



Bidding Basics

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Opener's rebid after opening 2♣

In this installment, we look at the auction where partner has responded to our strong 2♣ opening. We are assuming that our partnership is using the mainstream method whereby a 2♦ response is “waiting.” Responses of 2♥, 2♠, 3♣ or 3♦ are natural with a good five-card or longer suit and at least 8 high-card points. (If your partnership uses 2♥ as a bust response or the less-popular method of steps/controls, this article won't all be relevant.)

Most of the time, the response to 2♣ will be 2♦. What are opener's follow-ups?

After 2♣-2♦

2♥. This shows five or more hearts and is forcing one round but not to game. Rebid 2♥ with these:

♠A Q J ♥A 10 6 5 4 ♦A K J 2 ♣A
♠A 2 ♥A Q 10 7 6 5 2 ♦A K Q 2 ♣—

► Ask Jerry *continued*

hand responder will most often hold. In my opinion, in terms of gain versus loss, getting to a good slam should carry a higher priority than trifling with the opponents, so if forced to pick, I would have a slight preference for SJS at the two level. In most cases, if these are the only two choices, I am happy to play whatever partner wants to play because neither comes up very frequently. ■

There is no need for the opener to jump. It would only serve to preempt your own auction. In fact, a jump should have a very special meaning, not worth memorizing or discussing unless you are playing for a national championship.

2♠. This shows five or more spades and is forcing one round but not to game. Rebid 2♠ with these:

♠A K 7 6 5 ♥A K Q 3 2 ♦A 3 2 ♣—

Note that opener shows the higher-ranking suit first with 5-5 shape.

♠A K J 9 5 3 ♥A K Q ♦3 2 ♣A 2

Again, opener should never jump in his suit.

Note: After 2♣-2♦; 2♥ or 2♠, it is important to know that responder can't pass. Responder can raise to three of the major (which is forcing with slam interest) or jump to four of the major to sign off (weak). Either of those raises by responder promises at least three-card support. Responder can also bid 2NT (natural and forcing) or his own new suit (five or more cards, forcing). With a really terrible hand, responder can bid 3♣, the so-called “second negative,” an artificial bid to warn opener that there might not be a game.

2NT. This shows 22-24 HCP, balanced. This is not forcing. Responder can pass with a really awful hand. If responder does bid again after 2NT, he can use Stayman or transfers.

3♣/3♦. Like 2♥ and 2♠, these bids are natural and forcing one round. Responder can bid the cheapest suit with a second negative. Anything else responder bids would force the partnership to game.

3♥/3♠/4♣/4♦. Don't make such a bid. There is no need to jump.

3NT. This shows 25-27 HCP, balanced. Stayman and transfers apply.

After responses other than 2♦

I don't recommend responding in notrump (it clogs the auction and usually wrong-sides the contract). Just pretend that 2♣-2NT or 2♣-3NT is a non-existent auction. If responder does have a decent notrump hand, he should just wait with 2♦ and catch up later.

What if responder bids a suit (2♥, 2♠, 3♣ or 3♦)? That shows at least a decent suit, usually two of the top three honors, and at least 8 HCP. Such a response is obviously game-forcing.

After those natural responses, opener bids naturally. He can bid 2NT (22-plus balanced), raise responder (showing three-card or longer support) or bid his own suit (promising at least five cards).

Bidding Basics Quiz ►

BIDDING BASICS QUIZ

What is opener's rebid with each of the following after the auction begins 2♣-2♦?

1. ♠A 7 6 5 2 ♥A ♦AK 7 6 5 ♣AQ
2. ♠AQJ 10 ♥AQJ 10 ♦AK 2 ♣J 2
3. ♠AKQJ 10 8 2 ♥AKQ 2 ♦K 2 ♣—
4. ♠KQ 10 ♥KQ 2 ♦AKQ 3 2 ♣AQ
5. ♠A 7 6 2 ♥A ♦AKQ 2 ♣AQ 7 6
6. What is opener's rebid after 2♣-2♥ with:
♠J 5 4 ♥AQ 6 5 ♦AKQ 3 ♣AK
7. What is opener's rebid after 2♣-2♠ with:
♠7 6 ♥AKQJ ♦AKQ ♣AKJ 2
8. What is opener's rebid after 2♣-3♦ with:
♠AQ ♥AQ ♦KQ 2 ♣KQJ 10 9 2

Answers

1. 2♠. With 5-5, start with the higher-ranking (not the better) suit.
2. 2NT. 22-24 balanced. This doesn't promise a stopper in all four suits.
3. 2♠. Don't jump and preempt your own auction. If partner passes, look for the partnership desk.
4. 3NT. 25-27 balanced. 3♦ is also possible.
5. 2NT. 22-24 "balanced." Not perfect, but the least of evils. I wouldn't do this with a low singleton.
6. 3♥. Support with support and go from there. Hopefully partner can control-bid 3♠.
7. 2NT. Balanced, forcing. No need to preempt your auction by jumping to 3NT. Leave room.
8. 4NT. Blackwood (possibly key card if your partnership employs it). You will bid 6NT or 7NT opposite one or two aces, respectively.