

Invitational Cue Bid

In traditional methods, the cue-bid of the enemy suit in response to partner's overcall would be forcing to game. The "Invitational Cue-Bid" simply engages the cue-bid more liberally, to include invitational hands (hence, the name) as well. Here is the way it works:

Cue-bid of the enemy suit In response to partner's suit overcall is forcing for one round. If responder has support for overcaller's suit, this bid may be made with as little as 11 (or a very good. 10) points. Otherwise, responder typically shows at least 13 points. In either event, there is no upper limit.

Opp	Partner	Opp	You	
				♠ 95
				♥ AK3
1♠	2♣	P	2♠	♦ 9762
				♣ K753

Your hand is too strong for a raise to 3 ♣ so start with an invitational Cue-bid.

Opp.	Partner	Opp.	You	
				♠ K4
				♥ AK3108
1♦	1♠	P	2♦	♦ 10654
				♣ K9

You would like to bid 2 ♥, but that is not forcing. You must first cue-bid 2 ♦ then bid your hearts later.

Rebids By Overcaller

After the invitational cue-bid, overcaller must not pass, except if his right-hand opponent (opening bidder) bids or doubles-in which case, he may pass with nothing useful to say. Overcaller should try to rebid as naturally as possible, but within the following framework:

1. Rebid of original suit confirms a minimum overcall and is not forcing. This does not necessarily show more than a five-card suit.

♠ KJ875	Opp.	You	Opp	Partner
♥ 963				
♦ KQ109	1♥	1♠	P	2♥
♣ 2	P	2♠		

Your natural rebid would be 3♦ but that requires extra strength. Thus you are forced to rebid 2♠

2. Any rebid below your original suit is ambiguous in strength (could be a minimum or a maximum overcall) and is forcing.

♠ AQ1086	Opp.	You	Opp.	Partner
♥ K 10 9 3				
♦ 84	1♦	1♠	P	2♦
♣ 10 3	P	2♥		

Even though your overcall is minimum it is possible to show your heart suit below the level of 2.

♠ K 10 3	Opp.	You	Opp	Partner
♥ A 4				
♦ KQ8654		1♠	2♦	P 2♠
♣ 9 8	P	<u>2 NT</u>		

Your two-level overcall is rather minimum, but a 2 NT rebid is more descriptive than 3♦.

♠ AK986	Opp.	You	Opp.	Partner
♥ 97		1♣	1♠	P 2♣
♦ AKJ9		P	<u>2♦</u>	
♣ 7 4				

Here your overcall is very good but there is no need to jump, since 2♦ is forcing.

3. Any rebid below your original suit confirms a good or maximum overcall. This is forcing (if below game).

♠ KQ976	Opp.	You	Opp.	Partner
♥ AQ7		1♥ 1♠	P	2♥
♦ K8	P	2NT		
♣ 9 8 5				

By rebidding past 2 #, you show extra values.

Rebids By Cue-Bidder

The invitational cue-bidder is required to bid again, unless overcaller rebids his original suit or if game has been reached. Here are the meanings of these rebids:

1. Preference to overcaller's first suit shows 11 or 12 points and is not forcing.

Opp	Partner	Opp	YOU	♠ Q108
				♥ A3
1♣	1♠	P	2♣	♦ A 1094
P	2♥	P	<u>2♠</u>	♣ 7642

You show the common "limit raise" type hand: with a better hand, you must jump to 3♠ or 4♠.

Opp.	Partner	Opp.	You	♠ A 5 3
				♥ 95
1♥	2♣	P	2♥	♦ K943
P 2♠	P	3♣	♣ K982	

You show a hand slightly too strong for an original 3♣ raise; partner need not bid again.

2. Single raise (below game) shows 13 or 14 points and is invitational to game.

Opp.	Partner	Opp.	You	♠ AQ5
				♥ K 9 6 3
1♦	1♠	P	2♦	♦ 103
p	2♠	P	3♠	♣ A982

You are Inviting 4♥, even though partner has confirmed a minimum. With just 11 or 12 points, you would pass 2♠.

3. New suit shows-at least 13 points and a five-card or longer suit. This is forcing for one round.

Opp	Partner	Opp	YOU	♠ A K987
				♥ A3
1♣	1♥	P	2♣	♦ K 1086
P	2♣	2	P	♣ 97

You show at least five spades, and partner must bid again.

4. Two notrump shows 13 or 14 points after a one-level overcall, but only about 11 or 12 points after a two-level overcall. In either case, this is not forcing, but invitational to game.

Opp	Partner	Opp	YOU	♠ Q7
				♥ AK95
1♣	1♥	P	2♣	♦ 952
P	2♦	P	2NT	♣ A1076

Partner's 2♦ bid has given you a clear-cut rebid. With a minimum overcall, partner should pass 2NT.

5. Repeat of the Invitational cue-bid (rare) shows a natural suit, and is invitational if below game.

Opp	Partner	Opp	YOU	♠ 3
				♥ 765
1♣	1♠	P	2♣	♦ A5
P	2♠	P	2♣	♣ KQJ10985

You show a real club suit. If you want to force partner to keep bidding, you must bid a new suit (diamonds or hearts, in this case).

Note: The above is the only way to bid the enemy suit naturally in response to partner's overcall, since we recommend a specialized meaning for a jump cue-bid response (see page 153). Nevertheless, little is lost, as the situations where it is desirable to play in the enemy suit are rare indeed.

6. Any game bid is a natural sign-off attempt, just as it sounds.

Opp	Partner	Opp	YOU	
				♠ K8
				♥ AQ83
1♦	2♣	P	2♦	♦ 1053
P	2 NT	P	3NT	♣ KJ42

Partners 2 NT bid must show a diamond stopper so forget about raising clubs. and try for the easier nine-trick game.

Other RESPONSES TO OVERCALLS

The Invitational cue-bid is such a convenient and a valuable weapon that the failure to use it can be very informative. A new light is shed on certain other responses, the most significant of which is the jump raise, which now becomes a weak pre-emptive bid. We recommend the following meanings for responses to partner's overcall.

Single raise shows 6 to 10 points. This is slightly weaker than customarily played, due to the availability of the invitational cue-bid.