Bridge on Sundays

Responding to a 1 NT Opening Bid

1NT = 12-14pts
With flattish hands you need a combined total of 26 points to have a 66% of success but, with a total of 25 points, then the success rate falls to around 52%. A 5 card suit shifts the chances of success up one notch. Suits that have 10s and 9s can also do this, especially in combination with other honours.

1. **Use Stayman 2♣** to look for a 4 card major suit in opener's hand.

2. **Use red suit transfers** to tell partner you have a 5 card major (weak or strong)
   Action after the transfer is completed.
   - Pass to show a weak hand
   - Bid 2NT/3NT to show 11 points and 12-15 points respectively, with a 5 card major.
   - Bid a new suit to show a hand of at least 5-4 distribution and forcing to game

3. **The 2♠ and 2NT responses to 1NT**
   - The 2♠ response is redundant so use it to show a 11 point hand with a 5/6 card minor suit containing preferably 2 honour cards. Partner can bid 2NT/3NT according to strength
   - The 2NT response shows 12 points, no 5 card minor
   - A 3NT response shows 12 points with a 5 card minor/to 15 points, with or without a 5 card minor. Partner will not have a 4 card major otherwise would have bid Stayman first

4. **Showing a weak hand with a 6 card minor**
   Use Stayman, but over any bid from partner bid 3 ♣/♦, non forcing

   Alternative bids to show a weakness take-out in a minor
   - bid 3♣/♦ direct over 1NT. (Section 5 will need modifying)
   - OR use the 2♠ response to include a weak 6 card minor. The re-bids by opener can then be modified: 2NT as before with a 12-13 point hand which you can convert to the minor and 3♣ bid showing 14 points and asking you to

pass with a long ♣ suit or bid 3♦ with that suit or bid 3NT with the invitational (not weak) hand as in section 3

5. **Showing a 6 card suit with possibility of a slam in the suit or NTs, around 18 points +**

Bid the suit at the 3 level. Opener then shows aces by cue bidding

- Over 3♣/♦, with a minimum hand and no support, signs off in 3NT rather than making a cue bid.
- Over 3♥/♠, with no aces, signs off at the 4 level in the major but can bid 3NT with a minimum hand, no aces and 2 cards in the major. Then partner can sign off in 4 of the major etc

See section 4 alternatives to show a weakness take-out

6. **Asking for aces.**

Bid 4♣ to ask for aces direct over the 1NT bid, otherwise, if there have been any other bids, use 4NT

7. **If you do NOT play red suit transfers**

- 2♦/♥/♠ is a weakness take-out in the suit
- 2NT asks for maximum/minimum from opener

A response at the 3 level shows a 5 card suit and is forcing to game/or the long minor, if you choose this option, with the major bids showing a game going hand.