

LEBENSOHL PART 1

When Partner has opened 1NT

You are South with the following hands

Partner has open 1NT (12-14) and RHO has, blast them, bid 2H natural

Hand 1	Hand 2	Hand 3	Hand 4	Hand 5	Hand 6	Hand 7	Hand 8
♠ AK32	♠ J109	♠ AKQ2	♠ AK87	♠ KQ2	♠ KQ2	♠ AKQ876	♠ AKJ654
♥ 2	♥ 53	♥ 102	♥ AJ4	♥ 102	♥ AJ4	♥ K103	♥ K103
♦ K753	♦ J2	♦ AJ7	♦ 102	♦ AQJ2	♦ K108	♦ Q2	♦ 98
♣ 10987	♣ AK9875	♣ Q432	♣ Q432	♣ Q432	♣ Q432	♣ J3	♣ 98

So what do you bid with these hands?

Double (T/O) 2NT (lebensohl) always forces 3♣ from partner	2NT (lebensohl) always forces 3♣ from partner	3♥ showing 4 of the other major and <u>a heart</u> stop	2NT (lebensohl) always forces 3♣ from partner	Bid 3NT I don't have 4 of the other major but I do have <u>a</u> <u>heart</u> stop	Bid 3♠ forcing	2NT (lebensohl) always forces 3♣ from partner
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I will discuss the follow ups after a 2NT bid in due course

So what is Lebensohl all about?

- It allows you to compete on strong and weakish hands
- It enables you to tell partner whether you have
 - a) A stop in the opponents suit or not
 - b) Four cards in an unbid major
- Allows you to make a take out double with shortage in the opponents suit but not the values for game to contest the part score (especially at pairs). If partner has a strong holding in the opponents suit he is of course at liberty to pass.
- The only downside is that you give up a natural 2NT raise (a hand which given the auction you are very unlikely to hold).

LEBENSOHL PART 1

The Auction has gone

North	East	South	West
1NT	2♥	2NT(lebensohl)	Pass
3♣ (forced)	Pass	?	

So what do I rebid with the following hands?

Hand 1

♠ J109
♥ 53
♦ J2
♣ AK9872

Pass showing a competitive hand with clubs.

Hand 2

♠ AKQ2
♥ 102
♦ AJ7
♣ Q432

Bid 3♥ showing 4 of the other Major but no heart stop and values for 3NT.

Hand 3

♠ KQ2
♥ 102
♦ AQJ2
♣ Q432

Bid 3NT showing the values for 3NT but not 4 cards in the other major and no heart stop.

Hand 4

♠ AKJ654
♥ K103
♦ 98
♣ 98

Bid 3♠ invitational with 6 Spades partner can pass.

Hand 5

♠ J109
♥ 53
♦ AK9872
♣ J2

Bid 3♦ showing a competitive hand with diamonds.

LEBENSOHL PART 1

The auction has gone

North	East	South	West
1NT	2♥	2NT(lebensohl)	Pass
3♣ (forced)	Pass	3NT (1)	

1) Showing the values for 3NT with not 4 spades and no heart stop

So what do I do with the following hands?

Hand 1

♠ AJ10
♥ KJ10
♦ J2
♣ A10987

Hand 2

♠ AJ532
♥ J4
♦ A32
♣ KJ4

Hand 3

♠ AJ2
♥ J4
♦ K1093
♣ KJ65

Hand 4

♠ AJ2
♥ 65
♦ AK987
♣ Q98

Hand 1 – Pass – I have a heart stop so this probably best – it may not make however!

Hand 2 – I elected to open 1NT rather than 1♠ because I had no rebid now I should take my chances in 4♠ partner will almost certainly have 2 spades if not 3.

Hand 3 – This is the awkward hand and I am forced to bid 4♣ - partner is at liberty to pass.

Hand 4 – This is another awkward hand and I am forced to bid 4♦ - partner is at liberty to pass.

LEBENSOHL PART 1

To reiterate Lebensohl allows you to distinguishing between hands that have a stop in the opponents and those that do not. Compare and Contrast the responses on these four hands after the Auction.

North East South
1NT 2♥ ?

Remember the mnemonic

Hand 1

♠ AKQ2
♥ 53
♦ AJ7
♣ Q432

Bid 2NT
followed by 3♥
showing 4
Spades but no
heart stop

Hand 2

♠ AK87
♥ AJ4
♦ 102
♣ Q432

Bid 3♥
immediately
showing 4
Spades and a
heart stop

Hand 3

♠ KQ2
♥ 102
♦ AQJ2
♣ Q432

Bid 2NT followed
by 3NT showing
not 4♠ and no
heart stop but
values for game

Hand 4

♠ KQ2
♥ AJ4
♦ K108
♣ Q432

Bid 3NT immediately
showing not 4♠ but I
have a heart stop and
values for game

F - FAST
A - ARRIVAL
S - SHOWS
S - STOP

LEBENSOHL PART 1

It also allows to differentiate between weak, invitational (sometimes) and strong hands

Again the Auction has gone

North	East	South
1NT	2♥	?

Hand 1

♠ AK8765
♥ 53
♦ 87
♣ J43

Bid 2♠
showing a
competitive
hand with
spades

Hand 2

♠ AKQ876
♥ K103
♦ Q2
♣ J3

Bid 3♠
forcing

Hand 3

♠ AKJ654
♥ K103
♦ 98
♣ 98

Bid 2NT and
follow up with
3♠ invitational
– Partner can
pass this

Hand 4

♠ J109
♥ 53
♦ J2
♣ AK9875

Bid 2NT and
pass the
forced **3♣**
response
from partner

Hand 5

♠ AK8
♥ 53
♦ AKJ1065
♣ K105

Bid 3♦ forcing –
you could well
have a slam
on!

LEBENSÖHL PART 1

In summary Lebensohl allows you to

- Compete on weak and strong hands
- To tell partner you have or deny a stop in the opponents suit
- To convey whether you have 4 cards in an unbid major
- To convey to partner whether you have the values for game

Generally

- A bid at the two level is natural and to play
- A direct bid at the three level is forcing
- Going through 2NT (Lebensohl) forces 3♣ and can show a whole host of hands

Next time in Lebensohl Part 2 we will discuss how to employ Lebensohl when those pesky opponents open a weak 2 – watch this space.