

# Overcall, Double, or Pass?

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**The situation. RHO opens one of a suit. You have some values.**

## 1 The overcall:

- 1.1 What is the purpose?
  - 1.1.1 To disrupt the opponents' bidding.
  - 1.1.2 To find a safe place to play. Most people require a good five-card suit.
  - 1.1.3 To indicate a safe lead to partner.
- 1.2 How strong must you be to overcall? What does your card say?

<b>SIMPLE OVERCALL</b> 1 level <u>8</u> to <u>16</u> HCP (usually) often 4 cards <input type="checkbox"/> very light style <input type="checkbox"/>
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1.2.1 The minimum for an overcall at the one level is 8 high-card points. Some insist on more strength.

- 1.2.1.1 Adjust up if you are vulnerable.
- 1.2.1.2 Adjust up if you must bid at the two-level.

1.2.2 The maximum is 16 or 17.

- 1.2.2.1 I never overcall if I have 17 points.
- 1.2.2.2 Some good players disagree with this, but it is critically important that you and your partner decide what an overcall means.

<b>NOTRUMP OVERCALLS</b> Direct: <u>15</u> to <u>18</u> Systems on <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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1.3 A 1NT overcall requires 15-18 hcp, a balanced hand, and a good stopper in opener's suit. Most people play systems (Stayman, transfers, etc.) are on.

## 2 The double has two cases:

- 2.1 Most of the time the double is for takeout:
  - 2.1.1 At least 13 support points (counting shortness). You expect to be the dummy.
  - 2.1.2 At least three-card support in all unbid suits.
  - 2.1.3 If you have any other requirements (shortness, four-card majors, etc.), make sure that you and partner are on the same wavelength.
- 2.2 Double can also be used to show a hand that is **too strong to overcall**. This is shown by "correcting" partners response.
  - 2.2.1 With a balanced hand and a stopper, rebid 1NT with 19-20 or 2NT with 21-22.
  - 2.2.2 With 17+ and a good suit, bid it at the cheapest level possible.

Actual hand from Saturday's game in Stamford: My partner opened 1♦. The opponent bid 1♠ with: ♠: AKQ854 ♥: AQJ7 ♦: K10 ♣: 5                      Guess what happened.

Next Week: \_\_\_\_\_