

The Gamblers' Casino Companion

A Guide to Popular Card Games of Chance & Skill

Trente et Quarante

Simple enough, like all casino classics - but fortunes can be lost as well as made. The rules are simple. Cards are dealt in two rows, red and black. If the first card dealt is black, the dealer continues dealing cards to the black row until its total value is equal to or greater than thirty-one. Face cards count ten points, aces count one. She then deals the red row in the same way. (If the first card was red, then the red row would be dealt first.) The winning row is the one whose total is closest to thirty-one. If both rows are the same, the bank takes all bets.

You bet on the row you think will win. You can bet on RED or BLACK, or on COULEUR (where you bet on the row which is the same colour as the first card) or INVERSE (the row of the opposite colour to the first card).

The normal way to place a bet is to say

>BET (X POUNDS or CHIPS) ON (RED/BLACK/COULEUR /INVERSE).

Winning bets pay evens (i.e., if you win, you get your stake back, plus an equal amount.)

Example: You

>BET 10 POUNDS ON INVERSE.

The first card dealt is the six of Clubs (a BLACK card); this means that you are betting on the RED ROW. Dealer deals 4, 9, Ace, King and 8. Total for the BLACK row is 38. She then deals Queen, 9, Ace, 4, 8 to the RED ROW, giving it a total of 32. The RED ROW is closest to 31, therefore you win £10 plus your original stake of £10 making a total of £20.

Blackjack

This is named after the "Black Jack" - the combination of a face card (worth ten) and an ace (worth eleven - or, under certain circumstances, worth one). You are gambling on whether you can get nearer to a total hand value of twenty one - without exceeding it - than the Bank (that is to say, the dealer). The dealer gives you your first card. You place your bet. The syntax is:

>BET (X POUNDS or X CHIPS).

You then get a second card. This is the minimum hand with which you can play. If you are happy with this hand, you can now "Stick" - in other words, decline any further cards. You do this by typing **NO** or **N** or **STICK** or **S** when the croupier asks if you want another card. The croupier at this point, or whenever you do "stick", will show her hand. If your two cards add up to less than 21, you should now consider whether "twisting" - asking for another card - is likely to bring your total to more than 21. If you have, for example, two tens, or a ten and a King, then drawing another card is likely to push you over the limit, in which case you have "bust". (Note that, in these circumstances, you are allowed to count an Ace as equal to one rather than eleven. You needn't worry about this as the computer calculates the best value for your hand if you have an ace.)

If, on the other hand, you want another card, type **YES** or **Y** or **TWIST** or **T**.

The game ends when you stick or bust, or when the croupier busts. You win if you beat her, or if you are still in the game when she busts. She wins all draws.

If you win with a Black Jack hand, the payout is 3 to 2 - that is, £5 for every £2 you bet (because you get your original stake back, too). Everything else pays evens.

N.B. Some Casinos recognize another form of winning hand, where the Player holds five cards and his total still remains under twenty-one, called a 'five-card trick'. Pay attention to the house rules of your casino.

Baccarat

Everyone gets a chance to be a star in Baccarat, because it's played by one of the players at the table, against the "Bank", or dealer. House rules vary as to who can be the Player; in Casinos populated by dedicated gamblers, the casual visitor has little or no chance of becoming Player, so might as well simply take his place with the rest of the table.

The Player takes the "shoe", which holds the cards. The betting is on whether the Player or the Bank will win, so the first thing to do is

>BET (X POUNDS or X CHIPS) ON (BANK or PLAYER)

Both Bank and Player are dealt two cards from the shoe, face up. They add up the values of their cards (aces count as one, face cards count as ten), then knock off the first digit if the to-

tal is ten or more. For example, if the Player is dealt a 5 and a 4, his hand value is 9; if dealt a 7 and a 3, the hand value is zero; and if dealt a Queen and an 8, the total value is 18 so knock off the '1' giving a hand value of eight.

This particular hand value, called a "natural", is an immediate winner. So is a hand value of nine. If there is a draw, neither the Player nor the Bank wins; the casino takes all the bets on the table.

If neither player has a natural and there is not a draw, play now continues. The rules are strict. If the Player's hand was 5 or less, he has to draw another card (let's call this one "C") and recalculates his total. If, alternatively, his hand totalled 6 or 7, he must stand - that is, he isn't allowed any more cards.

If the Player had to stand, the Bank then follows the same rules; in other words, if she has 5 or less, she draws another card, if she has 6 or 7 she stands.

If, on the other hand, the Player drew another card - the one we called "C", remember - the Bank follows a different set of rules:

(1) If the Bank's hand is seven, she **stands**.

(2) If the Bank's hand is two or less, she **draws** another card.

(3) If the Bank's hand is three to six inclusive, then what she does depends on the value of the Player's card "C", as follows:

(a) Bank's hand = 3; stand if C=8, else draw.

(b) Bank's hand = 4; stand if C = 1,8,9 or 10; else draw

(c) Bank's hand = 5; stand if C = 1,2,3,8,9 or 10; else draw

(d) Bank's hand=6; stand if C= 1,2,3,4,5,8,9 or 10; else draw

At the end of this process, the hand values are recalculated, and the highest one wins. The casino takes all bets if there is a draw - that is, neither Player nor Bank wins. If you bet on Bank and it wins, the Casino takes five per cent of your winnings (calculated to the nearest pound) as commission.

A winning Baccarat hand pays evens, like Trente et Quarante.

General Notes

The house limit in the City's casinos is usually £100,000

Most chips are worth £10; but you can receive smaller-value chips in your winnings. If you want to use these to bet with, you will have to calculate the value and: **BET X POUNDS**, but watch out- there may be a minimum bet.