

Basic Beginning Bridge

Lesson 3 – Opening Suit Bids

More information: <https://bridge.careytutor.com>

Objective for Lesson 3

- Main objectives:
 - Learn how to make simple opening bids in a suit
- Secondary objectives:
 - Total points evaluation of an opening hand
 - Strength for opening bids
 - Guidelines for opening bids
 - Targets for game/slam

Hand Evaluation for Opening Bidder

- **High card points**

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

- **Suit length**

- If any suit has more than 4 cards, add 1 point for each extra card
- High card points + suit length points = **total points** for the opening hand

Practice – Hand Evaluation

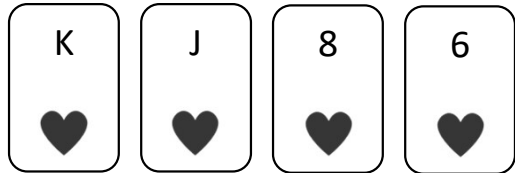
- How many high card points in each hand?
- Are there any suits longer than 4 cards?
- How many total points if you are the opening bidder?

Bidding Communication

- Each bid communicates:
 - The length of a suit
 - Overall strength of the hand
 - Total points for suit bids
 - Some bids clearly define a narrow range of length and strength.
 - Other bids merely give a broad range and have to be clarified with a **rebid**.
- Attempt to find a suit **fit** if possible.
 - **A fit** is a suit with 8 or more trumps between the two partners' hands.

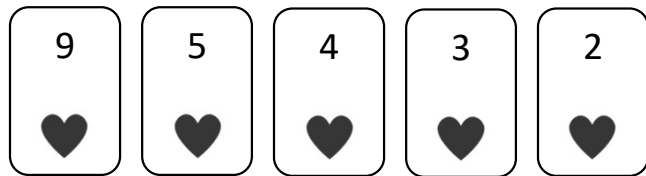
What Is a "Fit"?

Your Hand

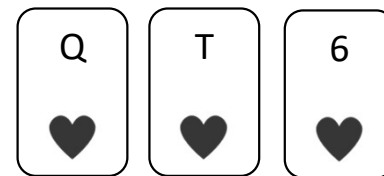


4 - 4

Partner's Hand



5 - 3



6 - 2



Opening Suit Bids

- With 12 – 21 total points plan to bid in a suit at the one level.
- Do you have one or more 5-card (or longer) suits?
 - Bid at the one level in your longest suit.
 - If equal length (5-5 or 6-6), bid at the one level in the higher ranking suit.
- With no 5-card or longer suit:
 - Bid at the one-level in your longest minor.
 - If 4 – 4 in minors, bid 1 Diamond.
 - If 3 – 3 in minors, bid 1 Club.
- Thus, a bid of 1 Heart or 1 Spade indicates 5 or more cards in the suit.

Example Opening Bids

1) ♠KJT2 ♥A8 ♦AJ63 ♣874 → *Open 1 Diamond*

2) ♠82 ♥JT983 ♦AKQ3 ♣A7 → *Open 1 Heart*

3) ♠A9872 ♥A5 ♦Q65 ♣843 → *Pass*

4) ♠AQT2 ♥T98 ♦AK3 ♣984 → *Open 1 Club*

Practice – Opening Bid

- Do you have enough total points to open the bidding?
- If you are the first to bid, what would you bid?
- How many high card points does the responder have?
- How does the responder's hand support (or not support) the opening bidder's hand?

General Bidding Principles I

- When making an opening bid, the length of the trump suit is more important than the strength of the trump suit.
- Standard American 5-Card Major System
 - Will quickly find a 5 – 3 fit in a major suit if such a fit exists.
 - Major suit (and No Trump) contracts score more than minor suit contracts.

Scoring Review – Trick Values

- **Major suits** (Hearts/Spades): score 30 points per trick

$$\underbrace{30 - 30 - 30 - 30}_{30} - 30 - 30 - 30$$

- **No Trump**: score 40 for the first trick, 30 thereafter

$$\underbrace{40 - 30 - 30}_{30} - 30 - 30 - 30 - 30$$

- **Minor suits** (Clubs/Diamonds): score 20 points per trick

$$\underbrace{20 - 20 - 20 - 20 - 20}_{20} - 20 - 20$$

Bidding Milestones

- **Part Score**
 - Make the contract!
 - Try to score some points toward a future game.
- **Game Bid**
 - Try to score 100 points or more in a single contract.
 - Game bonus!
- **Slam Bid**
 - Try to bid and make 12 or 13 tricks in a single contract.
 - Slam bonus!

Point Count Targets: 26 – 29 – 33 – 37

- *Point count targets are the combined points held by you and your partner.*
- Bidding a game
 - In no trump (3 no trump) – 26 high card points
 - In a major (4 hearts or spades) – 26 total points
 - In a minor (5 clubs or diamonds) – 29 total points
- Bidding a slam
 - Small slam (12 tricks) – 33 high card points (no trump)
– 33 total points (suit)
 - Grand slam (13 tricks) – 37 high card points (no trump)
– 37 total points (suit)

Targets – Combined Partnership Hands

26 – 29 – 33 – 37

General Bidding Principles II

- With sufficient points for game or slam, try to bid it.
- With fewer than game points plan to stop in a part score.
 - Make a choice of the best fit (suit or No Trump) based on the bidding.

Opening Bidder Point Ranges

12 - 15 Points – minimum

16 - 18 Points – medium

18 - 21 Points – strong

22+ Points – massive

Summary

- Opening bid strengths at the one level
 - 12 – 21 total points
- Opening one-level bid choices
 - Longest 5+ suit (if equal, then higher ranking suit)
 - One heart or one spade only with 5+ in the suit
 - Otherwise, bid the longest minor suit (1 diamond if 4-4, 1 club if 3-3)
- Game/Slam targets
 - 26 – 29 – 33 – 37