

## 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 16 or more HCP’s and a good 5-card or longer suit of his/her own.

For Example:

<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>West</u>
<b>1H</b>	<b>Dbl.</b>	<b>Pass</b>	<b>2D</b>
<b>Pass</b>	<b>2S</b> (Shows 16 {+} HCP’s and 5 {+} Spades)		

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 “**ELCD**” are mutually exclusive. When using “**ELCD**,” if the Take-Out Doubler's Partner bids **2C** in response to the Intervenor’s “**Double**,” and then the Take-Out Doubler 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>
<b>1H/1S</b>	<b>Dbl.</b>	<b>Pass</b>	<b>2C</b>
<b>Pass</b>	<b>2D</b> (Shows 12 {+} HCP’s, shortness in Clubs, 4 Spades/Hearts (the other Major), and 5 {+} Diamonds)		

This conversion of Clubs to Diamonds, when using “**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 shows an opening hand or its equivalent, 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 “**ELCD**,” however, you 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 to 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 HCP 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 “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 “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 “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, “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.*