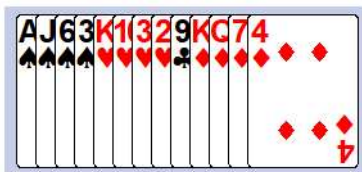


West	North	East	South
	1♣	Dbi	

You may not realize this, but the **takeout double** is actually a **convention**. The **natural** meaning of all **doubles** in bridge is that you think the **opponents** are not going to make the **contract** that they **bid**. A **takeout double** has an **artificial** meaning - it asks the **partner** of the **doubler** to **bid** his longest and strongest of the **unbid** suits.

**Takeout doubles** are such an integral part of **competitive bidding** that you may not think of these **doubles** as a **convention**, but that is exactly what they are (in fact, the **takeout double** may be the oldest **convention** in bridge).



West	North	East	South
	1♣	Dbf	

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**Takeout doubles** are such an integral part of **competitive bidding** that you may not think of these **doubles** as a **convention**, but that is exactly what they are (in fact, the **takeout double** may be the oldest **convention** in bridge).

Sometime around 1957, 2 of the greatest bridge players and theorists of all time, **Alvin Roth** and **Tobias Stone**, took a long hard look at the use of the **double** in auctions like this one:

West	North	East	South
	1♣	1♠	Dbf

South's **double** in this auction had been defined as **penalty** for the first 30 years of **contract bridge**, but **Roth** and **Stone** had their doubts about this.

They thought it was better to assign an **artificial** meaning to **doubles** in auctions like the one above. The **convention** they invented (which they called the **negative double**) has gone on to become one of the most popular and effective **conventions** ever devised.

West	North	East	South
	1♣	1♠	Dbf

So what kind of a hand does the **responder** describe when he makes a **negative double**?

West	North	East	South
	1♣	1♠	Dbf

So what kind of a hand does the **responder** describe when he makes a **negative double**?

A **negative double** promises at least 4 cards in all **unbid major suits**.

West	North	East	South
	1♣	1♠	Dbf

So what kind of a hand does the **responder** describe when he makes a **negative double**?

A **negative double** promises at least 4 cards in all **unbid major suits**.

A **negative double** of a 1-level **overall** promises at least 6 **total points**.

West	North	East	South
	1♣	1♠	Dbf

So what kind of a hand does the **responder** describe when he makes a **negative double**?

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A **negative double** of a 1-level **overcall** promises at least 6 **total points**.

A **negative double** of a 2-level **overcall** promises at least 8 **total points**.

West	North	East	South
	1♣	1♠	Dbf

So what kind of a hand does the **responder** describe when he makes a **negative double**?

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A **negative double** of a 1-level **overcall** promises at least 6 **total points**.

A **negative double** of a 2-level **overcall** promises at least 8 **total points**.

Why is it that more strength is required for making a **negative double** when the **opponent's overcall** (or **jump overcall**) is at the 2-level? The answer should be clear if we consider the basic purpose of using **negative doubles**:

West	North	East	South
	1♣	1♠	Dbf

So what kind of a hand does the **responder** describe when he makes a **negative double**?

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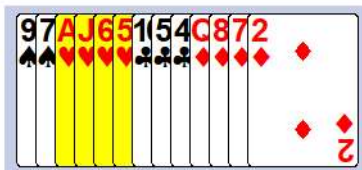
Why is it that more strength is required for making a **negative double** when the **opponent's overall** (or **jump overall**) is at the 2-level? The answer should be clear if we consider the basic purpose of using **negative doubles**:

**Negative doubles** are similar to **takeout doubles** in many ways. The **opener** should make some kind of **rebid** after a **negative double** - he should almost never **pass**.

Since the **negative double** of a 2-level **overall** asks the **opener** to **rebid** at the 2-level at minimum (where 8 **tricks** are required), it makes sense that such a **negative double** should be a little stronger than one where the **opener** can **rebid** at the 1-level (where only 7 **tricks** are required). That is why a 2-level **negative double** promises at least 8 **total points** while 6 **total points** are sufficient for a **negative double** of a 1-level **overall**.



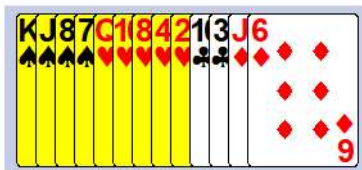
Here is a hand that is perfect for a **negative double** in the auction that we have been considering:



West	North	East	South
	1♣	1♠	Dbf

This hand has 7 HCP (enough for a **negative double** of a 1-level **overcall**) and 4 cards in the only **unbid major suit** (hearts). Therefore, this hand has all of the requirements for a **negative double** of East's 1♠ **overcall**.

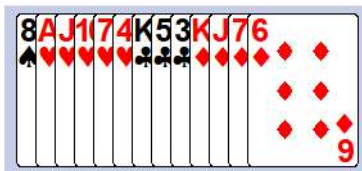
This hand is an example of a minimum **negative double** of a 2-level **overcall**:



West	North	East	South
	1♦	2♣	<b>Dbi</b>

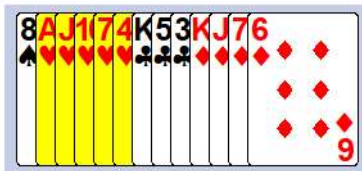
This hand has only 7HCP, but the 5-card heart suit is worth 1 **long suit point**. With 8 **total points**, this hand is just strong enough to make a **negative double** at the 2-level. There are 2 **unbid major suits** in this case and South has the necessary length in both of these suits (at least 4 cards) that a **negative double** promises to deliver.

This hand appears to be suitable for a **negative double**, but appearances can be deceiving!



West	North	East	South
	1♠	2♦	?

This hand appears to be suitable for a **negative double**, but appearances can be deceiving!



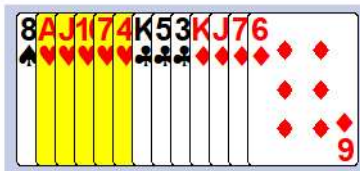
West	North	East	South
	1♠	2♦	2♥

With 12 HCP and 1 **long suit point** for the 5-card heart suit, this hand is easily strong enough for a **negative double** of East's 2-level **overcall**. Furthermore, this hand has more than enough cards in the only **unbid major suit** (hearts) for a **negative double**. It turns out that it would be a mistake for South to make a **negative double** with this hand. The reason is that he can make a **bid** that will provide his **partner** with a better description of his hand.

South should **bid 2♥** - just like he would have done if East had **passed**. In the **SAYC bidding system**, when the **responder** introduces a new **major suit** at the 2-level (or higher) in a **competitive auction** he promises at least 11 **total points** at and least 5 cards in the **major suit** that he **bid**. If this option is available, it should be used in preference to the **negative double**.

After an **overcall**, a new suit **bid** at the 2-level (or higher) shows at least 11 **total points**. If the new suit is a **major** the **responder** must have at least a 5-card suit to take this action.

This hand appears to be suitable for a **negative double**, but appearances can be deceiving!



West	North	East	South
	1♠	2♦	2♥

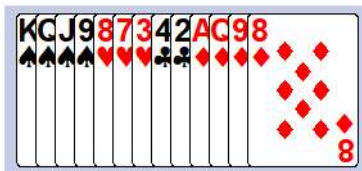
With 12 HCP and 1 **long suit point** for the 5-card heart suit, this hand is easily strong enough for a **negative double** of East's 2-level **overcall**. Furthermore, this hand has more than enough cards in the only **unbid major suit** (hearts) for a **negative double**. It turns out that it would be a mistake for South to make a **negative double** with this hand. The reason is that he can make a **bid** that will provide his **partner** with a better description of his hand.

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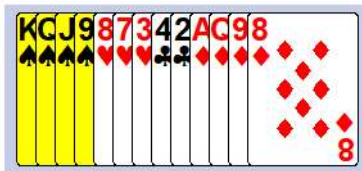
If the **responder's** hand is appropriate for **bidding** a new **major suit** at the 2-level (or higher) he should do so in preference to using a **negative double**.

Here is another example where the **responder** has a strong hand:



West	North	East	South
	1♥	2♣	?

Here is another example where the **responder** has a strong hand:



West	North	East	South
	1 ♥	2 ♣	DbI

This hand has 12 **total points** (all in the form of **HCP**). Although the South hand is strong enough to **bid** a new suit at the 2-level and although South has a very strong 4-card **major suit**, he would be promising at least 5 spades if he **bid** 2 ♠ here.

It is permissible to introduce a new **minor suit** at the 2-level on a 4-card suit, but here the **responder** should prefer to make a **negative double** rather than **bidding** 2 ♦. As you have seen, there are a lot of areas in **bidding** where the **major suits** take priority over the **minors**. This auction falls into that category. Exploring for a possible **8-card major suit fit** is one of the most important aspects of many situations in the **bidding**.

West	North	East	South
	1♣	1♦	?

Here are some examples of the same principles at work in a slightly different auction.



This hand has 13 **HCP** - enough to **force to game** opposite a 1♣ opening bid.



West	North	East	South
	1♣	1♦	Dbf

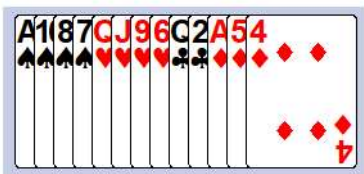
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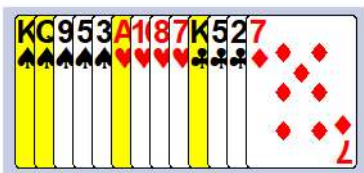
This hand has 13 HCP - enough to force to game opposite a 1♣ opening bid. However, with only 4-4 in the **unbid** suits it is best to start with a **negative double**. If South were to **bid** both hearts and spades, he would be suggesting at least 5 cards in whichever of the suits he **bid** first.

West	North	East	South
	1♣	1♦	?

Here are some examples of the same principles at work in a slightly different auction.



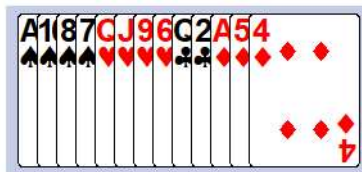
This hand has 13 **HCP** - enough to **force to game** opposite a 1♣ **opening bid**. However, with only 4-4 in the **unbid suits** it is best to start with a **negative double**. If South were to **bid** both hearts and spades, he would be suggesting at least 5 cards in whichever of the suits he **bid** first.



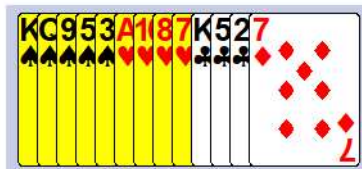
With 12 **HCP**

West	North	East	South
	1♣	1♦	1♠

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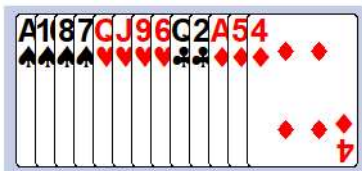
This hand has 13 **HCP** - enough to **force to game** opposite a 1♣ opening bid. However, with only 4-4 in the **unbid** suits it is best to start with a **negative double**. If South were to **bid** both hearts and spades, he would be suggesting at least 5 cards in whichever of the suits he **bid** first.



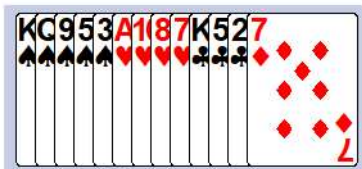
With 12 **HCP** and 1 **long suit point** for the 5-card spade suit, this hand has 13 **total points** and South should plan to **force to game**. He should start by **bidding** his 5-card spade suit and plan to **rebid** in his 4-card heart suit. North will then have a good picture of South's strength and his **major suit** distribution.

West	North	East	South
	1♣	1♦	?

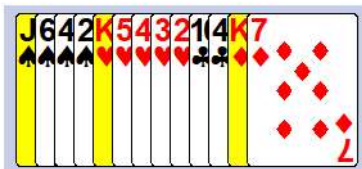
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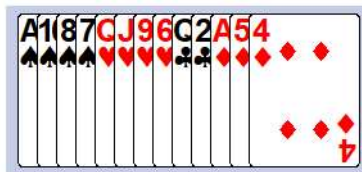
With 12 **HCP** and 1 **long suit point** for the 5-card spade suit, this hand has **13 total points** and South should plan to **force to game**. He should start by **bidding** his 5-card spade suit and plan to **rebid** in his 4-card heart suit. North will then have a good picture of South's strength and his **major suit** distribution.



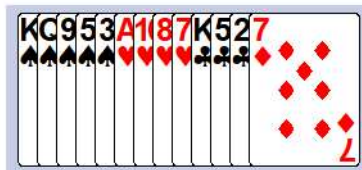
This hand has 7 **HCP**

West	North	East	South
	1♣	1♦	Dbf

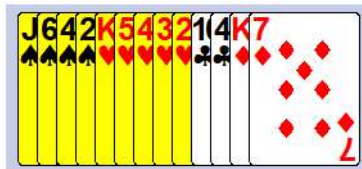
Here are some examples of the same principles at work in a slightly different auction.



This hand has 13 **HCP** - enough to **force to game** opposite a 1♣ opening bid. However, with only 4-4 in the **unbid** suits it is best to start with a **negative double**. If South were to bid both hearts and spades, he would be suggesting at least 5 cards in whichever of the suits he bid first.



With 12 **HCP** and 1 **long suit point** for the 5-card spade suit, this hand has **13 total points** and South should plan to **force to game**. He should start by **bidding** his 5-card spade suit and plan to **rebid** in his 4-card heart suit. North will then have a good picture of South's strength and his **major suit** distribution.



This hand has 7 **HCP** and 1 **long suit point** for the 5-card heart suit, bringing South up to 8 **total points**. That's not enough to allow South to bid 1♥ now and spades at his next opportunity as such a sequence would be **forcing to game**. It is best to start with a **negative double** on this hand.

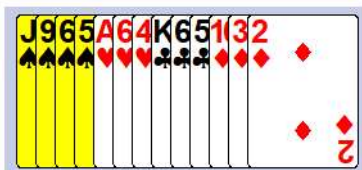
What if the **bidding** is the same, but the South hand has only one 4-card (or longer) **major suit**?



West	North	East	South
	1 ♣	1 ♦	?

It would be wrong to make a **negative double** here because this hand has only 3 cards in hearts. North would expect at least 4-4 in the **majors** for a **negative double** in this **auction**.

What if the **bidding** is the same, but the South hand has only one 4-card (or longer) **major suit**?



West	North	East	South
	1♣	1♦	1♠

It would be wrong to make a **negative double** here because this hand has only 3 cards in hearts. North would expect at least 4-4 in the **majors** for a **negative double** in this auction.

While the **bid** of a new **major suit** at the 2-level has some serious restrictions (at least 5 cards in the suit and at least 11 **total points**), **bidding** a new **major suit** at the 1-level is permissible on a much wider range of hands. It is perfectly acceptable to **bid** 1♠ here. That **bid** suggests no more than the same 4-card spade suit and 6 **total points** that a 1♠ **response** would have promised if East had **passed**.

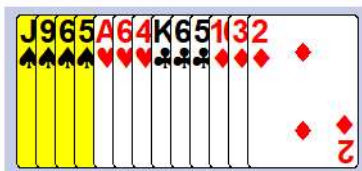
Things are a little different when the **opening bid** is 1♣ or 1♦ and the next hand **overcalls** 1♥:



West	North	East	South
	1♣	1♥	?



Things are a little different when the **opening bid** is 1♣ or 1♦ and the next hand **overcalls** 1♥:



West	North	East	South
	1♣	1♥	?

This hand is exactly the same as the hand we just saw. The **opening bid** is the same as it was last time too (1♣), but here the **overcall** is 1♥ instead of 1♦. In the previous example, a 1♠ **response** was recommended despite the fact that South had only 4 cards in spades. This was due to the definition of **negative doubles**. Since a **negative double** promises at least 4 cards in all the **unbid major suits**, the **responder** needs to have a way to **bid** when he has only one 4-card **major**.

This auction is different because there is only one **unbid major suit**. If South could **bid** 1♠ in this auction with a 4-card spade suit, there would be no point in using **negative doubles**!

In the **SAYC bidding system**, the dilemma is resolved by making a **negative double** with hands that contain exactly 4 cards in spades. A 1♠ **response** would promise at least 5 spades. In both cases, the **responder** suggests no more than 6 **total points** for these actions.

After a 1♣ or 1♦ **opening** and a 1♥ **overcall**, a **negative double** shows exactly 4 spades and a 1♠ **response** promises at least 5 spades. Both actions suggest 6 or more **total points**.

There are 2 possible **negative double** auctions in which there are no **unbid major suits**:

West	North	East	South
	1♥	1♠	Dbf

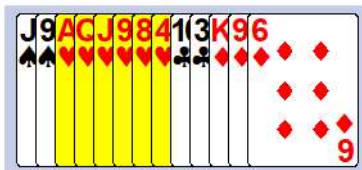
West	North	East	South
	1♠	2♥	Dbf

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West	North	East	South
	1♥	1♠	Dbf

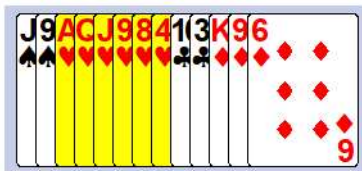
West	North	East	South
	1♠	2♥	Dbf

When there are no **unbid major suits**, a **negative double** suggests at least 4 cards in both **minor suits**. The strength promised is the same as it would be for other **negative doubles**.



West	North	East	South
	1♣	1♥	?

The South hand rates to win about 5 **trump tricks** on **defense** against a heart contract.



West	North	East	South
	1♣	1♥	Pass

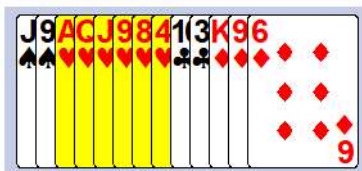
The South hand rates to win about 5 **trump tricks** on **defense** against a heart contract. Furthermore, it would not be at all surprising if the ♦K won a **trick** and North's **opening bid** makes it very likely that he will be able to win a few **tricks** of his own. Therefore, it is extremely unlikely that East could win the 7 **tricks** that he would need to succeed in a 1♥ contract.

If North-South were using **penalty doubles** in this situation, South would **double** 1♥ in the hope of collecting a reasonable **penalty**. However, in the **SAYC bidding system**, a **double** of 1♥ in this auction would be a **negative double** used to show exactly 4 cards in spades. This hand has only 2 spades and there is no way that South will be able to achieve what he wants (to **defend** against 1♥ **doubled**) if he makes a **negative double** with this hand.

Do you have any idea how South might be able to arrange to **defend** against 1♥ **doubled**? As a hint, consider the similar situation where the player on your right **opens the bidding** and you want to make a **penalty double** (which you cannot make since a **double** would be for **takeout**).

When you want to make a **penalty double** of an opponent's overcall you should **pass!** You might still be able to **defend** against the **doubled contract** that you were hoping for.

It may not be immediately obvious to you how South can arrange to **defend** against 1♥ **doubled** with his hand by **passing** after East's **overall**.



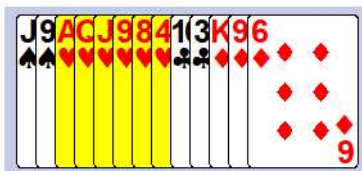
West	North	East	South
	1♣	1♥	Pass
Pass	<input type="text" value="Dbf"/>	Pass	Pass
Pass			

In fact, the only way that the **bidding** could continue such that 1♥ **doubled** could become the final **contract** is in the way that you now see above. Given your heart holding it doesn't seem very realistic that your **partner** is going to **double** 1♥ for you does it?

Actually, it is not unlikely at all, but don't worry if you are confused by this right now. It will all be clear soon. The reason that there is a good chance that your **partner** will **double** if East's 1♥ **overall** is **passed** around to him is this:

When a **partnership** is using **negative doubles** and an **opponent's overall** is **passed** around to the **opener**, he should **reopen** with a **double** if he is short in the **opponent's suit**.

It may not be immediately obvious to you how South can arrange to **defend** against 1♥ doubled with his hand by **passing** after East's **overall**.

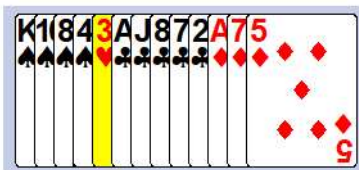


West	North	East	South
	1♣	1♥	Pass
Pass	<input type="text" value="Dbl"/>	Pass	Pass
Pass			

In fact, the only way that the **bidding** could continue such that 1♥ doubled could become the final **contract** is in the way that you now see above. Given your heart holding it doesn't seem very realistic that your **partner** is going to **double** 1♥ for you does it?

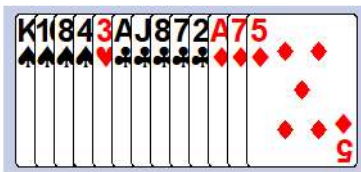
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When a **partnership** is using **negative doubles** and an **opponent's overall** is **passed** around to the **opener**, he should **reopen** with a **double** if he is short in the **opponent's suit**.



For example, if the **opener** held this hand and the **bidding** started as above, he should **double** at his second turn even though he has only 12 HCP (that is, no extra values for his **opening bid**). It is the **opener's singleton heart**, not his point count, that makes **double** the correct **reopening** action here.

North's **double** in the auction that we have been considering is similar in nature to a **takeout double**. North would usually have no more than 2 hearts and good **support** for all of the other suits to **double** for **takeout** in this position.

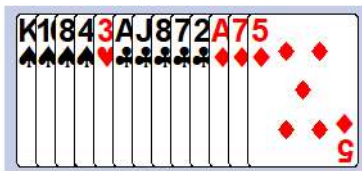


West	North	East	South
	1♣	1♥	Pass
Pass	Dbf		

Bridge players use the terms **reopening** and **balancing** to describe a **bid** or a **double** that is made after the 2 previous players have both **passed**.



North's **double** in the auction that we have been considering is similar in nature to a **takeout double**. North would usually have no more than 2 hearts and good **support** for all of the other suits to **double** for **takeout** in this position.



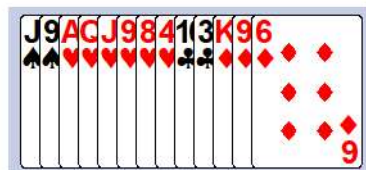
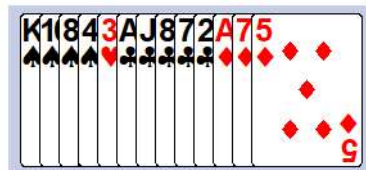
West	North	East	South
	1♣	1♥	Pass
Pass	<b>Dbf</b>		

Bridge players use the terms **reopening** and **balancing** to describe a **bid** or a **double** that is made after the 2 previous players have both **passed**.

Here we might say that North **reopened** with **double**, **balanced** with **double**, or that North made a **reopening double** or a **balancing double** to describe North's actions in the auction shown above. Here North's **double** is considered a **reopening** or **balancing** action because both South and West **passed** - if North had **passed** also then the **bidding** would have ended.

When **negative doubles** are not being used, North's **reopening double** in the auction above would be for **takeout**, but such a **double** would promise significant extra high card values. That is not the case when **negative doubles** are being used.

The **opener** should **reopen** with **double** whenever he is short in the suit of the **overall** just in case the **responder** was dealt a hand that was suitable for a **penalty double**.



West	North	East	South
	1♣	1♥	Pass
Pass	<input type="text" value="Dbl"/>	Pass	Pass
Pass			

To be sure, this is a roundabout way to **double** East's 1♥ **overall** for **penalties** when the North-South hands are similar to what you see above. **Penalizing the opponents** for an unwise **overall** is much easier when **negative doubles** are not being used.

West	North	East	South
	1♣	1♥	Pass
Pass	?		

The subject of **opener's** possible actions in the **reopening** position is a difficult one. Entire books have been written on this subject and it would not be practical to go into a lot of detail about this topic in this program. Here are a few principles that you can use that will usually allow you to make the right decision when you are the **opening bidder** and an **opponent's overcall** is **passed** around to you:

West	North	East	South
	1♣	1♥	Pass
Pass	?		

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If you have less than 3 cards in the suit of the **overcall** it is usually best to **reopen** with a **double**, especially if you have at least 3-card support for all of the **unbid suits**.

West	North	East	South
	1♣	1♥	Pass
Pass	?		

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If you have less than 3 cards in the suit of the **overcall** it is usually best to **reopen** with a **double**, especially if you have at least 3-card support for all of the **unbid** suits.

If you have a **2-suiter** with at least 5-5 in your suits or if you have at least 6 cards in the suit that you **opened**, it is usually best to **reopen** with your **natural rebid**.

West	North	East	South
Pass	1♣	1♥	Pass
	?		

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If you have a minimum **balanced** hand with 3 or more cards in the suit of the **overcall**, it is usually best to **pass**.

West	North	East	South
	1♣	1♥	Pass
Pass	?		

The subject of **opener's** possible actions in the **reopening** position is a difficult one. Entire books have been written on this subject and it would not be practical to go into a lot of detail about this topic in this program. Here are a few principles that you can use that will usually allow you to make the right decision when you are the **opening bidder** and an **opponent's overcall** is **passed** around to you:

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If you have a minimum **balanced** hand with 3 or more cards in the suit of the **overcall**, it is usually best to **pass**.

If you have 18-19 **HCP** and a **balanced** hand with 3 or more cards in the suit of the **overcall**, it is usually best to **rebid** 1NT. 1NT shows 18-19 **HCP** in this auction.

The next issue to explore is how the **opener** chooses his **rebid** after an **overcall** by the **opponent** and a **negative double** by his **partner**:

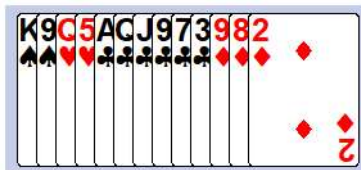
West	North	East	South
	1♣	1♥	Dbl
Pass	?		



The next issue to explore is how the **opener** chooses his **rebid** after an **overcall** by the **opponent** and a **negative double** by his **partner**:

West	North	East	South
	1♣	1♥	Dbl
Pass	?		

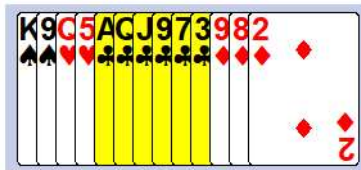
Fortunately, this is not a very difficult subject. In many cases the **opener** should make the same **rebid** that he was going to make if there had been no **overcall**. Here are some examples:



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West	North	East	South
	1♣	1♥	Dbl
Pass	2♣		

Fortunately, this is not a very difficult subject. In many cases the **opener** should make the same **rebid** that he was going to make if there had been no **overcall**. Here are some examples:

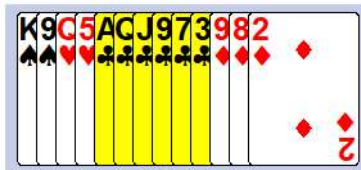


This is a minimum **opening bid** with 6 clubs and neither East's 1♥ **overcall** or South's **negative double** has changed that. **Rebid 2♣**, just like you would have done if East had **passed** and South had **responded** with a **bid** at the 1-level. If this hand had another Ace, then 3♣ would be the correct **rebid**.

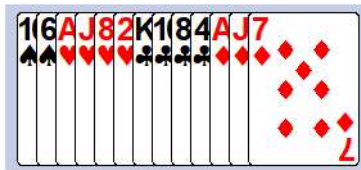
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West	North	East	South
	1♣	1♥	Dbl
Pass	?		

Fortunately, this is not a very difficult subject. In many cases the **opener** should make the same **rebid** that he was going to make if there had been no **overcall**. Here are some examples:



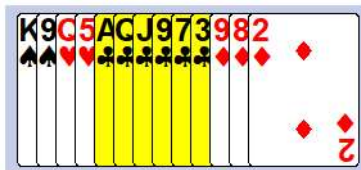
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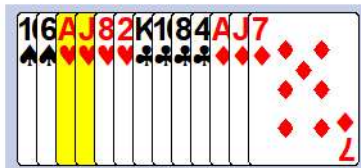
The next issue to explore is how the **opener** chooses his **rebid** after an **overcall** by the **opponent** and a **negative double** by his **partner**:

West	North	East	South
	1♣	1♥	Dbl
Pass	1NT		

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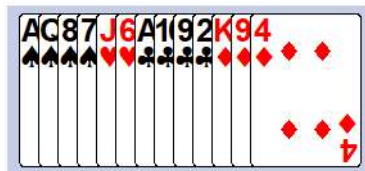


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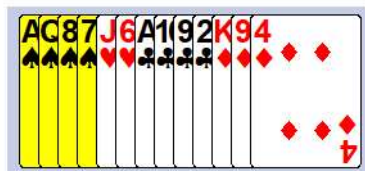
**Rebid** 1NT, the same **rebid** that you would have made if East had **passed** and South **responded** 1♠. You have a **balanced** minimum **opening bid** with at least 1 heart **stopper**. If you had a similar hand with 18-19 **HCP**, it would be correct to make your normal **rebid** of 2NT.

Sometimes a **negative double** does have an impact on the **opener's** choice of **rebids**:



West	North	East	South
	1♣	1♥	Dbl
Pass	?		

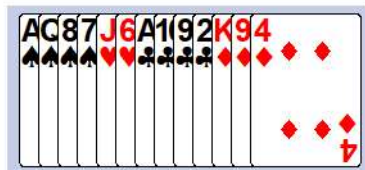
Sometimes a **negative double** does have an impact on the **opener's** choice of rebids:



West	North	East	South
	1♣	1♥	DbI
Pass	1♠		

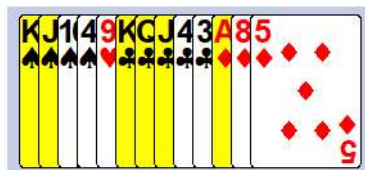
If East had **passed** and South had **responded** 1♠, then North would have **raised** to 2♠. However, in the above auction, 2♠ would be a **jump** and there is no reason for North to **jump** with his minimum hand. North should **rebid** 1♠ to tell his **partner** that he has a minimum **opening bid** with 4 cards in spades.

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West	North	East	South
	1♣	1♥	DbI
Pass	1♠		

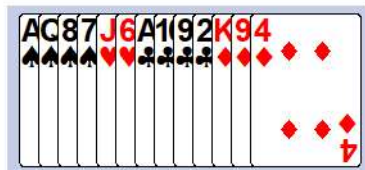
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West	North	East	South
	1♣	1♥	DbI
Pass	?		

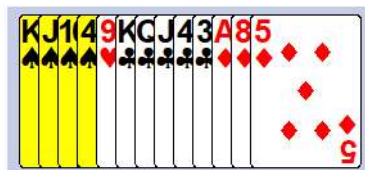
This hand has 14 **HCP**, the same number as the first hand on this page,

Sometimes a **negative double** does have an impact on the **opener's** choice of rebids:



West	North	East	South
	1♣	1♥	Dbl
Pass	1♠		

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West	North	East	South
	1♣	1♥	Dbl
Pass	2♠		

This hand has 14 **HCP**, the same number as the first hand on this page, but the **singleton** heart should be counted for 3 **short suit points**. **Short suit points** should be used here because North is planning on **rebidding** in spades - a suit in which his **partner** has promised 4 cards.

With 17 **total points** this is a medium strength hand. North would have **jump raised** a 1♠ **response** to 3♠. It is still correct for North to **jump** in spades, but in this **competitive** auction, a **jump** in spades is to the 2-level. North's proper **rebid** here is 2♠.



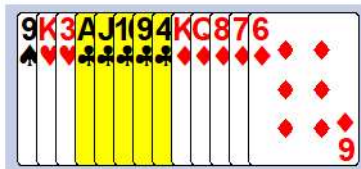
As you know, there are (rare) hands in which a player should **pass** when his **partner** makes a **takeout double**. Should the **opening bidder** ever **pass** when the **opponents overcall** and the **responder** makes a **negative double**?

West	North	East	South
	1♦	2♣	Dbf
Pass	<input type="text" value="Pass"/>		

As you know, there are (rare) hands in which a player should **pass** when his **partner** makes a **takeout double**. Should the **opening bidder** ever **pass** when the **opponents overcall** and the **responder** makes a **negative double**?

West	North	East	South
	1♦	2♣	Dbl
Pass	Pass		

There are occasions when the **opener** should **pass a negative double**, but they are also quite rare. As in the case of **passing a takeout double**, a player must be long and strong in the **opponents' suit** to **pass a negative double**. Here is an example hand with which the **opener** should **pass** in the auction shown above:



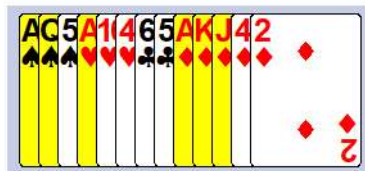
If East had **passed** and South had **responded** with 1 of a **major**, North would have **rebid** 2♣ with this hand. Once East **overcalls** 2♣, North should give up any thoughts he might have had about being the **declarer** in a **club contract**. East's 2♣ bid suggests that he has most of the remaining clubs in the deck so North should know that he does not want to play this hand in clubs.

While North should not want to declare a **club contract**, **defending** against 2♣ **doubled** is attractive. This hand rates to win several **trump tricks** against a **club contract**. North's other high cards and the high cards that his **partner** promises for his **negative double** will also win some **tricks** for the **defense**. North should **pass** and expect to collect a **reasonable penalty**.

As we just saw, there is no point in the **opener** trying to be the **declarer** in a **contract** where the suit that one of the **opponents overcalled** is **trump**. If the **opener** is very long and strong in the **overcaller's** suit, he should prefer to **defend** when his **partner** makes a **negative double**. That raises the question of what it would mean if the **opener** were to **rebid** in the **overcaller's** suit:

West	North	East	South
	1♦	2♣	Dbl
Pass	3♣		

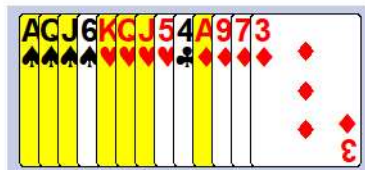
Here are some examples of hands that are suitable for a **cuebid** after a **negative double**:



This hand has 18 **HCP**

West	North	East	South
	1♦	2♣	Dbl
Pass	3♣		

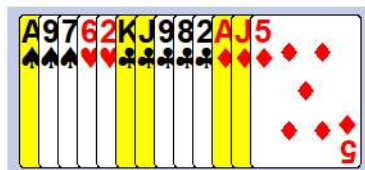
In this next example, the **opener** does not know which **major suit** to play in:



This hand has 17 **HCP**

West	North	East	South
	1♦	2♣	Dbl
Pass	3♣		

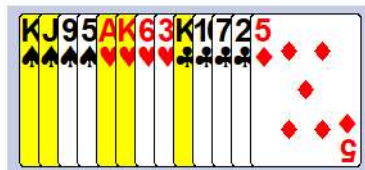
Here is an example of the type of hand that the **responder** should have in order to **cuebid** the suit that was **overcalled** by the opponents:



With 13 HCP

West	North	East	South
	1 ♣	1 ♥	2 ♥

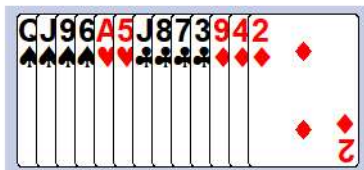
There is not much difference when the suit that was opened is a major:



With 14 HCP

West	North	East	South
	1 ♠	2 ♦	3 ♦

In each of the following exercises, your **partner opens the bidding** with 1 of a suit and the next hand **overcalls**. What call would you make with each of the following hands?



West	North	East	South
	1♣	1♥	?

What call would you make?

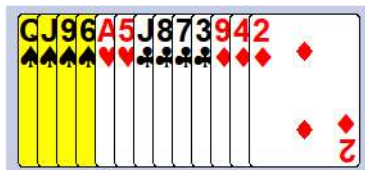
Pass
Dbl

1
2
3
4
5
6
7

Tell me



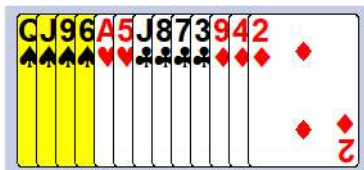
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West	North	East	South
	1♣	1♥	Dbf

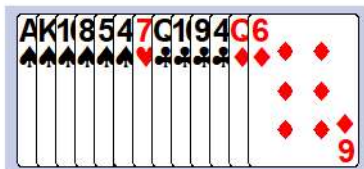
Make a **negative double**. Responding 1♠ after a 1♥ overcall promises at least 5 cards in spades. The **negative double** is used for hands like this one that have exactly 4 spades and at least 6 total points.

In each of the following exercises, your **partner opens the bidding** with 1 of a suit and the next hand **overcalls**. What call would you make with each of the following hands?



West	North	East	South
	1♣	1♥	<input type="text" value="Dbl"/>

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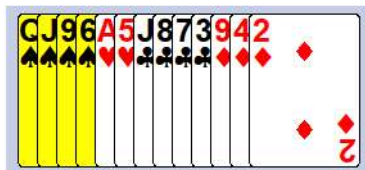


West	North	East	South
	1♦	2♥	<input style="width: 20px; height: 20px;" type="text" value="?"/>

What call would you make?

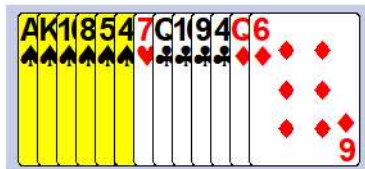


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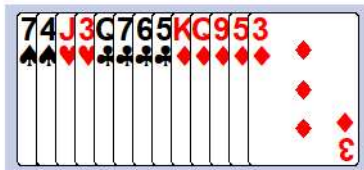
West	North	East	South
	1♣	1♥	Dbf

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West	North	East	South
	1♦	2♥	2♠

You should **bid 2♠**. This hand is more than strong enough for a **negative double** at the 2-level and you have more than enough cards in the only **unbid major suit** to make that call. The advantage of **bidding 2♠** is that it tells your **partner** more about your hand. **Bidding a new major suit** at the 2-level in a **competitive auction** promises at least 5 cards in that suit and at least 11 **total points**. When such a descriptive **bid** fits your hand this well, you should use it!



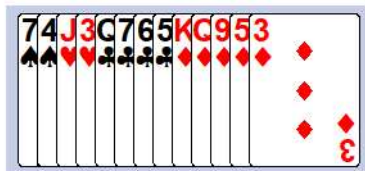
West	North	East	South
	1♥	2♣	?

What call would you make?

Pass
Dbl

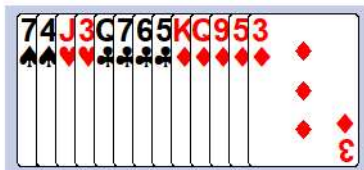
2
3
4
5
6
7

Tell me



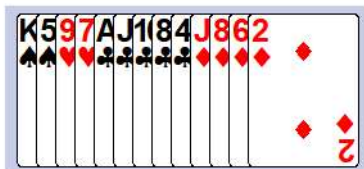
West	North	East	South
	1♥	2♣	Pass

You have to **pass** for now, despite holding 8 **HCP**. That's enough strength for a **negative double**, but a **negative double** in this auction would promise at least 4 cards in spades. You don't have enough hearts to **raise** your **partner** and your hand is not strong enough to **bid** 2♦ (that would show at least 11 **total points**). Anything other than a **pass** by you would **mislead** your **partner**. Remain silent for now. The auction is not over yet and you may well have another chance to **bid**.



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	1♥	2♣	Pass

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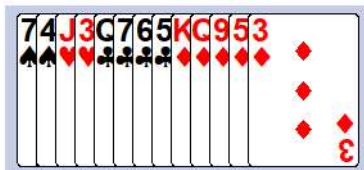


West	North	East	South
	1♠	2♥	?

What call would you make?

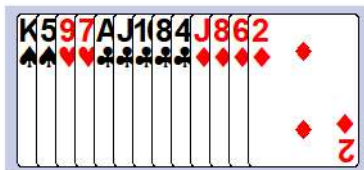


Tell me



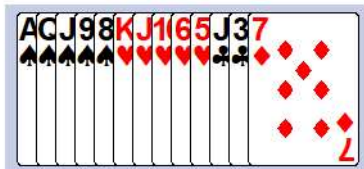
West	North	East	South
	1♥	2♣	Pass

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West	North	East	South
	1♠	2♥	Dbf

Make a **negative double**. When there is no **unbid major suit**, a **negative double** shows length in both **minor suits**. This hand has the requisite **minor suit** length and more than enough strength for a **negative double** of a 2-level **overcall**. You can be fairly confident that whatever **rebid** your **partner** makes will lead to a **reasonable contract**. When it is hard to foresee anything bad happening as a result of a given action in a **competitive auction**, that is all the more reason to take that action!



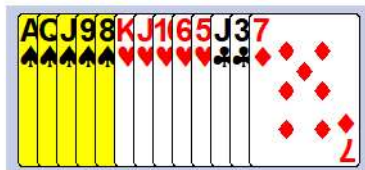
West	North	East	South
	1♣	1♦	?

What call would you make?

Pass
Dbl  
1
2
3
4
5
6
7

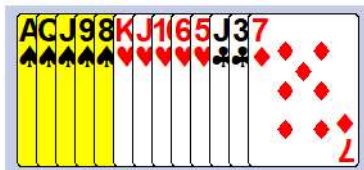
Tell me





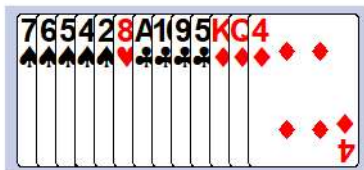
West	North	East	South
	1♣	1♦	1♠

**Bid 1♠.** A **negative double** would promise length in both **majors**, but this hand is strong enough to **bid** spades now and hearts later. After your next **bid** your **partner** will know that you have at least 5 spades, at least 4 hearts, and a strong enough hand to **force to game**. If you had a weaker hand with the same distribution, it would be correct to start with a **negative double**, but a **forcing 1♠** is the best first move with this powerful hand.



West	North	East	South
	1♣	1♦	1♠

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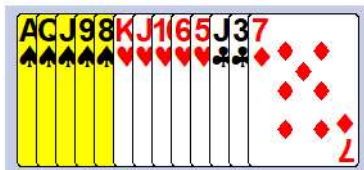


West	North	East	South
	1♦	1♥	?

What call would you make?



Tell me



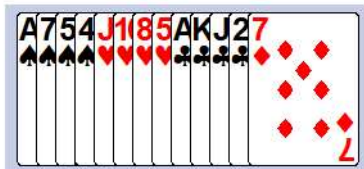
West	North	East	South
	1♣	1♦	1♠

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West	North	East	South
	1♦	1♥	1♠

5-card suits don't get much worse than this one, but 1♠ does not promise strong spades - only 5 of them. If you made a **negative double** with this hand, your **partner** would expect you to have only 4 cards in spades. Your **partnership** may never get to a 5-3 spade **fit** as a result. As in the above problem, 1♠ is **forcing** here. If the **partnership** does not belong in spades, you will find out about it when your **partner** makes his **rebid**.



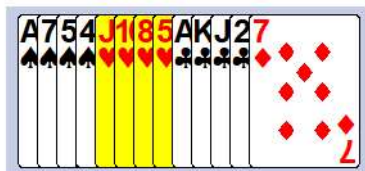
West	North	East	South
	1♥	2♦	?

What call would you make?

Pass
Dbl

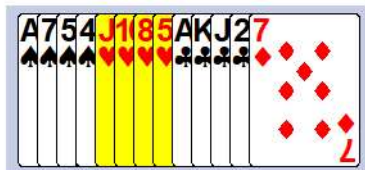
2
3
4
5
6
7

Tell me



West	North	East	South
	1♥	2♦	3♦

**Cuebid** East's suit with 3♦. This bid promises strong heart support and enough strength to **force to game**. Here there could be a **slam** in the cards if North has some extra values for his 1♥ opening bid. While you could make a **negative double** to tell your partner about your spade length, there is little point in doing that. You already know what **trump** should be. Let your partner in on your secret as soon as you possibly can!



West	North	East	South
	1♥	2♦	3♦

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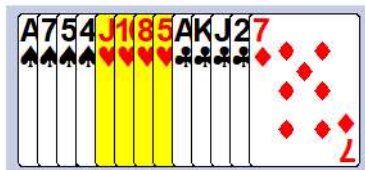


West	North	East	South
	1♠	2♦	?

What call would you make?

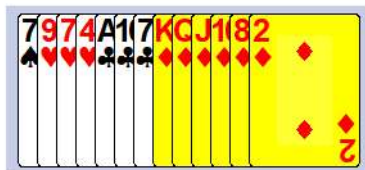
Pass **Dbi**  
 2 3 4 5 6 7

Tell me



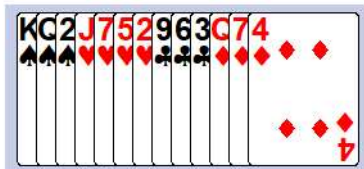
West	North	East	South
	1♥	2♦	3♦

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West	North	East	South
	1♠	2♦	Pass

You should **pass**. If you had a **penalty double** available you would make one as the thought of **defending** against a **contract** of 2♦ **doubled** with this hand is the sort of thing that bridge players dream about. Since a **double** by you would be a **negative double**, all you can do is **pass** for now and hope that your partner **reopens** with a **double**. It is still possible that you will have a chance to **defend** against the **contract** of your dreams!



West	North	East	South
	1♣	1♦	?

What call would you make?

Pass
Dbl  
1
2
3
4
5
6
7

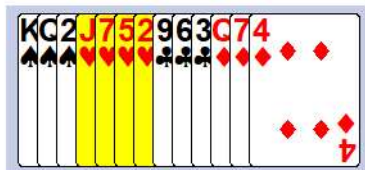
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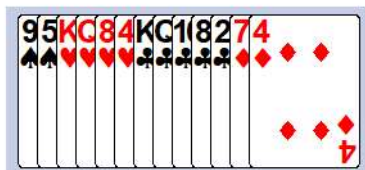
West	North	East	South
	1♣	1♦	1♥

1♥ is the correct bid. Bidding a new major suit at the 1-level after an opponent's 1♦ overall promises no more than a 4-card suit and no more than 6 total points. Don't make a negative double with this hand as your partner would expect you to have at least 4 spades for that call and this hand has only 3 spades. Bid 1♥ even though you have a weak 4-card heart suit.



West	North	East	South
	1♣	1♦	1♥

1♥ is the correct bid. Bidding a new major suit at the 1-level after an opponent's 1♦ overall promises no more than a 4-card suit and no more than 6 total points. Don't make a negative double with this hand as your partner would expect you to have at least 4 spades for that call and this hand has only 3 spades. Bid 1♥ even though you have a weak 4-card heart suit.



West	North	East	South
	1♦	1♠	?

What call would you make?

Pass
Dbl

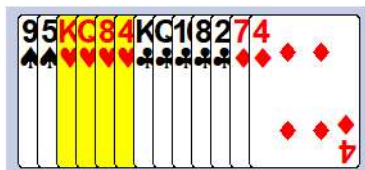
1
2
3
4
5
6
7

Tell me



West	North	East	South
	1♣	1♦	1♥

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West	North	East	South
	1♦	1♠	DbI

You should make a negative double to let your partner know that you have at least 4 cards in the unbid major (hearts in this case). This hand is (barely) strong enough to bid 2♣, but it is not strong enough to subsequently bid hearts. That sequence would be forcing to game and this hand does not have the values for that course of action. You should reject the alternative of a direct 2♥ bid as your partner would expect you to have at least a 5-card suit for the bid of a new major suit at the 2-level. A negative double is the way to go with this hand.