

EQUAL LEVEL CONVERSION DOUBLE (“ELCD”)

BACKGROUND: Traditionally, if an **Intervenor** holds opening count, its equivalent, or better, and support or tolerance for all three of the as-yet, un-bid, suits, a simple “**Take-Out Double**,” will suffice, as any suit picked by Partner, the **Advancer**, will satisfy the **Intervenor**. And when the Intervenor bids a new suit after initially making a “**Take-Out Double**,” ignoring his/her Responder’s chosen suit, he/she shows an even stronger 16 or more HCP’s, and a good 5-card or longer suit of his/her own. These additional HCP’s are also shown by the Intervenor bidding again by raising the Advancer’s choice of suits, as opposed to just accepting the choice and **not** re-bidding.

For Example:

<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>
1H	Dbl.	Pass	2D
Pass	2S (Shows 16 {+} HCP’s and 5 {+} Spades)		
	3D (Shows 16 {+} HCP’s)		
	Pass (Shows minimum Take-Out Double values)		

However, when a Partnership uses “**Equal Level Conversion Doubles**,” (“**ELCD**”), there is an exception to this traditional principle, as the traditional method, just reiterated, and the use of an “**ELCD**” are mutually exclusive. When using an “**ELCD**,” if the Take-Out Doubler's Partner bids **2C** in response to the Intervenor’s “**double**” and then re-bids **2D**, he/she is **not** promising a big hand.

For Example:

<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>
1H/1S	Dbl.	Pass	2C
Pass	2D (Shows 12 {+} HCP’s, shortness in Clubs, 4 Spades/Hearts (the other Major), and 5 {+} Diamonds)		

This conversion of Clubs to Diamonds, when using an “**ELCD**,” does **NOT** promise a big hand. It shows a hand with minimum (12-15 HCP) **Take-Out Double** values.

After an opening bid of one-of-either-Major suit by the Opponents, it also shows an opening hand or its equivalent, minimum HCP values, 4-cards in the as-yet, un-bid, Major suit, and five or more Diamonds. **Example:** If the Opponents were to have opened **1H**, and you have a hand such as: **AJ84 8 AJ973 A2**, it would be advantageous to reach a Spade contract should you find Partner with 4-Spades. Overcalling **2D**, or just “**Passing**,” might not achieve that possibility, as the Spade fit, if present, might be missed. Playing an “**ELCD**,” however, one can “**double**” with this hand. If Partner bids Spades, or Diamonds, great, you found a fit and you can just “**Pass**.” If, alternatively, Partner bids **2C**, you simply re-bid **2D**, as shown above. You are not showing a big hand with Diamonds! You are simply showing a hand that holds 4-Spades, the alternate Major suit, in this instance, but one holding a backup of 5 or more cards in Diamonds, as well.

The downside in using “**Equal Level Conversion Doubles**” is that if you really have a big 16 (+) HCP hand with a long, Diamond, holding, and if you were to “*double*,” and if Partner were to then bids **2C**, you would have to do something other than re-bid **2D**, as Partner won't expect 16 (+) HCP's. This is a small risk, one that is statistically unlikely to occur, and a small price to pay. When holding the bigger HCP holding; i.e., in order to show 16 (+) HCP's, the Doubler, in response to Partner's **2C** bid, can either cue-bid Opener's Major suit, else jump to **3D**, both of which are forcing, showing the stronger high-card point holding.

THE SUITS SHOWN WHEN USING “EQUAL LEVEL CONVERSION DOUBLES”

- (1) If the opening bid by the Opponents is a Major suit, an “**ELCD**” shows a Minor-Major combination held by the Intervenor which can be 5-4 or 6-4, or even longer.
- (2) If the opening bid by the Opponents is a Minor suit, the two suits referenced by the Intervenor, when using an “**ELCD**,” is both Major suits distributed 6-4, 4-6, 5-4, 4-5, or even 4-4.

If the Doubler's re-bid is at a higher level than Advancer's responsive call, it is *not* an “**Equal Level Conversion**,” rather it shows the traditional, standard, “*double-and-bid*,” 16 (+) HCP overcall, with a suit of 5-cards, or longer. In order to show extra HCP values, the Intervenor would have to jump his-her re-bid to **3D**, or bid a cue-bid of Opener's suit.

When playing an “**ELCD**,” therefore, the understanding is that the bid of a new suit by the Doubler is *not* forcing if it is presented at the same, “*equal*” level as the Advancer's response.

Finally, “*Equal Level Conversion Doubles*” are **NOT** alertable!

SUMMARY:

The principle idea, when using an “ELCD” is that any “double,” by an Overcaller, following an opening bid by an Opponent of either Major suit (1H or 1S), followed by a response to the Take-Out Double of 2C by Overcaller's Partner, followed by a re-bid of 2D by the Intervenor, shows 4-cards in the other, as-yet, un-bid Major suit and five-or more Diamonds. It does not show extra strength.

By Partnership agreement, an “ELCD” can also be used over an Opponent's opening call of either Minor suit, as well. Any “double” of an opening bid of either Minor suit (1C or 1D) bid by an Opponent shows both Majors.