

System resume

A. LEVEL 1 OPENING BID

0 – 11 H card points ->

Pass

12 - 19 H card points ->

Make **opening bid in a suit, normally at 1 Level** [i.e. 7 tricks]

- Need minimum 5 cards of Hearts ♥ or Spades ♠ to bid 1 H ♥ or 1 Sp ♠ respectively.
In case of a tie in length of suit, bid highest ranked suit independent of quality
- Need minimum 4 cards of Diamonds to bid 1 D ♦; if less D ♦ cards – then ‘artificial’ bid 1 Club ♣.
Open in the longest minor : if you have more clubs, open 1 Club ♣ even with 4 diamond cards.

15 – 17 H card points with **balanced hand** (i.e. 4-3-3-3 or 4-4-3-2 or 5-3-3-2) -> Bid **1 No Trump**

Unusually strong hands > Bid 2 Club ♣ = an “artificial bid” for opening

20+ H card points ->

Bid 2 Club ♣ = shows opener’s high strength.

OR 18+ H card points with max 4 losers ->

Bid 2 Club ♣

OR 22+ H card points with balanced hand ->

Bid 2 Club ♣

An “**artificial bid**” is a bidding convention signal and is **not** related to responder’s specific suit.

But for 20 – 21 H card points with balanced hand -> Bid **2 NT** [actual/real bid; not artificial]

Pre-emptive Bids – ONLY to disrupt opponents

6 – 10 H card points (weak zone) + 7 card suit with 2 Honours (A,K,Q) -> Bid 3 level of this long suit

6 – 10 H card points + 6 card suit->

Bid 2 D ♦ / 2 H ♥ / 2 Sp ♠ = “Weak Two” of long suit

Generally, if the partner has not already passed and you have 2 Aces or a major suit of 4+ cards, do not do a Weak-Two” pre-empt

Generally, the pre-empter will not bid again in the auction unless partner forces him to bid again.

B. LEVEL 1 BID RESPONSE

0 – 5 H card points ->

Always **Pass**

RESPONSES TO OPENING BID of 1 ♣ or 1 ♦

6+ H card points with **minimum 4 cards in one suit** -> Bid that long suit at level 1 (**1 H ♥ or 1 Sp ♠**)

OR Bid 2 ♣ or 2 ♦ (as appropriate – an actual bid)

But need minimum 10 points to bid a new suit at 2 level

In a **suit contract** – ONLY after first bid, add **distribution [D] points** for hand valuation for game level

Doubleton = add 1 D pt • Singleton = add 2 D pts • Void = add 3 D pts

RESPONSES TO OPENING BID of 1 H ♥ or 1 Sp ♠

With fit with partner – min 3 cards in his suit [i.e. 8+ cards for partnership]

- | | | |
|-------------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| ➤ 0-5 DH points | Pass | |
| ➤ 6-10 DH points | Minimum support | Bid 2 H ♥ or 2 S ♠ |
| ➤ 11-12 DH points | Medium support | Bid 3 H ♥ or 3 S ♠ |
| ➤ 13-16 DH points | Good support | Bid 4 H ♥ or 4 S ♠ |

Go for game

Without fit with partner i.e. < 3 cards in his suit

- | | | |
|----------------------------------|--|--------------------|
| ➤ 0-5 points | Pass | |
| ➤ 6-10 H points | Bid new suit at level 1 or bid 1 NT [artificial “Stop Bid” – does <u>not</u> show balanced hand] | |
| ➤ 11+ H points | Bid new suit at level 1 or 2 if necessary | |
| ➤ 11-12 H points + balanced hand | Bid 2 NT | |
| ➤ 13-15 H points + balanced hand | Bid 3 NT | Go for game |

RESPONSES TO OPENING BID of 1 NT

When responder has a **4 card suit in hearts or spades** and **at least 8 H card points**, responder should use the **Stayman convention** of an **artificial bid of 2 ♣**, which asks opening bidder (partner) if he has 4 cards in either of the majors to check for a fit. The opener’s answers are:

- 2 ♦ = Artificial bid = I don't have a 4 card suit in the majors.
- 2 ♥ = Real bid = I have 4 hearts and can still have 4 spades.
- 2 ♠ = Real bid = I have 4 spades and deny 4 hearts.

In the next round of bidding, since the partnership has at least 23 *H* points - the responder can then decide on the game contract – 3NT or 4 ♥ or 4 ♠ or higher.

*This simple version of Stayman can be used with game or slam ambitions (responder has 8+ *H* points).*

When responder has **5+ cards in a major suit**, there are increased chances for a fit since partner promised a minimum of two cards in each suit when opening in 1 NT.

To allow for the opener's stronger hand to be hidden and finally receive the opening lead, the **Jacoby (Red Suit) Transfers** (of artificial bids) are used to make the responder (with the long suit) the dummy.

Over 1NT - a responder's artificial bid of 2 ♦ shows 5+ hearts ♥ and asks opener to art. bid 2 ♥.

Over 1NT - a responder's artificial bid of 2 ♥ shows 5+ spades ♠ and asks opener to art. bid 2 ♠.

When answering such a transfer, the opener is obliged to artificially bid partner's suit as requested.

It's a different situation from Stayman - where responder asks if the opener has 4 cards in a major.

The responder that made the original transfer will then decide what course the auction will take.

When responder does **not** have a 5+ card major suit or at least 8 *H* card points, responder should Pass.

When responder has 10+ *H* card points and a balanced hand but does **not** have a 4 card major suit, responder should bid 3 NT (real bid).

RESPONSES TO PARTNER 2 Club ♣ BID (Artificial to show strength)

General partner response is 2 D ♦, to keep bidding open and give the opening partner the chance to better show his hand in his next bid.

If the responder has a good 5+ card suit and 8+ *H* points (i.e. partnership 28+ *H* points), then the responder should bid his strong suit at 2 level or go to 3 ♣ 2 or 3 D ♦ (actual/real bid).

RESPONSES TO PARTNER PRE-EMPTIVE BID

Responder can Pass – which is the normal response to a “Weak Two” pre-emptive bid.

Responder needs to have 14+ *H* points and Game ambitions to continue bidding in a suit.

If Responder has a stronger hand, he can bid 2 NT - asking for more information about partner's hand - to check if partner is in the minimum (6-7 *H*) or maximum (8-9 *H*) range in his pre-empt.

Responder can also raise partner bid to the third level to make the pre-empt higher

C. OPENER REBID

Purpose : to show opener's hand shape and honour strength

Opener options for hand shape

- Support partner's suit
- Announce another suit with 4+ cards
- Repeat opening suit with 6+cards

With balanced Opener hand

With 12-14 *H* points, bid 1 No Trump
With 18-19 *H* points, jump bid to 2 No Trump

Opener options for Honour strength

Minimum zone - bid at preferred suit at the lowest level
Make a bid level jump in preferred suit to show strength

In most situations you just have 2 levels to bid, so you distinguish between minimum (12-16 pts) and maximum (17-19 pts) zones.

When you support your partner's level-1 major, you can have 3 bid options (i.e. level 2 or 3 or 4), so you can distinguish between minimum, medium and maximum zones.

OPENER POINT ZONES for 2nd BID [DH = Distribution + Honour; H = Honour]		
Supporting partner suit	Minimum 12-16 DH	Cheapest level
	Medium 17-18 DH	Jump bid
	Maximum 19-21 DH	Double jump bid
Bidding a new suit	Minimum 12-16 H	Cheapest level
	Maximum 17-19 H	Jump bid
Re-bidding the opening suit	Minimum 12-16 H	Cheapest level
	Maximum 17-19 H	Jump bid
Showing a balanced hand	Minimum 12-14 H	Cheapest level NT
	Maximum 18-19 H	Jump bid NT

BIDDING : COMPETITIVE AUCTION

NOTE : *It is okay to bid competitively and fail to achieve your contract. Sometimes this is done just to prevent the opponents from winning the contract and points (that are more than the penalty points from your own contract failure).*

OVERCALL – To bid after an opponent's bid

Overcalls can be :

- a) in a suit
- b) in No Trump
- c) with a Double

One can have less points to make an overcall than to open the bidding (min 12 H points).

Overcall at level 1 promises a minimum of 5 cards in the overcall suit bid + around 8-16 points.

Overcall at level 2 promises a minimum of 6 cards in the overcall suit bid + around 10-16 points.

The lower our point count, the higher our overcall suit quality should be.

Overcall at 1 NT promises a balanced hand + around 15-18 H points

and a stopper (one+ honour) in the opener's suit.

This means we guarantee our partner that the opponents will not easily make all tricks in their suit after the opening lead.

The "Double"

Originally, the Double was intended to punish opponents if they overbid during the auction. With a classic Punitive Double - penalties for failing to make the contract are aggravated after a double.

In modern times, every time the contract is under game level most doubles are not punitive.

Usually such a Double is to show a reasonable hand that wants to dispute the auction and asks the partner to bid his best suit in order to find a fit.

Such a Double, can have 2 meanings:

- 1) – In the majority of cases, this promises a hand with opening H points (12+) and asks partner to show his better suit. The Doubler should have a minimum of 3 cards (ideally 4) in all unbid suits.
- 2) – In some situations - the Double can be made with a hand of 17+ points, too strong for a suit overcall.

Answering partner's Double - A partner's Double **must** be answered.

Assuming the opener's partner passes the Double :

Our answer should normally be :

- 0-8 points *DH* : Bid our best suit at the cheapest level.
- 9-11 *DH* : Make a jump bid in our best suit.
- 12+ *DH* + strength in opponent's suit : Make a "cue bid" at a higher level in the opponent's suit

With a balanced hand and a stopper in the opener's suit, we can make a No Trump bid with a minimum of 8 *H* points :

- 8-10 *H* : 1 NT
- 11-12 *H* : 2 NT
- 13-15 *H* : 3NT

Exceptionally strong hands (over 32 points in partnership)

Slam Bidding with the Blackwood Convention

A 'Slam' is a contract bid at level 6 or 7; if we make it, we will win extra game points.

In suit slam contracts : **32-33 *DH* points** needed for a 'small slam' (level 6); and **36-37 *DH* points** for a 'grand slam' (level 7).

In no trump slam contracts : around **33 *H* points** needed for a 'small slam' [6 NT]; and **37 *H* points** for a 'grand slam' [7 NT] .

Due to the high card concentration, opponents have less power to disrupt a slam contract, which is hence easier to play than a lower level contract. Beginners should not be afraid to risk slam contracts. In competition bridge, over careful players rarely have success.

One can assess your partnership's total points from the opening and responding bids in the earlier rounds of the auction.

However, one of the main risks in a Slam contract is the partnership missing 1 or 2 aces and having the contract defeated after one (two) tricks by the ace(s) held by the opponents .

The **Blackwood convention** is the '**artificial bid**' of **4 NT** to ask how many aces the partner has.

The partner's answers are:

5 ♣	= 0 or 4 aces	5 ♦	= 1 ace
5 ♥	= 2 aces	5 ♠	= 3 aces

If the partnership is missing 2 aces, sign off at the 5 level of the agreed trump suit,

Following the initial Blackwood 4 NT, if we have all the aces and plan to bid a grand slam - we can then make the '**artificial bid**' of **5 NT** to ask partner how many kings he has.

The partner's answers are similar.

6 ♣	= 0 or 4 kings	6 ♦	= 1 king
6 ♥	= 2 kings	6 ♠	= 3 kings

As a general rule, do **not** bid a grand slam without **all** the aces and kings.