

Pat's Home Poker Game

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1 Objective

The objective of Texas Hold 'Em is for each player to win chips by making the best five-card poker hand, using any combination of their two personal cards (hole cards) and five community cards dealt face up in the middle.

2 Hand Rankings

1. **Royal Flush:** A, K, Q, J, 10 of the same suit.
2. **Straight Flush:** Five consecutive cards of the same suit.
3. **Four of a Kind:** Four cards of the same rank.
4. **Full House:** Three of a kind plus a pair.
5. **Flush:** Five cards of the same suit.
6. **Straight:** Five consecutive cards of any suit.
7. **Three of a Kind:** Three cards of the same rank.
8. **Two Pair:** Two sets of pairs.
9. **One Pair:** Two cards of the same rank.
10. **High Card:** The highest single card.

3 House Rules

3.1 No Phones:

Players are not allowed to use their phones while they are involved in a hand.

3.2 No Hand if Not Present:

If a player is not at the table when a hand begins, they will not be dealt a hand. If a player leaves the table during a hand and does not return before it is their turn to act, their hand will automatically be folded.

3.3 Open Cash Game:

Players may join the game at any time, with seats available on a first-come, first-served basis. All players must buy chips using cash, which simplifies the cash-out process when players decide to leave the game.

3.4 Top up:

In between hands a player may top up their stack by purchasing additional chips. Players are allowed to top up to the maximum buy-in for that game. You are not allowed to buy chips from another player as this reduces the amount of chips in play.

3.5 Unlimited Rebuys:

Once players lose all their chips, they are allowed to re-buy into the game as many times as they want.

3.6 Table Stakes:

Only chips on the table may be wagered in a hand.

3.7 One Chip Rule:

If a player puts a single oversized chip into the pot without verbally declaring a raise, it is considered a call, regardless of the chip's denomination. For example, if the current bet is \$10 and the player places a single \$50 chip into the pot without saying "raise," it will be treated as a call for \$10, and the player will receive change for the remaining amount.

3.8 Trading Chips with Other Players

Between hands, a player may trade chips with another in order to obtain larger or smaller denominations.

3.9 Verbal Communication During a Hand:

Players are not required to disclose the amount of money in their stack if asked by another player. This rule is particularly relevant in high-stakes, heads-up situations. For example, if Player 1 goes all-in and Player 2 is deciding whether to call, raise, or fold, Player 2 may ask questions or make statements in an attempt to gauge a reaction. However, Player 1 is not obligated to respond, allowing them to maintain the mystery of their move and whether they are bluffing or holding a strong hand.

3.10 Show One, Show All

If a player reveals their cards to one person, they must reveal them to all players at the table to ensure fairness in the game. The same applies if a card is accidentally flashed to any player while dealing the flop, turn, or river; the card must be shown to all players.

3.11 Missed Blinds

Players who miss their turn to post a blind must post it when they return to the game. This is considered dead money and goes to the pot.

3.12 In the Dark Actions

In the dark actions refer to a player making a move (such as checking, betting, or raising) before seeing the next card or before the action reaches them. This is often done to create excitement or to mislead other players.

- **Checking in the Dark:** A player may declare that they are checking before the next card is revealed, without seeing the card. This means they waive their right to bet in that round.
- **Betting or Raising in the Dark:** A player may also declare a bet or raise without seeing the next card. The amount must be announced clearly, and the player is bound by that bet or raise regardless of what card comes.
- **In the Dark Rules:** Players who take actions in the dark are bound to those decisions once declared and cannot change their action after seeing the card or once the action reaches them.

4 Setup

- **Players:** 2-8 players.
- **Deck:** Standard 52-card deck (no jokers).
- **Blinds:**
 - The two players to the left of the dealer button post forced bets called blinds:
 - * **Small Blind:** First player posts half the minimum bet.
 - * **Big Blind:** Second player posts the full minimum bet.
 - The blinds and dealer button rotate clockwise around the table after each hand.
 - For our games, the blinds will be .25/.25 unless larger blinds are agreed upon.

- **Chips:** Every player starts with an agreed number of chips based off of a players buy in. For our games the chip denominations will currently be .25\$, 1\$, and 5\$ chips. The buy-in range is from 10\$ to 40\$

5 Gameplay

5.1 The Deal

The dealer shuffles the deck and deals two cards face down (hole cards) to each player. The cards are dealt starting with the player to the dealer's left and continue clockwise until each player has received two cards. If any player's card is accidentally exposed or flashed to other players during the deal, it is considered a misdeal, and the dealer must reshuffle and re-deal the entire hand.

To keep the game moving, two decks can be used. While the dealer is dealing the current hand, the small blind shuffles the previously used deck, and the big blind cuts it. This ensures that when the current hand ends, the dealer will already have a shuffled deck prepared for the next hand, speeding up gameplay.

5.2 Betting Rounds

- **First Betting Round (Pre-flop):** Betting starts with the under the gun player (player to the left of the big blind). They can fold, call the big blind, or raise. Betting continues clockwise until all players have either matched the highest bet, raised, or folded.
- **The Flop:** The dealer places three community cards face up on the table after burning 1 card (burning cards is a method of preventing individuals from effectively stacking the deck). Another round of betting begins, starting with the first active player to the left of the dealer.
- **The Turn:** The dealer reveals a fourth community card after burning 1 card (the turn). Another betting round starts.
- **The River:** The fifth and final community card (the river) is revealed after burning 1 last card. A final round of betting starts.

5.3 Showdown

After the final betting round, all remaining players reveal their hole cards. The player who was the last to take aggressive action (bet or raise) on the river is required to show their hand first. If there was no bet on the river, the showdown begins with the player closest to the dealer button, moving clockwise.

If a player who reveals their hand before you has a better hand, you can choose to muck your hand (fold without showing your cards) rather than reveal it. At no point are you obligated to reveal your cards if you choose to muck. Deliberately miscalling a hand with the intent of causing another player to discard a winning hand is unethical and may result in forfeiture of the pot.

5.4 Ties

If two or more players have the same hand strength at showdown, the pot is split equally between them. In cases where the pot cannot be evenly split, the odd chip is awarded to the player closest to the left of the dealer. The ranking of suits from highest to lowest is spades, hearts, diamonds, clubs. Suits never break a tie for winning a pot. Suits are used to break a tie between cards of the same rank (no redeal or redraw), this applies to non-monetary ties such as determining who starts with the dealer button.

6 Betting Structure

6.1 Check, Bet, Call, Raise, Fold:

- **Check:** If no one has bet, a player can pass their turn without betting.
- **Bet:** The first player to put money in the pot starts the betting round.
- **Call:** Match the highest bet.

- **Raise:** Increase the bet.
- **Fold:** Surrender the hand and forfeit the pot.

6.2 Betting & Raising:

- **No-limit:** Players can bet any amount of their remaining chips at any time.
- **Minimum Raise:** The minimum amount of chips a player can raise is equal to the previous bet or raise. For example, if someone raises to 2\$ on a 1\$ bet, the minimum raise then becomes 2\$.
- **All-In and Side Pots** When a player goes all-in and the other players still have more chips to bet, a side pot is created for the remaining chips. The player who went all-in is only eligible to win the main pot, while the other players compete for both the main and side pots.

7 Bonus Game Rules

Disclaimer

These rules are not guaranteed to be used in a game, players must agree to a rule based on its conditions.

7.1 Straddles

Definition: A straddle is a voluntary blind bet made before the cards are dealt, usually double the big blind. This also includes double straddles and onward, where a double straddle would be double the original straddle, triple straddles triple the original, and so on.

Purpose: Straddles create more action and allow the straddler to act last in the pre-flop betting round.

7.2 Running it Twice (Dealing Twice)

Definition: Running it twice means dealing the remaining community cards twice when all players are all-in to reduce variance.

Etiquette: All involved players must agree to this before the hand.

7.3 Chopping the Blinds

Definition: If only the small blind and big blind remain after everyone else folds pre-flop, they may agree to take back their blinds without playing the hand.

Etiquette: All players must agree to allow chopping blinds before the game starts.

7.4 Bomb Pots

A bomb pot occurs when all players agree to skip the pre-flop betting round and go directly to the flop. Every player contributes a predetermined amount to the pot before the flop is dealt. Once the flop is revealed, betting resumes as usual from the next active player to the left of the dealer. Bomb pots can be a fun way to increase action and create larger pots without pre-flop betting.

7.5 Kill Pots

A kill pot is triggered when a player wins two consecutive pots or when a player wins a pot of a certain size, as agreed upon by the group. The player who triggers the kill must post an additional blind, usually double the big blind, in the next hand. This increases the betting limits for that hand, making the next pot more valuable. Kill pots add excitement and a level of strategy, as players aim to avoid or trigger the kill.

8 Table Rules & Poker Etiquette

8.1 Clearly Visible Hand

All players' cards must remain on the table and clearly visible when not being viewed. This ensures transparency and prevents any misunderstandings during the game.

8.2 Chip Stacking

Players are entitled to a clear view of each opponent's chips at all times. Chips should be organized in stacks, generally no higher than 20 chips per stack, to prevent confusion or accidental spills. Higher denomination chips should be kept in front and easily visible. While players may shuffle or handle their chips, they must avoid doing so in a manner that could be mistaken for an intended action, such as betting or raising.

8.3 Looking at Folded Hands

It is considered highly unethical for any player to attempt to grab or look at another player's mucked cards. This violates the game's etiquette and disrespects the privacy of each player's strategy and how they play certain hands.

8.4 Going South

"Going south" refers to a player removing chips from the table during play to reduce their stack size, and therefore reduce the amount of chips they can lose. This is not allowed in poker. Players must keep all chips on the table until they cash out.

8.5 String Bets

A string bet is a bet made in multiple motions without clearly stating the total amount. String bets can be used to unfairly gauge reactions, so they are prohibited. This includes making motions that would indicate an action while not actually completing the action in order to gauge reactions.

8.6 Acting in Turn

Players must act when it is their turn. Acting out of turn can provide unfair information to other players. If you act out of turn by making a bet, checking, raising, or folding, you are not allowed to change your action unless the action of the in-turn player changes what you can do. For example, if player 2 checks out of turn of player 1, player 1 can then choose to bet with the knowledge of this person's intended action.

8.7 Protecting Your Hand

Players should protect their hand with a chip or an object. If their hand is mucked, it is dead. What this means is if another player's hand (folded or not) is mixed up with yours, then both hands are dead.

8.8 Handling Chips Properly

Do not splash the pot, players must place their chips in front of them and not throw them into the pot in an exaggerated or aggressive manner. This allows chips to be properly allocated and counted.

8.9 Talking About the Hand

Players no longer in the hand must not talk about their hand to the other players still in the hand.

8.10 Slow Rolling

Slow rolling is delaying revealing a winning hand at the showdown to irritate or embarrass another player. It is considered bad etiquette.

8.11 Abysmal Winning and Sore Losing

It is considered unethical to gloat or brag excessively after winning a hand, especially if the intent is to provoke or anger other players. Similarly, loudly complaining, blaming, or fuming after losing a hand is poor etiquette and disrupts the enjoyment of the game for others. Good sportsmanship is expected from all players, whether winning or losing.

8.12 Verbal Declarations

Verbal declarations of action, such as “call” or “raise,” are binding.

8.13 Leaving the Table

Players must inform the table if they need to step away. Leaving during a hand is discouraged.

8.14 Avoid Side Conversations

Avoid distracting others from the game. Players no longer in the hand should not be talking during a high stakes round, especially if it is heads up.

9 Poker Terms and Jargon

9.1 The Nuts

Definition: The best possible hand at any given moment during a poker game. For example, in Texas Hold 'Em, if the best possible hand given the community cards on the table is a four-of-a-kind, holding it would be considered having “the nuts.”

9.2 Stacking the Deck

Definition: An illegal practice in which the cards are intentionally arranged to benefit a particular player. This term is also used outside poker to describe situations where someone unfairly manipulates an outcome.

9.3 Getting Stacked

Definition: Losing all of your chips to another player in a single hand. For example, if you go all-in and lose, you’ve been “stacked” or “got stacked.”

9.4 Tilt

Definition: A state of emotional frustration or anger that causes a player to play recklessly. A player “on tilt” often makes irrational decisions after losing a significant hand or experiencing bad luck.

9.5 Full Tilt

Definition: The breaking point, when a player becomes extremely frustrated or emotional after losing several hands or a large pot. Playing “on tilt” often results in poor decisions and reckless play. If this happens, you should step out of the game for at least a few hands.

9.6 Fish

Definition: A weak or inexperienced player who is prone to making mistakes. More experienced players may target a “fish” to win more chips easily.

9.7 Bad Beat

Definition: Losing a hand despite having a very strong hand or being statistically favored to win. For example, if you have a full house but lose to a four-of-a-kind on the river, that’s a “bad beat.”

9.8 Dead Money

Definition: Chips in the pot contributed by players who have already folded. These chips are no longer tied to any player's hand and are up for grabs.

9.9 Crying Call

Definition: When a player calls a bet even though they believe they are likely beat, simply to confirm their suspicion.

9.10 Drawing Dead

Definition: When a player has no possible way to win the hand, even if the remaining community cards are dealt perfectly for them.

9.11 Freeroll

Definition: A situation where a player has the potential to win the entire pot without any risk of losing because their opponent is drawing dead or has no chance to improve.

9.12 Runner-Runner

Definition: A situation where a player needs two specific cards on the turn and the river to complete a winning hand, and both cards appear. This is a rare and lucky occurrence.

9.13 Limping In

Definition: Entering the pot by calling the big blind instead of raising. Limping is often seen as a weak play because it doesn't apply pressure to other players. It is usually done by players with marginal hands who want to see the first three community cards (the flop) without risking too many chips. However, this can often result in gradually losing chips over time.

9.14 Muck

Definition: To fold your hand without showing your cards. The "muck" refers to the pile of discarded cards on the table.

9.15 On the Button

Definition: Being in the dealer position for the hand, which is advantageous because you are the last to act in each betting round after the flop.

9.16 Under the Gun (UTG)

Definition: The position immediately to the left of the big blind, where the player must act first in the pre-flop betting round.

9.17 Short Stack

Definition: A player who has fewer chips than most of the other players at the table. Since a normal starting stack consists of approximately 100 big blinds, a short stack would be significantly lower, usually around half or less of that amount.

9.18 Heads-Up

Definition: When only two players remain in the hand or the game. Heads-up poker is often played with different strategies than full-table play.

9.19 Tanking

Definition: Taking an extended amount of time to make a decision during a hand. This is usually done during important or high-pressure situations.

9.20 Call the Clock

Definition: When another player is taking too long to make a decision, a player can "call the clock," giving the slow player a set time limit (typically 60 seconds) to act, or their hand will be folded. Some leeway can be given for significant decisions, allowing a bit more time before the clock is called.

9.21 Splashing the Pot

Definition: When a player throws their chips directly into the pot in a messy or disorganized manner. This is discouraged because it makes it harder to track the bet amounts.

Disclaimer

Please note that the information and rules outlined in this guide are subject to change in the future. Any updates or adjustments will be communicated to players to maintain fair and enjoyable gameplay.

If there is any contention or disagreement about the rules during the game, please refer to this document for clarification and the most up-to-date rules.