

# Beginners' Lesson 8: Overcalls

**Board 1**  
North Deals  
None Vul

♠ 9 8 3  
♥ 6 5 4 3  
♦ A 10 5 3  
♣ A K

♠ Q 6 5 4 2  
♥ K J  
♦ K J 7 4  
♣ Q 7

♠ A K J  
♥ A Q 9 7  
♦ Q 6  
♣ 10 9 5 3

West North East South  
3 NT 1 ♠ 1 NT Pass

Lead: ♠ 10

East has a perfect 1 NT overcall (16-18 HCP and a good stop in the opponent's suit). West only needs 10 HCP to bid game.

The ♠ 10 lead is the top of partner's suit.

Declarer plays a club, so they can then play a heart towards the ♥ AQ. They play the Q♥ (a finesse), then Ace and another heart.

**Board 5**  
North Deals  
N-S Vul

♠ 10 8  
♥ A 9 7 6  
♦ 9 6 4  
♣ K 7 6 3

♠ A 5 4 3  
♥ 4  
♦ A Q 10 7 3  
♣ Q 9 8

♠ 9 2  
♥ K Q 10 8 2  
♦ K J 5 2  
♣ 5 2

♠ K Q J 7 6  
♥ J 5 3  
♦ 8  
♣ A J 10 4

West North East South  
2 ♥ 1 ♦ 1 ♥ 1 ♠  
Lead: ♥ A

North opens their longest suit and then raises in partner's spades. EW should compete in hearts. South has great shape and should bid game once the spade fit is known.

Lead is ♥ A - partner's suit.

Declarer must ruff two small hearts in dummy before drawing trumps.

**Board 2**  
East Deals  
N-S Vul

♠ 10 9 8 6  
♥ 9 7  
♦ Q 10 5  
♣ 9 7 6 3

♠ 7  
♥ Q 10 6 5 2  
♦ K 9 8 6  
♣ J 5 2

♠ K J 5 2  
♥ K J  
♦ A J 2  
♣ Q 10 8 4

♠ A Q 4 3  
♥ A 8 4 3  
♦ 7 4 3  
♣ A K

West North East South  
Pass 2 ♥ 1 ♣ All pass

South has shown a strong balanced hand of 16-18. North does not have the strength for game and makes a weakness takeout of 2 ♥.

Lead is ♠ 2.

Declarer wins with the Q♠, and draws trumps then plays on diamonds.

**Board 6**  
East Deals  
E-W Vul

♠ 10 9 8 6  
♥ J  
♦ 10 9 7 5  
♣ J 7 6 3

♠ 7  
♥ A Q 10 6 5 2  
♦ A 8 6  
♣ K 5 2

♠ K J 5 2  
♥ K 7  
♦ K J 2  
♣ Q 10 8 4

♠ A Q 4 3  
♥ 9 8 4 3  
♦ Q 4 3  
♣ A 9

West North East South  
Pass 2 ♥ 1 NT Pass

North overcalls 2 ♥ and South, with an opening hand and good support, bids to game.

Lead is a small ♠.

Declarer wins then takes the heart finesse which loses. Once back in, draw the last trump and play on diamonds. ♦ A first and then low towards the ♦ Q.

**Board 3**  
South Deals  
E-W Vul

♠ J  
♥ 10 9 4  
♦ J 10 9 6 5 2  
♣ K 8 2

♠ A K 10 4 3  
♥ K Q 7 5  
♦ 3  
♣ 9 5 4

♠ Q 6 5 2  
♥ A 8 2  
♦ A 4  
♣ A Q J 7

♠ 9 8 7  
♥ J 6 3  
♦ K Q 8 7  
♣ 10 6 3

West North East South  
Pass 1 ♠ 1 NT Pass

East's overcall shows 16-18 HCP. West is not interested in game with 5 HCP. Notrumps is not a good option, so West makes the weak bid of 2 ♦. East must pass.

Lead is ♠ A. After seeing dummy, North should switch to the ♥ K.

Declarer should keep playing trumps before tackling the club suit.

**Board 7**  
South Deals  
Both Vul

♠ K Q 10 6 4  
♥ 4 3  
♦ 8 3 2  
♣ A Q 3

♠ 5  
♥ Q 10 8 7 6  
♦ K Q J 9 6  
♣ 4 2

♠ A 9 8 3 2  
♥ 2  
♦ 7 4  
♣ 10 9 8 6 5

♠ J 7  
♥ A K J 9 5  
♦ A 10 5  
♣ K J 7

West North East South  
1 ♠ 4 ♥ 4 ♠ 1 ♥

A good competitive auction. Both sides have a good fit and should not give up too easily. The contract will either end up in 4 ♥ by South or 4 ♠ by West.

Lead is ♠ K against 4 ♥, or ♥ 6 against 4 ♠.

Play the board twice to illustrate the power of big fits. 4 ♥ by South then 4 ♠ by West.

**Board 4**  
West Deals  
Both Vul

♠ 5 2  
♥ A 10 6  
♦ A Q J 8 7 3  
♣ J 3

♠ J 8  
♥ Q 8 4 3 2  
♦ K 4 2  
♣ 10 9 2

♠ K 9 6  
♥ J 9 7  
♦ 6 5  
♣ K 8 7 5 4

♠ A Q 10 7 4 3  
♥ K 5  
♦ 10 9  
♣ A Q 6

West North East South  
1 ♦ Pass 1 NT 2 ♠

Despite both opponents bidding, South is strong enough to overcall 2 ♠.

Lead is ♣ J

Declarer wins and plays a diamond towards dummy. When they get back in, they should return to dummy with a diamond and run the ♠ J hoping to capture the ♠ K (finesse).

**Board 8**  
West Deals  
None Vul

♠ A 8 5 3  
♥ Q 10 7 6  
♦ 7 4  
♣ 9 7 6

♠ 2  
♥ K J 8  
♦ A K J 10 9  
♣ K J 10 5

♠ K Q 10 9 6  
♥ 9 3 2  
♦ 8 5  
♣ A Q 4

♠ J 7 4  
♥ A 5 4  
♦ Q 6 3 2  
♣ 8 3 2

West North East South  
Pass 1 ♦ 1 ♠ 2 ♦

West, with a good trump fit, bids 2 ♠ (6-9 HCP). Both pairs may compete to the 3-level.

Lead is ♠ K against diamonds and ♦ 2 against spades. Again it is worth playing the hand twice. 3 ♦ or 3 ♠.

3 ♠, 1 down is a good result for EW as NS can make 3 ♦