

# Learning: How Good Is Your Hand?

In the situation where you open the bidding and partner responds— *How Good Is Your Hand?* There are six factors you need to consider when deciding whether your hand belongs in the minimum, medium or maximum range. Traditionally the yardstick for measuring hands was based on high card points. In fact that is only one (and not the most important) consideration.

1. High card points
  - 12-14/15 minimum - Bad
  - 15/16 – 17/18 medium - OK
  - 18-20 maximum - Good
2. Shape of your hand

4-3-3-3, 5-3-3-2 and 4-4-3-2 hands are the worst hands to hold

Good hands? Hands with singletons, six card suits, and hands with your points concentrated in your long suits
3. Quality of your points

Aces and Kings are good AQ, KQ, AK, KJ, QJ combinations of points are good

Scattered/Unsupported Queens and Jacks are bad (unsupported means that you don't have any other honor to go with your Queen or Jack)
4. Intermediate cards

10's and 9's increase the trick-taking ability of your hand

Good texture in your suit 8's and 7's help

Bad cards? 5's and 3's, cards below a seven
5. Location of points

Points located in your long suits (or in partner's suit) are more valuable than points located in your short suits because they increase your trick-taking ability

Soft points (Queens and Jacks) in the opponents' suits – bad
6. Partner's response to your opening bid

Did partner's response increase or decrease the value (trick-taking ability) of your hand?

If your Kings and Queens are in your partner's suit that is good! Shortness in partner's suit (0-1-2) is bad!