

Overcalls

If the opponents have bid first before you have, and then you choose to make a bid – this is called an **overcall**.

When making an overcall, your aims are different from when you open. You are trying to:

- Compete for and win the contract
- Obstruct the opponents
- With suit overcalls – to suggest a lead to partner.

Suit Overcalls

- A good 5+ card suit (e.g. a minimum of 2 honours or a 6+ card suit to a top honour)
- At the 2-level, you need a good 5+ suit and 10+ points or a longer suit
- Typically, 8-16 HCP at the 1-level and 10-16 at 2-level
- If you have length and good cards in the opponent's suit, it is best to pass, unless you have a hand suitable for a 1NT overcall as described following:

Responses to a Suit Overcall

- | | | |
|-----------------|-------|-----------------------------------|
| • Minimum raise | 6-11 | 3+ card support |
| • Jump Raise | 12-14 | invitational with 3+ card support |
| • Bid Game | 15+ | with 3+ card support |
| • 1NT | 9-12 | shows a stopper (see below) |
| • new suit | 11+ | good 5+ suit (rare) |
- The better your suit **fit**, the higher you can bid.

1NT Overcall

- 15-18 hcp
- Must have a stopper in their suit – a stopper shows a trick (e.g. Axx, KQx, QJ10)
- Note that you should **not overcall 1NT with 12-14 HCP** – you need more points.

Responses to a 1NT Overcall

Balanced hands:

- | | | |
|--------|-----|---------------------|
| • Pass | 0-7 | no Game |
| • 2NT | 8-9 | invitational to 3NT |
| • 3NT | 10+ | bid Game |

Unbalanced hands:

- | | | |
|---------------|-----|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| • 2♣/2♦/2♥/2♠ | 0-7 | 5+ card suit, to play |
| • 3♥/3♠ | 9+ | game force with exactly a 5-card suit (Opener will choose 3NT or 4♥/4♠) |
| • 3♣/3♦ | 6-8 | 6+ card suit and inviting to game
NB: if you have a 5-card minor with 9+ HCP, bid 3NT |
| • 4♥/4♠ | 9+ | game with 6+ suit |

Module 9: Companion Card Play Topic – Opening Leads

Card Play Tips for Opening Leads:

1. Look at the auction before your opening lead
2. Lead partner's suit, especially if they have made an overcall
3. When you are leading a doubleton lead high-low
4. In most situations it is best to avoid leading the opponents' suit(s)
5. Leading against a suit contract, unless it's your partner's bid suit, avoid leading a suit with an unsupported ace. EG: Do not lead from AJ93, AQ53 or A85 – look for an alternative suit to lead.

Which card should you lead when leading partner's suit?

1. Lead high-low from a doubleton in partner's suit
97 32 K7
2. Lead a low card – leading your lowest card promises an honour:
 K932 Q642 Q83
3. Lead top of a sequence of 2 or more honours:
KQ73 J1087 QJ7
4. Lead top of an interior sequence of 2 or more honours:
 KJ103 Q1094 K109
5. Lead a high card if you have nothing of value in partner's suit:
872 653 7642

Related topics –covered elsewhere in this course:

- *Jump overcalls – these will be explained later – they are like pre-empts which will be covered in Module 11.*
- *More strategy on leads is covered in earlier and later sections, plus in the improvers and advanced topics.*
- *More on responses to suit overcalls and responses to 1NT overcalls will be covered in the improvers and advanced topics.*

Overcalls - Quiz

1. RHO (Right Hand Opponent) opens 1♥ - what call do you make with these hands?

(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)
♠ J7654 ♥ 62 ♦ KQ85 ♣ A9	♠ AQ52 ♥ QJ2 ♦ A1085 ♣ A7	♠ KQJ852 ♥ 54 ♦ Q76 ♣ 97	♠ 52 ♥ 62 ♦ AKJ754 ♣ K97	♠ Q2 ♥ KJ654 ♦ QJ75 ♣ A7

2. What call do you make after the following auction?

(1♣), 1♠, (P), ? The opponents' bids are in brackets and 1♠ is your Partner's overcall

(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)
♠ A52 ♥ Q62 ♦ J7654 ♣ 97	♠ 52 ♥ K652 ♦ K754 ♣ J97	♠ KJ52 ♥ AJ3 ♦ KQJ74 ♣ 6	♠ QJ2 ♥ K6 ♦ AK1085 ♣ 976	♠ 5 ♥ KJ642 ♦ AJ852 ♣ 97

3. What call do you make after the following auction?

(1♦), 2♣, (2♦) ? The opponents' bids are in brackets and 2♣ is your Partner's overcall

(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)
♠ A52 ♥ QJ72 ♦ 32 ♣ J854	♠ KJ2 ♥ A962 ♦ AJ10 ♣ Q75	♠ KQJ52 ♥ Q62 ♦ 985 ♣ 85	♠ AQ82 ♥ KQJ982 ♦ 2 ♣ 105	♠ 7 ♥ AKQ3 ♦ A43 ♣ QJ765

4. What do you bid after the following auction?

(1♦), 1NT, (P) ? The opponents' bids are in brackets and 1NT is your Partner's overcall

(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)
♠ 96 ♥ AK62 ♦ 86 ♣ KJ1032	♠ Q109763 ♥ 54 ♦ 42 ♣ 985	♠ K43 ♥ J632 ♦ 63 ♣ Q954	♠ Q52 ♥ AK862 ♦ 975 ♣ J7	♠ A5 ♥ QJ73 ♦ 854 ♣ J1085