

Defence to Weak Twos.

When RHO opens with a weak two you have various options. Double is generally played as take-out these days and the usual scenario is: -

- 1) Pass. This could be anything, it is usually weak but it could well be a hand worth a penalty double (but cannot double as that is for take-out).
- 2) A simple overcall. Typically a good five of six card suit. As you are at the two/three level this need to be at least opening strength.
- 3) A jump overcall. This should be a six+ card suit. It is strong but not forcing.

Note that a jump is not pre-emptive but strong – there is no such thing as a pre-empt over a pre-empt.

- 4) Double. This is a take-out double and shows shortage in the suit bid. It generally shows 4 cards in the other major (over 2♥/♠) but not necessarily if very strong.
- 5) A cue bid of 3♦/♥/♠ over a 2♦/♥/♠ opening asks partner to bid 3NT with a stop. The hand usually has a long running minor.
- 6) 2NT. This is natural, around 15-18 with decent stop(s) in the suit bid. It may or may not contain 4 cards in the other major (if a 2♥/♠ opening).
- 7) 3NT. About 20+ with good stops, it may be somewhat less with a long minor.
- 8) 4NT. This is not Blackwood. It is a strong two-suited hand in the lowest two unbid suits (so in fact the same suits as the UNT but very strong).
- 9) Leaping Michaels is a jump overcall to four of a minor after a weak 2♥/♠ opening. The leap shows five cards in the unbid major plus five or six cards in the minor bid. Leaping Michaels is not a pre-empt but a strong playing trick hand.
For example, with ♠4 ♥AKJ54 ♦A ♣KQJ987 jump to 4♣ over a 2♠ opening. The bid is not strictly forcing but there usually is game (or slam) in one of the suits.

Balancing

If LHO opens a weak two and this is passed round to you, then all of the above holds except that you do not need such a strong hand (partner has values). But be aware that partner may well have passed because he has a stack of the suit opened and cannot penalty double. So be inclined to double with just about any hand with shortage in the suit opened.

For example, LHO opens 2♠ and this is passed round to you holding: -
♠64 ♥AJ54 ♦8 ♣J98743. You should balance with a double.