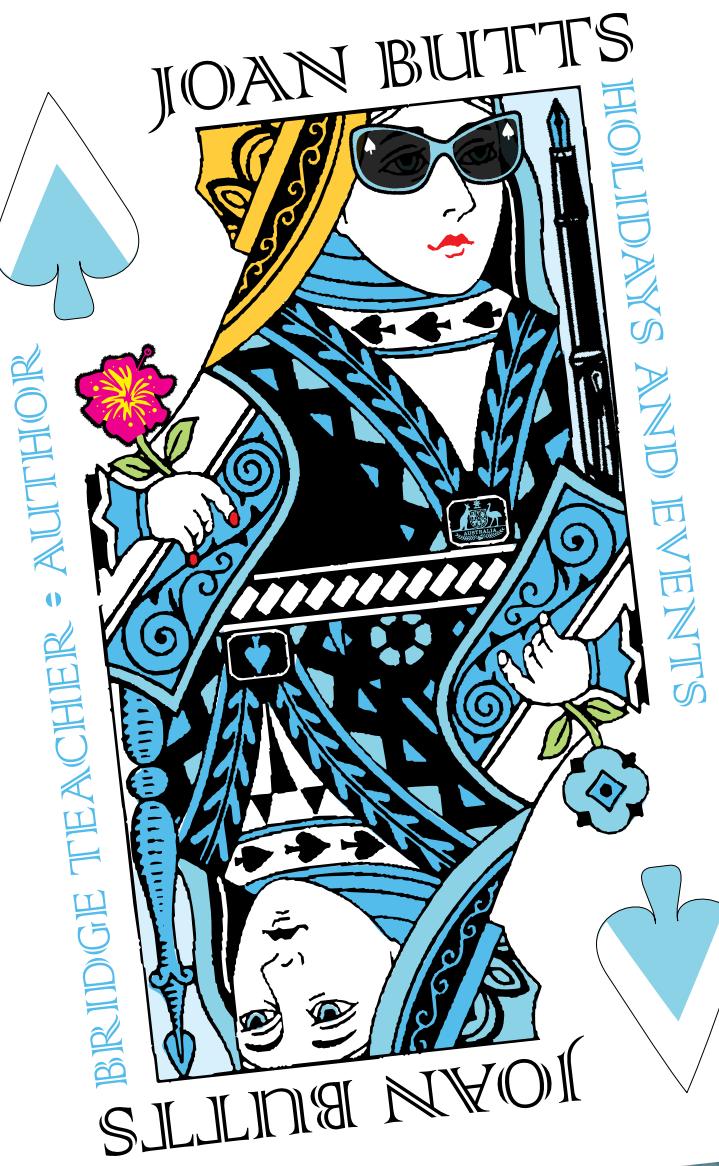


EBOOK



# play bridge

A WORKBOOK FOR  
THE ABSOLUTE BEGINNER

BY JOAN BUTTS



Joan Butts is a well-known Australian bridge personality who has represented her country in world championships. She teaches bridge around Australia, and for the past 25 years has owned and operated a bridge club in Brisbane, where she has taught thousands to play the game.

Her passion is bridge education. In 2011, Joan was appointed the Australian Bridge Federation (ABF) National Teaching Coordinator. In this capacity she trains teachers towards National Accreditation, introducing them to the latest methods in bridge education and arranging professional development programmes. Joan has a BA, Dip Ed and Dip Ed Psych from the University of Queensland and has been the official bridge teacher in Queensland for the past 12 years.

Joan is now involved with bridge online and offers her lessons and videos on **[joanbuttsbridge.com](http://joanbuttsbridge.com)**. This site caters for learners of all levels and allows users to play lots of interactive hands.

**Play Bridge: A Workbook for the Absolute Beginner** allows students to learn the fundamentals of the game quickly. It advocates a student-centred, hands-on approach, starting with a simplified form of the game called Mini Bridge. Joan believes the modern teacher should be 'a guide by your side', not 'a sage on the stage'.

By choosing this material, you have started on your journey to learning and appreciating the game of bridge. Enjoy each new step, and practise, practise, practise!



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# **PLAY BRIDGE:**

## A Workbook for the Absolute Beginner

By Joan Butts



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Thank you to all the people who've helped me make this project a reality, namely:

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- My members, both real life (CARDS Bridge Centre) and online ([joanbuttsbridge.com](http://joanbuttsbridge.com)), who support the concepts
- The bridge teachers who have given me their ideas, who use the material in class, and who believe in it, and finally
- My students, who test the material and let me know what they're thinking.

## Dedication

To my mother, who always had an ace up her sleeve.





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# Introduction



So, you've decided to learn bridge. What a great idea – you'll never look back! Bridge is the most popular card game in the world and is played by millions in bridge clubs, at home and online.

The modern form of the game evolved from Whist and Auction Bridge and is known as Contract Bridge or just 'bridge'. First played in Australia in the 1930s, bridge quickly became popular.

To learn the game of bridge properly, it's best to take some lessons and to play as often as you can. Lessons and games are offered at bridge clubs everywhere, and there are lots available online too.

This eBook **Play Bridge: A Workbook for the Absolute Beginner** will introduce you to the fundamentals of the game. Move at your own pace and practise hands as often as you're able, either at home, at the bridge club or online. All the hands from the end of each chapter may be played live on **joanbuttsbridge.com**. On the website, you'll always be sitting South and the bridge robots will play the other hands for you. The hands from the eBook have been rotated to make this happen, so although at first glance they may not look the same, they are!

Playing bridge on **joanbuttsbridge.com** is great fun and will reinforce the lessons. There are videos to match too. These are found at the end of each of the first four chapters, and match the chapter exactly. Two of the hands from each chapter are discussed in each video. If you need to, you could pause at certain points of the video and refer back to the text in the chapter

People learn in different ways – some from reading, some from listening, some from watching – but in bridge, everyone learns faster by actually playing the game.

Good luck with your new pursuit – I bet you will love it!

Joan Butts

Brisbane  
January 2014



## Chapter One

# THE MECHANICS

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**In this chapter you will learn about:**

- Tricks
- Trumps & no trumps
- Declarer & dummy
- Defenders
- Mini bridge
- High card points & length points
- The opening lead

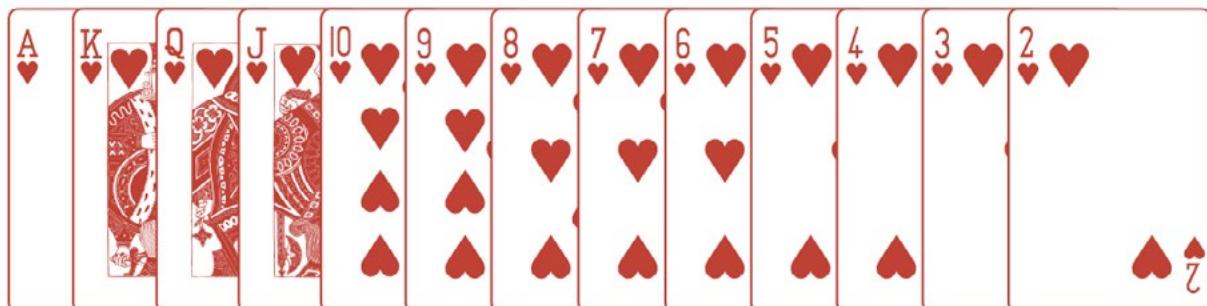


# Getting Started

Playing bridge is a great way to improve your mental fitness, meet new people and enjoy some card-playing competition. ***Train your Brain – Play this Game.*** You need four people, a deck of cards, a table and chairs... and this book!

## The Cards

A full deck is used – fifty-two cards (no jokers). There are four suits: spades (**♠**), hearts (**♥**), diamonds (**♦**) and clubs (**♣**), and thirteen cards in each suit, ranked in order of importance from the Ace down to the two.



Rank of the cards: Ace is the highest, two is the lowest.

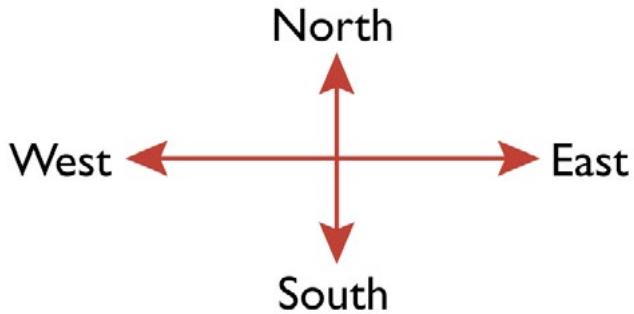


### High Cards

The **picture** cards – the Ace, King, Queen and Jack – are known as the **honours**, or **high cards**. Some people like to include the ten in this category too. The lower cards are known as the **pips**.

## The Players

Bridge is a **partnership** game. Four people (two pairs) sit at a table, with partners opposite each other. The positions of the players are referred to as the points of a compass.



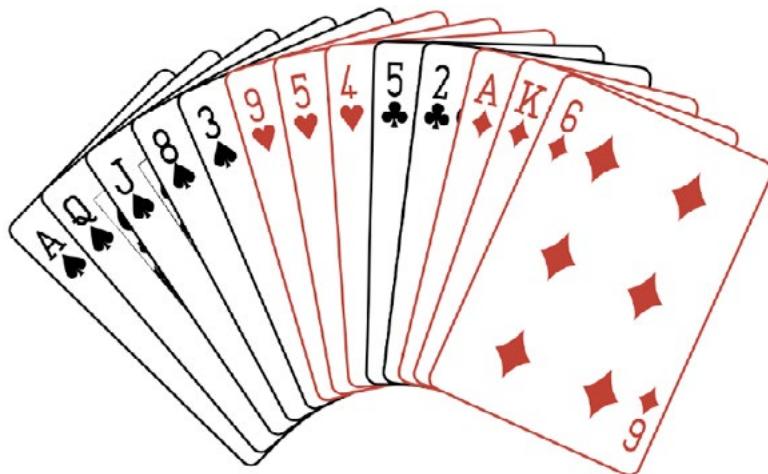
North–South form one partnership and East–West the other. The winners are the pair who scores most points overall.

## The Deal

If you're playing at home, one person – the dealer – distributes the cards one at a time, face-down, to each player. They start dealing to the player on their left and continue in a clockwise direction around the table until each player has thirteen cards. This is a **hand** of bridge. In a bridge club, the cards may be pre-dealt.

## Reading a Bridge Hand

Players pick up their cards and fan them out so that none of the other players can see them. They sort them into suits – usually red, black, red, black, but that's your choice.



When bridge hands are written in newspapers or books, they're shown like this:

♠ AQJ83

♥ 954

♦ AK6

♣ 52

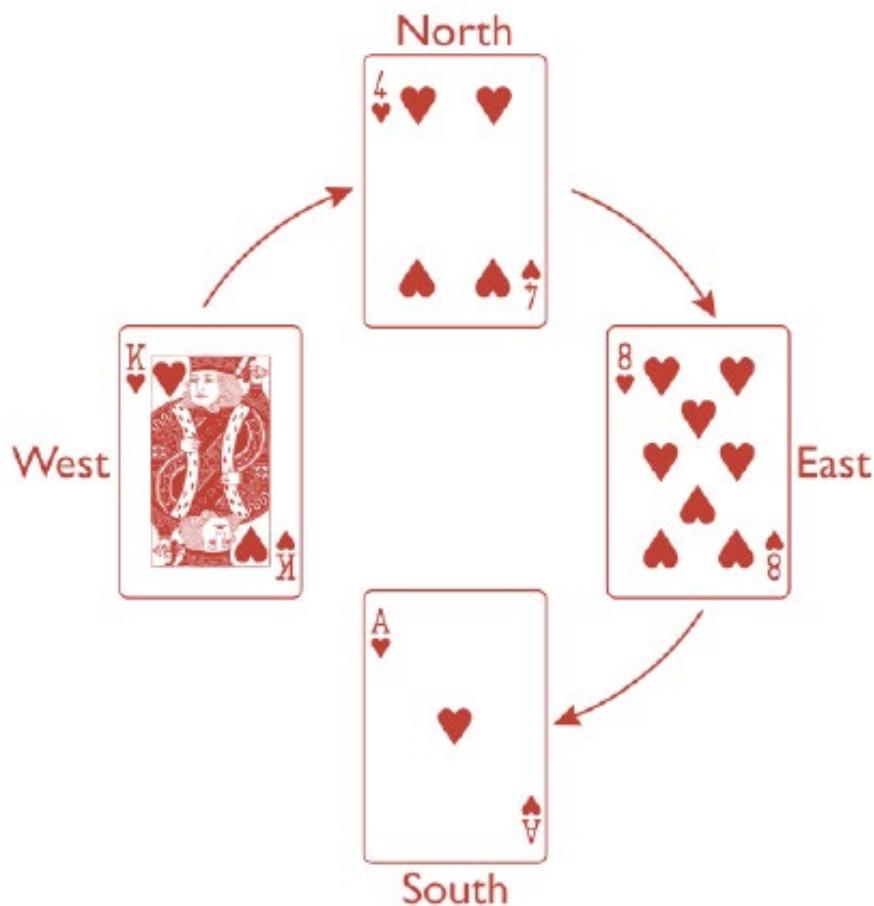
## The Game's Two Stages

1. The **bidding**, during which players discuss whether their hands are good enough to win a certain number of tricks.
2. The **play**, when players try to make the tricks they said they would.

## Taking Tricks

The object of the game is to win as many tricks as possible. A **trick** consists of four cards, played one at a time by each player.

- One player **leads** by placing any card face-up on the table.
- The other players **follow suit** if they can, playing their card, one at a time, clockwise.
- If they can't follow suit, a card from another suit is played (a **discard**).
- The highest card played in the suit led wins the trick.
- That player starts the play to the next trick.



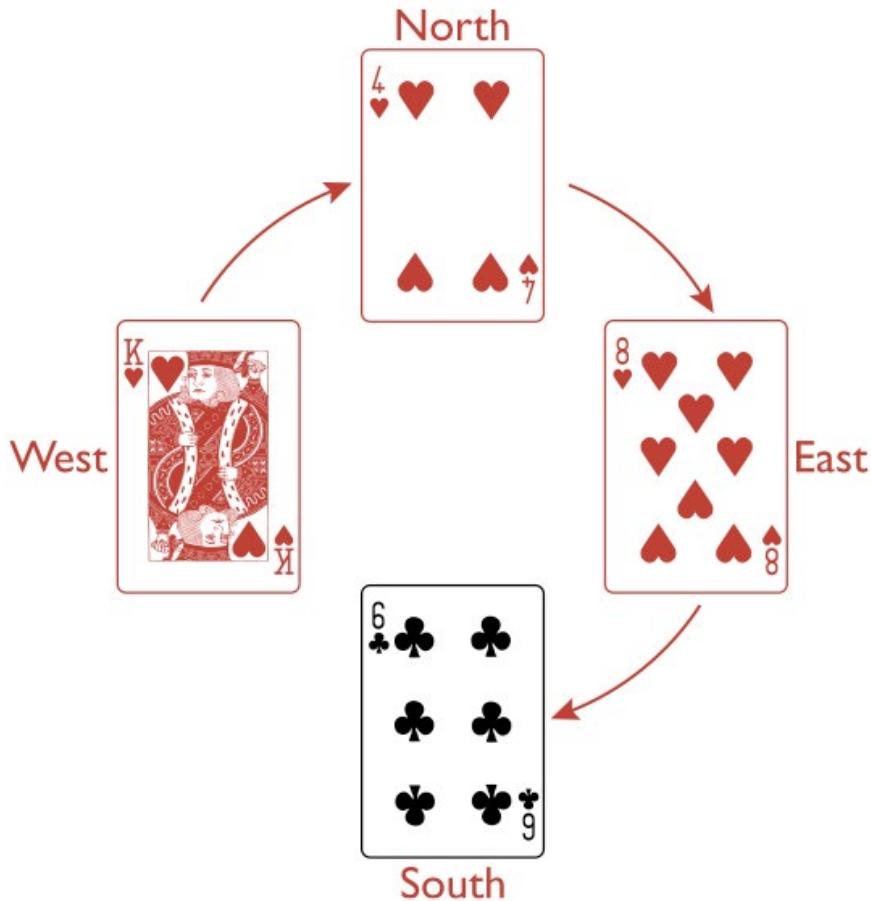
Here, West leads the ♥K, North plays the ♥4, East plays the ♥8, and South plays the ♥A. North–South win this trick.

Bridge is a partnership game, so the trick needs only to be won by one person in a partnership. South leads to the next trick, and the play continues until all thirteen tricks have been played.

## Trump and No Trumps

A bridge hand may be played in no trumps or with a trump suit. In **no trumps**, the highest card played in the suit led wins. Sometimes a suit is selected to be **trumps**. Any one of the four suits – spades (♠), hearts (♥), diamonds (♦) or clubs (♣) – could be trumps.

If there is a trump suit and a player can't follow to the suit led, they may win the trick by 'trumping' it (also known as 'ruffing'). A trump will beat any other card except for a higher trump.



West leads the ♠K, North plays the ♠4, and East plays the ♠8. South has no hearts. Because clubs are trumps, South's ♣6 will win the trick. A trump doesn't always have to be played (you could discard in another suit), but if you want to win the trick you need to use a trump.

Either partnership may choose a trump suit. The more trumps your side holds, the better. Eight or more cards of the same suit is known as a fit, and the longest combined fit will usually be trumps.

## The Offence and the Defence

One side plays the hand – they are the **offence** or the declaring side. Before the play starts, they decide on a certain number of tricks (i.e. they make a contract) and they score points if they take them.

The other pair – the **defence** or the defending side – tries to take enough tricks to beat the contract. If they succeed, they score points instead of the declaring side. They also get to make the **opening lead**, so this is an advantage for their side.

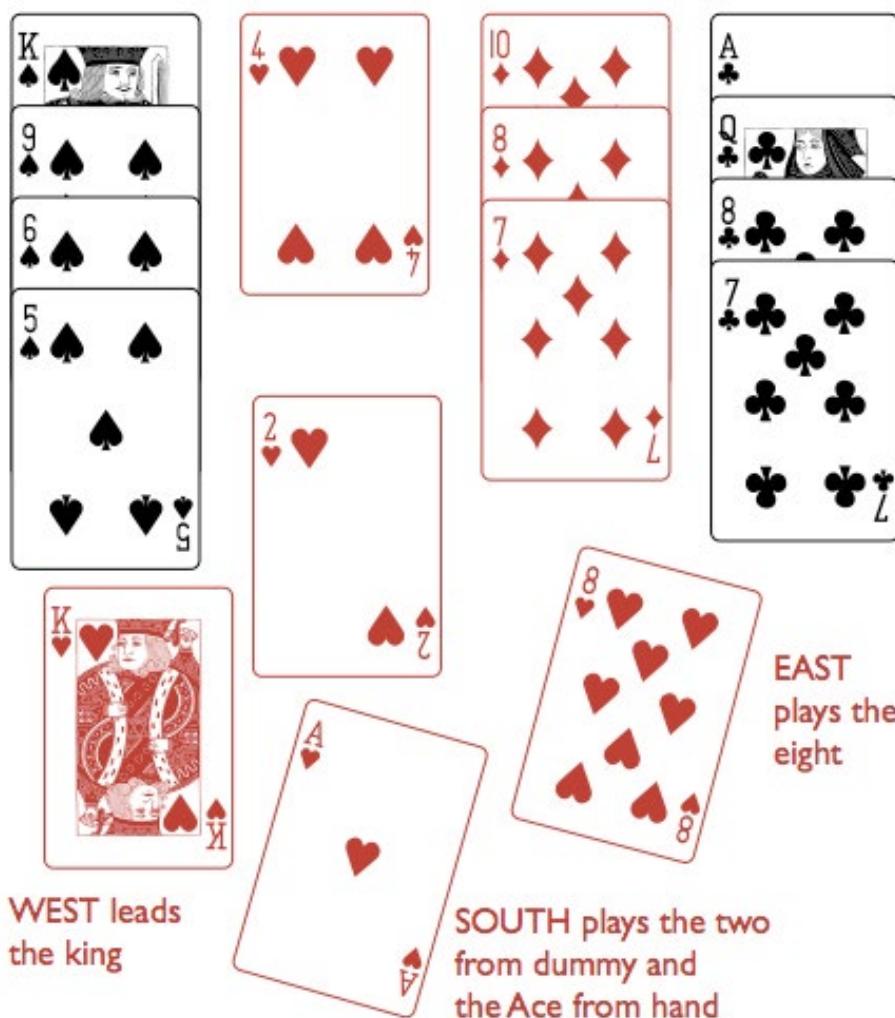
## Declarer and Dummy

Only one player of the partnership who wins the contract will actually play the hand. That person is known as **declarer**.

In bridge, declarer's partner shows their hand. It's known as the dummy hand or **dummy**. As soon as the opening lead has been made, all thirteen of dummy's cards are placed face-up on the table in suits, in rows. Everyone is able to see these cards.

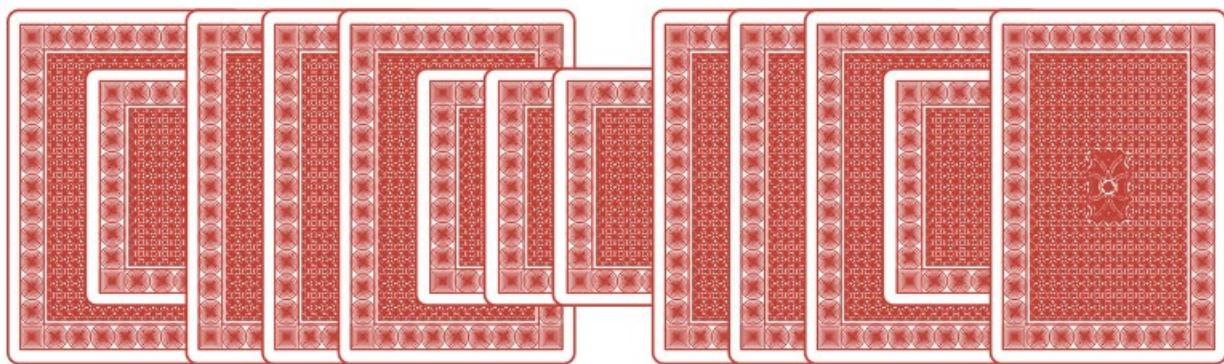
Declarer controls the play of both hands. It's accepted bridge etiquette for declarer to thank dummy when the hand goes up on the table (even if you don't like what you see). A simple 'thank you' is all you have to say.

The dummy hand and the first trick might look like this:



The opening lead from West is the ♥K. South (declarer), who decides which cards will be played from dummy too, asks North to play the ♥2. North holds the played card between dummy and the table edge, and turns it over when the trick is completed.

If the trick has been won, it is placed vertically (↑) by the winning partnership, and if lost, it is placed horizontally (←). When all the tricks have been played, there will be thirteen cards face-down showing tricks you won and lost.



Reading from the left, the first trick was won (↑), the second trick was lost (←), then three tricks were won and then three were lost. Three more were won, one was lost, and the last trick was won. Here, your side has won eight tricks and lost five – it's easy to tally up at the end this way.

## The Defence

Throughout the game neither defender has the benefit of seeing their partner's cards, but there are ways of communicating. For example, leading the **top of a sequence** is a popular method for showing a 'run' of cards. This means that when you are holding 'touching' cards, for example, ♠K, ♠Q, ♠J and ♠10, you should lead the top one (i.e. the ♠K), and that will show that you hold the ♠Q and the ♠J as well.

You have to make the opening lead and this is your hand:

♠ KQJ109  
 ♥ A742  
 ♦ 85  
 ♣ 97

Lead the ♠K because it shows you're holding the cards immediately below the ♠K. If you had both the ♠A and the ♠K, you would lead the ♠A.

Why not lead the ♥A? It's a good idea to get 'value' for Aces by waiting until they capture a high card such as the King or Queen in an opponent's hand. When an Ace is led, all three players usually play small cards to that trick, as they can't beat the Ace, so it's usually better to wait until an opponent leads that suit and you will capture one of their high cards with your Ace.

## Hand Evaluation

There's a relationship between high cards (Aces, Kings, Queens and Jacks) and tricks – usually the side with more high cards will take more tricks. Here's an accepted method for evaluating your hand: add points (as shown in the table) for the honour cards in each suit. The total is known as high card points or, more simply, **points**.

<b>High Cards</b>	<b>High Card Points (HCP)</b>
Ace	4 points
King	3 points
Queen	2 points
Jack	1 point

Here's an example:

	<b>High Card Points</b>	<b>Total</b>
♠AK73	4 + 3	7
♥QJ104	2 + 1	3
♦A92	4	4
♣108	0	0

The high card points on this hand total 14.

In each deck there are:

Four Aces	(4 x 4 = 16)
Four Kings	(4 x 3 = 12)
Four Queens	(4 x 2 = 8)
Four Jacks	(4 x 1 = 4)

In each pack, the total high card point count is 40.

**Long suits** are another feature that add value to a bridge hand. The more cards held in a particular suit between the partnerships, the stronger those hands will be if that suit is trumps. So, for every card that's longer than four in any suit, add an extra point. This is called a **length point**. If you hold:

<b>Length of Suit</b>	<b>Length Points</b>
Five cards	+1 point
Six cards	+2 points
Seven cards	+3 points

High card points + length points are used to value a hand at first.

	<b>HCP</b>	<b>Length Points</b>	<b>Total</b>
♠AK9732	4 + 3 = 7	2 (1 + 1 for the fifth and sixth spade)	= 9
♥QJ104	2 + 1 = 3	0	= 3
♦A9	4	0	= 4
♣10	0	0	= 0

The high card points + length points on this hand total 16.

## Mini Bridge

This is a simplified form of bridge used to introduce the game to school students.

- One of the players shuffles and deals the cards one-by-one, face-down, in a clockwise direction.
- Each hand is sorted and the players count their **high card points** and **length points**.
- Starting with the dealer, each player announces how many points they hold.
- The side with the **majority** of points becomes the declaring side. If there happens to be a tie, the dealer's side becomes the declaring side.
- **Declarer** will usually be the hand with the most points. Partner (dummy) places their cards face-up on the table. Declarer looks to see if there's a **fit**. If so, declarer makes that suit **trumps**. With no fit, the hand will be played in **no trumps**.
- Declarer then decides how many tricks to contract for, with or without a trump suit.
- The player to the left of declarer makes the **opening lead**, and the play starts.

## Summary

- Bridge is a card game for four people in two **partnerships**.
- One of the players, the **dealer**, distributes the cards, face-down, clockwise, until each player has thirteen cards.
- The cards are **ranked** in order of importance from the Ace down to the two.
- Each side will try to win **tricks** – that's four cards, one from each player (clockwise), the highest card winning.
- A hand may be played in **no trumps** or with a **trump suit**, of spades (**♠**), hearts (**♥**), diamonds (**♦**) or clubs (**♣**).
- Players must **follow suit** if they have a card of the suit led.
- In no trumps, the highest card played in the suit led wins.
- If a player can't follow suit, they must either **discard**, or if there is a trump suit, they may win the trick by trumping it.
- When one side holds the majority of cards in a suit (8+), it's known as a **fit**.
- Players add up their high card points and length points at the beginning of each hand.
- **High card points:** 4 points for each Ace, 3 points for each King, 2 points for each Queen, and 1 point for each Jack.
- **Length points:** 1 extra point for more than four cards in a suit.
- The **declarer** will play to make a certain number of tricks.
- The **defender** to the left of declarer makes the **opening lead**.
- Next, declarer's partner's hand (dummy) is placed face-up on the table. Declarer decides which **card** to play for both hands.
- The play to thirteen tricks continues this way.

# Play Hands

## I.I

### Dealer North

Play this hand online for practise at [joanbuttsbridge.com](http://joanbuttsbridge.com)

North	<p>♠ A42 ♥ AK10987 ♦ A52 ♣ 4</p>	North has 17 points (15 high card points + 2 length points), East has 7 high card points, South has 9 high card points, and West has 10 (9 high card points + 1 length point). North–South has the majority of points (26), and there's a fit in hearts, with North holding a six-card suit. North will be declarer and will try to take at least ten tricks.	
West	<p>♠ Q1085 ♥ 3 ♦ 987 ♣ AK1092</p>	East	<p>♠ J976 ♥ 54 ♦ KQJ10 ♣ 853</p>
South	<p>♠ K3 ♥ QJ62 ♦ 643 ♣ QJ76</p>		

## Opening Lead, Play and Defence

East makes the opening lead, and it's best to try for tricks in the strongest suit – diamonds. The ♦K is the recommended card to play (top of a sequence).

North wins the ♦A and plays two rounds of trumps to draw out those in the opponents' hands. Next, North crosses to dummy to win the ♠K, then back to hand to win the ♠A. The third spade will be trumped for an extra trick.

North–South will take ten tricks: six hearts, the ♦A, the ♠A and the ♠K, and a spade ruff in dummy's hand.

**I.2****Dealer East**

Play this hand online for practise at [joanbuttsbridge.com](http://joanbuttsbridge.com)

North	♠ 32 ♥ AK9 ♦ 1083 ♣ Q8543
West	♠ QJ1097 ♥ J543 ♦ 74 ♣ A10
South	♠ 64 ♥ Q108 ♦ 952 ♣ KJ962

East	♠ AK85 ♥ 762 ♦ AKQJ6 ♣ 7
------	-----------------------------------

East has 18 points (17 high card points + 1 length point), South has 7 (6 high card points + 1 length point), West has 9 (8 high card points + 1 length point), and North has 10 (9 high card points + 1 length point). East–West has the majority of points (27), and there's a fit in spades, with West holding a five-card suit. West will be declarer and try to take at least ten tricks.

**Opening Lead, Play and Defence**

North makes the opening lead (the ♥A) and will continue with another high heart (the ♥K), and then a heart to partner's ♥Q, thus taking the first three tricks.

South must change the suit now, probably to clubs. West wins the ♣A and will play spades, the trump suit. The idea is to draw the trumps from the opponents' hands. Once the trumps are drawn, declarer should take all the diamonds winners and make ten tricks.

## I.3

### Dealer South

Play this hand online for practise at [joanbuttsbridge.com](http://joanbuttsbridge.com)

North	♠ 964 ♥ KJ3 ♦ QJ3 ♣ A1092	East	♠ 873 ♥ 95 ♦ 862 ♣ QJ863
West	♠ KQJ102 ♥ 8742 ♦ 1097 ♣ K		
South	♠ A5 ♥ AQ106 ♦ AK54 ♣ 754		

South has 17 high card points. West has 10 (9 high card points + 1 length point), North has 11 high card points, and East has 4 (3 high card points + 1 length point). North-South has the majority of points (28), but there is no fit, so the hand will be played in no trumps. South, holding the majority of points for North-South, will be declarer and should try for at least nine tricks.

## Opening Lead, Play and Defence

The ♠K is the recommended lead, top of the sequence.

South takes this trick with the ♠A and then should play diamonds and hearts. There are four winners in each of these suits, and the ♣A will make a tenth trick.

**I.4****Dealer West**

Play this hand online for practise at [joanbuttsbridge.com](http://joanbuttsbridge.com)

North	<p>♠ J1084 ♥ 9632 ♦ AKJ ♣ J7</p>
West	<p>♠ A753 ♥ 87 ♦ 104 ♣ Q10654</p>
South	<p>♠ 96 ♥ KQJ10 ♦ Q98763 ♣ 8</p>
East	<p>♠ KQ2 ♥ A54 ♦ 52 ♣ AK932</p>

West has 7 points (6 high card points + 1 length point). North has 10 high card points, East has 17 (16 high card points + 1 length point), and South has 10 (8 high card points + 2 length points). There's a good club fit, and both East and West hold five clubs. East has more points so will be declarer. East–West should be able to take ten tricks.

**Opening Lead, Play and Defence**

South leads the ♥K, top of the sequence, promising the ♥Q and the ♥J.

East wins this trick with the ♥A. Now trumps (clubs) are played, and once the trumps have been drawn, declarer will take three top tricks in spades (♠A, ♠K and ♠Q). That will make ten tricks, with the defenders taking two diamonds and one heart.

# INTRODUCTION TO BRIDGE

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CLICK TO PLAY





## Chapter Two

# INTRODUCTION TO BIDDING

---

**In this chapter you will learn about:**

- Bidding
- Scoring
- Opening One No Trump
- Opening One of a Suit
- Responding
- The play technique of promotion

## The Language of Bidding

The first part of each hand of bridge is a discussion between the partners at the table about how many tricks they might contract to take, and whether to have a trump suit or not. This is all done through a special language called **bidding**.

Starting with the dealer, each player may make a bid or 'pass'. The first part of a bid is the number of tricks you think you can take. Usually you say '1' of your longest suit. This means taking seven tricks ( $6 + 1$ ). The second is which suit or no trumps you want to play the hand in. So  $3\heartsuit$  means nine tricks ( $6 + 3$ ) with hearts as trumps.

Everyone at the table is entitled to bid at their turn until a bid is followed by three passes. Now the hand will be played in the last mentioned suit, or no trumps, and at the level reached.

Each bid must be higher than the one before, so you need to know the ranking of the suits. Here they are from the top down:

- ♠ spades
- ♥ hearts
- ♦ diamonds
- ♣ clubs

- The lowest possible bid is  $1\clubsuit$ , and the highest is 7NT.
- ♠ & ♥ are called the **majors**, and they score 30 points per trick.
- ♦ & ♣ are called the **minors**, and they score 20 per trick.
- No Trumps scores the most (40 for the first trick and 30 per trick. after that), so it's at the top of the bidding ladder.
- There's a **trick score** and a **bonus score**.
- The declaring side scores for every trick made after the first six tricks.

Add up your points, and if you reach 13 or more, open the bidding. Usually bid one of your longest suit and see how partner likes that suit. If there's a **fit**, partner will raise that suit, holding three or more cards in it. Once you've opened, partner needs only 6 points to keep the bidding going. If there's not a fit, they'll bid their own longest suit and hope you can match that. How far up the bidding ladder you go will depend on how many points you have.

Mostly, your longest suit (always in the case of 1♠ or 1♥) promises five or more cards. It's not always the case when you open 1♦ or 1♣. This bidding system, **Standard Five-Card Majors**, is the most popular in the world.

Starting with the dealer, each player chooses whether to bid or pass. Even if you pass to begin with, you may still bid at your next turn. A bid consists of two parts – the first is a number from one to seven. The number refers to the tricks the partnership is committing to take, above six. This represents **how high** the bidding may go.

The second part is to suggest **where** the hand should be played, that is, with or without a trump suit. The bidding is all about making a '**contract**' – that's the number of tricks the declaring side will commit to take in order to score points. Hence the name '**Contract Bridge**'.

- A bid of one is a commitment to take seven tricks: (6 + 1)
- The highest bid is seven: that's all thirteen tricks (6 + 7)

For example, saying 1♥ means your side is contracting to take seven or more tricks, with hearts as trumps. A bid of 2NT is an undertaking to take eight or more tricks without a trump suit.

For the bidding to be legal, each call must be higher than the one before, either in a higher-ranked suit (♣, ♦, ♥, ♠) or in no trumps. The suits are ranked alphabetically, the lowest is 'c' for clubs (♣), next 'd' for diamonds (♦), next 'h' for hearts (♥), to the highest-ranked suit 's' for spades (♠).

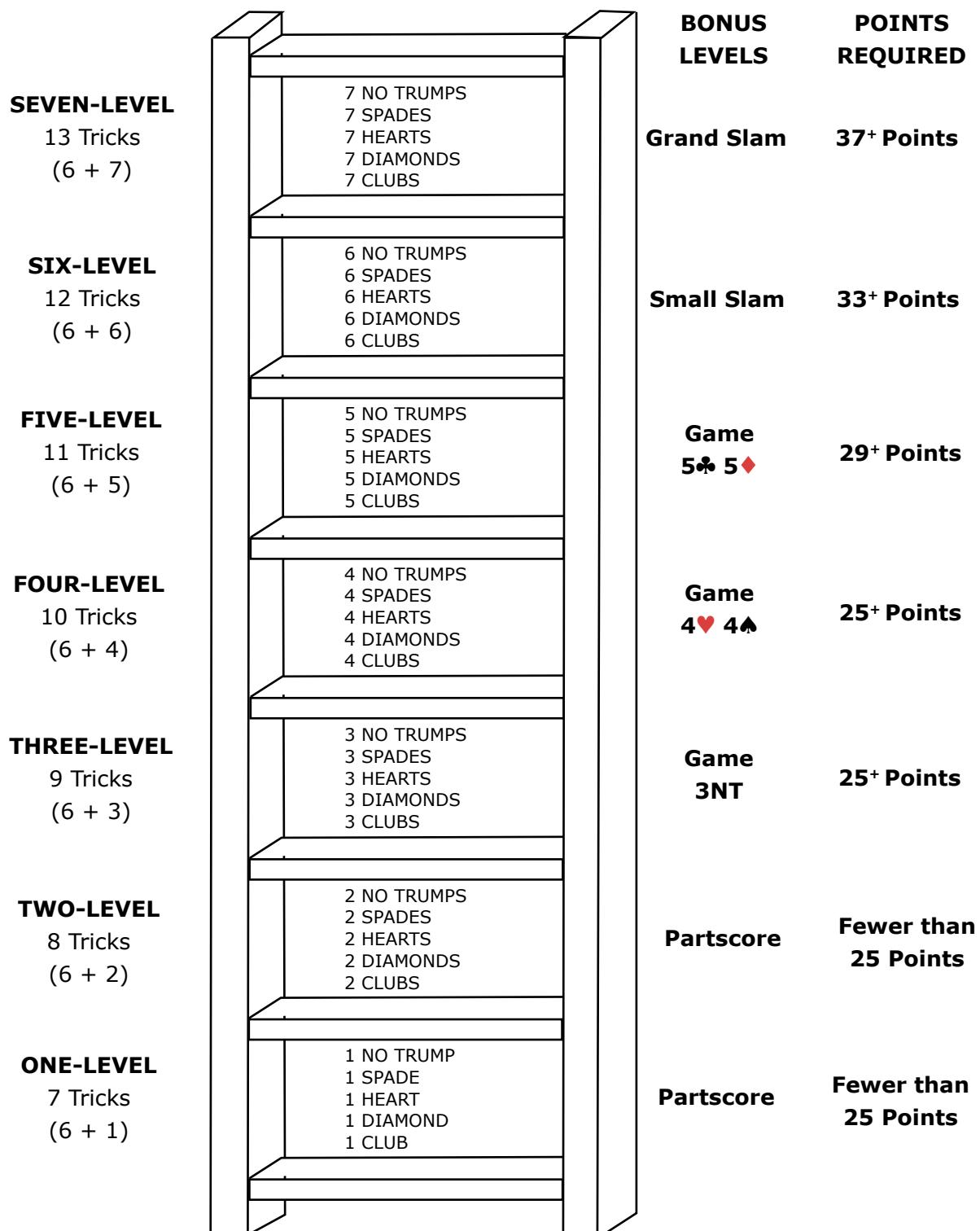
If the suit you want to bid is lower in rank than the one before, it needs to be mentioned at the next level (see the bidding ladder). The bidding is finished when a bid is followed by three passes.

North	East	South	West
1♥	Pass	1♠	Pass
2♦	Pass	2♠	Pass
3♠	Pass	Pass	Pass

On this hand, the 'contract' is 3♠, i.e. North–South is committing to take at least nine tricks with spades as trumps. South, the player who introduced spades as a trump suit, will be declarer. The bidding is finished when a bid (in this instance, 3♠) is followed by three passes.

# Bidding Ladder

The lowest possible bid is 1♣ and the highest 7NT. Each bid must be higher than the one before. A pass by any player does not stop them from coming in later. The bidding finishes when there are three passes.



## More on Scoring

The game bonus is awarded for making contracts that have a trick score of 100 or more points. Thus, bidding and making a contract of:

- 3NT (40+30+30)
- 4♥ or 4♠ (30 + 30 + 30 + 30) or
- 5♣ or 5♦ (20 + 20 + 20 + 20 +20)

will qualify for the game bonus.

Use the following guidelines when deciding whether to bid game:

- With 25+ combined points, play 3NT, 4♥ or 4♠ (game).
- With fewer than 25 combined points, play a partscore contract.
- With the minor suits (♣ and ♦), a few more points may be needed for game. That's why 3NT is a more popular contract than game in a minor (5♣ or 5♦).

The exact size of bonuses for making (or defeating contracts) is affected by a pre-determined condition called **vulnerability**. If your side is vulnerable, the bonuses are higher than if your side is not vulnerable. Which side is vulnerable, and when, is determined as follows:

### Vulnerability during a Round (4 hands) of Bridge

- 1st hand: neither side vulnerable
- 2nd hand: dealer's side vulnerable
- 3rd hand: dealer's side vulnerable
- 4th hand: both sides vulnerable

The bonuses that are awarded for bidding and making contracts are as follows:

### Game Bonuses

- 500 points: vulnerable
- 300 points: not vulnerable

Penalties are awarded against the declaring side when the contract fails to make. The size of the penalty depends on the vulnerability of the defeated side.

## Penalties for Undertricks

- Vulnerable: 100 points per trick
- Not vulnerable: 50 points per trick

For example: If your side, not vulnerable, bids to 4♠ and takes only seven tricks instead of ten (i.e. you fail by three), your opponents receive a score of 150 points (50 + 50 + 50). If your side were vulnerable, it would be 300 points (100 + 100 + 100).

## The Opening Bid

When you open the bidding, you tell partner important things about the **shape** and **strength** of your hand. You suggest that your hand is good enough to win a certain number of tricks. For this reason, the opener is often referred to as the **describer**. Most auctions begin at the one-level, although it's possible to start higher.

- To make the first bid for the partnership, a player needs a better than average hand in terms of high card and length points.
- In each pack there are:
  - Four Aces, worth 4 points each (that's  $4 \times 4 = 16$ )
  - Four Kings, worth 3 points each (that's  $4 \times 3 = 12$ )
  - Four Queens, worth 2 points each (that's  $4 \times 2 = 8$ )
  - Four Jacks, worth 1 point each (that's  $4 \times 1 = 4$ )
- That total is 40, and so an average hand is 10.
- 13 points is the accepted lower limit for an opening hand, and around 20 points the upper limit for bids at the one-level.

## Opening One No Trump

This is a very specific bid to show

- a balanced hand with
- 15, 16 or 17 points.

### What is a balanced hand?

A balanced hand is one in which the cards are evenly distributed across the four suits and which doesn't contain any really long or short suits. Short suits are:

- a **doubleton** (**two** cards)
- a **singleton** (**one** card)
- a **void** (**no** cards).

Balanced hands generally play better in no trumps (NT), and unbalanced hands play better with the long suit as trumps.

Here are some examples of 1NT openings:

♠ A87  
♥ KJ7  
♦ QJ109  
♣ AJ2

### Open 1NT

The hand is balanced, no doubleton, singleton, void, or five-card suit, and 16 high card points.

♠ KQ94  
♥ AQ  
♦ K109  
♣ K1052

### Open 1NT

Again the hand is balanced – one doubleton, and no singleton, void or five-card suit, and 17 high card points.

## Opening One of a Suit

All other hand shapes are called **unbalanced**. This is a typical unbalanced pattern:

♠ xxxxx      This hand shape is 6-4-2-1. Because it has a singleton, a doubleton and a six-card suit, it's considered unbalanced.  
♥ xxxx  
♦ xx  
♣ x

When your shape and point count are not suitable for opening 1NT (either not balanced, or outside the 15, 16 or 17 point range) but you have enough to bid, open at the one-level in a suit.

Which suit is opened?

Usually it's the longest. For example:

♠ AK863      Open 1♠. When you open in a major suit (♥ or ♠), you guarantee five cards in that suit. This, the most popular system in the world, is called **Standard Five-Card Majors**. In this hand, spades is the longest suit, with five cards.  
♥ A1042  
♦ 64  
♣ K3

Why do you bid your **longest suit** first and not your strongest suit?

The best trump suit will usually be the one in which your side has the most cards (and the opponents have the fewest). The best way to search for your side's best suit is to start by telling partner which is your longest suit.

Try these. In each case, you have the opportunity to open the bidding. What should you bid with the following?

- |            |          |           |         |
|------------|----------|-----------|---------|
| 1. ♠ AK876 | 2. ♠ 87  | 3. ♠ AKQJ | 4. ♠ 87 |
| ♥ A73      | ♥ KJ9876 | ♥ 987654  | ♥ AKQJ  |
| ♦ Q6       | ♦ Q87    | ♦ A5      | ♦ QJ987 |
| ♣ 983      | ♣ 76     | ♣ 8       | ♣ AK    |

## Answers

1. 1♠. 13 high card points and 1 length point for the fifth spade. That's 14 total points, enough to open. Although the hand is balanced, you do not have enough to open 1NT. Instead, choose the longest suit and open 1♠.
2. Pass. There are 6 high card points and 2 length points for the six-card heart suit, making a total of 8. This is not enough to open the bidding.
3. 1♥. 14 high card points and 2 length points, enough to open the bidding. Although you have 16 points, you cannot open 1NT because your hand is not balanced. Choose the longest suit, hearts, even though it's weaker in high card strength.
4. 1♦. There are 20 high card points and 1 length point for the fifth diamond. This is a strong hand, but still open with one of a suit.

Without a five-card major, open the longer minor. 1♦ usually shows four or more cards, and 1♣ may occasionally be three cards.

♠ A97                      Open 1♦. 13 high card points, but no five-card or longer major, and although the shape is balanced, to open 1NT would require 15, 16 or 17 points. Opening 1♦ does not promise five cards in diamonds.  
 ♥ KQ10  
 ♦ K975  
 ♣ J84

♠ A975                      Open 1♣. 13 high card points, but partner will expect five or more cards if the opening is 1♠ or 1♥. Although it doesn't look great, opening in the longer minor suit is better.  
 ♥ KQ108  
 ♦ K3  
 ♣ J84

Sometimes you'll have a choice of suits to open as there is the same number of cards in more than one suit. Use the following guideline: **with a choice of suits of equal length, open the higher ranking.**

- |                                    |   |
|------------------------------------|---|
| ♠ K83<br>♥ 42<br>♦ AQ62<br>♣ A1083 | Open 1♦. Here you have a choice of two four-card suits (minors). You don't have a five-card major, but you do have enough points to open, so start with the suit that's ranked higher. It's not a big deal though, which suit, clubs or diamonds, you open. |
| ♠ K8752<br>♥ AKJ42<br>♦ Q6<br>♣ 3  | Open 1♠. Although hearts are better than spades, open the higher-ranked suit, spades. You hopefully will have a chance to show your heart suit later.   |

## Guidelines for Opening the Bidding with One of a Suit

- With 13–20 points (high card points and length points), generally open one of your **longest** suit, unless you have the requirements for 1NT.
- 1♠ or 1♥ openings promise five or more cards in that suit.
- With two suits of equal length, open the higher-ranked.
- Without a five-card or longer major, open the longer minor.
- With four cards in both minors, open 1♦.
- With three cards in each minor, open 1♣.

## Responder

When you hear partner open the bidding, try to keep the conversation going even if you don't hold many points (6 is the accepted minimum). After all, opening at the one-level shows 13–20 points, maybe enough for game. For example, if opener has 19 points and you hold 6 points, the total will be 25 (enough). Passing at the outset won't allow your side to disclose this information, and the conversation won't even get off the ground.

What you respond depends on your shape and points. Responder is sometimes known as the **decider**, because often the final decision about **how high** and **where** to play the hand will be theirs.

If you know there's a fit, especially in the majors (**♠** or **♥**), show it by raising partner's suit. If you don't **know** yet whether there's a fit, bid your longest suit to tell partner what you've got.

Opener	Responder	Bidding: 1♠ P 2♠ P 4♠ all pass
♠ AKJ108	♠ Q753	
♥ AK65	♥ Q84	As responder, tell partner that there's
♦ 5	♦ 10842	a fit by raising to 2♠.
♣ A42	♣ Q3	

You're showing 6 or more points by doing this. If you pass because you don't think you have much of a hand, your side will miss game. By bidding, you allow partner to continue the conversation and show that they have a good hand with enough points for game, even if you don't have much.

## Play Point – Promotion

When you make your plan as declarer, you may find there are not enough sure tricks (winners) to make the contract. It may be necessary to develop extra tricks. One of the techniques used for doing this is called **promotion**.

### How is it done?

By using your side's high cards to drive out the higher cards in the other hands, you can promote lower-ranking cards into winners. Suppose this is the layout of the diamond suit between your hand and dummy:

Dummy

♦ 6532

You

♦ KQJ10

There are no sure diamond tricks, but there's potential. Play on diamonds and make the defenders play their ♦A. Your remaining cards have now been promoted into winners, and you will end up with three diamond tricks.

To promote tricks in a suit, it's necessary to give up the lead to the defenders. In this hand, you'll need to give up the lead once before your three tricks are promoted. In another hand, even more patience may be required.

Dummy

♣ QJ10

You

♣ 752

Here there are no sure tricks. You have to lose two club tricks to the defender's ♣A and ♣K before you promote a winner in the suit. This may not seem much of a bargain – you have to give up two tricks to get only one – but it may be the extra trick you need to make the contract.

Losing the lead in order to make tricks later is a common tactic during the play. As long as the defenders can't take enough tricks to defeat the contract when they get the lead, you'll end up developing the extra tricks necessary. Don't be afraid to give up the lead while you're developing tricks.

## Promotion and the Defenders

When an opening lead is made, it's often from a long suit. The actual card you choose to play should give partner a clue about what you hold.

When you have a sequence of touching cards, the top card of the sequence is recommended (from KQJ10 lead the King). The defenders take tricks using the same techniques as declarer, so here, the defenders are trying to promote their honours by letting declarer win with the Ace. After that, they will have three tricks in the suit.

When they are not touching (KJ852), lead a low card, technically the 5 – the fourth-highest of the longest and strongest suit. This is asking for partner's cooperation. Partner will need to play the highest card possible to win the trick or to force declarer to play a higher card. The idea is that even if this trick is not won immediately, it will help to promote later tricks for your side.

## Promotion and Declarer

North (Dummy)	<p>♠ 73</p> <p>♥ AJ5</p> <p>♦ J63</p> <p>♣ QJ1094</p>
West	<p>♠ QJ1084</p> <p>♥ 1076</p> <p>♦ 85</p> <p>♣ A53</p>

South (Declarer)	<p>♠ AK52</p> <p>♥ K43</p> <p>♦ A742</p> <p>♣ K7</p>
---------------------	--

There are five sure tricks: two spades, two hearts, and one diamond. You need to find four more. The club suit provides the key through promotion.

Win the first trick with the ♠K or the ♠A. Play the ♣K, and if West wins, you can later play the ♣7 over to dummy and take four club tricks. After winning your remaining Aces and Kings, you'll have nine tricks.

Even if West doesn't win the ♣A straight away (West doesn't **have** to play the Ace the first time the suit is led), lead another club and keep leading them after the Ace has gone.

It's important to go after the tricks you have to develop before taking your winners in other suits. Here you need nine tricks in no trumps, and the lead is the ♠Q from West.

If you take your five sure tricks, before leading the ♣K, it will be too late. The defenders will take enough tricks in other suits to beat the contract. Lead the ♣K right away, while you still have high cards left in other suits.

## Exercises

1. What would you bid on each of these hands?

(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)
♠ AJ54	♠ KJ86	♠ K42	♠ 943	♠ K8763	♠ AQ4
♥ K83	♥ AJ54	♥ AK86	♥ AQ862	♥ 10754	♥ K876
♦ Q7	♦ 7	♦ AK863	♦ void	♦ K4	♦ KQ3
♣ KQ63	♣ KJ62	♣ 2	♣ KQJ96	♣ K6	♣ K103

2. Promoting Cards

What's the maximum number of tricks you could take with each of the following suit combinations?

	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
Dummy:	♥ 953	♥ Q103	♥ Q5	♥ Q832
Declarer:	♥ KQJ	♥ J65	♥ KJ109	♥ J1094

3. You have to make twelve tricks in no trumps, and the opening lead is the ♠J.

### Dummy

♠ Q84  
♥ AQ7  
♦ KQ83  
♣ KJ4

a) How many sure tricks do you have?

### Lead

♠ J

### You

♠ AK6  
♥ K82  
♦ AJ95  
♣ Q52

b) Which suit do you plan to play after winning the first trick?

## Answers

1. a) 1NT. A balanced hand with 15 high card points.
  - b) 1♣. 13 points. You can't open 1♥ or 1♠ as there are not five or more cards in the suit, and the hand is unbalanced, containing a singleton.
  - c) 1♦. This hand is unbalanced, with 17 high card points + 1 length point.
  - d) 1♥. Open the higher ranking of two five-card suits with this unbalanced hand (12 high card points + 2 length points).
  - e) Pass, not good enough to open, and unbalanced with two doubletons (9 high card points + 1 length point).
  - f) 1NT, a balanced hand with 17 high card points.
- 
2. a) 2
  - b) 1
  - c) 3
  - d) 2
- 
3. a) Ten sure tricks (three in spades, three in hearts, and four in diamonds).
  - b) Play on the club suit, to promote two winners.

## Summary

- Hand shapes are classified as **balanced** or **unbalanced**. A balanced hand contains no voids or singletons and at most one doubleton. All other hand patterns are unbalanced.
- Open **1NT** with a balanced hand with 15, 16 or 17 points.
- Otherwise, open the bidding with one of your **longest suit** and 13–20 points.
- **Suit length:** Opening the bidding with  $1\spadesuit$  or  $1\heartsuit$  will promise five or more cards in that suit. An opening bid of  $1\clubsuit$  can be made with four or more cards. An opening bid of  $1\diamondsuit$  can be made with three or more cards.
- The system is called **Standard Five-Card Majors**.
- **Responding to the opening bid:** Responder should bid something with 6 or more points, otherwise pass.
- **Choosing the trump suit:** To choose a suit as trumps, the partnership needs an eight-card or longer fit
- **Bidding to Game:** With 25 or more combined points, the partnership should play in a game contract in no trumps (3NT), or the major suits ( $4\heartsuit$  or  $4\spadesuit$ ).
- **Minor Suit Game:** To bid to game in the minor suits ( $5\clubsuit$  or  $5\diamondsuit$ ), you need approximately 29 points.
- The size of the bonus for making game depends on a condition called vulnerability.
- **Vulnerability** also affects the size of the penalty score when declarer fails to make a certain number of tricks.

# Play Hands

## 2.1

**Dealer North**

**Nil Vul**

Play this hand online for practise at [joanbuttsbridge.com](http://joanbuttsbridge.com)

North	Bidding	
♠ AQ1042	N	S W
♥ 96	1♠	Pass
♦ Q2	2♠	Pass
♣ KQJ10	Pass	Pass
West	East	North has 15 points (14 high card points + 1 length point) and opens 1♠, showing five or more cards. South holds 7 points, enough to respond. South shows the fit by raising spades to the two-level. North decides not to try for game and will be declarer in 2♠, a partscore.
♠ 65	♠ J9	
♥ 7543	♥ KQJ10	
♦ AK98	♦ J1043	
♣ A65	♣ 984	
South		
♠ K873		
♥ A82		
♦ 765		
♣ 732		

## Opening Lead, Play and Defence

East leads the ♥K, top of a sequence, promising the ♥Q and the ♥J. Declarer counts the sure winners, and they are: five in spades, one in hearts, and none in diamonds and clubs at this point. That's six, so declarer needs two extra tricks from the club suit. When trumps have been drawn, the clubs will be promoted for three tricks, once the ♣A is won by West.

It's possible to make an overtrick and take nine tricks on this hand. Score: 3♠ making 9 tricks = 30 + 30 + 30 = 90 (trick score) + 50 (partscore bonus) = 140.

**2.2****Dealer East****EW Vul**Play this hand online for practise at **joanbuttsbridge.com**

North ♠ Q1083 ♥ 5 ♦ 965 ♣ QJ853	Bidding E     S     W     N 1♥    Pass    2♥    Pass 3♥    Pass    4♥    all Pass
West ♠ 976 ♥ 10987 ♦ A74 ♣ A72	East ♠ AK ♥ KQJ642 ♦ 1032 ♣ K6
South ♠ J542 ♥ A3 ♦ KQJ8 ♣ 1094	<p>East has 18 points (16 high card points + 2 length points) and opens 1♥, showing five or more cards in that suit. West (8 high card points) shows the heart fit by raising hearts to the next level.</p> <p>East, holding more than a minimum, bids 3♥, and West takes it to game, 4♥.</p>

**Opening Lead, Play and Defence**

The ♦K is led. The defenders try to promote their diamonds into winners. When West wins the ♦A, trumps should be drawn, even though the ♥A is in South's hand. East is promoting hearts to provide five winners and will then win the ♠A, the ♠K, the ♦A, the ♣A and the ♣K as well as five heart tricks. Total = ten.

Score: 4♥ making 10 tricks = 30 + 30 + 30 + 30 = 120 (trick score) + 500 (vulnerable game bonus) = 620.

**2.3****Dealer South****NS Vul**Play this hand online for practise at [joanbuttsbridge.com](http://joanbuttsbridge.com)

	North	Bidding
West		S    W    N    E
♠ KQ752		Pass   Pass   Pass   1♣
♥ 862		Pass   1♠   Pass   2♠
♦ 107		
♣ A82		
South	East	Pass   Pass   Pass
♠ 94	♠ J1083	
♥ AK94	♥ 753	South, the dealer, passes, as
♦ J9542	♦ AK	do West and North. East, with
♣ J7	♣ KQ64	13 points, opens 1♣. East can't
		open 1♠ as that would promise
		five or more.
		South passes, and West, holding
		10 points (9 high card points + 1
		length point), responds 1♠, the
		longest suit. East, holding four
		spades, raises this to 2♠.

**Opening Lead, Play and Defence**

North leads the ♥Q, top of a sequence, and North–South take three heart tricks. When either East or West regains the lead, trumps should be played, even though North is holding the ♠A. The technique of promotion means that once the ♠A is won by North, East–West will have four spade winners.

Nine tricks can be made: four spades, two diamonds, and three clubs.

Score: 2♠ making nine tricks = 30 + 30 + 30 = 90 (trick score) + 50 (partscore bonus) = 140.

**2.4****Dealer West****Both Vul**Play this hand online for practise at **[joanbuttsbridge.com](http://joanbuttsbridge.com)**

North	Bidding
♠ K932	W N E S
♥ K4	Pass Pass Pass 1NT
♦ A752	
♣ J85	Pass 3NT Pass Pass
West	East
♠ 107	♠ QJ85
♥ QJ10752	♥ 96
♦ 843	♦ QJ9
♣ A2	♣ 7643
South	West, North and East pass and South opens 1NT (16 high card points). West passes, and North (11 points) bids 3NT, knowing that partner has a balanced hand with 15, 16 or 17 points. That will be enough points for game (25 or more). South is declarer, needing to take nine tricks.
♠ A64	
♥ A83	
♦ K106	
♣ KQ109	

**Opening Lead, Play and Defence**

West leads the ♥Q, top of a sequence, and the longest suit. South counts the sure winners and finds that there are six: two in spades, two in hearts and two in diamonds. Three more are required, and the club suit has the potential for this using the technique of promotion.

South should win the first trick with the ♥A or ♥K and play clubs until West takes the ♣A. Now there are nine tricks. Declarer could fail if they win a second heart trick too early. When West wins the ♣A, the heart suit will provide four winners for East-West.

Score: 3NT making nine tricks = 40 + 30 + 30 = 100 (trick score) + 500 (vulnerable game bonus) = 600.

# BIDDING

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CLICK TO PLAY





## Chapter Three

# RESPONDING TO ONE NO TRUMP

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### **In this chapter you will learn about:**

- Responding to partner's opening bid of 1NT with balanced and unbalanced hands in the following ranges:
  - Minimum
  - Medium
  - Maximum
- Developing extra tricks with long suits

You will pick up lots of different shapes of hands – some with wild distributions and others where the suits are evenly divided – with no really long or short suits. The latter are called **balanced hands**.

There are three balanced hand patterns:

1. ♠xxxx ♥xxx ♦xxx ♣xxx (4-3-3-3)
2. ♠xxxx ♥xxxx ♦xxx ♣xx (4-4-3-2)
3. ♠xxx ♥xx ♦xxxxx ♣xxx (3-2-5-3).

Balanced hands generally play better in no trumps, and unbalanced hands play better with the long suit as trumps.

There's a special opening bid for balanced hands that have 15, 16 or 17 points, and that's 1NT. As responder, add your points to what partner is showing and make the decision about where to play the hand.

The general idea is that if responder has a balanced hand too, they will leave the contract in no trumps. But with a long suit of their own, they should make their suit the trump suit.

Your partnership needs 25 or more points between the two hands to bid to game. 3NT is game. Other game levels are:

- 4♠ or 4♥
- 5♦ or 5♣

## Responding to 1NT Opening Bids

When partner opens the bidding 1NT, you, as responder (the **decider**), have a lot of information about that hand. Opener (the **describer**), is showing a narrow point range (15, 16 or 17 points) and a balanced distribution 4-3-3-3, 4-4-3-2 or 5-3-3-2.

You might think that the player who has the stronger hand should be making the decisions for the partnership during the auction, but this isn't always the case. It's really the player who knows more about the combined assets of the hands. The responder's job is to add up the combined hands to determine **how high** to play the hand and **where** to play the hand.

These are the factors responder will be considering:

### **How High**

Game: 25+ points

Partscore: fewer than 25 points

### **Where**

Game:	4♥ or 4♠	a major-suit fit
-------	----------	------------------

	3NT	no major-suit fit
--	-----	-------------------

Partscore:	in a suit	a fit
	in no trumps	no fit

## **Deciding How High**

Suppose you hold the following hand and you hear partner open INT:

♠ A43  
 ♥ J53  
 ♦ 8642  
 ♣ 964

Are there enough points for game? Adding opener's promised points to your 5 points:

Your points	5	5
+ Partner's points	+15	+17
= Combined points	= 20 (at least)	= 22 (at most)

Even if opener has their maximum point count of 17, there are not the required 25 points for game. So the answer to **how high** will be a **partscore**. You should pass.

As another example, partner opens 1NT and your hand is:

♠ A43  
♥ J64  
♦ K754  
♣ Q107

Are there enough points for game? Adding opener's promised points to your 10 points:

Your points	10	10
+ Partner's points	+15	+17
= Combined points	= 25 (at least)	= 27 (at most)

Even if opener has their minimum of 15, there are enough points for a game. This time the answer to **how high** will be **game**. You should bid 3NT.

## Deciding Where

The key question is: '**Do we have a fit?**' Responder can usually determine this by adding the number of cards in their longest suit to the length opener has promised. Remember that opener's hand is balanced:

- |            |                                     |
|------------|-------------------------------------|
| 4-3-3-3 or | Therefore, in any suit, opener has: |
| 4-4-3-2 or | • at least two cards                |
| 5-3-3-2    | • probably three or four cards      |
|            | • maybe five cards.                 |

Using this information to shape your thinking about the possibility of a fit, let's see how you could decide **where** if partner opens 1NT and your hand is:

- |          |  |
|----------|--|
| ♠ J3     | Do you have a fit in hearts? Yes. Opener has promised at |
| ♥ KJ8432 | least two hearts, so the fit has been found. You have 9  |
| ♦ A87    | high card points + 2 length points = 11. Bid 4♥.         |
| ♣ 42     |  |

## Putting it Together: Placing the Contract

If responder can decide both **how high** and **where** to play the hand, the final contract can now be placed, for example, partner opens 1NT and you are the responder.

♠ A62

Your hand has 11 points (10 high card points + 1 length point) for the fifth diamond. The combined total will be between 26 and 28 points. So the answer to **how high** is **game**.

♥ K98

♦ Q9742

♣ J5

There is unlikely to be a major suit fit, so you can answer **where – no trumps**. Forget about playing in a minor suit contract. You would need to make eleven tricks to get the same result as making nine in no trumps.

Once you know what the final contract should be, just bid it. Here you should bid 3NT. Since responder is the decider, it is up to responder to place the contract. Opener should respect your decision and pass 3NT.

Here's another example. Partner opens 1NT. What is your bid with the following hand?

♠ K3

You have 12 points (10 high card points + 2 length points) for the fifth and sixth hearts. You know there are 27–29 combined points. How high – game.

♥ QJ9743

♦ A87

♣ 85

You have six hearts and partner has at least two, so a fit is assured. Play in a major any time there is a major fit. That settles where – hearts.

Your situation is almost identical to the first example. You know **how high** and **where** and want to play a specific game contract. This time, though, you want to play 4♥, so just bid it.

## The Easy Approach to Responses

In practice, responder does best to consider how high first when responding to 1NT. The easy way to do this is to use the point count method to put the hand into one of three groups:

1. Partscore: responder has 0–7 points
2. Maybe Game: responder has 8–9 points
3. Game: responder has 10+ points.

### I. Responding with 0 – 7 points (minimum hand)

When responder knows there are not enough combined points for game, the best partscore contract should now be found. How can responder choose the best partscore? If there is a fit, that suit should be trumps, otherwise, a partscore in no trumps should be chosen.

Responder uses the following guide to help decide whether there is a fit:

- With a six-card suit or longer, there **must be** a fit ( $6 + 2 = 8$ ).
- With a five-card suit, there is **probably** a fit (if the opener has three or four cards in the suit).
- With a four card suit, there is **probably not** a fit (if opener has two or three cards in the suit).

Consider this hand, when partner has opened 1NT (showing a balanced shape and 15, 16 or 17 points):

- |        |   |
|--------|---|
| ♠ 1087 | You have 4 points, so the partnership has at most 21 points between the two hands. You want to stop in a partscore - you don't have a long suit of your own to bid. |
| ♥ J42  |   |
| ♦ 8763 |   |
| ♣ K85  | The best thing to do is <b>pass</b> . Partner will play the hand in 1NT and try to take seven tricks.   |

Again, partner starts the bidding 1NT, and this is your hand:

♠ 3  
♥ J97642  
♦ 972  
♣ 863

You have only 3 points (1 high card point + 2 length points for the fifth and sixth heart). You don't want to bid any higher than necessary with such limited strength. Opener has at most 17 points, so the total is no more than 20 points between the two hands.

The first decision has been made: **the partnership belongs in a partscore contract.** There is not enough for game. You might be wondering whether you have to say anything with a hand like this. You're probably holding the weakest hand at the table. You'd like hearts to be trumps. You have six of them and partner has shown at least two by opening 1NT. You've found an eight-card fit. Putting the pieces together, your decision is that you belong in a partscore contract with hearts as the trump suit.

**Respond 2♥:** Partner is expected to respect your decision to stop in a partscore with hearts as trumps. You're showing an unbalanced hand, with 0–7 points, unsuitable for no trumps.

If responder, the decider, chooses to pass or bid 2♦, 2♥ or 2♠, all of which show a weak hand, opener must not bid again. Responder is simply deciding on the best partscore. Such a response is called a sign-off bid.

## Exercises

Partner opens the bidding 1NT. What would you respond with each of the following hands?

- |         |          |            |          |
|---------|----------|------------|----------|
| 1. ♠ A7 | 2. ♠ 42  | 3. ♠ J8753 | 4. ♠ 3   |
| ♥ Q842  | ♥ K87532 | ♥ A97      | ♥ 642    |
| ♦ 873   | ♦ 542    | ♦ 5432     | ♦ 765432 |
| ♣ 10743 | ♣ Q4     | ♣ 7        | ♣ 842    |

## Answers

1. Pass. With 6 points, there is no hope of game. You have no five-card or longer suit, so you would pass. The final contract will be 1NT.
2. 2♥. With 7 points (5 high card points + 2 length points) for the six-card suit, there is not quite enough to hope for game. You know there's a fit in hearts, so bid 2♥. Partner will pass.
3. 2♠. Your 6 points (5 high card points + 1 length point) offers no chance for game. Bid to the likely best partscore for your side: 2♠. Opener will say pass as you are the captain, the decider.
4. 2♦. Don't be tempted to pass just because you have a weak hand. The weaker your hand is, the worse your partner will fare playing in a contract of 1NT. With diamonds as trumps, your hand will be worth a couple of tricks at least. Sign-off in 2♦.

## Summary

### Responding to 1NT with 0–7 points (minimum hand)

- Pass with no long suit (fewer than five cards).
- Bid 2♦, 2♥ or 2♠ with a five-card or longer suit.

## 2. Responding with 8 or 9 points (medium hand)

Make an **invitational** bid. When responder has 8 or 9 points, the answer to **how high** is not yet known. A little more information will be required from partner, even though the 1NT opening bid is quite specific. Responder needs to know from opener if there are enough points for game.

Suppose partner opens 1NT, and this is your hand:

♠ KQ8	No trumps looks good, but it's not clear whether to stop in a partscore or go to game. You have 9 high card points. If partner has only 15 points, then the combined total is 24 points ( $15 + 9$ ). That's not quite enough for game. If partner has 16 or 17 points, then there should be enough ( $16 + 9 = 25$ or $17 + 9 = 26$ ).
♥ J54	
♦ 943	
♣ K765	

Respond 2NT. This invites partner to pass with 15 high card points and to go to 3NT with 17 high card points.

The following hands, each containing 8 or 9 points, should respond 2NT to a 1NT opening bid:

- |          |          |          |          |
|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| 1. ♠ K32 | 2. ♠ QJ7 | 3. ♠ K7  | 4. ♠ 643 |
| ♥ J76    | ♥ 76     | ♥ 1052   | ♥ Q2     |
| ♦ KJ84   | ♦ Q43    | ♦ K62    | ♦ AJ853  |
| ♣ 1097   | ♣ K8543  | ♣ Q10753 | ♣ 1074   |

## Summary

### Responding to 1NT with 8 or 9 points (medium hand)

- Bid 2NT with a balanced hand

## 3. Responding with 10+ points (maximum hand)

Make a bid that's forcing to game. When responder knows there are enough combined points for game, the only decision is where. If there's a fit, game should be played in the major suit (**♠** or **♥**), otherwise the final contract should be 3NT.

Consider this hand:

♠ A3  
♥ KQ2  
♦ J1032  
♣ 8765

You have 10 high card points and partner has 15-17. The conclusion is that your side has between 25 and 27 points, enough for game.

Focus on 3NT, 4♥ or 4♠. You want to play the major suit if you have an eight-card trump fit, otherwise you want to play in 3NT. With this hand, it doesn't appear that there's a fit in a major suit, so you should choose 3NT.

Do this by jumping directly to 3NT. You have all the information you need to make the decision, and you're the one to place the contract for the partnership.

Here's another example:

♠ K93  
♥ QJ9765  
♦ A10  
♣ 32

There are 10 high card points + 2 length points for the six-card heart suit. The partnership has at least 25 combined points, even if partner is minimum for opening 1NT (15 high card points).

This time, choose hearts as trumps. Partner's balanced hand contains at least two hearts, and you have six. That's at least eight and could be more. There's a fit, so jump directly to game, 4♥.

If responder has a five-card major ( $\spadesuit$  or  $\heartsuit$ ), it's not known whether there's a fit with partner, the 1NT opener, or not. Some help will be required from partner. There will be a fit unless partner holds only two cards in the suit. You need to make a bid that tells opener that you have enough points for game and a five-card major.

Suppose you have this hand:

$\spadesuit$  AJ975

10 high card points + 1 length point for the fifth spade – a total of 11 points. You want to take the partnership to the game level, but it's not clear whether to choose 3NT or 4 $\spadesuit$ .

$\heartsuit$  92

$\diamond$  AJ3

$\clubsuit$  1054

If your partner has three or more spades, the partnership has an eight-card major suit fit and belongs in 4 $\spadesuit$ . If partner has only two spades, there's no major suit fit and the partnership belongs in 3NT.

Jump to 3 $\spadesuit$ . This response asks partner to bid 4 $\spadesuit$  with three or more spades but to bid 3NT with only two spades. This will get you to your best contract.

For example, if opener holds:

#### Hand A

$\spadesuit$  K84

$\heartsuit$  AK87

$\diamond$  K854

$\clubsuit$  K3

Opener should choose to play in spades as there's a fit, and so bids 4 $\spadesuit$ .

#### Hand B

$\spadesuit$  K4

$\heartsuit$  AK87

$\diamond$  K854

$\clubsuit$  K32

Opener, holding only two spades, chooses a 3NT. There is no spade fit.

## Summary

### Responding to 1NT with 10+ points (maximum hand)

- Bid 4 $\heartsuit$  or 4 $\spadesuit$  with a six-card suit or longer.
- Bid 3 $\heartsuit$  or 3 $\spadesuit$  with a five-card suit.
- Bid 3NT with no possible major-suit fit.

## Play Point - Length – Putting Little Cards to Work

Do you think you could win a trick with a 2? Consider this layout of the heart suit:

	North	
	♥ AKQ2	
West		East
♥ J98		♥ 1073
	South	
	♥ 654	

North–South have only the top three cards in the heart suit, but they can take four tricks by leading the suit. After winning the first three tricks, East–West will have no hearts left, and the lowly ♥2 will be a winner.

Establishing tricks through length is dependent both on how many cards of that suit your side holds and on how the missing cards are divided. Suppose we make a slight change to the layout of the heart suit:

	North	
	♥ AKQ2	
West		East
♥ J983		♥ 107

	South	
	♥ 654	

If North now takes tricks with the ♥A, ♥K and ♥Q, West will have the winning heart (♥J), because they started with four cards, the same number as North. This is why low cards win tricks only some of the time. When you're not sure where your extra tricks are coming from, lead the longest suit in the combined hands.

	Dummy	
	♥ A763	
West		East
♥ QJ10		♥ 98

	You	
	♥ K542	

You have two sure tricks in this suit with the ♥A and the ♥K. Between your hand and dummy there are eight cards in the heart suit, leaving the defenders with only five. If the defenders' hearts are divided reasonably between the two hands, one defender will have three hearts and the other will have two, as in the diagram.

If you take the first two tricks with your ♥A and ♥K, and then lead the suit a third time, the defenders have to follow suit to the first two tricks, but West will be able to win the third trick. Now you have the only remaining hearts, so you have developed an extra trick in the heart suit.

To develop tricks through length, it's the number of cards you and your partner hold that's important, rather than only the high cards. Suppose this is the situation:

	Dummy ♥ 9632	You have no sure tricks in this suit, and it looks so weak that you might feel like looking somewhere else for tricks.
West ♥ AKJ	East ♥ Q	
	You ♥ 108754	Remember, any card that can be turned into a winner ends up with the power of an Ace, whether it takes the first trick or the last.
		If you were to lead this suit three times, the defenders would take three tricks, but you would end up with the last two heart tricks because the defenders would have none left.

## Exercises

1. Partner opens the bidding 1NT. What is your response with each of the following hands?

(a)  
 ♠ A4  
 ♥ KJ10  
 ♦ J765  
 ♣ 10652

(b)  
 ♠ 753  
 ♥ J84  
 ♦ K6  
 ♣ AJ642

(c)  
 ♠ void  
 ♥ 642  
 ♦ QJ864  
 ♣ J9742

(d)  
 ♠ 54  
 ♥ KQ1042  
 ♦ AJ2  
 ♣ 1043

(e)  
 ♠ Q63  
 ♥ K73  
 ♦ 8743  
 ♣ J104

(f)  
 ♠ 64  
 ♥ Q109852  
 ♦ 1054  
 ♣ 82

(g)  
 ♠ KQ5  
 ♥ K52  
 ♦ J75  
 ♣ K986

(h)  
 ♠ AJ9764  
 ♥ 2  
 ♦ KJ4  
 ♣ 965

2. What are the three game bonus levels that are most frequently considered by the responder after a 1NT opening?
3. How many combined points are required for a reasonable chance to make a game level contract?
4. How many points does the responder need to take the partnership right to the game level after an opening bid of 1NT?
5. What kind of hand would responder have to bid a suit at the two- level after an opening bid of 1NT?
6. What are the three types of bidding messages?
7. What message is sent by a response of 4♥ to an opening bid of 1NT?
8. What is an invitational bid that responder can make with a balanced hand after an opening bid of 1NT?
9. Establishing Long Suits: What is the maximum number of tricks you could take with each of the following suit combinations?

Dummy: (a) ♥ A763  
 Declarer: (a) ♥ K952

(b) ♥ 9876  
 (b) ♥ 5432

(c) ♥ A83  
 (c) ♥ K962

(d) ♥ K64  
 (d) ♥ AQ853

## Answers

1. (a) 2NT. Since you have 9 high card points, the partnership has 24–26 points. You can't be sure that you belong in game, but it might be possible if opener is at the top of their range. Bidding 2NT invites opener to bid game with a maximum, but pass with a minimum.
- (b) 3NT. With 9 high card points and 1 length point for the five card club suit, there should be enough combined strength for game. Although the partnership has a minor fit, it should be easier to take nine tricks in 3NT than eleven tricks in 5♣.
- (c) 2♦. You don't have enough to go to game, so settle for the best partscore. Since you have an unbalanced hand, playing in a trump suit will be best. Partner has at least two diamonds, so diamonds should be a reasonable trump suit. Clubs could be better, but you can't afford to get too high.
- (d) 3♥. With 10 high card points and 1 length point for the five- card suit, you know the partnership has enough for game. You can't be certain whether the partnership has an eight-card heart fit, because opener could have only two hearts. A jump to 3♥ asks opener to choose between 3NT and 4♥. With two hearts, opener will choose 3NT, with three or more hearts, opener can put the partnership in the 4♥ game.
- (e) Pass. The combined total is 21–23 points. 1NT appears to be the best spot.
- (f) 2♥.The hand is worth 4 points – 2 high card points and 2 length points for the six-card suit. The partnership has at most 22 combined points. There is at least an eight-card heart fit in the combined hands, since opener has at least two of them. The best partscore contract should be 2♥, so that's what responder bids.
- (g) 3NT. Since you have 12 high card points, the partnership has a combined total of 27–29 high card points. Bid the game in no trumps.
- (h) 4♠. You have 9 high card points and 2 length points. The partnership has at least 27 combined points and at least an eight-card major suit fit. Put the partnership in 4♠, game.

2. 3NT, 4♥ or 4♠. The responder rarely considers 5♣ or 5♦.
3. 25. With fewer than 25, the responder should stop in a partscore.
4. 10+.
5. 0–7, and a six-card suit or longer.
6. Sign-off, invitational and forcing.
7. 4♥ is a sign-off bid, asking opener to pass.
8. 2NT. This is an invitational response showing 8 or 9 points. Opener can pass with 15 points, and carry on to game with 16 or 17 points.
9. (a) Three  
(b) One  
(c) Three  
(d) Five

## Summary

- Knowing that opener has precisely 15, 16 or 17 points and a balanced hand (at least two or three cards in every suit) when the bidding starts with 1NT, responder can usually determine whether to play in a trump suit or in no trumps.
- With 0–7 points: bid two of your suit with a six-card suit, asking opener to pass. Otherwise, pass.
- 8–9 points: bid 2NT, inviting opener to carry on to game if they hold 16 or 17, and to pass if they hold 15.
- 10+ points: bid ♥ 4 or ♠ 4 with six cards in that suit. Bid ♥ 3 or ♠ 3 with five cards in the suit, asking opener to choose between 3NT and ♥ 4 or ♠ 4. Otherwise bid 3NT with a balanced hand.
- The 1NT opener will pass if responder bids a suit at the two-level.
- If responder jumps to the three-level in a suit, opener is expected to bid again.

# Play Hands

## 3.I

**Dealer North**

**Nil Vul**

Play this hand online for practise at [joanbuttsbridge.com](http://joanbuttsbridge.com)

	North	Bidding	
	♠ A85	N	E S W
	♥ 1074	1NT	Pass
	♦ A1042	3NT	Pass
	♣ AK4		
West		East	North, holding a balanced hand and 15 high card points, opens the bidding with 1NT.
♠ 962		♠ KQJ7	
♥ QJ65		♥ 932	
♦ 53		♦ J97	
♣ J852		♣ Q76	
South			South knows that with a balanced hand and 12 high card points, there are the values for game and so bids 3NT.
♠ 1043			
♥ AK8			
♦ KQ86			
♣ 1093			

## Opening Lead, Play and Defence

East leads the ♠K. There are eight sure winners – one spade, two hearts, three diamonds and two clubs. For the extra trick, declarer should look to diamonds, as this is the longest combined holding. East–West will have no more diamonds, so North–South’s last diamond will be a winner.

Using the technique of length, declarer will be able to develop nine tricks.

Score: 3NT making nine = 40 + 30 + 30 = 100 (trick score) + 300 (non-vulnerable game bonus) tricks = 400.

**3.2****Dealer East****EW Vul**Play this hand online for practise at **joanbuttsbridge.com**

North	Bidding	
♠ Q5	E	S W N
♥ QJ83	Pass	Pass 1NT Pass
♦ 9542	4♠	Pass Pass Pass
♣ J84		
West	East	When West opens 1NT holding 17 high card points, East knows for sure that there's a spade fit. Along with the six spades in East's hand, there must be at least two spades in West's hand (which is balanced).
♠ K73	♠ A109842	
♥ A72	♥ K6	
♦ QJ10	♦ 63	
♣ AK73	♣ Q109	
South		East has 11 points (9 high card points + 2 length points) in spades. Adding that to West's 15, 16 or 17 makes enough for game. East should bid 4♠.
♠ J6		
♥ 10954		
♦ AK87		
♣ 652		

**Opening Lead, Play and Defence**

South's lead will be the ♦A, and then the ♦K. As soon as East or West gains the lead, trumps should be drawn. Because of the nine-card suit, and the 2-2 split, East-West will take all six spade tricks, and should come to a total of eleven tricks, losing only to the ♦A and ♦K.

Score: 4♠ making 11tricks = 30 + 30 + 30 + 30 + 30 = 150 (trick score) + 500 (vulnerable game bonus) = 650.

**3.3****Dealer South****NS Vul**Play this hand online for practise at [joanbuttsbridge.com](http://joanbuttsbridge.com)

North	Bidding	
♠ KQJ109	S	
♥ J103	W	
♦ 84	N	
♣ 973	E	
West	Pass	1NT
♠ A75	Pass	2NT
♥ AK97		
♦ Q532		
♣ A10		
East	Pass	3NT
♠ 842		
♥ Q64		
♦ AK76		
♣ 862		
South		South passes, and West, who holds a balanced hand (3-4-4-2) with 17 high card points, opens the bidding with 1NT. North passes, and it's East's turn. This hand is balanced too (3-3-4-3). There are 9 high card points – just enough to make the invitational bid of 2NT.
♠ 63		
♥ 852		
♦ J109		
♣ KQJ54		
		This asks partner to bid 3NT with a maximum (17 high card points), and to pass 2NT with less than that. East, the responder, is showing 8 or 9 points by bidding 2NT. West, holding 17 high card points, bids 3NT.

**Opening Lead, Play and Defence**

North leads the top of the sequence, the ♠K, promising the ♠Q and the ♠J. Where are West's nine tricks to come from?

The sure winners are: one spade (♠A,) three hearts (♥A, ♥K, ♥Q), three diamonds (♦A, ♦K, ♦Q), and one club (♣A). That's eight tricks, and declarer is looking for a ninth.

The best chance for an extra winner is diamonds, because there are eight cards between the East-West hands. If the defenders' diamonds divide 3-2, the last diamond in each of the East-West hands will provide the extra trick. You might even notice that there's an extra trick available in the heart suit when it divides 3-3. The thirteenth heart in the West hand will make a trick.

It's possible to make ten tricks on this hand – one in spades, four in hearts, four in diamonds, and one in clubs.

Score: 3NT making 10 tricks =  $40 + 30 + 30 + 30 = 130$  (trick score) + 300 (non-vulnerable game bonus) = 430.

**3.4****Dealer West****Both Vul**Play this hand online for practise at [joanbuttsbridge.com](http://joanbuttsbridge.com)

North	Bidding	
♠ Q9	W	
♥ AK63	N	
♦ AK94	E	
♣ J108	S	
West	Pass	Pass 1NT Pass 2♠
♠ A7	Pass	Pass
♥ J42		
♦ 1072		
♣ KQ752		
East		
♠ K54		
♥ Q10987		North opens 1NT with a balanced
♦ J8		17 high card points, and South has
♣ A94		to decide what to do. There are
South		only 5 points (3 high card points +
♠ J108632		2 length points).
♥ 5		
♦ Q653		
♣ 63		
		South's hand will be useless if the
		contract is played in no trumps, as
		it will be difficult to reach South's
		hand to enjoy the spade tricks. If
		spades are trumps, at least the
		South hand is worth three or four
		tricks.

**Opening Lead, Play and Defence**

The opening lead will be the ♣K, promising the ♣Q. (Note: in a suit contract, the lead may be from two touching honours only rather than three.) After losing the first two club tricks, South will trump the third and play on spades. It's necessary to lose two spade tricks to the ♠A and the ♠K, but after that, because of the spade length, four tricks will be won. This shows the power of having a trump suit.

The diamond suit will produce four tricks, because after the ♦A, ♦K, and the ♦Q, the last diamond in each hand will produce a trick, because there are none left (and no trumps left in the opponents' hands to trump diamonds). South will come to nine tricks, losing two trumps (the ♠A and the ♠K) and two clubs (the ♣A and the ♣K).

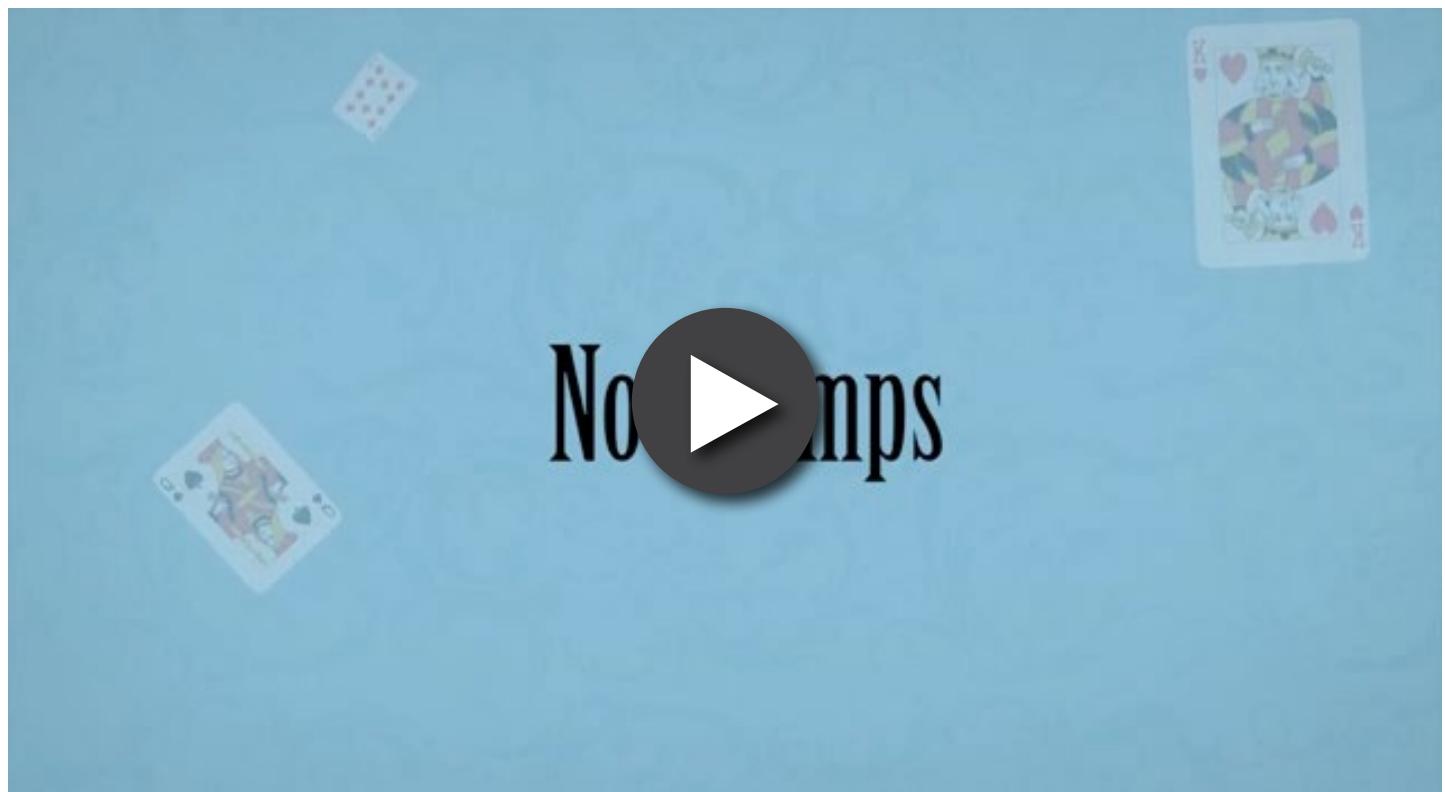
Score: 2♠ making 9 tricks = 30 + 30 + 30 = 90 (trickscore) + 50 (partscore bonus) = 140.

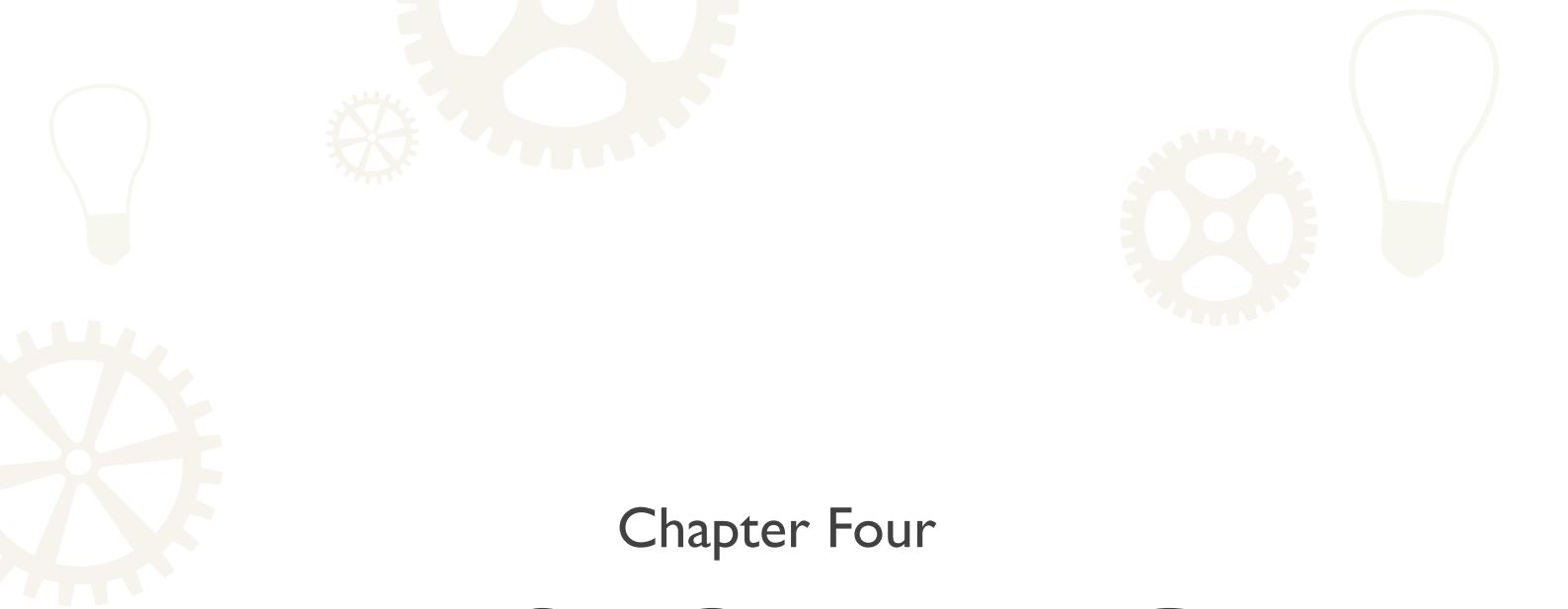
Notice that if the contract is 1NT, declarer will fail if the defenders play carefully. They can take five club tricks and two spade tricks before declarer can manage to make seven tricks.

# NO TRUMPS

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CLICK TO PLAY





## Chapter Four

# **RESPONDING TO OPENING BIDS OF ONE OF A SUIT**

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### **In this chapter you will learn about:**

- Raising partner's suit
- Responding in your own suit
- Showing a limited and unlimited hand
- Responding in no trumps
- The play technique of the finesse

## Responding with a Fit

As responder, the easiest times are when you have a fit for partner, so always look first at what you hold in the suit partner has opened.

Raising that suit will show support, and says to partner, 'We've found the trump suit'. Your next job is to determine **how high** to bid. This involves adding your points to 13+ (you're not sure yet exactly how many partner holds, but something above 13) to see whether you could bid to **game** or sometimes even higher.

Let's say partner has opened with 1♠. With a fit for opener (three or more cards in their suit), make what's called a **limit bid** and respond like this:

6–9	Raise to two	(1♠ P 2♠) (minimum hand)
10–12	Raise to three	(1♠ P 3♠) (medium hand)
13+	Raise to game	(1♠ P 4♠) (maximum hand).

You need to give partner the exact message of your points and shape, because then partner will know whether to bid more or not. When there's a fit, your **short suits** will make your hand better, because you'll be able to trump losers in the short suits faster.

For each:

- **doubleton** (two cards), add an extra 1 point
- **singleton** (one card), add 3 extra points
- **void** (no cards), add 5 extra points.

Note: So far we've only added for length, but once a fit becomes known, both opener and responder may use shortage points **instead** of length points in their hand evaluation. Bridge hands are dynamic, and a hand might improve in value as you find out more about partner's shape.

Let's have a look at a hand:

♠ AQ2  
 ♥ 10876  
 ♦ A543  
 ♣ 83

♠ 876  
 ♥ AQJ93  
 ♦ K82  
 ♣ A7

North, the dealer, passes, and so does East. You have 14 high card points (two Aces worth 4 points each, that's 8, one King worth 3 points, one Queen worth 2 points, and one Jack worth 1 point). There's also an extra point for the fifth heart. So the total is 15.

Open 1♥. West passes and your partner North has 10 high card points, a fit in hearts, and a doubleton club. That's 11 total points, putting the hand in the medium range. You'll show between 10 and 12 by jumping to 3♥. Opener knows there should be enough to try for game, so bids 4♥.

## Responding in a New Suit

Sometimes there is no immediate fit, so the bidding needs to resolve where to play without wasting bidding space. Take this hand:

♠ 98  
 ♥ A1052  
 ♦ AQ105  
 ♣ A83

♠ A76  
 ♥ K9863  
 ♦ 83  
 ♣ 942

North opens 1♦, and South has enough to respond, but no fit for opener's diamonds. South bids 1♥, the longest suit. This is an **unlimited** bid showing at least four hearts and 6+ points, suggesting hearts as trumps. North will show the fit and a minimum by bidding 2♥. South doesn't have enough for game so passes 2♥.

Any **new** suit bid by responder makes the bidding **forcing**, meaning that partner must bid again, because the partnership is still trying to find a fit. All the following sequences are forcing – the opener is expected to bid again:

- (a) 1♥ Pass 1♠
- (b) 1♣ Pass 1♦
- (c) 1♥ Pass 2♣

To show a new suit at the one-level, you need 6 or more points. To bid your own suit at the two-level, a much better hand is required, usually one with almost opening strength. 10 points is the absolute minimum.

When you hear partner open in a **minor** suit and you don't plan to raise that suit, bid a major if you have four or more cards in it. Note that four cards rather than five is adequate here. Bidding this way will make it easier to find 4-4 major fits.

Consider each of the following hands you might hold as responder after partner starts the bidding with 1♦:

♠ KJ87  
♥ 432  
♦ 102  
♣ Q962

With this hand, you would like to suggest spades as trumps. You have only 6 high card points, but you want to keep the auction going in case the partnership has enough combined strength for game. Opener could have up to 20 points, and even if not, the partnership would still like to find the best partscore. **Bid 1♠.**

♠ KJ873  
♥ AQ  
♦ 102  
♣ Q962

This hand is worth 13 points (12 high card points + 1 length point for the five-card spade suit). The partnership must have enough points for game. You should still respond 1♠, showing your suit. It's too early to decide whether the contract should be 3NT, 4♠ or something else. That's why the change of suit needs to be forcing for opener to bid again. **Bid 1♠.**

♠ KJ873  
♥ 43  
♦ KQ102  
♣ Q9

Finding a major suit fit takes priority over a minor suit fit. You only need ten tricks for the game bonus in a major, whereas you need eleven in a minor. If you don't find a major fit, you can always go back to the minor, as the auction is forcing. If partner doesn't like spades, you can go back to diamonds. **Bid 1♠.**

♠ KJ873  
♥ AK43  
♦ 102  
♣ 62

With a choice of suits to show partner, bid the longer one. You may have the chance to show hearts later. **Bid 1♠.**

On the hand below, partner has again opened 1♦:

♠ 873  
♥ AK4  
♦ 102  
♣ AJ1073

You need a strong hand like this to bid your suit at the two-level, because the auction is getting higher while you're committing to search for a suitable trump suit. **Bid 2♣.**

## Responding One No Trump

On the hand below, partner has again opened 1♦:

♠ Q93  
♥ K84  
♦ 432  
♣ K1097

You have 8 high card points. You don't have support for partner's diamond suit, and you don't have a suit you can show at the one-level. You would have to go to the two-level to tell partner about the club suit – but that requires a better hand. You have too much to say pass. **Bid 1NT.**

A response of 1NT is used when you have a hand of 6–9 high card points and nothing else to bid. It keeps the auction going and says that you can't support partner's suit and don't have a suit to show at the one- level. It's best to keep the meaning of opener's and responder's bids in separate categories, because the 1NT response is nothing like a 1NT opening (15, 16, or 17 points, balanced).

## Summary

### Minimum Hands

6–9	(limited bid)	With a fit, raise to two of suit opened (eg 1♠ P 2♠). Without a fit, bid your own suit at one-level (eg 1♦ P 1♥). Without a fit, and with a weak hand, bid 1NT (eg 1♠ P 1NT).
6+	(unlimited bid)	Without a fit, bid new suit at two level (eg 1♠ P 2♣).
6–9	(limited bid)	Without a fit, and with a weak hand, bid 1NT (eg 1♠ P 1NT).

### Medium Hands

10–12	(limited bid)	With a four-card fit, raise to three of suit (eg 1♠ P 3♠). Without a fit, bid new suit at two level (eg 1♠ P 2♣).
10+	(unlimited bid)	Without a fit, bid new suit at two level (eg 1♠ P 2♣).

### Maximum Hands

13+	(limited bid)	With a fit, raise to game (eg 1♠ P 4♠). Bid 2/3NT (eg 1♠ P 2/3NT) with a balanced hand.
13+	(unlimited bid)	Bid own suit at two-level (eg 1♠ P 2♣/♦/♥).

## Play Point - The Finesse

The finesse is an attempt to take a trick with a card when the other side has a higher-ranked card still in their possession. Suppose you need to take two tricks from the heart suit in this layout:

	Dummy	
	♥ AQ	
West		East
♥ KJ974		♥ 10865
	You	
	♥ 32	

You have one sure trick, the ♥A. Where's the second trick to come from? You want to make use of the ♥Q. It won't do much good to play the ♥A and then the ♥Q, because West will win the second trick with the ♥K.

The guideline here is to lead towards the card you hope will take a trick. Start by leading a low heart from your hand towards the dummy, making West play before you have to choose dummy's card. Suppose West plays a low heart. You play dummy's ♥Q and it wins. You still have the ♥A left for a second trick in the suit.

This is called taking a **finesse**. You're hoping the defenders' cards are favourably located and that your finesses will be successful, but that won't always be the case. If the ♥K is moved to East's hand, this will be the layout:

	Dummy	
	♥ AQ	
West		East
♥ J974		♥ K10865
	You	
	♥ 32	

When you lead a low heart toward dummy and play the ♥Q, East will win the trick with the ♥K and your finesse will lose. Too bad, but there was nothing you could do. A finesse will work 50% of the time.

## Exercises

1. Partner opens the bidding 1♠. What would you respond with each of the following hands?

(a)	(b)	(c)
♠ 84	♠ J983	♠ KJ84
♥ Q965	♥ 75	♥ A1073
♦ J1064	♦ KQ95	♦ 6
♣ KJ4	♣ Q97	♣ 10642

2. Partner opens the bidding with 1♣. What would you respond with each of the following hands?

(a)	(b)	(c)
♠ 984	♠ Q92	♠ 986
♥ Q1063	♥ AJ875	♥ 103
♦ 103	♦ Q106	♦ KQ3
♣ J953	♣ 96	♣ AQ1082

3. Play Exercise: The Finesse

What is the maximum number of tricks you could take with each of the following suit combinations? On what will it depend? From which hand should you start the play?

Dummy: (a) ♦ K7    (b) ♦ 853    (c) ♦ AQ    (d) ♦ QJ10    (e) ♦ Q53  
 Declarer: (a) ♦ 52    (b) ♦ KQ6    (c) ♦ 95    (d) ♦ A64    (e) ♦ A64

## Answers

1. (a) 1NT With 7 points, you don't have enough strength to bid a new suit at the two-level. 1NT fills the gap.
  - (b) 2♠ A raise to the two-level shows support for partner's suit, and 6–9 points.
  - (c) 3♠ With support for partner's suit, add your shortage points. You have 8 high card points and 3 shortage points for the singleton diamond. A limit raise to the three-level shows 10–12 total points.
- 
2. (a) Pass With 3 points, you don't have enough to bid.
  - (b) 1♥ With 9 high card points and 1 for the five-card suit, keep things going by suggesting a new suit.
  - (c) 3♣ 11 high card points and 1 for the five-card suit. A jump raise to three shows support and 10–12 points.
- 
3. (a) One Depends on where the Ace is, hopefully on declarer's left. Play towards dummy.
  - (b) Two Depends on where the Ace is, hopefully on declarer's right. Play towards declarer's hand.
  - (c) Two Depends on where the King is, hopefully on declarer's left. Lead towards dummy.
  - (d) Three Depends where the King is, hopefully on declarer's right. Lead towards declarer's hand.
  - (e) Two Depends on the King. Hope it's on declarer's left. Lead a small card from dummy and play the Ace from declarer's hand, then play a small card towards dummy's Queen.

## Summary

The responder to an opening bid of one of a suit has the following choices:

- Pass = 0—5 points.
- Support partner's suit, especially if there's a major suit fit (i.e. you hold three cards or more in that suit):  
Raise to the two-level = 6—9 points  
Raise to the three-level = 10—12 points  
Raise to the four-level = 13+ points.
- Use shortage points to value your hand, when there's a fit  
Add:
  - 1 point for a doubleton (two cards in a suit)
  - 3 points for a singleton (one card in a suit)
  - 5 points for a void (no cards in a suit).
- Bid a new suit with
  - 6 or more points at the one-level and
  - 10 or more points at the two-level

A bid of a new suit by responder is a forcing bid, and opener is expected to bid again.

- Respond 1NT with 6—9 points when you can't support partner's suit, or suggest a new suit at the one-level.

# Play Hands

## 4.I

**Dealer North**

**Nil Vul**

Play this hand online for practise at [joanbuttsbridge.com](http://joanbuttsbridge.com)

	North	Bidding	
	♠ AQ6	N    E    S    W	
	♥ 10876	Pass   Pass   1♥   Pass	
	♦ A543	3♥   Pass   4♥   Pass	
	♣ 83		
West		Pass   Pass	
♠ K543	♠ J109		
♥ 42	♥ K5	North and East pass and South,	
♦ QJ10	♦ 976	holding 15 total points (14 high	
♣ J1042	♣ KQ965	card points + 1 length point) for	
		the five-card heart suit, opens	
	South	with 1♥. North has 10 high card	
	♠ 876	points and an extra point for the	
	♥ AQJ93	doubleton club now that there's a	
	♦ K82	known heart fit – total 11.	
	♣ A7		

The response to make is 3♥, called a limit raise, showing a fit in hearts and 10–12 points. This asks partner to continue to game in hearts if there are 25 or more points between the two hands, and to pass 3♥ if not. South, with 15 total points, bids 4♥, knowing that there are enough points for game.

## Opening Lead, Play and Defence

The lead from West is the ♦Q, which will be won by North. There are two possible finesses to be taken on this hand, in the trump suit and in spades. Declarer should try the trump suit first and needs to be in the North hand to start the play for the finesse to work. When East plays a small card in hearts, South should play either the ♥9, ♥J or ♥Q. This will win, as the ♥K is with East and it will fall next when the ♥A is played.

Once trumps have been drawn, South needs to be in hand to try the spade finesse and should lead a small spade up towards North, inserting the ♠Q if West plays low. When this wins, North–South will make ten tricks (possibly even eleven if the last diamond is used to discard the club loser).

Score: 4♥ making 10 tricks =  $30 + 30 + 30 + 30 = 120$  (trick score) + 300 (bonus for the non-vulnerable game) = 420 to North–South.

**4.2****Dealer East****EW Vul**Play this hand online for practise at [joanbuttsbridge.com](http://joanbuttsbridge.com)

North	Bidding	
♠ K5	E	S W N
♥ J865	1♠	Pass
♦ 972	4♠	Pass
♣ Q1084	Pass	Pass
West	East	
♠ 10984	♠ AQJ63	East has an opening bid of 1♠, holding 12 high card points and 1 length point = 13. South passes, and West has a hand with a total value of 14 points (13 high card points + 1 shortage point for the doubleton heart). West knows what suit to have as trumps (♠), and also that game should be bid.
♥ A7	♥ 94	
♦ AJ63	♦ Q1054	
♣ A63	♣ K7	
South		So West bids 4♠ immediately. That ends the auction.
♠ 72		
♥ KQ1032		
♦ K8		
♣ J952		

**Opening Lead, Play and Defence**

South leads the top card from two touching cards (♥K). Declarer needs to make ten tricks and will try to take the finesse in trumps (♠) and also diamonds.

Declarer should first play on the trump suit and take the finesse. The ♠10 should be played, if North doesn't play the ♠K, declarer will play the ♠3. When the ♠10 holds the trick, another spade is played and now the ♠K will appear and will be taken by the ♠A.

Now that the opponents' trumps have been drawn, declarer could also try the finesse in diamonds by leading the ♦Q towards the ♦A and ♦J and hoping that the ♦K is in the South hand. It is – the finesse worked (again), and you can make all four diamond tricks by playing the suit this way. Declarer can actually make twelve tricks (two overtricks), but even eleven is one more than was needed.

Score: 4♠ making 12 tricks =  $30 + 30 + 30 + 30 + 30 + 30 = 180$  (trick score) + 500 (vulnerable game bonus) = 680 to East-West.

**4.3****Dealer South****NS Vul**Play this hand online for practise at [joanbuttsbridge.com](http://joanbuttsbridge.com)

North	Bidding	South, with a balanced hand and 14 points, opens 1♦. West passes, and North, with 7 high card points, doesn't have a suit to call at the one-level, isn't strong enough to bid a new suit at the two-level, and shouldn't raise diamonds without at least four cards in that suit. So, the bid of 1NT will best describe this hand, showing 6–9 high card points (a limit bid), and not forcing. Opener may pass, and does, as there are not enough points for game.
♠ 875	S      W      N      E	
♥ 1052	1♦      Pass      1NT      Pass	
♦ 984	Pass      Pass	
♣ AQJ8		
West	East	
♠ QJ6	♠ 10942	
♥ Q96	♥ KJ87	
♦ QJ107	♦ A2	
♣ K102	♣ 743	
South		
♠ AK3		
♥ A43		
♦ K653		
♣ 965		

**Opening Lead, Play and Defence**

The lead by East will be the ♥7 – the fourth-highest of the longest and strongest suit. Declarer (North) has to take seven tricks to fulfil the contract. There are only four sure winners: the ♠A and ♠K, the ♥A, and the ♣A. Three more tricks are required.

The club suit will hopefully provide declarer with the extra tricks required. Win the ♥A, and play a small club from the South hand towards the ♣AQJ8, playing the ♣J or the ♣Q if West plays low.

It's even possible to cross back to hand with the ♠A and make the same play in clubs, this time playing whichever of the ♣Q or ♣J is remaining. After the ♣A is played, the very last club will also make a trick, because it's the last.

If the lead in diamonds comes from the North hand towards ♦K, another trick can also be made. The finesse have worked. It's possible to take eight tricks.

Score: 1NT making 7 tricks = 40 (trick score) + 50 (partscore bonus) = 90. If you make an overtrick, add another 30, making the score 120.

**4.4****Dealer West****Both Vul**Play this hand online for practise at [joanbuttsbridge.com](http://joanbuttsbridge.com)

North	Bidding	
♠ KJ102	W	N E S
♥ 7	Pass	Pass 1♦ Pass
♦ K972	1♥	Pass 2♥ Pass
♣ QJ106		
West	East	Pass Pass
♠ A76	♠ 98	
♥ K9863	♥ A1052	West and North pass, and it's up
♦ 83	♦ AQ105	to East to open 1♦, holding 14
♣ 942	♣ A83	points. South says pass, and West
South		responds 1♥, showing four or more
♠ Q543		cards in that suit. (Note: responder
♥ QJ4		need only have four cards to bid a
♦ J64		major, as opposed to opener, who
♣ K75		needs five or more.)
		Now the fit has been found, and East
		raises to 2♥. This will be the final
		contract, as there are not enough
		points to bid the game.

**Opening Lead, Play and Defence**

The opening lead from North is the ♣Q, top of the sequence. Dummy will take the trick, and trumps should be drawn. West should play two rounds of trumps, winning these tricks with the ♥A and the ♥K. There's no need to play a third round (and use two of yours for a winner of theirs) when their only trump left is a winner.

Try a finesse in the diamond suit by leading a small diamond from the West hand and playing the ♦Q if North (correctly) plays low. The ♦Q will hold the trick, and West should make nine tricks: one spade, one spade ruff in the dummy hand, four hearts, two diamonds, and one club.

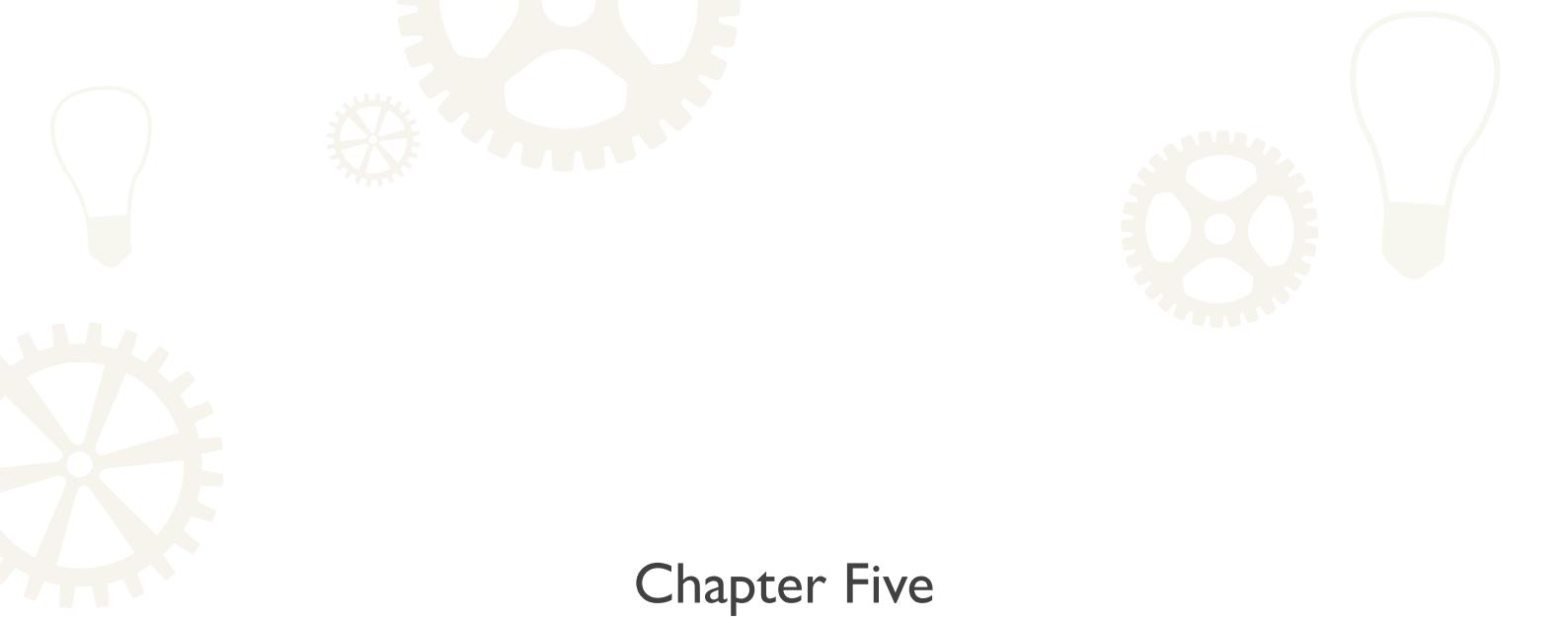
Score: 2♥ making 9 tricks = 30 + 30 + 30 = 90 (trick score) + 50 (partscore bonus) = 140 to East-West.

# **RESPONDING TO SUIT BIDS**

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**CLICK TO PLAY**





# Chapter Five

# **OPENER CONTINUES THE BIDDING**

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**In this chapter you will learn about:**

- Opener's second bid with
  1. One suit
  2. Two suits
  3. Balanced shape
  4. Support for partner's suit
- The technique of making tricks by trumping losers

## Opener's Rebids after Opening Bids of One of a Suit

What does opener do now, after hearing responder's bid? Opener's original bid started the description of the hand, and now, at the second bid (called **opener's rebid**), it's time to describe the strength and shape in more detail. This will help partner, responder, to make the best decision about **how high** and **where** to play the hand.

### (I) Strength

An opening one-bid shows a hand of between 13 and 20 points, and either a balanced or unbalanced shape. This covers a lot of possibilities and needs further description. At this second round, you'll narrow down the strength of the hand into three ranges:

- Minimum (13–15 points)
- Medium (16–18 points)
- Maximum (19–20 points).

Your rebid will tell just which of these hands you have. Compare these three hands, all of which have the same distribution:

(1) ♠ 82

♥ AQJ1097

♦ AJ3

♣ 104

(2) ♠ 82

♥ AQJ1097

♦ AKJ

♣ 104

(3) ♠ 82

♥ AQJ1097

♦ AKJ

♣ K4

♠ 82  
♥ AQJ1097  
♦ AJ3  
♣ 104

Hand 1 contains 12 high card points plus 2 length points for the six-card suit – a total of 14. That's a minimum opening hand, so you would make the **minimum rebid, the cheapest possible.**

You	Partner
1♥	1♠
2♥	

♠ 82  
 ♥ AQJ1097  
 ♦ AKJ  
 ♣ 104

Hand 2 contains an extra King, making it worth 17 points. Now it's a **medium-strength hand**, and you would show partner that by **jumping a level of the bidding**.

You	Partner
1♥	1♠
3♥	

♠ 82  
 ♥ AQJ1097  
 ♦ AKJ  
 ♣ K4

Hand 3 contains even another King, to bring it up to 20 points – **a maximum hand, so jump straight to game.**

You	Partner
1♥	1♠
4♥	

In this precise way, your rebid reflects the different qualities of the three hands, and their appropriate categories.

## (2) Shape

Opener, with their rebid, also defines the exact shape of the hand within a precise range. There are four possible shape categories:

(a)  
**A single-suited hand**  
 Six cards or more of your own suit

♠ AKJ1063  
 ♥ A75  
 ♦ 4  
 ♣ 832

(b)  
**A two-suited hand**  
 Five or more cards of one suit plus four or more cards of another

♠ AKJ106  
 ♥ A7532  
 ♦ 4  
 ♣ 83

(c)

A **balanced** hand

4-3-3-3

4-4-3-2 or

5-3-3-2 shape,

with fewer than four cards of responder's suit

♠ AKJ10

♥ A75

♦ 542

♣ Q83

(d)

A hand with a **fit** for responder's first bid

e.g. the bidding has gone

♠ AKJ10

♥ A75

♦ 3

♣ QJ832

You	Partner
1♣	1♠

and you, the opener, have four spades – a good fit

## After Responder Makes a Forcing Bid

When responder bids a new suit (e.g. 1♥ Pass 1♠), it's known as a **forcing bid**. That means opener must find another bid and keep the conversation alive until the side has found whether there's a fit or not, and how high to go. Partner may have as few as 6 points to bid a new suit at the one-level but may also be strong (unlimited). Responder is expecting to hear more about opener's hand before the partnership can settle on a suitable contract. So, whatever happens, don't pass a bid that's meant as forcing.

### (a) Hands without a Fit for Responder

In each of the following examples, you're North, and the auction has started this way:

North (You)	South (Partner)
1♦	1♥
?	

and you must make your second bid.

**(1) Single-Suited Hands**

♠ 43  
♥ 7  
♦ AQJ9832  
♣ A105

**Rebid your long suit at the minimum level:** With 11 high card points plus 3 length points for the seven-card suit, your hand is a minimum opener. You don't like partner's heart suit, and you have a single-suited hand. There is no other suit to suggest, and your hand is not suitable for no trumps. Rebid 2♦, telling partner you really like diamonds as trumps, and you hold at least six.

♠ 43  
♥ 7  
♦ AQJ9832  
♣ AK5

**Jump rebid your long suit:** This hand is similar to the previous one except that the extra King gives you 17 points, a medium-strength hand.

Rebid 3♦ rather than 2♦. Partner will get the message that you have more than minimum strength, since you jumped a level of bidding.

**(2) Two-Suited Hands**

North (You)	South (Partner)
1♦	1♥
?	

♠ AQ43  
♥ 7  
♦ AQJ93  
♣ 1052

**Bid your second suit at the one-level (1♠):** You don't like partner's hearts, but you can offer another choice – spades – with a minimum hand bid 1♠. Conversations that start with each partner showing one or two suits might go on for some time until an agreement is reached.

♠ 43  
♥ 7  
♦ AQJ93  
♣ KQ1052

**Bid a new suit at the two-level:** You opened 1♦, the higher ranking of the two five-card suits. When responder bids 1♥, show your second suit by bidding 2♣.

### (3) Balanced Hands (not 15–17 points where the opening bid would be 1NT)

North	South
(You)	(Partner)
1♦	1♥
?	

♠ A43  
♥ 72  
♦ AQJ9  
♣ Q1052

**Bid 1NT:** You could show your other suit, clubs, or tell partner that you have a balanced hand. A rebid of 1NT is recommended because it keeps the partnership at the one-level and also sends responder an accurate description of the shape of your hand.

♠ A43  
♥ 72  
♦ AQJ93  
♣ Q105

**Bid 1NT:** Here you don't have a second suit to show, and your hand is balanced. With 13 high card points plus 1 length point for the five-card suit, it's in the minimum range. 1NT is a better bid than 2♦, as that would show six diamonds.

### (b) Hands with a Fit for Responder

With four cards or more in responder's suit, show the support. Which level you choose will depend on the strength, and opener's three categories apply when making the decision about how high.

- Minimum (13–15 points)
- Medium (16–18 points)
- Maximum (19–20 points).

#### (1) Minimum

Suppose you hold this hand:

♠ J764  
♥ A4  
♦ AKJ42  
♣ 95

You	Partner
1♦	1♠
2♠	

You have 13 high card points and 1 shortage point for each of the two doubletons = 15 total points. Once a fit has been found, shortage points apply to both opener and responder.

With a minimum opening hand (13–15), raise spades to the cheapest level, 2♠. Partner will have at least four spades. Responder will now be in a position to decide whether to stop in partscore or go to game.

## (2) Medium

The auction starts the same way as last time, but you are better than minimum:

♠ A764                  With a medium hand (16–18), jump a level.

♥ A4

♦ AKJ42

♣ 95

You                  Partner

1♦                  1♠

3♠

There are 16 high card points and 1 point for each doubleton, that's 18. Be more aggressive this time. Bid 3♠, letting partner know you like spades and have a hand of 16–18 points. Partner can now decide whether to bid game.

## (3) Maximum

The auction starts the same way:

You open the bidding 1♦, and partner responds 1♠.

♠ A764                  With a maximum hand (19-20), jump to game.

♥ A4

♦ AKJ1042

♣ 8

You                  Partner

1♦                  1♠

4♠

You count 1 point for the doubleton heart and 3 points for the singleton club. With your 16 high card points, the hand is now worth 20 points. This is a wonderful hand, and you want to describe the maximum strength while letting partner know that you like spades as trumps, jumping all the way to 4♠ (game).

The rebids start to fall into a pattern depending on the strength of opener's hand.

13–15 points:	1♦ P 1♠ P 2♠	With minimum, opener raises to the next level.
16–18 points	1♦ P 1♠ P 3♠	With medium, opener jumps a level.
19–20 points	1♦ P 1♠ P 4♠	With maximum, opener jumps to game.

Let's look at some other rebids opener can make, keeping in mind the principle that '**the more you have, the more you bid**'.

## Responder Raises Your Suit to the Two-Level

You              Partner      The partnership has found a suitable trump suit, but that's not necessarily the end of the bidding.  
 1♥              2♥      (6–9pts) Remember, responder knows only that you have 13–20 points.

When the bidding goes 1♥ Pass 2♥, you, opener, need to be more specific now. The raise to 2♥ is not forcing, so pass with minimum, move toward game with medium, and go straight to game with maximum. Let's see how this works: Responder raises, showing 6–9 points.

♠ 32  
 ♥ AQ842  
 ♦ Q7  
 ♣ KJ32

You              Partner  
 1♥              2♥  
 Pass

**Minimum:** You wouldn't accept a game invitation as you are minimum, 12 high card points and 1 point for each doubleton = 14 total points. You have nothing to add, so pass and end the auction. Partner's raise to 2♥ shows at most nine points. The partnership has at most 23 points, not enough for game.

♠ 32  
 ♥ AQ8642  
 ♦ KQ  
 ♣ KJ3

**Medium:** This hand has 15 high card points plus 1 point for each doubleton, giving you 17. You'd like to invite game rather than actually bid it. If responder has 6 or 7 points, there won't be enough, but if 8 or 9 there will be.

You              Partner  
 1♥              2♥  
 3♥

Rebid by 3♥, leaving the final decision to partner, who, like you, will also need extra values to bid to game.

♠ 32  
 ♥ AKQ642  
 ♦ KQ  
 ♣ KJ3

**Maximum:** Add another point for each of the doubletons, and you now have 20 points. This is a strong hand, and even if responder has as few as 6 points, there should be enough for game. Bid 4♥.

You              Partner  
 1♥              2♥  
 4♥

## Responder makes a stronger invitation

Say you start with 1♥ and responder jumps to 3♥. This shows a fit (4+ hearts) and 10–12 points, inviting you to consider game.

As opener, add your points to 10, 11 or 12. If the combined total is 25+, bid game. With fewer, pass. The bidding goes 1♥ Pass 3♥.

♠ 432  
 ♥ AQ842  
 ♦ Q7  
 ♣ KJ3

**Minimum:** With 12 high card points and 1 point for the doubleton, reject the invitation by **passing**.

♠ 32  
 ♥ AQ842  
 ♦ A7  
 ♣ KJ32

**Medium:** With partner promising at least 10 points, your 14 high card points and 2 shortage points are enough to accept the invitation by **bidding game**, 4♥.

## Responder bids 1NT

This shows 6–9 points without a fit for opener's first bid suit. Responder doesn't have another suit that can be introduced at the one-level. Opener doesn't have to bid again if 1NT sounds like the best spot for the partnership. NB: Responses in no trumps are not forcing. They are limit bids. Let's look at some examples:

You              Partner  
1♥              1NT

♠ A87  
♥ KJ1093  
♦ K65  
♣ Q4

**Pass.** Partner didn't support hearts, and you have a balanced hand. It sounds as if no trumps is the best spot. You have 13 high card points plus 1 length point for the fifth heart.

That's a minimum hand, so take minimum action. As partner's response is not forcing, you should pass. Partner is showing at most 9 points. There isn't enough combined strength for game.

♠ 7  
♥ KJ1093  
♦ J2  
♣ AKJ86

**Bid 2♣.** Here you have a second suit, and you're giving partner a choice between clubs and hearts as the trump suit.

♠ A87  
♥ KJ10932  
♦ 2  
♣ KJ6

**Bid 2♥.** This time you have an unbalanced hand but no second suit to suggest. Your 2♥ rebid emphasises that you think hearts will make a good trump suit even though partner has not shown support. With a minimum hand, rebid your suit at the lowest level.

♠ A87  
♥ AKJ1093  
♦ 2  
♣ KJ6

**Bid 3♥.** This is similar to the previous example except you now have a medium hand of 18 points (16 high card points plus 2 length points for the six-card suit). This tells partner you're interested in reaching game if partner has more than 6 or 7 points. Still add length points because no fit has yet been found.

♠ AK7  
 ♥ KJ1093  
 ♦ A2  
 ♣ KJ6

**Bid 3NT.** You have a balanced hand worth 20 points – 19 high card points plus 1 length point for the five-card suit. Partner hasn't supported hearts, and you have no other four-card or longer suit to suggest, so bid 3NT.

Notice how easy it is if you know the suit you want to play in (your long suit) or you know you want to play in no trumps. **The more you have, the more you bid.** Partner will quickly get the message.

- With a minimum balanced hand, pass the 1NT response or rebid your long suit without jumping.
- With a medium-strength balanced hand, raise to 2NT or rebid your long suit by jumping, inviting responder to continue to game with a little extra.
- With a maximum-strength balanced hand, go right to game level in no trumps or your own suit.

When you don't know exactly what suit to play in, or whether to settle for no trumps, it may take a little longer before your partnership can decide where to play. You can bid your second suit, as in the first hand on p106, and the spotlight falls on responder to select their second bid. That's the subject of the next chapter.

## Play Point - Trumping losers

A trump suit can have a dramatic effect on the number of tricks either side can win. Suppose you are playing in a contract with hearts as trumps and this is the spade suit:

Dummy  
 ♠ 32  
 ♥ 10962

You have one loser in the spade suit as you're missing the ♠Q, but after playing your ♠A and ♠K, dummy will have no spades remaining.  
 Hearts are trumps.

Declarer  
 ♠ AK4  
 ♥ AK743

Lead the ♠4 and trump it with one of dummy's hearts.

Let's look at a complete hand. You're in 4♥ and the opening lead is the ♣K from West:

	<b>North</b> (Dummy)	
	♠ 10643	
Lead ♣ K	♥ AQ85	
	♦ 4	
	♣ A643	
<b>West</b>		<b>East</b>
♠ Q875		♠ KJ9
♥ 3		♥ 642
♦ Q1082		♦ KJ765
♣ KQJ9		♣ 108
<b>South</b>		
(Declarer)		
♠ A2		
♥ KJ1097		
♦ A93		
♣ 752		

You need ten tricks, and you have one sure spade trick, five heart tricks, one diamond trick, and one club trick. That's only eight. There's nothing much to promote or finesse, and your long suits aren't going to provide you with two extra tricks.

The key here is the singleton diamond in the dummy. It allows you to make use of the trump suit to provide the two extra tricks you need. After winning the ♣A, play the ♦4 and win the trick with your ♦A. Dummy has no diamonds left after this trick, so you can lead another diamond and play one of dummy's trumps to win the trick. That's the first extra trick.

Now play a low spade from dummy and win the trick with the ♠A in your hand. Lead your last diamond, and again win the trick by using one of dummy's trumps. That's the second extra trick. Notice that you still have five heart tricks left to take. In effect, you're going to take seven tricks from the trump suit rather than five.

Earlier, we discussed drawing trumps straight away when you have all the tricks you need. That's not the case when you're looking for extra tricks. Sometimes you have to delay drawing trumps. On this hand, if you were to play trumps first, it would take three rounds before East had no hearts left. That would leave you with only one trump in dummy. You could get one extra trick by trumping one of your low diamonds, but you couldn't get the second. There's a lot to think about in the play, especially when you have a trump suit. But it's always good to try something and see how it works out.

## Summary

When choosing a rebid, opener classifies their hand as minimum, medium or maximum and bids accordingly.

- A minimum hand has 13–15 points.
- A medium hand has 16–18 points.
- A maximum hand has 19–20 points.

Opener also shows the shape of the hand with this second bid. There are four possible hand shapes:

1. Single-suited (six or more cards of one suit)
  2. Two-suited (five cards of one suit, and four or more cards of another)
  3. A balanced hand
  4. A hand with support for responder's first bid suit.
- With minimum values, opener rebids as inexpensively as possible. Move cautiously up the bidding levels, or pass if responder has made an invitational bid.
  - With medium values, go straight to game.

Opener must pay attention to the message responder is giving.

- A response in a new suit is a forcing bid, and opener must bid again.
- If responder raises opener's suit to the two-level or bids 1NT, opener doesn't have to bid again, as the response is weak, showing no more than 9 points.

## Exercises

1. Are the following opening hands minimum, medium or maximum?

(a)	(b)	(c)
♠ K3	♠ 2	♠ AKJ2
♥ AK76	♥ A763	♥ AKJ108
♦ AKJ3	♦ K10	♦ 96
♣ Q93	♣ A109754	♣ 84

2. What would be your choice of rebid with each of the following hands after the auction has started?

North	South
(You)	(Partner)
1♥	1♠
?	

(a)	(b)	(c)
♠ 84	♠ Q2	♠ 3
♥ KQ10973	♥ AJ875	♥ QJ942
♦ 103	♦ A105	♦ AK96
♣ AQ5	♣ Q96	♣ K75

(d)	(e)	(f)
♠ KJ73	♠ AJ85	♠ 10962
♥ Q10874	♥ AQ763	♥ AKQ93
♦ A3	♦ 10	♦ void
♣ K10	♣ KJ8	♣ AK82

(g)	(h)	(i)
♠ 3	♠ 2	♠ A2
♥ AQ109752	♥ AJ942	♥ AKJ10983
♦ KQ6	♦ A3	♦ KQ9
♣ K8	♣ K10874	♣ 4

OPENER CONTINUES THE BIDDING

3. What would be your choice of rebid with each of the following hands after the auction has started?

North	South
(You)	(Partner)
1♠	2♠
?	

(a)	(b)	(c)
♠ AKQ862	♠ KJ983	♠ QJ9764
♥ K9	♥ A1064	♥ K10
♦ AJ82	♦ 105	♦ AKQ
♣ 5	♣ KJ	♣ 85

4. Trumping Losers

Assume hearts are trumps and the opponents lead the ♠A, winning the first trick, and then the ♠K. How many trump tricks will you win in each of the following situations?

	(a)	(b)	(c)
Dummy:	♠75 ♥432	♠7 ♥432	♠75 ♥432
Declarer:	♠84 ♥AKQJ10	♠84 ♥AKQJ10	♠8 ♥AKQJ10

What is the advantage of trumping losers with dummy's trumps?

Why is it not usually as advantageous to trump losers in the long hand (declarer's hand)?

# Answers

1. (a) **Maximum.** This hand has 20 high card points, putting it in the maximum range of 19–20 points.
  - (b) **Minimum.** There are 11 high card points plus 2 length points for the six-card suit. This is a minimum hand.
  - (c) **Medium.** 16 high card points plus 1 length point for the five- card suit puts this hand in the medium-strength category of 16–18 points.
- 
2. (a) Bid 2♥. This is a minimum, unbalanced hand of 13 points. With no second suit to suggest and no support for partner’s suit, rebid your suit at the cheapest level.
  - (b) Bid 1NT. There are 13 high card points plus 1 length point for the five- card suit. You can show your minimum-strength, balanced hand by rebidding 1NT.
  - (c) Bid 2♦. This is a minimum-strength hand. Partner hasn’t shown support for your first suit, and you don’t like partner’s suggested choice of suit. Show your other suit to give partner a choice, and bid it at the cheapest available level.
  - (d) Bid 2♠. With four cards in the suit partner has bid, spades will be trumps. The hand is worth 13 high card points and 1 shortage point for each of the doubletons, since you’re planning to support partner’s suit. With a minimum hand, raise partner to the two-level.
  - (e) Bid 3♠. With support for partner’s suit, you can count 3 shortage points for the singleton diamond to go along with your 15 high card points. 18 points puts the hand in the medium- strength category. Jump to the three-level when raising partner’s suit.
  - (f) Bid 4♠. Although there are only 16 high card points, you can count 5 shortage points for the void in clubs when planning to raise partner’s suit. 21 points puts the hand in the maximum category, and you should raise all the way to game.

- (g) Bid 3♥. This is a medium-strength hand with 14 high card points plus 3 length points for the seven-card suit. With an unbalanced hand, no support for partner's suit, and no second suit to show, jump rebid your suit to show the extra strength.
  - (h) Bid 2♣. Show your second suit to give partner a choice of trump suits. With a minimum hand of 12 high card points plus 1 length point for each of the five-card suits, show your second suit at the cheapest available level.
  - (i) Bid 4♥. This is a maximum-strength hand of 20 points – 17 high card points plus 3 length points for the seven-card suit. That's enough to go straight to game.
3. (a) Bid 4♠. There are 17 high card points plus 1 shortage point for the doubleton heart, and 3 for the singleton club, so, with 21 points, this is a maximum. The trump suit is agreed upon, so take the partnership to the game level.
- (b) Pass. A minimum-strength hand of 12 high card points plus 1 shortage point each for the club and diamond doubletons. You don't have to bid over partner's invitational response. Partner's raise shows 6–9 points, so the partnership has at most 23 combined points, not enough for game.
- (c) Bid 3♠. There are 15 high card points and 1 shortage point for each of the doubletons in hearts and clubs. This makes 17 points, and so the hand falls in the medium-strength category of 16–18 points. Move toward the game level by rebidding 3♠, inviting responder to carry on to game with a little extra.
4. (a) Five  
(b) Six  
(c) Five

Trumping losers with dummy's trumps usually gains a trick for declarer.

Trumping losers in declarer's hand does not usually gain a trick.

# Play Hands

## 5.1

**Dealer North**

**Nil Vul**

Play this hand online for practise at **joanbuttsbridge.com**

	North	Bidding	
	♠ Q1098	N	E S W
	♥ K43	1♣	Pass 1♥ Pass
	♦ 7	1♠	Pass 2♥ Pass
	♣ AKJ43	3♥	Pass 4♥ All Pass
West		East	
♠ AK32	♠ J64		
♥ 86	♥ A5	North has 14 points (13 high card	
♦ QJ104	♦ K8652	points + 1 length point) and opens	
♣ 762	♣ Q108	1♣, the longest suit. East passes,	
		and South, with 9 points (7 high	
	South	card points + 2 length points) bids	
	♠ 75	1♥, showing four or more cards	
	♥ QJ10972	in that suit. North now tries 1♠,	
	♦ A93	suggesting a second suit, but	
	♣ 95	South confirms the six-card heart	
		suit by bidding 2♥.	

North, with three hearts and 3 useful shortage points with the singleton diamond (thus the hand is now worth 16 points), invites game by bidding 3♥. South, with 9 points (7 high card points + 1 each for the spade and club doubletons) should take the contract to game, 4♥. South is declarer.

## Opening Lead, Play and Defence

The ♠A is led, and next the ♠K. That's two tricks for the defence. North may try to play another spade, but if so, North will win this with North's ♠Q. The best defence would be a trump switch, feeling that declarer will try to trump losing diamonds in dummy.

That way, at least East-West can try to reduce the trumps in dummy. One, or even two, extra tricks can be made by playing the ♦A and then trumping losing diamonds in the North hand. Note: trumping diamonds will only be possible if there are trumps left in the North hand.

Score: 4♥ making 10 tricks = 30 + 30 + 30 + 30 = 120 (trick score) + 300 (partscore bonus) = 420.

**5.2****Dealer East****EW Vul**Play this hand online for practise at **joanbuttsbridge.com**

	North	Bidding	
	♠ K10963	E      S      W      N	
	♥ 754	P      1♦      Pass      1♠	
	♦ K6	P      3♠      Pass      4♠	
	♣ K92	P      Pass      Pass	
West			
♠ Q2	♠ J5		
♥ 86	♥ QJ109	South, holding 15 points and	
♦ J1094	♦ Q32	four diamonds, opens 1♦. West	
♣ QJ754	♣ A1086	passes, and North (with 9 high	
		card points + 1 length point)	
		bids 1♠. South shows the fit by	
	South	raising spades to 3♠, showing	
	♠ A874	16–18 points, because the	
	♥ AK32	singleton club improves the hand	
	♦ A875	by 3 shortage points. North adds	
	♣ 3	one for the doubleton diamond,	
		and bids the game, 4♠.	

**Opening Lead, Play and Defence**

The opening lead from East will be the ♥Q, top of a sequence. South will win the ♥A, and can draw trumps. After this, a club should be played and once the first trick is lost, dummy's spades should be used to trump the other two club losers. Eleven tricks can be made.

Score: 4♠ making 11 tricks = 30 + 30 + 30 + 30 + 30 = 150 (trick score) + 300 (non-vulnerable game bonus) = 450.

**5.3****Dealer South****NS Vul**Play this hand online for practise at **[joanbuttsbridge.com](http://joanbuttsbridge.com)**

<b>North</b> ♠ 1094 ♥ void ♦ J10876 ♣ QJ975	<b>Bidding</b> S   W   N   E Pass 1♣   Pass 1♥ Pass 2♥   Pass 4♥	<b>West</b> ♠ 753 ♥ QJ93 ♦ K3 ♣ AK62	<b>East</b> ♠ J62 ♥ AK1075 ♦ A92 ♣ 84	Pass   Pass   Pass
<b>South</b> ♠ AKQ8 ♥ 8642 ♦ Q54 ♣ 103				South passes, and West has opening values, 13 points, but no five-card major suit to bid. Although the hand is balanced, there are not enough points to open 1NT.
				So the next best thing is to bid 1♣. North passes and East bids 1♥. South passes and West now supports partner's hearts. Because the West hand is minimum (13 high card points + 1 shortage point for the doubleton diamond = 14), West bids 2♥.  East now adds one extra point for the doubleton club, and that makes 13 in all (12 high card points + 1 shortage point), so game should be possible, and the trump suit is hearts. East bids 4♥.

## Opening Lead, Play and Defence

South's lead is the ♠A, and the defence will take the first three tricks in the spade suit. When East gains the lead and plays trumps, they will discover that the trump suit is breaking badly (4-0).

Although there is no trump loser for East-West, don't play all four trumps because then there will be a diamond loser. So trump the losing diamond in dummy before drawing all South's trumps. That way, East-West will come to 10 tricks.

Score: 4♥ making 10 tricks = 30 + 30 + 30 + 30 = 120 (trick score) + West 300 (non-vulnerable game bonus) = 420.

**5.4****Dealer West****Both Vul**Play this hand online for practise at [joanbuttsbridge.com](http://joanbuttsbridge.com)

North	Bidding	
♠ 972	W      N      E      S	
♥ AK54	1♦    Pass    1♥    Pass	
♦ 76	3♦    Pass    Pass    Pass	
♣ J986		
West	East	
♠ 43	♠ K1085	West holds a single-suited hand
♥ 7	♥ 109632	in diamonds, with 17 points
♦ AQJ9832	♦ K105	(14 high card points + 3 length
♣ AK5	♣ 7	points). East responds 1♥,
South		showing six or more points and
♠ AQJ6		at least four hearts.
♥ QJ8		
♦ 4		
♣ Q10432		
		West now rebids 3♦, showing
		a medium-strength hand (in
		the range of 16–18), and East
		passes, knowing that game is
		not an option.

**Opening Lead, Play and Defence**

The opening lead will be the ♥A and the ♥K, which is trumped by West. Before drawing trumps, West should play the ♣A and ♣K and trump a club in the dummy hand. This will make an extra trick, as well as the seven trump tricks in West's hand – that's ten in total.

Score: 3♦ making 10 tricks = 20 + 20 + 20 + 20 = 80 (trick score) + 50 (partscore bonus) = 130.



## Chapter Six

# RESPONDER'S SECOND BID

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### In this chapter you will learn about:

- How responder decides on a partscore or game when opener and responder are:
  1. minimum
  2. medium
  3. maximum
- How to discard losers



## Rebids by Responder

Partner opened, you responded, opener made a rebid, and now it's back to you for your second bid. Add up the combined strength of the two hands to decide on the best contract for the partnership. Let's see how to work it out.

Responder wants to get the partnership to the best partscore or game. The formula is: less than 25 combined points, play a partscore, more than that, play game.

Responding hands fall into three categories:

- (a) Minimum: 6–9 points
- (b) Medium: 10–12 points
- (c) Maximum: 13+ points

### (a) Minimum: 6–9 points

When opener shows a minimum hand and responder has 6–9 points, it's time to be cautious. Don't introduce another suit, instead, choose a suit that has already been mentioned, or settle for a partscore of 1NT. The bidding conversation might progress this way:

Opener

♠ K86  
♥ 94  
♦ AQ1065  
♣ A63

Responder

♠ J104  
♥ QJ86  
♦ K3  
♣ 10952

**1♦:** I like diamonds and have 14 points (13 high card points + 1 length point).

**1NT:** Shows a balanced hand with 13–14 points, without support for your hearts. NB: With 15 points, the opening would be 1NT.

**1♥:** I have at least four hearts and at least 6 points. I expect partner to bid again.

**Pass:** Not the time to go higher or look for another trump fit. Settle for a partscore in no trumps.

Opener

♠ A73  
♥ 105  
♦ AJ65  
♣ A643

Responder

♠ J104  
♥ QJ8652  
♦ K3  
♣ 109

**1♦:** I have an opening hand, 13 high card points.

**1NT:** This shows a balanced hand of 13–14 high card points, and I don't have support for your hearts.

**1♥:** I have four or more hearts and at least 6 points. I expect you to bid again.

**2♥:** If you have a balanced hand, you must have at least two hearts (I have six). Not enough for game, so settle for a partscore in hearts. I expect you to pass.

Opener

♠ KQJ  
♥ 82  
♦ QJ62  
♣ A1073

Responder

♠ 104  
♥ QJ865  
♦ K10953  
♣ 2

**1♦:** I like diamonds and have 13 **high card points.**

**1NT:** This shows a balanced hand with 13–14 points, and no support for your hearts.

**1♥:** How do you feel about hearts?

**2♦:** I like your diamonds. I didn't tell you straight away because I was hoping we had a major suit fit. Let's play a partscore in diamonds. I expect you to pass.

The last hand illustrates why responder can afford to look for a major fit even when there's a known minor fit. Rather than showing the diamond support right away, responder looks for a heart fit and then reverts to diamonds when no major suit fit is found.

## RESPONDER'S SECOND BID

Try this exercise: Partner opens the bidding 1♦, and you respond 1♥. Partner rebids 1NT, showing a minimum opening hand (13, 14 high card points).

Opener	Responder
1♦	1♥
1NT	?

Ask the question **how high** to determine whether you want to be in a partscore or game on each of the following hands. Then ask **where** to help choose your best rebid.

(1)    ♠ K87  
      ♥ A963  
      ♦ J64  
      ♣ 974

(2)    ♠ 7  
      ♥ QJ964  
      ♦ K9653  
      ♣ J5

(3)    ♠ 92  
      ♥ KQ8542  
      ♦ 62  
      ♣ 853

How High: \_\_\_\_\_  
Where: \_\_\_\_\_  
Rebid: \_\_\_\_\_

How High: \_\_\_\_\_  
Where: \_\_\_\_\_  
Rebid: \_\_\_\_\_

How High: \_\_\_\_\_  
Where: \_\_\_\_\_  
Rebid: \_\_\_\_\_

**Answers:**

- (1) Partscore. No Trumps. Pass
- (2) Partscore. Diamonds. 2♦
- (3) Partscore. Hearts. 2♥

## (b) Medium: 10–12 points

Suppose opener shows a minimum hand of 13–15 points and responder has 10, 11 or 12 points. There might not be enough combined strength for the game level if opener is at the very bottom of the range (13). On the other hand, if opener has 14 or 15 points, the partnership will have enough for game.

With 10 to 12 points, responder invites game without quite getting there. This asks opener to carry on to game with maximum, i.e. 13 rather than 15, otherwise, pass.

Opener

♠ Q2  
♥ J943  
♦ AJ92  
♣ KQ3

Responder

♠ KJ94  
♥ Q105  
♦ 643  
♣ AJ8

**1♦:** I have a diamond suit and enough to open.

**1NT:** I have a balanced hand with 13–14 points, but I can't support your spade suit.

**Pass:** No I don't, only the 13 points I started with. Hope we're not too high.

**1♠:** I have four or more spades and at least 6 points. I expect you to bid again.

**2NT:** Since you don't like my spades, it sounds as though no trumps is best. I have too much to give up on game, but not quite enough to bid there myself. Do you have anything extra?

That's the general idea for responder with 10–12 points after opener shows a minimum. If opener has a medium or maximum, the partnership should always bid game. The partnership has more than the 25 points needed for game. Decisions with invitational hands require good bidding understandings.

Try this exercise: Your partner opens the bidding 1♥ and you respond 1♠. Partner rebids 2♥, showing a minimum hand (13–15) with six or more hearts. Ask the question **how high** to determine whether you want to be in partscore or game, on each of the following hands. Then ask **where** to help you choose your best rebid.

RESPONDER'S SECOND BID

(1)    ♠ KJ732  
      ♥ A8  
      ♦ 92  
      ♣ K643

(2)    ♠ K1094  
      ♥ J3  
      ♦ QJ85  
      ♣ AJ4

(3)    ♠ AKJ10852  
      ♥ 3  
      ♦ Q7  
      ♣ 982

How High: \_\_\_\_\_  
Where: \_\_\_\_\_  
Rebid: \_\_\_\_\_

How High: \_\_\_\_\_  
Where: \_\_\_\_\_  
Rebid: \_\_\_\_\_

How High: \_\_\_\_\_  
Where: \_\_\_\_\_  
Rebid: \_\_\_\_\_

**Answers:**

- (1) Maybe game. Hearts. 3♥
- (2) Maybe game. No Trumps. 2NT
- (3) Maybe game. Spades. 3♠

## (c) Maximum: 13 or more points

Now there's no stopping in partscore. The combined partnership strength is at least 26 points (13 + 13), and responder should be targeting the best game. Listen to these auctions:

Opener

♠ Q106  
♥ A4  
♦ KQ1073  
♣ J103

Responder

♠ J93  
♥ KQ83  
♦ AJ9  
♣ Q75

**1♦:** I've got enough to open the bidding (12 high card points + 1 length point = 13).

**1NT:** I can't support your hearts, but I have a balanced minimum (13–14 points).

**1♥:** What do you think about hearts as a trump suit?

**3NT:** I have 13 points, so we must have enough for game. We haven't found an eight-card fit, so no trumps looks like the best game to play.

Opener

♠ K102  
♥ 104  
♦ KQ65  
♣ AJ103

Responder

♠ 3  
♥ KQJ983  
♦ AJ9  
♣ Q75

**1♦:** (as usual)

**1NT:** Another minimum balanced hand. I never seem to have support for partner's suit these days.

**Pass:** Good luck. Hope I've got what you expect.

**1♥:** Even though I'd like to play in hearts, I'll wait to hear partner's next bid before deciding on a contract.

**4♥:** I don't need to hear any more. I've got a hand worth 15 points, so we must belong at the game level. Partner must have at least two hearts, so we've got a suitable eight-card major suit fit.

Try this exercise: Your partner opens the bidding **1♣**, and you respond **1♥**. Partner rebids **1NT**, showing a minimum hand of 13, 14 points.

Ask the question **how high** to determine whether you want to stop in a partscore, or play game on each of the following hands. Then ask **where** to help choose your best rebid.

(1)    ♠ KQ84  
      ♥ AJ105  
      ♦ K93  
      ♣ 84

(2)    ♠ AQ5  
      ♥ Q109643  
      ♦ 52  
      ♣ A7

(3)    ♠ 4  
      ♥ AK876  
      ♦ KQ963  
      ♣ 63

How High: \_\_\_\_\_  
Where: \_\_\_\_\_  
Rebid: \_\_\_\_\_

How High: \_\_\_\_\_  
Where: \_\_\_\_\_  
Rebid: \_\_\_\_\_

How High: \_\_\_\_\_  
Where: \_\_\_\_\_  
Rebid: \_\_\_\_\_

### Answers:

- (1) Game. No Trumps. 3NT
- (2) Game. Hearts. 4♥
- (3) Game. Hearts or No Trumps. 3♦ (new suit)

As responder, **listen carefully to the bidding**. You can usually tell by the sound of the auction whether opener's hand is minimum, medium or maximum.

### I.Opener is Minimum (13, 14 or 15 points)

Opener	Responder	Opener	Responder	Opener	Responder
1♥	1♠	1♥	1♠	1♥	1♠
2♠	?	2♥	?	1NT	?

Opener had to bid again because a new suit by responder is forcing. You will know that their hand is minimum (13–15 points) if opener:

- raised your suit as cheaply as possible
- rebid their own suit as cheaply as possible, or
- bid No Trumps as cheaply as possible

## 2. Opener is Medium (16, 17 or 18 points)

Opener	Responder	Opener	Responder	Opener	Responder
1♥	1♠	1♥	1♠	1♥	2♥
3♠	?	3♥	?	3♥	?

Because opener has made a jump in the bidding (in the first two cases) and has continued to 3♥ in the third case when 2♥ could have been passed out, there's a suggestion that opener is not minimum.

So, to show a medium-strength hand, opener generally makes a jump, but not straight to game.

- In the first hand your bid is 3♠, not a quiet 2♠ and not a strong 4♠.
- In the second hand your bid is 3♥, but not 4♥.
- And in the last example, opener could have passed responder's limit raise to 2♥, but instead made an invitational bid of 3♥.

## 3. Opener is Maximum (19-20 points)

Opener	Responder	Opener	Responder	Opener	Responder
1♥	1♠	1♥	1♠	1♥	1NT
4♠	?	4♥	?	3NT	?

The jump all the way to game (4♠, 4♥ and 3NT) shows the upper range for an opening bid at the one-level, 19–20 points.

## The Combined Fit

Deciding if there's a suitable eight-card or longer trump suit also comes from listening to opener's description of the hand. Listen to this:

Opener	Responder	No trouble here. There's a spade fit. The only decision for responder is whether there will be enough for game, knowing opener is minimum. It's ok to pass as responder with a minimum.
1♥	1♠	
2♠	?	

Now listen to this auction:

Opener	Responder	Opener is showing a balanced hand. It's unlikely that the partnership has a major suit fit because opener didn't rebid 1♥ or 1♠ to show a four-card suit. Again, it's fine to pass once opener has announced a minimum hand, if you don't have enough for game.
1♣	1♦	
1NT	?	

Try this auction:

Opener	Responder	Opener is describing a hand with a long heart suit, six or more cards. Opener doesn't have support for your spades, doesn't have a balanced hand, and doesn't have another suit to bid. Pass if you can't see game.
1♥	1♠	
2♥	?	

## Play Point - Discarding Losers in Suit Contracts

Sometimes losers can be trumped in dummy, but another method is this: discard your losers on extra winners available in partner's hand – it often happens that weakness in one area is compensated for by extra strength somewhere else. There may be additional winners in a side suit (other than trumps) on which you can throw (discard) losers.

The advantage is that you will then be able to trump to prevent the opponents from taking tricks in that side suit. The technique is not useful in no trumps, since, even if you were able to discard some losers on dummy's winners, you wouldn't have any trumps to prevent the opponents from taking tricks in the suit you discarded.

To discard a loser, you must have a side suit where there are more cards in one of the partnership hands than the other. The suit also must contain more winners than you need, to take care of losers in that suit.

Here are some examples:

Dummy: ♥AK4

Declarer: ♥2

In this suit, you have one low card in your hand, but dummy's Ace will take care of it. So you have no losers in the suit. Dummy also has the King, which you can use to take care of a loser in another side suit.

Dummy: ♥3

Declarer: ♥AKQ

Declarer has two extra winners. You can discard two of your losers in another side suit.

Dummy: ♥AQ3

Declarer: ♥K4

Dummy has a surplus winner in this suit. Start by playing the King (high card from the short side) and then lead the 4 to dummy's Ace. The Queen can now be played, allowing you to discard a loser.

## To Draw or not to Draw

Should you draw trumps before discarding your losers? In general, you want to draw the opponents' trumps as soon as possible. But if your losers are quick and you have to lose the lead to draw trumps, then delay drawing trumps until you have disposed of your extra losers. If you can draw trumps without giving up the lead, it is safer to do this before discarding your losers.

Try these two hands: (a) North

♠ AK6  
♥ A543  
♦ A83  
♣ J54

Lead: ♦K

South

♠ 3  
♥ K109876  
♦ 765  
♣ AKQ

You are in a contract of 4♥ and the opening lead is the ♦K. You now have potentially two losers in the diamond suit, but there's a way to throw one of the losers on the spade suit. Can you draw trumps first and not lose the lead? The answer is yes, so play the ♥A and then the ♥K, drawing the opponents' trumps. Then play the two top spades, ♠A and then ♠K, discarding one of the losing diamonds on the ♠K.

(b) North

♠ AK6  
♥ J543  
♦ A83  
♣ J54

Lead: ♦K

South

♠ 3  
♥ Q109876  
♦ 765  
♣ AKQ

Same contract (4♥) and same lead (♦K), because you are missing the ♥A and the ♥K, so you will have to lose the lead when you begin drawing trumps.

If you do start by drawing trumps, the opponents will take the ♥A and the ♥K and the two (now established) diamond winners. That will mean four defensive tricks, and the contract will be defeated.

## Exercises

1. What would you rebid with each of the following hands after the auction starts?

Opener	Responder
1♣	1♠
2♠	?

(a)    ♠ KJ843	(b)    ♠ KJ843
♥ Q95	♥ Q95
♦ 64	♦ 64
♣ J104	♣ KJ10

2. What would you rebid with each of the following hands in this auction?

Opener	Responder
1♥	1♠
2♥	?

(a)    ♠ AJ75	(b)    ♠ KQ105	(c)    ♠ QJ95
♥ A6	♥ 5	♥ 62
♦ 752	♦ AQ62	♦ Q1074
♣ A1043	♣ KJ84	♣ J96

3. What would you do with each of the following hands after the auction begins?

Opener	Responder
1♦	1♠
3♠	?

(a)    ♠ Q963	(b)    ♠ A1096
♥ 954	♥ 954
♦ J6	♦ J6
♣ K864	♣ K864

#### 4. Discarding Losers

Each of the following side suits provides an opportunity for declarer to discard losers by throwing them on an extra winner in dummy. How many losers can be discarded? What must declarer do to get the side suit ready for discarding losers?

**Dummy:** (a) ♡ AKQ    (b) ♡ KQJ    (c) ♡ AK764    (d) ♡ AQJ    (e) ♡ QJ109

**Declarer:**    ♡ 98              ♡ 74              ♡ 983              ♡ 83              ♡ 65

#### 5. Discarding Losers

North (Dummy)

♠ AK6

♥ J543

♦ A83

♣ J54

South (You)

♠ 3

♥ Q109876

♦ 765

♣ AKQ

Suppose you are in a contract of 4♥ and the opening lead is the ♦K.

How many tricks will you have to lose when developing the trump suit? How many tricks could you potentially lose in diamonds? Should you start playing the trump suit right away? If not, why not?

## Answers

1. (a) Pass. Partner's raise to 2♠ shows a minimum-strength hand of 13–15 points. You have 7 high card points plus 1 point for the doubleton diamond. That's not enough combined strength to go for game. Pass, and play in a partscore contract.
  - (b) 3♠. Your hand falls into the 10–12 point range – 10 high card points plus 1 for the doubleton diamond. Even though opener has shown a minimum hand, there may still be enough for the game bonus. Move toward game level, inviting opener to carry on with a little extra.
  - (c) 4♠. You have 13 points – 12 high card points plus 1 length point for the five-card suit. Go for the game bonus in the agreed trump suit.
- 
2. (a) 4♥. With 13 points, you know the partnership should reach the game level. Partner has bid hearts twice, rather than supporting your suit or showing another suit. It sounds as though partner has at least six of them. Bid game in the eight-card major suit fit.
  - (b) 3NT. You again have enough to put the partnership in a game level contract. With no liking for partner's suggested trump suit, try for the nine-trick bonus contract of 3NT.
  - (c) Pass. You have only 6 points, and partner is showing a minimum. Time to stop bidding.
- 
3. (a) Pass. Partner's jump raise is invitational, showing 16–18 points and support for your suit. With only 7 points (6 high card points + 1 shortage point for the doubleton diamond), reject partner's invitation and settle for partscore.
  - (b) 4♠. With 9 points (8 high card points + 1 shortage point for the doubleton diamond), you have enough to accept the invitation. Even if partner has only 16, there will be 25 combined points.

4. (a) One loser can be discarded. After the Ace and King have been played, declarer has no cards left and can discard a loser on the Queen.
- (b) One loser can be discarded. After the suit is played twice, losing the first trick to the Ace, declarer has no cards left in the suit.
- (c) Assuming the suit is divided 3-2, two losers can be discarded after the suit has been played three times, giving up a trick. Declarer can discard on dummy's two remaining winners.
- (d) One loser could be discarded after two winning finesses.
- (e) Two losers could be discarded after the suit is played twice and the opponents take the Ace and the King.

5. You have to lose two tricks in the trump suit.

There are two potential losers in diamonds.

You can't draw trumps right away because the opponents would take two diamond tricks and two trump tricks. Instead, you must first discard one of your diamond losers on the extra spade winner in the dummy.

## **Summary**

- When it's time for responder to make a rebid, enough information has usually been passed back and forth for responder to make a decision about the contract.
- Opener's points are added to responder's. If the total is less than 25, responder will put the partnership in a partscore contract. When there are 25 or more, responder puts the partnership into game.
- In deciding on the best contract, responder listens to opener's description of the hand. If the partnership has uncovered a suitable trump fit, responder uses that information when choosing the contract. If no suitable trump suit has been found, responder guides the partnership into a no trump contract.

# Play Hands

## 6.1

**Dealer North**

**Nil Vul**

Play this hand online for practise at [joanbuttsbridge.com](http://joanbuttsbridge.com)

North	Bidding						
♠ K764	N	E	S	W			
♥ 765	Pass	1♦	Pass	1♥			
♦ 106	Pass	1NT	Pass	4♥			
♣ KQ75							
West	East	Pass Pass Pass					
♠ 983	♠ J52						
♥ AQJ932	♥ K108	East has a balanced hand, with 13 high card points and four diamonds. North passes, East bids 1♦. South passes, and West, holding 13 (11 high card points + 2 length points) responds 1♥.					
♦ 3	♦ AKQ4						
♣ A93	♣ J102						
South							
♠ AQ10							
♥ 4							
♦ J98752							
♣ 864							
	Even though West has a strong hand, it's best to keep the bidding low while searching for a fit. The change of suit by responder is forcing, and East bids 1NT, showing a minimum balanced hand of 13, 14 points.						

South passes, and West knows there are enough points for game, and with six hearts, will bid that suit again. West also knows that East will hold at least two hearts, for the rebid of 1NT, so there is a known heart fit. 4♥ becomes the final contract.

## Opening Lead, Play and Defence

The lead is the ♣K. Declarer can afford three losers. There are three spade losers and one club loser – one too many – but dummy has two extra diamond winners on which you can discard two losers, allowing you to make your contract.

Should you draw trumps first or discard your losers? Once the ♣K has driven out your Ace, all your losers are quick. However, you can draw trumps without giving up the lead, so you should do this before discarding your losers. Once the opponents' trumps are drawn, you can play the ♦A, ♦K and ♦Q, and discard two of your spade losers.

Notice what happens if you don't draw trumps first. When you play your ♦A, ♦K and ♦Q, West trumps the ♦Q. Unlucky, but preventable if you draw trumps first. If your losers are slow – that is, the opponents cannot take their winners in the suit right away when they get the lead – you generally can afford to draw trumps first, even if you must give up the lead. On this hand, you will lose only one club and one spade trick.

Score: 4♥ making 11 tricks =  $30 + 30 + 30 + 30 + 30 = 150$  (trick score) + 300 (non-vulnerable game bonus) = 450.

**6.2****Dealer East****EW Vul**

Play this hand online for practise at **[joanbuttsbridge.com](http://joanbuttsbridge.com)**

<b>North</b> ♠ Q1074 ♥ AKQJ ♦ J75 ♣ 109	<b>Bidding</b> E     S     W     N Pass 1♣     Pass 1♥ Pass 1♠     Pass 4♠	<b>East</b> Pass     Pass     Pass
<b>West</b> ♠ A6 ♥ 9874 ♦ 10984 ♣ 732		East passes. South has 15 points (14 high card points + 1 length point). With an unbalanced hand, South should open in the longest suit, 1♣. West passes and North must decide what to do. North's first priority is to look for a major suit fit.
<b>South</b> ♠ KJ98 ♥ 10 ♦ A62 ♣ KQJ54		With an unbalanced hand, South opens 1♣. West passes and North must decide what to do. With four cards in hearts as well as spades, North bids 1♥ responding up the line. By responding 1♥, North will find out whether there's an eight-card heart fit, but still leave room to find an eight-card spade fit. At responder's second turn, there is all the information needed to place the contract. North now knows that there's a spade fit, and with 14 high card points, also knows that they should be in game. North raises to game: 4♠ by South.

## Opening Lead, Play and Defence

West doesn't have much of a hand to lead from, but with the opponents bidding clubs, hearts and spades, a diamond lead is best. West should lead the top of the touching high cards, the ♦10.

As soon as dummy comes down, declarer sees that at the moment there are four losers: a spade loser, two diamond losers, and a club loser. There's nothing you can do about the spade or club losers, so concentrate on eliminating the diamond losers. Fortunately, dummy has extra heart winners. You can discard both your diamond losers on dummy's top hearts.

One consideration is whether or not to start by drawing trumps. After the diamond lead drives out the ♦A, you can't afford to lead trumps straight away. The defenders are ready to take four tricks if they get in with the ♠A. You have to get rid of a diamond loser first, so play the heart suit straight away – the ♥A, followed by the ♥K, and the ♥Q, and discard your diamond losers. Then you can draw trumps and drive out the ♣A to make the contract. The lead of the ♦10 traps dummy's ♦J and sets up two winners for the defence.

If declarer gives the defenders an opportunity to take their winners early, the defenders can defeat the contract. Otherwise, the defenders are likely to get only two tricks. They may get another trick if declarer draws all the trumps before driving out the ♣A.

Score: 4♠ making 10 tricks = 30 + 30 + 30 + 30 = 120 (trick score) + 300 (non-vulnerable game bonus) = 420.

**6.3****Dealer S****NS Vul**Play this hand online for practise at **[joanbuttsbridge.com](http://joanbuttsbridge.com)**

	North	Bidding
	♠ J865	S    W    N    E
	♥ Q53	Pass   Pass   Pass   1♣
	♦ QJ10	Pass   1♠   Pass   2♣
	♣ Q75	
West		Pass   Pass   Pass
♠ AKQ10	♠ 3	When East, holding 14 points (12
♥ 764	♥ J108	high card points + 2 length points)
♦ 9642	♦ A85	
♣ 82	♣ AK10963	opens with 1♣, West tries to find a major fit and bids 1♠, four or more cards. (NB: responder may bid their major suit with only four cards when partner opens a minor, but not so with opener, who needs five or more.)
	South	
	♠ 9742	
	♥ AK92	
	♦ K73	
	♣ J4	

East has only a minimum opening hand and shows six clubs by bidding that suit again, at the next available level, 2♣.

This tells West that opener's hand is minimum (13–15 points) and, knowing there are not enough points for game, and not having another suit to bid, passes, happy to play in the club partscore. (Opener's rebid of clubs shows six cards.)

## Opening Lead, Play and Defence

The lead from South is the  $\heartsuit A$  and then the  $\heartsuit K$ . If South plays yet another heart, North will win the  $\heartsuit Q$ , the third trick for the defenders. Now North will switch to a diamond, the  $\diamondsuit Q$ , top of the sequence. East will take that with the  $\diamondsuit A$  and counts the losers. The three losers in hearts have already materialised and now there are two in diamonds and one in trumps, clubs. That's six – one too many. What to do?

East should draw trumps by playing the top two trumps ( $\clubsuit A$  and  $\clubsuit K$ ). After this, there will be one trump out in the North hand ( $\clubsuit Q$ ), and it's a winner. There's no need to waste two of East-West's trumps to draw one winning trump. East's chance to make the contract is now to play three rounds of spades, discarding the two losing diamonds, and letting North make the  $\clubsuit Q$  eventually.

Score:  $2\clubsuit$  making nine tricks =  $20 + 20 + 20 = 60$  (trick score) + 50 (partscore bonus) = 110.

**6.4****Dealer West****Both Vul**Play this hand online for practise at **[joanbuttsbridge.com](http://joanbuttsbridge.com)**

	North	Bidding	
	♠ AQJ932	W	N E S
	♥ J83	P	1♠ P 2♦
	♦ 3	P	2♠ P 4♠
	♣ A93	P	P P
West			
♠ 765	♠ 84		North, holding 14 points (12 high
♥ AK76	♥ Q104		card points + 2 length points)
♦ 1065	♦ J987		opens 1♠, and hears South bid
♣ 1086	♣ KQJ4		2♦ (forcing), showing a diamond
			suit and at least 10 points. With
	South		six spades and a minimum, North
	♠ K10		rebids 2♠. South now knows that
	♥ 954		North has a six-card or longer
	♦ AKQ42		suit, and that between the two
	♣ 752		hands there are enough points
			for game. South's bid is 4♠.

**Opening Lead, Play and Defence**

The lead is the ♣K, top of the sequence. North can see three heart losers and now has been exposed to two club losers. There's a possibility of discarding two losers (either club or heart losers, it won't matter) on the high diamonds. Can North afford to draw trumps first? Yes, as North–South don't have to give up the lead. Now there are ten tricks available, six spades, three diamonds, and one club. If the lead had been a heart, East–West would take three heart tricks, but declarer would then throw two clubs on the high diamonds.

Score: 4♠ making ten tricks = 30 + 30 + 30 + 30 = 120 (trick score) + 500 (vulnerable game bonus) = 620.

# 'Play Bridge' The System: Standard Five-Card Majors

## **Hand Evaluation**

High Card Points Ace = 4

King = 3

Queen = 2

Jack = 1

Length Points      Five-card suit, add 1 point

                      Six-card suit, add 2 points

                      Seven-card suit, add 3 points (etc.)

## **Opening One No Trump (INT)**

15, 16 or 17 points and balanced hand (4-3-3-3, 4-4-3-2, 5-3-3-2)

## **Responses to INT**

0-7 points - 5 or 6 card suit or more = bid 2 of suit

Balanced hand = Pass

8-9 points

Balanced = Bid 2NT

10+ points

Six + card suit, ♠ or ♥ = bid 4♠ or 4♥

Five-card suit = bid 3 of that suit (opener will choose)

Balanced = bid 3NT

## **Opening One of a Suit**

13-20 points, using high card points and length points

Open the longest suit:

if 1♠ or 1♥, promises five cards or more

if 1♦, usually four cards or more

if 1♣, three cards or more

Trump fit = eight or more cards of the same suit

Game: majors or NT     = 25 or more combined points

Partscore                = fewer than 25 points.

## **Responses to One of a Suit**

With a fit, revalue using shortage points

Doubleton (two cards in suit): add 1 point

Singleton (one card in a suit): add 3 points

Void (no cards in a suit): add 5 points

0–5 points = Pass

With 3+ card support for opener's suit and

6–9 points = raise partner's suit to the two-level

10–12 points = raise partner's suit to the three-level

13+ points = raise partner's suit to four/game.

Without a fit, bid a new suit, which shows, at the

One-level = 6+ points

Two-level = 10+ points, nearly opening hand

NB: Change of suit by responder is forcing (for opener to bid again).

6–9 points, no fit, no support = 1NT.

## **Opener's Second Bid**

Clarify point range

13-15 points      Minimum      = Proceed with caution

16-18              Medium      = Jump a level

19-20              Maximum      = Jump to game

Clarify Shape

Single-suiter (6 or more cards) = Bid suit again

Two-suiter (5 + 4 + shape) = Bid second suit

Balanced = Bid NT

Support for responder = Raise responder's suit

## **Responder's Second Bid**

Decision time – responder decides (or invites) the final contract

Fewer than 25 points – partscore

25+ points – game

Play in suit if fit,

Play in NT if no fit.

## Glossary of Terms

<b>Auction -</b>	A series of bids that determines the final contract.
<b>Balanced -</b>	A term to describe the shape of certain hands – those with no voids, no singletons, and no more than one doubleton. There are three balanced hand patterns- 4-3-3-3,4-4-3-2, 5-3-3-2.The numbers refer to the number of cards in a suit.
<b>Bid -</b>	A commitment to try to take at least the number of tricks named in the specific denomination.
<b>Bidding -</b>	The various bids and calls that make up the auction.
<b>Bidding message -</b>	The message given by a bid – either forcing, invitational, or sign -off.
<b>Bonus -</b>	Points scored for making a partscore, a game, a slam, or for defeating the opponents' contract.
<b>Break -</b>	The distribution of the outstanding cards in a suit.
<b>Call -</b>	Any bid, double, redouble, or pass.
<b>Contract -</b>	The final bid in the auction that commits declarer's side to try to take at least the number of tricks named in the selected denomination.
<b>Deal -</b>	The distribution of the fifty -two cards among the four players.
<b>Dealer -</b>	The player who distributes the cards. The dealer has the first opportunity to open the bidding.
<b>Declarer -</b>	The player who first bid the denomination of the final contract, the player who will try to fulfil the final contract by playing the cards for the partnership.

<b>Defeat -</b>	To prevent declarer from making the contract.
<b>Defence -</b>	The side that did not win the contract.
<b>Denomination -</b>	The suit or no trump specified in a bid.
<b>Discarding -</b>	The playing of a card, other than a trump card, of a suit different from the suit led.
<b>Distribution -</b>	The number of cards held in each suit by a particular player or by a partnership.
<b>Distribution points -</b>	In -hand evaluation, points that take the shape of the hand into consideration.
<b>Doubleton -</b>	A holding of two cards in a suit.
<b>Drawing trumps -</b>	The playing of trumps until there are none in the opponents' hands.
<b>Dummy -</b>	Declarer's partner, the hand that is placed face -up on the table after the opening lead.
<b>Entry -</b>	A card that provides a means of winning a trick in a particular hand.
<b>Finesse -</b>	A technique available in no trump and suit play that is an attempt to win a trick with a card that does not rank as high as one held by the opponents.
<b>Five -card major system -</b>	A method of bidding which requires the opening bidder to have at least five cards in a major to open the bidding with that suit.
<b>Follow suit -</b>	Play a card in a suit that is led.
<b>Forcing (bid) -</b>	A bid that forces partner to bid again.

<b>Game -</b>	A total trick score of 100 points or more.
<b>Game contracts -</b>	3NT, 4♠, 4 ♥, 5♦, 5♣.
<b>Hand -</b>	The cards held by each of the players, a deal of bridge, the position at the table.
<b>Hand evaluation -</b>	The total number of points – adding high card points and length points at first and perhaps shortage points later.
<b>HCP -</b>	The abbreviation for high card points.
<b>High card points (HCP) -</b>	The value of the high cards in a hand- Ace=4, King= 3, Queen=2, Jack=1.
<b>Honour (card) -</b>	One of the four top cards in a suit (the picture cards) - Ace, King, Queen, Jack. Some players like to include the 10 in this group.
<b>Invitational bid -</b>	A bid that invites partner to bid again.
<b>Jump raise -</b>	A bid in partner's named suit which jumps one or more levels of the bidding.
<b>Lead -</b>	The first card played to a trick.
<b>Length points -</b>	The extra value for the long suits - for a five -card suit (add 1 point), six -card suit (add 2 points), seven -card suit (add 3 points), eight -card suit (add 4 points).
<b>Level -</b>	The number of tricks a player contracts to take when making a bid.
<b>Limit raise -</b>	The raise of a one -level opening bid to the three - level, it shows a hand of 10–12 points and support for opener's suit.
<b>Loser -</b>	A card in a player's hand that will not win a trick.

<b>Lower -ranking (suit)-</b>	A suit lower in the bidding scale, the lowest - ranking suit is clubs.
<b>Major suits -</b>	Hearts and spades.
<b>Make -</b>	Take enough tricks to fulfil the contract.
<b>Mini bridge -</b>	A simplified version of bridge that does not use bidding but in which hands are evaluated using the high card point and length point method.
<b>Minor suits -</b>	Clubs and diamonds.
<b>New suit -</b>	A suit that has not previously been bid by the partnership during the auction.
<b>No trump -</b>	A contract with no trump suit, the highest card played in the suit led wins the trick.
<b>One of a suit -</b>	An opening bid at the one -level.
<b>One -level -</b>	The lowest level at which the auction can start, it represents seven tricks.
<b>Open the bidding -</b>	Make the first bid in the auction.
<b>Opener -</b>	The player who makes the first bid in the auction.
<b>Opener's rebid -</b>	The opening bidder's second bid.
<b>Opening bidder -</b>	The player who makes the first bid in the auction.
<b>Opening lead -</b>	The card led to the first trick by the player on declarer's left.
<b>Overtrick -</b>	A trick won by declarer's side in excess of the contract.
<b>Partnership -</b>	The two players seated opposite each other at the table.

<b>Partscore -</b>	A contract with a trick score worth less than 100 points.
<b>Pass -</b>	A call indicating that a player does not want, at that turn, to bid.
<b>Passed out -</b>	A deal in which no one makes a bid.
<b>Penalty -</b>	The bonus awarded to the defending side for defeating a contract.
<b>Play -</b>	The part of the game following the auction during which the declarer tries to make the contract.
<b>Points -</b>	Points are awarded on a score sheet for bidding and making contracts, and for defeating the opponents' contracts.
<b>Point count -</b>	A method of hand evaluation that assigns points for the high cards held and the distribution.
<b>Promotion -</b>	The increase in the trick-taking potential of a card in a suit as the higher-ranking cards are played.
<b>Raise -</b>	To support partner's suit by bidding that suit at a higher level.
<b>Rank of cards -</b>	The cards in each suit are ranked in order during the play – the Ace is highest, followed by the King, Queen, Jack, ten, down to the two.
<b>Rank of suits -</b>	The suits are ranked in order during the bidding – spades are highest, then hearts, diamonds and clubs, no trumps ranks higher than spades.
<b>Rebid -</b>	A second bid by any player.
<b>Respond -</b>	Make a bid, other than pass, when partner has previously made a bid.

<b>Responder -</b>	The partner of the opening bidder, the partner of the player who overcalls or makes a takeout double.
<b>Responder's rebid -</b>	Responder's second bid.
<b>Right hand opponent -</b>	The opponent on a player's right.
<b>Ruffing -</b>	Playing a trump on a trick when you are void in the suit led.
<b>Score sheet -</b>	The paper on which points are recorded.
<b>Shape -</b>	The number of cards held in each suit by a particular player.
<b>Shuffling -</b>	Mixing the cards for distribution to each player.
<b>Sign -off (bid) -</b>	A bid that asks partner to pass.
<b>Single raise -</b>	A raise to the next available level.
<b>Singleton -</b>	A holding of one card in a suit.
<b>Strength -</b>	The point count value of a hand.
<b>Suits -</b>	The four groups of cards in the deck, each having a characteristic symbol – ♣ clubs, ♦ diamonds, ♥ hearts and ♠ spades.
<b>Support -</b>	The number of cards held in a suit that partner has bid.
<b>Sure trick -</b>	A trick that can be taken without giving up the lead to the opponents.
<b>Touching -</b>	Cards that are adjacent in rank (i.e. the Queen and the Jack).

<b>Trick -</b>	The unit of play consisting of four cards, one contributed by each player in clockwise rotation, which starts with the player on lead.
<b>Trick score -</b>	The points scored for contracts bid and made.
<b>Trump suit -</b>	The suit, if any, named in the contract.
<b>Trumping -</b>	Playing a trump on a trick when void in the suit led.
<b>Unbalanced (hand) -</b>	A hand containing a void, singleton or more than one doubleton.
<b>Undertrick -</b>	Each trick by which declarer's side fails to fulfil the contract.
<b>Valuation -</b>	The method of determining the value of a particular hand during the auction. Usually this is a combination of values for high cards held, and length.
<b>Void -</b>	A holding of no cards in a particular suit.
<b>Vulnerability -</b>	The status of a hand during a round of bridge, which affects the size of the bonuses scored for making or defeating contracts. Bonuses and penalties are higher when declarer is vulnerable.

## The Next Step

Well done! You've achieved something really worthwhile by learning bridge. No one expects you to be an expert yet, but do give yourself a pat on the back for your efforts. Now you need to keep playing!

There are lots of places to find a game of bridge. Perhaps it's with friends at home, or at a bridge club, or online. It doesn't matter where, but playing hands will increase your confidence. The hands from this book, and many more, are available online too. Go to my website, **joanbuttsbridge.com**. My videos to match the book are available there too.

Look for a partner you feel comfortable with. It's good to be able to talk about bridge with someone who's on your wavelength.

At a club, find a supervised session to play in, because the pace is slower. Eventually, you'll feel ready to move into higher gear – to duplicate bridge. Here everyone will play the same hands during a session. Your score will be compared with everyone else who played the same hands.

Bridge is an ongoing learning process, and you've just taken your first step. Practise for a while, using my next book, **Play Bridge 2: A Workbook for Help with Play**, and then take more lessons. Make sure you have a good grasp of the basics before you move on. And, most importantly... enjoy your new skill!



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## **Also Available from Joan Butts:**

### **A Guide by Your Side**

Joan Butts & Kathy Johnson.

A summary of the basics, to use at the table.

### **Play Bridge: A Teachers Manual**

A guide for teachers, emailed free if you buy the books.

### **Play Bridge Videos**

Four videos to match "Play Bridge: A Workbook for the Absolute Beginner".

#### **Video 1. Introduction to Bridge**

#### **Video 2. The Bidding**

#### **Video 3. No Trumps**

#### **Video 4. Responding to Suit Bids**

### **Play Bridge 2: A Workbook for Help with Play**

A six-chapter book to use after beginners lessons, when in supervised sessions, or for play lessons.

For more information or to purchase any of these,  
visit my website: **www.joanbuttsbridge.com**

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## Play Bridge: A Workbook for the Absolute Beginner

This book will suit new bridge players. It's straightforward, clearly set out, and covers the essentials for playing a basic game of bridge. There's no information overload, and students will be able to play plenty of hands for reinforcement, in class and online.

### Joan Butts

Joan is the Australian Bridge Federation's National Teaching Coordinator. In this role, she trains teachers all over Australia.

She has played the game since she was 25, and has represented Australia in world championships. Her passion is bridge education. She has taught thousands to play, at the bridge club she has owned for 25 years, and all over the world.



### What's Next

Take your time to master the concepts in this book, practise the hands and watch the matching videos, available at [joanbuttsbridge.com](http://joanbuttsbridge.com). Play as often as possible, and most importantly, enjoy this introduction to the wonderful game of bridge.



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