

Printable Version:

Weak Two Bids (edited for content from <http://www.bridgeguys.com/Conventions/WeakTwoBids.html>)

This convention is perhaps the most difficult to understand and explain. However, its effectiveness has caused many bridge players to adopt it in their Partnership Agreement. In essence, it is a mild preempt. Bidding Weak Twos disturbs the bidding of the opponents, obstructs the auction process of the opponents and generally does not permit the opponents to reach game.

Among the pioneers of the bidding auction there were several who simply liked to mess up the bidding. There was **Mr. Vanderbilt, Mr. Van Vleck, Mr. Schenken**. All great bridge players and men of adventure, who liked to throw stumbling blocks in the path of their bridge opponents.

Over the years, their convention has been used and developed further. Their convention has spawned variations. This has led to some confusion, because the situation is different when the Weak Two Bid is used in First Seat as opposed to the Third Seat. The situation is different regarding vulnerability. **Therefore, position and vulnerability are the two keys to successfully using Weak Two Bids.** We shall try to cover as much ground as possible without making it too confusing. If the partnership agreement is that the opening bid of 2 Clubs is a strong, artificial bid describing multiple strong holdings, then there are only three Weak Two Bids: 2 Diamonds - 2 Hearts - 2 Spades. The length of the suit, depending on vulnerability, is either a 5-card suit or a 6-card suit. The high card points should generally be in the suit bid. Experience shows that there should be no void in any suit. The point range is different according to partnership agreement, but in general both following point ranges are acceptable:

5 high card points to 10/11 HCP - 6 high card points to 10/11 HCP

Example 1: Vulnerable: East-West Dealer: South

South

♠ 742
♥ K9
♦ QJ10876
♣ J4

West

♠ AKJ95
♥ QJ6
♦ K9
♣ K107

Analysis:

South is Dealer. South has 7 high card points. East and West are vulnerable. South does not know how strong his partner is. South could jeopardize his partner's holding. South could preempt and obstruct the bidding auction of the opponents. South could inform his partner of his length and approximate strength.

Analysis:

West has 17 high card points. West would have opened 1 No Trump, if South had passed. West now sees his Diamond suit in danger. West has another bid: **2♠** West, however, cannot inform his partner of his strength.

South bids 2♦

North

♠ Q63
♥ 8532
♦ 5432
♣ A5

East

♠ 108
♥ A1074
♦ A
♣ Q98632

Analysis

North knows partner is weak. North knows that he is not vulnerable. North knows that East and West have game. Game by East and West equals 600+ minus points. North realizes: down three tricks and doubled equals -500. North decides to become adventurous North joins in to obstruct the bidding.

North bids

Analysis:

East knows that his partner has opening values. East does not know partner's strength. East does not have support in Spades. East cannot bid 3 Hearts; he only has four. East does not know that West has a Stopper in Diamonds. Should East try **3 No Trump** or **4♣**? East does not know whether to bid No Trump. East struggles for a bid.

Conclusion: a Weak Two Bid in Diamonds by the dealer had the effect that the opponents have difficulty in finding their contract. This is the desired effect of the Weak Two Bid.

But, now we turn the cards around, and see what happens.

Example 2:

Vulnerable: East-West

Dealer: South

South

♠ 742
♥ K9
♦ QJ10876
♣ J4

West

♠ Q63
♥ 53
♦ 543
♣ Q9863

Analysis

South is Dealer. South has 7 high card points. East and West are vulnerable. South does not know how strong his partner is. South could jeopardize his partner's holding. South could preempt and obstruct the bidding auction of the opponents. South could inform his partner of his length and approximate strength.

Analysis

West has 4 high card points.

West must pass.

South bids 2♦

North

♠ AKJ5
♥ QJ64
♦ AK
♣ A107

East

♠ 1098
♥ A10872
♦ 92
♣ K52

Analysis:

North knows partner is weak, 5-11 high card points. North knows that he is not vulnerable. North has 21 high card points. North has been disturbed by partners Weak Two Bid.

Analysis:

East has 7 high card points.

North would have bid Two No Trump. What are the Guidelines for North?

East must pass.

What are the Responses to Weak Two Bids? What are the Guidelines for North?

North, in the above example, finds himself in a bind. What should he bid? This is the time for the Partnership Agreement to become activated and enforced. Without a Partnership Agreement, both partners are doomed to either not reach the correct contract or to exceed the correct contract. The problem lies in the fact, that the responder does not know whether his partner has a second suit and that the Responder cannot estimate the point range, which can be between 5 high card points to 11 high card points. In the above example, the contract can either be **3 No Trump** or **4 Spades**, but that is not the issue. The issue is: **What are the bidding possibilities for the responder after his partner has opened with a Weak Two Bid?** Below are some general guidelines, not only for the responder but also for the Weak Two bidder.

Recommendations and Guidelines about Distribution

There are several schools of thought about this feature of the holding and the learning bridge player will have to make a choice, a decision. The following constitutes only suggestions, recommendations and guidelines offered by bridge authors, bridge theoreticians, and bridge experts.

2 or fewer Spades	2 or fewer Spades	6 or more Spades
2 or fewer Hearts	6 or more Hearts	2 or fewer Hearts
6 or more Diamonds	2 or fewer Diamonds	2 or fewer Diamonds
3 Clubs	3 Clubs	3 Clubs

The Weak Two bidder should bid as follows with each example:

2 Diamonds	2 Hearts	2 Spades
------------	----------	----------

With this pre-agreed distribution, the responder knows immediately that the opener has absolutely no support for him in any other suit. This way, the responder will not be looking for a second suit.

Recommended and Suggested Response Methods

All raises are preemptive – That is, they are to play. Responder is CAPTAIN Opener should NEVER re-raise.

Responder's 2 No Trump – Feature Ask

This bid is a one-round forcing bid and shows game interest. If opener rebids his suit, then the opener shows weakness and no other feature in a side suit. If the opener rebids another suit, then this rebid shows a high-card feature, normally an Ace or King and a moderately strong holding.

Using this guideline it must be revealed to the opponents whether or not the opener is allowed to rebid above the level of three in his original suit. If the opener raises the 2 No Trump bid by partner to 3 No Trump, then this bid shows a solid suit.

Ogust

This is a conventional method employed by the partnership whereby the opener, whose partner has bid a forcing 2 No Trump, is able to describe further the strength of the holding and the quality of the suit by a series of artificial bids.

6-cards	Hand	Suit	Memory Aid
3♣	Weak (5-8 HCP)	Weak 1 Top 3 Honors	Weak Weak
3♦	Weak (5-8 HCP)	Good 2 Top 3 Honors	Weak Good
3♥	Good (9-11 HCP)	Weak 1 Top 3 Honors	Good Weak
3♠	Good (9-11 HCP)	Good 2 Top 3 Honors	Good Good
3N	6 or 7 running tricks.		Great

Over a Weak 2 ♦ some pairs do not permit a Heart or Spade response to Ogust. If you venture into frequent 5-card weak 2 bids, then use the following...

5-cards	Hand	Suit	Memory Aid
3♣	5-11 HCP	Any 5-card suit	5
3♦	5-7 HCP	Any 6 Cards	Weak
3♥	8-9 HCP	Any 6 Cards	Medium
3♠	10-11 HCP	Any 6 Cards	Good
3N	6 or 7 running tricks.		Great