

Short Talk 1

Most UK bridge players use the weak No Trump (12-14) – as opposed to the Americans and Europeans who are strong no-trumpers.

Because the weak no trump is pre-emptive and very descriptive, you should try to open 1NT wherever possible.

Because 1NT should be opened frequently, defenders need good methods to bid over it (Landy / Astro / etc etc) and should be fairly aggressive, especially when NV.

Because the opposition should be competing over 1NT, the bidding space can be reduced, and unfamiliar partnerships may find themselves in grey areas.

Example 1, you hold:

J 10 9 8 4
5 4
A 8 3
K 10 2

and partner opens 1NT. You intended to transfer to 2S but 2H is overcalled.

1NT (2H) ?

Well 2S seems entirely sensible and partner should not misunderstand.

However, example 2, you hold:

5 4
J 10 9 8 4 2
A 8 3
K 10

and the auction goes:

1NT (2S) ?

If you bid 3H, how does partner know whether you have:

Hand 3 or Hand 4

5 4	K 4 3
J 10 9 8 4 2	A K 8 4 2
A 8 3	Q 8 5
K 10	K 10

With hand 3 you would like to play in 3H but not 4H

With hand 4 you would like to play in 3NT or 4H but not 3H !

If you play basic Lebensohl you can distinguish between these 2 hand types – namely:

(Hand 3) – competitive – to play

(Hand 4) – game forcing – partner choose

With hand 4 you bid 3H – this is forcing showing game values with 5 hearts (and almost certainly a spade stop).

With hand 3 you bid 2NT (artificial & alertable); partner responds 3C (artificial & alertable); you now bid 3H (to play).

Hand 3

Hand 4

1NT (2S) 2NT* (P)	1NT (2S) 3H (P)
3C* (P) 3H (P)	3NT / 4H
P	

Sometimes there is room for a third option:

Supposing the opposition play ASTRO and the auction goes:

1NT (2D*) ?

Hand 5	or	Hand 6	or	Hand 7
5 4		K 4 3		5
J 10 9 8 4		A K 8 4 2		K J 10 7 3
A 8 3		Q 8 5		A 8 7 4
10 5 3		K 10		K J 3

With hand 5 you would like to play in 2H but not 3H or beyond!
 With hand 6 you would like to play in 3NT or 4H
 With hand 7 you would like to play in 3H or 4H (or poss 3NT or 4 minor)

If you play basic Lebensohl you can distinguish between these 3 hand types – namely:

(Hand 5) – competitive – to play in 2H only
 (Hand 6) – game forcing – partner choose
 (Hand 7) – invitational – partner choose

Hand 5	Hand 6	Hand 7
1NT (2D*) 2H	1NT (2D*) 3H (P) 3NT / 4H	1NT (2D*) 2NT* (P) 3C* (P) 3H (P) P / 4H / 3NT / etc

Note that in the case of hand 7, opener may not have 3 hearts, and may not have adequate spade stop(s) in which case they may have to bid 4C or 4D, e.g. :

A 8 2
 8 6
 K J 5
 A 10 9 5 4

This hand is minimum but there is still play for 4C.

There is far more to Lebensohl; this is the most common situation where you want to distinguish between competitive, invitational and game forcing hands.