

DOUBLES and OVERCALLS

No Trump Doubles at least the same number of HCP as opener.

Therefore, if opener's range for a 1NT opener is 12-14 HCP, a double shows at least 14 HCP.

Overcalls of 1NT at least a six card suit and 10-13 HCP.

If partner doubles an opening bid of 1NT, treat it as a 1NT opener in the 14-16 HCP range and bid accordingly.

Suit Doubles There are two types of doubles in a suit contract,

- 1) At least 17 HCP
- 2) Takeout double (all doubles of a suit contract are assumed to be for takeout until we know differently).

If partner doubles, telling us to bid our longest suit at the appropriate level, AND then he introduces a new suit, we are being told he has the (at least) 17 HCP type of double.

Responses to takeout doubles are 0-7 HCP bid longest suit at lowest level

..... 8 HCP or more, jump in longest suit.

Do not worry if you have zero, or very few HCP, Bid your suit, that's all partner is asking (at this stage).

In general, a low level double is only passed if the doubler's partner is absolutely certain the contract is going to be defeated.

In general, doubles under 3NT (with one notable exclusion*) are negative doubles, and doubles over 3NT are penalty (sometimes called positive) doubles.

*If you open 1NT, opposition overcall and then partner doubles, this is for penalties and you should not bid again.

Suit overcalls In general, at least a five card suit in the 8 to 16 HCP range. (Remember, if you had 17 HCP you would have doubled first).

So to overcall, you need either a good suit, OR good points (ideally both would be nice, but is not necessary for the overcall).

Overcalling an Overcall if the opposition overcall our partner and we want to bid a suit, we can use the opponent's bid against them

e.g. 1C (1H). If we have the appropriate number of points to reply to partner and a five card suit, we can bid it here 1S. This promises a minimum of 6 HCP and a minimum of five spades (why five? because we have overcalled an overcall, and just as an overcall promises at least a five card suit, so do we).

What would happen if we want to bid 1S, but we only have four of them? we double! (A good term for this sequence is thinking of it as a major suit double).

1C (1S) Double (major suit double ... I was wanting to bid 1H, but can't because of the intervention).

To overcall with a 1NT bid, you are promising 15-16 HCP, and ideally two stoppers in the suit bid. (Again, remember, if you had 17 HCP you would have doubled first).

Sometimes with a balanced hand in the 12-14 HCP range it is impossible to either overcall or double, we have to accept that and just defend to our best ability.

If the opposition double our 1NT opening bid, it does not affect our bidding, and we can use all our normal bids over No Trump openings, such as Stayman etc it also gives us an option of a redouble if we think our partner can make seven tricks. (Remember a final contract of 1NT redoubled, if successful, is the equivalent of a game bid).

N.B. Remember, a takeout double is used when we don't have a long suit (of at least five cards) of our own to make an overcall.