

**Presents:** 



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

**Quick Reminder:** When our side opens INT 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 I:** 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 INT?

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 INT 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?**  **<u>Rule 3</u>:** 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 I 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 I NT  $\rightarrow$  2C is Stayman
- Over 2 NT  $\rightarrow$  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 scubapt 1NT Pass 2♣ Pass 2♦ Pass	The bid of 2 Diamonds says: "I <b>do not have</b> a major suit that is 4 cards or longer".
WEST NORTH EAST scubapr 1NT Pass 2♣ Pass 2♥ Pass	The bid of 2 Hearts Says:"I have 4 or more cards in the Heart suit."
WEST NORTH EAST scubapt 1NT Pass 2+ Pass 2+ Pass	The bid of 2 Spades Says:"I have 4 or more cards in the Spade suit and I do not have 4 Hearts."
These are the <b>only 3 responses</b> to Stayman <b>EVER</b>	

Rule:



With at least 25 points we know we have game. Which game is best though? **Rule I:** 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.** 

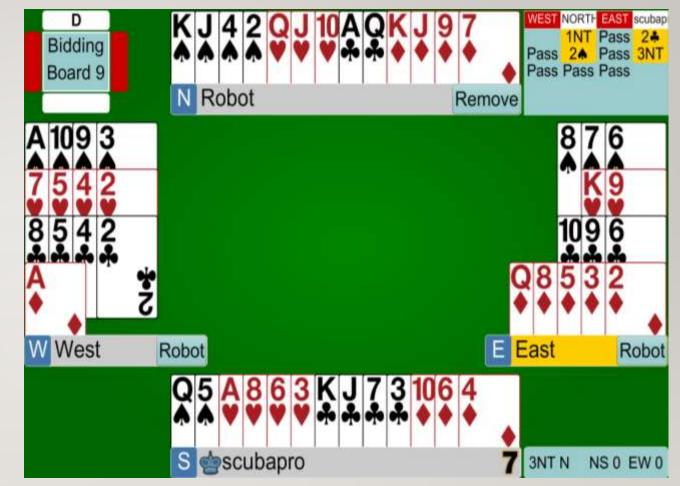
We know we have enough for game and we just confirmed we do not have a fit in a Major suit.

**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
- I5+ = 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.



**<u>Rule 4</u>**: 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.

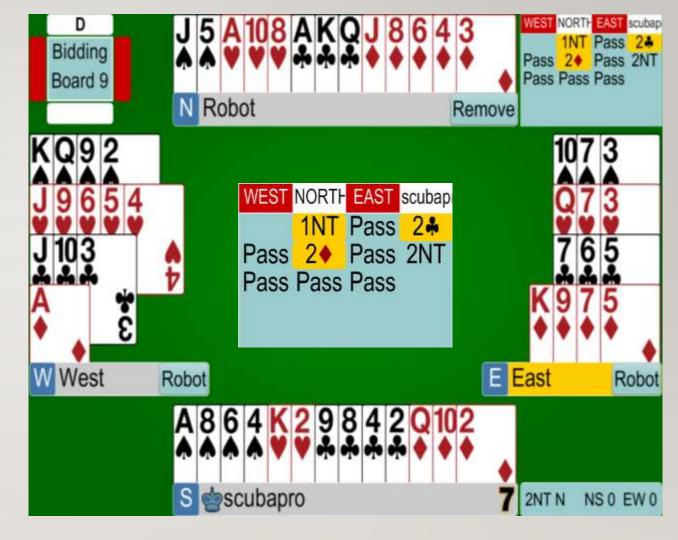
No fit in Spades on this hand.

So what is our next bid as South?





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



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



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



**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 I:** 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...





What do you bid next on this hand?



Your next call here?



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.



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

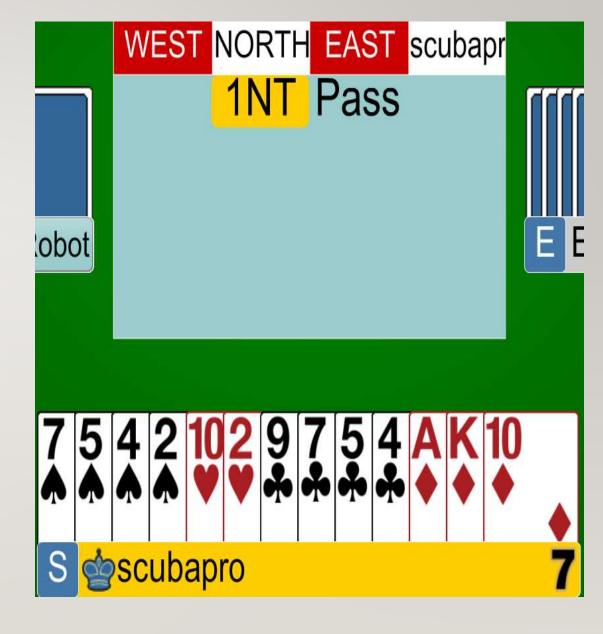


**Rule:** When we are completely balanced, like the hand above (4333), we do not need to try and find a Major suit fit. We should always stay in No – Trump with 4333 hands.



Last chance to excel....

## What do you bid with this hand?



Did you pass?

**Rule 5:** Over the bid of I 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 for more free content just like this!



## LearnBridge.nyc Rules:

I: 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 INT 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 I 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 <sup>(3)</sup>

