

Guidelines for Responding to Strong Openings After Interference

When overcalls after a strong opening (2♣, 2♦, or 2 NT) occur, responder needs to tell opener about possession of a stopper, as well as long suits and general strength in sharply curtailed bidding space. (2♦ is, for this discussion, assumed to show 18-19 HCP and a balanced hand.)

The following guidelines are based on the principle that since such interference occurs relatively seldom (and strong bids are themselves only occasional), responder's bids need to be:

- natural
- logical
- consistent with other bidding methods

AFTER A 2-LEVEL OVERCALL

forward going bids

☞ 2NT shows points for game, *promises* a stopper, and implies suit interest.

Opener's Rebids

All systems are on, with opener bidding Stayman and transfers.

☞ Double shows points for game and *denies* a stopper.

OPENER'S REBIDS

Opener can

- pass for penalties
- bid 2NT, showing a stopper
- bid a suit, implying, after 2♣, an unbalanced hand

☞ A cue bid shows slam interest and *denies* a stopper.

OPENER'S REBIDS

Opener can

- bid 3NT, showing a stopper
- bid 3 or 4 of a suit, denying a stopper

This bid does not promise more than 4-cards in the suit bid

Non-forward going bids

☞ Pass denies game values and a long suit.

☞ Three of a suit is to play, promising 5+ in the suit.

After 2♣ the suit should be 6+.

OPENER'S REBIDS

- Opener must pass

☞ Four of a suit (game in a major) promises length, but not strength.

OPENER'S REBIDS

- Opener must pass

☞ 3NT is to play, shows no interest in a potential 5-3 fit, and denies a 4-card major.

OPENER'S REBIDS

- Opener must pass

AFTER 2NT OR A 3-LEVEL OVERCALL

All of responder's bids are forward going. Pass alone denies values for game

☞ Pass denies game values and a long suit

OPENER'S REBIDS

Opener can

- pass, denying shortage in the overcaller's suit
- double, asking partner to pass for penalty or bid a long suit (which may be his or her lowest 4-card suit)

☞ Three or four of a suit is **natural**, promising 5+ in the suit; 4 of a minor is strongly invitational to game

OPENER'S REBIDS

Opener can

- bid 3NT, showing a stopper and no more than doubleton support for responder's suit
- Raise partner to game, with or without a stopper
- Bid a good 5-card suit at the three or four level, with or without a stopper

☞ Double is **negative**, showing game values and a 4-card major.

OPENER'S REBIDS

Opener can

- bid 3NT, showing a stopper and without 4-card support for partner's presumed major
- Raise partner to game, with or without a stopper
- Bid a good 5-card suit at the three or four level, with or without a stopper

☞ 3NT shows a **stopper** and is to play.

OPENER'S REBIDS

Opener should pass, except with 10 tricks in his/her own hand.