

Puppet Stayman (2NT)

Many players bid the major when holding 15-17 HCP and a 5-card major. However, when holding 20-21, players should bid 2NT even with 5-card majors (assuming a balanced hand).

Given that the 2NT opener may be holding a 5-card major, responder should explore that possibility if they hold as few as 3 cards in a major suit. The Puppet Stayman convention provides a set of responses that enables this discovery process. 2NT > 3♣ is the method to initiate Puppet Stayman (same as basic Stayman) and the 3C bid is no longer alertable.

After the following sequence 2NT > 3♣, opener can describe a hand that has 1) a 5-card major, 2) 1 or both 4-card majors, and 3) no 4 or 5 card majors:

Bid	Typical Meaning
3♥ or 3♠ [Alert]	Shows a 5-card major in the suit
3♦ [Alert]	Shows 1 or 2 4-card majors
3NT [Alert]	Shows a lack of 4-card or 5-card majors

Following a 3♦ response (2NT > 3♣ > 3♦) by Opener, Responder can show 1 or both 4-card majors:

Bid	Typical Meaning
3♥ or 3♠ [Alert]	Shows a 4-card suit in the UNBID major
4♦ [Alert]	Shows a 4-card suit in BOTH majors