

Overcalling – the competitive auction

A one-level overcall usually shows **8 - 16 points** and a **good** 5-card or longer suit. What is important is that the suit has a **Suit Quality** of at least **7**. To find the **Suit Quality** you need to add the number of cards in the suit to the number of honours. A Jack or ten only counts if it is accompanied by another higher honour card. What matters is having a suit that you would like your partner to lead to you if you become defenders.

A two-level overcall shows **10 - 18 points** and a **good** 6-card or longer suit – a **suit quality of 8**. Occasionally we could hold a very good 5-card suit e.g. ♣A Q J 10 9.

If your Right Hand Opponent opens 1♥ what would you bid with each of these hands? (Answers below).

♠ K Q 10 5 2
♥ 6
♦ 8 7 2
♣ A 9 6 3

1

♠ 8 5
♥ A 2
♦ K 10 2
♣ K Q J 9 8 7

2

♠ Q 7
♥ J 6 5
♦ K J 8 4 2
♣ A Q 2

3

♠ A K Q 5 3
♥ 4 3
♦ A K 9
♣ 10 4 2

4

ANSWERS

1. Bid 1♠. You are just strong enough. 9 points and a suit quality of 8.
2. Bid 2♣. At least 10 points and a suit quality of 9.
3. Pass. Enough points but the suit quality is too weak.
4. Bid 1♠. Max strength, suit quality of 8.