

PREEMPTIVE BIDDING

WEAK TWO BIDS Responder's Options

Bridge Lab

with the Monroes

WHY PREEMPT?

- Good results often come from obstructing the opponents' bidding by taking away space on the bidding ladder.
- Describes a weak distributional hand to help partner reach the best contract and avoid poor contracts.
- Opener's tricks are conditional on the preempt suit being trump.
 - Tricks may be of little use on defense or in NT contracts.

OPENER'S WEAK TWO General Guidelines

- ☑ Less than Opening Hand (5-10 HCP). **No 4th Seat weak opening preempts.**
- ☑ "Decent" 6-card suit - ♦♥♠ (not ♣) - with about 5 or 6 "playing tricks" and middle touching cards.
- ☑ After the preempt, **DON'T BID AGAIN** unless responder makes a **forcing** bid.

Responder is the CAPTAIN – PASS•RAISE•FORCE

- ☑ **NON-FORCING.** Raising opener's suit is responder's only **non-forcing** bid.
- ☑ **FORCING.** Responder's new suit or 2NT are **forcing** bids.

RESPONDER'S NON-FORCING OPTION • RAISE OPENER'S SUIT

1st Priority COUNT TRICKS	With 2-3 card fit in the preempt Major suit and enough combined tricks BID GAME. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opener has about 5-6 tricks, Responder needs 4+ tricks. Responding to a 2♦ opening bid, game is most likely in a major suit fit or NT.
2nd Priority COUNT TRUMP LOTT	Without enough combined tricks, raise to the level of the combined number of cards in the trump suit (Law of Total Tricks). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opener has shown 6 cards in the suit. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Pass with 0-2 card support. The 2-level is high enough. ○ Raise to the 3-level with 3-card support ○ Raise to the 4-level with 4-card support.

DON'T PREEMPT OVER A PREEMPT!

Good advice for the Responder and the Opponents

MORE

THREE Level Opening Bid = 7-card suit, about 4-9 HCP

FOUR Level Opening Bid = 8-card suit, about 4-9 HCP

JUMP OVERCALL is preemptive (weak), similar to an opening preempt. **AGREEMENT**

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RESPONDER'S FORCING BIDS [Rare]

2NT GAME TRY Asks Opener for Strength Range	<p>Only used by responder to inquire about the strength range of opener's hand, most frequently used as a game try in opener's suit. Avoid thoughts of 3NT!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">☑ A hand interested in game with 2-3 cards in opener's suit.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ If opener has a minimum (5-7), responder plans to stop in partscore 3-level of opener's suit.○ If opener has a maximum (8-10), responder is on his way to game in opener's major.• Opener has 8-10 points (maximum): Opener makes a useful rebid to show the strength. Opener does not rebid the preempt suit with a maximum hand! BY AGREEMENT FEATURE Rebids by Opener with a maximum (8-10) hand:<ul style="list-style-type: none">(1) bid a new suit to show an Ace or King in that suit. With no other option, reluctantly show an outside Queen.(2) bid 3NT with a solid suit – AKQxxx or AKJxxx - and no feature.• Opener has 5-7 points (minimum): Only options is to rebid the preempt suit. This is the weakest rebid by Opener.
NEW SUIT FORCING!	<p>A new suit by Responder is FORCING! Responder is proposing an alternate suit as trump and is asking for support for the new suit regardless of opener's strength.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• YES. Opener raises the new suit with 3-card support.• NO. Opener rebids the preempt suit without support. <p>NOTE: Experienced partnerships may agree that a new suit by responder is non-forcing and adopt alternate forcing options. This AGREEMENT is non-standard and requires ALERTS!</p>

Should Responder Bid 2NT?

Without question, the most misunderstood response to a weak 2-bid is 2NT. Most players bid 2NT much too often. In reality, responder should bid 2NT only when he has:

- ☑ A blockbuster hand that is interested in slam [rare]; OR
- ☑ A hand where he is interested in game, but doesn't know if his side is strong enough.

Marty Bergen, *Mastering Weak 2-Bids*

Rule of 17

A mathematical formula to assist newer players in deciding whether responder has adequate fit and strength to bid 2NT as a game try based on the strength of opener's hand.


TRY for game only with at least 17 "Mel Points." You get one point for each HCP you have and one Mel Point for each card you have in partner's long suit.

How You Can Play Like an Expert, by Mel Colchamiro

Weak Two Bids

Responder Passes

Board 1
South Deals

♠ 4 3 2 ♥ A Q ♦ Q 10 7 3 ♣ Q 9 6 2		♠ A Q ♥ K 10 8 4 2 ♦ K 8 5 2 ♣ 10 7	
11 10 12 7	♠ K J 10 9 6 5 ♥ 7 6 5 ♦ 6 ♣ K 8 5		
West	North	East	South 2♠ ¹


All pass
1. 6-♠s, 5-10 Points, Good Suit

Contract: 2♠ South, 8 Tricks
Lead: ♦ 3, 4th highest, East plays ♦ K.
Losers: 2-♠, 3-♥, 1-♣ = 6.

Play: Declarer wins the ♦ A and leads a trump (a finesse). After pulling trump, South leads the ♣ 5 to finesse the ♣ Q.

Responder Hopes For Game

Board 2
South Deals

♠ Q 8 6 3 ♥ K 7 4 ♦ A 9 ♣ J 6 4 2		♠ A 7 5 ♥ A 6 ♦ K Q J 5 ♣ A 10 8 5	♠ K 10 9 4 2 ♥ 9 8 ♦ 6 4 3 ♣ Q 9 7
18 10 5 7	♠ J ♥ Q J 10 5 3 2 ♦ 10 8 7 2 ♣ K 3		
West	North	East	South 2♥


Pass 4♥¹ All pass
1. 4+ Tricks, Try ♥s not NT

Contract: 4♥ South, 10 Tricks
Lead: ♠ 3, 4th highest, East plays ♠ 10.
Losers: 1-♥, 1-♦ = 2.

Play: South wins the ♠ A, tries the trump finesse, draws trump, and loses the ♦ A. The ♥ K is the other loser.

Responder Raises Free mpt

Board 3
South Deals


♠ Q 8 7 3 2 ♥ 6 ♦ K 4 ♣ A 10 7 3 2		♠ A 5 ♥ A 7 3 2 ♦ Q J 9 8 3 ♣ Q 9 5	♠ A K 9 4 ♥ J 10 ♦ A 10 6 2 ♣ K J 6
9 9 16 6	♠ J 10 6 ♥ K Q 9 8 5 4 ♦ 7 5 ♣ 8 4		
West	North	East	South 2♥ ¹

Pass 4♥² All pass
1. Good 6-♥s, 5-10 Points
2. 4-♥s, LOTT

Contract: 4♥ South, 10 Tricks
Lead: ♠ 3, 4th highest, East plays ♠ K.
Losers: 3-♠, 2-♦, 2-♣ = 7.
Play: South draws trump and ruffs two ♠s in Dummy. Going down two is better than letting the opponents make slam.

Responder Has a Huge Hand

Board 4
North Deals

♠ K 6 3 ♥ J 9 ♦ Q J 7 6 ♣ K 10 3 2		♠ 4 ♥ 10 6 5 2 ♦ A K 10 9 4 2 ♣ 8 6	♠ 9 8 7 5 ♥ 8 3 ♦ 8 3 ♣ A J 9 5 4
7 10 5 18	♠ A Q J 10 2 ♥ A K Q 7 4 ♦ 5 ♣ Q 7		
West	North	East	South

Pass 2♦ Pass 2♠¹
Pass 3♦ Pass 3♥²
Pass 4♥ All pass
1. Forcing Bid, About 18+ Points
2. Second Good Suit

Contract: 4♥ South, 10 Tricks
Lead: ♣ 2, 4th highest, East plays ♣ A.
Losers: 1-♠, 2-♣ = 3.
Play: Promote ♦s or execute a ruffing finesse on the ♠ K for an overtrick.



Bidding Basics

BY LARRY COHEN  larryco.com

Responding to a weak two-bid

In this article, your partner opens with a weak two-bid – 2♦, 2♥ or 2♠ – showing a decent six-card suit and roughly 5–11 HCP. How do you proceed?

Responding to a weak two-bid is a fairly easy topic to master if you start by dividing it into two parts: Hands where you have interest in game or slam or hands where you don't.

1. You have interest in game or slam

This is likely to occur only about 10–15% of the time. Because your partner's hand is weak, you will need a pretty good hand to act. If you think you have enough for slam (very rare), you can just bid it, or maybe use Blackwood. If partner opens 2♥, and you hold:

♠A K ♥K Q 4 2 ♦2 ♣A K Q 8 7 6,

who could blame you for using Blackwood and placing the contract in 6♥ opposite one ace and 7♥ opposite two. Make the hand a bit weaker, and you might just settle for game, by jumping to 4♥ with something like:

♠Q 8 2 ♥K Q 3 ♦5 ♣A K Q 8 7 6.

Try to avoid jumping to 3NT unless you are sure that is where you want to play. Opposite partner's 2♠, you would venture 3NT with:

♠5 ♥K Q ♦A K Q J 10 7 6 5 ♣K Q.

If you bid a new suit, you are showing at least five cards and it is forcing for one round: Partner may not pass.

You also have the option of responding with 2NT. This doesn't mean you want to play in 2NT. It asks opener to describe further (more on this in a future article). To use this 2NT response, you would have to have game interest. A reasonable guideline to know if you have game interest is the "Rule of 17." Add your high-card points to the number of trumps you have in support of partner's suit. If it is less than 17, you probably don't have game interest.

2. You don't have interest in game or slam

This is by far the most common situation. Any time you don't meet the aforementioned Rule of 17, game is probably not in the cards. Does that mean you should pass? Usually, yes. However, if you have support for partner (at least three cards), you can make a pest out of yourself by furthering partner's preempt. Whether or not your RHO has acted, you should raise to the three level if you have three-card support and to the four level with four-card support. For example, raise partner's 2♦ to 3♦ with:

♠K 7 6 5 ♥6 5 ♦K J 2 ♣J 10 3 2.

Raise partner's 2♠ to 4♠ with:

♠Q J 9 8 ♥A 8 7 6 5 ♦3 ♣K J 2.

This strategy is based on the Law of Total Tricks, which suggests competing to the three level with a nine-card fit and to the four level with a 10-card fit. Some judgment is needed. If you

are vulnerable and/or very flat (like 4–3–3–3) and/or full of queens/jacks, use a little caution. For example, don't raise a vulnerable 2♥ opening to 4♥ with:

♠Q J 5 ♥9 8 7 6 ♦K J 8 ♣Q J 9.

Once you have raised partner preemptively, don't bid again (nor should your partner).

If you digested the above, you will note that you would raise 2♠ to 4♠ with either of these hands:

♠A Q 8 2 ♥10 ♦K J 9 5 4 ♣10 9 6
or

♠K Q ♥K Q 3 ♦A K Q 10 8 7 ♣3 2.

With the first hand, you are doing it as a preempt, and with the second, to make. How will your partner know? He won't, but doesn't need to. Your opponents will also be guessing. ➤

BIDDING BASICS QUIZ

For the first four questions, nobody is vulnerable and partner deals and opens 2♥. What is your response?

1. ♠A ♥AQ76 ♦AQ7654 ♣J2
2. ♠KQJ10 ♥Q32 ♦KQJ82 ♣2
3. ♠A2 ♥Q32 ♦J10876 ♣542
4. ♠Q854 ♥J ♦K8762 ♣AQ2

For the next three questions, both sides are vulnerable, and LHO passes followed by partner's 2♠. RHO passes. What is your response?

5. ♠4 ♥K2 ♦AKQJ765 ♣AQ2
6. ♠KJ32 ♥KJ2 ♦Q1076 ♣J2
7. ♠2 ♥KQ765 ♦AJ54 ♣J32

Both sides are vulnerable, partner opens 2♦ and RHO doubles. What is your response?

8. ♠A2 ♥J7654 ♦KJ2 ♣1076

Answers

1. 4♥, expecting partner to make it.
2. 2NT. Find out more about partner's hand (opposite a minimum, you won't want to be in game.)
3. 3♥. A preemptive raise. Partner had better be on the same page!
4. Pass. You are high enough.
5. 3NT. This is to play. Partner is not supposed to correct back to his suit.
6. 3♠. A compromise between a cowardly pass and a too-risky 4♠.
7. Pass. Don't jump from the fire into the frying pan with 3♥!
8. 3♦. You make it too easy on your opponents if you pass.