



Adventures in Bridge

Leaders in Bridge Entertainment and Education

www.advinbridge.com

This Week in Bridge

(34) Opening 2♣

© AiB

Level: 1

Robert S. Todd

robert@advinbridge.com

General

An opening bid of 2♣ is strong, artificial and forcing. It shows a hand that has or almost has game on its own and feels that it can't afford to open with a simple 1-level natural bid. 2♣ opening bids are forcing to one level below game ("game minus 1.") So even if partner has nothing we must play at least 2NT, 3M, or 4m.

What Kind of Hands Open 2♣ and Why

- Balanced hands with 22+ HCP
 - There is no other way to show hands with this many HCP.
- Single-Suited Unbalanced Hands with 20+ HCP (usually 9+ tricks.)
 - These hands have 6+ card suits and are afraid that if they open at the one-level if they might play there when they can make a game.
- Two-Suited (or Three-Suited) Unbalanced Hands with 10+ tricks and a large number of HCP.
 - These two-suited hands have at least game in their hand and are highly interested in slam.

What Kind of Strong Hands Do Not Open 2♣ and Why

Two- and three-suited hands rarely open 2♣. This is because a 2♣ opening bid takes up a lot of bidding space. If we open 2♣ and have two suits to show, it can become difficult to have enough space to show our hand at a low enough level. When we have a very distributional hand the opponents often have very distributional hands and thus can preempt us if we open 2♣ with this kind of shapely hands. This also makes opening at the 1-level safer; your bid is much less likely to pass out when everyone at the table has a distributional hand.

3NT Good 24 to 26 points. Balanced Hand. 5-card Major Common.

2♣ 2♦/♥*

4NT 27-28 points. Balanced Hand. 5-card Major Common.

Majors

2♣ 2♦

2M This usually shows a 6+c Major Suit with 20+ HCP. It could be a 5-4 hand, but this is much rarer.

Fast Arrival

2♣ 2♦

2M 4M Since 2♦ is GF, this shows the worst possible 2♦ bid. It shows no Ace or King.

2♣ 2♦

2M 3M Since 2♦ is GF, then 3M is forcing and stronger than a jump to 4M – usually an outside Ace or King.

Conclusion

2♣ opening bid auctions are not common, but when they do come up it is important for you and partner to have good agreements about how to handle these strong hands. It can be frustrating to pick up an enormous hand and make a bid that you think is forcing a slam try, only to have partner pass. Avoiding that kind of misunderstanding is what having good agreements accomplishes, so make sure to discuss these auctions with your partner.