Practice Session for U3ABD17: Bidding Strong Hands

Welcome!

Here is a description of all the hands that you could play in today's Practice Session. It includes details like the cards in each hand, how to evaluate each hand (High Card Points, Shortage Points, shape), the "correct" bidding, and lead.

This week we've given you some rare, more powerful hands to bid. No more 1NT!

Don't feel bad if you bid the hands a bit differently, or ended up in a slightly different contract. Each week there's something new, it will take you a while to get the hang of all of it. Hopefully it will make a bit more sense with the detailed explanations given here. Yes, it's getting trickier.

We're here to help, share our enthusiasm for this great game. You will make mistakes, but we're always happy to explain or answer questions. Remember, you're playing with people who are just starting out, too. Let's have fun together!

-Ed

Advanced topics

Advanced topics are in green. These are included for completeness; you can ignore them for now.

Recap

In previous modules you learned how to bid NORMAL hands (with 12-19 HCP), by opening with 1NT or one of a suit. In this week's module you learned how to bid STRONG hands (with 20+ HCP), by opening with 2C or 2NT - and how to respond to these strong opening bids.

This Week's Lessons – Bidding Strong Hands

In this week's module, you learned about:

- Opening 2NT
- Responding to 2NT
- Opening 2C
- Responding to 2C

Opening 2NT

An opening bid of 2NT shows partner you have a balanced hand and 20-22 HCP. Your balanced hand may include five cards in a Major or Minor: 5332. This bid is NOT forcing, although partner doesn't need much to respond.

Responding to 2NT

The 2NT opening is so strong, you bid to game unless very weak:

- With 0-3 HCP and a 6+ Major: Transfer to your Major and PASS, so partner plays in 3H/S
- With 0-3 HCP and no 6+ Major: PASS
- With 4+ HCP and a 6+ Major: Transfer to your Major then raise to 4H/S
- With 4+ HCP and a 5-card Major: Transfer to your Major then raise to 3NT. Partner will pass with two trumps, or raise to 4H/S with three or more trumps
- With 4+ HCP and a 4-card Major: Use Stayman. If you find a fit, raise to 4H/S, otherwise bid 3NT.
- With 4+ HCP and no 4-card Major (a balanced hand or long Minor):
    - 4-10 HCP: bid 3NT
    - 11-12 HCP: bid 4NT as a Slam Invitation; partner will raise to 6NT with 22 HCP
    - 13-14 HCP: bid 6NT, a Small Slam

BUT with a long suit (Major or Minor) and 10+ HCP, a Slam is very likely in that suit. We'll describe Slam bidding in detail in a later module.

Opening 2C

The 2C opening bid is used for very strong hands that should make game even if partner is so weak that they would pass a 1-level opening bid. 2C forces your partner to bid. You can open 2C with three main types of hand:

- A balanced or unbalanced hand with 23+ HCP
- An unbalanced hand with 21-22 HCP and a good 5+ Major
- An unbalanced hand with less than 21 HCP that can take NINE tricks in your suit (Minor or Major) without any help from partner

In the second and third cases, your long suit makes up for your points. If you have 21-22 HCP and a 5+ Minor, open 1C/D – you haven't got as Game Force hand, can only expect to make game if partner responds, showing 6+ HCP.

WARNING: Descriptions of 2C will often say it promises 23+ HCP but this version of the 2C opening has been adjusted to work with Weak Twos rather than Strong Twos.

Responding to 2C

The 2C bid is a Game Force, meaning you have to respond and keep bidding until you have reached game – with two EXCEPTIONS explained below. When partner opens 2C:

- With 0-7 HCP: bid 2D. This is a negative bid, indicating that a Slam is unlikely. Any other bid suggests a Slam is likely or very likely!
- With 8+ HCP and a good 5+ suit, bid your suit: 2H, 2S, 3C or 3D
- With 8+ HCP and no good 5+ suit: bid 2NT

2C Opener's Second Bid

If partner makes a negative response of 2D (showing 0-7 HCP):

- With a balanced hand and 23-24 HCP: Rebid 2NT. Partner is allowed to pass with 0-1 HCP; this is EXCEPTION ONE
- With a balanced hand and 25-28 HCP: Rebid 3NT.
- Otherwise, you must have game-in-hand in a suit and will usually bid your game as partner is too weak to reach a slam.

If partner makes a positive response (anything other than 2D), showing 8+ HCP:

- This is a SLAM FORCE, bidding must continue until you reach a slam.
- We will ignore slam bidding for now, that's in a later module. None of today's practice hands are slam hands!

2C Responder's Second bid

After the 2C opener's second bid, you are usually in the best position to decide whether to settle for game, or try for a Slam. Slam bidding is described in detail in a later module! But remember that all bidding sequences other than 2C 2D 2NT are Game Forcing, so you must keep on bidding until you reach game. Don't pass.

If you made a negative (2D) response to the 2C opening, showing 0-7 points:

- If partner has rebid a major (2C 2D 2H/S) and you have just 0-3 HCP, your second bid should be 2NT, as a second negative. See EXCEPTION TWO below
- If partner has rebid a minor (2C 2D 3C/D) and you have just 0-3 HCP, your second bid should be 3NT
- If partner has rebid 2NT (2C 2D 2NT) you can raise to 3NT with 2+ points OR use a Transfer if you have a 5+ Major OR use Stayman if you have one or two 4-card Majors
- Otherwise, with 4-7 HCP, you can raise partner's suit with 3+, bid your own 5+ card suit, or bid NT - do not pass

Using Transfers over 2C 2D 2NT:

- With 2+ HCP and a 6+ Major: Transfer to your Major then raise to 4H/S

- With 2+ HCP and a 5-card Major: Transfer to your Major then raise to 3NT. Partner will pass with two trumps, or raise to 4H/S with three or more trumps

Using Stayman over 2C 2D 2NT:

- With 2+ HCP and a 4-card Major: Use Stayman. If you find a fit, raise to 4H/S, otherwise rebid 3NT

If you made a positive response to the 2C opening, showing 8+ points:

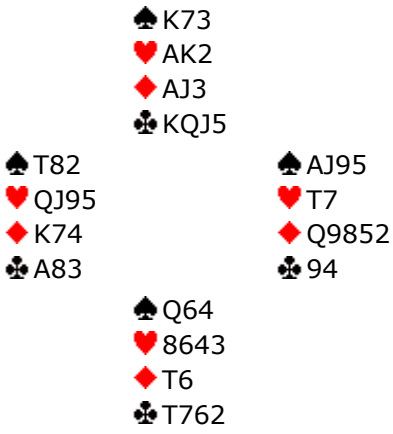
- This is a SLAM FORCE, bidding must continue until you reach a slam.
- We will ignore slam bidding for now, that's in a later module. None of today's practice hands are slam hands!

2C Opener's Third Bid - EXCEPTION TWO

If you open 2C with less than 23 HCP and partner responds with TWO negative bids (2D and 2NT), showing less than 3 points, you may decide to stop short of game. For example: 2C 2D 2S 2NT 3S. Partner will pass.

The Hands

North	East	South	West
2NT	Pass	Pass	Pass



Board: 1 Dealer: North #2007

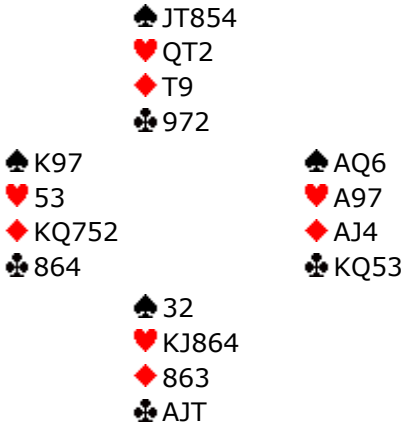
North has 21 HCP and a balanced hand, so opens 2NT.

A 2NT opening shows 20-22 HCP and a balanced hand.

South has just 2 HCP, so knows they do not have enough points for game (22-24), so passes.

If you look at the hands, you can see they will probably make 7-8 tricks: one or two Spades, two Hearts, one Diamond and three Clubs. 23 HCP is only a little short of the 25 HCP that will usually deliver 3NT, but the missing 2 points can make a big difference, as you have two less and they have two more!

East	South	West	North
2NT	Pass	3NT	Pass
Pass	Pass		



Board: 2 Dealer: East #561

East has 20 HCP and a balanced hand, so opens 2NT.

A 2NT opening shows 20-22 HCP and a balanced hand.

West has 8 HCP, so knows they have enough points for game (28-30) but not enough for a Slam, so bids 3NT

South	West	North	East
2NT	Pass	3NT	Pass
Pass	Pass		



Board: 3 Dealer: South #1892

South has 21 HCP and a balanced hand, so opens 2NT.

A 2NT opening shows 20-22 HCP and a balanced hand.

North has 7 HCP, so knows they have enough points for game (27-29) but not enough for a Slam, so bids 3NT

West	North	East	South
2NT	Pass	3NT	Pass
Pass	Pass		

	♠542 ♥K92 ♦T987 ♣T84	
♠KQ ♥T873 ♦AKQ64 ♣AQ		♠AT6 ♥64 ♦J52 ♣K7632
	♠J9873 ♥AQJ5 ♦3 ♣J95	

Board: 4 Dealer: West #1913

West has 20 HCP and a fairly balanced hand, so opens 2NT.

A 2NT opening shows 20-22 HCP and a balanced hand.

East has 8 HCP, so knows they have enough points for game (28-30) but not enough for a Slam, so bids 3NT.

ADDITIONAL (ADVANCED) DISCUSSION

West has two Doubletons, so their hand is semi-balanced, not an ideal hand to open 2NT. They could open 1D instead and jump on the second round to show their points, but partner might pass with less than 6 points, potentially missing game.

Both Doubletons are good stops, reducing the attendant risk, so 2NT seems the better bid to me – but it's debatable.

North	East	South	West
2♣	Pass	2♦	Pass
2NT	Pass	3NT	Pass
Pass	Pass		

	♠AK6 ♥A754 ♦AQ2 ♣AQ5	
♠QJT73 ♥J98 ♦J4 ♣J98		♠92 ♥KQ6 ♦KT863 ♣T76
	♠854 ♥T32 ♦975 ♣K432	

Board: 5 Dealer: North #1160

North has 23 HCP and a balanced hand. Slightly too strong for a 2NT opening bid (20-22 HCP), they open 2C.

An opening bid of 2C shows 21+ HCP (with a 5-card Major) or 23+ HCP in a balanced hand, or 9+ playing tricks. This is a Game Force unless opener rebids 2NT.

South has 3 HCP, so must make the negative response, 2D.

The 2D response to the 2C opening bid shows 0-7 HCP; a negative response indicating a Slam is unlikely.

North bids 2NT to show they have 23-24 HCP and a balanced hand. Partner can pass now if they have a very weak hand (less than 2 HCP) i.e. this rebid "cancels" the presumed Game Force.

South has 3 HCP, just enough to raise partner to game in 3NT.

ADDITIONAL (ADVANCED) DISCUSSION

If you're playing Strong Twos, the 2C opening is a bit stronger, showing 23+ HCP or 10+ tricks.

East	South	West	North
2♣	Pass	2♦	Pass
2♠	Pass	3♣	Pass
3♠	Pass	4♠	Pass
Pass	Pass		

	♠ ♥K9862 ♦KQ932 ♣A83	
♠654 ♥T75 ♦4 ♣QJ6542		♠AKQJ983 ♥AJ ♦AJ5 ♣7
	♠T72 ♥Q43 ♦T876 ♣KT9	

Board: 6 Dealer: East #1918

East has 20 HCP and an excellent 7-card Major. They will make at least 9 tricks without any help from partner, so can open 2C.

An opening bid of 2C shows 21+ HCP (with a 5-card Major) or 23+ HCP in a balanced hand, or 9+ playing tricks. This is a Game Force unless opener rebids 2NT.

West has 2 HCP, so must make the negative response, 2D.

The 2D response to the 2C opening bid shows 0-7 HCP; a negative response indicating a Slam is unlikely.

East bids 2S to show their suit. There's no need to jump as the 2C opening is a Game Force.

West bids 3C to show their suit. After their earlier 2D response, this shows they have 3-7 HCP and a 5-card Club suit.

East rebids their Spades to show their length. West raises partner to 4S since they have 3-card support and no other values to show.

South	West	North	East
2♣	Pass	2♦	Pass
2NT	Pass	3♣	Pass
3♠	Pass	4♠	Pass
Pass	Pass		

	♠QT32 ♥75 ♦T532 ♣QJT	
♠74 ♥QJT ♦J987 ♣9652		♠865 ♥K98632 ♦Q ♣K84
	♠AKJ9 ♥A4 ♦AK64 ♣A73	

Board: 7 Dealer: South #2997

South has 23 HCP and a balanced hand. Slightly too strong for a 2NT opening bid (20-22 HCP), they open 2C.

An opening bid of 2C shows 21+ HCP (with a 5-card Major) or 23+ HCP in a balanced hand, or 9+ playing tricks. This is a Game Force unless opener rebids 2NT.

North has 5 HCP, so must make the negative response, 2D.

The 2D response to the 2C opening bid shows 0-7 HCP; a negative response indicating a Slam is unlikely.

South bids 2NT to show they have 23-24 HCP and a balanced hand. Partner can pass now if they have a very weak hand (less than 2 HCP) i.e. this rebid "cancels" the presumed Game Force.

North has 5 HCP and a 4-card Major, so bids 3C (Stayman) to check for a 4-4 fit.

South has a 4-card Spade suit, so responds with 3S.

North raises partner to 4S as they've established a 4-4 fit in Spades.

West	North	East	South
2♣	Pass	2♦	Pass
2NT	Pass	3NT	Pass
Pass	Pass		

	♠T63 ♥85 ♦52 ♣AQT863	
♠AKQ ♥KQT4 ♦AK6 ♣K92		♠87 ♥AJ6 ♦J743 ♣J754
	♠J9542 ♥9732 ♦QT98 ♣	

Board: 8 Dealer: West #2297

West has 24 HCP and a balanced hand. Too strong for a 2NT opening bid (20-22 HCP), they open 2C.

An opening bid of 2C shows 21+ HCP (with a 5-card Major) or 23+ HCP in a balanced hand, or 9+ playing tricks. This is a Game Force unless opener rebids 2NT.

East has 7 HCP, not quite enough for a positive response, so must make the negative response, 2D.

The 2D response to the 2C opening bid shows 0-7 HCP; a negative response indicating a Slam is unlikely.

West bids 2NT to show they have 23-24 HCP and a balanced hand. Partner can pass now if they have a very weak hand (less than 2 HCP) i.e. this rebid "cancels" the presumed Game Force.

East doesn't have a 5-card suit to bid, or a 4-card Major to investigate with Stayman. They do have 7 HCP, more than enough to raise to 3NT

North	East	South	West
2NT	Pass	3♣	Pass
3♠	Pass	4♠	Pass
Pass	Pass		

	♠KQJ5 ♥K62 ♦AK84 ♣AT	
♠A3 ♥JT9 ♦JT65 ♣Q982		♠T86 ♥AQ8753 ♦2 ♣J64
	♠9742 ♥4 ♦Q973 ♣K753	

Board: 9 Dealer: North #2234

North has 20 HCP and a balanced hand, so opens 2NT.

A 2NT opening shows 20-22 HCP and a balanced hand.

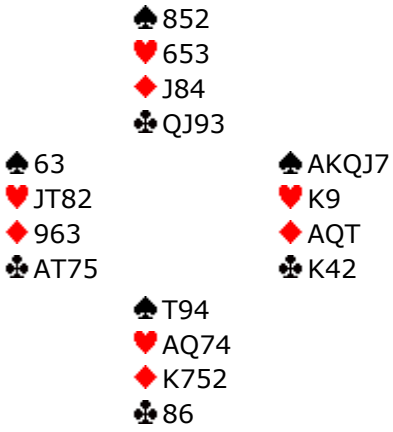
South has 5 HCP, so knows they have enough points for game (25-27) but not enough for a Slam. They could bid 3NT, but the singleton Heart is a worry. With 4 Spades they bid 3C, Stayman, to check if there's a 4-4 fit in a Major. 4S would probably be easier than 3NT with a fit.

Notice that South just needs 4 Spades, they don't have to be good cards!

North responds 3S to show they have 4 Spades and deny 4 Hearts.

South raises to 4S as they have at least 8 Spades and 25 HCP, just enough for game – although they can (perhaps) add two points for their singleton Heart.

East	South	West	North
2NT	Pass	3♣	Pass
3♠	Pass	3NT	Pass
Pass	Pass		



Board: 10 Dealer: East #2546

East has 21 HCP and a balanced hand, so opens 2NT. With such a strong 5-card Spade suit, it's tempting to play in Spades, but you're not strong enough to open 2C and if you open 1S, partner might pass with fewer than 6 HCP, missing game.

A 2NT opening shows 20-22 HCP and a balanced hand.

West has 5 HCP, so knows they have enough points for game (25-27) but not enough for a Slam. They could bid 3NT, but with 4 Hearts they bid 3C, Stayman, to check if there's a 4-4 fit in a Major. 4H would probably be easier than 3NT with a fit.

Notice that West just needs 4 Hearts, they don't have to be 4 good cards!

East responds 3S to show they have 4 Spades and deny 4 Hearts.

West can't bid either Major without a 4-4 fit. With at least 25 HCP, they have just enough to bid 3NT.

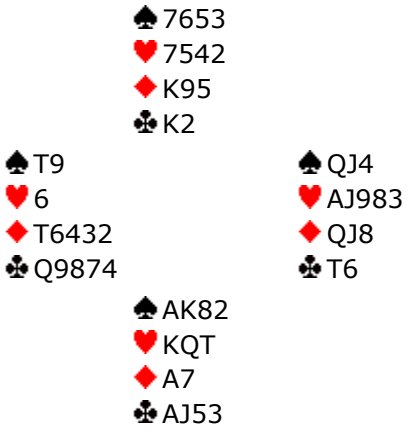
ADDITIONAL (ADVANCED) DISCUSSION

East is nearly strong enough to open 2C, but not quite (they have 8-9 tricks).

If they were playing Strong Twos, East could open 2S.

Notice that East has a 5-card major and would probably do better in 4S if partner has at least 3-card support. Finding a 5-3 fit after a 2 NT opening is difficult – which is why some people won't open 2NT with a 5-card Major.

South	West	North	East
2NT	Pass	3♣	Pass
3♠	Pass	4♠	Pass
Pass	Pass		



Board: 11 Dealer: South #894

South has 21 HCP and a balanced hand, so opens 2NT.

A 2NT opening shows 20-22 HCP and a balanced hand.

North has 7 HCP, so knows they have enough points for game (27-29) but not enough for a Slam. They could bid 3NT, but with two 4-card Majors they bid 3C, Stayman, to check if there's a 4-4 fit in a Major. 4H/4S would probably be easier than 3NT with a fit.

Notice that North just needs 4 cards in a Major to try Stayman, they don't have to be 4 good cards!

South responds 3S to show they have 4 Spades and deny 4 Hearts.

With a 4-4 fit in Spades and at least 26 HCP, North is strong enough to bid 4S

West	North	East	South
2NT	Pass	3♣	Pass
3♠	Pass	4♠	Pass
Pass	Pass		

	♠T62 ♥T642 ♦KQJ9 ♣Q2	
♠KQ95 ♥KJ9 ♦A4 ♣AK74		♠AJ84 ♥3 ♦762 ♣JT965
	♠73 ♥AQ875 ♦T853 ♣83	

Board: 12 Dealer: West #2516

West has 21 HCP and a balanced hand, so opens 2NT.

A 2NT opening shows 20-22 HCP and a balanced hand.

East has 6 HCP, so knows they have enough points for game (26-28) but not enough for a Slam. They could bid 3NT, but with a 4-card Major they bid 3C, Stayman, to check if there's a 4-4 fit. 4S would probably be easier than 3NT with a fit.

The singleton Heart would also be a worry in NT – and an asset in Spades.

West responds 3S to show they have 4 Spades and deny 4 Hearts.

With a 4-4 fit in Spades and at least 26 HCP, East is strong enough to bid 4S.

North	East	South	West
2NT	Pass	3♥	Pass
3♠	Pass	4♠	Pass
Pass	Pass		

	♠KQ ♥QT643 ♦AK97 ♣AQ	
♠AJ6 ♥72 ♦T85432 ♣J8		♠T3 ♥AJ9 ♦QJ ♣T96542
	♠987542 ♥K85 ♦6 ♣K73	

Board: 13 Dealer: North #3075

North has 20 HCP and a balanced hand, so opens 2NT.

A 2NT opening shows 20-22 HCP and a balanced hand.

South has 6 HCP so game should be on, with 26-28 HCP. In 3NT? No. South has a weak 6-card Spade suit and a singleton Diamond, 4S sounds a much better bet; partner must have at least two Spades to open 2NT, for an 8-card fit. Let's hope they're good ones!

South could just bid 4S, but that would put North's much stronger hand on the table as Dummy, showing East-West where all those points are. Much better to hide North's hand, by making them Declarer.

So South bids 3H, a transfer to 3S, then raises 3S to 4S, confident in a 6-2 fit and 26 HCP – or better.

East	South	West	North
Pass	Pass	2NT	Pass
3♥	Pass	3♠	Pass
3NT	Pass	4♠	Pass
Pass	Pass		

	♠Q43 ♥KQJ9 ♦KJ842 ♣7	
♠KT7 ♥A76 ♦A5 ♣AKQ53		♠AJ965 ♥T82 ♦T3 ♣964
	♠82 ♥543 ♦Q976 ♣JT82	

Board: 14 Dealer: East #3563

West has 20 HCP and a balanced hand, so opens 2NT.

A 2NT opening shows 20-22 HCP and a balanced hand.

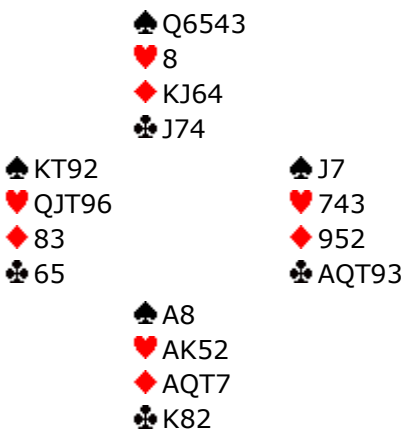
East has 5 HCP so game should be on, with 25-27 HCP. In 3NT? Maybe. East has a decent 5-card Spade suit and a doubleton Diamond, so 4S sounds a better bet, but only if partner has 3+ Spades, for an 8-card fit. The way to find out is to use a Transfer.

East also wants West's much stronger hand hidden from the Defence, so they want West to be Declarer – another advantage of a Transfer.

So East bids 3H, a transfer to 3S, then bids 3NT rather than 4S. This tells partner that they have a 5-card Spade suit and enough points for game. Partner can pass if they only have two Spades, or bid 4S with three or more, confident of an 8-card fit.

West does indeed have three Spades, so "corrects" the contract to 4S as requested.

South	West	North	East
2NT	Pass	3♥	Pass
3♠	Pass	3NT	Pass
Pass	Pass		



Board: 15 Dealer: South #780

South has 20 HCP and a balanced hand, so opens 2NT.

A 2NT opening shows 20-22 HCP and a balanced hand.

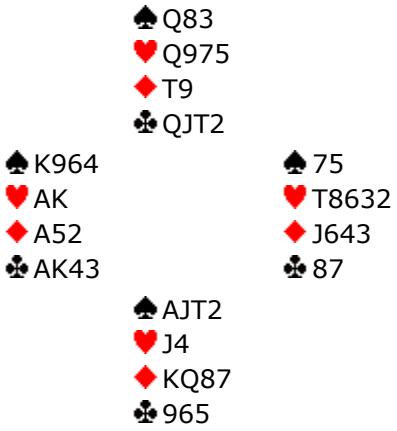
North has 7 HCP so game should be on, with 27-29 HCP. In 3NT? Maybe. North has a decent 5-card Spade suit and a singleton Heart, so 4S sounds a better bet, but only if partner has 3+ Spades, for an 8-card fit. The way to find out is to use a Transfer.

North also wants South's much stronger hand hidden from the Defence, so they want South to be Declarer – another advantage of a Transfer.

So North bids 3H, a transfer to 3S, then bids 3NT rather than 4S. This tells partner that they have a 5-card Spade suit and enough points for game. Partner can pass if they only have two Spades, or bid 4S with three or more, confident of an 8-card fit.

South only has Spades, so 3NT is a abetter contract than 4S (with a 7-card fit) – so they pass.

West	North	East	South
2NT	Pass	3♦	Pass
3♥	Pass	Pass	Pass



Board: 16 Dealer: West #1731

West has 21 HCP and a balanced hand, so opens 2NT.

A 2NT opening shows 20-22 HCP and a balanced hand.

East has just 1 HCP so game is very unlikely. They could pass 2NT, but they have a 5-card Heart suit and two Doubletons, their hand is much more useful in Hearts than NT.

East also wants West's much stronger hand hidden from the Defence, so they want them to be Declarer – an advantage of a Transfer.

So East bids 3D, a transfer to 3H, then passes. Partner must have at least two Hearts, for a 7-card fit. Not ideal, but they are not strong enough to rebid 3NT to offer a choice.

At first glance the 3H contract looks more difficult than 2NT, after all it requires an extra trick! However, East's hand is so weak it's unlikely to make ANY tricks in NT, but might make two tricks (by ruffing) in Hearts.

North	East	South	West
2♣	Pass	2♦	Pass
3NT	Pass	Pass	Pass



Board: 17 Dealer: North #2464

North has 26 HCP and a balanced hand. Too strong for a 2NT opening bid (20-22 HCP), they open 2C.

An opening bid of 2C shows 21+ HCP (with a 5-card Major) or 23+ HCP in a balanced hand, or 9+ playing tricks. This is a Game Force unless opener rebids 2NT.

South has 0 HCP, so must make the negative response, 2D.

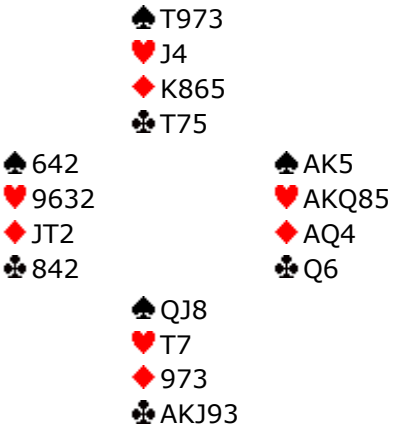
The 2D response to the 2C opening bid shows 0-7 HCP; a negative response indicating a Slam is unlikely.

North bids 3NT to show their point count and balanced hand.

The 3NT rebid after a 2C opening shows 25-28 HCP and a balanced hand..

South has nothing else to say and passes

East	South	West	North
2♣	Pass	2♦	Pass
2♥	Pass	4♥	Pass
Pass	Pass		



Board: 18 Dealer: East #485

East has 24 HCP and a balanced hand with a good 5-card Major. Too strong for a 2NT opening bid (20-22 HCP) or 1H opening, they open 2C.

An opening bid of 2C shows 21+ HCP (with a 5-card Major) or 23+ HCP in a balanced hand, or 9+ playing tricks. This is a Game Force unless opener rebids 2NT.

West has 1 HCP, so must make the negative response, 2D.

The 2D response to the 2C opening bid shows 0-7 HCP; a negative response indicating a Slam is unlikely.

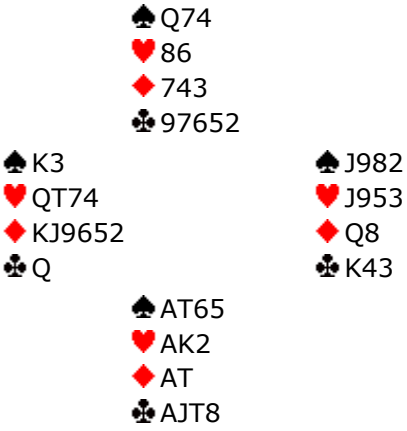
East bids 2H to shows their 5-card suit.

West only has 1 HCP but does have 4-card support for partner's Hearts. They don't have any other values to show, so they bid game, 4 Hearts.

ADDITIONAL (ADVANCED) DISCUSSION

West's 4H bid feels a bit heavy-handed; the 2C opening bid is a game force, so a 3H response would give partner a bit more space for any other bids they want to make – they aren't going to miss game Still, no harm done.

South	West	North	East
2NT	Pass	Pass	Pass



Board: 19 Dealer: South #3230

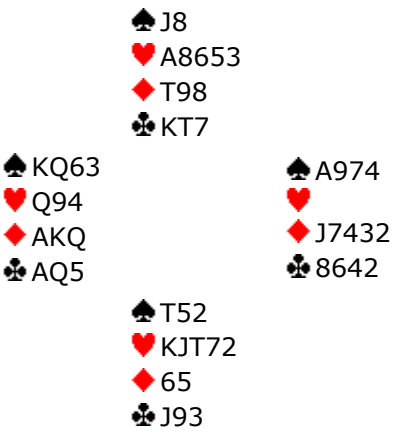
South has 20 HCP and a balanced hand, so opens 2NT.

A 2NT opening shows 20-22 HCP and a balanced hand.

North has just 2 HCP, so knows they do not have enough points for game (22-24), so they pass.

You might wonder why North didn't bid their 5-card Club suit – wouldn't a 3C contract be easier than 2NT? Maybe, but that 3C bid would be interpreted as Stayman by their partner. So they must pass.

West	North	East	South
2NT	Pass	3♣	Pass
3♠	Pass	4♠	Pass
Pass	Pass		



Board: 20 Dealer: West #2882

North has 20 HCP and a balanced hand, so opens 2NT.

A 2NT opening shows 20-22 HCP and a balanced hand.

South has 5 HCP, so knows they have enough points for game (25-27) but not enough for a Slam. They could bid 3NT, but with a 4-card Spade suit and a void in Hearts they bid 3C, Stayman, to check if there's a 4-4 fit. 4S would probably be easier than 3NT with a fit.

The void in Hearts would be a worry in NT but an asset in Spades.

North responds 3S to show they have 4 Spades and deny 4 Hearts.

With a 4-4 fit in Spades and at least 25 HCP, East is strong enough to bid 4S.

ADDITIONAL (ADVANCED) DISCUSSION

If North had responded 3D, South could pass – they're not strong enough to be certain of game in Diamonds, but at least you've got 7+ trumps. Or they could bid 4D as a game invitation. Or 5D, relying on that void to make up the points.

If North had responded 3H, South could bid 3NT, replying on North for stops in Hearts. North now knows South has 4 Spades, so can decide whether to pass or bid 4S on that basis.

Synopsis

	u3a Commentary Synopsis				
	Subject	**Strong Hands**	**Hand #**	**Declarer / Defender**	
		Bidding Sequence			
1	N	2NT	2007	Dec	
2	E	2NT, 3NT	561	Dec	
3	S	2NT, 3NT	1892	Dec	
4	W	2NT, 3NT	1913	Dec	
5	N	2C, 2D, 2NT, 3NT	1160	Dec	
6	E	2C, 2D, 2S, 3C, 3S, 4S	1918	Dec	
7	S	2C, 2D, 2NT, 3C, 3S, 4S	2997	Dec	
8	W	2C, 2D, 2NT, 3NT	2297	Dec	
9	N	2NT, 3C, 3S, 4S	2234	Dec.	
10	E	2NT, 3C, 3S, 3NT	2546	Dec.	
11	S	2NT, 3C, 3S, 4S	894	Dec	
12	W	2NT, 3C, 3S, 4S	2516	Dec	
13	N	2NT, 3H, 3S, 4S	3075	Dec	
14	E	2NT, 3H, 3S, 3NT, 4S	3563	Dec	
15	S	2NT, 3H, 3S, 3NT	780	Dec	
16	W	2NT, 3D, 3H	1731	Dec	
17	N	2C, 2D, 3NT	2464	Dec	
18	E	2C, 2D, 2H, 4H	485	Dec	
19	S	2NT	3230	Dec	
20	W	2NT, 3C, 3S, 4S	2882	Dec	