

The Exciting World of Bridge – Lesson 7

The Takeout Double

Doubling for takeout

The overcall is used when you want to compete and you have a suit to show partner. Another way to compete is to use the takeout double. This double tells partner you want to compete but asks partner to choose the strain.

Requirements for a takeout double

To make a takeout double, you need support for all of the unbid suits, ideally four-card support, especially in the unbid major suit(s). You also need at least the strength for an opening bid (13 or more total points). However, when valuing your hand, you use dummy points. The takeout doubler can also have a different type of hand – a hand with 18+ total points which is too strong for a simple overcall.

Advancing after a takeout double

A takeout double is forcing and asks the Advancer to bid a suit — other than the one bid by the opponent(s). Assuming no interference from the opponents, the advancer bids as follows:

0 to 8 total points

The Advancer bids a four-card or longer unbid major suit at the cheapest level. With no major suit, the Advancer bids a four-card or longer unbid minor suit.

9 to 11 total points

The Advancer jumps in a four-card or longer unbid major suit. With no major suit, the Advancer jumps in a four-card or longer unbid minor suit.

12 or more total points

The Advancer jumps to game in a four-card or longer unbid major suit. The Advancer also can use the cuebid to ascertain the best strain.

Notrump advances after a takeout double

- 1 NT 8-10 HCP at least one stopper in the opponent's suit.
- 2NT 11-12 HCP at least one stopper in the opponent's suit.
- 3 NT 13 HCP or more and at least one stopper in the opponent's suit.

Rebids by the takeout doubler

If the Advancer makes a minimum bid, the takeout doubler passes with a minimum hand (13 to 15 total points), raises with a medium hand (16 to 18 total points) and jump raises with a maximum hand (19 to 21 total points).

There are two requirements for a takeout double — support for the unbid suits and the values for an opening bid, with dummy points used in the valuation.

When an opponent opens the bidding and you have an opening bid, you can compete with an overcall if you have a five-card or longer suit. If you have support for all of the unbid suits, you can make a takeout double. With 15 to 18 HCP, a balanced hand, and strength in the opponent's suit, you can overcall 1NT. If your hand doesn't fit any of these criteria, you should pass. By making a takeout double and then bidding a new suit, you show a hand too good for a single overcall (18 or more total points).

When partner makes a takeout double, the Advancer with a hand worth 0 to 8 total points must bid something if the right-hand opponent (RHO) passes. The Advancer should bid a four-card or longer major suit at the cheapest level or a four-card or longer minor suit at the cheapest level. With stoppers in the opponent's suit, the advancer can bid 1NT with 8-10 HCP.

If the opponent on the Advancer's right makes a bid, the Advancer can pass with a weak hand of 0 to 5 points, but should try to compete with a minimum hand of 6 to 8 total points.

When the Advancer bids with 9 to 11 total points following partner's takeout double, the Advancer jumps in a four-card or longer major suit if there is one in the hand. Without one, the Advancer jumps in a four-card or longer minor suit. The Advancer also can jump to 2NT with stoppers in the opponent's suit with 11 or 12 HCP.

When advancing to a takeout double with 12 or more total points, the Advancer makes sure that the partnership gets to game.

When rebidding after making a takeout double, you must be very careful if partner shows a minimum hand. Pass with a minimum hand, raise one level with a medium hand and give a jump raise with a maximum hand.