

## Bridge Primer #1 – Part C

### Teach Your Friends and Family to Play Bridge with Simple Steps

Based on Lesson 1 from website: [ATeacherFirst.com](http://ATeacherFirst.com)

**Part A focused on Opening 1 of a Suit and finding an 8-card fit in a major.**

The first goal when bidding is to find an 8-card fit in a major suit.

**Part B Focus: Opening 1 of a Suit; Opening in a minor suit; Bidding NT when there is no 8-card fit in any suit; playing in a NT contract.** The 2<sup>nd</sup> goal when bidding is to find a No Trump contract if an 8-card fit in a major cannot be found and your hand is relatively balanced.

**Part C** will focus on supporting your partner in a minor suit when you have found an 8-card fit. This is the least desirable option of the three, but when a major suit fit is not found and hands are unbalanced, it is sometimes the best option.

Reminder to the Coach: Adjust the explanations to suit your group. Use repetition as much as required. At this point, after having bid and played Part A and B games, players should have learned some important concepts. More will be added, slowly. These games build on the other games.

The coach needs to be careful not to complicate the bidding or the playing by giving too much detail in the explanations. Sometimes it's best just to say to your group: "That's all you need to know for now. You will learn much more as we go along."

The coach sets up the hands for each game or can get his/her group to assist. The Dealer changes with each game, in rotation: North, East, South, West. The "auction" starts with the dealer who will bid or pass. Do not be concerned about vulnerability at this stage — just ignore that for now if the question comes up.

These games are set up with the Opener and Responder both having minimum-range hands.

The players should know these point ranges:

Opener's Hand: Minimum with 12-15 pts.

Responder's Hand: Minimum with 6-9 pts.

Coach, start to emphasize these points when bidding now, adding a little bit more information as we go along:

With two minimum-range hands in the partnership, we try not to go too high in the bidding. The higher you bid, the more tricks you must take. With a minimum hand from Opener and a minimum hand from Responder, the bidding should not go any higher than the 2 or 3 level.

Remind the players that they need to take 8 tricks to make a contract at the 2 level.

They need to take 9 tricks to make the contract at the 3 level.

## Game #1

The Coach should set up the hands as shown in the diagram on the right. The Dealer is North and is the first to bid or pass. North will pass because he does not have 12+ pts. East is next and has 12+ pts so will open the bidding.

Coach asks: Do you have a 5-card major, East? (no)  
Therefore, you should open with a minor suit (1♦ or 1♣).

### Rules for Opening in a Minor Suit:

1. Open with the minor suit which has the most cards (the longest minor).
2. If the minor suits are the same length, open with the highest-ranking minor (1♦). If you have 4 of each minor, open 1♦. The diamond symbol has 4 pts, so use that to help your memory.
3. If you have exactly 3 cards in both minor suits, open 1♣. Use the 3 leaves of the clover to help you remember that rule.

Game #1 - North Dealer		HCP
♠ A J 5		8
♥ Q 10 6 3		9
♦ 10 4 3		14
♣ J 10 4		9
♠ K 10 9 6		
♥ 8 7		
♦ 8 7 6		
♣ A Q 8 2		
	♠ 7 4 2	
	♥ A 9 4	
	♦ A K Q J 2	
	♣ 9 5	
	♠ Q 8 3	
	♥ K J 5 2	
	♦ 9 5	
	♣ K 7 6 3	

The following information (between the asterisks \*\*\*) was covered in Primer 1B, but could be worth repeating. The coach should use his/her judgment about how much of it to repeat and how often.

\*\*\* This is the message you are sending when you open in a minor suit:

"I have 12+ points, I do not have 5 or more cards in a major suit, and I have at least 3 cards in the minor suit bid." You are not saying anything about where the high cards are in your hand. Responder can expect 3 or more cards in the minor suit, but the most important message about the shape is that the Opener does not have a 5-card major.

You are describing the shape of your hand. Your partner will know that you do not have a 5-card major suit, because you did not open in a major (but you could have a 4-card major suit). Your partner will know you have at least 3 cards in the minor suit when you open with 1♣ or 1♦, but does not know exactly how many cards you have in that suit. Your partner knows you have 12+ pts but does not know which suit has any high cards. You are bidding based on the length in the suit you bid, not the strength of the suit you bid. Rule for opening bids: "Bid on length, not strength."

You cannot tell your partner everything about your hand in one bid. Sometimes it takes a few bids to do that. Together you are trying to find an 8-card fit in a major suit as your #1 goal and you can do this by the process of elimination. For example, when your partner opens with 1♦ or 1♣, you know immediately that your partner does not have a 5-card major suit. Once you realize that, together, you do not have an 8-card fit in a major suit, you start to look at your #2 goal which is to bid No Trump.

If you know with certainty that you have an 8-card fit in a minor suit, this may be a better contract than No Trump, especially when you have one or two short suits with no stoppers. These games focus on this option – finding a fit in a minor suit contract. \*\*\*

Now, back to East, who has enough pts to open the bidding.

East: You have no 5-card major; therefore, you will open in a minor. Which of your minors is longer? (diamonds) This time, it seems obvious which suit East should open with; however, always remember that we open to show length, not strength. South's opening bid will be 1♦. South will pass.

West, how many pts do you have? (9) When you have 6 points or more, you should respond to your partner's opening bid. Therefore, you will bid.

West, what is your first goal when bidding? (To find an 8-card fit in a major suit)

How many cards does your partner have in a major suit? (West might say he doesn't know. He should know that East does not have 5 cards in a major, but East could have 4 in a major.)

West, since your partner could have 4 in a major, and you have 4 in a major, you will bid your 4-card major to find this out. West, bid 1♠.

North will pass. Now, back to East.

East, do you have 4 cards in a major? (No)

With 5 cards in a minor and no support shown in that suit from Partner, you can bid it again to show 5 cards instead of just 3 which your promised when you opened with 1♦. East should bid 2♦.

West, can you find an 8-card fit in a major, your first goal when bidding? (No, that possibility has now been eliminated) Now, you should be looking for the 2<sup>nd</sup> goal, finding a NT contract.

With no bids in hearts, it may be best to settle on a minor suit contract when one or more suits are short. Since East has now promised at least 5 diamonds, West knows there is an 8-card fit in diamonds.

West, with just the minimum responding hand, you should pass. You have found your longest suit and with 8 cards together in diamonds, that's a good contract to be in. (This explanation is simple enough for now.)

All pass. What is the final contract? 2♦ by East

Who is on lead? South

South, which is your longest, strongest unbid suit? (hearts)

Then, lead the 4<sup>th</sup> highest card from your heart suit. (♥2)

West places the dummy hand on the table.

East, you should analyse your hand together with the dummy hand to decide on a strategy.

How many tricks do you need to take to make your contract? (8)

(Reasoning: 2 level contracts require 8 tricks to make – add 2 + 6 = 8 tricks)

Soon, you will get to know the number of tricks required almost automatically and you will not have to think about it too much. East should count losers: 1 heart, 1 club, and 2 or 3 spades.

Always count trump! You need to know how many trump are in the opponents' hands. Since you have 8 together with the dummy, they have 5. Sometimes it's easier to keep the number 5 in your head and count down from it, as you pull trump from the opponents.

East, take the trick with the ♥Ace. Then play your high trump cards until you know the opponents have none left. (You will need to pull trump 3 times. As you pull trump, the first time the opponents played 1 each = 2, so 5 minus 2 = 3 trump remaining; pull again; 2 more were pulled, now there is just 1 left; pull trump the 3<sup>rd</sup> time to take them all.)

East, you should see the finesse possibility in clubs. Play a low club from your hand towards the dummy. Play the ♣Ace only if the ♣King appears from South's hand. If South plays the ♣King, then take it with the ♣Ace. If South does not play the ♣King, then play the ♣Queen. This time the finesse works. It will be













**Game #8:**

West is the dealer and has enough pts to open the bidding. West does not have a 5-card major so will open with a minor suit. Clubs are longer than diamonds so his bid will be 1♣.

North and South will pass throughout this game.

East has 6+ pts, enough to respond to West. East does not have a 4-card major. East does not have a fit (5-card support) for West's opening bid of clubs. However, East has 5 diamonds and can still bid this at the 1 level.

Game #8 - West Dealer		HCP	
		9	
		14	10
		7	

  

♠ K Q 6		♠ 8 7 3
♥ A 5 4 3		♥ K J 9
♦ 10 5 3		♦ K Q J 4 2
♣ 10 8 3		♣ 7 6
♠ A 2	♠ N	♠ J 10 9 5 4
♥ 7 2	♥ W	♥ Q 10 8 6
♦ A 8 7 6	♥ E	♦ 9
♣ A Q 9 5 4	♠ S	♣ K J 2

East's bid is 1♦.

**Rule:** A change of suit in the first round is forcing.

West must bid again. East is showing at least 4 diamonds, probably 5 diamonds. West can now support East's diamonds. West's bid is 2♦.

All will pass. East can bid 3♦ to show more than a minimum hand of 6-9 pts, but he can also pass.

The contract is 2♦ or 3♦ by East.

South is on lead. He has two strong, unbid suits, hearts and spades. The spades are longer but the hearts are stronger. South should lead either the ♠Jack (top of a sequence of cards Jack/Ten/9) or ♥6 (4<sup>th</sup> highest from four or more cards in a suit). Coach, let South choose which card to lead. If he leads the ♠Jack, East will take the first trick with the ♠Ace in dummy. If he leads the ♥6, North should play the ♥Ace and lead his partner a small heart.

Play out the hand. East should be able to take more than 9 tricks and may make a slam (taking 12 tricks).