

## When should you double?

There are many different types of double and this document covers the four types that are most useful.

### Double for Penalties

Do this if you think the opponents won't make their contract AND you can't get a better score from bidding and making your own contract. You need to be sure you can get them down. In a competitive auction they are likely to be short in your suit so don't expect to make many tricks there - they need to come in the outside suits or trumps. If you get this wrong and the part-score you doubled actually makes then your opponents get a large score so I suggest you only double game contracts or 1NT openings for penalties. Finally doubling announces to the opposition where the points are and may help them so don't be greedy.

### Double for Takeout

The classic for this is:

North	East	South	West
1♠	Double		

This shows an opening hand, shortage in spades, four hearts and tolerance for playing in clubs or diamonds (say three in each at least).

It can also show the other two suits when bid in the fourth seat:

North	East	South	West
1♥	Pass	1♠	Double

Or it can be used to restart the bidding:

North	East	South	West
1♥	2♦	Pass	Pass
Double			

This shows a shortage in diamonds and tolerance for the other two suits.

Finally, use a takeout double to show a strong hand (16+ points) - double then bid:

North	East	South	West
1♦	Double	Pass	1♠
Pass	2♣		

This can be any shape but you would support partner's spades with a jump bid of 3♠ if you had 4+ of them.

### Negative Double

For example:

North	East	South	West
1♦	1♠	Double	

The double by South shows four hearts and 6-9 points with no support for diamonds. "The opposition have stolen my bid".

### Lead Directing Double

This one means what it says - it is a double of a suit bid by the opposition and asks partner to lead that suit. Normally, but not always, you are doubling a conventional bid - one that doesn't show the suit bid (in this case Stayman).

For example:

North	East	South	West
1NT	Pass	2♣	Double

West wants East to lead a club.