

Hamilton Bridge Centre

Responsive Doubles

Helping partner find a fit (or have a fit).



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Introduction

A responsive double is used under the following circumstances:

1. Your left-hand opponent opens one of a suit.
2. Your partner makes a takeout double.
3. Your right-hand opponent raises his partner's suit.

Your responsive double (a "response" to partner's takeout double) shows two things:

1. A minimum point count, depending on the level to which your right-hand opponent has raised.
2. A choice of two suits for partner. The specific suits depend on whether the opponents are bidding a minor suit or a major suit.

Responsive doubles must be alerted.

Note: Many players also use responsive doubles when partner has made a simple overcall. This extension of responsive doubles will **not** be covered in this article.

Examples

The following examples show responsive doubles:

Example 1

North dealer, neither side vulnerable

North

1♥

East

Double

South

2♥

West

Double

West's double is responsive.

Example 2

North dealer, neither side vulnerable

North

1♣

East

Double

South

2♣

West

Double

West's double is responsive.

Example 3

North dealer, neither side vulnerable

North

1♥

East

Double

South

3♥

West

Double

West's double is responsive.

How High To Go

Players who use responsive doubles generally play them up to the same level as they play negative doubles.

Point Count

Use the same point count requirement that you would use for negative doubles. A good guideline is:

- 6 points at the two-level
- 8 points at the three-level
- 10 points at the four-level

There is no upper limit for responsive doubles.

What Suits Does It Show?

Opponents Are Bidding A Minor Suit

When the opponents are bidding a minor suit, a responsive double typically shows **both majors**. Generally you will have four cards in each.

Example 4

North dealer, neither side vulnerable

North

1♣

East

Double

South

2♣

West

Double

West's responsive double shows both majors, and asks East to pick the suit.

Opponents Are Bidding A Major Suit

When the opponents are bidding a major suit, a responsive double typically shows **both minors**. Generally you will have four cards in each. If you hold the unbid major and a minor suit, do not use a responsive double. Respond in the unbid major suit instead.

Example 5

North dealer, neither side vulnerable

North

1♥

East

Double

South

2♥

West

Double

West's responsive double shows both minors, and asks East to pick the suit. West does not have four or more spades. West should bid spades if he holds four or more.

Responsive Doubles In Action

Example 6

North dealer, neither side vulnerable

North

1♣

East

Double

South

2♣

West

??

You're sitting West with each of the following hands:

♠ Q 8 7 3
♥ K J 9 3
♦ 10 8
♣ 9 6 4

Make a responsive double to show both majors.

♠ Q 8 7 3
♥ 9 6 4
♦ 10 8
♣ K J 9 3

Respond 2♣. You cannot make a responsive double without four or more cards in both major suits.

Example 7

North dealer, neither side vulnerable

North

1♠

East

Double

South

2♣

West

??

You're sitting West with each of the following hands:

♠ 9 6 4
♥ 10 8
♦ K Q 9 3
♣ A 10 9 3

Make a responsive double to show both minors.

♠ 10 8
♥ K Q 9 3
♦ 9 6 4
♣ K J 9 3

Respond 3♥. Always respond in the unbid major when you can.



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