



Introduction to Bidding

The main difference between Bridge and Minibridge is that in Bridge there is an Auction, or Bidding process. Schematically a board of bridge looks like this:

Shuffle and Deal	⇒	Bidding (This decides who will be declarer, how many tricks they need to take whether there is a trump suit and if so what it is)	⇒	Play	⇒	Score
-------------------------------	---	---	---	-------------	---	--------------

The **dealer** starts the bidding by making the first call. Then the player on his left bids, and so on till the bidding is finished. Each player can make several different bids in the course of the auction.

A **bid** consists of a number from one to seven, followed by one of the five possible denominations: “clubs”, “**diamonds**”, “**hearts**”, “spades or “no-trump”.

Every bid says that we hope to make 6 tricks plus the number bid. “7NT” is a bid to make 13 (6+7) tricks. Three hearts (3♥) states that, together with partner, you hope to make 9 tricks (6+3) with hearts as trumps.

Any hand with 12+ HCP (a queen above **average**) is worth an **opening bid**.

To **respond** to your partner’s opening bid you need 6+ HCP.

A **balanced** hand with 12-14 points opens INT (balanced = 4333, 4432, 5332 -no **singletons** or **voids**)

A balanced hand with 15+ points or an unbalanced hand opens 1 of a suit.

To make an **overcall** you should have a good 5+ card suit and some points.

In an auction a player must make a higher bid than the one before.

A player who does not wish to make a higher bid says “**Pass**”, and the next player has a turn.

For bids like 2♦ and 2♠, both at the same level, the rank order is ♣ (lowest), ♦, ♥, ♠, NT (highest)

The Bidding Staircase shows all the possible bids from the lowest to the highest. As well as the 35 bids there are 3 other calls: “Pass”, “**double**” (I don’t think you will fulfil your contract) and “**redouble**” (Yes, I will)

Here is an example of Bidding:

Dealer	♠ 6				
West	♥ Q93				
	♦ AKJ42				
	♣ QJ87				
♠ A974		N		♠ KQJ52	
♥ K1052		W E		♥ A86	
♦ 986		S		♦ 1073	
♣ 53				♣ 42	
	♠ 1083				
	♥ J74				
	♦ Q5				
	♣ AK1096				

West dealt, so he makes the first call: “Pass”.

North has 13 points and a long diamond suit: North bids 1♦
(We call the first bid the **Opening Bid**)

The bidding passes to **East**, who proposes spades as trump by bidding 1♠, a higher bid than 1♦ (We call this an **overcall**.)

South sees good prospects with clubs as trump and he bids 2♣
(His partner opened the bidding, so this is a **response**)

West has not many big cards, but he has good support for his partner’s suit (spades). So he **raises partner** to 2♠

North has support for his partner’s suit (clubs), so he tells partner with his second bid (**rebid**) 3♣.

With no extra values **East** says “Pass”, as do **South** and **West**.
So the bidding is finished and 3♣ is the **final contract**.

In a **bidding diagram** we show the bidding like this: we see

	<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
Pass		1♦	1♠	2♣
2♠		3♣	Pass	Pass
Pass				

North’s <i>opening bid</i> :	1♦
East’s <i>overcall</i>	1♠
South’s <i>response</i>	2♣
West’s <i>raise</i>	2♠
North’s <i>rebid</i>	3♣

East, South and West all pass No-one has bid higher than 3♣, so that becomes the final contract.

South was the first member of the NS partnership to bid clubs, which means that South will be declarer

The member of the partnership who first bids the denomination of the final contract becomes declarer

Now the play begins. West makes the opening lead because he sits on declarer’s left.

North is dummy, and lays his cards face up on the table in 4 columns with the trump suit, clubs, on his right.

The contract is 3♣. Declarer must try to make at least 6+3 = 9 tricks.



The Bidding Staircase

GRAND SLAM ZONE	7NT
Collect an ENORMOUS Bonus	7♠
1000 non-vulnerable, 1500 Vulnerable	7♥
(But not very often – you have to take all 13 tricks!)	7♦
	7♣

SMALL SLAM ZONE	6NT
Collect a Bigger Bonus	6♠
500 non-vulnerable, 750 Vulnerable	6♥
Provided you can take 12 tricks	6♦
(Not much room for error)	6♣

GAME!!	5NT	Score the same as 3NT+2
GAME!!	5♠	Score the same as 4S +1
GAME!!	5♥	Score the same as 4H +1
GAME!!	5♦	Score 400 non-vulnerable
Collect a Bonus!	5♣	600 Vulnerable (same as 3NT)

	4NT	Score the same as 3NT with an overtrick!
GAME!!	4♠	If you make 10 tricks you score 420 or 620
Collect a Bonus!	4♥	If you make 11 tricks you score 450 or 650
	4♦	4 of a minor is still a part-score
	4♣	If you achieve your 10 tricks you score 130

GAME!!	3NT	This is the cheapest “ Game ” contract
Collect a Bonus!		Score 400 non-vulnerable or 600 Vulnerable (100+300/500)
	3♠	At the 3-level your goal is 9 tricks
	3♥	If you play in a suit you still get only the part-score bonus
	3♦	If you make 9 tricks 3♠ scores the same as 1♠+2 or 2♠+1
	3♣	

2NT	At the “ 2-level ” your goal is to make 8 tricks (6+2)
2♠	If you achieve your goal you get the same part-score bonus of 50 points
2♥	2NT making 8 tricks scores 120 (40+30+50)
2♦	2♥/2♠ making 8 tricks scores 110 points (60+50)
2♣	2♣/2♦ making 8 tricks scores 90 points (40+50)
	These score are exactly the same as playing at the one-level with an overtrick

1NT	<i>Welcome</i>	If you stop here your goal is to make 7 tricks (6+1)
1♠	<i>to the</i>	If you achieve your goal you get a part-score bonus of 50 points
1♥	<i>“one-level”</i>	1NT making 7 tricks scores 90 points (40+50)
1♦		1♥/1♠ making 7 tricks scores 80 points (30+50)
1♣		1♣/1♦ making 7 tricks scores 70 points (20+50)
		If you make extra tricks you score more –
		an extra 30 points for each “overtrick” in no-trump, hearts or spades
		an extra 20 points for each “overtrick” in clubs or diamonds

START

(You need not start at the very bottom nor need you make every possible bid!
But you **MUST** move upwards)