

RULES - NO LIMIT TEXAS HOLD'EM POKER

The following pages are merely suggestions for rules that may be used in a tournament. Any tournament that is being played should have rules available for the players to review if questions arise.

These pages are again suggestions and each tournament has the right to determine their own rules. The players must be made aware of the rules prior to the beginning of play.

1. Definitions for No Limit Texas Hold'em Poker.

The following definitions apply to all the rules of No Limit Texas Hold'em Poker:

- (1) "Ante" means a predetermined contribution to the pot before the first card of the game is dealt.
- (2) "All-in" means a player wagers all of that player's remaining chips to the pot.
- (3) "Bet" means a player's wager to the pot on any betting round.
- (4) "Bet or fold" means the requirement that a player place a wager (i.e., bet) or fold that player's hand.
- (5) "Big blind" means the forced bet that is made by the person sitting 2 seats to the left of the button. This is the largest forced bet.
- (6) "Blind" means a required bet made before any cards are dealt.
- (7) "Blind position" means the player to the left of the button.
- (8) "Burn" means to place a card down prior to dealing the flop, turn and river.
- (9) "Button" means an object which is moved clockwise around the table to denote an imaginary dealer.
- (10) "Buy-in" means a purchase of chips by a player prior to play.
- (11) "Call" means a bet made equal in amount to the immediately preceding bet.
- (12) "Check" means to waive the right to initiate the betting in a round, but to retain the right to call or raise.
- (13) "Check and raise" means a raise after a player first checked in a round.
- (14) "Chips" means small tokens or disks used to place bets.
- (15) "Community cards" means cards dealt or turned face upward which can be used by all players with a live hand to make their best hand.

- (16) "Deal" means the distribution of playing cards among the players.
- (17) "Dealer" means the person at each table who deals, burns, shuffles and cuts the cards or operates the shuffling device.
- (18) "Defective deck" means a deck that is found to have other than the proper cards or number of cards for the game being played or is otherwise found to have a card that is taped, cut, shaved, marked, defaced, bent, crimped or deformed.
- (19) "Flop" means the first 3 community cards dealt or turned face up at one time.
- (20) "Fold" means to discard a hand, forfeiting claim to the pot.
- (21) "Hand" means, 1 deal, the cards held by a player, or the best cards a player is holding.
- (22) "House rules" means the sponsoring organization set of rules, consistent with this title, governing the operation of the No Limit Texas Hold'em Poker tournament.
- (23) "Misdeal" means to deal a hand of poker incorrectly.
- (24) "Muck" means discards, burn cards and cards from the unused remainder of the deck of cards.
- (25) "Opener" means the player who makes the first bet in any round.
- (26) "Pot" means the total amount anted and bet by players during a game which is awarded to the winning player or players.
- (27) "Re-buy" means when a player is allowed to purchase additional chips at a predetermined fee as long as the player has a predetermined amount of chips on the table.
- (28) "Round" means a cycle of bets made by the players following the deal of the cards.
- (29) "Showdown" means the revealing of each player's hand after the last bet to determine the winner or winners of the pot.
- (30) "Small blind" means the forced bet that is made by the person sitting one seat to the left of the button. This bet is half the size of the big blind.
- (31) "Stake" means the funds with which a player enters the game.

2. No Limit Texas Hold'em Poker tournament rules.

(a) Deal. --

(1) When a table is opened for play, the deck of cards in a game of No Limit Texas Hold'em Poker consists of a complete standard deck of 52 cards. The design on the backs of the cards in the deck must be identical, and no card may contain any marking, symbol, or design that enables a player to know the identity of any element printed on the face of the card. The backs of the cards may contain a logo. The backs of the cards in the deck must be designed to eliminate the ability of any person to place concealed markings on them. No sponsoring organization may use cards that are taped, cut,

shaved, marked, defaced, bent, crimped, or deformed. All jokers are to be discarded from the deck of cards.

(2) No Limit Texas Hold'em Poker cards are dealt by a dealer on a poker table. The dealer must protect the deck to avoid exposure of the cards (hands). A player bets on the cards (hand) the player holds. All the bets placed by the players are collected together in the center of the table which is known as the pot. There may be a required initial ante and there may be required blind bets by the players. After all the dealing of cards and betting has occurred for a pot and there are 2 or more players still in contention, there is a showdown to determine which player has the best hand. The object of the game is for a player to win the pot either by making a bet no other player is willing to match or by the player having the most valuable hand after all the betting is over. The winning player shall be the player who holds the hand of highest rank.

(3) The dealer shall deal 2 cards to each player, face downward and 1 at a time. The first player to receive a card is the player to the left of the player who has the button. A button shall be moved around the table, clockwise, so that the player who has the button receives the advantage. The last player to receive cards is the player assigned the button. Play must proceed in a clockwise direction with each player's turn following the person on the player's immediate right. After all players have received their 2 cards, there is a betting round. The player to the left of the last blind bettor may call, raise, or fold and each following player may call, raise, or fold in a clockwise order.

(4) The dealer burns the top card of the deck and deals 3 community cards from the deck 1 at a time face downward and turns them face upward all at once in the center of the table. Community cards are common to the hand of every active player in the pot.

(5) After the flop, the betting continues for another round. The first player still in the pot sitting left of the player assigned the button is the first to act and then each player in a clockwise order may act in turn until all bets are equal. Any player may call, check, raise, or fold in accordance with the house rules.

(6) The dealer burns a card and deals a fourth community card, known as the turn card, face upward in the center of the table. Another round occurs. The dealer then burns a card and deals a fifth community card, known as the river card, face upward in the center of the table for the final round.

(7) After all bets are made and if there are 2 or more players remaining in the game, there is a showdown and in No Limit Texas Hold'em Poker, the best qualifying high hand wins the pot.

(8) The 5 community cards shall be combined with none, 1, or 2 cards from each player to determine the player's best 5 card hand.

(9) There is no limit as to the amount a player can raise or bet during any round. At any time following the first deal, a player can go all-in.

(b) Conduct. -- The following rules shall apply to all No Limit Texas Hold'em Poker tournament play and must be included in the printed rules for each tournament:

(1) All players will receive an equal number of tournament chips for their entry fee and any subsequent re-buys.

(2) Initial table and seat assignments shall be determined by random draw or assignment. As tables are combined following player elimination, the remaining players shall also draw or be reassigned

to new seating assignments.

- (3) Players are eliminated from the tournament when they lose all their chips.
- (4) Play will continue until only 1 player has not been eliminated.
- (5) At the final table players may agree to divide the remaining cash prizes. (If even 1 of the remaining players does not wish to "split" the pot then play will resume)
- (6) The sponsoring organization shall have 2 separate decks of cards available at each table. The color or markings of the backs of the cards of the 2 decks must be different.
- (7) The dealer, at least once each hour, shall count the cards in the deck to verify that the deck is complete. The decks used at each table shall be replaced with new decks as needed and the sponsoring organization shall have extra decks on hand for this purpose.
- (8) All pots are to be awarded by the dealer. When the dealer has awarded a pot and it has been taken in by that player without a claim made against it, the award stands. No player may make an agreement with any other player regarding the pot. Each game must be played to conclusion and the pot awarded to the actual winning player.
- (9) Each player shall be permitted to play only 1 hand and the player shall make all decisions **without** advice from any other person. Any communication between a player with a live hand and a spectator about the play of the hand or other players at the table is prohibited.
- (10) No player may wager on another player's hand, nor may any player play other than the player's own hand. No player may exchange or otherwise transfer their chips to any other player during the tournament.
- (11) No player shall use a camera, cell phone with camera or recording device at the poker table.
- (13) Only tournament chips on the table at the start of a game may be in play for that pot. Concealed chips may not be used in play.
- (14) A player may assemble chips in front of the player before acting. A player must be considered to have made a bet if the player pushes assembled chips forward or releases chips into the pot at a sufficient distance from the player to make it obvious that the player intends it as a bet. If the situation is unclear and the player allows the dealer to pull the player's chips into the pot without making an immediate objection, it must be considered a bet by the player.
- (15) If a player is absent from the table they will be dealt in and all antes, forced bets and blinds will be posted as required. A player's hand will be immediately declared dead if the player is not in the player's seat when it is the player's turn to act.

3. Ranking of cards in hand.

The cards are ranked ace, king, queen, jack, 10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, and 2. A No Limit Texas Hold'em Poker hand in a showdown shall consist of 5 cards, ranked according to the following from highest to lowest:

- (1) Straight flush. -- Five cards of the same suit in sequence; an ace-high straight flush is a "royal flush";

- (2) Four of a kind. -- Four cards of the same rank;
- (3) Full House. -- Three cards of the same rank and 2 cards of 1 other rank;
- (4) Flush. -- Five cards of the same suit;
- (5) Straight. -- Five cards in sequence;
- (6) Three of a kind. -- Three cards of the same rank;
- (7) Two pair. -- Two cards of the same rank and 2 cards of 1 other rank;
- (8) One pair. -- Two cards of the same rank; and
- (9) High card. -- The highest ranking card in the hand.

4. Tie.

Ties shall be broken and/or resolved according to house rules.

5. Sponsoring organization to provide dealer.

The sponsoring organization must provide the dealer for the final table, which may be provided by a licensed third party vendor. The dealer shall not play, make a bet or otherwise wager on a No Limit Texas Hold'em Poker game.

6. Ante.

Each individual player must ante by placing chips equaling the ante in front of the player on the table before the first card of the game is dealt. The dealer must sweep the antes and place them in the pot. Once the first card is dealt to any player, the ante may not be altered, except that if a player's hand is declared dead for reasons other than the player's fault, the ante may be returned to such player.

7. Shuffling device.

(a) If appropriate to the play of an approved No Limit Texas Hold'em Poker game, a mechanical shuffling device may be used to dispense each player's cards, and/or the community cards, as a group, to the dealer. The dealer shall then deal an intact group of cards from the shuffling device to each player, and/or to the community card area, as specified by this chapter.

(b) If appropriate to the play of an approved No Limit Texas Hold'em Poker game, an approved electronic shuffling device may be used to deal each player's cards, and/or the community cards, as a group, to the dealer. The dealer shall then deal an intact group of cards from the shuffling device to each player, and/or to the community card area, as specified by this chapter.

8. Protection of hands.

A player shall protect a held hand by holding onto it above the table or by placing 1 or more chips on it. A protected hand may not be ruled dead by accidental contact with discards unless it is impossible to reconstruct completely. A player who has a protected hand taken in by the dealer or fouled by discards through no fault of the player is entitled to a refund of all of the chips the player put in the pot in that game.

9. Misdeal.

(a) A card that is meant to be dealt face downward but is dealt face upward or flashed as it is dealt so that a player might know its identify or a card that is dealt off the table is dead. An exposed card meant to be dealt face downward must be replaced.

(b) In No Limit Texas Hold'em Poker games, if the flop is dealt prematurely or contains too many cards, the community cards are mixed with the remainder of the deck, which is then reshuffled, cut by the dealer and a new flop is dealt without burning a card. If the fourth community card is dealt prematurely, it is taken out of play for that round. The dealer will burn and turn what would have been the fifth community card in its place. After betting is completed, the dealer will place the premature fourth community card in the remainder of the deck, which is then reshuffled, cut by the dealer who then burns and deals the final community card. If the premature card is dealt on the fifth card, the deck is reshuffled and dealt in the same manner.

(c) A misdeal causes all of the cards to be returned to the dealer for a redeal. A misdeal may not be called once action has occurred.

10. Burned cards.

If the dealer burns a card, it must be kept separate from the muck until all cards have been dealt. If the dealer burns a card and is unable to deal immediately, the dealer may place the burned card back on top of the deck.

11. Required statements when betting.

A player may substitute a gesture for a verbal statement of the player's action. The dealer must announce it, and the player must correct the dealer before any further action takes place. A player may verbally state an action as "check," "call," "raise," or "fold." If a player bets but announces a fold, the player has a dead hand. A statement by a player of "call" or "raise," "check" or "fold," or of a specific bet is binding. A player who states a certain amount but puts a different value of chips into the pot must correct the bets to the stated amount. The dealer must insure all bets are as stated by the player. Players, who make a bet, decide incorrectly that they have no live hand against the play, and fold their hand, lose the pot unless their hand is declared retrievable by the dealer.

12. Call procedure.

(a) Players who unintentionally put fewer chips into the pot than are needed to call must complete the call or withdraw the partial bet in full. If action has taken place, the player is responsible for completing such player's bet, even if the player might have been unaware of the raise. Players may assemble chips in front of them before acting. A player makes a bet if such player pushes assembled chips forward or releases chips into the pot at a sufficient distance from the player to make it obvious that the intent is to bet. If the situation is unclear and a player allows the dealer to pull the player's chips into the pot without making an immediate objection, it is a bet. A player must place the entire bet in front of the player at one time. Unless a player has placed the amount of chips required to call a bet and to signify a raise, the player may not place additional chips for a raise.

(b) If a player calls but places a value of chips into the pot that is larger than the bet, it must be regarded as a call unless the player announces a raise. The player may clarify an apparent call as a raise only if no other player behind such player has placed chips into the pot or announced a call or raise.

13. Showdown.

(a) If 2 or more players remain in the pot after all of the cards have been dealt and the betting is over for that hand, the remaining players show their cards to determine which player has the best hand and wins the pot.

(b) The following provisions govern showdown:

(1) A hand with too many or too few cards for that game is dead.

(2) A hand is ranked according to the actual cards it contains. The cards speak for themselves when

exposed and laid face up on the table.

(3) A hand that is prematurely discarded by a player and touches the discarded cards is dead.

(4) A verbal concession of a losing hand is not binding.

(5) Players who leave the table concede the pot and have a dead hand.

(6) A hand discarded by the dealer without objection is dead.

14. Review of hands at showdown.

At the conclusion of the round, a player shall place the player's hand face upward on the table at the showdown as follows:

(1) If there has been a bet on the final round, the player who made the bet must show first;

(2) If there have been 1 or more raises on the final round, the player who last raised must show first;

(3) If the final round has been checked by all the players, the player who acted first must show first;

(4) The subsequent order of showing hands is clockwise around the table from the player who must show first; and

(5) A player may choose to discard a hand without showing it.

15. Award of pot.

Pots may only be awarded by the dealer. When the dealer has awarded a pot and it has been taken in by a player without a claim against it, the award stands. Any such claim shall be made before the objecting player's cards are mucked. No player may make an agreement with any other player regarding the pot. A hand must be played to conclusion and the pot awarded to the winning player or players.

16. Odd chips in ties.

If a pot that is split by having tied hands at the showdown has an odd chip, the chip is awarded to the first live player to the left of the button.

17. Use of defective deck.

If a defective deck is used, all chips in the pot must be returned to the players in the amount each contributed. Players who know the deck was defective and attempt to win the pot by a bet are not entitled to their chips in the pot. Such chips must remain in the pot as forfeited for the next game. A player who won a pot is entitled to keep it, even though the deck is subsequently found to be defective. No sponsoring organization or licensed third party vendor shall use a deck which it knows or reasonably should have known to be defective. The cards in the deck shall be counted within 30 minutes of play, at a minimum.

18. Faced card.

If a card is improperly faced in the deck, it must be treated as a dead card and replaced by the next card below it in the deck.

19. Time limit.

The sponsoring organization may place a maximum time limit for players to act on their hands. At the end of the time limit, if the players have not bet, they must check. If there has been a bet to a player, the player's hand is dead. The dealer must provide warning to the player before the expiration of the time limit.

20. Posting of rules.

Posted sponsoring organization rules shall be clear and legible and placed in a conspicuous and conveniently accessible location available to all players in the No Limit Texas Hold'em Poker tournament room. Rules posted and the place of posting must be approved by the sponsoring organization. Printed copies of sponsoring organization rules must be provided to players upon request. Any other rules besides the rules stated in this chapter shall be developed by the sponsoring organization.

21. Tournament chips required.

All wagers must be made with approved tournament chips provided by the sponsoring organization or licensed third party vendors. No currency, chips other than tournament chips, or other thing of value may be used as wagers. No person may introduce into any No Limit Texas Hold'em Poker game any playing card that was not obtained through the current deal of the cards by the sponsoring organization's dealer, or any poker chip other than those obtained from the sponsoring organization where the No Limit Texas Hold'em Poker game is being held. Tournament chips shall have no cash value, and shall represent tournament points only. There shall be no limitation of the size of a wager made with tournament chips. Tournament chips may never be redeemed for cash or for any other thing of value, except that the point total represented by the players' accumulations of tournament chips shall be used to determine the winners and/or final place in a tournament. If the tournament chips in play are not imprinted with a number representing the actual number of points or units of credit which the chip represents, each tournament table must display a notice visible to all players which describes the currently assigned point or credit value to each different color of chip. The point value assigned to each color chip may change between rounds of tournament play, but the required notice must always reflect the current values.

22. House Rules for Texas Hold'em Poker tournament play.

Printed house rules for the Texas Hold'em Poker tournament shall include:

- (1) The standard rules of play of each game as set forth in this chapter.
- (2) The amount of the entry fee. The rules must also expressly state whether or not re-buys will be permitted, and if permitted, under what circumstances or conditions.
- (3) The initial amount of all antes and blind bets and a description of the manner in which the amount of antes and blinds will increase during the progress of the Texas Hold'em Poker tournament.
- (4) How the final round of play is to be determined and how the Texas Hold'em Poker tournament is to be concluded.
- (5) How many prizes are to be awarded and the exact description of each prize.

23. No Limit Hold'em Poker tournament director.

(a) A sponsoring organization shall appoint a tournament director for each No Limit Texas Hold'em Poker tournament. Nothing shall preclude the sponsoring organization from having a member of the licensed third party vendor as tournament director.

(b) The No Limit Texas Hold'em Poker tournament director shall be the final arbitrator of all disputes that occur during that tournament.

