

# Priority 1) Open a 5+card Major Suit

## Yellow Card Bidding System Mantras

First, determine which suit to play in the following priority:

- 1) try for a **MAJOR** suit contract.
- 2) try for a **NO TRUMP** contract.
- 3) settle for a **MINOR** suit contract.

After the suit is determined, then determine the contract level.

During the bidding process:

- support a major suit when possible
- propose the other major suit when possible
- when proposing a new suit, propose it at the lowest possible level

The **1♠** opening bid has two requirements:

- 1) Points: **12-21 HCPs** (no distribution points). The suit **location of the HCPs is NOT important**.
- 2) Suit length: **5+spades**, with the same number of hearts or less. Lengths of the other suits are not important.

Opening Bids in Spades (opener has 9 to 21 HCPs and and 5+spades)														
Length of Spade Suit	Opener's HCPs and Bid													
	0 to 8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
	Pass	Weak Opening			Opening Count			Medium Hand			Strong Hand			
5+ Spades	PASS	PASS			1♠									
exactly 6 Spades *		2♠* (Weak 2's)												
exactly 7 Spades *		3♠* (Preempt 3)												
8+ Spades *		4♠* (Weak 4's)												
* Special Condition - must have at least 5 HCPs in the spade suit														

The **1♥** opening bid has two requirements:

- 1) Points: **12-21 HCPs** (no distribution points). The suit **location of the HCPs is NOT important**.
- 2) Suit length: **5+hearts**, with more hearts than spades. Lengths of the other suits are not important.

Opening Bids in Hearts (opener has 9 to 21 HCPs and 5+hearts)														
Length of Heart Suit	Opener's HCPs and Bid													
	0 to 8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
	Pass	Weak Opening			Opening Count			Medium Hand			Strong Hand			
5+ Hearts	PASS	PASS			1♥									
exactly 6 Hearts *		2♥* (Weak 2's)												
exactly 7 Hearts *		3♥* (Preempt 3)												
8+ Hearts *		4♥* (Weak 4's)												
* Special Condition - must have at least 5 HCPs in the heart suit														

## Priority 2) Open 1 NT

The 3 criteria for opening a No Trump hand are:

### 1) No 5+card major

- When holding a 5+card major, open that 5+card major instead of NT.
- This practice clarifies the nature of the NT opening hand, and makes it easier to identify an 8+card fit in a major suit.
- SAYC allows a NT opening with a 5-card major, but I suggest not opening a NT when holding a 5+card major.

### 2) Must be Balanced

- no voids, no singletons, and 1 or 0 doubleton
- distributions of balanced hands are described by the general notation:  
4-3-3-3  
4-4-3-2  
5-3-3-2 (major suit cannot be 5-cards)

### 3) Specific Point Count Ranges

Each No Trump opening bid must be in one of three specific honor card point ranges

- 15 to 17 HCPs - 1 NT
- 20 to 21 HCPs - 2 NT
- 25 to 27 HCPs - 3 NT

Opening Bids in No Trump																	
Opener's Requirements	Opener's HCPs and Bid																
	0 to 11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
	Pass	Opening Count			Medium Hand			Strong Hand			Maximum Hand						
NO 5+card Major & Balanced	PASS	1 ♣ or 1 ♦			1 NT			1 ♣ or 1 ♦			2 NT		2 ♣		3 NT		

## Priority 3) Open the Better Minor Suit

The **1♦** opening bid has four requirements:

1) Points: **12-21 HCPs** (no distribution points). The suit **location of the HCPs is NOT important**.

2) Does not have a 5+card major (otherwise open with that major).

It is possible that the opener has a 4-card major suit and prefers to play a major suit contract, but could not open that major. The responder assumes this as the responder determines its response.

3) Does not qualify for a **1NT** opening.

4) Suit length: **3+diamonds** where diamonds are the **Better Minor**. (Go to the [Better Minor web page](#) for more information.)

Opening Bids in Diamonds (opener has 9 to 21 HCPs and 3+diamonds)														
Length of Diamond Suit	Opener's HCPs and Bid													
	0 to 8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
	Pass	Weak Opening			Opening Count			Medium Hand			Strong Hand			
3+ Diamonds	PASS	PASS			1♦									
exactly 6 Diamonds *		2♦* (Weak 2's)												
exactly 7 Diamonds *		3♦* (Preempt 3)												
8+ Diamonds		PASS												
* Special Condition - must have at least 5 HCPs in the diamond suit														

The **1♣** opening bid has four requirements:

1) Points: **12-21 HCPs** (no distribution points). The suit **location of the HCPs is NOT important**.

2) Does not have a 5+card major (otherwise open with that major).

It is possible that the opener has a 4-card major suit and prefers to play a major suit contract, but could not open that major. The responder assumes this as the responder determines its response.

3) Does not qualify for a **1NT** opening.

4) Suit length: **3+clubs** where clubs are the **Better Minor**. (Go to the [Better Minor web page](#) for more information.)

Opening Bids in Clubs (opener has 9 to 21 HCPs and 3+clubs)														
Length of Club Suit	Opener's HCPs and Bid													
	0 to 8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
	Pass	Weak Opening			Opening Count			Medium Hand			Strong Hand			
3+ Clubs	PASS	PASS			1 ♣									
exactly 6 Clubs		PASS												
exactly 7 Clubs *		3 ♣ * (Preempt 3)												
8+ Clubs		PASS												
* Special Condition - must have at least 5 HCPs in the club suit														