



# Conventional Wisdom Lite

## Filling out a basic 2/1 convention card – part 1

BY LARRY COHEN

In this six-part series, Larry Cohen will take the reader through completing a basic 2/1 game forcing convention card. He will explain procedures and conventions to help prepare newer players for the world of duplicate bridge – particularly tournaments, which require partners to carry matching, filled-out convention cards. The card is a tool for establishing agreements with your partner before you play and for making those agreements known to your opponents. Your opponents should each have a card at the table so you know what they play as well.

Throughout the series, Larry makes choices about which conventions to recommend. There's more than one way to play any call. If there weren't, the convention card wouldn't come with blank lines and empty boxes.

Larry recommends that newer players interested in duplicate use 2/1 Game Forcing from the get-go. Because 2/1 is the system

used by most tournament players, playing it will make you more marketable as a partner.

For those who prefer an even simpler card without a 2/1 game force, the ACBL offers one on its website. For a sample “fat-free” convention card, go to [acbl.org/fatfree](http://acbl.org/fatfree). That card is a great resource for beginner-level Standard American players. There hasn't been a similar resource for beginning 2/1 players – until now. At the conclusion of this series, Larry's card will also be available online.

Some parts of the card pertaining to advanced conventions will be shown faded out on the sample card. Ignore them for now. Other conventions are discussed briefly. For those wanting to know more, there are numerous articles and books available explaining these conventions in greater detail. Two such resources are [acbl.org/common](http://acbl.org/common) and [larryco.com](http://larryco.com).

Larry Cohen is a multiple NABC champion, author and long-time contributor to the Bridge Bulletin.

This month we will explore a few sections of the convention card, but let's first get some preliminaries out of the way.

Some special conventions – most of which are outside the scope of this series – require Alerts. They are shown in red on the convention card. The partner of the person making that special bid will say “Alert,” and if asked by the opponents, will explain. On the few occasions where I mention one of those conventions, I will also tell the reader if an Alert is required. If your opponents ever say Alert, you are entitled to ask the meaning, but only when it is your turn to bid.

There are some bids that aren't “Alertable” but are “Announceable.” What's that mean? When the bid is made, the *partner of the bidder* immediately makes an Announcement to the table. Those are shown in blue on the convention card. Some of them will be mentioned in this first article.

One other part of duplicate bridge which can intimidate newer players is the director call. We'll look at some of the main reasons a director might need to be summoned (always politely – all directors have the same last name, which is “please,” as in “director, please”). This list isn't complete, but covers at least 90 percent of director calls. There is no need to be shy or uncomfortable about any of these – it is just part of the game.

- A player counts his cards and discovers he doesn't have 13 (you do count your cards, right?).
- One of the players makes an insufficient bid (such as 1♥ after his opponent opened 1♠).
- One of the players bids out of turn. This includes a pass or double out of turn.

- One of the players has made the opening lead face up when it was actually his partner's opening lead.
- One of the defenders accidentally faces/plays a card when it isn't his turn.
- There is a problem with a claim. For example, declarer says “I have the rest of the tricks” – but maybe it isn't so clear he is right.
- It is discovered that somebody revoked (failed to follow suit.)

Most of these things happen due to lack of concentration, but they are quite common among inexperienced players.

With the litigious but important procedural stuff out of the way, we can start with the bridge discussion.

**NAMES**

The first thing on the convention card to fill out is your name and partner's. First and last, please. This might seem trivial, but it is important. It sets a nice tone at the table if your names are available, should the opponents wish to glance at your convention card. Laziness – or arrogance – is not an excuse to leave this easy-to-fill-out section blank.

**NOTRUMP OPENING BIDS**

This is perhaps the most difficult section of the convention card to fill out. There is no universal system here, so it involves choices. Here is a mainstream way to play:

1NT range: 15 to 17. Because it is in blue, the partner of the 1NT opener must announce the range aloud. As soon as 1NT is opened, the partner says: "15 to 17." Why are there two sets of blue lines with ranges? Some pairs play different ranges in special situations (based on vulnerability or whether they are dealer, second, third or fourth seat). Just fill out the top lines and leave the other ones blank. Check the box underneath which says "5-card Major common." The current trend is to open 1NT with any 5-3-3-2 hand pattern if it is in the 15-17 point range.

"System on over" deals with interference. How dare they step into your notrump auction! Eventually, your partnership can study how to cope with the interference, but for now, you can leave out this section and hope to just "wing it."

For 2♣, check the black Stayman box.

For 2♦ and 2♥, check the blue box to indicate you play Jacoby transfers. Since it is blue, the partner of the transferer (who opened 1NT) makes an out-loud one-word announcement: "transfer."

**GENERAL APPROACH**

If you check the "Game Forcing" box next to "Two Over One," there isn't much else that needs to be filled out in this section.

The "Very Light" section can be skipped unless you are playing in a partnership that has specifically addressed this issue.

The Forcing Opening is 2♣. Check the black box, and you are done with the General Approach.

**NAMES** Susie Smith and Joe Jones

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**2/1 GENERAL APPROACH**

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**Two Over One:** Game Forcing  Game Forcing Except When Suit Rebid   
**VERY LIGHT:** Openings  3rd Hand  Overcalls  Preempts   
**FORCING OPENING:** 1♣  2♣  Natural 2 Bids  Other  \_\_\_\_\_

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**NOTRUMP OPENING BIDS**

<p>1NT <u>15 to 17</u> _____ to _____ 5-card Major common <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> System on over _____ 2♣ Stayman <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Puppet <input type="checkbox"/> 2♦ Transfer to ♥ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Forcing Stayman <input type="checkbox"/> 2♥ Transfer to ♠ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2♠ <u>clubs</u> 2NT <u>inv</u></p>	<p>3♣ <u>diamonds</u> _____ _____ _____ 4♦, 4♥ Transfer <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Smolen <input type="checkbox"/> Lebensohl <input type="checkbox"/> (____ denies) Neg. Double <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____</p>
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**2NT** 20 to 21  
Puppet Stayman   
**Transfer Responses:**  
Jacoby  Texas   
3♠ \_\_\_\_\_

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**3NT** \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_  
Conventional NT Openings \_\_\_\_\_

There are several ways to use responses of 2♠, 2NT, 3♣, 3♦, 3♥ and 3♠. It can get complicated. I will give you a very simple way to get by for now:

2♠ = Transfer to clubs (this one is an Alert – not an Announcement).

2NT = Natural and invitational, showing 8-9 HCP.

3♣ = Transfer to diamonds (also an Alert).

3♦ / 3♥ / 3♠ = Just leave them blank and don't make these bids.

Optional: 4♦ and 4♥ could be marked as transfers if you and your partner use "Texas transfers." Because it is in blue, it is Announceable, not Alertable, by the partner of the transferer.

For 2NT, mark the common range of 20-21. This is always a balanced hand (no singletons or voids). Use Stayman and transfers.

You can mark 3NT as 25-27. Don't hold your breath waiting. Or if you have learned Gambling 3NT, you can write it in here. If you use 2♣ for all 22+ HCP hands and never open 3NT, you can leave it blank.

# Conventional Wisdom Lite

## Filling out a basic 2/1 convention card – part 2

### MAJOR OPENING

Just about everybody plays five-card majors, so check the box underneath “5.” Occasionally it is good strategy to open with a strong four-card major in third or fourth seat, but unless this is something you’d expect your partnership to do frequently, you should also check “5” next to “3rd/4th.”

### RESPONSES

Unless you are playing something conventional (like Bergen raises), mark the **Double Raise** (1♠–3♠ or 1♥–3♥) as “Inv.” This is your typical limit raise, which should be four-card support and about 10–12, counting distribution.

**After Overcall:** Make sure you and your partner have an agreement. The old-fashioned approach is to ignore the overcall, so the Double Raise would still be invitational. If you use a cuebid of the opponents’ overcall suit to show a strong raise, then you would play the jump raise as weak (preemptive with four-card or longer support). If you haven’t discussed this, or don’t know what I am talking about it, just mark it as “Inv.”

Though there is no place to mark it, most players play the double raise as weak after an opposing takeout double. Summary: Make sure you and your partner know what a raise from 1♠ to 3♠ (or 1♥ to 3♥) shows if the opponents don’t come in at all, if they overcall, or if they double.

**Conv. Raise:** If you use the popular Jacoby 2NT convention, check the red 2NT box. You can leave out the 3NT box. If you play a double jump in a new suit as a Splinter bid, check the “Splinter” box. Reminder: Anything in red is Alertable (by the partner of the person who makes the bid).

**1NT:** Because a two-level response is forcing to game, a 1NT response (to 1♠ or 1♥) can be used with up

to 12 HCP. (In Standard, a 1NT response would be limited to 6–10.) As to Forcing or Semi-forcing, I recommend the latter. Semi-forcing is simpler and really means *not forcing* at all, because opener can pass. Forcing means opener won’t pass. There are many online sources about the pros and cons of each way. Bottom line: Pick one way or the other and mark the box accordingly. Either way, remember that the 1NT response is 6–12. Because it is in blue, the partner of the 1NT bidder Announces (“forcing” or “semi-forcing”).

Anything else in this section, such as Drury, can be added as the partnership gains more experience.

### MINOR OPENING

Check the box under 3 for both 1♣ and 1♦ openings. A 1♦ opening will usually contain at least four cards in diamonds. But if opener is 4=4=3=2 (in that order), he has no choice but

to open with a three-card diamond suit. We never open the bidding in a two-card suit unless we are playing a special system (such as “short club”). With 3–3 in the minors, open 1♣. By checking 3 under each, you are indicating you play the mainstream way – nothing fancy.

### RESPONSES

**Double Raise:** See the discussion on this topic under Major Opening. All the same agreements should apply. Down the road, your partnership might wish to explore inverted minors. But for now, mark the Double Raise the same way as in the sister section on Major Opening.

I suggest checking the box that says **Frequently bypass 4+♦**. This means that your priority in responding to 1♣ is to show a four-card major (as opposed to diamonds).

For the 1NT response to 1♣, mark 6–10. We never use a forcing or semi-forcing notrump after a minor-suit opening. Mark the 2NT response as 11–12 (invitational), and 3NT as 13–15.

BY LARRY COHEN



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MAJOR OPENING		MINOR OPENING	
Expected Min. Length	4 5	Expected Min. Length	4 3 <sup>NF</sup> 0–2 Conv.
1st/2nd	<input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	1♣	<input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
3rd/4th	<input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	1♦	<input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
RESPONSES		RESPONSES	
Double Raise: Force <input type="checkbox"/> Inv. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Weak <input type="checkbox"/>		Double Raise: Force <input type="checkbox"/> Inv. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Weak <input type="checkbox"/>	
After Overcall: Force <input type="checkbox"/> Inv. <input type="checkbox"/> Weak <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		After Overcall: Force <input type="checkbox"/> Inv. <input type="checkbox"/> Weak <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Conv. Raise: 2NT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3NT <input type="checkbox"/> Splinter <input type="checkbox"/>		Forcing Raise: J/S in other minor <input type="checkbox"/>	
Other: _____		Single raise <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	
1NT: Forcing <input type="checkbox"/> Semi-forcing <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		Frequently bypass 4+♦ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
2NT: Forcing <input type="checkbox"/> Inv. <input type="checkbox"/> _____ to _____		1NT/1♣ _____ <b>6 to 10</b>	
3NT: _____ to _____		2NT Forcing <input type="checkbox"/> Inv. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>11 to 12</b>	
Drury <input type="checkbox"/> : Reverse <input type="checkbox"/> 2-Way <input type="checkbox"/> Fit <input type="checkbox"/>		3NT: <b>13 to 15</b>	
Other: _____		Other: _____	



# Conventional Wisdom Lite

## Filling out a basic 2/1 convention card – part 3

BY LARRY COHEN

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### 2♦/2♥/2♠ OPENING

Assuming you don't use a convention like Flannery, these two-bids should all be marked as weak: Check the box in black that says "Weak." The typical range is 5–11. You can fill that in for HCP, but based on vulnerability and suit quality, you could open with less. A six-card suit is expected.

For the response to all three, mark "2NT Force." Unless you use Ogust (which uses step responses to show a good or bad preempt or suit quality), it will be presumed that after 2NT, the opening bidder will show a feature – which is an ace or king – if he has a decent weak two-bid. It is normal for a new suit response to be forcing, so there is no need to mark anything else in this section. New Suit NF would be unusual and is thus in red.

### 2♣ OPENING

An opening bid of 2♣ shows any strong hand and says nothing about clubs. If balanced, it should be more than a 2NT opener, so 22+. If unbalanced, there is no exact point range. Just check the box (in black) that says "Strong" and don't fill in a high-card-point range.

Check the box for "Waiting" next to 2♦. This is the mainstream method for responding; only if you use something special would you mark this section otherwise. Since it is in black, the 2♦ waiting response is not Alertable.

	DESCRIBE	RESPONSES/REBIDS
2♣ _____ to _____ HCP Strong <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> 2♦ Resp: Neg <input type="checkbox"/> Waiting <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	←	
2♦ _____ 5 to 11 _____ HCP Natural: Weak <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Intermediate <input type="checkbox"/> Strong <input type="checkbox"/> Conv. <input type="checkbox"/>		2NT Force <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New Suit NF <input type="checkbox"/>
2♥ _____ 5 to 11 _____ HCP Natural: Weak <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Intermediate <input type="checkbox"/> Strong <input type="checkbox"/> Conv. <input type="checkbox"/>		2NT Force <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New Suit NF <input type="checkbox"/>
2♠ _____ 5 to 11 _____ HCP Natural: Weak <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Intermediate <input type="checkbox"/> Strong <input type="checkbox"/> Conv. <input type="checkbox"/>		2NT Force <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New Suit NF <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>OTHER CONV. CALLS:</b> New Minor Forcing: <input type="checkbox"/> 2-Way NMF <input type="checkbox"/>		
Weak Jump Shifts: In Comp. <input type="checkbox"/> Not in Comp. <input type="checkbox"/>		
4th Suit Forcing: 1 Rd. <input type="checkbox"/> Game <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		

### OTHER CONVENTIONAL CALLS

Just about everything is in red, which means it is Alertable. Eventually, new minor forcing is useful to learn (used after opener rebids in notrump). All of the conventions listed here can be researched online, but shouldn't be played until the partnership fully understands and can easily remember them.

**Weak Jump Shifts:** If you have discussed with your partner that responder's jump in a new suit (such as 1♦ – (Pass) – 2♠) is a weak bid, you can check the red box next to Weak Jump Shifts where it says "Not in Comp." I'd recommend not making such a bid unless you are on comfortable footing with a regular partner. Even more daunting would be to make such a jump when the opponents are in the auction, such as 1♦ – (1♥) – 2♠. I'd recommend staying away from this line and this kind of potentially confusing bid until you and a regular partner are ready to come up with firm agreements.

**4th Suit Forcing:** This should be marked and played – check the box that says "Game." In other words, if your partnership bids, for example: 1♦ – 1♥; 1♠ – 2♣, the 2♣ bid (the fourth suit) doesn't necessarily show clubs – it just announces that the partnership belongs in game or slam.





# Conventional Wisdom Lite

## Filling out a basic 2/1 convention card – part 4

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### SPECIAL DOUBLES

A good understanding of negative doubles is important. This “convention” is used when your partner opens one of a suit and the opponents overcall in a suit. Responder’s double is not penalty. If double were penalty (ugh!), you would check the box in red. Instead, “After Overcall,” please check the box that says “Negative.”

Through what level? This is a matter of partnership agreement. After a high-level jump overcall, it is unlikely responder will want to make a penalty double. The opponent who jump-overcalls will have a very long suit – the higher he bids, the longer the suit. The responder will usually be short in the opponent’s suit. Accordingly, I recommend negative doubles be used on any level. You could mark “thru 7♥” or “thru ∞” (infinity). This means negative doubles are played on any level.

After a low-level negative double, the opener will almost always take it out. After a high-level negative double, the opener will usually leave it in and try to set the opponents. If any of this isn’t clear, please do an online search from a trusted source and read about negative doubles.

Any other doubles in this section can be added later down the road, so leave them all blank. Responsive and Support Doubles are indeed popular with tournament players, but in my experience, newer players get confused and often forget them.

### NOTRUMP OVERCALLS

This is an easy one. Mark the range as 15 to 18 (even though a 1NT opening is a tighter 15–17 range) and check the box that says “Systems on.” This means that after your side overcalls with 1NT, that the 1NT bidder’s partner uses Stayman and Transfers.

For “Balancing” you can mark a different range – about 12–15 would be standard. But if this is confusing, you can keep it the same as direct and mark it as 15 to 18 for now.

Assuming you are playing the unusual 2NT convention, you can mark “2 Lowest” next to “Jump to 2NT.” Notice that this is in black, so not Alertable.

<p><b>SPECIAL DOUBLES</b></p> <p>After Overcall: Penalty <input type="checkbox"/> _____</p> <p>Negative <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> thru <u>∞</u></p> <p>Responsive <input type="checkbox"/> : thru _____ Maximal <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Support: Dbl. <input type="checkbox"/> thru _____ Redbl <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Card-showing <input type="checkbox"/> Min. Offshape T/O <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p><b>NOTRUMP OVERCALLS</b></p> <p>Direct: <u>15 to 18</u> Systems on <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Conv. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Balancing: <u>12 to 15</u></p> <p>Jump to 2NT: Minors <input type="checkbox"/> 2Lowest <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Conv. <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p><b>SIMPLE OVERCALL</b></p> <p>1 level <u>8 to 17</u> HCP (usually)</p> <p>often 4 cards <input type="checkbox"/> very light style <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><b>Responses</b></p> <p>New Suit: Forcing <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NFConst <input type="checkbox"/> NF <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Jump Raise: Forcing <input type="checkbox"/> Inv. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Weak <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p><b>DEFENSE VS NOTRUMP</b></p> <p>vs: _____</p> <p>2♣ _____</p> <p>2♦ _____</p> <p>2♥ _____</p> <p>2♠ _____</p> <p>Dbl: _____</p> <p>Other _____</p>

Note: All the lines are red, but your bid is not Alertable if it is natural.

### SIMPLE OVERCALL

On the 1 level, mark something like 8 to 17 HCP. As to “Responses,” this is a tough area, because there is no standard way to play. Though possibly not best, I’d say the simplest way to mark these boxes would be as shown. Down the road, the jump raise can be changed to weak, and you can use a cuebid of the opponents’ suit to show an invitational or better raise.

### DEFENSE VS NOTRUMP

There are about 50 conventions that can be used here! Choose something simple – or even natural – and fill in the boxes accordingly. Most popular are Cappelletti/Hamilton, DONT and Landy. Search online for descriptions.

I strongly suggest you play the same system in direct seat (immediately after 1NT) as in the balancing seat (after 1NT–Pass–Pass–?). There are two sets of lines to cover the possibility that you might face opponents who use a weak notrump, such as 12–14. It is too much memory drain at this stage to play two systems. So, just choose one method against all 1NT openers and use only the first set of lines.

Be sure to thoroughly understand any convention you choose here and the follow-ups by the partner of the overcaller. Be sure you and your partner know what double means: Is it natural/strong, or part of a convention?



# Conventional Wisdom Lite

## Filling out a basic 2/1 convention card – part 5

BY LARRY COHEN

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### JUMP OVERCALL

This refers to your jump overcall after the opponents have opened the bidding on the one level. Normal is “Weak.” These jump overcalls can be thought of as showing the same general values and suit length as an opening preempt – six cards for a jump two-level overcall and seven cards for a jump three-level overcall. If the opponents open with a preempt, then a jump overcall shows a 6+ card suit and a good hand (by standard definition). Just check the box that says “Weak.”

### OPENING PREEMPTS

There is nothing you need to mark in this section. For a two-level preempt, a six-card suit is assumed. For a three-level preempt, a seven-card suit, and for a four-level preempt, an eight-card suit. If you and your partner have a definite style agreement, such as super-conservative or reckless, check the Sound or Very Light box, respectively.

### DIRECT CUEBID

If you use the popular convention called Michaels cuebids, check the boxes next to Michaels under Minor and Major. This convention, like most times you bid the opponents’ suit, is not Alertable. If you haven’t learned Michaels bids and would play that bidding the opponent’s suit is natural, you would have to not only mark the box, but because it is in red, Alert! Yes, a natural bid is Alertable, because it is so rare.

### OVER OPP’S T/O DOUBLE

You and your partner need to decide what a response on the one level and higher levels means if the opponents double your opening bid. I suggest that one-level bids are forcing (natural, of course), but two-level bids (also natural) are not forcing. So check “1 level.”

A Jump Shift (the second line in this section) is something to be avoided unless you and your partner have a sure agreement as to its meaning. If you do have a firm understanding, check the box accordingly; “Weak” is the most common method.

Redouble can be used to show any hand with 10 or more HCP.

If you use 2NT after the double to show a limit raise or better, you can check the boxes in red for Majors and/or Minors. If this is confusing, you can skip this section. Do make sure you and your partner know what a jump raise means after an opposing double: mainstream is weak.

<p><b>JUMP OVERCALL</b></p> <p>Strong <input type="checkbox"/> Intermediate <input type="checkbox"/> Weak <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	<p><b>OVER OPP’S T/O DOUBLE</b></p> <p>New Suit Forcing: 1 level <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2 level <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Jump Shift: Forcing <input type="checkbox"/> Inv. <input type="checkbox"/> Weak <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Redouble implies no fit <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>2NT Over Limit+ Limit Weak</p> <p>Majors <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Minors <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Other _____</p>
<p><b>OPENING PREEMPTS</b></p> <p>Sound Light Very Light</p> <p>3/4-bids <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Conv./Resp. _____</p>	<p><b>VS Opening Preempts Double Is</b></p> <p>Takeout <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> thru <math>\infty</math> Penalty <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Conv. Takeout: _____</p> <p>Lebensohl 2NT Response <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Other: _____</p>
<p><b>DIRECT CUEBID</b></p> <p>OVER: Minor Major</p> <p>Natural <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Strong T/O <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Michaels <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	

### Vs Opening Preempts Double Is

This is easy. Just check the box that says “Takeout” and you are done. It is normal to play a double as takeout when the opponents open with a preempt. You can leave the “thru” line blank or just mark  $\infty$  (infinity).



# Conventional Wisdom Lite

## Filling out a basic 2/1 convention card – part 6 of 6

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### LEADS

The standard leads are indicated in bold. If you and your partner have no special agreements, there isn't much to be filled in here. Standard will be presumed. If you do something fancy (like 10 or 9 leads to show 0 or 2 higher), you would have to circle such a special agreement by marking the card (not in bold) that your partnership would lead. Notice that under "versus Suits," A K x has no bold. Just circle the card you would lead; "standard" these days is to lead the ace.

For Length Leads, standard would be 4th Best against both suits and notrump. Mark your agreement accordingly. If you do something else, such as 3rd/5th Best against suits or Attitude against notrump, you mark that instead. Unless you've played many years and have an equally experienced partner, I suggest settling on "Standard" in this area. The advantages of fancier methods are negligible.

For the "Primary signal to partner's leads," the standard choice is "Attitude."

### SLAM CONVENTIONS

You can check the "Gerber" box, but I recommend using it only if the prior bid was 1NT or 2NT. Gerber is a 4♣ bid which asks for aces. Since it is in black, Gerber is not Alertable; nor are the responses.

For 4NT, mark "Blackwood" if you play plain-old aces. If you use Roman key card Blackwood with the old-fashioned responses where 5♣ = 0 or 3 and 5♦ = 1 or 4, check RKC. If you use the more modern responses of 5♣ = 1 or 4 and 5♦ = 0 or 3, check the 1430 box. **Note:** Whatever you play, make sure your partner is playing it the same way! No kind of Blackwood nor any responses to it are Alertable.

Interference in Blackwood auctions is so rare that it isn't really practical for newer players, so you can ignore the last line of this section.

<b>SLAM CONVENTIONS</b> Gerber <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> : 4NT: Blackwood <input type="checkbox"/> RKC <input type="checkbox"/> 1430 <input type="checkbox"/>																													
vs Interference: DOPI <input type="checkbox"/> DEPO <input type="checkbox"/> Level: _____ ROPI <input type="checkbox"/>																													
<b>LEADS</b> (circle card led, if not in bold) versus Suits      versus Notrump <table border="0"> <tr> <td><b>x x</b></td> <td><b>x x x x</b></td> <td><b>x x</b></td> <td><b>x x x x</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>x x <b>x</b></td> <td>x x x <b>x x</b></td> <td>x x x</td> <td>x x x <b>x x</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>A</b> K x</td> <td>T 9 x</td> <td>A K J x</td> <td>A Q J x</td> </tr> <tr> <td>K Q x</td> <td>K J T x</td> <td>A J T 9</td> <td>A T 9 x</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Q J x</td> <td>K T 9 x</td> <td>K Q J x</td> <td>K Q T 9</td> </tr> <tr> <td>J T 9</td> <td>Q T 9 x</td> <td>Q J T x</td> <td>Q T 9 x</td> </tr> <tr> <td>K Q T 9</td> <td></td> <td>J T 9 x</td> <td>T 9 x x</td> </tr> </table>	<b>x x</b>	<b>x x x x</b>	<b>x x</b>	<b>x x x x</b>	x x <b>x</b>	x x x <b>x x</b>	x x x	x x x <b>x x</b>	<b>A</b> K x	T 9 x	A K J x	A Q J x	K Q x	K J T x	A J T 9	A T 9 x	Q J x	K T 9 x	K Q J x	K Q T 9	J T 9	Q T 9 x	Q J T x	Q T 9 x	K Q T 9		J T 9 x	T 9 x x	<b>DEFENSIVE CARDING</b> vs SUITS vs NT Standard: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Except <input type="checkbox"/> <hr/> Upside-Down: count <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> attitude <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <hr/> <b>FIRST DISCARD</b> Lavinthal <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Odd/Even <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <hr/> <b>OTHER CARDING</b> Smith Echo <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Trump Suit Pref. <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Foster Echo <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>x x</b>	<b>x x x x</b>	<b>x x</b>	<b>x x x x</b>																										
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J T 9	Q T 9 x	Q J T x	Q T 9 x																										
K Q T 9		J T 9 x	T 9 x x																										
<b>LENGTH LEADS:</b> 4th Best vs SUITS <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> vs NT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3rd/5th Best vs SUITS <input type="checkbox"/> vs NT <input type="checkbox"/> Attitude vs NT <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Primary signal to partner's leads</b> Attitude <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Count <input type="checkbox"/> Suit preference <input type="checkbox"/>																												
<b>SPECIAL CARDING</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>PLEASE ASK</b>																													

### DEFENSIVE CARDING

Unless you and your partner are using something nonstandard, this is easy to fill in. Check both boxes next to "Standard" (under "vs SUITS" and under "vs NT"). This means that *high* means you like it (or an even number as in hi-lo with a doubleton) and that *low* means you don't like it (or an odd number of cards if giving a count signal). There is no need to mark anything else in this section. Yes, there are some good nonstandard methods available here – most experts use them – but until you've played bridge for many years, it is impractical to use anything other than standard.

Larry Cohen's completed basic 2/1 convention card is available at [acbl.org/basic2over1card](http://acbl.org/basic2over1card).