

Flannery

A Standard Version Utilizing Two Diamonds Presented by Mike Savage

Flannery is a convention designed to handle minimum opening hands with five hearts and four spades. In the original version (the most popular) an opening bid of 2D is Flannery. In a later version, **2H** is used for **Flannery**; the only difference is that **Pass** replaces the **2H** response—all other bids remain the same.

The basic structure is played the same way but various experts differ on the meanings of a few responses.

2D = Shows 5 hearts, 4 spades and 11-15/16 HCP (some partnerships vary the point range a little ±). There are a few players who use **Flannery** with 6 hearts and 4 spades but that is not highly recommended.

Responses:

Pass = When you have a long diamond suit, no major fit and no interest in game after **Flannery**.

2H or **2S** = To play with no game interest—responder has shown his best fit. **2H** might be bid with only 2 hearts and **2S**, with only 3 spades—if there is no better bid. These two responses cover a wide range of HCP—from 0 up to as many as 11/12 when you have a poor fit.

2NT = Asks opener to show his strength and shape. Shows an invitational or better hand.

Responses:

3C or **3D** = First option: Shows a three *or* four-card minor along with your hearts and spades.
Original meaning: Shows a three-card minor along with your hearts and spades.

3H = Shows 4-5-2-2 distribution with a minimum.

3S = Shows 4-5-2-2 distribution with a maximum.

3NT = Shows 4-5-2-2 distribution with a maximum and queen or better in both minors.

4C or **4D** = Show a 4-card minor if you play a **3C** or **3D** response to show specifically three.

3C = First option: Shows a weak or non-invitational hand with a long club suit and no major fit.

3D = First option: Shows a long, good suit with an invitational hand and denies a major fit.

Second option: Some partnerships play that both 3C and 3D over 2NT are natural and forcing.

3H or **3S** = Sets trumps, is game forcing and shows some slam interest. Opener rebids as follows:

3NT = Maximum with 4-5-2-2 and some minor honor help.

4C or **4D** = Always bid w/shortness in other minor (5-4-3-1, 5-4-1-3, 5-4-4-0 & 5-4-0-4).

4H over **3S** or **3S** over **3H** = Maximum (or semi-max) with 4-5-2-2 and no minor help.

4H over **3H** or **4S** over **3S** = Shows a minimum and 4-5-2-2 distribution (no stiff/void).

3NT = To play with no major fits.

4C or **4D** = First option: Transfer to the corresponding major (**4C** = hearts, **4D** = spades).

Over **4C**, respond **4H** with a minimum and **4D** with a maximum.

Over **4D**, respond **4S** with a minimum and **4H** with a maximum.

Second option: Some partnerships play this natural & forcing, usually with slam interest.

- Miscellaneous:
1. If you play **Flannery**, most partnerships play that a **1S** response to **1H** normally shows a 5-card suit as partner would have opened **Flannery** if he had four spades and five hearts (unless he was strong enough to reverse). However opener *could* be 4-6 in the majors.
 2. Third seat, non-vul vs. vul, you might choose to open **Flannery** with two points less than the bottom of your normal range. This can be a very effective pre-emptive tool.
 3. When defending against **Flannery**, a trump lead is often the best lead for the defenders.
 4. Some partnerships play that after **2D-2NT**: **3C** or **3D** show a stiff or a void but since **2NT** does not establish a known trump suit, it seems better to play this response after **2NT** as a fragment—which might eventually wind up *being* the trump suit.