

Practise your Unbalanced 2♣ opening Bids

To open 2♣ with an unbalanced hand you should have at most 4 losers if playing in a major contract, or 3 losers if playing in a minor contract.

Counting losers:

- Only the first three cards in any suit can be losers.
- Only the ace, king and queen are winners.
- “Droppable Honours” count as losers (i.e. a singleton king or a doubleton queen)
- The queen counts as half a loser except when combination with ace, king or jack.

Hand: 1 Dealer: North Vul: EW West North East South ? 	South ♠ K Q 9 (1) ♥ A K Q 10 8 4 (0) ♦ A K 5 (1) ♣ J (1)
Hand: 2 Dealer: South Vul: All West North East South ? 	South ♠ A K 9 7 6 5 3 (1) ♥ A K (0) ♦ 5 (1) ♣ K J 3 (2)
Hand: 3 Dealer: South Vul: All West North East South ? 	South ♠ A K J 2 (1) ♥ K J (1) ♦ 2 (1) ♣ A K 10 9 7 2 (1)
Hand: 4 Dealer: South Vul: All West North East South ? 	South ♠ A K J 8 2 (1) ♥ K Q 6 5 2 (2) ♦ 2 (1) ♣ A K (0)
Hand: 5 Dealer: North Vul: None West North East South 2♣ Pass ? 	South ♠ K Q 8 6 5 ♥ A 8 6 ♦ 5 3 2 ♣ 6 2
Hand: 6 Dealer: North Vul: None West North East South 2♣ Pass ? 	South ♠ Q 9 8 6 ♥ K Q 3 ♦ Q J 7 ♣ K 5 3

Answer: 2♣

Only 22 HCP but you have just 3 losers. You cannot risk opening 1♥ as partner might pass.

Answer: 2♣

Just 18 HCP but just 4 losers. To make game you need very little help from partner (just ♣Q or ♥Q would be enough). You cannot risk the possibility that partner might pass.

Answer: 1♣

20 HCP and 4 losers. You need at most 3 losers in a minor suit contract to open 2♣. If you open 2♣ here the bidding could go 2♣-2♦-3♣-3NT-Pass and you then find that you lose five diamond tricks off the top while 4♠ or 5♣ is made at other tables.

Answer: 2♣

20 HCP and 4 losers, and two long majors. If partner responds 2♦ you should bid 2♠ and then 3♥ over partner's rebid. This shows 5-4 in the majors. If partner then rebids 3NT you should rebid your hearts to show 5-5.

Answer: 2♠

9 HCP and a good 5 card spade suit. Make a positive bid. Partner may have been planning to rebid 2NT or 3♣ but with 3+ cards in spades including an honour she may now consider a spade contract and a possible slam.

Answer: 2♦

13 HCP opposite a 2♣ opener!! However, with no very good suit of your own to show, you should await events. 2♦ is 100% forcing. You will be in a much better position to act after partner's rebid.

Hand: 7 Dealer: North Vul: None West North East South 2♣ Pass ?	South ♠ K 9 ♥ K 3 2 ♦ J 6 5 ♣ Q 10 9 6 5
Hand: 8 Dealer: North Vul: None West North East South 2♣ Pass 2♦ Pass ?	North ♠ A K J ♥ A Q J 10 9 8 ♦ A ♣ K Q 3
Hand: 9 Dealer: North Vul: None West North East South 2♣ Pass 2♦ Pass 2♠ Pass ?	South ♠ 7 6 5 4 ♥ Q 8 6 2 ♦ 7 3 ♣ J 9 5
Hand: 10 Dealer: North Vul: None West North East South 2♣ Pass 2♦ Pass 2♠ Pass ?	South ♠ 7 6 ♥ K Q 7 6 2 ♦ 7 3 ♣ J 9 5 4
Hand: 11 Dealer: North Vul: None West North East South 2♣ Pass 2♦ Pass 2♥ Pass ?	South ♠ K J 9 3 2 ♥ K 7 4 ♦ Q 6 2 ♣ 9 5
Hand: 12 Dealer: North Vul: None West North East South 2♣ Pass 2♦ Pass 2♠ Pass 2NT Pass 3♠ Pass ?	South ♠ - ♥ 9 6 7 ♦ 8 7 6 5 2 ♣ J 9 5 4 2

Answer: 2♦

You have 9 points and a balanced hand, enough for slam, but if you bid 2NT you take out a whole level of bidding. Partner might be 5-5 in spades and hearts and will only be able to show four of his five hearts at the 4 level (2♣-2NT-3♠-3NT-4♥), in which case you would miss an 8-card heart fit. And an immediate 2NT bid would mean that if partner had a balanced hand and rebid 3NT, you will be the one playing the contract with the strong hand on the table. 2♦ is a waiting bid. Partner can show a major at the 2-level and you can then bid 2NT.

Answer: 2♥

Now partner knows that you have an unbalanced hand and your longest suit is hearts. With 3 card heart support partner should raise to 3♥ with 4+ HCP, or 4♥ with 0-3 HCP (known as the 'Principle of Fast Arrival', with no slam interest.)

Answer: 4♠

The Principle of Fast Arrival. This bid shows 3 card spade support and 0-3 points. hand. Jumping straight to game shows a WEAK hand, 0-3 points, which will temper his ardour 😊. With 4+ points you would bid have bid 3♠, and partner had an unlikely 27+ HCP he would have gone 'slamming'.

Answer: 3♥

You do not have 3 card support for partner's suit, but you have a reasonable hand, 6 HCP and a good 5 card heart suit. Your bid describes your hand perfectly, 5-7 points (with 8 points you would have responded 3♥ first time). Partner is now in a good position to decide how to proceed.

Answer: 3♥

You have 9 HCP. If partner had rebid 2NT you could have bid 3♥ (transfer to spades), but partner has shown at least five hearts and you have a fit and the ♥K. A fundamental maxim is that when you have found a fit in a major, let partner know right away. Don't look for any other fit. Your spades will be very helpful as a side suit. A slam is very likely so you show your support and strength by bidding 3♥ rather than 4♥ which should suggest a weaker hand. Remember that partner's rebid is game forcing (only a 2NT bid opener can be passed with 0-2 HCP).

Answer: Pass

This is one of the only two rebids by opener that you can pass after an opening 2C bid (*the other is after the sequence 2C-2D-2NT which you can pass with 0-1 point*). Here you have a dreadful hand, and your 2NT rebid was a 'second negative', warning partner that you were very weak and might very well not bid again. Nonetheless partner has insisted on rebidding his spades, so leave him to it!!