



# Conventional Wisdom

## Filling out the convention card — part 24 (conclusion)

### Putting it all together

Some general guidelines about the use of the convention card are presented here, along with an example of a properly filled-out card. (Yours may be different, of course!)

### The purpose of the convention card

Although the convention card is a great way for you and your partner to discuss your methods and refresh your memories as to what your agreements are if you haven't played together in awhile, remember that the convention card exists for the convenience of your opponents. The opponents may wish to look at your card at the beginning of a round to get a general idea of what your methods are, they might want to see what your opening lead agreements are when they declare or they may wish to look at your card during the auction to see what your agreements are without asking you to explain them verbally.



*Note:* Just as you should ask questions during the auction only when it is your turn, you should look at an opponent's card only when it is your turn to bid.

### Where should the convention card be placed during play?

Since the card is for the benefit of the opponents, it should remain in a place that they can easily access it, i.e., on the table. When bidding boxes are in use, it can be difficult to find enough room for the boxes, the convention cards, score slips, boards and snacks/drinks. Some players find it helpful to fold their convention cards in half to help conserve space, while others keep non-essential items (food) off of the table. Whatever your approach, avoid practices such as sitting on the card. Make it easy for your opponents to pick up and read your card.

### Properly filled out cards

We've all encountered pairs who have either no convention cards or blank cards with the words "Standard" scribbled at the top. This is inappropriate and not in the spirit of the game. If you haven't got time to properly fill out the convention card, you haven't got time to play. It is also required that both partners — not just one — have properly filled-out cards.



Both players must have identically filled-out convention cards. It is not permitted for one partner to make calls that mean one thing while the same call from his or her partner means something else.

<b>SPECIAL DOUBLES</b> After Overcall: Penalty <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> thru <b>3♣</b> Responsive <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> thru <b>3♣</b> Maximal <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Support: Dbl. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> thru <b>2♥</b> Redbl. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Card-showing <input type="checkbox"/> Min. Offshape T/O <input type="checkbox"/>		<b>NOTRUMP OVERCALLS</b> Direct: <b>15</b> to <b>18</b> Systems on <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Conv. <input type="checkbox"/> Balancing: <b>11</b> to <b>14</b> Jump to 2NT: Minors <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Lowest <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Conv. <input type="checkbox"/>		<b>NAMES</b> <b>Susan Spade &amp; Harold Heart</b>	
<b>DEFENSE VS NOTRUMP</b> vs: <b>strong</b> <b>weak</b> 2♣ <b>♠+ other</b> <b>majors</b> 2♦ <b>♠+ major</b> <b>natural</b> 2♥ <b>majors</b> <b>natural</b> 2♠ <b>spades</b> <b>natural</b> Dbl: <b>one suit</b> <b>penalty</b> Other: <b>2NT=minors</b>		<b>GENERAL APPROACH</b> <b>2/1</b> Two Over One: Game Forcing <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Game Forcing Except When Suit Rebid <input type="checkbox"/> VERY LIGHT: Openings <input type="checkbox"/> 3rd Hand <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Overcalls <input type="checkbox"/> Preempts <input type="checkbox"/> FORCING OPENING: 1♠ <input type="checkbox"/> 2♠ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Natural 2 Bids <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/>		<b>NOTRUMP OPENING BIDS</b> 1NT <b>15</b> to <b>17</b> to 3♣ <b>natural inv.</b> 3♦ <b>natural inv.</b> 3♥ <b>4-1-4-4 (GF)</b> 3♠ <b>1-4-4-4 (GF)</b> 5-card Major common <input type="checkbox"/> System on over: Dbl <input type="checkbox"/> 2♣ Stayman <input type="checkbox"/> Puppet <input type="checkbox"/> 2♦ Transfer to <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2♥ Transfer to <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2♠ Transfer to <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2NT → <b>diamonds</b>	
<b>JUMP OVERCALL</b> Strong <input type="checkbox"/> Intermediate <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Weak <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<b>OVER OPP'S T/O DOUBLE</b> New Suit Forcing: 1 level <input type="checkbox"/> 2 level <input type="checkbox"/> Jump Shift: Forcing <input type="checkbox"/> Inv. <input type="checkbox"/> Weak <input type="checkbox"/> Redouble implies no fit <input type="checkbox"/>		<b>MAJOR OPENING</b> Expected Min. Length 4 5 1st/2nd <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> 3rd/4th <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>OPENING PREEMPTS</b> Sound <input type="checkbox"/> Light <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Very Light <input type="checkbox"/> 3/4-bids <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Conv./Resp. <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>		<b>VS OPP'S T/O DOUBLE</b> 2NT Over Limit+ Limit Weak Majors <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Minors <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/>		<b>MINOR OPENING</b> Expected Min. Length 4 3 0-2 Conv. 1♣ <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> 1♦ <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> 1♥ <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>DIRECT CUEBID</b> OVER: Minor Major Natural Strong T/O Michaels <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>		<b>VS Opening Preempts Double Is</b> Takeout thru <b>4♥</b> Penalty <input type="checkbox"/> Conv. Takeout: <input type="checkbox"/> Levensohl 2NT Response <input type="checkbox"/> Other: <input type="checkbox"/>		<b>RESPONSES</b> Double Raise: Force <input type="checkbox"/> Inv. <input type="checkbox"/> Weak <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> After Overcall: Force <input type="checkbox"/> Inv. <input type="checkbox"/> Weak <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Conv. Raise: 2NT <input type="checkbox"/> 3NT <input type="checkbox"/> Splinter <input type="checkbox"/> Other: <input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>SLAM CONVENTIONS</b> Gerber <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 4NT: Blackwood RKCB 1430 <input type="checkbox"/>		<b>MAJOR OPENING</b> 1NT: Forcing <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Semi-forcing <input type="checkbox"/> 2NT: Forcing <input type="checkbox"/> Inv. <input type="checkbox"/> to 3NT: to Drury <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reverse <input type="checkbox"/> 2-Way <input type="checkbox"/> Fit <input type="checkbox"/> Other: <input type="checkbox"/>		<b>RESPONSES</b> Double Raise: Force <input type="checkbox"/> Inv. <input type="checkbox"/> Weak <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> After Overcall: Force <input type="checkbox"/> Inv. <input type="checkbox"/> Weak <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Forcing Raise: J/S in other minor <input type="checkbox"/> Single raise <input type="checkbox"/> Other: <input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>LEADS</b> (circle card led, if not in bold) versus Suits versus Notrump x (A) K x T 9 x A K J x A Q J x K Q x K J T x A J T 9 A T 9 x Q J x K T 9 x K Q J x K Q T 9 J T 9 Q T 9 x Q J T x Q T 9 x K (A) T 9 J T 9 x T 9 x x		<b>DEFENSIVE CARDING</b> Standard: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Except <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Upside-Down: count <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> attitude <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>		<b>DESCRIBE</b> <b>RESPONSES/REBIDS</b> 2♣ <input type="checkbox"/> to <input type="checkbox"/> HCP 2♦ Resp: Neg <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> Waiting <input type="checkbox"/> 2♥ <input type="checkbox"/> to <input type="checkbox"/> HCP <b>decent suit</b> <b>feature</b> Natural: Weak <input type="checkbox"/> Intermediate <input type="checkbox"/> Strong <input type="checkbox"/> Conv. <input type="checkbox"/> 2NT Force <input type="checkbox"/> New Suit N/C <input type="checkbox"/> 2♥ <input type="checkbox"/> to <input type="checkbox"/> HCP Natural: Weak <input type="checkbox"/> Intermediate <input type="checkbox"/> Strong <input type="checkbox"/> Conv. <input type="checkbox"/> 2NT Force <input type="checkbox"/> New Suit N/C <input type="checkbox"/> 2♠ <input type="checkbox"/> to <input type="checkbox"/> HCP Natural: Weak <input type="checkbox"/> Intermediate <input type="checkbox"/> Strong <input type="checkbox"/> Conv. <input type="checkbox"/> 2NT Force <input type="checkbox"/> New Suit N/C <input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>LENGTH LEADS:</b> 4th Best vs SUITS vs NT 3rd/5th Best vs SUITS vs NT Attitude vs NT		<b>FIRST DISCARD</b> Lavinalthal <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Odd/Even <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>		<b>OTHER CONV. CALLS:</b> New Minor Forcing <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2-Way NMF <input type="checkbox"/> Weak Jump Shifts: In Comp. <input type="checkbox"/> Not in Comp. <input type="checkbox"/> 4th Suit Forcing: 1 Rd. <input type="checkbox"/> Game <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Unusual vs. Unusual</b> <b>Truscott vs. Big Club</b>	
<b>Primary signal to partner's leads</b> Attitude <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Count <input type="checkbox"/> Suit preference <input type="checkbox"/>		<b>OTHER CARDING</b> Smith Echo <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Trump Suit Pref. <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Foster Echo <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>		<b>OTHER CONV. CALLS:</b> New Minor Forcing <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2-Way NMF <input type="checkbox"/> Weak Jump Shifts: In Comp. <input type="checkbox"/> Not in Comp. <input type="checkbox"/> 4th Suit Forcing: 1 Rd. <input type="checkbox"/> Game <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Unusual vs. Unusual</b> <b>Truscott vs. Big Club</b>	
<b>SPECIAL CARDING</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>PLEASE ASK</b>					

### Looking at your own convention card during the auction or play

The Laws forbid access to written memory aids during any phase of the game, and this includes your own convention card. Your convention cards are for the opponents' use, not yours. Note that clubs may relax this rule, however, especially if new players are participating, to assist them in learning. Experienced players may wish to overlook a newcomer's dependence on the card. All players should be aware, however, that the card is not a memory crutch. Newcomers may be given a pass, but others should refrain from peeking at the card during the bidding or play.

### Active ethics

Be proactive in making sure your opponents understand your explanations. Don't use jargon or convention names when explaining calls. If an opponent looks confused at your explanation, rephrase. Keep your explanations simple, direct and open — the same way that your methods should appear on your convention card.