

Overcalls

Once an opponent has opened the bidding, even though you may have enough strength, you can no longer also open the bidding. You may still bid, but the requirements for doing so are different than those when no one has made a bid. A bid of a suit or no trump after the opponents have opened the bidding is called an **overcall**. The requirements for an overcall vary slightly due to the level and the vulnerability. The one thing that you should always have is a **good** five card or longer suit.

Reasons to Overcall:

- a) Even though the opponents have shown strength by opening the bidding, your side may have a majority of the points and want to get the bid (maybe even game)
- b) Suggest a suit that partner might lead if on defense
- c) Suggest a suit that you might want to compete in to push the opponents too high
- d) Suggest a suit that you might want to sacrifice in. A sacrifice is when you bid something that you know you are not going to make, but you think the penalty for going down will be less than the score they will get for making what they are bidding.
- e) To take up bidding room so that it is harder for the opponents to find their best contract.

The most important thing to remember when making an overcall is that you want to have at least a five card or longer suit that is of good quality. When you open the bidding with 1H

you only need a five card suit and 13 HCP. The quality of the heart suit does not matter as long as you have enough points outside the suit to open. When you overcall, however, the quality of the suit is important. Your suit needs to have some honors.

Requirements to Overcall:

- a) Good 5 card or longer suit
- b) At the one level at least 8+ HCP. At the 2 level at least 10 HCP.
- c) Be a little more cautious if you are vulnerable.
- d) An overcall of 1NT shows 15-17 HCP and a stopper in the opponent's bid suit.

What would you do with the following hands after RHO opens 1H?

- a) KQT76 8 QJ76 987
- b) 86543 8 QJ76 KQJ
- c) AK7 7654 K87 K87
- d) KQ6 KJ7 AQJ7 987
- e) K7 Q876 83 KJ765
- f) A6 8 A762 KJT654

