

Cardiff Bridge Tutors

How to Respond to an Overcall.

West	North	East	South
1♣	2♥	Pass	



Responding to an Overcall.

If at all possible you should support your partner's overcall but try to work out what type of overcall your partner was making.

Your options in responding will be:-

1. Pass
2. To support your partner
3. To bid No Trumps
4. To make an overcall of your own
5. To respond to a Takeout Double

1. If you can't support your partner and have no bid of your own.

PASS!

The only exception will be if your partner made a takeout double and the opposition have not bid.

West	North	East	South
1♣	2♥	Pass	Pass

2. Supporting your Partner's suit.

Your partner will have at least five cards in the suit they overcalled in.

You need a minimum of three to support them.

Remember your partner bid with!

Suit Quality

- at least two honours

Suit length

- Five of six of a suit

Points

A minimum of 8 for a 1 level call

11 or a good six card suit for a 2 level overcall

With **8-10 HCP** and a good quality suit the overcall at the **one level** shows.

West	North	East	South
1♣	1♥		

8-10 HCP
Two honours in a
five card ♥ suit
An 8 loser hand.

With **11+ HCP** and a good quality suit the overcall at the **two level** shows.

West	North	East	South
1♣	2♥		

11+ HCP
Two honours in a
five card ♥ suit
A 7 loser

Use the Losing Trick Count to determine the level to which you can support.

If you don't use the Losing Trick Count then I strongly recommend that you learn it. It is an invaluable tool in evaluating your hand.

Without the Losing Trick Count then you may wish to use "The Law of Total Tricks".

This says that **usually** the number of tricks won is equal to the number of cards the partnership jointly holds in the trump suit.

To make an overcall then you know that your partner has at least 5 cards in that suit and so if you have 3 then you could **usually** expect to make 8 tricks. In this case you could support up to the two level.

3. Bidding No Trumps.

If you had a balanced hand and only two cards in your partner's overcalled suit then you might want to think about a NT bid.

How many points would you need to do this?

If your partner has overcalled at the one level then you can expect them to have 8-10 points ie 4 points fewer than a normal opening bid.

Your 1NT response would need 4 points more and so 10-14 would be needed to make a 1NT reply.

West	North	East	South
1♣	1♦	Pass	

West may have 12-19 HCP, North 8-10 and East less than 6.

If you as South are holding 13 HCP and a balanced hand how does this now look?

North/South have 21-23 HCP leaving East/West with 19-17.

If you have a stopper in the enemy suit then NT looks a very good contract.

Here is an example where N/S could bid and make a 1NT contract.

<p>♠ J109 ♥ 985 ♦ AK1086 ♣ 43</p> <p>♠ K32 ♠ 876 ♥ QJ7 ♥ A43 ♦ Q2 ♦ 543 ♣ AQJ86 ♣ 10752</p> <p>♠ AQ54 ♥ K1062 ♦ J97 ♣ K9</p>	<p>Board 4 : Dealer West : All vulnerable</p> <p>West(15) North(8) East(4) South(13)</p> <p>1♣ 1♦ Pass 1NT</p> <p>All Pass</p>
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4. Make your own Overcall.

You need a good reason to make your own overcall, think of the post mortem if you get it wrong!

You will need a strong overcalling hand in your own right and the best reason would be if you can overcall a major suit over your partner's minor.

If your partner has overcalled at the two level then you will need an exceptional hand to bid an alternative suit!

5. Respond to a Takeout Double.

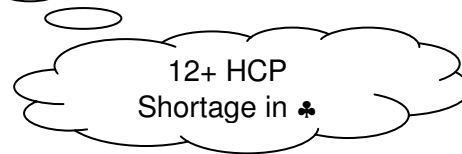
- **Doubles**

Modern Acol teaches that a double of the opposition's opening bid is a Takeout double it is not for penalties.

The double should mean:

- Enough points to open
- A shortage in the opponent's bid suit.
- Ability to support any suit that your partner bids.

West	North	East	South
1♣	X		



North's double is asking South to show their best suit.

Examples.

Supported Overcall.

<p> ♠ Q2 ♥ AQ7653 ♦ 5 ♣ Q762 ♠ K10974 ♠ J8 ♥ J1082 ♥ 4 ♦ K632 ♦ AQJ1094 ♣ - ♣ AK83 ♠ A653 ♥ K9 ♦ 87 ♣ J10954 </p>	<p>Board 1 : Dealer North : Love all</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;">West(7)</th> <th style="text-align: left;">North(10)</th> <th style="text-align: left;">East(15)</th> <th style="text-align: left;">South(8)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td>1♥</td> <td>2♦</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4♦</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>6♦</td> <td>All Pass</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>North opens on the Rule of 20. East has a very strong hand but long minors and with a singleton & doubleton doesn't like the idea of playing in NT and so overcalls 2♦. West assumes 7 losers by East and as they hold 7 they bid 4♦. East has only 5 losers but with no way of checking controls they bid the small slam.</p> <p>Note how important it is to bid to the absolute maximum.</p>	West(7)	North(10)	East(15)	South(8)		1♥	2♦	Pass	4♦	Pass	6♦	All Pass
West(7)	North(10)	East(15)	South(8)										
	1♥	2♦	Pass										
4♦	Pass	6♦	All Pass										

Takeout Double.

<p> ♠ QJ73 ♥ J6 ♦ AQ ♣ QJ653 ♠ K104 ♠ A652 ♥ 109 ♥ KQ43 ♦ K10654 ♦ 8732 ♣ K82 ♣ A ♠ 98 ♥ A8752 ♦ J9 ♣ 10974 </p>	<p>Board 1 : Dealer North : Love all</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;">West(9)</th> <th style="text-align: left;">North(13)</th> <th style="text-align: left;">East(13)</th> <th style="text-align: left;">South(5)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td>1♣</td> <td>Dbl</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1♦</td> <td>1♥</td> <td>2♦</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3♦</td> <td>All Pass</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>East's hand is absolutely perfect for a takeout double. They can tolerate any suit bid and have a singleton A♣.</p>	West(9)	North(13)	East(13)	South(5)		1♣	Dbl	Pass	1♦	1♥	2♦	Pass	3♦	All Pass		
West(9)	North(13)	East(13)	South(5)														
	1♣	Dbl	Pass														
1♦	1♥	2♦	Pass														
3♦	All Pass																

Making your own overcall.

<p> ♠ Q3 ♥ K83 ♦ KQJ1097 ♣ 75 ♠ AKJ106 ♠ 9874 ♥ 9 ♥ QJ1054 ♦ 3 ♦ 52 ♣ QJ9832 ♣ K4 ♠ 52 ♥ A762 ♦ A864 ♣ A106 </p>	<p>Board 1 : Dealer North : Love all</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;"><i>West(11)</i></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><i>North(11)</i></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><i>East(6)</i></th> <th style="text-align: left;"><i>South(12)</i></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td>1♦</td> <td>1♥</td> <td>3♦</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3♠</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>4♠</td> <td>All Pass</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>You need a very good reason to overcall your partner's overcall. Six high quality ♠s, a singleton ♥ and 11 points are a good reason.</p>	<i>West(11)</i>	<i>North(11)</i>	<i>East(6)</i>	<i>South(12)</i>		1♦	1♥	3♦	3♠	Pass	4♠	All Pass
<i>West(11)</i>	<i>North(11)</i>	<i>East(6)</i>	<i>South(12)</i>										
	1♦	1♥	3♦										
3♠	Pass	4♠	All Pass										