

# Strong Two---2♣

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<http://watsongallery.ca/bridge/aaBidding/StrongTwo.pdf>

Strong two's is a bidding convention that has been replaced by weak two's and a strong two clubs. Strong Two is a much better system than strong Two's.

Here is how Goren defined a strong two (2♣, 2♦, 2♥, 2♠):

Goren's Bridge Complete. NY:Doubleday, 1942 through 1971

With a good five-card suit --- 25 points

With a good six-card suit --- 23 points

With a good seven-card suit --- 21 points

With a second good five-card suit, 1 point less is needed. If the game is to be in a minor suit, 2 points more will be needed.

With a weak hand, partner responds 2NT.

"Should opener make ANY rebid other than in the suit he bid originally, responder may not pass below game." p20 of Goren's Bridge Complete. NY:Doubleday, 1942 through 1971

A positive response is a good five card suit (K10xxx) with at least 7 points and 1 quick trick or at least 8 points and 1/2 quick trick.

Goren's Bridge Complete. NY:Doubleday, 1942 through 1971

This is all passé. The fact that responder could be declarer at 3NT with a weak hand is ludicrous. The frequency of the modern system of weak two's and a strong two clubs stands testament to strong two's being outdated.

## The Modern System

2♦, 2♥, 2♠ are usually weak but 2♦ can be any of the following:

- Intermediate six diamonds
- Flannery (5 hearts and 4 spades and 11-15 points)
- Roman (4-4-4-1 or 4-4-5-0)

- Mexican (18-19 balanced)

## Requirements:

2♣ is now one of the following:

- 22+ high card points
- 8.5 Quick Tricks with three defensive tricks
- Game on your own

## Responses:

Waiting:

2♣    2♦

- 2♦ is waiting and is almost always down except for a positive response.
- The cheapest three-level suit is negative after one has bid 2♦ waiting first.

Positive response is:

2♣    2♥, 2♠, 3♣, 3♦

- 6 card minor
- 5 card major
- 2 of top 3 honours
- an outside control (ace or king or singleton or void).
- around 8 HCP's

## Steps or 2♥ negative:

I do not agree with these two methods. They are almost as bad as 2NT being negative in the old strong-two system. Wrong siding the contract can be a disaster because the strong hand is led through on the opening lead and is seen for the rest of the auction.

## Weak Hands:

With no 5 card major:

2♣ 2♦  
2NT Pass

With no support:

2♣ 2♦  
2♠ 3♣ cheapest 3-level suit  
3♠ P

With 2 or 3-card support (2 card support only when weak)

2♣ 2♦  
2♠ 4♠

With interest in slam:

Do not bid the cheapest 3-level suit and do not jump to game.

2♣ 2♦  
2♠ 3♠

This shows either:

- Hand that is not blank.
- slam interest
- a good eight high card points
- two controls or better  
(a void or ace is two controls and a king or singleton is one control)

## Strong Balanced Hands

2♣ 2♦  
2NT 22-24

2♣ 2♦  
3NT 25-27  
4♣ Stayman  
4♦ Transfer to 4♥  
4♥ Transfer to 4♠  
5♣ Gerber (Super Gerber)

2♣ 2♦  
4NT 28+  
5♣ Super Gerber

### Notes:

After 2♣ 2♦:

- declarer will try to rebid 2NT with 22-24 not 3 of a minor with only five cards in the minor and balanced (5422) because it makes finding a four-card major difficult.

2♣ 2♦

3♦ 3♠ now a four-four ♥ fit may be lost

- The first suit bid by either partner is five-cards.

## Examples:

Do you open the following with 2♣?

1. ♠AKQ108762 ♥2 ♦32 ♣32
2. ♠AKQ108762 ♥2 ♦K2 ♣32
3. ♠AKQ108762 ♥A ♦K2 ♣32
4. ♠KQJ10654 ♥2 ♦32 ♣543
5. ♠KQJ106542 ♥A ♦K2 ♣53
6. ♠KQJ106542 ♥A ♦AK2 ♣3
7. ♠KQJ10654 ♥A ♦AK32 ♣3

Partner opens 2♣, what do you respond?

8. ♠AJ543 ♥3 ♦654 ♣6543
9. ♠AJ543 ♥3 ♦654 ♣A543
10. ♠AQ543 ♥3 ♦654 ♣6543
11. ♠AQ543 ♥3 ♦654 ♣A543
12. ♠543 ♥3 ♦Q654 ♣AQ543
13. ♠53 ♥3 ♦8654 ♣AQ6543
14. ♠53 ♥K654 ♦3 ♣AQ6543
15. ♠54 ♥32 ♦K54 ♣AQ10543
16. ♠54 ♥32 ♦Q54 ♣AQ10543
17. ♠5 ♥432 ♦Q54 ♣AQ10543

The bidding goes as follows:

2♣ 2♦  
2♠

What do you bid with the following?:

18. ♠982 ♥654 ♦654 ♣6543
19. ♠82 ♥7654 ♦654 ♣6543
20. ♠2 ♥87654 ♦87654 ♣43
21. ♠2 ♥87654 ♦K7654 ♣43
22. ♠2 ♥K7654 ♦87654 ♣43
23. ♠2 ♥Q7654 ♦Q7654 ♣43
24. ♠102 ♥Q654 ♦Q7654 ♣43
25. ♠102 ♥K654 ♦Q7654 ♣43
26. ♠102 ♥Q654 ♦AQ654 ♣43
27. ♠Q32 ♥QJ3 ♦J32 ♣J543

28. ♠10987 ♥2 ♦8765 ♣8765  
 29. ♠10987 ♥Q5 ♦QJ6 ♣QJ65  
 30. ♠10987 ♥2 ♦A765 ♣8765  
 31. ♠10987 ♥2 ♦A765 ♣K765

## Answers:

1. No-1♠-Are you going to play anything but spades?
2. No-1♠-There are 8 1/2 quick tricks but only 1 or 2 defensive tricks
3. Yes-2♣-Marginal because it could be only two defensive tricks
4. No, -7 loser hand-3♠ at favourable vulnerability; 2♠ at equal vulnerability; and Pass at unfavourable vulnerability
5. No, 1♠-13 points and 1 1/2 quick tricks
6. Yes-2♣-game in your hand.
7. Yes 2♣-game in your hand.
8. 2♦ waiting-if partner bids 2♥, you bid 2♠ and if partner rebids 2NT then transfer to spades and the strong hand plays.
9. 2♦ waiting, same as 8
10. 2♦ waiting, same as 8
11. 2♠, a positive response-2 of top 3 honours and three side controls (ace =2)
12. 2♦ waiting, minor has to be 6 cards long
13. 2♦ waiting
14. 2♦ waiting, you have a strong enough hand and the right suit to bid 3♣, but you do not want to lose the heart suit.
15. 3♣
16. 2♦ waiting
17. 3♣, spade control makes the difference here
18. 4♠ less than 2 controls and two-card plus support
19. 4♠ less than 2 controls and two-card plus support
20. 3♣, negative-3♦ would be a constructive hand
21. 3♥, a constructive hand but pretty slim
22. 3♥
23. 3♥, 2 queens is constructive
24. 3♦, bidding hearts first would show five hearts
25. 3♦, a constructive hand
26. 3♦, a constructive hand
27. 4♠, weak no controls-Good points but no controls
28. 4♠, weak only one control but zero high card points

29. 4♠ (likely the same as the one before if partner has shortness opposite quacks)
30. 3♠, 3 controls, slam is possible
31. 3♠, 4 controls, slam is likely