

# Showing Support for Partner's Opening of 1 of a Minor

## General requirements for showing immediate support:

- ◆ **No 4+ card major** (& generally no 4 card diamond suit after a 1♠ opener)
  - ❖ ♠ 5432 ♥Kx ♦KQJ1098 ♣x: Bid 1♠ (after 1♦ opener)
  
- ◆ **NT is not a better description** (1N: 6- bad 10; 2N=good 10-bad 12-; 3N=good 12-15)
  - NT does not deny support for the minor
  - Especially for the 3N bid, you need the majors stopped (for 2N one might be partial)
  - ❖ ♠ Qxx ♥Kxx ♦Q10xxx ♣xx: Bid 1N (after 1♦ opener)
  - ❖ ♠ Axx ♥QJx ♦J10xxx ♣Kx: Bid 2N (after 1♦ opener)
  - ❖ ♠ AQx ♥QJx ♦QJxxx ♣Kx: Bid 3N (after 1♦ opener)
  
- ◆ **You have an 8+ card fit** (or a least it's highly probable that you do)
  - Responder can have only 4 diamonds there is no more descriptive bid and you agree that the only "short" diamond by opener is exactly 4-4-3-2
    - ❖ ♠ xx ♥xx ♦KQJx ♣KJxxx: Raise diamonds (after 1♦ opener, playing 2/1)
  - Side note: Adjusting for hands that would open NT (or 2♣ then NT) at some level:
    - You will open a 3 card diamond suit about 1.62% of the time
    - You will open a 3 card club suit about 6.33% of the time

## Note about bidding:

- ◆ Any system needs to have bids to describe the available hand strengths (preemptive, constructive, invitational, game forcing, slam going) for each hand type (in this case, "hand type" means a hand that needs to make an immediate raise of partner's opening minor)
  - Obviously you can't have unique bids to distinguish each of the strengths **BUT**
  - You must have bids that include each strength for each hand type
    - At a minimum forcing and non-forcing bids
    - Ideally, you would like to distinguish some of the ranges
  - Sample minor-raising hands with various strengths (after 1♦ opener):
    - ❖ Preempt (Non-vulnerable!): ♠ x ♥xxx ♦KJxxxx ♣xxx
    - ❖ Constructive: ♠ Qxx ♥xx ♦KJxxx ♣Qxx
    - ❖ Game Invitational: ♠ xx ♥KJx ♦K10xxx ♣Kxx
    - ❖ Game Forcing: ♠ xx ♥AQx ♦K10xxx ♣AKx
    - ❖ Slam Invitational: ♠ Axx ♥x ♦KQJxxx ♣AQx

## Standard – and the problem with it:

- ◆ Single minor raise = 6- bad 10; double raise = good 10-bad 12
- ◆ What do you do with a game forcing hand & no other 4 card suit?
- ◆ You can't play in 2N – could be important at match points (pair games)
- ◆ You can't preempt below the 4-level

## Solution – Inverted Minors:

### Basic Inverted Minors:

- ◆ **Single minor raise=good 10 – infinity**
  - Forcing one round (by an unpassed hand – see partnership decisions needed below)
- ◆ **Double minor raise=less than a game invitation**
  - Consider vulnerability with very weak hands
- ◆ Provides a forcing bid, allows investigation of NT and gives plenty of room for exploration with stronger hands
- ◆ **Warning:** This does not work well with short club systems (though you can use it for the diamond raises if the short club is because diamonds promise 4+ card length)

### Some common variations:

- ◆ *Distinguish weak from constructive*
  - Double minor raise is less than constructive (basically preemptive) (my choice)
  - With a constructive raise you either (choose 1 of these):
    - Bid 1N which may be seriously off-shape
    - Bid 2♠ which gives up the weak jump shift (my choice)
- ◆ *Distinguish Invitational from game forcing or better*
  - Use the jump shift to the other minor (1♣-2♦ or 1♦-3♣) to distinguish between invitational only and game force or better. This is called Criss-Cross.
    - Can play it either way: single raise=GF+ & Criss-Cross=invitational or vice versa
    - If Criss-Cross is invitational, you can't play 2N after a 1♦ opening
    - For 1♦-3♣, you lose other possible uses of the 3♣ bid.
      - I use it for a natural, game invitation – a hand for which there is no other bid playing 2/1.

### Partnership decisions needed:

- ◆ Are inverted minors on or off by a passed hand?
  - Recommendation: On
    - The single raise is specifically invitational (non-forcing)
    - Otherwise you have most of the same problems that inverted solves
- ◆ Are inverted minors on or off after a double?
  - Recommendation: Off
    - You need the single raise for a constructive raise
    - There are several choices for responses (see options after a double below)
- ◆ Are inverted minors on or off after an overcall?
  - Recommendation: Off
    - You need the single raise for a constructive raise
    - Game invitational or better hands can start with cue bid

## Follow-ups to double minor raise played as weak:

- ♦ Pass with anything short of a big hand
- ♦ With 18-19 HCP and all outside suits stopped, bid 3N
  - ❖ ♠ Axx ♥Kxx ♦AKxx ♣AJ10 (after 1♦-3♦): Bid 3N
- ♦ With 18-19 HCP and missing a major stopper, bid the major you have stopped
  - ❖ ♠ AKx ♥xxx ♦AKxx ♣AJ10 (after 1♦-3♦): Bid 3♠
- ♦ If slam invitational, control bid or ask for keycards
  - ❖ ♠ AK ♥A ♦Axxxxx ♣KJxx (after 1♦-3♦): Ask for keycards

## Follow-ups to single minor raise played as invitational or better:

- ♦ Much variation here – mostly in strength required for bids
- ♦ One major difference is match point (pairs) vs IMP (teams) bias:
  - If both 2N & 3 minor make exactly:
    - In pairs, you definitely want to be in 2N
    - In teams, it makes absolutely no difference which contract you are in
      - In fact, there is an argument that you never want to play 2N in teams
  - Thus, in some variations, 2N cannot be played and in some almost all rebids are game-going

***Since we play mostly pairs, my recommendations will be oriented to finding NT at any level.***

**Note:** *The only bids that can be passed below game by either hand are 2N and 3 of your minor*

### ♦ ***Opener rebids NT if balanced with both majors stopped:***

- 2N: minimum, does not accept game invitation
  - ❖ ♠QJx ♥Axxx ♦Qxxx ♣Kx (after 1♦-2♦): Bid 2N
    - Responder usually passes with invitation or raises to game with game force
    - Responder can correct to 3 of minor with invitation and unbalanced hand (non-forcing)
      - ❖ ♠ x ♥Qxx ♦Qxxxx ♣KQxx (after 1♦-2♦; 2N): Bid 3♦
    - If slam invitational, responder can control bid or splinter or ask for keycards
- 3N: accepts game invitation (14 HCP or 15 HCP with some reason didn't open 1N)
  - ❖ ♠QJx ♥Axxx ♦KJxx ♣Kx (after 1♦-2♦): Bid 3N
    - If slam invitational, responder can control bid or ask for keycards
- 4N: 18-19 (and you should also have other minor stopped at this level)
  - ❖ ♠ KQx ♥A109x ♦KJx ♣AQx (after 1♦-2♦): Can bid 4N, but see note
    - Note: This takes up a huge amount of room. You will generally do better to control bid or ask for keycards.
    - Responder should pass with a minimum invitation. If responder thinks slam is possible, you can agree to show keycards (as if 4N were a keycard ask) to keep yourselves out of a bad slam.

♦ **Opener rebids 2 of a major showing a stopper to explore for NT (& see 2♦ after 1♣-2♣ below):**

- Denies stopper in other major; does not promise extra values
  - ❖ ♠ AQx ♥xx ♦Axxx ♣Q10xx (after 1♦-2♦; 2♠): Bid 2♠ then pass 2N or 3♦
  - ❖ ♠ AQx ♥xx ♦AQxx ♣Q10xx (after 1♦-2♦; 2♠): Bid 2♠ then raise 2N to 3N, but pass 3♦
- Responder with stopper in other major bids 2N with invitation only, 3N with game force
  - ❖ ♠ xx ♥KJx ♦K10xxx ♣Kxx (after 1♦-2♦; 2♠): Bid 2N
  - ❖ ♠ xx ♥AQx ♦K10xxx ♣AKx (after 1♦-2♦; 2♠): Bid 3N
  - If slam invitational, responder can control bid or splinter or ask for keycards
- Responder without stopper in other major bids:
  - 3 of minor with invitation only
    - ❖ ♠ KJx ♥xx ♦K10xxx ♣Kxx (after 1♦-2♦; 2♠): Bid 3♦
  - Over 2♥, can decide with partner if 2♠ is a partial stopper not promising extras
    - ❖ ♠ J10x ♥xx ♦KQxx ♣KJxx (after 1♦-2♦; 2♥): Bid 2♠
  - Anything else is game forcing **BUT**
    - ▶ Discuss with partner if you can stop at 4 of minor if both have minimum opening values. If you generally play 4 of minor as a keycard ask (see keycard ask options below), discuss in which sequences is just a game invitation instead.
  - If slam invitational, responder can control bid or splinter or ask for keycards

♦ **Opener's rebids with no major stopper:**

- Without extra values:
  - Generally rebid 3 of minor. Remember you need about 28 combined points to make a minor game.
    - ❖ ♠xxx ♥xx ♦AKxx ♣AJxx (after 1♦-2♦): Bid 3♦
  - After 1♣-2♣ with diamonds double-stopped, you can try 2♦ and hope to hear NT from responder (if you choose my option for the meaning of 2♦ below). Drawbacks:
    - Why didn't partner bid NT in the first place with both majors stopped? Most likely, he/she is unbalanced (probably short in diamonds) and therefore has at least 6 clubs. Unless you are very balanced, you might actually do better in a club partial. (If the reason was that responder was strong, he/she will bid again over 3♣).
    - This gives your silent opponents a cheap way to back into the auction
      - ❖ ♠xxx ♥xxx ♣AKx ♣AQJx (after 1♣-2♣): Bid 2♦ and correct 2 of major to 3♣
      - ❖ ♠xx ♥xx ♣Axx ♣AQJxx (after 1♣-2♣): Bid 3♣
  - After 1♦-2♦ with a real club suit and a maximum based on distribution, you can try 3♣ to invite game (if you choose my option for the meaning of 3♣ below)
    - ❖ -- ♥xxx ♦AKxxx ♣KQxxx (after 1♦-2♦): Bid 3♣
- With extra values:
  - Make bids that cannot be passed. It will usually sound like you are looking for NT, but when you pull responder's NT to some other bid or keep bidding beyond 3 of your minor, responder will get the idea that you are game-going in the minor.

♦ **Opener's rebids with a slam invitational hand:**

- Jump in new suit is a splinter
  - ❖ ♠ AKx ♥x ♦AQxxx ♣KJxx (after 1♦-2♦): Bid 3♥
    - ▶ If partner now bids 4♣ showing the a ♣ control you can ask for keycards and get to a good slam opposite the "right" invitation (like ♠ xxx ♥Axx ♦Kxxxx ♣Ax)
- Ask for keycards
  - ❖ ♠ AKx ♥x ♦KJxxx ♣AKJx (after 1♦-2♦): Ask for keycards
- Double jump in new suit is exclusion keycard ask (except kickback suit if you play kickback)

♦ If you have super-distributional (but not strong) hand, you can bid 5 of minor – but remember that you don't know partner's strength and could be really making things difficult for him/her.

♦ **The following rebids need to be discussed with partner:**

- 2♦ after 1♣-2♣. Some options:
  - Stopper – may have one major stopper (**my choice**)
    - ❖ ♠ xx ♥QJxx ♦AJx ♣KQxx (after 1♣-2♣): Bid 2♦
  - Stopper – denies both major stoppers
    - Not my choice because with most balanced hands with both major stopped, responder would have bid 2N instead of 2♣ in the first place.
      - ❖ ♠ xxx ♥xx ♦AKx ♣KQJxx (after 1♣-2♣): Bid 2♦
  - Natural and game-going or advance cue bid
- 3♣ after 1♦-2♦. Some options:
  - Stopper – denies both major stoppers (& accepts game invitation, at least in NT)
    - But be aware that partner with both majors stopped will tend to respond 2N or 3N rather than inverted minor unless really unbalanced
  - Natural and 2-suited, but only game invitational (**my choice**)
    - ❖ ♠ -- ♥xxx ♦AKxxx ♣KQxxx (after 1♦-2♦): Bid 3♣
  - Natural and 2-suited and game forcing

**If you choose a more IMP-oriented response system:**

- ♦ Usually, only 2N & 3 minor can be passed; bidding a stopper shows game interest
- ♦ Be sure to discuss with partner whether, once game interest is shown, you can stop in 4 of minor if NT proves to be unplayable.

## Options after a double:

For all, you don't have 4 cards in a major suit (& usually not 4 diamonds after 1♣) and 1N or 3N isn't suitable

- ◆ Jordan: 2N shows limit raise or better (and is a one round force)
  - 2 minor is simple raise (usually constructive)
  - 3 minor is preemptive
  - Redouble is 10+ with no fit
  
- ◆ Jordan: 2N shows limit raise exactly (non-forcing)
  - 2 minor is simple raise (usually constructive)
  - 3 minor is preemptive
  - Redouble is 10+ with no fit or game-going with fit
  
- ◆ Flip-flop (intended to get NT played by "right" hand if playable):
  - 2 minor is simple raise (usually constructive)
  - 2N is preempt in minor
  - 3 minor is invitational
  - Redouble is 10+ with no fit or game-going with fit
  
- ◆ Natural:
  - 2 minor is simple raise (usually constructive)
  - 3 minor is preemptive
  - 2N is natural and invitational
  - Redouble is 10+ with or without fit

## Other immediate minor raises:

- ◆ **Double jump shift: splinter**
  - ❖ ♠ x ♥AQx ♦KQxxxx ♣AJxx (after 1♦): Bid 3♠
  
- ◆ **4 minor preemptive**
  - Even If you use 4 minor to ask for keycards (start with raise to 2 of minor to prepare for keycard ask)
  
- ◆ **5 minor preemptive**

## Keycard ask options after inverted minor raise (agree with partner):

For all of these, responses are the same as you usually play for keycard (3014 or 1430)

- ♦ **Minorwood** (4♣ for clubs, 4♦ for diamonds) – **My recommendation**
  - Make sure you and partner agree when this is minorwood vs. when this is invitational
  - I found an interesting treatment for minorwood in the literature:
    - 1st step: asks partner to show his keycards
    - 2nd step and above: normal responses starting 1 step up
- ♦ **Crosswood** (4♦ for clubs, 4♣ for diamonds)
  - Can't control bid clubs over 1♦-2♦; 3♦ or 3N
- ♦ **Kickback** (4♦ for clubs; 4♥ for diamonds) – My choice, but not if you don't normally play it
  - Lose some splinters and some exclusion keycard asks
- ♦ **Keycard Gerber** (4♣ over NT rebids regardless of minor)
  - Can't control bid clubs over 1♦-2♦; 3♦ or 3N
- ♦ **Roman Keycard Blackwood** (4N)
  - This normally gets you too high