

SPECIAL DOUBLES (Convention Card)

- **Negative Doubles** thru _____ (September 27th and October 4th lessons)

Your partner has opened the bidding and the opponent overcalls. A double by you is negative—not for penalty.

Most players play negative doubles through 3S.

Negative doubles do not need to be alerted.

- **Support Doubles** thru _____ (November 1st lesson)

Your partner has opened a suit at the 1-level. You have bid a new suit at the 1-level. The opponent either makes a double or an overcall. A redouble or a double by your partner tells you (the responder) that he has 3-card support for the suit you bid.

Support doubles normally are played through 2S.

The support double/redouble bids **MUST** be alerted.

- **Maximal Double** (August 2nd lesson)

Your partner overcalls and you raise his overcall one level. If the opponents bid their suit at the 3-level, a double by your partner (who made the initial overcall) is telling you that he is at the top of the simple overcall range. He is asking you to bid 3 or 4 of the agreed suit depending on how good was your raise of his suit.

Maximal doubles do not have to be alerted.

- **Responsive Doubles**

The opponents have opened the hand and your partner makes a takeout double or overcalls. The responder raises his partner's suit. A double by you is known as a responsive double—the focus of today's lesson.

Most players play responsive doubles through 3S. the same level as they play negative doubles.

The responsive double does not have to be alerted.

Competitive Bidding—Part IX
(November 8, 2021)

RESPONSIVE DOUBLES

A **Responsive Double** is a (takeout) double by the advancer after the opponents have bid and immediately raised a suit and partner has acted either by making a takeout double or an overcall. The responsive double is not much different in meaning than the negative double. The opportunity to use it occurs frequently.

On your Convention Card under Special Doubles, you need to specify the level to which you play responsive doubles. Most people play the same range for responsive doubles as they play for negative doubles. This consistency makes it easier to remember.

Why play responsive doubles?

The following two bidding problems illustrate why the responsive double is a valuable bidding tool.

Problem 1. **K975** **Q1082** **864** **Q7** (your hand)

Bidding: LHO Partner RHO You
 (1D) Dbl (2D) ?

You want to compete since you have four cards in each major and you expect your partner to be at least 4-3 in the majors for his takeout double. The problem, of course, is should you bid 2H or 2S? Partner might hold one of the following hands:

AQ84 KJ7 5 KJ643

or

AQ4 KJ73 5 KJ643

Obviously, opposite the first hand you want to reach 2S. In the second hand, you want to be in 2H. Since it is hard to be a good guesser, is there a better way to place the contract in the optimal place? The answer is to make a responsive double. When the opponents have bid and raised a minor suit and partner has made a takeout double, your responsive double simply asks him to choose his better major.

Problem 2. Q4 KJ84 94 K10873 (your hand)

Bidding: LHO Partner RHO You
(1D) 1S (2D) ?

A responsive double in this case shows the two unbid suits and a tolerance for partner's suit. You are quite happy to hear partner rebid his spades if he has overcalled on:

AK9752 Q5 852 Q6

or on

AKJ98 Q5 852 A62

However, partner might hold the following type hand:

AK743 Q1093 85 Q6

A part score in hearts will play better.

Or, perhaps partner might hold the following type hand:

AK743 5 852 QJ62

Now you want to play in 3C. By making a responsive double, you tell your partner that you have support for both hearts and clubs plus a little something in spades, as well as sufficient values to compete.

NOTE: The opener has bid a suit and your partner makes a takeout double. If the responder bids a new suit, some partnerships play that a double by the advancer is a penalty double. Larry Cohen recommends responsive doubles in all these type situations.

Responsive Double Sequences

The following bidding sequences indicate the use of the responsive double by the advancer:

<u>Takeout Double</u>				<u>Overcall</u>			
(1C)	Dbl	(2C)	Dbl	(1C)	O	(2C)	Dbl (O = overcall}
(1D)	Dbl	(2D)	Dbl	(1D)	O	(2D)	Dbl
(1H)	Dbl	(2H)	Dbl	(1H)	O	(2H)	Dbl
(1S)	Dbl	(2S)	Dbl	(1S)	O	(2S)	Dbl

Requirements for a Responsive Double

In all cases, you need sufficient values to compete at the level to which you are driving your partner. Opposite a takeout double, this need not be very much. If the suit bid and raised is to the two level, you can make a responsive double with 6 to 8 HCP. If the suit bid and raised is to the three level, you should hold at least 9 HCP. If the suit bid and raised is at the four level, you need a minimum of 10 HCP. These values should be a little higher opposite an overcall, although the better your shape and tolerance for partner's suit, the less HCP you need to make a responsive double.

Assume you and your partner have agreed to play responsive doubles through 3S. What bid would you make holding the following hands?

Problem 3. J863 KJ43 83 Q103

Bidding: LHO Partner RHO You
 (1C) Dbl (2C) ?

Make a responsive double. You have too many points to pass and you have four-card support for both majors. You are asking your partner to bid his better major.

Problem 4. K52 AJ86 9832 103

Bidding: LHO Partner RHO You
 (1C) Dbl (2C) ?

Simply bid 2H. You have eight high card points and four hearts. Bid your suit at the cheapest level. (See previous lessons on the takeout double, September 13th and September 20th.) If you make a responsive double, your partner will think you are four/four in the majors. What a disaster it would be if the opener rebid 3C and your partner were to bid 3S!

Problem 5. J863 KJ43 83 Q103

Bidding: LHO Partner RHO You
 (1C) Dbl (3C) ?

Although you are four-four in the majors, your hand is much too weak to make a responsive double. If you do double and your partner has enough strength for you to make a three-level contract, he may very well bid a major suit game. Down one. On the hand above, you should pass and hope partner can double a second time. **Never make a bid that will mislead your partner.**

Problem 6. Q4 8 KQ743 AJ853

Bidding: LHO Partner RHO You
 (2H) 2S (3H) ?

Since you are playing responsive doubles through three spades, you should double. The above example illustrates why responsive doubles were invented. You want to compete, but you are not certain which of your suits to bid. You can stand for your partner to rebid 3S. Your double tells your partner that you have the minor suits and tolerance for his spade suit.

Problem 7. KJ108 J9765 8 K94

Bidding: LHO Partner RHO You
 (1D) 2C (2D) ?

Here, you want to make a responsive double showing cards in the major suits. It is permissible to conceal support for partner's club suit in the hope that a major-suit fit may be found.

Problem 8. AQ975 KJ6 1043 98

Bidding: LHO Partner RHO You
 (1D) Dbl (2D) ?

Bid 3S. You have a five-card suit and a good 10 HCP. You have too much to simply bid 2S. Your partner will know you have in the range of 9-11 HCP (see September 20th lesson) and will bid accordingly.

Problem 9. J5 xxx AQxx Axxx

Bidding: LHO Partner RHO You
 (1D) Dbl (4D) ?

Since you are playing responsive doubles through the level of 3S, a double by you would be for PENALTY.

Problem 10. A85 53 10652 AKJ3

Bidding: LHO Partner RHO You
 (1S) Dbl (3S) ?

A double here would be considered as a responsive double. The best strategy here is to pass or bid 3NT with your hand. NOTE: holding the above hand, you would relish having your bid be a penalty double.

Bidding After Partner has Made a Responsive Double

If your partner has made a responsive double (after your takeout double), the principles of limit bidding apply. That is: (a) minimum suit bids show minimum values; (b) jump bids (or 2NT) show extra values and are game invitational if below game; and (c) a cue-bid of the enemy suit is the only game forcing bid you can make.

Problem 11.	97	AK98	A982	Q102
Bidding:	Opp	Partner	Opp	You
	(2S)	Dbl	(1S) (P)	Dbl ?

With a minimum takeout double, you should make a minimum bid. Your partner's responsive double indicates little interest in hearts. He is asking you to bid your better minor suit. So, bid 3D.

Problem 12.	AJ7	KJ108	AQJ9	32
Bidding:	Opp	Partner	Opp	You
	(2C)	Dbl	(1C) (P)	Dbl ?

When you jump to 3H you are showing extra values and a game invitational hand. Your partner should pass with a minimum responsive double.

Problem 13.	AJ7	AQ7	A42	A832
Bidding:	Opp	Partner	Opp	You
	(2S)	Dbl	(1S) (P)	Dbl ?

You have too many HCP to simply overcall 1N. When your partner makes a responsive double, you know that your side has game. Bid 3NT. Or, if they are vulnerable vs. nonvulnerable, you might consider passing converting the responsive double to a penalty double.

Next Week: Focus will be on the Unusual 2NT and Sandwich NT Bids

Assignment from last week.

			North	East	South	West
	1092		Bidding: You	LHO	Pard	RHO
	Q108			1C (P)	1H	(2D)
	AK6			Dbl* (P)	6H	All Pass
	A753					
			*Support Dbl—must be alerted			
			Contract: 6H			
			Opening Lead: Q of diamonds			
AJ4		8763				
3		62				
QJ10974		8532				
K104		QJ9				
	KQ5		Losers: Spades = 2			
	AKJ9754		Hearts = 0			
	VOID		Diamonds = 0			
	862		Clubs = 2			

Bidding: You use a Support Double to show 3-card heart support. Your partner blasts into a 6H contract.

Play of the Hand: West leads the queen of diamonds. Aren't you surprised to see that more than half of your partner's points are in diamonds?! How would you play to make the slam?

Since West overcalled, he is favored to hold the ace of spades; but, East might hold the jack of spades. Clubs may break 3-3. You win the diamond lead and dump a club. You play the other big diamond and dump another club from your hand.

Cash the ace of clubs and trump a club with the ace of hearts. Lead a small trump to dummy's 10 of hearts. Trump another club with the king of hearts. When the clubs break 3-3, you pull the remaining trumps and ditch a spade on your fourth club. You concede a spade and claim your contract. (Refer to Dummy Reversal Lesson on June 14.)

If the clubs had not split 3-3, you could still fall back on finessing East for the jack of spades. In this hand, the finesse would fail and you would go set.

The important thing to note in the play of this hand is to give yourself options if there is more than one line of play to bring home the contract.

