

Unusual notrump

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In the [card game](#) of [bridge](#), the **unusual notrump** is a [conventional](#) bid showing two lower unbid suits.

When the right-hand opponent opens 1♥ or 1♠, the immediate overcall of 2 NT shows at least 5-5 in the [minor suits](#) (that is, at least five clubs plus at least five diamonds) and, presumably, a weakish hand (6 to 11 [points](#)). If the next player passes, the partner is expected to select the minor suit that he/she prefers and bid it at the 3-level. The unusual notrump is one of the earliest conventions devised for the game. It extended the principle that when the natural meaning of a bid is not generally very useful, it is profitable to agree that it means something somewhat opposite. That is, while natural notrump bids show a strong hand with balanced distribution, the unusual notrump shows a weak hand with very unbalanced distribution.

The unusual notrump is used only after the opponents open the bidding. In addition to succinctly describing the hand to the partner, it also deprives the opponents of a lot of bidding space (that is, it has a [preemptive](#) value).

Many players extend the convention to have it show the "two lowest unbid" suits rather than strictly the minors. Thus, over 1♣, 2NT shows diamonds and hearts; and over 1♦, it shows clubs and hearts.

If the 2 notrump bidder bids again freely, then it shows a *strong* [two suiter](#). To distinguish the weak and strong holdings, many partnerships agree *not* to use the unusual notrump for intermediate hands (about 12 to 14 points); they would simply overcall with one of their suits and show the other later if the bidding offers a chance. However, for two-suiters, many players apply [losing trick count](#) (LTC) instead of point count, as it more accurately depicts the offensive trick-taking potential of the hand. With LTC in effect, the required strength is about 4.5–7 losers, the latter only in favorable vulnerability.

Similarly, a 4NT overcall shows an extreme two suiter (usually at least 6-5, often 6-6 or 7-6) and enough trick-taking potential so that a 5-level contract can be made, or a sacrifice will likely be profitable. It shows the same two suits as 2NT would show. Note that 4NT is "unusual" only when the opponents open the bidding; otherwise, 4NT is normally played as the [Blackwood convention](#) or a quantitative invitation to 6NT.

The [Michaels cuebid](#) is a similar convention which is used to show a two suiter with one or both [major suits](#).

To counteract the unusual notrump, the opening side may employ [unusual vs. unusual](#).

Drawbacks

Due to the ease with which it is learned and used, it is among the most abused conventions whereby bidders with insufficient strength and lengths (such as 5-4 in the minors) invoke the convention.

This often leads to one of:

1. Opponents are offered the option to double and collect a heavy penalty.
2. Opponents outbid the bidders to obtain a major suit contract.
3. Opponents make a contract that is normally unmakeable due to forewarning of adverse distribution.

Leaping Michaels

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In the game of [bridge](#), **Leaping Michaels** is a conventional [overcall](#) made in defense to an opposing 2-level or 3-level [preempt](#). Leaping Michaels is played by many pairs as it provides a means to show strong [two-suited hands](#) (5-5 or longer) that are less suitable for a [takeout double](#).

To do so, Leaping Michaels, utilises the 4♣ and 4♦ bids. Similar to [Michaels cuebid](#), in case this minor suit overcall is in the opposing suit, both major suits are implied. In case the overcall is not a cuebid, the suit bid plus a major suit is indicated. So, on preempts of the opponents (indicated between brackets), the following applies when playing Leaping Michaels:

- (2/3♥) - 4♣ : Clubs and spades
- (2/3♥) - 4♦ : Diamonds and spades
- (2/3♠) - 4♣ : Clubs and hearts
- (2/3♠) - 4♦ : Diamonds and hearts
- (3♣) - 4♣ : Majors
- (3♣) - 4♦ : Diamonds and an undisclosed major
- (3♦) - 4♣ : Clubs and an undisclosed major
- (3♦) - 4♦ : Majors

After (3♦) - 4♣, a bid of 4♦ asks for the major. The bids 4♥ and 4♠ are to play.

Following (3♣) - 4♦ the bid of 4♥ is played as [pass-or-correct](#).

Some partnerships prefer to interchange the meanings of the 4♣ and 4♦ bids following a 3♣ preempt so that 4♣ denotes diamonds and an undisclosed major. This has the advantage that the 4♦ becomes available to ask for the major suit. The 4♥/4♠ responses can then be played as natural (to play).

Leaping Michaels can be utilised after natural [two-level preempts](#), but also after conventional preempts such as [Muiderberg](#). Even after a [Multi 2 diamonds](#) preempt, Leaping Michaels can be utilised to good effect:

- (2♦) - 4♣ : Clubs and an undisclosed major (4♦ asks for the major)
- (2♦) - 4♦ : Diamonds and an undisclosed major (4♥ is [pass-or-correct](#))