

`BLACKJACK

Blackjack is played with 1 or more participants competing against the House, represented by the Dealer. Cards are dealt to each person. The value of each person's cards is computed. The goal is to get as close to 21 as you can without going over.

If you are nearer to 21 than the Dealer, you win. If the Dealer is closer, you lose. If you are the same as the Dealer, it is a tie and it is called a PUSH. If you go over 21, you automatically lose. If the Dealer goes over 21 and you don't, you automatically win.

The game is played in two stages: the Betting stage and the Playing stage.

`BETTING IN BLACKJACK

In Blackjack there is a minimum and a maximum bet amount for each table. Each player must bet at least the minimum and no more than the maximum amount at any one time.

To bet, you move your cursor (represented by a hand) to your stack of chips. While the fingers of the hand are on top of the stack of chips you wish, press and release the left mouse button. One of the chips will leave the stack and be held by the hand. You can pick up and carry up to 10 chips at one time. Now move the cursor to the circular betting area and press the right mouse button. The chips are released into the betting area and your bet has been made.

If you release your chips anywhere other than the proper betting area, they will return to their original area.

If you wish to change your mind concerning your wager, you may press the "CLEAR BET" button in the status bar. All chips bet thus far are returned to their original stacks.

When you are finished with your betting, you may press the "DONE BETTING" button to end your portion of the betting sequence.

`PLAYING BLACKJACK

Two cards are dealt to each player, face up. The Dealer also receives two cards although her first card is dealt face down and cannot be seen by the players.

Face cards all count 10. The Ace counts either 1 or 11. The rest of the cards count their pip value.

If you are dealt the value of 21 in the first two cards (needing an ace and a 10, Jack, Queen, or King), you have a BLACKJACK and are paid immediately.

If you exceed the value of 21, you are said to have BUSTED and automatically lose your wager.

If you are 21 or less, you will compare your amount to that of the Dealers (you never play against any of the other players). If you are higher, you win an amount equal to your wager. If you are lower, you lose your wager. If you are the same, you have a PUSH (a tie) and you get your original bet back.

After the cards are dealt, the dealer looks at her hand. If she has a BLACKJACK (21 in two cards), she shows them immediately and everybody loses.

If she does not have a BLACKJACK, play will move from one player to the next until everyone has had a chance to play.

If the player has a BLACKJACK, she will be paid immediately. She doesn't do anything else.

If she does not have a BLACKJACK, she can decide to either STAND with what she has or ask for another card (known as taking a HIT). The value of the new card is added to her previous amount.

If she BUSTS (goes over 21) her play is through. If she doesn't, she can again ask for another HIT or elect to STAND.

When each player is done, the Dealer shows her cards. If she has 17 or higher, she MUST stand with that. If she has 16 or less, she MUST take HITS until her total is over 17 or higher.

The players win when either the Dealer has BUSTED or when their total is closer to 21 than her is. They PUSH when there is a tie. They lose when they are less than the Dealer.

`DOUBLING

A double is when the player bets an amount equal to her original wager that she will beat the dealer with the addition of ONE additional card. She states her intention by stating, "Double" and moving her additional chips to the betting area. She then gets one and only one card. Then her turn is over.

If she beats the Dealer, she wins an amount equal to her combined bet.

Doubling best occurs when a player has 9 through 11 since the most likely card to be received is a 10 or higher, making her new total 19 through 21. Doubling can, however, be done with any amount except BLACKJACK.

`SPLITTING

When a player's first two cards are identical in value (two 4's, two 8's, two Jacks, etc.) she can elect to SPLIT the hand. She announces her intention by stating "SPLIT" and moving an amount of chips equal to her original bet to the betting area.

She will then receive one additional card on each of the new "hands". In essence then, she is playing two distinct hands, each with the chance of getting BLACKJACK or BUSTING or anywhere in between.

Splitting such things as face cards is usually a poor thing to do since you would be breaking up a very good hand for the possibility of two poor ones. Splitting Aces is always a good idea. Splitting the rest is a matter of opinion.