

Partnership Checklist

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This is NOT to replace filling out the convention card. For my Series on the Convention Card, click [here](#).

This list is to supplement the convention card. It covers what I feel are important areas that all regular partnerships need to address. These aren't really conventions, or "must-play" treatments. What I am trying to do is prevent accidents.

The order basically follows that of the ACBL Convention Card.

My suggestions (but just opinions--no need to do it my way) are in GOLD. The suggestions are for Intermediate-to-Advanced Level. For "expert" level, probably more sophisticated methods would be suggested.

Abbreviations are listed at the end.

Style:

More important than any convention is to make sure you know each other's style and stay consistent. Are you a light opening bidder? Aggressive preemptor? Are you an overbidder? Underbidder? Aggressive in bidding games or slams?

Larry's suggestions: Open on the light side. Preempt on the normal side, paying careful attention to vulnerability. Be aggressive in trying for games when vulnerable at team scoring.

Are you playing [2/1 GF](#)? Most people reading this will do so, so here is a checklist:

A] Is 2/1 100% [GF](#)? Yes

B] What if there is interference or one of you is a Passed Hand? Not [GF](#)

C] Is 1♦-2♣ [GF](#)? What are follow-ups? Yes. Opener shows 4-card Major if he has one.

D] Does anything by opener guarantee extra values?

D1] 1♥-2♣-2♠ -- extras? No (unless you play Flannery)

D2] 1♥-2♦-2NT -- extras? No

D3] 1♥-2♦-3♣--extras? No

E] What is a jump rebid by opener such as 1♥-2♣-3♥? Solid suit, not a dead minimum

F] What is opener's jump shift? (1♥-2♣-3♦) [Splinter](#)

G] What is the default rebid for a balanced minimum with no stopper in an unbid suit(s)?

For example: ♠AJ2♥KJ876♦876♣KJ after 1♥-2♣-?? Don't bid 2NT without stoppers. Don't rebid a bad 5-card suit. Sometimes you will be totally stuck and have to lie.

H] What are jumps to game? Fast Arrival-Weakest action.

I] Is a 1NT response to a major, followed by opener's jump-shift, followed by responder's 4M raise a limit raise? Yes (3M would be ambiguous--usually just a preference).

After Our 1NT Opening:

Depending on how thorough you are, you need to discuss all follow-ups to [Stayman](#) (such as 1N-2♣-2♦-2 MAJ and 1NT-2♣-2 any-3 level). There are many ways to play this.

What if they double [Stayman](#)? XX=To Play. Pass=Clubs stopped ([Stayman](#) bidder Redoubles to Re-[Stayman](#)). Direct answer denies a club stopper. (Fast Denies -- a familiar theme for [lebensohl](#) users).

What if they double a Jacoby Transfer? Pass=2-card support. XX=3-card support, maximum. Accepting the transfer = 3- or 4-card support, minimum. Anything else=4-card support, maximum. Be very careful if you use XX as described not to have a memory accident and play in 2 something redoubled down 1,600.

What are follow-ups to a Jacoby Transfer -- does it change by a Passed Hand? New suit=[GF](#) (even by PH). Jacoby then 4-level new suit = [splinter](#). Jacoby than 4M=balanced slam try (6-3-2-2)--assuming you can use Texas to just sign off.

What is opener's Double if they interfere (example: 1N-P-2♣-2♥-Double) Takeout

What are doubles by responder (direct and delayed -- for example: 1N P P 2♠ P P Double) Cards

What are opener's Doubles if they balance (1NT P P 2♠ X) Takeout

You must review what you play over [artificial](#) interference.

What is the difference between Jacoby and Texas? Texas then 4NT=[RKC](#). Jacoby then 4NT=Quantitative

Is Texas still on after 1NT-P2♣-P-2♦? Yes ("Extended Texas" -- which means that after [Stayman](#) and a 2♦ answer, a jump to 4♦/4♥ is still a transfer--6-4).

After our 1♣/1♦ Opening:What are jump shifts? Strong (1-suited or that suit and a fit for partner)

What changes by a Passed Hand? PH jump=fit

How do I make a strong minor-suit raise? [Inverted Minors](#)

What are 2NT and 3NT responses? 2N=11-12 3N=13-15

Walsh principles? Yes. Bypass Major with only 1 bid to make

After 2NT rebids? [New minor](#) Forcing (or learn something more complex)

After our 1♥/1♠ Opening:Do we play regular [Jacoby 2NT](#) or modified? Regular

What is 2NT and other actions by a Passed Hand Natural

What is a jump shift by a passed hand? Fit

If we play Bergen Raises -- on in comp? How do we play them? Prefer jump to 1-under on 3-level is Nat, Inv.

Is 1♠-4♥ a [Splinter](#)? Yes

1NT response and follow-up 1NT semi-forcing (Opener passes with 5-3-3-2 minimum) Do we play [Bart](#)?

After Our Strong 2♣:

Can you stop below game and how? Only if after 2♦, waiting, Opener Rebids 2NT or repeats his suit on the 3-level after a 2nd negative.

Interference: If they overcall, what is responder's double? 0-3 (Pass=[GF](#))

Opener's Double? Takeout/Cards

If they Double 2♣ to show clubs (or other)? Pass=0-3 -- everything else=System on and [GF](#) (XX=Business)

After our Weak 2-bids:

Over interference, is 2NT still Asking? Yes Is Double by responder penalty? Yes

After 2MAJ-P-2NT-Overcall -- what does opener do? Pass with minimum, Dbl=3+cards in their suit/Penalty

Other Conventional Calls:
4th suit -- is it [GF](#)? 100%

By PH? Natural, NF

[New minor](#) -- How do you play after 1NT rebid? [New Minor](#) Forcing (or 2-Way [Checkback](#))

On by PH? No In Comp? No

Jump in 4th suit (example: 1♥-1♠-2♣-3♦)? Natural, Invitational

All jumps in competition are ?? Weak (unless discussed otherwise--such as by a passed hand).

Reverses?? Responder's rebid of his suit = 5+ cards, 1-round force. Cheaper of 4th suit or 2NT = potential sign-off. Anything else=[GF](#). See [this article](#) for more details.

Serious 3NT - Not unless seriously discussed :)

Is 2NT special (not natural) in either of these auctions:

1M-2M-2N or 1m-1M-2M-2N? Yes. Forcing, [artificial](#), Asking.

Over their 1NT

Whatever convention you use, be sure to discuss all follow-ups and actions if they double. Same system versus Weak/Strong or in balancing seat? Same System but need Pen X versus Weak NT. Same in Balancing Seat.

Over their preempts

What is a cue-bid (such as 2♥ 3♥)? Asking for Stopper. (4-minor = [Roman Jump](#) Overcall)

If you play [lebensohl](#), is it on by PH? Yes

[Michaels](#)

Can it be an in-between hand? No.

What are partner's notrump bids? Asking for the minor (but if both Majors shown, then asking min/max).

Slam Bidding

[RKC](#): Ever "plain BW?" No

What is trump? Last bid or first agreed suit.

What about Queen ask and King asks? Next step asks Queen (5 of trump suit denies, otherwise show king or bid 6)

1430? Yes

Over Interference (or if they Double 4NT) : Some form of DoP1 (and ignore double of 4NT)

Bids of our major on 5-level -- If in comp, looking for control in their suit. Otherwise looking for good trump.

5NT [Pick-a-slam](#)? Yes--but be careful and discuss it.

Responding with a void: Many treatments available, none of which are standard or foolproof--pick one and agree (sorry for the cop-out).

Defense Aside from methods, agree on what the primary signal is. Attitude.

Discuss the "BIG" lead against notrump. Ace asks for Attitude, King asks for Count/Unblock

Discuss "middle of the hand" plays. Low from good holding, top of nothing

If using [Smith Echo](#), discuss exceptions. When count takes priority.

What are signals in the trump suit? Hi-lo wants ruff if possible, otherwise suit preference.

Other Competition (general)

Parenthesis () denote calls by the opponents

- 1) (1♣)-P-(1♥)-2♣
- 2) (1♣)-P-(1♥)-2♥
- 3) (1♣)-P-(1♥)-1NT
- 4) (1♣)-1♥-(P)-2♣ (and what about 3♣--jump-cue?)
- 5) (1♣)-1♥-(P)-New Suit
- 6) (1♣)-1♥-(P)-2♣-(Dbl)-?? (What are overcaller's actions?)
- 7) They overcall our opening bid with 1NT
- 8) If exploring on 3+ level and they double one of our [artificial](#) "cue-bids",
 - a) What is PASS by the next player?
 - b) What is Redouble by the next player?
 - c) What if the next player bids directly?
 - d) What if the next player passes and the original cue-bidder Redoubles?
- 9) They Double our [artificial](#) bids such as [Stayman](#) or Jacoby Transfers?
- 10) (1♣)-X-(P)-2♣ : Forcing how high? What if PH?
- 11) 1♣ (X) XX : Forcing how high? What are future doubles?
- 12) General default rule for all doubles by our partnership
- 13) General default rule for Forcing Passes for our partnership
- 14) Extras shown:
 - a) 1♥ (P) 1♠ (2♣) 2♦ ?
 - b) 1♣ (1♠) X (P) 2♦ ?
- 15) 1♦ (P) P (X):
 - a) XX
 - b) 1♥
- 16) 2NT bids: In competition when are they natural, when are they scrambling?
- 17) Against [artificial](#) bids such as Bergen Raises, [Drury](#) or "newfangled" [artificial](#) bids/transfer responses/advances, etc.
- 18) Versus [Michaels](#) and [Unusual notrump](#)
- 19) Versus [Precision](#), [artificial](#) 1-of-a-minor openings.
- 20) Versus Flannery, Multi, [Namyats](#), Gambling 3NT, other...
- 21) We double, they redouble, partner of doubler passes: Example: (1♠) X (XX) Pass

Larry's Suggestions:

- 1-2-3): Natural (After 1NT, "SYSTEM ON" -- and in fact, SYSTEM ON after any natural NOTRUMP OVERCALL BY US)
- 4) 100% guarantees 3+ card support (Limit raise or better). This works in conjunction with #5 below... (Jump-cue = mixed raise)
- 5) NF unless change of Level. If "advancer" of the overcall wants to force in his own suit, he has to change level.
- 6) Fast Arrival -- Return to the trump suit is the WEAKEST. Pass or anything else is more encouraging.
- 7) Dbl=Penalty Bids=2-suited: lowest of a 2-suiter (not including partner's suit). 2N=Limit-Raise+ Jumps=weak
- 8a) On 3-level, nothing to say. On 4+ level -- denies control, but MORE encouraging than return to trump suit
- 8b) On 3-level -- values in that suit; stopper, encouraging. On 4+level : Control (1st or 2nd round)
- 8c) Weakest action on any level. No control/stopper
- 8d) On 3-level -- a punt. On 4+ level -- 1st round control
- 9) If they double any [Stayman](#) bid, I like this treatment (but it involves memory!):
 - XX=Business (usually 5 decent clubs)
 - Direct Answer to [Stayman](#) (What it would always mean, but NO STOPPER IN CLUBS!)
 - Pass=Any Club Stopper(s) -- and the [Stayman](#) bidder redoubles to repeat the [Stayman](#) inquiry
 - If they double Jacoby transfer: Redouble=3 trumps, maximum (This is very memory dangerous!!!)
 - Opener's Pass of the Double shows a doubleton in the suit being transferred to
 - Opener's acceptance of the transfer directly shows exactly 3 trumps and a minimum (he XX with max)
 - Opener's other bids show 4 trump
 - If they Double Texas: Opener's Pass is neutral -- willing to play from other side. His XX=extras and a control
- 10) Forcing to suit agreement or notrump. By a PH: same
- 11) Forcing only to 2♠. All future doubles are penalty.
- 12) Unless defined in notes (or on this checklist), ALL DOUBLES on 1- and 2-level are NEVER Penalty
- 13) Unless defined in notes (or on this checklist), Pass is forcing only if 100% "obvious."

14) No, No

15) Extras -- good hand -- not fear (in both cases)

16) In general, use all in-comp 2NT as NOT Natural. The default is "takeout/scrambling" if it ever could be.

Example: 1♦ (P) 1NT (P) P (2♥) P (P) 2NT -- is something like: ♠7 5 4♥4 3♦K J 8♣A J 10 8 3.

Example: 1♦ (2♠) P (P) X (P) 2NT -- is something like: ♠8765♥42♦J32♣J432 (scrambling).

17) Double of their [artificial](#) suit shows that suit--lead directional type (on low level=length). Bidding their [artificial](#) suit is also natural. "Accepting" their transfer (for example, if they bid♥ to show♠ and you bid♠) = cue-bid.

18) Double=penalty minded (next double=penalty). Bids=Lo-to-lo, Hi-to-Hi -- for example: 1♠ (2NT) : 3♣=Good♥hand, 3♦=Limit+♠, 3♥=NF, 3♠=weaker raise than 3♦. If only 1 suit known, then cue-bid = the raise, new suits=F.

19) Versus Big Club: [crash](#) -- or just preempt a lot. Versus Polish 1♣, Short♦, etc. : Unless you are highly

experienced, treat as completely natural and use your regular agreements.

20) Versus Flannery: 2♥=Takeout, 2♠=natural, 2NT=natural, X=cards

Versus Multi: Use ACBL Defense (opponents must provide)

Versus [Namyats](#): Double=cards/takeout oriented, pass then X=lighter takeout.

Versus Gambling 3NT: Double = Good hand, 4♠=Majors, at least 5♥, 4♦=Majors better or longer♠

Versus Other: Discuss at table

21) Not business. Just nothing to say. However, if behind the bidder (like 1♠ P P X XX), then business.

Abbreviations:

2/1 = "Two over one"

[GF](#) = Game Force

M = Major

m = minor

() = Calls in parenthesis are actions taken by the opponents