



Guidelines for fundraising event games

These guidelines are designed to assist you with the conduct of fundraising event games but should not be relied upon to provide authoritative information on all aspects of the game. The guidelines provide general summarised statements only and should not be relied upon as a substitute for professional advice on the matter.

TEXAS HOLD 'EM POKER

These generic rules are applicable specifically to Texas Hold 'Em Poker, one of several variants of Poker. These rules are intended to provide the user with a basic set of 'house rules' to allow for the operation of a poker tournament. These rules are appropriate for use by organisations intending to host a charity poker evening. These Rules only cover the modern variation of Texas Hold 'Em Poker.

Several other, less common, variants of poker games exist, of which these rules are not intended to govern. Within Texas Hold Em Poker, the betting structure of the game can be Fixed, Limit, or No Limit. Generally, tournaments are in the No Limit Texas Hold Em (NLHE) format unless otherwise stated.

Object

The object of a poker tournament is to accumulate all of the tournament chips in play and be declared the winner. Players can accumulate tournament chips by constructing the best five-card hand by using their own holding in combination with the Board. Players can also choose to 'bluff' opponents, which will cause their opponent to fold their holding, and thus win the hand without exposing their own holding.

Dealing the Game and Betting Rules

Each player should begin a tournament with a set amount of chips, as determined by tournament staff, which is equal to other entrants in the tournament.

Before the cards are dealt, the Dealer button is placed at a particular seat as determined by tournament staff. The Blinds are forced bets which begin the game and rotate around the table before the beginning of each hand. The usual structure is to use two blinds that increase as time progresses – a Small Blind and a Big Blind.

The Small Blind is immediately to the left of the Dealer button, and the Big Blind is immediately to the left of the Small Blind. Generally, these amounts are set in increments that allow for easy doubling at the conclusion of each level. For example, the blinds beginning at 50 and 100 chips, and progressing higher to 100 and 200 as time progresses.

The cost of the blinds generally increase after a set period of time – as set by the tournament staff – which encourages the game to progress and a winner determined. If the blinds do not increase, the length of the tournament will increase quite substantially, and a winner will only be determined after a significant period of time.

In each betting round of the game, players are not obligated to make a Bet. Players must assess whether to Call, Raise or Fold when a Bet is made by an opponent. If no Bet is made, a player can elect to Check, which allows the player to continue with the hand until an opponent makes a Bet, at which point the player must Call, Raise or Fold. All players can elect to Check their holding, which allows the game to progress without the making of any bets in the relevant betting round.

Player Rules

Players must not exchange information or communicate in relation to their holding or strength of their holding as the hand progresses. Colluding with other players impacts the integrity of the game and makes it unfair for other players involved in the tournament.

Tournament organisers should not allow collusion or 'soft play' to occur in the conduct of tournaments so as to allow all players an equal opportunity to win the tournament.

Guidelines for fundraising event games

TEXAS HOLD 'EM POKER CONTINUED

Game Rules

Most variations of poker games are played with one deck of 52 cards with jokers removed. The design/colour on the reverse side of the cards should be identical (that is, all cards should be of the same set) to prevent players from determining a particular card in the deck by reference to a cosmetic difference.

Players receive two cards face down as their hole cards, with the dealer beginning the deal by giving the player to the left of the dealer one card face down, and progressing around the table in a clockwise fashion. The dealer then repeats this procedure so each player has two cards (**Figure 1**).

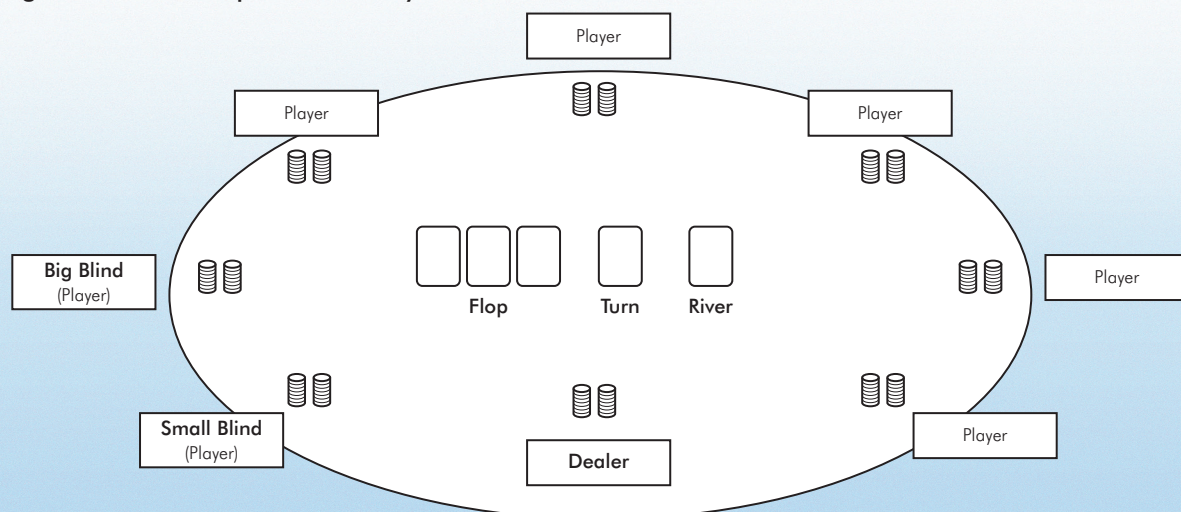
After each player has two cards, they can then look at the cards and assess whether to proceed with the hand.

There is a round of betting which begins with the player immediately to the left of the Big Blind. Players can elect to Call, Raise, or Fold (pre-flop betting) based on their holding. After betting has concluded, the Flop is dealt.

Three board cards are turned simultaneously (the Flop) and another round of betting occurs. The next board card is turned (the Turn), and there is another round of betting. The final card is then dealt at the conclusion of this betting (the River), and a final betting round occurs. After this betting round has concluded, the players expose their respective holdings to determine the winner of the hand (the Showdown).

The board cards are community cards, and a player can use any five-card combination from among the board and personal cards. A player can even use all of the board cards and no personal cards to form a hand ("play the board").

Figure 1: Standard poker table layout



This publication provides general summarised information in regard to the subject matter covered above, and with the understanding that the Victorian Commission for Gambling and Liquor Regulation is not passing legal opinion or other professional advice. This information should not be relied upon as a substitute for professional legal advice. Authorised by the Victorian Commission for Gambling and Liquor Regulation.

Guidelines for fundraising event games

TEXAS HOLD 'EM POKER CONTINUED

Rules and definitions

1. **'Bet'** means a wager that is made under the course of play.
2. **'Blinds'** refer to "blind bets," these are the forced bets made before the cards are dealt.
3. **'Big Blind'** refers to a forced bet to begin the hand, usually double the amount of a Small Blind.
4. **'Small Blind'** refers to a forced bet to begin the hand, usually half the amount of a Big Blind.
5. **'Button'** is a nickname for the player acting as the Dealer in current hand.
6. **'Call'** means a wager made in an amount equal to the immediately preceding bet of an opponent.
7. **'Check'** refers to the action of continuing with a live hand unless and until a player makes a Bet. If there is no raise pre-flop, the big blind may check.
8. **'Chip/s'** means a token that is used to place bets on the table. Tournament chips are given a value for the purpose of each tournament, and have no monetary value outside of the conduct of the tournament.
9. **'Community Cards'** are the cards dealt in the middle of the table after the pre-flop deal and betting has concluded. Community cards include all three 'streets' – flop, turn and river.
10. **'Dealer'** means a person in possession of the Dealer Button, who has the benefit of being last to act in each betting round. The Dealer Button will also be used if a casino dealer/ tournament staff elects to deal the game.
11. **'Flop'** refers to the three community cards dealt, immediately after the pre-flop betting has concluded.
12. **'Fold'** means a decision by the player to no longer continue with their hand in a single game.
13. **'Play Money'** has no monetary value and is used as the prop in place of real currency.
14. **'Pre-flop'** means anything that occurs before the flop is dealt.
15. **'Raise'** means to make a bet greater than the amount of a previous bet made during the betting round.
16. **'River'** means the final community card dealt.
17. **'Showdown'** means when players reveal their hands to discover the winner of the pot.
18. **'Split'** refers to the action of dividing the pot by the number of winning players, where each player has an identical winning hand.
19. **'Turn'** means the fourth community card dealt.