

Takeout Double Bridge Convention - Bidding and Responses

bridgebum.com/takeout_double.php

The takeout double is a double that asks partner to bid one of the unbid suits. The double usually shows 11+ points and 3+ cards in each unbid suit. Some basic examples:

South

	West	North	East	South
♠ A532	Pass	Pass	1 ♠	Dbl ¹

♥ KQJ5

♦ AT93

♣ 7

(1) Takeout double, asking partner to bid diamonds, hearts or spades — whichever suit he has the greatest length and strength in.

♠ AQ32

♥ K4

♦ AT973

♣ 72

	West	North	East	South
1 ♠	Pass	1 ♥	Dbl ¹	

(1) Takeout double, asking partner to bid diamonds or spades.

♠ A532

♥ KJT5

♦ 6

♣ KQT3

	West	North	East	South
1 ♦	Pass	1NT	Dbl ¹	

(1) Not for penalty; asks partner to bid clubs, hearts or spades.

Takeout doubles can also be made with strong one-suited hands (16+ points):

♠ AKQ32	West 1 ♣ Pass	North Pass 1 ♥	East Pass Pass	South Dbl ¹ 1 ♠ ²
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♥ A4

♦ KQ3

♣ 752

(1) Takeout double.

(2) A new suit by the doubler shows a strong one-suited hand. However, this is not forcing.

Responses to a Takeout Double

After hearing a takeout double from partner, the following actions are available.

Response	Meaning
Pass	<p>Converts the takeout double into a penalty double. At the one- and two-levels of bidding, Pass shows a very strong trump holding, general values, and no biddable suit. A low-level Pass should never be made on a weak hand that wants to be excused from bidding. It especially should not be made on a weak hand with a handful of little trumps.</p> <p>At higher auction levels, the Pass can be based more on points and/or flat shape.</p>
A "cheapest-level" suit response	Natural, 3+ cards (usually 4+ cards) and 0-9 points. Not forcing.
A jump shift in a suit	Natural, 4+ cards and 10-12 points. Not forcing.
A double jump shift in a suit	In response to a double at the 1-level, this is weak, 6+ card suit and 6-8 points. Not forcing. Note that some partnerships may play this as strong.
A "cheapest-level" no-trump bid	Natural, balanced, 7-10 HCP. Promises a stopper in the enemy suit. Tends to deny a biddable 4-card major.
A jump shift in no-trumps	Natural, balanced, 11-12 HCP. Otherwise, see above.

3NT Balanced with a stopper in the opponents' suit(s), signoff. Opposite a 1-level takeout double, this shows roughly 13-15 HCP.

Cue-bid 10+ points, artificial and forcing. Typically unbalanced without a better alternative bid. Some may play this stronger, showing a game-forcing 12+ points. Doubler's rebids are natural.

Ranges vary slightly by partnership, but this is in the ballpark of common practice.

Responses After Interference

If your right-hand opponent bids over partner's double, then any "free" bid shows 6+ points and at least a 4-card suit. If the takeout double is redoubled, all bids are natural but jump suit bids become preemptive, showing at least 5 cards and 0-8 points.

How high to play takeout doubles is a matter of partnership agreement. Many partnerships play takeout doubles through the 3-level, and then "optional" or penalty doubles beyond that.

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