

INTERMEDIATE COURSE
Lesson Two: Responding to One of a Suit

First Priority – Support Opener with 4+ cards

Responder should always reply with 6+ points and their first priority is to support partner with 4+ cards of opener's suit and use the SUPPORT LINE to choose the right level, say opener bid 1♠:

| | | | |
|-------------|-------------|---------------|--------------|
| 0-----5 pts | 6-----9 pts | 10-----12 pts | 13+ pts----- |
| Pass | 2♠ | 3♠ | 4♠ |

Partner opens 1♥, what do you respond with:

| | | | |
|------------------|----------------|--------------|--------------------------|
| ♠ AQ109 | ♠ 743 | ♠ 92 | ♠ 83 |
| ♥ KJ72 | ♥ J765 | ♥ AQ107 | ♥ KJ7 |
| ♦ 1093 | ♦ AK98 | ♦ AK874 | ♦ AJ862 |
| ♣ 43 | ♣ 93 | ♣ 85 | ♣ J105 |
| 3♥ (10 – 12 pts) | 2♥ (6 – 9 pts) | 4♥ (13+ pts) | 2♦ (need 4+ ♥s to raise) |

Second Priority – Bid Longest Suit at Lowest Level

Second priority is to bid your longest suit at the lowest level and with two 4 card suits bid the CHEAPEST of your 4s. However with two 5 card suits ALWAYS bid the highest – HIGH FIVES!

Partner opens 1♣, what do you respond with:

| | | |
|------------------|----------------|--------------------|
| ♠ AQ93 | ♠ AJ1085 | ♠ AQ107 |
| ♥ 743 | ♥ 7 | ♥ AKQ4 |
| ♦ KJ87 | ♦ AJ1073 | ♦ J76 |
| ♣ 72 | ♣ K3 | ♣ J9 |
| 1♦ cheaper of 4s | 1♠ high fives! | 1♥ no need to jump |

BIDDING BLIP ALERT!

Even when you have loads of points opposite an opening bid, as is the third example above, 17 points, there is no need to jump to 2♥ as this takes up lots of bidding space and a bid of 1♥ is 100% forcing – opener will ALWAYS bid again.

IMPORTANT: Whenever you have 4+ card support for partner's MAJOR, always support immediately. However when you have four card support for partner's MINOR, strive to show a 4+ card major first.

The Rule of 14 and the “Dustbin Bid”

If you need to respond at the two level with a new suit then you will need 10+ points or a hand that passes The Rule of 14 (see below). If you have 6 – 9 points then respond 1NT, known as “The Dustbin Bid”, as all sorts of rubbishy hands should respond 1NT! The beauty of responding 1NT is that it keeps the bidding low when you have a weak hand.

A 1NT response shows:

- 1 6 – 9 points
- 2 Any shape!

Opener has bid 1♥, what do you respond with:

| | | | |
|--------|---------|---------|---------|
| ♠ 972 | ♠ J1098 | ♠ 952 | ♠ AKJ |
| ♥ 43 | ♥ 74 | ♥ 7 | ♥ 95 |
| ♦ KJ82 | ♦ AQ65 | ♦ KJ765 | ♦ 8532 |
| ♣ A642 | ♣ 983 | ♣ Q642 | ♣ Q1093 |

- (A) 1NT (B) 1♠ (C) 1NT (D) 2♣

- (A) Not strong enough to bid 2♣, would need 10+ pts, so 1NT Dustbin is perfect
- (B) Fine to bid a new suit at the ONE level, showing 6+ pts and 4+ spades
- (C) Fine to bid 1NT Dustbin with a singleton (or void)
- (D) Showing 10+ pts and 4+ cards in clubs

The Rule of 14:

If responder has 10+ points, then they can AUTOMATICALLY bid a NEW suit at the two level. However there are times when responder has 9 points (or fewer) and a 5+ card suit and still have the strength to bid a new suit at the two level, passing The Rule of 14:

“Add your **TOTAL** points to the number of cards in your **LONGEST** suit and if this adds up to 14 or more, then bid your new suit at the 2 level. If not, put your hand in the **DUSTBIN** and respond One No Trump, 6 - 9 pts, any shape”. For example:

Partner Opens 1♠, what do you respond with:

| | | | |
|---------|---------|----------|-----------|
| ♠ 96 | ♠ 74 | ♠ - | ♠ K53 |
| ♥ AJ7 | ♥ KJ974 | ♥ 1085 | ♥ 6 |
| ♦ Q9875 | ♦ AJ64 | ♦ KJ7653 | ♦ J76 |
| ♣ J86 | ♣ 98 | ♣ Q642 | ♣ Q109752 |

- 1NT 2♥ 1NT 2♠

- Only “13” (8pts and 5♦s) Rule of 14 passed (9pts and 5♥s) Even with a void and a 6 card suit! Prefer to raise ♠s with only 3 cards and shape