



More About Stayman

Stayman is a *convention* we use to look for a 4-4 major suit fit after partner has opened 1NT or 2NT. It *asks* opener whether he has a 4-card major.

When partner opens 1NT and we have enough to at least invite game (11+HCP), and at least one 4-card major, we can use Stayman before raising to 2NT or 3NT in case there is a 4-4 major suit fit that will play better than 2/3NT.

Similarly, **when partner opens 2NT** and we have 5+HCP, enough for game, we can use Stayman to look for a 4-4 fit *provided* we have at least one 4-card major.

Also when the bidding starts 2♣ – 2♦ – 2NT – where **2NT is the first natural bid**.

And **after a 1NT overcall** (1♥) – 1NT – (P) – use Stayman just as you do over a 1NT opener

Note that by using Stayman you *promise* at least one 4-card major.

With a 5-card major you should transfer, then bid NT or a second suit

Stayman auctions:

1NT	2♣	1NT	2♣	1NT	2♣
2♦		2♥		2♠	
Opener has no 4-card major.		Opener has 4 hearts (may also have 4 spades)		Opener has four spades (denies 4 hearts)	

When you use Stayman *you must be prepared for any of the three responses that partner may make*. So you must have at least the values to invite game if you do not find a fit – usually!

Stayman with Weak Hands

When you have a weak hand you can use Stayman as a means to improve the partscore.

You still promise at least one 4-card major, but this is the only time when you may also have a 5-card major

The idea is to improve what is clearly a poor contract

Eg	♠ J7632 ♥ J1054 ♦ 8 ♣ K73	♠ J873 ♥ QJ543 ♦ 1093 ♣ 8	♠ QJ32 ♥ 10942 ♦ J6532 ♣ -	♠ 7 ♥ Q943 ♦ J10543 ♣ J53
If partner bids a major over Stayman – Pass.		Again, Pass 2♥/2♠	Pass whatever partner responds.	This time you just have to Pass 1NT.
If he bids 2♦ bid 2♠, as a weak sign-off		Over 2♦ bid 2♥, your longer major as a weak sign-off	It must be better than 1NT!	You cannot cope if partner bids 2♠.

Do not use Stayman unless you can cope with any of the three responses that partner may make



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Further Bidding after Stayman

Weak hands –

pass the response
or **bid 2♥/♠** (with 5-4 in the majors)

Invitational hands –

raise 2♥/♠ to 3♥/♠ with 4-card support
or **bid 2NT** without 4-card support

Game going hands –

raise 2♥/♠ to 4♥/♠ with 4-card support
or **bid 3NT** without 4-card support.

Opener must not bid again

Opener passes if minimum, bids 4♥/♠ if maximum

Opener passes if minimum, bids 3NT if maximum
unless he has 4cards in the other major.

After 1NT-2♣-2♥-2NT- opener bids

3♠ minimum, 4♠ maximum with 4-4 in the majors

Opener passes

Opener **passes** or ***converts*** to 4♠ with both majors