

# Doubles, Doubles and More Doubles

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# Outline

- Types of Doubles: Penalty, Takeout, Negative, Support, Responsive, Maximal, Balancing, Rosenkranz, Snapdragon, Lead-Directing (artificial bid, Lightner, 3NT), DSI (Do Something Intelligent), 1C/1NT (DONT, Meckwell, Mathe)
- Takeaways:
  - 1) deciding which doubles you and your partner wish to employ
  - 2) clarifying the meaning of some ambiguous doubles (responsive, 1nt interference, 3nt, etc.)
  - 3) clarifying when the double is “on”, particularly support and maximal
  - 4) understanding what the opponents are doing and how to cope
  - 5) recognizing the downsides (misunderstandings, helping the opponents, or being forced to defend a doubled contract that you didn’t intend.



# Penalty Doubles

- **The only double that is not a convention**
  - Invokes the original meaning of a double – they are going down and I want it to count double (or more)
  - Since then, bidding has evolved such that double almost NEVER means that
- **When is it NOT**
  - Most low-level doubles
  - Most doubles when the opponents have a fit and/or plenty of points
- **When it is a Penalty Double**
  - 1NT opener, if not conventional
  - Their 1NT overcall
  - If agreed to, then a double of their bid after partner opens 1NT
  - After your side redoubled their takeout double
  - An overcall after partner's preempt
  - A double of their competitive game bid or any sacrifice bid
  - When no other meaning is possible



# Takeout and Negative Doubles

- **The Takeout Double**

- Tends to show opening values and support for all unbid suits
- Exceptions include:
  - Hands that are good enough to bid again over partner's minimum response
  - Hands that are short in clubs or diamonds, if you agree to equal level conversion
- Takeout doubles are meant to be taken out
  - Do not pass because you are weak; only pass because you have a VERY good holding in the opponent's suit

- **The Negative Double**

- Much like a takeout double, but made by the responder. (e.g., 1C-1H-X)
- Generally made on a hand that is not strong enough to bid or doesn't have enough length to bid. If there is one unbid major, it promises at least four.
- Always shows at least four of at least one unbid suit; tends to be major-oriented

- **The Responsive Double**

- Made in "response" to partner's takeout double or overcall
- Generally shows both majors or both minors (if the Os are bidding a major)



# Specialized Doubles

- **Support**
  - Shows exactly three-card support for a suit that partner promised four (or 5?)
  - Usually applies ANYTIME partner has promised four and the Os bid.
  - Up to a certain level. Need to agree if it applies over 2S or a 3-level bid
- **Maximal**
  - Shows game invitational values when there is no space to do so otherwise
  - After 1H-2D-2H-3D, a 3H bid is merely competitive. X is a game try.
- **Rosenkranz**
  - Shows “Honor-third” in a suit in which partner has overcalled
  - Bidding partner’s suit shows three or four without a high honor
- **Snapdragon**
  - When three suits have been bid (two by Os; one by P), a double shows the fourth suit WITH tolerance for partner’s suit
  - Bidding the fourth suit denies support of at least honor-doubleton



# Other Doubles

- **Balancing**
  - Almost any low-level double in the passout seat
  - Says that you do not want to sell out and asks P to bid their longest suit
  - May be very aggressive in matchpoints, less so in IMPs (especially vulnerable)
  - May suggest certain distributions, where 2NT was an alternative choice
- **DSI (Do Something Intelligent)**
  - Shows values that have not yet been revealed and no clear action
  - As the name suggests, it asks partner to do what looks right, including passing
  - Example from a Bridge Bulletin bidding quiz: You hold Qx AKQT9 xxx AJx. The auction has gone: 1D-1H-P-1S-2D. Double to show extras and no clear action.
- **Conventional Doubles of 1NT or a Big Club**
  - Meckwell
  - DONT
  - Mathe



# Lead-Directing Doubles

- **Artificial Bids**
  - Transfers
  - Stayman
  - Cue Bids
  - Blackwood/RKC/Gerber responses
  - Flannery 2D (although there are alternative uses if you and partner agree)
- **Lightner Double**
  - Unusual Lead
  - Not Partner's suit; not trumps
  - Dummy's first bid suit
  - Doubler's void
- **Double of 3NT**
  - Dummy's first bid suit
  - Partner's suit
  - Spades (or hearts)



# Auctions for Discussion

- 1C-X-1H-X
- 1C-1S-1NT-X
- 1C-1NT-X
- 1H-P-2H-P-P-X
- 1S-P-2S-P-P-X
- 1S-P-2S-P-P-2NT
- 1H-1S-2H-X
- 1NT-P-3NT-X
- 1NT-P-2C-P-2H-P-3NT-X
- 1H-2C-2H-3C-X





# Suggestions

- **Discuss many of these doubles with your partners:**
  - Which will you play?
  - When are they “ON”?
  - What do they mean?
  - What does your redouble of their double mean in many situations?
- **Sample Support doubles discussion:**
  - How high (1C-P-1S-3D)? Risk/reward isn't clearly in favor
  - On if partner has shown five (1C-1H-1S-2D)?
  - On over all interference (1C-P-1H-1NT)?

