

After One Diamond – Two Clubs

Superseded by *EZ-Expert Bidding Tools*, Second Edition. (Applies to Edition 1.)

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Our 2 ♣ response to a 1 ♦ opening bid is forcing to game.

Rule: The 2 ♣ response to 1 ♦ provides a 5-card suit, except for a 3=3=3=4 hand unsuitable for a 3 NT response.

With game values, only four clubs, and another 4-card suit, the response should be either one of a major or a forcing 2 ♦ raise. As usual, our 3 ♣ response denies a 4-card major and is invitational with at least six good clubs (see page 40).

Suppose partner opens 1 ♦, and we hold one of these hands:

- a. ♠ K 9 6 4 ♥ 10 6 ♦ Q 3 ♣ Q 10 8 4 2 [weak]
- b. ♠ K 7 ♥ 10 6 ♦ Q 7 3 ♣ Q 10 8 4 3 2 [weak]
- c. ♠ A 9 6 4 ♥ 10 6 ♦ Q 3 ♣ K Q 10 4 2 [invitational]
- d. ♠ A 7 ♥ 10 6 ♦ Q 7 3 ♣ K Q 10 8 4 2 [invitational]
- e. ♠ A 9 4 ♥ 10 6 ♦ Q 10 3 ♣ K Q 10 4 2 [invitational]
- f. ♠ A Q 9 4 ♥ 10 6 5 ♦ Q 3 ♣ K Q 10 4 [game-forcing]
- g. ♠ A Q 9 4 ♥ 10 6 ♦ Q 3 ♣ K Q 10 4 2 [game-forcing]
- h. ♠ A Q ♥ 10 6 ♦ Q 7 3 ♣ K Q 10 8 4 2 [game-forcing]

We respond 1 ♠ and 1 NT, respectively, with hand [a or b]. We also respond 1 ♠ with hand [c], planning to invite game later. With hand [d], we jump to 3 ♣, invitational.

This topic is about what happens on game-forcing hands, such as [g & h], after the 2 ♣ response – and problem hands like [e & f].

Over the 2 ♣ response, opener's rebid of a major suit does not show extra values (it's not a strong reverse). It denies holding five or more diamonds and shows a 4-card major.

In priority order, opener bids, shows or plans to show:

1. a 5-card major (with 6+ diamonds),
2. notrump, 3=3=4=3 or possibly 3=3=5=2 (one major may be unstopped),

3. diamonds with five or more,
4. a 4-card major (usually 3 or 4 diamonds),
5. 3 ♣ or a splinter (3 ♥ or 3 ♠ singleton or void) with 4+ clubs.

This plan should cover all shapes for opener. Because the opening bid was not 1 NT, opener should not have a medium-strength balanced hand. Responder could have such a hand.

O2	R2	Next	Rec. After { 1 ♢ - 2 ♣ } game-forcing
2 ♢	5+ diamonds, may have a 4-card major.		
	2 ♥	4+ hearts & 5+ clubs.	
	2 ♠	4+ spades & 5+ clubs.	
	2 NT	Natural, may be 3=3 majors with 4, 5, or 6 clubs.	
2 ♥	4+ hearts (3 or 4 ♢), may have 4 spades.		
2 ♠	4+ spades (3 or 4 ♢), but not 4 hearts.		
2 NT	12 to 14 HCP, 3=3=4=3 shape. <input type="checkbox"/> 3=3=2=5 permitted.		
3 ♣	4+ ♣, no 4-card major, no singleton or void in a major.		
3 ♢	6+ diamonds, medium+ strength, no 4-card major.		
3 ♥	Splinter: 4+ clubs, medium+ strength, 0 or 1 heart.		
3 ♠	Splinter: 4+ clubs, medium+ strength, 0 or 1 spade.		
3 NT	18 to 19 HCP, 3=3=4=3 shape. <input type="checkbox"/> 3=3=2=5 permitted.		

Problem hands, such as responder [e]:

- Invitational values,
- No 4-card major suit,
- Diamonds unsuitable for a single, invitational raise,
- 2 NT unsuitable, *and*
- Club suit unsuitable for a 3 ♣ response.

Our 2 NT response is invitational, but promises stoppers. Our plan is to respond 2 NT with a suggestion of a stopper in one major, accompanied by a solid stopper in the other. Otherwise, we either go low at 1 NT or force to game with 2 ♣.

e. ♠ A 9 4 ♥ 10 6 ♢ Q 10 3 ♣ K Q 10 4 2 [invitational]

f. ♠ A Q 9 4 ♥ 10 6 ♢ Q 7 3 ♣ K Q 10 4 [game-forcing]

Hand [e] responds 1 NT; with another point, hand [e] should force to game with 2 ♣. With only four clubs, we respond 1 ♠ on hand [h].

Examples:

g. ♠ A Q 9 4 ♥ 10 6 ♦ Q 3 ♣ K Q 10 4 2 [game-forcing]

h. ♠ A Q ♥ 10 6 ♦ Q 7 3 ♣ K Q 10 8 4 2 [game-forcing]

We open 1♦, partner bids 2♣, and we hold:

1. ♠ K 10 7 2 ♥ A J 7 ♦ K 9 8 2 ♣ J 3

On hand [1], we rebid 2♠, with fewer than five diamonds.

Responder [g] bids 3♠, since slam is possible opposite a large opening hand; we sign off in 4♠. When responder [h] rebids 3♣, we bid 3NT.

2. ♠ K 10 7 2 ♥ J 9 7 ♦ A K 8 2 ♣ J 3

On hand [2], we rebid 2♠, reaching 4♠ with responder [g].

Responder [h] rebids 3♣ over 2♠, denying a heart stopper; we bid 3♥, showing and asking for half a stopper (Q-x or J-x-x). Responder retreats to 4♣, where we play.

Move the ♣ 4 into the spade suit, and responder would instead bid 3♠ over 3♥. Taking a position, opener might pass, especially at matchpoints – people without our methods can land in real trouble.

3. ♠ K J 2 ♥ 9 7 2 ♦ A K 10 8 ♣ J 7 3

On hand [3], we rebid 2NT with the expected 3=3=4=3 and one major stopped. Responder [g or h] shows a spade stopper. We bid 4♣, and responder should play there.

Note: If the response were 2♣ on hand [f], our ship would be in a strong on-shore breeze without an anchor.

4. ♠ K 10 2 ♥ A J 7 ♦ A K 8 2 ♣ A 7 3

On hand [4], we had planned a jump rebid of 2NT. With the expected 3=3=4=3 shape, 3NT is a good bid. Over a natural 4♠ by responder [g] we jump to 6NT and play there.

3NT has implicitly raised responder's clubs (surely 5+ cards for an action now other than 4NT), so 4♦ by either partner asks for keycards in clubs. The grand slam may still be difficult to reach with responder [h].

5. ♠ K J 2 ♥ A 7 ♦ A K 10 9 8 2 ♣ J 3

On hand [5], we jump to 3 \diamond . Responder [g or h] bids 3 \spadesuit , as an advance control-bid, confirmed by bidding 4 \diamond over our 3 NT. We bid 4 \heartsuit (RKB \diamond), and land in 6 \diamond . (Lacking a heart stopper, we would have played in a minor suit – in slam if we held a singleton.)

Exercise: explore situations where has five diamonds (or more in a non-jump hand), 4-4-4-1, four clubs, or four hearts instead of spades.

Backstory

2 \clubsuit with a 4-card major. After a 1 \heartsuit opening bid, we can safely respond in a 4-card minor suit, when holding four spades. The known 5-card heart suit anchors the auction, and there is only the one additional major to explore. To respond 2 \clubsuit over 1 \diamond when holding another 4-card suit, we need a 5-card club suit to anchor the complexities of this auction.

BWS includes 3 \clubsuit invitational and 2 \clubsuit forcing to game over 1 \diamond . Beyond that there is only one sentence on this topic:

Opener's reverse of the form one diamond – two clubs – two of a major does not promise extra values and is ambiguous as to diamond length.

♦ Alternative Methods

The article “After One Diamond – Two Clubs” outlines these methods:

- An Almost 2/1 method played by Gary Schwartz and the author for a couple of decades.
- Alternative A, inspired by Max Hardy: 2 \clubsuit forces to game and opener's 3 \clubsuit is a catch-all.
- Alternative B: 2 \clubsuit forces to 2 NT and opener's 2 \diamond is a catch-all.
- Alternative C, inspired by a method Marshall Miles said was popular in Europe: 2 \clubsuit forces to 2 NT and opener's 2 \heartsuit is a catch-all.

See also the Eaves and Kearney threads on Bridge Winners.

(end of primary book content – the following text is only in this article)

Almost 2/1. For a couple of decades, Gary Schwartz and I played that the 2 \clubsuit response forced to game unless the suit was rebid. Back in the day, I proposed two plans to Gary Schwartz, and he chose: opener's 2 \diamond rebid was a catch-all rebid that could be made with a few as three diamonds; opener's reverse into a major showed 4+ cards and 5+ diamonds, but no extra strength; 2 NT showed extra values and forced to game (mostly a wasted bid, since 1 NT was not opened). We only played this method with each other,

and it did not get reinforced. Eventually, we messed up and decided to switch to 3 ♣ invitational and 2 ♣ forcing to game (BWS).

When I fleshed out a plan and proposed it to Gary, he came back with what he plays with others. That's alternative A, which I published in October 2024 as a future addition to the book, along with alternatives B and C.

That same month Marty Bergen's plan, similar to alternative A, appeared in the *Bulletin*. Gary and I have agreed that Bergen's is better, so that's the basis for the recommended method.

Alternative A – 2 ♣ forces to game – 3 ♣ catch-all

Max Hardy's *Standard* book (starting page 51) has a precursor of this plan, where opener may rebid 2 NT with a 4-card major. Hardy also requires that responder have at least five clubs to bid 2 ♣ with a 4-card major. Larry Cohen's plan in his "For the 1,000th time" article is not as detailed but appears similar. Cohen allows a decent 4-card minor when holding a 4-card major. While Cohen's plan is appealing, we cannot afford only four in the minor, over 1 ♦.

O2	R2	Next	Alt. A: After { 1 ♦ – 2 ♣ } game-forcing
2 ♦	5+ diamonds, may have a 4-card major.		
	2 ♥	4+ hearts, may have 4 spades.	Common continuations below.
	2 ♠	4+ spades, but not 4 hearts.	
2 ♥	4+ hearts, may have 4 spades (3 or 4 ♦).		
2 ♠	4+ spades, but not 4 hearts (3 or 4 ♦).		
	2 ♠	[over 2 ♥] 4+ spades.	
	2 NT	oM stopped, small or large hand.	
	3 ♣	Natural, oM not stopped.	
	3 ♦	Natural, oM not stopped.	
	3 M	M is trump; serious 3 NT.	
	3 NT	oM stopped, medium hand.	
	JS oM	Splinter: 4+ M, short in oM.	
	4 M	Terrible hand, 4-card support.	
2 NT	Balanced, small or large hand, both majors stopped.		
3 ♣	Unstopped major, no 4-card major: 4+ ♣ or 3=3=4=3.		
3 ♦	6+ diamonds, medium+ strength, no 4-card major.		
3 ♥	Splinter: 4+ clubs, medium+ strength, 0 or 1 heart.		
3 ♠	Splinter: 4+ clubs, medium+ strength, 0 or 1 spade.		
3 NT	Balanced, medium hand, both majors stopped.		

In priority order, opener bids, shows or plans to show:

1. a 5-card major (with 6+ diamonds),
2. diamonds with five or more,
3. a 4-card major,
4. notrump with both majors stopped,
5. 3 ♣ with 4+ clubs or 3=3=4=3.

With fewer than four cards in each major, and only four diamonds, opener will either have four or more clubs or be 3=3=4=3.

Alternative B – 2 ♣ forces to 2 NT – 2 ♦ catch-all

Rule: All opener's rebids, except 2 ♦ or 2 NT, force to game.

Opener strains to rebid 2 NT, to let responder off the hook. Half a stopper (Q-x or J-x-x) or four small is good enough in one major. 2 NT is usually best with 4=4=4=1 shape.

Rule: Over opener's non-forcing 2 NT rebid, 3 ♣ forces to game.

For 2 ♣, responder will only hold a 4-card major with game-forcing values. With only invitational values, we respond in the major.

Rule: The 2 ♣ responder's rebid of a major suit forces to game.

Responder will only hold a good 6+ card club suit with game-forcing values. With only invitational values, we respond 3 ♣.

The 2 ♣ responder will have a hand unsuitable for a 2 NT or 3 NT response. (A 2 NT response is often played as forcing with Plan B).

In priority order, opener bids, shows or plans to show:

1. a 5-card major (with 6+ diamonds),
2. notrump with both majors stopped (2 NT NF, 3 NT 18–19),
3. diamonds with five or more,
4. a major suit, with four cards and game values,
5. 3 ♣ with four clubs and game values,
6. 2 ♦ with 4+ diamonds.

The rare 4=4=3=2 hand with xxxx-xxxx in the majors confounds us.

A chart for Plan B is left to the interested reader.

Marshall Miles' *Constructive Bidding* book, starting on page 59, inspired alternative B. (Chapter 5, page 72, of *Mike Lawrence's Workbook* is a precursor.) The 2 ♣ response is distinctly less powerful and more complicated when it may only be invitational. Alternative B has its own problem hands, causing opener's 2 ♦ to be a catch-all, for example. It does allow the 2 NT

response to show a split-range, balanced game force (small or large); 3 NT would be medium.

Alternative C – 2 ♣ forces to 2 NT – 2 ♥ artificial catch-all

This alternative was inspired by a paragraph from Miles, who understood it to be popular in Europe.

Rule: All opener's rebids, except 2 ♦ or 2 ♥, force to game.

The 2 ♣ responder will have a hand unsuitable for a 2 NT or 3 NT response. (A 2 NT response is often played as forcing with this alternative).

In priority order, opener bids, shows or plans to show:

1. 2 ♥ to artificially imply a minimum hand,
2. a 5-card major (with 6+ diamonds),
3. notrump with game values and both majors stopped,
4. diamonds with five or more and any strength,
5. a major suit, with four cards and game values, or
6. 3 ♣ with four clubs and game values.

Over opener's GF 2 NT bid. With a 4-card major, responder bids it. 3 NT is to play. A minor suit is a last resort.

Over opener's 2 ♥ rebid: All bids by responder except 2 ♠ force to game. Responder bids an artificial 2 ♠ with all invitational hands, asking opener to bid 2 NT. Opener bids:

- 2 NT when willing to play there. Responder usually passes, but may escape into decent 4-card diamonds or decent 6-card clubs.
- 3 ♣ – natural and non-forcing.
- 3 ♦ – GF with exactly 3=3=4=3 shape.
- 3 ♥ – GF with five hearts (and six diamonds).
- 3 ♠ – GF with four hearts, four diamonds, balanced, and no spade stop – asking for a spade stopper.

Alternative C looks good with the example hands, but there is much to remember. A chart for Alternative C is left to the interested reader.

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