

Takeout Doubles

After the opponents open, holding a good hand which does not qualify for an overcall, your side may be able to enter the bidding with a *takeout double*. A double of an opening bid of a suit asks partner to “take it out” by bidding an unbid suit or, in less common cases NT. The doubler must be prepared for any suit partner bids. Requirements:

A double of one of a suit requires 11-18 points with 3+ cards in unbid suits and no more than 2 cards in Opener’s suit; or any 16+ hand with a 6-card or longer suit; or any balanced with 19+ points.

Responses to a Takeout Double

If your partner makes a takeout double and your right-hand opponent passes, you must respond even with no points¹—if you pass, the doubled bid would become the final contract. You may bid any unbid four-card or longer suit (including jump bids). Usually you will bid your longest suit, although you should prefer to bid a 4 card suit major suit over a 5-card minor. Your response also shows your strength. Since you are required to bid with nothing, you jump with 9+ to 12 points; you should bid game with 13 points or more:

Points	Response	Forcing?
0 to 9-	Cheapest Level	No
9+ to 12	Jump	No
13 or more	Bid Game	N/A

With 8+ HCP, no 4-card Major and at least one stopper in Opener’s suit, you may respond with NT. However, always favor bidding a 4-card Major over NT.

Points	Stoppers	Response	Forcing?
0 to 7	0 to 1	cheapest level suit	No
8 to 10	1	1 NT	No
11 to 12	1 ½	2 NT	No
13 or more	1 ½	3 NT	N/A

¹ In extremely rare cases, when you hold a strong and long holding in Opener’s suit, you may choose to convert the TOX to a penalty X.

Quiz 2

Assume your right-hand opponent opens the bidding one diamond. Fill in your call.

	Your Hand	Call		Your Hand	Call
1.	♠ AKJ7 ♥ A963 ♦ 42 ♣ T83		2.	♠ 2 ♥ AJ9 ♦ T984 ♣ KJT52	
3.	♠ KT2 ♥ AQ942 ♦ T52 ♣ 76		4.	♠ QJ8 ♥ A94 ♦ AJ8 ♣ KQ97	

Assume the opening bid is one heart, partner makes a takeout double (TOX), and your right-hand opponent passes. What is your call?

	Your Hand	Call		Your Hand	Call
5.	♠ 86 ♥ 9862 ♦ QT3 ♣ JT84		6.	♠ KQ96 ♥ A63 ♦ 64 ♣ JT64	
7.	♠ 762 ♥ QJ86 ♦ AT2 ♣ T84		8.	♠ AJ974 ♥ AQ32 ♦ 2 ♣ 872	