

Lesson Summary for U3ABDa15: Doubling for Takeout, Double Then Bid & Overcalling with 1NT

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Welcome!

To help clarify some points in this week's lesson, we're giving you this Lesson Summary. It describes the same topics from a slightly different angle and is more portable than videos. We've also included some additional detail where it seems needed.

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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.

Weekly summary

Here's a brief overview of the course so far, week by week:

1. Open a 12-14 point balanced hand with 1NT. Respond according to your points if you don't have a long (5+) major
2. Respond to partner's 1NT opening bid if you have a long major by using a Red Suit Transfer, then rebid according to your length and strength
3. Open a 12-19 point unbalanced hand with one of your longest suit: 1C, 1D, 1H or 1S. Respond to partner's bid according to your points and shape: support a major if you have 4+, bid your own suit or 1NT or pass
4. Open a 15-19 point balanced hand with one of a suit, planning to rebid 1NT (15-16 points), 2NT (17-18 points) or 3NT (19 points). But if partner raises your suit or bids a suit that's a fit you may change your plan – especially if it's a major suit
5. Open a 12-19 point unbalanced hand with one of your longest suit:
With a 6-card suit, plan to bid it again (twice).
With a 5-card suit, plan to bid your second (4+) suit next **if you can**.
With 12-15 points, your second bid should not be a jump or reverse.
With 16-19 points, your second bid should be a jump or reverse.
I say **plan** because partner might pass, or raise your first suit, or bid your second suit, or bid NT giving a point count, or change suit with a jump to show length and strength.
6. When partner opens one of a suit and rebids a second suit without jumping or reversing (showing 12-15 points), you have 4 main options:
ONE: With an 8-card fit in either suit: raise that suit
TWO: Without a fit, but stops in the unbid suits: bid NT
THREE: Without a fit or stops, but your own 6-card suit: bid your suit again
FOUR: Without a fit, stops or 6-card suit: make a preference bid, choose the better fit
Base your response (pass, single raise, jump raise or game) on total points, assuming partner has the minimum 12
7. When partner opens 1NT and you have a 4-card major (or two) and 11+ HCP, respond 2C (Stayman) to ask them to bid their 4-card major, if they have one; a 2D response says they don't. Then, with a 4:4 fit, bid a Game Invitation or Game, depending on total points - assuming partner has 12. With no fit, bid 2NT or 3NT based on total points - assuming partner has 12.

8. Overcalling (1): When an opponent opens one-of-a-suit:

With 8-15 points, a 5-card suit and (ideally) 2 Honours, make a **Suit Overcall** at the one-level. To overcall at the two-level, you need 11-15 points. These are constructive bids, aiming to make a contract. With a longer suit and fewer points, make a **Jump Overcall**, an obstructive bid aiming to stop your opponents.

Raise partner's suit overcall to the **LEVEL OF FIT** regardless of points:

With 3 trumps, raise to 2 ($5+3 = 8$ tricks). With 4 trumps, raise to 3 ($5+4 = 9$ tricks)

With 5 trumps, raise to 4 ($5+5 = 10$ tricks).

You CAN bid your own 5+ suit, but this isn't forcing. If you're strong, force partner to bid with a **Jump**.

9. Overcalling (2):

With 16+ points and a stop in the opponent suit: **Overcall with 1NT or Double Then Bid 2NT or 3NT**

With 12+ HCP and 3-card support for the unbid suits: **Double for Takeout**

With 16+ HCP and a long suit, Double and then bid your suit: **Double Then Bid**

This Week's Lessons – NT Overcalls and Doubles

This week's lessons: NT Overcalls

If you have a strong hand, no long (5+) suit you can bid, and not enough support for the other three suits to Double for Takeout, you may be able to overcall in NT.

To overcall with 1NT you need:

- A stopper in the opponent's suit.
- 16-18 HCP.
- For example: **1S 1NT** shows 16-18 points and a stopper in Spades

With more than 18 points, **DOUBLE** first (which forces partner to bid) and then rebid NT:

- With 19-20 HCP and a stopper: Double then bid NT without a jump (1NT or 2NT)
- With 21-23 HCP and a stopper: Double then bid NT with a jump (2NT or 3NT)
- With 24+ HCP and TWO stoppers: Double then bid 3NT

If you have 11-14 HCP you can overcall with 1NT, but only after 2 passes (in fourth seat). For example:

1C pass pass 1NT shows 11-14 HCP and a stopper in Clubs

This week's lessons: The Takeout Double

Doubles can be used to increase the penalties when contracts go down; upping the stakes. But Doubles of one-of-a-suit opening bids are used for something else. In this lesson you learned about using a **Double** to encourage your partner to bid, usually called a **Takeout Double**.

We will look at Penalty Doubles in the next module of the course.

If an opponent opens with one of a suit and you want to compete but don't have a 5+ suit to overcall with and can't overcall with 1NT, you can make a Takeout Double if you have:

- Shortage (0-2 cards) in the opponent suit
- Opening points (12+)
- Support (at least 3 cards) for the other three suits

These requirements have the helpful acronym **S.O.S.**

If your hand includes a 5-card minor, you would usually make a Takeout Double rather than an overcall, as you're hoping for a fit in a major. If you have a 5-card major, however, you would usually overcall with your major rather than double unless it's too weak (no Honours).

A Takeout Double is a forcing bid. It forces partner to bid their longest suit, even if they have ZERO points and a 3-card suit (they could have four in the doubled suit) they must not pass. If you make a normal (12-15 HCP) Takeout Double, you must be prepared to play in any suit your partner chooses; you won't bid again unless you're strong OR their response shows they are strong.

You can use a Takeout Double immediately after an opponent opens, or after two passes. You can even use it if both opponents have bid different suits, to ask partner to bid one of the two unbid suits.

You cannot use a Takeout Double over a 1NT opening because a double of 1NT is always for penalties (as described in the next module).

You can also double an opponent's opening bid to show you have a strong hand that is too strong for a simple overcall. This Double Then Bid is described in the next section. Partner will treat this other type of double as a Takeout Double until you show them otherwise!

Anyway, back to the Takeout Double...

This week's lessons: Responding to a Takeout Double

If partner doubles the opponent's suit, you must consider this a Takeout Double and respond by bidding your longest suit – with two exceptions, described below. You cannot pass just because you've got a terrible hand!

In general, bid your longest suit, but bid a shorter major in preference to a longer minor. If your longest suit is the doubled suit, you may even have to bid a 3-card suit. **No excuses, you have to bid.**

- With 0-8 HCP, bid your longest suit at the lowest level
- With 9-12 HCP, jump in your longest suit
- With 11+ HCP and a 5-card major or 6-card minor, jump to game
- With 13+ HCP if you are unsure of the best contract, bid the doubled suit! This **CUE BID** asks partner to give you more information. It's a Game Force, so bidding will continue until game is reached.

Partner will probably pass if you don't jump, as you've shown them less than nine points, potentially ZERO! All the other bids suggest game is either likely or certain – although minor games are less likely than major games. If partner is strong enough to carry on, they will bid.

However, if you have a balanced hand, no unbid 4-card major, and a stopper in the doubled suit, you can bid NT:

- With 6-9 HCP bid 1NT
- With 10-12 HCP bid 2NT (a Game Invitation)
- With 13-15 bid 3NT

Partner may pass these bids, depending on their point count – no point raising further if Game isn't on.

Can I pass a Takeout Double?

Sometimes.

You can pass a Takeout Double if an opponent overcalls the Double, taking it out, and you have less than 6 points and a poor shape (no long suit to show partner).

You can pass a Takeout Double if you have enough length in the doubled suit to be SURE it will go down, converting the Takeout Double into a Penalty Double. **This is a very rare hand**, as you must also be reasonably sure that you're not missing a better contract. So, for example, if you have stops in the opponent's suit, you could perhaps bid 1NT; if you have a biddable suit and points outside the doubled suit, you might even miss game by passing.

There is a bit of a trap there. If you pass, converting the Takeout Double into a Penalty Double, but partner's bid was actually Double Then Bid with lots of points, they might not get a chance to bid again and you will miss out on a Game or even a Slam. Still, in that situation, the doubled contract should go down by several tricks, and the penalty points soon mount up.

This week's lessons: Doubler's Rebid

If you have a normal Takeout Double (12-15 HCP) you will typically pass your partner's response UNLESS they jump, as they have shown 0-8 points. If they jump, you should have enough information to choose the final contract.

If you have a strong Takeout Double (more than 15 points), you can raise their suit as a Game Invitation (for them to bid Game if maximum). Or you might have a strong overcall hand – as described in *Double Then Bid*, next.

This week's lessons: Double Then Bid

Not all doubles of an opponent's bid are Takeout Doubles. Yep, there is a second use of the Double, to make a **strong overcall**, but they only learn that it isn't a Takeout Double when you bid your suit, on your second bid. This is **Double Then Bid**.

We have included this bid here because it looks like a Takeout Double, but it's really a strong suit overcall; confusing.

So, Double Then Bid: If you have a long suit and want to overcall, but have good points too, you don't want partner to think that you have a typical, weak-kneed overcall. So instead of overcalling with your suit, you make TWO bids. You start by doubling, which looks like a Takeout Double, but once partner has bid their suit (fingers crossed) you bid

YOUR suit. Partner then realises (fingers still crossed) that it wasn't a Takeout Double after all, surprise! It's a strong overcall. For example:

1H	Opponent opens
DOUBLE	Partner doubles for takeout
PASS	Opponent passes
2C	You bid your longest suit, as requested
PASS	Opponent passes
2S	Surprise! Partner's double wasn't a Takeout Double, it was Double Then Bid

You can use Double Then Bid with three types of strong hand:

- 16+ HCP and a 6+ card suit
- 18+ HCP and a 5+ card suit
- 19+ HCP and any shape

Balanced But Strong? You've already met the NT version of Double Then Bid, where you are too strong to overcall with 1NT, so double and then rebid NT. What, you've forgotten already? It's on the first page, tsk.

Change of Plan? While your plan is to Double and then bid your suit or NT, your partner responds to your Takeout Double That Wasn't. That response might make you change your plan:

- If partner made a negative response (showing 0-8 HCP) your plan is unchanged, as you need more information to decide if game is possible
- If partner made a positive response (showing 9+ HCP) then you are in a Game Forcing situation, as you have at least 25 HCP – you just need to find the right game. Partner will realise that when you rebid your suit, but you might already know enough to bid game or slam, if partner has found a fit or shown a crucial stopper by bidding NT.

This week's lessons: Responding to Double Then Bid

Once you have revealed your secret, your partner has to forget the idea that you made a Takeout Double and re-evaluate! Your second bid isn't forcing, but partner now knows quite a lot about your hand, and is in a good position to choose the final contract, can pass if really weak, make a Game Invitation, or bid game in your suit. Remember, it's a strong overcall.

If you made a positive response to the Double (that wasn't a Takeout Double) then you are in a Game Forcing situation, as you have 9+ HCP and partner has 16+ HCP – you just need to find the right game. Keep bidding until you do.

This week's lessons: Overcalls Table

We've covered all the overcalls you can make when an opponent opens with one of a suit:

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)

Points	Length	Bid
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 bid 1NT (no jump)
21-23	Balanced with stopper	Double then bid 2NT (jump)
24+	Balanced with stopper	Double then bid 3NT

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