

No Trump Ranges

When you open the bidding, one of the most useful things you can tell your partner is that you have a balanced hand. Our bidding system is built around the idea that, if we are balanced, we will bid no trumps as quickly as possible – our partner will then have an excellent picture of our hand. If you have a balanced hand and are about to open the bidding, you should place your hand within the following ranges and then bid accordingly:

15-17 HCP – Open One No Trump – this is the foundation of our system and you should always choose this if you can.

12-14 HCP – Open One of your longest suit (or your better minor), then Rebid No Trumps at the cheapest level.

18-19 HCP – Open One of your longest suit (or your better minor), then Rebid No Trumps and *jump* one level.

20-22 HCP – Open Two No Trumps (your partner can then bid Stayman or Transfers at the Three Level).

23+HCP – Open Two Clubs (Game forcing) and then rebid Two No Trumps.

Exception – What if we find a Major Suit Fit?

Following the above has one key exception. If we open One of a minor, planning to rebid No Trumps at some level next time and our partner responds with One of a major that we have four card support for. We should raise the major. We have now found a fit and THAT is even more important than telling our partner we have a balanced hand.

With 12-14 we should raise our partner's major one level

With 18-19 we should raise our partner's major to game

Bidding out our shape is very, very important. However, we shouldn't lose sight of the fact that finding fits in major suits is the aim of all our bidding agreements. It is hardly ever right to conceal a fit in a major suit.

Some example hands

How would you open the following hands? What is your planned rebid over your partner's likely responses?

♠ QT8	♠ AKQJ	♠ QJT92	♠ AQJT5
♥ AJ53	♥ 9872	♥ AQ4	♥ 53
♦ KQJ	♦ KJ	♦ AK	♦ KQ2
♣ A652	♣ 874	♣ AJ5	♣ QT3
1NT	1C then...	2NT	1S then...

♠ AQJ	♠ 53	♠ 32	♠ T86532
♥ AK	♥ AKQT	♥ 543	♥ KQ3
♦ KQJ52	♦ KJ53	♦ AKJ2	♦ AQ
♣ KJ2	♣ KQJ	♣ AKT5	♣ AQ
2C then 2NT	1D then...	1NT	1S then... (or?)

An extra benefit:

With balanced hands, bidding No Trumps as soon as you can conveys such a lot of information to partner. Crucially, once you and your partner are consistent in always bidding No Trumps with balanced hands, we can begin to make inferences about your bids which *aren't* No Trumps:

1D : 1S

2C ← What do we know? Opener *must* have 5+ Diamonds and 4+ Clubs **because she didn't rebid No Trumps.**