

Pre-emptive bids

Making life difficult for opponents

A pre-emptive bid is made on a hand that has playing strength because of distribution but insufficient values to make an opening bid

There are no universal standards but some general points are worth considering. Here are some ideas

1. Suit bid should contain some HCP values
2. You want any penalty to be restricted to less than the opponents will make if they bid and make a Game. So count the number of playing tricks expected to win then:
 - add 3 to the total when **Not Vulnerable**
 - add 2 to the total when **Vulnerable**
 - add 1 to the total when vulnerability is **UNFAVOURABLE**
3. Your partner will also expect:
 - a 3 level bid to be a **7-card suit**
 - a 4 level bid to be an **8-card suit**
 - a 5 level bid to be a **9-card suit**
4. For a pre-emptive overcall partner will expect:
 - a jump overcall at the 2 level to be a **6-card suit**
 - a jump overcall at the 3 level to be a **7-card suit**
5. Pre-emptive bids in first and second seat potentially cause problems for your partner who may have values so in this case partnerships may agree that such bids should be on the stronger side e.g. definitive about playing strength.
6. In third seat after two passes pre-empts are more attractive as it can be assumed that fourth seat has values.
7. With some support for the opener's suit the Responder can use the 'Law of Total Tricks' to determine whether to raise the pre-empt to further frustrate the opponents