

Smolen (1NT Responses with 5-4 or 4-5 in the Majors)

While most players (responder) use transfers to: 1) keep the big hand hidden; and 2) to gain an advantage on the opening lead, it becomes difficult when you (responder) are holding 5 cards in one major and 4 cards in the other major. You don't want to transfer and risk not finding the 4-4 fit in the 2nd major.

Before exploring the options (below) with invitational or game forcing HCP, if you have 7 HCP or less simply transfer and pass (unless you also have 4 Diamonds, then use Trash Stayman).

Smolen provides a method to show both majors – beginning with a traditional Stayman process. Smolen is employed if Opener denies a 4-card holding in both majors (i.e., a 2♦ response). Simply put, the responder bids the shorter major to indicate extra length in the other major. This allows the strong hand to remain hidden if a fit exists.

After the following sequence 1NT > 2♣ > 2♦, responder uses the following bids to show HCP and shape:

Bid	Typical Meaning
2♥ [Alert]	Shows 5 Spades and 4 Hearts with 8-9 HCP (invitational).
2♠ [Alert]	Shows 5 Hearts and 4 Spades with 8-9 HCP (invitational).
3♥ [Alert]	Shows 5 Spades and 4 Hearts with 10+ HCP (game forcing).
3♠ [Alert]	Shows 5 Hearts and 4 Spades with 10+ HCP (game forcing).

Smolen (2NT Responses with 5-4 or 4-5 in the Majors)

Smolen over 2NT is a partnership choice. Over 2NT, Smolen and Puppet Stayman are in direct conflict (Puppet also conflicts with Forcing Raises over 2NT).

After the following sequence 2NT > 3♣ > 3♦, responder uses the following bids to show HCP and shape:

Bid	Typical Meaning
3♥ [Alert]	Shows 5 Spades and 4 Hearts with 10+ HCP (game forcing).
3♠ [Alert]	Shows 5 Hearts and 4 Spades with 10+ HCP (game forcing).

To learn more about this convention/our books (*Beginning Bridge Using 2 Over 1*, *Beyond Beginning Bridge Using 2 Over 1*, and *The 2/1 Gold Card System* series) visit www.DiamondBooksPublishing.com.