



Use and abuse of Conventions

Aims

- To understand that you don't need to play a battery of conventions to do well
- To understand that if you forget and have a bad board it will take time to get back to break even
- To play as much or as few as you are comfortable with
- To agree what you are playing with partner
- To use conventions selectively and on the right hands (Position, vulnerability, suit quality are all examples of things to be considered)

The Unusual no trump

- When does it apply?
- What does it show?
- What rules or restrictions should there be?

It applies when it can't be natural or when you have agreed it should not be natural. It always shows the two lowest unbid suits.

Mess number 1: The opponents open a short club (2 or more) and partner bids 2NT. Which suits?

Mess number 2: The opponents open a Strong Club and partner bids 2NT. Which suits?

Mess number 3: The opponents open 1D and respond 1S. Partner now bids 1NT. One of you thinks it is 16-19 balanced with some stops. The other thinks it is the other two suits. Who is right?

Mess number 4: you apply it correctly, partner understands but you get a terrible results because you applied it on the wrong hand

Blackwood

- Which type should you play?
- When should you use it?
- When is it a poor idea to use it?
- Are you prepared for any response?
- Is the 5 level safe?

Blackwood is a bad idea with a void.

It is also a bad idea with xx in a suit and no idea if partner has a control there.

If you bid Blackwood and don't have a clear idea of what to do opposite a response you should not have bid Blackwood.

Key card offers much more than normal Blackwood

In a regular partnership know what to do with a void in response and know what to do if the opponents intervene. Do you play DOPI? Do you play ROPI?

Double to convey a message

- Can you double to tell partner what to do?
- Will this risk giving away the hand to opponents?
- Why do some players reverse pass and double?

Double can tell partner what to lead. Double of Stayman or a transfer or a splinter.

Do you know how you play (1NT) No (2C) x?

When you double a suit for the lead especially in a high level auction it should say not only lead my suit but there is nothing better. Doubling for the lead at the five level with two kings can go wrong.

Be careful you have enough that they can't redouble and play there!

Have you discussed what 1NT (No) 2C (x) xx or pass or 2D means?

What does it mean if you double a UCB?

Redouble can do the same thing. If RHO opens 1H, you overcall 1S and the next hand makes a negative double what does xx mean?

Weak Two's

- What is your agreement about suit quality, side suits.
- Differences in position and vulnerability
- Responding to Weak Two's with a relay, a new suit or a raise

In 1st/2nd seat you should seek to be fairly orthodox and avoid bad suits and side 4 card majors

In 3rd seat you can be a bit more daring.

When responding a change of suit is normally forcing. If you play a Weak 2D then 2H or 2S can be constructive because you have a jump to 3HS if needed.

When you might want to play game you often bid 2NT to ask. The most common response to this is to rebid the suit with a bad hand and to show a high card feature if you are better than minimum.

If you raise partner's suit one level you are trying to make the opponents life difficult therefore the opener should NEVER bid again and your hand may be anything from a pre-emptive raise to try and keep the opponents out to a fair hand with little good chance of game and hoping the opponents will lurch in so you can double

If your opponents come in you should know what you are doing! For example 2S (3CDH) x is penalties. If the opponents double your 2NT relay then ignore them.

Jacoby 2NT response

- This applies over 1H or 1S opening to show a. a fit (4+ cards) and b. the values for game or better
- It is a better use of the bid than natural and non forcing
- Some players play it as only the values for the 3 level or more.

There are all sorts of schemes over 2NT.

The simplest is a. 3 suit is natural b. 3NT is strong, balanced and forcing c. 4 suit is a splinter d. 4 of your major is a bad hand with no interest at all.

Decide what other raises you want to play.

Some are only sensible if you play 5 card majors.

What is Bergen? You can show a 4 card raise to 3, a 4 card mixed raise to 3, a 3 card raise to 3.

Principle advantage: Much more precision in major suit auctions

Principle disadvantage: Allows the opponents to involve themselves in the auction if they know what they are doing. If your opponents bid 1S No 3C do you know what a double means?

How do you play 1M-3NT? A pudding raise?

What do you do with Splinters? Most play 1S-4C as a splinter but is it any range? If you play 2NT as a raise then some splinters can go this way.