

## ALEX'S BRIDGE TIP # 1

This is your hand:

S 65  
H KJ976  
D Q8  
C 8765



1NT

Your partner opens 1NT. What will you bid? You bid 2D. Transfer. Yes?  
Partner bids 2H and you pass. You know you have at least a 7 card Heart fit, yes?  
Because the NT opener will not open 1NT with a singleton Heart 99.9% of the time.

OK, so keep those ground rules in mind as we jump ahead.

S 65  
H KJ976  
D Q8  
C 8765

1H



1D

This time your partner opens 1D, you respond 1H. Now opener rebids 1NT, what will you bid?

The correct bid by you now is 2H because you know you have a 7 card fit in Hearts. Opener pledges to never have a singleton Heart for her 1NT rebid. She has promised a balanced hand. AND you know that opener does NOT have four Spades so this means that opponents have at least eight Spades between them. Your side will be safer playing in a trump suit contract.

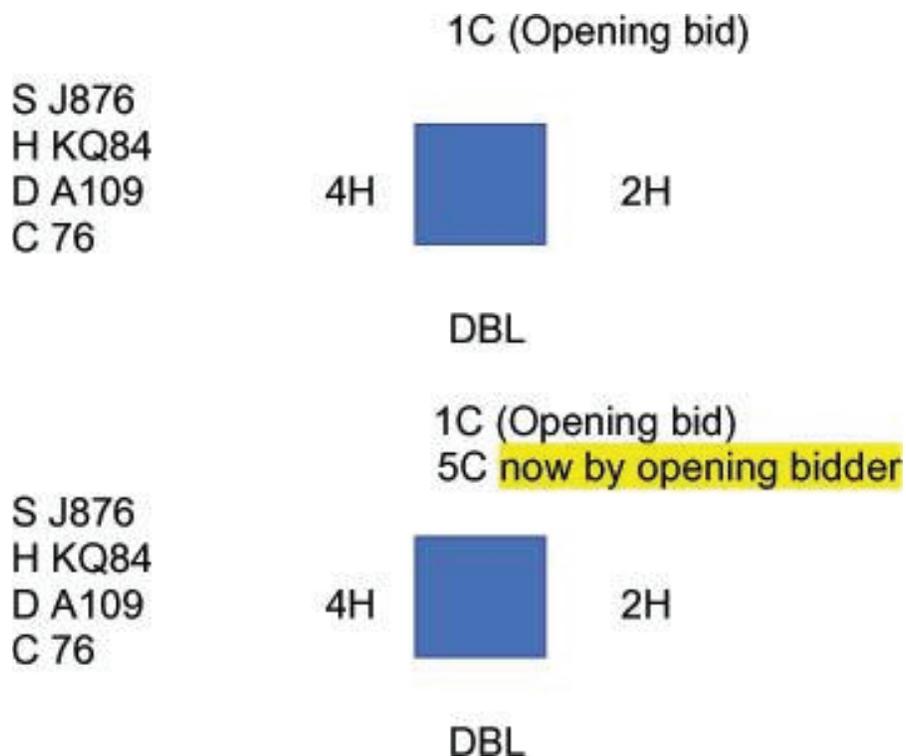
The rebid of your Heart suit at the 2 level shows only 6-9 points and at least 5 Hearts.

Note that Opener with

S AJ8  
H 6  
D A9543  
C A865

after 1D -1H must now rebid 2C, NOT 1NT. Write this in stone and place under your pillow so that it will go in by osmosis. It is an important principle.

## ALEX'S BRIDGE TIP # 2



You are West. Your LHO (North) opens 1C and partner makes a preemptive jump overcall to 2H. There is a negative double by RHO and you are West. You bid 4H. This is a good bid. North (LHO) now bids 5C. Pass/Pass and back to you.

What will you bid? Ask yourself this. "Have you already told your story?" You told partner that you likely have 4-card support for Hearts and not a big hand. You may not now tell her this again. You have done your damage and interfered with their auction, making it harder for them to bid scientifically. It has all become "By guess and by golly!" If you now bid 5H, North will now bid 6C which makes and you pushed them there. RULE: You may not preempt twice.

Just ask me. I know all about it. I fell from grace and followed my heart and not my head and bid 5H. Indeed the opponents now got to 6C, making. A bottom board for us and a stern lecture by Alex to me. You see, you get to read what he says, I have to listen to it in person. I hang my head in shame. My bad. Onward and upward!!

**QUESTIONS ABOUT HANDS:** Please submit questions about hands on which you'd like advice to [akornel@sympatico.ca](mailto:akornel@sympatico.ca) Alex is way better than I will ever be. If you need a handout, ask me. But I will be cutting back on emails for a while now.

## WHEN THE OPPONENTS HAVE OPENED THE BIDDING

When your opponents have opened the bidding, in order for you to bid a suit, you must have a decent quality 5-card suit. If you only have 8-12 points (definitely not much of a hand) then you must have a sterling quality suit, one that you desperately want your partner to lead such as

AKxxx  
or  
KQxxx

i.e. 2 of the top 3 honors.

OR

a 5 card suit with 3 of the top 5 honors e.g. QJ10xx

If you have 13 or more points, you do not have to have such a great quality suit, but you still must have five cards in it.

As you know, this bid is called an overcall. At the one level, you need 8 or more points but at the 2 level, you must have close to an opening bid at least.

So what in the world do you do with this hand:

S KQxx  
H KJxx  
D Axxx  
C x

Suppose the opponent on your right has opened the bidding with 1C. If you bid 1S, you will be promising a good 5 card suit. What's more, partner will inevitably have a singleton spade and a bunch of hearts. Bidding hearts or diamonds is equally wrong. The solution is to make partner pick the suit, by making a *takeout double*. You say double and partner is **forced** to bid now.

Note that the fewer cards that you own in the opponents' suit, as the doubler, the more cards you will have in all the other suits. Partner is being *forced* to bid, so the more cards you have in the suits partner will choose from, the more useful your hand will be as a dummy.

### RESPONSES TO THE TAKEOUT DOUBLE:

When partner makes a takeout double, you **must** respond and may not pass. However, if your RHO (right hand opponent) makes a bid, then the pressure is off and you no longer need to respond. If you do respond after an intervening bid, you are now promising 8+ points.

Since you are forced to respond to the takeout double, no points are required. The takeout doubler wants to know your best suit *and* your point count. On the following hands, your LHO has opened with 1D and your partner has made a takeout double. RHO has passed.

S 5432  
H 543  
D 543  
C 543

This is a very sad hand. A hand where you want to ask for your money back. But you must respond; there is a gun to your head. You will respond 1S.

When you as responder to TOD bid your best suit at the cheapest level, you promise 0-8 points and at least four cards in that suit.

Once again, your LHO has opened with 1D and your partner has made a takeout double. RHO has passed.

S Jxxx  
H xxx  
D xx  
C AKJx

Bid 2 S...this shows 9-11 points & at least four Spades.

Once again, your LHO has opened with 1D and your partner has made a takeout double. RHO has passed.

S AQxxx  
H xx  
D xxx  
C AKx

Bid 4S. Your partner doubled showing support for ALL the unbid suits (at least Jxx is all unbid suits) and the Doubler has 13 or more points. You have 14 points so your side must get to game. You do need to have five Spades to make this bid.

One more: Your LHO has opened with 1D and your partner has made a takeout double. RHO has passed.

S xxx  
H xxx  
D AQx  
C Kxxx

Bid 1NT. If you were tempted to bid 2C or even 3C, NT is better. When you are responding to partner's takeout double and are tempted to respond in a minor, stop and consider whether you can bid NT. The bid of 1NT shows 8-10 HCP and a stopper in opponents' suit.

With 11-12 HCP and stoppers in opponents suit, bid 2 NT in response to partner's takeout double.

With 13-15 HCP, bid 3 NT in response to partner's takeout double.

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## 2 C -- What does it mean?

by Larry Cohen [www.larryco.com](http://www.larryco.com)

In this quiz, 2 C could mean any of the following (your job will be to match the auction with the meaning):

- Strong/Artificial
- Stayman
- Michaels Cuebid
- Natural Overcall
- Natural Rebid
- New Minor Forcing
- Natural Response
- Artificial Overcall
- Other Artificial Meaning
- Other

### Question 1

What does South's 2 C mean in this auction?

<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
		1 C	2 C

#### **Choose One:**

Natural

Strong takeout

5-5 or longer in the Majors (Michaels Bid)

Other

#### **Answer:**

Michaels Bid. This is one of the first conventions most players learn.

### Question 2

What does South's 2 C mean in this auction?

<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
			2 C

#### **Choose One:**

Weak 2-bid in clubs

Strong, artificial and Game Forcing

Strong, artificial but not Game Forcing

Strong and Natural

Other

**Answer:**

Strong, artificial but not GF.

Ever since the 1960's, this has been the meaning. You can stop in a partscore, the most common way being 2 C-2 D-2NT-Pass.

Question 3

What does South's 2 C mean in this auction?

West	North	East	South
			1 D
Pass	1NT	Pass	2 C

**Choose One:**

Stayman

New Minor Forcing

Both minors, forcing

Both minors, not forcing

Other

**Answer:**

Both minors, not forcing.

Typically, opener has 5 or more diamonds and 4 or more clubs (but could be 4-4 with a major-suit singleton). This bid is not forcing, but has a wide range (anything from a minimum up to about 18 points).

Responder with 6-9 can pass if their Clubs are better than their Diamonds.

Question 4

What does South's 2 C mean in this auction?

West	North	East	South
			1 C
Pass	1 H	Pass	2 C

**Choose One:**

5 or more clubs, minimum

6 or more clubs, might have a 4-card major, minimum

6 or more clubs, no 4-card major, minimum

Other

**Answer:**

6 or more clubs, no 4-card major, minimum.

With a 4-card major, opener must bid it (either 1 S or raise hearts). Do not repeat a 5-card suit in this auction.

**Question 5**

What does South's 2 C mean in this auction?

West	North	East	South
	1NT		2 C

**Choose One:**

- Natural
- Stayman, at least 2 clubs
- Stayman, says nothing about clubs
- Other

**Answer:**

Stayman -- says nothing about clubs -- could even be void in clubs.

**Question 6**

What does South's 2 C mean in this auction?

West	North	East	South
	1D	Pass	1 S
Pass	1NT	Pass	2 C

**Choose One:**

- Stayman
- Natural
- New Minor Forcing
- Requires Partnership Agreement

**Answer:**

Requires partnership agreement -- but most experts use this artificially (so choice #3 was also accepted as correct). It can be considered "new minor forcing". There are many forms of this convention and the partnership would need to agree.

### Question 7

What does South's 2 C mean in this auction?

West	North	East	South
Pass	1 H	Pass	Pass 2 C

#### **Choose One:**

- Natural, Game Forcing
- Natural not Game Forcing
- Drury
- New Minor
- Requires Partnership Agreement

#### **Answer:**

Requires Partnership Agreement. Don't feel badly if you voted for Drury (also accepted as a correct answer). That is the way most experienced partnerships use it (and what I recommend). However, this is a convention that both partners often forget.

### Question 8

What does South's 2 C mean in this auction?

West	North	East	South
	1 H	Pass	2 C

#### **Choose One:**

- Stayman
- New Minor
- Other Artificial bid
- Natural, 6-10
- Natural, 6+
- Natural, 10+
- Natural, Game Forcing
- Requires Partnership Agreement

#### **Answer:**

Requires Partnership Agreement -- but Natural, Game Forcing which is the modern way (and the way I recommend) is also a correct answer.

### Question 9

What does South's 2 C mean in this auction?

West	North	East	South
	1 C	Pass	2 C

#### **Choose One:**

- Stayman
- Game Forcing, Artificial
- Natural, 6-9
- Natural, 10+
- Requires Partnership Agreement

#### **Answer:**

Requires Partnership Agreement. Most experts use it as showing Inverted Minors. 10 + Points and at least 5 of the minor.

### Question 10

What does South's 2 C mean in this auction?

West	North	East	South
		1 D	2 C

#### **Choose One:**

- Natural, 9+
- Natural, roughly opening bid values
- Other

#### **Answer: 2 -**

Natural, roughly opening bid values. A 2-level overcall shows a decent hand and suit.

### Question 11

West	North	East	South
1 H	1 S	Pass	2 C

#### **Choose One:**

- Natural, forcing
- Natural, not forcing
- Requires partnership agreement

**Answer: 3 -**

Requires Partnership Agreement. I suggest your partnership treats it as forcing one round (and natural).

**Question 12**

What does South's 2 C mean in this auction?

<b>West</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>South</b>
		<b>1 NT</b>	<b>2 C</b>

**Choose One:**

Natural

Majors

Clubs and another suit

One-suited hand

Requires Partnership Agreement

**Answer: 5 -**

Requires Partnership Agreement. There are many possible conventions here (DONT, Cappelletti, Landy, and tons of others). Even natural is possible.

**Notice that "Requires Partnership Agreement" was the answer to about half the questions in this quiz--so it might be time to sit down and talk to your partner!**

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