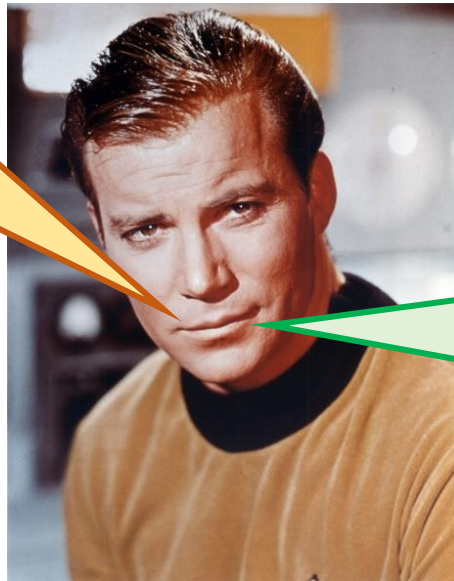


Bidding after a NT Opener

Presented January 15, 2025

Partner opened 1NT,
so **I** am **Captain
of the Team**

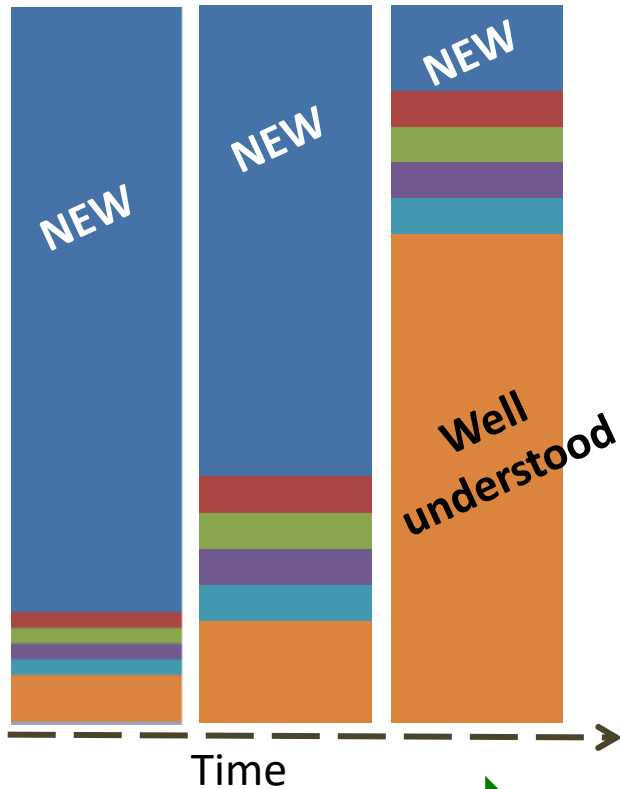


Because Partner gave me such a
PRECISE description of her hand

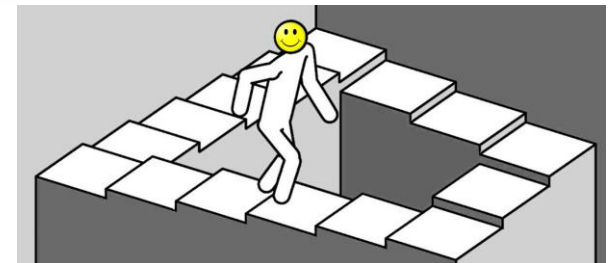
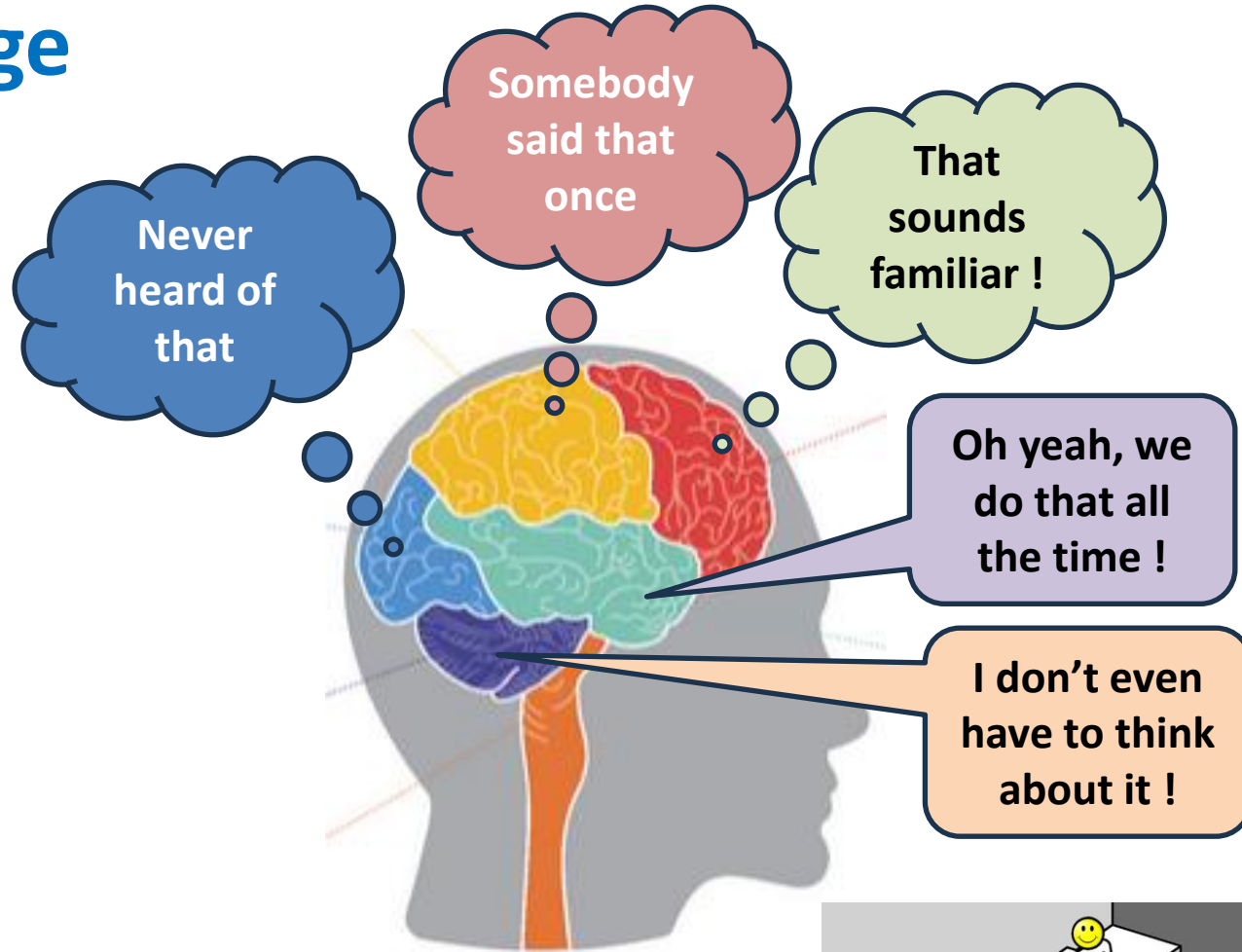
... not because of my ginormous ego

Phil Abrahamson

How we learn bridge



Repetition helps to consolidate learnings



The “NT Opening Ladder”

Opening with a balanced hand
– the whole kit & kaboodle

Don't hold your breath waiting for 28+ HCP
– about 1 hand in 35,000



Opener
HCP

Action
to take

28+

← Buy a lottery ticket 😊

25-27

Open **2C**, rebid **3NT**

22-24

Open **2C**, rebid **2NT**

20-21

Open **2NT**

“Tweener”

18-19

Open 1 of a Suit, **JUMP to 2NT**

15-17

Open **1NT**

12-14

Open 1 of a Suit, **rebid 1NT**

RARE

All you need to remember:

- Open 1NT with 15-17
- With more, scoot up the ladder
- With less, rebid 1NT if still at 1 level

It's wonderful when Partner opens 1NT

You hold this hand. **What final contract is best?**

What suit?
(or NT?)

What level?



NOT asking "how do we bid it?" – just "where do we want to end up?"

♠ AK 5 4 3 2
♥ 3 2
♦ 4 3 2
♣ A 3

4♠

♠ K 2
♥ QJ 9 7 4 2
♦ 4 3
♣ 4 3 2

2♥

♠ A
♥ AK 9 7 6 2
♦ 4 3 2
♣ 4 3 2

4♥

♠ QJ 2
♥ 3 2
♦ Q 9 3 2
♣ Q 4 3 2

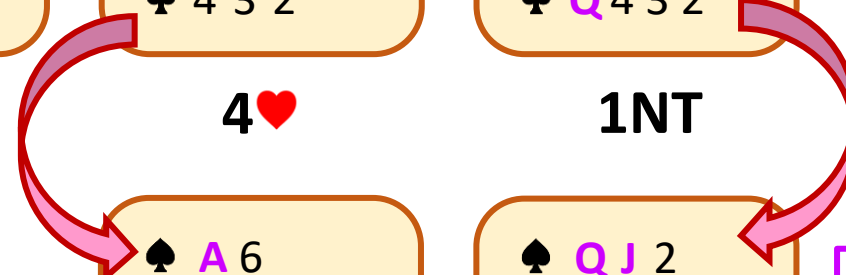
1NT

♠ A 3 2
♥ AK 9
♦ 9 6 3 2
♣ 4 3 2

3NT

♠ 6 5 4 3 2
♥ 3 2
♦ 4 3 2
♣ 4 3 2

2♠



♠ A 6
♥ AK 9 7 2
♦ 4 3 2
♣ 4 3 2

3NT
or 4♥

♠ QJ 2
♥ 3 2
♦ Q 9 3 2
♣ A 4 3 2

maybe
3NT

When Partner opens 1NT,
you know what to do, so
YOU become Captain of the Team

Depends on Opener's hand
– does she have 3 Hearts?

Depends on Opener's hand
– is she min or max?

Bidding after Partner opens NT

“ I have 15-17 HCP,
balanced ”

Opener
1NT

- 6+ card Major → **play in that Major**
- 5-card Major → NT or Major (**Transfer!**)
- 4-card Major(s) → NT or Major (**Stayman**)

- Game strength → **Bid it !!**
- Invitational strength → **Invite !!**
- Weaker → **STOP !!**

Bidding is a **CONVERSATION**.

The goal of bidding is to answer 2 questions:

**What suit
(or NT)?**

Priorities

1. **8-card Major fit ?**
2. **NT ?**
3. Minor suit

What level?

- Below game
- **Game (25-26 points)**
- **Slam (33 points)**

After a NT opener by Partner,
Responder can answer these questions **easily** !

Because Responder knows
so much about Opener's
hand (HCP and shape)

Fleshing that out ... after Partner opens 1NT

6+ card Major → play in that Major → (1) Transfer, then (2) Pass, Invite, or Bid Game

*The weaker you are, the
MORE IMPORTANT it is to transfer*

Pass if weak !!!

Your bid is in your suit.
Level depends on your strength.

5-card Major → play there or NT → (1) Transfer, then (2) Pass, Invite, or Bid Game

Your bid is NT.
Level depends on your strength.
Partner chooses NT or Suit.

4-card Major(s) → play there or NT → If **invitational+**, then:
(1) Stayman, then (2) Invite, or Bid Game

With a **4-card Major and a 5-card Major**:

- If WEAK, just Transfer
- If Invitational+, try Stayman; if no success, bid your 5-card suit (Pard will choose it with 3)

Your bid is NT or raise Pard's suit.
Level depends on your strength.

If balanced – I Pass with 8 HCP ... and ... Invite with 9 HCP

Partner opens 1NT – and you are Balanced, with no 4+ card Major

My philosophy: Pass with 8 HCP, and Invite with 9 HCP

(partner accepts with 16 or 17)

Many people invite with 8 or 9,
and accept with 17 (or a “good” 16)

Why do I prefer my philosophy ?

- It leads to fewer “2NT, down 1” contracts when Opener has 15 HCP (see Appendix)

If balanced – Pass with 8 HCP ... and ... Invite with 9 HCP

Table shows final contract

My approach
(invite with 8, accept with 16 or 17)

Invite with 8 or 9
(accept w/ 17)

		Responder				Responder	
		8 HCP (PASS)	9 HCP (Invite)			8 HCP (Invite)	9 HCP (Invite)
Opener	15 HCP	1 NT	2 NT	2 NT	2 NT	Same contract in both approaches	
	16 HCP	1 NT	3 NT	2 NT	2 NT		
	17 HCP	1 NT	3 NT	3 NT	3 NT		

In these cases, 1NT is better than 2NT !!

25-HCP
3NT (a wash)

Miss 25-HCP
3NT (a wash)

And if not in 3NT, 1NT is better than 2NT !!

Thanks to Gary Porter !!