

RESPONDING TO OPENER'S 1st BID of ONE of A SUIT

NB not including the 2 over 1 system which has different responses.

When responding you are aiming to find ...

- if your partnership holds a fit of 8+ cards in the one suit (with priority to be in a major)
- how many total points you hold between you – thus providing limits to your bidding level
- if, between you & partner you have cover in all suits, & can make a NoTrump contract

Below is a straightforward method, providing guidelines suitable for most players.

A. With a fit in Opener's suit i.e. partnership has a combined 8 or more cards in the suit bid

Add in distribution points – then bid as below

- less than 6 - PASS
- 6-9 - raise to 2nd level eg opener bids 1H – you bid 2H (to show a fit and 6-9 points)
- 10-12 - raise to 3rd level eg opener bids 1H – you bid 3H (to show a fit and 10-12 points)
- 13 -17 - if fit is in a major suit, raise to 4th level “game” hearts/spades
- 15-17 - if fit is in a minor suit, can raise to 5th level - “game” for clubs/diamonds
- 18 plus - ask for Aces

However, if the “fit” is in a minor suit, and you are holding four cards in a major suit, bid the major before acknowledging the minor. If opener has four of your major, you have found a second fit and should play in the major. If there is no fit in the major you can return to a bid in the minor suit. If you have found a fit in a minor suit and have stoppers in the other three suits consider NOTRUMPS

B. No fit with Opener

less than 6 points – Probably **PASS** see below*

6-9 points - bid a new suit at the 1 level (a suit of 4 or more - prefer a major)

If you can't bid a suit - bid 1NT This is a point count only and tells partner you have no biddable four card suit and have 6-9 points

10 plus points - keep bidding low – bid a new suit at 1 level but you can bid a new suit at 2nd level if necessary. **Opener must bid again as you have changed suit.** Bidding should continue to “game” if you, “responder”, have 13 or more points. (Opener's 13 plus your 13 = 26) Possible slam level with 18+ points

If you have no four card major, and the suit bid by opener compliments your hand (after checking you have cover in any suit bid by opposition) consider:

- 2NT with 10-12 points
- straight to 3NT with 13+ points i.e. “game” level
- ask for Aces with 18+ points

**Debate – After partner's 1C opening bid, and no overcall by right hand opponent, are you as responder forced to bid if holding fewer than 6 points? (Make a partnership agreement)*

Some say YES! “Never leave your partner in 1Club”

Others say NO! PASS Because.....

- If you have little, it is likely the opposition will enter the bidding in 4th seat or your partner will have a strong hand and likely make the contract even with few clubs.
- To respond with less than 6 points is a lie and may lead opener to a worse situation.
- If you do enter the bidding later, your partner will know, as you passed first time round, that you have fewer than 6 points and will be restrained in his bidding.

Compromise Bid with 4-5 pts and a 4 card major i.e. 1H or 1S - If not, PASS