

RAISING PARTNER'S MAJOR WITH 3 CARD SUPPORT

When partner opens with one of a major and we have 6-9 points and no suit of our own that we can bid, it is often better to support with 3 cards rather than bidding 1NT.

Raising with 3 card support is particularly useful if there has been an overcall at the two level.

North East South
 1♠ 2♥ 2♠

South
♠ Q 8 7
♥ 9 8 5
♦ 3 2
♣ K J 7 6 2

When to raise with 3 card support:

- When partner opened a major
- and we have 6 – 9 points
- and a shortage (at least a doubleton)
- and the 3 card supporting suit has a least one honour

Advantages of raising with 3 card support:

- Our shortage and 3 trumps might give partner the chance to ruff a loser or two.
- Stops the 4th bidder from overcalling with two of a minor.
- If the auction becomes competitive, partner might be able to compete to the 3 level with 6 cards and minimum points knowing we have some support.

Risk

- Very little! Opener will often have 5 cards in the major. If opener does not have 5 cards in the major, he has extra points i.e. a balanced hand with 15-19 (otherwise would have opened 1NT). This will help compensate if there is only a 7 card trump fit.

When not to raise with 3 card support

- With no shortage (4333).
- When partner opened 1♥ and we have 4 spades. We may miss a 4-4 spade fit.
- When we have 10+ points. We don't make an immediate response at the 3 level or higher without 4 card support. With 10+ points (or satisfy the [Rule of 14](#)) we can make a forcing bid in another suit.
- When partner opened a minor suit.

Should we raise hearts after an opening bid of 1♥?

♠ 9 8 4 ♥ K J 5 ♦ Q 9 7 5 4 2 ♣ 2	♠ 7 6 5 2 ♥ K Q 7 ♦ 3 2 ♣ Q 4 3 2	♠ 8 4 ♥ Q 9 5 ♦ J 6 5 3 ♣ K 4 3 2	♠ 9 8 4 ♥ Q 9 5 ♦ 8 6 5 3 ♣ Q 4 3	♠ 4 ♥ A Q 9 ♦ K J 7 6 2 ♣ Q J 3
Yes, ideal for a raise to 2♥.	No, we should bid 1♠.	Yes, suitable for a raise to 2♥.	No, with flat shape nothing we can ruff.	No, too many points. We should bid 2♦.