

BIG DOUBLES – TAKEOUT DOUBLES THAT SHOW VERY GOOD HANDS

Overcalls are usually limited to approximately 17/18 HCP and are not forcing. Occasionally you will be in the overcalling position and hold a hand that is stronger than this. On hand of this type of hand you need to make a takeout double first, and then show your suit with your next bid.

This strength-showing bid can be made with

- A hand that is too strong to make a simple overcall of a suit; typically a hand of 17/18+ points and a good suit. Start by doubling and then bidding your suit over partner's response.
- A balanced hand that is too strong for a 1NT overcall; typically a hand with 19+ points and a stopper in the opponent's suit. Double first and bid no trumps later.

Note that if partner makes a minimum response there is no need to jump bid unless you have a gigantic hand— you have already shown a hand that is too good for a simple overcall.

Example

Your right hand opponent opens 1C and you hold

AKQxxx
AKx
Ax
xx

This hand is too strong for a 1S overcall. There are many hands where partner would pass this and you easily make 10 tricks. Double first, then bid spades over partner's response.

Your right hand opponent opens 1C and you hold

AQxx
AJx
Axx
AJx

This hand has 20 HCP and is too strong for a 1NT overcall, which shows 16 to 18 points. Double first, then bid NT over partner's response.