

OVERCALL Lesson 1

BEGINNING	IMPROVING LEVEL	INTERMEDIATE	ADVANCED	EXPERT
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MINI LESSONS



WHAT IS AN OVERCALL? The first bid made by your side after the opposition has opened.

A SIMPLE OVERCALL - The first bid by your side after the opposition opens one of a suit.

This can happen in the first round, in only one of two situations:-

- Immediately after the opposition's opening
- or
- Immediately after the Responder's bid

OPENER (1H)	YOU 1S	RESPONDER	YOU
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OR

OPENER (1H)	YOU PASS	RESPONDER (1S)	YOU 2C
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Competitive auctions (both side are bidding)

When both sides are bidding the priorities change. Without interference, one side just gets to have a nice, comfortable conversation about what the best contract is.

- When both sides are bidding the goals change. The advantages & risks of bidding in a competitive auction are different. These effect the requirements for making a bid.
- Overcalling guidelines try to balance the advantages and risks.

OVERCALLING GUIDELINES – SIMPLE OVERCALL

Suit at the 2-level – 5-card⁺ good quality suit¹ and opening values

Suit at the 1 level – 5-card⁺ and 7-17 points – lower the points – higher the quality of the suit

Overcalling at the *one-level* is less risky. *High quality suit, less points: High points, more compromise is OK on quality*
Overcalling at the *two-level* is riskier. *A good quality suit is always important.*

Example – you are North and West opens the bidding

West (1H)	North 1S
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North should overcall **1S** with either of the hands below.

HAND 1

♠ AKJ73 ♥ 32 ♦ 532 ♣ 532 (8HCP and a good quality suit)

HAND 2

♠ KQ ♥ K10954 ♦ A432 ♣ J6 (13HCP & not such good quality is fine at the 1-level)

The advantages of overcalling **1S** on both these hands outweigh any risks.

1NT overcall

West (1H)	North 1NT
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15-17 Balanced just as you would have opened given the chance

BUT must have a stopper in the opponent's suit/s

Example 1

♠ AKJ ♥ AQ7 ♦ 10932 ♣ Q32 **1NT** Overcall. 16HCP Balanced **AND** stoppers in Hearts (the opponent's suit)

Example 2

♠ AKJ ♥ 10932 ♦ AQ7 ♣ Q32 **PASS**. This hand is the same as Hand 1 but with the Hearts & Diamonds swapped Without a Heart stopper, INT overcall would be fatal. There is no 5-card suit for a suit overcall & the requirements for X are not met. PASS on first round and come into the bidding on the 2nd round. This gives very sound information to partner.

PRACTICE HANDS – WILL ADD TO THIS HANDOUT NEXT WEEK.

¹ Good quality suit = Two of the top 3 honours (A,K or Q) OR three of the top 5 Honours (A,K,Q,J or 10)