

DARDEN RESTAURANTS INC

Form 4

January 17, 2006

FORM 4
UNITED STATES SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
Washington, D.C. 20549

Check this box
if no longer
subject to
Section 16.
Form 4 or
Form 5
obligations
may continue.
See Instruction
1(b).

**STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN BENEFICIAL OWNERSHIP OF
SECURITIES**

Filed pursuant to Section 16(a) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934,
Section 17(a) of the Public Utility Holding Company Act of 1935 or Section
30(h) of the Investment Company Act of 1940

OMB APPROVAL

OMB
Number: 3235-0287
Expires: January 31,
2005
Estimated average
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(Print or Type Responses)

1. Name and Address of Reporting Person *
WALSH RICHARD J

(Last) (First) (Middle)

**5900 LAKE ELLENOR
DRIVE, P.O. BOX 593330**

(Street)

ORLANDO, FL 32859-3330

(City) (State) (Zip)

2. Issuer Name **and** Ticker or Trading
Symbol
**DARDEN RESTAURANTS INC
[DRI]**

3. Date of Earliest Transaction
(Month/Day/Year)
01/12/2006

4. If Amendment, Date Original
Filed(Month/Day/Year)

5. Relationship of Reporting Person(s) to
Issuer

(Check all applicable)

____ Director ____ 10% Owner
____X____ Officer (give title ____ Other (specify
below) below)
SVP, Corporate Affairs

6. Individual or Joint/Group Filing(Check
Applicable Line)
____X____ Form filed by One Reporting Person
____ Form filed by More than One Reporting
Person

Table I - Non-Derivative Securities Acquired, Disposed of, or Beneficially Owned

1. Title of Security (Instr. 3)	2. Transaction Date (Month/Day/Year)	2A. Deemed Execution Date, if any (Month/Day/Year)	3. Transaction Code (Instr. 8)	4. Securities Acquired (A) or Disposed of (D) (Instr. 3, 4 and 5)	5. Amount of Securities Beneficially Owned Following Reported Transaction(s) (Instr. 3 and 4)	6. Ownership Form: Direct (D) or Indirect (I) (Instr. 4)	7. Nature of Indirect Beneficial Ownership (Instr. 4)
Common Stock	01/12/2006		M	17,499 A	\$ 6 83,005	D	
Common Stock	01/12/2006		S	17,499 D	\$ 40.5 65,506	D	
Common Stock					38	I	By self as custodian for minor
Common Stock					1,331.747 ⁽¹⁾	I	Savings Plan

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Reminder: Report on a separate line for each class of securities beneficially owned directly or indirectly.

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SEC 1474
(9-02)

Table II - Derivative Securities Acquired, Disposed of, or Beneficially Owned
(e.g., puts, calls, warrants, options, convertible securities)

1. Title of Derivative Security (Instr. 3)	2. Conversion or Exercise Price of Derivative Security	3. Transaction Date (Month/Day/Year)	3A. Deemed Execution Date, if any (Month/Day/Year)	4. Transaction Code (Instr. 8)	5. Number of Derivative Securities Acquired (A) or Disposed of (D) (Instr. 3, 4, and 5)	6. Date Exercisable and Expiration Date (Month/Day/Year)	7. Title and Amount of Underlying Securities (Instr. 3 and 4)	8. Amount or Number of Shares
Stock Option (Right to Buy)	\$ 6	01/12/2006		M	17,499	(2) 06/17/2007	Common Stock	17,499

Reporting Owners

Reporting Owner Name / Address

Relationships

Director 10% Owner Officer Other

WALSH RICHARD J
5900 LAKE ELLENOR DRIVE
P.O. BOX 593330
ORLANDO, FL 32859-3330

SVP, Corporate Affairs

Signatures

Douglas E. Wentz, Attorney-in-fact for WALSH, RICHARD J., 5900 Lake Ellenor Drive,
P.O. Box 593330, Orlando, FL 32859-3330, Darden Restaurants, Inc. (DRI)

01/17/2006

__Signature of Reporting Person

Date

Explanation of Responses:

* If the form is filed by more than one reporting person, see Instruction 4(b)(v).

** Intentional misstatements or omissions of facts constitute Federal Criminal Violations. See 18 U.S.C. 1001 and 15 U.S.C. 78ff(a).

The number of shares reported is based on a plan statement dated December 31, 2005, and is derived from an undivided interest in a fund
(1) consisting of both Darden common stock and a small cash position that fluctuates from time to time. The number of shares reported may change based on the size of the cash position at the time of reporting.

(2) The option vested in two equal annual installments beginning 6/17/2000.

Note: File three copies of this Form, one of which must be manually signed. If space is insufficient, see Instruction 6 for procedure.

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