

# How To Play Blackjack

Some players call the game blackjack and some call it twenty-one.

## **Objective**

The objective of the game is to beat the dealer. If your cards total higher than the dealer's cards without going over 21 you win. You are not trying to get close to 21. If your hand or the dealer's hand goes over 21 you "Bust." If you bust you automatically lose. If the dealer busts and you do not you win. The player must act first. If the player busts he loses regardless if the dealer busts or not.

## **Card Values**

The suits of the cards have no affect on the game. Cards 2 - 10 are counted at face value without regards to their suit. All face cards have a value of ten. An ace can count as either one or eleven. A queen and a five would equal 15. An ace and a five would total either 6 or 16. A hand that does not have an ace is referred to as a [Hard Hand](#) because it has only one value. A hand that contains an ace is referred to as a [Soft Hand](#) because the value can change. If you draw to a soft hand and the three cards total a number where counting an ace as eleven puts you over 21 then the hand becomes a hard hand. Example: You are dealt an ace and a three. You have 4 or 14. If you then draw a ten you now have a hard 14 because if you count the ace as 11 you would have 25, which would bust you.

## **Blackjack Table**

Blackjack is dealt on a special table that is shaped as a semi-circle. There is a separate circle or square for each player. The player puts his bet in the betting circle if front of his space. Only chips put in the betting circle count as your bet. After all bets are made the play begins.

## **Blackjack**

If you or the dealer is dealt an Ace and a ten-value card you have 21 known as a blackjack. This is a natural. If you get the blackjack you will be paid 3 to 2 for your bet providing the dealer does not get one at the same time. If you and the dealer have blackjack it is a push. If only the dealer has blackjack all players will lose.

## **Hitting**

To take a hit means that you want to draw another card. To signal the dealer for a hit you will tap the table in front of you or make a beckoning motion with your hand. If you wish another card after the first you would motion in the same manner.

## **Standing**

Once you are satisfied with either your first two cards or after hitting, you signal the dealer that you wish to stand. This is done by waving your hand over the top of your cards.

## **Doubling Down.**

When you [double down](#) you are allowed to double your bet after receiving your first two cards. You then receive one card only on your hand. Most casinos will allow you to double down on any two cards (DOA). Some casinos limit your doubling to hands that total ten or eleven. DOA is a favorable rule to the player. To signal that you are doubling down you will place an additional bet next to your original bet. Most casinos will let you double down for less than your original bet providing it meets the table minimum. This is foolish. You only double in favorable situations and it is to your advantage to double for the maximum.

## **Splitting**

If you are dealt a pair (two cards of the same rank) you can split these into two separate hands. You must make an additional bet equal to your starting bet. You signal the dealer that you are splitting by placing your second bet next to your first bet in the betting circle. Do not put this bet on top of the original bet. Do not separate the cards. The dealer will do this for you. You will now play each hand one at a time. The dealer will give you a second card to go with the first split card. You will then decide to hit or stand. After you play out this hand and stand you will move on to the next split card and the process will be repeated. Some casinos will allow you to double down on your first two cards after splitting. You would play this as you would if you were doubling down on your first two cards. This rule is favorable to the player.

## **A Simple Strategy:**

Here is a simple strategy to get you started.

If your first cards total 12-16 you have a "Stiff" hand. (one that can be busted with a hit.)

If the dealer's up card is a 2 - 6, it is a "Stiff" hand for the dealer.

If you have 17 or better it is a Pat hand and you stand.

If the dealer shows a 7 - Ace, you consider it a pat hand.

If you have a stiff and the dealer has a stiff you **STAND**.

If you have a stiff and the dealer has a pat hand you **HIT**

# How To Play Craps

Craps is by far the most exciting game in the casino and the players are not afraid to let their emotions show. The game is fast moving and at times very loud. It is for this reason that craps is probably the most intimidating game to new players.

Craps is not as confusing as it looks. It actually is an easy game to learn. An understanding of the basics of the game and how to make a passline bet will get you started on your way. You don't have to be concerned with any other of the craps bets when you begin to play craps. There are about 40 different bets that can be made on a craps layout but most of them like the proposition and hardway bets have terrible odds that you should avoid. To get started playing craps, all you need to understand is the basic passline bet

## **Passline Bet**

A simple passline bet works like this. You place your bet on the passline before a new shooter begins his roll. This is known as the come out roll. If the shooter rolls a 7 or 11 you win. If the shooter rolls a 2, 3 or 12, you lose. If the shooter rolls any other number, that number becomes the point number. The shooter must roll that number again before a seven is rolled. If that happens, you win even money for your passline bet. If a seven is rolled before the point number is rolled again, you lose.

## **Example**

A new shooter rolls the dice for the first time and they land on a 4 and a 2. The total is six, which becomes the "Point." The dealers places a marker that looks like a hockey puck on the number 6 on the craps layout. The shooter must now roll a six before he rolls a 7. If he rolls the six, the passline bet wins and the shooter rolls again. This is a new comeout roll and the same procedure applies as the first time the shooter rolled the dice.

If the shooter rolls a seven before the six the pass line bet loses and the dice are passed to the next shooter.

## **Odds Bet**

Once the point is established the bettor can make an additional bet behind the passline bet. This is known as the "Odds Bet." It is the only bet in the casino that does not have a house edge as it is paid off with true odds.

Most casinos offer double odds, which means you can make a bet twice the size of your pass line bet. If you passline bet is \$5 you are allowed to make an odds bet of \$10.

The odds bet is paid as following:

If the point is 4 or 10 it pays 2 to 1

If the point is 5 or 9 it pays 3 to 2

If the point is 6 or 8 it pays 6 to 5.

A passline bet is the simplest bet you can make on at the craps table and it will get you

on your way to playing this exciting game.

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# How To Play Roulette

The object of Roulette is to pick the winning number that will appear on the Roulette wheel. You can also bet combinations of numbers or choose the color or whether it is odd or even. It is not as easy as it seems.

## **The Wheel**

There are two different roulette wheels. The European wheel has 37 slots numbered 0-36. The house edge is 2.63. The American wheel has 38 numbers because the added a double zero (00). The addition of the extra number increases the house edge to 5.26 percent.

## **The Layout**

The game of Roulette originated in France. The modern day layout we find in the casino dates back to 1842. Roulette layouts have two betting areas. The inside betting area contains the individual numbers on the layout. The outside betting area has boxes for the columns, red/black and odd/even and different groups of numbers.

The numbers on the inside are arranged in 12 rows of three numbers making forming three vertical columns. The 0 and 00 are at the top of the columns.

## **Buying In**

You must purchase special roulette chips when you sit down to play. To avoid disputes each player receives a different color chip. These chips are good for that table only and you must cash them in when you get done playing. You will then be given regular casino chips to take to the cage. You cannot cash in the roulette table chips at the cage.

## **Inside Bets**

There are several inside bets that you can make. You can bet a number straight up or straddle the line between numbers to select a combination of numbers. The payouts are as follows.

**Straight Up** bet is a wager on a single number. It pays 35 to 1.

**Split Bet** is a wager on two numbers and it pays 17 to 1. You make this bet by placing your chip so it straddles the line between any two numbers.

**Street bets** or **line bet** and it pays 11 to 1. You make this bet by placing your chip on the vertical line separating the outside and inside betting areas. The chip straddles the first number in the row.

**Corner bet** or **Quad bet** pays 8 to 1. You make this bet by placing a chip so it is touching the four corners of the numbers you are betting.

**Basket bet** is a five number bet on zero – double zero and numbers-1-2-3 which pays 6 to 1. On the double zero wheel it has a house edge of 7.89 percent making it the worst bet in Roulette.

**Double Street bet** is a wager on six numbers and pays 5 to 1. You place your chip on

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the line separating the outside and inside area as you do for the street bet but let it also straddle the row above or below.

### Outside Bets

The outside bets are any of the bets made in the boxes surrounding the numbers.

**Red Black Odd and Even** are all even money bets. You place your chips in the boxes on the layout.

**Dozens bet** are made on the 12 consecutive numbers. You place your wager in the boxes marked 1-12, 13-24 or 25-36. These bets pay 2 to 1. If the zero or double zero comes up you lose.

**Column bets** are also 12 number bets. Instead of 12 consecutive numbers they consist of the numbers in one of the three vertical columns and are made in the boxes at the bottom of the layout. These bets pay 2 to 1 as well.

### The Dealer

Dealers are required to keep the wheel moving at all times, even between spins. They spin the ball in the opposite in the opposite direction of the wheel. This causes the ball to jump and spin before landing on a number.

The dealer marks the winning number with a marker. You are not allowed to place your bet for the next spin until the dealer removes the marker from the previous winning number. Make sure you wait for them to pick it up before putting down your chips.

### Playing Tips

Roulette has a high house edge but if you play at a full table you will only get about 30 spins an hour which slows down the time your money is exposed to the house edge. It will also increase your comp time.

If the number you want to bet is covered is already covered with chips, don't worry. It is permissible to stack you chips on top of the other chips. This is another reason why each player has their own color chips.

You are allowed to place bets after the dealer spins the ball. The dealer will tell you when to stop. As the ball slows down the dealer will wave their hand over the table and call out "No More Bets."

# How To Play Texas Hold 'Em

Texas Hold'em is a deceptively simple game to learn but a harder game to master. Each player is dealt two personal cards and then five community cards are turned up on the board. You make the best five card hand using any combination of the seven cards. For this example we will use a low limit structure of \$2/4. There are four betting rounds and the first two have a limit of \$2 and the last two rounds have a limit of \$4. You must bet or raise only the amount of the limit for that round.

## **The Start**

To start a new hand, two "Blind" bets are put up or "Posted." The player immediately to the left of the dealer puts up or "posts" the small blind which half the minimum bet one dollar. The player to the left of the small blind posts the big blind which is equal to the minimum bet which is two dollars for this game. The rest of the players do not put up any money to start the hand. Because the deal rotates around the table, each player will eventually act as the big blind, small blind and dealer.

## **The Opening**

Each player is dealt two cards face down with the player on the small blind receiving the first card and the player with the dealer button getting the last card. The first betting round begins with the player to the left of the big blind either putting in two dollars to "Call" the blind bet, or putting in four dollars to "raise" the big blind or folding his hand. The betting goes around the table in order until it reaches the player who posted the small blind. That player can call the bet by putting in one dollar since a dollar blind was already posted. The last person to act is the big blind. If no one has raised, the dealer will ask if they would like the option. This means the big blind has the option to raise or just "check." By checking the player does not put in any more money. A rookie mistake sometimes occurs here. Because the blind is a live bet live, the player with the big blind has already put his bet in. Some players throw their cards in not realizing that they are already in the hand. Another rookie mistake is betting or folding your cards when it is not your turn. You must wait before you act.

## **The Flop**

After the first betting round is completed, three cards are dealt and turned face up in the middle of the table. This is known as the "Flop." These are community cards used by all the players. Another betting round begins with the first active player to the left of the dealer button. The bet for this round is again two dollars.

## **The Turn**

When the betting round after the flop is completed, the dealer turns a fourth card face up in the middle of the table. This is called the "Turn." The bet after the turn is now four dollars and begins again with the first active player to the left of the dealer.

## **The River**

Following the betting round for the turn, the dealer will turn a fifth and final card face up. This is called the "river," and the final betting round begins with four dollars being the minimum bet.

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## **The Showdown**

To determine the winner, the players may use any combination of their two hole cards and the five cards on the "Board" (Table) to form the highest five-card hand. In some rare cases the best hand will be the five cards on board. Don't count on this happening too often. In that case the active players will split the pot. A sixth card is never used to break a tie.

## **Before the Flop:**

### **Starting Hands:**

Position, Patience and Power are the key to winning in Texas Hold'em. The most important decision you will make is choosing to play a starting hand. The biggest mistake a player makes is playing too many hands. Being aware of your Position in relationship to the dealer is important in Texas Hold'em. You need a stronger hand to act from early position because you have more players acting after you who may raise or re-raise the pot. It is important that you are Patient and wait for Powerful starting hands to play from the correct position.

The player to the left of the big blind acts first before the flop. He along with the other two players to his left are in early position. The next three players are middle position and the ones after that are in late position. The blinds act last before the flop and first after it. Here are some guidelines for stating hands that I recommend you play when you are starting out. They are fairly tight but will give you a good foundation to work with until you learn a little more about the game.

### **In Early position**

Raise with A-A, K-K and A-Ks from any position. (s denotes suited cards) Call with A-K, A-Qs, K-Qs and Q-Q J-J, T-T and fold everything else.

### **In Middle position**

Call with, 9-9, 8-8, A-Js, A-Ts, Q-Js, A-Q, K-Q

### **In Late position**

Call with A-Xs, K-Ts, Q-Ts, J-Ts, A-J, A-T and small pairs. (note x denotes any card) It takes a stronger hand to call a raise than it does to make with one, If there is a raise before it is your turn to act you should fold. Why put in two bets with marginal hands?

**Note:**

Many players will play any two suited cards from any position and they will play an Ace with any small kicker. These hands are losers in the long run and you should avoid getting into the habit of playing them. They are traps that will cost you money.

**The Blinds**

Once you post your blind the money no longer belongs to you. Many players feel they must defend their blinds by calling all raises even with marginal hands. Don't waste additional money on marginal hands. Also, don't automatically call with the small blind if you have nothing. Saving a half bet will pay for your next small blind.

**HOW TO PLAY TEXAS****HOLD 'EM****The Flop**

Deciding whether to continue playing after seeing the flop will be your second biggest decision. It can also be one of the most costly decisions if you continue after the flop with an inferior hand. It is said that the flop defines your hand. That is because after the flop your hand will be 71 percent complete. Where does this figure come from? Assuming you play your hand out to the end, it will consist of seven cards. After the flop you have seen five cards or 5/7 of the final hand, which is equal to 71 percent. With this much of your hand completed you should have enough information to determine whether to continue. Poker Author Shane Smith coined the phrase "Fit or Fold. If the flop does not fit your hand by giving you top pair, or better or a straight or flush draw, then you should fold if there is a bet in front of you. If you played a small pair from late position and you do not flop a third one to make a set you should throw the pair away if there is a bet.

**The Turn**

If you think you have the best hand after seeing the Turn card and are first to act, then go ahead and bet. Many players will try to get fancy and attempt to check raise in this position. If the other players also check, you have lost a bet or two. In low limit games the straight forward approach is usually the best as there are plenty of players who will call you. Make them pay. Why give them a free card if you don't have to.

If another player raises on the turn and you hold only one pair you are more than likely beaten and should fold.

If you get to the Turn and you hold only two unsuited overcards (two cards higher than any cards on the board) with no flush or straight draws, then you should fold if there is a bet in front of you. Too much

money is lost by players who hope to catch a miracle card on the river. The best hand you can make with two unsuited overcards is a pair which will probably lose anyways.

### **The River**

If you have been playing properly you will not see the river card unless you have a strong hand that is a favorite to win or you have a draw to a winning hand. Once the river card is turned over, you know exactly what you have. If you were drawing to a hand, you know whether you were successful or not. Obviously if you do not make your hand you will fold.

As with the Turn you should bet your hand if you are first to act. If you bet and the other player folds then they more than likely would have just checked if you had checked in an attempt to check raise.

When you get to the river there are two mistakes that you can make. One is to call a losing bet, which will cost you the price of a bet. The other is to fold your hand, which will cost you all the money in the pot. Obviously folding your hand will be a far more costly mistake than merely calling a bet. If there is a slight chance you may have the winning hand you should call. I'm not advocating calling with nothing but you should call if there is a chance to win.

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