

When is 4C Gerber?

Answer: When you and your partner have agreed that it is! Most pairs play Gerber only in certain NT sequences. But *which* NT sequences? Have you discussed these auctions with your favorite partner?

(1) **1N/P/4C?** This is the classic Gerber sequence, always Gerber unless you don't play Gerber at all.

(2) **2N/P/4C?** This is another classic Gerber sequence, but since 4C after a Stayman sequence should be Gerber (see #6 below), Amalya Kears's *Bridge Conventions Complete* suggests using 3C followed by 4C as Gerber whether or not either partner holds a 4-card major, so that the direct 4C response can be used to show a slam try with long clubs.

(3) **3N/P/4C?** Is this Gerber or Stayman? If you play a Gambling 3NT, it is surely a rescue bid, asking partner to pass if clubs is his long minor and to correct to 4D if diamonds is his long minor. But if 3N is a big balanced hand, it makes more sense for 4C to be Stayman. In that situation, many pairs play that 5C is Gerber (Super Gerber) and 4N is invitational. The same logic applies to the sequence **2C/P/2D/P/3N/4C**.

(4) **2C/P/2D/P/2N/P/4C?** If 2D is a true negative, 4C as Gerber is senseless, so it must show a weak freak unsuitable for NT, inviting 5C or 6C. If 2H is your true negative, then 4C would also be the weak freak. If 2D is waiting, 4C should probably be Gerber with no 4-card major, intending 6N unless two aces are missing.

(5) **2C/P/2S/P/2N/P/4C?** You'd better discuss this one. The positive response puts you in slam try country, so 4C could be Gerber, but it also makes sense to use 4C as a splinter, with 4N as Blackwood or Roman Keycard Blackwood, since the 5-level will probably be safe.

(6) **1N/P/2C/P/2any/P/4C** and **2N/P/3C/P/3any/P/4C?** Since the Stayman bidder is asking about Opener's shape, 4C should not be natural and thus should be Gerber, aiming for slam in 6N or in Opener's major.

(7) **1N/P/2D/P/2H/P/4C?** You'd better discuss this one, too. In the absence of discussion, most would assume this is Gerber. Some pairs would assume 4C is a splinter, inviting a heart slam. Some prefer to use a new suit at the 4-level to show a slam try with a second 5-card suit, while a new suit at the 3-level shows a singleton (or void) with no second 5-card suit. This allows Opener to get out at 3N with a double stopper and poor support for the major.