

ALEX'S BRIDGE TIP

When deciding whether to make a penalty double, you must also examine the auction. If partner made a one-level overcall, you can generally count on her for one defensive trick. See below

Partner's Action	You expect her to have
Opening Bid of 1 of a Suit	3 defensive tricks
Opening Bid of 1 NT	4 defensive tricks
Take-Out Double	3 defensive tricks
Simple Overcall	1 defensive trick
Single Raise of Your Bid	1 defensive trick
Weak Two Bid	1 defensive trick
Pre-emptive Opening	0 defensive tricks

Using the table above, you add your defensive tricks to partner's expected defensive tricks and this will help you decide whether to double the final contract or not. As a general rule, players do not make enough penalty doubles.

Keep in mind that if you and partner have a fit of nine cards or more in a suit, you will be lucky to get one trick in that suit on defence.

You also have to evaluate your trump holding in the opponents' suit. If Declarer is to your right, a holding of KJ9 will produce 2 tricks most often. But if Declarer is to your left, you'll be lucky to get one trick out of this suit. If Declarer is on your right and you have AQ doubleton of trump, you will often score two tricks in that suit but if the trump suit has been first bid on your left, you will often only score one trick.

You must also consider your holding in other suits:

e.g. The opponents get to 4S but your RHO has bid Clubs first. You hold Clubs KQx. The odds of scoring two tricks in Clubs are much higher than if Clubs had been bid first by your LHO.



BARBARA'S BRIDGE TIP

How soon they forget! Tell me you know what the picture above is! Remember the Suez Canal??

What will you bid with this hand after the following auction? Opponents are not bidding. You are the hand with ?

S 7

H KJ75

D A83

C Q10853

1C - 1H

1S - ?

a) 1NT

b) 2C

c) 2NT

d) 3C

If you chose to raise Clubs now, you are headed in the right direction. But how many clubs?

Let's look at another hand that is a bit weaker:

S 7

H KJ75

D 983

C Q10853

1C - 1H

1S - ?

Now you are in the weakest point range as Responder. Any weaker (with 0-5) and you would have passed. So with 6-9 points, you usually bid only once unless pushed by partner. When Opener offers you a choice of trump suits though, you must choose. So on the last hand above, you bid 2C now, showing 6-9 points and preference for Clubs. This is called SIMPLE preference (Simple because it is not a jump).

Back to the first hand:

S 7
H KJ75
D A83
C Q10853

1C - 1H
1S - ?

So it is important that you behave differently now that you have a better hand.

1C - 1H
1S - 3C This is called JUMP preference and shows 10-12 points and at least four Clubs.

One more:
Same auction:

1C - 1H
1S - ?

Your hand is:

S 64
H AQJ972
D K83
C 76

What will you bid now?

- a) 1NT
- b) 2H
- c) 3H
- d) 4H
- e) 2NT

You now show your invitational hand by jumping to 3H. This invites partner to bid game if he likes Hearts and has a good opening bid. 3H is NOT forcing, even though it is a jump. NEW suits are forcing. OLD suits are NOT forcing. Hearts has been bid before so it is now an old suit. You are showing 10-12 and a 6 card Heart suit.

IF you chose to bid 2H, you would be promising a hand like the one below:

S 7
H KJ10654
D Q876
C 76

1C - 1H
1S - 2H shows 6-9 points and a dislike for BOTH of partner's suits. You promise a 6 card suit or a very good five-card suit.