

CHECKBACK STAYMAN BY RESPONDER

Eddie Kantar has pointed out the unplayability of standard bidding after a 1NT rebid by opener:

Opener	Responder
1♣	1♠
1NT?	

Responder may now want to sign off, invite game, or force to game with a suit bid. There are only two levels of bidding available for the three actions, however, and three into two won't go. Kantar's answer was to make all jump rebids by responder invitational. With stronger hands he bids an artificial 2♣ and then makes his forcing bid. Unfortunately he can't sign off in clubs.

Others remedy that drawback by using the lowest unbid minor ("New Minor Forcing") for the artificial bid, permitting responder to sign off in opener's minor suit. He can no longer sign off in the unbid minor, however. Presumably this is a lesser evil. But what if there is no unbid minor?

Opener	Responder
1♣	1♦
1NT?	

How can responder make a signoff bid in clubs, an invitational bid in clubs, or a forcing bid in clubs, with only two bids to choose from (2♣ and 3♣)? The same problem arises if responder wants to rebid in diamonds. How to sign off, invite, or force in diamonds?

The use of three-level jumps as invitational has other weaknesses. Suppose the auction goes: 1♣-1♠; 1NT-3♣, with 3♣ invitational, and opener holds ♠Q32 ♥AJ5 ♦K84 ♣K732. What now? Bid 3♠ and find responder with a weak four-card suit? Besides, 3♠ is forcing, accepting the game invitation. No, opener must pass and perhaps miss a 5-3 spade fit. His problem is worse with a 3-4-3-3 hand. If responder uses "New Minor Forcing" (bidding 2♦ artificially) with five spades and invitational strength, she can't then make an invitational club bid (a 3♣ bid following NMF is forcing to game) if opener lacks spade support. A poor notrump contract may result.

Another situation: You have ♦K983 ♥Q1086 ♦KQJ4 ♣8 and respond 1♥ to partner's 1♦ opening. After his 1NT rebid you invite with 3♦. He now bids 3NT with ♠AJ10 ♥K7 ♦A7632 ♣Q75 and has no play, down two. How could he tell that five diamonds would be a better contract? You might have held ♠8 ♥Q1086 ♦KQJ4 ♣K983, and notrump is the right spot. There ought to be a way to describe these three-suited hands more accurately.

Another: Partner opens 1♣ and you say 1♠ with ♠A97542 ♥K983 ♦7 ♣85. When he rebids 1NT you must sign off with 2♠, but he could easily have four hearts: ♠Q ♥A1075 ♦KJ5 ♣KJ432. A heart contract is better, but how do you get there? A 2♥ rebid shows a weak 5-5 in the majors, maybe 6-5, or even 5-4, but not 6-4.

More: You respond 1♠ to a 1♣ opening, holding ♠AJ75 ♥62 ♦863 ♣KQJ2. When partner rebids 1NT, should you bid 3♣ or 2NT? If he has a minimum 2NT might be better, especially if he has only three clubs. If only we could invite game *and* show club support without going past the two level.

One more: You have ♠AJ7632 ♥A2 ♦A76 ♣Q9 and respond 1♠ after partner opens 1♣. When he rebids 1NT, how do you indicate slam interest? Wouldn't it be nice if 3♠ were forcing? Then partner could use Blackwood with ♠K85 ♥K76 ♦K52 ♣AJ102, and a 4♠ rebid by responder would imply no interest in slam: ♠J976432 ♥A2 ♦A7 ♣93

Try this approach as a solution to most such problems:

Opener	Responder
1♣/1♦/1♥	1♦/1♥/1♠
1NT	3♣/3♦/3♥/3♠ - forcing
	2♦/2♥/2♠ - weak (except for reverses)
	2♣ - Checkback Stayman

A 2♣ rebid is Checkback Stayman (CS), forcing and artificial. It usually shows a game try sort of hand, about 11 high card points (HCP). As we shall see, CS may also be used with some weaker or stronger hands. It's most common uses are (1) to find out if opener has support for responder's major, (2) to find out if opener has an unbid four-card major, and (3) to discriminate between game-going and game-invitational hands.

Warning: DO NOT USE CHECKBACK STAYMAN IF A REVERSE OR OTHER NATURAL BID WILL ADEQUATELY DESCRIBE YOUR HAND!

Partner will assume you do not have a good natural call when you use CS, and will therefore exclude certain holdings when he tries to picture your hand. Suppose you have ♠43 ♥KJ97 ♦AQ1083 ♣J4. After answering 1♦ to partner's 1♣ opening, your next call when he rebids 1NT is 2♥--a good descriptive forcing (but not to game) reverse, implying five diamonds and four hearts. CS would be unnecessary and incorrect.

If you have reversing values and support for partner's suit when he rebids 1NT, you can reverse and then raise or use CS, reverse, and then raise. Which? The former if you want to force, the latter if you want to invite. CS is not "adequate" with game-going values.

One advantage of playing CS is that opener can bypass a four-card major suit, e.g., rebidding 1NT after opening 1♣ with a 4-3-3-3 hand such as ♠Q1076 ♥J103 ♦AJ9 ♣AQ8 and receiving a red suit response. Even if a 4-4 fit is missed, such hands often play just as well in notrump if responder is also balanced. If she is unbalanced, she may be able to use CS to "check back" for spades. Besides, you don't want responder to make a club preference with a hand such as ♠842 ♥A987 ♦32 ♣K973, as she would after a 1♠ rebid. Nor do you want her competing to 3♣, or jumping to 3♣ invitational, with four-card support.

RULE: After opening 1♣, a new suit bid at the one level implies more than three clubs. If you can't stand bypassing a strong four-card major, just open the bidding with it (although you may have to rebid it with a minimum hand).

RULE: With a very weak hand responder should raise opener's minor rather than bid a new four-card suit. The raise is both descriptive and preemptive, shutting out a one-level overcall. It may enable opener to compete to the three level, something responder could not do.

RULE: Responder should not use CB with a 5-3-3-2 hand, even with five cards in a major. Just raise notrump. Similarly, do not use CB with a 4-3-3-3 hand (i.e., four spades and three-card support for partner's hearts).

RULE: Opener should not bypass a four-card spade suit when the response is 1♥ and he has a doubleton heart. It's okay to do this only with a 4=3=3=3 hand.

Further advice:

With a strong four-card suit and a weak next-lower five-card suit, respond in the four-carder when not strong enough to reverse. Respond 1♠ to 1♣ or 1♦ with ♠AKJx ♥J9xxx ♦xx ♣xx, then rebid 2H if opener bids 1NT and hope opener doesn't prefer spades. With ♠J9xx ♥AKxxx ♦xx ♣xx, respond 1♥ and pass a 1NT rebid, even with a singleton in opener's minor. With three cards in his minor you can use CS.

What does responder have in this auction?

Opener	Responder
1♥	1♠
1NT	2♥

Answer: A weak hand with five spades and three weak hearts, unbalanced: ♠Q8743 ♥986 ♦3 ♣K853. With four spades or better hearts, responder should bid 2♥ instead of 1♠.

Responder should generally not use CB with a 4-4-3-2 hand, even when holding an unbid major. If one of the suits is partner's and the strength is concentrated in the partnership's two suits, using CB is okay. Despite the balanced hand, inviting game by showing a raise for partner may be safer than raising notrump with zilch in the two unbid suits.

Responses to Checkback Stayman

Now, how do you respond to CS? In one of just three ways:

-- Show three-card support for a major that responder has bid.

-- Lacking that, show an unbid major or rebid a five-card heart suit (Not spades? No. How can you rebid 1NT after opening 1♠?).

-- Otherwise bid 2♦.

Opener	Responder
1♣	1♠
1NT	2♣
2♥	- four hearts, denies three spades
2♠	- spade support, may have four hearts
2♦	- denies spade support or four hearts

While opener may bypass a weak four-card major to rebid 1NT, even with 4-4-3-2 distribution, he must not bypass four spades over a 1♥ response unless he has three hearts, even with very weak spades. The reason is that a 2♠ response to CS might interfere with responder's plans.

Responder's Next Bid

If responder does not pass opener's response to CS, her next bid has one of the following meanings:

-- A bid of 3♣ is a signoff:

Opener	Responder	Opener	Responder
1♣	1♦	1♦	1♠
1NT	2♣	1NT	2♣
2♦	3♣	any	3♣

Opener usually passes, but in the first auction he could now bid 3♦ with something like ♠A43 ♥K76 ♦9862 ♣AQ5. In the second auction responder has a weak hand, maybe 4-6 in the black suits, and opener must pass.

-- A 2NT bid, artificial, shows clubs and a game-invitational hand:

Opener	Responder	Opener	Responder
1♣	1♥	1♦	1♠
1NT	2♣	1NT	2♣
2♦/2♥	2NT	2♦/2♥/2♠	2NT

In both cases responder is showing clubs and a game-invitational hand, probably unbalanced. If opener bids 3♣, declining the invitation, responder will pass. If opener bids anything else, he is accepting the game try. Occasionally opener will pass the 2NT bid, with a minimum hand and strength in the "unbid" suits.

The 2NT bid is invitational in clubs when made immediately after the 2♣ call, but:

Opener	Responder
1♣	1♦
1NT	2♣
2♦	2♥
2♠	2NT is a natural bid

(I'll explain this auction later.)

-- A bid of 3♦, 3♥, or 3♠ is invitational, not forcing:

Opener	Responder
1♣	1♠
1NT	2♣
2♦	3♦/3♥/3♠ are all invitational

Look at this sequence:

Opener	Responder
1♦	1♥
1NT	2♣
2♥	3♦

The 3♦ bid is invitational and denies five hearts. Opener must not go back to hearts unless he has a good hand and wants to be in game. With five hearts responder must bid 3♥ instead of 3♦ for her game try. The principle is this:

WHEN OPENER SHOWS SUPPORT FOR RESPONDER'S MAJOR, RESPONDER'S BID OF ANOTHER SUIT OR NOTRUMP DENIES FIVE CARDS IN THE MAJOR.

-- A heart raise at the two level is invitational, implying three-card support:

Opener	Responder
1♥	1♠
1NT	2♣
2♦	2♥

Responder has J10x or better in hearts. With four hearts she would usually invite with a 3♥ bid, but 2♥ may be preferred when the hand is marginal for a game invitation. Opener must pass 2♥ with a minimum hand, perhaps playing a 4-3 fit. With more than a minimum he can bid 2♠, 2NT, or 3♥ (all invitational); 3♣, 3♦, or 3♠ (all forcing); 3NT; or 4♥. Of course the spade raises show only good doubleton support, since opener has denied holding three spades.

-- A new suit at the two level is forcing. There are three basic situations:

1) A 1♦ responder bids a major after using CS. Let's start with 2♠:

Opener	Responder
1♣	1♦
1NT	2♣
2♦	2♠ - forcing
2NT	3♣/3♦ - invitational

Opener has denied holding a major, so responder can only be bidding 2♠ on the way to describing her hand. She may have 4=1=4=4 or 4=1=6=2, for instance. Opener must bid 2NT, forcing, as a mark-time bid, letting responder get on with the bidding.

When the 1♦ responder bids 2♥ after using CS, opener bids 2♠ with a double spade stopper, otherwise 2NT:

Opener	Responder
1♣	1♦
1NT	2♣
2♦	2♥
2♠	shows a double stopper
2NT	otherwise (forcing)

Opener's 2♦ bid denied four hearts or four spades. His 2♠ bid shows good strength in spades, without which he must bid 2NT. Responder might have ♠J ♥A1097 ♦KJ8752 ♣Q9. When opener bids 2♠ over 2♥, responder can bid 2NT (instead of 3♦) to invite game.

2) A 1♠ responder bids 2♥ after using CS:

Opener	Responder
1♣	1♠
1NT	2♣
2♦	2♥

The 2♥ bid shows four hearts only, since responder would jump to 3♥ (invitational) with five. Opener must now bid 2♠. His 2♦ response denied a holding of four hearts or three spades, so responder must only be trying to describe her hand fully. Perhaps she has a weak hand with six spades and four hearts, using the 2♥ bid as a device to get back to spades (2♠ over 2♦ would show five spades, not six). She might have ♠AJ874 ♥K652 ♦J9 ♣Q8, planning to bid a natural and invitational 2NT after the forced 2♠ bid. She could not bid 2NT over 2♦ because that would show clubs, remember?

3) A 1♥ responder bids 2♠ after using CS. This is the only time that opener is allowed to show the quality of his hand after a two-level suit rebid by responder:

Opener	Responder
1♣	1♥
1NT	2♣
2♦/2♥	2♠

When opener bids 2♥ he could have four spades, since he must show heart support as a first priority. If so, he can now raise spades (jumping with a maximum). Otherwise, or if he bid 2♦, he now bids 2NT with a minimum, which responder may pass, or something at the three level (perhaps 3NT) with a good hand.

Since a reverse would be preferable with a 5-4 hand, this sequence tends to show 4-4 in the majors. Responder usually can't do the same sort of thing after responding 1♠ with 4-4 majors (opener must bid 2♠ with three, leaving responder with no good bid with an invitationl hand unless she has four cards in opener's suit. That is one reason why 1♥ is the preferred response to a minor opening when holding both majors. If the opening is 1♦, responder can be quicker to bypass a weak heart suit with 4-4 majors (with opener unlikely to have hearts), but must not use CS. Also, if responder has a game-going hand, there is no problem:

Opener	Responder
1♣	1♥
1NT	2♣
2♥	2♠
2NT	3♣ - invitational
	3NT - implies four hearts (else why CS?)

When a responder who uses CS bids two suits, then bids notrump or raises opener, she is making a game try. When she bids all three suits other than the one opened, she is forcing to game:

Opener	Responder	Opener	Responder
1♣	1♠	1♣	1♥
1NT	2♣	1NT	2♣
2♦	2♥	2♦	2♠
2♠	2NT/3♣	2NT	3♦

The 1♠ responder has only invited game with her last bid, so opener passes with a minimum. The 1♥ responder, who has also bid spades and diamonds, has made a game force, perhaps with a 4-5-4-0 hand (but could be 4-4-4-1). The 3♦ bid is natural, not "Fourth Suit Artificial," a convention that does not apply in CS sequences.

-- A rebid of a major suit at the two level shows a weak hand and a five-card suit, with trump support for opener's minor, or a minor suit on the side, or both:

Opener	Responder
1♦	1♠
1NT	2♣
2♦	2♠

With nothing but six spades and a weak hand, responder would have bid 2♠ over 1NT. With six spades and four hearts, she would have bid 2♥ over 2♦, forcing opener to bid 2♠. The 2♠ bid therefore shows five spades, and opener can pass with a good doubleton (J10 or better) in spades. Otherwise he must bid 2NT with two or three clubs (at least three, in this case), and 3♣ with four or more. Responder will then place the contract in either clubs or diamonds. Occasionally it will be impossible for opener to have fewer than four clubs:

Opener	Responder
1♣	1♠
1NT	2♣
2♦	2♠

Opener has denied holding four hearts or three spades, so he has eight cards in the minors and could hardly have opened a three-card club suit. In this situation a 2NT bid would show four clubs and a 3♣ bid would show five. There is one other such case:

Opener	Responder
1♣	1♥
1NT	2♣
2♦	2♥

Responder has five hearts and a weak hand, with diamonds or clubs in reserve. With a weak 4=6 in the majors, responder must bid 2♥, not 2♣, over 1NT. Again, opener must have at least four clubs, so a 2NT bid would show four, a 3♣ bid five. What would a 2♠ bid by opener mean at this point? "I have three strong spades and the minimum number of clubs--four." Responder can then bid 2NT with ♠10 ♥J9872 ♦AJ87 ♣Q65. Opener will not take the 2NT bid as invitational, since the 2♥ bid denies interest in game. Opener's hand: ♠KQ9 ♥65 ♦KQ83 ♣KJ72

If opener has ♠A32 ♥65 ♦KQ83 ♣KJ72, he bids 2NT over 2♥, showing four clubs. Then responder, knowing opener is 4-4 in the minor suits, would place the contract by bidding 3♦. Finally, if the 8♦ were the 8♣, opener would bid 3♣ over 2♥ and responder would pass.

In the following auction responder has ♠Q9873 ♥7 ♦K108 ♣A965:

Opener	Responder
1♦	1♠
1NT	2♣
2♥	2♠
3♣	Pass

Opener must have a hand like: ♠K ♥Q863 ♦AQJ7 ♣K1032, since his 3♣ bid shows four clubs. Responder therefore passes.

This procedure of bidding 2NT or 3♣ (sometimes 2♠) to indicate the number of clubs held applies only when responder has shown a weak hand by rebidding her major after using CS.

A jump to 3NT after opener shows support for responder's major suit implies four cards in the other major or (if the opening was 1♥) support for opener's hearts:

Opener	Responder
1♣	1♠
1NT	2♣
2♠	3NT

Responder must have four hearts, so opener can bid 4♥ if he has a heart suit.

Opener	Responder
1♥	1♠
1NT	2♣
2♠	3NT

Responder must have three-card heart support to be using CS, since she apparently has only four spades: ♠KQ73 ♥Q103 ♦AK4 ♣542. Opener can now bid 4♥ with a hand such as ♠J54 ♥KJ762 ♦QJ5 ♣AJ.

With CS opener can bypass a four-card major with a notrumpish hand. After opening 1♣ with ♠A754 ♥KJ8 ♦932 ♣KQ4, he can rebid 1NT after a 1♦ or 1♥ response. If responder has an unbalanced hand with four spades she will usually be able to check back with a 2♣ bid, or reverse into spades. With ♠J632 ♥AQ

♦KQJ6 ♣J86, she has no need to check for spades with such a beautiful hand for notrump. She will raise to 3NT, avoiding the bad spade game that most partnerships will find.

Opener should not bypass a four-card spade suit after a 1♥ response unless he has three hearts. There are many weak hands with which responder, holding five hearts and a singleton, will use CS. She is counting on a 2♦ or 2♥ bid from opener, and 2♠ would get the bidding too high. Knowing that opener must bid 2♥ over CS with three hearts and four spades, her assumption is a safe one.

If you must rebid 1NT after a 1♥ response, holding four spades and a doubleton heart, make sure the doubleton is very strong: ♠5432 ♥KJ ♦AQJ ♣K1098. Then you can bid 2♥ if responder rebids 2♣. Don't bid 2♦, which denies four spades.

After responding 1♥ to 1♦ with ♠9 ♥A10763 ♦Q975 ♣J32, do not bid 2♦ when opener rebids 1NT. A 2♦ preference denies five hearts, with which a 2♣ bid is safe (opener will bid 2♦ or 2♥, not 2♠). With three hearts opener no longer has to guess whether to pass a 2♦ preference or show the heart support.

Suppose responder to a 1♥ opening has a weak hand with spades and diamonds:

Opener	Responder
1♥	1♠
1NT	2♦

A slight problem here is that responder, lacking the strength for an original 2♦ response, could have six diamonds and only four spades. If opener has 3-3 in those suits he will prefer spades, so responder may have to go on to 3♦, which opener must pass. Could responder have a weak hand with 4-5 in spades-diamonds? No. With such a hand responder should just pass 1NT. If responder is 4-5 in spades-diamonds, her distribution will be 4-2-5-2 or 4-1-5-3, suitable for a 1NT contract.

CS applies when 1NT is opener's third bid. There is only one such sequence:

Opener	Responder
1♣	1♦
1♥	1♠ (natural)
1NT	2♣ is CS

All subsequent bids have the same meaning as previously described. A 2♥ bid by opener would show five hearts, which is not impossible, or a strong four: ♠KJ ♥97632 ♦Q3 ♣AKJ3 or ♠J5 ♥AK105 ♦876 ♣A653. Responder can now raise hearts with three-card support.

The 2NT bid to show clubs is often useful with a 4-4-4-1 hand. Partner opens 1♦, you bid 1♥ with ♠Q ♥KQ52 ♦K652 ♣Q987, and he rebids 1NT. Your CS call now fetches a 2♦ bid. The best move now is not a 3♦ raise, the natural inclination, but 2NT (showing clubs). Partner will assume you have a two-suited hand with hearts and clubs, and will usually bid 3NT or 3♣. If he bids 3♣, you bid 3♦, completing the picture of your hand. He might pass 2NT, but that's all right--he must have good spades to do so. If he happens to bid 3♦ over 2NT (showing five diamonds and accepting the game try), you will raise. He must have a good hand with weak spades, so five diamonds should be playable. He might have ♠643 ♦A4 ♦AJ432 ♣AJ3.

CS is not normally used with 4-4-3-2 hands, but there are exceptions:

-- With two strong four-card suits, one of which is partner's suit, and little strength outside, CS may be preferable to a notrump raise: ♠KQJ3 ♥87 ♦AJ102 ♣943. Partner opens 1♦ and you respond 1♠. After his 1NT rebid you can bid 2♣, intending to follow with a diamond raise. This course is safer than a raise of 1NT to 2NT.

-- CS can be used with a 4-4-3-2 hand of invitational strength if it includes good three-card support for opener's hearts (J10x or better) or if the two four-card suits are majors and the original response is 1♥. CS doesn't work if the response is 1♠, so responder must just raise to 2NT in that case.

-- When responder is strong enough for game opposite a minimum, she can use CS to check for an unbid major, even with 4-4-3-2 distribution: ♠AQ104 ♥972 ♦AKJ10 ♣J3. Partner opens 1♣, you say 1♦, and he rebids 1NT. It is permissible to bid 2♣, just in case opener has bypassed a four-card spade suit. If opener does not bid 2♠, you jump to 3NT. With a weaker hand, however (♠AQ103 ♥854 ♦KJ82 ♣75), a 1♦ responder to a 1♣ opening can only raise 1NT to 2NT, because CS doesn't work. That is one reason for bidding 1♠ instead of 1♦ with this sort of hand.

CS is not generally used with a 4-4-4-1 hand when the singleton is in opener's suit, unless responder has a game-going hand or has responded 1♥ with both majors. Otherwise CS either wouldn't work or would serve no purpose.

An invitational hand with 5-3-3-2 distribution should just raise notrump, even with a five-card major. Partner opens 1♦ and you respond 1♥ with ♠A3 ♥Q10964 ♦Q76 ♣K83. After his 1NT rebid you should raise to 2NT rather than bid 2♣. You have a balanced hand, partner has not raised hearts, so respect his judgment and raise notrump. Besides, he can bid 3♥ over 2NT if he wants to. If you use CS and opener bids 2♦, you cannot raise to 2NT (since a 2NT bid now would show clubs). With a game-going hand the 2♣ bid is safe, but it is usually better to just raise notrump with 5-3-3-2 hands.

I said earlier that responder should not use CS "if a reverse or other natural bid will suffice." There are some situations where a reverse won't "suffice." Suppose you have ♠A1093 ♥KJ873 ♦Q96 ♣4 and partner opens 1♦, you say 1♥, and he rebids 1NT. What now? Reverse with a 2♠ bid or use CS? Answer: Bid 2♣ with this sort of hand, planning to show spades next, then follow with an invitational diamond raise if partner doesn't fit one of the majors. With a game-going hand (add a queen) you can bid 2♠ over 1NT, reversing, then raise diamonds. You can treat this as a forcing sequence if you don't already, because CS is available for invitational strength hands. The reverse sequence does not "suffice" to show both invitational and game-going hands of this type.

When a passed hand jumps to the three level after opener's 1NT rebid, opener may choose to pass the supposed force if the jump is a raise of his suit or a jump in the same suit:

South	West	North	East
Pass	Pass	1♣	Pass
1♠	Pass	1NT	Pass
3♣	Pass	Pass	Pass

North opened with ♠86 ♥10964 ♦KQ4 ♣AQJ3. Naturally the 3♣ bid shows a great hand despite the original pass, since an invitational (CS) sequence is available. South's hand: ♠AK75 ♥4 ♦875 ♣K9874. Perhaps North should keep going with a 3♦ bid, getting the partnership to a mediocre 5♣ game.

When the jump is in a new suit, however, opener may not pass:

South	West	North	East
Pass	Pass	1♣	Pass
1♠	Pass	1NT	Pass
3♥ - forcing			

If opener can only bid 3♠ (poor hand, poor fit) now, responder may pass. Opener can raise hearts with only three trumps, since responder must have at least 5-5, probably better, in the majors. "Probably better" because responder could use a CS sequence to invite game with 5-5 in the majors.

When the Opponents Intervene with a Bid

CS is used even when the opening bid is overcalled or doubled at the one level:

North	East	South	West
1♣	1♥/Dbl	1♠	Pass
1NT	Pass	2♣ is CS	

All further bids by either partner retain the usual meanings, except that a natural bid in an opposing suit can show either four cards or a strong three. For instance, after the heart overcall, a 2♥ response by North would show four hearts with at least one honor or three good hearts (e.g., KJx), (while denying three-card spade support).

CS does not apply if the 1NT bid is doubled, however. The bidding reverts to standard bidding in that case:

South	West	North	East
1♣	Pass	1♠	Pass
1NT	Dbl	2♣ - signoff	

If there is an opposing bid following the 2♣ bid that initiates CS, all doubles are for business, and all bids are natural:

South	West	North	East
1♣	Pass	1♠	Pass
1NT	Pass	2♣	Pass
2♦	2♥	Dbl - business	

South	West	North	East
1♦	Pass	1♠	Pass
1NT	Pass	2♣	2♥
Pass	Pass	Dbl - business	
2NT - natural			
3♣ - may not be weak			

When an Artificial Bid Gets Doubled

When an opponent doubles an artificial bid, including the CS 2♣ bid, any elaborate scheme for always showing stopper(s) or lack of stopper in the doubled suit would get in the way of CS bidding sequences, so we just use common sense. Immediate bids continue the CS sequence, while reopening bids revert to natural bidding.

South	West	North	East
1♥	Pass	1♠	Pass
1NT	Pass	2♣	Dbl
Pass - prefers clubs to spades, club strength			
2♦ - conventional response, poor clubs			
2♥/2♠ - says nothing about clubs			
Rdbl - good clubs, good hand			

The pass or redouble tends to deny five hearts or three spades. "Good clubs" means club strength, at least a double stopper, not necessarily with four-card length. The 2♥ and 2♠ bids do not deny good clubs, however (but 2♦ does).

South	West	North	East
1♣	Pass	1♠	Pass
1NT	Pass	2♣	Pass
2♦	Dbl	Pass - playable diamonds	
Rdbl - good diamonds, good hand			
2♥/2♠/2NT/3♣ - normal rebids			

The normal rebids say nothing about diamonds. North could have good diamonds and just not want to complicate things by passing or redoubling.

If the double of an artificial bid gets passed around, a redouble suggests that the doubled contract may be playable, and may be the highest scoring (or only) game. Partner can pass if he agrees. Otherwise the bidding proceeds naturally, with no artificial bids:

South	West	North	East
1♦	Pass	1♠	Pass
1NT	Pass	2♣	Dbl
Pass	Pass	Rdbl - to play	
2♦/2♥/2♠/2NT - natural			
3♦/3♥/3♠ - invitational			

When a Natural Bid Gets Doubled

When a natural bid is doubled, a redouble is to play, a pass is a suggestion (not a command) that the contract may be playable, and a bid just ignores the double, continuing the CS sequence. Partner can do what he wants after a pass: redouble (to play) or continue with natural bidding.

Summary

After a 1NT rebid by opener:

All three-level suit jumps by responder are forcing.
 Any two-level suit bid other than 2♣ or a reverse is weak.
 To invite game, responder first bids 2♣ (artificial).
 2♣ followed by 3♣ is a weak signoff, so:
 2♣ followed by 2NT is a game-try club bid.

Opener's action after CS:

Show three-card support for responder's major suit.
 Lacking that, rebid a five-card suit or show an unbid major.
 Lacking either of these, bid 2♦.

When opener shows support for responder's major, responder's next bid of a minor suit or notrump denies five cards in the major.

If responder's next bid after CS is a new suit at the two level, that is a force.

When using CS, if responder shows two suits and then bids notrump or raises opener's suit, she is making a game try. When she bids all three suits other than the one opened, she is forcing to game.

After CS, responder's rebid of her major at the two level shows a five-card suit and a weak hand. Responder must have support for opener's minor, or a minor suit on the side, or both. Opener can pass with a good doubleton in responder's major. Otherwise, he bids 2NT or 3♣, depending on how many clubs he has. Over 2♥ he can bid 2♠ with three strong spades, perhaps leading to a 2NT contract.

When opener shows support for responder's major after CS, responder's jump to 3NT implies four cards in an unbid major, or adequate trump support for opener's hearts.

After a 1NT rebid, a reverse by responder is forcing, and a subsequent raise of opener's suit is also forcing. Use CS with an invitational hand.

