



Hand Shapes:

Balanced patterns: 4-3-3-3 4-4-3-2 5-3-3-2 – No void, no singleton, not two doubletons
Semi-balanced patterns: 5-4-2-2 6-3-2-2 7-2-2-2 – No void, no singleton, two or three doubletons
Unbalanced patterns all contain at least one void or one singleton.

Hand Valuation : High card points (HCP):
A = 4
K = 3
Q = 2
J = 1

Distributional points after a trump fit is found:
Void = 5
Singleton = 3
Doubleton = 1

Points needed for games: 3NT or 4♥ or 4♠: 25 points For 5♣ or 5♦: 28 points.

Points for slams: Small slam (any 6-contract): 33 points Grand slam (any 7-contract): 37 points

Trumps needed for games and slams: At least an 8-card trump fit is required.

Opening the bidding: 0-11 points: Pass 12-21 points: Open with a 1-bid. 21-up: Open with 2♣. (2NT with 20-22 bal)

Which suit to open :

1. Start with your longest suit.
Exception : With 11-13 HCP and five good spades and six poor hearts, prefer to open 1♠.
2. With a 5-5 or 6-6 pattern, bid the higher-ranking suit first. This also applies to five clubs and five spades.
3. (a) 4-3-3-3: Open 1NT or 2NT with the right point count. If not, open the 4-card suit (or 2♣ with 23+).
(b) 4-4-3-2 pattern: Open 1NT or 2NT with the correct point count. Open 2♣ with 23+ HCP. In the 12-14 or 18-19 zone, open the cheaper 4-card suit.
(c) 4-4-4-1 pattern : Black singleton, open the middle suit. Red singleton, open the suit below the singleton.

1NT opening: 15-17 points, balanced shape.

2NT opening: 20-22 points, balanced shape.

With 12-14 or 18-19 balanced: Open with 1-in-a-suit and rebid no trumps later according to the strength held.

With 23-up balanced: Open 2♣ and rebid no-trumps next (unless you can support responder).

Leads: Top from a sequence of three or more cards as long as the sequence contains at least one honour. Fourth-highest from a long suit with no sequence. Top from a doubleton. Middle-up-down from three low cards.

Signals: High-low is encouraging on partner's lead or as a discard. Lowest card is discouraging.

Overcalls:

A suit overcall at the 1-level shows a strong 5+ suit and 8-16 HCP. A suit overcall at the 2-level (not a jump-overcall) shows a strong 5+ suit and 10-16 HCP. **The 1NT overcall shows 15-18 points, balanced shape and at least one stopper in their suit.**

Doubling a suit at the 1-level or 2-level is for takeout. **A double of no-trumps is normally for penalties.**

Responding to a suit opening: Single raise = 6-9. 1NT response = 6-9. 1-level suit = 6+ points. 2-level new suit reply = 10+ points. Jump-shift = 16+ points and a powerful one-suiter or a strong suit and support for opener's suit. Jump-raise = 10-12 points, 4-card support. 2NT response = 11-12, balanced. 3NT response = 13-15 points, 4-3-3-3 pattern. Responder's change of suit is forcing (unless responder is a passed hand or there has been a 1NT bid in the auction).

Responding to 1NT: With a balanced hand, pass with 0-7, bid 2NT with 8-9, 3NT with 10-15 and explore slam with 16+. With an unbalanced hand, bid a suit at the 2-level with 0-7 points, jump to the 3-level or to game with a long suit and 8+ HCP. Any suit bid over 1NT shows a 5-card suit at least.

Responding to 2NT: With a balanced hand, pass with 0-3 points, bid 3NT with 4-10 points and explore slam with 11+ points. The 2NT opening is not forcing, but any reply commits the partnership to game. A suit bid at the 3-level shows a 5-card suit and is forcing.

4NT Blackwood Convention asking for aces: 5♣ = 0 or 4 aces, 5♦ = one ace, 5♥ = two aces, 5♠ = three aces. After the reply to 4NT, a bid of 5NT indicates all the aces are held and asks for kings: 6♣ = no kings, 6♦ = one king, 6♥ = two kings, 6♠ = three kings and 6NT = four kings.