

Audrey Grant Bridge Basics II

Overcalls and Advances Chapter 2

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Overcalls and Advances

When both sides are bidding for privilege of naming the trump suit or no trump, it is referred to as a **competitive auction**.

One way to compete after the opponents have opened the bidding is to make a bid over the opponents bid.

This bid is referred to as an overcall.

The Simple Overcall

East opens the bidding 1 diamond. What should South do?

♠ 8 4
♥ A K Q 10 9
♦ 10 5 2
♣ A 6 5

The Simple Overcall

♠ 8 4
♥ A K Q 10 9
♦ 10 5 2
♣ A 6 5

Bid 1 Heart. South would have opened the bidding if east had passed.

Overcalling at the cheapest level is called the **simple overcall**.

Advantages and Risks of an Overcall

In competitive auctions, the goals change and this affects the requirements for making a bid.

For example, suppose east had opened 1 club.

What do you bid with this hand?

♠ A Q J 10 8
♥ 10 7 2
♦ Q 10 5
♣ 9 3

Advantages and Risks of an Overcall

In competitive auctions, the goals change and this affects the requirements for making a bid.

For example, suppose **east had opened 1 club**. **South holds:**

♠ A Q J 10 8
♥ 10 7 2
♦ Q 10 5
♣ 9 3

1 Spade - South would not open this hand with 9 HCP's plus 1 length point for the five card suit, but there are advantages to overcalling with this hand.

Advantages of an Overcall

South wants to compete for the contract and prefers spades as trumps.

A one spade overcall could interfere with the opponent's auction. It takes away space on the bidding ladder.

Makes it more difficult for the opponents to find a trump fit.

If East – West wins the auction, North – South will be defending. By overcalling 1 spade, south may help the partnership find the best defense. If north has the opening lead, south has suggested the spade suit.

Risks in Overcalling

By overcalling, South **gives information** about the hand **to the opponents** as well as partner.

Might help declarer make better decisions during play or bidding.

If overcaller cannot make his contract, the opponents could make a **penalty double**.

The Advantages of Overcalling tend to outweigh the risks.

Guidelines for an Overcall

Distribution

A good five-card suit or a six-card or longer suit

Strength

7 to 17 High-card points at the one level

13 to 17 points at the two level or higher.

The Overcall – Examples

For example, suppose east has opened **1 Diamond**.

What do you bid with this hand?

♠ Q J 10 9 8
♥ 8 4
♦ 5 3
♣ A 9 6 4

The Overcall – Examples

For example, suppose east has opened **1 Diamond**.

♠ Q J 10 9 8
♥ 8 4
♦ 5 3
♣ A 9 6 4

1 spade – This is a **minimum level overcall with 7 high card points**. South would not open this hand, but south can take at least 3 spade tricks and one club trick with this hand.

The Overcall – Examples

For example, suppose east has opened **1 Diamond**.

What do you bid with this hand?

♠ A J 9 8 6
♥ 5
♦ J 5
♣ K Q 8 7 3

The Overcall – Examples

♠ A J 9 8 6
♥ 5
♦ J 5
♣ K Q 8 7 3

1 spade – With two five card suits, south overcalls the Higher ranking suit first, the same as when opening the bidding.

Overcall at the Two Level

To overcall at the two level, you need a **good five card or longer suit** and about the **same strength as an opening bid.**

The Overcall – Examples

For example, suppose east has opened **1 Spade**.

What do you bid with this hand?

♠ 6 4
♥ 10 3
♦ K 8 2
♣ A K Q 9 6 3

The Overcall – Examples

For example, suppose east has opened **1 Spade**.

♠ 6 4
♥ 10 3
♦ K 8 2
♣ A K Q 9 6 3

2 clubs – To overcall at 2 level, south needs a good suit and about the same strength as an opening bid.

The Overcall – Examples

For example, suppose east has opened **1 Spade**.

What do you bid with this hand?

♠ 6 4
♥ A Q 10 8 3
♦ A K J 8 2
♣ 3

The Overcall – Examples

For example, suppose east has opened **1 Spade**.

♠ 6 4
♥ A Q 10 8 3
♦ A K J 8 2
♣ 3

2 hearts – This is a good hand with enough values to Overcall at the two level. With 2 five card suits, Bid the higher ranking suit.

The Overcall – Examples

For example, suppose east has opened **1 Heart**.

What do you bid with this hand?

♠ J 7 6 3 2
♥ Q 8 4
♦ K J 3
♣ 5 2

The Overcall – Examples

For example, suppose east has opened **1 Heart**.

♠ J 7 6 3 2
♥ Q 8 4
♦ K J 3
♣ 5 2

Pass – The hand is too weak and the suit is too weak, especially at the two level.

The Overcall – Examples

For example, suppose east has opened **1 Heart**.

What do you bid with this hand?

♠ Q J 5
♥ A J 9 8 4
♦ K 3
♣ Q 5 2

The Overcall – Examples

For example, suppose east has opened **1 Heart**.

♠ Q J 5
♥ A J 9 8 4
♦ K 3
♣ Q 5 2

Pass – South does not have enough points to overcall 1 No trump (**15-18 HCP**) and south is better to defend against hearts than bid a new suit.

The Overcall – Examples

For example, suppose east has opened **1 Heart**.

What do you bid with this hand?

♠ A 7 6
♥ K J 5
♦ Q 7 6
♣ Q J 6 5

The Overcall – Examples

For example, suppose east has opened **1 Heart**.

♠ A 7 6
♥ K J 5
♦ Q 7 6
♣ Q J 6 5

Pass – There is no five card suit to overcall. Passing is difficult with a nice hand, but it is a better choice than overcalling with a four card suit.

Overcall after Both Opponents have Bid

West	North	East	South
1 ♣	pass	1 ♥	?

You are south - What do you bid with this hand?

♠ K Q J 9 7
♥ 6 2
♦ 7 5 4
♣ A 8 6

Overcall after Both Opponents have Bid

West	North	East	South
1 ♣	pass	1 ♥	1 ♠

♠ K Q J 9 7
♥ 6 2
♦ 7 5 4
♣ A 8 6

1 Spade – now is the time to enter the auction with a Good five card suit and 10 high card points.

Overcall after Both Opponents have Bid

West	North	East	South
1 ♠	pass	2 ♠	?

You are south - What do you bid with this hand?

♠ 7 3
♥ 10 4
♦ A Q 9
♣ A K J 10 8 6

Overcall after Both Opponents have Bid

West	North	East	South
1 ♠	pass	2 ♠	3 ♣

♠ 7 3
♥ 10 4
♦ A Q 9
♣ A K J 10 8 6

3 clubs – It is risky to come into the auction at the three level but with a good six card suit and a good hand, it is worth the risk.

Advancing a Simple Overcall

The partner of the **Opening Bidder** is **Responder**

The partner of the **Overcaller** is **Advancer**

The guidelines for an overcall are not the same
As the guidelines for an opening bid.

Advancers guidelines differ also.

Advancing a Simple Overcall

Advancer's Priority – Supporting Partner's Suit

With support, advancer can value the hand using **dummy points**:

5 points for a void

3 points for a singleton

1 point for a doubleton

Advancing a Simple Overcall

Advancer's Priority – Supporting Partner's Suit

Purpose of raising partner's suit:

To try to reach your best contract

To prevent the opponents from finding their best contract.

Advancing a Simple Overcall

Advancer's Priority

Supporting Partner's Suit With Minimal Values.

The Law of Total Tricks

As a guideline in competitive auctions, it is usually safe to raise to the level of the combined trumps held by the partnership.

Advancing a Simple Overcall

Advancer's Priority

Advancing a One-Level Overcall With Support and 6 – 9 points

3 card support	Raise to the two level
4 card support	Raise to the three level
5 card support	Raise to the four level

The jump raise to the three level is referred to as a preemptive jump raise.

Advancing with Minimal Support

West	North	East	South
1 ♥	1 ♠	2 ♥	?

You are south (advancer) - What do you bid with this hand?

♠ K 8 2
♥ 6 2
♦ K 7 5 4 3
♣ 9 6 2

Advancing with Minimal Support

West	North	East	South
1 ♥	1 ♠	2 ♥	2 ♠

♠ K 8 2
♥ 6 2
♦ K 7 5 4 3
♣ 9 6 2

2 spades – With 3 card support for overcaller's spade suit and 7 points, south raises to the 2 level.

Advancing with Minimal Support

West	North	East	South
1 ♥	1 ♠	2 ♥	?

You are south (advancer) - What do you bid with this hand?

♠ Q J 8 5
♥ 3
♦ Q 7 5 4 3
♣ 9 6 2

Advancing with Minimal Support

West	North	East	South
1 ♥	1 ♠	2 ♥	3 ♠

♠ Q J 8 5
♥ 3
♦ Q 7 5 4 3
♣ 9 6 2

3 spades – With 4 card support for overcaller's spade suit and 7 points, south makes a preemptive jump raise to the three level. If North has a minimum hand and is defeated in this contract, it is likely the opponents have game.

Advancing with Minimal Support

West	North	East	South
1 ♥	1 ♠	2 ♥	?

You are South (advancer) what do you do with this hand?

♠ J 10 8 7 5
♥
♦ 10 9 6 4 3
♣ 7 5 2

Advancing with Minimal Support

West	North	East	South
1 ♥	1 ♠	2 ♥	4 ♠

♠ J 10 8 7 5
♥
♦ 10 9 6 4 3
♣ 7 5 2

4 spades – With 5 card support for overcaller's spade suit and 6 points, south makes a preemptive jump raise to the four level. If North has a minimum hand and is defeated in this contract, it is likely the opponents have game or slam.

Advancing a Simple Overcall

Raising with 10+ Points – The Cuebid

The situation is different when advancer has support and about 10 points. It is possible that your partnership can make a part score or even game.

We use a Cuebid – a bid of the opponents Suit to show a hand with 10+ points and Support for partner's suit.

Advancing an Overcall with Support and 10+ Points

Cuebid the opponents suit, showing interest in reaching game.

West	North	East	South
1 ♦	1 ♠	pass	?

You are south (advancer) - What do you bid with this hand?

♠ A 7 5
♥ K 9 3
♦ 8 7 5
♣ K J 7 2

Advancing an Overcall with Support and 10+ Points

West	North	East	South
1 ♦	1 ♠	pass	2 ♦
	♠ A 7 5		
	♥ K 9 3		
	♦ 8 7 5		
	♣ K J 7 2		

2 Diamonds – A cuebid of the opponents suit shows partner a hand with support and interest in reaching a game contract, about 10 or more points.

The cuebid is forcing and the overcaller is expected to bid again.

Advancing an Overcall with Support and 10+ Points

Cuebid the opponents suit, showing interest in reaching game.

The cuebid is forcing and the overcaller is expected to bid again.

With a **minimum hand, the overcaller simply **rebids the suit** at the **cheapest** level.**

With **more than a minimum, overcaller makes **some other descriptive bid** such as a new suit or a jump in the overcalled suit.**

Advancing an Overcall with Support and 10+ Points

South – what do you bid with the following?

West	North	East	South
1 ♦	1 ♠	Pass	?
	♠ Q 10 8 5		
	♥ 5		
	♦ A 10 8 5		
	♣ A K J 6		

Advancing an Overcall with Support and 10+ Points

West	North	East	South
1 ♦	1 ♠	Pass	2 ♦
	♠ Q 10 8 5		
	♥ 5		
	♦ A 10 8 5		
	♣ A K J 6		

2 Diamonds – With 14 high card points plus 3 dummy points, advancer starts with a cuebid. Even if partner makes a minimum rebid of 2 spades, south has enough to jump to 4 spades.

Advancing an Overcall with Support and 10+ Points

♠ Q 10 8 5

♥ 5

♦ A 10 8 5

♣ A K J 6

2 Diamonds – With 14 high card points plus 3 dummy points, advancer starts with a cuebid.

Why doesn't south jump directly to 4 spades?

An immediate jump to 4 spades shows a weak hand

A cuebid followed by anything shows a strong hand

Play Hand #5

Play Hand #6

Advancer's Second Choice – A New Suit

Guidelines for Advancing in a New Suit

A good **five-card or six-card** or longer **suit**

Six or more points at the one level

11 or more points at the two level

An advance in a new suit is **not forcing**

Advancer's Second Choice – A New Suit

You are advancer (south) – What do you bid?

West	North	East	South
1 ♣	1 ♥	Pass	?

♠ A Q J 10 7

♥ 5 2

♦ Q 8 5 4

♣ 10 7

Advancer's Second Choice – A New Suit

You are advancer (south) – What do you bid?

West	North	East	South
1 ♣	1 ♥	Pass	1 ♠
	♠ A Q J 10 7		
	♥ 5 2		
	♦ Q 8 5 4		
	♣ 10 7		

1 spade – South does not have support for overcaller's heart suit, but has sufficient strength and a good enough suit to recommend spades at the one level.

North can pass south's bid to avoid getting too high.

Advancer's Second Choice – A New Suit

You are advancer (south) – What do you bid?

West	North	East	South
1 ♣	1 ♥	Pass	?
	♠ K 8		
	♥ J 2		
	♦ A Q J 8 5 4		
	♣ 9 8		

Advancer's Second Choice – A New Suit

You are advancer (south) – What do you bid?

West	North	East	South
1 ♣	1 ♥	Pass	2 ♦
	♠ K 8		
	♥ J 2		
	♦ A Q J 8 5 4		
	♣ 9 8		

2 Diamonds – South does not have support for overcaller's heart suit, but has sufficient strength and a good enough suit to recommend diamonds at the two level.

North can pass south's bid to avoid getting too high.

Advancer's Second Choice – A New Suit

You are advancer (south) – What do you bid?

West	North	East	South
1 ♣	1 ♥	Pass	?

♠	A K Q 7 6 5 2
♥	J 2
♦	A Q J
♣	8

Advancer's Second Choice – A New Suit

You are advancer (south) – What do you bid?

West	North	East	South
1 ♣	1 ♥	Pass	2 ♣
	♠ A K Q 7 6 5 2		
	♥ J 2		
	♦ A Q J		
	♣ 8		

2 Clubs - South has a hand where you would be disappointed if partner passed. You **start with a cuebid**, which is forcing to partner, **then rebid your new suit at the next opportunity.**

A cuebid followed by a new suit from advancer shows a very strong hand and suit

Advancer's Third Choice – No Trump

You are advancer (south) – What do you bid?

West	North	East	South
1 ♥	1 ♠	Pass	?

♠ 8 3
♥ A J 10 8
♦ Q 7 5 4
♣ Q 10 8

Advancer's Third Choice – No Trump

You are advancer (south) – What do you bid?

West	North	East	South
1 ♥	1 ♠	Pass	1 NT
	♠ 8 3		
	♥ A J 10 8		
	♦ Q 7 5 4		
	♣ Q 10 8		

1 No Trump – An advance of **1 NT** shows **6-10** points; an advance of **2 NT** shows **11-12** points and an advance of **3 NT** shows **13 or more points** with stoppers in the opponents suit.

Passing as Advancer

You are advancer (south) – What do you bid?

West	North	East	South
1 ♣	1 ♥	Pass	?
	♠ K 8 6 2		
	♥ 9		
	♦ Q J 7 5 4		
	♣ 8 3 2		

Passing as Advancer

You are advancer (south) – What do you bid?

West	North	East	South
1 ♣	1 ♥	Pass	Pass

♠ K 8 6 2
♥ 9
♦ Q J 7 5 4
♣ 8 3 2

- Pass** – If north had opened the bidding, south could bid 1 spade, but it is unlikely there is enough strength for game. Any attempt to improve the contract may get the partnership further into trouble.

Rebids by the Overcaller

The following bids by advancer are not forcing:

Raise of the overcalled suit

A new suit

No Trump

Rebids by the Overcaller

The following bid by advancer is forcing:

A Cuebid of opponents suit

With minimum support, opener rebids at the cheapest level

With more than minimum values, overcaller can bid a new suit, jump in the overcalled suit, or bid no trump

Rebids by the Overcaller

You are overcall (**west**) – What do you bid?

West	North	East	South
1 ♠	Pass	2 ♠	1 ♥
?			Pass

♠ A Q 10 9 5
♥ 8 5 4
♦ K 9 6
♣ J 5

Rebids by the Overcaller

You are overcall (**west**) – What do you bid?

West	North	East	South
			1 ♥
1 ♠	Pass	2 ♠	Pass
Pass			

♠ A Q 10 9 5
♥ 8 5 4
♦ K 9 6
♣ J 5

Pass – With only **11 points**, partner promising **6-9 points**, overcaller should pass.

Rebids by the Overcaller

You are overcall (**west**) – What do you bid?

West	North	East	South
1 ♠	Pass	2 ♠	1 ♥
?			Pass

♠ A K 10 7 5 3
♥ Q 5
♦ A Q 6
♣ 9 4

Rebids by the Overcaller

You are overcall (**west**) – What do you bid?

West	North	East	South
			1 ♥
1 ♠	Pass	2 ♠	Pass
3 ♠	?		

♠ A K 10 7 5 3
♥ Q 5
♦ A Q 6
♣ 9 4

3 spades – with **15 HCP plus 2 length** points, overcaller should make a raise to the three level to see if partner has the top level of his range.
8 to 9 points.

Rebids by the Overcaller

You are overcall (**west**) – What do you bid?

West	North	East	South
			1 ♥
1 ♠	2 ♥	2 ♠	3 ♥
?			

♠ A K J 10 5 3
♥ 6 5
♦ A 9 6
♣ 9 4

Rebids by the Overcaller

You are overcall (**west**) – What do you bid?

West	North	East	South
			1 ♥
1 ♠	2 ♥	2 ♠	3 ♥
3 ♠			
	♠ A K J 10 5 3		
	♥ 6 5		
	♦ A 9 6		
	♣ 9 4		

3 spades. West has choice of passing and defending against 3 hearts, or competing further. With a good six card suit, competing at the 3 level seems reasonable.

Rebids by the Overcaller

You are overcall (**west**) – What do you bid?

West	North	East	South
1 ♥	pass	1 ♠	1 ♦
?			Pass

♠ J 4 2
♥ K Q 10 9 5
♦ 9 6
♣ Q 8 2

Rebids by the Overcaller

You are overcall (**west**) – What do you bid?

West	North	East	South
			1 ♦
1 ♥	pass	1 ♠	Pass
Pass			

♠ J 4 2
♥ K Q 10 9 5
♦ 9 6
♣ Q 8 2

Pass. East's new suit is not forcing. With a minimum hand, west passes and leaves the partnership to play in partscore in spades.

Rebids by the Overcaller

You are overcall (**west**) – What do you bid?

West	North	East	South
1 ♥	pass	1 ♠	1 ♦
?			Pass

♠ 3
♥ A Q J 9 7 5
♦ 10 5 3
♣ A 4 2

Rebids by the Overcaller

You are overcall (**west**) – What do you bid?

West	North	East	South
			1 ♦
1 ♥	pass	1 ♠	Pass
2 ♥			

♠ 3
♥ A Q J 9 7 5
♦ 10 5 3
♣ A 4 2

2 Hearts – West does not have to bid again, but with a good six card Heart suit, rebid the Hearts suit.

Rebids by the Overcaller

You are overcall (**west**) – What do you bid?

West	North	East	South
			1 ♦
1 ♥ ?	pass	1 ♠	2 ♦

♠ A 10 4
♥ A J 10 7 5
♦ 5 4
♣ K 8 5

Rebids by the Overcaller

You are overcall (**west**) – What do you bid?

West	North	East	South
			1 ♦
1 ♥	pass	1 ♠	2 ♦
2 ♠			

♠ A 10 4
♥ A J 10 7 5
♦ 5 4
♣ K 8 5

2 Spades. West has support for partner's spades and competes by raising to the two level.

Rebids by the Overcaller

You are overcall (**west**) – What do you bid?

West	North	East	South
1 ♠ ?	pass	1 NT	1 ♣ Pass

♠ A Q 10 5 2
♥ 6 3
♦ K J 10 7 5
♣ 8

Rebids by the Overcaller

You are overcall (**west**) – What do you bid?

West	North	East	South
			1 ♣
1 ♠	pass	1 NT	Pass
2 ♦			

♠ A Q 10 5 2
♥ 6 3
♦ K J 10 7 5
♣ 8

2 diamonds. East did not support spades but should have some support in diamonds. The hand is too unbalanced to play in No Trump.

Overcaller's Rebid after a Cuebid

You are overcall (**west**) – What do you bid?

West	North	East	South
			1 ♥
1 ♠	pass	2 ♥	Pass
?			

♠ K Q J 8 3
♥ J 9 5
♦ Q 7 2
♣ 9 4

Overcaller's Rebid after a Cuebid

You are overcall (**west**) – What do you bid?

West	North	East	South
			1 ♥
1 ♠	pass	2 ♥	Pass
2 ♠	?		

♠ K Q J 8 3
♥ J 9 5
♦ Q 7 2
♣ 9 4

2 spades – Partner shows 10+ points and support but with a minimum overcall, west bids at the cheapest level.

Overcaller's Rebid after a Cuebid

You are overcall (**west**) – What do you bid?

West	North	East	South
1 ♠	pass	2 ♦	1 ♦
?			Pass

♠ A K J 10 8 7 4
♥ 8 3
♦ 6
♣ A Q 9

Overcaller's Rebid after a Cuebid

West	North	East	South
			1 ♦
1 ♠	pass	2 ♦	Pass
4 ♠			

♠ A K J 10 8 7 4
♥ 8 3
♦ 6
♣ A Q 9

4 spades – With a maximum hand, west takes the partnership to game.

The No Trump Overcall

East opens **1 Heart**

You are **South** – What do you bid?

West	North	East	South
		1 ♥	?
	♠ 7 3		
	♥ A Q 10		
	♦ A 7 4 2		
	♣ K Q J 10		

The No Trump Overcall

East opens **1 Heart**

West	North	East	South
		1 ♥	1 NT





♠ 7 3
♥ A Q 10
♦ A 7 4 2
♣ K Q J 10

1 No Trump – with 15 to 18 points and stoppers in the heart suit, South overcalls 1 NT.

Advancer's Actions

You are South – What do you bid?

West	North	East	South
1 	1 NT	pass	?

 J 5
 K 9 3
 J 7 4
 A J 8 7 3

Advancer's Actions

West	North	East	South
1 ♦	1 NT	pass	3 NT
	♠ J 5		
	♥ K 9 3		
	♦ J 7 4		
	♣ A J 8 7 3		






3 No Trump – with 10 points and 1 length for the five card suit, advancer should raise partner to 3 NT.

The Weak Jump Overcall

A jump overcall – bidding one or more levels higher than necessary – is similar to a preemptive opening bid.

It shows a weak hand with a long suit.

The Weak Jump Overcall

West	North	East	South
		1 	?
	 6		
	 A Q J 10 8 7		
	 8 7 4		
	 8 6 3		

What do you bid?

The Weak Jump Overcall

West	North	East	South
		1 ♦	2 ♥
	♠ 6		
	♥ A Q J 10 8 7		
	♦ 8 7 4		
	♣ 8 6 3		

2 Hearts – With a good six card suit, but a hand too weak to open at the one level, south would have opened 2 hearts with this hand.

So, instead of making a simple overcall, South should jump to 2 hearts (a weak jump overcall for the same reasons)

The Weak Jump Overcall

West	North	East	South
		1 ♠	?

♠	6
♥	9 6 2
♦	K Q J 10 7 5 4
♣	8 6

What do you bid?

The Weak Jump Overcall

West	North	East	South
		1 ♠	3 ♦

♠	6
♥	9 6 2
♦	K Q J 10 7 5 4
♣	8 6

3 Diamonds – this bid is obstructive, yet descriptive.

Play Hand #7

Play Hand #8