

Overcalls

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<http://watsongallery.ca/bridge/aaBidding/Overcalls.pdf>

Which hand screams for a 2♣ overcall of 1♠ and which screams for a pass?

None Vulnerable, Your RHO opens 1♠:

♠Axxx ♥xx ♦x ♣AKJ1098

♠J32 ♥KQ ♦KQ2 ♣KQ742

The first one screams for 2♣ and the second one screams for a Pass because
"Overcalls are made of tricks not points."

Lawrence, Mike, The Complete Book on Overcalls in Contract Bridge.
Louisville, Kentucky, USA: Devyn Press, Inc. 1979. P 24

Purpose of Overcalls

- To enter the bidding with the correct hand.
 - If you have length in opponent's suit(s), you tend to want to defend and wait to see if partner can compete. If partner, looking at shortness in a suit of the opponents, cannot compete then do you really want to be in that auction? Perhaps with a fit but you want to find out at the lowest level possible.
 - However, having length in RHO's suit is not all that bad. Having four or more implies partner will have a fit with your suit.
- Lead direct
- Win a part-score battle
- To interfere and suggest a place for partner to further pre-empt the auction or to sacrifice.
- Take away bidding room
 - 1♦ 2♣
 - 1♣ 1♠
- Push the opponents higher
- Make opponents unsure of sufficient stoppers
- Warn partner to proceed with caution with a misfit.

However the Purpose of Overcalls is not:

- To show declarer how to play the hand.
- To get penalized and give the opponents more than they can get playing the contract themselves.
- To enter the auction because you have a poor quality long suit.
- To enter the auction because you have a random smattering of finessable values.
 - You do not need to tell the table every time you have opening points.
 - "When you go down 700 (800 now), do not ever be heard to sing the song of a sucker, 'But partner I had opening points' ."
 - Goren's Bridge Complete, Seventh Edition, New York: Doubleday and Company, 1971, p168.
- To ask partner to cash the Ace in your overcall suit on the opening lead if it can be used to capture an honour held by the declarer.

Night and Day Difference

The one-level overcall and the two-level overcall, although the purposes are similar, are completely different.

The one level:

- 7+ HCP's not vulnerable
- 10+ HCP's vulnerable.
- High card strength will make up for suit quality
- The weaker one is, the better is the suit.

The two level:

- A six-card two-loser suit if partner has poor trump support.
- KJ10987 not KJ5432
- 13+ HCP's

For both levels:

- Assign any Queen or Jack in any suit of the opponent's ZERO HCP's
 - I would not object to assigning a finessable Queen -1 HCP's
 - Assign any King likely in the pocket also ZERO HCP's
- Look at the quality of side-suit points.
- Second suits of decent quality are always nice
- Intermediate cards in the overcall suit are important.

The ACBL Convention Card

SIMPLE OVERCALL	v:
1 level <u>7+</u> to _____HCP (usually)	2
often 4 cards <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> very light style <input type="checkbox"/>	2
Responses	2
New Suit: Forcing <input type="checkbox"/> NFConst <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NF <input type="checkbox"/>	2
Jump Raise: Forcing <input type="checkbox"/> Inv. <input type="checkbox"/> Weak <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	0
<u>cuebid = LR + or full opener</u>	-
WIMP OVERCALL	

Future Topics:

- One Diamond Overcalls
- One NoTrump Overcalls
- Two Suited Overcalls
- Jump Overcalls
- Four-card Overcalls