

STRONG NO-TRUMP BIDS (Simplified)

For beginners and intermediate players, it is important to develop a disciplined approach to all no-trump bids. With suit bids there is a degree of flexibility, in that points can be added for length, shortage, etc. but with no-trump bids, suits lengths are secondary, and therefore the point range should be fairly precisely defined. No-trump bids are usually made when there is no clear-cut alternative suit bid. No-trump bids are all LIMIT BIDS and can be passed by your partner.

We are discussing NT bids in the Standard American bidding system. The recommended point ranges for various NT bids are (conventional bids are italicised):

Opening the bidding with a balanced hand

Players with a balanced hand should always PLAN to bid NT at their first opportunity. Remember to review your PLAN based on the actual bidding. To look at the various options we consider the primary point ranges for an OPENING Hand.

12-14 points - bid 1 in a suit and **intend** to bid NT at the next bid. If you have an agreed fit with responder's bid suit then choose to show a 1 suit raise of responder's suit instead of your intended NT bid.

15-17 points - bid 1NT - the hand should be balanced and may contain a 5-card suit.

18-19 points - bid 1 in a suit, and jump in NT over responder's bid of a new suit.

If responder passes and the opponents overcall, then 1NT by the opener shows 18-19 points.

If responder supports opener's bid suit, then opener will decide between a bid of game and a part score.

20-22 points – bid 2NT - the hand should be balanced and may contain a 5 card suit.

23-24 points – bid 2C (artificial and strong) followed by 2NT to show 23-24 points balanced.

Some partnerships define this bidding sequence as 23+ rather than 23-24.

25-26 points – bid 2C (artificial and forcing) followed by 3NT to show 25-26 points balanced.

Note: - Over 1NT and 2NT openings, it is usual to play Stayman (one of the many variations), and suit transfers by responder.

Note: - An Opener with 23-24 or 24-26 points needs to consider their options to support the Responder's bid before preferring their plan to bid NT at the next bid.

Examples:

Opening Bids

a)	b)	c)	d)
♠ K963	♠ AK9	♠ AK9	♠ AK9
♥ K63	♥ KJ53	♥ KQJ	♥ K96
♦ AJ52	♦ AK63	♦ AKQ74	♦ AKJ74
♣ Q8	♣ K53	♣ Q2	♣ J2

- a) - 1NT
- b) - 2NT
- c) - 2C
- d) - 1D