

Gerber Convention

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Description: **Gerber** is a convention that uses a [4♣] bid as a relay (asking) bid to enquire about the number of aces held by partner. A further relay bid may follow to enquire about the number of kings held.

Rationale:

◆ **Gerber** is invoked at a lower level than **Blackwood**. Thus, when insufficient aces are present to pursue a slam, it allows for a lower safe exit than Blackwood.

When to use: Within the auction context, a bid of 4♣ may have several meanings. E.g. **Splinter bid**, **Cue bid**, Game invite, etc. Partners must be clear on its intended meaning, whenever bid. Typical agreements maybe;

- 4♣ is always **Gerber** ~ *restrictive but unambiguous!*
- Only an immediate 4♣ response to any partner's NT bid is **Gerber**
- 4♣ is **Gerber** unless a natural club suit bid has been made by the partnership.
- Retain specific 4♣ bids. E.g. **Splinter bids** 1M>>4♣, **Cue bids** 1M>>3M>>4♣ ~ *risk of ambiguous meaning!*

Gerber is used to complement **Blackwood** and **Quantitative Bidding**. It is not a replacement convention.

Response; Partner makes a step response to show the number of Aces they hold.

4♦ = 0/4, 4♥ = 1, 4♠ = 2, 4NT=3.

If the partnership holds all four Aces, a 5♣(A) follow up bid is asking for Kings.

Do not count a void as an Ace.

❖ **Examples** You are responding to partner's opening bid....

Hand-1	Hand-2	Hand-3	Hand-4
♠ A K Q 6 5 4	♠ K Q 7	♠ K 6	♠ A Q 10 7 5 3 2
♥ K 8 7 4 (12)	♥ A J (19)	♥ A Q J 10 8 6	♥ A 9 5 (18)
♦ 9 4	♦ K 8	♦ A K 9 7 2 (17)	♦ A 10
♣ 10	♣ K Q J 10 7 5	♣ void	♣ A

Hand-1	1♥ >> 1♠ >> 3NT >> ?? Partner has 19 hcp. Good chance of a ♠-slam if partner has x2 Aces and you have a safe exit into [4♠] if not. Bid [4♣ (A)]
Hand-2	1NT >> ?? A [4NT] <i>Quantitative</i> bid is likely to be passed (<14 hcp), but if partner has x2 Aces, a 6NT slam is possible. Bid [4♣ (A)], with a safe exit into [4NT].
Hand-3	1NT >> 3♥ ^f >> 3NT >> ?? Partner has 2-card ♥-support. Good chance of a ♥-slam if partner has x2 Aces. Bid [4♣ (A)], with a safe exit into [4♥].
Hand-4	1NT >> 2♥ ^{Transfer} >> 2S >> ?? Bid [4♣ (A)], asking for Aces and Kings. With x3/4 Kings - follow up with a NT small/grand slam, and with x2 Kings – exit into [5♠], making partner declarer – with their balanced hand hidden.