

FORCING NO-TRUMP

Whenever a Partnership is utilizing the **Standard American** 5-card Major bidding system, it is useful, in conjunction with a “**2/1 (two-over-one) Game Force**,” to also use a “**Forcing 1-NT**” response system. This pattern helps to narrow the ranges of other bids by the Responder and thus helps in otherwise difficult situations. In general, the **1-NT** response to an opening of **1H** or **1S** by Partner is *forcing*, and *alertable* (Opener alerts with the spoken word, “*Forcing*”), and usually exhibits a range of between 5-11 HCP’s. (Note: In some situations, the Responder’s HCP range may exceed 11; that is, may be unlimited.) **Opener must make a re-bid, even if it be, minimally, a 3-card Minor or a 4-card Heart suit. Opener’s re-bid then shows both distribution and point count. Responder, then becomes the team Captain, and can then place the final contract, invite to game, or to Slam.**

Opener’s Re-bid following Responder’s “1-NT Force”

Opener makes the same re-bid as that after a non-forcing 1-NT response except when holding a minimum balanced hand of 12-14 points. Under the latter condition, instead of “*Passing*,” Opener bids either the longer Minor suit or 2C with equal length in both Minors.

<u>Opener:</u>	AKXXX	AXX	KXX	XX	1S	“1-NT”
					2D	(Minimum Opening)
	AQXXX	KXXX	XX	AX	1S	“1-NT”
					2H	(Minimum Opening)
	AQXX	KQXXX	AQ	KX	1H	“1-NT”
					2S	(Hand is strong enough to “ <u>Reverse</u> ”)
	AQXX	KQXXXX	XX	X	1H	“1-NT”
					2H	(Minimum Opening + 6-Hearts)
	AXXXX	AKXX	AK	QX	1S	“1-NT”
					3H	(Jump shift, Game Forcing)
	JXX	AXXXXX	AKX	A	1H	“1-NT”
					3H	(One Trick Better than Minimum + 6 or more Hearts)
	AJXXX	AQX	AX	KXX	1S	“1-NT”
					2-NT	(A 16-18 HCP Hand inviting 3-NT)

When “1-NT Forcing” Does NOT Apply

1. After an opening bid of **1C** or **1D**
2. If Responder’s right-hand Opponent (RHO) Overcalls or “*Doubles*”
3. If Responder is a “*previously-passed*” hand (The **1-NT** is then, semi-forcing and can be “Passed.”)

Thus, since the **1-NT** force usually exhibits 5-11 HCP’s, then any 2-level response of a new suit by Responder shows 12(+) high-card points and is forcing to game in all but the following sequences where both Opener and Responder repeat their suits evidencing a misfit:

(a) 1H 2C 2H 3C (Not Forcing)	(b) 1S 2D 2S 3D (Not Forcing)
(c) 1S 2D 2S 3C (Game Force)	

