

INTERFERENCE OVER OUR 1NT OPENING
LEBENSOHL
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WHEN ARE REGULAR NT SYSTEMS ON?

1NT (Double)

When double means something other than penalty, then...
Ignore double, all NT systems on

(Double)

When double is penalty, then.....

Redouble = forces 2C to get out in 2C or 2D

1NT	(Dbl)	Rdbl	(Pass)
2C	(Pass)	Pass	(Pass)

1NT	(Dbl)	Rdbl	(Pass)
2C	(Pass)	2D	(Pass)
Pass	(Pass)		

All regular NT systems on

1NT (2C)

When 2C means clubs, one-suiter, etc., then....

Double = Stayman

2D/ 2H/ 2S/2N = systems on

(2C)

When 2C is Landy showing the majors, then....

Double = willingness to double one or their majors for penalty

2D = natural, nonforcing

2H/S = stopper in the suit bid with values to at least 2N

WHAT IS LEBENSOHL?

Lebensohl deals with the problem created for the partner of the opening NT bidder following an overcall. A 2-level suit bid is nonforcing, a 3-level suit bid is forcing and 2NT is a relay to 3C. A good memory aid is, "SLOW SHOWS" or "DIRECT DENIES". In other words, slow shows a stopper. Direct denies a stopper. When given an opportunity to make a bid directly or by going through 2N and then making the bid, going slowly through 2NT:

- shows weakness in a lower ranking suit
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- shows invitational values in a higher ranking suit

- shows a stopper in opponent's suit with Stayman (cuebid) or 3NT
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WHEN DOES LEBENSOHL APPLY?

When the opponents interfere at 2D, 2H, or 2S, Lebensohl structure applies. You can describe one of several different types of responding hands:

- A weak signoff with a long suit that is higher ranking than the overcall.
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- A weak signoff with a long suit that is lower ranking than the overcall.
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- Invitational values with a long suit that is higher in rank than the overcall.
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- Game values with a 4-card major and a stopper in their suit.
 -
- Game values with a 4-card major and no stopper in their suit.
 -
- Game values with no 4-card major and a stopper in their suit.
 -
- Game values with no 4-card major and no stopper in their suit.

When you play Lebensohl, you give up the use of 2NT as a natural notrump invitation. This is not much of a sacrifice, as when you hold this type of hand 8-9 HCP's and a stopper in their suit; you can show it with a penalty double.

Let's look at an example:

1NT (2H) ?

- Double = Penalty
- 2S = Signoff
- 2NT = Lebensohl, relaying partner to 3C
- 3C/3D/3S - natural and forcing
- 3H = (cuebid of their suit) Stayman (promising 4 cards in the other major) with forcing values and no heart stopper
- 3N = game values, no 4-card major and no stopper in their suit
- 4D/4H = Texas Transfer

After the 2N bid forcing 3C, then.....

- Pass = 5+ clubs, no interest in game
- 3D = 5+ diamonds, no interest in game
- 3H = (cuebid their suit) Stayman with game values and their suit stopped
- 3S = Invitational (since 2S is available as weak)

- 3N = game values, no 4-card major, with a stopper in their suit

If your first bid denied a stopper (direct cuebid or jump to 3NT):

After the direct cuebid, showing Stayman without a stopper in opponent's suit;

- Opener will bid a 4+card major if he has one.
- If he has no 4+card major but does have a stopper in their suit, he'll bid 3NT.
- With no 4-card major and no stopper, he'll run to his cheapest 4+card suit. You can then pass, raise to game or bid your cheapest 4+card suit if you don't have a fit with partner.

After the jump to 3NT, showing game values without a stopper in opponent's suit:

- Opener will pass if he has a stopper.
- If he does not have a stopper, he'll bid 4 of his cheapest 4+card suit. You can then pass, raise to game or bid your cheapest 4+card suit if you don't have a fit with partner.

Other issues:

How should you handle:

1NT	(2X)	(P)	(P)?
1NT	(P)	(P)	(2X)?

How should you handle:

2-suited overcalls
 With 1 known suit?
 With 2 known suits?

Acknowledgements: Karen's Bridge Library