

Negative Doubles

updated by Harry 10/1/19

- What to do when your pard opens one of a suit and right hand opponent overcalls? Say your hand contains some strength with length in unbid suits.
- *Double* conveys message to pard, asking pard to bid (not pass) again.
- Emphasis is on any unbid major or majors – looking for the golden fit.
- How much strength does pard need to make a negative double?
 - 6+ points for a one level negative double. Suggests the hand likely belongs to us
 - 8+ points for a two-level negative double. The hand belongs to us.
 - 10+ points for a three-level negative double. The hand belongs to us and we may have a game or slam.
- Examples
 - 1C 1H X shows 4 spades and tolerance for diamonds with minimum of 6 points.
 - 1D 1S X shows hearts and tolerance for clubs with 8+ points.
 - 1D 2S X shows hearts and tolerance for clubs with 10+ points.

- How high in the bidding does negative double apply? You need pard's agreement on that (see convention card below). Some play negative doubles through 2S others through 3S. Put another way, decide with your pard at what level a double should be for penalty (a positive double).
- Pay attention to neg doubles when they are used or not used against you. Lots of clues for you on bidding and defense!
- What if you cannot make a negative double? For example, you do not have support for major(s) but would like to get into the auction.
 - With 9+support points, it's okay to bid a new suit at the two-level.
 - With support for partners suit and 6 to 10 points raise pard to the two-level.
 - With 12+ support points cue bid the opponents' suit (GF).
- What if you cannot make a negative double (no support for major[s]) and opponents' overcall has been at the two-level? For example, your pard opens one club and LHO overcalls two spades.

Note that agreement on this convention card is to play negative doubles through two spades. Many players agree on three spades as the threshold.

Marty Bergen recommends higher than that, say through five diamonds! You need to discuss this with partner.

SPECIAL DOUBLES

After Overcall: Penalty _____

Negative thru 2S _____ ←

Responsive : thru 2S _____ Maximal

Support: Dbl. thru 2S _____ Redbl

Card-showing Min. Offshape T/O
