

YOUR HAND	DEALER'S UP CARD									
	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	A
8										
9										
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12										
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A-2										
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8-8										
9-9										
YOUR HAND	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	A

The basic strategy chart teaches you how to play your cards against the dealer's cards. Normally, you hit first in blackjack and the house gains its edge through your first move. Thereafter, the dealer makes his move and deals cards accordingly. Hence, you need proper guidance at every round to understand and play the correct moves.

Basic strategy may seem odd and incomprehensible to you initially, nevertheless, with practice; you can understand all game nuances and play the game of blackjack tactfully.

There are two types of hands in a game of blackjack-Hard hands when Ace has the value of one and soft hands when Ace has the value of 11. Hence, the strategy table differs for both the hands.

Please take the time to check out our Casino Theme Page by going to: <http://www.dinnerandamurder.com/Themes/Casino.htm>



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Basic Rules for BlackJack

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♣ Rules of the Game ♠

The rules of BlackJack differ slightly from area to area and/or from casino to casino. For example, a casino in downtown Vegas may have different rules than one of the Vegas Strip casinos, which may have different rules from a casino up in Reno or Tahoe, etc. Therefore, it is important to research what the rules are for the area/casinos you plan on playing in.

The BlackJack table seats a dealer and one to seven players. The first seat on the dealer's left is referred to as First Base, the first seat on the dealer's right is referred to as Third Base. A betting square is printed on the felt table in front of each player seat. Immediately in front of the dealer is the chip tray. On the dealer's left is the deck or shoe and beside that should be the minimum bet sign, which you ought to read before sitting down to play.

On the dealer's immediate right is the money drop slot where all currency and tips (chips) are deposited. Next to the drop slot is the discard tray.

Before any cards are dealt, the players may make a wager by placing the desired chips (value and number) into the betting box.

Occasionally a player may sit out a hand or two for various reasons, i.e bathroom, cell phone call, etc. If you attempt to sit out too many hands especially if there are people waiting to play at your table, you may be asked to leave the table until you are ready to play.

Once all the bets are down, two cards (one at a time) are dealt from left to right. In many Vegas casinos, players get both cards face down. In most casinos the player's cards are dealt face up. Should the cards be dealt face up, don't make the faux pas of touching them! They are dealt face up for a reason, primarily to prevent a few types of player cheating.

The dealer receives one card down and one card up. The numerical values of the cards are: (10, J, Q, K) = 10 ; (Ace) = 1 or 11 ; (other cards) = face value (3 = 3). Since a casino can be very noisy, hand signals are usually the preferred method of signaling hit, stand, etc.

If the cards were dealt face down and you want a hit, lightly flick the cards across the felt two times. If the cards were dealt face up, tap your finger on the felt in front of you & just behind your face up cards. You may also want to nod your head yes while saying "hit". The best way to indicate to the dealer that you want to

House Percentage: The casino's advantage in a particular game of chance.

Drop Percentage: That portion of the player's money that the casino will win because of the house percentage. It is a measure of the amount of a player's initial stake that he or she will eventually lose. On average this number is around 20 percent. That is, on average, Joe Gambler will lose \$20 of every \$100 he begins with.

Head-On: To play alone at a BlackJack table with the dealer.

Tough Player: a player who can hurt the casino monetarily with his or her intelligent play.

Counter: Someone who counts cards.

High Roller: A big bettor.

Mechanic: A manipulator of the cards, typically for illicit purposes.

Shill: A house employee who bets money and pretends to be a player to attract customers. Shills typically follow the same rules as the dealer which makes them somewhat easy to spot (ie, they don't Double Down or Split).

Pit Boss: An employee of the casino whose job is to supervise BlackJack players, dealers, and other floor personnel.

Did you know?

The history of the BlackJack card game itself is still disputed but was probably spawned from other French games such as "chemin de fer" and "French Ferme". BlackJack originated in French casinos around 1700 where it was called "vingt-et-un" ("twenty-and-one") and has been played in the U.S. since the 1800's. BlackJack is named as such because if a player got a Jack of Spades and an Ace of Spades as the first two cards (Spade being the color black of course), the player was additionally remunerated.

the deck or shoe to be played.

Bankroll: The stake (available money) a player plans to bet with.

Flat Bet: A bet which you do not vary ie, if you are flat betting ten dollars, you are betting \$10 each and every hand without changing the betting amount from one hand to the next.

Black Chip: A \$100 chip.

Green Chip: A \$25 chip.

Red Chip: A \$5 chip.

Foreign Chip: A chip that is issued by one casino and is honored by another as cash. A casino is not necessarily obligated to accept them.

Settlement: The resolving of the bet. Either the dealer takes your chips, pays you, or in the case of a push, no exchange of chips occurs.

Token: To "token" the dealer is just another word for tipping the dealer. You can add your token to the line to play dealers token as a bet. You win, the dealer wins.

Marker: An IOU. A line of credit provided by the casino to a player.

Comp: Short for complimentary. If you wave lots of money around, the casino may give you things like a free room or free food, hoping you'll keep losing money at the tables in their casino.

Heat: The pressure a casino puts on a winning player, typically someone who is suspected of being a card counter.

Shuffle Up: Prematurely shuffling the cards to harass a player who is usually suspected of being a counter.

Pit: The area inside a group of gaming tables. The tables are arranged in an elliptical manner, the space inside the perimeter is the pit.

House: The Casino of course.

Cage: Short for cashier's cage. This is where chips are redeemed for cash, checks cashed, credit arranged, etc.

stand regardless of how the cards were dealt is to move your hand from left to right in a level attitude with your palm down. Your hand should be a few inches or so above the table. Nodding your head no at the same time helps, while saying "stay" or "stand".

Single deck games are pretty much restricted to Nevada casinos. In the casinos that have one-deck games, the tables are usually full. Multiple deck games typically consist of an even number of decks (2, 4, 6, 8) although a few casinos use 5 or 7 decks. There are two main reasons many casinos use multiple decks: They allow the dealer to deal more hands per hour, thereby increasing the casino take, and they reduce (but in no way eliminate) the player advantage gained from card counting.

The rules the dealer must play by are very simple. If the dealer's hand is 16 or less, he/she must take a card. If the dealer's hand is 17 or more, he/she must stand. Note that some casinos allow the dealer to hit on soft 17 which gives the house a very small additional advantage. The dealer's strategy is fixed and what you and the other players have is immaterial to him/her as far as hitting and standing is concerned.

The player can do most anything he/she wants as far as hitting and standing goes. Should a player get a BlackJack (first 2 cards are an Ace and a ten) the payoff is 150% more than the original bet ie, bet \$10.00 and the payoff is \$15.00.

Doubling down is restricted to 2-card hands, usually totaling 9, 10, or 11 although some casinos allow doubling down on any 2-card hand. If your first two cards provide you with the appropriate total and your cards were dealt face down, turn them over and put them on the dealer's side of the betting square. If your first two cards provide you with the appropriate total and your cards were dealt face up, point to them and say "double" when the dealer prompts you for a card and simultaneously put an equal amount of chips next to (not on top of) those already in the betting box. The dealer will give you one more card only, then he/she will move on to the next hand.

Did you know?

Cheating by the house is rare in the major casinos. (The Nevada Gaming Commission may revoke a casino's gambling license if a casino is caught cheating players.) Granted, there may be a few employees (dealers, boxmen, whomever) that may cheat players, but it is extremely unlikely that any casino in Nevada or Atlantic City does so on a casino-wide scale. You definitely should be wary of any casino that is not regulated, such as those found on many cruise ships. However, the fact is that casinos make plenty of money legitimately with the built-in house advantages and don't really need to cheat players to survive.

If you have a pair that you want to split and your cards are dealt face down, turn them over and place them a few inches apart. If your cards were dealt face up, point to your cards and say "split" when the dealer prompts you for a card. The original bet will go with one card and you will have to place an equal amount of chips in the betting box near the other card. You are now playing two hands, each as though they were regular hands with the exception being that if you have just split two aces. In that case, you only get one card which will hopefully be a 10.

If it is a ten, that hand's total is now 21 but the hand isn't considered a BlackJack. That is, you are paid 1:1 and not 1:1.5 as for a natural (BlackJack). Combined example of above two plays: Say you are dealt two fives. You split them. The next card is another 5 and you re-split them. Three hands have grown out of one and you are now in for three times your original bet. But wait. Say the next card is a six.

So one hand is a 5,6 which gives you eleven; another just has a 5 and the other hand has a 5. You decide to double down on the first hand. You are dealt a 7 giving 18 which you stand on. Now a ten is dealt for the second hand and you decide to stay at 15. The last hand is the lonely third 5, which is dealt a four for a total of nine. You decide to double down and get an eight giving that hand a total of 17. You started with a twenty dollar bet and now you are in for a hundred! Better hope the dealer doesn't end up with a hand more than 18 lest you lose a C-note.

It was dangerous to split two fives because you are replacing a hand that is great for drawing on or doubling down on, by what will probably be two poor hands.

Insurance comes into play when the dealer's up card is an Ace. At this point all the players have two cards. The dealer does not check his/her hole card before asking the players if they want insurance, as the dealer can't give away the value of the hole card if the dealer doesn't know what the hole card is. If a player wants insurance, half the original amount bet is placed on the semicircle labeled "insurance" which is printed on the table. If the dealer has a BlackJack the player wins the side bet (the insurance bet) but loses the original bet, thus providing no net loss or gain since insurance pays 2 to 1. If the dealer does not have a BlackJack, the side bet is lost and the hand is played normally. If you are not counting cards, don't bother with insurance. The proper Basic Strategy play is to decline. The time to take insurance is when the number of non-tens to tens drops below a 2 to 1 margin since insurance pays 2 to 1.

BlackJack Definitions

Action: This is a general gambling term which refers to the total amount of money bet in a specific period of time. Ten bets of ten dollars each is \$100 of action.

Burn Card: A single card taken from the top of the deck or the first card in a shoe which the dealer slides across the table from his/her left to the right, and is placed into the discard tray. The card may or may not be shown face up (which can affect the count if you are counting cards). A card is burned after each shuffle.

Cut Card: A solid colored card typically a piece of plastic which is given to a player by the dealer for the purpose of cutting the deck(s) after a shuffle.

Hole Card: Any face down card. The definition most often refers to the dealer's single face down card.

Shoe: A device that can hold up to eight decks of cards which allows the dealer to slide out the cards one at a time.

Hard Hand: A hand in which any Ace is counted as a 1 and not as an 11.

Soft Hand: A hand in which any Ace is counted as an 11 and not as a 1.

Pat Hand: A hand with a total of 17 to 21.

Stand: To decline another card.

Hit: To request another card.

Bust: When a hand's value exceeds 21... a losing hand.

Push: A player-dealer tie.

Pair: When a player's first two cards are numerically identical (ie, 7,7).

Point Count: The net value of the card count at the end of a hand.

Running Count: The count from the beginning of the deck or shoe. The running count is updated by the value of the point count after each hand.

True Count: The running count adjusted to account for the number of cards left in