

# Jacoby 2NT\* Revisited

By Neil H. Timm

If one opens one of a major and partner likes the suit, a common practice playing the 2/1 Game Force System is to use the Jacoby 2NT\* conventional bid. It has been traditionally not been played over interference, but many now play it over a take-out double (partnership agreement). After a major suit opening bid, the 2NT\* bid shows at least 4-card support for the major with at least game-forcing values, 13+ dummy/support points (some still use 12+).

## Original Jacoby 2NT\*

### Jacoby 2NT\* Responses by Opener

Rebids by Opener	Suit Length	Dummy Points
3 (new suit)*	Singleton/Void	13+
3 (major suit opened)*	5/6+ in major	18+
3NT*	(5-3-3-2) balanced	15-17
4 (new suit)	5+ card suit	13+ to 17
4 (major suit opened)	5+ major	13/14 (balanced minimum)

A jump to the four level in a new suit after 2NT\* is clearly invitational to slam. When showing a singleton after 2NT\*, the trump suit should contain at least two of the top three honors. **Do not show a singleton with a weak trump suit.**

Furthermore, a new suit at the four-level should contain at least two of the top five honors (some require 2 of the top 3) in the 5-card suit bid (e.g. Q10xxx). **All rebids by opener must be alerted (\*=alert) and explained in detail if asked.**

### Following is a summary of descriptive bids following Jacoby 2NT\*.

After 1♥ - 2NT\*

- 3♣\* = ♣ shortage
- 3♦\* = ♦ shortage
- 3♥\* = good hand with no shortage
- 3♠\* = ♠ shortage
- 3NT\* = better hand with no shortage
- 4♣ = a 5+card ♣ suit
- 4♦ = a 5+-card ♦ suit
- 4♥ = poor hand with no shortage

After 1♠ - 2NT\*

- 3♣\* = ♣ shortage
- 3♦\* = ♦ shortage
- 3♥\* = ♥ shortage
- 3♠\* = good hand with no shortage
- 3NT\* = better hand with no shortage
- 4♣ = a 5+card ♣ suit
- 4♦ = a 5+card ♦ suit
- 4♥ = a 5+card ♥ suit
- 4♠ = poor hand with no shortage

The problem with the original Jacoby bids is the 4-level minor suit bids, they take up too much bidding space. This approach also implies that suit length is more important than shortness. Another problem with the original bids is the jump to 4M in the major suit. It often preempts the partnership from finding a slam.

To correct this problem some change the requirement from a 5-card suit to a 4-card suit. If this is your agreement, then showing shortness is more important than suit length! However, you still have the 4M fast arrival-bidding problems.

The following modification corrects the fast-arrival bidding problem and allows for more bidding space to investigate slam.

## **Simple Modified Jacoby 2NT\* Bids**

### **Jacoby 2NT\* Responses by Opener**

- 3♣\* = any minimum hand 13/14 points
- 3♦\* = any balanced maximum hand 15+ points
- 3♥\* = ♣ shortness 13+
- 3♠\* = ♦ shortness 13+
- 3NT\* = shortness in Other Major 13+
- 4m = 5-card minor (two of top 5) with 13+

A major disadvantage of this modification as with the original Jacoby NT is that too much information about suit shortness is communicated to the opponents, which helps them with their defense of the hand. To avoid this problem, Larry Cohen and others have proposed modifications to eliminate that problem since shortness is concealed as well as removing the fast arrival bid. I refer you to his web site for the proposed modifications to Jacoby 2NT\*:  
<https://www.larryco.com/bridge-articles/modified-jacoby-2nt>.

I visited Bridgeweb who surveyed responders on their responses to Jacoby 2NT\* and found the following.

### **How do you respond to Jacoby 2NT\*?**

1. 3 of a suit show shortness in that suit (24.00%)
2. 4 of a suit shows GOOD 5 card side suit (20.00%)
3. 3M show extra values - (20.00%)
4. 4M shows minimum hand (20.00%)
5. 3clubs shows minimum hand with some shortness (12.00%)
6. 3d shows extra values (4.00%)

Most continue to use the original version (84%) with 16% using the Modified Version.