

Lebensohl is a necessary convention when your partner opens 1NT and next hand bids . It is less necessary, but useful, when the opponents open a weak 2-bid.

Consider hand A : xx xx KJTxxx xxx and hand B : x Axx KJTxxx KQx

Partner opens 1NT and righty bids 2 spades. You would like to play in 3 diamonds with hand A. Using lebensohl, a bid of 2NT over 2 spades asks partner to bid 3 clubs. Your next bid (or pass) is to play. You thus bid 3 diamonds and partner passes. So with hand B you can bid 3 diamonds directly over 2 spades. This is forcing and natural.

What if you have C : Kx KJxx x QJxxx

Without lebensohl, you have no Stayman. But using lebensohl, we bid 2NT and our nice partner obeys and bid 3 clubs. We surprise him and bid 3 spades, the opponent's suit. This is Stayman. Note that with 5 hearts, we just bid a forcing 3 hearts over 2 spades.

Lebensohl can be remembered simply – that 2NT is NOT to play over interference. It's artificial and alertable. Asks partner to bid 3 clubs.

The lebensohl **over a weak 2** follows the same principle: that 2NT is not for play

D xxx Jx Jxxxx xxx E Kxx Jx AJxxx xxx F Kxx Ax AJxxx Qxx G Ax Axxx Kxx Kxxx

Assume the irritating opponent opens 2 spades and partner doubles.

With hand D we are very weak. Bid 2NT asking partner to again bid 3 clubs. We convert to 3 diamonds. Done.

With E, we have 8-11 points, an in-between hand. After the double we respond with 3 diamonds, a natural constructive bid.

F and G are game-going hands.

With F we can jump to 3NT. With a less balanced or stronger hand we can jump to 4 diamonds, which is forcing to game.

With G we tend to assume partner has 4 hearts and jump to 4 hearts. Finally, we can cuebid their suit, 3 spades, with any hand where we need help in deciding where to play. Generally this would show a hand like xx AQx KJxxx Kxx which needs partner to bid 3NT with a stopper.

What if they open 2 hearts, partner doubles, and we have spades, a higher ranking suit?

H KJxx xx AJxx xxx I KJxx xx AJxx KQx

With I, we can jump to 3 spades forcing.

With H we have an invitational hand. We bid 2NT and over the expected 3 clubs from partner, we bid 3 spades .

Of course, with 0 to about 8 points we sign off in 2 spades.