

1D OPENING BID

Points:
18+ p

Distribution:
any

The 1D-opening bid is also used for hands which contain only 15-16 p, but have only 4 losers (strong 1-suiter or 2-suiter). Note: There are hands of 18 p, which are not strong enough for a 1D opening.

RESPONSES TO 1D OPENING BID

Partner must announce obliged his number of controls, in steps (K = 1 control, A = 2 controls), as follows:

1NT	3 controls
2C	4 controls
2D	5 controls
2NT	6 controls
3C	7 controls
3D	8 controls

With 0-2 controls the responses are:

1H	negative, 0-6 p
1S	positive, 7+ p

Normally, the positive response of 1S creates a game-force situation unless a misfit is diagnosed.

2H/2S responses are out of scale; they are reserved for weak hands with a long suit: 6 cards minimum, 3-4 p.

Opener can pass.

After opponent's intervention, responses are also simple:

1. Interventions without jump (up to and including 2D)

a) Pass	= negative, 0-6 p
b) Double	= positive, 7+ p
c) Next step over intervention's suit	= 3 controls
d) Two steps over intervention's suit	= 4 controls and so on.

If the intervention is a double, pass = negative, 0-6 and redouble = a positive response, 7+. The normal responses, in steps, then show the number of controls (1H = 3 controls, 1S = 4, etc.)

Remember 2H/2S responses are out of scale, even in this case, and they are always negatives with long suit.

2. Interventions with jump (2H and higher)

a) Pass	= negative
b) Suit	= 7+ p, natural
c) 2NT	= 7+ p, without biddable suit and promises stopper in opponent's suit
d) Cue-bid	= strong hand
e) Double	= 7+ p, penalty tendency

OPENER'S REBID: FIRST REAL BID AND DEVELOPMENTS

There are two different developments depending on whether opener's rebid is NT or a suit.

A) All balanced hands bid NT:

- NT at minimum level (1NT/2NT) shows 18-20 p.
- 2NT with jump show 21-22 p.
- over 23 p, bid first <1S relay>, then 2NT or 3NT.

When partner's positive response doesn't permit to opener to bid <1S relay> or 2NT with jump, the bidding can continue along natural lines, bidding a suit, even if the suit is only 4 cards (beginning with the cheapest, as Baron) to find a fit; immediate raise of a minor suit which was bid at the 2-level (2C/2D) promises at least 4-card support.

When partner's positive response does not permit the rebid of 1NT, balanced opener with 18-20 p can choose between bidding a minor suit or 2NT (in this case 2NT shows 18-20 p because it is without jump). Remember that it is sensible to reserve 2NT for 4333 hands, while with 4432 hands it is better to bid a suit (especially if the short suit is doubleton xx).

The bidding continues following the same structure as after the 1NT opening bid, obviously correlated to the limits of points that exist in this case: hands negative or limited or positive and taking into account by possible game-force situations caused by first control response. Thus, responder will be negative with 0-4 p, limited with 5-6 p and positive with minimum 7 p (7 p + 18 p = 25 p – sufficient points for game).

Examples:

1D 1NT (18-20, balanced)	1S (positive)
1D 2NT (18-20, balanced)	2C (4 controls)
1D 2NT (21-22, balanced)	1H (negative)
1D 2NT (21-22, balanced)	1S
1D 1S (relay) 2NT (23-24, balanced)	1H (negative) 2C (second negative, 0-4)

N.B. Opener's 2NT rebid is obliged after <1S relay>, even if his hand contains a 4 card major suit; responder takes the initiative (as normally happens when opener shows a balanced hand): 3C means negative with a long suit; 3D is Stayman. With 25 or more points, opener can bid his major suit and, in case of misfit, can jump directly in 3NT.

THREE IMPORTANT NOTES

1. When opener shows an 18-20 p, balanced hand at 2NT level (ex. 1D-1NT-2NT = 18-20 p), 3C by responder is Stayman for points and majors.

Responses: 3D with 18-19 p; 3H/3S/3NT with 20 p and biddable suit (with 4 card in both majors bid 3H).

Examples:

1D 2NT (18-20, balanced) 3S (20 p, 4 cards, denying 4 heart cards)	2C (4 controls) 3C (Stayman)
1D 2NT (18-20, balanced) 3D (minimum, 18-19) 3S (4 cards, denying 4 heart cards)	1NT (3 controls) 3C (Stayman) 3H (4 cards)

2. After 2NT with jump (21-22 p), 3C is a negative bid that demands the obliged counter-response of 3D; 3D over 2NT is Stayman; 3H/3S are natural, game-force, searching for fit [support can be shown through next step (cue-bid), while 3NT is reserved for the hands without support].

Examples:

1D 2NT (21-22, balanced) 3D (forced)	1H (negative) 3C (negative) 3H (sign-off, with long H)
1D 2NT (21-22, balanced) 3S (4 cards, denying 4 heart cards)	1H (negative) 3D (Stayman)
1D	1H (negative)

2NT (21-22, balanced)	3S (positive with long S)
4C (cue-bid with good support; better than 4S which shows weaker support)	

2. After opener has used the <1S relay> and rebids 2NT, he shows a balanced hand with 23-24 p. In this case also 3C is a negative bid which demands the obliged counter-response of 3D; 3H/3S are naturals, game-force, trying to find a fit, while 3D is Stayman.

Example:

1D	1H (negative)
1S (relay)	2C (second negative, 0-4)
2NT (23-24, balanced)	3C (negative)
3D (obliged)	PASS with long D or 3H with long H, etc.

B) Unbalanced hands, which contain a long suit are shown by opener bidding the higher ranked suit. Auction continues natural, logically, keeping account that, after the game-force responses, tempo is not a problem. The partnership has possibility to show all their values - long suits, support and, eventually, other values: singletons, voids (via cue-bidding).

TWO IMPORTANT NOTES

1. When opener bypasses the <1S relay>, the first suit bid (2C/2D/2H) by opener shows 18-19 p and an unbalanced hand. With 20+ p, opener uses the conventional <1S relay>. With 18-19 p and long spades, opener also uses the <1S relay> and then repeats the spade suit at the 2-level (2S).

2. 3-suited hands 4441 bid the <1S relay> if it contains minimum 20 p; if not, auction is natural, logically. Opener's first rebid with 18-19 will always be a minor suit (2C/2D); therefore, support for the minor must be 4 cards minimum (not three!).

DEVELOPMENTS AFTER 1H NEGATIVE RESPONSE

Game is still possible after a 1D opening and a 1H negative response.

After this response, opener has 2 possibilities, besides 1NT or 2NT (for balanced hands):

1. Natural bid at 2 level
2. <1S relay>, conventional – forcing until 2NT

1. Natural bid at 2 level

Opener's natural bid shows a minimum hand (18-19 p) and responder can pass; if responder does not pass, he rebids naturally; opener can pass responder's rebid, even if it is a jump.

2. <1S relay>

This bid is conventional, forcing to 2NT; these means that responder can't pass below this level, except for this situation:

1D	1H
1S	2C (negative)
2S (non-forcing bid because shows 18-19 p with long S)	

Responses after <1S relay>:

- 2C = negative, 0-4 p
- 1NT = positive balanced, 5-6 p
- 2D/2H/2S = positive (5-6 p) with minimum 5 cards in suit bid
- 3D/3H/3S = positive with 7 cards in bid suit

With positive hand and long Clubs, you can choose from 3 bids:

- 2NT = 5332
- 3C = 6(7) club cards
- 1NT = if hand contains another 4 card suit

IMPORTANT! After <1S relay>, opener tries, at the 2 level, to find a fit with his partner in suits by 4 cards which both will announce them in rank order. Practically <1S relay> functions as a Stayman for suits (majors or minors). These don't exclude bidding of long suits that are bid at 2 level and could be repeated at 3 level. Opener shows a long suit if it is first bid at the 3 level. With a strong 3-suited hand he can raise partner's suit or can announce 2NT, bid which, since it was not the first rebid after the <1S relay>, shows a 3-suited hand without fit in partner's suit.

Examples:

1D	1H
1S (relay)	2C (negative)
2D (natural)	2S (natural)
2NT (3-suited without S)	
1D	1H
1S (relay)	2C (negative)
2H (natural)	2S (natural, without 4 heart cards)
3S (support, minimum 4 cards, non-forcing)	
1D	1H
1S (relay)	2H (positive, long H)
2S (minimum 4 cards)	3H (minimum 6 cards)
4C (long C without 2 heart cards, otherwise he would have bid 4H)	

AUCTION WITH JUMP AT 2 LEVEL

Opener and also responder can use these bids with exceptional shape after opening and controls have been shown. Let's see two cases:

a) Responder's jump in second round shows a 6 card suit headed by 2 top honours; if the auction is with double jump (ex. 1D-2C-2D-4S) it shows a minimum 7 card suit.

1D	1NT (3 controls)
2C	3S (6 spades with 2 top honours)
1D	1NT
2C	4S (7 spades with 2 top honours)

b) In general, opener does not use a jump because it is preferable to use the space available to exchange maximum information. Only in exceptional cases, with very unbalanced hands which contains a strong suit and at most 2/3 losers, he can make a jump auction that is interrogative in the suit bid.

Responder must announce, in steps, the number of cards that he has in this suit:

- 1 st step	= 1 card (or void)
- 2 nd step	= 2 cards
- 3 rd step	= 3 cards
- 4 th step	= 4 cards, etc.

Immediately after the responder has shown his number of cards, a NT bid by opener asks for the number of top honours (A/K/Q) in the set suit. Responses are in steps also :

- 1 st step	= no honour
- 2 nd step	= 1 honour
- 3 rd step	= 2 honours
- 4 th step	= 3 honours

Opener's bid of a second suit asks, as above, the number of cards and a subsequent NT bid asks for the number of honours in this second suit.

Let's see two practical examples:

1D	1S
3C (C interrogative)	3S (3 club cards)
3NT (? club honours)	4C (0 honours)
4D (D interrogative)	4S (2 diamond cards)
6C (conclusion)	

1D	1H
2S (S interrogative)	3D (3 spade cards)
3H (H interrogative)	4D (4 heart cards)
4NT (? heart honours)	5D (1 honour)
5S (conclusion)	

1C OPENING BID

Points:

- a) 12-14
- b) 15-17

Distributions:

4432/ 4333/ 5332 (5 cards in either minor suit)
any (unbalanced)

Balanced hands are shown through 1NT/ 2NT/ 3NT at second round.

Opener's 1-level rebid in a major suit (1H/1S) is ambiguous as to whether it is balanced or unbalanced.

Only in two cases can the 1C balanced opener bid a suit at the 2 level on the second round:, when his hand contains 4 card support for partner. In this case, 2H over 1H or 2S over 1S show a 12-14 balanced hand.

Examples:

1C	1H
2H (12-14 p with 4 hearts support)	

1C	1S
2S(12-14 p with 4 spades support)	

Unbalanced hands (15-17) are shown by a rebid at the 2 or higher level.

Examples:

1C	1S
2C (15-17 p, long C)	

1C	1H
2D (15-17 p, long D)	

1C	1H
1S (ambiguous)	1NT
2C (15-17 p with long C and 4 spade cards)	

1C	1D
1H (ambiguous)	2C
2D (15-17 with long D and 4 heart cards)	

RESPONSES AFTER 1C OPENING BID

A. Negative (0-10 p)

- 1D (or pass after opponent's interventions): 0-7 p

1D response can be also made with 8-10 p and a long minor suit; this avoids the, 1NT response because a balanced opener will pass; prefer to play 2C/ 2D.

Example:

1C	1D
1H	2C (8-10 p, 5(6) club cards)

1C	1D
1H	2D (8-10 p, 5(6) diamond cards)

N.B. If opener is 15-17 he will bid his long suit at his turn.

If after 1D negative response opener bids a major suit (1H/ 1S), responder still doesn't know opener's hand type; therefore, responder, with a maximum negative hand (6-7 p) and good support in opener's suit, must keep the bidding open.

Specification With a maximum (17 p), opener will jump bid a major suit (2H/ 2S) over the 1D response.

Example:

1C	1D
2H (maximum 17 p and 5 strong hearts)	

B. Limited (8-10 p)

- 1H = 4 cards (at least)
- 1S = 4 cards (minimum), denying 4 heart cards
- 1NT = without biddable major suit

Responder major suit rebids follow 'long-suit-first':

Example:

1C	1S
1NT	2H (8-10 p, 5 spades & 4 hearts)

N.B. This is the only one case in the system, which the change of suit is non-forcing.

1C	1H
1NT	2H (8-10 p with long H; may hide 4 spade cards)

1C	1H
1S	2S (8-10 p with long H & 4 spade cards)

Opener with 15-17 p must bid his long suit at 2 or 3 round; when the opener 15-17 fits responder's suit (1H/ 1S), opener can bid 2NT to ask for controls. 2NT can be used also when the opener has a long side suit plus 4-card support for responder's major.

Responder shows his controls as follows:

- 3C = negative (0-2 controls)
- 3D = 3 controls
- 3H = 4 controls
- 3S = 5 controls

Examples:

1C	1H (natural)
2NT (4 heart cards and 15-17 p)	

1C	1S (natural)
2NT (fit and 15-17 p)	3D (3 controls)
3H (forcing, request for singleton/ void)	4C (cue-bid)
4S (conclusion)	

1C	1H
2NT (fit and 15-17 p)	3D (3 controls)
3H (forcing)	4C (cue-bid, denying spade control)

Conclusion 2NT on the second round (fit and 15-17 p) is a game-force; responder can't pass even with only 8 p [the minimum necessary for 1H/ 1S response] because game can be made with shapely hands with less than 25 p (the normal minimum for game)].

Opener with an ugly hand (exactly 15 p, and 6-7 losers) will not bid 2NT forcing over 1H/1S responses, but will make a non-forcing bid.

Examples:

1C	1H
3H (fit and 15 p)	can pass

1C	1S
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3C (fit and 15 p)

can pass

NOTE! After partner's 1H response, with 4 spades and long C/D, opener must bid 1S, foregoing for the moment to show his strength (15-17 p) which will be cleared up on the next round when he bids his long minor.

Examples:

1C	1H
1S (ambiguous)	1NT
2D (15-17 with long D & 4 spades)	

1C	1H
1S	1NT
2S (15-17 with long Ss)	

When the opener has 2 long suits (5 cards), bid first the higher-ranking suit; on the next round jump bid the second suit; thus he announces to his partner that he has a 5-5 pattern.

Examples :

1C	1H
1S	1NT
3D (5 spades & 5 diamonds)	

1C	1S
2H	2NT
4C (5 hearts minimum & 5 clubs)	

1C	1NT
2C	2D
3H (6 clubs & 5 hearts)	

For memory, when a 1C opener makes a jump bid on the 3rd round, he shows two long suits (5 cards minimum in each suit). This rule is valid even over 1D response.

C. Positive relative (11+ p)

- 1H/1S, rebid 3H/3S = exactly 11 p and 6 cards

- 2C/2D = 4 cards minimum and 11+ p.

The 1H/ 1S positive responses are an absolutely priority, even with a longer minor. If followed by a jump to 3H/ 3S, they are limit bids which show exactly 11 p and minimum 6 cards (with 12+ p and long major suit, use the 2H/ 2S responses over 1C).

Example:

1C	1H
1NT	3H (11 p, minimum 6 heart cards)

The 2C/ 2D rebids of responder deny 4 cards in either major suit and show 4+ cards in the suit bid. The auction is not yet game-forcing; to force again, responder must change suit (forcing), asking opener to choose one of these options:

- to bid 2H/ 2S, giving preference to responder's first suit with 3 cards support (with 4 opener would have raised immediately);
- to raise responder's second suit at 3 level with 4 cards support minimum (and without 3 cards in first suit);
- to bid 2NT without 3 cards in first suit (major) or 4 cards in the second suit;
- to make another bid to show a 15-17 p opening bid.

Examples:

1C	1H
1NT	2D (forcing, suit can, exceptionally, be 3 cards)

1C	1H
1S	2D
3D (4 diamond cards, without 3 hearts)	

1C
1NT
2NT (no 3 hearts, no 4 diamonds)

1S
2D

1C
1S
2S (15-17, with long S)

1H
2D

1C
1S

1H
2H (8-10 p, non-forcing)

1C
1NT

1S
2S (8-10 p, non-forcing)

1C
1NT

1S
2NT (11-12 p, non-forcing)

N.B. Only a change of suit creates a one-round force.

Over the immediate 2C/ 2D responses, a balanced opener will bid :

- 2NT = 12-13 p
- 3NT = 14 p, regardless of support for responder's suit

Examples:

1C
2NT (12-13 p)

2C (11+ p, minimum 4 club cards, forcing)
can pass

1C
3NT (14 p)

2D (11+ p, minimum 4 diamond cards, forcing)

Over 2NT response, responder can force using <suit change> or he can repeat his suit (non-forcing bid).

Examples:

1C
2NT

2C (minimum 11 p)
3C (non-forcing)

1C
2NT

2C
3D (forcing, longer suit is C)

1C
2NT

2D
3S (forcing, longer suit is D; 3S shows a stopper in spades and logically also weakness in hearts)

To show the <reverser> it is enough to bid the long suit which can coincide with partner's suit.

Examples:

1C
2S (<reverser> with long S)

2D

1C
3D (<reverser> with long D)

2D

SPECIAL BIDS

With positive hands that contain both majors: the first response is normally 1H and if the partner doesn't bid the spade suit, these are bid on the second round. With 5 spades, you can therefore bid 1H on the first round and 2S on the second round as forcing; Using 2NT, opener can clear up the number of hearts in responder's hand.

Example:

1C	1H
1NT	2S (forcing with long S)
2NT	3H (at least 5 hearts)

With strong hands and 4 hearts/spades and another long suit, 6 cards, (major or minor), you bid the 4- card suit on the first round and then make a forcing jump to the next round, showing the long suit (minimum 6 cards).

Examples:

1C	1H
1NT	3D (4 hearts & 6 diamonds)

N.B. 2D would be forcing with fewer Ds).

1C	1H
1NT	3S (4 hearts & 6 spades)

Note: A sequence that does not guarantee a 4-6 pattern, but certainly long Ss, is created if opener bid 1S after responder's 1H.

1C	1H
1S	3S (long Ss and positive hand)

N.B. Bidding 2S here would not be forcing (8-10 p with 5 hearts and 4 spades, as seen above).

D. Positive - game-force

- 2H/ 2S shows a long and solid suit with minimum 12 p. Opener with a balanced hand (12-14 p) must bid 2NT, regardless of partner's suit, support for which can be shown on the next round (as the situation is game-forcing, nobody can pass below game). Any suit bid by opener shows the <rever> hand; a simple raise of responder's suit means the same.

Examples:

1C	2H
2NT (12-14 p, balanced)	3C (natural)
3H (heart raise)	4H

1C	2H
3H (<rever> with support)	

1C	2S
3S (<rever> with support)	

With a balanced minimum and 4 card support, instead of 2NT can bid 4H/ 4S as sign of weakness:

1C	2H
4H (12 p, 4 heart cards)	

E. Jump <special> responses

- 2NT promises 8-10 p with 5-5 in minors
- 3C promises 8-10 p with 6 clubs and 5 diamonds.
- 3D promises 8-10 p with 6 diamond and 5 clubs.

Auction continues along natural lines; opener can pass.

N.B. The points indicated always represent the real values of the hand and not just HCP. In reality, with 2 long suits and 10 HCP, these hands are treated as positives.

Example:

1C	2D (positive)
2NT	3C
3NT	pass or 4C

- 3H/ 3S the double jump over 1C shows a 7 card suit headed by 2 top honours (A/ K/ Q). Without extra values, opener can pass.

Examples:

1C	3H
----	----

3NT (stopper in other 3 suits and heart support)

1C
pass

3S

N.B. The double jump responses of 3H/ 3S are equivalent to the natural, pre-emptive 3H/ 3S opening bids.

RESPONSES AFTER OPPONENT'S INTERVENTIONS

If the opponent's intervention is at the 1 level (1D/ 1H/ 1S), the auction is not affected and the responses have their usual meaning:

- (1) Suit changes at 1 level are a one round force and promises at least 8 p.
- (2) Suit changes at 2 level (2 over 1) are natural, one round force and promises as usual at least 11 p.
- (3) 1NT has the usual meaning (8-10 p), but promises a stopper in opponent's suit.
- (4) Cue-bids are rare enough; it can be used to show a positive hand, game-force, with good support for the other 3 suits.
- (5) Over an opponent's take-out double, redouble with at least 10 p; any other action retains its usual meaning. The 1D response is, in this case, natural with 8 p minimum; with a negative hand, pass over opponent's double. The negative 1D response is not needed here.

- (6) Double <<San Marco>>

This type of doubles, negative, informative, takeout (as Sputnik), asks opener to keep the bidding open and is used by responder in 4 situations:

a) with 6-10 p and a long suit which cannot be shown with a 2 over 1 bid (at least 11 p).

N.B. After a 1H overcall, responder, with long S and 8-10 p, can bid 1S, but with long Ds cannot bid 2D (reserved for hands with a minimum of 11 p) and therefore he starts with a double.

Example:

1C	1H	double
1S	pass	2D (conclusion)

N.B. If opener bids again he has a <rever>.

- b) with 8-10 p and a balanced hand (but no stopper), and no other available action, to prevent the opponents winning the auction.

Examples:

1C	1S	double
1NT	pass	pass
1C	1H	double
1S	pass	pass or 1NT

- c) with 5 cards in the opponent's suit and positive hand (minimum 12 p). This is used to protect against a bluff or psyche; on the next round bid the suit doubled as a forcing bid, and obliging partner to bid 2NT if he has a stopper in the opponent's suit.

Examples:

1C	1S	double
1NT	pass	2S (forcing)
2NT (spade stopper)	pass	4S (conclusion)
1C	1H	double
1NT	pass	2H
2S (without H stopper)	pass	3H (non-forcing)

- e) after 1S intervention, with 4 hearts and a minimum 8 p (hand could be also positive). In this case, opener, if he has 4 hearts, must bid 2H if he has a balanced hand with 12-14 p. With strong hand and long H, he must jump bid to 3H. The 2NT bid is reserved for hands with 4 hearts and a long minor; having hearts, responder bids 4H

(without slam hopes) or 3H to begin cue-bids. Any other action denies 4 hearts in opener's hand. 2NT bid by opener cannot ask for controls (as it would after a 1H response) since responder might not have hearts at all.

Examples:

1C	1S	double (<San Marco>)
2H	pass	pass/ 3H/ 4H
1C	1S	double
3H (<rever> with long H)		
1C	1S	double
1NT	pass	2S (forcing)

N.B. Obviously, when the responder has 4 hearts, but he doesn't find a fit with opener, he may make a forcing bid to elicit other information and then to end the bidding.

In the case of 1NT or higher overcalls (2C/ 2D, etc.), the responder's actions are natural, non-forcing (to force, make a natural jump or cue the opponent's suit). Double shows a desire to play for penalties.

Examples:

1C	2D	2H (non-forcing, 6-10 p)
1C	2D	double (penalty)

OBSERVATIONS

(1) Remember that when opener shows a <rever> and the partner isn't negative (1H response and higher), the situation is forcing until 2NT. Therefore, with 5 hearts or spades, the responder could simply repeat his suit at the 2 level, even with a strong hand because he certainly knows that opener couldn't pass.

Examples:

1C	1S
2C (<rever>)	2S (forcing situation)
1C	1H
2D	2H (forcing situation)

(2) After the 1D negative response, opener <rever> with major 2-suited, uses the same rule as at 1H/ 1S opening bid. The jump always promises 6 cards in first suit.

Example:

1C	1D
1S	1NT
3H (6 spades and 4 hearts)	

1NT OPENING BID

Points:
15-17

Distributions:
4332/ 4432/ 5332 (5 cards minor)

RESPONSES

A) Negative (0-7 p)

- Pass or 2C with unbalanced hands, forcing opener to bid 2D. After such response, the responder passes with diamonds or bids his real suit – 2H/ 2S/ 3C – sign-off.

Example:

1NT	2C
2D (obliged)	2H (conclusion)

B) Positive (10+ p)

- 2H/ 2S/ 3C/ 3D : Natural bids with 5 cards at least and asks the opener about the quality of support for the suit. Responses are in 5 steps:
 - 1st step = negative-relative (may have 3-4 cards but with no honours)
 - 2nd step = 3 cards with 1 honour
 - 3rd step = 3 cards with 2 honours
 - 4th step = 4 cards with 1 honour
 - 5th step = 4 cards with 2 honours

Attention! These responses are mandatory for a major suit, but are optional for minor suits. With a long minor you can bid 3NT over 1NT opening bid. This means that 3C/ 3D responses are almost always slam try or an unbalanced hand with the intention to play 5C/ 5D. If responder bids a new suit, opener is obliged to respond in same mode, in 5 steps.

After the opener's first response, if responder rebid the original suit below game, he asks opener to begin cue-bidding.

Example:

1NT	2S
3C (3 cards with 1 honour)	3S (cue initiation)
4C (cue-bid)	4H (cue-bid)

Where the first response was negative (1st step), the rebid of the first suit seeks clarification of the negative-relative response. The explanations are as follows:

- with 3-4 cards in partner's suit (interrogative's suit) = raise to 4 level
- with 2 cards without honour = 3NT
- with 2 cards with 1 honour = 4C/ 4D with 4 cards in the minor suit bid

Here is a special situation in this sequence:

1NT	2H
2S (negative-relative)	3NT
4H (3-4 cards, no honour)	

N.B. 2H bid promised at least 5 cards.

Classic examples of asking bids:

1NT	2H
2NT (1 honour with 3 cards)	3C
4C (2 honours with 4 cards)	4D
4S (1 honour with 3 cards)	4NT (ace request)
5H (2A)	5S (Spade ask)
6C (1 honour with 3 cards) . . .	

1NT	2S
2NT (negative-relative)	3S (asks for clarification)
3NT (2 cards with no honour)	4C (C asking bid)
4H (1 honour with 3 cards)	

C) Terminating responses (10+ p)

- 3NT
- 4C Transfer to Hs
- 4D Transfer to Ss
- 4H 6+ cards in suit, without slam interest
- 4S 6+ cards in suit, without slam interest

When responder wants opener to play the major suit contract, he transfers.

If the opponents overcall, transfers no longer apply. After 1NT opening bid and opponent's intervention, jump in a new suit shows a positive hand with a long suit. In this case bid directly to game, 4H/ 4S.

D) Special response (10+ p)

- 2NT asks opener to bid a suit without stopper or to bid 3NT with stoppers in all suits. Responder who has 10 p and a long minor suit (ex Ax-Qxx-xx-KQxxxx) makes this bid and he wants to establish if is preferable to play in 3NT or,

in the case of an unguarded suit, at 5C/ 5D level. After the bid of an unguarded suit, responder bids his minor at 4 level, inviting game, or bids 5C/ 5D to play.

E) Limited response (6-8 p)

- 3H/ 3S jump over 1NT.

Shows 6-7 card suit. The opener goes into the game only with a hand rich in top honours.

F) Unusual response (5-7 p)

- 2C in the first round and then jump at 3H/ 3S with major suits or 3D/ 2NT (for clubs) with minor suits; all these bids are made after opener's forced 2D response. These bids shows 6 cards headed by 2 top honours (A/ K/ Q) and with no other values in the hand. The opener decides depending on his hand : pass, 3NT, 4H/ 4S.

Example :

1NT	2C (negative)
2D (obliged)	3H (6 cards with 2 honours)
Pass/ 3NT/ 4H	

G) 2D Asking Bid (8+ p)

- 2D <Burgay> invites the opener to clarify his hand as follows :

** With minimum (15-16 p) : 2H = 4 heart cards
: 2S = 4 spade cards
: 2NT = no 4-major

** With maximum (17 p) : 3C = both minors in 4 cards, denying 4 cards in majors (obvious!)
: 3D = both majors in 4 cards
: 3H = 4 hearts
: 3S = 4 spades, denying 4 heart cards
: 3NT = 4-3-3-3 (4 card minor)

- Over a maximum response, the situation is game-forcing (responder has at least 8 p).

- Over 2H response, responder's 2S is a one round force.

- Over a minimum response, responder's 2NT/ 3H/ 3S aren't forcing, (8-9 p and 5-6 cards in suit).

- Over a minimum or maximum response, responder's 3C/ 3D/ 4C/ 4D are slam try demanding clarification about quality of suit through 5 steps as over the positive response.

Examples:

1NT	2D (ask)
2H	2NT (conclusion)
1NT	2D
2NT	3H (terminal, 8-9 p, long H)

1NT	2D
2H	3C (C ask)
3H (1 honour in 3 cards)	3NT (terminal)

1NT	2D
2H	2S (natural, one round force)
3S	pass or 4S (remember opener is minimum)

RESPONSES OVER OPPONENT'S INTERVENTION

With negative hands (0-9 p)

- Pass or suit at minimum level as competitive bid.

With positive hands (9-10 + p)

- a) suit with jump is natural, asking bid about quality of suit; the opener will respond through 5 steps (as in the case without intervention).
- b) Overcall of opponent's suit (cue-bid) denies a stopper in opponent's suit; 3S cue-bid over 2S overcall promises 4 hearts.
- c) 2NT show a stopper or semi-stopper in the opponent's suit.

In the cases (b) and (c), the opener is invited to bid suits of 4 cards (in rank order) or 3NT [with stopper in case (b), with semi-stopper in case (c)].

In case of stopper/ semi-stopper's lack or misfit, the auction can be stop below game (exceptionally).

Examples:

1NT	2D	3D (positive without stopper)
3H (natural)	pass	3S (natural)
3NT (with D stopper)		
1NT	2H	2NT (positive with stopper/ semi-stopper)
3D (natural)	pass	3S (natural)
4S		

Note: If responder bid 2NT, promising stopper or semistopper (Qx/ Jxx) in opponent's suit, bid of the enemy suit at the 3-level denies a full stopper (he has only a semi-stopper). The opener decides whether to play 3NT.

2NT can be used to explore opener's hand. (This bid can be useful in the particular case when the responder has 9-10 p and 2 long minors).

Example:

1NT	2S	2NT (positive, with stopper)
3D (4 cards)	pass	3S

N.B. 3S = he hasn't 4 heart cards, otherwise 3H, and he denies a full stopper in spade; probably he has diamond support. The opener bids 3NT with spade stopper or 4C with 3 clubs (he denied 4 clubs because he would have bid 3C, not 3D, over 2NT) or 4D, trying to find support (non-forcing).

After opponent's interference via a double, redouble invites the opener to punish the opponents (8 p minimum). Any suit bid over opponent's double is considered negative.

Examples:

1NT	double	2C (negative, with long C)
1NT	double	2D (negative, with long D)

Note: When responder redoubles but he doesn't intend to punish the opponent's, on the next round he can make a forcing bid (cue-bid or 2NT). These two bids permit to bid the suits in rank order for finding a fit and to arrive in the best contract. 2NT bid is different from cue-bid: 2NT guarantee the stopper (semi-stopper) and the cue-bid denies it.

Example:

1NT	double	redouble	2D (natural)
pass	pass	3D (cue-bid forcing)	pass
3S (natural, denying H)	pass	4S	

OBSERVATIONS ON THE 1NT OPENING BID

1) When the responder bids 4NT as an intended sign off after partner's reply to an ask, opener can still ask for aces by bidding 5C (5C substitutes for the impossible 4NT). If the replay to an ask exceeds 4NT, the ace request still can be made through 5NT.

2) Double aim 2nd seat of the opponent's 1NT opening is equivalent to our 1NT overcall, used in system, and it shows 16 p minimum and a 5+ suit. Our re-opening double (4th seat) is just an invitation to compete and can be made with fewer points. It's good to have in this case a 2-suited hand. It's good to avoid a balancing double with 4+ clubs or better because it is difficult for partner to find a fit at a low level. With long Cs, pass or bid 2C naturally.

3) With 8-9 p and a long major suit (H/ S) we saw that we bid 2D; if opener shows a minimum hand, we bid 3H/ 3S non-forcing. Opener, with 16 p and good support, can bid the game.

4) The 1NT opening bid will in general have a stopper in all suits but many players prefer to open with 1NT despite no stopper in a suit (doubleton xx). Another option is to open 1C. We can later make a forcing bid in a 4 card minor (2C/ 2D), a bid which in the system is supported only with 4 cards. This route can be good when we have a minimum (15-16 p) hand with a rag doubleton in one of the majors.

1H/ 1S OPENING BID

Points:

12-14

Distributions:

- a) 1-suited hands without singleton (5332/ 6332/ 5422)
- b) canape with clubs or diamonds (4-5/ 4-6)
- c) major 2-suited
- d) special distributions

The hand is certainly unbalanced and promises at least 4 cards in the suit opened; the second round will clarify the long suit. With a long opening suit, the suit is repeated; otherwise bid the long minor, canape principle.

Major 2-suiters bid the longer major first, not canape : on the next round the other major will be shown.

Note: 5422 patterns with 5 cards in a major suit and 4 cards in a minor suit are considered 1-suited hands; on the second round, opener can choose to repeat the major or to bid 1NT (not guaranteeing a balanced hand: it can be a 5332 or 5422 distribution), and bid the minor suit on the 3rd round.

Examples with 1-suited hands:

1H	1NT
2H	pass
1H	2C
2H	3C
1S	2C
2S	4S

The suit opened is repeated; he could also pass with a 5332 distribution over 1NT limited response (8-10 p).

Example:

1S	1NT
pass	

Examples of canape with C/ D:

1H	1NT
2C (4 H & 5/ 6 C)	
1S	1NT
2D (4 S & 5/ 6 D)	
1S	2C
3C (4 S & 5/ 6 C)	
1H	2D
3D (4 H & 5/ 6 D)	

Examples for major 2-suiters:

1H	1S
2S (long H and 4S)	
1H	1NT
2H (long Hs, may hide 4 S)	
1S	1NT
2H (long S and 4 H)	
1S	2C
2H (long S and 4 H)	

Pay attention to the next example which always shows 2 long suits (at least 5 cards):

1H	any response (except 1S)
2S	

Responder, through 2NT (relay), can ask for clarification and, in this case, the opener bids his 6 cards suit (if he has 6-5) or if not, he bids his fragment (being 5-5 in majors he has a doubleton or a tripleton minor).

Examples:

1H	2C
2S	2NT
3H (6 H and 5 S)	
1H	1NT
2S	2NT
3C (5-5 in majors and x-x or x-x-x in Cs)	

Over 1S response, with 5-5 in majors, can announce 2NT with jump or can bid directly the game.

Examples:

1H	1S
2NT (5-5 in majors)	
1H	1S
4S (6 H and 5 S)	

N.B. To bid 2S over responder's 1S because this shows 5 hearts and 4 spades, as seen in a previous example in this chapter.

RESPONSES TO 1H/ 1S AND DEVELOPMENTS:

A. Negative responses (0-10 p). These responses exclude, in general, game values :

- pass 0-7 p
- simple raise 8-10 p and 4 cards support at least
- 1NT 8-10 p without support (4 cards)

Over 1H opening, with 4 spades responder must bid 1S, one round forcing and ambiguous as to points (on the second round the 1S responder with positive hand must make a forcing bid: jump or suit change).

Example:

1H	1S
2C (natural)	2D (one round forcing)
2S (obligatory with 3 card support)	

B. Limited responses (10-11 p or 8 losers)

- 3H over 1H
- 3S over 1S

Promises 4+ support and invites opener to bid game with a maximum or pass with a minimum.

- 3C/ 3D/ 3H/ 3S (without opponent's interference)

These jump-responses show 7 cards in a suit headed by 2 top honours, with no outside values. They are equivalent to a pre-emptive opening. Opener will terminate the bidding, with "pass" the most frequent.

Examples:

1H pass (with minimum)	3H (limited)
1S 4S (with a good opening bid)	3S (limited)
1H pass	3C (7 cards with 2 top honours)
1H 3NT (to play)	3D (7 cards with 2 top honours)

B. Positive responses (11 p minimum)

- 2C/ 2D/ 2H/ 2S

2H/ 2S responses are natural and show 5 cards at least.

2C/ 2D show 4 cards at least (exceptionally can be only 3 cards and, in this case, represent a waiting bid, lacking any better bid, to find out more about opener's hand.

The 2S jump response over 1H, is the only game-force; the others are only one round forces.

The auction can be therefore abandoned below game; responder can force again by bidding a new suit which might be a short suit.

Responder's long suit is always the first suit. We don't use canape bidding as responder; when responder bids his first suit at 2 level, it is always the longest suit.

However, if the first response is 1S over the 1H opening, a second suit of responder's can be shorter or longer than spades (ambiguous situation, which can be cleared up on the 3rd round).

Examples:

1S 2D (longer D) pass	2C (natural, 11 p minimum) 3C (non-forcing)
1H 2S 3NT (maximum hand)	2D 2NT (non-forcing)
1H 3H 4S (minimum 2 cards support)	2S (game-force) 3S (6 cards at least)
1H 2H pass	1S (ambiguous) 2S (long S with 8-10 p, non-forcing)
1H 1NT (in general 5332) 2S (obligatory with 3 spades)	1S (ambiguous) 2C (forcing) 4S (with 5 spades and positive hand)
1H 2C (long suit) 2H (without 3 spades)	1S (ambiguous) 2D (forcing) 3D (long D, non-forcing)

D. Forcing response : 2NT

This bid promises at least 4 cards in opener's suit and represents a slam try. Opener clears up his hand by bidding his long suit. An eventual 3NT by opener shows 5 cards in opening suit in an "ugly" hand (spread honours).

After this clarification, the auction will be controlled by responder who will be able to cue-bid or relay to obtain another information from opener. Responder ends the auction only by bidding the opener's suit at the game level.

Examples:

1S		2NT
3C (long C)		3D (relay or cue-bid)
3NT (nothing else to say; Cs are probably not too pretty, otherwise he would have bid 4C)		
1H	2C	2NT (always forcing with fit)
3D (long D)	pass	3H (forcing)
4C (cue-bid which shows C control and the lack of S control: skipped suit)		

N.B. 2NT still promises fit in opener's suit, even if opponent overcalls.

EXCEPTIONAL HANDS

- With 6-4 distribution (6 cards in opening suit) will bid 1H/ 1S and then in 2nd round opener will make a jump in the 4 cards suit which can be a minor or a major.

Example:

1H	1NT
3C (6 H & 4 C)	

- With 6-5 or 6-6 distribution (6 cards in opening suit and a long minor suit) will bid 1H/ 1S and in 2nd round the opener will make a jump to 4C/ 4D level.

Example:

1S	2C
4D (6 S & 5 D)	

- With 6331 distribution (singleton in a minor suit) will bid 1H/ 1S and then opener will make a jump to 3H/ 3S (with same distribution, but singleton in other major will open 2H/ 2S).

Example:

1S	1NT
3S (6331 and singleton in a minor suit; partner can bid 4H knowing that he will find 3 cards in hearts)	

- 1S opening bid, then 4H in 2nd round, can be made with 6-6 in majors.

Example:

1S	2C
4H (6-6 in majors)	

- With a 4441 distribution, open 1H with 4 cards, otherwise with 1C (if the singleton is in heart); in 2nd round make a natural bid (without jump).

Example:

1H	1NT
2C	

N.B. This second bid normally shows 5 clubs at least (canape), but we saw that a minor raise must be made with 4 cards minimum. Therefore there should be no problems and on the 3rd round opener's complete distribution can be shown.

Example:

1S	1NT
2C	2D (non-forcing)
3D (can pass 2D; this bid indicates clearly)	

the 3-suited hand)

AFTER OPPONENT'S INTERFERENCE

After opponent's interference, the auction doesn't change; however if responder makes a call, this is natural and non-forcing; opener can pass.

Example:

1S	2C	2D (non-forcing)
pass/ 2S (with a good long suit)		

1H	1NT	2C (non-forcing)
----	-----	------------------

IMPORTANT! The only exception is after a 1S overcall; in this case, the change of suit at 2 level keeps its normal meaning and is a one round force.

Example:

1H	1S	2C (one round force)
----	----	----------------------

1H	1S	2D (one round force)
----	----	----------------------

N.B. Over 1S overcall, unable to bid 1NT with 8-10 p and no stopper, use <double – San Marco>.

This type of double can be used also with a 6-10 p and any long suit, even spades. The purpose is to force partner to bid, then bid own suit at 2 level, which is non-forcing.

Responder's 2S overcall certainly represents a force which asks for a spade stopper and, also, can be used as safety against an eventual bluff or psychic of opponent (see 1C opening bid - <double San Marco>).

Examples:

1H	1S	double (<San Marco>)
2C	pass	2D (non-forcing, long D)

1H	1S	double
2H	pass	2S (forcing)
2NT (S stopper)	pass	3S (natural bid against opponent's bluff)

Over opponent's take-out double, redouble shows a positive hand and is an invitation to punish the opponents.

Responder's new suit over a double isn't forcing even for one round. Instead, jump bid is forcing.

Example:

1S	double	2C (non-forcing)
----	--------	------------------

1H	double	redouble (positive)
----	--------	---------------------

N.B. a) In general, redouble denies a good support for opening suit; with a good support, can pass over double (penalty pass), then call on second round.

b) In the case of opponent's interference, a jump suit show a positive hand with long suit, therefore can't be a limited hand with 7 card-suit headed by two top honour (as it was without interference).

OBSERVATIONS TO 1H/ 1S OPENING BID

1) For a good memorization must remember that every time when 1H/ 1S opener makes a jump at 2nd round, he promises sure 6 cards in opening suit (H/ S).

2) If responder makes a positive bid after what he passed at 1st round, must keep account that he can have than 11 p. Because is a forcing bid, we give it a relative importance.

2C/ 2D OPENING BIDS

Points:
12-14

Distributions:
5-4-x-x
6-3-2-2
6-3-3-1
5-5/ 6-5/ 6-6

These opening bids show always a long opening suit and certainly excludes possession of four or more cards in a major suit. Can have also the other minor suit (minimum four cards).

RESPONSES TO 2C/ 2D OPENING BID

Obviously responder can pass or can make natural and non-forcing bids, as 2H/ 2S, showing at least 5-card suit and 8-10 p.

The maximum opener, with good support, can raise the major to the 3 level (non-forcing).

Also, responder's 3D/ 3H/ 3S aren't forcing, but shows 6-7 cards and 10-11 p; opener can pass.

Examples:

2C	2H
pass	
2C	2H
3H (3 card support and a singleton)	
2D	3S
pass (S singleton, poor hand in top honours)	
2D	3H
4H (at least 2 hearts and top honours)	

Immediate raise of opening suit (3C/ 4C/ 3D/ 4D) is pre-emptive.

Example:

2C	3C (pre-emptive)
2D	4D (ditto)

IMPORTANT! With 10-11 p and support for opener's suit, responder can bid the other minor (inverted rule: 3C over 2D, 2D over 2C). These conventional bids mean: with a good opening bid partnership tries 3NT or otherwise they play 3C/ 3D/ 4C or 4D. Try for 3NT is made through negative cue-bids (a suit bid indicates the lack of stopper in this suit).

In the case of opponent's interference, 3C is natural and is non-forcing; the inverted rule applies only if there is no opposition interference.

Examples:

2D	3C (diamond support and 10-11 p)
3D (minimum hand)	
2D	3C (inverted rule)
3H (good hand without H stopper)	3NT (with H stopper)
2C	2D (inverted rule)
2S (good hand without S stopper, but with H stopper)	3D (without D stopper)
3NT (good hand and that's all)	pass or 3NT
2C	2D
3C (minimum)	pass

The only one forcing response is 2NT, after what opener clear up his hand as follows:

- 3C minor 2-suited (5-4)
- 3D 1-suited hand without singleton (6-3-2-2)
- 3H 6-3-3-1 and 3 heart cards (C or S singleton)
- 3S 6-3-3-1 and 3 spade cards (heart singleton)
- 3NT 5-5 in minors
- 4C 6-5 in minors
- 4D 6-6 in minors
- 4H 7-5 in minors
- 4S 7-6 in minors

The auction continues naturally.

N.B. Over the 3C response (5-4 in minors), partner can use 3D relay for more information: opener bids 3NT with 2-2 in the other suits (H-S), 3H/ 3S with 3 cards in suit and singleton in other major (5-4-3-1).

At this point, can still use cue-bids or relays for more information about opener's hand (remember the situation is game-forcing; 3NT will never be a relay, always a sign-off).

Examples:

2C	2NT
3D (6-3-2-2)	3H (natural)
4H (with 3 card support)	
2D	2NT
3C (5-4-x-x)	3D (relay)
3H (3 hearts)	4H (conclusion)
2C	2NT
3S (6-3-3-1 with 3 spades)	4C (slam proposition, invites cue-bid)
4D (cue-bid)	4H (relay)
4S (cue-bid)	4NT (ace ask)
5D (1 ace)	6C (conclusion)
2C	2NT
3H (6-3-3-1 with 3 hearts)	3S (forcing)
3NT (S singleton; any other bid shows 3 spades and C singleton)	

N.B. This common last example is important to keep in mind.

AFTER OPPONENT'S INTERFERENCE

In case of opponent's interference, the development of auction doesn't change; keep in mind that the overcall of opponent suit is always forcing (at least a game-force), possible slam try.

After opponent's take-out double, redouble shows a positive-limited hand, while a suit bid will be negative (non-forcing); invites pass. The only forcing response remains the 2NT relay.

If opponent's interference occurs after the 2NT relay, opener has these choices:

- pass if rebid would be below the interference
- double with identical response
- next step same as without the interference

Example:

2D	2H	2NT	3H
double (6-3-3-1 and 3 heart cards)			
2C	2D	2NT	3D
pass (would be response 3C with 5-4-x-x)			

2H/ 2S OPENING BIDS

Points:
12-14

Distributions:
5-4-3-1
5-5-x-x
5-6-x-x
6-3-3-1

4H (6-3-3-1 with H singleton)

5C (conclusion)

Optional: <Under-the-singleton> rule: Bid the suit below the singleton, instead of the singleton suit, as follows:

- 3C with D singleton
- 3D with singleton in other major
- 3H with C singleton (with 5-4-3-1)

In this case, bidding the suit where partner has a singleton creates a forcing situation for obtaining more information. This has the advantage of conserving space.

Examples:

2H	2NT
3C (5-4-3-1 with D singleton)	
2S	2NT
3D (5-4-3-1 with H singleton)	3H (forcing)
2H	2NT
3D (5-4-3-1 with S singleton)	3H (conclusion)
2H	2NT
3D (5-4-3-1 with S singleton)	3S (forcing)
2S	2NT
3H (5-4-3-1 with C singleton)	4C (forcing)

AFTER OPPONENT'S INTERFERENCE

Over opponent's interference, the development of the auction doesn't change; keep in mind that bidding the opponent's suit is always game-force, slam try.

Over take-out double, redouble shows a positive hand with penalty interest; 2NT is still the enquiry bid as above.

Over 2NT enquiry and opponent's overcall, opener has next possibilities:

- pass if rebid would be below the interference
 - double with identical response
 - next step same as without the interference
- (identical to 2C/ 2D opening bids)

OBSERVATIONS TO 2H/ 2S OPENING BIDS

- 1) Immediate raise of opening suit (3H/ 3S) is normally pre-emptive (sign-off).
- 2) Keep in mind that when 1H/ 1S opener rebids the major at the 2 level (2H/ 2S), he can have a very interesting hand because, otherwise, he would have opened with 2H/ 2S, as above.
- 3) Using <under-the-singleton> rule can help the memory and save bidding space.

3C/ 3D OPENING BIDS

Points:
12-14

Distributions:
6-4-x-x

These opening bids show always 6 cards in opening suit and 4 cards in other minor suit.

RESPONSES TO 3C/ 3D OPENING BIDS

The only forcing response is a major (3H/ 3S), then opener clarifies his distribution in 5 steps:

- 1st step = singleton/void in responder's suit
- 2nd step = 2 cards
- 3rd step = 3 cards
- 4th step = honour doubleton
- 5th step = honour tripleton

As responder then knows opener's number of cards in all four suits, he can choose the final contract.

Example:

3C		3S (ask for clarification)
4C (2 spades – 2 nd step)		

IMPORTANT! When responder passed initially, 3H/ 3S responses are natural and, therefore, these bids cannot be asking bids; opener can pass.

Example:

pass	pass	3C	pass
3S (natural, non-forcing)			

N.B. If an opponent doubles, the 3H/ 3S bids are still asking bids with the 5-step rebids, even if responder passed initially. With long H/ S, responder can pass after the double and then bid on the next round.

Redouble still shows a positive hand with a desire for penalties.

pass	pass	3C	double
3S (interogative)	pass	3NT (0/1 cards)	pass
4D (conclusion)			

3NT OPENING BID

Points:
12-14

Distribution:
7-4-x-x

The 3NT opening is a 2-suited hand with 7 cards in a minor suit and 4 cards in the other minor.

RESPONSES

- 4C = negative, then opener passes with long C or bids 4D with long D
- 4D = conventional, positive
- 4H/ 4S = natural bids

N.B. This opening bid is important to show unbalanced hands excluded from the 2C / 2D opening bids.

3NT	4D (forcing)
5C (long C)	

3NT	4D (forcing)
4H (cue-bid with long D, void in H)	
4S (cue-bid with long D, void in S)	
4NT (cue-bid with long D, 7-4-1-1)	

3NT	4C (negative)
4D (with long D)	pass

3NT	4C (negative)
pass (with long C)	

N.B. Over a 4D response, opener with long Ds can show the exact pattern.