

## Revision Workshop: Introduction to Bidding

When Bridge is played well, it is not a game of rules, but a game of thinking, partnership, and making mistakes. The winner is the one who:

- outthinks their opponent
- is a good partner, someone always trying to understand partner and make life easy for partner
- is willing to make mistakes and learns from their errors. Over time the number of errors diminishes but all the best players will always make some mistakes – otherwise it isn't Bridge. Unless you accept that Bridge is a game with mistakes, you cannot be a great player.

What should I think about after sorting my hand?

**Do I have enough points to Open the bidding if nobody bids before me?** If yes, then

- Do I have a 5+ card major to bid?
- If I don't have a 5card major, which minor will I bid?
- If I have a balanced hand and enough points to open a NT, have I included additional length points for any 5+ card suit in my total point count?

**If I don't have enough points to open, prepare for what to do when partner opens:** Will I remember how many points I have (double check if necessary). Estimate any additional points if there is a fit.

- Do I pass
- What will I do if I do not have a fit with partner
- Do I respond at the lowest level if partner opens the bidding AND we have a fit
- Do I show an invitational hand if partner opens the bidding AND we have a fit
- Will I immediately or eventually bid to the game level if partner opens the bidding

**What will I do if the opponents interfere?**

- If the opponents double, I will ignore the double and bid as though the double didn't happen.
- If the opponents bid first or overcall and I can open or I have support for partner I won't change my bid.
- If the opponents bid first or overcall and I do not have support for partner:
  - I will bid a NT with a stopper in the opponents' suit, <3 of partner's suit, and the other two suits covered at the appropriate level (6-10 is 1NT; 11-12 is 2NT; 13+ is 3NT).
  - I will bid my own suit
  - I will double with <5 cards in a suit, shortage and no stopper in opponents suit and 8+points

**But there is more – here are some guidelines:**

- Open the **higher** of two five card suits when you are the OPENER
- BUT bid **lowest** of equal length majors if you are the RESPONDER.
- Bid a major before a minor even if the minor is longer than the major whether you are opener or responder

THEREFORE: When you open the bidding and then bid a new suit, the first suit is usually longer than the second.

Unless responder has a BIG hand, the first duty is to support partner if possible.

# BRIDGE SUMMARY – THE BIDDING

## OPENING

Open all 12+ high-card point hands.  
Usually open your longest suit first.  
To open 1♥ or 1♠ you need 5+cards (*and 12+ points*),  
Otherwise ...  
Open 1♣ or 1♦ which could be 3+cards (*and 12+ points*)

HIGH CARD POINTS	
Ace:	4 HCP
King:	3 HCP
Queen:	2 HCP
Jack:	1 HCP
10:	0 HCP

**NOTE:** You need 8+ cards in the two hands for a fit.  
You need at least 6 cards to repeat a suit.

## RESPONDING

Respond to an opening bid with all 6+point hands. Respond up the line with 4/4; Respond higher of 5/5.

### RESPONDING WITH A MAJOR (♠ or ♥) FIT

If you have a major suit fit (3+cards) raise the major immediately. With a fit, count your shortage points.

**A fit is at least 8 cards between the 2 hands.**

1♥ to 2♥ with 3+cards and 6-9 TOTAL Points

1♥ to 3♥ with 3+cards and 10-12 TOTAL Points

1♥ to 4♥ with 3+cards and 13+ TOTAL Points

If you have a minor suit fit (**4+cards**), usually look for a major first

### SHORTAGE POINTS

Void:	+5
Singleton:	+3
Doubleton:	+1

You can only add shortage points once you have a fit.

Do **NOT** double count.

### RESPONDING WITHOUT A FIT

Starting with your longest suit, respond with 4+cards in a suit, Bid a major before a minor - with 4 diamonds and 4 hearts bid the hearts first.

A new suit at the one-level can be made with 4+cards and 6+High Card Points

A new suit at the two-level can be made with 5+cards and 10+High Card Points

A 1NT response says "I don't have a fit, no suit to bid at the one level and 6-10 High Card Points".

A 2NT response says "I don't have a fit, no 5+suit and 11-12 High Card Points".

A 3NT response says "I don't have a fit, no 5+suit 13-15 High Card Points".

A new suit by the responder is forcing – Opener cannot pass unless the opponents intervene.

### FIT and GAME

Go for Game with a combined 25+points.

If there is a fit, always choose the Major, 4♠ or 4♥

Rarely choose 5♣ or 5♦; prefer 3NT

With no chance for Game, stop as low as possible.

**NOTE:** You need 8+cards in the two hands for a fit.

### GAME CONTRACTS

4♥ or 4♠

3NT

5♣ or 5♦

Go for Game if you have a combined 25+ points.

## OPENING HANDS WITH EQUAL LENGTH MAJORS

- Q1            What do you Open? WHY? State 3 reasons  
♠ AQT87      1♠ - You have 12 HCP ie enough points to open;  
♥ KJ942      You have 5 spades, the minimum number for opening a major.  
♦ Q3            **You always open the higher of two five-card suits.**  
♣ 2
- Q2            What do you Open? WHY? State 4 reasons.  
♠ T8764      1♠ - You have 12 HCP ie enough points to open;  
♥ AJ973      You have 5 spades, the minimum number for opening a major.  
♦ K7            **Always open the higher of two five-card suits.** Quality is irrelevant.  
♣ A
- Q3            What do you Bid? WHY? State 4 reasons.  
♠ QT764      1♠ - You have 18 HCP ie too strong to open 1NT and are not balanced;  
♥ AKJT4      You have 5 spades, the minimum number for opening a major.  
♦ KJ            **Always open the higher of two five-card suits.** Quality is irrelevant.  
♣ A
- Q4            What do you Bid? WHY? State 3 reasons  
♠ 87            1♥ - With 11 HCP and amazing shape, too strong to pass. You may need to show  
♥ AQT73      2 suits;  
♦ 9              You have 5 hearts, the minimum number for opening a major.  
♣ KQ876      **You always open the higher of two five-card suits.**
- Q5            What do you Bid? WHY? State 4 reasons.  
♠ KJ987      1♠ - You have 18 HCP ie too strong to open 1NT and not balanced with a  
♥ A2            singleton;  
♦ 7              You have 5 spades, the minimum number for opening a major.  
♣ AQT96      **You always open the higher of two five-card suits.** Quality is irrelevant.
- Q6            What do you Bid? WHY? State 4 reasons.  
♠ K7            1♥ - With 17 HCP cannot open 1NT as you are NOT balanced AND too  
♥ J8642      strong.  
♦ AKQT8      You have 5 hearts, the minimum number for opening a major.  
♣ A              You always open the higher of two five-card suits.  
**A major is always more important.** Quality is irrelevant.
- Q7            What do you Bid? WHY? State 4 reasons.  
♠ 98642      1♠ - You have >12 HCP, enough to open  
♥ AQJT7      You have 5 spades, the minimum number for opening a major.  
♦ AQ            **Opener always open the higher of two five-card suits.** Quality  
♣ 8              is irrelevant.  
NOTE: RESPONDER bids the lower of equal length majors

**OPENER bids highest of equal length majors  
BUT RESPONDER bids lowest of equal length majors  
Both Opener and Responder bid Majors before minors even with a longer minor**

## BALANCED HANDS

- Q8            What do you Open? WHY?  
♠ KQ7       With 4333 shape (balanced) and 15-17 points, **ALWAYS** open 1NT  
♥ AT86  
♦ J96  
♣ AK7
- Q9            What do you Open? WHY?  
♠ AQ872    With 5332 shape(balanced) and 15-17 points, **ALWAYS** open 1NT  
♥ K42       Note: This hand counts as 17 points as we add an additional point for  
♦ 972       length(5+cards) with NT hands  
♣ AK
- Q10           What do you Open? WHY?  
♠ QT764    With 5332 shape(balanced) and 15-17 points, **ALWAYS** open 1NT  
♥ K42       Note: This hand is 16 points; The 5-card suit is such poor quality that we do NOT  
♦ KJ       add an additional point for length.  
♣ AK
- Q11           What do you Open? WHY?  
♠ J9872    With 5332 shape(balanced) and 15-17 points, **ALWAYS** open 1NT  
♥ AJ       Note: This hand is 16 points; The 5-card suit is such poor quality that we do NOT  
♦ KQ9      add an additional point for length.  
♣ KQT
- Q12           What do you Open? WHY?  
♠ 872       With 5332 shape(balanced) and 15-17 points, **ALWAYS** open 1NT  
♥ QT874    Note: This hand is 15 points; The 5-card suit is such poor quality that we do NOT  
♦ AQ       add an additional point for length.  
♣ AKJ
- Q13           What do you Open? WHY?  
♠ 92        With 4432 shape (balanced) and 15-17 points, **ALWAYS** open 1NT  
♥ AJ97  
♦ KQT  
♣ AK86
- Q14           What do you Open? WHY?  
♠ 987       With 4333 shape (balanced) and 15-17 points, **ALWAYS** open 1NT  
♥ 974       Always remember you have a partner so even though you are very exposed in the  
♦ AKJ       majors, it is likely partner will have coverage there.  
♣ AKQT
- Q15           What do you Open? WHY?  
♠ Q3        With 5332 shape(balanced) and 15-17 points, **ALWAYS** open 1NT  
♥ K97       Note: This hand is 17 points; We add an additional point for length(5+cards) with  
♦ QJ7       NT hands  
♣ AKJ97

Q16 What do you Open? WHY?  
♠ K43 1NT is 15-17 points; Open 1C – too strong to open 1NT as you have 18 points.  
♥ A2 Add 2 points for a strong 6 card minor.  
♦ 43 Hopefully pard with bid 1H or 1S then you can jump to 2NT to show 18-19  
♣ AKQT76 points and find your 3NT game.

Q17 What do you Open? WHY?  
♠ K2 1NT is 15-17 points; Open 1C – too strong to open 1NT as you have 18  
♥ KJ9 points.  
♦ AQ Add 1-2 points for a medium quality 6 card minor.  
♣ KJ7642 Hopefully pard with bid 1H or 1S then you can jump to 2NT to show 18-19  
points and find your 3NT game.

**BALANCED SHAPE is 4333, 4432, 5332, 6322 if minor is 6 cards long  
Remember to count length points if you have a balanced hand before opening 1NT**

## OPENING MINOR HANDS

Q1 ♠ 8 ♥ AQT7 ♦ QJ97 ♣ A862	Open what? WHY? Open 1♦; 12-14HCP No 5card M Highest of equal length suits	Pard bids 1S? It shows ... what? >6 HCP At least 4 spades Unlikely to have 4 hearts unless 5+spades	What do I rebid? Choose from: 2C – Min; No ♠ 1NT- Possible but scary with one ♠
Q2 ♠ 42 ♥ 97 ♦ AKQ8 ♣ K8764	Open what? WHY? Open since = 12HCP Exception: 1♦; It's not a major; It's lead directing; Allows a rebid of 2C	Pard bids 1H or 1S? It shows .. what? 1H or 1S shows 4+ cards and 6+ HCP It says nothing about ♦ or ♣ as we bid majors first	What do I rebid? 2C shows a weak hand with ♦ and ♣ asking responder to choose best one
Q3 ♠ 7 ♥ KT76 ♦ KQT9 ♣ AKJ8	Open what? WHY? 1NT not possible as unbalanced. With 16+HCP I can open 1♦ or 1♣. I choose 1♦. Prefer ♣ opening lead from opponents	Pard bids 1S? It shows ...? 1S shows 4+S and 6+points; Unlikely to have 4 ♥ unless 5+♠	What do I rebid? Too strong for 1NT as >14HCP; With 16+HCP, bid 2H so pard knows we have game if he has 10+HCP
Q4 ♠ 8742 ♥ AKQT ♦ KT4 ♣ Q5	Open What? WHY? 1D as 12-14 HCP Must have at least 3 cards in a minor to open	Pard bids 1S? It shows ...? 1S shows 4+S and 6+points; Unlikely to have 4 ♥ unless 5+♠	What do I rebid? With 8-card fit, bid 2S to show 4S and 12-14 total points
Q5 ♠ K72 ♥ AQT8 ♦ KT84 ♣ J3	Open what? WHY? 1D as 12-14 HCP No 5-card major Minor suit > 3 cards	Pard bids 1S? It shows ... what? 1S shows 4+S and 6+points; Unlikely to have 4 ♥ unless 5+♠	What do I rebid? WHY? 1NT shows <4 spades, Balanced hand, and 12-14 total points
Q6 ♠ A2 ♥ KQ7 ♦ J8742 ♣ KT8	Open what? WHY? 1D as 12-14 HCP No 5-card major D is longest of C&D	Pard bids 1S? It shows .. what? 1S shows 4+S and 6+points; Unlikely to have 4 ♥ unless 5+♠	What do I rebid? 1NT shows <4 spades, Balanced hand, and 12-14 total points
Q7 ♠ 97642 ♥ KQ ♦ AJ ♣ A874	Open What? WHY? 1S as 12-14 HCP 5+Spades; quality irrelevant	Pard bids 2S? It shows ..? 6-10 TOTAL points 3+ spades so we have an 8-card fit	What do I rebid? 3S to look for game With max(10) pard bids 4S With 6-8 pard should pass If they bid, can bid to lvl of 3S

Q8	Open what?	WHY?	Partner bids 2NT? What does it show?	What do I rebid?
♠ KT7	1NT – 4432	Balanced	2NT shows no 4 or 5 card major	3NT as 17+8pts = 25
♥ AQJ8	15-17	Points	2NT shows 8-9 points	25 points = Game
♦ AKT4				
♣ T3				

We aim to find a major fit or be in a NT contract if we have long minor suits. We open a minor with:

- No 5+ card major; Must have at least 3 cards in the minor; Usually open longest minor
- Usually not 15-17 unless there is shortage;
- Responder's 1st duty is to bid the LONGEST major with least 4 cards. Bid lowest if majors are equal length

REBIDS: Do you have Game (25 total points in the partnership)

Q1	YOU	PARD	What does pard have?	Bid what? WHY?
♠ T76	1♦	1♠	5+S & 4+H; Would bid H first	2S = agree 8 card fit in spades
♥ J87	1NT	2♥	with equal length.	2S = confirms 12-14 points with
♦ AJT6	?		Unbalanced - didn't pass/raise	3♠
♣ AK9			1NT	
Q2	YOU	PARD	What does pard have?	What do you bid? WHY?
♠ 82	1♦	1♠	5+S & 4+H; Would bid H first	PASS = agree 8 card heart fit
♥ J873	1NT	2♥	with equal length.	Pass = confirms 12-14 points with
♦	?		Unbalanced - didn't pass/raise	4♥
AKT7			1NT	
♣ KQ3				
Q3	YOU	PARD	What does pard have?	What do you bid? WHY?
♠ QT7	PASS	1♠	Partner has 12+HCP &	3♠ is 3+spades = 8 card
♥ 42	?		5+Spades	fit; Too strong for 2♠;
♦ K7				With 11/12pts, invite
♣ AJT42				game with 3♠
Q4	YOU	PARD	What does partner have?	What do you bid? WHY?
♠ J97	PASS	1♠	Partner has 12+HCP & 5+Spades	3♠ is 3+spades = 8 card fit;
♥ 4	?			Too strong for 2♠;
♦ AT76				With 11pts, invite game
♣ KT642				with 3♠
Q5	YOU	PARD	What does partner have?	What do you bid? WHY?
♠ 842	-	1♠	Partner has 12+HCP & 5+Spades	1 <sup>st</sup> duty is support partner
♥ AT654	?			3♠ is 3+spades = 8 card fit;
♦ AJ73				Too strong for 2♠;
♣ 2				With 12pts, invite game
Q6	YOU	PARD	What does partner have?	What do you bid? WHY?
♠ QJT73	1♠	2♥	5+H and 10+points	1NT as no fit; Don't like NT with singleton
♥ 4	?			However, partner has stops in H and you
♦ AQ				are not strong enough to bid 2C;
♣ K6432				Shortage in partner suit = liability
Q7	YOU	PARD	What does partner have?	What do you bid? WHY?
♠ KQ876	1♠	2♥	5+H and 10+points	4♥; 8-card ♥ fit so 14pts
♥ A32	?			With 14pts & partners 10+ is
♦ 3				close enough for game.
♣ Q632				
Q8	YOU	PARD	What does partner have?	What do you bid? WHY?
♠ QJT987	1♠	2♥	5+H and 10+points	2♠ to show 6♠ and NO fit
♥ K	?			You are minimum especially with shortage
♦ T3				in partner's suit;
♣ AKT9				



## Reading List for the Enthusiastic New Bridge Player

### Beginners Lessons

There is no perfect introduction to Bridge; Most books about bidding are out of date though books on card play are generally useful. Read what your teacher recommends or whatever books appeal most. The books suggested in this article are all available from the Mollymook Library.

### Month 1: Card Play: Select one of the two books below.

1. "Introduction to Declarer's Play" by Edwin P. Kantar: Tells you all about the declarer card play that they never taught you in Beginners lessons; Read one chapter per week. Read chapter's 1 and 2 followed by chapters 8 and 9; Save the rest for later when you are more experienced.
2. "Introduction to Defence: 2nd Edition" by Edwin P. Kantar: Tells you all about the declarer card play they never taught you in Beginners lessons; Read one chapter per week. Start at the beginning and read as much as makes sense to you during the month. Start with chapters 1 & 2; After a month, you can try reading Chapter 1 of Part 2 as well as Further Tips on Defensive Play.

### Month 2: Card Play: Same two books as above

If you did Declarer Play in month 1 then read Defence in month 2 or vice versa

**Month 3&4:** Time to add some bidding conventions. You can read and learn it in one day BUT need practise for at least two weeks in club games before moving onto the next convention. If you half know them you can add one convention each week.

- "All about Notrumps" by Paul Marston is a great summary on how to bid and play no trumps with lots of examples and quizzes. It covers Stayman and Transfers too.
- "Stayman Auctions" by Barbara Seagram & Linda Lee; Simple Stayman is one of the top three Bridge Conventions, essential to every Bridge player's repertoire. Even if you think you know how to play Simple Stayman, it is worth the time to read the overview on pages 3-10 with your partner so that you are on the same page (exclude the crossed out sections which are no longer used). If you are new to Stayman, then reading this and doing the quizzes on pages 13-22 will help you become a master in no time. You don't need to read the whole thing - the introduction and some quizzes will give you what you need.
- "Jacoby Transfers: Practise your Bidding": Barbara Seagram & Andy Stark; Explains the concept well with examples but does go into quite a lot of advanced material that rarely comes up. Recommend reading just pages 3-8 and then moving onto the Quizzes in section 3. Read in conjunction with learning 1NT and Stayman.
- "Negative and Responsive Doubles in Bridge" by Harold Feldheim; Only 60 pages presented beautifully. Clarifies all the mysteries around doubles which is not an easy topic to explain.

### Month 5: Time to work on Competitive Bidding and add Opening Twos

"Step-by-Step Overcalls" by Sally Brock; One of the rare books on Competitive Bidding written for intermediate through to advanced players; Deals with why, what, and how to respond to an overcall. A must for every intermediate player. Well written, beautifully presented with excellent quizzes.

## **Month 6: Revision**

- “My First Book of Bridge Problems” [Pat O'Connor] WINNER - 2012 - American Bridge Teachers Association Book of the Year. When Peter was directing at Hunters Hill where they had several copies of this book, it was one of the most popular books. He also found it was a quiz book full of useful information for newer players presented in a very readable manner.
- “The Language of bidding” [Paul Marston] Good summary of what you need to know about Bidding for beginners to club players so makes for excellent revision. Ensure you read latest version ie 5th edition of the 2 copies if you can. Note: Recommend you exclude multi two's on page 100-106, exclude page 155( Bergen Raises) and review responding to weak twos on page 97 with an experienced player as there are better ways to do this.

## **Then**

- “Planning NT Contracts” [Bird/Bourke] One of the biggest challenges for newer players is declaring in NT especially 1NT. 1NT is so often tricky. This book addresses the basic principles of NT play and provides quizzes to reinforce the learning. A must for any player who wants to improve their NT declarer play.
- “Planning Suit Contracts” [Bird/Bourke] Short; good structure with a lesson followed by quiz format

Whatever turns you on