

Texas Holdem Poker

Texas Holdem Poker belongs to the class of poker games referred to as community card games, because certain cards are shared by all players. It is the most popular of all poker games. The objective of Texas Holdem is to make the best five-card poker hand from the two cards dealt face down and three of the five community cards dealt face up. What makes the game interesting is that the community cards are not dealt in one go but in stages, with betting between each stage.

The player to the left of the dealer places the small blind (half the minimum stake) and the player to his left places the big blind (the minimum stake) into the pot. The purpose of these blinds is to ensure a minimum amount in the pot. The dealer then deals two cards face down to each player. These are known as pocket or hole cards. The dealer's position keeps shifting to the left after each deal. The first round of betting then begins. Each round of betting is commenced by the person who placed the small blind. Based on their cards and their ability to bluff the players have three options. They can fold and be out of the deal. Or they can place the minimum bet to stay in the game. Or they can raise the stakes. If the stakes are \$5/\$10, then the betting begins with \$5 and is raised by \$5 as well. Once this round is complete the game proceeds to the next stage. The first three community cards are dealt face up on the board by the dealer. The board is placed at the center of the table so that it is visible to all players. These cards are known as the flop. The players can reassess their hands and enter into a new round of betting. This round also takes place at the minimum stake. The same three options are available to players. After the betting is completed, the fourth community card, known as the turn card is opened by the dealer. Now players have seen six of the seven cards from which they are to make their final hand. The betting now takes place at the maximum stake, which implies that the raises will be by the maximum stake. If the stakes are \$5/\$10 the bets in this round will be raised by \$10. After the round of betting is complete, the last community card is dealt face up by the dealer. This card is known as the river. Now players can make their final hand from their hole cards and three of the community cards. Another round of betting takes place at the maximum levels. After this there is the showdown. The players still in the game show their cards, starting from the one who placed the last bet. The player whose hand is highest in the poker rankings wins the pot, after the casino takes away its cut. If only one player is left in the game after the final round of betting, he does not have to show his hand.