

THE CROWHURST 2♣ CONVENTION

Traditionally a 1NT re-bid, if partner replied one of a suit, denoted in Acol a balanced hand with 15 – 16 points (if an opening 1NT is 12 – 14) but there are advantages in having a wider range 1NT re-bid.

In most of the country this 1NT re-bid shows 12 – 16 points but in this article we use it show 15 – 18 which is more popular in this area.

A major advantage is that after the 1NT re-bid responder can bid a conventional 2♣ (Crowhurst) to discover both the strength of opener's hand and his holdings in the majors.

If responder has a poor seven points or less then game is unlikely and he will pass or sign off by re-bidding his own suit or in partner's suit, although 2♣ can no longer be used as a natural bid.

The opener replies to the 2♣ enquiry as follows:

1. Re-bids his own major at the two level showing a five card suit and 15 – 16 points and at the three level with 17 – 18.
2. Raises responder's major at the two level showing three card support with 15 – 16 and at the three level with 17 – 18.
3. Holding neither a five card major nor three cards in partner's major bids 2D with 15 – 16 and 2NT with 17 – 18.

A	♠ K8 ♥ AJ54 ♦ A983 ♣ A105	B	♠ K87 ♥ AJ65 ♦ A64 ♣ KJ2	C	♠ K8 ♥ AJ654 ♦ A64 ♣ AQ2	D	♠ K84 ♥ AJ65 ♦ A64 ♣ AQ2	E	♠ K8 ♥ AJ65 ♦ A64 ♣ AQ2
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All these hands open 1H, and after a 1♠ reply bid 1NT. Partner asks with 2♣.

With hand A a bid of 2♦ shows 15 – 16 and denies five hearts or three spades

With hand B a bid of 2♠ shows 15 – 16 and three spades.

With hand C a bid of 3♥ shows 17 – 18 and a five card suit.

With hand D a bid of 3♠ shows 17 – 18 and three cards in partner's suit.

With hand E a bid of 2NT shows 17 – 18 and denies five cards in hearts or three cards in spades.

Note that any bid of 2NT and higher shows 17 – 18 points.

With this information responder can decide the final contract.

Sometimes you will hold 5 cards in your major and three in partner's; which do you show? When partner bids 2♣ you do not know which major he is interested in but, with a choice *always bid hearts first* as this allows a fit in either major to be found.

F	♠ K87 ♥ AJ754 ♦ A6 ♣ K53
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Hand G opens 1♥, partner 1♠ and you re-bid 1NT.

Responder asks with 2C and the bid is 2♥ showing 5 hearts but not denying 3 spades. If partner has 5 spades he can now say 2♠ (forcing) to check if you have three. With this hand you would now say 3♠. Without three spades you would bid 2NT.

If this was a 17 – 18 point hand the initial reply after 2♣ would be 3♥ and responder, with a five card suit, could bid 3♠ to check if you hold three spades.

Holding a balanced hand (15+) with a major and a minor many prefer to bid the major first, but if you prefer to open with the minor suit then this convention is helpful.

G	♠ Q1097
	♥ K5
	♦ A98
	♣ AQ76

If you open 1♣, partner replies 1♥ and you re-bid 1NT.
 Partner asks with 2♣ and you can bid 2♠ showing a four card spade suit with 15 – 16 points. This denies holding three hearts.
 With 17 – 18 the bid would be 3♠.

H	♠ Q1097
	♥ K75
	♦ A9
	♣ AQ76

If you open 1♣, partner replies 1♥ and you re-bid 1NT.
 Partner asks with 2♣ and you reply 2♥ showing a three card heart suit and 15 – 16 points. This does not deny a four card spade suit.

There is a refinement to help when responder holds 9 points and does not know whether to bid game. After opener has bid his suit and re-bid 1NT, if responder holds exactly 9 points he bids 2NT instead of asking with 2♣.

Opener with just 15 points can pass but if he holds 16 and decides to go to game he can still bid 3♠ or 3♥ on the way to show five cards in his own suit or three cards in partner's.