

Basic and Basic+ Charts

In 2020, ACBL revised permissible bidding conventions for different types of games and competitions. Club games usually use the “Open Chart”. Restricted games, such as mentor games should use either Basic or Basic+.

The full document can be found on ACBL:

http://web2.acbl.org/documentLibrary/about/CONVENTIONCHARTS2_2020.pdf

This is an excerpt from the document, showing only the Basic and Basic+ Charts.

Basic Chart

Bidding Agreements are disallowed unless they are specifically allowed. If an Agreement would be disallowed unless it satisfies a specific High Card Point or shape requirement, a player may not use judgment to include hands with fewer High Card Points or a different shape. Note that almost all Agreements are allowed beginning with Responder's initial action.

Allowed Bidding Agreements

Opening Bids

1. Any Natural opening bid in a suit, as long as it shows at least Average Strength.
2. A 1C or 1D opening bid that is either Natural or Quasi-Natural, as long as it shows at least Average Strength.
3. An Artificial 1C opening bid that is Strong and Forcing.
4. A Natural NT opening bid, as long as it shows at least 10 HCP and the Range is not greater than 5 HCP.
5. An Artificial 2C or 2D opening bid that is Very Strong.
6. A 2D opening showing 0-1 diamonds along with 3+ cards in all other suits, as long as it shows at least Average Strength.
7. A 2D opening showing a 4-4-4-1 or 5-4-4-0 pattern, as long as it shows at least Average Strength. The short suit may be known or unknown.
8. *** A 2-level opening bid showing Average Strength with at least 5-4 shape with both suits known.
9. Any Weak Natural opening bid in a suit at the 2-level showing at least 4 HCP and has a Range not greater than 7 HCP.
10. Any Weak Natural opening at the 3-level or higher showing 6 or more cards in the suit.
11. A 3NT opening bid that shows a known or unknown long minor suit (the suit may be solid or broken).
12. An Artificial 4C opening showing hearts, and an Artificial 4D opening showing spades.
13. Any opening bid of 4NT or higher.

Responses and Rebids

1. Any Natural response.
2. Any game forcing response at the 2 level or higher.
3. An Artificial 1D response to any 1C opening bid.
4. Any Artificial negative response to a Strong or Very Strong opening bid.
5. A Forcing 1NT response to an opening bid of 1H or 1S. 1NT cannot guarantee an Invitational or stronger hand.
6. Any response to a NT opening bid.
7. An Artificial jump response showing a raise (of any strength) of Opener's Natural opening bid.
8. An Artificial response of 2C and/or 2D by a passed hand showing a raise of Opener's Natural opening bid.
9. Any response to a 2-level or higher opening bid.
10. All calls starting with Opener's second bid (this applies to both pairs).

Overcalls and Competitive Bids

1. All Natural overcalls.
2. All doubles and redoubles, and all calls by both sides after a double or redouble.
3. All Artificial cuebids (by either pair), except a cuebid that could be Weak must show at least one known suit. All responses to a cuebid are allowed.
4. A 2NT overcall showing at least 5-4 distribution in the minors or in the two lowest unbid suits.
5. After partner's Natural 1NT overcall, any Artificial advance.
6. After an opponent's Natural NT opening bid or overcall:
 - a. An Artificial 2C bid having any meaning
 - b. An Artificial bid showing two known suits with 4-4 length or better
 - c. An Artificial bid showing a known 5+ card suit
 - d. A Natural bid showing 4+ cards in the suit bid and another known or unknown suit of 4+ cards.

7. In response to partner's overcall showing an unknown suit or suits, any call asking for partner's longest or cheapest unknown suit (e.g., "pass or correct" calls).
8. An Artificial NT overcall at any level for 2-suited or 3-suited takeout. A 1NT bid in this category must show at least Near-Average Strength.
9. After an opponent's Artificial opening bid, any Artificial defense that does not include a Purely Destructive overcall.

Lead and Carding Agreements

Encrypted Signals are never allowed when leading, following suit or discarding. Otherwise:

1. Opening lead: Any method may be used on opening lead. (Leading low from doubletons must be pre-alerted.)
2. First discard: Any method may be used on the first discard.

***** Following Suit & Discarding**: Except for the first discard, only high-to-low or low-to-high ordering strategies are allowed when following suit or discarding.

- *Note: Distinct meanings for middle cards (vs. highest and lowest) are permissible.*
- *Note: Defining meanings for specific spots (2,4,6...), as opposed to relative high/low agreements, are permissible only on the first discard.*

In addition, a pair may be prohibited from playing any carding method when they are deemed to be playing it in a manner that does not maintain proper tempo. A decision that prohibits a pair from playing a particular carding method may be appealed to the tournament committee.

Basic+ Chart

Bidding Agreements are disallowed unless they are specifically allowed. If an Agreement would be disallowed unless it satisfies a specific High Card Point or shape requirement, a player may not use judgment to include hands with fewer High Card Points or a different shape. Note that almost all Agreements are allowed beginning with Responder's initial action.

Allowed Bidding Agreements

Opening Bids

1. Any opening bid in a suit which is Natural, as long as it shows at least Near-Average Strength.
2. A 1C or 1D opening bid that is either Natural or Quasi-Natural, as long as it shows at least Average Strength.
3. An Artificial 1C opening bid that is Strong and Forcing.
4. A Natural NT opening bid, as long as it shows at least 10 HCP and the Range is not greater than 5 HCP.
5. Any 1NT opening bid that is Strong and Forcing.
6. A 2-level opening bid showing a Three-Suited hand and at least Average Strength.
7. Any 2-level or higher opening bid that is Very Strong.
8. Any 2-level opening bid showing at least Average Strength with at least 5-4 shape and both suits known.
9. Any Weak Natural opening bid in a suit at the 2-level showing at least 3 HCP and has a Range not greater than 8 HCP.
10. A NT opening bid at the 2-level or higher showing at least 5-4 distribution in the minors.
11. Any Weak Natural opening at the 3-level or higher.
12. A 3NT opening bid showing a known or unknown solid suit.
13. A 3NT opening bid showing a known or unknown long minor suit.
14. A 4-level opening bid showing at least 6 cards in a different known suit.
15. Any opening bid of 4NT or higher.

Responses and Rebids

1. Any Natural response.
2. Any game forcing response.
3. An Artificial 1D response to any 1C opening bid.
4. Any Artificial response to a Strong or Very Strong opening bid.
5. Any 1NT response to an opening bid of 1H or 1S.
6. Any response to a NT opening bid.
7. An Artificial jump response showing a raise (of any strength) of Opener's Natural opening bid.
8. An Artificial jump response that shows at least 5 cards in a known suit and at least 4 cards in another known suit.
9. An Artificial response of 2C and/or 2D by a passed hand that shows a raise of Opener's Natural opening bid.
10. Any response to a 2-level or higher opening bid.
11. Any response after an opposing double.

Overcalls and Competitive Bids

1. All Natural overcalls.
2. All doubles and redoubles, and all calls by both sides after a double or redouble.
3. All calls in Balancing Seat.
4. All Artificial cuebids (by either pair), except a cuebid that could be Weak must show at least one known suit. All responses to a cuebid are allowed.
5. A suit overcall showing at least 5-4 distribution in two known suits. If the overcall is not a jump, then it must show at least Average Strength.
6. An Artificial NT overcall at any level for 2-suited takeout. A 1NT bid in this category must show at least Near-Average Strength. Below the 4-level at least one suit must be known.
7. An artificial NT overcall at any level for 3-suited takeout. A 1NT bid in this category must show at least Near-Average Strength.
8. After partner's Natural 1NT overcall, any Artificial advance.

9. After an opponent's Natural NT opening bid or overcall:
 - a. An Artificial 2C bid having any meaning
 - b. An Artificial 2D bid showing a one-suited hand in hearts or spades
 - c. Any other call showing a known suit of at least 4 cards
10. In response to partner's overcall showing an unknown suit or suits, any call asking for partner's longest or cheapest suit (e.g., "pass or correct" calls).
11. After an Artificial opening bid, any Artificial defense that does not include a Purely Destructive overcall.
12. After an opening bid of 2C or higher, any Artificial defense that does not include a Purely Destructive overcall.
13. After an opening bid and an overcall or double, any call (by either side) showing Length in a known suit.
14. After an opening bid and an overcall, a bid of spades to show any of:
 - a. A desire to play No Trump
 - b. One minor
 - c. Both minors
 - d. Any combination of the above

Beginning with the Opening Bidder's second call, all calls are allowed by both pairs.

Lead and Carding Agreements

<Same as Basic Chart>