

**Martin J Silverthorne**

# **Knockout** ***Blackjack!***



**Russell Hunter Publishing**

**Knockout Blackjack**  
**By Martin J Silverthorne**

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## Introduction

How would you like to turn \$20 into \$1,000 your first hour of play?

That's what I did when I was first testing this strategy. I signed ON to my favorite online casino (I'll tell you where) and deposited \$20. Just one hour later my bankroll hit \$1,021.

That's \$1,000 in clear profits in one hour by anyone's measurement!

But, that was just the start.

We have now finished long-term testing of Knockout Blackjack with 5,356 Documented Games!

Incredibly, this system achieved an unheard of 96.16% Session Rate!

There is no other blackjack system like it.

Best of all, there are no hard rules to memorize and no card counting!

It is based on what Lex calls his "One-Two Count."

Are you ready to get started?

**If You Have Dreamed About Becoming a Professional Blackjack Player or if You'd Just Like to Win \$5,000 a Day Sitting at Home, Knockout Blackjack is the Perfect Solution!**

I am going to show you how the highly successful professional gambler, Lex Steiger, uses his simple "One-Two Count" to win a fortune playing blackjack!

It doesn't matter where you live. If you are in the United States, Canada, the UK, Australia, Singapore, Germany or South Africa, you can win a fortune playing blackjack using Steiger's amazing Knockout Blackjack!

And, you don't have to visit a casino to win big. Players just like you are cashing in on online blackjack using what has been called "the most effective online blackjack strategy ever created!"

If you would like to be able to win \$5,000 every day then Knockout Blackjack is just what you need!

In the next few pages I am going to reveal how you can get started with just \$20, win \$5,000 your first day and then go on to set up a nonstop stream of winnings that you can rely on for life!

### **Knockout Blackjack is the System That the Casino Bosses Don't Want You to Know About!**

I first heard about this system when a casino boss, who is a friend of mine, called about a player who was "ravaging the high-limit blackjack games."

Lex Steiger was winning so steadily that it was driving the casino bosses absolutely nuts. I'll tell you more about what happened in a couple of minutes, but to state it simply –

Lex Steiger was wiping them out with his Unstoppable Blackjack System!

### **Once You Learn the Secrets of Beating Blackjack Using the Knockout Blackjack's "One-Two Count" You Can –**

- Log on to any online casino (we'll tell you where our players play and win), deposit \$20 and you'll win \$1,000 in your first hour of play (we'll show you how)!
- Play in your favorite land-based game and quickly move up to winning \$2,576 an hour (documented winnings) as a \$100 better!

- Easily beat every version of blackjack offered today, even European Blackjack!

### **Steiger's Back in Town**

I had just started watching Breaking Bad (one of the few TV shows I watch) when my cell phone rang. I planned on letting the call go to voice mail but decided I had better answer it as I was expecting an important call from overseas.

The voice I heard on the other end was anything but calm. It was Stan, who is a shift manager at the Bellagio. He sounded like he was about to have a seizure.

“Your friend is back.”

“Who?” I asked.

“Your British friend, Steiger. He’s back playing and giving us hell again. I want you to do something about it.”

Stan had called me several months ago when Lex Steiger was cleaning up at the high-limit roulette table.

“So he’s back playing roulette again,” I said, trying to sound sympathetic.

“Worse. He’s in the high-limit blackjack pit betting \$500 a hand and winning over \$10,000 an hour. Can you come over and talk him into playing somewhere else?”

I told Stan I would drive over after finishing the episode of Breaking Bad.

His last words were, “Don’t take too long.”

### **Steiger's Run at the Bellagio**

When I arrived I went to the high-limit playing area and met Stan. I could see Steiger sitting with a gorgeous woman on each side of him calmly playing blackjack.

Stan filled me in. "Steiger has been here three weeks and it's really starting to hurt. My boss in on my case to get rid of the guy, but I can't find a reason to ask him to leave."

I tried to look grim. "No card counting or anything else you guys consider cheating going on, huh? Why don't you just ask him to stop playing?"

Stan glared at me. "We don't do that anymore. If he is winning legitimately, I have to let him play."

Stan explained that they had tried everything to distract Steiger including sending in beautiful shills to try to distract him.

"Is that what's going on with the girls sitting on each side of Steiger?"

Stan frowned again. "Yeah. He's been getting the Kelly treatment for two days. (Kelly was the redhead on Steiger's right side.) He's even taken her to dinner and god knows what else and he's still here playing and winning. Now he's got Kelly betting like he is and she is winning too."

"So your little scheme backfired on you. Maybe she'll invite some of her friends to play and they can take over the whole table."

I thought Stan would have a case of apoplexy. "That's what I am afraid of. That's why I called you. You are our only hope."

I walked over and spoke to Lex. "Welcome to Las Vegas. I wish you'd let me know you were here. Did you get tired of London's fog?"

He looked up squinting from the glare and said, "Yeah, yeah, needed a break from the damp. You looking to play?"

I nodded and asked Kelly if she minded if I sat down. She smiled, “Honey, if you are Lex’s friend then you are my friend too,” as she batted her eyes.

I played a few rounds and then Lex said, “Let’s take a break. I want to show you my new system.”

He gave Kelly and her friend a fistful of hundred dollar bills and they trotted off, happily talking as they bounced and jigged across the casino.

### **Winning With the 1-2 Count!**

Lex was ready for a break especially when I told him that my wife, Diane, had just finished making some of her word class green chile stew.

As we drove across town he talked about his new blackjack strategy.

“I guess you noticed I was giving the casino some fits,” he laughed as we drove.

“I noticed. The casino manager was about ready to explode when he called me. What were you doing anyway? Was it some new way of card counting?”

“Nah. I don’t even try that anymore. It’s too hard and too unreliable.”

“Did you come up with a new betting system? A new progression, perhaps?”

“Not that either. But you’re getting closer.”

I braked hard as a car of teenagers almost sideswiped us. Lex just smiled, unusually mellow for him.”

I turned back to Lex as the speeding car went on. “Are you going to keep me in suspense. What were you doing back there? I watched you and couldn’t figure it out. And, the casino didn’t have a clue. Are you willing to share?”

“I’ll give you a clue. Can you count to two? Like one-two?”



“Sure. What does that have to do with it?”

He smiled one of his rare enigmatic smiles. “Everything. Maybe I’ll show you after a bowl or two of Diane’s stew.”

### **Counting to Two Is All It Takes to Destroy the Casinos.**

After putting away two bowls of stew, we opened a bottle of brandy and we moved to the dining room.

I went to my study and came back with several decks of cards and a notepad.

“I’m ready to learn.”

“Don’t waste any time do you?” He shuffled the cards and handed them to me.

“Why don’t you deal and I’ll show you what I am doing.”

Before we went any further he pulled out a small card showing his playing strategy.

“Don’t use this much, but I still carry it.”

I glanced at it. “I already know basic strategy. I don’t think I need the card either.”

He smiled for the second time that day. “You don’t know this one. Take a look at it.”

I took another look at the card and noticed how he had simplified the number of blackjack plays.

“Pretty easy playing strategy. Is this what you use?”

“That and the two-count.”

As I dealt him hands he talked as he played explaining how he used the “one-two” count.

He wrote down several series of numbers on the notepad and showed me how he counted his wins or losses to come up with his bets.

He pointed to the numbers he had written down. “They are my knockout bets. When I combine them with my simple one-two count I beat the game.”

I continued to deal and he continued to play his hands.

After about thirty minutes I thought I had it figured out. I asked him if he minded if I tried it out online in my favorite online casino.

“Go ahead. I’m going to see if I can talk your lovely wife into one more bowl of stew.”

### **The Next Night We Hit the Green Valley Ranch!**

Lex wanted some downtime from playing and I was sure he wouldn’t be missed at Bellagio. He rode around with me while I ran some errands and I took him and Diane out to lunch. Before we left I asked him if he wanted to call Kelly and he told me he was taking some time off from Kelly and he would be fine with just the two of us.

We returned to the house and I caught up on some work in my office while Lex took a walk, played with my rowdy black lab, Jack, and took a short nap.

He stuck his head in my office about 5:00 and asked if I wanted to play a little blackjack.

I had been hoping that he was in the mood. “Have you ever played at the Green Valley Ranch?”

“No. I never heard of it. Does it offer decent blackjack?”

“The best games that are not in Las Vegas.” I told him about the casino as we drove to Henderson, a town south of Las Vegas.

We arrived, I turned my car over to valet parking and we walked in and headed for the blackjack pit.

Lex bought in for \$2,000 and started out making \$50 bets. I picked a table with lower minimum bets, bought in for \$200 and started playing.

After about an hour of play we took a break and compared notes in the lounge.

Lex had quickly increased his bet sizes as his winnings grew. By the time we took a break he was making \$200 bets. He piled his chips on the table and I helped him count them. \$6,132. I asked him, “This was off your \$2,000 buy-in, correct?”

“Yeah. I cleared over \$4,000.”

I pulled my chips out counted them and announced a win of \$719. Considering that I had only risked \$200 this was just as impressive as Lex’s win.

He reached out and knocked on the table. “I think I’ll play here for a while.”

I needed to return and Lex assured me that he would be fine. “I think I’ll have my clothes and sundries moved over here for a while.”

As I was driving home I thought about Stan and gave him a call. “I think your troubles are over for a while. Steiger’s moved to a different joint.”

Stan sighed audibly. “Just keep him out of here and I owe you big time.”

### **From \$20 to \$1,000 in an Hour of Online Play!**

With Steiger on his own again I decided to try a little experiment. We had had impressive results using the system at the Green Valley Ranch. Now I decided to give the system a real workout online.

I logged on to my favorite online casino, noted the balance in my account and wrote it down. I decided to risk just \$20 of my balance and see how much I could win in an hour.

This is a very tough test for any system to pass. With only \$20 at risk a loss of any size would end my experiment. If the system just held up for an hour that would be an achievement. If it made money that would be even better. And, if it made a lot of money that would be a stupendous accomplishment.

I started out playing blackjack with \$1 bets. I set out to win enough at each level that I could increase the size of my base bets to the next higher level.

Thirteen minutes after I started I had won enough to move up to \$2 betting.

I put in another seven minutes and my winnings were large enough to move up to \$3 bets.

Nine minutes later I started making \$5 bets!

I continued this way for one hour. As soon as the alarm went off I stopped play. I had turned \$20 into \$1,021 in one hour!

Since then I have repeated this experiment many times. I have also had other players try it and there is no doubt in my mind –

Anyone using Knockout Blackjack only can turn \$20 into \$1,000 in just one hour!

## **How I Won \$1,000 in One Hour!**

I thought you might like to see the steps I took to win \$1,000 in one hour.

Here's what happened –

I started with just \$20 and as my winnings grew I moved up my level of play. I started out as a \$1 bettor and by the end of one hour I had moved up to \$10 betting.

The table below shows the steps I took to win \$1,000 in one hour –

### **From \$20 to \$1,000 in One Hour**

<b>Base Bet</b>	<b>Bankroll Needed for this Level of Play*</b>	<b>Hourly Win Rate Online</b>	<b>Win Goal</b>	<b>Play Time</b>	<b>Bankroll After Play</b>
\$1	\$20	\$188	40	13 minutes	\$88
\$2	\$80	\$363	40	7 minutes	\$132
\$3	\$120	\$544	80	9 minutes	\$209
\$5	\$200	\$907	120	8 minutes	\$348
\$8	\$320	\$1452	80	3 minutes	\$442
\$10	\$400	\$1811	600	20 minutes	\$1,021
				60 minutes	

While winning \$1,000 in one hour with only \$20 risked is an amazing accomplishment, I want to point out another fact that will make you a lot of money –

In one hour I won enough to move up to making \$25 base bets.

And, as a \$25 bettor the average online win rate is \$4,536 an hour.

I am not kidding about this.

If you are willing to risk \$20 and play for an hour you will have a large enough bankroll to become a \$4,536 an hour winner!

If this sounds a little scary, let me bring you down to earth.

You don't have to jump up to \$25 betting right away.

Instead, you could withdraw \$600 of your \$1,000 winnings leaving \$400 in your account.

Then, with \$400 you would be fully qualified to make \$10 bets.

Here's the great news about becoming a \$10 player –

Making \$10 Base Bets you will average winning \$1,811 an hour online (based on documented long-term testing).

## **I've Worked Out a Million Dollar Deal for You!**

I didn't hear from Lex Steiger for about a week. By then I had tried out Knockout Blackjack in two more Las Vegas casinos and racked up several more high profit sessions online. All of the signs were there that this strategy would be devastatingly effective against all versions of blackjack available today.

I wanted to test this system further and if it held up I wanted to share it with a few of my friends and my clients.

But before I could do this I felt like I needed to talk to Steiger again.

Lex called on Friday night and said he was ready to leave the Green Valley Casino. Lex had won over \$120,000 playing there and ended up having a spat with a pit boss over what he said was a dealer error in paying him on a winning hand. Lex is normally pretty cool about causing trouble and I figured he was just ready for a change. After all, Henderson is not Las Vegas and I think that he was starting to miss Kelly.

Lex came over in a cab in time for cocktails. Diane was gone so he and I had the house to ourselves. We sat out on the covered patio looking at the pool and staying out of the merciless Las Vegas sun.

I broached the subject of Knockout Blackjack with Lex. I told him what I had in mind. I wanted to do a complete validation of the system using players who would report to me.

Then if the system held up I would release a small number of copies of the system to friends, associates and some clients.

He thought about what I had said and named his terms.

"You have got to keep the number of persons using this system low."

I nodded. "No problem there. I plan on using it myself and we share the same interests in not screwing up a good thing."

“Then there is one more condition. Do you think Diane could send some of her Green Chile Stew to London on a regular basis? It is a highly additive concoction.”

These were terms I could live with. However, I could tell that Lex was getting restless again.

“I’ve got another week to stay here. I would like to settle into a casino that offers good blackjack and is on the Las Vegas Strip. I am starting to miss Kelly and her friends.”

I finished my drink and said, “I’ll drive you over. I know the perfect place. You are going to love it.”

### **A Night to Remember a Caesar’s Palace**

There are many newer casinos in Las Vegas and many of them cater to high rollers like Lex Steiger. However, Caesars Palace is still my favorite for high bet action. They have been at this game a lot longer than the new comers and I knew that Lex would feel right at home.

Lex checked in, immediately got upgraded to a suite, had the bellman take care of his luggage and personal things and we headed for the cashier to make sure his credit line was set up.

After Lex had established credit at Caesars we headed for the high limit playing area.

Lex sat down at a table with \$500 minimum bets. I found one more to my taste with \$100 minimum bets.

We had agreed before hand to limit our playing to no more than two hours and then to have a scrumptious meal at Rao’s, one of Las Vegas’s best restaurants.

The game was a good one as I knew it would be. I easily kept track of the “one-two” count and set up the knockout bets to match the count.

After about forty-five minutes I counted up my winning – Up \$2,108. So far, so good. I took a restroom break and swung by Lex's table on my way back. He had stacks of \$500 and \$1,000 chips in front of him. He gave me one of his sardonic lopsided smiles. There was no doubt he was in his element. And, as usual he was cleaning up with Knockout Blackjack.

I went back to my table and after thirty minutes more I moved up to \$200 bets. This was high level betting even for me but I quickly adjusted to making higher bets and receiving the higher payoffs.

Finally, I felt like taking a break. I colored up my chips and walked over to Lex's table.

He was playing with \$1,000 chips and had several large stacks of chips in front of him. I noticed that Kelly had joined him and she was playing with \$500 chips. Lex just looked up and said, "Give me fifteen more minutes." Kelly dazzled with her million-dollar smile and gave Lex's arm a squeeze.

I told Lex I would be at the lounge we had passed walking in. He nodded once and I walked to the cashiers and cashed in. I had won \$8,430 in two hours play. While this did not beat my personal record I had to admit it had been an exhilarating ride. I got two thousand in cash and the casino's check for the balance and headed for the lounge.

I had just ordered a scotch and water when Lex showed up by himself. "Where's Kelly?"

"She wanted to visit the gift shop and told me she really didn't want to listen to a bunch of male bonding."

I nodded. I believe she knows her stuff. "How'd you do? It looked like the table was about to run out of chips."

"First things first. This is a class joint. Reminds me of a private club in London where I used to play a bit."

"How'd you do?" He showed me his receipt from the cashier. It read \$43,589.



My jaw almost dropped. “You won \$43,000 in two hours.”

He laughed. “Funny thing was another chap at the table was betting \$5,000 a hand and he got all of the attention.”

He laughed. “He must have lost at least \$100,000 while I was playing. So from the casino’s perspective they were big winners.”

He laughed again and pulled out his comp slip. “I did get unlimited comps so the meal is on me.. Let’s go to that restaurant you told me about. What was the name, Ralphs?

“Rao’s. I think you’ll like it. What about Kelly?”

“I’ll call her on my mobile. She can meet us there.”

### **Knockout Blackjack Blasts Through to a 96% Win Rate in Long-Term Testing!**

Lex flew back to London a week later. We had a farewell dinner and I brought him up to date. I was in the process of setting up a scientifically controlled long-term test of Knockout Blackjack.

While most experts just test blackjack systems using computer simulations I wanted a real world test. I believe the only way you can learn how well a system works in real life play is to have real players use it in real casinos.

My intention was to set up a group of about twenty players who would play in online casinos as well as in casinos in the US, the UK, Germany, Australia and Macau.

I was up to fourteen players when Lex gave me his final blessing.

“If you learn anything that I can use to make more money promise you will pass it on.”

I promised Lex, thanked him again and spent the next two weeks getting the testing off the ground.

I rounded out my test group with 22 players and assigned them different games in different locations.

Fourteen players were to play in land-based games on the Las Vegas Strip, in Downtown Las Vegas, in Iowa, Mississippi, New Jersey, Connecticut, California, London, Bavaria, Germany, Sydney, Australia and Macau.

The remaining players were given a list of online casinos where they would play.

Our players played at levels from \$1 bets online to \$25 bets in land-based games.

They played in games offering excellent playing conditions as well as games considered to be bad games by most blackjack experts.

They found the best games on the Las Vegas Strip. The poorest games were the games played by European rules.

They recorded key information on every game they played. They kept track of their bets, their time played and their win/loss record.

They used special tracking forms I set up for their play so that in essence I had a complete record of their play.

When the final reports were in I found that our players had played 147,805 rounds of blackjack broken down into 5,356 games.

Incredibly, they won \$2,758,394 testing this system!

And, unbelievably they won 96.16% of all sessions played!

Here's how their hourly win rates broke down:

### **Knockout Blackjack's Verified Winnings per Hour**

<b>Base Bets</b>	<b>Land-based</b>	<b>Online</b>
\$1	\$26	\$181
\$2	\$52	\$363
\$3	\$77	\$544
\$5	\$129	\$907
\$8	\$206	\$1451
\$10	\$258	\$1815
\$15	\$386	\$2722
\$20	\$515	\$3629
\$25	\$644	\$4536
\$35	\$902	NA
\$50	\$1288	NA
\$75	\$1,932	NA
\$100	\$2,576	NA
\$200	\$5,152	NA
\$300	\$7,728	NA
\$400	\$10,304	NA
\$500	\$12,880	NA

Let me tell you what this testing means for you.

First, you can become a Knockout Blackjack player with lots of confidence since you will be using a system that players just like you have used in real life blackjack games.

And, you won't have to worry about how it will perform since it delivered a rock solid 96% win rate in documented long-term testing.

Take a look at the hourly winnings shown above.

This is a good forecast of how you will do as a Knockout Blackjack player.

Take online play for example. You can start out with as little as \$20 (I'll show you how) and win \$181 an hour as a \$1 player.

If you follow my plan of play you can move up to \$10 betting in one hour.

As a \$10 bettor you can win \$1,815 an hour.

Let me clarify one thing right now.

These are not gross winning amounts with no losses deducted.

These are the net amounts with all losses removed.

As, Lex might say, “They’re the bottom line, baby!”

### **Striking the Game of Blackjack!**

Imagine what you could do if you had two bets which could beat blackjack 75% of the time!

You could walk up to any blackjack table or log on to a online blackjack game and make these two Strike Bets with strong odds of beating blackjack in your favor.

That’s all it takes to beat blackjack 75% of the time. Just take five minutes to learn these two Strike Bets!

I know what you are thinking. I said these bets cover blackjack 75% of the time. What about the other 25 percent?

Let’s talk about the bad news first. Every blackjack game is going to have losing streaks. While Strike Betting works well with choppy but playable games, there are times when the house gains such a strong edge that the player will lose bet after bet. That calls for a change in betting . . .

## **Defending Your Bankroll!**

Strike Bets are terrific. They are simple to learn, easy to use and very effective. However, these are not the bets you want to make when the house starts winning hand after hand.

Every blackjack game has streaks. And the hardest one to deal with is a long losing streak.

Card counters try to outlast losing streaks by playing with a large enough bankroll to simply wait them out.

Many experts, such as John Patrick, suggest that you quit playing if you lose four bets in a row.

I never thought either one of these choices was very good –

The card counters pour their money down the drain waiting for a change.

And other players just quit, undoubtedly leaving the table with a net loss every time they do this.

If you have played blackjack lately you know that long losing streaks are becoming more common. They are a real problem for anyone who wants to win with any kind of consistency.

Until now the choices were few –

## **Going on the Offense Through Defense!**

Knockout Blackjack Betting has a whole new approach to long losing streaks –

Instead of losing money, why not make money during losing streaks?

Sound crazy?

Here's how Knockout Betting works –

If you are in Strike Betting mode, you will get a signal to set up a Tactical Knockout Bet. This signal is clear. It doesn't entail counting or computing anything.

You'll get the signal in the clearest way possible –

Your bets will tell you when to set up a Tactical Knockout Bet.

So, you get the signal and set up a Tactical Knockout Bet. If the bet wins, you go right back to Strike Betting.

If the Tactical Knockout Bet loses you immediately change to Counterstrike Betting.

Counterstrike Betting is a proven way of not only surviving long losing streaks but making money out of them!

Once you learn how to use Knockout Betting's Counterstrike Mode, you will have overcome the house's biggest edge against players.

In fact, instead of wiping you out in a losing streak, you will come back stronger than ever!

### **Turning the Tables on Blackjack With Lightning Strike Betting**

You'll win with Strike Betting. That's a fact.

And, you'll overcome losing streaks and actually win money with Counterstrike Betting.

That covers the good and bad of blackjack.

Now, are you ready for the awesome?

Let's take a look at winning streaks.

Most players are not much better handling winning streaks than they are dealing with losing streaks.

They either bet too much or too little.

If they keep their bets small, they lose the money to quickly multiply their winnings during a winning streak.

If they bet too large, like doubling each winning bet, they are likely to win several bets in a row and end up with a loss.

Knockout Blackjack Betting has the best system for safely profiting from winning streaks ever created!

## **Blasting Your Way to Monster Wins!**

Imagine winning bet after bet!

And, imagine using a system that automatically locks up large portions of your winnings.

That's exactly how Knockout Betting's Lightning Strike Betting Strategy works.

Once you enter Lightning Strike Betting Mode you are going to win more.

The only question is how long the winning streak lasts.

But, here's the best part of using Lightning Strike Bets –

No matter how long the winning streak lasts you are going to make money!

Other systems require double wins or even triple wins to make money.

With Lightning Strike Betting, you'll make money even if the win streak only lasts for one bet.

This is the only strategy for winning bets that will win no matter what happens.

If the winning streak fizzles after one win, you will make money.

If you win two or three bets in a row, that's even better, you'll make a lot more.

And, when you hit one of those five, six or seven bet winning streaks, you'll be in the winning groove and locking up your profits all the way through!

And, when the winning streak ends?

You'll get a clear signal and immediately move back into Strike Betting Mode ready to pile up even more winnings!

### **If You Like Winning You're Going to Love Knockout Blackjack Betting!**

Knockout Blackjack Betting is biggest discovery in blackjack play since card counting was developed!

It is the only system that automatically puts you in the right betting mode to win no matter what the game is doing.

If the game is choppy, but playable, you will be using Strike Bets and piling up profits.

If the game turns against you, you will use Counterstrike Betting to not only protect your winnings but actually beat the house even when it has the highest edge against you!

And, when you hit a winning streak, you will pile up win after win in the safest and sanest way ever devised using Lightning Strike Betting!



What's more, you will never have to count hands, count cards or make any other kind of calculations –

The Tactical Knockout Bet will automatically match your bets to the phase of the blackjack game.

The Tactical Knockout Bet has been proven to be 97% accurate in thousands of documented games.

With this Knockout Betting Strategy you are going to win faster and smarter than any card counter or any player using a fixed betting system.

No other system can match the pure win power of this Super Blackjack Strategy!

## How to Play Blackjack

Blackjack is played on a semi-circular table. The game usually has six or seven spots for the players to sit. Only the most basic of rules, such as the payoff on blackjacks, dealer drawing rules and insurance payoffs, are shown on the layout. The small plaque, usually displayed next the dealer's right hand, shows the table betting limits, such as \$5 minimum, \$500 maximum.



## Objective

The objective in the casino game of blackjack is to beat the dealer. Although as many as six other players may play at your table with you, each player competes individually against the dealer. You can beat the dealer in two ways. You can have a hand total greater than the dealer's without exceeding 21. Or, the dealer can bust his hand by drawing cards to a total greater than 21. The objective is not, as is described in many casino brochures, to get as close to 21 as possible without going over (*busting*). In many hands you won't even try to get close to 21.

If either the player or the dealer has an ace and a 10-valued card as his first two cards, then this hand is called a blackjack or *natural* and is usually paid off at three to two for a player. If both the dealer and player have blackjacks, the hand is a standoff or *push*, and neither the dealer nor player wins.

If you tie the dealer with a total of 21 or less, you neither win nor lose your bet for that hand. This is called a "push." The term originated from the time when a dealer would push a player's wager out of the betting area whenever there was a tie. Now, the dealer usually "knocks" on the table in front of a push indicating that a payoff or loss was not overlooked and that instead there was a tie.

## Card Values

Cards numbered 2 through 10 are valued at face value. Picture cards count as 10. An Ace equals either 11 or one, at the discretion of the player. Card suits have no meaning in blackjack.

Examples: Q, 5 = 15                      10, 4 = 14  
              Ace, 2 = 3 or 13              2, 3, 10, 2 = 17

## Hard Hands and Soft Hands

Hands with an Ace counted as 11 are called soft hands.

Examples: Ace, 5 = 16

3, Ace, 4 = 18

Ace, 10 = 21

Ace, 2, 2, 5 = 20

A hard hand is any hand which does not have an Ace or in which the Ace is counted as one to avoid exceeding a total of 21.

Example: Ace, 6, 9 = 16

Ace, 9 = 10

6, 9 = 15

10, 9 = 19

## The People

Each blackjack game is conducted by a dealer who has been trained to run the game.



Blackjack tables are grouped together in an area designated a blackjack pit. Individual blackjack tables are supervised by floor personnel, called floormen, who report to pit bosses, who are supervised by shift managers, who must answer to casino managers.

A player may enter a game by sitting down at an unoccupied chair and converting cash to chips or, if playing on credit or against money deposited with the casino, signing a casino form, called a *marker*, in exchange for chips.

## **Wagers**

The size of your bet must conform to the table's maximum and minimum limits. This range varies and is posted at each table. Some casinos allow cash wagers played inside the betting area, but normally cash must be converted to chips before playing.

Before any cards are dealt, each player must decide on the amount of his wager and place it in the designated betting area in front of him (or her), known as the *betting box* or *spot*. If several different chips are bet, they must be neatly stacked. Different denominations of chips must be arranged with the larger-valued chips on the bottom of the stack and the lesser-valued chips on top. For example, a wager of \$70 might consist of two \$25-valued "green" chips on the bottom, with four \$5-valued "red" chips stacked neatly on top.

Chips placed beside the betting area normally indicate to the dealer that the player wishes them *colored up* or *colored down*, i.e., exchanged for chips of higher or lesser value.

If you wish to make a bet for the dealer, a common tipping practice, you may place the dealer wager between the betting area and the dealer to show that a separate bet is being made for the dealer instead of an outright tip. The dealer's bet will suffer the same fate as the player's hand: if the player's hand wins, the dealer wins the *toke* or tip as well. If the hand loses, the dealer loses his tip.

## **Two Different Styles of Blackjack**

Two different styles of blackjack are played in casinos. Single or double deck *pitch* games are dealt directly from the dealer's hand. Games with four to eight decks of cards are dealt from a shoe rather than being held by the dealer.

## Playing Procedures

The dealer will convert the player's cash or marker into chips. The usual colors for chips are:

\$1.00 = white or metal token

\$25.00 = green

\$2.50 = pink

\$100.00 = black

\$5.00 = red

\$500.00 = purple

The rules that the particular casino uses are not posted anywhere on the table. If you are in Atlantic City, every casino uses the same basic rules as set by the Casino Control Commission. In Nevada, the rules vary from casino to casino and may even be different in the same casino. The Mississippi casinos use yet a different variation of playing rules, as do most international casinos. The only way to be certain of the exact rules is to ask about the rules.

To begin a new round of play, the dealer will shuffle the cards and, after the shuffle, will ask a player to cut the deck by placing a plastic *cut card* in the deck.

The dealer finishes the cut and places the cut card in a position usually two-thirds to three-fourths from the top card. The depth of the placement is known as the *penetration*. This means that from two-thirds to three-fourths of the cards will be put into play before the dealer reshuffles.

After the shuffle, the dealer will take the top card and place it in the discard tray. This card is called the *burn card* and the procedure is called *burning a card*.

Each player who wants to wager must place a bet in the circle in front of him on the table. The dealer will deal cards starting from his left to right. Each player, as well as the dealer, will receive a card in turn until each person has two cards.

The first card dealt the dealer is placed face down so that it is not visible to the players. This is called the dealer's *hole card*. The second card dealt the dealer is dealt face up and is called the dealer's *up-card*.

When casinos deal either single or double deck games, the cards are usually dealt face down. In these games, the player is permitted to pick up his cards. In games using multiple decks dealt from a box called a *shoe*, the player's cards are dealt face up. In these games players are not permitted to touch the cards.

After all the players and the dealers have received two cards, the dealer will ask each player, starting from his left and moving clockwise to the right, if he or she wants additional cards. A player may decide to just keep the two original cards and *stand*. He may ask for as many additional cards as he wants, called taking a *hit*. He also has other options such as *surrendering*, *doubling down*, *splitting pairs*, or in some instances, *taking insurance*.

If a player's hand exceeds 21, it is an automatic loss and his wager loses. After all the players have played out the hands, the dealer will complete his hand. Players who bust in drawing to their hands will have lost their wagers prior to the dealer completing his hand. Those players who did not *bust*, or exceed a total of 21, will win or lose depending on whether their card totals exceed the dealer's hand. Ties are pushes with neither the dealer nor player winning.

### **Signaling a Dealer**

Casino blackjack is played at a rapid pace with very little conversation between the dealer and the player. Hand signals are used by players to communicate with the dealer. The only player option which is signaled verbally by the player is surrender.

In games where the cards are dealt face up and no touching or handling of the cards is permitted, the player will signal taking a hit (drawing more cards) by making a beckoning or scratching motion with his finger on the table. If he wants to stand, he will signal the dealer by waving his hand over the cards.

To split a pair in a face up game, the player will simply place the same value wager next to (not on top of) the original wager. The dealer will separate the cards, indicating a split.

To Double down, the player will place an equivalent bet or less behind his original bet.

Usually when a player splits or doubles, he will wager an amount equal to the original bet. However, if he chooses, a player may wager less than his original bet. For example, if a player has bet \$25 and receives a pair of 7s, he may decide to split the pair into two different hands. He can wager any amount up to \$25 on his second bet. If he wanted to wager only \$10 on the second hand created by splitting, this is permissible.

In games where players hold the cards, they will signal for a hit by scratching the table with their cards. To stand, a player will place his cards under his wager.

To split a pair in a hand held game, the player places the cards face up on the table above his wager and makes his second wager by placing the chips next to the original wager.

To double down in the hand held game, the player will toss his cards face up on the table and make a wager equal to or less than his original bet by placing the chips next to the first bet.



## **Peeking**

If the dealer's up-card is a 10-valued card or an Ace, in order to save time which would be lost by playing out all hands and then having to return additional player bets made because of the players' decisions to double down or split pairs before the dealer checked to see if he had a blackjack, most casinos require the dealer to "peek" at his hole card immediately, being careful not to allow any of the players to see the card. If the hole card provides the dealer with a blackjack, the dealer exposes it at once and quickly collects all of the losing bets around the table. If you or any of the other players also has a blackjack, it is a push.

If after peeking the dealer finds that he has no blackjack, the round continues with players exercising their normal options, including making additional wagers of splitting or doubling down.

## **Playing Options**

The dealer must play his hand in accordance with the house rules even if he has the players beaten without drawing any more cards. The dealer must draw until he has a total of 17 to 21. In some casinos, most notably in downtown Las Vegas and northern Nevada, the dealer will hit a soft 17 (A,6) or any other soft hand totaling 17 such as A,A,5 or A,4,2. This rule is disadvantageous to the players. If the dealer does not bust, he will compare his total with each of the player totals, paying the winners and collecting bets from the losers.

## **Player Options**

In addition to making decisions to stand or hit, players have certain other options for playing out their hands. Depending on the rules of the game played, they may split any pair, double down after receiving the first two cards, surrender if this option is offered or take insurance under certain circumstances. How these options are

exercised are major contributors as to whether a player has a successful winning strategy or not.

### **Pair Splitting**

Virtually all casinos allow the player the option of splitting the first two cards if these cards have the same value (eg. 7,7, 10,10 Q,K).

By splitting a pair, the player is changing one initial hand into two separate hands. In order to do this, the player usually doubles his initial bet. If, after splitting, he receives another card of like value, most casinos will allow him to split again, up to a total of four splits. Of course, each split requires adding an additional wager.

A player may ask for as many draw cards (hits) as he wants on a split hand. The exception to this rule occurs with split aces. In this case, nearly every casino allows only one additional draw card to each split ace. Probably the most frustrating hand in blackjack is to split a pair of Aces and then receive another Ace, for a hand totaling 12. This outcome turns one of the most promising hands into one of the most dismal.

Splitting pairs may be advantageous to a player for two reasons. First, it offers the option of turning a weak hand into two potentially stronger ones. It is always advantageous to split an 8,8, as a hand valued at 16 is the weakest possible hand. Two hands with starting totals of 8 each are better starting hands than one hand totaling 16.

Another reason a player will split pairs is to exploit a dealer's weakness as revealed by his up-card. A hand of 9,9 will be split versus a dealer's up-card of 6. With an up-card of 6, the dealer has a potential *stiff hand*, a hand to which the dealer must draw, but which can be busted with a draw if the hole card is a 6 through 10. To take

advantage of the dealer's weakness, a player would split the 9,9 to get more money on the table.

### **Doubling Down**

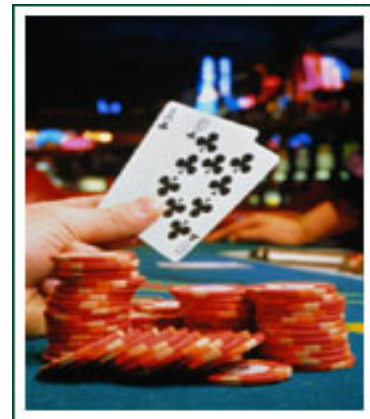
Doubling down is a valuable player option in that a player may double his wager in favorable situations. The only disadvantage to the player is that when he doubles down, he may draw only one additional card. Doubling down is used in two ways to increase the player's prospects of winning a hand. A player will double down when the dealer's up-card is weak, and the dealer has a high probability of busting. Here, the purpose of doubling is to take advantage of the dealer's weakness. A player may also decide to double down if his first two cards are so strong that he is likely to win against the dealer by beating his total outright.

### **Surrender**

The player option of *surrender* was first seen in 1958 at the Continental Casino in Manila. After a dealer determined that he didn't have a blackjack, a player could throw in his hand after any number of cards, so long as he hadn't busted. By surrendering his hand, the player would lose only half of his original bet.

In 1978, Resorts International in Atlantic City offered players the chance to surrender after receiving the first two cards, before the dealer checked for a blackjack. This option became known as early surrender and the version first used in Manila as late surrender.

Early surrender offered too much of an advantage to knowledgeable players and was discontinued after a short trial period. It has not been offered anywhere since.



Late surrender, which is also called conventional surrender or just "surrender," is now common in Las Vegas, Atlantic City and other gambling meccas. It now consists of giving up your hand and losing half of your wager after seeing the first two cards. Surrender is permitted only if the dealer has no blackjack.

After viewing your first two cards and the dealer's up-card, you may decide that your hand is so poor that you have little chance of winning it. At this point, casinos offering surrender will allow you to give up your card and lose half of your bet, after the dealer peeks and determines that he doesn't have a blackjack. In a shoe game, you may announce your intention to surrender by simply saying aloud, "I surrender." In a single or double-deck game dealt face down, tossing your first two card face up onto the table will signal the dealer that you are surrendering the hand.

### **Insurance**

After dealing the first round of two cards to himself and each of the players, the dealer will momentarily stop the game if his up-card is an ace. The dealer will ask the players if they wish to take insurance.

A player may insure his hand against the prospect of the dealer having a 10-valued card as his hole card and thus a blackjack. This bet is made by placing a bet in an amount up to one-half of the original wager. A winning insurance bet pays two to one and wins if the dealer does indeed have a blackjack.

Dealers will check their hole cards by peeking at them in such a way that no players can see the cards.

Here's how insurance works. Assume that a player's wager is for \$10.00 and he is dealt a 10,10. The dealer's up-card is an Ace. Before any player has the chance to complete his hand, the dealer will ask "insurance?" To make the insurance bet, the

player would place up to \$5 in front of his original bet. Assume he makes the insurance wager and bets \$5.00. After all the insurance bets are made, the dealer will peek at his hole card. Let's assume it was a ten. The dealer will turn over the ten to show the players his blackjack. The player will lose his original \$10 wager. However, his insurance wager will win and will be paid 2 to 1, for \$10.00. The net result is that the player breaks even.

If the dealer's hole card is not a ten valued card, the insurance bet is lost and the round continues with the usual player and dealer playing options.

### **Back-Playing**

Back-playing is much more common in international games than with games in the United States. It is especially common in locales with many Asian players such as Australian casinos.

When the tables are crowded, some casinos allow players standing behind the seated players to place additional bets in the same betting boxes. The seated players must consent to this arrangement, and the back betting player is forced to abide by any decisions the seated player makes. It is customary to politely ask a seated player if you may bet with him before attempting to make a wager.

The seated player may split or double down on a hand and the back bettor may either match his original bet accordingly, wager a lesser amount, or simply refrain from making an additional wager and abide by the results of the original hand. Allowing these outside players to play in the seated players' boxes often creates confusion, especially in situations where one player will take insurance and not the other, or in situations where one player doubles or splits and the other forgoes these options.

## **Disputes**

If your hand signal to hit or stand is misunderstood by the dealer and you are either passed over when you wanted another card or given a card when you signaled *no cards*, you may have a dispute. If the dealer does not resolve it to your satisfaction, a floor person or pit boss will be called over to mediate a resolution.

If there is genuine doubt and the wager is small, the pit bosses tend to side with the player. In a rare case, the videotape recorded by the "eye in the sky" may be consulted. I have only seen this done once, and it was for a very large wager made by a very insistent player.

Decisions made by the casino bosses are final regarding the settlement of various playing controversies.

## **"No-Peek" Devices**

Many casinos do not allow a dealer to peek at his hole card whenever he has a 10-valued card or an Ace showing. Instead, an electronic device is used which scans the hole card and signals the dealer. The dealer simply slides the card into this device. If the dealer has a blackjack, a tiny red light comes on signaling the hand is over. If a green light shows, there is no blackjack and the hand proceeds.

The gadget is simply a safeguard designed to protect the dealer from dealer-player collusion. Since the dealer does not see the hole card, it also protects the house from dealers who inadvertently give subconscious signals called *tells* to players, and also protects the house against players who get a look at the hole card when the dealer exposes it enough for the player to see the card. Obviously, any player who knows the value of the dealer's hole card gains an edge over the casino, and use of the no-peek device prevents this.

### **European Rules**

In most European casinos, the dealer will not take a hole card until after all players have completed their hands. In a game played this way, if you split pairs or double down against the dealer's Ace or 10-valued card, and the dealer ends up with a blackjack, you will lose all of your wagers. This is a major disadvantage for the players.

### **Mid-Shoe Entry**

Normally entering a game of blackjack is as simple as finding an open spot at a table and making a wager in the appropriate betting box. After finishing a hand in process, the dealer will accept the newcomer into the game for the next hand.

Some casinos, especially in Atlantic City, are requiring that players enter a game only after a shuffle. Similarly, if a seated player does not play a hand, he may not be allowed to reenter the game until after the next shuffle is finished.



These procedures are implemented to thwart card counters, who may observe a game and enter it only when the count is favorable. This technique is also known as *Wonging* after Stanford Wong who first wrote about it.

### **Multiple Action Blackjack**

In the mid-1990s, the Tropicana casino in Atlantic City introduced a twist to the blackjack game by allowing a player to make up to three separate wagers on an upcoming hand. In this game, the dealer starts with an up-card against three consecutive player bets. The player keeps the same cards versus all three dealer's hands. The hands are played like regular blackjack hands. If a player goes bust, all

three bets are lost. Splitting, doubling and insurance are available although surrender is not. This game is not recommended for players using the Knockout Blackjack Betting Strategy.

### **Spanish 21**

You can find a version of blackjack in Las Vegas casinos called *Spanish 21*. Upon first encounter it sounds terrific. A player's blackjack beats a dealer's blackjack. A player's 21 beats a dealer's total of 21. You can surrender half of a doubled down bet after you double if you don't like the card dealt. You can take extra hits on split Aces. There are even bonuses for special hands like 7-7-7 and five card hands totaling 21.

This sounds like a wonderful version of blackjack. The only obviously disadvantageous rules for the player are that the dealer is required to hit all soft 17s and that six decks are used. So what's not to like? *They have removed all of the 10-spots from the deck!* The Jacks, Queens and Kings remain, but the deck has been depleted of 25% of its 10-valued cards. And this is enough to turn the game into one with very negative expectations for the player. Don't play Spanish 21. It can be deadly for your bankroll!

### **Exposed Hole Cards**

Bob Stupak's Vegas World introduced a blackjack version known as *double exposure*. Although Vegas World is gone, replaced by the Stratosphere Tower, double exposure still appears from time to time. In this version of the game, the dealer's cards are dealt face up with the hole card exposed. In exchange for knowing exactly what the dealer's first two cards total, the player loses a lot. No soft doubling is allowed. Pairs may only be split once. Players win blackjack ties but lose all other ties. Blackjacks comprised of a Jack and the Ace of Spades pay double as does a total of 21 consisting of a 6, 7 and 8 of the same suit. However, normal blackjacks



only pay even money. Like Spanish 21, this is an insidious version of blackjack and should be avoided.

Incidentally, I have had some of the best craps games in my career at Stupak's version of craps called *Crapless Craps*. In this version of the game, all of the craps numbers of 2, 3, and 12 were turned into point numbers along with the 11. I can still vividly recall a lovely lady shooter establishing such points as 2, 3, 11 and 12 and then rolling number after number without any sevens appearing before hitting her points. Although, like Double Exposure Blackjack, Crapless Craps was a sucker game, it was an enjoyable one and for a shooter who could avoid rolling sevens except on come out rolls, a true delight.

The landmark casino which replaced the old Vegas World, the Stratosphere Tower, is, at 135 stories, the tallest structure in the United States west of the Mississippi. Unfortunately, Bob Stupak is no longer a fixture of this establishment, and I for one will miss his creative and often innovative variations of casino games as well as his unending and often outlandish self promotion.

### **Additional Player Information**

1. Before sitting down to play, check the small placard to the left of the dealer for the minimum bets on the table. Don't assume that because you have previously played at the table the table minimums are the same. The \$5 minimum table you played at this morning may have become a \$10 or \$25 minimum bet table by evening.
2. To convert your cash to chips, wait until the dealer has finished a round of play, then lay your cash on the table and tell the dealer, "Chips please." The dealer will stack your chips in front of you.

3. Wagers can only be made before the dealer starts to deal.
4. You should never touch your wager after it has been made and the dealing started. If you do, you will look like a cheater, and you may come under additional casino scrutiny.
5. Never touch your cards in a game where the cards are dealt face up.
6. Be clear with your hand signals. Your hands should be kept behind your wager except when putting down an insurance bet. Remember to use hand signals at all times rather than stating "hit" or "stand." You may say "surrender" when you are surrendering a hand.
7. You may usually play up to two hands. You must make the minimum wager on each hand.
8. If you are playing and need to take a break from the table, you may ask the dealer to hold your place. The dealer will place a plastic marker in your betting circle indicating that your place is taken. Breaks of up to fifteen minutes are acceptable. If you do take a break, take your casino chips with you!

Now, we'll move on to using the correct playing strategy. This is an important step in becoming a skilled Knockout Blackjack Betting Strategy player and taking the casinos' money! I invite you to read on, even if you think you know Basic Strategy. The Knockout Blackjack Betting Strategy's Playing Strategy is much easier to learn than typical basic strategy rules.

## Blackjack Playing Strategy

There are several aspects to becoming a winning player using the Knockout Blackjack Betting Strategy. Obviously, the first thing you must do is learn how to play the game. The second is to learn the best playing strategy for each combination of cards you are dealt in a game.

Basic Strategy is a system of rules for playing against every dealer up-card in the best possible manner. The strategy differs slightly, depending on the rules the casino uses for the game and on the number of decks used in a game.

The concept of a basic playing strategy began in 1953 when Roger Baldwin and his associates did the first scientific analysis of the game of blackjack. Using hand calculators, they completed voluminous calculations and derived optional playing strategies which were published in the *Journal of the American Statistical Association* in 1956. Subsequently, Baldwin and his associates published the first book describing basic strategy, *Playing Blackjack to Win*, in 1956.

If you are interested in learning how to play perfect basic strategy for any number of decks or combination of rules, you are referred to the late Dr. Peter Griffin's *The Theory of Blackjack*.

If you are already familiar with using basic strategy, then you may want to skip most of this chapter and just learn the Knockout Blackjack Betting Playing Strategy, presented on pages 57 to 59.

The modern playing strategy was first developed by removing the three cards shown by the players first two cards and the dealer's up-card from a "computerized" deck(s) of cards. Then every possible combination of cards that can be drawn were played, with the results evaluated and tabulated to show the most efficient way to play each hand. Later, as computers became more powerful and easier to use, high speed computer simulations

verified the accuracy of those earlier calculations, and a correct basic strategy of play was created. With it, the casino's edge in a typical multi-deck game falls to about 1/2%.

Without counting cards, player decisions are based on two pieces of information. You know the value of the hand dealt you and you know the value of the dealer's up-card. Suppose you are dealt a hand of 10,6 totaling 16, versus the dealers up-card of 10. Should you hit or stand? You might make this play on a hunch, but the correct answer is to hit, even though you are likely to bust. Subsequent to Baldwin's work, numerous computer studies have confirmed that even though you are likely to bust by hitting, in the long run, you will lose less money taking the hit and running the risk of busting than you will by standing against the dealer ten.

Many players reason that since the house usually wins, mimicking the dealer and always hitting a hand totaling less than 16 is a viable strategy. The casino will have an edge of 5.5% over this "mimic the dealer" strategy. Blackjack players playing on hunches may give the casinos as much as a 10% to 15% advantage.

Casino playing rules also effect the casino's advantage in blackjack. The table below summarizes the effects of different rules on the casino's advantage over the player, assuming the player always plays perfect Basic Strategy (positive signs indicate the casino advantage over the player).

<b>Single deck</b>	<b>No advantage</b>
<i>Double deck</i>	+0.35%
<i>Four decks</i>	+0.52%
<i>Six decks</i>	+0.58%
<i>Eight decks</i>	+0.61%
<i>Dealer hits soft 17</i>	+0.20%
<i>Double on 10 and 11 only</i>	+0.25%
<i>Double down after splitting</i>	-0.13%
<i>Conventional surrender</i>	-0.05%
<i>Early surrender</i>	-0.62%
<i>No splitting of pairs</i>	+0.18%

With this information, it is possible to compute the casino's advantage against a basic strategy player for each different set of rules. For example, for a four deck Las Vegas Strip casino where the dealer stands on a soft 17, where any two cards may be doubled, and with no surrender allowed, the casino advantage is the same as that for a four deck game, as shown in the previous table, of 0.52%.

Playing in Atlantic City against six decks with conventional surrender, we have:

<b>Six deck game</b>	<b>+0.58%</b>
<b>Double down after splitting</b>	<b>-0.13%</b>
<b>Conventional surrender</b>	<b><u>-0.05%</u></b>
<b>Casino Advantage</b>	<b>+0.40%</b>

Playing on a Mississippi dockside riverboat, we might face a two deck game with doubling after pair splitting allowed. The casino's advantage is:

<b>Two deck game</b>	<b>+0.35%</b>
<b>Double down after splitting</b>	<b><u>-0.13%</u></b>
<b>Casino Advantage</b>	<b>+0.22%</b>

In Northern Nevada as well as Laughlin, single deck games are available, but the dealers will hit on soft 17s and doubling down is restricted to hands totaling 10 and 11 only. The casino advantage in these games is:

<b>Single deck</b>	<b>-0-</b>
<b>Dealer hits soft 17</b>	<b>+0.20%</b>
<b>Double on 10 and 11 only</b>	<b><u>+0.25%</u></b>
<b>Casino Advantage</b>	<b>+0.47%</b>

## TYPICAL CASINO PLAYING RULES

Las Vegas Strip	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dealer stands on soft 17</li> <li>• Doubling allowed on any two cards</li> <li>• Multiple pair splitting allowed</li> <li>• Doubling after pair splitting</li> <li>• Single and multiple decks</li> <li>• Surrender widely available</li> </ul>
Downtown Las Vegas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dealer hits soft 17</li> <li>• Doubling allowed on any two cards</li> <li>• Multiple pair splitting allowed</li> <li>• Doubling after pair splitting allowed</li> <li>• Many single deck games</li> <li>• Surrender widely available</li> </ul>
Atlantic City	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dealer stands on soft 17</li> <li>• Doubling allowed on any two cards</li> <li>• Multiple pair splitting allowed</li> <li>• Doubling after pair splitting allowed</li> <li>• Mostly 2, 6 and 8 deck games</li> <li>• Surrender is available in some casinos</li> </ul>
Mississippi Gulf Coast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dealers stands on soft 17</li> <li>• Doubling permitted on any two cards</li> <li>• Multiple pair splitting allowed</li> <li>• Doubling after pair splitting allowed</li> <li>• Mostly 2, 6 and 8 deck games</li> <li>• Surrender is available in some casinos</li> </ul>
Northern Nevada	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dealer hits soft 17</li> <li>• Multiple pair splitting allowed</li> <li>• Doubling on totals of 10 and 11 only</li> <li>• Mostly 2, 6 and 8 deck games</li> <li>• Surrender is not available</li> </ul>
International - Typical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dealer stands on soft 17</li> <li>• Doubling on totals of 9, 10 and 11</li> <li>• Multiple pair splitting allowed</li> <li>• Dealer takes hole card after players finish hands</li> <li>• Mostly 6 and 8 deck games</li> <li>• Surrender is not available</li> </ul>

The preceding chart summarizes the typical playing rules for a number of different casino locations. The blackjack games you must avoid are games in which the dealer wins all ties. This rule will give the casino more than a 9% advantage over you — an insurmountable advantage to try to overcome, even using the Knockout Blackjack Betting Strategy!

These playing rules are accurate as of the date of this publication, but you are advised that casinos can change the rules, and different rules may apply when you play.

The optimal way for a player to play each hand against every possible dealer up-card was derived by playing millions of blackjack hands on a simulated basis using computers.

Because of differences in playing rules between different locales, such as the difference in the way the game is played in northern Nevada and the Las Vegas Strip, and because the number of decks used in a game can affect playing strategy, most experts present a slightly different playing strategy for each variation in rules, with adjustments for multiple decks versus single deck play.

It is far too complicated to memorize pages of different charts, trying to learn slightly different strategies for each rule variation. It is simply not necessary to take this approach to beat blackjack. Learning every possible difference in how to play your hand will, at best, improve your mathematical probability of winning by 0.03%. If you make a couple of mistakes in playing strategy, because of the complexity of the rules, these will more than negate the slight advantage learning the many variations in playing strategy gives you. For these reasons, the Knockout Blackjack Betting Playing Strategy uses only one strategy, which can be used in single as well as multiple deck games, with nearly every rule variation.

We shall review the applications of this strategy under the different playing options available to the player.

As you go through the pages which follow, I will present the basic strategy in several different ways. I will also go through each part of the strategy showing the reasoning behind it and giving you clues which will help you remember the strategy. **THIS INFORMATION IS PRESENTED FOR YOUR REFERENCE ONLY. YOU DON'T HAVE TO LEARN IT TO WIN USING THE KNOCKOUT BLACKJACK**



**BETTING STRATEGY. THE KNOCKOUT BLACKJACK BETTING  
STRATEGY'S PLAYING STRATEGY IS SHOWN ON PAGES 57 to 59.**

Even though different basic strategies have been developed for single deck, 2 deck, 4 deck, 6 and 8 deck games, as well for different rule variations, there is not that much difference in the strategy and the version which follows contains a complete basic strategy you can use for games in the United States.

The chart on the next page contains the complete Basic Strategy. This strategy is optimal for games with four to eight decks where the dealer stands on a *soft 17*. It is excellent for a game which allows doubling down on any *first* two cards, and allows doubling after splitting. If the dealer's up-card is a 4 and you receive a pair of 3s, you should split the 3s into two hands. If you receive an 8 on the first hand for a total of 11, you should double down on this hand where doubling after splitting is allowed.

**Warning: I am presenting this information for your reference only. The playing strategy used by the Knockout Blackjack Betting Strategy is much easier to learn and use.**

The strategy presented here is also optimized for games where you can re-split pairs out to four hands *except for Aces*.

## Complete Basic Strategy

The DEALER is showing a:

<i>YOU have:</i>	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	T	A
<b>5-8</b>	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H
<b>9</b>	H	D	D	D	D	H	H	H	H	H
<b>10</b>	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	H	H
<b>11</b>	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	H
<b>12</b>	H	H	S	S	S	H	H	H	H	H
<b>13 or 14</b>	S	S	S	S	S	H	H	H	H	H
<b>15</b>	S	S	S	S	S	H	H	H	G	H
<b>16 (not 8s)</b>	S	S	S	S	S	H	H	G	G	G
<b>17-21</b>	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
<b>17 (soft)</b>	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H
<b>18 (soft)</b>	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	H	H	H
<b>A, 2 or A, 3</b>	H	H	H	D	D	H	H	H	H	H
<b>A, 4 or A, 5</b>	H	H	D	D	D	H	H	H	H	H
<b>A, 6</b>	H	D	D	D	D	H	H	H	H	H
<b>A, 7</b>	S	D	D	D	D	S	S	H	H	H
<b>A, 8 or A, 9</b>	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
<b>2, 2 or 3, 3</b>	P	P	P	P	P	P	H	H	H	H
<b>4, 4</b>	H	H	H	P	P	H	H	H	H	H
<b>6, 6</b>	P	P	P	P	P	H	H	H	H	H
<b>7, 7</b>	P	P	P	P	P	P	H	H	H	H
<b>8, 8</b>	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
<b>9, 9</b>	P	P	P	P	P	S	P	P	S	S
<b>A, A</b>	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P

H = Hit   S = Stand   P = sPlit   D = Double Down   G = Give up (surrender if allowed, otherwise Hit)   T = Ten-valued card

1. Never take insurance
2. Never split 5s or Ts
3. Always hit soft hands of 17 or less when doubling is not an option.

### **Basic Strategy — Hitting and Standing with Hard Totals**

A player with a hard hand has a hand without any Aces or a hand in which an Ace must be valued as a 1 to avoid going over 21. A player will always hit a hard hand with a total of 11 or less, as there is no single card which can bust the hand.

If a player's hard hand totals 17 through 21, he will always stand, as the risk of busting is too great to draw to these hands.

If a player's hand totals 12 to 16, the player's strategy will depend on the dealer's up-card. If the dealer shows an up-card of 2, 3, 4, 5 or 6, the player is more likely to stand as these are the dealer hands with a greater chance of busting. If a dealer shows a possible pat hand with an up-card of 7, 8, 9, 10 or Ace, the player is more likely to have to draw, knowing that he faces the possibility of busting, but recognizing that the dealer's possible high total has forced him to draw and face the risk of busting.

## **The Knockout Blackjack Betting Strategy rules for hitting and standing are fairly simple:**

- 1 If the dealer has an up-card of 7 or higher, keep hitting until you have a 17 or higher.
- 2 If the dealer shows an up-card of 4, 5 or 6, stand at 12 or better. You will only hit if your hand is 11 or lower.
- 3 If the dealer has a 2 or 3, stand at 13 or higher. You will only hit if your hand is 12 or lower.

Notice that when a player draws to a soft hand, it may become a hard hand. If the player draws to an A,7 and receives a 7, he now has A,7,7, for a total of 15. Here the Ace must be counted as having a value of 1 to avoid busting. With his soft hand converted to a hard hand, the player will now use the rules for hitting and standing for hard hands. Since his total is now 15 versus a dealer's 10, he must draw again, even though his chance of busting is high.

### **Doubling Down**

Doubling down is a valuable player option in that a player may double his wager in favorable situations. The only disadvantage to the player is that when he doubles down, he may draw only one additional card. Doubling down is used in two ways to increase the player's prospects of winning a hand. A player will double down when the dealer's up-card is so weak and the dealer so likely to bust that the player wants to take advantage of the dealer's weakness to try to double his winnings. A player may also wish to double down if his first two cards are so strong that he is likely to win against the dealer by beating the dealer's total.

The most important thing to consider in doubling down is the high probability of drawing a 10-value card. Thus, the player will double very aggressively when his totals are hard

hands of 10 or 11, as by drawing a 10-value card his totals will become 20 and 21. With a hard 9, he will double less aggressively, as the prospect of drawing to a total of 19 does not give him as strong a hand as a 20 or 21.

The player will never double on hard hands of 12 or more as drawing a 10-value card will bust his hand.

The ten factor affects doubling against the dealer stiff. The player will double very aggressively against the dealer up-cards of 4, 5, or 6 as the dealer's probability of busting is high.

In contrast to doubling with the hard totals of 9, 10, and 11, where the player expects to beat the dealer's total, with soft hands he will double with the expectation of exploiting a dealer's stiff hand, and doubling his winnings when the dealer busts. Consequently, the player will double certain soft hands only against the dealer's stiff of 3 to 6.

Soft hands of A,2 and A,3 are the weakest soft hands for doubling, and they will be doubled only against a dealer's weakest cards of 5 and 6.

**Soft hands of A,4 and A,5 are slightly stronger candidates for doubling in a multiple deck game, and the player will double these hands when the dealer shows an up-card of 4, 5, or 6.**

A,6 and A,7 are the best soft hands for doubling. Because of the high probability of drawing a ten, these hands have a good chance of becoming 17 and 18 respectively. The player will double these hands against any dealer up-cards of 3, 4, 5, or 6.

A,8 totaling 19, and A,9 totaling 20, are powerful totals in themselves. They will never be doubled as the risk of destroying a good hand is greater than the possibility of improving the profit picture by doubling.

## **The Doubling Rules for the Knockout Blackjack Betting Strategy are very simple:**

Only double down as follows:

11 vs a dealer 2-10

10 vs a dealer 2-9

9 vs a dealer 3-6

## **Splitting Pairs**

Virtually all casinos allow the player the option of splitting pairs. In Nevada, pairs may generally be split and re-split (if a like-valued card is dealt to a pair already split), up to a total of four hands. In Atlantic City, pairs may be split only once, although a split pair may be doubled down, an option which is not offered in most Nevada casinos.

Splitting pairs may be advantageous to the player for two reasons. First, it offers the option of turning a weak hand into two potentially stronger ones. It is always advantageous for a player to split an 8,8, as a 16 total is the weakest possible hand. Two hands with starting totals of 8 each have a good possibility of becoming hands totaling 18 each.

Another reason a player will split pairs is to exploit a dealer's weakness as revealed by his up-card. A pair of 9s will be split versus a dealer's up-cards of 2 to 9, except for 7. The reason is that in each of these cases, the dealer most likely has a weaker hand than the hands the player is likely to be dealt by splitting his 9s. As in this situation, when the dealer shows a weaker up-card, the player will split his pair in order to double the amount of money bet.

Millions of computer simulated hands have shown that the real reason to split pairs in accordance with the Knockout Blackjack Betting Strategy's Playing Strategy is that this move will produce superior profits.

Some pairs will never be split. Pairs consisting of 10,10, and 5,5, will never be split regardless of the dealer's up-card. The reason should be self evident. In each of these situations, the card total dealt is powerful enough that the player has more to lose by splitting than he is likely to gain. A 10,10 totals 20 which gives the player a high likelihood of winning. Likewise, a 5,5, for a total of 10, is an excellent starting hand, while two 5s split may give totals of 15, which are stiff hands.

### **These are the pair splitting rules used by the Knockout Blackjack Betting Strategy:**

- Split pairs of 2s, 3s and 7s versus a dealer up-card of 3 to 6.
- Split pairs of 4s against dealer up-cards of 5 and 6.
- Split 6s against dealer up-cards of 4 to 6.
- Split 9s against dealer up-cards of 2 to 9 except for 7.
- Always split aces and 8s

### **Insurance**

The insurance bet is an additional bet only on whether the dealer has a natural. Since the Ace is already showing, the player is wagering on whether the dealer's hole card is a ten.

Making the insurance bet does not increase or decrease the chance of winning the main bet. It is strictly a side bet and the main bet will be played to its completion regardless of the outcome of the insurance wager. If the dealer has a blackjack, then insurance pays 2 to 1. If the dealer doesn't have a ten as his down card, and therefore a blackjack, then the insurance bet loses.

It is possible to compute the disadvantage of the insurance bet. If the player is not counting cards and has no knowledge of the card played, then he can assume that the remaining cards are in the same proportion as a full deck. With tens, jacks, queens and kings all

valued at 10, the proportion of 10-valued cards compared to non 10-valued cards is: 16 ten valued cards/52 total cards or 4/13. Thus the chance of winning the insurance bet is 4/13.

The chance that the dealer's hole card is not a ten is computed as:

36 non ten valued cards/52 total cards, or 9/13

The expected value of an insurance wager is calculated by adding the probabilities of the outcomes multiplied by the payoffs, for:

Expected Value of Insurance =  $4/13(2) + 9/13(-1) = -1/13$  or -7.7%.

**Here is the rule for Insurance for the Knockout Blackjack Betting Strategy:**

Never take insurance.

**Surrender and Early Surrender**

Surrender, sometimes called "conventional surrender," and early surrender are options not available to the player in most blackjack games.

Early surrender was offered in the early days of Atlantic City blackjack and has not been available for years. With early surrender, a player can choose the option of surrendering half of his wager before the dealer checks to see if he has a blackjack. This option significantly reduces the house advantage. The following chart shows how to correctly use the early surrender option.

**EARLY SURRENDER**

Dealer Up-card	Surrender (Hard Totals)
<i>A</i>	5-7
<i>10</i>	14-16
<i>9</i>	16*
<i>* Split 8,8 instead of surrender.</i>	



With conventional surrender, the player may surrender and thereby lose half of his wager only after the dealer has ascertained that he does not have a blackjack. With conventional surrender, the surrender option is removed from the player if the dealer has a blackjack, and for this reason is not as advantageous to the player as early surrender. The chart below shows the correct strategies for conventional surrender.

### CONVENTIONAL SURRENDER

Dealer Up-card		Surrender (Hard Totals)
<u>Single Deck</u>	<u>Multi Deck</u>	
<i>10, A</i>	9, 10, A	16*
<i>10</i>	10	15
<i>10</i>	-	7 7
<i>*Split 8,8 instead of surrender.</i>		

**There is no provision for Surrender in the Knockout Blackjack Betting Strategy.**

## **Review of the Complete Basic Strategy**

If you haven't done so already, take a look at the Knockout Blackjack Betting Strategy's Playing Strategy on pages 57 to 59. Let's review the reasoning behind each decision shown in the table line by line.

### **Player's Hand is a 5-8**

The smallest two-card total you can have is a 5 if we exclude a pair of 2s which are covered further down the chart. If you want to count an A,A as a 2, then you've got me on this, but you would normally think of this hand as a 12. At any rate, you can't possibly bust by hitting any hands totaling 5 to 8, and you can usually improve your position by taking any card. You will note that none of these totals is strong enough to warrant doubling down. Even though you may be tempted, don't double on an 8 when the dealer shows a 6.

### **Player's Hand is a 10 or 11**

Next to an outright blackjack, these are the best possible starting hands you can get. While the usual Basic Strategy calls for a number of doubling situations when you hold a 10, with the Knockout Blackjack Betting Strategy we will double only versus a dealer up-card of 4, 5 or 6.

### **Player's Hand is a 12**

A hand of 12 is basically a losing hand as are the hands totaling from 13 to 16. No matter what you do with these hands, you are most likely to lose the hand. These are the hands where your best plays are designed to minimize losses.

The basic strategy for your stiff hands is to stand against a dealer's stiff hands. The dealer will bust on hands showing a 2, 3, 4, 5 or 6 up about 40% of the time, which means you will win 40% of your stiff hands by just standing.

The exceptions to this rule occurs when the dealer is showing a 2 or 3 up and you have a 12. With a 2 or 3 up, the dealer is not as weak as when he shows a 4, 5 or 6, which are the

only times you do better with a 12. So, with dealer up-cards of 2 or 3, you will hit. Otherwise, stand versus the dealer stiffs.

### **Player's Hand is a 13 or 14**

A hand totaling 13 or 14 is not a wonderful hand to start with. You will stand against any of the dealer's stiffs of 2, 3, 4, 5 or 6. Understand that you will lose most of these hands, but you will reduce the number of times you lose by standing rather than hitting versus the dealer stiff. Of course, if the dealer shows a potential *pat hand* with a 7, 8, 9, 10 or Ace up, you must take a chance and hit.

### **Player's Hand is a 15**

If surrender is allowed, here's a chance to use it. Surrender your 15 versus a dealer exposed card of 10. I know that it goes against the grain to give up half of your wager without a fight, but it has been proven that hitting a 15 versus a 10 results in a higher loss than just giving up one-half of the bet. If surrender is not offered, then hit the hand.

### **Player's Hand is a 16**

This is another thrilling total to start a round with. If you can surrender, then by all means give up this hand if the dealer shows a 9, T or Ace. This is the worst possible starting hand, and you shouldn't expect to win with it. If surrender is not available, bite the bullet and take a hit versus a dealer's potential pat hand with an exposed card of 7, 8, 9, 10 or Ace. If the dealer has a stiff, you will stand with this hand. A hand totaling 16 versus a dealer's 10 is a close call, and I will have some more to say about this situation in a few pages.

### **Player's Hand is a 17 to 21**

These are considered "pat hands" and the rule is simple. Never hit a pat hand versus any dealer up-card. You will only win with a 17 if the dealer breaks; otherwise, you are hoping for a tie at best. However, your chance of busting is greater if you hit a 17 than your odds of winning if you stand with the hand.

**Player's Hand is a soft 17**

If your first two cards consist of A,6, for a total of 17, you will double down versus a dealer up-card of 3 through 6. A dealer's 2 is not quite weak enough to double on, so you will hit if the dealer shows a 2.

Many players are reluctant to hit an A,6 when the dealer shows a 6. They reason that since they have the dealer beaten with a 17, they'd be better off to stand. If you stand, your odds are about even that you will beat the dealer's hand; however, if you hit, your odds improve to about 9 to 7. By taking one more card, you go from an even-money proposition to becoming a 9 to 7 favorite. And, when you double down, you have the chance to get twice the amount wagered when the odds favor your winning.

If your first two cards are other than an A,6 and you draw to a soft 17, the opportunity to double down is gone. With a soft 17, you will always hit as there is no card which can bust this hand. You will always hit a soft 17 because this is basically a weak hand. If you stand, you will beat the dealer only if he busts; otherwise, the best you can hope is to tie him. Any hand totaling 17 is a poor hand, but you will rarely hurt yourself by hitting when it is a soft total.

**Player's Hand is a Soft 18**

The soft 18 is one of the hands players routinely misplay. The correct way to play this hand is to hit when the dealer shows an up-card of 9, T or A and stand otherwise. If you consider the Ten Factor, this makes sense as a dealer hand with up-cards of 9, T or A will tend towards totals of 19, 20 and 21, and you must hit your soft 18 for a chance to improve it.

On the other side of the coin, if the dealer shows a 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 or 7, you probably have it beaten with a hand totaling 18. It makes sense to stand in these cases.

Although some players may feel that a hand totaling 18 is strong enough to stand on, even against the dealer up-card of 9, T and A, it is worth the gamble to hit until you either bust or get a pat hand.

**Player has an A,2 or A,3**

These are basically weak hands which you will hit against any dealer up-cards except 5 and 6.

**Player has an A,4 or A,5**

These are slightly better starting hands than an A,2 or A,3 as soft 15s and 16s tend to become higher totals than soft 13s and 14s.

**Player has an A,6**

Remember, you will never stand with a soft 17. However, an A,6 gives you the opportunity to get more money down when the odds favor you. As with a starting two-card hand of 9, the 2, sometimes called the "dealer's Ace," provides the dealer with too many ways of making a pat hand and you will not risk doubling against it. When the dealer shows a 2, hit the A,6 as you will versus the other dealer up-cards of 7, 8, 9, T or A.

**Player has an A,7**

This is one of the trickier hands to play correctly. I commonly see players misplay this hand. However, this is a hand you want to learn to play correctly as doing so will put extra dollars in your pocket for the effort.

If the "dealer's ace" of 2 shows, we will stand. If a dealer has either a 7 or 8 showing, we will also stand. A soft 18 beats the dealer's potential 17 when he shows a 7, and we will stand versus the 8 as we can tie the dealer's potential 18 and the risk of hitting is too great in this situation.

If the dealer show a 9, T or A, he probably has us beaten if we stand. Therefore we will hit the soft 18 and continue to hit until we either bust or get a pat hand. Standing with such a soft hand versus the dealer's strongest cards is a common playing error.

### **Player has an A,8 or A,9**

What's not to love about these hands? With the strong starting totals of 19 and 20, all you do is sit back and wait for the dealer to play out his hand, as the odds gods favor you when you start with these totals.

### **Player has a 2,2 or 3,3**

Just as they do for the dealer, hands starting with 2s and 3s tend to make strong hands for the player. If the dealer shows a 2 to 7, you will split these hands. Splitting even against the dealer's 2 makes sense because of the strong possibility that you will draw to two-card totals of 9, 10 or 11, giving you the chance to double down. Splitting against the dealer 7 is not as obvious as splitting against his stiff, but a dealer 7 is a fairly weak hand. The dealer will tend to make a pat hand of 17, while you, starting with a 2 or 3, enjoy the possibilities of additional splitting or doubling opportunities with a good chance of beating the dealer's total.

A dealer's up-card of 8, 9, T or A is too formidable and you will hit rather than split against these up-cards.

### **Player has a 4, 4**

The possible gain from splitting when the dealer shows a 5 or 6 is just great enough to make this the correct play rather than hitting from a total of 8.

### **Player has a 6,6**

This is one of my least favorite starting hands. No matter what you do, you are likely to lose with a 6,6, so our strategy calls for making the best of it. If the dealer shows a 5 or 6, we will split the pair of 6s and hope we draw a 3, 4 or 5 giving us a decent starting total and

the possibility of doubling down versus the dealer's stiff hand. I often will lose one hand and win or tie with the other when splitting 6s.

If the dealer shows a 7, 8, 9, T or A, bite the bullet, hit the hand and hope for the best.

### **Player has a 7,7**

This hand is almost as bad as a pair of 6s. When you split a pair of 7s, you will tend towards getting two hands totaling 17 — which are winners only if the dealer busts. Here we will split the pair when the dealer shows an up-card of 2 through 7.

### **Player has an 8,8**

Trust me. It is a lot more fun when a dealer turns over his 8 up-card and has another 8 in the hole than when you are dealt a pair of 8s. This is the worst possible total you can start with. The correct strategy is to always split a pair of 8s even if surrender is available. There is one exception to the splitting rule. If you are playing internationally where the dealer does not take a hole card until the players have played out their hands, just surrender your 16 against a dealer T or A if surrender is allowed.

Getting a 16 against a 10 is the worst possible blackjack situation. Hitting the 16, you will win three times out of thirteen. However, if you split the 8,8 into two hands starting with 8 each, you will lose less in the long run than just hitting the 16.

### **Player has a 9,9**

You will split a pair of 9s against any of the dealer's stiff hands of 2, 3, 4, 5 or 6. This is obviously a good move as you will want to get more money wagered when the dealer is most likely to bust, and splitting this hand accomplishes that. If the dealer shows a 7, you will stand as your hand totaling 18 is likely to beat a dealer's hand tending towards a total of 17. The correct strategy is to split the pair versus a dealer's 8 or 9 and stand if a dealer shows a T or A. Splitting hands against a dealer's T or A is not likely to beat the dealer, so standing with your original pair of 9s is the right move. Splitting the pair against the

dealer's 8 also seems logical as the split 9s will gravitate towards two hands totaling 19, beating anything up to a dealer's 9.

Splitting the pair of 9s against the dealer's 9 is a close call, but it is the right move. There is always the possibility of drawing a 2 as the second card on each 9, setting up ideal doubling situations.

### **Player has an A,A**

The best starting hand you can have in blackjack, other than a blackjack, is a hand totaling 11. Splitting a pair of Aces changes one mediocre hand totaling 2 or 12 into two starter hands totaling 11 each and is therefore always the right move, even against a dealer's Ace. The only exception to always splitting a pair of Aces is when playing against European rules where the dealer does not take a hole card until all player options are exhausted. Here, as with splitting a pair of 8s, you will change the main rule and just hit the pair of Aces when the dealer shows an Ace. The risk of losing your split bets is too great and, as we have seen earlier, a hand totaling 2 is not such a bad beginning total.

### **Player has a 5,5 or a 10, 10**

You will never split pairs of 5s or 10s under any circumstances. You are always better off doubling the pair of 5s against dealer cards of 9 or less.

Unless you are a card counter, it never makes sense to split a pair of 10s totaling 20, a hand too powerful to split.

### **Playing Correctly is Still no Guarantee of Winning**

Now that you have seen an explanation of the Knockout Blackjack Betting Strategy's correct playing strategy, you may feel like you know what to expect in a blackjack game. If you double down on an 11 versus a dealer's 4, you should win, right?



While the playing rules I have given you are the correct ones, on individual hands anything can happen. Assume your first two cards are 9,2, for a starting total of 11. The dealer's up-card is a 6, his worst possible up-card. You just wagered \$100, a large bet for you, and now you sigh with relief as you have the dealer backed into a corner. You place another hundred dollar wager on the table signaling the dealer you want to double down.

You watch in disbelief as you are dealt an Ace for a total of 12, while the dealer turns over his hole card revealing a 10,6 and then draws a 5 for a perfect 21. "What the hell happened here?" you might mutter. "This hand should have been a slam dunk win!"

You are supposed to win this hand. In fact, the odds are 2 to 1 in your favor! You should have won two out of three bets. Well, in the long run you will, but you just lost that one bet in three. It has to happen. This is the nature of gambling. Even when you have an edge, there is never any guarantee you will win any particular bet.

Have you ever hit a 16 and beat the dealer's 10-valued up-card? Of course you have. The odds are 10 to 3 against you winning this hand, but you still have a chance of winning some of the time. Most of us tend to think of low probability wins like this one as due to skill, while dealer wins of low probability plays as bad luck or even deceit.

The truth is, luck can run either way in any given hand. The key to long term success is to play each hand optimally using the correct Knockout Blackjack Betting Strategy Playing Strategy. The table below lists some of the most common hands and your odds of winning.

### Odds of Player Hands Winning

<i><b>Hands</b></i>	<i><b>Player's Odds</b></i>
<i><b>20 versus dealer 8</b></i>	8 to 1 favorite
<i><b>20 versus dealer 4</b></i>	5 to 1 favorite
<i><b>19 versus dealer 10</b></i>	8 to 7 favorite
<i><b>19 versus dealer 3</b></i>	5 to 2 favorite
<i><b>18 versus dealer 10</b></i>	7 to 5 underdog
<i><b>18 versus dealer 5</b></i>	8 to 5 favorite
<i><b>17 versus dealer 9</b></i>	5 to 2 underdog
<i><b>17 versus dealer 7</b></i>	5 to 4 underdog
<i><b>17 versus dealer 2</b></i>	4 to 3 underdog
<i><b>16 versus dealer 10</b></i>	10 to 3 underdog
<i><b>15 versus dealer 10</b></i>	3 to 1 underdog
<i><b>15 versus dealer 2</b></i>	9 to 5 underdog
<i><b>12 versus dealer 5</b></i>	7 to 5 underdog
<i><b>11 versus dealer 6</b></i>	2 to 1 favorite
<i><b>10 versus dealer 2</b></i>	3 to 2 favorite
<i><b>A,5 versus dealer 3</b></i>	even money
<i><b>A,3 versus dealer 5</b></i>	9 to 7 favorite

## **The Knockout Blackjack Betting Strategy Playing Strategy**

The Playing Strategy you will use for the Knockout Blackjack Betting Strategy reduces the number of times that you will double down or split pairs. This is done in the interest of controlling the size of your wagers and further limiting the times that you will be called on to wager more on a hand. Once we cover the Knockout Blackjack Betting Strategy's Betting System, you will better understand when this is done.

**At any rate, in using this “simplified playing strategy” very little in playing effectiveness is lost, while a great deal is gained in money management.**

## **A Summary of the Knockout Blackjack Betting Playing Strategy**

1. If the dealer has an up-card of 7 or higher, keeping hitting until you have a hard hand of 17 or higher.

2. If the dealer shows an up-card of 4, 5 or 6, stand at a hard hand of 12 or better. You will only hit if your hand is 11 or lower.

3. If the dealer has a 2 or 3, stand at a hard hand of 13 or higher. You will only hit if your hand is 12 or lower.

4. Hard hand doubling:

11 vs a dealer 2-10

10 vs a dealer 2-9

9 vs a dealer 3-6

5. Soft hand doubling:

A,7 & A,6 vs 3-6

A,5 & A,4 vs 4-6

A,3 and A,2 vs 5-6

Splits are handled as follows:

- Split pairs of 2s, 3s and 7s versus a dealer up-card of 3 to 6.
- Split pairs of 4s against dealer up-cards of 5 and 6.
- Split 6s against dealer up-cards of 4 to 6.
- Split 9s against dealer up-cards of 2 to 9 except for when dealer shows a 7.
- Always split aces and 8s

6. Never take insurance

### **Learning the Knockout Blackjack Betting Strategy Playing Strategy**

For your convenience, a "pocket size" version of the Knockout Blackjack Betting Strategy Playing Strategy is presented on the next page. You may make a photocopy of this chart and carry it in your pocket while you are learning basic strategy. This way, you can pull the chart out and study it for a few moments at a time. Most persons learn better by exposing themselves over and over to the same information for short time periods rather than by trying to spend a large amount of time memorizing everything in one session. The pocket card will be a handy reference tool for you.

After you have become very familiar with the playing strategy, you should try writing it down from memory. Another good learning tool is to create a set of index cards. The cards should have the dealer up-card and the player cards on one side and the correct play on the reverse.

## Knockout Blackjack Betting Strategy Playing Strategy Pocket Card

Knockout Blackjack Betting Strategy
<b><u>Splitting:</u></b> A,A 8,8 vs All dealer hands 9,9 vs 2-9 except 7 6,6 vs 4-6 4,4 vs 5-6 2s, 3s and 7s vs 3-6
<b><u>Doubling Down:</u></b> 11 vs 2-10, 10 vs 2-9, 9 vs 3-6 A,7 & A,6 vs 3-6 A,5 & A,4 vs 4-6 A,3 & A,2 vs 5-6
<b><u>Hitting &amp; Standing:</u></b> Hard 11 or lower always hit Hard 17 or higher always stand Hard 12-16 stand vs dealer 4,5, or 6 Hard 13-16 stand vs dealer 2 or 3 Soft 17 Hit till Hard 17 or better Soft 18 Stand 2-8, otherwise hit Soft 19-20 Always stand
<b><u>Insurance</u></b> Never take insurance.

Once you have the cards prepared, you can go through them looking at the dealer up-card and player cards and then describe the strategy. Put the cards you answered correctly aside and spend more time reviewing the cards you missed until you are able to give the correct answer for every playing option.

You can also practice with a deck of cards. I learned basic strategy many years ago practicing with cards. Deal one card as the dealer's up-card and two as the player cards. Decide on the correct strategy. If you are not sure, check the strategy card above.

## **Blackjack Myths and Player Errors**

Many gamblers focus on events which have no bearing on the real outcome of a game. Gambling does many things to people. It changes otherwise rational people into somewhat irrational, superstition-ridden players. Superstition tends to generate myths. Two of the most common ones which come instantly to mind are the belief shared by craps players that if one die flies off the table during the shooter's roll, a seven will show on the next roll. It is easy to see how this superstition turned into a bona fide belief. Since a seven appears once every six dice rolls anyway, it is easy to remember the times it appeared immediately after one of the dice left the table.

The second gambling myth, which is very common, is the belief that the order of cards in blackjack is affected by the players errors; hence, you should avoid a table of amateurs, since they make the most playing mistakes.

Gambling is full of myths and if you want to become a serious, winning blackjack player, you need to forget the myths and instead focus on the concepts which really can affect your ability to win or lose the game.

### **The Negative Expectancy**

There is a widespread belief that many gamblers adhere to. How many times have you seen a gambler start out making \$5 or \$10 bets. Then, after losing four or five bets in a row, he will raise his bets to \$25 or even \$50. Why does he do this? Many players feel like they are due to win a bet.

If the bettor continues to follow this line of reasoning, he may end up losing all of his gambling bankroll in short order because the hoped for string of winning bets never showed.

Many experts like to use examples like this to disparage any types of betting progressions, smugly opting that they all must fail because it is impossible to predict

the outcome of the next decision in a casino game. The experts will point out that having lost four or five bets in a row is no guarantee that you will win the next bet or even one of the next four or five bets.

There are many different ways that it can be proven that previous decisions in games of chance like craps, roulette and baccarat have no bearing on the outcome of future decisions. Even card counters would argue that in blackjack a loss of four or five consecutive decisions does not increase the probability of winning unless the dealer has used an abundance of low-valued cards leaving the unplayed cards with a surplus of high cards. This condition tends to favor the player and could influence the outcome of future hands.

The experts' argument can be boiled down to a simple statement: If you are a gambler and consistently raise your bets after losses, hoping that fate will intervene and give you a winning streak to counter the losses, you will be doomed to lose.

This statement, when made by proponents of card counting, is considered a *quid pro quo* type of damning statement against any type of betting system other than card counting ever having any chance of winning at blackjack. These experts believe that it is impossible to win consistently over the long-term against any games of chance where the house has an edge over the player.

The expert argument then concludes with the reasoning that the only way that blackjack can be beaten is by learning to count cards.

The premise that the player's negative expectancy must always catch up with him and cause him to lose is based on the player playing nonstop until infinity. Players don't play that way. Our focus is on short-term play using the player's options of leaving a table with winnings intact, or stopping play under certain circumstances.



Let's assume that losing four bets in a row at blackjack is a sign that this particular table may be too tough for us to beat. We could opt to simply walk away and look for a different table. We may not chose to act the way our critics chose to portray us. We may decide to quit rather than fight a decidedly negative trend.

On the other hand, after a couple of losing bets, we may decide to raise our wager using the reasonable expectation that most trends in blackjack are short lived, and raising our bet after a losing wager may be one of the smartest moves we can make if we want to win consistently.

One of my favorite examples refuting the experts' claim that games with negative player expectancies can't be overcome was given by Frank Barstow in *Beat the Casino*. He presented an example of using a simple arithmetic betting system to win at a game offering the opportunity to wager on even-money bets. He used craps for his example, but he just as easily could have used roulette, baccarat or even blackjack. However, using blackjack for a test of wagering on even-money bets is a little less clear because of the effect of doubling down and splitting pairs on the amount wagered.

Here's the system. You will start wagering \$1, betting only on the pass line at craps. After each bet, you will raise the next bet by \$1 regardless of whether you have won or lost the previous bet. You will stop each game when you have a profit.

Barstow picked an extreme case to test this betting strategy. He found a sequence of craps decisions starting with only four pass line decisions in the first 27 decisions. He had to continue wagering for some time, eventually investing almost \$13,000 in wagers, with his bets reaching \$160 before he won.

He concludes with the observation that in a trial of 500 or more decisions, it would be virtually impossible to lose using this progression. I wouldn't go so far as to state that it would be virtually impossible to lose, as even this progression could run into

the house limits on the maximum size bet allowed, and therefore, not be allowed to continue.

The point here is that a progression can be used to over-come games with negative expectancies and win on a consistent basis.

There are other strategies with better risk-reward ratios than this "foolproof system." Interestingly, this "increase each bet by \$1" system was being sold some years ago as a "foolproof" way to win at Blackjack.

### **Don't Change the Order of Cards**

Many players object to a new player joining a blackjack game in the middle of a shoe. I have been asked to please wait until the next shuffle before beginning to play. The player's request that I stand by until a new shuffle is based on the superstition that the order of cards in this particular round of 200 to 300 cards has been set and that my entry will disrupt the order of cards.

Winning players are more likely to be concerned about keeping the order of cards than losing ones. Losing players may very well welcome my entry, hoping that I will change the order of cards for the better.

There is no substance to this belief. Even expert card counters have no idea whether the next card will be favorable or unfavorable to them. They only know that the remaining undealt cards may be neutral, may favor the dealer, or may be favorable to the player. Having this information still gives no clue as to what the next card, or even the next two or three cards might be.

Let's take a little test here. If the dealer spreads out the undealt cards in a fan shape face down and offers to let you pick your next card, do you think that you could do better than merely accepting the next card normally dealt? Unless you are

clairvoyant, it is not likely that your guess would improve your odds of winning. Why, then would it make any difference whether another player joins the table.

If a new player joins the table and changes the order of cards, might not it work against the dealer instead of the players? The answer is that there is no basis in fact for believing one way or the other.

If you want to believe that your luck, karma, or fate is tied up in the order of cards, then you have to consider that my joining a game may very well be part of this plan, and that by objecting to my entry, you are setting up the very series of events which will cause you to lose.

Many casinos today, especially in Atlantic City, are posting signs on the tables reading "No Mid-shoe Entry." This, in effect, bars you or me from entering a game before the next shuffle. You are most likely to see these signs at higher stake games. Superstitious players believe that this rule was implemented to protect the seated players against new players taking *their cards*, and changing the order of cards.

The casino bosses have probably justified this rule to pacify their high rollers, but this rule also has the effect of preventing card counters from standing back and counting and then "Wonging in" or jumping in when the count is favorable to the players.

Casinos enacting this rule have little to lose as they can thwart a card counting strategy while placating some of their higher betting players.

### **Bad Players at the Table Can Hurt You**

Imagine that you are seated at a table with three other players at the last spot at the



table, at third base. The dealer's up-card is a 3. The three other players have stood with a 13, 16 and 14. Two of the three players have monster bets out. Now all eyes are on you. You are trying to remember the correct basic strategy rule.

"Should I hit or stand with a 12 against the dealer's 3." You are aware of the pressure. You finally decide to stand (the correct basic strategy is to hit until you have a total of at least 13). The dealer turns over his hole card revealing a 10 for a total of 13. Next he draws a 8 for a perfect 21. Everyone at the table groans. If you had followed basic strategy, you would have hit and gotten the 8. The first card dealt on the next round is a Jack. This would have been the dealer's bust card if you had taken a hit instead of standing.

Two of the players make some pointed comments to you about learning how to play and leave the table. The third player remains, seething. Meekly, you decide to leave the table after the next round of cards is dealt.

Has this ever happened to you? Many players are convinced that if a player misplays his hand the other players are hurt. This becomes especially obvious if the player is in the hot seat at third base, making the last hitting or standing decision before the dealer completes his hand.

If the other players disagree with the third baseman's play, they often make their objections known, sometimes loudly and crudely. Have you ever been one of the accusers in this type of display?

What if you were the one who stood with a 12 versus a dealer 3? Obviously, the table is expecting you to take a hit. Does your decision really have any effect on the next card? What if the dealer suddenly reached into the deck and reversed the next two undealt cards? What should you do now? Does this have any affect on your decision? The other players are still watching you, hoping that your decision will be the one that gives the dealer the bust card. But what should you do now?

The truth of the matter is that you should play your hand in the best way possible for yourself. You can never know when the next card will be the dealer's bust card or will make his hand. The feeling that bad players somehow hurt good players is another superstition. A player's error is just as likely to help another player as is his playing perfect basic strategy.

Don't worry about playing with bad players. Sometimes they improve the game and at other times their mistakes may hurt you. It all averages out.

If you are on third base? Just shrug off any heat you get from other players. For various reasons, I prefer to play in the first seat at the table, called *first base*, or in one of the middle chairs. However, I usually have more choices because I play at tables with \$100 or higher minimum wagers. If you are playing at \$5 or \$10 minimum wager tables, you may face more crowded conditions and be forced to sit at third base. My advice is to use the correct Power Blackjack Basic Strategy, which, as you will see in a few chapters, will sometimes vary from basic strategy. If the other players don't like your play, they can play elsewhere. You can take some satisfaction in that it is usually players who are losing themselves who make the most noise, and you can observe your own stacks of chips won, smile at the losers, and just shrug your shoulders. The proof is in the pudding as they say.

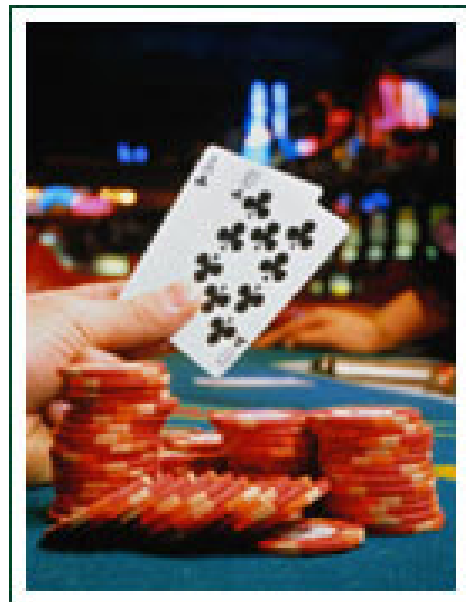
### **Insure a Good Hand?**

In general, the only relevant factor in deciding whether or not to take insurance is the probability that the dealer has a 10-valued hole card with the Ace showing.

Insurance is only a proposition or side bet, and should be considered a totally separate event from the cards dealt the player.

For a non card counter, the general rule is to never take insurance. Many players, and even casino personnel, will advise you to insure a hand with a high total such as 20, but not a low totalled hand such as one totaling 6. This really makes no sense at all. In fact, insuring a 20, when you just took two tens out of circulation (assuming you don't have an A,9), would be the worst time to take insurance, since you just reduced the probability that the dealer has a 10-valued card in the hole.

If you are dealt a blackjack and the dealer has an Ace as his up-card, he will ask you if you want "even money." Many players will accept this proposition without realizing that this is the same as insuring the blackjack. Consider three players each receiving a blackjack with \$10 bets up with the dealer showing an Ace up. The dealer offers insurance and the first player accepts, putting a five dollar chip in the insurance betting area of the table. The second player says "I'll take even money," while the third player declines the wager.



The dealer turns over his hole card and has a 9 — not a blackjack. The first player, who took insurance loses his insurance bet of \$5 but is paid \$15 for the blackjack, netting \$10. The second player, who took even money, gets \$10. Only player three, who refused insurance, receives \$15 as full pay for the blackjack. The first and second players received \$10 each, showing that there is no difference between insuring a blackjack and taking even money.

In general, the insurance rule for the Knockout Blackjack Betting Strategy is simple. The rule for playing the Knockout Blackjack Betting Strategy is: **Never take insurance.**

### **Doubling Down for Less Money**

When you double down, you don't have to match your original bet when you decide to "double." Instead you can make a wager for a lesser amount.

Players may decide to double for less whenever they are either unsure whether they should double, or even if they know doubling is the correct procedure, but they are concerned about the size of the bet required, usually because the original bet is large compared to the size of their average bets.

You will want to remember that the doubling situations recommended as part of the Knockout Blackjack Betting Playing Strategy are based on doubling for the full amount allowed, an amount equal to your original bet. If you decide not to double down for the full amount, you are better to take a hit rather than doubling for a lesser amount.

### **Commonly Misplayed Hands**

Playing some hands correctly seems to defy common sense or they are at least more difficult for players to play correctly than others. I have listed some of the hands I have observed other players having the most difficulty playing correctly.

**Player has a 12 vs. a dealer's 3.** Many players who have learned basic strategy can't remember whether to hit or stand on this hand. They remember that a dealer showing a 2, 3, 4, 5 or 6 has a potential stiff hand, but they can't quite remember whether to hit or stand in this situation. So they stand. The correct move is to hit against a dealer's 2 or 3 until you have at least a 13. Here, the correct move is to hit.

**Player has a 16 vs. a 7.** Most players recognize that you have no choice but to hit this stiff hand against a dealer's 9 or 10. But when the dealer is only showing a 7, many players wimp out and stand with a 16. This is actually "bass ackwards" as my Dad used to say.

You have a better chance hitting a 16 versus a dealer's 7 than a high card such as 9 or 10. Hitting against the higher cards, if you avoid busting, you are still likely to lose if you catch a 2 or a 3. Against a 7, that same deuce may turn you into a winner!

**Player has a 3,3,A vs. a dealer's 4, 5 or 6.** Wow, a 17 against a dealer's worst stiff cards. Time to stand, no? Actually I just threw another soft 17 at you but with several cards. Dealers should call out both totals when you have a soft hand. This hand is a 7 or a 17. Most likely the dealer will only announce a 17 and you, seeing the dealer's stiff card will stand. But this would be the wrong move. With a multi-card soft 17, you no longer have the opportunity to double against a dealer's 3 to 6, so you will hit. As you will recall, you will always hit a soft 17 as there is no single card which can bust you, and 17 is a very weak hand to stand on.

**Player has a 9,9 vs. a dealer's 9.** Are you tempted to stand with a hard 18? If you do, you will only win four times out of ten. But a player's 9 versus a dealer's 9 is almost an even money bet. It may go against your better instinct, but the correct move is to split the pair of 9s versus the dealer 9.

**Player has 8,8 vs. a dealer's 10.** This is blackjack's worst possible hand. You may be tempted to surrender the hand where surrender is offered, but the correct strategy is to split the pair of 8s. Even though you'll have to put more money down to split the pair, over the long term splitting loses less than half the money as hitting the 16 against the 10. Another way of stating this, is that even though this is a losing hand, you will lose less in the long run by splitting instead of either hitting or standing.



## Betting Systems

Betting systems fall into the broad categories of betting the same after each decision, known as flat betting, raising wagers after wins, called positive progressions, and raising money after losses, named negative progressions.

There are also systems which have characteristics of one or more of these types, such as the Knockout Blackjack Betting Strategy's Betting System which we will encounter in a couple more chapters. Many of the classical betting systems were developed for roulette in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, but can be used for other games with even-money wagers such as craps, baccarat and blackjack. Although none of these systems in its pure form is a winning system, it is worthwhile to study the efforts of our not so dumb ancestors as these betting systems are the grandparents of every modern betting system.

### Martingale

Martingale is one of the oldest betting systems using a negative progression. It is named after Henry Martingale, an English casino owner in the 1700s who is reputed to urge losing punters to "double 'em up" with their wagers.

This system is very simple. You will use a betting series where each bet in the series is twice as large as the preceding one, as with 1, 2, 4, 8, 16, 32. So long as you win a bet, you will continue to bet at the lowest level, e.g. wager 1. If you lose a bet, you will move up to the next wager, doubling the amount of the previous wager. Use of the system ensures that whenever your wager eventually wins, you will win the amount of the original wager, in this instance 1.

One of my gambling friends once told me about an amazing system he had developed for craps. He had gone to Las Vegas on two consecutive trips and returned a winner. He was wagering only on don't pass at casino craps using a betting series starting with a \$1 bet and doubling his bet after each loss. He was certain that his risk of loss was very small and planned to continue to use the system. He was reluctant to share the system with me but he

finally confessed that he was using the following betting series, increasing his wager one level following a loss: 1 2 4 8 16 32 64 128 256. He correctly pointed out that he would have to lose nine times in a row to lose the betting series, and he just didn't think that this was possible.

I pointed out to him that there was a very real possibility that he could lose nine decisions in a row; in fact, this would happen once about every 500 pass line - don't pass decisions. With craps decisions averaging fifty to sixty per hour, a loss of all nine wagers could happen once every eight to ten hours. I asked him to consider whether he was winning enough to sustain a loss of \$511.00 (the total amount he was risking) in order to win the sum of \$1. This must have impressed him as I don't think he ever used this system again (or at least he didn't tell me about losing with it).

The Martingale system would be just about unbeatable if you could continue to double your wagers until you finally won a bet. Modern casinos are very aware of Martingale, and they know that the easiest way to thwart the system is to narrow the spread between maximum and minimum bets allowed. In other words, the minimum wager must be high enough and the maximum wager low enough that no more than eight or nine doublings can occur. If you find a table with a low minimum, such as \$1 and a high maximum, such as \$3,000, you may wish to try using a Martingale system against the table. You could use the following series of wagers: 1 2 4 8 16 32 64 128 256 512 1,024 2,048. With 12 bets in the series, you would be an odds on favorite to win any weekend gambling contest involving even-money wagers. However, you might want to consider one thing. If you try this, sooner or later you will lose bet number 11, for \$1,024. You will now have lost \$2,047 and will be called on to bet \$2,048 in order to win the grand sum of \$1. Are you willing to risk it? If you win, you will be up exactly one buck for your efforts. However, if you lose your last wager of \$2,048, you will have lost \$4,095 in the gaming contest. While the risk of loss is low, it will happen at some time if you continue to wager this way, and there is no guarantee that it won't happen during your first casino excursion using this system.

Martingale in its purest form is too risky for the amount of reward offered. Nearly every gambling expert likes to cite Martingale as an example of a losing system and then jump into a gloating mode and proclaim that all betting systems are losers. However, a Martingale system can be used with very good results if it is used on a spot basis. Assume that you are wagering on an even-money game and that you have lost the last four consecutive wagers. Usually, a three-stage Martingale against this trend continuing for three more decisions will be quite profitable and the reward will be reasonable as compared to the amount risked.

### **Grand Martingale**

One criticism of Martingale is that too much is risked compared to the potential return. For example, in the first Martingale series shown, you would have had to wager \$256 in order to win a net \$1. With Grand Martingale, additional chips are added to each increased wager, so that when a win finally occurs, the amount won will be greater than just the amount of the first wager. A typical Grand Martingale series is: 1 3 5 15 35 75.

Martingale in all forms risks a lot to win a little. When the losses come, they will wipe out hours of profits. Another twist to using a Martingale series is to play Martingale in reverse, called an "Anti-Martingale" betting series. With this system, winning wagers will be pressed (doubled). Whenever you encounter a long winning streak this system can produce phenomenal profits. Assume we use the following Anti-Martingale series: 5 10 20 40 80. With five consecutive wins, we will win \$155, while our total risk is only the amount of our first wager, \$5.

The high risk reward ratio is a major reason while raising your wagers after wins is recommended by many gaming experts. However, as we saw two chapters back, this type of system wins very infrequently, and the many small losses overwhelm most gains, so that over 90% of all games will end with a loss.

## Labouchere

With Labouchere, also known as the Cancellation System, the player sets up a series of numbers which will add up to the profit he will make if he wins this betting series. If he picks 1 2 3 as his series, his expected profit for winning this series is  $1 + 2 + 3 = 6$ . Like the variations of Martingale, this series is used with even-money bets.

To start the series, a player will wager the sum of the two outside numbers, in this case 6 ( $1 + 2 + 3 = 6$ ). If he wins this wager, he will cancel the two outside numbers by scratching them out, and wager the sum of the next two outside numbers. In this simple series, only the single number of 2 is left, so the player would wager 2. If he also wins this wager, he will have won the series, having won 4 on the first round and 2 for the second wager, for a total of 6, the total of all bets in the series.

Any time the player loses a wager, he will add the amount lost to the series and continue to wager the sum of the two outside wagers. Let's assume the player lost the first bet of 4. He would add this wager to the series, which would now become: 1 2 3 4. His next wager would be for 5, the sum of the two outside wagers. We will assume that this bet wins. Having won the bet, our players cancels the outside numbers of 1 and 4 leaving the series as: 2 3. He next wagers the sum of these two numbers, betting 5. If this wager wins the series is completed. If he loses this wager, the losing bet of 5 will be added to the series and he will continue the series.

The principal appeal of this system is that it appears to be a two for one proposition in that each win cancels two numbers while a loss only adds one number to the series. However, this isn't the case as the player is not paid two for one on winning bets.

In testing this system, I have had bets escalate to wagers of hundreds of dollars all too frequently. This is probably the most insidious of the old time roulette systems. It is said to have been responsible for more suicides on the French Riviera than any other system. Part of the problem with this system is that the small stream of steady wins tends to lull the player into believing that the system can't lose. Unfortunately, a long enough losing streak

will occur that the wagers called for will either be larger than the player's bankroll or will exceed the house limits and not be allowed. In either case, the series will be over with the end result that the player suffers a substantial loss.

This system can also be played in reverse, known as Reverse Labouchere. With Reverse Labby, as many punters call it, the amount of each win is added to the series, and the two outside numbers are canceled whenever a loss occurs. Each wager is still the sum of the two outside numbers. This system produces many small losses in exchange for an occasional win over 1,000 times the amount at risk.

Use of this approach is recounted in Norman Leigh's fascinating account of his successful effort to beat the casino in Monte Carlo by playing Labouchere in reverse (*Thirteen Against the Bank*, William Morrow & Co., 1976). Norman Leigh theorized that the reason so many players lose with Labouchere is that they run into the house limits or lose their playing capital and are unable to recoup losses. Since the bank has almost unlimited capital in comparison to the players, the bank can out wait most player assaults, knowing that either the house betting limit or the player's own limited financial resources will bring about the player's demise.

In using the reverse betting strategy, Leigh reasoned that this approach would most closely resemble the bank's approach to most other players. *He would wait out the small losses until a large win occurred.* Leigh spent months recruiting and training a team to play against the casino. His trials in pulling off this coup make for fascinating reading. I believe that one of the reasons he was eventually able to beat the casino in Monte Carlo was that his starting wagers were fairly low and the house maximums large in comparison. Consequently, he was able to keep his losses fairly low while his team played on, waiting for the monster win.

It is doubtful that this system could be used successfully now, as the spread between minimum and maximum wagers is not large enough in most casinos. The losses realized while waiting for the large win would be enormous, with the house limits on maximum wagers limiting the systems' ability to ultimately recoup the losses.

### **D'Alembert**

This system was invented by a French mathematician, based on the assumption of *equilibrium* in gaming contests. D'Alembert reasoned that since winning and losing bets must eventually equal one another, a system of adding one chip after each losing bet and subtracting a chip after a winning bet would ultimately result in a win as winning wagers would always be greater than losing ones.

It is not unusual to win only ten of the first thirty wagers in an even-money betting contest. With d'Alembert's system, the player will wager higher and higher amounts until he eventually runs into our old nemesis, the house limit.

D'Alembert can be fairly successful if it is modified to include no more than nine or ten bets in a series of wagers, so that potential losses are limited. An additional modification to improve the system is to space the bets so that the win of two consecutive wagers will offset prior losses. A series which accomplishes this is 1 2 3 4 7 11 18. With this series, a player would drop back to the lowest bet after winning two consecutive wagers, such as 7 and 4. This system can be fairly successful if used by two partners betting the opposite in roulette, craps or baccarat.

### **Ascot**

This is another of the old time roulette systems which can be adapted to any game offering even-money bets. With Ascot, winning wagers are increased one unit at a time in a predetermined series of wagers while losing bets are lowered one step using the same betting series. An Ascot betting series can be from seven to eleven numbers. A typical series is: 2 3 5 8 13 20 30. The player's first wager would be a middle number such as 8. If this wager wins, the next wager would be 13. If this wager also won, the succeeding wager would be for 20, and so on, with each win followed by an increase of one level in the betting series. The series would end with the win of the last bet in the series. For a win, that would be a win of 30. A losing series would be terminated with the loss of the lowest bet of 2.

The greatest problem with Ascot is that alternating wins and losses at the higher levels of wagers will destroy the profit potential of the series. This can be a serious flaw in any system calling for a large reduction in the amount wagered following a loss.

### **The Fibonacci System**

Fibonacci was a mathematician who discovered a series of numbers where the sum of each two numbers in the series equals the number which follows. A Fibonacci series with twelve levels of bets would look like: 1 1 2 3 5 8 13 21 34 55 89 144 233 for a total risked of \$609.

This is a very low risk system for use with even-money bets at craps, roulette and baccarat. It can also be used at blackjack.. To use it, you will increase your bet one level following a loss. After any win, you drop your next wager one level. If you win two bets in a row, or win two out of three bets, you drop back to the first bet in the series.

This system was sold many years ago for \$100 a copy with instructions to use it betting don't pass in craps. This is a good system for partners to use betting opposites. With roulette, for instance, one partner could bet red while the other wagered black. With craps, one would wager on pass line and the other on don't pass. With baccarat, one partner would bet banker and the other on player hands.

An adaptation of this system has been used to successfully win at craps (*The Silverthorne System*, Silverthorne Publications (see <http://www.silverthornepublications.net/SilverSysInternet/> ).

Incidentally, there are a number of derivations of the Fibonacci series of numbers, including ratios of the numbers, which are regularly used in trading stocks and commodity future contracts. This is indeed a versatile and powerful sequence of numbers.

### **The Parlay**

A parlay or *paroli* is a positive progression method. In its simplest form, it consists of leaving a winning bet plus the winnings up for a second win. If you are betting \$10 on an even-money bet and win \$10, you parlay the wager by leaving \$20 up for the next decision. If this bet wins, you will have won \$30 while only risking \$10.

Probably the most attractive aspect of a successful parlay is that it wins three times as much as the amount risked. However, the probability of winning two bets in a row on even-money wagers is less than one in four. For this reason, one of the better ways to use a parlay is to combine it with a series of bets where the amount wagered is increased following a loss. For example the following parlay progression could be used: 2 2 3 4 6 8 12 16.

To use this series, you would normally start with the first wager in the series. If this bet won, you would parlay it and next wager \$4. If either the original wager or the parlay lost you would move up one level in the betting series. Any time a parlay bet is won, you will start the betting series over. If the series is lost, you may either start the series over or leave the table.

Setting up parlay progressions like the one above can be the basis for some of the best performing betting progressions in gambling. To use such a series in blackjack, which requires additional money in order to handle pair splitting and doublings, requires adjustments to the series. One way to handle this is to modify basic strategy to reduce the number of splitting and doubling plays. However, this is not a wise way to play blackjack as these moves represent one of the player's strongest winning options. A better way to handle the program of developing a winning parlay progression for blackjack is to modify the progression so that it allows for splitting and doubling opportunities.

### **Positive Betting Progressions in Blackjack**

Charles Einstein who originated the Hi-Opt 1 card counting system wrote a book titled *Blackjack Betting* in 1981. In it he advocated a betting system based on the rhythm of



blackjack wins and losses. He recommended increasing wagers following losses and decreasing wagers after wins, somewhat similar to the Ascot system described earlier.

Traditional card counting experts and mathematicians who have studied the blackjack game reacted negatively to Einstein's progressive betting system. In general, the advocates of card counting are unwilling to even consider that any betting progression can come close to equaling the results achieved through card counting. Their minds are closed on the subject that anything other than card counting can be used to win at blackjack.

### **Dahl's System**

Donald Dahl in *Progressive Blackjack* (Citadel Press Group, 1993) presents a positive betting progression for use at blackjack. The progression for tables with \$5 minimum bets is: 5 5 7 7 10 10 15 15 25 25 35 35 50 50.

To use this progression, always start with the lowest bet and move up one level after each win. After any loss, you will start the progression over.

Dahl suggests that you skip a level after receiving a blackjack. For instance, if you were at the level three bet of \$25 and won with a blackjack, you would skip the next \$25 bet and wager \$35 on the next hand.

He recommends skipping two levels after winning splits and doubles unless the jump would cause you to risk more money than the amount received on the previous wager. If this is the case, then jump just one level on the next bet.

Dahl's book is interesting, but his system is weak in several ways. No automatic stopping points are suggested and he doesn't have any suggestions for sessions when multiple losses occur.

### **Thomason's System**

Walter Thomason in his *Twenty-first Century Blackjack* (Bonus Books, 1999) develops a positive progression betting system with which he does extensive testing. Thomason plays 5,000 hands of blackjack comparing the results of flat betting, the Thomason System and card counting. We will discuss this fascinating study more in the next chapter.

Thomason's betting progression consists of starting with a bet of \$20. He increases his wager by \$10 each time he is the net winner of a hand and drops back to his original \$20 bet following any loss. In addition, he caps his betting series at a maximum of \$50. A series of six consecutive wins would look like: 20 30 40 50 50 50 for a total win of \$240.

He adds one more item to his betting progression. He suggests that a player quit playing anytime he loses four bets in a row. Dahl calls this is "quit point."

### **Patrick's System**

Another positive betting system was presented by John Patrick, a professional gambler turned writer. In his *John Patrick's Blackjack* (Carol Publishing Group, 1995) he describes his system. He uses a system with both progressive and regressive attributes. With his system, you will start with a wager at least twice as large as the table minimum so that you have room to reduce the size of your bet after wins. After your first win, your next wager will be one-half the size of the first winning wager. For instance, if your base bet is \$10 and you win, you will wager \$5 next. After any net loss you will revert to the original starting bet. However, if you can manage to win the second bet in a series, you will return to the two-unit bet and increase the amount wagered after any additional win.

A series of six wins at a \$10 minimum table would look like: 20 10 20 30 40 50 for a total of \$170 won.

Like Thomason, Patrick suggests a way to limit losses by quitting if you lose the first four hands in a shoe or deck.



Just how well do these betting system perform under real life casino conditions? Is card counting really superior to using a betting progression? We will take a hard look at these questions in the next chapter. The answers may astound you.

## Card Counting

Casinos did not know their actual edge over the players in blackjack even as late as the 1930s. A blackjack book by Joe Treybal *Handbook on Percentages*, published in 1930, has some very vague and mostly inaccurate statistics about blackjack.

This is quite understandable as blackjack did not develop a more standardized set of rules until after World War II. In the 1930s, some clubs paid bonuses for 21 totals made up of certain cards such as a 6, 7, and 8 of the same suit, three 7s and seven card totals of 21, to name just a few of the variations.

In the early 1950s four U.S. soldiers, Roger Baldwin, Wilbert Cantery, Herbert Maisel and James McDermott, defined a "correct" way to play blackjack. Using only simple desk calculators, they examined every play option at blackjack and came up with a suggested playing strategy. They published an article "The Optimum Strategy in Blackjack" in 1956 which became the basis for today's basic strategy play. This group had developed for the first time a reasonably accurate strategy that allowed the player to play even with the house. This event marked the beginning of systematic study of blackjack.

A professor at New Mexico State University, Edward O. Thorp, followed the Baldwin study by developing a computer program which would analyze the composition of the remaining cards after certain cards were removed during play. Thorp discovered that the player could gain an advantage over the casino after certain cards had been removed from play. Thorp published his findings in the famous *Beat the Dealer*, published in 1962.

Thorp's new basic strategy was good enough to eliminate any house advantage at all, allowing the basic strategy player to gain an edge over the house. By using this basic

strategy with several card counting systems that Thorp developed, a player could gain a significant edge over any single-deck game in Las Vegas. Blackjack was changed forever.

The way blackjack was played before Thorp's publication had many liberal rules favoring the player. The house dealt from a single deck and the cards were hand held. Many times, every card was put into play. This would allow a counter to know the exact composition of the remaining cards in the deck and be able to make considerable money using this knowledge in skillful *end play*. Players were allowed to double down on any two cards, split Aces repeatedly, and take as many cards on split Aces as they wanted. Some casinos offered bonuses in addition to the 3 to 2 payoff for player blackjacks. Some casinos paid higher bonuses for blackjacks.

Bonuses or automatic wins were offered for a player drawing more than a specified number of cards without busting, and many casinos offered generous surrender options. Casinos also had to put up with cheats who would mark the cards or switch their own cards into the game. Players were allowed to handle their own cards and to scrape the table surface when a hit was desired.

Overall, the casinos were racking in large profits from blackjack. Only a small group of players had the skill to take advantage of the casinos' liberal rules. The average person did not understand the game well enough to win very often, and as yet there was not a consensus on the correct playing strategy.

Thorp's book hit the casino bosses like a bombshell. They had visions of armies of card counters, armed with the knowledge imparted by Dr. Thorp, invading the casinos and cleaning up at the blackjack tables. The obvious defenses were to shuffle cards more often, to eliminate end play and to change some of the more player favorable rules. Still the bosses were not satisfied that the threat was

contained. On April 1, 1964 the bosses acted yet again. The Las Vegas Resort Hotel Association announced that two major rules of blackjack were being changed. Aces could no longer be split and doubling down was restricted to hard 11s only. The blackjack playing public had had enough. They reacted by staying away from the blackjack tables in droves. Blackjack revenues plummeted. Dealers were upset over the drastic rule changes because the major source of their income, tips, had disappeared. Within a couple of weeks, the casinos caved into the pressure and abandoned these two rule changes.

However, the casinos were not finished with changing the game of blackjack. Multiple deck games were introduced which devastated the card counters chances of winning. With multiple decks used, the number of cards seen by the counters was reduced. In addition, a new cutting procedure was used with the plastic insert card inserted cutting off the last one quarter to one third of the cards from being dealt. This virtually eliminated the profit from end play. The combination of multiple decks and a large number of unseen cards effectively reduced the significance of the running count used by card counters.

Many casinos eventually terminated the player's ability to double down on any two cards and restricted them to doubling on tens and elevens only. Many casinos also removed the surrender options as well as the bonus payoffs for different hands as previously discussed.

Following Thorp, the correct playing strategy was refined even more. Most notably, Julian Braun of IBM developed computer software which played every possible blackjack hand randomly against every possible dealer up-card for millions of hands. He then compared the different rule changes with how they effected the outcome of different hands. By extensively analyzing his results. Braun came up with a very accurate playing strategy with variations for each change in playing rules. Thus,

different playing strategies were developed for single-deck games versus multiple deck games and for different casino rules, such as the rule regarding whether a dealer would hit or stand with a soft 17. Braun's work formed the basis for virtually every card counting system which has arisen since then (including the Power Blackjack Playing Strategy).

In 1970, Lawrence Revere published *Playing Blackjack as a Business* and presented a simplified card counting system as well as easy to read basic strategy charts. His count, called the High-Low count, is still popular and is used by card counters.

## **Counting Systems**

### **Thorp's Five-count Strategy**

Using a computer to analyze millions of different possible blackjack situations, Edward Thorp showed that the removal of all four 5s from a single deck of cards improved the player's chance of winning and would give the player an edge over the casino of 3.6%. He developed a Five-count Strategy to track the number of fives remaining undealt. He suggested using Basic Strategy until all four 5s had been dealt and then he recommended a modified playing strategy.

As a modern counting strategy, the Five-count is not very effective. It loses its ability to predict player advantage in multi-deck games as the removal of a small number of cards has much less effect on the player's chance of winning. Also, the player must change the size of his bets too drastically to take advantage of rare situations when no 5s are left. Another drawback is that other players at the table can just as easily benefit. Finally, the Five-count offers no information about the other most important cards for the player, Tens and Aces.

### **Thorp's Ten-count Strategy**

Thorp also discovered that a deck with proportionately more 10-valued cards offered a greater advantage to the player and devised a count to keep track of tens. Since in every deck there are four times more 10-valued cards than cards of any other value, this allowed for much greater deviations from the norm when Ts were tracked instead of 5s. Such variations offered players the chance for even bigger advantages than the Five-count offered and Thorp's Ten-count is a much more powerful strategy.

Another advantage of the Ten-count was that it would tell the player when it was advantageous to take insurance. However, like the Five-count, it ignored Aces forcing counters to keep separate track of them along with the number of 10-valued and non 10-valued cards, resulting in three different counts.

Besides juggling the different counts, the player also had to memorize complex implementation tables and perform complicated mathematical calculations in order to determine which values to use in the tables.

Although Thorp's Ten-count strategy could still be used with single-deck games today, its calculations are simply beyond most players abilities, especially under real playing conditions.

### **Thorp's Point-Count System**

In his second edition of *Beat the Dealer* published in 1966, Thorp presented a point count system which has formed the basis for innumerable variations which have been developed since then. Harvey Dubner's similar system appeared slightly before this publication and primarily utilized modifications of Thorp's original presentation.

Using Braun's sophisticated computer programs, Thorp determined that the player's advantage was greatest when there were fewer small valued cards (2s, 3s, 4s, 5s, and



6s) left undealt, leaving relatively more 10-valued cards and Aces available. He logically concluded that the player's advantage increased when the deck was "rich" in Tens and Aces.

Thorp's original point count is still a relevant count today. The count works by assigning a value to each card and keeping a running count of the cards as they are dealt. The low cards of 2s, 3s, 4s, 5s, and 6s are assigned values of +1 each, while 10-valued cards and Aces are valued as -1 each. The neutral cards of 7, 8 and 9 are simply ignored. By keeping a running total of cards as they are dealt, a counter can easily tell the composition of the remaining pool of undealt cards.

## Card Counting Today

Using increasingly complex computer simulations, the trend throughout the 1980s was to create more complex counting systems. Some of these systems, such as Ken Uston's Advanced Point Count System, assigned three different values to cards and was extremely difficult to use.

Most of the card counting strategies developed are balanced systems. With a balanced system, the total of all of the values assigned different cards will equal zero when all of the cards in a deck have been counted. Hi Opt II is an example of a balanced count.

Values of +1 are assigned the cards 3, 4, 5 and 6 of which there are 16 per deck of cards. A value of -1 is assigned the 16 10-valued cards. Whenever a deck of cards has been counted using this system, the total will be zero if the count was done correctly. This is an example of a balanced count where the sum of the number of cards assigned positive values times the number of cards with positive values assigned is exactly equal to the sum of the values of cards with negative values times the number of cards with these values.

While keeping a *running count* with a system like Hi Opt II may not be extremely difficult, the running count must be adjusted to the *true count* before a playing decision can be made. The true count can be roughly defined as the running count adjusted for the number of decks left to be dealt.

If you think using a system like this under real conditions is challenging, you are right. Imagine doing the following with the dealer talking, the cocktail waitress jiggling, other players chatting, the floorman coming by to see if you want to be rated, with the constant background noise assorted with any modern casino - bells

and clanging noises coming from the all pervasive slot machines, screams from the craps pit, while your companion interrupts you to see if you are ready to go shopping.

Let's assume you are playing in a six deck game. Your running count is +8. It is time to make your bet, and the dealer is waiting for you. But before you can decide how much to wager and how to play your hand, your card counting system requires that you first convert the running count to a true count.

Without forgetting the running count total, you look at the stack of discarded cards and estimate that three and one-half decks have been played. Now you must subtract the number of decks played from the total number of decks dealt and divide the number of decks remaining to be dealt by the total number of decks used. Got it? Subtracting 3 1/2 from 6 gives you two decks left to be dealt. Quickly now, the dealer is really getting impatient, divide your running count of +8 by 2.5 decks and round the total down. Did you get 3? Good. Now make your bet according to your true count of +3, but don't forget your original running total of +8 because you must continue to use this total to count the cards as they are dealt.

After the dealer has dealt each of the players two cards, you notice the dealer has an Ace showing. He asks if you want insurance? You must go through the calculations all over again, using your new running count total of +11. Whether you take insurance or decline it depends on the true count. You must be able to recall the exact playing strategy for dozens of hands, as the strategy changes, depending on the true count. Sometimes you will hit a hard 16 versus a dealer 10 and at other times you will stand on the hand.

Now, try to act natural. The floor person has just asked you if you like to take insurance? What do you say? If you are using a multi-level system which

incorporates more than one numeral for counting, things can really get exciting. Imagine using the Uston Advance Point Count, with values of 1, 2 and 3 assigned to various cards.

Uh oh. You forgot your side count of Aces. Many counting systems require that you also keep a separate count of Aces. Some experts blithely suggest that you can use chips or the position of your feet to count Aces.

Let's see, right foot in, one Ace; left foot out, two Aces; running count is -6; three and a quarter decks left to be played. Now decide. Do you split a pair of tens or stand with them. Wait, you forgot to adjust to the true count and what was that strategy variation you were supposed to memorize?

I forgot to mention one more detail. Most systems require that you learn over 200 strategy variations matched to different levels of true counts and adjusted because of Ace side counts. This is why you must know the true count before you decide how to play your hand. Your playing strategy changes with the count.

Are you starting to understand why most players are not card counters?

If you want to learn to count cards, I can recommend the system I have used with great success. You can learn all about it in *Advantage Blackjack*, published by Silverthorne Publications (See <http://www.silverthornepublications.com/AdvantageBlackjack/>).

Using this approach, it will not take you any time to compute your wager size because the system is greatly simplified. You won't need to make any adjustments to your count. The only numbers you will use for counting are -1, 0 and +1. And your playing strategy will stay the same regardless of the count.

Casinos have made it extremely difficult for card counters. In addition, counters have to contend with a strategy which requires a huge bankroll and allows for huge fluctuations in the bankroll. I would not attempt to earn a living counting cards with less than \$250,000 as my permanent bankroll. I would have to be prepared to see the bankroll decline as much as \$100,000 and still have faith in my system. And, with card counting, I would have to be prepared to play on a daily basis, putting in many hours of play, as card counting only gains an advantage over long term play, and may not help at all in any individual session. Many persons believe that card counters always win. Just the opposite is true. A very advanced card counter might win 60% of his sessions, losing 40% of the time. In addition, the counter is faced with the possibility of long losing streaks. If you are a week end player using a typical counting system, you might easily lose four weekends in a row.

It is hard not to become discouraged about card counting once you know the grim truth. If you become very proficient at counting, you may be asked to leave a casino, or even barred from playing there.

While the casinos have created a number of formidable obstacles for would-be card counters, their latest weapon may spell the end for card counting if its use becomes wide spread.

Many casinos are now using a *continuous shuffling machine* (CSM). This machine is a device that randomly inserts discards back into the deck. When one is used, it is like playing against a freshly shuffled shoe every hand. Please don't confuse this with the automatic shuffler used for shuffling the entire deck or shoe.

Most players don't like the CSM, and at this time, it is mostly being used at tables with lower minimum wagers, so as to not offend high rollers at the higher minimum

wager tables. The effect of the CSM on card counting should be obvious. If a CSM is used, card counting is rendered totally ineffective.

In addition to eliminating any risk from card counters, using a CSM actually speeds up the game allowing more hands per hour. Since most players play at a disadvantage to the house, increasing the number of hands played per hour increases the house profit. You can begin to see why casino bosses like CSMs.



However, a computer simulation run on billions of hands showed that using a CSM actually lowers the house edge. This was true regardless of the number of decks used. Knockout Blackjack Betting Strategy players have nothing to fear playing against CSMs.

## Comparison of Betting Systems

A 2,000 game computer run comparing flat betting, a positive and a negative progression showed that the negative progression was most likely to win having won 85.35% of its games. The positive progression won the least number of games, winning only 9.6% of its games. Flat betting won 38.70% of the games played.

While this test was instructive for us to gain an overall feel about how each system performs, it was inadequate to test how the positive and negative progressions would perform under real casino conditions. In real play, we can choose to cease playing under certain conditions, such as the number of consecutive losing hands, which the computer simulations do not measure well.

In *Twenty-First Century Blackjack*, Walter Thomason manually played 5,000 consecutively dealt hands of cards and compared flat betting, using the Thomason progression, which was explained in the previous chapter, and using a simple card count. Thomason's form of testing is the same form that I have used to test and evaluate the Knockout Blackjack Betting Strategy. Each hand was played by hand with the results recorded. I believe that this manually played approach to evaluating a system is much more accurate than computer simulations which fail to allow for such variations as using different types of bet selection and table departure rules.

Thomason's first round of tests on 5,000 hands produced 5,664 bets. The number of bets was higher than the number of hands due to additional wagers made because of pair splitting and doubling down. His test produced 45% winning hands, 47% losers and 8% tie hands.

The results of pitting flat betting against his positive progression system and a card counting system are most instructive. On his initial test, the following results were attained:

Flat Bettor: Won \$6,030, Lost \$6,640, Net Loss of \$610.

Card Counter: Won \$12,930, Lost \$13,470, Net Loss of \$540.

Thomason Progressive System: Won \$8,940, Lost \$8,970, Net Loss of \$30.

I think it is pretty obvious that the progressive system with its loss of only \$30 greatly outperformed both of the other approaches to wagering.

Thomason next applied a *Quit Point* to the same set of hands. A Quit Point is an additional playing rule which states that the player will quit playing, e.g. leave the table, whenever he loses four hands in a row. This rule is to be applied regardless of when the losses occur — at the start, the middle or the end of a deck or shoe.

When the same betting systems were replayed with the Quit Point rule used, the results were quite different:

**Flat Bettor:** Changed from a \$610 loss to a \$1,060 win.

**Card Counter:** Changed from a \$540 loss to a \$1,400 win.

**Thomason Progressive System:** Changed from a \$30 loss to a \$1,890 win.

These are dramatic improvements, and they show the tremendous impact that adding just one rule can have on the results of real play as compared to computer simulated play.



Thomason also compared his progression to both Donald Dahl's and John Patrick's progressive betting systems. His tests were limited to the first 20 shoes (968 bets) of his 5,000 hand run and did not incorporate using Quit Points. Although his progressive betting system fared slightly better than either Dahl's or Patrick's systems, the validity of the comparisons was diminished somewhat by only using 968 bets and by not including Thomason's recommended Quit Point in testing his system. John Patrick specifically recommends that a player leave the table if he loses the first four hands in a shoe or deck.

While Thomason's tests are thought provoking, they do not address the issue of how well a negative progression might have fared played against the same hands, using a predetermined stopping point for consecutive losing hands.

I devoted several pages to Thomason's work because it is unique among blackjack books. Most experts who advocate card counting have closed minds when it comes to believing that any approach other than card counting has any validity for winning at blackjack. They typically use computer simulations which are incapable of judging the effects of consecutive winning or losing hands or of additional system rules as may be used by human beings playing in real world conditions. As a result, the card counting advocates invariably come up with simulated results showing that flat betting and using progressions lose at the rate of the house edge multiplied by the amount wagered and that card counting provides the only source of a winning strategy.

Of course, this reasoning also shows that card counting is the only system capable of beating the game. At this point in the book, I hope you are more than a little skeptical of the claims of card counters. Hang on to your hat. I am about to show you how you can back the casinos into a corner using the Knockout Blackjack Betting Strategy Betting System.



## **Slicing and Dicing the Game of Blackjack**

I have presented a number of approaches to winning at blackjack.

Systems using Betting Progressions apply a betting formula to playing blackjack in an attempt to beat the game by using betting rules.

Card counters also use betting rules but set the rules up so that they will modify their bets according to their current forecast of undealt cards.

Using a Betting Progression is a passive system in that no changes are made in the betting strategy based on the behavior of the game.

Card Counting is a reactive system in which the player will attempt to react to changing playing conditions and adjust his bets to match.

The attraction of Betting Progressions is that they are fairly easy to use. However, most betting progressions ultimately fail when long losing streaks are encountered.

Positive Betting Progressions are attractive because they can win large amounts using a small bankroll. However, Positive Betting Progressions have poor win rates as we saw in the previously chapter where a test of a positive betting progression showed a win rate of only 9.6%.

Negative Betting Progressions are attractive because they win at much higher win rates than Positive Betting Progressions. In the long-term test discussed in the last chapter, a negative betting progression won over 85% of all of its sessions.

Like card counting, Knockout Blackjack Betting is a reactive system in which the betting strategy is changed depending upon how the game is progressing. However, unlike card

counting, where the player is trying to forecast or make an educated guess when it is time to make larger bets, Super Craps uses a different method of determining bet sizes.

### **Slicing the Game of Blackjack Into Playable Pieces**

After studying and analyzing millions of rounds of blackjack play, we discovered that the best way to play blackjack is to treat it as three different games, dependant upon how wins and losses are trending in the game. We will use betting progressions in the game, but instead of trying a “one size fits all” approach, we will use a different betting strategy to match the current blackjack trend.

### **Choppy But Playable Modes**

Blackjack can be beaten using a negative betting progression about 85% of the time. That’s why we had an 85% win rate testing a negative betting progression. While net wins can be achieved using a negative betting progression for all blackjack play, much higher win rates can be achieved when a negative progression is limited to choppy, but playable trends.

This is almost intuitive for many blackjack players. However, the \$64,000 question is how can we know when it is safe to use a negative betting progression and when we need to use a different system!

We use Timing Signals to determine which betting strategy best matches the current blackjack trend. These Timing Signals will set up a Tactical Bet which will determine the optimal betting strategy.

During play we may change from one betting strategy to another. However, we will do this automatically with no guessing or attempting to forecast the future.

We will always start a game using Strike Betting. We will stick with this strategy until we receive a Timing Signal telling us that it may be time to change. Then, depending on the outcome of a Tactical Bet, we may change betting strategies.

## **Long Losing Streaks**

Long losing streaks are the bane of all players. Regardless of your system, long losing streaks can decimate your bankroll. Long losing streaks are the number one cause of system failure for negative betting progressions. For example if we knew that losing streaks longer than six or seven consecutive losses never occurred, we could beat the game of blackjack 100% of the time.

However, losing streaks are fairly common. In games dealt with six or more decks, in online, and in all games using continuous shuffling machines, long losing streaks have become more and more common.

We won't get into the theory of why this is true, but you can accept that longer losing streaks have become a fact of life in most blackjack games as they are dealt and played today.

To combat long losing streaks, card counters rely on using a large bankroll and hoping that their winning streaks will overcome their losses in long losing streaks.

With negative betting progressions, the player can only hope that his betting system wins before he runs out of bankroll or hits the house limit on bets.

We prefer to use a different approach. We use an automatic signal to tell us when we are in a losing streak and it is time to change our betting method. Once we get a signal, we will change from Strike Betting to Counterstrike Betting, the strategy used to combat losing streaks.

## **Cashing in on Winning Streaks**

The goal of all blackjack players is to hit a winning streak. However, neither card counting or negative betting progressions are designed to capitalize on winning streaks. Only positive betting progressions take advantage of winning streaks. However, positive

betting progressions take a beating most of the time since winning streaks only occur about 5% to 7% of the time.

Card counting is not reactive to winning streaks. A card counter can be winning hand after hand, but if the count is low he will keep his bets low.

Players using negative betting progressions will have winning streaks of their smallest bets, which while profitable, is not the optimum way to take advantage of the chance to win bet after bet.

With Knockout Blackjack Betting whenever we receive the automatic signal we will change our betting mode to Lightning Strike Betting. This mode uses the principles of a positive betting progression, but does so in a conservative way that preserves most of a win when a winning streak ends.

### **Automatic Signals**

Knockout Blackjack Betting reacts to changes in the flow of the game by using an automatic signal that tells the player that a betting change may be in order. Knockout Blackjack Betting sets up a Tactical Bet which determines the betting strategy.

Here's how this signal works –

When you are using Strike Betting, you will get a timing signal that you need to make a Tactical Bet. You will make the Tactical bet and the outcome of this wager will determine whether you change to the Counterstrike Betting Strategy or remain in Strike Betting mode.

You can think of the Tactical Bet as a way of testing the blackjack game to see why you will go on to your next bet.

If the Tactical Bet loses, you will Knockout into Counterstrike Betting mode.

If the Tactical Bet wins, you will continue using the Strike Betting Strategy.

Once you are in Counterstrike Betting Mode you will need to win one bet to return to Strike Betting.

When you are in Strike Betting Mode you can also change to Lightning Strike Betting. When you do your first Tactical Bet in Lightning Strike Mode will determine whether you continue using the Lightning Strike Betting Strategy or revert to Strike Betting.

### **Summary of Knockout Blackjack Betting's Betting Strategies**

Blackjack is a game of trends. Knockout Blackjack Betting uses a system to determine the current trend and then apply the best betting strategy for that trend.

Blackjack is very tough to beat using a fixed betting progression which doesn't react to different trends or card counting which ignores trends and tries to forecast future trends.

Knockout Blackjack Betting divides the game of blackjack into three major trends with one strategy for each type of trend.

**Strike Betting** is used when the game is choppy but still playable. Strike Betting is a net winning strategy. You may have games where you never change from Strike Betting. You will do well in these games, keeping your bets low but steadily building your winnings.

**Counterstrike Betting** is the best way to combat long losing streaks. Other strategies really don't have a way to combat losing streaks other than trying to survive. With our Counterstrike Betting Strategy you will tend to stay about even or even build more profits during a losing streak. This is a superior way to handle losing streaks.

**Lightning Strike Bets** are used when the trend is player favorable and you have a

winning streak underway. Our Lightning Strike Betting Strategy is designed so that you will capitalize on winning streaks but not risk giving back too much when the streak ends.

**Timing Signals** are used in each betting strategy to tell you when you need to make a Tactical Bet or immediately change betting strategies. These signals tend to be very timely and are the key to the success of Knockout Blackjack Betting.

**Tactical Bets** are special bets used after receiving a Timing Signal. The outcome of a Tactical Bet determines a change in betting strategy.

Are you starting to feel like a general planning a battle? You should. When you play blackjack using one of Knockout Blackjack Betting's battle strategies you will be matching your play to each change in trends in the game, giving you an edge that other players can only envy.



# The Knockout Blackjack Betting Strategy

In the previous chapter we did an overview of the strategy. In this chapter you'll learn exactly how to use the Knockout Blackjack Betting Strategy to consistently win at blackjack.

You will always begin a game using the Strike Betting Strategy. This is the strategy that works best with choppy but playable blackjack trends and we always assume that we are in a playable trend when we begin a game.

We will use several different betting strategies for Knockout Blackjack Betting. Each betting mode uses different bets. Throughout this book our examples will be based on using \$5 base bets. However, you can play this strategy with base bets ranging from \$1 to \$500. In the Summary of Knockout Blackjack Betting chapter we will show you the bets for all levels of play.

## Strike Betting

To use Knockout Blackjack Betting you will always begin using the Strike Betting Strategy with a Level-1 bet.

Strike Betting uses a betting series of seven bets. For \$5 base betting, the following betting series is used:

**Strike Bets for \$5 Base Bets**

Level	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
\$ Bet	5	10	15	25	40	65	105

The Betting Rules for Strike Betting are as follows:

1. Always begin with a Level-1 bet. If you lose the bet, increase the bet to the next level.
2. The general rule for Strike Betting is to increase your bet one level after losing a bet and drop your bet one level after winning a bet. If you win two bets in a row or two out of three bets you will always drop to a Level-1 bet. Example: You win a Level-5 bet of \$40 and then win a Level-4 bet of \$25. Your next bet will be a Level-1 bet.
3. Anytime you lose two bets in a row will be treated as a Timing Signal to start the Counterstrike Betting Strategy. Example: If you lose a Level-2 bet of \$10 and then lose a Level-3 bet of \$15, your next bet will be a Counterstrike Strategy Bet.
4. The two loss in a row rule applies to all levels of betting for Strike Bets. For example, if you lose a Level-3 bet of \$15 and then Lose a Level-4 bet of \$25 your next bet will be a bet using Counterstrike Betting.
5. After winning any bet using the Counterstrike Strategy, you will immediately revert to making a Strike Bet at the last level lost before starting Counterstrike Betting. Example: Lose a Level-1 bet of \$5, followed by losing a Level-2 bet of \$10. Start Counterstrike Betting with a Level-1 Counterstrike Bet of \$5. If this bet wins, resume making Strike Bets with a Level-2 Strike Bet of \$10.
6. The effects of winning and losing blackjacks, splits and doubled hands are ignored for purposes of determining the Strike Bet level. Example. You make a Level-3 bet of \$15, double the bet to \$30 and win. Even though you won twice as much as normal for this level, your next bet will still be a Level-2 bet of \$10. The exception to this rule is when you decide to call a game completed after winning the doubled bet.

Before we go any further discussing Strike Bets we need to talk about Counterstrike

Betting as you will switch back and forth between the two strategies following specific betting rules.

### **Counterstrike Betting**

Counterstrike Betting is used after losing two consecutive Strike Bets. As soon as this occurs you will change to Counterstrike Betting.

Like Strike Betting, Counterstrike Betting uses a Betting Series. For \$5 Base Bets, the following Betting Series is used:

**Counterstrike Betting Series for \$5 Base Bets**

Level	1	2	3	4	5	6
\$ Bet	5	10	20	40	80	160

The rules for Counterstrike Betting are:

1. Always begin Counterstrike Betting with a Level-1 bet. If the bet wins, resume Strike Betting at the previous Strike Betting level. If the bet loses increase the bet one level.
2. Continue making Counterstrike Bets until you have one winning bet. With any winning bet you will revert to Strike Betting at its last betting level for the next round of play.

Counterstrike Betting is a simple Martingale Betting Series. With any win in the series the amount of the Level-1 bet is won. If a higher level bet wins more because of a blackjack or a split or doubled bet, the series will win more.

**A Series of Counterstrike Bets is shown below:**

<b>Round</b>	<b>Bet Amount</b>	<b>Outcome of Bet</b>	<b>Cumulative Amount Won or Lost</b>
1	5	Lost 5	-5
2	10	Lost 10	-15
3	20	Lost 20	-35
4	40	Lost 40	-75
5	80	Won 80	Won 5

The most attractive feature of using a Martingale Betting Series is its ability to recover from losses. In testing different betting systems for Counterstrike Betting, the Martingale Series delivered the highest profits.

One of the reasons that a Martingale Series is so effective is that it is being used to defend against losing eight bets in a row but is only risking six bets to do so.

We will only start Counterstrike Betting using a Martingale Series after losing two consecutive Strike Bets. We would have to lose these two bets plus six consecutive Counterstrike Bets in order to lose a game. Fortunately, losing eight consecutive bets is rare enough with blackjack that Knockout Blackjack Betting has an overall win rate of 96.16% of all games.

Let's take a look at a realistic series of bets where we started out using Strike Bets, switched to Counterstrike Betting and then returned to Strike Bets.

### Switching From Strike Bets to Counterstrike Bets and Back Again

Round	Strategy Mode	Bet Level	Amount Bet	Bet Outcome W/L	Amount Won or Lost for Round	Cumulative Amount Won or Lost
1	Strike	1	5	L	-5	-5
2	Strike	2	10	L	-10	-15
3	Counterstrike	1	5	L	-5	-20
4	Counterstrike	2	10	L	-10	-30
5	Counterstrike	3	20	L	-20	-50
6	Counterstrike	4	40	W	+40	-10
7	Strike	2	10	W	+10	-0-
8	Strike	1	5	W	+5	+5

This series of bets where there were five losses to three wins is fairly typical of blackjack play. To keep this example simple we didn't show the player receiving any blackjacks or winning a doubled or split hand. However, in real world play these hands are crucial to the player's success. For example, if we had received a blackjack, paying 3 to 2 on round 6 we would have won \$60 instead of \$40. With this \$20 "bonus" we would have won \$25 in this series of bets instead of just \$5.

Let's go through this illustration round by round.

1. We start making a Level-1 Strike Bet. This is always our starting position any time we start a game of blackjack. We lost the bet.
2. Since we lost our first bet in round 1, we make a Level-2 Strike Bet which also loses.
3. Anytime we lose two consecutive Strike Bets, we will change to Counterstrike Betting making a Level-1 Counterstrike Bet. This bet may be considered a Tactical Bet in that the outcome of this bet determines whether we continue in Counterstrike Betting or immediately return to Strike Betting. We lose the Level-1 Counterstrike Bet and Knockout into Counterstrike Betting Mode.

4. We make a Level-2 Counterstrike Bet of \$10 and lose.
5. We move up to a Level-3 Counterstrike Bet of \$20 and lose.
6. Following a loss, we move up our Counterstrike Bet to Level-4 and win the bet.
7. The win of any Counterstrike Bet signals a move back to Strike Betting. When we return to Strike Betting we always return to the betting level of the last losing bet, which in this case is a Level-2 Strike Bet. We wager \$10 and win.
8. Having won a Level-2 Counterstrike Bet, we drop one level and make a Level-1 Counterstrike Bet and win.

### Lightning Strike Betting

The third betting strategy is Lightning Strike Betting. This is the strategy designed to build profits safely during winning streaks.

We will only enter Lightning Strike Betting Mode after winning a Level-1 Strike Bet. After winning this bet we will gradually increase the size of each bet until we have a losing bet.

With any losing bet we will return to Strike Betting at the Bet Level with an amount higher than our last and losing Lightning Strike Bet.

Lightning Strike Bets build on the Level-1 Lightning Strike Bet. For \$5 Base Bets, where the Level-1 Lightning Strike Bet is \$5, we will use the following betting series for Lightning Strike Bets:

Winning Level-1 Strike Bet	-----Lightning Strike Bets-----						
5	6	7	8	9	10	12	14

This is a very conservative betting series. When you are in a winning streak you should continue in this betting series as long as you continue to win each bet. With a single loss you will revert to using Strike Betting at the Level higher than your last losing bet.

If you lose an \$8 Lightning Strike Bet, your next bet will be a Level-2 Strike Bet of \$10.  
If you lose a \$14 Lightning Strike Bet, your next bet will be a \$15 Strike Bet.

Let's continue the previous example which showed eight rounds of play entailing Strike Bets and Counterstrike Bets. We'll add some more rounds where a winning streak occurs and then ends, showing how Lightning Strike Bets perform.

The next table picks up where the table showing eight rounds of play using Strike and Counterstrike bets left off. Here, starting with round 9 we enter Lightning Strike Betting Mode and continue in this mode through round 12.

### **Series of Bets Showing Interplay of Strike, Counterstrike and Lightning Strike Bets**

<b>Round</b>	<b>Strategy Mode</b>	<b>Bet Level</b>	<b>Amount Bet</b>	<b>Bet Outcome W/L</b>	<b>Amount Won or Lost for Round</b>	<b>Cumulative Amount Won or Lost</b>
1	Strike	1	5	L	-5	-5
2	Strike	2	10	L	-10	-15
3	Counterstrike	1	5	L	-5	-20
4	Counterstrike	2	10	L	-10	-30
5	Counterstrike	3	20	L	-20	-50
6	Counterstrike	4	40	W	+40	-10
7	Strike	2	10	W	+10	0
8	Strike	1	5	W	+5	+5
9	Lightning Strike	1	6	W	+6	+11
10	Lightning Strike	2	7	W	+7	+18
11	Lightning Strike	3	8	W	+8	+26
12	Lightning Strike	4	10	L	-10	+16
13	Strike	3	15	W	+15	+31
14	Strike	2	10	W	+10	+41

The first eight rounds of play match the rounds played in the earlier table showing how Strike Bets and Counterstrike Bets interact. In this table we were in Lightning Strike Betting Mode from rounds 8 to 12. Let's review rounds 9 through 14.

9. We won a Level-1 Strike bet in round 8. Anytime we win a Level-1 Strike Bet, we will enter Lightning Strike Betting Mode. In round 9 we wager \$6 as our first Lightning Strike Bet and win. If we had lost this bet it would have been treated like a Tactical Bet and we would have immediately reverted to Strike Betting making a Level-2 bet. However, since we won the bet we will continue in Lightning Strike Betting Mode until we lose a bet.

10. Following a win we raise our Lightning Strike Bet from \$6 to \$7 and win the bet.

11. Since we won our last bet we continue in Lightning Strike Betting mode and wager \$8 which wins.

12. With a win on the previous round we remain in Lightning Strike Betting Mode and bet \$10 which loses. Anytime we lose an Lightning Strike Bet is a Timing Signal to return to Strike Betting.

13. With the lose of a \$10 Lightning Strike Bet, we resume Strike Betting, making a wager that is the next level higher than the lost Lightning Strike Bet. We make a Level-3 Strike Bet of \$15 and win

14. Following the win of a Level-3 Strike Bet, we drop our bet one level and make a Level-2 Strike Bet of \$10 and win. We stopped at this point. If we had continued, our next bet would have been a Level-1 Strike Bet of \$5. If we had won this bet, we would have changed to Lightning Strike Betting Mode again. If we had lost this bet we would have made a Level-2 Strike Bet on the next round.



These illustrations should have given you a sense of how the Knockout Blackjack Betting smoothly transitions from one betting mode to another. To keep our examples simple we eliminated winning or losing larger amounts from receiving blackjacks and winning or losing doubled and split hands. In the next chapter we'll show how the strategy performs in real blackjack play.

## Knockout Betting In Action!

In the previous chapter we introduced Strike Bets, Counterstrike Bets and Lightning Strike Bets. However, our examples did not include real world play where receiving blackjacks and winning and losing doubled and split hands are part of blackjack. In this chapter we'll show actual games played using the complete strategy.

For all games played we used the Knockout Blackjack Betting Playing Strategy to determine how to play each hand. This playing strategy is repeated below for your reference.

### Knockout Betting Playing Strategy

<b>Knockout Blackjack Playing Strategy</b>
<b><u>Splitting:</u></b> A,A 8,8 vs All dealer hands 9,9 vs 2-9 except 7 6,6 vs 4-6 4,4 vs 5-6 2s, 3s and 7s vs 3-6
<b><u>Doubling Down:</u></b> 11 vs 2-10, 10 vs 2-9, 9 vs 3-6 A,7 & A,6 vs 3-6 A,5 & A,4 vs 4-6 A,3 & A,2 vs 5-6
<b><u>Hitting &amp; Standing:</u></b> Hard 11 or lower always hit Hard 17 or higher always stand Hard 12-16 stand vs dealer 4,5, or 6 Hard 13-16 stand vs dealer 2 or 3 Soft 17 Hit till Hard 17 or better Soft 18 Stand 2-8, otherwise hit Soft 19-20 Always stand
<b><u>Insurance</u></b> Never take insurance.

Sample Game 1 was played in an online casino. It consisted of 25 rounds of play. There were two hands where we doubled down and won and one hand with a winning blackjack.

## Sample Game 1

### Key:

#### Bet Mode:

S = Strike Bet

D = Counterstrike Bet

A = Lightning Strike Bet

Sp = Split Pair

Db = Doubled hand

BJ = Blackjack

W= Winning Hand

L = Losing Hand

Ps = Push

Round	Bet Mode	Bet Level & Original Bet	Double	Split	Total Bet	Amount Won or Lost for Round	Running Total
1	S	1-5			5	L -5	-5
2	S	2-10	Db-10		20	W +20	+15
3	S	1-5			5	L -5	+10
4	S	2-10			10	W +10	+20
5	S	1-5			5	L -5	+15
6	S	2-10			10	L -10	+5
7	D	1-5			5	L -5	-0-
8	D	2-10			10	L -10	-10
9	D	3-20			20	L -20	-30
10	D	4-40			40	W-40	+10
11	S	2-10			10	W +10	+20
12	S	1-5			5	L -5	+15
13	S	2-10			10	L -10	+5
14	D	1-5			5	L -5	-0-
15	D	2-10			10	Ps	-0-
16	D	2-10			10	W +10	+10
17	S	2-10			10	L -10	-0-
18	S	3-15	Db-15		30	W +30	+30
19	S	2-10			10	L -10	+20
20	S	3-15			15	W +15	+35
21	S	1-5			5	L -5	+30
22	S	2-10			10	W-BJ +15	+45
23	S	1-5			5	W +5	+50
24	A	1-6			6	W +6	+56
25	A	2-7			7	L -7	+49
26	S	2-10			10	W +10	+59

In Sample Game 1 we won \$59 in 26 rounds of play. Let's review this game round by round.

1. We started the game making a Level-1 bet of \$5 in Strike Betting mode. We lost the round.
2. Following the loss we move up one level and make a Level-2 Strike Bet of \$10 and then double the bet for a win of \$20.
3. With a win, we drop our Strike Bet one level, making a Level-1 Strike Bet of \$5 which loses.
4. We increase our Strike Bet one level, making a Level-2 Strike Bet of \$10 which wins.
5. We drop back to a Level-1 Strike Bet of \$5 and lose the bet.
6. Following the loss we move up to a Level-2 Strike Bet of \$10 and lose the bet.
7. Anytime we lose two consecutive Strike Bets we change to Counterstrike Betting. We make a Level-1 Counterstrike Bet of \$5 and lose. With this loss we are committed to making Counterstrike Bets until we win a bet.
8. We make a Level-2 Counterstrike Bet of \$10 and lose.
9. We move our Counterstrike Bet up one level, making a Level-3 bet of \$20 which loses.
10. We increase our Counterstrike Bet to a Level-4 bet of \$40 and win.
11. When we win any Counterstrike Bet we return to Strike Betting at the same level we were before starting Counterstrike Betting. We make a Level-2 Strike Bet of \$10 and win.

12. With a win we drop our Strike Bet one level, make a Level-1 bet of \$5 and lose.
13. With a loss we move up one level and make a Level-2 Strike Bet of \$10 and lose.
14. With two losing Strike Bets we shift to Counterstrike Betting, making a Level-1 Counterstrike Bet of \$5 which loses.
15. Following the loss we make a Level-2 Counterstrike Bet of \$10 and the hand pushes.
16. We repeat the last bet of \$10 and win.
17. The win of any Counterstrike Bet will cause us to shift back to Strike Betting at the same level as our last Strike Bet. We make a Level-2 Strike Bet of \$10 and lose.
18. With the loss we move our Strike Bet up one level, make a Level-3 bet of \$15. We double the hand, betting a total of \$30 and win.
19. With the win we drop back one level and make a Level-2 Strike Bet of \$10. Please note that even though we won more on the previous hand it doesn't change our betting plan. We lose our \$10 bet.
20. With a loss we move up to a Level-3 Strike Bet of \$15 and win. Having won two out of the last three bets we will drop to a Level-1 bet on the next round.
21. We make a Level-1 Strike Bet of \$5 and lose.
22. With the loss we move up to a Level-2 Strike Bet and receive a blackjack paying off \$15.
23. We drop our bet to a Level-1 Strike Bet of \$5 and win the bet.

24. The win at the Level-1 Strike Bet is the Timing Signal to begin Lightning Strike Betting. We make a Level-1 Lightning Strike Bet of \$6 and win.

25. With the win we move up to the next level of Lightning Strike Betting, making a Level-2 Lightning Strike Bet of \$7 which loses.

26. With the loss of any Lightning Strike Bet we return to Strike Betting at the level higher than the losing Lightning Strike Bet. We make a Level-2 Strike Bet of \$10 and win. With this win we see that we have won \$59 and we call the game over.

In Sample Game 1 we experienced all three modes of betting. In some game we are fortunate enough to stay in Strike and Lightning Strike Betting modes only. Sample Game 2 is one of those games.

## **Sample Game 2**

### **Bet Mode:**

S = Strike Bet

D = Counterstrike Bet

A = Lightning Strike Bet

Sp = Split Pair

Db = Doubled hand

BJ = Blackjack

W= Winning Hand

L = Losing Hand

Ps = Push

## Sample Game 2

Round	Bet Mode	Bet Level & Original Bet	Double	Split	Total Bet	Amount Won or Lost for Round	Running Total
1	S	1-5			5	L -5	-5
2	S	2-10			10	W +10	+5
3	S	1-5			5	W +5	+10
4	A	1-6			6	W +6	+16
5	A	2-7			7	W +7	+23
6	A	3-8			8	W +8	+31
7	A	4-10			10	W +10	+41
8	A	5-12			12	W +12	+53
9	A	6-14			14	W +14	+67
10	A	7-17			17	W +17	+84
11	A	8-20			20	W +20	+104
12	A	9-23			23	W +23	+127
13	A	10-28			28	W +28	+155
14	A	11-32	Db-32		64	W +64	+219
15	A	12-35			35	L -35	+184
16	S	4-25			25	W +25	+209
17	S	3-15			15	W +15	+224
18	S	1-5			5	W +5	+229

In Sample Game 2 we won \$229 in 18 rounds of play. Let's review this game round by round.

1. We started the game with a Level-1 Strike Bet of \$5 which lost
2. After losing our first bet we raised our next Strike Bet to a Level-2 Bet of \$10 and won.
3. We drop back to a Level-1 Strike Bet of \$5 and win.
4. Winning a Level-1 Strike Bet acts as a Timing Signal to start Lightning Strike Betting. We make a Level-1 Lightning Strike Bet of \$6 and win.
5. Staying in Lightning Strike Betting Mode, we make a Level-2 Lightning Strike Bet of \$7 and win.

6. Continuing in Lightning Strike Mode we make a Level-3 Lightning Strike Bet of \$8 and win.
7. On a winning streak ,we next make a Level-4 Lightning Strike Bet of \$10 and win the bet.
8. We move up to a Level-5 Lightning Strike Bet of \$12 and win the bet.
9. Still in a winning streak, we make a Level-6 Lightning Strike Bet of \$14 and win.
10. We opt to make an Lightning Strike Bet of \$17. We win the bet. At this point we decide to increase our Lightning Strike Bets in increments of 3.
11. We make a \$20 Lightning Strike Bet and win the bet.
12. We make a \$23 Lightning Strike Bet and win. We decide to increase our next bet by 5.
13. We make a \$28 Lightning Strike Bet and win.
14. We become more cautious and only increase our next bet to \$32. We double the wager to \$64 and win the bet.
15. Staying cautious we increase our next bet by 3 and bet \$35. We lose the bet.
16. Having lost an Lightning Strike Bet we change back to Strike Betting. Since our last losing Lightning Strike Bet was for \$35, if we made the next larger Strike Bet we would make a bet of \$40. We decide that this bet is too high and we make a Level-4 Strike Bet of \$25 and win.
17. Having won a Strike Bet we drop our bet one level and make a Level-3 Strike Bet of



\$15 which wins.

18. With two wins in a row we drop back to a Level-1 Strike bet of \$5. We win the bet. We are up \$229 at this point. We decide to take a break.

You will notice that we made some decisions on the fly in the last game. From round 10 through round 15 we increased our Lightning Strike Bets at our own rate. We opted to keep the increases small mostly using increments of 3. We could have made a lot more on this run if we had increased each bet by 5 or even 7. I tend to favor conservative plan and the risk of increasing your bets too much on a nice run like this is giving back to much when you finally lose. I played conservatively in the increases in size of the Lightning Strike Bets and when the run finally ended with the loss of \$35 in round 15, I was still in a solid winning position after the loss.

After losing this Lightning Strike Bet, I decided to make a Level-4 Strike Bet of \$25. I just as easily could have decided to make a Level-3 Bet of \$15 or even a Level-2 Bet of \$10. It is far better to err on the side of conservatism when switching back to Strike Betting after such a nice winning streak in Lightning Strike Betting Mode.

## Bankroll Requirements

In order to use Knockout Blackjack Betting successfully you need to have money set aside for use of the strategy. We call this money the ***Bankroll***.

The ***Game Bankroll*** is the amount needed to play one game. For land-based play, it is the amount of cash converted to casino chips before playing.

The ***Total Bankroll*** is the amount needed for long term play. It is larger than the Game Bankroll to allow for losing games. We recommend a Total Bankroll four times the size of the Game Bankroll.

### Determining the Size of the Game Bankroll

The Game Bankroll is based on the amount risked with the Foundation Bets plus a reserve of extra cash needed for doubling and splitting bets.

For \$5 Base Betting, the Strike bets consist of the following bets:  
5 10 15 25 40 65 105. These bets total \$265.

Counterstrike Bets of \$5 Base Betting are:  
5 10 20 40 80 160 and total \$315.

In order to use these two betting series we must have a large enough bankroll to accommodate all of the Counterstrike Bets, for a total of at least \$315.

To accommodate splits and doubled hands we use a Game Bankroll or Buy-in of \$400 for \$5 betting.

The Game Bankroll acts as a Loss Limiter for this system. If you lose all of the Game Bankroll, or are unable to make a wager because you lack bankroll, the game will end as a losing game.

For example, you have had a series of losing bets including losing larger doubled and split bets. As a result, your Game Bankroll is down to \$65 and you are called upon to make an Lightning Strike Bet of \$80. In this case you will not make the bet. Since you don't have enough funds to make this bet, you will stop the game with a loss.

### **Target Wins**

We divide our play into games which are usually very short, running from 10 to 40 decisions with an average of 28 rounds of play per game.

To keep our games short we play for Target Wins. Each level of play has its own Target Win. A Game can be considered won once you hit a Target Win. With the Target reached you can stop the game with a win.

### **Extended Play**

Many times you will want to continue playing after hitting a Target Win. This is especially true with online play, where a game lasting 28 rounds can be completed every five minutes. If you wish to continue play, just reset the strategy to a Level 1 Lightning Strike Bet and continue playing. For land-based play you should remove your winnings from play when you use this technique. With online play, where you can't really remove chips from play, you should keep written records of your play so that you know when you have won each game.

### Knockout Blackjack Betting Base Bets, Betting Series, Target Wins, Game Bankrolls & Total Bankrolls

Base Bet	Betting Series	Target Win	Game Bankroll	Total Bankroll
\$1	A) 1 2 3 5 8 13 21 B) 1 2 4 8 16 32	\$8	\$80	\$160
\$2	A) 2 4 6 10 16 26 42 B) 2 4 8 16 32 64	\$16	\$160	\$320
\$3	A) 3 6 9 15 24 39 63 B) 3 6 12 24 48 96	\$24	\$240	\$520
\$5	A) 5 10 15 25 40 65 105 B) 5 10 20 40 80 160	\$40	\$400	\$800
\$10	A) 10 20 30 50 80 130 210 B) 10 20 40 80 160 320	\$80	\$800	\$1600
\$15	A) 15 30 45 75 120 195 315 B) 15 30 60 120 240 480	\$120	\$1200	\$2400
\$20	A) 20 40 60 100 160 260 420 B) 20 40 80 160 320 640	\$160	\$1600	\$3200
\$25	A) 25 50 75 125 200 325 525 B) 25 50 100 200 400 800	\$200	\$2000	\$4000
\$35	A) 35 70 105 175 280 455 735 B) 35 70 140 280 560 1080	\$280	\$2800	\$5600
\$50	A) 50 100 150 250 400 650 1050 B) 50 100 200 400 800 1600	\$400	\$4000	\$8000
\$75	A) 75 150 225 375 600 975 1575 B) 75 150 300 600 1200 2400	\$600	\$6000	\$12000
\$100	A) 100 200 300 500 800 1300 2100 B) 100 200 400 800 1600 3200	\$800	\$8000	\$16000
\$200	A) 200 400 600 1000 1600 2600 4200 B) 200 400 800 1600 3200 6400	\$1600	\$16000	\$32000
\$300	A) 300 600 900 1500 2400 3900 6300 B) 300 600 1200 2400 4800 9600	\$2400	\$24000	\$48000
\$500	A) 500 1000 1500 2500 4000 6500 10500 B) 500 1000 2000 4000 8000 16000	\$4000	\$30000	\$60000

Betting Series:

A – Strike Bets

B – Counterstrike Bets

Before you rush right out and start using Knockout Blackjack Betting, you've got to think about money.

Most gamblers have very little conception of what a gambling bankroll is or how to manage it. Most trips to casinos are scheduled as vacations, or in conjunction with some other event such as a business conference, and the would-be gambler will grab whatever money happens to be available as his "bankroll." Records are never kept of gambling wins and losses, and the player really has no idea how much has been lost. In many cases the gambler doesn't want to know, for if he had to face the hard cold facts, recognition of his lack of gambling prowess would be unavoidable.

This approach is the wrong way to go about becoming a consistent winner. Most people think that there is some "magic" way of winning and that with this secret all that is necessary is to join the action and become a big winner. Others, of the more cynical persuasion, believe that it is not possible to beat any casino game, so why worry about bankrolls. Just take what you can scrape up at the moment, have a good time, and when the money is gone, chalk it up to experience.

I hope that you have recognized at this point that the Knockout Blackjack Betting Strategy is a powerful winning strategy. However, if it is applied in a haphazard manner without adequate controls to prevent losses, it will probably be a disappointment.

The starting point for any successful gambling endeavor is to bring an adequate bankroll. Notice that I did not say a large bankroll. It is not necessary to risk large sums of money to become a successful winner; however, it is necessary to bring at least adequate funds for the system to work.

Let's first discuss **what a bankroll is not**. It is not next month's rent or mortgage payment. It is not money advanced on credit cards. It is not the down payment needed on a new car. And, it is not casino credit.

**A bankroll is cash set aside specifically for the purpose of using the Knockout Blackjack Betting Strategy!** It is a separate fund of cash that is not needed for living expenses, much like an investment in any speculative venture. It is money that you can afford to lose, although, if you follow our recommendations, you will probably not lose it. But you must be prepared for the possibility that your bankroll could be lost, and its loss must not adversely affect your lifestyle.

I recommend that you start with a small bankroll and **use winnings to build your bankroll to a larger amount**.

I have given you guidelines for the size bankroll needed in the chapter introducing the **Knockout Blackjack Betting Strategy**.

You also must consider casino(s) where you will play and the minimum wagers required at the blackjack tables. If you have a bankroll for a \$5 minimum game, but only \$10 games are available, then you will not have an adequate amount to play.

Before beginning casino play, you will divide your trip bankroll into four parts with one part for each game. If you are a \$5 bettor, you will bring \$200 to the table. This is your **game bankroll**.

When you are playing, you must be aware of the status of your bankroll throughout the game. This is easily accomplished if you keep your chips segregated by denomination so that you can tell at a glance the approximate

amount that you are ahead or behind. Every time you win a parlay bet you should count your game bankroll.

You should always set a Target Win amount for each game. Your Target Win should be eight times the size of your minimum wager. Thus, if you are making \$5 minimum wagers, you will use a Target Win of \$40.

You will terminate a game when you have won your target win or lost every bet in a betting series. However, there is still another trigger for quitting. If you have played longer than two hours, you should quit. Fatigue is a great leveler in casino gambling, and you must not play when you are tired.

When you take a break from playing, the first thing you will do is to record the results of the session. You will carry a notebook for this purpose, and you will record the results of every gambling session. The information you will want to record for each session is:

**Date Played**  
**Casino**  
**Approximate time played**  
**Betting Series Used**  
**Game Bankroll**  
**Amount Won or (Lost)**  
**Explanation for stopping**  
**Comments**

Each item of information can be set up as a column heading so that you can easily add the Amount Won or Lost to determine exactly your position on each trip. You

will use the Explanation for Stopping column to record the reason for stopping a sessions, such as "hit target win" or "played 2 hours."

You will find that this information is invaluable in fine-tuning your play.

After entering this information in your notebook upon completion of a playing session, you will take a break. The best bet for a break is to remove yourself from the casino for at least an hour. You can catch a bar show, go for a walk, or take a short nap.

If disaster strikes and you lose your entire bankroll, you should never borrow on your credit card or use other monies to continue gambling. One purpose of having a defined bankroll is to prevent you from ever using other money for gambling. If you have lost your bankroll, then your gambling is over for this trip.

You should also set win goals for each trip. If your bankroll is \$1,500 and you have set a win goal of \$1,500, then you should quit when your target win is reached. I have known too many gamblers who just couldn't quit when they were ahead. The Knockout Blackjack Betting Strategy is a powerful winning strategy; however, part of its effectiveness is using these controls to limit losses and to walk away with winnings.

With the Knockout Blackjack Betting Strategy you can also build your bankroll. Use your own devices to build your initial minimum bankroll, but after you have done this, you can use winnings from blackjack to **increase your bankroll at an accelerated rate!**

To accelerate the growth of your bankroll, you will increase the size of the Betting Series used as your bankroll grows.



We now have all of the ingredients to put the Knockout Blackjack Betting Strategy to work. In the next chapter we'll see how this strategy did in real life play.

## Knockout Blackjack Betting in Action

There is no doubt that playing blackjack using *Knockout Blackjack Betting* is very profitable. We have documented play for 5,356 blackjack games using this strategy.

I had the help of a number of associates who worked with me to play the strategy and then record the results of each game.

We played against many different blackjack versions and variations.

In land-based play we played against single, double and various levels of multiple decks.

We played in games using continuous shuffling machines – designed to speed up the game and thwart card counters.

We played against European blackjack with the “no peek rule” used by dealers showing up-cards of Aces. (This is a very disadvantageous rule for players as players will lose split and doubled hands to a dealer blackjack.)

We played in many different online blackjack games.

We soundly beat every version of blackjack offered today!

We played at many different levels – from using \$1 minimum bets online to \$500 minimum bets in Caesars Palace in Las Vegas.

What’s more, our hourly win rates were nothing short of amazing.

Let me give you just a couple of examples.

If you use Knockout Blackjack Betting in land-based games and use \$25 chips as your base bets, you will average winning \$644 an hour.

Hourly winnings in online games, which are played faster than land-based ones, are really high –

When you play with \$10 base bets, you'll make \$1552 an hour!

Even entry-level players don't do that badly. There are many online games accepting \$1 minimum bets. If you play in one of these games using \$1 as your base bet, you will pull in a very cool \$155 an hour!

These are really outstanding win rates, and I can't blame you if you are a little skeptical. However, these win amounts are based on 5,356 documented games. I didn't invent them. These are the amounts other players made using ***Knockout Blackjack Betting!***

To facilitate comparability of results in playing at different betting levels, we converted all of our raw game data into the equivalent results of using \$5 Base Bets. You should be familiar with this betting level as all of the examples of play used in this book are based on using \$5 Base Bets.

Here are the parameters used for \$5 Base Bets

#### **Strike Bets for \$5 Base Bets**

Level	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
\$ Bet	5	10	15	25	40	65	105

### Counterstrike Betting Series for \$5 Base Bets

Level	1	2	3	4	5	6
\$ Bet	5	10	20	40	80	160

### Lightning Strike Bets

After winning Level-1 Strike Bet of \$5, wager 6 7 8 10 12 14 17 20 23 26 30 35 40 45 50 60 70 80 100.

Game Bankroll: \$400

Total Bankroll: \$800

Target Win: \$40

The results of these games are summarized below:

### Summary of Long-Term Test of Knockout Blackjack Betting

Total Games	5,356
Games Won	5,150
Games Lost	206
Win Percent 5150/5356	96.16%
Total Rounds Played	147,805
Net Won	\$237,621
Average Winnings per round of play	\$1.608
Average Winning per game (all games)	\$44.37
Total Won excluding losing games	\$245,449
Number of Winning Games	5,150
Average Winnings per winning game \$245,449/5150	\$47.66
Average Loss per losing game \$7828/ 206 =	\$38.00
Average Rounds per Game 147,805 rounds played/ 5,356 games =	27.60

I believe that the results attained in these 5,356 games are very representative of what you can expect with long-term play using Knockout Blackjack Betting.

We won 5,150 games for a long-term win percentage of 96.16% of all games. Stated another way, you will win better than 96 out of every 100 games you play with this strategy.

With \$5 Base Bets we averaged winning \$47.66 per winning game, higher than our Target Win of \$40 per game. After deducting for losses our net average winnings per game were \$44.37 per game.

Another way of looking at this is that using a Target Win of \$40 per game, we managed to net an average of \$44.37 per game, which is 111% of our target.

This becomes more impressive when you convert the amount won to a net amount per round statistic –

Using \$5 Base Bets, we won an average of \$1.608 per round of play.

The average game took just 27.6 rounds to complete.

This means that in a land-based casino with 80 rounds of play per hour, it will take you about 21 minutes per game.

In online play, wins will come more quickly since the game is faster. If you play at a rate of 300 rounds per hour you will complete a game online in less than six minutes!

A very important statistic derived from this play is the average amount won per round. Here, playing with \$5 Base Bets, we won an average of \$1.608 per round. This is the net amount won after deducting the affect of losses.

Once we have this statistic we can compute hourly winnings for different levels of play and different game speeds. Below are the average hourly winnings you will make as a \$5 Base Bettor in land-based games and online games.

Average Hourly Winnings for Land-based games (80 rounds per hour)      \$128.64

Average Hourly Winnings for Online games (300 rounds per hour)      \$482.40

The following table shows the hourly win rates for play in land-based and online games with Base Bets ranging from \$1 to \$500.

### **Knockout Blackjack Betting Hourly Winnings for Land-Based and Online Casinos**

<b>Base Bets</b>	<b>Land-based (80 per hour)</b>	<b>Online (300 per hour)</b>
\$1	\$25.75	\$155.53
\$2	\$51.52	\$311.05
\$3	\$77.28	\$466.57
\$5	\$128.80	\$777.63
\$8	\$206.08	\$1244.20
\$10	\$257.60	\$1552.60
\$15	\$386.40	\$2332.89
\$25	\$644.00	\$3888.15
\$35	\$901.60	\$5443.41
\$50	\$1288	\$7776.30
\$75	\$1,932	\$11,664.45
\$100	\$2576	\$15,552.60
\$200	\$5152	NA
\$300	\$7728	NA
\$400	\$10,304	NA
\$500	\$12880	NA

As a beginning player you may want to start out making \$1 bets online. With a Game Bankroll requirement of just \$80 this is a great place to start. You will average winning \$155 an hour at this level.

However, you will undoubtedly want to move up to \$2 betting as soon as possible where you will average winning \$311 an hour.

As your winnings grow you can continue to increase the size of your base bets playing online. Many of our testers like to use \$25 base bets, with average winnings of \$3,888 an hour!

If you prefer to play in land-based games you will find Knockout Blackjack Betting very profitable. You will probably start in a \$5 game winning \$128 an hour.

As you move up your hourly winning will increase. For professional level play you'll want to use base bets of \$50 or more. As a \$50 bettor you'll pull in a quite reasonable \$1288 an hour. Two hours a day at this level will net you better than \$2,500 a day!

The following table shows the Base Bets, Betting Series, Target Wins, Game Bankroll and Total Bankroll for play levels ranging from \$1 to \$500 base bets

## Knockout Blackjack Betting Base Bets, Betting Series, Target Wins, Game Bankrolls & Total Bankrolls

Base Bet	Strike-Counter Strike Bets	Lightning Strike Bets	Target Win	Game Bankroll	Total Bankroll
\$1	S) 1 2 3 5 8 13 21 C) 1 2 4 8 16 32	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 etc	\$8	\$80	\$160
\$2	S) 2 4 6 10 16 26 42 C) 2 4 8 16 32 64	2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 12 etc	\$16	\$160	\$320
\$3	S) 3 6 9 15 24 39 63 C) 3 6 12 24 48 96	3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 12 14 etc	\$24	\$240	\$520
\$5	S) 5 10 15 25 40 65 105 C) 5 10 20 40 80 160	6 7 8 9 10 12 14 17 20 etc	\$40	\$400	\$800
\$10	S) 10 20 30 50 80 130 210 C) 10 20 40 80 160 320	12 14 16 18 20 24 28 34 40 etc	\$80	\$800	\$1600
\$15	S) 15 30 45 75 120 195 315 C) 15 30 60 120 240 480	18 21 24 28 32 36 40 45 50 etc	\$120	\$1200	\$2400
\$20	S) 20 40 60 100 160 260 420 C) 20 40 80 160 320 640	25 30 35 42 48 55 63 70 etc	\$160	\$1600	\$3200
\$25	S) 25 50 75 125 200 325 525 C) 25 50 100 200 400 800	30 35 42 50 60 70 85 100 etc	\$200	\$2000	\$4000
\$35	S) 35 70 105 175 280 455 735 C) 35 70 140 280 540 1080	42 50 60 70 83 90 100 112	\$280	\$2800	\$5400
\$50	S) 50 100 150 250 400 650 1050 C) 50 100 200 400 800 1600	60 70 85 100 120 145 170 etc	\$400	\$4000	\$8000
\$75	S) 75 150 225 375 600 975 1575 C) 75 150 300 600 1200 2500	90 120 150 190 230 270 320 etc	\$600	\$6000	\$12000
\$100	S) 100 200 300 500 800 1300 2100 C) 100 200 400 800 1600 3200	125 150 190 230 275 350 etc	\$800	\$8000	\$16000
\$200	S) 200 400 600 1000 1600 2600 4200 C) 200 400 800 1600 3200 6400	250 300 380 460 550 700 etc	\$1600	\$16000	\$32000
\$300	S) 300 600 900 1500 2400 3900 6300 C) 300 600 1200 2400 4800 9600	375 450 570 690 1050 etc	\$2400	\$24000	\$48000
\$500	S) 500 1000 1500 2500 4000 6500 10500 C) 500 1000 2000 4000 8000 16000	625 750 950 1150 1375 1750 etc	\$4000	\$30000	\$60000

Betting Series:

A – Strike Bets

B – Counterstrike Bets



## Plan Before You Play

Most people approach casino gambling as a lark, and little consideration is given to the amount of time, money or psychological preparation necessary for winning. Some attention is given to finding a "system" or "gimmick" and off the player goes to try his hand at winning. Needless to say, this approach hardly ever works.

Some work and advance preparation are essential to becoming a consistent winner at roulette or any other casino game.

The advance preparation is fairly easy. First, read and understand this book. The easiest way to practice is to play in an online casino on your home computer in "practice mode" where no money is risked. This will give you a realistic feel for blackjack as it is played, whether you play online or in a land-based game.

Practice is essential for two reasons. First, by practicing you will gain a greater understanding of the system than you ever will by just reading about it. Secondly, practicing the system will give you a greater feel for it than I can ever convey by describing it. In practicing this strategy, you will gain a level of confidence in your play which is important before you ever venture forth to take on a casino.

You can practice with Bovada Casino without registering or having to download software. Here is the link to Bovada's free blackjack game – <http://casino.bodog.com/free-blackjack.jsp>

In a casino, your enemy is not the casino or the dealer. It is your own lack of self-control. If you can control yourself and have a mastery of your approach, you will become a winner. If you can't, then it is unlikely that the Knockout Blackjack Betting Strategy or any other system can make you a winner.

After you have learned and practiced this strategy, you will want to begin planning to apply it in a casino. “What,” you say. *Planning?* I just spent time learning the darned thing! What's this planning? Why can't I just jump in my car or get on a plane, arrive at a location that has blackjack and start playing? Or, why can't I just get online, pick an online casino and start playing blackjack?

Planning begins with determining the size of bankroll you will take for your ***Knockout Blackjack Betting Strategy Sessions***. The amount you take for an excursion to a casino(s) is called the ***Trip Bankroll***, and it should be five times the size of bankroll required to play a game. If you decide to play online, you can use these same concepts. Here your “Trip Bankroll” can be thought of as your total bankroll for online play.

It is necessary to use a larger bankroll for a trip to provide for an adequate cushion against losses. If, for example, you decided that since the loss rate is so low (about one in 26 games), you would only take the amount needed to play one game. What would you do if the loss occurred in the first game? You would not have a large enough bankroll to continue to play blackjack, and you would be "tapped out" even with a winning system.

It is far better to plan for the worst and then do your best to prevent it from occurring. The following table summarizes the bankroll requirements for minimum bets of \$1 to \$500.

### **Knockout Blackjack Betting Bankroll Requirements**

<b>Base Bet</b>	<b>Game Bankroll</b>	<b>Total Bankroll</b>
\$1	\$80	\$160
\$2	\$160	\$320
\$3	\$240	\$520
\$5	\$400	\$800
\$10	\$800	\$1600
\$15	\$1200	\$2400
\$20	\$1600	\$3200
\$25	\$2000	\$4000
\$35	\$2800	\$5400
\$50	\$4000	\$8000
\$75	\$6000	\$12000
\$100	\$8000	\$16000
\$200	\$16000	\$32000
\$300	\$24000	\$48000
\$500	\$30000	\$60000

Needless to say, this bankroll should come from money that is extra and will not be needed for living expenses. If you take the money needed to pay mother's medical bill for gambling, the psychological pressure will probably be too much for you, and in general, this is just not a good way to approach any speculative venture.

After building your bankroll and practicing the system until you can perform flawlessly, you may begin your final preparations for a gambling excursion. You should have a notebook for recording the results of your play and a game plan for your trip.

A trip game plan can be very informal consisting of an itinerary with playing time scheduled in a general way. You don't have to have every minute scheduled, but I have found that my mental attitude is improved if I have planned a definite amount of time for gambling as well as other activities.

If you wish to approach using the ***Knockout Blackjack Betting Strategy*** in an extremely organized and professional manner, you may wish to develop a plan to let the system help build your bankroll.

Assume that your bankroll is \$1000. You are planning a trip to Las Vegas and you find out that the minimum bets accepted where you will stay are \$10 bets.

You check with the table showing bankroll requirements and see that the bankroll required to use the Knockout Blackjack Betting Strategy with \$10 unit bets is \$1,600. You can see that you don't have a large enough bankroll to play at this level.

You really only have a couple of choices now. You can postpone using the Knockout Blackjack Betting Strategy in Las Vegas until you save another \$600 and have the bankroll required.

Or, you can play online in a game with lower minimum wagers, where your \$1000 bankroll will be adequate. You can literally "build" the bankroll needed for the Las Vegas trip from your winnings playing online.

The table below shows win rates for play in online casinos.

### Hourly Win Rates for Play In Online Casinos

Size of Base Bet	Hourly Win Rate
\$1	\$155
\$2	\$311
\$3	\$466
\$5	\$777
\$8	\$1244
\$10	\$1552
\$15	\$2332
\$25	\$3888
\$35	\$5443
\$50	\$7776
\$75	\$11,664
\$100	\$15,553

Referring to the table showing bankroll requirements at the beginning of this chapter you note that the bankroll required for \$2 Base Bets is just \$320. With your \$1000 bankroll you can easily play at this level.

The table above shows average hourly winnings of \$311 for a \$2 Base Bettor playing online.

You decide to use \$300 an hour as your estimated average hourly win for play as a \$2 Base Bettor.

Now, you want to find out how long it will take you to “grow” the bankroll for your Las Vegas trip. You compute:

Bankroll Needed for \$5 Base	\$1600
Bets in Las Vegas	
Current Bankroll	<u>1000</u>
Bankroll Shortage	<u>\$600</u>

Now, you compute how long it will take you to win the \$600 additional bankroll playing online with an average hourly win of \$300.

$$\$600/\$300 \text{ an hour} = 2 \text{ hours}$$

You have almost a week before the planned Las Vegas trip. You decide to try the online play plan, and in a little less than two hours you win \$600. You start packing for Las Vegas.

When you arrive at your choice of gambling locale, it is important that you arrive prepared, confident that you have mastered the ***Knockout Blackjack Betting Strategy***, determined a plan of action, brought the materials with you which you will need, planned the correct bankroll and developed a playing schedule for your trip.

You will want to come to the blackjack table confident about yourself and your game plan. Although you will undoubtedly enjoy the edge you have over other players, make sure that your enjoyment never interferes with your plan to beat the dealer.

Good luck in all of your play!!!

## How to Play With a Smaller Bankroll

Would you like to get almost the same winning power with a smaller bankroll?

We have found that you can drop off the highest Strike Bets and Counterstrike Bets with very little decline in the performance of Knockout Blackjack Betting.

The advantage of doing this is obvious –

By reducing the number of bets in the betting series you will reduce the bankroll needed to use this strategy.

In effect, with winnings very close to the win rate of the complete Knockout Blackjack Betting Strategy you will get “more bang for the buck” using shortened betting series.

The following table summarizes the Base Bets, Betting Series, Target Wins, Game Bankrolls and Total Bankroll for the Shortened Version of Knockout Blackjack Betting.

### Knockout Blackjack Betting Shortened Version Base Bets, Betting Series, Target Wins, Game Bankrolls & Total Bankrolls

Base Bet	Betting Series	Target Win	Game Bankroll	Total Bankroll
\$1	A) 1 2 3 5 8 13 B) 1 2 4 8 16	\$8	\$40	\$80
\$2	A) 2 4 6 10 16 26 B) 2 4 8 16 32	\$16	\$80	\$160
\$3	A) 3 6 9 15 24 39 B) 3 6 12 24 48	\$24	\$120	\$240
\$5	A) 5 10 15 25 40 65 B) 5 10 20 40 80	\$40	\$200	\$400
\$10	A) 10 20 30 50 80 130 B) 10 20 40 80 160	\$80	\$400	\$800
\$15	A) 15 30 45 75 120 195 B) 15 30 60 120 240	\$120	\$600	\$1299
\$20	A) 20 40 60 100 160 260 B) 20 40 80 160 320	\$160	\$800	\$1600
\$25	A) 25 50 75 125 200 325 B) 25 50 100 200 400	\$200	\$1000	\$2000
\$35	A) 35 70 105 175 280 455 B) 35 70 140 280 540	\$280	\$1400	\$2800
\$50	A) 50 100 150 250 400 650 B) 50 100 200 400 800	\$400	\$2000	\$4000
\$75	A) 75 150 225 375 600 975 B) 75 150 300 600 1200	\$600	\$3000	\$6000
\$100	A) 100 200 300 500 800 1300 B) 100 200 400 800 1600	\$800	\$4000	\$8000
\$200	A) 200 400 600 1000 1600 2600 B) 200 400 800 1600 3200	\$1600	\$8000	\$16000
\$300	A) 300 600 900 1500 2400 3900 B) 300 600 1200 2400 4800	\$2400	\$12000	\$24000
\$500	A) 500 1000 1500 2500 4000 6500 B) 500 1000 2000 4000 8000	\$4000	\$15000	\$30000



## **Skilful Play**

There are a number of decisions you can make in becoming a successful Knockout Blackjack Betting Strategy player. For example, you must decide where to play and whether you will tip or not.

You will also need to make decisions on setting up and using a casino credit line as well as having your play rated. How you handle these situations can have a great bearing on your long-term success as a winning gambler.

### **Picking where you play**

Your first choice in deciding to become a blackjack winner is deciding where to play. I rate casinos on several different aspects. My first concern is whether the casino offers games that I find playable.

Every casino sets minimum and maximum bets for its table games. Typical minimum and maximum bets for blackjack games offered by small casinos might be \$5 minimum bets and \$500 maximum bets. These limits will be acceptable for 90% of the players using the Knockout Blackjack Betting Strategy. But a few players may require higher betting limits.

A more typical problem faces players in casinos which set minimum bets too high. Some East Coast casinos set their minimum blackjack bets at \$10.

Many casinos will change their minimum wagers depending on the time of day and day of the week. Minimum bets are raised in the evenings and on weekends. If you are an Atlantic City player looking for tables with lower minimum bets, you will find more blackjack tables with lower minimums if you play during the week instead of on weekends.

Besides table limits, I also consider the atmosphere of a casino. I absolutely refuse to play in casinos with rude dealers. I can tolerate slow dealers, dealers still in training and dealers who don't talk much. But I refuse to put up with dealers who make sarcastic remarks to other players or criticize my play. Life is too short. Change tables or, if necessary, change casinos.

Fortunately, casino employees are reasonable people and problematic dealers are not seen too often.

Some casinos have other annoying quirks. Can you tolerate a lot of smoke? Some casinos have poor ventilation systems so that a dull cloud of smoke seems to permeate the casino area. If this bothers you, don't play there.

Other casinos are dirty or have crowded, uncomfortable playing conditions. For several years there was a casino less than ten minutes from my house where I absolutely refused to play because the place resembled a dump (it has been updated and is now acceptable).

These are choices you must make. If you play in Las Vegas, you have just about every choice you can imagine available. If you want to play in a real players' joint, try Binion's Horseshoe downtown. Would you like some real elegance? You'll like the Venetian or Bellagio's.

One thing I don't do is discuss my system while I play. Some dealers will comment on it; most don't. You may get questions from other players. If you decide to discuss your system, keep it simple. You might state that you like to raise bets when you are winning, but sometimes you raise them after a loss as well.

If you start talking about the system, you will undoubtedly lose your concentration. In addition, it is almost a given that if you are trying to demonstrate the system to someone, you are going to have a loss. Call it bad luck or bad karma, but you can believe that discussing the system while you are playing is not a good idea.

## **Tipping**

If you don't like to tip, most international play will suit you fine. Most casinos in Asia, Europe and Commonwealth countries like England, Australia and New Zealand forbid tipping the dealers.

In the U.S., you really have no choice but to tip. Many players refuse to tip, arguing that tips come right off their bottom line. I can't argue with the logic, but I will question the results of a no-tipping policy.

I personally have a great deal of respect for most casino personnel and especially dealers. I enjoy tipping them in exchange for good service, and once it is established that I am a "George" (slang for a good tipper), the level of service increases appreciably.

When I tip, I never just give the dealer the tip. I only tip by making bets for the dealer.

I tip by making a bet for the dealers if I have been winning. If I continue to win I will make another bet for the dealer about every twenty to thirty rounds of play.

## **Act like a gambler**

Play like a loser. If you are in a prolonged winning streak, don't rub it in the casino's face by continuing to play at the same table. If you do, make sure that you consistently make the kinds of moves which will throw the pit off. But your best ploy is not to overstay your welcome, especially if you are winning a bundle.

If you have a nice win and a floor person comments on it, you can casually mention that you dropped a bundle at craps last night and you are still not close to even. But don't do this if you never play craps. Make your story plausible.

## **Hide Chips**

As a winning player, you will want to look for ways to disguise the amount you are winning. The easiest way to do this is to pocket chips.

This is harder to accomplish if you are playing alone, and is easiest to accomplish if you have a playing partner.

*How to Survive and Prosper as a Professional Gambler*, published by Silverthorne Publications, has some excellent suggestions on chip hiding routines. With a female accomplice, it is easy to slip chips to her and let her hide them in her purse.

Sometimes my wife carries a shopping bag with her, which is a great place to stash chips and offers additional cover to help us look like a pair of happy, typical tourists.

If you are a black chip player, you are better off hiding green chips, as the bosses are more concerned with watching your stack of black chips. If you commonly wager \$500 or more, then you can get away with hiding \$100 chips, but don't try to stash the \$500 chips as the bosses may catch on.

## **Play for Cash or on Credit?**

There are many advantages to establishing credit with several casinos. Once you have established credit, it is there any time you want to use it. You don't have to carry cash, arrange for wire transfers or try to talk casinos into cashing checks. You generally will not be able to even cash a cashier's check in a casino until it has been verified. If you show up on a Saturday hoping to cash a cashier's check, you will be out of luck until your bank reopens on Monday and can verify the check.

Another advantage to establishing credit is that when you use casino credit, you get to sign markers at the table. You will look like a gambler, since most gamblers who play with black chips have casino credit lines.

I'll let you in on a dirty secret. Casinos are not in the business of loaning money to gamblers, at least not now. If you have a bad gambling habit and a weak bank account, your local friendly loan shark is more likely to accommodate you than your not-so-friendly casino.

When you establish a credit line, the casino is agreeing to advance you no more than the average balance in your checking account for the last six months.

Your creditworthiness has nothing to do with getting casino credit. These guys don't care whether you are employed, just filed for bankruptcy or are dodging your other creditors. Casino credit is based on how much bread you keep in your checking account.

Do you feel a little better about the high rollers signing the markers? They are signing magnetically coded checks which can be run through their checking accounts. Normally markers are not handled this way as the casino prefers to be paid by check, but if necessary, the casino markers can and will be deposited by the casino and will be presented for payment at your bank just like any other check you have written.

If you are a black chip player, casino credit is almost mandatory unless you want to carry a large amount of cash with you, which I don't recommend. If you know where you will be playing, you can arrange to have cash deposited with the casino cashier and sign markers against your own *front money* on deposit with the casino.

### **Rated Players**

Once you start playing with green or black chips, you are going to be asked by a floor person if you want to be rated. Many novice gamblers resent the intrusion of a floor person and answer evasively or even negatively. This is a big mistake. By rating your play, the casino is evaluating your ability to receive comps or freebies from the casino. Comps can really add to your bottom line and can be very

profitable once you learn to play the comp game. Another reason to become rated is that being rated and receiving comps from the casino is what gamblers normally do. And you want to look like just another gambler.

Even if you are a low to mid-range player and want to get *full RFB*, which stands for Room, Food and Beverages comped, there are many casinos which will accommodate you.

Using casino comps, you can travel just about anywhere and get full VIP treatment. Many casinos will even pay your airfare. But you have to know how to work the system to maximize these benefits. I suggest that you learn how to get the maximum amount of comps and let a casino pay for all of your gambling excursions.

As a Knockout Blackjack Betting Strategy player, you are in the perfect position to get and benefit from comps. No matter what your level of play, you can increase your enjoyment and profits by availing yourself of casino comps.

### **Learn to play another casino game**

I highly recommend that you learn to play at least one other table game besides blackjack. My number one choice of the game to learn is craps.

Craps is still a favorite game of many high rollers. Just by making pass line bets with double odds you can play almost even with the house. If you add a winning strategy on top of learning craps, such as the unique betting system revealed in the *Power Craps Strategy*, then you are on the way to having a second casino game you can beat.

Craps, using the *Power Craps Strategy*, is an excellent game for using hit and run tactics. If you have been playing blackjack and are tired of concentrating on your wagers, craps may give you just the break you need. This can't hurt your reputation

with the casino. Because many high rollers now favor craps, you will enhance your appearance as a high roller when you add this game to your repertoire. By mixing a little craps play in with your blackjack play, you will look more and more like another gambler to the casino bosses.

You may be surprised how well you do at craps. On a typical casino visit, I usually make almost as much money playing craps as I do playing blackjack. Silverthorne Publications is the premier publisher for winning craps systems. You can check out the **Power Craps Strategy** at [www.silverthornepublications.com/PowerCraps](http://www.silverthornepublications.com/PowerCraps)

**And so, you are almost ready to start beating the casinos, but . . .**

You are almost ready to take on the casinos. I have presented a complete strategy which has been proven to win against casino blackjack. Perhaps you have been practicing the Knockout Blackjack Betting Strategy. You have figured out how to put together your bankroll. However, the greatest battle still awaits you. The casinos have even more powerful weapons at their disposal than the house edge. They are masters at a whole number of psychological traps set to ensnare you, with the end goal of relieving you of as much of your money as they can in the shortest and most pleasant way possible. Let's take a look at the casino's battery of weapons and see what you can do about them.

## **Discipline and Control**

At this point, you should have a good understanding about how to use the Knockout Blackjack Betting Strategy to win money at blackjack. You should know when to bet, how much to wager, and when to quit. You know about how your bankroll determines the size of your wagers and about using game bankrolls. You should have some definite ideas about how you want to interact with casino personnel. You have learned some ways to improve playing conditions by interacting with and tipping the dealer. You also have been introduced to the idea of playing on casino credit and playing for comps.

Now you have to deal with the largest obstacle to your success. The greatest single threat to your success is not the casino personnel. It is not a bad run at the tables. It is not the risk of consecutive losses eating up your bankroll. It is not the wine, the women, and the atmosphere. The greatest single threat to your playing career will be you. Surprised? Read on.

### **Self Control**

Ultimately, success at casino gambling, business, romance or life, for that matter, largely depends on self-control. Winning at gambling is all about self-control. It is about controlling the amount of money used for gambling. It's about reducing losses. It's about limiting the amount of money used for any session of play. And ultimately, it's about walking out the door a winner.

Gamblers are a lot like fishermen. They like to talk about the one that got away. How many times have you been in a casino winning and ended up leaving a net loser? In the real world, the only wins that count are the ones you go home with.

Actually, it is no great feat to get ahead playing blackjack. Probably over 75% of all blackjack players are ahead sometime in their play. But do they walk out the door winners? No. Probably close to 95% of all blackjack players end up losing money.



The typical casino hold is about 20% for a blackjack table. *Hold* is a term referring to the amount the casino keeps as its win out of the money dropped at the table — e.g. the *drop*. If you buy in for a hundred dollars, and play for thirty minutes and leave with \$85, you have lost \$15 out of \$100. Your contribution to the drop was \$100 and your loss gave the casino a hold rate of 15%.

Winning at gambling is first about controlling yourself. It is about accepting responsibilities for your own actions. In the long run, you don't win because you were lucky, and you don't lose because you had a string of bad luck. Using the Knockout Blackjack Betting Strategy will help you create your own luck. Used properly, you will be able to play at an advantage over the casino and be a net winner.

If you think about the times you were ahead in a casino and ended up giving it all back plus whatever additional cash you scrounged, who is to blame? The casino? The game? The house edge?

Don't get angry with me for pointing this out. What is wrong with setting aside your winnings when you are ahead? And what is wrong with limiting your losses when you hit a losing streak? And what is wrong with leaving a losing table?

I hope you answered "nothing." Doing these things requires self-control. They are easy to think about doing but may be much harder to actually accomplish. I am a former smoker. I always thought I could quit smoking when I wanted to. But I failed to quit a number of times. When I finally quit, I realized how difficult the process really was. It was easy to think about quitting smoking but doing it was quite challenging. Now that I have quit, I am out of the woods, right? Well, not quite. I believe that smoking is much like a drug addiction, and as a former addict, I am never cured. I am only one cigarette away from becoming a smoker again. Control in a casino may require much the same discipline as that of a reformed smoker. Having a large monetary loss only requires a temporary loss of control.

Trust me, winning is habit forming. Losing, especially at a game like blackjack when you know you are using a winning strategy, is tough. Some professional gamblers, especially traditional blackjack card counters, will lose for months at a time. I am not sure that I could continue to play blackjack under those circumstances. The documented losing streaks for the Knockout Blackjack Betting Strategy tend to be fairly short. If you play blackjack regularly using this strategy, it is highly unlikely that you will ever encounter two back to back losing casino visits. But it can happen.

Once you are in a losing streak, you will be hard pressed to continue with your set game plan. You will begin to question everything about the strategy. You may feel like the dealer has it in for you. You will start to think that no matter how you wager, your bets will lose. When your larger bets lose, you will begin to question the betting strategy.

Trends are a dominant factor in gambling. Every blackjack table has streaks. If you are in a winning streak, you may begin to feel omnipotent. However, when a losing streak hits, you may start to question every aspect of your playing strategy.

Perhaps the best thing you can do whenever you encounter losing tables is to first change tables. Your next option is to quit playing blackjack for a time. Depending on your feelings, you should either quit gambling altogether during your break, or if you are still in the mood to play, switch casino games. I have found on many occasions that a switch of games was exactly what I needed to improve my mood.

Many players seem to become chained to a particular table at some point in their play. This may be fine when the table is winning, but could spell disaster during a prolonged losing spell.

While losing is tough, winning may be even tougher for some people. Many players subconsciously feel that gambling winnings are "ill begotten gains." Many times people raised with a strong work ethic cannot adjust to the reality that winning at gambling requires a great deal of effort too. Gambling winnings may not seem

real or may even seem shameful. Many people feel guilty when they win. For these people, walking out with some of the casino's money doesn't feel right.

Gamblers never cease to amaze me. Gambling falls into some special category of human behavior that escapes the normal rules we usually live by. People change their behavior dramatically in casinos. Consummate misers can't wait to throw their money away in casinos. People who clip coupons every week to save ten bucks on groceries think nothing of dropping a hundred, five hundred or even a thousand in a casino.

Discipline is all about the ability to develop a winning plan. Control is about being able to follow it.

### **Ego Needs**

We all share a need for recognition. We like to talk about our triumphs. Once you become a successful, consistent winner at blackjack, you are going to feel the need to talk about it occasionally.

You need to curb the urge to discuss the fact that you are a winner, especially while you are in a casino. If you have a big win at the craps table, feel free to comment on your success. The casino is not concerned with craps winners, because they do not believe that anyone can gain an advantage over them in this game, at least not without cheating.

Obviously, you should never discuss your blackjack winnings with any casino employees. Your goal is to look as much like another losing gambler as possible. Casinos don't like winners, and you are much more likely to get the royal treatment if you look like another losing gambler.

Occasionally, outside of the casino, I have been asked about how my strategies work. When I first learned to beat the casinos, I was quite enthusiastic and wanted

to share my enthusiasm with other people. The typical reaction when I have revealed that I have a winning blackjack system is total disbelief. I am simply not believed. My best advice is to act like the vast majority of casino patrons who don't have a clue as to how to win.

### **Play the Part**

I have given a number of suggestions about looking like a gambler. Everyone has his (or her) own style, and I am not suggesting that you disguise yourself physically or change your identity. However, individuals who look serious, never drink, never tip, or don't talk to dealers or floor personnel do not look like gamblers and will not get the full benefit of casino generosity, including comps.

I have tried to give you as much ammunition as I can, but you can add your own finishing touches. Using casino credit is a must if you are a black chip player. You simply don't want to walk around with ten thousand dollars or more on your person. Not only are you literally risking your life should a mugger decide to target you, but you could run afoul of U.S. laws if you leave the country with more than \$10,000 in cash on you and don't declare it. Using the casino's credit and signing markers will make you look much more like a gambler, and it actually is a very convenient way to play.

You should also play for comps. Once you are playing with black chips, you will have comps offered to you and you might as well enjoy them. Even mid-range gamblers and low rollers can avail themselves of substantial comps.

### **The Casino is Not Your Enemy**

The dealers, floor persons, cocktail waitresses, pit bosses, shift bosses and casino hosts are not your enemy. While pit bosses often scrutinize the play of high rollers, they are just doing their jobs. Many of the casino employees are actually rooting for you to win. We have discussed how to get a dealer on your side by being friendly

and using your tips advantageously. But your floor person is not against your winning. As long as you are not perceived as a threat to the casino's bankroll and are not engaged in behavior the casino objects to, e.g. card counting, you are free to win occasionally. Just don't rub it in their faces.

Floor persons are the primary decision-makers on the amount of comps you get, and I always chat with the nearest floor person. Starting a conversation is easy. Once you are a credit player, you will interact with the floor person as soon as you buy in, by signing a marker. After establishing some rapport with a floor person, I will occasionally ask him or her for advice on certain blackjack wagers. It is always better to down play just how knowledgeable you are. Most floor persons enjoy helping players and like to show off their own expertise.

In dealing with all casino personnel, your goal is to always be a polite, friendly person who likes the casino, enjoys talking to pit personnel, is impressed by the floor person's tremendous knowledge of blackjack, makes large wagers and doesn't quite know how to play blackjack correctly. This act will buy you a tremendous amount of unrestricted playing time, and your comp rate should go up exponentially. You are the perfect player from the casino's viewpoint, and the casino bosses will be willing to pay to ensure that you play in their casino.

## **Drinking**

You've been waiting for this part, haven't you? I have yet to read a book on gambling where the author does not admonish the reader not to drink. Professional blackjack players, I guess, are too engrossed in observing the game to even lift a glass to their beleaguered lips. If they do manage a drink, it has to be Evian water. For the bosses and for most players, having a drink while you play is part of the fun. Gamblers do it for sure. And you want to look like a gambler, right?

I generally have a few drinks while I gamble. I also drink straight orange juice, coffee, iced tea and even ice water at the tables.

Drinking something alcoholic at the craps table is one more signal to the pit that you are not a threat. I generally go slow on the alcoholic drinks and time my drinks. In general, the fact that you are a blackjack player will go a long way towards enhancing your reputation as a gambler.

### **Superstitions**

Superstitions really have no effect on the outcome of cards or dice or little balls spinning around inside of larger wheels or do they? Most gamblers and many pit personnel are superstitious. Gambling itself seems to breed superstitions.

What happens is that we remember certain events that occurred prior to, or in connection with other events, and we assume that there is a causal relationship between two seemingly unrelated occurrences.

The dice game is rife with superstitions. Lady shooters are lucky, as are virgin shooters, who have never rolled the dice before. If a die or the dice fly off the table, many old pros call their odds, place and buy bets off on the next roll, as everyone knows that sevens come after the dice fall on the floor.

Blackjack players have their own superstitions. Many of these concern upsetting the natural order of the cards. If you have been playing one hand of blackjack and suddenly spread to two hands, the other players may become unglued at the move. Likewise playing a hand differently than they would have can cause a barrage of negative comments.

Poker players may wear their lucky hats, and where would a slots player be without her lucky charm bracelet?

Many casino bosses have lucky and unlucky dealers. A craps crew which loses too much money may find itself fired, or at least broken up and the members rotated

into different crews. If a blackjack player is winning too much money, a boss may bring in a lucky dealer. In the good old days when Vegas was mobbed up, the lucky dealer may well have been dealing seconds, with a real reason behind the luck. In this day of corporation controlled casinos, a cheating dealer is unlikely, as a casino is not willing to risk its license over one winning player. However, many bosses believe certain dealers are lucky for the house, just as other dealers are unlucky. If a boss decides a dealer is unlucky, the hapless dealer is not likely to have a fruitful career with that casino.

Because gamblers and bosses are superstitious, it makes sense for you to at least appear to be superstitious too. If you lose, it is because the table is too cold, or in the alternative, if you win, you are on a hot streak. Hot and cold streaks do occur, and it doesn't hurt to play them up.

In addition to enhancing your conversation with bosses, you can use your superstitions to influence dealers as well. More than once I have told a dealer that I feel that the next wheel spin will be lucky and placed a larger bet when the floor person was watching.

Use superstitions to justify certain plays when you are talking to the bosses. Just don't get caught up in believing too many casino superstitions yourself. Your lucky hat is not likely to have been responsible for your last win, nor is a particular casino necessarily unlucky.

I will admit that I partially subscribe to the "unlucky casino syndrome." There are some casinos where I never seem to do well. I have no rational explanation for this. However, since I tend to play in Las Vegas where dozens of casinos vie for my attention, I can easily avoid the casinos that are unlucky for me.

## **Moving Up Your Betting Levels**

If you devote much time to blackjack using the Knockout Blackjack Betting Strategy, at some point you will want to increase the size of base bets — jumping from a betting series with a \$5 Base Bet to a higher level, for example. Many players find that an emotional adjustment is required to make these moves.

The size of the wagers required may intimidate them to the extent that they feel compelled to modify the Knockout Blackjack Betting Strategy.

Of course, you must adhere to all of the requirements I have described before you decide to increase the size of your base wagers. You never want to over-bet your bankroll, and you should only increase the size of your wagers when your bankroll is large enough to justify it. If you are undercapitalized, then you clearly are out of your league to jump from green chip to black chip play.

However, once you have built the prerequisite bankroll, you should be able to increase the size of your wagers. To acclimate yourself to making larger wagers, try moving in steps. You might increase from being a \$5 Base Bet bettor to using \$10 wagers as your starting point.

Probably your biggest hurdle will be moving up to black \$100 chip play. You will receive a great deal more attention from the casino than when you were a red chip or green chip player. Most of the attention will be positive. When you play with black chips, you automatically join an exclusive club with significant casino comps to be made available. However, your play will also be under greater scrutiny, and this bothers many players.

In addition to being showered with comps, you will also find that black chip play has other privileges. It is usually much easier to find uncrowded tables as a black chip player.



I suggest that you start wagering at a comfortable level for you. Your comfort level may be as a \$3, \$5 or a \$10 player. Stay at this level until you have thoroughly mastered, not only the technical side of playing correctly, but the emotional side of dealing with players, bosses and dealers. When you are ready, both psychologically and with adequate bankroll, try moving up just one step and then playing at this level for awhile. Continue to hone your casino people skills at each new level and don't forget to look and act the part. Black chip players do act differently than nickel chip players.

### **The Casino As Your New Office**

Walking up to a blackjack tables the first time can be an intimidating experience. If you have not played much, you will not fully understand the roles of the dealer, the floor person, the pit boss, the other casino personnel, and the eye-in-the-sky cameras following your every move.

If you are unfamiliar with casino surroundings, you may want to progress into your new role as a winning blackjack player on a step-by-step basis.

You can first play using a lower level of play. This is an excellent approach, and you will win plenty of money using this approach. The best way to practice playing blackjack and using the Knockout Blackjack Betting Strategy is to play online in “practice mode” where you can play at your own pace and refer to the Blackjack Tracking Form and the Playing Strategy card as often and as leisurely as you like.

Once you feel very comfortable playing blackjack, you can gradually increase your betting level, using casino profits to build your bankroll. It may take a number of trips before you feel confident enough to move up to higher level play.

Only after you have completely mastered the Knockout Blackjack Betting Strategy should you consider moving up to black chip status. At this point, you should feel that the casino is your new office, and the casino personnel are your fellow workers.

Remember that the casino is not your enemy. The primary functions of modern casino personnel, including bosses, are to make sure the casino patrons have a good enough experience that they will become repeat customers.

Once you become known in a casino, you will find yourself interacting with the casino personnel even more. Dealers will welcome you by name. Cocktail waitresses will remember your favorite drink. Bosses will invite you to coffee. A casino host will work with you to make sure that you get all of the comps to which you are entitled.

Once you sense that everyone in the casino is genuinely rooting for you to win, you will know that you have done your job well.

In order to reach this level, there is no substitute for putting in your hours. You will need to demonstrate that you are not only friendly, but reliable, honest and consistent in your fair treatment of all you encounter.

Too many players complain to bosses, dealers and anyone else who works in the casino. Grumpy players are all too common, and you want to make sure that you don't present this face to your "fellow workers." If you are tired or grumpy, don't play. It is important to take breaks frequently and use the time to relax. You should be at your peak emotionally when you play, and this includes having a positive mental attitude and interacting with players and casino personnel on a friendly and helpful basis.

Eventually the casino will recognize you as congenial, reliable and dependable. And, if you decide to make playing blackjack your new profession, your relationship with your new associates will serve as the foundation for your new business.

## Casino Comps

Whether you chose to become a rated player at the casino table games, join a slot club or both, once you get into the system, you can start getting your share of comps. There are a number of tried and proven ways to multiply the number of comps you get. Here are some pointers.

### **Chose a primary casino and then play there.**

A basic premise of the whole comp system is to reward loyal players. Casinos offer comps to lure new players to their casino and to make sure that their current customers remain their customers. If you think you have it tough trying to use the comp system to your advantage, just think what the casinos are up against with new competition springing up every day.

If you are a whale, you can ignore my advice. Just plan on either bringing or setting up a credit line of \$100,000 or larger, and wherever you decide to land will be glad to comp you. If you are in the million dollar plus range, the casino will not only comp you, but anyone else you chose to bring with you. They'll even charter a 737 and fly in as many of your friends as you want to bring along.

If you are not quite in this range, then it will pay to find a primary casino and reward it with your patronage. A player with as little as \$1,000 can get RFB treatment in some of the downtown casinos in Las Vegas. A player with a \$2,500 bankroll will have an even greater choice of hotel casinos. Move up to the \$5,000 to \$10,000 range, and a whole other batch of casinos become available.

But, in order to get noticed and adequately comped with a bankroll from \$1,000 to \$10,000, you have to be willing to reward a casino with your playing time.

A friend of mine visits Las Vegas about ten times a year. He usually takes \$5,000 to \$10,000 and manages to lose between half and three quarters of it per trip. I won't comment on his approach to gambling. Quite frankly, it stinks. Anyway, the subject is comps.

Believe it or not, he doesn't get any. He stays at a different casino every trip. I think he believes the constant changes might improve his luck. This is not necessarily bad, if he would play at the casino where he stays. He invariably changes casinos every hour or two and ends up playing in ten to twelve different establishments over the course of two or three days.

Because of the size of his buy-ins, he is constantly asked if he wants to be rated. He always declines. He confesses that he doesn't want the casinos to know how much he is losing. I think that he is trying to kid himself about his losses.

I have explained the comp system to him. As long as he is losing, he might as well have the casinos kick in \$750 to \$1,000 per trip. This money is there for the asking if he would only pick a primary casino and give it a reasonable amount of play.

I can't convince him to change his ways. But, maybe I can influence you.

There are many other benefits to playing more in a primary casino. The first benefit is the application of the old saw, "If you scratch my back, I'll scratch yours."

The casino will accelerate the rewards offered you the more you play. Some casinos formalize this process and actually accelerate the comps to slot club members as their total number of points increases. Many casinos offer more and more free rooms and entertainment the more you patronize them.

The key to maximizing your benefits from this whole process is to find a casino that matches your needs and then start playing there. If you have picked correctly, your loyalty will be well rewarded.

**Join a slot club and/or get a VIP card.**

The start of getting comps is to be into the casino comp system. If you bet \$25,000 a hand, the host will find you. If you bet \$5 to \$25 a pop, you have to get the casino's attention. And the easiest way to do this is with a little piece of plastic which looks just like a credit card.

Once you have a card, getting comped will become part of your routine. The first thing you will do as a machine player is to insert your club card in the card reader.

When you sit down at a craps, roulette or a blackjack table you will present your VIP card when you buy in.

Your card will go down with your cash at the blackjack table when you lay five hundred in front of the dealer and tell him, "Chips please."

Once you have the cards and use them, all of your play will count towards something.

**Get to know your casino host.**

The casino host or the slot host will be your key to getting the most comps in most casinos.

If you are a member of the casino's slot club, you will get nearly all of your comps by asking the casino slot host. Many times comps for food, rooms, shows and merchandise are built right into the slot club payoffs. If you have just joined a slot club, try giving them some play for an hour or two and then asking the slot host for a buffet comp.

My experience with comps from playing slots or video poker is that the slot hosts are much more likely to be generous with comps than the personnel at the slot club

booths. If you want brochures on the slot clubs or general information on the slot club, talk to the clerks at the booth. If you want a particular comp, ask the slot host.

Casino hosts, catering to the table game players, are at the top of the casino pecking order for granting comps. Their top priority is to cultivate new customers and to keep the current customers happy.

The casino hostesses are the persons working for VIP Services who help you check in, arrange your limo service, make dinner and show reservations and so forth.

The hostesses will handle most of your scheduling and reservation needs. The casino hosts are the people you need to talk to to arrange RFB and airfare reimbursement.

You can meet a casino host a number of ways. One way is to call a casino before coming and ask to speak to a host. This is a good way to ask about the casino's comp policy and to tell the host that you are interested in playing there.

If you are playing with front money, you should meet your host after depositing your money with the cage but before you begin play.

If you are a cash player and make a large enough buy-in, you may have a chance to meet a host when the casino sets you up with a VIP card.

After you have played in a casino, you can make reservations through the casino host. Making a reservation through a host who knows you is a good way to get a room even if the front desk claims that no rooms are available. Casinos always reserve a block of rooms for their best customers, and a casino host can get you a room when a reservation clerk can't.

I recommend taking a little time to develop a relationship with a host. Part of developing a relationship is consistency. If you make one casino your primary

casino and visit several times a year, it will be easier to become known to a host than if he only sees you every other year.

If you are using a casino credit line, the host will introduce himself to you. With front money or cash, you will want to make a point of meeting the host.

Treat your host with respect and nurture the relationship. He can shower you with all kinds of freebies, including gifts, food, a free room and VIP treatment. And he is paid to do this. For your part, you have to convince your host that your action is sufficient to justify the comps you want. And being a nice person won't hurt either.

**Be a nice person.**

Or have I said that? You can get enormous leverage out of maintaining friendly relationships with the people who work in casinos.

Start with the dealers and cocktail waitresses. These people have a couple of the hardest jobs in the casino and are at the bottom of the casino hierarchy. A smile and a reasonable tipping policy will do wonders to get these folks on your side. I believe that creating a positive atmosphere starts with how you act towards the casino personnel. A positive atmosphere is conducive to winning as well as to getting your fair share of comps.

You might look at it this way. If you are a grump, the dealer will probably reciprocate. This is contagious behavior, and soon the whole table will act the same way. The pit personnel not only will not be impressed with your play, they probably will be put off by the whole scene at your table. Not only will your rating likely suffer, you won't have nearly as much fun.

You can't always control how dealers and other customers act. If I join a table where no one is talking, and the dealer barely grunts when spoken to, I will make my departure very quickly. Usually a few cheerful words followed by a token for the

dealer will turn the atmosphere around. However, if this fails, you can't be faulted for not trying. Life is too short to play under miserable conditions. It is always better to change tables than to continue to play with an out of sorts crew and crabby complaining customers. Under these conditions, you should just leave.

**Visit the casino at off times.**

I nearly always schedule my casino trips for the middle of the week. I will typically arrive on a Monday afternoon and stay until Thursday afternoon. The benefits of visiting during the week are many. If there are any drawbacks to avoiding the weekend crowds, I haven't found them.

I don't like waiting and I hate lines. By timing my visits to the middle of the week, I can usually walk into any coffee shop, make reservations for a gourmet restaurant just about any time I chose and get show tickets to the shows I want to see.

If you want to really reduce the size of the crowds, travel in the middle of the week during off season. Las Vegas is slower during the middle of summer when it is hot and in the late fall and early winter when it's colder. The slowest time in Vegas is usually between Thanksgiving and Christmas. But watch out for conventions. The Comdex is usually in town in November. Then it's impossible to get a room (unless you are a rated player or belong to a slot club).

If you like to visit Atlantic City, try visiting during the middle of the week in the dead of winter. You'll not only avoid the larger crowds, but you'll find that the minimum wagers on many tables have been reduced.

Visiting during an off time is also an excellent way to get noticed for purposes of getting rated and getting your comp career off to a roaring start.

With fewer players to contend with, a host or a floor person is easier to meet and to visit with. Also, during slow times, casinos tend to be more generous with comps.



After all, they are more likely to have a slew of vacant rooms just waiting to be given away to qualified players on a Wednesday night in December.

### **Ask for comps.**

If you play \$10,000 a hand at baccarat, you do not have to ask for comps. The casino will shower you with them. If you are like the rest of us wagering anywhere from \$5 to several hundred a hand, you need to ask for comps.

Slot players have the more systematic approach as the card readers on the machines are tied into a centralized computer system, and comps are based on points. If you are a slots or video poker player, getting a comp is pretty straight forward with this system.

Table game players have to deal more with people. And unless you are a whale, a boss will almost never offer you a comp unless you have just won big in a smaller casino which watches every loss. Facing a player who might walk out with their money in hand, some casinos will start throwing comps at the player. But most of the time, even rated players can play and play and never be offered a comp unless they ask for it.

My advice? Always ask for the comp. I have given you several examples of how to do it.

### **Maximize your comps.**

Anyone who follows the steps I have described can get comps. Your first step is to pick your primary casino and give it most of your business. Before you pick your casino you want to make sure that the casino has a reasonable comp policy and that

it has beatable games. You should also like the casino as you will be receiving a lot of invitations there once you get into their comp system.

After picking your primary casino, you need to join its slot club and get a VIP card. I usually do both. Some casinos, like Rio in Las Vegas, combine rating slot, video poker and table players on one card. Others track machine and table action separately. However, it usually pays to join the slot club, even if you are mostly a table game player.

In many ways, slot club players have an advantage over the table game players. Their rating is automatic, they don't have to get the attention of some boss. By joining the slot club, they start receiving mailing from the casino. I have received offers of free rooms from casinos where I had never played a slot machine, but had joined their slot club.

If you are just establishing your rating and want to get a room on a crowded weekend, your slot club membership can be invaluable. After the reservation clerk tells you there are no rooms available, tell her you are a member of the slot club or ask to speak to a slot host. Chances are, the casino will find a room for you.

Getting to know the casino personal is critical. The more the casino personnel know and like you, the more comps are likely to flow your way. This is even true for slot players with their automated rating system. A slot host can easily "bump up" your comp from a buffet for two to a coffee shop comp for two, even if your rating is not quite there.

With table players, interacting with the pit personnel is critical. A boss can make or break you in terms of your rating. If your average wager is \$25, your goal is to be rated as at least a \$50 to \$75 player. It is not enough to increase your wagers when the boss is looking, you need to be a nice person.

Playing with front money gives the casino a real shot at beating you. When you deposit the money in the cage, the casino knows that they have a shot at winning all of your front money. If you are willing to risk \$10,000, this will open the door to full RFB at most establishments.

When you play with front money, be sure to put it all in play. If you deposit \$10,000, draw markers for the full ten grand. This doesn't mean you should lose the money. If you look like a loser and the casino sees that you have put all of your front money into play, your rating will increase.

Remember to look like a loser. You can save your bragging for when you get home. Appear to lose, but lose gracefully. Dealers and bosses hear players gripe about losing every day. Look like a loser but don't complain.

If you run into a fantastic winning streak, don't worry about disguising the fact that you are a winner. The bosses will know that you are winning. If you try to hide enough chips to turn a big win into a loss, they'll know. When you have a big win, act like a winner. Go ahead and tip a little more. If you are playing craps, shouting is not out of line. I have had some of my best comps come out of big wins as casinos hate to see winners walk out the door with their money.

### Summary of the Comps Game

Once you know how to play the comps game, you will be able to milk the casinos for every dime your action entitles you to. I have given you some pointers on how to get a quarter's worth of comps for a dime's worth of action.

When you combine getting the maximum number of comps with the Knockout Blackjack Betting Strategy, you are in the best position to maximize your profits from casino gambling.

If you at least break even, then the comps you receive constitute a profit for your play. If you are able to win money at the casino games, then your profit will be even greater.

## Casino Etiquette

If you know how to dine in a fine restaurant without making a scene, or automatically open doors for others and say thanks when someone holds open a door for you, you will probably not have any trouble knowing how to conduct yourself in a casino. I normally don't think much about etiquette until I see some jerk raising hell with a dealer about his losses, or chewing out a cocktail waitress for taking too long with an order. Then I have to wonder how the concept of manners has escaped him completely.

I said *him*, because boorish, obnoxious behavior nearly always comes from males, with very few females managing to become the perfect asses that males seem to delight in being.

Casinos seem to attract a higher than normal number of persons with a need to blow off at some unfortunate casino employee. The times I have somehow gotten in the middle of these disputes, I nearly always take the side of the dealer or floor person, especially if a male patron is unjustifiably berating a female employee for no reason other than he has poor control over his gambling, managed to lose much more than that should have, and is now looking for a scape goat.

For most persons who visit casinos, etiquette is simply a matter of common courtesy. It's okay to get a little wild in a casino. These are supposed to be places of fun, and drinking a little too much may be part of the entertainment. But for a successful Knockout Blackjack Betting Strategy player, the rules are not quite the same. The casino is your place of employment and drinking should be limited. It goes without saying, courteous behavior should be practiced at all times.

At all casino table games, the rules of etiquette are pretty simple. Treat the dealers and other players with respect and avoid being loud, pushy or belligerent. If you get into a disagreement with a dealer, stay calm and be gracious even if the dealer really is wrong. It does not make sense to win an argument over a single payoff.

Here are some guidelines for casino play.

1. When you have finished playing, you can ask the dealer to color you up before leaving the table.
2. Watch your own bets at all times. Blackjack bets are easy to track as you handle the bets yourself and place them directly in front of you.
3. Don't force your way into a crowded table. If the table is crowded ask the nearest player if he minds if you join them.
4. Don't slow down the game by constantly asking the dealer basic questions about how the game is played or how bets are made. There are hundreds of books on how to play blackjack including this one. You should learn the correct payoffs for the bets you will be making.
5. Try to be discrete about your wins and losses. No one really cares to know how much you are winning, and it doesn't do you any good to advertise that you are a consistent winner.
6. While playing, conduct yourself courteously at all times. If you drink, refrain from overdoing it and never get drunk. You will need to stay alert to correctly make the wagers required by the Knockout Blackjack Betting Strategy, and contrary to the opinion of some drunks, alcohol does not make you think clearer.
7. Toke the dealers. Dealers call tips "tokes" as in a token of appreciation. Many players don't realize that dealers are not paid much more than minimum wage. Blackjack dealers try very hard to please the public. Most dealers want the players to win and have a good time. They know that if the players enjoy themselves and win, they will get toked. I always toke the dealers. If I win more I will toke them more, but even if I lose, I will make several bets for the dealer.

This is not only the right thing to do but will pay you off in spades if you do it consistently. Even floor personnel know who the tippers are, and my experience has been that if you tip, you will be more than repaid by hard working dealers, who will watch out for your bets and by casino complimentaries, controlled by and large by pit personnel who rate your play.

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It's time to pull together everything we have learned. The next chapter reviews all aspects of the Knockout Blackjack Betting Strategy and gives you a concrete game plan you can put into action.

# Summary of Knockout Blackjack Betting

## Playing Strategy

1. If the dealer has an up-card of 7 or higher, keeping hitting until you have a hard hand of 17 or higher.
2. If the dealer shows an up-card of 4, 5 or 6, stand at a hard hand of 12 or better. You will only hit if your hand is 11 or lower.
3. If the dealer has a 2 or 3, stand at a hard hand of 13 or higher. You will only hit if your hand is 12 or lower.
4. Hard hand doubling:  
11 vs a dealer 2-10  
10 vs a dealer 2-9  
9 vs a dealer 3-6
5. Soft hand doubling:  
A,7 & A,6 vs 3-6  
A,5 & A,4 vs 4-6  
A,3 and A,2 vs 5-6
6. Splits are handled as follows:
  - Split pairs of 2s, 3s and 7s versus a dealer up-card of 3 to 6.
  - Split pairs of 4s against dealer up-cards of 5 and 6.
  - Split 6s against dealer up-cards of 4 to 6.
  - Split 9s against dealer up-cards of 2 to 9 except for when dealer shows a 7.



- Always split aces and 8s

7. Never take insurance.

## Knockout Blackjack Betting Strategy Playing Strategy Pocket Card

Knockout Blackjack Betting Strategy
<b><u>Splitting:</u></b> A,A 8,8 vs All dealer hands 9,9 vs 2-9 except 7 6,6 vs 4-6 4,4 vs 5-6 2s, 3s and 7s vs 3-6
<b><u>Doubling Down:</u></b> 11 vs 2-10, 10 vs 2-9, 9 vs 3-6 A,7 & A,6 vs 3-6 A,5 & A,4 vs 4-6 A,3 & A,2 vs 5-6
<b><u>Hitting &amp; Standing:</u></b> Hard 11 or lower always hit Hard 17 or higher always stand Hard 12-16 stand vs dealer 4,5, or 6 Hard 13-16 stand vs dealer 2 or 3 Soft 17 Hit till Hard 17 or better Soft 18 Stand 2-8, otherwise hit Soft 19-20 Always stand
<b><u>Insurance</u></b> Never take insurance.

## Strike Betting

The Betting Rules for Strike Betting are as follows:

1. Always begin with a Level-1 bet. If you lose the bet, increase your bet to the next level.
2. The general rule for Strike Betting is to increase your bet one level after losing a bet and drop your bet one level after winning a bet. If you win two bets in a row or two out of three bets you will always drop to a Level-1 bet. Example: You win a Level-5 bet of \$40 and then win a Level-4 bet of \$25. Your next bet will be a Level-1 bet of \$5.
3. Any time that you lose two bets in a row will be treated as a Timing Signal to start the Counterstrike Betting Strategy. Example: If you lose a Level-2 bet of \$10 and then lose a Level-3 bet of \$15, your next bet will be a Counterstrike Strategy Bet.
4. The two loss in a row rule applies to all levels of betting for Strike Bets. For example, if you lose a Level-3 bet of \$15 and then Lose a Level-4 bet of \$25 your next bet will be a bet using Counterstrike Betting.
5. After winning any bet using the Counterstrike Strategy you will immediately revert to making a Strike Bet at the last level lost before starting Counterstrike Betting. Example: Lose a Level-1 bet of \$5, followed by losing a Level-2 bet of \$10. Start Counterstrike Betting with a Level-1 Counterstrike Bet of \$5. If this bet wins, resume making Strike Bets with a Level-2 Strike Bet of \$10.
6. The effects of winning and losing blackjacks, splits and doubled hands are ignored for purposes of determining the Strike Bet level. Example. You make a Level-3 bet of \$15, double the bet to \$30 and win. Even though you won twice as much as normal for this level, your next bet will still be a Level-2 bet of \$10. The exception to this rule is when you decide to call a game completed after winning a doubled or split bet.

## Counterstrike Betting

Counterstrike Betting is used after losing two consecutive Strike Bets. As soon as this occurs you will change to Counterstrike Betting.

Like Strike Betting, Counterstrike Betting uses a Betting Series. For \$5 Base Bets, the following Betting Series is used:

**Counterstrike Betting Series for \$5 Base Bets**

Level	1	2	3	4	5	6
\$ Bet	5	10	20	40	80	160

The rules for Counterstrike Betting are:

1. Always begin Counterstrike Betting with a Level-1 bet. If the bet wins, resume Strike Betting at the previous Strike Betting level. If the bet loses increase the bet one level.
2. Continue making Counterstrike Bets until you have one winning bet. With any winning bet you will revert to Strike Betting at its last betting level for the next round of play.

Counterstrike Betting is a simple Martingale Betting Series. This means that with any win in the series, the amount of the Level-1 bet is won. If a higher level bet wins more because of a blackjack or a split or doubled bet, the series will win more.

## Lightning Strike Betting

The third betting strategy is Lightning Strike Betting. This is the strategy designed to build profits safely during winning streaks.

We will only enter Lightning Strike Betting Mode after winning a Level-1 Strike Bet. After winning this bet we will gradually increase the size of each bet until we have a losing bet.

With any losing bet we will return to Strike Betting at the Bet Level with an amount higher than our last and losing Lightning Strike Bet.

Lightning Strike Bets build on the Level-1 Lightning Strike Bet. For \$5 Base Bets, where the Level-1 Lightning Strike Bet is \$5, we will use the following betting series for Lightning Strike Bets:

Winning Level-1 Strike Bet	-----Lightning Strike Bets-----						
	-----						
5	6	7	8	9	10	12	14

You can continue the series if you continue to win. Suggested bets are 17 20 23 27 32 38 44 50 60 70 80 100

This is a very conservative betting series. When you are in a winning streak you should continue in this betting series as long as you continue to win each bet. With a single loss you will revert to using Strike Betting at the Level higher than your last losing bet.

If you lose an \$8 Lightning Strike Bet your next bet will be a Level-2 Strike Bet of \$10. If you lose a \$14 Lightning Strike Bet, your next bet will be a \$15 Strike Bet.

# **Knockout Blackjack Betting Base Bets, Betting Series, Target Wins, Game Bankrolls & Total Bankrolls**

<b>Base Bet</b>	<b>Betting Series</b>	<b>Target Win</b>	<b>Game Bankroll</b>	<b>Total Bankroll</b>
\$1	A) 1 2 3 5 8 13 21 B) 1 2 4 8 16 32	\$8	\$80	\$160
\$2	A) 2 4 6 10 16 26 42 B) 2 4 8 16 32 64	\$16	\$160	\$320
\$3	A) 3 6 9 15 24 39 63 B) 3 6 12 24 48 96	\$24	\$240	\$520
\$5	A) 5 10 15 25 40 65 105 B) 5 10 20 40 80 160	\$40	\$400	\$800
\$10	A) 10 20 30 50 80 130 210 B) 10 20 40 80 160 320	\$80	\$800	\$1600
\$15	A) 15 30 45 75 120 195 315 B) 15 30 60 120 240 480	\$120	\$1200	\$2400
\$20	A) 20 40 60 100 160 260 420 B) 20 40 80 160 320 640	\$160	\$1600	\$3200
\$25	A) 25 50 75 125 200 325 525 B) 25 50 100 200 400 800	\$200	\$2000	\$4000
\$35	A) 35 70 105 175 280 455 735 B) 35 70 140 280 540 1080	\$280	\$2800	\$5400
\$50	A) 50 100 150 250 400 650 1040 B) 50 100 200 400 800 1600	\$400	\$4000	\$8000
\$75	A) 75 150 225 375 600 975 1575 B) 75 150 300 600 1200 2400	\$600	\$6000	\$12000
\$100	A) 100 200 300 500 800 1300 2100 B) 100 200 400 800 1600 3200	\$800	\$8000	\$16000
\$200	A) 200 400 600 1000 1600 2600 4200 B) 200 400 800 1600 3200 6400	\$1600	\$16000	\$32000
\$300	A) 300 600 900 1500 2400 3900 6300 B) 300 600 1200 2400 4800 9600	\$2400	\$24000	\$48000
\$500	A) 500 1000 1500 2500 4000 6500 10500 B) 500 1000 2000 4000 8000 16000	\$4000	\$30000	\$60000

Betting Series:

**A – Strike Bets**

**B – Counterstrike Bets**

## Knockout Blackjack Betting Base Bets, Betting Series, Target Wins, Game Bankrolls & Total Bankrolls

Base Bet	Strike-Counter Strike Bets	Lightning Strike Bets	Target Win	Game Bankroll	Total Bankroll
\$1	S) 1 2 3 5 8 13 21 C) 1 2 4 8 16 32	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 etc	\$8	\$80	\$160
\$2	S) 2 4 6 10 16 26 42 C) 2 4 8 16 32 64	2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 12 etc	\$16	\$160	\$320
\$3	S) 3 6 9 15 24 39 63 C) 3 6 12 24 48 96	3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 12 14 etc	\$24	\$240	\$520
\$5	S) 5 10 15 25 40 65 105 C) 5 10 20 40 80 160	6 7 8 9 10 12 14 17 20 etc	\$40	\$400	\$800
\$10	S) 10 20 30 50 80 130 210 C) 10 20 40 80 160 320	12 14 16 18 20 24 28 34 40 etc	\$80	\$800	\$1600
\$15	S) 15 30 45 75 120 195 315 C) 15 30 60 120 240 480	18 21 24 28 32 36 40 45 50 etc	\$120	\$1200	\$2400
\$20	S) 20 40 60 100 160 260 420 C) 20 40 80 160 320 640	25 30 35 42 48 55 63 70 etc	\$160	\$1600	\$3200
\$25	S) 25 50 75 125 200 325 525 C) 25 50 100 200 400 800	30 35 42 50 60 70 85 100 etc	\$200	\$2000	\$4000
\$35	S) 35 70 105 175 280 455 735 C) 35 70 140 280 540 1080	42 50 60 70 83 90 100 112	\$280	\$2800	\$5400
\$50	S) 50 100 150 250 400 650 1050 C) 50 100 200 400 800 1600	60 70 85 100 120 145 170 etc	\$400	\$4000	\$8000
\$75	S) 75 150 225 375 600 975 1575 C) 75 150 300 600 1200 2500	90 120 150 190 230 270 320 etc	\$600	\$6000	\$12000
\$100	S) 100 200 300 500 800 1300 2100 C) 100 200 400 800 1600 3200	125 150 190 230 275 350 etc	\$800	\$8000	\$16000
\$200	S) 200 400 600 1000 1600 2600 4200 C) 200 400 800 1600 3200 6400	250 300 380 460 550 700 etc	\$1600	\$16000	\$32000
\$300	S) 300 600 900 1500 2400 3900 6300 C) 300 600 1200 2400 4800 9600	375 450 570 690 1050 etc	\$2400	\$24000	\$48000
\$500	S) 500 1000 1500 2500 4000 6500 10500 C) 500 1000 2000 4000 8000 16000	625 750 950 1150 1375 1750 etc	\$4000	\$30000	\$60000

Betting Series:

A – Strike Bets

B – Counterstrike Bets

## Tracking Your Bets

You can keep track of your bets either by using chips to represent decisions or by using the Knockout Blackjack Bet Tracker.

Below follows a blackjack game in recorded using the Knockout Blackjack Bet Tracker

### **Key:**

#### **Bet Mode:**

S = Strike Bet

D = Counterstrike Bet

A = Lightning Strike Bet

S = Single hand

Sp= Split Pair

Db= Doubled hand

BJ = Blackjack

W= Winning Hand

L = Losing Hand

Ps = Push

## Sample Game 1 Using the Knockout Blackjack Bet Tracker

Knockout Blackjack Game No 1      Location: Bovada Casino

Date 10-12-12      Game Bankroll \$200      Base Bet Level \$5

Strike Bets (S): 5 10 15 25 40 65 105 Counterstrike Bet(D): 5 10 20 40 80 160

Lightning Strike Bets (A): 6 7 8 10 12 14 17 20 23 27 32 38 44 50 60 70 80 100

S = Single hand Sp = Split Pair Db = Doubled hand BJ = Blackjack W= Winning Hand L = Losing Hand

Round	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Mode-Level	S1	S2	S1	S2	S1	S2	D1	D2	D3	D4	S2	S1	S2	D1	D2	D2
\$ Amt	5	10	5	10	5	10	5	10	20	40	10	5	10	5	10	10
Sp																
Db		D														
Tot Bet	5	20	5	10	5	10	5	10	20	40	10	5	10	5	10	10
W/L	L	W	L	W	L	L	L	L	L	W	W	L	L	L	Ps	W
Bal	-5	+15	+10	+20	+15	+5	-0-	-10	-30	+10	+20	+15	+5	-0-	-0-	+10

Round	17	18	18	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32
Mode-Level	S2	S3	S2	S3	S1	S2	S1	A1	A2	S2						
\$ Amt	10	15	10	15	5	10	5	6	7	10						
Sp																
Db		D														
Tot Bet	10	30	10	15	5	10	5	6	7	10						
W/L	L	W	L	W	L	BJ	W	W	L	W						
Bal	-0-	+30	+20	+35	+30	+45	+50	+56	+49	+59						

\* Amounts are rounded off for simplicity

To follow this game, you should refer to the explanations used for Sample Game 1 recorded in the Ledger format.

Please see the Addendum – Knockout Blackjack Bet Tracker for blank forms.



## Addendum A –Knockout Blackjack Bet Tracker

Knockout Blackjack Game No \_\_\_\_\_ Location: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date \_\_\_\_\_ Game Bankroll \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Base Bet Level \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Strike Bets (S): \_\_\_\_\_ Counterstrike Bet(D): \_\_\_\_\_  
 Lightning Strike Bets (A): \_\_\_\_\_  
 S = Single hand Sp = Split Pair Db = Doubled hand BJ = Blackjack W= Winning Hand L = Losing Hand

Round	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Mode-Level																
\$ Amt																
Sp																
Db																
Tot Bet																
W/L																
Bal																

Round	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32
Mode-Level																
\$ Amt																
Sp																
Db																
Tot Bet																
W/L																
Bal																

Round	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48
Mode-Level																
\$ Amt																
Sp																
Db																
Tot Bet																
W/L																
Bal																

**Comments:**

## Addendum B - Player Cards

### \$1 Base Bets

#### Knockout Blackjack Betting

\$1 Bets Game Bankroll \$80 Target Win = 8  
Strike Bets 1 2 3 5 8 13 21  
Counterstrike Bets: 1 2 4 8 16 32  
Lightning Strike Bets: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9  
10 11 12 13  
Refer to Playing Strategy Card for how to play  
each hand

### \$2 Base Bets

#### Knockout Blackjack Betting

\$2 Bets Game Bankroll \$160 Target Win = 16  
Strike Bets 2 4 6 10 16 26 42  
Counterstrike Bets: 2 4 8 16 32 64  
Lightning Strike Bets: 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 12  
14 16 18  
Refer to Playing Strategy Card for how to play  
each hand

### \$3 Base Bets

#### Knockout Blackjack Betting

\$3 Bets Game Bankroll \$240 Target Win = 24  
Strike Bets 3 6 9 15 24 39 63  
Counterstrike Bets: 3 6 12 24 48 96  
Lightning Strike Bets: 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 12 14  
16 18  
Refer to Playing Strategy Card for how to play  
each hand

## **\$5 Base Bets**

### **Knockout Blackjack Betting**

\$5 Bets Game Bankroll \$400 Target Win = 40  
Strike Bets 5 10 15 25 40 65 105  
Counterstrike Bets: 5 10 20 40 80 160  
Lightning Strike Bets: 6 7 8 9 10 12 14 17 20  
Refer to Playing Strategy Card for how to play  
each hand

## **\$10 Base Bets**

### **Knockout Blackjack Betting**

\$10 Bets Game Bankroll \$800 Target Win = 80  
Strike Bets 10 20 30 50 80 130 210  
Counterstrike Bets: 10 20 40 80 160 320  
Lightning Strike Bets: 12 14 16 18 20 24 28 34  
40  
Refer to Playing Strategy Card for how to play  
each hand

## **\$15 Base Bets**

### **Knockout Blackjack Betting**

\$15 Bets Game Bankroll \$1200 Target Win = 120  
Strike Bets 15 30 45 75 120 195 315  
Counterstrike Bets: 15 30 60 120 240 480  
Lightning Strike Bets: 18 21 24 28 32 36 40 45 50  
Refer to Playing Strategy Card for how to play each  
hand

## **\$20 Base Bets**

### **Knockout Blackjack Betting**

\$20 Bets Game Bankroll \$1600 Target Win = 160  
Strike Bets 20 40 60 100 160 240 420  
Counterstrike Bets: 20 40 80 160 320 640  
Lightning Strike Bets: 25 30 35 42 48 55 63 70  
Refer to Playing Strategy Card for how to play each hand

## **\$25 Base Bets**

### **Knockout Blackjack Betting**

\$25 Bets Game Bankroll \$2000 Target Win = 200  
Strike Bets 25 50 75 125 200 325 525  
Counterstrike Bets: 25 50 100 200 400 800  
Lightning Strike Bets: 30 35 42 50 60 70 85 100  
Refer to Playing Strategy Card for how to play each hand

## **\$35 Base Bets**

### **Knockout Blackjack Betting**

\$35 Bets Game Bankroll \$2800 Target Win = 280  
Strike Bets 35 70 105 175 280 455 735  
Counterstrike Bets: 35 70 140 280 540 1080  
Lightning Strike Bets: 42 50 60 70 83 90 100 112  
Refer to Playing Strategy Card for how to play each hand

## **\$50 Base Bets**

### **Knockout Blackjack Betting**

\$50 Bets Game Bankroll \$4000 Target Win = 400  
Strike Bets 50 100 150 250 400 650 1050  
Counterstrike Bets: 50 100 200 400 800 1600  
Lightning Strike Bets: 60 70 85 100 120 145 170  
Refer to Playing Strategy Card for how to play each hand

## **\$75 Base Bets**

### **Knockout Blackjack Betting**

\$75 Bets Game Bankroll \$6000 Target Win = 600  
Strike Bets 75 150 225 375 600 975 1575  
Counterstrike Bets: 75 150 300 600 1200 2400  
Lightning Strike Bets: 90 120 150 190 230 270 320  
Refer to Playing Strategy Card for how to play each hand

## **\$100 Base Bets**

### **Knockout Blackjack Betting**

\$100 Bets Game Bankroll \$8000 Target Win = 800  
Strike Bets 100 200 300 500 800 1300 2100  
Counterstrike Bets: 100 200 400 800 1600 3200  
Lightning Strike Bets: 125 150 190 230 275 350  
Refer to Playing Strategy Card for how to play each hand

## **\$200 Base Bets**

### **Knockout Blackjack Betting**

\$200 Bets Game Bankroll \$16000 Target Win = 1600  
Strike Bets 200 400 600 1000 1600 2600 4200  
Counterstrike Bets: 200 400 800 1600 3200 6400  
Lightning Strike Bets: 250 300 380 460 550 700  
Refer to Playing Strategy Card for how to play each hand

## **\$300 Base Bets**

### **Knockout Blackjack Betting**

\$300 Bets Game Bankroll \$24000 Target Win = 2400  
Strike Bets 300 600 900 1500 2400 3900 6300  
Counterstrike Bets: 300 600 1200 2400 4800 9600  
Lightning Strike Bets: 375 450 570 690 1050  
Refer to Playing Strategy Card for how to play each hand

## **\$500 Base Bets**

### **Knockout Blackjack Betting**

\$500 Bets Game Bankroll \$30000 Target Win = 4000  
Strike Bets 500 1000 1500 2500 4000 6500 10500  
Counterstrike Bets: 500 1000 2000 4000 800 16000  
Lightning Strike Bets: 625 750 950 1150 1375 1750  
Refer to Playing Strategy Card for how to play each hand