

**"A Very Brief Note on Rhoda Walsh's  
'Rule of 7-9-11' for Making Overcall Bids  
Showing a 2-Suited Hand:  
Overcalls Such as 'Unusual 2NT',  
'Michaels Cuebid', 'DONT', and 'Cappelletti'"**

**Esther Klinktoast-Houstonhousen<sup>1</sup>**

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**Bruce:** Today, we are honored to have with us Esther Klinktoast-Houstonhousen, Quintuple Gold Emerald Life Master (20 Million+ ACBL MasterPoints), who will discuss **"A Very Brief Note on Rhoda Walsh's 'Rule of 7-9-11' for Making Overcall Bids Showing a 2-Suited Hand: Overcalls Such as 'Unusual 2NT', 'Michaels Cuebid', 'DONT', and 'Cappelletti'"**. Well, Esther, thank you for talking to us today!

**Esther:** D\*\*n it, Bruce! How many times do I have to tell you to **NEVER, ever** call me Esther! Always, **ALWAYS, ALWAYS** instead call me, Ms. Klinktoast-Houstonhousen!

**Bruce:** Errr, well, Est... err, I mean Ms. Klinktoast-Houstonhousen, sorry about that. Well, at the start would you tell us a little bit about who this **Rhoda Walsh** person is?

**Esther:** Well, Bruce, I will certainly try to help you. Rhoda Walsh (1933 -) is an American bridge player who resides in Los Angeles. She is an attorney. She has won **12** North American Bridge Championships and was Runner-up in **6** North

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<sup>1</sup> As noted in an article in the Winter/Spring, 2024 article in The American Bridge Teachers' Association (ABTA) Journal, [https://esther-bridge.com/pdf/ABTA\\_1\\_24.pdf](https://esther-bridge.com/pdf/ABTA_1_24.pdf), Esther Klinktoast-Houstonhousen in fact is a hypothetical, and not a real person! So this article was really, really written by Bruce Thompson.

American Bridge Championships. She is inactive in curating her "Rhoda's Rules" bridge website:

<https://rhodasrules.com>

However, her website is still online and includes numerous "Rhoda's Rules" as well as numerous "Bridge Stories".

Today's "Esther Bridge Dialogue Lesson" summarizes Rhoda's "Rule #18".

<https://rhodasrules.com/rules-16-30>

**Bruce:** Errr, well... Err, I mean... Ms. Klinktoast-Houstonhousen, ummm... Would you remind us what you mean by Bridge Conventions that "show" Partner your 2-Suited Hand?

**Esther:** Well, Bruce, there are a wide variety of "artificial" bids that show Partner that your Hand is 2-Suited with both your "long" Suits having good "Suit Quality". Examples are:

1. "Unusual 2NT":  
[https://esther-bridge.com/pdf/unus\\_2NT.pdf](https://esther-bridge.com/pdf/unus_2NT.pdf),
2. "Michaels Cuebid":  
[https://esther-bridge.com/pdf/5\\_cuebids.pdf](https://esther-bridge.com/pdf/5_cuebids.pdf),
3. "DONT": <https://esther-bridge.com/pdf/dont.pdf>, and
4. "Cappelletti":  
<https://esther-bridge.com/pdf/cappellet.pdf>

**Bruce:** Errr, well... Err, I mean... Ms. Klinktoast-Houstonhousen, obviously the interested reader can consult the "Esther Bridge Convention Lessons" to learn more about these conventions work.

**Esther:** Well, Bruce, sure. But I will say that each of these Overall bids are "artificial" and therefore must be "Alerted!" and "show" a Hand that is 2-Suited.

**Bruce:** Errr, well Ms. Klinktoast-Houstonhousen, why are the various bids that "show" you are holding a 2-Suited Hand so important?

**Esther:** Well, Bruce, because when you hold a 2-Suited Hand the probability of finding an 8+ card "fit" with Partner go up *massively*. If your 2 "long" suits are 4-4 the probability

of an 8-card "fit" is **60%**, 5-3 **66%**, 5-4 **74%**, and 5-5 a whopping **84%**!<sup>2</sup>

**Bruce:** Errr, well... Err, I mean... Ms. Klinktoast-Houstonhousen, what then is Rhoda's "**Rule of 7, 9, 11**"?

**Esther:** Well, Bruce, I will try to help you. Rhoda's "**Rule of 7, 9, 11**" is a *general* guideline regarding how many HCPs you should hold to make any of these "artificial" bids, as follows:

1. If you are not Vulnerable and Opponents are Vulnerable you need **7+** HCPs concentrated in your **2** "long" Suits to make any of these "artificial" Overcall bids.
2. If you and Opponents are either both Vulnerable or both not Vulnerable you need **9+** HCPs concentrated in your **2** "long" Suits to make any of these "artificial" Overcall bids.
3. If you are Vulnerable and Opponents are not Vulnerable you need **11+** HCPs concentrated in your **2** "long" Suits to make any of these "artificial" Overcall bids.

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<sup>2</sup> Within the "Esther Bridge Lessons" see: "**A Comprehensive List of 8 Different Categories of Bridge Probabilities, and How These May Help Guide Your Bidding and Play**": [https://esther-bridge.com/pdf/8\\_probs.pdf](https://esther-bridge.com/pdf/8_probs.pdf)