

How to Play No Limit Texas Hold'em

The minimum bet in No Limit Texas Hold'em is the same as the size of the big blind, but players can always bet as much more as they want, up to all of their chips.

Minimum raise: In No Limit Texas Hold'em, the raise amount must be at least as much as the previous bet or raise in the same round. As an example, if the first player to act bets \$5 then the second player must raise a minimum of \$5 (total bet of \$10).

Maximum eligible raise: The size of your stack (your chips on the table).

In No Limit Texas Hold'em, there is no 'cap' on the number of raises allowed.

The Blinds

In NL Texas Hold'em, a marker called 'the button' or 'the dealer button' indicates which player is the nominal dealer for the current game. Before the game begins, the player immediately clockwise from the button posts a forced bet, known as the 'small blind', and the player immediately clockwise from the small blind posts another forced bet, known as the 'big blind' (which is usually twice the size of the small blind). Depending on the exact structure of the game, each player may also be required to post an 'ante' (another type of forced bet, usually smaller than either blind, posted by all players at the table) into the pot.

Now, each player receives his or her two hole cards.

Player Betting Options

In NL Texas Hold'em the available actions are 'fold', 'check', 'bet', 'call' or 'raise'. Exactly which options are available depends on the action taken by the previous players. Each poker player always has the option to fold, to discard their cards and give up any interest in the pot. If nobody has yet made a bet, then a player may either check (decline to bet, but keep their cards), or bet. If a player has bet, then subsequent players can fold, call or raise. To call is to match the amount the previous player has bet. To raise is to not only match the previous bet, but to also increase it.

Pre-Flop

After seeing his or her hole cards, each player now has the option to play his or her hand by calling or raising the big blind. The action begins to the left of the big blind, which is considered a 'live' bet on this round. That player has the options to fold, call or raise.

The Flop

Now, three cards are dealt face-up on the board. This is known as 'the flop'. In NL Texas Hold'em, the three cards on the flop are community cards, available to all players still in the hand. Betting on the flop begins with the active player immediately clockwise from the button. The betting options are similar to pre-flop, however if nobody has previously bet, players may opt to check, passing the action to the next active player clockwise.

The Turn

When the betting action is completed for the flop round, the 'turn' is dealt face-up on the board. The turn is the fourth community card in NL Texas Hold'em (and is sometimes also called 'Fourth Street'). Another round of betting ensues, beginning with the active player immediately clockwise from the button.

The River

When betting action is completed for the turn round, the 'river' or 'Fifth Street' is dealt face-up on the board. The river is the fifth and final community card in a NL Texas Hold'em game. Betting again begins with the active player immediately clockwise from the button, and the same betting rules apply as they do for the flop and turn, as explained above.

The Showdown

At the end of the final betting round, if there is more than one remaining poker player, the last person to bet or raise shows his or her cards first. If there was no bet on the final round, the player immediately clockwise from the button shows his or her cards first. The player with the best five-card poker hand wins the pot. In the event of identical hands, the pot will be equally divided between the players with the best hands. NL Texas Hold'em rules state that all suits are equal. After the pot is awarded, a new game of NL Texas Hold'em is ready to be played. The button now moves clockwise to the next player, blinds and antes are once again posted, and new hands are dealt to each player.