

Piatnik

The rules of
POKER
Card Poker & Poker Dice

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Basic game (Draw Poker)

Most versions of Poker can be played by between 2 and 8 players (Stud Poker allows up to 10 players) but are most enjoyable when 5 or more players are involved. Draw Poker works best with 5—6 players.

A standard 52-card pack is used, with the Jokers removed (some Poker variants require Jokers, which necessitates modifying the betting rules accordingly). Aces are both high (above Kings) and low (below Twos).

One player takes over the bank, selling chips to the players as required. The chips should be of at least 3 colours, the basic unit being white chips and the other colours multiples thereof. In the course of betting, chips are placed in a pot in the middle of the table.

Before each hand begins the players must „buy into the game“. This can be done in one of two ways: either each player places one chip in the pot; or the dealer for the hand pays an agreed amount to the pot. The first dealer is determined in the following way. One of the players begins dealing out one card to each player, in clockwise rotation and face-up, until a Jack is dealt. The Jack designates the first dealer. Thereafter the deal rotates clockwise. The dealer deals five cards face-down to each player, one at a time.

The players look at their cards and open the initial round of betting, starting with the player on the dealer's left and continuing in clockwise rotation. He has two options: he can either check (stay in the game but not place any bet in the pot) or place a bet (if his hand contains a

pair of Jacks or higher). If he checks, the player to his left has the same choice, between checking or betting. If he also checks, the turn passes to his left neighbour and so on, until one of the players has opened the betting. If all the players check, then the cards are collected, shuffled and dealt by the next dealer, the chips paid into the pot remaining there for the next hand. Once a player has opened the betting, each player must bet at his turn (he cannot check). When it is his turn to bet a player has three options: drop, call or raise. By dropping a player drops out of the game, forfeiting any bets he may previously have placed in the pot. A player who calls places in the pot as many chips as will equalize the highest bet made so far. A player who raises equalizes the previous highest bet and then adds to it, stating by how much („Raising by ten . . .“ etc.). A limit or maximum bet is

usually arranged before play begins. This round of betting ends when either all the players but one have dropped (the surviving player being the winner), or all the players who have not dropped have called and the turn has come back to the last player who raised. At this point the draw begins. Each player left in the game has the opportunity to exchange between 1 and 4 of his cards. He takes the cards to be exchanged out of his hand and lays them face-down on the table in front of the dealer. The dealer gives him the same number of cards from the remainder pack, placing the exchanged cards on one side. If the remainder pack is used up before all the players have drawn, the exchanged cards are shuffled and reused as a remainder pack. Once all the players have either drawn new cards or declared themselves satisfied with their dealt hands, the second round of betting begins. The player who opened

the first round (i. e. made the first bet rather than checking) has the first option in the second round. He can check or bet. Once a bet has been made, all the players must again either drop, call or raise. As in the first round, betting continues until either all the players but one have dropped (the surviving player being the winner), or all the players who have not dropped have called and the turn has come back to the last player who raised. The players then show their hands, and the player with the highest hand takes the pot. A player who drops and a player who wins because all the others dropped do not have to show their hands.

The various combinations are listed below in descending order of priority:

1. *Straight flush*: five cards of the same suit in sequence (e. g. ♥J-10-9-8-7).

A *straight flush* headed by an Ace is called a *royal flush* (e. g. ♣A-K-Q-J-10).

2. *Four of a kind*: four cards of the same rank (e. g. ♥7-♦7-♣7-♠7).
3. *Full house*: *three of a kind* and a *pair* (e. g. ♥9-♦9-♣9+♣8-♠8).
4. *Flush*: any five cards of the same suit (e. g. ♠7-♠9-♠10-♠Q-♠K).
5. *Straight*: five cards in sequence but not all of the same suit (e. g. ♥A-♠K-♣Q-♥J-♥10).
6. *Three of a kind*: three cards of the same rank (e. g. ♥7-♦7-♣7).

7. *Two pairs*: two cards of one rank, two cards of another (e. g. $\spadesuit 9$ - $\clubsuit 9$ + $\spadesuit J$ - $\heartsuit J$).
8. *One pair*: two cards of the same rank (e. g. $\heartsuit 9$ - $\spadesuit 9$)
9. *High card*: the highest card in a hand of unmatched cards (e. g. $\heartsuit K$ - $\spadesuit J$ - $\spadesuit 8$ - $\spadesuit 6$ - $\clubsuit 3$).

If two players have the highest hand, the ranking is decided as follows:

1. *Straight flush*: the flush with the higher top card wins.
2. *Four of a kind*: the higher cards win.
3. *Full house*: the higher *three of a kind* wins.
4. *Flush*: the higher top card wins. If the top cards of both hands are of equal rank, the second-highest cards in both hands are compared, and so on.

5. *Straight*: the higher top card wins.
6. *Three of a kind*: the higher-ranking three cards win.
7. *Two pairs*: the highest-ranking pair wins. If the higher pairs are identical, the lower pairs are compared. If they are identical, the rank of the fifth, unmatched card decides.
8. *One pair*: the higher-ranking pair wins. If the pairs are of equal rank, the highest of the unmatched cards are compared. If they are equal, the second-highest and so on.

In determining the relative priority of equal hands the suits are of no significance. There is no hierarchy of suits in Poker.

Stud Poker

Draw Poker is sometimes referred to as Closed Poker, to distinguish it from Stud or Open Poker.

Unless otherwise stated, the same rules apply to Stud Poker as to Draw Poker.

The two main differences concern the method of dealing and the number of betting rounds. As in Draw Poker, each player receives five cards, but not all at once. The dealer deals each player one card closed (face-down) and one open, and there follows the first betting round. The betting is opened by the player with the highest open card. If two players have equally high cards, the player nearer the dealer in clockwise rotation opens the betting. In Stud Poker there is no checking: players can only drop, call or raise. When the bets have been equalized, each

player still in the game receives his third card, again open. Another round of betting follows, opened by the player with the highest combination in his open cards. The fourth card is dealt, again open. The players bet again as above. The fifth and last card is dealt, also open, and the last round of betting begins.

Seven-Card Stud Poker

The rules are similar to those for Stud Poker above, with the following differences. On the first deal each player receives two closed and one open card. Then the first bets are placed, and the game continues as in Stud Poker, with further betting rounds after the dealing of the fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh cards. The fourth, fifth and sixth cards are dealt open, the seventh closed.

POKER DICE

Several dice games have been derived from the ever-popular card game of Poker. Some require special poker dice (marked with Ace, King, Queen, Jack, Ten and Nine), others are played with standard dice, and others again can be played with either. The game known generally as Poker Dice is closest to the original card game.

Poker Dice

The five dice required for this game can be either poker dice or standard dice (marked 1 to 6). The rules are the same in both cases; those outlined below refer to standard dice.

In theory any number of people can play Poker Dice, although in practice the best numbers are between two and five.

Each player rolls one die once to determine who starts. If two or more players tie with the highest roll, they roll again until the starter has been established.

The object is to make the best possible Poker hand with the five dice. At his turn a player rolls all five dice. He may declare himself satisfied with the results; or he may pick up any number of the dice (from one to all five) and roll them again. Once again he may choose between stopping at this stage or again taking up some of the dice and rerolling them. Dice which he left on the table after his first roll may not be rerolled on his third roll. Each player thus has up to three rolls in which to make his

hand. After that the turn passes to the player on his left. The game ends when every player has had his turn. The hands are compared, and the player who achieved the highest hand is the winner.

The various poker hands, in descending order of priority, are:

1. Five of a kind
2. Four of a kind
3. Full house (three of a kind + one pair)
4. Three of a kind
5. Two pairs
6. One pair
7. High die (the highest die of five unmatched dice).

Straights (runs or sequences) are not counted in Poker Dice.

If two players score the same highest hand (for example, if they both have Four of a kind), the hand with the higher-ranking numbers wins. Thus, four Fives would beat four Threes. Ones count high — above Sixes, not below Twos. (If dice with Poker symbols are used, the Ace is high.) If two players tie (with four Fives, for example), they play off against each other to decide the round.

Betting is on a round-by-round basis. Agreed bets are placed before the beginning of each round, and the winner takes all.

A simple variant of Poker Dice follows exactly the same rules, except that the winner is the player with the lowest rather than the highest hand.

Yacht

Yacht derives some of its combinations from Poker. It can be played with either poker or standard dice. There is no limit to the number of people who can play yacht, but the ideal numbers are between 2 and 6. Yacht is played with five dice. Each game consists of twelve rounds. The players throw one die each to determine who starts: the highest throw designates the starter. In the case of a tie, the players concerned throw again.

At each turn a player may throw up to three times. He throws all five dice once and may choose whether to leave his throw as it is or try to improve it. If he chooses the latter, he may pick up any number of dice (from one to all) and reroll them. After this second throw he may again decide whether to stop or to reroll one or more of

the dice. Dice which he left after the first throw must also be left after the second. When the player declares himself satisfied with his throw, but at the latest after his third attempt, he must enter his score in the score sheet, and the turn passes to the player on his left. When each player has entered one score in the score sheet, the first round is complete. The game proceeds in this manner until all twelve rounds are completed.

The score sheet contains vertical columns listing the twelve possible combinations, their maximum scores and boxes for the scores of each player. For five players it would look like this:

COMBINATION	MAXIMUM POINTS	A	B	C	D	E
Yacht	50					
High straight	30					
Low straight	30					
Four of a kind	29					
Full house	28					
Choice	30					
Sixes	30					
Fives	25					
Fours	20					
Threes	15					
Twos	10					
Aces (Ones)	5					
Total						

At the end of his turn a player may write a score into any appropriate box — he does not have to work down the column from top to bottom. But he must write in a score or, if his throw does not produce a score, put a cross in a box so that it cannot be used later. In the same way, a box cannot be used twice. The scoring is as follows. A throw of Ones, Twos, Threes, Fours, Fives or Sixes scores the total of numbers that fit the category (e.g. three Twos will score 6 points). The dice not matching the category are not counted. Choice is reserved for a bad throw which the player cannot score elsewhere; he scores the total number of all five dice. Full House (three of a kind plus one pair) scores the total number of all five dice. Four of a kind likewise scores the total of all five dice (the four matching dice plus the unmatched die). Low and high straight (runs from 1 to 5 and from 2 to 6)

each score 30 points. Yacht (five of a kind) scores 50 points. The winner is the player with the highest total.

The basic game is the same as Yacht, the only difference being the scoring system. Each player (or team) has not one but three columns in which to enter scores. In effect the game consists of three games played simultaneously. In each game a column is contested, and the overall object is to win two of the three columns. The score sheet looks like this: (see next page)

Escalero

This game is a somewhat more complex expansion of Yacht. It is best played either by two players or by four in two teams of two.

COMBINATION	A1	B1	A2	B2	A3	B3
Yacht						
High straight						
Low straight						
Four of a kind						
Full house						
Choice						
Sixes						
Fives						
Fours						
Threes						
Twos						
Aces (Ones)						
Total						



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