

Texas Hold'em Rules – How to Play?

Without question, Texas Hold'em is the most popular form of poker played both online and offline today. As has been said often about Texas Hold'em, the game takes a minute to learn but a lifetime to master.

Some of the best players in the world have been playing for more than 40 years and still admit that they learn something new almost every time they sit down at the table and the cards hit the felt.

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However, while understanding the finer points of the game can be challenging, learning the basics of Texas Hold'em and how the game is played is relatively easy.

Texas Hold'em Poker Rules

- The two players seated to the left of the dealer spot (or button) put out the “blinds” – which are predetermined mandatory bets that are made prior to the cards being dealt. The first person to the left of the dealer button puts out the “small blind”, while the second player puts out the “big blind”.
- To begin a hand, every player is dealt two cards face down. These cards are commonly referred to as the “hole cards” or “pocket cards”.
- The first person to act is the player to the left of the big blind who can either call the big blind, raise or fold their hand. This continues for every player at the table in a clockwise pattern, and is referred to as “pre-flop action”.
- When each player at the table has decided whether to remain in the hand or fold, three community cards are dealt face up on the table. These three cards are referred to as “the flop”. These cards – and the subsequent two community cards dealt – will be used by all players in combination with their hole cards to make the best five-card hand possible.

- Next, there is another round of betting, this time starting with the first player to the left of the dealer. Another community card is then dealt, known as “the turn” or “fourth street”.
- Another round of betting occurs, once again starting with the first player to the left of the dealer, after which the fifth and final community card, known as “the river”, is dealt.
- One last round of betting occurs after which all players still in the hand turn over their cards – this is called the “showdown”. Whoever can make the best five-card hand by combining their hole cards with the community cards wins the pot.

Though in no way a complete overview of the game, these are the basics of how Texas Hold'em is played. From here you can move on to learning some of the fundamental strategies and tactics, and start growing your skills.

Top 10 Best Starting Hands in Zynga Texas Hold'em

There is probably more educational material available on poker than there is on any other game in the world (or most mainstream sports for that matter), but beginning players who are not quite ready for advanced theory can instantly step up their game by knowing the top ten starting hands.

These are the best cards that can be dealt to any player pre-flop in a game of Texas Hold'em, and knowing how they rank and how to play them is a major step forward in becoming a poker force to be reckoned with.

Here is a list of the top ten starting hands and their nicknames:

1. A-A – Pocket aces is hands down the strongest starting hand in Texas Hold'em, and when played correctly you will win with them more often than not. Nicknames: American Airline, Pocket Rockets.
2. K-K – The second most powerful hand is almost always the strongest opening pair at the table, though you do have to be wary of anyone that could have flopped aces. Nickname: Cowboys.

3. Q-Q – Pocket queens fall into the range of hands that you will likely raise with pre-flop regardless of your position, though you must proceed with caution. Nickname: Ladies.

4. A-K – Ace-king is one of those hands that can win you a lot of money or send you packing depending on how you play it. Ace-king suited is a little stronger than its non-suited counterpart. Nickname: Big Slick.

5. J-J – Statistically, pocket jacks will win a ten-handed pot approximately 20% of the time. As long as the flop doesn't bring an ace, king or queen, you should be good to go. Nickname: Jesters.

6. A-Q – Much like J-J, A-Q is expected to win a ten-handed pot around 20% of the time. It is considered the second best drawing hand.

7. K-Q – Although you won't want to call any pre-flop raises with this hand in early or middle position, K-Q is a great drawing pair that can make you tough to beat with the right flop.

8. A-J – With suited A-J you can call a raise in late position, though with the unsuited variation you will be better off just folding the majority of the time.

9. K-J – This is mostly a hand to play in late position, and you would almost never stick around after a pre-flop raise unless the table is short-handed.

10. A-10 – When you are dealt A-10, you are hoping to see a cheap flop where maybe you can get lucky and land a deceptively strong hand that will be hard for your opponents to pick up on.