

**Martin J Silverthorne**

***Take Down***  
**Blackjack!**



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# **Take Down Blackjack**

## **By Martin J Silverthorne**

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## Introduction

### **Take Down Blackjack Is The Highest Powered Blackjack Strategy Available Today!**

Once you learn Take Down Blackjack, you will make higher profits with less risk, using a smaller bankroll, and with greater consistency than any other blackjack strategy.

“I have never experienced blackjack like this before. Take Down Blackjack just rolls over the casinos. Winnings come so fast and so easily that I still keep expecting to lose.

“But losses are not what you are going to get with this system. I am consistently winning from \$4,200 to \$5,100 a day playing online a couple of hours.

“I have more money with Take Down Blackjack than with any other system ever created. It is Number One in my book!”

Stan B. – Dayton, Ohio

Are you ready to make some serious money playing blackjack?

If you heard that playing blackjack is one of the best ways to make money available today, you heard right.

However, no matter how you have played the game before, you won't have won as fast or as easily as you will with Take Down Blackjack.

It does what card counters could do fifty years ago before the casinos changed the game of blackjack.

And, it does this using a bankroll less than 1/100<sup>th</sup> of the size needed by card counters.

But, instead of requiring months of practice like card counting, it is so simple that you will learn it in less than an hour.

I don't care what you have tried and failed at before.

This is the number one moneymaker available today for the number one moneymaking casino game.

If you have ever dreamed of becoming a blackjack pro, this is your chance to become one the privileged few who will gain the power of Take Down Blackjack!

Take Down Blackjack is a revolutionary new way of winning at blackjack. It is so good that all it takes is \$25 to set up \$5,000 a day winnings for life

### **Take Down Blackjack Performs Just Like Its Name - It Takes Down Every Version of Blackjack Dealt Today, Including the Online Versions!**

Unlike other strategies based on theory, Take Down Blackjack was developed by blackjack pros who depend on their skills to win everyday! When you use it, you will be using a real strategy, proven by real players, to beat the game of blackjack with absolute certainty!

This is the Premier New Strategy that is overturning blackjack everywhere it is offered. With this strategy you'll be able to –

- Log on to any of dozens of certified online casinos (I'll tell you which ones) and within ten minutes pull in a profit of \$168!
- Turn the Take Down Strategy into a solid income of \$5,000 or more a day of pure profits, without the headaches associated with having employees, renting a location, maintaining an inventory, dealing with overhead, fees, licensing and financing issues or even the need to leave home!

- Get started online for \$25 and within seven hours turn this into \$10,000 in all-cash profits! I know this sounds impossible, but it is based on a solid plan that dozens of my students have used with great success. If you've got \$25 and can follow simple instructions, you'll be \$10,000 richer by tomorrow night!
- Become a real blackjack pro bringing in an annual income in excess of \$300,000, all on your own terms, at your own pace and with lots of time off!

And, this will be just the beginning of the success you'll have taking down blackjack!

"I am into my third week taking down blackjack. I play in two casinos in Council Bluffs, Iowa and have been clearing over \$2,300 per visit.

"I am seriously thinking of turning pro? What do you think?"

Jamie K. – Council Bluffs, Iowa

### **Take Down Blackjack Beats Every Other Blackjack Strategy With Its Unique Concepts of Hitting the Casino Hard When the Time is Right and Then Preventing the Casino From Winning!**

Take Down Blackjack is based on the Take Down Betting System – a system designed to overcome every version of blackjack offered today.

On top of that it uses a unique new version of Basic Strategy –designed specifically to reduce risk and increase profits.

It uses a new line of defense called the Burgher Wall that stops the casinos cold during losing streaks.

On top of that it adds G Betting which hits the casinos very hard during winning streaks and pulls in sky-high profits very quickly.

As a result, \$5 bettors playing online break the \$500 an hour win barrier (documented winnings of \$504 an hour).

Land-based players making \$100 bets are blasting down the casino doors with documented winnings of \$1,681 an hour!

What's more, learning and winning with Take Down Blackjack is super simple and virtually foolproof with the Complete Profit Kit we have developed!

“Just completed a seven-day cruise to the Caribbean. Not only did the captain manage to get us safely from island to island, but I won over \$6,000 paying blackjack in the ship's casino.

“I used Take Down Blackjack to easily beat the blackjack games and had the time of my life doing it.

“I more than paid for the cruise for two. As soon as I got back I booked an Alaskan cruise three months from now. I am very confident that Take Down Blackjack will overwhelm the blackjack games on the next cruise as well.”

Harlan K. – Indianapolis, Indiana

### **Even As You Are Reading This, Our Players Are Taking Down Blackjack Games Worldwide!**

Right now players are taking down blackjack games in both online and land-based games!

The best part of this is that the bosses can't stop us because casino countermeasures really have no effect on how the system works!

Before I tell you more about why Take Down Blackjack is unstoppable, let's talk about blackjack.

The casinos love blackjack because players believe that they can win and actually expect to win because card counters used to win or they have some kind of system they picked up somewhere.

The casino bosses know the real truth!

Nearly every blackjack player is doomed to fail because the bosses have changed that game so much to prevent players from winning!

Casinos really love the movies about winning card counters because it helps perpetuate the myth that card counters are still beating the casinos.

The bosses really like for players to learn some card counting system and then to try to hide their skills because the casino is afraid of losing. The truth of the matter is that the casinos would pay the bus fare for these hapless players who don't understand that the game they are trying to beat now is not the same game the card counters were beating forty years ago.

Blackjack is the number one table game for casino profits. The casinos beat just about all of the players except for one very notable exception –

The casinos not only can't beat players using Take Down Blackjack, but they are much more vulnerable to losing than they ever were against card counters two generations ago!

Instead of being a huge profit source for the casinos, our players have turned the game into a dependable source of endless profits that the casino bosses are powerless to stop!

Here's how one of our Take Down players put it, "Take Down Blackjack turns blackjack into a powerful and dependable source of player profits. I easily win \$5,000 to \$6,000 a day and the bosses can't stop me. Even if they asked me to stop playing, I would just



change to another equally vulnerable casino. This strategy is number one with no real competition!”

“Before I discovered Take Down Blackjack I was trying to live off unemployment. I have never been without a job before yet I have now been looking for another job for over eight months.

“I was very discouraged until I discovered Take Down Blackjack. I started with just \$25 figuring that was about as much as I could afford to lose. However, instead of losing I won \$12,000 in my first three days.

“I am now a \$2,500 an hour winner playing online. My daily game plan is simple – play blackjack a couple of hours and clear \$5,000 before quitting.”

Gary J – Beaumont, Texas

### **Here’s Proof That Take Down Blackjack Will Work For You, Too!**

Take Down Blackjack is not another theoretical system.

It is not a card counting system.

It does not use a fixed betting system.

It is unique because of its abilities to beat blackjack under all circumstances.

What’s more, everything I am sharing about this system is factual and documented. We analyzed a total of 4,356 games of real blackjack played by real players in real casinos to measure the performance of this system.

The results are truly impressive.

When I call Take Down Blackjack a “\$5,000 a day system” I am not making up a number. I am giving you the amount that players just like you are winning every day using the same strategy I am going to share with you!

Because it has been tested, tweaked and perfected, you will start beating the blackjack game as soon as you start playing. The facts support the claim that this system really is unstoppable! Short of closing down all of the blackjack games the casinos can’t stop you from winning!

“I love playing blackjack but it has become a love-hate relationship. I love the game because it is fun, but I hate it because I can’t consistently win.

“All that changed about five weeks ago when I started Taking Down the game using your strategy.

“Since then I have been a consistent winner. I am now visiting Las Vegas twice a month and clearing over \$16,000 each trip.

“There is nothing else as powerful, yet easy-to-use as Take Down Blackjack.”  
Mark L. – San Diego, California

### **Here’s How It Began . . .**

My name is Martin Silverthorne. By training I am a CPA, but by inclination I am a gambler and an investor. For instance, I have made a lot of money over the years using progressive based betting systems at blackjack.

I recently met a couple of friends for lunch at the Red Rock Casino. The topic was supposed to be investing, but before long we started talking about blackjack.

T F Burgher is a stock trader. Remarkably, he makes money whether the stock market is up or down. His mantra is “by eliminating big losses, the profits will take care of themselves.”

Like me, Randy Gallagher is a professional blackjack player. He loves to run up his winnings but admits he has been known to lose way too much in a single losing session.

Being a CPA, I like to play by the numbers. By this I mean that I use a solid system that wins enough on the average to overcome losses.

We started talking about our dream system.

T F thought that if I could eliminate most of my losses, that my system would be greatly improved.

Randy liked what I was doing but right away could see that I wasn't taking full advantage of winning runs.

I listened to their critiques and finally said, “Why don't we put our money where our mouths are. Let's put all of our ideas together and see what we come up with.”

Without any formal plan we had just laid the groundwork for the world's most powerful system – Take Down Blackjack!

Long losing streaks are a part of blackjack. Most experts say to quit after four straight losses. We have a better way –  
Wall off the casino's losing streak. Sound crazy? It's not. It's called the Burgher Wall and it stops the casinos cold!

## **The Power of the Burgher Wall!**

T F Burgher studied blackjack. I helped him out by supplying him with thousands of rounds of blackjack play that I had recorded while developing my winning blackjack strategies.

He went to work on what he called “ways to stop the losses.”

When we met five weeks later, I realized that T F had come up with an idea that is one of the most powerful ones ever!

He had developed a system that literally stops the casino from beating you when you go into a losing streak.

It was like nothing I had ever seen.

It doesn't entail using a fixed betting progression.

With his system, you will never increase your bets following losses.

It wasn't a system requiring that you sit out hands. This technique is just not possible in most online games and many land-based games.

And it doesn't require that you quit playing if you start losing.

Many experts have given up on how to stop losing streaks and simply recommend that you quit playing if you lose four times in a row.

T F pointed out the big flaw in this approach.

“My studies show that one of the best times to win big at blackjack is when a losing streak ends. But, you've got to be playing to take advantage of this great opportunity.”

When he told me about his system to stop the casinos cold, I almost couldn't believe it.

I added it to my own betting system to see what would happen.

It didn't really prove itself for a couple of days.

I hit a terrible losing streak playing at the Orleans. One time I lost seven straight bets. Later the same day I hit a nine-bet losing streak.

Normally I would have lost these sessions. As good as my base system is, it can't handle nine straight losses.

Except now it did. I used what I was now calling the Burgher Wall to stop the casinos cold.

I didn't stop betting. And, I didn't chase the losses with a betting progression. The best way to describe it is to say that I set up a wall that stopped the casinos from beating me!

Remarkably, just like T F had stated, as soon as the losing streaks ended I had some great wins.

This changed my whole philosophy of playing. By walling off the losses I would win much faster.

"It's all in the power of limiting losses," T F said. "It works in trading and it works in blackjack, too."

G Bets are the most powerful bets in Take Down Blackjack. Winning a single G Bet is enough to pull in a winning game!

### **"When The Wind's Behind You, Go Like Hell!"**

I got together with Randy Gallagher a week later. Randy had applied his considerable skills to improving my system's win rate.

Randy explained. “Your system is really good at providing stable wins. But it misses a huge opportunity to win a whole lot faster.”

He had my attention. I am always ready to learn from another pro.

“Show me what you mean,” I said.

Then he did.

He demonstrated how I should change my betting so that I could win up to three times my normal amount by making different moves.

Rather than just talking about it, we decided to play a little blackjack that afternoon.

Three bets into my first game I had a set up for Randy’s G Bet. I made it and won. Amazingly, winning a single G Bet gave me a winning game.

But, I decided to keep on playing. Ten plays into the game I had another G Bet set up. I made the bet and won again. This time I decided to back off and call it a game.

I set aside my winning chips and kept on playing.

Four hands later I set up another G Bet.

I told Randy that his G Bet (short for his last name of Gallagher) was really impressive.

He smiled. “I don’t know about calling it the G Bet. All I know is that when the wind’s behind you, you can go like hell.”

**[We refer to G Bets as Protective Bets in this manual.]**

I looked up from counting my winnings. “I guess I could call it the Wind Bet or the Hell Bet.”

Randy thought for a second, “I kind of like the G Bet. Maybe you ought to stick with that.”

### **Taking Down the Casinos, One At a Time!**

After seeing the power of the G Bet, I decided to add both the G Bet and the Burgher Wall to my betting system. At this point, without knowing it, I had about 98% of world’s best blackjack strategy put together.

Two days later, after practicing my new system for over four hours, I was ready to take on a real blackjack game.

I decided to play downtown at the Golden Nugget, which has always been one of my favorite properties.

I started out by making \$10 bets. I quickly was up over \$200. I jumped to \$25 bets next and pulled in over \$500 so fast that I had trouble accepting the full capabilities of this remarkable new system.

I moved up to \$50 bets next and pulled out another \$840 in quick profits.

The system was working flawlessly.

When the cards were flowing more or less normally, I was pulling in steady wins using my old betting system.

When I hit a losing streak I would set up the Burgher Wall and just wait for the trend to change.

And, when a losing streak ended I immediately hit the casino hard with another winning G Bet.

Playing this way there wasn’t anything the casino could throw out that I couldn’t handle.

A pit boss I know watched me for a while. He finally walked up to me and said, “I haven’t figured out all of your moves, but it’s pretty clear you are taking down the game of blackjack.”

That sort of stuck with me. That’s exactly what this system was doing. It was taking down the game of blackjack like no system I had ever experienced.

I wrapped up my play at the Nugget, pulling in a nice win of \$3,230. I decided to take a break and then visit Binions’ across the street.

I have a love-hate relationship with Binions. I have had my best craps game ever there and also experienced my biggest loss at blackjack.

I decided to turn the Take Down Blackjack System loose on Binions.

The casino bosses who have seen Take Down Blackjack in action are perplexed. They know it is a winning system, but there is nothing they can do to stop the system from beating blackjack!

## **I Take Down the Blackjack Game at Binion’s Gambling Hall**

After a relaxing lunch at the Carson Street Café I walked back through the Golden Nugget and crossed the street to Binions.

It wasn’t very crowded this time of day and I found a \$25 minimum blackjack table where I could play head to head with the dealer.

I started out making \$25 bets. By the third shuffle I was making \$50 bets, and forty minutes after I started play I was racking in the money making \$100 bets.

Take Down Blackjack was performing flawlessly. After winning very steadily with lots of big surprises to the upside as my G Bets hit, I finally ran into a horrible losing streak. I



was getting nothing but stiff hands while the dealer was hitting a blackjack every other hand and pulling 19s and 20s. I was drawing to 17s when I was lucky and busting otherwise.

I was having the kind of losing streak where every player suspects that the dealer is cheating. After years of playing, I knew that horrible losing streaks were part of the game whether the dealer was cheating or not.

However, unlike other players who get hammered when the dealer gets hot I set up a Burgher Wall.

Even though I was still betting I knew the dealer wouldn't beat me even if he won 20 straight rounds.

His winning streak stopped at eleven straight wins. Three bets later I won a G Bet and decided to take a break with another winning game.

After sitting down at the bar and ordering a scotch, I realized that I was tired. I counted up my winnings. I had just hit Binions for \$11,345 starting out with small bets and gradually moving up.

It was a good thing I was sitting down. I knew I was winning a lot but my final tally really brought it home!

Without really trying I had taken down the blackjack game at Binions.

The best part of all was my winning was not a fluke.

I didn't win because I was lucky. In fact I had seen some horrendous losing streaks this afternoon.

The dealer threw some really bad hands my way. However, it didn't matter. When the cards were average I beat the game with my normal betting pattern.

When the cards were bad I set up the Burgher Wall, impervious to long losing streaks.

And, when the cards were favorable I pounced on the casino with winning G Bets.

As I walked back to my car parked in the high-rise structure adjacent to the Golden Nugget I couldn't help but think, "I could grow to like taking down blackjack games, everywhere, anytime I feel like it."

### **Taking Down Las Vegas!**

I continued to use the Take Down Blackjack System in casino after casino in Las Vegas.

The next day I played at Main Street Station and won \$7,894.

The following day I moved down to the Strip and won \$12,958 at Caesars Palace.

I took a couple of days off then hit the Flamingo for \$14,390 followed up by winning \$11,490 at the Four Queens.

In my excitement I neglected to keep as careful records as I normally do. I can give you the exact amount of my winnings for each session, but I couldn't give all the details.

However, I didn't feel the least bit guilty. I would worry about record keeping later. Right now I was having the time of my life taking down the blackjack games in Las Vegas.

Take Down Blackjack's win record is a stunning 94.44% of all games played. This means you will win 17 out of every 18 games played. As one player put it, "It simply overwhelms the game of blackjack!"

### **Take Down Blackjack Wins 94.44% In Long-Term Play**

The first people I shared my success with were T F and Randy. By the next day Randy was playing at the Mirage, making \$500 bets and "hauling in cash by the bucket" as he put it.

T F was worried by downturns in stock prices and seemed distracted when I passed on the news of Take Down Blackjack's blistering performance.

About this time I made the decision to put Take Down Blackjack through a vigorous long-term test and see how it fared.

I recruited 29 people to play the system and keep track of all kinds of details.

I set each of the players up with a complete package designed to make using the Take Down System really easy and virtually automatic!

I turned them loose with instructions to give the casinos hell, then report back to me.

And, that's exactly what they did. By the time they were finished they had played a total of almost 90,000 rounds of blackjack and won \$843,490 playing blackjack.

Keep a few things in mind—

These were not blackjack pros but ordinary people, many of whom had never played blackjack before.

They were not high rollers. Even though they eventually won a lot of money, most of them started with less than \$200 as their total bankrolls.

However, even though they started with small bets, they didn't stay there.

By the end of the test the average online player was making \$25 bets and clearing \$2,520 an hour.

In the land-based games, our average player ended up becoming a \$200 bettor, pulling in a solid \$3,362 an hour in all-cash winnings.

Oh, and before I forget —

My players won a solid 94.44% of all of the games they played.

In short, they took down the casinos and won a lot of money for themselves!

Take Down Blackjack has been called the “Universal Blackjack Strategy.” It is the only strategy you need to beat every version of blackjack offered today!

**Take Down Blackjack Beats Every Version of Blackjack Offered Today! No Exceptions!**

Take Down Blackjack simply “outsmarts” every version of blackjack offered today.

It easily beats handheld single deck games.

It beats the monster six and eight deck games dealt out of shoes.

It beat games where players are barred from mid-shoe entry.

It beats games using Continuous Shuffle Machines.

It beats games offering the horrible 6 to 5 payoff rules for winning blackjacks.

It beats games played with the ridiculous European no-hole card rules.

It beats games which limit doubling after splits.

It beats games where steely eyed dealer shuffle up every time a player raises a bet.

And, that’s just for the land-based games!

It also beats all of the versions of blackjack offered online.

What's more, it works just as well for \$1 bets as for \$500 bets.

The size of your bets or the speed of the game or even severely restrictive rules can't stop Take Down Blackjack.

It is the blackjack player's best friend and the casino bosses' worst nightmare!

"I have been successful using several of your blackjack systems. However, I have noticed that if you hit a long enough losing stretch they all eventually lose.

"That's one of several reasons I am so impressed with Take Down Blackjack. It can't be defeated by long losing streaks.

"I also love the way it sets up G Bets that hit the casinos right between the eyes.

"Take Down Blackjack is by far the best. I don't see how you can ever top this system."

Bart C. – San Jose, California

### **Here's What You Can Expect Once You Learn Take Down Blackjack –**

You are really going to like Take Down Blackjack. Even if you have never played blackjack, you are going to love having piles of winning chips constantly shoved at you.

If you are just an average Take Down player you are going to make a lot of money.

Here's some of what you can expect, based on our 90,000 rounds of real world blackjack play.

You can get started online as a \$1 bettor and instantly be making \$100.80 an hour.

As my wise old aunt Jesse used to say, “Honey, making \$100 an hour is a hell of a lot better than not making \$100 an hour.”

So, if you have always dreamed of becoming a \$100 an hour winner, congratulations! You can accomplish this your first hour as a \$1 bettor.

Want a raise?

Forget about asking your boss for one. Just double your bets.

As a \$2 bettor you’ll make a very sweet \$201 an hour. See, I told you you’d like this.

Play a couple of hours at this level. Then move up to making \$5 bets. Now you’ll net a very cool \$504 an hour. And, that’s enough for your first day.

On your second day, you may want to try \$10 bets and see what winning \$1,008 an hour feels like.

Can you begin to see the possibilities here?

We are talking about your second day of play online and you are already winning over \$1,000 an hour.

Now, you might be thinking, “What’s the catch here?” Is he talking about gross winnings? Is there a trick here?

I am happy to tell you there’s no trick here. The amounts I am giving you are long-term net rates. These are the amounts you will win after deducting the rare losing game.

I’ve been talking about online play so far. You are going to win faster online simply because computers play a lot faster than people do.

Other than that I prefer the live action in a brick and mortar casino.

To win faster in your favorite casino you can play head to head against the dealer. As a \$25 bettor you'll make better than \$600 an hour in a fast land-based game.

To keep the bankroll requirements low you may want to start out as a \$5 or \$10 player. Don't worry. You'll win fast enough that you'll soon be up to making \$100 base bets.

And, as a \$100 bettor playing at an average rate of play, you'll clear about \$1,680 an hour. Play in a faster game and you'll easily clear over \$2,000 an hour in any land-based game.

Do these amounts sound pretty high to you?

If you are a \$5 bettor you probably can't picture yourself making \$100 bets.

Relax. You'll quickly get used to it. As your winnings grow and multiply and you take down one blackjack game after another, you'll know when it's time to move up.

Chances are within two weeks of learning Take Down Blackjack you'll move up to making \$200 bets bringing in \$3,000 to \$4,000 an hour. And, because this system is so strong I can predict that you may be the calmest player in the casino even though you are playing at a level you wouldn't have dared to a short time before becoming a Take Down player.

“I just finished playing blackjack in a Las Vegas Strip casino. At my final game I was making \$200 bets.

“Two days ago I was a \$10 bettor and I was scared of losing. Now I am making \$200 bets and I am confident. What happened in the last two days?

“I am the same person I was two days ago. The difference is that I have now been taking down blackjack and have seen how much power this system gives me.

“Right now I am over \$7,000 ahead. Tomorrow I plan on adding \$10,000 more to my winnings.”

Joe P. – Los Angeles, California

Ed Note: We got an email from Joe after he came home. He won another \$11,000 his last day and came home over \$18,000 richer.

## **Taking Down Blackjack Automatically!**

Most blackjack strategies expect you to learn hundreds of rules on how to play different hands.

That’s not necessary to take down blackjack.

Instead of having numerous versions of Basic Strategy, you only have to use one with Take Down Blackjack.

And, it is a very special version of Basic Strategy. It is specially optimized to maximize profits with G Bets.



It is easier to learn than other versions of playing strategy.

And, you'll get a strategy card you can take with you.

But, that's just the start.

You'll also get a custom Take Down Blackjack Betting Card for every level of betting. We cover bets ranging from 25¢ to \$500. All you have to do is take the card with you for your level of betting. Most players take several cards so that they can easily increase the size of their bets as their winnings build.

Having a playing strategy card, which tells you how to play each hand, and a Betting Card to give you the bets, just about makes play automatic.

But, we take automatic play one step higher than this –

If you are new to blackjack don't worry. We'll give you everything you need to play like a seasoned pro. It's called "the Instant Winning Formula." You get it when you try out Take Down Blackjack for a Risk-Free Trial.

### **The Take Down Blackjack Player's Complete Profit Program Comes With an Automatic Playmaker**

When we set up our test players we left nothing to chance. In addition to everything else, each player got an Automatic Playmaker.

Here's how the Automatic Playmaker works –

Before you start to play you set up your level of play for that game. You'll set the Game Bankroll, your Profit Goals and set up the different types of bets. This isn't hard. All of this information is on the Take Down Blackjack Betting Card for your level of play.

After you set up the Automatic Playmaker you start playing.

It's really that easy.

The Automatic Playmaker will signal when you need to set up a Burgher Wall.

And, it will tell you when to set up G Bets.

It will guide you through my normal betting series.

But, it does more than that!

You can use the Automatic Playmaker to –

Determine when to wrap up a game,

As a way to monitor all of your bets,

And, as a system to track your winning and losing bets.

The Automatic Playmaker is so good it does everything but place your wager in the betting spot.

Now I know what you are thinking –

You are worried that you won't be allowed to take the Automatic Playmaker with you when you play.

Relax. The toughest blackjack rules in the country are in Atlantic City and on the Las Vegas Strip. You can take your playmaker with you to either location because it is 100% legal for blackjack play.

If you prefer not to take a playmaker with you, we'll show you how to use chips to track your bets. That's what I do when I play.

However, even if you use chips for tracking your play in land-based games you'll always want to use the Automatic Playmaker online.

Let's say you get interrupted when you are playing. You take a phone call or have to answer the door.

The Playmaker will keep track of where you were. When you return to your computer you'll know exactly where you are and what you have to do next!

### **Start Living Life the Way It Should Be Lived!**

Keep it simple. That's my new mantra.

Eliminate the things that bother you and spend more time doing what you like.

Sound impossible? Does this sound like some late night guru's pitch for his meditation program?

Sorry about that. It's just that Take Down Blackjack has changed my life in so many ways that I thought you might like to try it too!

First thing I'll tell you is that I haven't quit work. I still like to spend a few hours a day in my home office.

I still trade stocks and make investments.

I like to set up luncheons with business associates and friends.

And, I am working on several special projects.

However, I will share a couple of things I don't do –

I don't hold down a regular job.

I don't commute and get stuck in rush hour traffic.

I don't answer to some boss who makes my life miserable.

And, I don't worry much about making money anymore.

Here's why –

Anytime I want to I can easily pick up an extra \$3,000 to \$5,000 a day playing a little blackjack.

If I have the time, I love spending an afternoon in my favorite casino.

If I don't, then a couple of hours play online will do the job.

I'll admit it –

I don't know you.

You may like your job and want to keep it.

Or, you may be ready to make a change.

What I do know about you is that you can use another \$3,000 to \$5,000 a day.

Even if you don't need the money I guarantee that you will get a huge kick out of beating blackjack anytime you want.

It's not only fun, but it's good for bragging rights.

Or, if you prefer, you don't have to tell a soul.

Maybe someone will notice your new Porsche 911S.

Or, the new Audi A8 sitting in your driveway.

Or, maybe they won't.

Either way it doesn't matter.

You'll have a lot more than some expensive new toys to play with.

You'll have true peace of mind knowing that you can bring in \$3,000 to \$5,000 a day whenever you want.

And, in this time of high anxiety and endless pressure, that's pretty valuable.

### **It's Time to Get Started**

Your first step to learning how to take down blackjack is right in front of you. You need to read this manual, learn the system and then follow our steps to success.

Good luck in taking down the casinos!



**Martin J Silverthorne**

## 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 *upcard*.

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 upcard 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 upcard. A hand of 9,9 will be split versus a dealer's upcard of 6. With an upcard 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 upcard 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 upcard, 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 upcard 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 upcard 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 upcard 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 Take Down Blackjack 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 Take Down Blackjack player and taking the casinos' money! I invite you to read on, even if you think you know Basic Strategy. The Take Down Blackjack Playing Strategy is much easier to learn than typical basic strategy rules.

## The House Edge

Blackjack is different from other casino games. Games like craps, roulette and baccarat are games of chance, where each play is an independent event, which is the mathematician's way of saying that whatever occurs in previous rounds of play has no bearing on the current outcome.

With roulette, the house will maintain a constant edge against the player. American roulette wheels have 36 numbers colored red or black, and zero and double zero spots colored green. If the color red has come up ten times in a row on an American wheel, what is the probability of the next spin of the wheel landing on a red number? Regardless of the previous outcomes, the odds of rolling a red number on the next spin of wheel, there are 18 chances out of 38 numbers or 47.37%.

Blackjack is unique among casino table games in that the odds change after every hand is played. How well the player does is also dependent on the player's skill at playing his hands and his betting strategy.

Before we talk about the nature of the house edge in blackjack, let's take a look at the odds facing a player in some other casinos games.

With Keno, the house enjoys about a 30% advantage over the players. This game should only be played for fun as it is almost impossible to win consistently at Keno.

Slot machines hold anywhere from 25% to 30% to less than 1% of the player's money. It is possible to beat slot machines with skillful play although most players don't even try. Las Vegas casinos make more money from slots than all of the table games combined. There are over 115,000 machines in Clark County alone.

Craps, following World War II, was the most popular casino table game. Blackjack has since surpassed craps in popularity if not excitement. Not only is craps an exciting fast action game, it is an excellent game for applying betting systems and money management techniques. With a low 1.4% house edge for line bets, and less than one percent for line bets, come bets and don't come bets with odds, craps offers the best bets in the casino

besides blackjack. A major difference between craps and blackjack is that at blackjack a bettor can realize house odds less than one percent by judicious use of numerous player options, whereas, in craps, a house edge close to zero is achievable by simply knowing the correct bets to make.

The house edge in roulette varies from 5.26% for the American wheel with its two green numbers of 0 and 00, to only 1.35% for the single zero European game using the *en prison* rule. Like craps, it is an excellent game for using betting systems and can be beaten by those who know how.

Baccarat is the least known casino table game, which is a shame because of its low house edge of only 1.17% for banker bets and 1.37% for player bets. Many casinos now offer a mini baccarat, which is played on blackjack sized tables and offers lower minimum wagers than the full sized baccarat games, which are often played in special roped off areas and are the domain of strictly high rollers.

Many people believe that it is impossible to win in any casino game and that winning is just a matter of luck. Luck may be a factor in winning or losing in any game of chance; however, blackjack is primarily a game of skill, not chance.

While most casino patrons have heard that blackjack can be beaten, they believe that only certified mathematical geniuses can master the skills necessary to beat the game. This is almost a valid criticism with many of the complex card counting strategies, but it certainly cannot be applied to the Take Down Blackjack Strategy.

First, let's consider the relative advantages and disadvantages the dealer and the player face in the game of blackjack.

### **The Dealer's Advantage**

The only advantage the dealer has over the player is that the player must play out his hand before the dealer plays his. If both the player and the dealer bust (go over 21), the dealer will win. Considering that a player will bust on the average about 28% of the time, this advantage is not insignificant.

The easiest way to assess a dealer's chance of busting is with the information revealed by turning over one of his cards. The following chart shows the dealer's chance of busting depending on his upcard. The chart also shows the player's win/loss rate with each dealer upcard.

Dealer's Upcard	Player Win/Loss	Dealer Bust Rate
2	9.8%	35.30%
3	13.4%	37.56%
4	18.0%	40.28%
5	23.2%	42.89%
6	23.9%	42.08%
7	14.3%	25.99%
8	5.4%	23.86%
9	-4.3%	23.34%
10	-16.9%	21.43%
Ace	-36.0%	11.65%

The dealer's worst upcards are 2 through 6, which may be possible stiff hands. The dealer must hit these hands regardless of the value of his hole card, and the probability of busting is high.

On the other hand, if the dealer shows a 7 through Ace as his upcard, the dealer is more likely to have a *pat hand* — a hand on which he can stand without drawing.

### **The Player's Advantages**

While the dealer's advantage is formidable, the player has several potential advantages over the dealer:

1. The player will receive a payoff of 3 to 2 on his blackjacks while the dealer will not. The players do not have to pay the dealer 3 to 2 when the dealer has a blackjack (a natural).
2. The player has flexible playing options while the dealer does not. Thus a dealer must hit a stiff hand (a hand totalling 12 through 16) even if he has the players beaten by standing.
3. The player has the option of doubling down so that he can get more money on the table during favorable situations.
4. The player can split pairs, allowing him to improve poor hands or to take advantage of the dealer's potentially weaker hands.
5. The player can take insurance, while this option is not available to the dealer.
6. When offered, the player can surrender a poor hand, forfeiting only one-half of his wager. The dealer never has this option.

The table on the next page outlines the differences in the rules between the player and the dealer showing who has the advantage for each difference.

As you can see, the house's sole edge arises from the fact that the player must play first. Because of this, if the player breaks, the house wins immediately, *even if the dealer would have busted had he been forced to play his own hand out!* It has occurred to more than one player that mimicking the dealer may be the best way to play. However, if you decided to do this, you would give the house an edge of about 8%. This is the house's initial edge in blackjack.

So what can you do about this? You will notice that except for the dealer's advantage in acting first, every other rule favors the player. The dealer has no options whatsoever and must follow a fixed set of rules in a robot-like fashion. As a result, the ultimate edge the house has against a player is dependent upon how well the player exercises his options.

### Who Has the Advantage?

<b>Player</b>	<b>Dealer</b>	<b>Who Has the Advantage?</b>
Acts first	Acts last	Dealer
Paid 3 to 2 for Blackjack	Even money	Player
May hit or stand at will	Must hit 16 & stand on 17	Player
May double Down	No doubling allowed	Player
May split pairs	No splitting allowed	Player

From a house edge of about 8%, the house's edge may be reduced by a player's use of his options. The next table shows how much of an edge each player option is worth if it is used correctly. However, in order to gain the edge offered by each option, a player must learn how to use each option, otherwise the player may lose all of the edge offered by each option, or worse, even increase the house's edge to an amount greater than 8%!

### Optimal Use of the Player's Options

<b>Blackjack bonus of 3 to 2</b>	<b>Gives the player</b>	<b>2 1/4%</b>
<b>Proper hitting and standing</b>	<b>May regain as much as</b>	<b>3 1/4%</b>
<b>Proper doubling down</b>	<b>May regain as much as</b>	<b>1 1/2%</b>
<b>Proper pair splitting</b>	<b>May regain as much as</b>	<b>1/2%</b>



If you learn how to hit and stand properly, you will reduce the house edge by another 3 1/4%. Proper use of doubling down will gain you another 1 1/2%, and finally, proper pair splitting will chip away an another 1/2% of the house's edge.

If you can just learn to hit, stand, double down and split pairs properly, you will reduce the house advantage to about 1/2% in a multi-deck shoe game with typical blackjack rules.

### **The Ten Factor**

The dominant cards in blackjack are the 10-value cards. With tens, jacks, queens and kings all valued as 10, a player is four times as likely to draw a 10-value card as any other card. Out of a deck of 52 playing cards, 16 are 10-value cards for a total of almost one-third of the deck.

Because of the preponderance of 10-value cards, there is a tendency for a hand to increase by ten points when the player or dealer draws a card. Likewise, it is useful to think of a dealer's hidden or hole card as having a value of ten because of the dominance of 10-value cards.



In blackjack it is possible to almost completely eliminate the house edge by learning how to play each hand correctly. By using special betting strategies and exercising other player options, a player using the Take Down Blackjack Strategy can gain an edge over the house and win consistently.

Putting the complete strategy together will come later. For now, lets learn how to play well enough that the house edge is reduced to an almost negligible margin.



# Strategic Concepts

## INTRODUCTION

The Take Down Blackjack Strategy consists of several parts. In order to successfully play the strategy, it is first necessary to master what is called Basic Strategy for Blackjack. Basic Strategy is based on computer simulations of Blackjack played for millions of card decisions. Virtually every Blackjack book written by a credible author contains more or less the same Basic Strategy. If you ever find a Blackjack system which varies significantly from Basic Strategy, you should be very leery of ever trying it.

## DEALER'S ADVANTAGE

The dealer has an advantage over the player because the player must play out his hand before the dealer plays his. If both the player and the dealer bust (go over 21), the dealer will win. In this case, if we consider a tie when both the player and the dealer bust, then the dealer wins all ties.

If a player were to mimic the dealer, that is, hit and stand in exactly the same manner as the dealer, the player would lose, on the average, 8% more of his hands than the dealer. This is a mathematical expression of the dealer's edge over the player on winning those ties where both the player and the dealer draw cards with totals exceeding a value of 21.

## OVERCOMING THE DEALER'S EDGE

Our object is not to mimic the dealer nor to try to come as close to 21 as possible. Many books on Blackjack will state that the object of the game is to come as close to 21 as possible, which is another way of parroting the dealer's moves. Our real objective is to beat the dealer. If our total is fairly low, say a 12 or 13, and the dealer busts, we have won just as surely as if we had a hand of 21 versus a dealer's 17. By using the player's options of standing, hitting, doubling down and splitting pairs judiciously, we can overcome the dealer's advantage of winning ties on busted hands.

## **PLAYER INFORMATION TO BEAT THE DEALER**

We have two pieces of information after the first two cards have been dealt in a round of Blackjack. We know the value of the cards dealt us, and we can see one of the two dealer cards (his upcard). This information is all that we have to make our decisions using the guidelines of correctly playing Basic Strategy.

We will compare the strength of our total versus the dealer's upcard. This will give us the information on whether we should accept only the two cards dealt us and stand or whether we should ask for additional cards. In certain situations, we will want to double our wager by doubling down as the strength of our card total compared to the dealer's exposed card indicates that this strategy will improve our prospect of winning. If we are dealt a pair of cards, we will compare our pair with the dealer's exposed card and decide whether it is advantageous for us to split the pair of cards and play two hands instead of one.

Basic Strategy gives us a road map of the correct decisions to make with our two pieces of information; therefore, we can overcome the disadvantage of playing our hands before the dealer plays his.

## **THE TEN FACTOR**

The dominant cards in Blackjack are the 10-value cards. With 10s, Jacks, Queens, and Kings all valued at 10, we are four times as likely to draw a 10-value card as any other card. Out of a deck of 52 playing cards, 16 are 10-value cards for a total of almost one-third of the deck.

Because of the preponderance of 10-value cards, there is a tendency of a hand to increase by ten points when drawing a card. Likewise, though we can't see a dealer's hidden or hole card, it is correct to think of this card as a 10-value card because of the dominance of 10 in a deck of cards. It is by thinking that the dealer's hole card will be a 10 that we are able to formulate a playing strategy which assumes that a dealer's total will tend to be ten points higher than the value of his upcard.

## **DERIVATION OF BASIC STRATEGY**

Basic Strategy was derived by playing thousands, and even millions, of Blackjack hands on a simulated basis using computers. Some of the correct Basic Strategy decisions may seem contrary to common sense. Take, for instance, the Basic Strategy decision of a player playing his hand with a value of 12 versus a dealer's upcard of 2 or 3. The correct strategy is for the player to hit (draw another card). This decision is actually a close one, but after playing millions of hands where the player stands and millions of hands where the player hits, it has been shown that the player will have a greater expectation of winning if he hits in this situation.

Another example: The correct strategy is to double down on an A 7 versus a dealer's 6 upcard. Why? If we have an A 7 for a total of 18, why jeopardize what will probably be a winning hand by doubling down, and risking more money on what may or may not have as high a total value? The answer is that a 6 is the weakest hand a dealer can show. With the dominance of 10 cards, it is likely that the dealer will have a hand totaling 16, and he will have to hit. By hitting a 16, the dealer is likely to bust. By doubling on a hand of A 7, we are less concerned with diluting the hand valued at 18 than we are at getting more of our money down as a bet against the dealer's weak hand. In this situation, we are not doubling down to improve our total, but we are doubling down to double our prospects of winning when the dealer busts.

## Take Down Blackjack Playing Strategy

There are several aspects to becoming a winning Take Down Blackjack player. 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 upcard 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*.

The modern playing strategy was first developed by removing the three cards shown by the players first two cards and the dealer's upcard 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 upcard. Suppose you are dealt a hand of 10,6 totalling 16, versus the dealers upcard 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 affect 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).

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

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

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

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

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:

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

## 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 Take Down Blackjack 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 upcard 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 Take Down Blackjack Basic 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.

If you are strictly a casual player, I don't want you to become discouraged by the time investment in learning the complete Take Down Blackjack Playing Strategy. For me to tell you that it is much simplified, as compared to learning variations in playing strategy for each slight change in rules, may seem condescending at best. If you want to play blackjack occasionally and still want to have an excellent chance of winning, you can do so without even learning the much simplified Take Down Blackjack Playing Strategy.

## Quick and Dirty Strategy

1. If conventional surrender is offered, always surrender any 16 against a dealer 9,10 or Ace and any 15 against a dealer 10.
2. Hard hand hitting and standing rules are:
  - Always stand on 17 or higher
  - Always hit on any hand of 11 or less
  - With a hand of 12 to 16, hit against an upcard of 7 greater, or otherwise stand
3. Soft hand hitting and standing rules are:
  - With a soft hand of 18 or more, always stand.
  - With a soft hand of 17 or less, always hit.
4. Double down on any hand of 10 or 11 if your total is greater than the dealer's upcard, eg. double on 11 versus a dealer 10 or lower, double on 10 versus a dealer 9 or lower.
5. Split any pairs of 8s unless 8s are surrendered.
6. Never take insurance.

I am presenting a very condensed strategy you can use called the **Quick and Dirty Strategy**. You can probably learn this strategy in less than thirty minutes, and for playing blackjack occasionally, you will not sacrifice much. Using this strategy, you will be playing at less than a 1% disadvantage in most casino games. If you combine this with the Take Down Blackjack Betting Strategy, which I will explain a little later, you should be an overall winner in blackjack.

If you are unfamiliar with basic strategy or you simply don't have the time or inclination to learn the complete basic strategy, just learn the Down and Dirty Playing Strategy. You will

play better than 95% of all blackjack players, and you will have an excellent chance of winning.

After you have mastered the Quick and Dirty Strategy, you may want to learn enough to cut the house edge down to a measly 3/4% using the Simplified Playing Strategy. This strategy has more explicit rules than the first condensed playing strategy. You will notice that there are more hands to double down and more pairs to split. Just learning this strategy will give you better odds than taking pass line and single odds in craps or playing baccarat. The house edge using this strategy is about one-half of the best odds you could find on European single zero roulette wheels and is about three times lower than playing perfect Caribbean stud. Gaining this additional 1/4% is just a matter of learning a few more pairs to split, another hand to double and an additional card to hit.

You if only play blackjack once in while and don't have the time or inclination to play perfect basic strategy, you don't need to go beyond the **Quick and Dirty Strategy**. However, when you are ready to gain as much advantage over the house as you can with the best playing strategy, you will need to memorize the *Master Playing Strategy*

This strategy reduces the number of doubling and splitting options to protect your bankroll. Take Down Blackjack is a system designed to maximize profits from bet timing. For this reason it is more important to control the size of bets than it is to double or split on hands with only small gains in advantage. Therefore, to protect your bankroll, you should always use the TA Safe Playing Strategy with Take Down Blackjack.

## Master Playing Strategy

- 1. If conventional surrender is offered, always surrender any 16 against a dealer 9,10 or Ace and any 15 against a dealer 10.**
- 2. Hard hand hitting and standing rules are:**
  - Always stand on 17 or higher
  - Always hit any hand of 11 or less
  - With a hand of 12, stand if the dealer has an up-card of 4, 5, or 6, otherwise hit.
  - With a hand of 13, stand if the dealer has an up-card of 2, 3, 4, 5, or 6, otherwise hit.
- 3. Soft hand hitting and standing rules are:**
  - With a soft hand of 18 or more, always stand.
  - With a soft hand of 17 or less, always hit.
- 4. Double down on any hand of 11 or 10 if the dealer shows a card of 2 to 7**
- 5. Double down on any hand totaling 9 if the dealer shows a 5-6.**
- 6. Split any pairs of 8s unless 8s are surrendered.**
- 7. Split a pair of 7s if the dealer shows a 7 or lower.**
- 8. Split any pair s of Aces.**
- 9. Never take insurance.**

## Take Down Master Playing Strategy

### **Take Down Blackjack Strategy**

#### **Splitting:**

7,7 is vs 7 or lower  
8,8 always split  
A,A always split

#### **Doubling Down:**

11 and 10 vs 2-7, 9 vs 5-6

#### **Hitting & Standing:**

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 Always Stand

#### **Surrender:**

Surrender 16 vs 9,10 and 15 vs 10.

#### **Insurance**

Never take insurance.

## **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 choose 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 overcome 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 upcard 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.

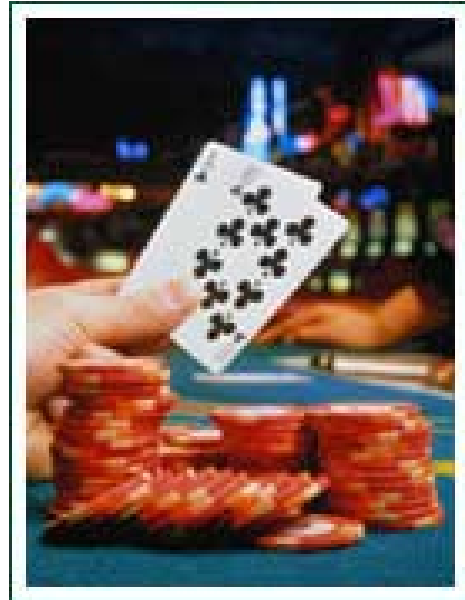
### **Insure a Good Hand?**

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 upcard, 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 Take Down Blackjack Strategy is simple. The rule for playing the Take Down Blackjack Strategy is: **don't take insurance unless you have a blackjack and the dealer shows an ace as his upcard.**

### **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 Take Down Blackjack 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 backwards" 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.

## What About Progressive Betting?

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 Take Down Blackjack 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 systems 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 upcard 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 simple 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  $3\frac{1}{2}$  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. Take Down Blackjack Strategy players have nothing to fear playing against CSMs.

## Comparison of Betting Systems

We learned in the chapter on betting progressions that the surest way to win a high number of games is to use a negative progression. 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 Take Down Blackjack 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 Take Down Blackjack Strategy Betting System.



# The Take Down Blackjack Strategy

Take Down Blackjack uses a betting progression as the heart of the strategy. The progression for \$5 Base Betting is shown below:

## Standard Betting Series

Level	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total
Bet	5	6	7	10	12	16	22	30	40	50	158

Bets made in this betting series are referred to as Standard Bets.

### Protective Bets

There is a second betting series which is used after incurring three consecutive losing Standard Bets. For \$5 betting, this series consists of bets of \$1 which are made until a bet wins. Setting up Protective Bets is sometimes referred to setting up a Burgher Wall. T.F. Burgher first developed these bets and when we were testing this system we often referred to them as setting up a Burgher Wall against losses.

### Take Down Bets

Take Down Bets consist of parlaying any win made in the Standard Betting Series. (These are sometimes called “G Bets” named for Randy Gallagher who developed them.) For example, if we win a Level 2 bet of \$6, we will parlay the bet and wager \$12 for the next round of play.

### Rules for Betting

1. You should play at a table where the minimum wagers allowed are smaller than the Base Bets you use in the Standard Betting Series. The examples which follow are played in games accepting bets ranging from \$1 to \$100. In these games our Protective Bets are \$1 each, while our Standard Bets start at \$5. You can easily find blackjack games online with \$1 to \$100 bet limits.

In land-based play you will most likely find games with \$5 to \$10 minimum bets. To take full advantage of Take Down Blackjack's unique Protective Betting Mode, you will need to use a Standard Betting Series with a larger base bet than the minimum wagers at the table. For example, at a table with \$5 minimum bets, you could use \$5 Protective Bets and use a Standard Betting Series with a Base Bet of \$10 or \$25.

2. You will always start play making a Level 1 Bet in Standard Betting Mode. If you win, you will parlay the bet. For example, if you win a bet of \$5, you will wager \$10 for the next round, consisting of the original bet plus the amount won. If you double or split a wager and win, you will only parlay on the original wager. For example, if you bet \$5 and double down with \$10 wagered and win the wager, you will parlay \$10 for the next bet, consisting of your original wager of \$5 plus an amount equal to it.

3. Whenever you lose a Standard Bet, whether it is parlayed or not, you will raise your bet one level for the next round of betting. For example, if you lose a Level 1 bet of \$5 you will wager a Level 2 bet of \$6 on the next round of play. If you lose a parlayed Level 1 bet of \$10 you will move up to a Level 2 bet for the next round of play.

4. If you win a parlayed bet you have won a Take Down Bet. When you win it you will win three times the size of your original wager when you win a parlay. For example, if you bet \$5 and win and then parlay it and wager \$10 and also win, you will have won \$15, three times the size of your original wager of \$5. With any win of a parlayed or Take Down Bet you can either quit play or drop back to Level 1 on the next round and continue playing.

5. Winning and losing blackjacks, doubled hands or split pairs does not affect the size of parlay bets or the level of betting. For example, if you make a Level 1 bet of \$5, double the bet and win, you will have wagered \$10 and won \$10. However, for the next round of play you will parlay the amount of the original bet of \$5 and wager \$10 as the parlayed bet. Let's assume that instead of winning the Level 1 bet of \$5, which you doubled to wager \$10, you lost the bet. Even though you lost more than a normal Level 1 bet of \$5, you will still move up one level, to Level 2 for the next round. Using the Master Playing Strategy you are much more likely to win doubled and split bets than with other versions of basic strategy. The best option for winning with Take Down Blackjack is to ignore the effects of winning and losing doubled and split bets, as well as receiving blackjacks.

6. If you lose three bets in a row you will move into Protective Betting Mode. For \$5 Base Bets we recommend using Protective Bets of \$1 each. Once you are in Protective Betting Mode you will stay in this mode until you win one bet. Example: You lose Level 1, 2 and 3 bets. With three consecutive losses you change to Protective Betting Mode and wager \$1 on the next round. If the bet loses you will continue in Protective Mode and wager \$1 again on the next round. Whenever you win a Protective Betting Mode bet, you will resume betting in the Standard Mode at the level higher than your last losing Standard Mode bet. In this case, since your last Standard bet was a losing Level 3 bet, you will make a Level 4 bet.

7. You will use the Master Playing Strategy as shown on the following player card. This playing strategy reduces the number of times that you will double down or split bets. While this strategy gives up about one tenth of one percent in player advantage, it more than makes up for this in reducing the size of the bankroll needed to use this system. It also reduces the risk of doubling or splitting hands when the very slight advantage of making the move does not outweigh the risks of losing this wager. This is especially critical on parlayed bets and larger bets in the betting series.

## Take Down Master Playing Strategy

### Take Down Blackjack Strategy

#### Splitting:

7,7 is vs 7 or lower  
8,8 always split  
A,A always split

#### Doubling Down:

11 and 10 vs 2-7, 9 vs 5-6

#### Hitting & Standing:

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 Always Stand

#### Surrender:

Surrender 16 vs 9,10 and 15 vs 10.

#### Insurance

Never take insurance.

8. To use this system you will need to use a Game Bankroll or buy-in that is greater than the total of the bets in the betting series. While the bets shown for the Standard Betting Series with \$5 Base Bets total \$158, you should buy in for \$250. This is to provide for extra cash needed to double or split hands. For example, you might be making a \$40 Level 9 wager and have a profitable doubling opportunity if you show a total of 11 on your first two cards versus a dealer's upcard of 6. By using a bankroll larger than the total of the bets in the series, you will be able to make the bet.

9. Use Profit Goals and Stop Losses when you play. In general I like to use a Profit Goal eight times the size of the Base Bet. With a Standard Betting Series using \$5 Base Bets, I use a Profit Goal of  $8 \times \$5 = \$40$ . Using a Profit Goal gives me a reasonable target to hit before stopping a game.

10. Stop Losses are generally based on the size of the Game Bankroll. As a practical matter you will consider a game lost anytime you lose a Level 10 wager. With the loss of all ten levels of bets, you will have depleted your bankroll and you will need to take a break before continuing play.

11. You should use a Total Bankroll five times the size of your Game Bankroll. For \$5 Base Bettors, using a Game Bankroll of \$250, their Total Bankroll should be five times this amount or \$1,250.

### The System in Action

We've covered a lot of rules and at this point the system may seem fairly complex. It is not that hard to use and the easiest way to understand it is to see how the rules are used in a game.

### Sample Game 1

#### Standard Betting Series Used

Level	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total
Bet	5	6	7	10	12	16	22	30	40	50	158



Base Bet - \$5  
Game Bankroll - \$250  
Total Bankroll - \$1,250  
Profit Goal - \$40  
Loss Limit - Loss of a Level 10 bet.  
Protective Bets - \$1

The table used to present the game is set up as follows:

**Round.** The round of play.

**Standard Bets.** The bet level of wagers made in Standard Betting Mode. If the bet is a parlayed bet “Par” is shown with the Bet Level, where “1-Par” signifies a parlayed Level 1 bet.

**Protective Bets.** This column shows bets made in Protective Mode following three losing Standard Bets.

**Original Bet.** The amount of the original bet.

**Hands.** Shows the type of hand played. Here we can see whether we had a single hand, (S), a doubled hand (D), a split pair (SP) or a Blackjack (BJ).

**Total Bet.** This is the total amount bet for the round. This includes the amounts of the original bet as well as any additional wagers due to doubling or splitting.

**W/L.** Outcome of wagers, where W= win, L=Loss and Ps=Push.

**Amount Won or Lost.** Here the results of the round of play are shown. With a split pair, if we win one hand and lose the other we will show the round as a Push (Ps).

**Balance.** This is our running total for a game.

**Table Key:**

S = Single hand

SP = Split Pair

D = Doubled hand

BJ = Blackjack

Par = Parlayed bet

W= Winning Hand

L = Losing Hand

Ps = Push

**Sample Game 1**

Round	Standard Bets	Protective Bets	Original Bet	Hands	Total Bet	W/L	Amount Won or Lost	Balance
1	1		5	S-BJ	5	W	+7.50	+7.50
2	1-Par		10	S	10	L	-10	-2.50
3	2		6	S	6	L	-6	-8.50
4	3		7	S	7	L	-7	-15.50
5		1	1	S	1	L	-1	-16.50
6		1	1	S	1	L	-1	-17.50
7		1	1	S	1	W	+1	-16.50
8	4		10	S	10	W	+10	-6.50
9	4-Par		20	Db	40	W	+40	+33.50
10	1		5	S	5	W	+5	+38.50
11	1-Par		10	S	10	W	+10	+48.50

**Round by round explanation of Sample Game 1:**

Round 1. We start the game in Standard Mode making a Level 1 bet. We receive a blackjack and win \$7.50 on a \$5 bet.

Round 2. Following the win we parlay the amount of the original bet previously made. We add \$5 to our original bet of \$5 ignoring the bonus amount won with the blackjack. We wager \$10 and lose the bet.

Round 3. We lost the parlay which was a Level 1 bet. We make a Level 2 bet for \$6 and lose.

Round 4. Following the loss we increase our bet one level to Level 3. We wager \$7 and lose the bet.

Round 5. Having lost three Standard Bets we move into Protective Betting Mode. We wager \$1 and lose.

Round 6. Without a win we continue in Protective Betting Mode and bet \$1 which loses.

Round 7. Still in Protective Betting Mode, we wager \$1 and win.

Round 8. The win on any bet in Protective Betting Mode moves us back into Standard Betting Mode one level higher than where we left off. We make a Level 4 bet of \$10 and win.

Round 9. We will parlay any Standard Bet which wins. We add \$10 winnings to our Round 8 bet of \$10 and wager \$20. We double down on our first two cards betting another \$20 for a total of \$40. We win the bet. This win brings our win for the game up to \$33.50, within striking distance of our goal of \$40.

Round 10. Following winning the Take Down Bet (the parlay) we drop back to Level 1 and bet \$5. We win.

Round 11. A winning bet in Standard Mode sets up another Take Down Bet. We parlay the last bet and wager \$10 this round. We win the wager. After this round our net win for this game reaches \$48.50, exceeding our Profit Goal of \$40.

## **Comments About Sample Game 1**

Sample Game 1 gives us a good overview of how Take Down Blackjack works.

We lost rounds 2, 3 and 4 in Standard Betting mode. Anytime we lose three consecutive wagers in Standard Mode, we will change to Protective Betting Mode. That is what we did on Round 5.

We lost Rounds 2 through 6, a total of five consecutive bets. Losing streaks of this length or even longer are very common in blackjack. Many systems don't have an effective way to cope with losing streaks. Some systems advocate quitting after losing four consecutive bets. We have found that because of blackjack's tendency to trend that long losing streaks are commonly followed by winning streaks. This is exactly what happened in Sample Game 1. After losing Rounds 2 through 6, we won Rounds 7 through 11.

We have found that this streakiness occurs just as commonly in computer-based games as card based so that it is not strictly tied to card bunching or using physical cards. Using Protective Bets allows us to keep playing without racking up large losses. When the trend changes we can quickly recoup any losses and set up a win.

Parlaying bets following wins in Standard Betting Mode is another good move. In testing this system we found that we are more likely to have a win following a win than a loss following a win. Using a Take Down Bet is a powerful way to take advantage of this player advantage situation.

We won Round 8 and for Round 9 we parlayed the Round 8 win and bet \$20. This was our largest wager of the game and we doubled and won. One of the reasons we use the Take Down Master Playing Strategy is that it reduces the times we will double or split bets. With the Master Playing Strategy for instance, we will double only when we are strongly favored to win. In Round 9 our first two cards totaled 11, versus a dealer's 5 so that we were in a strong position to win and we did. However, if the dealer had showed a 9 instead of a 5 we would not have doubled the hand. Conventional Basic Strategy would have called for doubling. With the Master Playing Strategy we would have hit the hand.

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We'll present more sample games in the next chapter.

## More Sample Games

Sample Game 1 was a fairly easy game. We won the game in 11 rounds of play.

In Sample Game 1 our Profit Goal was \$40. For Sample Game 2 we changed our Profit Goal to \$50. Let's see how we did.

### Table Key:

S = Single hand

SP = Split Pair

D = Doubled hand

BJ = Blackjack

Par = Parlayed bet

W= Winning Hand

L = Losing Hand

Ps = Push

### Sample Game 2

Round	Standard Bets	Protective Bets	Original Bet	Hands	Total Bet	W/L	Amount Won or Lost	Balance
1	1		5	S	5	W	+5	+5
2	1-Par		10	S	10	L	-10	-5
3	2		6	S	6	L	-6	-11
4	3		7	S	7	W	+7	-4
5	3-Par		14	S	14	W	+14	+10
6	1		5	S-BJ	5	W	+7.50	+17.50
7	1-Par		10	S	10	Ps	-	+17.50
8	1-Par		10	S-BJ	10	W	+15	+32.50
9	1		5	S	5	L	-5	+27.50
10	2		6	S	6	W	+6	+33.50
11	S-Par		12	S	12	L	-12	+21.50
12	3		7	S	7	L	-7	+14.50
13	4		10	S	10	W	+10	+24.50
14	4-Par		20	S	20	W	+20	+44.50
15	1		5	S	5	L	-5	+39.50
16	2		6	S	6	L	-6	+33.50
17	3		7	S	7	L	-7	+26.50
18		1	1	S	1	W	+1	+27.50
19	4		10	S	10	W	+10	+37.50
20	4-Par		20	S	20	W	+20	+57.50

## **Round by round explanation of Sample Game 2**

Round 1. We start the game making a Level 1 bet in Standard Mode. Our bet wins.

Round 2. When in Standard Betting Mode we will set up a Take Down Bet following any win by parlaying the original amount of the winning bet. We add \$5 to our original bet of \$5 and bet \$10. We lose the bet.

Round 3. Following the loss of the parlayed Level 1 bet we move up to Level 2 and wager \$6. Our bet loses.

Round 4. We increase our bet one level following the loss and make a Level 3 bet of \$7 and win.

Round 5. Following any winning bet in Standard Mode we set up a parlay wager. We wager \$14 and win the wager.

Round 6. Any parlay win drops our next wager back to Level 1. We make a Level 1 bet of \$5 and receive a blackjack.

Round 7. Following the win we parlay the original bet and add \$5 winnings to it, ignoring the bonus paid for the blackjack. We push on the round.

Round 8. Following a push we repeat the same wager and receive a blackjack..

Round 9. Following the win of a Take Down Bet we drop back to Level 1. We bet \$5 and lose.

Round 10. We make a Level 2 bet of \$6 and win.

Round 11. We parlay our last winning bet and wager \$12. We lose the bet.

Round 12. Following the loss of a Level 2 bet we move up to Level 3, wager \$7 and lose the bet.

Round 13 . We make a Level 4 bet of \$10 and win.

Round 14. Having won a Standard Bet in Round 13 we set up a Take Down Bet and parlay the bet wagering \$20. We win the parlay. Our winnings reach \$44.50. With a Profit Goal of \$40 we would call the game over at this point. However, since we have set a Profit Goal of \$50 for this game we continue playing.

Round 15. Following the win of the Take Down Bet we are back to Level 1. We wager \$5 and lose.

Round 16. We move up to a Level 2 bet of \$6 and lose the wager.

Round 17. Since we lost the Level 2 wager we increase our wager to Level 3 and bet \$7. We also lose this bet.

Round 18. Anytime we have three consecutive losses in Standard Mode we shift to Protection Betting Mode. We wager \$1 and win.

Round 19. With the win of a Protective Bet we resume play in Standard Mode making a Level 4 wager of \$10. We win the bet.

Round 20. We parlay the last winning bet and wager \$20. We win the bet and our net winnings for the game reaches \$57.50 exceeding our Profit Goal of \$50. We call the game completed.

### **Comments About Sample Game 2**

This game took a little longer than Sample Game 1. We moved our Profit Goal up to \$50 which took longer to reach than the recommended Profit Goal for this level of play of \$40.

In this game we had a total of 11 winning bets, one push and 8 losing bets. If we had made flat bets of \$5 each, we would have won \$15 for this game. The superiority of the Triple Acton Blackjack System is demonstrated by this game.

We made a total of six Take Down Bets and won four out of six. This gave our winnings a huge boost.

We managed to get through this game with the longest string of losses reaching only three losses so the Protective Betting was not really necessary. However, if we had faced four or five or even more consecutive losing bets, Protective Betting would have protected us from larger losses.

Sample Games 1 and 2 were interesting but not too difficult. In Sample Game 3 we will be faced with many losing bets. Let's see how it turns out.

### Sample Game 3

For this game our Profit Goal is \$40. We will use the system set up for \$5 Base Bets which is repeated here for your reference:

#### Parameters of Play for Sample Game 3

##### Standard Bets Used for Sample Game 3

Level	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total
Bet	5	6	7	10	12	16	22	30	40	50	158

Game Bankroll - \$250

Total Bankroll - \$1,250

Base Bet - \$5

Profit Goal - \$50

Protective Bets = \$1

Loss Limit – Loss of a Level 10 bet

Protective Bets - \$1 each

#### Table Key:

S = Single hand

SP = Split Pair

D = Doubled hand

BJ = Blackjack

Par = Parlayed bet



W= Winning Hand

L = Losing Hand

Ps = Push

### Sample Game 3

Round	Standard Bets	Protective Bets	Original Bet	Hands	Total Bet	W/L	Amount Won or Lost	Balance
1	1		5	S	5	L	-5	-5
2	2		6	S	6	L	-6	-11
3	3		7	S	7	L	-7	-18
4		1	1	S	1	L	-1	-19
5		1	1	Db	2	L	-2	-21
6		1	1	S	1	W	+1	-20
7	4		10	S	10	L	-10	-30
8	5		12	S	12	W	+12	-18
9	5-Par		24	S	24	W	+24	+6
10	1		5	S	5	W	+5	+11
11	1-Par		10	S	10	L	-10	+1
12	2		6	S	6	L	-6	-5
13	3		7	S	7	W	+7	+2
14	3-Par		14	S	14	W	+14	+16
15	1		5	SP	10	W	+10	+26
16	1-Par		10	S	10	W	+10	+36
17	1		5	S	5	L	-5	+31
18	2		6	S	6	W	+6	+37
19	2-Par		12	S	12	L	-12	+25
20	3		7	S	7	L	-7	+18
21	4		10	S	10	L	-10	+8
22		1	1	S	1	W	+1	+9
23	5		12	S	12	W	+12	+21
24	5-Par		24	S	24	W	+24	+44

### Round by Round Explanation of Sample Game 3

Round 1. We start the game with a Level 1 bet of \$5. We lose the bet.

Round 2. We raise our bet one level to Level 2, wager \$6 and lose.

Round 3. After losing a Level 2 bet we make a Level 3 bet of \$7 and lose.

Round 4. Following three consecutive losing Standard Bets we change to Protective Betting Mode and bet \$1. We lose again.

Round 5. Still in Protective Mode we bet \$1, double the bet and lose.

Round 6. Continuing in Protective Mode we bet \$1 and win.

Round 7. Following any win in Protective Mode, we return to Standard Betting one level higher than our last losing bet. We make a Level 4 wager of \$10 and lose.

Round 8. We move up to Level 5 and bet \$12. We win the bet.

Round 9. We will parlay any winning wager made in Standard Betting Mode so we parlay the \$12 bet and wager \$24. We win the bet.

Round 10. With the win of the Take Down Bet (the parlay) we revert to the lowest bet level and make a Level 1 bet for \$5. We win.

Round 11. We parlay our last winning bet of \$5, wager \$10 and lose the bet.

Round 12. Following the Level 1 loss we make a Level 2 bet of \$6 and lose.

Round 13. We move up to Level 3, wager \$7 and win.

Round 14. We parlay the last winning bet of \$7, making a Take Down Bet of \$14. We win the bet.

Round 15. With any Take Down Win we drop back to Level 1. We make a Level 1 bet of \$5 and split a pair for a total bet of \$10. We win the two bets.

Round 16. Following the last win, we parlay the amount of the original bet and wager \$10 this round. We win the bet.

Round 17. Following a successful Take Down win we drop back to bet Level 1, bet \$5 and lose.

Round 18. Having lost the last bet we move to a Level 2 bet of \$6 and win.

Round 19. We always parlay a winning Standard Bet. We bet \$12 as our Take Down Bet and lose.

Round 20. Following the loss of a Level 2 parlayed bet we move up to Level 3 and bet \$7. We lose the wager.

Round 21. We move up to a Level 4 bet of \$10 and lose.

Round 22. Three consecutive losing Standard Bets moves us into Protective Betting Mode. We bet \$1 and win.

Round 23. With the win of a Protective Bet we revert to Standard Betting and make a wager one level higher than our previous losing Standard Bet. We make a Level 5 wager of \$12 and win.

Round 24. We parlay the last winning bet, wagering \$24 and win the wager. This brings our winnings for the game up to \$45, exceeding our Profit Goal of \$40. We call the game completed.

### **Comments About Sample Game 3**

Sample Game 3 had 12 winning bets and 12 losing bets. If we had made flat bets, we would have broken even and have nothing to show for this game. Instead, using our combination of Standard Bets, Take Down Bets and Protective Bets, we won \$45.

We lost the first five rounds of the game. While this would be devastating to many systems we took it in stride, aided by changing to Protective Betting Mode.

As we see so many times in blackjack, five consecutive losing bets were followed by five bets where we won four out of five of the bets. With blackjack it is critical to keep losses small during losing streaks and then take full advantage of winning streaks.

After Round 10 we were ahead by \$11 with four winning and six losing wagers. On rounds 14 to 24 we set up four Take Down Bets by parlaying winning bets. We won three out of four of the bets which set up a nice game win by the end of Round 24.

This game was more difficult than the first two Sample Games. We had a long losing streak in this game, but our losses were minimized by using Protective Bets. While our wins and losses balanced out we won the game by getting more money bet during favorable bet runs and reducing our bets during losing runs.

Let's take a look at one more sample game. In Sample Game 4 we complete an entire game with Standard Bets ranging from \$5 to \$10.

### Sample Game 4

For this game our Profit Goal is \$40. We will use the system set up for \$5 Base Bets which is repeated here for your reference:

#### Parameters of Play for Sample Game 4

Standard Bets Used for Sample Game 3

Level	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total
Bet	5	6	7	10	12	16	22	30	40	50	158

Base Bet - \$5

Game Bankroll - \$250

Total Bankroll - \$1,250

Base Bet - \$5

Profit Goal - \$50

Protective Bets = \$1

Loss Limit – Loss of a Level 10 bet

Protective Bets - \$1 each

**Table Key:**

S = Single hand

SP = Split Pair

D = Doubled hand

BJ = Blackjack

Par = Parlayed bet

W= Winning Hand

L = Losing Hand

Ps = Push

**Sample Game 4**

Round	Standard Bets	Protective Bets	Original Bet	Hands	Total Bet	W/L	Amount Won or Lost	Balance
1	1		5	S	5	W	+5	+5
2	1-Par		10	S	10	L	-10	-5
3	2		6	S	6	W	+6	+1
4	2-Par		12	S	12	W	+12	+13
5	1		5	S	5	Ps	-	+13
6	1		5	S	5	W	+5	+18
7	1-Par		10	S	10	L	-10	+8
8	2		6	S	6	W	+6	+14
9	2-Par		12	S	12	L	-12	+2
10	3		7	S	7	W	+7	+9
11	3-Par		14	S	14	Ps	-	+9
12	3-Par		14	S	14	Ps	-	+9
13	3-Par		14	S	14	L	-14	-5
14	4		10	S	10	W	+8	+3
15	4-Par		20	S	20	W	+20	+23
16	1		5	S	5	W	+5	+28
17	1-Par		10	S	10	W	+10	+38
18	1		5	S	5	L	-5	+33
19	2		6	S	6	L	-6	+27
20	3		7	S	7	W-BJ	+10.50	+37.50
21	3-Par		14	S	14	W	+14	+51.50

**Round by Round Explanation of Sample Game 4**

Round 1. We start play in Standard Mode making a Level 1 bet of \$5 which wins.

Round 2. We parlay the Round 1 win, wagering \$10 and lose the bet.

Round 3. Following the loss of the Level 1 parlayed bet, we make a Level 2 bet of \$6 and win.

Round 4. We set up a Take Down Bet, parlaying the previous winning bet and wagering \$12. We win.

Round 5. With a Take Downwin we drop back to Level 1, wagering \$5 and push the hand.

Round 6. We repeat the bet and win.

Round 7. We parlay the winning bet, betting \$10. We lose the wager.

Round 8. Having lost a Level 1 parlayed bet we make a Level 2 bet of \$6 and win.

Round 9. We parlay the previous winning bet, betting \$12. We lose the bet.

Round 10. We move up to Level 3, wagering \$7 and win.

Round 11. We parlay the previous winning bet, betting \$14. We push the hand.

Round 12. We repeat the previous bet and push again.

Round 13. We repeat the previous bet, wagering \$14 and lose.

Round 14. With the loss of a Level 3 parlay bet we make a Level 4 bet of \$10 and win.

Round 15. We parlay the last winning bet, wagering \$20 and win the wager.

Round 16. Following the win of a Take Down Bet we drop back to Level 1, wagering \$5 which wins.

Round 17. We parlay the last winning bet, wagering \$10 and win.

Round 18. Following winning the parlay bet we drop back to a Level 1, \$5 bet and lose.

Round 19. We move up to Level 2, betting \$6 and lose.

Round 20. We increase our wager to a Level 3 bet of \$7 and receive a winning blackjack.

Round 21. We parlay the wager of \$7, adding \$7 to it for a wager of \$14. We win the bet. This win brings our winnings up to \$51.50, exceeding our goal of \$40. We call the game complete.

#### **Comments About Sample Game 4**

Sample Game 4 was choppy. We never had enough consecutive losses to move into Protective Betting Mode. We made seven Take Down Bets and lost four out of the seven bets. However, winning a majority of the Take Down Bets is not necessary to win and we still reached our Profit Goal in 21 rounds of betting.

## **Take Down Blackjack Sets New Performance Records!**

After I developed Take Down Blackjack, I went on a winning streak. I used the system in several different online casinos and won a large amount of money.

I played in many different land-based casinos and continued to win. While I kept track of winning and losing games, I was curious about how well this system would hold up under controlled testing.

I contacted Silverthorne Publications and asked for their help. I was hoping that they could set up a testing program for me. However, their publisher, Martin J Silverthorne, was very forthright in telling me that they were currently testing four different systems and that they “had run out of manpower.”

However, he got me on the right track. He showed me how to set up and control a testing program. My only problem was finding the people to help me.

I started out calling people on my own Christmas mailing list. I got my core group of seven testers that way.

Then I used the “friends of friends” approach. I asked each of my core testers to see if they could find more people ready to help me. At this point things moved quickly.

By now each of my original seven players had experienced using the system. They could share first hand just how profitable it was.

Eventually I ended up with 27 players. I hired an accounting major in a local university to help me track the results.

I was confident that I had a solid way of seeing just how average players would do using Take Down Blackjack.



Each player was given a kit showing how to play the system and tracking forms to record their play. My seven core members acted as trainers and helped the newer players get going.

By the time my players and I finished the test of Triple Acton Blackjack we had played in 73 different casinos.

We played in 37 different land-based casinos and 36 online casinos. While our players did make minor mistakes in play, such as not following our Master Playing Strategy perfectly, or betting an incorrect amount on occasion, overall I am confident our results are very representative of what any average player will experience playing blackjack using the Take Down Blackjack Strategy.

Our players played at many different levels with their Base Bets ranging from 50¢ bets to Base Bets as high as \$200. To make our results comparable I followed Martin Silverthorne's suggestion and had our accountant convert all the results to what he called "\$5 Based Play." What this means is that we converted all of the games played at different levels to the equivalent of the results the players would have had if they had used \$5 Base Bets.

After all of the games were converted to \$5 Based Play, we analyzed the play as you will see in the following table.

The purpose of all of this number crunching was really very simple. We wanted to know what our results would be if we had played all of our games at \$5 Base Bets using a Profit Goal of \$40.

Here are the parameters used for our \$5 Based Play:

## **\$5 Base Bet Standard Betting Series Used**

Level	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total
Bet	5	6	7	10	12	16	22	30	40	50	158

Game Bankroll - \$250

Total Bankroll - \$1,250

Base Bet - \$5

Profit Goal - \$50

Protective Bets = \$1

Loss Limit – Loss of a Level 10 bet

Protective Bets - \$1 each

## **Testing Results**

We played a total of 4,356 documented games of blackjack. The games were played in both land-based and online casinos and, as noted above, all of the results were converted to \$5 Based Play, using the parameters shown. The results of our play is summarized on the following page.

We won 4,114 games out of 4,356 games played, for a game win rate of 94.44% of all games played.

The average amount won per game, net of all losses, was \$33.71.

Our average game took just 20.03 rounds of play.

In a land-based casino, with 60 rounds of play per hour, an average player could play three games per hour.

In online games, which are played much faster, we estimate that our players could play 300 rounds per hour. At this rate of play, a player could play 15 games an hour online.

Just so we are clear on what I mean by a game, I am talking about a session of play which either results in a win, defined as reaching or exceeding the Profit Goal for that level of play, or losing the game by losing the Level 10 wager.

Winning a game does not mean the player has to quit playing. He may want to continue playing. If he does keep playing, he should reset his bankroll to the original Game Bankroll and reset his play by starting with a Level 1 bet in Standard Betting Mode.

In land-based play it is easy to reset the bankroll. The winnings chips can be put in a separate stack. Once there they will never be used for play.

In online games it is not possible to pull out chips from your bankroll since the casino keeps a running tab of your account balance. With online play I suggest you record your account balance at the beginning and end of each game so that you can keep track of winnings per game.

The most important statistic from our testing is the amount you will win per round of play. In this \$5 Based Test, the average amount won was \$1.68 per round.

This amount can be used to estimate hourly winnings in different casinos. For example, in a land-based game, played at 60 rounds per hour, as a \$5 bettor you could expect to make  $\$1.68 \times 60$  rounds or \$100.80 an hour.

Online the hourly win rate for \$5 bettors is just stunning. We compute  $\$1.68 \times 300$  rounds = \$504.00 an hour.

The following table summarizes Base Bets, Game Bankroll, Profit Goal and Win Rates for play ranging from \$1 to \$500 Base Bets.

Let's take a look at two levels of play – \$25 betting online and \$100 betting in land-based games.

The goal of every online player using Take Down Blackjack should be to reach the \$25 betting level. This betting level is perfect for online blackjack games with bet limits ranging from \$5 to \$500.

Twenty-five dollar bettors will play according to the following parameters:

Base Bet	Game Bankroll	Standard Bets										Protective Bet	Profit Goal
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		
\$25	\$1250	25	30	35	50	60	80	110	150	200	250	\$5	\$200

Assuming the player plays online at the rate of 300 rounds per hour, he will win an average of \$2520 an hour using \$25 Base Bets. Even if he plays at the slower rate of 200 rounds per hour, his average net winnings will be \$1,681 an hour!

With land-based play, \$100 play is the sweet spot. Ideally, \$100 bettors should play in games with bets ranging from \$25 to \$5,000. There are many of these games in Nevada and in Atlantic City.

Hundred dollar base bettors will use the following parameters of play:

Base Bet	Game Bankroll	Standard Bets										Protective Bet	Profit Goal
		100	125	150	200	250	325	450	600	800	1000		
\$100	\$5000	100	125	150	200	250	325	450	600	800	1000	\$25	\$800

Playing in tables with no more than two or three players, 60 rounds of play an hour is not unreasonable. At this rate of play a \$100 Base Bettor can expect to win an average of \$1,680 an hour. If the player plays one-on-one against the dealer, the game will be a little faster, perhaps 80 rounds per hour. At this rate, a \$100 Base Bettor will net \$2,240 an hour.

While these win rates may sound too good to be true, it is difficult to argue against the hard evidence. These win rates are based on 4,356 games played in real casinos by real players and cover 87,241 rounds of play. While this is not the theoretical “long-term,” which might total millions of decisions, I have a lot of faith in these results. When you use the system, I am comfortable in telling you that your win rate should be close to our long-term averages which proves that –

Anyone using the Take Down Blackjack System is going to win and win big at blackjack in any game offered today!

## How Much Can You Win Playing Blackjack?

Take Down Blackjack is a winning system at all levels of play. You can play blackjack online making bets ranging from ten-cent wagers to \$100 Base Bets. There are a few online casinos accepting higher bets but these are the practical ranges for most online play.

In land-based games you will find blackjack bet limits ranging from \$3 minimum bets to as high as \$500 minimum bets.

As a practical matter, most players in brick and mortar casinos will be able to find games accepting \$5 to \$25 minimum bets.

The table below summarizes the Base Bets, Game Bankroll, Profit Goals, Total Bankroll, Winnings per Round and Average Hourly Win Rates for Land-based and Online play.

### Take Down Blackjack Summary of Base Bets, Game Bankrolls, Profit Goals & Win Rates

Base Bets	Game Bankroll	Profit Goal	Total Bankroll	Winnings per Round	Winning Per Hr – Land-Based (50 Rounds per Hour)	Winning Per Hr – Online (300 Rounds per Hour)
1	50	8	250	0.336	\$16.80	\$100.80
5	250	40	1250	\$1.68	\$84.00	\$504.00
10	500	80	2500	\$3.36	\$168.00	\$1008.00
15	750	120	3750	\$5.04	\$252.00	\$1512.00
25	1250	200	6250	\$8.40	\$420.00	\$2520.00
50	2500	400	12500	\$16.80	\$840.00	\$5040.00
100	5000	800	25000	\$33.60	\$1680.00	\$10,080
200	10000	1600	50000	\$67.20	\$3360.00	NA
300	15000	2400	75000	\$100.80	\$5040.00	NA
400	20000	3200	100000	\$134.40	\$6720.00	NA
500	25000	4000	125000	\$168.00	\$8400.00	NA

The win rates shown in the table are based on our 4,356 game test. They are net amounts including both winning and losing games. If you are in a winning streak, your average hourly wins will be higher than the amounts shown in the table. However, every player is going to have some losing games. Our average long-term loss rate was about one game out of every 18 played. Once you have played long enough and averaged in losing as well as winning games. Your average hourly net wins should be very close to our averages.

Let's consider some of your options –

You can get started playing online making \$1 bets for as little as \$50. Amazingly, you'll win \$100.80 an hour as a \$1 bettor. Many players stay at this level for some time. It's easy to see why –

Twenty-five hours a week will net \$1 online players \$2,500 a week. That's over \$10,000 a month making \$1 Base Bets.

Five-dollar play online is really profitable. With a proven net win rate of \$504 an hour, two hours a day will net over \$1,000.

Many players have settled into making \$1,000 a day for a couple of hours play. If they play five times a week, they'll pull in \$5,000 a week.

Land-based play may be even more exciting than online play. Here you have a chance to win consistently in some of the most exciting casinos in the world.

You can start out as a \$5 Bettor winning \$84 an hour. From here you'll quickly jump to \$10 and then \$25 betting. Twenty-five dollar play will consistently deliver winnings averaging \$420 an hour.

But why stop here? Most of our players in brick and mortar games move up to \$100 play as soon as possible Here's why –

Players making \$100 Base Bets average winning \$1,680 an hour. What's more, you don't have to play in high limit games to play at this level. Any casino allowing bets

from \$25 to \$2,000 is perfect for this level of play. You'll make \$100 Base Bets, \$25 Protective Bets and net \$1,680 an hour in winnings.



## **Skilful Play**

There are a number of decisions you can make in becoming a successful Take Down Blackjack 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 Take Down Blackjack 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 Take Down Blackjack 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 Take Down Blackjack 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 Take Down Blackjack 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 Take Down Blackjack 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 Take Down Blackjack 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.

### **Things to Avoid**

There are some things I just won't tolerate when I play blackjack. Top on my list of "the things I like least" are rude dealers. If a dealer starts making comments about my play, or is rude to other players, my advice is to just leave.

You don't need this kind of aggravation. If you have a bad feeling about the table, trust your instincts and leave.

### **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 Take Down Blackjack 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 Take Down 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 Take Down Blackjack 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 Take Down Blackjack 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 toke 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 Take Down Blackjack 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 Take Down Blackjack 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 Take Down Blackjack Strategy, and contrary to the opinion of some drunks, alcohol does not make you think clearer.
7. Toke the dealers. Dealers call tips "tokens" 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.

It's time to pull together everything we have learned. The next chapter reviews all aspects of the Take Down Blackjack Strategy and gives you a concrete game plan you can put into action.

## Winning With the Take Down Blackjack Strategy

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.

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 Take Down Blackjack 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 Take Down Blackjack Strategy Sessions. The amount you take for an excursion to a casino(s) is called

the Total Bankroll, and it should be at least three to four times the size of bankroll required to play a game. We recommend a Total Bankroll five times the size of a Game Bankroll. If you decide to play online, you can use these same concepts.

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 18 games), you would only take the amount needed to play one game. What would you do if the loss occurred in the first session, or even the first half dozen sessions? 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 session and trip bankrolls required for each level of wagering.

**Take Down Blackjack Strategy Base Bets,  
Game Bankroll, Profit Goal and Total Bankroll Requirements**

<b>Base Bets</b>	<b>Game Bankroll</b>	<b>Profit Goal</b>	<b>Total Bankroll</b>
1	50	8	250
5	250	40	1250
10	500	80	2500
15	750	120	3750
25	1250	200	6250
50	2500	400	12500
100	5000	800	25000
200	10000	1600	50000
300	15000	2400	75000
400	20000	3200	100000
500	25000	4000	125000

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 an adequate number of tracking forms, 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 Take Down Blackjack 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 \$1,000. You are planning a trip to Las Vegas and you find out that the minimum roulette bets accepted are \$5 bets.

You check with the table presented a couple of pages ago and see that the bankroll required to use the Take Down Blackjack Strategy with \$5 bets is \$1,250. 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 Take Down Blackjack Strategy in Las Vegas until you save another \$250 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 the win rates for both land-based and online play.

### Take Down Blackjack Hourly Win Rates

Base Bets	Game Bankroll	Total Bankroll	Winning Per Hr –Land-Based (50 Rounds per Hour)	Winning Per Hr – Online (300 Rounds per Hour)
1	50	250	\$16.80	\$100.80
5	250	1250	\$84.00	\$504.00
10	500	2500	\$168.00	\$1008.00
15	750	3750	\$252.00	\$1512.00
25	1250	6250	\$420.00	\$2520.00
50	2500	12500	\$840.00	\$5040.00
100	5000	25000	\$1680.00	\$10,080
200	10000	50000	\$3360.00	NA
300	15000	75000	\$5040.00	NA
400	20000	100000	\$6720.00	NA
500	25000	125000	\$8400.00	NA

Referring to the table at the beginning of this chapter you note that the bankroll required for \$1 Base Bets is just \$250. With your \$1000 bankroll you can easily play at this level.

The table above shows average hourly winnings of \$100.80 for a \$1 Base Bettor playing online.

You decide to use \$100 an hour as your estimated average hourly win for play as a \$1 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	\$1250
Bets in Las Vegas	
Current Bankroll	<u>1000</u>
Bankroll Shortage	<u>\$250</u>

Now, you compute how long it will take you to win the \$250 additional bankroll playing online with an average hourly win of \$100.

$$\$250/\$100 \text{ an hour} = 2.5 \text{ hours}$$

You have almost a week before the planned Las Vegas trip. You decide to try the online play plan, and in less than three hours you win \$250. 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 Take Down Blackjack 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.

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.

For your convenience, I am repeating several tables used throughout this book so that you can print the next few pages and have these tables available for reference.

Good luck in all of your play!!!



# Summary of Take Down Blackjack

## Take Down Blackjack Betting Strategy

Take Down Blackjack uses a betting progression as the heart of the strategy. The progression for \$5 Base Betting is shown below:

### Standard Betting Series

Level	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total
Bet	5	6	7	10	12	16	22	30	40	50	158

Bets made in this betting series are referred to as Standard Bets.

### Protective Bets

There is a second betting series which is used after incurring three consecutive losing Standard Bets. For \$5 betting, this series consists of bets of \$1 which are made until a bet wins.

### Take Down Bets

Take Down Bets consist of parlaying any win made in the Standard Betting Series. (These are sometimes called “G Bets” named for Randy Gallagher who developed them.) For example, if we win a Level 2 bet of \$6, we will parlay the bet and wager \$12 for the next round of play.

### Rules for Betting

1. You should play at a table where the minimum wagers allowed are smaller than the Base Bets you use in the Standard Betting Series. The examples which follow are played in games accepting bets ranging from \$1 to \$100. In these games our Protective Bets are \$1 each, while our Standard Bets start at \$5. You can easily find blackjack games online with \$1 to \$100 bet limits.

In land-based play you will most likely find games with \$5 to \$10 minimum bets. To

take full advantage of Take Down Blackjack's unique Protective Betting Mode, you will need to use a Standard Betting Series with a larger base bet than the minimum wagers at the table. For example, at a table with \$5 minimum bets, you could use \$5 Protective Bets and use a Standard Betting Series with a Base Bet of \$10 or \$25.

2. You will always start play making a Level 1 Bet in Standard Betting Mode. If you win the bet you will parlay the bet. For example, if you win a bet of \$5, you will wager \$10 for the next round, consisting of the original bet plus the amount won. If you double or split a wager and win, you will only parlay on the original wager. For example, if you bet \$5 and double down with \$10 wagered and win the wager, you will parlay \$10 for the next bet, consisting of your original wager of \$5 plus an amount equal to it.

3. Whenever you lose a Standard Bet, whether it is parlayed or not, you will raise your bet one level for the next round of betting. For example, if you lose a Level 1 bet of \$5 you will wager a Level 2 bet of \$6 on the next round of play. If you lose a parlayed Level 1 bet of \$10 you will move up to a Level 2 bet for the next round of play.

4. If you win a parlayed bet you have won a Take Down Bet. The bet is called a Take Down Bet because you will win three times the size of your original wager when you win a parlay. For example, if you bet \$5 and win and then parlay it and wager \$10 and also win, you will have won \$15, three times the size of your original wager of \$5. With any win of a parlayed or Take Down Bet you can either quit play or drop back to Level 1 on the next round and continue playing.

5. Winning and losing blackjacks, doubled hands or split pairs does not affect the size of parlay bets or the level of betting. For example, if you make a Level 1 bet of \$5, double the bet and win, you will have wagered \$10 and won \$10. However, for the next round of play you will parlay the amount of the original bet of \$5 and wager \$10 as the parlayed bet. Let's assume that instead of winning the Level 1 bet of \$5, which you doubled to wager \$10, you lost the bet. Even though you lost more than a normal Level 1 bet of \$5, you will still move up one level, to Level 2 for the next round. Using the Master Playing Strategy you are much more likely to win doubled and split bets than with other versions of basic strategy. The best option for winning with Take Down Blackjack is to ignore the effects of winning and losing doubled and split bets, as well as receiving blackjacks.

6. If you lose three bets in a row you will move into Protective Betting Mode. For \$5 Base Bets we recommend using Protective Bets of \$1 each. Once you are in Protective Betting Mode you will stay in this mode until you win one bet. Example: You lose Level 1, 2 and 3 bets. With three consecutive losses your change to Protective Betting Mode and wager \$1 on the next round. If the bet loses you will continue in Protective Mode and wager \$1 again on the next round. Whenever you win a Protective Betting Mode bet, you will resume betting in the Standard Mode at the level higher than your last losing Standard Mode bet. In this case, since your last Standard bet was a losing Level 3 bet, you will make a Level 4 bet.

7. You will use the Master Playing Strategy. This playing strategy reduces the number of times that you will double down or split bets. While this strategy gives up about one tenth of one percent in player advantage, it more than makes up for this in reducing the size of the bankroll needed to use this system. It also reduces the risk of doubling or splitting hands when the very slight advantage of making the move does not outweigh the risks of losing this wager. This is especially critical on parlayed bets and larger bets in the betting series.

8. To use this system you will need to use a Game Bankroll or buy-in that is greater than the total of the bets in the betting series. While the bets shown for the Standard Betting Series with \$5 Base Bets total \$158, you should buy in for \$250. This is to provide for extra cash needed to double or split hands. For example, you might be making a \$40 Level 9 wager and have a profitable doubling opportunity if you show a total of 11 on your first two cards versus a dealer's upcard of 6. By using a bankroll larger than the total of the bets in the series, you will be able to make the bet.

9. Use Profit Goals and Stop Losses when you play. In general I like to use a Profit Goal eight times the size of the Base Bet. With a Standard Betting Series using \$5 Base Bets, I use a Profit Goal of  $8 \times \$5 = \$40$ . Using a Profit Goal gives me a reasonable target to hit before stopping a game.

10. Stop Losses are generally based on the size of the Game Bankroll. As a practical matter you will consider a game lost anytime you lose a Level 10 wager. With the loss of all ten levels of bets, you will have depleted your bankroll and you will need to take a break before continuing play.

11. You should use a Total Bankroll five times the size of your Game Bankroll. For \$5 Base Bettors, using a Game Bankroll of \$250, their Total Bankroll should be five times this amount or \$1,250.

### **Take Down Blackjack Master Playing Strategy**

If you want to play blackjack occasionally and still want to have an excellent chance of winning, you can do so without even learning the much simplified Take Down Blackjack Master Playing Strategy.

I am presenting a very condensed strategy you can use called the **Quick and Dirty Strategy**. You can probably learn this strategy in less than thirty minutes, and for playing blackjack occasionally, you will not sacrifice much. Using this strategy, you will be playing at less than a 1% disadvantage in most casino games. If you combine this with the Take Down Blackjack Betting Strategy, which I will explain a little later, you should be an overall winner in blackjack.

#### **Quick and Dirty Strategy**

- 1. If conventional surrender is offered, always surrender any 16 against a dealer 9,10 or Ace and any 15 against a dealer 10.**
- 2. Hard hand hitting and standing rules are:**
  - Always stand on 17 or higher
  - Always hit on any hand of 11 or less
  - With a hand of 12 to 16, hit against an upcard of 7 greater, or otherwise stand
- 3. Soft hand hitting and standing rules are:**
  - With a soft hand of 18 or more, always stand.
  - With a soft hand of 17 or less, always hit.
- 4. Double down on any hand of 10 or 11 if your total is greater than the dealer's upcard, eg. double on 11 versus a dealer 10 or lower, double on 10 versus a dealer 9 or lower.**
- 5. Split any pairs of 8s unless 8s are surrendered.**
- 6. Never take insurance.**

If you are unfamiliar with basic strategy or you simply don't have the time or inclination to learn the Take Down Blackjack Master Playing Strategy, just learn the Down and Dirty Playing Strategy. You will play better than 95% of all blackjack players, and you will have an excellent chance of winning.

After you have mastered the Quick and Dirty Strategy, you may want to learn enough to cut the house edge down to a measly 3/4% using the Take Down Blackjack Master Playing Strategy. This strategy has more explicit rules than the first condensed playing strategy. You will notice that there are more hands to double down and more pairs to split. Just learning this strategy will give you better odds than taking pass line and single odds in craps or playing baccarat. The house edge using this strategy is about one-half of the best odds you could find on European single zero roulette wheels and is about three times lower than playing perfect Caribbean stud. Gaining this additional 1/4% is just a matter of learning a few more pairs to split, another hand to double and an additional card to hit.

If you only play blackjack once in while and don't have the time or inclination to play perfect basic strategy, you don't need to go beyond the **Quick and Dirty Strategy**. However, when you are ready to gain as much advantage over the house as you can with the best playing strategy, you will need to memorize the *Master Playing Strategy*

The Take Down Blackjack Master Playing Strategy reduces the number of doubling and splitting options to protect your bankroll. Take Down Blackjack is a system designed to maximize profits from *bet timing*. For this reason it is more important to control the size of bets than it is to double or split on hands with only small gains in advantage. Therefore, to protect your bankroll, you should always use either the Quick and Dirty Strategy or the Master Playing Strategy with Take Down Blackjack.

## Take Down Blackjack Master Playing Strategy

1. If conventional surrender is offered, always surrender any 16 against a dealer 9,10 or Ace and any 15 against a dealer 10.
2. Hard hand hitting and standing rules are:
  - Always stand on 17 or higher
  - Always hit any hand of 11 or less
  - With a hand of 12, stand if the dealer has an up-card of 4, 5, or 6, otherwise hit.
  - With a hand of 13, stand if the dealer has an up-card of 2, 3, 4, 5, or 6, otherwise hit.
3. Soft hand hitting and standing rules are:
  - With a soft hand of 18 or more, always stand.
  - With a soft hand of 17 or less, always hit.
4. Double down on any hand of 11 or 10 if the dealer shows a card of 2 to 7
5. Double down on any hand totaling 9 if the dealer shows a 5-6.
6. Split any pairs of 8s unless 8s are surrendered.
7. Split a pair of 7s if the dealer shows a 7 or lower.
8. Split any pair s of Aces.
9. Never take insurance.

## Take Down Blackjack Master Playing Strategy

### Take Down Blackjack Strategy

#### Splitting:

7,7 is vs 7 or lower  
8,8 always split  
A,A always split

#### Doubling Down:

11 and 10 vs 2-7, 9 vs 5-6

#### Hitting & Standing:

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 Always Stand

#### Surrender:

Surrender 16 vs 9,10 and 15 vs 10.

#### Insurance

Never take insurance.

## Summary of Base Bets, Game Bankrolls, Profit Goals and Bets

Base Bet	Game Bankroll	Standard Bets	Protective Bet	Profit Goal
25¢	12.50	.25 .35 .40 .50 .60 .80 1 1.50 2 2.50	\$0.25	\$2
50¢	25	.50 .60 .75 1 1.25 1.60 2.25 3 4 5	\$0.25	\$4
\$1	50	1 1.25 1.50 2 2.50 3.25 4.50 6 8 10	\$0.25	\$8
\$2	100	2 2.50 3 4 5 6.50 9 12 16 20	\$0.25	\$16
\$3	150	3 3.75 4.50 6 7.50 10 13 18 24 30	\$0.25	\$24
\$5	250	5 6 7 10 12 16 22 30 40 50	\$1	\$40
\$10	500	10 12 14 20 24 32 44 60 80 100	\$1	\$80
\$15	750	15 18 21 30 36 48 66 90 120 150	\$1	\$120
\$20	1000	20 25 28 40 48 64 88 120 160 200	\$1	\$160
\$25	1250	25 30 35 50 60 80 110 150 200 250	\$5	\$200
\$35	1750	35 42 50 70 85 110 150 210 280 350	\$5	\$280
\$50	2500	50 60 70 100 120 160 225 300 400 500	\$5	\$400
\$75	3750	75 90 105 150 180 240 325 450 600 750	\$5	\$600
\$100	5000	100 125 150 200 250 325 450 600 800 1000	\$25	\$800
\$200	10000	200 250 300 400 500 650 900 1200 1600 2000	\$25	\$1600
\$300	15000	300 375 450 600 750 1000 1350 1800 2400 3000	\$25	\$2400
\$400	20000	400 500 600 800 1000 1300 1800 2400 3200 4000	\$100	\$3200
\$500	25000	500 625 750 1000 1250 1625 2250 3000 4000 5000	\$100	\$4000

## Take Down Blackjack Strategy Cards

The easiest way to play Take Down Blackjack flawlessly is to take a Take Down Strategy Card with you when you play. We have completed a set of strategy cards for betting levels ranging from 25¢ to \$500.

### Take Down Blackjack Strategy - 25¢ Base Bets

<b>Take Down Blackjack Strategy - 25¢ Base Bets</b>										
Game Bankroll = \$12.50 Total Bankroll = \$63 Profit Goal = \$2										
<b>Standard Bets</b>										
Level	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Bets	.25	.35	.40	.50	.60	.80	1	1.50	2	2.50
<b>Protective Bets</b> -25¢, 10¢ if available										
<b>Rules:</b> Standard Bets: Up One level after loss. Parlay winning Standard Bets. If win back to Level 1. If lose 3 consecutive Standard Bets, go to Protective Betting until win one bet.										
Protective Betting: Only after losing 3 consecutive Standard Bets. Stay in Protective Betting until 1 win then back to Standard at one level higher than last Standard Bet loss.										
<b>Loss Limits:</b> Loss of Level 10 bet.										

### Take Down Blackjack Strategy - 50¢ Base Bets

<b>Take Down Blackjack Strategy - 50¢ Base Bets</b>										
Game Bankroll = \$25 Total Bankroll = \$125 Profit Goal = \$4										
<b>Standard Bets</b>										
Level	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Bets	.50	.60	.75	1	1.25	1.60	2.25	3	4	5
<b>Protective Bets</b> -25¢, 10¢ if available										
<b>Rules:</b> Standard Bets: Up One level after loss. Parlay winning Standard Bets. If win back to Level 1. If lose 3 consecutive Standard Bets, go to Protective Betting until win one bet.										
Protective Betting: Only after losing 3 consecutive Standard Bets. Stay in Protective Betting until 1 win then back to Standard at one level higher than last Standard Bet loss.										
<b>Loss Limits:</b> Loss of Level 10 bet.										



## Take Down Blackjack Strategy - \$1 Base Bets

**Take Down Blackjack Strategy - \$1 Base Bets**  
 Game Bankroll = \$50 Total Bankroll = \$250 Profit Goal = \$8

**Standard Bets**

Level	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Bets	1	1.25	1.50	2	2.50	3.25	4.50	6	8	10

**Protective Bets**-25¢, 10¢ if available

**Rules:** Standard Bets: Up One level after loss. Parlay winning Standard Bets. If win back to Level 1. If lose 3 consecutive Standard Bets, go to Protective Betting until win one bet.

Protective Betting: Only after losing 3 consecutive Standard Bets. Stay in Protective Betting until 1 win then back to Standard at one level higher than last Standard Bet loss.

**Loss Limits:** Loss of Level 10 bet.

## Take Down Blackjack Strategy - \$2 Base Bets

**Take Down Blackjack Strategy - \$2 Base Bets**  
 Game Bankroll = \$100 Total Bankroll = \$500 Profit Goal = \$16

**Standard Bets**

Level	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Bets	2	2.50	3	4	5	6.50	9	12	16	20

**Protective Bets**-25¢

**Rules:** Standard Bets: Up One level after loss. Parlay winning Standard Bets. If win back to Level 1. If lose 3 consecutive Standard Bets, go to Protective Betting until win one bet.

Protective Betting: Only after losing 3 consecutive Standard Bets. Stay in Protective Betting until 1 win then back to Standard at one level higher than last Standard Bet loss.

**Loss Limits:** Loss of Level 10 bet.

## Take Down Blackjack Strategy - \$3 Base Bets

**Take Down Blackjack Strategy - \$3 Base Bets**  
 Game Bankroll = \$150 Total Bankroll = \$750 Profit Goal = \$24

**Standard Bets**

Level	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Bets	3	3.75	4.50	6	7.50	10	13	18	24	30

**Protective Bets**-\$1, 25¢ if available

**Rules:** Standard Bets: Up One level after loss. Parlay winning Standard Bets. If win back to Level 1. If lose 3 consecutive Standard Bets, go to Protective Betting until win one bet.

Protective Betting: Only after losing 3 consecutive Standard Bets. Stay in Protective Betting until 1 win then back to Standard at one level higher than last Standard Bet loss.

**Loss Limits:** Loss of Level 10 bet.

## Take Down Blackjack Strategy - \$5 Base Bets

<b>Take Down Blackjack Strategy - \$5 Base Bets</b>										
Game Bankroll = \$250 Total Bankroll = \$1250 Profit Goal = \$40										
<b>Standard Bets</b>										
Level	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Bets	5	6	7	10	12	16	22	30	40	50
<b>Protective Bets-\$1</b>										
<b>Rules:</b> Standard Bets: Up One level after loss. Parlay winning Standard Bets. If win back to Level 1. If lose 3 consecutive Standard Bets, go to Protective Betting until win one bet.										
Protective Betting: Only after losing 3 consecutive Standard Bets. Stay in Protective Betting until 1 win then back to Standard at one level higher than last Standard Bet loss.										
<b>Loss Limits:</b> Loss of Level 10 bet.										

## Take Down Blackjack Strategy - \$10 Base Bets

<b>Take Down Blackjack Strategy - \$10 Base Bets</b>										
Game Bankroll = \$500 Total Bankroll = \$2500 Profit Goal = \$80										
<b>Standard Bets</b>										
Level	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Bets	10	12	14	20	24	32	44	60	80	100
<b>Protective Bets-\$1to \$5</b>										
<b>Rules:</b> Standard Bets: Up One level after loss. Parlay winning Standard Bets. If win back to Level 1. If lose 3 consecutive Standard Bets, go to Protective Betting until win one bet.										
Protective Betting: Only after losing 3 consecutive Standard Bets. Stay in Protective Betting until 1 win then back to Standard at one level higher than last Standard Bet loss.										
<b>Loss Limits:</b> Loss of Level 10 bet.										

## Take Down Blackjack Strategy - \$15 Base Bets

<b>Take Down Blackjack Strategy - \$15 Base Bets</b>										
Game Bankroll = \$750 Total Bankroll = \$3750 Profit Goal = \$120										
<b>Standard Bets</b>										
Level	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Bets	15	18	21	30	36	48	66	90	120	150
<b>Protective Bets-\$1to \$5</b>										
<b>Rules:</b> Standard Bets: Up One level after loss. Parlay winning Standard Bets. If win back to Level 1. If lose 3 consecutive Standard Bets, go to Protective Betting until win one bet.										
Protective Betting: Only after losing 3 consecutive Standard Bets. Stay in Protective Betting until 1 win then back to Standard at one level higher than last Standard Bet loss.										
<b>Loss Limits:</b> Loss of Level 10 bet.										

## Take Down Blackjack Strategy - \$20 Base Bets

### Take Down Blackjack Strategy - \$20 Base Bets

Game Bankroll = \$1000 Total Bankroll = \$5000 Profit Goal = \$160

#### Standard Bets

Level	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Bets	20	25	28	40	48	64	88	120	160	200

#### Protective Bets-\$5 to \$10

**Rules:** Standard Bets: Up One level after loss. Parlay winning Standard Bets. If win back to Level 1. If lose 3 consecutive Standard Bets, go to Protective Betting until win one bet.

Protective Betting: Only after losing 3 consecutive Standard Bets. Stay in Protective Betting until 1 win then back to Standard at one level higher than last Standard Bet loss.

**Loss Limits:** Loss of Level 10 bet.

## Take Down Blackjack Strategy - \$25 Base Bets

### Take Down Blackjack Strategy - \$25 Base Bets

Game Bankroll = \$1250 Total Bankroll = \$6250 Profit Goal = \$200

#### Standard Bets

Level	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Bets	25	30	35	50	60	80	110	150	200	250

#### Protective Bets-\$5 to \$10

**Rules:** Standard Bets: Up One level after loss. Parlay winning Standard Bets. If win back to Level 1. If lose 3 consecutive Standard Bets, go to Protective Betting until win one bet.

Protective Betting: Only after losing 3 consecutive Standard Bets. Stay in Protective Betting until 1 win then back to Standard at one level higher than last Standard Bet loss.

**Loss Limits:** Loss of Level 10 bet.

## Take Down Blackjack Strategy - \$35 Base Bets

### Take Down Blackjack Strategy - \$35 Base Bets

Game Bankroll = \$1750 Total Bankroll = \$8750 Profit Goal = \$280

#### Standard Bets

Level	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Bets	35	42	50	70	85	110	150	210	280	350

#### Protective Bets-\$5 to \$10

**Rules:** Standard Bets: Up One level after loss. Parlay winning Standard Bets. If win back to Level 1. If lose 3 consecutive Standard Bets, go to Protective Betting until win one bet.

Protective Betting: Only after losing 3 consecutive Standard Bets. Stay in Protective Betting until 1 win then back to Standard at one level higher than last Standard Bet loss.

**Loss Limits:** Loss of Level 10 bet.

## Take Down Blackjack Strategy - \$50 Base Bets

### Take Down Blackjack Strategy - \$50 Base Bets

Game Bankroll = \$2500 Total Bankroll = \$12500 Profit Goal = \$400

#### Standard Bets

Level	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Bets	50	60	70	100	120	160	225	300	400	500

#### Protective Bets-\$10 to \$25

**Rules:** Standard Bets: Up One level after loss. Parlay winning Standard Bets. If win back to Level 1. If lose 3 consecutive Standard Bets, go to Protective Betting until win one bet.

Protective Betting: Only after losing 3 consecutive Standard Bets. Stay in Protective Betting until 1 win then back to Standard at one level higher than last Standard Bet loss.

**Loss Limits:** Loss of Level 10 bet.

## Take Down Blackjack Strategy - \$75 Base Bets

### Take Down Blackjack Strategy - \$75 Base Bets

Game Bankroll = \$3750 Total Bankroll = \$18750 Profit Goal = \$600

#### Standard Bets

Level	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Bets	75	90	105	150	180	240	325	450	600	750

#### Protective Bets-\$10 to \$25

**Rules:** Standard Bets: Up One level after loss. Parlay winning Standard Bets. If win back to Level 1. If lose 3 consecutive Standard Bets, go to Protective Betting until win one bet.

Protective Betting: Only after losing 3 consecutive Standard Bets. Stay in Protective Betting until 1 win then back to Standard at one level higher than last Standard Bet loss.

**Loss Limits:** Loss of Level 10 bet.

## Take Down Blackjack Strategy - \$100 Base Bets

### Take Down Blackjack Strategy - \$100 Base Bets

Game Bankroll = \$5000 Total Bankroll = \$25000 Profit Goal = \$800

#### Standard Bets

Level	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Bets	100	125	150	200	250	325	450	600	800	1000

#### Protective Bets-\$10 to \$25

**Rules:** Standard Bets: Up One level after loss. Parlay winning Standard Bets. If win back to Level 1. If lose 3 consecutive Standard Bets, go to Protective Betting until win one bet.

Protective Betting: Only after losing 3 consecutive Standard Bets. Stay in Protective Betting until 1 win then back to Standard at one level higher than last Standard Bet loss.

**Loss Limits:** Loss of Level 10 bet.

## Take Down Blackjack Strategy - \$200 Base Bets

### Take Down Blackjack Strategy - \$200 Base Bets

Game Bankroll = \$10000 Total Bankroll = \$50000 Profit Goal = \$1600

#### Standard Bets

Level	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Bets	200	250	300	400	500	650	900	1200	1600	2000

#### Protective Bets-\$25 to \$50

**Rules:** Standard Bets: Up One level after loss. Parlay winning Standard Bets. If win back to Level 1. If lose 3 consecutive Standard Bets, go to Protective Betting until win one bet.

Protective Betting: Only after losing 3 consecutive Standard Bets. Stay in Protective Betting until 1 win then back to Standard at one level higher than last Standard Bet loss.

**Loss Limits:** Loss of Level 10 bet.

## Take Down Blackjack Strategy - \$300 Base Bets

### Take Down Blackjack Strategy - \$300 Base Bets

Game Bankroll = \$15000 Total Bankroll = \$75000 Profit Goal = \$2400

#### Standard Bets

Level	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Bets	300	375	450	600	750	1000	1350	1800	2400	3000

#### Protective Bets-\$25 to \$50

**Rules:** Standard Bets: Up One level after loss. Parlay winning Standard Bets. If win back to Level 1. If lose 3 consecutive Standard Bets, go to Protective Betting until win one bet.

Protective Betting: Only after losing 3 consecutive Standard Bets. Stay in Protective Betting until 1 win then back to Standard at one level higher than last Standard Bet loss.

**Loss Limits:** Loss of Level 10 bet.

## Take Down Blackjack Strategy - \$400 Base Bets

### Take Down Blackjack Strategy - \$400 Base Bets

Game Bankroll = \$20000 Total Bankroll = \$10000 Profit Goal = \$3200

#### Standard Bets

Level	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Bets	400	500	600	800	1000	1300	1800	2400	3200	4000

#### Protective Bets-\$50 to \$100

**Rules:** Standard Bets: Up One level after loss. Parlay winning Standard Bets. If win back to Level 1. If lose 3 consecutive Standard Bets, go to Protective Betting until win one bet.

Protective Betting: Only after losing 3 consecutive Standard Bets. Stay in Protective Betting until 1 win then back to Standard at one level higher than last Standard Bet loss.

**Loss Limits:** Loss of Level 10 bet.

## Take Down Blackjack Strategy - \$500 Base Bets

### Take Down Blackjack Strategy - \$500 Base Bets

Game Bankroll = \$25000 Total Bankroll = \$12500 Profit Goal = \$4000

#### Standard Bets

Level	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Bets	500	625	750	1000	1250	1625	2250	3000	4000	5000

#### Protective Bets-\$50 to \$100

**Rules:** Standard Bets: Up One level after loss. Parlay winning Standard Bets. If win back to Level 1. If lose 3 consecutive Standard Bets, go to Protective Betting until win one bet.

Protective Betting: Only after losing 3 consecutive Standard Bets. Stay in Protective Betting until 1 win then back to Standard at one level higher than last Standard Bet loss.

**Loss Limits:** Loss of Level 10 bet.

## The Take Down Blackjack Playmaker

The easiest way to keep track of your bets is to use casino chips to track your betting levels. One chip means that you are at Level 1. If you win your wager you will parlay the Level 1 bet. If your parlay wager loses you move up to Level 2 and you add one chip so that you now have two chips in your tracking pile.

To determine the size of a bet, you will refer to your *Take Down Blackjack Strategy Card*. This is the way I play when I play in land-based games.

However, you may want to use the *Take Down Blackjack Playmaker* to keep track of your play. This Playmaker was used by our testers to keep track of their play for the test games, and you can use it as well to keep track of your play.

You can use either a vertical or horizontal format. The Sample Games presented in this book represent a vertical format for recording bets. You can use this format to track your bets if you like.

However, most of our testers preferred using a horizontal format. It is more compact than the vertical format and just seems more intuitive. I have used both formats to track bets and I much prefer using the horizontal format.

Below is a sample of the preferred format for the Take Down Blackjack Playmaker. In the next few pages you will find blank copies ready for you to copy and use.





## Instructions for the Take Down Blackjack Playmaker

1. Fill in information at the top of the form including the Game Number, the Location, the Date, the Bet Level and the Profit Goal for each game.
2. Each column represents one round of play. The last entry for the column is the balance of winnings for the game.
3. **Level** is used to record the bet level where 1 = Level 1, 2 = Level 2 and so on.
4. **Orig Bet** is the amount of the original bet for that level. For example if you are making a Level 1 bet of \$5, then 5 will be written in.
5. **Parlay Bet** is the amount of a parlayed bet (a Take Down Bet).
6. **Db-Split** shows the additional amounts wagered for doubles and split. If your original bet is \$6 and you double down, you will write \$6 in this spot.
7. **Tot Bet** is the total of all bets for the round. It includes the original bet and the amounts of any doubles or splits.
8. **W/L** shows whether you won or lost on the round.
9. **Amt Won** is the amount won or lost for the round.
10. **Bal** is the balance won for the game.

## Review of Example Game

Before starting play you will set up the Playmaker for your level of play. You will fill in the Game Number, Location, Date, Base Bet, Game Bankroll, Profit Goal, Standard Betting Series and the size of Protection Bet. With this information you can not only track each round of play but the Playmaker will become a permanent record of your play.

## Review of Sample Game by Rounds

**Round 1.** Start the game by making a Level 1 bet for \$5. The bet loses. Record the wager and the loss as shown in the example.

**Round 2.** Record the Level 2 bet of \$6. Update the Playmaker to record a winning bet.

**Round 3.** This wager consists of a parlayed Level 2 bet in the amount of \$12. Record the \$12 parlay in the row showing parlay bets. The bet loses. Record the loss as shown in the example.

**Round 4.** Record a Level 3 bet in the amount of \$7. Record a loss for the bet.

**Round 5.** Record a Level 4 bet in the amount of \$10. Record a win for the bet.

**Round 6.** Parlay the Round 4 win making a \$20 wager, shown in the Parlay Bet spot. Record the win as shown.

**Round 7.** Following the winning Take Down Bet (the parlay), drop back to a Level 1 bet. The wager wins with a Blackjack. Write a B net to the W recorded in the W/L row.

**Round 8.** Make a Level 1 parlayed bet, parlaying the amount of the original bet of \$5. Show the \$10 wager in the Parlay Bet row. On this round we double down on the original wager, betting another \$10 which is shown in the Db-Split row. We win the bet and record the win.

**Round 9.** After winning the parlay we drop back to a Level 1 \$5 wager which loses. Record the loss and update the Balance.

**Round 10.** Make a Level 2 wager of \$6. The bet wins bringing our net win, shown in the Bal spot, up to \$40.50. With a Profit Goal of \$40 we call the game completed.

