

Overloading 1N – 3♦

The 3♦ response to 1N may be overloaded to mean **either weak majors or strong minors**.

By “*weak majors*”, we mean a responding hand that is at least 5-5 in the majors, but less than invitational strength, 0 – 6 HCP, can be 0. For example: ♠ Q 9 8 5 3 ♥ T 8 7 6 3 ♦ J 6 ♣ 4

By “*strong minors*”, we mean a responding hand that is 5/5 or 6/5 or 6/6 or 7/6 in the minor suits, and has at least mild slam interest. 5/4 hands are handled separately (modified Walsh).

Strategy: Opener assumes *weak majors* and takes preference for either ♥ or ♠. Responder passes with the *weak majors* hand, otherwise makes a descriptive bid with the *strong minors*.

1N	3♦	
3M	pass	3♦ was the <i>weak majors</i> hand
Otherwise responder bids again		
1N	3♦	
3M	3N	5/5 Minors
	4♣	5/6 Longer ♣: 2-0=5=6 or 1=1=5=6, 4♦ Kickback, 4♠ <i>escape</i> to 4N
	4♦	6/5 Longer ♦: 2-0=6=5 or 1=1=6=5, 4♥ Kickback, 4♠ <i>escape</i> to 4N
	4♥	6/6 ♥-void: 1=0=6=6, may be treated as a ♥-exclusionary Keycard-ask
	4♠	6/6 ♠-void: 0=1=6=6, may be treated as a ♠-exclusionary Keycard-ask
	4N	7/6 0=0=7-6: may be treated as 2-suited exclusionary ask

When responder shows 5/5, opener wishing to cooperate with a slam-try, may bid Kickback directly for either minor, or puppet via 4♣ to find the major-suit distribution, or escape:

1N	3♦	
3M	3N	5/5 Minors
	4♣	Relay to ask for distribution in the majors
	4♦	Kickback for ♣
	4♥	Kickback for ♦
	4♠	Escape , asking partner to sign-off in 4N
	4N	6-Ace Keycard-ask

Distribution-ask:

1N	3♦	
3M	3N	5/5 Minors, relay to ask
	4♣	4♦ 0=3=5=5 ♥-fragment 4N exclusionary-ask, 4♠ <i>escape</i> to 4N
		4♥ 3=0=5=5 ♠-fragment 4N exclusionary ask, 4♠ <i>escape</i> to 4N
		4♠ 2-1=5=5 semi-balanced, minimum, will pass 4N
		4N 2-1=5=5 semi-balanced, strong slam-try

Escape: Responses are structured so that 4♠ may be used as an *escape* bid, an attempt by opener to subside in 4N if responder has only a mild slam-try. Responder may

- bid 4N to complete the escape, and opener will pass, or
- give a 4N 6-Ace Keycard response to refuse the escape.