



THE
POCKET
GUIDE TO
2/1

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OUR OPENING BIDS AND WHAT THEY PROMISE

All one bids promise 12 HCP and will usually include two defensive tricks (Ace = 1, KQ = 1, K = 1/2, etc.)

1♣/1♦ 12-20 HCP, three-plus cards in the suit

1♥/1♠ 12-20 HCP, five-plus cards in the suit.

1NT 15-17 HCP with balanced (4-3-3-3, 4-4-3-2 or 5-3-3-2) distribution. Perfectly okay to have a 5-card major and maybe one unstopped suit.

2♦/2♥/2♠ Standard weak two-bids, 5-11 HCP, six-card suit, generally not 4 (or more) cards in another major

suit. (*Note:* there is obviously some room for individual variance here but don't stray too far!) The main suit will be 'good' = 4+ HCP and/or good spot cards

2♣ Strong, artificial and forcing. 22+ HCP if balanced, 20+ HCP if unbalanced.

2NT 20-21 HCP, balanced, 5-card major okay.

3NT 25-27 HCP, balanced, 5-card major okay.

3♣/3♦/3♥/3♠ Weak preemptive openings with less than 10 HCP, a seven-card suit (usually) and no defensive values outside the long suit. Follow the RULE of 2, 3, 4 and 5 — more later on this.

4♣/4♦/4♥/4♠ Also preemptive openings, more likely to have 8+ cards in the suit, also follow RULE of 2, 3, 4 and 5.

LENGTH CONSIDERATIONS

With 3-3 in the minors and no 5-card major, always open 1♣ — don't worry that your diamonds may be better. This means you will only have as few as three diamonds and still open the suit when you are precisely 4-4-3-2 in distribution.

With 4-4 in the minors and no 5-card major, generally open 1♦.

With 5-5 in any 2 suits and regardless of the hand's strength, open with the higher-ranked suit except if the 2 suits are clubs and spades and then open 1♣ with 12-15 HCP or 18+ HCP but open 1♠ with 16-17 HCP. (*Note:* this last option is

somewhat controversial and would not meet with the approval of all experts or teachers but it works very well — try it, you might like it!)

With 4-5 in the minors, a minimum hand and good diamonds, open 1♦ to prepare a rebid.

♠ 8 7	<i>Open 1♦ and rebid</i>
♥ 6 3	<i>2♣ over a 1♥ or 1♠</i>
♦ A Q 5 2	<i>response</i>
♣ A Q 6 3 2	

EXCEPTIONS FOR MINIMUM OPENERS

This may be a matter of personal and/or partnership style but if you choose to downgrade our standards and open lighter than we recommend, please remember to make allowances in all the responses and rebids.

If you are going to open one-bids with less than 12 HCP, some recommended hand types to do this with would include:

a) A good 6-card (or longer) suit with 11 HCP and 2 defensive tricks.

♠ A Q J 10 7 2 *Open 1♠*
 ♥ 4
 ♦ 7 6 5
 ♣ A 8 2

b) 11 HCP and 5-5 with two good suits that are 'touching' in rank. ('Touching' means adjacent in the suit rank ladder so that spades and hearts, hearts and diamonds, diamonds and clubs and even spades and clubs are touching while spades and diamonds, and hearts and clubs, are not).

Examples

♠ A 6 *Pass*
 ♥ A 3
 ♦ K 8 4
 ♣ 8 7 6 4 3 2

Two distinct flaws in this hand: only 11 HCP and a truly awful long suit.

♠ 3 *Pass*
 ♥ A 8 7 5 2
 ♦ K Q
 ♣ Q 8 5 3 2

Only 11 HCP and the 5-card suits aren't touching nor are they particularly good. A further flaw is the 5 HCP tied up in the doubleton KQ.