

Rules of Play

Shifting Wilds Poker

GAME DESCRIPTION

Shifting Wilds Poker is a table game that is played using a standard 52-card deck that is shuffled at the start of each game. At the start of the game, before any cards are dealt, each participating player must place a mandatory Ante wager and an equal Blind bet. Additionally, the player may place one or more of the available optional side wagers: Regular Bonus, Bad Beat, and/or Blackjack Bonus. Note that the value of the Regular Bonus side wager may be less than or equal to the player's Ante wager, but it cannot exceed the value of the Ante wager.

MAIN WAGER

After all bets have been placed, the dealer places one card face-down in the W1 spot, one card face-down in the W2 spot, and two community cards face-down in the center. Each player is then dealt four cards face-down, followed by the dealer being dealt four cards facedown.

The two community cards and W1 indicator card are then revealed. After inspecting his or her cards, each player must decide whether to stake an additional "Lock Bet" amount equal to the Ante, or to "Check" and continue with no additional bet. If the player places a Lock Bet, their hand will be evaluated using the W1 indicator, and no further decisions are allowed on the hand.

After the player makes their decision, the W2 indicator card is revealed. If the player did not place a Lock Bet, then the player must choose whether to Fold or to place a Play bet equal to the Ante. If the player Folds, then the Ante and Blind wagers are forfeited, along with any Bad Beat and Regular Bonus wagers the player placed. If the player places the Play bet, then the player will proceed to the showdown with their hand being evaluated using the W2 indicator.

The dealer's hole cards are then revealed and compared against the players' hands to resolve all active wagers, as outlined in the following section.

MAIN WAGER RESOLUTION

The player's hand is evaluated based on the best five-card poker hand that can be formed using any combination of the player's four hole cards, the two community cards, and the player's final indicator card (W1 if the player placed the Lock bet and W2 if the player placed the Play bet). Any of the player's four hole cards that match the rank of the player's final indicator may act as Wilds for the purposes of the hand evaluation. Note that the community cards and W1/W2 indicator cards cannot act as Wilds.

The dealer's hand is evaluated in a similar manner using the dealer's four hole cards, the two community cards, and the W2 indicator card. Any of dealer's hole cards may also act as Wild if they match the rank of the W2 indicator card.

The player and dealer hands are compared based on the following hand rankings, from highest to lowest:

- Royal flush
- Five of a Kind
- Straight Flush
- Four of a Kind
- Full House
- Flush
- Straight
- Three of a Kind
- Two Pair
- Pair
- High card

Ties are broken in standard five-card poker fashion by comparing, in order, the ranks of any five-of-a-kinds, four-of-a-kinds, three-of-a-kinds, pairs, and single cards within the hand. The one exception is that when comparing straights, A-2-3-4-5 is considered the lowest straight. For the purposes of determining the tiebreaker, wilds are counted as the card that would maximize the strength of the hand.

The Ante, Lock, and Play bets are resolved as follows:

- If the dealer qualifies with a Pair or Better:
 - If the player hand outranks the dealer hand, then any active Ante, Lock, and Play wagers pay 1 to 1.
 - If the player hand ties the dealer hand, then any active Ante, Lock, and Play wagers push.
 - If the dealer hand outranks the player hand, then any active Ante, Lock, and Play wagers will lose
- If the dealer does not qualify with a Pair or Better:
 - The Ante wager pushes.
 - If the player hand outranks the dealer hand, then any active Lock and Play wagers pay 1 to 1.
 - If the player hand ties the dealer hand, then any active Lock and Play wagers push.
 - If the dealer hand outranks the player hand, then any active Lock and Play wagers will lose.

The Blind wager is resolved as follows:

- If the player hand outranks the dealer hand, then the Blind wager pays according to Table 1.
- If the player hand and dealer hand tie, then the Blind wager pushes.
- If the dealer hand outranks the player hand, then the Blind wager loses.

Hand	Pays
Royal Flush	7 to 1
Five of a Kind	5 to 1
Straight Flush	2 to 1
Four of a Kind	1 to 1
Full House and Lower	Push

Table 1 – Blind Paytable

REGULAR BONUS SIDE BET

The Regular Bonus side bet is resolved based on the best five-card hand that can be formed from any of the player's four hole cards, the two community cards and the player's final indicator card (W1 if locked, W2 otherwise). The wager wins and pays according to Table 2 if the player can form a natural Three of a Kind or better, or a Wild Flush or better. The rules for Wild substitutions are the same as when evaluating the main wager. To determine the final payout when Wilds are present, the player's best natural five-card hand is evaluated in addition to the best five-card hand that can be formed when allowing wild substitutions. The player is paid according to whichever combination yields the higher pay, as given in Table 2.

Note that the Regular Bonus side bet is forfeited if the player folds on their main wager.

Hand	Pays (Natural)	Pays (Including Wild)
Royal Flush	50 to 1	20 to 1
Five of a Kind	N/A	15 to 1
Straight Flush	25 to 1	10 to 1
Four of a Kind	10 to 1	5 to 1
Full House	5 to 1	2 to 1
Flush	4 to 1	1 to 1
Straight	2 to 1	Lose
Three of a Kind	1 to 1	Lose
Other	Lose	Lose

Table 2 – Regular Bonus Paytable

BAD BEAT SIDE BET

The Bad Beat side bet is resolved based on the player's four hole cards and their indicator card (W1 if locked, else W2) and the dealer's four hole cards and indicator card (W2). The player and the dealer make the best natural five-card poker hand that can be created from their respective hole cards and indicator card. Wild substitutions are not considered when evaluating this bet. The Bad Beat wager wins and pays according to Table 3 if the player's five-card hand outranks the dealer's five card hand; otherwise, the wager loses.

Ties are broken in standard fashion by comparing, in order, the ranks of any four-of-a-kinds, three-of-a-kinds, pairs, and single cards within the hands. The one exception is that when comparing straights, A-2-3-4-5 is considered lowest straight.

Note that the Bad Beat side wager is forfeited if the player folds on their main wager.

Hand	Paytable 1	Paytable 2
Royal Flush	1000 to 1	1000 to 1
Straight Flush	500 to 1	500 to 1
Four of a Kind	100 to 1	100 to 1
Full House	50 to 1	50 to 1
Flush	25 to 1	25 to 1
Straight	20 to 1	20 to 1
Three of a Kind	10 to 1	15 to 1

Table 3 – Bad Beat Paytable

BLACKJACK BONUS SIDE BET

The Blackjack Bonus Side Bet is resolved based on the player's four hole cards. If these cards contain a Blackjack (i.e. an Ace with a Ten, Jack, Queen, or King), then the wager wins and pays according to the outcome as given in Table 4. Otherwise, the wager loses.

Outcome	Pays
Suited Blackjack	6 to 1
Unsuited Blackjack	3 to 1

Table 4 – Blackjack Bonus Paytable