

Jacoby or Texas with a 6-card major?

Jacoby transfers are on the 2-level, Texas on the 4-level. A Jacoby transfer guarantees only five—but could be made with a longer suit. A Texas transfer is “always” at least a 6-card suit. A Jacoby transfer could be made with 0 points! A Texas transfer means the responder has enough for at least game. If you have only a 5-card major, you will never use Texas.

Jacoby (2♦→2♥; 2♥→2♠) **Texas** (4♦→4♥; 4♥→4♠)

5+ cards 6+ cards

0+HCP “enough for game” HCP

Suppose your partner opens 1NT (15-17) and you have a six-card (or longer) major. Such hands are easy to bid. You will “always” want to play in your major—you know your side has at least an 8-card trump fit. Let’s look at responding hands with 6-card majors:

What level?

1) With a weak hand, you Jacoby transfer and pass—playing on the 2-level.

Example:

♠ KJ9765

♥ 54

♦ 432

♣ 54

1NT – 2♥

2♠ -- Pass

(You would do this even without the king and jack. With six little spades and a 0-count, you would Jacoby into 2♠ and then pass).

Oswald Jacoby

Inventor of Jacoby Transfers

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2) With an invitational hand, you Jacoby transfer and raise (invitational).

Example:

♠ KJ9765

♥ K4

♦ 432

♣ 54

1NT – 2♥

2♠ – 3♠ (Game invitational, 6+♠)

3) With a game hand (no slam interest), you Texas transfer and then Pass.

Example:

♠ KJ9765

♥ K4

♦ K32

♣ 54

1NT – 4♥

4♠ – Pass (No slam interest)

4) With slam interest, you Jacoby transfer, then jump to Game.

Example :

♠ KJ9765

♥ K4

♦ A32

♣ K4

1NT – 2♥

2♠ – 4♠ (Slam invitational)

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NOTES:

1) The sign-off and invite obviously have to start with Jacoby – this is easy to remember

2) The way to remember whether Texas or “Jacoby-then-jump” is the sign-off is as follows: With the stronger hand (slam interest), go slower (Jacoby) – maybe the 1NT opener can show a sign of life by jumping after the Jacoby transfer. You always want to leave more space in slam auctions. (This also applies after 2NT openings.)

Take the slow (snail-like) route with slam interest.

But, if you want to be only in game, you take the direct route (Texas). Jump (like a rabbit) directly to 4 to play there.

3) By starting slam hands with Jacoby, you have other tools available.

You can Jacoby transfer then jump in a new suit. This is a splinter bid, showing slam interest. For example, 1NT-2♥-2♠-4♦ shows something like:

♠AQJ642 ♥K75 ♦3 ♣K53. Accordingly, Jacoby followed by a jump to game, should be a balanced hand (6-3-2-2 type).

4) More experienced players will want to define what 4NT means after a transfer. I suggest that Jacoby followed by 4NT is Quantitative (Invitational). Meanwhile, Texas followed by 4NT should be RKC (or, if you don't use Keycard, play it as regular Blackwood).

Examples:

1NT-2♥-2♠-4NT : ♠AKJ54♥A32♦1093 ♣K5 (invitational, NF)

1NT-4♥-4♠-4NT : ♠AQ109765 ♥7♦KQ2 ♣K6 (asks for [Key Cards](#))