

I. OPENER BIDS 1♣: Responder Bids 1♠ to Show a Balanced Positive Response

Opener's 1♣ shows 16 HCP without regard to distribution. Responder's 1♠ shows a balanced, positive response. It is unlimited. Responder may have a five card minor yet prefer to show a balanced hand. Responder may not have a five card major. If Responder happens to have more than 13 DP when Opener selects the contract, Responder can continue.¹

A. 1♣ by Opener followed by Responder's 1♠.

After responder's 1♠, a positive response, game is anticipated. Opener has two choices: Opener can learn the details of responder's hand by asking with a rebid of 1NT {Alert: "Forcing."} that is not necessarily either balanced or limited or opener can ask for responder's support in opener's long suit.

1. Responder's Rebids After Opener's 1 NT Rebid.

a. Weaker Hands (8–10 HCP).²

1. 2♣ 8–10 HCP promising both four hearts and four spades. {Alert: "Eight to ten with four cards in each major."}
2. 2♦ 8–10 HCP promising four hearts and denying four spades. {Alert: "Eight to ten with four hearts."}
3. 2♥ 8–10 HCP promising four spades and denying four hearts. {Alert: "Eight to ten with spades."}
4. 2♠ 8–10 HCP with neither four hearts nor four spades. {Alert: "Eight to ten and no four card major."}

This set of responses has the advantage of simplicity. The artificial bids are parallel to familiar uses. It also ensures that the stronger hand will declare in four–four heart fits. It has the disadvantage of not giving an exact description of the responder's distribution.

1. Is three a risk that Opener may pass the answer to some question?

2. These responses modify those of *Wei and Radin* to take advantage of the extra response, 2♣, available when 1NT asks the question.

b. Stronger Hands (11+ HCP).³

1. 2NT 11+ HCP with one four (or five) card minor and no four card major. {Alert: "Eleven or more with one four card minor and no four card major."} Opener's rebid of 3♣ or 3♦ asks for Responder's length in that minor. (See below.)
2. 3♣ 11+ HCP promising both four hearts and four spades. {Alert: "Eleven or more with four cards in each major."}
3. 3♦ 11+ HCP promising four hearts and denying four spades. {Alert: "Eleven or more with four hearts."}
4. 3♥ 11+ HCP promising four spades and denying four hearts. {Alert: "Eleven or more with four spades."}
5. 3♠ 11+ HCP promising both four clubs and four diamonds. {Alert: "Eleven or more with four clubs and four diamonds."}

2. Opener's Further Rebids.

a. Opener's 3NT is to play.

b. Opener's bid of an implied suit of known length is a *Second Trump Asking Bid (How Many Faces?)*. Opener's third bid in each of the following sequences asks *How Many Faces?*

1. 1♣–1♠, 1NT–2♣, 2♥ (Responder showed both majors.)
2. 1♣–1♠, 1NT–2♣, 2♠ (Responder showed both majors.)
3. 1♣–1♠, 1NT–2♦, 2♥ (Responder showed four hearts.)
4. 1♣–1♠, 1NT–2♥, 2♠ (Responder showed four spades.)
5. 1♣–1♠, 1NT–3♣, 3♥ (Responder showed both majors.)
6. 1♣–1♠, 1NT–3♣, 3♠ (Responder showed both majors.)
7. 1♣–1♠, 1NT–3♦, 3♥ (Responder showed four hearts.)
8. 1♣–1♠, 1NT–3♥, 3♠ (Responder showed four spades.)
9. 1♣–1♠, 1NT–3♠, 4♣ (Responder showed both minors.)

3. These responses vary from *Wei and Radin*, p. 99, to parallel the two-level responses.

10. 1♣-1♠, 1NT-3♠, 4♦ (Responder showed both minors.)
- c. **Opener's bid of a new suit** following an implied major is a *Control Asking Bid* and sets the implied major as the trump suit.
- d. **Opener's bid of a minor suit** following Responder's 2♠ or 2NT asks for Responder's length in the minor. Opener knows Responder has a minor but doesn't know which one. Even though Responder denies a four card major, because Responder may have bid 1♠ with 3352 or 3325, Responder's first step will show only two cards. Responder should be careful not to go beyond three no trump. Thus

1. After Opener's 3♣,
 - a. Responder's 3♦ shows two clubs.
 - b. Responder's 3♥ shows three clubs.
 - c. Responder's 3♠ shows four clubs.
 - d. Responder's 3NT shows five clubs.
2. After Opener's 3♦,
 - a. Responder's 3♥ shows two diamonds.
 - b. Responder's 3♠ shows three diamonds.
 - c. Responder's 3NT shows four or five diamonds.

B. Opener's Support Asking Bids.

If Opener has an unbalanced hand, he can ask for support at the two level. Responder shows three card support or not and 12 HCP or not with the same four steps as in other auctions.

C. Opener's Rebid of 2NT can have either of two meanings.

1. If Opener jumps to 2NT over Responder's 1♠, then Opener wants to know Responder's point count.

2. If Opener asks for Responder's shape and then rebids 2NT, then Opener has a minimum 16 HCP and has not found a fit. His call is non-forcing. Responder may pass with the barest minimal balanced response.

D. Opener's 4NT instead of 3NT shows 20 or 21 HCP.

An orderly march to 3NT is a common outcome for balanced 16-18 HCP Opening hands. No compelling fit emerges and we play the same contract as the field. If, however, we have 21 or 22 HCP, we will also open 1♣. If Responder cannot find a positive response, we show our strength with a jump to 2NT. If Responder can find a positive response, there is no need to jump. We are in a game-forcing auction and can explore slowly. If no fit has emerged and Opener bids 3NT, that will usually end the auction. If Opener instead calls 4NT when 3NT would have been a signoff, then Opener is showing 20 or 21 and asking Responder to do the arithmetic to choose the right level of no trump.

E. Responder has more than 13 HCP.

If Responder has appreciably more than 13 HCP, then he need not acquiesce after Opener signs off with 3NT. Responder knows that Opener has a strong no trump. Responder can use the usual sequence to invite to six, to choose six, to force to six but invite seven, or to bid seven.

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