

**REQUIREMENTS FOR AN OPENING PRE-EMPTIVE 3C BID**  
**DOGMATA RE-DEFINED**

**Background:** An opening bid of “2C” is, today, recognized as a strong, artificial, and forcing opening bid; a hand with 21 or more HCP’s, comprised of either a balanced hand prepared to rebid 2NT (Example 1), or 3NT (Example 2), else a strong one-suiter (Example 3). Note: With a strong 2-Suited hand, one should resist opening “2C”, since doing so wastes a level of bidding, making it more difficult to show both suits at a convenient lower level (Example 4).

<u>Example 1</u>	<u>Example 2</u>	<u>Example 3</u>	<u>Example 4</u>
AQ	AKX	AQJXXX	AKQXXX
AQX	AQJ	KQX	AKXXX
KJXX	KQJX	AK	A (Open 1S, Rebid 3H)
AQJX	AQX	A	X

**Principle:** An opening weak 2-bid consists of 5-11 HCP’s and a 6-card suit (Example 5); an opening weak 3-bid consists of 8-11 HCP’s with at least a 7-card suit (Example 6) (See the Rule of 2-3-4).

<u>Example 5</u>	<u>Example 6</u>
AQXXXX	XX
X (Open 2S)	AQXXXXX
KXXX	QX
XX	XX (Open 3H)

**Redefinition:** Since “2C” is restricted to a strong, artificial and forcing opening bid, it is not available to use a 6-card pre-emptive bid in Clubs. Normally, one is expected to hold a 7-card Club suit with sub-minimum opening count in order to pre-empt with a 3C opening bid (Figure 7). With a weak hand evidencing a poor 6-card Club suit, pass (Figure 8); however, with most of the HCP’s consolidated within a 6-card Club suit, one may open a weak 3-Clubs (Example 9). **It is sometimes plausible to open a pre-emptive 3C bid with a good 6-card suit and sub-minimum HCP values assuming most of the HCP values fall within the Club suit.**

<u>Example 7</u>	<u>Example 8</u>	<u>Example 9</u>
KX	KXX	XX
X (Open a weak 3C)	X (Pass)	XX (Open a weak 3C)
KXX	AXX	KXX
KXXXXXX	XXXXXX	KQJ9XX

**MINOR SUIT PREFERENCE OPENING BIDS**  
**DOGMATA RE-DEFINED**

**Background**: When playing a 5-card Major System of bidding, holding opening values without a 5-card or better Major suit holding, one is required to utilize a preferred Minor opening bid; i.e., opening whichever Minor suit is discernibly longer (Figures 1 & 2).

**Example 1**

AQXX  
 AQXX  
 KXXX  
 X (Open 1D)

**Example 2**

AKXX  
 AQX  
 X (Open 1C)  
 JXXXX

**Principle**: When opening a preferred Minor suit in the absence of a 5-card or better Major suit holding, if the Minor suit holding be equal, one should open 1D; if the Minor suit holding be 6-6 (Figure 3), 5-5 (Figure 4), or 4-4 (Figure 5); and 1C, if the Minor suit holding be 3-3 (Figure 6).

**Example 3**

--  
 A (Open 1D)  
 AKXXXX  
 KXXXXX

**Example 4**

KX  
 X (Open 1D)  
 AKXXX  
 AQXXX

**Example 5**

AXX  
 XX (Open 1D)  
 KXXX  
 KQJX

**Example 6**

AKXX  
 XXX (Open 1C)  
 AXX  
 KXX

**Redefinition**: Remember, however, an opening bid by you, assuming the opponents ultimately take the bid, tends to be lead-directing to partner should he/she be on lead. As a result, one must consider the possible lead-directing consequences and possibly alter ones Minor suit opening bid accordingly. Therefore, **if a Minor suit holding be such that it would foster an embarrassment to the would-be opening bidder, should that suit be led by partner on defense, opener may deviate from the opening Minor suit preference standards listed above (Figures 7 & 8).**

**Example 7**

AQ  
 QXX (Open 1C)  
 XXXX  
 KQ10X

**Example 8**

AXXX  
 JXX  
 AKQ (Open 1D)  
 XXX

**USE OF THE STAYMAN CONVENTION**  
**DOGMATA RE-DEFINED**

**Background:** When using The Stayman Convention, and assuming a 15-17 HCP 1NT opening bidding range by opener, Responder should normally hold at least 8 HCP's with a good 5-card or longer suit (Figure 1), else 9 HCP's or more with any suit holding (Figure 2), in order to employ The Staymen Convention looking for a 4-4 Major suit Golden Fit, while at the same time not jeopardizing the partnership should no 4-card Major suit fit be ultimately found. With less than these requirements, Responder must not seek a Major suit fit lest a response by opener not be capable of being handled by Responder (Figures 3 & 4).

**Example 1**

QXXX  
XX (Bid "2C")  
KQJXX  
XX

**Example 2**

XX (Bid "2C")  
AXXX  
XX  
KQXX

**Example 3**

QXXX  
KXXX  
XXX  
XX (Pass)

**Example 4**

XX  
AXXX  
XXXXX  
JX (Pass)

**Principle:** The Stayman Convention, in response to a (15-17 HCP) 1NT opening is invoked by a Responder searching for a 4-4 Major suit "Golden Fit". It requires at least an 8 HCP holding by Responder so as to be capable of handling any feasible response, "2D", "2H", or "2S" by opener (Figures 5-7).

**Example 5**

AXXX  
XXX  
A10XXX  
X (Bid "2C")

**Example 6**

XX (Bid "2C")  
QXXX  
AXXX  
KXX

**Example 7**

AXXX  
XX (Bid "2C")  
KXXX  
KJX

**Redefinition:** The Stayman Convention, looking for a 4-4 Major suit fit, can be employed opposite a (15-17) HCP opening 1NT under two (2) circumstances: First, when Responder has at least 8 HCP's or more (Figures 1-2, 5-7), and secondly, when Responder holds as few as 0 HCP's with a hand that can accept any of the three possible responses of opener by passing ("Garbage Stayman") (Figure 8 & 9). Under the latter circumstances, Responder can be reasonably confident that by passing any of opener's rebids (2D, 2H, or 2S), the final contract will be more manageable than the original 1NT bid.

**Example 8**

JXXX  
XXXX  
QXXX  
X (Bid "2C")

**Example 9**

XXXX  
XXXX  
XXXXX  
--- (Bid "2C")

**DIRECT OVERCALLS**  
**DOGMATA RE-DEFINED**

**Background:** Direct, 2<sup>nd</sup> position overcalls (as opposed to balancing, 4<sup>th</sup> position overcalls) usually guarantee at least 8 or more HCP's at the 1-level and 10 or more HCP's at the 2-level. In addition, direct overcalls guarantee a 5-card or better suit (Figures 1 & 2).

The bidding has gone "1D" to your right and you hold:

**Example 1**

XXX  
AXXXX  
KQX  
KX (Overcall 1H)

**Example 2**

XXX  
XXX  
AJ (Overcall 2C)  
AQXXX

**Example 3**

AXXX  
XX (Pass)  
KXXX  
KXX

**Principle:** A direct, second position Overcall guarantees a 5-card or better suit, with 8 or more HCP's at the 1-level, and 10 or more HCP's at the 2-level. Absent a 5-card or longer suit, one can make a Take-out Double with Opening Count (Figure 4), else must pass if these minimum requirements are not met (Figure 5).

The bidding has gone "1C" to your right and you hold:

**Example 4**

AXXX  
AKXX  
KXXX  
X ("Double")

**Example 5**

AXXX  
AK  
AXXX  
XXX (Pass)

**Redefinition:** Generally, one requires distribution and high-card-point count as defined above when making a direct, second position overcall. However, a very strong 4-card suit is perfectly acceptable for a 1-level (not at the 2-level) overcall (Figures 6 & 7) in second position.

The bidding has gone "1H" to your right and you hold:

**Example 6**

AQJX  
XXX (Overcall 1S)  
AXX  
XXX

**Example 7**

AXX  
XXX  
AKQX  
XXX (Pass)

**THE USE OF A LEAD - DIRECTING DOUBLE**  
**DOGMATA RE-DEFINED**

**Background:** Penalty Doubles, Take-out or Informative Doubles, and Negative Doubles have been discussed on numerous occasions. They are utilized, for punishment of overly aggressive opponents (Figure 1); as a means for a would-be overcaller to enter the competitive bidding arena (Figure 2); and by Responder to an opening partner subsequent to an overcaller by the would-be-responder's RHO when responder's hand does not allow for a response because of a lack of suit length, enough HCP's, or both (Figure 3). (In all Examples, North is the dealer.)

<u>Example 1</u>		<u>Example 2</u>		<u>Example 3</u>	
<u>N</u>		<u>N</u>		<u>N</u>	
1H Dbl.		1H		1H	
<u>W</u>	<u>E</u>	<u>W</u>	<u>E</u>	<u>W</u>	<u>E</u>
4S	2S		Dbl.		2C
<u>S</u>		<u>S</u>		<u>S</u>	
4H				Dbl.	

**Principle:** A Double of an artificial bid is neither a take-out double, nor is it a penalty double, nor is it a negative double. Such a double is made specifically for the purpose of a lead directing signal to partner. Many such examples are possible (Figures 4, 5, & 6). (Here, again, North is dealer in all examples.)

<u>Example 4</u>		<u>Example 5</u>		<u>Example 6</u>	
<u>N</u>		<u>N</u>		<u>N</u>	
1NT		1H 4NT		1H	
<u>W</u>	<u>E</u>	<u>W</u>	<u>E</u>	<u>W</u>	<u>E</u>
Dbl.	Pass	Pass Dbl.	Pass Pass	Dbl.	2S
<u>S</u>		<u>S</u>		<u>S</u>	
"2D" (Transfer)		3H "5C"		"3S"	

In example #6, holding (KX XXX XXXXX AXX), West's double of South's artificial "3S" facilitates East's eventual lead of a Spade from East's hypothetical AQXXXX holding from which, without facilitation, East would be, otherwise, reluctant to lead.

**Redefinition:** A double of an artificial bid is generally a lead-directing double requesting or authorizing the lead of the artificially bid suit.

APPLYING THE LAW OF TOTAL TRICKS WHEN SACRIFICING  
DOGMATA RE-DEFINED

**Background:** Most beginning bridge players are reluctant to come into the bidding as would-be-overcallers, and are particularly reluctant to think in terms of bidding something with the advanced thought that their bid cannot be made, and that they will be set by knowledgeable opponents, and probably even doubled for additional penalties. Their initial learning has been so geared to bidding correctly, and to think in terms of making the stipulated contract, that the thought of bidding something with the specific intent to go down, is abhorrent (Example 1).

Example 1

<u>N</u>			
	1H		
<u>W</u>		<u>E</u>	
		2S	
	<u>S</u>		
	"3S"		

North has opened the bidding and thereby evidences an opening hand with Approximately 13 HCP's on average. East shows a weak hand, 5-11 HCP's with his/her pre-emptive jump overcall. South shows Heart support and at least a limit-raise or better (11+ HCP's). North & South have at least 24 HCP's, so why should West even contemplate bidding????

**Principle:** The LAW of total tricks advocates that one can compete to a bidding level, in a competitive auction scenario, to a level requiring tricks to be taken equal to the total number of trump pieces held between the partnership. (Example: Nine pieces of trump to compete to the 3-level (Nine tricks promised by the bid), ten pieces of trump to compete to the 4-level (Ten tricks promised by the bid), and so forth. Using this principal, and utilizing the same bidding (Figure 2) as above:

Example 2

<u>N</u>			
	1H		
<u>W</u>		<u>E</u>	
		2S	
	<u>S</u>		
	"3S"		

West holds: (KXXX XX AXXXX XX)  
West should bid 4S in a flash and without hesitation. He/she realizes that East shows a weak hand with at least a 6-card Spade suit. West holds 4 pieces and so The partnerships combined Spade holding is at least 10 pieces. The LAW advocates the ability to compete to the 4-level, for Even if doubled, one expects to lose less than if the opponents would have scored a 4-Heart contract. TRY IT !!!!!

**JUMP OVERCALLS****DOGMATA RE-DEFINED**

**Background**: Most bridge players utilize the jump-overcall as a defensive, weak, pre-emptive tool. It shows a 6-card or better suit with less than opening count values (5-11 HCP's); i.e., a hand which, as an opening bid would have pre-empted with a weak 2-bid or even a weak 3-bid or better (Examples 1 & 2). It is best to have most, if not all, of one's HCP's concentrated within the long suit. It is customarily utilized in the direct position; i.e., in the 2<sup>nd</sup> seat directly after an opening bid by one's RHO.

The bidding has gone "1D" to your immediate right and you hold:

**Example 1**

AQXXXX  
XX  
XXX  
XXX (Overcall 2S)

(or) The bidding has gone "1S" to your immediate right and you hold:

**Example 2**

XX  
KJXXXXX  
KX  
QX (Overcall 3H)

**Principle**: A jump-overcall is a pre-emptive defensive overcall, usually a double or triple jump in a new suit, aimed at obstructing the bidding by the opening side, utilized in the direct seat immediately to the left of an opening bid by the opponents. It is otherwise called a "**Weak Jump Overcall**". This form of weak overcall must always take the vulnerability into account, especially when jumping to the 3-level, so as not to open the possibility of being doubled into a loss of more points than could have otherwise been gained by the opponents if left alone to their own design. The level of the pre-empt should be governed by both the vulnerability and the playing strength of the hand. Not vulnerable, the level of the pre-empt should be within 3 tricks of the declared contract; vulnerable within 2 tricks.

**Redefinition**: In the balancing position, however, a jump overcall is **NOT** pre-emptive. In that position, since it would take place in the pass-out seat, there would be no need for a blocking pre-emptive bid. Accordingly, **in the balancing seat, a jump-overcall shows opening count with a very good, 5- or 6-card or better suit** (Example 3).

The bidding has gone "1D" P P , and you hold: **Example 3**

KJX  
AKJ10XX  
XX  
XX

(Overcall 2H) - **The Jump Overcall in the balancing seat shows opening count and usually a strong 5- or 6-card suit.**

**Summation:** In the balancing position, the requirements for almost all bids differ from that which could be expected of them if they had been exercised in the direct seat; i.e., immediately by the LHO of any opening bid by the opponents (Figures 4-6).

The bidding has gone "1D" to your left and you, in the balancing seat hold:

1D P P ???

**Example 4**

KQ (Overcall 1H - 5 Pieces are Desirable, but not Necessary in the  
AQXX Balancing Seat, as Four Pieces will Suffice if Necessary.)  
XXXX  
XXX

**Example 5**

KX (Overcall 1NT - only 10-14 HCP's and a  
KXX Stopper in Opponent's Suit are Needed  
AXXX in the Balancing Position, not the  
XXXX 15-17 HCP's Needed in the Direct Seat.)

**Example 6**

(Balance with a Takeout Double - AXXX  
In the Balancing Seat One Needs KXXX  
Only 10+ HCP's Along with X  
Appropriate Distribution; i.e., KXXX  
Shortage in the Opponent's Opening Suit.)



**THE RULE OF 20**  
**DOGMATA RE-DEFINED**

**Background** : The Rule of 20 advocates that one of the better ways to evaluate a first or second seat hand as to whether or not it is of sufficient strength to warrant an opening bid, is to count all of the HCP's to which you then add one additional point for every card held within the two longest suits within the holding. If the total adds to twenty (20) or greater, the hand should be opened. Utilization of this concept to determine whether or not to open in first or second position does not guarantee that one will always make one's contract, or that one will get a good result on every hand. However, its use will, in the long run, be beneficial more often than not.

No Rule should be taken literally, however, and as you can see by Examples 1-4 below, this rule is subject to compromise, adjustment, and exception.

**Example 1**

K        (**Pass** - Although technically this hand satisfies the Rule of 20,  
QJ        opening it is probably a practical joke upon the partnership.)  
QXXXX  
QXXXX

**Example 2**

AQXXX        (**Open 1S** - Although this hand does  
AXXX        not satisfy the Rule of 20, no amount  
XXX        of restraint could stop me from opening  
X        this (19) count promising holding.)

**Example 3**

AXXX        (**Open 1C** - Although technically this hand does not satisfy the  
XXX        Rule of 20, Always open any hand containing three Aces.)  
AXX  
AXX

**Example 4**

K10XX        (**Open 1D** - Although this hand also  
X        does not satisfy the Rule of 20,  
AQ10XX        texture is everything. Adding (1) one  
JXX        extra point for the two tens  
                  (½ point each), one reaches a Rule of  
                  twenty threshold allowing an opening bid.)

**Redefinition:** The Rule of 20 can, if one desires, be redefined with some “Additions”, “Subtractions”, and “Refinements”.

**1. Additions:**

**Add one (1) point for each two tens held, especially if they be in combination with higher honors in suits that are three or more cards in length (Example 5).**

**Example 5**

A10XX (Open 1D - This hand contains 10 HCP's, Nine (9) cards in  
AXX Diamonds and Spades, and one (1) additional point for  
Q10XXX the Diamond and Spade 10's, for a total of twenty (20).  
X

**2. Subtractions:**

**Subtract one (1) point for each of the following singletons: K,Q,J (All but the A)  
Subtract one (1) point for each of the following doubletons:  
KQ, KJ,QJ (Note the Ace is never involved) (Example 6).**

**Example 6**

QJ (Pass - This hand contains 13 HCP's, But one should subtract  
KXXXX one additional point for the doubleton QJ and the  
KJX Singleton K, which when added to Eight Diamond and Hearts  
K totals 19 and does not satisfy the Rule of 20.)

**3. Refinements:**

**Upgrade Aces and Kings, Downgrade Queens and Jacks (Examples 7 & 8).**

**Example 7**

QXXX (Pass - This hand contains too many Queens and Jacks and  
QJXX should, therefore, be downgraded.)  
QJX  
AX

**Example 8**

AXXX (Open 1C - This hand need be upgraded  
XXX due to the presence of three Aces.)  
AX  
AXXX

**Summation:** Remember, the Rule of 20 is only a guide to be used in first or second positions to identify those hands which, if opened, would likely reach a successful result. Having acknowledged this however, learn to be flexible, remember “Points Schmoits”, be tolerant of an aggressive partner who opens light, and when in doubt, “OPEN” anyway.

**TO REVERSE OR NOT TO REVERSE – THAT IS THE QUESTION****DOGMATA RE-DEFINED**

**Background :** A **REVERSE** is defined as an **Unforced** rebid at the level of two or more, in a higher ranking suit than that bid originally; (Examples: 1-2) i.e., a strength-showing bid.

	<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
<b>Example 1:</b>	1C	P	1S	P
	<b><u>2H</u></b>			
KX				(An <b>unforced</b> volitional rebid at the 2-level in a higher
AKXX				ranking suit than was bid originally = <b>A Reverse</b> )
XX				(Reverses by Opener are semi-forcing in that if Responder
AKJXX				has more than a minimum 5-7 HCP holding, game is present.)

	<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
<b>Example 2:</b>	1H	P	2D	P
	<b><u>2S</u></b>			
AJXX				(An unforced rebid at the 2-level in a higher ranking
AQXXX				suit than was bid originally = <b>A Reverse</b> )
X				(Automatically game-forcing (15+), since East has
AJX				evidenced 11+ with his/her 2-level new suit response.)

Opener's rebid in the following sequences (Examples: 3-4) are **not** a reverse because in each instance, the opponent's overcall has forced the bidding to a higher level, and it should be assumed that the Opener's original intention was to rebid at the level of one.

	<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
<b>Example 3:</b>	1C	1S	2D	P
	<b><u>2H</u></b>			
KX				(A <b>forced</b> rebid; East's 2-level bid is forcing,
AQXX				but North's overcall elevated the necessary
XX				bidding. Therefore this is not a Reverse.)
AJXXX				

	<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
<b>Example 4:</b>	1D	2C	2H	P
	<b><u>2S</u></b>			
AJXX				(A <b>forced</b> rebid; East's 2-level response is forcing,
AQXXX				but North's overcall of 2 Clubs forced the
X				level of communication between Opener and Responder
AJX				to an elevated level. No Reverse is present here.)

An up-the-ladder sequence at the 1-level is **never** considered a Reverse bidding sequence and, therefore, does **not** guarantee extra values (Example: 5).

	<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
<b>Example 5:</b>	1C	P	1D	P
	1H	P	1S	(An up-the-ladder, non-reverse
				by both Opener and Responder.)

When a Reverse is exercised by an Opening bidder, it guarantees at least a hand with 15+ HCP's. Since Responder has already evidenced a 6+ HCP count holding by virtue of his/her initial response, the combined strength of the partnership is rarely less than 23 high card points, and is, therefore, an evidence of game possibility (Example: 6).

	<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
<b><u>Example 6:</u></b>	1C	P	1S (6+HCP's)	P
	<u>2H</u> (15+ HCP's)			

(Unless Responder has a bare minimum, opener's reverse will prompt a rebid by Responder)

When utilized by Responder, a Reverse is a game-forcing sequence. The partnership is committed to reach game and neither Opener nor Responder is permitted to pass short of a game-level final contract (Example: 7).

	<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
<b><u>Example 7:</u></b>	1C	P	1H	P
	2C	P	<u>2S</u> (Resp.'s Reverse)	P
	3NT	P	P	P
	XX		AXXX	
	AX		KQXXX	
	KXX		Q	
	AJXXXX		KXX	

In Reverse bid situations, the first suit is always longer than the second. All Reverses imply that the first bid suit consists of at least five (5) cards, and that the second suit be shorter, as, in some extreme circumstances, it may be necessary to make a reverse re-bid in a 3-card suit (Example: 8). Most Reverses imply a 5-4 expected distribution, with the possibility of a 5-3, 6-4 or 6-5 distribution, as well.

One Last provision, there is such a sequence called a **High-Reverse**. It is defined as a non-jump rebid by Opener in a third suit at the level of three (Example: 8). A High-Reverse is always forcing to game since the Responder has already shown 11+ HCP's, by definition.

	<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
<b><u>Example 8:</u></b>	1H	P	2D	P
	<u>3C</u>			

XX	
AQXXX	(A <b>High-Reverse</b> showing 15+ HCP's. Note that the first bid suit contains 5-cards and that the second bid suit may necessarily contain as few as 3-cards so as to evidence the 15+ HCP count.)
AQX	
AQX	

Although the usual axiomatic principle is to bid length **before** strength, recognizing the guaranteed HCP count value of a Reverse, one must be careful to compromise the length-before-strength principle, if that be necessary, so as never to violate the HCP value requirement of a Reverse bid (Examples: 9-16).

**Principle: With good hands bid naturally; i.e., longest suits first, with weaker mediocre hands, bid practically.**

**Example 9:**

X (Open this strong hand 1D. Following an anticipated 1S bid by  
AQXXX Responder, Opener may Reverse evidencing Diamonds being longer  
AKQXXX than Hearts and a strong holding of 15+ HCP's. By re-bidding the  
X Hearts once again at the third bid, Opener will then evidence  
A 6-5 distribution.)

**Example 10:**

X (Open this weaker hand 1H. This modest holding  
AJXXX does not permit the reverse that would be  
AJXXXX evidenced if Diamonds were to have been bid  
X first and Hearts second. One must, therefore,  
conceal the fact that the Diamonds are longer  
so as to avoid reversing.)

**Example 11:**

(Open 1C, confident that over an anticipated 1H or 1S  
Response by partner, opener has the HCP strength to re-bid  
2D, thereby Reversing, showing 15+ HCP's, and the Club  
holding longer than Diamonds.)

AJ  
AX  
AQXX  
KXXXX

**Example 12:**

XX (Open this weak hand 1D, intending to rebid 2C. This hand  
XX satisfies the Rule of 20 thereby allowing it to be opened.  
AKJX It is too weak, however, to evidence that the Club holding  
KXXXX is longer than the Diamond suit, since doing so would  
create a Reverse, in a hand too weak to allow such an  
Exaggeration of HCP values.)

**Example 13:**

(Open this hand 1NT. It is simply not good  
enough for a 1C opening and a 2D Reverse, and is  
too strong for a simple 1D opening and 2C re-bid.  
Although opening 1NT with two doubletons is imperfect,  
It is often the best strategy when your 4-card suit is  
Higher ranking than your 5-card suit.)

KJ  
AQ  
QJXX  
KXXXX

**Example 14:**

KXXXX (Open this weak hand 1C with intent to rebid Spades twice more.  
 A It is too weak a hand to set up a probable high-reverse sequence  
 XX if one were to hypothetically open 1S and partner were to  
 AJXXX Respond 2H necessitating a 3C (High-Reverse) Re-bid by Opener.)

**Example 15:**

(Open this hand 1S with intent to rebid 3C over an anticipated 2H bid by Responder. This hand is clearly strong enough to permit a High-Reverse sequence by Opener. **Remember: Opener must plan his/her re-bid BEFORE the call of his/her opening bid.**)

AJXXX  
 A  
 KX  
 AKXXX

<b>Example 16:</b>	<u>West</u> 1C ????	<u>North</u> P	<u>East</u> 1S	<u>South</u> P
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AX  
 (a) AKXX (In holding (a) Opener should rebid 2H. This hand is strong enough to Reverse. In hand (b), however, Opener's re-bid should be 1NT, Too weak to Reverse.)  
 XX  
 AKXXX  
 (b) XX  
 AQXX  
 KX  
 AXXXX

Responder, too, must be careful to think out his/her responses before making them. Doing so will ensure that the proper valid messages are being sent to partner (Examples: 17-18).

<b>Example 17:</b>	<u>West</u> 1H	<u>North</u> P	<u>East</u> ????
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AXXX (Responder must bid 1S with (a) (b) AKXX  
 (a) XX because the hand is too weak to venture XX  
 X to the 2-level, with hand (b), Responder XX  
 QXXXXX can bid 2C on his/her first response, with AKXXX  
 Intent to bid Spades on his/her next response,  
 A Responder's Reverse which forces to game.)

<b>Example 18:</b>	<u>West</u> 1S	<u>North</u> P	<u>East</u> ????
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AX  
 (a) KJXXX (A 2H bid by Responder is satisfactory in hand (a), the HCP strength is there to justify such a bid. In (b), however, Responder must first bid 1NT intending to Show his/her 6-card Heart suit on his/her Next re-bid.)  
 XX  
 AQXX  
 (b) X  
 KQJXXX  
 XXXX  
 XX

**PREDICTING RESPONDER'S FIRST BID****DOGMATA RE-DEFINED**

**Background**: An often used proverb sets forth the maxim that “**Failing to Prepare is Preparing to Fail**”. So it is in bridge; i.e., thinking ahead is critical. Opener’s ability to anticipate what partner is likely to respond will often assist Opener in planning his/her auction’s first bid. Murphy’s Law and the reality of life being what they are: **When one opens the bidding with a Minor, partner will most likely respond in your shortest Major. If you open 1 Heart and are short in Spades, partner will most usually respond 1 Spade, or 1 No Trump; and so on and on it goes, almost endlessly. What Opener does not want to hear, happens anyway.**

We have often spoken about the need for Opener to plan his/her second bid **before** he/she mentions his/her first bid, and so with the above adage in mind; i.e., Opener will most likely hear that which he/she does not want to hear, plan your rebid with each of the following hands after the expected response, and explore the possible need to adjust one’s opening bid accordingly, before the fact, not after:

**Example 1:** You hold: **AXX** (Responder’s likely first response is  
**AXXX** probably 1S. Open 1D and the  
**AXXXX** Re-bid 2S if necessary.  
**X** There are worse things in life than  
7-card fits, and anyhow, they are great  
character builders. Were Responder to have responded 1H, Opener would have Re-  
bid 2H; were Responder to have responded 2C, Opener would respond 2NT; else 2D  
over a 1NT response.)

**Example 2:** You hold: **X** (Responder’s likely first response is  
**XXX** probably 1S. Opener would clearly  
**AKJX** be inviting disaster if Opener were to  
**AXXXX** have settled on the length-before-strength  
adage and inadvertently opened 1C. To  
Re-bid either 2D (A clear Reverse) or 2C (A Re-bid of a poor 5-card suit) are  
both very unappealing poor alternatives. Plan ahead and open 1D such that when  
Responder bids a probable 1S, Opener can Re-bid a painless 2C showing a weak  
hand with length in the Minors. Yes, Opener would have given the illusion that  
his/her Diamonds are equal or longer than his/her Club holding, but that is far  
better than the lesser alternatives previously explored.)

**Example 3:** You hold: **K** (An opening bid of 1D intending  
**KQJ** to Re-bid 2C would have been a  
**XXXX** valiant attempt to avoid an improper  
**AXXXX** reverse, but the Diamond suit is so  
poor that an re-adjustment to an opening bid  
of 1C with intent to Re-bid 1NT is, by far, the best of the compromises  
necessary, given this particular holding. **Opener must always be prepared to  
compromise the usual dictates for choice as to which suit to open the bidding,  
if by doing so, a clearer and more exacting picture of his/her holding can be  
sent forth to Responder.**

---

**Example 4:** You hold: **KQJXX** (When holding this kind of Major suit  
**AXXXXX** bonanza, Responder's likely response  
**X** will almost assuredly be 1NT.  
**X** Accordingly, open 1S with intent to  
Re-bid 2H even though a slight distortion of  
the relative lengths of the Major suits will necessarily ensue. That  
knowledgeable distortion is far better than the damage that would occur should  
Opener have alternatively opened the longer Heart suit first, forced to display  
an erroneous Reverse by Re-bidding the shorter higher-ranking Spade suit. A  
much stronger HCP count would have had to be present for such a Reverse to have  
been appropriately valid.)

---

**Example 5:** You hold: **AQXXX** (Partner's likely response of 1NT  
**KJ10** to the first-glance opening of 1S  
**KJX** with this hand would destine the  
**AQ** partnership to a 3NT final contract.  
Opening 2NT, alternatively, however, would  
destine the partnership to the same 3NT contract, but the obvious advantage with  
the latter scenario would be that the stronger hand winds up being the concealed  
hand, and the lead would come into, not through, the stronger hand; two  
advantages which are likely to produce an extra trick, at the very least, as a  
pay-off to an opener with enough insight and a little forethought as to the  
possible consequences of his possible alternative action.)

---

**Example 6:** You hold: **X** (Partner's likely response with this  
**AKQJ** holding is, almost always, 1S.  
**KXXXX** To open a 4-card Major suit is thought  
**XXX** of as being sacrilegious, but look at the  
alternative here: To open 1D would  
necessitate a Re-bid of 2H over a presumed, but unwelcome, 1S, else a Re-bid of  
the poor 5-card Diamond suit. This hand is clearly not strong enough to offer  
the Reverse that would be bid by such an action, nor is the 5-card Diamond suit  
a holding with which to be proud. The clear alternative is to pre-plan a 2D Re-  
bid after opening this hand 1H. Modern players would sooner wash windows, but  
try it (Not window-washing), I mean opening a 4-card Major. You might just find  
it refreshing.) **"Forewarned is forearmed" - Plan Ahead!!**



**A NEW SUIT BY RESPONDER – FORCING OR NOT ?**

**DOGMATA RE-DEFINED**

**Background:** There are several circumstances where a new suit by Responder forces the auction. A New suit by Responder is usually forcing (Example 1), at least for one round, and as we have seen in previous lessons, a reverse by responder while showing a new suit is not only forcing, but compels, and irrevocably commits, the partnership to game (Example 2).

	<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
	1C	P	1H	P
	2C	P	<b>2D (New Suit)</b>	P
	2NT	P	<b>3NT (1-Round Force)</b>	P
<b>(Note:</b> The	AQX		KX	
2NT bid by Opener	XX		KQXXX	
shows Minimum values,	KX		AXXX	
a Spade stopper,	AXXXXX		QX	
absence of 3 Hearts,				
and a willingness to				
play in No Trump.)				

**Example 1:**

	<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
<b><u>Example 2:</u></b>	1C	P	1H	P
	2C	P	<b>2S (Resp.'s Reverse)</b>	P
	3NT	P	<b>P (Game-Forcing)</b>	P
	XX		AXXX	
	AX		KXXXX ( <b>Note:</b> Opener's Jump to	
	KXX		A 3NT is weaker than a 2NT	
	AJXXXX		KXX bid since partnership	
			has already committed itself to	
			game by virtue of the Responder's Reverse. Remember, "A Quick Arrival Is Weaker	
			Than A Slow Arrival". In this instance, the 3NT shows the bottom of Opener's	
			minimum range, 11-13, whereas, if Opener had bid 2NT under the scenario of this	
			game-forcing auction, Opener would have evidenced a maximum, 14-15 HCP's.)	

A third circumstance where a new suit by Responder is forcing is, at the 1-level. (Example 3) Such a Fourth Suit call at the 1-level is natural; i.e., not artificial, and is forcing for one round.

	<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
	1C	P	1D	P
	1H	P	<b>1S (New Suit)</b>	P
	1NT	P	<b>P (1-Round Force)</b>	P
AX			KXXX	
AQXX			XXX	
XXX			AXXX	
AXXX			XX	

**Example 3:**

At a higher level than at the 1-level, however, a fourth suit call is very different. This is the circumstance of the classic, specially-named, **“Fourth-Suit-Forcing”** scenario. Such a call **is** also forcing for one round, as are most other new suit calls by Responder. Such a fourth suit call, however, **may be** artificial, and **is**, therefore, alertable. A Fourth-Suit-Forcing call requires at least 11 HCP’s in order to be utilized. (Example 4)

	<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
<b><u>Example 4:</u></b>	1C	P	1H	P
	1S	P	<b>“2D” (Fourth Suit)</b>	P
	2NT	P	<b>3NT (Forcing for)</b>	P
			<b>(One Round)</b>	
	KXXX		AXX	
	AX		KQXXX	
	AXX		XXX	( <b>Note:</b> If Opener had
	QJXX		KX	had Three Hearts, his/her
				third bid would have been “3H”
				and not “2NT”. In this manner, the partnership would have found their 8-card
				Golden Fit in Hearts had it been, hypothetically, present. )

### **Non-Forcing Second Calls By Responder**

**New Calls By Responder That Are Not-Forcing:** There are, however, several circumstances where a new call by Responder is **not** forcing. The first is when the new call by Responder is NT. (See Example 5)

	<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
	1C	P	1H	P
	2C	P	<b><u>2NT</u> (Invitational)</b>	P
	P	P	<b>(Not Forcing)</b>	
	KQX		AXX	
	XX		KXXX	
	KX		AXXX	
	AXXXXX		XX	

**Example 5:**

Responder’s 2NT call is encouraging, but not forcing. Responder could have bid 3NT, but instead has invited Opener to 3NT should Opener have more than just a minimum 11-12 HCP’s. In this instance Opener declines the invitation and the partnership plays in a partial game contract.

A second scenario where Responder bids a new suit which is not forcing occurs subsequent to a 1NT re-bid by Opener. Such a new suit offers a second choice for a potential suit contract while exhibiting an abhorrence for NT as a final contract. Such a bid **is not** forcing. (Example 6) If Responder **did** wish to force he/she must jump the bidding. (Example 7)

	<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
<b><u>Example 6:</u></b>	1C	P	1S	P
	1NT	P	<b><u>2H</u></b> (Not Forcing)	P
	2S	P	P	P
	KXX		AXXXX	
	AXX		KXXX	
	AXX		XX ( <b><u>Note:</u></b> Opener has taken a	
	QJXX		XX simple preference in this	
			Non-forcing auction.)	

Given the same bidding scenario by Opener, if Responder had wished to force the auction for at least one more round, he/she would have to make a jump on his/her second bid. (Example 7)

	<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
<b><u>Example 7:</u></b>	1C	P	1S	P
	1NT	P	<b><u>3H</u></b> (Forcing)	P
	4H	P	P	P
	KX		QXXXX	
	AXXX		KXXX	
	AXX		KQ ( <b><u>Note:</u></b> Responder's jump on	
	QJXX		KX his/her second bid following	
			Opener's re-bid of 1NT forces	
the bidding, at least for one more round. In this instance, Opener takes a				
clear choice with his/her 4-Heart holding. )				

**OPENING 1 NO TRUMP OR NOT?****DOGMATA RE-DEFINED**

**Background:** The requirements for opening of 1NT are basically universally accepted today as 15-17 HCP's; an evenly balanced hand; i.e., the absence of any voids, singletons, and/or more than one doubleton; and a lack of any 5-card Major suit holding. Having learned these standards, let's now consider the possibility of deviation from our rigidities of the past.

**Refinements:** Let us revisit the above rigid standards in light of the following considerations:

1. Long suits, Aces, Kings, and Tens are gold.
2. Queens, Jacks, and honors in short suits are grossly distasteful.
3. Avoid re-bid problems, **before** the fact.

Using the above refinement considerations, let's consider the subsequent hands in order to re-assess whether or not a 1 No Trump Opening bid is best, given the following holdings:

---

<b><u>Example 1:</u></b>	XX KJ10X A10X AKQ10	( <b>No</b> - Tens are more valuable than Deuces, better to open this hand 1C and reverse with a 2H rebid if necessary over a probable 1 Spade response from partner.)
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<b><u>Example 2:</u></b>	AQ KXX XXXXXX AQ	( <b>Yes</b> - Opening this hand with 1NT better describes this holding than does a 1 Diamond opening followed by a 2D re-bid. The weak Diamond holding coupled with great Stoppers argue for a 1NT opening despite the presence of two doubletons.)
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<b><u>Example 3:</u></b>	QJXX QJ QJXX KQJ	( <b>No</b> - Opening this hand with 1 Diamond. This 15 HCP count full of Queens and Jacks is a pile of trash. With one measly quick trick, do not open 1NT.
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---

<b><u>Example 4:</u></b>	A10X K10X XX AQJ10X	( <b>Yes</b> - Opening this hand with 1 No Trump. This 14 HCP hand coupled with the presence of multiple tens and this beautiful 5-card Club suit is consistent with many 15 HCP holdings.
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---

**Example 5:** AJ10X (No - Four Aces should be counted as 17  
AXX not as 16. This hand is, therefore  
AX worth 18 HCP's and should be opened with 1 Club  
AXXX intending to jump to 2 NT on the re-bid.

---

**Example 6:** KJ (Yes - It would be quite uncomfortable if  
AJXX one were to open this hand with 1D  
KJXXX and partner were to respond with 1S. Under  
KX this hypothetical scenario, a re-bid of 1NT would  
be an underbid, and a 2NT re-bid would be an  
over-bid. Best to get the values spoken for immediately by opening 1NT despite  
the two doubletons. Think ahead !!! Take care if one's 5-card suit  
be lower ranking than one's 4-card suit. An alternative action with this  
holding would be to open 1 Diamond and to reverse with a 2H re-bid.

---

**Example 7:** AQ10XX (No - The gorgeous 5-card Spade suit  
AXX makes this hand too good for a mere  
AXX 1 NT opening bid. Better to treat this as if  
KX it were an 18 point hand, open with 1S intending  
to re-bid 2 NT on one's second call.

---

**Example 8:** AX (No - With any hand holding a 5-4 distribution  
KX and the 5-card suit is higher ranking  
KJXXX than the second suit, one never has to open  
KQXX with 1NT. A 1D opening bid followed by a 2C  
Re-bid evidences an 11-18 HCP count with the  
first bid suit equal or longer in length than the second bid suit.

---

**Example 9:** AQ10 (Yes - The fifth diamond coupled with two  
KX tens in this hand allow one to equate  
KQ10XX this 14 HCP count hand to most 15 HCP hands.  
XXX

---

**Example 10:** QXX (Yes - A 1NT opening describes this 15 point  
KJ hand better than any other series of  
KQ bids. The Club suit is not good enough  
AXXXXX to justify a rebid of 2C.

---

**Example 11:** AX (No - The gorgeous 6-card Club suit makes  
KX this hand too good for a 1NT opening.  
AQ10XXX Better to open it with a 1D bid intending to  
K10X re-bid 3D at one's next call.

---

**Summation:** One's requirements for an opening 1 No Trump bid must remain flexible in order to accommodate for variant holdings which augment or diminish one's values. Rigidity on this issue can get one into bidding difficulty & under- or over-evaluations.

**RESPONDING TO ONE NO TRUMP****DOGMATA RE-DEFINED**

**Background:** In nearly all circumstances, procedures normally available in most player's bidding system; namely, consideration that 26 HCP's is usually required for game, Responder's use of The Stayman Convention looking for four of a Major Suit in opener's hand, and/or Jacoby Transfers when Responder has 5 or more of a given suit, all provide the standard keystone foundation for most bidding sequences following an opening bid of partner's 1NT.

**Refinements:** There are, however, many adjustments and tangential considerations to these standard practices which are important to consider in fine tuning one's bidding sequences subsequent to Opener's 1NT. The following are some of these considerations:

**Partner opens with 1NT (15-17 HCP's)**

**Consideration #1:** If you, as Responder to a 1NT opening bid by partner, have, *Specifically*, a 4-3-3-3 distribution, **DO NOT** consider using the Stayman Convention. The combined hand holdings of Opener and Responder are statistically likely to do better in a No Trump contract even if an 8-card Major fit were, hypothetically, to have been present.

**Example 1:** QJXX KJX KXX QXX (Respond 3NT - Do **not** use Stayman)

**Example 2:** QXX KXXX QXX QXX (Invite by bidding 2NT - Do **not** use Stayman)

**Consideration #2:** Do **not** neglect to add extra points for long suits. The trick-taking capacity of Responder's added length (5 or more in a suit) increases the value of Responder's holding opposite a 1NT bid by partner.

(The holdings in Examples 3-5 are **not** equal even though they each contain identical honor values. The actual trick-taking capacity of the hand increases by one with each card of 5 or more in a given suit.)

**Example 3:** XXXX XXX KXX AJ10 (Pass. 3NT is not likely with these 8 HCP's)

**Example 4:** XXX XX KXX AJ10XX (Invite by bidding 2NT  
The hand is worth 9 HCP's)

**Example 5:** XX XX KXX AJ10XXX (Bid 3NT - Go for it!!!)

**Consideration #3:** If you, as Responder to a 1NT opening bid by partner, have, Specifically, a nondescript 8 HCP's Pass, even one with a 4-card Major suit. If, however, Responder has enhancing "spot cards", consider increasing the presumed value of the hand.

**Example 6:** QXX QXX JXX KXXX (Pass)

**Example 7:** XXXX QX KJX QXXX (Pass - Even with a 4-card Major)

**Example 8:** XX JXX K109X A10XX (Raise to 2NT)

**Example 9:** XX 109X KJ109 A1098 (Bid 3NT)

**Accurate Hand Evaluation Necessitates Consideration of "Spot-Cards"**

**Consideration #4:** When confronted with a Jacoby Transfer demand by Responder, A 1NT Opener should take a "Super-Acceptance" transfer to either Major when Opener holds both 4-card support for Responder's Major and a maximum 17 HCP holding.

<b><u>Example 10:</u></b>	<b><u>Opener</u></b>	<b><u>Responder</u></b>	
AQXX	1NT	"2H"	KXXXX
AXXX	<u>3S</u>	4S	X
XX	P		QXXXX
AKX			XX

**Note:** Opener takes a "super-acceptance" of a transfer to Spades when holding 17 HCP's and a 4-card support for Responder. For those familiar with the losing trick card method, by so-doing, Opener guarantees a 6 loser hand. Responder, previously intent on abandoning the bidding at 2 Spades, can re-assess his/her hand. Having re-evaluated it to be an 8 loser hand, Responder can now confidently go to a non-stopable 4S contract with their combined 22 HCP holding.

**Consideration #5:** With 5-4 in the Majors, Responder begins with Stayman rather than Jacoby. Only in this manner can Responder effectively handle both Major suits.

<u>Example 11:</u>	<u>Opener</u>	<u>Responder</u>
	AQX      1NT	"2C"
	AXX      "2D"	2H ("Drop Dead")
	XXXX      P	KXXX
	AJX	QX
		XX

<u>Example 12:</u>	<u>Opener</u>	<u>Responder</u>
	AQX      1NT	"2C"
	AXX      "2D"	2S ("Drop Dead")
	XXX      P	KXXXX
	AKXX	QXXX
		XXX
		X

<u>Example 13:</u>	<u>Opener</u>	<u>Responder</u>
	AQX      1NT	"2C"
	KQJ      "2D"	3H (Game-Forcing)
	KXX      4H	(Holding 5 Hearts
	QXXX	and 4 Spades)
		KJXX
		AXXXX
		AXX
		X

<u>Example 14:</u>	<u>Opener</u>	<u>Responder</u>
	AQ      1NT	"2C"
	KQJ      "2D"	3S (Game-Forcing)
	KXXX      3NT (Denial	(Holding 5 Spades
	QXXX      of a fit	and 4 Hearts)
		KJXXX
		AXXX
		AXX
		X
		In either Major)

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**MISCONCEPTIONS****DOGMATA RE-DEFINED**

**Background:** Numerous bidding misconceptions are present in the minds of many bridge players. Over the years of their bridge skills development, certain axioms, dogmas, or understandings have been ingrained to such a degree that they are believed to be sacrosanct and incapable of possible re-examination, modification, or even actual abandonment. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Flexibility in being able to modify one's bidding procedures is central to the development of improved bridge capabilities. Consider the following possible misconceptions!!!

**Misconception #1: "3NT is always a Shut-out bid!"**

One of the earliest bidding sequences a beginning bridge player learns is 1NT-3NT. The 3NT bid is a shut-out for, indeed, if Responder had been interested in inviting to, or ending in, a Slam contract, Responder would surely have taken a different tact. Thus, the unjustified misconception that all 3NT bids have the effect of closing the bidding. This is decidedly false! Consider the following:

**Example 1:** You (West) hold:

	<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
<b>AQJ10XX</b>				
<b>K</b>				
<b>JXXXX</b>	1S	3H	3NT	P
<b>X</b>	????			

There is nothing about West's hand that would condone confidence in a final 3NT contract. East's 3NT bid guarantees combined partnership values for game. East has at least one Heart stopper and fewer than three Spades. However, East did not say that he/she is confident that 3NT would be the best final contract. East's bid is a suggestion which West should correct to 4S.

**Example 2:** You (West) hold:

	<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
<b>KJXX</b>				
<b>X</b>				
<b>XXX</b>	1C	P	1S	P
<b>AKXXX</b>	2S	P	3NT	P
	????			

East has game values, four Spades and a balanced hand. He/she is suggesting, not demanding, an alternative contract. West's singleton Heart is a liability in 3NT, but, alternatively, an asset in 4S. Bid 4S!!!

---

**Misconception #2:** *"Opener must have a 4-card support in order to raise a one-of-a-Major response by Responder!"*

**Example 3:** You (West)hold: 

<b>KQX</b>	<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
<b>AQXX</b>				
<b>JXXXX</b>	1D	P	1S	P
<b>X</b>	????			

West's Diamonds are two weak to rebid 2D. West can neither bid 1NT with the Club singleton, nor can he/she bid 2H which would signify a much stronger hand (Reverse). West must re-bid 2S!

**Example 4:** You (West)hold: 

<b>X</b>	<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
<b>AQX</b>				
<b>AQXXX</b>	1D	P	1H	P
<b>XXXX</b>	????			

Although 2C would, in some holdings by East be best, West's Hearts are good enough, and his/her Clubs weak enough to justify 2H as a better re-bid than 2C. Do not fear, playing a 4-3 fit is a character-building scenario.

**Misconception #3:** *"Responder must have five (5) pieces to Support Opener's Minor suit opening!"*

**Example 5:** You (East)hold: 

<b>XXX</b>	<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
<b>X</b>				
<b>AXXX</b>	1D	P	????	
<b>QXXXX</b>				

Raise to 2D. No other action including a Pass is acceptable.

**Example 6:** You (East)hold: 

<b>XXX</b>	<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
<b>X</b>				
<b>AKXX</b>	1D	P	????	
<b>XXXXX</b>				

Raise to 2D. No other action is appropriate.

**Example 7:** You (East)hold: 

<b>AQ</b>	<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
<b>X</b>				
<b>QXXX</b>	1D	2H	????	
<b>JXXXXX</b>				

Raise to 3D. What other choice do you have?

**Misconception #4: "Only overcall with a strong suit!"**

**Example 8:** Your RHO bids 1C:

	<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
<b>XXXXX</b>				
<b>AK</b>				
<b>JXXX</b>		1C	????	
<b>AX</b>				

Overcall 1S. Would East prefer a better 5-card suit? Of course! Anyone would prefer our long suits to hold numerous honors, but one cannot always wait for the ideal circumstances. He who hesitates is lost!!!

**Example 9:** Your RHO bids 2D:

	<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
<b>A</b>				
<b>QXXXX</b>				
<b>AXX</b>		2D	????	
<b>AQXX</b>				

Overcall 2H. One must play the hand as providence dealt it.

**Misconception #5: "The stronger hand must be the declarer!"**

**Example 10:** You (East) hold:

	<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
<b>X</b>				
<b>QJ10XXX</b>				
<b>QJXX</b>	1S	P	1NT	P
<b>XX</b>	3NT	P	????	

Bid 4H. Opener has 20 or more HCP's and two or three Hearts.

**Example 11:** You (East) hold:

	<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
<b>QJXX</b>				
<b>X</b>				
<b>XXX</b>	1H	P	1S	P
<b>KJXXX</b>	3D	P	????	

Bid 3NT. Opener has 19+ HCP's and there is no other place to go.

**OPENING “2C” OR NOT? – CRITERIA REVISITED****DOGMATA RE-DEFINED**

Many means of assessment have been offered in an attempt to set forth a minimum criteria that would ordinarily signal enough of a holding to warrant an opening “2C”, strong, artificial, and forcing bid by a would-be-opener.

- a. Originally, a threshold of HCP’s coupled with a suit length requirement for unbalanced hands was used as the standard method of evaluation towards this question.

25 HCP’s with a 5-card suit.

23 HCP’s with a 6-card suit

21 HCP’s with a 7-card suit

- b. Some suggested setting a minimum threshold of at least 21+ HCP’s or more *without* consideration as to the distribution of the hand and the number of cards within a given suit.
- c. Still others, using the losing-trick count criteria suggested opening “2C” with any hand holding no more than four (4) losers.
- d. Some suggest that opener *not* bid “2C” as an opening call, even *if* an arbitrary point count or losing-trick count is satisfied, if, the hand contains two or more biddable suits.

Recently, a more exacting method of assessment has been set forth to deal with this issue. It embraces the suggestion that *any* hand, regardless as to its distribution, and whether or not it contains even two biddable suits, be considered as a candidate for a strong, artificial., and forcing “2C” opening if it satisfies the following two (2) requirements:

1. **It contains at least Nine (9) Playing Tricks;** i.e., not more than four (4) losing tricks.

and

2. **It contains at least as many “Quick Tricks” as losers,** defined as the number of defensive tricks one would take on defense against an opponent’s suit contract.

**AK = 2 Quick Tricks** (No suit may have more two (2) quick tricks)

**AQ = 1 ½ Quick Tricks**

**A = 1 Quick Trick**

**KQ = 1 Quick Trick**

**Kx = ½ Quick Trick** (Jacks are never “quick”)

3. **Always open “2C” with any hand with six (6) or more quick tricks and is there be a close decision, open “2C” if in doubt.**

Examine the example hands shown here and, using the criteria just presented, determine which of the following holdings qualify for a "2C" opening call.

Example 1:        **AKX**        (2 Quick Tricks)  
                      XX  
                      **AK**        (2 Quick Tricks)  
                      **AKXXXX**    (2 Quick Tricks)

This hand has 6 Quick Tricks - **Open "2C"**, do not even worry about counting Losers since at least 6 Quick Tricks are present.)

---

Example 2:        **AKQJXXX**    (2 Quick Tricks - No Losers)  
                      **QJX**        ( No Quick Tricks - 2 Losers)  
                      **A**         (1 Quick Trick - No Losers)  
                      **XX**        (No Quick Tricks - 2 Losers)

This hand contains four (4) Losers, but only three (3) Quick Tricks. **Open 1 Spade!** Remember for a "2C" opening bid, one must hold at least as many Quick Tricks as Losers.

---

Example 3:        **AKQXX**        (2 Quick Tricks - No Losers)  
                      **AKQXX**        (2 Quick Tricks - No Losers)  
                      **KX**         (½ Quick Trick - 1 Loser)  
                      **X**         (No Quick Tricks - 1 Loser)

This hand contains four and one-half (4½) Quick Tricks and only two (2) Losers. It would be foolish to open 1S and risk playing there. **Open "2C"**. Fear not having two (2) biddable suits. You will have the room to mention both below the game level even if Responder has a bust hand.)

---

Example 4:        **AKQJXX**        (2 Quick Tricks - No Losers)  
                      **AX**         (1 Quick Trick - 1 Loser)  
                      **X**         (No Quick Tricks - 1 Loser)  
                      **KQJ10**        (1 Quick Trick - 1 Loser)

This hand contains four (4) Quick Tricks and only three (3) Losers. Hands with three losers must have at least ten (10) Playing Tricks. This one qualifies. **Open "2C"**.

---

Example 5:        **AX**         (1 Quick Trick - 1 Loser)  
                      **AKJX**        (2 Quick Tricks - 1 Loser)  
                      **AQ10XXX**    (1½ Quick Tricks - 1 Loser)  
                      **X**         (No Quick Tricks - 1 Loser)

This hand contains four and one-half (4½) Quick Tricks and four (4) Losers. **Open "2C"**. Only 18 HCP's, you proclaim! Remember *Points Shhpoints!!* Go for it, do not hesitate, your new criteria are satisfied!!!!!!

---

**REVERSES BY OPENER - REVISITED****DOGMATA RE-DEFINED**

Reverses by the opening bidder seem to confuse and mystify some players. The subject of is especially complicated. However, understanding some of its principal characteristics affords a partnership the tools to be capable of finding the right final contract; a contract which would, otherwise, be difficult, if not impossible, were it not for the understandings incumbent upon the participant partners. Simply defined:

A **Reverse by opener** is an **unforced** re-bid to a suit **higher ranking** than his/her first bid suit, offered at opener's first opportunity to re-bid; **at the 2-Level, without jumping**.

**Examples:** a) 1C P 1H P  
2D A Reverse - Meets **all** stated Requirements.

b) 1C P 1D P  
1H Not a Reverse - It is made at the 1-Level  
Therefore, it is a simple "Up-the-Ladder" Re-bid.

c) 1D P 2C P  
2H Not a Reverse - Responder's 2-Level  
Response necessitated Opener's 2-Level bid. The  
principal here is that once Responder has bid at the 2-Level, opener does not  
require as big a hand to Reverse. Responder's 2-Level bid (evidencing 11-18  
HCP's) has forced opener's mandatory re-bid and opener must be afforded this  
latitude under this specific circumstance.

The **Strength** required by an opener in order to make a Reverse, as defined above, is dependent upon his/her distribution. Holding a 5-4 distribution, opener must have 17, or more, high-card points. In a hand comprised of a 6-4 or 6-5 distribution, opener may have even fewer high-card points. All of the following hands therefore meet the HCP requirement for opener to have reversed. Note that as the hand becomes more and more distributional, the HCP's required to legitimize the reverse become fewer.

d) 1C P 1S P  
2H All of the following hands qualify for a  
Reverse bid of 2 Hearts as shown here.

- 1) KX AQXX XX AKJXX
- 2) X KXXX KX AKQXXX
- 3) X AKXXX X AQXXXX

To re-define, **The Strength needed by opener to make a Reverse when holding a minimum 5-4 distribution is 17 or more HCP's. As opener's hand gets even more two-suited, and therefore, distributional, the high card point count required diminishes.**

**Suit Length:** When an opener reverses, his/her first bid suit is guaranteed to be longer than Opener's second bid suit, they are NEVER equal in length. If the two suits held by Opener were equal in length, Opener would have bid the higher-ranking suit first, evidencing 11-18 HCP's if opener's re-bid was not a jump-shift and 19 or more HCP's if opener were to jump-shift.

**Opener may never reverse with a 5-5 distribution**

**Examples:** e) AKXXX AQXXX AX X 1S P 2D P  
 2H Shows 11-18 HCP's  
 With the Spade suit Equal or Longer than the Hearts.

f) AXXX AQXXX AX X 1H P 2C P  
 2NT Here, Opener has opened his/her longer Major, and owing to Responder's apparent lack of a 4-card Spade holding (reflected by Responder's absence of an up-the-ladder response of 1 Spade), Opener need not, and, indeed, cannot mention his/her 4-Spade holding, because of the absence of 17 HCP's needed for this would-be Reverse had opener re-bid 2S over Responder's 2C bid. Opener's 2NT response shows a minimum of 11-14 HCP's and nothing about his/her distribution other than a lack of a 6-card Heart suit and a dislike for Clubs.

g) AKQXX AQXX AX X 1S P 1NT P  
 3H Shows 19+ HCP's  
 With the Spade suit Equal or Longer than the Hearts.

**Opener absolutely promises a third bid after his/her Reverse, unless Responder has gone to game himself/herself.** This promised re-bid feature of the system is critically important since it is the only avenue by which Opener could be afforded the opportunity so that he/she can fully describe the full distributional nature of his/her hand as shown in the next three examples.

**Examples:** h) 1D P 1S P  
 2H P 3C P Opener has promised a re-bid by virtue of  
 3D his/her initial Reverse. Once made,  
 Responder now knows Opener has 6 or more Diamonds & 4 Hearts.

i) 1D P 1S P  
 2H P 3C P Opener has now shown 5 or more Hearts  
 3H and Diamonds Longer than Hearts, Therefore,  
 Opener holds at least 6 or more Diamonds.

j) 1D P 1S P  
 2H P 3NT P Here, Opener volitionally chooses not to re-bid  
 P Opener could have re-bid if he/she so chose,  
 but Responder's game bid eliminated Opener's need to re-bid a 2<sup>nd</sup> time.

What about competitive auctions? The question arises as to whether or not Reverses are still in effect after the opponents choose to compete. The answer is unequivocally, **YES**.

**Reverses are Still on in competition**

**Examples:** k) 1D P 1S 2C  
 2H Opener's re-bid of 2H shows a big hand with 17, or more, HCP's. Opener could have fewer HCP's if holding a 6-5 distribution or better. Opener's Diamond holding is guaranteed longer than his/her Heart holding. The opponent's 2C overcall here does not diminish the impact of Opener's Reverse. Opener could have, alternatively, elected to have passed since Overcaller's bid has afforded Opener's partner another opportunity to re-bid. Instead, opener volitionally bid an unforced higher-ranking suit, a clear Reverse.

---

What about the forcing nature of a Reverse. Are they forcing to game? The answer is **No**. **Reverses are not forcing to game, but they are forcing for one round. Opener's reverse demands a re-bid from Responder.** Because opener's reverses are unlimited in so far as the number of HCP's held, Responder may not pass a Reverse bid from opener.

**A Reverse by opener is forcing for one round only.**

Now let's put all of the above learning into action and see how a Reverse bid and its implications and responsibilities upon the partnership come into play.

<u>North</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>South</u>
X	AJXXXX	1D	1S
AK10X	XX	2H	2S
AKJXXX	QX	3D	3NT
XX	KXX	P	

Firstly, notice that North here holds only 15 high-card points. Because of his/her 6-5 distribution, however, North opens 1 Diamond pre-planning to Reverse thus evidencing his/her Diamond holding being longer than his Heart holding. Opener's 6-5 distribution allows him/her to Reverse with fewer than 17 HCP's. After North's Reverse bid of 2H, South now knew that his/her 10 high-card points were enough for game. South, as Responder, could now feel confident that opener now promised a second re-bid following his/her Reverse, and that a 2S re-bid by South could not be passed. South could thereby have the freedom to now show his/her 6-card Spade suit. Opener's 2<sup>nd</sup> re-bid of 3D now showed a 6-card or longer Diamond suit holding, and parenthetically, a 5-card or longer Heart suit since the Diamond are irreversibly stated as being longer than the Hearts by having been bid first. South now confidently opted for a final 3NT contract. SEE HOW EASY!!

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**PRE-EMPTIVE OPENING BIDS RE-EXAMINED**

**DOGMATA RE-DEFINED**

Many bridge players are insecure and uncertain when dealing with pre-emptive bids. As a result, they find it difficult or confusing when it comes to applying sound principles dealing with potential pre-emptive bids of their own; else with responses or overcalls subsequent to partner's or opponent's opening pre-emptive bids. Let's explore some of these conditions while attempting to make sense of the proper actions most likely to produce a sound result in the majority of the instances. Applying the following principles will assist one in utilizing sound judgment when faced with these circumstances.

-----

**Misconception #1:**      ***"Never open a weak 2-bid when holding an outside 4-card Major suit holding."***

You Hold:      X                      (Open this hand with a 2-Diamond Pre-empt. Do  
                       JXXX                      not concern yourself with the possible loss of  
                       KQ109XX                potential Heart-fit. Bridge is a bidder's game.  
                       XX                         Go for it!! Partner will forgive you!)

-----

**Misconception #2:**      ***"It is permissible and appropriate to pre-empt over your opponent's pre-emptive opening bid."***

You Hold:      XX                      (You were prepared to open this hand with a 3H  
                       KJ10XXXX                pre-emptive bid of your own. Before you  
                       X                            get an opportunity to do so, your RHO opens  
                       KXX                        with a weak 2D call. Unwilling to be thwarted,  
   you consider the possibility of jumping to 3H as  
 previously intended.    WAIT! DO NOT PASS GO! DO NOT COLLECT ANY MONEY and, by the  
 way, **DO NOT BID 3H !!!!!!!!!!!**      **"ONE MUST NEVER PRE-EMPT OVER YOUR OPPONENT'S OR  
 PARTNER'S PRE-EMPT!"**

If you were to have jumped to 3H you would have shown a very strong hand as in the following holding, not weakness as exhibited above.

(This hand justifies a 3H overcall had your RHO opened with a pre-emptive 2D call.)	X AK10XXX AXX KQX
---	----------------------------

**Misconception #3: "It is permissible and appropriate to pre-empt over your partner's pre-emptive opening bid."**

You Hold: KQXXXX  
-----  
QXX  
XXXX (Partner opens a weak 2H bid. You were prepared to open a weak bid of your own, in this case, 2S. Resist the temptation!! Partner has done his/her best to thwart the opponent's perceived contract. **PASS!** Do not muddy the waters! Partner will otherwise take you for a strong forcing holding such as:

AKXXXX  
A  
KQX  
AXX (With this hand, any forcing Bid, subject to partnership

understanding, is justified. When partner pre-empts, showing a less-than-full opener, you must have a greater-than-full opener to offer a possibility of game, and thus, justify a forcing bid which any new suit offered would show.

**"NEVER PRE-EMPT OVER EITHER PARTNER'S NOR OPPONENT'S PRE-EMPT"**

-----  
**Misconception #4: "Greater than opening count values are needed opposite partner's opening weak 2-bid in order to respond further in advancing partner's pre-empt."**

If you hold less than opening count values along with support for your partner's weak pre-emptive opening bid, do not allow the opponents to exchange information. Do not be so obliging. What is relevant here is the degree to which you can support partner's pre-empt suit, and the proper application of The Law of Total Tricks ("THE LAW"). As a matter of principle, the weaker your hand (with support for partner) the more important it is to further partner's original pre-empt. With a fit for partner, **support with support.**

Partner Opens 2S - You Hold: KXXX  
XX (Bid 4S - Pre-empt)  
XX  
JXXXX  
AXX (Bid 3S - Pre-empt)  
XXXX Opener has 6 Spades  
AXX and you have 3, It is, therefore, safe to compete to the 3-Level  
XXX based upon The LAW, just as it was fully appropriate to bid 4S on the hand above with a total of ten Spades between the partners.

**THE LAW OF TOTAL TRICKS****DOGMATA RE-DEFINED**

The **Law of Total Tricks** (“**THE LAW**”) states that the **Total Number of Tricks** available to both partnerships on any deal is approximately equal to the **Total Number of Trumps** held by the respective sides. Remember: The **Total Number of Tricks** is defined as the **combined** total tricks available to **both sides** (assuming both the best declarer play and defense) if each side were to play in their best (longest) fit, assuming a reasonable balance of HCP’s and a less than bizarre distributional spread. The impact and significance of this fact becomes clearer if one examines the following scenario:

**Example:** Let’s hypothetically presuppose that the North-South team’s best (longest) fit is a 5-4 Spade fit. The East-West team’s best (longest) fit is a 4-4 Diamond fit. In this instance, North-South could take a total of nine tricks (5+4) in their Spade fit, whereas East-West could take a total of eight tricks (4+4) in their Diamond fit. The total number of combined trumps is 9 + 8, or 17, and the Total Number of Tricks available is this same 17.

	Q10XX	
	AQX	
	AX	
	10XXX	
XX		XX
XXXX		KXX
KQ10X		JXXX
KQX		AJXX
	AKJXX	
	J10X	
	XXX	
	XX	

**Note:** In the above example, North-South has nine (9) Spades, while East-West has eight (8) Diamonds for a total of 17 trumps. North-South can make 3-Spades (Nine Tricks) (Losing one Heart, one Diamond, and two Clubs); while East-West can make 2 Diamonds (Eight Tricks) (Losing two Spades, two Hearts, and the Ace of Diamonds), The total number of tricks available is 17.

Assuming the above-diagramed principal to be true, a team should, therefore, always **strive to compete to the level of the number of trumps held by their team, and conversely, should try not to let the opponents play at a level equal to their number of combined trumps, but rather, to push them one-level beyond same.**

Not-with-standing any of the following, a partnership should continue to bid one's Major suit games holding a combined partnership 26 or more HCP's (14 Losers or fewer) along with eight trumps.

### **The Ten Commandments of the Law of Total Tricks**

1. You are always safe bidding to the level equal to your number of combined partnership trumps. (With eight trumps compete to the eight-trick (2-level). The corollary is, therefore, to avoid bidding beyond your number of combined trumps.
2. Always try to define your trump length for partner so that the LAW can be properly implemented.
3. Your trump length is far more important than distribution or HCP's.
4. If the opponents have a fit and stop at the 2-level, balance to the 3-level even with as few as eight trumps for your partnership.
5. You will rarely get a bad result when competing to the 3-level with nine trumps. However, at the 4-level or beyond, it is sometimes too high even if your partnership holds ten trumps, especially with a 5-3-3-2 distribution.
6. A singleton is nice to have, but is in itself not sufficient reason to violate the LAW. On the other hand, voids, or freakish distributional hands such as a 2-suited hand are reasons to bid on, even if the partnership is otherwise short a trump to satisfy the LAW.
7. For tactical reasons, be eager to bid 4S over 4H, even before the opponents get there.
8. Never let the relative vulnerability prevent you from following the LAW.
9. **Major warning:** Beware of length in the opponent's suit. Your offensive potential is severely limited,
10. Although the LAW is not perfect and although you will occasionally receive a bad result from using the LAW, in the long run, its application is far more accurate for competitive bidding than the judgment of the best of players.

Now, having explained The LAW of Total tricks let's see if we can put it to practical use!

You are East in all of the following examples, how would you respond to the following bidding sequences applying the principals of the Law of Total Tricks.

XXXX	<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
XXX				
X	1S	Dbl.	??	(Bid 3S. This is a perfect weak
XXXXX				jump raise with the partnership having at
				least 9 Spades. Afraid? Take some vitamins and a
				tranquilizer!)

-----

AJXX	<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
QX				
QXX	2H	3C	??	(Pass. You have only an 8-card fit.
KXXX				The LAW states that you have a better chance
				to defeat 3C than to go further to the 3-level in Hearts.)

-----

AX	<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
AJXXXXXX			1H	Dbl.
AXX	2H	3D	??	(Bid 4H. Seven Hearts plus partner's
XX				three pieces means your partnership holds a
				10-card fit. Isn't bridge easy?

-----

XX	<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
XXX				
AQX	3H	P	??	(Bid 4H. Seven plus 3 equals ten.)
XXXXX				

-----

KXXXX	<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
--			1S	Dbl.
KJXXX	2S	4H	??	(Pass. You have only an 8-card trump
AJX				fit. 4H may not even make. If Responder
				Holds 5-pieces of trump, he can bid 4S.

-----

QXXX	<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
KXX	1D	Dbl.	2D	3C
QXXXX	3D	4C	??	(Bid 4D. Opener should have
X				five Diamonds to have competed to 3D over
				3C knowing you could have as few as 4 Diamonds. Your
				side, therefore, has ten Diamonds, hence the 4D competitive bid.

---

**BIDDING OVER THE OPPONENT'S ONE NO TRUMP****THE "DONT" CONVENTION****DOGMATA RE-VISITED and RE-DEFINED**

Overcalling subsequent to an opponent's opening bid of 1 NT is oft times misunderstood and, therefore, not frequently utilized by most beginning bridge players. The novice player becomes afraid to bid owing to the strength expressed by his/her opponent's 1NT opening bid, and is frightened, even intimidated, by the prospect of being set should he/she stoop to venture forth with any form of interference. Eventually the more experienced player, however, comes to realize that there is a legitimate need to find the inner fortitude to venture forth with such an overcall, and ultimately, the realization that the partnership need have some understanding as to which convention they wish to adopt in order to best accomplish this form of overcall interference. As one gains experience with bidding it soon becomes evident that although one can use natural bids in these instances, it is usually far better to have some conventional understanding with your partner. To date, we have explored together the Capeletti Convention which was presented in Lesson # 23 (Intermediate Bridge # 1 - Page 27).

Suppose, however, that you hold the following hand:

XX	<u>North</u>	<u>You</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>
KQXXX	1NT	???		
A				
KJXXX				

As you can see, the Capeletti Convention cannot handle this distributional holding, indeed, there is no way to adapt the bids available under the Capeletti Convention to deal with this particular Two-suited hand. Let's consider a constructive alternative to the Capeletti Convention.

**The "DONT" Convention** (Disturbing the Opponent's No Trumph), is, today, oft times used with great success. It is simple in its set-up and makes available the capability of dealing with a hand as shown above, as you will soon see. The realities that exist which make the "DONT" Convention the success that it has become are as follows:

1. Two-suited hands occur more frequently than their One-suited counterparts. One needs the capacity to show these Two-suited circumstances.
2. The alternative; i.e., to remain silent and to defend against the opponent's 1NT, is usually not a fruitful one.
3. Because this particular convention allows you to show Two-suited hands, one can disturb the opponent's more frequently --- Fun! Fun! Fun!
4. Although this convention eliminates the double as a means of evidencing an equivalent or better hand, it is infrequently necessary to do so, and if seemingly appropriate, seldom productive, for the opponents then seek, and oft times, secure a better alternative contract.

## THE "DONT" CONVENTION

1. *Points schmoins!* The key to successful interferences over an opponent's 1 NT opening bid is not points, rather vulnerability and distribution.
2. You are infrequently attempting to seek game. Rather you are venturing to enter the auction and, at the very least, trying to interfere with the opponent's capacity to communicate successfully.
3. This Convention is used in both the direct seat, as well as in the balancing seat, although, as with all balancing bids, the HCP strength required is more relaxed.
4. With strong balanced hands, the type with which, beforehand, one doubled to show equivalence, pass, Pass, PASS!!!! You are more likely to get a better score in duplicate competition than if you would enter the auction as you had been accustomed to doing previously.

### "DONT" BIDS

#### With One-suited Hands (Usually 6-cards or better)

"Double" = A One-suited Club, Diamond, Heart, or Spade Hand

"2S" = A One-suited Spade hand with a weaker HCP holding than the "double" above

#### With A Two-suited Hand (5-4 or better) Bid the Cheaper of Your Two Suits

"2C" = A Club suit and a higher-ranking suit as well

"2D" = A Diamond suit and a higher-ranking one as well (Obviously a Major suit)

"2H" = Shows Hearts and Spades

Your Right Hand Opponent has opened 1NT. You hold the following:

KJXXX	X	XX	K10XXX	(Bid "2C" - Shows Clubs and a Higher-ranking suit.)
XX	X	KQXXX	AJXXX	(Bid "2C" - Shows Clubs and a Higher-ranking suit.)
XX	AQXXX	XX	KQXX	(Bid "2C" - Shows Clubs and a Higher-ranking suit.)
AQXX	X	KQXXX	KXX	(Bid "2D" - Shows Diamonds and a Higher-ranking suit.)
X	KXXXX	AJXXX	QX	(Bid "2D" - Shows Diamonds and a Higher-ranking suit.)
KQJX	A10XXX	X	XXX	(Bid "2H" - Shows Hearts and Spades.)
AXXXX	KJXXX	XX	X	(Bid "2H" - Shows Hearts and Spades.)
XXX	AX	XX	AJ10XXX	("Double" to show a One-suited Hand.)
X	KXX	AQJXXX	JXX	("Double" to show a One-suited Hand.)
JXX	KQJXXX	KXX	X	("Double" to show a One-suited Hand.)
AQXXXX	XXX	AJX	X	("Double" to show a One-suited Hand.)
KJ10XXX	X	XXX	KX	(Bid "2S" to show a One-suited weak Spade hand.)

### Responses to THE "DONT" CONVENTION

If partner "Doubles", puppet "2C" so that partner can identify his/her suit.

If partner overcalls "2C" or "2D" showing the lower-ranking of a Two-suited hand,

- a. Pass with 3 or more cards in partner's bid suit
- b. Bid your own 6-card or better suit
- c. Otherwise, make the cheapest bid (alertable) asking partner to bid his/her second suit

If partner overcalls "2H" showing both Majors, select your choice of the two.

If partner overcalls "2S", pass.

Now let's put this new technique to use. The bidding has proceeded as follows:

<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>
1NT	"2C"	P	????
<u>You Hold:</u>		XXXX	
		A	(Pass - Partner has shown Clubs and a second
	(a)	QXXX	suit, probably Hearts. You are better off
		JXXX	remaining in Clubs!)
AK			(Bid 2H, your own suit. One rarely does this, but this is the
(b) XXXXXXXX			type of hand where you do. Partner will understand!)
XX			
XX		QXXXX	
		KXX	(Bid "2D" - Partner has shown Clubs and some second
	(c)	JXXX	Higher-ranking suit. You would obviously prefer
		X	to play in partner's other suit, whatever it is.)

-----

In the following examples, you are North, the DONT bidder:

<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>	
1NT	"2C"	P	"2D"	(a) KX (Pass, Partner has
P	????			XX selected your second
				AJXXX suit with his/her
	(b) KXXXX			KQXX inquiry.)
	A			(Bid 2S, your second
	XX			suit, as requested.)
	KXXXX			

-----

The bidding has proceeded as follows. What do you, the responder to the DONT bidder do?

<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>
1NT	"Dbl"	P	????
<u>You Hold:</u>		XXXX	
		AXX	(Bid "2C", the puppet bid sp that
	(a)	XXXX	partner can either pass if Clubs
		JX	be his/her single suit, else
			Bid that higher suit over which you will
	(b) KXXXXXX		Pass as requested.)
	XX		
	XXX		(Bid 2S - Over-rule partner's intent to interfere with
	X		his/her one-suited call. You have your own suit
			With which to interfere.)



USING THE STAYMAN CONVENTION WHEN HOLDING 5-4 IN THE MAJORS

DOGMATA RE-VISITED and RE-DEFINED

On multiple occasions in the past, we have discussed the fact that The Stayman Convention takes priority over Jacoby Transfer Bids when Responder to partner's opening 1 No Trump holds both a 4-card, and a 5-card, Major suit. We have shown that this is imperative. If Responder were to, alternatively, simply transfer into his/her 5-card Major, the partnership might miss a 4-4 Major Suit Golden fit, should it be present in the other Major suit. In the past, however, we have presented this topic in light of both game values and less than invitational values (so-called "Garbage Stayman"), but never, to date, have we explored the manner in which invitational values can also be exhibited under these same conditions, nor have we mentioned how the handling of such invitational value hands affects "Garbage Stayman" pursuits as a consequence. This is the goal of this review lesson.

A. Game Values: - With Responder holding 11 or more HCP's:

	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>You</u>	<u>West</u>	<u>You Hold:</u>	AJXXX
	1NT	P	"2C"			KXXX
						KJX
a)	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>You</u>	<u>West</u>		X
	1NT	P	"2C"	P		
	"2D"	P	<b>3S</b>		(Game-force evidencing 5 Spades and 4 Hearts.)	
	4S/3NT				Opener, having already denied four of either	
					Major suit, will either bid 4-Spades holding 3 Spades, else correct to 3NT	
					holding only 2 Spades.)	

b)	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>You</u>	<u>West</u>	
	1NT	P	"2C"	P	
	2H	P	<b>4H</b>		(Game, following Heart Fit Evidenced by Opener)

c)	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>You</u>	<u>West</u>	
	1NT	P	"2C"	P	
	2S	P	<b>4S</b>		(Game, following Spade Fit Evidenced by Opener)

You Hold: AJXX  
KXXXX  
KJX  
X

c)	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>You</u>	<u>West</u>	
	1NT	P	"2C"	P	
	"2D"	P	<b>3H</b>		(Game-force evidencing 5
	4H/3NT				Hearts and 4 Spades.)
					(Opener, having already denied 4 of either Major suit, will either bid 4-Hearts
					holding 3 Hearts, else correct to 3NT holding only 2 Hearts.)

d)	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>You</u>	<u>West</u>	
	1NT	P	"2C"	P	
	2H	P	<b>4H</b>		(Game bid following
					Heart Fit Evidenced)

e)	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>You</u>	<u>West</u>	
	1NT	P	"2C"	P	
	2S	P	<b>4S</b>		(Game bid following Spade Fit Evidenced)

With invitational values held by Responder, however, the bidding becomes slightly different.

**B. Invitational Values: - With Responder holding 9-10 HCP's:**

	<u>North</u> 1NT	<u>East</u> P	<u>You</u> "2C"	<u>West</u>	<u>You Hold:</u> QXXXX KXXX KJX X	
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g)	<u>North</u> 1NT "2D" Pass/2NT-4S/3NT	<u>East</u> P P	<u>You</u> "2C" <b>2S</b> P	<u>West</u> P	(Invitational, evidences 5 Spades and 4 Hearts.) Opener, having already denied four of either Major suit, will either pass with 3 Spades and a minimum (15) HCP's, bid 4 Spades with 3 Spades and a maximum (16-17) HCP's, bid 2NT with 2 Spades and a minimum of 15 HCP's, else 3NT with 2 Spades and a maximum of 16-17 HCP's. Responder will then pass Opener's decision.	
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h)	<u>North</u> 1NT 2H	<u>East</u> P P	<u>You</u> "2C" <b>3H</b>	<u>West</u> P (Inviting to Game)	
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i)	<u>North</u> 1NT 2S	<u>East</u> P P	<u>You</u> "2C" <b>3S</b>	<u>West</u> P (Inviting to Game)	
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You Hold: QXXX  
KXXXX  
KJX  
X

	<u>North</u> 1NT "2D" Pass/2NT-4H/3NT	<u>East</u> P P	<u>You</u> "2C" <b>2H</b>	<u>West</u> P	j) (Invitational, evidencing 5 Hearts and 4 Spades.) (Opener, having already denied 4 of either Major suit, will either pass with 3 Hearts and a minimum of 15 HCP's, bid 4 Hearts with 3 Hearts and a maximum of 16-17 HCP's, bid 2NT with 2 Hearts and a minimum of 15 HCP's, else 3NT with 2 Hearts and a maximum of 16-17 HCP's. Responder will then pass Opener's decision.)
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	<u>North</u> 1NT 2H	<u>East</u> P P	<u>You</u> "2C" <b>3H</b>	<u>West</u> P (Inviting to Game)	k) (Opener will pass with 15 HCP, and will continue to game, accepting the invitation, with a maximum of 16-17 HCP's.)
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	<u>North</u> 1NT 2S	<u>East</u> P P	<u>You</u> "2C" <b>3S</b>	<u>West</u> P (Inviting to Game. Opener will pass with a minimum of 15 HCP's, else continue to game with a maximum of 16-17 HCP's.)	
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**C. Less Than Invitational Values: - With Responder holding 0-8 HCP's:**

<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>You</u>	<u>West</u>	<u>You Hold:</u>	QXXXX
1NT	P	???			KXXX
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					X

Remember, when using “Garbage Stayman”, the Responder is prepared to find acceptable any of the possible three bids, “2D”, 2H or 2S, that are anticipated from Opener in response to Responder’s “2C” bid. Notice that under the circumstances shown above, however, if Responder were to bid Stayman (“2C”) and Opener were to respond either 2H **or** 2S evidencing an 8- or 9-card Major suit fit, Responder could then drop the bidding and pass with his weak holding. However, if Opener were to respond “2D”, holding no 4-card Major, Responder would have no place to go. If Responder were to try and recover and bid 2S hoping Opener would pass, Opener could not distinguish Responder’s call of 2S as in B(g) above, and Opener might, with maximum values, continue on to either 3NT or 4S, both of which are unmakeable with Responder’s minimum values.

Under these conditions, then, when holding 5-4 in the Majors and less than invitational values (0-8 HCP’s), Responder must forego attempting to find a hypothetical 4-4 Major suit fit and simply transfer into his/her 5-card Major suit using a Jacoby transfer bid(See examples m) and n). The exception to this would be if the partnership had the understanding as to the use of so-called “Crawling Stayman”, not dealt within this lesson.

m)	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>You</u>	<u>West</u>	<u>You Hold:</u>	QXXXX
	1NT	P	“2H”	P		KXXX
	2S	P	P			XXX
						X

(Or)

n)	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>You</u>	<u>West</u>	<u>You Hold:</u>	QXXX
	1NT	P	“2D”	P		KXXXX
	2H	P	P			XXX
						X

(But with)

o)	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>You</u>	<u>West</u>	<u>You Hold:</u>	QXXX	(or)	QXXX
	1NT	P	“2C”	P		KXXX		JXXXX
	2D/2H/2S	P	P			XXXX		XXXX
						X		-----