

Pre-emptive Openings

Pre-emptive Opening Bids

2-level openings (except 2♣)	show 6-10 and a good 6-card suit (SQOT = 8)
3-level openings	show 6-10 and a good 7-card suit (SQOT = 9)
4-level openings	show 6-10 and a good 8-card suit (SQOT = 10)

The pre-emptive opening is a **destructive** opening. Once you open you will **rarely bid again** – you have described your hand very accurately – from now on it is up to partner to bid on, double or pass.

Examples:

♠ KJ107543	♠ 2	♠ 2	♠ AQJ87432	♠ 4
♥ AJ3	♥ AQ8762	♥ AJ3	♥ 43	♥ K6
♦ K8	♦ 962	♦ J98542	♦ 74	♦ 542
♣ 7	♣ K72	♣ KJ4	♣ 9	♣ KJ87653
Open 1♠	Open 2♥	Pass (<i>poor suit</i>)	Open 4♠	Open 3♣

Responses with a fit:

BID TO THE LEVEL OF YOUR FIT. If partner opens with a preemptive 2♥ (showing 6 hearts) and you have three hearts, bid 3♥ regardless of your strength. Do so even with zero points! You have nine hearts between you, so bid to make nine tricks. If partner opens 3♠ (showing 7 spades) and you have three spades, bid 4♠. You have a combined ten spades, so bid to make ten tricks.

WITHOUT A FIT, count your HCP excluding Queens and Jacks (Quacks)

- To respond to partner's weak 2 without a fit you need 12+ HCP
- To respond to partner's weak 3 without a fit you need 15+ HCP

Responses to a Weak 2 without a fit:

Bidding a new suit

If you are very short in partner's suit, (a singleton or void), **DO NOT BE TEMPTED TO RESCUE PARTNER** by bidding your own suit unless you have a good hand. . A new suit bid is constructive, looking to improve the contract. You should have a good 5+ card suit (6+ if your bid is at the 3 level). Partner can pass, raise your suit or rebid her own suit.

Bidding No Trumps

This can be a very risky bid, even with 16+ HCP. Partner's only tricks may be in their long suit, so you will very probably need cards in their suit to enjoy them. If you can't get across to partner's hand enough times to establish their suit holding as winners then their hand might be worthless. Two card support is risky, three card support should be safe.

Examples (partner opens 2♥):

♠ 7	♠ A5	♠ A52	♠ KQJ542	♠ K3
♥ J73	♥ 84	♥ K7	♥ 4	♥ 3
♦ K8762	♦ AK743	♦ KQ85	♦ KQ8	♦ AKJ543
♣ 7432	♣ A753	♣ 9864	♣ QJ42	♣ KJ76
Bid 3♥	Bid 4♥	Pass	2♠	Pass

Note: for more experienced partnerships a responder with 15-16 points can use a conventional gadget, a bid of 2NT (artificial) asking partner whether he is top of his point range (8-10 points) or bottom (5-7 points). The 2NT bid is known as a "range asking bid" and is alertable.

Responses to a Weak 3 without a fit:

With a good hand, think about 3NT over partner's minor suit preempts. You should have some length (and preferably strength) in partner's suit so that you can get to dummy to cash those long suit tricks. Partner may not have an outside entry, and there's no room to ask. Don't be too concerned about points; if you can count nine probable tricks (given that six or seven will come from dummy), then bid 3NT.

With a good hand and no fit over partner's major suit preempts, think about the major suit game rather than 3NT. Partner is likely to have quick losers which the opponents will try to win off the top, so a "good hand" is one that has aces or ace king combinations rather than 'Quacks', (Queens and Jacks).

Examples (partner opens 2♦):

♠ 7	♠ AJ9	♠ A52
♥ A73	♥ QJ9	♥ K7
♦ J54	♦ 52	♦ KQ85
♣ AKQ1062	♣ AQJ53	♣ 9864
Bid 3NT	Pass	Pass³

Example (partner opens 3♥):

♠ KQ32
♥ 4
♦ AK96
♣ KQ42
4♥

Once you have preempted, do not bid again

If you open 3♥ and then bid 4♥ on the next round, you have either underbid first time or overbid second time. Bid the full value of your hand immediately, hoping to silence your opponents. If you let your opponents 'talk' and then bid on you have shown your weakness. They may well make a costly double, thinking you have overbid. If you are prepared to bid to 4♥, do so right away.

Don't preempt with four reasonable cards in a major suit (preempts with four cards in a minor suit are generally acceptable).

This point only applies to preempts in first or second seat. Partner may have been winding up to open in your major and you have preempted him rather than your opponents. Once partner is a passed hand, it is no longer a concern. Once you have made a preemptive bid, partner is in charge.