

Good bidding is the result of clear partnership agreements and bidding according to your agreements. Trust your partner and listen to them.

THE BONES OF BIDDING

Overcalls and Responding

YOUR PARTNERSHIP IS ON A QUEST TO FIND A MAJOR SUIT FIT.

1. Overcalls are one of the ways you have to get into the auction after an opponent has already opened the bidding.
2. An overcall at the one level does NOT require 13 points. In fact, you can overcall with as few as seven points. What you DO need is a five-card or longer suit with a couple of honors in it.

If opponent opens 1 diamond, and you have

KQ986 QJ3 J42 87	Overcall 1 spade
98 AK863 742 K73	Overcall 1 heart
AJ1086 AK Q72 984	Overcall 1 spade

3. If you can overcall or make a takeout double, prefer the overcall in order to show your five-card suit. If partner doesn't fit it, you may still be able to double later.

AQ864 AJ96 3 K43	Overcall 1 spade
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4. To overcall at the two level, you need a good 5-card suit and 10 points or more, or you need 8 points and a 6-card suit.

If opponent opens 1 spade, and you have

86 AQJ93 A842 87	Overcall 2 hearts
9 863 742 AKJ732	Overcall 2 clubs

5. Overcalls serve the following important purposes:
 - Disrupt the opponents
 - Show partner a lead in case you defend
 - Compete for the contract

6. If partner overcalls and you have 6 to 9 points and a fit, raise.

7. With ten or more points and a fit, cue bid the opponent's suit.

If opponent opens 1 diamond, and partner overcalls 1 spade:

K986 QJ3 A1042 87 Bid 2 diamonds.

Your cue bid does two things at once:

- It tells your partner you have 10 points or more
- It asks your partner, "Do you have an opening hand?"

If your partner does NOT have an opening hand, he will rebid his suit.

If your partner DOES have an opening hand, he will make a new bid to describe his hand further.

8. If partner overcalls and you don't have a fit, pass.

Don't try to "save" partner. You'll only make things worse. Just pass and wait for the opponents to continue bidding. Usually they save your partner for you.

9. To bid a new suit over partner's overcall, you need a good major suit and ten or more points. You are trying to improve the contract from a minor suit to a major suit, and you have points to do it. Your bid is forcing for one round. This sequence is uncommon.