

Fifth Chair



Takeout Double

The Takeout double or overcalling are the two common forms of immediate entry to the bidding after an opponent has opened the bidding.

REMEMBER, when playing doubles for takeout, you cannot double for penalty. If you want to double for penalty, in most situations, you have to pass and hope partner will double in the balancing position.

A double is intended for takeout under the following circumstances.

1. Partner has not bid a suit, NT or doubled,
2. The double is of 1, 2, or 3 of a suit, and
3. The double was made at the doubler's first opportunity to bid except in the case of a reopening double.

The requirements for a takeout double are very rigid. What type of hand should you have for a takeout double?

1. 11 or more high card points.
2. Support for the unbid suits, especially unbid majors.
3. Fewer than three of the opponents suit 85% of the time.
4. If you have the opponents' suit, you should overcall in some number of notrump with the requisite points.

The eleven point takeout double should be made with compensating factors, i.e. perfect distribution. It is invariably a hand with a singleton or void in the opponents bid suit. 4-4-4-1 or 5-4-3-1 or 5-4-4-0 (Thus valued as dummy, it has at least 14 points)

EXAMPLES The bidding is opened 1D. The following hands are GOOD takeout doubles.

1. AJxx 2. A109xx 3. J10xx 4. KQxx KQJx A9xx AQxx J10xx x x --- xx 109xx Kxx Axxxx AKx Takeout doubles are classified into four categories: 1. 11-15 points-DOUBLE and PASS-unless partner shows strength. 2. 16-18 points-DOUBLE and BID AGAIN-raise partner or bid another suit at your next opportunity. 3. 19-21 points-DOUBLE and JUMP-jump in partner's suit or your own suit at your next opportunity. (Not forcing)4. 22+-Almost game in your hand, rebid at 3 level if not game.

You cannot double and then bid a four card suit. You can cue bid the opponents' suit, or bid some number of NO Trumps, with 16 and up. The reason that #3 (19-21 HCP) is not forcing? You must always be aware that you have forced your partner to bid. Partner may not have one point in his hand.

An immediate double of 1NT should be based on 15 or more points, and have balanced distribution. It is primarily for penalties, but partner must use his own judgment.

If his hand contains little defensive values, but contains a long suit, it is better to show the suit. Holding 6 or 7 points, doubler's partner should pass.

Do not make takeout doubles with FOUR of the opponents' suit, because when you have four in the opponents' suit you cannot have support for the unbid suits. Even when you have three of the opponents' suit you must be very careful. The worst hand you should have would be

AJxx Kxx AJx xxx If the opening bid is 1C it is acceptable to double with this hand, but if the opening bid is 1S it is insane. You must be very careful when you know you are forcing partner to the two level.

Normally when you double one of a major, you will have four of the other major, but there are exceptions: Double 1S with any of these hands: 1. x 2. xx 3. xx AQx KQxx KQx KJxxx Axx Axxx Axxx A10xx Axxx

1. Plenty of high cards 2. Right distribution 3. Not my favorite but..

If the bidding is opened 1C - Pass with this hand:

Kxx Axx Kxx QJxx DO NOT MAKE Takeout DOUBLES with two Five card Suits.

You are South and East opens 1H. 1) AJxxx 2) Kx x x AQxxx AJxxx Qx KJxxx Hand 1 Overcall Spades and bid diamonds later if feasible. Hand 2 Overcall 2D and then show 3c if space permits.

If you have an unbid 5 card major suit, and a 3 card major suit, don't

double but instead bid the 5 card suit. Your right hand opponent opens 1C and you hold AKxxx Kxx Kxx xx

Don't double. Overcall 1S . Remember if you double and then bid spades

you are showing a hand in the 16 to 18 point range.

A REOPENING DOUBLE What happens if your right hand opponent opens 1C,

you overcall 1S, left hand opponent bids 2C, then Pass, Pass and the bidding comes back to you? Your instincts tell you that partner has some face cards since you have a minimum opener type hand and the opponents don't seem to want to get higher than 2. Why didn't partner bid? He doesn't fit spades! Is there a possibility that this above hand, with the 5 card spade suit is your hand? YES!

What can you do? You can double now! This says, "Partner, I told you I had a five card spade suit, but I also have tolerance for the other two unbid suits, Can you do something?" Partner says "Thanks! I was sitting here with this hand and couldn't get into the bidding because I couldn't stand to hear you rebid 2S.

x QJ10xx Axxxx Jx

ANOTHER REOPENING DOUBLE In modern bridge, this double is also for TAKEOUT:

E S (you) W N

1S 2D P P

2S X

Your hand should look like this: x AQx AQ10xxx Jxx

When you make your double on your second bid, partner should play you for 6 diamonds, and act accordingly.

CAUTION ON REOPENING DOUBLES Keep in mind, in order to overcall and then double, the opponents must have bid only one suit or stopped in precisely 1NT. Your opponent on your right has opened the bidding with 1 Diamond? What if anything, do you do with the following hands?

1. Ax 2. AQ 3. Kxxx 4. Axxxxx 5. xxxx

KQx KQ10xx AKQJx Kxxxx xxxxx

QJxxx AJx x Kx x

Kxx _____ Kx _____ QJx _____ --- _____ KQx _____

6. J109x 7. KQJ 8. A109xx 9. Axx 10. xxxx

Axx xxxx QJ10xx KJx AQxx

xx x Ax x x

AKxx _____ AKxxx _____ x _____ KQxxxx _____ KQxx _____

BIDS BY OPENER'S PARTNER - AFTER A TAKEOUT DOUBLE

Following a takeout double opener's partner should:

- a) Pass with a poor hand,
- b) Redouble with a good hand (10 or more points), or
- c) Bid immediately with 6-9 points.

Bidding has proceeded: 1D X?

What does partner of opening bidder do here?

11. KQxx 12. xxxxx 13. xxx 14. xxx 15. Kxx

Jx AQ Kxx xxxxx xxx

xxx x xx xx xxxxx

Axxx _____ Kxxx _____ Axxx _____ xxx _____ Qx _____

RESPONDING TO A TAKEOUT DOUBLE

If Partner of opening bidder passes, you MUST bid - choose your longest

UNBID suit, even if you have NO points. IF YOU HAVE A STACK OF OPPONENTS BID SUIT, you can only pass if you believe you can set the opponents, AND your side can get more points by setting the opponents, than by playing the hand.

Your hand is: xxx xx xxxxx xxx

Bidding has proceeded: 1D X P ?

You may not pass for penalties, Bid 1S. Partner KNOWS he has forced you to bid, and will rebid accordingly.

GUIDELINES FOR RESPONDING TO A TAKEOUT DOUBLE

A With 0-8 (minimum hand) respond as below:

i) Bid your 4 card or longer unbid major at the lowest level

possible,

ii) Bid 1NT with 6-10 points, opponents suit stopped, and no unbid

major

iii) Bid a 4 card or longer minor at the lowest level possible

iv) DON'T PASS

B. With 9 - 11 points - Medium Hand

i) Jump in unbid major Suit that is 4 cards or longer

ii) Jump to 2NT with opponents' suit stopped, if no major suit

iii) Jump in unbid minor suit, which is 4 card or longer

C. With 12-13 or more points

i) Jump to game in 4 card or longer major unbid suit (Some partnerships might cue bid opponents suit to show an opening hand)

ii) Jump to 3NT with opponents suit well stopped, and no unbid 4 card or longer major suit.

Bidding has proceeded: 1D X P ? What do you do with these hands?

16. xxxxx Qxxx xx xx
17. Ax QJxxxx --- xxxxx
18. Ax J10x Kxx xxxxx
19. Axx xxxxx KQxx x
20. x AKx xxxxx xxxx
21. Qxxxx Axx Qxxxx ---

REBIDDING BY TAKEOUT DOUBLER

As a matter of policy, takeout doublers should be careful in rebidding.

ANSWERS TO BIDDING PROBLEMS

- 1 Bid 1NT. You are balanced, and have a 1NT opening point count.
- 2 Double. When you have 16 HCP, you double, rather than overcall. You plan to show your strength and suit on your rebid. See page 1 discussion of point ranges for doubles.
- 3 Double. If partner bids clubs, you can then bid hearts. This rebid will show 16 or more points, AND a 5 card or longer suit.
- 4 Overcall 1S, your longer suit.
- 5 Pass. Great shape but only 5 points
- 6 Double. You are 4-3 in the majors, with 4 clubs. (13 dummy points)
- 7 Double. You are 4-3 in the majors. You prefer to find a major fit rather than clubs.
- 8 Bid 1S This is your higher ranking 5 card suit
- 9 Bid 2C You have 6 clubs and only 3 cards in each major.
- 10 Double You have 4 cards in each unbid suit. (14 dummy points)
- 11 Redouble. You have 10 points
- 12 1S. You have a 5 card suit, plus 9 HCP, and 3 for the singleton.
- 13 1NT
- 14 Pass
- 15 2 Diamonds

16 Bid 1 Spade, your longest suit.

17 Bid 4 hearts, you have a great playing hand, partner has shown support for the unbid suits, so your void and long trumps will produce extra tricks. You have 13 dummy points

18 Bid 1 NoTrump

19 Bid 2 hearts, which shows 10 points and a good hand.

20 Bid 2 clubs

21 Bid 1 spade, if partner raises spades, go to game. You are concerned that the Q of diamonds has no value, and that partner has wasted values in clubs.