

## SHAPE can be vital for a TAKEOUT DOUBLE.

Takeout doubles have a wide range. The lower the high card values, the more important it is to have the right shape. Takeout doubles can be grouped into three zones:

**Type A:** Minimum hands, normally about 12-15 points.

**Type B:** Medium hands. These are in the 16-18 range.

**Type C:** Maximum hands, 19 points or more.

**There are no shape requirements for a Type C double.** Double followed by a **NO-TRUMP** rebid after partner's weak reply shows 19+ balanced:

| <i>West</i> | <i>North</i> | <i>East</i> | <i>South</i> |
|-------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|
| 1D          | X            | Pass        | 1S           |
| Pass        | 1NT          |             |              |

**You can expect North to have 19-21 balanced and a stopper in diamonds.**

The same applies to North in this sequence:

| <i>West</i> | <i>North</i> | <i>East</i> | <i>South</i> |
|-------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|
| 1H          | X            | Pass        | 2C           |
| Pass        | 2NT          |             |              |

- With 15-17 points, balanced, and a stopper in their suit, North would have overcalled 1NT immediately.
- With 12-15 points, North should not take a second action as partner's weak reply shows a hand below 10 points. To double and bid again opposite a weak hand shows strength.
- To double and bid no-trumps opposite weakness shows 19+ points.

**If you double and rebid with a jump-bid in a SUIT, you are showing 19+ points and usually about a 4-loser hand:**

| <i>West</i> | <i>North</i> | <i>East</i> | <i>South</i> |
|-------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|
| 1D          | X            | Pass        | 1S           |
| Pass        | 3H           |             |              |

- Expect North to have 5 hearts, 19+ points and a 4-loser hand.
- As South's reply has not promised any strength at all and North is bidding for nine tricks opposite perhaps nothing useful, North should not have more than 4 losers.

Likewise:

| <i>West</i> | <i>North</i> | <i>East</i> | <i>South</i> |
|-------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|
| 1D          | Double       | Pass        | 1S           |
| Pass        | 3S           |             |              |

- North will have 4+ spades, 19+ points, around 4 losers. It can be a touch less if North has 5+ support for spades.
- Again South has promised nothing and as North is bidding for nine tricks without assistance, it should be based on a 4-loser hand.
- With one certain high card trick or some useful ruffing potential, South should bid game.

***The double-and-jump-raise and double-and-jump-shift after a weak reply are not forcing.***

Highly encouraging, but droppable. ***If you want to force partner to make another bid, you need to bid the enemy suit:***

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| 1D   | X     | Pass | 1S    |
| Pass | 2D    |      |       |

- North might have a hand worth game but not sure in which denomination or North might have just 19+ points and also no clear direction.
- A useful agreement here is for South to rebid 2S with a terrible hand without promising more spades, while other rebids are natural and show some values.

**In Type B hands:** the 16-18 point double has *modest shape requirements*.

- You may double with this strength on any shape other than a hand worth a 1NT overcall or if long and strong in their suit.
- If the hand fits, bid 1NT. Do not double.
- The takeout double ranges from 10 to 20+ and can be balanced, semi-balanced or unbalanced, while the 1NT overcall has a narrow range (15-17) and the shape is also limited.
- **Type B is shown by** doubling and bidding again after a weak reply, whether it is double-and-new-suit or double-and-raise.

| West | North  | East | South |
|------|--------|------|-------|
| 1D   | Double | Pass | 1S    |
| Pass | 2H/2S  |      |       |

In each case, North's strength should be around 16-18 points and about five losers. Double-and-new-suit shows a 5+ suit.

**Type A:** When doubling with a minimum hand (below 16 points), ***there are two vital shape components:***

- (1) The shortest suit in your hand should be the enemy suit.
- (2) You should have 3+ card support for any unbid suit.

***If either of these shape requirements is missing, the double is flawed and you should choose some other action. Often pass is the best move.***

|      |  |
|------|--|
| AJ72 | RHO opens. <i>When would you double with this hand?</i>                      |
| K964 | <b>Only after a 1C opening.</b> Then you have the shortage in their suit and |
| KJ7  | support (4cards) or tolerance (3 cards) in the unbid suits.                  |
| J2   | <i>After a 1D, 1H or 1S on your right, <u>Pass</u>.</i>                      |

- With nothing special in terms of shape, minimum for the takeout double is 12 points.
- With classical shape, you can double with fewer points.
- The classical shapes are the three-suiters, 4-4-4-1 and 5-4-4-0 with shortage in the enemy suit.
- By all means double with a 4-4-4-1 and 11+ HCP, or with a 5-4-4-0 and 9+ HCP.