

BIDDING OVER THE OPPONENT'S PRE-EMPT

1. Entering the auction at the 3-level or higher is always a risky business. Over an Opponent's pre-empt you have little information to guide your way and not much room to explore.
2. Because of these risks it always requires a few extra points to make a call directly over a pre-empt, compared to what a similar call would have shown at the 1-level.
3. An overcall of a 3-level pre-empt typically describes a hand with 13 or more high-card points and a good 6-card or longer suit (a few more points are necessary with only a 5-card suit). The Responder will raise with three or more cards in support (perhaps even two) and as little as eight or nine points.
4. A takeout double of a 3-level pre-empt typically promises support for the unbid suits and at least 16 points. The Responder answers according to the count as follows:
 - a) With 0-8 high-card points, simply choose an unbid suit.
 - b) With 9-12 high-card points, make a jump choice.
 - c) With 13 or more high-card points, cue-bid the Opponent's suit.
5. A bid of 3-NT over a 3-level pre-empt indicates a balanced or semi-balanced hand with stoppers in the pre-empter's suit and about 18-21 high-card points.
6. If one of the Opponents pre-empts and the next two Players pass, it takes fewer points in fourth seat to make an overcall or double. Since Partner might have passed with up to 15 points, the object is to protect your side's interests, sometimes with as little as 10 or 11 high-card points.
7. All competitive calls after a pre-emptive opening bid are made under pressure. Thus, the values they promise might not always be identical with the values they deliver.