

Conventional Wisdom Lite

Filling out a basic 2/1 convention card – part 2



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MAJOR OPENING

Just about everybody plays five-card majors, so check the box underneath “5.” Occasionally it is good strategy to open with a strong four-card major in third or fourth seat, but unless this is something you’d expect your partnership to do frequently, you should also check “5” next to “3rd/4th.”

RESPONSES

Unless you are playing something conventional (like “Bergen Raises”), mark the Double Raise (1♠–3♠ or 1♥–3♥) as “Inv.” This is your typical “limit raise,” which should be 4+ card support and about 10–12 counting distribution.

“After Overcall”: Make sure you and your partner have an agreement. The old-fashioned approach is to ignore the overcall, so the Double Raise would still be Invitational. If you use a cuebid of the opponents’ overcall suit to show a strong raise, then you would play the jump raise as weak (preemptive with 4+ card support). If you haven’t discussed this, or don’t know what I am talking about it, just mark it as “Inv.”

Though there is no place to mark it, most players play the double raise as weak after an opposing takeout double. Summary: Make sure you and your partner know what a raise from 1♠ to 3♠ (or 1♥ to 3♥) shows if the opponents don’t come in at all, if they overcall, or if they double.

Optional: If you use the popular Jacoby 2NT convention, check the red 2NT box. You can leave out the 3NT box. If you play a double jump in a new suit as a Splinter bid, check the “Splinter” box. Reminder: Anything in red is Alertable (by the partner of the person who makes the bid).

Because a two-level response is forcing to game, a 1NT response (to 1♠ or 1♥) can be made with up to

12 HCP. In “Standard,” a 1NT response would be limited to 6–10. As to “Forcing” or “Semi-forcing,” I recommend the latter. “Semi-forcing” is simpler and really means *not forcing* at all, since opener can pass. “Forcing” means opener won’t pass. There are many online sources to read about the pros and cons of each way. Bottom line: Pick one way or the other and mark the box accordingly. Either way, remember that the 1NT response is 6–12. Since it is in blue, the partner of the 1NT bidder Announces (“forcing” or “semi-forcing”).

Anything else in this section, such as Drury, can be added as the partnership gains more experience.

MINOR OPENING

Check the box under “3” for both 1♣ and 1♦ openings. A 1♦ opening will usually contain at least four cards in diamonds. But, if opener is 4=4=3=2 (in that order), he has no choice but

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MAJOR OPENING		MINOR OPENING	
Expected Min. Length	4 5	Expected Min. Length	4 3 ^{NF} 0–2 ^{Conv.}
1st/2nd	<input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	1♣	<input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
3rd/4th	<input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	1♦	<input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
RESPONSES		RESPONSES	
Double Raise: Force <input type="checkbox"/> Inv. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Weak <input type="checkbox"/>		Double Raise: Force <input type="checkbox"/> Inv. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Weak <input type="checkbox"/>	
After Overcall: Force <input type="checkbox"/> Inv. <input type="checkbox"/> Weak <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		After Overcall: Force <input type="checkbox"/> Inv. <input type="checkbox"/> Weak <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Conv. Raise: 2NT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3NT <input type="checkbox"/> Splinter <input type="checkbox"/>		Forcing Raise: J/S in other minor <input type="checkbox"/>	
Other: _____		Single raise <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	
1NT: Forcing <input type="checkbox"/> Semi-forcing <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		Frequently bypass 4+♦ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
2NT: Forcing <input type="checkbox"/> Inv. <input type="checkbox"/> _____ to _____		1NT/1♣ _____ 6 to 10	
3NT: _____ to _____		2NT Forcing <input type="checkbox"/> Inv. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 11 to 12	
Drury <input type="checkbox"/> : Reverse <input type="checkbox"/> 2-Way <input type="checkbox"/> Fit <input type="checkbox"/>		3NT: 13 to 15	
Other: _____		Other: _____	

to open with a three-card diamond suit. We never open the bidding in a two-card suit unless we are playing a special system (such as “short club”). With 3–3 in the minors, open 1♣. By checking “3” under each you are indicating you play the mainstream way – nothing fancy.

RESPONSES

Double Raise: See the discussion on this topic under Major Opening. All the same agreements should apply. Down the road, your partnership might wish to explore “inverted minors.” But for now, mark the Double Raise the same way as in the sister section on Major Opening.

I suggest checking the box that says “Frequently bypass 4+♦.” This means that your priority in responding to 1♣ is to show a four-card major (as opposed to diamonds).

For the 1NT response to 1♣, just mark 6–10. We never use a forcing or semi-forcing notrump after a minor-suit opening bid. Mark the 2NT response as 11–12 (invitational) and 3NT as 13–15.