

Have fun reading my book.
 I sure had fun writing it.
 May the tips and strategies help you play
 well in the casino.

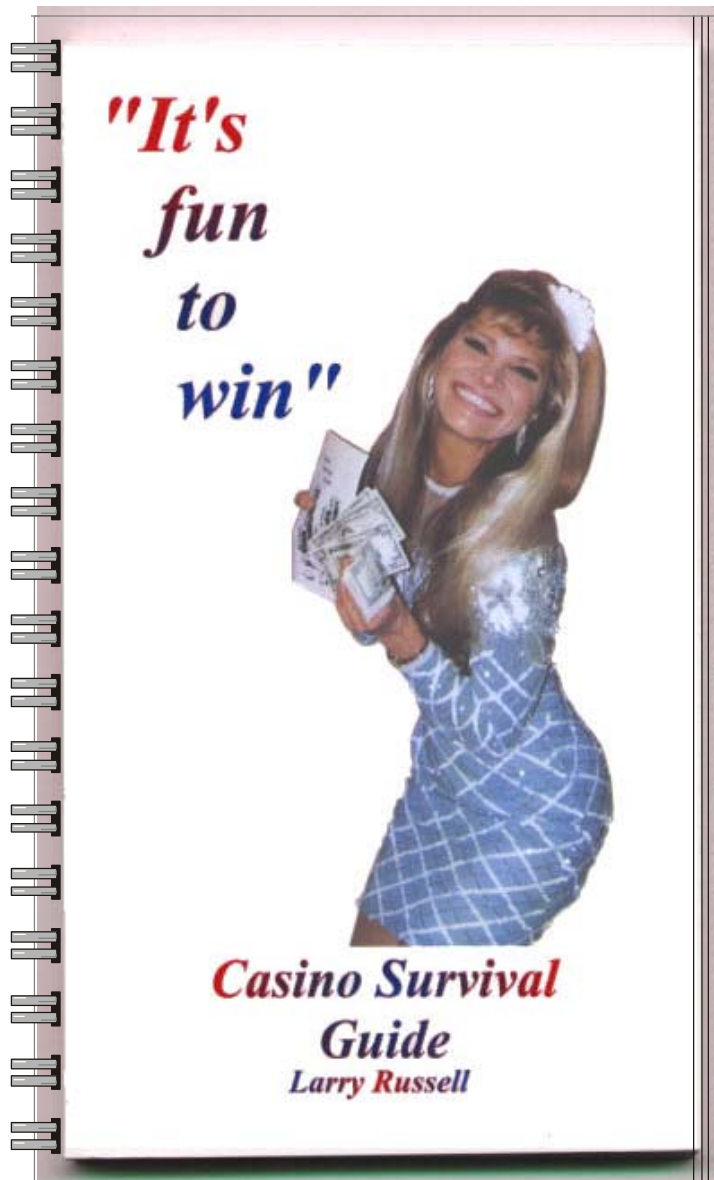
When you are finished... and have the
 knowledge to be an expert on casino
 gaming... it might be time to raise your play
 to the next level.

Take a few minutes and read about the
 LPRSystem.

Go to: www.lprsystem.com

I've played it for over ten years.
 My friends play it...
 My father (now 85) still plays the Mini-
 System.
 And we win!

Thanks and enjoy,
 Larry Russell



Larry Russell

That Larry Russell would be fascinated by the odds and ratios necessary to win in the gaming industry is no surprise to those who know him.. His love of mathematics has prevailed since college, where such was his major at the University of Denver.

With an early background in marketing, advertising, sales management and entertainment, Larry was constantly subjected to communicating and interacting with others, a definite necessity for success in the gaming industry.

For the last twenty years, Larry worked extensively in the varied facets of the operations within the casino, and then, on the other side of the tables, as a full time, professional player.

After teaching dealers across North America, how best to win for the casino, on the one hand, and then conducting seminars for the player, on the methods needed in order for them to win, Mr. Russell realized there was a void and a need for communicating what he learned through the school of hard knocks.

It was during a forty day stint of rain in Washington State that Mr. Russell finally started to condense his years of compiled notes, giving us a great tool in order to get the most advantage and entertainment in the rapidly expanding business of gaming.

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Pocket Size

Casino Survival Guide

This is your “No Holds Barred”, straight scoop casino player’s survival guide. Every fact and figure has been proven mathematically. Keep an open mind. Some of this information will contradict what you have learned in the past and much of it will contradict what casino dealers or pit supervisors might tell you. Even though their intentions are to be helpful, they are advising you with information learned from within the casino industry. What they are saying is probably riddled with myths and misconceptions.

My objective is to teach you to be a Smart Gambler. That is, to be aware of what is going on in the casinos, how to evade the many traps, take advantage of the best situations, try some new games, have the best shot at returning home with a profit and still have lots of fun on your casino trip.

“It’s Fun To Win!” Casino Survival Guide

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Revised 2002 by L.P. Russell

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In twenty-five years of being in and around the casino industry, I’ve realized a few things:

First, as a pit supervisor, I watched people walk into my casino with no idea of how to defend themselves against the pitfalls of casino gambling.

Most of the information that was available was either incorrect or so complicated that the recreational casino player had no fun playing the games.

Later, as a professional player, I learned how the percentages really worked, both for me and for the casino. “Luck” had nothing to do with it. Mathematics is the true judge of a gambler’s success and discipline is the final ingredient necessary to win.

It was when I was playing against the casinos that I realized what most casino players did and didn’t need. What they didn’t need is to take months, even years, of study, practice and much dedication to learn how to beat the casinos. It can be done, but it is not easy, nor is it a “get rich quick” plan.

Most of us go to the casinos to have a vacation, release some tension and have a blast...not to work. What we need is some

good information and a plan. From now on you will be the “Smart Gambler”, play the games you’ve wanted to try and always make the best bets on all the good games.

Take this Casino Survival Guide



There are enough neon signs in Las Vegas, no need to advertise one’s inexperience in the casino.

with you on your trip. Review it on the plane or in the car. Be fully armed for the adventure and the battle that lies ahead. Yes, take it into the casino.

Ready?... let’s get to it!

How the casinos make money.

This is what a friend of mine, a casino shift boss told me one day:

"There is a price we have to pay for any type of entertainment. It doesn't matter if we are paying for greens fees at the golf course, the price of a theater ticket or the fee we have to pay to play in the casino. Entertainment costs money!"

Sure, that's true. When we go to the golf course or theater, we do pay for our ticket before we start. But the casinos work it a little differently.

Imagine if at the casino entrance there was a booth where we had to declare how much money there was in our pockets and give the casino 20% of our cash up front.

Would you go in? I wouldn't. Don't worry, there will never be a booth like that, because the casinos don't want 20% of your money, they want it all!

What the casinos do is disguise their entertainment fee. It is built into the game so players don't realize they're paying it. It's called "Vigorish" or "PC", a built-in house advantage on every bet made. The PC, or house advantage, on casino games ranges

from below a percentage point to over 25% per bet. Tough to beat a 25% game!

To help explain how PC works, let's first look at a game that has no house advantage, the old "Coin Flip" Game. You bet on heads and I bet on tails.

Who will be ahead after 10,000 flips of the coin? We would be pretty even. In the long run there would be no profit for either side. Obviously, there is no coin flip game in the casino.



If there were, it would probably be set up like this. We bet \$10 on

heads, the house has tails.

When tails comes up, the house takes our \$10. When we win with heads, the house pays us \$9.

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Would you play this game? Probably not because it's too easy for the player to see the house taking it's 10% fee.

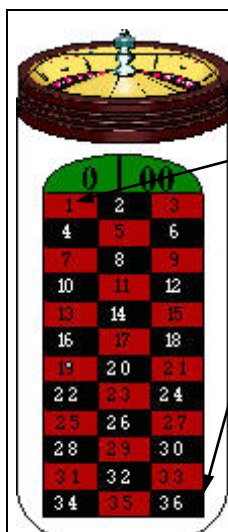
There is a simple formula for figuring the PC on most games. Take the amount the house should have paid if they were paying us according to the true odds, which in our coin flip game would be \$10, and divide this amount into the amount we were shorted from true odds, $\$10 - \$9 = \$1$. We come up with a house advantage of 10% ($10 \text{ into } 1 = .10 \text{ or } 10\%$).

Uh Oh. It's STORY TIME!

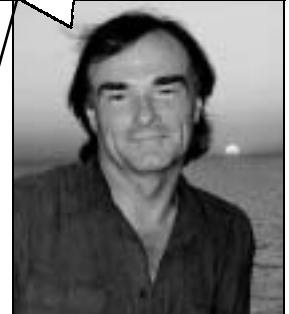
It happened one balmy night in the Bahamas. After sampling a sumptuous buffet, my parents were strolling through a casino when my mother stopped suddenly and placed a chip on the Roulette table. This was one of those European style square chips like the ones you see in the James Bond movies. She placed her chip on number 36...

You know what happened. The ball dropped into slot 36.

As they were walking away from the table, my father asked, "Why did you put your chip on number 36?". She answered, "If I had bet it on number 1, I would have only won one chip! I wanted to win 36 chips..."



Yo! Ma. These bets both pay thirty-five to one.



I can say "Yo" because my parents live near Philadelphia.

Mother did not know that when the ball falls into any of the 38 slots she gets paid 35 to 1. The next seminar I do near my parent's home, my mother will have a front row seat.

...now back to the lesson.

Let's look at a game where the PC is well disguised. The Roulette wheel has 36 red or black numbers, 1 through 36. When we bet a dollar on any number, let's say 26, and the ball falls in 26, they will pay us \$35, plus the dollar we bet, for a total of \$36...

If there are 36 possible outcomes and we end up with \$36 each time our number is rolled, we have an even game. There is no house advantage.

But...the Roulette wheel does not have 36 slots. It has 38. The casino has added 0 and 00 slots to the wheel. (Some Roulette wheels have only one zero. Still too high a PC, 2.70%) Now there are 38 possible outcomes. When our number hits we should be paid 37 to 1 (true odds) for a total of \$38.

But, the casinos only pay 35 to 1, a total of \$36. They have shorted us 2 units from true odds. Divide the amount we've been shorted (2) by the total we should have collected at true odds (38) and you find out that the PC on Roulette is 5.26%. Always. It never varies. "Luck" has n-o-t-h-i-n-g to do with it. If you play Roulette long enough, you will go B-U-S-T-E-D!

Here's an interesting thought. If everyone who went to the casinos made only one bet, win or lose, the casinos might just go broke, or, at least, make a whole lot less money.

Why?

Say we go to the casino with \$500. We make one \$500 bet on a game with a 10% house advantage. Win or lose, it's the only bet we make.



There is approximately a 50% chance of winning the bet. But, in the long run, with millions of people making that one bet, the House makes an average of 10%, or \$50, from each player that walks through the door. But that's all!

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How do most people play? With that same \$500, make \$5 bets. After making 100 bets, the house will make its 10% which leaves us with \$450. Now, keep playing. After the next 90 bets, the house makes its 10% (\$45). Now, we have \$405. Next time, \$364.50. And so on, and so on, until all we have left is the shirt on our backs, maybe.

If everyone made only one \$500 bet, the most the house would average is \$50 per player. But, the games are designed so that bankrolls keep getting replayed and each time they are, the house whittles away at our gambling stake, until we have little or nothing left. Pretty sneaky!

Realize, we are talking about percentages over the long term. Any one player can beat a particular game on any day.

Most casinos are open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. With millions of people playing, the percentages even out.

As long as there are people around the tables, the casinos know they will get their percentage, eventually.



How much do they make?

Now let's get into the House's advantage on all the major casino games and find out how much the hourly fee is to play each of them.

The Hourly Fee chart, on page 19, gives us a comparison of the dollar per hour cost to play a certain game. The figures are based on the average number of plays per hour on each game.

The far right column compares all the games on an equal basis; same number of plays per hour, 50, and the same bet size, \$5.

On a game like Blackjack, we might play 60 or more hands in an hour. In Keno, where they run a game every 5-6 minutes, there might only be 10-12 games per hour. The hourly rate may be less on keno, but only because fewer games are played every hour. Avoid high PC games like Keno. So, what does all this mean?

Here's an example.

We're going to the ball game. There are two seats available, same row, right next to each other. The one on the left costs \$56.

The one on the right is \$23. We'll enjoy the game from either seat because they have about the same view. Here's the tough question... Which one should we buy?

Obviously, the less expensive one. This principle certainly applies to which bets we should make in the casino.

Let's look at the Hourly Fee Chart to relate this example to the casino entertainment fees. On the crap table there is a bet called "Place the Five". This bet will cost about \$56 an hour for a \$25 bettor. Right next to it is the bet called "Place the Six". It will cost about \$23 an hour with a \$25 bet. Which bet provides more entertainment value? Actually, we'll get more "Bang for our Buck" with "placing" the six because more sixes than fives are rolled. AND IT COST LESS THAN HALF AS MUCH PER HOUR!

Compare your favorite bet to the others. For a \$5 Roulette player, the hourly entertainment fee is \$11.84. That's for a player who only bets one \$5 chip per spin of the wheel. Most players put about five chips out per spin. When they do, the entertainment fee grows to over \$59 per hour. Try something new. Switch to a lower house advantage game, like Baccarat. For a

\$5 bet, we'll only pay about \$4.35 per hour. Plus, we get to play more hands because each hand takes less time.



Sometimes it is worth it to buy the more expensive seat...Just not at the tables!

Switch to any bet where the fee is less than one bet per hour.

To find those GOOD BETS, let's look at the "bet size" column on the Hourly Fee Chart under the \$25 bet. Any of the dollar values that are less than \$25 indicate that this is a good bet. (Ignore Keno. The amount listed, \$12.06, is for only 12 plays per hour.)

In order to get an "over the long run"

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comparison, look at the column on the far right. All the bets are on an equal comparison. Each is based on the same number of plays per hour and a \$5 bet. Only bets with an hourly rate that is less than \$5 are good bets. (There is a possible exception which we will discuss in the "Craps Traps" section.)

Now you can play three different games with up to seven good bets. That leaves you plenty of ways to have great action without losing control of your bankroll!

The casino industry has created a high class fantasy land for us to enjoy. Just like any successful business, it costs the casino millions of dollars to accommodate and satisfy the customer. Taxes, wages, mortgages, decorations, utilities and promotions are not free. Paying a fee for enjoying such quality service is justified. We just don't want to overpay for our entertainment.

Remember, the casinos do not build 20 story luxury hotels based on Luck. Luck has nothing to do with it. It's all cold, hard percentages. Which leads us to the next topic... The Traps.

Hourly Fee Chart					
Game	Plays/ Hour	PC(%)	Cost/ Hour		All at 50 Bets/Hr.
			\$0.25	\$1	\$5.00
Slots					
1 coin	240	10.00%	\$6.00	\$24.00	\$25.00
3 coins	190	2.00%	\$11.40	\$15.00
		8.00%	\$11.40	\$45.60	\$60.00
			\$1.00	\$25.00	\$5.00
Roulette	45	5.26%	\$2.37	\$59.18	\$13.15
Keno	12	21.00%	\$2.52	\$63.00	\$52.50
Big 6	50	20.33%	\$10.17	\$254.13	\$50.83
Baccarat	70	1.24%	\$0.87	\$21.70	\$3.10
Craps					
Pass/Come	60	1.41%	\$0.85	\$21.25	\$3.53
1x odds	60	0.848%	\$0.85	\$21.25	\$3.53
2x odds	60	0.606%	\$0.85	\$21.25	\$3.53
Dn't Ps/Cn	60	1.40%	\$0.84	\$21.00	\$3.50
Field	202	5.55%	\$11.21	\$280.20	\$13.86
Place 6/8	61	1.51%	\$0.92	\$23.10	\$3.78
Place 5/9	56	4.00%	\$2.22	\$56.00	\$10.00
Place 4/10	50	6.66%	\$3.33	\$83.25	\$16.65
3 or 11					
Any Crap	202	11.11%	\$22.44	\$561.60	\$22.78
Hard 4/10	50	11.11%	\$5.55	\$138.62	\$22.78
Hard 6/8	61	9.09%	\$5.55	\$138.62	\$22.73
Big 6/8	61	9.09%	\$5.55	\$138.62	\$22.73
Any 7	202	16.67%	\$33.67	\$841.84	\$41.68
Blackjack					
Guessing	60	10.00%	\$6.00	\$150.00	\$25.00
Basic					
Strategy	4deck	0.65%	\$0.39	\$9.75	\$1.63

The Traps

There are more myths, misconceptions and "traps" about casino gambling than there are slots in Nevada. Over the years, the industry has created excuses for customers who lose their money so they'll come back when they have more to lose. Here are a few of my favorites.

Who gets the credit?

When players win, who takes the credit. "I played really well and won \$xxx!" Or, when they lose, "I was doing ok until... (blame the dealer, blame the other players, blame the heat, blame the cold, blame the booze, blame the position of the moon, the color of your underwear, etc.). Seems like the one thing we forget to blame is the fact that the percentages are in favor of the House. We are supposed to lose our money. We all know it, but it's more fun to make excuses.

Most players know that the casino is supposed to win. I know this because of most players' answers to several statements I occasionally make. They inevitably start an

interesting and, sometimes, quite animated conversation. When I tell people I've played Blackjack for a living, their usual response is "So, you're a gambler". And, my immediate response is "No, I never gamble" followed by a smile, knowing, because of their puzzled looks, that this will involve a long discussion.

When using an advanced card counting technique, the percentages do fall into the player's favor.

The explanation starts by asking the following questions and usually results in the same responses.

Q: "Do the casinos gamble?"

A: "No."

Q: "Why not?"

With some occasional prompting, comes the answer...

"Because they have the advantage."

Absolutely correct! The math will win out. If there is an advantage on every bet made, the side with the advantage must come out ahead over time.

Now I reverse the situation and ask:

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"If I have an advantage on every bet I make in the casino, am I gambling?"

A: "Yes."

But the answer should be "No"!

Mathematics shows no favoritism. It doesn't recognize the difference between the house or the customer. Mathematics works the same for everyone.

Since the casinos have an advantage on every bet made, they are not gambling. It must also be true that if, because of knowledge of the correct strategies, I have a mathematical advantage on every bet made, I'm not gambling, either! Even though most people will admit that the House is not gambling because they have the advantage, some people just cannot accept the fact that the math works the same for both sides.

Gamblers have many excuses for losing. But now we know the real cause. Blame the House Advantage for gambling losses. Now, we can even approximate how much the "Entertainment Fee" will be on the next trip to the casinos by using the Hourly Fee chart.

The hot dealer syndrome.

"I lost all my money because the dealer got 'hot' and I didn't move to another table". We've all heard this one.

What we are seeing with "hot" or "cold" dealers is just the natural swings that occur in any game... the percentages are at work.

When you flip a coin, it doesn't always go heads-tails-heads-tails. In two flips of a coin you have these four possibilities:

The first flip is a head followed by a head or a tail. Or, the first flip is a tail followed by a head or a tail. These are the only possible outcomes for two flips of a coin: heads-heads; tails-tails; heads-tails; tails-heads.

So, in a 50-50 game, the dealer would win two in a row once, we would "win one-lose one" two times and we would win two in a row once. We would all break even. (L-L, L-W, W-L, W-W)

When a dealer gets "hot" it is just the math evening out. Remember, the house uses the same math we do. With no consideration for their PC, the house has the same chance of winning so many bets in a row, in so many hands. For fun, list the heads and tails

possibilities for three in a row. Start with heads-heads-heads and go to tails-tails-tails.

We have a one in eight chance of winning three in a row, but, so do they! The Law of Averages states that in 128 bets there will be one streak of 7 in a row. So, when the house wins seven in a row, we just experienced the math evening out to the 1 in 128 chance of 7 in a row happening.

You would think most people who work in a casino should understand that luck has nothing to do with it. But, amazingly, most of them do not. They have fallen prey to the myths and misconceptions that have been perpetuated form within the industry.

Consider the story of the casino shift boss who was having a losing night and had all the dealers stand on their left foot while dealing because it was "luckier". This really happened in a major casino!

Another casino supervisor told me she once worked for a shift boss who would throw a penny under each table every night for luck!!!

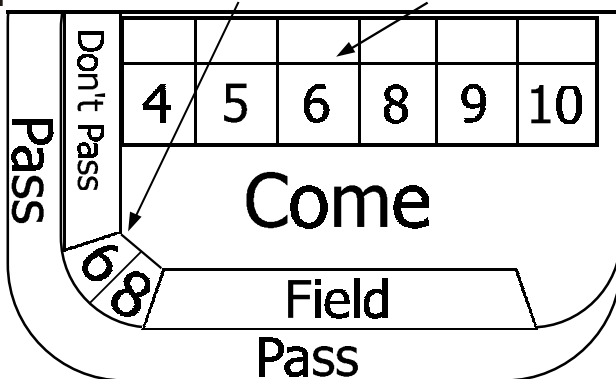
Superstition, serendipity, chance or luck, whatever label one places on it - it's really mathematics at play.

Craps Traps.

One crap trap is relatively simple, the other, more involved.

The first is a good example of choosing between a good bet and a bad bet. Corner Red is the name for the 6 & 8 that are right on the corner of the crap table near the pass line. They are very easy to reach and the numbers are red. When you bet the "big 6 or 8" on the corner and a 6 or 8 is rolled before a 7, you win even money (i.e. if we bet \$5, we win \$5).

**Same Bet! Roll a 6 (or 8) before a 7.
"Big Six...9.09% Place 6...1.51%**



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The chances of rolling a 6 or an 8 on the dice are the same, five out of 36. (Refer to the Wedge in the craps section.) The chances of rolling a 7 are six out of 36. More sevens will come up than sixes at a ratio of 6 to 5. But on this bet, we are paid even money, \$6 for a \$6 bet. The PC is 9.09%.

There is another bet that is the same except for the payoff. You may "Place" the 6 or 8. Give \$6 to the dealer and say "Place the 6". When a 6 is rolled before a 7, you win; 7 before a 6, you lose. Same probabilities as the Corner Red bet, 6 to 5. But now you get paid \$7 for a \$6 bet. Same bet as the "Big 6" but a payoff closer to the 6 to 5 true odds...the PC is 1.51%.

On which bet will your money last longer? We can see, by checking the Hourly Fee chart, that Placing the 6 or 8 is the better value by far!

Crap Trap #2...

The following contradicts what many sources of gaming information have been instructing over the years. I discovered it while working out the Hourly Fee Chart about ten years ago. Look at the chart for the Pass Line bet with and without single or

double odds.

Remember, the casinos will never give you something for nothing. The hourly rate for all three of these is exactly the same!!! How can this be when the PCs for the three bets are so different?

This is one of the most subtly disguised traps of all time. The PC on the Pass Line with double odds goes all the way down to .606%. That comes out to 61 cents per \$1000 bet. That's pretty close to 50-50. So where's the trap?

We go to the casino with a limited bankroll. It's the aim of the casino to take it away from us. Our objective is to keep it and add to it.

Let's go to the casino with \$500. We will make \$10 bets. There are 50 bets in our bankroll. If we only make Pass Line bets, no odds, we can get "stuck", or 50 bets below even, before going broke.

Next, let's make \$10 bets on the Pass Line and take double odds.

First, we need to figure out how many bets are in our \$500 bankroll?

There are 36 possible outcomes on the first, or “come out”, roll. There will be an immediate decision 1/3 of the time, win or loss, with a 2-3-7-11 or 12. (12 out of 36 possibilities. See the Wedge.) The other 24, or 2/3 the time, a Point will be established and we may take the double odds bet. So, 2/3 of the time, the bet will be \$30 not \$10. Our bankroll is still \$500 but our average bet size is larger. This increases our probability of ruin or losing our bankroll.

What is the average bet size? In 66 come out rolls, 22 will be \$10 bets, no odds, and 44 will be \$30 bets, with 2x odds. So...

$$22 \times \$10 = \$220$$

$$44 \times \$30 = + \$1320$$

$$\begin{aligned} & \$1540 \text{ divided by } 66 = \\ & \$23.33 \text{ as the average bet size.} \end{aligned}$$

Divide our average bet- \$23.33- into our \$500 bankroll. We have 21.4 bets.

This means the casino only has to get "hot" enough to get us down 22 bets “below even” to get all of our bankroll and make room for the next player.

The bottom line is the casino doesn't care who's playing. It still makes the same with or without Pass Line odds. They could give 10x odds and still make exactly the same per hour. But, with the odds bet, the house might get the whole enchilada, mucho rapido! And we have no “Shirto”!



If we're not careful, they'll grab the shirt right off our back!

What to do? If you're going to play odds, make the Pass Line bets smaller. With a \$5 bet and 2x odds the average bet is \$11.67. If you usually bet \$25, lower your Pass Line bet to \$10. Then there should be a

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sufficient number of bets in your bankroll to get through the negative swings.

“But they play so bad.”

This is generally directed to the Blackjack players. How many times have you become so upset because someone at your table was playing badly that you switched to another table? This is exactly what the casinos want you to do!

On the other hand, how many times have you switched tables when you were winning almost every hand and there was a "bad" player at the table. Probably never.

We only notice bad players when they seem to be costing us money. Also, most complaints are directed towards the last, or third base, player. How about the first or second position player? They are less noticed but also make mistakes.

Who says that those players are making mistakes, anyway? I, personally, have made plays at the Blackjack table that have made less knowledgeable players scream.

In my early days of counting cards against a single deck game, there was a play, made only when the count was high enough, where we, believe it or not, split two ten count cards! The other players didn't know I was making the correct play according to the system I was using. They were bringing out the lynching rope. I was labelled the “bad” player, for making the ultimate Blackjack taboo, splitting two tens, even though I was playing a much more advanced system than the average player realized.

Avoid criticizing another's play. The strategy that player is using may be correct for the system being played.

from now on, you will have a great basic strategy for any type of Blackjack game. Just remember, let's not get smug and look down upon players who do not have the same information as we do.

There is no need to do any research. The correct basic strategies are included in the Blackjack chapter. Learn them and practice them before going to the casino.

Now that we know the correct basic strategy for every type of Blackjack game, what to do about those players who don't
..... Absolutely nothing!

It makes no difference how anyone else at the table plays!

The only way other people play can affect the outcome of our game is if we let it. Watching the way other people play might tempt us to change our strategy because the "bad" player just caught our "winning" card. Other's tactics cannot change the overall outcome of the game. Those who believe it does are playing right into the casino's hands because, to the house's delight, at least they will have an excuse for losing. There will always be those who play differently. Don't change your play to accommodate anyone. Ignore them!

There is a way to prove that only the way we play our own hand matters.

As we all know, when a Blackjack hand starts, everyone, including the dealer, gets two cards. One of the dealer's cards is face-down, the "hole card," the other is face-up, the "upcard". The value of the dealer's upcard will determine how we will play our hand.

In our example, we are going to give the dealer the same upcard every hand. Let's say it's a 5. Leave the 5 as the dealer's



upcard but change the hole card every hand. Deal to six player spots.

Play hands with NO variation from the correct basic strategy. At the end of 10,000 hands, we would have recorded that the dealer has gone over 21 or "busted", 41.74% of the time.

Now, do exactly the same exercise but play all the hands opposite to the basic strategy. Instead of standing, hit 16 vs 5, double on hard 19, even split 10's. Always play the dealer's hand according to the standard casino rules.

Guess what the dealer's bust percentage will be after 10,000 hands...

Exactly the same...41.74%

This means it makes no difference how anyone else plays. It doesn't change our percentages in any way, shape or form. Only the way we play our own hand matters.

I'll give you one more example. Card counting, or keeping track of the high and low cards, can give an advanced player information that can be used to gain an advantage over the house. The main reason for counting cards is to identify an excess of large cards that have not yet been played.

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Large cards are good for the player because there will be more Blackjacks and bonus opportunities. Small cards are good for the dealer because the dealer will bust fewer times when an excess of small cards is available.

It doesn't matter how they play...

I was in Atlantic City. There were a few people watching three buddies having an obviously great time playing Blackjack. Their only strategy was to have a blast.

The onlookers were laughing because these guys were hitting at the wrong time, standing too soon and of course, started splitting lots of tens.

Big cards are good for the player. Since these players were suddenly getting lots of ten count cards to split, there must have been an excess of high cards left in the deck.

Opportunity was a'knockin'... I jumped right in there. One astounded onlooker almost ripped my shirt trying to hold me back from the certain "doom" of playing with these "bad" players.

Nonetheless, I won about eight hands in a row, had a fun time laughing with these party animals and we all traded "high-fives" as I cheerfully went on my way with a pocketful of chips.



Remember, only the way you play matters!

"I only take money I can afford to lose."

As a personal favor, rephrase this one. "Afford to Lose" is quite oxymoronic.

The "break-even" fib.

This one we all have heard often. "I do pretty well in the casinos. I usually break even after paying for the trip."

If 90% of the players were breaking even, there would be no casinos. We now know there is a cost for entertainment in the casino. Ours is less than most because we are Smart Gamblers. We won't break even or win every time. But, we can be absolutely sure we're getting the most "Thrills per Bill" on our casino adventures.

Always insure a blackjack.

What is Insurance? Even the name misdirects us as to what this bet really means.

When the dealer's upcard is an Ace, a player can "insure" any hand against loss to the dealer's Blackjack if, in fact, there is a ten under the Ace.

To take Insurance, we would place another bet equal to half your Blackjack bet in the Insurance betting area. If the dealer has Blackjack, you win 2 to 1 on the Insurance bet, but lose the Blackjack bet. You break even or "save" your bet. If the dealer does not have Blackjack, you lose the Insurance bet and play out the Blackjack hand.

Blackjack, 21 in the first two cards, pays 3 to 2 for the player unless the dealer also has 21 in the first two cards. Ties are called 'Pushes' and no chips change hands. If you have Blackjack and the dealer shows an Ace up, you can say that you want to get paid "Even Money" before the dealer looks under the Ace for a ten. This way, the Blackjack will always win even money, whether the dealer has Blackjack or not.

Most of the people in the casino will encourage you to take advantage of this bet because the player always collects money. Great marketing job. Even a casino shift manager believed that it was a smart bet... until hearing this explanation:

When having an ace and ten, or any other card combination, and the dealer shows an ace up, on what is the player guessing when making an Insurance bet?

Are we guessing that the dealer has Blackjack? No! We already know one of the dealer's cards, the Ace. So, the only thing we are guessing is what card is under the dealer's Ace. We would now be playing the "Guess the Ten in the Hole" Game.

If the guess is correct and there is a ten in the hole, we would get paid 2 to 1. That's it. The bet has ABSOLUTELY NOTHING to do with our Blackjack hand.

A casino could play the "Guess the Ten in the Hole" game on a separate table as an entirely independent game. No one would play because it's too easy to see it as a trap when this bet is not disguised as part of the game of Blackjack.

Such a trap is easy to see. What are the odds of a ten being under that Ace?

In a deck of cards, there are 16 ten count cards and 36 other count cards. The ratio of other counts to ten counts is 36 to 16, or 2.25 to 1 against a ten showing up. This is true no matter how many decks are in play.

When guessing correctly, we would win 2 to 1. The correct payoff is 2.25 to 1. The PC is about 8%, depending upon what

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cards are in our hand.

Should we insure our Blackjack? Better yet, should we ever take insurance? No! As a basic strategy player, never bet on the "Guess the Ten in the Hole" game.

"I always quit when I'm ahead".

There is only one way we can be sure to quit when we're ahead. First, we have to get ahead. Then, we can never go back!

Your favorite casino game does not know if you play seventy days for only an hour a day, or ten hours a day for a week.

Go back to our Coin Flip game. When we flipped the coin 10,000 times, did it matter whether we flipped it 10,000 times in one day or 1,000 times a day for ten days?

No, it didn't. Heads and tails would still have come out even.

Let's say we played 1,256 hands of Blackjack on our last trip to the tables. When we go back on our next trip, will the first Blackjack hand we play be #1 or #1257?

It will be #1257. Our Blackjack game never ends. We can stop for a while,

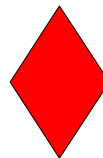
but the game will pick up right where we left off.

Percentages have great memories. They remember every player. Only a rare few persons I have known, in all my years of gaming, have actually lived up to the "quit when I'm ahead" statement. They went to the casino, made a big "score", invested their winnings wisely and never went back to the casino.

There are countless 'M's... myths, misinformations and misconceptions... about casino gaming.

Just remember, only play the good bets, be wary of most advice and enjoy the entertainment to the hilt..

It's a Great Show!



How to get a comp. (A Freebie)

“Comp” stands for “Compliments of the House”. Any player can get a comp. In most cases all you have to do is ask. If you're playing any game and you get hungry, do not be afraid to ask the nearest supervisor for a meal. Pit bosses love to take out their gold pens and scribble their initials on things, especially to accommodate a customer.

Want to try for a room? Again, all you have to do is ask....and prove to the casino it would be worth their while. Before you go on your trip, call the executive offices of your favorite casino. Ask them for their requirements for receiving an RF&B comp (Room, Food & Beverage). They will ask you several questions. Here's a scenario;

When would you like to visit?

The 17th of next month.

How many people?

Two.

What do you like to play?

Craps.

What bets do you like?

Pass line and some hard ways.

What limits do you like to play.

I'm a green chip player.

(Green are usually \$25 chips)

I'm sure we can accommodate you. We will require a minimum of 4 hours of play per day....



Very few Pit Bosses would growl at giving a comp.

You have your comp. Everyone's happy, including the casino. For they know they will benefit from their investment. How much? Let's look at the Hourly Fee chart to get the following figures.

\$25 Pass line with odds	\$21.25 per hour
\$25 Hard eight	\$138.62 per hour
	\$159.87 per hour
	x 4 hours
Average Loss	\$639.48 per day

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You are now monitored - that is, you are on the casino's computer. Plus, they know that a craps player will usually make other bets, too.

They will rate your play, actually logging how many hours you play, how many chips you buy, how many chips you cash in and the way you play.

You get an \$80 room and \$50 worth of food in return for the \$600+ per day spent gambling. Pretty good return on their investment.

Its amazing how loudly the deluded gambler brags about always being comped to a “free” penthouse suite. We know better. Nothing is free in a casino.

Sorry, casinos don't very often comp smart gamblers! Since, from now on, we will only be making good bets, don't expect to get those big comps. But you can get a few meals, if you ask for them.



How to play the games.

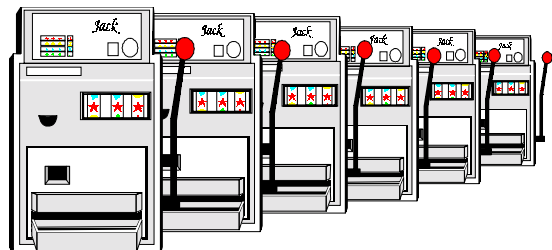
I'll briefly mention those “other” games, Roulette, Keno, The Slots, Pai Gow Poker, The Big Six or Wheel of Fortune (Sorry, no Vanna), Red Dog and any other game that will part anyone from their bankroll, very quickly indeed. Was that sufficiently brief?

The object for most of us is to go and have some fun in the casinos. So try all the games, once.

However, there is no point in me teaching anyone something which I cannot recommend. It is impossible to be a smart gambler when the odds against you are just too great, and they are in these games.

“Warning... playing those high percentage games all day long may cause that casino player's dreaded malady:

Bankrollis Disappearus!



Let's go over the basics of the three good games: Craps, Blackjack and Baccarat.. (as of 1-31-02 SOME video poker machines are included in the good Bets... Only on their %, not their degree of playing excitement! More research is being done.)

Craps.

People avoid this game because it seems confusing, very fast and most people don't want to make themselves look foolish by making a mistake when they try it.

It's a status thing to know how to play all the bets on the crap table. Players tend to flaunt their knowledge by making all these different bets, not realizing that most of them are in the "bad" bets category.

There are about 27 different bets on a crap table. Only three categories of these bets fall into the realm of good bets: Pass & Come (these are the same), Don't Pass & Don't Come (these are the same) and Placing the 6 or 8 (these are the same).

One thing to remember is that these bets are all independent. Consider each a separate game.

The one bet that makes it appear that they are inter-dependent is the Pass Line bet. When a Pass Line bet ends by making the

point, all the other bets continue as before.

But, when the Pass Line ends with a loss (7), all the bets end. So, when a 7 is thrown after a point has been established, all bets come to a conclusion.

At this point, the dice are passed left to a new shooter. The shooter is the player who gets to toss the dice. You do not have to throw the dice. You can pass them to your left. But why not? It's fun to fling'em down the table.

To better understand how the game works, we need to understand the chances of rolling the different numbers. There are two dice, with six sides each, numbered 1 through 6. Add the two face up sides together to get the total number. The lowest number is 2. The highest is 12.

How many times will each number be rolled? There is only one way to have a total of 2, a 1 on one die and a 1 on the other. There are two ways to roll an 11, a 5 on one die and a 6 on the second or a 6 on the first and a 5 on the second.

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If you list all the possibilities, you have a wedge shaped diagram of all the 36 different possible ways the dice will roll.

Here Comes the Wedge...

The Wedge

#	Ways dice can roll.	Total
2	1-1	1
3	1-2, 2-1	2
4	1-3, 3-1, 2-2	3
5	1-4, 4-1, 2-3, 3-2	4
6	1-5, 5-1, 2-4, 4-2, 3-3	5
7	1-6, 6-1, 2-5, 5-2, 3-4, 4-3	6
8	2-6, 6-2, 3-5, 5-3, 4-4	5
9	3-6, 6-3, 4-5, 5-4	4
10	4-6, 6-4, 5-5	3
11	5-6, 6-5	2
12	6-6	1
	Total	36

Notice which number will be rolled most often? Seven. It comes up 6 out of 36 rolls. You should also notice that the top and bottom half of the diagram mirror each other. We see that 2 and 12 have the same number of possibilities. So do 3 and 11, 4 and 10, 5 and 9 and 6 and 8.

Here's a tasty tidbit of trivial chimera. If you add the top and bottom of a die, you always come up with 7. If a 6 is on top, a 1 will be on the bottom. If you make a ten with 4-6, the bottom of the dice will read 3-1. So, when the point is four but we roll a ten, and someone yells "Turn 'em over", they're not talking about our eggs.

Pass and Come bets.

Pass and Come bets are exactly the same bet, except they are made at different times. You could actually eliminate the Pass Line bet and just have the Come bet. With the Pass Line, players feel more organized because they all make the same bet at the same time. Also, the casinos can put this bet at the outside of the table layout so the players can easily reach it.

The pass line bet works like this. If on the first roll of the hand a 2, 3 or 12 is rolled, the Pass Line loses. The dealers collect our money. If the first roll is a 7 or 11, we win the hand and the dealers pay us even money on our bet. If a 4, 5, 6, 8, 9 or 10 is the first roll, that number, called our point, must be rolled again before a 7 is rolled.

Roll that number again, we win. Roll a 7, we lose. After a point is established on the first roll, no other numbers, except our point number and 7, affect our bet. The 2, 3, 11 and 12 only count on the first roll of a hand.

The Come bet is exactly the same. If we make a Come bet when the shooter is about to make the first roll of the hand, the dealer will move your bet to the Pass Line. It's the same bet. If you make it before the shooter has established a point, it goes on the Pass Line. You can make a Come bet any time. You can have only one Pass Line bet. But you could have as many as six Come bets on the table at once.

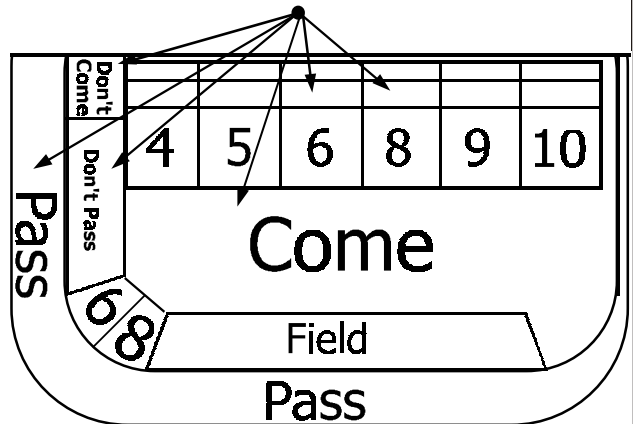
The same rules apply to the Come bet. Roll a 7 or 11 on the first toss, you win. A 2, 3 or 12 on the first roll, you lose. With a 4, 5, 6, 8, 9 or 10 on the first roll, to win, that number must be rolled again before a 7.

We can take odds on our Come bets just like we do on Pass Line bets. Just remember, if you play odds, lower your initial bet size to avoid the odds "trap".

"Should I turn my Come bet odds "off" on the Come Out roll?"

No, because every bet is a separate game. It doesn't matter what else is happening on the table, the percentages are still the same on every roll for winning our Come bet.

These are the good bets.



When the shooter makes the Pass Line point, a new Pass hand starts. The dealers will automatically turn off your odds unless you tell them to let them work on the Come Out roll. Let's say you have a Come bet with odds on 6. The odds of rolling a 7 before your 6 are always 6 to 5 (see the Wedge). The dice don't know that it's a Come Out roll. Why turn them off?

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Perhaps the previous explanation should have been included in the Myths section because it contradicts what most players believe to be correct. I didn't want to confuse the non craps players, so it's here.

The Don'ts.

The Don't Pass and Don't Come are the opposite of the Pass and Come bets. Just like the Pass and Come bets, the Don't Pass and Don't Come are the same bet except for when and where they are placed.

If a 7 or 11 shows on the first roll, you lose. If a 2 or 3, but not the 12, are rolled first, you win. If the casino allowed us to win when a 12 was rolled, the Don'ts would be about a 50-50 bet. Casinos don't like 50-50. To keep their advantage, a 12 on the first roll is a tie or push. No chips are won or lost.

If on the first roll a 4, 5, 6, 8, 9 or 10 is rolled, the Don't player wants to see a 7 before the point number repeats. The Don'ts fall into the category of good bets. But if you're going to the tables to have fun, you will probably enjoy hootin' and hollerin' with all the other players who are betting the Pass side.

Here's the Nutshell version...

PASS OR COME	
<i>When the 1st roll is:</i>	<i>The result is:</i>
2, 3 or 12	an automatic loss
7 or 11	an automatic win.
4,5,6,8,9 or 10	the number must be rolled again before a 7 is rolled. No other numbers matter.

DON'T PASS OR DON'T COME	
<i>When the 1st roll is:</i>	<i>The result is:</i>
2 or 3	an automatic win.
12	Push or tie. No result
7 or 11	an automatic loss.
4,5,6,8,9,or 10	a 7 must be rolled before the number repeats

Placing the 6 or 8.

We can walk up to the table anytime and make a good bet. It doesn't matter what part of the "hand" is going on. Here's how to do it.

Put \$6 out on the table. Tell the dealer to "Place the 6 (or 8)". The dealer will place the bet on the square with the #6. Now, if a 6 is rolled before a 7, we win. If a 7 is rolled before the 6, we lose. No other numbers matter.

The PC on this bet is 1.51%. Why? How many ways are there to roll a 7?(6 ways)

How many ways are there to roll a 6? (5 ways)

There is a 6 to 5 chance of a 7 rolling before a 6. When a 6 rolls before a 7 we are paid \$7 for the \$6 bet. If the house paid according to true odds, we would be paid \$6 for a \$5 bet. But, the casino will never pay at true odds, so they pay 7 to 6. This translates into a 1.51% house advantage. This is a good bet ...try it.

Take the plunge! You may have stood in the casino and watched and wondered about what was going on at the crap table. Now you can walk up to the table and enter the fray. But, caution...



C'mon Eleven!

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Craps is a very quick game. Start with just a Pass Line bet. Add some of the other good bets to your repertoire as you become comfortable with how quickly the game moves.

Remember, no matter how exciting the game gets, with all the hollerin', screamin', shoutin' and unbridled gambling passion, don't make any of those other, high PC bets. It will be tempting to make a few Hard Way or "YO Eleven" proposition bets, but refrain. Your pocketbook will thank you!



Blackjack or "21"

Uh Oh! Here's a casino game where we have to think. Not what we wanted to do on our vacation. So most people don't, even when they play Blackjack.

Decisions must be made after the hand has started. If we make the correct decisions, the PC on Blackjack is the lowest of all games.

If we make the wrong decisions or make them based on inaccurate information or play guesses or hunches, we will go immediately to the front of the "Big Comp" line and the casino will write us love letters begging us to return... soon!

Each player is dealt two cards and the dealer gets two. One of the dealer's cards is face up, so the players can see it. What the other players have does not affect our play. We are trying to beat the dealer, not the other players.

Just about any Blackjack player can explain the mechanics of the game, so let's not spend time with that. Every casino has a booklet on how to play the games. Don't be afraid to ask for one.

Here is a brief definition of the terms used in Blackjack.

- Basic Strategy:** The mathematically correct way to play each hand against any dealer's up card.
- Hit:** The request of another card. You may continue to hit as long as you do not go over 21.
- Bust:** When you draw a card that puts you over 21. You lose your bet even if the dealer ends up going over 21.
- Stand:** When your decision is to not draw another card.
- Double Down:** With certain totals in the first two cards, double your bet and get only one card.
- Split Pairs:** Taking any two cards of the same value and separating them into two hands with your original size bet on both. The hands are played independently.
- Stiff Hand:** A hand where one more card can put you over 21. A stiff hand would be 9-7.
- Soft Hand:** Aces can count one or eleven. They can only count as 11 when the total of all other cards is 10 or less. An Ace 7-5 can only count as 13. An Ace 5-2 is either 8 or 18. An Ace-Ace-7 is either 9 or 19.
- Hard Hand:** Any hand that does not have an ace that can be counted as 11. 10-6, 6-2-5-A, 4-2-7 and A-A-3-9 are hard totals.

Basic Strategy

There is a correct way to play each Blackjack hand. Mathematicians have proven this to be true for decades.

"When I have this hand and the dealer's upcard is (?), what do I do... hit, stand, double down, split or have another double Scotch? Well, mathematicians can help with four of those choices.

The following misconception could have been moved to the Myths Section, also.

Have you ever heard this statement made by the players, dealers and even the Pit Bosses at your table? "You've got to hit that fourteen against a dealer's ten.... assume the dealer has a ten in the hole". Most of us know what happens when we "ASSUME".

Remembering the Insurance bet myth, what are the odds of a ten count card being in the hole?

Thirty six others vs. sixteen ten count cards, equals a ratio of 2.25 to 1 (non tens to ten count cards). The odds are 2.25 to 1 that there will not be a ten count in the hole. So, if we "assume" there is a ten in the hole, we will be correct 1 out of 3.25 times. Not the odds we need to make this a good bet.

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Blackjack Basic Strategy

Here is the correct way to play every hand against the dealers' upcard. Use this strategy in games with four or more decks where the dealer stands on all 17's and double down on any two cards is allowed.

The variations for a one deck game are included at the bottom. A few of the variations made when holding only certain cards are listed, also.

ALWAYS HITS

A-A 8-8	Always Split
A-8 A-9 10-10	Always Stand
5-5 10-10	Never Split

Always Hands are "No Brainers" When you have A-A, you don't have to think! Always split them no matter what type of game you're playing. "Never " hands are treated just like "Always" hands. When you have 10-10, K-J, Q-10 or any other twenty count-NEVER, NEVER, NEVER do that nasty deed!!!

HARD TOTALS

When I Have	Stand vs. Dealer's	Hit vs.
12	4-5-6	all others
13 14 15 (16)	2-3-4-5-6	7-8-9-10-A

These are the hands we all love to hate! Remember... THESE ARE LOSING HANDS!!! You will lose over 50% of the time with these hands. What we're trying to do is lose the fewest times possible. (With 3 or more cards, STAND on 16 vs. 10)

SOFT TOTALS

When I Have	Double Down vs. Dealer's	Hit vs.
11	All Except	(A)
10	All Except	10-A
9	3-4-5-6*	All Others
A2 A3	5-6*	All Others
A4 A5	4-5-6*	All Others
A6	3-4-5-6*	All Others
A7	3-4-5-6**	9-10-A

Double Down is allowed on the first two cards unless the casino allows you to double after a split. Ask if you can, then note the changes in Splits.

(Double on 11 vs. A if the dealer hits soft 17)

* Where double down is only allowed on 10 or 11, hit these hands...
** Stand on these.

When	Split	Hit
2-2	4-5-6-7	All Others
6-6	3-4-5-6	All Others
7-7	All Except	8-9-10-A
9-9	All Except

Some casinos will allow you more than two splits. Ask how many times you can resplit. Also, ask if you can double after the split and add these changes.

Where you can double after the split,

remember to split these combinations...
2-2 vs. 2 & 3 44 vs. 5 & 6
3-3 vs. 2 & 3 6-6 vs. 2

Single Deck Variations

Stand on	Hit	Double	Split	If double after the split.
7-7 vs 10	10-3 vs 2	9 vs 2	2-2 vs 3	6-6 vs 7
8-4 & 7-5 vs 4		5-3 & 4-4 vs 5 or 6		6-6 vs 2
		A-6 vs. 2 A-2, A-3 vs 4		7-7 vs 8

Basic strategy is a result of figuring out how all the different cards combine to make certain totals, including busts.

In other words, if we have a ten and a six, how do all the twos combine with the threes, fours, fives, etc. to make the different totals for the player and the dealer. The results give us the best way to play each hand to get the most wins or, in the case of our sixteen, the least losses against a particular dealer's upcard.

Don't worry about how it was done. This math becomes relatively complex. The most well respected mathematicians in the Blackjack world have done the research for us. Just make sure you always play according to the basic strategy charts and although many players and casino personnel may make suggestions to contradict it, facts do not lie.

Different casinos offer different types of options with their game. Some casinos allow you to double down on any two cards, others only on ten or eleven. Some hit a dealers soft 17, others stand on all 17's. Very few allow you to double down after you split. Some still offer "late" surrender, but don't be concerned about that option.

The Basic Strategy charts give you a four or more deck strategy and the variations for a one deck game. There are changes for two, six and eight decks, but very few. So, unless you plan to become a professional player, there is no need to remember up to ten basic strategies. I know from experience how difficult it is to remember them all when playing in many casinos in various locations.

The mistakes we could make trying to remember all the different Basic Strategies will cost us far more than the few times our one chart does not list a particular variation.

Some other tips...Remember, other players can play however they want, and they will. We are not going to let it affect us.

It's O.K. to count on your fingers. I've seen dealers doing it. It's when you remove your shoes that other players might wonder. Great way to clear the table!

When you have one or more Aces in your hand, take your time. The dealer will help you count your hand if you want.

It doesn't matter where you sit at the table. But, the farther to the left you sit, the more time you have to decide how to play.

You may use your pocket size Basic Strategy chart at the table. But try not to slow the game too much.

Don't constantly switch tables unless you ate too much at the buffet and it's the only way you'll get your daily workout.

Wear a watch. Casinos have very few clocks. Get some sleep in your "non-comped" room.

Blackjack is a game of percentages. Always play your hand according to the charts. Never guess! Never play hunches!

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Baccarat

Here are some great reasons to play Baccarat! You can play while sitting down. It's easier to play than Craps or Blackjack. You can amaze your friends by spelling it correctly. And, you will be up against a PC of only 1.24 %, overall; that is, 1.17% on Bank bets, 1.37% on Player bets.

In Baccarat, each hand starts with two cards and sometimes a third card will be drawn. By following the charts below, you will learn how the draws are made. But in the casino, all you must decide is whether to place the next bet on Player or Bank (Heads or Tails). There are NO variations or decisions on drawing another card, as in Blackjack.

How to play:

Cards 2 through 9 are worth their face value, Ace is worth one and 10, Jack, Queen and King are worth 0.

The best hand equals a total of 9. The next highest is 8, then 7-6-5-4-3-2-1-0. The "Tens" digit is dropped when adding card totals together, i.e. 9 and 8 = 17 but are counted as 7, King and 5 = 15 but are counted as 5, Ace and 3 = 4. The Ace = 1.

Though Baccarat tables can seat up to twelve players, only four cards are dealt to start the hand. Cards are not dealt to each player, as in Blackjack.

The shoe holds all the decks and is passed around the table. The player with the shoe deals out the cards. This keeps the participants involved. (On the small tables, only the dealer touches the cards.)

Think of Baccarat as a big Coin Flip game. Twelve people sit around the table. In front of the dealer are two squares. One says "Heads" (Bank) and the other "Tails" (Player).

Before the dealer tosses the coin in the air, the participants put their bets in either the Heads betting area or in the Tails betting area. Then we make our bet for the next toss.

Let's say it comes up Heads. The dealer will pay even money on all the bets in the Heads area and collect all the bets in the Tails area. Then we make our bet for the next toss!

The game we play in the casino is very similar to the Coin Flip game. From now on, when we mention "Bank Hand", we refer to a square in front of the dealer where

the cards are placed for the “Heads” (Bank) bets. “Player” will refer to the square in front of the dealer where the “Tails” (Player) cards go.

The Player and the Bank hands each get two cards, dealt Player, Bank, Player, Bank. Depending on the totals in each hand, a third card may be dealt to each hand. There are fixed rules for drawing a third card. These rules never vary.

Player Draws	
1st two cards total	
1-2-3-4-5-10	Draw a card
6-7	No Draw
8-9	Natural, Bank does not draw

This chart lists the rules for drawing a third card.

Banker draws		
1st two cards total...	Draws when Players third card is...	No draw when Players third card is...
3	All but 8	8
4	2-3-4-5-6-7	1-8-9-10
5	4-5-6-7	1-2-3-8-9-10
6	6-7	1-2-3-4-5-8-9-10
7	No draw	
8-9	Natural...Player does not draw	
If Player takes no card, Bank stands on 6.		

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The player hand acts first. When either hand shows a natural, i.e 8 or 9 in the first two cards, there are NO draws. If the hands end up equalling the same number, it is a tie. Ignore all ties. No money changes hands.

Here are some examples.

Players have 5 (K-5). Remember, $10+5=15$, but we drop the 10's digit for a total of 5. Bank has 3 (A-2). Players rules say that when the first two cards total 5, draw a card...Players third card is a 4. The total is 9. Bankers rules say that when the Bank's first two cards total 3, draw a card when the Player's 3rd card is a 4. Bank draws a 5 for a total of 8. Player wins, 9 over 8.

Players have 4 (8-6). Bank has 8 (8-Q). There are no draws when either hand has 8 or 9 in the first two cards. Bank wins, 8 over 4.

Player has 5 (A-4). Bank has 6 (4-2). Player draws a 3 for 8. Bank does not draw. Player wins, 8 over 6.

Player has 7 (5-2). Bank has 6 (J-6). Player does not draw. Bank does not draw. Player wins 7 over 6.

Baccarat is a great game. Don't pass it by. You can play for as little as a \$5 bet, sometimes even on the big tables. Note, do not play less than a \$5 Bank bet on the "mini" Baccarat tables in the pit. On any table, there is a 5% commission on winning Bank bets. This commission gives the house it's 1.17% advantage on Bank hands. The minimum commission is 25 cents. This translates to a 12.5% house advantage on a \$2 Bank bet.

You do not have to memorize the drawing rules. They are posted near the table. The dealers never vary from the posted rules.

Let's not confuse Baccarat with a game called Chemin de Faire. You've watched "007" playing it while he was eyeing the villain across the table.

In Chemin de Faire, not only can a player at the table put up the money to bank the game, there are options as to drawing a third card. You may find the game in Europe, but I've never seen it in the United States. Our game is less complicated.

Try Baccarat, it might be the social highlight of your trip.

Poker

It was through the game of poker that I started in the casino business. I've made lots of friends over the years in this industry and its one of my favorites.

If you don't want to play against the House, this is the game for you. The casino supplies the tables, cards, the dealer and a supervisor who sometimes doubles as a referee. The house will organize a game for all the people who like a particular type of poker game at a certain betting limit.

Most casinos will offer a low limit game of Stud Poker, usually 7 card, which is very similar to the one you may have played around the kitchen table. The biggest difference is that the game moves a little faster than a typical home game.

The house makes money by taking a percentage of the pot, usually between 5 and 10 percent. The usual amount per hand is between \$2 to \$4. So, the faster the dealer runs the game, the more hands per hour are completed and the more money (called "rake off") the house makes.

The first time you play Poker in a casino, go to a room or table where people are having fun. If you see serious “sour pussies” around all the tables, go to another casino where there is a fun atmosphere.

All the casinos offer the same types of Poker games. The only thing that makes them different is how well they treat the customers. If you like the place, and the dealers are friendly, play there.

If you have never played poker before, try to find a beginner’s game or the lowest buy-in tournament to try out the game and get your feet wet and not get soaked.

Poker is not the same as the other casino games. There are no set percentages since we do not play against the house. Our knowledge of the game, discipline and ability to read other people will determine our success.

The most popular games are 7 Card Stud, Texas Holdem, Omaha (High/Low) and Pineapple.

In Stud, every player gets seven cards, two down, four up and the last card face down. Sometimes there is an ante, 25 to 50 cents, that is put into the pot before the



“I’ll call you...if you raise!”

dealer distributes the cards. Every casino poker room has a low limit game, \$1 minimum bets to \$3 or \$4 maximum bets.

The fast action, higher limit games are usually in the category of what are called “flop” games. Each player receives fewer cards, two to four, and all share five cards that are “flopped” in the middle of the table. Each player uses three or more of these cards as part of their hand.

Texas Holdem is the most popular. This is the game that is played at the World Series of Poker every year in Las Vegas.

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Each player gets two cards, face down. There is a betting round. Next, three cards are “Flopped” face up in the middle of the table. A fourth card, called the “turn” card, and a fifth, called the “river” card, are also dealt face up. There is betting between each card.

Omaha and Pineapple are forms of Texas Holdem usually played High Low Split.

Helpful Hints:

Don’t let the speed of the game intimidate you. Every player at the table had to play for the “first time”, also. Once you have played a few hands and become familiar with the procedures, the game won’t seem nearly as fast as when you were first watching it.

You will have to follow certain procedures. The main one for new players is to play in turn. You should only “act” (bet, call, raise or fold) on your hand after the player to your right has finished or acted. You will learn the procedures very quickly.

Common sense should prevail! The most frequently made mistake I have seen new players make is to keep playing a hand that has little or no chance of winning the

pot. If you need one card for a straight and another player, in 7-Stud, is showing four hearts. Should you be betting or calling? Probably not. If you both make your hands, who will win the pot? That flush will beat your straight. You are drawing to a losing hand. At least draw to a winning hand. If you have four hearts and the other player is showing four cards to a straight, at least you are drawing to the winning hand. Don’t be afraid to throw away a probable losing hand.

Start with good cards. Common sense, again. If the first cards look like they go together, play. If not, don’t.

If, in Stud, your first three cards are 2-7-Q of different suits, throw the hand away. Start with at least a pair, three in a row or three of the same suit. In Holdem, start with a pair, two suited cards or two in a row, the higher the better.

Don’t be a “Caller”. When you think you have the best hand, Bet! Put “pressure” on the game. Make the other players wonder what you have. Be in control.

If you are not sure what you have at the end of the hand, turn your cards face up. “Cards speak” in a casino. No matter what

you say you have, when you turn your cards up, the dealer (and players) will look through your cards for the best poker hand.

Ranking of the hands:

Straight Flush: Five in a row of the same suit. The highest being an ace high, or Royal Flush.

Four of a Kind Four cards of equal value.

Full House: Three of a kind and two of a kind. (Q-Q-Q-8-8).

Flush: Five of the same suit.

Straight: Five in a row.

Three of a kind Three cards of equal value.

Two Pair Two sets of equal value cards.

One pair. Two cards of equal value.

Poker is a lot of fun. As you start to meet the players at your favorite poker room, you will realize that most lower limit players consider poker as more of a social endeavor than a way to win lots of money.

Most of the time, the dealer or supervisor will be more than happy to help a new player get started. Usually a listing of the ranking of hands (what beats what) and the basics of play is available in every room.

Tipping

“To tip or not to tip”, that is the question!

Almost every hourly wage employee in the casino works for tips. From the dealers in the Pit, to the parking lot valet, to the washroom attendant, tipping is a way of life for the casino people.

The casino industry is completely service oriented. Since most casinos offer the same games, the individual success of their business depends on the degree and quality of the service provided for their customers. My advice is that if someone gives you good service, with a smile, give them a tip!

Tipping is never mandatory and should be based upon principle. If you ever feel disappointed with the service or feel as if you are being coerced by an obsequious employee into giving an undeserved tip, stand firm and don't.

When I get good service and give a tip, all I expect in return is a sincere “Thank You”. Then everyone is happy.

Salaried employees, pit bosses and shift managers, generally cannot accept tips.

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Budgeting and Betting

Have you ever gone to the casinos with a friend who...gets to the hotel...leaves the suitcases with the bell captain...doesn't even check in...goes to the tables...in three hours goes broke...spends the next two days following you around trying to borrow an "extra" hundred???

If you budget your money with a plan, win or lose, the trip will be more enjoyable.

First, divide your total bankroll into "session" banks. As an example, you're taking \$500 and will be at the casinos for 3 days. Therefore, you can play two sessions a day for the first two days. And, have some left to take a, hopefully unnecessary, “get even” shot before running for the plane on the third day.

A session bank should contain 20 bets. So, with \$500, you can have 100 bets of \$5. Since each session bank has 20 bets, you will have 5 session banks with 100 total bets. You can play twice a day the first two days and if you only have one bank left the third day, at least you can play again.

When do you stop? Whenever you feel like it, winning or losing, or when you lose a session bank. Take a break...go to a show...ask for a food comp...Sleep!!!...but take a break! The tables will be there when you are ready to play again.

Note: If you quit playing in the middle of a session bank, resume play with the same amount as when you stopped. If you were ahead, start with a 20 bet session bank. Pocket the profit. If you had lost a bank, start with a new 20 bet bank.

If you're a \$10 bettor and you want to play twice a day on your four day trip, here's what to do.

For each session you need 20 bets times \$10 for a session bank of \$200. In four days you'll need 8 session banks for a total bankroll of \$1600. Or you can go the other way. Take your budget. Divide it by the number of days, then by the number of times a day you want to play (two is good), and divide by 20 to get your single bet amount.

What I'm going to tell you now will not overcome the house advantage or in any way insure you of making a profit. But, it does give you a plan and will get your adrenaline pumping.

This is the fun part. How many of you \$5 bettors have ever made a \$25, \$40 or even a \$50 bet on the tables? Then had to Double Down!

How you get to those bigger bets is by starting with your minimum bet, let's say \$5, and increasing your bet one unit, \$5, every time you win. Win four in a row and you'll be making a \$25 bet. Win a couple more and you'll probably be making a bigger bet than you ever have made before. Now, check your pulse!

When do you stop increasing? When you lose a hand. Go back to your minimum bet. You never know when that once in a lifetime win streak is coming. Be ready!

Remember, none of this will overcome the house advantage. But, by playing only the good bets, exercising some discipline and using proper bankroll budgeting, you'll enjoy your trip more and have a better chance of returning home with lots of money in your pocket.

This chapter was written before the LPRSystem was released..



Congratulate yourself! You now know more about the good bets than just about anyone else you will ever encounter in a casino, including the "Bosses". I've enjoyed this time with you and sharing some of my knowledge gained over the years. I sincerely hope you will benefit from it.

Thank You!

Larry

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Guide to Paradise

by Jayda Lorean

Lady Luck.

Her mystery infatuates.

She mesmerizes, tantalizes,

Captivates and fascinates.

Weaves her fallacies, tells us lies.

Casts our puny forms to Fate.

She whispers low:

*"Child, do not hesitate, prepare to go,
And satiate, your craving for the casino"
Where she promises to wait.*

*She rules us with her hypnotic trance,
Lures us mindless, to her world of Chance,*

*Of kind and unkind circumstance,
A world of glitter, grandeur, romance,
Of compassion and indifference,*

*A wondrous adult fantasy,
A place where fortune and jeopardy,
Until our personality*

*Commands, lusts and demands,
The thrill are calculated mathematically.*

*Oh, so subtly,
She flirts with our impulsive side,
I, rush, the high,
Sweet luxury*

Of a winning hand.

*Her eyes flash instinctively,
Blinding our reason, seductively,*

*Impassioned, we believe in her totally,
Forgetting true probabilities
She's convinced our impulse needs,
That instantly, we must see
The dazzling sights of neon lights,
Feel the surge when one is "hot",
Glorify in taking the entire "pot"
Win a million at the slots,
Avoid the traps and win at craps,
Draw 21 in Blackjack,
Cash in a huge poker stack.
Sneer at all sound advise
And in one bold toss of the dice,
Wager all on Paradise.*

Ah, but no more.

*No need to any longer heed
Lady Luck's moronic Creed,
We see through her deceit.
Lost is her capricious grip,
For on this next gambling trip,
We have found a sure cure,
To guard against her haughty lure,
No its not garlic, nor manure,
I must confide, at my side,
I'm fully armed and well equipped,
With my handy-dandy, pocket sized,
Casino Survival Guide.*

Acknowledgments

First, I would like to thank all my fellow gamblers I have had the fortune to meet over the years. We like to share our gambling experiences and try out improved techniques. Without your input I would not have known that there was such a large demand and necessity for the information in the "It's Fun to Win" Casino Survival Guide.

My parents, who, through their sense of humor, showed me that not everyone goes to the casino armed for battle, but go to have a great time, only needing a bit of sound direction.

Also, the various casinos with which I have been involved over the years. I have seen what separates the great from the sad, according to how successful their efforts were in serving a product to the public with the greatest of flair and promotion.

Last, my good friends, who have made the gaming industry a lifetime enterprise and with whom I have had the privilege of debating and expounding many gaming principles.

JL you're the best. Thanks!

Ready for the LPRSystem?

Read all about it...

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