

This series is based on *Grant Standard*, a set of conventions and agreements that are in popular use today, such as 15-17 INT openings, five-card majors, and weak two-bids. A summary chart of *Grant Standard* and the corresponding convention card can be found at www.AudreyGrant.com. The site also has *Grant Basic*, a simpler set of agreements.

Earlier articles in this series appeared in the *Bridge Bulletin* and can also be found under 'Articles' at www.AudreyGrant.com.

When our partner makes a takeout double, as *advancer*—the partner of the takeout doubler—we are expected to bid if our right-hand opponent passes. We only pass if we want to convert the takeout double into a penalty double, an infrequent occurrence.

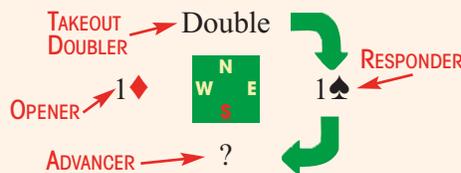
If our right-hand opponent bids, we are off the hook. We can pass with a weak hand, since the contract is no longer doubled and partner will have another opportunity to bid with a strong hand.

A takeout double is a competitive action, so both sides are contending for the contract. In the aggressive style of today's game, it's quite likely that our right-hand opponent will take some action over partner's takeout double: bidding a new suit or notrump, raising left-hand opponent's suit—perhaps with a preemptive jump—, or redoubling.

Just because we don't *have* to bid as *advancer* when our right-hand opponent bids doesn't mean we shouldn't *want* to bid when we have a little something. After all, partner invited us into the auction and showed the equivalent of opening bid values. When we have 6 or 7 points or more, the contract is as likely to belong to our side as theirs. Let's take a closer look.

Advancing a Double When Right-Hand Opponent Bids

When Right-Hand Opponent Bids a New Suit or Notrump



With this hand we were not looking forward to having to bid something (2♣?) if our right-hand opponent had passed. Responder's 1♠ bid has made it easy for us to pass and keep out of the auction. Thanks opponent!

If responder had passed, we would happily have bid 2♣, since we have a nice suit and some values.

Now that responder has bid, we are no longer obligated to say anything. However, we should *freely* bid 2♣ to let partner know we have some values and would like to compete for the contract. Why should we let the opponents choose the trump suit when our side has at least as much strength as they do?

This is a little less comfortable. We'd have an easy time bidding 1♥ if responder had passed. Now we'd have to go to the two level to compete. Still, partner has invited us into the auction, and it would be timid not to compete with six useful-looking high-card points. We should bid 2♥.

Notice that we bid hearts rather than clubs, even though our club holding is stronger. With equal length in both suits, we always give

preference to the major. Major suit contracts are worth more than minor suits, and if our side does have enough for game, 4♥ or 4♠ requires one less trick than 5♣ or 5♦. Also, the takeout doubler is more likely to have four-card support for an unbid major than an unbid minor. True, we could find ourselves playing in an ugly 4-3 heart fit at the two level, but we have to fight back when the opponents compete for the contract.

Will partner expect us to have a lot when we freely bid hearts at the two level? No. **Partner should only expect about 6-8 points. With a stronger hand, we would jump a level.** Speaking of which:

This hand has 9 high-card points plus 1 length-point for the five-card heart suit. If responder had passed, we would have jumped to 2♥ to show about 9-11 points and interest in reaching game. When responder bids 1♠, we must jump to 3♥ to show this much strength. A bid of 2♥ would only be competitive, about 6-8 points.

This is interesting! When partner doubled 1♦, we were planning to jump to 2♠ to show our values and interest in game. What do we do when our right-hand opponent bids our suit? We double. **A double of right-hand opponent's new suit or notrump bid after partner's takeout double is for penalty.**

We double for two reasons. First, we expect to defeat 1♠. Partner should have at least three spades for the takeout double, and we planned to contract for at least eight tricks with spades as trump. Second, right-hand opponent may be 'fooling around' with only one or two spades, trying to talk us out of our spade game. This is a popular tactic. Responder plans to run back to diamonds if doubled.

♠ J 8 3
♥ 7 4
♦ 9 8 6 3
♣ J 9 7 5

♠ 6 4 3
♥ Q 7
♦ 8 7 5
♣ A J 10 4 2

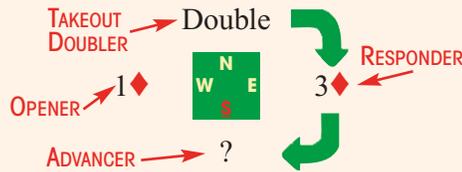
♠ 9 7
♥ J 7 4 3
♦ 8 7 5
♣ K Q 5 4

♠ 8 3
♥ K 10 6 4 2
♦ A 9 3
♣ Q 8 7

♠ K Q 10 5
♥ A 4
♦ 9 7 2
♣ J 10 6 3

When Right-Hand Opponent Raises the Doubled Suit

It's not unusual for responder to raise opener's suit when it is doubled for takeout. Responder wants to show support, and at the same time, make it more difficult for advancer to get into the auction. In addition, the modern style is for responder's jump raise to be a preemptive action, showing good support but a weak hand in terms of high cards. Again, the objective is to make it more challenging for the other side to compete effectively.



Notice how effective responder's jump raise to 3♦ can be when advancer has a hand like this. We would have a comfortable bid of 1♥ if responder had passed, and we would be willing to compete to 2♥, showing about 6–8 points, if responder had merely raised to 2♦. What do we do over 3♦? Passing seems a bit timid, but bidding 3♥ is a bit aggressive. If we bid 3♥, how is partner supposed to know if we are just competing, or if we are inviting to game with about 9-11 points?

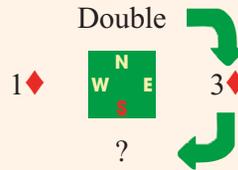
There is no right answer. The preemptive jump raise to 3♦ has had its desired effect of interfering with our nicely structured scheme for advancing. We'll just have to choose between an overbid or an underbid.

The Responsive Double

Responder's raise of opener's suit does give us another option. We can double. Although a double of responder's new suit or notrump bid is for penalty, most of today's partnerships play that **advancer's double of responder's raise—or jump raise—is for takeout**. This is known as a **responsive double**.

The reason that the double of a raise is used for takeout rather than penalty is that the opponents have found a fit. It's unlikely that we will

want to double them at a low level for penalty, especially since partner is likely short in the opponents' suit. Whereas, if responder bids notrump or a new suit, the opponents don't necessarily have a fit, so advancer may want to double for penalty.



With this hand we'd like to compete at the three level, but it's not clear whether to bid 3♥ or 3♠. Although partner may have four-card support for whichever suit we choose, it's also possible we'll land in a 4–3 fit if we simply take a guess.

The responsive double solves our dilemma. Partner's takeout double has asked us to pick a trump suit. In effect, the responsive double throws this back to partner: "Why don't you help choose the suit?" Whether partner picks hearts or spades, we'll have found an eight-card fit.

RESPONSIVE DOUBLE

When partner makes a takeout double of a suit and right-hand opponent raises the suit, double by advancer is for *takeout*, not for penalty.

We don't make a responsive double if we know which suit we prefer. With this hand, we'd simply bid 3♥.

When Partner Makes a Responsive Double

A responsive double asks for help in choosing where to play. Advancer is implying that there is more than one possible contract; with a distinct preference, advancer would simply bid the appropriate suit. So, **the partnership is searching for a fit and typically bids suits 'up the line' until a suitable fit is found**. Here are some examples.

WEST	EAST
♠ A K 5 2	♠ 8 4 3
♥ 10 6	♥ J 4
♦ K J 6 2	♦ A 10 7 3
♣ Q 8 5	♣ A J 4 2

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
			1♥
Double	2♥	Double	Pass
2♠	Pass	3♣	Pass
3♦	Pass	Pass	Pass

West makes a takeout double of South's 1♥ opening bid and North raises to 2♥. East would like to compete but isn't sure whether to bid clubs or diamonds. If East simply guesses to bid 3♣, the partnership would land in a 4-3 fit.

So East makes a responsive double, asking for West's help. West bids the cheapest suit, 2♠. East doesn't like spades and suggests 3♣. West doesn't much care for clubs, but knows that East must have another place to play and tries 3♦. Finally, the fit has been found and the partnership stops in its best partscore.

WEST	EAST
♠ J 4	♠ Q 10 3
♥ K Q 5 3	♥ A 8 2
♦ A 8 4 2	♦ 10 7 6
♣ K J 2	♣ A Q 8 5

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
			1♠
Double	2♠	Double	Pass
3♦	Pass	3NT	All Pass

After West's takeout double of 1♠, North raises to 2♠. East has enough to take the partnership to game but doesn't want to jump to 5♣ with only a four-card suit or jump to 3NT with such a tentative spade holding. Instead, East starts with a responsive double. When West bids diamonds, East suggests 3NT.

With a relatively balanced hand, West decides to accept the choice of 3NT. With a more unbalanced hand, West could bid again, knowing that East is suggesting more than one possible contract.

Although the responsive double seems straightforward—advancer's double of a raise is for takeout—, it is a little tricky to apply in practice. Both partners must work together to land in the best spot. ♦