

Poker Tip #4

Dec. 29, 2012

Tip Subject: Patience

This tip emphasizes the importance of patience as it relates to the first 3 tips, which were:

1. Playing Too Many Hands.
2. Suggested Starting Hands.
3. Position.

While “Position” is generally considered to be the single most important aspect of poker, **Patience** is not far behind.

Especially for those players all over the world who have developed the bad habit of playing too many hands.

To be a “Good” poker player you must shake the habit of playing too many hands.
And “**Patience**” is the key.

Following are websites that discuss poker strategy, and emphasize the importance of patience and not playing too many hands.

1. Pokertips.org

Common Beginner Mistakes

Mistake #1: Playing too many hands

When people sit down in a game, they want to play. Often, this means they will even play hands like A8 or K8.
This is a cardinal mistake.

Remember: In Phil Gordon’s suggested starting hands (Tip #2), A8 (unsuited) is not even listed as a playable hand.
And it’s a hand that many players play. Don’t be one of them.
Sure, you will win with it on occasion, but over the long run it’s a big loser.

2. Thepokersource.com

Be patient – One problem that befalls many Texas Hold’em tournament players is that they get impatient as the blinds increase. In order to be successful in tournament play, you must have the discipline to wait for a solid hand.

3. Titanpoker.com

In **Hold'em** Poker, **patience** is a virtue. Wait for good starting hands (see Poker Tip #2) and then play them aggressively.

Although few players you come in contact with will dispute the need to play **patient poker**, what most players consider **patient** and what you should consider **patient** are two entirely different things.

Many players are fond of hands like K♠J♦ or Q♥J♣ from early position. After all, in their value system, any two face cards are powerful holdings, and worth getting involved with regardless of the circumstances.

Trust us on this one. If you hold either of those two hands, and someone raises, do you think you have the best hand and are a favorite?

I hope not.

Don't be one of those players.

However, if you are one of those players, please read on.

Let's say you hold KJ and limp in, or Heaven forbid, call a raise.

If you miss the flop, as you will 3-out-of-4-times, it's not a huge problem because you can simply fold the hand.

The real problem arises when you catch part of the flop.

Suppose you called a raise with KJ and the flop contains a King, and the raiser bets.

Do you like your hand?

It's a tough call precisely because you really don't have much to go on when you try to decide if you have the best hand.

When he came out betting, your opponent may have been bluffing with a hand like A-Q, or semibluffing with J-J, but he might also have a hand like A-K. You can't be sure what he has, and consequently no idea about where you stand in relation to your opponent.

If your opponent holds a king, his kicker is likely to be better than yours, since you can be fairly sure he didn't raise before the flop with K-10. If you have a hand like K-J and your opponent holds K-Q or A-K, other than some odd flops that will result in a split pot or a miracle flop that gives you a straight, there are only three cards in the deck that can win it for you.

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Yet many players in your game probably treat K-J as though it were a top-notch hand. It's not. Sure, it's a hand you should see the flop with if you're in late position and no one has raised.

In fact, if you are in late position and no one has called the blinds, it's frequently a raising hand. But it is not a hand you can cold-call a raise with, nor is it a hand you can comfortably play from early position.

4. Nichepoker.net

The Value of Patience in Poker

Poker is a game of exploiting the mistakes of your opponents. A common mistake that you will see at the tables is players losing their patience and playing too many hands.

This can lead to entering the pot with a hand that is not solid enough for it's position.

Every poker player has had long runs of junk hands, a seemingly endless procession of small (paired and unpaired) cards.

In these situations medium-strength holdings can start to look very attractive. Hands you would normally fold without too much thought are played to relieve the boredom of constant folding. Here is where things get dangerous, especially when playing easily dominated hands.

For example, limping with ace-seven can lead to difficult (and often incorrect) decisions after the flop. If you hit the ace then an opponent could have a higher kicker, or hitting the seven can leave you vulnerable to an over-pair.

This is where the value of a patient approach comes in. Being disciplined enough to ask yourself whether you are really playing the hand for a profit should be a natural part of your poker game. Entering pots with vulnerable hands in order to relieve the boredom of a long spell of cold cards can easily wipe out the profits that you spent hours building in one fell swoop.

To summarize, patience is a valuable skill in poker, helping to ensure that the hands you play are profitable and helping to avoid potentially difficult situations – especially with easily dominated hands. A patient approach will also go a long way to ensuring that you are developing a solid foundation for the game, as well as minimizing your bad habits.