

Opening the Bidding

The Auction

In our previous lessons we have played Mini-Bridge, a form of bridge where the auction phase is greatly simplified to enable beginners to get into playing the hands and winning tricks without having to learn all the rules for bidding. Now it's time to start learning the Acoll bidding system.

Each suit has a ranking order. When you make a bid during the auction, you must ensure that it is higher than the previous bid, just as you would in any auction. You are now trying to reach a contract at the best level for your side. The first person to make a bid (not pass) becomes the **OPENER**. Opener's partner is called the **RESPONDER**.

Ranking of Suits

Notrumps	NT		
Spades	♠	}	Spades and Hearts are also called the MAJOR suits
Hearts	♥		
Diamonds	♦	}	Diamonds and Clubs are also called the MINOR suits
Clubs	♣		

The Levels of Bidding

1♣ 1♦ 1♥ 1♠ 1NT 2♣ 2♦ 2♥ 2♠ 2NT 7NT

You must make 6 tricks before you start to score in bridge – therefore:

1- level contracts must make 1+6 tricks = 7 tricks

2- level contracts must make 2+6 tricks = 8 tricks ... and so on

The lowest bid you can make is 1♣ = 7 tricks

The highest bid you can make is 7NT = 13 tricks

What is the Partnership looking for in a Contract?

Their aim is to find the best contract at the correct level. There are 3 levels to bid to:

Partscore	combined points less than 25
Game	combined points 25-32
Slam	combined points 33+

What is Game?

You get a large bonus when you make a Game, but you must make a certain number of tricks to succeed. The number of tricks varies according to the trump suit or NT.

Game is: 3NT – 9 tricks 4♥/♠ – 10 tricks 5♣/♦ – 11 tricks

1-level Opening Bids – Suit or No Trumps?

Opening in a Suit

1♣	12-19	4+ clubs
1♦	12-19	4+ diamonds
1♥	12-19	4+ hearts
1♠	12-19	4+ spades

You always open in your longest suit, regardless of how good the suit is. When you have two equal length suits there are rules to follow regarding which suit to open. We will cover these in Lesson 3.

Opening 1NT

There is one hand type where we do not open in a suit when we have 12-19 points. When we have **12-14 points** and what is known as a **BALANCED HAND**, we open 1NT.

A balanced hand contains:

- no void or singleton
- one doubleton at most

What do you open with the following hands?

♠ AQ6542	♠ AJ52	♠ K2	♠ K987	♠ 97642
♥ 72	♥ KJ	♥ J762	♥ A87	♥ AKQ2
♦ A2	♦ A75	♦ KQ875	♦ KJ3	♦ J3
♣ A92	♣ 9865	♣ K7	♣ A52	♣ 96
.....

Answers

♠ AQ6542	♠ AJ52	♠ K2	♠ K987	♠ 97642
♥ 72	♥ KJ	♥ J762	♥ A87	♥ AKQ2
♦ A2	♦ A75	♦ KQ875	♦ KJ3	♦ J3
♣ A92	♣ 9865	♣ K7	♣ A52	♣ 96
1♠	1NT	1NT	1♠	Pass

