



**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 'D' (Declarer) box is labeled 'Bidding Board 9'. The top row of cards shows the North hand: K♠, J♠, 4♠, 2♠, Q♥, J♥, 10♥, A♣, Q♣, K♦, J♦, 9♦, 7♦. Below this is the North player's name 'N Robot' and a 'Remove' button. The bottom row of cards shows the South hand: Q♠, 5♠, A♥, 8♥, 6♥, 3♥, K♣, J♣, 7♣, 3♣, 10♦, 6♦, 4♦. Below this is the South player's name 'S scubapro' and a '7' button. The middle section shows the bidding process: West (W) has bid 2♣, and East (E) has bid 3NT. The bidding history is shown in the top right: WEST (Pass), NORTH (1NT), EAST (Pass), scubapro (2♣), WEST (Pass), NORTH (2♠), EAST (Pass), WEST (Pass), NORTH (Pass), EAST (Pass). The bottom right corner shows the score: 3NT N, NS 0, EW 0.

**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 in a table:

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♦. Bid: 1NT.
- West (Robot):** Q♠ 9♠ Q♥ 8♥ 5♥ 3♥ 8♣ 4♣ 3♣ 2♣ A♦ 8♦ 4♦. Bid: 2♣.
- East (Robot):** K♠ 10♠ 2♠ 10♥ 4♥ Q♣ 10♣ 9♣ 7♣ 5♣ 7♦ 6♦ 5♦. Bid: 3NT.
- South (scubapro):** A♠ 6♠ 5♠ 3♠ K♥ 9♥ 7♥ 6♥ A♣ K♣ Q♦ 10♦ 2♦. Bid: 4♠.
- Score:** 4♠ S, NS 0, EW 0.
- Buttons:** "Remove" button is visible next to North's hand.

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

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

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 names are listed: WEST, NORTH, EAST, and scubapro. The bidding area shows '1NT' in a yellow box under NORTH and 'Pass' under EAST. On the left, a blue box labeled 'robot' is partially visible. On the right, a blue box labeled 'E' is partially visible. The main area shows a hand of cards: 7♠, 5♠, 4♠, 2♠, 10♥, 2♥, 9♣, 7♣, 5♣, 4♣, A♦, K♦, 10♦. At the bottom, a yellow bar shows the player's name 'S ♠ scubapro' and 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.

Visit [LearnBridge.nyc](http://LearnBridge.nyc) for more free content just like this!

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

- Board:** Board 25
- West:** Robot. Hand: A♠ J♠ 6♠ 3♠ K♥ J♥ 8♥ 6♥ K♣ Q♣ J♣ 8♦ 3♦. Bid: Pass.
- North:** scubapro. Hand: 10♠. Bid: 1NT.
- East:** Robot. Hand: A♥ 9♥ 7♥ 5♥ 4♥ 3♥ 10♣ 3♣ 2♣ 7♦ 6♦ 2♦. Bid: Pass.
- South:** scubapro. Hand: 7♠ 5♠ 4♠ 2♠ 10♥ 2♥ 9♣ 7♣ 5♣ 4♣ A♦ K♦ 10♦. Bid: 1NT.

The interface also shows a bidding area with 'D' and 'Bidding Board 25', and a 'Remove' button for North's bid.

# 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 😊**