others "bad invite"
 - 2♠ "bad" invite, still forward-going opposite max, but NF
 - 2NT "bad" invite, still forward-going opposite max, but NF
 - 3♣ artificial GF, maybe originally a "good" invite
 - 3♦ "bad" invite, still forward-going opposite max, but NF
 - 3♥ "bad" invite, will be 3-card support NF
 - 3♠ 6+♠ and GF, but not willing to blast 4♠
 - 3NT to play, likely originally a "good" invite
- 2♠+ GF with extra shape, as natural as possible (3♣ by responder stopper-ask)
- 2♦ to play
- 2♥ to play
- 2♠ to play
- 2NT GF, club stopper, ask for (natural) pattern out
- 3♣ natural, 5-5 or better blacks, game forcing
- 3♦ game forcing, sets diamonds (although 3NT still possible)
- 3♥ game forcing heart raise with a side spade suit
- 3♠ game forcing, sets spades as trump

1♥-1♠-2♣ 4+♣

- 2♦ asking; any invite or a GF stopper ask in diams
- 2♥ 8-12 hcp
 - Pass "bad" invite, content to play here
 - 2♠ "bad" invite, usually 6+♠
 - 2NT "good" invite, forward-going but NF
 - 3♣ "bad" invite; basically to play now
 - 3♦ stopper ask

- 3♥ “good” invite, will be 3-card support NF
- 3♠ “good” invite, 6+♠
- 3NT to play
- 2♠ 12-15 hcp, but not a lot of extra shape
- 2NT “bad” invite, forward going but NF
- 3♣ “bad” invite, forward going but NF
- 3♦ stopper/pattern ask (GF)
- 3♥ “bad” invite, will be 3-card support NF
- 3♠ “bad” invite, 6+♠
- 3NT to play
- 2N+ Natural, max, extra shape, GF
- 2♥ ♠ to play
- 2NT GF, diam stopper, can be 5/5 hand as opener will pattern out
- 3♣ “good” invite; about 13-14 hcp
- 3♦ GF club raise
- 3♥ ♠ game forcing, setting the suit

5.2 Continuations after Semi-forcing NT

The expectation is that a 1NT response usually shows about 8-12 hcp. With less than this (and no fit) responder will normally pass the opening or make a weak jump shift. However, it is possible to respond 1NT if willing to pass any non-forcing rebid by opener.

1♥-1NT about 8-12 hcp (or weaker if short ♥)

- Pass to play, at most 13 hcp, balanced or 45 in the majors
- 2♣ ♦ natural, 4+ cards in the suit, 8-15 hcp
- 2♥ natural, usually implies 11-15 hcp (some exceptions for hands with 4♠)
- 2♠ 5♥ and a 6+ minor, 12+ points, forcing (2NT asks the minor)
- 2NT 5♠ and 6+♥, not necessarily extras but forcing one round (natural continuations)
- 3♣ ♦ 6+♥, 5+ cards in the suit bid, 12+ points, strongly invitational
- 3♥ 7+♥ and 14-15 hcp
- 4♥ to play

Continuations are generally natural. Note that responder’s non-pass calls over opener’s simple two-level rebid imply the 8-12 range. This includes some rebids that would be weaker in standard methods.

1♠-1NT-2♦ Natural 4+♦

- 2♥ 8-12 points with 5+♥, normally a good suit if only five
- 2♠ 8-12 points with 2♠, if maximum tends to be non-suitable for 2NT
- 2NT 11-12 points, should have real stoppers in the round suits
- 3♣ 8-12 points with 6+♣
- 3♦ 10-12 points with 4+♦, can be a bit less with better fit

There are a few special sequences worth mentioning. If responder rebids 2NT, then opener's cheapest new minor suit is artificial and normally shows an accept of the invite with ten cards in two suits. Over this, responder can bid three of opener's major to suggest doubleton support, or three of opener's minor (or three of the other major, if three of opener's minor is unavailable) to show interest in the minor.

1♠-1NT-2♣-2NT 11-12 hcp invite

- 3♣ Minimum 5/5, not forward-going
- 3♦ Game force, either 6/4 or 5/5
 - 3♥ Interest in a club contract opposite 5/5 (normally 3♣)
 - 3♠ Interest in a spade contract opposite 6/4 (normally 2♠)
 - 3NT To play, might have 3♣ or 2♠ if strong/slow holdings in the reds
- 3♥ Patterning out, 5314 normally
- 3♠ Minimum 6/4, not forward-going
- 3NT Accepting the invite, can be 5224 or 5134.

5.3 Continuations after Two-over-one

Our new-suit two-over-ones promise 12+ points and four or more cards in the bid suit. The tendency is to bid 1NT with very flat 12-counts though. These bids are forcing to game if a major suit fit is found, because both responder and opener have seven or fewer losers. However, we can stop in various contracts when opener has a minimum and no major suit fit is present. The following rules govern opener's rebid:

1. Opener's rebid of 2M shows a minimum opening, either 11 hcp, balanced (except after 1♠-2♣), or 10-11 hcp, unbalanced without 4OM or lower-ranking suits that can be shown at the two level. The bid is non-forcing.
2. Opener's rebid of 2NT always shows 6+ in the original major or 5332, 12+ hcp (or good 11 with 6M) and is game forcing. Weaker one-suited hands normally open with a weak two bid.
3. Opener's direct raise of responder's suit is game forcing. It promises extras (12+ hcp) if the suit is a minor, but may still be a minimum after 1♠-2♥-3♥ because a major suit fit is found.
4. Opener's non-jump suit rebids are natural (except 1♠-2♣-2♦ which includes balanced 11), and game-forcing if it is above 2M (except 1♥-2♦-2♠).
5. Opener's jump rebids are artificial raises.

The following rules govern responder's rebids:

1. 3M is always natural and sets trumps. Non-serious 3NT applies.
2. After a non-GF response, rebid of 2NT or the two-over-one suit is NF.
3. After a 2NT rebid, 3♣ is a relay asking for shape information.
4. After opener's new-suit rebid at the two-level, the cheapest two-level bid is an artificial GF relay, except after 1♥-2♦-2♠.

5.3.1 Continuations after 1M - 2X - 2NT

3♣ Relay.

3♦ 6+M, high or no shortness. Over this 3♥ asks,

3♠ High shortness.

3NT No shortness.

4♣+ 6M-4X, high shortness, see continuation below.

3♥ 6+M, mid shortness.

3♠ 6+M, low shortness. Over any of 3♦/♥/♠ (the former including the clarification ask), 4-level bids are now cue-bids with M agreed.

3NT 5332.

4♣+ 6M-4X, low shortness, see continuations below.

3♦ If 2X is a minor, artificial forcing rebid of the minor, otherwise natural.

3M 3+M, sets trumps.

5.3.2 Continuations after opener's next suit at two level

The next step is a relay, except after 1♥-2♦-2♠. Over this relay, opener continues as follows.

2NT (if available) Shows a maximum non 6-4 hand.

3♣ Relay. Same responses as direct bids except being maximum.

3♦ Agrees second suit.

3M Agrees major.

3♣ 6-4, promises maximum unless both majors.

3♦ Agrees minor if major-minor. Strength ask if both majors. If it is both majors, then

3♥ Max (now 3♠ agrees ♠, 4♣+ cue-bid agrees ♥).

3♠ Min (natural follow-ups. If responder is interested in slam opposite min, he should have set trumps earlier).

3M Agrees major.

30M Ask for stopper if major-minor. Sets trumps if both majors.

3♦ 5-5

3M Agrees majors.

30M Agrees second suit.

3♥ 5431 with 3-card support. RP style follow-up.

3♠ No other suitable bid, usually 5431 or 5422 with no support and lacking stopper in fourth suit.

3NT 5431 or 5422 with stopper in fourth suit but no support.

If a GF relay is available, and we are not in a GF, then responder cheapest third suit or fourth suit at the three level is an artificial strong rebid of his suit.

5.3.3 Continuations after opener artificial raises of 2m

This includes auctions where opener jumps in a new suit in response to 2m (promising at least 55), or after a 2NT rebid followed by a bid that shows 6M-4m. In these situations, responder would have found out the location of opener's shortness as well as opener's approximate strength. These auctions are very forward going, so we use a modified form of spiral scan to discover if we have a playable slam. The rules are as follows:

- Responder's bid of 3NT at the first opportunity (except after 1M - 2♦ - 3♠), or the cheapest level of M or m is a sign-off.
- Excluding sign-offs, all bids scan for a specific feature, and responder can skip to locate the next feature. The ordering of the features are:
 1. Even (stop) / Odd (go) number of key cards, assuming minor is agreed.
 2. Void.
 3. Control in 4th suit.
 4. Major K.
 5. Minor Q.
 6. K in 4th suit (only if 3 is true).
 7. Major Q.
 8. Q in 4th suit.

For example, after 1♥- 2♣- 2NT - 3♣, with 6♥- 4♣ and short ♦, the bidding goes:

- 4♣ Even number of KCs.
 - 4♦ Asks for void.
 - 4♥ To play.
 - 4♠+ Asks for control in 4th suit, etc.
- 4♦ Odd number of KCs (we treat hands with 1KC as min, so in this sequence, it promises 3), no void.
- 4♥+ Odd number of KCs, ♦ void, no ♥K, etc.

5.3.4 Specific auctions

1♥-2♣ Natural

- 2♦ 10-15, 4+♦. 2♠ relay.
- 2♥ 10-11, 4+♣ or 4+♠, or 11 balanced. 2♠ relay, over which
 - 2NT 11 balanced, unbid suits stopped.
 - 3♣ 10-11, 4+♣.
 - 3♦ 10-11, 4+♠.
 - 3♥ 10-11, 4513.
 - 3♠ 11 balanced, some suit unstopped.
- 2♠ 12-15, 4+♠. 2NT relay.
- 2NT 12+, 6+♥ or balanced.
- 3♣ 12-15, 4+♣, natural follow-ups.
- 3♦ Min, 5+♥+ 5+♣.

- 3♥ Asking, can no longer play in 3NT.
- 3♠ High shortness, over which 3NT starts spiral scan.
- 3NT+ Low shortness, zoom.
- 3♠ Agree M artificially, ♣ suit may be suspect (more so after 1♠ opening).
- 3NT To play.
- 3♥ Max, 5+♥+ 5+♣, high shortness.
- 3♠/NT Max, 5+♥+ 5+◇, low shortness, even/odd KC, no zoom.

1♥-2◇ Natural

- 2♥ 10-11, 4+♣ or 4+◇, or 11 balanced. 2♠ relay, over which
- 2NT 11 balanced, unbid suits stopped.
- 3♣ 10-11, 4+♣.
- 3◇ 10-11, 4+◇.
- 3♥ 10-11, 1534.
- 3♠ 11 balanced, some suit unstopped.
- 2♠ 10-15, 5+♥ and 4♠. 2NT is *non-forcing*, 3♣ relay, over which
- 3◇ 6-4
- 3♥ 4531
- 3♠/NT 4513 or 4522, denies/promises ♣ stop.
- 2NT 12-15, 6+♥ or balanced.
- 3♣ 12-15, 4+♣. Natural follow-ups.
- 3◇ 12-15, 4◇.
- 3♥ Min, 5+♥+ 5+◇.
- 3♠ Asking; 3NT shows high shortness, 4♣+ shows low shortness.
- 3NT To play.
- 3♠ Max, 5+♥+ 5+◇, high shortness; 3NT starts spiral scan.
- 3NT+ Max, 5+♥+ 5+◇, low shortness, zoom.

1♠-2♣ Natural, possibly 1354 if less than GF or 3433

- 2◇ 10-15, 4+◇, or 11 balanced. 2♥ relay, over which 2♠ shows balanced, and higher 4+◇.
- 2♥ 10-15, 4+♥. 2♠ relay.
- 2♠ 10-11, 4+♣. 2NT relay (not needed as NF, as responder can pass or play in 3♣), over which
- 3♣ No shortage. New suits probe for 3NT (or advanced cue-bid if correct to 4♣ later).
- 3◇/♥ . High/low shortage. New suits are now cue-bids.
- 2NT 12+, 6+♠ or balanced.
- 3♣ 12-15, 4+♣.
- 3◇-3NT Same as 1♥-2♣, except with ♠.

1♠-2◇ Natural

- 2♥ 10-15, 4+♥. 2♠ relay.
- 2♠ 10-11, 4+♣ or 4+◇, or balanced 11. 3♣ relay, over which
- 3◇ 4+◇.

- 3♥ 5134.
- 3♠ 5314, 5224, or 5(332), denies ♥ stopper, or 55.
- 3NT 5314, 5224, or 5(332), promises ♥ stopper.
- 2NT 12-15, 6+♠ or balanced.
- 3♣ 12-15, 4+♣.
- 3♦ 12-15, 4+♦.
- 3♥+ Same as after 1♠-2♦, except with ♠.

1♠-2♥ Natural, 5+♥

- 2♠ 10-11, 5♠ and 4+m, or 11 balanced.
- 2NT NF, often singleton ♠; opener can rebid a 5-card minor.
- 3♣ Artificial rebid of ♥. 3♦/♥ says opener would accept/reject invite; over 3♦, ♥ is set as trumps.
- 3♦/♥ GF, 4+♦/♣.
- 2NT 12-15, 6+♠ or balanced.
- 3m 12-15, 4+m, may have 3♥ (opener is patterning out)
- 3♥ 10-15, 3+♥; if only 3♥ will be 10-12, 4+m or 11-13, 5332
- 3♠ Cooperative (non-serious) slam try, often short/weak spades
- 3NT Spade ace or king, serious interest
 - 4♣ first or second round control, could be shortage
 - 4♦ first or second round control, denies ♣ control
 - 4♥ denies any minor suit control (implicitly full values)
- 4♣ Serious interest, first or second round control, denies ♠ AK but maybe singleton
- 4♦ Serious interest, first or second round control, no ♣ control, no ♠ AK
- 3♠ 13-15, 4+♥ short in minor (3NT asks, high/low shortage), guarantee ♠ control.
- 3NT 13-15, 4+♥ weak ♠ (anti-splinter).
- 4m 10-12, 4+♥ splinters, guarantee ♠ control.
- 4♥ 10-12, 5422, no minor suit control.

5.4 Continuations after Raises

5.4.1 Simple Raise

We play 3-way (kokish) game tries after the single raise (i.e., next step to ask for help, next three to show shortness, and 3M to preempt or ask for good trumps). In competition, i.e., after 1M (any) 2M (dbl/bid), we play natural game tries and 3M is only competitive. If there is no free bid below 3M, then dbl is invitational to game (i.e., maximal doubles).

5.4.2 Strong Raise

Distributional limit raises and game forces make the minimum jump bid. This is 2NT over 1♠ opening and 2♠ over 1♥ opening. Opener then shows his range via steps. The minimum step shows about 9-11 hcp; all other steps are forcing to game. The second step denies slam interest opposite the limit raise (responder can still look with a suitable hand) and the third step is very slammish. Opener's fourth step forces a cue, fifth step is keycard, and higher bids are void-showing slam tries. Assuming opener makes one of the first three step responses, partner can sign off in game or show shortness (note that signing off in a partscore is not an

option). **Shortness is shown in the usual high/middle/low order.** This shortness showing bid is a game try opposite the minimum step and is otherwise a slam try. If opener makes a non-minimum step response, then the minimum bid (1♠-2NT-3♦-3♥) is artificial and shows an unspecified void (opener relays to ask and high/middle/low). Responder also has the option to bid keycard opposite the first or second step by bidding the suit above trumps (1♠-2NT-3♣ ♦-3NT). The distributional limit raise typically has 7 losers.

1♥-2♠ strong raise

- 2NT sub-minimum opening
- 3♣-♥ shortness (high/mid/low), game-try or better (except for 3♥ which is exactly a game-try; with more responder can start cue-bidding)
- 3♠ rkc
- 3NT-4♦ cue-bids, strong slam interest
- 3♣ gf, but denies slam interest opposite limit raise
- 3♦ void somewhere (then 3♥ asks hi-mid-lo)
- 3♥ ask for cue-bids
- 3♠ rkc
- 3NT-4♦ singleton (high/mid/low)
- 3♦ strong slam interest
- 3♥ void somewhere (then 3♠ asks hi-mid-lo)
- 3♠ no shortness, set up for cue-bids
- 3NT-4♦ singletons (high/mid/low)
- 3♥ ask for cue-bids
- 3♠ rkc
- 3NT-4♦ voids (high/mid/low)

It is also possible to make a game forcing raise by making a two-over-one bid first and raising opener's suit (to the *three level*) at the second turn.

5.4.3 Balanced Limit Raise

In addition, we play 1♥-2NT and 1♠-3♣ as a balanced limit raise. While we could express such a raise using a forcing notrump, this tends to have poor results if the opponents enter the auction.

1♥-2NT Balanced limit raise

- 3♣ second suit in spades
- 3♦ counter-try, better than normal limit raise
- 3♥ minimum limit raise, not four spades
- 3♠ minimum limit raise, four spades
- 3♦ counter-try, full opening values
- 3♥ sub-minimum, *not forcing*
- 3♠ keycard in heart
- 3NT-4♦ void-showing (high/mid/low).
- 4♥ to play

1♠-3♣ Balanced limit raise

- 3♦ second suit in hearts
- 3♥ counter-try, better than normal limit raise (does *not* show hearts, but accept via 4♥)
- 3♠ minimum limit raise
- 4♥ heart fit, taking a shot at game
- 3♥ counter-try
- 3♠ to play
- 3NT keycard in spade
- 4♣-4♥ void-showing (high/mid/low)
- 4♠ to play

5.4.4 Reverse Drury 2♦ BPH

After P 1M, we play 2♦ as an artificial good raise, typically 8-11hcp. Over this opener can make game tries above 2M in the same manner as after 1M - 2M raises.

5.5 Interference over 1M

After a double, we play transfers starting from 1NT. The lowest jump remains a good raise (systems on) but the next jump and onwards are fit-showing. Thus:

1♥ (dbl) .

- Rdbl strong, 10+ hcp; initial doubles after opponents natural bids are for takeout
- 1♠ natural, forcing one round
- 1NT transfer to ♣
- 2♣ transfer to ♦
- 2♦ transfer to ♥; ♥ raise with 8+ points, if 4 trumps normally balanced
- 2♥ weak raise, typically 4-7 hcp with 3♥
- 2♠ limit raise, 4+♥ and side shortness (systems on)
- 2nt both ♠ and ♥ (fit jump in spades)
- 3m fit-showing
- 3♥ weak (NV) or mixed raise (V)

We play fairly standard methods after overcalls. Double is negative up to 4♥, could be less than invite hand with long OM; if a constructive jump is available, double then bid is weaker. Cue-bid is limit raise or better, and does not establish forcing pass beyond 3M. if jump cue is below 4M, it is a splinter; if above 4M, it is exclusion RKC. If jump cue is splinter, then double jump cue is exclusion RKC. New suit is natural, forcing by UPH and constructive by PH. Jump shifts are weak but constructive if by UPH and fit by PH. Jump to 4OM is to play.

1♥-(2♣) After 2♣ overcall:

- Dbl Negative, 4+♠
- 2♦ Natural and forcing
- 2♥ Normal raise, can be aggressive
- 2♠ Natural and forcing, 5+♠
- 2NT Natural invite

- 3♣ Limit raise or better
- 3♦ Weak/constructive jump shift
- 3♠ Weak/constructive jump shift
- 3NT To play
- 4♣ Splinter raise of hearts
- 4♦ Fit jump
- 4♥ To play, wide range of values
- 4♠ To play, wide range of values

In situations where the auction becomes crowded and there is no room to cue-bid in support of opener's suit leaving room in between the cue-bid and 4M, we play 4M-2 as an artificial raise so as to leave room for opener to use last train. The corresponding suit will be shown by the cue-bid. Specifically, this applies to overcalls from 3M-1 up to 3M+2, i.e., after 1♥ (3♦/♥/♠/NT) and 1♠ (3♥/♠/NT/4♣). This also applies to 1M overcalls.

6 Notrump Opening

After many years playing Keri variants, we are back to playing stayman. We continue to use follow-ups to transfers developed by Charlie Garrod. Our structure after 1NT openings (or 1♣...1NT):

- 2♣ stayman, any of:
 - weak three-suiter short in clubs
 - weak with both majors (equal or longer spades)
 - invite-plus including one or two four-card majors
 - invite with 5+♠
 - game force short in diamonds (with or without 4-card major)
 - game forcing balanced or semi-balanced relay
- 2♦ transfer to ♥; might be only 4♥ if GF and holding a 6-card minor
- 2♥ transfers to ♠; never exactly invitational; maybe 4♠ if GF and a 6-card minor
- 2♠ balanced inv, no 4M, or one-suited minor invite, or GF bal, interested in finding out weak doubletons
- 2NT transfer to 3♣, weak or GF
- 3♣ transfer to 3♦, weak or GF
- 3♦ shows 4+♦, 0-1♣, 3-4 cards in each major, GF
- 3♥ shows 4♥, 0-1♠, 3+ cards in each minor, GF
- 3♠ shows 4♠, 0-1♥, 3+ cards in each minor, GF
- 3NT to play
- 4♣ ♦ transfer to hearts and to spades
- 4♥ ♠ signoff, no slam interest

The structure is geared towards identifying major suit length when responder has an invitational or better hands. An important departure from standard treatment is that we transfer into a four-card major on shapely game-going hands.

6.1 Continuations after 1NT-2♣

The 2♣ bid asks opener for a four-card major. We will sometimes rebid 2♠ rather than 2♥ when holding 4-4 in the majors, as this occasionally makes follow-ups easier; however otherwise this is the same as standard stayman responses. Our continuations after opener's 2♦ rebid:

1NT-2♣-2♦ Opener denies a major

- Pass weak three-suiter with 4+♦
- 2♥ forces 2♠; weak with both majors, or inv+ with both majors (but not inv with 5♠ exactly)
- 2♠ invitational with 5+♠; not forcing (may or may not have 4+♥)
- 2NT invitational with at least one 4M
- 3♣ game forcing relay
- 3♦ game force short in ♦
- 3♥♠ *smolen* showing five cards in the other major *and normally 2-2 in the minors*
- 3NT balanced game force with at least one 4M
- 4♣♦ south-african transfers to ♥ and ♠ respectively (normally 6-4 hands)
- 4M is to play (normally 6-4 hand)
- 4NT is quantitative (rare, usually bid 3♣ relay first)

If opener rebids 2♦ and responder bids 2♥ over this, opener is forced to bid 2♠. Continuations at this point work as follows:

1NT-2♣-2♦-2♥-2♠ Opener's 2♠ is forced

- Pass Weak with 5♠ and 4+♥
- 2NT Invite with 4♠ and 5♥
- 3m Game force with 3+ in this minor and 5/4 in the majors
 - 3M Normally 3-card support, looking for 4M if this is the five card suit
 - 3NT To play
 - om "No wastage"; see splinter sequences for more details
 - 4m Normally 5+m, wasted values in the short minor but not a good enough stop for 3NT
- 3M Invite with six in this major and four in the other

If responder bids 2♠ over 2♦ or 2♥, it is natural invitational. Continuations are as follows:

1NT-2♣-2♦/2♥-2♠ Invitational 5+♠

- Pass Min, 2-3♠
- 2NT Max, 2♠
 - 3X Shapely 55 invite, not forcing
 - 3♠ Minimum 6♠ invite, not forcing
 - 3NT To play
 - 4♠ To play
- 3X Good min, 3♠, values in X
- 3♠ Min, 3♠
- 3NT Max, 3(334)

Over opener's 2M rebid we play the following, where "OM" refers to the *other major*.

1NT-2♣-2M Opener shows 4-5M

- Pass weak hand willing to play there
- 2♠ invitational with 5♠; not forcing
- 2NT invitational with 4OM
- 3♣ accepts game try, asking for clarification
 - 3♦ short M; over which 3♥ asks for longer minor, 3♠ shows ♣ and 3NT shows ♦
 - 3♥ short ♦
 - 3♠ short ♣
 - 3NT no short
- 3♣ game forcing relay; normally no 4-4 fit for M
- 3♦ game force short in ♦; normally 3 cards in M
- 3M invite with 4(+)M
- 3OM game force (semi)-balanced with 4-5M ask cuebid
- 3NT balanced game force with 4OM
- 4♣ ♦ splinters with 4(+)M
- 4M is to play
- 4NT is quantitative (rare, usually bid 3♣ relay first)

Most of the continuations are pretty straightforward. Over responder's 3♦ rebid, the first priority is to look for a fit, the second to determine level by using 4♦ to indicate or deny "no wastage." The main sequence which requires some more explanation is the 3♣ relay. The idea is that opener's 3♦ rebid shows one four-card minor, opener's 3NT rebid denies a five-card suit and shows an even number of four-card minors, and 3M is natural if possible or otherwise showing five cards in the related minor. This works as follows:

1NT-2♣-2♦-3♣ Relay

- 3♦ One four-card minor, so 3343/3334
 - 3♥ 4+♣, slam interest opposite clubs
 - 3♠ 4+♦, slam interest opposite diams
- 3♥ 5♣
- 3♠ 5♦
- 3N (23)44

1NT-2♣-2♥-3♣ Relay

- 3♦ One four-card minor
 - 3♥ 4+♣
 - 3♠ 4+♦
- 3♥ Shows 5♥
 - 3♠ Slam try in ♥
 - 3NT To play
 - 4m Natural 5m slam try

- 3♠ Shows 4-4 majors
- 4m Natural 5m slam try
- 4♥ Slam try in *spades*
- 3NT 3433

1NT-2♣-2♠-3♣ Relay

- 3♦ One four-card minor
- 3♥ 4+♣
- 3♠ 4+♦
- 3♥ Shows 4-4 majors
- 3♠ Slam try in *hearts*
- 3NT To play
- 4m Natural 5m slam try
- 3♠ Shows 5♠
- 4m Natural 5m slam try
- 4♥ Slam try in *spades*
- 3NT 4333

6.1.1 1NT - 2♣ (Dbl)

If Stayman is doubled, we pass without a stopper in ♣ and answer Stayman normally with a stopper. Over a pass, our goal is now to right side the contract by putting the doubler on lead. The continuations are as follows.

1NT - 2♣ (Dbl) P (P) Stayman interference continuation

- Rdbl Re-Stayman, but now responses are scrambled
- 2♦ 4+♥
- 2♥ 4+♠
- 2♠ no 4-card major
- Over these, the usual continuation, but no special 2♥ transfer
- 2♦ A hand that would have scrambled over Stayman. Opener can correct to 2M.
- 2♥ Hands that would have continued as 1NT-2♣-2♦-2♥, but the weak hand may go through the Rdbl.
- 2♠ 5♠, inv, unbal
- 2NT, 3♣ Does not exist
- 3♦ 3-suited short in ♦.
- 3M 5M + 4OM, usually 22 in the minors
- Higher System on

6.2 Continuations after 1NT-2♦

This is like a standard transfer except it could also be made with GF hands with only 4♥. With 4+ support and maximum, opener may super-accept similar to 3-way game try, i.e.

2♠ max, 4+♥, good side suit (next step ask, natural responses, 3♥ = ♠)

2NT, 3m max, 4+♥, weak doubleton (NT = ♠)

3♥ not necessarily a max, but optional, usually 5♥

If a transfer break occurs, then ♥ is established as trumps for game and slam purposes. The cheapest diamond bid is a re-transfer, and if followed by new suits, these are cue-bids. Over 3♦, 3♥ is a sign-off, new suits other than 4♦ are cue-bids.

1NT-2♦-2♥ can contain 4♥ if non-max

- 2♠ inv, 5+♥
- 2NT min, 2♥ (pass or 3m/♥ NF)
- 3♣ max, 2♥ (pass or 3♦/♥ NF)
- 3♦ good min, 3+♥, counter try
- 3♥ min, 3+♥
- 3♠ max, 3433
- 3NT max, (3334) with 3♥
- 2NT GF, 4+♥ and 4+♣, not balanced, over opener's 3♣, go into short/long-minor modules
- 3♣ GF, 5+♥ and 4♦, short-minor module
- 3♦ GF, 4+♥ and 5+♦, long-minor module
- 3♥ Invite 5+♠ and 5+♥
- 3♠ GF, 6+♥ and asks for cuebids
- 3NT choice-of-game
- 4♣♦ splinter with 6+♥
- 4♥ mild slam try with 6+♥

6.2.1 Long-minor module

This applies whenever responder transfers to a major (M) and then show a game-forcing hand with a 5+ card minor (m). This is always shown via a bid of 3♦. Opener continues as follows:

1NT-??-??-3♦ GF, 4+M and 5+m

- 3♥ exactly 3M, checkback for a fit
- 3♠ 5+M, sets M as trumps
- 3NT only 4M, no SI
- 4m SI, 5+m
- 3♠ sets M as trumps
- 3NT strength in the unbid suits, suggests a contract
- 4m sets m as trumps, but usually weak in an unbid suit
- 4 unbid sets m as trumps, cue-bids
- 4M 4M, bad hand for slam

6.2.2 Short-minor module

This applies whenever responder transfers to a major (M) and then show a game-forcing hand with exactly 4m (m). When this is clubs, opener may not get a chance to bid anything before responder shows his shape, as follows:

1NT-??-??-3♥+ GF, 5+M and 4m, shape resolution as follows:

- 3♥ hi shortage, (15)(34)
- 3♠ lo shortage, (35)(14)
 - 3NT wastage
 - 4m sets m as trumps
 - 4om SI, sets M as trumps
 - 4M to play
- 3NT no shortage, (25)(24)
- 4♣ hi shortage, (16)(24)
- 4♦ lo shortage, (26)(14)
 - 4M to play
 - 4OM SI, sets M as trumps
 - 4NT SI, sets m as trumps
- 4M SI, (25)(24)

We ignore any double by the opponents in these sequences. Redouble is suggesting business, otherwise the normal asking bid is on. This is not considered a “relay sequence” and there are no RP asks.

6.2.3 Interference over transfers

If the opponents double the transfer bid, opener accepts the transfer if he either has stopper or has support for the suit. Pass denies both (over which responder can redouble to retransfer, bid 2♥ to play, or bid above 2♥ as if transfer has been accepted). Redoubles by opener is a suggestion to play.

If the opponents overcall, either in front of opener or after the transfer, over a 2♠ overcall, responder 3♥ is to play, 3m is invitational, and with a good hand starts with a double. Over a higher overcall, 3♥ is to play, and new suits are natural GF, and doubles are for takeout.

6.3 Continuations after 1NT-2♥

Most of the time, opener will accept the transfer. With 4+ support and maximum, opener may super-accept similar to 3-way game try, i.e.

- 2NT max, 4+ support and good side suit (next step ask, natural responses, 3♠ shows good ♣)
- 3X max, 4+ support, doubleton X
- 3♠ not necessarily a max, but optional, usually 5♠

Responder retransfer with 3♥ if possible; if not, 4♥ would be a retransfer. New suits are now cue-bids.

Continuations after transfers are based on more transfers. After 1NT-2♥-2♠, responder’s continuations are as follows:

1NT-2♥-2♠ may be 4♠ if min

- Pass spade signoff

- 2NT GF, 4+♠ and 4+♣, not balanced, over opener's 3♣, go into short/long-minor modules
- 3♣ GF, 5+♠ and 4♦, short-minor module
- 3♦ GF, 4+♠ and 5+♦, long-minor module
- 3♥ GF, 5+♠ and 5+♥
- 3♠ sets ♠ as trumps, asks for cue-bids
- 3NT choice-of-game
- 4♣ ♦ ♥ splinter with 6+♠
- 4♠ mild slam try with 6+♠

6.4 Continuations after 1NT-2♠

The 2♠ bid serves as a range ask as well as a one-suited invite in a minor. With a maximum, opener **rejects** the lowest undesirable game try. As opener will generally show a weak doubleton as a result, 2♠ can also be used by responder to find out if we have a weak doubleton opposite doubleton situation.

1NT-2♠ inv, balanced, or inv, 6+m, or bal GF investigating weak doubletons in M

- 2NT min
- 3m 6+m, was invitational but now non-forcing
- 3M GF, bal, weak doubleton M, start scrambling for suit if suit is wide open
- 3NT To play; may have been hands with a weak doubleton minor, or short of 1NT - 4NT.
- 3♣ max, reject one-suited ♣ game-try
- 3♦ Diamond invite, weakness in clubs, can be 3352 inv
- 3M weak doubleton M
- 4♣ Balanced invite/GF with weak clubs (3343)
- 3♦ max, accept ♣ but reject ♦
- 3M weak doubleton M
- 4♣ Weak diamonds; generally 3325 or club invite
- 3M max, accept both minor game tries, doubleton M
- 3NT max, accept all game tries, chooses not to show doubleton M

6.5 Continuations after 1NT-2NT and 1NT-3♣

The 2NT bid transfers to clubs and 3♣ transfers to diamonds. Opener always accepts this transfer absent interference. The continuations after the transfer to clubs:

1NT-2NT-3♣ forced

- Pass club signoff
- 3♦ GF, 5+♦ and 5+♣, or exactly GF, 6+/4+ minors either way
- 3M Values, show concern about the other major.
- 3NT To play
- 4m SI, 3+m. With the exactly GF 6/4 minor hand, bid 4m+1 if holding only 4m, raise to 5m otherwise.
- 3♥ GF, 3♥, 0-1♠, and 5+♣
- 3♠ GF, 3♠, 0-1♥, and 5+♣

3NT sets ♣ as trumps, asks for cue-bids
 4♣ SI, 6+♣ and 4♦

Further continuations are basically natural and follow the general rules about bidding over splinters. Continuations over a transfer to diamonds are in the same style:

1NT-3♣-3♦ forced

Pass diamond signoff
 3♥ GF, 3♥, 0-1♠, and 5+♦
 3♠ GF, 3♠, 0-1♥, and 5+♦
 3NT sets ♦ as trumps, asks for cue-bids
 4♣ SI, 6+♦ and 4♣

6.6 Continuations after Splinters

There are many different splinter sequences in our methods. The most straightforward are the direct splinter bids, which always show three-suited hands. There are also indirect splinter sequences after minor suit transfers (typically showing major suit shortage without four cards in the other major). After such a splinter bid, we have the following general rules:

- If opener bids the short suit, it denies wastage
- If opener bypasses the short suit, it shows wasted values
- If opener bids 3NT (and has not bid the short suit) it suggests a contract
- If responder bids 3NT, opener can only pass with stoppers in short suit
- If responder bids the short suit, it agrees opener's last suit and asks about wastage
- If responder bids the short suit *after* opener has shown or denied wastage, it shows void
- If opener bids the short suit *at the 4-level* he knows the best fit
- New suit bids at the 3-level do not deny stoppers in the splinter suit
- If opener bypasses 3NT without a known fit, it denies strength in short suit
- New suit bids below game are forcing, looking for a fit
- In general opener describes suits and wastage; responder picks the level

6.7 Over a penalty double

Against a penalty (or values) style double, we play the runouts described below. This also applies if we overall 1NT and it's doubled for penalty.

1NT (X) If double is for penalty

Pass suggesting to play 1NTX; opener can bid a long suit if he has one
 XX either a ♦ one-suiter, or ♣ and another suit
 2♣ To play opposite two-suited hand (2♦ from responder is one-suited)
 2♦ Dislike clubs, asks for the other suit (responder passes or corrects)

2M	Five-card major
2♣	signoff in ♣, or ♦+♥, or ♥+♠
2♦	shows ♦+♠
2♥	natural one-suited
2♠	natural one-suited
2NT	two-suiter not including clubs
3X	natural, preemptive

Opener normally passes the 2♣ bid. This is potentially dangerous, but a lot of people play forcing passes at a low-level. Also, we always have the option of passing 1NTX with a 4/4 or showing the five-card suit with a 5/4, making runouts on "two-suited" hands somewhat optional. In any case, if the 2♣ bid is doubled opener passes and responder can bid:

1NT-(X)-2♣-(X)-P (or other auctions where the 2♣ runout is doubled)

Pass	Club one-suiter, to play
Rdbl	5+♥ and a four-card pointed suit
2♦	4+♦ and 4♥
2♥	4♥ and 4+♠

6.8 Interference over 1NT

If the opponents bid 2♣ or make an artificial double of the 1NT, we play systems on (ignoring the opposing bidding).

If the opponents bid 2♦ or higher, we play rubensohl transfers and a negative double. Double (assuming the opposing bid is natural) is for takeout. Two-level suit bids are natural signoff. Bids of 2NT and above are transfers to the next higher suit. These can be any strength and must be accepted. The exception is a transfer into a suit which could have been bid at the two level; such a transfer shows at least invitational values and opener should bid the full value of his hand.

A transfer into the opponents' suit is a stopper ask. Accepting the transfer shows specifically half a stopper (Qx or Jxx or Qxx). Bidding 3NT shows a full stopper. Other bids are natural and deny as much as a half stopper.

Responder can also transfer and then cue as a stopper ask, or takeout double and then cue.

A voluntary bid of 3NT by responder always guarantees a stopper.

If the opponents bid in balancing seat, our continuations are effectively natural. Rubensohl and similar are off. Bidding 2NT shows two places to play (usually minors). This includes sequences where opener's LHO bids and his RHO advances (for example after 2♣ capp or some bid showing majors).

6.9 System after Natural 2NT

We rarely require systems over a natural 2NT. Methods after the opponents open (i.e. weak two and we overcall 2NT) are detailed in the competitive bidding section. The only real sequence where opener bids or rebids 2NT naturally without either opener or responder showing a suit is discussed here:

1♣-1♦-1♥-1♠-2NT Game forcing balanced hand without 4♠

3♣	modified stayman
3♦	no major
3♥	4♥

- 3♠ 5♥
- 3♦ ♥ transfers to the majors
- 3♠ asks for partner's four-card minor (3NT denies)
- 3NT to play
- 4♣ ♦ are natural slam tries (forcing to at least 4NT)
- 4♥ ♠ are to play (transfer then raise would show slam interest)

7 2♣ Opening

We currently play a fairly simple system over 2♣. We use 2♦ as an artificial relay, which guarantees invitational or better values. Major suit bids are natural and forcing, usually invitational or better, but could be less with a club fit.

2♣ 10-15H, 6+♣

- 2♦ invitational or better relay
- 2♥ 5+♥, forcing one round
- 2♠ 5+♠, forcing one round
- 2NT constructive or game-forcing club raise
- 3,4,5♣ Preemptive raise
- 3♦ Game force with 5+♥ and 5+♠
- 3♥ Game force with 5+♥ and 5+♦
- 3♠ Game force with 5+♠ and 5+♦
- 4♦ RKC for ♣

7.1 Bidding after 2♣-2♦

The structure is fairly similar to our normal relays. First priority for opener is to confirm or deny holding a four-card side suit. If we get to asking for AKQ points, the range will be 5-11 (and 5-9 if min, 7-11 if max, possible if opener is 6♣+ 4♠). Note that an immediate 3♣ by responder after opener's first response to the 2♦ relay is *never a relay* and is always a non-forcing invite.

2♣-2♦ invitational or better relay

- 2♥ No four-card side suit; clubs only
- 2♠ game-force relay; symmetric structure (but lose a step and no 5332)
- 2NT invitational values, want to declare notrump
- 3♣ invitational values, don't want to declare notrump
- 3♦ ♥ ♠ natural GF; a good 6+ card suit
- 2♠ 4♦
- 2NT game-force relay
 - 3♣ high (♠) shortage (now 3♦ asks void/RP)
 - 3♦ 1147 (now 3♥ asks RP)
 - 3♥ low (♥) void (now 3♠ asks RP)
 - 3♠ 2146 and 5-6 RP
 - 3NT 2146 and 7+ RP

	3♣	invitational values (not forcing)
	3♦	invitational with a diamond fit (not forcing)
	3M	natural GF; a good 6+ card suit
2NT	4♥	
	3♣	invitational values (not forcing)
	3♦	game-force relay
	3♥	high (♠) shortage (now 3♠ asks void/RP)
	3♠	1417 (now 4♣ asks RP)
	3NT	low (♦) shortage (now 4♣ asks void/RP)
	3♥	invitational with a heart fit (not forcing)
	3♠	natural GF; a good 6+ card suit
3♣	4♠	minimum values, <i>not forcing</i>
	3♦	game-force relay
	3♥	high (♥) shortage (now 3♠ asks void/RP)
	3♠	4117 (now 4♣ asks RP)
	3NT	low (♦) shortage (now 4♣ asks void/RP)
	3♥	natural GF, a good 6+ card suit
	3♠	4♠, not forcing
3♦	4♠	maximum values, and high (♥) shortness
	3♥	Relay
	3♠	Void in ♥
	3N	4126 and 7-8 RP (since max)
	4♣	and on 4126 and 9 RP, etc.
	3♥	4117, maximum values
	3♠	4♠, maximum values, and low (♦) void
	3NT	4♠, maximum values, and low (♦) singleton

If we relay onward after opener shows a 4-card side suit, the first rebid shows shortness (high/both/low). Then after a follow-up relay, the first step shows a *void* in the short suit. Otherwise with 6412-ish shape we move on to AKQ points. In any case, 4♦ is puppet for signoff and other relay breaks (besides 3nt of course) are control asks.

7.2 Bidding after 2♣-2M

These auctions are fairly natural. Note that with a two-suited game force, responder would start with a three-level jump or by relaying, so bidding a second suit by responder is generally invitational (only). Opener's 2NT rebid is forcing one round (and basically natural).

7.3 Bidding after 2♣-2NT

Opener's 3♣ is most common and declines the constructive raise. Other bids accept the constructive raise and are stopper-showing. If opener declines the constructive raise, responder bids on with a game force.

7.4 Bidding after two-suited jumps

With very slammish hands, responder will normally go through relay. Thus the direct 3X bids are typically looking for the best game, although slam is still possible if opener has a very nice hand. After 2♣-3♦, opener will normally select one of responder's suits by bidding three or four of a major. This usually shows three-card support (Hx possible in a pinch). At this point cuebidding is available. Opener's other bids (typically 3NT and 4♣) are natural. After 2♣-3M, most of opener's bids are natural. Bidding the other major at the cheapest level is a slam try in opener's major.

7.5 Interference

We ignore opponents double. If they bid a suit then double is takeout. Cuebid is a strong raise of the minor.

8 2♦ Opening

- 2♥ natural, forcing, 4+♥
 - 2♠ 4♠
 - 2NT Minimum, 0-2♥
 - 3♣ GF Relay, symmetric with 3♦ and above direct over 2♥
 - 3♦ Non-forcing (invite)
 - 3♥ Non-forcing (6+♥)
 - 3♣ Exactly 3♥; artificial
 - 3♦ Non-forcing (invite, 4♥ only)
 - 3♥ Non-forcing (invite, 5+♥)
 - 3♠ Cuebid for ♥
 - 3NT To play
 - 4♣ Cuebid for ♥
 - 4♦ Sets diamonds, slam try
 - 4♥ To play
 - 3♦ Maximum, ♣ stopper, 0-2♥
 - 3♥ Shows 6♥, ask about doubleton (3♠ asks spade stop, 3N shows, else agree ♥)
 - 3♠ Ask for spade stopper
 - 3NT To play
 - 3♥ Maximum, typically Hx in ♥, no ♣ stopper
 - 3NT Maximum, ♠ stopper, no ♣ stopper, no 0-2♥ not Hx
 - 3♠, 4♣ Maximum with 4♥, high/low shortage
 - 4♦, 4♥ Minimum with 4♥, high/low shortage
- 2♠ natural, forcing, 4+♠
 - 2NT Minimum, 0-2♠
 - 3♣ Exactly 3♠, artificial
 - 3♦ Maximum, ♣ stopper, 0-2♠
 - 3♥ Natural, 4♥ and a maximum
 - 3♠ Maximum, typically Hx in ♠, no ♣ stopper

- 3NT Maximum, ♥ stopper, no ♣ stopper, 0-2♠ not Hx
- 4♣, 4♦ Maximum, 4♠, high/low shortage
- 4♥, 4♠ Maximum, 4♠, high/low shortage
- 2NT constructive or better raise in ♦
- 3♣ sub-min, no game opposite even a limit raise. New suit stopper showing
- 3♦ min, no game opposite a constructive raise. New suit stopper showing
- Higher interested in game opposite a constructive raise, stoppers showing
- 3/4/5♦ preemptive
- 3x gf, 6+x

8.1 Interference

Similar to other natural openings, we continue to ignore doubles. If they bid a suit then double is takeout. Cuebid is a strong raise of the minor.

9 Preempts

Our openings of 2♥ and above are preemptive. The suit bids are basically standard preempts, though 3♣ and 3♦ are frequently good six-card suits.

9.1 Responses to 2M

We played modified responses based on the Italian methods.

2♥-2♠ asking for strength and shortness, typically inv+

- 2NT min with side shortness
 - 3♣ asking for shortness, guarantees game if low shortness; responses are HML
 - 3♦ ask for shortness, no game if low shortness; responses are LHM
 - 3♥ to play
- 3♣ max with high/mid shortness
 - 3♦ ask for shortness, guarantee game if mid shortness; responses are HM
 - 3♥ ask partner to pass with M shortness, bid on with H shortness
- 3♦ max with low shortness
- 3♥ min with no shortness
- 3♠ max with no shortness
- 4♣ ♦ max, 6-4 with Hxxx in ♣ ♦.

The responses after 2♠-2NT is identical, but the developments after 2NT to 3♠ responses are shifted one step upwards.

2♥-2NT 5+♠, looking for fit and strength

- 3♣ exactly 2♠
- 3♦ strength ask

- 3♥ min; over 3♥, Pass or 3♠ non-forcing, 4♣ ♦ are cuebids agreeing ♠. To agree ♥, directly cue-bid 4♣ ♦ (see below)
- 3♠ max, Hx ♠
- 3NT max, xx ♠
- 3♥ to play
- 3♠ inv
- 4♣ ♦ cuebids agreeing ♥
- 3♦ 1-♠; developments same as above, except now 4♣ ♦ agrees ♥ ♠ artificially
- 3♥ min, 3♠
- 3♠ max, 3♠, short in a minor (3NT asks, hi-lo)
- 3NT max, 3♠, no singleton
- 4m splinter with 6-4

Over 2♠, the club suit and heart suit are flipped to make more room to explore for heart fits, so 3♣ shows 5+♥, and 3♥ shows 5+♣. After 2♠-3♣, the developments are identical to 2♥-2NT except one step up, and that 4♣ always agrees ♥ and 4♦ always agrees ♠ due to lack of room.

2♠-3♣ 5+♥, looking for fit and strength

- 3♦ exactly 2♥
- 3♥ NF strength ask
 - Pass min
 - 3♠ max, Hx ♥
 - 3NT max, xx ♥
- 3♠ inv
- 3♥ 1-♥
- 3♠ min, 3♥
- 3NT max, 3♥
- 4m splinter with 6-4

Over a takeout double, our objective is to punish the opponents when we have the majority of strength, and make lead-directional raises when appropriate. We do not try to run to our own suit directly.

2M (X) applies also when we make a weak jump overcalls or overcalling strong NT

- XX strength-showing BUPH, further doubles by both partners for **penalty** (no takeout double after single-suited preempt). BPH shows 2- or 3-suited runout (if it's worth running with a single suit, advancer would have preempted or opened).
- 2M+1 system on
- 2M+2 to 2M+4 lead-directional raises
- Jumps fit jumps (double jumps exclusion)

9.2 Responses to 2NT

Over 2NT showing a weak hand with both minors, responses are:

any m to play

3♥ asks for shortness

3♠/NT ♠/♥ singleton

4♣/♦ ♠/♥ void

Over these, 4♥ asks for key cards in ♣, and 4♠ in ♦.

3♠ simple ace asking

3NT to play

4M to play

9.3 Responses to 3X or 4X

Over three-level preempts, new suits are natural and forcing. Jump to 4X+1 are RKC. Over 4♣, 4♦ is RKC. Over 4♦, 4NT is RKC. Over 4M, we assume trumps are set, and future bids are slam tries in M, including 4M+1 as RKC.

9.4 Responses to 3NT

Over 3NT showing 8.5+ tricks in either ♥ or ♠, responder replies as follows:

4♣ Transfer to your major and promises (at least) mild slam interest. Opener can bid on after transfer is completed.

4♦ Bid your major. Responder can then key card over it.

4M Pass or correct, usually an attempt to right-side

10 Slam Bidding

We have a number of different tools available for slam bidding. We prefer to set the suit and use cuebids where possible, and tend to use keycard only when one of the bidders has guaranteed a balanced hand, or when the much stronger hand is asking a weaker, limited hand. Certain sequences make use of relays and denial cuebids, but this is not our most frequent way of looking for slam.

10.1 Serious and Non-serious Slam Try

When a major suit is agreed at the three-level, the lowest bid shows minimal interest in slam but simply trying not to preempt partner from his plan. Partner should only start cue-bidding with serious slam interest. Bypassing this bid is a cuebid, and shows strong slam interest, and partner should strive to cooperate by cue-bidding. We do not generally bid four of the major directly (fast arrival) unless we have no outside ace to cuebid or partner's hand is limited and slam is out of the question.

These sequences typically occur after two-over-one calls (1♠-2♣-2♥-3♥). In this case, 3♠ is a non-serious slam try and higher bids are serious cuebids (3NT is a spade cue). Sometimes we agree ♥ at 3♠, this generally happens after 1NT openings but occasionally also after some two-over-one auctions. In such cases, 3NT is a spade cue and there is no serious / non-serious slam try.

10.2 Splinters and Point Count

On occasion we can bid a slam based simply on points. With 33 points we will bid a small slam in notrump and with 37 we will bid a grand. Our tendency is to avoid ace-asking sequences in such auctions (we don't even *play* Gerber over 1NT), and to use various quantitative invites if uncertain about the total strength.

After a splinter bid, if opener shows no wastage we can often bid a slam based on this alone. The rule is, for a small slam we must have all but 7 of the "meaningful" points and for a grand slam all but 3. With a singleton, there are 34 meaningful points (KQJ of the short suit don't matter) and with a void there are 30. Of course we need to make sure partner did not count any of these meaningless points for his opening, and this is what the no wastage "anti-cuebid" accomplishes for us.

10.3 Cuebidding Style and 5NT Inquiry

We have switched to the "Italian" cuebidding style. We will cuebid first or second round controls up the line, except that we normally do not cuebid a shortness control on the first round in a suit partner has bid naturally. We use non-serious 3NT where a major has been agreed (3♠ is the "non-serious" bid if hearts are agreed, and 3NT becomes a spade cue). If partner makes a "non-serious" call we feel free to sign off in game if minimum; also if partner has bypassed a suit and we do not have control in that suit, we will sign off in game. However, otherwise cuebidding below game is normally mandatory. We play "last train" as the bid just below game only in cases where partner has bypassed a suit (in which case it shows control in that suit and not necessarily the last train suit). For example, if we agreed spades at the three-level (i.e. 1♠-2♣-2NT-3♠):

3NT Non-serious interest

- 4♣ Extras, ♣ control
- 4♦ ♦ control
- 4♥ ♥ control, no ♦ control
- 4♠ No red controls
- 4♦ Extras, ♦ control, no ♣ ace or king
- 4♥ Last train; ♣ control; nothing about hearts
- 4♠ Denies ♣ control
- 4♥ Extras, ♥ control, no ♦ control, no ♣ AK
- 4♠ Could just be a minimum, nothing about controls

4♣ Serious interest, ♣ A or K

- 4♦ ♦ control
- 4♥ ♥ control, no ♦ control
- 4♠ no red controls

4♦ Serious interest, diamond control, no club A or K

- 4♥ Last train, ♣ control, nothing about ♥
- 4♠ No ♣ control

4♥ Serious interest, heart control, no ♦ control, no ♣ AK

4♠ Picture bid; good trumps, no red control, no honor control in clubs

At times a cuebidding auction will bypass keycard. If we determine that a grand slam is a possibility, it becomes important to determine partner's trump quality. We use 5NT as an inquiry in such auctions, asking for top trump honors. The responses are in steps with the first step being the worst trump suit and so forth. In general this will be by count (first step shows no trump honors, second step one of top three, and so forth) but on occasion there are inferences about the trump holding and, especially if the suit is clubs, we will modify the responses (i.e. 6♣ shows a disappointing trump suit for previous actions, and so forth).

10.4 Kickback 1430 Keycard

The bid directly above four of the trump suit is used for keycard. This is very handy when the agreed suit is a minor, but we need to have good rules to determine when keycard is on. The basic rules are:

If the suit is clearly agreed, then the bid just above four of the suit is keycard. If the suit was the last one partner bid and there is a natural, forcing call available in the suit just above, then a jump to four of the suit above is keycard. However, if *both* sides have previously made nonforcing bids, then there is no keycard.

For example, 2♣-4♦ is keycard, 1♥-2♥-4♠ is keycard.

There are also some unusual keycard sequences in our methods. After a major suit opening and a limit raise (or limit-plus) response, we often have keycard available at the three-level (1♠-2NT-3NT is keycard). After 2NT that shows weak with both minors, a 3♥ ask followed by 4♥/♠ are RKC for ♣/♦.

In all cases we play 1430 style responses by steps. The steps are:

1. One or Four keycards
2. Zero or Three keycards
3. Two or Five keycards, no trump queen
4. Two or Five keycards, with trump queen
5. One or Four keycards *with a void*
6. Zero or Three keycards *with a void*
7. Two keycards, no trump queen *and a void*
8. Two keycards, the trump queen *and a void*

In general we try to avoid keycard in sequences where a void-showing response is likely, and we will not always show our voids if holding a disappointing number of keycards or void in partner's bid suit.

After the keycard response, we can continue keycard. If the location of the trump queen is unclear, then the lowest call asks for the trump queen. Partner should bid the trump suit at the lowest level with no trump queen, cuebid an outside king when holding the trump queen (again NT replaces the highest bid), or jump in the trump suit to show the trump queen but no outside king. After partner denies the trump queen, bidding the keycard suit (the next bid above the trump suit) asks for specific kings.

If the location of the trump queen is clear, then rebidding the keycard suit (one above the trump suit) asks for specific kings. If the location of the trump queen is not clear, then rebidding the keycard suit asks for number of kings (to ask for specific kings, first ask for the queen).

In any case, bidding a new suit (including notrump) which is neither the agreed suit *nor* the queen ask *nor* the kickback suit (which is one above the agreed suit) is a specific suit ask. A notrump bid which is a specific suit ask asks about the suit which would be most awkward to bid naturally. In response to such a control asking bid, the first step shows nothing useful, second step shows the queen or doubleton, third step shows the king or singleton, and fourth step shows king and queen.

10.4.1 Vs Double

Over a double (except 4NT), pass denies control (redouble asks for keycard), answer key cards with non-positional control, and redouble shows positional control (next step reasks keycard).

Over a double of 4NT, redouble suggests to play (next step reasks keycard), pass invites partner to redouble (redouble to play, next step reasks keycard), answer keycards otherwise.

If the double occurs over the response, pass promises at least 4KC (otherwise should just signoff) but lacks control in the suit doubled (responder return to trump suit to show no control, redouble to show positional (opener return to trump if no help, otherwise as if system on), all others guarantee non-positional control, with the cheapest non-trump step showing the trump Q and no side K, and others show the trump Q with the cue-bid K). Other continuations promise control in the suit. Redouble is to play and bids are system on.

10.4.2 Vs Overcalls

Over an overcall (strictly) below five of the agreed suit, we play pass as first step (over this double asks for trump Q), double as second step (next non-trump asks for trump Q), and bids as third step and onwards.

Over an overcall at five of the agreed suit or above, we play double as even number of keycards, pass as odd.

10.5 Competitive Bidding

If we are in a forcing pass situation in a competitive auction, then we play the following meta-agreements:

1. Freely bidding a suit where partner has shown or implied a fit shows shortness in the enemy suit. This includes competing in a known fit for our side, or competing after partner's takeout double and a raise by the opposition.
2. If we have a known fit, or if partner has already made a takeout double, then double implies an honor control in the enemy suit. This is not a penalty double. Generally partner should pull this double if short in the opposing suit.
3. A forcing pass strongly suggests partner double. This shows either a true "penalty double" or a hand with no control of the opposing suit.

In general we tend *not* to play forcing passes when in doubt. Some of the rules:

1. A game force based on values creates a forcing pass. Typically this happens after 1♣ and a game-forcing response (or 1♣, competition, and a GF response), or in a GF relay sequence, or after a cuebid raise to game level.
2. A fit jump does not create a forcing pass. If fit jumper doubles it shows defensive values and asks partner to select defending or competing based on fit for the side suit.
3. A "limit+" raise of a major creates a force to the level of three of our major. It does not create a forcing pass if opponents bid above three of our major.
4. In most forcing pass situations below game level, we play doubles as takeout. This reduces confusion if we're not clear on whether a situation is forcing, and also creates more sequences in some auctions.

If we are in a cuebidding auction and opponents double one of the cuebids, we have the following agreements:

1. Redouble shows first-round control in the suit they doubled
2. Another cuebid or return to the trump suit shows help (queen or singleton) in the suit they doubled

3. Pass indicates possible trouble and asks partner to clarify (by redoubling to show first-round control, returning to the trump suit to show king-only, and doing anything else to show a solid second round control).

11 Defensive Bidding

11.1 Defense to Natural One of a Suit

We play natural overcalls, normally in the range of 8-16 hcp. Occasionally we will make an overcall with a weaker hand and a good suit, or with a stronger hand and an awkward continuation problem. An overcall tends to deny holding four or more cards in an unbid major suit, except for a spade overcall when holding hearts. So for example, overcalling 1♥ after a natural minor opening usually denies holding four or more spades. Our two-level overcalls require stronger hands, usually 12+ hcp if a five card suit or 10+ if a six card suit. We will overcall on good four card suits at the one level. Our notrump overcalls are 15-18 hcp with a stopper in direct seat, and 11-14 hcp in balancing seat.

We play a modified version of Max Hardy's system for showing two suited hands. Our cuebids are top and bottom (five cards in the bottom suit, four in the top as a minimum) and show at least ten points. Typically the lower suit is longer or better. These cuebids are often 4/6 but rarely 5/5 (the exception is where the top suit is very weak); 5/6 is also possible. Over 1♦, we will use 2NT to show 5+♣ and 4♥; over 1♣ we use 2♦ for this purpose; these bids also have a range starting at around 10 hcp. Other than over 1♦, a jump to 2NT shows the two lowest unids (at least 5-5); the 5-5 jump can be weaker in high cards especially at NV. We also play equal level correction after one-level openings, so our takeout double will be one of:

- Support (3+ cards) for all unbid suits
- Good support (4+ cards) for the higher two unbid suits
- A very strong hand (16+ points)

For brevity, we will call the cheaper of the two higher unids the "ELC suit" – for example if the auction began (1m)-X then hearts is the ELC suit; if the auction began (1M)-X then diamonds is the ELC suit. Doubler's continuations after advancer bids a suit or notrump are summarized below:

- Correcting to the ELC suit does not show extras unless advancer bid the highest suit
- Bidding a new suit or NT otherwise shows extras, but is NF unless advancer guaranteed values
- Jumping in a new suit below 3NT is natural and GF
- Jump cue or jumping in a new suit past 3NT is a splinter raise
- Cuebid is extras with usually 3-card support, but could also be any awkward GF
- Simple raise to the two-level shows very mild extras with 4-card support
- Raises to the three-level (esp. jump-raises) show real extras, but are not forcing

Note that a takeout double *always* promises some strength, at least ten points in direct seat (usually more). We do not make takeout doubles with the very weak five-five majors hands (these hands tend to pass or occasionally bid 1♠).

We play aggressive weak jump shifts (except the previously mentioned minor over minor jumps) and will sometimes bid to the three level on a six card suit or the two level on five. We play "systems on" over 2M overcalls, as described in the section on 2M openings.

We play a jump cuebid of opener's suit with 4 or fewer cards as natural, a good six card suit and around 9-13 hcp (intermediate). If the bid promises 5 or more cards, then jump cue asks for stopper for playing 3NT.

The table below summarizes our non-natural overcalls; overcalls omitted are natural (and weak, if jumps below game).

- 1♣ Showing 2+ clubs and NF
 - Dbl Takeout, or power double, or 4♠ and 5+♥
 - 2♣ 4(+♠ and 5+♦, 10+ points
 - 2♦ 4(+♥ and 5+♦, 10-16 points
 - 2NT 5+♦ and 5+♥, can be weak in values
 - 3♣ Natural, sound preempt
- 1♦ Showing 2+ diamonds and NF
 - Dbl Takeout, or power double, or 4♠ and 5+♥
 - 2♦ 4(+♠ and 5+♦, 10+ points
 - 2NT 4(+♥ and 5+♣, 10+ points
 - 3♦ Natural, sound preempt
- 1♥ Showing 4+♥
 - Dbl Takeout, or power double, or 4♠ and 5+♦
 - 2♥ 4(+♠ and 5+♣
 - 2NT 5+♣ and 5+♦, can be weak in values
 - 3♥ Stopper ask, usually a running minor
- 1♠ Showing 4+♠
 - Dbl Takeout, or power double, or 4♥ and 5+♦
 - 2♠ 4(+♥ and 5+♣
 - 2NT 5+♣ and 5+♦, can be weak in values
 - 3♠ Stopper ask, usually a running minor

11.2 Auctions where Both Opponents Bid

If both opponents have bid naturally, say (1X) P (1Y), 1NT is takeout for the unbid suits. A double is a sound takeout (13+hcp) of Y or a strong hand. Both 2X and 2Y are natural and sound (at least five good cards, often six). After an initial pass at the sandwich seat, if the auction comes back and the opponents have not clearly agreed on a fit other than X, double is takeout of X.

If we overcall in a new suit after (1X)-P-(1Y), then the opponents *second suit*, Y acts as the cuebid. Transfers are on starting from the cue (as usual). Bidding suit X is natural. For example:

(1♦)-P-(1♠)-2♣-(P) :

-
- 2♦ Natural
 - 2♥ Natural
 - 2♠ Good raise of clubs
 - 2NT Natural

3♣ Normal raise

If we have doubled and bid NT naturally in an auction where partner always passed [for example (1X)-Dbl-(2X)-P-(P)-2NT] then we play systems on. If the bid is 2NT (as it usually will be) then we play a special method where all three-level bids are transfers as described in the section covering defenses to preempts.

When we bid 2NT it is rarely suggesting a contract. In many cases 2NT offers a choice of the two lower unbid suits. When the values for 3NT cannot be present, we will use 2NT to show a raise of partner's suit without a top honor; for example 1♦-2♣-2♠-2NT. Given the opponents bidding, one would assume they have more than half the points. 2NT here is a raise to 3♣ without a top club honor (3♣ would guarantee an honor). We also use lebensohl over weak two bids.

We play responsive doubles at low-levels, but not at the three level and above. So 1♣-X-2♣-X is asking for partner's better major, but 1♣-X-3♣-X is penalty. Similarly, weak 2-X-raise-X is also for penalty. Doubles of suits which partner has implicitly shown via a takeout double are also penalty; for example 1♣-X-1♠-X is penalty; with both unbid suits we'd tend to bid the major (hearts). If partner overcalls and the opponents raise their original suit, then double is for takeout.

If partner overcalls and opponents bid a new suit, then we play somewhat special methods. Raises or notrump bids are always natural. Double is reverse snapdragon, showing a good hand with the fourth suit and no fit for partner (partner can in principle penalize on a seeming misfit). The remaining bids are cues of the opponents suit or directly bidding the fourth suit. Our rule here is that the *cheapest available* such bid is snapdragon, showing five-plus cards in the fourth suit as well as at least Hx support for partner. All the other such bids act as raises, with the cheapest being a limit raise. If there is a second such raise available below three of our suit, it shows a 4-card limit raise; if there is a third it shows a four-card mixed raise. Higher such bids are GF raises (if not jumps) or fit-showing raises (jump in the unbid suit) or splinters (jump in opponent suit) or simply to play (jump to 4M in an unbid suit). Some examples follow:

(1♣)-1♥-(1♠) Opponents have bid two suits naturally

Dbl	Diamonds with a good hand, at most xx in ♥
1NT	Natural
2♣	Diamonds plus at least Hx in ♥
2♦	3-card limit raise
2♥	Normal single raise
2♠	4-card limit raise
2NT	Natural and invitational
3♣	4-card mixed raise
3♦	Fit showing jump
3♥	Preemptive raise
3♠, 4♣	Splinter raises

(1♣)-1♠-(2♦) Opponents have bid two suits naturally

Dbl	Hearts with a good hand, at most xx in ♠
2♥	Hearts plus at least Hx in ♠
2♠	Normal single raise
2NT	natural inv if 2♦ is NFB; else "defensive" raise with weak trumps
3♣	3-card limit raise
3♦	4-card limit raise
3♥	4-card mixed raise

- 3♠ Preemptive raise
- 4m Splinter raise
- 4♥ To play

(1♥)-2♦-(2♠) Opponents have bid two suits naturally

- Dbl Clubs and a good hand, at most xx in ♦
- 2NT natural inv if 2♠ is NFB; else “defensive” raise with weak trumps
- 3♣ Clubs plus at least Hx in ♦
- 3♦ Normal raise
- 3♥ Strong ♦ raise with heart values (past three of our suit)
- 3♠ Strong ♦ raise with spade values (past three of our suit)
- 3NT To play
- 4♣ Fit showing jump
- 4♦ Preemptive raise
- 4M Splinter raise

If opponents cuebid our suit at a low level, the double simply shows length there. This especially applies after a 1♦ opening (which didn't show any diamonds at all). If we double a higher-level cuebid it is anti-lead directional (“do not lead my suit”). The distinction is basically whether we might want to compete in this auction; if it's obvious that we're on defense then double is about the lead, whereas if we might still buy the hand then it's suggesting to compete in doubler's suit.

11.3 Balancing and Pre-Balancing Actions

When balancing over a one-level bid, we continue to play *weak jumps*. These are relatively sound (we are hoping to make the contract) but still show less than a good opening hand. The idea is to block opener (who often has extras) from making another call, while giving partner a good description of our hand and hopefully buying the contract. Our one-level suit balances are quite similar to one-level overcalls in terms of strength and shape. However, two-level suit balances and balancing doubles can be about a queen lighter than direct-seat actions.

A balancing cuebid is the same as a direct seat cue (top and bottom). A balancing 1NT shows roughly 11-14 over one of a minor, but 12-16 over one of a major (because doubling will normally force us to the two level). A balancing 2NT shows roughly 19-20 (the range between this and 1NT is handled by double and then bid notrump). Note that in balancing seat over 1♦, 3♣ shows 10+, 4+♥+ 5+♣.

When opponents bid and raise a suit, we balance much as though they had bid at the one-level. We may pre-balance over a raise when holding a long suit, since getting our six-card suit into the auction is frequently good especially when they have a known fit. However, direct seat doubles over bid-and-raise are similar to one-level doubles (not super-aggressive). We will sometimes balance over a bid-and-raise on a four-card suit, especially 2♠ over 2♥.

In general, if game seems likely opposite less than 8 hcp, we will strive to bid in direct seat. We will not pass on 19 hcp hands and depend upon partner to balance on a five-count.

11.4 Jump Shifts When Partner Opened or Overcalled

Jumps to four of an unbid major are always to play in our methods. Otherwise, our default meaning for a single jump shift in competition is *natural and weak*; however there are quite a few exceptions as outlined below:

1. Jump in the opponents suit is a raise (mixed raise if below three of our suit, splinter otherwise).
2. If bidder is a passed hand, jump is fit-showing.
3. If bidder could show this suit via a transfer at the two-level, jump is fit-showing.
4. If the jump is past 3NT (but not to 4M) then jump is fit-showing.

A double jump (or triple jump) takes its meaning by the following priority order; no two jumps will have the same meaning (so if a single jump is fit-showing, double-jump is splinter):

1. Fit showing
2. Splinter
3. Exclusion Keycard

Note that if we opened 1m (artificial) the fit-showing and splinter meanings never apply. Jumps are always weak after the 1♦ opening (except jump cue, which is transfer to 3nt). Some examples follow.

(1♦)-1♠-(Pass) :

- 3♣ Natural and weak, since 2♣ would be forcing
- 3♦ Mixed raise
- 3♥ Fit showing; a weak hand with hearts could transfer via 2♦
- 3♠ Weak natural
- 4♣ Fit-showing (since 3♣ would be weak)
- 4♦ Splinter
- 4♥ To play

(1♠)-2♣-(Pass) :

- 3♦ Natural and weak (2♦ would be forcing)
- 3♥ Natural and weak
- 4♣ Splinter
- 4♦ Fit-showing
- 4♥ To play

11.5 Advances of Overcalls

When the opponents open a natural bid and partner makes a natural overcall, we play transfer advances starting with a cuebid and ending with a raise. This method is still on by a passed hand. Bids below the cuebid are natural and generally forcing. The lowest suit bid (whether natural or a transfer) could be a general good hand with no clear direction; in any case it always promises three cards (usually four) in the suit bid or transferred to. Notrumps are excluded from the transfers. For example:

(1♣)-1♥-(Pass) :

- 1♠ Natural, forcing, but could be 4♠ if a decent hand
- 1NT Natural, around 8-11 hcp
- 2♣ Transfer to ♦; 5+♦
- 2♦ Transfer to ♥; limit raise or better values

- 2♥ Normal raise, not particularly strong
- Jumps Constructive NF by UPH if no transfer to the suit is available; fit jumps otherwise.
- 2NT Invitational; usually 14-15 or so hcp; with less make a lower forcing bid, then 2NT.
- 3♣ Mixed raise
- 4♣ Splinter

(2♥)-3♣-(Pass) :

- 3♦ Natural, but could easily be only 4♦ in a decent hand
- 3♥ Transfer to spades; 5+♠; at least mildly invitational
- 3♠ Shows a club fit, but primarily this is a stopper-ask
- 3NT To play

(3♣)-3♠-(Pass) :

- 3NT Natural
- 4♣ Transfer to diamonds, but could be 4♦ in a good hand
- 4♦ Transfer to ♥, 5+♥
- 4♥ Good spade raise, at least mild slam interest
- 4♠ To play, less than an opening hand

Transfer advances are on if RHO doubles. Transfers begin with Rdbl, and exclude notrump. Transfer raise shows a better hand than a direct raise. Transferring into opener's suit, if the suit could be four or fewer, is natural. If it is at least five, shows an anti-positional NT holding and promises values for the next higher NT bid.

(1♣)-1♠-(Dbl) :

- Rdbl Transfer to clubs
- 1NT Natural
- 2♣ Transfer to diamonds
- 2♦ Transfer to hearts
- 2♥ Good spade raise
- 2♠ Normal spade raise

(1♥)-2♣-(Dbl) : (opponents play 5-card majors)

- Rdbl Transfer to diamonds
- 2♦ Anti-positional 2NT invite
- 2♥ Transfer to spades
- 2♠ Good club raise
- 2NT Natural
- 3♣ Normal club raise

Transferring followed by bidding overcaller's suit shows 5+ cards in the suit transferred to and doubleton support, with at least mild game interest. Over a simple (non-jump) overcall, the transfer will never be to just "locate values" – it's always a real suit.

Occasionally we will make an artificial raise of overcaller's suit, only to have opener back in again by doubling or bidding something. For example (1♥)-1♠-(Pass)-2♥-(Dbl). In these cases we are forced to the level of our suit implied by the raise (i.e. if we would've had to play at least two of our suit absent the interference, we are still forced to that level). When opponents action is below the level of our force, overcaller's weakest action is to bid our suit at the cheapest level. Passing therefore shows at least mild interest. However, if the opponents action is beyond the level of our force we could pass it out, so the weakest action is pass.

11.6 Continuations after Doubles of Notrump Probe

If our notrump probe gets doubled, we continue by

Pass Partial stop, or attempt to right side NT (like Axx or Kxx).

XX No partial stop, but in the context of the bidding, only need a single stop in the suit to make 3NT (for example, fitting honors in partner's suit or side aces).

3NT Partial stop.

Others No partial stop, and not enough side help.

XX At least xxx in the suit (worst possible holding).

3NT Solid stopper with sufficient side values to play 3NT.

Others At most xx in the suit with no partial stopper.

11.7 Defense to Opponents Notrump

If our opponents open a strong notrump (min \geq 14) or if we are a passed hand, we play the following structure:

Dbl shows a major-minor two suiter

2♣ shows both majors (normally 5-4)

2♦ ♥ ♠ are natural, usually six card suits

2NT unusual for the minors

3♣ natural, fairly wide range of values

After the 2♣ call, partner can sign off in a major or bid 2♦ (asking for longer major). If the 2♣ call is doubled, then redouble is rescue (pick a major) and 2♦ becomes natural.

After the double, advancer's 2♣ asks for a five-card suit. Doubler should pass with five clubs and a shorter major. Advancer's 2♦ asks for the major. Major suit bids by advancer are natural (suit of his own). After opener corrects, if responder bids again, the lowest suit of the other rank is pass/correct, and a 2NT call asks for the second suit and strength (low min/high min/low max/high max).

If the opponents bid on over the double, then a subsequent double of a natural suit is takeout, and a double of a transfer bid shows four cards in the bid suit (not the suit transferred to).

If a single suited hand is shown, a subsequent double by partner is penalty (much as if a weak two had been opened). We play system on over 2M overcalls as if we have opened a weak two major.

11.7.1 Vs Weak NT

If our opponents open a weak notrump and we are UPH, we play the following methods (Landy + some artificialities):

Dbl penalty, 15+ hcp in direct seat, or lighter with a runnable minor

2♣ around 10-15 hcp, both majors

2♦ around 10-15 hcp, 5+♦+ 4M, non-forcing

2♥ ♠ natural, normally 10-15 hcp

2NT around 10-15 hcp, 5+♣+ 4M or huge two-suiter, forcing

3♣ ♦ around 10-15 and 6+ cards

3♥ ♠ preemptive

3NT (quite) unusual

A balancing double of 1NT could be shaded by about a point.

If partner pulls a double of weak notrump, this normally shows a weak hand unsuited to defense. A jump-pull shows shape and invites game. If we are in a sequence where 1NT doubled or redoubled may be passed out, then partner of the doubler can bid 2♣ “fix-it” for rescue. This is an artificial bid asking partner to take action.

If the opponents run after a double of their weak notrump, the first subsequent double of a suit contract by our side is *takeout*. Later doubles as the scramble continues are penalty oriented.

After the Landy 2♣,

2♦ asks for better major, over which 3M invite

2M to play

2NT invite or better, asking

3♣/♦ min, ♥ ≥ ♠/♠ > ♥.

3♥/♠ max, ♥ ≥ ♠/♠ > ♥.

3m to play

3M mixed raise

If Landy 2♣ gets doubled, then pass shows tolerance for playing 2♣ double, 2♦ natural, rdbl asks opener to pick better major.

Over 2♦, 2♥/♠ are pass or correct, whereas 2NT is invitational or better, asking (min ♥, min ♠, max ♥, max ♠)

Over 2M, we play natural follow-ups because it is more likely that we have overcalled on 5M. New suits are forcing one round whereas 2NT is natural and invitational.

Over 2NT, 3♣ is to play (partner bids on with big two-suiter unsuited to double, 3♦ shows both major, 3M shows M-m, and 3NT shows minors). 3♦ is game try in a major, partner bids 3M with min and that major, 3NT/4♣ with max and ♥/♠, or 4♦-4NT as above.

11.8 Defense to Natural Preempts

11.8.1 General Principles

Double is for takeout through 4♠ and for penalty at higher levels. A 4NT bid over 4M is two-suited takeout. Over a new suit response to the preempt, we play double as takeout of the opened suit.

Simple overcalls are natural, and we play transfer advances starting from the cue. The cheapest suit bid (regardless of whether a transfer) is not always a “serious” suit and might be a forcing punt on a difficult hand. New suit from unpassed partner opposite an overcall is forcing.

Our notrump overcalls at the two level show about 16-19 hcp with a stopper. It is wide-ranging at the three-level, and could be based on a long running suit with stopper in the overcalled suit.

Cuebid at the three-level over an opening 2-bid is a stopper ask. This is either a strong single-suited hand, or a very strong balanced hand without a stopper or suitability for double. In some cases we can cue and then remove 3NT to show a big one-suiter with some slam interest. In response to the cue **without a stopper**, responder normally bids 4♣ (bid your suit) or bids naturally with a long suit of his own and a decent hand, or cuebids to show a good hand.

Jump to three of a suit shows a one-suited hand that’s too strong for a simple overcall, but is not forcing. Typical is about eight to a soft nine tricks (five losers). This is not a forcing bid, but it does set trumps (so partner’s suit bid over it is a cue). Jump to four of a minor is leaping michaels, showing the minor bid and an unbid major; this is forcing one round (i.e. to game) but can be a wide range of values. Jump to four of a major is strong but not forcing. If a jump to 3M was available this will be about 9-10 tricks. If no jump to 3M was available it’s about 8.5-10 tricks; this also sets trumps. Three-level cue followed by 4M should show a similar hand to a direct 4M jump, but denying control of the opposing suit (thus a 4M jump where cue was available shows control of their suit, often shortage). Over 2m, jump cue to 4m shows both majors (analogous to leaping michaels). Over 2M, jump to 4M shows a very strong major one-suiter. This normally starts at 10.5 losers, and also promises control of the opposing suit (else cue).

However, jump shifts over intermediate bids (like our 2♣ and 2♦ openings) remain weak.

11.8.2 After 2X preempts

- (2♦) 3♦ stopper ask, strong with clubs or strong major one-suiter without a stop
- 3M natural forcing, normally no stop
 - 3NT shows stop
 - 4♣ pass/correct no stop
 - 4♦ strength-showing
- 3M about 8-9 tricks natural one-suited
- 3NT to play, can be wide range of hands
- 4♣ clubs and a major, forcing one round
- 4♦ both majors
- 4M natural, about 9-10 tricks, normally has a diamond control
- 5M 10.5+ tricks but not slam in hand, promises diamond control (else 3D...4/5M)
- (2♥) 3♥ stopper ask, strong with a minor or strong spade one-suiter without a stop
- 3♠/4♦ natural forcing
 - 3NT stop showing
 - 4♣ pass/correct
 - 4♥ strong
- 3♠ about 8-9 tricks natural one-suited
- 3NT to play

- 4m minor and spades, forcing one round
- 4♥ stronger than 4♠, about 10.5-11 tricks with a heart control
- 4♠ about 9-10 tricks with a heart control (without heart control, start with 3♥)
- 4NT both minors
- (2♠) 3♠ stopper ask
- 4m minor and hearts, forcing
- 4♥ natural and strong, about 8.5-10 tricks, shows spade control (else 3♠...4♥ or 3♠...5♥ if pd bids 3NT)
- 4♠ very strong with hearts, 10.5+ tricks with spade control
- 4NT both minors

After a takeout double by partner of a two-level preempt (excluding clubs), we play a lebensohl 2NT response. The 2NT bid shows a bad hand (at most 8 hcp) and relays to 3♣. If advancer bids at the three level (bypassing 2NT) this shows about 8-11 hcp. This is *not forcing* but suggests that doubler may wish to bid on if he has more than a minimum takeout double. If there are two ways to bid at the three level, going through lebensohl shows an invitational hand with only 4 cards in the bid suit and stopper in X, whereas a direct jump shows an invitational hand with no interest in NT.

In more detail, suppose 2X is opened, Y a higher ranking suit, and Z a lower ranking suit. Advancer's options are:

2Y : 0-7, Y

2NT : usually weak with Z, or hands with unclear direction.

3♣ Not a very good hand, willing to play 3♣ opposite weak hands with ♣.

Pass or 3Z 0-7, Z

3Y GF, stopper in Y and unbid major, or slam try with unbid major. If advancer continues with a new suit, it is a cue-bid. If Y is ♠, then doubler is expected to bid 3♥, over which 3♠ shows the flexible hand with ♠, 3N shows ♥ and stopper in ♠, and higher is cue-bid with ♥

3X inv, stopper in Y and 4X

3NT extras, NF (15-17)

4m 5+m and 4 unbid major (if Y, then 4♣ = 5+♣ and 4♥, 4♠ = 5+♣ and 4♠)

3♦ Very good hand, no clear direction

3X 4X

3Y asks for stopper

3NT promises stopper

3Z 8-11, Z

3Y GF, stopper ask or two unbid suits of same rank

3X 8-11, 5X or 4X with no stopper in Y

3NT to play, about 12-14

4m slam try in m (if Y is not ♦)

After our natural 2NT overcall, we play all three-level continuations are transfers to the next suit. Transfer to the opposing suit is stayman. The one exception is when the opponents' suit is spades, in which case we reverse the meaning of 3♥ (now transfer to clubs) and 3♠ (now showing four hearts) to let the stronger hand declare. We also play south-african transfers (to unbid suits) at the four-level. The same system applies after intermediate (10-15) natural openings. Some oddities occur after 2♣ and 2♠ in order to right-side more contracts. Thus:

(2♣)-2NT 15+ to 18 balanced or nearly so

- 3♣ Transfer to diamonds, and could be start of Stayman.
- 3♦ Obligatory
 - 3♥ 4♠, may have 4♥ (overcaller bids 3♠ with 4♥)
 - 3♠ 4♥
- 3♦ Transfer to hearts
- 3♥ Transfer to spades
- 3♠ Transfer to diamonds, at least some slam interest
- 3NT To play
- 4♣ Transfer to hearts
- 4♦ Transfer to spades
- 4M To play

(2♦)-2NT 15+ to 18 balanced or nearly so

- 3♣ Asking for four-card major
- 3♦ Transfer to hearts
- 3♥ Transfer to spades
- 3♠ Transfer to clubs, at least some slam interest
- 3NT To play
- 4♣ Transfer to hearts
- 4♦ Transfer to spades
- 4M To play

(2♥)-2NT 15+ to 18 balanced or nearly so

- 3♣ Transfer to diamonds
- 3♦ Shows four spades, looking for major fit
- 3♥ Transfer to spades
- 3♠ Transfer to clubs, at least some slam interest
- 3NT To play
- 4♣, 4♥ Undefined
- 4♦ Transfer to spades
- 4♠ To play

(2♠)-2NT 15+ to 18 balanced or nearly so

- 3♣ Transfer to diamonds

- 3♦ Transfer to hearts
- 3♥ Transfer to clubs, at least some slam interest
- 3♠ Shows four hearts, choice of games (or more)
- 3NT To play
- 4♣ Transfer to hearts
- 4♦, 4♠ Undefined
- 4♥ To play

11.8.3 Over Higher Preempts

Over three-level minor preempt, jump to 4M has a wide range of 8.5-10 losers. With a stronger hand, jump to 5M with a control and bid 5m without. Cue shows an otherwise-unbiddable two-suiter. Our general rule is that jumping to 5M always *promises a control* and that otherwise we cuebid (either at the three-level over a weak two, or at the five-level otherwise). For example:

- (3♣) 4♣ both majors
- 4♦ diamonds and a major, forcing
- 4M natural, about 8.5-10 tricks
- 5♣ very strong one-suiter without a club control
- 5M very strong one-suiter with a club control
- (3♦) 4♦ any two-suiter
- 4M natural, about 8.5-10 tricks
- 5♣ natural, strong and shapely, about 9.5-10.5 tricks
- 5♦ big major one-suiter without diam control, 10.5+ tricks
- 5M big major one-suiter with diam control

Over 3M+ preempt, we often will not be able to distinguish control/no control. Bidding five-level-plus when the four-level was available implies some control in their suit (shortness or honor). This is just more likely than a hand with all the tricks except for two losers in their suit.

- (3♥) 4♥ spades and a minor
- 4♠ natural about 8.5-10 tricks
- 4NT minors
- 5m natural, about 9.5-10.5 tricks
- 5♥ spade one-suiter, 10.5+tricks without heart control
- 5♠ spade one-suiter, 10.5+ tricks heart control
- (3♠) 4♠ hearts and a minor
- 4NT minors
- 5m natural, about 9.5-10.5 tricks
- 5♥ natural, 10.5+ tricks, spade control

The 3NT overcall over a three-level preempt could be wide-ranging, and sometimes based on a running suit with stopper in X. Over this overcall:

- 4♣ Clarification ask.
- 4♦ bal, 16-18
- 4♥ bal, 19-21
- 4♠ bal, 22-24
- 4NT running suit + stopper
- 4♦ 55+ two-suiter; suit bids by overcaller are pass-or-correct.

Over 4m preempt, 4NT is natural. Two-suited hands start with a double and remove the bid of the other suit. 5-level new suit shows a big one-suiter with control of their suit.

11.9 Defense to Artificial Strong Bids

At vulnerable, we play *Mathe*. This means double shows both majors, notrump bids show both minors, and other calls are natural. Over an overcall, cheapest notrump is an artificial force, showing game interest. Opposite that new suit below M or 2M is NF, all others are natural(ish) GF.

At nonvulnerable, we play psycho-suction. Bidding any suit shows *either* the suit bid or the two suits above (so for example a 1♠ overcall of a strong club is either ♠ or both minors). Most followups are pass or correct. Notrump calls show two non-touching suits.

Over non-notrump overcall, cheapest notrump is an artificial force (this applies regardless of our vulnerability). Bid of single suit or cheaper of two-suiters NF. Bid of remaining suit or more expensive of two-suiters are GF.

11.10 Defense to Polish/Swedish Club

Over a two-way club, we will play psycho-suction at NV. Good hands (15+ hcp) will always start by passing. Passing and then backing in later will show a *better hand* than a direct bid in these auctions, including a balancing double (however this double is still takeout oriented). If we are vulnerable we retain the idea of passing with good hands, but play a more natural scheme of overcalls:

- 1♣ Polish or Swedish (i.e. strong or a weak notrump) and we are VUL
 - Pass Includes all 15+ hands, as well as weak hands w/o a bid
 - Dbl Major-oriented takeout, could have any minor suit shape
 - 1♦ ♥ ♠ Natural. Over 1M, 1NT serves as a cue-bid, and new suit are forcing one round. Jump in new suits are constructive.
 - 1NT 5+♦ and 4♥
 - 2♣ 5+♦ and 4♠
 - Else Natural

This system is on also over (1♣) P (1♦) if 1♦ does not promise a specific suit, but off otherwise.

Over a 1♣ or 1♦ opening that includes all balanced minimums, we play the same defence, except we may start with a double with a good unbalanced hand.

11.11 Defense to Artificial Two-Bids with a Known Suit

If the bid promises length in the bid suit (for example 2♥ opening showing hearts and a minor) then we treat it as natural. In some cases it is important to note that a double is takeout of the bid suit, *not* takeout for the two unbid suits. For example after a 3♣ opening showing clubs and hearts, we would double with 4441 shape but *not* with 4144 shape unless extremely strong. This allows partner to judge when the opponents have a misfit and penalize when appropriate.

If the bid promises length (five or more) in one known suit, then double is takeout of the suit shown. If we make a natural overcall, transfers will start from the cuebid of their shown suit. A direct cuebid of their shown suit at the two-level is a two-suited takeout and a cue of their shown suit at the three level is a stopper ask. Normally two suited takeout is 4+ in the highest suit and 5+ in the lowest suit. However, if their bid implies a specific second suit of at least four cards (i.e. Flannery) then the cuebid is for the two suits they didn't show. So for example over 2♦ flannery, double would be takeout of hearts, 2♥ would show the minors, 3♥ would ask for a stopper, and other calls would be natural. Over 2♦ transfer to hearts, double would be takeout of hearts, 2♥ would be 4+♠ and 5+♣, 3♥ would ask for a stopper, and other calls would be natural.

Bids which have both a strong and weak meaning (where the weak meaning is much more frequent) will be treated as if having the weak meaning. For example, 2♣ showing a strong hand or weak two in diamonds is treated as a transfer preempt in diamonds (one known suit) so double is takeout of diamonds, 2♦ shows spades and clubs (top and bottom), 3♦ is a stopper ask, and other calls are natural (as over a 2♦ preempt).

If the bid promises length (five or more) in two known suits, then the **cheaper** cuebid shows interest in our **cheaper** suit and the more expensive cuebid shows interest in the more expensive suit. For example, after 2NT minors, 3♣ cue shows hearts and 3♦ cue shows spades; after 2♥ showing ♠ and ♣, 2♠ shows diamonds and 3♣ shows hearts. These cuebids generally show better hands than bidding the suit directly (which indicates about 11-14 points, a minimum opener). Doubling an artificial bid which shows two known suits promises values; first subsequent double is for takeout.

11.12 Defense to Multi 2♦

In direct seat after the multi 2♦ opening, we act as if a weak two in spades has been opened. Our bids are:

double takeout of spades

2♥ natural, five or more hearts

2♠ a cuebid, clubs and hearts (top and bottom)

2NT balanced, about 16-19 hcp, stoppers in the majors

3♣ ♦ natural, sound overcalls

A direct seat pass followed by a subsequent double of hearts is takeout. A direct seat pass followed by a double of spades is penalty (we could have doubled 2♦ for spade takeout).

After 2♦-pass-2♥, we play as if two hearts was the opening bid (since it is nonforcing). In general, if the opponents make an artificial bid which is nonforcing and frequently passed, we will treat it as natural. A pass here followed by a subsequent double of spades is for takeout.

11.13 Defense to Artificial Responses

Generally, we double the artificial responses for lead. If the double occurs at a low-level, length is expected and advancer should feel free to compete in the doubled suit. We make two exceptions:

1. After a transfer response to 1♣ at the one level, we double to show the suit bid, cue-bid their suit for takeout. Over 1♣-1♠ that does not promise a specific 4+ card minor, we bid 2♣ to takeout for majors, 1NT to show a major-minor 2-suiter (like the double of a strong NT).
2. After an artificial mixed raise (such as regular Bergen 3♣), we double for takeout. Note that after an artificial limit raise, double is for lead.

12 Leads and Carding Agreements

12.1 Leads vs NT

- 4th best from length
- Xxx (if highest spot is affordable, o/w second highest)
- K is power lead, asking for unblock of Q/J or count
- Q from KQ or QJ, asking for attitude
- Coded T/9

12.2 Leads vs Suit

- 3rd from even, low from odd
- A from AKx(+)
- Coded T/9 (rare lead)
- xxX; this includes spot sequences like 987
- may lead high from Xxxx (count) if unlikely to be taken for doubleton
- Vs 5+ level contracts or declarer's preempt, K could be from AK or KQ and asks for count

12.3 Leads in the middle of the hand

- Spot cards are usually attitude, though if from Hxxx or longer holding, 4th vs NT and 3rd/low vs suit
- Honor leads are K from either AK or KQ, and coded T/9

12.4 Signals

We play upside-down attitude (low encourages). However, at trick one there is an additional inference about one of the other suits, which is designated as the "obvious shift."

There's a book about obvious shift carding by the Granovetters. For now, here are the rules for determining which suit is the obvious shift:

1. Obvious shift cannot be the suit lead
2. Obvious shift cannot be the trump suit
3. Obvious shift is not a suit where dummy has AKQ or 4 of top 5
4. Obvious shift in a suit contract is not dummy's singleton or void
5. Obvious shift cannot be a suit declarer bid naturally

6. Opening leader's bid suit is the obvious shift
7. Opening leader's partner's bid suit is the obvious shift
8. Against a suit contract, dummy's 3-card suit to at most 1 honor is the obvious shift
9. Dummy's shortest suit is the obvious shift
10. The suit with fewest honors (AKQJT) is the obvious shift
11. The lower-ranking suit is the obvious shift

We consider these rules in order until only one suit remains eligible to be the obvious shift. A discouraging signal at trick one says "please shift to the obvious shift suit." An encouraging signal denies interest in a switch to the obvious suit. At times this means we will encourage with nothing in the suit lead, simply to avoid a switch to the obvious suit. An unnecessary honor card asks for a switch to a suit *other* than the obvious suit.

After trick one, we play upside-down attitude. Most of the time, we give suit preference when following suit to declarer and dummy's plays. At times, when it is obvious to do so, we will give upside-down count, but in general our signals are suit preference. This includes lavinthal (suit preference) discards.