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Bridge Bidding Made Simple · Standard American edition



CHAPTER 4

Responding to One of a Suit

Supporting partner, new suits, notrump responses and minor openings

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1. Do you have enough to respond?

Rule 1. With **6 or more points**, respond to partner's opening. With 0–5, pass.

A new suit by responder is **forcing**: opener must bid again.

2. Supporting partner's major

In Standard American, 1♥ and 1♠ promise **five or more** cards, so **three-card support** is enough for an eight-card fit. Show it at once:

Your points, with support	Bid
6–10, three or more cards	Raise to **2** (1♥–2♥)
10–12, four or more cards	Jump to **3** (1♥–3♥), a "limit raise" inviting game
13 or more	Bid a new suit first, then jump to game in partner's major

> Most American players use a direct jump to game (1♥–4♥) to show a **weak** hand with five or more trumps, made to get in the opponents' way. Many also use the **Jacoby 2NT** convention to show 13+ with four-card support. Agree with your partner which you play.

In these examples partner has opened **1♥**.

♠ K 8 4 ♥ Q 10 7 ♦ J 9 6 2 ♣ Q 9 5	**8 points** and three hearts: raise to **2♥**.

♠ A 5 ♥ K J 8 4 ♦ Q 10 7 3 ♣ J 6 2	**11 points** and four hearts: **3♥**, a limit raise.

♠ A 5 ♥ K 10 8 4 ♦ K Q 7 3 ♣ Q 6 2	**14 points** and four hearts: bid **2♦** first (forcing), then jump to **4♥**.

3. Bidding a new suit

Rule 2. A new suit at the **one level**: 6+ points, four or more cards.
A new suit at the **two level** (a "two-over-one"): **10+ points**. To bid 2♥ over 1♠ you also need five hearts.

♠ K J 7 3
♥ 8 2
♦ Q 9 6 4
♣ K 10 5

9 points, no heart support, four spades: **1♠**.

♠ K 7 3
♥ 6 4
♦ A Q 5
♣ K J 10 8 3

13 points and five clubs: **2♣**.

4. Responding in notrump

Bid	Meaning
1NT	6–10 points, no support, nothing to bid at the one level
2NT (over 1♣ or 1♦)	13–15, balanced, forcing to game
3NT (over 1♣ or 1♦)	16–17, balanced (with 18 or more, bid a new suit first)

♠ Q 8 4 ♥ 7 2 ♦ K J 5 ♣ J 9 8 6 2	**7 points**, no support, no spade suit, too weak for 2♣ (10+): **1NT**.

5. When partner opens a minor

1♣ and 1♦ may hold only three cards, and a major-suit fit is worth more. So:

Rule 3. Over 1♣ or 1♦, show a **four-card major** before raising the minor. To raise a minor, you want **five** cards (four is fine over 1♦).

In these two examples partner has opened **1♦**.

♠ K J 6 2 ♥ 8 3 ♦ K 10 7 4 ♣ Q 5 2	Four diamonds, but also four spades. Bid **1♠** first.

♠ Q 7 4 ♥ K 5 ♦ K J 8 6 2 ♣ 9 7 3	**9 points**, five diamonds, no major: raise to **2♦**.

6. Summary

After partner opens one of a suit	Bid
0–5 points	Pass
Support for a major, 6–10	Raise to 2
Four-card support, 10–12	Jump to 3 (limit raise)
New suit, one level	6+ points
New suit, two level	10+ points
No fit, nothing to show	1NT (6–10)

7. Test yourself

Partner opens **1♥**. What do you respond?

1. ♠ Q 10 7 4
♥ K 2
♦ J 8 5 3
♣ Q 9 6

2. ♠ 5 3
♥ Q 9 6
♦ K 10 7 4
♣ J 8 6 2

3. ♠ 8
♥ J 7 2
♦ Q 8 5 3
♣ 9 7 6 4 2

4. ♠ A J 6
♥ K 10 5 3
♦ A 8 4
♣ 10 9 3

5. ♠ K 10 2
♥ J 4
♦ A Q 7 5 3
♣ K 9 5

6. ♠ K Q 8 5 3
♥ J 10 7 2
♦ A 4
♣ 8 6

Answers

1. 1♠. 8 points and only two hearts: show your spades.

2. 2♥. 6 points and three hearts: enough for a simple raise.

3. Pass. Only 3 points.

4. 3♥. 12 points and four hearts: a limit raise.

5. 2♦. 13 points and five diamonds: a two-over-one response.

6. 3♥. 10 points and four hearts: support first, even with five spades.

Next: Chapter 5, Raising Partner. Free lessons and challenge hands to play: **bridgescorer.com/learn**

About this guide. There are many versions of Standard American, and clubs, teachers and books do not all agree on every detail. This chapter describes one common, straightforward version for learners. We do not claim it is the only or the best way: if your teacher or club plays something different, follow them. What matters most is that you and your partner agree.

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