

PaiGow Poker for Windows v1.0b Help

Welcome to PaiGow Poker for Windows. PaiGow poker is a game that has grown very popular in recent years. I first saw it played 4 or 5 years ago in the California card clubs, and have since seen it played (with minor variations) in Las Vegas, Laughlin & Atlantic City, and heard of it being played in Reno. This version is my first crack at Windows programming. I have tried to retain the original flavor of the game, while making it quicker and easier to play (one of the main problems with playing the game can be the time it takes between hands to shuffle and deal the cards).

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Getting Started with PaiGow Poker for Windows

PaiGow Poker evolved from the Chinese game of Paigow, which is played with tiles. The basic idea behind the two games is similar: There is a high hand and a low hand. The object is for the player to have a higher value hand in both high and low to win. The Americanized version of PaiGow (known as PaiGow Poker) is played with cards rather than tiles.

There is a maximum of seven players available at all times. In the card clubs of California, the bank revolves amongst the players, so that each player in turn acts as the dealer (this is due to California law which prohibits the card clubs from acting as the "house"). In Las Vegas, the players usually play against the house, with the house acting as dealer and banker. The option is there for players to bank if they so choose, but most players decline, as they must put up enough money to cover the entire table.

In California, the player makes a bet, with a maximum of \$75 per hand, and puts up a \$1 ante for each hand. Regardless of Win, Loss or Push, the house gets the \$1. In Las Vegas, the house takes 5% commission on all winning wagers. Of course, they get 100% of all losing wagers. I have chosen in my program to take out the commission and ante. Also, the program assumes that all hands are played against a computerized "house". Future versions will include the ability to act as banker (dealer).

To begin the game, select the <Cards><Number of Players> option from the main menu. You will be prompted to select from 1 to 6 players (the dealer is the 7th player). After selecting the number of players, you will be given a confirm dialog. If you want to change the number of players select <Cards><New>. This can also be done between hands. This will reset the number of players, and also renew all players back with a starting bankroll of \$250.

Once you select the number of players, the <Deal> option on the main menu bar now becomes available. To deal a hand just select <Deal>. Each player will be dealt seven cards, then allowed to choose 2 cards to make up the low hand. Once all players have chosen their cards, the dealer will show its cards, and compare them to each player in turn, notifying each whether they won, lost or pushed.

See Rules of PaiGow for more information on actual game play.

Basic Rules of PaiGow Poker

How to Win

There is one simple rule for winning the game. To win, your low hand must be the dealer's low hand, while your high hand beats the dealer's high hand. If you beat one and lose one, then the hand is a push. If you lose both, then you've lost the hand. One point to consider: The dealer wins all ties. This rule rarely comes into play when comparing 5 card (high) hands, but is often in effect in the 2 card (low) hand.

Setting Your Hands

In PaiGow poker, the player is dealt 7 cards. It is up to the player to select from the 7 cards to make two separate hands, a high hand and a low hand. The high hand consists of 5 cards, the low hand of 2 cards. One very important rule: If you set your hand wrong, the computer will not tell you. Your hand will become an automatic loser! This is not cruelty on my part, it is just the rules of PaiGow Poker.

Selecting High and Low Hands

The 5 card hand you will create MUST be your best hand (with a few exceptions). For example; if you have one pair and 5 other cards (no flush or straight) then your low hand would consist of the highest two non-paired cards, and your high hand would consist of the pair plus the remaining three cards.

Other possibilities include having a full house . In this case, the 3 of a kind would be the 5 cards hand (along with the two extra cards) while the pair would be the low hand. This is considered a very strong hand. There are many combinations possible, for hints on game play, check out the Hint section.

PaiGow Hands

The name of the game, after all, is PaiGow. Unfortunately, this is exactly what you DON'T want to achieve. A PaiGow Hand is one where you have no pair , 3 of a kind , straight , flush , or even a full house ! In this case, the highest card would be your high hand, along with the four lowest cards. Your two card hand would then be made up of the second and third highest cards. Hopefully, you won't get this hand too often.

The Joker

This is one bright spot in the game; the joker! This card is semi-wild. It counts as an Ace in any situation, or can be used with four other cards in a straight or flush . For example: If you have 4-5-7-8-Joker, the joker would take the place of the 6, and become a straight. Similarly, if you have four of any one suit, plus the joker, that would count as a flush.

A Full House consists of three of a kind (such as three 7's) plus a pair.

3 of a Kind consists of three cards, all the same value (such 7Hearts, 7Clubs and 7Spades).

A Pair consists of 2 cards, both the same value (for example: 5Hearts & 5Clubs).

A Flush consists of 5 cards, all the same suit.

A Straight consists of 5 cards, all in sequence (such as 3-4-5-6-7) not necessarily the same suit.

Hints for PaiGow Poker

There can be some options for setting various hands. For example; if you have two small pairs (both below 7) it is better to keep BOTH pairs as your high hand while you keep your next two highest cards as your low hand. This is the standard "house" way of setting a hand such as this.

If you have two pairs in your hand with the top (highest) pair 10 or below, and you have an Ace as your highest non-paired card, it is again advisable to keep the two pairs as your high (5 card) hand, with the Ace and next highest card as your low (2 card) hand.

One final point: always be aware when you have a joker for possible options. Sometimes it is better to keep the joker as an Ace, rather than use it in a straight or a flush.

Ranking of Hands

The following hands rank in order from lowest to highest:

PaiGow Hand

One Pair

Two Pairs

3 of a Kind

Straight

Flush

Full House

4 of a Kind

Straight Flush

