

BadLands BlackJack V1.0

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Welcome to BadLands BlackJack. This game/simulation will not only entertain you with very realistic one-on-one BlackJack play, but will also allow you to learn how to beat the odds. If you have or ever will play BlackJack for *real* money, then you need to practice with BadLands BlackJack. It features incredible ray-traced and digitized graphics, wonderful period music, and voice directions, as well as customizable rules and strategy. We hope you enjoy BadLands BlackJack as much as we enjoyed creating it for you. Now lets play BlackJack...

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Basic of the Game

It has been mathematically proven that most variations of Blackjack, and certain variations of Video Poker, are beatable: if you play nearly *perfectly*. The basic strategy is to follow a set of rules for when to hit, stand, double down, and split. These rules are outlined in a series of Master Charts, which vary depending on other house rules that are explained later. Once these basic rules are mastered, you add simple card counting, and some common sense on when to raise and lower your bet to maximize your profit and minimize your loss. The key is to remember that you will lose, and lose often; most likely more than half the hands. However, if you play wisely, you will still come out ahead by losing *less* per hand, and winning *more* per hand.

The object of the game is to come as close to 21 without going over, or busting. The dealer deals you two cards face up, and himself one card face up, the other face down. The face value of the cards are added for your total. 10's, Jacks, Queens, and Kings all count for 10. An Ace can count for 11 or 1, your choice. For instance, if you are dealt a 4 and an Ace, you have either 5 or 15, whichever you prefer. If you choose to hit and draw an 8, you won't bust with a 23, you just count the Ace as a 1. You then have 4,1,8 or 13. You can then draw again if you choose. The original hand, the 4 and Ace counting as a 15 is called a soft total because you can change the value of an Ace. This is a very important advantage for the player.

The dealer must follow very specific and simple rules. If he has less than 17, he *must* hit, until his total is at least 17. In some casinos, the dealer must also hit a soft 17, or a 17 where he holds an Ace. This is extremely important. When you learn to count cards and know that many 10's remain in the deck or shoe, you know that the dealer stands a very good chance of busting. If you and the dealer tie, or have the same total, this is called a push. If you or the dealer holds a 21, this is BlackJack, or a natural. You can't lose with a BlackJack, but you might push. BlackJack usually pays 3 to 2 - another advantage for the player.

You might ask with all of these little advantages for the player and strict rules for the dealer, why casinos play BlackJack. The answer is, 99% of the players aren't any good! It takes lots of practice and concentration to learn the rules, but once mastered, they become second nature and at this point, BlackJack is more fun than ever because you are winning!

Basic Strategy

The idea behind basic strategy is simple. There are certain times, depending on your total and the dealers up card, when you should hit, stand, double down, split, or surrender. Typically, you stand when you have 17 or more, and hit with 11 or less, but there are many other cases that must be remembered. The trick to mastering basic strategy is to memorize the appropriate master table. At first, the master tables seems daunting but many of the moves are common sense, and the tables vary little, depending on the rules. It is easier, however, to select a particular game and master that one table, to avoid confusion. Typically, the best table to remember would be the Las Vegas Strip, Multiple Deck table. This is by far the most common. It is imperative that you master this table - if you don't know the basic strategy, you will not win on a consistent basis. The basic strategy will remove most of the house advantage by itself. Next we will take a look at card counting. This is really quite simple, and once learned, we will know when to raise and lower our bets, completing the cycle, and, at least in theory, move the advantage toward us in the long run. Let's count some cards...

Card Counting

There are dozens of techniques for counting cards. This concept may seem frightening at first: how can we keep track of all the cards, especially in a multiple deck game? In reality, it's quite easy. We just keep two numbers in our head. One is simply the number of Aces that have been dealt, and the other is a [running count](#). The running count is kept by adding or subtracting a number based on the cards dealt. For our method, which we'll credit Edwin Silberstang, author of [Winning Blackjack for the Serious Player](#), we assign the following count values.

| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|--|
| <u>2</u> | <u>3</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>5</u> | <u>6</u> | <u>7</u> | <u>8</u> | <u>9</u> | <u>10</u> | <u>J</u> | <u>Q</u> | <u>K</u> | |
| 0 | +1 | +1 | +1 | +1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | -1 | -1 | -1 | -1 | |

Remember, we count Aces separately. Let's take an example. At the beginning of a new game, the count is 0. We are dealt a Jack and a 5 and the dealer shows a 6 as his up card. Our count is as follows: Jack = -1 (count = -1), add the +1 for the 5, (count = 0), then add +1 for the 6, (count = +1). You hit and get a 4 (count = +2). You stand with your 19. The dealer turns over his [hole card](#) and has an Ace. (count = +2, 1 Ace out). He hits again, for his rules require him to hit soft 17's, and he gets a King = -1. (count = +1). The dealer busts, you win, and the count is +1. It's really that simple. A positive count means that the deck is favorable for us, as it contains more 10's than other cards. We are basically keeping a ratio of 10's to non-10's. The higher the count, the better the odds are we will get a ten. This favors us because the dealer must draw to 17, increasing his chances of busting, while we increase our chances of getting a 20 or 21. Keep in mind though, we are talking small shifts in probability. The dealer may still get Blackjack or 20 as well, but the odds do slide in our favor.

Now let's introduce the [true count](#). The true count is merely the running count divided by the number of half decks. For instance, let's say we have a running count of +6. We are playing a 4 deck game (8 half decks) and judging from the look of the discard pile, there are 3 half decks left, or 1 1/2 full decks. We divide the 6 by 3, and get +2. The reason we do this is to more accurately reflect the favorableness of the remaining cards. If there were only 1/4 of a deck left and the count was still +6 (not too likely, but possible), then we know the remaining cards are extremely favorable, and we increase our bet accordingly.

Now let's move on the betting strategy and find out why we even bother to count cards!

Betting Strategy

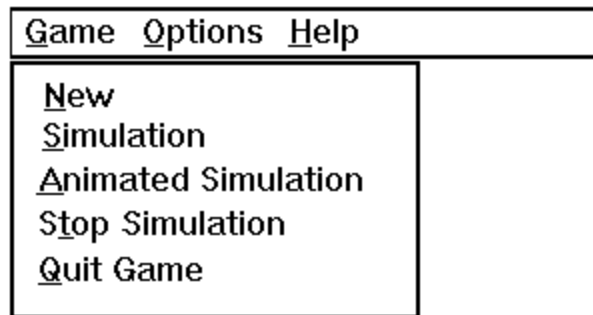
The reason we count cards is to determine the favorableness of the deck. When the count is positive, or favorable for us, we strategically raise or bet. When the count is negative, we lower our bet. The idea is to maximize our winning when the count is favorable, and minimize our losses when the count is negative. Let's look at the strategy for a four deck game.

We start off at two bet units. A bet unit is the table minimum, so on a \$5 table, a neutral bet would be \$10.

| <u>True Count</u> | <u>Bet</u> |
|-------------------|------------------------|
| negative | 1 Unit |
| 0 | 1 Unit |
| +1 | 2 Unit |
| +2 or +3 | 3 Units |
| +4 | 4 Units |
| +5 | 6 Units |
| +6 | 6 Units |
| +7 | 8 Units |
| +8 | 10 Units |
| +9 or above | 12 Units (upper limit) |

In a single deck game, where Aces become very important, we need to adjust our bet accordingly. If the count is positive but all Aces have been dealt, we probably don't want to raise our bet. In general, if the bet is negative, or neutral in a multiple deck game, reduce your bet to 1 Unit. As the count goes higher, increase your bet proportionally.

The Menus



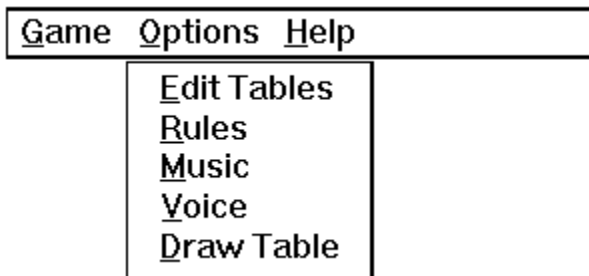
New - Starts a new game, resetting all statistics, bets, accounts, etc.

Simulation - Available upon [registration](#), this allows the computer to *simulate* thousands of hands using your defined rules and Master Charts, allowing you to test pre-defined and custom systems. This is an excellent way to determine real-world odds based on local Blackjack rules. When you begin a simulation, a new game is started and your account moves to \$1,000,000. This allows many more hands to be played in order to give you a longer running and therefore more accurate simulation. When you stop the simulation, the game *is not* reset - this allows you to view the results. However, you can reset the game by choosing New.

Animated Simulation - This is the same as Simulation, only the cards are displayed, as if you were really playing, and only 100 hands are simulated. This is also ***much*** slower! This is available in the non-registered version.

Stop Simulation - This ends the simulation run.

Quit Game - Ends the program. If you have [registered](#), all changes are saved, as well as your current statistics.



Edit Tables - Allows you to view and edit ten Master Charts that define your [basic strategy](#). See [Master Table Editing](#).

Rules - Allows you to modify the rules to match local casino rules. See [Rules Setup](#).

Music - Toggles the background music on or off.

Voice - Toggles the voice prompts on or off.

Draw Table - Toggles the background table bitmap. If you have a slower machine or are running 16-color mode, you may wish to select this option to speed up game play.

Game Options Help

Help Contents
Gold Key
About...

Help Contents - displays this help file.

Gold Key - Displays your unique serial number for [registration](#) and allows you to enter your Gold Registration Key.

About - Displays the BadLands Blackjack **About** dialog box.

The Action Window

Follow the basic strategy outlined in the Master Charts for when to Hit, Stand, Double Down, and split.

Other factors, such as card count, determine when to surrender or buy insurance.



DEAL Click on this to tell the dealer that you have placed your bet and are ready for your hand.



HIT Click on this when you want another card.



STAND Click on this to tell the dealer that you do not want any more cards.



DOUBLE Click on this to double your bet and draw only one more card.



INSURE Click on this if you want to place a side bet equal to one half of the current bet. You are basically buying insurance in case the dealer has 21. If he does, you lose your original bet but are paid 2 to 1 on the insurance bet, thereby breaking even. If the dealer does not have 21, you might win the main bet but lose the insurance bet, thereby halving your winnings.



SPLIT Click on this to split the two cards into two separate hands. You will then play the left hand normally, followed by the right hand. This will automatically double your bet - an amount equal to the original for each hand. Splitting is usually limited to identically ranks pairs, such as a pair of 8's. However, you should never split 5's or 10's. Follow the basic strategy outline in the Master Charts. Also note that you cannot resplit split pairs.



SURREND Click on this to surrender your initial two cards. You can do this if you feel hitting will bust you, or standing will allow the dealer to win. You will forfeit 1/2 your original bet. There are two types of surrender, which you can select in the Rules dialog. Early surrender allows you to surrender before the dealer checks to see if he has Blackjack, when holding an Ace or 10 as his up card. The more conventional surrender, or late surrender, only allows you to surrender if the dealer does not have Blackjack, reducing your advantage.

The Bet Window

Simply left-click on the desired amount to increase your bet, right-click to decrease it. You can increase your bet up to the amount of your funds. Keep clicking on the desired denomination until your bet has reached the desired level, then press deal.



The Statistics Window

| Account | Bet | Hands | Wins | Losses | Pushes | Splits | Doubles |
|-------------|-------|-------|------|--------|----------|------------|----------|
| \$999933.75 | 0.00 | 1651 | 726 | 1283 | 177 | 58 | 0 |
| Net | R-Bet | Move | Cnt | T-Cnt | Aces Out | Cards Out | Shuffles |
| \$-66.25 | 5.00 | HIT | -3 | -1 | 17 of 16 | 178 of 208 | 49 |

Account - this is amount of money you currently have to bet. You are given \$1000 to start so bet wisely. If you are a [registered](#) user and run a simulation, we start off at \$1,000,000 to provide a longer simulation run and more accurate statistics.

Bet - this is the amount of the current bet. You can increase/decrease this by left/right-clicking on the desired chip as often as needed.

Hands - this is the number of hands that you have played during this session, or since New Game was selected.

Wins - this is the number of hands you have won.

Losses - this is the number of hands you have lost.

Pushes - this is the number of hands that resulted in a push or tie.

Splits - this is the number of hands that you chose to split.

Doubles - this is the number of hands in which you doubled-down.

Net - this is your net loss or gain, a positive number means you are ahead, a negative number means you are behind.

R-Bet - this is the amount of the recommended bet based on the current true count.

Move - this is the current move you should take based on the currently selected strategy table.

Cnt - this is the running card count.

T-Cnt - this is the true count, or count divided by the number of half decks remaining in the dealers shoe.

Aces Out - this is the number of aces that have been discarded.

Cards Out - this is the number of cards that have been discarded.

Shuffles - this is the number of times the dealer has shuffled.

Gold Registration Key

The Gold Registration Key Dialog Box is where you enter your registration code. To register and receive the full features of BadLands BlackJack, plus be immediately registered for *all* future versions, mail, fax, or e-mail the Order Form, or call us with your **Visa** or **MasterCard**. We will give you the **Gold Key** when you tell us the **Serial No** as displayed in the dialog box:



A screenshot of a Windows-style dialog box titled "Gold Registration Key". The dialog box has a light blue title bar with a minus sign on the left. The main area is white and contains the following text: "Serial No: 0791783916" and "Gold Key: |". Below the text are two buttons: "Ok" and "Cancel".

NOTE: The Gold Key is valid only for the computer on which you **originally** install BadLands BlackJack. If you install the program on another machine or change hard drives, you will need to contact us for a different key. You can freely move the program around on the same hard drive without a new key. We don't mind if you install this on several computers for your own use as long as only one copy is run at a time, just like a book must be read one person at a time. The Gold Key keeps the dishonest from distributing illegally registered copies. We hope this does not cause you any inconvenience.

Rules Setup

The screenshot shows a 'SETUP' dialog box with the following sections:

- # of Decks:** A list of options from One to Ten, with 'One' selected.
- BlackJack Payoff:** A list of options: One to One, Two to One, and Three to Two, with 'Three to Two' selected.
- Dealer Options:** A section with two checkboxes: 'Hit on soft 17' (unchecked) and 'Insurance' (checked).
- Player Options:** A section with three sub-sections:
 - Double Down:** Options: Never, On 10 or 11 (selected), Always, and On split (checked).
 - Split:** Options: Never, Equal (selected), and Always.
 - Surrender:** Options: Never, Early (selected), and Late.
- Locale:** A list of options: Vegas Strip (selected), Vegas Downtown, Northern Nevada, Atlantic City, Riverboats, Indian Reservations, Custom 1, Custom 2, and Custom 3.

At the bottom right, there are three buttons: 'Cancel' (with a red X), 'OK' (with a green checkmark), and 'Help' (with a question mark).

of Decks - simply select the number of decks used for the game.

BlackJack Payoff - usually this is 3 to 2, but may vary in some casinos.

Dealers Options - Select whether the dealer must hit on soft 17's and whether he offers an insurance bet when his face card is an Ace.

Locale - This sets default rules for the desired location. You can then modify as desired.

Double Down - sets player's double down options. Usually only on 10 or 11, and not on split.

Split - sets player's split options. Usually only on equal pairs, i.e. 8-8.

Surrender - sets player's surrender options. Early is rarely allowed.

NOTE: Be sure to match a master table appropriate for the rules selected.

Ordering Information

To register and receive the full features of BadLands Blackjack, plus be immediately registered for *all* future versions, mail, fax, or e-mail the Order Form, or call us with your **Visa** or **MasterCard**. You can print the order form by clicking on **File** and selecting **Print Topic**. Be sure to give us your **Serial No** as displayed in the Gold Key dialog box. Thank you in advance for supporting shareware and our effort to bring you fine Windows games. Be sure to check out *Six Feet Under*, our wonderful Arcade-Action puzzle game for Windows, available on most on-line services, or our 24-Hour BBS.

Master Table Editing

Master Table Edit

Cancel
 OK
 Help

Northern Nevada - Single Deck

Table

◇ 1

◆ 2

◇ 3

◇ 4

◇ 5

◇ 6

◇ 7

◇ 8

◇ 9

◇ 10

| Your Hand | Dealer's Hand | | | | | | | | | |
|-----------|---------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|---|
| | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | A |
| 7/less | H | H | H | H | H | H | H | H | H | H |
| 62 | H | H | H | H | H | H | H | H | H | H |
| 44/53 | H | H | H | H | H | H | H | H | H | H |
| 9 | H | H | H | H | H | H | H | H | H | H |
| 10 | D | D | D | D | D | D | D | D | H | H |
| 11 | D | D | D | D | D | D | D | D | D | D |
| 12 | H | H | S | S | S | H | H | H | H | H |
| 13 | S | S | S | S | S | H | H | H | H | H |
| 14 | S | S | S | S | S | H | H | H | H | H |
| 15 | S | S | S | S | S | H | H | H | H | H |
| 16 | S | S | S | S | S | H | H | H | H | H |
| A2 | H | H | H | H | H | H | H | H | H | H |
| A3 | H | H | H | H | H | H | H | H | H | H |
| A4 | H | H | H | H | H | H | H | H | H | H |
| A5 | H | H | H | H | H | H | H | H | H | H |
| A6 | H | H | H | H | H | H | H | H | H | H |
| A7 | S | S | S | S | S | S | S | H | H | S |
| A8 | S | S | S | S | S | S | S | S | S | S |
| A9 | S | S | S | S | S | S | S | S | S | S |
| 22 | H | s | s | s | s | s | H | H | H | H |
| 33 | H | H | s | s | s | s | H | H | H | H |
| 44 | H | H | H | H | H | H | H | H | H | H |
| 66 | s | s | s | s | s | H | H | H | H | H |
| 77 | s | s | s | s | s | s | H | H | H | H |
| 88 | s | s | s | s | s | s | s | s | s | s |
| 99 | s | s | s | s | s | s | s | s | s | s |
| AA | s | s | s | s | s | s | s | s | s | s |

To edit the master tables, select the desired table on the left. Click in the name window to type in the name of the table or notes as to the rules the table follows. To edit the actual moves, simply left click on the desired cell. The move will rotate with each click, from H to S to D to s to X where:

- H = [hit](#)
- S = [stand](#)
- D = [double down](#)
- s = [split hand](#)
- X = [surrender](#)

Several master charts have already been entered for you. We recommend you do not change these, but modify an unused table.

NOTE: Be sure to match a master table appropriate for the rules selected.

BadLands Blackjack Order Form

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E-mail Addresses: **KHuck116@aol.com** or **DrBoyd@aol.com**

Here is my \$15.00. Please send me the gold registration key for BadLands Blackjack. My serial number is _____.

[]

Yes, I would like to be included on your mailing list for the next version of BadLands Blackjack. Also please send any new games as soon as you release them.

[]

No, I would not like to be included on your mailing list, but please send the gold registration key.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____

Zip: _____ - _____ Country: _____

[] Visa Number: _____ Exp Date: _____

[] MasterCard Number: _____ Exp Date: _____

[] Check or Money Order

basic strategy defines when to hit, stand, double down, or split, depending on your hand and the dealers visible card.

A box that contains multiple decks which makes it easy for the dealer to draw one card at a time.

A hand that contains an Ace which is counted as an 11.

Busting means you have a total greater than 21, a losing hand.

A tie, where you and the dealer hold the same total. Usually, a push results in no win or loss.

Blackjack, natural, or 21 is the strongest hand: you cannot lose. This usually pays 3 to 2.

The dealer's card which is face down.

The dealer's card which is facing up.

To hit means to draw another card.

To stand means that you don't want to draw any more cards.

To split means you turn two cards, usually identical pairs, into two hands. Doing so also effectively doubles your bet: the original amount on each hand. You then play each hand normally.

Doubling down means you double your bet and take only one more card.

Surrender means you give up half of your bet, instead of risking the loss of the full bet.

A master table defines when to hit, stand, double down, split, or surrender, depending on the dealers up card and your total.

The running count is a simple + or - count, adjusted after each hand, or each dealt card if possible.

The true count is simply the running count divided by the number of half decks remaining. This gives us a more accurate indication of the favorableness of the deck.

The discard pile is where the dealer places cards that have been played. You should try to judge this as accurately as possible in order to determine the number of half decks.

Further Study

The basic strategy presented here should improve your chances as winning Blackjack considerably. If you are **really** serious, we recommend you read as many books on Blackjack as possible. Go to your local library: they often have many good offerings. Some of these books are rather old, but the basics of the game remain the same, so these are as valuable as the newer books. We have presented a simplified method designed to help the average person who occasions the local Riverboat casinos or who heads to Las Vegas or Atlantic City for vacation. Professional players memorize hundreds of other exceptions to give them every edge possible.

A side bet in case the dealer has 21. Only available when the dealers up card is an Ace. If the dealer does have 21, you lose your original bet but are paid 2 to 1 on the insurance bet, thereby breaking even. If the dealer does not have 21, you might win the main bet but you will lose the insurance bet, thereby halving your winnings.

