



1NT Opening – A Reminder

Point Range: 12 or 13 or 14 High Card Points

BALANCED i.e. 4:3:3:3; or 4:4:3:2 or 5:3:3:2 (BUT NOT A FIVE CARD MAJOR); Put it another way....

No voids; No singletons; No more than one doubleton; Five cards in a minor, but not five cards in a major

Responding to 1NT opening with balanced hands

<u>Replying Hand HPC</u>	<u>Total points between the two</u>	<u>Bid</u>	<u>Looking for opener to:</u>
0-10	12-24	Pass	Play in 1NT
11-12	23-26	2NT	Bid 3NT if top of range, otherwise pass
13-18	25-32	3NT	Pass
19-20	31-34	4NT	Pass with twelve points, otherwise 6NT
23-24	35-38	5NT	(Forcing) Bid 7NT if top of range, otherwise bid 6NT
21-22	33-36	6NT	Pass
25+	37-40	7NT	Go get it!



Responding to 1NT opening - unbalanced hands

The good news is that opener must have at least two cards in each suit so any suit with five+ cards is a potential trump suit. So a simple approach is:

Weak Take Out

With 0-10 HCPs, the total between the hands is at most 24HCPs, and there is probably no game contract available.

Bid the longest suit at the two level, asking partner to pass, and to allow us to play the contract at the two level.

This is a "Weak Take Out", showing a weak hand (could have zero points) and simply takes a disastrous 1NT contract "out" into a less disastrous suit contract!

Points for game

With 11-18 HCPs, the total between the hands is in the game, but not slam, range.

With a five-card major you bid 3♥ or 3♠. Asking partner to choose between 3NT and 4♥ or 4♠.

With a six card major, go straight to 4♥ or 4♠ (There is at least eight trumps between the two hands).



Looking for a Major Suit in Opener's Hand – The STAYMAN Convention

<u>1NT Opener</u>	Sometimes there is a four-card major in the 1NT opening hand and the same major has four cards in the responding hand.	<u>Responder</u>
♠ A 10 9 8		♠ K Q J 2
♥ K Q J 4		♥ A 10 9 8
♦ Q 3 2		♦ K 5 4
♣ 9 8		♣ 7 6

There is a potential contract in the major.

There is also a possible threat to a No Trump Contract in short minor suits.

You add the Stayman convention to your tool kit to check for this situation.

You use it when responding to an opening 1NT and with more than 10 HCPs and one or both 4-card majors.

You would really like to know whether the opening hand has 4 cards in either major suit.

An eight card fit in a major is often safer than 3NT.



Ask Partner the Question

To find out, you and your partner agree to change the meaning of a 2♣ response to the 1NT opening bid.

<u>N</u>	<u>E</u>	<u>S</u>	<u>W</u>
1NT	P	2♣	P

Responder

♠	K Q J 2
♥	A 10 9 8
♦	K 5 4
♣	7 6

The bid no longer means a weak take out in clubs.

It now has a completely unnatural, or “conventional”, meaning.

Responder asks opener the question “Do you have one or more 4 card major suits?” by bidding 2♣. This bid does not mean that responder has clubs. In fact responder is relying on partner to make another bid, and NOT leave him to play a Club contract! This bid is forcing. This convention is known as “Stayman”.

It is legal to use these unnatural bids in bridge, but the use of the bid, and its meaning, must be made known to the opponents. Secret agreements are NOT legal.

To make quite sure that opponents know what is going on, in the case of a completely unnatural bid, like the Stayman 2♣, at the table, the bidder’s partner (opener) must say “Stayman” so that the opponents know a conventional bid is being used; when playing online the site’s Alert button is used.



Opener's Re-bid in response to Stayman 2♣

After the 2♣ response, if left hand opponent passes, opener MUST reply to the question.

If he or she has 4 cards in Hearts, the re-bid will be 2♥. This bid is natural.

1NT Opener

♠ K 4 3
♥ A 5 3 2
♦ K 9 8 7
♣ A 2

1NT Opener

♠ K 4 3 2
♥ A 5 3
♦ K 9 8 7
♣ A 2

If he or she has 4 cards in Spades, but less than 4 cards in hearts, the re-bid will be 2♠. This bid is natural.

If he or she has 4 cards in both Hearts and Spades, then the re-bid will be 2♥. This bid is natural.

1NT Opener

♠ K 4 3 2
♥ A 5 3 2
♦ K 9 8
♣ A 2



1NT Opener

♠ K 4
♥ A 5 3
♦ K 9 8 7
♣ A 6 5 2

If opener has less than 4 Hearts AND less than 4 Spades, the re-bid will be 2♦.

This is not natural, but "Stayman" has already been announced and is considered to cover the 2♦ negative reply.

Responder's Re-bid in a Stayman situation

One of the great features of the Stayman convention is that it allows you to make invitational re-bids.

No four-card major in opener's hand

If opener has denied majors with a 2♦ response, there will be no major fit. It is best to go back to No Trumps. With 11-12 points bid 2NT, with 13+ points 3NT.



Matching four-card major in opener's hand

If opener has shown a matching major, then choose the level to play in that major according to your calculation of the joint point count.

For example partner opens 1NT and you (South) hold:

♠	A J 10 9
♥	4 3
♦	K Q J 9
♣	10 9 8

There's 11HCPs. This may or may not be enough for game depending on opener's hand strength. Stayman lets you make an invitational response.

The auction goes:

<u>N</u>	<u>E</u>	<u>S</u>	<u>W</u>
1NT	P	2♣	P
2♠	P	3♠	P
4♠	P	P	P

Partner has realised that you are 11-12HCP and four spades, able to invite game with 3♠, but not bid the game. Partner is maximum for his bidding and so raises to the spades game.



Non-matching four-card major in opener's hand

If opener re-bids spades, and your four card suit is hearts, there will be no major fit. It is best to go back to No Trumps. With 11-12 points bid 2NT, with 13+ points 3NT.

If opener re-bids hearts, and your four card suit is spades, then bid NT at the appropriate level. Opener will deduce that you used Stayman with a four card spade suit. With no four-card spade suit opener passes or raises No Trumps.

With two four-card majors, he/she can rebid spades at the appropriate level.

For example, partner opens 1NT and you (South) hold:

♠	A K J 10
♥	4 3
♦	K Q J 9
♣	Q J 10

The auction goes:

<u>N</u>	<u>E</u>	<u>S</u>	<u>W</u>
1NT	P	2♣	P
2♥	P	3NT	P
4♠	P		

Partner works out that you are looking for a fit in spades. With less than four spades the opener would pass.

However, this opener has both four hearts and four spades and opts for the game in spades.



What if responder's hand is weak with long clubs?

Consider whether 1NT is the better option, but if not...

Partner opens 1NT and you (South) hold:

♠ J 10

♥ 4 3

♦ 4 3

♣ Q J 10 9 7 4 3

You cannot leave partner in 1NT, so you act as follows:

<u>N</u>	<u>E</u>	<u>S</u>	<u>W</u>
1NT	P	2♣	P
2♥	P	3♣	P
P	P		

Opener must deduce that responder bid 2♣ with a long club suit in a weak hand, and pass!

Stayman is immensely useful. and the fact it occasionally leaves you in a tough Club contract is compensated for by the many good major contracts it finds for you.



Finally – an unusual situation

Partner opens 1NT and you (South) hold:

♠ J 10 9 7 4

♥ 10 9 4 3

♦ 4 3

♣ Q J

You hold a five card major AND a four card major in a weak hand:

<u>N</u>	<u>E</u>	<u>S</u>	<u>W</u>
1NT	P	2♣	P
2♦	P	2♠	P
P	P		

If partner had bid either hearts or spades you would have passed.