

Lesson Two: Responses to NT (Chapter 3) and Preempts (p.359)

1. Responses to 1NT opener (Note – we do not use transfer bids). Responder counts total points:

With 0-7 pts and a 5-card or longer suit (not clubs), bid 2 of that suit, otherwise pass (“drop-dead” response) - post example on board

With a balanced hand and no 4-card major:

- 8-9 pts bid 2NT, even with a long minor suit
- 10-15 pts bid 3NT, even with a long minor suit
- 16-17 pts, bid 4NT (NOT Blackwood!), inviting small slam
- 18-19 pts, bid 6NT
- 20-21 pts, bid 5NT, inviting grand slam
- 22+ pts, bid 7NT

With an unbalanced hand:

- 8-15 pts and a 4-card or longer major, bid Stayman
- 8-9 pts and a 5-6-card major, bid Stayman, then your suit
- 10-15 pts and a 5-card major, jump to 3♥ or 3♠, asking opener to choose either game in NT or in your suit.
- 10-15 pts and a 6-card major, jump to game in it
- 16+ pts: explore slam

2. Stayman Convention (2 clubs):

Opener bids 2♦ without a 4-card major, bids 2♥ or 2♠ to show a 4-card major, or bids 2♥ if he has both 4-card majors.

Responder bids 2NT, raises opener’s major, or bids the other 5/6-card major with 8-9 pts, inviting game. With 10-15 pts, responder bids game in either NT or opener’s major.

[Note: responding to a 2NT or 3NT opener is similar, but requires fewer pts – do the math.]

3. Handling interference over 1NT (p.319):

After a double, bidding is unchanged

After overcall, responder’s bid is natural except for cue bid of opponent’s suit

Cue bid replaces Stayman

4. Quick Tricks

Before Goren, players used Culbertson, which based bidding on Quick Tricks (QT)

- 2 QT: AK in same suit
- 1½ QT: AQ in same suit
- 1 QT: A, KQ in same suit
- ½ QT: Kx

5. Pre-empts: Some additional thoughts

Don't pre-empt if you have enough points to open. You should have at least 6 HCP, but less than 13 total points

When vulnerable or in second position, be cautious - your suit should be strong as well as long

Never preempt when sitting in the 4th position unless you can make the bid on your own

6. Responding to preempts:

[Textbook says pass with less than 16 pts, but the following is a better approach]

With 3.5 Quick Tricks (QT) and 2-card trump support in a major, bid game

With 4 QT, 2 cards in partner's suit, stoppers in the other 3 suits, bid 3NT

With a strong, long suit of your own, use caution: partner's hand may be worthless and your bid is forcing

With 3 or more trumps and 3 or fewer QT, raise partner (preemptive)
Otherwise pass.

Note: If you have at least two cards in opener's suit and a void in another suit, count that as 1 QT. Count a singleton as $\frac{1}{2}$ QT