

HAND EVALUATION (= 60 % of Bridge)

- **Rule of 20 - 1st & 2nd Seat:** Add HCP & total cards in your 2 longest suits. If = 20, Open.
- **Rule of 18 - Third Seat Opener:** Add HCP & total cards in 2 longest suits. If = 18, Open. If plan to pass, you should have 3 cards in 1-level response suits & 2 cards in 2-level suits.
- **Rule of 15 - Fourth Seat Opener:** Add HCP + # Spades. If = 15, Open.
- **Opening Bid = HCP + Length Points = 13:** This comes out the Same as Rule of 20.
- **Length Points:** Add 1 point for every card Over 4 in your Longest suit AND 1 point for every card Over 3 in other suits. Length points are really worth more than HCP.
- **Length Points: 1 point for 5th card in a suit. 1 point for 6th card. 1+ point for 7th card.**
- 4-4-3-2 = 1 length points + 12 hcp = 13 points = Opening bid. Note, 12+4+4 = 20.
- 5-3-3-2 = 1 length points + 12 hcp = 13 points = Opening bid. Note, 12+5+3 = 20.
- 5-4-2-2 = 2 length points + 11 hcp = 13 points = Opening bid. Note, 11+5+4 = 20.
- 6-3-2-2 = 2 length points + 11 hcp = 13 points = Opening bid. Note, 11+6+3 = 20.
- 7-3-2-1 = 3 length points + 10 hcp = 13 points = Opening bid. Note, 10+7+3 = 20.
- **Once Your Suit is Supported:** Add More Extra Points: 1 for 6th card & 1 for 7th.
So: 5-card suit still = 1 total point. 6-card = 3 total points. 7-card = 5 total points!
And: Add Still another 1 point for a side Singleton & another 2 points for a side Void. Yes!
- **3 of Top 5 Honors – Add a Point:** Married 10's in 4-card+ suits: KJ10x = 5, AQ10xx = 8.
- **HCP: A = 4 1/3. K = 3+. Q = 2-. J = 1-. 10 & 9** with a higher honor = 1 point.
- **Ten** helps a higher honor too. Q10x(x) = 2 1/2. J10x(x) = 1+.
- Two 10's = 1 point at NT. Four 10's = 1 point at Suit contracts. 9's & 8's are important too.
- Honors in Long suits are worth more than honors in Short suits.
- Downgrade honors in short suits, especially Q's & J's. **Qx = 1 1/2. Jx = 1/2.**
- Honors Together are worth more than honors Scattered. QJxx, xxx vs Qxxx, Jxx.
- Honors in partner's long suits are worth more than honors in partner's short suits.
- At game & higher levels: A's & K's are worth more than Q's & J's.
- Q's, J's & 10's: pull more of their weight at lower levels & in NT.
- For suit contracts, Q's & J's in opponent's suits should not be counted.
- When a suit is bid by your left-hand opponent (LHO), a K should be downgraded.
- Lack of Support for Partner's Suit: If you have a Singleton -1 point or a Void -2 points.
- **Trump Support:**
For 3-trumps: Doubleton = 1 Stiff = 2 Void = 3
For 4-trumps: Doubleton = 1 Stiff = 3 Void = 4. If 5 dummy trumps, Void = 5.
- For a Combined Nine (9) Trumps: add a point. Worth a lot more than eight (8).
- **Points Schmoits:** Length & Distribution are much greater than Strength.
- **Distribution:** Players tend to Overbid Flat hands and Underbid Distributional hands.
5-5 or 6-5 Come Alive. 6-4 or 7-4 Bid Some More. Count these **4-5 Distribution** points.
- Be **Aggressive** at **Levels 1-4 (esp NT)**, but **Moderate** at **Levels 5-7**.
- If you are **Not Technical** with Fractions & Details, Just **"Understand" & use Intuition**.