

DIVISION 16 – ULTIMATE TEXAS HOLD’EM

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1.0 Interpretation

1.1 In these games rules, any words and expressions used that are defined in the Gambling Act 2003 have the same meaning as in the Act.

1.2 In this division, unless the contrary intention appears:

“**Ante Wager**” means the initial wager placed by a player in the Ante circle pursuant to subparagraph (a) of rule 5.1;

“**Blind Wager**” means the initial wager equal to the Ante Wager placed by a player in the Blind circle pursuant to subparagraph (a) of rule 5.1;

“**Check**” means to pass on placing a Play Wager, pursuant to rules 5.2 or 5.3;

“**Community Cards**” means cards dealt face upward which can be used by all players to complete their best possible hand;

“**Fold**”, in relation to a hand of cards, means to no longer continue with the hand;

“**Play Wager**” means an additional wager made by a player on his / her hand pursuant to rule 5.2, 5.3, or 5.4;

“**Poker value**” means, in relation to a hand of cards, the ranking of that hand as determined in accordance with section 4;

“**Trips Bonus Wager**” means an additional wager made pursuant to subparagraph (a) of rule 5.1, which is paid if the player gets 3 of a kind or higher regardless of whether he or she beats the Dealer.

2.0 Application

The rules contained in this Division, together with the general rules contained in Division 1, shall apply to the game of Ultimate Texas Hold'em.

3.0 Table Layout and Equipment

3.1 Ultimate Texas Hold'em shall be played at a table having on 1 side up to 7 sets of wagering areas for the players and on the opposite side a place for the Dealer. Each Ultimate Texas Hold'em table shall have a drop box attached to it.

3.2 The layout cloth covering the table shall bear an inscription to the effect that the "Dealer only plays with a pair or higher".

3.3 The wagering areas shall be designated as follows:

- (a) for Ante Wagers on the word "Ante";
- (b) for Blind Wagers on the word "Blind";
- (c) for Trips Bonus Wagers on the word "Trips"; and
- (d) for Play Wagers on the word "Play".

3.4 The following equipment shall also be used in the game:

- (a) 1 deck of playing cards;
- (b) 1 cutting card;
- (c) either:
 - (i) a card shoe capable of holding all of the cards used in the game,
or
 - (ii) an automatic shuffler capable of holding 2 separate decks of cards, from which the cards will be dealt; and
- (d) a discard rack capable of holding a single deck of cards.

4.0 Playing Cards and Ranking of Hands

4.1 All suits of cards shall have the same rank.

4.2 Subject to rule 4.3, cards shall rank, from lowest to highest, as follows:

- (a) 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, jack, queen, king, ace.

4.3 Hands of cards shall rank, from lowest to highest, as follows:

- (a) **1 Pair** 2 cards of the same value. A higher pair beating a lower pair. Aces shall be high;
- (b) **2 Pairs** 2 different sets of pairs. The highest pair has priority when comparing hands. If the high pairs are the same, then the low pairs are compared, and then the remaining card;
- (c) **3 of a Kind** 3 cards of the same value;
- (d) **Straight** 5 cards of any suit in sequence. An ace may be counted as high or low;
- (e) **Flush** 5 cards of the same suit, not in sequence. The value of the highest card in the hand shall decide the ranking between 2 flushes, and where the highest cards in both hands are the same value, the next card and so on;
- (f) **Full House** 3 cards of the same value and a pair (two cards of the same value). The hands take their rank from the threesome;
- (g) **4 of a Kind** 4 cards of the same value;
- (h) **Straight Flush** 5 cards of the same suit in sequence;
- (i) **Royal Flush** ace, king, queen, jack and 10 of the same suit.

4.4 Hands of the same poker value as described in rule 4.3, but consisting of different card values, shall be ranked according to the card values prescribed in rule 4.2. For example:

- (a) in the case of No Pair, the respective card values of the highest card in each hand shall determine the ranking, if these are the same the values of the next highest cards, and so on;
- (b) where 2 hands hold 1 Pair of the same card value, the respective value of the remaining cards in each hand shall determine the outcome;
- (c) a Straight consisting of king, queen, jack, beats one consisting of jack, 10, 9.

5.0 Wagers

- 5.1 Before the first card is dealt in a round each player shall make either:
- (a) an equal wager in the “Ante” and “Blind” circles; or
 - (b) an equal wager in the “Ante” and “Blind” circles and a “Trips Bonus Wager”.

An Ante Wager and Blind Wager are required to play the round.

- 5.2 After two cards have been dealt to each player and the Dealer and the five Community Cards have been dealt, the remaining cards will be placed in the discard rack and the players may pick up their cards and either:

- (a) check; or
- (b) place a Play Wager which is three or four times their Ante Wager in the area marked “Play”.

- 5.3 After the Dealer reveals the first three Community Cards, the players may either:

- (a) check; or
- (b) place a Play Wager which is two times their Ante Wager in the area marked “Play”.

- 5.4 After the Dealer reveals the final two Community Cards, any players that have not yet made a Play Wager may either:

- (a) fold; or
- (b) place a Play Wager which is equal to their Ante Wager in the area marked “Play”.

- 5.5 All Ante, Blind, Trips Bonus, and Play Wagers shall be made by placing chips, with the smaller denomination chips on the top, in the appropriate wager area of the layout.

- 5.6 Orally declared wagers shall be accepted only when accompanied by chips before “No more bets” is called.

- 5.7 At the Casino Operator’s discretion, a player may place wagers at two adjacent betting positions during the round of play.

- 5.8 Only 1 wager shall be accepted on any 1 wagering area.

5.9 Winning Ante Wagers and Play Wagers shall, subject to rule 5.12, be paid as 1 to 1.

5.10 Winning Blind Wagers and Trips Bonus Wagers shall, subject to rule 5.12, be paid in accordance with one of the following pay-tables:

	Paytable One		Paytable Two		Paytable Three		Paytable Four	
	Trips Bonus	Blind	Trips Bonus	Blind	Trips Bonus	Blind	Trips Bonus	Blind
Royal Flush	50 to 1	500 to 1	50 to 1	500 to 1	50 to 1	500 to 1	50 to 1	500 to 1
Straight Flush	40 to 1	50 to 1	40 to 1	50 to 1	40 to 1	50 to 1	40 to 1	50 to 1
4 of a kind	30 to 1	10 to 1	30 to 1	10 to 1	30 to 1	10 to 1	20 to 1	10 to 1
Full House	9 to 1	3 to 1	8 to 1	3 to 1	8 to 1	3 to 1	7 to 1	3 to 1
Flush	7 to 1	3 to 2	6 to 1	3 to 2	7 to 1	3 to 2	6 to 1	3 to 2
Straight	4 to 1	1 to 1	5 to 1	1 to 1	4 to 1	1 to 1	5 to 1	1 to 1
3 of a kind	3 to 1		3 to 1		3 to 1		3 to 1	

5.11 The Casino Operator shall display which pay table under rule 5.10 is in operation and that pay table shall be used for all Ultimate Texas Hold'em tables.

5.12 The payout odds on all wagers shall be subject to any maximum payout limit set by the Casino Operator. The amount of such limit shall be approved by the Secretary for Internal Affairs and be displayed on a notice at the table.

5.13 Except as permitted by these rules, once the Dealer has called "No more bets" no player shall:

- (a) make any wager; or
- (b) handle, alter or withdraw any wager until a decision has been made and implemented with respect to the wager.

5.14 No player shall handle, alter or withdraw a losing wager.

6.0 Opening of Table for Gaming

6.1 After receiving the designated number of decks of cards at the table pursuant to rule 3.4, both the Dealer and the Game Supervisor shall sort and inspect the cards independently of each other.

6.2 After the cards have been inspected they shall be spread out face up on the table for visual inspection by the first player or players to arrive at the table. The cards shall be spread out in horizontal fan-shaped rows according to suit, in sequence within the suit.

- 6.3 After the first player has or players have had an opportunity to inspect the cards visually, the cards shall be turned face down on the table, stacked and shuffled.
- 6.4 When an automatic shuffler is used:
- (a) each of the decks of cards shall be turned face down on the table, chemmy shuffled, stacked and riffle shuffled separately within the deck by the Dealer;
 - (b) each of the decks shall then be loaded into the automatic shuffler and shuffled separately by it; and
 - (c) the cutting card shall be used in accordance with approved procedures.

7.0 Shuffle and Cut of Cards

- 7.1 The cards shall be shuffled so that they are randomly intermixed within the deck:
- (a) immediately before the start of play;
 - (b) at the end of each round;
 - (c) at the recommencement of play following any period during which the table has been vacant;
 - (d) at the direction of a Game Supervisor or Casino Supervisor where there is reason to suspect that the randomness of the shuffle has been compromised; and
 - (e) if any card has been exposed prior to the cards entering the shoe.
- 7.2 Where a card shoe is used, after the cards have been shuffled, a casino employee shall cut the cards once, place them on the cutting card and then place all of the cards in the shoe for the commencement of play. No player may ever cut the cards.
- 7.3 The Dealer may at any time check and verify that the deck of cards or any of the decks, as the case may be, contain the correct number of cards, namely 52.
- 7.4 The Casino Operator may, after any round of play, direct that the cards be replaced, in which event the new cards shall be checked, shuffled and cut in accordance with sections 6 and 7.

8.0 Dealing the Cards

- 8.1 Immediately before the start of each round of play and after all Ante Wagers, Blind Wagers and any Trips Bonus Wagers have been made, the Dealer shall:
- (a) call “No more bets”; and then
 - (b) starting on his/her left and continuing clockwise around the table, deal the cards.
- 8.2 All cards shall be dealt face down.
- 8.3 When a card shoe is used the cards shall be dealt as follows:
- (a) 1 card to each wagering area containing an Ante Wager and Blind Wager and then 1 card to the Dealer; followed by
 - (b) a further card to each such wagering area and the Dealer, so that each player and the Dealer have 2 cards each; followed by
 - (c) 5 Community Cards in the centre of the table.
- 8.4 When an automatic shuffler is used the cards shall be dealt as follows:
- (a) 2 cards at a time to each wagering area containing an Ante Wager and Blind Wager; followed by
 - (b) 2 cards to the Dealer; followed by
 - (c) 5 Community Cards in the centre of the table.

9.0 Betting Round

- 9.1 After the cards have been dealt the players may pick up their cards and decide whether to check or to make a Play Wager three or four times the value of their Ante Wager.
- 9.2 When players have made their Play Wagers (if any), the Dealer shall proceed to turn over the first three Community Cards.
- 9.3 Players who have not already made a Play Wager may decide to either check again or to make a Play Wager two times the value of their Ante Wager.
- 9.4 The Dealer shall proceed to turn over the remaining two Community Cards.
- 9.5 When all five Community Cards are revealed, players who have not yet made a Play Wager can either fold or make a Play Wager to the same value of their Ante Wager.

- 9.6 A player who decides to fold shall place his/her cards face down on the table. The Dealer shall then, in relation to each player who has folded:
- (a) collect the Ante Wager, Blind Wager, any Trips Bonus Wager, and the player's cards;
 - (b) individually spread out the cards, face down, and count them; and
 - (c) place the cards in the discard rack.
- 9.7 For all remaining players, the Dealer will turn over his / her two cards. Each player and the Dealer's two cards will be combined with three of the Community Cards to make the best five-card poker hand.
- 9.8 When handling the cards, players shall at all times ensure that the cards remain on or above the area of the table. The cards must not be removed from the table.
- 9.9 Except as expressly permitted by these rules, players may not exchange cards, nor exchange, communicate, nor cause to be exchanged or communicated any information regarding their respective hands.

10.0 Final Settlement

- 10.1 Where the Dealer's hand is not 1 pair or higher, the Dealer does not qualify. Starting with the player on the Dealer's right, the Dealer shall:
- (a) expose each player's cards, signal a push for the ante and return the Ante Wager to the player;
 - (b) pay the Play, Blind and Trips Bonus Wagers in accordance with rules 5.9, 5.10, and 10.2; and
 - (b) collect, count and place the player's cards in the discard holder.
- 10.2 Where a player has made a Trips Bonus Wager at the beginning of the round and has received a 3 of a Kind or higher, the Dealer shall leave the particular cards face up on the table and those cards shall not be collected or discarded until the payout on the hand has been made.
- 10.3 If the player receives a 3 or a Kind or higher, the Trips Bonus payouts are made regardless of whether the hand wins, loses or pushes.
- 10.4 If the Dealer's hand has a poker value of a pair or higher, the Dealer reconciles the hands of those players who remain in the game. Starting with the player on the Dealer's right, the Dealer will:

- (a) bring the player's cards into the "work area" between the Dealer's hand and the Trips Bonus Wager area and reveal the player's cards;
- (b) determine the player's best 5-card poker hand by combining the player's 2 cards with 3 of the 5 Community Cards;
- (c) compare the player's hand with that of the Dealer; and
- (d) announce the value of the player's hand and whether it wins or loses.

10.5 A player's hand shall:

- (a) win if it has a higher poker value than that of the Dealer's hand;
- (b) subject to rule 10.3, lose if it has a lower poker value than that of the Dealer's hand; and
- (c) subject to rule 10.3, constitute a stand off if it has a poker value equal to that of the Dealer's hand.

10.6 Subject to rule 10.3, if a player's hand loses the Dealer shall:

- (a) collect, in order, the Play, Ante and Blind Wagers;
- (b) determine whether the Trips Bonus Wager qualifies and pay according to rule 5.10; and
- (c) collect, count and place the player's cards in the discard holder.

10.7 If a player's hand wins, the Dealer shall:

- (a) pay the Ante Wager and Play Wager on the hand in accordance with rule 5.9;
- (b) pay the Blind Wager in accordance with rule 5.10;
- (c) pay any Trips Bonus Wager in accordance with rule 5.10; and
- (d) collect, count and place the player's cards in the discard holder.

10.8 Subject to rule 10.3, if a player's hand constitutes a stand off, the Dealer shall:

- (a) pay any Trips Bonus Wager in accordance with rule 5.10;
- (b) collect, count and place the player's cards in the discard holder.

11.0 Irregularities

- 11.1 If a player fails to comply with rule 9.9, the Casino Operator may declare the player's hand void, in which event any Ante Wager, Blind Wager, Play Wager and Trips Bonus Wager made by that player shall be void.
- 11.2 If an incorrect number of cards is dealt to any player or to the Dealer this shall constitute a misdeal.
- 11.3 If an exposed card is dealt this shall not constitute a misdeal. The Dealer shall turn the card over and continue dealing, subject to rules 11.4 and 11.5.
- 11.4 If a card is exposed in error to the Dealer's hand this shall constitute a misdeal.
- 11.5 If more than 1 card is exposed in error during the dealing of the cards this shall constitute a misdeal.
- 11.6 If a player exposes 1 or more cards in his/her hand, this shall not constitute a misdeal, subject to rule 11.1.
- 11.7 Subject to rule 11.4 and notwithstanding rule 11.5, if the Dealer exposes 1 or more cards in his/her hand in error before all of the players have made a decision in relation to their bet wagers, the players will be given the option to make a Play Wager or to fold.
- 11.8 Subject to rule 11.9, if, before all cards are dealt, it is discovered that cards have been dealt to a wagering area without any wager, the Dealer shall collect all the cards, count them, reshuffle and re-deal.
- 11.9 If it is discovered that a complete hand has been dealt to a wagering area without any wager, the cards in that hand shall be counted and placed in the discard rack and the game shall then continue.
- 11.10 If it is discovered that the deck in use at the table does not contain 52 cards, the round shall constitute a misdeal and be void.
- 11.11 Subject to these rules, in the event of a misdeal, all wagers affected by the misdeal shall be void. In the event of the entire round being void the hands shall be re-dealt after the players have had an opportunity to change their Ante Wager and Blind Wager.
- 11.12 If a player makes a wager and is dealt a complete hand but is not present at the table to make a decision on that hand, the player shall be deemed to have folded and wagers shall be forfeited.
- 11.13 If the Dealer collects a player's cards before the player has decided whether to make a Play Wager, check, or fold, the player's hand shall be reconstructed.