



Presents:

Stayman

STAYMAN is one of the most useful and, as a result, most famous Bridge Conventions of all time.

Quick Reminder: When our side opens 1NT we frequently have more than one game possibility. The usual choices are: game in a Major suit or game in No – Trump. So which is better?

Rule 1: When you have an 8 card or longer Major Suit fit it is almost always right to play in that suit.

So how do we find those 8 card major suit fits after partner opens 1NT?

One way is to use the Stayman Convention. This bid helps us find Major suit fits after No – Trump opening bids and overcalls. It is specifically useful when trying to find an 8 card Major Suit fit when both players have exactly 4 card major suits.

Rule 2: Whenever our side has opened or overcalled with 1NT our partnership agrees that the immediate response of **2 Clubs** is the **Stayman Bid**.



The bid of **2 Clubs**, in the above auction, is Stayman and is essentially a question to partner.

That question is:
“Do you have a Major Suit of at least 4 cards?”

Rule 3: Stayman is only used after opening bids or overcalls of No-Trump.

Rule 4: You must always have **at least one Major** suit that is **exactly 4 cards** to use Stayman.

Rule 5: Over the bid of 1 No – Trump we must have at least a good **8 or more points** to make the Stayman bid.

The lowest level of the Club suit is Stayman

- Over 1 NT → 2C is Stayman
- Over 2 NT → 3C is Stayman
- *****in non competitive auctions*****
- The Stayman Bid always asks:
 - **“Do you have a 4 card Major?”**

Responses to Stayman

WEST	NORTH	EAST	scubapri
Pass	1NT 2♦	Pass Pass	2♣

The bid of 2 Diamonds says: “I **do not have** a major suit that is 4 cards or longer”.

WEST	NORTH	EAST	scubapri
Pass	1NT 2♥	Pass Pass	2♣

The bid of 2 Hearts Says: “I have 4 or more cards in the Heart suit.”

WEST	NORTH	EAST	scubapri
Pass	1NT 2♠	Pass Pass	2♣

The bid of 2 Spades Says: “I have 4 or more cards in the Spade suit and I do not have 4 Hearts.”

Rule: These are the **only 3 responses** to Stayman.... **EVER**



With at least 25 points we know we have game. Which game is best though? **Rule 1:** When we have an 8 card Major Suit fit we should almost always play in that suit.

How do we find out if we have a fit in hearts?
We bid 2 Clubs



Partner has shown a 4 card Spade suit and denied a 4 card heart suit with his bid. So we did not find our fit on this hand.

So what is our next call?

The best bid with our hand was...
3 No – Trump.

We know we have enough for game and we just confirmed we do not have a fit in a Major suit.

Rule: When we know we haven't found a Major suit fit (and have no interest in other suits) we should return to

No – Trump at the best level for our values:

- good 8 – 9 points = 2 No – Trump
- 10 – 14 points = 3 No – Trump
- 15+ = a later lesson 😊

Teacher's Note: The most frequent mistake I see on a hand like this comes from the South player. Students still want to bid 3 Hearts after 2 Spades to show their 4 card major. But the thing they don't realize yet is that 3NT already shows that South has a 4 card Heart suit.

The screenshot shows a bridge bidding interface. At the top, a bidding board displays the current bid as 3NT. The hand being evaluated is held by the North player (Robot). The hand consists of: Spades (K, J, 4, 2), Hearts (Q, J, 10), Clubs (A, Q), and Diamonds (K, J, 9, 7). The hand has 15 high card points. The bidding history shows: West (Robot) passed, North (Robot) bid 1NT, East (Robot) passed, South (scubapro) bid 2♣, West (Robot) passed, North (Robot) passed, East (Robot) passed, and South (scubapro) bid 3NT. The interface also shows the cards for West (Robot) and East (Robot). West's hand is: Spades (A, 10, 9, 3), Hearts (7, 5, 4, 2), Clubs (8, 5, 4, 2), and Diamonds (A). East's hand is: Spades (8, 7, 6), Hearts (K, 9), Clubs (10, 9, 6), and Diamonds (Q, 8, 5, 3, 2). The South player's hand is also visible at the bottom: Spades (Q, 5), Hearts (A, 8, 6, 3), Clubs (K, J, 7, 3), and Diamonds (10, 6, 4). The interface includes a 'Remove' button and a score table in the top right corner.

Rule 4: You must always have **at least one Major** suit that is **exactly 4 cards** to use Stayman.

So the 3NT bid guarantees that South's Major suit was Hearts. If it were Spades, South would have bid 4 Spades.

On this hand we meet the requirements for Stayman;

- Good 8+ points
- One Major with exactly 4 cards

Partner's 2D bid shows no 4 card or longer Major.

No fit in Spades on this hand.

So what is our next bid as South?

The image shows a bridge bidding interface. At the top, the bidding sequence is displayed:

WEST	NORTH	EAST	scubapro
Pass	1NT	Pass	2♣
Pass	2♦	Pass	

Below the bidding sequence, the hand for South is shown. The cards are: A♠, 8♠, 6♠, 4♠, K♥, 2♥, 9♣, 8♣, 4♣, 2♣, Q♦, 10♦, 2♦. The hand is labeled 'S' and 'scubapro' with a score of 7.

WEST NORTH EAST scubapro

1NT Pass 2♣

Pass 2♦ Pass 2NT

Pass

Robot

E E

A 8 6 4 K 2 9 8 4 2 Q 10 2

S scubapro 7

When we do not find a Major Suit fit it is usually best to just bid No – Trump at whatever level our values suggest.

2NT = 8 – 9 total points

D Bidding Board 9

N Robot Remove

WEST NORTH EAST scubapro

1NT Pass 2♣

Pass 2♦ Pass 2NT

Pass Pass Pass

W West Robot

E East Robot

A 8 6 4 K 2 9 8 4 2 Q 10 2

S scubapro 7

2NT N NS 0 EW 0

Partner correctly passes 2NT because she is at the lower end of her range. (15 – 17)

WEST	NORTH	EAST	scubapro
			1NT
Pass	2♣	Pass	

A	6	5	3	K	9	7	6	A	K	Q	10	2
♠	♠	♠	♠	♥	♥	♥	♥	♣	♣	♦	♦	♦
S	♠	scubapro										7

Rule: When you have both 4 card Majors you should always respond 2 Hearts.

WEST	NORTH	EAST	scubapro
			1NT
Pass	2♣	Pass	2♥
Pass	3NT	Pass	

A	6	5	3	K	9	7	6	A	K	Q	10	2
♠	♠	♠	♠	♥	♥	♥	♥	♣	♣	♦	♦	♦
S	♠	scubapro										7

Rule 4 again: Partner must have a 4 card Major to bid Stayman. It can not be Hearts because he would have bid 4 Hearts instead of 3NT. ... So partner has 4 Spades.

Your bid....

4 Spades is the correct bid on this hand. We know we have an 8 card Spade fit and partner has already bid game by going to 3 No – Trump.

Here we have arrived at a very difficult contract to play but this is still the best bid to make on all of these types of sequences.....

Rule 1: When we have an 8 card Major suit fit it is almost always right to play in that suit.

Let's look at some more hands...

The screenshot shows a bridge bidding board with the following details:

- Bidding Board:** Board 11, Deal D.
- North (Robot):** J♠ 8♠ 7♠ 4♠ A♥ J♥ 2♥ J♣ 6♣ K♦ J♦ 9♦ 3♦
- West (Robot):** Q♠ 9♠ Q♥ 8♥ 5♥ 3♥ 8♣ 4♣ 3♣ 2♣ A♦ 8♦ 4♦
- East (Robot):** K♠ 10♠ 2♠ 10♥ 4♥ Q♣ 10♣ 9♣ 7♣ 5♣ 7♦ 6♦ 5♦
- South (scubapro):** A♠ 6♠ 5♠ 3♠ K♥ 9♥ 7♥ 6♥ A♣ K♣ Q♦ 10♦ 2♦
- Bidding Log:**

	WEST	NORTH	EAST	scubapro
Pass	2♣	Pass	1NT	1NT
Pass	3NT	Pass	2♥	2♥
Pass	Pass	Pass	4♠	4♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass
- Score:** 4♠ S, NS 0, EW 0.

WEST	NORTH	EAST	scubapro
			1NT
Pass	2♣	Pass	2♠
Pass	3♠	Pass	

Robot

HAND 1

K♠	Q♠	10♠	6♠	J♥	8♥	K♣	9♣	4♣	K♦	Q♦	J♦	3♦	
S	♠	scubapro											7♦

What do you bid next on this hand?

WEST	NORTH	EAST	scubapro
	1NT	Pass	2♣
Pass	2♥	Pass	

Robot

HAND 2

A♠	9♠	4♠	3♠	10♥	8♥	K♣	5♣	3♣	A♦	10♦	5♦	2♦	
S	♠	scubapro											7♦

Your next call here?

Bidding Board 11

WEST NORTH EAST scubapro

1NT

Pass 2♣ Pass 2♠

Pass 3♠ Pass Pass

Pass

N Robot Remove

WEST NORTH EAST

9 8 5 2 A K 7 Q 3 2 7 5 4

♠ ♠ ♠ ♠ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♣ ♣ ♣ ♦ ♦ ♦

A J 7 4 3

♠ ♠ ♠ ♠ ♠ ♠

Q 10 5 4 2 9 6 3

♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥

10 6 A J 8 7 5

♣ ♣ ♣ ♣ ♣ ♣

8 6 2 A 10 9

♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥

W West Robot E East Robot

K Q 10 6 J 8 K 9 4 K Q J 3

♠ ♠ ♠ ♠ ♥ ♥ ♣ ♣ ♣ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

S scubapro 7 3♠ S NS 0 EW 0

Partner's 3 Spade bid invites us to game in Spades. With 15 total points we should pass. With a good 16 – 17 points we should bid game in Spades.

Bidding Board 13

WEST NORTH EAST scubapro

1NT Pass 2♣

Pass 2♥ Pass 3NT

Pass Pass Pass

N Robot Remove

WEST NORTH EAST

Q 5 A Q J 5 A Q J 4 9 8 3

♠ ♠ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♣ ♣ ♣ ♣ ♦ ♦ ♦

J 10 7 6 2 K 8

♠ ♠ ♠ ♠ ♠ ♠ ♠ ♠

K 9 7 6 4 3 2

♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥

9 7 2 10 8 6

♣ ♣ ♣ ♣ ♣ ♣ ♣ ♣

K Q 7 J 6 4

♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥

W West Robot E East Robot

A 9 4 3 10 8 K 5 3 A 10 5 2

♠ ♠ ♠ ♠ ♥ ♥ ♣ ♣ ♣ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

S scubapro 7 3NT N NS 0 EW 0

Here we know we have game and we did not find a Major suit fit through Stayman. So we bid 3NT

Last chance to excel....
What do you bid with this hand?

WEST NORTH EAST scubapro

1NT Pass

robot

E E

7 5 4 2 10 2 9 7 5 4 A K 10

♠ ♠ ♠ ♠ ♥ ♥ ♣ ♣ ♣ ♣ ♦ ♦ ♦

S ♠ scubapro 7

Detailed description: This is a screenshot of a bridge bidding interface. At the top, the player's name 'scubapro' is shown in a red box, with 'WEST' and 'EAST' also in red boxes. The 'NORTH' position is in a white box. Below this, the bidding options '1NT' (in a yellow box) and 'Pass' are visible. On the left, a blue box labeled 'robot' indicates the opponent's position. On the right, a blue box labeled 'E' indicates the player's position. The main area is a light blue rectangle. At the bottom, the player's hand is displayed as a row of 13 cards: 7♠, 5♠, 4♠, 2♠, 10♥, 2♥, 9♣, 7♣, 5♣, 4♣, A♦, K♦, 10♦. Below the hand, a yellow bar contains the player's name 'scubapro' and a crown icon, with a blue box containing the letter 'S' and a yellow box containing the number '7'.

Did you pass?

Rule 5: Over the bid of 1 No – Trump we must have at least a good 8 or more points to make the Stayman bid.

Want to learn more about finding Major Suit fits after No – Trump Bids. Check out our notes on Jacoby Transfers.

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The screenshot shows a bridge bidding interface with the following details:

- North (N):** Robot. Hand: A♠ J♠ 6♠ 3♠ K♥ J♥ 8♥ 6♥ K♣ Q♣ J♣ 8♦ 3♦. Bidding: 1NT. Action: Pass.
- West (W):** West. Hand: K♠ Q♠ 9♠ 8♠ Q♥ A♣ 8♣ 6♣ Q♦ J♦ 9♦ 5♦ 4♦. Bidding: Pass.
- East (E):** Robot. Hand: 10♠ A♥ 9♥ 7♥ 5♥ 4♥ 3♥ 10♣ 3♣ 2♣ 7♦ 6♦ 2♦. Bidding: Pass.
- South (S):** scubapro. Hand: 7♠ 5♠ 4♠ 2♠ 10♥ 2♥ 9♣ 7♣ 5♣ 4♣ A♦ K♦ 10♦. Bidding: 1NT N. NS 0 EW 0.

Interface elements include a 'D' button, 'Bidding Board 25', a 'Remove' button, and a bidding log at the bottom right showing '1NT N NS 0 EW 0'.

LearnBridge.nyc Rules:

1: When you have an 8 card or longer Major Suit fit it is almost always right to play in that suit.

2: Whenever our side has opened or overcalled with 1NT our partnership agrees that the immediate response of **2 Clubs is the Stayman Bid**

3: Stayman is only used after opening bids or overcalls of No-Trump.

4: You must always have at least one Major suit that is **exactly 4 cards** to use Stayman

5: Over the bid of 1 No – Trump we must have at least a good 8 or more points to make the Stayman bid

6: These are the **only 3 responses** to Stayman:

- **2D – 2H – 2S**

- When we know we haven't found a Major suit fit (and have no interest in other suits) we should return to No – Trump at the best level for our values:
 - good 8 – 9 points = 2 No – Trump
 - 10 – 14 points = 3 No – Trump
- When you have both 4 card Majors you should always respond 2 Hearts.
- **Don't worry if you make a mistake. That's how we learn the game 😊**