

Takeout Doubles

When opponents open with a suit bid, a double should not be for penalty. Instead this bid should promise:

- At least opening-bid strength (12+ HCP)
- Shortness defined as 0-2 cards in the suit the opponent opened
- Support for all unbid suits. Your double forces partner to bid, so you must have at least 3-card length in any suit they will choose.

Typical hands for a takeout double of an opponent's 1♣ opening would be:

♠KJ64 ♥A1073 ♦AJ42 ♣7
♠QJ76 ♥AQ92 ♦AJ4 ♣65
♠A104 ♥AJ84 ♦K10432 ♣8

The exception for Takeout Doubles: Big Hands

There is hand type where you can double without support for all unbid suits. You can start with a double if you have a hand that has one long suit and *great* strength (17+ HCP) such as: ♠A6 ♥AQJ1084 ♦AK65 ♣7.

Responding to Partner's Takeout Double - If partner doubles an opponent's suit bid, you must bid *unless*:

- The opponent on your right has also entered the bidding, OR
- You have a long, strong holding in the opponent's suit and want to pass and "convert" partner's takeout double to a penalty double. Typical holding in the opponent's suit would be: KJ10xxx or similar.

If partner doubles and the next hand passes, respond your longest unbid suit at the level that shows your point-count:

- 0-8 pts. - Bid your longest suit at the lowest level possible (1♥ - DBL - Pass - 1♠, 2♣ or 2♦).
- 8-11 pts. - Jump a level in your longest suit to show strength (1♥ - DBL - Pass - 2♠, 3♣ or 3♦).
- 8-10 pts. - Bid 1NT if you have good stoppers in the opponent's suit.
- 11-12 pts. - Jump to 2NT if you have stoppers in the opponent's suit, but do not have length in an unbid major.
- 12+ pts. - Jump to game in your suit (usually an unbid major) or notrump if you have good stoppers.

Worksheet – Takeout Doubles

What is your response to partner's takeout double after the auction: **1♣** by LHO -- *DBL* by partner -- Pass by RHO ?

Hand #1: ♠Q9 ♥J983 ♦Q754 ♣632 Bid _____

Hand #2: ♠J42 ♥1092 ♦642 ♣Q1073 Bid _____

Hand #3: ♠K2 ♥QJ93 ♦A986 ♣632 Bid _____

Hand #4: ♠982 ♥KJ ♦K1072 ♣Q1082 Bid _____

Hand #5: ♠104 ♥943 ♦KJ1065 ♣AQ5 Bid _____

Hand #6: ♠KQ1084 ♥4 ♦AJ106 ♣743 Bid _____

Hand #7: ♠A4 ♥73 ♦Q85 ♣QJ10975 Bid _____

Answers

Hand #1: Bid 1H. You must respond, and with two suits of equal length, you should choose the major.

Hand #2: Bid 1H. You have club stoppers, but your hand is too weak to bid notrump. Your only alternative is a 3-card suit, so try your cheapest major (and pray). Do not panic and pass!

Hand #3: Bid 2H. The jump tells partner that you have fair values (8+ to 11 pts.). If partner has extra strength, this may encourage him to bid a game.

Hand #4: Bid 1NT. You could also bid 1D, but a 1NT bid is more descriptive (it shows your club stopper) and more encouraging, since it promises at least 8-10 pts.

Hand #5: Bid 2NT. You have the strength to invite game, but 5D will be a difficult contract to make. With your balanced pattern and good club stoppers, suggest a notrump game instead. If partner has more than a bare minimum, he'll raise to 3NT.

Hand #6: Bid 4S. With your strong suits and a singleton, this hand is worth much more than its 10 high-card pts. Jump to game to show your great playing strength.

Hand #7: Pass. This is one of the rare hands where it's right to pass and defend 1C doubled. Your pass "converts" partner's takeout double to a penalty double.