THE OPENING BID - BALANCED HANDS

First

Look at the shape of the hand - i.e. count the lengths of the suits.

If the shape is 4-3-3-3; 4-4-3-2; or 5-3-3-2 then the hand is balanced. (*)
(Note that a balanced hand will not have 5-4 shape, a 6-card suit, a singleton, or a void.)
(With a good five-card major in a 5-3-3-2 shape, and 12 to 14 points, some partnerships will agree to treat it as unbalanced.)*

Secondly

You will open balanced hands according to the point-count.

With

12 to 14 points	open 1NT;
15 to 19 points	open one of a suit and rebid in no trumps;
20 to 22 points	open 2NT;
23 or more points	open 2♣ (artificial and strong) and rebid in no trumps.

And then what?

With 15 to 19 points you open one of a suit.

Which suit?

If you have a five-card suit open one of that suit;
if you have just one four-card suit open one of that suit;
if you have a four-card major and a four-card minor open the major;
if you have four hearts and four spades open 1♥;
if you have four clubs and four diamonds open the better suit.

Unless you locate an eight-card fit in hearts or spades in the first two bids you will rebid in no trumps.

Partner changes suit at the one-level

(Note that these ranges are the standard in modern Acol. Many club players use a slightly different scale as taught a few years ago.)

With 15 to 17 points

rebid 1NT.

With 18 or 19 points

rebid 2NT.

With a good hand and a six-card minor suit

rebid 3NT.

Partner responds 1NT

(a limited response promising 6 (5) to 9 points, and denying a suit which can be bid at the one-level)

With 15 or 16 points - pass.

With 17 or 18 points - bid 2NT

With 19 points - bid 3NT.

Partner changes suit at the two-level

Bid 2NT in all cases - game-forcing (15 + 10 is enough to bid a game).