

Principles

Partner has accurately described their hand : 12-14 HCP and balanced

Ask yourself 2 questions:

1. Do we have the 25 points necessary for game in no trumps (9 tricks) or a major suit (10 tricks).
2. Are we likely to have an 8-card fit in a major suit which will play better than NT.

If we have an 8-card fit in a major suit (hearts & spades) we usually prefer to play in that major.

At the game level a contract of 4 of a major (4M) often scores better than 3NT.

See notes D3.2 on locating a major fit when you hold 5+ cards in a major (hearts or spades).

We do not apply the same principle to playing in a minor suit.

Game in a minor suit (5m) requires 11 tricks.

It is usually easier to play for the 9 tricks needed for game in no trumps.

Also, if we make just one overtrick in NT, we score better (430) than when making game in a minor suit (400).

If part score is our limit we may have a weak suit and playing with a trump suit gives us some protection against the oppositions' strong holding in that suit.

See notes D3.2 on making a weakness takeout when holding 5-cards in diamonds, hearts or spades.

Our specific action depends on:

the strength of our hand

whether we hold a long suit (5+ cards)

With 10 points or less

Partner's maximum is 14 HCP.

The 25 points necessary for game cannot be present ($10 + 14 = 24$)

With 11-12 points

You should be in game if partner is maximum. ($11 + 14 = 25$)

You should be in part score if partner is not maximum.

With 13-18 points

You should be in game. ($13 + 12 = 25$)

With 19+ points

Slam is a possibility.

More in later lessons.

Action with no long suit : see notes D3.2

Action with a 5+ card suit : see notes D3.3