

# Opening Bids

N.B. Check in order

- a) More than 17pts or 8 Playing tricks (1D) **Alert !**
  
- b) 2x5 card suits **Announce!**  
(1NT Both Majors- 2C Clubs and a Major-2D Diamonds and a Major -2NT Minors)  
(NB LTC of 7, pts 8-16)
  
- c) 5 card Major 11-16pts (1H/S)
  
- d) 6 card Major 6-10 pts (2H/S)
  
- e) 7 card suit (3C/D/H/S)
  
- f) 12-16 pts (1C) **Alert!**  
(No 5 card major 11-16 any shape)

No to all above (Pass)

## 1C responses

- with 4 Hearts bid 1D **Alert!**
- with 4 Spades bid 1H **Alert!**
- with no 4 card major or 5 card minor bid 1S **Alert!**
- with a 5 card minor bid 1NT **Alert!**
- 12+ pts No 5 card suit balanced bid 2NT **Alert!**
- 12+ pts bid 5 card suit at 2 level

## 1D Responses

- 1H relay **Alert!**
- a) Then opener bids 1S **Alert!** (17-19 5 card suit)  
reply 1NT **Alert!**, opener bids suit at 2 level
- b) Otherwise opener bids 1NT (17-19) 2C(23+), 2D/H/S 8 playing tricks, 2NT(20-22)

1. **1C opener**

**12-16** No 5 Card Major could be short as 0 with a long Diamond suit

The objectives are to find a 5-3 fit, determine whether it is a part score (most likely) or a game. If a part score you want to stop at as low as level as possible. So it is probably more important to show a 5+card minor than a 4 card major as the opener is less likely to have 4 in the major and a part score in a minor or some level in NT is the most likely outcome, occasionally you will find a 44 or 53 fit in a major.

a) 0-5 pts Pass

b) 6-11

b.1 **with 4 Hearts bid 1D**

opener now can show a 4 card Heart suit by bidding 1H

or a 4 card spade suit bidding 1S

or a weak NT by bidding 1NT

or a 5 card minor by bidding it at the 2 level

b.2 **with 4 Spades bid 1H**

opener can now show 4 spades by bidding 1 S

or a weak NT by bidding 1NT

or a 5 card minor by bidding it at the 2 level

b.3 **with no 4 card major or 5 card minor bid 1S**

opener can now show a weak NT by bidding 1NT

or a 5 card minor by bidding it at the 2 level

b.4 **with a 5 card minor bid 1NT**

opener bids 2C inviting responder to show their suit and strength

eg pass 2C if clubs and weak, 2D if diamonds and weak etc

NB if responder is weak they close the bidding down asap and if not they keep it open and leave opener to decide what level they can go to

eg 1C-1H-1NT-2H (showing 5 spades and 4 Hearts and top end points)

or 1C-1H-1NT-2S (showing 5 spades and bottom end points)

c) **12 upwards – game forcing**

c.1 **No 5 card suit balanced bid 2NT**

c.2 **5 card suit bid it at the 2 level**

d) Any bid above is either shut out to game

or a slam invite eg 4S or 3D etc

NB **with intervention reply naturally if a bid but ignore a double**

After a weak jump overcall, double to show that your side has the balance of the points but no 5 card suit and leave it up to partner how to proceed

If partner passes over an overcall then as opener you show your 5 card suit or double to show weak NT or 4441 hand, asking partner to bid their lowest 4 card suit.

## 2. 1D 17+ or 16 with 8 playing tricks any shape

The objective here is for the opener to define their hand and from there to establish whether the outcome is a part score (occasionally), game (mostly) or slam (occasionally) or doubling the opposition for interference (usually dependent upon vul)

Responses

1H, relay

NB Other replies to 1D show weak ( $\leq 3$ pts) with long suit (6+)

After the 1H bid

a) Opener bids 1S showing unbalanced suit oriented in the 17-19ish range

Responder replies with 1NT asking Opener to specify the suit

Now Opener bids the suit at the 2 level

**NB if you have a 4441 then bid the suit below the singleton to find a fit or NT**

so Responder knows that Opener has 5+ in the suit, less than 8 playing tricks and an LTC of about 6

b) Opener bids 1NT showing 17-19 balanced no 5 card suit

Responder now bids as over strong NT ie Stayman, Transfers etc

NB Responder will always show a 5 card major transfer first if they have 54 or 55 in the majors eg 1NT-2D-2H-(2S or 3S depending upon strength)

After stayman, if Opener bids 2D then Responder should show their strength and which suits they can protect eg 2H (no spade cover and weak) or 3S (no heart cover and strong) so that Opener can determine the contract and the level eg 2NT or 3S or even 4 in a major with a strong hand and a 4-3 fit.

c) Opener bids 2NT showing 20-22 and may have a 5 card major so

Responder uses Puppet Stayman as well as transfers

d) Opener bids 2C shows 23+ and game is guaranteed,

responses 2D is negative, 2H/S, 3C/D shows 5 in the suit looking for slam

2NT is no 5 card suit with interest in slam

e) Opener bids 2D/2H/2S/3C shows 8 playing tricks in the suit and depending upon how many tricks Responder can add, they reply appropriately

NB with intervention reply naturally if a bid but ignore a double

eg 1D-1H-1S shows 6-9 with 5 spades

or 1D-1H-p-2H-2S now shows spade suit lower end

Similar logic to dealing with weak jump overcalls as with 1C opener ie double if no 5 card suit but you have balance of points and leave it up to partner as to how to proceed

NB pass after an overcall is waiting to see what partner has not necessarily negative but other options not available or suitable

**1. 1H/S 11-16 5<sup>+</sup> card suit**

Responses

- a) Pass. 0-5 HCP
  - b) 1NT 6-11 no major/fit (1S over 1H with 4<sup>+</sup> Spades)
  - c) 2 of a suit 10<sup>+</sup>pts and 5<sup>+</sup> in suit inviting to game
  - d) 2NT 10-13 flat, 2 in openers suit
  - e) Jump shift with 16<sup>+</sup>
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NB All following bids are 7 or 8 LTC depending upon vulnerability with a wide point range 8-16. The LTC has to be 7 or better if Vul. With fewer points the LTC has to be higher than otherwise implying a more distributional hand eg 661 shape  
Over intervening bids or doubles partner can pass and await developments, a bid is positive

- 4. 1NT** – Both Majors 5-5  
2NT shows both majors, 2C/D shows less than 3 hearts and at least 5 in the minor. Replies in a major based on LTC assuming opener has 7.
  
  - 5. 2C** – Clubs and a Major 5-5  
See Note 1 for responses
  
  - 6. 2D** – Diamonds and a Major 5-5  
See Note 2 for responses
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7. **2H/S** 6-10 HCP 6 in suit  
(NB always bid 3 if 7 and 4 if 8 in suit)  
Responses  
a) Ogust with 15pts upwards

In the sequence 2H/S-2NT-3 something then Responder showing a suit is showing an interest in either the suit or NT rather than Opener's suit  
eg 2H-2NT-3H-3S or 2S-2NT-3C-3H and then Opener can choose

- b) Raise 1 level with opening pts  
c) Over an intervening double raise by one more level than without the double if supporting the suit

8. **2NT** both Minors

9. **3 level suit** bids are pre-empts

### Other Conventions

- a) Strong jump overcalls– 5<sup>+</sup> in suit, 16<sup>+</sup> HCP
- b) Michaels over opposition opener NB treat 1C as natural even if could be short and for other artificial bids eg better minor or strong club/diamond
- c) Also over 1C/D overcall e.g. 1D-1H-2H showing 5S and 5 of a minor
- d) Discards – Italian  
NB if a high odd card is discarded followed by a lower odd card in the same suit, ignore the signal  
So if you have 973 of Hearts you play the 9 followed by the 3 next discard. You have A93 then you play the 3 to show interest in the suit  
You have A9(8) you play the 9 and when this is not followed by a lower odd card, the signal is genuine
- e) After Partner's lead show Attitude except when it is obvious not to continue the suit then use Suit Shift Preference to show what you want played next  
NB Not to show an honour as such eg you may have a King but don't want to be finessed
- f) Suit shift on dead cards or when suit is not going to be continued  
e.g. A is led and QJT on the table  
McKinney logic so low card shows lower suit etc.
- g) RKCB 14/30 on last suit responder bid even if it was an artificial bid  
e.g. 1D-p-4NT asks for Diamonds  
Over interference pass if your bid would be lower, double if it is stolen  
eg 4NT-5D- (if you wanted to bid 5C pass, 5D double)
- h) Co-operative Doubles  
At high level double if you have some quick tricks outside your suit  
The senior hand should have 2 and the junior 1

So leave it in, if you have the trick(s) and pull it if not

e.g. 1S-2H-4S-5H- double

Junior hand (not the opener) is showing 1 trick outside Spades so the senior hand passes with 2 quick tricks or bids 5S without. Remember in these auctions there will be voids and singletons, so don't expect both side suits to go 2 rounds

e.g. KQ in clubs and diamonds in this case is worth 1 trick not 2

i) Negative doubles

Shows 4/4 in unbid suits (treat partners 1C/D as a suit)

e.g. 1C-1H-dbl shows 4 Diamonds and 4 Spades and around 10 HCP.

Use Michaels to show 5/5

j) Penalty doubles after:

i) Natural NT bid at any point in the auction

ii) 3 suits bid or implied

e.g. 1H-2NT (showing 5/5 in minors) i.e. 3 suits bid

or 1H-1S-2H-3C again 3 suits shown so dbl penalty

iii) Over weak jump overcalls after partner opens 1C/D

eg 1C- 2H- Dbl now penalty as you cannot know partners suit

NB weak jump overcall by opposition then double for penalties if you have tricks in their suit and we have the majority of the points

k) Double of 1NT is for penalty showing a 17-19 pt NT hand

l) Opening bid is doubled then raise by 1 level more if supporting the suit

e.g. 1H-dbl-3H meaning you would have bid 2H without the double

m) MinorWood, using 14/30 in the agreed Minor suit

eg 1C-2C-4C

n) VoidWood using 14/30 excluding the new suit bid at game level eg 1H-3H-4S

o) Interference

Logic behind interference approach assume N is opener

i. 1C – dbl

You want to keep West out of the bidding to reduce info and avoid easy sacrifices, if you have 11+ then we have game and if not favourable vulnerability is probably the best option. So ignore the double and carry on regardless and you know where the missing pts are now

ii. 1C - 1 of a suit

Now you need to bid naturally ie 6-11 at the 1 level with a 4 card suit, 12+ at the 2 level with 5 card suit etc. There is no point in muddying the waters with artificial bids eg 1C-1H- what would double mean? That your bid was stolen ie you have 4+spades, or penalty – No

Most useful is to double to show 44 in other suits, pass and opener can re-open with double or show their minor.

- iii) 1C-2 of a suit (weak jump overcall)  
Now East has a probable 5 tricks in his hand ie 4 trumps and an outside trick or 5 trumps. West will usually provide 2 tricks so EW will often make 7 tricks and you need to be able to take them off by 2 favourable vulnerability, 3 equal or 4 unfavourable. So to do that you are going to have trump tricks in your hand ie sitting over East as well as points and not too many as you may have slam on,
- iv) 1D-dbl  
As with 1C you ignore the double and bid as if it did not exist. Again you now know where the pts are and if West bids over you, he will probably end up in trouble
- v) 1D-simple overcall 1H/S 2C  
Again you need to bid naturally and you can pass if you have nothing particular to say and wait for Opener to bid and show his hand
- vi) 1D – 2H/S 3C weak jump overcall as with 1C ie  
Now East has a probable 5 tricks in his hand ie 4 trumps and an outside trick or 5 trumps. West will usually provide 2 tricks so EW will often make 7 tricks and you need to be able to take them off by 2 favourable vulnerability, 3 equal or 4 unfavourable. So to do that you are going to have trump tricks in your hand ie sitting over East as well as points and not too many as you may have slam on,

## Overcalls

1. Over a 4H/S pre-empt 4NT shows “2 places to play” ie 2 long suits and partner responds by bidding lowest possible fit
2. Over a weak 2, 2NT is the unusual showing the lowest 2 suits and 3NT is to play
3. An overcall promises an LTC or 8 if vul favourable and 7 otherwise and like the CRO openers it does not promise a point range

### **Note 1 – Responses to 2C opener**

Weak (but how weak)

Pass with 3 clubs

2D. To play. I have 0 or 1 club and 6+d or 5 good ones. 2d may play better or at least as well BUT I also have at least 2 in BOTH majors so feel free to correct

2H I think your major will play better, pass or correct. I'm at least 2,2

2S I have a self supporting S suit.

3C 4+C but non forcing

3H long H suit, but non forcing

Stronger

2NT bid your Major at 3 or 4 level, I am at least 3,3

3D self supporting, non forcing

3S self supporting 6+

3NT, 4S/H to play

4C to play or go 5

4D to play or go 5D

4NT rkcb I will choose the final suit

### **Note 2 – Responses to 2D opener**

After double, ignore if you want to bid, or pass if possible because useful information is almost certain to be announced by opponents. Bids:

Weak

2H I don't like D please bid your major as I am at least 2/2 in both. Pass or correct

2S Self supporting suit please leave, but bear in mind if your suit is S

3D 5+D pre-emptive

NOT TOO WEAK ie inspect vulnerability/opponents etc

3C/H/S long suit 6+ will probably play better than 2D. Opener leaves unless lucky fit looks good, even for a sacrifice

**STRONGER**

2 NT Bid your major at 3 or 4 level. I will be at least 2/2 ideally 3/3 but careful with bidding 4 because I may be fishing for 3NT. **FORCING**

3NT 4H/S to play but if a lucky major fit then a strong opener may proceed

4C/D leave or go 5

4NT I will take over