

Poker Tip No. 8

Jan. 27, 2013

Tip Subject: **Playing Ace-Rag**

What is Ace-Rag: Pocket cards (unsuited) consisting of an Ace with a low kicker.

A9, A8, A7, A6, A5, A4, A3, A2

Situation: You look at your hole cards and see A-Rag..

Suggestion: It is generally considered best to fold your hand before the flop.

Notes: Good players can successfully play Ace-Rag, but only in rare situations.

In Phil Gordon's suggested starting hands (Tip No. 2), A-Rag (unsuited) is not even listed as a playable hand.

Following are Poker Instructional/Strategy sites that discuss playing A-Rag.

Pokerzone.com

Most new players overplay A-Rag.

If you pair the rag, you are probably beaten by a better hand.

And if you pair the Ace there is a chance that an opponent has also made a pair of Aces but has a better kicker.

Pokerplayernewspaper.com

Poker players love to see an ace in the hole. Any ace is good! Well, not really. The ace is the top card in the deck; no card is higher. So it's understandable that a poker player gets a warm, fuzzy feeling when he turns up the corner of his first hole card and sees an ace.

He tries not to show his excitement. Sure, he's hoping the other card will be a second ace, or a picture card, but it's just as likely to be a small card – nine or lower, giving him ace-rag.

A PokerPigeon will stay in with any ace, including ace-rag.

A PokerShark is more likely to quickly fold the ace-rag unsuited.

Ace-Rag unsuited is a Long-Term loser. It is a dominated hand.

Betting with ace-rag unsuited is just asking to lose your chips.

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Thepokerbank.com

It is typical for a beginner player to overestimate the strength of their hand just because they hold an Ace, and this can lead them into trouble.

More often than not you should be folding rag aces. This may come as no surprise to intermediate and experienced players as they have read this article or other articles like this, and learned from mistakes they have made at the table.

You should always look to fold rag aces, as they will rarely win big pots and are likely to lose you a fair amount of money if you are out-kicked.

There may be a slight chance that your opponent is playing a rag ace worse than yours, but you can never be sure of this and it is never ideal to be putting money into a pot when you do not know where you stand.