

LESSON - Opening in 1st/2nd Seat with the Rule of 22 by MARVIN

CONCEPT - Conventional wisdom suggests that most hands with 13 points and some 12 point hands should be opened. With 12 or fewer high card points, however, there are also opportunities to open bidding and gain the upper hand on the opponents. Bridge authors, Ron Klinger and Marty Bergen, suggest using the Rule of 22, to open potentially borderline hands. To determine if this method is applicable to your hand, add your **High Card Points (HCP)**, the **Number of cards in your 2 longest suits (LP)**, and the number of **Quick Tricks** together. If the total is **22** or more, consider opening the bidding in your longest suit. You may do this whether you are vulnerable or not vulnerable. This process provides an easy, but accurate method to determine if your hand is worth an opening bid, but **only** applies to bidding in the 1st or 2nd seat.

As Marty Bergen suggests, you bid more accurately if you can open before the opponents, it is easier to open than to overcall, and more importantly, it is more fun to bid than to pass! Remember, though, always use **common sense** when bidding!

NOTE – Quick Tricks (QTs) are tricks one can reasonably expect to win whether you are playing the hand or defending. When counting Quick Tricks in a suit: AK = 2 QTs, AQ = 1 ½ QTs, A = 1 QT, KQ = 1 QT, Kx = ½ QT, K = -1 QT.

EXAMPLES –

1	♠ A Q 10 9 6 3 ♥ K J 10 8 5 ♦ 6 ♣ 8;	10 HCP, 11 LP, 2 QT = 22 OPEN
2	♠ K 5 ♥ A J 10 9 7 ♦ 9 3 ♣ K 7 4 3;	11 HCP, 9 LP, 2 QT = 22 OPEN
3	♠ K J 4 2 ♥ K J ♦ Q 7 3 2 ♣ Q 8 2;	12 HCP, 8 LP, 1 QT = 21 PASS
4	♠ 10 8 6 4 2 ♥ 10 7 4 3 2 ♦ A Q ♣ A;	10 HCP, 10 LP, 2 QT = 22 ???

PRACTICE/QUESTIONS -

- 1 ♠ A K 9 4 ♥ K Q ♦ 10 9 3 ♣ 8 7 6 5
- 2 ♠ K Q 5 4 ♥ A 9 7 4 ♦ 8 ♣ K 10 9 7
- 3 ♠ K Q 5 4 ♥ A 9 7 ♦ 8 7 4 ♣ Q 10 9
- 4 ♠ A Q J 9 7 3 ♥ - ♦ 8 5 2 ♣ K 8 5 3
- 5 ♠ 10 9 ♥ Q 8 7 ♦ A K Q 8 6 4 2 ♣ 10
- 6 ♠ A Q 10 6 5 ♥ A J 7 5 4 ♦ 10 8 ♣ 6
- 7 ♠ K Q 10 4 3 ♥ J 8 ♦ 7 6 ♣ K Q 8 3
- 8 ♠ A 9 8 7 6 3 ♥ 10 ♦ 6 ♣ A J 10 9 7

REFERENCES –

To Open Or Not To Open - Featuring the rule of 20 by Marty Bergen

When To Bid, When To Pass by Ron Klinger

Answers

	HCP	LP	QT	TOTAL	ACTION
1	12	+ 8	+ 3	= 23	Open
2	12	+ 8	+ 2 ½	= 22 ½	Open
3	11	+ 7	+ 2	= 21	Pass
4	10	+ 10	+ 2	= 22	Open
5	11	+ 10	+ 2!	= 23	Open
6	11	+ 10	+ 2 ½	= 23 ½	Open
7	11	+ 9	+ 2	= 22	Open
8	9	+ 11	+ 2	= 22	Open

Additional thoughts: The Rule of 22 is a good guideline, as it gives an alternate way to identify an opening hand, but it can be fine-tuned. There are additional factors, which need to be considered when making the decision to open such as:

- Vulnerability (be more aggressive when not vulnerable)
- Points in long suits are better (♠AQ1085, ♥A10975, ♦43, ♣2 is much better than ♠108543, ♥109752, ♦AQ, ♣A)
- Short honors holdings should be discounted a bit (such as singleton K or doubleton queens or jacks)
- Spot cards (especially 10's and 9's) are better than 2's and 3's
- Suits that contain broken honors such as AJ10 or AQ10 are worth more than their point count, if accompanied by length