

Transfers after a NT opening or overcall

Opening 1NT

Shows 15-17 balanced or semi-balanced.

Hand shapes are 4333, 4432 and 5332. Some people will even open 1NT with 2236 and 2245 shape.

Don't worry about the weak doubleton, open 1NT.

The partner of the 1NT opener usually decides that contract as the opener has already described their hand.

Responding with a balanced hand

All you need to consider is what level NT to play in. Pass, invite game by bidding 2NT, bid game, slam or grand slam.

Respond in NT where you have a 4333 shape, even with a 4-card major, as it will play better in NT.

Responding with an unbalanced hand

After a 1NT opening by partner, 2D and 2H bids by responder are **Jacoby transfers**.

A transfer shows **five+** hearts (2D) or **five+** spades (2H) and asks opener to bid hearts or spades respectively.

1NT – 2D – *shows 5+ hearts, any strength*

1NT – 2H – *shows 5+ spades, any strength*

Why use transfer bids?

There are two reasons for using transfers:

1. The strong hand is concealed (i.e. the 1NT opener becomes declarer)
2. The opening lead comes up to the strong hand, which often gives declarer an extra trick.

With a five-card major, responder should **always** transfer to the major, regardless of how weak the hand is or how poor the major suit is. The weaker the transferor's hand the more important it is to transfer as the hand will play better in a major suit than in 1NT when dummy is very weak.

Opener's rebid after a transfer

In nearly all cases opener will complete the transfer.

1NT – 2D – 2H

1NT – 2H – 2S

Opener should **NOT** pass, rebid 2NT or bid another suit. The 1NT bidder must complete the transfer, even with a poor doubleton in the transfer suit.

With 4 card support for the transferor's suit, a doubleton in another suit and a maximum 1NT (16/17) opener can accept the transfer at the three level (this is called a 'super accept'):

1NT – 2D – 3H

1NT – 2H – 3S

Transferor's rebid after opener completes the transfer

With a weak hand (less than 8 HCP) – PASS

With an invitational hand (8-9 HCP) rebid 2NT – shows 8 or 9 HCP and asks partner to choose the contract. Opener can correct back with 3 of the major, pass 2NT, or bid game in NT or game in major suit with a fit and a maximum (16-17TP – if you have 3 card support for the major, don't forget to re-evaluate your hand to add shortage if you have a doubleton).

With a 6-card suit and 8 or 9 HCP raise to 3 level:

1NT – 2H	
2S – 3S	invitational

With enough for game (10+ HCP) transfer then rebid 3NT, giving your partner the choice of 3NT or game in the major – *Remember the 1NT opener may only have a doubleton in your suit and you don't really want to play in game with only a seven card fit!*)

What do I do if I have 5/4 in the majors?

Transfer to the 5-card major and then bid your second suit – but **game forcing**.

What do I do if I have a 6-card major and enough for game?

You can transfer then bid game.

Or use **Texas transfers**:

1NT – 4D or 4H shows a six card major suit and game values. If you have possibility of slam, you can now ask for aces by bidding 4NT or use control showing cue bids.

What if I have a long minor suit?

You can use minor suit transfers (i.e. 2S to 3C and 3C to 3D). Minor suit transfers show a *six card suit* as you are forcing the auction to the 3 level.

Transfers after interference – on or off?

Most partnerships play transfers are OFF after an intervening bid by the opposition. This means if the opposition bid after your partner's 1NT opening, responder's bids are natural.

1NT (2C) 2H natural with 5 hearts

With unbalanced hand – three level bids by responder

A jump response at the 3 level shows a 6+-card suit and is game force with slam interest – otherwise would transfer and then bid game.

Transfers after a 2NT opening

A 2NT opening shows 20-22 HCP and a balanced or semi-balanced hand.

Transfers can be used after partner opens 2NT but they are now at the 3 level:

2NT – 3D/3H – is a transfer.

What if you have a long minor? There are various ways to show a long minor after a 2NT opening but it is tricky as 3C after 2NT is Stayman and 3D is a transfer. Bidding your long minor at the 4 level by-passes 3NT, which might be a good contract so it may be best to reserve the 4 level minor suit bids for those hands where you are contemplating slam in your minor suit. Discuss this with your partner.