

CUE BIDS IN NOTRUMP

A Cue Bid of 2NT Over a Natural Notrump Overcall

South	West	North
1♦	1NT	2NT - unusual notrump

This cue bid shows great length in the lower two unbid suits, and asks partner to take a choice. In the auction above, North might have ♠ void ♥Q107632 ♦J ♣A108432.

A Cue Bid of 2NT Over a 1NT Response

South	West	North	East
1♣	Pass	1NT	2NT - unusual notrump

East is asking West to choose between hearts and diamonds, the lower two unbid suits. Artificial bids do not count as a suit bid, so the 2NT bid above would show both minors if the 1♣ bid is artificial.

The principle applies when partner has doubled, with the addition of a small subtlety:

South	West	North	East
1♦	Dbl	1NT	2NT

East has hearts and clubs, all right, but the hearts are weak and only four long: ♠2 ♥9632 ♦65 ♣KQ10873 With good hearts East would just bid that suit, since the double implies heart support.

When Partner Has Doubled 1NT for Business

South	West	North	East
1NT	Dbl	Pass	2NT - game forcing

East has a distributionally strong hand, perhaps a two-suiter, and doesn't pass the double because West might make a bad lead.

South	West	North	East
1♠	1NT	Dbl	Pass
2NT - forcing to game, not unusual notrump			

South	West	North	East
1♣	Pass	1♥	1NT
Dbl	Pass	2NT - forcing to game	

These 2NT cue bids show game-going hands that do not want to defend 1NT doubled. The 2NT bidder no doubt has a highly distributional hand, but could have any strong hand that fears missing a slam. Perhaps the notrump bid is a psych.

Over Any Response to a Strong 1NT Opening

South	West	North	East
1NT	Pass	2♣	2NT - unusual notrump

An artificial bid such as this Stayman 2♣ response does not count as a suit bid, so East is asking West to take a choice between the minors.

Over an Artificial Response to a Weak 1NT Opening

South	West	North	East
1NT	Pass	2♥	2NT - unusual notrump

North's bid was a Jacoby transfer bid, so the 2NT bid asks for a choice between the minors. If 2♥ had been natural, 2NT would be for takeout. See below.

Over a Natural Response to a Weak 1NT Opening

South	West	North	East
1NT	Pass	2♠	2NT - takeout

When the response to a weak notrump opening is natural, as with the 2♠ bid here, a 2NT bid is for takeout. The reason for this is that a double shows a hand that has a little something in spades and would have doubled 1NT for business if RHO had not bid. See section 12-3, Defense Against Weak Notrump Openings.

The same principle applies when there has been an artificial response to the notrump opening, but only after the 2NT bidder has passed over the artificial response:

South	West	North	East
1NT	Pass	2♣	Pass
2♦	Pass	Pass	2NT - takeout, not "unusual" Dbl - balanced good hand

Since 2♣ is an artificial bid (Stayman), an immediate 2NT bid over 2♣ would be unusual notrump and a double would merely show good clubs.

When Partner's 1NT Opening Has Been Doubled

South	West	North
1NT	Dbl	2NT

If the double is for business, the 2NT bid shows both minor suits.

If the double is an artificial call showing a one-suited hand, or a two-suited hand but the suits are not specified (e.g., Cansino double showing both majors or both minors) the 2NT bid has the same transfer meaning as over a pass. See Minor Suit Transfer Bids in Section 5-2.

If the artificial double shows a specific two-suiter, (both majors, for instance), the principle of "Unusual over Unusual" applies. See section 12-7, Defense Against Two-Suited Conventions. In this situation the 2NT bid is a natural raise.