

DEFENSIVE BIDDING

After Flannery

Presented by Mike Savage

Flannery is a convention designed to show minimum opening hands with five hearts and four spades. To show this hand, you open **2D** in the original version and in another version, **2H** is used. Flannery is a popular convention so your partnership needs to have defensive methods ready to be able to compete safely, without misunderstandings. On page one are the standard defenses after Flannery. On page two are the three most common response sequences after a **DbI** of **2D** Flannery. They are rarely discussed in many partnerships so the meanings suggested on page two, may be very useful to *your* partnership.

2D Flannery:

DbI = Shows a balanced hand with values for a sound, strong **1NT** opening or better and should have both majors stopped. (For responses to the double, see **Responses after DbI** on page 2).

2H = A take-out double of hearts, an opening hand or better and usually has at least three spades.

2S = Natural with a very good five or good 6-card suit and should have opening values.

2NT = Artificial (think Unusual No-trump), 5-5 plus in the minors with opening values or better.

3C or **3D** = Natural with at least opening values and a good (usually six-card) suit.

3H = Western cue-bid asking partner to bid **3NT** with a stopper. Usually bid with a long, solid suit.

Responses:

4C = Artificial, denies a stopper in hearts and asks partner to pass if clubs is his suit and, if it isn't, to bid his suit at the four-level. Denies game values for either minor.

4D = Artificial, denies a stopper in hearts but has values for game in partner's suit.

4S = Natural, to play. Shows a very good six or a reasonable seven-card suit and values for game.

3S = Natural and invitational with a very good six or a good seven-card suit with about 8-9 winners.

3NT = To play, usually based on a long solid minor, majors stopped and about 8½ to 10 winners.

2H Flannery: All meanings are the same as above, except those in **green**.

DbI = A take-out double of hearts with at least opening values or a hand too good to just bid **2NT**.

2S = 1st Choice:

Artificial (think Unusual No-trump), with 5-5 plus in the minors with opening values or more.

Alternate Choice:

Shows a good 5/6-card suit with opening values (if you choose this, you can't show both minors).

2NT = Natural with values for a sound, strong **1NT** opening with stoppers in the majors.

3C/3D = Natural with at least opening values and a good (usually six-card) suit.

3H = Western cue-bid asking partner to bid **3NT** with a stopper. Usually bid with a long, solid suit.

Responses:

4C = Artificial, denies a stopper in hearts and asks partner to pass if clubs is his suit, and if it isn't, to bid his suit at the four-level. Denies game values for either minor.

4D = Artificial, denies a stopper in hearts but has values for game in partner's suit.

4S = Shows a very good six or a reasonable seven-card suit and values for game.

3S = Natural with a very good six or a good seven-card suit with about 8-9 winners.

3NT = To play, usually based on a long solid minor, majors stopped and about 8½ to 10 winners.

(Bids in **blue** have the same meanings in all three sequences.)

Responses after 2D-Dbl-pass/2H or 2S: The meaning of a response to intervener's take-out double is somewhat dependant on what is bid by the responder to Flannery. After consultation (but not always agreement) with Danny Kleinman, Bill Hall and others, the bidding structure below seems effective to me.

2D-Dbl-2H: **Dbl** = Penalty.

2S = Natural and to play, usually with a five-card or longer suit.

2NT = Artificial. Asks intervener (the doubler) to bid **3C** and you will usually pass or bid **3D**, which intervener must pass. If advancer bids again, **3C** didn't show clubs.

If over **3C**, advancer bids **3H**, that shows at least four spades and is game forcing.

If over **3C**, he bids **3S**, that shows a good 5/6-card spade suit and is invitational.

Over **3C**, **4S** = slam invitational, very good spades and more than opening values.

3C/3D = Natural and invitational.

3H = Relay to **3NT**, wanting the big hand to be declarer as advancer has no major tenaces.

3S = Shows minors, usually 5-5, little interest in **3NT**, looking for a minor game or slam.

3NT = To play, wanting the Flannery bidder to be on lead; usually has tenaces to protect.

4S = Natural and to play, usually with a good 6 or 7-card suit. Has no slam interest.

2D-Dbl-2S: **Dbl** = Penalty.

2NT = Artificial, asking intervener (doubler) to bid **3C**, which you will usually pass or bid **3D**, which intervener must pass. If over **3C**, you bid: **3H** (rare) = natural and invitational, or **3S** = spade shortness, 4-4 plus in the minors, game values or more.

3C/3D = Natural and invitational.

3H = Relay to **3NT**, wanting the big hand to be declarer as advancer has no major tenaces.

3S = Shows minors, usually 5-5, little interest in **3NT**, looking for a minor game or slam.

3NT = To play, wanting the Flannery bidder to be on lead; usually has tenaces to protect.

4H = Natural and to play — rare (opener may have forgotten Flannery & has a weak two).

Below is my preferred bidding structure over **pass**; there are other possibilities.

2D-Dbl-pass: **Pass** = Penalty, with 3-4 diamonds and at least invitational values or any diamond stack.

2H = Relay to **2S**

After **2S:** **Pass** = Shows four or more spades and no game interest.

2NT = Relay to **3C**. Shows a weak hand with clubs; could only have four.

If over **3C**, **3H** = natural and to play (rare — they forgot Flannery?).

3C = Natural and forcing, denies having a spade suit.

3D = Shows shortness (4-3-1-5, 4-4-1-4, etc.) and at least game values.

3H = Shows shortness (4-1-4-4, 4-0-4-5, etc.) and at least game values.

3S = Natural and forcing, has at least a very good five or a six-card suit.

3NT = Shows game values and only four spades.

2S = Natural and invitational. Could have only four spades if there is no better bid.

2NT = Natural and mildly invitational as he didn't sign off in **2S** or **3C**.

3C = Natural and invitational.

3D = Transfer to **3H** (rare); a good 6-card suit, invitational or more (they forgot Flannery?).

3H = Relay to **3NT**, wanting the big hand to be declarer as advancer has no major tenaces.

3S = Natural and invitational, usually with a good six-card suit.

3NT = To play, wanting the Flannery bidder to be on lead; usually has tenaces to protect.

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