

# Common Bidding Mistakes

Mistake	Comment
Opener is in love with a nice 5 card minor, and fails to open 1NT despite holding 12-14 with 5332 shape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Failure to open 1NT will leave you without a suitable rebid.</li> <li>• Nice suits play well in a NT contract</li> </ul>
Responder is keen to immediately show a minor suit fit, and fails to show a 4 card major	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Your priority is to try and find a major suit fit</li> <li>• The minor suit fit will not go away</li> </ul>
Opener's rebid fails to properly describe their shape & strength	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In the absence of a fit opener's rebid shows balanced/unbalanced</li> <li>• Failure to rebid in NT shows an unbalanced hand</li> <li>• A rebid of their first suit denies 4 cards in any lower ranking suit that was biddable</li> <li>• With 16 or more points opener must make sure that responder gets to know about their extra strength</li> </ul>
Responder has an opening hand but lets the auction die below game level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An opening hand opposite to an opening hand has a duty to prevent the bidding dying below game level</li> <li>• You must be acutely aware of whether a bid can be passed, or is forcing</li> <li>• In general a new suit that is bid at the three level is forcing to game. Partner <b>MUST NOT</b> pass</li> </ul>
Responder makes a 2/1 bid without sufficient strength	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When you respond at the two level you are promising partner a hand worth <b>at least</b> 10 points. This is only three points short of the 13 promised by an opening bid.</li> <li>• When somebody opens and their partner responds by changing suit at the 2 level, everyone around the table should be aware that they are <b>at worst</b>, within 3 points/one trick of game. So a 2/1 response is strongly invitational.</li> <li>• Without sufficient strength you should just bid 1NT</li> </ul>
Going past 3NT when it would make	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Making the 9 tricks that you need for 3NT is usually much easier than making the 11 that you need for game in a minor.</li> <li>• There are some special methods called <b>Trial Bids</b>, that you can use when trying to establish if the partnership would be safe in 3NT</li> <li>• Trial bids are used after you have discovered that you do not have a major suit fit. Often you do have a minor suit fit.</li> <li>• The basic idea is this. You look at your hand and identify the suits where if you had strength/stop cards, you would happily bid 3NT. If say you felt happy about hearts, but were wide open in spades, you would bid hearts.</li> <li>• The message to partner is. I can look after hearts, can you look after spades?</li> <li>• Note: Trial bids are usually made in suits where the partnership cannot possibly have an 8 card major suit fit. (this does of course assume that the bidding has been correct) <a href="#">see trial bid sheet</a></li> </ul>

# Tutoring Hands: Common Bidding Mistakes

## Hand 1

5332 with a Long Minor

♠ 6 3  
♥ A Q 3  
♦ 8 5 2  
♣ A Q J 4 3

You have a 5332 shape and 13 HCP

You have a No Trump shape and are in the 1NT range of 12-14

You should restrain yourself from opening 1♣ and open 1NT

If you open 1♣ you will be unable to make a sensible rebid!

*Note:* Clubs will play well at a NT contract

**Open 1NT**

## Hand 2

Responding to 1♦

♠ Q 9 8 7  
♥ Q 9 8 7  
♦ K 6 3 2  
♣ 5

Good news, you have a fit

But your duty is to let partner know that you have a 4 card major

The minor suit fit will not go away

With more than one 4 card suit you should bid *up the line*

**Bid 1♥**

## Hand 3

Responding to 1♥

♠ J 5 2  
♥ 3  
♦ A Q 9 6 3 2  
♣ 9 4 3

You have more than 6HCP, so you must respond

You would like to bid 2♦, but you are not strong enough

You must bid 1NT

*Note:* 1NT merely says, partner I have 6-9 points but cannot show my suit

**Bid 1NT**

## Hand 4

Responding to 1♥

♠ A  
♥ 4 3  
♦ Q J 8 7 4  
♣ A Q J 8 7

You don't have a fit but you do have sufficient strength (10 or more points) to make a 2/1 bid

With two five card suits you should bid the highest ranking suit

This way you have the best chance of later showing your second suit

**Bid 2♦**

## Hand 5

Responding to 1NT

♠ A J 8 4 3  
♥ A Q 3  
♦ Q 8 5  
♣ J 3

You know the partnership has 26 to 28 points. So you want to be in game, but what game

You MUST make a forcing bid. *A new suit at the three level is forcing*

*Note:* Unless you play transfers this is your only bid

**Bid 3♠** Opener must choose between 3NT and 4♠

## Hand 6

Responding to 1♥

♠ A J 5 4  
♥ A Q 5 3  
♦ 8 5  
♣ 8 4 3

You have a major suit fit, so you want to play in hearts

But you are not quite strong enough to bid game

Make a jump raise

*Note:* A jump raise to one trick less than game is *invitational to game*

**Bid 3♥**