



# Bidding Basics

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## Opener's rebid after 1♠ – 1NT

This month, we examine opener's rebid after the start 1♠–1NT.

Note: If playing "standard," the 1NT response would show 6–10 HCP. In this series, we are assuming the more modern 2/1 game-forcing approach. This means that the 1NT response shows 6–12. It denies four-card spade support.

Is the 1NT response with 6–12 points forcing? Some 2/1 players insist so. For simplicity (and this series), we are going to treat it as semi-forcing. Opener can pass with a balanced minimum. This makes for a simple, natural approach by opener as below. (Note: "Semi-forcing" is the most confusing term in bridge lexicon, but that is what this approach is called. Don't ask.)

Opener's choices:

**Pass:** Shows a flat minimum (5–3–3–2) and, unless the opponents balance, 1NT will become the final contract. Examples:

♠A Q 10 4 2 ♥K 3 ♦J 8 7 ♣Q 3 2  
♠J 10 7 6 2 ♥A Q 2 ♦K Q ♣8 3 2

Note: If playing 1NT as 100% forcing, then, of course, opener has to bid again (2♣ on each hand above). For those worried that responder might have a three-card limit raise, don't worry. In many cases, 1NT will usually make, but 3♠ might go down.

**2♣:** Five or more spades and four or more clubs. This has a wide range, but is not forcing. Could be a dead minimum, but also could be quite a decent hand, up to about 17–18 points counting useful distribution. Can declarer

have six spades and four clubs? Yes, but with a non-minimum hand. With a minimum hand and six decent spades, it is probably better to ignore the clubs and repeat the spade suit instead.

Examples of 1♠–1NT; 2♣:

♠A Q 8 5 4 ♥2 ♦K Q 2 ♣Q 10 7 6  
♠A K 7 6 5 ♥A K ♦2 ♣J 8 7 6 5

Note: If playing 1NT as 100% forcing, then 2♣ doesn't promise four clubs.

**2♦:** Same as 2♣, but with diamonds as the second suit.

**2♥:** Four or more hearts and a fairly wide range. Could be a dead minimum, but could also have just short of a game-forcing 3♥ bid (see below). Even with six spades and four hearts, it is a good idea to mention the hearts on round two. Examples:

♠A Q 8 7 6 ♥K J 5 4 ♦Q 2 ♣A 3  
♠A 10 8 7 6 2 ♥A J 5 4 ♦A 2 ♣2

**2♠:** Minimum hand with six or more spades (and usually no other four-card suits, almost surely not four hearts):

♠Q 10 7 6 5 2 ♥5 ♦A Q 2 ♣K 3 2  
♠A K 10 8 7 6 2 ♥K 2 ♦J 3 2 ♣2

**2NT:** 18–19 balanced and says nothing about stoppers. If you had a balanced 15–17, you would have opened 1NT, so this is how you show 18–19. It is not forcing, as responder can pass with a dead minimum. Examples:

♠A Q J 3 2 ♥K Q 4 ♦K J 3 ♣Q 4  
♠K Q J 3 2 ♥K 3 ♦9 8 2 ♣A K Q

**3♣:** A jump shift. Strong (game-

forcing) and natural. Opener will be unbalanced with five-plus spades and at least four clubs. Examples:

♠A K J 6 5 ♥A 10 8 ♦— ♣A Q 10 6 3  
♠A K J 6 5 4 ♥J ♦K 2 ♣A K J 6

**3♦:** Same as 3♣, but with diamonds as the second suit.

**3♥:** Four or more hearts and game forcing. Examples:

♠A K J 8 7 ♥A K Q 3 2 ♦Q 3 2 ♣—  
♠K Q J 7 6 ♥A K 4 3 ♦A K 2 ♣2

Note: Don't make the mistake of jump shifting with a nice 16-count.

**3♠:** Six or more spades and a medium (invitational) hand. Examples:

♠K Q J 9 8 7 ♥A 2 ♦A Q 2 ♣J 2  
♠A Q 10 8 7 6 5 ♥K 2 ♦A J 9 ♣2

**3NT:** Because a 2NT rebid shows 18–19, and a 2NT opener shows 20–21, this bid isn't needed for a balanced hand. Therefore, it is defined as a very good trick-taking hand (long spades), something like:

♠A K Q 10 8 6 2 ♥Q 5 ♦A J ♣K 2.

(In practice, it means something like 19 balanced and a failure to trust that partner would know that 2NT shows such a hand!)

**4♣/4♦/4♥:** Don't make such a bid. 3♣, 3♦ and 3♥ are available for strong, game-forcing hands.

**4♠:** Lots of spades and a very good trick-taking hand, something like:

♠A K J 6 5 4 3 2 ♥J 2 ♦A 10 2 ♣—.

*Bidding Basics Quiz* ➤

## BIDDING BASICS QUIZ

What is your rebid after 1♠-1NT  
with:

1. ♠KQ10876 ♥AQ2 ♦AJ10 ♣2
2. ♠K65432 ♥AKJ7 ♦A2 ♣2
3. ♠KQJ76 ♥K2 ♦QJ2 ♣J87
4. ♠AK542 ♥AJ ♦32 ♣Q1092
5. ♠J108765 ♥AQJ ♦A32 ♣2
6. ♠Q10876 ♥2 ♦AJ65 ♣A107
7. ♠AQ1087654 ♥AQ7 ♦K2 ♣—
8. ♠AQJ76 ♥AKQ76 ♦— ♣Q108

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### Answers

1. 3♠. Six or more spades, invitation-  
al/medium strength.
2. 2♥. Five-plus spades, four or more  
hearts. Wide range, but not forcing.
3. Pass. (But 2♣ if you play 1NT is  
100% forcing.)
4. 2♣. Five-plus spades, four or more  
clubs. Wide range, but not forcing.
5. 2♠. Six-plus spades, minimum.
6. 2♦. A minimum, but show the  
second suit.
7. 4♠. Too much playing strength for  
just 3♠ (which would be invita-  
tional).
8. 3♥. Natural, game-forcing jump  
shift (five-plus spades, four-plus  
hearts).