

## **“Unusual 2NT!’ Overcall To Show You Are Holding a Hand That Is 2-Suited With Both Suits Having Good ‘Suit Quality’”**

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The “Unusual 2NT!” bid is *always* an **Overcall** bid. *If bid over Opponent’s bid of a Major*, the Unusual 2NT! bid tells Partner that you are two-suited ~5+/~5+ in the Minors. Most pairs also play that, as an Overcall against any bid by Opponents, the “Unusual 2NT!” bid shows a 2-suited hand in the **2 lowest unbid suits**.<sup>1</sup>

Assuming **no interference**, the “Unusual 2NT!” bid is a **Demand Bid requiring** Partner to bid at the 3 level Partner’s longest and strongest suit from between the 2 suits shown by the “Unusual 2NT!” bidder. With interference, Partner may *optionally* still bid either of the two shown suits. Because the “Unusual 2NT!” bid is artificial, showing a 2-suited hand, rather than a flat hand and points, this artificial bid **must** be Alerted!

The Unusual 2NT! bid often is made to obtain a “sacrifice bid” against a Major, or a positive Part Score, but also could be bid by someone holding a void in the Opponents’ bid suit to possibly find a game-score contract.

### Example #1

NORTH: 1S  
EAST: 2NT!  
SOUTH: PASS  
WEST: 3C

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<sup>1</sup> By Partnership Agreement some Partners play the “Unusual 2NT!” Overcall bid as *always* showing as Hand that is 2-Suited **only** in Clubs and Diamonds.

Example #2

WEST		EAST	
<b>S:</b> 72		<b>S:</b> KT86	
<b>H:</b> A3		<b>H:</b> T85	
<b>D:</b> KJT4		<b>D:</b> A863	
<b>C:</b> QT832		<b>C:</b> K5	
SOUTH: <b>1H</b>	WEST: PASS	NORTH: <b>2H</b>	EAST: PASS
SOUTH: PASS	WEST: <b>2NT!</b>	NORTH: PASS	EAST: <b>3D</b>
SOUTH: PASS	WEST: PASS	NORTH: PASS	

Note that "Unusual **2NT**" is played such that the "Unusual **2NT!**" bid is not always a Jump bid! Nevertheless, the "Unusual **2NT!**" bid is clearly *obvious* to Partner, even without a jump!!! As Esther comments:

"Consider, my *malodorous misanthrope*, this bidding sequence. SOUTH has shown an opening. or near-opening hand (if Partners are playing the "**Rule of 20**"), and at least 5 Hearts, while NORTH is showing at least 3 Hearts and 8-10 HCPs. With WEST bidding **2NT!**, can EAST *really, really, really* be confused, and think that WEST *really* wants to play **2NT** when N/S hold (1) 20+ HCPs and (2) at least 8 Hearts, which will kill any **2NT** contract???"

Examples #3 and #4

NORTH: <b>4S</b>	EAST: <b>4NT!</b>		
NORTH: <b>1H</b>	EAST: DOUBLE	SOUTH: <b>4H</b>	WEST: <b>4NT!</b>

Note that "high-level" "Unusual **NT!**" bids are "take out" Demand bids.

Example #5

NORTH: <b>1H</b>	EAST: PASS	SOUTH: PASS	WEST: <b>2NT!</b>
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Note that the "Unusual **2NT!**" bid can be made by a player not sitting LHO to the opening bidder.

Example #6

NORTH: PASS	EAST: PASS	SOUTH: PASS	WEST: <b>1S</b>
NORTH: <b>2NT!</b>			

Note that the "Unusual 2NT!" bid can be made by a player who holds a Passed hand.

After Opponent Opens a "Weak 2"

The "Unusual 2NT!" bid is **off** if an Opponent opens with a "Weak 2" bid.

Vulnerability of "Unusual 2NT!" Bidder

Because the "Unusual 2NT!" bid occurs as an Overcall when Opponents have shown points by opening a suit bid, and the "Unusual 2NT!" bid forces bidding to at least the 3 level, the "Unusual 2NT!" bid is more likely to be suitable when the Partnership is not Vulnerable.

Point Count Requirements

Most Partners agree that they will not bid "Unusual 2NT!" with a "medium" point count, because Responder will not know whether the "Unusual 2NT!" bid is or is not intended to be game going. Partners should reach a Partnership agreement as to whether they will bid "Unusual 2NT!" as "strong", or as "weak", and bid accordingly.

**Probabilities of a 5-5 or 5-4 or 4-5 Distribution**

				<b>Only</b>
<b>Any 2</b>			<b>Any 2</b>	<b>Both</b>
Dist.			Suits	Minors
5-5-2-1	3.448%	<b>Any</b>		
5-5-3-0	0.895%	5-5	4.343%	<b>0.724%</b>
5-4-3-1	12.931%			
5-4-2-2	10.580%	<b>Any</b>		
5-4-4-0	1.243%	5-4	24.754%	<b>4.126%</b>

A player sitting behind Opponents' Opening of a Major will very rarely be 5-5 in the Minors, but a player will hold 5-4 or 4-5 in the Minors with some frequency.

## "Unusual 2NT" Overcall of Opponent's "Strong" 2C Opening Bid

Some Partners play the "Unusual 2NT" Overcall when an Opponent opens with a "strong" 2C opening bid.<sup>2</sup> Such an Overcall may be dicey because the Opponent who bid 2C holds either **22-24** HCPs or **8+** "Quick Tricks"!

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<sup>2</sup> See "**Esther Bridge 'Pop' Quiz #250**" which draws from BBO Bridge Master Level 3 **Lesson**

**D-18:**

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