



Lebensohl versus Weak Two Bids

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This Topic provides you with hands where the opponents open with a Weak Two bid in one of the majors. Your partner doubles for take-out and now it's up to you. Most experts use a partly conventional treatment where they can distinguish between weak, invitational and game-forcing hands. This set of agreements is commonly referred to as Lebensohl. There are many variants, an extra reason to be at the same wavelength with your partner.

The key bid, after the take-out double, for responder is 2NT, puppet to 3♣. Without extra values for her or his take-out double partner will bid 3♣ indeed, enabling responder to describe her or his hand further. In case partner doubled with a strong hand, he will bypass 3♣.

They	Partner	You
2♥	dbl	pass penalty, willing to defend 2♠ natural, 0-8 HCP 2NT puppet to 3♣ 3♣ natural, invitational, 8-11 3♦ natural, invitational, 8-11 3♥ cuebid, GF with 4♠, no ♥-stopper 3♠ natural, invitational 3NT to play 4♣ GF, natural, sets ♣ as trumps 4♦ GF, natural, sets ♦ as trumps 4♠ to play, 5+♠, GF, no slam interest

They	Partner	You	Partner
2♥	dbl	2NT	3♣ no extra values, 11-16 3♦ natural, 5+♦, 16-19 3♥ strong hand, asking for ♥ stopper 3♠ natural, 5+♠, 16-19 3NT natural, to play, strong hand (too strong for 2NT overcall)

They	Partner	You	Partner	You
2♥	dbl	2NT	3♣	pass to play, 0-8 with 4+♣ 3♦ to play, 0-8 with 4+♦ 3♥ GF, 4♠ and ♥ stop 3♠ GF, 5+♠ 3NT suggestion to play, no ♥ stop, usually one or two minors

Over a 2♠ opening, everything is similar. Only the auctions where responder has Hearts are shown below.

They	Partner	You
2♠	dbl	3♥ natural and invitational, 8-11 3♠ 4♥, no ♠ stop

They	Partner	You	Partner	You
2♠	dbl	2NT	3♣	3♥ to play, 0-8 with 4+♥ 3♠ GF, 4♥ and ♠ stop

In the described treatment a direct bid on the three-level is invitational. Via 2NT you can bid weak hands below openers suit or game-forcing hands above openers suit. Bidding 3NT directly is natural, but if you bid 3NT via 2NT, you show a special kind of hand.

When you agree to play this convention, it normally also applies over an opening bid of 2♥/♠, showing a major/minor two-suiter. Over a weak 2♦ opening people usually play something different, because then both majors are still in play.

Variants: where this treatment uses the direct 3♠ bid as invitational and via 2NT as game-forcing, some people invert those meanings. That difference is just a matter of taste.

The same applies for the direct 3NT bid and 2NT followed by 3NT. These two bids are also often inverted.

Position: this convention is designed in response to a double in second hand but can also be used if partner doubles fourth in hand.

They	Partner	They	You
2♠	pass	pass	dbl
pass	2NT Lebensohl		

Not everyone prefers this treatment. Some play natural or scrambling in this situation, so that is something to discuss before agreeing to play Lebensohl.