

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.

My recommended point ranges for various NT bids are (conventional bids are italicised):

Opening Bids

1NT – 12 - 14 points - weak balanced (but may contain a poor 5-card suit – i.e. not suitable to re-bid).
2NT – 20 - 22 points (if playing Benji Acol (weak-two's) this range does vary)
(*3NT & 4NT are conventional*)

Note: – Over 1NT and 2NT, it is usual to play Stayman, and either weak take-outs or (better) transfers.

Responses (over opening bids of 1 of a suit)

Over Opener's Suit Bid:

1NT – 6 - 9(10) points (over 1♣, playing 4-card majors, the range should be 8 – 9(10) points, since with 6-7 points, you just bid 2♣). Not necessarily balanced - see example (h).
2NT – 11 - 12 points (balanced – no alternative suit bid)
3NT – 13 - 15 points (balanced – no alternative suit bid)
(*4NT – Blackwood*)

With 10 points when NT is an option, you need to judge whether the 10 points is a good 9 points (bid 1NT) or a poor 11 points (bid 2NT). A 'poor' count will have unsupported jacks

Following a major opener, with 9 points there are usually more suitable bids than 1NT. If you don't bid 1NT, consider what to do if partner repeats his major – are you then stuck for a bid – if so, your original bid should probably have been 1NT (see example (g)).

Over Opener's 1NT:

2NT – 12 points without a four-card major (if playing transfers, with 11 points, prefer 2♠)
3NT – 13 - 18 points without a four-card major
(*4NT – quantitative*).

Opener's Re-bids (having originally opened 1 of a suit)

Partner Responds At 1 Level:

1NT – 15 - 16 pts.
2NT – 17 - 18 pts.
3NT – 19 - 20 pts.
(*4NT - Blackwood – highly unlikely*).

Partner Responds At 2 Level:

2NT – 14 - 15 pts.
3NT – 16+ (this can be bid with 'good' 15 counts)

Opener's Re-bids (having originally opened 2♣)

2NT – 23 or 24 balanced (responder treats the same as a 2NT opening bid, but adjusted for points)

3NT – 25 or 26 balanced

Overcalls

1NT – 15 - 17 pts. – with 1 stop (ideally 1½) in the opening suit bid. (Note that partner's subsequent bids, Stayman etc. - are the same as for an opening 1NT, but adjusted for the 3 point difference).

2NT – 20 - 22 pts. (with experience, this bid has better meanings)

With 18 - 19 points double first, and then show the relevant strength on the next bid (via no-trump bid).

Responding To Take-Out Doubles

1NT – 6 - 9 points – with 1½ stops in opener's suit.

Responding To Partner's 1-Level Overcall

Since an overcall can be lighter than an opening bid, partner's responses are adjusted accordingly:

1NT – 10 - 11 pts (also with a stop in the opponent's opening suit)

2NT – 12 - 13 pts

(with more points, first cue-bid the opponent's suit and then bid no-trumps)

Examples:

Opening Bids

a)	♠ K963	b)	♠ AK9	c)	♠ AK9
	♥ K63		♥ KJ53		♥ KQ5
	♦ AJ52		♦ AK63		♦ AKQ74
	♣ Q8		♣ K5		♣ 62

a) - 1NT

b) - 2NT

c) - 2NT Ideally the hand should have an honour in all suits, but what else do you open?

Responses:

	Over 1♥		Over 1♥		Over 1♥		Over 1♥		Over 1♣
d)	♠ K96	e)	♠ K96	f)	♠ A109	g)	♠ A109	h)	♠ A94
	♥ Q6		♥ Q6		♥ Q7		♥ 8		♥ Q63
	♦ J532		♦ J4		♦ K8643		♦ K8643		♦ K54
	♣ J874		♣ J87432		♣ 954		♣ Q762		♣ J652
	Over 1♠		Opposition 1♦		Opposition 1♥		Over 1NT		Over 1NT
i)	♠ AQ7	j)	♠ AQJ7	k)	♠ AJ7	l)	♠ A85	m)	♠ A853
	♥ K983		♥ KJ63		♥ KJ63		♥ A94		♥ A94
	♦ A52		♦ 97		♦ Q97		♦ Q532		♦ Q532
	♣ Q54		♣ A83		♣ A83		♣ Q76		♣ Q7

- d) - 1NT
- e) - 1NT – 9+ points needed to respond with a new suit at the two level.
- f) - 2♦ - If partner re-bids 2♥, you can then pass.
- g) - 1NT – If you were to bid 2♦, and partner then re-bids 2♥, what do you bid next?
- h) - 1NT or 2NT. With 10 points, 1NT is a slight underbid; 2NT is a slight overbid. When learning, just bid 1NT (also the hand contains a hanging J).
- i) - 2♣ – playing 5-card majors (do not bid 4♠, which is a 7-9 (ish) with long spades). With more experience there are better bids to show this hand, but best to just bid an artificial 2♣. If partner then shows a strong hand (e.g. 3♠), you may investigate a slam.
 - 3NT – playing 4-card majors
- j) - Double – points sufficient for 1NT, but no stop in diamonds.
- k) - 1NT – 15 - 17 points with a stop in opposition's suit.
- l) - 2NT – 11 points
- m) - 2♣ Stayman (invitational) with a four-card spade suit (and shortage in diamonds)

Opener's Re-bids

After 1♦ - 1♠

n) ♠ K96
♥ Q74
♦ A843
♣ AK4

After 1♦ - 1♠

o) ♠ K96
♥ QJ4
♦ A843
♣ AK4

After 1♦ - 1♠

p) ♠ K96
♥ AJ4
♦ A843
♣ AK4

After 1♥ - 2♣

q) ♠ K96
♥ AJ943
♦ A84
♣ K4

After 1♥ - 2♣

r) ♠ K96
♥ AJ943
♦ AJ4
♣ K4

After 2♣ - 2♦

s) ♠ K96
♥ AKQ4
♦ A84
♣ AKJ

After 2♣ - 2♦

t) ♠ K96
♥ AKQ4
♦ AQ4
♣ AKJ

- n) - 1NT (16 points)
- o) - 2NT (17 points)
- p) - 3NT (19 points)
- q) - 2NT (15 points) (remember that partners 2♣ response guarantees at least 9 points)
- r) - 3NT (16 points)
- s) - 2NT (24 points)
- t) - 3NT (26 points)