



Ron Klinger

Benji Two Bids: the 2♦ opening

DEvised by Albert Benjamin of Scotland, Benjamin Twos are effective in combining Weak Twos with strong opening hands. The structure:

- 2NT = 20-22 points balanced
- 2♠ = weak two, 6 spades, 6-10 HCP
- 2♥ = weak two, 6 hearts, 6-10 HCP
- 2♦ = artificial, 23+ HCP or 10+ tricks
- 2♣ = artificial, 8½-9½ tricks, about one trick short of game, and a hand of power and quality

Benjamin 2♦

Recommended approach for the Benjamin 2♦ opening (forcing to game) = 25+ HCP balanced, *or* any non-balanced hand with 23+ HCP. *or* any hand below 23 HCP if it has 10+ playing tricks and is in the 16-22 HCP range. 10 playing tricks = 3 losers and means you have game in your own hand. With good playing strength but below 16 HCP, start with a one-level opening.

Each of these hands is suitable for a 2♦ opening:

♠ A Q J 10 8 7 ♥ K Q J ♦ A K Q 9 ♣ Void Only 2 losers	♠ A K J 2 ♥ A K 9 8 3 ♦ A K Q ♣ 2 24 HCP unbalanced
♠ K Q ♥ A K Q ♦ A K 4 3 ♣ A J 5 4 26 HCP balanced	♠ K Q J 2 ♥ 3 ♦ A K ♣ A K J 10 5 4 Only 3 losers

The 2♥ response is a negative but no

matter how weak responder's hand, the partnership should bid on to game (or double the opponents).

♠ A K Q 7 6 ♥ A K Q 6 ♦ A 3 ♣ J 8		♠ 3 ♥ 5 4 3 2 ♦ 8 7 6 2 ♣ 6 5 4 2
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West	East
2♦	2♥ (negative)
2♠	2NT
3♥	4♥
Pass	

It would be a very serious error to pass 2♠. East's 2NT rebid denies support for spades and denies a five-card suit.

♠ A Q J 9 8 6 ♥ A K Q 8 7 2 ♦ A ♣ Void		♠ 5 4 ♥ 9 6 4 3 ♦ 8 7 2 ♣ 5 4 3 2
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West	East
2♦	2♥ (negative)
2♠	2NT
6♥	Pass

West has only one loser but cannot tell which suit is best. Again, it would be awful if East passed 2♠.

Responses

- 2♥ is an artificial, negative reply, usually 0-7 HCP.
- Any hand of 0-5 HCP = negative and so are most hands of 6-7 HCP, but A + K (1½ tricks) or a suit headed by A-Q (1½ tricks) is worth a positive. A negative says slam is unlikely. As opener has 10+ tricks, a hand with

1½ tricks or better has definite slam prospects.

- Positive reply: any reply other than 2♥.
- Any positive reply (8+ HCP or 1½ tricks or more) means slam is likely and if a trump fit is found, you should definitely look for slam.

Choice of positive responses

- A suit bid shows a suit at least five-cards long. With hearts, you will have to bid 3♥, since 2♥ is the negative reply.
- 2NT = a balanced hand, no suit of at least five cards.
- If 4-4-4-1 with positive values, bid 2♥ and catch up later. It will be responder's duty then to push on to slam.
- With a two-suiter, bid your longer suit first, or the higher-ranking if 5-5 or 6-6.

Opener's rebid after the 2♥ negative

- 2NT shows a balanced 25+ HCP, forcing to game. Further bidding is the same as after a 2NT opening.
- With a hand that is not balanced, rebid in a suit to show a suit of at least five cards. With a 4-4-4-1 (rare problem), bid your cheapest four-card suit and make natural bids after that. With a two-suiter, bid the longer suit first, or the higher-ranking with a 5-5 or 6-6 pattern.
- Opener's jump-rebid in a suit below game shows a solid suit (e.g. 2♦ - 2♥ - 3♠ / 4♣ / 4♦) and sets this suit as trumps. It asks responder to bid any ace. With no ace, but one or two kings, bid no-trumps. With no ace and no king, responder must raise the suit.

♠ A K Q J 9 8 6 5	♠ 4
♥ Void	♥ 9 6 4 3
♦ K Q J	♦ A 8 7 2
♣ A K	♣ 5 4 3 2

West	East
2♦	2♥ (negative)
3♣	4♦ (♦A)
7♣	Pass

If East's second bid had been 4♥ (showing the ♥A) or 4♠ (no ace, no king) or 3NT (no ace, at least one king), West would have rebid 6♣.

Opener's rebid after a positive response

- After a 2NT response, 3♣ is Stayman and any other suit is a suit of at least five cards. 3NT = 25-26 points only.
- After a suit response, opener may raise with at least three trumps. Raising below game (2♦ - 2♠ - 3♣) sets responder's suit as trumps and asks responder to bid any ace. Opener's change of suit will be a suit of at least five cards, but a second suit by either partner might be just a four-card suit.

Responder's rebid after the 2♥ negative

- Support opener's major as first priority.
- Raising below game (2♦ - 2♥ - 2♠ - 3♣) shows an ace or a king or a singleton or a void, and is *stronger than the raise to game* (which shows support, but no controls).
- A jump in a new suit (2♦ - 2♥ - 2♠ - 4♦) shows at least four-card support and a singleton or void in the suit bid.
- A new suit by responder shows a suit of at least five cards, otherwise bid no-trumps.

♠ K Q J 9 8 7	♠ 6 5 3 2
♥ K 2	♥ Q 8 7
♦ A K	♦ Q 8 7 2
♣ A Q J	♣ 3 2

West	East
2♦	2♥ (negative)
2♣	4♣
Pass	

The jump to 4♣ shows spade support, but no ace, no king, no singleton, no void.

♠ K Q J 9 8 7	♠ 6 5 3 2
♥ K 2	♥ A 8 7
♦ A K	♦ 9 8 7 2
♣ A Q J	♣ 3 2

West	East
2♦	2♥ (negative)
2♣	3♣
4♣	Pass

The raise to 3♣ shows spade support and an ace or a king or a shortage. West signs off since the negative 2♥ will not be as much as an ace and a king.

♠ A K Q J 9 8 7	♠ 6 5 3 2
♥ A K	♥ J 8 7 4
♦ A 6 5	♦ 7
♣ A	♣ 9 8 3 2

West	East
2♦	2♥ (negative)
2♣	4♦
7♣	Pass

The jump to 4♦ shows spade support and a singleton or void in diamonds. Able to ruff the diamond losers, West can bid the grand slam.

Responder's rebid after a positive reply

After a positive reply by responder, bidding is natural and most auctions lead to slam.

- Try to agree on a trump suit before asking for aces.
- Try to allow opener, the strong hand, to do the asking.
- You should play that a positive response followed by a suit raise is forcing. □

CLUB PLAYER'S BIDDING QUIZ

ON each of the following problems, you are West. What should you bid with each hand on the given auction?

Julian Pottage gives the correct answers on page 45.

Hand 1	W	N	E	S
♠ Q 9 6 2	Pass	Pass	Pass	1♣
♥ A Q 10 5	?			
♦ Q 9 6 4				
♣ 4				

Hand 2	W	N	E	S
♠ K J 9 7 4				1♥ Pass
♥ A 7	?			
♦ A Q 8 4 3				
♣ 2				

Hand 3	W	N	E	S
♠ A 10 8 7 2				1♣
♥ K J 3 2	?			
♦ K Q 7				
♣ 6				

Hand 4	W	N	E	S
♠ 7 3				1♥ Pass
♥ K 10 2	?			
♦ 9 2				
♣ K J 8 6 4 2				

Hand 5	W	N	E	S
♠ Q 9 5				1♣ Pass
♥ K Q 7 2	?			
♦ 9 7				
♣ A J 8 6				

Hand 6	W	N	E	S
♠ 7 4 2	1♥	Pass	2♣	Pass
♥ A K 9 6	?			
♦ A J 2				
♣ Q J 6				

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