

INTERMEDIATE LESSON 9: STUDENT NOTES

High-level Bidding

General Principles of High-level Bidding

1. Sometimes it is right to **sacrifice at a high level** when you know your opponents can make game. However, DO NOT go too many down and get a bad board. For example, if you are **not vulnerable** and they can make a vulnerable game – 620/650, then going 2 down doubled gives away -300 and 3 down will give them 500 (still a better board). You may push them to a non-making 5-level contract. Be cautious if you are **vulnerable**.
2. **Bid on with freak deals** or a very good fit with partner.
3. It is usually correct to **bid 4♠ over 4♥** if you have a fit, but with four of their trump suit, consider doubling them.
4. If you have pushed them to game (such as with a pre-emptive opening) or to the 5-level, do not bid on – they may be going down. **“The 5-level belongs to the opponents”**
5. If you have shown your hand (eg a pre-emptive bid) then it is unusual for you to bid again.
6. Learn what it costs to go light doubled !

Vulnerability	1 Light	2 Light	3 Light	4 Light
Non Vul	100	300	500	800
Vul	200	500	800	1100

When you have the BALANCE OF POINTS and opponents sacrifice

1. If in doubt about bidding on, then pass or double them with 2 or 3 of their suit. The hand that bids to game usually makes the decision on what to do, but ...
2. **Pass is forcing** for partner to double or bid if we have bid a vulnerable game. After a 5-level sacrifice, if you pass then bid 5 after partner's double, this is a slam try.
3. Bid on to the **5-level** with a 10 card fit and a singleton or void in their suit
4. If they open or pre-empt 4♥ then when it is your first opportunity to bid, double is takeout. If they open or pre-empt 4♠, then double shows values and 4NT is takeout. Please refer to Lesson 10 for defence to Pre-emptive Openers

Good reasons to BID ON (usually over their sacrifice)

1. **Controls** – aces, singletons, voids
2. **No minor honours** in their suits (Q or J)
3. **Extra length** in your suit(s)
4. **Strong sequence** in your suit(s)
5. **Double fits** and honours in these suits

Reasons to DEFEND and/or DOUBLE rather than bidding on

1. Minor **honour in their suit** – eg Q65 or JT8
2. **Doubleton** in their suit
3. **Poor quality** in our trump suit
4. **Eight or nine** card fit in our trump suit
5. **Balanced** hand – fewer playing tricks available
6. **Misfit** with partner

Unfortunately it takes time and experience before your judgement improves with these high level decisions. You and your partner will make mistakes along the way. Try to make your decision confidently and remember that you can't get all decisions right!

At teams bridge you are more likely to “take the money” and double, rather than risk going down at the 5-level.