

When to open a suit - shape, position, rule of 20

Opening Major:

- 12+ HCP and a 5 card ♥ or ♠ suit.
- With less than 12HCP use the “rule of 20”.
- With both 5 card ♥ and ♠ suits open with the higher (1♠).

Opening Minor:

If you lack a 5 card major to open then you will need to open a minor suit. Agree with you partner on what minor suit opening style you will use:

Short Club (Strength: 13+HCP or Rule of 20)

- 1♣ shows 2+ ♣
- 1♦ shows 4+ ♦

Better Minor (Strength: 13+HCP or Rule of 20)

- Open the longer minor
- With 3/3 open 1♣
- With 4/4 open 1♦

Rule of 20:
Add your high card points to the length of your two longest suits, and if the total is 20 or more, open.

Opening Light:

In third hand (after two passes) you can open with 9-11 HCP when you hold 5+ ♠ with good honours (2 of top 3 or 3 of top 5)

Partner must remember that an opening in third hand could be light (i.e. 9 points) and can assume 5 cards in the major. Notice that person opening light is only interested in ♠.

In fourth hand with 10-11 points only open with ALL the following:

- you have a 5+ card ♠ suit
- you meet the rule of 20
- you have good honours in ♠

THE SIDE WITH SPADES WINS MOST PART-SCORE BATTLES

♠ J 3
♥ 10 9 7 5
♦ K Q 10 5 4
♣ A 5

P-P-?

In the 3rd seat - Pass

♠ K J 10 3 2
♥ 8 6 5
♦ Q 8
♣ K J 8

P-P-?

In the 3rd seat - 1♠ 3/5 honours is the minimum for a light opening