

## WEAK TWO'S

Weak twos are generally played only in the majors. Sometimes a weak 2D opening is also used. However, the 2D opening can be harnessed for far more useful purposes.

Requirements for opening 2H/S in first or second seat:

- A 6-card suit
- 6-10 HCP
- 7-8 losers
- No voids and not two singletons
- No four cards in the other major

Within the framework, a normal weak two will have 7 losers (maximum) or 8 losers (minimum). For example:

S	Q J 10 8 5 3	9 2	K Q 10 9 4 2	9 2
H	7	K Q J 8 5 3	7	A K Q 8 7 6
D	A 4 2	J 10 2	A 4 3	4 3
C	7 5 3	7 4	8 4 2	6 4 2

If the hand contains a void or two singletons, the playing strength will rise sharply and gives the weak two bid too wide a range.

S	K Q 10 9 6 4	This hand has a 5 losers and is much too good for a weak two. It might also play better in diamonds. If your system has no provision for showing a weak two suiters, pass or open 4S.
H	7	
D	Q J 9 8 2	
C	7	

S	----	This hand has 6 losers and is too good for a weak two. Opposite HAx and CKx, the heart game is a good bet. Rather than starting with a weak 2H, why not open 1H or 3H or, at favourable vulnerability, 4H?
H	K Q 10 7 5 3	
D	6 4 2	
C	A 9 8 6	

The same comments apply to a multi-2D opening when that is based on a weak two in one major or the other.

### 1-Opening vs. 2-Opening

When should you choose a 1-opening and when should you prefer a weak two?

- **10-12 HCP and 6 losers:** Always prefer a 1-opening
- **10HCP and 7 losers:** Open with a weak two
- **11-12HCP and 7 losers:** Open with 1-opening
- **10-12HCP and 8 losers:** Open with a weak-two

S	A 10 9 8 5 3	8 6	A 9 8 5 4 2	K Q
H	3	A J 8 6 4 3	J 7	Q J 10 8 6 4
D	K Q J 5	K Q J	K Q	J 5 3
C	5 2	5 2	J 5 2	Q J
	<i>10HCP, 6 losers Open 1S</i>	<i>11HCP, 7 losers Open 1H</i>	<i>11HCP, 8 losers Open 2S</i>	<i>12HCP, 8 losers Open 2H</i>

## RESPONDING TO THE WEAK TWO

### With 3-card or better support, use the LTC (losing Trick Count)

With 3-card support, there is a 9-card fit and using the LTC is a better guide than point count. Since the weak two should contain 7-8 losers, responder's strategy is easy to calculate:

**With 8 losers or worse:** Pass ( $8 + 7 = 15$ ;  $24 - 15 = 9$ ).

**With 7 losers:** invite game. Bid game over a maximum reply ( $7 + 7 = 14$ ;  $24 - 14 = 10$ ), but sign off in 3-major opposite a minimum reply by opener ( $7 + 8 = 15$ ;  $24 - 15 = 9$ ).

**With 6 losers:** bid game ( $6 + 8 = 14$ ;  $24 - 14 = 10$ )

**With 5 losers:** explore slam. Bid slam opposite a maximum ( $5 + 7 = 12$ ;  $24 - 12 = 12$ ) as long as two key cards are not missing. Settle for game opposite a minimum ( $5 + 8 = 13$ ;  $24 - 13 = 11$ )

**With 4 losers:** insist on slam unless you discover that two key cards are missing. You should be able to count the tricks for a possible grand slam if no key cards are missing.

### What action should each of the following responders take?

	OPENER	RESPONDER A	RESPONDER B	RESPONDER C
S	K Q 10 7 5 2	A 8 6	A 8 6	A 8 6
H	A 4	7 5	K 6	7
D	9 3	A K 8 5	A K 8 4	K 8 5 4
C	4 3 2	8 7 6 5	8 7 6 5	A Q 9 6 5

Responder A – has 8 losers and should pass 2S.

Responder B – has 7 losers and should invite game. When opener shows maximum, Responder B would bid 4S. If Opener shows a minimum, sign off in 3S.

Responder C – has 6 losers and should bid 4S. Game should be a fair chance even opposite a minimum.

### Doubleton in opener's suit

When responder has only doubleton support for opener and little or no prospect for ruffing any of opener's losers, it works better to calculate game and slam prospects by cover cards than using the LTC. Therefore:

- fewer than 3½ cover cards: Pass. Game worse than 50%.
- With 3½ - 4 cover cards: Invite game
- With 4½ - 5½ cover cards: Bid game, 50% or better chance.
- With 6 or more cover cards: Investigate slam potential.

Cover cards = outside suits; count the tricks only in the first two cards in each suit (ie, quick tricks):

- A-K = 2
- A-Q = 1½
- A-x = 1
- K-Q = 1
- K-x = ½

## Singleton or void in opener's suit

Do not use the LTC. Normally you should pass a weak two with a misfit unless you hold 16+HCP. With 16+points, bid a strong suit (new suit forcing) or use 2NT if you need to know whether opener is minimum or maximum.

## Responder wishes to investigate game or slam prospects

Game and slam exploration opposite a weak two depends on your systemic agreements. A good choice is the Ogust 2NT response. Opener describes the strength of hand and number of top cards in the long suits:

- 3C = minimum hand, one of top three honours
- 3D = minimum hand, two of top three honours
- 3H = maximum hand, one of top three honour
- 3S = maximum hand, two of top three honours
- 3NT = maximum hand, suit headed by A-K-Q

*(a memory guide: minor is minimum, 1-2-1-2-3)*

Examples of the use of the Ogust convention:

	WEST	EAST	WEST	EAST
S	A Q 8 7 5 2	K 6 3	A Q 8 7 5 2	K 6 3
H	7 6	A K 4 2	7 6	A K 4 2
D	J 8	6 5	K 8	6 5
C	6 4 3	A 8 7 2	6 4 3	A 8 7 2
	<i>Minimum, 2 top honours</i>	<i>7 losers, opposite 8 losers = 15 (24 - 15 = 9 winners)</i>	<i>Maximum, 2 top honours</i>	<i>7 losers, opposite 7 losers = 14 (24 - 14 = 10 winners)</i>

	WEST	EAST	WEST	EAST
S	8 3	Q 7	A 3	Q 7
H	K Q 9 7 4 3	A J 5	K Q 9 7 4 3	A J 5
D	9 2	A K Q J	9 2	A K Q J
C	Q 4 3	A K 6 2	9 4 3	A K 6 2
	<i>2H</i>	<i>2NT</i>	<i>2H</i>	<i>2NT</i>
	<i>3D</i>	<i>4H</i>	<i>3S</i>	<i>4C (Cue bid)</i>
			<i>4S (cue bid)</i>	<i>7NT *</i>

\* If the cue bid is showing first or second round control, east should check with 4NT first before committing to 7NT.

Here a hand from a recent tournament:

S	A Q T 7 5	J 9 6 4
H	-----	9 4 3
D	Q J 9 6	A 7
C	10 9 6 2	A K J 8