

# CONVENTION CHARTS

## Definitions

A group of four numbers separated by equal signs (=) denotes an exact suit distribution. For example: 5=4=3=1 denotes five spades, four hearts, three diamonds, and one club. A group of four numbers separated by hyphens (-) denotes any of the exact distributions matching that general pattern. For example: 4-3-3-3 represents: 4=3=3=3 or 3=4=3=3 or 3=3=4=3 or 3=3=3=4.

Definitions #1-4 below have specific meanings that may vary from commonly understood meanings or may not have previously been defined. Definitions #5 and higher likely match common understandings of the term, but are still defined here for specificity and clarity. Definitions #5 and higher appear alphabetically.

### 1. Hand strength:

- a. **“Weak”**: A hand that contains less than Near Average Strength.
- b. **“Near Average Strength”**: A hand that has at least 8 HCP or meets the “Rule of 17”.
- c. **“Average Strength”**: A hand that has at least 10 HCP or meets the “Rule of 19”.
- d. **“Strong”**: A hand that contains:
  - i. at least 15 HCP; or
  - ii. at least 14 HCP and meets the “Rule of 24”.
  - iii. at least 5 Control Points and is within one trick of game assuming suits break evenly among the other hands.
- e. **“Very Strong”**: A hand that contains:
  - i. at least 20 HCP; or
  - ii. at least 14 HCP and is within one trick of game assuming suits break evenly among the other hands.
  - iii. at least 5 Control Points and is within one trick of game assuming suits break evenly among the other hands.

### 2. \*\*\* **“Natural”**:

- a. Any opening bid, response, or overcall in a suit at the one-level showing 4 or more cards in the suit bid, except as provided in 2(f) and 2(g).
- b. Any opening bid at the two-level or higher showing 5 or more cards in the suit bid.
- c. Any response or rebid in a minor at the two-level or higher showing 3 or more cards in the suit bid
- d. Any response or rebid in a major at the two-level or higher showing 4 or more cards in the suit bid.

- e. Any suit overcall at any level showing 4 or more cards in the suit bid.
  - f. A 1C opening bid showing 3 or more clubs. This opening may also include exactly 4=4=3=2 shape.
  - g. A 1D opening bid, overcall, or response showing 3 or more diamonds.
  - h. A NT opening bid or overcall that contains no voids, no more than one singleton, which must be an ace, king, or queen, and that does not contain 10 or more cards in two suits combined.
  - i. A call is still Natural if it also shows distribution in another suit.
  - j. A pass, double, or redouble is Natural if it suggests the current contract as the final contract.
  - k. After the opening bid any bid is Natural if it suggests the contract bid as the final contract.
3. \*\*\* **“Quasi-Natural”**:
- a. A minor suit bid that is either Natural or shows a pattern that meets the definition of a Natural NT opening.
  - b. Any opening bid at the two-level or higher showing 4 or more cards in the suit bid.
4. \*\*\* **“Purely Destructive Initial Action”**: An opening bid or an overcall that satisfies none of the following:
- a. 4+ cards in a known suit.
  - b. 5+ cards in one of two possible suits.
  - c. 5+-4+ distribution in any two suits.
  - d. An either/or combination of any two of a, b, or c (which may be the same option twice).
  - e. A Three-suited hand.
  - f. At least Average strength.
  - g. Any Natural or Quasi-Natural opening bid.
5. **“Advancer”**: Overcaller’s partner.
6. **“Agreement”**: Partnership understandings of methods adopted by the partnership that are reached explicitly by discussion or implicitly through the mutual experience or awareness of the players. This applies to all calls, allowed and disallowed.
7. **“Artificial”**: Any call that is not Natural or Quasi-Natural.
8. **“Balancing Seat”**: After the bidding has been opened, a player who would end the auction if that player passed.
9. **“Bid”**: A call that names a level and a denomination (suit or notrump).
10. **“Call”**: Any bid, pass, double, or redouble.
11. **“Control Bid”**: A bid showing first or second round control of a suit.

12. **“Control Points”**: An alternate evaluation method where an Ace=2 and a King=1
13. **“Cuebid”**: A bid of a suit that an opponent has bid Naturally or Quasi-Naturally or a suit in which an opponent has shown 4 or more cards.
14. **“Direct Overcall”**: An immediate overcall by the left hand opponent of Opener.
15. \*\*\* **“Encrypted Signal”**: An encrypted signal is one where the ordering of the cards for the signal is dependent on information known only to the defenders. It is not an encrypted signal to have the type of signal (attitude, count, suit preference) dependent on information known only to the defenders.
16. **“Forcing”**: A call that, by partnership Agreement, may not be passed if the intervening opponent passes.
17. **“High Card Points (HCP)”**: The total number of points in a hand based on honors, counting 4 for an Ace, 3 for a King, 2 for a Queen, and 1 for a Jack.
18. **“Invitational”**: A hand sufficiently strong to indicate that partner should bid game unless partner has a minimum.
19. **“Length”**: Unless otherwise specified, “showing Length in a suit” or “showing a suit” means at least four cards in the suit.
20. **“Opener”**: The first player to make a bid in the auction.
21. **“Overcall”**: The first bid made by the pair that does not consist of Opener and Responder.
22. **“Preempt”**: A jump bid (by either pair) that does not promise at least Average strength.
23. \*\*\* **“Psych”**: A call that intentionally and grossly misstates the strength and/or suit length of one’s hand.
24. **“Psychic Control”**: Any Bid that conveys that a prior Bid was a Psych.
25. \*\*\* **“Range”**: One more than the difference between the highest number of HCP a bid can be and the lowest.
26. **“Responder”**: Opener’s partner.
27. \*\*\* **“Rule of N”**: A method of determining hand strength computed by adding the High Card Points of the hand to the number of cards in the two longest suits. To meet the “Rule of N”, this total must be at least N. \*
28. **“Takeout”**: A call that shows support for two or three suits and/or a strong hand.
29. **“Three-Suited”**: A hand with 4-4-4-1, 5-4-3-1, or 5-4-4-0 shape.

## Responses and Rebids

1. Any Natural response.
2. Any game forcing response at the 2 level or higher.
3. An Artificial 1D response to any 1C opening bid.
4. Any Artificial negative response to a Strong or Very Strong opening bid.
5. A Forcing 1NT response to an opening bid of 1H or 1S. 1NT cannot guarantee an Invitational or stronger hand.
6. Any response to a NT opening bid.
7. An Artificial jump response showing a raise (of any strength) of Opener's Natural opening bid.
8. An Artificial response of 2C and/or 2D by a passed hand showing a raise of Opener's Natural opening bid.
9. Any response to a 2-level or higher opening bid.
10. All calls starting with Opener's second bid (this applies to both pairs).

## Overcalls and Competitive Bids

1. All Natural overcalls.
2. All doubles and redoubles, and all calls by both sides after a double or redouble.
3. All Artificial cuebids (by either pair), except a cuebid that could be Weak must show at least one known suit. All responses to a cuebid are allowed.
4. A 2NT overcall showing at least 5-4 distribution in the minors or in the two lowest unbid suits.
5. After partner's Natural 1NT overcall, any Artificial advance.
6. After an opponent's Natural NT opening bid or overcall:
  - a. An Artificial 2C bid having any meaning
  - b. An Artificial bid showing two known suits with 4-4 length or better
  - c. An Artificial bid showing a known 5+ card suit
  - d. A Natural bid showing 4+ cards in the suit bid and another known or unknown suit of 4+ cards.

# Basic+ Chart

Bidding Agreements are disallowed unless they are specifically allowed. If an Agreement would be disallowed unless it satisfies a specific High Card Point or shape requirement, a player may not use judgment to include hands with fewer High Card Points or a different shape. Note that almost all Agreements are allowed beginning with Responder's initial action.

## Allowed Bidding Agreements

### Opening Bids

1. Any opening bid in a suit which is Natural, as long as it shows at least Near-Average Strength.
2. A 1C or 1D opening bid that is either Natural or Quasi-Natural, as long as it shows at least Average Strength.
3. An Artificial 1C opening bid that is Strong and Forcing.
4. A Natural NT opening bid, as long as it shows at least 10 HCP and the Range is not greater than 5 HCP.
5. Any 1NT opening bid that is Strong and Forcing.
6. A 2-level opening bid showing a Three-Suited hand and at least Average Strength.
7. Any 2-level or higher opening bid that is Very Strong.
8. Any 2-level opening bid showing at least Average Strength with at least 5-4 shape and both suits known.
9. Any Weak Natural opening bid in a suit at the 2-level showing at least 3 HCP and has a Range not greater than 8 HCP.
10. A NT opening bid at the 2-level or higher showing at least 5-4 distribution in the minors.
11. Any Weak Natural opening at the 3-level or higher.
12. A 3NT opening bid showing a known or unknown solid suit.
13. A 3NT opening bid showing a known or unknown long minor suit.
14. A 4-level opening bid showing at least 6 cards in a different known suit.
15. Any opening bid of 4NT or higher.

## Responses and Rebids

1. Any Natural response.
2. Any game forcing response.
3. An Artificial 1D response to any 1C opening bid.
4. Any Artificial response to a Strong or Very Strong opening bid.
5. Any 1NT response to an opening bid of 1H or 1S.
6. Any response to a NT opening bid.
7. An Artificial jump response showing a raise (of any strength) of Opener's Natural opening bid.
8. An Artificial jump response that shows at least 5 cards in a known suit and at least 4 cards in another known suit.
9. An Artificial response of 2C and/or 2D by a passed hand that shows a raise of Opener's Natural opening bid.
10. Any response to a 2-level or higher opening bid.
11. Any response after an opposing double.

## Overcalls and Competitive Bids

1. All Natural overcalls.
2. All doubles and redoubles, and all calls by both sides after a double or redouble.
3. All calls in Balancing Seat.
4. All Artificial cuebids (by either pair), except a cuebid that could be Weak must show at least one known suit. All responses to a cuebid are allowed.
5. A suit overcall showing at least 5-4 distribution in two known suits. If the overcall is not a jump, then it must show at least Average Strength.
6. An Artificial NT overcall at any level for 2-suited takeout. A 1NT bid in this category must show at least Near-Average Strength. Below the 4-level at least one suit must be known.
7. An artificial NT overcall at any level for 3-suited takeout. A 1NT bid in this category must show at least Near-Average Strength.
8. After partner's Natural 1NT overcall, any Artificial advance.

9. After an opponent's Natural NT opening bid or overcall:
  - a. An Artificial 2C bid having any meaning
  - b. An Artificial 2D bid showing a one-suited hand in hearts or spades
  - c. Any other call showing a known suit of at least 4 cards
10. In response to partner's overcall showing an unknown suit or suits, any call asking for partner's longest or cheapest suit (e.g., "pass or correct" calls).
11. After an Artificial opening bid, any Artificial defense that does not include a Purely Destructive overcall.
12. After an opening bid of 2C or higher, any Artificial defense that does not include a Purely Destructive overcall.
13. After an opening bid and an overcall or double, any call (by either side) showing Length in a known suit.
14. After an opening bid and an overcall, a bid of spades to show any of:
  - a. A desire to play No Trump
  - b. One minor
  - c. Both minors
  - d. Any combination of the above

Beginning with the Opening Bidder's second call, all calls are allowed by both pairs.

## Lead and Carding Agreements

Encrypted Signals are never allowed when leading, following suit or discarding. Otherwise:

1. Opening lead: Any method may be used on opening lead. (Leading low from doubletons must be pre-alerted.)
2. First discard: Any method may be used on the first discard.

\*\*\* Following Suit & Discarding: Except for the first discard, only high-to-low or low-to-high ordering strategies are allowed when following suit or discarding.

- *Note: Distinct meanings for middle cards (vs. highest and lowest) are permissible.*
- *Note: Defining meanings for specific spots (2,4,6...), as opposed to relative high/low agreements, are permissible only on the first discard.*

In addition, a pair may be prohibited from playing any carding method when they are deemed to be playing it in a manner that does not maintain proper tempo. A decision that prohibits a pair from playing a particular carding method may be appealed to the tournament committee.