

## RPL LEAGUE RULES



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This rule book is authored from "Robert's rules of Poker" and altered to accommodate specifics of the Raleigh Poker League.

'Robert's Rules Of Poker' is authored by Robert Ciaffone, better known in the poker world as Bob Ciaffone, a leading authority on cardroom rules. He acts as a rule consultant and rule drafter for several leading cardrooms. Robert's Rules Of Poker is widely regarded as the best set of poker rules in existence, and Robert Ciaffone has made the rulebook available for any person or cardroom in an effort to standardize poker rules around the world.

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## PROPER BEHAVIOR

### CONDUCT CODE

The Tournament Director will attempt to maintain a pleasant environment for all our league members and guests, but is not responsible for the conduct of any player. We have established a code of conduct, and may deny the use of our cardroom to anyone who violates it. The following are not permitted:

- Collusion with another player or any other form of cheating.
- Verbally or physically threatening any patron or employee.
- Using profanity or obscene language.
- Creating a disturbance by arguing, shouting, or making excessive noise.
- Throwing, tearing, bending, or crumpling cards.
- Destroying or defacing property.
- Using an illegal substance.
- Carrying a weapon.

### POKER ETIQUETTE

The following actions are improper, and grounds for warning, suspending, or barring a violator:

- Deliberately acting out of turn.
- Deliberately splashing chips into the pot.
- Agreeing to [check](#) a hand out when a third player is [all-in](#).
- Reading a hand for another player at the [showdown](#) before it has been placed faceup on the table.
- Telling anyone to turn a hand faceup at the [showdown](#) .
- Revealing the contents of a live hand in a multihanded pot before the betting is complete. Do not divulge the contents of a hand during a deal even to someone not in the pot, so you do not leave any possibility of the information being transmitted to an active player.
- Needlessly stalling the [action](#) of a game.
- Deliberately [discarding](#) hands away from the [muck](#) . Cards should be released in a low line of flight, at a moderate rate of speed (not at the dealer's hands or chip-rack).

- Stacking chips in a manner that interferes with dealing or viewing cards.
- Making statements or taking **action** that could unfairly influence the course of play, whether or not the offender is involved in the pot.
- Using a cell phone at the table.

## **HOUSE POLICIES**

### **DECISION-MAKING**

1. Tournament Director reserves the right to make decisions in the spirit of fairness, even if a strict interpretation of the rules may indicate a different ruling.
2. Decisions of the Tournament Director are final.
3. The proper time to draw attention to an error or irregularity is when it occurs or is first noticed. Any delay may affect the ruling.
4. A ruling may be made regarding a pot if it has been requested before the next deal starts (or before the game either ends or changes to another table). Otherwise, the result of a deal must stand. The first riffle of the **shuffle** marks the start for a deal.
5. If a pot has been incorrectly awarded and mingled with chips that were not in the pot, but the time limit for a ruling request given in the previous rule has been complied with, tournament director may determine how much was in the pot by reconstructing the betting, and then transfer that amount to the proper player.
6. To keep the **action** moving, it is possible that a game may be asked to continue even though a decision is delayed for a short period. In such circumstances, a pot or portion thereof may be impounded by the house while the decision is pending.
7. The same **action** may have a different meaning, depending on who does it, so the possible intent of an offender will be taken into consideration. Some factors here are the person's amount of poker experience and past record.

### **PROCEDURES**

1. Money and chips may be removed for security purposes when leaving the table. The establishment is not responsible for any shortage or

removal of chips left on the table during a player's absence, even though we will try to protect everyone as best we can. All removed funds must be fully restored when returning to the game.

2. Playing out of a [rack](#) is not allowed.
3. Only one person may play a hand.
4. No one is allowed to play another player's chips.
5. Pushing bets ("saving" or "potting out") is not allowed.
6. Pushing an [ante](#) or posting for another person is not allowed.
7. Splitting pots will not be allowed in any game. Chopping the big and [small blind](#) by taking them back when all other players have folded is allowed in [button games](#).
8. Insurance propositions are not allowed. Dealing twice (or three times) when [all-in](#) is permitted at big-bet poker.
9. Players must keep their cards in full view. This means above table-level and not past the edge of the table. The cards should not be covered by the hands in a manner to completely conceal them.
10. Any player is entitled to a clear view of an opponent's chips. Higher denomination chips should be easily visible.
11. Looking through the [discards](#) or deck stub is not allowed.
12. After a deal ends, dealers are asked to not show what card would have been dealt.
13. A player is expected to pay attention to the game and not hold up play. Activity that interferes with this such as reading at the table is discouraged, and the player will be asked to cease if a problem is caused.
14. A non-player may not sit at the table.
15. Speaking a foreign language during a deal is not allowed.

## **SEATING**

1. Seating is determined by random draw when paying your entry fee into the tournament. These assignments are not transferable.
2. When the tournament director merges tables, random redraw of seats and table are redrawn.
3. Merging of tables occurs as follows: Merge from 3 tables to 2, when 20 players remain in tournament. Merge from 2 tables to the final table, when 9 players remain in tournament.

## **BLINDS**

1. The dealer button is initially set at Seat #1. The two players to the left of the dealer are required to post blind bets before seeing their cards. Seat #2 is the small blind, Seat #3 is the big blind.
2. If the SB is knocked out, the button essentially goes into the empty seat. (If a player is moved to the table to balance tables, they will take that position [see rules on moving players])
3. If the BB is knocked out, then the BB moves on to the player who would have had it next and there isn't a SB on this hand. On the following hand the button would move to the empty seat. The player who was the big blind would now be SB, and the BB moves the next player.
4. When the play is down to 2 players, determine who would normally be the next BB and they will be the BB. The SB is always on the button and the other player is the BB. So pre-flop, the dealer (SB) acts first. After the flop, the dealer (SB) acts second.

## **THE DEAL**

1. The player to the right of the dealer must cut the deck before cards are dealt.
2. Additionally, the player to the right of the dealer will be shuffling the other deck of cards for the next hand. So after you deal, you then shuffle those cards to be used 2 hands from now.
3. The dealer is responsible for making sure all bets have been called before dealing cards. Also responsible for all ante's being posted, and SB/BB bets.
4. Order of the deal is as follows:
  - a. Dealer deals two cards (1 at a time) face down to each player.
  - b. Betting round 1 occurs
  - c. Dealer burns 1 card and deals 3 cards face up (the flop)
  - d. Betting round 2 occurs
  - e. Dealer burns 1 card and deals an additional 4<sup>th</sup> card face up (the turn)
  - f. Betting round 3 occurs
  - g. Dealer burns 1 card and deals final and 5<sup>th</sup> card face up (The river)
  - h. Betting round 4 occurs

5. Mucked cards can not be retrieved from the pile.
6. If a burn card or mucked card is exposed, the card is made available for viewing to the entire table.
7. If there was a bet or raise on the end, the person who made the last bet or raise shows their cards first. If it's checked, the first person to act in previous rounds shows their cards first.
8. If a player shows a better hand, he is not required to reveal his cards.

## **BETTING**

1. Check and raise is allowed.
2. The minimum bet is equal to the size of the BB.
3. The raise must always be equal to at least the size of the previous bet or raise.
4. Any player can bet all of their chips at anytime (all in). If a player throws in their Bounty Chip, this is an All In Bet.
5. Betting round 1 starts to the left of the Big Blind.
6. Betting rounds 2-4 starts to the left of the dealer.
7. Do not splash the pot. Stake your chips in front of you. Once all betting is complete, dealer should move all bets into the main pot prior to dealing next card.
8. Do not bet, check, call, raise, or fold out of turn.

## **GENERAL POKER RULES**

### **MISDEALS**

The following circumstances cause a [misdeal](#), provided attention is called to the error before two players have acted on their hands. (If two players have acted in turn, the deal must be played to conclusion, as explained in rule #2)

- (a) The first or second card of the hand has been dealt faceup or exposed through dealer error.
- (b) Two or more cards have been exposed by the dealer.
- (c) Two or more [boxed cards](#) (improperly faced cards) are found.
- (d) Two or more extra cards have been dealt in the starting hands of a game.
- (e) An incorrect number of cards has been dealt to a player, except the top card may be dealt if it goes to the player in proper sequence.

- (f) Any card has been dealt out of the proper sequence (except an exposed card may be replaced by the **burncard**).
- (g) The **button** was out of **position** .
- (h) The first card was dealt to the wrong **position** .
- (i) Cards have been dealt to an empty seat or a player not entitled to a hand.
- (j) A player has been dealt out who is entitled to a hand. This player must be present at the table or have posted a **blind** or **ante**.

2. Once **action** occurs, a **misdeal** can no longer be declared. The hand will be played to conclusion, and no money will be returned to any player whose hand is fouled. In **button game**, **action** is considered to occur when two players after the **blind** have acted on their hands. In stud games, action is considered to occur when two players after the forced **bet** have acted on their hands.

## **DEAD HANDS**

1. Your hand is declared dead if:

- (a) You **fold** or announce that you are folding when facing a **bet** or a **raise** .
- (b) You throw your hand away in a forward motion causing another player to act behind you (even if not facing a **bet** ).
- (c) The hand does not contain the proper number of cards for that particular game (except at stud a hand missing the final card may be ruled live, and at **lowball** and draw high a hand with too few cards before the draw is live).
- (d) You act on a hand with a **joker** as a holecard in a game not using a **joker**.
- (e) You have the clock on you when facing a **bet** or **raise** and exceed the specified time limit.

2. Cards thrown into the **muck** may be ruled dead. However, a hand that is clearly identifiable may be retrieved at management's discretion if doing so is in the best interest of the game. We will make an extra effort to rule a hand retrievable if it was folded as a result of false information given to the player.

3. Cards thrown into another player's hand are dead, whether they are faceup or facedown.

## **IRREGULARITIES**

1. In **button games**, if it is discovered that the **button** was placed incorrectly on the previous hand, the **button** and blinds will be corrected for the new hand in a manner that gives every player one chance for each **position** on the round (if possible).
2. You must protect your own hand at all times. Your cards may be protected with your hands, a chip, or other object placed on top of them. If you fail to protect your hand, you will have no redress if it becomes fouled or the dealer accidentally kills it.
3. If a card with a different color back appears during a hand, all **action** is void and all chips in the pot are returned to the respective bettors. If a card with a different color back is discovered in the stub, all **action** stands.
4. If two cards of the same rank and suit are found, all **action** is void, and all chips in the pot are returned to the players who wagered them (subject to next rule).
5. A player who knows the deck is defective has an obligation to point this out. If such a player instead tries to win a pot by taking aggressive **action** (trying for a **freeroll**), the player may lose the right to a refund, and the chips may be required to stay in the pot for the next deal.
6. If there is extra money in the pot on a deal as a result of forfeited money from the previous deal (as per rule #5), or some similar reason, only a player dealt in on the previous deal is entitled to a hand.
7. A card discovered faceup in the deck (**boxed card**) will be treated as a meaningless scrap of paper. A card being treated as a scrap of paper will be replaced by the next card below it in the deck, except when the next card has already been dealt facedown to another player and mixed in with other **downcards**. In that case, the card that was faceup in the deck will be replaced after all other cards are dealt for that round.
8. A **joker** that appears in a game where it is not used is treated as a scrap of paper. Discovery of a **joker** does not cause a **misdeal**. If the **joker** is discovered before a player acts on his or her hand, it is replaced as in the previous rule. If the player does not call attention to the **joker** before acting, then the player has a **dead hand**.
9. If you play a hand without looking at all of your cards, you assume the liability of having an irregular card or an improper **joker**.
10. One or more cards missing from the deck does not invalidate the results of a hand.
11. Before the first round of betting, if a dealer deals one additional card, it is returned to the deck and used as the **burncard**.
12. Procedure for an exposed card varies with the poker form, and is given in the section for each game. A card that is flashed by a dealer is treated as an exposed card. A card that is flashed by a player will play. To obtain a ruling on whether a card was exposed and should be replaced, a player should announce that the card was flashed or



exposed before looking at it. A downcard dealt off the table is an exposed card.

13. If a card is exposed due to dealer error, a player does not have an **option** to take or reject the card. The situation will be governed by the rules for the particular game being played.
14. If you drop a card on the floor out of your hand, you must still play that card.
15. If the dealer prematurely deals any cards before the betting is complete, those cards will not play, even if a player who has not acted decides to **fold**.

## BETTING AND RAISING

1. **check-raise** is permitted in all games, except in certain forms of **lowball**.
2. In **no-limit** and **pot-limit** games, unlimited raising is allowed.
3. Unlimited raising is allowed in **heads-up play**. This applies any time the **action** becomes heads-up before the raising has been **capped**. Once the raising is **capped** on a betting round, it cannot be uncapped by a subsequent **fold** that leaves two players heads-up.
4. An **all-in** wager of less than half a **bet** does not reopen the betting for any player who has already acted and is in the pot for all previous bets. A player facing less than half a **bet** may **fold**, call, or complete the wager. An **all-in** wager of a half a **bet** or more is treated as a full **bet**, and a player may **fold**, call, or make a full **raise**. (An example of a full **raise** is on a \$20 betting round, raising a \$15 **all-in bet** to \$35).
5. Any wager must be at least the size of the previous **bet** or **raise** in that round, unless a player is going **all-in**.
6. The smallest chip that may be wagered in a game is the smallest chip used in the **antes**, blinds, rake, or collection. (Certain games may use a special rule that does not allow chips used only in house revenue to play.) Smaller chips than this do not play even in quantity, so a player wanting **action** on such chips must change them up between deals. If betting is in dollar units or greater, a **fr action** of a dollar does not play. A player going **all-in** must put all chips that play into the pot.
7. A verbal statement denotes your **action** and is binding. If in turn you verbally declare a **fold**, **check**, **bet**, call, or **raise**, you are forced to take that **action**.
8. Rapping the table with your hand is a **pass**.
9. Deliberately acting out of turn will not be tolerated. A player who checks out of turn may not **bet** or **raise** on the next turn to act. An **action** or verbal declaration out of turn may be ruled binding if there is no **bet**, call, or **raise** by an intervening player acting after the infraction has been committed.
10. To retain the right to act, a player must stop the **action** by calling "time" (or an equivalent word). Failure to stop the **action** before three or more players have acted behind you may cause you to lose the right to act. You cannot forfeit your right to act if any player in front of

you has not acted, only if you fail to act when it legally becomes your turn. Therefore, if you wait for someone whose turn comes before you, and three or more players act behind you, this still does not hinder your right to act.

11. If you make a forward motion with chips and thus cause another player to act, you may be forced to complete your **action**.
12. A player who bets or calls by releasing chips into the pot is bound by that **action** and must make the amount of the wager correct. (This also applies right before the **showdown** when putting chips into the pot causes the opponent to show the winning hand before the full amount needed to call has been put into the pot.) However, if you are unaware that the pot has been raised, you may withdraw that money and reconsider your **action**, provided that no one else has acted after you. At pot-limit or no-limit betting, if there is a gross misunderstanding concerning the amount of the wager.
13. String raises are not allowed. To protect your right to **raise**, you should either declare your intention verbally or place the proper amount of chips into the pot. Putting a full **bet** plus a half-bet or more into the pot is considered to be the same as announcing a **raise**, and the **raise** must be completed. (This does not apply in the use of a single chip of greater value.)
14. If you put a single chip in the pot that is larger than the **bet**, but do not announce a **raise**, you are assumed to have only called. Example: In a \$3-\$6 game, when a player bets \$6 and the next player puts a \$25 chip in the pot without saying anything, that player has merely called the \$6 **bet**.
15. All wagers and calls of an improperly low amount must be brought up to proper size if the error is discovered before the betting round has been completed. This includes **actions** such as betting a lower amount than the minimum bring-in (other than going **all-in**) and betting the lower limit on an upper limit betting round. If a wager is supposed to be made in a rounded off amount, is not, and must be corrected, it shall be changed to the proper amount nearest in size. No one who has acted may change a call to a **raise** because the wager size has been changed.

If the dealer prematurely deals any cards before the betting is complete, those cards will not play, even if a player who has not acted decides to fold.

## THE SHOWDOWN

1. A player must show all cards in the hand face-up on the table to win any part of the pot.
2. **cards speak** (cards read for themselves). The dealer assists in reading hands, but players are responsible for holding onto their cards until the winner is declared. Although verbal declarations as to the contents of a hand are not binding, deliberately **miscalling** a hand with the intent of

causing another player to **discard** a winning hand is unethical and may result in forfeiture of the pot.

3. Any player, dealer, or **floorperson** who sees an incorrect amount of chips put into the pot, or an error about to be made in awarding a pot, has an ethical obligation to point out the error. Please help us keep mistakes of this nature to a minimum.
4. All losing hands will be killed by the dealer before a pot is awarded.
5. Any player who has been dealt in may request to see any hand that has been called, even if the opponent's hand or the winning hand has been mucked. However, this is a privilege that may be revoked if abused. If a player other than the pot winner asks to see a hand that has been folded, that hand is dead. If the winning player asks to see a losing player's hand, both hands are live, and the best hand wins.
6. Show one, show all. Players are entitled to receive equal access to information about the contents of another player's hand. After a deal, if cards are shown to another player, every player at the table has a right to see those cards. During a deal, cards that were shown to an active player who might have a further wagering decision on that betting round must immediately be shown to all the other players. If the player who saw the cards is not involved in the deal, or cannot use the information in wagering, the information should be withheld until the betting is over, so it does not affect the normal outcome of the deal. Cards shown to a person who has no more wagering decisions on that betting round, but might use the information on a later betting round, should be shown to the other players at the conclusion of that betting round. If only a portion of the hand has been shown, there is no requirement to show any of the unseen cards. The shown cards are treated as given in the preceding part of this rule.
7. If everyone checks (or is **all-in**) on the final betting round, the player who acted first is the first to show the hand. If there is wagering on the final betting round, the last player to take aggressive **action** by a **bet** or **raise** is the first to show the hand. In order to speed up the game, a player holding a probable winner is encouraged to show the hand without delay. If there is a **side pot**, players involved in the **side pot** should show their hands before anyone who is **all-in** for only the main pot.

## **TIES**

1. The ranking of suits from highest to lowest is spades, hearts, diamonds, clubs. Suits never break a tie for winning a pot. Suits are used to break a tie between cards of the same rank (no redeal or redraw).
2. An odd chip will be broken down to the smallest unit used in the game.
3. No player may receive more than one odd chip.
4. If two or more hands tie, an odd chip will be awarded as follows:

- (a) In a **button game**, the first hand clockwise from the **button** gets the odd chip.
- (b) In a stud game, the odd chip will be given to the highest card by suit in all high games, and to the lowest card by suit in all low games. (When making this determination, all cards are used, not just the five cards that constitute the player's hand.)
- (c) In high-low split games, the high hand receives the odd chip in a split between the high and the low hands. The odd chip between tied high hands is awarded as in a high game of that poker form, and the odd chip between tied low hands is awarded as in a low game of that poker form.
- (d) All side pots and the main pot will be split as separate pots, not mixed together.

## **BUTTON AND BLIND USE**

In **button games**, a non-playing dealer normally does the actual dealing. A round disk called the **button** is used to indicate which player has the dealer **position**. The player with the **button** is last to receive cards on the initial deal and has the right of last **action** after the first betting round. The **button** moves clockwise after a deal ends to rotate the advantage of last **action**. One or more **blind** bets are usually used to stimulate **action** and initiate play. Blinds are posted before the players look at their cards. Blinds are part of a player's **bet**, unless the structure of a game or the situation requires part or all of a particular **blind** to be "dead." Dead chips are not part of a player's **bet**. With two blinds, the **small blind** is posted by the player immediately clockwise from the **button**, and the **big blind** is posted by the player two positions clockwise from the **button**. With more than two blinds, the little blind is normally left of the **button** (not on it). **action** is initiated on the first betting round by the first player to the left of the blinds. On all subsequent betting rounds, the **action** begins with the first active player to the left of the **button**.

## **RULES FOR USING BLINDS**

1. The minimum bring-in and allowable raise sizes for the opener are specified by the poker form used and blind amounts set for a game. They remain the same even when the player in the blind does not have enough chips to post the full amount.
2. Each round every player must get an opportunity for the **button**, and meet the total amount of the **blind** obligations. Either of the following methods of **button** and blind placement may be designated to do this:
  - a. Moving **button** – The **button** always moves forward to the next player and the blinds adjust accordingly. There may be more than one **big blind**.
  - b. Dead **button** – The **big blind** is posted by the player due for it, and the **small blind** and **button** are positioned accordingly, even

if this means the **small blind** or the **button** is placed in front of an empty seat, giving the same player the privilege of last **action** on consecutive hands.

3. A player posting a **blind** has the **option** of raising the pot at the first turn to act. Although chips posted by the big blind are considered a bet, this option to raise is retained if someone goes all-in with a wager of less than the minimum raise.
4. In **heads-up play** with two blinds, the **small blind** is on the button.
5. A new player entering the game, will be seated in the same position from the table they previously were at and will be dealt in immediately and will post if in the small or big blind.
6. When you post the **big blind** , it serves as your opening **bet** . When it is your next turn to act, you have the **option to raise** .
7. A player who misses any or all blinds can resume play as soon as they return. Missed blinds are posted during the player absence.
8. A live "straddle **bet** " is not allowed in tournament play.

## HOLDEM

In hold'em, players receive two **downcards** as their personal hand (**holecards**), after which there is a round of betting. Three **boardcards** are turned simultaneously (called the "flop") and another round of betting occurs. The next two **boardcards** are turned one at a time, with a round of betting after each card. The **boardcards** are **community cards**, and a player may use any five-card combination from among the **board** and personal cards. A player may even use all of the **boardcards** and no personal cards to form a hand (play the **board**). A **dealer button** is used. The usual structure is to use two blinds, but it is possible to play the game with one blind, multiple blinds, an **ante**, or combination of blinds plus an **ante**.

## RULES

1. These rules deal only with irregularities. See the previous chapter, "Button and Blind Use," for rules on that subject.
2. If the first holecard dealt is exposed, a **misdeal** results. The dealer will retrieve the card, reshuffle, and recut the cards. If any other holecard is exposed due to a dealer error, the deal continues. The exposed card may not be kept. After completing the hand, the dealer replaces the card with the top card on the deck, and the exposed card is then used for the **burncard**. If more than one holecard is exposed, this is a **misdeal** and there must be a redeal.
3. If the dealer mistakenly deals the first player an extra card (after all players have received their starting hands), the card will be returned to the deck and used for the **burncard**. If the dealer mistakenly deals more than one extra card, it is a misdeal.
4. If the **flop** contains too many cards, it must be redealt. (This applies even if it were possible to know which card was the extra one.)

5. If before dealing the **flop**, the dealer failed to burn a card, or burned two cards, the error should be rectified if no cards were exposed. The deck must be reshuffled if any cards were exposed.
6. If the dealer fails to burn a card or burns more than one card, the error should be corrected if discovered before betting action has started for that round. Once action has been taken on a boardcard, the card must stand. Whether the error is able to be corrected or not, subsequent cards dealt should be those that would have come if no error had occurred. For example, if two cards were burned, one of the cards should be put back on the deck and used for the **burncard** on the next round. If there was no betting on a round because a player was all-in, the error should be corrected if discovered before the pot has been awarded.
7. If the dealer burns and turns before a betting round is complete, the card(s) may not be used, even if subsequent players elect to fold. Nobody has an option of accepting or rejecting the card. The betting is then completed, and the error rectified in the prescribed manner for that situation.

If the **flop** needs to be redealt because the cards were prematurely flopped before the betting was complete, or the **flop** contained too many cards, the **boardcards** are mixed with the remainder of the deck. The **burncard** remains on the table. After shuffling, the dealer cuts the deck and deals a new **flop** without burning a card

8. A dealing error for the fourth boardcard is rectified in a manner to least influence the identity of the boardcards that would have been used without the error. The dealer burns and deals what would have been the fifth card in the fourth card's place. After this round of betting, the dealer reshuffles the deck, including the card that was taken out of play, but not including the burncards or discards. The dealer then cuts the deck and deals the final card without burning a card. If the fifth card is turned up prematurely, the deck is reshuffled and dealt in the same manner. [See "[Section 16 – Explanations,](#)" [discussion #2](#), for more information on this rule.]
9. You must declare that you are playing the **board** before you throw your cards away; otherwise you relinquish all claim to the pot

## **NO-LIMIT RULES**

1. The number of raises in any betting round is unlimited.
2. All bets must be at least equal to the minimum bring-in, unless the player is going **all-in**.
3. All raises must be equal to or greater than the size of the previous **bet** or **raise** on that betting round, except for an **all-in** wager. A player who has already checked or called may not subsequently **raise** an **all-in bet**

that is less than the full size of the last **bet** or **raise**. (The half-the-size rule for reopening the betting is for limit poker only.)

4. "Completing the **bet**" is a limit poker wager type only, not allowed at big-bet poker. For example, if a player bets \$100 and the next player goes **all-in** for \$140, a player wishing to **raise** must make the total bet at least \$240 (unless going all-in).
5. Multiple **all-in** wagers, each of an amount too small to qualify as a **raise**, still act as a raise and reopen the betting if the resulting wager size to a player qualifies as a raise. Example: Player A bets \$100 and Player B raises \$100 more, making the total bet \$200. If Player C goes all in for less than \$300 total (not a full \$100 raise), and Player A calls, then Player B has no option to raise again, because he wasn't fully raised. (Player A could have raised, because Player B raised.)
6. a player who says "**raise**" is allowed to continue putting chips into the pot with more than one move; the wager is assumed complete when the player's hands come to rest outside the pot area. (This rule is used because no-limit play may require a large number of chips be put into the pot)
7. A wager is not binding until the chips are actually released into the pot, unless the player has made a verbal statement of **action**.
8. If there is a discrepancy between a player's verbal statement and the amount put into the pot, the **bet** will be corrected to the verbal statement.
9. If a call is short due to a counting error, the amount must be corrected, even if the bettor has shown down a superior hand.
10. Because the amount of a wager at big-bet poker has such a wide range, a player who has taken **action** based on a gross misunderstanding of the amount wagered needs some protection. A bettor should not show down a hand until the amount put into the pot for a call seems reasonably correct, or it is obvious that the caller understands the amount wagered. The decision-maker is allowed considerable discretion in ruling on this type of situation. A possible rule-of-thumb is to disallow any claim of not understanding the amount wagered if the caller has put eighty percent or more of that amount into the pot. Example: On the end, a player puts a \$500 chip into the pot and says softly, "Four hundred." The opponent puts a \$100 chip into the pot and says, "Call." The bettor immediately shows the hand. The dealer says, "He **bet** four hundred." The caller says,



- “Oh, I thought he **bet** a hundred.” In this case, the recommended ruling normally is that the bettor had an obligation to not show the hand when the amount put into the pot was obviously short, and the “call” can be retracted. Note that the character of each player can be a factor. (Unfortunately, situations can arise at big-bet poker that are not so clear-cut as this.)
11. A **bet** of a single chip or bill without comment is considered to be the full amount of the chip or bill allowed. However, a player acting on a previous **bet** with a larger denomination chip or bill is calling the previous **bet** unless this player makes a verbal declaration to **raise** the pot. (This includes acting on the forced **bet** of the **big blind** .)
  12. If a player tries to **bet** or **raise** less than the legal minimum and has more chips, the wager must be increased to the proper size. (This does not apply to a player who has unintentionally put too much in to call.) The wager is brought up to the sufficient amount only, no greater size.
  13. All wagers may be required to be in the same denomination of chip (or larger) used for the minimum bring-in, even if smaller chips are used in the **blind** structure. If this is done, the smaller chips do not play except in quantity, even when going **all-in**.
  14. In all **no-limit** and **pot-limit** games, the house has the right to place a maximum time limit for taking **action** on your hand. The clock may be put on someone by the dealer as directed by a **floorperson**, if a player requests it. If the clock is put on you when you are facing a **bet** , you will have one additional minute to act on your hand. You will have a ten-second warning, after which your hand is dead if you have not acted.
  15. Since all a player's chips may be put at risk on a hand, the house has the right to set a maximum amount for the buy-in to help control the effective size of a game.
  16. The cardroom does not condone "**insurance**" or any other "proposition" wagers. The management will decline to make decisions in such matters, and the pot will be awarded to the best hand. Players are asked to refrain from instigating proposition wagers in any form. The players are allowed to agree to **deal twice** (or three times) when someone is **all-in**. "Dealing twice" means the pot is divided in two, with each portion being dealt for separately.



## TOURNAMENTS

By participating in any tournament, you agree to abide by the rules and behave in a courteous manner. A violator may be verbally warned, suspended from play for a specified length of time, or disqualified from the tournament. Chips from a disqualified participant will be removed from play. Players, whether in the hand or not, may not discuss the hands until the action is complete. Players are obligated to protect the other players in the tournament at all times. Discussing cards discarded or hand possibilities is not allowed. A penalty may be given for discussion of hands during the play.

1. Whenever possible, all rules are the same as those that apply to live games.
2. Initial seating is determined by random draw or assignment.
3. The appropriate starting amount of chips will be placed on the table for each paid entrant at the beginning of the event, whether the person is present or not.
4. If a paid entrant is absent at the start of an event, at some point an effort will be made to locate and contact the player. If the player requests the chips be left in place until arrival, the request will be honored. The absent player will be posting blinds as if seated, then cards are folded. If the player is unable to be contacted, the chips may be removed from play at the discretion of the director anytime after a new betting level is begun or a hour has elapsed, whichever occurs first.
5. A starting stack of chips may be placed in a seat to accommodate late entrants (so all antes and blinds have been appropriately paid). An unsold seat will have such a stack removed at a time left to the discretion of the director.
6. A no-show or absent player is always dealt a hand. That player's stack will post chips for blinds and antes, and have the forced lowcard bet put into the pot at stud.
7. In all tournament games using a dealer button, the starting position of the button is determined by seat #1.
8. Limits and blinds are raised at regularly scheduled intervals.
9. If there is a signal designating the end of a betting level, the new limits apply on the next deal. (A deal begins with the first riffle of the shuffle.)
10. The lowest denomination of chip in play will be removed from the table when it is no longer needed in the blind or ante structure. All lower-denomination chips that are of sufficient quantity for a new chip will be changed up directly. Any odd amount chips will be chipped up to the next amount. Example: Removing \$25's, if the player has \$125 in chips they will receive \$200 in \$100 chips.
11. A player must be present at the table to stop the action by calling "time."
12. A player must be at the table by the action is to them in order to have a live hand for that deal.

13. As players are eliminated, tables are kept balanced. The tournament director will take a player from a table in the same position as the player eliminated. Example: Table 1 has 7 players and Table 2 has 6 players. Table 2 loses another player in the big blind position when the button is moved, the Big Blind position from Table 1 will move to table 2 to balance. Objective is to not create any advantage or disadvantage when moving.
14. As a complete table gets removed, all players will randomly select new seats and tables just as the start of the game. The tournament director will reduce tables as follows: From 3 tables to 2, when 20 players remain, From 2 tables to 1, when 9 players remain.
15. A change of seat is not allowed after play starts, except as assigned by the director.
16. New players are dealt in immediately and take over the obligations of that position, including the small blind or button position.
17. In all events, there is a redraw for seating when the field is reduced to three tables, two tables, and one table. (Redrawing at three tables is not mandatory in small tournaments with only four or five starting tables.)
18. A player who declares **all-in** and loses the pot, then discovers that one or more chips were hidden, is not entitled to benefit from this. That player is eliminated from the tournament if the opponent had sufficient chips to cover the hidden ones (A rebuy is okay if allowable by the rules of that event). If another deal has not yet started, the director may rule the chips belong to the opponent who won that pot, if that obviously would have happened with the chips out in plain view. If the next deal has started, the discovered chips are removed from the tournament.
19. You must have at least 1 chip after posting ante's to be considered a live person in tournament. If a player can't post ante & have 1 chip, they are eliminated and those chips will be put into the pot.
20. All players must leave their seat immediately after being eliminated from an event.
21. Showing cards from a live hand during the action injures the rights of other players still competing in an event, who wish to see contestants eliminated. A player in a multihanded pot may not show any cards during a deal. Heads-up, a player may not show any cards unless the event has only two remaining players, or is winner-take-all. If a player deliberately shows a card, the player may be penalized (but his hand will not be ruled dead). Verbally stating one's hand during the play may be penalized.
22. Non-tournament chips are not allowed on the table.
23. Higher-denomination chips must be placed where they are easily visible to all other players at the table.
24. All tournament chips must remain visible on the table throughout the event. Chips taken off the table or pocketed will be removed from the event, and a player who is caught doing this may be disqualified.

25. Inappropriate behavior like throwing cards that go off the table may be punished with a penalty such as being dealt out for a length of time. A severe infraction such as abusive or disruptive behavior may be punished by eviction from the tournament.
26. The deck is not changed on request. Decks change when the dealers change, unless there is a damaged card.
27. The **dealer button** remains in **position** until the appropriate blinds are taken. Players must post all blinds every round. Because of this, last action may be given to the same player for two consecutive hands by the use of a "dead button".
28. In **heads-up play** with two blinds, the **small blind** is on the button.
29. If a player announces the intent to rebuy before cards are dealt, that player is playing behind and is obligated to make the rebuy.
30. All hands will be turned faceup whenever a player is **all-in** and betting **action** is complete.
31. If multiple players go broke on the same hand, the player starting the hand with the larger amount of chips finishes in the higher place for prize money and any other award.
32. Tournament Director is not required to rule on any private deals, side bets, or redistribution of the prize pool among finalists.
33. Private agreements by remaining players in an event regarding distribution of the prize pool are not condoned. (However, if such an agreement is made, the director has the **option** of ensuring that it is carried out by paying those amounts.) Any private agreement that excludes one or more active competitors is improper by definition. No deals can be made about position of players (must play out for points and awarded winner of the event for the TOC)
34. A tournament event is expected to be played until completion. A private agreement that removes all prize money from being at stake in the competition is unethical.
35. Management retains the right to cancel any event, or alter it in a manner fair to the players.

## **RPL LEAGUE SPECIFICS**

1. Each season event must be played out to completion. No deals can be made with respect to order of knock out. Deals can be made relative to payout, but position for points and winners of events must be played out.
2. Winners of season game events receive an automatic bid to the Tournament of Champions.
3. Best Hand of the Night – must be played to the river to qualify. If after the river is dealt, if all other players fold or don't call a bet, the hand still qualifies. However, if everyone folds prior to the river card being displayed, it doesn't count. Best Hand of the Night must be

shown to the table to qualify. Additionally, both hole cards must be used to create the best hand.

4. Bounty Chips – Once you are knocked out, you are required to “cash in” your bounty chips. You can not collect and use in a future game.
5. In the event of a tied best hand of the night, the players will split the prize pool.
6. In the event a player is completely knocked out before the end of Round 3 (before the first break), they can elect to purchase a rebuy of \$5000 chips.
7. During the first break, any player who is AT OR BELOW \$1000 tournament chips, may purchase a rebuy of \$5000 chips during the break.
8. Win a seat to the WSOP – Entry fee will be paid directly to the WSOP. Entry fee will not be provided to the winner to use at their discretion.
9. Season events must have 7 players to qualify for a season game (points awarded and TOC seat won).
10. Game limited to 30 players – no wait list players to enter as players are knocked out.
11. Blind Structure posted on website ([www.RoadToTheTOC.com](http://www.RoadToTheTOC.com))
12. Payouts posted on website ([www.RoadToTheTOC.com](http://www.RoadToTheTOC.com))

### **TOURNAMENT OF CHAMPIONS REQUIREMENTS**

1. Winners of each season game are automatic qualifiers to the TOC.
2. The top 6 next scores (after winners from events are removed) are provisional qualifiers to the TOC.
3. Each qualifier must accept or decline their seat. In the event a player declines their seat, the next highest score will be offered the seat.
4. In the event you have a repeat winner in two different season games, it will extend the provisional qualifier list by 1. Example: in 10 season games, we have 1 player who wins 2 events, we would then have 9 automatic qualifiers and 7 provisional players.
5. In order to qualify as a provisional qualifier, you must play in at least 2 events.
6. In the event that there is a tie for points on the scoreboard for 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> place, both players will receive a provisional entry into the TOC.
7. There will be a last chance event the day of the TOC, where players who are league members that have played in at least 2 events, have an opportunity to play for a 17<sup>th</sup> seat at the TOC. Details on

qualifications for this event are posted on league website. All money collected for this event is added to the prize pool for the TOC. Winner receives a paid entry into the TOC as 17<sup>th</sup> player.

8. Seating of the TOC is based on POTY Standings

POTY Standing	Table	Seat
1	1	1
2	2	1
3	1	5
4	2	5
5	1	3
6	2	3
7	1	7
8	2	7
9	2	8
10	1	8
11	2	4
12	1	4
13	2	6
14	1	6
15	2	2
16	1	2

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## GLOSSARY

**ACTION:** A [fold](#), [check](#), call, [bet](#), or [raise](#). For certain situations, doing something formally connected with the game that conveys information about your hand may also be considered as having taken action. Examples would be showing your cards at the end of the hand, or indicating the number of cards you are taking at draw.

**AGGRESSIVE ACTION:** A wager that could enable a player to win a pot without a [showdown](#); a [bet](#) or [raise](#).

**ALL-IN:** When you have put all of your playable money and chips into the pot during the course of a hand, you are said to be all-in.

**ANTE:** A prescribed amount posted before the start of a hand by all players.

**BET:** The act of placing a wager in turn into the pot on any betting round, or the chips put into the pot.

**BIG BLIND:** The largest regular blind in a game.

**BLIND:** A required bet made before any cards are dealt.

**BLIND GAME:** A game which utilizes a blind.

**BOARD:** (1) The board on which a waiting [list](#) is kept for players wanting seats in specific games. (2) Cards faceup on the table common to each of the hands.

**BOARDCARD:** A community card in the center of the table, as in hold'em or Omaha.

**BOXED CARD:** A card that appears faceup in the deck where all other cards are facedown.

**BURNCARD:** After the initial round of cards is dealt, the first card off the deck in each round that is placed under a chip in the pot, for security purposes. To do so is to burn the card; the card itself is called the burncard.

**BUTTON:** A player who is in the designated dealer position. See dealer button.

**BUTTON GAMES:** Games in which a [dealer button](#) is used.

**BUY-IN:** The minimum amount of money required to enter any game.

**CARDS SPEAK:** The face value of a hand in a [showdown](#) is the true value of the hand, regardless of a verbal announcement.

**CHECK:** To waive the right to initiate the betting in a round, but to retain the right to act if another player initiates the betting.

**CHECK-RAISE:** To waive the right to bet until a bet has been made by an opponent, and then to increase the bet by at least an equal amount when it is your turn to act.

**COLLECTION:** The fee charged in a game (taken either out of the pot or from each player).

**COLOR CHANGE:** A request to change the chips from one denomination to another.

**COMMON CARD:** A card dealt faceup to be used by all players at the [showdown](#) in the games of stud poker whenever there are insufficient cards left in the deck to deal each player a card individually.

**COMMUNITY CARDS:** The cards dealt faceup in the center of the table that can be used by all players to form their best hand in the games of holdem and Omaha.

**COMPLETE THE BET:** To increase an all-in bet or forced bet to a full bet in limit poker.

**CUT:** To divide the deck into two sections in such a manner as to change the order of the cards.

**CUT-CARD:** Another term for the bottom card.

**DEAD CARD:** A card that is not legally playable.

**DEAD COLLECTION BLIND:** A fee posted by the player having the [dealer button](#), used in some games as an alternative method of seat rental.

**DEAD HAND:** A hand that is not legally playable.

**DEAD MONEY:** Chips that are taken into the center of the pot because they are not considered part of a particular player's bet.

**DEAL:** To give each player cards, or put cards on the board. As used in these rules, each deal refers to the entire process from the shuffling and dealing of cards until the pot is awarded to the winner.

**DEALER BUTTON:** A flat disk that indicates the player who would be in the dealing **position** for that hand (if there were not a house dealer). Normally just called "the button."

**DEAL TWICE:** When there is no more betting, agreeing to have the rest of the cards to come determine only half the pot, removing those cards, and dealing again for the other half of the pot.

**DECK:** A set of playing-cards. In these games, the deck consists of either:

(1) 52 cards in seven-card stud, hold'em, and Omaha.

(2) 53 cards (including the **joker**), often used in ace-to-five **lowball** and draw high.

**DISCARD(S):** In a draw game, to throw cards out of your hand to make room for replacements, or the card(s) thrown away; the **muck**.

**DOWNCARDS:** Cards that are dealt facedown in a stud game.

**DRAW:** (1) The poker form where players are given the opportunity to replace cards in the hand. In some places like California, the word "draw" is used referring to draw high, and draw low is called "**lowball**." (2) The act of replacing cards in the hand. (3) The point in the deal where replacing is done is called "the draw."

**FACECARD:** A king, queen, or jack.

**FIXED LIMIT:** In limit poker, any betting structure in which the amount of the bet on each particular round is pre-set.

**FLASHED CARD:** A card that is partially exposed.

**FLOP:** In hold'em or Omaha, the three community cards that are turned simultaneously after the first round of betting is complete.

**FLUSH:** A poker hand consisting of five cards of the same suit.

**FOLD:** To throw a hand away and relinquish all interest in a pot.



**FOURTH STREET:** The second upcard in seven-card stud or the first boardcard after the [flop](#) in hold'em (also called the turn card).

**FOULED HAND:** A [dead hand](#).

**FORCED BET:** A required wager to start the action on the first betting round (the normal way action begins in a stud game).

**FREEROLL:** A chance to win something at no risk or cost.

**FULL BUY:** A buy-in of at least the minimum requirement of chips needed for a particular game.

**FULL HOUSE:** A hand consisting of three of a kind and a pair.

**HAND:** (1) All a player's personal cards. (2) The five cards determining the poker ranking. (3) A single poker deal.

**HEADS-UP PLAY:** Only two players involved in play.

**HOLECARDS:** The cards dealt facedown to a player.

**INSURANCE:** A side agreement when someone is all-in for a player in a pot to put up money that guarantees a payoff of a set amount in case the opponent wins the pot.

**JOKER:** The joker is a "partially wild card" in high draw poker and ace-to-five [lowball](#). In high, it is used for aces, straights, and flushes. In [lowball](#), the joker is the lowest unmatched rank in a hand.

**KICKER:** The highest unpaired card that helps determine the value of a five-card poker hand.

**KILL (OR KILL BLIND):** An oversize blind, usually twice the size of the big [blind](#) and doubling the limit. Sometimes a "half-kill" increasing the [blind](#) and limits by fifty percent is used. A kill can be either voluntary or mandatory. The most common requirements of a mandatory kill are for winning two pots in a row at [lowball](#) and other games, or for scooping a pot in high-low split.

**KILL BUTTON:** A button used in a **lowball** game to indicate a player who has won two pots in a row and is required to kill the pot.

**KILL POT:** A pot with a forced kill by the winner of the two previous pots, or the winner of an entire pot of sufficient size in a high-low split game. (Some pots can be voluntarily killed.)

**LEG UP:** Being in a situation equivalent to having won the previous pot, and thus liable to have to kill the following pot if you win the current pot.

**LIVE BLIND:** A **blind** bet giving a player the **option** of raising if no one else has raised.

**LIST:** The ordered roster of players waiting for a game.

**LOCK-UP:** A chip marker that holds a seat for a player.

**LOWBALL:** A draw game where the lowest hand wins.

**LOWCARD:** The lowest upcard at seven-card stud, which is required to bet.

**MISCALL:** An incorrect verbal declaration of the ranking of a hand.

**MISDEAL:** A mistake on the dealing of a hand which causes the cards to be reshuffled and a new hand to be dealt.

**MISSED BLIND:** A required bet that is not posted when it is your turn to do so.

**MUCK:** (1) The pile of **discards** gathered facedown in the center of the table by the dealer. (2) To **discard** a hand.

**MUST-MOVE:** In order to protect the main game, a situation where the players of a second game must move into the first game as openings occur.

**NO-LIMIT:** A betting structure where players are allowed to wager any or all of their chips in one bet.

**OPENER:** The player who made the first voluntary bet.

**OPENER BUTTON:** A button used to indicate who opened a particular pot in a draw game.

**OPENERS:** In jacks-or-better draw, the cards held by the player who opens the pot that show the hand qualifies to be opened. Example: You are first to bet and have a pair of kings; the kings are called your openers.

**OPTION:** The choice to **raise** a bet given to a player with a blind.

**OVERBLIND:** Also called oversize blind. A **blind** used in some pots that is bigger than the regular big blind, and usually increases the stakes proportionally.

**PASS:** (1) Decline to bet. In a pass-and-out game, this differs from a check, because a player who passes must **fold**. (2) Decline to call a wager, at which point you must **discard** your hand and have no further interest in the pot.

**PAT:** Not drawing any cards in a draw game.

**PLAY BEHIND:** Have chips in play that are not in front of you (allowed only when waiting for chips that are already purchased). This differs from table stakes.

**PLAY THE BOARD:** Using all five community cards for your hand in hold'em.

**PLAY OVER:** To play in a seat when the occupant is absent.

**PLAYOVER BOX:** A clear plastic box used to cover and protect the chips of an absent player when someone plays over that seat.

**POSITION:** (1) The relation of a player's seat to the blinds or the button. (2) The order of acting on a betting round or deal.

**POT-LIMIT:** The betting structure of a game in which you are allowed to bet up to the amount of the pot.

**POTTING OUT:** Agreeing with another player to take money out of a pot, often to buy food, cigarettes, or drinks, or to make side bets.

**PROPOSITION BETS:** Side bets between players that are not related to the outcome of the hand.

**PROTECTED HAND:** A hand of cards that the player is physically holding, or has topped with a chip or some other object to prevent a fouled hand.

**PUSH:** When a new dealer replaces an existing dealer at a particular table.

**PUSHING BETS:** The situation in which two or more players make an agreement to return bets to each other when one of them wins a pot in which the other or others play. Also called saving bets.

**RACK:** (1) A container in which chips are stored while being transported. (2) A tray in front of the dealer, used to hold chips and cards.

**RAISE:** To increase the amount of a previous wager. This increase must meet certain specifications, depending on the game, to reopen the betting and count toward a limit on the number of raises allowed.

**RERAISE:** To [raise](#) someone's [raise](#).

**SAVING BETS:** Same as pushing bets.

**SCOOP:** To win both the high and the low portions of a pot in a split-pot game.

**SCRAMBLE:** A facedown mixing of the cards.

**SETUP:** Two suited decks, each with different colored backs, to replace the current decks in a game.

**SIDE POT:** A separate pot formed when one or more players are all in.

**SHORT BUY:** A buy-in that is less than the required minimum buy-in.

**SHOWDOWN:** The final act of determining the winner of the pot after all betting has been completed.

**SHUFFLE:** The act of mixing the cards before a hand.

**SMALL BLIND:** In a game with multiple **blind** bets, the smallest blind.

**SPLIT POT:** A pot that is divided among players, either because of a tie for the best hand or by agreement prior to the showdown.

**SPLITTING BLINDS:** When no one else has entered the pot, an agreement between the big blind and small blind to each take back their blind bets instead of playing the deal (chopping).

**SPLITTING OPENERS:** In high draw jacks-or-better poker, dividing openers in hopes of making a different type of hand. Example: You open the pot with a pair of aces. One of your aces is a spade, as are the three other cards in the hand. If you throw away the non-spade ace to go for the flush, you announce to the table, "Splitting openers."

**STACK:** Chips in front of a player.

**STRADDLE:** An additional blind bet placed after the forced blinds, usually double the big blind in size or in lowball, a multiple blind game.

**STRAIGHT:** Five cards in consecutive rank.

**STRAIGHT FLUSH:** Five cards in consecutive rank of the same suit.

**STREET:** Cards dealt on a particular round in stud games. For instance, the fourth card in a player's hand is often known as fourth street, the sixth card as sixth street, and so on.

**STRING RAISE:** A bet made in more than one motion, without the declaration of a raise (not allowed).

**STUB:** The portion of the deck which has not been dealt.

**SUPERVISOR:** A cardroom employee qualified to make rulings, such as a floorperson, shift supervisor, or the cardroom manager.

**TABLE STAKES:** (1) The amount of money you have on the table. This is the maximum amount that you can lose or that anyone can win from you on any

one hand. (2) The requirement that players can wager only the money in front of them at the start of a hand, and can only buy more chips between hands.

“TIME”: An expression used to stop the action on a hand. Equivalent to “Hold it.”

TIME COLLECTION: A fee for a seat rental, paid in advance.

TOURNAMENT: A poker competition, normally with an entry fee and prizes.

TURNCARD: The fourth street card in hold'em or Omaha.

UPCARDS: Cards that are dealt faceup for opponents to see in stud games.

WAGER: (1) To bet or raise. (2) The chips used for betting or raising.

**This chapter is authored by Robert Ciaffone. The notes are added by Joseph Smith the owner of lasvegasvegas.com.**