

Counting Points

High Card Points (HCP):

Ace = 4
King = 3
Queen = 2
Jack = 1

Length Points (when opening or overcalling):

5 card suit = 1
6 card suit = 2
7 card suit = 3
8 card suit = 4

Dummy Points:

Count only if you plan to support partner's bid major suit.
Don't count both dummy points and distribution points.
Void = 5
Singleton = 3
Doubleton = 1

Opening the Bidding

In order of priority:

1. If you have less than 13 points or good 12 HCP, PASS.
2. With 15 to 17 HCP points and a balanced hand (no voids, no singletons, at most one doubleton), bid "one not trump" (1NT)
3. If your longest suit is 5 cards or more, bid your longest suits
4. If you have two equal length suits of 5 or more cards, bid one of the higher ranking suits.
5. Bid your longer minor suit.
6. with 4 cards in each minor, bid "one diamond" (1D)
7. with 3 cards in each minor, bid "one club" (1C)

Opening Leads

Vs. NT Contracts:

Which suit? Lead your longest suit.

Which card? From a sequence of 3 or more touching cards headed by the A, K, Q, J, or T, lead the highest card.

Otherwise lead your 4th highest card in the suit.

(Some times the opponents have bid your longest suit, some time its right to lead it anyways, other times you should lead another suit in hopes your partner has it. Think about the bidding when choosing a lead.)

Vs. Suit Contracts:

Which suit? Lead your longest non trump suit

Which card? Lead higher from a sequence of 2 or more touching carded cards headed by the A, K, Q, J, or T.

Lead your 4th highest card, but not if the suit is headed by the A.

If a suit is head by the A but is missing the K, generally try to lead another suit. If you must lead that suit, lead the ace.

Responding to a 1NT opening Bid

A 1NT opening bid shows 15-17 points and a balanced hand (no voids, no singletons, and at most one doubleton):

Responders Bids:

With 0-7 (bad 8) high card points:

1. Bid 2D, 2H or 2S with a 5 card or longer suit. Signoff in a partscore
Partner must pass
2. Pass

With 8 (good) - 9 HCP:

1. Bid 2NT invitational Invitational
Partner will bid 3NT with a maximum, pass otherwise
2. See also the Stayman Convention if you have a 4+ card major, or a 6 card minor

With 10+ points:

1. Bid at the 4 level of a 6 card major Signoff in Game
2. Bid at the 3 level of a 5 card Major Forcing
Partner will raise with 3+ card support, of bid 3NT
3. Bid 3NT Signoff in Game

See also the Stayman Convention if you have a 4+ card major, or a 6 card minor

The Stayman Convention

When partner opens 1NT, bid 2C (Stayman) with any of the following hands:

- A game forcing hand with a 4 card major suit
- An invitational hand with a 4 card major suit
- An invitational hand with a 5 or 6 card major suit, or a 6 card minor suit

2C ask partner for a 4 card major:

1. With 4 or more hearts, opener bids 2H
2. With 4 or more spades, but not 4 hearts, opener bids 2S
3. Otherwise, opener bids 2D, denying a 4 card major.

Thus opener rebids show - 2D no four card or longer major, 2H shows four or more hearts and maybe 4 spades, 2S denies 4 or more hearts, but shows 4 or more spades.

Responders next bid:

1. With a game forcing hand and a 4 card major:
 1. If partner bids the major you hold 4 cards in, bid 4 of that major
 2. Other wise, bid 3NT
If opener has both majors, he can bid 4S, otherwise he must pass.
2. With an invitational hand and a 4 card major:
 1. If partner bids your major, raise to three of the major Invitational
 2. Otherwise, bid 2NT invitational
If opener has both majors, he can bid 3M or 4M
Otherwise, he can pas or bid 3NT
1. With an invitational hand with a 5 or 6 card major or a 6 card minor
Bid your suit as cheaply as possible Invitational
With a maximum opener may bid game in your major or bid 3NT
Otherwise opener must pass or bid 2NT

Responses to One of a Suit Opening

There are 4 categories of hands

Remember dummy points only count when a fit in a major is been established

0-5 points	Pathetic
6-10(bad) points	Minimum
10(good)-12(bad) points	invitational
12(good)+ points	game forcing

General Structure:

- Pass = pathetic
- Raise to 2 level = minimum
- Raise to the 3 level = invitational
- New suit at the one level = minimum to game forcing
- New suit at the 2 level = invitational to game forcing
- 1NT = minimum
- 2NT = invitational
- 3NT = game forcing

Responding to 1 of a Major:

With 0-5 points: Pass

With 6-10- points:

- a. Raise openers major to 2 level with 3 card support (evaluating your hand using dummy points) Not Forcing
- b. Bid a new suit with 4 or more cards at the 1 level Forcing
- c. Bid 1NT Not Forcing

With 10+-12- points;

- a. Raise the major to the 3 level with 3 card support (evaluating your hand using dummy points) Invitational
- b. Bid a new suit at the 1 or 2 level Forcing
- c. Bid 2NT with a balanced hand Invitational

With 12+ points:

- a. With support for partner suit, bid a new suit first, planning to jump in partner's suit at the next bid. (evaluating your hand using dummy points) Forcing
- b. Bid 3NT with a balanced hand and not 3 card support Forcing
- c. Bid a new suit at the 1 or 2 level Forcing

Responding to 1 of a Minor:

With 0-5 points: Pass

With 6-10 points:

- a. Bid a new suit with 4 or more cards at the 1 level Forcing
 - i. Bid your longest suit
 - ii. With two 4 card suits, bid the lower ranking suit
 - iii. With two 5 card suits, bid the higher ranking suit
- b. Raise openers minor to 2 lvl with 5 card support Not Forcing
- c. Bid 1NT Not Forcing

With 11-12 points;

- a. Bid a new suit at the 1 or 2 level Forcing
- b. Raise the minor to the 3 level with 5 card support Invitational
- c. Bid 2NT with a balanced hand Invitational

With 13+ points:

- a. Bid 3NT with a balanced hand Forcing
- b. Bid a new suit at the 1 or 2 level Forcing