

# **2009 WSOP Live Action**

## **Rules of Poker**

The following is a set of rules to govern the “Live-Action” section of the 2009 World Series of Poker. These guidelines were created along with the tournament staff for the World Series of Poker to ensure strict coherence between live action and tournament play. Game formats, hand-rankings, player behaviors, and similar aspects of poker will be ruled as consistently as possible across both live and tournament play.

## **SECTION 1**

### **PROPER BEHAVIOR**

The following is a list of violations that may result in removal from and probable permanent barring from the poker room.

1. Verbally or physically threatening any patron or employee.
2. Using profanity or obscene language. The occasional outburst may be tolerated, but players should be given a warning by the dealer regarding profanity. Obscene expletives will not be tolerated.
3. Collusion with another player or any other form of cheating is completely unacceptable and can be grounds for immediate and permanent expulsion from the room.
4. Creating a disturbance by arguing, shouting, or making excessive noise.
5. Throwing, tearing, bending, or crumpling cards.
6. Destroying or defacing property.
7. Using an illegal substance or being too intoxicated.
8. Carrying a weapon.

## POKER ETIQUETTE

The following actions are impolite and disruptive to the game. These actions can result in a warning, suspension, or even permanent to be determined by the floor supervisor responsible for the decision. This behavior should initially be politely pointed out to the player by the dealer in case the player is unaware of the violation. Further infractions should be brought to the attention of the floor supervisor in a professional, unbiased manner:

1. Deliberately acting out of turn.
2. Deliberately splashing chips into the pot.
3. Agreeing to check a hand out when a third player is all-in.
4. Reading a hand for another player at the showdown before it has been placed face up on the table.
5. Telling anyone to turn a hand face-up at the showdown.
6. Revealing the contents of a live hand in a multi-handed pot before the betting is complete.
7. Revealing the contents of a folded hand before the betting is complete. Do not divulge the contents of a hand during a deal even to someone not in the pot, so you do not leave any possibility of the information being transmitted to an active player.
8. Needlessly stalling the action of a game.
9. Deliberately discarding hands away from the muck. Cards should be released in a low line of flight, at a moderate rate of speed (not at the dealer's hands or chip-rack).
10. Stacking chips in a manner that interferes with dealing or viewing cards. Players must also stack chips in an orderly fashion in No-Limit and Pot-Limit games.
11. Making statements or taking action that could unfairly influence the course of play, whether or not the offender is involved in the pot.
12. Prolonged use of a cell phone at the table is not allowed. The use of headphones is allowed as long as their use does not interfere with play. No electronic devices will be allowed on the table top at any time.

## SECTION 2 - HOUSE POLICIES

The following is a list of guidelines that is used to help govern decisions made by floor supervisors in conjunction with the game rules listed in later sections.

1. Management reserves the right to make decisions in the spirit of fairness, even if a strict interpretation of the rules may indicate a different ruling. (Point of reference: A player who commits an infraction should not profit from it and, conversely, a player who has done nothing wrong should not be placed at a disadvantage).
2. Decisions of the floor supervisor are final.
3. The proper time to draw attention to an error or irregularity is when it occurs or is first noticed. Any delay may affect the ruling.
4. If an incorrect rule interpretation or decision by an employee is made in good faith, the establishment has no liability.
5. A request for a ruling must be made prior to the start of the next hand (or before the game either ends or changes to another table). Otherwise, the result of the prior hand will stand. The first riffle of the shuffle marks the start for a deal. On tables with shuffle machines the start of a new deal is once the button has been pushed on the shuffle machine.
6. If a pot has been incorrectly awarded and mingled with chips that were not in the pot, and the time limit for a ruling request given in the previous rule has been observed, management may determine how much was in the pot by reconstructing the betting, and then transfer that amount to the proper player.
7. To keep the action moving, it is possible that a game may be asked to continue even though a decision is delayed for a short period. The delay could be needed to check the overhead camera tape, get the shift supervisor to give the ruling, or some other good reason. In such circumstances, a pot or portion thereof may be taken off of the table by the house while the decision is pending.
8. The same action from two different players may have a different meaning, depending on the player who commits that action, so it is possible that the intent of an offender will be taken into consideration to make the fairest ruling possible. Some examples are a person's amount of poker experience and past record of behavior.

## PROCEDURES

1. These are the standard procedures that are used and generally accepted in card rooms around the U.S. They are subject to State Gaming Regulations as well as company policies, local customs, player preferences and security and surveillance considerations.
2. Cash is permitted on the table. \$100 bills are the only valid money in play at the table.
3. Money and chips may be removed for security purposes when leaving the table. The establishment is not responsible for any shortage or removal of chips left on the table during a player's absence, even though we will try to protect everyone as best we can. All removed funds must be fully restored when returning to the game.
4. If you return to the same game within one hour of cashing out, your buy-in must be equal to the amount removed when leaving that game.
5. If you transfer tables and go to the same game you must bring your full stack with you.
6. All games are table stakes. Only the chips in front of a player at the start of a deal may play for that hand, unless a player has purchased additional chips that are in transit, or a player has brought out money and announced an intent to increase their current buy-in. The amount bought must be announced to the table, or only the amount of the minimum buy-in plays. Awareness of the amount being in play for each opponent is an important part of poker. All chips and money must be kept in plain view.
7. Playing out of a rack is not allowed.
8. Only one person may play a hand.
9. No one is allowed to play another player's chips.
10. Permission is required before taking a seat in a game.
11. Playing over is allowed. The player will be allowed to play until his or her blind upon the initial player returning to the game.
12. Pushing bets ("saving" or "potting out") is not allowed. This means that players are not allowed to retract any bets that have been committed to the pot.
13. Pushing an ante or posting for another person is not allowed.

14. Players will not be allowed to agree to split pots in any game. Chopping the big and small blind by taking them back when all other players have folded is allowed in button games.
15. Insurance propositions are not allowed. Dealing twice (or three times) is permitted at TIME-RAKED games, (pot-limit and no-limit) if suggested by a player and agreed to by all players remaining in the pot.
16. The game's betting limit will not be changed if one or more players object. The supervisor may suggest that the objector(s) move to a similar sized game, if seating is available. Raising the limit is always subject to management approval and a change in rake or collection.
17. Players must keep their cards in full view. This means above table-level and not past the edge of the table. The cards should not be covered by a player's hands or hidden behind chips in a manner to conceal them (creating confusion and false action).
18. Any player is entitled to a clear view of an opponent's chips. Higher denomination chips must be easily visible. If a player requests an accurate chip count for another player, the dealer is responsible for counting out the chips if the player does not want to count out their own chips.
19. A player's chips may be picked up if they miss a blind and receive two absent buttons. A player should receive a missed blind button the first time they may miss a blind. An absent button will be given when the next dealer comes into an empty seat with a missed blind already. Absences may be extended if the supervisor is notified in advance and the situation warrants. Excessive absences may also cause a player's chips to be picked up from the table.
20. If two players are away from the table, a third player wanting to leave must return in time for his or her next blinds or wait until one of the other absent players returns (third-man-walking rule).
21. A lock-up in a new game will be picked up after ten minutes if someone is waiting to play.
21. A new deck must be used at least once around the table before it may be changed. A new setup may be requested once an hour, unless a deck is defective or damaged and needs to be replaced.
22. Looking through the discards or deck stub is not allowed.
23. After a deal ends, dealers are not to show what card would have been dealt next. (Rabbit Hunting is not allowed!)

24. A player is expected to pay attention to the game and not hold up play. Activity that interferes with play, such as reading, i-pods, ect., at the table is discouraged, and the player will be asked to cease if a problem is caused.

25. A non-player may not sit at the table.

26. In non-tournament games, you may have a guest sit behind you if no one in the game objects. It is improper for a guest to look at any hand in action, and may result in removal.

27. Speaking a foreign language while any hand is in progress is not allowed, regardless of whether a player has cards or not.

## SEATING

1. You must sign up at the podium to play in a live poker game. Phone ins are allowed.

2. It is the players responsibility to be in the area to hear their name called. If the player will not be around when this is happening they should notify the floor.

3. When there is more than one game of the same stakes and poker form, and a must-move is not being used, the house will control the seating of new players to best preserve the viability of existing games. A new player will be sent to the game most in need of an additional player. A transfer to a similar game is not allowed if the game being left will then have fewer players than the game being entered.

4. A player may not hold a seat in more than one game. (See also rule 13, this section)

5. The house reserves the right to require that any two players not play in the same game (husband and wife, relatives, business partners, and so forth).

6. When a button game starts, the dealer will high-card for the button position. The button will be awarded to the highest card by suit for all high and high-low games, and to the lowest card by suit for all low games. The Ace of Spade is the highest card.

7. In a new game, the player who arrives at the table the earliest gets first choice of remaining seats. If two players want the same seat and arrive at the same time, the higher player on the list has preference. A player playing a pot in another game may have a designated seat locked up until that hand is finished. Management may reserve a certain seat for a player for a good reason, such as to assist reading the board for a person with a vision problem.

8. To avoid a seating dispute, a supervisor may decide to start the game with one extra player over the normal number participating. If so, a seat will be removed as soon as someone quits the game.

9. To protect existing games, a forced move may be invoked when an additional game of the same type and limit is started. The must-move list is maintained in the same order as the original waiting list. If a player refuses to move into the main game he will be forced to quit and cannot play in the must-move game or get on the list for one hour.

10. You must play in a new game or must-move game to retain your place on the list, if by your not playing there would be three or more empty seats.

11. In all button games, a player going from a must-move game to the main game must move immediately from any position other than the small-blind or the button. That player then moves to the main game with the option of waiting to assume any position in the main game (other than best-position) without posting. In all stud games, a player may play only one more hand before moving.

12. A player who is already in the game has precedence over a new player for any seat when it becomes available. However, no change will occur after a new player has been dealt into the game. For players already in the game, the one who asks the earliest has preference for a seat change.

13. In all button games, a player voluntarily locking up a seat in another game must move immediately, except that the player is entitled to play the button if a blind has already been taken. In a stud game, a player changing tables may play only the present hand if someone is waiting for the seat being vacated, or one more hand when no one is waiting.

14. When a game breaks, each player may draw a card to determine the seating order for a similar game. The Floor Supervisor draws a card for an absent player. If the card entitles the absent player to an immediate seat, the player has until due for the big blind in a button game to take the seat (two hands in a stud game), and will be put first up on the list if not back in time.

## **SECTION 3 - GENERAL POKER RULES**

### **THE BUY-IN**

1. When you enter a game, you must make a full buy-in. At limit poker, a full buy-in is at least five (10) times the minimum bet for the game being played, unless designated otherwise. Example: For 3-6 Limit, the minimum bet is \$3, a full buy-in is \$30.

2. Short buys are not allowed.
3. A player coming from a broken game or must-move game to a game of the same limit will continue to play the same amount of money. If it is less than the minimum buy-in for that game the player will be allowed to play, with an option to rebuy more chips.
4. A player switching games voluntarily must have the proper minimum buy-in size for the new game. They must take their entire stack otherwise regardless of the maximum buy-in for that game.

## MISDEALS

1. The following circumstances cause a misdeal, provided attention is called to the error before two players have acted on their hands. (If two players have acted in turn, the deal must be played to conclusion, as explained in rule #2)
  - (a) The first or second card of the hand has been dealt face up or exposed through dealer error.
  - (b) Two or more cards have been exposed by the dealer.
  - (c) Two or more boxed cards (improperly faced cards) are found.
  - (d) Two or more extra cards have been dealt in the starting hands of a game.
  - (e) An incorrect number of cards have been dealt to a player, except the top card may be dealt if it goes to the player in proper sequence.
  - (f) Any card has been dealt out of the proper sequence (except an exposed card may be replaced by the burn card).
  - (g) The button was out of position.
  - (h) The first card was dealt to the wrong position.
  - (i) A player has been dealt out who is entitled to a hand. This player must be present at the table or have posted a blind or ante.
2. Once there is substantial action, a misdeal cannot be called. The deal will be played, and no money will be returned to any player whose hand is fouled. In button games, substantial action is considered to occur when a player has raised the pot or someone has called and the next player has acted on his hand. In stud games, action is considered to occur when two players after the forced bet have acted on their hands

## DEAD HANDS

1. Your hand is declared dead if:
  - a. You fold or announce that you are folding when facing a bet or a raise.
  - b. You throw your hand away in a forward motion causing another player to act behind you (even if not facing a bet).
  - c. In stud, when facing a bet, you pick your up-cards off the table, turn your up-cards facedown, or mix your up-cards and down-cards together.

- d. The hand does not contain the proper number of cards for that particular game (except at stud a hand missing the final card may be ruled live, and at lowball and draw high a hand with too few cards before the draw is live).
  - e. You act on a hand with a joker as a hole-card in a game not using a joker. (A player who acts on a hand without looking at a card assumes the liability of finding an improper card, as given in Irregularities, rule #8.)
  - f. You have the clock on you when facing a bet or raise and exceed the specified time limit.
2. Cards thrown into the muck may be ruled dead. However, a hand that is clearly identifiable may be retrieved and ruled live at management's discretion if doing so is in the best interest of the game. (We will make an extra effort to rule a hand retrievable if it was folded as a result of dealer error or incorrect information given to the player).
  3. Cards thrown into another player's hand are dead, whether they are face-up or facedown. (A player throwing hole cards into the hole-cards of a blind may cause a re-deal. The offending player will receive a hand, but it will be dealt dead).

## IRREGULARITIES

1. In button games, if it is discovered that the button was placed incorrectly on the previous hand, the button and blinds will be corrected for the new hand in a manner that gives every player one chance for each position on the round (if possible).
2. You must protect your own hand at all times. Your cards may be protected with your hands, a chip, or other object placed on top of them. If you fail to protect your hand, you will have no redress if it becomes fouled or the dealer accidentally kills it.

3. If a card with a different color back appears during a hand, all action is void and all chips in the pot are returned to the respective bettors. If a card with a different color back is discovered in the stub, but will not appear in any hand or on the board and substantial action has taken place, all action stands.
4. If two cards of the same rank and suit are found, all action is void, and all chips in the pot are returned to the players who wagered them (subject to next rule).
5. A player who knows the deck is defective has an obligation to point this out. If such a player instead tries to win a pot by taking aggressive action, the player may lose the right to a refund, and the chips may be required to stay in the pot for the next deal.
6. If there is extra money in the pot on a deal as a result of forfeited money from the previous deal (as per rule #5), or some similar reason, only a player dealt in on the previous deal is entitled to a hand.
7. A card discovered face up in the deck (boxed card) will be treated as a meaningless scrap of paper. A card being treated as a scrap of paper will be replaced by the next card below it in the deck, except when the next card has already been dealt facedown to another player and mixed in with other down-cards. In that case, the card that was face up in the deck will be replaced after all other cards are dealt for that round.
8. A joker that appears in a game where it is not used is treated as a scrap of paper. Discovery of a joker does not cause a misdeal. If the joker is discovered before a player acts on his or her hand, it is replaced as in the previous rule. If the player does not call attention to the joker before acting, then the player has a dead hand.
9. If you play a hand without looking at all of your cards, you assume the liability of having an irregular card or an improper joker.
10. One or more cards missing from the deck does not invalidate the results of a hand.
11. Before the first round of betting, if a dealer deals one additional card, it is returned to the deck and used as the burn card.
12. Procedure for an exposed card varies with the poker form, and is given in the section for each game. A card that is flashed by a dealer is treated as an exposed card. A card that is flashed by a player will play. To obtain a ruling on whether a card was exposed and should be replaced, a player should announce that the card was flashed or exposed before looking at it. A down card dealt off the table is an exposed card. A Floor Supervisor, based on circumstances, may determine whether a player must take or is entitled to a replacement card.
13. If a card is exposed due to dealer error, a player does not have an option to take or reject the card. The situation will be governed by the rules for the particular game being played.

14. If you drop any cards out of your hand onto the floor, you may not receive replacements and, at the discretion of the Floor Supervisor your hand may be dead.
15. If the dealer fails to burn a card or burns more than one card, the error should be corrected if discovered before betting action has started for that round. Once action has been taken on a board card, the card must stand. Whether the error is able to be corrected or not, subsequent cards dealt should be those that would have come if no error had occurred. For example, if two cards were burned, one of the cards should be put back on the deck and used for the burn card on the next round. On the last round, if there was no betting because a player was all-in, the error should be corrected if discovered before the pot has been awarded.
16. If the dealer prematurely deals any cards before the betting is complete, those cards will not play, even if a player who has not acted decides to fold.

## BETTING AND RAISING

1. Check-raise is permitted in all games, except in certain forms of lowball.
2. In no-limit and pot-limit games, an unlimited number of raises are allowed.
3. In limit poker, for a pot involving three or more players who are not all-in, these limits on raises apply:
  - a. A game with two or more betting rounds allows a maximum of a bet and four raises. [See "Section 16 - Explanations," discussion #6, for more information on this rule.]
4. Unlimited raises are allowed in limit-play when the betting round begins heads-up. If the round begins with more than two players and becomes heads-up during the middle of the round the raise maximum still applies.
5. A wager not all-in must be at least the size of the previous bet or raise in that round.
6. In limit play, an all-in wager of less than half a bet does not reopen the betting for any player who has already acted and is in the pot for all previous bets. A player who has not yet acted (or had the betting reopened to him by another player's action), facing an all-in wager of less than half a bet, may fold, call, or complete the wager. An all-in wager of a half a bet or more is treated as a full bet, and a player may fold, call, or make a full raise. (An example of a full raise on a \$20 betting round is raising a \$15 all-in bet to \$35.) Multiple all-in wagers, each of an amount too small to individually

qualify as a raise, still act as a raise and reopen the betting if the resulting wager size to a player qualifies as a raise.

7. The smallest chip that may be wagered in a game is the smallest chip used in the antes or blinds. If betting is in dollar units or greater, a fraction of a dollar does not play. A player going all-in must put all chips that play into the pot.
8. A verbal statement denotes your action and is binding. If in turn you verbally declare a fold, check, bet, call, or raise, you are forced to take that action. Rapping the table with your hand will be considered a check.
9. Deliberately acting out of turn will not be tolerated. A player who checks out of turn may not bet or raise on the next turn to act. An action or verbal declaration out of turn may be ruled binding if that action is still available in turn.
10. To retain the right to act, a player must stop the action by calling "time" (or an equivalent word). Failure to stop the action before substantial action or three or more players have acted behind you may cause you to lose the right to act. You cannot forfeit your right to act if any player in front of you has not acted, only if you fail to act when it legally becomes your turn. Therefore, if you wait for someone whose turn comes before you, and three or more players act behind you, this still does not hinder your right to act.
11. In limit poker, if you make a forward motion with chips and thus cause another player to act, you are forced to complete your action or forfeit your hand and the chips already committed to the pot. If no one acts behind you, you may be forced to these same conditions at the discretion of the Floor Supervisor.
12. A player who bets or calls by releasing chips into the pot is bound by that action and must make the amount of the wager correct. (This also applies at the showdown when putting chips into the pot causes the opponent to show the winning hand before the full amount needed to call has been put into the pot.) Under certain circumstances (lack of proper information or gross misinformation), if you are unaware that the pot has been raised, you may possibly be allowed to withdraw that money and reconsider your action, provided that no one else has acted after you.
13. String raises are not allowed. To protect your right to raise, you should either declare your intention verbally or place the proper amount of chips into the pot. Putting a full bet plus a half-bet or more into the pot is considered to be the same as announcing a raise, and the raise must be completed. (This does not apply in the use of a single chip of greater value.)
14. If you put a single chip in the pot that is larger than the bet, but do not announce a raise, you are assumed to have only called. Example: In a \$3-\$6 game, when a player bets \$6 and the next player puts a \$25 chip in the pot without saying anything, that player has called the \$6 bet.

15. All wagers and calls of an improperly low amount must be brought up to proper size if the error is discovered before the betting round has been completed. This includes actions such as betting a lower amount than the minimum bring-in (other than going all-in) and betting the lower limit on an upper limit betting round. If a wager is supposed to be made in a rounded off amount, and is not, it must be corrected. It shall be changed to the proper amount nearest in size. No one who has acted may change a call to a raise because the wager size has been changed.

## THE SHOWDOWN

1. To win any part of a pot, a player must show all of his cards face up on the table.
2. Cards speak (A tabled hand assigns itself its true value). The dealer assists in reading hands, but players are responsible for holding onto their cards until the winner is declared. Although verbal declarations as to the contents of a hand are not binding, 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.
3. Any player, dealer, or Floor Supervisor who sees an incorrect amount of chips put into the pot, or an error about to be made in awarding a pot, has an ethical obligation to point out the error.
4. All losing hands will be killed by the dealer before a pot is awarded.

Unless a hand has been exposed, a player may only request to see another player's hand if collusion is suspected and then so only in the presence of a floor person.

5. Show one, show all. Players are entitled to receive equal access to information about the contents of another player's hand. After a deal, if cards are shown to another player, every player at the table has a right to see those cards. During a deal, cards that were shown to an active player who might have a further wagering decision on that betting round must immediately be shown to all the other players. If the player who saw the cards is not involved in the deal, or cannot use the information in wagering, the information should be withheld until the betting is over, so it does not affect the normal outcome of the deal. Cards shown to a person who has no more wagering decisions on that betting round, but might use the information on a later betting round, should be shown to the other players at the conclusion of that betting

round. If a player shows only some of his hole cards, he may be required to show all hole cards upon request.

6. If everyone checks on the final betting round, the player who acted first is the first to show the hand. If there is wagering on the final betting round, the last player to take aggressive action by a bet or raise is the first to show the hand. In order to speed up the game, the last player to act or a player holding a probable winner is encouraged to show the hand without delay. If there is a side pot, players involved in the side pot should show their hands before anyone who is all-in for only the main pot. In a big-bet poker game if betting has ended on a round prior to the river, the player who pushed all-in is responsible for turning their hand over first.

## TIES

1. 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 in a chip race or high-card situation (no re-deal or re-draw).
2. Dealing a card to each player is used to determine things like who moves to another table or who gets the button in a new game. If the cards are dealt, the order is clockwise starting with the first player on the dealer's left (the button position is irrelevant). Drawing a card is used to determine things such as seating order coming from a broken game.
3. An odd chip will be broken down to the smallest unit used to make blinds in the game being dealt.
4. If two or more hands tie, an odd chip will be awarded as follows:
  - (a) In a button game, the first hand clockwise from the button gets the odd chip.
  - (b) In a stud game, the odd chip will be given to the highest card by suit in all high games, and to the lowest card by suit in all low games. (When making this determination, all cards are used.)
  - (c) In high-low split games, the high hand receives the odd chip in a split between the high and the low hands. The odd chip between tied high hands is awarded as in a high game of that poker form, and the odd chip between tied low hands is awarded as in a low game of that poker form. If two players have identical hands, the pot will be split as evenly as possible.
  - (d) All side pots and the main pot will be split as separate pots, not mixed together.

## SECTION 4 - BUTTON AND BLIND USE

In button games, a non-playing dealer normally does the actual dealing. A round disk called the button is used to indicate which player has the dealer position. The player with the

button is last to receive cards on the initial deal and has the right of last action after the first betting round. The button moves clockwise after a deal ends to rotate the advantage of last action. One or more blind bets are usually used to stimulate action and initiate play. Blinds are posted before the players look at their cards. Blinds are part of a player's bet (unless a certain structure or situation specifies otherwise). A blind other than the big blind may be treated as dead (not part of the poster's bet) in some structures, as when a special additional "dead blind" for the collection is specified by a cardroom's procedure. With two blinds, the small blind is posted by the first player clockwise from the button, and the big blind is posted by the player two positions clockwise from the button. With more than two blinds, the smallest blind is normally left of the button (not on it). Action is initiated on the first betting round by the first player to the left of the blinds. On all subsequent betting rounds, the action begins with the first active player to the left of the button.

## RULES FOR USING BLINDS

1. The minimum bring-in and allowable raise sizes for the opening bet are specified by the poker form used and blind amounts set for a game. In a tournament the blinds remain the same even when the player in the blind does not have enough chips to post the full amount. In live action if a player does not have enough to post the big blind they should no longer be dealt into the game.
2. Each round every player must get an opportunity for the button, and meet the total amount of the blind obligations (unless all-in – see irregularities). The following method of button and blind placement has been designated to do this:
  - a. Dead button – The big blind is posted by the player due for it, and the small blind and button are positioned accordingly, even if this means the small blind or the button is placed in front of an empty seat, giving the same player the privilege of last action on consecutive hands (limit).
3. A player posting a blind in the game's regular structure has the option of raising the pot at the first turn to act. Although chips posted by the big blind are considered a bet, the option to raise remains if someone is all-in with a bet of less than the minimum raise.
4. In heads-up play with two blinds, the small blind is on the button.

A new player may be dealt in between the big blind and the button, if the new player opts to "buy the button". Otherwise, a player must wait until the button passes.

5. When you post the big blind, it serves as your opening bet. When it is your next turn to act, you have the option to raise.
6. A player who misses any or all blinds can resume play by either posting all the blinds missed or waiting for the big blind. If you choose to post the total amount of the blinds, only the big blind is live. The remainder is taken by the dealer to the center of

the pot and is not part of your bet. When it is your turn to act, you have the option to raise.

7. If a player who owes a blind (as a result of a missed blind) is dealt in without posting, the hand is dead if the player looks at it before putting up the required chips, and has not yet acted. If the player acts on the hand and plays it, putting chips into the pot before the error is discovered, the hand is live, and the player is required to post on the next deal.
8. Any player who drew for the button is considered active in the game and is required to make up any missed blinds.
9. In all multiple-blind games, a player who changes seats will be dealt in on the first available hand in the same relative position. Example: If you move two active positions away from the big blind, you must wait two hands before being dealt in again. A player may post the amount of the big blind to immediately receive a hand.
10. A player who “deals off” (by playing the button and then immediately getting up to change seats) can allow the blinds to pass the new seat one time and re-enter the game behind the button without having to post a blind.
11. A live “straddle bet” is allowed at limit and no limit poker. A player can straddle from either under-the-gun or from the button, with the button having precedence. Dead straddles are not permitted. The minimum allowed raise after the straddle is three times the big blind. A mandatory straddle will not be enforced, even if every player at the table agrees, a new player will not be forced to straddle.
12. New players or players moving positions on the table are allowed buy the button or wait until the button passes and then post. If a player, moving seats, moves more than two seats away from the blind that person is responsible for posting the blind or waiting to assume his or her original position.

## SECTION 5 – TEXAS HOLD’EM

In Texas Hold’Em, each player receives two down cards as their personal hand (hole cards), after which there is a round of betting. The dealer burns a card and three board cards are then turned simultaneously (called the “flop”) and another round of betting occurs. The next two board cards (the “turn” and “river”) are turned one at a time with a burn card preceding each and a betting round coming after the placement of each card. The board cards are community cards, and a player may use any five-card combination from among the board and personal cards to make the best possible five-card poker hand. A player may even use all of the board cards and no personal cards to form a hand (play the board). A dealer button is used. The usual structure is to use two blinds, but it is possible to play the game with one blind, multiple blinds, an ante, or combination of blinds plus an ante.

## RULES FOR IRREGULARITIES

1. If the first or second hole card dealt is exposed, a misdeal results. The dealer will retrieve the card, reshuffle, and re-cut the cards. If any other hole card is exposed due to a dealer error, the deal continues. The exposed card may not be kept. After completing the hand, the dealer replaces the card with the top card on the deck, and the exposed card is then used for the burn card. If more than one hole card is exposed, this is a misdeal and there must be a re-deal.
2. If the dealer mistakenly deals the first player an extra card (after all players have received their starting hands), the card will be returned to the deck and used for the burn card. If the dealer mistakenly deals more than one extra card, it is a misdeal.
3. If the flop contains too many cards, it must be re-dealt. To redeal the flop, the four cards will be scrambled and the top card will be exposed and placed on top of the deck as the burn for the turn card. If more than four cards are exposed the flop and the stub will be reshuffled and the flop will then be redealt.
4. If before dealing the flop, the dealer failed to burn a card, or burned two cards, the error should be rectified if no board cards were exposed. The deck must be reshuffled if any board cards were exposed.
5. If the dealer fails to burn a card or burns more than one card, the error should be corrected if discovered before betting action has started for that round. Once action has been taken on a board card, the card must stand. Whether the error is able to be corrected or not, every effort should be made so that subsequent cards would be those that would have come if no error had occurred. For example, if two cards were burned, one of the cards should be put back on the deck and used for the burn card on the next round. If there was no betting on a round because a player was all-in, the error should be corrected if discovered before the pot has been awarded.
6. If the dealer burns and turns before a betting round is complete, the card(s) may not be used, even if subsequent players elect to fold. Nobody has an option of accepting or rejecting the card. The betting is then completed, and the error rectified in the prescribed manner for that situation.
7. A dealing error for the fourth board card is rectified in a manner to least influence the identity of the board cards that would have been used without the error. The dealer burns and deals what would have been the fifth card in the fourth card's place. After this round of betting, the dealer reshuffles the deck, including the card that was taken out of play, but not including the burn cards or discards. The dealer then cuts the deck and deals the final card without burning a card. If the fifth card is turned up prematurely, the deck is reshuffled and dealt in the same manner. [See "Section 16 – Explanations," discussion #2, for more information on this rule.]

8. If you are playing the board, you must still show your hole cards face up. Otherwise, you may relinquish any claim to the pot.

## **SECTION 6 - OMAHA**

Omaha, like Hold'Em, uses a three-card flop, a turn, and a river to create a five-card community board. Unlike Hold'em, each player is dealt four personal down cards (instead of two) at the start. In order to make a hand, a player must use precisely two hole cards with three board cards. The betting is the same as in Hold'Em, using pre-flop, flop, turn, and river betting rounds. At the showdown, the entire four-card hand must be shown to receive the pot.

### **RULES OF OMAHA**

1. All the rules of Hold'Em apply to Omaha except the rule concerning playing the board, which is not possible in Omaha because a player must use exactly two cards from your hand and three cards from the board.

## **SECTION 7 - OMAHA HIGH-LOW**

Omaha can be played as a high-low split pot game both limit and pot limit. The player must use any combination of two hole cards and three board cards for the high hand and another (or the same) combination of two hole cards and three board cards for the low hand.

### **RULES OF OMAHA HIGH-LOW**

1. All the rules of Omaha apply to Omaha high-low split except as follows. This game is played with a split-pot foundation. Half of the pot is awarded to the player or players with the best 5-card poker hand. The other half of the pot is awarded to the player or players holding the lowest 5-card poker hand.
2. A qualifier of 8-or-better for the low hand is used. This means to win the low half of the pot, a player's hand at the showdown must have five cards of different ranks that are an eight or lower in rank. An ace can be played as either high or low. Straights and flushes do not count against a low hand so the best possible low hand is A-2-3-4-

3. . If there is no qualifying hand for low, the best high poker hand wins the entire pot.

## SECTION 8 - SEVEN-CARD STUD

In seven-card stud, each player first receives two down cards followed by one up card to start the hand. After each player receives their three cards, there is the first round of betting. There are then three more up cards and a final down card, with a betting round after each, for a total of five betting rounds on a deal played to the showdown. The best five-card poker hand wins the pot. In all fixed-limit games, the smaller bet is wagered for the first two betting rounds, and the larger bet is wagered for the last three betting rounds (on the fifth, sixth, and seventh cards). If there is an open pair on the fourth card, any player has the option of making the smaller or larger bet. Deliberately changing the order of your up cards in a stud game is improper because it unfairly misleads the other players.

### RULES OF SEVEN-CARD STUD

1. If your first or second hole card is accidentally turned up by the dealer, then your third card will be dealt down. If both hole cards are dealt up, you have a dead hand and receive your ante back. If the first card of the dead hand dealt face up would have been the low card, action starts with the first hand to that player's left. That player may fold, open for the forced bet, or open for a full bet. (In tournament play, if a down card is dealt face up, a misdeal is called.)
2. The first round of betting starts with a forced bet, the bring-in, by the lowest up card by suit. On subsequent betting rounds, the high hand on board initiates the action (a tie is broken by position, with the player who received cards first acting first).
3. The player with the forced bet has the option of opening for a full bet.
4. If the player with the low card is all-in for the ante, the person to that player's left acts first. If the player with the low card has only enough chips for a portion of the forced bet, the wager is made. All other players must enter for at least the normal amount in that structure.
5. When the wrong person is designated as low and bets, if the next player has not yet acted, the action will be corrected to the real low card, who now must bet. The incorrect low card takes back the wager. If the next hand has acted after the incorrect low card wager, the wager stands, action continues from there, and the real low card has no obligations.
6. Increasing the amount wagered by the opening forced bet up to a full bet does not count as a raise, but merely as a completion of the bet. For example: In \$15-\$30 stud, the low card opens for \$5. If the next player increases the bet to \$15 (completes the bet), up to three raises are then allowed when using a three-raise limit.

7. In all fixed-limit games, when an open pair is showing on fourth street (second up card), any player has the option of betting either the lower or the upper limit. For example: In a \$5-\$10 game, if you have a pair showing and are the high hand, you may bet either \$5 or \$10. If you bet \$5, any player then has the option to call \$5, raise \$5, or raise \$10. If a \$10 raise is made, then all other raises must be in increments of \$10. If the player high with the open pair on fourth street checks, then subsequent players have the same options that were given to the player who was high.
8. If you are not present at the table when it is your turn to act on your hand, you forfeit your ante and your forced bet, if any. If you have not returned to the table in time to act, the hand will be killed when the betting reaches your seat. (In tournament play, the dealer is instructed to kill the down cards of any absent player as soon as all the players have received their entire starting hands, making sure to leave the window card in place until it is that seat's turn to act so that players may see all up cards.)
9. If a hand is folded when there is no wager, that seat will continue to receive cards until the hand is killed as a result of a bet (so the fold does not affect who gets the cards to come).
10. If you pick up your up cards without calling when facing a wager, this is a fold and your hand is dead. This act has no significance at the showdown because betting is over; the hand is live until discarded.
11. A card dealt off the table is treated as an exposed card.
12. The dealer announces the low card, the high hand, all raises, and all pairs. Dealers do not announce possible straights or flushes (except for specified low-stakes games).
13. If the dealer burns two cards for one round or fails to burn a card, the cards will be corrected, if at all possible, to their proper positions. If this should happen on a final down card, and either a card intermingles with a player's other hole cards or a player looks at the card, the player must accept that card.
14. If the dealer burns and deals one or more cards before a round of betting has been completed, the card(s) must be segregated from play as well as an additional card for each remaining player still active in the hand. After that round of betting has concluded, the dealer burns a card and play resumes. The removed cards are held off to the side in the event the dealer runs out of cards and will be shuffled in along with the remaining stub (no muck or burn cards should be reshuffled in this case). If the prematurely dealt card is the final down card and has been looked at or intermingled with the player's other hole cards, the player must keep the card, and on sixth street that player may not bet or raise but can only call during that betting round (because the player now has all seven cards).

15. If there are not enough cards left in the deck for all players, all the cards are dealt except the last card, which is mixed with the burn cards (and any cards removed from the deck, as in the previous rule). The dealer then scrambles and cuts these cards, burns again, and delivers the remaining down cards, using the last card only if necessary. If there are not as many cards as players remaining without a card, the dealer does not burn, so that each player can receive a fresh card. If the dealer determines that there still will not be enough fresh cards for all of the remaining players, then the dealer announces to the table that a common card will be used. The dealer will burn a card and turn one card face up in the center of the table as a common card that plays in everyone's hand. The player who is now high using the common card initiates the action for the last round (since there may be a complete hand on board).
16. An all-in player should receive hole cards dealt facedown, but if the final hole card to such a player is dealt face up, the card must be kept, and the other players receive their normal card.
17. If the dealer turns the last card face up to any player, the hand high on the board after the river will start the action. The following rules apply to the dealing of cards:
- (a) If there are more than two players, all remaining players receive their last card facedown. A player whose last card is face up has the option of declaring, in advance of any action, either all-in for the existing pot or in for all subsequent action at his or her discretion. If there are more than two players and the first player's card is exposed, all remaining players receive their cards up and the betting round proceeds as normal.
  - (b) If there are only two players remaining and the first player's final down card is dealt face up, the second player's final down card will also be dealt face up, and the betting proceeds as normal. In the event the first player's final card is dealt facedown and the opponent's final card is dealt face up, the player with the face up final card has the same option as in (a) above.
18. A hand with more than seven cards is dead. A hand with less than seven cards at the showdown is dead, except any player missing a seventh card may have the hand ruled live. [See "Section 16 – Explanations," discussion #4, for more information on this rule.]
19. A player who calls a bet even though beaten by an opponent's up cards is not entitled to a refund. (The caller receives information not available for free.)

## SECTION 9 - SEVEN-CARD STUD LOW (RAZZ)

The lowest-ranking hand wins the pot. Aces are low only, and two aces are the lowest pair. The format is similar to seven-card stud high, except the high card (aces are low) is required to make the forced bet on the first round, and the low hand acts first on all subsequent

rounds. Straights and flushes have no ranking, so the best possible hand is 5-4-3-2-A (a wheel). An open pair does not affect the betting limit.

### **RULES OF RAZZ**

1. All seven-card stud rules apply in razz except as otherwise noted.
2. The lowest hand wins the pot. Aces are low, and straights and flushes have no effect on the low value of a hand. The best possible hand is 5-4-3-2-A (Except in seldom-played Kansas City Razz where 7-5-4-3-2, no flush is the best hand).
3. The highest card by suit starts the action with a forced bet. The low hand acts first on all subsequent rounds. If the low hand is tied, the first player clockwise from the dealer starts the action.
4. Fixed-limit games use the lower limit on third and fourth streets and the upper limit on subsequent streets. An open pair does not affect the limit.

### **SECTION 10 - SEVEN-CARD STUD HIGH-LOW**

Seven-card stud high-low split is a stud game which is played both high and low. A qualifier of 8-or-better for low applies to all high-low split games (unless a specific posting to the contrary is displayed). This means to win the low half of the pot, a player's hand at the showdown must have five cards of different ranks that are an eight or lower in rank. (An ace is the highest card and also the lowest card.) If there is no qualifying hand for low, the best high hand wins the whole pot. A player may use any five cards to make the best high hand, and the same or any other grouping of five cards to make the best low hand.

### **RULES OF SEVEN-CARD STUD HIGH-LOW**

1. All rules for seven-card stud apply to seven-card stud high-low split, except as noted.
2. A player may use any five cards to make the best high hand and any five cards, whether the same as the high hand or not, to make the best low hand.
3. An ace is the highest card and also the lowest card.
4. The low card by suit initiates the action on the first round, with an ace counting as a high card for this purpose. On subsequent rounds, the high hand initiates the action. If the high hand is tied, the first player in the tie clockwise from the dealer acts first. If the high hand is all-in, action proceeds clockwise as if that person had checked.
5. Straights and flushes do not affect the value of a low hand.

6. Fixed-limit games use the lower limit on third and fourth streets and the upper limit on subsequent rounds. An open pair on fourth street does not affect the limit.
7. Splitting pots is determined only by the cards, and not by agreement among players.
8. When there is an odd chip in a pot, the chip goes to the high hand. If two players split the pot by tying for both the high and the low, the pot shall be split as evenly as possible, and the player with the highest card by suit receives the odd chip. When making this determination, all cards are used, not just the five cards used for the final hand played.
9. When there is one odd chip in the high portion of the pot and two or more high hands split all or half the pot, the odd chip goes to the player with the high card by suit. When two or more low hands split half the pot, the odd chip goes to the player with the low card by suit.

## **SECTION 11 - LOWBALL**

Lowball is draw poker with the lowest hand winning the pot. Each player is dealt five cards facedown, after which there is a betting round. Players are required to open with a bet or fold. The players who remain in the pot after the first betting round now have an option to improve their hand by replacing cards in their hands with new ones. This is the draw. The game is normally played with one or more blinds, sometimes with an ante added. Some betting structures allow the big blind to be called; other structures require the minimum open to be double the big blind. In limit poker, the usual structure has the limit double after the draw (Northern California is an exception). The most popular forms of lowball are ace-to-five lowball (also known as California lowball), and deuce-to-seven lowball (also known as Kansas City lowball). Ace-to-five lowball gets its name because the best hand at that form is 5-4-3-2-A. Deuce-to-seven lowball gets its name because the best hand is 7-5-4-3-2 (not suited). For a further description of the forms of lowball, please see the individual section for each game. All rules governing kill pots are listed in “Section 13 – Kill Pots.”

### **RULES OF LOWBALL**

1. The rules governing misdeals for Hold’Em and other button games will be used for lowball. [See “Section 16 – Explanations,” discussion #7, for more information on this rule.] These rules governing misdeals are reprinted here for convenience.
2. “The following circumstances cause a misdeal, provided attention is called to the error before two players have acted on their hands:
  - a. The first or second card of the hand has been dealt face up or exposed through dealer error.
  - b. Two or more cards have been exposed by the dealer.

- c. Two or more extra cards have been dealt in the starting hands of a game.
  - d. An incorrect number of cards have been dealt to a player, except the button may receive one more card to complete a starting hand.
  - e. The button was out of position.
  - f. The first card was dealt to the wrong position.
  - g. Cards have been dealt out of the proper sequence.
  - h. Cards have been dealt to an empty seat or a player not entitled to a hand.
  - i. A player has been dealt out who is entitled to a hand. This player must be present at the table or have posted a blind or ante.”
3. In limit play, a bet and four raises are allowed in multi-handed pots. [See “Section 16 – Explanations,” discussion #6, for more information on this rule.]
  4. As a new player, you have three options:
    - a. Wait for the big blind.
    - b. Post the big blind (except in single blind game).
    - c. Kill the pot for double the amount of the big blind.
  5. In a single-blind game, a player who has less than half a blind may receive a hand. However, the next player is obligated to take the blind. If the all-in player wins the pot or buys in again, that player will then be obligated to either take the blind on the next deal or sit out until due for the big blind.
  6. In single-blind games, half a blind or more constitutes a full blind.
  7. In single-blind games, if you fail to take the blind, you can only wait for blind or kill.
  8. In multiple-blind games, if for any reason the big blind passes your seat, you may either wait for the big blind or kill the pot in order to receive a hand. This does not apply if you have taken all of your blinds and changed seats. In this situation, you may be dealt in as soon as your position relative to the blinds entitles you to a hand (the button may go by you once without penalty).
  9. Before the draw, whether an exposed card must be taken depends on the form of lowball being played; see that form. (The player never has an option.)
  10. On the draw, an exposed card cannot be taken. The draw is completed to each player in order, and then the exposed card is replaced.
  11. A player may draw up to four consecutive cards. If a player wishes to draw five new cards, four are dealt right away, and the fifth card after everyone else has drawn cards. If the last player wishes to draw five new cards, four are dealt right away, and a card is burned before the player receives a fifth card. [See “Section 16 – Explanations,” discussion #9, for more information about this rule.]
  12. Five cards constitute a playing hand; more or fewer than five cards after the draw constitute a fouled hand. Before the draw, if you have fewer than five cards in your

hand, you may receive additional cards, provided no action has been taken by the first player to act, unless that action occurs before the deal is completed. (However, the dealer position may still receive a missing fifth card prior to the draw, even if action has taken place). If action has been taken, players are entitled on the draw to receive the number of cards necessary to complete a five-card hand.

13. You may change the number of cards you wish to draw, provided:
  - a. No card has been dealt off the deck in response to your request (including the burn card).
  - b. No player has acted, in either the betting or indicating the number of cards to be drawn, based on the number of cards you have requested.
  
14. If you are asked how many cards you drew by another active player, the player (and dealer) must respond until there has been action after the draw. Once there is any action, you are no longer obliged to respond and the dealer cannot respond.
  
15. Rapping the table in turn constitutes either a pass or the declaration of a pat hand that does not want to draw any cards, depending on the situation.
  
16. Cards speak (A tabled hand assigns itself a value). However, you are not allowed to claim a better hand than you hold. (Example: If a player calls an "8", that player must produce at least an "8" low or better to win. But if a player erroneously calls the second card incorrectly, such as "8-6" when actually holding an 8-7, no penalty applies.) If you miscall your hand and cause another player to foul his or her hand, your hand is dead. If both hands remain intact, the best hand wins. If a miscalled hand occurs multi-handed causing a foul, the miscalled hand is dead, and the best remaining hand wins the pot. For your own protection, always hold your hand until you see your opponent's cards.
  
17. Any player spreading a hand with a pair in it must announce "pair" or risk losing the pot if it causes any other player to foul a hand. If two or more hands remain intact, the best hand wins the pot.

### ACE-TO-FIVE LOWBALL

In ace-to-five lowball, the best hand is any 5-4-3-2-A. Straights and flushes do not count against your hand.

1. If a joker is used, it becomes the lowest card not present in your hand. The joker is assumed to be in use unless the contrary is posted.
  
2. In limit play, check-raise is not permitted (unless the players are alerted that it is allowed).

3. In limit ace-to-five lowball, before the draw, an exposed card of five or under must be taken, and an exposed card higher than a five must be replaced after the deal has been completed. This first exposed card is used as the burn card. [See "Section 16 – Explanations," discussion #8, for more information on this rule.]
4. In limit play,(the players should be alerted if it is not) if you check a five and it is the best hand, all action after the draw is void, and you cannot win any money on any subsequent bets. You are still eligible to win whatever existed in the pot before the draw if you have the best hand. If you check a five and the hand is beaten, you lose the pot and any additional calls you make. If there is an all-in bet after the draw that is less than half a bet, a five may just call and win that bet. However, if another player overcalls this short bet and loses, the person who overcalls receives the bet back. If the five completes to a full bet, this fulfills all obligations.

### DEUCE-TO-SEVEN LOWBALL

In deuce-to-seven lowball (sometimes known as Kansas City lowball), in most respects, the worst conventional poker hand wins. Straights and flushes count against you. The ace is used only as a high card. Therefore, the best hand is 7-5-4-3-2, not all of the same suit. The hand 5-4-3-2-A is not considered to be a straight, but an ace-5 high, so it beats other ace-high hands and pairs, but loses to king-high. A pair of aces is the highest pair, so it loses to any other pair.

The rules for deuce-to-seven lowball are the same as those for ace-to-five lowball, except for the following differences:

1. The best hand is 7-5-4-3-2 of at least two different suits. Straights and flushes count against you, and aces are considered high only.
2. On the deal only an exposed card of 7, 5, 4, 3, or, 2 must be taken. Any other exposed card must be replaced. Any exposed card will be replaced during any subsequent drawing round.
3. As opposed to A-5 lowball, check-raise is allowed on any hand after the draw, and a seven or better is not required to bet.

### NO-LIMIT AND POT-LIMIT LOWBALL

1. All the rules for no-limit and pot-limit poker (see Section 14 - No-limit and Pot-limit) apply to no-limit and pot-limit lowball. All other lowball rules apply, except as noted.

2. A player is not entitled to know that an opponent does not hold the best possible hand, so these rules for exposed cards before the draw apply:
  - a. In ace-to-five lowball, a player must take an exposed card of A, 2, 3, 4, or 5, and any other card must be replaced.
  - b. In deuce-to-seven lowball, the player must take an exposed card of 2, 3, 4, 5, or 7, and any other card including a 6 must be replaced.
3. After the draw, any exposed card must be replaced.
4. After the draw, a player may check any hand without penalty (The 'seven' rule is not used).
5. Check-raise is allowed.

## SECTION 12-BADUGI

Badugi is a form of lowball draw. A button and blind structure will be used in this game as well. Each player is dealt four cards face down, then acting in turn clockwise of the blinds. After everyone has acted it will then be time for the draw (when played limit stakes this game will usually be played with three draws). There will be a betting round after every draw. A player is entitled to as many (up to four) cards on each round as they need to make the best four card BADUGI.

### RULES OF BADUGI

1. A Badugi consists of four cards of different suits and ranks, with the lowest four card badugi being the winner. For example, the best hand consists of A-2-3-4 club, diamond, heart, spade in any sequence.
2. A hand can still be a winner if at the show down none of the remaining players have a badugi, in this case the best three, two, or even one card badugi will be awarded the pot.(ex. Ad-2c-3h-6h vs. Ac-3d-4h-5h, the winning hand would be Ad-2c-3h-6h because that hand consists of the three lowest, unsuited cards, Ad-2c-3h.)
3. The rules governing misdeals for lowball and other button games will be used for badugi.[see section 11-1,lowball for more information on this rule]
4. A player may receive four consecutive cards off the deck.
5. As a new player you must wait for the big blind or post a full big blind. If a player has missed a blind, they must wait for their turn in the big blind to come around before they can receive a hand, and at that time post the blind.
6. An exposed card of A, 2, 3, or, 4 must be taken on the deal only, any other card will be replaced always. (The player does not have an option in this matter.)
7. Check raise is allowed, on any round after any draw.

8. If you are asked how many cards you drew by another active player, the player (and dealer) must respond until there has been action after the draw. Once there is any action, you are no longer obligated to respond and the dealer cannot respond.
9. You may change the number of cards you wish to draw, provided:
  - a. No card has been dealt off the deck in response to your request (including the burn card).
  - b. No player has acted, in either the betting or indicating the number of cards to be drawn, based on the number of cards you have requested.
10. In the event of a re-shuffle (the dealer has gotten down to the last card of the deck while players still need cards,) the discards from the previous rounds and any mucked cards will be shuffled together to complete the remaining draws.
11. Badugi can be played with as many as eight players.

## **SECTION 13 - DRAW HIGH**

There are two betting rounds, one before the draw and one after the draw. The game is played with a button and an ante. Players in turn may check, open for the minimum, or open with a raise. After the first betting round the players have the opportunity to draw new cards to replace the ones they discard. Action after the draw starts with the opener, or next player proceeding clockwise if the opener has folded. The betting limit after the draw is twice the amount of the betting limit before the draw. Some draw high games allow a player to open on anything; others require the opener to have jacks or better.

### **RULES OF DRAW HIGH**

1. A maximum of a bet and four raises is permitted in multi-handed pots. [See "Section 16 – Explanations," discussion #6, for more information on this rule.]
2. Check-raise is permitted both before and after the draw.
3. Any card exposed by the dealer before the draw must be kept.
4. Five cards constitute a playing hand. Less than five cards for a player (other than the button) before action has been taken is a misdeal. If action has been taken, a player with fewer than five cards may draw the number of cards necessary to complete a five-card hand. The button may receive the fifth card even if action has taken place. More or fewer than five cards after the draw constitutes a fouled hand.

5. A player may draw up to four consecutive cards. If a player wishes to draw five new cards, four are dealt right away, and the fifth card after everyone else has drawn cards. If the last player wishes to draw five new cards, four are dealt right away, and a card is burned before the player receives a fifth card. [See "Section 16 – Explanations," discussion #9, for more information about this rule.]
6. You may change the number of cards you wish to draw, provided:
  - (a) No cards have been dealt off the deck in response to your request (including the burn card).
  - (b) No player has acted, in either the betting or indicating the number of cards to be drawn, based on the number of cards you have requested.
7. If you are asked how many cards you drew by another active player, you (and the dealer) must respond until there is action after the draw. Once there is any action after the draw, you are no longer obliged to respond and the dealer cannot respond.
8. On the draw, an exposed card cannot be taken. The draw is completed to each player in order, and then the exposed card is replaced.
9. Rapping the table in turn constitutes either a pass or the declaration of a pat hand that does not want to draw any cards, depending on the situation.
10. You may not change your seat between hands when there are multiple antes or forfeited money in the pot.
11. You have the right to pay the ante(s), whether single or multiple, at any time and receive a hand, unless there is any additional money in the pot that has been forfeited during a hand in which you were not involved.
12. If the pot has been declared open by an all-in player playing for just the antes, all callers must come in for the full opening bet.
13. If you have only a full ante and no other chips on the table, you may play for just the antes. If no one opens and there is another ante, you may still play for that part of the antes that you have matched, without putting in any more money.

### **JACKS-OR-BETTER**

1. A pair of jacks or better is required to open the pot. If no player opens the pot, the button moves forward and each player must ante again, unless the limit of antes has been reached for that particular game. (Most games allow three consecutive deals before anteing stops.)
2. If the opener should show false openers before the draw, any other active player has the opportunity to declare the pot opened. However, any player who originally passed

openers or has folded is not eligible to declare the pot open. The false opener has a dead hand and the opening bet stays in the pot. Any other bet placed in the pot by the opener may be withdrawn, provided the action before the draw is not completed. If no other player declares the pot open, all bets are returned except the opener's first bet. The first bet and antes will remain in the pot, and all players who were involved in that hand are entitled to play the next hand after anteing again unless.

3. Any player who has legally declared the pot opened must prove openers in order to win the pot.
4. In all cases, the pot will play (even if the opener shows or declares a fouled hand) if there has been a raise, two or more players call the opening bet, or all action is completed before the draw.
5. Even if you are all in for just the ante (or part of the ante), you may declare the pot open if you have openers. If you are all in and falsely declare the pot open, you will lose the ante money and may not continue to play on any subsequent deals until a winner is determined. Even if you buy in again, you must wait until the pot has been legally opened and someone else has won it before you can resume playing.
6. Once action has been completed before the draw, the opener may not withdraw any bets, whether or not the hand contains openers.
7. An opener may be allowed to retrieve a discarded hand to prove openers, at management's discretion.
8. Any player may request that the opener retain the opening hand and show it after the winner of the pot has been determined.
9. You may split openers, but you must declare that you are splitting and place all discards under a chip to be exposed by the dealer after the completion of the hand. If you declare that you are splitting openers, but it is determined that you could not possibly have had openers when your final hand is compared with your discards, you will lose the pot.
10. You are not splitting openers if your hand still retains openers. If you begin with the ace, joker, king, queen of spades, and the ten of clubs, you are not splitting if you throw the ten of clubs away. You are breaking a straight to draw to a royal flush, but have retained openers (ace-joker for two aces). You are not entitled to the action after the draw if you erroneously declared split openers but may still win the money before the draw if you have the best hand (with all other bets returned to the other players).
11. After the draw, if you call the opener's bet and cannot beat openers, you will not get your bet back. (You have received information about the opener's hand for free.)

**THE JOKER**

1. The players will be alerted as to whether the joker is in use.
2. The joker may be used only as an ace, or to complete a straight, flush, or straight flush. (Thus it is not a completely wild card.)
3. If the joker is used to make a flush, it will be the highest card of the flush not present in the hand.
4. Five aces is the best possible hand (four aces and joker).

## SECTION 14 - KILL POTS

To kill a pot means to post an over-blind that increases the betting limit. A full kill is double the amount of the big blind, and doubles the betting limits. A half kill is one-and-a-half times the big blind, and increases the betting limits by that amount. A kill may be optional in a game, and is often used at lowball when a player wants to be dealt in right away instead of waiting to take the big blind. A kill may be required in a game for any time a specified event takes place. In high-low split games using a required kill, a player who scoops a pot bigger than a set size must kill the next pot. In other games using a required kill, a player who wins two consecutive pots must kill the next pot. In this type of kill game, a marker called a "kill button" indicates which player has won the previous pot (a 'leg up'), and the winner keeps this marker until the next hand is completed. If the player who has the kill button wins a second consecutive pot and it qualifies monetarily, that player must kill the next pot.

### RULES OF KILL POTS

1. The kill button is neutral (belonging to no player) if:
  - a. It is the first hand of a new game.
  - b. The winner of the previous pot has quit the game.
  - c. The previous pot was split and neither player had the kill button.
2. In a kill pot, the killer acts last unless the pot has been raised before the killer's normal turn as action goes around the table. Once the killer has acted, action then continues in sequence to the left of the killer. (Some card rooms have the killer always act in turn, however it is more logical to always have the biggest 'blind' have last action, unless raised, as in all other blind and straddle games).
3. There is no pot-size requirement for the first pot or "leg" of a kill. For the second "leg" to qualify for a kill, you must win at least one full bet for whatever limit you are playing, and it cannot be any part of the blind structure, (unless otherwise agreed).
4. If a player with one "leg up" splits the next pot, that player still has a "leg up" for the next hand. If the player who split the pot was the kill in the previous hand, then that player must also kill the next pot.
5. A person who leaves the table with a "leg up" toward a kill still has a "leg up" (along with the current 'leg up') upon returning to the game.

6. A player who is required to post a kill must do so that same hand even if wishing to quit or be dealt out. A player who fails to post a required kill blind will not be allowed to participate in any game until the kill money is posted.
7. Kill blinds are considered part of the pot. If a player with a required kill wins again, then that player must kill it again (for the same amount as the previous hand).
8. When a player wins both the high and the low pot ("scoops") in a split-pot game with a kill provision, the next hand will be killed only if the pot is at least five times the size of the upper limit of the game.
9. If you are unaware that the pot has been killed and put in a lesser amount, and it has been announced as a kill pot with the kill button face up, you must correct the amount or forfeit the chips already in the pot. If it has not been properly announced, you may withdraw the chips and reconsider your action.
10. In lowball, an optional rule allows players to look at their first two cards and then opt whether to kill the pot. The pot may no longer be killed if any player in the game has received a third card. In order to kill the pot voluntarily, you must have at least four times the amount of the kill blind in your stack. For example: If the big blind is two chips, and the kill blind is four chips, the voluntary killer must have at least 16 chips prior to posting the kill. (If this rule is used, it should be in conjunction with having the killer act last on the first betting round rather than in proper order).
11. Only one kill is allowed per deal.
12. A straddle will not be allowed in a kill pot.
13. A new player has the option of sitting down into a kill pot or waiting for the next appropriate opportunity to begin play.
14. A player who is posting or new player entering the game cannot buy the button to enter the game while the kill is on.
15. Broken game status is allowed only for players of the same limit and game type. For this purpose, a game with a required kill is considered a different type of game than an otherwise similar game without a required kill.

## SECTION 15 - NO LIMIT AND POT-LIMIT

A no-limit or pot-limit betting structure for a game gives it a different character from limit poker, requiring a separate set of rules in many situations. All the rules for limit games apply to no-limit and pot-limit games, except as noted in this section. No-limit means that the amount of a wager is limited only by the table stakes rule, so any part or all of a player's chips may be wagered. The rules of no-limit play also apply to pot-limit play, except that a bet may not exceed the pot size. The maximum amount a player can raise is the amount that would be in the pot after that player called. Therefore, if a pot is \$100, and someone makes a \$50 bet, the next player can call that \$50 (without 'string' betting) and raise the pot \$200, for a total wager of \$250. For those rules that apply only to no-limit and pot-limit lowball, see the sub-section at the end of "Section 11 – Lowball."

### NO-LIMIT RULES

1. The number of raises in any betting round is unlimited.
2. All bets must be at least equal to the minimum bring-in, unless the player is going all-in. **(A straddle bet sets a new minimum bring-in, and gives the straddling player last action).** The minimum bet remains the amount of the original big blind on all betting rounds.
3. All raises must be equal to or greater than the size of the previous bet or raise on that betting round, except for an all-in wager. A player who has already acted and is not facing a full-size wager may not subsequently raise an all-in bet that is less than the minimum bet (which is the amount of the minimum bring-in), or less than the full size of the last bet or raise. (The half-the-size rule for reopening the betting is for limit poker only.)
4. "Completing the bet" is a limit poker wager type only, not allowed at big-bet poker. For example, if a player bets \$100 and the next player goes all-in for \$140, a player wishing to raise must make the total bet at least \$240 (unless going all-in).
5. Multiple all-in wagers, each of an amount too small to qualify as a raise, still act as a raise and reopen the betting if the resulting wager size to a player qualifies as a raise. Example:  
 Player A bets \$100 and Player B raises \$100 more, making the total bet \$200. If Player C goes all in for less than \$300 total (not a full \$100 raise), and Player A calls, then Player B has no option to raise again, because he wasn't fully raised. (Player A could have raised, because Player B raised.)

6. At non-tournament play, a player who says “raise” is allowed to continue putting chips into the pot with more than one move, provided an amount has been verbally declared in advance. A player may declare a raise, call the amount bet to them and then put the raise in with a single motion or simply put the chips into the pot in a single motion, to avoid making a string-bet.
7. A wager is not binding until the chips are actually released into the pot, unless the player has made a verbal statement of action. However, a forward motion into the pot with chips in hand may result in a player being forced to leave in the minimum amount allowable at that juncture at the Floor Supervisor’s discretion especially if the forward motion elicits a response by other players in the pot.
8. If there is a discrepancy between a player’s verbal statement and the amount put into the pot, the bet will be corrected to the initial action.
9. If a call is short due to a counting error, the amount must be corrected, even if the hand is beaten or mucked.
10. A bet of a single chip without comment is considered to be the full amount of the chip. However, a player acting on a previous bet with an over-sized chip is only calling the previous bet unless that player makes a verbal declaration to raise the pot. (This includes acting on the forced bet of the big blind.)
11. If a player tries to bet or raise less than the legal minimum and has more chips, the wager must be increased to the proper size. (This does not apply to a player who has unintentionally put too much in to call unless it is at least a half a bet or more in which case the player is obligated to make exactly the minimum raise). The wager is brought up to the sufficient amount only. Anything more would constitute a string bet.
12. In live play, all wagers may be required to be the same denomination of chip (or larger) used for the minimum bring-in, even if smaller chips are used in the blind structure. If this is done, the smaller chips do not play except in quantity, even when going all-in.
13. In non-tournament games, one optional live straddle is allowed. The player who posts the straddle has last action for the first round of betting and is allowed to raise. To straddle, a player must either be on the button or be on the immediate left of the big blind, and must post an amount twice the size of the big blind. The button has the first option to straddle.
14. In all no-limit and pot-limit games, the house has the right to place a maximum time limit for taking action on your hand. The clock may be put on someone by the Floor Supervisor or by the dealer as directed by a Floor Supervisor, if a player requests it. If the clock is put on you when you are facing a bet, you will have one additional minute to act on your hand. You will

- then have a ten-second warning, after which your hand is dead if you have not acted.
15. Since all a player's chips may be put at risk on a hand, the house has the right to set a minimum and maximum amount for the buy-in to help control the effective size of a game. (a range of 20 to 40 times the big blind as a minimum and 40 to 100 times the big blind as a maximum is the normal rule of thumb and may depend on local custom, player input or competitive market considerations. Players may not add to their stack or re-buy unless they are under the minimum).
  16. The cardroom does not condone "insurance" or any other "proposition" wagers. The management will decline to make decisions in such matters, and the pot will be awarded to the best hand. Players are asked to refrain from instigating proposition wagers in any form. The players are allowed to agree to deal twice (or three times) when someone is all-in and there can be no more betting. "Dealing twice" means the pot is divided in two, with each portion being dealt for separately. Dealing twice is only allowed in time raked games.

#### POT-LIMIT RULES

1. If a wager is made that exceeds the pot size, the surplus will be given back to the bettor as soon as possible, and the amount will be reduced to the maximum allowable.
2. The dealer or any player in the game can and should call attention to a wager that appears to exceed the pot size (this also applies to heads-up pots). The oversize wager may be corrected at any point until all players have acted on it.
3. In pot-limit play, it is advisable in many structures to round off the pot size upward to produce a faster pace of play. This is done by treating any odd amount as the next larger size. For example, if the pot size was being kept track of with \$25 units, then a pot size of \$85 would be treated as a pot size of \$100.
4. In pot-limit Hold'Em and pot-limit Omaha cash games, many structures treat the little blind as if it were the same size as the big blind in computing pot size. In such a structure, a player can open for a maximum of four times the size of the big blind. For example, if the blinds are \$5 and \$10, a player may open with a raise to \$40. (The range of options is to either open with a call of \$10, or raise in increments of five dollars to any amount from \$20 to \$40.) Subsequent players also treat the \$5 as if it were \$10 in computing the pot size, until the big blind is through acting on the first betting round. This rule of treating the little blind as if it were the size of the big blind is especially desirable in a structure where the little blind uses a lower-denomination chip

than the big blind, as in using blinds of \$10 and \$25 (two \$5 chips and a \$25 chip). At tournament play, strict pot-limit rules are normally used, so there the maximum opening wager is 3.5 times the size of the big blind.

5. In pot-limit, if a chip or a bill larger than the pot size is put into the pot, initiating action on a betting round, without comment, it is considered to be a bet of the pot size. If there has already been a bet on that betting round, it is only a call. A cash bundle secured by a money clip or band put into the pot is treated the same as an over-sized chip