

“Maximal Double”

A “**Maximal Double**” is a competitive conventional “*double*” used mainly in two specific competitive auctions by an Opener to differentiate between a competitive bidding scenario and an actual Game-try. It is a “*double*” used to invite to Game when the auction is too crowded for any other approach, and to differentiate it from a competitive bid in support of the Partnership’s bid suit.

<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
2H	2S	3H	1S ????

(In this bidding scenario, South may have one of two (2) choices.)

1. “**Bid 3S**” = A hand which he/she wished to compete further and to **sign-off**, as it is non-forcing.
2. “**Double**” - A hand with which he/she wishes to **invite to Game**. Note: In this instance, Responder has the option of (a) dropping the bidding at **3S**, (b) continuing to Game by bidding **4S**, or, (c) converting the auction to a penalty scenario by simply “*passing*” Partner’s “**Maximal Double**.”

With the availability of the use of a “**Maximal Double**,” either hand can be described: i.e., **3S** would be a competitive sign-off, and a “**Maximal Double**” would be used as a conventional bid inviting to Game. To reiterate, a “*double*,” when used in this way, invites to Game, while a suit bid is merely competitive.

Prerequisites: For a “**Maximal Double**” to be in effect, the following conditions are, thus, necessary:

- The Opponents have competed and raised to the 3-level
- We have bid and raised to the 2-level in our agreed-upon suit
- Our suit **outranks them by one** (Spades over Hearts, or Hearts over Diamonds)
- We have not yet established a Game-force.
- The “*doubling*” hand can logically be in a position to try for Game

Important Note: The most apparent, obvious and evident disadvantage of the “**Maximal Double**” is the fact that the Partnership loses its ability to employ the call of a “*double*” as a **Penalty Double**.

If the competitive team’s suit is higher-ranking by one suit (as seen below), the “**Maximal Double**” is *not needed* and is *never used*.

<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
1S	2H	2S	1H ????

(In this bidding scenario, South may have one of three (3) choices:

1. “**Bid 3H**” - a competitive sign-off.
2. “**Bid “3D”**” - A “**conventional forcing bid**” showing a hand with which he/she wishes to **invite to Game**.
3. “**Double**” - for **Penalty**.