

The Varied Meanings of “No-Trump” Bids

There are only 38 different bids in the game of Bridge: - 35 numerical, denominational bids from “1C” through “7-No-Trump,” “Pass,” “Double,” and “Re-Double.” All of them have numerous, and significantly different meaning dependent upon the actual sequence of the bidding process in which they become a part, the position at the bridge table of the players who are using them, and the possible presence of any conventions which might be employed by the individual partnerships involved. These factors must all be considered in order for the true meaning of these bids to be fully understood. The various bids described in this presentation represent most of the standard No-Trump bids available. Some of these meanings described herein, however, would be negated, or modified with the introduction of any of the many specialized conventional bids used today such as those seen within the “Two-Over-One Game Forcing” bidding system, the “Jacoby 2-No-Trump” convention, and the “Multi-Purpose 2-No-Trump” Convention, to name just a few. These special No-Trump conventional bids will be excluded from presentation within this document.

The Varied Meanings of “1-No-Trump”

- A. An Opening Bid of 1-NT in Any Position: = 15-17 HCP’s (American Standard), 12-14 HCP’s (ACOL), balanced with no singletons, or voids, and not more than one doubleton
- B. An Overcall of 1-NT:
 - 1. In the Direct (2nd) Seat: = 15-17 HCP’s, balanced with at least one stopper in Opponent’s bid suit
 - 2. In the Balancing (4th) Seat: = 10-14 HCP’s, balanced (Stopper not mandatory)
 - 3. Following 2-Suits Bid by the Opponents: = “Sandwich NT” = 5-5 in the two un-bid suits with less than opening values
 - 4. As a Re-Bid by a “Doubler” Following Partner’s response to his/her Take-Out Double: 18 (+) HCP’s (Stronger than a 1-NT Overcall) and Invitational to Game
- C. A Responder’s Bid of 1-NT:
 - 1. Following a Major *or* a Minor One-of-a-suit Opening by Partner: = 6-10 HCP’s without support for Opener & absence of a 4-card suit higher-ranking than Opener’s suit
 - 2. Following an Overcall by Responder’s RHO: = 8-10 HCP’s with at least one stopper in the Overcaller’s suit
 - 3. Following a Take-Out Double by Responder’s Right-Hand Opponent (RHO): = 6-10 HCP’s
 - 4. In Response to Partner’s Take-Out Double: = 8-10 HCP’s with no 4-card Major or 5-card Minor
- D. An Opener’s Re-Bid of 1-NT:
 - 1. Following Responder’s 1-Level Response (With or Without Interference): = 11-14 HCP’s, balanced without support for Responder’s suit (With a stopper if there be competition)
 - 2. Absent a Response from Partner following either Opponent’s Overcall: = 18-19 HCP’s, balanced

The Varied Meanings of “2-No-Trump”

- A. An Opening Bid of 2-NT in Any Position: = 20-21 (20-22 **or** 21-22) HCP’s, balanced
- B. An Overcall of 2-NT:
 - 1. In Either the Direct or Balancing Seat Following an Opponent’s Opening One-of-a-Suit Bid “Unusual 2-NT” = 5-5 or longer in the two lower-unbid suits, either very weak (5-10 HCP’s) or very strong (16+ HCP’s)
 - 2. Following a Pre-emptive Weak 2-Bid Opening by an Opponent: = 15-17 HCP’s (A 1-NT Bid)
- C. A Responder’s Bid of 2-NT:
 - 1. Following a Minor Suit Opening by Partner: = 11-12 HCP’s, without support for Opener’s suit and an absence of either 4-card Major suit

2. Following a Major Suit Opening by Partner: = 11-12 HCP's, without support for Opener, unless "Jacoby 2-NT" or "Multi-Purpose 2-NT" Conventions are played by the Partnership
 3. Following Partner's Opening 2-Level Pre-empt: = 15 (+) HCP's, forcing, Game-seeking
 4. Following the Bidding Having reached the 2-Level: = 11-12 HCP's, Invitational to game
 5. Following Partner's 1-NT Opening: = 8-10 HCP's, invitational to 3-NT
- D. In Response to an Overcaller's Take-Out Double: = 11-12 HCP's, invitational to 3-NT
- E. An Opener's Jump Re-Bid of 2-NT After Responder responds at the 1-Level: = 18-19 HCP's
- F. An Opener's Re-bid of 2-NT after Responder responds at the 2-Level: = Minimum opening values and a lack of support for Responder's suit

The Varied Meanings of "3-No-Trump"

- A. An Opening Bid of 3-NT in Any Position: = "Gambling 3-NT" = 9-11 HCP's with a Self-sustaining 7-card Club **or** Diamond suit headed by an A-K-Q, with nothing more than an outside Queen
- B. A Responder's Bid of 3-NT:
1. Following a Minor Suit Opening by Partner: = 13-15 HCP's, without support for Opener & an absence of any 4-card suit higher-ranking than Opener's suit
 2. Following a Major Suit Opening by Partner: = 13-15 HCP's, without support for Opener (**Note:** Some partnership agreements have this evidence 16-18 HCP's)
 3. A 3-NT Call by either Opener or Responder Made Subsequent to Multiple Bids by the Partnership: = To Play
 4. Subsequent to Partner's Opening Pre-emptive 2-Level or 3-Level: = Game values
- C. In Response to Partner's Take-Out Double: = 13+ HCP's, with stopper(s) in Opener's suit

The Varied Meanings of "4-No-Trump"

- A. An Opener's or Responder's Bid of 4-NT Subsequent to a Suit Agreement: = "Blackwood" or "Roman Key-Card Blackwood" - An Ace-Asking Convention exploring for the possibility of Slam
- B. A Responder's Bid of 4-NT Following a 1-NT Opening Bid by Partner: = "Quantitative" = Asking Opener to bid 6-NT with a maximum 1-NT opening count, else to "Pass" with a minimum
- C. An Overcall of 4-NT Subsequent to the Opposition Reaching a Game Contract: = "Unusual NT" = A pre-emptive interference and/or sacrifice holding 5-5 or longer in the Minors
- D. A 4-NT (No-Trump Escape) Bid Following an Unsatisfactory Gerber Response: - To play

The Varied Meanings of "5-No-Trump"

- A. A Bid of 5-NT:
1. As Part of the "Blackwood" Convention: = Asking for a count of Kings
 2. Subsequent to a Game-Level Contract Being Reached: = "Grand-Slam Force" - Asking Responder to go to the 6-Level or the 7-Level with either one or two of the top two Trump honors, respectively
- B. A Responder's Bid of 5-NT Following a 1-NT Opening Bid by Partner: = "Quantitative" = Asking Opener to bid 6-NT with a minimum 1-NT opening count, else to bid 7-NT when holding a maximum 1-NT opening count

The Varied Meanings of "6-No-Trump": = Bid to play, evidencing a 33 (+) HCP partnership holding, or its equivalent

The Varied Meanings of "7-No-Trump": = Bid to play, evidencing a 37 (+) HCP partnership holding, or its equivalent