

OPENING BIDS OF ONE OF A SUIT

With unbalanced hands of 12-19 points and balanced hands of 15-19 points you open the bidding with one of a suit, e.g. 1♣, 1♦, 1♥ or 1♠.

WHICH SUIT TO OPEN?

Start the bidding with your longest suit. If you have two suits of equal length open the higher ranking suit, **but** if you have exactly four hearts and four spades then open 1♥. The only exception to this is when you have 4441 shape, see below.

THE RULE OF TWENTY

Sometimes hands may not have 12 High Card Points (HCPs) but have good ‘shape’ and therefore worth opening. The ‘Rule of Twenty’ can be applied to determine whether a hand is worth an opening bid: Add the number of HCPs to the number of cards in your two longest suits. If the total comes to at least twenty you can open the bidding.

♠ 6 5	This hand is very unbalanced and has only 10 HCPs. Using the ‘Rule of Twenty’, add your 10 HCP’s, 5 hearts and 5 diamonds: 10+5+5=20. Therefore you can open 1♥.
♥ A Q 7 4 2	
♦ A 10 8 6 3	
♣ 3	

4441 HANDS

With 4441 shape and red suit singleton, open the suit below the singleton

With 4441 shape and black suit singleton, open the middle of the touching suits

SUMMARY

- Open with longest suit
- Open higher ranking of equal length suits (except with exactly 4 hearts and 4 spades, then open 1♥)
- Use Rule of 20 with shapely hands
- With 4441 shape and red suit singleton, open the suit below the singleton
With 4441 shape and black suit singleton, open the middle of the touching suits