

You Might Want to Pass When...

...When you don't have enough values to bid NT

Examples:

Your Hand	The Auction
KQ7 K765 K5 KT98	You open 1C and your partner responds 1D. Your RHO then bids 2S. What do you do? Avoid the temptation to bid 2NT here showing your stopper. You do not have enough points! You have already shown your hand, and the bid of 2NT would promise 18-19 points. Pass and see what your partner does.
K972 K7 Q853 JT9	Your partner opens 1H and you bid 1S. Partner then rebids 2C. What do you do? Avoid the temptation to bid 2NT here. You do not have enough points! A bid of 2NT by the responder would show 11-12 points. Either pass 2C or bid 2H.

...When you have no new information to share

Example:

Your Hand	The Auction
KQT75 A5 KJT 983	You open 1S and your partner responds 2H. Your RHO then bids 3C. What do you do? You do not have a Club stopper to bid 3NT. You have already described your hand—opening points with 5 Spades, so you have nothing new to add. Do not rebid your Spades! Pass and see what your partner does.

...When you don't have the right shape to bid

Examples:

Your Hand	The Auction
75 K54 AK62 KJ83	Your RHO opens 1D and you would like to get into the auction with your 14 HCP. What do you do? You do not have the right shape to make a takeout double because you only have 2 Spades. You do not have a 5-card suit to overcall. Pass and see what your partner does—or consider overcalling 1NT with your nice Diamonds.
KQ7 A765 K5 KJ98	Your RHO opens 1NT and you have a 1NT opener. What do you do? Unless you play a system where X shows an equal value hand, you must pass because you do not have the right shape to bid according to your system. If you do play the equal value X, have an agreement with your partner about whether systems are “on” or “off”.

...When you want your partner to re-open with a double (the trap pass)

Example:

Your Hand	The Auction
75 K85 AQT98 983	Your partner opens 1S and your RHO overcalls 2D. What do you do? You do not have the values to bid 2NT, which would promise 11-12 HCP. You do not have the right shape to double, because that would promise 4 Hearts. You cannot make a penalty double yourself here! Pass and see if partner makes a re-opening double, which you can convert to penalty.

...When you want to “wait and see” before bidding

Examples:

Your Hand	The Auction
7 KT8653 9862 Q3	Your LHO opens 1D and your partner overcalls 1S. Your RHO passes. What do you do? You do not have enough points to bid 2H directly. Pass and see what happens—you might be able to bid 2H at your next turn. Similarly, if your partner opens 1S, you should pass and see if you can bid 2H on your next turn.
AT9543 AT75 -- 987	You are in first or second seat. What do you do? You might be tempted to pre-empt 2 Spades with this hand, but it might be better to pass. If partner opens or overcalls 1H, you have a very good hand for them! If not, you can bid your Spades later, for example, if the opponents bid 1C – 1D or 1D – 2D. If you are in third seat and your partner has already passed, you might pre-empt 2S with this hand.