

Note: Opponent's bids are in (round brackets)

Review

- Simple Takeout Double
- Negative Double
 - See full note on EBC web page; Learning Materials; Other Full Course Booklets; Intermediate Conventions & More
 - You must agree how high such doubles are negative, above that they become penalty
 - If you agree negative through 3S, then 1H 4D X = penalty double
 - Strength required: If you force partner to bid at
 - 1-level, shows 6+ pts
 - 2-level, shows 8+ pts
 - 3-level, shows 10+ pts
 - 4-level, shows 12+ pts
- Penalty Double : Get more points by defeating the opponents when you are (almost) sure they are going down and more pts achievable by defending than playing the hand

General Guidelines

A double is takeout typically ...

- When there are 2 or more unbid suits
 - 1D P 1S X = 4-4 or better in unbid suits
 - 1S P 3S X = 3+ in all of unbid suits, short in spades, should have 4 hts
- At the 1 or 2 level but it depends on the prior bidding, could also be at 3-level
 - 3H X = this is takeout

Penalty doubles

- Vulnerability is a big factor in the decision to make a penalty double. The best time is when your side is **NVUL** and their side is **VUL**. Setting the contract only 2 tricks (doubled) beats any game score you might have obtained. On the flip side, you **VUL**, they **NVUL**, you need to set their contract 4 tricks doubled to get a better score than your Vul game.

A double is penalty

- **When your partner opens 1NT or RHO overcalls 1NT**
 - 1H 1N X = penalties; 9+ HCPs, your side has balance of power, 1N has 16ish opposite only 3ish, no or at most one entry to dummy
 - 1N 2H X = penalties; your partner is known to have 16ish pts, you have points and some trumps, good time to penalize
 - Perhaps you have S xx H QT9x D A9xx C Kxx

- Partner must have 2+ hts, so declarer is in at most a 7-card fit and getting a bad split (4-2). Your side has $16+9=25$ HCPs, so dummy coming down with only a few pts and short in trumps. You also have the declarer surrounded
- **Your partner has opened and their double has been redoubled.** This XX shows 10+ HCPs and an interest in defending. After the XX, either player is encouraged to double any subsequent bid by their side. Holding a mini-stack (4 cards) is often sufficient to penalize
 - 1H (X) XX 2C P P X holding S Axx H xx D Kxx C KJT9
 - Your side has $(12+11)$ at least 23 HCPs and you have a healthy trump stack (clubs) over the doubler. Consider dummy coming down with AQxx of clubs, guaranteeing the defensive side 3 trump tricks to go with lots of high card tricks
 - Opener should
 - double himself with trump stack
 - bid with a very offensive, poor defensive hand
 - For ex., over 1S by advancer, opener has S x H KQJTxx D KQxx C xx.
 - Stiff spade means they have found a decent fit
 - Hand has lots of tricks on offense, ie in hearts, but very few defensive tricks
 - Otherwise pass and allow partner to consider doubling or bidding on
- **Partner opens with a preempt and opponents enter the auction.** The logic here is opener will tend not to have support for other suits, so no point in responder making a takeout double.
 - 2S (3D) X when you hold S x H Axxx D AQTx C KQxx.
 - Your side has at least half HCPs ($5+15=20$) and opps are in 3-level contract with a bad trump split and several trump losers. You also have shortness in partner's good suit, hence partner should make some defensive spade tricks, or give you ruffs
- **Your side has found a fit, hence no reason to ask for another suit, this double is penalties.**
 - 1S (2C) 2S (3C)
 - P (P) X = penalty; You hold S Jxx H Txx D AJT C KJ9x
 - Your side has $12^+ + 10 = 22^+$ HCPs, opps are at 3-level (usually needs 23 pts), trumps are breaking 4-1, and you have good club cards behind declarer's good clubs
 - Note that open players use a new suit to invite game. Here they could bid 3D or 3H to invite a game so double is available for penalties as described above. Note one exception to above is if no suit available for game try, a maximal game try means a double becomes a game try, not a penalty double
 - ie, 1S (2H) 2S (3H)
 - X = game try, (since no suit below 3S available for game try)
- **When your partner responds 1NT over your minor opener.** When you make a takeout double, you are typically hoping partner has 4+ cards in an unbid suit, and hence will bid that suit. When partner responds in NT over your minor opening, this tends to show a flat hand, and denies a 4-card major. You open 1C or 1D and partner bids 1NT. Partner does not have 4Hts or 4Sps. Hence why would you make a takeout double, hoping partner has 4 cards in one of these suits.

- 1D (P) 1N (2C)
X = must be for penalties, as partner is marked w at most 3 cards in each major, why ask if partner has an unbid 4-card suit ?? Perhaps holding S Ax H Kx D KQTxx C AJTx
- **The bidding is just too high for a takeout to make sense.**
 - (1S) P (4S) X = penalties
 - However, if partner is very offensive, may pull X and bid long suit
- **You could have made a takeout earlier but did not**
 - (1S) P (2S) P
(3S) P (4S) X = penalties;
Consider holding S QJT9x H Axx D xx C xxx (I would suggest double even w QJT9 trumps = 4 trumps)
Opponents have “creeped” to game and you know they are getting a horrible trump split. They won’t have any extra values on this auction and they have to play their 5-3 spade fit with a 5-0 break including 2 (or 3) sure trump losers. Since they have just 25 pts, partner is also marked with about 40-25-(your 7) = 8 HCPs
 - (1D) P (2D) P or (1D) P (2D) P
(3D) X (3D) P (P) X
You could not double at the 1-level, but now wish to do so at the 3-level?? Too risky to ask partner for best suit at 3-level (and he has not bid), so this must be a penalty double. Rare double but must be a big trump stack (D QJT98) and Quick tricks.
- **Common sense 1: your opponents have clearly overbid**, your side has too much for their contract to make sense. Consider...
 - 1H (P) 2C (2S)
P (2N) X = Dear opponents, you are overbidding, I (penalty) double you.
You might be holding S AQTx H xx D xx C AJT9x.
Consider that
 - Your side has 12+11=at least 23 HCPs They are in 2N with 17 HCPs !
 - Opponent has bid 2N (wrongly) because they don’t like spades, and dummies long spades are not coming good, as you have a stack
 - You are behind declarer and partner should be leading a club for you, sitting over declarer’s club holding
 - If 2S bidder tries to rescue to 3S, you have another red card for them, and one level higher.
- **Common sense 2: Could this double make sense as a penalty double?**
 - 1D (1S) P (2S)
X = must be takeout. Would your partner have 6 sure tricks with spades as trumps, with opponents finding at least an 8-card fit?

What do you do if you wish to make a penalty double but cannot because it would be a takeout double?

- Partner opens 1H and your RHO overcalls 2D, they **VUL**, you **NVUL**.
 - You hold S Axx H x D KQJT9 C xxxx
 - You really want to make a “penalty” double because....
 - Your side holds (12+10 = 22+ HCPs), opps are at 2-level
 - You have a monster trump stack **behind** 2D bidder (declarer likely to be = 6 diamonds A87xxx)
 - You have shortness in partner’s suit, which means partner’s high hearts will likely be tricks on defense
 - What can you do? Answer = make a (trap) pass, hoping partner reopens with a double
 - Next player Passes
 - Partner must be short in diamonds, so should bid making a (reopening/takeout) double.
 - Partner’s hand = S Kxx H AQJxx D x C KQxx and she Xs (your heart skips a beat). Pass by 2C bidder. Now PASS by you, licking your chops.
 - You lead the K D and the carnage begins (best to “draw” declarer’s trump so she cannot make some ruffs with low trumps)
 - Defense wins 4Ds, 2Ss, 2Hs, 1C for down 4 = +1100
 - Auction was
 - 1H (2D) P --- trap pass, dieing for a (reopening) X from partner (P)
 - X (P) **PASS** P

Quiz	Answers:	1. T	2. P	3. T	4. P	5. P	6. P	7. P	8. T	9. T	10. P	11. P	12. P
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Quiz

Determine if the double (X) is for takeout (T) or penalty (P)

(Answers are on previous page)

1. (1H) P P X T or P
2. 1D (P) 2N 3C
X T or P
3. 1D (1S) P (2S)
X T or P
4. 1N (2S) X T or P
5. 1C (1N) X T or P
6. 1C (P) 1N (2H)
X T or P
7. 1D (P) 1S (X)
P (3H) X T or P
8. 1D (1S) P (P)
X T or P
9. (1D) 1S (2D) X T or P
10. 1S (2D) X (2N)
X T or P
11. 1H (4C) X T or P
12. 3D (3S) X T or P

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What a Game!!