

Video Poker

Video poker is played on a slots like machine. The machine is activated by inserting a coin or paper ticket. The player makes his wager and then presses the "play" button. Five cards are dealt to the player, who has to decide which to hold and which to replace. The objective of the game is to try for the highest ranking poker hand. The higher the ranking of the hand, the greater will be the payout. Below each dealt card is a button. The player has to press the button if he wants to hold the card. Once the button is pressed the cards are locked and marked "hold". The player then has to press the "deal" button in order to replace the remaining cards. The final hand is checked against the payout schedule and the player's balance is credited accordingly. The player then places his bet again and plays as before. When the player is through with playing he presses the "collect" button. He either gets his winnings in coins or a paper output, which can be cashed at the counter.

Video poker machines come in different denominations, usually ranging from \$0.25 to \$5. The player can choose which denomination machine he wants to play on. The latest machines play all denominations allowing the player to select the required denomination. After selecting the basic denomination the player can place wagers that are multiples of the basic denomination. Usually these multiples are 1x, 2x, 3x, 4x and 5x times the basic denomination. For example if the basic denomination is \$1, then the player can wager \$1, \$2, \$3, \$4 or \$5. The player's decision of holding or replacing cards depends on their value in contributing to a higher ranking hand. Hence it is necessary for the player to be aware of the rankings. These are identical to poker and are given below for ready reference. The rankings have been listed in descending order.

1. Royal flush: ace, king, queen, jack, ten of the same suit
 2. Straight flush: five cards in sequence and of the same suit
 3. Four of a kind: four cards of the same denomination, such as four tens
 4. Full House: a set of three cards of the same denomination and a set of two cards of the same denomination
 5. Flush: all five cards of the same suit
 6. Straight: five cards in sequence
 7. Three of a kind: three cards of the same denomination
 8. Two pairs: two sets of two cards each of the same denomination
 9. Jacks or better: the highest denomination card is an ace, king, queen or jack
- Another aspect of the game a player has to be aware of is the payout schedule, which lays out how much a player is paid for each hand. The payout schedule is given somewhere on the machine or screen. Payouts differ from machine to machine, the common payouts being 250:1 for a royal flush, 9:1 for a full house, 6:1 for a flush and 1:1 for jacks or better.