

Cambridge University Bridge Club

Articles - Author: Unknown

THE SCIENCE: SIMPLY SCIENTIFIC FOUR-CARD MAJORS

The general style is to open a major whenever possible with a minimum.

- 1♣/♦ Natural, 4+ cards
- 1♥/♠ Natural, very light, 4+ cards, could have longer minor if less than 14
- 1NT 14-16/17 BAL including all 5♥/♠ (332) types
- 2♣ 22+ BAL or distributional FG (Kokish)
- 2♦ Weak
- 2♥ Weak
- 2♠ Weak
- 2NT 20-21 BAL

Responses to 1♣ (1♦ is similar)

- 1♦/M Acol-style (1♦-2♣ is 11+, usually five clubs)
- 1NT 6-10
- 2♣/3♣ Limit
- 2♦/M Strong (as is 1♦-3♣)
- 2NT 'Reese', 11-12 BAL
- 3♦/M Void splinters FG (natural and weak is a sound alternative)
- 3NT 13-15 BAL, soft

Special continuations after (say) 1♣-1♥

- 1NT 11-13 BAL(ish), over which 2♣ is Checkback, others NF
- 2♥ Natural, over which 2♠/3♠/3♦ are all forcing game-tries
- 2NT 17/18-19 BAL
- 3♦ Mini-splinter (as are all jump reverses)

1♦-2♣

- 2♦ (5)6♦ NF
- 2♥/♠ 5♦ 4♥/♠ 14+ FG except that 3♣ by partner is non-forcing
- 2NT 11-13 BAL
- 3♣ 4♣ NF
- 3♦ 6♦ FG
- 3♥/♠ Splinter FG
- 3NT 17/18-19 BAL

Responses to 1♥ (1♠ is similar)

- 1♠ Acol-style
- 1NT 6-12 in principle (could be very weak non-vulnerable)
- 2♣/♦ Natural FG (optionally by a passed hand 2♣/♦ = 3/4 trump Drury, 8-11)
- 2♥ Limit, three-trump raises discretionary
- 2♠ Strong
- 2NT 11-12 with three spades, suitable for suit play
- 3♣/♦ Intermediate, about 10-12 with a good six-card suit (likewise 1♠-3♣/♦/♥)
- 3♥ Limit, four trumps
- 3♠ Splinter, six or seven losers
- 4♣ Splinter, six or seven losers
- 4♦ Splinter, six or seven losers
- 3NT 13-15, exactly three spades NF
- 4♥ Weak

1♥-1NT

- Pass 11-13 BAL, weak canapes
- 2♣ Transfer showing diamonds
- 2♦ 6♥ minimum or 5♥ 4♣ strongish: partner usually completes to 2♥
- 2♥ 5♥ 4♣ about 14-16 (less with an extra club)
- 2♠ 5♥ 4♠ 18+ F1
- 2NT 17/18-19 BAL
- 3♣/♦ 5♥ 5♣/♦ FG
- 3♥ Invitational, maybe not quite sound
- 3♠ Auto-splinter, showing a void
- 4♣ Auto-splinter, showing a void
- 4♦ Auto-splinter, showing a void
- 3NT Gambling
- 4♥ To play

Similarly, after 1♠-1NT:

- 2♣/♦ Transfers showing diamonds/hearts
- 2♥ Equivalent to 1♥-1NT-2♦

Continuations after (say) 1♠-1NT-2♣ (the general idea is to bid what you would have done if partner had bid a natural 2♦):

- Pass Bad hand with clubs (must take the blame if wrong)
- 2♦ Preference
- 2♥ Natural, NF
- 2♠ Preference; false preference shows about 8-10
- 2NT 11-12
- 3♣/♥ About 8-10, natural (did not jump shift)
- 3♦/♠ Limit

After (say) 2♠, opener might proceed:

2NT 5224 16-17
3♣ 5♠ 5♣ invitational
3♦ '5134' F1
3♥ '5341' F1
3♠ 6♠ 4♣ invitational
3NT 5224 18-19

Continuations after a 2/1 game-force, (say) 1♠-2♣:

2♦ Balanced 11-13 (maybe 18-19) or weak canape
2♥ 5♠ 4♥ any strength
2♠ 6♠ any strength
2NT 4♦ (replacing 2♦) any strength
3♣ 4♣ in principle minimum
3♦/♥ Splinter with extra values
3♠ One-loser spade suit with extra values
3NT 17/18-19 BAL

After a step one rebid, responder bids 2NT if he hasn't much to say, allowing opener to get his canape off his chest, show a five-card major, three-card support or whatever. A suit rebid by responder shows a distributional hand: a six-card suit, 5/5, four-card support for opener etc. 3NT is firmly to play.

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