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Bridge Bidding: The Next Step · Standard American edition



CHAPTER 2

New Minor Forcing

Finding a major-suit fit after opener rebids notrump

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1. The problem

In Standard American, when opener rebids 1NT after a one-level response, they show a balanced **12–14** points (Book 1, Chapter 6). Responder may still want to know two things: does opener have **three-card support** for responder's major, and, if responder bid spades, does opener have **four hearts**? (After 1♦ – 1♠, opener with four hearts and a balanced minimum rebids 1NT, because 2♥ would be a reverse.)

Opener	Responder
1♦	1♠
1NT	?

♠ A J 10 7 4
♥ K 5
♦ Q 6
♣ K 7 4 2

13 points opposite 12–14: game for sure. 4♠ if opener has three spades, otherwise 3NT.

2. New Minor Forcing

After opener's **1NT rebid**, responder's bid of the **unbid minor** at the two level (2♣ after 1♦, 2♦ after 1♣) is **artificial and forcing**. Responder promises about **11 or more** points and is looking for a major-suit fit.

Opener's reply	Meaning
2 of responder's major	three-card support
2♥ (after a 1♠ response)	four hearts, no three-card spade support
2NT	neither, minimum (12–13)
3NT	neither, maximum (14)

Responder then places the contract: game in the fit with 13 or more, an invitational raise to three with 11–12, or notrump when there is no fit.

Opener	Responder
♠ A 9 6	♠ A J 10 7 4
♥ K 8 2	♥ K 5
♦ K J 7 4	♦ Q 6
♣ Q 9 3	♣ K 7 4 2

1♦ – 1♠ – 1NT – 2♣ (new minor) – **2♠** (three spades) – **4♠**.

Opener	Responder
♠ K 7	♠ K Q 8 4
♥ A J 6 4	♥ K J 7 3
♦ Q 8 5 3	♦ A 6 2
♣ K 10 4	♣ 9 5

1♦ – 1♠ – 1NT – 2♣ – **2♥** (four hearts) – **4♥**. Without New Minor Forcing, the 4-4 heart fit would be lost.

3. When you don't need it

- **Weak hands.** With a long major and a weak hand, just rebid it: 1♦ – 1♠ – 1NT – 2♠ asks opener to pass.
- **Balanced, no five-card major** (and no four hearts to look for). Bid 2NT (11–12) or 3NT (13+) directly.
- **Six cards in your major.** There is a fit: jump to 3 (invitational) or 4 (game).

> Because 2♣ (or 2♦) is now artificial, responder cannot use it to show a real minor suit at the two level. With a weak hand and a long minor, bid three of it to play. Some partnerships add more detailed replies; the simple version here is enough to start with.

4. Summary

After 1m – 1M – 1NT (12–14)	Bid
Weak, long major	2 of your major (to play)
11+, looking for a major fit	the unbid minor (New Minor Forcing)
Opener shows a fit	raise to 3 (11–12) or 4 (13+)
Opener bids 2NT or 3NT	no fit: pass, or bid 3NT with 13+
Balanced, no five-card major	2NT (11–12) or 3NT (13+)
Six-card major, 11+	jump to 3 or 4 of it

5. Test yourself

1. ♠ A Q 10 6 3
♥ K 5
♦ J 4
♣ Q 7 6 2

1♦ – 1♠ – 1NT – ? What do you bid?

2. ♠ K J 7 4
♥ Q 5 2
♦ K 8 3
♣ A 9 5

1♦ – 1♠ – 1NT – ? What do you bid?

3. ♠ Q 9 7 5 4 2
♥ 8 4
♦ 6 3
♣ J 8 2

1♦ – 1♠ – 1NT – ? What do you bid?

4. ♠ A 9 6
♥ K 8 2
♦ K J 7 4
♣ Q 9 3

You opened 1♦. 1♦ – 1♠ – 1NT – 2♣. What do you bid?

5. ♠ K 7
♥ A J 6 4
♦ Q 8 5 3
♣ K 10 4

You opened 1♦. 1♦ – 1♠ – 1NT – 2♣. What do you bid?

6. ♠ A Q 10 6 3
♥ K 9 5 2
♦ J 4
♣ Q 7

1♦ – 1♠ – 1NT – 2♣ – 2♥ – ? What do you bid?

Answers

1. 2♣. New Minor Forcing: 12 points and five spades. Look for three-card support.

2. 3NT. Balanced with only four spades and no four hearts. Nothing to look for.

3. 2♠. Weak, with six spades: opener will pass.

4. 2♠. Three-card spade support comes first.

5. 2♥. Only two spades, but four hearts.

6. 4♥. Partner has four hearts; so do you. 12 points opposite 12–14 is enough for game with a fit.

Next: Chapter 3, Negative Doubles. Free lessons and challenge hands to play: **bridgescorer.com/learn**

About this guide. There are many versions of Standard American, and clubs, teachers and books do not all agree on every detail. This chapter describes one common, straightforward version for learners. We do not claim it is the only or the best way: if your teacher or club plays something different, follow them. What matters most is that you and your partner agree.

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