

TWO-LEVEL BALANCING

When the Opponents' bidding ends at two of a raised suit, Partner usually has unrevealed strength. It is useful to bid or double, if appropriate, to either buy the contract (making or down one) or push the Opponents up one important level.

The Opponents found a fit, but did not try for game even after upgrading for length points and Dummy points. The Opponents likely have less than 23 HCP, and could have as few as 18 HCP. When both sides have about 18-22 HCP, the deal is called a "20-20 deal". If both sides have a fit, you usually fight for the partscore.

If the Opponents have an eight or nine-card fit, you likely have a fit somewhere.

In this case, balancing bids do not show a specific number of points, but are only designed to find a reasonable suit with which to fight against the Opponents.

After the Opponents' two-level Fit

- Double with support for three (or two high ranking) suits
- Bid a 5 (or good 4) card suit
- 2NT over two-of-a-Major = Minors (at least 4-4)

You should not balance if most of your strength is in the Opponent's suit.

If the Opponents compete to the three-level after you balance, it is rarely right to continue competition. Balancer may have taken ample (but productive) risk already.

Opponents at 2-level without showing a fit

- No safety; if the Opponents have a misfit, likely so do you.
- Double with *four-card* support for all unbid suits
- Bidding a suit shows six-card suit.

Examples of dangerous auctions:

1D Pass 1H Pass
2D Pass Pass ???

1S Pass 1NT Pass
2C Pass 2S Pass
Pass ???

Deal 1

North Deals

None Vul

♠ K Q 8 6 2

♥ Q 7 5

♦ A 10 6

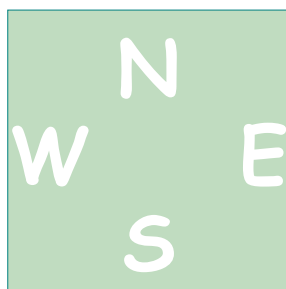
♣ K 2

♠ A 4 3

♥ K 9 8 3

♦ 5 4 3

♣ Q 7 4



♠ 10 5

♥ J 4

♦ K 9 8 2

♣ A J 9 6 5

♠ J 9 7

♥ A 10 6 2

♦ Q J 7

♣ 10 8 3

Bid the deal without peeking below. Then validate your table's action with the recommendation.

----- Peek below this line to validate your auction and contract. -----

*West**North**East**South*

1 ♠

Pass

2 ♠

Pass

Pass

2 NT!

Pass

3 ♣

All pass

----- Peek below this line to validate your opening lead. -----

3 ♣ by West

Opening Lead: ♠ K

Deal 2

East Deals

N-S Vul

♠ 9 7 6 2

♥ K 2

♦ A 7 6 5

♣ K 4 3

♠ K 8

♥ J 8 3

♦ 10 8 2

♣ Q J 8 7 6



♠ A Q 10

♥ A Q 10 6 4

♦ J 9 4

♣ 9 5

♠ J 5 4 3

♥ 9 7 5

♦ K Q 3

♣ A 10 2

Bid the deal without peeking below. Then validate your table's action with the recommendation.

----- Peek below this line to validate your auction and contract. -----

*West**North**East**South*

2 ♥

Pass

1 ♥

Pass

Pass

2 ♠

Pass

Dbl

All pass

----- Peek below this line to validate your opening lead. -----

2 ♠ by North

Opening Lead: ♣ 9