



## Transfer Advances

Jeff Rubens in an article in Bridge World described a method of dealing with competition over a 1NT opening and a natural major suit overcall. Instead of using Lebensohl, he proposed a method where responders continuations were transfers. The idea was to allow the responder to bid with both strong and competitive hands. The method was later named Rubensohl.

1NT 2♠ ?

2NT/3♣ /3♦ - 5 + cards in clubs/diamonds/hearts respectively, 6+ HCP but varies with length in suit shown. Opener is forced to bid responders suit. If responder has 10+ HCP, he will continue naturally after acceptance of the transfer.

3♥ - equivalent to a cue bid of 3♠ in standard methods

3♠ - same as 3♥ except it shows 4 hearts

D - a flat hand with 7+ HCP, opener can pass with good defense and spade length, bid 2NT with a spade stopper, or show a suit of his own.

3NT - to play. Used in conjunction with 3♥ to promise/deny stopper in opponents suit (just like a Lebensohl 2nt followed by 3NT to show a stopper, and a direct 3NT to deny one).

This method of responding was the first use of transfer advances, which have the typical advantages of ordinary transfers over 1NT, namely

- 1) More available sequences to invite, force or show various shapes
- 2) The balanced strong hand declares all contracts, potentially protecting his holding in overcallers suit and concealing the hand.

### Use in other sequences

Rubens went on to propose how transfer advances could be applied to non no trump auctions as well. Their use in that area was slow to catch on, and was only recently legalized in North America. The following ideas can be used in either FabSayc, standard or the 2/1 system. Note that transfer advances apply only to auctions where the overcall is below the next available no trump bid. They affect the responses from the five bids starting with the cheapest no trump.

Opener	Overcaller	Responder
1♣/1♦	1♥	?

Pass - weak or trap pass with heart length

Double - Values, flat hand, denies four spades.

1♠- normal, 4+ length, transfer advances do not apply. However support doubles and redoubles apply to openers rebids (showing three card support)

1NT/2♣- show length in next suit, 5 cards if an unbid suit, 4 card support if transferring into openers natural suit. A transfer into a new suit should be about 8+ HCP, a transfer raise is similar to a non inverted raise in standard methods.

2♦- transfer cue bid, flat hand asks opener to bid 2♥ with flat hand, or 2NT with a sound heart stopper, or bid to show his shape.

2♥- best used to show a limit raise of openers suit with shortness in hearts (at most two

cards)

2♠- Can be used as either fit showing (5+ spades and 4+ in openers suit) or as a weak jump shift or strong jump shift.

2NT - game force, good heart stoppers

3 of openers suit - preemptive

Other - by agreement, whatever meaning would apply if not using transfer advances

Similar considerations apply if the overcall above was 1 ♠.

Opener	Overcaller	Responder
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1♣/1♦	1♠	?
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Pass - weak of spades

Double - takeout oriented, tends to deny 5 good hearts.

1NT/2♣- as above

2♦- 5+ hearts, 8 + HCP

2♥- general game force

2♠- game invite or better, fit for openers suit

2NT and higher - same as after 1♥ overcall

Opener	Overcaller	Responder
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1♥	1♠	?
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Pass - weak of spades

Double - flat hand with values, fewer than 3 hearts unless you intend to take a second bid

1NT/2♣- competitive or better with 5+ clubs/diamonds respectively

2♦- constructive raise or better of hearts

2♥- weak raise of hearts

3♥- preemptive

2NT - natural game force, spade stopper(s)

2♠- probably best used to show 55 in minors, invite or better strength.

Openers rebids

If responder makes a transfer advance showing 5+ cards in the next suit, opener will normally accept the transfer if he would have passed a natural non forcing bid in the suit shown. This means that acceptance of the transfer is generally 2+ length and 14 or fewer points. Other rebids maintain there normal meanings.

e.g. 1♥ 1♠ 2♣ P  
?

2♦- limited hand, 2+ length

2♥- probably 6 hearts

2♠- game force, not specific

2NT - probably 15-17 HCP with spade stopper(s)

3♦- around 15 HCP with 4 cards in diamonds, or 3+

In FabSayc, where a 1♣ opening shows 12-16 balanced or 21+ HCP, the following special meanings apply.

1♣ 1♠ 2♣ P  
?

2♦- 12-14 HCP

2♥- 15-16 HCP, 4 card heart suit  
 2♠- 21+ hand, game force  
 2NT - 15-16 HCP with spade stopper

### Responders rebids

If responder transfers to a suit, then bids a new suit at the two level this is invitational only. To establish a game force responder must cue bid overcallers suit at his second turn.

1♣	1♠	1NT	P
2♣	P	?	

With ♠ Jx ♥ AQxx ♦ A9 ♣ AJ9xx bid 2♠ and continue with 3♥.

With ♠ xx ♥ KJxx ♦ xx ♣ AJ9xx bid 2♥, opener may pass or bid 3♣ with a minimum hand.

If responder doubles a 1♠ overcall and then continues with 2♥, he shows an invitational hand with 4 hearts.

Opener	Responder				
♠ Ax	♠ Qxxx	1♣	1♠	D	P
♥ Kxxx	♥ AQJx	1NT	P	2♥	P
♦ xxx	♦ Kx	P			
♣ AJ9x	♣ xxx				

Responders rebid of 2♥ is equivalent to a raise to 2NT but with four hearts.

Perhaps the auction where transfer advances are the most useful is after a 1♠ opening and a takeout double. The big advantage here is responder can either direct raise the major (very weak with 3 or 4 trumps) or transfer raise (constructive with 3 trumps, about 8-10 HCP).

1♠ - D - ?

RD- 10+, denies 3 spades

1NT - 8+ points, 5+ clubs, may include 3 spades

2♣ - 8+ points, 5+ diamonds, may include 3 spades

2♦ - 8+ points, 5+ hearts, may include 3 spades

2♥ - constructive single raise (or better) with 3+ spades

2♠ - weak raise with at most two cover cards and either only 3 spades or very flat

2NT - without transfer advances, this would be a spade raise, with them you can assign another meaning, possibly as a Jacoby 2NT.

3 bids - can be played as Bergen, fit jumps (54), weak or two suited

In the above auction the only bid you have to give up is a natural 1NT, however that is a small loss since making that bid can get the opponents off the hook when they are in trouble. If you pass with your flat 6-9 HCP hand, you can always reopen with a takeout double later if it seems appropriate.

The same general method can be used after 1♥-D as well. You merely have to decide if a 1♠ response shows spades or if it shows the moderate balanced hand. Assuming a 1♠ response is a transfer to 1NT (denying spades) then passing and doubling if opponents bid spades shows 4+ spades and values (is for penalty).