

Learn Blackjack

So what's the deal? What is the goal?

Often you will hear Blackjack defined as "getting as close to 21 as you can without going over". This is really not the greatest description if you really want to learn blackjack. A simple definition would be that you are trying to beat the dealer, this can be done with as little as 4 as the total of your cards. Just remember that all you want to do is beat the dealer's hand.

How does a hand start?

A maximum of 7 players will be sat at the gaming table. Each of the players will make a bet by placing chips in front of him in the circle marked on the table. The dealer will then deal two cards to each player, including themselves although only 1 of the dealer's cards will be dealt face up. This gives you a major clue to how strong of a hand the dealer has. You can safely ignore the cards dealt to the other players, you are playing against the dealer not them, and this is hard to understand when you first begin to learn blackjack.

What happens next?

Take it slowly at first; you need to learn Blackjack before you can play at the same speed as a professional. Play starts with the player to the left of the dealer. The idea is to beat the dealers hand without going over 21 (busting). If you and the dealer both bust you still lose.

You can do several things when it is your turn:

1. Hit - Ask for a card from the dealer, you can take as many as you wish one at a time.
2. Stand - Complete your turn.
3. Double Down - Double the bet and take one card before ending your turn.
4. Split - If you have two cards the same value you can split them into two hands, you will be given 1 fresh card for each hand and then play as two separate hands.
5. Surrender - Quit your hand and only lose half your bet.

When all players have finished their hand the dealer will then play their own, they will turn over the card you could not see previously and will take cards until they have 17 or over, once they reach 17 they may decide to stand. When you first learn Blackjack you should try to remember the dealer is going to try and beat as many people at the table as they can but they will not take unnecessary risks.

So what are the possible outcomes for a hand and what are the values of the cards?

Picture cards are counted as 10; ace is 11 or 1 depending upon whether 11 would bust you.

There are several possible outcomes for your hand.

1. Bust - You went over 21, you always lose when this happens even if the dealer also busts

2. Win - Your total is higher than the dealers.
3. Lose - Your total was lower than the dealers.
4. Push - You and the dealer have the same total.
5. Natural - You are dealt a 10 or a picture card and an ace, this is known as a natural or a Blackjack.

It can be fun to learn Blackjack; it is on the surface a simple game, as you progress more you will learn that there is much more to a good Blackjack player than first meets the eye.