

OVERCALLING

There are three main reasons to overcall

1. It might be your hand – your side may have a makeable contract.
2. You want to interrupt the opponents' communication by interfering in the auction.
3. You want to suggest a lead to partner if the opponents win the auction.

You should always have a decent five card suit to overcall. The required number of high card points ranges from (about) 8 to (about) 17. With 18 or more points double first and then bid your suit later.

Simple Overcalls

Usually, an overcall shows a hand that would have opened the bidding given the chance.

♠K87 You would have opened 1♥ with this hand. If your right hand
♥AKJ42 opponent opens 1♦ in front of you should overcall 1♥.
♦J7
♣Q64

♠K87 You would have opened 1♦ with this hand. If your right hand
♥J42 opponent opens 1♣ in front of you should pass. You cannot
♦AKJ7 overcall 1♦ because you don't have a five card suit.
♣Q64

Responding to suit overcalls is similar to responding to opening bids, with the exception that you are not obliged to respond in a new suit unless you have about 10+ points.

Pass	Nothing to say. 0-5 total points in a hand with support, 0-9 high card points with no support.
2-level raise	6-9 total points with 3+ card support
3-level raise	10-12 total points with 3+ card support
Game raise	13+ total points with support

New suit at cheapest level 10+ high card points, 5+ card suit, no support for partner's suit

Jump Overcalls

High level overcalls are similar to high level opening bids. You should make a weak jump overcall with about 6-10 high card points and a six card suit (single jump) or seven card suit (double jump). Remember the 'jump-bid' requirement. A 2♥ overcall of 1♣ shows 6-10 points and a 6 card suit whereas a 2♥ overcall of 1♠ is a simple overcall.

1NT Overcalls

A 1NT overcall shows 16-18 high card points and is a similar hand to a 1NT opening, with the additional requirement that it guarantees a stopper in the suit that your opponent opened. Bidding proceeds as if you opened 1NT – Stayman and transfers still apply.

Lead Directing Overcalls

Only overcall with minimum HCP when you can do so at the one level and you have an excellent suit that you really want partner to lead. For example, if right hand opponent opens 1♦

♠ A K Q T 4
♥ 9 8 2
♦ 6 5 3
♣ 6 5

♠ K J 8 3 2
♥ Q T 4
♦ J T 7
♣ Q 3

Overcall 1♠

Pass