



# Adventures in Bridge

Leaders in Bridge Entertainment and Education

[www.advinbridge.com](http://www.advinbridge.com)

info@advinbridge.com ♠ 850 570 6459

## Doubles Early in the Bidding – Takeout and Negative

©AiB

Robert S. Todd

[robert@advinbridge.com](mailto:robert@advinbridge.com)

### General Overview of Doubles

Double is probably the most useful call in all of bridge, other than pass.

The modern way to think about a double is very different than it was years ago. The modern way to think about doubles is flexible:

“I have enough values to take some action, but I’m not sure what other action to take!”

### The Basic Types of Doubles

Each of the players can make a basic type of double.

- *Takeout Double (Interferer – The first opponent to enter the auction.)*
  - Values to get into the auction (about 12+ points – depending on level of double and shape of the hand), but still looking for a fit (or the best fit).
  - 3-card support for all the unbid suits and shortness in the opponent’s suit.
  - Do we do so with 4333? - Location of honors affects decision.
  - What about with 5-4 in majors and a 1-minor opening? - Again, location of honors.
  - Compare a takeout double to an overcall that may not promise as many values but suggests a place to play – a primary suit.
- *Negative Double (Responder)*
  - Values to compete in the bidding (6+ points – more values depending on level of double), but still looking for a fit OR a “better fit” – Major suit fit over a minor suit fit.
  - Prefer a Freebid, showing length and values, no a negative double.
  - Negative Double is a good fallback plan – “Enough values to take some action, but no other good action”.
  - Usually two places to play – Responder has a plan for how to handle the auction.
    - Both unbid suits.
    - Unbid Major and partner’s minor.
    - Unbid Major and NT.
    - 1-long suit, but not enough to make a Freebid.

Subscribe to This Week in Bridge – FREE weekly Bridge email lesson!

[www.advinbridge.com](http://www.advinbridge.com)



## Doubles and Fits

Doubles mean different things in different situations. Here are two of the most important situations:

- *When we have not found a fit.*
  - A double is generally a takeout double (asking partner to bid) at low levels. It says, “I want to compete, but I need input from you as to where to play.”
- *When we have found a fit!*
  - After we have found a fit, we have the option of just bidding our suit to compete. Thus, a double becomes less “takeout” and more of a “card-showing” double. Cooperative.
  - Maximal Double when no space for game try.
  - When we have found a fit and the opponents bid our side suit, we do not double for penalty at a low level. Leave them there and hope partner reopens with a double.

## General Competitive Bidding Philosophies – Get in to the Auction Early

- *In and Out of the Auction* -- With weak or distributional hands we want to get in to the auction and out of the auction as quickly as possible. Thus, if we bid slowly (i.e. make an overcall and then later reopen with a double) then we must have an extremely strong hand – since we are violating this idea by “going slow”. Even stronger hands are shown by suppressing a long suit and “doubling and bidding”.
- *Protect Partner* - Do not give partner a chance to make a mistake. With a highly distributional hand do not make a low-level double. Also, if you are too short in trump for it to be wise for partner to pass your double (if you know the opponents are protected by the LOTT) then do not make a low-level double.
- *Balancing* - When we are in the passout seat (balancing seat) and our side has not bid yet, then we generally bid three of partner’s points for him (and he subtracts those from his hand if he ends up bidding again). This is true for making a takeout double as well. With shortness in the opponent’s suit and about 10 HCP we strive to compete in the bidding (even with a good 9 HCP with the proper shape and a decent hand for both offense and defense).