



The Basics of Acol Bidding

Our bidding system is a *natural* one.

This means that when we bid a suit we show length in the suit we bid.

We aim to reach the best contract by describing our strength and distribution in as few bids as possible.

The system is based on a number of **premises**, and the bids follow **logically**.

Often partner can tell just as much about your hand from what you do *not* bid as from what you *do* bid.

You have two aims during the auction:

to find out whether you have the values for game

to reach the best strain – usually the 8+card major suit fit, or, with balanced hands, NT.

1 The Opening Bid of One of a Suit:

This shows an unbalanced hand with 12-19 points, or a balanced hand too strong for a 12-14 1NT.

We open our **longest** suit (which is not necessarily the strongest!)

With two 5-card suits open the **higher-ranking**: plan to rebid the other suit, twice if necessary.

Exception: with 5♠+5♣ open 1♣: you can rebid 1♠, then 2♠, keeping the bidding low.

With two 4-card suits in a 4-4-3-2 distribution open:

the major with 1 major and 1 minor: 1♠/♥ with 4x♠/♥s + 4x♦/♣s (*best way to find a 4-4 major fit*)

1♥ with both majors: (*makes it is easy for partner to respond 1♠ so you can find any 4-4 major fit*)

1♣ with both minors

2 The First Response

With 4-card support for partner's major – raise him.

A raise is a **limit bid** showing a limited point range: 1♠-2♠ is 6-9; 3♠ is 10-12; 4♠ is 13-15.

Without 4-card support – respond in your longest suit if possible. (*You need 10+points for a 2over1*)

Bid one of a major if you can. With 4-4 in the majors bid 1♥ *leaving room for partner to bid 1♠*.

The response of one of a major is **unlimited**, 6-28 points, and **forcing**. Partner must bid again.

Without 4-card support, and with no-4-card suit you can bid at the 1-level, and 6-9 points, **bid 1NT**.

The 1NT response is a **limit bid** showing 6-9 points. It is not forcing: partner can Pass.

Opener may remove 1NT to a second suit, showing 5-4+

Or rebid his own suit with 6+cards to improve the part-score.

3 Opener's Rebid after a change of suit response

With 4-card support for partner's suit – raise him.

Lacking 4-card support, and **with a balanced hand** of 15-19 HCP – rebid in NT.

All natural NT rebids are **limit bids**.

Rebidding 1NT after a 1-over-1 shows 15-17 HCP

Jumping to 2NT after a 1-over-1 shows 18-19 HCP and is forcing

Rebidding 2NT after a 2-over-1 shows 15-19 HCP and is forcing

Lacking 4-card support, and with an unbalanced hand – bid a second suit.

Rebidding in a new suit is **unlimited** and partner should bid again

Rebidding a new suit shows **extra length** in your first suit: you must be at least 5-4.

With nothing better to do – rebid your first suit.

Rebidding your first suit usually shows 6+cards. (Very rarely a simple rebid may have 5)

Rebidding your first suit is a **limit bid**.

A minimum rebid shows a minimum opener

A jump rebid shows extra values and **promises 6+cards**