

Doubles, Doubles, and Doubles

By Neil H. Timm

The back of the General Convention Card (GCC) contains a section entitled **SPECIAL DOUBLES**. In this Bridge Bit, we review each of the terms listed.

Negative Double: Responder's double after partner opens the bidding and RHO makes a natural overcall in a suit, not NT. It allows the responder to take an action with many hands that lack the strength or suit length to make a natural bid. Many play these doubles through only 3♠; however, experts have no limit since the opponents may be trying to steal a bid at the 5-level!

Responsive Double: A double used for takeout after partner has made a takeout double or a simple suit (not NT) overcall, and right-hand opponent has raised the suit bid by opener. Example: Bid, takeout double, bid, responsive double. Usually played only through 2♠s. All players who use responsive doubles use them after a takeout double, but not all players use them when partner's first bid is an overcall to show the other two suits.

Support Double/Redouble: The use of a double of an enemy suit bid to show three card support for partner's suit. Example: 1♦ Pass 1♥ 2♣ double. The double shows 3-card support for hearts. A bid of 2♥s shows four-card support. Usually played through 2♥s, not 2♠s.

Minimum Off-shape Take-out Double: Usually requires 12-14 points and 4333 distributions; something like ♠KQ2 ♥AQ54 ♦K98 ♣765 when not vulnerable after an opening 1♣ bid. Or, perhaps holding: ♠AJ109 ♥Q105 ♦K43 ♣QJ2, vulnerable after a second seat 1♦ opening bid on your right.

Cooperative Double: Also called Competitive Doubles. Double of a low level suit contract (usually 2, not 3) after partner has already bid or doubled, shows values necessary to compete but no clear-cut bid.

Maximal Double: A double of a three level bid that asks partner to bid game; example: 1♠ 2♥ 2♠ 3♥ X=maximal double. The double asks partner to bid 3♠ with a minimum and 4♠ with a maximum. If you merely compete by bidding 3♠, partner may take the bid as only competitive.

Card-showing doubles is another way of saying Do Something Intelligent. In general, unless there is a partnership rule stating that a double is for penalties, then it is not for penalties.

Snapdragon Doubles, Rosenkrantz Doubles & Re-Doubles, and Equal Level Conversion Doubles with Hess Cue bids are discussed on my web site www.bridgewebs.com/ocala.