

Splinter Bids

We include this Conventional bid at this point because it might be considered a corollary to the Strong Jacoby Trump Raise. The Splinter bid, like the Strong Jacoby shows 4+card support, (usually¹) invitational points and possible interest in SLAM.

The Splinter also shows a Singleton or Void in the bid suit, 4+card (major suit) Trump support and invitational (10-12) playing points – if you had 13+ you'd bid Jacoby 2NT⁵. Most commonly it is a response bid to partners opening in a Major but can also be a rebid by either the opener or responder.

To employ a Splinter bid, the bid must be an **unusual** jump bid. We emphasize **unusual** because you may, for example, also employ Bergen raises and in that case a response of 3♣ or 3♦ is indeed a jump bid, but in your system it is not unusual if Partner opens either Major. A jump to 4♣ or 4♦ would be unusual. What, if you open 1♥ and, following a pass, Partner bids 3♠. Is that unusual? It certainly is in my bidding repertoire (I can't think of another convention that utilizes this jump) therefore the 3♠ bid is a Splinter. Control bidding is an acceptable follow up to a Splinter bid, if there is room. (If you check our pages on Bergen Raises this bid has a slightly different meaning and is referred to as an anonymous splinter); otherwise it is still a **Splinter** indicating a singleton or void in ♠'s (if you don't play Bergen raises) and 10+ HCP, thus 13 PP.

An immediate Splinter bid by responder follows the following form:

- 1♣ – P – 3♦/3♥/3♠ Shows support in ♣ (5+Card), a singleton/void in the bid suit, and slam interest.
- 1♦ – P – 3♥/3♠/4♣ Shows support in ♦ (5+Card), a singleton/void in the bid suit, and slam interest.
- 1♥ – P – 3♠/4♣/4♦ Shows (4+Card) support in ♥, a singleton/void in the bid suit²
- 1♠ – P – 4♣/4♦/4♥ Shows (4+Card) support in ♠, a singleton/void in the bid suit

But Splinter bids are not restricted to Responder's first bid; it could be responder's rebid such as

1♣ – P – 1♥ – P

1♠ – P – 4♣/4♦ either of these is a Splinter here showing 4+♠'s and 10+ HCP.

or

1♥ – P – 1♠ – P

2♥ – P – 4♣/4♦ either 4♣/4♦ is a Splinter bid. And an unusual Splinter by Responder on rebid. Note that only 3-Card support is being shown since opener is showing a 6-Card suit.

or

2♣ – P – 2♦ – P 2♦ is the standard waiting bid

2♥ – P – 3♠ 2♥ by opener shows a good 5-card suit the jump to 3♠ contrasted to bidding 2♣ is a Splinter showing 3-Card Support and a void/singleton in ♠. Similarly for a rebid of 4♣ or 4♦.

The Opener can also Splinter:

1♦ – P – 1♠ – P

4♥ 2♥ is a Reverse showing 16-18 HCP; 3♥ is a Jump-shift showing 18-19 neither suggest support for ♠, Thus the only unusual jump is 4♥ showing a void/singleton in ♥ and 4-Card support in ♠

or

1♦ – P – 1♥ – P

3♠ A Jump-shift would be a rebid of 2♠. 3♠ is an unusual jump showing at least 4-

1 We say usually because some suggest not using Jacoby 2NT when the singleton is an Ace. Thus, one might Splinter with more than invitational points when those Invitational points include a singleton Ace.

2 Note: A splinter after a Minor suggests Slam Interest. The Opposite is true of a Splinter after a Major. Over a Major there are different methods, so a splinter after a Major is game force but only suggests slam.

Card _____ support in Hearts and a void singleton in ♠.