

Early Fits: Basic 5-3 and 4-4 Fits

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Redouble Your Bridge Knowledge!

COUNTING HIGH-CARD POINTS

Aces - 4 Kings - 3 Queens - 2 Jacks - 1

OPENING BIDS

1H or 1S 12-20 hcp and 5+ cards in Major
Any 5 cards. 5-5: *Open Spades*

1NT 15-17 hcp and Balanced Hand
No Voids, No Singletons,
≤ 1 Doubleton
4-3-3-3, 4-4-3-2, 5(minor) -3-3-2

1C or 1D 12-20 hcp and 3+ cards in Minor
Any 3 cards. 4-4: *Open Diamonds*

GAMES: 25 pts - Major or NT
 28 pts - Minor

 33 pts - Small Slam
 37 pts - Grand Slam

RESPONDERS: GENERAL THOUGHTS

Did Opener bid 1H or 1S?

*Look for 3-card Support to continue bidding the Major suit. This is **the 5-3 Fit**.

Use the Responder Ranges to show Opener how much help you can give in the suit.

Did Opener bid 1C or 1D?

*Look for a 4+-card Major suit to bid in auction.

You hope that Opener also has 4 cards in that Major suit. If so, you have found **the 4-4 Fit**.

Use the Responder Ranges to show Opener how much help you can give in the suit.

Did Opener bid any 1-level suit?

*If you can't switch to a Major suit, look for a Fit with Opener's Minor suit (if Opener bid a Minor suit).

*If you cannot switch to a Major suit and you cannot raise Opener's Minor suit, bid 1NT.

IMPORTANT GUIDELINES FOR OPENERS AND RESPONDERS FOR BIDDING WITH EARLY FITS

*An Early Fit is when Opener bids 1H or 1S. Responder has 3+-card support.
Early Fit: 5-3 Fit*

*An Early Fit is also when Opener bids 1-level suit, and Responder changes to a 1-level Major suit.
Opener has 4 cards to go with Responder's 4+-card change of suit.
Early Fit: 4-4 Fit*

Early Fits require Opener and Responder to figure out if they have 25 points together. If so, they should be in a Major-Suit **Game** Contract: 4H or 4S.

Therefore, with Early Fits Openers and Responder use Point Ranges to help them determine the best level to bid on the Bidding Ladder.

Opener Ranges

12 - 15

16 - 18

19 - 20

Can afford to be on the 2-level

Can afford to be on the 3-level

Can afford to be on the 4-level

Responder Ranges

6 - 9

11-12

13 +

These ranges must be **MEMORIZED** and used any time you and Partner have found an Early Fit through the 5-3 process or the 4-4 process

EARLY FITS: THE 5-3 FIT

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Opener Bids 1H or 1S. Responder Has Immediate Fit in Major Suit

Responder has 3+ cards in Major. The partnership has the 5-3 Major-suit Fit.

Responder

Responder adds Distribution:

3-card Fit 1pt - Doubleton 2pt - Singleton 3pt - Void

4+-card Fit 1pt - Doubleton 3pt - Singleton 5pt - Void

Note: This is the ONLY time when any player uses the 1-3-5 Distribution method.

Responder only. 4+-card support ONLY

Responder now raises in Major suit to show total Responding points:

3-4 Card Support 6-10 points Raise to 2-Level Minimum Responder

11-12 points Raise to 3-level Medium Responder

13-18 points Change to a New Suit Maximum Responder

This forces the Opener to bid again.

Opener's Rebid will tell Responder whether the Partnership has Game or Slam.

1st Preference: If Opener starts with 1H, Responder may bid 1S IF Responder has 4 Spade cards.
Never lie when bidding Major suits.

2nd Preference: If Opener starts with 1H or 1S, Responder may change to a 2-level Minor suit even without 5+ cards in the Minor suit. Responder knows he/she will return to the Major suit eventually.

5-Card Support 0-10 points Bid Game: 4H or 4S Weak Responder

This is a direct jump to Game as a first Response.

This shows weakness, not strength.

It assumes a Responding hand with 5-card Major-suit support and a relatively balanced hand.

Opener Rebid

Opener adds Distribution:

Opener always uses 1pt - Doubleton 2pt - Singleton 3pt - Void

Opener may continue bidding in the shared suit if Opener's total points permit a raise.

Opener has 12 - 15 total points Can afford to be on the 2-level

16 - 18 total points Can afford to be on the 3-level

19 - 20 total points Can afford to be at Game level: 4H or 4S

Responder may bid again if invited by Opener.

The partnership shares point information to determine if Game may be found.

EARLY FITS: THE 4-4 FIT

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Opener Bids 1C, 1D or 1H.

Responder wishes to search for a Major-Suit Fit

Responder does not have 3+-card Support for a 1H Opening bid.

Responder has 4+ cards in a Major suit. Responder should bid a new suit on the 1-level in search of a 4-4 Major-Suit Fit.

Responder

Responder does NOT add Distribution:

Responder has 4+ cards in a Major Suit and 6+ hcp. Responder changes to a new suit by bidding 1H or 1S.

If Responder has two 4-card Majors, Responder always bids Hearts first - up the bidding ladder.

Responder is showing the bottom of a point range in Responding hand.

There is no way to show the upper limit of points in Responder's hand - just 6+ hcp (no Distribution)

Therefore, A New Suit By Responder Is Forcing For Opener For One Round

This Will Allow The Auction To Return To Responder For More Bidding

Opener Rebid

Opener has 4 cards in Responder's suit. The partnership has a 4-4 Major-Suit Fit.

It becomes a matter of how high the partnership will raise this shared suit.

Opener's job is to immediately share how much help he/she has in points in the shared suit.

Opener adds Distribution:

Opener always uses 1pt - Doubleton 2pt - Singleton 3pt - Void

Opener continues bidding in the shared suit, showing a specific Opening point range.

Opener has	12 - 15 total points	Can afford to be on the 2-level: 2H or 2S
	16 - 18 total points	Can afford to be on the 3-level: 3H or 3S
	19 - 20 total points	Can afford to be at Game level: 4H or 4S

Responder may bid again

If invited by Opener OR

**If Responder's point count allow for an Invitation or
Game level Responding**

Need More Information?

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Play Bridge—Learn by Doing
Level Two for Advanced Beginners
“Yellow Book”**

<https://www.essexbridgecenter.com/shop>

EARLY FITS: PRACTICE EXAMPLES

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South is the Dealer on every hand. Complete the auction
Cover the answers and work out on a separate piece of paper.

Hand 1	Hand 2	Hand 3	Hand 4	Hand 5	Hand 6
North ♠ Q 8 4 ♥ 8 6 5 ♦ K J 7 2 ♣ J 7 6 (7)	North ♠ 6 4 3 ♥ Q 9 7 ♦ T 7 5 ♣ A K 6 5 (9)	North ♠ T 9 8 6 ♥ A 9 8 4 ♦ - - - - ♣ 9 7 6 3 2 (4)	North ♠ K Q 6 3 ♥ J T 4 ♦ A 2 ♣ 9 8 3 2 (10)	North ♠ T 8 3 ♥ A 2 ♦ Q J 6 3 ♣ A 6 3 2 (11)	North ♠ 9 4 ♥ K 8 7 5 4 ♦ J 9 7 ♣ 9 4 3 (4)
South ♠ A K T 7 3 ♥ A K T ♦ 6 4 ♣ K Q 9 (19)	South ♠ A T 9 ♥ A K J 5 4 ♦ 9 6 ♣ J 8 7 (13)	South ♠ K Q 7 5 4 ♥ K J 3 ♦ A K 5 ♣ 8 4 (16)	South ♠ 5 4 ♥ K Q 8 7 5 ♦ K Q 8 7 ♣ A 6 (14)	South ♠ A Q 9 6 4 ♥ J 8 4 ♦ A 9 2 ♣ J 9 (12)	South ♠ A 8 2 ♥ A J 9 3 2 ♦ 4 ♣ A 7 6 5 (13)
<u>South</u> <u>North</u> 1S 2S 4S	<u>South</u> <u>North</u> 1H 2H P	<u>South</u> <u>North</u> 1S 2S 3S 4S	<u>South</u> <u>North</u> 1H 3H 4H	<u>South</u> <u>North</u> 1S 3S P	<u>South</u> <u>North</u> 1H 4H

South is the Dealer on every hand. Complete the auction
Cover the answers and work out on a separate piece of paper.

Hand 7	Hand 8	Hand 9	Hand 10	Hand 11	Hand 12
North ♠ A T 5 4 ♥ 6 4 2 ♦ A T 9 3 ♣ A 3 (12)	North ♠ A 8 ♥ 9 8 7 6 5 ♦ 7 4 2 ♣ K 8 7 (7)	North ♠ Q T 6 5 ♥ J 3 2 ♦ A 9 ♣ K J T 9 (11)	North ♠ Q T 8 7 ♥ K J 7 2 ♦ 4 ♣ Q 5 4 2 (8)	North ♠ Q 7 6 2 ♥ 8 ♦ J 9 7 ♣ A K Q 6 3 (12)	North ♠ K 7 6 ♥ Q 8 5 4 ♦ J 5 3 ♣ T 7 2 (6)
South ♠ K 8 7 6 ♥ A K 8 ♦ 7 5 ♣ K T 9 6 (13)	South ♠ 7 6 4 ♥ A K 3 2 ♦ A J 9 6 3 ♣ 5 (12)	South ♠ A K 8 7 ♥ A T 8 ♦ J T 8 ♣ Q 8 7 (14)	South ♠ 6 ♥ A T 9 4 ♦ Q J T 7 5 ♣ A K 9 (14)	South ♠ A J 9 5 ♥ T 9 6 ♦ A K T 8 6 ♣ 9 (12)	South ♠ Q T ♥ A K J 9 ♦ T ♣ A 9 8 6 4 3 (14)
<u>South</u> <u>North</u> 1C 1S 2S 4S	<u>South</u> <u>North</u> 1D 1H 2H P	<u>South</u> <u>North</u> 1C 1S 2S 3S 4S	<u>South</u> <u>North</u> 1D 1H 3H 4H	<u>South</u> <u>North</u> 1D 1S 2S 4S	<u>South</u> <u>North</u> 1C 1H 3H P