

# JACOBY TRANSFERS

Barbara Seagram & Andy Stark



PRACTICE YOUR BIDDING

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JACOBY  
TRANSFERS





# section HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

The purpose of this book is to help you and your partner practice Jacoby Transfers and better understand how they are used. The book has been designed so that it can be used either on your own or working with a partner. But while you will certainly get a lot out of it alone, it is especially good to use this book with your favorite partner to make sure that you are both on the same wavelength.

The first section of the book provides a refresher on Jacoby Transfers. It provides examples but no exercises. Don't worry, you will get plenty of chance to practice in the rest of the book. We have assumed in our example auctions that you are also playing Stayman, Gerber, and Roman Keycard Blackwood (all these are explained in detail in other books in this series). For more explanations, and as a source of other helpful conventions, you can also refer to *25 Bridge Conventions You Should Know*, by Barbara Seagram & Marc Smith, and *25 More Bridge Conventions You Should Know*, by Barbara Seagram & David Bird.

The last section of the book, 'Practice Hands', contains a set of forty pairs of North and South hands. You can print them out and use them for a partner to practice bidding (don't try to do more than ten at one sitting – that's more than enough to think and talk about at one time). We have provided space beside each hand to write down your auction; we suggest that you do this so you can refer to it when you are looking at the answers. You can also do this solo if you like: look at each hand in turn and write down the bid you would make at each step of the auction. Getting to the right spot is not the only goal; bidding the hand in the best way is another goal, so even if you see both hands you will still need to work out the correct auction.



When you have finished bidding the hands, look at the sample auctions and final contracts provided. This book uses Standard American bidding in the sample auctions. There may be more than one way to bid the hand, so don't worry if you don't duplicate our sequence exactly. Focus in particular on your use of Jacoby Transfers and the auction that follows, and make sure that you get that right.

There is an earlier section of the book, entitled 'Working Alone', which contains the same practice deals. In this section, we show you just one of the hands and ask you a series of questions about how to bid it as the auction develops. Working through these exercises will teach you a lot more about the convention, so even if you go through the practice deals with a partner, we suggest you go through the questions and try to answer them. This will help to make sure that you understand the convention thoroughly.

A final warning: don't expect to be perfect. Some of these hands are hard. So if you are doing better at the end of the book than at the beginning, you are doing very well indeed.

# section HOW JACOBY TRANSFERS WORK



## *What are Jacoby Transfers?*

Jacoby Transfers are quite simple. Suppose your partner opens the bidding 1NT. Instead of bidding 2♥ when you have hearts or 2♠ when you have spades (in both cases partner has to pass), you get partner to make those bids by bidding *the suit below the one you really have*. This is called a **transfer**. Of course partner is playing the same system as you and you've agreed to these methods, so you can rest assured your partner is going to accept the transfer and bid the suit to which you are transferring him.

Here are the two possible auctions:

<b>Partner</b>	<b>You</b>	<b>Partner</b>	<b>You</b>
1NT	2♦	1NT	2♥
2♥		2♠	

So 2♦ is a transfer to hearts, promising a five-card or longer heart suit, and 2♥ has a similar meaning with respect to spades.

You can immediately see the first advantage of adopting Jacoby Transfers into your bidding system: after partner bids 2♥ or 2♠, you get to bid again. From here you can describe your hand in all kinds of ways. You can pass partner at the two-level with a weak hand, you can make an invitational bid or you can jump right to game. In addition, you can keep making forcing bids on really strong hands — you can investigate slam contracts with confidence and trust. But a more flexible bidding structure

is just one advantage of Jacoby Transfers; there are many more, including these:

- 1) Transfers get the partnership to its best fit – either a major-suit contract or notrump.
- 2) Transfer auctions frequently ‘protect’ the strong hand (the 1NT bidder). How? Because after a transfer bid the 1NT bidder will become the declarer. The player with all the kings and/or ace-queen combinations will have the opening lead coming from his left up to his hand. It could mean the difference of merely an overtrick but who knows – it might mean the difference between making your contract and going down.
- 3) The strong hand is hidden from the opponents during play. The opponents will have to guess just a little bit longer where the 1NT bidder’s high cards are. One of bridge’s time-tested maxims is this: when possible, keep the strong hand hidden, let the weak hand be dummy.

## *When do you use Jacoby Transfers?*

First and foremost you should transfer into your five-card major suit whenever partner opens the bidding 1NT. You should transfer and pass if you are weak with 0-7 points. You should transfer and invite game if you have 8-9 points. And finally you should transfer and jump to game with 10-14 points. With even stronger hands you still start with a transfer but then you follow up with forcing bids to help the partnership investigate slam.

### *Weak hands*

Say you hold a poor hand such as:

♠ Q 10 8 4 2    ♥ J 3 2    ♦ 9 4 3    ♣ 10 5

One of the first things you learn is to not pass with these cards when partner opens the bidding 1NT. The reason for this is that your hand is probably useless to partner in a 1NT contract. So you learn to bid your spades. Without Jacoby Transfers you will bid 2♠ over 1NT, and partner will pass.

Playing Jacoby Transfers you begin with a call of 2♥. Your partner is temporarily in the dark as to the strength of your hand. Partner must bid 2♠ at his next turn, for that is what you asked him to do; you will show your strength with your next bid. So now you are at this stage in the auction:

Partner	You
1NT	2♥
2♠	?

It is your turn to call, and on the hand above you pass. That's it — auction over. Well, unless the opponents want to compete, but that's their decision; your job is over.

An important point to remember is that when you make a transfer bid, you are making one promise about your hand and one promise only: you have a major suit at least five cards long. That's it, nothing more. You have not yet offered any description as to the strength of your hand. You could be weak or you could be strong; you'll give partner that information with your rebid.

With each of the following hands, if partner opens 1NT you should use a Jacoby Transfer and pass partner's response:

- a) ♠ J 10 5 4 3    ♥ A 4    ♦ 9 7 5 4    ♣ 9 4
- b) ♠ Q 8 3    ♥ 9 8 7 6 5    ♦ Q 9 6 3 2    ♣ —
- c) ♠ 3    ♥ K 10 9 6 4 2    ♦ 10 8    ♣ 9 7 5 3
- d) ♠ A 9 8 5 4    ♥ 7 5 3    ♦ 8 4    ♣ J 9 6

Notice that all four hands have fewer than 8 points. With all of these hands you are not interested in inviting partner to game, so you want to buy the contract as cheaply as possible, and yet get to your safest spot.

Sometimes partner has only a doubleton in the suit you transfer him to, but that's okay — that happens. Other times you will get the partnership to an eight- or even nine-card fit. No matter what happens after you make a transfer bid, just think of it as an improvement on the alternative — toughing it out in 1NT.

*To sum up:* with 0-7 HCP and a five card-major, transfer to your major and then pass at your next opportunity.

raise to 4♥; notrump is not being offered as an option. With 17 HCP, partner's decision is easy; with a small heart instead of the queen, he would have only 15 HCP, and would pass 3♥.

Notice that when you are using Jacoby Transfers, if the auction starts 1NT-2NT, partner will know with certainty that your hand does *not* include a five-card major. If you had one, you would have shown it along the way. Notice also that once you have transferred, you promise a five-card major; don't rebid it unless you have more than five!

*To sum up:* with an invitational hand and a five-card major, first transfer into your major and then make the appropriate invitational bid — either 2NT or three of your major.

### *Game-going and stronger hands*

Bridge is never so easy as when you pick up a hand, partner opens 1NT and you immediately know you belong in game. We're not talking slam here, just game and game only. This is bidding bliss because you don't have any difficult decisions to make.

Here is an example of an easy hand to bid. Partner opens the bidding 1NT and you hold:

♠ A 10 9 8 3    ♥ K 4 3    ♦ Q 8    ♣ Q J 7

Playing Jacoby Transfers, you first transfer to spades with a bid of 2♥ and then jump to 3NT at your second turn to call. Once you have shown your five-card spade suit and then jumped to game, you are offering partner a choice of contracts: 3NT or 4♠. He can pass 3NT (which he will with a doubleton spade), or he can bid 4♠ if he has a three or four-card spade holding. It's that simple.

If you are too strong just to bid game and want to invite a slam based solely on point count, begin with a transfer at the two-level and then jump to 4NT. Say, for example, you hold 16 or 17 HCP and a five-card major. You don't know where the best spot is but you can describe your hand and let partner make the final decision.

<b>Partner</b>	<b>You</b>
1NT	2♦
2♥	4NT

## SOUTH HANDS

### Hand 36 - Dealer South

♠ J 9	<b>YOUR AUCTION</b>	
♥ K J 10 3	NORTH	SOUTH
♦ K Q 4 2		
♣ K Q 6		

### Hand 37 - Dealer North

♠ A Q 10 5 4	<b>YOUR AUCTION</b>	
♥ 5 3 2	NORTH	SOUTH
♦ K 4		
♣ A Q 3		

### Hand 38 - Dealer North

♠ Q J 7	<b>YOUR AUCTION</b>	
♥ A Q 10 8 6	NORTH	SOUTH
♦ 9 3		
♣ 9 8 4		

### Hand 39 - Dealer South

♠ A 4	<b>YOUR AUCTION</b>	
♥ K 8 2	NORTH	SOUTH
♦ A J 10 8 5		
♣ A 9 4		

### Hand 40 - Dealer South

♠ A J 9	<b>YOUR AUCTION</b>	
♥ J 5	NORTH	SOUTH
♦ A Q 7		
♣ Q J 9 8 5		

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Look for  
more books in this  
series. and also the  
companion software package  
**Practice Your Notrump  
Bidding**



## PRACTICE YOUR BIDDING JACOBY TRANSFERS

With this handy little book, you can

- Learn a new convention, or extend your knowledge of it
- Learn and practice by yourself using the unique quiz format
- Practice with your partner using the specially selected example hands, and compare your results with the recommended auctions



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