

1.

You are North.

E	S	W	N
		1S	?

You, as North hold

S AQ4  
H K76  
D A954  
C QJ8

What will you bid?

Overcall 1NT.

This shows 15-18 HCP and at least one stopper in opener's suit.

2.

You are North.

E	S	W	N
		1S	?

You, as North hold

S AQ2  
H KQ4  
D AQ76  
C QJ8

What will you bid?

This time, you have too many points to overcall 1NT. BUT you cannot overcall 2NT as that has a special meaning. In the world of modern bridge, the overcall of 2NT is called the Unusual No Trump and shows 5-5 at least in the lowest unbid suits (usually minors). SO, on this hand, you double first and then if partner bids 2C (let's say), you now bid 2NT. She knows you have 19-20 HCP now since if you had 15-18, you would have overcalled 1NT immediately. AND if you only had 13-15, you would have passed her minimum response to the takeout double because that only showed 0-8 points.

3.

You are North.

E	S	W	N
		2S	?

KQ8  
AQ9  
K62  
K942

What will you bid?

Overcall 2NT. This is NOT a jump, so it is not the Unusual NT bid.

This bid promises 15-18 HCP and at least one stopper in opponents' suit. It is just like 1S -1NT overcall.

4.

You are North.

E	S	W	N
		1S	?

You, as North hold

S 2  
H 84  
D AJ765  
C K10987

What will you bid?

And here we have the Unusual No Trump bid. Perfect. 5-5 in the minors and something in the long suits...i.e. an honour in each of the minors. Partner is obliged to choose one of your minor suits.

5.

You are North.

E	S	W	N
		1H	?

You, as North hold

S AQ7652  
H 8  
D 765  
C 987

What will you bid?

2S. This is just like opening with a Weak Two bid. It shows 6-10 HCP and a 6 card suit of quality. It makes it tougher for the opponents to bid and that is just what you want to happen.

6.

You are North.

E	S	W	N
		1H	?

You, as North hold

S AK872  
H 84  
D Q65  
C A97

What will you bid?

1S. A simple overcall which promises 8-17 points and at least a 5 card suit. IF you only have 8-12 points, then you need a suit of excellent quality: 2 of the top 5 honours or 3 of the top 5 honours. If you have 13 or more, the suit does not have to be great, but it does have to have 5 cards.

A common error here is to bid double instead showing partner 13 or more points. IF YOU DO that, then you will never be able to show your Spades later.

Note that if you double first and then bid your suit, you are telling partner that your hand is too good for an overcall and that you have 18 or more points.