

## LESSON 4: TEACHER NOTES

# One-Level Opening Bids

### What is in this Lesson

This lesson on one-level bids is a gentle introduction to the convolutions of a bridge auction. Beginners often seem to struggle more with bidding – you can help by emphasising basic concepts about:

- the correct suit to open first (*Teacher Option – can choose to teach Short Club*)
- the idea that minor suit openings do not guarantee length in the suit
- the HCP needed to open and to respond
- the HCP needed for a partnership to bid to game
- as responder, knowing when to pass, support opener's suit, or make some other bid.

This could also be a good time to help your students learn to work out trick points and bonus points for part scores, as well as for game contracts depending on vulnerability.

### Teacher Options

- *Student Notes have 1 major 4 major as a weak bid. You may wish to teach as strong (but for this lesson we avoid any examples)*
- *Notes assume better minor but you may wish to teach short club*
- *Decide if you want to teach Rule of 20. (Hand 9 & in "slide" in Handout if required)*
- *Shortage Points are taught in the next lesson but teacher could include them here*
- *If you are teaching 2/1 the ranges are in red*
- *This lesson teaches that responder only needs 3 card support for an invitational major limit raise*

### Preparation

- Some of the basic limit bids are covered in this lesson. We recommend you introduce the **Lesson Summary** sheet so students can refer to it. (Are you able to print a copy per student or, alternatively, refer students to the website)
- If teaching Rule of 20 prepare an example hand
- Teacher could start with a hand like this & change a card to show a change of bid



### Teacher Tips

- Dummy must say nothing. If declarer is hesitating ask them just to play
- Some students may be uncomfortable when they don't know which card to play. They may ask for your help. Emphasise that this is an experiment. It's more important to play any card to see what happens than it is to have someone tell you which card to play.

## Introduction / Revision

- Techniques - Force out (Promotion), Length, Finesse
- Declarer Play in a Suit
  - Count Winners and Losers
  - Typically draw trumps unless good reason not to
  - If last trump in opponent's hands is the top trump leave it out
  - Ruff in the Short Hand
  - Discard a loser on a winner
- Balanced Hand (not single or two suited, no singleton or void)
- Count remaining cards in trump suit

## Lesson Terminology

- Auction
- Limit Bid
- Level of Fit (minimum, invitational and enough for Game).

**<< The Teacher will need to judge how the class is progressing as to how much to teach. Playing and reviewing hands maybe the best approach >>>**

## Main Points to Emphasise

- Need 12+ to open. Look to bid 1NT first, then 5 card major, finally minor
- Bidding 1 minor does not guarantee more than 3 in suit
- Fit is 8 cards in partnership ("Golden Fit")
- HCP required to bid game (discuss partscore vs game)
- Bidding is a tool to communicate between partners
- If partner opens a major, Responder needs 3 or more cards in the suit for a fit, but if opens a minor we need 5 or more cards
- **Opener needs 5 cards in a major to bid but Responder only needs 4 cards to respond in another suit**
- Supporting partner's major suit opening if at all possible 6-10HCP, (10)11-12HCP, 13+HCP
- Limit Bids - bidding the same suit or NT tells partner how many points you hold

## At the End of the Lesson be able to

- Choose the correct suit to open first
- Know the HCP needed for a partnership to bid game.
- Choose correctly as Responder, when to Pass, Bid to support Opener's suit or Bid to Game in Opener's suit.
- Explain what is meant by making a **LIMIT BID**.
- Do the Maths

## Explain

### Opener's First Bid (Better Minor)

Bid	HCP	Shape
1NT	15-17	balanced hand
1♠	12-19	5+ spades
1♥	12-19	5+ hearts
1♦	12-19	3+ diamonds and <b>no</b> 5+ major
1♣	12-19	3+ clubs and <b>no</b> 5+ major

- Opening a minor denies a hand suitable for a 1NT or a 1 major opening
- Bid your longest suit first (must be 5+ cards for a major suit bid, otherwise bid your longer/better minor suit/*short club*)

### Responding to Opener's Bid

- Do we have 6+ HCP?
- Do we have a **fit**?
  - If yes tell partner how many points you have (introduce **Limit Bid**)
  - If no respond in a new suit
- If partner opened 1♥ Teacher can change cards below to show various bids



- Bid the lower ranking of two 4-card suits (this is different to the approach recommended for opening when you have two 4-card minor suits!)

**<< Suggest go through Questions 1,2, 3 and 5 in the Quiz below to check class understanding. Then play Boards 1 & 2. Perhaps remind students Drawing Trumps is the usual play unless good reason not to - we want students to practice their Declarer Play >>**

### Responding to Opener's Bid continued

- Game needs 25 points between the two hands. A limit bid lets both partner's "do the maths", eg could I make game?
- Introduce raises: minimum 6-10 HCP, invitational (10)11-12 HCP, game 13+ HCP
- Introduce Responder's 1NT Limit Bid (more next lesson)

**<< Play Boards 3 & 4 4&5 - help with the bidding. Review and focus on "do we have a fit" and, if so, "do we have points for game"? Mention this takes time to understand >>**

### Additional Rules to Opening at the 1 level *(if Teacher thinks class ready)*

- Bid the higher ranking of two 5-card suits
- With two 4-card minor suits, bid the higher ranking i.e. 1♦ If 3:3 bid 1♣
- **Rule of 20.** (Hand 9) Add the HCP to the number of cards in the **TWO** longest suits => if comes to 20 or more you can open the bidding. (Shape can be very powerful).

♠KQ854      11 HCP + 5♠ + 4♦ = 20 so can open 1♠ (planning to rebid 2♦)  
 ♥Q76  
 ♦AT95  
 ♣T

### Other Potential Inclusions in this Lesson

- Scoring – trick points, 50 pt bonus for partscore, game bonus
- Etiquette: Thoughts about initial lead
  - When making initial lead place the card face down on the table. You only expose the card once partner indicates he accepts your lead. This procedure minimises the risk of the wrong player facing a card for the opening lead.
  - Dummy goes down on the table after the initial lead has been led
  - When dummy puts down his hand, declarer says “thank you partner”.

<< Some teachers may prefer to use a [FLASH QUIZ](#) to test understanding - just read out questions >>

### Summary

- Need 12+ to open. Look to open 1NT first, then a major finally a minor
- Opening a minor does not guarantee length in suit
- Need 6+ HCP to respond
- Need 25+ to make game in NT or a major, more for a minor game
- As Responder, introduce knowing when to pass, when to support opener’s suit, or to make some other bid
- Introduction to the Limit Bid
- Introduction to Level of Fit
- Starting to do the Maths
- Remind them they can read Student Notes and Handout and they can practice with the Bridge–Training Hands. Additionally students can practice their opening bids with the link in the Handout

<< Play more boards >>

## Information Required To Play Hands

(or refer students to the “Lesson Summary”)

a) Responder’s Limit Raises (with a Fit)

1♥ – 2♥	6-10 HCP	3+ card support
3♥	(10)11-12 HCP	3+ card support

b) Opener’s Rebid after a Limit Raise (with a Fit)

After 1♥ – 2♥

Pass	12-15 HCP
3♥	16-17 HCP
4♥	18-19 HCP

c) Responder’s Limit NT Bids

1♥ – 1NT	6-10 HCP	denies 3+ support
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d) Opener’s Rebid after a NT Limit Response

After 1♥ – 1NT

Pass/rebid suit at min level	12-15 HCP	2♥ shows a 6+ suit
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## LESSON 4: 1 Level Opening Quiz (courtesy of D Browne)

1. The first player to bid something (not pass) is called the opener. How many points do you need to open the bidding?

2. The partner of the opener is called the responder. How many points do you need to respond to your partner's opening bid?

3. Opening: What should you call on each of the following hands?

(a)	♠98643	(b)	♠KQ75	(c)	♠A7643
	♥K3		♥AT86		♥5
	♦AKQJ		♦K6		♦A765
	♣32		♣Q64		♣Q32

4. For the keen student: Opening with suits of equal length. What should you open with these hands?

(a)	♠AJ987	(b)	♠5	(c)	♠KQ93
	♥AJ987		♥QJ876		♥KJ5
	♦5		♦AKJT6		♦Q65
	♣K2		♣54		♣Q32

5. Responding: Partner opens 1♥. How should you reply?

(a)	♠43	(b)	♠9543	(c)	♠97643
	♥8642		♥K32		♥2
	♦J98		♦A532		♦AQ98
	♣KQ64		♣32		♣732

6. For the keen student: Responding with suits of equal length. Partner opens 1♣; how should you reply?

(a)	♠98643	(b)	♠5	(c)	♠K985
	♥KQ763		♥T9875		♥K985
	♦AK		♦AKJ86		♦86
	♣2		♣J5		♣J54

## Flash Quiz

<p><b>Q1</b> What is meant by Responder making a limit bid?</p>	<p>Shows a fit &amp; HCP count within a narrow range. e.g. Opener Responder 1♥ 2♥ (6-10 HCPs + 3+ card support in ♥s) 1♥ 1NT (6-10 HCPs, 2 or less ♥s)</p>
<p><b>Q2</b> What do you need in order to open 1♥?</p>	<p>5+ cards in the Heart suit and 12 – 19 HCP's</p>
<p><b>Q3</b> With 5♦s &amp; 4♠s - what do you open?</p>	<p>Diamonds – bid your longest suit first.</p>
<p><b>Q4</b> With 4♠s &amp; 4♦s - what do you open?</p>	<p>Bid the ♦s first</p>
<p><b>Q5</b> With 4♠s &amp; 4♥ - what do you open?</p>	<p>1♣</p>
<p><b>Q6</b> With 5♠s &amp; 5♥s - what do you open?</p>	<p>1♠. Bid with the higher ranking suit first.</p>
<p><b>Q7</b> You open 1♠ and Responder bids 2♣. What does that mean?</p>	<p>Responder has 3+ cards in the Spades suit. His point range is 6 – 10 HCP.</p>
<p><b>Q8</b> You open 1♠ and Responder bids 3♣. What does that mean?</p>	<p>Partner has 3+ cards in Spades and (10)11 – 12 HCP.</p>
<p><b>Q8</b> You open 1♥ and Responder bids 1NT. What does that mean?</p>	<p>Partner has no support for hearts, 3 or less cards in Spades &amp; 6-10 HCP. <b>(2/1 6-12 HCP)</b></p>
<p><b>Q9</b> Define the term “support for partner’s suit”</p>	<p>You can support your partner’s bid suit when the partnership has 8+ cards in the suit.</p>