

Problem Bidding Scenarios

No-Trump Bids – Their Recognition and Usage - 1 -

It is imperative for Partnerships to discuss and to understand when various No-Trump bids are either *Natural* (to play, and, therefore, non-forcing), or *Artificial* (conventional and, therefore, sometimes forcing). To misuse, and/or misunderstand these differences is a bidding catastrophe waiting to happen. Among the many No-Trump bids available, the following represent those most frequently used, and, oft times, misinterpreted.

No-Trump Bids By an Opening Bidder

1. **An Opening 1NT - (*Natural*) - 1NT, or P-1NT, or P-P-1NT, or P-P-P-1NT =**
A balanced 4-3-3-3, 4-4-3-2, or 5-3-3-2 hand with 15-17 HCP's in S.A., (12-14 HCP's in ACOL) It is usually it is recommended to have stoppers in at least three of the four suits
2. **An Opening 2NT - (*Natural*) - 2NT, or P-2NT, or P-P-2NT, or P-P-P-2NT =**
A balanced 4-3-3-3, 4-4-3-2, or 5-3-3-2 hand with 21-22 HCP's
3. **An Opening "3NT" - (*Conventional*) - 3NT, P-3NT, P-P-3NT, or P-P-P-3NT =**
A "*Gambling 3-NT*" bid evidencing a 7-card Minor suit headed by the AKQ with 9-11 HCP's
4. **A Re-Bid of 1NT, Absent Competition - (*Natural*) - 1A - P - 1B - P**
1NT = A balanced hand, lack of support for Responder's bid suit, and 12-14 HCP's in S.A., (15-17 HCP's in ACOL)
5. **A Re-Bid of 1NT in Competition, Absent a Response from Partner - (*Natural*) -**
1A - 1B - P - P 1A - P - P - 1B
1NT (or) 1NT = A balanced hand with 18-19 HCP's and holding at least one stopper in the Opponent's bid suit; i.e., a hand which, had Partner responded, would have re-bid 2-NT
6. **A Re-Bid of 2NT, Absent Competition - (*Natural*) - 1A - P - 1B - P**
2NT = A balanced hand, lack of support for Responder's bid suit, and 18-19 HCP's

B. No-Trump Bids By Opener's Responding Partner

1. **A 1NT Bid in Response to Partner's Opening Bid of One-of-a-Suit, Absent Competition - (*Natural*) - 1A - P - 1NT =** A 6-10 HCP hand, lack of support for Partner's bid suit, and a lack of a 4-card "*Up-the-Ladder*" suit holding. The hand need not be balanced
2. **A 1NT Bid in Response to Partner's Opening Bid of One-of-a-Suit, in Competition - (*Natural*) - 1A - 1B - 1NT =** An 8-10 HCP hand, lack of support for Partner's bid suit, and a lack of a 4-card "*Up-the-Ladder*" suit holding, but with a guaranteed one or more stoppers in the Opponent's bid suit

3. **A 2NT Bid in Response to Partner's Opening Bid of One-of-a-Minor, With or Without Competition - (Natural) – 1C, 1D – 1H, 1S (P) – 2NT** = An 11-12 HCP hand, lack of support for Partner's bid suit, a lack of a 4-card "*Up-the-Ladder*" suit holding, but with a guaranteed one or more stoppers in the Opponent's bid suit, if in competition (An invitational bid inviting Opener to 3-NT if holding greater than minimum opening count)
4. **A "2NT" Bid in Response to Partner's Opening Bid of One-of-a-Major, Absent Competition – (Artificial & Forcing) – 1H, 1S – P – "2NT"** = A conventional ("*Jacoby 2-NT*") response showing opening count, and support for Partner's Major suit. Game-forcing
5. **A "2NT" Response to Partner's Opening Weak 2-Bid – (Artificial & Forcing) – 2B – P – 2NT** - A forcing bid, game-seeking, asking Opener to show, (1) a feature, (2) the appropriate response to the "*Ogust*" Convention, or (3) the appropriate response to the "*Klinger Ogust*" Convention, whichever system upon which the Partnership has agreed
6. **A 2NT Response to Partner's Opening 1NT – (Natural) – 1NT – P – 2NT** = An invitational bid showing 9-10 HCP's, or its equivalent, inviting Opener to Game
7. **A 3NT Bid in Response to Partner's Opening Bid of One-of-a-Minor, With or Without Competition - (Natural) – 1C, 1D – 1H, 1S (P) – 3NT** = A 13 (+) HCP hand, lack of support for Partner's bid suit, a lack of a 4-card "*Up-the-Ladder*" suit holding, and with a guaranteed stopper in the Opponent's bid suit, if there is a competitive overcall
8. **A 3NT Response to Partner's Opening 1NT – (Natural) – 1NT – P – 3NT** = A game-level, "*sign-off*" bid showing 11-15 HCP's, or its equivalent in S.A., (14-18 HCP's in ACOL)
9. **A 3NT Response to Partner's Opening Pre-emptive Bid - (Natural) - 2A (3A) – P – 3NT** = A hand holding Game-Values and/or a presumed nine or more running tricks. A "*sign-off*" bid
10. **A 4NT Response to Partner's Opening Bid of 1NT – (Artificial) - 1NT – P – 4NT** A "*Quantitative*" bid asking Opener to "Pass" with 15 HCP's in S.A., (12 HCP's in ACOL) and to proceed to 6-NT if holding 16-17 HCP's in S.A., (13-14 HCP's in ACOL)
11. **A 5NT Response to Partner's Opening Bid of 1NT – (Artificial) - 1NT – P – 5NT** A "*Quantitative*" bid asking Opener to bid 6-NT with 15 HCP's in S.A., (12 HCP's in ACOL) and to proceed to 7-NT if holding 16-17 HCP's in S.A., (13-14 HCP's in ACOL)

C. No-Trump Bids By an Overcaller

1. **A 1NT Overcall in the Direct (2nd) Seat – (Natural) - 1A - 1NT** = A 15-17 HCP balanced hand with at least one stopper in Opener's bid suit. A hand equivalent to an opening 1-NT bid
2. **A 1NT Overcall in the Balancing (4th) Seat – (Natural) - 1A – P – P - 1NT** = A balanced hand with 10-14 HCP. A stopper in the Opponent's bid suit is helpful, but not mandated

3. **A 1NT Re-Bid by a Balancing (4th) Seat Player Following His/Her Initial Take-Out Double - (Natural) - 1A – P – P - Double**
 $P - 1B - P - 1NT =$ A 15-17 HCP balanced hand with at least one stopper in Opener's bid suit. A hand equivalent to an opening 1NT call
4. **A "1NT" Overcall Immediately Following Two Suits Having Been Bid by the Opponent's - (Artificial and Forcing) - 1A – P – 1B – 1NT** = This is a distributional Take-Out, 5-5 or longer in the two lower un-bid suits, with fewer HCP values than a standard "Take-Out" Double (This is a so-called "*Sandwich NT*") A weak, fewer HCP's than opening count, distributional, "Take-Out" Double
5. **A 1NT Re-Bid by an Overcaller, Following Partner's Response to His/Her Initial "Take-Out" Double – (Natural) – 1A – Double – P – 1B**
 $P - 1NT =$ 18-19 HCP's, with at least one or more stoppers in the Opponent's bid suit (Stronger than a 1-NT Overcall) Is invitational to Game should Responder hold the top of his/her 0-8 HCP response
6. **A 2NT Overcall, Subsequent to an Opponent's Opening Weak 2-Bid 2D, 2H, 2S – 2NT - (Natural) =** A 15-17 HCP, evenly-balanced hand equivalent to an opening 1-NT call with at least one stopper in the Opponent's bid suit
7. **A 2NT Overcall, subsequent to an Opponent's Opening of One-of-a-Suit - (Conventional, Artificial and Forcing) – 1A – 2NT (or) 1A – P – P – 2NT =** An "*Unusual-NT*" conventional call, usually 5-5 or longer in the two lower un-bid suits, either very weak (5-10 HCP's), else very strong (16 + HCP's) - With 11-15 HCP's, "*in-between*" values, one overcalls both suits himself/herself, the higher of the two suits, first
8. **A 4NT Overcall, Subsequent to a 4S Pre-Emptive Bid by the Opponents – (Artificial and Forcing) – 4S – 4NT =** A "Take-Out" Double as a substitute call to a "Double," which, in this instance, would be for penalties

D. No-Trump Bids By an Overcaller's Responding Partner

1. **A 1NT Response to Partner's Overcall of One-of-a-Suit or to a "Take-Out" Double - (Natural) – 1A – 1B (Double) – P – 1NT =** An 8-10 HCP holding, lack of support for Partner's overcall suit, and at least one stopper in the Opener's bid suit
2. **A 2NT Response to Partner's Overcall of One-of-a-Suit or to a "Take-Out" Double - (Natural) – 1A – 1B – P – 2NT =** An invitational bid, lack of support for Partner's overcall suit, and at least one stopper in Opener's bid suit
3. **A 3NT Response to Partner's Overcall of One-of-a-Suit or to a "Take-Out" Double - (Natural) – 1A – 1B (Double) – P – 3NT =** A hand showing lack of support for Partner's overcall suit, at least one stopper in the Opener's bid suit, and game values