

Conventional Wisdom

Filling out the convention card — part 10

The 24-part *Conventional Wisdom* series is available online at www.acbl.org/play/conventionwisdom.html.

OTHER CONVENTIONAL CALLS

This section of the convention card serves as a catchall for treatments that don't have a home anywhere else on the card. While several common conventional gadgets are specifically mentioned here, there are extra lines provided at the end for partnerships to write in other treatments that they employ.

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Most of the treatments in this section are Alertable. Items in RED on the convention card must be Alerted and explained to the opponents upon request.

OTHER CONV. CALLS: New Minor Forcing: 2-Way NMF
Weak Jump Shifts: In Comp. Not in Comp.
4th Suit Forcing: 1 Rd. Game

Weak Jump Shifts

In a competitive auction such as:

West	North	East	South
1♣	1♥	2♠	

it's popular to play the 2♠ jump shift as weak. This approach is not Alertable in competition. If, however, you play weak jump shifts even when the opponents are silent, e.g.,

Partner	You
1♣	2♠

check the RED "Not in Comp." box and Alert the opponents.

Others

Common treatments you might describe in the lines at the bottom include defenses to artificial and strong 1♣ or 2♣ openings, defenses to the opponents' "unusual" bids such as 2NT showing the minors or Michaels cuebids, or perhaps special constructive agreements such as fit-showing jumps.

4th Suit Forcing

A common bidding tactic by responder to force opener to keep bidding is the convention known as 4th Suit Forcing (4SF). For example, after an auction that begins:

Partner	You
1♦	1♠
2♣	?

you could bid 2♥ (the fourth suit) to force opener to make another call. 2♥ in this case would not necessarily promise a true heart holding. It is simply a way to extract more information out of opener. On this auction, responder might have a hand such as:

♠AK762 ♥986 ♦KQ5 ♣J9. Opener may have three-card spade support or, failing that, a stopper in hearts for 3NT. 4SF allows responder to find out.

The only choice your partnership needs to make is whether this treatment is forcing for one round only (check the "1 Rd." box) or forcing to game (check the "Game" box).

New Minor Forcing

After the auction:

Partner	You
1♣	1♠
1NT	?

Experienced
Players

what would you bid holding:

♠KQ764 ♥AJ96 ♦A8 ♣52?

There are sufficient values for game, but which one? 3NT, 4♥ and 4♠ are all possibilities, but you need to know more about partner's shape to make an intelligent decision. To help with situations such as this, many pairs use the treatment called **New Minor Forcing (NMF)**. After any auction that begins

Opener	Responder
1 of a minor	1 of a major
1NT	

responder bids two of the *other* minor to ask opener to clarify his major-suit holdings. In the example auction, therefore, you would bid 2♦. This bid is conventional. Partner can then show three-card spade support (2♠), four hearts (2♥) or neither (2NT), allowing you to make a good guess as to what the final contract should be. If partner had opened 1♦ instead, your NMF bid would be 2♣.

2-Way NMF A refinement to regular NMF is the treatment called 2-Way NMF. After the "platform" of

Opener	Responder
1 of a minor	1 of a major
1NT	

responder announces an invitational hand by rebidding 2♣, while a 2♦ rebid is a game force. These rebids are used regardless of the minor opener bid first. After the 2♣ rebid, opener is usually required to bid 2♦. Rarely, responder will pass this with a weak hand that has a four-card major and six-plus diamonds, but typically responder completes the description of his invitational hand. After responder's game-forcing 2♦ rebid, however, opener makes the first move in describing his major-suit holdings.