

2-Level Major Suit Pre-empts

What do you need to pre-empt?

- 5-10 high card points (primarily in your suit—minimal outside values)
- 6 of the major (exactly!)
- DO NOT have 4+ of the other major (unless your partner has already passed)
- Sound (2 of top 3 or 3 of top 5) V vs. NV or second seat
- At least the Queen NV vs. V or third seat
- With equal vulnerability or in first seat, by partnership agreement.
- Once you pre-empt, do not bid again unless forced by your partner!
- There is no pre-empt in fourth seat! Opening 2H or 2S in fourth seat promises a 6-card suit with 14-16 HCP (a hand that wants to be in game opposite a limit raise).

Some Examples:

- A K J T 8 7, 9 8 7, 4 3, 9 7: Perfect pre-empt in any seat/vulnerability
- A K T 8 7 3, J 8 7, 4 3, 9 7: Very good pre-empt; minimal outside values
- K Q T 8 7 3, 9 8 7, 4 3, 9 7: Might not be good V vs. NV
- A Q T 8 7 3, 9 6 4, A 3, 9 7: Too good to pre-empt?
- Q T 8 7 3 2, 9 6 4, 8 3, 9 7: Do not pre-empt—not good enough

Responding to Partner's Pre-empt with a Fit (at least 2):

- Use the rule of 17 to decide if you have game: HCP + number of trumps = 17 or more. For example, partner pre-empts 2H and you have 3 Hearts and 14 HCP.
- Bid 2NT (forcing) to explore for the possibility of game. Possible responses:
 - Feature:
 - With a minimum hand, rebid the pre-empt suit (Q J T 9 8 3, K 3, 5 4, 6 4 2)
 - With a non-minimum hand, bid your cheapest A or K (K Q J 9 8 7, K 5 2, 5 4, 3 2)
 - With a running suit and no outside A or K, bid 3NT (A K J T 9 7, 3 2, Q 4, 7 6 4)
 - Ogust – bid up the line as follows:
 - 3C = Bad suit, bad hand
 - 3D = Good suit, bad hand
 - 3H = Good hand, bad suit
 - 3S = Good hand, good suit
- If game is not possible, “extend” the pre-empt: With 2-card support, pass; with 3-card support, bid 3; with 4-card support, bid 4. In other words, bid to the level dictated by the law of total tricks.
- If you are already a passed hand, generally pass and let the pre-empt do its job (unless NV vs. V).
- Sometimes, you might not want to extend the pre-empt. For example, you have a decent hand with 3-card support, not good enough for game, but probably good enough to keep the opponents from bidding (it is “your hand”). In that case, you can pass and only bid to the 3 level if forced by the opponents.

Responding to Partner's Pre-empt without a Fit (0 or 1):

- Bid a new suit (forcing) to find a fit in another suit:
 - Minimum of 15 HCP
 - Bid your own good suit at least 5 cards long
 - Opener's Responses:
 - After 2H – 2S: with 0 or 1: (1) rebid the pre-empt suit or (2) bid an A or K in a side suit; with 2 bid 2NT; with 3 (or possibly Hx) raise partner's suit
 - After any other new suit bids: Raise with 3 (or Hx); bid 3NT with xx and an outside A or K; with a singleton or void, bid a second suit headed by the A or K; otherwise, rebid the pre-empt suit
- Bid 2NT (forcing) to find out more about partner's hand. Generally, this is used to check for an outside entry to play NT. (This bid is not normally used with a void in partner's major.)
- Pass

NOTE: If the opponents bid and your partner doubles, it is 100% for penalty!