

## POKER INSTRUCTIONS

---

### LET'S PLAY POKER • TEXAS HOLD'EM

1. Texas Hold'em can be played with as few as 2 players – or as many as 10 – at a single table.
2. The game begins with 2 players, left of the dealer, placing an initial bet. This is called posting the blinds. In Texas Hold'em, there are no antes but forced bets, or blinds, are used.
3. The person to the left of the dealer posts a bet called the small blind, which is usually equal to half of the minimum bet.
4. The person to the left of the small blind posts the big blind, which is equal to the full minimum bet.
5. The dealer shuffles one full deck of 52 playing cards. In a Texas Hold'em game, a disc or other marker is used to indicate which person is the "dealer" for the round.
6. Each player is then dealt 2 cards face down. These are called your hole or pocket cards.
7. Next is a round of betting starting with the person to the left of the 2 who posted the blinds. This round is usually referred to by the term pre-flop. Like most games of poker, players can check, raise or fold.
8. Players can bet, raise or re-raise any amount equal or greater than the minimum bet, which should also equal the amount of the big blind.
9. In No-Limit Hold'em, the number of chips you have in front of you determines the maximum bet. A player can go "all-in" by pushing all their chips toward the center of the table. At this point, either the player or the dealer should "count them down," or calculate the amount of the player's all-in bet. To call, the other players at the table must match the value of the chips.
10. In the event a player cannot match the value of another player's bet, but would still like to call, he or she can go all-in and play for a portion of the pot. Should this happen, the dealer should divide the original, larger bet into two stacks. The first stack should match the amount of the caller's all-in bet. This stack is pushed into the original pot along with the caller's all-in bet. The second stack is placed into a side pot, for which the all-in caller is not eligible. This enables the rest of the table to continue play, raising and re-raising as they normally would. At the conclusion of the hand, the all-in bettor is eligible to win the original pot, but not the side pot.
11. After the initial betting round ends, the dealer discards the top card of the deck. This is called a burn card.
12. The dealer then flips the next 3 cards face up on the table. These cards are called the flop. These are communal cards that anyone can use in combination with their 2 pocket cards to form a poker hand.
13. Next is another round of betting, starting with the player to the left of the dealer.
14. After the betting concludes, the dealer burns another card and flips one more onto the table. This is called the turn card. Players can use this 6th card now to form a 5-card poker hand.
15. The player to the left of the dealer begins another round of betting. In many types of games, this is where the bet size doubles.
16. Finally, the dealer burns a card and places a final card face up on the table. This is called the river. Players can now use any of the 5 cards on the table or the 2 cards in their pockets to form a 5-card poker hand.
17. There is now a final round of betting starting with the player to the left of the dealer.
18. After this round of betting, all of the players remaining in the game begin to reveal their hands. This begins with the player to the left of the last player to call. It's called the showdown.
19. If 2 or more players have the same hand, the next highest card in the player's hand is used to break a tie. This is called the kicker.
20. If there is no kicker card and the tied players have used both hole cards, or have the exact same hand, then the pot is split between them.
21. The dealer button position moves clockwise to the next player and another round of play begins.

# RH

## POKER INSTRUCTIONS

---

### TOURNAMENT PLAY

For a fun evening with friends, organize a tournament where each player begins with the same number of chips. Play until one player has all of the chips and is declared "Champion." Tournament play can be very flexible to accommodate any large groups of people. Begin each table with 5–10 players, and consolidate tables as players are knocked out. With larger tournaments, remember to keep enough chips in the bank to "color-up" or exchange a player's low denomination chips for higher denomination chips. This keeps game play manageable so you don't spend all your time stacking chips.

### HINTS AND TIPS

- The minimum number of chips each player should start with is 40 times the big blind. For example, if the big blind is set at \$1 and the small blind at \$0.50, each player should begin with at least \$40. This ensures good game play.
- Some poker rooms will limit the table to 3 rounds of raising and re-raising. Make sure to clearly state the rules at your game before you begin playing.
- The strongest opening hand is Ace-Ace followed by King-King. These are the highest of the so-called "pocket pairs," 2 cards of the same numerical value hidden from view in your 2 down cards. Odds are 17:1 against being dealt pocket pairs so play them wisely.
- Play the person, in addition to playing the cards. Laying down a superior hand because you were bluffed out of the pot stings worse than losing in a showdown. Remember: There is no such thing as a moral victory in poker!

©2004

The United States Playing Card Company, Cincinnati, Ohio 45212 USA

For additional card game rules and information, visit us at [www.usplayingcard.com](http://www.usplayingcard.com)