

Bridge Bidding Cheat Sheet ♠

Standard American (SAYC) · 5-card majors · 15–17 1NT · for beginners and club players

BridgePlaybook

bridgeplaybook.com

1. Count your points

A = 4

Ace

K = 3

King

Q = 2

Queen

J = 1

Jack

40 HCP in the deck (average hand = 10). **After a trump fit** add: void +3, singleton +2, doubleton +1.

2. Opening bids

Pass	0–12	Open 11–12 only with the Rule of 20*
1♣ / 1♦	13–21	No 5-card major; 3+ cards (longer minor)
1♥ / 1♠	13–21	5+ cards: always a real suit
1NT	15–17	Balanced: no singleton or void
2♣	22+	Strong, artificial, forcing
2♦ / 2♥ / 2♠	6–11	Weak two: good 6-card suit
2NT	20–21	Balanced
3-level	5–10	Preempt: 7-card suit

***Rule of 20:** HCP + length of your two longest suits = 20 or more? Open.
Two 5-card suits: open the higher. 3–3 minors: 1♣. 4–4 minors: 1♦.

3. Responding to 1♥ / 1♠

0–5	Pass
6–9	3+ support: raise to 2
10–12	3+ support: limit raise to 3 (invitational)
13+	4+ support: Jacoby 2NT (game forcing)
0–9	5+ support: jump to game (preemptive)
6+	New 4-card suit at the 1-level (forcing)
6–10	No fit, nothing else to bid: 1NT

4. Responding to 1♣ / 1♦

6+	Bid a 4-card major first, cheapest first (up the line)
6–10	No major, balanced: 1NT
6–9	Raise partner's minor with good support

5. Beginner rules to remember

- 13+ HCP: open. 6+ HCP after partner opens: respond.
- Always open a 5-card major when you have one.
- Look for an 8-card **major fit** first; otherwise try notrump.
- 25 combined points = game. 33 = small slam.
- A new suit by responder is forcing: opener must bid again.

6. Responding to 1NT (15–17)

Pass	0–7	Balanced, no 5-card major
2♣	8+	Stayman: you hold a 4-card major
2♦	any	Transfer: 5+ hearts (partner bids 2♥)
2♥	any	Transfer: 5+ spades (partner bids 2♠)
2NT	8–9	Invitational, no 4-card major
3NT	10–15	To play, no 4-card major
4♣	slam	Gerber: asks for aces

Stayman answers

2♦	No 4-card major
2♥	4+ hearts
2♠	4+ spades, not 4 hearts

After a transfer

0–7	Pass
8–9	2NT (invite)
10+	3NT or game

7. Asking for aces

Blackwood 4NT (suit agreed)

5♣	0 or 4 aces
5♦	1 ace
5♥	2 aces
5♠	3 aces

Gerber 4♣ (over 1NT/2NT)

4♦	0 or 4 aces
4♥	1 ace
4♠	2 aces
4NT	3 aces

8. Points for game and slam (combined)

Partscore	18–24	Stop low: no game bonus
3NT	25+	9 tricks, no 8-card major fit
4♥ / 4♠	25+	10 tricks, 8+ card trump fit
5♣ / 5♦	28–29	11 tricks: prefer 3NT if possible
Small slam	33+	12 tricks: check aces first
Grand slam	36–37	13 tricks: all four aces

9. When the opponents open

1-level overcall	10–16	Good 5+ card suit
2-level overcall	12–16	Strong 5+ card suit
1NT overcall	15–18	Balanced, stopper in their suit
Jump overcall	5–10	Weak: 6+ card suit
Takeout double	12+	Short in their suit, support for the others