

Texas Hold 'Em Tournament Play

Most Texas Hold 'Em Poker games start with locating the dealer or dealer button. This is simply drawing for high card. The highest card wins. The two players to the left of the dealer (the button) then put in a predetermined amount of money into the pot before any cards are dealt, ensuring that there's something to play for on every hand. This is called "posting the blinds." Most often, the "first blind" or small blind -- the player to the left of the dealer -- puts up half the minimum bet, and the "second blind" or big blind puts up the full minimum bet. Bets can then be made in increments of the big blind.

Each player is dealt two cards, face down. These are known as the "[hole cards.](#)" *

Betting Begins

A round of betting takes place, beginning with the player to the left of the two who posted the blinds. Players can call, raise, or fold when it's their turn to bet.

Third Street or the Flop

After the first betting round, the dealer discards the top card of the deck. This is called burning the card and is done to ensure that no one accidentally saw the top card, and to help prevent cheating.

The dealer then flips the next three cards face up on the table. These cards are called the "flop."

NOTE: Eventually, a total of five community cards will be placed face up on the table. Players can use any combination of the community cards and their own two hole cards to form the best possible five-card Poker hand.

After the flop, another round of betting takes place, beginning with the player to the left of the dealer (the button). During this and all future rounds of betting, players can check, call, raise, or fold when it's their turn to bet.

Fourth Street or The Turn

The dealer burns another card and plays one more face up onto the table. This, the fourth community card, is called the "turn" or "Fourth Street."

The player to the left of the dealer (the button) begins the third round of betting.

Fifth Street or the River

The dealer burns another card before placing the final face-up card on the table. This card is called the "river" or "Fifth Street."

Final Betting and The Winner

Players can now use any combination of seven cards -- the five community cards and the two hole cards known only to them -- to form the best possible five-card Poker hand.

The fourth and final round of betting starts with the player to the left of the dealer (the button).

After the final betting round, all players who remain in the game reveal their hands. The player who made the initial bet or the player who made the last raise shows their hand first.

The player with the [best hand](#) ** wins.

* Ask for a Starting Hands reference card for free.

Business card sized reference of all starting hands and their rating; best to worse.

** Ask for a Ranking Hands for free.

Business card sized reference of all poker hands and where they rank against others.