

Bidding Basics

Responding after an opposing 1♥ overcall



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Like last month, let's start by making sure you are on the ball.

If the opponents overcalled with 1♥, what was your partner's opening bid?

Right, partner has opened a minor and RHO has overcalled 1♥. What are your options as responder?

Pass = Zero to about 7 or 8, or possibly a hand that wants to penalize 1♥. More on that at the end.

Double = Negative. This particular negative double guarantees exactly four spades. Not three, not five. Not two, not six. Exactly four! This is etched in stone. The strength is approximately 6-plus HCP. You can make a negative double with as little as:

♠QJ92 ♥65 ♦8752 ♣K65.

Is there an upper limit? No. You should make a negative double with:

♠AQ98 ♥AJ2 ♦A765 ♣A2.

So, the word "negative" can be a bit confusing. Of course, after doubling with such a hand, you will bid more later on.

1♠ = 6-plus HCP and five-plus spades. To help you remember, be happy when the opponents overcall 1♥. It allows responder to convey right away if he has only four spades with a negative double, or five or more. Bid 1♠ (forcing, of course) with these hands:

♠J8765 ♥AK2 ♦875 ♣54,

♠AQJ1065 ♥AK2 ♦A2 ♣76.

1NT = 6–10 balanced with hearts stopped, fewer than four spades. With either of these, respond 1NT:

♠Q87 ♥Q102 ♦KQ65 ♣1092

♠K2 ♥K1065 ♦Q1054 ♣J65.

2♣ = If the opening bid was 1♣, then this raise shows 6–10, usually with five-plus clubs, and denies four spades. If the opening was 1♦, then this shows five-

plus clubs and 10-plus points (one-round force). Respond 2♣ after 1♣–(1♥) with:

♠A2 ♥J52 ♦Q76 ♣J10876.

Respond 2♣ after 1♦–(1♥) with:

♠54 ♥53 ♦A63 ♣AK9762.

2♦ = If the opening bid was 1♦, then this shows 6–10, usually with four-plus diamonds, and denies four spades. If the opening bid was 1♣, then this shows five-plus diamonds and 10-plus points (one-round force). Respond 2♦ after 1♦–(1♥) with:

♠K65 ♥986 ♦KJ976 ♣64.

Respond 2♦ after 1♣–(1♥) with:

♠Q2 ♥J65 ♦AQ10854 ♣K2.

2♥ = Limit raise or better in the minor opened. Respond 2♥ after 1♣–(1♥) with:

♠A6 ♥A83 ♦A52 ♣A9865.

Respond 2♥ after 1♦–(1♥) with:

♠54 ♥742 ♦AQ102 ♣AJ76.

2♠ = Weak, six spades. Don't make this bid without partnership agreement/discussion.

2NT = 11–12 HCP, invitational, hearts stopped, denies four spades. With either of these, respond 2NT:

♠K65 ♥K32 ♦KJ2 ♣J1054

♠AQ2 ♥Q54 ♦QJ65 ♣J32.

3 level raise = Requires partnership agreement. In modern bridge, this would be preemptive because the cuebid is available to show a limit raise or better.

3 of a new suit = Weak, but don't make such a bid without partnership agreement.

3NT = 13–15 HCP, hearts stopped, denies four spades. With either of these, respond 3NT:

♠K102 ♥QJ84 ♦AQ2 ♣Q105
♠KJ6 ♥KQ2 ♦KQ2 ♣10965.

Trap Pass = With a desire to penalize 1♥, you can pass, hoping that partner reopens with a double for takeout. You can then leave in the double, converting it for penalty. This is most likely to happen if the 1♥ overcaller was vulnerable. You could pass and hope for partner's reopening double with, say,

♠K54 ♥KQ982 ♦A2 ♣984.

Bidding Basics Quiz

What is your response after 1♣–(1♥) with:

1. ♠10876 ♥A2 ♦AQ2 ♣AQJ2
2. ♠AK765 ♥A8654 ♦32 ♣2
3. ♠K2 ♥KQ10 ♦AQ32 ♣J543
4. ♠ – ♥A32 ♦Q654 ♣KQ8754

What is your response after 1♦–(1♥) with:

5. ♠A9876 ♥ – ♦AQ872 ♣A74
6. ♠J65 ♥KJ9 ♦Q32 ♣Q1076
7. ♠K32 ♥A ♦Q542 ♣K10765
8. ♠54 ♥54 ♦AJ765 ♣10765

Solutions on page 50.

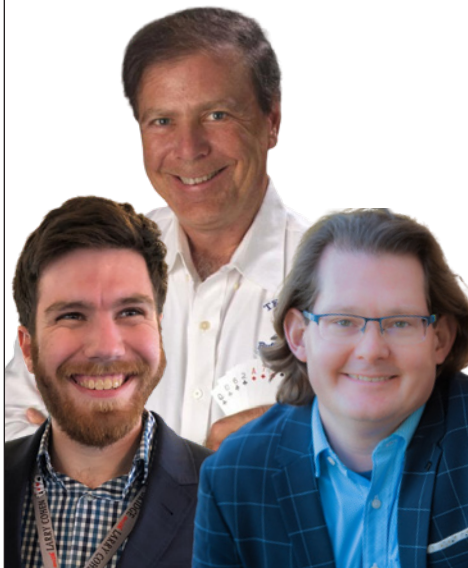


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Bidding Basics Quiz Answers

From quiz on page 49.

1. Double. Exactly four spades. You will spring to life later; for now, look for the 4-4 spade fit.
2. 1♠. Five-plus spades. Don't play for penalties (even if they are vulnerable); this hand has too much offensive potential.
3. 3NT. Make sure to reach game.
4. 2♥. Limit raise or better in clubs.
5. 1♠. To start (nice that partner will know you have at least five spades).
6. 1NT. 6-10, hearts stopped, denies four spades.
7. 2♣. Natural, five-plus clubs, 10-plus HCP, one-round force.
8. 3♦. Hopefully, partner knows this is weak in modern bridge.