

# **Poker Beginner Rules**

## **The Dealer Button**

Texas Hold'em is played with what's known as a rotating dealer, meaning a player will act as the dealer for one hand and then pass the role of dealer on to the player on their left when the hand is completed. To choose the dealer, either deal every player one card or spread the cards face down on the table and have every player choose one. The player with the highest-valued card (aces are high for selecting a dealer) starts as the dealer.

## **The Button**

If you're in a live poker room or casino with a professional dealer (or someone volunteers to always physically deal the cards) the dealer button will still rotate around the table. Even though he or she is physically dealing the cards, for all intents and purposes the person with the button is viewed as being the dealer for the hand. Once the hand completes the player with the dealer button will pass it to the player on his or her left.

Texas Hold'em Layout: note that the Texas Hold'em layout includes three flop boxes, one turn box and one river card box on the felt table.

## **Texas Hold'em Rules – The Blinds**

There are two blinds in Texas Hold'em – a **small blind** and a **big blind**. These are forced bets required by two players to make sure there are some chips in the pot worth playing for. Without any money in the pot all players might be inclined to fold much more often, slowing down the action considerably.

The player **directly to the left of the dealer** puts out the small blind. The big blind (usually double that of the small blind) is then paid by the **player to the left of the small blind**. The size of the blinds will dictate the stakes of the game you're about to play.

## **Texas Hold'em Betting Rules**

The person dealing the cards deals to the left of the player with the dealer button first and rotates clockwise around the table. Each player gets one card at a time until each player has two cards, both face-down. These are known as your **hole cards and they are for your use alone** when making your final 5-card poker hand.

A round of Texas Hold'em consists of a minimum of one and a maximum of four betting rounds. A hand ends when all players but one has folded. Or the fourth (final) Texas Hold'em betting round completes with multiple players still in the hand – whichever comes first.

At that point players enter **the showdown** and the player with the highest hand takes the pot. If two players share the highest hand, the pot is split equally between them.

## Texas Hold'em Betting Rules – Pre-Flop

When all players receive their hole cards you're now in the pre-flop betting round. Each player looks at his or her cards and decides what action to take. In Hold'em only one player can act at a time. The pre-flop betting round **starts with the player to the left of the big blind**. This player has three options:

- **Fold:** Pay nothing to the pot and throw away their hand, waiting for the next deal to play again.
- **Call:** Match the amount of the big blind (pre-flop this is also known as "limping in.")
- **Raise:** Raise the bet by doubling the amount of the big blind. (Note: a player may raise more depending on the betting style being played, again see the rules for No-Limit and Pot-Limit above.)

Once a player has made their action the player to the left of them gets their turn to act. Each player is given the same options: fold, call the current bet (if the previous player raised, that is the amount you must call; if no one has bet it's the big blind amount) or raise. **In Limit Hold'em a raise is always the amount of one bet in addition to the amount of the previous bet. All players have had a chance to act. All players who haven't folded have bet the same amount of money for the round.**

## Texas Hold'em Betting Rules – The Flop

Once the preflop Texas Hold'em round ends, the flop is dealt. This is done by dealing the top card in the deck face-down on the table (called the "burn" card, it's not in play), followed by **three cards face-up** in the middle of the table. These are the community flop cards which all players can use to make their best 5-card poker hand.

Once the flop has been dealt the first post-flop betting round begins. The rules of a post-flop betting round are the same as a pre-flop with two small exceptions:

- The first player to act is the next player with a hand to the left of the dealer
- The first player to act can check or bet; as there has been no bet made, calling is free.

## Texas Hold'em Betting Rules – The Turn

A turn card is dealt

Once the betting round on the flop completes (meaning any players who want to see the next card have matched the value of any bets), the dealer again 'burns' one card face-down out of play followed by a single card face-up in the middle of the table beside the 3 flop cards. Once the turn has been dealt the third betting round starts.

## Texas Hold'em Betting Rules – The River

Assuming more than one player is left having not folded on one of the previous streets, the river is now dealt. Dealing the river is identical as dealing the turn with one card being burned facedown followed by a single card face-up.

This is the final street and no more cards will be dealt in this hand. The final betting round is identical to the Texas Hold'em round on the turn.

## Showdown

Once the river betting round has been completed the players now enter the showdown. At this point the best 5-card poker hand wins the pot. Here are the rules you need to know about a Hold'em showdown:

- The **player who bet on the river is the default first player to reveal their hand**. If any other players choose to show their hand first, that is OK.
- If no betting happened on the river (all players checked), **the player closest to the left of the dealer must open their hand first**, continuing clockwise around the table.
- If a player is holding a losing hand **it is their option to reveal their cards or simply muck their hand and concede the pot**.

## Texas Hold'em Rules – Best 5-Card Hand

In Hold'em you must make the best 5-card hand possible *using **any combination** of your **two hole cards** and the **five community cards** on the table*. You can use **both**, **one** or **none** of your own hole cards to make your best hand. Here are some rules about evaluating a winning poker hand:

- Remember the official poker hand rankings. **There are no exceptions to this order: a flush always beats a straight; three of a kind always beats two pair, etc.**
- There are **no hands** used in Hold'em other than the hands listed in this chart. For example having three pairs is actually only "two pair," and the highest-valued two pair make up your final hand.
- Final poker hands **must be exactly 5 cards** and **only** those five cards are used to evaluate the winning hand.

<div> <span>♠</span> <span>♥</span> <b>POKER</b> <span>♦</span> <span>♣</span> </div> <div>HAND RANKINGS</div>	
Royal Flush	10♥ J♥ Q♥ K♥ A♥
Straight Flush	4♣ 5♣ 6♣ 7♣ 8♣
Four of a Kind	K♠ K♥ K♣ K♦ 3♠
Full House	10♥ 10♠ 10♦ A♠ A♣
Flush	10♠ K♠ 2♠ 6♠ 7♠
Straight	7♣ 8♠ 9♦ 10♠ J♥
Three of a Kind	5♠ 5♥ 5♣ J♦ A♦
Two Pair	A♠ A♥ 3♣ 3♠ J♣
One Pair	Q♦ Q♥ 2♥ 8♠ 9♣

- Suits are never used to evaluate the strength of a hand.

Once you determine the winning poker hand that player receives the pot. The dealer passes the dealer button to his or her left and the two players to the left of the new dealer put out their big and small blinds respectively.