

What is your agreement?

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Puppet Stayman is a common convention played when opening 2NT with 20-21 HCP and a balanced hand with a 5-card major suit. To initiate the convention one bids 3♣.

Over 1NT many also play Puppet to find a 5-card major fit using same 3♣* bid to initiate the Puppet Stayman convention. Now however, it must be alerted.

Alternatively, when using the convention over 1NT*, some prefer to use the bid of 2♣* as Puppet, by giving up the “standard” Stayman convention for finding a 4-4 card major fit.

This approach has become so common that the Bridge Buddy Convention Card has added a square labeled Puppet to their CC with a red line to indicate an alternative alerted bidding option for the 2♣ responses to 1NT*.

What is your agreement?

I purpose that over 1NT* you may use BOTH which I call Double Barrel Puppet Stayman To use this approach you would check both boxes on the Bridge Buddy CC.

Double Barrel Puppet Stayman

The convention has all of the advantages of Stayman and Puppet Stayman and maybe more.

The convention is initiated by the bid of 2♣ and requires having 9 HCP for an invitational bid opposite a standard strong 1NT opening or overcall showing 15-17 HCP or 11 HCP opposite a weak NT of 12-14 HCP.

After 1NT* the responses to 2♣ by opener are:

- 2♦ no 5-card major
- 2♥ 4-hearts
- 2♠ 4-spades and less than 4-hearts
- 2NT 4-4 in the majors
- 3♣* no 4-card major minimal a 4-card minor: 2344/3334/2254
- 3♦* no 4-card major maximum a 4-card minor as above
- 3♥ 5-hearts
- 3♠ 5-spades
- 3NT to play

Where *=alert and all 3-level bids are Game Force (GF) bids.

After Opener's response of 2♦ as NO 5-card major, responder follows Puppet and bids the major he does not have:

1NT*-2♣-2♦-2♥* (4-spades)

2♠ = spade fit, minimal hand
 2NT = no spades fit, minimum hand
 3NT = no spade fit, maximum hand
 4♠ = spade fit, maximum hand

1NT*-2♣-2♦-2♠* (4-hearts)

2NT = no heart fit, minimum hand
 3♥ = heart fit, minimum hand
 3NT=no heart fit, maximum hand
 4♥ = heart fit, maximum hand

Responder places the final contract following his strength. After the sequence 1NT-2♣-2♦-2♥*-2♠, the auction normally stops in a part score.

Opener	Responder
♠Q5	♠K732
♥AQ432	♥KJ6
♦K73	♦Q98
♣AQ5	♣1098

1NT*	2♣
2♥	3♥
4♥	Pass

Without the convention

1NT*	2♣
2♥	2♠
2NT	3NT
Pass	

Without the convention the 5-3 heart fit may have been missed.