

# Uncommon Doubles – Pt 1

## Improve Your Bidding

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Many players use takeout, negative, penalty, support, responsive and other doubles. But there are many uncommon doubles available for your consideration. Some alter the meaning of an existing treatment, but most expand the hand types covered, allowing you to double more often. See prior articles on [Rosenkranz Doubles](#) and [Equal Level Conversion Doubles](#).

### Highest Unbid Suit Negative Double

Most use negative doubles holding unbid suits, but what can be done with a hand like this one?

1♦ – 2♣;

♠AQxxxx ♥xxx ♦xx ♣xx

This treatment allows a negative double holding 6-9 HCP and a decent six card holding in the highest unbid suit. The auction continues as opener shows a 4 card heart suit.

1♦ – 2♣; DBL – Pass

2♥ – Pass; 2♠ (ALERT)

The only caution is to not bid 4♥ with less than 2 cards in the highest unbid suit. Holding ♠x ♥AKxx ♦AKQxxx ♣Kx, opener should temporize with 3♣ followed by 3N if partner bids 3♠.

### Maximal Double

Many use this double when there is no bidding room other than raising partner. See Mick's article [March 2021](#))

1♦ – 1♥; 1♠ – 3♥; ?

Opener competes with 3♠ and invites a spade game by doubling. For those who play support doubles through 2♥, there is higher frequency to use the double above 2♥ for stronger hands rather than for penalties.

In the auctions below, bidding 3♣, 3♦ or 3♥ competes and DBL invites game.

1♦ – 1♠; DBL – 2♠; ?

1♦ – P; 1♥ – 2♠; ?

### Invitational Double

When the opponents bid at the two level over partner's 1N, double can be used to invite where there is no agreement, such as doubling 2♣ for majors. This double does not promise four cards in the unbid major(s).

1N – 2♠; ?

With a minimum opener bids 2N or three of a minor but with a maximum bids 3♥ (4 hearts), 3♠ without a stopper or 3N. This occurs more often than a penalty or negative double. It works well with Lebensohl or [Transfer Lebensohl](#).

### Walsh Double

This is one of several conventions named after local expert Richard Walsh.

1 minor – 1♥; ?

The Walsh Double shows 6-9 and fewer than four spades, while 1♠ promises four or more spades. The loss of doubling to show a five card spade suit is a reasonable tradeoff considering how else you might show the following hands.

♠xx ♥Qxx ♦QJxx ♣KJxx

♠x ♥xxx ♦Axxxxx ♣Kxx

♠Kx ♥xxxx ♦Kxxx ♣Jxx

### Lead Directing Double

Most players use a Lightner Double to ask partner to yield a ruff against a slam contract. There is some debate as to whether you also need an outside Ace.

Many players have not agreed what the following doubles mean.

1N – P; 3N – DBL

1N – 2♠; 3N – DBL

1N – P; 2♦ – P; 2♥ – P; 3N – P; P – DBL

On the first hand, some request a lead in a specific suit (e.g. spades), the shortest major, partner's suit or in an unexpected suit. I like the specific suit. On the second hand does double ask for partner to lead his/her suit or not? Here I prefer the lead of the shortest major, not partner's suit. On last hand doubler neither bid 2♠ nor doubled 2♦, so double should ask for a club lead.

Doubling a splinter bid often does not help the defense, so some experts recommend that double should ask for the lead of the suit below the splinter excluding the trump suit.

Uncommon Doubles involve advanced treatments. Be sure to mark your convention card and alert properly. Thoroughly discuss applicable auctions, including passed hand bids, before playing these treatments with your regular partner.

Next month Part 2 will explore five more uncommon doubles. ♣