



Asking for Aces

23 June 2020

Why knowledge of Aces is useful

For Suit contracts:

- ♥ You have found a fit of at least 8 cards in a suit between you and your partner
- ♠ Through point count or Losing Trick Count, you think you may have strength for a slam
- ♦ To win at least 12 tricks, you generally need all four Aces
- ♣ Using a Blackwood bid of 4 NT, you can ask your partner for the number of Aces she has
- ♥ The other two cards that it would be very useful to know if your partner holds are the King and the Queen of trumps
- ♠ Roman Key Card Blackwood (RKCB) enables you to ask about these two cards as well

For No Trumps contracts:

- ♥ Gerber is a way of asking for Aces when the last bid by your partner has been in No Trumps

Three ways of asking for Aces

1. **Blackwood**, bidding 4 NT, asks how many Aces your partner holds
2. **Roman Key Card Blackwood (RCKB)** , bidding 4 NT, asks:
 - a. How many of the top five key cards (the 4 Aces and King of Trumps) your Partner has and,
 - b. if your partner holds exactly two of these, does she also hold the Queen of Trumps?

You and your Partner must agree whether to use 4 NT for Blackwood or RKCB

Gerber, bidding 4♣, is used directly after a NT bid by your partner to ask how many Aces she holds

A follow up bid of 5 NT (for 1 & 2) or 5♣ (for Gerber) can be used to ask for more information about Kings, but you would only do this if considering a Grand Slam (winning all 13 tricks)

If you do not like the answer to a 4 NT request, you can usually play at the 5 level

Gerber is more suitable for NT, because you can stop to play at 4 NT - only one level above game

Blackwood

Blackwood, bidding 4 NT, asks how many Aces your partner holds

Asking for Aces shows an agreement of Trumps

Partner responses to Blackwood:

Response from Partner	Meaning
5 ♣	0 or 4 Aces
5 ♦	1 Ace
5 ♥	2 Aces
5 ♠	3 Aces

If you follow up with a bid of 5 NT:

Response from Partner	Meaning
6 ♣	0 or 4 Kings
6 ♦	1 King
6 ♥	2 Kings
6 ♠	3 Kings

Roman Key Card Blackwood (RKCB)

RKCB, bidding 4 NT, asks how many of the 4 Aces and the King of Trumps **your partner holds**

Partner responses to RKCB:

Response from Partner	Meaning
5 ♣	3 or 0 Key cards (30)
5 ♦	1 or 4 Key cards (41)
5 ♥	2 Key cards w.o. Queen of Trumps
5 ♠	2 Key cards incl. Queen of Trumps

If you follow up with a bid of 5 NT:

Response from Partner	Meaning
6 ♣	1 King, excl. King of Trumps
6 ♦	2 Kings, excl. King of Trumps
6 ♥	3 Kings, excl. King of Trumps

Gerber

Gerber, bidding 4♣ after your partner has bid NT, asks how many Aces your partner holds

Partner responses to Gerber:

Response from Partner	Meaning
4♦	0 or 4 Aces
4♥	1 Ace
4♠	2 Aces
4 NT	3 Aces

If you follow up with a bid of 5♣ :

Response from Partner	Meaning
5♦	0 or 4 Kings
5♥	1 King
5♠	2 Kings
5 NT	3 Kings

Example 1

Vulnerability: **None**
Dealer: **West**

West's hand:

♠ K Q 7 3 2
♥ A Q
♦ A K Q J
♣ A K

East's hand:

♠ A J 10 5 4
♥ K 8 6
♦ 8 5 2
♣ 8 7

Bidding using Blackwood:

Bidding:			
West	North	East	South
?			

Bidding using RKCB:

Bidding:			
West	North	East	South
?			

Example 2

Vulnerability: **None**
Dealer: **West**

West's hand:

♠ A J 10 9 5 4 3
♥ A K Q
♦ K Q
♣ K J

East's hand:

♠ K Q 8 6
♥ 9 5 4
♦ A 8 6
♣ 10 5 4

Bidding using Blackwood:

Bidding:			
West	North	East	South
?			

Bidding using RKCB:

Bidding:			
West	North	East	South
?			

Example 3

Vulnerability: **East / West**
 Dealer: **South**

South's hand:

♠ A Q 8 6 5 4
 ♥ A 10 3
 ♦ 3 2
 ♣ Q 5

North's hand:

♠ K J
 ♥ K Q J
 ♦ A K Q J
 ♣ A K 7 6

Bidding using Blackwood:

Bidding:			
South	West	North	East
?			

Bidding using RKCB:

Bidding:			
West	North	East	South
?			

Example 4

Vulnerability: **All**
Dealer: **West**

West's hand:

♠ Q 8 5
♥ K Q 8 2
♦ J 9 8 3
♣ A 7

East's hand:

♠ A K 6
♥ A 10 9 6
♦ A K Q
♣ Q 8 4

Bidding:

Bidding:			
West	North	East	South
?			



Thank you