

## HEALTHY PLAY TIPS FOR PLAYING CARD GAMES

### Understand the game

It is important to understand how the game is played before you place your wager.

### Don't chase your losses

You could play a game for an hour and never win. Or you could win on your first hand. Continuing to play when you've already lost your budgeted amount is a surefire way to spend more money than planned.

### Set your time and money limits before you start

Deciding how much money and time you want to spend before you play is a good way to keep the games fun and enjoyable. Set a limit and stick to it.

### Be aware that wins always involve an element of chance

Trying to outsmart the dealer has no effect on winning. The outcome of a deal is completely random.

### Take breaks

Stepping away for a break or a walk is a great way to collect your thoughts, cool down and then decide if you should stop playing for that day. Setting a timer on your phone or making plans to meet a friend for coffee are great ways to take breaks.

### Never borrow money to gamble

Only use money that you can afford to spend.

### Limit alcohol or substance use

Gambling while under the influence of alcohol or other substances can impair your judgement.

This brochure has been developed by:



The Gambling Support Network provides online and phone support for Nova Scotians and their families who may have gambling-related concerns. The services are free, confidential and available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

1-888-347-8888 or TTY access through 711  
[gamblingsupportnetwork.ca](http://gamblingsupportnetwork.ca)

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## CARD GAMES



Card games are a form of entertainment. Just remember no system guarantees a winning hand of cards. Chance always plays a part.



What You Should Know  
About Playing Card Games

**YOURBESTBET**

Card games can provide entertainment when you play for fun and manage your play. This means understanding how the game works and not spending more time or money than you can afford.



The house rules have been developed to ensure that the house wins more than the player the longer you play.

## HOW CARD GAMES WORK

There are a variety of cards games. Some popular games include Blackjack and Poker, but every type of game has a set of rules and play procedures. The most important thing to remember for any card game is that the cards you are dealt are random, regardless of your experience. While there is a degree of skill involved with some card games, there is a house advantage that decreases your odds of winning over time and chance always plays a part. If you play with money or anything else of value, you should only bet as much as you can afford to lose.

## CHANCES OF WINNING

Compared to other forms of gambling, some card games can provide the player with more chances to experience success. This is because with some cards games your success can be partly determined by your play against opponents, and you can improve your chances through education and practice.

For example: A highly skilled Poker player will more often defeat a less knowledgeable, less experienced player. But it's important to remember that all players, regardless of experience, have no control over the cards that are dealt. No one could ever develop a knowledge base or betting strategy that would completely eliminate the randomness of the cards dealt during the game. In short, no one can have a winning formula that guarantees success 100% of the time. Also, the house rules have been developed to ensure that the house wins more than the player the longer you play.

In card games such as Blackjack and 3-Card Poker, the house (that is, the place that offers the bet) holds the edge or advantage.

For example: With Blackjack, the house edge primarily comes from the fact that when the dealer and player both exceed 21 (called a bust), the house takes the wager money. The player loses the money from that bet.

## THE TRUTH ABOUT CARD GAMES

There are many myths about how card games work, and how you can 'beat' the system to win more often. For games like Texas Hold'em Poker and Blackjack, your level of skill can influence the outcome of a game. The reason is because in these types of games, your decisions as a player directly influence the result. Still, no matter how good you are, you can't eliminate the house advantage, the place that offers the bet (e.g., the casino), which is why even the best players will lose over time. The house rules are developed to ensure that the house wins more than the player. Also, the dealing of cards is random. You cannot control the hand you receive.

**MYTH:** It's possible to develop a system of play that is better than anyone else, including the house.

**FACT:** No gambling system can beat the house over the long- term. The house rules have been developed to ensure that the house wins more than the player.

**MYTH:** A win is 'due' after a series of losses.

**FACT:** A win is never 'due'. The outcomes of gambling always involve chance, even in games that involve an element of skill. A series of losses will not necessarily be followed by a series of wins. On average, the more you play, the more money you will lose.

**MYTH:** After experiencing a series of good hands, it means you're 'on a roll' and the winning will continue.

**FACT:** There is no such thing as being 'on a roll'. The chance of getting a good hand is always random even in games that involve an element of skill. A few wins in a row does not mean that you will keep winning. You are just as likely to lose on the next hand.