

## Response to Partner's Double of a Weak 2 bid

Partner's takeout double of a Weak 2 requires similar shape and strength to that required for a takeout double of a 1-level opening bid. But now, if you have to respond at the 3 level, you will have to concertina 0-7 HCP hands and 8-11 HCP hands into one 3-level response. Partner will have to assume you are very weak, so will pass unless he has 19+ HCP, and a possible game contract will be missed. The Lebensohl '2NT - 3♣' relay enables you to differentiate between a very weak hand (0-7 HCP) and one that is suitable for a constructive bid (8-11 HCP).

Responses to partner's takeout double:

### Weak hands (0-7 pts.)

If your suit is higher in rank than the pre-emptor's suit (i.e., LHO opens 2♥ and you have spades), you make your "normal" minimum bid at the 2-level. But if you would have to go to the 3-level to make a minimum bid in your suit, you start with 2NT to relay partner to 3♥. Partner must bid 3♣. You now pass if clubs is your suit, or bid another suit.

|             |
|-------------|
| <b>East</b> |
| ♠ Q J 7 3   |
| ♥ 5 4 2     |
| ♦ 10 9 7    |
| ♣ J 6 2     |

|                                |          |          |          |
|--------------------------------|----------|----------|----------|
| <b>W</b>                       | <b>N</b> | <b>E</b> | <b>S</b> |
| 2♦                             | X        | P        | 2♠       |
| 0-7 HCP.<br>Signoff at 2 level |          |          |          |

|              |
|--------------|
| <b>East</b>  |
| ♠ 9 7 3      |
| ♥ K 10 8 3 2 |
| ♦ 10 9       |
| ♣ 7 6 5      |

|   |          |          |          |
|---|----------|----------|----------|
| <b>W</b>  | <b>N</b> | <b>E</b> | <b>S</b> |
| 2♠  | X        | P        | 2NT      |
| P   | 3♣       | P        | 3♥       |
| 0-7 HCP. Signoff at 3 level<br>Lebensohl relay. |          |          |          |

### Medium-strength hands- Invitational (8-11 pts.)

If you bid a suit at the 3-level (instead of using the 2NT sequence), it is encouraging, but not forcing. It shows a hand with constructive values (a good 8 to about 11 pts.), but not enough to jump to game. Doubler can pass with a minimum or bid on with extra values. You can also use the Lebensohl 2NT to invite when your suit is higher in rank than the pre-emptor's suit. If LHO opens 2♥ and you have spades, you can sign off in 2♠ if weak. If you instead use the Lebensohl 2NT - 3♣ - 3♠ sequence, it shows invitational values {8-11 pts}.

|             |
|-------------|
| <b>East</b> |
| ♠ A K 9 7 3 |
| ♥ J 4       |
| ♦ 8 6 4     |
| ♣ 10 3 2    |

|             |              |             |            |
|-------------|--------------|-------------|------------|
| <b>West</b> | <b>North</b> | <b>East</b> | <b>You</b> |
| 2♥          | X            | P           | 2NT        |
| P           | 3♣           | P           | 3♠         |

8-11 HCP. Invitational.  
Lebensohl relay. A direct 3♠ bid would have been game forcing.  
A direct 2♠ would have been weak, competitive)

|              |
|--------------|
| <b>East</b>  |
| ♠ 8 6 4      |
| ♥ Q 9        |
| ♦ 8 6 4 2    |
| ♣ A Q J 10 3 |

|             |              |             |            |
|-------------|--------------|-------------|------------|
| <b>West</b> | <b>North</b> | <b>East</b> | <b>You</b> |
| 2♥          | X            | P           | 3♣         |

8-11 HCP. Invitational.  
Bypass Lebensohl relay  
Lebensohl 2NT - 3♣ - P would have shown a weak hand.

### Forcing hands (12+ pts.)

The Lebensohl 2NT sequences above all show limited values. If you have invitational or forcing-to-game strength, your jump responses can all retain their standard meaning.

|   |
|---|
| <b>East</b><br>♠ J 8<br>♥ A K 9 3 2<br>♦ 8 6<br>♣ K Q 7 6 |
|---|

|             |              |             |            |
|-------------|--------------|-------------|------------|
| <b>West</b> | <b>North</b> | <b>East</b> | <b>You</b> |
| 2♦          | X            | P           | 3♥         |

12+ HCP. Game forcing.

Bypass Lebensohl relay

2♥ would have shown a weak hand.

Lebensohl relay followed by 3♥  
would have shown an invitational  
hand

With good balanced hands, you may be interested in no-trumps instead. Lebensohl provides two ways of describing your values. A straight jump to 3NT (fast arrival) shows a stop in the opponents' suit. Lebensohl relay followed by 3NT (slow arrival) shows no stop.

*(Note: some pairs reverse the stop/no stop bids. Use the system that you use for normal Lebensohl)*

|  |
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| <b>East</b><br>♠ 9 5 2<br>♥ A J 9<br>♦ K 8 7<br>♣ A J 10 3 |
|--|

|             |              |             |            |
|-------------|--------------|-------------|------------|
| <b>West</b> | <b>North</b> | <b>East</b> | <b>You</b> |
| 2♦          | X            | P           | 3NT        |

12 + HCP balanced.

Bypass Lebensohl relay

Shows a stop in the opponents' suit.

|  |
|--|
| <b>East</b><br>♠ Q 5 2<br>♥ A J 9<br>♦ J 8 7<br>♣ A J 10 3 |
|--|

|             |              |             |            |
|-------------|--------------|-------------|------------|
| <b>West</b> | <b>North</b> | <b>East</b> | <b>You</b> |
| 2♦          | X            | P           | 2NT        |
| P           | 3♣           | P           | 3NT        |

12 + HCP balanced.

Lebensohl Relay

Shows no stop in the opponents' suit.  
Partner can pass with a spade  
stopper, or start scrambling at the 4-  
level without one.