

Stayman and Transfers

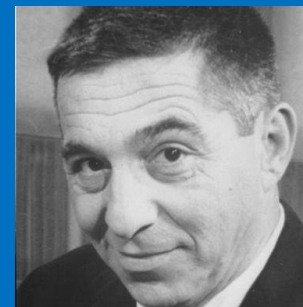
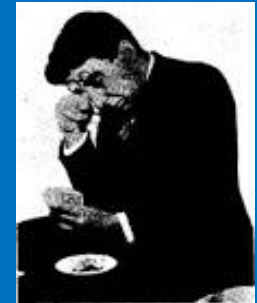
History of Stayman

The convention is named after
Sam Stayman who wrote the
first published description in
The Bridge World (June 45)

but



The initial concept was used in the UK by Ewart Kempson and Skid Simon but it was invented in the UK by Jack Marx in 1939 (who published in 1946), and in the USA by George Rapée in 1944. George was a regular partner of Sam Stayman



What is Stayman?

An artificial bid of 2C or 3C

It can be used over 1NT and 2NT opening bids, 1NT overcalls or 2NT rebid after artificial 2C or 2D openings

After an opening bid of 1NT

Your partner and you have balanced hands with a combined count of 26 HCP

What are your chances of success in 3NT, 4 of a major or 5 of a minor?

Chances of success with 26 HCP

- 4-4 fit in a major, 4H or 4S - 80%
- 3NT 60% falling to 50% with 25 HCP
- 5C or 5D - 30%

So what is 2C Stayman used for?

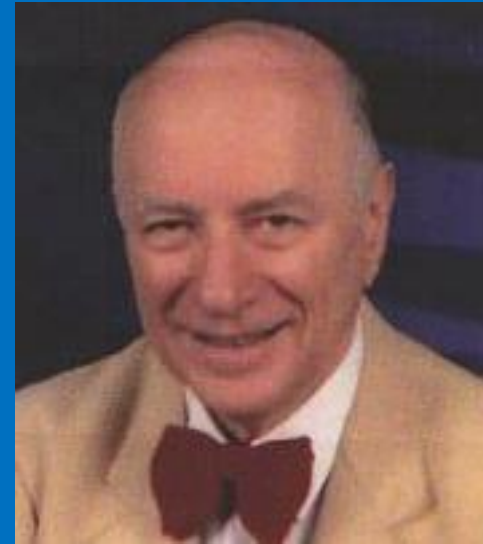
- To see if there is a 4-4 fit in a major and possibly try or go for game
- To look for a contract other than no-trumps with an unbalanced hand
- To escape to a better contract with a weak hand

Reference book: Bridge Conventions, Defences and Countermeasures

by Ron Klinger

Cassel & Co in association
with Peter Crawley

ISBN: 0-304-36112-7



Stayman - responses to 1NT P 2C P

2D - sorry, I don't have a 4-card major

2H - I have 4+ hearts, may have 4+ spades

2S - I don't have 4 or more hearts
but have 4+ spades

N.B. opener may have a weak 5-card major

Red Suit Transfer Bids

Can be used over 1NT and 2NT opening bids, 1NT overcalls or 2NT rebid after artificial 2C or 2D openings

Shows at least a 5-card suit and a variety of strengths

2D or 3D shows hearts, opener usually bids 2H or 3H

2H or 3H shows spades, opener usually bids 2S or 3S

Opener may break the transfer

If responder bids on then it is a game or slam try

So with ♠ AQxxx ♥ KJx ♦ Ax ♣ xxx

Bid 2H over 1NT to show five spades and then follow up with 3NT to show a balanced 13-18 HCP

Examples of transfers and rebids

♠	AJ	KT985	1NT	P	2H	P
♥	Q974	2	2S	P	pass ¹	
♦	KJ7	A84				
♣	JT95	8632				

¹ too weak to carry on

♠	AJ	4	1NT	P	2D	P
♥	Q97	J86532	2H	P	pass ¹	
♦	KQ65	J84				
♣	JT95	863				

¹ happy to get out of 1NT

♠	AJ3	KQ985	1NT	P	2H	P
♥	QJ73	2	2S	P	3C ¹	P
♦	73	AJT	4S	all pass		
♣	KJ98	Q632				

¹ game try trial bid

♠	AJ	4	1NT	P	2D	P
♥	Q97	J86532	2H	P	3H ¹	P
♦	Q84	AK5	4H	all pass		
♣	KQ32	A8				

¹ always promises at
least a six card suit

Breaking the transfer

If opener doesn't make the expected bid, this is called "breaking the transfer".

E.G. 1NT P 2H P
 3S

This shows a **MINIMUM** hand with 4 trumps (with nine trumps, bid to 3-level by the Law of Total Tricks)

MAXIMUM NT - 4 poor trumps.

Opener bids 2NT to show this.

If responder rebids the transfer suit,
this asks opener to sign off in three of
the major suit.

If responder bids anything else, it is a game try

E.G. show a second suit (trial bid)
bid a weak doubleton.

It's for partnerships to decide!

Responder makes a trial bid

E.G. ♠ Q4 K75 1NT P 2D P

♥ T754 A9862 2NT P 3C¹ P

♦ AQ5 3 4H² all pass

♣ KQJ5 A864 ¹ game try - trial bid

² accepts

Responder shows a weak doubleton

E.G. ♠ 8753 AQT62 1NT P 2H P

♥ AK4 T75 2NT P 3C¹ P

♦ KQJ2 A95 4S² all pass

♣ 85 94 ¹ weak doubleton

² all my points are “working”

If opener bids anything else, it is a game try

E.G. ♠ 975 83 1NT P 2D P
♥ KJ73 AQ862 3C¹ P 3D² P
♦ AK4 52 3H P 4H³ all pass
♣ Q952 AJT

¹ trial bid, 4 good hearts and near maximum

² re-transfer for opener to bid hearts

³ pass 3H if no help in clubs

Examples of Stayman over 1NT

♠	AKT4	Q932	1NT	P	2C	P
♥	A854	73	2H ¹	P	2NT ²	P
♦	K75	AQ86	4S	all pass		
♣	54	AT8				

¹ always bid hearts with both majors

² showing spades and 11-12 HCP

When a 4-4 major suit fit has been found, responder can bid game with 12+ HCP and 7-loser hand, but only make a game try with an 8-loser hand

4-4 major fit is found immediately

♠	AKT4	QJ32	1NT	P	2C	P
♥	K85	Q2	2S	P	4S ¹	all pass
♦	KT5	AQ86				
♣	J54	AT8				¹ 15 HCP and 7 losers

4-4 major fit isn't found directly

♠ AKT4 QJ32 1NT P 2C P

♥ K854 Q2 2H P 3NT P

♦ KT5 AQ86 4S¹ all pass

♣ J5 AT8 ¹ realises suit is spades

5-4 in the majors

With a weak hand < 10 HCP, use Stayman

Pass any response in a major suit or bid your 5-card major over 2D.

With 10+ HCP, transfer to the major and then show the other as an invitation to game

Weak 5-4 in the majors

♠	T85	QJ32	1NT	P	2C	P
♥	A85	JT972	2D	P	2H ¹	all pass
♦	KQ54	J86				
♣	KJ5	8				

¹ 5-hearts and 4-spades
else why use Stayman

5-4 in the majors, 10+ HCP transfer

N.B. You can't make a trial bid in the transfer suit.

♠	T85	QJ32	1NT	P	2D	P
♥	A85	KQJT9	2H	P	2S ¹	P
♦	KQ54	J86	3H	all pass		
♣	KJ5	8				

¹ game try with 7-losers

5-4 in the majors, 10+ HCP

♠	A85	KQJ32	1NT	P	2H	P
♥	A85	Q2	2S	P	3D ¹	P
♦	KJ42	A963	4S	all pass		
♣	965	43				

¹ forcing to 3S, 3NT or 4S

6-card major, game try

♠ A85	KQJ	1NT	P	2D	P
♥ A85	QJT954	2H	P	3H ¹	all pass
♦ KJ54	Q86				
♣ 965	8				¹ at least six hearts, never five!

What do you think the 2S bid shows in the following sequence

1NT pass 2C pass
2H pass 2S

Does it show a heart fit?

Is it weak, invitational or strong?

I play it weak, 6-card minor, 4-major

♠ AKT QJ32 1NT P 2C P

♥ Q854 72 2H P 2S¹ P

♦ KQ5 J86732 P² P

♣ 732 8

¹ Shows 4-6 distribution

² Strong 3-card support

6-4 getting into the minor

♠	T85	QJ32	1NT	P	2C	P
♥	A854	72	2H	P	2S ¹	P
♦	KQ5	J86732	2NT ²	P	3D	all pass
♣	QJ7	8				

¹ Shows 6-4 distribution

² What is your minor suit?

Yet another weak 6-card minor

♠	T85	QJ3	1NT	P	2C ¹	P
♥	J853	72	2H	P	3D ²	all pass
♦	KQ5	J86732				
♣	AKJ	85				¹ might pass 2S

² shows 6-card minor suit

Extended Stayman 5-5 in the majors

♠	T85	KQJ92	1NT	P	2C	P
♥	J8	KQ865	2D	P	3D ¹	P
♦	KQ95	J	3S	P	4S	all pass
♣	AKJ2	86				

¹ Do you have a 3-card major

What is the meaning of 1NT P 2S ?

Some play it as showing an 11 count with
2NT showing a balanced 12 HCP

I prefer to play it as showing a 6-card
minor with 9-11 HCP

Responder bids 2S to opener's 1NT

With a minimum, opener bids 3C, responder corrects to 3D if necessary.

With a maximum, opener breaks the transfer by bidding 2NT showing at least QJx or KTx in both minors and the majors stopped.

Then if responder has two of the top three honours in the suit then consider bidding 3NT

E.G. KQxxxx Jx QTx Qx

else sign off in the minor.

Full transfers over 1NT opening bid,
standard responses:

Red suit transfers as before showing at
least a five card suit

1NT P 2D P please bid 2H

1NT P 2H P please bid 2S

Minor suit transfers showing at least a six card suit

1NT P 2S P please bid 3C

2NT breaks the transfer

1NT P 2NT P please bid 3D

3C breaks the transfer

How do I show a raise to 2NT?

1NT P 2C¹ P ¹ taken as Stayman

2D}
2H} P 2NT² ² may have a 4-card major
2S} after 2D and doesn't
after 2H or 2S

Are there any snags?

Say the NT opener has two 4-card majors and responder has 4-spades. The bidding proceeds:

1NT	P	2C	P	This has taken on a new meaning
2H	P	2S		

2S can no longer mean 4-major, 6-minor

It now has to mean that responder has a

4-card spade suit and the bid is forcing for

one round. Opener bids 2NT or 3NT without

4-spades and 3S or 4S holding the suit.

Responder bids 3S to opener's 2NT

This could be 5 spades & 4 hearts but I like to play it as Minor Suit Stayman

3S shows 4-4 in the minors & slam ambitions

Opener bids as follows:

4C or 4D shows 4+ card fit and paves the way for cue bids.

4H or 4S shows 4+ club or diamond fit and is key-card Blackwood with step responses

After 2NT P 3S P
4H showing a club fit

4S = 3 key cards (0 is most unlikely)

4NT = 1 or 4 key cards

5C = 2 without the queen of clubs

5D = 2 with the queen of clubs

After 2NT P 3S P
4S showing a diamond fit

4NT = 3 key cards (0 is most unlikely)

5C = 1 or 4 key cards

5D = 2 without the queen of diamonds

5H = 2 with the queen of diamonds

N.B. You never pass the minor suit
game missing the queen of trumps

We have some prepared hands to play

There will be an opportunity to review
the results after each hand is played

Thank you for your attention