



The Takeout Double

Due to our very limited bidding vocabulary we have to work with, occasionally a word has to mean several things, depending on the circumstances. The bid “double” is easily the most versatile of all our bridge words. “Double” is often used to inflict penalties on the opponents when they bid too much, or it can be used as “takeout” bid, requesting partner to bid - totally opposite of a “penalty” double which suggests partner to pass. The *takeout double* is normally used by the player directly behind the opening bidder (or at the Takeout Doubler’s *first* opportunity to bid):

	Opener	You	Opponent	Partner
Example 1:	1♥	Double*	2♥	2♠
Example 2:	1♥	Pass	2♥	Double*

***IN BOTH** examples the “Double” is meant to request partner to choose one of the unbid suits. In these examples, since 1♥ was the opening bid, the Takeout Doubler is requesting his partner to bid spades, diamonds or clubs, whichever is his longest suit, with an emphasis on spades. If the responder to the takeout double has equal length in two suits, he should always favor an unbid *major* suit. To carry this principle further, the Takeout Doubler should *always* have support for the unbid major(s). Therefore, the two primary requirements for the Takeout Double are:

1. Shortness in the suit bid, and support for *all* (*I said all!*) the unbid suits!
2. The *equivalent* of an opening bid, counting both high cards *and* distribution

ONCE THE TAKEOUT DOUBLE is made, the Doubler has “told his story” so to speak, and is not required to bid again. Therefore the partner of the Takeout Doubler must assume the role of “captain” and as such take the major bidding role in the auction. Since the primary requirement of the Takeout Double is to guarantee support for the other suits, it stands to reason that following an opening bid of 1♥ by the opponents, a Takeout Double should be similar to:

♠Qxxx ♥x ♦QJxx ♣AKxx	♠KJxx ♥xx ♦AJxx ♣Qxx
♠Axx ♥xx ♦KQxx ♣Axxx	♠A10xx ♥J ♦Qxx ♣KJxxx

Alternative: In the case of a player having a *very good* hand - 18-19 points or more - the Takeout Double can be used, followed by bidding his own suit. *Much stronger hand than a simple overcall!*

Example:	Opener	TO Doubler	Opener’s Partner	TO Doubler’s partner
	1♥	Double	2♥	2♠
	Pass	3♣*		

*In this case, the Takeout Doubler has “doubled” and bid a new suit. This shows a *very good* hand and is a “game try” if partner has even minimum values. *Example:* ♠Ax ♥Ax ♦KJx ♣AQJxxx

Exception: In this auction, had the Takeout Doubler simply raised his partner’s suit response, that is not a *new* suit and only shows slightly more values than his Takeout Double guaranteed.

Responding to the Takeout Double

SINCE THE TAKEOUT DOUBLER has, for the moment, released captaincy of the auction, the responder must be careful not to “underbid” his values. Responses to a takeout double are:

1. With a minimum hand, 0-9, responder simply bids his best suit with emphasis on the unbid major. This does not mean the auction is over, but responder assumes it will end.
2. With a good hand, 10-12, responder must “jump” one level in his best suit, again with strong emphasis on the unbid major if he holds at least four of that suit.
3. With a very good hand, 13-15, responder must drive the partnership to a game. If no easy game bid is available, such as four of the unbid major, a “cue” bid is suggested to buy some time.