

ETM TOPS

Everything That Matters (ETM) TOPS

A Super Pairs System

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Release 2.1

ETM TOPS Introduction and Notes

Introduction

Welcome to the bridge bidding system that drives like a sport car. There is quick acceleration to the best spot, nimble handling in tight situations, fast braking to stop getting too high, good cornering for the obstacles, and, of course, lots of fun. Why drive one of those big old standard sedans loaded with useless options when you can drive a system built for excitement and winning.

Everything That Matters TOPS is a bridge bidding system primarily developed for pairs, matchpoint, and board-a-match scoring (events where every trick is important, not just games or slams). It is a mostly natural system with many common sense arrangements. However due to the unusual methods of the system, it is not appropriate for the inexperienced bridge player.

The system is essentially almost as natural as standard – however it varies the ranges of bids so much from standard that it seems like a totally new bidding system. The natural base of the system allows for fits to be found quickly, while the design of the ranges allow for the partnership to quickly reach the appropriate level of bidding. ETM TOPS represents many years of development consolidated into a simple yet highly effective system for pairs.

Release Notes

Release 2.1 Notes
- First Internet release.

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Definitions & Format

High card points are given in ranges, such as 10-12. The ranges are not absolutes that must be followed - the bidder is expected to make any adjustments due to hand characteristics – see Over-Active Evaluation below.

Some ranges are given in the format nn/yy-zz or nn/xx/yy-zz. In this case it means that yy-zz is the normal range, but some hands of nn or xx points are included as well. For example 8/9/10-13 means the normal range is 10-13, but some 8 or 9 point hands are included depending on hand type.

Useful: ETM defines the “useful” range as decent constructive to game invitational (limit) values. It is a range just a bit wider and stronger than “constructive”. It is usually made with a bid that gives room for partner to make a game try opposite it to find out whether it is good “useful” or not so good “useful”.

Legality and Alerts

ETM TOPS is designed to be ACBL GCC (General Convention Chart) legal. For most bidding, when a director questions whether it is legal or not, point out while the range is different than expected for standard, the bidding is natural (ACBL defines natural as 3+ for a minor suit, 4+ for a major suit).

While ETM TOPS is ACBL legal, most calls in ETM TOPS must be alerted and explained properly when asked, since the range and/or suit lengths expected will vary from what is expected from standard. For example opening 2H, which is natural, must be alerted, since the range is 8/9/10-13, not the expected weak two range – for this example describe 2H as being 6+Hs, 10-13 points normally, but may have 8-9 with good or great suit. However you will have to pre-alert that very light 1D, 1H and 1S openings are played – pre-alert means you let the opponents know about this before you start to play them.

Outside of the ACBL some adjustments may be necessary to play ETM TOPS. In particular, openings on just 8 HCP may not be permitted. However if Multi is allowed, it is possible to use 2D Multi to handle weak twos in a major – see ETM TOPS enhancements at the end of the document.

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Abbreviations

Code	Meaning
C	Constructive
F	Forcing
GF	Game Forcing
GI	Game Invitational
HCP	High Card Points
L	Limit (L+ = limit or better)
M	Major
m	Minor
NF	Not forcing
NT	Notrump
OM and om	OM is Other Major, om is other minor
ph	Passed Hand
R	Reverse
uph	Unpassed Hand
U	Useful – see definitions
W	Weak
X, Y, Z	Any Strain
[text]	Name of Conventional Call, Treatment, or Sub-Section Title

Bidding Sequences

When bidding sequences are given, the end of a round of bidding is shown by a semi-colon, not the usual hyphen. For example if two people were bidding (the opponents passing), it looks like this:

bid-bid;bid-bid;bid-bid.

If the calls of all four people were shown, it looks like this:

call-call-call-call;call-call-call-call;call-call-call-call

Hand Shape Descriptions

For hand shapes, normally the format is N-N-N-N, where N is the length of each suit. If the lengths are not in descending order, that it is an exact shape. For example 3-4-3-3 is an exactly hand shape, since the lengths are not in descending order. When the lengths are in descending order, the word 'exactly' will be included when the shape is exact (so 4-3-3-3 means any suit could be the four card suit, while '4-3-3-3 exactly' means four spades), or the equal sign will be used instead of the hyphen (so 4=3=3=3 is an exact shape).

ETM TOPS Style and Notes

[Aware/Brave]

ETM TOPS varies the requirements for some actions based on whether it is an appropriate situation to be more aggressive or not. The two situations are:

Aware – appropriate to be more cautious.

Brave – appropriate to be more aggressive.

Aware is abbreviated as @A which means “At Aware”.

Brave is abbreviated as @B which means “At Brave”.

One can assume for reading purposes that Brave is not vulnerable and Aware is vulnerable, but in actual play a partnership can decide what conditions are Aware and Brave before a particular session. For example if you want to rock and roll you may decide to just be Brave all the time!

[Flexibility and Over-Active Evaluation]

ETM TOPS offers a substantial degree of flexibility over the choice of opening actions. To decide on which choice to make, ETM highly recommends using “Over-Active Evaluation”, where many factors are considered in making the decision (the opposite of this method is just using the point count and suit distribution to determine the action). Over-Active Evaluation would not be as important in a system where structure would dictate the bid, but in ETM TOPS the flexibility provided gives many chances for evaluation to play a key role. Factors to be evaluated include high card points, shape, controls (aces and kings), spot cards, lead directional features, rebid strategy, problems for the opponents, defensive values, source of tricks potential, and major suit holdings.

[Par Spot]

ETM bidding is based on arriving at the probable par spot as fast as possible. The par spot is the contract that, assuming one is playing the contract, would be strain and level expected based on the points, distribution and vulnerability of both sides. For example say one side can make a four spade contract their way for +620; the par contract the other way may be four hearts doubled, for –500, so bidding five hearts would be –800, too much of a loss.

On any deal, the par spot for the opponents may be significantly less than or greater than your par spot. If one can bid to the par spot as fast as possible the opponents have less time to exchange information to determine their place to play. Returning to the par spot example, assume first one is playing in the direction that has the spade fit. If one can bid the contract quickly, the opponents with limited information may be induced into sacrificing in five hearts for –800. This would be a top board (or tied for top). Likewise if one is playing in the other direction, one may bid the four hearts contract very quickly, perhaps resulting in the opponents doubling instead of bidding four spades. Again this would be a very good board, only –500 instead of –620.

Many systems employ some methods to get to the par spot quickly, such as preemptive raises. However ETM TOPS provides a profligacy of these methods covering a whole spectrum of situations. In addition to getting to the par spot quickly, ETM TOPS include many methods and tactics that make it harder for the opponents to find their par spot. The preeminent example is the mini-notrump at Brave conditions. One notrump is often the par contract (if undoubled or not vulnerable) when holding 10 to 12 HCP in first or second seat, so bidding it immediately reaches the par contract. As well by taking away the one level from the opponents it makes it harder for them to find their par contract.

[System Design for Probability]

ETM TOPS is designed with probability in mind. First it doesn't concern itself that much with very strong unbalanced hands – these have a relatively low probability of

occurring. Compared to standard, ETM TOPS gives up some bidding accuracy when holding a pure game force unbalanced hand, but realizes that losses in this area are rare. Next ETM TOPS does not recommend highly scientific bidding to try to reach very unlikely but possible slam or games. The information revealed by these auctions might occasionally help reach a hard-to-get-to slam or game, but in return it will give the opponents key information to defend against many contracts. In addition, games or slams that are hard to reach are usually not certain to make, so even if a partnership gets there, the hard-to-get-to slams or games will go down a fair amount of the time. In this regard don't judge ETM TOPS on how it can bid the extreme difficult hands found in bidding competitions such as the Bridge World's Challenge the Champs. Instead judge ETM TOPS on how it handles the bread-and-butter hands that deliver victories. Finally ETM TOPS is based on frequency, seeking to provide bids for those hands that come up a lot of the time.

[Assume Opener's Most Likely Strength]

Before bidding begins the average strength expected for each player is 10 HCP (there is a total of 40 HCP in the deck, divided by the 4 players). Probability is such for each a hand a player is more likely to have a HCP holding closer to 10 HCP than farther away. Thus it is more likely a player has 7 HCP than 1 HCP, and is more likely to have 22 HCP instead of 24 HCP.

When opener shows a strong hand, say 15+ or more HCP, opener is more likely to a minimum than a maximum. Thus responder should assume, at first, that opener has a minimum hand for the bidding and then bid according. For example say the opening is 2NT in first or second seat, showing 20-21 balanced. Responder with 4 HCP should pass, not bid, knowing that opener is more likely to have 20 HCP, making game unlikely, than 21 points, making game possible.

When opener shows a hand in the 8-16 range, opener is most likely to have 10-11, and responder should bid according. Likewise if a player passes in first or second seat, showing usually less than 10, the player is still likely to have a few points than be completely bust.

[Passed Hand Bidding]

In first or second seat, some of ETM opening bids limit opener's hand so that responder can often make an immediate determination on where and how high to place the contract. After a first or second seat pass, the strategy is different. Here, after a third or fourth seat opening, responder will be limited by the pass, usually having less than 10 HCP and if unbalanced often less than 8 HCP. So third and fourth seat opening bids are wide-ranging, with responder instead describing the hand held to opener. To make sure that no game is missed, responder must reply to a one diamond, one heart, or one spade opener with a fit in opener's suit (even if no points!), or if no fit must reply if holding a king or an ace or the queen of opener's suit.

[Weak Hand Bidding]

ETM TOPS provides many opportunities for a hand to make an immediate bid with less values than what would be required in standard. However once a bid is made on minimum values, it is important to be able to pass if possible at the next time to bid, so that partner knows your hand can be weak. Take for example holding 3-1-5-4 exactly (5Ds, 4Cs & 3Ss) and 8-9, say you open 1D, partner responds 1S and next hand bids 2H. After this the best call is pass, for if partner has anything there will be a subsequent bidding. If you do pass and partner passes too, you may have missed your 5-3 spade fit, but the opponents have likely missed their 4H game.

System Overview

First & Second Seat – One and Two Level Openings

1C is a hybrid opening and it shows either a natural club opening or a balanced hand with at least 2Cs. If balanced can be 22+, or 13-14 with exactly 2Ds, or 15-17 @Brave, or 10-12 @Aware (but only with 3+Cs). It is unlimited so forcing. After 1C, 1D is natural or negative, other responses natural, inverted minor, useful jump shifts. Notrump replies: 1NT: 11-13, 2NT: 13+/14, 3NT: 15-17.

1D opening is a natural limited opening, 8-16, frequently a balanced 13 to 14, but can have a balanced 10 to 12 with exactly two clubs. After 1D, natural responses with inverted minor, useful jump shifts. Notrump replies: 1NT: 6-10, 2NT: 11-12, 3NT: to play.

1H or 1S openings are natural limited openings with 8-16, usually exactly five in the major if 10-13. Semi-forcing wide ranging 1NT. Semi-natural 2C response used to keep balanced hands low. 2D natural or limit raise with 3+Ds. Other natural non-jump suit responses. Useful jumps in suits. Game bids to play.

1NT opening is 14/15-17 @Aware, 10-12 @Brave. ETM Notrump systems are in a separate document.

2C opening is either 18-19 balanced, 16/17+ with a five or longer major, or almost GF+ with diamonds, or GF+ with 4-4-4-1 exactly. After 2C, 2D waiting, 2M to play opposite 18-19 balanced, transfer responses starting at 2NT.

2D opening is a natural, 17-22 with 5+Ds or exactly 4-4-4-1, or 15/16 with good 6+Ds. After 2D, 2H is a negative relay – forcing but looking for a place to play. 2NT asks with a GF hand. Other bids are natural.

2H or 2S openings are 8/9/10-13 with 6 or longer suit. Structure described in separate document.

2NT is 20-21 balanced. Structure described in separate document.

Third & Forth Seat – One and Two Level Openings

1C hybrid forcing opening, either Cs or a balanced hand. If balanced 19+, or 10-15 with 3+Cs. After 1C, 1D artificial 0-9 with no other good bid. Other responses natural, 1M shows five or longer, 0-9.

1D opening is a natural, 4+Ds, 10 or close to GF values. If balanced has 10-15. Natural responses but responder strives to respond, and 2D response shows 0-6 with 4+Ds.

1H or 1S openings 10 to close to GF values. Often five or longer but can have 4 card suit if balanced 10-15. 2D is Drury. 1NT semi-natural.

1NT opening is 14-18 in 3rd or 4th seat, 14 only with 6 card minor, 15 usually no four card major.

2C, 2D, 2H and 2S openings are natural and preemptive. In 4th seat the suit opened is always 6 or longer with minimum opening values (9/10-13). In 3rd seat it is anything goes, 5+ length in the suit opened, can have longer second suit, a wide range is possible, from 0 up to minimum opening values (12/13).

2NT opening shows an absolute game force in Ds, Hs, or Ss. It can be a 4-4-4-1 exactly with 24+ HCP. It asks about responder's aces and kings.

Opening Bids and Responses

Opening Bid Overview

[1st and 2nd Seat Openings Overview]

General Approach: Hybrid 1C, featherweight and limited 1D, 1H and 1S openings, mini notrump @B, strong notrump @A, 2C for good hands, 2D natural and good, intermediate 2H and 2S openings.

Opening	Style	Description
1C	Hybrid	Clubs or balanced, 10+ no upper limit. If balanced can be 22+ or one of the following: 1) 13-14 with 2Ds exactly 2) @B 15-17 3) @A 10-12 with 3+C's (then can have longer Ds). If balanced can have five card major if 15-17 or 22+.
1D	Light Limited	Diamonds, 8-16. If balanced, no five card major, and 13-14 with 3+Ds (can have longer Cs), or 10-12 with exactly 2Cs.
1H	Light Limited	Hearts, 8-16 HCP. 5+Hs and usually exactly 5Hs if 10-13.
1S	Light Limited	Spades, 8-16 HCP. 5+Ss and usually exactly 5Ss if 10-13.
1NT	Strong/Mini	@A 15-17, @B 10-12 often 3+C's. @A 3-3-2-5 & 14 opens 1NT too.
2C	Artificial, Good	Several good hand types: 1) 18-19 balanced (can have five card major), 2) Five+ major, 16-22, if 16 must have six or longer in suit, 3) Almost GF with long diamonds, 4) Absolute GF, unbalanced and clubs not longest suit.
2D	Natural, Good	Diamonds, 15/16-22, not forcing. 5+Ds or 4-4-4-1 exactly.
2H	Intermediate	8/9/10-13, 6+Hs, usually exactly 6. Great or long suit if just 8/9 HCP.
2S	Intermediate	8/9/10-13, 6+Ss, usually exactly 6. Great or long suit if just 8/9 HCP.
2NT	Natural	20-21 Balanced. Can have five card major.
3C, 3D	Preemptive	6 or longer or suit, less than 10 HCP if 3C, less than 8 HCP if 3D.
3H, 3S	Preemptive	6 or longer suit, less than 8 HCP.
3NT	Gambling	Gambling, seven card or longer minor headed by AKQ or AKJ, no outside ace or king.
4X	Preemptive	Standard preempt.
4NT	Asking	Ace asking

A pass in first or second seat does not deny an opening bid as above; the pass may be chosen as the best tactical choice with a hand that has a comfortable bidding plan if partner bids or passes.

[3rd and 4th Seat Opening Overview]

General Approach: Hybrid 1C, standard 3rd & 4th seat openings but almost forcing, strong notrump, anything goes two level and higher suit openings in 3rd seat, game forcing artificial 2NT opening.

Opening	Style	Description
1C	Hybrid	Clubs or 19+ balanced. If 19+ balanced can have five card major. Unlimited opening so forcing.
1D	Natural	Diamonds, 10+, if balanced maximum of 15. Can have close to game forcing values so responder strives to respond.
1H	Natural	4+Hs, 10+ HCP to a near GF. If balanced or 4Hs maximum of 15. Can have close to game forcing values so responder strives to respond.
1S	Natural	4+Ss, 10+ HCP to a near GF. If balanced or 4Ss maximum of 15. Can have close to game forcing values so responder strives to respond.
1NT	Strong	14-18 balanced, can have a five card major. If 14 only with a six card minor, and if 15 usually no four card major.
2X	Preemptive	Natural, in 4th seat 6 or longer suit with minimum opening values (9/10-13). In 3rd seat anything goes preemptive bid, 5+ length and can have equal or longer second suit, wide range possible, from 0 up to minimum opening values.
2NT	Artificial, GF	Asks for aces/kings. Absolute game force in diamonds, hearts, or spades.
3X	Preemptive	Wide ranging preempt in 3rd seat, about 11-13 HCP in 4th seat.
3NT	To play	To play, "Gambling" but any type of hand.
4X	Preemptive	Preemptive, in 4th seat with values so contract is possible make.
4NT	Asking	Ace asking.

Notrump Ladder – 1st or 2nd seat.

Range	Opening	Notes
0-9	Pass	Have to pass sometime.
10-12, 3+Cs	1C@A, 1NT@B	Mini-notrump when Brave, open 1C when Aware.
10-12, 2Cs	1D or 1NT@B	Opening 1D helps find a major fit, and with 2Cs opener at least 3-3 in the majors. @B prefer to open 1D instead of 1NT(10-12) with two clubs but if the hand looks notrump then bid it.
13-14, 3+Ds	1D	Can have longer clubs. Having 3Ds allows responder to compete with 5+Ds.
13-14, 2Ds.	1C	Opener has 4 or 5Cs and 3 or 4 in each major, or 4-4-2-3 exactly. However with 3-3-2-5 and 14 open 1NT when Aware.
15-17	1NT@A, 1C@B	Strong notrump when Aware, open 1C and rebid 1NT when Brave. Can have five card major, even if opening is 1C.
18-19	2C	Common system sequence: 2C-2D-2NT. Can have five card major.
20-21	2NT	Can have five card major.
22-24	1C	1C-1D-2NT the most common sequence.
25-27	1C	1C-1D-3NT the most common sequence.
28-30	1C	1C-1D-4NT.
31-32	1C	1C-1D-5NT.

Notrump Ladder – 3rd or 4th seat.

Range	Opening	Notes
0-9/10	Pass	To preempt open a suit at the two level.
9/10-15	1X	Natural one level suit opening. If 1C opened, will pass one level response or rebid a major. 1H or 1S can be opened with good four card suit, intending on passing 1NT response.
14-18	1NT	Can have a five card major. Usually no four card or longer major if 14-15 and usually a six card minor for 14.
19-21	1C	1C-1X-1NT 19-21, keeps bidding low opposite possible very weak hand.
22-24	1C	1C-1D-2NT the most common sequence.
25-27	1C	1C-1D-3NT.
28-30	1C	1C-1D-4NT.
31-32	1C	1C-1D-5NT.

Unbalanced Ladder – 1st or 2nd seat – hands not appropriate for preempt.

Range	Clubs	Diamonds	Hearts	Spades
0-7	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass
8-9	Pass	1D	1H but if 7+Hs open 2H or 4H	1S, but if 7+Ss open 2S or 4S
10-13	1C	1D	1H if 5Hs, 2H if 6+Hs	1S if 5Ss, 2S if 6+Ss
14-15	1C	1D	1H	1S
16	1C	1D if 5Ds, 2D if 6+Ds.	1H if 5Hs, 2C if 6+Hs	1S if 5Ss, 2C if 6+Ss.
17-22	1C	2D	2C	2C
GF	1C	2C	2C	2C

Unbalanced Ladder – 3rd or 4th seat – hands not appropriate for preempt.

Range	Clubs	Diamonds	Hearts	Spades
11 to almost GF	1C	1D	1H	1S
Absolute GF	1C	2NT	2NT	2NT

One Club Opening, 1st or 2nd seat – Hybrid: Clubs or Balanced.

[1C Opening Description]

The ETM TOPS 1C opening is a hybrid opening – it shows either a natural club opening or a balanced hand with at least 2Cs. The opening is forcing since either hand type is unlimited, opener could have all the aces, kings, and queens! The following are the hand types for the 1C opening:

- 1) Clubs, 10+, unbalanced (includes 5-4-2-2 or 6-3-2-2 shapes etc.), unlimited.
- 2) 22+ balanced, can have five card major.
- 3) 13-14 balanced with exactly 2Ds: so 4=4=2=3, 4=3=2=4, 3=4=2=4 or 3=3=2=5. However at Aware, open 1NT(15-17) not 1C with 3=3=2=5 and 14.
- 4) At Aware: 10-12 balanced with 3+Cs, can have longer Ds. Thus At Aware always 3+Cs unless 22+ balanced. Example of longer diamonds: 3=2=5=3 10-12 opens 1C @A - hope you get a diamond lead!
- 5) At Brave: 15-17 balanced, can have a five card major.

[Responses to 1C Opening]

General approach: one diamond natural or negative, other responses natural, inverted minor, useful jump shifts. Notrump replies: 1NT: 11-13, 2NT: 13+/14, 3NT: 15-17. With a four card major and not negative, respond 1M, not 1D with 4+Ds (major suit first) unless GF hand.

Response	Style	Description
1D	Hybrid	Diamonds (4 or longer) with no four card major (unless GF or stronger), or balanced hand less than 11 HCP & no four major, or any negative. Negative means a hand that would pass a standard one club opening. With a negative hand and a five card major decide on best strategy based on hand – you can reply 1D and hope to rebid the major (or pass opener's rebid) or you can respond one of a major to show the suit directly.
1H	Natural	4+Hs, if only 4Hs then 5/6+ HCP. If 5+Hs can be very weak. Can have 4+Ds (respond 1H even with longer Ds).
1S	Natural	4+Ss, if only 4S then 5/6+. If 5+Ss can be very weak. Can have 4+Ds (respond 1S even with longer Ds).
1NT	Natural	NF, Balanced, 11-13, no four card major expected.
2C	Natural	"Inverted minor" so forcing, better than a 3C response. If less than 11 HCP must be unbalanced with good clubs and no four card major (prefer one level suit response otherwise).
2D	Useful	Useful Jump Shift, 6+ diamonds, constructive or invitational hand.
2H	Useful	As above with hearts, usually 6+ hearts.
2S	Useful	As above with spades, usually 6+ spades.
2NT	Natural.	NF, Balanced, good 13 to 14, no four card major expected.
3C	Preemptive	Clubs and no game interest unless good club fit or 22+ balanced. At Aware 5+Cs and up to 9. At Brave 6+Cs and less than 8.
3D	Fit Showing	5+Cs, 4+Ds, good invitational or stronger, forcing to 3NT or 4C.
3H	Natural	7+Hs, game invitational based on long suit, not HCP, KQxxxx typical.
3S	Natural	As above with spades.
3NT	Strong	NF, Balanced, 15-17 with no four card major expected.
4X, 5C	Preemptive	Long suit, not much in values, sets trump suit so if opener bids it is a cuebid, and 4NT is RKCB for suit.

A non-jump suit response is forcing.

[Balanced hands after 1C-1D]

Range	Rebid
10-12@A, with four card major	1 of a major.
10-13@A, no four card major	1NT
13-14, four card major	1 of a major
13-14, 3-3-2-5	If Aware rebid 1NT if 13 or open 1NT(15-17) if 14. If Brave rebid 1NT(15-17) if 14, or bid 1H if 13. So at Brave 1C-1D-1H can be less than 4 hearts if 3=3=2=5 and exactly 13.
15-17@B	1NT
22-24	2NT
25-27	3NT
28-30	4NT
31-32	5NT

[Balanced hands after 1C-1M, no 4-4 fit found]

Range	Rebid
10-12@A	1NT, but after 1C-1H prefer 1S with four spades.
13-14@A	After 1C-1H rebid 1S with four. Otherwise raise to 2M with three card support.
13-14@B	1NT. So at Brave 1C-1M-1NT is 13-17, 13-14 will always have 3 card support.
15-17@B	1NT – after 1C-1H, prefer to still bid 1NT even with four spades.
22-24	2NT if two card support, 2D (asking bid) if three card support
25-27	3NT if two card support, 2D (asking bid) if three card support
28+	2D (asking bid)

[Balanced hands after 1C-1NT (11-13)]

Range	Rebid
10-12@A	Pass with 10-11, raise to 2NT with 12.
13-17	3NT.
22+	4C (Gerber)

[Balanced hands after 1C-2C (Inverted)]

Range	Rebid
10-14	Cheapest suit with values and/or 4 card length.
15-17@B	2NT or 3NT – prefer 2NT if doubleton club and minimum, 3NT if doubleton club and maximum.
22+	2NT, and if Brave (where 2NT can also be 15-17) will bid strongly later.

[Balanced hands after useful jump shift]

Range	Rebid
10-14	Pass or raise or ask with 2NT
15-17@B	Ask with 2NT
22+	Asks with 2NT

[Balanced hands after 1C-3C]

Range	Rebid
10-14	Pass or raise with four or five card support
15-17@B	Pass or raise with four or five card support
22+	Asks with 3D or bids 3NT

[After 1C-1D]

See the 1C-1D notrump ladder above, with these key ones:

1NT: 14/15-17@B and 10-13@A (no four card major@A).
 2NT: 22-24.
 3NT: 25-27.

After 2NT or 3NT rebid, play 2NT system on. For example 1C-1D;3NT-4D: transfer to Hs. @B, after 1NT (14/15-17) rebid play 1NT 15-17 system on. After @A, after 1NT (10-13) play no system on:

- 3NT and all 2 level bids to play.
- 2NT to invite game with Ds.
- 3 level bids as game forcing with Ds, 3M showing values.

1C-1D;1H and 1C-1D;1S rebids are non-forcing though can be quite strong. These are natural, though @B 1C-1D;1H can be 3=3=2=5 and 13 points. After the major rebid, responder bids naturally, using fourth suit forcing when holding diamonds to ask opener to describe hand – this does not establish a game force unless responder subsequently bids higher than 3C. 1C-1D;1H-2S is the fourth suit forcing bid in the sequence, leaving 1C-1D;1H-1S as a non-forcing natural bid just holding Ss. Note that 1C-1D;1M-1NT shows 6 to 10 balanced, but does not promise stoppers in the unbid suits.

1C-1D;2C denies a four card major of course, and is limited to 16 HCP – it may have 5Cs & 4Ds and no other good rebid – (but don't open 1D to avoid this since the system expects you to open 1C). After 2C, responder can force by bidding a major suit (not game forcing unless responder later bids higher than 3C), signoff by passing or bidding 2D, and invite with 2NT, 3C, or 3D.

1C-1D;2D is a two way bid: either 5+Cs & 4+Ds strong but below absolute game forcing strength, or long clubs and 20+ HCP. 2NT asks hand type: 3C shows long Cs, 20+ HCP, forcing to 3NT or 4C, while 3D above shows Cs & Ds. All other non-jump bids by responder show weakness, 2M showing five card suit and weak hand. If responder bids 3D over 2D, it is a signoff if opener has both minors, but opener is to bid again with the long C hand.

1C-1D;3C is about 17 to 19 HCP, with 6+Cs, non-forcing. Reverses into a major (1C-1D;2H and 1C-1D;2S) are non-forcing showing the major bid and longer clubs, and near game forcing strength – responder weakest actions are to pass or bid 3C, and the strongest action is to bid the other major on the three level which is fourth suit forcing with Ds. Jump reverses are used to establish an absolute game force with Cs and another suit, these are: 1C-1D;3D, 1C-1D;3H, and 1C-1D;3S.

[After 1C-1M]

After 1C-1M, opener has these non-raises available:

1S/1H	Natural with 5+Cs, usually just 4Ss, forcing, can have 3Hs if less than 18 HCP, or can be 4=3=2=4 exactly with 13-14.
1NT	@B balanced 14/15-17 or 13-14 with 3 in M. 1C-1H;1NT can have 4Ss if 15-17. @A balanced 10-12, can have 4Ss after 1C-1H-1NT.
2C	5+Cs, often 6Cs, 10-17, but if 16-17 only 5Cs and hand not strong enough for another bid.
2D	Two-way bid described below – either normal Cs & D reverse (including long Cs and D values) or very strong hand often with 3 in M and/or GF with long Cs.
2H/1S	Natural with 5+Cs, usually just 4Hs, forcing with reverse strength.
2NT	22-24, two in M, or can be 4-4-4-1 with 22-24 and singleton in M.
3C	15/16-18, 6+Cs, 15 with 7+Cs.
3NT	25-27, two in M, or can be 4-4-4-1 with 25-27 and singleton in M.

[1C-1H;1S is forcing]

1C-1H;1S is forcing and natural, and can have a hand that would jump shift in standard (1C-1H;2S). After 1C-1H;1S natural bidding is used, with 2D as fourth suit forcing but not game forcing – a game force is only established if responder later bids above 3C. Note that 1C-1H;1S-2D (fourth suit)-2S does not show 5Ss – it can be just a waiting bid with no D stopper – with 6+Cs & 5+Ss prefer to rebid 3S over 2D. 1C-1H;1S-3D is a natural invite with 5+Hs & 5+Ds. After 1C-1H;1S, with a weak hand and 5+Hs, since responder cannot pass (1S is forcing), responder must rebid 2C, 2H, or 2S. After 1C-1H;1S-2C, opener is to bid 2H with 3Hs, so if opener passes 2C has 5+Cs and less than 3Hs - so responder can bid 2C over 1S with only 2Cs if no other rebid seems best.

[1XYZ]

See the section later on 1XYZ for 1C-1M;1NT sequences.

[After 1C-1M;2C]

New suits forcing, 2M signoff, 2NT, 3C invitational, jump new suits natural invitational with 5-5 or better hands, game bids to play. Even if responder bids a new suit, a game force is not established unless responder makes a subsequent bid higher than 3C.

[After 1C-1S;2H]

After 1C-1S;2H, responder always bids 2S with 5+Ss, after which 2NT & 3C by opener is not forcing, while higher bids force to 3NT. After 1C-1S;2H-2S;2NT or 1C-

1S;2H-2S;3C, responder with a decent hand must bid 3D, fourth suit forcing, or 3NT or higher, since all other suit bids at the three level show weak hands. When responder has only 4Ss then 3C and 3H are immediate weak bids by responder, 2NT is forcing but not necessarily strong, and 3D, fourth suit forcing, is the strongest bid. 1C-1S;2H-2NT;3C is not-forcing by opener, showing 6+Cs but a minimum hand for a reverse, usually 16-18. If opener has only 5Cs, the minimum for a reverse would be about 18-20, such as in the sequence 1C-1S;2H-2S;2NT.

[After 1C-1M;2NT or 1C-1M;3NT]

After opener's 2NT or 3NT rebid over 1M, responders non-jump suit bids are all transfers, so for example 1C-1S;3NT-4H is a transfer to Ss. The use of transfers allows responder to describe hand type to opener, and also to signoff as necessary. Opener can super accept transfer with maximum and good playing values. To show 4-4 in the majors, responder just transfer to Ss, so 1C-1H;2NT-3H;3S-3NT would show 4-4 in the majors, game going. To show 4Ss & 5Hs, responder first transfers to Hs, then bids Ss (1C-1H;2NT-3D;3H-3S). 4NT directly over 2NT or 3NT is a quantitative slam try, non-forcing.

[After 1C-1M;3C]

New suits are forcing, 3M is a signoff, game bids to play.

[1C-1M raise structure]

2M:	four card support, or three with either singleton/void in another suit & 10-14, or if M=S 13-14 balanced and doubleton D. Maximum of 15 at Brave, where 1C can be 15-17 balanced and less than 13 will be unbalanced so will have compensating shape. Maximum of 14 at Aware where raise might be on 10-12 balanced with four card support.
2S/1H,3D,3H/1S:	four card or longer support, singleton or void in suit bid, either raise to 3M or hand too good to splinter above 3M. About 14-16 HCP or 20+ HCP.
3M:	four card or longer support, no singleton or void, 16-17.
3S/1H, 4D, 4H/ 1S:	four card or longer support, singleton or void in suit, raise to 4M with slam interest. About 17-19 HCP.
4C	four card support, a good six card or longer club suit, slam interest.
4M:	four card or longer support, no singleton or void, about 18-20 HCP.

Game tries after a bid under 3M are natural/semi-natural, showing values and/or length in the suit bid if feasible (although if less space is available it may make options limited and thus far from perfect). 2NT is asking (see below). 3NT promises at least Qxx or Kx in any unbid suit. If responder has only 3 in M for 2M, over opener's game tries responder attempts to keep 3NT open as an option if feasible.

[1C-1M;2M-2NT asks]

After 1C-1M;2M, 2NT asks. After opener's reply, responder can signoff in 4M, suggest 3NT or bid a suit at the three level to suggest another contract (not-forcing if a minor suit bid, forcing if the other major is bid), or cuebid on the four level to invite slam. 3M is not-forcing by responder, but opener should bid again with 13 or 14.

After 1C-1H-2H-2NT, opener's replies are:

- 3C: 3Hs, singleton/void in Ss, 10-14.
- 3D: 3Hs, singleton/void in Ds, 10-14.
- 3H: 4Hs, minimum, singleton possible only if 10 HCP.
- 3S: 4Hs, singleton/void in Ss, 11-13 .
- 3NT: 4Hs, more than minimum, balanced, spread out values, fairly flat shape.
- 4C: 4Hs, singleton/void in Cs, 11-13.
- 4D: 4Hs, 2-4-2-5 exactly, more than minimum.
- 4H: 4Hs, more than minimum, balanced, hand not appropriate for 3NT

After 1D-1S-2S-2NT, opener's replies are:

- 3C: 3Ss, singleton/void in Hs, 10-14
- 3D: 3Ss, singleton/void in Ds, 10-14
- 3H: 3Ss, 4Hs, 13-14 balanced.
- 3S: 4Ss, minimum balanced.
- 3NT: 4Ss, more than minimum, balanced, spread out values, fairly flat shape
- 4C: 4Ss, singleton/void in Cs, 11-13
- 4D: 4Ss, 4-2-2-5 exactly, more than minimum.
- 4H: 4Ss, singleton/void in Hs, 11-13
- 4S: 4Ss, more than minimum, balanced, hand not appropriate for 3NT

[1C-1M;2D asking bid]

The 2D rebid by opener is an asking bid with two types of hands:

- 1) The standard meaning: a reverse with 5+ clubs, 4+ diamonds, and 18 or more points.
- 2) An asking bid, with a very strong hand, used to determine responder's strength, often with 3 in M and/or GF with long Cs.

Responder replies as follows to the 2D asking bid:

2M	five or longer in M, less than 10 HCP.
2OM	exactly 4 in M, less than 10 HCP.
2NT	five or longer in M, 10 or more HCP.
3C	exactly 4 in M, three or longer clubs, 10 or more HCP.
3D	exactly 4 in M, four or longer diamonds, 10 or more HCP.
3H	exactly 4-4-3-2, 10 or more HCP, Qx or better in clubs.
3S	exactly 4-4-3-2, 10 or more HCP, Qxx or better in diamonds.
3NT	exactly 4-4-3-2, 10-14, no A, K or Q in clubs or diamonds.
4C	exactly 4-4-3-2, 15+, no A, K, Q in clubs or diamonds.

After responder's rebid, 2NT or 3M, which ever is cheaper, asks for further description, establishes a GF and shows a very strong hand. 3NT or 4M is to play, and does not promise any particular hand type. 1C-1M;2D-2M;3M is game invitational with 3 in M and about 22-23 balanced or the equivalent (e.g. could have instead 3 in M and long Cs). All other bids over responder's reply show the first hand type meaning: a club or diamond reverse.

[1C-INT(11-13)]

After 1C-INT(11-13), game bids are to play, and opener can show a minimum with Cs by bidding 2C, which is non-forcing but only passed with 2Cs and 11-12, since opener bids again with 13 (2NT) or if 11-12 and 3+Cs (3C). New suits by opener are forcing, and imply Cs. 1C-INT;2NT is a game invite. 1C-INT;3C is forcing with 6+Cs. 1C-INT;3X is a splinter, showing a singleton/void in the suit bid and Cs. 1C-INT;4C is Gerber. 1C-INT;4NT is a quantitative slam invite.

[1C-2C]

1C-2C is an inverted raise, promising some game interest or a stronger hand. It either is 11+ or unbalanced with long Cs and too good for just 1C-3C. After 1C-2C, 2NT handles strong balanced hands - @A 2NT always shows 22+ balanced, and bidding is now a natural slam investigation. @B, 2NT can be 15-17 or 22+ - responder assumes opener has 15-17, so 1C-2C;2NT-3C shows a minimum hand with long Cs, non-forcing with game invitational values opposite 15-17 - other bids over 2NT are forcing to game and descriptive. @B, opener with 22+ balanced, first bids 2NT, then bids stronger to show hand is not 15-17, but instead 22+. 1C-2C;3NT is 16-17 balanced @B, with a doubleton club, and @A shows a hand in the 14-15 range that will try to make 3NT using the C fit. All new suit bids after 1C-2C promise 3+Cs and are natural, showing stoppers, and force to 2NT or 3C. Opener and responder can continue to force by bidding below 2NT or by bidding above 3C, which establishes a game force. A jump in a suit to the three level is a splinter, singleton or void in suit bid and Cs, game forcing.

[Useful Jump Shifts]

1C-2D, 1C-2H, and 1C-2S are described in the separate ETM document about Useful Jump Shifts and Invitational Jump Shifts.

[1C-2NT(13-14)]

After 1C-2NT(13-14), game bids are to play, and three level suit bids by opener are forcing, and imply Cs. 1C-2NT;4C is Gerber. 1C-2NT;4NT is a quantitative slam invite.

[1C-3C]

After 1C-3C, a preemptive raise in Cs. Game bids are to play, 3D asks for a three card major, and all other bids are natural with Cs or a big hand with a C fit. After 3D, responder bids a three card major or 3NT. After the reply, opener can signoff in game, or invite game with 4C, or invite slam with a quantitative 4NT, or bid a new suit to cuebid, establishing the last bid suit as trumps, (so 1C-3C;3D-3NT;4D or 4M establishes Cs as trumps).

[1C-3D]

After 1C-3D fit showing, game bids are to play and opener can bid 3H to ask: 3S no values in the majors, 3NT Ss values, 4C/4D natural with H values. After responder's reply, opener can place contract, bid 4m to establish fit and invite cuebid, or bid 4M as a cuebid with minor suit slam interest. Other bids after 1C-3D are natural and promise Cs.

[1C-3M]

1C-3M is a precise bid showing a 6+ in the major, GI based not on points but a good suit & length, so opener can place contract, force with long Cs by bidding 4C, cuebid a new suit to establish M as trump and invite slam, or bid 4NT as RKCB with M as trump.

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One Diamond Opening, 1st or 2nd seat – Diamonds, 8 to 16, often 13-14 Balanced.

[1D Opening Description]

The ETM TOPS 1D opening is a natural limited opening that can have as little as 8 points and at most 16. It is frequently a balanced 13 to 14, but can have a balanced 10 to 12 with exactly two clubs. When balanced it can have as few as three diamonds, and if balanced 13 to 14 can have two to five clubs. When not balanced opener has at least four diamonds, and if 8 to 9 has at least five diamonds and a hand that would at least invite game opposite a 15 to 17 notrump. The following are the hand types for the 1D opening:

- 1) Diamonds, 10-16, unbalanced, but not 6+ diamonds and a good 15 or any 16.
- 2) 5+Ds, 8-9, decent suit.
- 3) 13-14 balanced, 3+Ds, can have longer clubs, no five card major.
- 4) 10-12 balanced, 3+Ds, exactly 2Cs, no five card major: so 4=4=3=2, 4=3=4=2, 3=4=4=2 or 3=3=5=2.

[Responses to 1D Opening]

General approach: natural with inverted minor, useful jump shifts. Notrump replies: 1NT: 6-10, 2NT: 11-12, 3NT: to play.

Response	Style	Description
Pass	Weak	Standard. Prefer not to pass more often just because 1D is limited since the opponents will not face much obstacle. Instead find a bid and leave the opponents guessing who has the strength.
1H	Natural	4+Hs, 5+. As in standard can stretch to bid a major with five or longer in suit. May have longer minor.
1S	Natural	4+Ss, 5+. As in standard can stretch to bid a major with five or longer in suit. May have longer minor.
1NT	Standard	NF, balanced or unable to make another bid, 6-10, no four card major expected.
2C	Natural	Natural, four or longer clubs, 10/11+. No four card major unless absolutely game forcing values.
2D	Inverted	Inverted minor, four or longer diamonds, 10/11+. No four card major. If long Cs prefer 1D-3C with game invite values.
2H	Useful	Useful Jump Shift, 6+Hs, constructive or invitational values.
2S	Useful	As above with spades.
2NT	Natural	NF, Balanced with at least three diamonds, 11 to 12, no four card major expected.
3C	Invite	Invitational or close to invitational with long clubs.
3D	Preemptive	To play, 5+Ds.
3H	Natural	7+Hs, game invitational based on long suit, not HCP, KQxxxx typical.
3S	Natural	As above but with spades.
3NT	To play.	Any shape, only expects opener to bid if very distributional.
4C	Fit Showing	5+Ds, 4+Cs, values for at least to play in 4D.
4D, 4H, 4S, 5C, 5D	Preemptive	Long suit, not much in values, sets trump suit so if opener bids it is a cuebid, and 4NT is RKCB for suit.

Key scheme: 1D-1M-2C is artificially used to show weak hand with long Ds OR good raise to 2M. This allows 1D-1M;2M to show a weak raise. 1D-1M-2D is used to show Ds & Cs.

[Balanced hands bidding]

Response	13-14	10-12 (exactly 2Cs)
1H	1NT or 2C (relay) if four card support.	2H if four card support. Otherwise 1S if four spades, or 1NT.
1S	1NT or 2C(relay) if four card support.	1NT or 2S if four card support.
1NT	Pass	Pass
2C	2NT	Major suit with values/length.
2D	2NT	Major suit with values/length.
2H, 2S, 3C	Pass or raise or bid 2NT.	Pass or raise with great fit.
2NT	3NT	Pass or raise with great fit.
3D, 3NT	Pass	Pass
Other	Depends	Depends

[After 1D-1M]

After 1D-1M, opener has these non raises (or not a direct raise) available:

1S/1H	Natural with 4+Ss & 4+Ds (usually just 4Ss), can have 3Hs if balanced 10-12.
1NT	Balanced, usually 13-14 or 10-12 with 3 in M. After 1D-1S;1NT can have difficult rebid hand: 1=4=5=3/2=4=5=2 & 11-14 or 1=4=4=4 & 10-14. 1D-1H;1NT can have 4Ss if 13-14 balanced and 4=2=3=4 or 4=3=3=3 shape, since 1D-1H-1S promises 4Ds.
2C	Artificial, either: a) 8-12 with 5+Ds, like a good weak two bid or minimum opening, b) 12-16 with 3/4 in M, 12 only with 4 in M & singleton/void. See 1D-1M raise structure below.
2D	The replacement bid for 2C: 11-16 with 4+Cs & 5+Ds, denies 3 in M and denies 4 in OM. With 15-16 & 5-5+ prefer 1D-1M;3C.
2H/1S	Natural with 5+Ds, usually just 4Hs, denies 3Ss, can also be 1-4-4-4 exactly. Not-forcing since 1D opening is limited, 15-16 with 4/5Ds, 13-16 with 6+Ds.
3C	15-16, 5+Ds & 5+Cs.
3D	6+Ds, 13-15, not 3 in M.
3NT	Solid Ds, partial stoppers in the unbid suits. 4D is now a signoff, 4C is RKCB for M.

[XYZ after 1D-1M;1NT]

See the section on XYZ for 1D-1M;1NT.

[Natural bidding after 1D-1H;1S, 1D-1S;2H]

After 1D-1H;1S and 1D-1S;2H natural bidding is used. The cheapest bid of the unbid suit, Cs, is fourth suit forcing by responder and asks opener to describe hand. 1D-1S;2H-3C is fourth suit forcing to game. However 1D-1H;1S-2C just forces opener to rebid and it only establishes a game force if responder later makes a bid above 3D. So sequences like 1D-1H;1S-2C(fourth suit forcing);2D-2S are GI, but not forcing (bid 3S to force).

[Bidding after 1D-1M;2C]

The sequence 1D-1M;2C is a two-way bid, either Ds & 8-12 or good raise in **M** with 12-16 (12 only with singleton/void & 4 in **M**). Responder usually makes one of three calls. First, with a weak hand and long in **M** responder can bid 1D-1M;2C-2M to signoff. Opener will only bid on with **M** raise, bidding **OM** or Cs to imply shortness in other unbid suit.

With a hand that would signoff opposite 8-12, responder bids 2D, after which opener pass with Ds & 8-12, or bids naturally (usually 2M) with 12-16 and **M** raise. 1D-1M;2C-2D;3D shows 6+Ds & 3 in **M**, 13-15 and 1D-1S;2C-2D;2H shows 13-16 with 4Hs & 3Ss & 4/5+Ds.

With a hand that is too strong to signoff opposite 8-12 with Ds, responder usually bids 2NT, which is an artificial asking bid. Opener rebids:

- 3M with 3 in **M**, shortness in Cs, 13-16.
- 3OM with 3 in **M**, shortness in **OM**, 13-16
- 4M with 13-14 balanced/semi-balanced, 4 in **M**.
- 4C with singleton/void in Cs, 4 in **M**, 12-14 (poor 14).
- 4D with singleton/void in **OM**, 4 in **M**, 12-14 (poor 14).
- 3C natural with 5+Ds, 4+Cs, 8-10.
- 3D with 8-10 with 5Ds.
- 3NT with 11-12 with 5Ds.

Responder over 2C can also bid a new suit, natural and forcing (but not GF). Opener bids naturally but tries to not bid above 3D with no fit for responder's suits and a minimum. Over the new suit 3M is saved to show exactly 3 in **M** and shortness in responder's second suit, while 4M shows the other raises with **M**. For example 1D-1S;2C-2H(forcing);3S would show 13-16, 3Ss & shortness in Hs. After opener's rebid, responder must bid fourth suit forcing or 3M to force, all other bids below game are just GI.

The sequence 1D-1S;2C-3H shows a good GI with 5-5+ in the majors. With a poor GI, start with 2H over 2C and then rebid 3H (or pass opener's rebid).

[Bidding after 1D-1M;2D]

The sequence 1D-1M;2D shows 5+Ds, 4+Cs, 11-16, and denies 3+ in **M** or 4 in **OM**. Bidding is much like over 1D-1M;2C in standard, with these exceptions:

- With a hand that would bid 2D over 2C in standard, responder simply passes 2D.
- With a C signoff (a hand that would pass 2C in standard), responder bids 3C.
- 1D-1S;2D-3H is a good GI with 5-5+ in the majors.
- With a GI in Cs, responder uses fourth suit forcing (2OM), which forces to either 3C or game. Now opener does not rebid above 3C unless holding a hand that would accept a GI in Cs (however only 3C by opener promises a minimum, all other bids wait for responder to show hand type). A 3C rebid by responder shows a GI in Cs, all other bids show a GF. After fourth suit forcing, a bid of the 'fourth suit forcing' suit at the three level (3OM) by opener artificially shows a GF with good Cs. For example:
1D-1S;2D-2H(fourth suit forcing);3H shows good Cs and a GF, 3C by opener would be passable.

[1D-1M raise structure]

2C:	This is used as a relay, and can contain a M raise (see above). When it is a raise it shows 12-16, and has one of the following hand types: a) 13-14 balanced with four card support, b) 12-14 (poor 14) with four card support and singleton/void, c) 13-16 with three card support and shortness.
2M:	8-12. Four card support, or three with shortness, if 12 not 4 in M and a singleton/void.
2NT:	Four card or longer support, singleton or void in a suit, a raise to 3M. About 14-16 HCP. 3C asks singleton, 3H shows singleton in OM , other bids show singleton C.
3M:	Four card or longer support, no singleton or void, 15-16.
3S, 4C, 4H:	Four card or longer support, singleton or void in suit, raise to 4M with maximum and good playing value.
4D	Four card support, seven card or longer diamond suit, maximum.
4M:	Maximum but does not want to reveal hand type.

Game try style just like over the 1C-1M raises, with 2NT used to ask.

[1D-1M-2M-2NT asks]

After 1D-1M-2M-2NT asks. After opener's reply, responder can signoff in 4M, suggest 3NT or bid a suit at the three level to suggest another contract (not-forcing if a minor suit bid, forcing if the other major is bid), or cuebid on the four level to invite slam. 3M is not-forcing by responder, but opener should bid again with 13 or 14.

After 1D-1H;2H-2NT, opener's replies are:

- 3C: 3Hs, shortness in Cs, 8-12
- 3D: 3Hs, shortness in Ss, 8-12
- 3H: 4Hs, 8-10
- 3S: 4Hs, singleton/void in Ss, 8-11
- 3NT: 4Hs, 11-12 balanced, doubleton C with Qx or better
- 4C: 4Hs, singleton/void in Cs, 8-11
- 4D: 4Hs, 2-4-5-2 exactly, 11-12
- 4H: 4Hs, 11-12 balanced, weak doubleton C

After 1D-1S;2S-2NT, opener's replies are:

- 3C: 3Ss, shortness in Cs, 8-12
- 3D: 3Ss, shortness in Hs, 8-12
- 3H: 4Ss, 8-10, H values
- 3S: 4Ss, 8-10
- 3NT: 4Ss, 11-12 balanced, doubleton C with Hx

4C: 4Ss, singleton/void in Cs, 8-11
4D: 4Ss, 4-2-5-2 exactly, 11-12
4H: 4Ss, singleton/void in Hs, 8-11
4S: 4Ss, 11-12 balanced, weak doubleton C

[1D-1NT(6-10)]

After 1D-1NT(6-10), game bids are to play, and opener can show a hand with Ds and no interest in game by bidding 2D. 1D-1N;-2C is natural, but limited to 14. 1D-1NT;3C is natural with 15-16, sometimes 14 if a good 5-5 or better. New major suits by opener are value showing, and imply 6+Ds and game interest. 1D-1NT;2NT is a game invite with a source of tricks in Ds. 1D-1NT;3D shows 14-15 with 6+Ds.

[1D-2C]

1D-2C is a natural bid, promising some game interest or a stronger hand. It shows 4+Cs and 11+. With long Cs and just invite values (opposite standard opening values) prefer to bid 1D-3C. 1D-2C can have a game invitational raise to 2NT with just a doubleton D (1D-2NT promises at least 3Ds).

After 1D-2C, 2NT always shows 13-14 balanced, while 3NT shows 14 balanced with great C fit. 1D-2C;2D shows a weak hand, 8-11, 5+Ds, may have a C fit if 8-9. 1D-2C;2M shows major suit length/values, either balanced with 10-12 or unbalanced with 12+; it may be bid on a good doubleton sometimes without any other good bid. 3C is a natural non-forcing raise, 10-12. 3D shows 6+Ds, 12-14, no C fit. 3M shows a singleton/void, C fit, and 12-16. After opener's rebid, a bid of 2NT or 3C by responder is not forcing, but 3C is strongly invitational, about 12-14 with 6+Cs. If responder bids 2NT over 1D-2C;2D, it shows about 14-15, for with less responder should pass 2D if balanced. 1D-2C;2M-2NT is about 11-13, asking opener to pass if 10-11 balanced, or to bid more if 12 balanced or holding an unbalanced hand.

[1D-2D]

1D-2D is an inverted raise, promising some game interest or a stronger hand. It shows 10+ with at least 4+Ds, often 5+Ds if just 10. After 1D-2D, 2NT always shows exactly 13-14 balanced with 3+Ds. 3NT shows a great D fit, stoppers in the unbid suits, and either 14 balanced, or 15-16 semi-balanced. 3D shows weakness, 8 to 11 with 5+Ds. 2M shows either 12+ and unbalanced hand with values/length in M, or a balanced 10-12 with 4 in the suit bid. 3M shows a singleton/void in the major, 5+Ds, 12-16. 3C is semi-natural, no other good bid, 12-16 with Ds, might be forced on a doubleton with 2-2-7-2 shape.

After opener's rebid, responder can bid 2NT or 3D both not forcing. 2S over 2H is only forcing to 2NT or 3D. All other sequences are forcing to 3NT or 4D. Cuebids above 3NT force to 5D or slam.

[Useful Jump Shifts and Invitational Jump Shifts]

1D-2H, 1D-2S, and 1D-3C are described in the separate ETM document about Useful Jump Shifts and Invitational Jump Shifts.

[1D-2NT(11-12 & 3+Ds)]

After 1D-2NT(11-12 & 3+Ds), game bids are to play, 3D is not-forcing, a signoff, and all other suit bids are forcing to 3NT or 4m.

[1D-3D]

1D-3D is a preemptive raise in Ds. It is a wide ranging bid, only constrained by that it denies game interest opposite 13-14 balanced. Over 3D, 3NT is a suggestion with a D fit, but responder can retreat to 4D with weak hand. 5D is to play, 3M shows values/length, looking for stopper in OM. 4M shows a void and is a slam try, 4C and 4D invites a major suit cuebid.

[1D-3M]

1D-3M is a precise bid, showing a 6+ in the major, GI based not on points but a good suit & length, so opener can place contract, force with long Ds by bidding 4D, cuebid a new suit to establish M as trump and invite slam, or bid 4NT as RKCB with M as trump.

[1D-4C]

After 1D-4C fit showing, 4D and minor suit game bids are to play. 4M shows values/length and invites responder to bid RKCB (for Ds) with a maximum and everything working.

1XYZ – Two Way Method after 1m-1M-1NT

[1XYZ Introduction]

1XYZ is a form of two-way checkback Stayman used after an opening suit bid, a major suit response, and a 1NT rebid. It is used in these five circumstances:

1C-1H;1NT
1C-1S;1NT
1D-1H;1NT
1D-1S;1NT
1H-1S;1NT

The 1D opening followed by 1NT rebid always shows 13-14 or 10-12 with 3 in the major suit. At Aware the 1C opening followed by 1NT over a major suit shows 10-12. At Brave, the 1C opening followed by 1NT over a major suit shows 15-17 or 13-14 with 3 in the major suit. The sequence 1H-1S-1NT shows about 8-11. In two of these situations (1D-1M;1NT and @B 1C-1M;1NT) the 1NT rebid has two distinct ranges, the main range, and a secondary range, which promises 3 in the major suit. After 1D-1M;1NT, the main range is 11-14 (usually 13-14) and the secondary range is 10-12. At Brave, after 1C-1M;1NT, the main range is 15-17, and the secondary range is 13-14. In the other situations, there is no secondary range. At Aware, for 1C-1M;1NT, there is no secondary range, just the main range of 10-12. Likewise 1H-1S;1NT shows 8-11, with no secondary range.

The 1XYZ methods used two main bids with invitational or stronger hands:

2C: A relay to 2D, used to signoff in Ds and to bid game invitational hands.
2D: Game forcing Stayman.

[1XYZ Description]

After 1[]-1M;1NT and 1 -1M;1NT, 1XYZ is used:

- 2M, and 3[] and 3D are signoffs (3D signoff used when does not want to signoff via 2C), and game bids are to play.
- 2H if 2OM is a signoff with both majors, at least 5Ss & 4Hs, opener takes preference.

- 2S if 2OM is game invitational with 4Ss and 4Hs. It is not-forcing.
- 2 \square asks opener to bid 2 \square , or, only if there is a secondary range, to bid 2M with 3 in M and secondary range. If opener bids 2D, responder then passes opener's rebid with a D signoff or makes any bid to show a GI hand, with 2M showing GI with 5 in M and 2NT showing GI with 4 in M. If opener bids 2M (secondary range & 3 in M), all bids are still GI, except for 2NT, which is an artificial relay to 3C with a signoff in either minor – opener must bid 3C and then responder passes with a C signoff or bids 3D with a D signoff.
- After 1D-1S;1NT-2C, opener can also bid 2H to show 10-11 & 1=4=4=4 or 1=4=5=3. Now all three level bids are GI. 2NT is a signoff in either minor (bidding like 1D-1S;1NT-2C;2S-2NT). The sequence 1D-1S;1NT-2C;2H-2S suggests a 5-2-3-3 hand that wanted to invite game opposite 11-14, and responder bids 3D, 3C, 2NT or passes as appropriate.
- 2 \square is GF Stayman and asks opener to describe hand. Opener only bids above 2NT with the main range and 3 in M, describing the hand further (if there is no secondary range opener only bids above 2NT with maximum and 3 in M). Opener's 2NT only denies 4 in OM or 3 in M, but can C or D suits.
- 2 \square followed by 3NT shows 5 in M, gives opener choice of game – gives less information to opponents than using 2 \square .
- 2NT shows 4 in M and is GI opposite the secondary range, (so GF if opener has more than the secondary range). If there is no secondary range, then 2NT is GI where opener should only decline if very minimum (e.g. 10 if 10-12).
- 3 \square , 3 \square , 4 \square are natural slam tries, 4 \square is Gerber.

[1XYZ Example Sequences]

1C-1H;1NT-2C;2H:	@B 2H shows 13-14 & 3Hs. Not used @A (opener must bid 2D over 2C).
1D-1H;1NT-2C;2D-Pass:	How to signoff in Ds (or bid 3D directly over 1NT).
1C-1S;1NT-2D;2H:	4Hs, denies 3Ss.
1D-1H;1NT-2D;2NT:	Denies 4Ss and 3Hs, shows 13-14.
1D-1S;1NT-2C;2D-2H:	5Ss, 4Hs, game invite.
1C-1S;1NT-2C;2S:	At Brave, 2S shows 13-14 & 3Ss. Not used at Aware.
1C-1S;1NT-2C;2S-2NT:	After 2S showing secondary range, 2NT is Lebenshol, signoff in a minor.
1D-1S;1NT-2D;2S:	3Ss & 10-12.
1C-1H;1NT-2D;3S:	15-17, 4Ss, 3Hs.
1C-1H;1NT-2C;2D-2H:	5Hs, game invite.
1D-1S;1NT-2C;2D-3NT:	5Ss, choice of game.

[1XYZ By Passed Hand]

1XYZ is used in the following passed hand sequence:

Pass-1C;1M-1NT (19-21)

After Pass-1C;1M-1NT, the usual 1XYZ all apply, including 2D is a GF. After Pass-1D;1M-1NT or Pass-1H;1S-1NT, since 2D is no longer needed to show a GF (responder cannot be that strong), 2D instead shows a mild invite with Ds and the major suit responded. For example Pass-1D;1S-1NT;2D shows Ss & Ds, mild invite, likely about 9 HCP.

One Heart or Spade Opening, 1st or 2nd seat – Five Card Majors, 8 to 16

[1H or 1S Opening Description]

The ETM TOPS 1H or 1S opening is a natural limited opening that can have as little as 8 points and at most 16. If 10 to 13 or 16 points, it has exactly five in the suit opened, while if 8 to 9 or 14 to 15, a six card suit is possible. The opening can be made with a longer minor. The following are the hand types for the 1H or 1S opening:

- 1) Five in the major, 8 to 16, can have a longer minor. A hand that would at least invite game opposite a 15-17 notrump.
- 2) Six or longer in the major, 8 to 9 but not great suit, or 14-15.

With 8-9 don't open with a poor five card suit, or an awful six card suit, since often the opponents will compete for the contract, and the opening might get the wrong lead from partner.

[Direct Raises of 1H or 1S Opening]

General approach: bid where you should bid according to the LAW. Don't give much information away.

Response	Style	Description
2M	Less than limit	To play, two or more trumps, opener can bid again with shape and 14-16, but must show hand type in case responder needs to play elsewhere.
2NT	Limit+ Raise	Limit raise or better in major with four or longer trumps.
3M	Preemptive	To play, often with four trumps, can have some values. Opener can bid on with good distribution as a make or save proposition.
4M	To Play	Can be weak or can have values. If opponents bid, opener can double to show interesting in bidding on, and otherwise pass.
3S/1H, 4C/1S	Unknown Splinter	Shows shortness in an unknown suit and limited hand, about 11-14 HCP, with 4+ trumps. Cheapest bid asks for shortness but note that 1S-4C does not have C splinter, use 1S-4D instead.
1H-4m	Fit showing	4+ in Hs, 4/5+ in m, values to play in 4H, bid in case opponents bid 4S.
1S-4D	Splinter	Singleton/void in Cs, limited, 11-14 HCP, 4+Ss.

[Other Responses to 1H or 1S Opening]

Semi-forcing wide ranging 1NT. Semi-natural two club response used to keep balanced hands low. Other natural non-jump suit responses. Useful jumps in suits. Game bids to play.

Response	Style	Description
Pass	Weak	Standard. Prefer not to pass more often just because the major suit opening is limited since the opponents will not face much obstacle. Instead bid and leave the opponents guessing who has the strength.
1S/1H	Natural	4+Ss, 5+. As in standard can stretch to bid a major with five in suit. May have longer minor.
1NT	Semi-Forcing	NF but never passed by a hand that would open the bidding in standard. Wider range in standard, up to 13 or 14 if a singleton or void in opener's major.
2C	Semi-Natural	Natural clubs or balanced with 3+C's with near standard GF values, or limit+ raise with 3+C's. If singleton in opener's major, must have long clubs or 15+. If balanced can have longer second suit.
2D	Natural	Natural diamonds with near standard GF values, or limit+ raise with 4+ Ds. If singleton in opener's major, must have long diamonds or 15+.
2H	Natural	Natural hearts with near standard GF values, or limit+ raise with 5+Hs. If singleton in spades, must have long hearts or 15+.
2S/1H	Useful	Useful Jump Shift, 6+Ss, constructive or invitational values.
3C	Invite	Invitational or close to invitational values, 6+C's.
3D	Invite	As 3C but with Ds.
3H/1S	Invite	As 3C but with Hs.
3NT	To play.	To play unless opener has a seven card major or a six card minor.
Suit games	Preemptive	To play.

A non-jump suit response is forcing. 1M-2C response is used to stay low on balanced hands opposite featherweight openings. Key scheme: 1H-1S;2C shows either good raise for Ss or Hs & Cs. This allows 1H-1S-2S to be a weak raise.

[1H-1S]

The 1S response to 1H shows 4+Ss, any strength.

Rebids to 1S:

- 1NT: 8-11 HCP, not 4Ss, only 5Hs. Tends not to have 3Ss. See the section on 1XYZ earlier.
- 2C: Artificial, either Hs & Cs (standard opening values or close to it) or 3/4Ss & 12-16, 12 only with 4Ss and a singleton/void. Responder normally bids 2D to ask then 2S shows 12-16 with 3/4Ss, 3H shows 14-15 with 6+Hs & 3Ss, all other bids show Hs & Cs, but normally just 2H is bid. 1H-1S-2C-2D(ask)-2H-3D is Fourth Suit Forcing to game. Instead of bidding 2D to ask, responder can signoff in 2H or 2S to show a weak hand - opener only bids again over 2H if holding 4S, usually bidding 2S but can bid above 2S to show nature of hand with exceptional distribution. Over opener's 2C, responder can also bid 2NT, 3C, 3D, 3H, or 3S to show a very strong invitational hand - over these bids opener with 4Ss & 13-16 bids 4S or bids above 3NT to show nature of hand.
- After 1H-1S;2C-2D(asks);2S(13-16), now 2NT by responder asks, with responses just like over 1H-1S;2S-2NT(asks).
- 2D: Natural, 10/11+ HCP, standard opening values or close to it. 3C is now Fourth Suit Forcing to game.
- 2H: 8-9 HCP, 6+Hs or 5Hs and too distributional to rebid 1NT.
- 2S: 3Ss or 4Ss, 8-12, if only 3Ss must have shortness in a minor and/or 6+Hs. If 12 not 4Ss and a minor suit singleton/void. After 2S game tries are natural, and 2NT asks for a description of the hand, opener to bid 3H with 6Hs & 3Ss, 3m with shortness in suit bid & 3Ss, 3S with minimum & 4Ss & and no singleton/void, 4m with singleton/void in suit bid & 4Ss, and with maximum and no shortness either 3NT, 4H or 4S.
- Jump new suit: 15-16 HCP, 5+ in second suit.
- 3H: 14-15, 6+Hs, less than 3Ss. 3S is now forcing by responder.
- 2NT: 4Ss, 14-16 HCPs, singleton/void in a minor. 3C asks for singleton:
- 3D: 4Ss, singleton/void in Ds, 14-16
- 3H: 4Ss, singleton/void in Cs, 14-16
- 3S: 4Ss, 15-16, no singleton/void.
- 4m: 4Ss, minor suit void in suit bid, 14-16, good playing value.
- 4H: 14-15, 6/7+Hs, 3Ss, solid suit if just 6Hs.

[1M-1NT]

The semi-forcing notrump handles hands without the values to bid on the two level or make a game invitational bid at the three level. If short in M can have up to 14 HCP.

Rebids to 1NT:

- Pass: 8-11 HCP, less than standard opening values, only 5 in M.
- New suit: 10/11+ HCP, standard opening values or close to it.
- 2M: 8-9 HCP, a great five card suit or 6+ in M.
- Jump new suit: 14-16 HCP, usually 5+ in second suit.
- 2NT: 14-15 HCP, 6 or longer in M, not a very good suit.
- 3M: 14-15 HCP, 6 or longer in M, very good suit.

After these rebids, responder's next bid is generally natural and standard, with the following:

- Pass without long suit to bid, less than 10/11, and singleton in M or good fit for suit bid.
- New suits to play with less than game invitational values.
- 2M shows a doubleton usually, up to 10/11. After 1M-1NT;2X-2M opener bids again with 15/16 HCP. Responder with a doubleton in M and 5-8 HCP should consider directly raising to 2M instead of bidding 1NT first.
- 1M-1NT;2X-3X is game invite, 10-11, five or longer in X if minor suit, 4 or longer in X if major.
- 2NT by responder over new suit shows 11-12, invites game. Now 1M-1NT;2X-2NT;3X is a signoff. With doubletons in opener's suits and 11, bid 2M to stay low on possible misfit hand.
- 3NT is to play, usually 13-14, shortness in M. After 1S-1NT;2H-3NT, opener bids again if 5-5.
- 1H-1NT;2X-2S is artificial, forcing, showing a good hand (in context for 1NT), 11-14, often with a fit for opener's second suit.
- Jump suit bids by responder are GF, showing five or longer in suit bid (usually just five) or just S values if 3S since no 1S response, maximum values, often singleton or void in M. For example 1H-1NT;2C-3D: 5+Ds, (11/12-14 HCP). Opener bids naturally, bidding 3M with no other bid, no stopper in fourth suit. Jump bids at four level imply fit for opener's second suit, since over 3NT.

[1M-2C]

This response shows one of three hand types:

- Cs. GF values if opposite a standard opener, but if not 6+Cs prefer 1NT if less than 15 and singleton or void in **M**.
- balanced with at least a great invite (12-13) opposite a standard opener.
- limit raise in **M** but short in Ds (doubleton or less) so could not bid 2D (1M-2D handles most limit raises but requires 3+Ds).

Rebids to 2C:

- 2D: Artificial, less than a standard opening bid values or dead minimum standard opening values (8-12 HCP, 12 HCP only without much distribution). Not 4+Hs if S opening.
- 2H: If S opening, 2H shows 4+Hs, any strength.
- 2M: **M** & 4+Ds, at least standard opening values.
- 2S: If H opening, 2S shows 4+Ss & 5+Hs, at least standard opening values.
- 2NT: Balanced, 5/6 in **M**, at least standard opening values. Usually 5-3-3-2 shape. Never 4 in **OM**. If 6 in **M**, suit must be bad.
- 3C: 4+Cs & 5 in **M**, at least standard opening values.
- 3D: 14-15, 6+ in **M**, singleton/void in Ds, not 4 in **OM**. Suit may not be good.
- 3OM: Singleton/void in suit bid, 6+ in **M**, 14-15, not 4+Ds. Suit may not be good.
- 3M: 14-15, 6+ in **M**, singleton/void in Cs, no other four card suit. Suit may not be good.
- 3NT: 14-15, 6 in **M**, balanced, good suit. Bid 2NT with bad suit.
- 4C,4D: Void in minor, 7+ in **M**, 14-15.
- 4H: If S opening, void in Hs, 7+Ss, 14-15.
- 4M: 14-15, 7-2-2-2.

After 1M-2C;2D:

- 2OM: Artificial, establishes GF.
- 2M: 2 in **M** and about 12-13 HCP. Can also be limit raise in **M** and short in Ds. Opener bids again if game possible and/or to show distributional hand, 2NT showing 11-12.
- 2NT: Natural, NF, about 14-15 HCP.
- 3C: Long suit, NF but is GI since had GF values opposite standard opening values.
- 3NT: To play if opener has 5 in **M**, but to play in 4M if opener has 6 in **M**.
- Above 3C: Natural with Cs & GF.

After 1S-2C;2H:

- 2S: 2Ss and about 12-13 HCP, but can also be limit raise in Ss, short in Ds. Opener bids again if game possible.
- 2NT: Artificial, forcing, asks for description, 14+ HCP if balanced.
- 3C: Long suit, NF, but GI since had GF values opposite a standard opener.
- 3H: Natural, 4+Hs but NF, only about 12-13 HCP.
- Game: Game bids to play.
- Other: Natural with Cs & GF.

After 1S-2C;2H-2NT (asks):

- 3C: Any minimum (8-10 HCP) without 5+Hs. 3D asks, responses like directly over 2NT. 3 of either major over 3C is to play.
- 3D: 5-5+ in majors. 3 of either major NF but opener raises with any 11+ HCP.
- 3H: Singleton/void in Cs, 11+ HCP, 5Ss & 4Hs.
- 3S: Singleton/void in Ds, 11+ HCP, 5S & 4Hs.
- 3NT: 5-4-2-2, 11+ HCP.
- 4C, 4D: Singleton/void in suit bid, 6+Ss, 4Hs, 11+ HCP.

After 1M-2C and a bid of 2M or above (showing standard opening values or better, 2M showing Ds).

- 2NT: Natural, forcing, but may not have C suit but just balanced hand.
- 3M: Limit raise in **M** with short Ds.
- Game: Game bids to play.
- Other bids: Natural with Cs, GF.

[1M-2D]

This response shows one of two hand types:

- Ds. GF values if opposite a standard opener but if not 6+Ds prefer to respond 1NT if less than 15 and singleton or void in **M**.
- A limit raise in **M** and 3+Ds.

Rebids to 2D:

- 2M: A hand that would not accept a limit raise in **M**, NF.
- Other: Natural, a hand that would accept a limit raise in **M**.

Follow-up by responder:

- 1M-2D-2M-3D rebid by responder is NF, long suit, GI since GF values opposite standard opener.
- 3D rebid by responder over other responses (i.e. not 2M) is GF with long suit.
- 1M-2D-2M-3M is NF, just a little more than a limit raise.
- 3NT & 4M is to play.

Other bids by responder are natural, forcing, but if opener had bid 2M over 2D, do not promise a rebid. For example 1H-2D-2H-2NT(forcing)-3D can be passed by responder.

[1S-2H]

This response shows one of two hand types:

- Hs. GF values if opposite a standard opener but if not 6+Hs prefer to respond 1NT if less than 15 and singleton or void in Ss.
- A limit raise in **M** and long Hs.

Rebids to 2H:

- 2S: A hand that does not have a GF opposite the 2H response, less than 3Hs, NF.
- 3H: 3+Hs but a minimum hand (8-10 HCP), NF.
- Other: Natural, a hand that has a GF opposite the 2H response. Bidding is now natural.

Follow-up by responder over 1S-2H;2S:

3H rebid by responder is NF, long suit, GI since GF values opposite standard opener.

3S is limit raise in Ss with long Hs.

3NT, 4H, 4S is to play.

Other bids by responder are natural, forcing, do not promise a rebid. For example 1S-2H;2S-2NT(forcing);3H can be passed by responder.

[Useful Jump Shifts and Invitational Jump Shifts]

1H-2S, 1H-3C, 1H-3D, 1S-3C, 1S-3D, and 1S-3H are described in the separate document about Useful Jump Shifts and Invitational Jump Shifts.

[1M-2M]

This raise is to play, and while often on three card support can be just a doubleton in **M** if less than 9 HCP. Opener usually passes except in three cases:

- 1) If 5-5 or better and a 5 loser hand, responder can bid a new suit, NF. Note that responder can pass with doubleton in **M**, for example 1H-2H;3C-Pass.
- 2) With 6+ in **M**, 14-15, opener can bid 3**M** or even 4**M** with good playing value.
- 3) Without a 5-5 or 6+ in **M**, opener rarely can make a NF game try with 2NT.

If the opponents compete over 2**M**, opener's double is not for penalty – instead it shows shortness in the opponents suit and maximum HCP (14-16 HCP). Note that the 2**M** is not often bid with 4 in **M** (bid 3**M** instead), so opener with just 5 in **M** should rarely compete to 3**M**, to follow the LAW.

[1M-3M]

To play, less than limit values, usually 4+ trumps. Opener usually passes but can bid 4**M** with 6+ in **M** (even if minimum – let the opponents guess who the hand belongs to!) or 5 loser hand.

[1M-Cheapest Double Jump New Suit]

1H-3S and 1S-4C show a limited hand, about 11-14 HCP, 4+ trumps, with an unknown singleton or void. 1S-4C cannot be a singleton or void in Cs though. The cheapest bid asks for the singleton/void, 1H-3S;3NT(asks)-4H showing a singleton or void in Ss, and 1S-4C;4D-4S shows a singleton or void in Ds.

[1S-4D]

This shows a limited splinter in Cs, about 11-14 HCP, 4+ trumps.

[1H-4C and 1H-4D]

These are fit showing bids, usually only to play in 4H but wants to get opener's cooperation in case the opponents bid 4S. It can be a slam try only if responder bids again above 4H.

[1M-4M]

This is to play. The bid may be made on as few as 3 trumps with the appropriate hand that offers play for the contract. If the opponents bid a suit, a double by opener now is 'Can't Bear It Double' – it shows a desire to bid 5**M** but invites partner to pass if holding values/length in the opponents suit.

[1M-2NT]

1**M**-2NT: Limit Raise or Better, four + trumps, or any 4-3-3-3 & 16+ HCP.

Normally opener makes one of two bids opposite 2NT (see passed hand bidding below):

3C: would pass limit raise.

3D: would accept limit raise, so establishes GF.

Opposite both these bids, 3**M** still shows the limit raise, and a new suit, except for cheapest new suit, shows shortness, a hand too good to splinter directly over 1**M** (so 14/15+).

The full structure after 1**M**-2NT:

3C: would pass limit raise or a very weak hand in HCP; now:

3NT: 16-18, any 4-3-3-3

new suit: singleton/void, too good to splinter directly over 1**M**, so 14/15+.

3**M**, 4**M**: to play.

3D: further ask:

3**M**: bad hand (for a hand that would pass a limit raise), NF.

New Suit: singleton/void in suit bid, not bad hand.

3NT: no singleton or void, but not a bad hand for a hand that would pass a limit raise.

4**M**: six or seven card suit, no singleton

3D: waiting, GF, responder then:

3**M**: limit raise, now cheapest bid is shortness asking (e.g. 3NT/3□).

Example: 1□-2NT;3□(waits);3□(limit)-3□(asks);3NT(short □).

4**M**: no shortness, more than a limit raise but not much more (otherwise ask again).

3**OM**: cheapest new suit to ask shortness, with 3**M**, 4**M** or higher showing no shortness, and a bid of 3NT showing shortness in the ask suit e.g. 1S-2NT;3D-3H(asks);3NT(short H).

new suit at four level: singleton/void, too good to splinter directly over 1**M** (so 14/15+).

3NT: shortness in the cheapest new suit bid (e.g. 1H-2NT;3D-3NT = S shortness), 14/15+.

Note that with any 4-3-3-3, 16+ HCP, after 3D opener must re-ask with cheapest new suit.

4**M**: to play with bad hand but wants to try game opposite limit raise, often 6+ in **M**.

Above 3D: natural, with some slam interest due to distribution.

[Showing or Asking by Responder]

Since opener will play **M** contract, responder with shortness shows it (via splinter or 2NT then shortness bid), so that opener's hand is less revealed. Only with no shortness does responder ask opener's shortness, to better evaluate the degree values are working or not.

[2NT by passed hand]

Good limit raise values by passed hand with simple responses:

3M: would not accept limit raise.

3C: asks singleton, 3M = C singleton, 3NT=none. 3M rebid NF by either player.

Game bids: 4M to play, 3NT suggestion.

Other: natural, slam tries.

[Over interference of 2NT]

3M by either hand shows poor hand.

Double or Redouble shows defensive cards, by opener can be the 4-3-3-3 hand with 16+ HCP.

New suit length/value showing.

Pass shows balanced hand, better than 3M.

Bidding reverts to natural.

One Level Suit Openings 1st or 2nd seat, Competitive - Overview

[Introduction]

This section discusses bidding when the opponents get into the auction after our side opens the bidding with a one level suit opening.

[General]

- Opener strives to pass on second round of bidding without close to standard opening values, even if shapely.
- Opposite limited 1D, 1H, and 1S openings, responder tries to place the contract quickly if possible.
- Responder assumes opener's values are often in the range of 10 to 12, not the standard 12 to 14.
- After 1D, 1H, or 1S opening with 15 to 16 or unbalanced 14, on the second round of bidding opener will bid aggressively when feasible, or reopen the bidding at the three level or lower.
- After 1C opening at Brave, where 1C can be 15-17 balanced, responder strives to bid with 9 or more points so that if responder passes, opener will often be safe taking no further action with 15 or an average 16.
- Responder holding a big hand, can use the negative double to learn more about opener's hand.

[Three Way Negative Double]

ETM TOPS employs a three way negative double after a one level suit opening in first or second seat and an overcall below 3NT. It shows either a normal negative double, or a hand too strong to make an immediate bid (normally 13 or more points if unbalanced, 16/17 if balanced), or a hand that wants to invite game with about 9 to 14 HCP (not 9 to 11 if bidding forced to three level) that has at least a mild fit for opener, often a doubleton honour, but no other good bid. Responses to three way negative doubles will be considered in a section below.

[Normal Negative Double at the Four Level – Shows Values]

ETM TOPS employs a normal negative double after a suit overcall at the four level. This double does not show a particular suit (e.g. like four cards in the other major) but instead just shows significant values that will be useful on both defense, if opener passes the double, or offense, if opener bids over the double.

[Constructive Free Bids by Responder]

A new suit bid by responder below game is non-forcing but constructive, about 6 to 12 HCP at the one level, about 8 to 12 HCP at the two level, about 10 to 13 HCP at the three level, and about 11 to 14 at the four level. It is not a negative free bid where the bid can be quite weak – instead it does show values but not enough to force opposite an opener that can be quite light.

Direct game bids by responder in a new suit are always natural and non-forcing in ETM TOPS. It shows values and/or length to play in game, and if a jump considerable length will be held.

[Cuebid by Responder]

A simple cuebid by responder shows a limit raise or better for opener's suit. With a bad limit raise consider just making a simple raise instead. A jump cuebid above 3NT shows a void in the suit bid, a fit for opener, and is a slam try. A jump cuebid below 3NT is two way: either it shows a stopper in the opponents suit, and wants opener to play the hand in 3NT unless very distributional, or it shows a void in the opponents suit and is a slam try. After the two way jump cuebid, usually opener will bid 3NT, and then responder will bid again with the void. If opener does not bid 3NT, responder, with a void, will know opener has no wasted values opposite the void. If the opponents bid opener will often be able to read what responder has, but normally opener assumes responder was just asking opener to bid 3NT.

[Forcing Passes]

ETM TOPS openings can be quite light, so often our side does not have a clear majority of the high cards. The only two times forcing passes are used in ETM TOPS are first when a clear game force has been established by the partnership, and second, when the bidding is forced to a certain level and that level has not been reached yet. Note that just bidding game does not establish a game force regardless of the vulnerability – bidding a game may be just taking a shot at it, and it can be based on shape, not points. ETM TOPS does not have many sequences where clear game forces are established in auction. One however is the jump cuebid mentioned above – for example 1H-1S-3S (two way cuebid)-4S:Pass is forcing.

[Optional Support Doubles]

Support doubles are used after RHO of responder passes or doubles, responder bids a suit at the one level and the player after responder (LHO of responder) makes a double, a notrump bid, or a suit below two of responder's suit. A double by opener shows three card support for responder's suit. For the 1C opening bid only, a support double may also show 22 or more HCP and two or more in responder's suit. Opener requires standard opening values or close to it to make a support double. Thus the double is optional since opener's pass does not deny three in responder's suit (some play mandatory support doubles but in ETM TOPS it is more important not to bid too much on 8-11 hands). Since the support double can be passed by responder with length in the opponent's suit, the support double is never made with a void there – with a void and three card support just support partner.

[Jumps by Responder]

A jump in opener's suit by responder is to play – essentially preemptive but not necessarily weak over the limited 1D, 1H or 1S openings. Over the preemptive jumps opener bids again with a maximum and/or great shape. After a minor suit opening a jump in a major is natural, to play if game, invitational with a six card suit if at the three level. All other jumps in new suits are fit showing, with Minifits used at the two level after a minor suit opening. Minifits show five or longer in the suit bid, and three or longer in opener's suit, about 6 to 10 HCP (7 to 10 if 1C opening @B), and are not-forcing. Fit showing bids at the three level or higher (or 1H-Double-2S) show length/values in the suit bid, at least 3+ (often 4+) in opener's suit if a major, 5+ if opener's suit is a minor, and enough values to force to the cheapest bid in opener's suit. These fit showing jumps are not perfect, such as showing always a beautiful 5+ card or longer suit (KQJxx) – instead they just show some values/length

in the suit bid (KQxx).

[Reopening by opener and penalty passes by responder]

Opener is expected to reopen the bidding at low levels when short in overcaller's suit, even with sub-minimum standard opening values (8-11). Thus responder must be careful when deciding to pass the reopening double, for opener can only be counted on for one defensive trick, not the two expected in standard.

[Opener's Bad Two Notrump]

If the right hand opponent of opener bids just before opener can make a second bid, then opener can bid 2NT to show a bad hand that wants to compete at the three level. This is the only version of the Good/Bad Two Notrump employs, and it is only available at opener's second call directly over a bid, including double, or even redouble.

[Responder's Heavy Two of opener's minor and Two Notrump]

Since opener can have less than standard opening values, responder must be careful not to overbid the hand in competitive auctions. In this regard, two auctions are heavier than standard. Directly after an overcall, two of opener's minor by responder is constructive, about 7 to 11, and if 7 or 8 with a nice fit. This is about 2 points higher than standard. Likewise responder's Two Notrump bid directly over an overcall shows about 12 to 13, and if the opening was a minor, responder promises at least three cards in opener's minor. With only two cards in opener's minor, either make a negative double, or if long in the opponent's suit, pass first and wait for any subsequent bidding.

[Standard ETM Competitive Methods]

See the ETM document on Standard ETM Competitive Methods, including methods against two suited overcalls like the unusual two notrump, and one notrump overcalls.

[Preempted – ETM TOPS]

ETM TOPS is relatively weak when preempted, due to the extended minimum range of one level openings compared to standard. In judging whether to take action or not, both opener and responder can compare their action against what they would do if the preempt still took place but opener had not opened. Then close decisions where responder does not have a fit for opener can be resolved towards what they would do in that case. For example after 1D-2S-? responder has a decision and after 1D-2S-Pass-Pass;? opener has a decision. In the first case responder can consider what would be done after Pass-2S-?. In the second case, opener can compare to what would be done after Pass-2S-Pass-Pass;?. In either case, by comparing what would be done if opener had not opened, the partnership can help make sure the bidding does not get overboard. Note that while preempts are effective against ETM TOPS one level openings, they cannot be freewheeling, since opener can be quite weak so it is not necessarily the ETM TOPS side that has the majority of the high cards or the best game prospects.

One Level Suit Openings 1st or 2nd seat, Competitive – Constructive Free Bids

[Introduction]

ETM TOPS uses Constructive Free Bids in competition by unpassed hands. After an overcall below 3NT, a new suit bid by responder below game is non-forcing but constructive, about 6 to 12 HCP at the one level, about 8 to 12 HCP at the two level, about 10 to 13 HCP at the three level, and about 11 to 14 at the four level. The Constructive Free Bid (CFB) is not the Negative Free Bid played by some where the hand can be quite weak – instead CFB does show values but not enough to force opposite an opener that can be quite light. Responder can have a little less points than is needed if holding a good long suit with playing value.

[When to make a negative double instead of a CFB]

When responder is short in the overcalled suit but does not have the values for a CFB, a negative double can be employed instead, as long as responder is comfortable with the continuations about the double. When responder is too strong for a CFB, then the Three Way Negative Double should be bid, unless a game bid or a jump bid describes the hand immediately. With exactly four cards in an unbid major, the negative double is usually preferred over the CFB.

[Opener's rebid after CFB, when opponents don't bid]

Without game interest but at least two in responder's suit, opener passes. With three or longer in responder's suit and at least game interest, opener can raise. With a game going hand, opener can bid game or cuebid below three notrump, which first asks for a stopper in the opponents suit. Notrump bids by opener are natural, with two notrump inviting game if responder is maximum. Jump bids are natural, showing a distributional hand and a maximum. With a singleton/void in responder's suit, opener bids naturally, but attempts to keep the bidding as low as possible, often rebidding the opening bid suit with no other good call available that would keep the bidding low. After opener's bid, responder's rebids are not forcing except for a cuebid.

[Opener's rebid after CFB, when opponents bid]

There is one special type of sequence used here. If the cheapest bid of responder's suit is three of a major or four of a minor, then a bid of that suit is to play, while a bid of the cheapest new suit is artificial, showing a raise for responder and game invitational values. If no new suit is available in this type of sequence then a double shows the game invitational hand (a version of the maximal support double). Aside from the special use of the double just mentioned, a double by opener shows a maximum hand, no good fit for responder, and not singleton or void in the suit doubled – it encourages a pass by responder if not too distributional. New suits by opener show distributional hands but no good fit (but remember the special use of the cheapest new suit when it is needed to show game invitational values). A cuebid below three notrump asks for a stopper in the opponent's suit – if the opponents have bid two suits naturally, then a cuebid does not ask but shows – it shows a stopper in the suit bid.

[With less than a CFB]

Pass and hope for a chance to bid later if it is necessary. Remember opener is often weak and it may not be fun to wander into an auction with few points and find yourself badly outgunned.

One Level Suit Openings 1st or 2nd seat, Competitive – Bad Two Notrump

[Introduction]

If the right hand opponent of opener bids just before opener can make a second bid, then opener can bid 2NT to show a bad hand that wants to compete at the three level. This is used to allow opener to distinguish between hands that merely want to compete to the three level, and hands that want to show values and bid at the three level. It is only available at opener's second call, and only directly over a bid, including double and redouble.

[Responder's action after 2NT]

Responder without exceptional values uses pass or correct bids, assuming at first that opener has clubs (if the opponents have not bid them) for one of the suits for the Bad Two Notrump bid. Thus responder will often just bid 3C, which opener can pass with Cs or bid another suit to show the nature of the hand. If responder does not want to risk playing in 3C, responder can bid another suit as pass or correct. With a strong hand, responder can cuebid, to show values, but still allow opener to describe hand type. With game going values, responder can also suggest a game contract, such as 3NT.

[Using the Bad Two Notrump to take up room]

The Bad Two Notrump can be used to preempt the bidding to the three level without overstating values. For example after 1D-Pass-1S-Double, opener can bid 2NT to take away the two level from the opponents, without promising much in values. It may be based on a spade fit, such as 1D-Pass-1S-Double;2NT-Pass-3C-Pass;3S, which shows a distributional raise to 3S, or it could be based on a shapely hand, such as 1D-Pass-1S-Double;2NT-Pass-3C-All Pass, which shows a minor two suiter based on length, not values.

One Level Suit Openings 1st or 2nd seat, Competitive – Three Way Negative Doubles

[Introduction]

ETM TOPS uses a Three Way Negative Double after a one level suit opening in first or second seat and an overcall below 3NT. The Three Way Negative Doubles shows either:

- 1) A normal negative double with four cards in an unbid major, and if there are two unbid majors then either both unbid majors or a rebid if opener bids the one not held.
- 2) A hand too strong to make an immediate bid (13+ if unbalanced or 16/17+ if balanced).
- 3) A hand with about 9 to 14 HCP, and no other good bid, and at least a mild fit for opener, often with honour doubleton in opener's suit. Prefer to pass if 9 to 11 and bidding is already forced to the three level. Generally prefer to make a negative double with this hand type when short in the overcaller's suit.

[Responding to the Three Way Negative Double]

When responder makes a three way negative double, opener's rebids are much like standard with these slight modifications:

- a) Instead of making a double jump to game (e.g. 1D-1S-Double-Pass;4H), opener should cuebid first, then bid the suit, to allow responder a chance to complete a description (e.g. 1D-1S-Double-Pass;2S-etc.).
- b) Holding less than standard opening values opener must be careful not to bid much. Without extra values opener never jumps in response to the negative double, and often uses a rebid of the opening suit to show a minimum without any other good bid. If the opponents bid over negative double, opener's usual action with less than standard opening values is to pass, even if four card support for responder's assumed major. However with close to standard opening values opener can show a fit for responder's major at the two level, or if the two level is not available, at the three level by using the Bad Two Notrump.
- c) While opener tends to rebid the opening suit with a minimum, after a 1D, 1H or 1S opening bid, opener tries not to make a simple rebid of the opening suit holding decent standard opening values or better. For example holding 14-15 and 6+Hs, the 1H opener will try to jump rebid in Hs or make a cuebid.
- d) After a 1D, 1H, or 1S opening bid, with 15 or 16, or 14 with a 6 card or longer suit, opener will jump rebid if possible below 3NT, or bid 4 of a major.
- e) Opener's 1NT rebid, or a jump rebid to 2NT if RHO passes, show the same hand type/values as it does without competition. For example: 1D-1S-Double-Pass;1NT shows 13-14 or 10-12 with 3Hs. Note that 2NT by opener is Bad Two Notrump if RHO of opener does not pass.

[Follow up actions]

Responder can make a number of follow-up actions after opener's rebid:

- Game bids suggest place to play.
- If opener rebids 1NT, and the opponents do not bid over that, then the 1XYZ structure is used.
- 1NT or 2NT is natural but does not promise a full stopper – cuebid is used next to ask for full stopper.
- A raise of opener's rebid is natural, invitational if below game.
- A non-jump bid of opener's suit shows 9 to 12 at the two level, 11 to 13 at the three level, and shows at least a doubleton in the suit, often a doubleton honour.
- A jump to three of opener's suit, or four of opener's minor, is a good game invitational with a fit, about 12 to 13 HCP if opener has not shown extras.
- A jump to 4NT is natural, slam invitational – cuebid first then bid 4NT to asking for keycards.
- If opener bids a major implied by the negative double, then:
 - Unbid suits below game are forcing, showing 13+, and are forcing to the cheapest notrump.
 - Cuebid below 3NT asks for stopper, but if followed by bid in the major was a slam try
 - Cuebid above 3NT slam try in major
- If opener did not bid an unbid major, then:
 - A bid of an unbid major is natural, showing 13+, and is forcing to the cheapest notrump.
 - A bid of the unbid minor is to play unless opener has a maximum, showing usually 6+ in the minor suit and four in the other unbid suit.
 - A jump bid of the unbid minor below game is game invitational, showing usually 6+ in the minor suit and four in the other unbid suit.
 - A cuebid shows a forcing hand, often with length in the unbid minor and 13+. It is forcing to the cheapest notrump.
 - A jump cuebid is a slam try, a fit for opener's last bid suit and/or a void in the overcalled suit.

One Level Suit Openings 1st or 2nd seat, Competitive – Example Auctions

[Introduction]

This section provides a number of example auctions which show the ETM TOPS competitive methods in action.

[Examples]

1D-1H-Double-Pass;2C-Pass-2S
 1D-1H-Double-Pass;1NT-Pass-2D
 1H-2S-Double-Pass;2NT-Pass-3C
 1D-1S-2H
 1D-1S-2H-2S;2NT
 1C-1S-Double-2S;3NT
 1C-1H-2C
 1D-1S-2NT
 1D-1S-2H-2S;Double
 1D-1S-2H-2S;3C
 1D-1S-2H-2S;3H
 1D-1S-3D
 1C-1H-2D-3H;4D
 1C-1H-2D-3H;3S
 1C-1H-2D-3H;Double
 1C-1S-2D-3S;Double
 1C-1S-2D-3S;4D
 1D-1H-1S-3H;3S
 1D-1H-1S-3H;Double

Forcing to at least 2NT, 13+.
 Artificial, GF, the 1XYZ structure is used.
 Non-forcing, 6+Cs, usually 4+Ds.
 CFB, 5+Hs, NF, about 8 to 12.
 Good/bad fit for H, 2+Ss, maximum values.
 To play, often maximum 15-17 balanced @B.
 Constructive, about 7 to 11.
 Natural, about 12 to 13.
 No good fit for H, 2+Ss, maximum values.
 Artificial, GI raise in Hs (cheapest new suit).
 To play, H fit but not enough values to GI.
 Preemptive, not necessarily super weak.
 To play, not enough to invite game.
 Artificial, cheapest new suit, GI in Ds.
 No good fit for Ds, 2+Hs, values+.
 Game try in Ds, no cheapest suit bid below 4D.
 To play, not enough to invite game.
 To play, not enough to invite game.
 Game try in Ss, no cheapest suit bid below 3S.

1D-1H-3H	Asks opener to bid 3NT, either with stopper in Hs or void and will bid again.
1S-2D-2H-3D;Double	Game try in Hs, no cheapest suit bid below 3H.
1S-2D-Double-Pass;2S-Pass-3H	13+, forcing with Hs.
1H-Double-2S	Fit showing jump shift, 3/4Hs, values/length in Ss, values/shape to play in at least 3H.
1D-1H-2S	Minifit, 5+Ss, 3+Ds, 6-10, NF.
1C-Double-2H	Minifit, 5+Hs, 3+Cs, 6-10 (7-10 @B), NF.
1C-Double-2S-3D;Double	Penalty, 2S defined hand.
1D-1S-Double-Pass;2H-Pass-3C	13+, Cs, forcing.
1D-1S-Double-Pass;2D-Pass-3C	Non-forcing, 6+Cs, usually 4Hs.
1H-1S-Double-Pass;2C-Pass-2H	9 to 12, doubleton H.
1H-1S-Double-Pass;2C-Pass-3H	12 to 13, 3+Hs, GI.
1D-Double-1S-2C;Double	Support double.
1D-1H-1S-2C;Double	No S fit, 2+Cs, maximum.
1D-Double-1S-2C;2NT	Good/bad 2NT, competing to 3 level on bad hand.
1D-Double-1S-2C;3D	6+Ds, maximum.
1D-Double-1S-2C;2NT-Pass-3C-Pass-3D	Long Ds, but not maximum values.
1D-Double-1S-2C;2D	6Ds, not maximum, but not 8-9 either or would have passed.

One Notrump Opening, All Seats

[1NT Opening Description]

Range can be one of these:

- In first and second seat @B, 10-12, often 3+Cs.
- In first and second seat @A, 15-17, or 14 with a five card minor, especially 3-3-2-5.
- In third and fourth seat, 14-18, only 14/15 without a four card major, and 14 only with long minor.

[1NT Structures]

ETM Notrump Structures are in separate documents, and there are different options. There are two recommended options:

- Use the ETM mini/weak notrump structure for 10-12 openings, using the ETM Regular or Advanced notrump structure for the 15-17/14-18.
- Use the ETM weak notrump version structure for all openings, and use the simplified Jacoby Stayman to further reduce headaches.

[1NT In Competition]

See two separate documents: ETM Notrump In Competition and ETM Rescues.

[10-12 Tactical Note]

Since the 10-12 notrump often has 3+Cs, if playing the ETM mini structure, if holding a weak hand with five clubs and a four card major, ask for fit in major, and if none signoff in clubs.

Two Clubs Opening, 1st or 2nd seat – Artificial – Intermediate/Strong

[2C Opening Description]

The ETM TOPS 2C opening is a strong intermediate or very strong opening – it shows at least 16 or HCP, and is most often 18-19 balanced or 16/17-22 with a five card or longer major. It also handles game forcing hands with diamonds, hearts, or spades. The following are the hand types for the 2C opening:

- 18-19 balanced. Can have five card major.
- 16-22 with a five card or longer major and often unbalanced. If 16 must be 6 or longer major.
- Almost game force with six or longer diamonds.
- Game force with diamonds, hearts, or spades.

[Responses to 2C Opening]

General approach: two diamonds waiting, two hearts or two spades to play opposite 18-19 balanced, transfer responses starting at 2NT.

Response	Style	Description
2D	Waiting	Normal response waiting to find out opener's hand type.
2H	To Play	Five or longer hearts, to play opposite 18-19 balanced unless good fit.
2S	To Play	Five or longer spades, to play opposite 18-19 balanced unless good fit. Prefer 2D if no plan for opener's rebid with Hs over 2S.
2NT	Transfer	Two hand types: 1) 6+ clubs and a hand that wants to play in 3C opposite 18-19 balanced unless good fit. 2) Any shape, A,K, or Q in every suit and at least 4 controls (Ace=2,King=1) but bid 3NT instead if 4 kings & 12-15 balanced. Hand type 2) is not necessarily balanced but if long clubs has extra values (15+). Opener usually rebids 3C, and then responder passes with 1) or bids longest suit (3NT if balanced) with 2).
3C	Transfer	6+Ds, either: 1) to play opposite 18-19 balanced unless good fit 2) good or solid diamonds (if only 6Ds must have 3 of top 4 honors).
3D	Transfer	6+Hs, good or solid hearts (if only 6Hs must have 3 of top 4 honors).
3H	Transfer	6+Ss, good or solid spades (if only 6Ss must have 3 of top 4 honors).
3S	Transfer	6+Cs, semi-solid clubs and outside A or K, or solid clubs.
3NT	Natural	All four kings, balanced, 12-15.
4C	Transfer	7+Ds, weak broken suit.
4D	Transfer	7+Hs, weak broken suit.
4H	Transfer	7+Ss, weak broken suit.

[After 2C-2D]

General approach: natural except absolute game force hands rebid 3C artificial.

Response	Style	Description
2H	Natural, NF	5+Hs, 16-22, 6+Hs if only 16. Not maximum with 6+Hs.
2S	Natural, NF	5+Ss, 16-22, 6+Ss if only 16. Not maximum with 6+Ss.
2NT	Natural, NF	18-19 balanced, may have five card major. 2NT system used over this.
3C	Artificial	Unbalanced absolute game force with clubs not longest suit.
3D	Natural, NF	6+Ds, just below absolute GF. About 19-22.
3H	Natural, NF	6+Hs, just below absolute GF. About 19-22.
3S	Natural, NF	6+Ss, just below absolute GF. About 19-22.
3NT	4-4-4-1	GF (24-26) with 4-4-4-1 exactly. 4C is now Gerber, other bids natural.
4C	Minors, NF	Both minors, very distributional, just below absolute GF.
4D	Natural	7+Ds, enough for game based on very long suit.
4H	Natural	7+Hs, enough for game based on very long suit.
4S	Natural	7+Ss, enough for game based on very long suit.
4NT	4-4-4-1	27-30 with 4-4-4-1 exactly. 5C is now Gerber, other bids natural.

[After 2C-2D;2H or 2C-2D;2S]

After 2C-2D;2H or 2C-2D;2S this is the rebid structure for responder.

Response	Style	Description
Pass	Weak	0-4, no ace, and if 3+ in M then 4-3-3-3 or no working card.
2S/2H, 2NT/2S	Asking	These bids are like a forcing notrump over a major suit opening. 2S is used over 2H to provide more bidding room. The bids do not promise a good hand, and can be used to find a better spot than 2M. Can be used with 9+, a fit for M, and no singleton or void.
2NT/2H	Artificial	This shows 5+Ss, forcing to at least to 3H.
3C,3D, 3H/2S	Natural	These natural bids show 5 or longer in the suit bid and are game forcing. If six or longer the suit did not have the quality for an immediate transfer. Very rarely can be 4-4-4-1 shape with 4 in bid suit & 4 in M, and 11+.
3M	Natural	Minimum raise in M, 0-5, 3+ in M. One working card (or a couple of queens) and some shape that might provide a ruff.
3S/2H, 4C, 4D, 4H/2S	Splinter	Singleton or void in the suit bid, 6-10. With more bid a new suit first.
3NT	Raise	5-8, fit for M, no singleton or void.
4M	Raise	4+ trumps, 3-6 HCP, an ace or a working king and a singleton or void.
4NT	Asking	RKCB for M

Opener treats the 2S/2H or 2NT/2S bid like a forcing notrump and shows a second suit if one held. 2C-2D;2H-2S(asks);2NT shows 4Ss, while 3S over 2S shows 5+Ss, 6+Hs. 2C-2D;2M-ask;3M shows 6 in M, but hand not good enough for 2C-2D;3M – new suits after 3M are cuebids for M. 2C-2D;2M-ask;3NT shows a 5-3-3-2. A jump to 4 of a new suit shows a great two suiter, with 5 in m and 6+ or great 5 in M. A jump to 4M shows 7+ in M, but minimum in values, about 16-18.

After opener's rebid, 3M by responder is non-forcing, just a doubleton and some values, about 5-7, while a jump to 4M shows 9-11 and a fit for M. If 4M is not a jump it is just a choice of contracts.

[After 2C-2D;3C]

General approach: rebid three diamonds more waiting or show controls.

Response	Style	Description
3D	Waiting	At most 2 controls (ace=2, king=1), so at most one ace and if one ace then no kings, and at most two kings then if one or more kings then no aces.
3H	Natural	3 controls, either an ace & a king or three kings.
3S	Natural	4 controls, two aces or four kings or one ace and two kings.
3NT	Natural	5 controls.
4C	Artificial	6 controls.
4D	Artificial	7 or more controls.

After response of 3H or 3S, bidding is forced to 4H or higher, so 3NT by either player is forcing. After response of 3NT or higher, bidding is forced to 5H or higher. Opener's rebids of 3NT or higher always show two under when the suit cannot be bid at the three level:

- 3NT=Ds
- 4C=Hs if 3H is unavailable (otherwise this shows Ds & Cs)
- 4D=Ss. if 3S unavailable (otherwise this shows long Ds).

Over these bids the in-between bid shows no a good fit for opener, the bid of opener's suit shows a fit. For example after 2C-2D;3C-3H(3 controls);3NT(Ds), 4C would show no good D fit, 4D would show fit.

4NT by either player is natural on follow-up sequences unless responder raises or shows a good fit for opener's suit.

[After 2C-2D;3C-3D]

General approach: natural, using 3NT to show diamonds.

Response	Style	Description
3H	Natural	5+Hs, GF.
3S	Natural	5+Ss, GF.
3NT	Diamonds	5+Ds, hand that does not want to bid above 3NT, NF.
4C	Minors	Both minors, distributional and GF.
4D	Diamonds	Long diamonds, a hand so distributional or strong so no 3NT since might be passed.
4H	Natural	7+Hs, very strong hand, about 11 tricks.
4S	Natural	7+Ss, very strong hand, about 11 tricks.

[After 2C-2D;3D, 2C-2D;3H or 2C-2D;3S]

After 2C-2D-3D, 2C-2D-3H, 2C-2D-3S, responder's without slam interest usually bids either 3NT or 4 of opener's suit. With slam interest responder bids a new suit, which shows values and length there – it does not promise a fit for opener's suit but shows either a fit for opener or enough values to make slam a decent possibility.

[After 2NT transfer response to 2C]

The 2NT response to 2C is two-way: either a weak transfer to Cs or any shape with A,K, or Q in every suit and at least 4 controls (Ace=2,King=1). Opener usually bids 3C, and then any bid by responder shows the 4 controls or better hand, game forcing, and natural bidding is used after this. If opener instead bids above 3C to show the nature of a strong hand, responder with a weak hand and Cs cannot pass so simply rebids Cs or raises opener's suit with a mild or better fit, while all other bids shows the 4 controls or better hand.

[After 3C or higher transfer response to 2C]

After 2C and responder's transfer response (not including 3C), opener will usually just complete the transfer or attempt to place the contract. Regardless of whether opener completes the transfer or not, natural bidding is used by both players, with new suits forcing if bid below game, and responder's suit bid tending to show location of values as opposed to length.

[After 2C-3NT]

After 2C-3NT, which shows a balanced hand, all four kings, 12-15, opener will often just place the contract. 4NT is slam invitational, while 4m looks for a minor suit fit (forcing to 4NT), and 5M looks for a major suit fit (forcing to 5NT).

Two Diamonds Opening, 1st or 2nd seat – Natural and Intermediate/Strong

[2D Opening Description]

The ETM TOPS 2D opening is a natural, non-forcing, intermediate/strong opening – it shows a good 15 to about 22, with 5+Ds or exactly 4-4-4-1. If 15 or 16 must have 6+Ds, and if 15 the suit must be good. With long diamonds and almost a game force, open 2C instead of 2D.

[Responses to 2D Opening]

General approach: two hearts is a negative relay – forcing but looking for a place to play or showing some game interest. Two notrump asks with a game forcing hand. Other bids are natural.

Response	Style	Description
Pass	Very weak	A hand that would pass 1D at standard but not even close to a response
2H	Negative, Asking	At most game interest, but often weaker looking for best place to play.
2S	To play	Spades, usually 6+, to play unless opener has fit.
2NT	GF, Asking	Establishes game force, asks opener's hand type.
3C	Natural	Clubs, GF.
3D	Invite	Mild game invite in Ds. Other option is to ask with 2H first.
3H	Natural	5+Hs, GF. Prefer 2NT with poor five card suit.
3S	Natural	5+Ss, GF. Prefer 2NT with average five card suit.
3NT	To Play	Opener not to bid unless very distributional.
4C, 4H, 4S	Splinter	Singleton or void, slam try inDs.
4D	RKCB	Roman Keycard Blackwood, Ds as trumps

[After 2D-2H]

General: Opener without considerable extras looks for a place to play. After opener's response, responder's suit bids are natural and not-forcing, jumps below game are game invitational, and game bids to play.

Response	Style	Description
2S	Natural	4+ spades
2NT	Hearts	Artificial, shows 4+ hearts
3C	Natural	4+ clubs
3D	Natural	6+ Diamonds, not almost GF
3H	Natural	4+ hearts, almost GF
3S	Natural	4+ spades, almost GF
3NT	Clubs	4+ clubs, almost GF, not too distributional
4C,4H,4S	Natural	At least 6Ds, at least five in suit bid, non-forcing but very good hand
4D	Natural	7+Ds, non-forcing, a hand not suitable for notrump but very good

[After 2D-2NT]

General approach: opener bids naturally on three level. Responder's suit bids below game are forcing of course (since 2NT is game forcing), and if responder bids 4D at any time it is RKCB for diamonds.

Response	Style	Description
3C	Natural	4+ Clubs
3D	Natural	6+ Diamonds
3H	Natural	4+ Hearts
3S	Natural	4+ Spades
3NT	Natural	6+Ds, no other 4 card suit, balanced.
4C, 4H, 4S	Natural	At least 6Ds, at least five in suit bid, very good hand
4D	Natural	7+Ds, very good hand but not suitable for notrump

Two Hearts/Two Spades Openings, 1st or 2nd seat – Limited

This is a Goldilocks two bid, it shows usually 10-13 HCP with six or longer in the major bid. It can have 9 HCP with a great six card suit (AKQ usually) or with KQ in the suit and an outside ace. It can have 8 or 9 with a seven card or longer suit and at least two of the top three honors.

See the ETM document on Goldilocks two bids.

Two Notrump Opening, 1st or 2nd seat – 20-21 Balanced.

[2NT Responses]

See the document ETM Two Notrump Structure.

[2NT In Competition]

See the document ETM Notrump In Competition.

Three Level and Higher Opening Bids in 1st or 2nd seat

3C: Less than 10 HCP, no outside ace. Always seven or longer in suit vulnerable. Can have six card suit not vulnerable if decent fillers in the suit plus not much strength outside. Open 3NT with 7Cs to the AKQ or AKJ.

After 3C:

- 3M is NF, with a long suit.
- 3D is artificial GF asking for cheapest three card major. Without a three card major, opener rebids 4C with awful suit, or bids 3NT otherwise.
- 4D is RKCB(1430). After reply and queen ask if necessary, new suits are control asks.
- Jump shifts are fit showing in competition, natural without competition, slow bidding stronger than fast bidding (3C-3D;3H-4S is stronger than 3C-4S).
- 4NT is natural, slam invitational but only a mild fit, often two small in Cs.

3D,3H,3S: Less than 8 HCP, no outside ace and rarely an outside king. Always seven or longer in suit vulnerable. Can have six card suit not vulnerable if decent fillers

in the suit plus not much strength outside. 4C/3X RKCB (1430), and after any queen ask if necessary, new suits are control asks. New suits and game bids NF. Jump shifts are fit showing in competition, natural and to play without competition. 4NT is natural, slam invitational but only a mild fit, often two small in suit opened.

3NT: Gambling, seven card or longer minor suit headed by AKQ or AKJ, no outside ace or king. 4C/4D/5D is pass or bid shortness – pass if that minor suit held or bid shortness if holding other minor, with NT showing shortness in Ds. 4M is to play. 5C is pass or correct, pass with Cs, bid 5D with Ds. 4NT asks opener to bid suit, responder wants opener to play to protect possible lead into Qx or something.

4X: Preempt, long seven card or longer suit, not a great hand. New suits to play. 4NT is RKCB for opener's suit.

4NT: Ace asking.

One Club Opening, 3rd or 4th seat – Hybrid: Clubs or Balanced.

[1C Opening Description]

The ETM TOPS 1C opening is almost the same as the opening in 1st and 2nd seat – again it is a hybrid opening – it shows either a natural club opening or a balanced hand with at least 2Cs. The opening is forcing since either hand type is unlimited. The following are the hand types for the 1C opening:

- 1) Clubs, 10+, unbalanced (includes 5-4-2-2 or 6-3-2-2 shapes etc.), unlimited. Often choose instead to open 2C or pass when 10-12.
- 2) 19+ balanced, can have five card major.
- 3) 10-15 balanced, 3+Cs, planning on passing next or raising responder's bid or rebidding a suit at the one level. If 15 usually a four card major. Often pass with 10-12, especially in 4th seat. With 4=4=2=3 exactly prefer to open 1H if H suit is good.

[Responses to 1C Opening]

General approach: one diamond 0-9 with no other good bid, other responses natural, 1M shows five or longer.

Response	Style	Description
1D	Hybrid	0-9, no five card major.
1H	Natural	5+Hs, 0 to 9 HCP, if 8/9 not a good suit.
1S	Natural	5+Ss, 0 to 9 HCP, if 8/9 not a good suit.
1NT	Natural	NF, Balanced, 8-9, no four card major expected.
2C	Natural	5-9 with 4+Cs, often 5+Cs, no four card major, 5-7 only with 6+Cs.
2D,2H, 2S	Minifit	5-9 HCP, 5+ in suit, 3+ in Cs.
2NT	Natural	NF, balanced, 8-9, 5Cs, no four card major.
3C	Preemptive	2-4 HCP, 6+Cs.
3D, 3H, 3S	Fit showing	5+Cs, 4+ in suit bid, 8-10, forcing to 3NT or 4C.

[Balanced hands after 1C-1D]

Range	Rebid
10-15	Rebid four card major, or if none, a three card major.
19-21	1NT
22-24	2NT
25-27	3NT
28-30	4NT
31-32	5NT

[Balanced hands after 1C-1M]

Range	Rebid
10-15	Pass or bid 2M or bid 1S over 1H
19-21	1NT or use 2D asking bid if three card support
22-24	2NT or use 2D asking bid if three card support
25-27	3NT or use 2D asking bid if three card support
28+	Use 2D asking bid.

[Balanced hands after 1C-1NT (8-9)]

Range	Rebid
10-15	Pass
19-22	3NT.
23-24	4NT.
25+	4C (Gerber)

[Balanced hands after 1C-2C (5-9)]

Range	Rebid
10-15	Pass or 3C
19+	2NT

[Balanced hands after mini-fit shift or 1C-3C]

Range	Rebid
10-15	Pass
19+	Cheapest notrump (2NT asks) or raise.

[After 1C-1D]

See the 1C-1D notrump ladder above, with these key ones:

- 1NT: 19-21
- 2NT: 22-24
- 3NT: 25-27.

Since responder has denied a five card major, there is no need to play Jacoby transfers over these bids. Instead the usual notrump systems are on, except that instead of transfers the cheapest D bid is a signoff in Ds, and the cheapest H bid shows a weak hand with both minors.

1C-1D;1H and 1C-1D;1S rebids are non-forcing though can be quite strong. These are natural or can be three card suits if 10-15 balanced. Responder bids naturally over these. There is no fourth suit forcing - 1C-1D;1S-2H for example shows 4Hs, 6+Ds, weak hand.

1C-1D;2C denies a four card major of course, and is limited to 16 HCP – it may have only 5Cs & 4Ds and no other good rebid. After 2C, responder usually just passes or bids 2D with a long suit, but with some values and a C fit, can try 2M, 2NT, or 3C.

1C-1D;2D is a two way bid just like with an unpassed hand but responses are different since 1D now denies a four card major. 1C-1D;2D shows either 5+Cs & 4+Ds strong but below absolute game forcing strength, or long clubs and 20+ HCP. 2NT asks hand type, usually 7-9: 3C shows long Cs, 20+ HCP, forcing to 3NT or 4C, 3D above shows Cs & Ds. Over 2D, 2M shows values or length in the major bid, weakness in the other major, about 7-9. 3C and 3D both show weakness, and if responder bids 3D over 2D, it is a signoff if opener has both minors, but opener is to bid again with the long C hand.

1C-1D;3C and reverses into a major (1C-1D;2H and 1C-1D;2S) just like in first or second seat.

[After 1C-1M]

After 1C-1M, opener has these non-raises available:

Pass	10-15 with 2 in M and not 6+Cs.
1S/1H	Natural with 5+Cs, usually just 4Ss, forcing, less than 3Hs.
1NT	19-21 balanced or semi-balanced, singleton or doubleton in M . Prefer to rebid 1NT instead of making a reverse with only 19-21 and just 5Cs.
2C	5+Cs, often 6Cs, 10-17, but if 16-17 only 5Cs and hand not strong enough for another bid. Denies 3 in M .
2D	Two-way bid described below – either normal Cs & D reverse (including long Cs and D values) or very strong hand often with 3 in M and/or GF with long Cs.
2H/1S	Natural with 5+Cs, usually just 4Hs, forcing with reverse strength.
2NT	22-24, two in M , or can be 4-4-4-1 with 22-24 and singleton in M .
3C	15/16-18, 6+Cs, 15 with 7+Cs.
3NT	25-27, two in M , or can be 4-4-4-1 with 25-27 and singleton in M .

Note that much of the bidding is the same as with first or second seat 1C opening.

[1C-1H;1S is forcing]

1C-1H;1S is forcing and natural, and can have a hand that would jump shift in standard (1C-1H;2S). After 1C-1H;1S natural bidding is used, with 2D as natural with 5+Hs, 4+Ds. After 1C-1H;1S, with a weak hand and 5+Hs, since responder cannot pass (1S is forcing), responder must rebid 2C, 2H, 2D, or 2S - responder can bid 2C over 1S with only 2Cs if no other rebid seems best since opener always has 5+Cs.

[1C-1M;1NT]

After the 1NT rebid showing 19-21 and denying 3 in **M**, 1XYZ is used (see section in the document).

[After 1C-1M;2C]

New suits natural & non-forcing, 2M signoff, 2NT and 3C mildly invitational (2NT promises a partial C fit), jump new suits natural invitational with 5-5 or better hands.

[After 1C-1S;2H]

As by unpassed hand except 1C-1S-2H-2S shows 6+Ss, and all other bids show exactly 5Ss. With just 5Cs, prefer to rebid 1NT, instead of 2H, with 19-21, unless void in Ss.

[After 1C-1M;2NT or 1C-1M;3NT]

As by unpassed hand.

[After 1C-1M;3C]

As by unpassed hand.

[1C-1M raise structure]

2M:	three or four card support. Maximum of 15
2S,3D,3H:	three card or longer support, singleton or void in suit bid, either raise to 3M or hand too good to splinter above 3M. About 15-17 HCP or 20+ HCP.
3M:	three card or longer support, no singleton or void, 16-17.
3S, 4D, 4H:	three card or longer support, singleton or void in suit, values for a raise to 4M. About 18-20 HCP.
4C	four card support, a good six card or longer club suit, slam interest.
4M:	four card or longer support, no singleton or void, about 18-20 HCP.
2D	asks, may have four card support.

All game tries are now natural. 2NT is not used as an asking bid.

[1C-1M;2D asking bid]

The 2D rebid by opener is an asking bid with two types of hands:

- 1) The standard meaning: a reverse with 5+ clubs, 4+ diamonds, and 18 or more points.
- 2) An asking bid, with a very strong hand, used to determine responder's strength.

Responder replies as follows to the 2D asking bid:

2M	five or longer in M , 0-4 HCP.
2OM	five or longer in M , 5-7 HCP.
2NT	five or longer in M , 8-9 HCP. Often not good suit since did not open.

After responder's rebid, 2NT or 3M, which ever is cheaper, asks for further description, and shows very strong hand. 3NT or 4M is to play. 1C-1M;2D-2M;3M is game invitational. All other bids over responder's reply show the first hand type meaning, a club or diamond reverse.

[1C-1NT(8-9)]

After 1C-1NT(8-9), game bids are to play and 2C is to play. Rest of bidding like opposite unpassed hand.

[1C-2C]

1C-2C is a natural raise, 5-9 & 4+Cs and no four card major, 5-7 only with 6+Cs. After 1C-2C, 2NT handles strong balanced hands with 19+ balanced, and this is forcing to game. 1C-2C;3C is to play. A new suit after 2C shows values and asks for a further description. After any of opener's rebids, 3C by responder shows 5-7 with 6+Cs. A jump in a suit shows a good C fit, singleton or void in suit bid, and is forcing to 3NT or 4C.

[Minifits]

Minifits are described in the separate ETM document.

[1C-2NT(8-9 & 5Cs)]

After 1C-2NT(8-9 with 5Cs), game bids are to play and 3C is to play. 1C-2NT;3X shows location of values. 1C-2NT;4X is a splinter, showing C fit and a singleton/void in the suit bid. 1C-2NT;4C is RKCB for Cs. 1C-2NT;4NT is a quantitative slam invite.

[1C-3C]

After 1C-3C, a very weak raise in Cs, 2-4 & 6+Cs. Bidding as with unpassed hand.

[1C-3D]

After 1C-3D fit showing responses 4C and game bids are to play. Over 3D opener can bid 3H to ask: 3S no values in the majors, 3NT Ss values, 4C/4D natural with H values. After responder's reply to 3H, opener can place contract, bid 4m to establish fit and invite cuebid, or bid 4M as a cuebid with minor suit slam interest. Other bids after 3D are natural and promise Cs. 4NT is RKCB for Ds if bid immediately over 3D, otherwise it is RKCB for Cs.

[1C-3H, 1C-3S]

After 1C-3H and 1C-3S fit showing responses, 4C and game bids are to play. Other bids after the fit showing bids are natural and promise Cs. 4NT is RKCB for the jump suit bid if bid immediately over it, otherwise it is RKCB for Cs.

One Diamond Opening, 3rd or 4th seat – Diamonds & Natural

[1D Opening Description]

The ETM TOPS 1D opening is a natural opening with 10 or more HCP. It is non-forcing but can only be passed by a hand without 4+Ds, and with no ace and no king of diamonds, and less than 5 HCP. Thus 1D can have close to game forcing values but still open at the one level. Hand types are:

- 1) Diamonds, 10+, unbalanced, non-forcing. Often choose to open 2D or pass with 10-12.
- 2) 4+Ds, balanced, 10-15, usually a four card major if 15. Often pass with 10-12, especially in 4th seat.

[Responses to 1D Opening]

General approach: natural.

Response	Style	Description
Pass	Weak	Lower than standard. No ace, no king of diamonds, not 4+Ds, not 5 or more HCP.
1H	Natural	4+Hs, 3/4/5+. Stretch to bid a major with five in suit. May have longer minor.
1S	Natural	4+Ss, 3/4/5+. Stretch to bid a major with five in suit. May have longer minor.
1NT	Standard	3/4/5-9, balanced or semi-balanced, usually no four card major.
2C	Natural	3/4/5-9, 5 good clubs or six or longer.
2D	Natural	0-6, weak raise in Ds, 4+Ds.
2H	Mini-fit	5-9 HCP, 5+Hs, 3+Ds.
2S	Preemptive	As above with spades.
2NT	Natural	NF, balanced with 5Ds, 8-9 and no four card major. Usually not good D suit since did not open.
3C, 3H, 3S	Fit Showing	5+Ds, 4 in suit bid, 8-9, 3C forcing just to 3D, 3H or 3S forcing to 3NT or 4D. 3H or 3S bids rare.
3D	Natural	7-9, 4+Ds.

[Balanced hands bidding]

Response	10-15
1H	2H if four card support, otherwise pass or 1NT.
1S	2S if four card support, otherwise pass or 1NT.
Other	Pass or bid Ds

[After 1D-1M]

After 1D-1M, opener has these non-raises available:

Pass	3 in M , minimum hand 10-13.
1S/1H	5+Ds, 4Ss usually, forcing if responder has a standard response.
1NT	10-15, not 3 in M if minimum (pass 1M then).
2C	4+Cs & 5+Ds, or after 1D-1S 1-4-4-4, 11-18, NF.
2D	11-17, 6+Ds or 5+Ds & 4Hs after 1S. 5Ds only if 16-17.
2H/1S	Natural with 5+Ds, usually just 4Hs, forcing, 18+ with 5Ds, 16+ with 6+Ds.
2S/1H	Artificial (bid 1S with 4Ss even if very strong), shows 6+Ds, no other four card suit, and 16-18 with 3Hs or 19-23. 2NT and 3C both asks, with 3D showing the 16-18 with 3Hs, all other bids showing 19-23. 3D by responder directly over 2S is a signoff.
3C	4+Cs & 5+Ds, 19-23, forcing if responder has a standard response.
3D	6+Ds, 16-18, not 3 in M .
3H/1S	Artificial, 6+Ds, 19-23 with no other four card suit, exactly 2 in M . After this bid, responder places the contract, or bids 4C or 4H cuebid to invite a bid of 4S to show Ax or Kx in suit.
3NT	6+Ds, 19-23, no other four card suit, singleton/void in M .

[Natural bidding after opener's rebid]

After 1M and opener's rebid, subsequent bidding is natural. After a 1NT rebid, 1XYZ is used, but 2D is not GF but just shows an invite in Ds. After opener's suit rebid, suits are natural and non-forcing including a bid of the fourth suit (so 1D-1H;1S-2C shows long Cs, non-forcing). Jumps are mild game invites.

[1D-1M raise structure]

2M:	10-15, 4 in M , can have 3 in M only if 1D-1S-2S and must then have 4Hs.
2NT:	Four card or longer support, singleton or void in a suit, about 15-17, a raise to 3M, or after 1D-1S, a raise with 6+Ds & exactly 3Ss 16-18. Can also be a singleton/void and a hand too strong to just double jump to show hand, about 21-23. This strong hand type will always bid again over responder's signoff. 3C asks for hand type: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 3D is M=Hs shows singleton/void C 15-17, - 3D if M=Ss shows 6+Ds, 3Ss, 16-18, - 3H shows singleton/void in OM, 15-17 - 3S if M=Ss shows singleton/void C, 15-17, - 4C shows a singleton/void in Cs & 21-23, - 4D shows a long great suit & 21-23, - 3S (if M=Hs) or 4H (if M=Ss) shows a singleton/void in that suit and 21-23.
3M:	Four card or longer support, no singleton or void, 16-17.
3S, 4C, 4H:	Four card or longer support, singleton or void in suit, raise to 4M with maximum and good playing value. About 18-20.
4D	Four card support, seven card or longer diamond suit, maximum.
4M:	Maximum but does not want to reveal hand type.

Game try style natural including 2NT, which is not used to ask.

[1D-1NT(3/4/5-9)]

After 1D-1NT(3/4-9), opener passes with 10-15 balanced, and opener can show a hand with Ds and no interest in game by bidding 2D, but responder is expected to bid again with 9 and a D fit. 1D-1NT;2C is natural & non-forcing, but responder is expected to bid again with 8-9. 1D-1NT;3D is a game invite, with about 16-17 & 6+Ds. 2NT shows 6+Ds, 18+, forcing to at least 3D. 3C is forcing to 3NT or 4m. 2M shows values/length, unbalanced hand, game interest or stonger. 3M shows singleton/void in the suit bid, forcing to 3NT or 4m. 3NT is a suggestion to play there based on a source of tricks in Ds.

[1D-2C]

1D-2C is a natural bid with 6+Cs or five good Cs, 3/4/5-9. Opener passes with 10-15 balanced or 10-14 with a C fit. With 5+Ds and 10-16 opener bids 2D. 3C is a raise with about 15-16. 3D shows 16-18 and 6+Ds. With a bigger hand opener bids 2M to show values, 2NT to show a source to tricks in Ds, and 3M to show a singleton/void in **M**, a C fit, forcing to 3NT or 4C. 3NT or 5m is to play.

[1D-2D]

1S-2D is a weak raise, 4+Ds, 0-6, a 'courtesy' just in case opener has an almost game force. After 1D-2D, opener often passes or raises Ds to preempt the opponents. New suits and 2NT look for possible game if responder is maximum. Jump new suits show singleton/void and look for possible 5D or even if 6D.

[Minifits]

Minifits are described in the separate ETM document.

[1D-2NT(8-9 & 5Ds)]

After 1D-2NT(8-9 with 5Ds), game bids are to play and 3D is to play. 1D-2NT;3X shows location of values. 1D-2NT;4X is a splinter, showing D fit and a singleton/void in the suit bid. 1D-2NT;4D is RKCB for Ds. 1D-2NT;4NT is a quantitative slam invite.

[1D-3D]

After 1D-3D, a semi-constructive raise in 4+Ds, 7-9, opener will often just place the contract by passing or bidding game. 3M shows values, looking for a stopper in OM. 4C is a cuebid, interested in slam. 4M shows a void, with slam interest. 4D invites a major suit cuebid.

[1D-3C, 1D-3H, 1D-3S]

After 1D-3C, 1D-3H, and 1D-3S fit showing responses, 3D, 4D if not a jump and game bids are to play. Other bids after the fit showing bids are natural and promise Ds. 4NT is RKCB for the jump bid if bid immediately over it, otherwise it is RKCB for Ds.

One Heart or Spade Opening, 3rd or 4th seat – Four/Five Card Majors

[1H or 1S Opening Description]

4 in the major, 5+ unless balanced. If balanced with 4 in M then maximum of 15. Can have close to game forcing values so responder strives to respond. 1M is not passed by a hand with 4 in M or 3 to one of top three honors. 1M is not passed with any ace or king of the major or more than 4 HCP. 10+ but often choose to open 2M or pass with 10-12, especially in 4th seat. The following are the hand types for the 1H or 1S opening:

- 1) Five in the major, 10+ to almost GF.
- 2) Balanced with four in the major, good suit, 10 to 15.

[Direct Raises of 1H or 1S Opening]

General approach: 2D Drury.

Response	Style	Description
2M	Less than limit	Weak raise, 0-6 HCP, four in M or three in M with the ace, king, or queen.
2D	Artificial	2D is Drury, an artificial raise for M, showing 7 to 9 points and four or longer in M or three in M with the ace, king, and/or queen.
3M	Preemptive	Five in M, 4 to 6 HCP.
4M	Preemptive	Rare, very weak but very shapely hand.
2NT	Unknown Splinter	Shows shortness in an unknown suit, great fit for major, 6 to 9 HCP. 3C asks for shortness, 3M showing short Cs. 3M directly over 2NT is a signoff.
Jump, double jump suit bids.	Fit showing	4+ in opener's major, 4/5+ in suit bid with values, forcing to cheapest bid in opener's major.

After these bids, cheapest bid in M is a signoff (or preemptive), new suits below 3M and 2NT are natural game tries, 3NT is a suggestion, new suits above 3M cuebids with slam interest, 4M to play, 4NT RKCB for M, and jump new suits show singleton/void with slam interest.

[Other Responses to 1H or 1S Opening]

Semi-natural 1NT.

Response	Style	Description
Pass	Weak	Lower than standard. Really weak.
1S/1H	Natural	4+Ss, 3/4/5+. As in standard can stretch to bid a major with five in suit. May have longer minor.
1NT	Semi-Natural	Up to 9 HCP. Passed by balanced hand with 15 or less HCP and four in M or 5-3-3-2, or 4-5-2-2 exactly.
2C	Natural	6+ clubs, up to 9 HCP, non-forcing.
2H/1S	Natural	6+ hearts, up to 9 HCP, non-forcing.

After responder's non-raise response, new suits at the three level are game forcing, very strong hand. 2NT is natural, non-forcing, about 19-20 over 1S or 1NT, 16-17 over 2C or 2H. 1NT over 1S shows 10-15 balanced or semi-balanced, 4 or 5Hs. New suits at the two level are wide ranging – over these responder with 6 to 9 tries to bid again, raising with a clear fit, bidding 2M with two in M, or bidding 2NT with a semi-fit & 8-9. After 1M-1NT;2m a semi-fit is four in m, while after 1S-1NT;2H a semi-fit is 3Hs. 1M-1NT;2m-3m is a courtesy raise with 5-7 & 5+ in m. 1H-1NT;2m-2S is artificial, 5+ in m with 8-9. 1S-1NT;2m-jump to suit above 3m is semi-natural, showing 8-9 with 5+ in m – for example 1S-1NT;2C-3D shows 8-9, 5+Cs, not short in Ds.

1S-1NT;2m-2H shows 5Hs and 2Ss. 1H-1NT;2S is a reverse, 18+ - with less rebid 2H if 6+Hs or 2m if 5Hs and something in the minor bid. Over the reverse, 2NT or 3H are the weakest bids – 3m is semi-natural and game forcing, either a long suit or a stopper in m and no stopper in om.

1M-1NT;2M and 1H-1S;2H shows about 14-17, with less opener can just open 2M in 3rd or 4th. 1M-1NT;3M or 1H-1S;3H shows about 18-19 and a good suit, with a stronger hand or not a good suit prefer to bid another suit. 1M-1NT;3NT and 1H-1S;3NT shows a good source of tricks in M, plus values in the unbid suits. 4M over any response is to play. A double jump below game shows a singleton or void in the suit bid and slam interest, and if no other suit has been bid it shows 7+ in M – for example 1S-1NT;4C shows a singleton or void in Cs, 7+Ss, slam interest. 1S-1NT;4H is natural, choice of majors. A raise of a 2C or 2H response is natural, game invite.

Two of a Suit Openings, 3rd or 4th seat – Natural & Preemptive

2C, 2D, 2H and 2S are natural and preemptive in 3rd and 4th seat. In 4th seat the suit opened is always 6 or longer, and minimum opening values (9/10-13) are held. In 3rd seat it is an anything goes preemptive bid, 5+ length in the suit opened, can have longer second suit, a wide range is possible, from 0 up to minimum opening values (12/13).

[Over two level preempts]

Responder has several duties over a third seat preempt:

- a) With three or four card support and lead directional values in another suit, bid the suit at the three level if under three of opener's suit.
- b) Bid 2NT if available with three or four card support and lead directional values in a suit that cannot be bid at the three level below three of opener's suit.
- c) Double a suit bid below 2NT to show three or four card support for partner, and lead directional values in the suit doubled.
- d) Double two notrump or a suit bid at the three level to show three or four card support for partner, and values in a suit that cannot be shown below three of opener's suit.
- e) Raise the preempt to the three level with three or four card support if a) to d) are not possible.
- f) Raise the preempt to the four level with five or six card support, or make a jump suit bid to show values in the suit bid plus great support.
- g) Redouble a takeout double with two card support.
- h) With singleton or void in partner's suit, over a pass or double bid a six card suit that can be shown at the two level.
- i) Pass otherwise.

After Pass-Pass-2X-Double;Pass, opener knows responder has at most one in the suit opened (would have redoubled with two, made a raise with three or longer), so now opener can take further action if viewed best. Likewise after Pass-Pass-2X-Pass;Pass-Double, opener can runout before next hand passes. For example Pass-Pass-2C-Pass;Pass-Double-2H shows at least as long Hs as Cs.

Over a fourth seat preempt, responder uses the same rules as above, with these two exceptions. If the opening is passed, then responder can simply pass with a fit and a minimum, so bidding then shows values. If the opponents do bid directly over the opening, responder with a maximum and a fit, where game might still be possible, must not simply bid three of opener's suit if can make any other reasonable bid, such as showing values in another suit or bidding 2NT or doubling.

Two Notrump Opening, 3rd or 4th seat – Ace/King asking - GF in Suit not Clubs

2NT in 3rd or 4th seat shows an absolute game force in diamonds, hearts, or spades. It can be a 4-4-4-1 exactly with 24+ HCP. It asks about responder's aces and kings.

[Responses to 2NT Opening]

General approach: 3C waiting, control showing. Like the sequence 2C-2D-3C.

Response	Style	Description
3C	Waiting	At most two controls (Ace=2, King=1), so at most one ace and no king or at most two kings and no ace.
3D	Artificial	Three controls: an ace & a king or three kings. Forcing to 4H or higher.
3H	Artificial	Two aces. Forcing to 4H or higher.

After 3C, opener bids natural suit, or can bid 3NT to show 4-4-4-1 with 24 to 26 points, 4C to show 4-4-4-1 with 27 to 30 points. After 3D or 3H response bidding is forced to at least 4H or higher.

After 3D or 3H response opener's rebids of 3NT or higher always show two under:

3NT=Ds

4C=Hs

Note that 4D=Ss is not needed since opener always has a 3S rebid available.

4NT by either player is natural on follow-up sequences unless responder raises or shows a good fit for opener's suit.

Three Level and Higher Opening Bids in 3rd or 4th seat

3X: Preemptive, wide ranging, can have a hand that would open the bidding at the one level in standard. Usually six or longer in suit but not vulnerable can try with great five card suit and nothing outside.

[Over the preempt]

The same structure is used as over the two level preemptive bids, but with four card support required to raise, a redouble promising four card support and a maximum, and responder not correcting the preempt with six or longer. 3NT replaces 2NT.

Examples:

3C-Double-Redouble: four card support maximum.

3C-3H-3S: four card or longer C support, S values.

3S-4H-4S: four card or longer S support.

3NT: Gambling, to play, usually has a source of tricks in a long suit, often a minor. Now 4C/4D/5C are pass or correct bids, pass if holding the suit, bid otherwise. Major suit bids show a long suit, to play. Responder rarely makes the pass or correct bid unless very weak if not doubled, fairly weak if doubled. Opener may have a major for the source of tricks so don't just run assuming a minor suit fit.

4X: Preemptive, wide ranging, believes that slam unlikely opposite passed hand. New suits by responder are lead directional in competition, not done otherwise. 4NT is RKCB for opener's suit with amazing fit and extras.

4NT: Ace asking.

ETM TOPS Enhancements

Introduction to Enhancements

This ETM TOPS document is a system file, not a system book. It contains the system definition for ETM TOPS but does not contain hand examples or much discussion on how to use the system. ETM offers enhancements to this system file in the forthcoming ETM Systems User Guide, which includes detail system use notes and thousands of example hands. This section looks at some of what will be offered in the User Guide.

ETM TOPS Tactics

The ETM Systems User Guide will explain how to use ETM TOPS to best advantage. It will discuss certain tactics that are made possible by the system. For instance it will consider the sequence 1H-4H, when to use it instead of the bids 1H-4C or 1H-4D fit showing, and how to set up the opponents using 1H-4H with 4Ss, hoping the opponents will bid 4S over 4H and then be doubled. There are many neat tools in ETM TOPS, and the User Guide will tell how to operate them to best advantage.

ETM Hand Examples

To help understand the ETM systems, a database containing thousands of example hands is being put together. When learning a particular sequence, such as 1C-1D;1M, it is beneficial to look at the example hands and how they were bid. For each hand in the database, the bidding sequence is given for each of the ETM systems, together with bidding notes.

ETM Components

The ETM systems are composed of components, and it is possible to mix and match the components to produce new systems. The ETM User Guide explains how to do this and gives the layout for some new systems. For example if playing in an event that permits Multi 2D (a weak two in either major), it is possible to play this combination of ETM TOPS and ETM Gold in 1st or 2nd seat:

- 1C: Like ETM TOPS 1C but not game force with Cs or 22+ balanced, so non-forcing.
- 1D: 10+ with Ds to just below game force, if balanced 10-14 & 3Ds, if 10-12 has exactly 2Ds and if 13-14 can have longer Cs.
- 1H,1S: Like ETM TOPS but 10-16 instead of 8-16. Only 5 in **M** if 10-13.
- 1NT: Like ETM TOPS
- 2C: Like ETM TOPS but can have game force in clubs instead of game force in Ss.
- 2D: Multi 2D, a weak two bid in a major & 3-9, or 22+ balanced, or game force in Ss.
- Above 2D: Like ETM TOPS

ETM TOPS Additions

The User Guide will provide optional sequences where, at the price of complexity, the system can be more precise in some situations. These mostly involve one hand learning what the partner's exact hand shape is.

To illustrate this, note after 1M-2C and opener's rebid, re-asks are possible, such as:

1M-2C;2NT-3C asks:

- 3D: 5 in **M**, 3Cs. 3H asks:
 - 3S: 2 in **OM**.
 - 3NT: 3 in **OM**.
- 3H: 6 in **M**, 2Cs. 3S asks 3 card major:
 - 3NT: 3Hs.
 - 4C: 3Ss.
- 3S: 6 in **M**, 3Hs.
- 3NT: 5 in **M**, 2Cs.