Conventional Doubles

A Dummy's Guide

(…because you probably will be dummy!)

Main Idea

- Penalty double not needed at low levels (usually), which frees double for conventional purposes

- Allows bidder to distinguish between four-card and five-card holdings

- Forces partner to make the big decisions (where to play, what level)

- Different kinds of doubles:
  - Takeout
  - Support
  - Big hands

Takeout Doubles

- Four cards in at least one major
  - With 5 cards, you can bid the suit directly
  - If opponents are bidding both majors, then you should have both minors
  - Should be short in Opponents' suit (opinions vary) – Negative Double
- Some points:
  - Partner has bid: **6+ HCP** (over one level bids), **8+ HCP** (over two level bids)
  - Partner has not bid, neither have you: **12+ HCP** (opening strength)
  - Partner has not bid, you have passed before: **10+ HCP**
    - Do not do this if opponents have bid past 2♢
- Special case:
  - 1♣ – (1♢) – __:
    - X: 4-4 in the majors
    - 1♡/1♠: 4+ cards in that suit

Support Doubles

- Exactly three cards in Partner's suit ($\heartsuit$ or $\spadesuit$) IFF Partner has only promised four cards

- Don't make support doubles if Partner has to go to the three level to rebid her suit!

- Does not promise extra strength

- Support redoubles also exist!

- Alertable bid by Partner

- Ex:
  - $1\clubsuit - (P) - 1\heartsuit* - (2\diamondsuit)$
    - $X*$

  *4 cards in $\heartsuit$

  *3 cards in $\heartsuit$

1$\heartsuit$

Interference

Big Hand Doubles

- Typical overcalls (=bidding over opponents) require 8-16 HCP

- If stronger? Double first, then rebid your suit

- Ex:

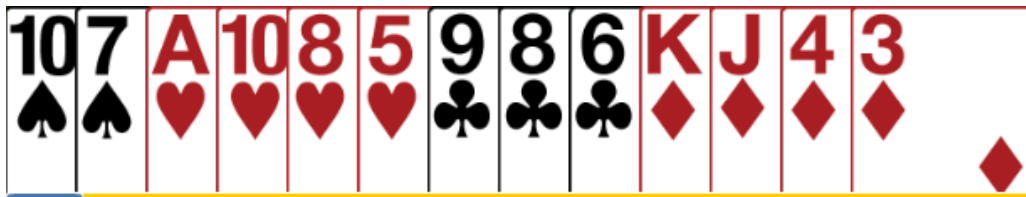# Partner opens 1♣ (or not). What if opponent overcalls with 1♢? 1♡? 2♢?

Q 10 9 3 ♠ A 9 6 2 ♡ Q J 6 ♣ 5 4 ♢

K J 6 5 ♠ K Q 9 ♡ 8 4 2 ♣ K 4 2 ♢

10 7 ♠ A 10 8 5 ♡ 9 8 6 ♣ K J 4 3 ♢

A 9 5 ♠ 7 4 ♡ Q 10 9 7 4 3 ♣ 8 5 ♢

A 10 7 2 ♡ J 10 8 5 4 ♠ K J 6 3 ♢

J 9 5 ♠ A Q 9 ♡ A 6 5 ♣ K 10 6 5 ♢

Partner opens 1♣ (or not). What if opponent overcalls with 1◇? 1♡? 2◇?

Hand 1: ♠ Q 10 9 3 ♡ A 9 6 2 ♣ Q J 6 ◇ 5 4

1◇: X
1♡: X or 1NT (because of length in ♡)
2◇: X

Pass, but double next time

Hand 2: ♠ K J 6 5 ♡ K Q 9 8 4 2 ♣ K 4 2 ◇ (K...)

1◇: X
1♡: X
2◇: X or 2NT (because of ◇ stopper)

1◇: X
1♡: X
2◇: Pass

Hand 3: ♠ 10 7 ♡ A 10 8 5 ♣ 9 8 6 ◇ K J 4 3

1◇: 1♡
1♡: 1NT
2◇: Pass …

Pass

Hand 4: ♠ A 9 5 7 4 ♡ Q 10 9 7 4 3 ♣ 8 5 ◇ (...)
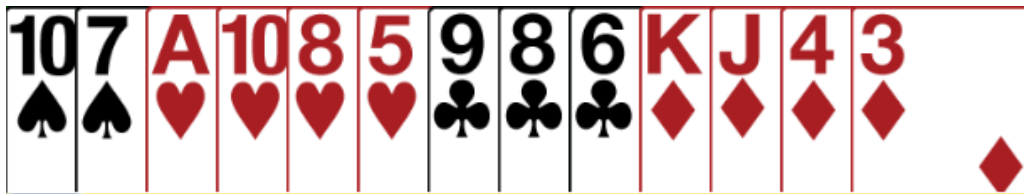
1◇: 3♣ (preemptive)
1♡: 3♣ (preemptive)
2◇: Pass (don't preempt over a preempt!)

Hand 5: ♠ A 10 7 2 ♡ J 10 8 5 4 ♠ 4 ♣ K J 6 3 ◇

1◇: 1♠ (can still find ♡-fit later)
1♡: 1♠
2◇: X (best way to find ♡-fit)

Pass, but double next time

Hand 6: ♠ J 9 5 ♡ A Q 9 ♣ A 6 5 ◇ K 10 6 5

1◇: 3NT
1♡: 3NT
2◇: 3NT

1◇: Pass
1♡: Pass
2◇: Pass