

# 11b v2: 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.

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

**Answer: 2♣**

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

**Answer: 1♥**

The dreaded 4-4-4-1 shape. You have only 4 losers but experience has shown that this works best on unbalanced hands with no strong suit. You are not likely to get passed out in 1♥

**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. 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.

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

**Answer: 2♦**

You have 9 points and a balanced hand, enough to make slam a realistic possibility, 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♥, yet you have an 8-card heart fit. And an immediate 2NT bid means that if partner has a balanced hand and rebids 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♦**

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

**Answer: 2♥**

Now partner knows that you have an unbalanced hand and your longest suit is hearts. Partner must not pass. Your bid is game forcing. With 3 card heart support partner should raise to 3♥ or 4♥. 3♥ would show a hand with slam potential, leaving bidding space below 4♥ for exploration, while 4♥ shows a weaker hand (known as the 'principle of fast arrival', with no slam interest.)

**Answer: 4♠**

You have good spade support and a poor hand. Your doubleton diamond is likely to produce a ruff.

**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).