

4. Overcalls & Scoring

♥ Overcalls

If you bid after your opponents have opened the bidding, you are an *overcaller*.

The rules are now different. Instead of trying to get to game, you are attempting to:

1. Steal the contract
2. Obstruct the opponents
3. Suggest a lead to partner

Simple overcall = Good 5-card suit

If you have a good 5-card suit you can simply bid that suit even with less than 12 hcp. All you promise is a good suit, so partner shouldn't expect a lot of points. A good rule of thumb for a good suit is that you should have 2 honours.

Your right hand opponent bids 1♥. What is your bid?

♠ KQJT9 1♠. You have a good suit and points aren't important when you are overcalling.
 ♥ A62
 ♦ 875
 ♣ 93

♠ 97632 Pass. You have lots of points but a bad suit.
 ♥ A62
 ♦ AQ5
 ♣ K3

**A Good Suit
has
2 of top 4 honours**

♣ Responding To Overcalls

It is important to bid if you possibly can so as to make life difficult for you opponents.

The principle is the same for the overcaller's partner as it is for the overcaller.

It is the trump suit that matters.

A big difference is that your partner has shown a 5-card suit so you only need 3 trumps as support.

1. Raise partner with 3 or more trumps
2. Pass with no support for partner's suit

Partner overcalls 1♠ after 1♥. Your bid?

♠ 97 Pass. Your partner is promising a good spade suit so there is no need to do anything. You don't have a fit.
 ♥ 962
 ♦ AQJ53
 ♣ K32

♠ 973 Bid 2♠. You have a fit. Push the bidding up a level. Your opponents have to bid at the 3 level now!
 ♥ 962
 ♦ QJ53
 ♣ K32

Because partner has shown at least 5 cards, you can raise with 3-card support. Don't bid unless you have a fit - except on the rare occasion when you have an extraordinarily good suit of your own.

