

Balanced Opening Hands



Intermediate Bidding Intermediate Series #5

Strong No Trump



No Trump hands are "balanced" and stronger than a minimum
4/3/3/3 3/3/5/2 4/4/3/2

The criteria for NT openings are the same for the 1NT level, however in "Intermediate" you may have a five card major when opening 2NT (20/21) or 2♣ (strong 22+ hcps) followed by 2NT or 3NT.

1NT	= 15 - 17
2NT	= 20 - 21
2♣/2NT	= 22 - 24
2♣/3NT	= 25 - 27

Response to 2 No Trump(20/21 hcps)

No 3+ card major, flat hand

0 - 3hcp	PASS
4 - 11 points	3 No Trump
12 hcps	4 No Trump
	(Quantitative, Invites 6NT)
13 - 15	6 No Trump
16	5 No Trump
	(Invites 7, forces 6NT)
17+	7 No Trump

Stayman and **transfers** apply over all NT opening ranges, however over 2NT and 2♣ (22+ hcps) 2NT opening bids, Stayman becomes "**Five Card Stayman**" or "**Puppet Stayman**"

The ability to open strong No Trump hands (20/21 and 22+hcps) with a five card major, enables opening bidder to quickly describe a flat hand with strength.

Since partner can open a strong No Trump with a five card major, responder must ask for a major with a 3 or 4 card major using **Puppet Stayman**.

Over 3♣, Opener bids a 5 card major at the 3 level, shows that they have a 4 card major with a 3♦ bid and denies a 4 or 5 card major with a 3NT bid. When opener shows a 4 card major, responder shows 4♥ with a 3♠ bid and shows 4♠ with a 3♥ bid and both majors bid of 4♦. Opener then places the contract in the known fit, 4♥ or 4♠.

Response to 2 No Trump(20/21 hcps)

With a 3 card major and 4+ hcps

Responder Bids 3♣ (**Puppet Stayman**) asks for major suit length

1NT Opener Re-bids

- 3♦ denies a five card major (but shows a four card major)
- 3♥ shows a five card ♥ suit
- 3♠ shows a five card ♠ suit
- 3NT denies a 4 or 5 card major

Responder limits hand with re-bid / show or deny support

4 - 11 hcps Raise to 4 with support; over 3♦ attempt to find a 4/4 fit by bidding your non 4 card major at the 3 level. Opener will bid 3NT with no fit or 4 of the other major with a 4 card fit.

With 5 card major - transfer

To Show 5♠ bid 3♥

To Show 5♥ bid 3♦

Opener automatically accepts the transfer - over
3♦ bid 3♥ - over
3♥ bid 3♠

Responder limits hand

0 - 3 hcps	PASS
4 - 11 points	3 No Trump
12+ hcps	force to slam

With 6 card major - limit hand after transfer

4 - 11 points 4♥/♠

12+ hcps force to slam

With both (4 card and 5 card major) bid Puppet Stayman (3♣)

Over GF 2♣ opener - adjust hcps requirements 3 hcps lower

Texas Transfers

Partner has opened NT and you have the points for game, a 6 card major (you know you have a fit) and you have no interest in slam, you can transfer at the 4 level.

To Show 6♠ bid 4♥

To Show 6♥ bid 4♦

Opener automatically accepts the transfer - over
4♦ bid 4♥ - over
4♥ bid 4♠

On the contrary, if responder transfers at the TWO level and then raises to 4, responder is showing a hand bigger than game range (10-15) hcps and inviting slam with 16/17 hcps, just short of forcing slam with 18 hcps.

Minor Suit Stayman

With minors over 1NT, bid 2♠. Opener bids 2NT with equal or longer ♦, else 3♣. Responder corrects or passes with a weak hand.

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| #1 - Bridge Bidding Basics | #11 - Strips and Squeezes |
| #2 - Six Basic Conventions | #12 - Blackwood |
| #3 - Play of the Hand | #13 - Cue-bids |
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| #7 - Stayman and Transfers | #17 - Weak No Trump |
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| #9 - Doubles and Overcalls | #19 - Unusual/NMF/4SF |
| #10 - Online Bridge | #20 - One Level Transfers |



Another tense night of contract bridge ahead.

Grafton Duplicate Bridge Club

Thursday Noon - Ameriprise Financial Bldg
Stratified Pairs - Bridge lessons at 11am
Director - Michael Leighton (701) 520-0753

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Thursday 1pm - (0 - 200) Temple Shalom
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Saturday 12:30pm - MB Bridge Centre
Swiss Teams
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Suit Opening Bids



Third Seat Light

When there have been two PASSES, 3rd seat can take some liberty and bid 1♥/♠ with 1 or 2 hcps less than normal opening values. However, when opening light in 3rd or 4th seat, the opening bidder must PASS any bid by responder except Reverse Drury 2♣.

Fourth Seat (Pearson Points)

When there have been three PASSES, 4th seat can take some liberty and bid 1♥/♠ when High Card Points (hcps) plus the number of ♠ total 15, known as **Pearson Points**. Otherwise, the 4th seat bidder should PASS out the hand unless the 4th seat bidder has a long suit with very close to opening values that will shut out the opponents with a preempt, such as 2♥ or 3♣.

Reverse Drury

Since partner may have opened with less than 13 hcps in 3rd or 4th chair, it is critical to keep the bidding low in that situation.

As an example, if partner opens 1♥/♠ in 3rd seat and you give a limit raise to 3♥/♠ with support and 11 hcps (you are a passed hand), partner could have 11 hcps and the combined 22 hcps would probably be set.

To prevent going to the 3 level with 3rd and 4th seat light openers, responder bids 2♣ (Reverse Drury) to show a limit raise. If opener was light, he bids 2♥/♠ and plays it there. With full opening values, opener bids 2♦ to show full values or 2♥ to show 5♠/4♥ with full values when opening 1♠.

When the 3rd or 4th seat bidder has opened light "11 or 12 hcps", it is critical for responder to show support with a "simple raise" or a "reverse Drury limit raise" immediately as the light opener is obligated to PASS any bid except the reverse Drury bid of 2♣. There are no jumps or 2NT bids available when partner has opened 1♥/♠ in 3rd or 4th chair. The only forcing bid is 2♣. Responder should be prepared to declare their bid.

Unbalanced Opening hands

4th Suit Forcing

When there has been no bidding interference by the opponents, the bid of the 4th suit is **Fourth Suit Forcing**. It is forcing to game by the opening bidder and forcing for 1 round by the responder.

Fourth Suit Forcing says nothing about the suit bid, it says that your side has the points to bid further, but the bidder is not sure what to bid and it asks partner to further describe their hand.

Disruptive Bidding

Cappelletti

In the Direct Seat over Strong 1NT (15-17)

- ✓ 2♣ shows a one suited hand (usually 6 or more)
 - Partner is expected to bid 2♦ with a weak hand, which the over-caller can correct to his long suit
 - Bid 2 of a good 5 or 6 card major
 - Bid 2NT with a strong hand (over-caller then bids the suit)
- ✓ 2♦ shows both majors, implies 5/5 can be 5/4
- ✓ 2♥ shows ♥ and a minor, implies 5/5 can be 5/4
- ✓ 2♠ shows ♠ and a minor, implies 5/5 can be 5/4
- ✓ 2NT show both minors
- ✓ Double is Penalty

DON'T (Disturb Opponents No Trump)

In the Direct Seat over Strong 1NT (15-17)

- ✓ 2♣ shows ♣ and a higher suit (usually 5/5)
- ✓ 2♦ shows a higher suit
- ✓ 2♥ shows ♥ and a minor, implies 5/5 can be 5/4
- ✓ 2♠ shows ♠
- ✓ 2NT show both minors
- ✓ Double is a single suit, partner relays with 2♣

Gokavi No Name Convention

In the Direct Seat over weak 1NT (12-14)

- ✓ 2♣ says clubs are better than ♦ and have a 5 card major
- ✓ 2♦ says the same thing about ♦
- ✓ 2♥ you have 4♥ and a longer minor
- ✓ 2♠ is the same for ♠
- ✓ 2NT is for the minors
- ✓ Double is for a single suit, or both majors or a Strong NT

Gambling 3NT - Opponents have not bid, 7 card minor headed by AKQ with no outside A or K. Partner pulls to 4♣ to pass or correct with opposition double and no stopper.

Inverted Minors - Raise of a minor opening shows 5+ card support.

- 1♣/♦ raised to 2♣/♦ shows 10+ hcps
- 1♣/♦ raised to 3♣/♦ shows less than 10 hcps

An variation of the Blackwood Convention (4NT) is **Roman Key Card Blackwood** which counts the King of trump as a key card. Therefore you have 5 "aces" or key cards. (1430)
5♣ = 1 or 4 key cards
5♦ = 0 or 3
5♥ = 2 without the Queen of trump
5♠ = 2 with the Queen

When ♣ is the agreed suit, some established partnerships agree to use (0314) so that a zero response of Aces does not force the six level.

When showing Kings over 5NT - do not show the trump King, as that has already been bid. A bid of 5NT guarantees that you and partner possess all key cards and the trump Queen.

If the trump queen is not known, the RKC bidder can ask by bidding 5♦ over a 5♣ response with either major as trump, or by bidding 5♥ over a 5♦ response when ♠ are the trump suit. Responder goes to 6♥/♠ with the trump Queen and stops in 5♥/♠ without the Queen. This is called the "Queen ask". Responder can also show another King, (with the Q) if bidding "cheapest" King to 5NT inquiry.

Nothing is more frustrating than a partner who doesn't show support

It is particularly important to **raise overcalls** (always 5+ card suits) **immediately** with 3 cards, unless you have 10+ hcps, partner has over-called a minor and you have a biddable major.

Overcalls have length and strength in the suit bid and in theory are more defining than an opening bid

Show support with a simple raise with minimal values (5-9) Cue-bid with a limit raise (10-12+) with invitational values. As an example LHO opens 1♣, partner overcalls 1♥, a 2♣ cue-bid by you is a limit raise of ♥. On the other hand, a jump to 3♥ of an overcall of 1♥ is pre-emptive (weak) and shows less than 6 hcps with 4♥.