

Tools for Some Competitive Situations

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Suit-Lead Transfers

Suit-lead transfers apply when partner's major suit opening or overcall has been doubled for takeout. We give up the free bid of 1 NT, but we get better opening leads and raises. If we pass, partner gets another chance, and so should we. General principles:

- An immediate jump to 2 NT is always our best raise of opener's or overcaller's major suit.
- Our jump raise is always mixed.

Our One of a Major – Doubled for Takeout

Responder's redouble is standard: 10+ HCP, at most 3-card support, but we promise at least 2-card support for opener's major.

A delayed double shows 10+ HCP with a singleton in opener's major.

When they double our major-suit opening, we play transfers at 1 NT through the suit below opener's major. These bids deny the strength to redouble and they request the opening lead, but the suit may not be long. Opener rebids naturally; passing 1 NT, completing the transfer, or bidding two of the major with extra length, are all weak. With extra values, opener may make a natural rebid in a new suit.

1 ♠ - (Double) - ?		1 ♠ - (Double) - ?	
Rdbl	10+ HCP, 2- or 3-card support.	Rdbl	
1 ♠	Spades, one-round force.	-	-
1 NT	Transfer to clubs.	1 NT	
2 ♣	Transfer to diamonds.	2 ♣	
2 ♦	2-3 winner raise.	Transfer to hearts.	2 ♦
2 ♥	0-1 winner raise.	2-3 winner raise.	2 ♥
2 ♠	Fit-showing, invitational.	0-1 winner raise.	2 ♠
2NT	Best raise, LR+, 4-card support.	2 NT	
3 ♣	Fit-showing jump, invitational.	3 ♣	
3 ♦	Fit-showing jump, invitational.	3 ♦	
3 ♥	Mixed raise.	Fit-showing, invitational.	3 ♥
-	-	Mixed raise.	3 ♠

Drury does not apply here; we can redouble and raise instead.

Examples:

1 ♠ – (Double) – ?

1. ♠ J 3 ♡ 9 7 6 ♦ 10 6 5 ♣ A Q 10 8 2

2. ♠ J 8 3 ♡ 9 7 6 3 ♦ 10 6 5 2 ♣ A 8

Bid 1 NT, a transfer asking for a club lead, on both hands [1] and [2]. Opener may pass! If opener bids 2 ♣ on hand [1], we pass; on hand [2], responder takes 2 ♣ back to 2 ♠.

3. ♠ K 4 3 ♡ 9 7 6 3 ♦ 10 6 5 2 ♣ 9 8

On hand [3], we bid 2 ♠, a junk raise.

4. ♠ K J 3 ♡ 9 7 6 3 ♦ 10 6 5 2 ♣ A 8

On hand [4], we bid 2 ♡, a good raise to 2 ♠, wanting a spade lead.

Negative Double of Our Major-Suit Overcall

(1 m) – 1 ♠ – (Double) – ?		(1 x) – 1 ♠ – (Double) – ?	
Rdbl	Competitive, doubleton A/K/Q support.	Rdbl	
1 ♠	Spades, one-round force.	–	–
1 NT	Transfer to the suit above.	1 NT	
2 ♣	If opener's suit, 3-card limit raise or better.	2 ♣	
2 ♦	2–3 winner raise.	Transfer / 3-card LR+.	2 ♦
2 ♡	0–1 winner raise.	2–3 winner raise.	2 ♡
2 ♠	Fit-showing, inv.	0–1 winner raise.	2 ♠
2 NT	Best raise, LR+, 4-card support.	2 NT	
3 ♣	Fit-showing jump, invitational.	3 ♣	
3 ♦	○ If opener's suit, invitational splinter.	3 ♦	
3 ♡	Mixed raise.	Fit-showing, inv.	3 ♡
–	–	Mixed raise.	3 ♠

Curly Cue

Curly cue applies when responder bids a suit at the *one level* over partner's takeout double. We change our advances to take advantage of having two cue-bids available. Here is the situation:

(1 A) – Dbl – (1 B) – ?

Cue bids. A cue bid of either suit shows *at least* the values for a standard jump response. Each cue bid shows a specific unbid suit.

Same rank: If suits A and B are the same rank (both majors, or both minors), then the cheaper cue bid shows the lower unbid suit, and the other cue bid shows the higher unbid suit, for example:

(1 ♣) – Dbl – (1 ♦) – 2 ♣ [=hearts, cheaper for lower]

(1 ♠) – Dbl – (1 ♣) – 2 ♠ [=diamonds, other for higher]

Here's the curl: When A is a minor and B is a major, then the cheaper cue shows the major, and the other cue bid shows the minor.

1. ♠ J 10 6 3 2 ♠ 6 3 ♦ K 10 6 ♣ A 8 3

(1 ♣) – Dbl – (1 ♠) – 2 ♣ [=spades, cheaper for major]

2. ♠ K 6 ♠ Q J 3 2 ♦ 10 8 6 3 ♣ A 6 2

(1 ♦) – Dbl – (1 ♠) – 2 ♦ [=hearts, can get out at 2 ♠!]

3. ♠ K 6 ♠ 3 2 ♦ 10 8 6 3 ♣ A Q 10 6 2

(1 ♦) – Dbl – (1 ♠) – 2 ♠ [=clubs, other for minor]

Notrump bids (8 to 10, etc.) and double (penalty) are unchanged.

Other bids are based on the law of total tricks. Assume that doubler has 4-card support, and bid according to the law:

Bid to the number of tricks equal to our total number of trumps.

4. ♠ J 10 6 3 2 ♠ 6 3 ♦ 10 6 5 ♣ A 8 3

(1 ♣) – Dbl – (1 ♠) – 2 ♠ [3 ♠ not vul, compare to [1]]

5. ♠ – ♠ K 10 6 5 ♦ J 8 7 4 ♣ 9 8 7 3 2

(1 ♣) – Dbl – (1 ♠) – 2 ♠ [3 ♠ overbid, not vul]

Shark over 1 NT Forcing

- Standard: double of 1 NT forcing is takeout for unbid suits.
- Shark: double of 1 NT forcing shows four cards in the unbid major and a longer minor suit.

Backstory

These topics, from the Appendix to the Second Edition of *EZ-Expert Bidding Tools*, did not achieve tenure there. They now have adjunct status in this article.

Al Muggia and I played suit-lead transfers methods for a while; he got them from world champion Jeff Meckstroth. We get to show a suit, ask for a lead as part of a raise, and take inferences on hands [3] and [4]. The two ways to two of the major have been rephrased in terms of winners, for this book. We also played Curly Cue.

Vic Quiros presented a similar plan for transfers after an opponent doubles our major suit opening in the *Bridge Bulletin*, June 2025, page 66. Quiros has some undefined bids that are defined as fit-showing here, likely my insertion.

GLM Mark 'Shark' Aquino included his double of 1 NT forcing with his comments on the book – I named it after him! He says his partnerships have no firm agreements on continuations. I would add 2 ♣, pass or correct, as an advance.