

New Minor Forcing

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New Minor Forcing is a convention used after responder bids 1 ♥ / ♠ and hears a 1NT rebid by opener. A 2 ♣ or 2 ♦ bid is artificial, showing at least game-invitational values and usually a 5-card major. It says nothing about clubs or diamonds, respectively. New Minor Forcing is used in these sequences:

Opener	Responder
1 ♣	1 ♥ / ♠
1NT	2 ♦ !

Opener	Responder
1 ♦	1 ♥ / ♠
1NT	2 ♣ !

Opener	Responder
1 ♥	1 ♠
1NT	2 ♣ / ♦ !

In each auction, 2 ♣ / ♦ is New Minor Forcing. These bids do not necessarily show a real suit; they are simply forcing bids that ask partner to describe his hand.

New Minor Forcing fills the need for the partnership to identify a 5-3 major-suit fit, since opener's 1NT rebid may include 3 cards in responder's suit. Playing standard methods, responder may be forced to rebid 2NT or 3NT with a 5-card major. Opener is then forced to guess whether responder has a 4- or 5-card suit. By playing New Minor Forcing and giving up the natural minor-suit rebid, players can more easily probe for a major-suit game.

Opener's Rebids

Opener's priorities are:

1. Bidding a 4-card major
2. Showing 3-card support for partner's major
3. Bidding no-trumps with a stopper in the unbid suit

4. Raising the "new minor" with 4 cards in that suit
5. Rebidding his suit if none of the above conditions are met

Note that the examples below illustrate a 12-14 HCP 1NT rebid by opener. If playing a weak 1NT opening bid, then opener's 1NT rebid would show 15-17 HCP, and responder's minimum strength would be revised downward accordingly.

1. Bidding a 4-card major

This is opener's top priority in case a 4-4 fit is available. When both a 4-4 fit and 5-3 fit are available, the 4-4 fit is generally preferred because the 5-card suit can theoretically be cashed to provide discards.

Opener	Responder
♠ KJ7	♠ AT932
♥ AQT7	♥ K932
♦ A563	♦ J2
♣ 65	♣ KT

Opener	Responder
1 ♦	1 ♠
1NT	2 ♣ (1)
2 ♥ (2)	3 ♥ (3)
4 ♥ (4)	Pass

1. New Minor Forcing.
2. Opener's top priority is to bid his 4-card heart suit.
3. Responder raises with 4-card support and game-invitational values.
4. Opener bids game with a maximum.

2. Showing 3-card support for partner's major

With 12-13 points and 3-card support, opener should bid partner's suit at the 2-level. With a good 13-14 points, opener should jump raise.

Opener	Responder

♠ JT3	♠ KQ2
♥ KJT	♥ A7532
♦ A4	♦ Q32
♣ K9632	♣ 87

Opener	Responder
1 ♣	1 ♥
1NT	2 ♦ (1)
2 ♥ (2)	Pass (3)

1. New Minor Forcing.
2. Opener shows 3-card support and minimum strength. (He also denies as many as four spades.)
3. Responder passes with a minimum opposite a minimum. New Minor Forcing does NOT promise a rebid.

Opener	Responder
♠ J73	♠ KQ2
♥ KQT	♥ A7532
♦ A4	♦ Q32
♣ A9632	♣ 87

Opener	Responder
1 ♣	1 ♥
1NT	2 ♦ (1)
3 ♥ (2)	4 ♥ (3)

1. New Minor Forcing.
2. Opener shows 3-card support and maximum strength. (He also denies as many as four spades.)
3. Responder continues on to game knowing partner has a maximum.

3. Bidding no-trumps with a stopper in the unbid suit

Opener can rebid 2NT (with 12-13 points) or 3NT (with 13-14 points) if he lacks a 4-card major or support for partner's major. A rebid in no-trumps promises a stopper in the unbid suit.

Opener	Responder
♠ KT3	♠ 94
♥ 84	♥ AJ975
♦ A97	♦ KQT62
♣ KQ632	♣ 8

Opener	Responder
1 ♣	1 ♥
1NT	2 ♦ (1)
2NT (2)	3 ♦ (3)
Pass (4)	

1. New Minor Forcing.
2. Opener promises a spade stopper with 12-13 points.
3. Rebidding the "new minor" shows at least a 4-card suit. With game-forcing values, responder could jump-rebid either of his suits instead.
4. Opener passes with a minimum.

4. Raising the "new minor" with 4 cards in that suit

This bid occurs when opener cannot bid the other major, raise partner's suit or bid no-trumps.

Opener	Responder
♠ Q9	♠ AT42
♥ 84	♥ AJ975
♦ A9752	♦ KQ4
♣ KQ63	♣ 8

Opener	Responder
1	1
1NT	2 (1)
3 (2)	3NT (3)
Pass	

1. New Minor Forcing.
2. Natural, denying a lot of things: four spades, a spade stopper, or heart support.
3. Responder is able to bid 3NT with game-going strength and a spade stopper.

Opener	Responder
AKT	62
84	AJ975
A97	KQ2
KT832	A87

Opener	Responder
1	1
1NT	2 (1)
3NT (2)	Pass

1. New Minor Forcing.
2. Opener promises a spade stopper with 13-14 points.

5. Rebidding his suit if none of the above conditions are met

This is opener's last resort. He lacks a 4-card major, a stopper in the unbid suit, 3-card support for partner, and he cannot raise the "new minor."

Opener	Responder
K7	AT932
AJT75	K6
963	JT8

♣ A52	♣ KT3
Opener	Responder
1 ♥	1 ♠
1NT	2 ♣ (1)
2 ♥ (2)	2NT (3)
Pass (4)	Pass

1. New Minor Forcing.
2. Opener has neither 3-card spade support nor a diamond stopper. He also cannot raise clubs.
3. Responder bids no-trumps with a club control. Note that he could bid 3NT with a maximum instead.
4. Opener passes with a minimum.

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