



# Coping with Overcalls

## Reasons for Overcalling

1. to reach a contract you can make
2. to get the defence off to the best lead
3. to make it harder for opponents to reach their best spot

Overcalls are annoying because they disrupt your familiar bidding sequences, and sometimes use up your bidding space.

## Coping when Opponents Overcall

- 1 When partner opens the bidding and RHO makes an overcall that does not prevent you from making your normal response - **make your normal response**

Eg 1♥-(1♠)- does not stop you raising partner with heart support if that was what you were going to do  
Nor does it stop you bidding 2♣ or 2♦ if that was your planned response  
Remember: *always support partner if you can*

- 2 When you would have made a 1-over-1 response but the overcall forces you to bid at the 2-level instead **you need the values to bid at the 2-level – at least a 5-card suit and 10+HCP**

Eg 1♦-(1♠)- you cannot bid 1♥. If you want to bid hearts you have to bid 2♥ instead  
This takes the auction very high, so you need at least 10 points and at least 5 hearts

Eg 1♥-(2♣) you cannot bid 1♠. To bid 2♠ you need 10+HCP and at least 5 spades.  
But you can bid 2♦♦ with only 4 cards just as you would have done without the overcall

With eg ♠A1032 you would respond 1♠.  
♥ K63 now you can respond 2♦ instead  
♦ KQ43  
♣ 65

- 3 To respond in no-trump you need a stopper in opponent's suit

Eg 1♦-(1♠) 1NT still shows 6-9HCP, but it promises at least one spade honour – a **stopper** in spades  
(You might bid 1NT with a 4-card heart suit you can no longer show at the 1-level,  
or with a 4-card spade suit you can no longer bid)

Eg 1♣-(1♠) 2NT still shows 10-11HCP, but promises at least one stopper in spades  
1♠-(2♦) Over the 2-level overcall 2NT still shows 10-11HCP with a diamond stopper



## Coping with Overcalls

- 4**      **When an opponent has overcalled in a suit you were going to bid you can no longer bid it naturally**

Eg 1 ♦-(1 ♠)      If you were about to respond 1 ♠ you cannot bid spades now.  
You can bid no-trump with a balanced hand and a spade stopper  
Or you can bid 2 ♣ with 4+clubs and the values to bid at the 2-level  
If you cannot make either of these bids you just have to pass

- 5**      **If**      you cannot support partner because you do not have support  
you cannot bid no-trump because you do not have a stopper in their suit  
you cannot bid a new suit because you are not strong enough to respond at the 2-level  
**you just have to pass**

**Remember:**      It is not the end of the world if you do not bid:  
partner has another chance to bid if he has something to say