

# Managing Opponent's Weak 2 Opening



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## **A. When the opponents open with a weak 2.**

Double is takeout.

2NT shows an opening 1NT 15-17, with at least one stop.

Bidding a suit shows 5+ pieces and an opening hand or better.

Doubling and bidding NT shows a better than a 1NT opener.

Doubling and bidding a suit shows a huge hand with a suit of your own.

With 12 or fewer HCP, pass and wait for partner to balance.

Jump bidding your suit shows 6+ cards and 18+ HCP.

### **Theory:**

The purpose of the weak 2 is to show a reasonable suit in 1st or 2nd seat and is meant to disrupt the opponents' bidding. It is not an immediate exploration for game even though partner may have a game going hand.

It is wise to enter the bidding following a weak 2 bid only if you have an opening hand. There is no such thing as a preempt directly over a preempt.

For example. LHO opens 2♥ and South overcalls 3♠. This bid shows a HUGE hand with long Spades and no desire to play in any other suit. Partner of the 3♠ bid should consider this bid to be forcing at least to game.

Sometimes you hold an opening hand after your RHO has opened with a weak 2, but you do not have the correct shape for a double. You should feel comfortable passing as partner will balance with as few as 10 HCP in order not to allow the opponents to play in a weak 2 if it appears that they want to.

A double in the pass out (balancing seat) should not be perceived as penalty but as takeout. Partner may convert to penalty with the following stipulations.

At least two certain tricks in the opponents' trump.

Two or more certain defensive tricks in your hand.

You should bid if the two criteria noted above are not met and convert the double to penalty by passing if they are.

Be aware of adverse distribution! If a person makes a weak 2 in a major suit, it is reasonable to assume that they are likely to be short in the other major. That means that you should expect adverse distribution in your trump suit should you find a fit by defensive bidding.

### **B. When the opponents open at the 3 level.**

Both vulnerable, your RHO opens 3♥. You hold this hand:

♠AKJ32 ♥86 ♦A987 ♣Q3

You are dying to bid! What is your correct call. Double is out of the question. What will you do if partner names Clubs. Do you have enough to overcall 3♠? NOT!

PASS. I know it will kill you.

GUIDELINE: If you overcall a 3 level preempt you must have at least 16 HCP and a good suit.

With the above hand, wait for partner to “protect” you with a bid or a double.

Both vulnerable, your RHO opens 3♥. You hold this hand:

♠J2 ♥A6 ♦AJ7 ♣AQ10985

### **THE NOTRUMP OPTION – Bid 3NT**

This interesting bid actually has a name. The Notrump Option specifically applies to the situation where your RHO has made a three level preempt. You have a hand that clearly is worth bidding. Lacking good cards in the opposite major, you are considering bidding 4♣ with this hand. Experts like Bob Hamman, Mike Lawrence and others suggest that you NOT blow past 3NT but rather bid it. Your game chances drastically increase.

You should bid 3NT with all of the following hands after your RHO opens with 3♥

♠AQ ♥K65 ♦A987 ♣KQJ8

♠J ♥Q96 ♦AKQJ87 ♣AQ9

This time no one is vulnerable.

♠J9 ♥AQ86 ♦AQJ7 ♣KQ9

This time everyone is vulnerable.

♠A92 ♥A63 ♦AJ97 ♣AQ10

You should bid 3NT with all these hands.

Things to consider:

The purpose of the preempt is to make life difficult for you and it often works. That’s life. You still need to apply some judgment and common sense to your bidding.

If you have 9-12 HCP and both majors, you should NOT double over a 3 level preempt of a minor. You are committing your partnership to at least the 3 level. Wait for your partner to balance with a double or a suit bid.

You should PASS these hands after your RHO bids 3♥

♠QJ943 ♥A6 ♦QJ7 ♣Q98

Bid 4♠ if partner doubles.

♠A95 ♥86 ♦KQJ97 ♣K98

Partner should balance with short ♥.

♠QJ94 ♥A86 ♦Q97 ♣Q98

Minor suit Queens are specious.

♠AJ984 ♥A86 ♦Q7 ♣1098

Resist temptation!

When should you double a 3 level Preempt?

It is essential to remember that when you double following a 3 level preempt by your RHO, you commit the partnership to at least 9 tricks. Partner will still jump to 4 with 9-11 HCP.

On the other hand, the balance of power may lie with the preemptors partners. If you make a skinny double, the worst possible result may occur. Partner on the other hand can protect you with a skinny balancing double and you may stop at the 3 level. This is a much more sound approach.

You should double for takeout after RHO makes a 3 level preempt with hands such as these.

You RHO has opened 3♦:

♠QJ94 ♥AK86 ♦97 ♣AQ8

Double

♠AJ94 ♥AQ86 ♦7 ♣KQ98

Double

♠AKQ4 ♥A986 ♦7 ♣QJ98

Double

On the other hand:

You should cuebid with both majors and a game going hand

You RHO has opened 3♦:

♠QJ1094 ♥AKJ86 ♦9 ♣AQ

Bid 4♦ Partner must pick a major.

♠AJ1094 ♥AKJ86 ♦9 ♣QJ

Bid 4♦ Partner must pick a major.

You should overcall with 16+ and a good suit.

You RHO has opened 3♦:

♠AJ ♥AKJ864 ♦9 ♣QJ87

Bid 3♥

♠KJ1094 ♥KQ6 ♦97 ♣AQJ

Bid 3♠

Competing when the opponents have opened at the 3 level is far from a perfect science. These guidelines will help. Sometimes however the bear eats you! ♣