

# Defense of the weak 1♣\* Opening Bid

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Playing 2/1 with 5-card majors, the most frequent bid is 1♣\*. When the opponent's pre-alert that their 1♣\* opening is 8+HCP or the rule of 17 what is the best defense? Or if the opponents pre-alert that their 1♣ may be short, don't let them Steeple the bid – you must compete, but how?

Adopt the under-call club convention which goes:

- 1♦\* = transfer to hearts (5+hearts 10-15 and 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> round control)
- 1♥\* = transfer to spades (5+spades 10-15 and 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> round control)
- 1♠\* = transfer to diamonds (should have 10-15 and 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> round control)
- 1NT\* = shortness in clubs and 10-15 HCP (Take-Out – NOT 15-18)
- X = 16+ HCP good hand (NO ALERT REQUIRED- CALLED POWER X)
- 2♣\* = both majors and 10-15 HCP weak
- 2♦\* = transfer to hearts (5/6+hearts and strong 16+HCP)
- 2♥\* = transfer to spades (5/6+spades and strong 16+HCP)
- 2♠\* = 5-5 in the majors and strong (16+HCP)
- 2NT\* = 5+hearts and 5+diamonds
- 3M\* = transfers to game in major
- 3NT = to play with stopper

Some have extended weak opening bids to all 1-level bids with 8+HCP, what now?

Simple – again use transfers over 1♦ = 5+ and 8-21HCP

Opener      You

- 1♦\*      XX\* = transfer to spades (5+ hearts and 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> round control)
- 1♥\* = transfer to spades (5+ spades and 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> round control)
- 1♠\* = transfer to clubs (should have 10-15 HCP 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> round control)
- 1NT\* = shortness in diamonds and 10-15 HCP (Takeout)
- X = 16+ HCP with shortness in diamonds
- 2♣\* = 10-15 and diamonds with at least one control
- 2♦\* = both majors and 10-15 and weak
- 2♥\* = transfer to spades (5/6+ spades and strong 16+HCP)
- 2♠\* = 5-5 in the majors and strong (16+ HCP)
- 2NT\* = 5+hearts and 5+diamonds
- 3M = Transfer to major game with 16+HCP
- 3NT = to play

\* = alert

**What about the majors?**

Over 1♥\*=4/5+ and 8-21HCP

Opener      You

1♥\*            1♠ = 5/6 spades and 10-15HCP  
                  1NT\* = shortness in hearts and 10-15HCP (Takeout)  
                  X = 16+ HCP with stopper in hearts  
                  2♦ = diamonds and 10-15HCP  
                  2♥\* = 5+spades with 16+HCP  
                  2NT\* = 5-5 in the minors with 10-15HCP  
                  3NT = to play

Over 1♠\*=4/5+ and 8-21HCP

Opener      You

1♠\*            1NT\* = shortness in hearts and 10-15HCP (Takeout)  
                  X = 16+  
                  2♥ = 5/6+hearts and 10-15HCP  
                  2NT\* = 5-5 in the minors with 10-15HCP  
                  3NT = to play

Responders to weak opening bidding schemes often have either a less than game force hand (8-15HCP) or a game force hand (16-21HCP) and typically employ transfer bids since opener has 8-21HCP.

The weak opening bidder often has a hand with

- (1) 1NT=10-14 NV or 15-17 VUL
- (2) 12-17 3-suited hand
- (3) 15-17 unbalanced hand
- (4) 17/18+hand

On average weak hands occur about 60% of the time; thus, with 10-15HCP you want to compete and to interfere with their weak bids!

The transfer bidding scheme as defined above significantly interferes with weak opening bidding schemes.