

HOW TO PLAY



THE GAME PLAYED ON
INTERNET POKER SITES



HOW TO PLAY TEXAS HOLD'EM POKER

Copyright © Stephen Godson, 2005

The right of Stephen Godson to be identified as the author of this work has been asserted in accordance with sections 77 and 78 of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.

Condition of Sale

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out or otherwise circulated in any form of binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent publisher.

Summersdale Publishers Ltd
46 West Street
Chichester
West Sussex
PO19 1RP
UK

www.summersdale.com

Printed and bound in Great Britain

ISBN 1 84024 511 5

HOW TO PLAY



THE GAME PLAYED ON INTERNET POKER SITES

TEXAS

HOLD'EM

**PROBABLY THE MOST POPULAR
FORM OF POKER IN THE WORLD,
TEXAS HOLD'EM IS PLAYED IN MOST
OF THE WORLD'S TOP COMPETITIONS
AND INTERNET POKER SITES.**

**IN THIS BOOK YOU WILL LEARN
ALL THE BASICS OF HOW TO PLAY
RIGHT THROUGH TO HOW TO BET
AND BLUFF PROPERLY.**

CONTENTS



THE RULES



THE HANDS



THE BETTING

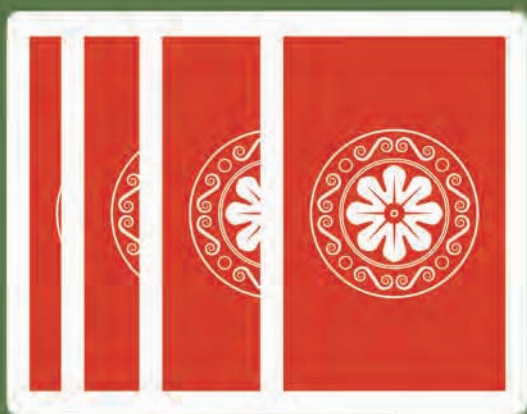
♥ 53

53 ♥

TIPS

♠ 77

77 ♠



THE RULES



HOW TO WIN :

A HAND CAN BE WON EITHER WITH
THE BEST FIVE-CARD COMBINATION

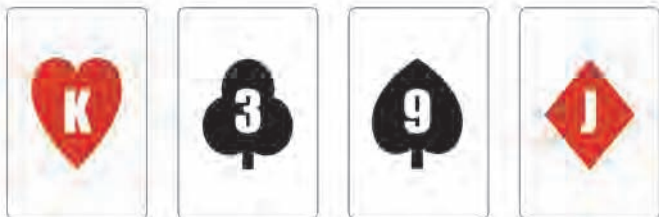


OR BY MAKING YOUR OPPONENTS
THROW IN THEIR CARDS.



EACH PLAYER IS DEALT TWO CARDS FACE DOWN.

**THESE ARE KNOWN AS THE 'HOLE' OR 'POCKET'
CARDS. THE HOLE CARDS ARE NOT REVEALED
TO THE OTHER PLAYERS UNTIL THE BETTING IS
FINALLY CALLED.**





**FIVE CARDS ARE DEALT FACE
UP IN THE CENTRE OF THE TABLE.
THESE ARE THE 'COMMUNITY CARDS'
AND ARE SHARED BY ALL PLAYERS.
THE WINNER IS DETERMINED BY
THE BEST FIVE-CARD COMBINATION
FROM THESE SEVEN CARDS.**



ORDER OF PLAY :

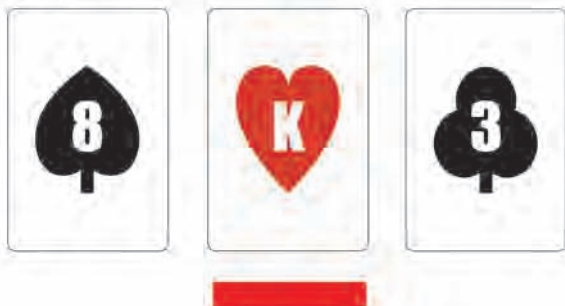
1.



**THE DEALER GIVES EACH PLAYER
THEIR OWN TWO CARDS FACE DOWN.**

**THIS IS FOLLOWED BY THE FIRST
ROUND OF BETTING.**

2.



THE DEALER REMOVES THE TOP CARD, KNOWN AS BURNING A CARD, THEN DEALS THREE COMMUNITY CARDS FACE UP.

THIS IS KNOWN AS 'THE FLOP'.

IT IS FOLLOWED BY THE SECOND ROUND OF BETTING.

3.



**THE DEALER BURNS ANOTHER
CARD AND DEALS ONE MORE
COMMUNITY CARD.**

THIS IS KNOWN AS 'THE TURN'.

**IT IS FOLLOWED BY THE THIRD
ROUND OF BETTING.**

4.



THE DEALER THEN BURNS ONE MORE CARD FOLLOWED BY THE FINAL COMMUNITY CARD.

THIS IS KNOWN AS 'THE RIVER'.

THERE IS THEN A FOURTH AND FINAL ROUND OF BETTING.

5.



ONCE THE BETTING HAS ENDED ALL REMAINING PLAYERS REVEAL THEIR CARDS STARTING WITH THE LAST PERSON TO RAISE THE BET.

THIS IS KNOWN AS 'THE SHOWDOWN'.

IF ALL BUT ONE PLAYER FOLDS THEN THE REMAINING PLAYER CAN CLAIM THE POT WITHOUT EVER HAVING TO REVEAL THEIR HAND.



IN TEXAS HOLD'EM THE DEALER IS DETERMINED BY THE DEALER BUTTON. THE DEALER BUTTON MOVES AROUND THE TABLE CLOCKWISE AT THE END OF EACH HAND, GIVING EVERYBODY THE CHANCE TO DEAL.

IN COMPETITIONS AND ONLINE GAMES THIS JOB IS TAKEN ON BY A DESIGNATED DEALER, BUT THE DEALER BUTTON IS STILL USED IN ORDER TO DETERMINE WHO STARTS THE BETTING.

BURN



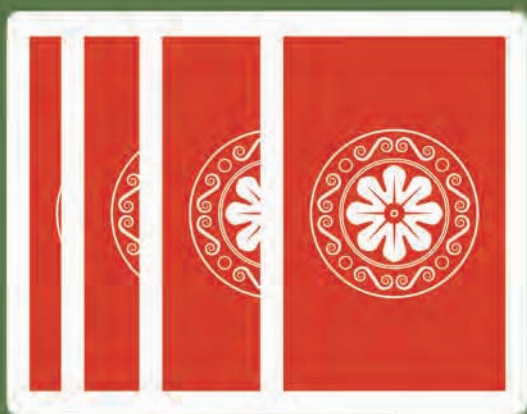
THE PROCESS OF REMOVING THE TOP CARD - OR BURNING A CARD, AS IT IS BETTER KNOWN - IS DONE TO STOP CHEATING IN CASE ANYBODY HAPPENS TO CATCH A GLIMPSE OF THE REMAINING TOP CARD FROM THE PREVIOUS DEAL.

AT THE BEGINNING OF THE GAME AND BEFORE EACH HAND THE DEALER SHUFFLES THE DECK.

WHAT
BEATS
?WHAT



ROYAL FLUSH
STRAIGHT FLUSH
FOUR OF A KIND
FULL HOUSE
FLUSH
STRAIGHT
THREE OF A KIND
TWO PAIR
PAIR
ACE HIGH



THE HANDS

♣ 29

67 ♣

**KNOW
WHAT
YOU'VE
GOT**

**NOW THAT YOU KNOW THE RULES,
IT'S TIME TO LEARN THE DIFFERENCE
BETWEEN A STRAIGHT, A FLUSH AND
A STRAIGHT FLUSH.**



ace, king, queen, jack, ten of the same suit

**A ROYAL FLUSH IS THE BEST
POSSIBLE HAND YOU CAN MAKE.
IF YOU MANAGE TO DRAW THIS
HAND YOU CAN'T LOSE!**

**UNFORTUNATELY THE ODDS
OF MAKING THIS HAND ON THE
FLOP ARE ALMOST 20,000/1.**

**BUT DON'T WORRY, THERE ARE
PLENTY OF OTHER HANDS YOU
CAN MAKE . . .**

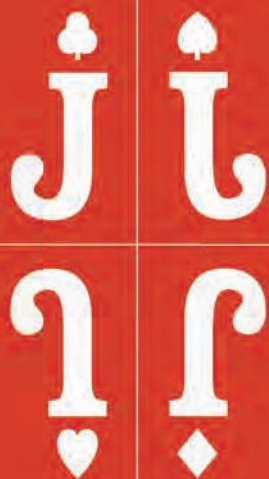
STRAIGHT



any five numerically consecutive numbers of the same suit

FLUSH

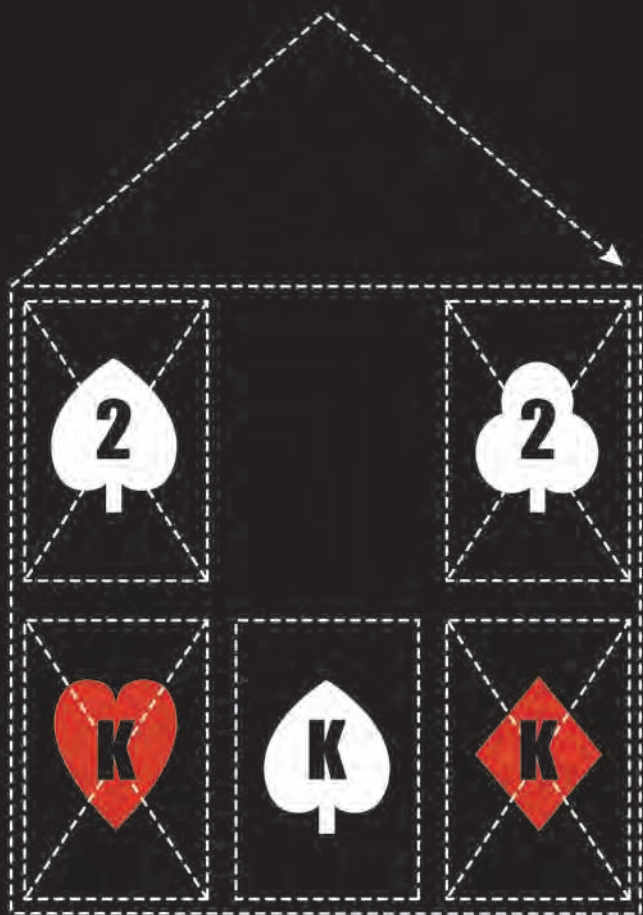




FOUR OF

A KIND

any four cards of
the same value



FULL HOUSE

- king of hearts 1
- king of spades 1
- king of diamonds 1
- two of spades 1
- two of clubs 1

Three cards of one value plus two of another. The highest ranking trio determines the winner when multiple hands occur.





any five cards
of the same suit

STRAIGHT

five numerically consecutive numbers of any suit







OF A KIND

three cards of the same
numerical value

TWO



two lots of two cards of
the same numerical value

PAIR





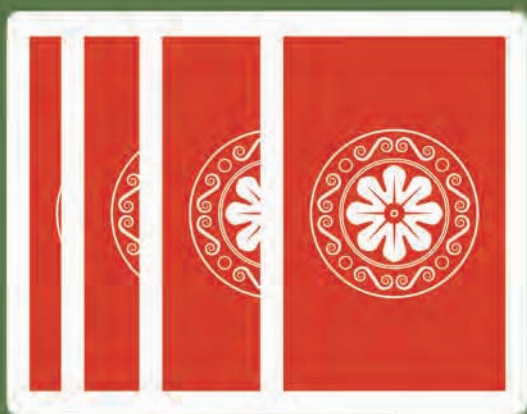
PAIR
LVIV

two cards of the same numerical value

ACE

HIGH

when no hand can be made the highest card wins



THE BETTING



BETTING

UNLIKE MOST FORMS OF GAMBLING, WHERE BETTING IS MADE ON THE PARTICULAR OUTCOME OF A GAME, BETTING IN POKER IS AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE GAME ITSELF. IT ADDS THE ELEMENT OF SKILL TO WHAT WOULD OTHERWISE BE A GAME OF JUST CHANCE.

WITH TEXAS HOLD'EM THERE IS NO ANTE. INSTEAD THERE IS WHAT IS KNOWN AS 'THE BLINDS'.

THE PLAYER TO THE IMMEDIATE LEFT OF THE DEALER PUTS IN THE 'SMALL BLIND' (1/2 THE MINIMUM BET) AND THE NEXT PLAYER TO HIS LEFT PUTS IN THE 'BIG BLIND' (EQUIVALENT TO THE FULL MINIMUM BET). THE BLINDS ARE PUT IN AT THE START OF EVERY HAND.







IN THE FIRST ROUND OF BETTING (BEFORE THE FLOP) THE PLAYER TO THE LEFT OF THE TWO BLINDS STARTS THE BETTING. THEY CAN EITHER CALL, FOLD OR RAISE. IF THEY CALL THEY HAVE TO MATCH THE BIG BLIND.



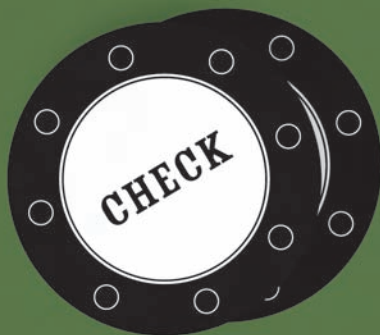


IN ALL SUBSEQUENT ROUNDS (AFTER THE FLOP) IT IS THE FIRST PLAYER TO THE DEALER'S LEFT THAT STARTS THE BETTING. THEY CAN RAISE, FOLD OR CHECK. IF THEY RAISE THEY CAN BET AS MUCH AS THEY LIKE, UNLESS THERE IS A LIMIT. ALL SUBSEQUENT PLAYERS THEN EITHER HAVE TO CALL, RAISE AGAIN OR FOLD.

IF THE FIRST PLAYER CHECKS IT MEANS THEY OFFER NO BET AT ALL. IF ALL SUBSEQUENT PLAYERS CHOOSE TO CHECK THEN THE BETTING MOVES ON TO THE NEXT ROUND.

FOLDING IS WHEN A PLAYER THROWS IN THEIR HAND.

CALLING IS WHEN SOMEONE MATCHES THE PREVIOUS BET.





IF A PLAYER GOES ALL IN, THEY PLACE ALL THEIR REMAINING CHIPS INTO THE POT. OTHER PLAYERS CANNOT RAISE ABOVE THIS BET BUT CAN ONLY MATCH IT.

HOWEVER, IF THERE IS MORE THAN ONE OTHER PLAYER LEFT IN THE GAME, THEY CAN CONTINUE TO RAISE THE BETTING IN A SEPARATE POT.

IF THE PLAYER WHO HAS GONE ALL IN EVENTUALLY WINS THE HAND, THEY DO NOT TAKE ANYTHING FROM THIS SEPARATE POT. INSTEAD IT IS SPLIT BETWEEN THE REMAINING PLAYERS.

ROUND OF BETTING

(EXAMPLE OF BETTING BEFORE THE FLOP)

PLAYER 3

(SMALL BLIND)

PLAYER 4

(BIG BLIND)

PLAYER 5 - CALL

(PUTS IN 1)

PLAYER 1 - CALL

(PUTS IN 1)

PLAYER 2 - FOLD

(PUTS IN 0)

PLAYER 3 - CALL

**(HAVING ALREADY POSTED THE SMALL BLIND,
PLAYER 3 ONLY NEEDS TO PUT IN 1/2 TO MATCH
EVERYBODY ELSE'S BET)**



PLAYER 4 - CHECK

**(AS THERE IS NO RAISE, PLAYER 4 CAN CHOOSE
NOT TO PUT ANY MORE INTO THE POT)**

 PLAYER 1.



PLAYER 2.

  PLAYER 3.

 PLAYER 4.

 PLAYER 5.

ROUND OF BETTING

(EXAMPLE OF BETTING AFTER THE FLOP)

PLAYER 3 - RAISE 1

(PUTS IN 1)

PLAYER 4 - SEE YOUR 1, RAISE 2

(PUTS IN 3)

PLAYER 5 - FOLD

(PUTS IN 0)

PLAYER 1 - SEE YOUR 2, RAISE 2

(PUTS IN 5)

PLAYER 3 - FOLD

(PUTS IN 0)

PLAYER 4 - CALL

(PUTS IN 2)



PLAYER 1.



(PLAYER 2.)



PLAYER 3.



PLAYER 4.



PLAYER 5.

WINNING HAND

EXAMPLE 1:



PLAYER 1.



PLAYER 2.



PLAYER 3.

LET'S HAVE A LOOK AT WHO WOULD WIN
THE POT IN A SHOWDOWN.

PLAYER 1 ONLY HAS A KING HIGH.
WITH TWO SPADES HE WAS PROBABLY
HOPING FOR A FLUSH.

PLAYER 2 AND 3 BOTH HAVE TWO PAIRS.



PLAYER 1.



PLAYER 2.



PLAYER 3.

HOWEVER, DESPITE BOTH PLAYER 2 AND PLAYER 3 HOLDING A TWO-PAIR HAND, IT IS PLAYER 2 WHO WINS.

THIS IS BECAUSE PLAYER 2 HOLDS A HIGHER PAIR IN HIS HAND WITH THE PAIR OF QUEENS.

EXAMPLE 2:



PLAYER 1.



PLAYER 2.



PLAYER 3.

**IN THIS EXAMPLE BOTH PLAYER 1 AND
PLAYER 2 START WITH STRONG PAIRS.**

**PLAYER 1 THEN STRENGTHENS HIS
HAND FURTHER BY DRAWING A THIRD
ACE ON THE FLOP.**



**BUT IT IS PLAYER 3 WHO EVENTUALLY
HOLDS THE WINNING HAND.**

**STARTING WITH THE WEAKEST OF ALL
THE HOLE CARDS, PLAYER 3 CRUISES
INTO POLE POSITION WHEN DRAWING
A FLUSH ON THE TURN.**

SPLIT POT

EXAMPLE 1:



PLAYER 1.

PLAYER 2.

SOMETIMES YOU DON'T NEED TO USE
BOTH CARDS TO FORM THE BEST HAND.

WHO HAS THE WINNING HAND ABOVE?



PLAYER 1.



PLAYER 2.



BOTH HAVE THE SAME HAND BECAUSE THE BEST FIVE CARDS TO BE MADE FROM THE SEVEN ARE: K K 7 7 Q.

BOTH USE THE KING BUT THEIR OTHER CARD IS NOT NEEDED. AS THEY BOTH EFFECTIVELY HAVE THE SAME HAND THE POT IS SPLIT.

EXAMPLE 2:



PLAYER 1.

PLAYER 2.

ON RARE OCCASIONS YOU DON'T NEED TO USE EITHER OF YOUR TWO HOLE CARDS TO FORM THE BEST FIVE-CARD COMBINATION.



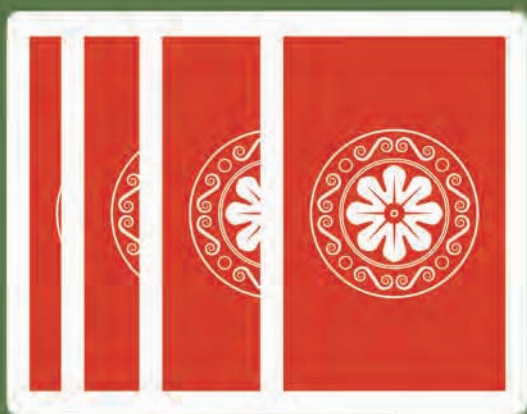
PLAYER 1.



PLAYER 2.

IN THIS EXAMPLE WE SEE THAT THE BEST FIVE-CARD COMBINATION DOES NOT INCLUDE ANY OF THE PLAYERS' HOLE CARDS AND IS MADE UP ENTIRELY OF THE FIVE COMMUNITY CARDS.

ONCE AGAIN THE POT IS SPLIT.



TIPS



BLUFFING

**POKER IS A GAME OF LUCK AND SKILL.
LUCK IN THE HAND YOU ARE DEALT
AND SKILL IN THE WAY THAT YOU BET.**

**YOU CAN WIN EVEN WHEN YOU HAVE AN
INFERIOR HAND
TO YOUR OPPONENT'S.**

**THIS IS ACHIEVED BY BETTING AS IF
YOU HAVE A SUPERIOR HAND AND IS
KNOWN AS BLUFFING.**

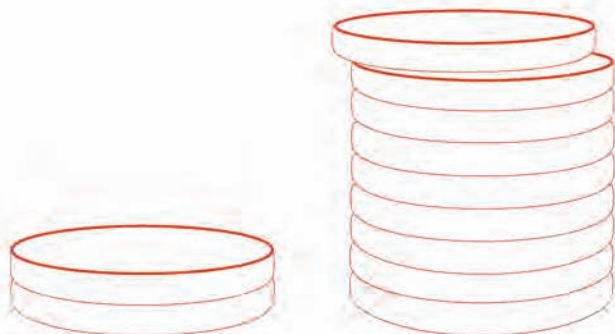
**YOU CAN ALSO BLUFF WHEN YOU HAVE
A GOOD HAND.**



**WHEN BLUFFING WITH A WEAK HAND
YOU ARE LOOKING TO FORCE YOUR
OPPONENTS TO FOLD THEIRS.
SO RAISE BIG AND DON'T HESITATE.**

WHEN YOU HAVE A STRONG HAND YOU ARE LOOKING TO ENTICE AS MUCH MONEY FROM YOUR OPPONENT AS POSSIBLE. SO HESITATION IS NOT NECESSARILY A BAD THING.

YOU CAN BET SMALL TO START WITH, DRAWING THEM IN, THEN ONCE THEY HAVE TAKEN THE BAIT YOU CAN RAISE THE BET TO SOMETHING MORE COSTLY.



**SOMETIMES IT CAN BE A GOOD IDEA
TO LET PEOPLE KNOW WHEN YOU
HAVE BEEN BLUFFING. THAT WAY
WHEN YOU ARE NOT BLUFFING THEY
MAY GET CAUGHT OUT.**





TRY TO VARY YOUR PLAY. BLUFFING TOO OFTEN WILL MAKE YOUR GAME OBVIOUS AND PREDICTABLE. THIS IS A DANGEROUS THING AS OTHER PLAYERS WILL BE ABLE TO READ YOU MORE EASILY AND EXPLOIT THIS FACT. SO TO BE MOST SUCCESSFUL WHEN BLUFFING, USE OCCASIONALLY.

SPOTTING

THE BLUFF

IT IS ALWAYS WORTH STUDYING YOUR OPPONENTS, ESPECIALLY WHEN YOU ARE OUT OF A HAND. WATCH TO SEE IF THEY HAVE ANY NERVOUS TICKS OR STRANGE MANNERISMS.

THE LONGER THE GAME GOES ON THE BETTER YOU SHOULD GET TO KNOW YOUR OPPONENTS' PLAY.

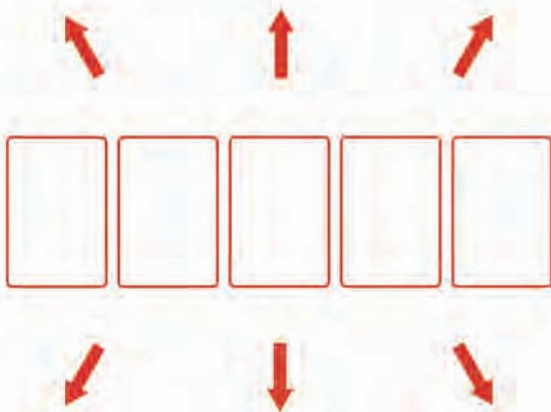
OBVIOUSLY YOU CANNOT DO THIS ONLINE, INSTEAD, TRY TO WATCH OUT FOR REPEAT BETTING PATTERNS.

OTHER TIPS :

**THERE'S NO SHAME IN FOLDING.
A DISCIPLINED BETTING STYLE
WILL STAND YOU IN MUCH BETTER
STEAD THAN A WILD ONE. SO PLAY
TIGHT AND BET ON A FEW HANDS
RATHER THAN EVERY ONE.**

**IF THE BETTING STAYS LOW IN THE
FIRST ROUND, EVEN IF YOU HAVE WHAT
LOOKS LIKE A VERY POOR HAND, IT'S
SOMETIMES WORTH STAYING IN TO SEE
WHAT COMES UP IN THE FLOP.**

PERHAPS THE BIGGEST THING TO REMEMBER IS THAT THE COMMUNITY CARDS ARE SHARED BY YOU AND EVERY OTHER PLAYER. GET INTO THE HABIT OF THINKING ABOUT WHAT THEY MIGHT MEAN, NOT ONLY TO YOU BUT ALSO YOUR OPPONENTS.





**DON'T PAY TOO MUCH ATTENTION
TO TIPS IN BOOKS.**

**NOW THAT YOU KNOW HOW TO PLAY
TEXAS HOLD'EM, THE BEST WAY TO
IMPROVE YOUR GAME IS TO PLAY.**

**NOW THAT YOU KNOW HOW TO PLAY
THE GAME ALL YOU NEED IS A BUNCH
OF MATES, A PACK OF CARDS AND
SOME CHIPS. GOOD LUCK.**

1.



2.



3.







