



Rubensohl and Transfer Lebensohl after intervention over our 1NT

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This Topic provides you with hands where the opponents intervene with a bid of two in a major over our 1NT opening. Responder may have several types of hands with which he/she wants to bid: weak hands with long suits or any stronger hand: limit or better.

Since you don't have your regular Stayman and transfers available due to the restricted bidding space, people resort to other conventions to still be able to get to the right strain. Of these conventions, *Lebensohl* and *Rubensohl* are the most widely used ones. A popular mixture of these two, called *Transfer Lebensohl*, is a little more complex and is used by a lot of experts.

Below we will describe Rubensohl and Transfer Lebensohl. Lebensohl can be found in the Topic sheet in the intermediate section of www.bid72.com/topics.

General Rubensohl rules

- ☛ a bid on the two-level is natural and to play
- ☛ a bid of 2NT or higher is a transfer and shows an invitational or better hand
- ☛ a transfer into opponent's suit asks for a four-card major

After a transfer, the 1NT opener will accept the transfer with a minimum and go to game with a maximum. After an accepted transfer, responder will pass with an invitational hand and bid on with a game forcing hand.

The advantages of Rubensohl over Lebensohl are that you can rightside the contract (into the hand of the 1NT opener). Also, using Rubensohl, with invitational hands responder shows his/her suit directly which may help if the opponents compete even further.

Here an example of how this set of agreements works out for a 2♥ overcall.

You	They	Partner	You	Partner
1NT	2♥	dbl take-out		
		2♠ natural, to play		
		2NT transfer to 3♣, invitational or better		
			3♣ minimum, to play opposite an invitational hand	
			3♦ game forcing, natural	
			3♥ game forcing, asking for a stopper	
			3♠ game forcing, natural	
		3♣ transfer to 3♦, invitational or better		
		3♦ transfer to 3♥, asks for 4♠		
		3♥ transfer to 3♠, invitational or better		
		3♠ transfer to 3NT, asks for ♥ stopper		
		3NT to play		

The same principles apply if the opponents overcall 2♣, 2♦ or 2♠, but when their bid is conventional you have to take that into account when defining the meaning of your own bids.

Over 2♣ Landy, your basic decision is whether you want to be able to bid a major on the two-level and/or on the three-level. If your answer is yes to both, the whole set of agreements is very similar to that over a natural 2♥ overcall. Transfers to 3♥ and 3♠ now show an invitational hand or better with that suit. The 3♠ bid is no longer needed and can be used for an alternative type of hand, for instance a hand showing both minors.

If you give up on showing a major on the three-level, transfers into 3♥ and 3♠ now ask for a stopper in that suit.

If you give up on showing a major on the two-level, the bids 2♥ and 2♠ now show a hand with both minors, invitational or game-forcing.

Transfer Lebensohl is mostly the same as Rubensohl. The only bid that is different is the 2NT bid. Instead of 2NT showing clubs, it now is a puppet to 3♣, just like in regular Lebensohl. You therefore give up on inviting with clubs. In return you gain the possibility of bidding a suit competitively on the three-level.

General Transfer-Lebensohl rules

- ☛ a bid on the two-level is natural and to play
- ☛ a bid of 3♣ or higher is a transfer and shows an invitational or better hand
- ☛ a transfer into opponent's suit asks for a four-card major
- ☛ 2NT forces 3♣ after which
 - ☛ a bid below the suit overcalled is natural and to play
 - ☛ a bid above the suit overcalled is natural with longer clubs
 - ☛ a cuebid shows clubs and asks for a stopper

See below for an example of how this set of agreements works out for a 2♥ overcall.

You	They	Partner
1NT	2♥	dbl take-out
		2♠ natural, to play
		2NT Lebensohl, a puppet to 3♣
		3♣ transfer to 3♦, invitational or better
		3♦ transfer to 3♥, asks for 4♠
		3♥ transfer to 3♠, invitational or better
		3♠ transfer to 3NT, asks for ♥ stopper; alternatively both minors
		3NT to play

You	They	Partner	You	Partner
1NT	2♥	2NT	3♣	pass to play
				3♦ to play
				3♥ game forcing with clubs, asking for a ♥ stopper
				3♠ 6+♣ and 4♠, game forcing
				3NT natural, to play, denying a ♥ stopper

In earlier days a direct double of an overcall over 1NT was played as penalty. Nowadays almost everybody prefers to play these doubles as take-out. This has some significance for the conventional treatments described.

Where earlier you had no choice but use one of the conventional bids, a transfer into opponent's suit, as some form of Stayman, you now normally start with double if you hold that type of hand.

This frees up the possibility to use the transfer into opponent's suit as something else. While some pairs still keep the transfer as asking for a major, useful when you have a highly distributional hand where you don't want to risk partner passing your take-out double, most pairs change the meaning of that bid to something else, for instance: showing both minors.