



# Adventures in Bridge

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## *This Week in Bridge*

### **(373) Responding to 1-Major with Non-Game-Forcing Values**

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Level: 4 of 10 (1 of 6)

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#### **General**

When partner opens the bidding with 1-Major and we do not have enough values to force to game, we need to find a call other than a 2/1 GF bid. When partner opens with 1-Major there is not much room left at the 1-level to make a natural bid, showing 6+ points. Here we look at our responding options with hands that have less than game-forcing values.

#### **Direct Raises of Partner's Suit**

When partner opens 1-Major then we have three immediate raises of their suit available to us.

- 2M Constructive Raise, 3-4 card support, good 7 to bad 10 points
- 3M Limit Raise, usually 4-card support (though some partnerships do this with 3-cards and shortness), and about 10-11 points.
- 4M Preemptive Raise, 5+card support, about 0-8 HCP.

All of these raises are non-forcing.

#### **Responding to 1♥**

When partner opens 1♥, we have a few more responding options than when partner opens 1♠. After a 1♥ opening most partnerships play that we can bid 1♠ or 2♠ as non-game-forcing actions:

##### *Example 1*

1♥

- 1♠ 4+card ♠, 6+ points, 1F
- 2♠ Weak Jump Shift, 6+card ♠, 0-5 HCP, NF



## 1NT Semi-Forcing Response to 1-Major

1NT Semi-Forcing is our most common non-game-forcing response.

- 1♠ 1NT about 6-11 points
- 1♥ 1NT about 6-11 points, denies a 4+card ♠ suit

As you can see there are two hand strengths that respond to 1-Major with 1NT Semi-Forcing:

- 6-9 pts – Minimum
- 10-11 pts – Invitational

Hands with 12+ points either make an artificial raise (*Jacoby, Splinter, etc.*) or make a 2/1 Game Forcing bid.

The hands that respond 1NT Semi-Forcing do not usually contain 4-card support for Opener's Major, but they could contain 3-card support (with 4-card support we would have shown our support directly).

## 3/1 Invitational Responses

There are a few other hands that we would like to be able describe in one call when partner opens the bidding. These are hands that have a long suit of their own and do not have much interest in playing in another suit. We use a jump to the 3-level, called a "3-over-1 invitational" bid to show these hands.

### List of 3/1 Invitational Bids

- 1♠ - 3♣ 6+card ♣, 9-11 pts, invitational (usually short ♠)
- 1♠ - 3♦ 6+card ♦, 9-11 pts, invitational (usually short ♠)
- 1♠ - 3♥ 6+card ♥, 9-11 pts, invitational (usually short ♠)
- 1♥ - 3♣ 6+card ♣, 9-11 pts, invitational (usually short ♥)
- 1♥ - 3♦ 6+card ♦, 9-11 pts, invitational (usually short ♥)
- 1♦ - 3♣ 6+card ♣, 9-11 pts, invitational

With hands that have a doubleton in partner's suit, a long suit of their own, and invitational values, we start with 1NT Semi-Forcing and find out more about partner's hand. If partner rebids their suit, then we have found a 6-2 fit and we can raise their suit. If partner does not rebid their suit, then we will look for a fit in our own long suit.

*Note: Some players choose to play Bergen Raises for their responses at the 3-level. These raises interfere with the 3/1 Invitational structure and we must choose between Bergen and 3/1 Invitational bids. The approach we present here does not include Bergen raises, but if you choose to adopt them then you will need to modify your invitational bid sequences.*



## Conclusion

Once you start playing a 2NT response to a 1-Major opening as Jacoby 2NT, then you start to add some complexity (and sophistication) to your response structure. In this case, a 1NT response needs to begin to absorb more hands than just 6-9 points without a fit. Once you upgrade to playing 2/1 GF then even more hands must go into the 1NT response to 1-Major opening. Of course, there are other bids available to describe your hand, most of them natural. Make sure that you and partner have good agreements about the meaning of all your options when you are responding to a 1-Major opening.