

Major Suit Bidding & Responses

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Most to least desirable contracts

1. Major suit with an 8-card fit
2. No-Trump
3. Minor suit with an 8-card fit
4. A suit with a 7-card fit

*Only a general ranking –

Very strong hand and hands with extreme distribution are exceptions.

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What should you have to open a major suit?

- 12 to 21 high card points(HCP)*
- At least five cards in the major suit
- No better bid (e.g., longer minor suit or no-trump)

*General guide:

Open with less than 12 HCP but having suit length points

Bid 2♣ with less than 22 points if you are “a trick short of game”

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How many points to open?

13+ high card points (HCP) – always

12 or fewer HCP – different valuations with suit length

- 1) Add 1 point for each card longer than 4 in a suit (bid if this + HCP=13)
- 2) HCP + two longest suits = 20 (rule of 20)
- 3) High card points + two longest suits + Quick Tricks = 22:
Rule of 22 (1st or 2nd seat)
- 4) Any 12 HCP, especially in 3rd seat

NOTE: Use method 1) until you are intermediate level player.
This is the conservative Audrey Grant recommendation.

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Bidding Quiz As Opener

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♠ K 9 8 7 2 ♥ A K ♦ A 3 4 ♣ 8 7 6		♠ Q 2 ♥ K Q J 9 8 7 ♦ Q 9 8 ♣ 4	
♠ K 9 8 7 2 ♥ A K ♦ A 3 4 ♣ Q 7 6		♠ A 2 ♥ K Q J 9 8 ♦ A 9 8 ♣ K J	
♠ 7 2 ♥ A K 10 9 8 7 ♦ A 9 8 ♣ 4		♠ A 2 ♥ K Q J 10 8 7 6 ♦ A K J ♣ 2	

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Responses to a Major Suit Opening

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Guidelines for responses

- 3+ card support → add value for singletons and voids
- 4 card support → add value for length
- 3+ card support → raise partner rather than bidding your best suit, except to show a game going hand.
- 6-9 points, support → raise your partner
- 6-9 points, no support → bid your suit at the 1 level or bid 1NT
- 10+ points, no support → bid your best suit.

NOTE: 2/1 will be presented in a later lesson

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Bidding Quiz
As Responder after Partner opens 1♥

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♠ K 9 8 7 ♥ 9 8 ♦ A 8 5 4 3 ♣ J 7		♠ 9 7 5 3 ♥ 4 ♦ Q 9 8 7 5 ♣ 8 3 2	
♠ K 9 8 7 ♥ K 10 7 ♦ J 8 7 6 ♣ 8 7		♠ 9 7 3 ♥ 4 ♦ A Q J 9 8 ♣ A K J	
♠ 9 7 5 4 ♥ Q 10 8 7 ♦ A K J 2 ♣ 4			

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Bidding Quiz
As Responder after Partner opens 1♠

12

♠ K 9 8 7 ♥ 9 8 ♦ A 8 5 4 3 ♣ J 7		♠ Q J 10 ♥ A K 7 6 ♦ A K J 3 2 ♣ 2	
♠ K 9 ♥ K J 9 7 6 ♦ 8 7 6 ♣ J 3			

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Recap

- Try to play in a major if you have an 8-card fit
- 1 of a major has a very broad point and distribution range. This makes standard bidding more difficult than in no-trump.
- As opener, add value to your hand for long suits
- As responder, add value to your hand for short suits if you also have good trump support.
- As responder, add value to your hand if more than 3-card support