

GENERIC COUNTER TO ONE NOTRUMP COUNTERS

Countermeasures to our 1NT opening bid can vary widely, so we need a generic countermeasure against them. Those that show two suits have already been covered in 12-7, Defense Against Two-Suited Conventions.

General rules:

- An artificial double of 1NT is ignored except to redouble with 5-7 HCP. Otherwise, all systems are on.
- Responder's bid of a known opposing suit is Stayman.
- Double of a conventional 2♣ bid is Stayman unless the bid shows clubs as well as some other suit. If it shows clubs, a double is for penalty and all systems are off except Texas Transfers. When the double is Stayman, all systems are on.
- This rule can be extended to say that doubles are business if the suit doubled is a natural bid even if it's conventional, and all systems are off except Texas Transfers.
- When systems are off, simple natural takeouts are competitive only and jump takeouts are invitational only.
- Other than 2♣, the double of an artificial bid by responder shows at least five cards in the suit and may not be particularly strong. Opener assumes it's a competitive action only until he knows differently. Rather than double the artificial bid it is better to actually bid the suit if strong enough to do so. The double does not deny strength, however, because the doubler could have a strong two-suited hand.
- Opener's double of an artificial bid or forced bid shows the suit, maybe four cards only.
- Direct doubles of a natural bid are for penalty.
- Balancing doubles are for takeout only if partner has not acted. Otherwise, penalty.
- It may pay responder to pass an artificial forcing bid and act on the next round, when an immediate action isn't clear. For instance, you can wait until a natural bid is available for use as Stayman if an artificial overcall doesn't have an anchor suit to use for that purpose. After passing, all jumps are forcing.