

# Five-Card Draw

2-6 players

52 cards

Difficulty: Easy

Duration: Short

Make the best five-card poker hand after one opportunity to exchange cards.

## SETUP

- 2-6 players with a standard 52-card deck.
- All players ante or post blinds.
- Deal 5 cards face-down to each player.

## SCORING

- Standard poker hand rankings apply.
- Best five-card hand wins the pot.

*Tip: Watch how many cards opponents draw — it reveals a lot about their hand strength.*

## ON YOUR TURN

- First betting round after receiving cards.
- Discard up to 3 cards and draw replacements.
- Second betting round.
- Showdown if two or more players remain.

Five-Card Draw is the simplest and most fundamental poker variant, often the first poker game people learn. Each player receives five private cards, has one opportunity to discard and replace cards, and then the best hand wins. Its straightforward structure makes it an excellent introduction to poker concepts.

## Objective

Make the best five-card poker hand after one draw round, where you may discard unwanted cards and receive replacements from the deck.

## Setup

1. **Players:** 2 to 6 players (works best with fewer players due to card limitations).
2. **Deck:** Standard 52-card deck.
3. **Ante or Blinds:** Either all players ante or small/big blinds are posted, depending on the format.
4. **Deal:** Each player receives 5 cards face-down.

## Gameplay

1. **First betting round:** Starting with the player to the left of the dealer (or the big blind), players bet, call, raise, or fold.
2. **The Draw:** Each remaining player may discard up to three cards (sometimes four if holding an Ace) and receive new cards from the deck.
3. **Second betting round:** Another round of betting takes place starting with the first active player to the left of the dealer.
4. **Showdown:** Remaining players reveal their hands and the best five-card hand wins the pot.

## Scoring

- **Hand rankings:** Standard poker hand rankings apply from high card to royal flush.
- **Draw information:** The number of cards an opponent draws is a key piece of information — drawing one often suggests two pair or a four-card draw.
- **Pot:** The best hand at showdown wins the entire pot.

## Variations

- **Jacks or Better:** A player needs at least a pair of Jacks to open the betting in the first round.
- **Triple Draw:** Players have three draw opportunities instead of one, typically played as a lowball variant.
- **Shotgun:** Community cards are added to the traditional draw format.

## Tips and Strategies

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- Drawing fewer cards disguises your hand — consider standing pat or drawing one to represent a stronger holding.
- Position matters greatly since you can see how many cards opponents draw before deciding your action.
- Play tight and enter pots with pairs or better; drawing to long-shot hands is usually unprofitable.

## Tips & Strategy

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The number of cards your opponents draw is the most important information available. Draw three to a pair, draw one or two to trips, and stand pat on made hands to apply maximum pressure.

Since you cannot see any opponents' cards, reading the draw is crucial. A player who draws one card likely has two pair or a four-card flush or straight draw.