

NON-COMPETITIVE BIDDING

(1) GENERAL BIDDING AFTER 1 LEVEL SUIT OPENINGS

Suit openings: 1C Normally 4+, may be 3 only with 4S-3-3-3  
and 15-20 hcp.  
1D 4+  
1H 4+  
1S Normally 5+, may be 4 in a tactical 3rd  
seat.

Four card suits are bid up the line, five card suits down  
the line. With 4-4-4-1, open 1D, and, if minimum, rebid 2D  
over a 2C response. With 4-4-1-4 or 4-1-4-4, open 1C.  
With 1-4-4-4, open 1D and rebid 2C over a 1S response, if  
weak.

Responses: 1 of new suit : 5+ hcp, 4+ in suit , unlimited.  
1NT : 5-8 hcp, 8-10 hcp over 1C  
2 of new suit : 9+ hcp, 4+ in suit ,except 1S-2H  
which shows 5+H. Unlimited.  
Jump shift : Asking bid.  
Single raise : 4+ card support (3+ for S),  
4-7 hcp (majors), 5-8 hcp (minors)  
Jump raise : 4+ card support,  
8-9 hcp (majors), 9-11 hcp(minors)  
2NT : 4+ card support,  
16+ hcp (minors),flattish.  
9-11 or 16+ hcp (majors.  
However: Natural (10-12) if bid at  
minimum level over interpose.  
3NT : 4 card support, flat hand,  
13-14 hcp.  
Double jump : Splinter, over the majors.  
shift Over the minors, a double jump in a  
major shows 4 card support for the  
minor and 4 of the bid major with  
a balanced 13-15 hcp.  
Jump to game : Weak distributional raise,  
probably a mini-splinter.

Opener's rebids:

(a) Over new suit at the one level:

1NT : 15-18 hcp, balanced. (May be 4-3-3-3,  
17-18 hcp, even if responder has bid  
1S. With 15-16 hcp, 4-3-3-3, raise  
to 2S.)

Then: 2C is Crowhurst.

2 of a new lower ranking suit is natural  
and non forcing, 5-4 or better.

Rebid of responder's suit is to  
play.

2 of opener's suit (except C) is to  
play.

2 of a new higher ranking suit is natural  
and constructive.

Jump rebid of responder's suit  
shows 6+, invitational.

Jump shift shows 5-5, invitational.

2NT is a transfer to 3C. Any subsequent bids are natural and forcing, but note that 3NT now shows 5-5 in first suit and clubs with mild slam interest, a subsequent 4C bid setting the suit and initiating cue bidding.

Rebid own suit : 5+ cards, less than 16 hcp.

Then: Rebid of responder's suit shows 6 cards, invitational.  
2NT shows 10-12, invitational.  
Raise of opener's suit is constructive, but may be preemptive also.  
Change of suit by responder is natural and forcing, 5-4 or better.

New suit at  
one level

: 5-4 or better, forcing, but may still be minimum. Could also be 4-4-4-1.

Then: 1NT shows 5-8 hcp.

Raise of opener's first or second suit is 5-8 hcp with support.

Jump raise of opener's first or second suit, is limit, 9-11 hcp.

2NT is 10-12, natural, not a raise.

3NT is to play.

Rebid of responder's suit shows 6+, constructive.

Fourth suit is fourth suit forcing.

(See appropriate section.)

Jump rebid of responder's suit shows 6+ , forcing.

Jump rebid of fourth suit is natural, forcing, 5-5 or better.

New suit at  
two level

(non reverse) : 5-4 or better, less than 19 hcp.

(NT rebids should be found on many 17-18 hcp hands to endeavour to circumvent the uncomfortably wide range of this rebid. For the same reasons responder should try to avoid the pass with medium to constructive hands in the 8-9 hcp region.)

Then: Pass shows weak preference for opener's second suit, 4+.

2 of opener's first suit is weak preference, often a doubleton , keeping the bidding open in case opener wants to move again on 17-18 hcp.

Fourth suit is fourth suit forcing.

2NT shows 10-12 hcp, invitational.

Rebid of responder's suit shows 6+, invitational.

Raise of opener's second suit has constructive values, 4 card support, and opener will bid 3NT with a stop in the unbid suit and extra values.

Jump in the fourth suit is natural and forcing, 5-5 or better.

Jump in opener's first suit is a limit raise, 9-11 hcp, 3+.  
Jump in responder's suit shows 6+ and is forcing.  
3NT is to play.  
A jump to four of opener's minor is a slam try, inviting a cue.

New suit at two level (reverse)

: 5-4 or better, 16-18 hcp.  
Then: Pass is weak preference to second suit.  
Return to first suit is weak preference.  
Rebid of responder's suit is constructive, 5+.  
2NT shows 7-8 hcp, natural.  
Fourth suit is fourth suit forcing.  
Raise of opener's second suit shows 4+, forcing.  
Jump rebid of responder's suit shows 6+, forcing.  
3NT is to play.  
Four of opener's first suit, if a minor, is a slam try.

2NT : 19-20 hcp , balanced (Unusually , may be 4-4-4-1 ,5-4-3-1.)  
Then: Pass is extremely unusual, since 24+ hcp are held, usually!  
3C is Crowhurstish enquiry, done on most forcing hands.  
Change of suit by responder is natural and forcing, showing 5-5 or 6-4, depending on suits.  
Rebid of responder's suit shows 6+ and is forcing, and a minimum change of suit by opener is then a cue, agreeing the suit.  
Sequences such as 1D 1H 2NT 3D are forcing and may be followed by cue bidding.

Jump rebid : 6+ card suit to 2 of 3 top honours and internally solid, 7-7.5 pt, 16-18 hcp.  
Then: Pass shows a minimum response.  
Change of suit is natural and forcing at the three level, but is a cue agreeing opener's suit at the four level.  
3NT and raises to game in the suit are to play.

Jump shift : Game force, 19+ hcp, 5-4 or better, but second suit may occasionally be 3 if a minor.  
Then: Fourth suit is fourth suit forcing.  
3NT is to play.  
Rebid of responder's suit shows 6+ and is forcing.  
Jumps to game are fast arrival.  
Raises of opener's suit below game show strong support, but this may

also be done via fourth suit sequences  
which are economical advance cues.

3NT : Shows a 4 card fit with responder's suit,  
a flat hand, and values for game, 19-20  
hcp. If a major, denies the ability to  
Superswiss.

4C/D : Superswiss if responder bid a major.  
(See appropriate section.)

Raise of  
responder's  
suit : 4-4 or better, 12-16- hcp. Raise on 3 only  
if you can find no better bid , you are  
maximum, and have active ruffing values.  
Then: Change of suit by responder is a  
long suit trial.  
Jump shift is a cue.

Jump raise  
of responder's  
suit : 4-4 or better, 16+ to 18 hcp.  
Then: Change of suit by responder is  
a cue.

Game raise  
of responder's  
suit : 'Weak'distributional raise. Denies ability  
to Superswiss. For example, 1D 1S 4S on  
KQxx,x,AQJxxx,Kx. May also be a tactical  
element to the bid.

Reversing jump : Natural, strong 6-5.  
(eg 1D 1H 2S) Then: 2NT implies no fit, may be minimum.  
Others below game, natural and forcing.  
Fourth suit forcing.  
Fast arrival, etc.

Double jump  
rebid : Your response has improved my hand!  
(eg 1H 1S 4H)

(b) Over a 1NT response.

New suit  
(non reverse) : Constructive, 5-4 or better , not 5-4-2-2,  
happy to hear another bid on 7-8 hcp.  
Then: Responder can pass, raise either  
suit with a maximum, show a  
hidden 5 card H suit (over 1S),  
with a maximum, or bid 2NT with a  
maximum and good support for both  
suits. (Primary support for second  
suit, secondary support for first  
suit, most honours in opener's suits.)

New suit  
(reverse) : Forcing for one round, 5-4 or better.  
Then: Responder can clarify his hand  
type, as above.

Rebid of suit : To play, 6+ card suit, nominally.

2NT : Invitational to 3NT.

3NT : To play.

Jump rebid  
of suit : Invitational, 6+ card suit .

Jump shift : Game forcing, natural, 5-4 or better.  
Then: Fast arrival applies to game bids,  
others natural and forcing.

(c) Over a response of 2 of a new suit, opener's rebids are similar to those listed above under (1), except:

2NT : 15-17 hcp, natural, further development  
after previous 2NT responses, including  
Crowhurstish.

3NT : 18-20 hcp, natural (not a raise)

reverse : Now forcing to game, therefore further  
(eg 1H 2C 2S development includes fast arrival,  
or 1S 2H 3C) strong support below game, fourth suit  
forcing, etc.

4 of minor : The sequence 1 major - 2 minor - 4 minor  
is forcing to game, with slam interest.  
Cueing may follow.

(d) Over a single raise of opener's suit:

Single raise : Invitational if a major, responder bidding  
naturally. Preemptive if a minor and  
should not be disturbed.

2NT : Invitational and flat. Possible games of  
4 of major or 3NT (major), 3NT (minor).  
(Note that this will be slightly stronger  
over a single major raise.)

Minimum suit : Long suit trial if a major. This should  
be raised to game if responder can help  
with honour length, or with ruffing  
values in the suit, even if responder  
is minimum. If responder cannot help  
in the suit, but is maximum with good  
cards in another suit, he may bid this  
suit as a counter trial, if economical.

If the raised suit is a minor, then  
opener's minimum suit rebid is a NT probe  
showing either a suit, or a chunky  
holding, wanting a maximum opposite  
with holdings in the other suits for 3NT.

3NT : To play, if a minor was raised.  
Choice of contracts if a major.  
(Not a cue bid).

Jump in a suit : A cue, agreeing the raised suit ,for both  
majors and minors.

(e) Over a jump raise of opener's suit:

Minimum change

of suit : If raised suit is a major, then this is a cue bid, agreeing the suit.  
If raised suit is a minor, then this is a NT probe, showing a chunky holding in the suit, and inviting 3NT, except the sequence 1D 3D 4C, which has bypassed 3NT. In this case 4C is a cue bid.

3NT : To play, if raised suit is a minor.  
If raised suit is a major, this is either a cue of the trump A, or slam interest denying the AC.

(f) Over a 2NT rebid which is unambiguously 16+ hcp and a fit:  
(For our purposes this is for the minors only.)

Minimum rebid : Interest in slam opposite 16 hcp.  
This gives the most economical cueing sequences.

Minimum change

of suit : A cue, agreeing the raised suit.

3NT : To play, showing a minimum or sub-minimum with no slam interest.

5 of bid suit : To play, unbalanced.

(g) Over a 2NT rebid which is ambiguous (9-11/16+ hcp):  
(For our purposes this is for majors only.)

Minimum rebid

of suit : To play, opposite the 9-11 hcp.  
Then: Change of suit by responder confirms the 16+ hcp variety and is a cue.  
3NT confirms 16+ hcp, and cues trump A.  
4H confirms 16+ hcp, and no cue.  
(ie not much better than minimum.)

Minimum change

of suit : Long suit trial, opposite the 9-11 hcp.  
(See earlier discussion on trials.)  
With 16+ hcp, responder will make a minimum suit bid as a cue, or bid 3NT, (not possible in a trial sequence) as a cue of the A trumps. Opener will confuse this as a counter trial in the first instance, but responder will clarify the 16+ variety by bidding further.

3NT : Choice of contract over 9-11 hcp variety.  
(Note that this is different from the 1M 3M sequence because of cueing economies. Apparent trials/cues at lower levels will be the best way to handle the stronger hands.)  
Any change of suit by responder will be a cue, confirming 16+ hcp variety.

Jump to game

in major : To play, opposite 9-11 hcp variety.  
Any change of suit by responder will be  
a cue, confirming 16+ hcp variety.

Jump shift : A cue! Normal cueing sequence with 9-11  
hcp variety. Excited cueing sequence  
with 16+ hcp variety.

(h) Over a 3NT response:

Pass : Content.

Rebid of 4  
of suit : To play, if a major.  
Slam try, if a minor, over which  
responder can cue if interested.

Change of suit: A cue, agreeing the suit.

4NT : Blackwood.

(2) MISCELLANEOUS CONVENTIONS AND COMMENTS RELATED TO SUIT BIDDING

Fourth suit forcing

A bid of the fourth suit is forcing and tries to elicit  
further information about shape and/or stoppers. The sequence  
is forcing to game on the non fourth suiter unless he hears  
a 2NT bid which shows 10-11 hcp.

The sequences are best illustrated with examples:

	1C	1H	
	1S	2D	Fourth suit
Then	2H		shows 3 card H support
	2S		shows 5 card S
	2NT		shows D stopper, minimum
	3C		help! I have nothing of interest distributionally, probably less than 15 hcp.
	3D		counter cue, half stopper, or or extra values, no D stop, in which case there will be more bidding coming.
	3H		shows 3 card H, with extra values
	3S		shows 5 card S, with extra values (Unlikely, as there was no S opening or 2S rebid.)
	3NT		shows D stopper, extra values

(Normally , it is not necessary to differentiate strength,  
but , since the 1S rebid is forcing and unlimited,  
it is desirable to do so in this case.)

	1H	2C	
	2D	2S	Fourth suit
	3S		Shows 4-5-4-0

(Raise of fourth suit , if a major, shows four. A raise of  
a fourth suit minor is either a counter cue with a  
half stopper, or may show extra values (as above) without  
a stopper.)

	1D	1S	
	2C	2H	Fourth suit
3 card S support	2S	2NT	10-11 hcp, not forcing

	1H	1S	
Game force	3C	3D	Fourth suit
3 card S support	3S	4H	I had H all along, D was an advance cue. Strong support.

	1H	1S	
Game force	3C	3D	Fourth suit
No more shape	3H	4H	May be reluctant doubleton support, no advance cueing connotations here.

	1D	1H	
Strong 6-5	2S	3C	Fourth suit.
C stopper	3NT	4D/S	Agreeing suit, C was advance cue. (Could also have shown strong support via 3D/S instead of 3C.)

	1H	1S	
Game force	3D	4C	Cue, agreeing D. (Bypasses 3NT, strong H agreement shown via 3H.)

### Splinters

A double jump shift (eg 1H 3S, 1S 4H, 1C 3H ) is a splinter showing at least 4 card trump support (even for S), a singleton in the suit bid, about 9-11 hcp, and at least 3 controls. This will enable the bidding of some light, making slams via cueing sequences. No controls should be held in the short suit.

#### Example:

AQJxx	Kxxx	1S	4H	Splinter
xxxx	x	6S		
x	Axxx			
AKx	QJxx			Responder must have AD + KS/D, and other values in the minors. Looks to be at worst on a finesse.

Splinters also occur in some sequences after 2C/D openings. (See the appropriate section.)

Note: With a void, either make a direct ask, or bid your own suit first and listen to the rebid.

### Truscott

If responder has passed originally, or if a double has been interposed, then a bid of 2NT shows a sound raise to three of opener's suit (9-11 hcp). Requirements for raises to three and two thus drop accordingly. Note that, according to the system already outlined, we already play an inherent form of Truscott in the majors. Nevertheless we also implement this convention in the minors, in the above situations.

### Bidding after passing originally

Normal responses are played, as well as the following:

- (1) Simple raise : Truscott in all suits, weaker
- (2) Jump raise : Truscott in all suits, weaker

- (3) 2NT : Truscott in all suits, good raise  
(4) Jump shift : Natural, good 5 card suit,  
tolerance for partner's suit,  
and a near opening.  
Then:  
2NT is a minimum opening not wishing  
to play in the jump or the original  
suit at the three level.  
3 of original suit is to play.  
3NT is to play.  
Minimum suit bid is natural and forcing.  
Jump shift is a cue, agreeing  
responder's suit.

#### Crowhurst

If the 1NT rebid by opener is wide range, showing 15-18 hcp then a 2C bid by responder is Crowhurst, enquiring as to opener's shape and strength. The sequence is forcing to 2NT on the opener. The 2C bidder may, of course, pass at any stage. In response to the 2C enquiry, opener shows if his original suit was 5 cards, 4 card suits up the line, and 3 card support for responder in the most economical order. The bidding is natural in most cases. Bids at the two level denote a minimum hand (15/16), while those at the three level denote a maximum (17/18).

#### Responses:

These depend on the particular suits opened and responded. In general:

- 2D/H show either a 5 card suit (if originally opened), or the other 4 card suit, or 3 card support (if responder's suit), and a minimum (15/16hcp)  
2S shows another 4 card suit, or 3 card support for responder, and a minimum.  
2NT shows a 5 card club suit and a minimum when 1C was the original opening.  
3C shows a 5 card club suit and a maximum when 1C was the original opening.  
3D/H/S show the same as for 2D/H/S but a maximum (17/18).  
3NT shows a maximum 4-3-3-3 with 4 of opened suit (except in the case of C when 4-3-3-3 is shown). With 3-3-3-4, jump to 3 of responder's suit first, then bid 3NT.

Further bidding: If responder bids 2NT after a two level response from opener, this must be passed. If responder bids below 2NT, then opener must keep bidding to at least 2NT. All sequences after a maximum response are game forcing.

#### Examples:

- |               |   |
|---------------|---|
| 1D 1H         | 1D 1H   |
| 1NT 2C        | 1NT 2C  |
| 2D 2H forcing | 2H pass content with 3 card support, no game. |
| 2NT 3-2-5-3   |   |
| 1C 1S         |   |
| 1NT 2C        |   |

3D 4D forcing, inviting cue

1D 1H

1NT 2C

3S 4C cue, agreeing S (there are other ways of  
insisting on C.)

1D 1H

1NT 2C

2H Then: 2S is a request to keep bidding out the shape.  
(May not necessarily have S.)

2NT is to play.

3C is forcing, ostensibly a natural trial bid,  
but may turn out to be an advance cue.

3D sets the suit, forcing, inviting a cue.

3H is invitational.

3S/4C/4D are cues, agreeing H.

### (3) 1NT OPENING AND RESPONSES (Relay version)

The 1NT opening denotes a basically flat hand with 12-14 hcp.

Possible shapes are 4-3-3-3, 4-4-3-2, 5-3-3-2 (possibly  
with a 5 card major), 6-3-2-2 (with a 6 card minor).

There are no requirements on number of suits stopped.

Responses: (a) 2C Relay, game forcing.

(See separate section with codified  
responses.) Note, however that  
the invitational 2NT sequence is  
also conducted via 2C, but this is  
the only non game forcing use of relay.  
Note: If responder has passed originally  
2C reverts to Stayman.

(b) 2D Transfer to H.

Then: 2NT is invitational with 5H-3-3-2  
2S/3C/3D are invitational long suit  
trials, at least 5H-4 of suit bid.

The invitation may be passed.

With a maximum and no H fit, opener  
should not bid 3NT, as the trial  
is basically a suit invitation.

3H is invitational with 6H (but a  
weaker suit than a direct 1NT-3H)

3S/4C/4D sets H as trumps (solid suit)  
and starts a cueing sequence.

(Could also relay with this type  
of hand.)

3NT offers choice of game between  
NT and H, shows a balanced hand.

4H is to play.

4NT is Blackwood, setting H.

(Relay would probably be used instead.)

(c) 2H Transfer to S, with similar structure to  
above.

(d) 2S Transfer to C, but opener may superaccept  
via 2NT with a good C fit (2 honours/Axxx) and tops.

After 3C : 3D/H/S by responder are natural  
and invitational since  
the forcing hands can be  
handled via relays.

4D/H/S set C and are cues.

4NT is Blackwood in C.

After 2NT : 3C to play, still not  
interested.

3NT to play, superaccept  
accepted.

Others As above, same as after  
3C.

- (e) 2NT Transfer to D, but opener may superaccept via 3C. The bidding structure is similar to the above.
- (f) 3C/D/H/S Natural and invitational with a six card suit of good solidity, missing only one honour. Opener should bid 3NT with a missing honour in the suit and tops elsewhere.
- (g) 3NT To play.
- (h) 4C Gerber (Unlikely).
- (i) 4NT Invitational to 6NT.
- (j) 5NT Invitational to 7NT.

Escape mechanism when 1NT opening (or overcall) is doubled

- (a) A redouble by responder asks opener to bid 2C, and then pass responder's next bid. This sequence implies a five card suit.
- (b) A simple suit bid (except 2S) implies a 4-4-3-2 and that responder is bidding four card suits upwards. Opener can then ensure that no worse than a 4-3 fit is reached by bidding the next suit up every time he finds himself in a 4-2 fit. If responder has two five card suits, he may choose to use this sequence also.
- (c) A bid of 2S should show a six card suit and a definite desire to play in 2S, preferably doubled. However, if the opponents are aware of the nuances of the system, one may choose to bid a psyche 2S with only five and a terrible hand, hoping that they will be too scared to double.

#### (4) CODIFIED RELAY RESPONSES TO 1NT

The 2C relay after a 1NT opening will be employed on nearly every game forcing hand, and also on invitational 2NT type hands.

The philosophy of the relays is that distribution is disclosed first, then number of controls, then location of controls, cyclically, until responder chooses to break the relay by bidding either game or slam.

Rules:

- (a) The next step by responder is a relay. (The only exception is 3NT which is NEVER a relay.)
- (b) If responder rebids a non-relay 2NT after bidding 2C originally, then this is merely a normal Acol invitational 1NT-2NT sequence.
- (c) Apart from (2), if responder breaks the relay below game then the sequence is still game forcing, and his bid is natural, asking for opener to cooperate in a cue bidding sequence. For whatever reason, responder has decided that the relays will not be able to tell him what he wants to know.

Responses to 1NT-2C relay:

- (1) 2D : at least one 4 card major
- (2) 2H : no 4 card major
- (3) 2S : 5 card H
- (4) 2NT : 5 card S
- (5) 3C : 6 card C
- (6) 3D : 6 card D

Second responses to 1NT-2C-2D-2H relay:

- (1) 2S : 4 card H + 4 card minor
- (2) 2NT : 4 card S + 4 card minor
- (3) 3C : 4 card H + 4 card S
- (4) 3D : 3-4-3-3
- (5) 3H : 4-3-3-3

Third responses to 1NT-2C-2D-2H-2S-2NT relay:

- (1) 3C : 2-4-3-4
- (2) 3D : 3-4-2-4
- (3) 3H : 2-4-4-3
- (4) 3S : 3-4-4-2

Third responses to 1NT-2C-2D-2H-2NT-3C relay:

- (1) 3D : 4-2-3-4
- (2) 3H : 4-3-2-4
- (3) 3S : 4-2-4-3
- (4) 3NT : 4-3-4-2

Third responses to 1NT-2C-2D-2H-3C-3D relay:

- (1) 3H : 4-4-2-3
- (2) 3S : 4-4-3-2

Second responses to 1NT-2C-2H-2S relay:

- (1) 2NT : 5 card C
- (2) 3C : 5 card D
- (3) 3D : 4 card C + 4 card D
- (4) 3H : 3-3-3-4
- (5) 3S : 3-3-4-3

Third responses to 1NT-2C-2H-2S-2NT-3C relay:

- (1) 3D : 3-3-2-5
- (2) 3H : 3-2-3-5
- (3) 3S : 2-3-3-5

Third responses to 1NT-2C-2H-2S-3C-3D relay:

- (1) 3H : 3-3-5-2
- (2) 3S : 3-2-5-3
- (3) 3NT : 2-3-5-3

Third responses to 1NT-2C-2H-2S-3D-3H relay:

- (1) 3S : 2-3-4-4
- (2) 3NT : 3-2-4-4

Second responses to 1NT-2C-2S-2NT relay:

- (1) 3C : 3-5-3-2
- (2) 3D : 3-5-2-3
- (3) 3H : 2-5-3-3

Second responses to 1NT-2C-2NT-3C relay:

- (1) 3D : 5-3-3-2
- (2) 3H : 5-3-2-3
- (3) 3S : 5-2-3-3

Second responses to 1NT-2C-3C-3D relay:

- (1) 3H : 2-2-3-6
- (2) 3S : 2-3-2-6
- (3) 3NT : 3-2-2-6

Second responses to 1NT-2C-3D-3H relay:

- (1) 3S : 2-2-6-3
- (2) 3NT : 2-3-6-2
- (3) 4C : 3-2-6-2

By this stage the distribution has been bid out fully, and the next relay is for controls. (A=2, K=1)

- Responses:
- (1) First step : 2 or less
  - (2) Second step : 3
  - (3) Third step : 4
  - (4) Fourth step : 5
  - (5) Fifth step : 6

(Note: If these relays are being employed over a strong NT or a 1NT overcall, then the control responses start at 3 or less.)

The next relays are to find the locations of the controls, and, at this stage the Queens are also introduced.

Opener's hand is arranged mentally by both players in descending order of length, or, if equal length, in order of rank. Opener stops his relay response at a step corresponding with the first suit he encounters with less than a Q held. Another relay by responder then reactivates the cycle to discover the positions of other controls. In some cases it is possible to find out where the odd J is. Where the relay sequence is broken at game level or above, then this is to play.

Example:

	Axx	Kxx	
	Qx	AKxx	
	xxxx	-	
	AKxx	QJxxxx	
	1NT	2C	Relay for shape (1)
No major	2H	2S	Relay for shape (2)
4-4 minors	3D	3H	Relay for shape (3)
3-2-4-4	3NT	4C	Relay for controls
5 controls	4NT	5C	Relay for location (1)
Less than Q in D	5H	5S	Relay for location (2)
QH	6C	7C	To play

Note that opener would have responded 6C to the final relay for location of controls without the QH, which responder would have been happy to pass knowing that there was a spade loser.

#### Interference in relay sequences

- (a) If they double a relay, then they have given us more space and step responses still apply.
  - i.e. pass is step 1
  - redouble is step 2, etc.
- (b) If they double a relay response, then similar considerations apply.
  - i.e. a non-relay 2NT is still invitational
  - pass is the next relay
  - redouble suggests the possibility of playing there and penalising them in their runoff.
  - a minimum suit bid is natural and game forcing.
- (c) If they overcall at the two level directly over the 2C, then:
  - double is suggestive of penalties
  - pass suggests that they have equalled or exceeded opener's normal response.
  - Responder may distinguish these cases by relaying in the next step suit, double being penalties, and a non relay suit natural and game forcing.
  - any suit bid denotes the original response.
- (d) If they overcall at the two level over opener's response to 2C, then:
  - double is penalties.
  - pass is the next relay.
  - suit bids are natural and game forcing.
- (e) If they overcall or raise to the three level or above, then the relays are broken, double is always for penalties, and suit bids are natural and game forcing.

Examples:

	1NT (-) 2C (X)	Relay
First step	pass (-) XX (-)	Relay
H + minor	2D etc	
	1NT (-) 2C (-)	Relay
First step	2D (X) pass (-)	Relay
H + minor	2H etc	
	1NT (-) 2C (-)	Relay
First step	2D (X) 2NT	Invitational
	1NT (-) 2C (2D)	Relay
My bid was 2D	pass (-) 2H (-)	Relay (X = penalties)
H + minor	2S etc	
	1NT (-) 2C (2S)	Relay
My bid was 2D/H/S	pass (-) 2NT (-)	Relay (X = penalties)
My bid was 2S	3H (-) 3S (-)	Relay
3-5-3-2	3NT etc	
	1NT (-) 2C (2S)	Relay
My normal bid	3C (3S) X	Penalties (4C would be natural, inviting cue).
without interpose		

#### (5) OPENING 2C

The opening Benjamin 2C occurs on hands which are either:

- (a) strong and balanced in the ranges 21-22,25-26,29-30hcp  
or
- (b) Acol two type hands with 8/9 pt in a major or 9/10 pt in a minor. An outside four card suit may also be held. To qualify for a 2C opening the hand should have significant values outside the main suit, at least three controls. This allows responder to more effectively penalise opponents who stray into the auction. Hands such as AKQJxxx,Ax,xx,xx, although certainly having 8 pt, should not be opened 2C, but 4D Texas.

Responses to 2C:

2D	negative, denies A+K, KQ+KQ, K+K+KQ, K+K+K+K (but may conceal a very strong balanced hand, to be disclosed later.)
2H/S/3C/3D	positive, has at least values described above and a 5 card suit with at least one top honour.
2NT	positive, ostensibly a flat hand with no 5 card suit. May be 4-4-4-1 or may include a very weak 5 card suit not suitable for previous response. Normally less than 12 hcp.
3H/S	a one loser suit of at least 6 cards. This may be a 'negative' response e.g. KQJ10xx or 'positive' e.g. AKJ10xx. If opener has one of the top three honours in the suit, he can assume no losers.
3NT	a balanced positive, 12+ hcp. May be better to go via the 'impossible negative' of 2D.
4C/D/H/S	a no loser suit of at least 6 cards. In the case of this and the previous response the bid suit should be virtually the only feature of the hand. That is at most a KQ outside should be held. With stronger hands responder can proceed more slowly via a normal positive.

Rebids by opener after responses less than 2NT:

- (1) With the big, flat hands opener rebids 2NT with 21-22, 3NT with 25-26, etc.

Rebids by responder: (After an original negative.)

In these cases the bidding reverts to typical sequences after an Acol 2NT opening:

- (a) 3C is Baron, searching for 4-4 fits with natural bidding.
- (b) 3D is Flint, a transfer to 3H which may be passed or converted to 3S, which must be passed by opener.
- (c) 3H/S are natural and forcing, showing a 5 card suit. Opener may then bid 3NT with a doubleton, 4H/S with a fit, or superaccept by bidding another suit, which is a cue, inferentially agreeing responder's suit.
- (d) 3NT is to play
- (e) 4C is Gerber
- (f) 4H/S are to play
- (g) 4NT is invitational to 6NT
- (h) 5NT is invitational to 7NT

If opener's rebid is 3NT, then the same principles apply i.e. 4C is Baron, 4D is Flint, 4H/S are natural and forcing, 4NT and 5NT are invitational, 5C is Gerber.

Note: If responder originally bid 2H/S natural, then his further bidding is natural and descriptive.

- (2) With an Acol two type hand, opener rebids the suit, over which responder generally continues to bid naturally. A jump rebid by opener in a major denotes a 9/9.5 pt hand. A jump to game in a major implies a seventh trump, an inability to game force with 2D, unsuitability for Texas or one level opening (eg AJ109xxx,AKx,KQ,x), and a burning desire to play in game.

Rebids by responder: (After an original negative)

- (a) Pass: very weak
- (b) Single raise: some fit + one trick
- (c) 2NT: some values, no primary support, no biddable 5 card suit.
- (d) suit bid: natural, 5 cards of reasonable quality, forcing.
- (e) jumps in a suit: splinters, no positive response, but excellent distributional fit.
- (f) other: game placements

Rebids by responder: (After an original 2H/S)

- (a) Single raise: strong support, cueing sequence may follow.
- (b) Other bids as above, except stronger, of course.

- (3) If opener raises responder's positive suit bid, this may indicate either an Acol two in the suit (unlikely!), a secondary four card suit with an Acol two in another suit, or primary 3 or 4 card support in a big, flat hand. Cueing will follow.

Rebids by opener after a 2NT response:

- (1) A 3C bid by opener is Baron, implying the big, flat

variety and searching for a 4-4 fit opposite the nominally flat hand. Even if opener is not interested in a suit contract he must trot out Baron before bidding 3NT. (see below)

- (2) 3D/H/S confirm Acol twos. The suit is considered set and further suits bid by responder are cues.
- (3) 3NT confirms an Acol two in C, which may be passed by responder. 4C by responder sets the suit and invites opener to cue, 4D/H/S are cues, 4NT is Blackwood.

Examples:

2C 2D  
2H 3H I have 1.25 tricks. Can you find another 0.75?

2C 2H  
2S 3S Strong support after positive  
4C etc. I have AC or void.

2C 2H  
2S 4C Strong splinter  
4D etc. I have AD or void.

2C 2D  
3H I have 9 tricks. Have you got one?

2C 2D  
2S 3H  
3NT Natural

2C 2D  
2S 2NT  
3C 6-4 or 7-4

2C 2D  
2NT 3C Baron  
3D 3H  
4H

2C 2D  
3NT 4H Forcing  
4S etc Inferential cue, setting H. (4NT would be natural, denying H support.)

2C 2NT  
3C 3H  
3S 4C Inferential cue, setting S

Over opponents' interference

- (1) If 2C is overcalled in the direct seat:  
Responder can: (a) Pass with a negative  
(b) Double for penalties. This does not necessarily imply a positive. It merely says to partner that your hand is most suitable for defence, and should act as a negative influence on opener's suit aspirations.  
(c) Anything else, natural and positive.

If responder passes the overcall back to opener,  
opener can: (a) Double with 21-22 and no stop in opponent's suit.

- (b) Bid 2NT or suit naturally.
  - (c) Cue opponent's suit with 25-26 and no stop. If their suit is a major this should show 4 in other major.
  - (d) Bid 3NT naturally.
- (2) If opponents overcall a negative response in third seat: Opener acts as above, except that a pass now shows 21-22 hcp, balanced with a poor holding in their suit, and a double shows 21-22 hcp with a penalty oriented holding in their suit, or an Acol two in their suit!
- (3) If opponents overcall a positive response in third seat: Double by opener either expresses extreme satisfaction or warns partner that you are not keen on his suit or NT.
- (4) If they double the 2C then responder can:
- (a) Pass with a negative
  - (b) Redouble with at least 4 C and a near-positive or positive.
  - (c) Bid 2D with a positive in D.
  - (d) Make normal bids with other positives.

If the double is passed to opener, he can:

- (a) Pass, to play
  - (b) Redouble, to express extreme satisfaction or up the ante.
  - (c) Bid 2NT or a suit naturally.
  - (d) Bid 3C with 21+ balanced and no stopper.
  - (e) Bid 3NT naturally.
- (5) If they double the 2D response, opener can:
- (a) Pass to show 21-22 with no stopper.
  - (b) Redouble to show an Acol two in D (or a strong, flat hand with an excellent D suit, suggesting a play for 2DXX.)
  - (c) Bid 2NT or a suit naturally.
  - (d) Bid 3D with 25-26 and no D stopper.
  - (e) Bid 3NT naturally.

#### (6) OPENING 2D

The Benjamin 2D shows either:

- (a) A strong, balanced hand with 23-24, 27-28, etc hcp
- or
- (b) A game force (3 loser hand or better, 2 losers if single suited in a minor.)

2H is the negative response (same requirements as for 2D over 2C opening), and the other responses are similar to those over 2C.

If opener rebids 2NT (23-24) or 3NT (27-28) the further development of the bidding is identical to that discussed over the 2C opening.

The further discussion here will deal only with bidding after a game forcing suit rebid by opener, concentrating mainly on differences from the corresponding 2C sequences. Since this is a game forcing opening, the distributions and suit textures are not as restrictive as in the case of the 2C opening. For this reason it is often preferable

to open one of a suit, rather than the game force on some hands (particularly the three suited variety).

Opener's rebids:

- (1) Minimum suit rebid: GF with at least 5
- (2) Jump suit rebid: Guarantees a solid suit and demands a cue.

Responder's rebids after minimum suit rebid by opener:

- (1) Minimum NT is a second negative, or may be waiting to hear another suit.
- (2) Minimum suit raise is strong support even after a negative original response (not the values for a positive, but my hand was improved by your rebid). Qxx or better in suit is normal requirement.
- (3) Minimum change of suit: natural, 5 card forcing.
- (4) Jump shift: splinter, as over 2C opening.

Examples:

2D	2H	2D	2NT
3S	4C cue	3H	3S inferential cue, agreeing H
4D	etc cue		

2D	2S natural,+ve	2D	2H
3C	3H natural	2S	4C splinter, liking S
		4D	cue

2D 4H solid suit  
7H with your suit and my Aces we can make 7 despite my H void.

2D 2H  
2S 4S S support, but weak. (3S stronger)

2D 2H  
2S 2NT 2nd negative  
3C 3S very reluctant S support (doubleton ?)  
may still be a zero count.

Interference over 2D openings is handled in a similar fashion to that already discussed over 2C openings.

#### (7) 2H/S OPENINGS

These are weak two's, showing a 6 card suit with playing strength determined by the rule of -500 (or -many at favourable vulnerability). There is no hcp requirement. If a seven card suit is held, one should try to find a bid other than a weak two. It is permissible to hold an outside four card minor, but 6-5 is not allowable. It is definitely not allowed to hold two Aces. It is generally forbidden to hold an outside four card major, but occasionally it may be tactically desirable to bid a weak two with such a holding (generally no better than Jxxx).

Responses:

- (a) A single raise is to play, generally being bid for tactical reasons.
- (b) A change of suit is forcing, seeking support.

- (c) 2NT is Ogust, seeking clarification.
  - Responses: 3C poor hand, poor suit
  - 3D poor hand, good suit
  - 3H good hand, poor suit
  - 3S good hand, good suit
  - 3NT top 3 honours
  - (Good suit = 2 of top 3 honours)
  - (Good hand = 9-11 hcp, with something outside trumps)
- (d) A jump shift is an asking bid (with weak hand responses).
- (e) A return to 3H/S after Ogust is to play. A change of suit is natural and forcing.

#### (8) THE 2NT OPENING

The 2NT opening shows at least 5-5 in the minors. It is basically an obstructive bid, with strength determined by the vulnerability and the rule of -500. For example, at favourable vulnerability, less than an opening bid will be held, at equal vulnerability a poor opening may be held, and at adverse vulnerability it is possible to hold a reasonable opening if there are no extra distributional pluses. It is not desirable to hold significant values in the majors.

#### Responses:

- (a) 3C/D Sign off.
- (b) 3H/S Natural and forcing, nominally 6 cards. Opener should raise on a doubleton. Opener should bid 3NT without support, in case responder wants to play there.
- (c) 3NT To play.
- (d) 4C/D Nominally invitational, but there is often a tactical preemptive element here. Opener must field this.
- (e) 4H/S To play.
- (f) 4NT Blackwood, not invitational!. Opener should assume C as trumps when framing responses with 2 Aces.
- (g) 5C/D To play.

#### (9) 3C/D/H/S OPENINGS

These are all obstructive preempts showing a nominally seven card suit (may be six in tactical situations) with strength determined by the rule of -500 or many. Requirements should not be too rigid, and the preempts should be varied considerably in certain seats.

#### Responses:

- (a) 3NT To play.
- (b) Single non-game raise: Further preemption. Don't raise again!  
(May be egging opponents into 4 of major in order to penalize them.)
- (c) Change of suit: Forcing, looking for secondary support. Opener should bid 3NT without support.
- (d) 4NT Blackwood.

#### (10) THE 3NT OPENING

The 3NT opening denotes an Acol style 4C/D opening containing a non-solid suit. Playing strength requirements are determined by the normal preempt evaluation rule of -500. It is possible that opener holds 7-4 or 8-4 either way in the minors.

Responses:

- (a) 4C/D Pass or convert. On conversion responder may become activated.
- (b) 5C/D Pass or convert.
- (c) 4H/S To play.
- (d) 4NT Blackwood.

(11) 4C/D OPENINGS

The 4C and 4D openings are Texas transfers to 4H and 4S, respectively, implying at least a seven card suit.

Other requirements should be evaluated carefully.

The hand should be too good for a 4H/S opening in the sense that a few precise key cards in responder's hand will allow slam to be made, but not suitable for a 2C opening because of a lack of controls outside the main suit, and not good enough for a game forcing 2D opening due to having more than three losers. The main suit quality should be excellent, typically with at most one loser. If responder has a trump honour, he can assume seven or more trump tricks with no loser. Normally, if there are three or more high card controls outside trumps, the hand will probably be suitable for a 2C or 2D opening.

- Summary of requirements:
- (1) 7+ solid trumps, maximum 1 loser
  - (2) 2-3 key cards (any A, trump K).
  - (3) Maximum of 5 controls.
  - (4) Typically 3.5-4.5 losers.
  - (5) Maximum of 2 controls outside trumps.

Examples:

AKQxxxx	Open 4D	AQJxxxx	Open 2C
x		Kx	Rebid 3S
Axxx		Axx	
x		KQx	
AKQJxxx	Open 2D	AKQJxxxx	Open 4D
-	Rebid 4S	-	
AKQx		QJxx	
xx		x	
KQJ10xxxx	Open 4D	KQJ10xxx	Open 2C
x		Ax	Rebid 4S
-		Ax	
AQJx		KQ	

A smattering of hcp opposite a Texas opening is not sufficient to make a slam playable. Responder should investigate slam only with 2+ key cards and some other values. Responder shows his strength and opener then uses control asking bids to determine if slam can be made.

Responses:

- (1) 4C 4H Sign off.
- 4D 4S Sign off.
- (2) 4C 4D Slam try, showing 2 key cards +
- 4D 4H outside values. Use CAB1.

- (3) 4NT Slam try, showing 3 key cards.  
Use CAB2.

CAB1

Over the response (2) opener may express no slam interest by signing off in trumps. If he bids any other suit this is a control ask in that suit, 4NT asking in the relay suit (ie D with H trumps, H with S trumps).

- Responses: (1) 1 step: no control  
(2) 2 steps: second round control  
(3) 3 steps: first round control  
(4) 4+ steps: first + second round control,  
with extra control in suit bid.

CAB2

A second control asking bid may be required to determine whether slam is makeable. Opener here is basically looking for second round control (unless this has already been shown as a response to CAB1).

- Responses: (1) 1 step: no second or third round control  
(2) 2 steps: third round control  
(3) 3 steps: second round control  
(4) 4+ steps: second and third round controls  
and extra controls in bid suit.

Note: If two steps commit to slam, then the first two steps should be combined into one.

If second round control in the suit is already known to be held, the responses can be condensed to:

- (1) 1 step: no third round control  
(2) 2 steps: third round control  
(3) 3 steps: third round control + extra  
controls in bid suit.

CAB2 is also used after the 4NT response to Texas, since all five key cards are known to be held in this case.(2+3)

Texas trump probe

A bid of 5NT by opener at any stage is a trump probe looking for the Q.

- Responses: (1) 6M: No Q  
(2) 7M: Yes, I have the Q.  
(3) 6C: No Q, but at least xxx in trumps,  
no other unshown controls.  
(4) 6D: No Q, but at least xxx in trumps,  
and one or more unshown controls.

Examples:

AKQJxxxx	xxx
xx	AKxx
KQx	Axx
-	xxx

Two possible sequences:

Texas in S	4D	4H	2 key card slam try
CAB1 in H	4NT	6D	AKH + AD
Enough!	7S		
	4D	4H	
CAB1 in C	5C	5D	No C control! ie AD+AH
CAB2 in H	5H	5NT	KH (Since 2nd step commits to slam first 2 steps are combined)
	7S		

```

AKJ109xx Qx
- Axxxx
KQJx Axx
xx Axx

```

```

Texas in S 4D 4NT 3 key card slam try (AC,D,H)
Trump probe 5NT 7S I have the Q!

```

(12) 4H/S OPENINGS

Openings of four of a major are preempts according to the rule of -500. Normally a suit of at least 7 cards, but may be bid on other holdings (eg 6-5) in tactical situations (eg third seat). It should be stressed that one should not be over-weight for the bid, Texas openings being preferred in this situation.

(13) THE 4NT OPENING

The 4NT opening is an ask for specific Aces.

Responses: (1) 5C : No A  
(2) 5D : AD  
(3) 5H : AH  
(4) 5S : AS  
(5) 5NT : Two A  
(6) 6C : AC

Example:

```

- xxxx 4NT? 5H AH
KQJx Ax 7C Content
A xxxxx
AKQJxxxx xx

```

(This could also be handled via a 2D opening and subsequent jump, showing a solid suit and demanding a cue).

(14) 5C/D OPENINGS

The 5C/D openings are preempts based on the rule of -500, but at equal or adverse vulnerability they should not be trotted out willy nilly, since opponents are prone to double at this level and their partners generally leave it in. The chance of 'accidentally' making should therefore be higher than for a lower level preempt.

Example:

```

- This is fine for a vulnerable
x 5D opening.
AKJ109xxx
KQxx

```

(15) 5H/S OPENINGS

The openings of 5H/S are specific requests for responder to raise the contract one level for each top trump honour held.

Example:

QJ109xxxx AK 5S 7S I have two!  
 AKQx xxxx  
 A xxxxx  
 - xx

(16) MISCELLANEOUS SLAM BIDDING CONVENTIONS

CUE BIDDING

Cue bids occur in slam explorative auctions where a trump suit has been explicitly or implicitly agreed, and an asking bid is not appropriate. First round controls are shown in the first instance, followed by second round controls. A bid of NT in a cue bidding auction is forward going, showing a trump holding and 4NT is never Blackwood in such an auction. In some cases (see suit bidding section) first cues in NT to show A trumps are allowable.

Examples:

1H 3H	1H 3H
3NT AH or tell me more	3S Cue, AS
2D 2H	2D 2H
3S 4C Cue, AC	3S 3NT A second round control somewhere. (S are set, so 3NT can't be natural; not AS since opener has it)
2C 2D	1C 2NT 16+ hcp, 4+C
2NT 3S	3C 3D Cue, AD
4D Inferential cue, agreeing S. Shows AD, no AC.	1C 2NT
	3D Cue, AD
	1S 2NT Ambiguous raise
Long suit trial	3C 3D Initially a counter trial
To play	3S 4C Now shows AC,AD, 16+ hcp
Qx Kx	1C 2NT
Kx AJxx	3D 3H Cue, AH
Axxx KQx Pivotal, AC	3NT 4D KD, no AS
AQxxx Kxxx KH	4H 4S KS
	6C
	Should have enough extra in that 16+

ASKING BIDS

These are similar to Culbertson and NSW asking bids and are implemented when responder makes a jump shift.

Examples: 1D 2H?, 1S 3C?, 2H 3S?

They should not be confused with splinters which involve double jump shifts.

These bids are useful when responder has either a trump fit with opener and good playing strength or a strong hand with a self-sufficient trump suit. They seek primarily controls in the asked suit, but outside holdings can be shown in many cases. Trump holdings are ascertained by a separate trump probe.

Responses to first round asks:

- (1) Holding neither A,K, singleton or void in asked suit, sign off at minimum level in agreed trump suit.
- (2) Holding K or singleton, no outside A, sign off.
- (3) Holding void or A, no outside A, raise asked suit.
- (4) Holding A in asked suit and one outside A, or singleton or void in asked suit and two outside A, rebid NT at lowest level.
- (5) Holding A and two outside A, or void, singleton or K and three outside A, jump rebid NT.
- (6) Holding void, singleton or K and one outside A bid the suit of the outside A, jumping if trump A.
- (7) Holding K and two outside A, jump bid the lower non-trump A.

Further bidding

- (a) After a negative response to a first round ask, an ask in a new suit is treated as a first round ask. An ask in the same suit seeks clarification of the holding in that suit, with the following responses:

- (1) Holding K or singleton, no outside A, raise the asked suit.
- (2) Holding third round control and one outside A, bid the suit of the A, jumping if trump A.
- (3) Holding third round control, two outside A, bid NT at the lowest level.
- (4) Holding third round control, three outside A, jump bid NT.
- (5) With holdings not as good as the above, sign off in trumps. (Jxx or worse in asked suit)

- (b) After an initial positive response to a first round ask, an ask in a new suit is a second round ask, seeking further controls in this suit, and any outside non-trump second round controls not already shown.

- Responses:
- (1) Holding no second round control in the asked suit, sign off.
  - (2) Holding second round control, no outside second round controls, bid NT at the lowest level.
  - (3) Holding second round control, one other second round control, bid the outside control. (There may be another one also.)
  - (4) Holding void, raise asked suit.
  - (5) Holding second and all lower controls in asked suit, jump bid asked suit if below six of agreed trump suit.

Note: As a general principle, if a clarification ask has not occurred, opener should assume that responder knows the particular controls that have been shown, and should ignore these when framing further responses. For example, in the above responses, treat as a second round control a third round control where a second round control has already been shown. Do not be afraid to manufacture a response other than those above if you have a better holding.

- (c) After a NT response to a first round ask, a repeat ask in the same suit is a clarification ask. The following responses occur:

- (1) Holding A, A, bid suit of outside A, even if it is trumps.
- (2) Holding singleton, A, A, bid NT.

(3) Holding void, A, A, raise asked suit.

#### The trump probe

The bid of NT by responder after a positive response to an ask is a trump probe with the following responses:

- (1) Holding neither K nor Q sign off in trumps.
- (2) Holding Q, bid first step, omitting trumps.
- (3) Holding K, bid second step, omitting trumps.
- (4) Holding KQ, bid third step, omitting trumps.

#### Weak hand responses to an ask

These apply when opener is known to be weak. In our case this means specifically when he has opened a weak two, an example sequence being 2H 3S?

- Responses:
- (1) With neither first nor second round control in the asked suit, sign off.
  - (2) With second round control, no outside first round control, bid NT at lowest level.
  - (3) With second round control, one outside first round control, bid outside control, jumping if trump A.
  - (4) With first round control, and one outside first round control, or singleton and two outside first round controls, jump bid NT.

#### Interference in asking bid sequences

If the opening is doubled or overcalled, then the jump shift is still an ask. (Of course economy must be taken into account at higher levels.)

Examples: 1D (1H) 2S, 1S (2H) 4C?, 1H (x) 3C?

If the asking bid is doubled, then the accuracy of the responses is improved. For example, the responses to a first round ask are modified to:

- (1) Holding no second round control in asked suit, pass.
- (2) Holding second round control, no outside first round controls, redouble.
- (6) Holding second round control and the trump A, minimum bid in agreed trump suit. (No jump required now.)

If they make a simple overcall over the ask, attempt to show all first round responses as follows:

- (1)&(2) The sign off now becomes pass.
- (6) A minimum bid of trumps now shows void or second round control in asked suit and the trump A.
- (3-5,7) Minimum or jump bids in a suit or NT retain their normal meaning (See responses to first round asks), but note that the absolute level of the bids will be determined by the overcall.
- (8) A double shows that the overcaller has stolen the original response.

Examples: 1D 2S? (3D) X shows s/v/KS, AD  
3H shows s/v/KS, AH  
3S shows v/AS  
3NT shows AS, another A  
or s/vS and two A  
4C shows s/v/KS, AC  
4H shows KS, AH, AD  
4NT shows AS, two other A  
or s/vS, three A  
5C shows KS, AC, another A

In the unlikely event that they make a jump overcall over the ask, it is suggested that the following hybrid defence be played:

- (1) Double if their jump overcall has taken your response, make your normal response if it is greater than their bid. Subsequent bidding will be in accordance with the asking structure.
- (2) If they have beaten your normal response, Pass. The bidding now reverts to natural. If responder bids a minimum non-trump suit at this point this is a cue, a 4NT bid is Blackwood, a jump into a non-trump suit is to play (solid suit variety of original ask). A double by responder is now penalty.

Examples: 1C 2H? (4D) X shows KH, AD, another A  
4NT would show four A

1C 2H? (4D) pass X is for penalty  
4H,S,5D are cues  
4NT is Blackwood  
5C,6C are to play  
5/6H,S are to play

#### General comments on asks

When planning an asking sequence, all possible responses should be considered, with regard to economy. It is often best to ask in a suit in which you hold the A since this will immediately pick up second round control in the suit and the outside Aces and allows an immediate trump probe. It is sometimes rewarding to ask in a suit in which you have a void, since, if opener gives a negative response, you know that all controls are working.

An ask may be made by a hand which contains a self-sufficient suit, but, as far as opener is concerned, his suit is trumps for the purposes of the asking sequence. To play in the solid suit, responder must jump into the final contract. Along the same lines, the only way to play in 3NT after an asking sequence is to bid 3NT after a negative response to a first round ask (presumably after a minor opening).

#### Example hand:

AKxxxx	QJxxx	1S	3H?
x	Axxx	3NT	4C?
Axxx	x	4S	4NT?
xx	AKx	5D	6C?
		6NT	7S

Responder's hand is a little too good for a splinter, and in these circumstances an ask is generally the best bid.

In view of responder's hand, the 3NT response shows a s/vH, A, A. 4C is a dummy ask, preparing to find out about third round C control later (more economical than the direct trump probe). 5D shows the KS, and 6NT shows third round C control and no second round D control.

#### BLACKWOOD

A 4NT bid is asking for Aces in most sequences.

Responses (1969 Roman): 5C 0/3 A  
 5D 1/4 A  
 5H 2 A, no K/Q trumps  
 5S 2 A, K or Q trumps  
 5NT 2 A, K+Q trumps

Where there is no agreed trump suit, an inferential suit is generally available, for example the suit bid immediately before the jump to 4NT.

An unambiguous next step is a call for kings with three step responses as above. A bid of an agreed trump suit is for play. Where a trump suit has been agreed, and the bid is not ambiguous, 5NT is a GSF trump probe. (This will occur only after 5C/D responses to Blackwood.) For responses see GSF section.

Example:

AKQxx	xxxxx	1S	4NT?
xx	AKQxx	5D	5NT (GSF)
Qxx	A	7S	I have K+Q
Qxx	AK		

Blackwood after interference:

Where there is a double of 4NT ignore the double when responding. Where they bid over the 4NT then DOPE is the applicable convention:

X shows an odd number of Aces  
 pass shows an even number of Aces

GERBER

A jump to 4C after a 1NT opening or a NT first rebid by opener, except as a rebid of responder's suit, is a Gerber ask for Aces.

4NT is thus invitational to 6NT in some circumstances.

The responses are: 4D 0/3 A  
 4H 1/4 A  
 4S 2 A

After the first round response, a bid of 5C is for kings, with similar responses.

Example Gerber situations:

1NT 4C?	1H 1S	1C 1H	2C 2H
	1NT 4C?	2NT 4C?	2NT 4C?

Example invitational sequences:

1NT 4NT	1H 1S	1C 1H	2C 2H
	1NT 4NT	2NT 4NT	2NT 4NT

Note: If the invitation is accepted, Blackwood type responses may be given.

A non-Gerber sequence:

1D 2C	
2NT 4C	(Rebid of responder's suit, natural and forcing, inviting a cue.)

A non invitational sequence:

2C 2H	
3NT 4NT	(Blackwood - no jump.)

SUPER-SWISS (Opener's Swiss)

Upon hearing a one of a major response after his opening in a lower ranking suit, a double jump by opener into a minor is Superswiss, showing high card or playing strength values for a raise to four of the major, but also guaranteeing certain control holdings.

For the purposes of this convention, any A and the K of trumps are defined as key cards, and a rebid of 4C by opener shows values for four of responder's major with three key cards, while a rebid of 4D shows four key cards.

Example:

AKxx	1C	1S	
KQx	4D		(4 key cards)
Ax			
Axxx			

Note: Rebids of 3NT or 4Major deny the ability to Superswiss although overall values are there. This may avoid the investigation of non-making slams at a low level. The rebid of 3Major does not deny as many as three key cards since the other criterion for Superswiss is not met; that is values for game are not held (opposite a minimum response).

Further bidding after Superswiss:

Since Blackwood is clearly useless after a Superswiss response, a further bid of 4NT by responder asks for secondary key cards, defined as any non-trump K or the Q of trumps. Step responses are employed:

5C	shows	0	secondary key cards
5D	shows	1	
5H	shows	2	
5S	shows	3	

(The higher responses will not be possible after 4D)

A further minimum suit bid by responder is not a cue, but an ask for help in the suit for slam purposes. It is suggested that second round asking bid style responses be played:

- (1) With no second round control in asked suit, sign off in trumps.
- (2) With second round control, no unshown controls outside, bid minimum NT.
- (3) With no further losers in the asked suit, raise the suit.
- (4) With second round control and one (or more) outside unshown controls, bid an outside control.

Example:

AKxx	QJxxx	1C	1S	
KQ	xxx	4D	4H	
Axx	KQx	5H	6S	(No further H
Axxx	Kx			losers)

GRAND SLAM FORCE (GSF trump probe)

A bid of 5NT is normally the GSF trump probe, looking for grand slam in trumps when partner holds two of the top three trump honours. In the case of some suits specific responses can be played:

C trumps:	6C	shows	0/1	trump honour
	7C	shows	2	trump honours

D trumps:	6C	shows	0 trump honour
	6D	shows	1 trump honour
	7D	shows	2 trump honours
H trumps:	6C	shows	0 trump honour
	6D	shows	Q trumps
	6H	shows	K trumps
	7H	shows	2 trump honours
S trumps:	6C	shows	0 trump honours
	6D	shows	Q trumps
	6H	shows	K trumps
	6S	shows	K and extra length
	7S	shows	2 trump honours

Example:

(Responder)

Axxxx

AKJxxx

-

AK

1C 1H

1S 5NT (GSF in S)

6S 7S (Kxxxx opposite- let's  
try seven.)