

*25 Bridge Conventions You Should Know*

PRACTICE

MAKES

PERFECT

BARBARA SEAGRAM & DAVID BIRD



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# INTRODUCTION

The book *25 Bridge Conventions You Should Know*, by Barbara Seagram and Marc Smith, is a classic that has sold more than 160,000 copies — the best-selling bridge book for many decades. This playbook is designed to accompany it.

Each of the twenty-five chapters begins with a summary of an important bidding convention. This is followed by four deals in which the convention is put to instructive use. There is then further analysis of the play or defense of the contract that is reached. A bridge teacher might use such deals after explaining a particular convention to her students. Alternatively, you will be able to try the various problems in the deals yourself, as you read this book. You may be asked, for example: ‘Look at the West hand for a moment. What would you lead against 4♠?’ Once you have made up your mind, the text may continue: ‘Right, now take the South cards and see if you would have made the contract.’

Your overall aim here is the same as with most such books — to improve the standard of your game and to enjoy yourself at the same time. Good luck!

Barbara & David



**LEARN THESE**

**1**

**FIRST**



# 1

## STAYMAN 2♣ RESPONSE TO 1NT

One of the world's most popular and useful conventions is the Stayman 2♣ opposite a 1NT opening from partner. It is used to seek a 4-4 fit in a major suit. After a start of 1NT – 2♣, the opener rebids:

- 2♦ I have no four-card major
- 2♥ I have four hearts (maybe four spades too)
- 2♠ I have four spades, but not four hearts

Sometimes the opener will hold a five-card major when he rebids 2♥ or 2♠.

You use Stayman when you hold one or more four-card majors yourself. If instead you held five cards in one of the majors, you would start with a transfer response (see Chapter 8).

The responder may take various actions after the opener's rebid. He may pass when his hand is weak and he is happy to play in spades, hearts or diamonds (his shape may be 4=3=5=1 or 4=4=5=0):

Partner	You
1NT	2♣
2♦	all pass

With 8-9 points, responder may invite a game at his second turn:

(a) Partner	You	(b) Partner	You
1NT	2♣	1NT	2♣
2♠	2NT	2♠	3♠

In (a) the responder bids 2♣ holding four hearts. When no 4-4 heart fit comes to light, he invites a game in notrump. In (b) a 4-4 spade fit has been found and the responder invites the opener to bid 4♠ with a non-minimum.

When the responder is stronger, with 10+ points, he may bid a game:

(a) Partner	You	(b) Partner	You
1NT	2♣	1NT	2♣
2♠	3NT	2♠	4♠

# PLAY DEAL 1-1

Neither Vul. Dealer South.

	♠ K Q 5 4											
	♥ J											
	♦ A 8 5 2											
	♣ 8 6 3 2											
♠ 10 9 8 6	<table border="1" style="border-collapse: collapse; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: auto;"> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W</td><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		♠ 3	
	N											
W		E										
	S											
♥ Q 4 3		♥ K 10 9 7 6 5										
♦ 9 4		♦ J 10 7 3										
♣ A Q 10 7		♣ K 9										
	♠ A J 7 2											
	♥ A 8 2											
	♦ K Q 6											
	♣ J 5 4											

West	North	East	South
pass	2♣	pass	1NT
pass	4♠	all pass	2♠

**The Bidding:** North uses a Stayman 2♣ to seek a 4-4 fit in spades. When South rebids 2♠ a spade fit is located and North bids game in the suit. If South had rebid 2♦ or 2♥ instead, North would have bid 3NT. (It is rarely right to look for an eleven-trick minor-suit game instead of 3NT, unless you have a very shapely hand.)

**The Play:** West leads the ♠10 and, as declarer, you must make a plan before playing to the first trick. You expect to lose three club tricks and should plan to ruff two hearts in the dummy. These ruffs should be taken with the ♠5 and ♠4, leaving the trump honors to draw the defenders' trumps. It is therefore vital to win the first trick in the dummy with the ♠Q (or the ♠K).

You cross to the ♥A and ruff a heart with the ♠4. You return to your hand with the ♦Q and ruff your last heart with the ♠5. You then play the dummy's remaining top trump and reenter your hand with the ♦K to draw West's remaining trumps with the ♠AJ.

You can then try your luck in the diamond suit. If it breaks 3-3, you will be able to discard a club and score an overtrick. When the cards lie as in the diagram, you cannot avoid the loss of three club tricks. You make the contract exactly.

# PLAY DEAL 1-2

E-W Vul. Dealer South.

	♠ 9 4 3 2 ♥ 8 6 4 3 ♦ A J 8 ♣ A 2											
♠ Q J 10 8 ♥ 10 5 ♦ 9 6 3 ♣ Q 9 7 6	<table border="1" style="margin: auto; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W</td><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		♠ K 7 5 ♥ Q J 9 ♦ 10 7 4 2 ♣ K 10 3	
	N											
W		E										
	S											
	♠ A 6 ♥ A K 7 2 ♦ K Q 5 ♣ J 8 5 4											

West	North	East	South
pass	2♣	pass	1NT
pass	3♥	pass	2♥
all pass			4♥

**The Bidding:** North uses Stayman 2♣ to seek a 4-4 fit in hearts or spades. What should he say at his second turn, when a heart fit has been found? He is not quite strong enough to leap to 4♥ and should invite a game by raising to 3♥. South holds a maximum 17 HCP and is happy to bid the heart game.

**The Play:** West leads the ♠Q and, as declarer, the time has come to make a plan. You expect to lose a spade and a club and must therefore hope that trumps break 3-2 and you have only one loser in that suit. You start with five potential losers, looking at the South hand. To reduce this to the required three, you should aim to ruff two clubs in dummy.

Suppose you win the spade lead and play your two top trumps, finding a 3-2 break. You will go down! When you surrender a club trick, preparing to take the two ruffs that you need, East will win and draw a third round of trumps. With only one trump left in dummy, you can no longer take two ruffs.

After winning the spade lead, you should play ace and another club. When you regain the lead, you will play the ace and king of trumps and subsequently take two club ruffs in dummy. East can score his master trump when he wishes. The contract is yours!

# PLAY DEAL 1-3

N-S Vul. Dealer South.

	♠ K 8 5 2											
	♥ K Q J 3											
	♦ 8 7 6 2											
	♣ A											
♠ Q 10 4	<table border="1" style="border-collapse: collapse; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: auto;"> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W</td><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		♠ A J 7 6	
	N											
W		E										
	S											
♥ 10 9 8 5		♥ 6 2										
♦ A 10 3		♦ J 9										
♣ 9 7 4		♣ 10 8 6 3 2										
	♠ 9 3											
	♥ A 7 4											
	♦ K Q 5 4											
	♣ K Q J 5											

West	North	East	South
pass	2♣	pass	1NT
pass	3NT	all pass	2♦

**The Bidding:** North uses a Stayman 2♣ to seek a 4-4 fit in either hearts or spades. When South rebids 2♦, denying a major, North rebids 3NT.

**The Play:** West leads the ♥10 and declarer counts eight top tricks in hearts and clubs. He wins the first trick with dummy's ♥J and plays the ♣A, so that he will be able to score the three club honors in his hand later. His next move is to lead a diamond to the king, setting up a ninth trick from that suit. The deal is not yet over! What should declarer do when West wins with the ♦A and switches to the ♠Q? (He can see that there is no future in hearts and declarer has played both diamonds and clubs.)

How easy it would be to cover with dummy's ♠K, but you would then go down. East would win with the ♠A and return the ♠6 to partner's ♠10 (swallowing your ♠9). The ♠4, through dummy's remaining ♠85 would then allow East to score two more spade tricks with his ♠J7.

How can you avoid losing four spade tricks? You should calculate what will happen if you do not cover the ♠Q. West will continue with the ♠10. Now it is right to play the ♠K, because East will have no entry back to the West hand. When he wins with the ♠A, he cannot play effectively from his remaining ♠J7. Dummy's ♠85 will be a stopper and you have nine tricks.

# PLAY DEAL 1-4

Neither Vul. Dealer South.

<p>♠ Q J 10 8 ♥ Q 4 3 ♦ 10 9 4 ♣ Q 10 7</p>	<p>♠ 7 6 4 2 ♥ K ♦ A K 2 ♣ 9 8 6 5 2</p>	<table border="1" style="margin: auto; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td style="padding: 5px;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 5px;">W     E</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 5px;">S</td></tr> </table>	N	W     E	S	<p>♠ K 3 ♥ J 10 9 7 6 ♦ Q 8 6 5 ♣ J 4</p>
N						
W     E						
S						
	<p>♠ A 9 5 ♥ A 8 5 2 ♦ J 7 3 ♣ A K 3</p>					

West	North	East	South
pass	2♣	pass	1NT
pass	3NT	all pass	2♥

**The Bidding:** North uses a Stayman 2♣ to seek a 4-4 fit in spades. When South responds 2♥ to show a heart suit, North rebids 3NT. If South held four spades as well as four hearts, he would then bid 4♠. He would know that North would not have bid Stayman unless he held at least one four-card major.

**The Play:** West leads the ♠Q and East plays the ♠K so that it will not block the suit on the second round. You are not afraid of any switch and hold up your ♠A on the first round, winning the spade continuation. What next?

You have seven top tricks and can establish two more tricks in clubs, provided the suit splits 3-2. Should you continue with the ♣A, the ♣K and a low club? No, because you would then have no entry to reach the ♥A in your hand. West would win with the ♣Q, score two spade winners and exit safely in diamonds, putting the contract one down.

To make the contract you should lead the ♣3 on the first round of clubs, setting up two extra winners in the suit. West will win, score two more spade tricks and return a heart. You win with the ♥K, cross to the ♣A and play the ♥A. You then play the ♣K and return to dummy with a diamond to score two more club tricks. You make four clubs, one spade and two tricks in each red suit.

Remember the concepts you learned in this book with the handy...

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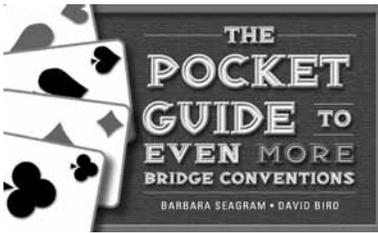


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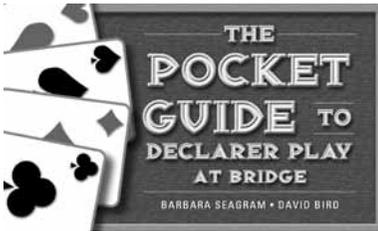


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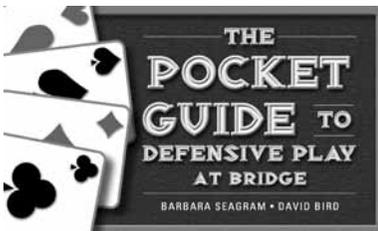


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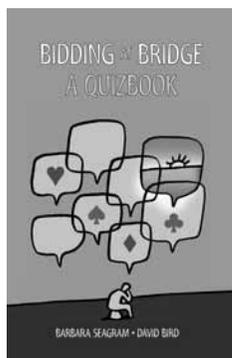
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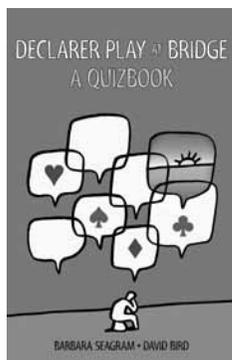
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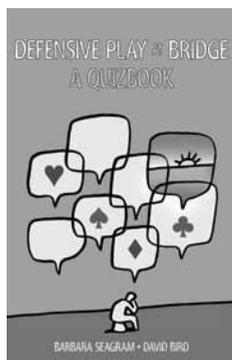
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*25 Bridge Conventions You Should Know* has sold more than 250,000 copies since it was first published, and continues to top the bridge bestseller lists. Over the years, readers and teachers have suggested that it would be an even better book if it offered some way to practice what they had learned. Now here it is: a brief summary of each of those 25 conventions, together with example hands that can be dealt out and used to apply your new knowledge.



**BARBARA SEAGRAM** (Toronto, Canada) is one of North America's best-known bridge authors and teachers. She travels throughout the world teaching the game in clubs and on cruise ships. There are well over half a million copies of her various books in print.



**DAVID BIRD** (Southampton, UK) can claim to be the most prolific bridge author in the history of the game, with well over 100 books to his credit. Somehow he also finds time to contribute regularly to bridge magazines around the world, and provide commentary on high-level events on BBO.

