

DOUBLE TROUBLE:

A Discussion of Takeout Doubles

Bentonville Regional Bridge Tournament
Lunch and Learn Session

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Presented by: Lowell F. Lynde, Jr.
113 Sarah DR, Choudrant, LA 71227
Email: bowebil@hotmail.com

“Understanding Takeout Doubles and the follow-ups is probably more important than any other part of bidding. They come up more often than any convention.” Larry Cohen

“A takeout double asks your partner to bid one of the unbid suits, and this convention is indispensable to good bidding.” William S. Root

WHAT IS A TAKEOUT DOUBLE? A takeout double is a double made by an opponent of the opening bidder at his first turn to bid and his partner (known as the advancer) has passed or has yet to bid.

WHAT ARE THE REQUIREMENTS FOR MAKING A TAKEOUT DOUBLE?

- 1) At least 3-card support for the unbid suits.
- 2) Usually 4-card support for the other major if opener's bid is a major.
- 3) Shortness in the opener's suit—2 or fewer cards. The ideal distribution is 4-4-4-1. Other possible distributions are 4-4-3-2 and 5-4-4-0 and 5-4-3-1 and 5-3-3-2. Do not make a takeout double with a GOOD 5-card suit but rather overcall in that suit.
- 4) Opening bid value counting support points: 3 for a void, 2 for a singleton, and 1 for a doubleton.

SOME SPECIAL THINGS TO CONSIDER REGARDING THE TAKEOUT DOUBLES:

- 1) **ADVANCER SHOULD NEVER PASS** the takeout double unless he is reasonably certain that he and his partner can set the opener (usually because of a long and powerful trump stack). Otherwise he should bid even with 0 points.
- 2) Takeout doubles are usually doubles of an opening bid of a suit at the 1, 2, or 3-level. Doubles of higher opening bids should be discussed by the partnership.
- 3) A **POWER DOUBLE** sounds at the beginning like a takeout double and the advancer will not know until the doubler makes his second bid. If at his second turn to bid, doubler bids a new suit he is showing a good suit and 16+ HCP.

Example:	Opener	You	Responder	Advancer
	1♦	Double	Pass	1♥
	Pass	1♠	ALL pass	

Doubler's Hand: ♠ A K J 9 7 2 ♥ 5 3 ♦ J 8 ♣ A K 6

Note: Doubler's hand is too strong to make an overcall which usually shows a good 5-card or longer suit and 10-15 HCP.

ADVANCER Responds to a Takeout Double with a Suit Bid (Assume that Opener's Partner Passes)

	0 – 9 points Advancer bids a suit as cheaply as possible	10 – 12 points Advancer jumps 1-level in bidding a suit	13+ points Advancer jumps 2 levels in bidding a suit
12 - 15 points Minimum hand	PASS any bid that advancer makes	PASS with 12-13 but raise with 14-15	Raise Advancer's suit to the 4-level (Principal of Fast Arrival)
16 - 18 points Invitational hand	Raise one level. Advancer should PASS with 0-7 points but rebid his suit with 8-9.	Raise Advancer's suit to the 4-level (Principal of Fast Arrival)	Cue bid opponent's suit. Advancer can bid game in his suit with a minimum or explore for slam.
19+ points Forcing hand	Raise two levels. Advancer should PASS with 0-4 points but rebid his suit with 5-9.	Cue bid opponent's suit. Advancer can bid game in his suit with minimum or explore for slam.	Very unlikely that this will happen but if it does, explore for slam.

CAUTION: *One of the most common mistakes an advancer makes is not jumping to show the invitational or better hand.*

NOTE: What should advancer do if opener's partner bids?

Advancer is not required to bid in this case. He should only bid if he has a good 8-9 points or any 10+ point hand.

When should the advancer cuebid?

The advancer cuebids in the following situations:

1. He holds 4 cards in each major and 10+ points
2. He has 3 or 4 cards in each major and 13+ points. Lacking a major suit fit, advancer cue bids a second time to ask partner to bid 3NT with a stop in the opponents suit or otherwise play in a 4-3 fit.

Advancer Responds to a Takeout Double with a Notrump Bid:

- 1) 1 NT shows a stopper(s) in the opponent's suit and 6-9 HCP
- 2) 2 NT shows a stopper(s) in the opponent's suit and 10-12 HCP
- 3) 3 NT shows a stopper(s) in the opponent's suit and 13+ HCP

Practice Problems for Takeout Doubles:

Suppose the bidding has gone: 1♣ Double Pass ???

As the advancer, what do you bid with each of the following hands?

1. _____ ♠ J 10 7 6 ♥ 5 4 2 ♦ Q J 8 3 ♣ 8 5
2. _____ ♠ K 8 5 4 ♥ A J 9 ♦ K 10 4 2 ♣ 9 2
3. _____ ♠ 6 4 3 ♥ K Q J 7 5 ♦ A J 5 4 ♣ 2
4. _____ ♠ Q J 10 4 ♥ A 10 9 8 ♦ K 5 4 ♣ 7 4
5. _____ ♠ K 9 8 ♥ Q 7 6 ♦ 6 4 3 ♣ K J 10 4
6. _____ ♠ Q J 4 ♥ A Q 2 ♦ K J 7 ♣ 6 4 3 2

Suppose that the bidding has gone: 1♦ Double Pass 2♥

Assume opener passes, as the doubler what would you bid with each of the following hands?

7. _____ ♠ K Q 10 4 ♥ A J 4 2 ♦ 5 4 ♣ Q 8 3
8. _____ ♠ A K J 8 7 6 ♥ 5 4 ♦ A 9 5 ♣ K Q
9. _____ ♠ K J 8 3 ♥ Q J 7 4 ♦ 6 2 ♣ A K 7
10. _____ ♠ K Q 9 6 ♥ A Q 9 8 ♦ 7 ♣ A Q 6 5