

Club Work

Articles for

Poker / live poker

Article One

Why play online poker?

Very simple: it's fun, exciting and it's possible to make money with it on a structural basis; if you're willing to learn. How much money? That depends on you. If you're serious about it you can make a lot, even when you have nothing more to start with than one of many no deposit promotions.

To give you a taste of how it's done:

So you play the lowest limits, you read books about poker strategy, you make mistakes and learn from them, you post hands on the forum (a poker 'hand' is jargon for the cards you are dealt in a round) to get commentary from other members. If you tripped your bankroll you try out one limit higher, until you beat that limit, etc. If you play on a regular basis this way you can build up a bankroll of over \$1000 within a couple of months. Don't start cashing out too soon, because you need that bankroll to climb the ladder to higher limits.

Advantages of Online Poker vs. 'Live Games' (like a bar or somebody's home)

You can play far more hands. At an online table you can play around 60 'hands' (rounds) an hour, at a live game you're lucky to get 20. You can also play more tables at the same time in an online poker room. Some people play 10 or more tables at the same time, playing effectively more than 600 hands an hour. Why is this important? Because you can make (far more) money per hour.

There are always enough people to play against. Whether you like to play at 10 in the evening or 4 in the morning, there are always more than enough bad players online to shake down. So you're dependent on no-one.

You can play at much lower limits online. This is important, because you don't want to have to invest \$1000 of your own money just to find out whether or not you can become a winning player. \$50 won't get you anywhere in a normal casino, but at an online poker room you can use it to build a serious bankroll.

It's safer online and there is much less fraud. Contrary to what you might think, fraud is virtually non-existent in online poker rooms. The anti-fraud software these companies have is so damn good (understandable, it's their bread and butter) that a fraudulent player is better off at a 'brick and mortar' casino. Also, you don't have to worry about some guy beating you up and taking your bankroll when you exit the casino.

Article Two

Rules of the Game

How the game is played

No Limit Texas Hold'em (the most popular form of poker) is played at a table with 2 to 10 players. The game starts with every player getting to closed cards (hole cards) – cards that you of course can see- after which a betting round follows. In this first of four betting rounds the players decide whether or not they want to play.

You can:

Raise. This means you increase the stakes. Every player has to either match that amount (call) or throw away his hand (fold).

Call. You match the amount that is put in by the other player(s). At the very minimum, this is the so called 'big blind', which is money that one of the players involuntarily puts in the pot. (more about that later)

Fold. This means you throw away your cards.

The money that all players put in the middle is called 'the pot'. This is what players motivate to make high combinations and sometimes bluff.

After the first round of betting the dealer lays down 3 cards open on the table. This is called 'the flop'. A second betting round follows, the same way as the first. The idea is that every time something new happens, a betting round follows. After the completion of this second betting round, the dealer lays down another card open on the table. This is called 'the turn'. Follows the third betting round. Finally the dealer lays down the last open card. 'The River'.

There are now 5 cards open on the table. These cards are community cards, which means everybody can use them. (you don't grab them literary of course, just use them in your head). The idea is to make the highest possible combination of 5 cards, using your own (closed) cards and the 5 community cards. One of the reasons the game is so exciting is because there are only 2 cards you can't see of your opponents, just as you only have 2 hidden cards. But they can make all the difference of course...

After this last community card (the river) is placed on the table, the last betting round follows. Finally, the players that still are in the game after matching each other's bets, show their hand. The best combination wins the pot. If there is only one player left (because nobody wanted to match his bet) he takes the pot without having to show his hand. This is why players like to bluff (they might win the hand even if they don't have the best hand).

Every hand, the dealer moves one place to the right (clockwise). This means everybody is the dealer just as often. The position of the dealer is marked with the so called 'dealer button', which has the shape of a circle. Why is it important the position of the dealer moves? For several reasons.

First, the 2 players on the right of the dealer are called the small blind (closest to the dealer) and the Big Blind (next to the small blind). If you sit on a table with stakes \$0.02/\$0.04, it means that the small blind has to pay 2 cents and the big blind 4 cents. The big blind is always double the small blind. These blinds are an important concept, because they make sure there is always money in the pot. So if somebody raises and nobody calls, the raiser 'picks up the blinds'.

Second, the Dealer position is the best position. Without going in to it to deeply, we will just say here that the dealer always acts last (except in the first round, when the blinds act last). This is a major advantage, because it means he only has to act after everybody else has already 'said' what they want to do. The close you are to the left side of the dealer (right side is blinds), the better your position is.