

The One No Trump Overcall

<p>♠ K J 7 4 3 2 ♥ J 2 ♦ A K 2 ♣ 6 5</p> <p>♠ 10 6 5 ♠ A Q 8 ♥ K 8 6 ♥ A 10 7 ♦ 9 6 5 ♦ J 10 8 3 ♣ Q 10 3 2 ♣ K J 9</p> <p>♠ 9 ♥ Q 9 5 4 3 ♦ Q 7 4 ♣ A 8 7 4</p>	<p>Board 1 : Dealer North : Love all</p> <table><tr><th>West</th><th>North</th><th>East</th><th>South</th></tr><tr><td></td><td>1♠</td><td>1N⁽¹⁾</td><td>All pass</td></tr></table> <p>1 15-18, at least one spade stop</p> <p>East has a good stop and a half and a great chance of ♠Q being a winner (either on the lead or because the opening bidder holds it). Leading a singleton in partner's suit is unattractive and South may seek a surprise attack by leading a 4th best heart (♥4). Declarer will win in hand and set up the club suit. He may have to take the spade finesse himself but should come to seven tricks – two spades, two hearts and three clubs (and may make a diamond too).</p>	West	North	East	South		1♠	1N ⁽¹⁾	All pass				
West	North	East	South										
	1♠	1N ⁽¹⁾	All pass										
<p>♠ J 10 2 ♥ K 9 6 ♦ A J 5 4 2 ♣ 5 3</p> <p>♠ 9 8 4 ♠ Q 7 6 3 ♥ 8 7 4 3 ♥ A 5 ♦ 9 7 6 3 ♦ K 8 ♣ 8 2 ♣ A J 9 6 4</p> <p>♠ A K 5 ♥ Q J 10 2 ♦ Q 10 ♣ K Q 10 7</p>	<p>Board 2 : Dealer East : NS vulnerable</p> <table><tr><th>West</th><th>North</th><th>East</th><th>South</th></tr><tr><td></td><td></td><td>1♣</td><td>1N⁽¹⁾</td></tr><tr><td>Pass</td><td>2N⁽²⁾</td><td>Pass</td><td>3N⁽³⁾</td></tr></table> <p>All pass</p> <p>1 15-18, with at least one club stop 2 Invitational (8-9 hcps) 3 In the maximum range (17-18) so accepts the invite</p> <p>Here the partner of the 1N overcaller has more than enough to invite to game (nine opposite a known minimum of fifteen – some may blast game on the basis of the five card diamond suit). Whichever route is taken will see South, who has a maximum for his overcall, will contract for game. The defence cannot defeat this contract and declarer should emerge with ten tricks losing just to the “round suit” aces and ♦K.</p>	West	North	East	South			1♣	1N ⁽¹⁾	Pass	2N ⁽²⁾	Pass	3N ⁽³⁾
West	North	East	South										
		1♣	1N ⁽¹⁾										
Pass	2N ⁽²⁾	Pass	3N ⁽³⁾										

<p>♠ J 10 7 5 3 2 ♥ 9 4 3 ♦ 6 5 ♣ 9 3</p> <p>♠ A 6 4 ♠ K 8 ♥ K Q J 8 ♥ A 7 6 5 ♦ 9 7 3 ♦ K J 10 8 ♣ A Q 7 ♣ 6 5 2</p> <p>♠ Q 9 ♥ 10 2 ♦ A Q 4 2 ♣ K J 10 8 4</p>	<p>Board 3 : Dealer South : EW vulnerable</p> <table> <tr> <th>West</th> <th>North</th> <th>East</th> <th>South</th> </tr> <tr> <td>1N⁽¹⁾</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>2♣⁽²⁾</td> <td>1♣</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2♥</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>4♥</td> <td>All pass</td> </tr> </table> <p>1 15-18, at least one club stop 2 Stayman</p> <p>Of course, we may overcall in no trumps but want to suggest playing in a suit contract. We can seek to find 4-4 major fits by using our old friend the Stayman convention. Opposite the 1N overcall East has sufficient values for game (eleven opposite at least fifteen points). East uses Stayman knowing that if a 4-4heart fit is not unearthed he'll jump to 3N. West obliges and 4♥ is reached.</p> <p>North may well lead his partner's suit. Declarer wins, draws three rounds of trumps and plays on diamonds. In this way he will lose just three tricks – one club and two diamonds. If North starts with a very speculative ♦6 lead he will obtain a diamond ruff but the contract won't be defeated. Declarer's club loser can be pitched on a winning diamond.</p>	West	North	East	South	1N ⁽¹⁾	Pass	2♣ ⁽²⁾	1♣	2♥	Pass	4♥	All pass
West	North	East	South										
1N ⁽¹⁾	Pass	2♣ ⁽²⁾	1♣										
2♥	Pass	4♥	All pass										
<p>♠ K 8 ♥ J 8 6 3 ♦ A K J ♣ K J 9 5</p> <p>♠ A 10 2 ♠ Q 7 5 ♥ K 4 ♥ Q 10 5 ♦ Q 10 7 5 4 ♦ 8 6 3 ♣ A Q 2 ♣ 10 8 6 3</p> <p>♠ J 9 6 4 3 ♥ A 9 7 2 ♦ 9 2 ♣ 7 4</p>	<p>Board 4 : Dealer West : All vulnerable</p> <table> <tr> <th>West</th> <th>North</th> <th>East</th> <th>South</th> </tr> <tr> <td>1♦</td> <td>1N⁽¹⁾</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>2♣⁽²⁾</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>2♥</td> <td>All pass</td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>1 Somewhat familiar by now 2 Stayman</p> <p>This is the variant of Stayman that is easy to miss – a weak hand with at least 5/4 in the majors. The point is that after using it partner may bid a major and we will have found an eight card fit; and, if partner denies a major by bidding 2♦, we retreat to our five card suit knowing we'll play in a 5-2 or 5-3 fit. It gives us two bites of the cherry and is therefore better than unilaterally transferring into the five card suit.</p> <p>Here the cards are well placed for declarer to make an overtrick in hearts – he'll lose a club, two trumps and a spade (with the spades breaking 3-3 they can be set up reasonably painlessly). Playing in spades is inferior as there will always be two spade losers (to go with two hearts and a club).</p>	West	North	East	South	1♦	1N ⁽¹⁾	Pass	2♣ ⁽²⁾	Pass	2♥	All pass	
West	North	East	South										
1♦	1N ⁽¹⁾	Pass	2♣ ⁽²⁾										
Pass	2♥	All pass											

<p>♠54 ♥AK53 ♦86 ♣KQJ84</p> <p>♠K9763 ♠AQJ ♥87 ♥Q109 ♦AQ73 ♦KJ105 ♣95 ♣A63</p> <p>♠1082 ♥J642 ♦942 ♣1072</p>	<p>Board 5 : Dealer North : NS vulnerable</p> <table><tr><th>West</th><th>North</th><th>East</th><th>South</th></tr><tr><td></td><td>1♣</td><td>1N⁽¹⁾</td><td>Pass</td></tr><tr><td>2♥⁽²⁾</td><td>X⁽³⁾</td><td>2♠⁽⁴⁾</td><td>Pass</td></tr><tr><td>3♦⁽⁵⁾</td><td>Pass</td><td>4♠</td><td>All pass</td></tr></table> <p>1 15-18, with at least one club stop 2 Transfer showing 5+spades 3 Shows heart suit cheaply 4 Promises 3spades (pass would show a doubleton) 5 Game try, bidding out shape</p> <p>Whether North doubles the heart bid, or not, the auction should follow a similar pattern. That said, the double can help West as East has an option of passing over it to say he has a doubleton spade. Here West becomes quickly aware of the known eight card fit. He can use 3♦ as a game try. East has a maximum (though the value of ♥Q is not so easily assessed) and, with such good cards in spades and diamonds, will drive the auction to game.</p> <p>There is little to the play. Declarer can draw trumps and claim at least ten tricks. If North mistakenly cashes a second heart before setting up a club winner, declarer will be able to discard the club loser in the West hand on the established ♥Q.</p>	West	North	East	South		1♣	1N ⁽¹⁾	Pass	2♥ ⁽²⁾	X ⁽³⁾	2♠ ⁽⁴⁾	Pass	3♦ ⁽⁵⁾	Pass	4♠	All pass
West	North	East	South														
	1♣	1N ⁽¹⁾	Pass														
2♥ ⁽²⁾	X ⁽³⁾	2♠ ⁽⁴⁾	Pass														
3♦ ⁽⁵⁾	Pass	4♠	All pass														
<p>♠984 ♥AJ5432 ♦QJ ♣85</p> <p>♠Q10632 ♠J5 ♥109 ♥Q87 ♦7432 ♦A85 ♣97 ♣AKJ64</p> <p>♠AK7 ♥K6 ♦K1096 ♣Q1032</p>	<p>Board 6 : Dealer East : EW vulnerable</p> <table><tr><th>West</th><th>North</th><th>East</th><th>South</th></tr><tr><td></td><td></td><td>1♣</td><td>1N⁽¹⁾</td></tr><tr><td>Pass</td><td>2♦⁽²⁾</td><td>Pass</td><td>2♥</td></tr><tr><td>Pass</td><td>3♥⁽³⁾</td><td>All pass</td><td></td></tr></table> <p>1 15-18, with the now-inevitable club cover 2 5+hearts (transfer) 3 Game invitational showing 6+hearts</p> <p>We enter more cautious waters. North has just about enough to invite partner to bid on to game, 3♥ showing a hand with at least 6hearts. South has both a minimum and only a doubleton heart so finds a none-too-difficult pass.</p> <p>West leads ♣9 which East wins to switch to a spade (perhaps). Declarer sees the danger of losing a spade, two clubs, a diamond and a trump. He wins the spade (with ♠A to mask who holds ♠K) and plays a diamond immediately. In this way he can throw the spade loser before having to give up the lead again. A heart finesse can be taken. It loses but the contract has been made – two spades, five hearts and two diamonds.</p>	West	North	East	South			1♣	1N ⁽¹⁾	Pass	2♦ ⁽²⁾	Pass	2♥	Pass	3♥ ⁽³⁾	All pass	
West	North	East	South														
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<p> ♠ 6 3 ♥ J 10 2 ♦ J 10 5 4 2 ♣ J 5 2 ♠ K J 7 4 ♠ 5 ♥ 7 6 5 ♥ Q 8 4 3 ♦ A K Q 7 ♦ 9 8 ♣ A 8 ♣ K 9 7 6 4 3 ♠ A Q 10 9 8 2 ♥ A K 9 ♦ 6 3 ♣ Q 10 </p>	<p>Board 7 : Dealer South : All vulnerable</p> <table> <tr> <th>West</th> <th>North</th> <th>East</th> <th>South</th> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>1♠</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1N⁽¹⁾</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>2♣⁽²⁾</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2♦⁽³⁾</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>3♣⁽⁴⁾</td> <td>All pass</td> </tr> </table> <p>1 15-18, here with very good spade stops 2 Stayman 3 Denies 4hearts (see text) 4 To play, usually (as here) with at least 6clubs</p> <p>East has the sort of hand on which he will only commit to a part score. He tries first to find a 4-4 heart fit and when that isn't forthcoming he bales out into his long minor (as this is at the 3level it's better to hold at least six cards in the suit). Note that West doesn't show his spade suit – East West won't be playing in the opponents' suit and showing this amounts to giving away unnecessary information.</p> <p>Serendipity may be at work here as East has become the declarer. That prevents North leading a heart, the only lead to break the contract. South will probably start with a top heart which North will discourage (playing ♥10 if "high for hate" or ♥2 if a low card is discouraging). South switches to a diamond. Declarer wins and plays two rounds of clubs before playing a spade. South wins and plays a second diamond. Declarer is home as he can throw one heart on ♠K and another on the third diamond. East loses a spade, two hearts and a trump.</p>	West	North	East	South				1♠	1N ⁽¹⁾	Pass	2♣ ⁽²⁾	Pass	2♦ ⁽³⁾	Pass	3♣ ⁽⁴⁾	All pass
West	North	East	South														
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2♦ ⁽³⁾	Pass	3♣ ⁽⁴⁾	All pass														

<p> ♠ A Q J 6 ♥ K 10 ♦ K J 8 4 ♣ Q 9 8 ♠ K 10 9 8 5 ♠ 7 4 ♥ A J 8 3 ♥ Q 9 4 2 ♦ A Q ♦ 10 9 ♣ 10 5 ♣ A K J 6 3 ♠ 3 2 ♥ 7 6 5 ♦ 7 6 5 3 2 ♣ 7 4 2 </p>	<p>Board 8 : Dealer West : Love all</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <th><i>West</i></th> <th><i>North</i></th> <th><i>East</i></th> <th><i>South</i></th> </tr> <tr> <td>1♠</td> <td>1N⁽¹⁾</td> <td>X⁽²⁾</td> <td>2♣⁽³⁾</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>2♦</td> <td>Pass/X⁽⁴⁾</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2♥</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>3♥</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4♥</td> <td>All pass</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>1 15-18 and very good spades here 2 Penalties 3 5+diamonds (exit transfer) 4 Choice here - double is the modern choice and is for takeout</p> <p>Not everything is rosy when we overcall 1N. Once in a while the third hand has decent values and can double to show 9/10+hcps. South really is looking at a dreadful collection but his saving grace is the five card diamond suit. Here we use 2♣ as a transfer to diamonds. It's a bonus when partner has good support for us. The important point to remember is that we've been able to find a relatively safe haven. That the opponents now find their making game contract is a secondary issue. North South have avoided a big penalty.</p>	<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>	1♠	1N ⁽¹⁾	X ⁽²⁾	2♣ ⁽³⁾	Pass	2♦	Pass/X ⁽⁴⁾	Pass	2♥	Pass	3♥	Pass	4♥	All pass		
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<p> ♠ Q 7 5 ♥ A 10 9 7 4 ♦ Q J 8 3 ♣ A ♠ 10 9 8 6 ♠ K 2 ♥ 5 3 2 ♥ J 8 6 ♦ 9 7 4 ♦ A K 10 2 ♣ 7 4 2 ♣ K Q J 10 ♠ A J 4 3 ♥ K Q ♦ 6 5 ♣ 9 8 6 5 3 </p>	<p>Board 1 Scenario 2 (Talk) : Dealer North : Love all</p> <table> <tr> <th>West</th> <th>North</th> <th>East</th> <th>South</th> </tr> </table> <p><u>East overcalls 1N</u></p> <table> <tr> <td></td> <td>1♥</td> <td>1N⁽¹⁾</td> <td>X</td> </tr> </table> <p>All pass 1 15-18, heart stop (?) 2 Stayman</p> <p><u>East passes</u></p> <table> <tr> <td></td> <td>1♥</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>1♠</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>2♠</td> <td>All pass</td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>We have a similar set up of the North and East cards but this time the South and West cards have been switched. Now, if East bids, he will come a cropper. South will double and West will have no mechanism to escape.</p> <p>Let's say South leads ♥K against 1N doubled. He plays a second heart and switches to a club. North wins and cashes three further hearts. He can switch to a low spade and the defence can come to three spades. Together with five hearts and the ace of clubs, that's nine tricks. Declarer has been defeated by three tricks – minus 500 to East West.</p> <p>So, with hindsight, East would have been better to pass. North South do have some chance of making 4♥ but they are quite likely to play in a part score. 2♠ can make nine tricks but North South will rue East's decision not to bid. Plus 140 is no substitute for the juicy penalty.</p>	West	North	East	South		1♥	1N ⁽¹⁾	X		1♥	Pass	1♠	Pass	2♠	All pass	
West	North	East	South														
	1♥	1N ⁽¹⁾	X														
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