

## Negative Doubles

“Sputnik”

Partner opens 1 of a suit and is overcalled by LHO in a suit: the ‘negative’ double shows 6+ HCP (8+ for X at 2 level) and a biddable 4 card suit in at least of the other 2 suits.

NB: ‘negative’ means “not those bid suits”; it has no top limit in point count.

### Problem:

1 - South

♠ 8 7  
♥ K Q 4 2  
♦ K 5 4 3  
♣ 10 8 4

N E S W

1♣ 1♠ ?

### Possible Solutions?

2♣ **No:** shows 6-9 pts and 4 card support (2 if playing 5cm and opening suit is a major)

2♦/♥ **No:** shows 10+ pts & (preferably) 5 card suit

2♠ **No:** Unassuming Cue bid – agreeing partner’s suit and asking for more info..

2NT **No:** shows 15-17 HCP and stops in enemy suit

PASS: **Possibly:** but this leaves West open to bid 2♠ and opener then has to bid again at the 3 level, disadvantaging a strong hand without any information from partner.

**X: Optimal:** shows 6+ HCP and at least one 4 card unbid suit (♦/♥) – if 5 card, then <10 HCP (otherwise you can bid 2 ♦/♥).

### Further points:

- Double of a **major** always shows 4 card suit in other major: with 5 card major, bid it.
- Double of 1♣ - 1♦ implies 4-4 in majors.

### Negative double of double?

2 - South

♠ -  
♥ K 9 8 7  
♦ A 9 5 4 3  
♣ K Q 10 6

N E S W

1♥ x ?

### Possible Solutions:

4♥ Possible – but this is usually a pre-emptive shut-out bid, excluding any possibility of slam, even though this may seem remote with 12+ HCP in East.

NB: with North, East and South having an opening hand, West is very unlikely to have many points.

2♦/♣ Possible – delayed game raise, looking for opener’s rebid to gauge whether to ‘bid on’ past 4♥.

**REDOUBLE XX Preferred:** a ‘negative double, of East’s Double. Gives West opportunity to show a 4 card suit. South shows at least 4/4 in the minors, and can always revert to clear major suit fit later.

## Opener's Rebid

Natural. Assume partner does not have support in your suit – even though this may not be true.

**Forcing?** **Almost always** – a pass for penalties by opener would imply length but no stops in ♠s (otherwise can bid NT) and ≤2 card red suits. **Needs partnership agreement:** as there is no maximum point count for negative double, pass can miss a good game contract.

- **RB opinion:** any double of a suit up to 3♥ is for take-out and forcing.

Some partnerships agree: Cue bid of enemy's suit is 19+ and FORCING TO GAME.

## Other Situations – discuss with partner

When both majors have been bid, then the negative double can still be used, but now it would suggest holding the minors, e.g in the sequence 1♥ – (1♠) – Dbl, the double is still for take-out, suggesting the minors.

When you have a choice of making a negative double or bidding at the one level, the double usually shows **four** cards, thus:

1♣ – (1♥) – Dbl.	The negative double shows four spades
1♣ – (1♥) – 1♠	When both minors have been bid, the negative double at the one level promises both majors, but at the two level it promises just one:
1♣ – (1♦) – Dbl	Because you could bid 1♥ or 1♠ with four cards, the double is used to show both majors.
1♦ – (2♣) – ?	You cannot show a four-card major at the one level, so the double shows at least one major.

Another example:

3 – West	East
♠ K J 10 6 5	♠ 7 4
♥ A 6 2	♥ 5 3
♦ J 9	♦ K Q 6 5 4 3
♣ K 6 4	♣ A 5 2

W	N	E	S
1♠	2♥	X	-
2♠	-	3♦	End

The negative double is useful simply to get your strength across. Here, East's negative keeps his side in the auction. He is too weak to bid 3♦ which would force his

side into a forlorn 3NT, but he wants to show some strength, otherwise West may well have to pass out 2♥ thinking that East has a weak hand (0-7 points). West simply rebids his suit as he usually would, and when East rebids 3♦ he can pass because he knows that, had East been stronger, he would have bid 3♦ direct.

Examples: 1♥ - 1♠ - ?

<p><b>3</b></p> <p>♠ K 3</p> <p>♥ 10 9 7 6</p> <p>♦ A 9 4</p> <p>♣ Q 10 6 4</p> <p style="text-align: right; background-color: #d9ead3;">2♥</p>	<p><b>4</b></p> <p>♠ 8 7 5 3</p> <p>♥ J 8 7 5 3</p> <p>♦ A O 4</p> <p>♣ 4</p> <p style="text-align: right; background-color: #d9ead3;">3♥</p>	<p><b>5</b></p> <p>♠ -</p> <p>♥ Q 6 5 4</p> <p>♦ A 9 5 4 3</p> <p>♣ K Q 10 6</p> <p style="text-align: right; background-color: #d9ead3;">X</p>
---	---	---

Your partner opened 1♦ and was overcalled by 1♥ - what do you bid on these hands

<b>Hand 7</b> ♠ K J 5 3 ♥ 7 ♦ K Q 7 5 4 3 ♣ Q 10	X	<b>Hand 8</b> ♠ K J 5 3 ♥ 7 ♦ Q 10 ♣ K Q 7 5 4 3	X	<b>Hand 9</b> ♠ K J 5 ♥ K J 10 7 ♦ Q 9 4 ♣ A 6 4	3NT
--	---	--	---	--	-----

After this sequence what should you bid as East with any of the hands below

W N E S  
1♥ dbl ???

<b>Hand 10</b> ♠ K 7 5 3 ♥ 7 6 ♦ A 9 4 ♣ Q 10 6 4	XX	<b>Hand 11</b> ♠ Q 8 7 5 3 ♥ J 7 6 5 ♦ A Q 4 ♣ 4	2♥	<b>Hand 12</b> ♠ 5 ♥ 10 7 6 ♦ A 9 5 4 3 ♣ K Q 10 6	X
<b>Hand 13</b> ♠ K J 5 ♥ 7 ♦ K Q 10 7 5 4 3 ♣ Q 10	2♦	<b>Hand 14</b> ♠ K Q J 5 ♥ Q 10 8 7 ♦ ♣ K 9 7 5 4 3	2♣	<b>Hand 15</b> ♠ K 7 5 ♥ K 10 7 6 ♦ A 9 4 ♣ 10 6 4	XX

In the following hands North opens and is overcalled by the suit above)

NORTH		SOUTH		
Hand 16 North Deals E = 1♥	♠ A 10 9 ♥ K 6 2 ♦ A K Q 7 2 ♣ 8 7	Hand 16 North Deals E = 1♥	♠ K 8 7 5 4 3 ♥ ♦ 10 4 3 ♣ K 6 5 3	1♦ 1♥ 2♦ - 2NT - 3♦
Hand 17 Dealer North E = 1♦	♠ J 4 2 ♥ Q 7 ♦ K 6 ♣ K Q J 4 3 2	Hand 17 Dealer North E = 1♦	♠ A K 7 5 ♥ A K 6 4 2 ♦ 9 ♣ A 10 8	1♣ 1♦ X - 2♣ - 4NT - 5♣
Hand 18 Dealer North E = 1♥	♠ A 7 6 4 ♥ J 7 3 ♦ A Q J 7 6 ♣ 5	Hand 18 Dealer North	♠ K 9 ♥ A Q ♦ K 10 5 4 ♣ A 9 8 4 2	1♦ 1♥ 2♣ - 2♦ - 3NT
Hand 19 Dealer, North E = 1♦	♠ 5 4 ♥ K J 7 3 ♦ K 6 ♣ A K 10 7 3	Hand 19 Dealer North E = 1♦	♠ A K 9 2 ♥ A Q 10 6 2 ♦ A 2 ♣ 8 2	1♣ 1♦ X - 1♥ - 4NT- (RKCB) 5♥ - 5NT - 6♦ - 7♥
Hand 20 Dealer North E = 1♦	♠ Q 9 2 ♥ A Q 8 3 ♦ 3 ♣ K Q 9 6 2	Hand 20 Dealer North E = 1♦	♠ A K J 10 6 ♥ K 7 9 2 ♦ Q 10 ♣ 10 4	1♣ 1♦ X - 1♥ - 1♠ - 2♠ - 4♠