

The XYZ convention

(first developed by Joe Kivel)

This material is taken from the January, 2012 Two-over-One Course given by John Schwartz and John Williams.

After 3 bids all at the 1 level:

- 2♣ is an artificial relay to 2♦, usually showing invitational values.
- 2♦ is an artificial bid, forcing to game.

There are 10 auctions that qualify as XYZ:

1♣-1♦-1♥, 1♣-1♦-1♠, 1♣-1♦-1NT, 1♣-1♥-1♠, 1♣-1♥-1NT
1♣-1♠-1NT, 1♦-1♥-1♠, 1♦-1♥-1NT, 1♦-1♠-1NT, 1♥-1♠-1NT

We recommend not playing XYZ over interference at first.

After 1X-1Y-1Z:

- 2C** (artificial-alertable) asks opener to bid 2D; responder may pass 2D or make an invitational bid.
- 2D** (artificial-alertable) forcing to game
- 2H** is weak unless it is a reverse
- 2S** is weak unless it is a reverse
- 2NT** transfers to 3 Clubs to sign off
- 3C, 3D, 3H, & 3S** are GF, slam tries.

Pros and Cons of XYZ:

- + Can show weak, invitational, strong at the 2 level; more room to explore game/slam.
- + Can play invitational partscore hands at the 2 level.
- + More general and powerful than NMF.
- Can't play in 2♣ after an XYZ beginning
- Opponents can make lead-directing doubles of the artificial 2♣ and 2♦ bids.

Some examples of XYZ auctions

Opener	Responder
Responder is weak	
♠ KQ82 ♥ 64 ♦ AK63 ♣ Q52	♠ T6 ♥ KQJ973 ♦ 972 ♣ 94
1 ♦ 1 ♠	1 ♥ 2 ♥
Responder wants to invite in ♦'s	
♠ KQ82 ♥ 64 ♦ AK63 ♣ Q52	♠ A6 ♥ KJ97 ♦ QJ9872 ♣ 9
1 ♦ 1 ♠ 2 ♦ (artificial)	1 ♥ 2 ♣ (artificial) 3 ♦
Responder is invitational	
♠ KQ82 ♥ 64 ♦ AK63 ♣ Q52	♠ T6 ♥ KQJ97 ♦ J72 ♣ A94
1 ♦ 1 ♠ 2 ♦ 3 NT	1 ♥ 2 ♣ 2 ♥
Responder has game forcing values	
♠ KQ82 ♥ T64 ♦ AK63 ♣ Q5	♠ A6 ♥ KQJ97 ♦ J72 ♣ K94
1 ♦ 1 ♠ 2 ♥ (with 3 ♥)	1 ♥ 2 ♦ 4 ♥
How to stop in a ♣ partscore	
♠ KQ82 ♥ 64 ♦ Q52 ♣ AK63	♠ J9 ♥ KJ64 ♦ 8 ♣ QT8742
1 ♣ 1 ♠ 3 ♣	1 ♥ 2 NT (artificial)
How to invite in NT	
♠ KQ82 ♥ 64 ♦ Q52 ♣ AK63	♠ J9 ♥ KJ64 ♦ KJT3 ♣ QT8
1 ♣ 1 ♠ 2 ♦	1 ♥ 2 ♣ 2 NT
Opener may reject the relay to 2 ♦ (rare)	
♠ AK83 ♥ K97 ♦ 4 ♣ AJ432	
1 ♣ 1 ♠ 2 ♥ (opener doesn't want to play ♦s if responder is weak w/ ♥s and ♦s)	1 ♥ 2 ♣ (relay to 2 ♦)