

Practice makes perfect

WELCOME to our new members who started learning bridge at evening class in September. By now you will have started to realise what a wonderful and exciting game bridge is. I hope you will have made new friends and be practising at home together in between lessons – this can be so much fun.

After playing MiniBridge for a few weeks, you will have learnt how to open 1NT and respond to it. It is important to have 12-14 points and a balanced hand when you open with 1NT:

(1) ♠ Q J 6 3 ♥ Q 4 3 ♦ K 9 7 ♣ K Q 8	(2) ♠ 9 7 2 ♥ A 5 ♦ K Q 10 8 4 ♣ K Q 2
(3) ♠ K Q 2 ♥ K Q 10 8 4 ♦ 9 7 2 ♣ A 5	(4) ♠ K 8 3 2 ♥ A 4 ♦ A J 8 7 3 ♣ Q 2
(5) ♠ K Q 5 2 ♥ A J 4 ♦ K 7 3 ♣ Q 4 2	

Hands 1 and 2 are perfect 1NT openings but *Hands 3-5* are not. *Hand 3* has a five-card major (hearts or spades, here hearts) so is better opened with 1♥. *Hand 4* has two doubletons, so again is better opened in a suit (1♦, as you have five diamonds) and *Hand 5* has 15 points which is too many to open with 1NT (1♠ would be better).

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Once partner has opened with 1NT you have to work out which contract you would like to play in. Decide whether your hand

is balanced or unbalanced, and whether your partnership has sufficient points to play in a game or not (generally 25 points is enough to make 3NT, 4♥ or 4♠). With a balanced hand either pass, invite partner to game, or raise to directly to game:

(6) ♠ Q 8 6 2 ♥ Q 4 3 ♦ 9 7 6 ♣ K Q 8	(7) ♠ 9 7 2 ♥ K Q 5 ♦ K Q 8 4 ♣ K J 2
(8) ♠ K Q 2 ♥ Q 8 4 ♦ 9 7 2 ♣ A J 7 5	

With *Hand 6*, simply pass: you are happy with no-trumps, but here there is very little chance of game. With *Hand 7* bid 3NT as you have at least 26 points between you. With *Hand 8* bid 2NT; this requests partner to bid 3NT with 14 points (or a good 13) and to pass otherwise.

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If, when partner opens with 1NT, you



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REALLY EASY BRIDGE

have an unbalanced hand, you should again decide whether your side has sufficient points for game:

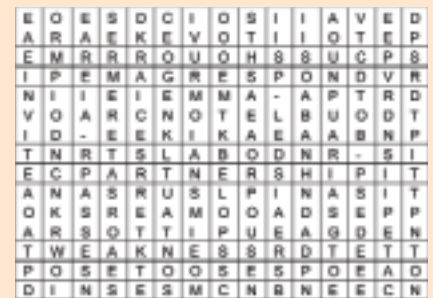
(9) ♠ 9 2 ♥ A Q 9 6 5 2 ♦ K Q 4 ♣ K 2	(10) ♠ K Q 2 ♥ K Q 10 8 4 ♦ 9 7 2 ♣ A 5
(11) ♠ J 6 2 ♥ Q J 9 4 3 ♦ 9 7 6 ♣ 8 6	

With *Hand 9* bid 4♥ as you have enough points between you for game and you know your side has at least eight hearts as partner has promised at least two. With *Hand 10* you also have enough points for game but since here you have only five hearts you should bid 3♥; partner will bid 4♥ if he has three or four hearts, and bid 3NT if he has only two. What should you bid with *Hand 11*? We'll discuss it in the next issue! □

Aunty Gill's WORD SEARCH

Find the terms listed below. Words can appear horizontally, vertically or diagonally, forwards or backwards.

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|-------------|------------|-----------|
| contract | doubleton | game |
| invite | minibridge | no-trumps |
| partnership | pass | points |
| raise | respond | spades |
| take-out | unbalanced | weakness |



Bridge terms for beginners are explained at www.reallyeasybridge.com