

## Responding to partner's 1-level opening bid

### Some things to remember

When your partner opens the bidding at the 1-level the type of hand they have could vary widely in strength and shape (except 1NT, where we know a lot about partner's hand).

Partner could have anywhere from 11HCP up to about 20HCP and a hand of any shape.

Responder's first task is to start describing their hand to opener.

Avoid underbidding, overbidding or wild gambling bids!

### Remember:

- With a choice of suits to bid, bid your longest suit first.
- With 5-5 bid the highest ranked suit first.
- With 4-4 bid the lowest ranked suit first (but if you have a weak hand and a 4 card major bid the major suit first).
- With no suit of your own, bid NT at the appropriate level.

### Types of responding hands:

Weak responding hands	Strong responding hands
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 6-9 HCP</li><li>• 10 HCP with a 4-4-4-3 shape</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 10+ HCP</li><li>• 9 HCP and a 6-card or longer suit</li></ul>

### Some guidelines to help you

In order of priority

#### 1. *After a 1H or 1S opening and you have a fit:*

- With a weak hand and 3 or 4 card support, raise partner's major to the 2-level (remember our number one priority is to find a major suit fit so tell partner about it straight away).

##### Hand 1: Raising partner's major

KJ75

IH (p) You?

J54

T3

Bid 2H, show your weak support as soon as possible

Q863

- With an 'invitational' hand of 10-12 TP and 3 or 4 card support, raise partner's major to the 3-level (this is called a 'limit raise').

### Hand 3(a):

JT4	1H (p) You?
J87	
AJ6	Down grade this hand bid 2H – has flat a poor 3334 shape – no ruffing potential
K872	

- With a weak hand and 5 card support for partner's major and shortage in another suit, raise partner's suit to the 4-level (**Note:** this 'weak freak' or 'shut out raise' is subject to partnership agreement. If you are a newer player you may prefer to play the jump to game in partner's major as showing support for partner's suit and an opening hand).

### Hand 2: The weak freak

7	1H (p) You?
Q8754	
KJ63	Bid 4H – law of total tricks. Ten trumps will often make 10 tricks

- With a 12/13+TP and 3 or more card support for partner's major suit, change suit and plan to bid game in partner's major suit with your second bid (see note above). Beware if you are a passed hand as your change of suit at the 1 level is not forcing.

### Hand 9: Game going hand with support

A8	1H (p) You?
K762	
KT63	Bid 2D with plan to bid 4H on next bid
A52	

Newer players may want to bid 4H on this hand to show an opening hand

Advanced players may want play 2NT here to show an opening hand and 4 trumps or play Bergen raises.

- **Note:** If you are an experienced player, there are a number of conventions you can play after partner opens 1 of a major. These include *Jacoby 2NT* and *Bergen Raises*.
- After partner opens in 3<sup>rd</sup> seat

### Hand 16: Drury

KQ4	P (p) 1H (p) You?
KJ7	
Q8743	Bid 2C Reverse Drury to find out if partner opened light
T7	

Can you remember the responses? With a light opening P rebid their suit, 2D or bidding a new suit shows full strength opening.

## 2. After a 1H or 1S opening and no fit in partner's major

- When partner opens 1H and you have a weak hand and 4 spades, bid 1S, otherwise bid 1NT (even with an unbalanced hand).
- When partner opens 1S and you have a weak hand, bid 1NT (even with an unbalanced hand).

87	1S (p) You?
KQ853	
964	Bid 1NT, even if we took the 7 spades and made it a diamond
KT7	

- If your partner opens 1 of a major and you have a strong hand and no fit with partner's major suit, bid a new 4+ card suit at the 1 or 2 level or jump in NT. Remember: a new suit at the 2 level shows 10+HCP, a jump to 2NT shows 10-12 HCP and no major suit, and a jump to 3NT shows an opening hand and no major suit.
- **Note:** A 2H response after partner opens 1S **ALWAYS** shows at least 5 hearts.

Lets look at this auction: 1S (p) 2H – what does opener know about responder's hand?

## 3. After a minor suit opening

- With a weak hand, raise partner's minor suit with 5 card support, bid a new suit at the 1-level or bid 1NT. **Do NOT bid a new suit at the 2 level with a weak hand – bid 1NT.**

K74	1D (p) You?
97	
J85	Bid 1N not 2C as you are too weak
A9863	

Q43	1D (p) You?
KJ5	
J96	Bid 1N not 2C as you have the dreaded 3334 shape
K875	

- When partner opens a minor suit and you have both support for partner's minor and a 4+ card major suit, **show your major suit first**. You can always go back to partner's minor suit later.

KJ9	1D (p) You?
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QJ74  
JT54  
T2

Bid 1H – show your major

- **Note:** where you have a weak hand and partner opens a minor suit, prefer to show a 4 card major rather than a 4 or 5 card minor suit (remember, we are looking for a major suit fit and with a weak hand you are likely to only get one bid so use it wisely!). This is known as ‘Walsh style’ bidding.

KJ9  
QJ74  
JT54  
T2

1C (p) You?

Bid 1H – show your major

- **For more advanced players:** where your partner opens a minor and you have a very weak hand (less than 6 HCP) and a long 6+ card major suit, you can show this type of hand by jumping in your major suit: For example: 1D (P) 2H or 2S. This is a ‘drop dead bid’ and partner should pass with most hands.

QJ87632  
98  
T  
743

1D (p) You?

Jump to 2S shows a hand with less 6HCP and a long major. Opener passes.

- **Note:** If you are a more experienced player you may like to play ‘Inverted minors’ when partner opens 1C or 1D.