

Conventional Wisdom



Filling out the convention card — part 12

As we continue to discuss the section of the convention card devoted to doubles, we recall that many low-level doubles are commonly played as something other than penalty. This is because the opportunities to inflict a large penalty on the opponents at a low level are rare. Therefore, more practical uses for the double have been developed.

Support

In competitive auctions, support doubles and redoubles are used to tell responder that you (as a 1♣ or 1♦ opener) have three-card support for responder's major. For example:

You	LHO	Partner	RHO
1♣	Pass	1♠	2♥
?			



In this auction, you could show three-card spade support by doubling with a hand such as: ♠K 8 5 ♥A 7 ♦J 5 2 ♣K Q 9 8 6

Why do this? It allows you to differentiate between three-card support (double) and four-card support (2♠). This can be valuable information for partner in deciding how high to compete, whether to bid a game or even what denomination to bid.

Change your hand slightly to

♠K 8 6 5 ♥A 7 ♦J 5 2 ♣K Q 9 8,

and you would rebid 2♠ to indicate four-card spade support.

Indicate how high the support double agreement is in effect on the "thru" line (2♥ is popular).

SPECIAL DOUBLES

After Overall: Penalty _____

Negative thru _____

Responsive thru _____ Maximal

Support: Dbl. thru _____ Redbl

Card-showing Min. Offshape T/O

Redouble

The support redouble occurs on this type of auction:

You	LHO	Partner	RHO
1♣	Pass	1♠	Dbl
?			

Playing this method, a redouble would show three spades while a raise (2♠) would promise four. If you play this method, check the appropriate boxes, decide how high the agreement applies and be sure to Alert the opponents.

Items in **RED** on the convention card must be Alerted and explained to the opponents upon request.

ALERT

Minimum Offshape Takeout

A takeout double of an opening bid usually shows a hand with opening values and shortness in the opener's suit. It also suggests support for the unbid suits. Some players, however, will make a takeout double on any hand with minimal opening values (the 12 to 14 HCP range) even if the pattern isn't classic. If, after RHO's 1♥ opening, you would double with a hand such as

♠A 5 ♥K 8 7 3 ♦K J 6 4 ♣Q 8 5,
check the box.

Card-showing

If your low-level competitive doubles show values without being strictly penalty or negative in nature, check this box. For example, if partner opens 1♣, RHO bids 1♥ and you double simply to show a good hand regardless of the pattern, this would be a card-showing double.



Tip: Experienced players consider this type of double to be poor. Partner will have a difficult time trying to figure out your pattern if you double with a hand such as this.