

## Basic Rules of No Limit Texas Holdem Poker

The object of Texas Hold'em is to create the best five-card hand using seven available cards. Each player is dealt 2 cards which only they can see and use. There are then 5 cards dealt to the middle of the table which everybody can see and use.

### Dealer

Once the game a dealer is assigned. Obviously the dealer is important, as they indicate who posts the compulsory bets (known as blinds) before each hand, they also indicates who is first to act in each betting round.

On the tables the current dealer is indicated by a disc marked with a "D" known as the dealer button. At the end of each hand the dealer changes to the next player to the current dealers left and continues to move clockwise after each hand is finished.

### Blinds

In Texas Hold'em there are 2 compulsory bets that are made before the start of each hand. These are known as the "Small blind" and the "Big blind". This ensures that there are chips to be won in every hand.

The player to the immediate left of the dealer places the small blind and the player to the left of the small blind posts the big blind.

In No Limit games the size of the blinds is set by the stakes of the table you are at. So for example at a \$1 / \$2 table the small blind would be \$1 and the big blind would be \$2.

### First Betting Round – Before the Flop

Once the blinds have been posted, 2 cards are dealt face down to each player at the table, these are known as "hole cards". Only the individual player can see these cards.

At this point the first betting round begins and each player must make a decision on how to act based on the strength of their hole cards. They have the following options:

**Fold** – Throw the cards away and not play in this hand

**Call** – Call the size of the big blind or highest bet if another player has raised, and take part in the hand

**Raise** – Make a bet bigger than the big blind, any other player who wants to play would then have to call your increased bet in order to carry on. A raise must be at least an increase the size of the Big Blind so the minimum raise would be 2 times the big blind amount. In No Limit there is no maximum to your raise, It can be your whole stack if you wish.

Action always goes clockwise on a table. On the first betting round, the first person to act is the player to the left of the big blind. Each player acts in turn until all the players have acted at the table, and the amount put in the pot by each player remaining in the pot is equal.

### The Flop

After the first betting round has finished, the dealer places 3 cards face up in the middle of the table – this is known as the "Flop". The cards in the middle of the table are called "Community Cards" as they are shared by all the players towards making their final hands.

### Second Betting Round – After the Flop

Players can now see 5 cards (2 hole cards + 3 community cards) out of the 7 cards to come and should have good idea of how their hand is developing. At this point the second betting round begins.

In this and all subsequent betting rounds, the action starts with the first player remaining in the hand to the left of the dealer. This player can either:

Check – not bet anything

Bet – place a bet which the other players must at least call to continue in the hand. The minimum bet is the size of the big blind.

If everyone checks then this betting round ends with no-one betting. As soon as someone bets then the other players can either:

Fold – drop out the hand

Call – call the bet that has been made

Raise – increase the bet that has been made which the other players must call to continue in the hand.

As in the previous betting round, the play continues clockwise around the table until all players have called, checked or folded and the amount placed in the pot by each player still in the hand is equal.

#### The Turn

After the second betting round, the dealer places a 4th community card, face up on the table – this is called the “Turn card”, it is sometimes also referred to as “Fourth Street”.

After the Turn there is a third betting round, which operates in exactly the same way as the previous betting round.

#### The River

After the third betting round, the dealer places the 5th and final community card face up on the table – this is called the “River card”.

After the River the fourth and final betting round takes place in the same way as the previous round.

#### The Showdown

After the final round of betting, each player still left in the hand can use any combination of the 2 hole cards in their hands and the 5 community cards on the table to produce the best 5 card hand.

The player with the highest ranking hand wins the pot. If two or more players have the same value hand then the pot is split between them equally.

#### Next Hand

Once the hand has finished and the pot has been awarded to the winning player, the game moves onto the next hand. The dealer button moves to the next player on the left of the current dealer, the cards are shuffled, the blinds are posted by the next 2 players and the cards are dealt again.