

Practise your Overcalls

Print off and fold down the middle.

<table><tr><th>1</th><th>West</th><th>North</th><th>East</th><th>South</th></tr><tr><td></td><td>1♦</td><td>Pass</td><td>Pass</td><td>?</td></tr></table>	1	West	North	East	South		1♦	Pass	Pass	?	<p>♠ K9872 ♥ J752 ♦ A92 ♣ 6</p>	<p>Pass</p> <p>You have sufficient honour strength (8+) to overcall, but our SQOT is only 6 (you need 7 to overcall at the 1-Level)</p>
1	West	North	East	South								
	1♦	Pass	Pass	?								
<table><tr><th>2</th><th>West</th><th>North</th><th>East</th><th>South</th></tr><tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>1♠</td><td>?</td></tr></table>	2	West	North	East	South				1♠	?	<p>♠ K3 ♥ J2 ♦ KJ876 ♣ Q1042</p>	<p>Pass</p> <p>You are not strong enough to overcall the 2-level, and your SQOT is a poor 7. You need a SQOT that is at least equal to the number of tricks you are bidding for, here 8. West could have a decent hand with very good diamonds and no support for East's spades, and if you are doubled you could go for a big penalty.</p>
2	West	North	East	South								
			1♠	?								
<table><tr><th>3</th><th>West</th><th>North</th><th>East</th><th>South</th></tr><tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>1♥</td><td>?</td></tr></table>	3	West	North	East	South				1♥	?	<p>♠ AKJ10 ♥ 543 ♦ Q72 ♣ K72</p>	<p>Pass</p> <p>You MUST have at least five cards in your overcall suit. Partner might be very short in spades. Your hand is well suited to defending.</p>
3	West	North	East	South								
			1♥	?								
<table><tr><th>4</th><th>West</th><th>North</th><th>East</th><th>South</th></tr><tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>1♣</td><td>?</td></tr></table>	4	West	North	East	South				1♣	?	<p>♠ KQJ86 ♥ 7 ♦ Q743 ♣ 965</p>	<p>1♠</p> <p>A classic 1-level overcall. Lovely spades with a SQOT of 8 and 8 HCP. 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.</p>
4	West	North	East	South								
			1♣	?								
<table><tr><th>5</th><th>West</th><th>North</th><th>East</th><th>South</th></tr><tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>1♠</td><td>?</td></tr></table>	5	West	North	East	South				1♠	?	<p>♠ 6 ♥ KJ1092 ♦ A3 ♣ Q6542</p>	<p>2♥</p> <p>A 2-Level overcall requires close to opening values and a SQOT of 8+. If you added a 6th heart (removing a club) then the SQOT would be 9 but it does not follow that you should bid to make 9 tricks (3♥). You would still overcall 2♥.</p>
5	West	North	East	South								
			1♠	?								
<table><tr><th>6</th><th>West</th><th>North</th><th>East</th><th>South</th></tr><tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>1♥</td><td>?</td></tr></table>	6	West	North	East	South				1♥	?	<p>♠ K943 ♥ KJ9 ♦ Q43 ♣ AK2</p>	<p>1NT</p> <p>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 HK will win the first or second round of hearts.</p>
6	West	North	East	South								
			1♥	?								
<table><tr><th>7</th><th>West</th><th>North</th><th>East</th><th>South</th></tr><tr><td></td><td>1♣</td><td>1♠</td><td>Pass</td><td>?</td></tr></table>	7	West	North	East	South		1♣	1♠	Pass	?	<p>♠ Q72 ♥ J642 ♦ K762 ♣ 98</p>	<p>2♠</p> <p>You know that partner has 5+ hearts so you have a heart fit. Your bid shows modest values (6-11 HCP) and 3+ card heart support.</p>
7	West	North	East	South								
	1♣	1♠	Pass	?								
<table><tr><th>8</th><th>West</th><th>North</th><th>East</th><th>South</th></tr><tr><td></td><td>1♣</td><td>1♠</td><td>Pass</td><td>?</td></tr></table>	8	West	North	East	South		1♣	1♠	Pass	?	<p>♠ Q965 ♥ Q965 ♦ A52 ♣ J64</p>	<p>3♠</p> <p>You would normally require 3 card support and 11+ HCP to make a jump raise of partner's overcall suit. However you have a fourth spade, which surely is worth an extra trick.</p>
8	West	North	East	South								
	1♣	1♠	Pass	?								

<table><tr><th>9</th><th>West</th><th>North</th><th>East</th><th>South</th></tr><tr><td></td><td>1♣</td><td>1♠</td><td>Pass</td><td>?</td></tr></table>	9	West	North	East	South		1♣	1♠	Pass	?	<p>♠ J6 ♥ K94 ♦ Q987 ♣ A98</p>	<p>1NT</p> <p>You do not have 3 card support for partner's spades but you do have 10 HCP and a stopper in opener's club suit and a balanced hand. You need roughly three more points to bid No Trumps than you would do if partner had opened the bidding. With 13 HCP you would bid 2NT. With a good 15 HCP and good club stoppers you would bid 3NT.</p>
9	West	North	East	South								
	1♣	1♠	Pass	?								
<table><tr><th>10</th><th>West</th><th>North</th><th>East</th><th>South</th></tr><tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>1♥</td><td>?</td></tr></table>	10	West	North	East	South				1♥	?	<p>♠ J5 ♥ 952 ♦ KJ53 ♣ AKJ6</p>	<p>Pass</p> <p>You would open 1NT with this hand but you have to pass. You don't have a 5 card suit and are not strong enough to overcall 1NT, which would require 16 HCP (or a good 15) and a heart stopper, of which we have neither. Our hand is</p>
10	West	North	East	South								
			1♥	?								
<table><tr><th>11</th><th>West</th><th>North</th><th>East</th><th>South</th></tr><tr><td></td><td>1♦</td><td>1NT</td><td>Pass</td><td>?</td></tr></table>	11	West	North	East	South		1♦	1NT	Pass	?	<p>♠ KJ8632 ♥ AK2 ♦ 74 ♣ 42</p>	<p>4♠</p> <p>You have an 8 card fit (partner has a balanced hand so at least two spades) and the values for game.</p>
11	West	North	East	South								
	1♦	1NT	Pass	?								
<table><tr><th>12</th><th>West</th><th>North</th><th>East</th><th>South</th></tr><tr><td></td><td>1♦</td><td>1NT</td><td>Pass</td><td>?</td></tr></table>	12	West	North	East	South		1♦	1NT	Pass	?	<p>♠ 752 ♥ 98643 ♦ 2 ♣ j972</p>	<p>2♥</p> <p>A rescue bid, weak takeout. As with a 1NT opener, a 1NT overcaller will not normally bid again.</p>
12	West	North	East	South								
	1♦	1NT	Pass	?								
<table><tr><th>13</th><th>West</th><th>North</th><th>East</th><th>South</th></tr><tr><td></td><td>1♦</td><td>1NT</td><td>Pass</td><td>?</td></tr></table>	13	West	North	East	South		1♦	1NT	Pass	?	<p>♠ K52 ♥ Q8643 ♦ Q9 ♣ A872</p>	<p>3NT</p> <p>Partner has at least 15 HCP and a diamond stopper. You have 11 HCP, so enough for game.</p>
13	West	North	East	South								
	1♦	1NT	Pass	?								
<table><tr><th>14</th><th>West</th><th>North</th><th>East</th><th>South</th></tr><tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>1♠</td><td>?</td></tr></table>	14	West	North	East	South				1♠	?	<p>♠ J5 ♥ KQ96432 ♦ 6 ♣ AK3</p>	<p>2♥</p> <p>You have a good opening hand so must not make a weak jump overcall to 3H, which would be a weak Jump overcall (WJO), showing 5-10 HCP and a 7 card suit. You have to make a non-jump overcall, prepared to rebid your suit to let partner know you have this sort of hand..</p>
14	West	North	East	South								
			1♠	?								
<table><tr><th>15</th><th>West</th><th>North</th><th>East</th><th>South</th></tr><tr><td></td><td>1♦</td><td>1NT</td><td>Pass</td><td>?</td></tr></table>	15	West	North	East	South		1♦	1NT	Pass	?	<p>♠ 8 ♥ 987 ♦ 8753 ♣ KQJ52</p>	<p>Pass</p> <p>Playing Stayman and Transfers in response to partner's 1NT overcall ('Systems On'), you cannot bid 2♣ here as that is Stayman.</p>
15	West	North	East	South								
	1♦	1NT	Pass	?								
<table><tr><th>16</th><th>West</th><th>North</th><th>East</th><th>South</th></tr><tr><td></td><td>1♥</td><td>1NT</td><td>Pass</td><td>?</td></tr></table>	16	West	North	East	South		1♥	1NT	Pass	?	<p>♠ 987654 ♥ ♦ J1087 ♣ 752</p>	<p>2♥</p> <p>You are too weak to leave partner in 1NT. Transfer to spades, a weak takeout. Partner should pass</p>
16	West	North	East	South								
	1♥	1NT	Pass	?								
<table><tr><th>17</th><th>West</th><th>North</th><th>East</th><th>South</th></tr><tr><td></td><td>1♥</td><td>1♠</td><td>2♥</td><td>?</td></tr></table>	17	West	North	East	South		1♥	1♠	2♥	?	<p>♠ Q986 ♥ 7 ♦ QJ87 ♣ KQ54</p>	<p>3♥</p> <p>With 10 HCP and great spade support you make a constructive Unassuming Cue Bid (UCB). A bid of 3♠ here would show a weaker hand, bidding to the level of the fit and expecting partner to pass.</p>
17	West	North	East	South								
	1♥	1♠	2♥	?								