

# 1NT THE ULTIMATE PREEMPT

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## Introduction

2♣	Invitational Puppet Stayman
2♦ 2♥ 2♠ 3♣	To play
2NT	Game Forcing
3♦	Minor Suit Slam Try
3♥ 3♠	Forcing
Brozel Escape	
14-17 NT	in 4 <sup>th</sup> seat
Lebensohl	
Quiz	

## Introduction

When you think of a preemptive bid, you probably think of an opening bid at the two, three or four level. These preempts are effective and important to a good, aggressive game of bridge. But, the most effective preempt you can make is actually 1NT. An important bridge maxim is "whoever bids NT first wins." How true that is!

Since 1NT is such an effective preempt, it seems logical to be able to use it as frequently as possible. Our opening 1NT shows 10-13 HCP, regardless of vulnerability (only in the passout seat does it change to 14-17 HCP). Using 1NT to show 15-17 or 16-18 HCP is a waste of a good bid, because it just doesn't occur frequently enough. About 1/3 of all hands contain 10-13 HCP. You will be dealt 15-17 HCP about 10% of the time and 16-18 HCP about 7% of the time. This does not mean you will get to open 1/3 of all hands 1NT. This is because of distribution or someone opening in front of you. But you will get to open many more hands with the ultimate preempt... 1NT. Why does a weak NT opening work out so well? There are several reasons:

- \* It puts tremendous pressure on the opponents (The Ultimate Preemptive Factor).
  - \* They must guess whether their hand is worth a bid at the two-level.
    - \* If they pass they might miss a game.
    - \* If they bid they might end up in a poor contract for lack of room to discover their best fit.
    - \* If they bid they have less room to figure out how many points their side has and overbid or underbid.
    - \* If they bid they might catch their partner with nothing and suffer a large low-level penalty.
  - \* Weak NT auctions get to game immediately whenever possible (i.e. 1NT - PASS - 4♥). In this auction the opponents do not know if the 4♥ bidder has 6 hearts and 19 HCP or is just making a preemptive bid with 7 hearts and 0 HCP. Similar to the auction of 2♥ - PASS - 4♥, it puts the opponents to a guess.
  - \* It puts your partner in a comfortable position.
  - \* Partner will have a lot of knowledge about your hand from your first bid and feel confident throughout the auction.

These are just some of the reasons to play Weak NTs. Of course, as with any system, you will experience some bad results because of it. Guaranteed. The bad results might be because of:

- \* Playing the contract from the wrong side.
- \* Bidding and going down when the hand would have been passed out.

\* Getting doubled in a partscore AND being set more than the value of the opponents game (this happens much less frequently than you might think).

When you play Weak NTs, with Strong NT hands you open 1 of a suit and rebid 1NT. Is this a major disadvantage? Not significantly. I've found that opening 1 of a suit with stronger hands sometimes helps to evaluate game and slam possibilities better.

If the system is played correctly, the good results will outweigh the bad. I personally tracked the matchpoints on hundreds of hands where my partner or I opened a Weak NT. The average was approximately 65%. You don't have to be a statistician or a bridge expert to realize the significance of that figure. Take the good results with the bad. In the long run you will be well ahead of the strong notrumpers.

You may open 1NT with semi-balanced distributions (i.e. 5-4-2-2, 6-3-2-2, 7-2-2-2), even if the two doubletons are unstopped! 1NT can also be opened with a five card major if it is not strong enough to open 1♥ or 1♠ (10-11 HCP). Possible 1NT openers are:

♠ KJ5	♠ 984	♠ T7
♥ A943	♥ Q8542	♥ AQJ
♦ Q842	♦ JT	♦ K86532
♣ 97	♣ AKJ	♣ J3

### Other Bids When Playing a Weak NT

With the strong NT hands you must open of a suit. A rebid of 1NT shows 14-16. A rebid of 2NT shows 17-19. Also, there are other auctions where you can infer extra values from a NT rebid. For example, 1♠ - 2♣ - 2NT (opponents passing) would show 14-16; 3NT, 17-19.

A common problem with any range of NT is what to do with NT strength and a five card major. What do you rebid after you open 1♥, partner responds 1♠ and you have a 5-3-3-2 type hand? For weak NT users some of the choices are:

- A) After 1♥-1♠, a 1NT rebid is standard (12-14). Make up a bid with a 5-3-3-2, 15-17 (rebid your five card suit or bid a three card suit).
- B) After 1♥-1♠, a 1NT rebid is a strong NT, 14-16. Open 1NT with a 5-3-3-2, 10-13 and a five card major.
- C) After 1♥-1♠, a 1NT rebid is a strong NT, 14-16. Open 1NT with a 5-3-3-2, 10-11 and a five card major. With 12-13, and a 5-3-3-2 rebid 2♣ unless your doubleton is in clubs, then bid 2♦ (like a forcing NT response).

I've played all three systems.

- A) is too awkward.
  - B) is good because you get to open with the ultimate preempt more often, but
  - C) is slightly better because the "field" will be opening 1♥ with your hand and you will lose on partscore hands where the major suit plays better than NT. The ambiguous 2♣/2♦ rebids rarely occur and cause a problem even less.
- CI)

North	South	North	South
♠ KJ5	♠ Q98	1♦	1♥
♥ QT3	♥ KJ62	1NT	PASS
♦ AJT9	♦ T85		
♣ A84	♣ 762		

North's 1NT rebid shows 14-16.

North	South	North	South
♠ KJ5	♠ Q98	1♦	1♥
♥ QT3	♥ KJ62	2NT	PASS
♦ AJT9	♦ T85		
♣ AK4	♣ 762		

North's 2NT rebid shows 17-19.

North	South	North	South
♠ AKJ3	♠ Q982	1♦	1♥
♥ 98	♥ KJ62	1♠	2♣
♦ K972	♦ T85	PASS	
♣ KT8	♣ Q62		

North's should bid 1♠ to show the four card suit.

North	South	North	South
♠ KJ92	♠ AQ4	1♦	1♥
♥ KJT	♥ AQ52	1NT	3NT
♦ KJ6	♦ T95	PASS	
♣ KJ5	♣ T72		

With such a balanced and NT oriented hand, North should skip over the four card spade suit. South has the option of going through Checkback Stayman (see next section) to find a 4-4 spade fit.

### Checkback Stayman

After the bidding goes 1♣/1♦/1♥ - 1 major - 1NT (14-16):

- \* **2♣ is a relay to 2♦** and says you either want to play 2♦ OR have invitational (but not game forcing) values and are interested in a major suit game. If you make any bid after the relay to 2♦, then you are showing invitational values.
- \* **2♦ promises game forcing** values (good 11+ HCP) and tends to show interest in a major suit game. Rules of a game forcing auction apply (fast arrival denies slam interest, jumps in NT show extra strength). See section on fast arrival for a more detailed description.
- \* **A new suit past 2♦ at the two or three level is a weak hand**, non-forcing (the only exception is a reverse in the auction 1♣/1♦ - 1♥ - 1NT - 2♣)

Checkback Stayman can also be played after a rebid of 2NT. This is common called Wolff Signoff. 3♣ shows a weak hand that wants to signoff. 3♦ creates a game force.

North	South	North	South
♠ A83	♠ J64	1♣	1♥
♥ QJ8	♥ AT73	1NT	2♣
♦ KQJ	♦ T97642	2♦	
♣ K953	♣ ---		

1NT shows 14 to 16. 2♣ is a relay to 2♦ and enables North to play the contract there.

North	South	North	South
♠ QJ	♠ T852	1♦	1♠
♥ AQJ	♥ 73	1NT	2♣
♦ JT94	♦ AQT83	2♦	
♣ QJT7	♣ 96		

Again South wants to play 2♦, so he goes through 2♣.

North	South	North	South
♠ K73	♠ QJ862	1♦	1♠
♥ A9	♥ J8543	1NT	2♥
♦ A9863	♦ 72	2♣	
♣ AJ5	♣ 6		

2♥ is weak promising at least 5-4 in spades and hearts.

North	South	North	South
♠ A73	♠ KQT94	1♦	1♠
♥ K2	♥ A85	1NT	2♣
♦ QJ532	♦ 96	2♦	2♠
♣ AQT	♣ 964	4♣	

Going through 2♣, and then bidding 2♠, South shows invitational values with 5 spades. North can PASS, bid 2NT, 3♠, 3NT or 4♠. He chooses 4♠.

North	South	North	South
♠ QT86	♠ AK64	1♣	1♥
♥ KJ7	♥ Q9863	1NT	2♦
♦ AJ6	♦ T6	2♠	4♣
♣ AJ3	♣ K8		

South forces to game with 2♦, and North shows 4 spades. South denies any interest in slam with 4♣.

North	South	North	South
♠ KJ4	♠ AQ832	1♦	1♠
♥ KJ7	♥ AT84	1NT	2♦
♦ KJ32	♦ Q6	2♠	3♠
♣ QJ6	♣ K8	4♠	

2♠ shows 3 spades (don't worry about the distribution).

3♠ is forcing and shows at least mild slam interest.

4♠ shows NO slam interest (his hand couldn't be too much worse!).

## Responses to 1NT

Our responses to 1NT are very scientific. You can find out opener's point count, length in the majors or minors, and can escape into a good contract if 1NT is doubled.

- \* 2♣ is a Modified Puppet Stayman promising invitational values (11+ -15-), but denying game forcing values.
- \* 2♦/2♥/2♠/3♣ shows a five card or longer suit (3♣ shows 6) and 0-11 HCP.
- \* 2NT is game forcing showing a balanced or semi-balanced hand, interest in a major suit game and 15+ HCP (similar to 2♦ Game Forcing Stayman).
- \* 3♦ shows interest in a club or diamond slam (similar to minor suit stayman).
- \* 3♥/3♠ shows 5+ of that suit and an unbalanced hand. Game Forcing.
- \* 3NT, 4♥, 4♠, 6♥, 6♠, 6NT, 7NT are to play.
- \* 4♣ is Standard Gerber.
- \* 4NT invites 6NT.
- \* 5NT invites 7NT.

If the opponents overcall:

- \* Lebensohl (Fast Action Denies Stopper)
- \* Negative Doubles (at the 3-level only)

If the opponents double (regardless of what the double means):

- \* Brozel Escapes (Mandatory Reopen)

## 2♣ - Modified Invitational Puppet Stayman (*Weak NT only*)

A bid of 2♣ in response to 1NT shows enough values to invite game, but not enough to force to game. The range for this bid is 12 (or a very good 11) to a bad 15 HCP. Opener's bids 2♥ or 2♠ with a 5 card major, 3♣ or 3♦ with a 6 card minor or bids 2♦ with any other hand. After 2♦ you bid 4 card majors up the line.

NOTE: This is different than the normal Puppet Stayman used in 2NT - Game Forcing or after a 2♣ opener and a 2NT rebid.

Here are some examples of how two hands might be bid:

North	South	North	South
♠ A974	♠ JT	1NT	2♣
♥ A32	♥ T973	2♦	2♥
♦ T853	♦ AKQ	2♠	2NT
♣ QJ	♣ K862		

2♦ shows no 5 card major or 6 card minor; 2♥, 4 or more hearts; 2♠, no heart fit, but 4 spades and a minimum hand (with a maximum you would jump to 3♠); 2NT, no spade fit.

North	South	North	South
♠ QJ8	♠ AK953	1NT	2♣
♥ K4	♥ A65	2♦	3♠
♦ A9762	♦ JT84	4♠	
♣ Q72	♣ 9		

3♠ shows a 5 card suit. North is happy to accept the invitation.

NOTE: Since 2♣ already denied a game forcing hand, 3♠ is non-forcing.

North	South	North	South
♠ JT4	♠ A53	1NT	2♣
♥ AQJ84	♥ KT52	2♥	4♥
♦ K3	♦ AQT94		
♣ T84	♣ 6		

2♥ is a 5 card suit with 10-11 HCP. South's hand reevaluates to a 4♥ bid.

North	South	North	South
♠ AT2	♠ K53	1NT	2♣
♥ K986	♥ T	2♦	3♣
♦ 653	♦ QJT	3NT	
♣ AT	♣ KQJ984		

Since 2♣ already promises invitational values, 3♣ emphasizes the club suit. North realizes how valuable the CA is, and accepts.

### 2♦/2♥/2♠/3♣ - To Play (*Weak NT Only*)

After a 1NT opener from partner, these are signoff hands (2♦/2♥/2♠/3♣ respectively):

♠ 9843	♠ QJ3	♠ 86542	♠ 952
♥ J8	♥ QJ872	♥ 732	♥ 53
♦ Q8653	♦ KJ4	♦ 653	♦ T8
♣ AJ9	♣ J2	♣ 94	♣ J98642

Opener is expected to pass, but can raise with good 4 card support or compete with any 4 card support. 6 clubs are required for 3♣, but only 5 are necessary for 2♦, 2♥ or 2♠. The range for this bid is 0-11 (with a very good 11, you can bid 2♣). With a no trumpish hand and good entries you might consider passing 1NT as opposed to bidding 2♦ or 3♣. Never pass 1NT with a five card major.

### 2NT - Game Forcing (*Weak NT Only*)

Playing 2NT as game forcing is quite effective combined with our 2♣ as Invitational Puppet Stayman, and 3♦ looking for a minor suit slam. It is superior to Two-Way Stayman because you get to describe all the same hands Two-Way Stayman does, plus you get to play 2♦. 2NT Game Forcing is easy to respond to because you bid your shape as if partner opened 2NT (standard).

After 1NT - 2NT:

- \* 3♣ - Puppet Stayman (the most common rebid)
- \* 3♦ - 5 hearts
- \* 3♥ - 5 spades
- \* 3♠ - 5-4 in the minors, 12-13 HCP
- \* 3NT - No interest in any other contact

After 1NT - 2NT - 3♣:

- \* 3♦ - One or both four card majors
- \* 3♥ - 5 hearts
- \* 3♠ - 5 spades
- \* 3NT - Neither 4 nor 5 of either major

After 1NT - 2NT - 3♣ - 3♦:

- \* 3♥ - 4 spades
- \* 3♠ - 4 hearts
- \* 3NT - No interest in a four card major, was interested in a five card major
- \* 4♣ - 4 hearts and 4 spades, asks 2NT bidder to bid their major (or better major with both)

North	South	North	South
♠ J863	♠ AQT	1NT	2NT
♥ KJ7	♥ AQ63	3♣	3♦
♦ Q853	♦ K9	3♥	3NT
♣ AJ	♣ Q762		

3♣ is Puppet Stayman, 3♦ shows one or both four card majors, 3♥, a four card spade suit, 3NT denies a spade fit.

North	South	North	South
♠ AJ85	♠ KQ93	1NT	2NT
♥ QJ62	♥ K94	3♣	3♦
♦ JT	♦ 8532	4♣	4♠
♣ QJ93	♣ AK		

In this auction, 4♣ shows both majors.

North	South	North	South
♠ JT7	♠ AQ954	1NT	2NT
♥ J2	♥ A87	3♣	3♠
♦ A842	♦ K65	4♠	
♣ AT94	♣ QJ		

3♣ - Puppet Stayman, 3♠ - 5 spades, 4♠ - Spade fit, no serious slam interest (a cuebid would indicate a fit and serious slam interest).

North	South	North	South
♠ A95	♠ K6	1NT	2NT
♥ JT852	♥ AKQ43	3♦	3♠
♦ K62	♦ Q7	4♦	4NT
♣ Q9	♣ AKT82	5♦	6♥

3♦ - 5 card heart suit (transfer), 3♠ - Cuebid, 4♦ - Cuebid, 4NT - RKC for hearts, 5♦ - 1 key card (can't be 4 after a weak NT opening), 6♥ - Good Job!

North	South	North	South
♠ AT7	♠ KQJ96	1NT	2NT
♥ A6	♥ K94	3♣	3♠
♦ A843	♦ K75	4♦	4NT
♣ T842	♣ AK	5♣	6♠

3♣ - Puppet Stayman, 3♠ - 5 card suit, 4♦ - Cuebid showing slam interest, 4NT - RKC for spades, 5♣ - 0 or 3 keycards (obviously 3 from South's hand), 6♠ - South can see 11 tricks and figures there is likely a 12th trick somewhere since North cuebid 4♦.

### 3♦ - Minor Suit Slam Try (1 or 2 suited) (Weak NT Only)

This shows a hand that is interested in a minor suit slam. It is similar to Minor Suit Stayman. This bid is game forcing and asks opener to show his shape. The responses are:

- 3♥ - At least 4 clubs
- 3♠ - At least 4 diamonds
- 3NT - Neither 4 clubs nor 4 diamonds
- 4♣ - At least 4 clubs and 4 diamonds

North	South	North	South
♠ T873	♠ A6	1NT	3♦
♥ AJ	♥ K94	3♠	4♦
♦ AKT3	♦ QJ875	4♥	4NT
♣ T84	♣ AKQ	5♣	6♦

3♦ expresses interest in a minor suit slam, 3♠ shows 4+ diamonds, 4♦ agrees on diamonds as trump, 4♥ is a cuebid (first or second round control), 4NT is Roman Key Card Blackwood for diamonds. The 5♣ response is 0 or 3 key cards (South knows it's 3).

North	South	North	South
♠ Q6	♠	1NT	3♦
♥ AJ982	♥ T6	3NT	4♦
♦ AT9	♦ KQJ8732	4♥	4S
♣ 863	♣ AKJ5	5♦	6♦

After North shows no four card minor, South's bid of 4♦ shows 6+ diamonds. 4♥ is an encouraging cuebid (5♦ would be discouraging). South cuebids 4S. North with nothing more to say bids 5♦. South has an easy 6♦ call.

### 3♥/3♠- Forcing (Weak NT Only)

When your partner opens a Weak NT, and you have a game forcing hand which is unbalanced and contains at least one 5 card or longer major, you should forego the 2NT response and bid the longer major at the three level. This action is forcing to game, shows length in the bid suit and asks partner to:

- A) Bid 3NT with only 2 card support
- B) Raise to 4 with 3 card support
- C) Cuebid a new suit with 3 or more card support and a good control

North	South	North	South
♠ Q642	♠ AKJT85	1NT	3S
♥ 9853	♥ 6	4♣	4NT
♦ A9	♦ KQ84	5♣	6S
♣ AQ5	♣ K7		

3♠ shows a game forcing hand, unbalanced. 4♣ is a cuebid in support of spades, showing 12-13 HCP, at least 3 card support and the CA or CK. 4NT is RKC for spades. 5♣ shows 0 or 3. South could bid 5♠ to ask it was 0 or 3, but he knows North has at least the CA since South has the CK.

North	South	North	South
♠ 94	♠ AKJT85	1NT	3S
♥ KJ753	♥ 6	3NT	4♦
♦ 752	♦ KQ84	4S	
♣ AQ9	♣ K73		

3NT by North shows a doubleton spade. 4♦ is a second suit. 4♥ would be a cuebid for diamonds by North, so he simply corrects. South is discouraged and passes. Note that a cuebid by North can't be a cuebid for spades, because 3NT denied 3 spades. North should raise even with a 4-3-3-3 distribution because South is unbalanced. South could have gone through 2NT with possible interest in NT.

North	South	North	South
♠ 62	♠ AKJT85	1NT	3S
♥ Q43	♥ 6	3NT	4♦
♦ AT972	♦ KQ84	5♣	6♦
♣ AJ5	♣ K3		

The auction continues the same except this time North has great diamond support and announces his enthusiasm by cuebidding 5♣. South figures the slam is a decent shot.

## Brozel Escapes after a DOUBLE

One reason people fear playing the Weak NT is that you might get doubled and go for a telephone number. This escape system will get you out of almost all doubles. It is a bit more complex than most escape systems, but well worth learning. Look in Appendix A for a detailed description of other escape systems to compare to ours.

Regardless of what the double means (penalty, one suited hand, two suited hand, the majors), the escapes are on. Two suited hands are 4-4 or better. One suited hands will contain a 5 card suit (or 4-3-3-3 distribution).

- 2♣ - Clubs & Hearts
- 2♦ - Diamonds & Hearts
- 2♥ - Spades & Hearts
- 2♠ - Spades

REDOUBLE - Two suited hand without hearts (Clubs & Diamonds, Clubs & Spades, Diamonds & Spades).

PASS - Forces partner to redouble. You either want to play 1NT redoubled or you have a one-suited hand and will pull the redouble to that suit.

NOTE: If the auction proceeds 1NT - Pass - Pass - DOUBLE, the 1NT opener just bids his distribution as if the auction went 1NT - DOUBLE. He would bid 2♣ with clubs and hearts, redouble with both minors or spades & a minor, pass with a single suiter, etc. If the auction proceeds Pass - 1NT - Pass - Pass - DOUBLE, the escapes are off and bidding proceeds naturally, because the cards are unlikely to be seriously stacked against you (and a big penalty against the opponents is likely). Here are some example escape hands:

North	South	North	East	South	West
♠ K53	♠ 97	1NT	DBL	PASS	PASS
♥ AJ9	♥ T8753	RDBL	PASS	2♥	
♦ Q986	♦ T73				
♣ T53	♣ 964				

South's PASS is forcing showing either a hand that wants to play 1NT redoubled (usually 10+ HCP) or a single-suited hand. 2♥ shows a heart suit. If East or West bid in any of these escapes sequences, North and South should SHUTUP QUICKLY! A good general principle is that when you've successfully escaped, the opponents are in a very awkward position. Let them guess what to do!

North	South	North	East	South	West
♠ 653	♠ 9	1NT	DBL	2♣	PASS
♥ AQJ5	♥ K862	2♥			
♦ K863	♦ T75				
♣ J8	♣ T9764				

South's 2♣ shows at least 4 clubs and hearts. North takes his preference.

North	South	North	East	South	West
♠ AJT8	♠ KQ63	1NT	DBL	RDBL	PASS
♥ 95	♥ T8	2♣	PASS	2♦	PASS
♦ T85	♦ 7642	2♠			
♣ KQ43	♣ JT3				

South's redouble shows a two-suited hand without hearts (Clubs & Diamonds, Clubs & Spades, Diamonds & Spades). When South corrects 2♣ to 2♦, North knows he must have diamonds and spades and re-corrects to 2♠.

North	South	North	East	South	West
♠ KJ9	♠ T83	1NT	DBL	RDBL	PASS
♥ A986	♥ 53	2♦			
♦ 9853	♦ QJT4				
♣ QJ	♣ K863				

After a redouble, North's response will usually be 2♣, but on this hand he knows diamonds or spades will be a better contract than 2♣.



North	South	North	East	South	West
♠ QJ3	♠ 87	1NT	DBL	RDBL	PASS
♥ Q84	♥ 975				
♦ Q953	♦ KJT4				
♣ QJ2	♣ KT53				

Just in case South has a diamond fit, North bids 2♦. North is equally happy playing 2♣ as 2S, so, 2♦ is right just in case South has this hand. Notice that if North bids 2♣ they will end up playing their 4-3 fit instead of their 4-4 fit. Responding to the redouble is a logical problem... What might partner have?

North	South	North	East	South	West
♠ T85	♠ 653	1NT	DBL	PASS	PASS
♥ K83	♥ QJ83				
♦ KQJ3	♦ 752				
♣ Q74	♣ T85				

Yuck! Sometimes you won't have a one or two-suited hand and you will have to lie and tell partner you have a one-suited hand.

North	South	North	East	South	West
♠ KJ	♠ Q854	1NT	DBL	RDBL	PASS
♥ Q9852	♥ 6				
♦ J8	♦ T9652				
♣ QJ83	♣ 762				

EEEEK! This is the hand we fear, although it hasn't happened to us (yet!). Everyone's bidding was normal. After the two suited RDBL, North hopes with 2♣, but South bids 2♦ to show diamonds and spades. South tries 2♥ showing a five card suit just in case South has T854 763 T965 76, making 2♥ a better spot (a 5-2 ♥ fit is also possible) or T8543 6 T965 762, making 2♠ better.

Don't let this hand scare you off from the Weak NT, these type of hands will be rare and more often than not the opponents will bid something and rescue you on these hands where THEY will be doomed for a bad result. Weak NTs are really exciting!

North	South	North	East	South	West
♠ A86	♠ J53	1NT	DBL	PASS	PASS
♥ AKJ5	♥ QT73				
♦ 653	♦ AJ7				
♣ 984	♣ Q63				

Sometimes truth is stranger than fiction. My partner, Rich Unger, and I were sitting North and South. East's hand was (KQx xxxx KQx AKx). He should have passed over North's redouble, obviously. West thought the 2nd redouble was SOS, East didn't have the same idea. Rich and I confess that we burst out laughing at the end of the auction (and kept laughing most of the evening). Double-dummy, we might have been able to beat the hand for +2200, but South, of course, couldn't find a heart lead and we only beat it two for +1000 (the same top). This is an extreme example of the great results you get with Weak NTs and our escape system.

North	South	North	East	South	West
♠ 93	♠ 82	1NT	DBL	2♦	PASS
♥ AKT64	♥ QJ93				
♦ 8752	♦ T964				
♣ K9	♣ 753				

After South shows diamonds and hearts, North is drooling with the double fit. Although you shouldn't be anxious to jump, this hand is appropriate for a jump at any vulnerability.

North	South	North	East	South	West
♠ A53	♠ 864	1NT	PASS	PASS	DBL
♥ A864	♥ KQT2				
♦ K965	♦ 84				
♣ T7	♣ J9853				

North escapes showing diamonds and hearts and South places the contract. Don't forget that the escapes apply after a balancing double is made.

North	South	North	East	South	West
♠ K9	♠ A853	1NT	PASS	PASS	DBL
♥ KT6	♥ QJ3	PASS	PASS	PASS	
♦ Q8652	♦ KT3				
♣ K53	♣ JT7				

North passes to show a single suited hand and is expecting South to redouble, but South is happy with 1NT doubled. It appears as if West may have been making a light penalty double and is not likely to do that in the future.

REMEMBER: The escapes don't apply if the DBLER in the passout seat has already passed. If the DBLER is a passed hand, opener should bid a good 5 or any 6 card suit, else pass and wait to see if partner can double them. Partner may also want to sit for 1NT doubled (these possibilities are more likely since the DBLER is doubling on a weak hand).

### Responding to 14-17 NTs (4th Seat)

Responses to the 14-17 NT are more "standard." You should use whatever systems you normally use over your Strong NT. We will not go into great detail over our response to the 14-17 NT because they will occur so infrequently. When deciding what to play, keep in mind your partner has less than 12 HCP.

In the Ultimate system after a 4th seat, 14-17 NT:

- \* 2NT is invitational, not game forcing
- \* Garbage Stayman
- \* Jacoby (2♠ is a transfer to 3♣ and could be a diamond bust)
- \* Texas (off after an overcall, on over a double)
- \* Forcing Smolen
- \* 3♥ - 5/5 in the majors, invitational
- \* 3♠ - 5/5 in the majors, forcing

North	South	North	East	South	West
♠ K4	♠ T873		PASS	PASS	PASS
♥ AJ53	♥ QT94	1NT	PASS	2♣	PASS
♦ AJ	♦ T8653	2♥			
♣ QJ973	♣ ---				

South uses Garbage Stayman after the strong NT opener and passes whatever North bids.

North	South	North	East	South	West
♠ QJ6	♠ K852		PASS	PASS	PASS
♥ K7	♥ AT9542	1NT	PASS	2♣	PASS
♦ AQ85	♦ JT	2♦	PASS	3♠	PASS
♣ QT32	♣ 8	3NT	PASS	4♦	PASS
		4♥			

South uses Stayman to check for a 4-4 spade fit and then bids 3S, Smolen. 3NT shows a doubleton heart and 4♦ is a transfer to hearts.

North	South	North	East	South	West
♠ J9	♠ KT652		PASS	PASS	PASS
♥ A94	♥ QJT83	1NT	PASS	3♥	PASS
♦ KJ84	♦ Q	4♥	PASS	PASS	PASS
♣ AKJ7	♣ T5				

South bids 3♥ to show 5/5 in the majors and invitational values (with T8752 JT832 A KQ, he should bid 3♠).

North	South	North	East	South	West
♠ KQ8	♠ 72		PASS	PASS	PASS
♥ 843	♥ KQJ952	1NT	PASS	4♦	PASS
♦ KQ73	♦	4♥			
♣ KQT	♣ J652				

South uses a Texas Transfer after North's 4th seat 1NT.

North	South	North	East	South	West
♠ AJ63	♠ 74		PASS	PASS	PASS
♥ KJ74	♥ 95	1NT	PASS	2♠	PASS
♦ Q6	♦ KT5432	3♣	PASS	3♦	PASS
♣ A82	♣ 954	PASS			

South bids Minor Suit Stayman and corrects 3♣ to 3♦.

## Bidding when the opponents interfere after a 1NT opener (Lebensohl)

We use Lebensohl (Slow Shows) when there is interference. A brief summary (natural overcalls):

- \* A direct jump to 3NT says I have values for 3NT, no interest in a major suit game and no stopper.
- \* A direct cuebid is Stayman, asking for a four card major and no stopper.
- \* A new suit at the two-level is to play.
- \* A new suit at the three-level is forcing (5 or more cards).
- \* 2NT is a relay to 3♣, responder will describe his hand at his next bid.

After the relay:

- \* 3NT shows the values for 3NT, no interest in a major suit and a stopper.
- \* A cuebid shows a stopper and is Stayman, asking for a four card major.
- \* A new suit above overcaller's suit, is invitational.
- \* A new suit below overcaller's suit, is to play.

North	South	North	East	South	West
♠ KJ63	♠ AT	1NT	2♥	3NT	PASS
♥ A8	♥ T5	PASS	PASS		
♦ Q874	♦ A93				
♣ T63	♣ AKQ752				

3NT shows the values for 3NT without a heart stopper. North has the stopper and can leave it in, without the stopper he would pull 3NT to a minor.

North	South	North	East	South	West
♠ T853	♠ AKQ4	1NT	2♦	3♦	PASS
♥ AK	♥ QT8	3♠	PASS	4S	
♦ A3	♦ 9862				
♣ 97542	♣ AQ				

3♦ asked for four card major and denied a diamond stopper. North bids his major and South raises to game. If North bid 3♥, South could be 3NT, leaving the decision up to North, because his original call of 3♦ denied a stopper.

North	South	North	East	South	West
♠ KT3	♠ AQJ85	1NT	2♥	2♠	PASS
♥ Q64	♥ JT7	PASS	PASS	PASS	
♦ QJ8	♦ 953				
♣ A974	♣ 82				

2♠ is to play. Even after the strong NT, 2♠ would not be a transfer after the overcall.

North	South	North	East	South	West
♠ A83	♠ K9	1NT	2♠	3♥	PASS
♥ 97	♥ AJ842	3NT	PASS	PASS	PASS
♦ AQJ83	♦ K75				
♣ T63	♣ A4				

3♥ is natural and forcing and says nothing about a stopper. North has a stopper, but no support so 3NT looks good. 3♠ by North would ask for a stopper.

North	South	North	East	South	West
♠ 853	♠ AK	1NT	2♠	2NT	PASS
♥ AK7	♥ T63	3♣	PASS	3NT	
♦ QJ93	♦ AK84				
♣ JT4	♣ A652				

2NT is a relay to 3♣ and 3NT after the relay shows the values for 3NT with a spade stopper.

North	South	North	East	South	West
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♠ AQJ4	♠ K9	1NT	2♦	2NT	PASS
♥ T3	♥ AKJ5	3♣	PASS	3♦	PASS
♦ Q86	♦ A73	3♠	PASS	3NT	
♣ QJT5	♣ K983				

3♦ after the relay is Stayman promising a stopper. 3♠ shows 4 or 5 spades.

North	South	North	East	South	West
♠ KJT	♠ AQ8532	1NT	2♥	2NT	PASS
♥ K7	♥ A3	3♣	PASS	3♠	PASS
♦ Q85	♦ 96	4S			
♣ KJ843	♣ QT9				

3♠ in this sequence is invitational because it is above overcaller's suit. North accepts.

**QUIZ** As dealer, what do you open?

♠ Q93	♠ QJ3	♠ 75	♠ KQJ	♠ QT
♥ A64	♥ Q83	♥ 942	♥ J3	♥ Q97
♦ J952	♦ QJ5	♦ KJ85	♦ T4	♦ KJT7
♣ AJ8	♣ Q742	♣ KQJ3	♣ QJ8543	♣ J983

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

Your partner opens 1NT (10-13) and your RHO passes. What action do you take?

♠ J9864	♠ JT52	♠ 865	♠ AQ8	♠ A82	♠ J86
♥ 542	♥ J843	♥ 942	♥ AK93	♥ K7542	♥ J4
♦ J32	♦ J985	♦ 98632	♦ J9	♦ A	♦ QJ63
♣ 98	♣ 4	♣ 52	♣ JT63	♣ AJ43	♣ AKQ5

6                      7                      8                      9                      10                      11

♠ A5	♠ AK8532	♠ KQ974	♠ KQJ6	♠ QJ976432
♥ A9	♥ ---	♥ QJ	♥ JT75	♥ ---
♦ KQ954	♦ J82	♦ A9432	♦ AT	♦ 9754
♣ AK54	♣ QJ75	♣ 8	♣ JT4	♣ 3

12                      13                      14                      15                      16

Your partner opens 1NT (10-13) and your RHO overcalls 2♥. What action do you take? If you make a relay, also write down what your next bid will be.

♠ KQ7	♠ AQJT83	♠ 9854	♠ AJT63	♠ AQT82
♥ KQ5	♥ A	♥ AK	♥ J5	♥ 7
♦ KQ	♦ 532	♦ AK	♦ QJ6	♦ 976543
♣ 87532	♣ 986	♣ Q8752	♣ AQT	♣ 5

17                      18                      19                      20                      21

Your partner opens 1NT (10-13) and your RHO doubles. What action do you take?

♠ 874	♠ AK852	♠ KQ93	♠ 75	♠ 986
♥ AK963	♥ 643	♥ JT42	♥ 964	♥ QT93
♦ 92	♦ T8	♦ 983	♦ JT85	♦ J
♣ T72	♣ 764	♣ 64	♣ 7632	♣ 87532

22                      23                      24                      25                      26

♠ 8542	♠ KJ5	♠ 953
♥ KQJT7	♥ KJ6	♥ J95
♦ 93	♦ KJ9	♦ JT6
♣ 73	♣ JT84	♣ QJT7

27                      28                      29

You open 1NT (10-13) your LHO and partner pass. Your RHO doubles.  
What action do you take?

♠ AK85	♠ J64	♠ KQ65
♥ KJ84	♥ K92	♥ 85
♦ 972	♦ K8	♦ QT93
♣ 65	♣ KT953	♣ A84
30	31	32

## QUIZ ANSWERS

1. 1NT
2. 1NT
3. 1NT, don't worry about having two suits unstopped.
4. 1NT, 6 card (and on rare occasions, 7 card) suits are perfectly okay.
5. 1NT, only 9 HCP
6. 2♠
7. PASS, you can't garbage stayman with this system.
8. 2♦
9. 2NT, game forcing.
10. 3♥, natural and game forcing.
11. 2♣, and follow up with 2NT. Vulnerable at IMPs, we would stretch and bid 2NT immediately.
12. 3♦, a minor suit slam try.
13. 4♠
14. 2♣, and over partner's response bid 3S, invitational.
15. 2♣, bid 2♥ over 2♦ or raise 2♥/2S.
16. 4♠, although there are many creative possibilities (2♥, 3♥, 3NT, 4♥, etc.)
17. 2NT, and then 3NT over partner's 3♣.
18. 2NT, then 3♠.
19. 2NT, then 3♥.
20. 3♠
21. 2♠
22. PASS. You have 1 suited hand. If partner gets the chance to redouble, you will pull to 2♥.
23. 2♠. This shows a single suiter in spades. This is the only single suiter you can bid directly.
24. 2♥. Hearts and Spades.
25. RDBL. Both minors OR spades and a minor.
26. 2♣. Clubs and hearts.
27. PASS. You could bid 2♥ for the majors, but your since your five card suit is so much better than your four card suit, treat it as a one suiter.
28. PASS. If your partner redoubles, leave it in. If they bid anything, double it.
29. PASS. You are praying one of the opponents will bid. If the redouble comes around to you, bid 2♣ with confidence and in tempo.
30. 2♥. Hearts and spades.
31. PASS. One suited hand (could be 4-3-3-3). If partner wants to know your suit he will redouble.
32. RDBL. Both minors OR spades and a minor.