

Opening and Responding to one of a suit

When you first look at your cards you should count your HCPs and see if the hand is balanced.

If you the number of cards in your two longest suits and is 8 or less then it is balanced otherwise it is unbalanced. Note a 4-4-4-1 hand would be considered unbalanced even though there are only 8 cards in the two longest suits.

With 12-14 points and a balanced hand you would open 1NT

You can open one of a suit if the hand is

- Balanced with 15-19 points
- Unbalanced with 12-19 points

Note: If you open 1 of a suit then you are promising a rebid if your partner responds with a new suit.

Opening one of a suit with a balanced hand (15-19 points)

(i.e. hands distributed 4-3-3-3, 4-4-3-2, 5-3-3-2)

Open with 1 of your longest suit, if you have 2 four-card suits (4-4-3-2) then open with the lower ranked suit and rebid as follows

1NT with 15-16 points,

2NT with 17-18 points,

3NT with 19 points

Of course, in order for you to rebid your partner must have responded.

Opening one of a suit with an unbalanced hand (12-19 points)

Which suit to bid?

- Bid your longest suit first
- With 5-5-3-0, 5-5-2-1 or 6-6-1-0 distributions then bid the higher ranked suit
- With 4-4-4-1 distribution and a black singleton then bid the middle suit of the other three
- With 4-4-4-1 distribution and a red singleton then bid the suit below the singleton

Bidding with 4-4-4-1 distribution	
Singleton	Bid
♣	1♥
♦	1♣
♥	1♦
♠	1♦

Rule of Twenty

When deciding to open the bidding with less than 12 points do the 'Rule of Twenty' test. If the total of all your high card points plus the numbers of cards in your two longest suits is 20 or more you may open the bidding.

Responding to a one of a suit opening

If you have 6 or more points then you should respond to partners opening.

Opening Bid	Response in preference order
1♣ or 1♦	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Bid a 4-card or longer major (forcing) 2. Support partner's minor 3. 1NT (6-7 points)
1♥ or 1♠	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Support partner's major 2. Bid 1♠ over 1♥ opening (forcing) 3. Bid 1NT (6-7 points) or 4-card or longer minor at 2-level (8+ points)

Supporting partner's suit

The opening bid shows a 4-card suit or longer, to support the opener you must have at least 4 cards in the suit.

Bidding a new suit

When responding with a new suit, the order of priority is longest first, the higher suit with 5-5 and 6-6 patterns and with 4-card suits, bid the cheapest (lowest rank). A new suit bid is also **forcing** meaning your partner must bid. However do not bid a new suit at the 2-level with less than 8 points.

Responding 1NT

The 1NT response is bid only as a last resort. It shows 6-7 points but does not mean that the hand is balanced.