

Super-Acceptance of “Jacoby Transfers”

Super-acceptances are a useful and popular adjunct to “*Jacoby Transfers*,” so much so, that they have become part of standardized bidding for most Bridge Players. The original advantage in using super-acceptances was that after a transfer to either Major suit by Responder, a super-acceptance by the **1-NT** Opener, shows a hand that has the potential to produce a Game-level contract opposite many responding hands that would otherwise “*pass*” a simple acceptance. In addition, the use of super-acceptances act preemptively when Responder holds minimum values and the Opponents are potentially likely to compete following a “*transfer*,” and a subsequent “*pass*” by the Responder.

Over the years, two concepts have evolved regarding when, and under what circumstances, Opener should make a super-acceptance.

- (1) Whenever Responder to an opening strong **1-NT** bids “**2D**,” transferring to **2H**, or “**2H**,” transferring to **2S**, Opener, when holding the maximum possible; i.e., 4-pieces of the suit requested by the Responder’s transfer and the top of his/her HCP count (17 HCP’s), Opener should make a super-acceptance of **3H** or **3S**, respectively.
- (2) The “**LAW OF TOTAL TRICKS**,” however, suggests that the 3-level would be safe anytime the Partnership has a 9 (+) HCP fit, and therefore Opener should super-accept on all, or virtually all, hands holding 4-card support for Responder’s requested Major suit.

The question arises, therefore, as to whether Opener should (A) *only* super-accept when holding maximum values and 4-piece support, as in (1) above, or (B) *always* super-accept when holding 4-pieces of Responder’s requested Major suit, irrespective of the point count of the Opener; i.e., not limited, singularly, to when Opener holds 17 HCP’s, as in (2) above.

Consensus seems to confirm that using super-acceptances whenever Opener holds 4-pieces, irrespective of point count, as shown above in (2), yields mixed success. At times, the field, not using super-acceptances, has had the auction end at the 2-level, **contract making**, whereas, taking the super-acceptance at all times can backfire; as, often, the Opponents cannot make anything, and a 3-level **contract by Opener’s side fails**.

Conclusion: Super-accept only when: **1.** There is a reasonable chance of a Game opposite a hand that would “*pass*” a simple accept, and, **2.** When Game is not that likely, and there is a significant danger that the Opponents can compete effectively by entering the auction and balancing.

When, and Under What Circumstances, Should Opener Make a Super-Acceptance ?

Conditions Favoring Opener’s Use of a Super-Acceptance

- 1. Opener should super-accept with Hearts more often than with Spades and, especially, when holding a doubleton Spade.** (The Opponents, under these conditions, are most likely to be inclined to balance seeking a competitive contract in Spades at the 2-level.)
- 2. Opener should always super-accept with five trumps.** (With a 10-card fit, the chances are high that the Opponents can and will balance.)

Conditions Against Opener's Use of a Super-Acceptance

1. Opener should **not** super-accept with questionable working values. (When holding an excessive number of "Quacks" [Queens and Jacks], Opener should **not** make a super-acceptance.)
2. Opener should **never** super-accept with a 4-3-3-3 shape. (With a 4-3-3-3 side shape, your offensive potential is reduced by almost a full trick. Your risk of going down, therefore, is too high, even with a maximum HCP count.)
3. Opener should **not** super-accept with too many high cards of uncertain worth. (For example: Qx, AKxx, KJx, QJxx. This hand has 16 HCP, but facing a weak Responder, some or all of the outside high cards will not take tricks on offense.)

Examples Illustrating These Conditions

(You have opened 1-NT and Responder has responded with a "2D" transfer)

Hand 1: ♠Jx, ♥QJxx, ♦AKxx, ♣Axx (*Make a super-acceptance here!* Even if you were to go down, chances are excellent that the Opponents are making something in Spades.)

Hand 2: ♠Qx, ♥AKxx, ♦KJx, ♣QJxx (*Do not make a super-acceptance here!* Your soft values require Responder to have fitting cards to achieve their potential. If Responder is weak, some of your high cards will have no value on offense. However, they may have value on defense. With less offense and more defensive values, make a simple acceptance.)

Hand 3: ♠Jx, ♥QJxxx, ♦AKx, ♣Axx (*Make a super-acceptance here!* Always make a super-acceptance when holding 5-pieces of Responder's requested Major suit, notwithstanding HCP count.)

Hand 4: ♠Jxxx, ♥QJx, ♦AKx, ♣Axx (*Do not make a super-acceptance here!* With a 4-3-3-3 distribution, Opener should never make a super-acceptance.)

Bottom Line: Reserve your super-acceptances for hands with high cards that are sure to contribute, rather than on those that only have speculative value.

Hand 1: ♠xx, ♥QJxx, ♦AKQx, ♣Axx (Super-accept, bidding "3H" here)

Hand 2: ♠Qx, ♥AKJx, ♦QJx, ♣QJxx (Do not super-accept, here, bid "2H")

On occasion, Responder's left-hand Opponent (LHO) will make an interference call similar to the example shown below. Under these circumstances, Responder, at his/her discretion and under positive circumstances, can elect to make a "retransfer," demanding that Opener accept the transfer previously blocked by the Opponent's overcall..

<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>
1-NT	Pass	"2D"	2S
Pass	Pass	"3D"	Pass
3H	Pass	Pass or 4H	Pass

Larry Cohen's 3-Way Super-Acceptance Responses when holding 4-pieces of Responder's Major

(1)With 4-pieces of Responder's implied Major and 15-16 (-1) HCP's: 1-NT - "2D"/"2H" - 3H/3S

(2)With 4-pieces of Responder's implied Major, a 4-3-3-3 distribution, and 16 (+) - 17 HCP's:
1-NT - "2D"/"2H" - 2-NT

(3)With 4-pieces of Responder's implied Major, a doubleton, and 16 (+) -17 HCP's:
1-NT- "2D"/"2H" - 3 of the suit containing the doubleton