

Review of standard raise structure when a major is opened:

1 M – 2 M: 6-9 points, 3+ card support

1M – 3 M: 10-12 points, 4+ card support: limit raise

1M – 4 M: up to 9 points, 5+ card support, shortness somewhere: “weak freak”

But what if the opponent interferes with a suit bid?**There’s a simple structure if you have 6 – 9 points:**

1M – (2x) – 2M: 3 card support, 6-9 points (8 card fit, safe to bid up to the 2 level)

1M – (2x) – 3M: 4 card support, 6-9 points (9 card fit, safe to bid up to the 3 level)

1M – (2x) – 4M: 5+ card support: 6-9 points (10+ card fit, safe to bid up to the 4 level)

If the Opponent doubles, the same structure applies:

1M – (X) – 2M: 3 card support, 6-9 points (8 card fit, safe to bid up to the 2 level)

1M – (X) – 3M: 4 card support, 6-9 points (9 card fit, safe to bid up to the 3 level)

1M – (X) – 4M: 5+ card support: 6-9 points (10+ card fit, safe to bid up to the 4 level)

How do you handle interference if you have 10+points and support

When the right hand opponent overcalls with a suit bid, you can use “cue bid raises”. Bidding the RHO’s suit shows 10+ points and at least 3 card support for partner. It is a forcing bid. Partner cannot pass!

1H – (1 S) - ?. If you have 10+ points and 3 + card support for partner’s suit, cue bid the opponent’s suit:

1 H – (1 S) – 2S

Opener’s rebid:

Rebid of their suit at lowest level: shows minimum opener (12-13 points). Responder can raise to 4 with extras.

Raise to game: at least good 14 points or more

New suit: help suit game try

If the overcall is a minor suit, cue bids are still used:

If you have 10+ points and support, cue bid the opponent's suit:

1H – (2 m) – 3 m

Minor cue bid raises

Cue bid raises also apply when your partner opens a minor, but you should have 5 clubs or 4 diamonds and 10+ points to use cue bid raises.

Examples:

1 C – (1H) – P – 2 C: shows 5 + clubs (or 4 very good clubs) and 10+ points

1 D – (1H) – P – 2 D: shows 4 + diamonds and 10+ points

Cue bid raises of your partner's overcall:

Cue bid raises also apply when your partner has made an overcall

Example: RHO opens 1 H, your partner overcalls 2 C, LHO passes:

(1H) – 2 C – (P) – 2 H Bid 2 hearts to show 3+ card support and 10+ points

If both opponents bid:

(1 C) – 1H – (1 S) – 2 C: cue bid the **first suit bid** by the opponents: shows 3 + hearts and 10+ points

(1 D) – 1H – (2 C) – 2 D: shows 3 + hearts and 10+ points

Opponents overcall with a pre-empt:

1 H – (2 S) – 3 S: shows values and support for partner's suit but you should have extra length and/or strength for this as you are forcing to game

Other uses for cue bids (it's not just for raises 😊)

♠ ♥ ♦ ♣

Michaels cue bid: overcalling the opponent's opening bid with a cue bid shows a two suited hand:

Opener - overcaller

(1 ♦) - 2 ♦: shows at least 5 – 5 in the majors (or at least 5 - 4)

(1 ♣) – 2 ♣: shows at least 5 – 5 in the majors (or at least 5 – 4)

(1 ♥) – 2 ♥: shows at least 5 spades and 5 in a minor (or at least 5 – 4)

(1 ♠) – 2 ♠: shows at least 5 hearts and 5 in a minor (or at least 5 – 4)

More info:

https://web2.acbl.org/documentLibrary/play/Commonly_Used_Conventions/michaelscuebid.pdf

or do a web search for “Michaels cue bid”

Unusual 2 NT overcall: overcalling the opponent's opening bid with 2 NT shows a two suited hand:

(1 ♦) - 2 NT: shows at least 5 hearts and 5 clubs (or at least 5 - 4)

(1 ♣) – 2 NT: shows at least 5 hearts and 5 diamonds (or at least 5 – 4)

(1 ♥) – 2 NT: shows at least 5 diamonds and 5 clubs (or at least 5 – 4)

(1 ♠) – 2 NT: shows at least 5 diamonds and 5 clubs (or at least 5 – 4)

More info:

https://www.bridgebum.com/unusual_2nt.php

or do a web search for “unusual 2NT”

Simple approach on how to handle these overcalls: cue bid the opponent's lower “known” suit to show a limit raise or better of partner's suit.

e.g. 1 ♥ – (2 NT) – 3 ♣ is a limit raise or better in hearts (clubs is the lowest known suit)

1 ♣ – (2 ♣) – 2 ♥ shows a limit raise or better in clubs (hearts is the lowest known suit)

1 ♠ – (2 ♠) – 3 ♥ shows a limit raise or better in spades (hearts is the only known suit)

A more complete approach follows on the next 4 pages:

As responder, you can use cue bids to show support for partner's suit by cue bidding one of the "known" or "implied" suits held by the overcaller

Karen Walker's website has a good summary of the modern approach to this.

https://kwbridge.com/bb/b_unus.htm

Unusual over Unusual 2 NT over a major suit opening:

Over partner's 1 ♥ opening, opponent bids 2 NT showing clubs and diamonds		Over partner's 1 ♠ opening, opponent bids 2 NT showing clubs and diamonds	
Response	Meaning	Response	Meaning
Double	Double with a hand that is worth a redouble of a takeout double. This says that you can double at least one of their suits for penalty and promises another bid	Double	Double with a hand that is worth a redouble of a takeout double. This says that you can double at least one of their suits for penalty and promises another bid
3♣	Bid 3♣ (cuebid of their lower suit) with a limit raise or better in hearts	3♣	Bid 3♣ (cuebid of their lower suit) with game values or better in hearts
3♦	Bid 3♦ (cuebid of their higher suit) with game values or better in spades.	3♦	Bid 3♦ (cuebid of their higher suit) with a limit raise or better in spades.
3♥	A constructive raise (7-10 points) opposite a 1♥ opening.	3♥	Opposite a 1♠ opening: Bid three of the other major with a hand similar to a good weak two-bid — this is natural and constructive but non-forcing.
3♠	Opposite a 1♥ opening: Bid three of the other major with a hand similar to a good weak two-bid — this is natural and constructive but non-forcing.	3♠	A constructive raise (7-10 points) opposite a 1♠ opening.

Unusual over Unusual 2 NT over a minor suit opening:

Over partner's 1 ♣ opening, opponent bids 2 NT showing diamonds and hearts.		Over partner's 1 ♦ opening, opponent bids 2 NT showing clubs and hearts	
Response	Meaning	Response	Meaning
Double	Double with a hand that is worth a redouble of a takeout double. This says that you can double at least one of their suits for penalty and promises another bid	Double	Double with a hand that is worth a redouble of a takeout double. This says that you can double at least one of their suits for penalty and promises another bid
3 ♣	A constructive raise (7-10 points) opposite a 1 ♣ opening. (should have at least 5 clubs)	3 ♣	Bid 3 ♣ (cuebid of their lower suit) with a limit raise or better in diamonds
3 ♦	Bid 3 ♦ (cuebid of their lower suit) with a limit raise or better in clubs.	3 ♦	A constructive raise (7-10 points) opposite a 1 ♦ opening. (should have at least 4 diamonds)
3 ♥	Bid 3 ♥ (cuebid of their higher suit) with game values or better in spades.	3 ♥	Bid 3 ♥ (cuebid of their higher suit) with game values or better in spades.
3 ♠	Bid 3 ♠ with a hand similar to a good weak two-bid — this is natural and constructive but non-forcing.	3 ♠	A constructive raise (7-10 points) opposite a 1 ♠ opening. Bid 3 ♠ with a hand similar to a good weak two-bid — this is natural and constructive but non-forcing.

Unusual over Michaels cue bid over a minor suit opening:

Over partner's 1 ♣ opening, opponent bids 2 ♣ showing the majors		Over partner's 1 ♦ opening, opponent bids 2 ♦ showing the majors.	
Response	Meaning	Response	Meaning
Double	Double with a hand that is worth a redouble of a takeout double. This says that you can double at least one of their suits for penalty and promises another bid	Double	Double with a hand that is worth a redouble of a takeout double. This says that you can double at least one of their suits for penalty and promises another bid
3 ♣	A constructive raise (7-10 points) opposite a 1 ♣ opening. (should have at least 5 clubs)	Bid 3 ♣	6+-card suit and about 7-10 pts. (a hand like a Weak Two-Bid).
2 ♦/3 ♦	Bid 2 ♦ : 6+-card suit and about 7-10 pts. (a hand like a Weak Two-Bid).	Bid 3 ♦	A constructive raise (7-10 points) opposite a 1 ♦ opening. (should have at least 4 diamonds)
2 ♥	Bid 2 ♥ (cuebid of their lower suit) with a limit raise or better in clubs.	Bid 2 ♥	(cuebid of their lower suit) with a limit raise or better in diamonds
2 ♠	Bid 2 ♠ (cuebid of their higher suit) a game-forcing hand and a 5+ diamond card suit.	Bid 2 ♠	(cuebid of their higher suit) a game-forcing hand and a 5+-card club suit.

Unusual over Michaels cue bid over a major suit opening:

Over partner's 1 ♥ opening, opponent bids 2 ♥ showing spades and a minor		Over partner's 1 ♠ opening, opponent bids 2 ♠ showing hearts and a minor	
Response	Meaning	Response	Meaning
Double	Double with a hand that is worth a redouble of a takeout double. This says that you can double at least one of their suits for penalty and promises another bid	Double	Double with a hand that is worth a redouble of a takeout double. This says that you can double at least one of their suits for penalty and promises another bid
3 ♣	6+-card suit and about 7-10 pts. (a hand like a Weak Two-Bid). Non-forcing	3 ♣	6+-card suit and about 7-10 pts. (a hand like a Weak Two-Bid). Non-forcing
3 ♦	6+-card suit and about 7-10 pts. (a hand like a Weak Two-Bid). Non-forcing	3 ♦	6+-card suit and about 7-10 pts. (a hand like a Weak Two-Bid). Non-forcing
3 ♥	Bid 3 ♥ A constructive raise (7-10 points) opposite a 1 ♥ opening.	3 ♥	Bid 3 ♥ (cuebid of their known suit) with a limit raise or better in spades.
2 ♠/3 ♠	Bid 2 ♠ (cuebid of their known suit) with a limit raise or better in hearts.	3 ♠	Bid 3 ♠: A constructive raise (7-10 points) opposite a 1 ♠ opening.

Western Cue bid

The opponent opens a weak two: 2 ♠ or 2 ♥

Your partner can cue bid the opponent's suit to ask you to bid 3 NT with a stopper in the opponent's suit.

Note that (2 ♦) - 3 ♦ is generally still played as Michaels, with 5 - 5 in the majors (partnership agreement)

(the topic of stopper asking/stopper showing with Western and Eastern cue bids is a complex area 😊)

Another example of a Western cue bid:

N – E – W – S

1 ♥ - (1 ♠) – 2 ♣ - (P)

3 ♣ - (P) – 3 ♠

3 ♠ is a Western cue bid asking partner to bid 3 NT with a spade stopper. It's not a cue bid raise of hearts as West could have done that at their first opportunity to bid. It's not a control bid as hearts have not been agreed upon as the trump suit.

Cue bid after partner doubles

(1m) – X – (P) – 2 m

(1M) - X - (P) – 2 M

(standard responses to a double: with 0-8 pts, bid your best suit at the cheapest level; with 9-11 pts: jump. With 12+: **cue bid**)

Cue bid of opener's suit after partner's double: 12+ points, artificial and forcing. Typically unbalanced without a better alternative bid. Almost always game forcing. Doubler's rebids are natural.

(the topic of handling doubles by the opponents is another complex area 😊)