

BLUE BOOK

PERMITTED UNDERSTANDINGS

LEVEL 3

Published by the Laws & Ethics Committee
of the English Bridge Union

Based on Blue Book published 1st September 2022

1 GENERAL

1 A *Introduction*

The Blue Book defined 'Level 3' in a section 'Partnership Understandings: Other Permission'. This legacy document contains that section and other relevant parts of the Blue Book (2022). Section headings and numbering has been retained from the Blue Book.

3 SYSTEM CARDS

3 G *'Multi-coloured 2♦' – 'Multi'*

3 G 1 *Meaning of 'Multi'*

The term Multi without qualification means a traditional multi-coloured 2♦ opening, i.e. a 2♦ opening that shows one of these three possibilities:

- (a) A weak hand with hearts
- (b) A weak hand with spades
- (c) A strong hand of one or more types.

A 2♦ opening that does not follow this rule must not be described as a Multi unless an appropriate qualification is included. For example, if there is no strong option it might be called a 'Weak only Multi'; if Hearts is the only weak option then it might be called a 'Hearts only Multi'.

5 RULES FOR PARTNERSHIP UNDERSTANDINGS

5 D *Rules for "Strong" opening bid*

5 D 1 To be considered a "Strong" opening bid, the minimum allowed by agreement is:

- (a) Opening bid of 1♣ or 1♦: at least 13 HCP
- (b) Above 1♦: at least 16 HCP, or 13 HCP concentrated in two suits containing 10+ cards.

7 PARTNERSHIP UNDERSTANDINGS: LEVEL 4

7 B One Level Openings

7 B 1 1♣ and 1♦ openings

1♣ or 1♦ may each be played to have any **one** of options (i)-(iv) below

- (i) Forcing or not, showing any combination of the following hand types:
 - a) At least four cards in the suit bid
 - b) At least four cards in the other minor
 - c) Any distribution that satisfies the requirements for a natural 1NT opening (see 7B3(i) below) subject to the minimum strength requirement of 7A3 for suit openings.
- (ii) Forcing, with any meaning or meanings as long as they are all “Strong” (see 5D1(a))
- (iii) *Any meaning showing at least four cards in a specified suit, forcing or not
- (iv) *A combination of both (i) and (ii) above (‘Polish Club’ or ‘Three-Way Club’)

7 B 2 1♥ and 1♠ openings

Any meaning is permitted which shows 4 (or more) cards in the suit opened.

7 B 3 1NT opening

1NT may be played as any **one** of the following

- (i) Natural, non-forcing with a continuous defined range. A ‘natural’ 1NT opening has no more than nine cards in two suits, no void, and does not have seven hearts or seven spades. The range must be the same when holding a singleton
- (ii) Any meaning or meanings as long as they all show a strong hand (see 5D1(b))
- (iii) *A three-suited hand (5440, 5431 or 4441), the shortage need not be specified
- (iv) *Any meaning showing at least four cards in a specified suit, forcing or not

7 E Defence to Opening Bids in Second (Direct) Seat

7 E 3 1NT overcall of a natural non-forcing opening bid of 1♣, 1♦, 1♥ or 1♠

A 1NT overcall may, instead of a meaning allowed by 7E2, be played as any **one** of the following:

- (a) Any single meaning permitted for an opening bid of 1NT (see 7B3), or
- (b) A take-out bid (similar to a take-out double) of any agreed strength, or
- (c) **Either* a hand with at least 14 HCP that would be permitted to open a natural 1NT *or* a weak hand with a long suit, or
- (d) *A weak hand with a long suit.

* These agreements were historically not permitted at Level 3. See section 8.

8 PARTNERSHIP UNDERSTANDINGS: OTHER PERMISSIONS

8 A *Introduction*

8 A 1 The EBU no longer runs events at Level 3. However, clubs and County Associations may wish to run events with permitted understandings in line with the old Level 3, particularly for the restrictions on artificial pre-emptive openings. This section summarises a suitable set of permitted understandings defined partly by identifying those at the current Level 4 that were not permitted at Level 3.

8 A 2 *Comparison to the 'old' Level 3*

The set of permitted partnership understandings described here is mainly in line with Level 3 for opening bids and overcalls. Historically, Level 3 also restricted the meaning of a second seat take-out double and actions in fourth seat. These restrictions have not been included here, for consistency with the changes also made in 2013 to Level 4.

8 B *Opening Bids and Overcalls at the One Level*

8 B 1 All opening bids and overcalls at the one level permitted at Level 4 are permitted with the exception of those marked with a star (*). See 7B and 7E3.

8 C *Two-Level and higher Opening Bids*

8 C 1 *Opening Bids in a Suit from 2♣ to 3♠*

These may be played as **one** of the following

- (a) Any meaning or meanings as long as they all show a strong hand (see 5D1(b)), or
- (b) Any meaning or meanings which show at least five cards in the suit opened, or
- (c) 2♣ or 2♦ may be played to show at least 4-4 in the majors

8 C 2 *'Multi' 2♦*

A 2♦ opening may be played to contain a weak option and one or two strong options.

(a) Weak option

A defined range of no more than 5 HCP[†], a minimum strength of 4 HCP and a maximum of 12 HCP. The agreed strength may differ according to position and/or vulnerability.

The suit may be played as either (i) 5+ hearts; or (ii) 5+ hearts or 5+ spades

(b) Strong options

The minimum strength is 16 HCP. At least one strong option must be of reasonable frequency.

One or two of the following may be played:

- (i) an Acol Two: the suit need not be specified
- (ii) a 4-4-4-1 (or 5-4-4-0) hand, with a defined range; the singleton/void need not be specified
- (iii) a balanced or semi-balanced hand (no singleton, void or seven card suit) with a defined range; alternatively it may be agreed that it may contain a singleton
- (iv) any game forcing hand.

[†] 'range of no more than 5 HCP' is not defined in the Blue Book: it includes 5-9 or 8-12 but not 6-11.

8 PARTNERSHIP UNDERSTANDINGS: OTHER PERMISSIONS

8 C 3 *Other two-level suit openings*

Alternatively an opening bid of 2♣, 2♦, 2♥ or 2♠ may be played as **one** of the following

- (a) A three-suiter (5440, 5431 or 4441) with at least three cards in the suit bid (any shortage), minimum strength at least 'Rule of 18'
- (b) A three-suiter, short in the suit bid, minimum strength 'Rule of 18'

8 C 4 *Opening bids of 2NT*

A 2NT opening may be played as one of the following

- (a) Any meaning or meanings that show a strong hand (see 5D1(b)), or
- (b) Both minors, any agreed strength

8 C 5 *Opening bids of 3NT*

These may be played as **one** of the following

- (a) Natural, or
- (b) An unspecified solid suit, with or without outside high cards, or
- (c) A single suiter, being one of at most two possible suits

8 C 6 *Opening bids of 4♣ and 4♦*

Each of these may be played as **one** of the following

- (a) Natural, any agreed range
- (b) 4♣ showing a strong 4♥ opener and/or 4♦ showing a strong 4♠ opener

8 C 7 *Higher Opening Bids*

Suit bids must be natural.

No trump bids may have any agreed meaning.

8 D *Other Partnership Understandings*

8 D 1 The rules for all other partnership understandings in the auction from responder's first bid onwards are identical to those at Level 4.

8 D 2 The rules for carding understandings are identical to those at Level 4.