

SORTING OUT DIFFERENT DOUBLES by Maritha Pottenger

Take-Out Doubles can only be done when **OPPONENT opens the bidding**. They can show 3 suits when only one opponent has opened OR two suits when one opponent opens; partner passes and other opponents (on your right) bids a second suit.

Example: RHO opens 1C—double by you shows diamonds, hearts & spades (or 18+ HCP)
LHO opens 1C; partner passes; RHO bids 1H—double by you shows diamonds and spades.

Negative Doubles can only be made by **Responder**—when partner opens and opponents overalls.

Example: Partner opens 1D; RHO bids 1H—double by you shows four spades (and a second place to play)

Support Doubles can only be made by Opener—you open; LHO passes; partner bids major; RHO bids—a double by you shows EXACTLY 3-card support for partner major (IF you have support doubles on your convention card)

Example: You open 1 club; LHO passes; partner bids 1H; RHO bids 1S—double by you is 3-card heart support.

Responsive Doubles can only be made by Advancer—partner of someone who either makes a take-out double or makes an overcall when Opener and Responder are bidding the SAME SUIT.

Example: LHO opens 1C; partner doubles (take-out); RHO bids 2C—double by you is responsive. You are at least 4-4 in the majors and want partner to pick the suit.

Example: LHO opens 1C; partner overcalls 1S; RHO bids 2C—double by you is responsive. You are at least 5-4 (preferably 5-5) in hearts and diamonds.

Inferential Example: LHO opens 1H; partner doubles (take-out); RHO bids 2H—double by you is responsive FOR THE MINORS. If you had 4 spades, you would have already bid spades yourself, so you are at least 4-4 in the minors and want partner to compete in her longest minor.

Penalty Doubles occur:

- 1) Opponents opens bidding at 4S or higher
- 2) Partner has fully described her hand (e.g., opened a Weak Two bid)
- 3) Direct doubles of opponent's NT opening (unless playing DONT or other artificial system)
- 4) Doubles of NT overcalls (when partner opened bidding)
- 5) Doubles in competition at the 3 Level or higher if not negative or responsive
- 6) After either partner has made a redouble
- 7) After either partner has passed a take-out, negative, or responsive double (thus converting it to penalty), all subsequent doubles are penalty as well

Maximal Competitive Doubles occur only in competition when opponents are bidding the suit directly below your suit. Doubling their suit is a game try. Bidding one more is purely competitive (IF on Conv Card).

Example: 1S by you; 2H by LHO; 2S by partner; 3H by RHO—double is a game try (Maximal Competitive Double). 3S would be purely competitive—do NOT want partner to bid any more.

Reopening Doubles are made by the person in the pass-out (balancing seat). A reopening double is MANDATORY for the Opener if you open; LHO overcalls and it goes pass-pass back to you at the one or 2-level. This is the other half of Negative Doubles. If you are short in the suit that was overcalled, you MUST reopen the bidding with a double. This is like a take-out double (“Bid something, partner!”), but it caters to the possibility that partner is sitting there with lots of cards in the opponent's suit and cannot double because a double by her would have been NEGATIVE. So, you reopen with a double, and she happily passes, thus converting your re-opening (take-out) double to PENALTY.