

## Stayman after a 2NT opening

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### Suit bids after a 2NT opening

3♥ or 3♠ show a 5-card suit and ask partner to raise with 3-card support. With only two cards, opener bids 3NT.

4♥ and 4♠ show a 6+ suit.

Other bids show stronger hands and will be covered later. This hand was bid

♠ A K	♠ J 7
♥ K 9 4	♥ Q J 7 5 3
♦ A Q 10 8	♦ 4 2
♣ K J 7 2	♣ Q 9 6 3

**Polly Len**

2NT 3♥

4♥

Len has five hearts and enough points to respond. Polly nearly passed 3♥ as she only had 20 points, but as it is forcing, so she correctly raised to 4♥. With only had two hearts she would have bid 3NT.

### Stayman after a 2NT opening

Stayman works so well after 1NT has been opened that most people play it after a 2NT opening. Since a 2NT opening shows a balanced 20-22 points, responder doesn't need very much to go for game. Any bid by responder creates a game force; there is no weakness takeout over 2NT.

3♣ shows a hand with at least one 4-card major and asks if opener has a 4-card major. The replies are 3♦ with no major, 3♥ with four hearts and may be four spades too. 3♠ shows four spades and denies four hearts.

♠ A K 6	♠ J 9 7 4
♥ K 4	♥ Q J 7 5
♦ A Q 10 8	♦ 2
♣ K J 7 2	♣ Q 9 6 3

**Lucy Doreen**

2NT 3♣

3♦ 3NT

With four cards in each major Doreen responded 3♣, but when Lucy denied a 4-card major, she had to bid 3NT.

Even with a diamond lead, Doreen made nine tricks in 3NT.

The rule for using Stayman over 2NT is the same as using Stayman over 1NT –you must be prepared for any response that partner might make. On this hand Doreen has six points but she might have used Stayman with even fewer points

♠ A K 6 3	♠ 9 7 4 2
♥ K 4	♥ Q 10 7 5
♦ A Q 6	♦ 2
♣ K J 7 2	♣ Q 9 6 3

**Janet Pete**

2NT 3♣

3♠ 4♠

Pete gave serious thought to passing 2NT with only four points but decided to take the risk. He was rewarded when 4♠ lost just one spade, one heart and one club trick but 2NT went down on a diamond lead.

This hand would test an experienced pair, so full marks to Catherine on her bidding

♠ A K 6 3	♠ Q J 4 2
♥ K 9 8 4	♥ Q 7 5
♦ A 6	♦ Q 2
♣ A K 2	♣ 10 9 6 3

**Catherine Sylvia**

2NT

3♣

3♥

3NT

4♠

Stayman shows a hand with a 4-card major. It's not hearts it must be spades, so Catherine bravely bid 4♠ over 3NT and was rewarded when she found that 3NT goes several down on ♦ J lead from North.

♠ A K	♠ J 9 7 5	<b>Jean Gill</b>
♥ K 9 8	♥ Q J 7 5 4	2NT 3♣
♦ A Q 6	♦ 3	3♦ 3♥
♣ K J 7 3 2	♣ Q 9 8	4♥

Gill gave a lot of thought to her bid when Jean opened 2NT. At first she considered 3♥ but then she realised that Jean might have four spades, so she tried Stayman. If Jean had responded 3♠, Gill could raise to 4♠. But when she denied a 4-card major, 3♥ had to show a 5-card heart suit and the best game was reached.

Of course responder doesn't always have a weak hand when partner opens 2NT. On the following hand East has 13 points. Knowing partner has at least 20 points, the partnership must have at least 33 points between them and that should be enough to make a slam. I gave the hand to Margaret and Peter to bid, as they are always optimistic bidders and they didn't let me down!

♠ Q J 6	♠ A K 10 9 8	<b>Margaret</b>	<b>Peter</b>
♥ A 9	♥ K Q J 7	2NT	3♣
♦ Q J 6 2	♦ 3	3♦	3♠
♣ A K Q J	♣ 9 8 3	4♠	6♠

It's very important to play this hand in a suit contract, as against 6NT the defenders can cash their ♦A and ♦K to get 6NT one down. Peter didn't need to check whether two aces were missing as two aces count for eight points. With a combined 33 points only seven points are missing, so the slam can't be missing two aces.

There is only one hand where responder to 2NT can make a weak takeout. I asked the class if they could construct it, but that defeated them all

♠ A K 6 3	♠ 9 8 5 4	2NT	3♣
♥ K 4	♥ J 6 5 4	3♦/3♥/3♠	pass
♦ A Q 6	♦ J 9 7 5 2		
♣ K J 7 2	♣ -		

This horrible East hand will pass any reply West makes to Stayman. If West hasn't got a major, East just hopes that West has at least three diamonds. There is no other hand I can think of where East can pass any response from West. And there is absolutely no hand where West can pass the bidding out below game, once East has responded.