

TIPS FROM MIKE LAWRENCE: INSIGHTS ON BRIDGE: BOOK 2
[Baron Barclay]

Both sides are vulnerable. East is dealer and opens 1C. You are South.
What will you bid? Answers are condensed by Barbara

1.	2.	3.	4.
S AQJ8 H 73 D 98 C AQ542	S 73 H 3 D AJ9875 C J986	S Q7652 H K8752 D 3 C K7	S J106 H AKJ8 D AQ72 C 82
5.	6.	7.	
S Q873 H AQ D KJ76 C Q107	S AKJ87 H AQ7 D KJ2 C 106	S 42 H AQ975 D AKQ7 C 83	

ANSWERS

1. Bid 1S. Now and then you can overcall with a 4-card suit. 4-card suit overcalls require all of the following:

a) A very good suit

b) One level ONLY

c) A good hand. 13 useful points or so. (Barbara: Doubleton Q's in opponents' suit count as zero points!)

d) You do not have a better bid such as a takeout double.

2. Pass. Vulnerable, this suit is not good enough for a 2D jump overcall. NOT vulnerable: 2D.

3. Pass. A Michaels Cuebid shows more than this when vulnerable. Add the H J and S J and it would be acceptable.

4. Double. You have adequate trump support for all unbid suits. You do NOT need 4 of each major to make takeout double. To make a takeout double with only 13-17 points (including distribution), you do need 7 cards in the majors at least. 4 in one and 3 in the other.

5. Pass. Not enough to overcall 1NT. Too poor a S suit to bid 1S and not enough to double and then bid NT if partner responds in Hearts. That would show 18 or more HCP.

6. Double. This is the minimum you need to double and then bid your suit. 18 or more points including distribution.

7. Bid 1H and hope to show D later. This hand is not good enough for doubling first and then bidding Hearts.

FLANNERY CONVENTION

Why learn Flannery? You have this hand:

S AK54
H AJ654
D 76
C 87

You open 1H and partner bids 2C. What will you rebid? If you are playing 2/1, some agree that it is now fine to bid 2S. Alex and I disagree. We believe that a reverse by the opener shows extras (17 or more) even if playing 2/1. Because if you play that opener can reverse even with a minimum, how will responder ever know if opener has extra points?

So, this is why the Flannery convention was invented.

As Opening bidder, with 11-15 HCP, and specifically 5 Hearts and 4 Spades, open 2D. You must agree with partner that you are playing this, of course.

Responder to Flannery will often wish to know more information about your hand. Shape, stoppers and strength (11? or 15?) He will bid 2NT to ask the question which says: Tell me more! He will usually have 13 or more points to make this bid.

2D - 2NT

HERE ARE THE REBIDS BY THE OPENER AFTER THAT AUCTION

3C shows 4-5-1-3 (4 S, 5H, 1D and 3C)

3D shows 4-5-3-1

3H shows 4-5-2-2 and minimum hand

3S shows 4-5-2-2 and maximum hand

3NT shows 4-5-2-2 and stoppers in both minors

4C shows 4-5-0-4

4D shows 4-5-4-0

2 of a major shows a weak hand and a desire to play there.

3 of a major shows an invitational hand and invites opener to bid game with a maximum.

You can play around with some of the last two responses and apply different meanings.

**MORE FROM MIKE LAWRENCE
INSIGHTS ON BRIDGE: BOOK 2
[Baron Barclay]**

This time no-one is vulnerable. East has opened with 3H and you are South. What will you bid with this hand?

a)	b)	c)	d)
S 74	S AQJ	S AK	S A2
H AJ110	H K83	H K3	H AKJ9
D KQJ97	D AKJ8	D AKJ9875	D J2
C KQ7	C AQ10	C 54	C AQ987

a) Bid 3NT. East's bid has made life hard. If your partner can produce a few points, you rate to have a good play for 3NT. Yes, you have two small spades. It's a sensible risk to take.

b) This time you have a mountain. But what else can you do? If you double, your partner will often bid 4C or 4D and now you are beyond your best contract of 3NT.

c) Bid 3NT. If you bid 4D and make it, you get 130. If you bid 3NT and make it, you get 400. In either contract, you will need a little luck.

d) Bid 3NT. It would be nice to double 3H for penalty but the double would be takeout. If you pass, they will go down and you will get 150. If you make 3NT, you get 400.

Moral of the story (by Barbara). Don't let your opponents push you around. It's a bidder's game. Alex always says: "The meek shall not inherit good bridge scores!"

Bridge is like Boxing? by Jack Brawner

"To me, boxing is like a ballet. Except there's no music, no choreography, and the dancers hit each other." – Jack Handey

Ah, boxing: the "sweet science". Why do they call it that? It's just guys hitting each other, right? No, not really. The key to boxing is to punch but not be punched, and there are many different punches and combinations. Even the brutish Mike Tyson, during his short reign of invincibility, was a superb defensive boxer and his go-to knockout punch was actually a three-punch combination.

Bridge and boxing can actually be viewed quite similarly: Defend well. Don't leave yourself open. When the opponents leave themselves open, take advantage and hit them hard. Keep your opponents off-balance. Make the opponents guess what you are going to do, not the other way around. Keep the pressure on. Play to YOUR strengths, not theirs. And above all, CONCENTRATE!

When you are away from the actual match: Analyze your errors. Listen to your trainer/teacher/coach/mentor. Work on your weaknesses. Develop new skills. LEARN!

So how does this relate to bridge? During the bidding, keep the opponents off-balance whenever possible: preempt aggressively, contest the part-scores, balance, and double frequently. Get in the auction whenever possible, but don't leave yourself open. If the bidding is uncontested, bid well but don't do anything silly. During the play of the hand, do everything possible to take every trick possible.

**ALEX'S AND BARBARA'S BRIDGE TIPS WHEN YOU ARE RESPONDING TO
1 NT OPENERS
and YOU HAVE 5 card or longer majors OR a 4 card major**

JACOBY & TEXAS TRANSFERS

Partner has opened 1NT. If you have:

0 to 7 HCP, and a **5-card H**, or **S suit**, then **bid 2** of the suit below the one you really have and partner will bid the one above it. This is called a Jacoby Transfer. Now you pass.

6-7 HCP, and a **6-card Major suit**, **bid 2** of the suit below the one you really have and partner will bid the one above it. Now you raise that suit to the 3 level, inviting partner to go further and partner will either pass or bid 4 of the suit.

8-14 HCP, and a **6-card Major suit**, **bid 4** of the suit below the one you really have and partner will bid the one above it. Now you raise that suit to game. Partner will pass. This is a TEXAS transfer.

Responder with 15 or more HCP & a 6 card major can now use Keycard Blackwood.

8-9 HCP, and a **5-card major suit**, **bid 2** of the suit below the one you really have and partner will bid the one above it. Responder now bids 2NT.

Opening NT bidder has 4 choices now:

With minimum hand and not having 3 of your major, opener will pass

With maximum hand and not having 3 of your major, opener will bid 3NT

With minimum hand and WITH three cards in your major, opener will bid 3 of the major. You must pass.

With maximum hand and WITH 3 of your major, opener will bid 4 of the major.

10 + HCP, and a **5-card Major suit**, **bid 2** of the suit below the one you really have and partner will bid the one above it. You now bid 3 NT. He will look at his hand now. If he has 3 cards in the suit you have promised (the one above the one you actually bid), then he will now bid 4 of that major and you will pass.

JACOBY TRANSFERS SUMMARY

With 5 card suits: (MAJORS ONLY)

0-7 HCP Transfer at the 2 level and then pass when it is next your turn to bid

8-9 HCP Transfer at the 2 level and then invite by bidding 2 NT

10-14 HCP Transfer at the 2 level & then bid game in NT. Partner will pass or correct to 4 of the major

With 6 card majors:

0-5 HCP & 6 card major Transfer at the 2 level and then pass when it is next your turn to bid

6-7 HCP & 6 card major: Transfer and then invite by bidding your suit again (you may never bid a 5 card suit again [in transfers], thus you are promising 6).

8 -14 HCP & 6 card major: Transfer at the 4 level: TEXAS Transfer. Pass when NT opener bids 4 of your suit.

15 + HCP & 6 card major Texas Transfer at the 4 level then after partner bids 4 of your suit, you bid Key CARD Blackwood.

It is Blackwood because a trump suit has been agreed upon and partner has at least two cards in that suit.

With 5-4 in the majors:

Bid Stayman first and then if partner bids 2D, now you bid your 5 card major. With 8-9 HCP, if partner bids 2D, then bid 2 of your major. With 10+ HCP, if partner bids 2D, then bid 3 of your five card major.

With 5-5 in the majors:

Transfer to higher ranking suit (to Spades) and then bid the lower ranking suit (Hearts) With 8-9 HCP, bid 3 H next.

With 10+ HCP bid 4 H next

This is all by partnership agreement so you have to talk about this!

FANCIER STUFF!

Some play that

1NT - 3H shows 5-5 in majors and an invitational hand

1NT - 3S shows 5-5 in majors and a slam-going hand or a game-going hand.

You have to decide what you want to play for all f these. Just be on the sane page as partner.

STAYMAN SUMMARY
Partner has opened 1NT

(If partner has opened 2NT, you need fewer points to use Stayman)

With 8 or more HCP and a 4 card major (or two) AND a short suit, use Stayman

Bid 2C and opener will respond as follows:

2D = I have no 4 card major

2H = I have a 4 card Heart suit (and maybe I also have 4 Spades)

2S = I have a 4 card Spade suit (BUT I DO NOT have a 4 card Heart suit)

Do NOT use Stayman with 4-3-3-3 distribution. You have no ruffing values.

NOTE THAT WHEN THERE HAS BEEN Stayman or a Jacoby Transfer in an auction, you cannot now use Blackwood as 4NT is now Quantitative.

Before responding in No Trump to your partner's 1 NT opening bid, consider if you should be using the STAYMAN CONVENTION.

We prefer to play contracts in major suits. No Trumps are second choice, and minor suits are the last and least preferred choice.

SO...If you have 8+ HCP, a 4-card major suit, **and a short suit**, then you should use **Stayman in our eternal quest to find an 8 card major suit fit.**

TIPS SO YOU DO NOT FALL BEHIND IN A FACE-TO-FACE GAME

First: Do not postmortem (go over hands) between deals. Finish the round and then discuss hands if there is still time. You will find yourselves under less pressure by following this suggestion.

Remember: We provide hand records in pair games so you don't have to worry about forgetting a particular holding.

Second: If you are on opening lead, make your lead before recording the contract in your private score. You will have plenty of time after leading to record the information and still see the entire first trick.

Third: Unless you have a legitimate reason to leave the table, such as the restroom or a smoke break, please remain at the table and visit with your opponents. You might actually find this enjoyable and a new way to make friends.