

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
East Deals
Both Vul



9
 ♠ A 10 4 2
 ♥ Q 10 3
 ♦ 5 2
 ♣ K 9 5 4

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
		1 ♦	Pass
2 ♦	Pass	Pass	Dbl

Deal 5
West Deals
N-S Vul



10
 ♠ K J 9 4
 ♥ 9 7 5 2
 ♦ Q 3
 ♣ A 8 2

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
1 ♣	Pass	1 ♥	Pass
2 ♥	Pass	Pass	2 ♠

Deal 2
East Deals
None Vul



10
 ♠ A 8 2
 ♥ Q 2
 ♦ Q 6
 ♣ Q 9 7 6 5 2

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
		1 ♠	Pass
2 ♠	Pass	Pass	3 ♣

Deal 6
East Deals
Both Vul



7
 ♠ J 8 6 4 3
 ♥ A 5
 ♦ Q 5 2
 ♣ 9 7 2

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
		1 ♣	Pass
1 ♥	Pass	2 ♣	Pass
2 ♥	Pass	Pass	Pass

Deal 3
East Deals
N-S Vul



10
 ♠ 8 2
 ♥ A 8 4
 ♦ Q 8 6 4
 ♣ K J 9 2

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
		1 ♥	Pass
2 ♥	Pass	Pass	2 NT

Deal 7
West Deals
E-W Vul



10
 ♠ Q 10 9 4
 ♥ 9 5 3
 ♦ A 10 6 5
 ♣ A 3

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
1 ♦	Pass	1 ♥	Pass
2 ♥	Pass	Pass	2 ♠

Deal 4
East Deals
E-W Vul



7
 ♠ A 8 5 2
 ♥ 4 3
 ♦ K 10 8 4 2
 ♣ 4 2

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
		1 ♥	Pass
2 ♥	Pass	Pass	Dbl

Deal 8
West Deals
None Vul



9
 ♠ Q 10 2
 ♥ A 9 7 5 2
 ♦ K 9 8
 ♣ 5 2

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
1 ♣	Pass	1 ♠	Pass
2 ♣	Pass	Pass	Pass

Deal 9
East Deals
N-S Vul



7
 ♠ 4 3
 ♥ A J 9 6 2
 ♦ Q 9 4
 ♣ 10 7 2

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
		1 ♣	Pass
1 ♥	Pass	2 ♣	Pass
Pass	Dbl	Pass	2 ♦

Deal 10
East Deals
E-W Vul



9
 ♠ A 10 4 2
 ♥ Q 10 3 2
 ♦ 5 2
 ♣ K 9 5

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
		1 ♦	Pass
2 ♦	Pass	Pass	Dbl
Pass	2 ♠	3 ♦	Pass

Deal 11
West Deals
Both Vul



9
 ♠ A Q 5 3 2
 ♥ 8 4 3
 ♦ K 10 2
 ♣ 4 3

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
1 ♥	Pass	2 ♥	Pass
Pass	2 NT	Pass	3 ♦

Deal 12
East Deals
E-W Vul



11
 ♠ A 8
 ♥ Q J 10
 ♦ K J 2
 ♣ 9 7 5 4 2

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
		1 ♠	Pass
2 ♠	Pass	Pass	Dbl

Deal 13
East Deals
Both Vul



9
 ♠ 3 2
 ♥ A 2
 ♦ K J 9 7
 ♣ J 9 8 7 2

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
		1 ♠	Pass
2 ♠	Pass	Pass	2 NT

Deal 14
West Deals
None Vul



11
 ♠ K 8 5
 ♥ A 4 3
 ♦ K J 3 2
 ♣ 9 8 2

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
1 ♥	Pass	2 ♥	Pass
Pass	2 ♠	3 ♥	Pass

Deal 15
East Deals
Both Vul



8
 ♠ K 9 8 2
 ♥ 3 2
 ♦ K Q 9 7
 ♣ 10 8 2

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
2 ♥	Pass	1 ♥	Pass
	Pass	Pass	Dbl

Deal 16
East Deals
None Vul



10
 ♠ A 5
 ♥ 6 3
 ♦ K J 10 7
 ♣ Q 9 6 5 4

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
		1 ♠	Pass
2 ♠	Pass	Pass	2 NT