

Responsive Doubles

Used when: LHO opened a natural suit, partner neither passed nor bid notrump, RHO made a suit bid at or below 3S, and you wish to make a takeout call and get further description from partner. There are four situations (ranging from most to least commonly viewed as responsive) shown below. *Note that for simplicity's sake, all bids are shown to be at the lowest possible level. As mentioned above, the bidding may reach higher.*

(1) **(1Y)-X-(2Y)-X:** The Classic Responsive.

(2) **(1Y)-1Z-(2Y)-X:** Asking for another suit or additional length in the first.

(3) **(1Y)-X-(1Z)-X:** Some play this as Penalty. Many play it as Responsive. Discuss with your partner.

(4) **(1W)-1Z-(1Y)-X:** The most obscure one; check with your partner.

Most pairs who play this popular convention limit its use to these precise conditions: (1 and 2 only)

***a** - Our first action was a three-suit takeout double OR a simple suit overcall.*

***b** - It's possible we have a playable fit in any of **three** suits.*

***c** - The opponents must have bid **and** raised a suit.*

THE CLASSIC RESPONSIVE DOUBLE

After an opening, a **Takeout Double** by partner and a Two or Three Level Raise by the partner of the opener, the partner of the Takeout Doubler can also double, thereby providing descriptive information about his hand. This is known as a Responsive Double.

This sounds confusing, but take a look at the illustration:

West	North	East	South
1 ♦	Double	2 ♦	Double
			♠ Q873
			♥ Q1097
			♦ 7
			♣ Q852

The double of North is a Take-Out Double, but the double of South is a Responsive Double. South is too weak to cuebid the Diamonds, and South does not want to simply guess which suit North, his partner, would prefer. Therefore, South doubles and informs his partner that he has both Major suits. The Responsive Double. If South had a 5-card or more suit, then South would just bid it.

If South were to cuebid the Diamonds, that would force his partner to bid on the Three Level, and their contract might possibly be only on the Two Level. That is why **Mr. Fielding-Reid** came up with this Responsive Double. The Responsive Double can not equal a **Penalty Double** in this situation, and should not be construed as a Penalty Double.

RESPONSIVE DOUBLE #2

To illustrate this use of the Responsive Double, the following hand is from the 1997 World Team Championship between France and the United States.

Dealer: North			
Vulnerable: East-West			
United States: North-South			
North	East	South	West
♠ 32	♠ J4	♠ AK965	♠ Q1087
♥ K743	♥ A985	♥ QJ62	♥ 10
♦ Q5	♦ KJ1043	♦ 6	♦ A9872
♣ KQJ103	♣ A5	♣ 976	♣ 842
Pass	1 ♦	1 ♠	3 ♦ Preemptive
Double*			

*Responsive Double showing both unbid Suits, Hearts and Clubs

The Responsive Double of North met all the requirements. North had length in the two unbid suits, and also the strength required to make the Responsive Double.

If a Responsive Double is called after a raise of the Major suits, more information has already been exchanged than had a Minor suit been opened and raised. The Responsive Doubler knows the suit of his partner, the Takeout Doubler. The Responsive Doubler has therefore more descriptive information about the hand of his partner. The minimum requirement of high card points is approximately the same, but the shape of the hand becomes more important. How many cards in the Major suit of the opponents does the possible Responsive Doubler have? Could his partner, the Takeout Doubler, possibly be void?

In general, most bridge partnerships agree that there is a **Responsive Double through to 4 Diamonds**. You and your partner should come to a general understanding and include this in your individual Partnership Agreement. Also, there should be agreement as to whether a Responsive Double is valid over Weak Two Bids and stronger Preempts.

Another Example of Classic Responsive Double

A double by advancer, after overcall has bid, and after responder has raised opener's suit, is responsive, and shows the unbid suits. Similar in nature to negative doubles, although not so common.

S: KQJx
H: AJTx
D: x
C: K9xx

S: Axxx
H: Qxxx
D: xx
C: JTx

W	N	E	S
1C	X	2C	X
3C	4H	P/O	

Notes: North's double is takeout. South's double is responsive, showing tolerance for the other three suits. If North had bid 1S instead of X, South's double would show hearts and diamonds. If East had bid a different suit than opener, South's X would be for penalties.

How many High Card Points

The high card point range will differ according to the individual Partnership Agreement. After the opponents settle on one suit, the shape of the hand also begins to play an important role. Remember also, that South may pass after his Right Hand Opponent makes a bid. The high card point range also changes with the Level of the Auction. So we have:

Partnership Agreement

Shape of the Hand

Level of the Auction

High Card Points

These four elements must enter into the decision of partner of doubler. All four elements must be considered. It is conclusive that most high card points are in the other three hands, and that partner of doubler will be weak. Therefore, a Responsive Double of 2 Clubs or 2 Diamonds would require a minimum of 6 points (distributional points added), and a Responsive Double of 3 Clubs or 3 Diamonds would require a minimum of 9 points (distributional points added).