

PUPPET STAYMAN CONVENTION

Puppet Stayman – Used by responder with at least invitational values to discover whether opener's Notrump bid may consist of a 5 card major suit.

In the sequence: 2N - 3C responder's 3C bid behaves similar to the Stayman convention but promising at least a 3 card major suit and at least game invitational values. Using Puppet Stayman, responder can no longer use treatments like Garbage Stayman to show a bust hand short in Clubs since opener may jump directly to 3N with a good hand lacking major support. Note: some extend Puppet Stayman to opener's 1 Notrump (1N - 2C) as well. However, others object to that treatment believing the often verbose bidding sequences reveal more information to defenders than the supposed benefit discovering a 5-3 major suit fit. Using Puppet over opener's 1 Notrump bid also permits defenders to Double artificial bids during the bidding, either for lead direction or possible sacrifice bids.

Classic Puppet Stayman over 1 Notrump:

PS: There are several variations of puppet stayman in use.

Method 1:

Over Opener's 1N or 2N bid, some play responder's 2C or 3C should be used when holding a 3 card major to find a possible 8 card fit when opener holds a 5 card major. If opener does not bid the anticipated major, responder signs off in 3N as:

2N - 3C;
3D - 3N.

Using this method, Responder bids 4D to show *both* 4 card majors:

2N - 3C;
3D - 4D.

Method 2 - classic treatment:

Unlike Method 1 above, responder's 3N rebid promises *both 4 cards majors*. So, in the sequence:

2N - 3C;
3D - 3N

Opener may correct to a 4 level major suit game when holding 4 cards in either major.

1N - 2C; 2H/S	If 1 Notrump opener has a 5 card major, opener may rebid the major if responder makes a Notrump response. With 3+ cards in opener's 5 card major suit, responder bids game, etc (may be slam-going). Otherwise, responder makes appropriate Notrump bid.
1N - 2C; 2D	If the 1 Notrump Opener has 4 cards in a major but no 5 card major, opener begins by bidding 2D
1N - 2C; 2N	If 1 Notrump opener does not have a 5 or 4 card major, opener bids 2N .

1N - 2C; 2D - 2H/S	If the 1 Notrump opener has 4 cards in a major, opener begins by bidding 2D . Next, responder bids 4 card major not held by the responder (Smolen-like); this allows the stronger opener to become declarer. Opener may now invite or force game in the <i>other</i> major with the appropriate fit; otherwise, opener may make the appropriate Notrump response.
1N - 2C; 2D - 2N See Note:	After the 1 Notrump opener promises a 4 card major, the responder bids 2N to promise both 4 card majors. Note: alternative treatments exist for partners that use 1N - 2N for other purposes (Minor Suit Stayman or Four Way Stayman); those players must use the 1N - 2C; 2D - 2N to show an invitational hand. The alternative treatment may substitute 3C or 3D in place of 2N to show 4-4 in both majors (others may reserve minor suit rebids to initiate slam invites in the respective minor suit).
1N - 2C; 2D - 3H/S	When the opener shows a 4 card major and the responder has 4 cards in one major and 5 cards in the other major, the responder bids the shorter 4 card major at the 3 level - thus allowing the stronger opener to become declarer.
1N - 2C; 2D - 3N	When responder does not have a 4 card major, responder signs off in 3N (implying opener does not have a 5 card major where responder does not have a 4 card major)

Classic Puppet Stayman over 2 Notrump: Some prefer to play Puppet Stayman only after opener's 2 Notrump bid.

After Responder bids 3C (showing game forcing values), Opener bids 3 in the major suit with a 5 card major, 3D with a 4 card major, otherwise 3N.

2N - 3C; 3H/S	If 2 Notrump opener has a 5 card major, opener may rebid the major if responder makes a Notrump response. With 3+ cards in opener's 5 card major suit, responder bids game, etc (may be slam-going). Otherwise, responder makes appropriate Notrump bid.
2N - 3C; 3D	If the 2 Notrump opener has 4 cards in a major, opener begins by bidding 3D
2N - 3C; 3N	If 2 Notrump opener does not have a 5 or 4 card major, opener bids 3N .
2N - 3C; 3D - 3H/S	If the 2 Notrump opener has 4 cards in a major, opener begins by bidding 3D . Next, responder bids 4 card major not held by the responder (Smolen-like); this allows the stronger opener to become declarer. Opener may now bid game in the <i>other</i> major with the appropriate fit; otherwise, opener bids 3N .
2N - 3C; 3D - 4C/D;	After the 2 Notrump opener's 3D promises a 4 card major, the responder may bid 4C/D to promise both 4 card majors; some play 4C is slam invitational while 4D only shows game-going values (slow shows, fast denies). Playing this treatment, opener can pre-accept bidding 4D to showing Hearts or 4N to initiate slam ask in Spades . Not surprisingly, some creative folks reverse the meaning of 4C and 4D .

Simplified Puppet Stayman over 1 Notrump: An alternative treatment is the simplified Puppet Stayman convention, credited to Marty Bergen; responder promises game-going values using this method.

1N - 3C;	Like its big brother, the 3C Puppet Stayman asks opener to bid a 5 card major or bid 3D holding a 4 card major.
1N - 3C; 3D	If the 1 Notrump Opener has 4 cards in a major, Opener begins by bidding 3D
1N - 3C; 3N	If 1 Notrump opener does not have a 5 or 4 card major, Opener bids 3N .
1N - 3C; 3D - 3H/S	If the 1 Notrump opener has 4 cards in a major, opener begins by bidding 3D . Next, responder bids 4 card major <i>not</i> held by the responder (Smolen-like); this allows the stronger opener to become declarer. Opener may now bid game in the <i>other</i> major with the appropriate fit; otherwise, opener bids 3N .