

TAKEOUT DOUBLES

When your opponent opens the bidding you can pass, overcall or double.

A **takeout double** should show one of two types of hand. The first type is

- A hand on which you would have opened the bidding if your opponent hadn't bid in front of you, and
- Support for all three unbid suits (ie at least 3 cards in each of the other suits)

A takeout double is like bidding three suits at once.

A takeout double can also be made on a hand that is **too strong to overcall**.

- 18+ points and a good 5+ card suit, in which case you are too strong to overcall. You double and then bid your suit.
- 19+ points and a balanced hand, in which case you are too strong to overcall 1NT. Double and then bid NT.

Responding to Partner's Takeout Double

If the next three players pass after a double then the contract will be played in opener's suit, doubled. This is rarely a good outcome for the doubling side, so if third hand passes the doubler's partner must make a bid to cancel the double. If opener's partner bids, then the doubler's partner is not obliged to bid but may choose to bid with a suitable hand.

Since the doubler's partner may be obliged to bid with poor hands, you should make higher level bids with stronger hands. Remember that doubler has shown an opening hand with at least three cards in the suit that you will bid – in some respects you are 'supporting' a suit that partner has shown.

Responder's Bids

Longest suit at lowest level: 0-6 HCP with any length; 0-8 with a 4-card suit.

Higher bids show progressively better hands. A jump to the 3-level is invitational to game. A bid of 2NT shows 11-12 HCP and stoppers in the enemy suit.

Bid game with a hand that would have opened the bidding or would have raised to game if partner had opened.