# 7 – Overcalling - Summary Sheet

## Overcalling

Overcalling **is not** the same as opening - your aims have changed.
You still want to bid and make a contract when the hand belongs to you,
but you also want to:-

put a spanner in the works
suggest a defensive lead
search for a profitable sacrifice.

## Lowest-level suit overcalls

will promise at least a five-card suit at the one-level, and ideally at least a six-card suit at the two-level.
The suit should be of good quality – partner will lead it in defence.
Strength might be anything up to about 17 points.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| ♠ | K Q J 8 5 | RHO (Right-hand opponent) opens 1♦. |
| ♥ | A 7 2 | Nearly opening values and an excellent quality five-card suit which you would |
| ♦ | 6 4 | love your partner to lead in defence. |
| ♣ | J T 4 | Bid 1♠. |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| ♠ | J 8 6 5 4 | RHO opens 1♦. |
| ♥ | A K 2 | Minimal opening values and a rubbish suit. |
| ♦ | J 4 | Pass. |
| ♣ | Q J T | |

## The 1NT overcall

A 1NT overcall is not the same as a 1NT opening bid.
It shows a more or less balanced hand of 15 to 18 points with at least some sort of stop in the opponents' suit.
A hand which would open 1NT will not make a 1NT overcall –
Just sit back and defend.

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|---|---|---|
| ♠ | K T 5 | RHO opens 1♦. |
| ♥ | A 7 | 13 points in a nearly balanced hand with an excellent diamond stop. |
| ♦ | A Q | This hand would open 1NT, but it is not strong enough to overcall 1NT. |
| ♣ | T 9 8 7 4 3 | Pass. |

## The take-out double

A low-level double invites partner to make a bid in any one of the other three suits.
Usually it will promise a hand of near opening strength or better with no more than 2 cards in the opponents' suit and at least 3 cards in each of the other 3 suits.
With up to about 16 points, you will double and then pass partner's two-level response, or raise a one-level response to the two-level with four-card support.
With 17 or more points you can show a strong overcall by doubling and then bidding again – such a hand might be almost any shape.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| ♠ | K T 5 4 | RHO opens 1♦. |
| ♥ | A 7 2 | 13 points with short diamonds and at least 3 cards in each of the other three |
| ♦ | A Q | suits. |
| ♣ | T 9 8 7 | Double, then raise 1♠ to 2♠, or pass 1♥ or 2♣. |