

What is this Double?

Conventional or Penalty?

- I have often had bridge students tell me they have difficulty understanding when a double is conventional and when it is meant for penalty.
- I understand the confusion, because the “double” is used in many conventional ways.
- We’ll look at some bidding sequences and talk about whether they are penalty or conventional.

The Responsive Double

north east south west
1♥ dble 2♥ dble

West's likely hand

♠ K 4 2

♥ 3 2

♦ Q J 9 4

♣ K10 4 2

Only on when opponents
bid and raise the same
suit.

- East's double is, of course, a takeout double. .
- West's double is called a responsive double.
- When LHO opens 1 suit, partner doubles, and responder raises opener's suit, your double is a responsive double.
- Shows both minors.
- Poor support for the unbid major.

The Responsive Double

north	east	south	west
1♦	dbld	2♦	dbld

West's likely hand

♠ K 10 4 2

♥ K J 8 2

♦ J 9 4

♣ K 10

Only on when opponents bid and raise the same suit.

- East's double is, of course, a takeout double.
- West's double is called a responsive double.
- When LHO opens 1 suit, partner doubles, and responder raises opener's suit, your double is a responsive double.
- Shows both majors,.
- Poor support for the unbid minor.

After a Two-Suit Overcall

north	east	south	west
1♦	2♦	dbld	2♥
pass	pass	dbld	

north	east	south	west
1♦	2♦	dbld	2♥
dbld	pass		

- South's original double says I can penalize one (or both) of east's suits.
- South's second double is intended for penalty.
- North's double here is meant for penalty.

When an Opponent Overcalls at the Two Level

north	east	south	west
1♥	2♦	pass	pass
dbl	pass	??	

South's possible hand

♠ K 4 2

♥ 3 2

♦ A J 9 6 4

♣ K 10 4

- In this situation, north's double is not a penalty double.
- It asks south if she wants to defend east's 2 diamonds.
- Or perhaps compete in another suit.
- Vulnerability is a factor here.

When RHO Overcalls 1 No Trump

north	east	south	west
1♥	1nt*	dbl	

*15-18

- A direct double of a 1nt overcall is a penalty double..
- This is basically a bridge standard.
- I cannot think of another way of playing it.

When RHO Overcalls 1 No Trump

north east south west
1nt* 2♦** dble

*15-18

**d.o.n.t.

- Some might play this as a “stole my bid” double.
- But this should be a penalty double.
- When opponents make a two suit overcall, a double says I can punish one of the suits.
- When only one suit is known, as in this situation, it’s the known suit.
- “Stole my bid” is one of the worst conventions ever invented.
- There are ways of handling overcalls of partner’s 1nt.
- Learn one.

When RHO Overcalls in Fourth Seat

north	east	south	west
1♦	pass	1♥	1♠
dbld			

- This is a conventional double.
- Called a support double.
- Shows 3 card support for South's suit.
- If you do not play support doubles, north's double is optional saying ...
- I think we should be competing but I'm not sure where.
- South can bid or pass and defend.

A Different Kind of Support Double

north	east	south	west
1♦	1♥	1♠	dbld

West's hand

♠ K 4
♥ K 7 2
♦ A 9 6 5 4
♣ 10 4 2

- West's double is a support double.
- Some people play this as a Rosenkranz support double.
- The Rosenkranz convention says I have support for partner's suit and one of the top 3 honors.

A Different Kind of Support Double

north	east	south	west
1♥	1♠	2♠	dbld

West's hand

♠ K 4 2

♥ K 7 2

♦ A 9 6 5 4

♣ 10 4

- West's double is a support double.
- South's spade cue bid shows support for north's hearts.
- West's double shows support for east's spades.
- It says, "Partner, I was going to support your bid."

When They Make a Conventional Bid

north	east	south	west
1nt	pass	2♣	dbld

West's hand

♠ 4 2

♥ K 7 2

♦ 9 6 2

♣ K Q J 4 2

- West's double is lead directing.
- You make this bid when you have some substance in the suit.

Doubling a Jacoby Transfer

north	east	south	west
1nt	pass	2♥*	dbld

*transfer

West's hand

♠ 4 2

♥ K Q 10 8 4

♦ 9 6 2

♣ A 4 2

- This is an ideal hand to make a lead directing double.
- A heart lead might establish the suit.
- Your club ace can be an entry.
- Always be sure you have some substance in the suit when you make a lead directing double.

Doubling a Jacoby Transfer

north	east	south	west
1nt	pass	2♥*	dbld

*transfer

West's hand

♠ 4 3 2

♥ A 8 4

♦ J 9 6 2

♣ A 4 2

- It would be foolish to make a lead directing double with this hand.
- It is possible that two hearts doubled might become the final contract.

When They Try for a Slam

north	east	south	west
----	-----	1♠	pass
2♦	pass	2♠	pass
3♠	pass	4♣	??

West's hand

♠ 4 2

♥ J 10 7 2

♦ 9 6 2

♣ K J 10 9

- Should West double south's 4♣ control bid?
- No. East will not be making the opening lead.
- South will be declarer and west will make the opening lead.
- No reason to tell the declarer about your clubs.
- Let her find out on her own.

Different Slam Try

north	east	south	west
----	-----	1♠	pass
3♠	pass	4♣	pass
4♥	??		

East's hand

♠ 4 2

♥ K Q J 7

♦ 9 6 5 2

♣ J 7 4

- In this case, east is in position to make a lead directing double.
- He desperately wants a heart lead.
- His partner will make the opening lead.
- Left to choose, west may select a diamond or a club.
- Help him decide.

Different Slam Try

north	east	south	west
----	-----	1♠	pass
3♠	pass	4♣	pass
4♥	??		

East's hand

♠ 4 2 2

♥ Q J 10 7

♦ 6 5 3 2

♣ Q 7

- In this case, you do not especially want a heart lead.
- But you really don't want a diamond or club lead.
- A heart lead cannot cost anything...
- Help partner find the best opening lead.

Let's Talk About the Redouble

- This is the least used bid in bridge.
- Nevertheless, there are some specific uses for the bid.
- We'll discuss a few of them.

After an Opponent Makes a Takeout Double

north east south west

1♥ dble redble

South's hand

♠ A 5 4 2

♥ Q 7

♦ K J 3 2

♣ J 9 7

- South's redouble shows a hand with 10+ points and any distribution.
- Your hope is to trap your opponents and double them for penalties.
- Any other bid south might make would show weakness.
- Even if south could support hearts, she should redouble first, with 10+ points.

Redouble After an Opponent's Negative Double

north east south west

1♣ 1♠ dble redble

West's Possible hand

♠ A 2

♥ Q J 7 5

♦ K J 10 3

♣ 9 7 6

- West's redouble shows a good hand 10+ points.
- Without solid support for east's spades.
- With spade support and 10+ points, west would cue bid hearts.
- If west makes a direct spade bid, it shows length but weakness.

Redouble After an Opponent's Double Jacoby Transfer

north	east	south	west
1nt	pass	2♥	dbld
redouble			

North's hand

♠ A J 10

♥ Q 5

♦ K J 10 3

♣ K Q 6 5

- North's redouble shows a hand with 3+ cards in the transfer suit.
- And a less than maximum hand.

Redouble After an Opponent's Double Jacoby Transfer

north	east	south	west
1nt	pass	2♥	dbl
2♠			

North's hand

♠ A Q J 2

♥ 7 5

♦ A K 10

♣ K 3

- By bidding the transfer suit, north shows a maximum.
- The sort of hand with which he might have super accepted, if west had not doubled.

Redouble After an Opponent's Double Jacoby Transfer

north east south west
1nt pass 2♥ dble
pass

North's hand

♠ J 2

♥ K Q 7 5

♦ A K 10

♣ K J 3

- With a doubleton in the transfer suit, opener will pass.
- Regardless of strength,

Final Thoughts

- The double is the most used conventional bid, and the meaning of it (as with any convention) is derived from what is going on in the bidding at the exact moment.
- Always talk over your use of the double with your partner.
- Many of the conventional double we discussed in this lesson are alertable.