

# Texas Hold'Em Poker Rules

1. The organizer of the tournament is to consider the best interest of the game and fairness as the top priority in the decision-making process. Unusual circumstances can, on occasion, dictate that the technical interpretation of the rules be ignored in the interest of fairness. Their decision is final.

## Betting Procedures

2. The action of betting is physically defined as the release of chips after a single, forward motion.

3. Above all, verbal declarations in turn are binding. A player who declares a call, raise, fold, must do so to the limit that the chips allow. If simultaneous declarations are made (tossing in a raise and saying call), the verbal declaration takes precedence.

4. Action out of turn is not binding. The deliberate intention to act out of turn may result in a penalty.

5. Check-raising (checking, then later raising over a bet) is allowed.

6. String betting (placing out bets with more than one motion without verbally declaring your intention) is forbidden. Any betting motions after the first motion will be dismissed.

7. In no limit or pot limit, by stating the word "raise", a player protects his right to raise, but the raise must be made in one additional motion unless he states the amount.

8. In no limit or pot limit, a bet must be at least the amount of the big blind.

9. In no limit or pot limit, a raise must be at least the amount of the previous bet.

9a. If a player puts in a bet below the minimum allowed that is equal or above 50%, the player will be required to make a full raise. The raise will be exactly the minimum raise allowed. If a player cannot cover the full minimum raise, he or she must go all-in.

9b. If a player puts in an amount that is less than 50% of the minimum allowed bet, the player is considered to have called and is returned the excess chips.

10. In limit hold em, there will be a max limit of a bet, a raise, a reraise, and another reraise. When only two players are involved in a hand this betting "cap" does not apply.

11. When a player throws in an oversized chip without making a verbal declaration...

11a. In limit hold 'em, an oversized chip will be considered to be a call.

11b. In no-limit, before the flop, an oversized chip is a call.

11c. In no limit, after the flop, an oversized chip *by the initial bettor* will constitute the size of the bet.

11d. In no limit, after the flop, an oversized chip *by a player facing a bet* will be considered a call.

11e. In no limit, if a player states just the word "raise" and throws in an oversized chip, the raise will be that amount.

11f. In pot-limit, if a player states just the word "raise" and throws in an oversized chip, the raise will be the maximum amount allowable up to the size of that chip.

### **Split Pots, Side Pots, and going All-in**

12. A player who is all-in must show his cards at the showdown.

13. In the case of a split pot when there are two or more high hands, the chip(s) will be split as evenly as possible (chips may need to be broken down into smaller denominations) with any odd chip(s) left over given out to the winning player with the worst position (left of the button being the worst).

14. Each side pot will be split as a separate pot. They will not be mixed together before they are split.

15. When a player creates a side pot by going all-in, the side pot will be the current pot plus each call up to the amount of the all-in. Any raises (or calls in the case of a below-the-limit all-in) go into the new pot.

16. At the showdown with a side pot, the player who is all-in can only win the pot set aside when he or she went all-in. After the winner of that hand is resolved, the players involved in the main pot determine the winner without regard to the all-in hand.

17. In case of multiple side pots, a player can only win up to what he put in times the number of calls up to the all-in amount.

### **Blinds and Antes**

18. Players must post blinds and antes before cards are dealt.

19. If a player does not have enough to cover his blind/ante, a side pot is created before

cards are dealt and...

19a. In an ante only game, the side pot will equal the amount of the all-in times the number of players.

19b. In a blind only game, the side pot will equal the amount of the all-in times the number of callers.

19c. In a game with blinds AND antes, if the player can call the ante and part of the blind, the side pot will equal the amount of the ante times the number of player PLUS the amount of the remaining all-in blind times the number of callers.

19d. In a game with blinds AND antes, if the player can call all or part of the ante but no part of the blind, the side pot will equal the amount of the all-in times the number of players and the blind will be absent.

20. When heads up, the blinds are reversed. The player on the button has the small blind.

21. In the hand after a big blind is eliminated, the button will move normally and there will be no small blind. The following hand, the button will move into the position where the eliminated player was, creating a dead button situation.

22. In the hand after a small blind is eliminated, the button will move into the position where the eliminated player was, creating a dead button situation.

23. In the hand after both blinds are eliminated, the button will move into the position where the former small blind was and there will be no small blind. The following hand, the button will move into the position where the former big blind was.

24. Through players being eliminated, no player should miss a big or small blind.

## **Chips**

25. All chips must be visibly displayed at all times. Players may not have tournament chips in their pockets at any time. A player who has chips in his pocket will forfeit the chips. The forfeited chips will be taken out of play from the tournament. Any other form of "ratholing" will be dealt with similarly.

26. Players must keep their highest denomination chips visible at all times.

27. There will be no foreign chips allowed on the table.

28. At the request of the dealer, a player must exchange his or her chips for chips of a different denomination.

### **Killing a Hand / Dead Hands**

29. Another player may call for a clock against a player who is taking an unreasonable amount of time to make a decision.

29a. Once a clock is called for, the player with action will be given one minute to make a decision. If a decision has not been made by the time the minute is over, there will be a 10-second countdown. If a player has not acted on his hand by the time the countdown is over, the hand will be dead.

29b. A player who calls "time" will act on the same rules as above.

30. If a live player leaves during a hand, there will be no minute countdown and the hand will be declared dead.

31. A player must be in their seat by the time all players have complete hands in order to have a live hand. Otherwise the blinds/antes will be forfeited and the hand will be killed.

32. If a live hand touches the muck, it will immediately be ruled dead.

33. If a dealer kills an unprotected hand, the player will have no redress and will not be entitled to his money back. An exception would be if a player raised and his raise had not been called yet, he would be entitled to receive his raise back.

34. Dealers cannot kill a winning hand that was turned face up and was obviously the winning hand.

### **Verbal Discussion**

35. Verbally disclosing the true contents of your hand will cause the hand to be killed and a penalty will be assessed.

35a. A player cannot verify the contents of a live hand that was verbally disclosed. Only a director or floor person may check those contents after the hand is over, but before the pot has been awarded. If the hand is verified but is not in violation of the previous rule, the contents will not be revealed by the floor or director to anyone.

35b. If a verbally disclosed hand is killed through verification after the hand, the pot goes to the best hand among the remaining players at the showdown, or to the last player to fold.

35c. By definition, verbal disclosure must include the actual ranks or suits, or any synonym to the ranks or suits. Nicknames for specific two-hand combinations like "Big Slick" or "American Airlines" will also constitute verbal disclosure. Furthermore, only a definitive declaration will constitute a verbal disclosure. Language like "may", "might", or "could" could nullify a declaration as verbal disclosure.

36. Advising a player how to play a hand may result in a penalty.

37. Verbal declarations as to the content of a player's hand at the showdown are not binding (cards speak); however at management's discretion, any player deliberately miscalling his hand to induce other players to reveal their cards may be penalized.

38. Players are obligated to protect the other players in the tournament at all times. Discussing cards discarded or hand possibilities are not allowed.

## **Exposing Cards**

39. During the initial deal, if any pocket card is exposed due to dealer error, it is a misdeal.

40. A player who exposes his cards during the play may incur a penalty, but will not have his hand killed. If any player at the table saw the exposed cards, any other player has a right to know what the exposed card or cards were. If a player unintentionally exposes his cards during play, his hand will not be ruled dead. If any player at the table saw the exposed card(s), then any other player at the table has the right to know what the exposed card(s) was.

41. At the showdown players begin to show their cards starting with the player to the left of the last to call. A player may "muck" his cards if they cannot win over a previously shown hand. If the house suspects cheating or collusion, you may be asked to expose your cards to the dealer, coordinator, and/or the other players.

42. Any player *who is live during the showdown* may ask to see both pocket cards from a player who reveals only one.

43. Any player may ask another player to reveal his or her pocket cards if they were exposed to any player at the table.

44. A player may **not** ask to see both pocket cards from another player who revealed them to a spectator.

## **Penalty Situations**

45. Penalties available for use by the tournament organizers are verbal warnings, 10, 20, 30, and 40 minutes away from the table and may be used with discretion. These may be utilized up to and including disqualification. A player who is disqualified shall have his chips removed from play.

46. A penalty may be invoked if a player exposes any card with action pending, if a card(s) goes off the table, if soft-play occurs, or similar incidents take place. Penalties WILL be invoked in cases of abuse, disruptive behavior, or similar incidents.

### **Going up in Levels and Chip Racing**

47. When time has elapsed in a round and a new round is announced, the new limits apply to the next hand. The hand begins when the first card is dealt.

48. Excessive stalling during a hand to receive a favorable position prior to a limit change may result in a penalty.

49. As levels progress it may be necessary to exchange chips of a low denomination for chips of a higher denomination. When this happens, players may have odd chips. These are chips which, due to an insufficient sum, cannot be traded to the higher denomination. To determine what happens with these odd chips, a "chip race" is performed by the dealer.

49a. Players trade in their odd chips for an equal value of higher denomination chips.

49b. Any leftover chips that cannot be traded in will be part of the chip race. These chips are placed in the middle and are collectively traded for chips of the next highest value. Any remainder is removed.

49c. Starting with the small blind of the next hand, each player who lost an odd chip is dealt a single card. The highest card wins the race. In the case of a tie, the player who was dealt the high card first will win. (So the first ace dealt wins)

49d. Starting with the winner of the race and continuing around the table, each player who was dealt a card is given a new higher- denomination chip from the middle until there are no chips left in the middle.

50. A player cannot be raced out of a tournament. In the event that a player has only one chip left, and loses the race, he will be given one chip of the smallest denomination still in play.

### **Multi-table rules**

51. Initial tournament and satellite seats will be randomly assigned.
52. Players going from a broken table to fill in seats assume the responsibilities of their new position. They may receive any position from blind to button.
53. The only place a moved player cannot be placed is between the small blind and the button. If it is necessary for a player to be moved to this position, that player must sit out that hand.
54. A player moved to balance two tables will be the player who will not lose position as a result of the move. Play may be halted temporarily to accommodate for the move. In a case where multiple seats are open, the worst positioned seats are the most preferable to be moved.
55. A player who intentionally dodges his blind(s) when moving from a broken table will forfeit the blind(s) and/or incur a penalty. The money will be put into the next pot and will be considered dead money.
56. Prior to the "bubble" (the point where only a few more players must be eliminated for all remaining players to be guaranteed a portion of the prize pool), the tournament may be played "hand-for-hand". This means that each table will wait until all other tables finish their hands before starting another. This deters stalling by players in an attempt to place higher.
57. Hand-for-hand play may also be instituted during times where stalling to receive a higher place in the tournament would be advantageous to any player.

### **Rebuy and Add-on Rules**

58. A player with no chips may not miss a hand. If a player with no chips misses a hand, they lose their right to rebuy and are no longer able to participate in the tournament.
59. If a player announces intent to rebuy before the first card is dealt but does not have chips yet then that player is live, playing behind, and obligated to make the rebuy.
60. Players can only rebuy between hands; under no circumstances will a player be allowed to make a rebuy when cards are out.
61. If rebuys and add-ons are only permitted until a certain point in time, a player has until that point in time to provide funds for the rebuy. If funds are presented at that time, then the player may rebuy and/or add-on.
62. Rebuys and add-ons will only be permitted within the first hour of game play. Rebuys will cost an additional \$200 and add-ons will cost an additional \$100. For a \$200 rebuy you will receive the same amount of chips you received at the initial start of play, for a

\$100 add on you will receive 3/4 the amount of chips you received at the initial start of play.

63. There is a MAXIMUM limit of ONE rebuy and ONE add-on per player. If you elect to purchase either or both please notify the dealer at your table and raise your hand for a “bank runner” to come over and accommodate you.

### **Miscellaneous Rules**

64. One player to a hand. During the hand, a player may not discuss play with other players, spectators, or the dealer.

65. English only at the table for games in the United States.

66. Players may not exchange chips for any reason.

67. A player who wants to use a cellular phone or any communication device must step away from the table.

68. A player may not leave a camera, cell phone, any recording instrument, or highly reflective item on the table.

69. Deck changes will be when there is a change of dealer or the limit changes. The house may additionally call for deck changes in other circumstances. Players may not ask for deck changes unless proof can be made that certain cards can be construed as "marked".

70. Rabbit hunting (asking to see additional board cards after play is over) is forbidden as it can give insight into players' hands by reducing the possible number of unknowns.

71. The tournament coordinator reserves the right to cancel or alter any event at its sole discretion in the best interest of the tournament and/or its players.

### **Prizes**

72. Prizes will be awarded to the final 11 Texas Hold’Em Tournament Poker players. The prize package selection will work like a draft, where the winner of the tournament will have first pick between all eleven prize packages and so on thereafter.

73. Trophies for the final 3 Texas Hold’Em Tournament Poker players will be awarded the night of the event as well.