

LEBENSOHL IN A NUTSHELL

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Lebensohl is a complex convention used after an opponent overcalls your partner's 1NT. This is a very simplified version to get you started.

Remember this phrase **slow shows: direct denies**.

When your partner's 1NT opening is overcalled at the two-level,

1. Double is for penalty

2. 2NT is a relay, demands that opener bid 3C

1NT	2H	2NT	Pass
3C			

3. You can still get to 3NT if you have 10+ points,

a. 3NT **directly** after the overcall **denies** a stopper

1NT	2H	3NT
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b. 2NT then 3NT after partner bids 3C (**slow**) **shows** a stopper

1NT	2H	2NT	pass
3C	p	3NT	

4. A cuebid of the opponents suit is stayman

a. **Directly** after the overcall **denies** a stopper

1NT	2S	3S	pass
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b. Using the 2NT relay, (**slow**) then cuebidding **shows** a stopper

1NT	2S	2NT	pass
3C	p	3S	

c. If the overcall suit was 2 clubs or double, Lebensohl is off. Double 2C for Stayman, otherwise bid as you would have without the interference.

5. With a 5+ card major suit and a game-forcing hand, bid your suit at the three level immediately.

1NT	2S	3H	P
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6. With a 6+ card minor suit and a game forcing hand, bid your suit at the three level immediately.

7. Bidding your suit at the 2 level is competitive.

1NT 2D 2H

a. If you have no room to bid your suit at the 2 level, bid 2NT

i. And pass if your suit is clubs

ii. Otherwise bid your suit; opener must pass

1NT 2H 2NT P
3C P 3D

8. If you have room to bid a suit at the 2 level, but instead bid 2NT and over opener's 3C bid a suit, you are bidding an invitational hand

1NT 2D 2NT P
3C p 3H

You give up bidding a natural 2NT. If that's what you wanted to do, pass, double, or bid 3NT. You give up transfers after interference. (There is transfer Lebensohl when you get ready to learn it.)

This is Lebensohl over natural interference.

If the interference is one of the many artificial systems, you can still use Lebensohl. If the system has one known suit, base **slow shows; direct denies** on that known suit. For example, if 2D shows diamonds or some two suited hand, base **slow shows; direct denies** on diamonds. If there is no known suit, the single suit option is the base suit. For example, if 2C shows diamonds or some two suited hand, base **slow shows; direct denies** on diamonds.

Lebensohl can also be used when the opponents open a weak two.

Have fun exploring the many possibilities.

Adapted from *25 Conventions You Should Know* by Barbara Seagram

References:

[25 Conventions You Should Know](#) by Barbara Seagram

[The Lebensohl Convention Complete](#) by Ron Anderson