

1S and 2D Openings

The structure for opening the bidding on unbalanced hands lacking a Major suit can take two forms. The following structure describes either form, where a 1S opening shows 4+ in suit "om" and the appropriate 2m opening shows 6+ in suit "m".

The opening bids of 1 and 2 each promise 18-22OP (20-24OP in third or fourth position subject to judgment). Both openings show at most three cards in each Major suit. The former is opened on every unbalanced hand with four or more cards in suit m (that is, all six-card or longer m one-suiters and all Minor two-suiters), and the latter is opened on single-suited hands with six or more in suit om.

The limited nature of these hands often makes it very easy for responder to determine that the opening side has little (or no) play for game, and responder will often take an action that is a suggestion of a final contract. Additionally the knowledge responder has of the opponents Major suit fit(s) will sometimes allow him to violate agreements for tactical reasons.

On most hands that may offer play for game, and all of those that will force to game, responder bids a particular step (2 over 1 and Step 1 over 2m) which is a relay, showing at least game interest and asking for further description of opener's hand. After subsequent bids by opener, responder continues to bid Step 1 for relay. Responder may break relays with a natural invitational bid at the two- or three-level. Once broken, relays are never resumed, and natural bidding proceeds in the context of the previous auction.

Responder may also utilise fit-showing jumps as invitational actions.

The response structures for the two openings are similar:

Responding to 1 and 2m

1	2m	Meaning
No	No	No desire to bid; does not promise any holding in the bid suit, however negative inferences exist from the failure to make a non-forcing bid.
1NT	-	Natural, non-forcing but opener will only pass with a 2254 or 2245 that offers good notrump play. Opener's rebids of 2 and 2 show at least five card suits and the desire to suggest that suit as trumps.
2	2 /	Relay , showing a hand with at least game interest. If unable to force to game, such a hand should be able to offer play for 2NT, three of opener's Minor or in its own suit. In particular it needs to be prepared for a response at the three-level showing six or more cards in the suit opened.
2	2	Natural, non-forcing, showing a suit of at least five cards (normally six or
2	3	longer). Opener is expected to pass without a clear reason to bid (e.g. a good
2	3	seven card suit, or extreme shortage in responder's suit, or three card support).
2NT	-	Asks opener to bid his longer Minor suit.
-	2NT	Invitational values but 0-1 cards in m. Opener reverts to 3m when holding a minimum with poorer than expected prospects in 2NT. Opener bids 3NT with game values. Occasionally responder might hold a small doubleton in m.

1. A three-level raise of the suit opener showed is not constructive and usually is based on the expectation or knowledge of a nine-card fit. This is a wide-ranging action that may be

based on slightly fewer trumps or marginal invitational strength to provide a maximum jeopardy situation for the opponents when considering entering the auction.

2. Higher raises are expressions of desire to play the contract named.
3. Jumps to new suits at the three level (or four-level below opener's Minor) are fit-showing, holding 6+ in the suit bid, 3+ support for opener's suit and interest in playing game. These bids are occasionally tactical.
4. Game bids are to play.
5. 4NT in response to a 1 opening asks for opener's longer Minor suit.

Relay Structures

The relay structures are identical to those after 1-1NT-2 and 1-1NT-2-2+:

After 1-2 and 2-2

1	2	Meaning
---	---	---------

2	-	5+, 4+, unbalanced, symmetric continuations (See: Relay Structure).
---	---	---

2	-	4+, 5+, unbalanced, symmetric continuations (See: Relay Structure).
---	---	---

2	2	6+ Minor, 0-2 other Minor, symmetric continuations (See: Relay Structure). etc.
---	---	--

Responder may break the relay to 3m after 2 and 2 (and sometimes 2NT) responses and this suggests a hand with 2+ fit and interest in 3NT. After higher responses by opener, such a hand takes its chances somewhere.

Competitive Bidding

When the opponents compete before a relay auction has begun, then if the relay bid or the double of it is available, then that bid is for relay. A redouble of the 1 opening tends to deny invitational values and denies tolerance for Spades. A redouble of the 2 opening shows tolerance to play 2 XX and interest in penalising the opponents at the two-level. Doubles of suit bids are negative/takeout until either hand has been defined (e.g. a raise, an ask for Minor-suit preference), then penalty, except that after a raise to the three level or higher, opener's double (See: **Other Alternative Agreements**) shows desire to bid more but inability to break the captancy. The 2m opening defines the hand, so all doubles are penalties. Doubles of notrump bids show values and some degree of penalty interest depending on the meaning of the bid doubled. Jump bids in new suits remain fit-showing, non-jump suit and natural notrump bids remain non-forcing. Raises tend to be not constructive. Cuebids and double-then-raise auctions are constructive. Many 2NT bids in competition show two places to play, particularly after the 1 opening.

When the opponents compete after a relay auction has begun, then the agreements used are identical to those used after interference during a 1 relay auction.