



25

BRIDGE CONVENTIONS

YOU

SHOULD KNOW

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Answers

ANSWERS

- 1 a 2♣ You will bid 2NT over a 2♦ response and raise a response of either major to the 3-level to show an invitational hand.
- b 2♣ You will bid 2NT over a 2♦/2♥ response and raise a 2♠ response to the 3-level.
- c 3♠ You have a game-forcing hand with a 5-card major and so do not need Stayman.
- d 2♣ This time you use Stayman in case you have a 4-4 heart fit. You will raise a response of either major to game, and bid 3♠ over 2♦ (forcing and showing five spades and four hearts).
- e 2♠ You have a five-card major and a weak hand, so do not use Stayman. Knowing partner has four hearts will not help you.
- f pass While 2♥ or 2♠ might be a better contract than 1NT if partner has a four-card major, you cannot handle a 2♦ response to Stayman.
- g 2♣ You intend to pass any response.
- h 2♣ You will raise a 2♠ response to 3♠, and over either a 2♦ or 2♥ response you will bid an invitational 2♠ showing your five-card suit.
- i 3NT Never use Stayman with 4-3-3-3 distribution.
- 2 a pass With a flat 15 points, you have no excuse for accepting partner's invitation.
- b pass Partner is inviting, but you have a minimum.
- c pass Partner wants to play 3♣, and he's not promising spades.
- d 4♠ Partner has invitational values with five spades, and your hand has a fourth spade and 16 HCP.
- e 4♥ This is just the same as the situation in (d). Partner has five hearts and is inviting game. You have 16 high, three good hearts and a ruffing value. Go for it!
- f 6NT *4NT isn't Blackwood!* Partner has four hearts, and having failed to find a fit in that suit has invited you to slam in notrump. Your 17 points look great.
- g pass We know, you have a great 17 and you don't like clubs much. So what?
- h 4♠ Partner shows an invitational hand in this sequence. You have a maximum with three good spades. Just do it.



ANSWERS

- 1 dbl You have 15 points and support for all unbid suits.
- 2 1♥ You have a good five-card heart suit so should overcall rather than doubling.
- 3 dbl You are too strong simply to overcall 1♠, so double and then bid spades on the next round.
- 4 dbl You are too strong to overcall 1NT, so double and then bid notrump on the next round.
- 5 pass You must have support for all the unbid suits to make a takeout double. You are not strong enough to bid 1NT, and you have no suit long and strong enough to overcall.
- 6 2♣ Pick your favorite of the three unbid suits. You must not pass partner's takeout double with this type of hand — you don't really think those diamonds are good enough to defend with, do you?
- 7 2♠ You have 10 points so you jump in your best suit.
- 8 1NT You have 10 HCP, no four-card major, and a stopper in the opponents' suit. Perfect!
- 9 4♥ You have enough points for game, and partner has promised you heart support.
- 10 2♦ You have an opening bid, but it's not yet clear what the right game is. Let partner know right away by making a cuebid. If partner bids hearts you will raise, otherwise you can try notrump.
- 11 pass Partner has a minimum, and so have you, despite your four-card spade support.
- 12 2♥ Just enough for a single raise. If partner is at the top of his range, game just might be there.



ANSWERS

- 1**
- a** 2♥ This is a perfect description of your hand.
 - b** pass You cannot open 2♥ with a four-card spade suit on the side.
 - c** 3♠ You cannot open a Weak Two-Bid on a seven-card suit.
 - d** 2♦ Your hand qualifies for a Weak Two-Bid in every respect.
 - e** pass You don't have two of the top three or three of the top five in spades.
 - f** 1♠ Count your points — you are too good to open with a preempt.
- 2**
- a** 4♠ Partner must have the ♠AK and cannot therefore have either of the other missing aces, so there is no hope of slam.
 - b** pass With a singleton spade, despite your good hand, don't be surprised if 2♠ is too high.
 - c** 2NT Partner must have the ♠AK. If he also has a minor-suit king then you will be able to count thirteen tricks and you can bid 7♠. If he does not, then you plan to settle for 6♠, which at worst will require one of the minor-suit finesses to work.
 - d** 3♥ You have too much not to bid game, but 4♥ may be the best contract. See whether partner can support your suit before making a decision.
 - e** 3♠ You expect the hand to belong to the opponents, but this little raise will make life that much tougher for them.
 - f** 4♠ If the red-suit honors are badly placed, you may have no tricks at all on defense! Raise the stakes as high as you dare right away, and let them start bidding at the five-level.



ANSWERS

- 1 a 2♣ You will rebid 2NT to show a balanced hand with 22-23 HCP.
- b 2♣ Although you have only 17HCP, once you add your distributional points you have more than enough; you can just about make game in your own hand. You will be able to investigate slam, but stop in game if partner has nothing useful.
- c 1♦ You have a nice hand, but if partner cannot respond to 1♦, it is unlikely you can make game.
- d 2♣ You will rebid 3NT to show a balanced hand with 24-25 HCP.
- e 1♦ Experience has shown that this works best on unbalanced hands with no strong suit. You are not likely to get passed out in 1♦
- f 1♠ You won't get passed out here, and you'll get to bid both suits.
- 2 a 2♠ You have more than 8 points and a qualifying 5-card suit.
- b 2♦ Much as you would like to, you cannot pass. 2♦ simply tells partner that you don't have a descriptive positive bid to make. Next round you'll use a cheaper minor bid if you can.
- c 2♦ The spades aren't good enough to bid directly (only one top honor), but you'll get plenty of chances to bid them later.
- d 2♦ How can you have a hand this good opposite a 2♣ opener? For now, you await events. Remember, if partner has a heart void, your hand may not be as good as it looks!
- 3 a 3♣ Second negative, telling partner what a terrible hand you have. Support hearts later.
- b 3♣ Stayman. You intend to bid a slam, but right now you don't know whether it will be in hearts, spades, or notrump.
- c 4♠ The picture bid. You have spade support and a poor hand.
- d 3♥ The strongest bid you can make at this stage. Once hearts are agreed, you can explore slowly for the right level to play at.
- e 6NT Partner's 4NT was quantitative, asking you to bid slam with a maximum. You have 22 points, but a good 5-card suit, so accept.
- f 3♠ This was a trick question, since we did not discuss this earlier. Although 2♠ now is forcing to game, a jump below game tells partner that you have a solid suit, and want to play there even if he has a void. All you really need to know on this hand is how many aces partner has: but first tell him which suit is going to be trumps.



ANSWERS

- 1 2♠ You are too weak to bid 2♥. Raising spades is preferable to rebidding your indifferent clubs.
- 2 2♥ You are not interested in game opposite a 1NT response, but this will likely be the best contract. You are too weak for 2♠, and besides, partner cannot have four spades on this auction.
- 3 1♥ Rebidding a second suit at the 1-level does not show extras.
- 4 2♠ This is forcing, so partner cannot pass. You don't intend to play in spades, but this is the best way to describe your hand. When you rebid hearts, partner will know you have a strong hand with 4-6 in the majors.
- 5 2♦ This hand is worth a reverse — just!
- 6 3♣ You are not interested in game if partner has only 16 or 17 points. Your spades are not worth rebidding, and your heart stopper is not good enough for 2NT. Note that even with three diamonds and only two clubs, 3♣ would be the right bid (opener has more clubs than diamonds).
- 7 3NT Your hand is too good to bid only 2NT, which partner can pass. You have solid stoppers in the fourth suit (spades) so jump to what is the most likely game.
- 8 4♣ Time to tell partner about your club support, and if you bid only 3♣, partner could pass. Your ♦Q is a big card too, and slam is not out of the question.
- 9 3♥ It's not clear yet what the right game is. Make a forcing bid and keep describing your hand.
- 10 2♥ Notice the difference between this hand and the one in Question 9, and the way they are bid as a result. With any luck partner will pass this...



ANSWERS

- 1 4NT If partner has two aces you will bid 6♠. If he has only one ace you will sign off in 5♠. It is possible that partner has no aces, so using Blackwood even on this huge hand is not without risk.
- 2 4NT All you really need to know is how many aces partner has. If he has two aces, bid 6♦. If he has all three missing aces, bid the grand slam.
- 3 4NT As with Problem 2, knowing how many aces partner has will tell you how high to bid. No other information is relevant.
- 4 4NT Blackwood will tell you everything you need to know. If partner has an ace, bid 6♠, and if he has two, bid the grand slam.
- 5 4♣ This is the Gerber convention, used opposite a strong notrump opening. If partner shows zero or one ace, sign off in 4♣. If he has two, bid 6♠, and if he has all three missing aces, bid 7♠.
- 6 4♥ Partner might easily have an ace, but if he does then he is very unlikely to have both the king and queen of hearts. Your trump suit is not good enough to look for slam.
- 7 3♥ You will recall that partner's 2♥ response to 2♣ guarantees at least two of the top three honors. As you have the ace, he must have at least ♥KQxxx, and thus all you need to know is whether he also has the missing ♦A. However, if you bid 4NT now, it would show a 28+ HCP balanced hand (see p. 43). So raise hearts now, then use Blackwood at your next turn.
- 8 ?? You cannot use Blackwood here, since the response will not help you. If partner shows an ace, it may be the ♦A or it may be one of the two useful aces: you can never find out. Exactly what you should bid now, we shall discuss in Chapter 14 on control-showing cuebids.
- 9 ?? This is the other type of hand on which players frequently misuse Blackwood. As with Question 8, knowing how many aces partner has doesn't solve your problem, and therefore Blackwood is the wrong tool. Say partner shows one ace: you still do not know whether the opponents have the ♥AK to cash. This problem is another that can be solved using cuebids (see Chapter 14).
- 10 4NT No, this is not Blackwood. Partner has opened 1NT and therefore 4♣ would ask for aces. This is a quantitative notrump raise, inviting partner to bid 6NT with a maximum or pass if he is minimum.



ANSWERS

- 1 dbl You have two four-card majors and more than the necessary 6 points.
- 2 1♠ Double here would promise both majors.
- 3 1♠ This shows more than 6 points and at least five spades.
- 4 dbl You have exactly four spades, more than the necessary 6 points, and both unbid suits.
- 5 pass You have both unbid suits but not enough strength to force partner to bid at the three-level.
- 6 dbl You have two unbid four-card majors. You can show your extra high-card strength on the next round.
- 7 dbl You do have the unbid major, and although you don't have clubs, you have good support for partner's diamonds. If partner bids 3♣, you will retreat to 3♦. This says you have four hearts, but that you were just kidding about clubs.
- 8 2♥ You have an opening bid and a good five-card suit: more than enough to make a forcing bid.
- 9 1NT A minimum notrump rebid: you have a spade stopper, and partner has promised hearts. Don't even think about passing for penalties — your spades are badly placed for defense.
- 10 3♠ This time all your high cards seem to be working well, and you have just discovered a nine-card trump fit (partner must have five spades).
- 11 pass This is how partner shows you five or six hearts with too weak a hand to bid 2♥ directly over the 2♣ overcall.
- 12 2♠ Partner's double showed four spades.



ANSWERS

- 1**
- a** 2♥ You will pass partner's 2♠.
 - b** 2♥ You will pass partner's 2♠. Despite the six-card suit you do not have enough to invite game.
 - c** 2♥ You will bid 2NT over partner's 2♠. You want to invite game and show your five-card spade suit. Opener will now choose the final contract — either 2NT, 3NT, 3♠ or 4♠.
 - d** 2♥ You will bid 3♥ over partner's 2♠. This tells partner that you have five or more spades along with five hearts and enough values for game.
 - e** 2♥ You will bid 3NT over partner's 2♠. This tells opener to choose between 3NT (if he has only two spades) and 4♠.
 - f** 2♣ Remember that you use Stayman with 5-4 in the majors and 8+ points.
 - g** 2♥ You will bid 3♠ over partner's 2♠. This invites opener to bid 4♠ with a maximum 1NT. With a minimum he will pass 3♠.
 - h** 4♥ You are not interested in slam, but you have enough for game and you want spades to be trumps. You will pass when partner completes the transfer with a 4♠ bid.
 - i** 2♥ You will pass partner's 2♠. Remember that to use Stayman on a weak hand you must be able to deal with any of the three possible responses. If partner responds 2♦ to Stayman here you will not then be able to bid 2♠ as that shows an invitational hand.
 - j** 3♠ This tells partner you have a good spade suit and interest in slam. Note that you should not transfer at the four-level and then use Blackwood because you have two losing diamonds; even if you have only have one ace missing the opponents may still be able to take the first two tricks.
- 2**
- a** 3♠ With a minimum hand, you are declining the game invitation. However, with three-card support you should convert to partner's suit.
 - b** 4♣ Partner has a strong hand with black suits; your first duty is to raise clubs with four of them. Later you can support spades too.
 - c** pass With only a doubleton heart, you should choose to play the hand in notrump.
 - d** 4♠ Convert to spades with three-card support.



ANSWERS

- 1 2NT You have enough points to insist on game as well as four-card spade support. Be aware, however, that having made this bid you are completely minimum.
- 2 2NT This time you have lots of extra values, but the best way to start is with 2NT and see whether partner can tell you anything useful. For example, if partner bids 3♦ next (showing a singleton or void in diamonds) then you will be well on your way to bidding a grand slam.
- 3 2♣ You used to bid 2NT on this type of hand, but you can no longer do so. Bid 2♣ intending to bid 3NT next round.
- 4 2♣ There is a conventional alternative here, if you and your partner wish to play it. You can use 3NT to show exactly this hand: three-card spade support, values for game, 4-3-3-3 shape, and no real slam interest.
- 5 3♣ Yes, you have game values and four-card spade support, but that doesn't mean you should always bid 2NT if there is a more descriptive bid available. On the assumption that you play jump shifts as strong, we suggest 3♣ here. If you play weak jump shifts, you should start with 2♣ on this hand. There will be plenty of time to support spades later.
- 6 3♠ Balanced, extra values, and good trumps. Perfect!
- 7 3♥ This says nothing about your hand other than telling partner you have at most a singleton heart. You can tell him you are minimum later by failing to co-operate with any slam tries he makes.
- 8 4♠ You are not really sorry you opened this hand, especially now you've found a spade fit. However, it's not really suitable for slam unless partner has a super hand. Tell him you are minimum and balanced by jumping to game immediately, and leave any further moves to him.
- 9 3NT You have extra values, but you are balanced, and it is important that partner knows you have bad trumps. Even though you may have plenty of high card points, you certainly don't want to reach 6♠ if partner's trumps are ♠Q542 or even ♠K542.
- 10 4♦ Anything from 4♠ to 7♦ or 7♠ are possible contracts, so tell partner you have a good two-suited hand and leave him to judge how well the hands fit together.



ANSWERS

- 1 4♦ This hand is a minimum for a splinter in terms of both points and distribution, but 4♦ is clearly the most descriptive bid you can make.
- 2 3♠ You shouldn't be much better than this for a splinter — a 15-count including distribution.
- 3 3♣ Assuming that you play strong jump shifts, this is the right way to start describing this hand. If you play weak jump shifts, then start with 2♣. You are too strong for a splinter bid of 3♠, while Jacoby 2NT (if you play it) doesn't let partner in on the news that you have a source of tricks in clubs.
- 4 2NT This time, start with a Jacoby forcing raise. This hand is too strong for a splinter (showing 13-15 points) whereas Jacoby 2NT is unlimited. Besides, if partner shows a singleton club you will be off to the races, but opposite a singleton spade you will tread more warily.
- 5 4♦ Although you have only 9 HCP, this hand is plenty good enough for a splinter. You could reach a good slam if partner has as little as ♠K4 ♥K9764 ♦J632 ♣A2 (11 HCP to go with your 9!).
- 6 4♣ Once you add your distributional points to your HCP your hand is quite strong enough to insist on game facing even a minimum response. Rather than just bidding 4♠, let partner know about your club shortness in case that is just the information he needs to bid a slam.
- 7 3♠ This is not a weak bid, but you are not quite good enough to bid game facing a 6-7 count.
- 8 3♦ Your hand looks strong enough to bid 4♣, but there is no guarantee that partner has more than four spades and thus you cannot afford to bypass 3NT. Don't splinter as opener without at least four-card support.
- 9 2♥ Bidding 4♣ does not do justice to this monster — it's too good! Start with 2♥ (a reverse and thus forcing — see Chapter 5). You always intend to play in spades, but there is no rush to get the bidding to the four-level on this hand.
- 10 4♠ The jump raise to game carries the information that you have a strong hand with four-card spade support but no shortness.



ANSWERS

- 1 2♣ Raise now, as you may not get another chance.
- 2 2♦ Tell partner you have a decent hand with spade support. If partner can only rebid 2♣, then you will pass.
- 3 2♦ You know you are going to bid at least 4♣, but bid 2♦ for now and see whether partner is better than minimum.
- 4 3♣ You have a bad hand but a nice fit for partner's spades. Bid as much as you dare (perhaps even 4♣ not vulnerable against vulnerable opponents). The objective is to try to stop LHO bidding hearts, where they almost certainly have a good fit.
- 5 3♦ Start by telling partner that you have a nice hand with spade support. You are going to raise to game even if partner shows a minimum by rebidding 3♣, and if he does more than that then a slam is quite possible.
- 6 2♥ You could bid 3♦ to show spade support, but there is no rush. Start by showing your hearts. 2♥ is forcing, just as it would be if RHO had passed. There will be plenty of time to support spades later. Always try to choose the sequence that provides partner with the maximum amount of information.
- 7 2♣ You are not proud of your overcall. Better tell partner that you have a minimum.
- 8 4♣ Even if partner has a minimum cuebid (about 11-12 points and three-card support) you want to play in game.
- 9 3♣ You have a minimum opening. What bidding 3♣ now says to partner is 'If the auction had gone 1♣-3♣ I would have passed'.
- 10 4NT As partner has enough for a limit raise, you expect to make lots of tricks. Just check how many aces (if any) are missing, then bid 5♣, 6♣ or 7♣.



ANSWERS

- 1 1NT If the 1♦ opening bid were on your right, and you had the ♠K instead of one of the small spades, you would overcall 1NT and consider that a minimum. In balancing seat, bid 1NT with this hand — again, a minimum.
- 2 1♥ You wouldn't overcall 1♥ with a poor hand and such a weak suit if the 1♦ opening were on your right, but in the balancing seat it is clear to do so. Pretend one of your small clubs is the king, and now you would have a normal direct-seat overcall.
- 3 dbl Mentally give yourself the ♠K and you can see that you would have a normal takeout double of a 1♦ opening on your right.
- 4 dbl Why not 1NT, you might think? Even though you have a good hand, you must still mentally add a king for being in the passout seat. Having done so, you have a 20-count! With that much in direct seat you would have to double first, intending to bid notrump next, and you should follow the same plan with this hand in the passout seat. Remember that in balancing seat you can bid 1NT with 12 points, so you cannot make the same bid with 17 HCP; you must differentiate between these hands.
- 5 1NT You have a good hand, but pretend the ♦A is the jack and it does not look quite as strong. Partner has already overbid by three points, so 1NT is plenty. In other words, as partner is expected to overbid in balancing seat, you must underbid to compensate.
- 6 2♣ If partner had doubled in direct seat, you would have jumped to 3♣, but opposite a balancing double you need a much better hand to take such action. This one is not close to good enough.
- 7 2♠ This hand is worth a jump, but only to 2♠. Opposite a direct-seat double you would jump to 3♠, but as you realize by now, you have to underbid by a king in a balancing auction.
- 8 1♥ If partner had made a direct-seat takeout double you might have considered bidding 1NT. After the balancing double you have a much weaker hand than partner is expecting and 1NT would be a significant overbid (it suggests 11-13 points and you have only 7). Just bid your best suit and hope it all works out. You didn't even think about passing for penalties with this garbage, did you?
- 9 2♠ With 10 points and a nice fit for partner's suit, you would have been more enthusiastic opposite a direct-seat overcall, but this is facing a balancing bid. You may be too high already.
- 10 1NT You have a nice hand, but it is not certain that your side has even half of the points and with no fit you should be very wary.



ANSWERS

- 1 pass You do not have a good enough hand to make a game try.
- 2 3♦ You will not make 4♠ if partner has three small diamonds, but game should be a good bet if he has some help in the suit.
- 3 4♠ You could bid 3♦ to ask for help in diamonds, but this hand is so good you really should insist on game.
- 4 4♠ You could ask for help in diamonds or clubs, and if you were a little weaker you would have to guess which to choose. However, with this hand you are just about good enough to bid game and hope partner has some useful bits and pieces.
- 5 3♣ You could bid 3♥, but you might easily make game even if partner has no help there. The club suit is the place you could really use assistance.
- 6 3♦ If partner has help in diamonds, you want to play in game. If not, then 3♠ is probably high enough.
- 7 4♠ A fourth trump and a singleton heart. Even with only 5 HCP this is a very good hand and partner should make at least ten tricks. Hope you don't have too much!
- 8 pass Partner is *not* inviting you to raise, despite your maximum. He has made his 3♠ bid purely to make it difficult for the opponents in case they can make something.
- 9 3♥ We didn't mention this in the chapter, but there is one thing you're allowed to do other than bidding 3♠ or 4♠. Bidding 3♥ here says 'I don't have the club help you want, but I do have a good hand and some goodies in hearts'. Partner may be able to bid a reasonable game now on

♠ AKQ63 ♥ Q6 ♦ K5 ♣ K932

 Notice that you can only do this in a new suit below the level of three of the agreed major.
- 10 3♠ Even though you are maximum for your 2♠ bid, you have no help in hearts.



ANSWERS

- 1 4♠ You are not interested in a slam if all partner can do is invite game, so simply raise to 4♠
- 2 4♣ Start cuebidding with your lowest first-round control. Do not be tempted to bid 3♠ just because you have a nice suit — that's not what 3♠ tells partner.
- 3 4♥ Cuebid your first-round control, not your diamond length
- 4 3♥ Ostensibly, bidding 3♥ shows a stopper for notrump purposes. However, when you later bid more clubs, partner will know that 3♥ was a cuebid.
- 5 pass Partner has denied holding a red-suit ace. Why risk the five-level when you already know there are two top losers?
- 6 4NT Blackwood! We have said that you should not use Blackwood when you have a void, but in this case you already *know* that partner has the ace of hearts and does not have the ace of diamonds. If he responds 5♦, you will know the opponents have two aces to take and sign off in 5♠. If he shows two aces, then you can confidently bid 6♠.
- 7 4♥ Partner has spade support and at most a singleton diamond (see Chapter 10). This suggests that he will have honors in the other three suits, all of which will fit nicely opposite your ♥Ax and ♣Qx.
- 8 4♥ With such a minimum opening, you cannot proceed beyond the safety of game despite having an ace. Note that you know partner does not have the ♠A, so there is at least one loser there, and the five-level might easily be too high.
- 9 5♣ Now that partner has continued past game, you can cuebid your club ace. It sounds as though that may be all partner needs to hear to bid a slam.
- 10 5♦ You don't have a very good hand, but opposite partner's strong bidding you could be much worse. You have already denied first-round diamond control by bidding 4♠, so it's safe to cuebid your singleton now.



ANSWERS

- 1 5NT It is just about possible for partner to have a 3♠ rebid without both the ace and king of spades, so bid 5NT just to make sure. You rate to have about sixteen tricks to cash on this hand.
- 2 5NT Once partner shows the ♦A by cuebidding (4♦ — see Chapter 14) all you need to know before bidding the grand slam is that the trumps are solid. Bid 5NT and partner will bid 7♥ if he has both the king and the queen of hearts.
- 3 7♠ Great, partner has both missing aces. All you need to do now is to check that he has the ♠Q. Ah... but you cannot bid GSF after you use Blackwood, since 5NT now would ask for kings, which doesn't help you; you'll just have to shoot 7♠ and hope for the best. See Chapter 20 on Roman Key Card Blackwood for a more sophisticated version of Blackwood which solves this problem.
- 4 5NT The jump to 5NT agrees partner's diamonds. If he has ♦AQxxxx you want to play in a grand slam.
- 5 6♠ Partner will be disappointed but that's better than playing in 7♠ missing the ace of trumps!
- 6 7♦ Partner's jump to 5NT agreed diamonds. You don't need to worry about anything else — just answer the question about your top trumps. Partner must have some kind of freak like



ANSWERS

- 1 2♦ This shows both majors. As you have the very strong hand type, you intend to bid again even if partner only gives you a simple major-suit preference.
- 2 2♥ Ideal. A very good hand with five spades and a five-card minor.
- 3 2NT Whether you bid on this hand will depend on the vulnerability. Despite only having 8 HCP, your excellent shape gives you good playing strength if partner can fit either or both of your suits. We recommend that you bid 2NT with this hand, but if you're vulnerable against not, discretion should probably persuade you to pass.
- 4 1♠ You don't have both majors and you don't have the two lowest unbid suits, so you cannot show this two-suited hand with one bid. Overcall 1♠ for now. Perhaps you will have a chance to bid your clubs later.
- 5 3♠ If partner has a strong hand you expect to make game. If he is weak, then perhaps the opponents can make game. Either way, a jump will get across the message that you have a good fit for one of partner's suits and some values.
- 6 4♠ Because of the fit for both of partner's suits, you expect to make this contract if he is strong. If he is weak then you know the opponents can make game and this will be a profitable sacrifice. By bidding confidently you hope the opponents will allow you to steal the hand in 4♠ even when partner is weak.
- 7 2NT You don't like spades at all, and expect partner's second suit to be clubs. It cannot hurt to bid 2NT to find out, though. On a good day partner will bid diamonds next.
- 8 4♦ We saw in Chapter 15 that a bid of the opponents' suit at a high level can be used to show a control and suggest slam interest. This cuebid, however, simply asks partner to tell you which major he prefers and shows enough values for game. Neat, huh?
- 9 3NT This may not make if partner is very weak, but if you are going to make game it's likely to be in notrump. If you don't bid notrump, no one else will, and if partner is 6-6 in the majors, he'll bid again.
- 10 2♥ You don't like either of partner's suits and you expect to go minus. The objective is to escape undoubled on what is clearly a misfit. Bid a confident 2♥ and hope partner doesn't raise. One thing is certain, and that is that passing now will give LHO an easy double as he is already known to have diamonds.



ANSWERS

- 1 2♣ Perfect. Almost enough to double 1NT, but not quite, and 5-4 in the majors.
- 2 2♣ This is a perfect hand for Landy, because you have 5-5 in the two suits you are showing. Even vulnerable against non-vulnerable opponents, you should overcall with this hand and accept if partner invites game.
- 3 dbl You are too strong just to overcall. If you bid 2♣ and partner gives preference to a major at the two-level, you will be tempted to raise because you have extra values. If partner is broke this will be a disaster, while you can beat 1NT with very little assistance from partner.
- 4 2♠ Not 2♣ this time. Even though you have both majors, it will seldom be better to play in hearts when your spades are so much stronger.
- 5 pass You are only 4-4 in the majors. While it is tempting to bid, do not mislead partner.
- 6 2♠ Partner will have at least four spades, and often five. Do not be tempted to pass just because you are so weak. Remember that partner may have no clubs at all.
- 7 3♠ Jumping all the way to game will get you too high if partner has tried to compete for the partscore on a minimum hand. Invite with 3♠ and let partner out if he has stretched to overcall in the first place.
- 8 3♣ This time you can insist on game, but which one? Bidding 3♣ asks partner to tell you which is his better major. When you find out, you can raise to game.
- 9 4♠ On a good day, this may even make! The opponents have enough values to make at least a partscore and may even be cold for game. Make life hard for the opponents by preempting with such a good fit.
- 10 3NT You have a good hand, but it isn't going to fit well so don't be surprised if this doesn't make. You will probably need the clubs to run, and that's something you won't find out about until you see dummy.



ANSWERS

- 1 2NT You intend to pass partner's 3♣.
- 2 2NT You intend to invite game by bidding 3♠ over partner's 3♣.
- 3 3♥ You want to reach game and even a slam is not impossible. You start by showing game values and four spades but denying a heart stopper. If partner bids 3NT you can bid 4♦ (which shows slam interest) as you expect 4NT or 5♦ will be safe havens.
- 4 3NT This is the hardest one for new Lebensohl players to understand, but when you bid 3NT immediately, partner knows that you do *not* have a heart stopper. As you also do not have four spades, you almost certainly have support for both minors (or a strong minor suit of your own). If partner has no heart stopper either, he will bid his better minor suit and you will reach a minor-suit game, which is very likely to make.
- 5 2NT You must be careful not to bid 3NT without thinking. Yes, you almost certainly want to play in 3NT, but if you bid it without first bidding 2NT to show a heart stopper, then partner will remove it when he has no heart stopper. Of course, you will bid 3NT over opener's forced 3♣.
- 6 3♥ This promises four spades and tells partner that you have nothing in hearts. Perfect!
- 7 2NT Over partner's forced 3♣, you plan on bidding 3♥. Now partner will know that you have both four spades and a heart stopper and he will choose the right game.
- 8 dbl This is a penalty double. If RHO had passed, then you would have invited game by bidding 2NT. Now you can go for an even bigger score defending 2♥ doubled. Partner will have at least two hearts and you will collect a juicy penalty even when you cannot make game.
- 9 4♣ Partner doesn't have a heart stopper, so clearly 3NT is not the right contract. He also doesn't have four spades (he would have bid 3♥, not 3NT). Fortunately, you have a nice club suit, for which partner is virtually sure to have decent support.
- 10 3♥ Partner has no diamond stopper, so 3NT is unlikely to be the right place to play. However, partner has at least one four-card major, so you know you have an eight-card fit somewhere.



ANSWERS

- 1 2♠ You have a fairly poor hand with spade support; make your normal bid.
- 2 2♣ Drury. You are maximum with three-card spade support. Perfect.
- 3 2♣ Drury. Even better — now you have an excellent hand. If partner shows a sound opening bid you intend to go to game and may even show some slam interest.
- 4 3♠ This is a preemptive raise. Partner will know you have a poor hand with good spade support. Not vulnerable against vulnerable, you might well bid 4♠ with this hand.
- 5 1NT Of course, you cannot even consider bidding 2♣ on this hand since it shows support for spades. Not that that's any great loss, since venturing to the two-level with a poor hand and no fit for partner is seldom a good idea anyway.
- 6 2♠ Sometimes, in third seat, you can open a strong four-card major suit, as in this example. Here, you have a sub-minimum opening bid, so just rebid your spades over Drury. Partner will almost certainly pass 2♠ and, as he will have at least three-card (and often four-card) support, this will be a sensible contract.
- 7 2♥ This confirms that you have a sound opening bid. With a weak hand you always rebid your major.
- 8 2♠ This shows a normal reverse (i.e. a strong hand with at least five hearts and at least four spades). This is easy to remember — with a weak hand you never go beyond two of the major for which partner has shown support. With this hand you are too good to bid a simple 4♥ over a Drury 2♣ as you might easily have a slam even opposite a passed partner.
- 9 4♠ Partner has shown a sound opening bid; opposite that, you can re-evaluate your hand to an opening bid in support of spades, so raise to game.
- 10 4♥ Partner's 2♥ bid shows a full opening bid. Your 2♣ bid told partner that you had three spades, so now show that you have four hearts and a super-maximum for your initial pass. If you have a choice, it is usually better to play in a 4-4 major-suit fit rather than a 5-3, since the five-card suit can often be used for discards.



ANSWERS

- 1 5♠ You have two key cards (♠A and ♥K) plus the queen of trumps.
- 2 5♣ You have four key cards. 5♣ = 1 or 4.
- 3 5♣ You have one key card (♥K). 5♣ = 1 or 4.
- 4 5♥ You do not have the queen of trumps (hearts) so you make the lowest available bid in the agreed suit.
- 5 6♥ You have the queen of trumps but no outside king, so you jump in the agreed suit.
- 6 6♣ You have the queen of trumps and an outside king. Cuebidding your (lowest) king also shows the ♥Q.
- 7 pass 5♥ was a sign off. 5♠ would have asked for the trump queen.
- 8 5NT You have the queen of trumps and an outside king. However, cuebidding your ♠K would take you past 6♥. Bidding 5NT show the ♥Q as well as a king too high-ranking to cuebid.



ANSWERS

- 1 2♥ It seems likely that 3NT will be the best contract if partner has a heart stopper. If he does not, then you will have to look for an alternative spot. FSF should uncover this information.
- 2 3♦ You have no way to guess the right final contract. Consult partner by using FSF.
- 3 2♥ This time, you have a heart stopper, but it is far from clear that 3NT is the best spot. Indeed, even 7♣ could be cold, but you would rather not commit to bypassing the notrump game yet. You cannot bid 3♣ now as that would be non-forcing and you certainly want to make sure of reaching game. Use FSF now and you should be able to make a forcing 3♣ bid next time.
- 4 4NT Yes, you can get very technical here and start a delicate sequence with 2♥ (FSF) but why bother? Especially if you're playing the Roman Key Card version, Blackwood is going to give you all the information you need to decide whether to play 6♠ or 7♠. Remember that if no suit has been explicitly agreed, a jump to 4NT sets the last-bid suit as trumps — in this case, spades.
- 5 2♦ You could jump to 3NT, and that may well be the final contract, but you should use FSF first in case partner has three-card spade support.
- 6 3NT You could bid 3♣ FSF, but why do that? What would you hope to achieve? You already know that you want to play in game, you have no fit, and you have no worries about the unbid suit.
- 7 2♠ 'I have the values for game but need help in spades...' — the perfect message to send!
- 8 4♥ You have already found your eight-card (or better) major-suit fit, so why bother with FSF? Show both the values for game and the heart fit now and leave any further move to partner.
- 9 2♥ Similar to the previous hand in that you know which suit you want to be trumps (spades in this case), but this time you are too strong to make a limited bid. You need to conserve space on this hand. Start with 2♥ intending to set spades as trumps on the next round, and leaving lots of room to explore the right level.
- 10 3♣ A strong two-suiter in hearts and clubs. Perfect!



ANSWERS

- 1 2♦ You have invitational (or better) values but you cannot yet tell which is the best game. Ask partner to tell you more about his hand.
- 2 3♠ This time you can describe your hand by making an invitational jump rebid of your own suit. If you use NMF and partner rebids 2NT to show a minimum without three spades, you can no longer stop in 3♠ as that would now be a forcing bid. You will only have two choices, both poor — pass 2NT or force to game.
- 3 2♣ 3NT, 4♥ and 4♠ are all possible contracts at this point. You need more information. By using NMF you will find out whether partner has a fit with your second suit — he will bid hearts if he has four of them. If he does not, he will support spades if he has three of those. Whatever partner does next, you will be well placed to select the correct game contract.
- 4 3NT Where else are you going on this hand? Partner cannot have four spades as he did not bid 1♠ at his second turn. You do not really care whether or not he has three hearts, nor does it matter whether he is minimum or maximum. Bidding NMF on this hand will just give free information about partner's hand to the defenders.
- 5 2♦ You want to find out whether partner has three-card spade support and whether he is maximum or minimum. As there are two unbid minors, choose the one in which you have more strength.
- 6 3♦ You do not want to pass 1NT, but you cannot bid 2♦ as that would be NMF. Jumping to 3♦ tells partner to pass. This should be at least as good a spot as 1NT and will frequently be much better.
- 7 3♥ Your first priority is to show four hearts. Since you have a maximum for your 12-14 point 1NT rebid, you must also jump.
- 8 2♠ You do not have four hearts to show, but you do have three-card support for partner's spades. With a minimum opening bid, you therefore support spades at the cheapest available level.
- 9 2♦ You have no unbid major to show, and you do not have support for partner's suit. You also have a minimum opening bid. You would bid 2NT if you had stoppers in both unbid suits (spades and clubs) but with no club stopper you simply rebid your suit.
- 10 2♠ The same type of hand as in Question 9 but this time a maximum. With stoppers in both black suits, you would jump to 3NT, but lacking a club stopper you show all of the features of your hand by bidding your spade stopper now. Note that 2♠ cannot show a four-card suit as you did not bid 1♠ over partner's 1♥ response.



ANSWERS

- 1 3♦ You have a minimum in terms of high cards, but your suit quality is good. 3♦ = a minimum hand, good suit.
- 2 3♥ You have a maximum hand in terms of points, but your suit quality is poor. 3♥ = a maximum hand, poor suit.
- 3 3NT Partner has shown a minimum with a good suit. He must have at least ♠KQxxxx but he cannot have as much as a king outside his suit. Assuming you can run six tricks in spades, you can count nine tricks. There is a great danger that you will be able to make only the same nine tricks in 4♠. Look at this hand opposite the hand for Problem 1, for example.
- 4 4♠ Partner has a maximum, but as his suit is poor it is unlikely that slam will be a good prospect even with so many HCP.



ANSWERS

- 1 dbl You want to compete, so ask partner to choose a major.
- 2 pass You are not quite strong enough to force partner to bid at the three-level.
- 3 2♥ Partner will have at least three card support for both majors so 2♥ will be at least an eight-card fit. Even if he has four cards in each major, 2♥ will be a better contract than 2♠, but if you double, partner might well choose spades. Don't ask him to choose when you have a strong preference.
- 4 2♠ You don't have very much, but since partner is likely to have four spades and short hearts you do not want to sell out to 2♥.
- 5 3♠ Good enough to invite game.
- 6 dbl This asks partner to choose a minor, but when you remove his choice to 3♥ he will know that you just want to compete and do not want him to raise unless he has significant extra values.
- 7 3♥ Invitational.
- 8 2♠ You have three-card support for partner's overcall and a weak hand. Why not tell him exactly that?
- 9 dbl You might well want to bid a game, but even if you do, you don't yet know which one. See what partner says after your responsive double.
- 10 3♥ You have an excellent hand for your overcall and four-card support for the heart suit partner has promised. Because you have three diamonds (and the opponents have at least eight) you know partner has at most two and perhaps a singleton. The hands should fit well and although you may not have the high-card requirements for game, you would expect it to make most of the time.



ANSWERS

- 1 db1 This specifically asks partner to lead dummy's first bid suit — hearts. Even a heart lead will not always beat the contract, but you can be fairly sure that no other lead will and it is worth the risk.
- 2 db1 Partner probably will not lead his broken heart suit unless you tell him to do so. 3NT may still make even on a heart lead, but it will almost certainly do so on any other lead.
- 3 db1 The opponents are ready for a spade lead, and looking at your hand you can see why. You want a heart lead, to score your ruff, but partner is sure to lead a spade unless you tell him *not* to do so.
- 4 db1 You must make sure that partner leads a spade. Yes, he might lead one anyway, but if he has a singleton spade and something like ♣Q10xxxx in clubs he is likely to lead a club if you do not double.
- 5 db1 You do not care what partner leads. 6♠ is going down and you have enough bits and pieces outside not to fear that opponents will run to 6NT and make that.
- 6 ♦9 Partner wants a ruff, and looking at your hand you can be fairly sure that it is diamonds in which he is void. Lead the highest diamond as a suit-preference signal so that he will know to return a heart rather than a club to put you back in to get a second ruff.
- 7 ♦5 Partner has doubled to make sure you lead his suit. Even the nice heart suit should not dissuade you from doing so. Note that if partner had not doubled, you would have preferred a heart lead rather than a singleton in his minor.
- 8 ♦9 Without partner's lead-directing double of 5♦ you would have led a club, but there is no reason to ignore partner's suggestion.
- 9 ♣9 Without partner's lead-directing double of 2♣ you would probably have led a diamond. If partner thinks a club lead is best, you certainly have no reason to argue with that.
- 10 ♣5 Without partner's double you would have chosen between the safe ♥J and the attacking singleton diamond. Since dummy has not bid a suit, partner's double asks you to lead declarer's second suit — remember, the Lightner Double calls for an *unusual* lead. Partner will surely ruff the club lead, and you will still come to your ♣K later.

