

# ♠ ♥ Starting the Bidding ♦ ♣

In Mini Bridge we announce our HCP and ask for a fit to decide the Contract that way. But we now have to move on to learning the Language of Bidding to convey that same information and also reach the most ideal Contract.

**What is the Contract:** In simple terms it is how many tricks we have to make based on our HCP and our fit and determines how much we will score for the

Contract

This is a Bidding Box. It contains all of the possible bids...



## Where to Start?

The Dealer gets the first opportunity to “speak” or to bid. Just as they did in Minibridge, and similarly we go around clockwise bidding. The first bid we learn is...



**Pass.** This will become our favourite bid!

**Pass means I have 0-11 HCP**

In plain English we can say it means “Partner I have nothing worth telling you about right now”



**1 No Trump** is the first positive bid we will learn.

If we **Open** 1NT we promise 12-14 HCP and a **Balanced Hand**.

The Bidding is like a language, and as such we can “translate” a lot of these terms and bids into plain English. For example, when you hear the term **Balanced**, what do you think it means?

The Opener	Balanced Hand
<p>The opener is the person to make the first positive bid. Or, in other terms, the first person to NOT pass.</p>	<p>A balanced hand will NOT contain a Void, a Singleton or 2 or more Doubletons.</p> <p><b>Void</b> is No cards in a suit</p> <p><b>Singleton</b> is only 1 card in a suit</p> <p><b>Doubleton</b> is only 2 cards in a suit</p>

Balanced hands make up the largest percentage of hands we will be dealt, and this is why we learn how to deal with Balanced hands first.

<p>♠ Q3 ♥ A76 ♦ A432 ♣ A973</p>	<p>♠ 543 ♥ AJ10987 ♦ Q1087 ♣</p>	<p>♠ KQ ♥ J43 ♦ A10653 ♣ QJ4</p>	<p>♠ KQ9 ♥ K76 ♦ A63 ♣ A983</p>
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Take a look at the above hands... Count the HCP. Are they balanced or unbalanced? Can we open 1NT?

## Continuing the Auction

*How does the Auction or Bidding actually end? How do we arrive at a Contract? When do we start playing? How many tricks do we have to make?*

W	N	E	S
Pass	Pass	1NT	
Pass	Pass	Pass	

Let's take this Auction as an example.

North and East have Passed. They both have between 0 to 11 HCP. South then **Opens** 1NT. Showing?

The rest of the Players Pass... **After 3 Passes the auction ends** (as long as everyone has had a chance to bid!). The final Bid is the final Contract. So the Contract in this case is 1NT. South is **Declarer** and North is **Dummy**.

An easy way to know how many Tricks Declarer has to make is to add 6 to the **Level** of the contract. Add 6 to 1NT and that's 7. If Declarer makes 7 Tricks they get their score. If they make more than 7 they get a bonus. If however they do not make their 7 tricks they **give away** a certain Score. How that Score is calculated is a different story...

## Game Score

There are certain Contracts that give us a HUGE score bonus called the Game Score bonus. Our next bid to learn is the first Game Contract which is 3NT. To bid and make 3NT we need 25 HCP between us and our partner. 25 HCP is another one of those magic numbers in Bridge.

W	N	E	S
Pass	1NT	Pass	
3NT	Pass	Pass	Pass

Let's now look at this Auction. East **Opens** 1NT showing 12-14 and a Balanced Hand. West then **Responds** with 3NT... If East has at least 12 HCP, how many HCP does West have at least?

It must be at least 13 HCP.  $13 + 12 = 25$ . In plain English West is saying "Partner, I think we have enough HCP between us to go for that HUGE Game Score bonus. Best of luck!"

We now need to start to distinguish between Opener and Responder in terms of what their bids mean etc. For example, we would only ever **Respond** 3NT if we were SURE we had 25+HCP between us and our Partner. What if we weren't sure...?