

General Rules for Takeout Doubles

If your opponent opens with a suit bid, a double by you promises:

- At least opening-bid strength (12+ pts.)
- Shortness in the suit the opponent opened.
- Support for all unbid suits. Your double forces partner to bid, so you must have at least 3-card length in any suit he will choose. Typical hands for a takeout double of an opponent's 1C opening would be:

♠KJ76 ♥AQ92 ♦KJ4 ♣65
♠Q104 ♥AK84 ♦K10432 ♣8

The exception (not covered in the book): There is one type of hand where you can double without support for all unbid suits. You can start with a double if you have a hand that has one **long** suit and **great** strength (17+ pts.) -- the type of hand where you don't want to risk having partner pass a simple overcall of your suit. Your hand and your suit should be strong enough that you could make game if partner has as little as 4-6 pts. and a fit -- a hand like ♠KJ ♥AQJ1084 ♦AK65 ♣7. To describe this hand, start with a double that forces partner to respond. Then "overrule" partner's choice by freely bidding your heart suit at your next turn.

If the opponent opens 1NT, all the suits are unbid, so a double is **not** for takeout. A double of 1NT is always for **penalty**, showing 18+ pts. **Use this double cautiously.** Even if you have a lot of high-card points, you should avoid making a penalty double unless you have a strong suit to lead.

Responding to Partner's Takeout Double

If partner doubles an opponent's suit bid, you **must** respond **unless**:

- The opponent on your right has also entered the bidding, **OR**
- You have a long, strong holding in the opponent's suit and want to "convert" partner's takeout double to a penalty double.

If the opponents have gotten in your way, responder is allowed to bid again with the 9+ points and the suit bid is not forcing.

Respond your **longest** unbid suit at the **level** that shows your point-count:

- **0-9 pts. (Note you book uses 10 points)** -- Bid your longest suit at the lowest level possible (1H - DBL - Pass - **1S, 2C** or **2D**). or if balanced then
 - **7-10 pts. -- Bid 1NT** if you have good stoppers in the opponent's suit.
- **10 - 12 pts. -- Jump** a level in your longest suit to show strength (1H - DBL - Pass - **2S, 3C** or **3D**), or if balanced then
 - **11-12 pts. -- Jump to 2NT** if you have stoppers in the opponent's suit, but do not have length in an unbid major.
- **12+ (good) pts. -- Jump to game** in your suit or no-trump.

Rebids by the Takeout Doubler

With a Minimum 12-16 points

- responder made the cheapest possible response – pass
- responder jump, pass, raise to invite or bid game, you must decide

With a Medium Hand – 17-18

- Responder made the cheapest possible response – raise one level to invite, game is still possible.
- Responder has jumped, raise to game

With a Maximum hand – 19-21

- Responder has made a cheapest possible response – jump raise
- Responder has jumped, raise to game