

TIPS FOR TOPS - 4

1. A **direct** overcall, by a “*previously-passed*” hand, of “**1-NT**” after a Major suit opening by an Opponent is “**Unusual**” for the Minors. It is the same as a direct “**2-NT**” overcall by a “*non-passed*” hand.

You (West) Hold: X X QJXXXX AQXXX

Example: South West (You) North East

(a) 1S ??? (Bid “**2-NT**” - Unusual for the Minors. A **1-NT** bid would have been natural; i.e., 15-17 HCP’s.)

(b) Pass Pass Pass
 1S ???

(Bid “**1-NT**” - Unusual for the Minors.)

2. As Responder to Partner’s opening **1-NT**, with Game values, and a 6-4 or 4-6 Major suit holding, bid **Stayman** first looking for 4-card support for your 4-card Major suit. If no fit is found for the 4-card Major suit, jump to Game in the 6-card Major suit. Remember, Opener must have at least two of the 6-card Major for his/her opening **1-NT** bid.

Example: South (Partner) West North (You)
 1-NT Pass ??

You Hold: (a) AKXX AXXXXX XX X (Bid “**2C**”, Over Opener’s “**2D**” bid **4H**. Over Opener’s **2S** bid **4S**.)

3. A “**Negative Double**” followed by a single raise of Partner’s second suit is **not** forcing, it is invitational.

<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>
1C	1S	Dbl.	P
2H	Pass	???	

You hold: a) AX AJXX KXXX XXX (Raise to **3H**, invitational with 8 losers.)
 b) AX AJXX AKXX XXX (Raise to **4H**. “The one who knows, goes.”)

4. If, after you make a “**Negative Double**,” your LHO raises your RHO, and the bidding comes back to you, a repeat “**double**” is for Take-Out, showing extra values (10+ HCP’s).

<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>
1C	1S	Dbl.	2S
Pass	Pass	???	

You (North) Hold: a) AQXX XXX KJXX XX (“**Double**” again to show Partner you have extra values and it is your side’s hand with the majority of the HCP’s.)

5. When playing “**Negative Doubles**,” you, of course, **cannot** make an immediate **Penalty Double**, for they are mutually exclusive. Opener will not be capable of discerning the difference and must legitimately construe your bid as a “**Negative Double**.” With a strong 5- or 6-card holding in the Opponent’s overcall suit, do not gasp, just “*pass*” in tempo in order to be ethical.

<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>
1D	2C	???	

You Hold: a) XXX QXX XX AKXXX ("Pass." Hopefully Partner will reopen the bidding with a **Take-Out Double** which you will "pass" converting it to a penalty situation.)

6. After you "double" a low-level artificial bid ("**Lead-Directing**") and then later bid a new suit, you show a 2-suited hand, and request Partner to make a choice.

You (East) Hold: X AJXXX XX KQJXX

<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>
1-NT	P	"2H"	Dbl.
2S	P	P	3C

(The "double" shows long Hearts, and the Club bid shows long Clubs. Voila, you have shown your hand exactly.)

7. After you, Partner, and one Opponent have bid, and there has been a Minor suit agreement, a cue-bid of the Opponent's suit ("**Western Cue-Bid**") asks Partner to bid No-Trump, if he/she holds a stopper in the suit bid by the Opponents.

<u>South (You)</u>	<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	(You) A KXX XX AKJXXXX
1C	1D	3C	Pass	
???				

(Bid "3D"! You would like to play in 3-NT if Partner holds a Diamond Stopper. A good Partner will have one!)

When the Opponent's have bid one suit, a cue-bid of that suit is an asking bid; when they have bid two suits a cue-bid is a telling bid.

8. When the bid to your right is **strong**, a jump by you is **weak**, and when the bid to your right is **weak**, a jump by you is **strong**.

Examples:

	<u>East</u>	<u>South (You)</u>	
a)	1-NT	3D	(1-NT is strong, so yours is weak.)
b)	1H	2S	(1H is strong, so yours is again weak.)
c)	3H	4S	(3H is weak, so yours is strong.)
	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South (You)</u>
d)	1C	Dbl.	2D (The "double" is strong, yours is weak.)

9. Anytime you are in a Game-forcing auction and your RHO intervenes, a "**Pass**" by you is forcing (Example 1), and a "**Double**" by you is for penalties (Example 2).

Examples: (1)

<u>South (You)</u>	<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>
1C	Pass	2H	2S

"Pass"

(The 2H bid is Game-forcing and Slam invitational, so your "pass" is forcing. Maybe Partner will have a better idea of what to do than you, for once.)

(2) You hold:

AKXXX	KQX	X	QXXX
<u>South (You)</u>	<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>
1S	2H	3D	4H
????			

("Double"! Even though a "Pass" by you would have been forcing, (Example 1), your hand is better suited for defense with strength in the Opponents suit and shortness in Partner's.)

10. Be aggressive in the early stages of the auction. If you are overly conservative, the bidding has a way of getting out of hand. Waiting in the bushes is for Poker Players and Hunters, not for Bridge Players.