

EGCC Conventions: Red Suit Transfers

Red Suit Transfers are another convention used after an opening 1NT. They do two things:

- 1) Allow you to find a 5-3 fit in a major, and
- 2) Allow you to show both a strong and a weak hand with the same bid, thus doubling your bidding options.

How They Work

A red suit transfer is a bid of 2♦ or 2♥ in response to your partner's 1NT opening bid.

They instruct your partner (opener) to bid (transfer to) the next suit up (so 2♥ after 2♦ and 2♠ after 2♥). They also guarantee 5 cards in the suit transferred to.

What Next?

This is where the clever bit comes in. If you are doing a weak takeout (5 cards in a major) then you just pass. If you have more points and might be interested in game, you bid on.

A rebid of NT shows exactly five in the suit, a rebid of the suit shows 6 (or more).

A bid of another suit shows 5 (or possibly more) in the first suit and 4 in the second, and is usually game forcing.

When do I Use it

The common situations are:

- 1) When you are weak and have a 5 card major
- 2) When game might be possible and you have a 5 card major but do not know whether partner has 3+.

Typical Sequences

North	South	
1NT	2♥	
2♠	Pass	Weak takeout: South has 6 or less points and 5 or more spades

North	South	
1NT	2♥	
2♠	2NT	South has 11-12 points and exactly 5 spades.
...?		

North now knows the combined hand situation and bids accordingly:

Pass With 2 spades and 12 or a poor 13 points
 3NT With 2 spades and a good 13 or 14 points
 3♠ With 3 or more spades and 12 or a poor 13 points
 4♠ With 3 or more spades and a good 13 or 14 points

North	South	
1NT	2♥	
2♠	3NT	South has 13+ points and exactly 5 spades.
...?		North will bid 4S if he has 3 or more spades, and will Pass otherwise.

North	South	
1NT	2♥	
2♠	3♠	South has 11-12 points and 6 or more spades.
...?		North will bid 4S if he has a good 13 or 14 points.

North	South	
1NT	2♥	
2♠	4♠	South has 13+ points and 6 or more spades.

The sequences work similarly if South has hearts instead of spades.

Alerting and Announcing

Red Suit transfers are announced (just like Stayman). To announce the 2♦, you say "Hearts", and to announce the 2♥, you say "Spades". Remember you announce your partner's bids, not your own.

Working with Stayman

Red suit transfers work quite well with Stayman. You use the former if you have a 5+ card major, and Stayman if only a 4 card major. You never use both together.