Splinters, Jacoby 2NT, and 1st-round controls - teacher's notes

Partner opens one of a Major and you have at least 4-card trump support.

Suppose that you hold either 13+ points in a balanced hand or 7-loser or better in an unbalanced hand.
You hold enough to go straight to four of the major, but partner will not be able to distinguish between this game bid with every hope of making and a much weaker raise based on (say) 5-card support and little else.
The solution is to introduce some support bids to convey the good news and at the same time to give partner some useful information at a low level in case either of you has thoughts of a slam.

Easiest, but rare, is the pudding raise.
This is an immediate jump to 3NT.
Typically, this will show 13 or so points and four-card trump support in a 4-3-3-3 shape.
If partner's hand is also 4-3-3-3 then he will pass with little hope of making a ruffing trick, and usually you will find yourself in the optimum contract. More often partner will be unbalanced and will revert to four of the major for an extra ruffing trick and a better score.

Note that in some advanced methods the bid might be used in some other conventional manner.
However, it should never be 'to play'. There is always another way to bid such a hand and the bid takes away all the options for opener to show different hand-types some of which might have slam potential.

Note that the following two bids are introduced in the modern style in which the splinter will always be on limited high-card values. In an earlier version the splinter might have been full-value and the Jacoby 2NT would then have denied an Ace or a void.

Jacoby 2NT
This promises at least 4-card support and typically 13+ points in a non-pudding hand.
Most top partnerships play it as game-forcing.

Splinter bids
Some other unbalanced hands with 4-card support might have a 7-losing trick count but only invitational high-card points (say 10 to 12). If they also contain a void or a singleton in a side-suit then the solution is a splinter bid – a double jump in a new suit – (e.g. 1S – 4C promising four-card spade support, at most 1 club, a maximum of about 12 points, and forcing to game.)

Opener's rebid

Both of the above bids allow for further exploration of the two hands below the levels of game or Blackwood in the search for a possible slam. In some sequences the Blackwood convention will be played subsequently.

As a starter method, following either a Jacoby or a splinter raise, I will suggest that both partners now bid first-round controls up the line.

This is not the choice of experts, nor is it my recommendation as you progress, but it is a good simple starting method as you get used to Jacoby and splinters. Plan to move on sooner rather than later.

Partner opened one of a minor and you have at least four-card trump support.

The immediate 3NT response will be a rare phenomenon usually based on a long suit, but it will be to play.

The immediate 2NT response will either be played as natural and invitational – about 10 to 12 points - although there will always be an alternative, or as a 16+point game-force (The Baron 2NT).

Splinter responses still exist and will tend to be full value, but I cannot overemphasise that your first priority when facing an opening bid of one of a minor will normally be to seek a contract in either a major or no trumps.