

Transfer-Oriented Symmetric Relay

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Chapter 1

Relay Structure

1.1 Relay Structure Table of Contents

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1.2 General Notes

Relayer (referred to hereafter as “R”) will normally make the next highest bid (“Step 1”) to ask responder (hereafter referred to as “RR”) to continue describing the hand. The exception to this is 3NT which is to play, **never** a relay. Other non-relay bids by R below game do exist, but have context-dependent definitions.

When showing shortages, RR shows shortages in suits of high-middle-low rank with bids in ascending order, and in similar fashion when showing lengths (in some structures) RR shows them in suits of low-middle-high rank with bids in ascending order. The guiding principle is that lower bids show more cards in lower-ranking suits.

1.3 Responder's hand valuation after a strong opening.

After an opening $1\clubsuit$, responder gives a positive response with a hand with 9+HCP and at least 2 AK controls. With a hand with (5)6-8HCP, RR describes a semipositive hand. With a weaker hand yet, RR describes a full negative hand. The agreements in auctions after a negative response may be found [page 11](#).

After a third- or fourth-seat $1\clubsuit$, a positive response is made with 7-11(12)HCP balanced, 7-9HCP unbalanced and at least 1 AK control, since RR is known to have been unable to open the bidding, and R is stronger for the $1\clubsuit$ opening in this position. A semipositive hand has (3)4-6HCP in this position, and a full negative hand has fewer.

1.4 Positive shape-showing relays

Discussion question: How do the ends of these structures interact with being limited (e.g. opening bid, or semipositive) or level-adjusted? In particular, discuss 7411s.

First response

The responding scheme with a positive hand is almost “up-the-line”; RR makes the lowest bid that describes the hand held, except when balanced, or three-suited including both minors. This structure is reasonably effective in avoiding RR bidding suits they are known or likely to hold.

$1\heartsuit$	Unbalanced, $4^+\spadesuit$
$1\spadesuit$	Balanced (without a 5-card suit) or a red two-suiter.
$1NT$	Hearts, either one-suited or two-suited with \clubsuit
$2\clubsuit$	Diamonds, either one-suited or three-suited with \clubsuit
$2\diamondsuit$	Clubs, one-suited.
$2\heartsuit+$	Two-suited with both minors.

One-suited hands

With a one-suited hand of at least five cards, RR shows that suit and then rebids at $2\spadesuit$ or higher to describe the residual short suits.

$2\spadesuit$	0-2 in the highest-ranking other suit. (continuations page 3)
$2NT$	0-1 in the middle-ranking other suit.
$3\clubsuit$	“Even shortage”.
$3\diamondsuit$	Game-forcing relay.
$3\heartsuit$	6322 (correct?).
$3\spadesuit$	7222.
$3\diamondsuit$	5332 with low-ranking shortage.
$3\heartsuit$	6331 with low-ranking shortage.
$3\spadesuit$	7330 with low-ranking shortage.

[One-suited hands]

3NT	7321 or 7231 with low-ranking shortage (no resolution of 3-2 fragments) and 9-12HCP with 2-5 AK controls.
4♣+	7321 or 7231 with low-ranking shortage (no resolution of 3-2 fragments) and 13+HCP with 2-5 AK controls, or 6+ AK controls, showing AK control number.

The shapes not explicitly shown in the structure can be constructed through “symmetry” - for example, all hands of 6331 pattern include a 3♥ bid, possibly after 2♠ or 2NT to specify the suit of the singleton. Other hand patterns are resolved similarly. When the structure is shifted up two steps, something rearranges, but I can’t interpret Dan’s notes about the 3NT call: “in a 2-up relay situation, this bids not 4D but 4C, just like a 7330”. Likewise, how do we resolve in other level-adjusted situations, and over 2m openings?

One-suited hands—2♠ Back

2NT	Game-forcing relay.
3♣	“Even shortage”.
3♦	Game-forcing relay.
3♥	6223.
3♠	6232.

Two-suited hands

With a two-suited hand, RR shows his first suit up-the-line as listed in the positive responses. RR then shows the second suit and resolves their relative length. A bid of 2♦ always shows at least four cards in the lower-ranking suit (always ♣, in fact) and at least five cards in the higher-ranking suit. A “reverser” bid of 2♥ shows precisely four cards in the higher-ranking suit and at least five in the lower-ranking suit. Hands with two suits of at least five cards tend to start with two bids at or below 2♦, and then always a bid of 2♠.

After RR’s first response, with both majors they continue with 1NT over the 1♠ relay, with a major and diamonds they continue with 2♣ (transferring to diamonds!), with a major and clubs they continue with 2♦/2♥ (zooming to the reverser, as above), and with both minors they make a direct response at or above 2♥.

Thus the structure below applies after showing a second suit with 1NT, 2♣, 2♦ or 2♥.

2♦	Three-suited with both majors.
2♥	5+ in the lower-ranking suit, 4 in the higher-ranking suit (a “reverser” bid).
2♠	5+ 5+ in the two suits. (continuations page 4)
2NT	0-1 in the higher-ranking other suit.
3♣	A 5422 pattern.

[Two-suited hands]

3♦	5431 with lower-ranking shortage.
3♥	6421 with lower-ranking shortage.
3♠	6430 with lower-ranking shortage.
3NT	7420 with lower-ranking shortage, forcing.
4♣	7411 with 9-12HCP with 2-5 AK controls.
4♦+	7411 with 13+HCP with 2-5 AK controls, or 6+ AK controls, showing controls.

Again the the structure is “symmetric” - all 6421 patterns will include a 3♥ bid, after clarifying the relative length of the suits and the shortages with previous actions. The 5-5 substructure is also symmetric internally. Note that the 7411 shape is shown “asymmetrically”, in that it is shown directly in the above structure, but the symmetric one that includes the 2NT shortage-showing bid does not include a duplicate 7411 pattern! The only reasonable alternative is to treat 7411 with 5422 as “even shortage”, which is grossly inefficient because it costs a step on the greatly more frequent 5422 patterns. So when a 7411 is not present in the structure, 3NT and 4♣+ show the relevant 7420-type pattern, respectively minimum and non-forcing, and maximum and showing controls.

Showing 5+ 5+ hands [Back](#)

2NT	Game-forcing relay.
3♣	0-1 in the higher-ranking other suit.
3♦	A (65)11 pattern (even shortage).
3♥	5611 pattern.
3♠	6511 pattern with 9-12HCP with 2-5 AK controls.
3NT	6511 pattern with 13+HCP with 2-5 AK controls, or 6+ AK controls, showing controls.
3♥	5521 with lower-ranking shortage.
3♠	5530 with lower-ranking shortage.
3NT	5620 with lower-ranking shortage.
4♣	6520 with lower-ranking shortage and ??
4♦+	6520 with lower-ranking shortage and ??

Three-suited hands

With a three-suited hand with a minor shortage, RR simply shows both major suits and then uses the “empty” 2♦ bid to describe his holding. With a major shortage, RR responds 2♣ and rebids 2♥. Then after the subsequent relay, RR bids as described.

Step 1	High shortage (0-1).
Step 2	4441 (low shortage).
Step 3	4450 (low shortage).

[Three-suited hands]

Step 4 4540 (low shortage).

Step 5 5440 (low shortage).

After showing a high-ranking shortage, RR shows his exact shape by using the step responses as above, beginning at 4441.

Balanced hands

With a balanced hand, RR responds 1♠ (right-siding notrump) and plans to rebid at 2♦ or higher.

2♦		Any 4-4-3-2 with 4♥ (continuations page 5)
2♥		Any 4-4-3-2 with 4♠ 2-3♥ (continuations page 5)
2♠		4=3=3=3 or 3=4=3=3.
	2NT	Game-forcing relay.
	3♣	3=4=3=3.
	3♦+	4=3=3=3 (with zoom).
2NT		2=3=4=4.
3♣		3=2=4=4.
3♦		3=3=3=4.
3♥+		3=3=4=3 (with zoom).

This relay structure avoids RR bidding an unshown four-card major that they hold.

After showing 4-4-3-2 with 4♥ [Back](#)

2♥		Game-forcing relay.
	2♠	4-4-3-2 also with 4♠
	2NT	Game-forcing relay.
	3♦	4=4=2=3.
	3♥	4=4=3=2 (with zoom).
	2NT	2=4=3=4.
	3♣	3=4=2=4.
	3♦	2=4=4=3.
	3♥+	3=4=4=2 (with zoom).

After showing 4-4-3-2 with 4♠ [Back](#)

2♠		Game-forcing relay.
	2NT	4=2=3=4.
	3♣	4=3=2=4.
	3♦	4=2=4=3.
	3♥+	4=3=4=2 (with zoom).

1.5 Strength asking relays

After the shape is shown, the next relay asks for strength and/or controls, subject to the usual stricture that 3NT and game-level bids above Step 1 are not relay asks. AK controls are evaluated as simple sum with an ace counting two and a king one, even if singleton. The onus lies on R to ask for controls only when there are no replies that are reasonably likely to be awkward, since their next (non-3NT) Step 1 is also a relay.

An unlimited hand (i.e. only a positive response by an unpassed hand, or a [Reverse Relayed](#) 1♣ opener) has an initial step response showing a minimum (9-12HCP with 2-5 AK controls or 15-17HCP or 4-6 AK controls, respectively) with higher step responses implying a maximum and showing controls beginning with 3 or 6, respectively. After showing a minimum, R may inquire further for number of controls beginning with 2 or 4, respectively.

Dan's notes are contradictory for semipositives. The strong club section says there's no 8⁺ response (which I prefer), but the negative response section implies the following: A semipositive hand (passed or unpassed) shows its strength with a lowest response showing the HCP for a positive but short of controls (and then a further relay for AK controls beginning with zero), and higher responses showing the normal HCP range and AK controls beginning from zero.

Otherwise, a limited hand does not further resolve its strength, but merely shows controls beginning from its base. A passed hand positive begins from 1, and any semipositive begins from 0. The bases for limited openings are discussed in their sections.

1.6 Zooming

When RR holds the pattern that is the highest call defined in the response structure it is efficient that that response follow on to show the strength of the hand without requiring R to waste two steps in making a subsequent ask. A limited hand may never bypass 3NT when zooming to strength-showing or DCB. An unlimited hand may do so only when showing a maximum. Discuss how this works with level adjusting.

1.7 Spiral Scan

After controls have been shown, "denial cue-bidding" commences. In denial cue-bidding the suits are assigned an order of priority - firstly by order of length, but if two or more lengths are equal (or have lengths that are unknown), then the higher-ranking suit is scanned first.

Generally, on the first ask ("scan"), RR is asked to look for an ace or king in the suit of highest priority. If neither of these is held then RR bids Step 1 to show this. Otherwise, RR then scans the suit of second priority, also for any of the top two honours, bidding Step 2 to deny one. This process continues through all the suits, and eventually may return to the suit of highest priority (i.e. "spiralling"). When this occurs, RR looks for the queen in

that suit, and so on.

However, for suits known to be at least six cards long, the first scan checks for at least two of the top three honours, stopping to show at most one. A subsequent scan of this suit stops when holding the lower possible number of top honours (zero or two, accordingly), and passes when holding one or all three.

When RR has shown 5⁺ AK controls, R may inquire with Step 2 to instruct responder to ignore aces and promote all cards by one rank, and to follow all the above rules. How does this interact with the end signal?

The highest possible relay ask is 5NT. If a response is made at 5NT or higher, then R must be prepared to place the final contract. No relay response higher than 7♣ may be given. The onus is clearly on R not to make an ask when there is reasonable chance of unfortunate consequences. It is occasionally necessary to finesse a card during the bidding! (Don't tell your teammates, it spoils your image.)

1.8 Ending relay auctions

R may attempt to end a relay auction at any time by passing a response or by bidding Step 2 or higher when that bid is at least at game level. One exception to this is that 3NT is never a relay - even if the previous response was 3♠. R must bid 4♣ to relay in this case. Another exception is noted in the previous section.

The remaining exception is that if the final shape information has been transferred by the relay structure (and control strength either shown or not), and 4♦ is above Step 1, R has two ways to achieve a sign-off. A 4♦ “end signal” bid prefaces a sign-off opposite normal hands, and with a normal hand RR must bid 4♥ and pass any rebid by R. An unlimited RR with extra strength (e.g. a maximum hand?) may refuse to bid 4♥ and instead show controls beginning with their normal base at 4♠. R then continues to relay as normal, or signs off with any bid of at least Step 2.

Otherwise, an initial call by R higher than 4♦ is natural and invitational, and RR should evaluate his hand and particularly his trump suit. When RR has shown at least three cards in the suit of the invitation, it asks for extra strength in the bid suit and a better than minimum hand. The trump fit is usually exactly 8 cards. R denies two honours in the suit; a typical holding is Hx(xx), so RR needs HJxx(xx) or better to accept, or (if unlimited) a hand with so much extra strength that slam is likely on high cards. When RR has shown a 7-card suit, R shows a small singleton in the suit so RR needs AKxxxxx or HHJxxxx or better. When accepting, RR gives a 03/14 RKCB response.

In such auctions, delayed and direct 4NT bids by R show quantitative notrump interest, respectively with and without interest in a minor suit contract.

Rarely, R can choose to employ a below-slam jump in a denomination as an invitational action. RR should use their judgement in the context of the hand type they have shown.

RR should be aware that R normally could have anticipated finding out about useful aces and kings and/or high-priority queens, and so should normally focus on other queens and relevant jacks. R will normally not anticipate “fast” losers, and, for example, could be seeking internal trump or side-suit solidity to make slam playable. A jump to 5NT when 4NT was also a jump is forcing to 6NT, and shows interest in a grand slam.

1.9 Reverse Relay

Reverse Relay (RR) is the name used to describe some early relay-breaks by a 1C opener when holding minimum three-suited hand types. There are two motivations for using Reverse Relay:

- To identify when there is no stopper opposite the shortage in 3NT so that another contract can be chosen.
- To ascertain the degree of wastage opposite the shortage for slam purposes.

The former can be best achieved by agreeing to use a bid above Step 1 to show a singleton in the suit responder showed when holding a fairly minimum hand. Responder can resume relays in opposite roles if appropriate. The latter can be achieved by using other bids above Step 1 to show some degree of fit for responder’s suit and a side shortage in a fairly minimum hand. Responder can resume relays in opposite roles if appropriate, however there is not the same urgency to show shapes below 3NT where there is a probable major-suit fit.

All Reverse Relays are off in all competitive and level-adjusted auctions, for both simplicity and avoiding bypassing 3NT.

There are a few structure-specific concerns when using RR:

- After 1♣-1♥ when opener holds ♠ shortage the odds of a ♥ fit are fair, and it makes sense to have responder take over relay captaincy since they will declare such a contract.
- After 1♣-1♠ any shortage showing is useful, since this response includes the balanced hands, which is the only hand that knows if there are wasted values (or no stopper) opposite a short suit.
- After 1♣-1NT, responder will be declaring notrump contracts, and may need to be the person to judge the existence of an adequate stopper opposite a short suit.
- After 1♣-2♣ and higher, no major suit is held and so 3NT often become the contract. Any shortage should be made known to check on adequate control.

The lowest available non-relay step shows a shortage in responder’s known suit (if any), and higher steps show other shortages in the normal high, middle, low order. Two structures are used depending on the level of the first response and the level of the shortage-showing bid, the 10-shape structure and the 4-shape structure. No zooming occurs off these structures.

After 10-shape Reverse Relay:

Step 1	4441 or 5440.
Step 1	4441.
Step 2	4450.
Step 3	4540.
Step 4	5440.
Step 2	5 cards in the lowest-ranked suit, or 4 cards in that suit and 5 in the next lowest-ranked suit.
Step 1	3451.
Step 2	4351.
Step 3	3541.
Step 3	4531.
Step 4	5341.
Step 5	5431.

After 4-shape Reverse Relay:

Step 1	4441.
Step 2	4450.
Step 3	4540.
Step 4	5440.

Reverse Relay auctions

1♥	♠
1♠	Relay, three-suited only with extras.
1NT	10-shape RR short on ♠ (responder's suit).
2♣	10-shape RR short on ♥ (high suit).
2♦	10-shape RR short on ♦ (middle suit).
2♥+	Zoom to 10-shape RR short on ♣ (low suit).
1♠	Flat, or red two-suiter.
1NT	Relay, three-suited only with extras.
2♣	10-shape RR short on ♠ (high suit).
2♦	10-shape RR short on ♥ (high-middle suit).
2♥	10-shape RR short on ♦ (low-middle suit).
2♠+	Zoom to 10-shape RR short on ♣ (low suit).

[Reverse Relay auctions]

1NT	♥, possibly with ♣
2♣	Relay, three-suited only with extras.
2♦	10-shape RR short on ♥ (opener's suit).
2♥	10-shape RR short on ♠ (high suit).
2♠	4-shape RR short on ♦ (middle suit).
2NT+	Zoom to 4-shape RR short on ♣ (low suit).
2♣	♦, possibly three-suited with minors.
2♦	Relay, three-suited only with extras.
2♥	4-shape RR short on ♦ (opener's suit).
2♠	4-shape RR short on ♠ (high suit).
2NT	4-shape RR short on ♥ (middle suit).
3♣+	Zoom to 4-shape RR short on ♣ (low suit).
2♦	♣
2♥	Relay, three-suited only with extras.
2♠	4-shape RR short on ♣ (opener's suit).
2NT	4-shape RR short on ♠ (high suit).
3♣	4-shape RR short on ♥ (middle suit).
3♦+	Zoom to 4-shape RR short on ♠ (low suit).

The sequence 1♣-2♦-3♣-3♦-4♣ (5044 opposite ♣) is the only one that bypasses 3NT, and therefore it is tucked into 3NT along with the previous step. Note that there is no zoom to controls in either 10-RR or 4-RR. It isn't strictly necessary that the 1♣-1NT-2NT zoom be only 4-shape RR since 10-shape will fit, but the above is a concession to memory burden.

Responder asks for controls starting with 4 instead of 2. Check this for consistency! Further, if shape has been found, and nobody has bid notrumps yet, a 3♠ bid by responder, even if relay, is a transfer to 3NT. 3NT would be to play, and 4♣ would have to be the relay, if 3♠ was previously the relay step.

1.10 Stopper Asks

Sometimes opener will know that 3NT is the correct contract, especially at matchpoints, and wishes to place the contract there, but requires a stopper in a suit. When responder is short in a suit, there is no hope, and when responder has 4⁺ cards in the suit, there is no danger. Opener may ask about the strength of the 2-3 card fragments. These are the only below-3NT relay breaks that are employed by this system.

When responder has shown at least one known 2-3 card suit, opener can break relays by bidding extra steps below 3NT, instead of relaying normally. The first step inquires about the highest fragment, the second about the next highest fragment, and so on. If there are only "n" fragments, then only the first "n" extra steps are stopper-asks, and steps starting at

“n+1” extra steps are the RKC-style asking bids described already. If there are no 2-3 card fragments, then there are no stopper-asking bids, and the RKC-bids are used immediately.

Special Case in Competition - If the opponents have explicitly shown strength (either with an overcall, or a X) in one of responder’s fragments, that suit is moved to the front of the queue, with the remaining fragments following in normal descending order. This makes sure that the most likely stopper-ask is available if possible. If two suits have been shown by the opponents, they are both considered first before other fragments, in descending order themselves.

The responses to the stopper ask are in four basic steps, with one of the steps always 3NT and the other three running around it.

1. With a stopper and a minimum, responder rebids 3NT.
2. With no stopper and a minimum, responder rebids the cheapest non-NT step. Opener passes or bids naturally, there is no relay since opener is pronounced minimum.
3. With no stopper and 13⁺ HCP, responder rebids the second cheapest non-NT step. Opener relays for controls (3⁺) or signs off.
4. With a stopper and 13⁺ HCP, responder bids run-on to controls (3⁺) starting with the third cheapest non-NT step.

1.11 After a negative response to 1♣

After 1♣–1♦:

With extra strength, opener may show this and attempt further relays, or bid according to a structure similar to the Woolsey defence to a strong notrump opening.

1♥	19 ⁺ (21 ⁺) HCP any shape (could be less on a strong playing hand). (continuations page 12)
1♠	15-18(17-20), long minor(s), or minor-major canape. (continuations page 13)
1NT	15-18(17-20), systems on, but transfer followed by 3-bid is only highly invitational.
2♣	15-18(17-20), both majors. (continuations page 13)
2♦	15-18(17-20), long major. (continuations page 13)
2♥/2♠	15-18(17-20), 5♥/♠ and 4 ⁺ m. (continuations page 14)
2NT	6-card minor of any quality, about 18-19(20-21) HCP, positionally suited to declare NT, almost good enough for a 1♥ strong relay. (continuations page 14)
3X	15-18(17-20) but long good suit with high trick-taking capacity.
3NT	To play, based on long running suit with side stoppers, 15-18(17-20) HCP.

1♣-1♦-1♥ Back

The full relay structure is used as normal but shifted up 2 steps.

1♠	Second negative, 0-4 HCP. (continuations page 12)
1NT	5 ⁺ HCP and 4 ⁺ ♠
2♣	5 ⁺ HCP, balanced, or a red two-suiter.
2♦	5 ⁺ HCP and 4 ⁺ ♥ 0-3♠ 0-3♦
2♥	5 ⁺ HCP and 4 ⁺ ♦
2♠	5 ⁺ HCP and 5 ⁺ ♣ and denies other suit.
2NT	5 ⁺ HCP, reverser, 4♦ 5 ⁺ ♣
3♣	5 ⁺ HCP 5 ⁺ ♦ 5 ⁺ ♣
3♦	5 ⁺ HCP, spade shortage, both minors with longer ♦ if bid directly.
3♥	5 ⁺ HCP, even shortage, both minors with longer ♦ if bid directly.
3♠	5 ⁺ HCP, 3=1=5=4.
3NT	5 ⁺ HCP, 2=1=6=4.
4♣	5 ⁺ HCP, 2=0=7=4.
4♦	5 ⁺ HCP, 3=0=6=4 with 8 ⁺ HCP.
4♥	5 ⁺ HCP, 3=0=6=4 with 0 AK controls; etc. (NB maximum AK controls = 3).

What is the principle underlying this rearrangement? Where is the 7411 type?

1♣-1♦-1♥-1♠ Back

1NT	19-22(21-24) balanced. Keri is on.
2♣	Game-Force, any shape.
2♦	Natural, non-forcing, 19-22(21-24) HCP.
2♥	Stayman (Rigal inversion).
2NT	Shows ♥ (Rigal inversion).
2♥/2♠/3♣	Natural, non-forcing, 19-22(21-24) HCP.
2NT	23-24(25-26) balanced. Stayman and transfers are on.
3♦/3♥/3♠	Not used.
3NT	To play, based on long running suit with side stoppers.

1♣-1♦-1♠ Back

1NT	Strong ask
2♣/♦	Non-max followed by Rigal inversion.
Step 1	Inverted, but what does that mean? Asking for major?
2NT	Inverted, but what does that mean? Shows displaced suit?
2M	Max with major and good 6-card minor
2NT	Asks minor.
3m	Correctable.
3OM	6OM.
2NT	Max 5-5 minors.
3m	To play.
3M	6M.
4m	Invitational.
3m	Max good suit no major.
2♣/2♦	Correctable.
2M/3m	Weak to play.

1♣-1♦-2♣ Back

2♦	Asks for better major.
2M	Better major.
suits	Invitational.
4m	Control bid for M.
4OM	Slam try in OM.
games	To play.
2M	To play.
2NT/3♣/3♦	Nat, invitational.
3M	Nat and GF (prepares slamtries).
4♣/4♦	Transfers to the corresponding major.

1♣-1♦-2♦ Back

2M	Correctable.
2NT	Multi-Ogust.
3♣	Weak.
3♦	Asks for suit.
3♥/3♠	Suit.
3♦/3♥	Medium, transfers.
3♠/3NT	Max, transfers.
3m	?

1♣-1♦-2♥/2♠ Back

2NT	Asks for other suit and strength.
3♣/3♦	Min with 4 ⁺ ♣/♦
3♥/3♠	Max with 4 ⁺ ♣/♦
3♣	Correctable.

1♣-1♦-2NT Back

3♣	Correctable.
3♦/3♥	Transfers.
3♠	Asks for the minor.
3NT	To play.

After 1♣-1♦-1♥-1♠-2♣

Responses are Rival-esque. No third negative. Natural relays (Mark will need some examples!). After relaying for length, relay for shortage (NHML for one-suiters). Run-ons for 2-suiters pertain to length of long suit, and never pass 3NT unless 6-card major or 7-card minor.

2♦	Balanced 4432 or 4333. CRASH relays like in main relay structure - but this needs discussion now we're not using CRASH.
suit	Natural.
2NT	Responder uses Puppet Stayman - discuss detail.
3♠	4♠ and 5 ⁺ ♥
2♥	♥
2♠	♠
2NT	♦ and ♣
3♣	Relay.
3♦	Asks for 3 ⁺ card major.
3M	Shows 6 ⁺ M.
3♣	Single-suiter.
3♦	Relay for length.
3M	Shows 5 ⁺ M.
3♦	6 ⁺ ♦, no 3 card major.
3♥	Relay for length.
3♠	Natural.
3♥/3♠	5 ⁺ ♦, 3 card fragment. Relay or super-relay for length.
3NT	3=3=5=2.

Notice that there is no question of right-siding hands once all the suit denominations have been bid at the one-level!

1.12 Interference after $1\clubsuit-1\diamond$

Interference at the one-level is insufficient to raise the level of relays damagingly, but the danger of a preemptive raise increases significantly. Throw in that our combined strength should be less on average after such an overcall, and the advantage of maintaining a 19^+ relay has dissipated. Thus, double over a suited overcall at the 1, 2, 3 levels over the $1\diamond$ negative response is for takeout, or any VERY strong hand, as standard. Non-jump new suits are minimum for the level bid. XX is takeout of \diamond or any really strong hand (then penalty X?). 1NT is 17-19(19-21) balanced with good stoppers. Non-jump 2NT is Good-Bad. Pass is non-forcing and suggests either a trap pass or a hand with no good bid. Responder's double over a pass is takeout with almost any strength. After $1\clubsuit-1\diamond-1\heartsuit$, however, relays may still be on after an overcall. Though this is rare, if the $3\diamond$ Criterion still holds (interference is X, $1\spadesuit$, 1NT, or $2\clubsuit$), relays are still on.

Chapter 2

Major-oriented one-level openings

2.1 General

This system uses an (almost) MAFIA (**MA**jors **FI**rst **Al**ways) approach to describing hands too weak for a strong opening and too strong for a weak opening. Hands that are three-suited with both minors must open $1\spadesuit$ showing both minors, and balanced hands without a five-card major must open 1NT. Otherwise, all hands with hearts will open $1\diamondsuit$ and those with spades (and not hearts) will open $1\heartsuit$. These opening bids may be showing their longest suit, or could have a longer side suit. The limited nature of these hands often makes it very easy for responder to determine that the opening side has little (or no) play for game, and responder will take an action that is a suggestion of a final contract.

Continuations follow the same general principles after the $1\diamondsuit$ and $1\heartsuit$ openings; the cheapest step begins game-invitational relays, most other low-level bids are natural and tend to suggest final contracts, a two-level transfer to opener's major shows fit, some jump bids show fit for the shown suit and are invitational, and some jumps in notrump show fit with at least invitational strength and possibly undisclosed shortage.

The initial relay requires opener to describe their hand as minimum or maximum. In order to deal with the requirements for both game and slam bidding, a maximum hand must have both 13-14HCP and 3 controls. With strong shape (e.g. 10 cards in two suits) with values concentrated in the long suits the HCP minimum can be shaded. With a hand that does not satisfy these requirements, opener describes a minimum.

After the initial relay and the subsequent descriptive rebid by opener, responder can continue to bid Step 1 for game-forcing relay in all but one case. If opener's response shows a maximum, relayer may continue to relay in a game-force, or make a cheap raise or new suit bid to issue an invitation (on a misfit in the latter case).

If opener's first relay response shows a minimum, R may continue as above, however after a second relay response R may again make a natural, invitational relay break. If such a relay auction later asks for controls, the lowest response is made on all hands with 2, with no resolution of the wide range of HCP.

Responder has available many different raise strategies. With 3-card support and less than invitational values, they should choose the most appropriate response from 1NT, the transfer two-level raise (possibly with a new-suit rebid to show 3-6) or the two-level raise. With 3-card support and invitational or better values, they should relay and then if only invitational, break to 2M if opener shows a minimum. With 4-card support and less than invitational values, responder should choose from among the transfer two-level raise, the two-level raise and the preemptive three-level raise. With 4-card support and balanced invitational values, responder should raise with 2NT, unless 4333 and notrump-oriented, which should relay and then break to 3M. With 4-card support and unbalanced invitational values, responder may splinter immediately if only a fitting maximum will produce game (say 7-9HCP), or make a delayed splinter via the transfer two-level raise if most maximums or a fitting minimum will produce game (say 10-12 HCP), or raise to 2NT if unsuited for a splinter. With 4-card support and game strength, responder may relay, or bid 2NT on a hand that has slam interest only if opener has a maximum with a suitable shortage (more often used if opener showed ♡), or bid 2NT on a hand of 16-18HCP that wishes to show its own shortage for slam evaluation purposes.

2.2 Responding to the 1♦ opening

After 1♦

Opener shows 4+♡ any shape that is not flat or including both minors, 10-14HCP.

- | | |
|-----|--|
| 1♡ | Game invitational or better relay. (continuations page 18) |
| 1♠ | Natural 4+♠, 0-11HCP non-forcing. |
| 1NT | Balanced or semi-balanced (including hands with 3♡), 0-11HCP, normally forcing. In particular, limited balanced hands with potential Moysian heart fits should respond 1NT rather than 2♡ as any eight card fit will always be found after the 1NT response. For example with 5=4=3=1 with opener and 3=3=3=4 with responder, the auction 1♦-1N-2♠ is clearly superior to 1♦-2♡. Responding hands such as 2=3=2=6 with a weak suit are often best treated with 1NT also. Further bidding is not constructive. (continuations page 20) |

[After 1♦]

- 2♣ Natural, non-forcing, showing a suit of at least five cards. Opener is expected to pass without a good reason to bid, normally a concealed suit of at least five cards, or a good six card opening suit, or a good fit and playing strength. A 2NT rebid by opener shows primary fit and maximum values. When opener rebids without showing fit, there is a fair tendency to deny tolerance. Opener may conceal tolerance any time his holding suggests an advantage in doing so.
- 2♦ Artificial raise, either
- 10–11HCP with 3♥,
 - 8–9HCP with 4♥ and balanced, or
 - 9–11HCP with 4⁺♥ and an unspecified invitational splinter seeking either any maximum hand, or a fitting minimum.
- (continuations [page 20](#))
- 2♥ Natural, non-forcing, either 3-card support and unbalanced, or 4-card support balanced and in either case showing less than “constructive” values. (continuations [page 20](#))
- 2♠/3♣/3♦ Mini-splinters, 7–9HCP seeking fitting maximum hands.
- 2NT 4⁺♥, either
- 10–12HCP (usually) balanced invitational raise,
 - GF raise interested in slam only opposite a maximum with suitable shortage, or
 - GF 16–18HCP raise wishing to show shortage.
- When resolving shortages in either hand, three cheap adjacent bids are used, showing shortages naturally where possible, and up-the-line otherwise. (continuations [page 21](#))
- 3♥ 4-5 card support (depending on shape), not constructive.
- 3♠ 5⁺♥, GF (13–15 HCP) and an unspecified void. (continuations [page 22](#))
- 3NT Transfer to 4♥ (“**You** play it”), does not set up a forcing pass, and is often based a shapely two-suiter.
- Games To play. Doubles by both hands are for penalty.
- 4m Fit-showing raise to 4♥, preparing for competition by fourth hand. X by opener is for penalty, X by responder shows additional defensive values.
- 4♥ To play, could be weak.

After 1♦–1♥ [Back](#)

- 1♠ Minimum. (continuations [page 19](#))

[After 1♦–1♥]

1NT	♠, two- or three-suited.
2♣	Game-forcing relay.
2♦	Three-suited with both majors (symmetric continuations)
2♥+	Two-suited with ♠ and ♥ (symmetric continuations)
2♣	Two-suited with ♦ and ♥ (symmetric continuations)
2♦	5+♥, 4+♣ two-suited (symmetric continuations)
2♥	5+♣, 4♥ two-suited (symmetric continuations)
2♠+	One-suited with 5+♥ (symmetric continuations)

After 1♦–1♥–1♠ Back

1NT	Natural, invitational (exception to Step 1-for-relay rule). Opener may pass, correct cheaply to a suit of at least five cards, or bid 2NT or above with a low-control 13–14HCP. How do we find 4-4 fits in ♠?
2♣	Game invitational or better relay. The structure remains symmetric, but shifts up two steps. Responder may make a natural invitational relay break after at most one more relay ask. (continuations page 19)
2♦/3♣	Natural, invitational.
2♠	Natural, invitational 5+♠
3♣	4+♣ 0-1♠, accepting the invitation.
3♦	4+♦ 0-1♠, accepting the invitation.
3♥	6+♥ 0-1♠, accepting the invitation.
3NT	Accepting with 2♠
4♠	Accepting with 3+♠
2♥	Natural, invitational usually 3♥ How do we find 4-4 fits in ♠?
3♥	Natural, invitational 4♥, notrump-oriented, probably 3=4=3=3.
Games	To play.

After 1♦–1♥–1♠–2♣ Back

2♦	4+♠ (could be 3-suited).
2♥	Two-suited with ♦ and ♥ (symmetric continuations)
2♠	5+♥, 4+♣ two-suited (symmetric continuations)
2NT	5+♣, 4♥ two-suited (symmetric continuations)
3♣+	One-suited with 5+♥ (symmetric continuations)

After 1♦–1NT Back

P	Three-suited with both majors (or balanced 11–13HCP in 3rd/4th seat).
2♣/2♦/2♥/2♠	5+ ♣/♦/♥/♠, any strength.
2NT	5+m 5+♥, maximum.
3♣/3♦	6+ ♣/♦ 4♥, maximum.

After 1♦–2♦ Back

Responder shows artificial raise, either

- 10–11HCP with 3♥,
- 8–9HCP with 4♥ and balanced, or
- 9–11HCP with 4+♥ and an unspecified invitational splinter seeking either any maximum hand, or a fitting minimum.

2♥	To play. (continuations page 20)
2♠	5+ ♠ non-forcing game-try (now 2NT scrambles without fit).
2NT	Forcing to 3♥, requesting that responder show any minor suit, and making opener's new-suit rebid or raise show a game-forcing canape hand.
3♣/3♦	6+ ♣/♦ non-forcing game-try.
3♥	5+♥ invitational.
Games	To play.

After 1♦–2♦–2♥ Back

2♠/3♣/3♦	6+ ♠/♣/♦ 3♥ non-forcing game-try.
2NT	4+♥ 0-1♣/♦ invitational.
3♣	Inquiry.
3♦/3♥	0-1♦/♣
3♥	4+♥ 0-1♠ invitational.

After 1♦–2♥ Back

2♠/3♣/3♦	5+ ♠/♣/♦ non-forcing game-try.
2NT	5+♥, asks responder to show any concentrated minor-suit values.
3♥	5+♥ Invitational.

After 1♦–2NT Back

Responder shows 4⁺♥, either

- 10–12HCP (usually) balanced invitational raise,
- GF raise interested in slam only opposite a maximum with suitable shortage, or
- GF 16–18HCP raise wishing to show shortage.

When resolving shortages in either hand, three cheap adjacent bids are used, showing shortages naturally where possible, and up-the-line otherwise.

3♣	Maximum, no feature to show.
3♦	16–18HCP unspecified void.
3♥	Inquiry.
3♠/3NT/4♣	16–18HCP 4 ⁺ ♥ 0♠/♦/♣
3♥/3♠/3NT	16–18HCP 4 ⁺ ♥ 1♣/♠/♦
4♥	To play.
3♦	Maximum with unspecified shortage. (continuations page 21)
3♥	Minimum.
3♠	16–18HCP unspecified void still with slam interest.
3NT	Inquiry.
4♣/4♦/4♥	16–18HCP 4 ⁺ ♥ 0♣/♦/♠
3NT/4♣/4♦	16–18HCP 1♠/♣/♦ still with slam interest.
3♠	Minimum, enough extra trump length to want to play game opposite the invitational type.
3NT/4♣/4♦	16–18HCP 0-1♠/♣/♦ still with slam interest.
4♥	To play.
3NT/4♣/4♦	Maximum, shows probable 6-card canape suit with all non-ace values in the suits.

After 1♦–2NT–3♦ Back

3♥	Inquires about shortage.
3♠	Unspecified void.
3NT	Inquiry.
4♣/4♦/4♥	0♣/♦/♠
3NT/4♣/4♦	1♠/♣/♦
3♠	16–18HCP unspecified void.
3NT	Inquiry.
4♣/4♦/4♥	16–18HCP 4 ⁺ ♥ 0♣/♦/♠
3NT/4♣/4♦	16–18HCP 4 ⁺ ♥ 1♠/♣/♦
4♥	To play.

After 1♦–3♠ [Back](#)

3NT

4♣/4♦/4♥

Inquiry.

♣/♦/♠ void.

2.3 Responding to the 1♥ opening

After 1♥

Opener shows 4+♠ 0-3♥ any shape, 10-14HCP.

- 1♠ Game invitational or better relay. (continuations [page 23](#))
- 1NT Balanced or semi-balanced (including hands with 3♠), 0–11HCP, forcing, OR a not-quite-invitational hand with 6+♥ (hoping to rebid 2♥). In particular, limited balanced hands with potential Moysian spade fits should respond 1NT rather than 2♠ as any eight card fit will always be found after the 1NT response. For example with 4=3=5=1 with opener and 3=3=3=4 with responder, the auction 1♥–1N–2♦ is clearly superior to 1♥–2♠. Responding hands such as 3=2=2=6 with a weak suit are often best treated with 1NT also. Further bidding is not constructive. (continuations [page 24](#))
- 2♣/2♦ Natural, non-forcing, showing a suit of at least five cards. Opener is expected to pass without a good reason to bid, normally a concealed suit of at least five cards, or a good six card opening suit, or a good fit and playing strength. A 2NT rebid by opener shows primary fit and maximum values. When opener rebids without showing fit, there is a fair tendency to deny tolerance. Opener may conceal tolerance any time his holding suggests an advantage in doing so.
- 2♥ Artificial raise, either
- 10–11HCP with 3♠,
 - 8–9HCP with 4♠ and balanced, or
 - 9–11HCP with 4+♠ and an unspecified invitational splinter seeking either any maximum hand, or a fitting minimum.
- (continuations [page 24](#))
- 2♠ Natural, non-forcing, either 3-card support and unbalanced, or 4-card support balanced and in either case showing less than “constructive” values. (continuations [page 25](#))

[After 1♥]

2NT	4+♠, either <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10–12HCP (usually) balanced invitational raise, • GF raise interested in slam only opposite a maximum with suitable shortage, or • GF 16–18HCP raise wishing to show shortage.
	When resolving shortages in either hand, three cheap adjacent bids are used, showing shortages naturally where possible, and up-the-line otherwise. (continuations page 25)
3♣/3♦/3♥	Mini-splinters, 7–9HCP seeking fitting maximum hands.
3♠	4-5 card support (depending on shape), not constructive.
3NT	Transfer to 4♠ (“ You play it”), does not set up a forcing pass, and is often based a shapely two-suiter.
Games	To play. Doubles by both hands are for penalty.
4m	Fit-showing raise to 4♠, preparing for competition by fourth hand. X by opener is for penalty, X by responder shows additional defensive values.
4♠	To play, could be weak.

After 1♥–1♠ Back

1NT	Minimum (responder should not pass, since opener can have a low-control 13–14HCP). (continuations page 23)
2♣	Two-suited with ♦ and ♠ (symmetric continuations)
2♦	5+♠, 4+♣ two-suited (symmetric continuations)
2♥	5+♣, 4♠ two-suited (symmetric continuations)
2♠+	One-suited with 5+♠ (symmetric continuations)

After 1♥–1♠–1NT Back

2♣	Game invitational or better relay. The structure remains symmetric, but shifts up two steps. Responder may make a natural invitational relay break after at most one more relay ask. (continuations page 24)
2♦/2NT/3♣	Natural, invitational.
2♥	Natural, invitational 5+♥
3♣	4+♣ 0-1♥, accepting the invitation.
3♦	4+♦ 0-1♥, accepting the invitation.
3♠	6+♠ 0-1♥, accepting the invitation.
3NT	Accepting with 2♥
4♥	Accepting with 3+♥
2♠	Natural, invitational usually 3♠

[After 1♥-1♠-1NT]

3♠	Natural, invitational 4♠, notrump-oriented, probably 4=3=3=3.
Games	To play.

After 1♥-1♠-1NT-2♣ Back

2♦	Two-suited with ♦ and ♠ (symmetric continuations)
2♥	5+♠, 4+♣ two-suited (symmetric continuations)
2♠	5+♣, 4♠ two-suited (symmetric continuations)
2NT+	One-suited with 5+♠ (symmetric continuations)

After 1♥-1NT Back

P	Balanced 11-13HCP (in 3rd/4th seat).
2♣/2♦	5+♣/♦, any strength.
2♥	5+♠ 3♥, any strength.
2♠	5+♠ 0-2♥, any strength.
2NT	5+m 5+♠, maximum.
3♣/3♦	6+♣/♦ 4♠, maximum.

After 1♥-2♥ Back

Responder shows artificial raise, either

- 10-11HCP with 3♠,
- 8-9HCP with 4♠ and balanced, or
- 9-11HCP with 4+♠ and an unspecified invitational splinter seeking either any maximum hand, or a fitting minimum.

2♠	To play. (continuations page 24)
2NT	Forcing to 3♠, requesting that responder show any minor suit, and making opener's new-suit rebid or raise show a game-forcing canape hand.
3♣/3♦	5+♣/♦ non-forcing game-try.
3♠	5+♠ invitational.
Games	To play.

After 1♥-2♥-2♠ Back

3♣/3♦/3♥	6+♣/♦/♥ 3♠ non-forcing game-try.
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[After 1♥-2♥-2♠]

2NT	4+♠ unspecified shortage, invitational.
3♣	Inquiry.
3♦/3♥/3♠	0-1♦/♥/♣

After 1♥-2♠ Back

3♣/3♦	5+♣/♦ non-forcing game-try.
2NT	5+♠, asks responder to show any concentrated suit values.
3♠	5+♠ Invitational.

After 1♥-2NT Back

Responder shows 4+♠, either

- 10-12HCP (usually) balanced invitational raise,
- GF raise interested in slam only opposite a maximum with suitable shortage, or
- GF 16-18HCP raise wishing to show shortage.

When resolving shortages in either hand, three cheap adjacent bids are used, showing shortages naturally where possible, and up-the-line otherwise.

3♣	Maximum, no feature to show.
3♦	16-18HCP unspecified void.
3♥	Inquiry.
3♠/3NT/4♣	16-18HCP 4+♠ 0♦/♥/♣
3♥/3♠/3NT	16-18HCP 4+♠ 1♥/♣/♦
4♠	To play.
3♦	Maximum with unspecified shortage. (continuations page 26)
3♠	Minimum.
3NT	16-18HCP unspecified void still with slam interest.
4♣	Inquiry.
4♦/4♥/4♠	16-18HCP 4+♠ 0♦/♥/♣
4♣/4♦/4♥	16-18HCP 0-1♣/♦/♥ still with slam interest.
3NT	Minimum, enough extra trump length to want to play game opposite the invitational type.
4♣/4♦/4♥	16-18HCP 0-1♣/♦/♥ still with slam interest.
4♠	To play.
4♣/4♦	Maximum, shows probable 6-card canape suit with all non-ace values in the suits.

After 1♥–2NT–3♦ [Back](#)

3♥		Inquires about shortage.
	3♠	Unspecified void.
		3NT Inquiry.
		4♣/4♦/4♥ 0♣/♦/♥
	3NT/4♣/4♦	1♥/♣/♦
3♠		16–18HCP unspecified void.
	3NT	Inquiry.
		4♣/4♦/4♥ 16–18HCP 4+♠ 0♣/♦/♥
	3NT/4♣/4♦	16–18HCP 4+♠ 1♥/♣/♦
4♠		To play.

2.4 Competitive Bidding

When the opponents compete before a relay auction has begun, then if the relay bid or the double of it is available, then that call is for relay. The auctions 1♦–(1♥)–X and 1♥–(1♠)–X both show an invitational or better double and a first-round relay break by responder reveals an invitational hand-type. A redouble of the 1♦ or 1♥ denies fit and seeks penalties. Pass shows tolerance for the present contract. Otherwise, their double of our opening or their overcall in our shown suit is ignored.

After most raises by responder, doubles by either hand are for penalties. After fit-showing raises that transfer captaincy to opener, responder may X to show extra defensive values, but opener retains captaincy.

When holding three-card support for opener’s suit and the opponents have overcalled, responder should prefer to make a negative double if possible, then to raise if unbalanced, then to pass if balanced, and finally to raise. An invitational three-card raise should start with a negative double. Opener is expected to rebid naturally on the assumption of a perfect 4432-shape negative double.

The remaining discussion assumes either an overcall of the opening bid, or a pass, followed by responder’s action, followed by subsequent action from either opponent.

If a relay auction has not begun, doubles of suit bids (including the bids formerly used as relays) are negative/takeout until either hand is defined, then penalty. Hand definition occurs when a hand raises, describes a long suit, shows a second suit, indicates balanced or semi-balanced nature, makes a takeout or penalty double, passes a takeout double or makes a double of notrump bid (which shows values and some degree of penalty interest depending on the meaning of the notrump bid). Passing when double would be for takeout does not define the hand.

Over interference at or below 1NT, new suit bids at the two level by responder are non-forcing and so X-and-bid sequences are forcing. 2NT by either hand at their first opportunity to raise partner’s suit shows an offensive invitational or better raise. An immediate cuebid

by either hand shows a game-forcing raise; in the case of responder it shows an defensive invitational or better raise.

Over interference at or above $2\clubsuit$, new suit bids at the two level by responder are non-forcing but constructive. 2NT through one step below 3M are transfers. A transfer to a new suit that was excluded by the overcall is either weak or game-forcing. A transfer to their suit shows a defensive invitational (or better) raise, and a transfer to our suit shows an offensive invitational raise. A transfer to a suit not excluded by the overcall is a fit-showing raise. The jump raise is pre-emptive. Below-game jumps to new suits are fit-showing, but game-level jumps to new suits are to play.

In general, jump bids in opponents' suits are splinter actions. Jump bids in new suits are fit-showing. In all cases, a fit-showing action shows the offensive strength for that level and a suitable holding in the bid suit, like KQTxx. Jumps to all suit games are natural and to play. Non-jump suit and natural notrump bids remain non-forcing, however any passed-hand non-jump new suits are fit-showing. Raises tend to be not constructive. Opener may continue over raises to $2\heartsuit/2\spadesuit$ as in the absence of competition. Cuebids and double-then-raise auctions are constructive. In various esoteric auctions where fit is known and further competition possible, jumps (and non-jumps that can't be natural) are fit-showing to empower partner's further actions in competition.

Remaining 2NT bids in competition show two places to play, particularly in smouldering 2-level auctions when double would be for penalties. In any case, 2NT is never natural in competition.

4NT in a competitive auction is RKCB whenever that is possible, and suggesting two possible strains at the five level whenever RKCB is not a possible interpretation. An unnecessary jump to five of opener's suit asks for control of their suit (partner makes a control bid holding first-round control, and raises holding second-round control).

When the opponents compete after a relay auction has begun, then the agreements used are identical to those used after interference during $1\clubsuit$ auction. In particular all doubles by relayer (and opener if relays have been broken) are for penalties. After advancer's action over responder's initial relay, relays are broken if their action was at or above two of our major, and opener should bid with non-minimum hands with 2NT showing a five-card major, a new suit showing at least five-card length there. Such an auction is forced at the one- or two-level (double is for penalty), but not at the three-level (double is for takeout).

When opener makes a bid in an impossible suit when their action cannot be interpreted as a good raise of responder's suit, that bid shows a holding in the bid suit that is as long as possible, and (almost always) extra length in their own suit. A double of such a suit in a penalty situation shows a maximum-length holding with at least the A, K or Q.

Chapter 3

Minor-oriented openings

3.1 General

The minor suit openings are $1\spadesuit$, $2\clubsuit$ and $2\diamondsuit$. All single-suited minor hands of 10-14HCP open naturally with $2\clubsuit$ or $2\diamondsuit$. Hands with both minors (and possibly a major suit) will open $1\spadesuit$. The limited nature of these hands often makes it very easy for responder to determine that the opening side has little (or no) play for game, and responder will often take an action that is a suggestion of a final contract.

The responding structures vary a little with the opening bid, but typically natural bids in both majors, a game-forcing relay, one or more invitational sequences, and preemptive raises are used.

After $1\spadesuit$

Pass	To play with spades.
1NT	Non-forcing, asking for 5-card suit, 0–10HCP, may be preparing a sign-off in a minor. Further bidding is not constructive.
P	$4=1=4=4$ or $1=4=4=4$.
$2\clubsuit/2\diamondsuit$	$5^+\clubsuit/\diamondsuit$
$2\heartsuit/2\spadesuit$	$0=5=4=4/5=0=4=4$.
$2\clubsuit$	Game force relay (but by a passed hand, to play).
$2\diamondsuit$	Three-suited with both minors (symmetric continuations)
$2\heartsuit$	Two-suited with \diamondsuit and \clubsuit (symmetric continuations)
$2\diamondsuit$	Game-invitational relay. (continuations page 29)
$2\heartsuit/2\spadesuit$	Constructive, non-forcing.
2NT	Pre-emptive with both minors.
$3\clubsuit/3\diamondsuit$	Pre-emptive.
$3\heartsuit/3\spadesuit$	Splinter, game-forcing.

[After 1♠]

3NT	To play.
4♣/4♦	Preemptive.

After 1♠–2♦ Back

2♥	4-5♥ F1.
2♠	4-5♠ F1.
2NT	No major, ♣ better than ♦, min.
3♣	No major, ♦ better than ♣, min.
3♦	5+♦ 5+♣ in minors (or conc. 5-4), max.
3♥/3♠	Max, 6+ ♣/♦
3NT	Max, 5-4-3-1 or 5-4-2-2, with strength in majors.

After 2♣

2♦	Signoff in a major, or mild invite with ♥ or ♦
2♥	Forced.
P/2♠	To play.
2NT	♥, no ♣ fit.
3♣	♥ with ♣ fit.
3♦	Invite with great ♦ (inconsistency?).
3♥	Invite with great ♥
2♥	GF relay with normal one-suiter structure (adjustment for no 5332?).
2♠	Natural, mild invite. Opener may pull with singleton.
2NT	Ogust-like.
3♣	Any minimum.
3♦	Max with 3♠ 3♥ or 7+ ♣ and a singleton.
3♥	Asks.
3♠	Some singleton.
3NT	3♠ 3♥
3M	Max with 3OM.
3NT	Max 2♠ 2♥
3♣	Preemptive.
3♦/3♥/3♠	Invitational fit-jumps.

After 2♦

2♥	GF relay with normal one-suiter structure.
2♠	Natural, mild invite. Opener may pull with singleton.

[After 2♦]

2NT	Ogust-like.
3♣	Any minimum.
3♦	Max with 3♠ 3♥ or 7 ⁺ ♦ and a singleton.
3♥	Asks.
3♠	Singleton.
3NT	3♠ 3♥
3M	Max 3OM.
3NT	Max 2♠ 2♥
3♦	Preemptive.
3♥/3♠	Invitational fit-jumps.

3.2 Responding to the 2NT opening

After 2NT

3♣/3♦	To play.
3♥/3♠	Natural and forcing.
3NT	To play.
4♣/4♦	Not invitational.
4♥	RKCB for C.
4♠	RKCB for D.
4NT	Both minors, seeking opener's better suit.

3.3 Competitive Bidding

After 1♠, if the opponents double, we use system on with XX seeking penalties. If they overcall, we retain our relay bids if those bids or the double of them are still available. Otherwise we use a takeout X (possibly GF in a suit biddable at the two-level), preemptive raises, two-level new suits constructive but non-forcing, 2NT Lebensohl, three-level suits game-forcing and games to play. X over their 1NT is for blood.

After 2♣ or 2♦, if the opponents double, we use system on with XX seeking penalties. If they overcall, we use a penalty X, 2NT limit raise (stopper?), preemptive raises, two-level new suits constructive but non-forcing, three-level suits game-forcing and games to play.

After any raise, doubles by responder of suit bids remain for penalties. A double by opener at his first opportunity strongly suggests bidding on but without the freak needed to break the captivity held by responder.

Jump bids in new suits remain fit-showing, except where the suit bid at the previous level was either not natural, or natural but non-forcing. 2NT bids in competition can show

two places to play, particularly in smouldering 2-level auctions when double would be for penalties. In any case, 2NT is never natural in competition.

Except where already defined above, 4NT in a competitive auction is RKCB whenever that is possible, and suggesting two possible strains at the five level whenever RKCB is not a possible interpretation. In particular after a $1\spadesuit$ opening, 4NT by either hand when their partner's minor-suit preference is not known is for minor-suit takeout. An unnecessary jump to five of opener's suit asks for control of their suit (partner cuebids holding first-round control, and raises holding second-round control).

When the opponents compete after a relay auction has begun, then the agreements used are identical to those used after interference during $1\clubsuit$ auction. In particular all doubles by R (and RR if relays have been broken) are for penalties.

Chapter 4

Opening 1NT

4.1 Preliminaries

Summary of responses to 1NT

2♣	Puppet to 2♦
2♦/2♥	Transfer to ♥/♠
2♠	Range probe or strong suit.
2NT	Transfer to ♣
3X	Transfer splinters.
3NT	To play.
4♣	5+♠ 5+♥ game forcing, with slam interest.
4♦	5+♠ 5+♥ game forcing, either without slam interest, or with a slam-force.
4M	To play.

4.2 The Keri 2♣ puppet

This structure is used for most invitational hands, balanced or near-balanced game-forcing hands with interest in strain or level, or hands needing a transfer to ♦. The easiest mnemonic for the structures after 1NT–2♣–2♦–2♥/2♠/2NT is that the bidding is natural, with 3♦ always showing 4333 shape. Otherwise these structures are almost natural.

The 2♥ and 2♠ continuations show invitational hands with 4-5 cards in the suit shown. This allows rejected invitations to be played at the two-level. Sometimes a 4-3 fit will be reached in order to cater for the possibility of the fit having been 5-3, but in such cases the contract might be better than 2NT anyway.

The game-forcing 2NT rebid provides the functionality of normal 4- and/or 5-card Stayman-style auctions. It finds all 4-4 and 5-3 major suit fits, and allows responder two different auctions when holding 5M(332). Responder should choose to transfer to the major and rebid

3NT when holding a weak 5-card suit in a balanced hand. Holding a strong 5-card suit, or an unbalanced hand, responder should choose this GF inquiry auction, as all fits will be found and responder can elect to play 3NT with a strong suit facing a 4333 shape.

After the Keri puppet 1NT-2♣

2♦	(almost forced).
P	Weak with ♦
2♥	Inv with 4-5♥ (could have 4♠, even with 5♥). (continuations page 33)
2♠	Inv with 4-5♠ 0-3♥ (continuations page 33)
2NT	GF inquiry (continuations page 34)
3m	Inv 6 ⁺ m. (continuations page 35)
3M	GF 4M 5 ⁺ ♦ (transference).
3NT	5♦(332) slam invitation (now 4♣/♥/♠ natural 5-card suits and 4♦ accepting ♦).
4♣	6♦ 4♣ slam interest (now 4♦ accepts ♦, other bids are control bids for ♣)
5NT	5♦(332) grand slam invitation.
3♦	Gimmick superaccept - responder has at least invitational values or has ♦ so this shows a maximum and 5♦
3♥/3♠	Invitational 4-5♥/♠ (but forcing now, obviously).

After the Keri puppet 1NT-2♣-2♦-2♥ [Back](#)

This structure is basically natural (in context), except that 3♣ is a counter-try with fit and ruffing value, and 3♦ includes all accepting 4333 shapes (compare with the auction 1NT-2♣-2♦-2NT-3♦). A maximum response forces to game.

P	Minimum 3 ⁺ ♥ or 3=4=3=3, or bad 4432 with 4♥
2♠	Minimum 4=2=x=x.
2NT	Minimum, 3=2=x=x, 3=3=4=3 or 3=3=3=4.
3♣	Good minimum 4♥ 4432 no wasted quacks.
3♦	Maximum any 4333 (responder with 4333 or 5332 plays 3NT!), 3M now seeks 4-card support.
3♥	Maximum 3♥ and a doubleton (now 3♠ checks for 4-4 ♠ fit).
3♠	Maximum 4-5♠ 2♥
3NT	Maximum 3=2=x=x or 2=2=x=x.
4♥	Maximum 4-5♥ not 4333.

After the Keri puppet 1NT-2♣-2♦-2♠ [Back](#)

P	Minimum 3♠ or 4333, or bad 4432 with 4♠
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[After the Keri puppet 1NT-2♣-2♦-2♠]

2NT	Minimum, 2♠ or 3♠ in a 4333.
3♣	Good minimum 4♠ 4432 no wasted quacks.
3♦	Maximum any 4333 (responder with 4333 or 5332 plays 3NT!), 3♠ now seeks 4-card support.
3♥	Maximum 2=5=x=x.
3♠	Maximum 3♠ and a doubleton.
3NT	Maximum 2♠
4♠	Maximum 4-5♠ not 4333.

After the Keri puppet 1NT-2♣-2♦-2NT [Back](#)

3♣	Catchall - not 4333, no 5M, thus has a doubleton.
3♦	Asks for 4M.
3♥	4♥ and another 4-card suit.
3♠	4♠ slam interest (responder's 4m continuation over opener's 3NT seeks a 4-4 minor suit fit).
3NT	4♠ no slam interest.
4♦	4♥ general slam try.
3♠	4♠ and a 4-card minor suit.
4m	4♥ 4m slam interest.
4♥	4♠ general slam try.
3NT	5m or (32)44.
4m	3m seeking fit.
3♥	5♥(332) with a strong suit, offering choice of games. With a weak suit, transfer to that suit and then offer choice-of-games with 3NT.
3♠	5♠ seeking fit.
3NT	To play.
3♠	5♥(332) with a strong suit, offering choice of games. With a weak suit, transfer to that suit and then offer choice-of-games with 3NT. The 3♥ holding caters for responder holding 5♥.
3NT	To play.
4m	4m, no 4M seeking fit.
3♦	Some 4-3-3-3.
3M	4-5M seeking 4M fit.
3NT	To play, including 4M 333.
4m	4m seeking fit.

[After the Keri puppet 1NT-2♣-2♦-2NT]

3♡	5♡
3♠	5♠ seeking fit.
3NT	To play.
3♠	5=3=x=x.
3NT	5=2=x=x.

After the Keri puppet 1NT-2♣-2♦-3m [Back](#)

P	No interest.
3♦/3M	Shows stopper.
3NT	Implies stoppers.

4.3 After a transfer to ♡

This structure is different from classical ♡ transfer auctions in three ways: the 2NT rebid is a game-forcing structure promising a four-card minor, a spade continuation reveals a canape transfer, and a minor suit continuation guarantees at least 5-5 shape but does not imply slam interest. The first of those differences is enabled by the 1NT-2♣-2♦-2♡ invitational auction, and this new use for 2NT allows new minor suits by responder to show at least 5-5 shape and game-forcing strength. The canape transfer style to the majors caters in the best possible way to reaching the lowest playable contract when responder has 5=4=x=x and invitational values (with an invitational 4=5=x=x responder starts with 2♣).

After 1NT-2♦

2♡	Normal accept. (continuations page 35)
2NT	2 top ♡ honours and 3 instant winners.
2♠/3m	Stopper in suit, 1 top ♡ honour and either 4 instant winners or 3 winners + a finesse. Stoppers should be shown up-the-line.
3♡	5♡

The superaccepts are only used by opening bidder when their range includes only hands with at least 14 HCP. The point of the superaccepts is to locate 3NT contracts running the ♡ suit because 2♦ is never bid on an invitational hand with only 5♡. The Klinger example hands all have 4-card support but it isn't stated if this is necessary. Occasionally this super-accept style will stumble across responder's singleton facing opener's non-stopper and a game can result.

After 1NT-2♦-2♡ [Back](#)

P	Weak with ♡
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[After 1NT-2♦-2♥]

2♠	Shows 4♥ 5+♠, invitational or better or better (canape transfer)
2NT	Minimum, no fit.
P	Most invitational hands.
3♥	5+♠ 5+♥ invitational.
3♠	6+♠ 4♥ invitational.
3♣	Maximum, ♥ fit.
3♦	Maximum, ♠ fit.
3♥	Minimum, ♥ fit.
3♠	Minimum, ♠ fit.
3NT	Maximum, no fit (responder may correct with extra length in either major).
2NT	GF 5+♥ 4m Either seeking best game or with slam interest (continuations page 38).
3m	5+♥ 5+m GF seeking strain, not necessarily interested in slam.
3♥	Good ♥ preference.
3NT	No interest (natural from responder, quantitative 4NT).
4♥	Weak ♥ preference.
else	Control bids for responder's minor.
3♥	Normal 6+♥ invitational.
3NT	5♥ game values typically 5332, and if 5332, holding a weak suit (strong suit via 2♣).
3♠/4m	Autosplinter (Klinger suggests voidwood but I don't like it).
4♥	To play, no slam suggestion.
4NT	5♥(332) small slam invitation.
5NT	5♥(332) grand slam invitation.

4.4 After a transfer to ♠

This structure is different from classical ♠ transfer auctions in three ways: the 2NT rebid is a game-forcing structure promising a four-card minor, a heart continuation reveals a game-forcing canape transfer, and a minor suit continuation guarantees at least 5-5 shape but does not imply slam interest. The first of those differences is enabled by the 1NT-2♣-2♦-2♠ invitational auction, and this new use for 2NT allows new minor suits by responder to show at least 5-5 shape and game-forcing strength. The canape transfer style to ♥ is a corollary of the best treatment for a 5=4=x=x invitational hand (note that with an invitational

4=5=x=x responder starts with 2♣).

After 1NT–2♥

2♠	Normal accept. (continuations page 37)
2NT	2 top ♠ honours and 3 instant winners.
3m/3♥	Stopper in suit, 1 top ♠ honour and either 4 instant winners or 3 winners + a finesse. Stoppers should be shown up-the-line.
3♠	5♠

The superaccepts are only used by opening bidder when their range includes only hands with at least 14 HCP. The point of the superaccepts is to locate 3NT contracts running the ♠ suit as 2♥ is never bid on an invitational hand with only 5♠. The example hands all have 4-card support but it isn't stated if this is necessary. Occasionally this super-accept style will stumble across responder's singleton facing opener's non-stopper and a game can result.

After 1NT–2♥–2♠ [Back](#)

P	Weak with ♠
2NT	GF 5+♥ 4m Either seeking best game or with slam interest (continuations page 38).
3m	5+♠ 5+m GF seeking strain not necessarily interested in slam.
3♠	Good ♠ preference.
3NT	No interest (natural from responder, quantitative 4NT).
4♠	Weak ♠ preference.
else	Control bids for responder's minor.
3♥	GF 4♠ 5+♥
3♠	Good ♠ preference.
3NT	No interest.
4m	Cues for ♥
4♥	Bad ♥ preference.
4♠	Bad ♠ preference.
3♠	Normal 6+♠ invitational.
3NT	5♠ game values typically 5332, and if 5332, holding a weak suit (strong suit via 2♣).
4m	Autosplinter (Klinger suggests voidwood but I don't like it).
4♥	Choice of 4M contracts.
4♠	To play, no slam suggestion.
4NT	5♠(332) small slam invitation.

[Structure after 1NT–2R–2M–2NT–3♣]

3♠		0-2OM not 5422.
	4m	4m seeking fit.
	4M	No fit.
	else	Cues for implied fit.
3NT		5M 2OM 4m 2om no slam interest.
	4m	4m seeking fit.
	4M	No fit.
	else	Cues for implied fit.
4m		5M 2OM 4m 2om slam interest.
	4M	Weak no fit.
	4NT	Strong no fit.
	5m	Weak fit.
	else	Strong fit.

Natural bidding follows. Showing minor shortage implies the other minor and opener may cue to imply acceptance and slam interest. A return to 4M is an attempt to play.

Advanced structure after 1NT–2R–2M–2NT–3♦

With slam interest, responder normally shows their minor suit up-the-line, zooming to low-even-high shortage when holding ♦

3♥		4♣
	3♠	Relay, setting ♣
	3NT	4♣ 0-1♦ (low shortage).
	4♣	4♣ 2OM 2♦ (even shortage).
	4♦	4♣ 0-1OM (high shortage).
	3NT	Cue for M.
	4♣	Setting ♣
	4♦	Cue for M.
3♠		4♦ 0-1♣ (low shortage).
	4♦	Setting ♦
	4M	To play.
	else	Cue for M.
3NT		4♦ 2OM 2♣ (even shortage).
	4♦	Setting ♦
	4M	To play.
	else	Cue for M.

[Advanced structure after 1NT-2R-2M-2NT-3◇]

4♣	4◇ 0-1OM (high shortage).
4◇	Setting ◇
4M	To play.
else	Cue for M.
4◇	??
4M	No slam interest.
4OM/5♣/5◇	ERKCB on OM/♣/◇ for M.

4.6 Other sequences

Remaining responses to 1NT

The other responses include a range probe that works also as a one-suited slam investigation tool, a transfer to ♣, transfer splinters and South African Transfers.

2♠	Range probe or strong suit.
2NT/3♣	Minimum/Maximum.
Games	To play.
3X/4♣	One-suited with slam interest. Opener now rebids 3NT/4NT with small doubleton support, and makes a control bid otherwise. These sequences are good for 6322 or 7222 hands with slam interest.
4NT	Second invitation to 6NT.
5NT	Second invitation to 7NT, forcing to 6NT.
2NT	♣ transfer.
3♣	Forced.
P	Weak with ♣
3◇	Both minors 5 ⁺ 4 ⁺ either way GF, natural continuations.
3M	Strength showing.
3M	5 ⁺ ♣ 4M GF.
3NT	No interest.
4♣	Setting ♣
else	Cuebids for the major.
3NT	5♣(332) small slam invitation (now 4◇/♥/♠ natural 5-card suits and 4♣ accepting ♣).
4♣	6♣ 4◇ slam interest (now 4◇ accepts ◇, other bids are control bids for ♣) - note that this sequence is not needed for a ♣ one-suiter as such hands start with 2♠
5NT	5♣(332) grand slam invitation.

[Remaining responses to 1NT]

3♣/3♦/3♥/3♠	Transfer splinters (3-suiters, rarely 5431 or 6m331), bid the suit below the shortage. Responder has denied a 5-card major, and if they hold 6m they are committing to at least 5m unless opener can stop the short suit. Bidding 3♥ to show short ♠ promises 4♥, a six-card minor or willingness to play a 4-3 ♥ fit.
Step 1	Accept the transfer with a working maximum (Ace in the short suit counts, no other honours in the short suit counts).
others	Suggesting potential trump suit and denying a hand suitable for Step 1. A natural scramble or slam auction follows.
3NT	To play.
4♣	5+♠ 5+♥ with slam interest N.B. different from Dan's notes.
4♦	General slam interest.
4M	Preference with no interest.
4◇	5+♠ 5+♥ either game forcing without slam interest, or slam-forcing.
4M	Preference.
4M	To play.
4NT	??

4.7 Slam ideas

- invites with 5m
Transfer to ◇ then 3NT, or transfer to ♣ then 3NT
- invites with 5M
2-level transfer then 4NT = quant
4-level transfer then 4NT = RKC
- quantitative invites
2♠ will get the info you need
2♠-2N/3♣-4NT is invite within context of min or max shown
- invites with 6-carder
With one suiter that wants to start asking, bid 2♠ then new suit is RKC for that suit (wrap around 3NT, which shows xx in that suit, but 4♣ is re-RKC) after RKC, spiral scan for trump queen, side kings, side queens in that order, from high side suit to low side suit. With more mild try, 2♣-2◇-2N-3X-3M, then 4M, or 1N-2R-2M-4M.
- single-suiter with shortage
Transfer then jump-shift in shortage
- with 4432 or 4333 shapes

- 2♣-2♦-2NT and take it from there as charts above
- with 5-4(+) minors
2N-3♣-3♦
- with 4M-5m
Transfer to minor, then bid major at 3-level

4.8 Keri in Competition

After the opponents X the 2♣ puppet, we use XX to suggest playing there, P to show a ♣ stopper and 2♦ to deny a ♣ stopper. NB change from Dan's notes

After an overcall over the 2♣ puppet, opener may double for penalties when they also have tolerance for a weak ♦ hand to rescue, otherwise they should pass. Responder's bids are natural and invitational when below 2NT and natural and game-forcing otherwise (with 2NT an inquiry as without competition). A cuebid of the opponents' suit asks for a stopper. If the 2NT inquiry is available, responder's major-suit bids reveal game-forcing hands with primary ♦ and secondary major suits.

1NT-2D/H-(X)-

Pass = 2-card support (XX = re-transfer)

accept = 3-card

XX = 4-card (bid as if undisturbed)

1NT-2S-(X)-

2NT/3C = normal, plus spade stopper

Pass = denies stopper (XX to bid as if undisturbed)

XX = strong spades

4.9 1NT in competition

- Over two-level natural bids, X is takeout (2NT is scramble by opener) and Transfer Lebensohl is on. At the 3-level, X is takeout and new suits are forcing for one round.
- Over a penalty X, DONT is played (XX is one-suiter, bid is suit and higher). Mark thinks this is wrong and wants to change it.
- Over an artificial X or unanchored 2C, systems are on.
- Over an unanchored 2D or higher, X is cards, else Transfer Lebensohl.
- Over a single-anchored artificial bid, the 2-level cue is a weak takeout, else Transfer Lebensohl.

- Over 2C or 2D showing the majors, Unusual vs Unusual are the cues, and 2NT is both minors.

Chapter 5

Third and Fourth Seat Adjustments

5.1 General

Opening range for suit bids is wider. 1NT and 1♣ are stronger. Major suit openings may be balanced on 4 cards for preemptive effect. All responses are the same as 1/2 seats.

5.2 Opening Bids

1♣	any 17+ HCP hand
1♦	11-16, 4+♥
1♥	11-16, 4+♠ 0-3♥
1♠	11-16, 4+♦ 4+♣ (2♦ invit relay, 2♣ to play)
1NT	13-16 NV, 13(+)-16 V (see strong NT structure)
2♣/2♦	11-16, 6+♣/♦
2♥/2♠	weak 2 (undisciplined 3rd seat, solid 4th seat)
2NT	3rd seat 5-5 minors weak, 4th seat 6+♣ 4+♦ 11-16
3X/4m	Preempt
3NT	Acol 3NT, to play
Games	To play

Particular care should be taken to anticipate an 11-13 balanced hand with a 4-card major. In response to 1♣, 7+ is a positive (1+ AK controls), and 4-6 is a semipositive. Opener's reverse relays start at 5 AK controls. 1♠-2♣ is now to play, since GF relay makes no sense. 2m responses should be different too.

After overcalls, all ranges shift up 2HCP. Light actions are possible with good reason.