

Responsive Double Basics

Presented by Mike Savage

In general, **Responsive Doubles** occur when your partner has made a take-out double or has overcalled a suit and the next hand has raised opener's suit. It's a take-out double by the defense after your partner has bid. It shows the unbid suits and values to compete, sometimes with strong game interest. Here's when you use them:

1. When the opponents open the bidding and your partner makes a **take-out double** and the next hand raises opener's suit, a double by you is **Responsive** and should show at least 4-4 in two of the three unbid suits - except that over **1H-Dbl-2H**, a double should *deny* four spades since a double of 1H (almost) guarantees spade support. Your partner should now bid his lowest ranking 4-card suit and if you have a fit, you can pass or raise, according to your strength. If you have less than four in the suit your partner bid, you should now bid your lowest suit and your partner will choose between that suit and the other unbid suit - as you should have *at least* four cards in two suits to make a Responsive Double.
2. When the opponents open the bidding and your partner makes a **simple overcall** and the next hand raises opener's suit, if you also play Responsive Doubles over partner's overcalls, a double by you now is for takeout. If your partner overcalled in a major suit, you typically would be 5-5 or 5-4 in the unbid suits and perhaps a doubleton in your partner's suit. If the suit partner overcalled is a minor, you could have support for his minor but still make a Responsive Double - looking for a major fit also.

So after your partner doubles or makes an overcall and the next hand raises, a double by you now is **Responsive** - for take-out. If your partner has overcalled a minor, and you have a fit for partner and also have a poor five-card major, you can make a Responsive Double fairly lightly HCP-wise at the two-level as you can always show the fit on your next bid. If you have a good 5-card or longer major and values to bid, bid your suit at the two-level even if you *have* a fit. In general, when you make a Responsive Double you should have 8/9 or more HCP at the two-level and usually be quite shapely at the three-level (or higher).

How high you play Responsive Doubles is up to your partnership. Some play Responsive Doubles only thru **2S**, others play them thru **3S** (usually after a preemptive jump raise). *Some* modern experts play that if your partner overcalls one of a major and the next hand makes a weak jump raise of his partner's opening suit, a double by you is an *invitational raise* while bidding three of partner's suit is merely competitive.

Responsive Double Basic Guidelines and some other options after partner's take-out double:

1C/1D-Dbl-Simple Raise-Dbl = Responsive, shows any two suits, 6-9 or more HCP (in a few partnerships this shows the major suits, never a major and a minor).

1C/1D-Dbl-Simple Raise-3-level cue bid = Shows game going values but is not sure what game to bid.

1C/1D-Dbl-Simple/Jump Raise-4-level cue bid = Shows at least 4-4 in the majors and values for game.

1H-Dbl-2H-Dbl = Responsive, shows the minors (a minority show *any* two suits) 8-10 or more HCP.

1H-Dbl-2H-3H = Shows opening values, asks primarily for a heart stopper, or further hand description.

1S-Dbl-2S-Dbl = Responsive, shows both minors, *denies* four hearts and has 8-10 or more HCP.

1S-Dbl-2S-3S = Shows opening values, asks primarily for a spade stopper or further hand description.

1 of anything-Dbl-1 of a suit-Dbl = Penalty. In some partnerships the auction of: **1C-Dbl-1D-Dbl** is an exception to this and is used as a **Responsive Double**.

Responsive Doubles after partner's simple overcall:

1C/1D-1H/1S-Simple Raise-Dbl = Responsive, shows 5-5 or 5-4 (five in the major - four in the minor) in the unbid suits, usually with a two-card fit in partner's suit.

1H-1S-2H-Dbl = Responsive, showing 5-5, 5-4 in the minors with good suits and/or at least 10 HCP and also denies a primary fit in partner's suit.

1S-2C/2D-2S-Dbl = Responsive, shows 5-5 or 5 hearts & 4 in the unbid minor, usually with a two-card fit.

1S-2H-2S-Dbl = Responsive, showing 5-5, 5-4 in the minors with good suits and/or at least 10 HCP and also denies a primary fit in partner's suit.