

Responder's New Suit Bids and Opener's Limit Rebids

To bid a new suit responder needs at least four cards in the suit and 6 points if responding at the 1-level and 10+ points* to bid at the 2-level. New suit bids are wide ranging and could have as many as 19 points. They are forcing bids. Partner **MUST NOT PASS!**

1♥ –	1♠	6+ points	4+ card suit
	2♣	10+ points*	4+ card suit

* But see 'Rule of 14' below

Length Points

If responder has a fit for partner's suit then responder can count shortage points as well as HCP. But if responder bids a new suit (i.e. no fit has been found), responder can add one extra 'length' point for every card over and above four cards in a suit. Extra length can be valuable in establishing a suit in No Trump contracts. A great way of working out whether your hand is good enough to bid a newsuit at the 2 Level is the Rule of 14:

Rule of 14

Add the number of cards in your longest suit to your high card points. If the total is 14 or more, you are strong enough to respond at the 2 level. If not, you should bid 1NT.

This is just another way of counting 'length' points.

Consider the following hand:

South	North	East	South	West
♠ 9 4 3	1♥	P	1NT	
♥ 9 6				
♦ K 8 2				
♣ A J 9 4 3				

You have 8 points and 5 clubs, giving a total of 13, so you should respond 1NT. If you count 'length' points you have $8 + 1 = 9$ points.

Add either a jack or a 6th club and you can respond 2♣.

The Dustbin 1NT response

A responding bid of 1NT is a rather odd bid!

It is the only No Trump bid that doesn't mean a Balanced Hand. It simply shows a point count. It says:

1. 'I don't have 4 cards in my partner's suit'
2. and 'I don't have a suit I can bid at the 1 level'
3. and 'I don't have enough points to bid at the 2 level'

We call it the 'Dustbin Bid' as it catches all those rubbish hands with 6-9 points where there is nothing else you can bid. Remember, you always bid with 6+ points. 1NT is your last resort if you can't bid anything else.

After partner opens 1♥ we must respond with 6 points. A response of 2♦ would promise a hand satisfying the Rule of 14

So we bid 1NT.

West

1♥

East

1NT

Notice East doesn't have a balanced hand

East

♠ 9 8 2

♥ 7

♦ K J 8 6 3 2

♣ Q 8 4

Responding with two 4+ card suits

With two suits of exactly four cards, bid the **cheaper** suit:

- If partner opens 1♥ and you have 4 spades and 4 diamonds, bid 1♠
- If partner opens 1♠ and you have 4 clubs and 4 hearts, bid 2♣

With two five card suits, bid the **higher ranked** suit:

- If partner opens 1♦ and you have 5 hearts and 5 spades, bid 1♠
- If partner opens 1♠ and you have 5 clubs and 5 hearts, bid 2♥

With a 4 card suit and a 5/6 card suit, usually bid the longer suit, but don't bypass a 4 card major * in favour of a 5+ card minor suit

- If partner opens 1♥ and you have 5 diamonds and 4 clubs, bid 2♦
- If partner opens 1♥ and you have 4 spades and 5 clubs, bid 1♠

* You CAN bypass a 4 card major in favour of a 5 card minor provided you have a strong hand (12+ points) – we will cover this in a future lesson.

Opener's rebids after a new suit response

□

- Support partner's suit 4+ in that suit
- Bid NT balanced
- Rebid long suit 5+ in the suit
- *Bid a new suit* 4+ in the 2nd suit (next lesson)

Opener supports Responder's Suit

It is important to show support for partner's suit if an 8+ card fit has been found, particularly if it's a major:

After 1♥ – 1♠:

2♠	12-15*	4-card support	single raise
3♠	16-18*	4-card support	invitational raise
4♠	19+*	4-card support	game raise

** A fit has been found so don't forget to add shortage points when evaluating your hand strength.*

Opener bids No Trumps – showing a balanced hand

After 1♥ – 1♠

1NT	15-16
2NT	17-18
3NT	19+

After 1♥ – 2♣

2NT	15-16
3NT	17+

Opener rebids their own suit – showing an unbalanced hand

After 1♥ – 1♠:

2♥	12-15	5+ card suit
3♥	16-18	6+ card suit
4♥	19+	6+ card suit

