



Opening 2NT and Responses

The opening bid of 2NT is just like the opening bid of 1NT – but a whole lot stronger.

It shows 20-22 HCP (no more, no less) in a hand with balanced distribution – no singletons or voids.

When you have at least half the points in the pack in your own hand you do not need a lot of help from partner to make game. Responder should bid on with **4 or more high** card points.

Do not worry about all the suits that you are weak in – partner has them covered.

The responses are just the same as the responses to 1NT, but **a level higher**.

The only difference is that partner does not need to be rescued! Your aim is to find the best game or pass.

You can use Stayman and Transfers to check for possible 8-card fits in a major just as you do over 1NT.

Summary of the Responses to a 2NT Opening Bid

Opening Bid	Responses
2NT 20-22 HCP balanced (4-3-3-3, 4-4-3-2, 5-3-3-2) or semi-balanced (5-4-2-2 or 6-3-2-2) Points required for 3NT = 25+ Points required for 6NT = 33+ Points required for 7NT = 37+	<p>+3♣ Stayman, as over 1NT, asking about 4- card majors</p> <p>Opener bids: 3♦ with no 4-card major 3♥ with 4 hearts or both majors 3♠ with 4 spades and not 4 hearts</p> <p>Responder raises to game in a 4-4 major fit, bids 3NT without a fit</p> <p>+3♦ Transfer, showing 5 hearts Opener completes the transfer. Responder continues as over 1NT: (2NT-3♦-3♥) -3NT 5 hearts, 4-9HCP. Opener passes/converts to 4♥ with 3 -4♥ 6+ cards, sign off +3♠ 5+hearts and 4 spades, offers a choice of 3 possible games</p> <p>3♥ Transfer, showing 5 spades Opener completes the transfer Responder continues as after 3♦ transfer.</p> <p>-3NT A sign-off, to play in game. 4-9HCP. Denies any interest in major suit fits. (May have a long minor – 3NT is easier than 5♣/♦)</p> <p>-4♥/4♠ To play. A 6+ card suit. (we usually prefer to transfer the declaration into the strong hand, so these show at least mild interest in slam.)</p> <p>-5♣/♦ Sign-off, to play <i>These are as rare as snow in June</i> They show 7+card suits and about 1 high card!</p> <p>+4NT A slam invitation with a balanced hand. 11-12HCP</p> <p>-6NT A sign-off, to play in slam. 13-14HCP</p> <p>-7NT 17-20 HCP. (Not impossible, just unlikely)</p>