

Fifth Chair



Lebensohl (Intervention Over 1NT Openings)

When there is intervention over the 1NT opening transfers are off, and we use the convention called Lebensohl.

Partner opens 1NT (15-17) and next opponent makes an overcall 1NT 2S?

South (you) will be confronted with a difficult decision on many hands.

If you have 0-4 points a PASS is clear.

If you have 4-8 points, your side owns half the points

(15 + 5 - 8 = 20 - 23) and you may want to compete for the part-score or punish them, depending on the vulnerability.

Partner needs to know whether you are interested in part-score only or game i.e whether your bid is forcing. For example you hold:

94 AQ842 73 9863

PARTNER OPP YOU

1NT 2D ?

You know that your side holds 21-23 HCP and as partner will hold three hearts in the majority of cases, you will have an 8-card fit.

The Law says to be in 2H. If they have an 8-card diamond fit, which is highly likely with your diamond holding, they could make 2S. Even if they go one down this will be a bad score for you (especially at MPs), as you will collect 50 or 100 instead of 110 or 140. You make an agreement with your partner that bidding at the two-level is not forcing. But what happens if the overcall is 2S? Should you now bid 3H?

I think there are many reasons to do so. Partner could have four hearts, could be maximum and your side holds 22-23 HCP. Logic tells us that 3H has excellent chances. Even one down in 3H could be more profitable than letting them play in 2S. But if you bid 3H partner will not know if your 3H bid is forcing.

We use the Lebensohl convention after a two-level overcall of partner's 1NT opening bid, to clarify this type of situation:

(1)	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH	WEST
	1NT	2D	2H	P

?

Opener should pass as 2H is only competitive (2-level bid)

(2)	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH	WEST
	1NT	2S	2NT	P
	3C*	P	3D	P
	?			

Opener should pass. (Responder has 5 diamonds and only competitive values)

(3)	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH	WEST
	1NT	2H	2NT	P
	3C	P	3S	P
	?			

Responder could've bid 2S directly but went via Lebensohl. This is an invitational bid with 5 spades and 9-10 points

(4)	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH	WEST
	1NT	2H	3S	P
	?			

	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH	WEST
	1NT	2S	3H	P
	?			

	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH	WEST
	1NT	2D	3S	P
	?			

All these are forcing to game (3-level bids). 3NT, 4 of a major, 5 of a minor.

(5)	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH	WEST
	1NT	2S	?	

You have : S-- 975 H-- KQ1064 D-- AJ5 C-- J3

Bid 3H, which is forcing to game.

(6)	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH	WEST
	1NT	2S	?	

You hold: S-- 87 H-- J98765 D-- A104 C--J7

Bid 2NT. After partner's compulsory 3C, bid 3H. Partner knows to pass

(7)	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH	WEST
	1NT	2S	?	

You hold: S-- 87 H-- K75 D-- AJ87 C-- KJ76

Bid 3NT, which denies a spade stopper (without a stopper, partner should bid his best minor and we settle for 4C /D).

(8)	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH	WEST
	1NT	2H	?	

You hold: S-- K765 H--QJ7 D-- 42 C-- A1087

Bid 2NT and cue bid 3H over partner's 3C. This shows 4 spades and a stopper in hearts

9)	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH	WEST
	1NT	2H	?	

You hold: S-- K4 H-- KJ104 D-- Q82 C-- 10954

Double. This should be fun

(10)	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH	WEST
	1NT	2H	?	

You hold: S-- 72 H--K103 D-- KQ10875 C--J5

Bid 2NT and over 3C bid 3NT. You have sufficient values and a heart stopper

AFTER 3-LEVEL INTERVENTION

1. A new suit is forcing to game

(b) Double is negative (short in their suit) and is not forcing to game.

NORTH	EAST	SOUTH	WEST
1NT	3D	?	

3H/S = forcing to game and shows a 4-card suit (as with 5 can go straight to game)

Double = 7-10 HCP, invitational with at least one 4-card major

Eg S-- AJ87 H-- J872 D-- 3 C --Q954

Opener has the choice of converting to penalty by passing.

--CONTINUED--

QUIZ ON LEBENSOHL

1. Partner opens 1NT and next opponent bids 2H.

What do you bid with:

- (a) S-- AQ842 H--73 D--9842 C--83
- (b) S-- Q4 H-- KJ1043 D-- Q82 C-- 10954
- (c) S A--J83 H--72 D-- Q86 C K--983
- (d) S-- J3 H-- 62 D --KQ7632 C 9--54
- (e) S K--3 H--84 D—932 C --AKJ873
- (f) S A--Q83 H-- K103 D-- 984 C --K1043

2. Partner opens 1NT and there is a bid of 2S by next hand.

What do you bid with:

- (a) S 83 H KQ1073 D J932 C 42
- (b) S-- J4 H-- 983 D --K82 C --KQ--J64
- (c) S-- Q93 H-- AJ93 D --K62 C 954
- (d) S-- 4 H --A82 D-- AQ642 C --K842
- (e) S --93 H --AQ62 D-- K8 C --J6432
- (f) S-- AJ87 H --J872 D—2 C -- Q954
- (g) S-- 972 H-- 643 D --AK82 C-- K94

--CONTINUED--

ANSWERS TO QUIZ ON LEBENSOHL

1. (a) Bid 2S, competitive and non-forcing

1. Double. Likely to be your best spot – especially if they are vulnerable

2. Bid 3H . This shows four spades and no stopper in hearts

3. Bid 2NT-Lebensohl and convert partner's 3C to 3D

4. Bid 3NT. This shows 10+ points and no stopper

5. Bid 2NT. Over partner's 3C cue bid 3H. This shows four spades and a stopper – giving partner a choice of games.

2. (a) Bid 2NT and correct partner's 3C to 3H

(b) Bid 3C. This is forcing (to 3NT or 4C)

(c) Bid 2NT and over 3C bid 3S. This shows four hearts and a spade stopper

(d) Bid 3D which is forcing and follow with 6C which partner should read as five diamonds and at least four clubs

(He can pass or correct to 6D).

(e) Bid 3S which is Stayman.

(f) DOUBLE for penalties.

(g) 3NT. No stopper needed, as you have the points.