



# CLASS 6 EVALUATING STRENGTH OF HAND & RESPONDING TO 1-LEVEL MINOR OPENINGS



## OBJECTIVES

- Evaluate What Makes a Hand Stronger
- Understand Limited vs. Unlimited Bids
- Make a Responding Bid
- Respond to a 1-Level Minor Opening Bid

## REVIEW

Why would you bid Game? \_\_\_\_\_

What are HCP? \_\_\_\_\_

Who is the player with the 1<sup>st</sup> chance to bid? \_\_\_\_\_

Who is the player who makes the 1<sup>st</sup> bid? \_\_\_\_\_

How many HCP should you hold to open the bidding? \_\_\_\_\_

What is your priority in opening the bidding? \_\_\_\_\_

What is the rank order of suits in the bidding? \_\_\_\_\_

How many cards are needed to open the bidding in majors? \_\_\_\_\_

How many cards are needed to open the bidding in minors? \_\_\_\_\_

What is a balanced hand? \_\_\_\_\_

What do you need to open 1NT? \_\_\_\_\_

What 2 things are you trying to share with partner during the bidding?

\_\_\_\_\_

## REVIEW

If a player opens 1♠...      How many HCP do they hold? \_\_\_\_\_

How many spades do they have? \_\_\_\_\_

.....

If a player opens 1♥...      How many HCP do they hold? \_\_\_\_\_

How many hearts do they have? \_\_\_\_\_

What is the largest number of spades they could hold? \_\_\_\_\_

Why? \_\_\_\_\_



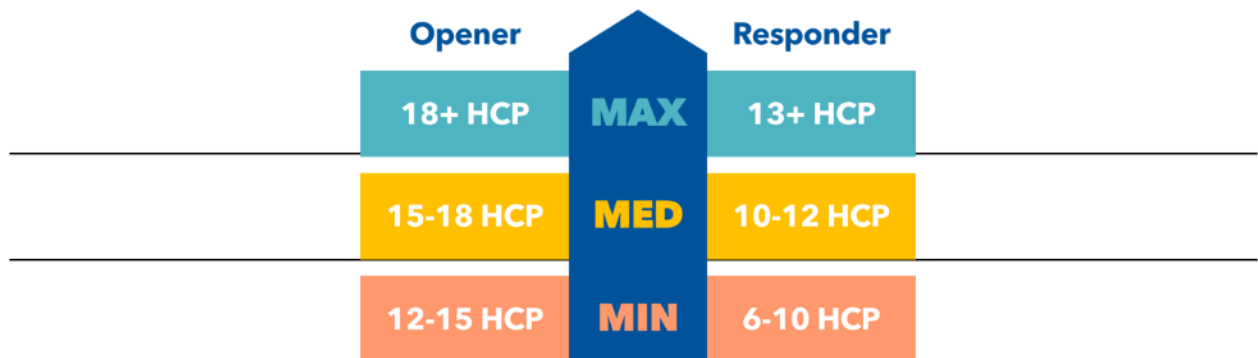
## BEYOND HCP REVIEW

Other factors that make your hand stronger than HCP may indicate:

- **Distribution** – Relative length/shortness of suits and number of trumps in combined hands.
- **Purity** – HCP are concentrated in long suits; and any HCP in short suits are high honors.
- **Texture** – Intermediate cards (10's, 9's and 8's) in a hand often increase the trick taking ability more than indicated by the HCP.

## HOW STRONG IS MY HAND?

Describing strength of hand can happen in the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> or even 3<sup>rd</sup> bid. Once you discover **WHERE** to play, then you know which factors are relevant and may change how you categorize your hand.



## LIMITED VS. UNLIMITED BIDS

**LIMITED** bids narrowly define the range of HCP you hold. One reason this is important is because your partner can ‘Do the Math’ and decide to:

- **Bid Game** – when hold enough total HCP between the 2 hands, or if other factors make Game seem possible.
- **Invite Game** – when HCP and other factors make Game seem possible.
- **Pass** – when Game is not possible.


**UNLIMITED** bids, on the other hand, have no upper limit on HCP promised and require partner to bid again.

## MAKING A RESPONDING BID

If your partner opens the bidding (**OPENER**), then you are the **RESPONDER**.

Your partnership is evaluating through the bidding where and how high to play by determining:

- **FIT** – identifying a suit in which you hold 8+ cards between your combined hands (remember the focus is finding a major fit).
- **STRENGTH** – doing the math to see if you have enough HCP for Game.

 **Remember, your focus is finding a Major fit; finding a Minor fit is your last priority!**

## DECIDING TO MAKE A RESPONDING BID

At their first opportunity to bid, **RESPONDER** needs 6+ HCP to bid and with 6+ HCP Responder must bid.

### Combined HCP Needed for Game (or Slam)

PRIORITY	GAME	HCP	SMALL SLAM	HCP
<b>MAJORS</b>	4♠   4♥	25-26	6-level	32-33
<b>NOTRUMP</b>	3NT	25-26		
<b>MINORS</b>	5♣   5♦	28-29	7-level	37-38

## RESPONDING TO A 1-LEVEL, MINOR OPENING BID

First, look for a Major FIT...

4+ Card Major	FIRST, COULD YOU HAVE A MAJOR FIT?		
	4♥ OR 4♠	6+ HCP	Bid suit at 1-level
	5♥ OR 5♠		Bid suit at 1-level
	BOTH 4♥ & 4♠		Bid 1♥
BOTH 5♥ & 5♠	Bid 1♠		

‘4 ON THE FLOOR’ \_\_\_\_\_

‘HIGH FIVE’ \_\_\_\_\_

If no Major FIT, then check if you are balanced...

Balanced (NT)	NO 4+ CARD MAJOR   ARE YOU BALANCED?		
	No voids, no singletons & no more than one doubleton	6-10 HCP	Bid 1NT
		11-12 HCP	Bid 2NT
		13-15 HCP	Bid 3NT

BALANCED \_\_\_\_\_

Not balanced, look for FIT with partner’s Minor...

Minor Opened	NOTRUMP NOT POSSIBLE?   DO YOU HAVE A FIT WITH PARTNER’S MINOR SUIT?		
	5+ cards in minor suit opened	6-9 HCP	Raise bid at 2-level
		10-12 HCP	Raise bid at 3-level
		13+ HCP	Bid new suit

What # of cards did Opener need to open their minor at the 1-level?

\_\_\_\_\_


What # of cards does Responder need in that minor to assure a FIT?

\_\_\_\_\_

## RESPONDING TO AN OPENING 1-LEVEL MINOR BID

If **no FIT** with partner’s Minor, then explore the unbid Minor...

Unbid Minor	NO FIT PARTNER’S MINOR   EXPLORE UNBID MINOR		
	4+ ♦	6+ HCP	Bid 1 ♦
	5+ ♣	10+ HCP	Bid 2 ♣

 When bidding a new suit, bid it at the lowest level. If that is at the 2-level, you need 10+ HCP.

If none of the above, then...

**IF NONE OF THE ABOVE THEN WITH 6-9 HCP → BID 1NT**

*Note: Very rarely you will find that you do not have a good responding bid, but with 6-9 HCP you must bid (e.g., you have 5+ clubs but not the 10+ HCP needed to bid at the 2-level), in those cases you bid 1NT.*

## LET’S RESPOND TO 1-LEVEL MINOR OPENING BIDS



### REMEMBER

- Priority of Contracts: Majors → NT → Minors.
- Count your HCP and ‘Do the Math’ could you have Game values?
- Have you found a **FIT**?
- Are you **BALANCED**?
- Consider factors that may make hand stronger, and decide if it is a MIN, MED or MAX hand.


### DIRECTIONS

- Work independently using the chart on page 50 and the hands in manual on pages 51-52.
- Review the opening bid on each page and choose a responding bid.
- Note if your responding bid is **LIMITED** or **UNLIMITED**.
- If time allows, discuss your bids with your table.

## RESPONDING TO A MINOR CHART

*Note: This chart follows the priority of contracts by first looking for the possibility of a major contract, then Notrump, followed by a fit with the minor suit opened, then the unbid minor suit, and finally what to do if none of the above applies. Work it from top to bottom.*

<b>4+ Card Major</b>	<b>FIRST, COULD YOU HAVE A MAJOR FIT?</b>		
	<b>4♥ OR 4♠</b>	<b>6+ HCP</b>	<b>Bid suit at 1-level</b>
	<b>5♥ OR 5♠</b>		<b>Bid suit at 1-level</b>
	<b>BOTH 4♥ &amp; 4♠</b>		<b>Bid 1♥</b>
<b>BOTH 5♥ &amp; 5♠</b>	<b>Bid 1♠</b>		
<b>Balanced (NT)</b>	<b>NO 4+ CARD MAJOR   ARE YOU BALANCED?</b>		
	<b>No voids, no singletons &amp; no more than one doubleton</b>	<b>6-10 HCP</b>	<b>Bid 1NT</b>
		<b>11-12 HCP</b>	<b>Bid 2NT</b>
<b>13-15 HCP</b>		<b>Bid 3NT</b>	
<b>Minor Opened</b>	<b>NOTRUMP NOT POSSIBLE?   DO YOU HAVE A FIT WITH PARTNER'S MINOR SUIT?</b>		
	<b>5+ cards in minor suit opened</b>	<b>6-9 HCP</b>	<b>Raise bid at 2-level</b>
		<b>10-12 HCP</b>	<b>Raise bid at 3-level</b>
<b>13+ HCP</b>		<b>Bid new suit</b>	
<b>Unbid Minor</b>	<b>NO FIT PARTNER'S MINOR   EXPLORE UNBID MINOR</b>		
	<b>4+♦</b>	<b>6+ HCP</b>	<b>Bid 1♦</b>
	<b>5+♣</b>	<b>10+ HCP</b>	<b>Bid 2♣</b>
<b>IF NONE OF THE ABOVE THEN WITH 6-9 HCP → BID 1NT</b>			

 **Count Your HCP. Remember you need 6+ HCP to make a responding bid. And if you must bid a new suit at the 2-level, you need 10+ HCP and usually 5+ cards in the suit.**

## RESPONDING BID PRACTICE

Your partner opened 1♣, which promises: \_\_\_\_\_

What bid would you make as **RESPONDER**?

	HAND	HCP	BID	WHY
1	♠ QJ75 ♥ 9543 ♦ K7 ♣ 932			
2	♠ 963 ♥ K ♦ Q743 ♣ AQ743			
3	♠ A65 ♥ J93 ♦ AQ74 ♣ J32			
4	♠ 93 ♥ 32 ♦ J9543 ♣ KJ74			
5	♠ AKJ94 ♥ QJ943 ♦ 5 ♣ 73			
6	♠ 8 ♥ Q85 ♦ KJ9752 ♣ K84			

## RESPONDING BID PRACTICE

Your partner opened 1♦, which promises: \_\_\_\_\_

What bid would you make as **RESPONDER**?

	HAND	HCP	BID	WHY
<b>7</b>	♠ QJ75 ♥ 9543 ♦ K7 ♣ 932			
<b>8</b>	♠ 963 ♥ K ♦ Q743 ♣ AQ743			
<b>9</b>	♠ A65 ♥ J93 ♦ AQ74 ♣ J32			
<b>10</b>	♠ 93 ♥ 32 ♦ J9543 ♣ KJ74			
<b>11</b>	♠ AKJ94 ♥ QJ943 ♦ 5 ♣ 73			
<b>12</b>	♠ 8 ♥ Q85 ♦ K9752 ♣ K842			



## 2ND BIDS BY OPENER & RESPONDER

So far, we have only learned opening bids and responding bids. Your 2nd bid is called a **REBID** and you will learn more about that in Classes 8 and 9, but for now just keep in mind:

- What is the priority of contracts?
- Do we know where we want to play – have we found a fit?
- Do we have enough combined HCP for Game? Can we do the math?
- Do I need to tell partner anything else about my hand?

## LET'S TRY BIDDING SOME HANDS

### REMEMBER

- Are you considering a limited or unlimited bid? If limited, categorize your hand (MIN, MED or MAX). The level of your bid shows your strength.
- Think about your 2<sup>nd</sup> bid (**REBID**), keeping in mind:
  - Priority of contracts
  - Have we found a fit?
  - Can we do the math? Do we have enough for Game?
  - Do I need to tell partner anything else about my hand?
- The 1st player to bid the suit or Notrump that becomes the contract is the **DECLARER**.

### DIRECTIONS

- Start with Board #1 and everyone pulls out the hand for their seat, whoever is **DEALER** has 1<sup>st</sup> chance to bid.
- Use the charts to choose an opening or responding bid, depending on who you are in the auction (use the bidding box).
- Say out loud what you understand from partner's bid after they make it, before you make your bid. But don't tell partner what you hold. Make notes on pages 54-55.
- In these hands, after the opening bid is made the opposing partnership will always PASS, and the auction is done after 3 players call PASS.
- After auction, flip both Declaring partnership's hands face up and discuss.
- Repeat for Boards #2-4.



## OPENING A MINOR & RESPONDING PRACTICE

Circle who you are for each hand. Use the boxes down the middle to note the bids made. Take notes on your side of the sheet on what the bids mean.

### Hand #1

**OPENER** [HCP:       ]

**RESPONDER** [HCP:       ]

OPENER BID

What did I promise?		What do I know?
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RESPONDER BID

What do I know?		What did I promise?
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OPENER REBID

What did I promise?		What do I know?
---------------------	--	-----------------

RESPONDER REBID

What do I know?		What did I promise?
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### Hand #2

**OPENER** [HCP:       ]

**RESPONDER** [HCP:       ]

OPENER BID

What did I promise?		What do I know?
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RESPONDER BID

What do I know?		What did I promise?
-----------------	--	---------------------

OPENER REBID

What did I promise?		What do I know?
---------------------	--	-----------------

RESPONDER REBID

What do I know?		What did I promise?
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## OPENING A MINOR & RESPONDING PRACTICE

### Hand #3

**OPENER** [HCP:     ]     

**RESPONDER** [HCP:     ]     

OPENER BID

What did I promise?		What do I know?
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RESPONDER BID

What do I know?		What did I promise?
-----------------	--	---------------------

OPENER REBID

What did I promise?		What do I know?
---------------------	--	-----------------

RESPONDER REBID

What do I know?		What did I promise?
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### Hand #4

**OPENER** [HCP:     ]     

**RESPONDER** [HCP:     ]     

OPENER BID

What did I promise?		What do I know?
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RESPONDER BID

What do I know?		What did I promise?
-----------------	--	---------------------

OPENER REBID

What did I promise?		What do I know?
---------------------	--	-----------------

RESPONDER REBID

What do I know?		What did I promise?
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***Bridge is the king of all card games.***

***[Bridge is] deliciously simple in the rules  
but deliciously complex in doing well.***

***Bridge helps you think. It's a game you can play  
your entire life and keep getting better and better.***

***~ Bill Gates***

<sup>1</sup> BridgeUnion.com, March 2010. Interview with Bill Gates.

<sup>2</sup> ACBL Video. *Bill Gates Encourages Young People to Play Bridge.*

<sup>3</sup> CBS News Sunday Morning, February 17, 2008. *In the Cards.*