

THE MYSTERIOUS MULTI

HOW TO PLAY IT HOW TO PLAY AGAINST IT

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THE ACBL DEFENSES TO MULTI

In North America, the American Contract Bridge League has designated two basic defences to the Multi, and these are available at the table. We have a preference for the more complex Option Two, as it retains 2♥ and 2♠ as natural bids.

Option One

dbl Takeout of spades. Respond as you would to a double of a weak two-bid, including Lebensohl, if used.

2♥ Takeout of hearts. Respond as to a double of a weak two-bid, including Lebensohl, if used.

Pass, then dbl Light takeout of the suit doubled.

2♠/3♥ Natural, limited. A response in the other major is a cuebid, jumps natural.

2NT 16-18. Respond as to a 2NT opening.

3m Natural.

3♠ Strong and natural, 4♥ response is a cuebid.

4m 5+/5+ in the suit bid and a major. Bidding 4♦ over 4♣ asks for the major; bidding 4♥ over 4♦ says pass if you have hearts or correct to spades.

The following doubles are for takeout

West	North	East	South
2♦	pass	2M	dbl

Responses are the same as after a weak two-bid

West	North	East	South
2♦	pass	2M	pass
pass	dbl		

Lebensohl applies if used.

West	North	East	South
2♦	pass	2♥	pass
2♠	dbl		

Lebensohl applies if used.

After

West	North	East	South
2♦	pass	2M	?

- dbl* Takeout
- 2NT* 15-18. Respond as to 2NT opening
- 3m* Natural
- 3M* Natural
- 4M* Natural
- 4m* 5+/5+ in that minor and a major. 4♦ over 4♣ asks for the major; 4♥ over 4♦ says pass or correct to spades

After

West	North	East	South
2♦	pass	2♥	dbl
2♠	?		

- dbl* Penalty opposite takeout of hearts
- 3♥* Natural assuming doubler is short in hearts
- 3♠* Cuebid asking for spade stopper

After

West	North	East	South
2♦	pass	2♥	pass
2♠	pass	pass	dbl

Takeout of spades (same responses as 2♠-pass-pass-dbl).

West	North	East	South
2♦	pass	pass	?

Bid as over a weak 2♦ opening. It's quite rare to see an auction where responder is able to pass 2♦, but as a defender you have to be ready for it. Here is a high-level example from the final of the 2005 Bermuda Bowl between Italy and the USA:

E-W vul.

	♠ A J 5										
	♥ K 10 9 7 6 2										
	♦ 8 7										
	♣ 5 4										
♠ 9 ♥ A J 8 5 ♦ 9 6 2 ♣ A 10 9 8 3	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W</td><td style="text-align: center;">E</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W	E			S		♠ K 10 8 3 ♥ Q 4 3 ♦ K 4 ♣ Q J 7 2
	N										
W	E										
	S										
	♠ Q 7 6 4 2										
	♥ —										
	♦ A Q J 10 5 3										
	♣ K 6										

West	North	East	South
<i>Nunes</i>	<i>Meckstroth</i>	<i>Fantoni</i>	<i>Rodwell</i>
	2♦	pass	pass
3♣	pass	3NT	all pass

Because Meckwell play a weak-only version of the Multi, South was able to pass the opening bid. That gave West a problem, as his partner might have passed with some strong hands, so he felt he had to balance. East could not be sure how much of his hand his partner had already bid so he naturally took a shot at 3NT, and that drifted two down when South led a diamond.

Option Two

Immediately over 2♦:

- dbl* 13-15 balanced or any strong hand
- 2M* Natural. A response in the other major is a cuebid, while a jump in the other major is natural
- 2NT* 16-18. Respond as to a 2NT opening bid
- 3m* Natural
- 3M* Strong. A response in the other major is a cuebid.
- 4m* 5+/5+ in suit bid and a major. 4♦ over 4♣ asks for the major; 4♥ over 4♦ says pass or correct to spades

Note: with a takeout double of a major, pass planning to double on the next round; with a strong hand, double directly since 2♦ may be passed.

West	North	East	South
2♦	pass	2/3/4M	?

- dbl* Takeout
- others* Natural

West	North	East	South
2♦	pass	2M	pass
pass	?		

- dbl* Takeout

West	North	East	South
2♦	dbl	2M	pass
pass	?		

dbl 18+

West	North	East	South
2♦	pass	2♥	pass
2♠	?		

dbl Takeout of spades

Responses to all these doubles are the same as after a double of a weak two-bid. Lebensohl applies if you normally play it after (2M) – dbl – (pass).

West	North	East	South
2♦	pass	2M	?

- 2NT 15-18. Respond as to a 2NT opening*
- 4m 5+/5+ that minor and a major. 4♦ over 4♣ asks for major; 4♥ over 4♦ says pass or correct to spades*
- 3M Natural*
- 4M Natural*

West	North	East	South
2♦	pass	2♥	dbl
2♠	?		

- dbl Penalty*
- 3♥ Natural, assuming partner is short in hearts*
- 3♠ Asking for a spade stopper*

West	North	East	South
2♦	pass	2♥	pass
2♠	pass	pass	?

dbl Takeout of spades (respond as after 2♠-pass-pass-dbl)

West	North	East	South
2♦	dbl	2M	?

- dbl *Balanced with at least invitational values. Does not deny a four-card major. If game-forcing, will only have a stopper in the major bid*
- 2♠ *Natural*
- 2NT *Lebensohl intending to sign off, or game-forcing with a minor*
- 3♣ *Stayman, game-forcing, continuations as after 2NT-3♣*
- 3♦/3♥ *Transfers, at least invitational*
- 3♠ *Both minors, game forcing*
- 3NT *11-15, stopper in both majors*
- 4m *Strong invitation*
- 4M *Natural*
- 4NT *Blackwood*

West	North	East	South
2♦	dbl	2M	2NT
pass	?		

- 3♣ *13-15 balanced*
- 3♦/3♥/3♠ *18+, game-forcing*
- 3NT *18-23*

West	North	East	South
2♦	dbl	2M	2NT
pass	3♣	pass	?

- pass *Weak with clubs*
- 3♦ *To play*
- 3♥ *Clubs, game-forcing*
- 3♠ *Diamonds, game-forcing*
- 3NT *Balanced with stopper only in the major opponent did not bid*

There is a sequence where the opponents use a pass (or more unusually redouble) to show diamonds:

West	North	East	South
2♦	dbl	pass/rdbl	?

- pass* *Diamonds!*
- 2M* *To play*
- 2NT* *Clubs, forces 3♣ with 13-15, then 3♦ shows a forcing club 1-suiter, others natural, with clubs*
- 3♣* *Stayman, game-forcing, continuations as after 2NT-3♣*
- 3♦/3♥* *Transfers, at least invitational*
- 3♠* *Artificial, game-forcing, no diamond stopper*
- 3NT* *11-15, stoppers in both majors*
- 4m* *Strong invitation.*
- 4M* *Natural*
- 4NT* *Blackwood*

West	North	East	South
2♦	dbl	3 any	?

- dbl* *Penalties*
- New suit* *One-round force*

You can also show a strong hand by cuebidding whatever suit East bids.

If the auction goes like this (which is not allowed by some authorities if a strong option is included):

West	North	East	South
2♦	pass	pass	?

Bid as over a weak 2♦ opening