

Beginning Bridge Bidding

Hand Evaluations

High Card Points (HCP): Aces(4) + Kings(3) + Queens(2) + Jacks(1)

Shape: Every card beyond 4 in a suit: +1 point

OR: Voids(3) + Singletons(2) + Doubletons(1)

Subtract value for unprotected high cards, *e.g.* singleton Kings

Advanced: $\frac{2}{3} \times [A(5) + K(4) + Q(3) + J(2) + T(1)]$

Hierarchical Opening Bids

Bid	HCPPoints	Features
2♣	>21	Or 9+ tricks by yourself
1♠	13-21	5+ spades
1♥	13-21	5+ hearts
2NT	20-21 HCP	Balanced Hand (no voids, no singletons, at most one doubleton.)
1NT	15-17 HCP	
1♣/♦	13-14	Balanced Hand : open 1♣/♦ then NT
1♣/♦	18-19	Balanced Hand : open 1♣/♦ then 2NT
1♦	13-21	More diamonds than clubs (3 ♦'s maybe)
1♣	13-21	Default opener (3 ♣'s maybe)
2♠	5 – 12	6 spades (5+ HCP in spades)
2♥	5 – 12	6 hearts (5+ HCP in hearts)
2♦	5 – 12	6 diamonds (5+ HCP in diamonds)
3♣	5 – 12	6 clubs (5+ HCP in clubs)
3♠	5 - 12	7 spades (5+ HCP in spades)
3♥	5 – 12	7 hearts (5+ HCP in hearts)
3♦	5 - 12	7 diamonds (5+ HCP in diamond)
4♣	5 - 12	7 clubs (5+ HCP in clubs)
4♠	5 - 12	8 spades (5+ HCP in spades)
4♥	5 - 12	8 hearts (5+ HCP in hearts)
4♦	5 - 12	8 diamonds (5+ HCP in diamonds)
pass	None of the above bids apply	

Objectives for subsequent bidding

1. Find 8 card fit in hearts or spades (strength in trump suit not necessary)
2. With 25+ combined points get to game (3NT, 4♥, or 4♠).
3. With adequate controls (A/K), get to slam level (>5NT).

“Do the math and trust your partner. Forgive yourself and forgive your partner.”

		Score** (Bonus)
Seven Level 37+ points Grand Slam	7N	220(1000)
	7S	210(1000)
	7H	210(1000)
	7D	140(1000)
	7C (6N)	140(1000) 190(500)
Six Level 33+ points Small Slam	6S	180(500)
	6H	180(500)
	6D	120(500)
	6C (5N)	120(500) 160(300)
Five Level 29+ points	5S	150(300)
	5H	150(300)
	5D	100(300)
	5C 4N	100(300) 130(300)
Four Level 26+ points Game	4S	120(300)
	4H	120(300)
	4D	80(50)
	4C 3N	80(50) 100(300)
Three Level 23+ points	3S	90(50)
	3H	90(50)
	3D	60(50)
	3C	60(50)
	2N	70(50)
Two Level 20+ points	2S	60(50)
	2H	60(50)
	2D	40(50)
	2C	40(50)
	1N	40(50)
One Level 16+ points	1S	30(50)
	1H	30(50)
	1D	20(50)
	1C	20(50)

**First number is contract point value. Second number is duplicate bonus for non-vulnerable undoubled contracts made. For Rubber bridge (2 out of 3 games), game bonuses (300) do not apply; instead award 500 (3 game rubber) or 700 (2 game rubber) points to rubber winner. Setting tricks are worth 50 points each. For doubled or vulnerable contracts, see a complete scoring table.

Overcalls If opponents open the bidding, you may overcall. Here are some options:

1. Bid a new suit at the 1 level: 8-16 points and a good five card suit.
2. Bid a new suit at the 2 level without jumping: 10-16 points and a good six card suit
3. Bid a new suit by jumping: preemptive, six card suit and <11 points (same as weak opening).
4. Bid 1NT: balanced with 15-18 points (only Stayman is 'on' for overcalled NT)
5. Bid "double": 11-18 points and support for the 3 (or 2) unbid suits.
6. Bid 2NT (unusual NT): 5-5 in the lower two unbid suits.
7. Bid opener's suit (Michael's Cue bid): 2 five card suits, including all unbid majors.
8. If you have 18+ points, double and when bidding comes back to you describe your hand.
9. Pass: none of the above bids seem right.

Responses to Opening Bids If your partner opens the bidding, here are some guidelines for responding:

1. With 0 – 4 points generally pass, except over 2♣, or perhaps to Jacoby transfer.
2. In general, show 4 card majors at 1-level and 5+ card suits at the 2-level.
3. Remember 2-level requires 20+ combined points, so don't go there unless you have >6 points.
4. Double jump shifts (splinters) > jump shifts > jump raises > shifts > raises > passes
5. Always get to game level if your partnership has the necessary points (HCP + distribution).
6. Double (or triple) distribution points with 9 (or 10) card trump fit.

	1♦	1♥	1♠	1NT	2♣	2♦	2♥	2♠	2NT	3Suit	3NT	4Suit
1♣	4+ ♦ >4	4+ ♥ >4	4+ ♠ >4	6 – 10 ~Balanced	5+ ♣ 6 – 10	5+ ♦ >13	5+ ♥ >10	5+ ♠ >10	Balanced 11 - 12	5+ ♣ 11 - 12	Balanced 13 – 15	5+ ♣ ~13
1♦		4+ ♥ >4	4+ ♠ >4	6 – 10 ~Balanced	5+ ♣ >10	5+ ♦ 6 - 10	5+ ♥ >01	5+ ♠ >10	Balanced 11 - 12	4+ ♦ 11 - 12	Balanced 13 – 15	4+ ♦ ~13
1♥	↑ Responders Bid		4+ ♠ >4	6 – 10 ~Balanced	4+ ♣ >10	4+ ♦ >10	3+ ♥ 6 – 10	5+ ♠ >13	4+ ♥ >13 Slinterest	3+ ♥ 11 - 12	Balanced 13 – 15	3+ ♥ ~13
1♠				6 – 10 ~Balanced	4+ ♣ >10	4+ ♦ >10	5+ ♥ >10	3+ ♠ 6 - 10	4+ ♠ >13 Slinterest	3+ ♠ 11 - 12	Balanced 13 – 15	3+ ♠ ~13
1NT	← Opener's Bid				4+ ♥/♠	5+ ♥	5+ ♠	5+ ♣/♦	8 - 9	natural	>9	
2♣						0 A/K's	1 A/K	2A/K's	3 A/K's			

Tips for playing hands as Declarer

1. Plan the play before you play.
2. How you decide to play the cards usually determines how many tricks you win. You can develop tricks through promotion, length, and finesses. Use endplay or squeeze to get that last trick.
3. Keep track of as many things as you can, especially how many cards have been played in trump suit.
4. Be cognizant of transportation, *i.e.* always being able to lead a trick from the desired hand.

Tips for playing hands as Defender

1. Only lead a high card if it is the top of a sequence in your hand, *e.g.* KQJ.
2. Singletons can be good leads, especially against suit contracts.
3. Always strongly consider returning your partner's initial lead.
4. Against NT contracts, leading from a long suit often helps to develop that suit for your partnership. A good strategy can be leading the 4th highest from your longest and strongest suit.