

## **EASY TO LEARN BLACKJACK SYSTEM**

In all of the games used for gambling, Blackjack remains the only one in which a participant can actually change his chances of winning during the game. Whether those running casinos wish to admit it or not, Blackjack does involve skill.

Blackjack actually refers to a specific holding (two cards totaling 21). However, this is also the most common term for the game - also known as 21.

You are playing against the dealer at all times. Many people feel that you must play differently depending on where you sit at the table. This is not true. Players sit in a semi-circle around the dealer, but no matter where you sit, you are still playing against the dealer. You owe nothing to the other players - it is your own money you are risking.

In Blackjack, the suits of the cards have no significance.

Tens, jacks, queens, and kings all count 10. An ace counts 1 or 10 at the player's option. Cards from 2 to 9 have their face value. Therefore, if you hold a nine and a five, you have 14. A nine and an ace can be either 10 or 20.

The simple idea of the game is to get closer to 21 without going over than the dealer does. You are dealt two cards and the dealer is dealt two cards also - one always face up, and one face down. You are then given the option of standing with the cards you have ("stick" or "sticking") or you may be "hit" and be given another card ("hitting"). You may take as many cards as you wish to, but should you go over 21, you "bust" and the dealer wins automatically. The dealer will not take any cards until all players are through at taking cards. Thus the dealer's biggest advantage is here. Any players that bust, lose their bet - even if the dealer goes bust.

If you stay at 21 or under and have a higher total than the dealer, you win; if both you and the dealer hold cards equaling the same total, it is a "push" and you stay even (not winning or losing). If the dealer has a higher total without busting, he wins.

The pay off if you win is even money (one to one). If you get a "21" or "Blackjack" (21 in two cards) you are paid at a rate of 3 to 2 (bet \$10 win \$15). If the dealer gets blackjack at the same time, you push - all other players lose.

You may take "Insurance" when the dealer's first card is an ace. After all players and the dealer have two cards, he will ask "Insurance?". You may bet another 1/2 of your original bet. Payment is 2 to 1 if the dealer does get blackjack.

At this point, after each player and the dealer has 2 cards, he will start at the immediate right and see if the player wants a card (a "hit"). If yes, the player scratches the table with his fingers or cards towards

himself. If not, he places his cards under his bet or makes a negative movement with his hand. Dealers respond to hand gestures only. If you go over 21 "bust" you turn your cards over (face up) and the dealer takes the cards and your bet. If you stay at 21 or under, the dealer will continue to the next player.

As we mentioned, an ace can be counted as a 1 or 11. When you have say an 8 and a 10, you have a "hard" hand. However, an 8 and an ace gives you a "soft" hand. Because you have a soft 19 or a hard 9 if you count the ace as a one.

The dealer on the other hand does not get these options. When all players are through, the dealer turns face up his hole card. He must take a card if he has 16 or less. He must stand (in most casinos) on a hard or soft 17.

Most players try and guess what the dealer has and look at the other cards on the table before deciding to hit or stand. Most players also never win at Blackjack.

At this point, you should understand how the game is played. [The following is your best strategy as determined by computer testing:](#)

Always hit when you have 11 or less.

Always stand with a hard 17 or more.

[On a hard hand:](#) When the dealer's up card is from 7 to Ace, draw if you have 12 to 16. When the dealer's card is 2 to 6, stand on 12 to 16 except if the dealer's card is a 2 or 3, in which case you would draw.

[On a soft hand do the following:](#) Always draw to a soft 12. Stand on 18 except when the dealer has a 9 or 10 value card. Stand on 19.

In most casinos, you may double down (double your bet) after your first two cards.

[On a hard hand:](#) Always double with 11, with 10 except if the dealer has a 10 or ace, with 9 against the dealer's 2 to 6 up card.

[On a soft hand:](#) With ace 2 to ace 7 double against dealer's 4, 5, or 6. Also with ace 6 against 2 or 3 and ace 7 against 3.

Another play is the splitting of pairs. If your first two cards of the deal are the same value, you may place a bet the same as your original, and play two hands.

Always split ace-ace, and 8-8. Never split 10-10, 5-5, or 4-4. Split other pairs only when the dealer's card is 2 to 6. These rules may seem complicated and difficult. However, after playing at home, this basic strategy will require no concentration.

After you have become comfortable with the basic strategy, you may be able to shift the odds in your

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favor. Although counting card is illegal in some places, simple methods or advanced strategy can be easily employed.

When a number (greater than average) of 10's have been used, more 5 average cards are present and this is an advantage to the dealer. If more 5 value cards have been used, the advantage is in your favor (a slightly larger bet may be in order). Here is a way for counting high + low cards: Whenever a 2 or 6 appears, count +1. Cards 7, 8, 9 count 0. Count -1 for 10's and aces.

In this manner, there are 5 low cards (+1) and 5 high (-1) cards. If at any time the number obtained is say +5 or more, it is to your advantage to raise your bet. If very few low cards are left, it may even make sense to stand on 15 or 16 against dealer's high card.