

# Stayman with a FIT or NO FIT

By Neil H. Timm

When partner opens a hand with the bid of 1NT, one of the most widely used bridge conventions is the Stayman Convention used to find a 4-4 major suit fit.

**The Convention is initiated by the bid of 2♣ and normally requires responder to have at least ONE 4-card major suit and at least 8HCP.**

Let's assume your partnership is playing 2/1 with 5-card majors and that 1NT=15-17HCP. Then, most would agree that if partner holds:

8-9HCP	partner's hand has invitational values
10-17HCP	partner's hand has game values
18+HCP	partner's hand has slam potential

However, suppose after bidding 2♣, partner either responds 2♦ showing NO 4-card major or bids a major at the 2-level (2♥/2♠) and you have the other major; not being 4-4 in the majors.

We saw in a previous Bridge Tip that with 9HCP we ignore Stayman with ONLY one 4-card major and just bid 3NT!

<https://www.bridgewebs.com/ocala/Rethinking%20Stayman.pdf>

Some example hands follow:

♠KQxx ♥KJxx ♦xx ♣xxx    ♠xx ♥Axxx ♦Axxx ♣Jxx    ♠Axx ♥Axxx ♦Jxx ♣xxx

We these hands bid 3NT and ignore Stayman. Only bid Stayman with 9HCP and 4-4 in the majors.

**What do you with 10-17HCP and ONLY One 4-card major?**

Most will use Stayman, but what happens if the 1NT bidder is 4333 and you are 3433 without a fit? **SO, WHAT - Always use Stayman!** How do you respond with or without a fit?

Terrence Queded (2006) in his book "No Trump Bidding, Stayman and Transfers", Trafford Press Recommends Two Conventions which he calls the Advanced Stayman in Doubt (ASID) Convention and the Shape Asking Relay after Stayman (SARS) Convention.

**With ASID, after opener's responses of 2♥/2♠ a bid of 3♦\* "agrees" that we have a trump fit and initiates the ASID Convention while after the opener's bids of 2♦/2♥/2♠ the bid of 3♣\* initiates the SARS Convention which is used with or without a trump fit!**

Example (1) of ASID

North	South	North	South
♠KQ7	♠A63	1NT	2♣
♥K876	♥J952	2♥	3♦*
♦A74	♦QJ5	3NT	Pass
♣AJ2	♣KQ3		

Example (2) of ASID

North	South	North	South
♠KQ7	♠A63	1NT	2♣
♥AJ74	♥Q952	2♥	3♦*
♦Q4	♦753	4♦*	4♥
♣A942	♣KQ3	Pass	Pass

Example (3) of ASID

North	South	North	South
♠Q7	♠763	1NT	2♣
♥A10743	♥Q952	2♥	3♦*
♦A74	♦KQ3	4♥	Pass
♣AJ2	♣KQ5		

**ASID Convention**

1NT - 2♣ - 2♥ - 3♦\*

3♥	3433, 15-16HCP
3♠	doubleton ♠
3NT	3433, 17HCP
4♣*/4♦*	doubleton in bid suit
4♥	5-card suit

1NT - 2♣ - 2♠ - 3♦\*

3♥	doubleton ♥
3♠	4333, 15-16HCP
3NT	4333, 17HCP
4♣*/4♦*	doubleton in bid suit
4♠	5-card suit

The SARS Convention is used after the bids 2♦/2♥/2♠ No Fit/Heart Fit/Spade Fit where the fit may be either 4-4 or 5-4. See the link below for a review of SARS.

[www.bridgewebs.com/ocala/StaySmolen%20Crawling%20and%20Extended%20Stayman.pdf](http://www.bridgewebs.com/ocala/StaySmolen%20Crawling%20and%20Extended%20Stayman.pdf)

Numerous examples are provided by Terrence Quested (2006) in his book “No Trump Bidding, Stayman and Transfers” on pp. 42-58.

Playing Sars, 3♦ is used for Extended Stayman.