# MAJOR SUIT OPENINGS

*Note: This lesson assumes you are **NOT** playing the 2-over-1 Game Force system.*
*Note: This lesson assumes you are **NOT** playing Jacoby 2NT for strong Major raises.*
*If you are playing either of these conventions you don't need this lesson.*


## ABOUT THE DEALS

You may be either Opener or Responder, but you will always be in the South position.

The first page or two of each Deal shows only your hand. The initial bidding is given and you are asked to decide what you would bid, then click **BID** . The subsequent page will then appear telling you what you should have bid and continuing the auction. On the final page of each Deal partner's hand will be shown.

Although it is not included in the Deals you might wish to examine your and dummy's hand and make a Plan of how you would play the contract.


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**Opening bids:**

To open 1♥ or 1♠ you should have a least 5 cards in the suit. Any 5 cards will do, even 6 5 4 3 2.

You should also have between 13 and 21 points. Well, maybe 12 good points will do.

Here are some examples of a 1♥ opening bid.

♠ 9 8 3   ♥ A K Q 9 3   ♦ K 7   ♣ 9 7 6

♠ A 6 2   ♥ 9 8 7 5 3   ♦ A 4   ♣ A 6 5

♠ K 7 3   ♥ A K Q J 6   ♦ A Q   ♣ 8 3 2

♠ 5   ♥ Q J 9 7 4 2   ♦ K Q 3   ♣ A Q 4

You might have opened hand #3 with 2NT, but probably not.

**Responses:**

With fewer than three cards in partner's suit use these responses.

| Points | Response |
|--------|----------|
| 0-5 | pass |
| 6-10 | bid new suit at 1 level or bid 1NT |
| 11-16 | bid new suit at 1 or 2 level |
| | |

| 13-15 | bid 2NT if balanced |
|---|---|

If you do have at least three cards in partner's Major suit, then you already know of the 8-card fit and can be pretty sure you will end up playing in that suit. These responses apply.

| Points | Recommended Response |
|---|---|
| 0-5 | pass with 3 or 4 card support |
| 6-10 | raise partner to 2-level |
| 10-12 | limit raise; jump to 3-level |
| 13-15 | bid a new suit (forcing) then bid 4 of the Major |
| 0-9 | bid game with 5 card support |

This set of bids isn't universally agreed.
Some don't use the weak jump to game even though it is there primarily for preemptive purposes.
Others switch the third and fourth bids, using a jump to the 3-level as forcing to game and a new suit then 3 of the Major as the 11-12 point hand.

We recommend sticking to the table, and have used this system throughout the examples.

**Opener Rebids:**

Once Responder shows at least 6 points with a response Opener puts his hand into one of three categories:

| Points | Category | Rebids |
|---|---|---|
| 13-15 | Minimum | Rebid the Major suit if 6-cards<br>Bid a new lower-ranking suit<br>Bid cheapest notrump |
| 16-18 | Medium | Jump rebid a 6-card Major<br>Bid a new suit<br>Jump in NT or partner's suit |
| 19-21 | Maximum | Jump rebid a 6-card Major<br>Jump shift in a new suit<br>Jump to 3NT or game in partner's suit |

By now either Opener or Responder may be in a position to place the contract, or another bid may be needed.

**Help Suit Game Try:**

Suppose you have a hand like this:
&spades;A 6   &hearts;A K Q 9 3   &diams;K 7 6 3   &clubs;9 3

You open 1&hearts; partner responds 2&hearts;. You have agreed on the trump suit, but now have to figure out how

high. You have 17/18 points and partner has shown 6-10 so you know the total is between 23 and 28. Not strong enough to bid game, but good enough to invite to game.

The "normal" invitational bid you might make is 3♥. This would tell partner to check his points and pass if he has 6 or 7, but go to game if he has 9 or 10. With 8 he would have to make a judgement call.

A better invitational bid is 3♦, a suit you could use "Help" in. This bid in no way changes the fact that you are going to end up in ♥s since that is already agreed. What it does is helps partner if he has a close call. With 9 or 10 points he should go to game regardless, but with 8 (maybe 7) he should look at his ♦ holding to see if he can help you in the suit. If so, he bids the game, if not, he returns to 3♥.

With this hand he would bid 3♥:
  ♠ K 7  ♥ J 8 5 4  ♦ 5 4 2  ♣ Q J 9 2

But with this hand he would bid 4♥:
  ♠ K 7  ♥ J 8 5 4  ♦ Q J 9 2  ♣ 5 4 2

20 examples will be worth more than another 1000 words.


**Deal 1**