

Strong Takeout Doubles – A double at your first turn to make a call is normally for takeout *i.e.*, asking partner to bid. There are really two kinds of Takeout Doubles. Those made with a minimum hand of 11 to 14 hcp, and those made with a maximum hand of 18 hcp or better. A minimum hand makes a Takeout Double with the intent to pass on the next turn to make a call. A maximum hand makes a Takeout Double with the intent to rebid to further define the hand.

Takeout Double (Minimum Hand) – You normally make a takeout double showing about an opening hand of 11 to 14 hcp (2 defensive tricks), shortness in the opening bid suit (at most a doubleton) and 3-card support for all unbid suits (at least Jxx).

Takeout Double (Maximum Hand) – You can also make a takeout double as a forcing bid to describe a larger hand of 18 hcp (good 17 hcp) or better. You would make this takeout double with the intent to rebid and further define your hand.

With a maximum hand, after making a takeout double, you would rebid to show one of three kinds of hand:

1) A one suited hand.

Example 1: Holding ♠A6 ♥AKJ975 ♦AQ6 ♣83 (18 hcp) you would make a takeout double of 1♣, 1♦, or 1♠ and then rebid some number of ♥. This shows a very good hand with a very good suit.

2) A hand too strong for a 1Nt overcall.

Example 2: Holding ♠KQ84 ♥KJ3 ♦AQ6 ♣A83 (19 hcp) you would make a takeout double of any opening bid and rebid some number of notrump. This shows a balanced hand with 19+ hcp (playing that a 1Nt overcall shows 15 to 18 hcp).

3) The values of an “old fashion” game forcing cue-bid.

Example 3: Holding ♠AKQJ97 ♥K6 ♦AQJ4 ♣8 (20 hcp) you would double an opening bid of 1♣ and rebid some number of ♣ as a cue bid.



When making Takeout Doubles be careful not to rebid the same values. Once you define your hand, if you rebid the same values, partner will never get it right.

Hands That Don't Fit – So what do you do with a hand that does not fit the Mini or Maxi Takeout Double? For example you could have a hand that is ♠A ♥A5432 ♦AK432 ♣32 (15 hcp). This hand has too many points to make a minimum hand takeout double and too few to make a maximum hand takeout double. In addition, this hand has two 5-card suits ♥A5432 and ♦AK432 ... how would you describe this hand if you start with a Takeout Double?

With hands that do not fit the Mini or Maxi you bid to describe the hand. You bid the suits to show shape and to the level to describe the strength. With two suits you bid the first and rebid the second, as needed, to describe the hand.