

Doubles x 4

a) Penalty Double

A double of 1NT is always a penalty double.

e.g. N E S W
1NT -----Double----- P -----P

The doubler will usually have 16+ pts but not necessarily a balanced hand.

e.g. N E S W
1NT -----Double----- P -----P
Kx
KQJxxx
AKx
xx

East doubles *because* they have 16 pts. They could of course overcall in Hearts but it is best to show the strength of the hand with a double. Later, possibly East will bid their hearts.

e.g. N E S W
1NT -----Double----- ? -----P
xxx
xx
Qxx
Qxxxx

After the double both South and West may wish to remove the double with very weak hands.

A weak takeout call of 2C is best here. NB the bid suggests a 5 card suit and few pts.

e.g. N E S W
1NT -----Double----- P -----?
xxx
Qx
Jxxxx
xxx

It is debatable but .. the partner of the doubler can also remove the double with a very weak hand and a 5+ card suit. Here 2D is a sensible bid.

Penalty Double of a suit contract.

e.g. N E S W
1H ----- P -----3H-----P
4H-----P-----P-----Dble.
Axx
KQ10x
Axx
xxx

Here 4H was freely bid. The doubler will usually have high cards *and* long trumps. The double will of course reveal to the declarer that you hold long trumps and will often help declarer to know how to play the hand and so such doubles should only be made when you are very sure of your ground.

e.g. N E S W
1S-----2H-----3S-----4H
4S-----5H-----P-----P
Dble
AKxxx
xx
KQJx
Kx

Here 5H sounds like a *sacrifice* bid. ie the opponents have bid the contract to stop you making 4Sp. No doubt the contract will be close to making but is likely to go off. It is reasonable to double with high cards without trump tricks. North expects to take at least two tricks (in the A sp + K di) and would hope partner would take a trick or two too.