

Good bidding is the result of clear partnership agreements and bidding according to your agreements. Trust your partner and listen to them .

# THE BONES OF BIDDING

## Negative Doubles

YOUR PARTNERSHIP IS ON A QUEST TO FIND A MAJOR SUIT FIT.

1. Negative doubles are a tool to help you combat an opponent's overcall. Your partner opens in one suit, your opponent overcalls in another, and you then double to show the other two unbid suits.

|            |      |           |     |            |
|------------|------|-----------|-----|------------|
| Pard<br>1♣ |      | Opp<br>1♠ |     | You<br>dbl |
| 104        | KQ74 | QJ63      | 984 |            |

Your double shows hearts and diamonds,  
the two unbid suits.

2. Negative doubles are part of the quest for a major suit fit.

|              |  |           |   |  |   |  |   |  |   |  |             |
|--------------|--|-----------|---|--|---|--|---|--|---|--|-------------|
| <u>NORTH</u> |  |           |   |  |   |  |   |  |   |  |             |
| ♠ A Q J 9 8  |  |           |   |  |   |  |   |  |   |  |             |
| ♥ Q 7 6      |  |           |   |  |   |  |   |  |   |  |             |
| ♦ 6          |  |           |   |  |   |  |   |  |   |  |             |
| ♣ A 8 6 3    |  |           |   |  |   |  |   |  |   |  |             |
| Dealer: West |  |           |   |  |   |  |   |  |   |  |             |
| <u>WEST</u>  | <table border="1" style="border-collapse: collapse; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W</td><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">S</td><td></td></tr> </table> |           | N |  | W |  | E |  | S |  | <u>EAST</u> |
|              | N  |           |   |  |   |  |   |  |   |  |             |
| W            |  | E         |   |  |   |  |   |  |   |  |             |
|              | S  |           |   |  |   |  |   |  |   |  |             |
| ♠ K 7 4      |  | ♠ 5 2     |   |  |   |  |   |  |   |  |             |
| ♥ A J 5 4    |  | ♥ K1032   |   |  |   |  |   |  |   |  |             |
| ♦ K Q 8 2    |  | ♦ 9 5 3   |   |  |   |  |   |  |   |  |             |
| ♣ 7 4        |  | ♣ A 9 7 2 |   |  |   |  |   |  |   |  |             |

After West opens 1 diamond and North overcalls 1 spade, East would be stuck if there were no negative doubles. He doesn't have enough points to bid at the two level (10 or more). What's more, a bid of 2 hearts would show a 5-card heart suit.

Negative doubles come to the rescue. East will just bid "double," and his partner knows he has hearts and clubs, the two unbid suits.

3. Negative doubles are a bidding convention, like Stayman or Jacoby Transfers. They don't mean exactly what they say. Literally, the bid of "double" would mean that you want to defend and that you expect to set the opponent.

But a negative double doesn't mean you want to defend, and it doesn't mean that you think you can set them. It just means that you have the other two unbid suits.

Negative doubles are so widely played that players expect your double in this circumstance to be a negative double. In fact, the Laws of Contract Bridge call for an "Alert!" of any double of this kind that is not a negative double.

Negative doubles themselves are not alerted.

4. The point requirements for a negative double are a very wide range. Your promise only a minimum of 6 HCP, but you could have 16 HCP, or even more. There is no upper limit.

Partner will always assume that your negative double shows just 6 to 9 points. So if that is all you have, you need to nothing more.

|      |     |     |
|------|-----|-----|
| Pard | Opp | You |
| 1♣   | 1♠  | dbl |

104 KQ74 QJ63 984  
Your double shows hearts and diamonds,  
the two unbid suits.

If partner next bids 2 hearts, showing that he too has four hearts, you may just pass. You have only the 6 to 9 points that partner is expecting.

If you have more than 6 to 9 points, you simply bid again.

|      |  |     |  |     |
|------|--|-----|--|-----|
| Pard |  | Opp |  | You |
| 1♣   |  | 1♠  |  | dbl |

104 KQ74 QJ63 QJ8

This time you have 11 HCP's, more than partner expects.

If partner next bids 2 hearts, you need to raise to 3 hearts, showing invitational values.

If your hand was even stronger, maybe like this:

A4 KQ74 QJ63 QJ8

then, after you make the negative double and partner bids 2 hearts, you would jump to 4 hearts, showing that you have enough points to bid game.

5. Sometimes you want to make a negative double, but your hand is not quite perfect to do it. The negative double may still be okay.

|      |  |     |  |     |
|------|--|-----|--|-----|
| Pard |  | Opp |  | You |
| 1♣   |  | 1♠  |  | dbl |

104 KQ74 984 QJ63

Your double shows hearts and diamonds, the two unbid suits. But you don't have diamonds, and you do have clubs.

If partner next bids 2 hearts, you pass. Perfect!

If partner next bids 2 clubs, you pass. That's just fine!

But if partner next bids 2 diamonds, you will need to bid 3 clubs. Partner will know that you had hearts and clubs instead of hearts and diamonds.

The important part is this:

Even though you may not have the right minor suit holding, you always **MUST** have the right major suit holding. You must always have 4 cards in the major suit that you are promising.

## 6. Sometimes you don't have either of the minors, but your major suit may have 5 or more cards:

|      |     |     |
|------|-----|-----|
| Pard | Opp | You |
| 1 ♣  | 1 ♠ | dbl |

104 KQ7643 Q84 63

Your double shows hearts and diamonds, the two unbid suits. But instead you have a long major.

If partner next bids 2 hearts, you pass. Perfect!

If partner next bids 2 clubs or 2 diamonds, you bid 2 hearts. Now partner will know you have extra length in the major, and he will know you have less than 10 points.

You could not bid 2 hearts over 2 spades because you don't have the 10 points necessary to bid at the 2 level. Thanks to the negative double, you can still bid your suit; you just have to double first to limit your points.

## 7. Negative doubles can show both of the majors:

|      |     |     |
|------|-----|-----|
| Pard | Opp | You |
| 1 ♣  | 1 ♦ | dbl |

A1042 KJ76 984 63

Your double shows hearts and spades, the two unbid suits.

## 8. Negative doubles can let you clarify the length of your spade suit right away:

|      |     |     |
|------|-----|-----|
| Pard | Opp | You |
| 1 ♣  | 1 ♥ | dbl |

A1042 976 K J84 63

Your double shows exactly 4 spades.

|      |     |     |
|------|-----|-----|
| Pard | Opp | You |
| 1 ♣  | 1 ♥ | 1 ♠ |

A10942 97 K J84 63

Your bid shows 5 spades, because with only four you negative double.