

# The Maximal Double

aka Maximum Overcall Double

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The basis of this bid revolves around a competitive bidding scenario where opener usually bids one of a major. The Left Hand Opponent (LHO) makes a sequential overcall. Responder can no longer distinguish between a bad raise with support holding perhaps 4-7 HCP or a constructive raise with support showing 8-10 Evaluation Points (EP). Responder does however raise the opener.

In the following example, South is the dealer.

South	West	North	East
1♥	2♦	2♥	3♦

The basis for this type of bidding decision falls in line with the idea that raises in competition are NOT forward going. Therefore, if South bids 3♥ it should not be construed as having interest in game. This is where the Maximal Double comes into play. When the bidding space runs out in a competitive auction, the Maximal Double allows you to keep bidding with clarity so that you do not have to concede the auction to the opponents.

3♥ indicates a desire to sign off in a partscore

Double is an invitation to game showing 16+ HCP

The bidding would look like this:

South	West	North	East
1♥	2♦	2♥	3♦
3♥ (Minimum values)			

or

South	West	North	East
1♥	2♦	2♥	3♦

X (Extra values asking partner to bid game with a constructive raise)

There is a rare instance where all of North's values happen to be in the opponent's suit (in this case ♦) and North might choose to convert the Maximum Double to a penalty double; this is RARE.

Consider the following example:

South	West	North	East
1♠	2♥	2♠	3♥

3♠

In this example South has no interest in game. If, however the bidding proceeds as follows, South has 16+ EP and would like partner to bid game with 8-10 HCP. It should be clear by now that if North had a limit raise, they would cuebid.

South	West	North	East
1♠	2♥	2♠	3♥
X			

The South hand in this example would look something like this:

♠KQ876  
♥6  
♦AQ43  
♣KJ8

The advantages of the Maximal Double as opposed to some other game try:

Partner can pass with a good hand and 2 tricks in the opponents suit thereby converting the double to penalty

Responder understands that opener shows extra values (at least a King extra) and should bid game with a constructive raise

Failure to make a Maximal Double is perceived as a signoff

Most often the bidding space does not allow for any other kind of invitation to game

Example: South is the Dealer.

NORTH	
♠ KJ86	
♥ 1073	
♦ 1085	
♣ KQ5	
WEST	EAST
♠ A72	♠ Q1094
♥ Q86	♥ 52
♦ KQ632	♦ AJ74
♣ 64	♣ 1032
SOUTH	
♠ 53	
♥ AKJ94	
♦ 9	
♣ AJ987	

South is the dealer and opens the bidding with 1♥.

South	West	North	East
1♥	2♦	2♥	3♦
X			

South has made Maximal Double showing extra values. South's hand grows to 17 EP with distribution. North should bid 4♥.