

Response to weak 2 bids

Weak Twos are opening bids that show 5-10 [high card points](#) and six cards in the bid suit. Ideally, opener has concentrated strength in his six-card suit and nothing in the other suits. The classic weak two bid looks something like this:

♠AQJTxx
 ♥x
 ♦xxx
 ♣xxx

By opening 2♠ you make it harder for the opponents to find a fit in one of the other suits. See also the [Rule of 2, 3 and 4](#), which is a guideline for determining when to open a weak two.

A weak two bid usually does not contain a side four-card major, although this is up to partnership agreement. The reason it is dangerous to preempt with a side four-card major is because the partnership may miss a good fit in that major, perhaps even a game contract, while they may have no fit in the weak two suit and may languish there.

Also, while the [SAYC](#) bidding system espouses 5-11 [HCP](#) as the range for a weak two, this technically conflicts with the [Rule of 20](#). If you have 11 points and a 6-card suit, then you must have a 3-card side suit (or longer). Add that up and you get 20 points. So it's worth deciding if you and your partner want to open 11-pointers as a weak two.

Responses to a Weak Two

Response Meaning

A simple raise Named "[Raise Only Non Forcing](#)", this shows 3 or 4-card support and approximately 6-13 points (insufficient values for a game contract). It is preemptive and completely non-forcing.

A jump raise Usually shows a weak, preemptive hand (with at least 4-card support). It is also common to make a 4♥/♠ jump raise with 5-card support regardless of strength. However, a major suit jump raise may also be made by a strong hand that believes the game contract will succeed.

A new suit Natural and forcing for one round, typically showing at least a 5-card suit and denying support for partner's suit. However, this is up to partnership agreement; some pairs prefer to play a new suit as a non-force.

2NT Strong, artificial forcing bid. It is most frequently used when responder has 3+ card support. Opener is asked to show a feature in a side suit, i.e. an ace or king, by bidding that suit at the three level. Examples:

2♥ : 2NT

3♣

3♣ shows the ace or king of clubs.

2NT

2♠ : 2NT

3♠ shows a minimum hand with no side suit features.

See also [Ogust](#), a convention with more detailed responses to 2NT.

In competition, the artificial 2NT response and rebids are on.

Example Responses

♠AJ3	Pass	West
	2♦ ¹	North
	Pass	East
♥52	Pass	You
	3♦ ²	

- ♦T942 ¹ Weak.
² An obstructive raise. Non-forcing.

♣K542

		West
♠AKJ	Pass	North
	2♠ ¹	East
	Pass	You
♥AT3	2NT ²	

- ♦K9652 ¹ Weak.
² Artificial and forcing. With game-invitational values, South plans to rebid 4♠ unless partner shows a minimum hand via a 3♠ bid.

♣42

		West
♠AKJ2	Pass	North
	2♥ ¹	East
	Pass	You
♥KQJ5	4♥ ²	

- ♦6 ¹ Weak.
² A strong raise to game. However, this bid can also be preemptive with a *weak* hand and 4+ card support.

♣K743

Responding to a weak two bid. If you don't have at least **2** card support, you should pass unless you have 16+ HCP. The general system of **responding** is called RONF -- Raise (is the) Only Non-Forcing (Bid). If you **bid** any new suit, you are showing 5+ cards and asking responder to raise with 3 card support.

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Lesson 7 -- Weak Two Bids and Responses

A **Weak Two Bid** is a bid of **2D, 2H or 2S** that shows **6-10 HCP** and **exactly 6 cards in the bid suit**. Not 5 or 7, but exactly 6. The bid is said to be **pre-emptive**. That is, it should pre-empt most of the bidding space away from the opponents. However, the bid is also meant to show your partner that you have some points and a good suit.

To that end, your weak two bids should be disciplined. You only make them with 6-10 HCP and a six card suit. But beyond that, your suit should be fairly good: At least two of the top three honors (A,K,Q) and three of the top five (A,K,Q,J,T). In addition, you shouldn't have a four card major or a good 3 card major.

What if I have a 6 card suit with 11-12 HCP?

Pass, probably, unless your points are very bad. You are just between a one and a two bid. Rather than compromise your opening bid, just wait and overcall with your suit.

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If you bid **2NT** You are asking the opener to show a feature (an outside stopper, either an Ace or a guarded King). Usually, you'll need this to know if you can bid 3NT. If opener doesn't have a stopper, he rebids his suit.

If you have a fit, then you can bid 2NT to look for key cards for a game if you have an invitational hand (16-18 HCP, counting distribution). If you have enough points to bid game (19+) then you can just bid 4 of the suit.

If, however, you have few points but quite a few trump support, then you should raise the bid. The more trumps, the higher you should raise it. This depends on your vulnerability, but the guidelines are something like:

- With 6-9 points and 3 trump: bid 3,
- With 6-9 points and 4 trump: bid 4,
- with 6-9 points and 5 trump: bid at least 4, maybe 5.

Since we play **RONF** a corollary is that **Any raise by responder is a signoff bid, and opener should not bid again**. The reason for this is that the opening bid is **limited**. Responder may have a real raise, may be trying to confuse the opponents, or whatever. Opener has described his hand, if responder doesn't ask, he stays quiet.

Wait, I noticed something...

If my partner opens 2 of a major, and I bid four of a major, I might be pre-empting, with very few points and a long suit, or I might have a stack of points (possibly 20 or more). How does partner tell what I have?

A: He doesn't. He passes either way. A nice side benefit is that the opponent's might not be sure if you are stealing the hand from them or if the hand really does belong to you. And when opponents make mistakes at the 4 level or higher, you tend to get a lot of points.

SUMMARY

2D, 2H, or 2S shows 6-10 HCP with a 6 card suit, no 4 card hidden major, and good suit quality.

- 2D, 2H, 2S -

- 2H, 2S (/2D, 2H): 16+ HCP, 5+ Card suit, asking for 3 card support. Forcing.
- 2NT: Forcing, either 16+ HCP or 13+ HCP with support.
 - 3C: Club stopper.
 - 3D: Diamond stopper.
 - 3H (after 2S opening): Heart stopper.
 - 3S (after 2H opening): Spade stopper.
 - 3M (same as opening): no outside stoppers.
- 3C, 3D: 16+ HCP, 5+ Card suit, asking for 3 card support. Forcing.
- 3H(/2S): 16+ HCP, 5+ Card suit, asking for 3 card support. Forcing.
- 3M: 6-9 HCP, 3 trumps. Signoff.
- 3N: 16+ HCP. All other suits stopped. Signoff. (Note, this bid will not be easy to make if partner has no outside stopper to provide an entry for you).
- 4M: Either 6-9 HCP with 4+ Trumps or 16+ HCP with 2+ Trumps. Signoff.
- 5M: 6-9 HCP with 5+ Trumps. Signoff.
- 6M: Lots of trumps, either lots of points or very preemptive. Signoff.

Final Notes

I have taught disciplined weak twos. They are far from the only way to play weak twos. Weak twos on 5 card suits (or even four card suits) are not unheard of in tournament play, and the point range is somewhat variable.

Your Options

Overview

Your partner has 6-10 TP along with an adequate six card suit. What you bid depends on how well your hand supports your partner's suit. As responder you will have either, a weak hand with less than 9 points, a medium hand with 10-13 points, or a strong hand with 14+ points.

Responding to your Partners Weak 2 Bid

Unless you have an independent suit that can play opposite a singleton without a problem.

1. With a singleton in partner's suit and no strong suit of your own, say nothing unless you have 16+ HCP.
2. With a doubleton in partner's suit, you will need 15 HCP to keep the bidding going and if you have an honor (Ax, Kx, Qx) in your doubleton of partner's suit, and a good hand in other suits 14 HCP is enough.
3. With three or four card support for partner usually you should raise partner to the three or four level.

NB: If you and your partner have a 9 card fit or longer your opposition will of necessity have a 8 card or longer fit in another suit.... but luckily with preemptive bidding..... you and your partner have found your fit first!

and bid 5NT without a side suit king.