

Simple competitive bidding

My partnership has some very simple rules for competitive bidding:

- Aggressive overcalls at the 1-level, sounder at the 2-level.
- New suit is forcing over a 1-level and a 2-level overcall.
- A cue bid after an overcall shows support, e.g., (1♥) – 1♠ – (Pass) – 2♥ shows a good raise to 2♠ or higher.
- All raises are pre-emptive. Stronger raises must cue bid first.
- Fit jumps after an overcall and in competition:
 - (1♣) 1♥ (P) 2♠ - I expect to see 5+ spades, 4+ hearts and values for at least 3♥.
 - 1♦ (1♥) 2♠ - I expect to see 5+ spades, 5+ diamonds and values for at least 3♦.
- Weak jump overcalls (strength and suit quality depend on vulnerability).
- A direct cue bid is a Michaels Cue Bid: over a minor it shows 5-5 in the majors; over a major it shows five cards in the other major and an undisclosed minor.
 - It promises a fair 11+ points when vulnerable, with points concentrated in the two suits.
 - It can be very weak when non-vulnerable.
 - It can be a lot stronger, in which case the hand will bid again.
- A 1NT overcall shows 15-17 HCP (same in the balancing position, and in the fourth seat when the opponents have both bid and partner has passed eg (1♣) P (1♠) 1NT).
- A 2NT jump overcall is an unusual notrump: it shows 5-5 in the two lowest unbid suits.
- Doubles are always takeout at low levels.
- Minor suit raises are natural, not inverted, in competition (including after a takeout double).