

STAYMAN CONVENTION

ABOUT THE DEALS

You may be either Opener or Responder, but you will always be in the South position.

The first page or two of each Deal shows only your hand. The initial bidding is given and you are asked to decide what you would bid, then click **BID**. The subsequent page will then appear telling you what you should have bid and continuing the auction. On the final page of each Deal partner's hand will be shown.

STAYMAN CONVENTION SUMMARY

When one partner opens 1NT it is difficult to uncover a 4-4 Major fit using only natural bidding. The Stayman Convention solves the problem and improves bidding accuracy as well. As an additional benefit, when you use Stayman the 1NT Opener usually becomes the Declarer on the hand, thereby keeping the stronger hand concealed.

The Stayman Convention is worthwhile even if it is the only convention you use. However, there are added benefits to using Stayman in conjunction with Jacoby Transfers. The two work smoothly together with Stayman taking care of those hands where Responder has a 4-card Major(s) and Jacoby Transfers taking care of those hands where Responder has a 5- or 6-card Major.

The actual working of Stayman is simple:

Following a 1NT opening, Responder will only use Stayman when he holds at least one 4-card Major suit.

He does so by bidding 2♣ which requires Opener to reply as follows:

- With no 4-card Major suit he bids 2♦.
- With a 4-card ♥ suit, (and possibly 4 ♠s as well), he bids 2♥.
- With a 4-card ♠ suit, (but not 4 ♥s), he bids 2♠.

It really is as simple as that. Well, almost.

Stayman takes much of the guesswork (sometimes called judgement) out of the bidding and steers you directly to these two goals:

1. With a partnership 26 points you will reach game, with 33 you will reach slam.
2. With a partnership 8+ cards in a Major suit you will play in that suit, otherwise you will play notrump.

For the first point consider this table which is based on the 1NT opener holding 15-17 points.

Resp Points	Opener Points			Bidding Target
	15	16	17	
8	23	24	25	Partscore
9	24	25	26	
10	25	26	27	
11	26	27	28	

12	27	28	29	Game
13	28	29	30	
14	29	30	31	
15	30	31	32	
16	31	32	33	
17	32	33	34	Slam
18	33	34	35	

Responder's actions are as follows:

- 8 points or fewer - usually pass, but may use Stayman and then pass
- 9 points - invite partner to game
- 10 points - either invite or force to game, using your judgement
- 11-15 points - force to game
- 16 points - invite to slam
- 17 points - either invite or force to slam, using your judgement
- 18 points or more - force to slam

Opener's actions are as follows:

- 15 points - decline invitations
- 16 points - either decline or accept, using your judgement
- 17 points - accept invitations

As to the second point above (the 8-card trump fit) Responder is usually in charge.

- If Opener shows a 4-card Major which matches one held by Responder, then Responder picks that suit.
- If Opener does not show a 4-card Major which matches one held by Responder, then Responder picks notrump.

Opener usually has no say in the suit selection, with this important exception:

If Opener holds 4 cards in **EACH** Major suit he responds 2♥.

Should Responder then bid notrump, indicating a dislike for ♥s, Opener should bid ♠s because she knows there is a 4-4 ♠ fit,

Some comments are in order about the point count methods used on these pages.

Initial point count for both hands is based on 4-3-2-1 plus one point for a fifth card in a suit.

Revalued points (only after a trump fit is discovered) are +1 for a doubleton, +2 for a singleton and +3 for a void. Both hands should count these revalued short-suit points; Opener of course would not have a singleton or void.

One more point. Stayman should definitely be used after 2NT openings as well.

25 examples will be worth more than another 1000 words.

Deal 1