



Bidding at Bridge Windows

Voyager of the Seas®

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The Auction

We have *very* limited bridge “language” - only eight words and seven numbers - in which to conduct an informative, intelligent partnership discussion called the “auction.” The purpose of this communication is to compute the *combined* strength of the two hands (yours & partner’s) and find a dominant trump suit in which to declare the final contract.

The prime objective in winning the auction (outbidding the opponents) is to play the hand in the trump suit that you and your partner own a decisive advantage, at least the *golden* 8-card fit. Objective number 2 is to disrupt the opponents, pushing them too high in their bidding.

The two-fold dangers in the bidding auction are to either bid too high and get a bad minus score, or to bid too low and miss a game bonus (300 or 500), or even a slam bonus (500 or 750).

Good Tip! Don't turn your Plus Scores ☺ into Minus Scores ☹ !

Bidding is an exercise in simple addition. To have a good chance for a game bonus, the *combined* partnership high-card strength should be 25-32. You find this by adding *your* high cards to partner’s points. For slams 33-40 are needed. In the absence of unusual distribution, which greatly enhances your chances to take a lot of tricks on offense and limits you to just a few tricks on defense, all hands *below* the 25 point combined strength level should be played in contracts at the lowest possible level. These “part score” auctions should be greatly contested.

Real Good Tip: Do your bidding in “Windows” of Strength

	Min	Good	Animal		min	good	animal
<i>Windows: Opener</i>	(13-15)	(16-18)	(19-21)	<i>Responder</i>	(6-9)	(10-12)	(13-?)

During the auction your concentration should always be on the simple arithmetic of adding your points to partner’s points in determining how high you may compete for the final contract.

- ◆ If *your* hand as opener is “minimum” for an opening bid - 12-15 - and your *partner’s* hand is “minimum” for responding - 6-9 - then the combined partnership has a maximum of 24 points. Barring great distribution, a “part score” for a plus score is your goal.
- ◆ If your opening hand is *minimum* and partner’s responding hand is *good* - 10-12 - then the combined total is 22-27, and a game should be explored (invited) by responder.
- ◆ All other combinations of opener and responder - *good* opener, 16-18 plus *good* responder, 10-12, *should* be bid to a game or a slam since the partnership is guaranteed of a minimum of 26 points. Slam bidding (33 combined points) uses this same math.
- ◆ Continuing the window-addition approach, if opener has a *very good* holding, 19-21, *any* response by partner should bring a game bonus since the two hands total between 25-31.
- ◆ The combination of any *good* hand by opener, 16-18, and any *very good* hand by responder, 13-15, is assured a good game prospect and slam could be explored since the combined strength of the two hands is at least 26 up to a possible 33 points.

Good luck, and keep counting in those Windows!