

Practice Session for U3ABDa15: Doubling for Takeout, Double Then Bid & Overcalling with NT

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Welcome!

Here is a list of all the hands that you could play in today's Practice Session. It tells you useful stuff about them, like the cards in each hand, the High Card Points, the "correct" bidding and lead. Don't feel bad if you bid the hands a bit differently, or ended up in a different contract. There are new things to learn each week, it will take you a while to get the hang of it, no doubt.

This week we've given you hands – and permission – to overcall, so there's something for everyone to do!

Bridge is a great game, but it can be overwhelming, so much to think about. Don't worry, it will get easier. We're here to help it all make sense; don't worry about making mistakes, we're always happy to explain or answer questions. Remember, you're playing with other people who are just starting out, too. Let's have fun together!

To help clarify some points in this week's lessons, we've added a Lesson Summary. It describes the same topics from a slightly different angle to the online materials, with additional detail where it seems needed. You can find a link to the Lesson Summary next to the link for the Bidding Commentary on our web site.

-Ed

Advanced topics & background information

Anything in green is background information or more advanced than you need right now. But if you're keen, it's worth knowing.

The Overcalls Table

Here is a duplicate of the table in the Lesson Summary, for your convenience:

Points	Length	Bid
8-15 [1]	5+ trumps	1-level overcall
11-15 [1]	5+ trumps	2-level overcall (not a jump)
5-10	6+ good trumps	Jump overcall
6-9	7 trumps	Double jump overcall (pre-empt)
6-9	8+ trumps	Triple jump overcall (pre-empt)
16-18	Balanced with stopper	1NT immediate overcall (2 nd seat)
11-14	Balanced with stopper	1NT overcall after two passes (4 th seat)
12+	0-2 in doubled suit, 3+ in other suits, no 5-card major	Double (Takeout Double)
16+	6+ trumps	Double then bid suit (Double Then Bid)
18+	5+ trumps	Double then bid suit (Double Then Bid)
19-20	Balanced with stopper	Double then 1NT (no jump)
21-23	Balanced with stopper	Double then 2NT (jump)
24+	Balanced with stopper	Double then 3NT

[1] May have up to 17 points with a 5-card suit, as they need a 6-card suit to Double Then Bid

The Hands

Boards 1-4: Overcalling with 1NT

North East South West

1 ♠ 1NT Pass Pass
Pass

♠ KJ763	
♥ A962	
♦ K8	
♣ Q5	
♠ Q98	♠ A52
♥ J4	♥ KQT8
♦ 7543	♦ QJ96
♣ K862	♣ A3
	♠ T4
	♥ 753
	♦ AT2
	♣ JT974

Board: 1 Dealer: North Lead: ♠T H646

North has 13 points and a 5-card Spade suit, so opens 1S.

East has 16 points so wants to bid. They have enough points to overcall with a suit, but don't have a 5-card suit. They have enough points to double for takeout, but only have 2 Clubs, so can't; partner is bound to bid Clubs! They do, however, have a stop in Spades, so can overcall 1S with 1NT.

The 1NT overcall of a suit (not an overcall of 1NT with a suit!) shows 16-18 points and a stop in the overcalled suit.

South has just 5 points and 2 Spades, so can't support partner and must pass.

West has just 6 points, so can see 22-24 points, not enough to raise partner to 2NT (a game invite). They have a partial stop in Spades and no 5-card suit, so they pass.

North could in principle bid 2H to show their shape, but partner has already passed, it's safer to defend against 1NT.

1NT should make quite easily, making 1 or 2 Spade tricks, 3 Heart tricks, 1 Diamond trick and 2 Club tricks.

East South West North

1 ♥ 1NT Pass 2NT
Pass Pass Pass

♠ KT4	
♥ Q5	
♦ 86542	
♣ K62	
♠ Q9853	♠ 7
♥ T	♥ A98764
♦ QT93	♦ KJ7
♣ 875	♣ AJT
	♠ AJ62
	♥ KJ32
	♦ A
	♣ Q943

Board: 2 Dealer: East Lead: ♠5 H1875

East has 13 points and a 6-card Heart suit, so opens 1H.

South has 15 points so wants to bid. They have enough points to overcall with a suit, but don't have a 5-card suit. They have enough points to double for takeout, but only one Diamond, so can't; partner is bound to bid Diamonds! They do, however, have a stop in Hearts, so can overcall 1H with 1NT - **although one point short!**

The 1NT overcall of a suit (not an overcall of 1NT with a suit!) shows 16-18 points and a stop in the overcalled suit.

West has just 4 points and only one Heart, so can't support partner's bid; they have a 5-card Spade suit, but they're too weak to bid it (2S would promise 10 points). So they pass.

North has 8 points, so can see 24-26 points, not quite enough to raise partner to 3NT (which requires 25 points), so they raise to 2NT (a game invite). This bid asks partner to bid 3NT if they've got the maximum points for their bid: 18 points.

East could in principle rebid 2H to show their 6-card suit, but partner has already passed, it's safer to defend against 2NT.

South doesn't have 18 points, so passes South's invitation to bid 3NT.

2NT is a bit tricky, as you could make 3 or 4 Spade tricks, 2 or 3 Heart tricks, 1 Diamond trick and 1 Club trick depending on finesses and the defence. So 7, 8 or 9 tricks.

South West North East

1 ♣ 1NT Pass Pass
Pass

♠ QT76
♥ Q87432
♦ 72
♣ 2

♠ AJ83 ♠ K542
♥ K5 ♥ JT
♦ KJ95 ♦ T83
♣ KQ9 ♣ J875

♠ 9
♥ A96
♦ AQ64
♣ AT643

West North East South

1 ♠ 1NT Pass Pass
Pass

♠ K752
♥ KQ
♦ K9854
♣ KQ

♠ QT986 ♠ 3
♥ AJ ♥ 98532
♦ AQJ ♦ T6
♣ A32 ♣ T8764

♠ AJ4
♥ T764
♦ 732
♣ J95

Board: 3 Dealer: South Lead: ♥ 4 H2054

South has 14 points and a 5-card Club suit, so opens 1C.

West has 17 points so wants to bid. They have enough points to overcall with a suit, but don't have a 5-card suit. They have enough points to double for takeout, but only have 2 Hearts, so can't; partner is bound to bid Hearts! They do, however, have a stop in Clubs, so can overcall 1C with 1NT.

The 1NT overcall of a suit (not an overcall of 1NT with a suit!) shows 16-18 points and a stop in the overcalled suit.

North has just 4 points and 1 Club, so can't support partner and must pass. (They can't bid 2H, as that would promise 10 points.)

East has just 5 points, so can see 21-23 points, not enough to raise partner to 2NT (a game invite). They have a partial stop in Clubs and no 5-card suit, so they pass.

South could rebid 2C, but partner has already passed, it's safer to defend against 1NT.

1NT should be easy, making 2 or 3 Spade tricks, 1 Heart trick, 2 or 3 Diamond tricks and 2 Club tricks

Board: 4 Dealer: West Lead: ♠ 3 H1728

West has 18 points and a 5-card Spade suit, so opens 1S.

North has 16 points so wants to bid. They have enough points to overcall with their 5-card Diamond suit. They have enough points to double for takeout, but only have 2 Hearts and 2 Clubs, so can't; partner is bound to bid Hearts or Clubs! They do, however, have a stop in Spades, so can overcall 1S with 1NT.

They choose to overcall with 1NT; minor suit contracts earn less, and 2D would require another trick. (Their length in Spades is also less of a liability in NT.) Which bid did you choose?

The 1NT overcall of a suit (not an overcall of 1NT with a suit!) shows 16-18 points and a stop in the overcalled suit.

East has 0 points and just 1 Spade, so can't support partner and must pass. (They can't bid 2H, as that would promise 10 points.)

South has just 6 points, so can see 22-24 points, not enough to raise partner to 2NT (a game invite). They have another stop in Spades, so NT looks fine. They pass.

West could rebid 2S, but partner has already passed, it's safer to defend against 1NT. They have a good hand, 1NT might well go down.

1NT will indeed be tricky, probably making 2 Spade tricks, 1 or 2 Heart tricks, 1 Diamond trick and 2 Club tricks. (As it happens, most of the points are in West's hand, which makes it easier.)

Boards 5-16: Doubling for Takeout & Double Then Bid

North	East	South	West
1♠	Dbl	Pass	2NT
Pass	3NT	Pass	Pass
Pass			

♠ KQJT7
♥ K862
♦ 94
♣ A9

♠ A983
♥ 743
♦ KJ8
♣ QJT

♠ 5
♥ AQJT
♦ AQ52
♣ K872

♠ 642
♥ 95
♦ T763
♣ 6543

Board: 5 Dealer: North H146

East has 16 HCP, a single Spade, and no 5-card suit - an ideal hand to double the 1S opening for takeout.

This double **usually** promises 12+ HCP, a shortage in the doubled suit, and a tolerance for any of the other three suits; a **Takeout Double**. However, partner can also double if they have a strong overcall (16+ points and a long suit); see the [Discussion](#) below.

The double is forcing.

West has 11 HCP and no 4-card suit other than Spades, so they can't respond with a suit. With a stop in Spades, they can bid NT. A response of 1NT would show 6-9 HCP, so they respond with 2NT, showing 10-12 HCP, a balanced hand, and a stop in the doubled suit.

East can see they have 26-28 HCP and one stop in the opponents' suit. They're strong enough to raise to 3NT, although the single stop in Spades plus their Singleton is a worry.

Why should I double with a strong overcall?

To tell partner you've got a strong hand - eventually!

Sometimes you want to overcall AND tell partner you have a good hand. A simple overcall at the one-level like 1H 1S only promises 8 points and a 5-card suit, partner will probably pass with a moderate hand. So with 16+ points and a good 6-card suit, or 18+ points and a good 5-card suit, you should **DOUBLE** before bidding your suit. This is **Double Then Bid**, used to make a strong overcall.

On this hand, East has a strong (16-point) hand but does NOT have a long suit, so they must Double For Takeout. If partner makes a positive response, they can raise to game.

Whenever partner doubles the opponent, you always assume it is a Double For Takeout and bid your longest suit as requested. And when partner passes or raises your suit, you know you were right.

BUT if partner ignores your suit and bids their own, then it wasn't a takeout double after all, it was **Double Then Bid** i.e. a strong overcall in their suit. Double Then Bid promises 16+ HCP and a good 6-card suit, or 18+ HCP and a good 5-card suit. Now you must respond to that strong overcall in partner's suit and forget about the take out that never was: pass if very weak, bid a game invitation or game if strong enough, and so on.

Yes, it's confusing.

East	South	West	North
1♥	Dbl	Pass	2♣
Pass	2♦	Pass	2NT
Pass	3NT	Pass	Pass
Pass			
	♠ 863		
	♥ QT72		
	♦ Q6		
	♣ J653		
♠ J4		♠ A972	
♥ 63		♥ AK984	
♦ 98532		♦ 7	
♣ K872		♣ T94	
	♠ KQT5		
	♥ J5		
	♦ AKJT4		
	♣ AQ		

Board: 6 Dealer: East H2586

South has 20 HCP and a strong 5-card suit. Too strong for a simple overcall of 2D, they want to make a strong overcall by using **Double Then Bid**. They start by doubling 1H, which partner will take as a Takeout Double. (See the [Discussion](#) below for more on Double Then Bid.)

North responds to partner's (presumed) Takeout Double. They only have 5 HCP but are forced to bid. They have a balanced hand and a stop in the opponents' suit, but they're not quite strong enough to bid 1NT (requires 6-9 HCP). So they bid their longest suit; they have a choice between Clubs and Hearts. Normally they would bid the major, but that's been bid by the opponents, so they bid Clubs.

This 2C response promises very little; at least 3 Clubs and 0-8 HCP.

South ignores partner's response (as planned) and bids their long suit, 2D, because their double was NOT a takeout double, it was Double Then Bid (DTB). DTB is a strong overcall, either 16+ HCP and a good 6-card suit, or 18+ HCP and a good 5-card suit.

North can't support Diamonds with just 2 trumps, but does have a stop in the opponent's suit and 5 HCP, so bids 2NT, showing 6-9 HCP and a stop; a slight overbid but worth showing the stop.

South can see at least 27 HCP so raises to 3NT, even though a single stop in the opponents' suit might not be enough. Their J5 might help a bit.

[So that's a Takeout Double, right?](#)

OK, it's confusing enough I'll say it again.

Listen very carefully, I will type this only twice.

You can Double for Takeout but can also use a Double to make a strong overcall: Double Then Bid.

South has a good hand, so they want to tell partner. A simple overcall at the two-level like 1H 2D only promises 11 points and a 5-card suit, partner will probably pass with a moderate hand. So with 16+ points and a good 6-card suit, or 18+ points and a good 5-card suit, East must DOUBLE before bidding their suit. This is **Double Then Bid**, used to make a strong overcall.

So if partner doubles the opponent, you always assume it is a Double For Takeout and bid your longest suit as requested. And when partner passes or raises your suit, you know you were right.

BUT if partner ignores your suit and bids their own, then it wasn't a takeout double after all, it was **Double Then Bid i.e.** a strong overcall in their suit. Double Then Bid promises 16+ HCP and a good 6-card suit, or 18+ HCP and a good 5-card suit. Now you must respond to that strong overcall in partner's suit and forget about the take out that never was: pass if very weak, bid a game invitation or game if strong enough, and so on.

Yes, it's still confusing.

South	West	North	East
1♥	Dbl	Pass	1♠
Pass	1NT	Pass	3NT
Pass	Pass	Pass	

♠ 973
♥ 2
♦ T7642
♣ Q962

♠ Q5	♠ AT64
♥ AQ64	♥ 973
♦ AK83	♦ QJ5
♣ AJ4	♣ 753

♠ KJ82
♥ KJT85
♦ 9
♣ KT8

West North East South

1♥	Dbl	Pass	2♠
Pass	3♠	Pass	4♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	

♠ AK76
♥ QJ
♦ AJ4
♣ 8732

♠ 5	♠ 432
♥ AKT86	♥ 975
♦ QT85	♦ 9732
♣ QJ6	♣ A54

♠ QJT98
♥ 432
♦ K6
♣ KT9

Board: 7 Dealer: South H2726

West has 20 HCP, a stop in the opponents' suit, and no 5-card suit - an ideal hand to overcall with 1NT, but that only promises 16-18 points. So instead they must use Double Then Bid, to show a strong overcall - in NT. They start by doubling 1H, which partner will take as a Takeout Double. (See the [Discussion](#) for Board 6 for more on Double Then Bid.)

East responds to partner's (presumed) Takeout Double. They have 7 HCP and a balanced hand, but no stop in the opponents' suit, so they can't bid 1NT but must show their longest suit by bidding 1S.

This 1S response promises very little; at least 3 Spades and 0-8 HCP.

West ignores partner's response and bids 1NT, the second part of their Double Then Bid. This shows a stop in the doubled suit and 19-20 HCP. Notice that this is not a response to partner's 1S bid.

East can see at least 26 HCP - more than enough for 3NT.

Board: 8 Dealer: West H913

North has 15 HCP, a shortage in the opponents' suit, and no 5-card suit - an ideal hand to double for takeout.

This 1-level double promises 12+ HCP, a shortage in the doubled suit, and a tolerance for any of the other three suits; a **Takeout Double**.

This double is forcing.

South has 9 HCP, a balanced hand and a 5-card Spade suit, so they bid their 5-card major. They jump to show their point count.

This jump response promises 9-12 HCP, does not promise a stop in the doubled suit, and promises at least 3 trumps (although usually 4+).

North can see 24-27 HCP and probably 8+ Spades, so raises 2S to 3S to invite game - although their QJ in Hearts could be worthless.

South has a good 5-card suit and the promised 9 points, just enough to raise to 4S, although it's marginal - did you make 10 tricks?

North might have jumped straight to 4S as they have a good fit and 3 more points than promised, but QJ of Hearts may be wasted (and is).

North	East	South	West
1♦	Dbl	3♦	4♥
Pass	Pass	Pass	

♠ 976
♥ K
♦ AKQJ6
♣ 8743

♠ KT3
♥ AT87
♦ T7
♣ KQ96

♠ AQ85
♥ J964
♦ 5
♣ AJT2

♠ J42
♥ Q532
♦ 98432
♣ 5

Board: 9 Dealer: North H2740

East has 12 HCP, a shortage in the opponents' suit, and no 5-card suit, so doubles for takeout.

This 1-level double promises 12+ HCP, a shortage in the doubled suit, and a tolerance for any of the other three suits (at least 3 cards in each); a **Takeout Double**.

This double is forcing.

West has 12 HCP and a moderate 4-card major, and no stop in Diamonds so they can't bid NT. With 24+ HCP and 3+ Heart support, they jump to game over South's 3D raise.

What if an opponent takes out my partner's double?

An opponent will often raise their partner's suit if you double, to disrupt your bidding - even if quite weak. That 3D jump bid really messed up the bidding for E-W. Well done, South!

After an intervening bid (which "takes out" [cancels] the double), you are no longer forced to respond to your partner's double. So if you do respond (make a **free bid** as it's called) you are promising a reasonable suit and a few points. The higher you have to bid, the better your hand has to be.

West 12 HCP and three 4-card suits to choose from. Ignoring the minor (as usual)...

West's 4H bid is rather questionable:

- If partner has similar support for both majors, wouldn't 4S be a better contract?
- Partner might only have 3 small Hearts.
- What if partner has a Double Then Bid hand, with a long suit in Clubs or Spades and no support for Hearts? You just have to hope they overrule your 4H and bid their suit. Luckily you've got good support for the other suits too!

I think West should bid 3H, not 4H. Their suit isn't long but they do have points; the fact that they've made a free bid shows that they've got points, so partner should bid game with a bit of extra support. Tricky!

East	South	West	North
1♦	Dbl	Pass	2♥
Pass	4♥	Pass	Pass
Pass			
	♠ 8		
	♥ T97643		
	♦ AQ7		
	♣ Q53		
♠ T75432			♠ KQ6
♥ J			♥ K8
♦ J53			♦ KT9842
♣ T97			♣ K8
	♠ A9		
	♥ AQ52		
	♦ 6		
	♣ AJ642		

Board: 10 Dealer: East H2403

South has 16 HCP, a shortage in the opponents' suit, and a 5-card suit. While they could overcall with 2C, there is a much better chance of game if there's a fit in Hearts or Spades, so they double for takeout.

This 1-level double promises 12+ HCP, a shortage in the doubled suit, and a tolerance for any of the other three suits; a **Takeout Double**.

This double is forcing.

North has 8 HCP, an unbalanced hand with a weak 6-card Heart suit. They exaggerate their strength slightly (in light of their 6-card suit) by jumping to 2H.

This jump response promises 9-12 HCP, no stop in the doubled suit, and at least 3 trumps (although usually 4+).

South can see 25-28 HCP and probably 8+ Hearts, so bids 4H with reasonable confidence.

How do I respond to a Double with a good hand?

A Takeout Double forces you to bid (if there's no intervening bid), even with a terrible hand such as a 4-card suit and 0 HCP. So when you have a reasonable hand, don't just bid your suit, **jump** - just like North did on this hand.

South's Singleton Diamond and finessing chances in the other three suits (East opened, so probably has most of the missing Honours) enhance their hand considerably - they're happy to raise 2H to 4H.

North's gamble on overvaluing their hand pays off!

South	West	North	East
1♠	Dbl	2♠	3♥
4♠	5♥	Pass	Pass
Pass			
	♠ A93		
	♥ 876		
	♦ 4		
	♣ T75432		
♠ Q		♠ T64	
♥ AKJ54		♥ QT932	
♦ A83		♦ KJ95	
♣ KQ86		♣ J	
	♠ KJ8752		
	♥		
	♦ QT762		
	♣ A9		

Board: 11 Dealer: South H2563

West has 19 HCP, a shortage in the opponents' suit, and a good 5-major suit. While they could overcall with 2H, that only promises 10-15 points. So instead they use Double Then Bid, to show a strong overcall. They start by doubling 1S, which partner will take as a Takeout Double. (See the [Discussion](#) for Board 6 for more on Double Then Bid.)

East responds to partner's (presumed) Takeout Double. They have 7 HCP and a 5-card major; a decent hand, so they bid 3H over the 2S intervention.

A suit response after an intervention promises 6-9 HCP and a 4-card suit. (You're no longer forced to bid after the intervention; your bid is a **free bid**.)

That was lucky! East has bid West's longest, strongest suit. West can see 25-28 HCP and 9+ Hearts, so bids 5H over the 4S intervention with reasonable confidence.

Why didn't West double 4S?

West could double 4S for penalties. After all, N-S can only have 15 (or less) HCP! However, their length in Hearts and their Singleton Q in Spades suggest N-S probably have enough trumps and shortages to make 4S by cross-ruffing. Shapely hands often perform such better than their HCP suggest.

If you look at the hands, E-W makes 5H (throwing two losing Diamonds on Club winners). N-S can probably make 4S, losing 0 Spades, 0 Hearts, 2-3 Diamonds and 1 Club. (The best defence is to lead a trump at every opportunity, denying Declarer the trumps to ruff Diamonds from Dummy.) If 4S goes down one, doubled, E-W only scores 100 or 200, depending on Vulnerability.

So playing in 5H scores a lot better than 4S doubled.

West	North	East	South
1♦	Dbl	1♠	4♥
Pass	Pass	Pass	
	♠ KT5		
	♥ KJ93		
	♦ K3		
	♣ AT42		
♠ A74		♠ J986	
♥ T65		♥ 2	
♦ AQJ854		♦ T762	
♣ 6		♣ K853	
	♠ Q32		
	♥ AQ874		
	♦ 9		
	♣ QJ97		

Board: 12 Dealer: West H2628

North has 14 HCP, a shortage in the opponents' suit, and no 5-card suit, so doubles for takeout.

This 1-level double promises 12+ HCP, a shortage in the doubled suit, and a tolerance for any of the other three suits; a **Takeout Double**.

This double is forcing.

South has 11 HCP and a 5-card major, so bids a slightly optimistic 4H over the 1S intervention. Partner has only promised 12+ points and 3 Hearts!

North	East	South	West
1 ♣	Pass	Pass	Dbl
2 ♣	Pass	Pass	2 ♥
Pass	3 ♥	Pass	4 ♥
Pass	Pass	Pass	
	♠ AJ9		
	♥ QJ6		
	♦ 5		
	♣ KQJ862		
♠ K8		♠ 752	
♥ AK974		♥ 8532	
♦ AJ93		♦ KQT4	
♣ A5		♣ T4	
	♠ QT643		
	♥ T		
	♦ 8762		
	♣ 973		

Board: 13 Dealer: North H2823

West has 19 HCP, a shortage in the opponents' suit, and a good 5-card suit. Too strong for a simple overcall, they want to make a strong overcall by using **Double Then Bid**. They start by doubling 1C, which partner will take as a Takeout Double. (See the [Discussion](#) for Board 6 for more on Double Then Bid.)

North is strong enough to rebid their long Club suit (they are almost certain to make 6 tricks without help from partner) so they bid 2C. This is a natural bid, but also helps make it harder for the opponents to find a fit.

North's 2C bid has taken out the Takeout Double, so East is no longer forced to bid. With just 5 HCP they pass rather than bid 2D or 2H. (A bid in this situation, when you're not forced to bid, is called a "free" bid and promises 6-9 points and a 4-card suit.)

West is happy enough that East didn't respond, as they weren't doubling for takeout, but to show a strong overcall. They continue by bidding their long suit as planned: 2H.

Phew. This bid by the doubler of their own suit indicates they had doubled to show a strong hand (Double Then Bid) and promises 16+ HCP and a 6-card suit, or 18+ HCP and a 5-card suit, or 19+ HCP with any shape. West's hand is in the third category.

East can now see at least a 4-4 fit in Hearts and 16+5 HCP; they can even add a Shortage Point for their Doubleton, making 22 points. Partner knows they have less than 6 HCP, so their 5+1 points is worth a 3H bid, a Game Invitation.

West has 19 HCP and can rely on partner to have 4-5 HCP from their bid, making 23-24. With a good fit in Hearts, 4H seems a good bet.

East	South	West	North
1♦	Dbl	1♠	2♣
3♦	Pass	Pass	5♣
Pass	Pass	Pass	

	♠ A93		
	♥ 963		
	♦		
	♣ A987632		
♠ KT72		♠ Q85	
♥ K72		♥ JT5	
♦ QT97		♦ AKJ5432	
♣ T4		♣	
	♠ J64		
	♥ AQ84		
	♦ 86		
	♣ KQJ5		

Board: 14 Dealer: East Lead: ♦A H984

East opens 1D under the Rule of 20. (With 11 HCP they're too strong to open 3D, a pre-empt. Just as well, as you haven't met pre-empts yet!)

South has 13 HCP, a shortage in Diamonds, and no 5-card suit. With 3-card support for the unbid suits, it's an ideal hand to double the 1D opening for takeout.

This double **usually** promises 12+ HCP, a shortage in the doubled suit, and a tolerance for any of the other three suits; a **Takeout Double**. However, partner can also double if they have a strong overcall (16+ points and a long suit); see the [Discussion](#) for Board 6.

The double is forcing.

West has 8 HCP and 4-card support for partner's Diamonds. While it's tempting to raise partner's suit, West also has a decent 4-card Spade suit, so bids that instead; if they can find a fit in Spades, a Spade contract should score better than Diamonds.

This bid promises partner 6+ HCP and a 4-card suit. It does NOT deny a fit with partner's minor. It's a change of suit, so it's forcing.

North has 8 points with a decent 7-card suit in Clubs. They're no longer forced to bid - West's intervention has taken out the double - but they want to! So they bid 2C. Partner has promised 3-card support, that's at least 10 trumps; promising.

This bid of a suit after the double has been taken out (a **free bid**) without a jump promises 6-9 points and a 4-card suit.

East hasn't got 4 Spades, so can't support partner's 1S bid, but partner has promised 6 points, and their Diamond suit is really good, so their jump to 3D is justified.

South passes, despite their excellent fit with partner's Clubs. Hmm.

West passes, despite their excellent fit with partner's Diamonds. Hmm.

It's left to North to bid game in 5C without any encouragement from their partner.

This bidding is quite odd!

South	West	North	East
1♥	Dbl	Pass	2♠
Pass	3♠	Pass	4♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	

	♠ 863		
	♥ T63		
	♦ 94		
	♣ AT954		
♠ AQT5		♠ KJ97	
♥ 9		♥ A752	
♦ KQJ72		♦ 63	
♣ Q82		♣ K76	
	♠ 42		
	♥ KQJ84		
	♦ AT85		
	♣ J3		

Board: 15 Dealer: South H2725

West has 14 HCP, a shortage in the opponents' suit, and no 5-card major, so doubles for takeout (ignoring the 5-card minor).

This 1-level double promises 12+ HCP, a shortage in the doubled suit, and a tolerance for any of the other three suits; a **Takeout Double**. Or it could be a strong hand with a long suit - see the [Discussion](#) for Board 6.

This double is forcing.

East has 11 HCP and two decent 4-card majors. To show their 9+ points, they should jump rather than bidding at the lowest level, but which major should they bid? Their opponents have already bid Hearts, DO NOT BID YOUR OPPONENT'S SUIT! So they jump to 2S.

West can see 23+ points and 8+ Spades, not quite enough to bid Game so they raise 2S to 3S as a Game Invitation. ([Although with 2 Shortage Points in Hearts I'd bid 4S.](#))

East has a bit more than they'd promised (2 extra HCP), so they're happy to bid 4S.

West	North	East	South
Pass	1♣	Dbl	Pass
1♥	2♣	3♥	Pass
4♥	Pass	Pass	Pass
<div> <div>♠ QJ6</div> <div>♥ 5</div> <div>♦ AQ4</div> <div>♣ KQ9763</div> </div>			
<div>♠ 85</div> <div>♥ J873</div> <div>♦ 63</div> <div>♣ AT842</div>		<div>♠ AK42</div> <div>♥ AKT94</div> <div>♦ K97</div> <div>♣ J</div>	
<div> <div>♠ T973</div> <div>♥ Q62</div> <div>♦ JT852</div> <div>♣ 5</div> </div>			

Board: 16 Dealer: West H2733

East has 18 HCP, a shortage in the opponents' suit, and a good 5-card suit. Too strong for a simple overcall, they want to make a strong overcall by using **Double Then Bid**. They start by doubling 1C, which partner will take as a Takeout Double. (See the [Discussion](#) for Board 6 for more on Double Then Bid.)

West responds to partner's (presumed) Takeout Double. They have just 5 HCP and a poor 4-card major. They're forced to bid by partner's double. They can't bid 1NT despite their stop in Clubs, as they don't have 6 HCP, so they bid their 4-card suit, 2H.

This minimum level suit bid promises very little; a 3-card suit (usually 4+) and 0-8 HCP.

East has a great fit with West's Hearts – it's the suit they were going to bid! They can see at least 8 Hearts and 18-26 HCP. With so much uncertainty on the point count, they can't bid game straight away, so bid 3H as a game invitation.

This jump raise of Hearts shows a strong hand (4 card support and 16+ HCP); as opener has intervened a raise to 2H would be taken as weak (competitive only).

West has 5 HCP plus 2 points for their doubletons, making at least 23 points. More importantly, they're significantly stronger than the minimum and partner has bid strongly, so they bid a slightly optimistic game, 4H.

Boards 17-32: Pot Luck!

Note: Boards 21-32 do not have a Bidding Commentary.

North	East	South	West
1 ♥	Dbl	Pass	2 ♣
Pass	2 ♦	Pass	2NT
Pass	3NT	Pass	Pass
Pass			
	♠ A972		
	♥ AK984		
	♦ 7		
	♣ T94		
♠ 863		♠ KQT5	
♥ QT72		♥ J5	
♦ Q6		♦ AKJT4	
♣ J653		♣ AQ	
	♠ J4		
	♥ 63		
	♦ 98532		
	♣ K872		

Board: 17 Dealer: North H2586

East has 20 HCP and a strong 5-card suit. Too strong for a simple overcall of 2D, they want to make a strong overcall by using **Double Then Bid**. They start by doubling 1H, which partner will take as a Takeout Double. (See the [Discussion](#) for Board 6 for more on Double Then Bid.)

West responds to partner's (presumed) Takeout Double. They only have 5 HCP but are forced to bid. They have a balanced hand and a stop in the opponents' suit, but they're not quite strong enough to bid 1NT (requires 6-9 HCP). So they bid their longest suit; they have a choice between Clubs and Hearts. Normally they would bid the major, but that's been bid by the opponents, so they bid Clubs.

This 2C response promises very little; at least 3 Clubs and 0-8 HCP!

East ignores partner's response (!) and bids their long suit, 2D, because their double was NOT a takeout double, it was Double Then Bid (DTB). DTB is a strong overcall, either 16+ HCP and a good 6-card suit, or 18+ HCP and a good 5-card suit.

West can't support Diamonds with just 2 trumps, but does have a stop in the opponent's suit and 5 HCP, so bids 2NT, showing 6-9 HCP and a stop; a slight overbid.

East can see at least 27 HCP so raises to 3NT, even though a single stop in the opponents' suit might not be enough. Their J5 might help a bit.

So that Double wasn't a Takeout Double, right?

Correct. If partner doubles and then bids their own suit or NT over your response, it was Double Then Bid, used to make a strong overcall. They have 16+ points (after a suit rebid) or 18+ points (after a NT rebid).

If you don't have a strong overcall, you **MUST** live with the suit that you have forced your partner to bid by making a Takeout Double.

East	South	West	North
Pass	1♦	DbI	Pass
1♠	Pass	1NT	Pass
2♣	Pass	Pass	Pass
	♠ J84		
	♥ Q72		
	♦ 986		
	♣ JT96		
♠ K5			♠ 9763
♥ AK84			♥ T53
♦ AQ74			♦ 5
♣ K73			♣ Q8542
	♠ AQT2		
	♥ J96		
	♦ KJT32		
	♣ A		

Board: 18 Dealer: East H2812

West has 19 HCP, a balanced hand, and two stops in the opponents' suit. They're a bit too strong to just overcall with 1NT (which shows 16-18 points); they want to make a strong overcall by using **Double Then Bid**. They start by doubling 1D, which partner will take as a Takeout Double. (See the [Discussion](#) for Board 6 for more on Double Then Bid.)

This double is forcing.

East responds to partner's (presumed) Takeout Double. They have just 2 HCP, a poor 5-card minor and a poor 4-card major, but they're forced to bid. They bid their horrible 4-card major, 1S, as majors are preferred to minors and this keeps the contract low - assuming West passes the response, as often happens with a Double for Takeout.

This minimum level suit bid promises very little; a 3-card suit (usually 4+) and 0-8 HCP.

West ignores partner's response (!) and rebids 1NT as planned, to show their 19-20 point count.

East bids their second suit, 2C, as a weakness takeout (with no liking for NT and less than 6 HCP). No, it isn't Stayman, as they have already bid Spades!

West passes as there's no chance of game with less than 25 HCP.

Should I pass a NT rebid or show a second suit?

In general, you should only show a second suit over a NT rebid if your hand will play much better in your second suit; partner has already denied support for your first suit, and they have a liking for NT.

I think East should pass rather than bid 2C; West has promised at least one stop in Diamonds, and it's much better to have the weak hand visible as Dummy.

Even if East bids 2C, West should bid 2NT. This will make the weaker hand Dummy, encourage a Diamond lead for a free finesse, and NT contracts score better. If they make!

What do you think?

South	West	North	East
1 ♣	Pass	Pass	Dbl
Pass	1 ♠	Pass	2 ♥
Pass	3 ♥	Pass	4 ♥
Pass	Pass	Pass	
	♠ T953		
	♥ 962		
	♦ 872		
	♣ 532		
♠ J742		♠ AKQ	
♥ KT5		♥ AQJ83	
♦ A64		♦ T93	
♣ 874		♣ QT	
	♠ 86		
	♥ 74		
	♦ KQJ5		
	♣ AKJ96		

Board: 19 Dealer: South H1328

East has 18 HCP and a good 5-card Heart suit. Too strong for a simple overcall, they want to make a strong overcall by using **Double Then Bid**. They start by doubling 1C, which partner will take as a Takeout Double. (See the [Discussion](#) on Board 6 for more on Double Then Bid.)

West responds to partner's (presumed) Takeout Double. They have a balanced hand and 8 HCP, strong enough to bid 1NT (which promises 6-9 HCP) but they haven't got a stop in the doubled suit, so instead they bid their longest suit, 1S.

This 1S response promises very little; at least 3 Spades and 0-8 HCP!

East ignores partner's response (!) and bids their long suit, 2H because their double was NOT a takeout double, it was Double Then Bid (DTB). DTB shows a strong overcall, either 16+ HCP and a good 6-card suit, or 18+ HCP and a good 5-card suit.

West can now see at least a 5-3 fit in Hearts and 16+8 HCP, making 24+ points. So they probably have enough points for game, but in Hearts or in NT? They don't have four Hearts, but KTx is good support and there's a 5:3 fit, so they decide to invite game in Hearts rather than NT.

This 3H Game Invitation promises support for Hearts and 6 HCP; it asks partner to bid game with more than the minimum 16 HCP.

East has 18 HCP, so is happy to bid game, 4H.

West	North	East	South
1 ♠	Dbl	Pass	2 ♥
Pass	3 ♦	Pass	5 ♦
Pass	Pass	Pass	
♠ AKJ5 ♥ A ♦ AQJ96 ♣ Q76			
♠ QT8742		♠ 3	
♥ QT6		♥ KJ92	
♦ 5		♦ T3	
♣ AK2		♣ JT9843	
♠ 96 ♥ 87543 ♦ K8742 ♣ 5			

Board: 20 Dealer: West H2724

North has 21 HCP, and a good 5-card Diamond suit. Too strong for a simple overcall, they want to make a strong overcall by using **Double Then Bid**. They start by doubling 1S, which partner will take as a Takeout Double. (See the [Discussion](#) on Board 6 for more on Double Then Bid.)

South responds to partner's (presumed) Takeout Double. They have just 3 HCP and two 5-card suits. Partner's double forces them to bid their longest suit, but which one? Even though the Diamond suit is better (with an Honour) a major contract is always better than a minor contract – so they bid 2H.

North ignores partner's response (!) and bids their long suit, 3D because their double was NOT a takeout double, it was Double Then Bid (DTB). DTB shows a strong overcall, either 16+ HCP and a good 6-card suit, or 18+ HCP and a good 5-card suit.

So South can see a minimum of 16+3 HCP i.e. 19+. The better news is that they have a 5-5 fit with partner's Diamonds, as well as a singleton and a doubleton – so they can add 3 Shortage Points to that rather unimpressive HCP total, making 22+.

So... is 22+ points enough to bid 5D, bearing in mind you usually need 27+ points for a minor game? South thought so and bid it.

Did you?

There's a time for optimism, but a Game Invitation is more reliable

If you look at the hands, you can see that Declarer makes 5D easily. Indeed, they can make 6D by drawing trumps and cross-ruffing the losing Hearts, Spades, and Clubs – losing just one Club trick by throwing a Club on the fifth Heart. Indeed, if you take the Spade finesse (which is likely to succeed, West ought to have an Honour in their suit), you make 7D.

So is South's 5D bid a good bid? **Not really, they got lucky!** North is a lot stronger than promised by their bids, could have a much weaker hand like this:

♠ QJ
 ♥ AT6
 ♦ AQJT96
 ♣ Q6

This hand has 16 HCP, a shortage in Spades, and a 6-card Diamond suit as promised – but N-S would lose 5 tricks: two Spades, two Hearts and two Clubs!

So I'd say South's 5D bid was quite bad, they should have bid 4D – and even that is fairly optimistic. Of course North would raise to 5D in a heartbeat with 21 HCP, but there is no way that South could know they were that strong. A Game Invitation like 4D is the best bid when you're not reasonably sure of game, when you need partner to have more than the minimum they have promised. Use a Game Invitation to ask them!

North	East	South	West
Pass	1♥	Dbl	Pass
1♠	2♦	4♠	Pass
Pass	Pass		

Board: 21 Dealer: North Lead: ♥K H859
No bidding commentary.

♠ 864	
♥ A7532	
♦ 942	
♣ 65	
♠ JT92	♠ 5
♥ 4	♥ KQJT8
♦ 73	♦ KQ865
♣ JT9732	♣ K8
♠ AKQ73	
♥ 96	
♦ AJT	
♣ AQ4	

East	South	West	North
1♦	Dbl	1♠	2♣
3♦	Pass	Pass	5♣
Pass	Pass	5♦	Dbl
Pass	Pass	Pass	

Board: 22 Dealer: East Lead: ♣K H983
No bidding commentary.

♠ A98	
♥ 976	
♦	
♣ A987632	
♠ KT42	♠ Q53
♥ K32	♥ JT4
♦ QT97	♦ AKJ8542
♣ T4	♣
♠ J76	
♥ AQ85	
♦ 63	
♣ KQJ5	

South	West	North	East
1♦	Dbl	1♠	2♣
3♦	Pass	Pass	5♣
Pass	Pass	Pass	

Board: 23 Dealer: South Lead: ♦A H984
No bidding commentary.

♠ KT72	
♥ K72	
♦ QT97	
♣ T4	
♠ J64	♠ A93
♥ AQ84	♥ 963
♦ 86	♦
♣ KQJ5	♣ A987632
♠ Q85	
♥ JT5	
♦ AKJ5432	
♣	

West North East South

1♦ Dbl 1♥ Pass

1♠ Pass 1NT Pass

2♦ Pass Pass Pass

♠ KQJ9

♥ AT85

♦ 8

♣ AQT6

♠ A8742

♠ T

♥

♥ QJ742

♦ AJ7432

♦ Q65

♣ J9

♣ K853

♠ 653

♥ K963

♦ KT9

♣ 742

Board: 24 Dealer: West Lead: ♠K H1036

No bidding commentary.

North East South West

1♣ Dbl Pass 2♠

Pass 4♠ Pass Pass

Pass

♠ A

♥ 643

♦ J95

♣ AKT854

♠ J7642

♠ KQ53

♥ Q

♥ AK72

♦ AQ7

♦ KT8

♣ Q632

♣ J7

♠ T98

♥ JT985

♦ 6432

♣ 9

Board: 25 Dealer: North Lead: ♣A H1075

No bidding commentary.

East South West North

1♣ Pass Pass Dbl

1♠ 2♦ 3♣ 3♦

Pass Pass Pass

♠ T983

♥ AQ65

♦ AQ73

♣ 4

♠ 764

♠ AKQJ

♥ T83

♥ J42

♦ T84

♦ K

♣ QJ85

♣ AT932

♠ 52

♥ K97

♦ J9652

♣ K76

Board: 26 Dealer: East Lead: ♣Q H1145

No bidding commentary.

South	West	North	East	Board: 27	Dealer: South	Lead: ♦4	H1198
1 ♣	Dbl	1 ♥	Pass	No bidding commentary.			
2NT	Pass	3NT	Pass				
Pass	Pass						
	♠ K43						
	♥ Q975						
	♦ 53						
	♣ KT82						
♠ QT72		♠ J98					
♥ KJT6		♥ 82					
♦ AJ842		♦ T976					
♣		♣ Q965					
	♠ A65						
	♥ A43						
	♦ KQ						
	♣ AJ743						

East	South	West	North
1 ♠	Dbl	2 ♠	Pass
4 ♠	Pass	Pass	Pass

Board: 30 Dealer: East Lead: ♥K H1347
No bidding commentary.

♠ 732
♥ 7542
♦ K98
♣ JT9

♠ T54	♠ AKQ986
♥ AT3	♥ J86
♦ QJT632	♦
♣ 6	♣ A854

♠ J
♥ KQ9
♦ A754
♣ KQ732

South	West	North	East
1 ♠	Dbl	2 ♠	3 ♥
4 ♠	5 ♥	Pass	Pass
Pass			

Board: 31 Dealer: South H2563
No bidding commentary.

♠ A93
♥ 876
♦ 4
♣ T75432

♠ Q	♠ T64
♥ AKJ54	♥ QT932
♦ A83	♦ KJ95
♣ KQ86	♣ J

♠ KJ8752
♥
♦ QT762
♣ A9

West	North	East	South
1 ♦	Dbl	1 ♠	4 ♥
Pass	Pass	Pass	

Board: 32 Dealer: West H2628
No bidding commentary.

♠ KT5
♥ KJ93
♦ K3
♣ AT42

♠ A74	♠ J986
♥ T65	♥ 2
♦ AQJ854	♦ T762
♣ 6	♣ K853

♠ Q32
♥ AQ874
♦ 9
♣ QJ97

Synopsis

Boards 1-16

Now that you're allowed to overcall, some of the bidding sequences include passes - to show when you DIDN'T overcall.

Some of these hands do not support the **Plan the Play** feature of **My Hands** yet, as indicated in the table below.

Subjects:

- NTO = No Trump Overcall (bid a NT contract over opponent's suit)
- DTO = Double for Take Out (ask partner to choose a suit)
- DTB = Double Then Bid (a strong overcall)

Board	Dealer	Bidding	Subject	Hand #	Plan The Play?
1	N	1S, 1NT	NTO	H646	Y
2	E	1H, 1NT, 2NT	NTO	H1875	Y
3	S	1C, 1NT	NTO	H2054	Y
4	W	1S, 1NT	NTO	H1728	Y
5	N	1S, X, 2NT, 3NT	DTO	H146	Y
6	E	1H, X, 2C, 2D, 2NT, 3NT	DTB	H2586	N
7	S	1H, X, 1S, 1NT, 3NT	DTB	H2726	N
8	W	1H, X, 2S, 3S, 4S	DTO	H913	Y
9	N	1D, X, 3D, 4H	DTB	H2740	N
10	E	1D, X, 2H, 4H	DTO	H2403	Y
11	S	1S, X, 2S, 3H, 4S, 5H	DTB	H2563	N
12	W	1D, X, 1S, 4H	DTO	H2628	N
13	N	1C, X, 2C, 2H, 3H, 4H	DTB	H2823	N
14	E	1D, X, 1S, 2C, 3D, 5C	DTO	H984	Y
15	S	1H, X, 2S, 3S, 4S	DTO	H2725	N
16	W	1C, X, 1H, 2C, 3H, 4H	DTB	H2733	N

Boards 17-32

Now that you're allowed to overcall, some of the bidding sequences include passes - to show when you DIDN'T overcall.

Some of these hands do not support the **Plan the Play** feature of **My Hands** yet, as indicated in the table below.

Subjects:

- NTO = No Trump Overcall (bid a NT contract over opponent's suit)
- DTO = Double for Take Out (ask partner to choose a suit)
- DTB = Double Then Bid (a strong overcall)

Board	Dealer	Bidding	Subject	Hand #	Plan The Play?
17	N	1H, X, 2C, 2D, 2NT, 3NT	DTB	H2586	N
18	E	1D, X, 1S, 1NT, 2C	DTB	H2812	N
19	S	1C, X, 1S, 2H, 3H, 4H	DTB	H1328	Y
20	W	1S, X, 2H, 3D, 5D	DTB	H2724	N
21	N	1H, X, P, 1S, 2D, 4S, P, P, P	DTO	H859	Y
22	E	1D, X, 1S, 2C, 3D, P, P, 5C, P, P, 5D, X	DTO	H983	Y
23	S	1D, X, 1S, 2C, 3D, P, P, 5C, P, P, P	DTO	H984	Y
24	W	1D, X, 1H, P, 1S, P, 1NT, P, 2D	DTO	H1036	Y
25	N	1C, X, P, 2S, P, 4S, P, P, P	DTO	H1075	Y
26	E	1C, P, P, X, 1S, 2D, 3C, 3D, P, P, P	DTO	H1145	Y
27	S	1C, X, 1H, P, 2NT, P, 3NT, P, P, P	DTO	H1198	Y
28	W	1H, X, 3H, 4S, 5H, 5S	DTO	H1301	Y
29	N	1C, X, P, 1NT, P, 2NT, P, 3NT, P, P, P	DTO	H1309	Y
30	E	1S, X, 2S, P, 4S	DTO	H1347	Y
31	S	1S, X, 2S, 3H, 4S, 5H	DTB	H2563	N
32	W	1D, X, 1S, 4H	DTO	H2628	N