8 – Higher-level openings and jump-suit overcalls - Summary Sheet

HIGHER-LEVEL OPENINGS

Different partnerships play different methods.
The method which follows is the one must commonly taught at the present time and is used by many partnerships up to anywhere below an expert level.

Opening three-bids

An opening bid at the three-level is almost universally played as 'weak and pre-emptive' - that is, it is not strong enough in high cards to justify a normal opening bid at the one-level, but it is pre-emptive in that it gets in the way before the opponents have a chance to start bidding.
Usually it will be on a **seven**-card suit of some quality, and roughly 5 to 9 points.

♠	K Q J 8 5 4 2	A good 7-card suit but only 7 points.
♥	7 2	Open 3♠
♦	6 4	
♣	J 4	

Opening two-bids

2♣ is reserved for those strong hands which are too good to risk partner passing a one-level opening. Partner must respond (usually 2♦) and most sequences are then forcing to game.
Note that the hand may be of any shape, and the bid says nothing about clubs.
The hand should contain at least 16 points, but usually it will be one or more of:-

- at least 23 points in a balanced hand;
- at least 22 points in an unbalanced hand;
- at least 9 playing tricks.

♠	K Q 5	23 points in a balanced hand.
♥	A K 2	Open 2♣.
♦	A Q	Partner will usually respond 2♦, after which you will respond 2NT to show the
♣	K Q 8 7 4	balanced shape and 23 or 24 points.

Opening bids of 2♦, 2♥ and 2♠

These bids are played as natural and weak promising a **six**-card suit and about 5 to 10 points. Their purpose is to get in the way.

Jump overcalls

They are weak and natural.
At the two-level they should be six-card, and at the three-level they should be seven-card.

♠	K Q T 7 5 4	RHO opens 1♦.
♥	J 7 2	A good 6-card suit but only 6 points.
♦	8	Bid 2♠ – a weak jump overcall promising precisely such a holding.
♣	8 7 4	Partner should not get carried away.