



TCH SOCIAL

AUSTIN

Tournament Rules & Procedures

TCH Social – Austin follows the guidelines of the Poker Tournament Directors Association (TDA).

This book is designed to combine the TDA rules and procedures with our own house rules and procedures.

The following pages will contain exact wording from the TDA Rules and Procedures, as well as more in depth explanations and procedures that are specific to TCH Social – Austin.

The wording copied from the TDA will be in red ink, TCH Social specific rules, procedures, and explanations will be in black ink.

A Table of Contents is listed on the next page, just click where you want to go!

Updates to this document will be highlighted and labeled with the date it was updated.

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TCH Social - Austin General Tournament Rules

1. **TCH Social - Austin Reserves all Rights**
 - a. TCH Social - Austin reserves the right to cancel, change or modify any event at any time, for any reason, with or without notice.
2. **Non-Cash-Value Tournament Chips**
 - a. Non-Cash-Value Tournament Chips are used in all TCH Social - Austin Events, and are the property of TCH Social - Austin.
 - b. Tournament Chips may NOT be removed from the Event area.
 - i. Participants found to be transferring chips from one Event to another or from one Participant to another, or removing chips from play for any reason, including but not limited to:
 1. Taking Chips as souvenirs.
 2. Putting chips in pockets for transport
 3. Hiding Chips “Going South”
 4. Adding Chips “Going North”

Will be subject to penalty in strict accordance with Rule 69 (Warnings, Penalties, and Disqualification).
 - c. Any attempt to deface, or otherwise damage tournament chips will be subject to penalty and possible expulsion from the room at the sole discretion of the Tournament Director or the Room Manager.
3. **Must be a TCH Social - Austin Member to Register and Play any Event**
 - a. All participants must become a member of TCH Social - Austin (Other Texas Card House “Sister Properties” will be honored) in order to play or participate in any and all events. There are various membership options available including daily, monthly, annual, and promotional memberships (these may change and vary depending on current promotions and location).
4. **Event Receipts**
 - a. Participants are responsible for verifying their receipts and seat assignments for accuracy. Any changes or cancellations must be made prior to the participant receiving a hand in the event.
 - b. The Tournament Director or Room Manager may make exceptions on a case by case scenario, at their sole discretion.
5. **No Show**
 - a. Any participant who has registered for an event and not taken a hand by the start of the third level will be considered a “no show” if no prior arrangements or notifications have been made.
 - b. If a participant is deemed a “no show”, they will have their chips removed from play and will not be allowed to participate in that specific event.
 - i. The participants buy-in (Entry Fee + Access Fee) will be voided and removed from the prize pool and held in the Cage and available to be claimed by the participant who initially registered for the event.

- c. All funds held in the cage when participants are deemed a “no show” must be claimed within 90-days from the date of the event. After 90 those funds will be forfeited to TCH Social - Austin and will not be refundable.
 - i. Continued abuse of the “No Show” policy may result in expulsion from the club.

6. Prizes and Payouts

- a. Prizes and entries are not transferable. Prize and payout structures will be clearly posted on the events structure sheet and will be dependent on the total number of entries as well as the type of event.
- b. Net payouts (Total Payout - Buy-in Amount = Net Payout) in excess of \$5,000 are subject to Federal Texas and reportable winnings including [IRS form W2-G](#) (or [IRS Form 1042-S](#) for qualifying Non-U.S. Citizens) being issued and reported.
 - i. Non-U.S. Citizens may also have 30% of their Net Payout withheld for federal taxes dependent on the country in which they reside.
 - ii. Participants who qualify for reportable winnings will be required to produce a valid form of photo identification. Acceptable forms of identification include:
 - 1. Passport
 - 2. Passport Card
 - 3. State issued Drivers License
 - 4. State Identification Card
 - 5. Military Identification Card
 - iii. For Non-U.S. Citizens, acceptable forms of identification include:
 - 1. Passport
 - 2. Foreign Government issued Drivers License
 - 3. Consular Identification
 - 4. Alien Registration Card
 - iv. In addition to a valid photo Identification, qualifying participants will also need to provide their Federal Identification Card, or complete an IRS form requesting that information.
 - 1. Acceptable forms for U.S. Citizens:
 - a. Government issued Social Security Card
 - b. [IRS Form W-9](#)
 - 2. Non-U.S. citizens will need to provide a U.S. ITIN Card (which can be obtained by completing and filing [IRS Form W-7](#)) or complete [IRS Form W-8BEN](#).
- c. If a qualifying participant cannot provide the required documentation listed above, their prize will be withheld until proper documentation can be provided.

General Concepts

1. Floor Decisions

- a. **The best interest of the game and fairness are top priorities in decision-making. Unusual circumstances occasionally dictate that common-sense decisions in the interest of fairness take priority over technical rules. Floor decisions are FINAL.** A floor person making a ruling at a table should confidently make their ruling and walk away. If a floor person is unsure of a ruling, they should contact the Tournament Director or Shift Manager (If possible) before making a ruling.

2. Player Responsibilities

- a. Players should verify registration data and seat assignments, verify they're dealt the correct number of cards before substantial action occurs, protect their cards, make their intentions clear, follow the action, act in turn with proper terminology and gestures, defend their right to act, keep cards visible and chips correctly stacked, remain at the table with a live hand, table all cards properly when competing at showdown, speak up if they see a mistake, act in a timely manner, call for a clock when warranted, transfer tables promptly, follow one player to a hand, know and comply with the rules, practice proper etiquette, inform the house if they see or experience discriminatory or offensive behavior, and generally contribute to an orderly event where all players feel welcome.
- b. While the above listed items are the players responsibility, they are still our Guests and we should assist them in their responsibilities when able.

3. Official Terminology and Gestures

- a. Official betting terms are simple, unmistakable, time-honored declarations like bet, raise, call, fold, check, all-in, complete, and pot (pot-limit only). Regional terms may also meet this test. Also, players must use gestures with caution when facing action; tapping the table is a check. It is the responsibility of players to make their intentions clear: using non-standard terms or gestures is at the player's risk and may result in a ruling other than what the player intended.

4. Player Identity

- a. Players must be clearly identifiable at all times. Tournament staff may request a player to remove any item (Sunglasses, hood, or other facial covering) which inhibits their identification or is a distraction to other participants. If a team member feels that a Guest meets the above listed qualifications, they should notify a Floor Supervisor; the Floor Supervisor will use their discretion in the matter.

5. Electronic Devices and Communication

- a. Players may NOT talk on a phone at the table. Ring tones, music, videos etc. should be inaudible and non-disturbing to others. These and other devices, tools, photography, videography, and communication must not create a nuisance, delay the game or create competitive advantage and are subject to house and gaming regulations.
- b. Phones and other devices may not rest on the table. (Resting phones on the rail is not the same as the table).
- c. Players with live hands may not interact with or operate an electronic or communication device. The definition of such devices may include new technologies and shall be as updated by the TD.
- d. Betting apps, charts, and other poker strategy tools may NOT be used AT THE TABLE. Nor may players receive or use poker strategy data from another person or source. Violations of this may be subject to penalties.
 - i. This rule is not meant to prevent our Guests from doing things like watching TV, listening to music, playing on HiJack, etc.
- e. If a Dealer witnesses any of the above listed items at the table they should politely inform the Guest of the rule and inform a Floor Supervisor of the infraction.

6. Official Language

- a. **The house will clearly post and announce acceptable language(s) at the table.**
- b. English is the ONLY language to be spoken at the poker table regardless of if the Guests are in a hand or not. Dealers should politely inform the guests of this when they witness them speaking in a language other than English.
- c. There may be exceptions to this for the purpose of translating to a player when they do not understand something that a staff member is trying to communicate to them. Even then, that should only be done in the presence of and at the sole discretion of the Tournament Director, or Room Manager.

Seating, Starting, Breaking, and Balancing Tables

7. Random and Correct Seating

- a. **Tournament and satellite seats will be randomly assigned. A player starting in a wrong seat with a correct chip stack will move to the correct seat with their current total chip stack.**
- b. Seat assignments will be issued randomly through Poker Atlas.
- c. One table will “draw for the button”, whichever seat the button begins in will be where the button starts for every table in that event or flight.
 - i. One Dealer will deal 9 cards, the order of the highest card will be the seat the button begins in (even if that seat has no player or a “Dead Button”).
- d. Participants who have registered before the tournament start time will have their starting chip stack put into play at the beginning of the tournament and they will be blinded off if the participant is not present.
 - i. Participants may “Un-Register” the event provided the tournament has not yet started (the tournament starts when the floor person announces “Shuffle up and Deal”).
- e. Any entry won via a direct entry satellite will immediately be registered for the event at the time the entry was won. If the event is a multi-flight tournament, satellite winners will have their choice of flight.
 - i. Satellite winners will have until the start of the flight they chose to change their flight choice.
 - ii. The Tournament Director in their Sole Discretion reserves the right to keep chip stacks out of play until players arrive at the table if deemed appropriate for any Event.

8. Alternates, Late Registration, & Re-Entries

- a. Alternates, players registering late, and re-entries will be sold full starting stacks. They will randomly draw a seat and table by the same process (PokerAtlas Tournament Registration) and from the same seat pool then in place for new players and are dealt in except between the small blind and button.
- b. In Re-Entry events, if a player is permitted to forfeit chips and buy a new stack, the forfeited chips will be removed from play and added back to the tournament chip inventory.
- c. Anytime chips are removed from play the amount of the chips should be noted by a tournament floor and logged into PokerAtlas to accurately display the "Total Chips in Play" on the Tournament Clock.
- d. During the late registration period, participants who register should report to their seat assignment within a reasonable amount of time.
 - i. A player's starting stack will be put into play once the player arrives at the table and is verified by the dealer at the table. If a player is found to be "dodging blinds" or "stalling to get better position" they will receive a one round penalty.
 - ii. If a reasonable amount of time has passed, a Floor Person should attempt to locate the individual and let them know that their chips will be going into play.
 1. If a reasonable amount of time has passed and all attempts at locating the individual have been exhausted, the Floor Person should put their chips into play, or unregister them for the event at their discretion.
 - iii. Once a player has registered and received a hand, they will not be eligible to un-register and get a refund.
 1. There may be exceptions made in unique or otherwise non-standard circumstances, those situations will be handled on a case by case basis and will be at the sole discretion of the Tournament Director.
- e. Players will be permitted to pay for another player's entry into an event, at the discretion of the Tournament Director or Room Manager.
 - i. When registering another Guest, the person paying for the entry must be able to provide a picture of the other guest's player card, or valid form of identification.
 - ii. Once registered, the player's chips will be placed in their assigned seat and will be blinded off until the player arrives to play their stack.
- f. Players will be permitted to "call in" and register for an event, at the discretion of the Tournament Director or Room Manager.
 - i. The registered players chips will be put into play immediately and blinded off until the player arrives to play their stack.

9. Players with Special Needs

- a. Accommodation for players with special needs will be made when possible.
- b. Accommodations should only be made for Guests with prior approval from the Tournament Director or Room Manager. i.e. Cashiers should never give a different seat to a guest than the one they were assigned at random; they should direct them to the tournament podium to speak to a floor person.

10. New Players and Players from Broken Tables

- a. **New players entering the tournament and players from broken tables can get any seat, including the small blind, big blind, and the button and be dealt in, EXCEPT between the Small Blind and the Button (this would cause someone to pay the big blind twice).**
- b. **Players from a broken table will be assigned new tables and seats by a 2-step random process.** We will assign tables and seats via PokerAtlas table break.
- c. When opening a new table after the tournament has already started, players from other tables being moved to balance should be given random seats at the new table via Poker Atlas and allowed to assume any position at the new table.
 - i. The players being pulled from other tables to open the new table should be chosen by the first seat sold on the new table. i.e. Seat 7 is the first seat sold on the new table, the player(s) who are seated in seat 7 at the existing tables will be the ones to move.
 - ii. If more than one player from each table is needed to move, the next seat sold on the new table will be the other seat that will move to the new table.
 - iii. If opening a second table (10 total players). Seats 2-4-6-8 Should be blocked and not sold on the new table. Once a 10th player has been registered for the event, seats 2-4-6-8 from the old table will move to the same seats on the new table. The button will start in whatever seat the button currently is on the first table.

11. Balancing Tables and Halting Play

- a. **To balance in flop and mixed-games, the player to be big blind next moves to the worst position, including single big blind if available, even if that means the seat is big blind twice. The worst position is never the small blind. In stud-only, players move by position (the last seat open at the short table is the seat filled).**
- b. **In mixed games (ex: H.O.R.S.E.), when the game shifts from Hold'Em to Stud, after the last Hold'Em hand the button moves to the position it would be if the next hand was Hold'Em and is frozen there during Stud. The player moved in stud is the player who would be big blind if the game were Hold'Em for that hand. Shifting to Hold'Em the button starts where it was frozen.**
 - i. For all mixed events, there will be a predetermined number of hands dealt of each game before the game changes.
 1. The process for tracking these games will be dealers moving lammer from their well, to the middle of the table underneath the game plaques.
 - a. Dealers will move a lammer after they shuffle the deck, but before they cut the cards. (This procedure is important to ensure that the correct amount of hands are played on each table.
- c. **The table from which a player is moved will be specified by a predetermined procedure.**
- d. **The predetermined procedure will be as follows; if there is one table that is more full than the others, that table will be the one we move a player from to balance. If there are several more full tables, the last table to be opened, or the next table in the breaking order will be the table we move a player from to balance.**
- e. **Play will halt on tables 3 or more players short (by elimination) than the table with the most players once the blinds are impacted Play halts on other formats (ex. 6-handed max and turbo tournaments) at the Tournament Directors discretion. Tournament Directors may waive halting play and waiver is not a misdeal. As the event progresses, at the Tournament Directors discretion; tables should be more tightly balanced.**

- i. We will balance within one when there are 4-tables or less or when we are within 1 full table away from the money, whichever comes first. For restarts, tables will be balanced within one when the size of the tournament is less than 6 tables. The Tournament Director may impose tables being more tightly balanced in different situations depending on the event.
- f. No player should be moved during the course of a hand, the floor person will wait until the current hand has been completed. The player moving will be sat in the worst possible position, if the big blind is available, they will be sat there and dealt in as the big blind, even if that means they are the only blind (dead small blind), and even if that seat is the big blind twice in a row.

Pots / Showdown

12. Declarations, Cards Speak at Showdown

- a. Cards speak to determine the winner. Verbal declarations of hand value are not binding at showdown. However deliberately miscalling a hand may be penalized. Dealers should read and announce hand values at showdown. Any player, in the hand or not, should speak up if they think a mistake is made in reading hands or calculating and awarding the pot.
- b. Dealers should avoid reading hands in ways other than exactly what the hand is. For example, Dealers should not say “The Nuts” or “Nut Flush”, instead they should say “Ace High Diamond Flush” or “Jack High Straight”.

13. Tabling Cards and Killing Winning Hand

- a. Proper tabling is both:
 - i. Turning all cards face up on the table
 - ii. allowing the dealer and players to read the hand clearly.
 - iii. “All cards” means both hole cards in Hold’Em, all 4-hole cards in Omaha, all 7 cards in 7-Stud, etc.
- b. At showdown players must protect their hands while waiting for cards to be read. Players who don’t fully table all cards, then muck thinking they’ve won, do so at their own risk. If a hand is not 100% retrievable and identifiable and a Floor Supervisor rules it was not clearly read, the player has no claim to the pot. The Floor Supervisor’s decision on whether a hand was sufficiently tabled is final.
- c. Dealers cannot kill a properly tabled hand that was obviously a winner.
- d. Any discrepancy that involves a participant’s hand being ruled live or dead is to be made only by a floor supervisor.

14. Live Cards at Showdown

- a. Discarding non-tabled cards face down does not automatically kill them; players may change their minds, and table cards that remain 100% identifiable and retrievable. Cards are killed by the dealer when pushed into the muck, or otherwise rendered irretrievable and unidentifiable.

15. Showdown and Discarding Irregularities

- a. If a player tables one card (or multiple cards in other games than Hold'Em) that would make a winning hand, the dealer should advise the player to table all cards. If the player refuses, the floor should be called
- b. If a player bets, then discards thinking they have won (forgetting another player is still in the hand) the dealer should hold the cards and call the floor. If the cards are mucked and not retrievable and identifiable to 100% certainty, the player is out and not entitled to a refund of the called bet(s). If cards are mucked and the player initiated a bet or raise not yet called, the uncalled amount will be returned.

16. Face Up for All-Ins

- a. All hands WILL be tabled without delay once a player is all-in and all betting action by all other players in the hand is complete. No player who is either all-in or has called all betting action may muck their hand without tabling. All hands in both the main and side pot(s) must be tabled and are live.

17. Non-All-In Showdowns and Showdown Order

- a. In a non-all-in showdown, if cards are not spontaneously tabled or discarded, the TD may enforce an order of show. The last aggressive player on the final betting round (Final Street) must table first. If there was no final round bet, the player who would act first in a final betting round must table first (i.e. first seat left of the button in flop games, high hand showing in Stud, low hand in Razz, etc.).
- b. A non-all-in showdown is uncontested if all but one player mucks face down without tabling. The last player with live cards wins and is not required to table the cards.

18. Asking to See a Hand

- a. Players not still in possession of cards at showdown, or who have mucked their cards face down without tabling, lose any rights or privileges to ask to see any hand.
- b. If there was a river bet, any caller has an inalienable right to have the last aggressors hand tabled on request. ("the hand they paid to see") provided the caller tabled or retained his or her cards. TD's discretion governs all other requests such as to see the hand of another caller, or if there was no river bet.

19. Playing the Board at Showdown

- a. To play the board, players must table all hole cards to get part of the pot.

20. Awarding Odd Chips

- a. First, odd chips will be broken into the smallest denomination in play.
 - i. Flop games with 2 or more high or low hands: the odd chip goes to the first seat left of the button.
 - ii. Stud, Razz, and if two or more high or low hands in Stud 8/OB: the odd chip goes to the high card by suit in the player's 5-card winning hand.
 - iii. Hi Lo split pot games: the odd chip in the total pot goes to the Hi hand.

21. Side Pots

- a. Each side pot WILL be split separately. There will be no "Combine and Chop."

22. Disputed Hands and Pots

- a. The reading of a tabled hand may be disputed until the next hand begins (see Rule 23 to understand when a new hand begins). Accounting errors in calculating and awarding the pot may be disputed until substantial action occurs on the next hand. If a hand finishes during a break, the right to any dispute ends 1 minute after the pot is awarded.

General Procedures

23. New hand and New Limits

- a. A new level starts on announcement by the floor or audio signal by the clocking system. The new level applies to the next hand. Hands begin on the first riffle, push of the shuffler button, or on the dealer push. If a hand starts at the prior level by mistake, the hand will continue at the prior level after substantial action occurs. If a new level starts during the dealer push, the incoming dealer will deal one hand at the prior level.

24. Chip Race, Scheduled Color Ups

- a. At scheduled color-ups, chips will be raced off starting in seat 1, with a maximum of one chip awarded to a player. Players CANNOT be raced out of play: a player losing their last chip(s) in a race will get 1 chip of the lowest denomination still in play.
- b. Players must have their chips fully visible and are encouraged to witness the chip race.
- c. If after the race, a player still has chips of a removed denomination, they will be exchanged for the current denominations only at equal value. Chips of removed denominations that do not fully total at least the smallest denomination still in play will be removed without compensation and added back to the room's chip inventory.
- d. When directed to race off chips by a floor person, the dealer should facilitate the sale of the chips being raced off, to one player at the table.
 - i. Once all chips have been sold to a single player at the table, the race off should proceed with each "extra" chip receiving one card.
 - ii. Once all players with extra chips have been given their respective cards, all the chips being raced off should be gathered and counted, the player who has bought all the chips will then buy the extra chips by exchanging them for the lowest denomination chip left in play. In the event of odd chip numbers, 1 or 2 extra chips will round down, 3 or 4 chips will round up (except for 500 denomination chips, they will always round up).
 - iii. The participants with the highest-ranking cards will receive one of the chips. Once a chip has been awarded to a player, their cards should be scooped up and mucked to keep track of who has been paid and who has not.
 - iv. Once a floor person has "paid" for the raced-off chips, they should place them in the middle of the table in order to designate them as "Paid For".
 1. Once these chips are placed in the middle of the table, they should not be moved by the dealer.

25. Cards and Chips Kept Visible, Countable, and Manageable, Discretionary Color-Ups

- a. Players, dealers, and the floor are entitled to a reasonable estimation of players chip counts; thus, chips should be kept in reasonable countable stacks. The TDA recommends clean vertical stacks of 20 same denomination chips each as a standard. Higher denomination chips must always be visible and identifiable. If a floor person can't look at a chip stack and quickly estimate its value, players likely can't either.
- b. The Tournament Director and floor persons control the number and denominations of chips in play and may color up one or more players at their discretion at any time. Discretionary color ups are to be announced.
- c. Players must keep live hands in plain view at all times.

26. Deck Changes

- a. Deck changes will be on the dealer push or level changes or as prescribed by the house. Players may not ask for deck changes.
- b. Each tournament table will have two decks of cards that differ in color.
- c. Deck changes should be done immediately when a dealer pushes into a table.
- d. If there is a damaged/marked card, the dealer should alert the floor person promptly and switch to the alternate deck from their well.
- e. Once a tournament has been sent on break, the dealers' responsibility should be done in the following order:
 - i. Place the button on top of the chip stack of the participant who is the button when returning from break.
 - ii. Race off chips if applicable.
 - iii. Set/suit both decks of cards
 - iv. Update chip counts in your tablet.

27. Re-Buys

- a. Players may not miss a hand. Players declaring intent to rebuy before a hand are playing chips behind and must make the re-buy.
- b. In the event a player needs to go to the ATM or equivalent to get money to re-buy, the floor should be called. If the floor agrees for the guest to be able to re-buy, the guest's chips will be immediately put into play and blinded off until they return.

28. Rabbit Hunting

- a. Rabbit hunting (revealing cards that would have come if the hand had not ended) is not allowed.

29. Calling for a Clock

- a. Players should act in a timely manner to maintain a reasonable pace of the game. If in a Floor person's judgment, reasonable time has passed; they may call the clock or approve a clock request by any player in the event. Players must be at their seats to call for a clock. A player on the clock has up to 25 seconds plus a five second countdown to act (Total of 30 Seconds). If a player faces a bet and time expires, the hand is dead; if not facing a bet, the hand is checked. A tie goes to the player. Floor Persons may adjust the time allowed and take other steps to fit the game and stop persistent delays.
- b. In the event that a floor person has put a player on a clock, the Poker Atlas Tablet will be used to count down. The floor person should announce when there are 15 seconds remaining, 10 seconds remaining, and then count down to zero from 5.

30. At Your Seat and Live Hands

- a. To have a live hand, players must be in their seats when the last card is dealt to all players on the initial deal. Players not then at their seats may not look at their cards because they will be immediately killed. Their posted blinds and antes are forfeited to the pot and an absent player dealt the stud bring-in card posts the bring-in. "At your seat" will be defined as within arm's length reach of the player's chair. This rule is not intended to encourage players to be out of their seats while in a hand, players must remain seated when they are in a hand.

31. At the Table with Action Pending

- a. Players with live hands (including players all-in or otherwise finished betting) must remain at the table for all betting rounds and showdown. Leaving the table is incompatible with protecting your hand and following the action is subject to penalty.

Button / Blinds

32. Dead Button & Small Blind

- a. Tournament play will use a dead Button.
- b. Tournament play will use a dead Small Blind / Single Big Blind.

33. Dodging Blinds

- a. Players who intentionally dodge any blind will incur a penalty.
- b. Players who are observed intentionally dodging any blind(s) should be turned into a floor person immediately.
- c. If the floor person confirms this behavior, that player will incur an immediate 1 round penalty.

34. Button Placement and Movement

- a. If incorrect button movement is discovered before substantial action occurs, the error will be corrected. However, if substantial action has occurred, play will continue. Ex: If the button is moved twice and substantial action occurs the error will stand, the button will NOT be backed-up on the next hand. All players have a responsibility to monitor button placement and speak up if they see a mistake.
- b. To avoid incorrect button movement, dealers should follow the procedure "Push the Pot Move the Dot".
- c. During heads-up play, the small blind is the button, is dealt the last card, and acts first pre-flop and last on all other betting rounds. Starting heads-up play, the button may need to be adjusted to ensure no player has the big blind twice in a row.

35. Misdeals and Fouled Decks

- a. Misdeals include but are not necessarily limited to:
 - i. 2 or more boxed cards on the initial deal
 - ii. The first card dealt to the wrong seat.
 - iii. Cards dealt to a seat not entitled to a hand.
 - iv. A seat entitled to a hand dealt out.
 - v. The wrong number of cards is dealt to any player (except the button).
 - vi. Before substantial action, a non-standard card for the game is found (example: jokers, 2-3-4-5 in short deck)

- vii. In flop games, if 1 of the first two cards dealt off the deck or any other 2 down cards are exposed by dealer error.
- b. Players may be dealt two consecutive cards on the button in the instance that one is flipped during the deal.
- c. In misdeals, the re-deal is an exact replay of the previous hand: the button does not move, no new players are dealt in, limits stay the same. Cards are dealt to players who were dealt-in but not at their seats for the original deal and they can play the re-deal. Players on penalty who were originally dealt-in will receive cards then their hands are killed. The original deal and re-deal count as 1 hand for a player on penalty, not 2.
- d. Once substantial action occurs a misdeal cannot be declared; the hand must proceed unless the deck is fouled. Non-Standard cards found after substantial action are treated as scraps of paper (Exception: Fouled Decks).
- e. Fouled Decks. If 2 or more cards of the same suit and rank are found, the deck is fouled. Other fouled deck conditions may be defined by local gaming regulations and house policy. If a fouled deck is discovered, regardless of substantial action, play will stop, and all bets will be returned. Once a hand has concluded and the next hand has begun (the first riffle of the shuffle procedure), the right to dispute based on a fouled deck does not exist.

36. Substantial Action

- a. Substantial Action is either:
 - i. Any 2 actions in turn, when at least one of the actions includes chips being put into the pot (i.e.any two actions except 2 checks or 2 folds)
 - ii. Any combination of 3 actions in turn (Check, Bet, Raise, Call, Fold). Posted blinds do not count towards substantial action.

37. Button With Too Few Cards

- a. A player on the button dealt too few cards should announce it immediately. Missing button cards may be replaced even after substantial action if permitted for the game type. However, if the button acts on the hand with too few cards (by check or bet), the button's hand is dead.

38. Burn Cards After Substantial Action

- a. The burn cards are to protect the stub, not to "preserve the card order." If Substantial action occurs and a hand is killed due to the wrong number of cards, all cards of the killed hand are mucked, and randomness applies to further dealing. The stub is treated as a normal stub and only one card is burned from the stub for each subsequent street. The burn is always one card per street, never more.

39. Irregular Flops & Premature Dealt Cards-

- a. 4-Card flops: If the flop has 4 rather than 3 cards, exposed or not, and regardless of whether the card is presumed known, the floor will be called. The dealer will then scramble the four cards face down, the floor person then randomly selects 1 card, the randomly selected card will then be the burn card for the flop, and the other 3 cards will be the flop.
- b. If there was no burn on a 3-card flop, exposed or not and regardless of whether the door card is presumed known, if no action has occurred, the 3 cards will be scrambled face down, the floor will choose one random card that will become the burn card. The flop will be the other 2 cards, plus the next card off the stub. If any action (even one check) has occurred, play proceeds with the initial 3 cards. Only 1 card is burned for the turn.

- c. For prematurely dealt cards, see Recommended Procedure 5 (Listed below as well).
 - i. Board and burn cards are sometimes dealt prematurely, before action on the preceding round is finished. (When this happens, the dealer should immediately call for a floor person. The floor person should explain that the premature card is going to be shuffled back into the deck and will have a chance to come back out again, and then have the table complete the action.) The general procedures for these situations are:
 1. Premature Flop: Leave the flop burn card as the burn. Return the premature board cards to the deck stub and reshuffle the entire stub. Re-Deal the flop (without another burn) from the newly shuffled stub.
 2. A Premature Turn Card: Leave the turn burn card as the burn. Return the premature turn card to the deck stub and reshuffle the entire stub. Re-Deal the turn (without another burn) from the newly shuffled stub.
 3. A Premature River Card: Leave the turn burn card as the burn. Return the premature river card to the deck stub and reshuffle the entire stub, Re-Deal the river (without another burn) from the newly shuffled stub.
 4. Premature Card in Stud: The premature card is returned to the stub, the stub is re-shuffled, and a new street is dealt from the newly shuffled stub without another burn.
 - d. Re-Shuffling During a Hand: To protect the integrity of the game, anytime the sub must be re-shuffled during the play of a hand, the cards must be shuffled face-down and unexposed. Examples include premature cards, disordered stub, extra draw or stud cards, etc.

40. Methods of Betting: Verbal and Chips

- a. Bets are made by either verbal declaration and/or pushing out chips. IF a player does both, whichever is first defines the bet amount. If simultaneous, a clear and reasonable verbal declaration takes precedence, otherwise the chips play. In unclear situations or where verbal and chips are contradictory, the TD will determine the bet based on the circumstances and Rule #1.
- b. Verbal declarations may be general (“call,” “raise,” “pot”), a specific amount only (“one thousand”), or both (“raise, one thousand”).
- c. For all betting rules, declaring a specific amount only is the same as silently pushing out an equal amount. Ex. Declaring “two hundred” is the same as silently pushing out 200 in chips.

41. Methods of Calling

- a. Standard and acceptable forms of calling include:
 - i. Saying “call”
 - ii. Pushing out chips equal to a call
 - iii. Silently pushing out a single Overchip
 - iv. Silently pushing out multiple chips equal to a call under the “Multi-Chip Rule” (Rule 45).
- b. Silently betting chips relatively tiny to the bet (ex: blinds 2K-4K. A bet of 50K, B then silently puts out a single 1K chip) is non-standard, strongly discouraged, subject to penalty, and will be interpreted at TD’s Discretion, including being ruled a full call.

42. Methods of Raising

- a. In no-limit or pot-limit, a raise must be made by:
 - i. Pushing out the full amount in one motion.
 - ii. Verbally declaring the full amount prior to pushing out chips. It is the responsibility of the players to make their intentions clear.
 - iii. 2-Motion raises were eliminated in 2019.

43. Raise Amounts

- a. A raise must be at least equal to the largest prior full bet or raise of the current betting round. A player who raises 50% or more of the largest prior bet but less than a minimum raise must make a full minimum raise. If less than 50% it is a call, unless “raise” is first declared or the player is all-in (Rule 45). Declaring an amount or pushing out the same amount of chips is treated the same (Rule 40). Ex: NLHE, opening bet is 1,000, verbally declaring “Fourteen Hundred” or silently pushing out 1,400 in chips are both calls, unless raise is first declared.
- b. Without other clarifying information, declaring raise and an amount is the total bet. Ex: A opens for 2,000, B declares “Raise, eight thousand.” The total bet is 8,000. Not 8,000 more (10,000)

44. Oversized Chip Betting (Over Chips)

- a. If facing a bet or blind, pushing out a single oversized chip (including your last chip) is a call if a raise isn’t first declared. To raise with an over chip a player must declare raise verbally before the chip hits the table surface. If a raise is declared but no amount is stated, the raise amount is the maximum allowable for the chip. If not facing a bet, pushing out an over chip silently (no declaration) is a bet of the maximum for the chip.
- b. If facing an all-in and a player silently pushes out a single chip of any denomination, that player has called the bet they are facing, even if it makes that player all-in.

45. Multiple Chip Betting

- a. If facing a bet, unless raise or all-in is declared first, a multiple-chip bet (including a bet of your last chips) is a call if every chip is needed to make the call, i.e., removal of just one of the smallest chips leaves less than the call amount.
 - i. Ex. Player A opens for 400, B raises to 1100 total (a raise of 700), C puts out one 500 chip and one 1000 chip silently. This is a call because removing the 500 chip leaves less than the 1100 call amount.
 - ii. Ex. NLHE blinds are 25-50. Post-Flop A opens for 1050 and B puts out his last chips (two 1000’s). B calls unless raise or all-in was first declared.
- b. If every chip is not needed to make the call, i.e., removal of just one of the smallest chips leaves the call amount or more.
 - i. If the player has chips remaining, the bet is governed by the 50% standard in Rule 43.
 - ii. A bet of a player’s last chip(s) is an all-in bet whether reaching the 50% threshold or not.

46. Prior Bet Chips Not Pulled In.

- a. To avoid confusion, players with prior-bet chips not yet pulled in who face a raise should verbalize their action before adding chips to the prior bet.
- b. If facing a raise, clearly pulling back a prior bet chip binds a player to call or raise; he or she may not put the chip(s) back out and fold.
- c. If new chip(s) are added silently and the bet is unclear to the house, the call and raise rules 41-45 apply as follows:
 - i. If prior chips don't cover the call AND are either left alone OR fully pulled back, an over chip is a call and multiple new chips are subject to the 50% raise standard (Rule 43).
 - ii. If prior chips are partly pulled back OR if prior chip(s) cover the call, the combined final chip bet is a raise if reaching the 50% standard (Rules 43 & 45), if less it is a call.

47. Re-opening the Bet

- a. In no-limit and pot limit, an all-in wager (or cumulative multiple short all-ins) totaling less than a full bet or raise will not reopen betting for players who have already acted and are not facing at least a full bet or raise when the action returns to them. If multiple short all-ins re-open the betting, the minimum raise is always the last full valid bet or raise of the round (See also Rule 43).
- b. In limit, at least 50% of a full bet or raise is required to re-open betting for players who have already acted.

48. Number of Allowable Raises

- a. There is no cap on the number of raises in no-limit and pot-limit. In limit play, there is a limit to raises even when heads-up until the event is down to 2 players; the house limit applies.
- b. The above-mentioned "House Limit" is 1-bet and 4-raises (total of 5-bets) for fixed limit games.

49. Accepted Action

- a. Poker is a game of alert, continuous observation. It is the caller's responsibility to determine the correct amount of an opponent's bet before calling, regardless of what is stated by others (players or dealer). If a caller requests a count but receives incorrect information from a dealer or player, then pushes out that amount or declares a call, the caller has accepted the full correct action and is subject to the correct wager or all-in amount. As with all situations, Rule 1 may apply at the Floor Person's discretion. (See Also RP-12).

50. Acting in Turn

- a. Players must act in turn verbally and/or by pushing out chips. Action in turn is binding and commits chips to the pot that stay in the pot.

- b. Players must wait for clear bet amounts before acting.
 - i. Ex. NLHE A says “raise” (but no amount), and B quickly folds. B should wait to act until A’s raise amount is clear.
- c. If a Guest acts out of turn the dealer should alert a Floor Person to the table.
 - i. Provided this is not a repeated issue at this table, the floor person should address the entire table, politely “Let’s all do our best to follow along with the action and act accordingly, if anyone is unsure of the action please ask the dealer where the action is and they will let you know. The next time it happens will be issuing penalties”. By addressing the entire table that will effectively serve as a warning to everyone at the table. A floor person should use their discretion when issuing penalties for this infraction.

51. Binding Declarations / Under Calls in Turn

- a. Any and all situations regarding an under-call should be immediately alerted to the attention of a floor person, no action should be taken further until the floor person has directed how to proceed.
- b. General verbal declarations in turn (such as “call” or “raise”) commit a player to the full current action.
- c. A player under calls by declaring or pushing out less than the call amount without first declaring “call.” An under call is a Mandatory Full Call IF made in turn when facing:
 - i. Any bet heads-up
 - ii. The opening bet on any round multi-way.
 - 1. The opening bet is the first chip bet of each betting round (not a check). In blind games the posted Big Blind is the pre-flop opener.
 - iii. In other situations, the Tournament Director or Floor Persons discretion applies.
- d. All-In buttons reduce undercall frequency.
- e. This rule governs when players must make a full call and when, at the floor person's discretion they may forfeit the amount of the intended undercall and fold.
- f. If two or more under calls occur in sequence, play backs up to the first undercaller who must correct his or her bet by using Rule 51-C. The floor person will then decide how to treat the hands of the remaining bettors based on the circumstances.
- g. NLH, blinds 1000-2000. Post flop, A opens for 2000, B raises to 8000, C pushes out 2000 silently. C has under-called B’s bet. In accordance with the under-call rule, because B is not the opener and the round is still multi-way, at TD’s discretion C may be required to make a full call or allowed to forfeit the 2000 under-call and fold. Notice the above states AT THE TD’s DISCRETION. This is not something that a dealer can decide by themselves.
- h. NLHE, blinds 1000-2000. Post flop 4 players remain. A opens for 8000, B silently puts out 2000. Per the Under-call rule, player B under called the OPENING bet and must make a full call of 8000.
- i. NLHE, blinds are 1000-2000. Post Flop, A opens for 2000, B raises to 8000, C declares “Call”. Per the under-call rule, C has made a general verbal declaration (“call”) in turn. C is obligated to call B’s full bet of 8000.

52. Incorrect Bets, Under Bets and Under Raises

- a. In limit and no-limit, opening or raising less than the minimum legal amount is corrected anywhere on the current street (if on the river any time before showdown starts).

- i. Ex: NLHE 100-200, post-flop A opens for 600 and B raises to 1000 (a 200 under raise). C and D call, E folds then the error is noticed. Increase the bet to 1200 total for all bettors any time before the turn is dealt. After the turn the error stands.
- b. In pot limit, if a player under bets the pot based on an inaccurate count, if the pot count is too high (an illegal bet), it will be corrected for all players anywhere on the current street; if too low, corrected until substantial action occurs after the bet.
- c. Incorrect Bet Amount, Pot-Limit Games Examples
 - i. PLO, blinds are 500-1000. Post-Flop the pot totals 10,500. Player A wants to bet the pot and asks the dealer for a count. The dealer replies, “nine thousand five hundred.” A pushes out 9,500. Player B folds and Player C calls 9,500. Substantial Action has occurred after the initial erroneous bet. The dealer then realizes A’s pot bet should have been 10,500. Because the quoted amount was less than the pot and substantial action has occurred, the 9,500 bet is binding and will not be increased to 10,500.
 - ii. Same as the first above example except; Player B folds then the dealer realizes A’s pot bet should have been 10,500. Substantial action has not occurred, so A must increase his or her bet to 10,500.
 - iii. PLO, blinds are 500-1000. Post-Flop the pot totals 10,500. Player A wants to bet the pot and asks the dealer for a count. The dealer replies, “eleven thousand five hundred.” Player A pushes out 11,500. Player B folds, Player C and D both call 11,500. Before burning and turning the next card, the dealer realizes the initial bet was an illegal over bet. Despite substantial action occurring, because the bet was an illegal amount, it will be reduced to 10,500 for all players calling anywhere on the current street with each player being refunded the overage amount. IF the next card has already been dealt, the error will stand, and all players will be held to the amount they put in the pot and will not have the overage amount returned.

53. Action Out of Turn

- a. Any action out of turn (check, call, or raise) will be backed up to the correct player in order. The OOT action is subject to penalty and is binding if action to the OOT player does not change. A check, call or fold by the correct player does not change action. If the action changes, the OOT action is not binding; any bet or raise is returned to the OOT player who has all options: call, raise, or fold. An OOT fold is binding.
- b. Players skipped by OOT action must defend their right to act. If a skipped player has reasonable time and does not speak up before substantial action (Rule 36) OOT occurs after the player, the OOT action is binding. Action backs up and the floor will rule on how to treat the skipped hand given the circumstances, including ruling the hand dead or limiting the player to non-aggressive action (call or fold, but not raise or bet).

54. Pot Size and Pot-Limit Bets

- a. Players are entitled to a pot count in pot-limit games only. Dealers will not count the pot in limit and no-limit.
 - i. If a player asks, the dealer should inform them that they cannot tell them and then spread the pot in a manner that the player inquiring can have a better view of how many chips are in the pot.
- b. Pre-flop a dead or short all-in blind will not affect calculation of the pot limit bet.
- c. Post-flop bets are based on actual pot size.

- d. Declaring “I bet the pot” is not a valid bet in no-limit but it does bind the player to making a valid bet (at least a minimum bet) and may be subject to penalty. Players who say this when facing a bet must make a valid raise (at least a minimum raise).
- e. Pot Limit Games that use a Big Blind Ante (BBA) will NOT consider the ante amount when calculating the pot PRE-FLOP.
 - i. The ante WILL be counted towards the pot size POST-FLOP.

55. Invalid Bet Declarations

- a. If a player faces no bet and
 - i. Declares “call,” they must check.
 - ii. If they declare “raise,” they must make at least a minimum bet.
 - iii. If they declare “check” when facing a bet, they may call or fold, but CANNOT raise.

56. String Bets and Raises

- a. String bets and raises are not allowed.
 - i. Such wagers involve multiple movements whereby a player puts out a bet then returns to their stack for more chips to add to the bet.
- b. Dealers will call out and not allow string bets. If more issues arise, the floor person should be called.

57. Non-Standard and Unclear Betting

- a. Players use unofficial betting terms and gestures at their own risk. These may be interpreted to mean other than what the player intended. Also, if a declared bet can legally have multiple meanings, it will be ruled the highest reasonable amount that is less than or equal to the pot size (the size of the pot before the bet was made).
 - i. Ex. NLHE, blinds are 200-400, the pot totals less than 5000, and the player declares “I bet five”. With no other clarifying information, the bet is 500; if the pot totals 5000 or more, the bet is 5000.
- b. The pot is the total of all prior bets including any bets in front of a player not yet pulled in.

58. Non-Standard Folds

- a. Any time before the end of the final betting round, folding in turn if there is no bet to you (Ex. Facing a check or first to act post-flop) or folding out of turn are binding folds subject to penalty.

59. Conditional and Premature Declarations

- a. Conditional statements of future action are non-standard and strongly discouraged. At the floor person’s discretion, they may be binding and/or penalized.
 - i. Ex. “If-Then” statements such as “If you bet, I will raise.”
- b. If player A declares “bet” or “raise” and B calls before A’s exact bet amount is known, the Floor Person will rule the bet as best fits the situation, including possibly obliging B to call any amount.

60. Count of Opponent's Chip Stack

- a. Players, dealers, and the floor are entitled to a reasonable estimation of opponent's chip stacks.
 - i. A player may request a more precise count ONLY if facing an all-in bet and it is his or her turn to act.
- b. The all-in player is not required to count; on request the dealer or floor will count it.
- c. Accepted action applies (Rule 49).
- d. Visible and countable chip stacks (Rule 45) greatly improve counting accuracy.

61. Over-Betting Expecting Change

- a. Betting should not be used to obtain change. Pushing out more than the intended bet can confuse everyone at the table.
- b. All chips pushed out silently are at risk of being counted in the bet.
 - i. Ex. The opening bet is 325 to player A who silently puts out 525 (one 500 and one 25), expecting 200 in change. This is a raise under the multiple chip rule.

62. All-In With Chips Found Behind Later

- a. If A bets all-in and a hidden chip is found behind after a player calls, the Floor Person will determine if the chip behind is a part of accepted action (Rule 49).
 - i. If not part of accepted action, A is not paid off for the chip(s) if he or she wins.
 - ii. If A loses, he or she is not "saved" by the chip(s) and the Floor Person may award the chip(s) to the winning caller.

Play: Other

63. Chips Out of View and in Transit

- a. Players may not hold or transport chips in a way that takes them out of view. A player who does so will forfeit the chips and may be disqualified. The forfeited chips will be removed from play and added back into the tournament chip inventory. The TDA recommends the house provide racks or bags to transport chips when needed.
 - i. Racks should ALWAYS be provided when moving players.
 1. If players have only one stack of chips that can easily be carried in one hand, they will not be required to use a rack.
 2. If a player has more than one stack of chips that cannot easily be carried in one hand, they will be REQUIRED to use a rack.

64. Lost and Found Chips

- a. Lost and found chips should have every effort made to find the rightful owner.
 - i. Lost and found chips for which ownership cannot be determined will be taken out of play and returned to tournament inventory.
- b. In the case that the chip(s) belong to a player who has since busted out of the tournament, the floor person will refer to Rule 62 (All-In With Chips Found Behind Later) to determine what happens with the chip(s).

65. Accidentally Killed / Fouled / Exposed Hands

- a. Players must protect their hands at all times, including at showdown while waiting for hands to be read.
 - i. If the dealer kills a hand by mistake, or if in a Floor Persons judgment is fouled and cannot be identified to 100% certainty, the player has no redress and is not entitled to a refund of called bets. If the player initiated a bet or raise and has not yet been called, the uncalled amount will be returned to the player.
- b. If a hand is fouled but can be identified, it remains in play, despite any cards that may have been exposed.

66. Dead Hands and Mucking in Stud

- a. In Stud Poker, if a player picks up the upcards while facing action, the hand is DEAD.
- b. Proper mucking/folding in stud is to turn all upcards face down and push them all forward face down.

67. No Disclosure. One Player to a Hand

- a. Players must protect other players in the tournament at all times. Therefore players, whether in the hand or not, must not:
 - i. Discuss contents of live or mucked hands
 - ii. Advise or criticize play at any time.
 - iii. Read a hand that hasn't been tabled.
- b. One-player-to-a-hand is in effect. Among other things, this rule prohibits showing a hand to or discussing strategy with another player, advisor, or spectator.

68. Exposing Cards and Proper Folding

- a. Exposing cards with action pending, including the current player when last to act, may result in a penalty but not a dead hand.
 - i. Any penalty begins at the end of the hand.
- b. When folding, cards should be pushed forward low to the table, not deliberately exposed or tossed high ("helicoptered"). See Rule 66.

69. Ethical Play

- a. Poker is an individual game. Soft play will result in penalties, which may include chip forfeiture and/or disqualification. Chip dumping and other forms of collusion will result in immediate disqualification and the player will receive no refund.

70. Etiquette Violations

- a. Etiquette violations are subject to enforcement actions as stated in Rule 71.
 - i. Examples include but are not limited to:
 1. Persistent delay of the game
 2. Unnecessarily touching another player's person, cards, or chips.
 3. Repeatedly acting out of turn.
 4. Maintaining poor card or chip visibility and countability.
 5. Betting out of reach of the dealer.
 6. Abusive conduct.
 7. Offensive hygiene.
 8. Excessive or disruptive chatter.

71. Warnings, Penalties, and Disqualifications

- a. Enforcement options include but are not limited to:
 - i. Verbal Warnings
 - ii. One or more “missed hand” or “missed round” penalties.
 - iii. Disqualification and expulsion with no refund
- b. For missed rounds, the offender will miss one hand for every player (including him or her) at the table when the penalty is given multiplied by the number of penalty rounds.
 - i. Players away from the table or on penalty may be anted or blinded out of a tournament.
 - ii. Repeat infractions are subject to escalating penalties.
- c. A penalty **MAY** be invoked for etiquette violations (Rule 70), card exposure with action pending, throwing cards, violations one-player-to-a-hand, or similar incidents. Penalties **WILL** be given for soft play, abuse, disruptive behavior, or cheating.
- d. Checking the exclusive nuts when last to act on the river is NOT an automatic soft play violation; TD or Floor Person’s discretion applies based on the situation.
- e. Players on penalty **MUST** be away from the table. Cards are dealt to their seats, their blinds and antes posted, their hands are killed after the initial deal.
 - i. In Stud, if the player is dealt the bring-in, they must post the bring-in.
- f. Chips of a disqualified player shall be removed from play.

Procedures

1. All-In Buttons

- a. All-in buttons clearly indicate a player is “all-in.” The dealer should keep the button (not each player).
 - i. Each table should have at least three all-in buttons stored in the well.
- b. When a player bets all-in, the dealer will place an all-in button in front of the player, in full view of the rest of the table.

2. Bringing in Bets with Action Pending

- a. Routinely bringing in chips as betting and raising proceeds around the table is poor dealing practice. Reducing bet stacks can influence a player’s action, create confusion, and increase errors.
- b. The **ONLY** time a dealer is permitted to bring in bets, is if the player who is **CURRENTLY** facing action, asks the dealer to do so.

3. Personal Belongings

- a. The table surface is vital for chip stack management, dealing, and betting. The table and nearby spaces (legroom and walkways) must not be cluttered by non-essential personal items. Each cardroom should clearly display its policy on items allowed in the tournament area.
- b. Use your discretion when enforcing this, there should **NEVER** be any food, or beverages on the table surface.

- c. There should never be anything on the table that can conceal a player's cards.
 - i. A card protector that covers more than half of a playing card.
 - ii. A Phone.
 - iii. A chip rack.
 - iv. Wallet.
 - v. Purse.
 - vi. Hat.

4. Disordered Stub

- a. When cards remain to be dealt on a hand and the stub is accidentally dropped and appears to be disordered a dealer should immediately alert a floor person. The floor person should use the following to correct the situation:
 - i. First try to reconstruct the stub in its original order if possible;
 - ii. If not possible, create a new stub using only the stub cards (not the muck and prior burns).
 - 1. These should be scrambled, shuffled, cut, and play proceeds with the new stub.
 - iii. If when dropped, the stub is mixed with the muck and/or burns, then scramble the mixed cards together, shuffle, and cut. Play proceeds with the new stub.

5. Prematurely Dealt Cards

- a. Board and burn cards are sometimes dealt prematurely, (tapping on the table before burning and turning greatly reduces the frequency of this) before action on the preceding round is finished. The general procedures for these situations are: (Dealers must immediately call for a floor person as soon as this happens) The floor person should then complete the action on the betting street and then:
 - i. Premature Flop
 - 1. Leave the flop burn cards as the burn. Return the premature board cards to the deck stub and reshuffle the entire stub. Re-deal the flop (without another burn card) from the newly shuffled stub.
 - ii. A Premature Turn Card
 - 1. Leave the turn burn card as the burn. Return the premature turn card to the deck stub and reshuffle the entire stub. Re-deal the turn (without another burn card) from the newly shuffled stub.
 - iii. A premature River Card
 - 1. Leave the river burn card as the burn. Return the premature river card to the deck stub and reshuffle the entire stub. Re-deal the river (without another burn card) from the newly shuffled stub.
 - iv. Premature Card in Stud
 - 1. The premature card is returned to the stub, the stub is re-shuffled, and a new street is dealt from the newly shuffled stub without another burn card.

6. Efficient Movement of Players

- a. Moving players for breaking and balancing should be expeditious so as not to unduly miss blinds or otherwise delay the game. If possible, players should have racks for chip transport and sufficient color-ups should be done so players do not carry unusually large numbers of chips (See rules 10, 11, and 63).
- b. If moving a player who is away from the table, their chips should be carried to their new table for them, put into play, and blinded accordingly.
 - i. The player whose chips were moved should be alerted of the table move as soon as possible. If you don't immediately see the guest to inform them of this you should print off a seat card for their new seat, and leave it in their old seat so that they can see it when they return to their table.

7. Timing of Dealer Procedures

- a. The TDA recommends that dealers hold up the push 90 seconds prior to a scheduled break or a level change.
 - i. This avoids having time expire in crucial stages of the game.
- b. Refer to rule 23 for situations in which the dealer does not hold the push 90 seconds prior to a scheduled break or level change.

8. Hand for Hand Procedures

- a. Payoff eligibility starts at the announcement: "Finish the hand you are on and then hold up, we are going hand for hand." If enough players bust on the current hand in play, the busting players will be eligible for a share of the place(s) paid on the current hand.
 - i. Ex. NLHE tournament paying 50 players. 52 Players remain when the announcement is made and during the current hand 3 players bust from different tables. All 3 players will share in the 50th place payout.
 1. In the event that the 3 players who busted were on the same table, the two players with the least amount of chips will be eliminated in 52nd and 51st place respectively, and the player who had the most chips will be eliminated in 50th place and receive the entire 50th place payout.
- b. During hand for hand play, a maximum of 3 minutes per hand will be deducted from the clock.
 - i. During hand for hand play, we will deduct **exactly 2 minutes** off of the clock per hand.
- c. So that players can most clearly know the timing of level changes, whenever possible the clock should be reduced by 2-minutes each hand, not after "batches" of multiple hands.
 - i. Ex. 17:30 remains on the clock when "finish the hand you are on....." is announced. At the start of the next hand the clock is set to 15:30. At the start of the following hand it is set to 13:30 and so on and so forth.
- d. Blinds continue to increase as time elapses off the clock at the tare of 2 minutes per hand and new levels are reached.
 - i. If during hand for hand play a scheduled break is set to occur, we will wait until all hands have been completed, and then start the clock for the break. Remind players that we will still be hand for hand once we return from break.

- e. **Players are encouraged but not required to remain seated during hand for hand play.**
 - i. We should politely ask our guests to remain in their seats during hand for hand play. If they choose to get up and go to the restroom between hands, that is their prerogative.
 - ii. If players are getting up from their seats to “sweat” the other table or try to relay information back to their table regarding the action of the other table, they should receive at minimum a “final warning” (penalties may be given at the discretion of a floor person).
- f. **In the event of an all-in and a call during hand for hand, the cards of all players in the hand should remain face down.**
 - i. **Dealers should not deal additional cards until instructed** by a floor person.
- g. If there is an all in and a call the floor person will wait until all other tables have finished their hand before allowing the dealer to proceed with the run out as to not affect a potential decision on other tables.
- h. If two or more players are eliminated in the same hand from the same table, whoever had the least chips will be busted first, whoever had more chips will receive the payout.
- i. If two or more players are eliminated in the same hand from different tables, those players will split the cash amount evenly.
- j. Before going hand for hand these rules should be explained to all of the players in the tournament to ensure everyone knows the expectations of play while going hand for hand.

9. Number of Players at the Final Table

- a. **9 & 8 handed events will combine from two tables of five players each, down to a 9 handed table.** (With the exception of Big-O, those events will play an 8-handed final table).
- b. **7 & 6 handed events will combine from two tables of four players, each to a 7-handed final table.**

10. Tournament Stud Dealing Procedures

- a. **A down card exposed on the initial deal will be the player’s up card and 3rd street will be dealt down to that player. The player can be the bring-in.**
- b. **A card exposed by the dealer on 7th street will be replaced if betting action remains on the hand. 7th street should be dealt down even if no betting action remains on the hand and in all-in situations the player(s) not at risk expose first.**
- c. **Cards of a player not at his or her seat for the deal will be killed. No cards will be dealt to a hand on 4th street that is not live.**
- d. **If there are two or more matching high hands showing in Stud, Stud-8, or low hands in Razz, betting starts on the hand with the high cards by suit in all games (Suit Rank Lowest to Highest: Clubs, Diamonds, Hearts, Spades).**
- e. **If the player dealt the low card by suit is all-in for the ante, betting starts to his or her left. Players with chips must bet at least the bring-in or fold.**
- f. **Bets will NOT be doubled on 4th street for a pair showing.**
- g. **For premature cards dealt in stud, see Procedure 5 (Also listed below).**
 - i. **Premature Card in Stud:**
 - 1. **The premature card is returned to the stub, the stub is re-shuffled, and a new street is dealt from the newly shuffled stub without another burn card.**

h. 7th Street Short Sub Procedure:

- i. If before dealing 7th street the number of cards in the current stub is less than the “required number” (number of remaining players + burn card + undealt last card) proceed as follows:
 1. If the required number can be reached by adding the 3 prior burn cards (for 4th, 5th, and 6th street) the current stub will be scrambled with the prior burns to create a new stub. The new stub will be cut, a card burned, and one card dealt to each player.
 2. If there are at least 3 cards in the current stub but adding the prior burns would not reach the required number, the dealer will burn the top card of the current stub and deal the next card as a community card in the center of the table.
 3. If the current stub has less than 3 cards, it will be scrambled with the 3 prior burns for a new stub which will then be cut, a card burned, and the next card dealt as a community card.
 4. If a community card is in play, the first player who would act on 6th street will be first to act on 7th street.

11. Ante Formats and No Ante Reduction

- a. If a single-player ante is used, the big blind ante format (BBA) with big-blind-first calculation is recommended. Antes should not be reduced (including at the final table) as play progresses in the event.
 - i. In the event that a player is all-in in the big blind, but does not have enough to cover the posted ante and blind amount, they will pay the **BIG BLIND FIRST**, and any remaining chips will be posted as an ante.

12. Dealers Should Announce Bets and Raises

- a. Dealers should routinely announce **non-all-in** bet values as betting proceeds around the table. All-in bets will be counted only on request of the player CURRENTLY facing action.
- b. Accepted action continues to apply.
- c. Scheduled and discretionary color-ups improve bet countability.

13. Dealers Should Stack Chips in Split-Pot Games

- a. Where possible, dealers should periodically stack pot chips in split-pot games.
 - i. Stacking Chips should not obscure players’ view or otherwise disrupt the game.
 - ii. The pot should be stacked in all split-pot games, regardless if there is “no low”, available or not.

14. Randomness May be Applied to Special Situations

- a. For error remedies not otherwise covered in these rules and procedures, Tournament Directors or Floor Persons may use the concept of “Randomness” to design a solution.

15. Proper Tournament Staff Communication

- a. Outgoing dealers should inform incoming dealers of pertinent information regarding the table.
 - i. Examples include but are not limited to:
 1. Blind information
 2. Players on warning or penalties
 3. Disruptive behavior
 4. Equipment issues

- b. The dealer should inform the floor of all existing and potential infractions of Rule 2 (Player Responsibilities) and Rule 70 (Etiquette). Special emphasis should be placed on any discriminatory or offensive behavior in general or towards specific players or staff.

16. Player Absent on a Breaking Table

- a. If a player is not present during the breaking of a table, their chips should be moved to the new table by a staff member.
 - i. If a player draws a seat where they are dealt in as a blind, their blinds/antes will be posted for them.
 - ii. We should promptly move the absent players' chips to their new seat assignment, but leave their new seat card at their old seat so that they know where their chips were moved to.
 - 1. An effort should also be made to alert the guest personally to let them know where their new seat is.

17. Tournament Draw Betting Procedures

- a. Limping is allowed in all single-draw games.

18. Order of Mixed Games

- a. In order to reduce errors, in mixed game events (ex H.O.R.S.E.), stud and stud-8 need not be played consecutively.
 - i. The order in which games are to be played will be clearly posted on the structure sheet for the event. If the rotation calls for Stud & Stud-8 back to back, then that will be how the rotation proceeds.

19. Reducing Stalling

- a. The house should clearly announce intention to reduce stalling so that players understand timely play is expected. It is recommended that each house establish creative methods for reducing stalling.
 - i. Some methods successfully used by TDA member houses include:
 - 1. Random Table Breaks instead of table draws
 - 2. Using fixed # of hands per level
 - 3. Going orbit for orbit
 - 4. Soft hand for hand
 - 5. Adding a shot clock
 - ii. All of the above options are fine to use at the Floor Persons discretion. Most of the time if we alert the remaining players that if we notice excessive stalling we will go "soft hand for hand" ; they act in a timely manner without having to do it.

20. Cards Ready for Shuffle

- a. At the start of the tournament and the ending of a break, within one minute of starting or resuming play, the Floor Person should announce “Dealers prepare your decks”.
 - i. (We will adopt the phrase “Dealers and Players, you have about 1-minute remaining on your break, Players please return to your seats, Dealers as soon as you have 2 Players at your table get your cards washed up and ready to go”.
- b. When at least two players are at the table, the dealer will wash and square the deck, to be ready for shuffle when the level starts.

21. Spreading the Pot

- a. The pot will only be counted in pot-limit events.
- b. On request the pot may be spread by the dealer to increase chip visibility.
- c. See also Rule 54: Pot Size and Pot-Limit Bets.

22. Betting Non-Denominational Items (Bounty Chips, Clock Tokens, Etc)

- a. Action items with no nominal value (bounty chips, clock tokens, etc) should be of different size than standard betting chips.
- b. Betting with these items will be interpreted per house policy or Rule 1 and may be ruled a call or all-in at TD’s discretion.
 - i. Any bet or betting motion and release of a bounty chip will be considered a bet of the maximum amount.
 1. All-In in No Limit Games.
 2. Pot Size bet in Pot Limit Games.

7 Card Stud Games

1. Basic Gameplay

- a. Stud games are played with a maximum of 8 participants (9-Handed Final Tables)
 - a. In all stud games, the first card will be dealt to the participant closest to the left of the dealer. There will not be a “button” used in stud games.
 - b. Each participant receives two down cards followed by one up card to start the hand.
 - c. After each participant receives their three initial cards, there is the first round of betting.
 - d. There are then three more up-cards and a final down card, with a betting round after each, for a total of five betting rounds provided the hand goes to showdown.
 - e. In all fixed-limit games, the smaller bet is wagered for the first two betting rounds, third and fourth street, and the larger bet is wagered for the last three betting rounds, on the fifth, sixth, and seventh street.
 - f. Deliberately changing the order of a participant's up-cards is improper because it unfairly misleads the other participants; a participant deliberately changing the order of the up-cards may have a dead hand.
 - g. If a participant receives each of the first three down cards down, the floor supervisor will scramble the 3 cards and randomly select one of the cards to turn over as the participant's up-card.
 - h. When the wrong person is designated as the bring-in and bets, if the next participant has not yet acted; the action will be corrected to the correct bring-in position, who has the option to either post the bring-in, or complete to the full bet according to the structure. The incorrect bring-in takes back their initial incorrect wager.
 - i. If the next hand has acted after the incorrect bring-in action, the wager stands, action continues from there, and the real bring-in has no obligations.
 - i. Increasing the amount wagered by the forced bring-in, up to a full bet does not count as a raise but merely as a completion of the bet.
 - i. For example: The bring-in is 100, then completed to 400; four raises are then allowed.
 - j. If a participant is not present at the table when third street has been delivered to the final participant position, they will forfeit their posted ante and bring-in (if any).
 - i. The down cards will be killed; the up card (third street), will be killed when action reaches the absent participants position.
 - ii. Fourth street will not be delivered to an absent participant.
- k. Announcing Hands**
 - i. All new pairs should be announced by the dealer.
 - ii. All new “High Hands” should be announced by the dealer.
 - iii. Possible straights or flushes should NOT be announced by the dealer.

2. Seven Card Stud Hi

- a. The first round of betting starts with a forced bet, known as “The Bring-In”.
 - i. The participant who is designated as the “Bring-In” is always the participant who has the lowest card by rank and suit as their up-card (Third Street).
 1. Card Rankings Hi to Lo: A-K-Q-J-10-9-8-7-6-5-4-3-2
 2. Suit Rankings Hi to Lo: Clubs-Diamonds-Hearts-Spades
 - ii. The participant designated as the bring-in MUST make a bet
 1. The participant will have the option to open with the posted “bring-in” amount according to the event structure, or “complete” to a full bet as designated by the structure.
 2. In the event that the participant who drew the bring-in is all-in for the ante, the person to that participant’s left acts first.
 - a. If the participant who drew the bring-in is all-in for a portion of the bring-in, the bet is made; all other participants must enter for at least the bring-in amount or the full bet as designated by the structure.
 3. When an open pair is showing on Fourth Street (the second up card), the participant does not have the option of betting either the lower or the upper limit, they can only bet the lower limit.
 - iii. For the rest of the betting rounds, the highest showing hand amongst the participants' up-cards will act first.
 1. A tie is broken by a high card, then by a suit.

3. Seven Card Stud Hi/Lo 8 or Better

- a. Seven-Card Stud/8OB is a stud game which is played both high and low. A qualifier of 8-or-better for the low hand is required (The best low hand is 5-4-3-2-A). This means to win the low half of the pot, a participant’s hand at showdown must have five cards of different ranks that are an eight or lower in rank. An ace is the highest card and the lowest card.
 - i. The participant who is designated as the “Bring-In” and initiates the action, is always the participant who has the lowest card by rank and suit as their up-card (Third Street).
 1. Card Rankings Hi to Lo: A-K-Q-J10-9-8-7-6-5-4-3-2
 2. Suit Rankings Hi to Lo: Spades-Hearts-Diamonds-Clubs
 - ii. The participant designated as the bring-in MUST make a bet
 1. The participant will have the option to open with the posted bring-in amount according to the event structure, or “complete” to a full bet as designated by the structure.
 - iii. For the rest of the betting rounds, the highest showing hand amongst the participants’ up-cards will act first.
 1. If the high hand is tied, the first participant in the tie, clockwise from the dealer, acts first.
 - iv. If the high hand is all-in, action proceeds clockwise as if that person had checked.
- b. If there is no qualifying hand for low, the best high hand wins the whole pot.
- c. A participant may use any five cards to make the best high hand, and the same or any other grouping of five cards to make the best low hand.
 - i. Straights and Flushes do not affect the value of a low hand.
- d. When an open pair is showing on Fourth Street (the second up card), the participant does not have the option of betting either the lower or the upper limit, they can only bet the lower limit.
- e. When there is an odd chip in a chopped pot, it will be awarded to the high hand.

- i. If two participants split any portion of the pot by tying for either the high or the low, that portion of the pot shall be split as evenly as possible to the lowest denomination chip in play.
- ii. The participant with the highest card by suit receives the odd chip.
 - 1. When making this determination, only the five cards used by the participant at showdown are considered.
- f. All other rules for seven-card stud apply to Seven-Card Stud/8OB if not mentioned above.

4. Seven Card Stud Hi/Lo Regular

- a. All rules of seven Card Stud/8OB apply except:
 - i. There is no qualifier for a low hand. (Ex. J-10-8-6-A could win the low portion of a pot).
 - ii. The high card by suit initiates the action on the first round with the King of Spades being the highest card by rank and suit.
 - iii. On all betting rounds after the first, the action is initiated by the lowest hand.

5. Razz

- a. The lowest ranking hand wins the pot, aces are low only, and two aces are the lowest pair. The format of Razz is similar the that of Seven-Card Stud Hi except:
 - i. The high card, with the King of Spades being the highest card by rank and suit, will be designated as the Bring-In.
 - ii. The participant with the lowest showing up-cards will act first on all other betting rounds.
 - 1. If tied, the first participant clockwise from the dealer starts the action.
 - iii. Straights and Flushes have no ranking (The best possible hand is 5-4-3-2-A otherwise known as "The Wheel").
 - iv. The lowest hand wins the entire pot.
 - v. Aces are always low.
- b. All other rules for Seven-Card Stud Hi apply to Razz if not otherwise mentioned above.

Draw Games

6. Basic Gameplay

- a. Lowball is draw poker with the lowest hand winning the pot. Each participant is dealt five cards facedown, after which there is a betting round. (Badugi is an exception to this; Participants are dealt 4-cards face down.) Tournament play begins with a small and big blind. The participants who remain in the pot after the first betting round now have a chance to improve their hand by replacing cards in their hands with new ones (the draw aspect of the game). There are two basic formats, Fixed Limit and No Limit.

7. Limit games are generally triple draw; the basic rules for limit poker apply.

- a. In Triple Draw, the participants will have a betting round with the initial hand, after the first draw, after the second round, and once again after the third draw (4-Total betting rounds).
- b. The most popular forms of limit triple draw lowball are:
 - i. **Ace-To-Five lowball (also known as California Lowball)**
 - 1. A-5 Lowball gets its name because the best possible hand is 5-4-3-2-A
 - a. Aces are always low.
 - b. A straight or flush does not count against the hands.
 - c. This game is played with a maximum of 6 participants (7-Handed Final Table).
 - 2. **Deuce-To-Seven Lowball (also known as Kansas City Lowball)**
 - a. 2-7 Lowball gets its name because the best hand is 7-5-4-3-2, not suited
 - b. Aces are high only.
 - c. Straights or flushes are ranked as straights or flushes, but are not fouled hands. (Flushes and Straights are bad).
 - d. This game is played with a maximum of 6 participants (7-Handed Final Table).
 - 3. **Badugi**
 - a. A Badugi is defined as a four card hand that has all the different suits (1 Club, 1 Diamond, 1 Heart, 1 Spade). The best Badugi is 4-3-2-A with all different suits.
 - b. This game is played with a maximum of 8 participants (9-Handed Final Table)
 - c. At Showdown, if no participant shows a 4-card Badugi, the winner is determined by the lowest 3-Card Badugi Hand.
 - 4. **Baducey**
 - a. Baducey is a split pot game that combines A-5 Lowball and Badugi. Half the pot is awarded to the best A-5 hand, the other half of the pot is awarded to the best Badugi hand.
 - i. This game is played with a maximum of 6 participants (7-Handed Final Table)
 - ii. All other lowball rules apply unless specified otherwise.

5. Badacey

- a. Badacey is a split pot game similar to Badacey, except it combines Badugi and 2-7 Lowball. Half the pot is awarded to the best 2-7 Hand, the other half of the pot is awarded to the best Badugi hand.
 - i. This game is played with a maximum of 6 participants (7-Handed Final Table)
 - ii. All other lowball rules apply unless specified otherwise.

8. No Limit draw games

- a. These games are generally played with a single draw and the basic rules for No-Limit apply. In Single Draw, the participants will have a betting round with the initial hand and a second betting round after the first draw (Two betting rounds total).
 - i. The most popular forms of No-Limit Single draw lowball are
 - 1. **2-7 No-Limit Single Draw**
 - a. 2-7 No-Limit Single Draw is played with the same basic rules of 2-7 Triple Draw except:
 - i. There is only one draw rather than three.
 - ii. The game is played with a No Limit betting structure rather than a fixed limit betting structure.
 - 2. **5 Card Draw High No-Limit.**
 - a. 5-Card Draw High No-Limit is similar to 2-7 No-Limit Single Draw except:
 - i. The objective of the game is to make the best 5-Card poker hand (the same rankings as Texas Hold'Em). This game is governed by all other draw game rules, unless specified otherwise.
 - b. In the event of a re-shuffle, meaning the dealer has gotten down to the last card of the deck while participants still need cards, the discards from the current draw will NOT be included.
 - i. The last card will be reshuffled with the muck and the discards from all previous draws (Again, NOT the current draw).
 - ii. If the dealer can complete the draws for that round by using the last card in the stub, the dealer will use this card, but ONLY if the last card will complete all draws for the round.
 - 1. This is also known as the "Last Last" rule.
 - c. All exposed cards, while dealing the initial hand, will be replaced.
 - i. The second exposed card on the initial deal will constitute a misdeal.
 - d. Participants cannot change the number of cards to be replaced once their discards have been placed, in turn, on the table.
 - i. Participants are permitted to exchange any of their discards for a different card in their hand at any time prior to cards being dealt for that round.
 - e. The dealer should not burn and begin to deal the next round of cards until all participants have, in turn, placed their discards forward or stood pat (Participants elected to not draw any cards).
 - i. After "ALL" participants have declared their draws, the dealer will announce the number of cards each participant is drawing prior to the delivery of the next round of cards. (This announcement prevents future changes of the discards).
 - ii. If all Participants stand pat, one card is still burned in order to designate the current round.
 - iii. If a participant wishes to draw an entirely new hand, the participant will receive all five cards consecutively.