

# Starting Hands in Texas Hold'em Poker (The Ultimate Guide)



Like every poker, Texas hold'em has a ranking in which the winner can be determined. In addition to community cards, players can make the best five-card poker hand using one or both hole cards.

Aces are typically high but may also be low when a straight line that goes as-through-five is completed.

## Categories of Hands

### Suited Hands

Connectors – Two connected cards of the same suit include those hands. Hands like AKs, KQs, QJs, JTs and T9s are the best in this category.

AKs is a high-quality hand that should be played from any position at all times. KQs is also a good player, with QJs, JTs and T9s playing very well positioned to push straight and win big pots.

The less suitable connectors such as 76s and 54s can be played from late positions in the first lift, but should be folded from the beginning.

Gappers – hands such as KJs, T8s, 75s, etc. are ideal one-gappers. Such hands will connect to the board and win large pots, but they are not as productive as connectors.

The bigger the distance, the more selective the hands are. Two-gapper hands are such as KT, J8, 74, and K9s, J7s, 73s, etc. The top gapper hands (such as kjs) play and rise from early to late.

The bottom two and 3 gappers (such as T7's, 85's, 42's) can be played from late but never from any other location.

## **Pocket Pairs**

Premium Pocket Pairs – Hands like TT+ are premium preflop holdings that should be lifted from some position first. These are long-standing hands that can withstand attacks by 3 bets and even callers. They are competitive.

Middle Pockets Pairs – The 55 to 99 pocket pairs are decent preflop, but should not be as violent as the premium ones. The weakest hands (55 and 66) in this game should be folded in a full ring game from an early stage.

Low Pocket Pairs – 22 to 44 hands should not be played in early position as a first raise but should become competitive from later positions.

You 're often going to look for the flop with the low-pocket pairs to hit a set (three of a kind).

## **Offsuit Hands**

Premium – Hands such as AKo and AQo are premium offset hands and should be played in all positions as an improvement even in an entire ring game.

You can add hands such as KQs and maybe AJs to the Premium list in a 6-max or shorthanded game and open it anyway.

Sometimes playable – AJo and KQo are small premium hands that should be folded into a complete ring game from the earliest points.

JTo+, A4o through ATo, QTo+ and KTo+ are also often playable off-suit hands. Hands such as A2o and A3o are at the bottom of this spectrum and can only be played late occasionally.

Trashy – Hands such as Q5o, J6o, 52o and 84o are one of Texas Hold'em's weakest start hands and should not be played as an initial increase.

Most starting hands are in this class in Texas Hold'em, so it is important to get used only to selecting the right hands from each position.

Often you're going through long stretches of unplayable hand; don't get bored!