

Opening 1 in a Suit

You must have 13 points (HCP plus distribution points) to open at the one level in a suit. Normally if you have a 5 card major, regardless of its strength, you open the 5 card major. Without a 5 card major you open a minor. When opening a minor a diamond opening promises at least 4 diamonds. If you don't have 4 diamonds, you can open 1♣ with as few as 3 clubs. Why is this? Because, if you remember the point count and trick counts ... the goal is to find a fit in a major suit, or if it is possible to play in no trump. In fact opening in a minor is asking your partner "hey, do you have a 4 card major?" This is referred to as "opening a convenient minor".

With 13 – 21 pts:

- Five-card-major, open the longest major first.
- If major suits are of equal length open with the highest ranking first. Unless, you have 16+ HCP and are playing "Reverses".
- If no Five-card-major, open with the longest minor
 - With 4-4 open ♦
 - With 3-3 open ♣
 - ♦ A K Q ♣ 6 3 2 open 1♦ (recommendation)
 - ♦ A Q 10 ♣ K 10 9 open 1♣
- With 4-4 in the majors and 3♦ 2♣, there are those who play a diamond opening promises 4 diamonds, thus will open this hand with 1♣.
 - I am not really sure what makes the diamonds special to warrant this
 - If this hand is opened 1♦, it would only account for 3% of the 1♦ openings
 - When playing this "strict promise of 4 diamonds" say at a SAYC event, every time your partner opens 1♣, you must announce "could be short".
 - [Larry Cohen](#) [David Farmer](#) [Princeton.edu](#) [ACBL](#)
- Opening light, with the right hand
 - Most often in the 3rd or 4th seat and no one has opened
 - Hand should normally have at least 11 points and adhere to the "rule of 20"
 - Rule of 20: HCP only in two longest suits + number of cards in those suits = 20

By opening one in a suit, you tell your partner how many points you have and your best suit (longest). Sometimes, you do not "really" have a good suit. Sometimes your points are a little less, but you do have a good suit. And sometimes they are more ... all the way up to 21! The good news is, you can tell your partner you have "more" the next time you bid. The bad news is ... you do not always get to bid again