

The **DEFINITIVE** **ONLINE POKER** **STRATEGY**



The essential facts you need to know about playing

TEXAS HOLD'EM **ONLINE**



where you take in the cash

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INTRODUCTION

There are many different styles of poker games you can play in live casinos and online, but of all the styles played today, none is more popular than Texas Hold'em.

Texas Hold'em has received much of its popularity from certain hit TV shows such as the Traveler's Channel *World Poker Tour*, and ESPN's *World Series of Poker*. However, aside from these exciting shows, Hold'em has gained popularity because it is one of the easiest games to learn, the hands are fast, and the stakes are high. Thus, many novice players have come to realize that as long as one masters the skill of the game, there is a lot of money waiting to be won in the world of Texas Hold'em poker.

If you are interested in such money making opportunities, or a chance to improve upon your Texas Hold'em poker game, this book is exactly what you need to get started in the right direction. Nevertheless, understand that although this book will provide you with the basic rules, as well as strategies for you to keep in mind and apply to your game, playing Texas Hold'em, or any poker game for that matter, takes much more than luck – it takes dedication.

The skill you need to become a good poker player can only be learned through practice, patience and observation. Therefore, if you ever hope to win at poker or become a champion, you're going to need to learn how to play like the pros.

So what's their secret? For starters, not only have they developed their own poker strategies, but they understand that although knowing how to play their cards is important, the real talent is playing the other players. Professionals study their fellow opponents, and come to know how the other players will react during game play. This gives them an advantage over the other players, because a pro will know how to weed conservative players out of the pot, or keep the juvenile player in the hand for as long as they can, so he can milk these hot-heads for all they're worth.

Since that is the case, how you gain the advantage over your fellow opponents will vary depending on if you are playing poker live or online. One of the biggest problems many players who engage in online poker fail to realize, is that while

the games follow the same rules and similar strategies of live play, the fact that you can not see the other players makes gaining the upper hand over them difficult, especially if you don't know how to apply the right psychology.

Why? Think about it: In a live poker game you can see the facial expressions, and the reactions of the other players. This allows you to gain a pretty good idea of the type of player they are, as well as how they play their cards by simply observing their body language. However, when playing online, you do not have the luxury of relying on the reactions of your opponents, which means that in order to figure out the type of players you are up against, you need to mentally pay attention to the decisions they make in the game, and observe how they communicate when you converse with them online.

For the purpose of this guide, we will be focusing primarily on the tactics related to online Texas Hold'em game play. This focus will help you gain a better understanding of how to not only effectively play against other online players by learning the online psychology of good game play, but also how to use these skills to win.

Taking your online Texas Hold'em poker playing abilities to the next level is possible, and this book is here to show you how you can make this goal a reality. Within its pages you will find the rules, strategies and fantastic tips related to online poker and Texas Hold'em. You will even discover the different types of players you should watch out for, as well as fantastic strategy tools that can help you uncover the odds, providing you with a better shot at winning the pot.

So without taking up anymore of your precious time, let's get started.

Relax, get comfortable and get ready, because it's time to take your online Texas Hold'em game to the next level.

Have fun, and good Luck!






(but if you read this book you'll realize luck really isn't a major factor when it comes to being a killer poker player!)

ADVANTAGES OF ONLINE POKER

Before we turn our attention towards Texas Hold'em and the strategies you can apply to your online poker experiences, it is important that you understand the differences between online and live poker, as well as the advantages of playing online.

Now more than ever, people are choosing to take part in online poker instead of going to a casino. One of the major reasons is because visiting an online poker site is far easier and handier than going to a live casino. Imagine, instead of having to travel outside of your home to a busy, noisy casino, you can relax and experience just as much poker enjoyment in the virtual world with a simple "click" of your mouse.

Here are just a few main highlights of the advantages of online poker:

-  You can play at any time of the day or night from the comfort of your own home or place of choosing at your convenience.
-  You can play against players from all over the world.
-  You can play for fun.
-  You can use special strategy tools to assist you when you play.
-  You don't have to worry about the other opponent's seeing your expression or hearing your comments during a hand.

To further appreciate the advantages of playing online, we'll take a closer look at the differences between live and online poker. Following are some notable distinctions:

PHYSICAL Vs. VIRTUAL

Perhaps the single most obvious difference between live and online poker is the fact that at a live poker table, players are physically present and can therefore see the moves of their opponents, their emotions, as well as their reactions. This makes playing live poker far more challenging than online, because players always need to be conscious of what their opponents are doing, and if they are being watched. Moreover players need to have control over their body language,

emotions and expressions, as sudden reactions or nervous gestures or movements can often be a dead giveaway to an experienced player.

When playing poker online, however, players do not need to concern themselves with physical control. You can scream, yell, laugh and make any expression you want, because even though your family, pets or neighbors may hear or see you and possibly think you're crazy, your opponents can only judge you by the way you converse over a chat dialogue, and by the moves you make in the game.

What's more is when you play online you don't have to worry about following a dress code, which is required at many live casinos. Therefore, whether you feel inspired to dress to the nines, wear your pajamas or –heaven forbid- your birthday suit, the point is you can wear whatever you want...just try not to freak out your neighbours too much!

TABLE LIMITS

Generally there are lower limits in online poker rooms than in live casinos. Of course, there are certain internet casinos that offer tables with higher limits, but there is usually enough diversity in table limits, to suit the budget of any player. Furthermore, the lower limit tables makes online poker an ideal environment for players to learn, develop, and try out new strategies without feeling as though they are taking a huge gambling risk. Thus, there is no worry of losing a substantial amount of money when practicing your skills online.

VARIETY

When it comes to choosing poker games and betting limits, no live casino can provide you with the variety you will find online. Choosing a desired poker table is important for all players, because it is essential that you feel comfortable while playing. Online poker rooms allow you the chance of selecting a table with a betting limit that you deem most suitable for your budget and expertise. You will also discover that finding a seat at an online poker table of your choosing is far easier and more probable than in a live casino. Just check out the hundreds of tables to choose from at www.pokerrewards.com

GAME CONDUCT

It is not possible for any players participating in online poker to break the rules of conduct that apply to the game. Due to computer technology and gaming

software, no player has the ability to see their opponent's cards, show their cards to other players, place string bets or act out of turn during a hand. The software will only permit the conduct that has been programmed to occur, and for the standard online casino or poker site, this means that you are entitled to see the number of players taking part in the hand, the money amount of each player, and the total sum of money that accumulates in the pot. On the other hand, in a live casino, players can break conduct rules, cause disruptions and stall the hand.

PLAYER SUPPORT

Due to the fact that online poker can be played in the comfort and privacy of your own home or place of choosing, you can use a variety of special tools and programs such as calculators, charts and tables when playing a game. The purpose of these devices is to assist you in finding out the best odds in the hand. Although they are not considered cheating, and while some are even permitted in a live casino, the beauty of using these helpful tools online is that no one else can see you, and therefore no one can judge your actions or intimidate you when you play.

TIME CONTROL

When it comes to fast hands, live poker doesn't even compare to online poker. Online poker games are substantially shorter than those played in a live casino. The major reasons are due to the fact that internet players continually hop from table to table, and hands are much shorter as rounds are quick because of computer software, and players can not see their opponents. This allows online players the freedom to participate in games for as long or as little as they wish. Therefore, while one player may only be interested in playing a single game for a few minutes, another may wish to spend an hour or longer.

A live poker game, however, may last for hours, and this is because the average round during a hand can last anywhere from 10-20 minutes depending on the number of players involved in the hand.

Overall, the experiences provided by both live and online poker tables are equally social, enjoyable and rewarding for players. Furthermore, each environment requires players to adapt to a different style of game play that is often challenging and involves skill. However, when it comes down to it, nothing beats the advantages of comfort, convenience and choice that you will only find with online poker.

BASIC POKER RULES

Have you ever caught yourself racking your brain every now and again trying to remember the basic rules of poker hands, or forgetting what poker hand beats what? Don't worry; this is a common concern among many novice players and even effects intermediate players from time to time.

Regardless of what player category you fit into, let's face it; you need to know the basics of poker in order to really dig your heels into the sport of Texas Hold'em, or any other style of poker game for that matter. Thus, whether this is your first time learning about the possible winning poker hands, or you are simply in need of a little refresher course, here is what you need to know.

First and for most, a standard 52-card deck is used in every poker game, regardless of the number of players, or the style of game that is being played. The standard deck features the following cards starting with the highest rank to the lowest as listed below:

- * **Ace**
- * **King**
- * **Queen**
- * **Jack**
- * **10**
- * **9**
- * **8**
- * **7**
- * **6**
- * **5**
- * **4**
- * **3**
- * **2**
- * **Ace** (an ace can count as both a low or high card)



Each rank is featured in the same 4 equal suits:

♠ Spade

♦ Diamonds

♥ Hearts

♣ Clubs

The object is to achieve the highest hand by obtaining one of the winning card combinations listed below in the table. **Note, the following list begins with the highest and ends with the lowest possible winning hand:**



Royal Flush

Ace, King, Queen, Jack and 10 of the same suit
(A♠, K♠, Q♠, J♠, 10♠)



Straight Flush

5 consecutive cards of the same suit
(5♦, 6♦, 7♦, 8♦, 9♦)



Full House

3 of a kind and a pair, with the 3 of a kind valued first
(7♦, 7♣, 7♥ - 4♠, 4♣)



Four of a Kind

4 cards with the same value
(8♥, 8♣, 8♦, 8♠)



Straight

5 cards of any suit in consecutive order
(7♣, 8♦, 9♣, 10♥, J♠)



Two Pair

2 sets of pairs
(2♣, 2♥ - 6♥, 6♦)



Flush

Any 5 different cards of the same suit
(3♥, 5♥, 7♥, 9♥, J♥)





Three of a Kind
3 cards with the same face value
(10♠, 10♥, 10♦)



One Pair
2 cards with the same face value
(3♠, 3♦)

HIGH CARD

If none of the above hands are achieved within a game, the player with the highest card wins. Additionally, In the event that two players have the same hand, the player with the highest card wins.

Now that you have familiarized yourself with the types of hands you are trying to obtain to win the pot, it's time to learn or "refresh" your memory on how to play Texas Hold'em.

Of all the games played in card rooms today, Texas Hold'em is by far the most popular game, and one of the easiest to learn, making it both fun and rewarding to play. The object of the game is to make the strongest 5 card hand by using a combination of your 2 hole cards and the 5 community cards on the table.

When playing Texas Hold'em online, every player will have a turn at using the dealer button, which enables them to act as the virtual dealer. In addition each player will be required to post blinds at one time or another.

The rules of Hold'em take only a few minutes of your time to learn. Once you have them down you'll never forget them, and can begin focusing your energies on learning, using and developing your own strategies.

BASIC TEXAS HOLD'EM GAME RULES

TERMINOLOGY AND FACTS:

Number of Players - 2 – 10

If a Hold'em game consists only of two players it is referred to as a "heads up" match.

Dealer Button ("Button", "Buck", "Puck") - This is a device that is used in online poker rooms to mark the dealer among the players for each hand. The dealer button is a small disk that is marked with the letter "D". The dealer button is not only essential to the players so they know who is dealing, but also because the two players to the left of the dealer must post the two blinds in the game. After the completion of each hand, the dealer button moves to the left.

Blinds - In games with blinds, there are two blinds posted – the small blind (half of the minimum level bet) and the big blind (the full minimum bet). Before the game begins, the small blind is posted by the first player closest to the dealers left, and the big blind is posted by the player to the left of the small blind player.

The purpose of the blinds is to make it so that there is money in the pot before the game starts. That way the betting can begin, encouraging players to take part in the hand. It also means that no one will walk away empty-handed should the hand end quickly.

The size of the blinds is determined by the limits of each table. Therefore if you are playing at a \$4/\$8 table, and the typical small blind is half the minimum bet, the small blind will be \$2, and the big blind will be the full minimum bet of \$4.

Betting Structure - The betting structure is the same for every table. The only aspect that will change is the amount of money involved, which will correspond to the limits for the table you choose to play at. For the purpose of this chart we will use the \$4/\$8 table example:

Small/Big Blinds	1st Round	2nd Round	3rd Round	Final Round
\$4/\$8	\$4	\$4	\$8	\$8

Note: *For each round of betting, there is a limit of 1 bet and 3 raises. Therefore, in the \$4/\$8 example, betting would be restricted to a total of \$16 in rounds 1 and 2, and \$32 in rounds 3 and 4.*

Hole Cards - Also known as "pocket" cards, hole cards are those dealt to each player and are face down, so that only the player can see these cards.

The Flop - These are the first three community cards issued by the dealer.

Turn - The fourth community card that is dealt

River - The fifth and final community card to be dealt

TEXAS HOLD'EM IN ACTION

ROUND ONE – THE PREFLOP

As soon as a dealer has been selected and the blinds posted, the game begins with the dealer dealing each player two hole cards clockwise round the table. Once this is complete, the first round of betting starts and things begin to get interesting!

ROUND ONE – BETTING

At this point of the game, players must carefully consider their hole cards and determine if they have potential. Betting commences with the player to the immediate left of the big blind player, and follows clockwise round the table.

In this betting round, each player, with the possible exception of the player who posted the big blind, may either choose to **fold** (quit the game), **call** (meet the bet) or **raise**, increasing the big blind to a full bet. If players still left in the round choose to only call the big blind, then the player who originally posted the big blind is the only player who has the option to **check** (stay in the game without calling or raising) their own blind.

Players wager using the smaller level of the stakes at the table (*Note: Refer to the section about betting structure listed above to see the example about the limits and rules for the betting rounds*).

ROUND 2 – THE FLOP

By this point of the game, the excitement increases as the dealer deals the first three community cards face up on the board (the middle of the table). Now players can use these three communal cards in combination with their two hole cards to determine their hand possibilities.

ROUND 2 – BETTING

For this round, betting commences with the first player closest to the dealers left (it doesn't matter if the dealer folds, betting always commences with the player

closest to their left) and continues clockwise round the table. Betting follows the same structure as in the first round, with players able to fold, call, and raise. The first player to make a wager may check, and if no other raises are made, the other players may check also.

Like the first round, players wager using the smaller level of stakes at the table.

Round 3 – THE TURN

Once the second betting round has come to an end, the dealer deals the fourth community card on the board. Now the game becomes even tenser as the players left in the game now have 6 cards to work with.

ROUND 3 – BETTING

The third betting round follows the same as the second betting round, with the exception that now players must wager using the higher level of the stakes at the table.

ROUND 4 – THE RIVER

At this point of the game, palms really start to sweat as the fifth and final community card is dealt on the board. Players now have all 7 cards at their disposal, and must make the best possible 5-card hand.

ROUND 4 – THE FINAL BET

Betting commences as it did in the last round, with the higher level of stakes at the table making up the wager.

SHOWDOWN

Here it is, the moment every player waits for – when their blood runs cold with defeat or pumps hot with the victory!

Each player left in the hand show their cards, beginning with the last player to bet and continuing in that pattern. During the showdown players may also choose to **“muck”** (fold out of the game, without showing their cards) their hand.

If in the event, a player wins by default, which means that every other player in the hand folded, no showdown will occur, and the winner is given the option to show their cards or not. For the most part, players choose not to show their

winning hand, as it adds to the drama of the game, and keeps the other opponents guessing what the great hand was.

WINING THE POT

1. The player with the best hand, in accordance with the poker hands listed in the "Basic Poker Rules" section of this book, is declared the winner by the computer software, and takes the pot.
2. If it happens that two players have identical winning hands, they are both declared the winners and the pot is split evenly between them.
3. If the 5 community cards make the best possible hand, the pot will be split evenly among all players still left within the hand. When this occurs, it is known as "the board plays".

BETTING LIMITS AND OTHER FACTS

There are three different types of limit games you can play in Texas Hold'em –

1. Fixed-Limit
2. Pot-Limit
3. No- Limit

FIXED LIMIT

A fixed limit game means that during each betting round, limits are placed on the bets. Thus, a \$4/\$8 fixed limit table means that during the first two rounds of betting the maximum bet any player can make is \$4, and in the last two rounds of betting the maximum bet is \$8.

During each round of betting, only three raises are allowed, and each raise can not exceed the betting limit for that round. Therefore, on the first round the player entitled to the first bet may fold, call or bet \$4. The second player, after the first bet has been made, may fold, call the \$4, or raise another \$4, which would make the bet total to \$12. If another player decides to make one more raise, it would be the third and final raise for the round totaling the bet to \$16. After this raise, all the remaining players in the round may either fold, or call. The same method works for the last two rounds with the max bet of \$8, making the total bet for these rounds no more than \$32.

If you are a beginner player, or would like to keep your budget capped, playing Texas Hold'em at a fixed limit table is a good idea, as it will help you to stay in control over your losses and improve your game before you start to play with the big fish. *(Note the fixed limit style game was the betting example used in the above Texas Hold'em rules)*

POT LIMIT

A pot limit Texas Hold'em game begins with a minimum bet designated by the table which is posted by the big blind. However, as the game gets underway, players who make a raise can not make one smaller than double the amount of the previous bet, or one larger than the total money amount in the pot during any time of the game. Thus, if there is \$100 in the pot and the previous bet before yours is \$20, than the minimum raise you could make is \$40, and the maximum raise would be \$100.

The only exception to this pot limit betting rule is the all-in. An all-in is when a player chooses to wager all of his or her remaining chips. For example, should a player choose to wager all their chips as a raise, but the total amount of their chips is smaller than the minimum bet, their wager will still count, because the player has no more chips to offer.

As far as pot limit game goes, there is much more flexibility when it comes to betting, compared to a fixed limit game. Furthermore, players have more liberty to use strategies that involve bluffing, and more risky techniques. For this reason, pot limit games aren't always the best choice for beginners or apprehensive players. However, if you are determined to give it a go, try to enter a pot limit game where the buy-in is reasonably low.

NO LIMIT

Like the pot limit Texas Hold'em game, the only time a no limit game is designated by a wager at the table is the minimum bet which is posted by the big blind. After this initial betting takes place, the minimum raise graduates to double the amount of the previous bet. However, unlike pot limit games, the maximum raise is all the chips you have. This means that in a no limit game, players can wager all of their chips at any point during the game. Players can raise as much as they like, as long as it does not exceed their total number of chips, and it is double the amount of the last bet.

If players choose to go all-in, or if they run out of chips they can not be “bet out” of a hand, just as in the pot limit game. However, if a player runs out of their chips before the game is finished, a “side pot” is established if there is more than one player with chips still remaining in the hand. The players who have no more chips, or who have gone all-in can not win any more than the amount that they are “in” for. That is why the side pot is created for the remaining players with chips (**Note, this also applies to pot limit games**).

There is no question that the no limit game is the most exciting of all limit games, however, usually only professionals participate in no limit games because the stakes are so high, and you need exceptional skill in order to win the pot. In fact it is the no limit style game that is used in *The World Series of Poker* championship tournament.

It is essential that you choose the limit game that is most suitable to your skills as a player. Always know the type of game you are playing as well as the stakes involved at a table before joining the game. Usually the higher the stakes are, the better the players you are up against. Take it slow and stick to fixed limit games before you decide to take big risks.

THE RAKE

Just like live casinos, the vast majority of online poker rooms include rakes with their games. A rake is a profit the house makes from a percentage of money that is taken from the pot. In some cases, the percentage of the rake may be a predetermined amount, while in other cases it may depend on the size of the pot. Therefore, find out if there is a rake and how it works at the online casino or poker site of your choosing.

ANTE

Although rare, in some online Texas Hold’em games, especially during tournaments, players are required to place an ante. An **ante** is a specific amount of money which each player must put into the pot before the start of every game. Unlike the blinds however, the ante is not recognized as a bet during the hand. However, regardless if there happens to be an ante or not, blinds are still posted in Hold’em games.

Alright, so now that you know how to play Texas Hold'em, and are aware of the different stakes involved, it's time to learn strategies so that you can develop the skills to be the last player standing after showdown.



TEXAS HOLD'EM STRATEGIES

There are many strategies that you can learn when playing Texas Hold'em, and due to the fact that there are so many, for the purpose of this guide what you will find are the essential tips and tactics you should keep in mind when playing. After all, becoming a good Hold'em player is about using your strategies to determine when you should "hold'em" or "fold'em".

Knowing whether you should fold or stay in the hand is based on two vital factors:

1. the 5 community cards
2. the 2 hole cards

In other words, the strategies you use are linked to your two hole cards, because they determine the potential of your starting hand, as well as the community cards, because they are apart of yours and every other players possible victory. Thus, evaluating your Hold'em game takes practice, and the decisions you will make during each hand will depend on different factors such as:

- Your starting hand
- The number of players in the game
- The community cards
- How high the limit game is
- Etc.

Nevertheless, despite the number of players or how high the stakes are, it is your starting hand which is the major key to your survival.


PLAYABLE STARTING HANDS

In total there are 169 possible starting hands, but for the purpose of this guide you will only find those starting hands which provide you with the best chance of winning.


To give you a better understanding of the most effective way to use the starting hands listed below, here are some helpful guidelines for you to follow:

- Starting hands that are **blue** consist of the top ten starting hands, and indicate that these hands can be raised and re-raised at any time during the game.
- Starting hands that are **green** indicate that it is best to call these hands early in the game, and then proceed to raise midway and late in the hand.
- Starting hands that are **orange** indicate that it is in your best interest to call in the middle and late portion of the game.
- Starting hands that are **purple** should be called only when you are in the late portion of the game.
- **A** = Ace, **K** = King, **Q** = Queen, **J** = Jack and **10 - 2** = numerical card value and **m** = matching suit.

STARTING HANDS:

 **Any pair** - they provide you with the possibility of high pair, two pair, three of a kind, full house and four of a kind. Naturally the higher the pair you start with the better off you are -

- * **A-A, K-K, Q-Q, J-J**
- * **10-10, 9-9, 8-8**
- * **7-7 6-6, 5-5, 4-4, 3-3, 2-2**

 **Any high card accompanied by another of their matching suit** – These starting hands have the potential of achieving a high pair, three of a kind, flush, a straight or a straight flush. Depending on their arrangement any suited **A**, **K**, Or **Q** have potential flush possibilities.

- * **A-Km, A-Qm, A-Jm, A-10m, A-9m, A-8m, A-7m, A-6m, A-5m, A-4m, A-3m, A-2m**
- * **K-Qm, K-Jm, K-10m, K-9m, K-8m, K-7m, K-6m, K-5m, K-4m, K-3m, K-2m**
- * **Q-Jm, Q-10m, Q-9m, Q-8m, Q-7m, Q-6m, Q-5m, Q-4m, Q-3m, Q-2m**



* **J-10m, J-9m, J-8m, J-7m, J-6m, J-5m**

* **10-9m, 10-8m, 10-7m, 10-6m**



Any high card with another unsuited high card – These starting hands have the potential of achieving a high pair or straight. *(Note: it is a good idea to only play the combination of unsuited cards if their value totals to 21 or more.)*

* **A-K, A-Q, A-J, A-10, A-9**

* **K-Q, K-J, K-10, K-9**

* **Q-J, Q-10, Q-9**

* **J-10, J-9**

* **10-9**



Low card accompanied by any other low card of matching suit – The only potential these cards have is the may achieve a possible flush or straight, because they are connected by suit.

* **9-8m, 9-7m, 9-6m**

* **8-7m, 8-6m, 8-5m**

* **7-6m, 7-5m**

* **6-5m, 6-4m**

* **5-4m, 5-3m**

* **4-3m**

**You should fold if you have
any starting hand that is not found in the above list.**

It is important that you realize when playing Texas Hold'em you will end up folding prior to the flop most of the time. This is because you will likely experience frequent, terrible starting hands on a regular basis such as 2-7 or 3-8. Don't let this discourage you. You need patience when it comes to playing Hold'em, so don't expect to win every game you play or you'll only end up losing all of your chips. Keep in mind that although a strong starting hand is a good sign, and increases your chances of nabbing the pot, always be prepared to fold if your hand fails to improve, because more than likely another player already has the better cards.



FOLD'EM AND BLUFF'EM

Knowing when and when not to fold or bluff during a Hold'em game takes experience, and the only way you are going to gain that is to practice and play frequently. However, knowing how to minimize your losses and maximize your winnings is all about knowing the right time to bet, call, raise, check or fold.

For instance, if you want to cut your losses, fold during the preflop if you do not have a strong starting hand. On the other hand, if your starting hand has potential, the longer you stay in the game and raise the bar, the more opportunity you have to get the other players to keep adding money to the pot; thus maximizing your possible victory.

The above folding tip sounds obvious and perhaps you may even think it to be easy, but the truth is, folding is sometimes difficult for players, especially for those players who have little patience and a lot of pride. **To help you decide when to fold ask yourself these questions:**

1. Do I currently have potentially one of the best hands according to the number of players in the game?
2. Do I have enough faith in my hand to take on the other players' personalities?
3. Is my hand worth the current wager?

Although you'll never know the exact answers to these questions, the whole point of asking them is so that you will follow your gut instinct and do what you feel is best for the present game, and your budget. Basically, asking yourself these three questions is like giving yourself a bit of a reality check.

Furthermore, there are technically two particular rounds in Hold'em where folding needs to be considered seriously, the Preflop and the Turn. The preflop gives you an indication of your potential victory with your starting hand, so if it doesn't look good, you can fold quickly out of the game and cut your losses early. The turn, on the other hand, is your last chance to fold before you put your final chips in the pot for the last round. Thus, if you reach the turn and all of your confidence in your hand has run dry, you can still cut your losses by skipping out on the showdown.

BLUFFING

The whole point to bluffing is to trick the other player(s) into believing you have the best hand. The reason you want to do this is so that players will fold out of the game and you can win the pot. Sounds pretty straight forward doesn't it? Sure it does, but like everything else in life, anything that sounds easy rarely ever is. After all, do you actually think there would be so many strategies out there if gambling was that simple? Of course not, and that's why it takes skill. And how do you achieve this skill? Experience!

SEIZE THE OPPORTUNITY TO CHECK

If you are able to check in the game, take advantage of this opportunity. Why? Well, if it happens that you are still in the game after the flop, have an O.K. hand, and are the first person to bet, you can check and hope that the other players follow suit. If your plan works, you will be able to make it to the next round and get another card without having to lose any more of your chips.

Checking can also work to your bluffing advantage if you have a strong hand. For instance, if you have a strong hand and you choose to check instead of raising midway through the game, the other players may be tricked into thinking that your hand is weaker than it actually is.

In addition, if you believe that your hand is likely the best of all the players after the flop, at this time it is usually a good idea to check/raise. Check/raise means that you check whenever you get the opportunity, and raise if you are bet into. On the flip side of the coin, should you feel that your hand isn't strong enough you can check/fold, which means you check if you get the chance, and fold if you are bet into.

Above all, you need to remember that when it comes down to it folding is often your best option as it allows you to control your money, giving you the chance to really nail your golden opportunity once it finally comes your way. Hence, spend less time obsessing over winning every game, and use your focus on a good hand to maximize its potential and win the pot.

10 ESSENTIAL TIPS AND TACTICS :

1. **If your two hole cards are a low pair, be cautious of how you play.** It is a good idea to only stay in the hand if the betting is low. As the game continues, if you find you don't have a 3 of a kind or two pairs, it is usually in your best interest to fold.
2. **Don't make the mistake of folding too quickly.** REMEMBER, if you find everyone is checking, stay in the game and choose to check also; therefore you can move on to the next round without having to put in anymore money in the pot. After all, the next round may provide your hand with the card you've been waiting for.
3. **As early as the second round of betting (after the flop) you will have 5 cards to work with,** giving you a good idea of just how strong your final hand will look like, without putting you to much in the hole. At this time, carefully consider your odds and decide whether it is best to stay in the game, or quit while you're ahead.
4. **Don't play at tables that you know you can't afford to lose.** Not only will this affect the way you play, making you more anxious and liable to make foolish mistakes, but high-stakes tables generally appeal to skilled players.
5. **If you have a strong starting hand, play aggressively during the preflop and try to weed out as many players as you can who have weak hands.** This will stop them from getting lucky during the flop. In addition it will ensure that players who think they have a shot at winning to put more money in the pot.
6. **Watch out for flops that are in consecutive sequence such as 6-7-8,** because even if you have a high pair there is a high probability that another player will make a straight.
7. **Sometimes being caught bluffing can work out in your favour.** While getting caught may not be your primary goal, it will make it harder for your

opponents to guess your next move. Nonetheless, you shouldn't always bluff to try and fake out your players, eventually a really good player will catch on and end up taking all of your chips.

8. **Carefully study your fellow opponents.** Pay attention to the moves they make during the game. How and when do they bet, call, fold, call, check, raise or bluff? Do they take their time when it is their turn to make a move or do they act quickly? Even though players tend to jump around from table to table online, if you frequent a certain table often, you will come to know the type of players that filter through. Never forget – you can always learn something from others.
9. **Keep a watchful eye on the high stakes tables, as they usually draw more experienced and professional players.** By studying the actions of these players during the game, you will gain a better idea of what separates the pros from the armature and mediocre players. This is an excellent opportunity so make sure you take notes!
10. **If you are learning how to play Texas Hold'em at the fun tables, don't fall into the trap of shrugging off the games because the money isn't real.** This careless attitude will only cause you to develop bad habits. Instead, play as if your chips are the real thing, you'll develop great strategies from this.



HELPFUL ONLINE POKER STRATEGY TOOLS

Did you know that you could be missing out on all the online Hold'em excitement, and a chance at winning the pot simply because you don't know when the odds are in your favor? Can you honestly afford to let the other players out do you just because they have this advantage? Of course not, and that's why you need to level the playing field. In short, what many online players have is a poker odds calculator, and that is exactly what you need to improve your online poker playing abilities.

Whether you like it or not, mathematics plays a large role in poker, because it is through calculating the odds that you can make ideal decisions of folding, calling or raising during a Hold'em game. If math wasn't your favorite subject in school and the very mention of it has made you want to run screaming, don't worry, you don't have to be a mathematician in order to win at poker. You will find that there are many helpful strategy tools that have been designed to work out the odds for you.





There are different programs that you can obtain which will allow you to improve upon the value of your online poker experience. The vast majority will require you to fork out some of your hard earned cash but they are powerful tools if you use them well.

Here at Poker Rewards we decided to take a close look at the best poker calculators on the market and extensively surveyed our players to see exactly what features they would like to see in a poker calculator.

The response was so overwhelming we decided to build our own calculator based on our research. After hundreds of man hours and man many thousands of dollars we reckon we ended up with a great poker calculator with some really powerful features to improve you play. What's more we have decided to offer it to you for free! Yep that's right, 100% free, with no strings attached.




PARAGON POKER PAL

Paragon Poker Pal is one of the original online poker odds calculators. It is extremely popular as it is compatible with over 100 online poker rooms. It works with Texas Hold'em, 7 Card Stud, Omaha and various other poker game styles. Furthermore, this excellent tool features:

-  Personal settings – allowing the player to set up the calculator so that it works with their style of playing as well as their accuracy.
-  Storage Space – allows the player to store history of the past hands they played so that they can look back and study these hands to see where they went wrong and how they can improve.
-  Over 1,000,000 card statistic variations.
-  Provides advice to the player during the game based on the percentage accumulated of the calculated odds.

TEXAS CALCULATEM

Like Paragon Poker Pal, this is a strategy calculator that is ideal for online Texas Hold'em play and is compatible with almost all internet poker rooms. It comes complete with table and odds charts and has many other convenient features which includes:

-  Revealing the exact odds during game play
-  Automatically watching your game
-  Providing you with helpful advice on whether or not it would be in your best interest to fold, call or raise.

Here is a basic idea of how the odds calculators work when used in a game of Hold'em. To begin with, these devices know that before the start of every hold'em game, each player has a 1 in 5 (20%) chance of winning. After the preflop, the tool will then inform the player of their possible chances of winning the pot. If the calculator reveals to the player that he or she has less than a 20% chance of winning, this is a sign that the odds are strongly against them, and is a good indication that he or she should fold.

You should keep in mind, however, that although the advice provided to you by **Poker Rewards Calculator**, and the others, are as accurate as possible, don't forget that these strategy tools are still calculators, and they can not tell you when or how to bluff.

Furthermore, always relying on your calculator will eventually catch up with you, and reveal to the other players your straight-playing strategy. That being the case, what can end up happening is players will fold whenever they see you make a raise. In other words, don't always do what the calculator suggests, especially once you gain a better grasp on the Hold'em game. You need to keep the other players guessing what you will do next, because it not only gives you the chance to develop your own strategies, but it makes the game more exciting!

A poker odds calculator is a must for your online poker games that involve real money. Without a doubt, the **Poker Rewards Calculator** is a valuable teaching tool for anyone who wants to learn the fundamentals of poker game strategy – and it's 100% free to our players! Furthermore, the online poker environment is one that is fast moving, making it even more essential for you to have a poker odds calculator as your ally.




Aside from the odds calculators, there are other online poker programs, such as player profiling and tracking software, which some players use to help them with their game. One such tracking program is Poker Tracker.

POKER TRACKER

This computer program is different than the odds calculator because it saves data on yours and your opponents' hand history, and is compatible with a few of the poker game styles including Texas Hold'em. Some of the Poker tracker features include:



You can track your games on more than one poker site. This allows you to keep an eye on ring games (non-tournament games that can last for hours or days and players can enter or leave the game at any time they wish as long as they still have money to buy back it) or tournament game.

-  Track the starting hands you obtain and look at the number of hand combinations you receive to discover how many times you are able to reach the flop, fold, raise and win money.
-  Track each opponent you play against to discover who you won the most amount of money from, as well as who has won the most from you. You can also keep detailed notes of each player, which will help you find out how often and when they make it past the preflop and flop, as well as when they fold, call, raise, check/raise, check/fold and reach the showdown.
-  Replay your hands, the entire gaming session, or the complete tournament graphically.

As you can see, poker tracker is a nifty program that can really help you gain a good understanding of the way you and your other opponents play Hold'em. When used to your advantage, you can learn many things from this excellent teaching tool.

Are any of these programs considered cheating?

It may sound surprising, but these programs are not considered cheating tools. In respect to the odds calculator software, using these devices is no different than relying on a calculator to add, subtract, multiply and divide for you on a math test. Although these strategy calculators do provide you with information on the best probabilities based on your hand and your other opponents' (depending on the tool you use), they do not provide you with extra turns, cards, or the ability to see another player's hand. In short, odds calculators randomly work out the probabilities of your cards, nothing more.

That being said, in regards to certain player profiling programs (with the exception of poker tracker, as its purpose is to track every opponent you have played as you've played them), there are increasing debates on whether or not some of these programs should be allowed in online poker rooms.

The reason is because some programs allow the tracker to study the other opponent through the use of a program that follows the player being tracked from

table to table. These programs record the players playing style, and the tracker gains all of this information without ever having to play that particular player repeatedly in order to come to this conclusion on their own. Thus, some believe that the players who are being constantly tracked are given an unfair advantage when faced against the player who has tracked them, as the tracker already has a good idea when the other player will fold, call, raise or bluff.

Currently player profiling software is not illegal, but there is no question that the use of such programs is sneaky, and takes the fun and excitement out of the joy of truly outwitting your fellow opponents and winning the pot.



THE ONLINE POKER APPROACH

Playing poker online is vastly different than playing it live. Players are constantly jumping around from table to table, which means you have to learn how to keep up with the fast pace online poker environment, forcing you to adopt a different approach than you would if you were playing poker live.

Poker, regardless where you play it, is ultimately about psychology and how you use it to gain the advantage over your opponents. For instance, many times during Hold'em the winner rarely has an impressive hand. Often a player wins by a low pair, such as a pair of 8's. The point is it doesn't matter if you don't have an excellent hand, all that matter is that it is better than everyone else's!

So how do you achieve the ideal online poker approach that puts you a step above the average Joe? Aside from practice, here are some aspects you should keep in mind and apply to your games:

AVOID DISTRACTIONS

It may not have occurred to you but many players are distracted when they play poker online. For instance, while playing, many players often:

- * play two tables at once
- * read or write emails
- * watch TV
- * talk on the phone
- * work
- * or busy themselves with other matters

Have you ever found yourself multitasking while playing poker online? It's easy to do isn't it? However, whether you've realized it or not these distractions have a negative effect on your game, because your mind is busy trying to focus on too many things at once. Remember, if you are planning on improving your game and winning, you need to take poker seriously, and to do that your full attention is required.

In addition, keep on the look out for players who may appear distracted, you can use their scattered mind to your advantage. Pressure them to fold early, or drag them further into the hand so they will add more money to the pot.



NAMES WITHOUT FACES

Although you have the freedom to make any facial expression you would like when playing online poker, as no one else can see you, this is both to your advantage and disadvantage because your other opponents also have this freedom. Since no player can see their opponent, some players become careless and will bluff to the point of foolishness, because they don't have anyone to stare them down.

However, just because players frequently bluff online, you can't always assume every opponent you are up against is pulling a fast one on you. That being said, there will be times where you will have to call or raise more often than you prefer, especially when faced against those players who are desperate to win the pot every hand. In the long run, if you find players frequently bluffing and you have a relatively decent hand, it's best to call, as many online poker players find this a far more rewarding tack than constantly making a raise.

STATE OF MIND (MENTAL CONTROL)

Your state of mind is key to your success when playing online poker. The mental control you have influences the way you play. When you are focused on the game at hand, you will learn about the other players, likely hand probabilities, and quickly discover opportunities that allow you to gain the upper hand over your fellow opponents.

A player with a controlled state of mind is one who:

- * Keeps their focus, and controls their emotions when faced with defeat.
- * Does not become defensive when they compete.
- * Has confidence in their abilities and lets the other players know this when they play.
- * Does not let other players gain the upper hand by letting their opponents psyche them out.
- * Remains positive. Regardless how unfavorable your hand may be, Getting frustrated about constant bad hands isn't going to make your odds

any better, it's only going to make you frustrated, which can cause bad judgment once you do get a hand you can work with.

- * Does not let their minds wonder or start daydreaming during a game. It is imperative that your mind is constantly focused on playing the game. That means knowing the probabilities of yours and your opponents' hand.
- * Stays patient. If you are too anxious to win the pot you can make foolish mistakes, making it easy for more experienced players to eat you alive.

A good poker player is in control of their every action. They are not only aware of their own state of mind, but the minds of their other players as well. They are relaxed, and easily adjust to the different players that enter the game, ready and waiting to defeat them as soon as they get the chance to take advantage of the way they play.

POSITIVE ATTITUDE

If you adopt a positive outlook on life, it makes all the difference in the world, because it affects the way you feel, think and respond to the people and environment around you for the better. That's why it is in your best interest to maintain a positive attitude when you play poker.

- * **Look on the up side of things** – if your game isn't going the way you would like it to, put all your concentration into the other players and think about how you will gain the upper hand over them once the strong hand comes your way.
- * **Believe in your abilities as a poker player** – everyone has different styles of playing, find the one you are comfortable with, stick to it, improve it, and settle for nothing but the best.
- * **Care about the game** – If you ever expect to become good at winning, you have to take the game seriously. A carefree attitude won't fly in poker.
- * **Trust your instincts** – when you are feeling positive about your game, you will feel more in tune with your intuition, and won't second guess your

decisions. Your intuition is a powerful ally that is linked to your subconscious, and more often than not it acts in your best interest.

Remember, even the best poker players were beginners once, and everyone has their days that aren't so lucky. But that doesn't mean you give up or care less about the game. You need to work for success, and with a positive attitude you will gain the determination and drive to win.

CLASSIFY YOUR POKER PLAYERS

If there is one thing frequent poker playing will teach you, it is that every player thinks differently. Not only that, but there is an incredible difference between the way the poker player on the left thinks to the one on your right. You should never assume that all players act the same, or that you will be able to figure out their strategies only after a few games. Experienced

players won't play with straight edge strategy, therefore the only way you will learn their secret is to study them. For example:

Classify Your Poker Players

- **Keep track of the way each player bets.**
- **After the showdown pay attention to the hands each player had.**
- **Identify if a player is passive or aggressive.**

- * **Keep track of the way each player bets.** You can achieve this by taking note of who folds, and who doesn't. This will give you an indication on whether the players make strong or weak bets.
- * **After the showdown pay attention to the hands each player had.** Did the player with the weak hand place strong bets? Did the resulting weak hand have potential (for instance, were they missing one card that could have provided them with a flush, etc.)
- * **Identify if a player is passive or aggressive.** Do they constantly raise and stay in the hand for a long time with a weak hand, or do they fold or call often, rarely making a raise.




Every player has a certain style, strategy and method of playing their cards. While some will be easy to classify, the more experienced players will be more spontaneous, and use more than one approach when playing in order to throw off others who are trying to track and figure out their profile. More about distinguishing player characteristics will be discussed in the next section "Player Profiling".

When you maintain a positive attitude, and have control over your state of mind you will be more open to improvement and won't limit yourself to a one track mind. Online poker psychology is an art that requires you to be flexible and focused at the same time. This art is not one that is easy to come by and takes hours of practice. However, the rewards you will reap after taking the time to develop your own online poker psychology, and learn Hold'em inside and out, will be worth all your blood, sweat and tears.



POKER PLAYER PROFILES

Studying your opponents is how you will find out how they play, respond and react during a hand. Even if you fold out of the game, you can still watch the remaining players to see what decisions they make. Discover if they:

-  Fold more often than call or raise
-  Frequently bluff
-  Check/raise or check/fold often

The more you watch your opponents the better you will be at player profiling, which is a talent that takes time to achieve, especially online, due to the fact that you will rarely play the same players over and over again. Once you are able to distinguish the type of game your opponents like to play, you can then slot them into one of these player profile categories:

1. **The Aggressive Player**
2. **The Tight/Conservative Player**
3. **The Loose Player**
4. **The Straight Player**
5. **The Immature Player**

To gain a better understanding for the way these players function, here is what you can expect from each –

THE AGGRESSIVE PLAYER

Players who are aggressive will try to do all they can to psyche you out and get you to do what they want. They will be the player who chooses to raise over folding, putting pressure on the other players to either fold or muck their hand at showdown.

Really talented aggressive players have a lot of confidence and it shows. They make the other players feel uneasy, often causing them to second guess their position in the game when the stakes are high. If you don't see them coming, a good aggressive player will take control over the way you play, and con you out of the pot and your money.



If you want to stand up to the aggressive player you need to show them you have a backbone, and that their bullying strategy isn't going to work on you. Know your cards and have the courage to give the overly aggressive player a taste of their own medicine.

THE TIGHT/CONSERVATIVE PLAYER

A tight, or conservative player, is one who does not like to take risks unless they are necessary. He or she will not have the confidence to bet if they don't feel their cards are strong enough. More often than not, the tight player knows the rules of the game inside and out, has an excellent memory, as well as a talent for analyzing the skills of other players. Therefore, when they do achieve a strong starting hand, they'll surprise all the other players and snatch the pot.

A talented conservative player is an extremely tactical opponent. When faced with him or her, you will find that they generally fold or call, instead of taking risks. Thus, be wary of this type of player, for although you may think they are passive at first, they could very well be waiting for the opportune moment to take the win. Be on the lookout if this player is still in the hand in the later rounds, this usually is a sign that they have a strong hand.

THE LOOSE PLAYER

The loose player is one who is carefree, and is more likely to fold or call more often than raise or bluff. They rarely win frequent pots, and treat poker more as a fun pass time than as a serious money-making sport. If you discover the loose player, you can gain the upper hand over them by playing a little more aggressively, and intimidate them into folding early, so they don't get the chance to obtain a stronger hand.

THE STRAIGHT PLAYER

The straight player is one who is robotic. He or she rarely takes risks, unless they have a really strong hand. Often these players are beginners and are only following the advice of a program such as the odds calculator. You will discover that the more you watch a straight player, the more you will be aware when they have a strong hand because they will play more aggressively and raise, which is a good indication that you should fold, because they only play aggressive when their helper program shows the odds are in their favor.

THE IMMATURE PLAYER

The immature player is one who is generally the easiest to recognize. Their poker style is often cocky, rude, careless and thoughtless. Rarely do these players win big pots as they take foolish risks and are the first to lose all of their money.

Immature players are not respected by other players, because they don't take the game seriously. It is easy to take advantage of these players, so use them to put more money in the pot early on in the game. The faster these players are out of the game, the quicker you will increase your winnings, and have more of a budget to play with.

Remember, even if you have profiled the players you are up against, you should never underestimate any player at any time. Letting your guard down could be the end of your game.

Play the players – don't let them play you!

ESTABLISHING YOUR POKER PLAYER PROFILE

When it comes to establishing your own poker player profile it is best to be adaptable. The more you change your tactics and strategies when playing, the harder time the other players will have at figuring out what your next move will be. A player who is adaptable is exceptional, as he or she can outwit all of their opponents when the stakes are high.

Of course, becoming a master of profile changing isn't something that comes naturally, and like everything else, takes practice and plenty of experience playing against, and studying others.

To help you with this task here are some tips to keep in mind on your quest to become a great player:



Don't be afraid to fold - The best poker players in the world fold when they know their hand just won't cut it. Folding doesn't make you less of a player, on the contrary it shows that you know how to keep your chips.



Don't study and try to outwit only one player - In online poker, most of the people you play against at a table won't be there for long. Therefore, this

strategy can prove to be a waste of your time if you constantly have to face new players.



Keep your emotions in check - If you are feeling upset or frustrated it would be best if you called it a day and calm down before attempting to play again. Negative emotions cause you to become distracted, and distractions cause your mind to wander, allowing the other players to walk all over you.



Don't fall into a routine - You may find that you are extremely comfortable with one strategy, but falling into a routine of using only one technique will turn you into a straight player, allowing others to gain a good idea of what your next moves will be.



Don't become too comfortable - If you find that you are comfortable with the way you play, it's time for you to improve your skill and try something new. Comfort is a sign of laziness, which can cause you to remain at one level, limiting your potential as a player and winner.



Keep your mind open for new ideas - Advice and a few pointers never hurts anyone, as it could be the one tip you need to progress your abilities. You can always learn something. Therefore, whether you get a tip from a professional, a book, a friend or even a kid, show your gratitude and don't forget to return the favor whenever the opportunity presents itself.

Being a good poker player is knowing how to think and act for yourself. So trust your instincts, learn to be flexible, and give it all you've got!

POKER GAME ETIQUETTE

Regardless if you play poker live or online, etiquette matters. Unfortunately many online players think they can get away with an obnoxious or crass personality, simply because they don't have to look other players in the face. There is no excuse for rudeness. Having respect for yourself and other players is essential when you play online.

How you are perceived as a poker player should matter to you, and is not something you should brush aside. If you expect other players to respect you,



you have to show them the same courtesy. Therefore, make your mother proud and keep these tips in mind when engaging in online conversation with the fellow members of the site:



Mind your P's and Q's – Watch your language when you're online. Don't use profanity or vulgar language that other players may find offensive. Not only is this extremely immature, but you'll soon become unpopular and disliked by others.



Control your pride – No one wants to hear another player boast about their winnings, or whine about their loss.



Keep your comments to yourself - Don't make snide remarks about other players or make fun of how they play.



Arguing gets you no where – There is no point in arguing with another player. It will only frustrate you, and won't change what has happened. Let it go, move on and keep your focus on the game.



Use your common sense – Stay level headed at all times, and adapt to the players and the table you are playing at. Avoid arguments, and do your part to make the game run smoothly. Don't become a problem.



Relax and have Fun – Don't forget that as much as you want to win, it is important that you also have fun when you play. So relax, enjoy yourself, make friends and respect the other players.

CONCLUSION

In the end it doesn't matter how many techniques you learn, all that matters is how you think and use these strategies for yourself when playing. Being a good poker player is about knowing how to play it smart. Don't forget, that despite all of the strategies you learn, and how well you study the players, the single most important aspect of your poker game is you.

REMEMBER:



KEEP YOUR EMOTIONS IN CHECK – Stay focused on your cards, the players and the game. You need to think straight and keep your mind on your goal. Don't succumb to your pride should other players try to ruffle your feathers.



KNOW YOUR LIMIT – Keep in mind that you will have more bad hands than you will good ones, so don't get sucked in to becoming obsessed with winning, or let the other players intimidate you into continual play when you know you should call it quits. Make sure you:

- * Set a budget limit for yourself and don't go past it.
- * Know when you should and shouldn't gamble
- * Only play with the money you know you can afford to lose
- * Know when to walk away



STAY REALISTIC – Don't fool yourself into believing that you are ready for the big times like the professional players on TV. Poker for these pros isn't only a game, it's a livelihood which they take seriously, and is one that they have played for years in order to master.



PRACTICE – the only way you will progress as a player, develop new strategies, learn to read other players, and win more pots is to practice. You can't rely on luck to become a good poker player, or read all the strategy books in the world and expect for it to happen over night. It takes dedication, determination and the drive to win.



Finally, remember that winning is rarely about luck, it's about killer poker instinct. Thinking like a winner is what sets you apart from the average poker player, and to be a winner, you have to think and act like one. And the only way you'll achieve such status as a player is to have patience and self-control to know when to hold'em or fold'em.

**Don't forget to enjoy
Your-self, and have a great
time playing poker online!**

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GLOSSARY OF POKER TERMS

While you will find that some of the following terms have appeared in this guide, the others are popular terms you may come across when playing Texas Hold'em.

Action – another term for betting

All-in – when a player bets all of their chips

Ante – A buy in amount paid to the pot by all players before the game begins and is not recognized as part of the game.

Blind – A forced ante in Texas Hold'em made by two players. The big blind is the full minimum bet, and the small blind is half of the minimum bet. These first two bets count in the game.

Bluff – when a player bets aggressively with a bad hand

Board – another term for the 5 community cards on the table

Buy-in – the cost of entering a tournament. For a ring game it is the minimum starting stack.

Bots – online poker cheating method that involves robot software which has been created to run 24/7 disguised as a player.

Call – term used when a player wishes to meet the bet of another player

Capt the betting – The final raise during the fourth betting round, and from this point on a player can only call or fold, and can no longer make a raise.

Check – This is an option during the betting rounds that permits players to stay in the hand without making a bet, call or raise. Check can be used only by the big blind in the first round (as long as no other player makes a raise) and by the first player to make a wager in the following rounds, and can then be used by the other players in the round until someone makes a bet.

Check Fold – check when able, fold when bet into



Check Raise – Check when able, raise when bet into

Collusion – Popular cheating technique that involves two or more players conspiring together to cheat the other players out of the pot. It could also only involve one person who is acting as two players by use of a bot or another computer.

Community cards – cards that are dealt face up on the board and are shared by all players.

Concealed Pair – A pair that is face down

Connectors – two cards that follow in consecutive sequence

Cowboys – Two kings

Dead Card – Cards which have already been played and are not long recognized as part of the game.

Dealer Button – Button that shows which player is dealing during the game.

Deuce / Duck– a single two

Drawing Hand – a player's hand that requires more cards in order to improve a winning hand, for instance a straight or flush.

Fast Play – A playing strategy that results in a player betting, raising and re-raising in order to intimidate the other players out of the hand as fast as possible.

Fish Hooks – Two Jacks

Flop – The second round where the first 3 community cards are dealt

Fold - Option used during any betting round in which a player can quit the game.

Hole cards/Pocket cards – The two cards that are dealt face down to each player during the pre flop.

Kicker – the side card that is not apart of a pair and has the highest value

Ladies – Two queens

Lay-down – folding a strong hand

Muck – When a player folds out of the game instead of exposing their hand during showdown, so the other players can not see their hand.

Nuts – The best possible hand in regards to the cards on the board.

Opener – the first player who volunteers to bet.

Over-card – the highest card in play on the board.

Over-pair - a concealed pair that has higher value than any other card on the board.

Payout – the amount of money a player leaves with from a ring game, or wins in a tournament.

Raise – When a player increases the previous bet.

Rake – percentage of pot money that is given to the poker site, or live casino which hosts the game.

Re-buys – The second time a player must pay in order to remain in a tournament or ring game in the event that they lose all of their chips.

Ring Game – An ongoing game where a player buys-in and can leave at any time.

River – Last card dealt in the game, and is also know as 5th street in Hold'em

Rockets/Pocket Rockets – Pair of aces

Slow Play – a playing strategy that results in a player checking or calling whenever they can, in order to keep as many players in the game as possible so that they can maximize the pot winnings.

Split Pair – When one card is on the board and the matching card is concealed.

Trips – Term for three of a kind

