

BART

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What's **Bart**? San Franciscans know it as "Bay Area Rapid Transit." Simpsons fans know him as an 8-year old brat (a purposeful anagram?).

In bridge, it is a convention developed by Les **Bart**. It is used after the auction begins specifically:

South	West	North	East
--	1 Spade	Pass	1 NT
2 Club	Pass	?	

Typically, to use this convention we assume 1NT was forcing (or maybe semi-forcing).

Responder can now bid a conventional 2♦ to show many possible hand-types (we will get to that in a moment).

So, in the auction above, if East bids anything other than 2♦, his bids are natural and would mean:

2♥: Natural, Weakish

2♠: Natural, Weakish (either a very weak 3-card raise, or more normally a 2-card preference and about 6-9 HCP).

2NT: Natural

3♠: Natural (but more of a courtesy raise. With a better hand, start with 2♦).

3♦: Natural -- to play (because there is no natural 2♦ bid available)

3♥: Natural -- stronger than 2♥

3♠=3-card limit raise

3NT= Natural

Aside from all those natural calls, responder has the "**Bart**" 2♦ call available. To bid 2♦, he can have any of these hand-types:

- 1) A good raise to 3♠ (he will bid 3♠ next)
- 2) A hand with exactly 5♥ and 2♠ (opener will bid 2♠ if he can stand to play in hearts opposite a 5-card suit)
- 3) A good preference to 2♠
- 4) A good hand with diamonds (he will bid 3♦ next)
- 5) Some other "unsure" decent hand--just waiting to hear opener bid again

What does opener do after the **artificial** 2♦ bid?

First of all, he alerts it. Then he can do any of the following:

Pass: Not allowed

2♥: Willing to play in hearts if responder has 5 (usually a doubleton heart)

2♠: No tolerance for hearts (usually a singleton heart, could be 6♠ and 4♠).

2NT: Natural, extras

3♠: Natural 5-5 in blacks

3♦: **artificial**, saying: "If you have hearts, I have a GREAT hand -- something like a 5=3=1=4 maximum"

3♥ and higher: Not a good idea

Warnings:

This is just a summary of the basics of **Bart**.

There are several variations possible (One is called "Lisa" -- a Simpsons reference.)

As usual, make sure to discuss if on by a Passed Hand (I say YES), or if there was interference (I say NO).

The 2♦ bid after 2♠ is alertable. 1♠-1N-2♠-2♦-3♦ to show hearts is alertable.