

Dealing With Interference

We initially learn how to bid assuming the opponents sit quietly passing throughout. Gradually though, we also learn that leaving the opponents to have a nice, quiet auction is a recipe for a bad score – so we begin to interfere in their auctions. Unfortunately, they also learn to interfere in our auctions! How do we deal with the situation where we have opened the bidding and the opponents have overcalled?

Here are some principles to use in competitive auctions where we have opened the bidding:

In a competitive auction a hand with a major fit is more valuable

If we have a fit and we are in a competitive auction, we should “upgrade” our hand by one or two points in deciding how high to raise our partner. Remember that in an uncontested auction with 6-10 we will usually raise to the 2-level, with 11-12 TPs we will raise to the 3-level and with 13 or more TPs we will bid game. In a competitive auction, we should stretch these ranges a little lower:

1S:2C:?	1H:1S:?	1S:2H:?	1D:1S:?
♠ T943	♠ 2	♠ AT82	♠ 42
♥ Q93	♥ KT9	♥ 74	♥ AT2
♦ Q542	♦ QJT94	♦ KQ9	♦ AT8742
♣ 72	♣ J983	♣ JT32	♣ T3
Raise to 2 Spades Instead of passing	Raise 1H to 3H Instead of 2H	Raise 1S to 4S Instead of 3S	Raise 1D to 3D Instead of 2D

In a competitive auction, opener should remember that responder is stretching – they are more likely to have a little less than a little more. The idea is that we know what suit we want to play in, we want to get to our limit as quickly as possible and let **them** make the final guess about whether to push on.

In a competitive auction, without a fit we should prioritise showing majors

If we do not immediately find a fit in a competitive auction, we should still be predominantly concerned with showing our major suits – especially four card suits. In general, bidding after the opponents have bid shows a five card suit, with only four card suits we should bid No Trumps or we should **Double**.

1C:1D:?	1D:1H:?	1D:1H:?	1D:2H:?
♠ QJ72	♠ KT942	♠ KQ83	♠ 98
♥ KT9	♥ A9	♥ J984	♥ KJT2
♦ 3	♦ AT94	♦ T2	♦ AKT32
♣ KJ543	♣ T2	♣ KJ9	♣ JT
Respond double	Respond 1S	Respond double	Respond 2NT Double over 2S

When the opponents double, we suddenly have the opportunity to use double as another way of showing the majors. As a rule of thumb, you should double with a four card major and bid it yourself if you have five or six card (but be aware that the opener might repeat their own suit or bid the other minor!)

Responding In No Trumps

In general, responding in No Trumps when the opponents have bid shows exactly the same strength as if they didn't. However, it now promises a **stopper**. The opponents have announced a good, five card suit and they're about to get off to the right lead. It is important that you have a picture card that will “get in the way” of them running that suit.