

What the Multi 2D usually means

An opening 2D shows one of 3 types of hand:

1. A weak 2 in either Hearts or Spades i.e. 5/6-9 points and a 6 card suit.
2. A strong 2 (8 playing tricks) in either Clubs or Diamonds.
3. A strong balanced hand (19/20 or 21/22 points according to partnership agreement).

Hint: when an opening 2D is Alerted (it shouldn't be Announced as it is a conventional bid) you are entitled to ask what is the meaning of the bid. **Don't** be fobbed off with the one word answer "Multi". You have the right to probe further by asking "could you explain what that means?". It is always tempting to ask about a bid even if you have no intention of bidding which is wrong, wait until the end of the auction before you make a lead or after partner leads and dummy is tabled. Alternatively ask to see the opponents' Convention Card which should have a full explanation of the Multi. If they cannot produce a Convention Card that is a cardinal sin! They could be asked by the Director to revert to playing a Simple System.

If the opponents play Multi 2D what do other bids at the 2 level mean?

2C - the standard Game Forcing hand or a 23+ point balanced hand preparing to rebid NT.

2H/S - a strong bid (8 playing tricks) in the bid suit

2NT - a strong balanced hand (either 19/20 or 21/22 whichever complements the 2D bid).

The 2C bid should be Alerted and the H, S and NT bids should be Announced.

How should I defend against the Multi 2D?

Remember that you will have two chances to show your hand as the partner of the 2D* bidder is required to bid a "waiting" 2H which indicates that he/she has little interest in proceeding further. If the 2D bidder holds a weak 2 in Hearts they will pass or if the suit is Spades they will correct to 2S.

Keep your defence to the Multi fairly simple. With a reasonably balanced 12-15 (or 18+) HCP double for take out to alert your partner that the balance of points might lie with you but bear in mind that the opposition has a long suit and points don't always bring in higher level contracts. If you have a long (6 card) minor and not much in the majors bid it immediately. As you are not sure which Major suit the 2D opener holds think carefully before wading in with a 2H/S overcall on a poor 5 card suit. Remember about "two chances to bid" and if partner keeps quiet after the 2D X 2H relay a further double by you is more useful as a request for partner to bid and is unlikely to be for penalties. If you are in 4th position after a 2D* P 2H relay you can still double to show a hand interested in competing.

If you have a big balanced hand with at least 19 HCP and stops in both majors bid 2NT directly. Partner should consider treating this like an opening 2NT and play the system you would normally use when partner opens 2NT i.e. Stayman and transfers.

Finally - if you are holding a hand that you would have bid the Unusual 2 No Trump showing at least 5-5 in the minors you can play a waiting game after the sequence 2D* P 2H P 2S P P 2NT* ,

or 2D* P 2H P P 2NT*. Partner will alert the bid as you have failed to make a take out double when it was your turn to bid and therefore you must hold a minor suited hand.

After a 2D opener most partners of the hand that has opened will just bid a 2H relay. However, there are two other possible bids;

2S - which will be Alerted and tells partner that if his/her suit is Hearts you are prepared to bid up to 3H. If partner has bid the Multi 2D holding Spades he can then pass. If the partner of the Multi 2D opener bids a direct **3H** (which should be alerted) it indicates that they are prepared to play at the 3 level in Spades. Again the opener will pass or "correct" to 3S.

2NT - forcing for 1 round and asking partner to describe their hand further. There are various methods for describing the weak 2 version. If partner has opened the Multi with one of the strong versions the partnership must be in the slam zone.

Other non-standard opening 2 bids

Lucas twos - an opening 2H/S shows 5+ cards in that suit 5-9 (6-10) HCP with at least 4 cards in an unspecified minor. A bid of 2NT by responder asks the opener to bid the minor suit held.

In defence treat the opening bid as if it is a one level bid and double for take out. It is advisable to hold 4 cards in the unbid major or at least 3 cards to an honour.

Two No Trumps - unlikely to occur in Club Bridge but there are pairs who open 2NT to show at least 5-5 in the minors and around 5-9 HCP NV and 8-11 HCP Vul. If you are defending bid **3C** to show a hand that you would have made a **strong** take out double and **3D** to show a **weak** take out double. You might ask why not make a take out double as opposed to the above two bids? Your aim should always be to disrupt the opponents as well as telling partner that you want to contest the auction.