

Week 2 — The big double, both opponents bid, balancing

Doubling and then bidding again shows 18+; when both opponents bid, double shows the unbid suits; in the balancing seat, subtract three points. (*Cohen, Mar–May 2022*)

Rules card

1. **Big double:** with 18+ total points, double with *any* shape, then bid again (your suit, notrump or a raise). Not forcing.
2. Double, then 1NT = about 18–20 balanced with their suit stopped (more than a 1NT overcall).
3. **Both opponents bid** (e.g. 1♣–P–1♥–?): double = takeout, showing the two unbid suits. After they bid and raise, double a little light.
4. **Balancing seat** (your pass ends the auction): subtract 3. Double with about 9+; 1NT is about 10–14.

What's your call?

#	Auction	Your hand	Answer	Why
1	RHO 1♦	♠ A K J 8 7 ♥ A Q 4 ♦ 5 ♣ A Q 6 2	Double, then bid spades	20 HCP: too strong to overcall
2	RHO 1♣	♠ A Q 5 ♥ K J 4 ♦ A Q 10 3 ♣ K J 8	Double, then 1NT	20 balanced: shows 18–20
3	RHO 1♥	♠ A 3 ♥ 8 4 2 ♦ A K J 10 8 6 ♣ K 7	2♦	15 HCP: a normal overcall
4	1♣ – P – 1♥ – ?	♠ K Q 8 4 ♥ 5 3 ♦ A J 9 6 2 ♣ K 7	Double	Shows spades and diamonds
5	1♥ – P – 2♥ – ?	♠ Q 10 7 3 ♥ 4 ♦ K 9 6 2 ♣ A 8 5 3	Double	Light, but don't sell out to 2♥
6	1♥ – P – P – ?	♠ K 10 8 4 ♥ 7 3 ♦ A 9 6 3 ♣ Q 10 5	Double	9 HCP is enough when balancing
7	1♦ – P – P – ?	♠ K Q 5 ♥ A 10 2 ♦ K 9 3 ♣ J 8 7 4	1NT	Balancing range about 10–14

Takeaway: Doubling and then bidding again shows a big hand; if you can't afford a second bid, you need the shape.

Week 2 — Full deals (Boards 5–6)

Full deals (★ = the hand the lesson is about)

Board 5 · Dealer North · Vul N–S

		North · 7 HCP		
		♠ Q 9 3		
		♥ J 8 6 5 3 2		
		♦ J 7		
		♣ K 3		
West · 0 HCP	Dealer North Vul N–S		East · 13 HCP	
♠ 5 2		♠ 10 6 4		
♥ 10 7		♥ K 9		
♦ 9 4 3 2		♦ A K Q 10 8 6		
♣ 10 9 8 7 4		♣ J 5		
		South ★ · 20 HCP		
		♠ A K J 8 7		
		♥ A Q 4		
		♦ 5		
		♣ A Q 6 2		

Suggested auction: N Pass – E 1♦ – S Dbl – W Pass – N 1♥ – E Pass – S 1♠ – W Pass – N 3♠ – E Pass – S 4♠ – all pass.

South has 20 HCP and five spades, which is too strong for a 1♠ overcall (limit about 17). Double first, then bid spades: that second bid shows 18+. North's 1♥ showed 0–8; with 7 HCP and three spades North is near the top and invites. Had South simply overcalled 1♠, North would pass and game would be missed.

Board 6 · Dealer East · Vul E–W

		North · 6 HCP		
		♠ J 8 4		
		♥ Q 10 7 3		
		♦ J 9 2		
		♣ Q 6 3		
West · 0 HCP	Dealer East Vul E–W		East · 14 HCP	
♠ 10 9 6 2			♠ K 7 3	
♥ 9 5 2			♥ A 8 6	
♦ 8 6 5			♦ K 7 4	
♣ 7 5 2			♣ A 10 9 4	
		South ★ · 20 HCP		
		♠ A Q 5		
		♥ K J 4		
		♦ A Q 10 3		
		♣ K J 8		

Suggested auction: E 1♣ – S Dbl – W Pass – N 1♥ – E Pass – S 1NT – W Pass – N 2NT – E Pass – S 3NT – all pass.

South has 20 balanced with clubs stopped. A direct 1NT overcall shows about 15–18, so double first, then bid 1NT: about 18–20, not forcing. North, with 6 HCP, invites; South accepts with the maximum.

Week 2 — Full deals (Boards 7–8)

Full deals (★ = the hand the lesson is about)

Board 7 · Dealer South · Vul Both

		North · 7 HCP		
		♠ 9 5 2		
		♥ A Q J 10 7 2		
		♦ 5 3		
		♣ 9 3		
West · 6 HCP	Dealer South Vul Both		East ★ · 11 HCP	
♠ Q J 7 3			♠ K 10 8 4	
♥ 9 6			♥ 5 3	
♦ K 8 4			♦ A J 9 6 2	
♣ 10 8 6 2			♣ K 7	
		South · 16 HCP		
		♠ A 6		
		♥ K 8 4		
		♦ Q 10 7		
		♣ A Q J 5 4		

Suggested auction: S 1♣ – W Pass – N 1♥ – E Dbl – S 2♥ – W 2♠ – N 3♥ – all pass.

When both opponents have bid, a double shows the two unbid suits: spades and diamonds. East has 11 HCP plus two doubletons. West shows the spade fit with 6 HCP (a free bid). N–S still reach 3♥, but East–West have pushed them a level higher.

Board 8 · Dealer West · Vul None

		North · 12 HCP		
		♠ Q J 9 2		
		♥ Q 8 6		
		♦ K 10 4		
		♣ A 7 3		
West · 15 HCP	Dealer West Vul None		East · 4 HCP	
♠ A 5		♠ 7 6 3		
♥ A K J 10 4		♥ 9 5 2		
♦ Q 7		♦ J 8 5 2		
♣ J 9 8 2		♣ K 6 4		
		South ★ · 9 HCP		
		♠ K 10 8 4		
		♥ 7 3		
		♦ A 9 6 3		
		♣ Q 10 5		

Suggested auction: W 1♥ – N Pass – E Pass – S Dbl – W Pass – N 2♠ – all pass.

In the balancing seat, subtract three: South doubles with only 9 HCP because a pass ends the auction. North passed 1♥ with a flat 12 and the ♥Q, but knows South has "borrowed a king", so jumps only to 2♠, not game. N–S make a partscore instead of defending 1♥.

Week 2 · NORTH

Board 5 · Dealer North · Vul N-S

♠ Q 9 3 ♥ J 8 6 5 3 2 ♦ J 7 ♣ K 3

Board 6 · Dealer East · Vul E-W

♠ J 8 4 ♥ Q 10 7 3 ♦ J 9 2 ♣ Q 6 3

Board 7 · Dealer South · Vul Both

♠ 9 5 2 ♥ A Q J 10 7 2 ♦ 5 3 ♣ 9 3

Board 8 · Dealer West · Vul None

♠ Q J 9 2 ♥ Q 8 6 ♦ K 10 4 ♣ A 7 3

Week 2 · EAST

Board 5 · Dealer North · Vul N-S

♠ 10 6 4 ♥ K 9 ♦ A K Q 10 8 6 ♣ J 5

Board 6 · Dealer East · Vul E-W

♠ K 7 3 ♥ A 8 6 ♦ K 7 4 ♣ A 10 9 4

Board 7 · Dealer South · Vul Both

♠ K 10 8 4 ♥ 5 3 ♦ A J 9 6 2 ♣ K 7

Board 8 · Dealer West · Vul None

♠ 7 6 3 ♥ 9 5 2 ♦ J 8 5 2 ♣ K 6 4

Week 2 · SOUTH

Board 5 · Dealer North · Vul N-S

♠ A K J 8 7 ♥ A Q 4 ♦ 5 ♣ A Q 6 2

Board 6 · Dealer East · Vul E-W

♠ A Q 5 ♥ K J 4 ♦ A Q 10 3 ♣ K J 8

Board 7 · Dealer South · Vul Both

♠ A 6 ♥ K 8 4 ♦ Q 10 7 ♣ A Q J 5 4

Board 8 · Dealer West · Vul None

♠ K 10 8 4 ♥ 7 3 ♦ A 9 6 3 ♣ Q 10 5

Week 2 · WEST

Board 5 · Dealer North · Vul N-S

♠ 5 2 ♥ 10 7 ♦ 9 4 3 2 ♣ 10 9 8 7 4

Board 6 · Dealer East · Vul E-W

♠ 10 9 6 2 ♥ 9 5 2 ♦ 8 6 5 ♣ 7 5 2

Board 7 · Dealer South · Vul Both

♠ Q J 7 3 ♥ 9 6 ♦ K 8 4 ♣ 10 8 6 2

Board 8 · Dealer West · Vul None

♠ A 5 ♥ A K J 10 4 ♦ Q 7 ♣ J 9 8 2