

Stayman

This is a very simple introduction to the Stayman convention.

When partner opens 1NT he may, or may not, have a 4 card major (perhaps both). If we have a 4 card major (or perhaps both majors) then we need to find out if we have a 4-4 fit in a major suit with partner. The best way to find this out is to bid 2♣ (Stayman). This is a totally artificial bid which asks partner 'do you have a 4 card major suit'?

There are just three possible replies from partner: -

2♦ = no 4 card major

2♥ = a 4 card ♥ suit (possibly also 4 ♠'s if 4-4 in the majors)

2♠ = a 4 card ♠ suit

Having established whether there is a major suit fit or not, responder then continues with a pass, an invitational bid or a game forcing bid, depending upon his strength.

Remember, the 2♣ Stayman bid *promises* at least one 4 card major. That is until we get onto the more complex variations in the NT book.

For more fairly basic information about the Stayman convention look at the beginner's news-sheet no 9 in the 'Basic Bidding' link.

Stayman is covered in detail in the more advanced NT bidding book which is on this web site