

This Free E-Book is brought to you by Natural-Aging.com.

100% Effective Natural Hormone Treatment
Menopause, Andropause And Other Hormone Imbalances
Impair Healthy Healing In People Over The Age Of 30!

Playing Small And Medium Pocket Pairs In Texas Hold'em

By Ryan D.

There are many different theories out there as to how to play small and medium pocket pairs in

Texas Hold'em, but one thing is clear: a lot of players make crucial errors with these hands that end up costing them dearly in tournaments and cash games. These starting hands, pocket deuces all the way up to pocket tens, are undoubtedly very tricky and there is no one right way to play them. As with most strategic or theoretical discussions of poker the context of the hand is all-important. How many players are in the pot? How many players are left to act? What is their style of play? What is your status at the table in terms of chips, previous play, and your general table image? And those questions barely scrape the surface in terms of what you need to consider before you act.

Broadly speaking, however, we can say the following when it comes to these hole cards – the most common mistakes made when playing pairs is a tendency to be too aggressive or the exact opposite, namely to muck them without a fight. These hands are often worth a speculative bet because they do have tremendous potential value. If you are in a multi-way pot with aggressive players a small pair can be a lethal weapon. Hitting a set on the flop is not only likely to be the best hand, but also is so well disguised from the rest of the table that you are likely to get paid off for having the best hand.

In no-limit hold'em small and medium pocket pairs can help you take down monster pots if you isolate a single opponent who happens to hold a premium hand that isn't a pair. A lot of poker players will happily get all their chips in the middle when they hold big slick or even AQ and AJ. If you challenge those hands with 88 or 66 you are ahead, although only slightly, and these type of races are certainly very common to see. Neither player has made a mistake, but both have taken a serious risk. The problem for players who hold the small or medium pair is that they could easily be dominated by a bigger pair. A lot of players behave the same way with AK as they do with AA, so when you have a small pair it is very tough to call that type of opponent. It is interesting to note that many players are far more aggressive pre-flop with AK than they are with a genuinely big hand (AA, KK, QQ), either because they are very confident that their hand is worth whatever they have in front of them (a misguided view) or because they don't really want anyone playing back at them. It's not quite a semi-bluff because AK can potentially be a very powerful hand, but often the easiest way to win with this hand is to make everyone else fold pre-flop.

In limit games it is generally unwise to push too hard pre-flop with small or medium pairs, but it is hardly ever correct to fold these hands pre-flop either. The issue here is that in a loose limit game your pre-flop raise will not scare anyone so you will still likely need to hit your set at some point in order to have a fighting chance of winning the pot. You are better off playing those pocket pairs cautiously, calling and playing passively (especially if there is a lot of action and several live hands) and taking a wait-and-see approach. The implied pot odds of hitting your hand definitely dictate that folding would be the wrong play, at least in limit hold'em games. There are times when you will be forced to lay down these hands. If you have a healthy stack and an opponent makes a huge bet in no-limit hold'em there is no reason to look him up. The best-case scenario is that you are in one of those races where you are a slight favorite, but you could easily be dominated. Isolating an opponent when you hold a small pair is an ideal strategy when your own back is to the wall – for example, you are short-stacked in a tournament.

The beauty of small and medium pocket pairs is that they enable good poker players to be very

creative. You can switch gears with a hand like this at a moment's notice. Say you are in the big blind with 77. Five players limp in before you and now the action is on you. It is a good situation for a strong player because depending on the context of the hand she can either limp in as well, hoping to hit a magical third 7, or she might push right now and win the hand before the flop can be dealt. It is very tough for those limpers to call a huge bet by the big blind unless they were slow-playing a monster (which does happen!)

More serious errors are committed with these hands after the flop, but rarely by good players who know what they are doing. There is no crime in giving up on these hands if you miss the flop. The hope of spiking a set on the turn or the river is unlikely to be supported by the pot odds you're getting, but if there is crazy action and you're in a limit game it can of course be correct to wait and try to do just that. You should also keep in mind that opponents tend to stay in hands with high cards so if there is paint on the flop it is doubtful that you still hold the best hand – and you may have been behind from the outset, which is why playing those little pocket 44's can be so trying!

Ryan is joint editor at Online Poker Insider

<http://www.online-poker-insider.com/>

How To Play Omaha Poker

By Adel Awwad

Ohama Poker plays the second best in attracting a large amount of people in card games next to Texas Hold'em. Ohama Poker is very similar to Texas Hold'em, with the main difference being that a player can choose his or her hand out of nine cards instead of seven. This is the reason for the growing popularity of the game.

Playing Small And Medium Pocket Pairs In Texas Hold'em

Omaha, which has the same structure as Texas Hold'em, is played very similar to Texas Hold'em; the only difference being that each player is dealt four hole cards instead of two. The players post the blinds and then receive their hole cards. After receiving the hole cards, a betting round takes place and then comes the 'flop', the 'turn' and the 'river' with a betting round between each of them.

The main difference between Omaha and Texas Hold'em is that each of the players has to form his hand out of precisely two hole cards and three board cards. This is different from Texas Hold'em where a player could use either one or both (or even none) of his hole cards. If a player is trying to win the low hand, he must use two unpaired hole cards that are ranked lower than eight, and three board cards, also unpaired, that are also ranked lower than eight.

In Omaha, the starting hands should be coordinated, which means that they should fit together. What you really want are cards that are more likely to form into straights, flushes or a full house. It's very rare that a pair would hold up on an Omaha table. Look for double-suited hands, giving you two chances of a flush and cards that are close together or considered in a run.

In playing the game, this is an example where many new Omaha players falter. The players, for instance, see four spades on the board, which are the community cards, and they have the Ace of Spades in their hand. They think they have the nut flush, forgetting that a player must use two hole cards, therefore needing two spades in his hand to make a flush.

Omaha is played either Pot Limit or Limit. The game is not played No Limit, as having four hole cards gives so many extra possibilities, chances, and permutations. If playing No Limit, the game would be too wild and without direction.

This article is the property of

<http://www.123onlineomahapoker.com>

. This document may be freely

redistributed in its unedited form and on the condition that all references are kept intact along with the hyperlinked URLs.



This Free E-Book has been brought to you by Natural-Aging.com.

[100% Effective Natural Hormone Treatment](#)
Menopause, Andropause And Other Hormone Imbalances
Impair Healthy Healing In People Over The Age Of 30!