

THE PALACE OF DREAMS

A PEERMONT RESORT

GAMING GUIDE

HOW TO PLAY BLACKJACK



lackjack has been adapted from a version of the French game vingt-et-un, or "21" and is one of the most popular card games. The game is steeped in tradition and is fast-paced and competitive. Although a simple game to play, it is mentally challenging and is popular with players as they are in control of their own hands and can play them as they wish.

Blackjack can be found on the Main Casino floor, in the Velarium Casino and in the exclusive salon privé - the Palace Court Privé. As an important guest of Emperors Palace, this guide to playing Blackjack has been provided for your convenience but please always feel free to ask questions. Should you require assistance, please do not hesitate to call upon the Casino personnel, including the dealers.

Good luck and enjoy the game.

The Game

A Blackjack (also known as a "natural") is when the first two cards dealt in the initial deal is an Ace in combination with a 10, Jack, Queen or King. The object of Blackjack consists of the player trying to get nearer to a total of 21 than the dealer. Should he exceed a point total of 21, this is known as a "bust" or "too many" and the game is over for the player.

Each card counts as the numerical value of the card except Jacks, Queens and Kings which count as 10, and an Ace which counts as either 1 or 11, whichever the player chooses. When a Blackjack is dealt, the Ace counts as 11. In other kinds of hands, the player uses the Ace according to his need. For example:

Should a player be dealt an Ace and a 4, this will equal a point total of 5 or 15. Should the

player draw a third card to improve his hand and he is dealt a 5, this will equal a point total of 10 or 20 (Ace + 4 + 5 = 10 or 20). The player in this case will use his Ace as an 11 as a point value of 20 is a strong hand. But should an 8 have been dealt instead of the 5, the point total would equal 13 (Ace + 4 + 8 = 13). The player must count the Ace as 1 (otherwise he would bust), giving a total of 13 and, depending on the dealer's card, the chance to draw again.

A Blackjack always beats a multicard combination with a point total of 21, for example: 5 + 9 + 7 = 21.

The Table

The dealer stands behind a curved table which has seven places for players to sit and place their bets. The minimum and maximum stakes are clearly displayed at the tables and chips may be purchased from the dealers.



The Play_

The cards are shuffled together by the dealer and dealt from a Shuffler (an automatic card shuffling machine). After shuffling the decks, the dealer offers the players, in turn, a plastic card to "cut" the deck. This is done by inserting the card halfway into the deck. The dealer deals the cards from left to right in a clockwise fashion.

Before distributing cards, the dealer calls for bets to be placed. Place your bet in the betting area marked out on the table in front of your seat. If you wish to do so, and if there is space available, you may play two or more spots at the same time. The dealer starts the game by dealing one card to each of the players and one card to himself, all face up. A second face up card is dealt to the players only. It is at this point that the game becomes tensionfilled as the players must now decide their course of action and make decisions that will affect the outcome of their game. Once the players have drawn any additional cards they may require, the dealer announces "no more cards". The dealer draws his second card plus any others required to complete his hand

The Player's Hand

The player must assess the strength of his hand and compare it with what he knows about the dealer's face up card. Based on this, and the strength of his own cards, he decides what strategy to take (which is described further on). If you think your hand is strong enough to beat the dealer's hand, you "stand" or "stay" - meaning no more cards dealt. You indicate this to the dealer verbally and by holding out your hand, palm down, waving it over your cards in a negative fashion. Should you decide your hand is weak and that you need additional cards to try and beat the dealer's hand, you indicate this verbally by saying "card" and by tapping your index finger gently on the table, close to your cards.

You are allowed to take as many cards as you wish as long as you do not exceed 21. You "stay" when you are satisfied that you have achieved the strongest hand possible. Should you request an additional card and you bust, the dealer will collect your losing bet and proceed to the next player.

The Dealer's Hand

Once all players have completed their hands, the dealer deals himself a second face up card. The dealer must abide by the house rules and has to draw a card on any point total of 16 or less and stand on any point total of 17 or more. If the dealer busts by drawing a card to put him over a total of 21, all players are paid out (except of course those who may have bust before the dealer played his own hand). Should the dealer not bust, he compares his hand with each player's hand. He collects from those players holding weaker hands, and pays those holding stronger hands. Should the point total of a player's hand be equal to the dealer's, the bet is a "stand off" (a tie), and no money exchanges hands.

The Payout

All winning bets, with the exception of a Blackjack and an Insurance bet (see further on), are paid at 1 to 1 (even money). A winning Blackjack hand is paid at 3 to 2 (1 and a half times the stake). As mentioned previously, a Blackjack beats a multicard combination with a point total of 21.

Other Betting Options_

Insurance:

If, in the initial deal (the two cards to each player and one card to the dealer), the dealer's face-up card is an Ace, the dealer asks the players if they wish to take out insurance. Should a player believe the dealer's second card (still to be dealt) could be a card with a point total of 10 (i.e. a Blackjack), the player is allowed to take out insurance. This side bet is placed in the area of the table inscribed with "INSURANCE PAYS 2 TO 1".

An insurance bet is half of the table minimum, up to half of the value of the bet. Insurance bets pay 2 to 1 if the dealer does draw a Blackjack. Should the dealer not draw a card with a point total of 10, all insurance bets lose. The player's original bet is paid as normal.

Surrender:

Should the player's initial hand be weak, he has the option to 'surrender' except if the dealer's first card is an Ace. Should he choose to surrender, the player loses half his original stake.

Double:

A double bet gives the player an opportunity to take advantage of a strong hand. A player may double his bet on his first two cards on any total with the exception of a Blackjack. He may bet any amount up to the total of his original stake but no less than half the table minimum by simply placing the additional chips next to his original bet. Double bets pay 1 to 1.

Splitting Pairs:

If the player's first two cards have the same numerical value (two 9's for example), he may split them into two hands and play separate hands in the same game. The bet on the second hand must be the same amount as the original stake. When splitting cards, the player must first play the hand on his right. Only after the first hand has been played and completed, may he play his second hand.

The player may continue to split his hands if he is again dealt two cards with the same numerical value. Should, for example, a ten and Jack from the initial hand be split, and the player receives a Queen and a King, they can be split again as they too have the same numerical value. If a pair of Aces is split and another Ace is dealt, this hand can be split again. Should the second card dealt be

anything other than an Ace, this hand is complete - no doubling can take place and no third card can be drawn

Split pairs pay 1 to 1 for each split hand. Blackjacks do not count as such after splitting Aces and the payout is as for a point total of 21 - even money back. Should the dealer be dealt a Blackjack, this wins over a hand with a point total of 21. After splitting a pair, with the exception of Aces, the player may "double" should he wish to do so.

Basic Strategies

When playing Blackjack, you need to familiarise yourself with tactics for each situation that can occur. This is not difficult because the dealer has to follow a set of rules in his play so you know exactly what to expect and can therefore take the necessary action.

A series of guidelines may help you determine when to take a card and when to stand. Although none of these guidelines is a guarantee that you will win, this is a safe and sensible approach to the game.

Following are two basic strategies. The first assumes that the player has not been dealt an Ace and the second assumes he has been dealt an Ace:

STRATEGY 1

When player's first two cards total:	When dealer's first card is:	Player's Strategy:
17 - 18 - 19 - 20	Any Card	Stand
14 - 15 - 16	7 - 8 - 9 - 10 - Ace	Card
14 - 15 - 16	2-3-4-5-6	Stand
13	7 - 8 - 9 - 10 - Ace	Card
13	2-3-4-5-6	Stand
12	7 - 8 - 9 - 10 - Ace	Card
12	4 - 5 - 6	Stand
12	2 - 3	Card
8 - 9 - 10 - 11	7 - 8 - 9 - 10 - Ace	Card
8 - 9 - 10 - 11	5 - 6	Double

STRATEGY 2

When player's first two cards includes an Ace and:	When dealer's first card is:	Player's Strategy:
Ace + 2 - 3 - 4 - 5	2 - 3 - 7 - 8 - 9 - 10 - Ace	Card
Ace + 2 - 3 - 4 - 5	4 - 5 - 6	Double
Ace + 6	2-3-4-5-6	Double
Ace + 6	7 - 8 - 9 - 10 - Ace	Card
Ace + 7	2 - 7 - 8 - Ace	Stand
Ace + 7	9 - 10	Card
Ace + 7	3 - 4 - 5 - 6	Double
Ace + 8	Any Card	Stand
Ace + 9	Any Card	Stand

NB: Should two Aces be dealt, it is advisable to always split the pair.

Blackjack Etiquette

To avoid confusion, the player should always use hand signals and a verbal "yes" or "no" when telling the dealer he wishes to stand or take a card. Decisions to split pairs, double down or take insurance should also be indicated verbally, and by placing the appropriate amount of chips in the correct betting areas.

The player must never touch his cards or his wagered chips. The dealer is the only person allowed to remove or alter the location of the cards and chips.

When counting the total point value of his hand, the player should feel free to take his time and move at his own pace. However, he must try not to bring the game to a standstill.

Blackjack 7's

Blackjack 7's is a variation of the classic Blackjack game. Should you wish to, you may place an additional bet to cover the possibility of the hand dealt containing one, two or three 7's. This optional bet adds even more excitement to the game of Blackjack.

As in the classic Blackjack game, players place their bets in the standard Blackjack betting areas. To the right above each player's betting area, is another smaller betting area inscribed with "7's". A Blackjack 7's bet must be placed here.

The cards are dealt in the exact same way as the classic Blackjack game. Once bets have been placed, the dealer starts the game by dealing one face-up card to each player, one card to himself and a second card to each player (but not himself).

After the initial two cards have been dealt, if the player's first card is not a seven, the bet will be a losing bet.



Hands with one seven dealt:

All hands containing a seven as the *first* card dealt, pay 5 to 1. Should, for example, a Jack be dealt first followed by a seven, this seven will not count.

Hands with two sevens dealt:

In the event you are dealt two sevens in the initial deal, the payout is 50 to 1 regardless of the outcome of the game. You may decide to either split your sevens or ask for an additional card in the hope of being dealt a third seven. Should you decide on an additional card, and are dealt a third card which is not a seven, you are still paid 50 to 1 for your initial two sevens (regardless whether your hand busts or not).

If you decide to rather split your two sevens combination, you automatically receive 50 to 1 but forfeit your right to receive an additional payout should a third seven be dealt to either of your split pairs.

Hands with three sevens dealt:

Should you receive two sevens in the initial deal and are dealt a third seven, the payout depends on the colour and suits of the sevens being held.

The Payout

One seven (as the first card in the initial deal) : 5 to 1
Two sevens (in the initial deal) : 50 to 1

Three sevens - of different colour

(e.g. red, red, black) : 500 to 1

Three sevens - of the same colour

(e.g. black, black, black) : 1000 to 1

Three sevens - of the same suit

(e.g. heart, heart) : 1500 to 1

Once all players with winning 7's hands have been paid, the game continues as in classic Blackjack.

Double Bonus Blackjack_

Double Bonus Blackjack is regular Blackjack with the extra options of doubling hands that would normally be considered risky doubles if the hand wins, the double portion of the bet is paid at odds as follows:

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