

Landy 2♣ overcall of a 1NT opening bid

The main disadvantages in playing a natural defence to 1NT lie in the frequency with which one can disrupt the auction as an overcaller, and the ability to find the best fit available. When holding a two-suited hand, it is clearly desirable to show both suits at once, as this will allow partner to choose the best one. This is particularly important when holding both majors, since they make it more likely that we can win a competitive auction (we can outbid the opponents without raising the trick level).

Over a 1NT opening bid, overcall options are as follows:

- a) Double = Penalties (16+ HCP)
- b) 2♣ = Landy (see below)
- c) 2♦/2♥/2♠/3♣ = Natural overcalls. Good 5 card suit (3♣ = 6 cards)/10 HCP non-vulnerable.

A Landy 2♣ overcall shows:

- **Close to Opening strength** (19 on the Rule of 20) and at least 5-4 in the majors, or 5-5 if vulnerable. A typical Landy hand will have at most 7 losers, more likely 6 losers.
- **A maximum 15 HCP.** With 16+ HCP you should always double for penalties. There are at most 12 points in the two unbid suits and the chances of finding game your way are less than 50%, whereas the chances of scoring a lucrative penalty are greater than 50%.
- **Most of the strength is in BOTH majors** (At least two honours in each suit.)
Note: If a fit in a major can be found, a hand such as ♠KQ854 ♥KJ765 ♦J7 ♣8 has only 10 HCP, but only 6 losers. ♠KQT854 ♥KJ765 ♦4 ♣8 has only 9 HCP but only 5 losers!!! Bid Landy rather than 2 spades. Partner is as likely to have three hearts as two spades.

Partner responses to Landy overcall (assume partner has 7 losers – count yours!)

- Pass: 7+ clubs (weak - 0-9 HCP)
- 2♦ (relay): equal length in both majors, even if 2-2, or 11-12 HCP and at least one 3 card major (prepared to raise Landy bidder's response or bid his own 3 card suit), or Landy bidder must bid his longest major (hearts if equal)
 - Partner's response to overcaller's bid of longest major
 - Pass: Weak (0-9)hand, excl. 7+ card diamond suit
 - 3♣: 7+ Clubs (10-12 HCP) (– note: via 2♦.)
 - 3♦: 7+ Diamonds (weak, 0-9 HCP)
 - 2NT: 10-12 HCP – length in both minors.
- 2♥/♠: 3+ cards in the major (0-9)
- 3♥/♠: 4+ cards in the major (8 losers)
- 4♥/♠: 4+ cards in the major (7 losers)
- 2NT: 13-14 points balanced, no 3-card major.

Hands suitable for Landy:

Hand A
♠ A J 6 5 4
♥ K J 5 4 3
♦ 3 2
♣ 3

Hand B
♠ K Q 7 3 2
♥ Q J 10 4
♦ Q 4 2
♣ 2

Hand C
♠ K Q 7 6
♥ A K 7 4 2
♦ 4 2
♣ K 6

Check your understanding:

Playing Landy, what is your next bid on each of these auctions?

1 ♠ K Q 8 4
 ♥ A J 7 4 2
 ♦ A 7 3
 ♣ 4

LHO Partner RHO You
 1NT ?

2 ♠ K J 6 4 2
 ♥ Q J 10 6 3
 ♦ K 4
 ♣ 7

LHO Partner RHO You
 1NT ?

3 ♠ A K Q 3
 ♥ Q J 10 8 4
 ♦ A J 4
 ♣ 4

LHO Partner RHO You
 1NT ?

4 ♠ K Q J 7 4 2
 ♥ Q 9 6 3
 ♦ K 5
 ♣ 4

LHO Partner RHO You
 1NT ?

5 ♠ K J 5 3
 ♥ A Q 5 2
 ♦ K 6 3
 ♣ J 5

LHO Partner RHO You
 1NT ?

6 ♠ 8 6 4 2
 ♥ 3
 ♦ J 4
 ♣ J 9 8 6 4 2

LHO Partner RHO You
 1NT 2♣ pass ?

7 ♠ K J 8 4
 ♥ J 4
 ♦ 9 7 4 3
 ♣ A 8 4

LHO Partner RHO You
 1NT 2♣ pass ?

8 ♠ A Q 6
 ♥ K 7 3
 ♦ A Q 8 5 3
 ♣ 9 4

LHO Partner RHO You
 1NT 2♣ pass ?

Answers

- 1 2♣ Perfect. Almost enough to double 1NT, , and 5-4 in the majors.
- 2 2♣ This is a perfect hand for Landy, because you have 5-5 in the two suits
- 3 dbl You are too strong just to overcall.
- 4 2♠ Not 2♣ this time. Even though you have both majors, it will seldom be better to play in hearts when your spades are so much stronger.
- 5 Pass You are only 4-4 in the majors. Do not mislead partner.
- 6 2♠ Partner will have at least four spades, and often five. Do not be tempted to pass just because you are so weak. Remember that partner may have no clubs..
- 7 3♠ Jumping all the way to game will get you too high if partner has tried to compete for the partscore on a minimum hand.
- 8 2♦ This time you can insist on game, but which one? Bidding 2♦ asks partner to tell you which is his better major. When you find out, you can raise to game.