

# Modern Acol for Beginners

## Lesson 9: Practise the Stayman Convention



Print off and fold down the middle.

<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>1</th> <th>West</th> <th>North</th> <th>East</th> <th>South</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>1NT</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>?</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	1	West	North	East	South			1NT	Pass	?	♠ K853 ♥ KJ10 ♦ Q2 ♣ AJ52	<b>2♣</b>  12-14 HCP, at least one 4 card major and a balanced hand. An ideal Stayman hand.					
1	West	North	East	South													
		1NT	Pass	?													
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2	West	North	East	South													
		1NT	Pass	?													
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3	West	North	East	South													
		1NT	Pass	?													
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4	West	North	East	South													
				1NT													
	Pass	2♣	Pass	?													
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5	West	North	East	South													
				1NT													
	Pass	2♣	Pass	?													
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6	West	North	East	South													
		1NT	Pass	2♣													
	Pass	2♦	Pass	?													
<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>7</th> <th>West</th> <th>North</th> <th>East</th> <th>South</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>1NT</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Pass</td> <td>2♣</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>?</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	7	West	North	East	South					1NT		Pass	2♣	Pass	?	♠ AK42 ♥ 9863 ♦ A5 ♣ K103	<b>2♥</b> Partner is using Stayman to ask if you have a 4-card major. You have both majors so you show your hearts first, regardless of where your points lie. If partner responds 2NT (showing 11-12 HCP and denying four hearts) then he must have four spades, otherwise why bid Stayman? You have game values even if partner has just 11 HCP so you would then bid 4♠.
7	West	North	East	South													
				1NT													
	Pass	2♣	Pass	?													

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8	West	North	East	South													
		1NT	Pass	2♣													
	Pass	2♥	Pass	?													
<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>9</th> <th>West</th> <th>North</th> <th>East</th> <th>South</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>1NT</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>?</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	9	West	North	East	South			1NT	Pass	?	♠ K876 ♥ Q65 ♦ AJ8 ♣ K83	<b>3NT</b> You have 13 HCP and four spades but you have a 'pancake' hand, i.e. a flat 4-3-3-3 shape, so you should not bid Stayman looking for an 8 card spade fit. You have no shortage so will not be able to produce any extra tricks by ruffing. You will make the same number of tricks in 3NT as in 4♠ and will require one trick fewer to make a game contract.					
9	West	North	East	South													
		1NT	Pass	?													
<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>10</th> <th>West</th> <th>North</th> <th>East</th> <th>South</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>1NT</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>?</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	10	West	North	East	South			1NT	Pass	?	♠ Q8763 ♥ J652 ♦ 4 ♣ 752	<b>2♣</b> With 5-4 in the majors you can use Stayman even with a weak hand. If partner responds 2♥ or 2♠ then you will pass. If partner responds 2♦ you will sign off in 2♠ and partner must pass. This sequence is known as 'Weak Stayman'.					
10	West	North	East	South													
		1NT	Pass	?													
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11	West	North	East	South													
		1NT	Pass	?													
<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>12</th> <th>West</th> <th>North</th> <th>East</th> <th>South</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>1NT</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>?</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	12	West	North	East	South			1NT	Pass	?	♠ 9752 ♥ Q65 ♦ J9432 ♣ 7	<b>2♣</b> This is "Garbage Stayman", a rare form of weak takeout made when responder is weak and is happy to pass any response from partner, such as here, where a 7+ card fit is almost guaranteed. Suitable hands have five diamonds and at least three cards in each major					
12	West	North	East	South													
		1NT	Pass	?													

\* Ref Q.11 above., if playing Transfers (Lesson 12) as part of your system then you would not use Phoney Stayman. You would bid 2♠, asking partner to bid 3♣. You would then pass if your long minor is clubs, or convert to 3♦ if your long minor is diamonds.