

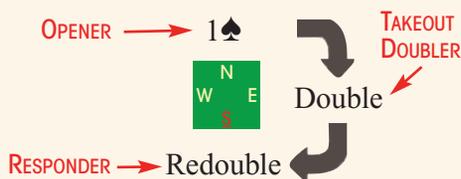
What's Standard?

by David Lindop

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.

One of responder's options when opener bids one-of-a-suit and the next player doubles is to **redouble**.



THE REDOUBLE

When opener's bid of one-of-a-suit is doubled, a redouble by responder shows **10 or more high-card points**.

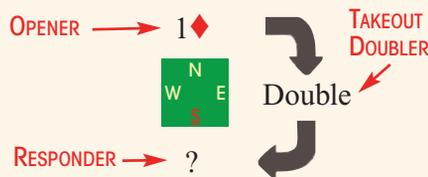
In previous issues, we looked at what happens after responder decides to redouble. But what does it mean if responder doesn't redouble?

The obvious implication is that responder has fewer than 10 high-card points. That's generally the case, but in some situations responder may choose not to redouble even with 10 or more points. So let's take a closer look at responder's other actions.

A New Suit at the One Level

Standard practice is that **a new suit at the one level is forcing after a double, unless responder is a passed hand**. This allows responder to bid naturally with fewer than 10 points, and also with more than 10 points when appropriate.

When Responder Does Not Use the Redouble



When East doubles, we don't have to stretch to respond since our partner will have another chance to bid when the auction comes back around. Nevertheless, we should respond 1♥ with this hand, the same bid we would have made if East had passed.

One reason for making our normal response over the double is that we do not want to be shut out of the auction. If we pass, for example, the auction might continue:

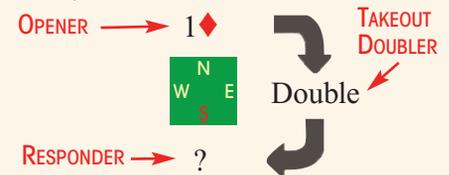
WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
1♠	1♦	Double	Pass
Pass	Pass	2♠	?

Now it's too late to introduce our heart suit since we'd have to bid it at the three level. Much better to take the opportunity to show our suit at the one level.

There is some argument for not bidding a new suit after the takeout double. If our opponent is showing support for the unbid suits, isn't it unlikely that we have a fit with our partner in one of those suits?

There is some truth to that, but many players make takeout doubles with little or no support for one of the unbid suits. So we may still have an eight-card or longer fit. In the above example, East might have three-card support for hearts, but that would still leave room for partner to hold three or four hearts.

Even if partner doesn't have a fit, our 1♥ bid may help partner choose the best contract. Partner may be able to bid notrump without having to worry about hearts.



So although some players might prefer to respond INT over the double with this type of hand, ignoring the double and bidding 1♠ is reasonable. We don't want to be talked out of our 4-4 spade fit.

How about this hand? With our 10 high-card points, we have enough to redouble when East doubles partner's 1♦ opening. But we would be very uncomfortable if the auction were to continue:

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
1♠	1♦	Double	Redouble
Pass	Pass	2♠	?

We don't want to double the 2♠ contract for penalty, but we also don't want to bid 3♥ since that would now be forcing and might get us too high. Instead, it makes more sense to simply bid our heart suit right away. Now we are comfortable if the auction continues like this:

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
1♠	1♦	Double	1♥
Pass	Pass	2♠	?

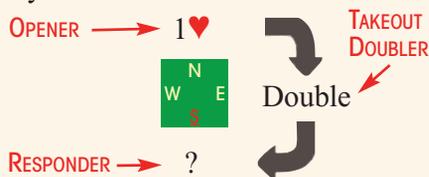
We can simply bid 3♦, invitational, having already shown our hearts.

So **we aren't forced to redouble just because we have 10 or more high-card points**. We can use our judgment and simply bid a new suit at the one level if we think the auction might go awkwardly. We're better prepared to bid again later. That's why a new suit at the one level is forcing.

A New Suit at the Two Level

Unlike a new suit at the one level, standard practice is that **responder's non-jump new suit at the two level is not forcing after a takeout double.**

This may seem strange—and some players prefer to treat any new suit response as forcing—but experience has shown that it usually more effective for responder to be able to introduce a new suit at the two level with fewer than 10 high-card points. With 10 or more high-card points and a suit that would have to be shown at the two level, responder always starts with a redouble.



If East had passed, we would have to respond 1NT with this hand since we aren't strong enough

♠ 10 4
♥ 6 2
♦ 8 6 5
♣ A Q J 9 7 3

to bid a new suit at the two level. But when East doubles, we can make the much more informative bid of 2♣, non-forcing. We might win the auction, get partner off to the best lead if they win the auction, or help the partnership compete for the contract.

In effect, treating a new suit at the two level as non-forcing gives us an advantage with this type of hand. We can immediately show our suit, which we could not do if East had passed or overcalled. That can be valuable in a competitive auction.

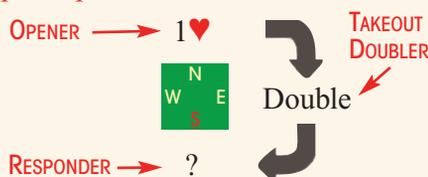
Let's give responder more strength.

Since a new suit at the two level is non-forcing, we must now start with a redouble, planning to bid our suit on the next round. That's okay. With this much strength and a good suit, we're not afraid of being shut out of the auction if the opponents bid. We're willing to show the clubs at the three level or higher, if necessary. And we can double the opponents for penalty if they get too frisky.

♠ K 4
♥ 6 2
♦ 8 6 5
♣ A K J 9 7 3

The Preemptive Jump Raise

Since we could redouble with 10 or more points and support for partner's suit, there's no need for a jump raise to the three level to be a limit raise. Instead, **a jump raise of opener's suit is preemptive after a takeout double.**



It's standard practice to jump to 3♥ with this type of hand when East doubles. The basic idea is to make it more challenging for the opponents to enter the auction and find their correct level if the deal belongs to their side. Even if they do enter the auction, our jump creates some uncertainty. For example:

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
	1♥	Double	3♥
3♠?			

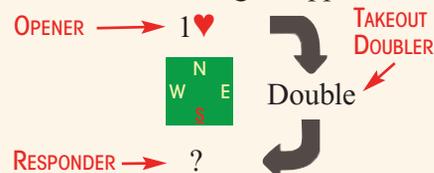
East can't be sure whether West's 3♠ is merely competitive or inviting game. West might simply want to compete to 1♠ or 2♠, but has been forced to overbid a little because of our jump. Or West might have wanted to jump to invite game, but our 3♥ bid has made that impossible.

Our preemptive jump raise is also descriptive. Knowing we have good trump support and little else, partner may be able to continue to game with a strong hand, or to take a sacrifice against the opponents' contract with a good playing hand but little defense. If partner does raise, the opponents are left to guess whether or not partner has a strong hand.

Raising to the three level with such a weak hand may seem dangerous. However, experience has shown that it is relatively safe when we have at least a nine-card fit. If we are doubled, any penalty is likely to be less than the value of their potential contract. Also, it's not easy for them to double for penalty. East is likely short in hearts, and double by West is usually played as takeout (responsive).

2NT as a Limit Raise

Although responder can start with a redouble when holding 10 or more points and support for opener's suit, it's not always a good idea, especially with four-card or longer support.



With four-card heart support, 10 high-card points, and 1 dummy point for the doubleton spade, we would have made a limit raise to 3♥ if East had passed. We can't do that after the double since it would be preemptive.

However, if we start with redouble, the auction might become awkward if it continues something like this:

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
	1♥	Double	Redouble
2♠	Pass	3♠	?

We haven't yet shown the heart support, and we can't do that without over-bidding to game. We also don't want to double for penalty with so much strength in partner's suit. To avoid this situation, **many partnerships use a jump to 2NT over an opponent's takeout double to show a limit raise or better in opener's suit.**

This is referred to as Jordan 2NT, or sometimes Truscott or Dormer 2NT. If we have agreed to use this convention, we would bid 2NT over the double with the above hand. Partner can return to 3♥ with a minimum hand, or jump to 4♥ to accept the invitation. If the opponents compete, partner is well-placed to decide whether to pass, double, or bid on.

Here we have a hand stronger than a limit raise, but we still start with 2NT when East doubles the 1♥ bid. If partner bids 3♥, we will continue to 4♥, showing a hand strong enough to force to game. The advantage of this approach is that a jump to 4♥ directly over the double is preemptive, and partner is well-positioned to know what to do if the opponents bid. ♠