

Two-over-one Game Forcing, Part 3: The 2-Over-1 Response and Developments

© Dan Neill

Note:

- with nothing special to show, make a waiting bid
- only jump with very specific hand types (i.e. rarely)
- if the opponents happen to bid, doubles are penalty

Which Suit to Bid First Using 2-Over-1

- a 2♥ response promises 5 or more cards
- a 2♦ response promises 5 or more cards
- a 2♣ response handles both clubs and balanced hands, so it could be 3 or even 2 cards
- other GF alternatives to a 2-over-1:
 - Jacoby 2NT (balanced 4 card raise)
 - splinters (3-suited 4 card raise)
 - 3NT (3crd support with any 3[433] shape, 13-16 HCP, choice of games)

How would you respond to a 1♠ opening as an unpassed hand?

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1) ♠ Jx
♥ KQJx
♦ AQxxx
♣ xx | 2) ♠ Ax
♥ Qxxx
♦ KJx
♣ AJxx | 3) ♠ Qxx
♥ Axx
♦ Kxxx
♣ AJ |
| 4) ♠ AQ
♥ xxxxx
♦ Kxx
♣ AQx | 5) ♠ QTxx
♥ AQx
♦ xx
♣ AJxx | 6) ♠ QJxx
♥ x
♦ AJxx
♣ Kxxx |

Opener's First Rebid

- without any other good bid, rebid the major

- the 3-level requires something “special”

With a Raise of Responder’s Suit:

- raise hearts with 3 cards and any strength (the jump to 4♥ shows 5422)
- raising a minor promises a solid opening (and clubs requires 4 cards)
- splinter by jump-shifting to a new suit, showing shortness and a solid opening
- with a mild raise of a minor, rebid something else cheaply like 2 of the original major or 2NT

What should opener rebid after 1♥-2♦?

- | | | | | | |
|----|---------|----|---------|----|---------|
| 7) | ♠ Kxx | 8) | ♠ xx | 9) | ♠ AQx |
| | ♥ AQxxx | | ♥ AJTxx | | ♥ AJxxx |
| | ♦ Kxx | | ♦ AQxx | | ♦ KJxx |
| | ♣ xx | | ♣ Ax | | ♣ x |

Without a Raise:

- bid a new suit at the 2-level
- bid 2NT with both side suits stopped
- bid a new suit at the 3-level (not a jump) with at least 15 HCP or 13 HCP and 5-5 shape
- jump to 3NT with 15-17 balanced
- jump rebid the original major with a solid self-sufficient suit, does not promise extra strength
- if nothing else, pass the buck to partner by rebidding 2 of the original major, *which does not promise 6 cards*

What is opener’s rebid after 1♠-2♦?

- | | | | | | |
|-----|-----------|-----|---------|-----|---------|
| 10) | ♠ AQxxx | 11) | ♠ Axxxx | 12) | ♠ AJxxx |
| | ♥ AKQx | | ♥ Qxx | | ♥ Qx |
| | ♦ xx | | ♦ KJ | | ♦ x |
| | ♣ Ax | | ♣ Axx | | ♣ AKJxx |
| 13) | ♠ AKQxxxx | 14) | ♠ AKJxx | 15) | ♠ AJTxx |
| | ♥ Ax | | ♥ xxx | | ♥ xx |
| | ♦ xxx | | ♦ xx | | ♦ Ax |
| | ♣ x | | ♣ AQx | | ♣ Kxxx |

Responder's Rebid

- without any other good bid, rebid 2NT

- show support for opener's major (jump to game would show a bad hand for slam)
- rebid a 6+ card suit
- bid a second suit
- jump-shift as a splinter for the last-bid suit
- rebid 2NT to pass the buck back to partner, which *does not promise all side suits stopped*

What is responder's rebid after 1♠-2♦-2♠?

16) ♠ AJx
♥ Qxx
♦ AKxxx
♣ xx

17) ♠ xx
♥ xx
♦ AQJxxx
♣ AQx

18) ♠ Kx
♥ AQxx
♦ KJxxx
♣ xx

19) ♠ Qxx
♥ x
♦ AQxxx
♣ KQxx

20) ♠ Ax
♥ xxx
♦ KQxxx
♣ Axx

21) ♠ Kxx
♥ Qx
♦ KQJxx
♣ Qxx

After a Fit is Found Below Game

This is the core advantage to 2-over-1. Both partners know where the auction is heading, and we are *below game still*. Kick back and waste that free bidding space? Are you kidding...

After a major suit fit

The most common situation is for a major suit to be shown directly at the 2-level or 3-level, but also it could be found via a splinter. For example:

1♥-2♣-2♠-3♥

1♠-2♦-2♠-3♠

1♥-2♦-2♥-4♣

At this point, the decision is whether to try for slam or not. The way to try for slam is to *cue-bid* an Ace or King of another suit. It could even be a singleton or void in an unbid

suit. This not only shows slam interest, but by bidding these cue-bids cheaply up the line, it can reveal that one suit has two fast losers, and thus let the pair stay at the 4-level.

If partner makes the first cue-bid, which shows extra values, you are obligated to cue-bid in response, at least up to the game level. If either player stops in game, that is non-forcing.

What does opener rebid after 1♥-2♣-2♥-3♥?

22) ♠ Kxx
♥ AJxxxx
♦ Qx
♣ Ax

23) ♠ xx
♥ AKxxx
♦ Axx
♣ Jxx

24) ♠ x
♥ AQxxxx
♦ KQJ
♣ Kxx

What does responder rebid after 1♥-2♣-2♥-3♥-3♠?

25) ♠ Axx
♥ Kxx
♦ xx
♣ AKQxx

26) ♠ x
♥ AJx
♦ Kxx
♣ AT9xxx

27) ♠ xx
♥ AQx
♦ Ax
♣ QJxxxx

After a minor suit fit

Playing 5 of a minor is not something you strive to do in a 2/1 auction, especially at matchpoints where 3NT or 4 of a major pay so much better. So after a minor suit fit, the 3-level is devoted mainly to a search for stoppers for 3NT. If either player bids past 3NT, then all bids are cue-bids.

This would also be a good time to show a doubleton honor in partner's major in case 4 of the major would play well.

What does responder bid after 1♠-2♣-2♠-2N-3♣?

28) ♠ xx
♥ KQx
♦ xxx
♣ AKxxx

29) ♠ Ax
♥ xx
♦ Jxx
♣ AKJxx

30) ♠ Kx
♥ AKx
♦ QJx
♣ KQxxx

Answers

- 1) 2♦. Respond in the 5 card suit, game forcing.
- 2) 2♣. No 5 card red suit, so 2♣ is the default. Game forcing.

- 3) 2♣. As before – no 5 card red suit, so 2♣. This is the one shape where it could be just 2 cards. All others will have 4 card support (Jacoby 2NT), or 3+ clubs.
- 4) 2♥. The quality of the hearts does not matter. Plan on rebidding NT later.
- 5) 2NT. Balanced GF with 4+ card support – Jacoby 2NT.
- 6) 4♥. Splinter, 4+ spades, singleton/void hearts, game force.
- 7) 2♥. Waiting. Raising a minor to the 3-level requires a solid opening, 14+ HCP or shape. Plan on rebidding 3♦ at the next opportunity.
- 8) 3♦. Promises a solid opening.
- 9) 4♣. A jumpshift by opener after a 2/1 response is a splinter, showing a solid opening with 4+ card support usually.
- 10) 2♥. The extra strength will be communicated later. For now, finding a fit is the priority.
- 11) 2N. Both side suits stopped, just 5 cards in the major. Will not be 15-17 (jump to 3N, or open 1N)
- 12) 3♣. Promises 15+ HCP or a little less with 5-5 shape – an interesting hand.
- 13) 3♠. Solid suit, does not promise extra strength. Partner may raise with a singleton, or cue-bid.
- 14) 2♠. Waiting. No heart stopper, so probably partner should declare NT if it is there.
- 15) 2♠. Waiting. 3♣ would promise extra shape or strength.
- 16) 3♠. While partner has not promised 6 cards, you have 3 so there is an 8crd fit. The hand is too “sharp” (Aces, Kings) to jump to 4♠, which would show a bad hand for slam.
- 17) 3♦. Still game-forcing. Without a heart stopper, best to stress the quality and length of the diamonds. If partner has 6+ spades, she will likely rebid 3♥ or 3♠ to try to get you to show a doubleton.
- 18) 2N. Most flexible. 3♥ also may work, but this gives more room for partner to describe the rest of her hand. You will bid 3♠ next if given the chance.
- 19) 4♥. Splinter for spades. Partner knows your shortness and can take control.
- 20) 2N. Does not promise both side suits stopped.
- 21) 4♠. Bad hand for slam (lots of Queens and Jacks).
- 22) 3♠. Opener must cue-bid at least to game as responder is unlimited. We should be happy to have an extra trump since a 9crd fit plays far better than an 8crd fit.
- 23) 4♦. The cheapest cue-bid – no ♠ cue-bid, and no ♣ cue-bid. If partner signs off at 4♥, either she is missing a black control, or she was minimum. Either way we are glad to pass. If partner bids RKC over 4♦ the ♦ control must have been her worry.
- 24) 3♠. We could bid RKC right now, but there is no rush. If partner bids 4♥ now, denying a minor control, we can pass 4♥ knowing we are off 2 Aces. A cue-bid in a side suit may be a singleton or void.
- 25) 4♣. If partner bids 4♥ now, we have 2 fast ♦ losers and can stop at game without risking the 5-level.
- 26) 4♣. We are obligated to cue-bid – opener is unlimited. If partner signs off in 4♥ we will pass.
- 27) 4♦. We deny a ♣ cue-bid so if partner bids 4♥, we will pass.
- 28) 3♥. 2NT did not promise both red suits stopped. We might want to play in 4♠ (if partner has 6), 3N (if partner has a ♦ stopper), or 5♣ (if partner has neither). 3♥ shows worry about ♦. The primary goal after a minor fit is to decide whether to play in 3NT or not.

29) 3♠. This descriptive bid shows “where we live”. If partner has weakness in a red suit, or 6+ spades, we will avoid 3NT, even playing in a 5-2 ♠ game.

30) 3♥. We will bid beyond 3N, but we want to get more information about partner’s hand. We pretend ♦ weakness, but then we will reveal slam interest with a 4♣ (or 4N over 3♠) bid. If partner bids 3NT, showing a ♦ stopper, we know that ♦ are controlled for slam. None of this nuance is possible in SAYC.