

## HIGH-LEVEL NOTRUMP OPENINGS

### The 3NT Opening

An opening bid of 3NT is natural, based on a long solid minor plus outside stoppers, with a total of eight or nine tricks (perhaps assuming a favorable lead). A minimum: S-Q3 H-K4 D-K8 C-AKQJ872. The same hand with red aces instead of red kings would be a maximum. At least three suits must be stopped, and the weakest suit no worse than Jxx, Qx, or singleton king. Partner bids 4NT with 2-1/2 to 3 quick tricks, 6NT with 3-1/2:

Quick tricks: ace counts 1-1/2

king	1
queen	1/2
AQ	2
AK	2-1/2
AKQ	3

Opener	Responder
3NT	4♣ - Gerber
	4♦/4♥ - transfer bids
	4♠ - slam try in opener's suit

A transfer bid followed by 4NT is Roman Key Card Blackwood. The 4♠ bid says responder is interested in playing a slam in opener's suit, whichever it is. Responder might have S-AK432 H-6 D-10764 C-J83. Opener signs off in 4NT with a minimum, bids five of his minor with an unstopped suit, and bids six of his minor with a maximum and all suits stopped.

### The 4NT Opening

An opening bid of 4NT is regular Blackwood. Starting at this level gives the opposition less chance to intervene. With a notrump type hand containing ten sure tricks, start with an artificial 2♣ opening,

### The 5NT Opening

An opening of 5NT shows eleven tricks, a 4-3-3-3 hand, at least three aces, asks partner to raise one level for every ace, king, or queen in her hand. Responder can chance six of a suit with nothing but a six-card suit headed by the jack, or any seven-card suit. Opener should not "correct" back to notrump unless he has a little card to reach partner's suit. AK2 is okay, but not AKJ.

### The 6NT Opening

An opening of 6NT shows a 4-3-3-3 hand, twelve tricks, missing just one queen. Responder can bid seven with the missing queen or a six-card suit headed by the jack, or any seven-card suit. If missing just an ace or a king, start with an artificial 2♣ opening.