

5-CARD MAJOR

COMMON RECOMMENDATIONS

LOWER RANGES OPENING BIDS

An Opening Bid is the first non-Pass bid of the auction. In making an Opening Bid you are telling your partner something about the strength and shape of your hand. After counting your High Card Points (HCPs) you will know whether you hold a weak, average or strong hand and you are ready to make a decision. With an HCP count of less than 6 you will have to Pass. If the number of cards in your two longest suits plus your HCP count comes to 20, it is usually safe to open the bidding (the so-called "Rule of 20"). If you do open the bidding, your partner can look for an appropriate response by referring to a lower-level decision table (as highlighted).

WEAK HANDS	AVERAGE HANDS				
6-9 HCPs	10	11	12-14 HCPs	15-17 HCPs	18-19 HCPs
<p>Weak Two: If you have a 6-card ♠, ♥ Or ♦ suit with at least two of the top five honours, you may: Open 2 of that suit annoying the opposition To respond, partner goes to WEAK2 table</p>	<p>Balanced Hand with 15-17 HCPs: If you have 15-17 HCPs and a balanced hand (a hand in which there are no Voids, no Singletons and at most one Doubleton), you will: Open 1NT To respond, partner goes to 1NT table</p>				
<p>Pre-Emptive Three: If you have a 7-card suit with at least two of the top four honours, you may: Open 3 of that suit making it hard for the opposition To respond, partner goes to 3SUIT table</p>	<p>Unbalanced Hand with 10-19 HCPs or Balanced Hand with 10-14 or 18-19 HCPs: Start looking for a Fit (a suit in which your partnership has at least 8 cards). In Third or Fourth Seat the point range can be relaxed a bit (instead of 12+ HCPs, 10-11 HCPs might suffice):</p> <p>Major: If you have 12-19 HCPs and one or two 5+ card Major suits, you will: Open 1 of Major suit (Open 1♠, if you have two)</p> <p>No Major: If you have 12-19 HCPs but no 5+ card Major suit, you will: Open 1 of Longest Minor suit (Open 1♣ if distribution is 3-3, Open 1♦ if distribution is 4-4)</p> <p>Strong 6+: If you have 10 HCPs and a very strong 6+ card or a good 7+ card suit, you may: Open 1 of that suit</p> <p>Good 6+: If you have 11 HCPs, a good 6+ card suit and partner has not bid yet, you may: Open 1 of Good 6+ card suit</p> <p>To respond, partner goes to 1SUIT table</p>				
<p>Pre-Emptive Four: If you have an 8+ card suit with at least two of the top four honours, you may: Open 4 of that suit making it very hard for the opposition To respond, partner goes to 4SUIT table</p>					
<p>Gambling 3NT: If you have a 7+ card Minor suit headed by the Ace, King and Queen, you may: Open 3NT making the opposition sit up To respond, partner goes to 3NT table</p>					

HCPs: Ace = 4, King = 3, Queen = 2, Jack = 1

Major Suits: ♠ ♥

Minor Suits: ♦ ♣

Ranking: NT ♠ ♥ ♦ ♣