

Defense Against Weak 2 Bids

When the person on your right makes a Weak 2 Bid

A bid shows good values.

1. A minimum overcall shows a good suit of 5 cards or longer and a good hand. A general rule is to have 6 tricks in your hand at the 2 level or 7 tricks at the 3 level. (An ace is a trick, a KQ is a trick, a K is half a trick, the 4th or longer card in a suit is a trick.) (Probably an opening bid that is not all queens and jacks)
2. A jump overcall shows a better hand (A good suit and 8 tricks) This should be a very good suit with at least 14 HCP
3. With a 9 trick count hand, double first and then bid your suit. (17 or more HCP)
4. A takeout double shows a sound opening bid and support (at least 3 card) support for the other 3 suits.
5. A bid of 2NT shows the values of a 1NT overcall (15 to 18 HCP and a stopper in the weak 2 suit). Responses (Stayman and transfers) are the same as they would be to a 1NT overcall.
6. A direct cue bid of the opponents suit (eg. 2H 3H) could be one of the following:
 - a. A Western Cuebid: It asks partner to bid 3NT with a stopper in opponent's suit. If partner doesn't have a stopper, he bids 4C and the cue bidder can correct to his suit. The cue bidder usually has a long running suit and 7 or more tricks in his hand
 - b. A Michaels Cuebid: Over 2H, this would show 5 cards or more in spades and a minor. This would have to be a strong Michaels as partner may have to bid at the 4 level.

In the balancing seat (say 2H – pass – pass - ?) the requirements for bidding are less. You can make a takeout double with support for the unbid suits and 10 or more points. A bid of a suit still should show a good suit but might be a bit weaker. A jump bid in a suit shows a good suit and a good hand. A bid of 2NT is the same as in the direct seat.

Your RHO opens 2H, what do you bid with the following:

- | | | | |
|--------------|-----------|------------|--------------|
| 1. S K 9 | 2. S A 8 | 3. S A 8 6 | 4. S A 8 6 4 |
| H 7 4 | H K J 7 | H 4 2 | H J 3 |
| D A J 10 6 3 | D Q J 8 4 | D K Q 8 6 | D K 8 6 |
| C K Q J 8 | C K Q 6 4 | C K Q 6 4 | C Q 10 9 7 |

If partner makes a overcall:

1. Raise to 3 or 4 with the appropriate values and 3 card or more support. If you have 3 card support (especially in a major), do not bid your suit if it is 5 cards or less.
2. A new suit is constructive but is not forcing. Partner may pass.
3. The only forcing bid is a cue bid of the opponent's suit (game force)

If partner makes a takeout double: (2H – X – pass - ?)

We all know the responses to a takeout double at the one level (1H – X – pass - ?)

1. A minimum bid (1S, 2C, or 2D) shows 0 to a bad 8 HCP
2. A jump bid (2S, 3C, or 3D) shows a good 8 to a bad 12 HCP (invitational)
3. A cue bid shows a good 12 HCP or better.

Responding to a double of a weak 2 bid, we also want to distinguish between a weak hand, an intermediate hand, and a strong hand. This can be done in standard bidding similar to responding to a takeout double at the 1 level. A minimum bid would show less than 8 HCP; a jump bid would show 8 – 12 HCP; and a cue bid would show an opening hand. This will work in many hands, but there is a danger that the jump bid will get too high. (2H – X – pass – 4D If the doubler has a minimum and only 3 diamonds, you could be too high) However, it is better to jump than to make a minimum bid with 9 or 10 points.

A better system of responses is the Lebensohl convention:

Over 2H – X – pass:

1. With a minimum hand (7 or less HCP) responder bids at the 2 level if possible (2S). Otherwise he bids 2NT (Lebensohl) which requires opener to bid 3C. Responder will then pass or bid 3D if his suit is a minor.
2. If responder bids 3C or 3D it shows an invitational hand (8 to 11 HCP)
3. If responder bids 2NT and then bids a suit that he could have bid at the 2 level (3S), it is invitational but not strong enough to force to game.
4. A jump response (3S, 4C, or 4D) shows a strong hand with at least an opening hand.
5. Responder can also pass for penalties or bid NT with the appropriate hand.

Your LHO opens 2H, partner doubles and RHO passes, what is your bid with the following using standard bidding and using the Lebensohl convention?

- | | | | |
|-----------------|-----------------|-------------|-------------------|
| a. S K J 10 6 4 | b. S K J 10 6 4 | c. S J 10 4 | d. S A J 10 9 7 5 |
| H 5 3 | H 5 3 | H Q 6 3 | H 4 |
| D J 8 6 4 | D K Q 6 4 | D J 8 7 4 2 | D K 8 |
| C J 10 | C J 19 | C 10 8 | C A 10 7 2 |

Answers:

RHO opens 2H, what do you bid?

1. Bid 3D. You have enough tricks (7 ½) or points (14) to bid at the 3 level. You haven't enough spades to make a takeout double.
2. Bid 2NT. 16 HCP with a stopper in hearts. This indicates the same as a 1NT overcall
3. Double. 14 HCP and at least 3 cards in the unbid suits. You don't need 4 spades to make this bid.
4. Pass. Not strong enough to make a double directly. You could double if the bidding has gone 2H – pass – pass.

The bidding has gone 2H – double – pass, what do you bid using standard bidding and the Lebensohl convention?

- a. Bid 2S in both. A minimum hand.
- b. Bid 3S using standard bidding. Using Lebensohl, bid 2NT and then bid 3S after partner bids 3C. An invitational hand.
- c. Bid 3D using standard bidding. Using Lebensohl, bid 2NT and then bid 3D over partner's 3C bid. A very minimum hand the type we get all the time.
- d. Bid 3H (cue bid) then bid spades next using standard bidding. A jump to 4S would probably work here also. Using Lebensohl, bid 3S. This is a game forcing hand. Note if the hand has slam possibilities, you can start exploring as a lower level using Lebensohl.