



In 2/1 Game Force;
The only relevant auctions are:

1♦ - 2♣

1♥ - 2♣

1♥ - 2♦

1♠ - 2♣

1♠ - 2♦

1♠ - 2♥

Lesson 1

TWO over ONE
 Bidding System

an introduction

Introduction

Why use Two over one? One of the most popular bidding systems in the U.S. is the 2-over-1 Forcing-to-Game system. It's based on Standard American with 5-card majors. The main difference is in the meanings of 2-level responses to a major-suit opening.

The general approach is just as the name suggests: If responder's first bid is 2 of a new suit showing 13 or more points (1♠ by opener – 2♣, 2♦ or 2♥ by responder), it sets up a forcing auction; the partnership must bid on to game level. This is different from old-fashioned Standard American, where a 2-level response promises a good 10 or more points, but is *not* forcing to game.

The main advantage of the 2-over-1 system is that it saves bidding space. After making the initial 2-level response, responder doesn't have to jump to show forcing-to-game values. Because the auction can stay low, opener and responder have more room to exchange information below game level and more ways to evaluate slam possibilities.

There is no easy way to show many invitational hands of 10-11 pts we use the a Forcing One Notrump bid, which is a key part of the 2-over-1 system.

1♦-2♣. 1♥-2♣ 1♠-2♣ 1♥-2♦, 1♠-2♦, 1♠-2♥

These are the only 6 possible "2/1" auctions. Anything else would be either a raise, or a jump shift (such as 1♥ - 2♥ is a raise and 1♣ - 2♥ is a jump shift).

This system is not on if the opponents interfere (either with a double or an overcall). This system is not on by a Passed Hand. (So, the opening must be by the dealer or the player in 2nd position).

Bidding



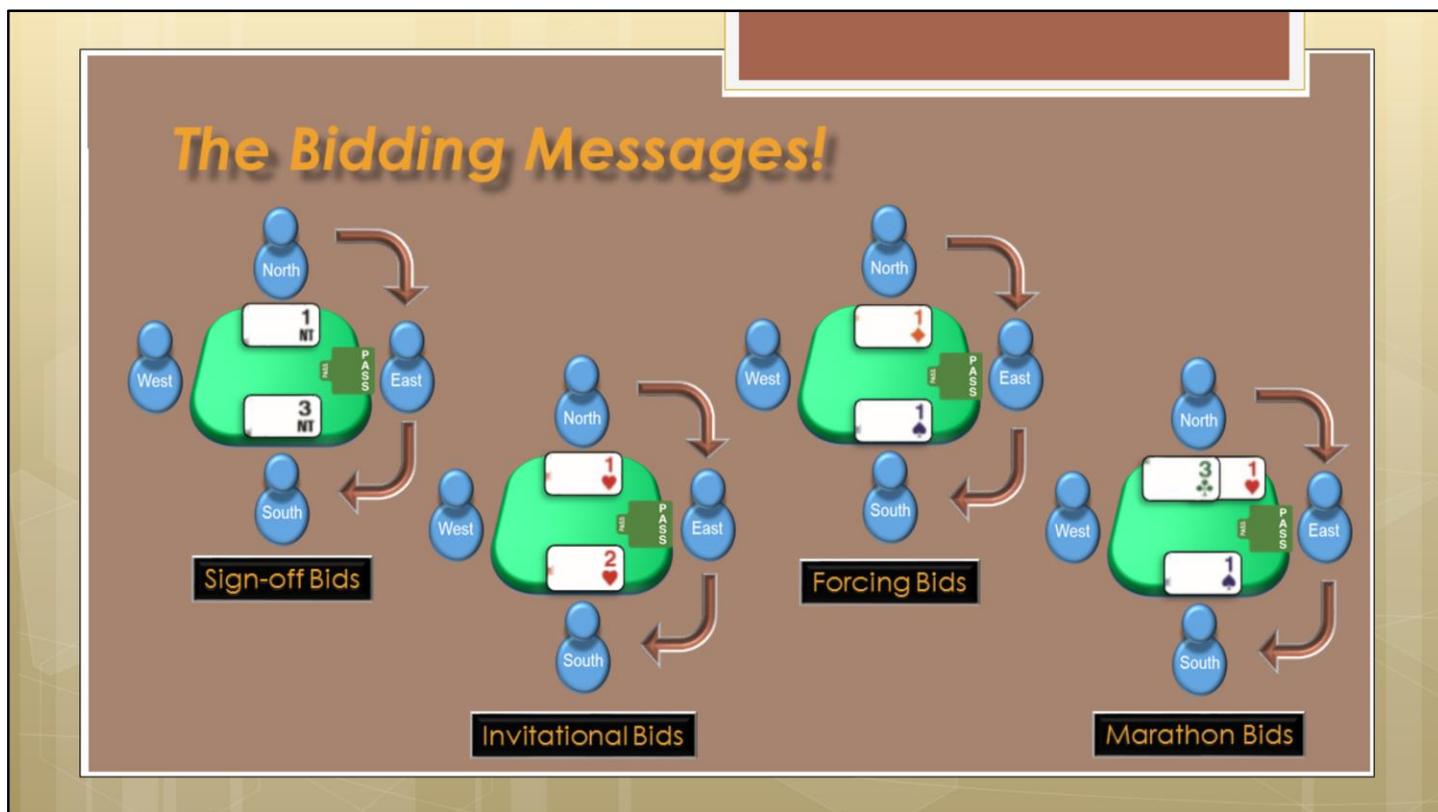
- Why TWO-OVER-ONE?
- Two-Over-One Game Forcing - 2/1 GF.

Bidding

The two-over-one style discussed in this lesson is two-over-one game forcing. Other variations are possible such as two-over-one game forcing, or except when responder rebids the same suit at the three level. Only the essential concepts are covered here: two-over-one responses and the forcing 1NT. A complete two-over-one game forcing style usually includes a number of additional conventions. The ideas presented here, however, are enough to get started. Here are the topics covered:

Two-Over-One This clarifies the use of the term two-over-one and reviews the standard approach, which does not commit the partnership to game in some sequences. Some of the challenges associated with the standard approach are illustrated, especially the challenge of knowing whether a specific bid is forcing or non-forcing.

Two-Over-One Game Forcing The concept of playing two-over-one as game forcing is introduced. The major advantage is that it removes any doubt for the partnership about which sequences are forcing and which are invitational after a two-over-one response. This part of the concept is straightforward.



The key to 2/1 Game Force is a change to the bidding message sent by the 2/1 response. So let's start with a review of the bidding messages. Every bid made during the bidding conversation sends a message to partner. It's important to have the message understood. Each bid carries one of four possible meanings:

Sign-off Bids

North opens with an invitational 1NT, showing a balanced hand of 15-17 points, and South raises to 3NT.

Invitational Bids

After an invitational response, opener may pass or bid again with values to warrant improving the contract or moving toward game. With minimum values, North will pass the invitation; with maximum, North can jump to game; with something in-between, North can make a further invitational bid, moving toward game.

Forcing Bids

A new suit response at the one level is forcing, and opener must make a further descriptive bid. South's hand is unlimited in strength, so the partnership could belong in game, or even slam.

Marathon Bids

A forcing bid tells partner to bid again, but it doesn't commit the partnership to game. Partner won't have to keep bidding unless another forcing bid is made. This could make the auction awkward, since the partnership must continually be concerned about the bidding message of each call.

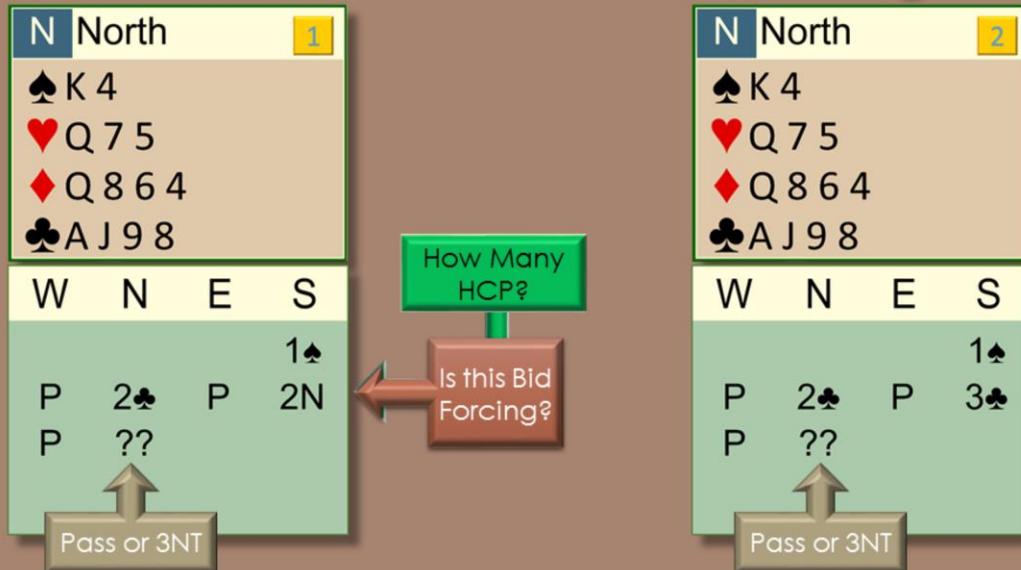
To simplify the subsequent auction, some bids are forcing to at least game. Both players must continue to bid until the game level is reached. These are referred to as *marathon bids*. After a marathon bid, **How HIGH** has been determined, to at least game. A marathon bid allows the partnership to find the best game, or to explore the possibility of a slam, without fear of the auction stopping too soon.

For example, suppose opener bids 1♥, responder bids 1♠, and opener jumps to 3♣. Opener's *jump shift* to 3♣

is a marathon bid. Even with a minimum for the 1♠ bid, responder is expected to bid again, and neither partner can pass until a game contract is reached.

How does the partnership know whether a bid is sign-off, invitational, forcing, or marathon? It must decide on its agreements before the game begins. In many cases, intuition guides the partnership, and after a while, a pattern starts to emerge. The power of agreeing to play Two-over-one Game Force, however, is that it makes the bidding messages crystal clear in some key situations: when the partnership is looking for the best game or a possible slam.

Standard Methods Shortcomings!



One key to good bidding is for each member of the partnership to recognize whether a particular bid is forcing, invitational or a signoff. There are many situations which create almost insurmountable challenges using standard methods.

South deals and opens the bidding 1♠. What is North's response? (2♣.) With 12 high-card points, you are too strong for 1NT. Using standard methods, North is too weak to jump to 2NT, which would be forcing, showing 13 or more points. North might play a jump to 2NT as artificial, the Jacoby 2NT response showing a forcing raise in spades. Instead, North simply starts with a new suit. When responding with four-card suits, bidding up the line, 2♣ is typical. Responding in a new suit at the two-level over partner's one-level suit bid is referred to as a two-over-one response.

Now South rebids 2NT over North's 2♣ response. What does that show? (A balanced minimum.) South has described a minimum-strength balanced hand of 12 to 14 points with a five-card spade suit. With a balanced hand of 15 to 17 points, South would have opened 1NT. With 18 or 19 points, South could jump to 3NT.

Is South's rebid forcing? (No.) Although some partnerships might have an agreement that North's two-level response has guaranteed a second bid, most partnerships would treat South's 2NT rebid as non forcing. North is allowed to pass with a minimum. A two-over-one response in Standard American methods is not forcing to game.

<table border="1" style="border-collapse: collapse; width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="background-color: #e0f0ff;">N North</td> <td style="background-color: #fff9c4; text-align: center;">3</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2">♠ K 4</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2">♥ Q 7 5</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2">♦ A Q 8 6 4</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2">♣ A 8 3</td> </tr> </table> <table border="1" style="border-collapse: collapse; width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="background-color: #e0f0ff;">W</td> <td style="background-color: #e0f0ff;">N</td> <td style="background-color: #e0f0ff;">E</td> <td style="background-color: #e0f0ff;">S</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: center;">1♥</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">P</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2♦</td> <td style="text-align: center;">P</td> <td style="text-align: center;">3♦</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">P</td> <td style="text-align: center;">??</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 10px;"> <table border="1" style="border-collapse: collapse; width: 80px; margin: auto;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">What should North Bid?</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">3♥ - 4♥</td> </tr> </table> </div>	N North	3	♠ K 4		♥ Q 7 5		♦ A Q 8 6 4		♣ A 8 3		W	N	E	S				1♥	P	2♦	P	3♦	P	??			What should North Bid?	3♥ - 4♥	<h3 style="text-align: center; text-decoration: underline;">Playing Standard Methods</h3> <p style="text-align: center;">South raises North's 2♦ response to 3♦. Would a rebid of 3♥ be forcing?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Would a raise to 4♦ be treated as non forcing in most partnerships?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">If a rebid of 3♥ is non forcing, What rebid should North make? (4♥/5♦/4♣.)?</p>
N North	3																												
♠ K 4																													
♥ Q 7 5																													
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W	N	E	S																										
			1♥																										
P	2♦	P	3♦																										
P	??																												
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South opens 1♥. What is North's response? (2♦.) With 15 high-card points plus a five-card suit, North knows the partnership belongs in at least game. With only three-card support for hearts, North shouldn't make an immediate forcing raise in that suit. Instead, North can start with a two over-one response of 2♦, waiting to hear South's rebid. Other calls maybe, a natural, forcing, 2NT response is a possibility, but doesn't describe the heart support or the fine diamond suit. The same flaw is present in a response of 3NT, showing a strong balanced hand. A response of 2♦ keeps most options open.

South raises North's 2♦ response to 3♦. Would a rebid of 3♥ be forcing? (No/Yes.) Although some partnerships might agree to play a rebid of 3♥ as forcing in this situation, the standard approach is to treat it as non forcing. A rebid of 3♥ would be invitational, showing three-card support and a hand of limit-raise strength, 10 to 12 points

Two-Over-One Game Forcing

N North	5
♠ K 4	
♥ Q 7 5	
♦ A Q 8 6 4	
♣ A 8 3	
S South	
♠ A 3	
♥ A K 6 4 3	
♦ K 9 7 3	
♣ 6 2	

W	N	E	S
			1♥
P		P	
P		P	
P		P	
P		P	

Annotations:

- "We are in Game" (points to the 1♥ bid)
- "♥ fit and I have a good hand" (points to the 1♥ bid)
- "I have ♠A" (points to the ♠A in South's hand)
- "I have ♦ too" (points to the ♦A in South's hand)
- "Ohh, you have ♥ and a good hand. You did not jump to game! Let's see what you got! I have ♠A" (points to the ♥A and ♠A in South's hand)

One possible solution to the dilemma of handling two-over-one responses is for the partnership to discuss guidelines for each possible sequence that might occur. There's a simpler solution, however

After South 3♦, What bid would North like to make at his point to clarify the situation? (3♥, forcing.) North would like to show heart support, without using up all of the bidding room below the game level. The ideal bid at this point would be a forcing 3♥ call. That leaves plenty of room for the partnership to explore for the best game or to move toward slam. Many partnerships simplify this whole situation through the following agreement:

A two-over-one response by an unpassed hand is forcing to game. Playing two-over-one game forcing, North can bid 3♥ at this point without any worry about being passed. The initial 2♦ response already committed the partnership to the game level. Any bid below game, therefore, must be forcing.

Over North's 3♥ bid, South can bid; (3♠.) South didn't promise anything extra with the raise to 3♥, so South can now show a top of-the-line hand for either diamonds or hearts by cuebidding 3♠, showing interest in reaching slam.

South cuebids 3♠, what call might North make? (4♣.) Now North can confirm interest in slam by cuebidding 4♣, showing first-round control of clubs. Notice that the partnership is still below the game level, but both partners have had an opportunity to express interest in reaching a slam. After this start, the partnership should reach an excellent 6♥ contract or even a grand slam.

Two-Over-One Game Forcing

N North	6
♠ K 4	
♥ Q 7 5	
♦ A Q 8 6 4	
♣ A 8 3	
S South	
♠ Q 3	
♥ K 9 6 4 3	
♦ K 9 7 3	
♣ K J	

W	N	E	S
			1♥
P	2♦	P	3♦
P	3♥	P	4♥
P	P	P	

I do not have a big hand, game is where we belong!

A two-over-one response by an unpassed hand is forcing to game!

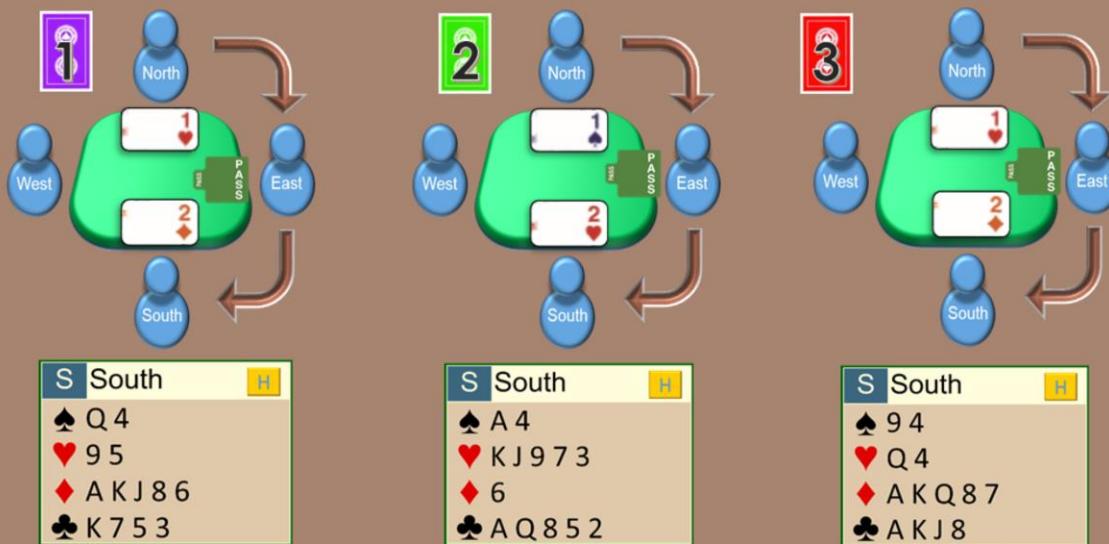
Playing two-over-one game forcing; leaves plenty of room for the partnership to explore for the best game with minimum hands.

With a minimum opening bid, South would settle for game in the eight-card major-suit fit by bidding 4♥. What call would North make after South's 4♥ bid? (Pass.) North would have no reason to bid again. South has shown a minimum opening bid and expressed no interest in slam. North would pass and settle for game. Is 4♥ a good spot? (Yes.) 4♥ is the best contract for North–South. 3NT is unlikely to make if the opponents lead spades. 5♦ is also unlikely to make. Declarer has to lose the ♠A and may also lose two heart tricks, unless the missing hearts lie very favorably. Even 4♥ isn't 100% secure. If the hearts divide badly, declarer could lose three heart tricks and the ♠A. However, 4♠ is certainly where the partnership would like to be.

Summary:

Two-over-one game forcing can make it easier to explore for the best game contract or to look for slam. Once the initial two-over-one response has been made, any bid below game is forcing. Neither partner needs to jump to game for fear of being passed in a part score contract. It can make the partnership more comfortable because there is no longer any doubt about whether a bid is forcing or invitational.

2/1 Auction Bidding Messages!



In Layout 1

Respond 2♦. A new suit by responder at the two level, without a jump, starts the 2/1 Game Force auction. South's hand is worth 14 points-13 *high-card points* plus 1 *length point* for the five card diamond suit, enough to commit the partnership to at least game.

This is the same response that would be made using standard methods. The difference is in the bidding message and the strength requirements. Playing 2/1 Game Force, South's 2♦ response is forcing to game and promises at least 13 points. In standard methods, the 2♦ response is only forcing for one round and could be made with as few as 10 points. After hearing opener's rebid, responder would have to show the extra strength to make sure the partnership gets to game.

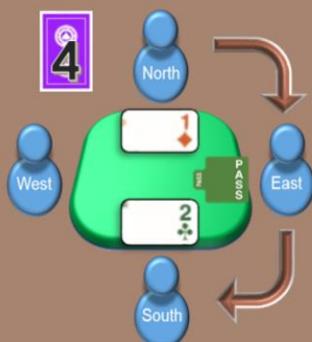
In Layout 2

Respond 2♥. After an opening bid of 1♠, a response of 2♥ shows a five-card or longer suit, as in standard methods. With two five card suits, clubs and hearts, bid the higher-ranking suit, hearts, first. Playing 2/1 Game Force, the 2♥ response is forcing to at least game. In standard methods, the partnership is not yet committed to game.

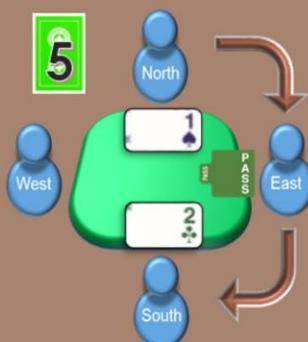
In Layout 3

Respond 2♦, South has 19 high-card points plus 1 length point for a total of 20. In standard methods, South might make a *strong jump shift* to 3♦ to show the great strength and slam interest. Playing 2/1 Game Force, there's no need to use up bidding space with a jump shift in this situation. The 2♦ response is forcing to game, leaving plenty of room to explore for slam along the way. In general, responder should avoid making a jump shift with a two-suited hand. It takes up a lot of bidding room, making it difficult to describe the distribution of the hand.

2/1 Auction Bidding Messages!



S	South	H
♠	5	
♥	A 8 3	
♦	9 7 5	
♣	A Q J 8 5 2	



S	South	H
♠	Q J 5	
♥	A J 6 2	
♦	9 7 3	
♣	K Q 5	

2/1 APPLIES WHEN

- ❖ Opener bids 1♦, 1♥, 1♠
- ❖ The next player passes.
- ❖ Responder bids a new suit at the 2 level without jumping.
- ❖ Responder is an *unpassed* hand.

2/1 Game Force (GF)

- A non-jump, new suit by responder at the 2 level is **forcing to at least game** and shows
- ❖ 13 or more points.
 - ❖ The next player passes.
 - ❖ 5+ cards for a 2♥ response.
 - ❖ 4+ cards (rarely 3) for a 2♦ or 2♣ response.

In Layout 4

Respond 2♣. 2♣ is the only 2/1 Game Force responder can make after a 1♦ opening bid. South has 11 high-card points plus 2 length points for the six-card suit, enough to commit the partnership to game after North opens the bidding. The auction would start the same way in standard methods, but the 2♣ response would be forcing one round only, not to game.

In Layout 5

Respond 2♣. South has 13 high-card points, enough for a 2/1 Game Forcing response. With only three spades, South can't make an immediate forcing raise, and 2♥ would promise a five-card suit. Occasionally, responder's only option is to bid a three-card minor. North will probably expect a longer club suit, but South is always planning to play with spades as trumps. 2♣ is just a *temporizing* bid.

When 2/1 Game Force is Off!

Responder is a Passed Hand

S	South	P	S	W	N	E
♠	9 3		P	P	1♠	P
♥	7 5		2♦			
♦	A J 9 6 5					
♣	K Q 8 4					

WHEN 2/1 DOES NOT APPLY

- ❖ If responder RHO overcalls or doubles.
- ❖ If Responder is a passed hand.

Layout 1 Hand:

S	South	H
♠	8 3	
♥	J 8 2	
♦	A K J 8 7 3	
♣	9 4	

Layout 2 Hand:

S	South	H
♠	K 8 3	
♥	Q 2	
♦	9 6 5	
♣	A K J 8 7	

Even if the partnership has agreed to play 2/1 as game forcing, there are two situations when it doesn't apply:

In Layout 1

Respond 2♦. After East's 2♣ overcall, South's bid of a new suit at the two level is still forcing-as in standard methods-but it is not forcing to game. In a competitive auction, it would be impractical for South to have to pass with this type of hand just because there are only 11 total points, not enough to force to game. If South were to pass and West jumped to 3NT, for example, it's too late for South to show the diamond suit, and North might get off to a poor opening lead. South can afford to bid 2♦, promising 10 or more points, and then pass a 2♠ or 2NT rebid by North. If North now bids 2♥, South can rebid 3♦, non-forcing.

In Layout 2

Redouble. With 10 or more high-card points, responder starts with a redouble, or makes some form of artificial raise with a fit for opener's suit. After a takeout double, a 2♣ response would be non-forcing and show a weaker hand. Many partnerships use responders jump to 2NT over a takeout double to show four-card or longer support for opener's suit and the values for a limit raise or better. This is known as Jordan 2NT convention.

In Layout 3

Respond 2♦. Once South has passed initially, showing fewer than 13 points, a 2/1 response is no longer forcing to game. In fact, it's not even forcing! With a *light opening* bid in third or fourth position, opener can pass responder's new suit bid, hoping for a small part-score.

Exercise 1

You partner West opens the bidding 1♥. What do you respond with each of the following hands?

E East 1

♠ K 10 6
♥ J 6
♦ Q 10 8 5 3
♣ Q 9 5

1NT

E East 2

♠ QJ 7 6 3
♥ 9 3
♦ K 7
♣ A Q J 2

1♠

E East 3

♠ 5 2
♥ Q 9 4
♦ 7 6 3
♣ A J 8 6 2

2♥

E East 4

♠ J 7 2
♥ 4
♦ A K J 7 4
♣ Q 10 8 4

1NT

E East 5

♠ K 9 8 5
♥ 10 6
♦ A K J 6 3
♣ K 5

2♦

E East 6

♠ 10 3
♥ 6
♦ A J 5 3
♣ K J 10 6 3 2

1NT

- 1) 1NT. This is the same bid East would make whether or not the partnership plays two-over-one. The only difference is that East knows West will bid again since the 1NT response is forcing. That will be too bad if 1NT is the best possible contract on this deal, but it's the price that must be paid for using this convention.
- 2) 1♠. No reason for East not to make a natural response. 1♠ is forcing.
- 3) 2♥. Playing five-card majors, East should raise with three-card support.
- 4) 1NT. Playing natural methods, East could respond 2♦. Playing two-over-one, a response of 2♦ would be forcing to game. East isn't quite strong enough for that and must settle for 1NT. The good news is that West will bid again, giving East an opportunity to further describe the hand.
- 5) 2♦. East has enough to commit the partnership to game and makes a natural response, bidding the longest suit first.
- 6) 1NT. unless the partnership is playing that a response of 2♣ followed by 3♣ is non forcing, East has to make a forcing 1NT response. East will have an opportunity to show the club suit after West makes a rebid.

Exercise 2A

Opener's Rebids:

What call does West make with these hands after the auction goes as shown?

W West		1	
♠	AKJ873		
♥	105		
♦	QJ9		
♣	J8		
W	N	E	S
1♠	P	2♥	P
2♠	P	3♠	P
4♠			

W West		2	
♠	KJ862		
♥	AQ83		
♦	94		
♣	Q5		
W	N	E	S
1♠	P	2♦	P
2♥	P	2N	P
3N			

W West		3	
♠	86		
♥	KQ10862		
♦	94		
♣	AK5		
W	N	E	S
1♥	P	2♦	P
2♥	P	3♥	P
4♣			

Opener's Rebids

- 1) 4♠. East's 2♥ response committed the partnership to at least game. East's 3♠ bid is forcing, leaving room to explore slam possibilities. With nothing to add to the conversation, West settles for 4♠.
- 2) 3NT. The 2NT bid is forcing once East started with a two-over-one. West has shown a five-card spade suit and a four-card heart suit. If East doesn't want to support either of these suits, notrump looks like the spot.
- 3) 4♣. After the 2♦ response, the partnership is committed to at least game. East's 3♥ bid shows interest in a slam. With a minimum hand and heart support, East could have jumped to 4♣. West should cooperate with East by cuebidding 4♣. The first-round control of clubs may be what East needs to know about before bidding a slam.

Exercise 2B

What call does West make with the these hands after the auction goes as shown?

Opener's Rebids:

W West		4	
♠	K 10 8 7 4		
♥	J 8 3		
♦	K 4		
♣	A 7 5		
W	N	E	S
		P	P
1♠	P	2♥	P
P			

W West		5	
♠	10 6		
♥	K Q 10 8 5		
♦	A Q J 3		
♣	5 4		
W	N	E	S
1♥	1♠	2♣	P
2♦	P	3♣	P
P			

Two-over-one game forcing can make it easier to explore for the best game contract or to look for slam. Once the initial two-over-one response has been made, any bid below game is forcing.

Neither partner needs to jump to game for fear of being passed in a part score contract. It can make the partnership more comfortable because there is no longer any doubt about whether a bid is forcing or invitational.

Opener's Rebids

- 1) Pass. Since East passed originally, the 2♥ response is not forcing. With a light opening bid, there's no need for West to bid again. Hearts should be a satisfactory trump suit.
- 2) Pass. After the interference, East's 2♣ bid is not game forcing. The 3♣ bid is only invitational so, with nothing else to say, West should stop in part-score.

11/26/2016

2 over 1 in a nut-shell

1. Only these bids constitute the 2/1 system auction: $1\heartsuit-2\clubsuit$, $1\heartsuit-2\spadesuit$, $1\spadesuit-2\clubsuit$, $1\spadesuit-2\heartsuit$, $1\heartsuit-2\diamonds$, $1\spadesuit-2\diamonds$, $1\spadesuit-2\heartsuit$
2. 2/1 is on when you open as dealer or in 2nd seat after RHO pass.
3. This system is not played by a passed hand.
4. A 2/1 response to partner's opening bid promises 13+ HCP.
5. You respond to partner's 1 of a major with 1NT with 6-12 HCP.
6. This 1NT can not be passed by opener (hence "forcing")
7. Responding NT to partner's $1\clubsuit$ or $1\diamonds$ is equivalent to SAYC.
8. This NT CAN be passed by opener, or if you passed out first.
9. After 1NT forcing all bids by opener are natural and could be invitational.
10. If you are a passed hand, you can play 1NT as "semi-forcing"
11. After your 1NT forcing all your subsequent bids are non-forcing.
12. $1\diamonds-2\clubsuit$ is 100% forcing to game, otherwise play it as $1\diamonds-2N$ to show 10-12 HCP.
13. When opponents interfere 2/1 is OFF.



- 1NT Openings
- Responder's Rebids

Next Week
Lesson 2

TWO over ONE
Bidding System

1 NT Forcing

This section introduces the downside of two-over-one game forcing. The 1NT response has to cover a much wider range of hands. This leads to the need to play the response of 1NT as forcing, when the opening bid is a major suit. 1NT is not forcing in response to a minor suit, because responder has more bidding room. 1NT also isn't forcing by a passed hand.

Playing two-over-one game forcing appears to make the partnership's bidding much easier. There's no longer any question of whether partner's bid is invitational or forcing after a two-over-one response. As with all conventions, however, there is a price to pay. You can't play two-over-one game forcing without adding another conventional agreement.

Opener's Rebid after 1NT Forcing

Opener's rebid after a forcing 1NT response is discussed. Most of the time, opener simply makes a natural response. The only complication arises when opener would have passed a non-forcing 1NT response and may now have to manufacture a rebid.