

STAYMAN

(Promissory)

Stayman

Stayman is a convention used by responder after a 1NT or 2NT opening bid, to ask if opener has a 4 card major suit.

I prefer to teach and play promissory Stayman, meaning that if I as responder bid 2♣ stayman I will be holding 4 cards in one (or both) of the major suits.

AFTER A 1NT OPENING BID

2♣ Stayman = I have a 4 card major, partner do you also have a 4 card major?

Responses to 2♣ Stayman :

2♦ - No I do not have a 4 card major

2♥ - Yes I have 4♥s and I may also have 4♠s

2♠ - Yes I have 4♠s and I don't have 4♥s

Generally Stayman is used with hands of 11+ points when responder has a 4 card major and a game might be possible if there is a 8 card major fit.

There are a couple of exceptions when holding less than 11 points and this topic is covered in my STAYMAN AND TRANSFER SPECIAL SCENARIOS handout.

EXP 1

A	West	1NT 2♦/2♠	East	2♣ 2NT	East Hand	♠ Q62 ♥ AK83 ♦ T5 ♣ K874
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B	West	1NT 2♥	East	2♣ 3♥		
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A West bids 2♦/2♠ East bids 2NT to show 11 to 12 points

B West bids 2♥ East will raise to 3♥ invitational again showing 11 to 12 points

EXP 2

A	West	1NT 2♦	East	2♣ 3NT	East Hand	♠ KT64 ♥ AQ93 ♦ Q86 ♣ QJ
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B	West	1NT 2♥/2♠	East	2♣ 4♥/4♠		
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A West bids 2♦ East bids 3NT to show 13 to 18 points

B West bids 2♥/2♠ East raises to game in that major knowing of the 8 card major fit

EXP 3

A	West Hand	West	East
	♠ AQ84	1NT	2♣
	♥ KJT3	2♥	2NT
	♦ 63	4♠	
	♣ A95		

- A** West opens with 1NT (12 to 14) East responds 2♣ Stayman
- West bids the lower ranking major 2♥s East denies ♥s by bidding 2NT
- West knows that if East does not have ♥s then they must have ♠s because they are playing promissory Stayman so bids 4♠ the known 8 card fit.

AFTER A 2NT OPENING BID

3♣ is Stayman. Same principles as Stayman over a 1NT except opener has 20 to 22 points

AFTER A 1NT OVERCALL

2♣ is Stayman but the overcaller should have 16 to 18 points for their 1NT overcall so you need to adjust the responses by 4 points

Summary

When playing Stayman the first bid by responder of 2♣ shows **SHAPE** all subsequent bids by responder show **POINT COUNT**.

In general Stayman is for 4 card majors and Transfers are for 5 card majors apart from one or two exceptions.