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The Basics Of Popular Poker Games

By Tom Riemersma

There are many different and popular poker games out there today. The most popular games are

Texas Hold'em, Omaha, and Seven-Card Stud. This article will provide you with the basics to begin playing each of these popular forms of poker.

To start out I will go over the ranking of hands - this is the same for every form of poker:

1. Straight Flush (5 cards of the same suit in sequential order: Q-J-10-9-8) 2. Four of a Kind (4 matching cards: J-J-J-J-7) 3. Full House (3 matching cards and 2 other matching cards: K-K-K-5-5) 4. Flush (any 5 cards all the same suit) 5. Straight (5 cards in sequential order: 9-8-7-6-5) 6. Three of a Kind (3 matching cards: 5-5-5-K-9) 7. Two Pair (2 sets of 2 matching cards: A-A-J-J-3) 8. One Pair (2 matching cards: Q-Q-7-5-2) 9. No Pair (Any 5 cards that work into one of the above options: A-Q-J-10-8)

Texas Hold'em Poker is a community card game with four rounds of betting. One player acts as the dealer, called the button. The button rotates clockwise each hand. Usually there is a blind system to facilitate the betting. The player to the left of the dealer is the "small blind" and the next player to the left is the "big blind." The small blind is generally one half of the minimum bet for that round and the big blind is the full minimum bet. These two players are the only players who put money into the pot before any cards are dealt.

Each player receives two cards face down - these cards are called hole cards. The first round of betting starts with the person to the left of the big blind and continues clockwise. Three community cards are then dealt face up on the table - this is called the flop. (The second through fourth rounds of betting starts with the person to the left of dealer who is still in play and continues clockwise.) A fourth community card is dealt face up on the table, called the turn card. Then the third round of betting happens. Finally the fifth community card is dealt face up on the table - called the river card. Then the fourth and final round of betting happens.

Players must combine their hole cards with the community cards to make the best possible 5-card poker hand. Players can use either both hole cards, one hole card, or no hole cards in order to make their hand. The player with the best hand takes the pot and then next hand starts with the dealer button

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moving clockwise each hand. There are two variations to Texas Hold'em: Pot Limit and No Limit.

Omaha Poker is a community card game similar to Texas Hold'em with four rounds of betting. The main difference is each player is dealt four cards face down rather than two. When you are making your hand at the end of all rounds of betting, you **MUST** use two and only two hole cards and three community cards (for one 5 card hand). A popular variation to Omaha is Omaha High–Low in which the player who has the highest and the player with the lowest hand (A,2,3,4,5 or close to this) split the pot.

Seven–Card Stud is different than both Texas Hold'em and Omaha in many ways. There are no community cards in stud poker, five rounds of betting instead of four, and antes instead of blinds. In stud the player's hands determine the order of play as well, instead of a simple clockwise order.

The ante begins the deal, anyone who wants in must pay to the pot. For the first round of betting each

player is dealt (one at a time) two cards face down (hole cards) and one card face up (upcard). The player with the **LOWEST** upcard starts the first round of betting and betting continues clockwise. A fourth card is dealt face up, and the player with **HIGHEST** upcard starts the second round betting which continues clockwise. Likewise the fifth and sixth cards are dealt face up to start the third and fourth rounds of betting respectively. Again betting for these rounds starts each time with the player with the **HIGHEST** upcards and continues clockwise. Finally, the seventh and last card is dealt face down, and betting starts with the same player that started the fourth round of betting. Each player makes the best possible five card poker hand using any combination of their seven cards. A popular variation to Seven–Card Stud is Seven–Card Stud High–Low where the players with the best and worst hands split the pot.

Tom Riemersma has played tons of poker and loves all sorts of poker games. He is the resident poker chip expert for Elite Poker Chips, the premiere online poker chip store. Check out

<http://www.elitepokerchips.com/>

for all your home poker chip needs.

The World Series Of Poker

By Adel Awwad

When you mention casinos the first thought that goes through your mind is poker. Poker is the one of the most popular casino card games. Mention casino poker and the World Series of Poker (WSOP) jumps right out. What are the stakes and who are the players of these high profile casino poker games?

The world series of poker started in 1971 and today it attracts more than 5,000 players from around the world competing for more than US\$ 7,000,000 in prize money. Although it began with only one main event, that being No Limit Texas Holdem, it has evolved to include many more new events over the

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years. Texas Holdem, Omaha, Omaha High/Low, and Seven Card Stud are the four most popular forms of poker today. Depending on the rules and the game being played at the casino, two players will place money into the "pot" and the casino dealer will shuffle and cut the cards.

The casino dealer will then deal each player at the casino poker table their cards face down. After each round of dealing, the players at the casino table will place additional bets in the "pot" as the casino dealer hands them additional cards or replace existing cards. Each casino poker game has its own rules. Poker has grown faster than any other casino game with the introduction of online casino poker websites. With such large amounts of money being played for in the WSOP it has drawn more people to online casino games.

With a hole card camera, poker is now also a popular spectator sport and moving out of casinos and into your home with cable broadcast. Casinos in your corner of Internet will continue to grow as online casino poker evolves in cyberspace. Therefore, over the course of time and as the interest in poker continues to skyrocket and expand to different parts of the world, you should be on the look out for new casino poker games!

Adel Awwad is the webmaster of Online Casinos – Copyright © 2005

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