

Major Responses



Alternative Bids To Consider

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Most of you are content with your current responses to one of a major. Here are a number of treatments to consider trying with your regular partner. For the example hands, assume 11 hcp openings, forcing 1N, Jacoby 2N and reverse Bergen with a two over one approach.

What do you currently bid after partner opens 1♠?

[A] ♠xxx ♥xx♦Axxx ♣xxxx

[B] ♠xxxx ♥Kxx ♦Qxx ♣Qxx

[C] ♠Axx ♥Axxx ♦xxxx ♣xx

[D] ♠Kxx ♥Kxx ♦Kxxx ♣Kxx

[E] ♠x ♥Axx ♦KQJxxx ♣xxx

[F] ♠x ♥xxx ♦KQJxxx ♣xxx

[G] ♠xxxx ♥xx ♦KQxx ♣Kxx

[H] ♠xxxx ♥x ♦AQxx ♣Axxx

[I] ♠xxxx ♥x ♦xxxx ♣KJxx

[J] ♠xxxx ♥x ♦Axxx ♣Kxxx

[K] ♠Jxxxx ♥x ♦QJxx ♣Qxx

[L] ♠xxxxx ♥x ♦AJxx ♣xxx

[M] ♠Kxxx ♥x ♦AQxx ♣KJxx

[N] ♠Kxxx ♥♦AQxx ♣KJxxx

Most of you Pass with [A], bid 2♠ with [B] and [C], respond 1N holding [D], [E] and [F]; use Bergen 3♦ [G] and 3♣ [H], continue 3♠ with [I] and [J], finish with 4♠ on [K] and [L]; and use Jacoby 2N on [M] and [N]. The suggested style will help you differentiate these bids for more accurate bidding. Unless noted raises and responses are similar after a 1♥ or 1♠ opening.

Simple Raises - 2♠, 3♠, 4♦, 4♠

Raise to 2♠ with 4 to 7 hcp, which is preemptive and then invite with Kokish responses. With 4 spades, 0 to 7 hcp, at least a doubleton, and 8 to 10 losers, jump raise to 3♠; with fewer losers bid 2♦. Respond 2♠ with [A] and [B], 3♠ on [I], 4♠ on [K], and 4♦ on [L]. Holding 5 spades with the same requirements as 3♠, respond 4♠, but with an Ace or KQ bid and alert 4♦. Weak raises help opener make game or slam decisions without getting too high.

Constructive Limit Raise - 2♦

With either a constructive raise (8 to 9) or limit raise (10 to 12) bid and alert 2♦. Invite with Kokish responses over opener's or responder's 2♠ rebid. Respond 2♦ with [C], [D], [G], [H] and [J]. So what are Kokish responses? The after two of the major by opener or responder, the next lowest bid (2♠ or 2N) is a

strength showing invitation without shortness; partner then bids the major or responds with shortness. Suit bids show shortness, with 2N over hearts showing short spades. A raise to three by either partner invites.

Game Forcing Shortness - 3♠/3N and 3♥/3N

Over 1♥ opening, 3♠ shows 4+ hearts and a singleton, while 3N promises 4+ hearts and a void. The next bid asks for the shortness with 4♥ over 3N showing a spade singleton or void. After 1♠ with 4 card support, bid 3♥ with a singleton and 3N with a void, use the same bids with 4♠ showing a heart singleton or void. Bid and alert 3♥ on [M] and 3N on [N].

Invitational Jumps - 3♣ and 3♦

Jumping to three of a minor denies even 2 card major support, a good 6 card suit (2 of top 3) and 10 to 12 hcp. Respond 3♦ on [E] and 1N on [F]. Although not forcing, these bids cater to misfits or good notrump games when opener holds the missing high minor honor. New suits are forcing, and 3 of the major invites game with a solid 6 or semi-solid 7 card suit. Our team won the final round of a Flight A regional KO when the opponent bid and played in a similar 3♣ contract with Qx of spades. 4♠ made at the other table.

These major responses are advanced treatments that require practice, memory and patience. Some of them can only be used with Open and Open+ convention charts. Be sure to mark your convention card and alert properly. Thoroughly discuss applicable auctions, including passed hand bids, before playing these treatments with your regular partner.

If you have questions, comments or suggestions, please email me at ronaldlien@aol.com. ♣