

Lesson 6: Practise your Overcalls

(Not playing Stayman or Transfers)

Print off and fold down the middle.

<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>1</th> <th>West</th> <th>North</th> <th>East</th> <th>South</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>1♦</td> <td>?</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	1	West	North	East	South				1♦	?	<p>♠ K8642 ♥ J752 ♦ A92 ♣ 6</p>	<p>Pass You have sufficient honour strength (8+) to overcall, but your SQOT is only 6 (Five spades + one spade honour). You need a SQOT that is at least the same as the number of tricks you are bidding to make, here seven.</p>
1	West	North	East	South								
			1♦	?								
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2	West	North	East	South								
			1♠	?								
<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>3</th> <th>West</th> <th>North</th> <th>East</th> <th>South</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>1♥</td> <td>?</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	3	West	North	East	South				1♥	?	<p>♠ AKJ10 ♥ 543 ♦ Q72 ♣ K72</p>	<p>Pass You have opening values and your spades are lovely with a SQOT of 8, but you MUST have at least five cards in your overcall suit. Partner would be relying on you having at least 5 spades in order to determine whether there is an 8+ card fit. Your hand is well suited to defending.</p>
3	West	North	East	South								
			1♥	?								
<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>4</th> <th>West</th> <th>North</th> <th>East</th> <th>South</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>1♣</td> <td>?</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	4	West	North	East	South				1♣	?	<p>♠ KQJ86 ♥ 7 ♦ Q743 ♣ 965</p>	<p>1♠ A classic 1-level overcall - lovely spades with a SQOT of 8 and 8 HCP, and good shape. The singleton heart offers ruffing potential. Overcalls in spades are especially disruptive. If West had been planning to bid diamonds or hearts she will now have to do so at the 2-level instead of at the 1-level, and may not be strong enough to bid.</p>
4	West	North	East	South								
			1♣	?								

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5	West	North	East	South								
			1♠	?								
<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>6</th> <th>West</th> <th>North</th> <th>East</th> <th>South</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>1♥</td> <td>?</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	6	West	North	East	South				1♥	?	♠ K943 ♥ KJ9 ♦ Q43 ♣ AK2	1NT To overcall 1NT you need a good stopper in opener's suit and 16+ HCP (or a good 15 HCP). If you are declarer in a No-Trump contract then West will almost certainly lead East's suit (hearts) and your ♥K will win the first or second round of hearts.
6	West	North	East	South								
			1♥	?								
<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>7</th> <th>West</th> <th>North</th> <th>East</th> <th>South</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td>1♣</td> <td>1♠</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>?</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	7	West	North	East	South		1♣	1♠	Pass	?	♠ Q72 ♥ J7642 ♦ K762 ♣ 9	2♠ You know that partner has 5+ spades so you have a spade fit. Your bid shows 3+ card spade support and modest values (6-11 points including shortage).
7	West	North	East	South								
	1♣	1♠	Pass	?								
<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>8</th> <th>West</th> <th>North</th> <th>East</th> <th>South</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td>1♣</td> <td>1♠</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>?</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	8	West	North	East	South		1♣	1♠	Pass	?	♠ Q965 ♥ Q965 ♦ AJ32 ♣ 5	3♠ You have 9 HCP. You would normally require 11+ HCP to make a jump raise of partner's overcall suit. However you have a singleton in opener's suit, worth three points in ruffing values, and your fourth spade will surely produce an extra trick.
8	West	North	East	South								
	1♣	1♠	Pass	?								
<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>9</th> <th>West</th> <th>North</th> <th>East</th> <th>South</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td>1♣</td> <td>1♠</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>?</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	9	West	North	East	South		1♣	1♠	Pass	?	♠ 76 ♥ AK4 ♦ J987 ♣ K983	1NT You do not have 3 card support for partner's spades but you do have 11 HCP, a stopper in opener's club suit and a balanced hand. To respond in No Trumps to partner's 1♠ overcall you need roughly three more points than the 6-9 points you would need if partner had opened 1♠, i.e. 9-12 HCP. With 13-14 HCP and at least one good stopper (preferably two) you would bid 2NT. With a 16 HCP or good 15 HCP and two good club stoppers you would bid 3NT.
9	West	North	East	South								
	1♣	1♠	Pass	?								

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10	West	North	East	South								
			1♥	?								
<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>11</th> <th>West</th> <th>North</th> <th>East</th> <th>South</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td>1♦</td> <td>1NT</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>?</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	11	West	North	East	South		1♦	1NT	Pass	?	♠ KJ8632 ♥ AK2 ♦ 74 ♣ 42	<p>4♠</p> <p>You have an 8-card fit (partner has a balanced hand so at least two spades) and 11 points. You have a spade fit and the values for game opposite partner's 16+ HCP.</p>
11	West	North	East	South								
	1♦	1NT	Pass	?								
<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>12</th> <th>West</th> <th>North</th> <th>East</th> <th>South</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td>1♦</td> <td>1NT</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>?</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	12	West	North	East	South		1♦	1NT	Pass	?	♠ 752 ♥ 98643 ♦ 2 ♣ J972	<p>2♥</p> <p>A rescue bid, a weak takeout. Your hand is worthless playing in No Trumps but your hearts will be very useful as trumps.</p> <p>As with a 1NT opener, a 1NT overcaller will not normally bid again. Overcaller's limit bid has described her hand very accurately and overcaller should respect your bid, appreciating that you might well have this hand type.</p>
12	West	North	East	South								
	1♦	1NT	Pass	?								
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13	West	North	East	South								
	1♦	1NT	Pass	?								
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14	West	North	East	South								
	1♦	1NT	Pass	?								

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15	West	North	East	South								
	1♣	1♠	Pass	?								
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16	West	North	East	South								
			1♠	?								
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17	West	North	East	South								
	1♣	1♠	Pass	?								