

Franklin Bridge Club

2026 BRIDGE LESSONS



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Lesson Ten

Strong Opening Bids



Rules up until NOW

- **INT** opening – 12-14 HCP
- **1-level** openings – 12-19 HCP
- **2-level** openings – 6-10 HCP
- **3-level** openings – 6-10 HCP



BUT sometimes we have
stronger hands (**20+ points!**)



What you know so far...

HCP	BIDDING
12 – 14	Open INT
15 – 17	Bid a suit then rebid INT
18 – 19	Bid a suit then rebid 2NT
20 – 22	?
23+	?





Strong Opening Bids

There are **TWO** Strong Opening Bids

HCPs	BIDDING
20 – 22	Open 2NT
20+ (distributional) 23+ (balanced)	??



Strong Opening Bids – 2NT

EXAMPLE



This hand has 20–22 HCP and it is a
Balanced hand (WHY??)



Strong Opening Bids – 2NT

EXAMPLE



This hand has 20–22 HCP and it is a
Balanced hand (WHY??)



Responses to 2NT (20-22 points)

- **PASS** \Rightarrow 0-4 HCP, no GAME
- **3♣/♦** \Rightarrow 5+ card suit ... forcing GAME
- **3♥/♠** \Rightarrow 5-card suit ... forcing **GAME**
- **3NT** \Rightarrow No 5-card major, balanced hand
- **4♥/♠** \Rightarrow 6-card suit

Opener now chooses 3NT or 4 of the major

Responses to 2NT openers are similar to 1NT openers ... BUT there is no weak option now

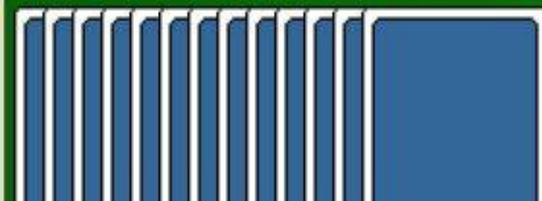


Responses to 2NT OPENER 1 of 3

N PARTNER



W HIM



W	N	E	S
Pass	2NT	Pass	

E HER



S YOU



Responses to 2NT OPENER 2 of 3

N PARTNER

W HIM

W	N	E	S
Pass	2NT	Pass	3NT

E HER

S YOU



Responses to 2NT OPENER 3 of 3

N PARTNER

W HIM

W	N	E	S
Pass	2NT	Pass	3NT
5+ points			
Balanced hand			

E HER

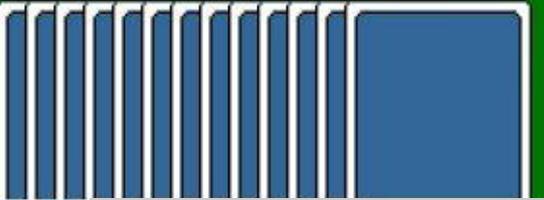
S YOU

Q♠ 5♠ 4♠ 10♥ 9♥ 5♥ A♣ 10♣ 9♣ J♦ 9♦ 7♦ 3♦

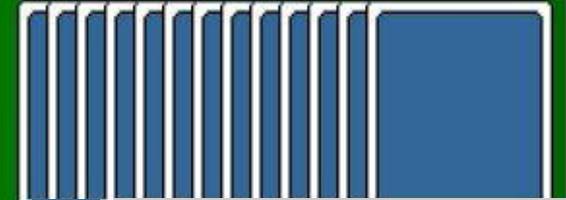


Responses to 2NT OPENER 1 of 3


N PARTNER


W HIM

W	N	E	S
Pass	2NT	Pass	


E HER

S  YOU

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



Responses to 2NT OPENER 2 of 3

N PARTNER

W	N	E	S
Pass	2NT	Pass	3♥

W HIM

E HER

S YOU



Responses to 2NT OPENER 3 of 3

N PARTNER

W HIM

W	N	E	S
Pass	2NT	Pass	3♥
5+ points			
5-card heart suit			

E HER

S YOU



Responses to 2NT OPENER 1 of 3

N PARTNER

W HIM

W	N	E	S
Pass	2NT	Pass	

E HER

S  YOU



Responses to 2NT OPENER 2 of 3

N PARTNER



W HIM



W	N	E	S
Pass	2NT	Pass	4♠

E HER



S  YOU



Responses to 2NT OPENER 3 of 3

N PARTNER

W HIM

W	N	E	S
Pass	2NT	Pass	4♠
5+ points			
6-card spade suit			

E HER

S YOU





Strong Opening Bids

There is a second Strong Opening Bid...

HCPs	NOTRUMP STRUCTURE
20 – 22	Open 2NT
20+ (distributional) 23+ (balanced)	Open 2♣ Game Forcing

2♣ is an ARTIFICIAL BID

Partner HAS to keep bidding until GAME is reached





Strong Opening Bids

There is a second Strong Opening Bid...

HCPs	NOTRUMP STRUCTURE
20 – 22	Open 2NT
20+ (distributional)	Open 2♣
23+ (balanced)	Then rebid suit

2♣ is an ARTIFICIAL BID

Partner HAS to keep bidding until GAME is reached



Strong Opening Bids

EXAMPLE



Open 2♣

20+ points

Distributional hand

2♣ is an ARTIFICIAL BID

Partner HAS to keep bidding until GAME is reached





Strong Opening Bids

There is a second Strong Opening Bid...

HCPs	NOTRUMP STRUCTURE
20 – 22	Open 2NT
20+ (distributional)	Open 2♣
23+ (balanced)	Then rebid 2 or 3 NT

2♣ is an ARTIFICIAL BID

Partner HAS to keep bidding until GAME is reached



Strong Opening Bids

EXAMPLE



Open 2♣

23+ points

Balanced hand

2♣ is an ARTIFICIAL BID

Partner HAS to keep bidding until GAME is reached



Responses to 2♣

- **2♦** ⇒ **0-7 points, any shape**
- **2♥/♠** ⇒ **8+ points, 5+ card suit**
- **2NT** ⇒ **8+ points, balanced hand**
- **3♣/♦** ⇒ **8+ points, 5+ card suit**

**The 2♦ response is artificial ...
it has NOTHING to do with diamonds**



Responses to a 2♣ Game Force 1 of 3

N PARTNER

W HIM

W	N	E	S
	2♣	Pass	

E HER

S YOU

7♠ 6♠ 3♠ J♥ 9♥ 8♥ Q♣ 7♣ 3♣ 7♦ 6♦ 4♦ 3♦



Responses to a 2♣ Game Force

2 of 3

N PARTNER

W HIM

W	N	E	S
	2♣	Pass	2♦

E HER

S YOU

7♠ 6♠ 3♠ J♥ 9♥ 8♥ Q♣ 7♣ 3♣ 7♦ 6♦ 4♦ 3♦



Responses to a
2♣ Game Force
3 of 3

N PARTNER

W HIM

W	N	E	S
	2♣	Pass	2♦
0 – 7 points			
2♦ is an ARTIFICIAL BID			

E HER

S YOU

7♠ 6♠ 3♠ J♥ 9♥ 8♥ Q♣ 7♣ 3♣ 7♦ 6♦ 4♦ 3♦



Responses to a 2♣ Game Force 1 of 3

N PARTNER

W HIM

W	N	E	S
	2♣	Pass	

E HER

S  YOU

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



Responses to a
2♣ Game Force
2 of 3

N PARTNER

W HIM

W	N	E	S
	2♣	Pass	2♥

E HER

S YOU

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



Responses to a
2♣ Game Force
3 of 3

N PARTNER

W HIM

W	N	E	S
	2♣	Pass	2♥
8+ points			
Shows 5+ hearts			

E HER

S YOU

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



Responses to a
2♣ Game Force
1 of 3

N

PARTNER

W	N	E	S
	2♣	Pass	

W

HIM

E

HER

S  YOU

K 9 6 4 Q J 10 K 10 8 7 9 7

♠ ♠ ♠ ♠ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♣ ♣ ♣ ♣ ♦ ♦



Responses to a
2♣ Game Force
2 of 3

N PARTNER

W HIM

W	N	E	S
	2♣	Pass	2NT

E HER

S YOU

K♠ 9♠ 6♠ 4♠ Q♥ J♥ 10♥ K♣ 10♣ 8♣ 7♣ 9♦ 7♦



Responses to a
2♣ Game Force
3 of 3

N PARTNER

W HIM

W	N	E	S
	2♣	Pass	2NT
8+ points			
No 5-card suit			

E HER

S YOU

K 9 6 4 Q J 10 K 10 8 7 9 7

♠ ♠ ♠ ♠ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♣ ♣ ♣ ♣ ♦ ♦



Opener's rebids after 2♣ opening

IF partner bids 2♦ (weak)

- Bid your own 5-card+ suit
- Bid 2NT (shows 23 or 24 HCP)
- Bid 3NT (shows 25+ HCP)

REMEMBER ... Partner HAS to keep bidding until GAME is reached



Opener's rebids after 2♣ opening

IF partner bids 2♥/2♠

- Agree the **FIT** with 3+ of the suit
- Bid 2NT (23 + points) – no fit
- Bid your own suit with 5-card + suit

REMEMBER ... Partner HAS to keep bidding until GAME is reached



Opener's rebids after 2♣ opening

IF partner bids 2NT

- Bid 3♥/3♠ with 5-card suit
- Bid 4♥/4♠ with 6+ card suit
- Bid 3NT with balanced hand
- Bid a minor if none of the above apply

REMEMBER ... Partner HAS to keep bidding until GAME is reached



Opener's rebids after 2♣ opening

IF partner bids 3♣/3♦

- Bid your own MAJOR suit with 5+ in suit
- Bid 3NT with balanced hand
- Raise the minor none of the above apply

REMEMBER ... Partner HAS to keep bidding until GAME is reached



Example 1 - Strong Opening Bids



Open 2♣

2♣ is an ARTIFICIAL BID

Partner HAS to keep bidding until GAME is reached



Example 1 - Strong Opening Bids



Open 2♣

Partner bids 2♦

2♣ is an ARTIFICIAL BID

Partner HAS to keep bidding until GAME is reached



Example 1 - Strong Opening Bids



Open 2♣

Partner bids 2♦

Rebid 2♥

Showing 5+ hearts

2♣ is an ARTIFICIAL BID

Partner HAS to keep bidding until GAME is reached



Example 2 - Strong Opening Bids



Open 2♣

2♣ is an ARTIFICIAL BID

Partner HAS to keep bidding until GAME is reached



Example 2 - Strong Opening Bids



Open 2♣

Partner bids 2NT

2♣ is an ARTIFICIAL BID

Partner HAS to keep bidding until GAME is reached



Example 2 - Strong Opening Bids



Open 2♣

Partner bids 2NT

Rebid 4♥

Showing 6+ hearts

(Partner MUST have 2+ hearts... WHY?)

2♣ is an ARTIFICIAL BID

Partner HAS to keep bidding until GAME is reached



Example 3 - Strong Opening Bids



Open 2♣

2♣ is an ARTIFICIAL BID

Partner HAS to keep bidding until GAME is reached



Example 3 - Strong Opening Bids



Open 2♣

Partner bids 2NT

2♣ is an ARTIFICIAL BID

Partner HAS to keep bidding until GAME is reached



Example 3 - Strong Opening Bids



Open 2♣

Partner bids 2NT

Rebid 3NT

No 5 Card Major

2♣ is an ARTIFICIAL BID

Partner HAS to keep bidding until GAME is reached



Example 4 - Strong Opening Bids



Open 2♣

2♣ is an ARTIFICIAL BID

Partner HAS to keep bidding until GAME is reached



Example 4 - Strong Opening Bids



Open 2♣

Partner bids 2♥

2♣ is an ARTIFICIAL BID

Partner HAS to keep bidding until GAME is reached



Example 4 - Strong Opening Bids



Open 2♣

Partner bids 2♥

Rebid 3♥

Showing a FIT

2♣ is an ARTIFICIAL BID

Partner HAS to keep bidding until GAME is reached



Bidding to SLAM level

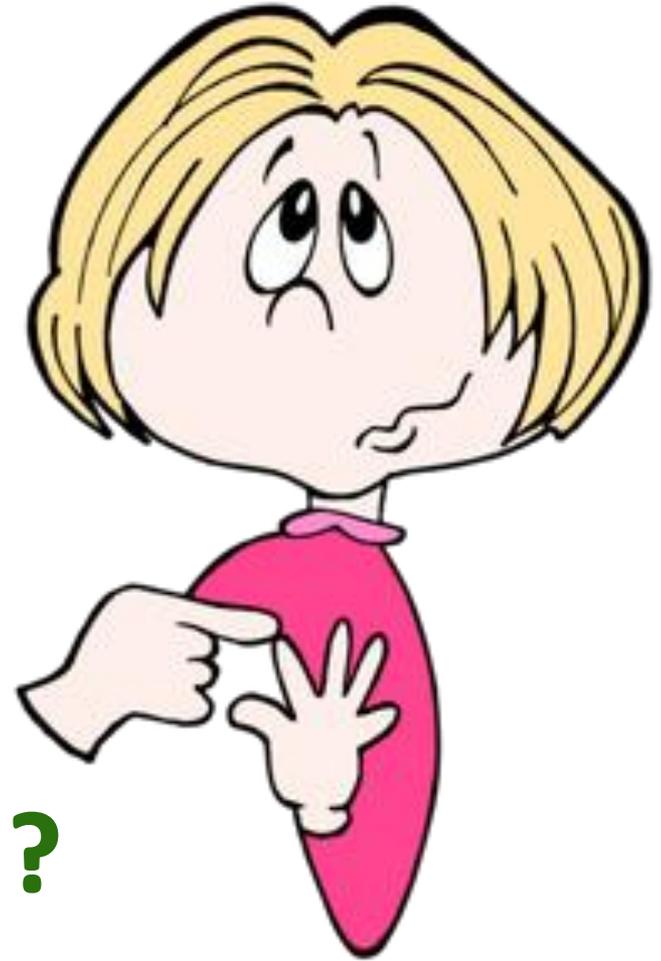
- **A SLAM needs  tricks**
- IF the partnership has 32+ points you **MAY** have the values for SLAM
- You can find out how many aces partner has by bidding 4NT

**You NEED to check that you are not missing
TWO aces**



Ask for Aces using 4NT

- 5♣ ⇒ No Aces
- 5♦ ⇒ 1 Ace
- 5♥ ⇒ 2 Aces
- 5♠ ⇒ 3 Aces



Count on your fingers ?



Ask for Kings using 5NT??

After finding out the number of Aces with 4NT, you will either:

1. Sign off at **5-level**
2. Bid Slam (**6-level**)
3. If you have all the aces, bid **5NT** asking for Kings (if you are looking for a Grand Slam!)



Ask for Kings using 5NT!!

- 6♣ ⇒ No Kings
- 6♦ ⇒ 1 King
- 6♥ ⇒ 2 Kings
- 6♠ ⇒ 3 Kings



Count on your toes!!



Advice from a Grand Master

Believe it or not, your bridge journey is just beginning !

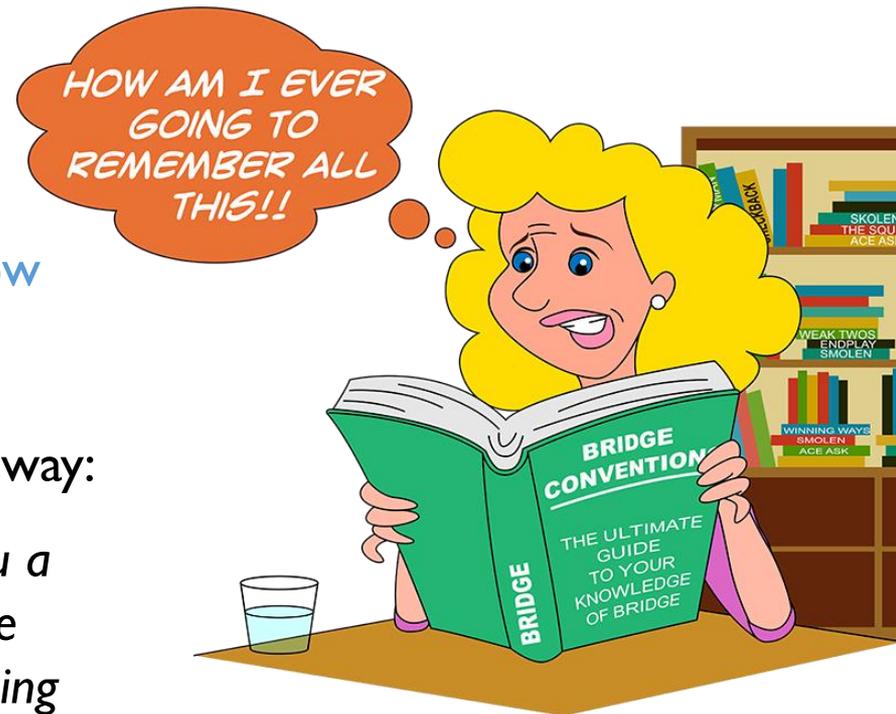
You will discover there is still a lot to learn about the game, but there is no hurry ! Stick to the basics and master what you have learnt in these lessons before trying anything new.

Don't let people tell you what to do. Refer to your lesson notes to reinforce how you should bid and play the hands.

Here is a great quote to help you on your way:

“It's not usually the first mistake that gives you a bad board, it is the second one. You often make the second mistake because you are still focusing on the first one. Don't let one mistake cause another!”

- Robert S Todd





Good Luck

Have fun !



Questions?



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