

The Bidding System - Summary

Determine the value of your hand:

High card points (HCP): Ace=4 King=3 Queen=2 Jack=1

Length points: 1 point each for the 5th, 6th, 7th, etc card in one suit.

Shortness points: (only in suit contract, only if you have 3 cards or more in partner's suit):

With 3 trump: Void in a side suit = 3; Singleton = 2; Doubleton (2 card suit) = 1

With 4+ trump: Void in a side suit = 5; Singleton = 3; Doubleton = 1

With more than one short suit: Count points only for one, the shortest one.

Partnership combined total points and the contracts they usually make:

- **20:** 2 in a combined 8+ card suit or 1 no trump
 - **23:** 3 in a combined 8+ card suit or 2 no trump
 - **25:** 4 in a combined 8+ card suit or 3 no trump
 - **29:** 5 in a combined 8+ card suit or 4 no trump
 - **33:** 6 in a suit or NT
 - **37:** 7 in a suit or NT
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Bidding Objective: Determine what denomination (what suit? No-trump?) & how high (1 to 7).

1. **Play in 8+ card major suit.** First choice. Usually the safest & best contract.
 2. **Play in No Trump.** Second choice.
 3. **Play in a minor.** Last choice. (More tricks required and gives a lower score.)
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Opener: **Basic:** 12-15 points, **Medium:** 16-18, **Maximum:** 19-21, **Monster:** 22+

Responder: **Basic:** 6-9 points, **Medium:** 10-11, **Maximum:** 12+

Open the bidding:

- **1C or 1D:** with 12-21 points, no 5+ card major (open 1 in your best minor, might be 3 cards)
- **1H or 1S:** with 12-21 points and a 5+ card major suit (hearts or spades).
- **1NT:** 15-17 HCP in a balanced hand (no void, no singleton, no 5+ card major)
- **With 18-19 HCP** in a balanced hand: Open 1 in a suit, then bid 2NT.
- **2NT:** 20-21 HCP in a balanced hand (no void, no singleton, no 5+ card major)
- **2C:** with 22+ points or 9 1/2 tricks in your own hand (close to game in your own hand)
- **2D, 2H, 2S:** with 5-11 points and a 6 card suit (a preemptive bid)
- **3C, 3D, 3H, 3S:** with 5-11 points and a 7 card suit (a preemptive bid)
- **4C, 4D, 4H, 4S:** with 5-11 points and an 8 card suit (a preemptive bid)
- **5C, 5D:** with 5-11 points and a 9 card suit (a preemptive bid)

Preemptive bids: Use up the bidding room to stop opponents from finding their best spot.

Respond after partner opens the bidding

- **With 0-5:** Pass or make a preemptive jump to 2, 3, 4 or 5 of a long suit.
 - **With 6-9:** Do not pass. Bid 1 of a suit, 1NT, or 2 of a suit previously bid by your side
 - **With 10-11:** Continue bidding up to the 2 level or 3 of a suit already bid by your side.
 - **With 12+:** Bid game or slam if the best spot is already known. If not, keep bidding new suits until the best spot is identified and then bid that game or slam.
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Opener's 2nd Bid:

- **Pass:** If you know responder's size, are in a good spot, have nothing more to show.
 - **Rebid your 1st suit:** with 6+ cards in the suit
 - **Bid a 2nd suit:** with another 4+ card suit
 - **Raise responder's suit:** with a known 8-card fit in the suit
 - **Bid NT:** Often better to bid NT than to raise responder's minor.
 - **Clarify whether small, medium or large:**
 - **Small:** Pass if in a good spot. Otherwise, make the cheapest next reasonable bid.
 - **Medium:** Make an extra bid or jump a level. (Eg: 1H-2H; 3H or 1D-1S; 3S)
 - **Large:** Jump to game. (Eg: 1H-2H; 4H or 1D-1S; 4S or 1D-1S; 3NT)
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Tweak 1: 1H-3H & 1S-3S show 4 card support (and 10-11 points).

Tweak 2: 1H-4H & 1S-4S are preemptive with 0-5 points and 5 card support.

Caution: Do not **reverse** (make pard bid at 3 level) if you cannot see 23 combined points.

Suit lengths:

- **Open 1C:** 3 or more clubs. **Open 1D:** 4+ diamonds 95% of the time.
 - **Open 1H or 1S:** at least 5 cards in the suit.
 - **Respond:** 4 cards in the suit, except need 5 hearts for 2H response to 1S.
 - **Bid a 2nd suit:** 4 cards in the suit (and promises 5 cards in a first-bid major).
 - **Bid same suit 2nd time without support from partner:** 6 cards.
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Wide Point Ranges, Narrow Point Ranges, Captaincy:

- **All NT bids (opener and responder) show a narrow point range:**
 - Opener:** Open 1 in a suit and then bid 1NT: **12-14.** Open 1NT: **15-17.**
 Open 1 in a suit and then bid 2NT: **18-19.** Open 2NT: **20-21.**
 - Responder:** 1X-1NT: **6-9.** 1X-2NT: **10-11.** 1X-3NT: **12-15.**
- **Opener's 1st bid, if not in NT, shows a wide point range:** 12-21.
- **Opener's 2nd bid shows a narrow range:** Small, medium or large. (See above.)
- **Responder's immediate support and NT bids show a narrow range:**
1H-2H (6-9); 1H-3H (10-11); 1S-1NT (6-9); 1D-2NT (10-11).
- **Responder's new suit bids show a wide range:**
1D-1S (6+); 1H-2D (10+); 1D-1S; 1NT-2C (10+).
- **Captain:** When one partner makes a "narrow" bid, the other knows the combined total within 2-3 points and becomes captain. This is usually the responder. Captain makes **forcing** bids, places the contract or makes an **invitation**. Non-captain can make an invitation but no other extra bids.
- **Forcing:** New suit by an un-passed responder is unlimited. Opener should not pass. Once a trump suit has been agreed, a new suit by opener is forcing.
- **Invitation:** A bid by the captain that is not a pass, not game, but some other bid in between.
 - **If opener invites:** Responder stops below game with 6-7; bids game with 8-9.
 - **If responder invites:** Basic opener declines with 12-13; bids game with 14-15.