List of poker hands

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In poker, players construct hands of five cards according to predetermined rules, which vary according to which variant of poker is being played. These hands are compared using a hand ranking system that is standard across all variants of poker, the player with the highest-ranking hand winning that particular deal in most variants of poker. In some variants, the lowest-ranking hand can win or tie.

Although used primarily in poker, these hand rankings are also used in some other card games, and in poker dice.

The ranking of a particular hand is increased by including multiple cards of the same card rank, by all five cards being from the same suit, or by all five cards being of consecutive rank. The relative ranking of the various hand categories is based on the probability of being randomly dealt such a hand from a well-shuffled deck.

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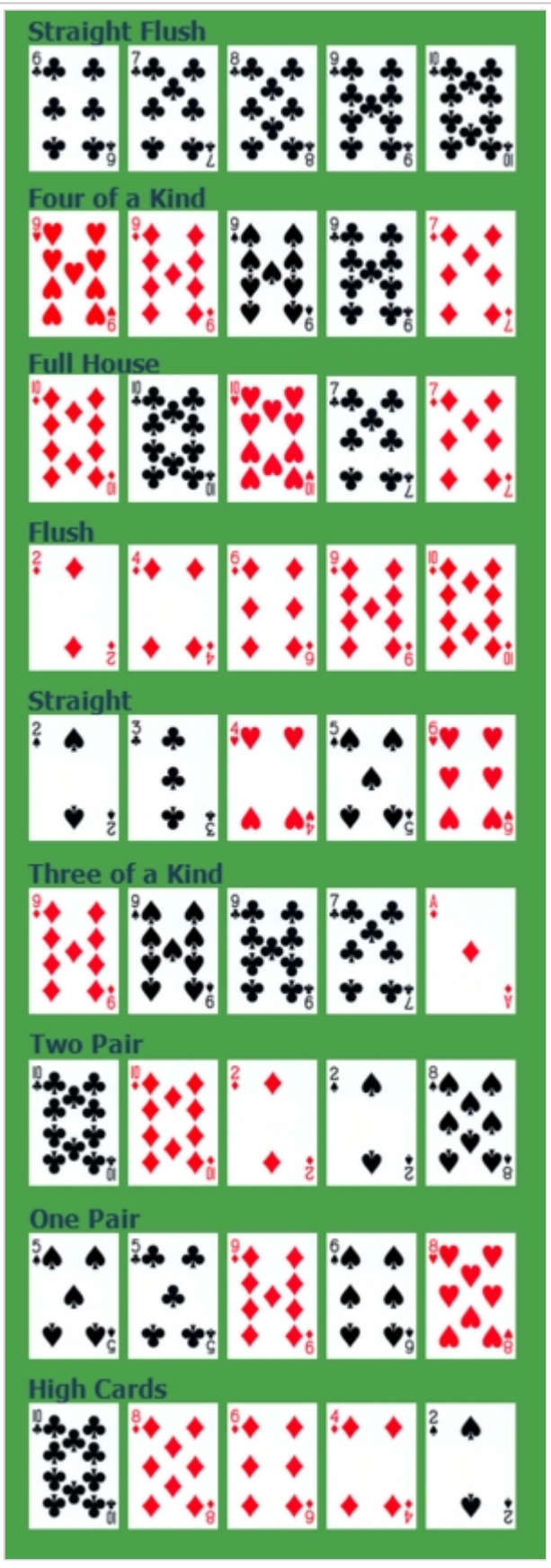


Examples of poker hand categories in descending order

General rules

The following rules apply to the ranking of all poker hands. Under typical rules there are 7463 distinct ranks.

A hand always consists of **five cards**. In games where more than five cards are available to each player, the best five-card combination of those cards must be played. Any cards not included in the hand do not affect its ranking. For example, if player A holds **3♠ Q♦** and player B holds **3♣ A♣**, and five

cards **4♣ 5♦ 6♦ 7♣ 10♥** are available to both players, the players hold equally ranking **3-4-5-6-7** straights despite the fact that the player B's ace ranks higher than the player A's queen.

Individual cards are ranked **A** (highest), **K, Q, J, 10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2** (lowest). Aces can appear low when part of an **A-2-3-4-5** straight or straight flush. In the poker variants ace-to-five and ace-to-six lowball, the ace only plays low, and only plays high in deuce-to-seven lowball. Individual card ranks are used to rank hands that are in the same rank category.

The **suits** of the cards are used to determine whether a hand forms a flush or straight flush. In most variants, suits do not have an associated value, and play no part in determining the ranking of a hand. Sometimes a ranking called high card by suit is used for randomly selecting a player to deal. *Low* card by suit usually determines the bring-in better in stud games.

Hands are ranked first by category, then by individual card ranks; even the lowest hand that qualifies in a certain category defeats all hands in all lower categories. For example, **2♦ 2♣ 3♦ 3♣ 4♠**, the lowest-valued two pair hand, defeats all hands with just one pair or high card (such as **A♣ A♦ K♦ Q♥ J♣**). Only between two hands in the same category are card ranks used to break ties.

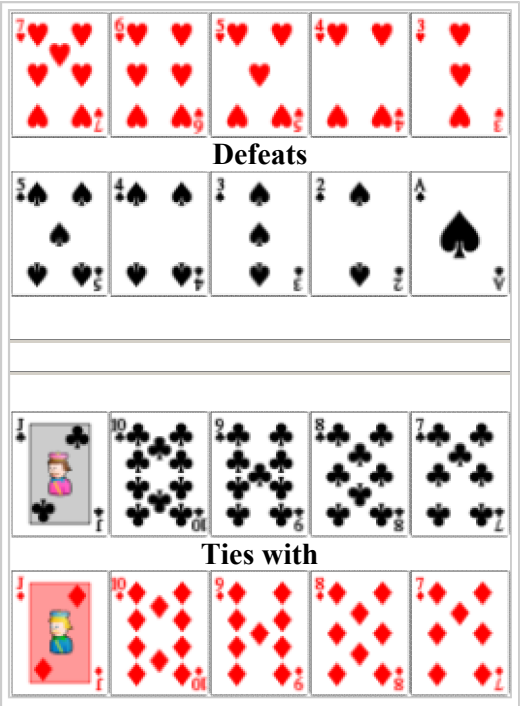
A poker hand has the same hand ranking regardless of the order in which it is arranged by the deal, by a description, or by a picture. So a hand arranged as **10♠ 8♦ 10♦ 6♣ 10♣** is ranked the same as **10♣ 10♦ 10♠ 8♦ 6♣** even though in the first hand the three of a kind is not immediately obvious.

If there are multiple hands of the same rank at the showdown, the pot is divided equally between the winning players.

There are 311 875 200 ways (5-permutations) of being dealt five cards from a 52 card deck,[Note 1] but since the order of cards does not matter, there are 5! = 120 5-permutations giving any one hand, so there are only $\binom{52}{5} = \frac{52!}{5!(52-5)!} = \frac{52!}{5!47!} = \frac{52 \times 51 \times 50 \times 49 \times 48}{5!} = 2,598,960$ possible distinct hands.

Hand categories

Straight flush



Straight flush examples

A straight flush is a hand that contains five cards in sequence, all of the same suit, such as **Q♣ J♣ 10♣ 9♣ 8♣**. Two such hands are compared by their card that is ranked highest. Because suits have no relative value, two otherwise identical straight flushes tie (so **10♣ 9♣ 8♣ 7♣ 6♣** ties with **10♥ 9♥ 8♥ 7♥ 6♥**). Aces can play low in straights and straight flushes: **5♦ 4♦ 3♦ 2♦ A♦** is a **5**-high straight flush, also known as a "steel wheel".[1][2] An ace-high straight flush such as **10♦ J♦ Q♦ K♦ A♦** is known as a **royal flush**, and is the highest ranking standard poker hand.

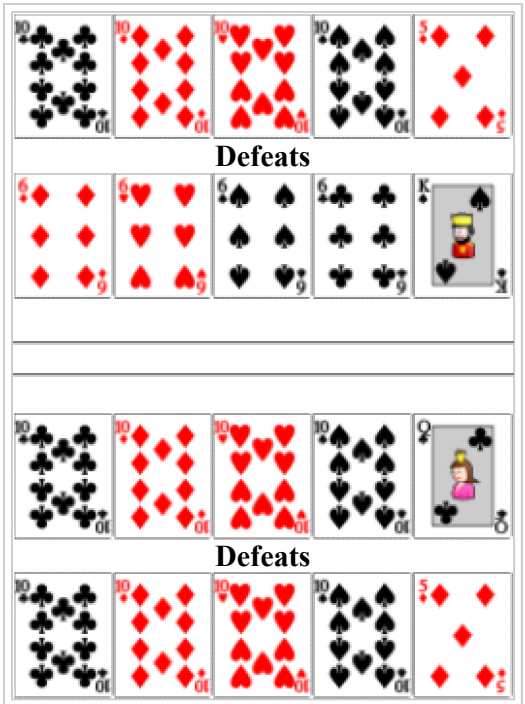
There are 40 possible straight flushes, including the four royal flushes. The probability of being dealt one in a five-card deal[Note 2] is $\frac{4 \cdot 10}{2,598,960} \approx 0.0015\%$.

Four of a kind

Four of a kind, also known as **quads**, is a poker hand such as **9♣ 9♠ 9♦ 9♥ J♥**, which contains four cards of one rank, and an unmatched card of another rank. Quads with higher ranking cards defeat lower ranking ones. In community-card games (such as Texas Hold 'em) or games with wildcards it is possible for two or more players to obtain the same quad; in this instance, the unmatched card acts as a kicker, so **7♣ 7♠ 7♦ 7♥ J♥** defeats **7♣ 7♠ 7♦ 7♥ 10♣**. If two hands have the same kicker, they tie and the pot is split.

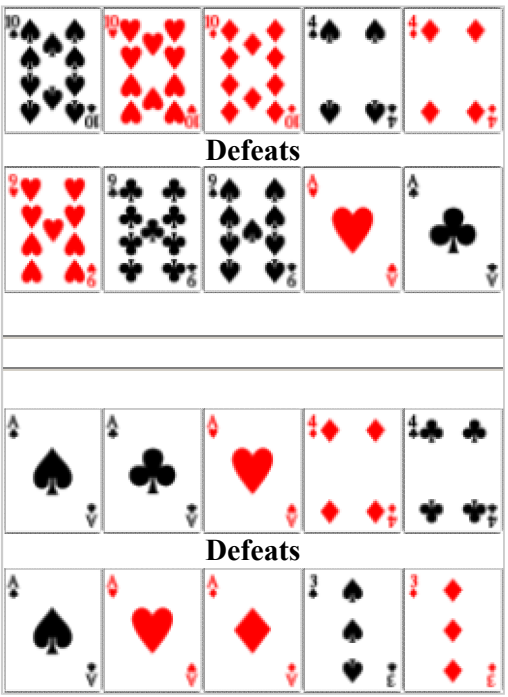
There are 624 possible hands including four of a kind; the probability of being dealt one in a five-card deal is

$$\frac{13 \times (52 - 4)}{2,598,960} \approx 0.024\%.$$



Four of a kind examples

Full house



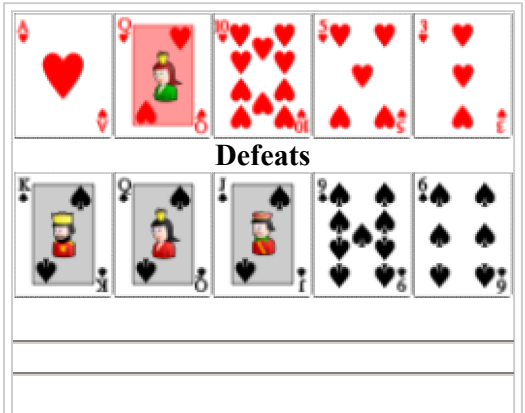
Full house examples

A **full house**, also known as a **full boat**, is a hand such as **3♣ 3♠ 3♦ 6♣ 6♥**, which contains three matching cards of one rank, and two matching cards of another rank. Between two full houses, the one with the higher ranking three cards wins, so **7♠ 7♥ 7♦ 4♠ 4♣** defeats **6♠ 6♥ 6♦ A♠ A♣**. If two hands have the same three cards (possible in wild card and community card games), the hand with the higher pair wins, so **5♥ 5♦ 5♠ Q♥ Q♣** defeats **5♣ 5♦ 5♠ J♠ J♦**. Full houses are described as "*Three* full of *Pair*" or occasionally "*Three* over *Pair*"; **Q♣ Q♦ Q♠ 9♥ 9♣** could be described as "Queens over nines", "Queens full of nines", or simply "Queens full".

There are 3,744 possible full houses; the probability of being dealt one in a five-card hand is $\frac{C_1^{13} C_3^4 \cdot C_1^{12} C_2^4}{2,598,960} \approx 0.14\%$.

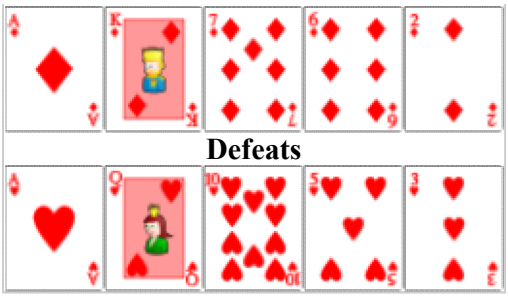
Flush

A **flush** is a poker hand such as **Q♣ 10♣ 7♣ 6♣ 4♣**, where all five cards are of the same suit. If the hand also has all the cards in sequential order, it would be a straight flush. Two flushes are compared as if they were high card hands; the highest ranking card of each is compared to determine the winner. If both hands have the same highest card, then the second-highest ranking card is compared, and so on until a difference is found. If the two flushes contain the same five ranks of cards, they are tied and split the pot, that is, suits are not used to rank them.



Flushes are described by their highest card, as in "queen-high flush" to describe **Q♦ 9♦ 7♦ 4♦ 3♦**. If the rank of the second card is

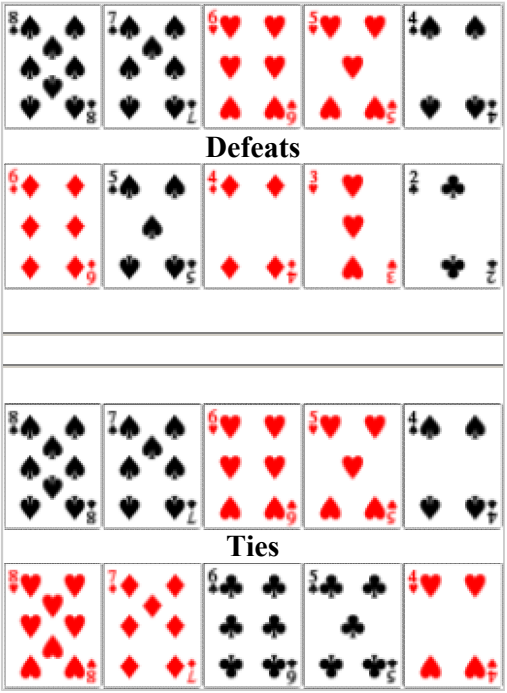
important, it can also be included: **K♠ 10♠ 5♠ 3♠ 2♠** is a "king-ten-high flush" or just a "king-ten flush", while **K♥ Q♥ 9♥ 5♥ 4♥** is a "king-queen-high flush". However an alternate method of describing a flush can be utilized specifically in community card games, like Texas Hold 'em, where the highest ranking card in the flush sometimes will be a community card, and as such becomes irrelevant for its rank. In such situations, a person's flush might be described as being as high as his hold cards. For example, consider that the community cards show **A♣ 10♣ 6♣ 2♣**, and Player A has hold cards of **Q♣ J♦** while Player B has hold cards of **K♣ 10♠**. The **A♣** is playable by both and becomes irrelevant in determining which player holds the higher flush so Player A's hand can be described as a queen high flush while Player B holds a king high flush. In this case, both players have a flush of the same suit, and because it is a community card game they have equal rights to the high ace, which consequently counteracts the ace being a meaningful high card any longer. Because in games like five card draw, two players cannot have an ace high flush of the same suit and the former method is always used.



Flush examples

There are 5,148 possible flushes, of which 40 are also straight flushes; the probability of being dealt a flush, which is not also a straight flush, in a five-card hand is $\frac{4 \cdot C_5^{13} - 40}{2,598,960} = \frac{5108}{2,598,960} \approx 0.20\%$.

Straight



Straight examples

A **straight** is a poker hand such as **Q♣ J♠ 10♠ 9♥ 8♥**, which contains five cards of sequential rank. If the cards were also all of the same suit, the hand would be a straight flush. Two straights are ranked by comparing the highest card of each. Two straights with the same high card are of equal value, suits are not used to separate them.

Straights are described by their highest card, as in "ten-high straight" or "straight to the ten" for **10♣ 9♦ 8♥ 7♣ 6♠**.

A hand such as **A♣ K♣ Q♦ J♠ 10♠** is an ace-high straight (also known as Broadway), and ranks above a king-high straight such as **K♥ Q♠ J♥ 10♥ 9♣**. The ace may also be played as a low card in a five-high straight such as **5♠ 4♦ 3♦ 2♠ A♥**, which is colloquially known as a *wheel*. The ace may not "wrap around", or play both high and low: **3♣ 2♦ A♥ K♠ Q♣** is not a straight.

There are 10,240 possible straights, of which 40 are also straight flushes; the probability of being dealt a straight, which is not also a straight flush, in a five-card deal is $\frac{10 \cdot 4^5 - 40}{2,598,960} = \frac{10,200}{2,598,960} \approx 0.39\%$.

It is impossible to have a straight hand without either a five card or a ten card.

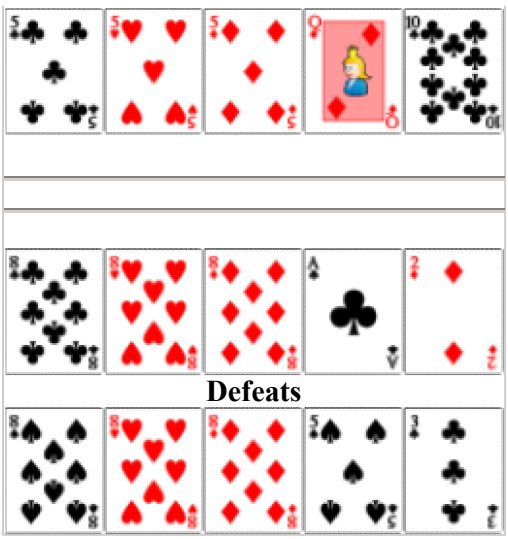
Three of a kind

Three of a kind, also called **trips** or a **set**, is a poker hand such as **2♦ 2♠ 2♣ K♠ 6♥**, which contains three cards of the same rank, plus two unmatched cards. In Texas hold 'em and other flop games, three of a kind is called a "set" only when it is composed of a pocket pair and one card of matching rank on the board (as opposed to two matching

cards on the board and a third in the player's hand).[3]

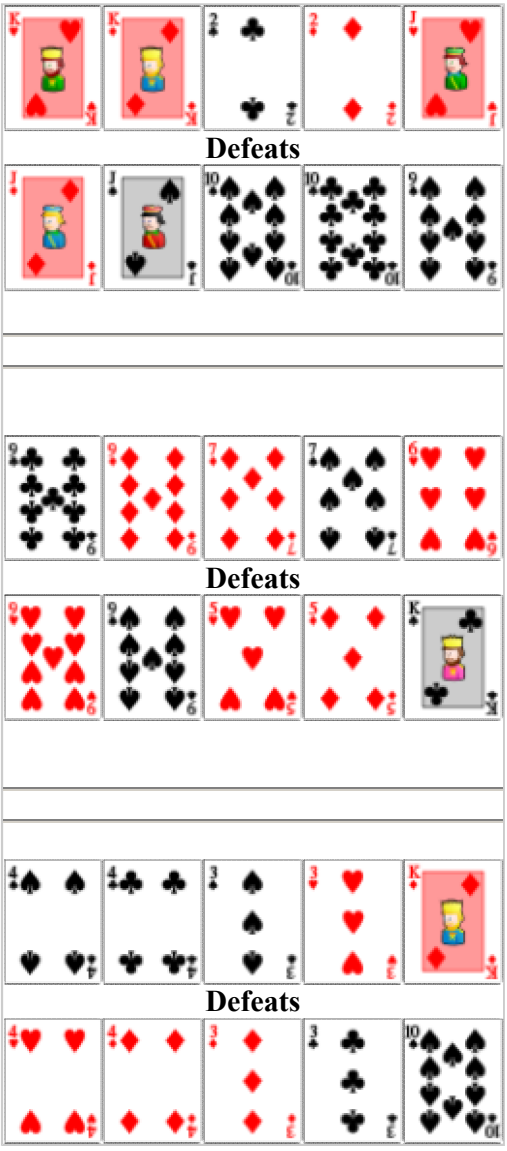
Higher-valued three of a kind defeat lower-valued three of a kind, so **Q♠ Q♥ Q♦ 7♠ 4♣** defeats **J♠ J♣ J♦ A♦ K♣**. If two hands contain three of a kind of the same value, which is possible in games with wild cards or community cards, the kickers are compared to break the tie, so **4♦ 4♣ 4♠ 9♦ 2♣** defeats **4♦ 4♣ 4♠ 8♣ 7♦**.

There are 54,912 possible three of a kind hands in a five-card deal which are not also full houses; the probability of being dealt one in a five-card hand is $\frac{54,912}{2,598,960} \approx 2.1\%$.



Three of a kind examples

Two pair



Two pairs examples

A poker hand such as **J♥ J♣ 4♣ 4♠ 9♥**, which contains two cards of the same rank, plus two cards of another rank (that match each other but not the first pair), plus one unmatched card, is called two pair. To rank two hands both containing two pair, the higher ranking pair of each is first compared, and the higher pair wins (so **10♠ 10♣ 8♥ 8♣ 4♠** defeats **8♥ 8♣ 4♠ 4♣ 10♠**). If both hands have the same top pair, then the second pair of each is compared, such that **10♠ 10♣ 8♥ 8♣ 4♠** defeats **10♠ 10♣ 4♠ 4♥ 8♥**. If both hands have the same two pairs, the kicker determines the winner, so **10♠ 10♣ 8♥ 8♣ A♦** beats **10♠ 10♣ 8♥ 8♣ 4♠**. Finally, if both hands have the same two pair and same kicker, the pot is split.

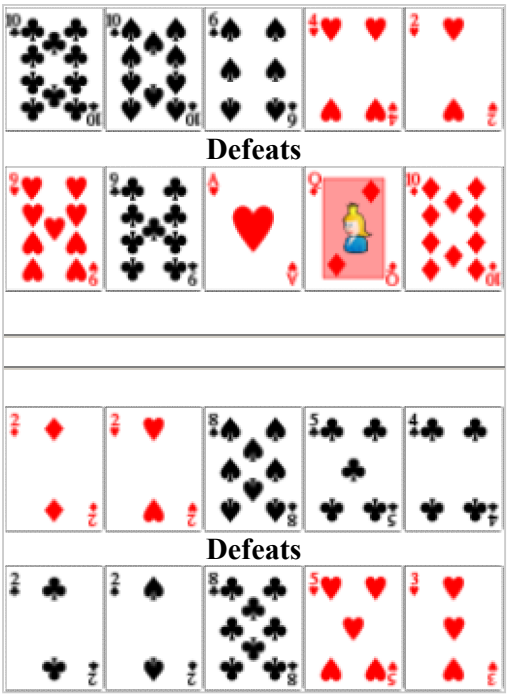
Two pair are described by the higher pair first, followed by the lower pair if necessary; **K♣ K♦ 9♠ 9♥ 5♥** is described as "Kings over nines", "Kings and nines", or simply "Kings up" if the nines are not important.

There are 123,552 possible two pair hands that are not also full houses; the probability of being dealt one in a five-card deal is $\frac{123,552}{2,598,960} \approx 4.75\%$.

One pair

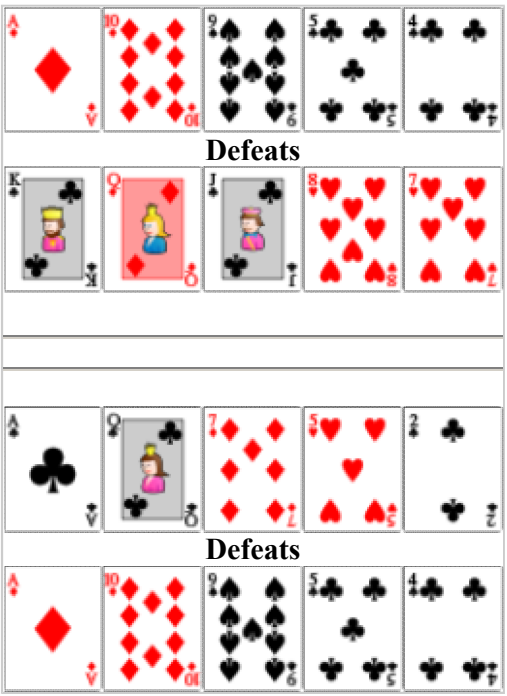
One pair is a poker hand such as 4♥ 4♠ K♠ 10♦ 5♠, which contains two cards of the same rank, plus three other unmatched cards. Higher ranking pairs defeat lower ranking pairs; if two hands have the same pair, the non-paired cards (the kickers) are compared in descending order to determine the winner.

There are 1,098,240 possible one pair hands; the probability of being dealt one in a five-card deal is $\frac{1,098,240}{2,598,960} \approx 42\%$.



One pair examples

High card



High card examples

A **high-card** or **no-pair** hand is a poker hand such as K♥ J♣ 8♣ 7♦ 3♠, in which no two cards have the same rank, the five cards are not in sequence, and the five cards are not all the same suit. Essentially, no hand is made, and the only thing of any potential meaning in the player's hand is their highest card. Nevertheless, they sometimes win a pot if the other players fold or even at a showdown. Two high-card hands are ranked by comparing the highest ranking card. If those are equal, then the next highest ranking card from each hand is compared, and so on until a difference is found.

High card hands are described by the one or two highest cards in the hand, such as "king high", "ace-queen high", or by as many cards as are necessary to break a tie. They are also referred to as "nothing", "garbage", and other derogatory terms.

The lowest possible high card is seven-high (such as 7♠ 5♣ 4♦ 3♦ 2♣), because a hand such as 6♦ 5♣ 4♠ 3♦ 2♥ would be a straight, and in 6♦ 5♣ 4♠ 3♦ A♥ the ace would serve as the high card.

Of the 2,598,960 possible hands, 1,302,540 do not contain any pairs and are neither straights nor flushes. As such, the probability of being dealt "no pair" in a five-card deal is $\frac{1,302,540}{2,598,960} \approx 50\%$.

Variations

Decks using a wild card or bug

The use of a joker as a bug creates a variation to game play. When a joker is introduced, it most commonly functions as a fifth ace, unless it can be used to complete a flush or straight. Some casino draw poker variants use a joker, and thus the best possible hand is *five of a kind* aces, or A♥ A♦ A♣ A♠ J with the joker representing the fifth ace. In lowball, the joker plays as the lowest card not already in the hand. In non-casino settings the joker is sometimes a full wild card.

Lowball

Main article: Lowball (poker)

Some variants of poker called **lowball** or **low poker** are played with the standard hand rankings described here, but with the objective reversed: players strive not for the highest ranking of the above hands but for the *lowest* ranking hand. There are several methods of ranking low hands, including ace-to-five low, deuce-to-seven low, ace-to-six low and deuce-to-six low. The ace-to-five (known as California lowball) is used in razz, in some draw poker varieties, and in deuce-to-seven (known as Kansas City lowball).

Stripped deck variant

Five-card draw poker is sometimes played with a stripped deck. This variant is commonly known as "seven-to-ace" or "ace-to-seven" (abbreviated as A-7 or 7-A). It can be played by up to five players. When four or fewer players play, a normal 32-card deck without jokers, with ranks ranging from ace to seven, is used. With five players, the sixes are added to make a 36-card deck. The deck thus contains only eight or nine different card ranks, compared to 13 in a standard deck. This affects the probabilities of making specific hands, so a flush ranks above a full house and below four of a kind in the seven-to-ace five-card draw. Many smaller online poker rooms, such as Boss Media spread the variant, although it is unheard of in land casinos.

See also

- Glossary of poker terms
- List of poker hand nicknames
- Non standard poker hands
- Poker probability – various probability calculations on poker hands

Notes

1. ^ In general, the number of *k*-permutations taken from a set of *n* is
$$n^{\underline{k}} = n \times (n-1) \times \cdots \times (n-k+1),$$
which in this case gives $52 \times 51 \times 50 \times 49 \times 48 = 311\,875\,200$
2. ^ Note that the probabilities will vary slightly in games where the player can select from more than five cards (such as Texas Hold'em and Omaha), as the player is able to select the best possible hand from the cards available.

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External links

- Printable chart of poker hand rankings (.pdf format)