

### **Preempts:**

Generally, when you have a 6-card suit, preempt at the 2 level; if you hold 7 pieces in your suit, preempt at the 3 level, and with an 8-card suit, preempt at the 4 level.

### **What do you need? Here are some guidelines.**

At the 2 and 3 level:

1. No more than one outside Ace. A "preemptor" should not have 2 defensive tricks.
2. No voids, no more than one outside feature, perhaps an outside King.
3. If you preempt in one major, and hold 4-cards in another major, the 7-card suit should be solid enough opposite a singleton. Such as: ♠ Q765, ♥ KQJ10753, ♦ 2, ♣ 4
4. Do not preempt in a minor with a good side 4-card major.  
Such as: ♠ 2, ♥ KQ65, ♦ A1098732, ♣ 7

### **In 3rd seat, (after partner has passed), Anything goes!!**

1. 9 or 10 cards in the minors, and no 3-card major, open 3 of the minor.  
Such as: ♠ 2, ♥ 43, ♦ QJ76, ♣ AQ7654 or ♠ 98, ♥ 53, ♦ KQJ876, ♣ K76
2. The weaker you are in third seat, the more LHO will have! So, open at the 3 level, despite suit quality.

### **In 4th seat:**

1. If you open in 4th seat, your "preemptive bid" shows a full opening hand, otherwise, use the "Rule of 15" and pass.

Vulnerability plays a major role when opening at the 3 and 4 levels. However, lead-directing and depriving bidding space, is an important part of preempts.

**Board 1**

North Deals  
None Vul

	♠ 9 8		
	♥ K Q 10 9 8 6 4		
	♦ 9 7 6		
	♣ 8		
♠ Q J 4 3 2	<div style="display: inline-block; background-color: green; color: white; padding: 5px; text-align: center;">             N W     E S           </div>	♠ K 10 7 5	
♥ A		♥ J 5 3 2	
♦ A 10 5 3		♦ Q J 4 2	
♣ 10 3 2		♣ 5	
	♠ A 6		
	♥ 7		
	♦ K 8		
	♣ A K Q J 9 7 6 4		
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
	3 ♥	Pass	3 NT
All pass			

**Auction Commentary:** The preemptor is **not** the captain and cannot remove a bid of 3 NT by responder. When you limit your hand, you're never in charge. South either has a fit in the preemptive suit and wants their hand to be dummy, (holding stoppers in every other suit, so long as they receive the opening lead toward their hand!), OR they GUARANTEE 9 tricks in their own hand!

**Opening Lead:** 3 ♠ (4th from the longest suit in West's hand)

**Planning the Play:** In NT, you need to count your WINNERS, to see if you have enough for the contract. And if you don't have enough, this helps you determine which suit(s) to work on first to set them up!

Winners: 8 ♣s and the 1 ♠ = 9 tricks. On a diamond lead there are 10 tricks, as the K ♦ would then be a winner. Note that a 4 ♥ contract does not make -- it will lose 2 ♥ tricks and 2 ♦ tricks.

**Takeaway:**

When you want to be in game, (so you can collect the game bonus), but your long suit is a minor, you should consider being in 3 NT. This way, you only need 9 tricks to make the bonus, and if your hand happens to make overtricks, you'll do better than being in 5 of your minor!

Not Vulnerable:

5 ♣ making 5 = 400 .... *If a hand can make 11 tricks in 5 ♣, and 11 tricks in 3 NT, compare **400***  
 3 NT making 3 = 400  
 3 NT making 4 = 430  
 3 NT making 5 = 460 .... **with 460!** *Remember that in duplicate bridge, the highest score wins!*

(And this hand goes down in 5 ♣ anyway, having to lose 1 ♥ trick, 1 ♠ trick, and 2 ♦ tricks.)

**Board 7**  
 South Deals  
 Both Vul

	♠ J 7 6		
	♥ 8 7 6		
	♦ 6 5		
	♣ Q J 10 5 4		
♠ Q	N	♠ 10 8 5 4 3 2	
♥ A K Q J 10 9 5 3	W     E	♥ 4 2	
♦ K Q 3	S	♦ A 4 2	
♣ 9		♣ 3 2	
	♠ A K 9		
	♥ —		
	♦ J 10 9 8 7		
	♣ A K 8 7 6		
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
			1 ♦
4 ♥	Pass	Pass	Dbl
Pass	5 ♣	All pass	

**Auction Commentary:** West's 4 ♥ overcall promises a self-sufficient 7 or 8 card suit. Can South take action? It is clear-cut to double here, as all doubles are "Take-Out" if partner has not bid. Responder can convert your takeout to penalty holding the right trumps behind the 4 ♥ bidder, but not with this hand. With 3 small ♥s, North knows partner is very short in ♥s. Even with 3 HCP, responder **MUST** bid! Partner guarantees tolerance for all unbid suits!

**Opening Lead:** 4 ♥ (the top of a doubleton in partner's suit)

**Planning the Play:** In a suit contract, always start by counting losers. Declarer can afford just 2 losers in a 5-level contract, but you will lose 2 ♦s and 1 ♠. Even going down 2, and even doubled, it will be a better score than the 4 ♥ contract, which actually makes an overtrick!

**Takeaway:**

The "X" (double) card has many faces! Its meaning depends on where it comes in the auction.

- If partner has never bid, it's usually a Takeout Double.
- By responder after partner bids and the opponents bid, it's a Negative Double.
- LHO bids, partner passes, RHO bids, and you X, it's Takeout (for the other two suits).
- If the opponents stop in a low-level contract, a X in the passout seat is a Balancing Double, trying to either steal the contract, or push them up a level. (Usually not an opening hand.)
- If opener bids, (LHO can bid or pass), responder bids, and RHO bids, opener's X rebid shows exactly 3 pieces in support of responder's suit. This is called a Support Double.
- There's always the Penalty Double, which comes in several places. If an opponent overcalls 1 NT, and Responder has most of the remainder of the points, X is penalty. If we have a game-forcing auction, (such as a 2/1 call or a conventional call that shows game values), if they bid after that, X is penalty. (Weigh this against your side making a game, though ;) There are others, too. *You and partner need solid understandings as to what yours mean and where!*

**Board 8**

West Deals  
None Vul

♠ 6	♠ 9 7 5 4	♠ A Q J 3
♥ K Q 10 9 7 5 4	♥ A J 6	♥ 3
♦ 7 4	♦ 6 5 3	♦ A K 8 2
♣ Q 8 6	♣ 10 7 4	♣ A J 5 3
	<div style="display: inline-block; border: 1px solid black; background-color: #008000; color: white; padding: 5px; margin: 5px;">           N W     E S         </div>	
	♠ K 10 8 2	
	♥ 8 2	
	♦ Q J 10 9	
	♣ K 9 2	

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
3 ♥	Pass	4 ♥	All pass

**Auction Commentary:** West opens a preempt, showing less than opening strength and a good 7-card suit. East is strong enough to go to game opposite a preempt, but which game? As the preemptor is known to be weak and not much else-it is likely that this suit will be useless if its not trumps. Unless responder has 9 tricks in her own hand, we strive to play in the preemptor's suit.

**Opening lead:** 7 ♠ (With no honor, lead 2nd highest.)

**Planning the Play:** In a suit contract, count losers: 2 ♥s losers (both the AJ♥) and 1 ♣ loser. Declarer will win the A♠ and draw trumps. Your ♣ finesse will lose to the K♣, but the rest of the tricks are yours.

**Takeaways:**

1. VERY IMPORTANT TAKEAWAY! We had two VERY SIMILAR 3 ♥ opening hands in this session. This board has nearly the same ♥ cards as in board #1. Looking back at #1, as partner, we chose 3 NT because we have tricks in our own hand. The 8 ♣s and 1 ♠ need no help at all from partner other than a ♥ stopper, which they told us about with their 3 ♥ opening. Thanks, partner! But in this hand, we have an AQJ, ♠ and an AK♦ and AJ♣. GREAT stoppers, but, probably only 5 tricks. However, partner claimed to have a reasonable and long ♥ suit, and we can probably count on that for the other 5 tricks, so long as those ♥s are trumps.

2. The phrase "lead away from the Ace" means the same as "underlead the Ace." This happens when you have the Ace of a suit in your hand, and you choose to lead that suit, and you choose to lead a small card. While this may be a perfectly good lead defending a NT contract, doing it in a suit contract usually gives Declarer an undeserved trick!