

Guts

Introduction

Guts is often played as an option in dealer's choice poker games, although it is not strictly speaking a poker game. It is normally played with hands of fewer than five cards, and it has a different betting mechanism from normal poker - match pot betting. If the players are somewhat reckless the size of the pot can escalate very rapidly, and the name presumably refers to the bravery required to contest one of these large pots and risk losing an equally large amount.

Two-card Guts

- This is the basic game. A standard 52-card pack without jokers is used. In theory as many as 26 people could play, but the game probably works best for around 5 to 10 players.
- The players need to agree in advance on the ante that all will pay at the beginning to start the pot, and it is wise also to agree on a maximum amount that can be won from or lost to the pot in a single deal. This might for example be set at 100 times the ante. ***(or NOT)***

Deal and Declaration

- If the pot is empty all players pay the agreed ante to the pot. The cards are shuffled and cut and the dealer deals the cards one at a time face down until every player has two cards. The players look at their cards.
- Starting with the player to dealer's left and continuing clockwise around the table, ending with the dealer, each player in turn says either "in" or "out".
- Players who say "out" cannot win the pot, but do not lose any extra money.

Showdown

If more than one player says "in", all those who are "in" show their cards, and the player with the best cards wins the pot. When comparing hands, aces are high and

- any pair of equal cards beats any two unequal cards,
- a higher pair beats a lower pair,
- between two non-pair hands, the hand with the highest card wins,
- if two hands have equal highest cards, the hand whose other card is higher wins.

Therefore the highest hand is A-A, then K-K, Q-Q, etc. down to 2-2, then A-K, A-Q, A-J, ... , A-2, K-Q, K-J, ... , K-2, Q-J, ... down to the lowest hand 3-2.

Payments

- ❖ ***Players who said "in" but do not have the highest hand must each pay an amount equal to the whole pot, and these payments form the pot for the next deal.***
- ❖ If two or more players tie for best hand, they share the pot equally.

- ❖ If just one player says "in" and all the others say "out", the player who is "in" simply takes the whole pot and does not need to show any cards. The pot will also be emptied if there is a tie between all the players who stay in. This may end the game, if it is being played as an option in dealer's choice. If the game is to continue, the players will need to place a new ante.
- ❖ Note that if all the players other than the dealer say "out", the dealer will automatically say "in" and collect the pot, irrespective of how good or bad his or her cards may be.
- ❖ If after the losers have paid, the amount in the pot exceeds the agreed limit, the excess chips are set aside in a reserve. The pot to be played for in subsequent deals will be equal to the limit, and if it is won, chips are brought out of the reserve to form a new pot. Example: there is 80 in the pot and the limit is 100. Four people stay in. The winner takes the 80, the three losers each pay 80, and there is now 100 in the pot and 140 in reserve. If this pot is won without a contest there will be 100 in the pot and 40 in reserve. If this too is won without a contest there will be 40 in the pot and no reserve. **(or NOT)**