

## The Stayman Convention

Used by a responder after a 1NT or 2NT opening bid, to ask if opener has a 4 card major.

### Basic Stayman after 1NT

Typically Stayman is used on hands of 11+ points when responder has a four card major and game might be possible if there is a major suit fit.

2♣ means: I have a 4-card major. Have you got a 4 card major partner?

### Opener's replies to the 2♣ (Stayman) question :

- 2♦ - No I don't have a 4 card major.
- 2♥ - I have 4 hearts and may have 4 spades.
- 2♠ - I have 4 spades but I don't have 4 hearts.

### The Stayman bidder must be prepared for any reply from opener.

The following hands are suitable for bidding Stayman after 1NT. They have 11+ points and at least one four card major.

♠ Q J 9 3	14 HCP
♥ A K 7 5	If opener rebids a major, we bid game in the major. If opener rebids 2♦ we bid 3NT
♦ K 5	
♣ J 7 5	

♠ Q 9 3	12 HCP
♥ A K 7 5	If opener rebids 2♥ we raise to 3♥, invitational. If opener rebids 2♦ or 2♠, we bid 2NT showing 11-12 points.
♦ K 5	
♣ 9 7 5 3	

♠ K Q 8 2	14 HCP
♥ Q 7 5	If opener rebids 2♠ we bid 4♠. If opener rebids 2♦ or 2♥, bid 3NT.
♦ 6 3	
♣ A K 6 2	

## Should opener bid again?

When responder makes a second bid after Stayman, opener should work out what he knows about responder's hand and decide if another bid is required. Look at this bidding sequence. Why did responder bid Stayman and then bid 2NT after the 2 bid? He must have four spades and 11-12 points (and less than four hearts).

1NT	2♣
2♥	2NT
?	

♠	K Q J 3
♥	A 7 5 2
♦	A 8 2
♣	9 4

We are the opener in the above auction and this is our hand. We opened 1NT and we replied 2♥ to the Stayman bid. We worked out that partner's next bid of 2NT showed four spades and 11- 12 points so with 14 points and four spades, we bid 4♠.

## TAKING IT FURTHER

### Why "typically" Or "usually"?

**Stayman can also be used on any hand of zero to 28 points** when it would be useful to find out if opener has a 4 card major. There is only **one condition: we must be prepared for any reply from opener**. The following hands are suitable for bidding Stayman after 1NT. They have 11+ points and at least one four card major.

### Examples

♠	K Q J 3
♥	A 8 7 5 2
♦	A 8
♣	9 4

#### Weak Stayman

This hand is also suitable for Stayman although it has less than 11 points.

If opener rebids 2♥ or 2♠ we can pass. If opener rebids 2♦ we can still sign off in 2♣ because we have five - a weak take-out.

♠	10 3
♥	A 7 5 2
♦	Q 8 2
♣	K Q 9 7 4 2

#### Weak Take-out to Clubs

This hand is also suitable for Stayman although it has only 11 points.

If opener rebids 2♥ we can bid an invitational 3♥.

If opener rebids 2♦ or 2♠ we can still sign off in 3♣ because we have six.

♠	K J 3 2
♥	Q 7 5 2
♦	K 9 8 2
♣	9 4

#### Garbage Stayman

This hand is also suitable for Stayman although it has less than 11 points.

Whatever opener replies we PASS. The contract is 2 in whatever suit opener bids.

If opener replies 2 then, because opener has denied having a four card major, he has at least three cards in diamonds.