

The 1NT bid is so precise – it defines one's hand to within 3 points and also describes the balanced shape. Let us use effective and appropriate tools to get to the right contract each time, or die trying. Some pointers follow –

- Always transfer with a 5-card major! Make it a rule and save yourself lots of future anguish;
- Stayman asks, transfers tell. Use them wisely. When you can tell, do it. No secrets.
- With 8-pointers and few intermediates, staying short of game will always earn you masterpoints;
- If your slam depends on just one finesse, bid it. Your partner may also find a surefire way to make it on a 100% line using the strip and endplay technique;
- When partner transfers to a major and you have a maximum 17-count and 4 cards in the major, jump to 3M;
- 2♠ response to 1NT = trf to 3♣. Partner can pass or correct to 3♦. Weak minor;
- After 1NT a response of 3m (m = minor, M = major) = invitational to 3NT = shows a 6/7-carder with 2 of top 4, not Q-J;
- 3M response = slam try. With no fit, bid 3NT, else advance cue;
- 4♣ is best played as Gerber, and 4♦/4♥ are transfers to 4♥/4♠ (Texas). KQ109872, xx, Kxx, x go 4♥ (trf);
- After 1NT-4NT pass with minimum, and bid suits upwards if you are maximum, jump if good 5-carder;
- If you transfer to 2M you guarantee 5 in the suit transferred to. Now...
 - 2NT = 5-carder invite. Pass with min no fit, 3M minimum fit, 3NT max, no fit, and 4M max + fit
 - 3M = 6-carder invite. Pass or 4M
 - 3NT = 5-carder, game values. Pass or correct to 4M.
- Transfer then new suit = forcing to game. Select;
- Stayman then 3-minor shows a HUGE HAND WITH SLAM INTEREST IN THE MINOR;

If they interfere

- If they overcall 2♣ natural, play DOUBLE as stayman; all other bids natural (NO transfers);
- If they OVERCALL, remember transfers are OFF. Bid natural;
- If they DOUBLE transfers are ON, and 2C is still Stayman;
- Play double of their overcall as showing values stuck for a bid;
- Cue bid = stayman;
- Learn LEBENSÖHL in your good time. An easy way to differentiate when you weak or forcing, e.g. if it goes 1NT - (2♠) - 3♣ Is this weak to play? Or forcing?

Now test yourself!

Your partner opens 1NT. How do you bid the following 48 hands? (Partner has 4 hearts, min)

Your hands – open the PDF file “South”.

Then compare your contract with the “makeables” file.

- 10-20 right Yup, you need these lessons
- 21-30 right Not bad, but lots'a room for improvement
- 31-40 right Good going, getting there!
- 41-48 right I am impressed! Start teaching?

N.B. On board 5 e.g. 3NT is just lucky. Score 3♦ as correct. *Not sure, then let me know.*

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