


 BY LARRY COHEN  
 larryco.com

# Bidding Basics

## After an opposing two-level (or higher) overcall

**O**ur partner opened and the opponents have overcalled at the two level or higher.

If the opponents overcall 2♣ (naturally) or higher in a suit, double is negative.

For example, after 1♠-(2♣), double with:

♠K2♥AJ76 ♦Q765 ♣432.

Two-level suit bids show 10+ points and are forcing one round. For example: 1♥-(2♦), bid 2♠ with:

♠KQ1087 ♥32 ♦A32♣A32.

A cuebid shows a limit raise or better. Example: 1♠-(2♥), bid 3♥ with:

♠K1087 ♥K6 ♦AJ2 10876.

A jump raise should be weak.

Example: 1♦-(2♣), bid 3♦ with:

♠87 ♥765 ♦AQ1076♣432.

Notrump bids are natural – 2NT is invitational with a stopper. Example: 1♠-(2♣), bid 2NT with:

♠Q2♥KJ2 ♦Q1087 ♣K976.

With a penalty pass, responder can pass and hope partner reopens with double for takeout and then leave it in.

The above paragraph is a lot to digest, but really it just follows the same principles as when the overcall was at the one level (see previous installments). Here are more examples to help.

After 1♥-(2♦), pass with these two hands:

♠Q63♥74 ♦Q762 ♣Q762

♠A62♥9 ♦KJ1063 ♣8642.

**Negative double with:**

♠AJ74♥63 ♦K74 ♣Q762

♠K108642♥9 ♦63 ♣QJ74.

**Raise to 2♥** (6–10) with:

♠762 ♥KJ9 ♦762 ♣A762

♠A762 ♥Q105 ♦74 ♣8642.

**Bid 2♠** (five-plus spades, 10-plus points) with:

♠AQ1063 ♥9 ♦762 ♣AJ74

♠KQJ1063 ♥A9 ♦A74 ♣A9.

**Bid 2NT** with:

♠KJ9 ♥63 ♦KJ9 ♣QJ762 or

♠Q74 ♥Q9 ♦Q1063 ♣AJ96.

**Bid 3♣** (five-plus clubs, 12-plus points) with:

♠A74 ♥63 ♦74 ♣AKQ762

♠K63 ♥9 ♦A762 ♣AQJ105.

**Bid 3♦** (limit raise or better) with:

♠K2 ♥KQ9 ♦8642 ♣AJ74

♠A63 ♥A762 ♦A9 ♣AQ74.

**Bid 3♥** (weak) with:

♠762 ♥Q1074 ♦63 ♣K762

♠9 ♥A1074 ♦762 ♣87642.

**Bid 3NT** with:

♠KJ9 ♥Q9 ♦AQ74 ♣Q1074

♠QJ9 ♥J9 ♦KQ9 ♣KQ983.

After 1♠-(3♣), pass with:

♠9 ♥A74 ♦K762 ♣Q10762.

You hope partner doubles for takeout which you then pass for penalty.

**Negative double** with:

♠74 ♥AQ74♦A8642 ♣74

♠74 ♥KJ762♦KJ752 ♣2.

**Bid 3♦** (five-plus diamonds, 12-plus points) with:

♠K74 ♥A9♦KQJ1074 ♣72

♠A ♥K2♦KQ10762 ♣8642.

**Bid 3♥** (five-plus hearts, 12-plus points) with:

♠83 ♥AJ10762 ♦AK762 ♣—

♠AK2 ♥AQ1084 ♦9 ♣Q1074.

**Bid 3♠** (roughly 8–11 with three-plus spades) with:

♠Q74 ♥A9 ♦K8642 ♣762

♠J762 ♥8642 ♦K2 ♣A105.

**Bid 3NT** with:

♠102 ♥KJ9 ♦KQ1074 ♣KJ9

♠Q9 ♥AKJ ♦Q762 ♣Q1074.

### Over a Michaels or unusual notrump bid

If the opponents make a two-suited bid, double is penalty oriented. Bidding their suit is beyond the scope of this series – but it isn't natural! Assume anything else is natural.

### Over partner's 2♣

If partner opened 2♣ and the opponents overcall, you can mostly ignore it. If you bid, you promise a decent five-plus card suit and 8-plus points. The only calls that could cause confusion are pass or double. Although not necessarily best, I would keep things simple and pass with nothing and define double as "enough values for game." Good luck remembering such an agreement – interference after a 2♣ opening is rare.

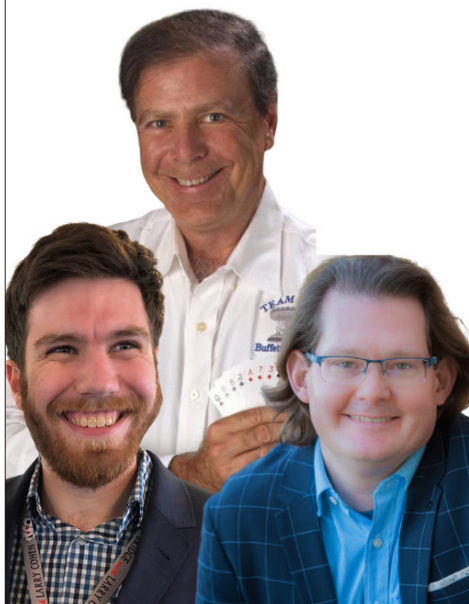
### We preempt and they overcall

With enough for game, bid game. Otherwise, with support for opener, raise to the three level with nine expected trumps (not invitational) and to the four level with 10. However, be aware of vulnerability and flat distribution. Raise 2♥ to 3♥ after an overcall with:

*continued on page 54*

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### BIDDING BASICS *continued from page 53*

♠9 ♥Q74 ♦A87642 ♣762,  
but not with

♠J74 ♥J74 ♦J84 ♣Q762.

If they overcall after our preempt, double is for penalty. Opener should not pull. New suits are natural. Are they forcing? This is a matter of partnership agreement. Assuming both partners can remember any such

agreement (a big assumption), my suggestion would be non-forcing. So, after 2♥-(2♠), responder can bid 3♦ with, say:

♠74 ♥9 ♦AKQ10762 ♣762.

The main thing is to remember that a double is penalty. For example, after 3♥-(3♠), double with:

♠KQ987 ♥9 ♦AQ63 ♣A32.

### Bidding Basics Quiz

What is responder's call after 1♠-(2♥) with:

- 1) ♠74 ♥74 ♦AQ74 ♣AJ762
- 2) ♠9 ♥A74 ♦A74 ♣KQ10762
- 3) ♠KJ2 ♥86 ♦A765 ♣K873

What is responder's call after 2♠-(3♥) with:

- 7) ♠KJ95 ♥2 ♦A97654 ♣86
- 8) ♠- ♥QJ987 ♦AQ76 ♣KQ106

What is responder's call after 1♣-(2♠) with:

- 4) ♠KJ2 ♥Q102 ♦A32 ♣J1076
- 5) ♠32 ♥A32 ♦AQ2 ♣AJ765
- 6) ♠A765 ♥AQ32 ♦A ♣K765

### Bidding Basics Quiz Answers

- 1) Negative double.
- 2) 3♣. Natural, forcing.
- 3) 3♥. Limit raise or better in spades.
- 4) 2NT. Natural, invitational, spades stopped.
- 5) 3♠. Limit raise or better in clubs. This is not asking for a spade stopper, but partner will likely bid 3NT if he has spades stopped.

- 6) Double. Negative (gotta look for that 4-4 heart fit).
- 7) 4♠. Follow the LAW of Total Tricks.
- 8) Double. Penalty. You've got it!