

Protocol and Alerts

- If your partner FAILS to alert one of your bids, do **NOT** make any response or gesture. Should your side end up playing the hand, you MUST tell your opponents that there was a failure to alert prior to the opening lead. Call the director. If your side ends up on defense, you do not have to call attention to the failure to alert. But, at the end of the hand, the defense does need to call the director and report that there was a failure to alert.
- If you alert your partner's bid, you do not need to give any further explanation unless an opponent asks what the alert means.
- If you open a suit which could be short, you MUST **announce** the minimum number of cards your partner holds in the suit, i.e., if your partner opens 1C and it could be shorter than 3, you MUST say, "Could be as short as 0, 1 or 2". Players who play strong 1C systems (such as Precision) may not have any clubs. NOTE: It is not sufficient to simply say, "Could be short".
- If there is a **transfer bid**, you must say, "s/he has ___ (the suit your partner has)." For example, if you open 1NT and partner bids 2D: Announce, "She has hearts."
- In the bidding of a hand, a long hesitation by one of the bidders followed by a pass gives information to his/her partner. Normally, his/her partner would now be barred from bidding because s/he knows partner has values; but, did not make a bid. It's OK to pause and then make a bid; but, to pause a long time and then pass is unethical.
- Try as best as you can to play in tempo. On a difficult hand, you should take all the time you need to plan your play of the hand. But, your side needs to try not to hold up the game on every single round. A good suggestion is not to discuss any of the hands until all hands in the set have been played.
- If you must talk about a particular hand, it is best to not talk loudly. Players who have not yet played the hand can hear and take advantage of the fact that, "You should have got us to a slam."
- During the play of a hand, all players should not make any comments, asides, sorry partner type statements, exasperating sighs, etc. The only player speaking should be the declarer when s/he calls for a card from the dummy. A STOIC demeanor is the proper decorum for all four players at the table.
- If you kibitz a hand, you must not speak. Period. When you leave the table, it is unethical to discuss the hands with any other player until the game is over.
- Repeat from last week: **DO NOT GLOAT OR BRAG!**
- Promote Goodwill by complimenting an opponent on the play of a hand.

**Strong Two Club (2C) Opening
Fourth-suit Forcing
(December 13, 2021)**

Two Club Opening Bid

When your partner opens with two clubs, he has a very powerful (strong) hand and needs very little from you to make a game. Depending on the shape of his hand, he is saying that he is within one and a half tricks of making game in his own hand. His hand is either worth 22+ high card points (HCP) or is a powerfully suited hand. Thus, he needs very little from you to make a game.

CAUTION: IF YOU OPEN 2C ON A HAND NOT STRONG ENOUGH TO DO SO, YOU MAY PAY A PRICE!

NOTE: When your partner opens with 2C, you absolutely **MUST NOT PASS**. Even with zero points, you must make a bid.

Your partner opens 2C (22+ HCP or a powerfully suited hand). Below are some of the possible bids that you might make.

- 2D (a waiting bid which does not say anything about diamonds); no alert needed.
- If you have a five-card suit headed by two of the top three honors **and** a minimum of 8 HCP, simply bid the suit at the lowest level
- With 8-10 HCP **and** a somewhat balanced hand, bid 2NT

NOTE: The above responses are the basic ones which would be taught to beginners/novice plus/intermediate minus players. Now, responders are foregoing the bidding of 2NT or the five-card suit. Most are playing 2D; and, waiting for partner to make his second bid.

Opener's Rebids:

- 2NT = 22-24 HCP and a balanced hand
- 2H/2S = 5+ suit. He is looking for at least 3 card support from you.
- 3C/3D = Normally, shows a 6+ card suit and an unbalanced hand
- Makes a **KOKISH BID** (Explanation of these bids will be covered below.)

Responder's Rebids:

NOTE: If your partner has a 22+ HCP, balanced hand or has a 5+ card suit, you need only 3-4 HCP points for game or 10 HCP for a possible slam.

- If you have found a suit fit, raise partner's suit to three level
NOTE: If you hold a minimum of 3 HCP and 3 of partner's suit, simply bid game.
- With no suit agreement yet, bid a five card suit or 2NT
- If opener's second bid is 2NT, use Stayman, i.e., asking for a four-card major; or, use the transfer bids (3D transfers to hearts, etc.).
- How to tell your partner that you have a BUST

Example 1.	Partner	You
	2C	2D
	2NT	PASS

This is the one time that you can pass (you have less than 2 or 3 HCP).

Your Hand: xx xxx Qxxx xxxx

Example 2.	Partner	You
	2C	2D
	2H/2S	3C*
	3H/3S	PASS

Your 3C* bid shows a second negative (must be alerted). If your partner simply rebids his suit at the three level, you can pass with a bust.

Your Hand: xx xx Jxxxx xxxx

PRACTICE HANDS

Hand 1.	<u>Opener</u>	<u>Responder</u>
	2C	2D
	2H	3H
	4H	PASS
	AKQ5	83
	AK1085	J73

NOTE: Opener is the Captain.

	9	AJ10
	AQ2	9743
Hand 2.	<u>Opener</u>	<u>Responder</u>
	2C	2D
	2NT	3NT

	AKQ5	83
	AK108	J73
	95	AJ10
	AQ5	97543

Hand 3.	<u>Opener</u>	<u>Responder</u>
	2C	2D
	3D	3NT

	A9	6532
	Q	10872
	AKQJ986	102
	AQ6	K95

Hand 4.	<u>Opener</u>	<u>Responder</u>
	2C	2D
	3D	3H
	3NT	4C*
	4NT**	6NT

*Gerber (ask asking)

**shows 3 aces

	A9	K8
	Q	KJ654
	AKQJ986	73
	AQ2	J1084

Note: Responder is the Captain. If his partner had bid 4D/4H/4S, then a bid of 4NT by responder is a signoff.

Hand 5.	<u>Opener</u>	<u>Responder</u>	
	2C	2D	
	2NT	3C*	Stayman, not second negative. Second
	3S**	4S	negative would be PASS over the 2NT
	*Stayman, asking for four card major		rebid by partner.
	**I have four spades		
	AQJ3	10984	
	K83	QJ2	
	A8	J2	
	AKQ7	J1082	

Let's look at the auction. Your partner opens 2C to which you respond 2D (waiting). Partner rebids 2NT to show a balanced 22-24 HCP hand. You know that there are 27 to 29 HCP between the two hands (22+ plus your 5). Looking for a 4-4 fit in a major suit, you bid 3C (Stayman). When partner bids 3S, you simply bid the 4 spade game. If your partner had bid 3H, then you bid 3NT to play. If your partner also had 4 spades, he can still bid 4 spades at this point.

Hand 6.	<u>Opener</u>	<u>Responder</u>
	2C	2D
	2H	3H
	(a) 4S*	4NT**
	(b) 4NT***	5C****
	5D*****	6H*****
	7H/7NT	

*Kickback keycard asking bid

a**Shows 1 or 4 key cards

b***Keycard Blackwood

****Shows 1 or 4 key cards

*****Asks for queen of hearts and outside king

*****Shows the queen of hearts and no outside kings

A	Q3
AKJ842	Q76
10	A987
AKQJ2	8543

NOTE: Whether you use kickback or keycard Blackwood, you find out partner has 1 4 key cards

Let's look at this auction. Partner has a colossal hand! It's worth much more than 22+ HCP. It probably has only two losers. You have a wonderful hand with heart support which you show when you bid 3H. (A jump to 4H would be showing a weak hand with at least 3 card heart support.) Now the opener is getting excited about a possible grand slam. All he needs to know is if you have the ace of diamonds and the queen of hearts. He can either bid keycard Blackwood or Kickback to find out if you have the ace of diamonds. When you show 1 ace, he now checks for the queen of hearts by bidding the next suit above your response. When you show the queen, he can either put the hand in 7H or 7NT.

The 2C Kokish Bids

The following bids are available to you when you open 2C.

2C 2D *Alert Bid
2H*

- Your partner is forced to respond 2S.
- A rebid of 2NT shows 25+ HCP and a balanced hand (system are on)
- A rebid of 3C shows 5+H, 4+C and 22+ HCP
- A rebid of 3D shows 5+H, 4+D and 22+ HCP
- A rebid of 3H shows 6+ hearts and 22+ HCP
- A rebid of 3S shows 5+ hearts, 4+spades and 22+ HCP

2C 2D *Alert Bid
2S*

- Your partner is forced to respond 2NT
- A rebid of 3C shows 5+S, 4+ C and 22+ HCP
- A rebid of 3D shows 5+S, 4+D and 22+ HCP
- A rebid of 3H shows 5+S, 4+H and 22+ HCP
- A rebid of 3S shows 6+ spades and 22+ HCP

These are the basic bids in the system. The main feature of Kokish bids is the showing of 25+ HCP notrump hand at the two level. Now Puppet Stayman and all system bids are on.

In competition, if your partner's 2C opening is doubled, a PASS by you promises a positive response. Your "pass" must be alerted. A redouble by you shows a negative response and must be alerted.

In competition, if your partner's 2C is overcalled at the two level, a PASS by you promises a positive response. Your "pass" must be alerted. A double by you shows a negative response and must be alerted.

Opponents are now putting in interference bids over the 2C openings. You and your partner need to establish how you are going to handle a double or overcall bid.

Fourth Suit Forcing

When your partner opens the bidding and you also have an opening hand, you **MUST** be in game. However, using standard bidding methods sometimes makes it difficult to know which game to bid. Enters the **Fourth Suit Forcing Bid**.

As the name implies, Fourth Suit Forcing is used after three suits have been bid by you and your partner. A bid of the fourth suit now is artificial and tells partner that you have the values for a game; but, that you are not sure which game to bid. It is similar to the New Minor Forcing bid in that you are asking your partner to further describe his hand.

After the fourth suit forcing bid is made, you cannot pass short of game. Because this bid is artificial (you might or might not have any cards in the suit bid), it **must be alerted**.

Let's look at the following examples of the fourth suit forcing bid.

Hand 1.	<u>Opener</u>	<u>Responder</u>
	1D	1S
	2C	2H*

Here, the 2H may be artificial and has to be alerted in this bidding sequence. Two hearts is the fourth suit. The bid announces to your partner that your side has the values for game. It asks the opener to describe his hand further. Normally, if he holds a stopper in hearts, he would bid 2NT.

Hand 2.	<u>Opener</u>	<u>Responder</u>
	1C	1D
	1H	2S*

2S Bid: xx Kxx AQxx KQxx

1S Bid: AKxx xx xxxx xxx

Here, the 2S bid is artificial and **must** be alerted as fourth suit forcing. A bid of 1S by you is forcing for one round only. In this auction, most players treat 1S as natural and forcing for one round. A jump to 2S denies a four-card spade suit; but, promises values for game.

Fourth suit forcing is not used after a reverse or after a 2C opener. In these cases, you are in a forcing auction; so, the artificial bid is not needed.

When to use Fourth Suit Forcing?

There are two major times when you should use the fourth suit forcing bid:

- when looking for a stopper for a possible 3NT contract

The bidding:	<u>Opener</u>	<u>Responder</u>
	1D	1H
	1S	2C*

Your hand:	KJ5	AK54	K74	873
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In this hand, you have 14 HCP and your partner has opened. You must be in game since your partner has shown at least 12 HCP when he opens the hand. The total points between the two hands is at least 26 HCP. However, it is unclear what game to bid. You cannot raise spades with only three; partner did not support your hearts. You cannot bid notrump because you do not have a club stopper. The solution is to bid 2C which is Fourth Suit Forcing. Now, your partner knows that you belong in game. He can bid 2NT with a club stopper, give delayed support for your hearts or rebid one of his suits to show extra length.

- when we are unsure of what the final game contract will be

The Bidding:	<u>Opener</u>	<u>Responder</u>
	1D	1S
	2C	2H*

Your hand:	AQ765	AJ4	Q74	87
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You have 13 HCP. After your partner opens the bidding, you know that you must be in game. You want to play in 4S if partner has three spades. If not, 3NT or even 5D. To find out more about partner's hand, bid 2H, fourth suit forcing. Partner cannot pass and will continue to describe his hand until game is reached.

NOTE: In the above auction, if the opener had rebid 1NT rather than 2C, you could rebid 2C (new minor forcing) in an attempt to find out if he has three spades.

What are opener's rebids after his partner bids the fourth suit?

- Recognize that partner's bid is forcing and may be artificial
- Alert our opponents and explain, if they ask
- Bid notrump if you have a stopper in the fourth suit
- Show 3-card support for our partner's first suit
- Rebid one of our suits with extra length there
- Keep bidding until game is reached.

Practice Hands

The bidding:	<u>Opener</u>	<u>Responder</u>
	1D	1S
	2C	???

What would you bid holding the following hands?

Hand 1.	AQ876 K52 J2 K32	Answer: 2H, the fourth suit
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Hand 2.	K876 765 A43 AQ3	Answer: 2H, the fourth suit
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Hand 3.	KJ543 86 Q54 Q32	Answer: 2D
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The Bidding:	<u>Opener (you)</u>	<u>Responder</u>
	1H	1S
	2D	3C*

Hand 1.	6 K9542 AQ42 KJ3	Answer: 3NT. You have a stopper in clubs.
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Hand 2.	J98 KQJ54 KJ97 A	Answer: 3S, to show 3-card support. You do have a club stopper, too. First priority is to show 3-card support.
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Hand 3.	K3 AQJ86 KQ542 5	Answer: Rebid, 3D showing 5/5 hand and no stopper in clubs
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Next Week: Defensive Tips and Telling/Asking Bids

