



ACBL ALERT REGULATIONS

March 1, 2002



PRE-ALERTS--Before cards are taken from the board, disclose to the opponents:

Any Mid-Chart or Super-Chart methods; unusual general approaches (e.g., two-system methods); highly aggressive methods or preempts; opening bids (even in 3rd seat) or 2/1 responses that are weaker than usual, overcalls with fewer than 6 HCP, low leads from doubletons. Pre-Alertable calls must also be Alerted when they are made.

ALERTS--Say "Alert," and tap the Alert card (or display it) if in use, when partner makes any of the following calls, but don't explain (or Announce) them until asked:

- Conventions that are not exempted below and all highly unusual calls (e.g., canapé bids)
- A bid whose forcing or non-forcing nature is unusual, or one that has an unusual strength, length, or range requirement (e.g., a direct notrump overcall based on less than 14 HCP or more than 19 HCP; a weak two bid with a range greater than 7 HCP or not showing at least five cards in the suit, a possibly strong raise of a 1♥/1♠ opening to 4♥/4♠)
- Any opening artificial ace or control-asking bid, including Blackwood and Gerber, or any such inquiry during the auction made at or below the level of 3NT, and responses
- 2♣ opening that is natural and non-forcing, and conventional responses (except 2NT)
- 2♦/2♥/2♠ opening that is not a natural weak two bid, or is weak but promises another suit
- 3NT opening based by partnership agreement on a six-card or longer suit, whether "gambling" or not
- In response to one-level suit opening, a weak single jump raise, or non-forcing weak jump shift, over a pass
- Strong single raise of a natural one-level suit opening, even if only "constructive"
- 1♦ response to 1♣ that denies a four-card major regardless of hand strength
- Non-forcing non-game new suit response by an unpassed hand (UPH) to an opening suit bid at any level
- Non-forcing 2NT, non-forcing new suit bid by UPH, conventional response other than 2NT, or invitational raise, in response to a non-forcing opening bid at the two level.
- Unusual response to a 2♣ opening (e.g., controls, HCP, 2♥ bust, 2♦ game force, negative double)
- 1NT response that by partnership agreement may be based on more than 10 HCP, but is not Announceable
- 1NT rebid by a natural opener that by partnership agreement may be stronger than 15 HCP
- Artificial checkback rebid (e.g., Checkback Stayman, New Minor Forcing) after a natural opener's notrump rebid
- Unusual Stayman usage (e.g., Two-Way, Puppet), and an unusual or conventional response to Stayman other than a minimum bid in diamonds to deny a four-card major
- Subsequent call by a Stayman bidder that does not promise an implied major
- Next-level club response to a natural notrump opening (or overcall) that does not ask for a four-card major
- Natural 2♦/2♥/2♠ response to a 1NT opening or 1NT overcall unless it is a signoff
- Gerber 4♣ in the absence of a previous notrump bid, or other unusual ace or control-asking bid
- Strong or intermediate jump overcall of one-level suit openings and responses, except in balancing seat
- Weak jump shift as an advance of partner's overcall, even over a pass
- Unusual notrump by an unpassed hand if a non-jump 1NT/2NT/3NT bid, or a jump to 3NT, or does not definitely show either both minors or the two lower unbid suits (as indicated on the convention card)
- Penalty(ish) double of a natural bid when non-penalty is expected, including: double of an overcall of a one-level suit opening, through 4♥; double of an opening bid in a suit (including 1♣ or 1♦ that "may be short"); double of a natural suit response to an opening bid, through 4♥
- Non-penalty double when penalty is expected, including: negative double of 4♠ or higher overcall, double showing support, takeout double of 4♠ or higher opening bid, double of an overcall of a 1NT or higher opening bid (e.g., 1NT-2♠-Dbl, 2♣-2♠-Dbl), double of a notrump bid (except 1x-P-1NT-Dbl), double of a splinter bid that shows strength elsewhere.
- Negative double that does not show what is usually expected (e.g., 1♣-1♥-Dbl denying, or not implying, four spades), or is a double of 4♠ or higher overcall
- Conventional redouble (e.g., showing 3-card support), except one obviously asking for a rescue ("S.O.S.")
- Passes with highly unusual or unexpected meanings (e.g., 1♦-Dbl-Rdbl-Pass showing a desire to defend 1♦ redoubled; 2♣ (strong, artificial)-2♠-Pass showing values; 1♠-2♣-Pass forcing)

(OVER)

ANNOUNCEMENTS--Explain partner's call without being asked, and tap the Alert card, or display it, if in use:

- The range of a natural 1NT opening, but not of a higher notrump opening or notrump overcall
- “Forcing” for a forcing 1NT response to a 1♥ or 1♠ opening
- “Semi-Forcing” for a semi-forcing (opener may pass with no more than a balanced minimum) 1NT response to a first or second-seat (only) 1♥ or 1♠ opening. If opener tends to pass 1NT only after a four-card opening, 1NT is Alertable.
- “Transfer” for a diamond-to-heart or heart-to-spade transfer response at any level to any natural notrump opening or overcall, or after a natural notrump rebid by opener, even over a double. “Transfer” may be Announced even if a later game-forcing bid (Alerted) will cancel the transfer meaning. Alert all other transfer bids.
- “May be short” for non-forcing 1♣ or 1♦ openings that might be based on fewer than three cards

DO NOT ALERT OR ANNOUNCE:

- Non-forcing one-level suit opening with an agreed range of somewhere between 10-21+ HCP
- Artificial strong 2♣ opening and 2♦ negative or waiting response
- Stayman next level of clubs in response to an opening notrump bid (or overcall), asking for a major
- Natural 2♦/2♥/2♠ signoff response (not 2♣, which must be Alerted) to a 1NT opening or overcall.
- Natural three-level response to a 1NT opening or notrump overcall, jump or not, any strength
- Possible bypass of a four-card major when bidding notrump, except 1x-P-2NT not forcing
- Possible two-card 2♣ rebid after a forcing or semi-forcing 1NT response, if only done with 2-2 minors.
- Non-invitational raise of a natural two-level opening, or a forcing 2NT response
- Natural jump response of 2NT, whether forcing or merely invitational
- Jump raise, weak or strong, except a weak single jump raise of an opening one bid when RHO passes
- Natural constructive (i.e., not weak) or better jump shift as an advance of an overcall, even if not forcing
- Cue bid (bid of a suit shown by an opponent), regardless of meaning, except for a direct cue bid of a natural opening bid played as natural. 1x-P-1y-2x natural and 1x-P-1y-2y natural are not Alertable, but 1x-2x natural is Alertable
- Natural bid in a suit bid artificially by an opponent, a double that shows the suit, or a lead-directing double of the suit
- Jump overcall, strong or weak, over non-strong two-level and higher opening bid
- 4NT or higher unusual notrump bid, an unusual jump to 2NT, or any unusual notrump by a passed hand
- Blackwood 4NT ace or key-card inquiry; but Alert highly unusual responses
- 4♣ Gerber ace-asking after partner has opened, responded, or overcalled in notrump
- Forcing pass whose forcing nature is not unexpected
- Pass that denies three cards in partner's suit

DELAYED ALERTS

Alertable bids above 3NT, starting with opener's second call, are Alerted after the auction. Before the opening lead, declarer or dummy Alerts such bids made by their side. Although legal, it is better not to explain one's own bid. Defenders Alert and explain partner's bids, not their own, when the opening lead is face down, before dummy is tabled. Conventional doubles, redoubles, and passes must be Alerted immediately when made, but forcing passes at this level are not Alertable.

ALERT MISTAKES

Players who realize their own mistake (failure to Alert, or incorrect explanation) must call the Director immediately. A player whose partner has made a mistake gives no indication of that in any manner before the final pass. The presumed declarer or dummy then calls the Director before the opening lead is made, but a defender must wait until play is over.

Compiled unofficially by Marvin L. French, mfrench1@san.rr.com, who welcomes questions or comments.