

**How To
Win At
Blackjack
By
Hillary Buffett**



The Winner's Trifecta of Discipline, Basic Strategy and Card-Counting

Blackjack is a simple game with not very many rules. While this book is succinct and easy to read, it presses thoroughly through the few golden rules that will make the difference for you. With simple, step-by-step tips, this book will combine between having fun, building your confidence, and racking up the winnings.

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Foreword

Dear Reader,

We've asked Jonathan M, a 15-year veteran of the blackjack tables who turned his holidays into profit making trips, to share in his overall experience not only with regard to his success with Blackjack, but with the "gambling bug" as well.

We also asked Jonathan to read and give a short review of this book.

We are thus happy to introduce you to Jonathan M, his experience at the casinos, and some brief advice.

Hello, I am Jonathan, and whether you're a beginner at Blackjack, a middle-weight, or a hefty player, following the guidelines given in this book can give you enough additional savvy to make you a better player and a more adept money manager -i.e. a winner.

You'll be able to shift the odds in your favor simply by acquiring a solid understanding of Blackjack and sticking to some of its very basic rules, often referred to as "basic strategy". This book offers easy, step-by-step explanations of Blackjack basic strategy. It will also teach you a winner's overall tools and skills and guide you in how to develop your ability in "card-counting", a process that further improves your overall odds.

You will acquire the same knowledge and discipline that turned me from an anxious-ridden and frequent loser into a self-controlled, poised player -with a comfortable second income to boot.

And you too will be able to develop the same game-plans and talent that will give you the confidence to have a great time whenever you enter a casino or play online.

I wasn't always so successful though, as you will soon find out. So with that out of the way, here's my story in brief.

So let me start with this axiom: whether you gamble with thousands of dollars as I do, or with a few hundred, all the principles that apply to me apply to you as well, irrespective of the size of your bankroll.

In addition, smart gamblers know that how they manage their bankroll is 80% of the winning formula. Everything else is secondary.

Years ago, my typical long weekends in Vegas, Biloxi or some of the other gambling hotspots would commonly involve landing there on a Friday afternoon and flying back home on the following Monday afternoon.

I used to almost always accompany a friend of mine, Rudi, who would invariably arrive at a casino with a cashier's check for 15, 20 or \$25,000 which, when added to some \$40,000 or more that he could raise with his credit cards, and with the credit lines that he had in many casinos, it would constitute, as you can surmise, quite a fat bankroll.

Rudi was by no means a "whale". That is casino jargon for the highest of the high rollers, a term usually reserved for industry and commerce moguls and Saudi princes and their cohorts -folks who can drop one or more million dollars in one sitting.

But Rudi was a substantial enough player to deserve a casino's best hosting privileges. They would think nothing of sending us a limo to drive us for example from D.C to Atlantic City, a trip of some 350 two-way miles that would take us to the casino and then back home. If we wanted to fly to Vegas, they would reimburse us for first-class tickets immediately upon registering in at their casino.

Each casino would assign a host to Rudi (and little me), and the host would hardly ever refuse us anything, be it fabulous suites to stay in, meals at the most expensive restaurants, tickets to the hottest shows or sports events, side-trips here and there -all courtesy of the casino. "Just come and play" would characterize their posture, without hesitation.

That tells you at what level of confidence the casinos operate in regard to the likelihood of your dropping your entire wad over a weekend -several times the monetary value of the hospitality they showered us with.

At my level of play, where I could win or lose \$5,000 or \$10,000 over a weekend, and without Rudi to back me up, I would have normally been good for a nice room and basic food and beverages -all free of charge. But with Rudi, the sky is the limit: the best wines, and every other indulgence we could think of to take advantage of their open-handed "generosity".

I still have some 15 beautiful white-cotton bathrobes that the casinos give away, as well as slippers and men's fashion accessories like ties and cuff links -I have closets full of those.

But even as a smaller player, they would always be eager to "comp" you meals or even a room every now and then, particularly when you're on a roll, for they would want their money back.

When I first started playing blackjack, I too would almost always resort to cashing out my credit cards and opening lines of credit with the casinos. I quickly found out that all you had to do to get a \$10,000 credit facility (that you could start using right away) was to walk up their credit desk, fill-out a 6-question form, sign, and be promptly back at the tables, feeling like a king again -for an hour or two until you started hemorrhaging again.

In the interim, I had a business that nearly sustained me with that kind of risk-taking. I say "nearly" because no business can carry you once the gambling gets out of hand -unless of course you happen to be a big shot toting a black American Express card (I always yearned for one of those -with no credit limit!)

Rifting through credit cards for the purpose of raising play-cash at a casino is a sucker's ritual. The rip-off that the credit card banks get away with has always been unconscionable. 3 or 4% for the mere availability, then another up to 6% for the actual cash raised -by the time you're done, you've pilfered away some 10% of the cash that you raised.

Then you have to get home, send a check when that is possible, wait for about a week until your check gets there and clears sufficiently for you to draw money out of it again. If you're going to casinos regularly, that becomes a fool's errand. But because of the fever to gamble, it's a fool's errand that the banks make millions out of.

And for some 4 or 5 years, my gambling did get out of hand. Between my passion for day-trading stocks in the daytime and going to casinos in weekends, not only was I dropping a fortune on a regular basis, but my leaving the office to others left my business lacking in direction and agility. Put in simpler terms, I was being kicked in the ass good and proper, both at the tables and at work.

It is difficult to shake yourself out of the gambling rituals that you construct around your daily existence. Your very lifestyle becomes even more addictive than the blackjack tables.

As the years rolled by, the weekends became all the more painful. After losing all the cash I had, I would cash out my credit cards and max out my credit facilities. I would hop from one casino to the other to raise more money from my credit lines.

From losses of \$5 to \$10k over a weekend, I had graduated to losses in excess of \$20,000 or even \$30,000, and I would thus spend agonizing days simply licking my wounds, trying to clean up the mess I got into over the weekend, and doing as much repair work to my credit cards as possible.

Gamblers are notoriously clever at raising bankrolls until, that is, there is nothing left to raise. They then hit "rock bottom", a common tag in gambling circles.

I had to take stock of what I had become -an outlandishly stupid gambling addict with the worst possible habits, both with my money, in my time management, and at the tables.

Being in the company of Rudi didn't help either. For although he was a wealthy man with plenty more resources than I, even he started hemorrhaging, at times quite profusely. The two of us being friends didn't help one bit. The last thing you want to do as a gambling addict is be in the company of someone whose lifestyle was even more of a disaster than yours.

So, I smartened up, at first a little, and later quite elaborately. I took stock of every one of my rituals, at home, at work and around the tables, and I determined to start putting some order here and there.

The first meaningful thing I did was to close down my day trading activities that kept me all the time in a frenzied state of tension. I also shut down every one of my credit facilities, and I started keeping my credit cards back home when on a junket. In addition, I started going much less on weekend "excursions". Instead of almost every weekend at the casinos, I narrowed that down to one weekend a month, and even then, I would spend only 4 or 5 hours a day at the tables, instead of 12 to 14 hours.

My gambling had made me forget the most important discipline I had used in trading stocks which consisted of always having a "stop-loss" order which would trigger the liquidation of a position when it hit a specific losing point and thereby limiting losses.

If you set your own parameters for profits and losses, then you too can set a stop order that tells you not only when to put a stop to your losing streak, but also when to take a profit and remain a winner.

Blackjack may be a game to be enjoyed, but when your money is at stake, you need to be disciplined and follow self-imposed rules.

So, I urge you to try to derive some lessons from my experience and all that I went through.

I loved this book. Not only do I regard it as the best all-round book for beginners and intermediary players who want to promptly acquire proficiency in playing Blackjack, mastering strategy, and maximizing their chances at having fun and gaining confidence at the tables.

As for advanced players, the book rightly focuses on the holistic playing experience, so as to acquire the overall tools to eradicate unhealthy habits and poor judgment and dramatically enhance their potential with discipline and an accompanying healthy lifestyle.

I am Jonathan, and I wish readers all the best. Enjoy the book!

Chapter One

The 5 Most Common Mistakes



When you hit the Blackjack tables at casinos, you find many types of players. There will be those, usually drink in hand, just fooling around and laughing with friends and dates.

There will be others, sweating profusely, the anxiety oozing out of their foreheads, obviously not having fun, perhaps on a losing streak and possibly well into their credit cards and last dimes.

Finally, you will encounter the “few”, players who seem composed, comfortable in their own skins, emitting all the signs of confidence, and going intently about “working” the table.

You want to avoid the first two groups and stick around and maybe play with that last one. You will thus be among winners, the only place to be.

So here are the 5 common mistakes you want to avoid making at all costs:

1. Letting emotion take hold

Gambling combined with emotion is a recipe for disaster. Blackjack is a game with “structure”. It requires you to have your own personal set of guidelines and rules to play by.

It is so easy to allow emotion to take over. In the heat of the moment, when you’ve been at it for some time, it is essential not to get swayed by an emotional impulse.

Examples:

You start betting much higher than you had planned.

You start deviating from both your personal game-plan as well as from basic strategy.

Lesson: craft a sound game-plan with specifically allocated amounts and objectives, and then stick to it.

2. Lacking understanding of the game

Just like in stock trading, much of the speculation can be better managed by way of a greater understanding of the mechanics at play.

Guidelines:

The more you know the game, the greater your opportunity of winning.

Study carefully all the guidelines we will list for you, and commit “basic strategy” to memory so that you can make the best play calls on a sound and routine basis.

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