

Competitive Bidding

Guidelines for competing

Duplicate Life

Jane Youngberg



1

Lets do the Math

- If you bid 2H or 2S and make it, you score 110 points.
 - If you bid 3H/S, are doubled, and go down 1 trick, your opponents score 100 NV and 200 V.
 - If you bid 3H/S and go down 1, your opponents score 50 NV and 100V
- Conclusion**
The three level bids belong to the opposition except when you are NV.

4

Outline

1. Basics

2. Low level auctions

2

When should you compete?

	1H	1S	2H	2S	
1H (opener)	1S				P P 3H (pass out seat)
(overcaller)					3H by responder shows the following:
2H (responder)	2S				NV against V tends to show a competing bid.
(advancer)					Down 1 is 50
	1H	1S	2H	2S	Down 1 X is 100. better than 110 for the opposition
					V against NV shows

3H by opener shows extras

Your partner will do something in the pass out seat. The opener

5

70% of auctions

are competitive

in today's modern bidding

3

The player in the pass out seat has an added responsibility

In the pass out seat make every effort to bid unless you are V against NV	P P 1S P
1H P 2H P	2S P P Pass out seat
P Pass out seat	NV bid if possible

- Make every effort to bid in this seat either a 5 card suit or X for 4 S

V think twice about bidding

6

No One Vulnerable East dealer

♠ AJ87
♥ J86
♦ A83
♣ Q85

♠ 1093
♥ Q53
♦ QJ64
♣ KJ3

9 HCP

12 HCP

♠ Q4
♥ AK1074
♦ K107
♣ 1062

12 HCP

W N E S

♠ K652
♥ 92
♦ 952
♣ A974

7 HCP

2H X P 3H (X or pass)

1H P 2S P

Competitive Bidding Tools

This is a brief summary of bids and treatments you should use to be competitive in modern duplicate bridge. It is important that you and your partner discuss these tools thoroughly!

Takeout Doubles:

Overcalls and Weak Raises in Competition

Cue bids for Limit Raises and Mixed Raises

Support Doubles

New Minor Force

Weak Jump Overcalls and Weak Jump Shifts

Unusual 2NT and Michaels

Lebensohl

Action Doubles

NS Vulnerable EW Not Vulnerable

♠ AJ87
♥ J86
♦ A83
♣ Q85

♠ 1093
♥ Q53
♦ QJ64
♣ KJ3

9 HCP

12 HCP

♠ Q4
♥ AK1074
♦ K107
♣ 1062

12 HCP

W N E S

♠ K652
♥ 92
♦ 952
♣ A974

7 HCP

2H X P 3H

1H P 2S P

Competitive Bidding Strategies

Don't "sell out" too low. If the opponents stop at a low level, you don't have to have a strong hand to balance back into the auction. The best situations for competing are when:

- (1) You're not vulnerable;
- (2) The opponents have stopped in 1 or 2 of a suit contract (not 1NT or 2NT); and
- (3) You hold shortness in the opponents' trump suit.

Double more part scores. If you bid to a part score that you think you could have made, but your opponents bid over it, a double is sometimes necessary for you to get even an average score. (Be very careful in choosing when to use this tip!)

NS Vulnerable EW Vulnerable

♠ AJ87
♥ J86
♦ A83
♣ Q85

♠ 1093
♥ Q53
♦ QJ64
♣ KJ3

9 HCP

12 HCP

♠ Q4
♥ AK1074
♦ K107
♣ 1062

12 HCP

W N E S

♠ K652
♥ 92
♦ 952
♣ A974

7 HCP

2H X P 3H

1H P 2S P

- Use a simplified form of the "Law of Total Tricks (Trumps)" for competitive decisions. In part score situations -- those where you've found a fit but wanted to stop below game -- **don't let the opponents push you to the three-level unless you have at least a 9-card trump fit. (or vulnerability is on your side)**
- **Overcall freely.** At the one-level, don't be afraid to make light, lead-directing overcalls (as few as 8 or 9 points if you have a good suit), especially if you're not vulnerable and your opponent opens a minor. If you have to go to the two-level to bid your suit, though, be cautious. For a two-level overcall, you should have good high-card strength (11-12+ pts.) and a very good suit (a strong 5-carder or, better, a 6+-card suit). A vulnerable two-level overcall should be even stronger.

- Raise partner's suit freely. Even if you're light in high-card points, stretch to raise partner if you have a fit for his suit, especially in competitive auctions.
- Sacrifice more often. If you have a good fit, sacrifice freely **if your opponents are vulnerable and you are not**. But be very conservative about sacrificing when you're vulnerable and the opponents are not.
- When making a competitive decision, do not consider points as the main factor! Your decision should be based on distribution and number of trumps.

13

The WORST time to balance is when:

- You have a very weak hand (fewer than 8 pts.) and/or a weak suit.
- You have length in *OPENER'S* suit. The more cards you have in the opponents' suit, the less chance there is that you and partner will have a fit. It's often best to pass and let opener play in what may be a bad contract.
- You're vulnerable. If you can't make your bid, the penalty may be expensive, so be conservative

16

There Are 3 (possible) Positive Outcomes if you compete, especially at Matchpoints.

1. You reach a contract you can make
2. You go down 50 or 100 instead of giving the opposition 110+
3. You push them to a higher level and they may be down 1

14

Balancing Over One-Bids

A balancing bid is made in the pass-out seat after an opponent has opened the bidding (1 of a suit on your left, Pass, Pass, to you). In these situations, it's often a good idea to stretch to keep the auction alive.

The BEST time to balance is when:

- You're short in the opponent's suit.
- You have length and high-card strength in the other three suits.
- You have a good 5-card or longer suit.
- You're not vulnerable (if you can't make your bid, the penalty will be lower, and may be even less than the score you would have lost if you had defended the one-bid).

15