

Introduction to bridge

Lesson 2: The bidding

The auction - determines the contract and consists of each player making a **bid**, starting with the dealer. The highest bid wins the auction and their bid becomes the contract for that hand.

A bid – a bid is an undertaking to win the number of tricks bid plus six. Thus, a bid of 1 ♣ says the partnership can win 7 tricks with clubs as trumps (1 plus 6 = 7 tricks)

The bidding ladder – the lowest bid that a player can make is 1 ♣, 7 tricks with clubs as trumps, and the highest bid is 7 no trumps (NT), which is 13 tricks with no trump suit (6 + 7 = 13).

1 ♣, 1 ♦, 1 ♥, 1 ♠ 1NT	7 tricks
2 ♣, 2 ♦, 2 ♥, 2 ♠ 2NT	8 tricks
3 ♣, 3 ♦, 3 ♥, 3 ♠ 3NT	9 tricks
4 ♣, 4 ♦, 4 ♥, 4 ♠ 4NT	10 tricks
5 ♣, 5 ♦, 5 ♥, 5 ♠ 5NT	11 tricks
6 ♣, 6 ♦, 6 ♥, 6 ♠ 6NT	12 tricks
7 ♣, 7 ♦, 7 ♥, 7 ♠ 7NT	13 tricks

Each bid must be higher than the last bid made. For example, if a player starts the bidding with 1 ♦, the next person to bid can bid 1 ♥, 1 ♠ or 1NT but must bid 2 ♣ if they want clubs to be trumps

A player can pass and come back into the bidding later.

The auction is over when there has been a bid followed by 3 consecutive passes.

Opening the bidding – the first bid in the auction, other than pass is known as the opening bid.

An opening hand - is a hand with 12 or more total points (High card points plus length points). This means you have a slightly better than average hand (an average hand would be 10HCP).

A fit - is when a partnership holds the majority of cards (eight or more) in any one suit.

A major suit - spades and hearts are the major suits. You score more points for playing and making a contract in a major suit than in a minor suit.

A minor suit – clubs and diamonds are the minor suits. You score fewer points for bidding and making a contract in a minor suit than in a major suit.

What do you need to open the bidding at the 1 level? – you need at least 12 total points to open the bidding at the 1 level.

- Open your **longest suit first**
- To open a major suit, you must have **five cards** in that suit
- If you do not have a 5-card major, open your **longer minor**.

What if my suits are of equal length?

- With two five card suits open the higher ranked suit
- With four diamonds and four clubs, open 1 diamond
- With three diamonds and three clubs open 1 club
- With four spades, four hearts three diamonds and two clubs, open 1 diamond.

Responding to partner's opening bid – when your partner opens the bidding you are known as the **responder**.

- With less than 6HCP pass
- With 6 or more HCP you **must** respond.

If partner opens a major suit –

- With at least **3 cards in partner's major** suit with raise partner's suit. For example, 1 ♥ - 2 ♥
- If you **don't have support** for partner's major suit:
 - bid a 4-card spade suit if partner bid hearts
 - bid your longest suit at the 2 level if you have 10 or more total points
 - If you have less than 10 points and don't have a suit you can bid at the 1 level, bid 1NT.

If partner opens a minor suit – if partner opens a minor, bid your 4-card major at the lowest level, even if you have support for partner's suit because you prefer to play a contract in a major suit. You can show support for partner's major suit later in the auction.