

# Seven Card Stud

Seven-card stud is played with two downcards and one upcard dealt before the first betting round, followed by three more upcards (with a betting round after each card). After the last downcard is dealt, there is a final round of betting. The best five-card poker hand wins the pot. In all fixed-limit games, the smaller bet is wagered on the first two betting rounds, and the larger bet is wagered after the betting rounds on the fifth, sixth, and seventh cards. If there is an open pair on the fourth card, any player has the option of making the smaller or larger bet. Deliberately changing the order of your upcards in a stud game is improper because it unfairly misleads the other players.

## RULES OF SEVEN-CARD STUD

1. The first round of betting starts with a forced bet by the lowest upcard by suit. On subsequent betting rounds, the high hand on board initiates the action (a tie is broken by position, with the player who received cards first acting first).
2. The player with the forced bet has the option of opening for a full bet.
3. Increasing the amount wagered by the opening forced bet up to a full bet does not count as a raise, but merely as a completion of the bet. For example: In \$15-\$30 stud, the lowcard opens for \$5. If the next player increases the bet to \$15 (completes the bet), up to three raises are then allowed when using a three-raise limit.
4. In all fixed-limit games, when an open pair is showing on fourth street (second upcard), any player has the option of betting either the lower or the upper limit. For example: In a \$5-\$10 game, if you have a pair showing and are the high hand, you may bet either \$5 or \$10. If you bet \$5, any player then has the option to call \$5, raise \$5, or raise \$10. If a \$10 raise is made, then all other raises must be in increments of \$10. If the player high with the open pair on fourth street checks, then subsequent players have the same options that were given to the player who was high.
5. If your first or second holecard is accidentally turned up by the dealer, then your third card will be dealt down. If both holecards are dealt up, you have a dead hand and receive your ante back. If the first card dealt faceup would have been the lowcard, action starts with the first hand to that player's left. That player may fold, open for the forced bet, or open for a full bet. (In tournament play, if a downcard is dealt faceup, a misdeal is called.)
6. If you are not present at the table when it is your turn to act on your hand, you forfeit your ante and your forced bet, if any. If you have not returned to the table in time to act, the hand will be killed when the betting reaches your seat. (In tournament play, the dealer is instructed to kill the hand of any absent player as soon as all the players have received their entire starting hands.)
7. If a hand is folded when there is no wager, that seat will continue to receive cards until the hand is killed as a result of a bet.
8. If you are all in for the ante and have the lowcard, the player to your left acts first. That player may fold, open for the forced bet, or open for a full bet.
9. If the wrong person is designated as low and that person bets, the action will be corrected to the true lowcard if the next player has not yet acted. The incorrect lowcard takes back the wager and the true lowcard must bet. If the next hand has acted after the incorrect lowcard wager, the wager stands, action continues from there, and the true lowcard has no obligations.
10. If you pick up your upcards without calling when facing a wager, this is a fold and your hand is dead. This act has no significance at the showdown because betting is over; the hand is live until discarded.
11. A card dealt off the table is treated as an exposed card.
12. In all games, the dealer announces the lowcard, the high hand, all raises, and all pairs. Dealers do not announce possible straights or flushes (except for specified low-stakes games).
13. If the dealer burns two cards for one round or fails to burn a card, the cards will be corrected, if at all possible, to their proper positions. If this should happen on a final downcard, and either a card intermingles with a player's other holecards or a player looks at the card, the player must accept that card.
14. If the dealer burns and deals one or more cards before a round of betting has been completed, the card(s) must be eliminated from play. After the betting for that round is completed, an additional card for each remaining player still active in the hand is also eliminated from play (to later deal the same cards to the players who would have received them without the error). After that round of betting has concluded, the dealer burns a card and play resumes. The removed cards are held off to the side in the event the dealer runs out of cards. If the prematurely dealt card is the final downcard and has been looked at or intermingled with the player's other holecards, the player must keep the card, and on sixth street betting may not bet or raise (because the player now has all seven cards).
15. If there are not enough cards left in the deck for all players, all the cards are dealt except the last card, which is mixed with the burncards (and any cards removed from the deck, as in the previous rule). The dealer then scrambles and cuts these cards, burns again, and delivers the remaining downcards, using the last card if necessary. If there are not as many cards as players remaining without a card, the dealer does not burn, so that each player can receive a fresh card. If the dealer determines that there will not be enough fresh cards for all of the remaining players, then the dealer announces to the table that a common card will be used. The dealer will burn a card and turn one card faceup in the center of the table as a common card that plays in everyone's hand. The player who is now high using the common card initiates the action for the last round.
16. An all-in player should receive holecards dealt facedown, but if the final holecard to such a player is dealt faceup, the card must be kept, and the other players receive their normal card.
17. If the dealer turns the last card faceup to any player, the hand now high on the board using all the upcards will start the action. The following rules apply to the dealing of cards:
  - (a) If there are more than two players, all remaining players receive their last card facedown. A player whose last card is faceup has the option of declaring all-in (before betting action starts).
  - (b) If there are only two players remaining and the first player's final downcard is dealt faceup, the second player's final downcard will also be dealt faceup, and the betting proceeds as normal. In the event the first player's final card is dealt facedown and the opponent's final card is dealt faceup, the player with the faceup final card has the option of declaring all-in (before betting action starts).
18. A hand with more than seven cards is dead. A hand with less than seven cards at the showdown is dead, except any player missing a seventh card may have the hand ruled live. [See Section 16 Explanations, discussion #4, for more information on this rule.]
19. A player who calls a bet even though beaten by an opponent's upcards is not entitled to a refund. (The player is receiving information about an opponent's hand that is not available for free.)

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