

DEFENSE AGAINST DISCIPLINED WEAK TWO BIDS

A disciplined weak two bid is defined as promising a good six-card suit and at least 6 HCP. See section 12-9 for defense against "undisciplined" weak two bids.

A takeout double must be slightly stronger than a minimum for a one-level double. A double of one major practically guarantees at least four cards in the other major, unless the doubler is quite strong. Even then, three cards is a minimum holding for an unbid major. A double of 2♦ should have at least seven cards in the majors, at least four in each if the double is a little light.

A direct 2NT overcall shows 16-18 HCP. With a single stopper one might want more than 16 HCP, and 19 HCP would not be too much. Partner raises to 3NT with 9 HCP or so. If he passes with 8 HCP and you miss a game, that's life. You can't do everything.

A 2NT overcall in the reopening position can be a little lighter, but not much. Third hand could be loaded, just waiting to double something. Besides, partner won't know what to do with 9 HCP if you bid 2NT with anything from 14 to 19 HCP.

After a 2NT overcall, use the same conventions and treatments as for a 2NT opening. A 3♣ bid is always Stayman, while a transfer acts like a cue bid, implying first or second round control and slam interest. With conventions "on," the normal cue bid is not available.

With too big a hand for a 2NT overcall, double and then bid 3NT. A 2NT bid after doubling would not be interpreted as too big a hand for a 2NT overcall (although the range should be higher, say 17-19 HCP):

South	West	North	East
2♦	Dbl	Pass	2♠
Pass	2NT		

This sequence implies a hand with 3-4 in the majors, maybe a single diamond stopper, and 17-19 HCP. Just pass 2♠ with less (or bid 2NT instead of doubling).

South	West	North	East
2♥	Dbl	Pass	2♠
Pass	2NT		

Here too, East implies three-card spade support and only a single heart stopper: ♠AQ3 ♥K4 ♦A876 ♣KJ54

Since you can double and then bid notrump with a big hand, a 3NT overcall tends to be based on a solid minor. Don't "gamble" with this bid in the direct position. Bid 3♦ with ♠K3 ♥J4 ♦AKQ873 ♣432, even over a weak 2♠ bid. You could bid 3NT in the balancing position, knowing partner probably has a couple of high cards (but not enough to hang you with a slam bid).

When making a suit overcall of a weak two bid, you assume partner has 7 HCP or so. The converse is that responder generally passes with 7 HCP or less and no good ruffing potential. It also follows that you must make a jump overcall if an ace and a queen, or two kings, in partner's hand will produce game.

A cue bid overcall of a weak two bid is a strong bid that is often based on a two-suited hand. Overcall 2♠ with 3♠ holding ♠4 ♥AK1087 ♦8 ♣AQJ873. If partner bids diamonds, you bid 4♥, implying a two suited hand with hearts/clubs. Don't cue bid with a hand weaker than this. Just overcall in one of the suits and hope to bid the other later. A cue bid can also be based on a very strong three-suited hand.

A jump cue bid shows a game-going hand in a major, too strong for a mere jump to game:

South	West	North	East
2♥	4♥	Pass	5♣ -cue bid in support of spades
Pass	6♠		

East has ♠J♥8732 ♦10843 ♣AJ92, West ♠AKQ10843 ♥void ♦A92 ♣KQ6. A jump to 4♠ over 2♥ would not do the hand justice. East would have passed and missed a slam. A jump to game in a major should usually have no more than nine playing tricks. This one has 9-1/2, with first or second round control of every suit.

A jump cue bid of 4♠ over a 2♠ opening would be very unlikely, since overcaller would need close to eleven tricks.

A jump cue bid of 4♦ over a 2♦ opening is ambiguous, since overcaller could have either hearts or spades. Advancer can bid 4NT (regular Blackwood) or cue bid a minor as a slam try only if ready to play in either major. A 4♠ bid is not a cue bid. It implies slam interest if overcaller's suit is hearts, but not otherwise.

When Third Hand Bids a New Suit

Partners of weak two bidders often psych a major suit response, so a double of such a takeout is for business if it is forcing::

South	West	North	East
2♥	Pass	2♠	Dbl - business if 2♠ is forcing
			3♥ - takeout if 2♠ is forcing

The double shows a 2♠ overcall. If East has a 3♠ overcall he should bid 3♠ rather than double, because the double is a limit call. The reason is shown by this auction:

South	West	North	East
2♥	Pass	2♠	Dbl
Pass	Pass	4♥	?

If East had values for a 3♠ bid, he can't show that now.

If the major suit response is not forcing (which must be Alerted), then a psych is much less likely to a double is takeout, showing both minors, and a cue bid in one of the opposing suits shows a stopper (Telling Cue Bid), implying that partner should bid 3NT with the other suit stopped.

A double of a minor suit response is for takeout:

South	West	North	East
2♠	Pass	3♣	Dbl - takeout

With 5-5 or better a 4♣ cue bid would be preferable if the hand is strong enough. A cue bid in opener's suit (3♠, in this case) is a Telling Cue Bid," showing a stopper and suggesting that partner bid 3NT with the other suit stopped (♠A4 ♥A9 ♦AKQ874 ♣972).

When Third Seat Bids Over a Double

South	West	North	East
2♥	Dbl	2♠	?

If East has four or more spades, North's bid is almost certainly a psych. East should double if she was going to bid 2♠ willingly (i.e., possessing 6-8 HCP or so). If she was going to jump to 3♠, she now bids 3♠, following the policy of ignoring the opposing bid except for possibly doubling it. A double is therefore a limit call, denying the values for a 3♠ or 4♠ bid. If you double with a wide range of HCPs and suit length, you and partner may be doing some guessing if the bidding goes like this:

South	West	North	East
2♥	Dbl	2♠	Dbl
Pass	Pass	5♥!	

Similarly, a bid by the doubler in a new major that was bid over the double is natural, whether or not it has been doubled:

South	West	North	East
2♦	Dbl	2♥	Pass/Dbl
3♦	3♥ - natural, not forcing		

These considerations do not apply when the suit involved is a minor:

South	West	North	East
2♥	Dbl	3♣	4♣ - forcing cue bid

East has first round control of clubs and a strong hand. A double would be for business.

When third hand raises, a double should be played as a Responsive Double or a Positive Double (section 9-1).

South	West	North	East
2♠	Dbl	3♠	Dbl - Takeout

The double should say, "This is our hand, but I'm not confident that I can make 4♥."