

## Flannery

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Flannery is a bidding convention in which Opener by bidding an "artificial" (not showing Diamonds) **2 Diamonds** shows a holding of (1) **11 to 15 HCPs** and (2) exactly<sup>1</sup> **4 Spades and 5+ Hearts**. Flannery is useful because, **first**, *hands that are two-suited play much better in Suit contracts!*<sup>2</sup> **Second**, as emphasized in the "**Probabilities Section**" of the "Esther Bridge Lessons", *when Opener holds 4/5+ in the Majors, the probabilities of Partners finding an 8+ card fit in the Majors soars massively, and showing 2 Suits at once facilitates finding this fit!* **Third**, because some Partners play "reverses" (i.e., opening 1 Suit, and then at the next level bidding a new higher-ranked Suit, in order to show Partner a ginormous Hand), *playing Flannery avoids the problem of making an untrue "reverse" by first bidding Hearts, and later Spades, to show a Hand that is 2-suited in the Majors, when one does not hold sufficient HCPs to bid a "reverse"*. Finally, Flannery also tends to freeze Opponents out of the bidding.

### Responses to Flannery

**2H** Natural, a **weak signoff** with support in Hearts

**2S** Natural, a **weak signoff** with support in Spades

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<sup>1</sup> As players advance in skills they quite naturally place an increasing emphasis on communicating exact Trump card counts, in recognition of the preeminence of the "Law of Total Tricks", which says that *you can generally make a Suit contract that is less than the number of Trump cards your Partnership holds, minus 6!* Within the "**Esther Bridge Lessons**", see: "**Lesson #6: 'Law of Total Tricks' versus HCPs**".

<sup>2</sup> This is exactly why Marty Bergen invented his "**Rule of 20**" as a guide to opening sitting in any position with *fewer* than 13 HCPs given certain 2-Suited hands! Within the "**Esther Bridge Lessons**", see: "**Lesson #43: Are the 'Rule of 20' and the 'Law of Total Tricks' Both Broken?**", and "**Lesson #45: Opening the Bidding Using the 'Rule of 22' versus the 'Rule of 20' ...**"

- 3C Natural, 6+ Clubs, a **weak signoff**
- 3D Natural, 6+ Diamonds, **Invitational**, because *otherwise Responder would simply Pass the 2D opening bid*
- 3H 3+ Hearts, 10-12 points, **invitational**
- 3S 4+ Spades, 10-12 points, **invitational**
- 3NT Natural, **signoff**
- 4C! **Transfer to Hearts (4H)**
- 4D! **Transfer to Spades (4S)**
- 4H Natural, **signoff**
- 4S Natural, **signoff**
- 2NT! This bid by Responder asks Opener, "**Please describe the shape of your hand in the Minors,**" given that Opener has already shown 5-4 in the Majors, and only 4 cards the Minors. This is a forcing **demand bid**. Some Partners play without using the 2NT! query bid.

"!" = required "Alert!" by the bidder.

### Opener's Responses to Responder's 2NT Distribution Query

- 3C 4-5-1-3 with length in the Clubs Minor
- 3D 4-5-3-1 with length in the Diamonds Minor
- 3H! 4-5-2-2, with **Minimum point count**, suggesting a stop at either 3H or 3S
- 3S! 4-5-2-2, with **Maximum point count**
- 3NT Showing good point count with stops in both Minors

"!" = required "Alert!" by the bidder.