

# Enhanced Transfer Bids

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Multiple Opening Transfer Bids (MOTB) are becoming more common in duplicate bridge,

The reason for 1-level transfer bids is because 4 card majors are very important. Establishing a 4-4 or better major fit is a priority, more important than 5-3 fits or 5 card majors. Transfers show a 4-card major immediately, there is no need for New Minor Forcing (NMF), Two-Way (NMF) or XYZ.

Transfers are also becoming more popular with 2, 3, and 4-level preemptive bids, often putting the balancing seat bidder on lead through the weak hand. In this bridge bid I review common 3-level, 2-level, and 4-level transfer bidding systems/conventions.

## 3-level Transfer Bids

Enhanced 3-level transfer bids allow one show both a one suited preemptive hand and two-suited 5-5 hands with a maximum of 4-losers where the first possibility is a one-suited hand, and the second possibility is a two-suited hand:

The forcing 3-level transfer bids are used to show a 7-card suit are:

- 3♣\* preempt to 3♦
- 3♦\* preempt to 3♥
- 3♥\* preempt to 3♠
- 3♠\* preempt to 4♣, opener passes

\* = alert

With a one-suit hand, opener often passes or invites game. If responder can cover 4-losers, he may bid game or explore slam.

**These transfer bids are played in the first, second, or fourth positions. In the third position one merely bids the preempt suit.**

With a two-suiter 5-5 hand, after responder transfers, opener bids:

After 3♦:

- 3♥\* diamonds and hearts with club shortness
- 3♠\* diamonds and spades with club shortness
- 3NT\* diamonds and clubs with heart shortness
- 4♣\* diamonds and clubs with spade shortness

After 3♥:

- 3♠\* hearts and spades with club shortness
- 3NT\* hearts and clubs with diamond shortness
- 4♣\* hearts and clubs with spade shortness
- 4♦ hearts and diamonds with spade shortness

After 3♠:

- 3NT\* spades and clubs with diamond shortness
- 4♣\* spades and clubs with heart shortness
- 4♦\* spades and diamonds with heart shortness
- 4♥\* spades and hearts with diamond shortness

Let's look at an example:

Opener

♠AQJ8642  
♥97  
♦532  
♣7

Opener

3♥\*  
Pass

Partner

3♠

Opener

♠A  
♥AQJ105  
♦76  
♣KQJ105

Opener

3♦\*  
4♣\*

Partner

3♥  
etc.

Responder knows opener has at least 4-losers and if responder has a minimum of two or three playing tricks will bid game with a fit or perhaps explore slam.

Opener

♠AJ109875  
♥A87  
♦872  
♣-

Partner

♠KQ  
♥104  
♦AKQ543  
♣KQ5

Opener	Partner
3♥*	3♠
4♠	4NT
5NT (Even # keycards with a void)	6♦ (Is it diamonds?)
7♠ (No)	Pass

If the void was in diamonds, opener would bid 6♥.

The advantage of transfers is that the opponents do not know either the hand pattern or the hand strength and may fear a misfit and therefore hesitate to overcall.

What does one need to bid over a 3-level preempt? Usually, 15/16 points.

A 3-level transfer convention popular in Europe is the VERDI convention developed by Svend Novrup and Anders Lausten of Denmark in 1968. It works briefly:

3♣\*/3♦\*/3♥\*      Preemptive transfer with a semi-solid suit; responder next bids:  
 (1) makes a transfer bid  
 (2) bids a game in the transfer suit, another suit, or NT  
 (3) makes a slam try

3♠\*      Shows a solid minor suit without side-suit strength, responder next bids:  
 (1) 4♣ with a weak hand, opener passes or bids 4♦  
 (2) with a strong hand he bids game in NT, opens minor or another suit  
 (3) makes a slam try

3NT\*      Preempt with a semi-solid minor and an outside A/K; responder has the same options used with the bid of 3♠\*.

To defend against VERDI, a double shows strength in the bid suit, a cue bid is for take-double, a pass followed by a double is penalty.

Another popular transfer convention popular in Europe is the **Three-Level Multi Convention** developed by Paul Glick, an American expert from Phoenix Arizona, published in the "Bridge World" magazine, October 1994.

The transfer bids show either a preemptive hand, a two-suited hand, or a strong hand with 24-27HCP. The transfer bids are 2NT\*, 3♣\*, 3♦\*, and 3♥\*. After a relay, opener may pass, use step sequential relay bids show two-uitied hands (space permitting), and 3NT=24-27HCP with a balanced hand.

## 2-level Transfers Bids

Enhanced 2-level transfer bids allow one to show any single suited hand with one 6-card suit or two 5-5 card suits.

The forcing 2-level transfer bids to show a 6-card suit are:

2♦\* preempt to 2♥  
2♥\* preempt to 2♠  
2♠\* preempt to 3♣, opener passes  
2NT\* preempt to 3♦

After 3♦:

3♥\* diamonds and hearts with club shortness  
3♠\* diamonds and spades with club shortness  
3NT\* diamonds and clubs with heart shortness  
4♣\* diamonds and clubs with spade shortness

After 2♠:

2NT\* spades and clubs with diamond shortness  
3♣\* spades and clubs with heart shortness  
3♦\* spades and diamonds with heart shortness  
3♥\* spades and hearts with diamond shortness

After 2♥:

2♠\* hearts and spades with club shortness  
2NT\* hearts and clubs with diamond shortness  
2♣\* hearts and clubs with spade shortness  
2♦\* hearts and diamonds with spade shortness

To bid over a 2-level preempt requires at least 13 points.

An alternative approach is to employ the **Bergen Cohen Two-Under Preempt** Convention.

The bids are:

- 2♦\*- shows a Weak Two Bid in Spades
- 2♠\*- shows a 3-Level Preempt in Clubs
- 2NT\* - shows a 3-Level Preempt in Diamonds
- 3♣\* - shows a 3-Level Preempt in Hearts
- 3♦\* - shows a 3-Level Preempt in Spades
- 3♥\* - shows a 4-Level Preempt in Clubs
- 3NT\* - shows a 4-Level Preempt in Diamonds

A bid of 3♠ is not used. This bid is used to show a distributional hand that could/would be opened with a Gambling 3NT bid, a hand with a long solid minor suit and no outside Aces or Kings. There are some partnerships which have decided not to use the 2NT opening bid as a Diamond Preempt. The preference is that this bid should be a natural bid indicating a normal 2NT opening bid. The bid of 2♣ shows a strong hand and 2♥ is a natural preemptive bid.

With a weak hand responder will sign-off in opener's long suit. With a better hand responder bids an intermediate suit that ranks above the opener's bid. Opener next shows a forcing hand with artificial and forcing responses that are somewhat complicated and only for serious partnerships. See the site: <https://www.bridgeguys.com/conventions-2underpreempt/> for details.

## 4-level Transfer Bids

What does one do with an 8-card major suit or solid 7-card major suit? For example:

Hand (1)

♠AKQJ876  
♥K7  
♦76  
♣72

Hand (2)

♠AKQ10954  
♥9  
♦7  
♣AJ82

Hand (1) will almost yield a game with 6 losers and hand (2) with only four losers a slam is possible if partner holds the club king and a red Ace.

Hand (3)

♠AKQJ87  
♥K7  
♦76  
♣72

Hand (4)

♠AKQ10954  
♥K  
♦7  
♣1073

Hand (3) has two quick losers in the side suits while hand (4) has only two quick losers in clubs.

With a weak major solid 7-card suit or a weak major 8-card suit, **opener bids 4 of a major**; however, if in addition one has a guarded Ace or King in a side suit or has only two losers in a side opener bids 4♣\*/4♦\* show to hearts and spades, respectively called the NAMTAYTS convention.

As responder, one may relay into the opposite major with game/slam interest or bid 4NT with slam interest; however, with only game interest responder bids the major at the 4-level.

If opener has only two losers in a side suit, opener may next bid the suit at the 5-level which asks partner if he can cover one of his two losers. If so responder bids slam in the major or returns to the major at the 5-level.

The major disadvantages of the NAMYATS transfer convention are that it makes it easier for the opponents to interfere without risk by doubling the relays and it does not allow for preemptive bids for the minors. Hence, playing 2/1 many will instead open these hands 2♣ and use the 4-level preempt for a weak major suit hand.

To intervene over a 4-level bid usually requires 17-19 points and a good 6-card suit.

Over NAMYATS, a double is takeout, a cue bid shows a two-suiter and 4NT shows a minor two-suiter. A pass followed by a double is neither penalty nor take-out but shows a good hand.