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Titre : JEU DE POKER AVEC ARRANGEMENT DE CARTES POSEES SUR LA TABLE
Title: FLAT LINE HOLD 'EM POKER GAME

Abrégé/Abstract:
A method of playing a poker style card game, wherein the dealer deals two "hole" cards to each player. The dealer then deals nine cards as the community cards which are arranged in two separate sets. One set of community cards is arranged in a North-South direction and the other set is arranged in an East-West direction, the two sets being intersected by one shared community card. In a preferred embodiment, the community cards are laid out in a "Cross" or "Star" shape or "+" or small letter "t" shape. All players can utilize the community cards, in conjunction with their "hole" cards, so as to form a poker hand. The winning hand comes from that player whose two "hole" cards best fit with one of the sets of community cards on the table, and achieves the highest poker ranking.
Abstract

A method of playing a poker style card game, wherein the dealer deals two 'hole' cards to each player. The dealer then deals nine cards as the community cards which are arranged in two separate sets. One set of community cards is arranged in a North-South direction and the other set is arranged in an East-West direction, the two sets being intersected by one shared community card. In a preferred embodiment, the community cards are laid out in a "Cross" or "Star" shape or "+" or small letter "t" shape. All players can utilize the community cards, in conjunction with their "hole" cards, so as to form a poker hand. The winning hand comes from that player whose two "hole" cards best fit with one of the sets of community cards on the table, and achieves the highest poker ranking.
FLAT LINE HOLD 'EM POKER GAME

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to a poker-style card game, and more particularly to a poker-style card game in which each of the players attempts to achieve a high ranking poker hand by combining at least two "hole cards" which are dealt to their initial hand and various pre-designated combinations of community cards which all players can use as part of their poker hand. More specifically, the present invention relates to a poker-style card game in which each of the players attempts to achieve a high ranking poker hand by utilizing at least two "hole cards" which are dealt to their initial hand in combination with community cards selected from one of at least two designated areas, each of these areas having a plurality of community cards therein.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PRIOR ART

Poker-style card games have been played in casinos and establishments for many years. Texas Hold’em is by far the most popular poker game because of the large number of players who can play at one time and the fast action and large pots that are generated. The game is fast because only two cards are dealt to each player, with the remaining cards being dealt to a "flop" which forms the community cards from which each player makes up the rest of his hand. (Of course, in Texas Hold’em, "The Turn" also refers to fourth card which is dealt face up in the middle of the table. Play proceeds as in the previous round, except now all bets and raises must be equal to the high limit bet size. "The River" refers to a fifth and final card is dealt face up in the middle of the table. Play proceeds as in the previous round. All bets and raises must be equal to the high limit bet size.) Each hand, however, has a single set of community cards which all players use as part of their poker hand. Therefore, the winning hand usually comes from that player whose two cards best fit with the community cards. (Of course the winning hand could be the five community cards)

With the strong growth of wagering type poker games such as Texas Hold’em since the turn of the decade, millions of players throughout the world have taken up the game of poker online, in casinos and now, in professional tours. In 2003, Texas Hold’em exploded in popularity as a spectator sport in the United States due to events such as the World Poker Tour and the winner of the World Series of Poker was a player who qualified online, which has really helped the growth of the game. One of the biggest reasons the game exploded was the invention of placing little cameras inside the
table that allowed the television audience to see the players' hidden cards, whereby players at home could now “play along” with the pros, watching them bet, raise and fold.

Texas Hold’em is considered a game of skill, and a difficult game for the novice player to learn to play because it takes considerable study, practice and a large bankroll to become a competent player. Although Texas Hold’em has really grown in popularity amongst the number of players who play the game of poker, it has many drawbacks that hold the game back. One such negative with Texas Hold’em is it is very “tight”, with little room for error. Because the game is a game of skill and players only get two cards initially as “hole” cards, it can be a game which features numerous instances where hands are folded by players. While online versions of the game can be somewhat more exciting, because players are playing a wild and crazy version of the game for fun chips, and not with the risk associated with playing for money, it can be stated that when the game is played for money, it is a totally different game altogether. In fact, it is not uncommon for players in money games or tournaments to fold 5, 10 or 20 straight hands in a row. The reason players do this is they are waiting for that one good hand to play. As a result, the amount of folding which can come into play in Texas Hold’em serves to decrease the excitement and enjoyment level of the players watching and participating in the game. Another equally unexciting situation in Texas Hold’em often presents itself when the best poker hand on the table, is actually the five community cards, as opposed to those of the players.

Although this is strategy for many players, it would be preferable if there was a game that entices the player to play more, ultimately building on average bigger pots. Obviously if the game is being played where the house is taking a rake, or a percentage of every pot, the bigger per pot average means more house profits as well.

Another drawback to Texas Hold’em is in the “No Limit” version of the game. Players can play for hours and hours in a tournament, and one bad decision can take them right out of the game. Certainly and without doubt this is an attraction of the game, but could it be argued that this same attraction is a negative that players don’t know exists until they are given another option?
Yet another drawback to a seemingly great game is that although it is broadcast on TV, and is thought to be a spectator sport, is it truly? Action is very seldom seen in the game. One hardly ever finds 6 players in at the very end, all with high hands and creating exciting thrilling moments. It can easily be argued that Texas Hold’em’s perceived exciting play is directly attributable to the lack of other comparable options.

Yet another drawback of Texas Hold’em is one of its brightest points. Players shy away from games like 7 card stud and Omaha for they feel there is too much luck and not enough skill. Players are attracted to skill and rightly so. Because there is so much obvious skill in the game Texas Hold’em, the game play of the players can become regimented and predictable, where the players play like machines, which makes for a boring game.

In a strange paradox, one of Texas Hold’em’s bright points is also a drawback. In addition, the game of Texas Hold’em itself has not been a game with a lot of variations. For example, games such as Blackjack seem to have numerous different variations, as do most card games in the casino. However, variations of Texas Hold’em have not evolved in a similar manner. It should be noted that there have been variations of poker-style card games that have utilized certain elements contained in games like Texas Hold’em, such as the use of community cards from which each player makes up the rest of his hand, such as United States Patent No. 5,531,448 (Moody), which discloses a poker-style card game that allows each player to choose, from four groups of two cards, which two he will add to his three “hole” cards to make the highest ranking poker hand. However, this patent describes a game in which players only use 5 cards to make their hands as opposed to seven cards, that is to say there are only two community cards. Such a method reduces the amount of cards with which a player has available to them to construct a high ranking poker hand. Further, it is doubtful that this game could even be considered poker, from a purist’s standpoint. For one thing, all community cards are flipped at once, and players do not play against each other for a pot. There is also no betting after each community card is flipped, and no raising.

Another such variation is United States Patent No. 5,657,993 (Merlino et al), wherein, in
making up a complete poker hand, each of the players will utilize his or her two “hole” cards and three of the community cards. However, this patent describes a game in which players construct their hands in much the same manner as that in Texas Hold ‘em, where the winning hand comes from that player whose two cards best fit with the single set of community cards, the essential difference being that instead of flipping the flop (first three cards), the turn (the fourth card) and finally the river (the fifth and last community card), the game disclosed in Merlino et al flips the community cards one at a time. As such, many of the same problems and concerns outlined above in connection with Texas Hold ‘em will also apply to this game, in that it can be a game which features numerous instances where hands are folded by players, which, as a result, serves to decrease the excitement and enjoyment level of the players watching and participating in the game.

Accordingly, a need still exists for a poker-style card game that allows players to attempt to achieve a high ranking poker hand by utilizing at least two “hole cards” which are dealt to their initial hand in combination with community cards selected from one of at least two designated areas, each of these areas having a plurality of community cards therein, with a view to enticing players to stay in the game longer rather than folding their hand early, thus contributing to further betting. Moreover, such a wagering card game should increase player excitement, and should increase the revenues of each table for the casino.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

It is an object of the present invention to provide a poker-style card game in which each of the players attempt to achieve a high ranking poker hand by combining at least two “hole cards” which are dealt to their initial hand with various pre-designated combinations of community cards.

It is another object of the present invention to provide a method of playing a poker-style card game in which each of the players attempt to achieve a high ranking poker hand by utilizing at least two “hole cards” which are dealt to their initial hand in combination with community cards selected from one of at least two designated areas, each of these areas having a plurality of community cards.
It is a still further object of the present invention to provide a method of playing a poker-style card game in which, by allowing players to construct a poker hand utilizing "hole cards" in combination with community cards selected from one of at least two designated areas, players will stay in the game longer rather than folding their hand early, thus contributing to further betting, which leads to increased excitement.

It is yet another object of the present invention to provide a method of playing a poker-style card game in which, by virtue of the players staying in the game longer and competing rather than folding, the likelihood of a plurality of players participating in the final round of the game is increased.

According to one aspect of the present invention, there is provided a method of playing a card game using at least one standard deck of playing cards comprising the steps of: (a) dealing an initial hand of two cards to at least two players; (b) arranging a collection of community cards from the deck in a predetermined pattern of at least two distinct groupings, the at least two distinct groupings each having at least five community cards therein which are usable by any of the at least two players to form a poker hand; (c) the at least two players each combining the initial hand of two cards with the community cards contained in one of the at least two distinct groupings to each form the poker hand; and (d) examining each of at least two players completed hands to determine the poker hand ranking thereof.

A further aspect of the present invention provides for a method of playing a card game at a gaming table involving a dealer and at least two players using at least one standard deck of playing cards comprising the steps of: (a) the at least two players making a first wager to participate in the card game; (b) dealing an initial hand of two cards face down to each of the at least two players; (c) conducting a first round of betting among each of the at least two players after the two cards have
been dealt, an amount of the betting being placed into a pot; (c) arranging a collection of community cards comprising nine cards from the deck face down into a first and a second distinct set each having four separately distinct cards and one shared card therein, whereby the shared card intersects the two distinct sets, and wherein the community cards in any one of the first and the second distinct set are usable, in combination with the initial hand of two cards, by each of the at least two players to form a five card poker hand; (e) turning two of the community cards in the first distinct set face up; (f) turning two of the community cards in the second distinct set face up; (g) conducting a second round of betting among each of the at least two players after two of the community cards in the first distinct set and two of the community cards in the second distinct set have been turned face up, an amount of the second round of betting being placed into the pot; (h) turning a final two of the community cards in the first distinct set face up; (i) turning a final two of the community cards in the second distinct set face up; (j) conducting a third round of betting among each of the at least two players after the final two of the community cards in the first distinct set and the final two of the community cards in the second distinct set have been turned face up, an amount of the third round of betting being placed into the pot; (k) turning the shared card which intersects the two distinct sets face up; (l) conducting a final round of betting among each of the at least two players after the shared card which intersects the two distinct sets has been turned face up, an amount of the final round of betting being placed into the pot; (m) each of the at least two players turning up the initial hand of two cards; (n) each of the at least two players forming the five card poker hand by selecting any combination of the community cards contained in only one of either the first distinct set or the second distinct set, in combination with the initial hand of two cards; (o) examining each of the at least two players completed hands to determine a poker hand ranking thereof, with a hand having a highest poker hand ranking among players utilizing the community cards contained in the first distinct set in combination with the initial hand of two cards being declared one winning hand, and another winning hand having a highest poker hand ranking being declared among players utilizing the community cards contained in the second distinct set in combination with the initial hand of two cards; (p) paying each of the players with the one winning hand and the another winning hand a preestablished amount of the pot; and (r) wherein steps (a) to (p) are repeated to continue play and begin subsequent rounds, if necessary.

A still further aspect of the present invention relates to a method for playing a virtual card
game on a computer device comprising a processor for executing a set of instructions, and involving
at least two players and a virtual dealer comprising(a) displaying a wagering area on a display screen
for the computer device where the at least two players place a first wager to start the card game;(b)
displaying a betting area on the display screen for the computer device where the at least two players
can place a bet, call or fold, as necessary, the bet being added to a jackpot, an amount of the jackpot
being displayed on the display screen;(c) the virtual dealer dealing an initial hand of two “hole” cards
to the at least two players, the cards which have been dealt to the at least one player being displayed
in respective Player Hand Areas on the display screen; (d) the processor beginning a first round of
betting after the two cards have been dealt, whereby the at least two players can place a bet, an amount
of the bet being placed into a pot;(e) the processor arranging a collection of community cards
comprising nine cards from the deck face down into first and second distinct set areas on the display
screen, each of the first and second distinct set areas having four separately distinct cards and one
shared card displayed therein, whereby the shared card intersects the two distinct sets, and wherein
the community cards which are displayed in any one of the first and the second distinct set areas are
usable, in any combination with the initial hand of two cards, by the at least two players to form a five
card poker hand; (f) the processor turning two of the community cards in the first distinct set area face
up on the display screen; (g) the processor turning two of the community cards in the second distinct
set face up on the display screen; (h) the processor beginning a second round of betting after the two
of the community cards in the first distinct set and the two of the community cards in the second
distinct set have been turned face up on the display screen, whereby the at least two players can place
another bet, if necessary, an amount of the another bet being placed into a pot;(i) the processor turning
a final two of the community cards in the first distinct set area face up on the display screen;(j) the
processor turning a final two of the community cards in the second distinct set face up on the display
screen; (k) the processor beginning a third round of betting after the final two of the community cards
in the first distinct set area and the final two of the community cards in the second distinct set area
have been turned face up on the display screen, whereby the at least two players can place a further
bet, if necessary, an amount of the further bet being placed into a pot; (l) the processor turning the
shared card which intersects the two distinct sets face up on the display screen; (m) the processor
beginning a final round of betting after the shared card which intersects the first and the second
distinct set areas has been turned face up on the display screen, whereby the at least two players can
place a final bet, if necessary, an amount of the final bet being placed into a pot;
(n) the processor turning up the at least two players initial hands of two cards on the display screen;
(o) the processor allowing the at least two players to form the five card poker hand by selecting any
combination of the community cards contained in only one of either the first distinct set or the second
distinct set, in combination with the initial hand of two cards;(p) the processor examining the at least
two players completed hand to determine a poker hand ranking thereof, with a hand having a highest
poker hand ranking among players utilizing the community cards contained in the first distinct set
in combination with the initial hand of two cards being declared one winning hand, and another
winning hand having a highest poker hand ranking being declared among players utilizing the
community cards contained in the second distinct set in combination with the initial hand of two
cards; (q) the processor paying each of the players with the one winning hand and the another winning
hand a preestablished amount of the pot; and (r) the processor repeating steps (a) to (q) to continue
play and begin subsequent rounds, if necessary.

A still further aspect of the present invention provides for a computer device comprising a
processor for executing a set of instructions for playing a virtual card game involving at least two
players and a virtual dealer comprising: (a) displaying a wagering area on a display screen for the
computer device where the at least two players place a first wager to start the card game;
(b) displaying a betting area on the display screen for the computer device where the at least two
players can place a bet, call or fold, as necessary, the bet being added to a jackpot, an amount of the
jackpot being displayed on the display screen; (c) the virtual dealer dealing an initial hand of two
"hole" cards to the at least two players, the cards which have been dealt to the at least one player being
displayed in respective Player Hand Areas on the display screen; (d) the processor beginning a first
round of betting after the two cards have been dealt, whereby the at least two players can place a bet,
an amount of the bet being placed into a pot; (e) the processor arranging a collection of community
cards comprising nine cards from the deck face down into first and second distinct set areas on the
display screen, each of the first and second distinct set areas having four separately distinct cards and
one shared card displayed therein, whereby the shared card intersects the two distinct sets, and
wherein the community cards which are displayed in any one of the first and the second distinct set
areas are usable, in any combination with the initial hand of two cards, by the at least two players to
form a five card poker hand; (f) the processor turning two of the community cards in the first distinct set area face up on the display screen; (g) the processor turning two of the community cards in the second distinct set face up on the display screen; (h) the processor beginning a second round of betting after the two of the community cards in the first distinct set and the two of the community cards in the second distinct set have been turned face up on the display screen, whereby the at least two players can place another bet, if necessary, an amount of the another bet being placed into a pot; (i) the processor turning a final two of the community cards in the first distinct set area face up on the display screen; (j) the processor turning a final two of the community cards in the second distinct set face up on the display screen; (k) the processor beginning a third round of betting after the final two of the community cards in the first distinct set area and the final two of the community cards in the second distinct set area have been turned face up on the display screen, whereby the at least two players can place a further bet, if necessary, an amount of the further bet being placed into a pot; (l) the processor turning the shared card which intersects the two distinct sets face up on the display screen; (m) the processor beginning a final round of betting after the shared card which intersects the first and the second distinct set areas has been turned face up on the display screen, whereby the at least two players can place a final bet, if necessary, an amount of the final bet being placed into a pot; (n) the processor turning up the at least two players initial hands of two cards on the display screen; (o) the processor allowing the at least two players to form the five card poker hand by selecting any combination of the community cards contained in only one of either the first distinct set area or the second distinct set area displayed on the display screen, in combination with the initial hand of two cards; (p) the processor examining the at least two players completed hand to determine a poker hand ranking thereof, with a hand having a highest poker hand ranking among players utilizing the community cards contained in the first distinct set in combination with the initial hand of two cards being declared one winning hand, and another winning hand having a highest poker hand ranking being declared among players utilizing the community cards contained in the second distinct set in combination with the initial hand of two cards; and (q) the processor paying each of the players with the one winning hand and the another winning hand a preestablished amount of the pot.

(r) the processor repeating steps (a) to (q) to continue play and begin subsequent rounds, if necessary.
According to another aspect of the present invention, there is provided a method of playing a card game involving a dealer and at least two players using at least one standard deck of playing cards comprising the steps of (a) the at least two players making a wager to participate in the card game; (b) dealing an initial hand of two cards face down to each of the at least two players; (c) conducting a first round of betting among each of the at least two players after the two cards have been dealt, an amount of the betting being placed into a pot; (d) arranging a collection of community cards comprising nine cards from the deck face down into a first and a second distinct set each having four separately distinct cards and one shared card therein, whereby the shared card intersects the two distinct sets, and wherein the community cards in any one of the first and the second distinct set are usable, in combination with the initial hand of two cards, by each of the at least two players to form a five card poker hand; (e) turning at least one of the community cards in each of the first and the second distinct set face up; (f) conducting a second round of betting among each of the at least two players after the at least one of the community cards in each of the first and the second distinct set have been turned face up, an amount of the second round of betting being placed into the pot; (g) turning any of the remaining community cards in each of the first distinct set and the second distinct set face up;

(h) conducting a third round of betting among each of the at least two players after the any of the remaining community cards in each of the first distinct set and the second distinct set have been turned face up, an amount of the third round of betting being placed into the pot; (i) turning the shared card which intersects the two distinct sets face up; (j) conducting a final round of betting among each of the at least two players after the shared card which intersects the two distinct sets has been turned face up, an amount of the final round of betting being placed into the pot; (k) each of the at least two players turning up the initial hand of two cards; (l) each of the at least two players forming the five card poker hand by selecting any three of the community cards contained in only one of either the first distinct set or the second distinct set, in any combination with the initial hand of two cards; (m) examining each of the at least two players completed hands to determine a poker hand ranking thereof and determine a winning hand, with the hand having a higher poker hand ranking being declared the winning hand; (n) paying the player with the winning hand a preestablished amount of the pot; and (o) wherein steps (a) to (n) are repeated to continue play and begin subsequent rounds, if necessary.
The advantage of the present invention is that it provides an improved method for playing a poker-style card game in which each of the players attempts to achieve a high ranking poker hand by utilizing at least two "hole cards" which are dealt to their initial hand in combination with community cards selected from one of at least two designated areas, each of these areas having a plurality of community cards therein.

A still further advantage of the present invention is that it allows an improved method of playing a poker-style card game in which, by allowing players to construct a poker hand utilizing "hole cards" in combination with community cards selected from one of at least two designated areas, players will stay in the game longer rather than folding their hand early, thus contributing to further betting, which leads to increased excitement.

Yet another advantage of the present invention is to provide an improved method of playing a poker-style card game in which, by virtue of the players staying in the game longer and competing rather than folding, the likelihood of a plurality of players participating in the final round of the game is increased.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

A preferred embodiment of the present invention is described below with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which:

Figure 1 is a plan view illustrating an example gaming table layout for use in playing the card game according to one embodiment of the method of the present invention, and which illustrates the community card areas;

Figure 2 is an illustration of an embodiment of game play according to an embodiment of the present invention, wherein the first community cards are flipped face up;

Figure 3 is an illustration of an embodiment of game play according to an embodiment of the
present invention, wherein the second set of community cards are flipped face up; and

Figure 4 is an illustration of an embodiment of gameplay according to an embodiment of the present invention, wherein the final community card has been flipped face up.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

The present invention teaches a variant of a poker-style game most related to that of Texas Hold’Em, and involves a playing method called “FLAT LINE HOLD ‘EM”. Of course, almost all poker games can be played either Limit, Spread Limit, Pot Limit or No Limit, and the present invention is no different, in that these versions could, if deemed necessary, be utilized during gameplay. (IE: Limit betting has fixed bets. Spread Limit has fixed bets within a range, for example, $1 to $4. In Pot Limit you can bet up to the pot size. In No Limit you can bet all the chips in front of you).

In one embodiment of the present invention, the game is dealt from one deck of cards, though variations of the game may include numerous numbers of decks of cards, such as, for example, dealing eight decks from a shoe in a casino. Of course in the virtual world, either in Video Poker or on other virtual embodiments such as the Internet there needs be no limit at all to the number of decks used. It is possible to even include variations with jokers. If a joker was used, it could be a wild card and each player could use it to his own advantage. The joker could also be used as one card rank in a player’s hand when he makes his best poker hand in one line and counted as another card rank for play in the other line as will be described herein.

In a preferred embodiment, the present invention is played at a poker style table with anywhere from 2 to 10 players at a table, though it would be apparent to one skilled in the art that variations as to the exact number of players playing at one time can be varied. For example, if the game is played in tournaments styles in casino or online, on mobile phones, or the like, numerous players could conceivably participate. Often in tournament style games, thousands of players can play in one tournament and through the increasing of the blinds in the game, eventually all players are eliminated and one player who has not lost all his chips is declared the winner. In another embodiment, the present invention may also be played on a Blackjack like table top where players can play against the
house. Playing against the house alters the betting and the way the game is played, as hereinafter described.

As with traditional poker, each card has a rank and the present invention uses the traditional ranking of each card. Ace is the highest ranking card, followed by King, Queen, Jack, Ten, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, and 2. There is no ranking between the suits - so for example the king of hearts and the king of spades are equal. Of course in poker, the winning hands are decided by a poker ranking comprising of a 5 card hand. The poker hands from highest to lowest are listed:

- **Royal Flush** (Ace, King, Queen, Jack and Ten of the same suit)
- **Straight Flush** (a 5 card Straight, which is suited)
- **Four of a Kind** (IE. 6 Clubs, 6 Diamonds, 6 Spades, 6 Hearts)
- **Full House** (Three of a kind plus one pair)
- **Flush** (five cards of one suit)
- **Straight** (5 consecutive cards, including Ace, 2, 3, 4, 5, but not all the same suit)
- **Three of a Kind**
- **Two Pairs**
- **One Pair**
- **Highest Card in Rank**

As with traditional poker, any hand in a higher category beats any hand in a lower category (so for example any two pair beats a pair). Between hands in the same category the rank of the individual cards decides which is better. In describing the poker game version of the present invention, in the preferred embodiment, two to ten players would be sitting at a table with a dealer. The players would be playing a poker version against one another building a pot, eventually won by one or more of the players at the table.

In a preferred embodiment, the present invention uses in the poker style version of the game a "Dealer Button". This is a physical, or virtual Dealer button that slides clockwise or counter clockwise depending on the way the game is offered. In the preferred embodiment this button would
slide one player position in a clockwise fashion after each pot is won, ending that game. Of course, as indicated above, in an alternative embodiment the Dealer button could slide one player position in a counter clockwise direction after each pot is won. A new game would begin with the dealer button in front of a new player. The purpose of this dealer button involves the start of each hand called the “Blinds”. In the preferred embodiment, as in Texas Hold 'em, the rules dictate that there be two forced bets every hand, called blinds. There is a “Small Blind”, which is 1/2 of the low limit bet size, and a “Big Blind”, which is equal to the low limit bet size. Before the hand begins, the player to the immediate left of the dealer button (if dealer button is passed clockwise each hand) is forced to post the small blind, and the player to the left of that person is forced to post the big blind. These bets count towards that player's first round bet, and are considered live, meaning the player may choose to raise even if nobody else has. Blinds may often increase in amounts depending on the variation. For instance in tournament play the Blinds are constantly increasing in a way to eliminate players from the game by forcing them out of chips.

As noted above, and in a preferred embodiment, at the start of each new game the players are forced to post the small and big blinds. Usually the player to the left of the dealer button must post the small blind and the person to that player’s left must post the big blind. In an alternative embodiment, it would also be possible for all players to ante each new game. Although this is currently used in later stages of poker tournaments when all players have lots of chips, everyone often must ante to build quicker, larger pots, players having to ante could be involved in any variation as long as it is posted and players all play by the same rules.

The blinds are considered towards the player’s first round of bets. They may choose to raise bets as is offered by the rules on their turn, but the blinds count towards their first bet. One reason why Blinds are offered in poker is, quite simply, so the pot begins with something. If all players fold out in the hand, the pot winner would win something instead of nothing.

In one embodiment of the present invention, and with specific reference to “heads up” play where only two players are playing against one another, it should be noted that the player with the
dealer button posts the small blind and is the first to act before the flop. His opponent would post the big blind and acts first in the three betting rounds.

After the blinds have been posted, the game begins with everyone receiving two “hole” cards in the preferred embodiment of the present invention. One skilled in the art would understand that subtle variations as to this could be effected. For example, in an alternative embodiment, it would also be possible for players to be initially given more cards, for example, three cards, and then may have to discard a card, or initially be given four cards and then discarding two.

The first card dealt is usually to the player after the dealer button as if he were actually dealing the cards. All cards are dealt face down in the preferred embodiment but it is possible that in versions of the game, players could receive two cards down and one or more face up that they may also use in building their best poker hand.

After all cards are dealt to the players, in the preferred embodiment, the dealer will now bury one card from the deck (it being understood that “burying” the card implies that the card is not shown to the players. It can be placed under the community cards, in the discard rack, off to the side, etc., just so long as the players do not see it).

In the preferred embodiment of the present invention, the essence of the game is that players have the option of constructing a poker hand utilizing two separate sets of community cards which all players can use as part of their poker hand. In other words, a player uses their two “hole” cards in conjunction with one of the sets of community cards on the table to form their poker hand. With reference to Figure 1, each player has the option of using the player’s two hole cards and the five community cards from north to south (20,60,100,80,40), wherein the player has seven total cards at the end to make his five card poker hand. However, each player remaining in the game also has the option of using instead their two “hole” cards and the community cards from West to East (50,90,100,70,30), a total of seven cards at the end to make their final five card poker hand. As one can see, area 100 intersects each of the North-South and East-West areas, and area 100 also pertains to the final community card which is revealed to the players, as hereinafter described. As can be seen in Figure 1, the preferred embodiment shows the community cards laid out in a “Cross” or “Star”
shape or "t" or small letter "t" shape. In a preferred embodiment of the present invention, the player who has the best poker hand utilizing their two "hole" cards and the community cards from West to East (50,90,100,70,30) will get a share of half the pot, and the other half of the pot will be the player who has the best poker hand utilizing their two "hole" cards and the five community cards from north to south (20,60,100,80,40). Of course the same player’s hand could be the best poker hand from West to East and the best poker hand from North to South and win both ways, or the full pot. Of course, in an alternative embodiment of the present invention, the winner could also be the player who simply has the best poker hand, utilizing their two "hole" cards in conjunction with one of the sets of community cards on the table.

Again with reference to Figure 1, game play continues, after everyone has received two "hole" cards, with the dealer then placing four cards face down on the table 10, one each to areas 20, 30, 40 and 50, then buries two more cards and place four more cards face down on the table, one each to each of areas 60, 70, 80 and 90, then buries three more cards and places one additional card face down on the table in card area 100. The dealer would now have 9 cards on the table, all face down in front of the dealer and the players on the table layout. These cards so placed are called community cards because all players will use these cards with their existing "hole" cards to make their final poker hands.

It should be understood that the dealer does not have to physically place the cards on the table layout until which time the cards actually come into play. In an alternative embodiment, the dealer could place them in these areas as they are required. For instance, in the virtual world, cards might be placed ahead of time, but in casinos, where the possibility of a marked card could occur, cards may sit in the dealer's hands until they need to be played. It is also to be further understood that any number of cards could be buried, as noted above, such as, for example, only one card could be buried between each of the "flop", "turn" and "river". Any number of cards could be buried but it would be recommended that whatever number is chosen, with the table or tournament the game is played at, this would always be a constant and not change from game to game. It is also not absolutely essential that, after the dealer then places four cards face down on the table to each of areas 20, 30, 40 and 50, that the dealer bury cards before placing place four more cards face down on the table in each of areas
60, 70, 80 and 90, or before placing the “river” card in card area 100. It should be noted that burying cards in such manner is, however, the preferred embodiment.

After the dealer has either played all the cards, placed them face down on the table layout or before they place any cards, depending on the house rules, all players starting to the left of the player with the big blind act on their hand. In the preferred embodiment, a player could fold, shoving in their cards and not playing further until next game, after this pot is decided. Of course, as in regular poker, players may bet or call. A player would call by placing a bet equal to the big blind. Players may also raise, which is placing double the big blind in a limit game. Of course all betting is in accordance within the rules provided for the game that is being played (ie: Limit, Spread Limit, Pot Limit or No Limit, for example). It would also, of course, be understood to one skilled in the art that all player actions in terms of betting, calling, raising, and the like, could be considered a “round of betting”. This means that in a “no limit” game, for example’s sake, players could bet up to all their chips, where as in a “limit” game, there may be a set amount a player could raise on any given round.

Each player gets to act on their hand before the dealer would make their next move. Of course players may have several decisions within the round, just as in regular poker, depending on the number of raises which might be limited to a predetermined number of raises, which could also depend on the actual round of betting at the time.

After all players have acted the dealer would now, in the preferred embodiment, flip up four of the nine cards on the table layout that are currently face down, these being, with reference again to Figure 1, in areas 20, 30, 40 and 50 (or, in the alternative embodiment, if they had not been placed yet, deal four cards to areas 20, 30, 40 and 50). In either of these two options the cards in areas 20, 30, 40 and 50 will now be face up, exposed for all the players to view. As noted, previously, these cards are called community cards because all players will use these cards with their existing “hole” cards to make their final poker hands.

In an alternative embodiment, it should clearly be understood that although the dealer has
flipped the community cards face up in areas 20, 30, 40 and 50 he could, alternatively, have flipped any two cards in areas 20, 60, 80 and 40 (North-South direction) and any two cards in areas 50, 90, 70 and 30 (East-West direction). The dealer could have easily flipped the community cards up to the top two locations (20, 60) and the side two locations (30, 50) instead of the four cards on the tips (which are, of course, 20, 30, 40 and 50).

Now with four community cards exposed on the table layout (in the preferred embodiment, these are of course in areas 20, 30, 40 and 50) players have one more community card already in play than in Texas Hold’em and this gives the players the belief that better hands could occur, and that they now have a better chance to make a hand, and this causes less folding. With four community cards on the table, there is a better chance the players now have something better to work with.

At this point, one might assume that because the present invention actually has placed a fourth community card into play at the same time Texas Hold’em has only 3 community cards in play (after the “flop”) that the method of the present invention is making the game too easy. This simply is not true because in Texas Hold’em, after the “flop” is revealed, the player now can see 5 cards in their hand that they could use to construct their final poker hand. In the present invention, players actually have two different 4 card hands that they will be using to make their final 5 card hand. For example, a player would have the option of using their two “hole” cards in conjunction with the cards drawn to areas 30 and 50 (the East-West direction) to construct their final poker hand OR, using their two “hole” cards in conjunction with the cards drawn to areas 20 and 40 (the North-South direction) to construct their final poker hand. So although they have more possibilities, the present invention at this stage does not yet allow the player to see a five card hand yet, which is a major distinguishing feature from Texas Hold’em. By not allowing for the five card poker hand to be possible yet, it deters players from going all in at this point, but does deter them somewhat from folding, and in turn keeps more players in the game and betting towards what would be known as the “turn” in Texas Hold’em.

Of course now that the dealer has flipped the first four community cards to areas 20, 30, 40 and 50, there is a round of betting by the players who remain in the game. Players are afforded all the
options they were afforded in the first round of betting and possibly more depending on the option being offered. The player to the immediate left of the dealer button acts first and play sequentially proceeds clockwise around the table. Some of the options the players are afforded are to check, bet, raise and fold. All bets and raises must be equal to the low pot limit if in a limit game unless other options afforded. Each player may go all in at any time in no limit games.

In the present invention all betting is going into a pot. At the end of all betting this pot is dispersed amongst the winners of the game, as hereinafter described, depending on the rules herein and variations of the version of the poker game being played.

At this point four of the nine community cards on the table are exposed in this embodiment, if the dealer had placed all nine cards face down already on the table. In the alternative embodiment, where the dealer only places the cards as they will be in play, then there are only the four exposed cards on the layout. With reference again to Figure 1, after all players have acted on their hands the dealer will now expose four more community cards, in the preferred embodiment, in each of areas 60, 70, 90 and 80 making a total of 8 of the nine community cards in play exposed to the players (or deal four more community cards to each of areas 60, 70, 90 and 80, in the alternative embodiment).

The second set of exposed four community cards in areas 60, 70, 90 and 80 will depend on what previous community cards the dealer had exposed. If the dealer had first exposed community cards (30, 50) then the dealer would now expose (90, 70). If the dealer had exposed (20, 60) and (50, 90) than now the dealer would expose (70, 30) and (80, 40). The key is now to expose all the remaining community cards except the center community card (100) in the preferred embodiment.

As noted previously, it should be understood that although the preferred embodiment shows the community cards laid out in a “Cross” or “Star” or “+” or small letter “t” shape, the shape of the layout could be any design as long as there is one intersecting card between the two sets of community card areas. So in an “L”, “T”, “X”, “V”, where as cards where laid out in sets of four with one intersecting card, the intersecting card would be the final card turned over, referred to in traditional
Texas Hold’em as the “River”.

Of course now that the dealer has flipped all but the last community card, there is a round of betting by the players who remain in the game. Players are afforded all the options they were afforded in the first two rounds of betting and possibly more depending on the option being offered. The player remaining to the immediate left of the dealer button acts first and proceeds clockwise around the table. Some of the options the players are afforded are to check, bet, raise and fold. Now all bets and raises must be equal to the high limit bet size if in a limit game unless other options afforded. Each player may go all in at any time in no limit games.

In the preferred embodiment using the player’s two “hole” cards and the four community cards from north to south (20,60,80,40) the player has six total cards to make his five card poker hand, just as in Texas Hold’em, however each player remaining in the game also has their two “hole” cards and cards from West to East (50,90,70,30), a total of six cards to make their final five card poker hand. Of course one more community card remains unseen (100) that will be exposed.

In the popular game Texas Hold’em after the turn card is exposed, the players have a total of six cards at this point seen to make their final five card hand. These cards consist of their two hole cards, three community cards exposed on the flop and another community card exposed on the turn with one more community card to be played (known as the river), giving the players a total of seven cards to make one five card hand. In the present invention after the turn card is exposed, the players have two different potential hands with a total of six cards in each to make a final 5 card poker hand. These cards consist of the player’s two hole cards and four more community cards from North to South (20,60,80,40) for a total of six cards with one more community card yet to be exposed in the center (100) for a final total of seven cards to make their final five card poker hand. The second six card hand now would consist of the player’s two hole cards and the four exposed cards from West to East (50,90,70,30) and the final community card, the center card (100) that has not been exposed yet, for a final total of seven cards to make a final five card poker hand.
The strategies involved with the present invention are so far superior than to Texas Hold’em. For example, in Texas Hold’em, when the river card is flipped over it is all too often already a foregone conclusion as to who will win the pot.

Of course now in both Texas Hold’em and the present invention we are at the same point, playing the last community card. The dealer would now flip over what is known as the last community card (in area 100 in the present invention), showing the players the seventh and final card in Texas Hold’em or the ninth and final card in the present invention. Of course now that the dealer has flipped all the community cards, there is a final round of betting by the players who remain in the game. Players are afforded all the options they were afforded in the first three rounds of betting and possibly more depending on the option being offered. The player remaining to the immediate left of the dealer button acts first and proceeding clockwise around the table. Some of the options the players are afforded are to check, bet, raise and fold. All bets and raises must be equal to the high limit bet size if in a limit game unless other options afforded. Each player may go all in at any time in no limit games.

It should be noted that in Texas Hold’em, at this point, after all the betting, the winner of the game pot is the player with the best five card poker hand using the poker hand rankings described herein. Players are allowed to use any combination of their two “hole” cards and the five community cards in play. This would now be decided by players actually going to what is called a Showdown - Anyone who has not folded after the last round of betting will now have the option of showing their hand and possibly winning the pot. The person who bet last is the first to show their hand, and then it proceeds clockwise from there, with each remaining player either choosing to show their hand, or muck it. Often times a player will muck their hand if they aren't going to win the pot, and don't want their opponents to see what they played.

In the present invention the showdown is different from that of Texas Hold’em and one of the reasons more players will stay in the game. This leads to heavy late-game betting which is always exciting to see in poker. Showdown still occurs in the present invention however things are a little
different for players have two potential seven card layouts (as previously described) to make their best five card poker hand. In the preferred embodiment of the present invention the game pot will usually be split amongst at least two players. Half of the game pot will go to the player with the best five card poker hand that consists of their two hole cards and the five community cards from North to South (20,60,100, 80,40). The other half of the game pot will go to the player with the best five card poker hand that consists of their two hole cards and the five community cards from West to East (50,90,100,70,30). Of course the same player may have the best five card hand in both directions, so in essence, it is possible for one player to win the entire game pot by virtue of winning both North to South and West to East.

The present invention has kept more players in the game longer, and has enticed them to feel they can win one of the directions. If a player has a strong hand in one direction and a very weak poker hand in the other direction, this player is still betting, and quite possibly raising or going all in, which is a key feature of the present invention. Other players who might have a strong hand in the other direction, they do not know in what way the player betting is also strong and must decide if they want to call these bets or fold out.

In the present invention it is possible for the worst hand at the table in essence to be the strongest hand in one direction, stronger than the others in that direction and win half the pot, even though in true poker sense other players all had higher hands. The reason for this is only the highest hand in both directions wins half the pot. So for example player #1 has the best hand of all remaining hands, which lets say is a pair of fives, in the North-South direction, but yet Player #2 has a Straight in the West-East and Player #3 has Three of a kind in the West East and Player #4 has a Flush in the West-East. Although players #2,3 and 4 all had better poker hands, they did not have a better poker hand from North to South than player #1, so player number one would win half the game pot and in this example, the West to East game pot would go to player #4 who had the flush.

In order to illustrate and describe the present invention more fully, here are some examples of game play from the start of the game.
Hand Examples

Player #1 (has Dealer Button)
Player #2 (posts Small Blind – Gets First Card)
Player #3 (posts Big Blind)
Player #4 (Makes First Decision)

Player #5
Player #6
Player #7
Player #8
Player #9
Player #10

All Players are dealt two cards each. (Although they are face down so other players cannot see them, we have exposed them to show the examples)

Player #1 (has Dealer Button) (Hand consists of 9 of Diamonds and 3 of Hearts)
Player #2 (posts Small Blind – Gets First Card) (Hand consists of Ace of Hearts and 6 of Clubs)
Player #3 (posts Big Blind) (Hand consists of Ace of Spades and 10 of Diamonds)
Player #4 (Makes First Decision) (Hand consists of King of Clubs and 5 of Spades)
Player #5 (Hand consists of 6 of Spades and 9 of Hearts)
Player #6 (Hand consists of 4 of Hearts and 3 of Spades)
Player #7 (Hand consists of 8 of Spades and Queen of Clubs)
Player #8 (Hand consists of 6 of Diamonds and 9 of Spades)
Player #9 (Hand consists of 10 of Hearts and Jack of Clubs)
Player #10 (Hand consists of Ace of Clubs and 4 of Diamonds)

A round of betting occurs. Let’s say all players called the Big Blind with Player #3 checking. Then cards are flipped face up to the community card areas 20, 30, 40 and 50, which can be seen with reference to Figure 2.
Position 20 – King of Hearts
Position 30 – 2 of Hearts
Position 40 – 8 of Hearts
Position 50 – 7 of Spades

Betting starts at Player #2. Let’s say all players Check, all players stay in the game and now the dealer flips and exposes four more cards in community card areas 60, 70, 80, 90, as can be seen with reference to Figure 3.

Position 60 – Queen of Hearts
Position 70 – 7 of Clubs
Position 80 – 5 of Hearts
Position 90 – 8 of Clubs

Again another round of betting occurs.

Player #1 (has Dealer Button) (Hand consists of 9 of Diamonds and 3 of Hearts)
Player #2 (posts Small Blind – Gets First Card) (Hand consists of Ace of Hearts and 6 of Clubs)
Player #3 (posts Big Blind) (Hand consists of Ace of Spades and 10 of Diamonds)
Player #4 (Makes First Decision) (Hand consists of King of Clubs and 5 of Spades)
Player #5 (Hand consists of 6 of Spades and 9 of Hearts)
Player #6 (Hand consists of 4 of Hearts and 3 of Spades)
Player #7 (Hand consists of 8 of Spades and Queen of Clubs)
Player #8 (Hand consists of 6 of Diamonds and 9 of Spades)
Player #9 (Hand consists of 10 of Hearts and Jack of Clubs)
Player #10 (Hand consists of Ace of Clubs and 4 of Diamonds)

Of course players use community cards in areas 20, 40, 60, 80 and yet to be exposed card 100, plus their two “hole” cards in their hand to make a final 5 card poker hand to win half the pot, and
players also have the option of instead using community cards in areas 30, 50, 70, 90 and yet to be exposed card 100, plus their two “hole” cards in their hand to make a final 5 card poker hand to win half the pot.

At this time Player #2 has an Ace high Flush and Bets.
Player #3 folds
Player #4 has 2 pair. This player must decide if the 2-pair is good enough to win the 20, 40, 60, 80, 100 line. This player, seeing 4 hearts on board, knowing unless he draws a Full House he will likely lose, Folds.

Player #5 has a Flush, 9 high in the 20, 40, 60, 80, 100 line, and has an open ended straight in the 30, 50, 70, 90, 100, line. This player calls Player #2’s bet.

Player #6 has a low Flush and seeing as so many other players are in, folds.
Player #7 has a pair of Queens and a pair of 8’s in the 20, 40, 60, 80, 100 line, and has an two pair, a pair of 8’s and a pair of 7’s in the 30, 50, 70, 90, 100, line. This player is not confident that they will win the 20, 40, 60, 80, 100 line, but think if no one has a 7, he might win the 30, 50, 70, 90, 100, line. This player calls Player #2’s bet.

Player #8 has an open ended straight and thinks they could win line 30, 50, 70, 90, 100, even though they know even their straight draw in line 20, 40, 60, 80, 100, will not win. This player calls the bet of Player #2.

Player #9 has a ten high flush in line 20, 40, 60, 80, 100 line and can only be beat by the jack or ace if a flush wins that line. He also has a straight draw if he gets a 9 in 100, so this player decides to call Player #2’s bet.
Player #10 Folds
Player #1 Folds

At this time the dealer flips community card 100, as can be seen with reference to Figure 4.

Position 100 – 3 of Diamonds
Now there is another round of betting.

Player #2 has an Ace high Flush and Bets.
Player #5 has a Flush, 9 high in the 20, 40, 60, 80, 100 line, and never caught his open ended straight in the 30, 50, 70, 90, 100, line. This player now thinks the 9 high flush can't win and folds.

Player #7 has a pair of Queens and a pair of 8's in the 20, 40, 60, 80, 100 line, and has an two pair, a pair of 8's and a pair of 7's in the 30, 50, 70, 90, 100, line. This player is not confident that they will win the 20, 40, 60, 80, 100 line, but think if no one has a 7, he might win the 30, 50, 70, 90, 100, line. This player calls Player #2's bet.

Player #8 Folds

Player #9 has a ten high flush in line 20, 40, 60, 80, 100 line and can only be beat by the jack or ace if a flush wins that line. So this player decides to call Player #2's bet.

Players go to a showdown and reveal their hands (actual order of how hands are revealed could depend on variation).

Player #2 announces they have an Ace high flush on the 20, 40, 60, 80, 100 line and a pair of 7's on the 30, 50, 70, 90, 100, line.

Player #7 sees they can't win line 20, 40, 60, 80, 100, but have two pair, 8's and 7's on line 30, 50, 70, 90, 100.

Player #9 folds their hand. (This player sees although they had the 2nd best hand on the table, their ten high flush could not beat player #2 who had an Ace high flush in line 20, 40, 60, 80, 100. Of course this player could not beat two pair in line 30, 50, 70, 90, 100, so they could not win.

The dealer would give half the pot to player #2 for having the best poker hand of all remaining players in line 20, 40, 60, 80, 100.

The dealer would give half the pot to player #7 for having the best poker hand of all remaining players
in line 30, 50, 70, 90, 100.

Depending on the version of the game being played in accordance with the present invention, the house may take a percentage of each pot, say 5 or 10% as their profit for dealing the cards. This would be taken out of the final pot at the end of each game. Casinos could also take a set fee, say $5 out of every pot. In another embodiment, casinos could also charge the players a sitting fee or hourly rate to play the game. In online casinos and the virtual world, players could play for free, or play as members which may or may not cost fees payable on some predetermined amount of time, say monthly or yearly, as would be readily apparent to one skilled in the art.

In an alternative embodiment of the present invention, the game play previously described herein can also be applied to a virtual embodiment, or adapted to a video gaming device or terminal in much the same manner as Draw Poker has been adapted to a video gaming device, as would be apparent to a person skilled in the art, an embodiment of which is hereinafter described. For example, game play could begin with a player pressing a button to effect a computer “shuffling” a desired or pre-selected number of decks. Further interface buttons can be used to indicate the wagering of “chips” by a player into a wagering area. Of course, any such virtual embodiment or video gaming device or terminal will preferably display a user interface to a player through a display device. A user interface device can include, but is not limited to, any of a mouse, keyboard, touch screen display, joystick, touch pad or voice recognition system, which is preferably provided to effect user interaction with the virtual embodiment. The display device, or video monitor, may be any form of display screen such as a CRT, plasma screen, liquid crystal screen, LED screen or the like. As an example, a player inserts a coin or token to activate the video gaming device or terminal and presses the deal button to display the cards. The video gaming device or terminal may include a coin slot or variation thereof by which the player can wager units such as currency, coins, tokens, identification cards, player tracking cards, ticket in/ticket out acceptance, and the like. While not illustrated, it is well known to provide a cash reader to accept cash denomination wagers, the cash reader enabling the player to accumulate credits for wagering with the video gaming device or terminal. Additionally, means may be provided for the player to wager from funds on a debit card, credit card or the like as known in the art.
Thereafter, by pressing various interface buttons that are provided on the video gaming device or terminal, the player determines which of the community card groups to use to comprise the player's hand. After the player completes the selection, the gaming machine reveals the face down cards, displays the results of the play and awards the player any winning amounts to which the player may be entitled. The method of the present invention is intended to cover both the live gaming table version of the game as well as an electronic video gaming device or terminal version of the game. It should be noted that such a virtual arrangement could be supported on a wide variety of implementations including, but not limited to, kiosks, home computers and client/server based arrangements (which may be useful in casinos and on the Internet).

In the preferred embodiment of the present invention it is desirable to also add a progressive building jackpot to the game. Progressive jackpots are associated with many different casino games where players play a side bet, say $1.00 each hand to play in this progressive. In the side bet portion of the present invention, mathematical combinations of winning the highest progressive are much higher than current Texas Hold’em for it is possible for one player to have two different royal flushes, which is usually the top hand in poker, in the same hand.

In the present invention it is also possible to incorporate special cards, usually decks of one color or in the preferred embodiment, dealing the game from one deck of cards that are unlimited in the number of colors each card could be. For instance a player could be dealt the 6 of Clubs, but using the virtual deck of colored cards, even though there might be only one 6 of Clubs in the deck of 52 cards, the computer could randomly make the 6 of clubs one of any number of colors, or one of a limited number of colored cards. For Example if the computer chose from eight different colors for each card and they were as follows; Red, Blue, Green, Yellow, Purple, Orange, Brown and Pink, a player now would have an endless possibility of combinations. For instance a player could now have a Royal Flush, made of a different color of cards or a Royal Flush made up of cards all the same color, IE. Ace, King, Queen, Jack and Ten of Spades, all in the Yellow color.

The beauty about a progressive jackpot associated with Texas Holdem using these cards, or
with the present invention, is that not only can the progressive jackpots be built much higher than allowed just using normal standards cards, but players who fold out of poker now, don’t have anything to cheer for the rest of the game. Now players playing the progressive, but still fold out, are still cheering for a winning progressive. Another benefit of adding a progressive pot and using the special colored cards, is that now players playing in fun games, any non money game or even big tournaments can participate in the jackpot. This encompasses most of the market of the internet. These cards can be applicable to any card game in the world.

Of course with the present invention players need not pay $1.00 per hand, but could pay any amount, for example, one cent. In another variation, another player could play $1.00 per hand. Depending on the amount won, the player with the dollar bet would win 100 times that of the person who played the penny. Players could also pay to play in many different ways, for instance one pay per tournament, where as the better player could get more hands for his investment.

It is also possible and recommended to connect the jackpot between different sites on the net to even grow higher jackpots. Obviously if 100,000 tables are connected to one pot, it will grow bigger than if just 1,000 tables in a site are connected to the jackpot.

The present invention has been described herein with regard to preferred embodiments. However, it will be obvious to persons skilled in the art that a number of variations and modifications can be made without departing from the scope of the invention as described herein. For instance the present invention could be a casino table game where the player plays against other players and the dealer, where there is some set betting limits. It could be possible that the dealer (house) only has to bet a portion of the player’s bet or the dealer may get an extra hand, playing two hands against the players one each time.
THE EMBODIMENTS OF THE INVENTION IN WHICH AN EXCLUSIVE PROPERTY OR PRIVILEGE IS CLAIMED ARE DEFINED AS FOLLOWS:

1. A method of playing a card game using at least one standard deck of playing cards comprising the steps of:

a) dealing an initial hand of two cards to at least two players;

b) arranging a collection of community cards from the deck in a predetermined pattern of at least two distinct groupings, the at least two distinct groupings each having at least five community cards therein which are usable by any of the at least two players to form a poker hand;

c) the at least two players each combining the initial hand of two cards with the community cards contained in one of the at least two distinct groupings to each form the poker hand; and

d) examining each of at least two players completed hands to determine the poker hand ranking thereof.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein the predetermined pattern of the at least two distinct groupings forms a cross shape, so that there is a middle community card shared by the at least two distinct groupings, at least two upper community cards, at least two lower community cards, at least two left community cards and at least two right community cards.

3. The method of claim 1 in which the at least two distinct groupings of community cards further comprise a first group of community cards which runs in a North-South direction, and a second group of community cards which runs in an East-West direction.

4. The method of claim 3, wherein the first group comprises the at least two upper community
cards, the at least two lower community cards and the middle community card.

5. The method of claim 3, wherein the second group comprises the at least two upper community cards, the at least two left community cards, the at least two right community cards and the middle community card.

6. The method of any one of claims 3 to 5, wherein the at least two players can each optionally combine the initial hand of two cards with the first group of community cards to form the poker hand, or combine the initial hand of two cards with the second group of community cards to form the poker hand.

7. The method of any one of claims 3 to 6, wherein each of the at least two players can optionally combine the initial hand of two cards with only one of the first and second group of community cards to form the poker hand.

8. The method of any one of claims 1 to 7, wherein the method of playing the card game further comprises placing a dealer and the at least two players at a casino table, each of the dealer and the at least two players having a unique playing position at the casino table.

9. The method of any one of claims 1 to 8, further comprising dealing the initial hand of two cards to the at least two players from a plurality of decks of playing cards.

10. The method of any one of claims 1 to 9, wherein the step of combining the initial hand of two cards with the community cards contained in one of the at least two distinct groupings to form the poker hand further comprises the at least two players forming a poker hand having five cards therein.

11. The method of any one of claims 1 to 10, wherein the at least two distinct groupings are intersected by at least one shared community card, wherein the at least one shared community
card is contained in each of the at least two distinct groupings.

12. The method of any one of claims 1 to 10, wherein steps (a) to (d) are repeated to continue play and begin subsequent rounds, if necessary.

13. A method of playing a card game involving a dealer and at least two players using at least one standard deck of playing cards comprising the steps of:

14. A method of playing a card game at a gaming table involving a dealer and at least two players using at least one standard deck of playing cards comprising the steps of:

   a) the at least two players making a first wager to participate in the card game;

   b) dealing an initial hand of two cards face down to each of the at least two players;

   c) conducting a first round of betting among each of the at least two players after the two cards have been dealt, an amount of the betting being placed into a pot;

   c) arranging a collection of community cards comprising nine cards from the deck face down into a first and a second distinct set each having four separately distinct cards and one shared card therein, whereby the shared card intersects the two distinct sets, and wherein the community cards in any one of the first and the second distinct set are usable, in combination with the initial hand of two cards, by each of the at least two players to form a five card poker hand;

   e) turning two of the community cards in the first distinct set face up;

   f) turning two of the community cards in the second distinct set face up;

   g) conducting a second round of betting among each of the at least two players after
two of the community cards in the first distinct set and two of the community cards in the second distinct set have been turned face up, an amount of the second round of betting being placed into the pot;

h) turning a final two of the community cards in the first distinct set face up;

i) turning a final two of the community cards in the second distinct set face up;

j) conducting a third round of betting among each of the at least two players after the final two of the community cards in the first distinct set and the final two of the community cards in the second distinct set have been turned face up, an amount of the third round of betting being placed into the pot;

k) turning the shared card which intersects the two distinct sets face up;

l) conducting a final round of betting among each of the at least two players after the shared card which intersects the two distinct sets has been turned face up, an amount of the final round of betting being placed into the pot;

m) each of the at least two players turning up the initial hand of two cards;

n) each of the at least two players forming the five card poker hand by selecting any combination of the community cards contained in only one of either the first distinct set or the second distinct set, in combination with the initial hand of two cards;

o) examining each of the at least two players completed hands to determine a poker hand ranking thereof, with a hand having a highest poker hand ranking among players utilizing the community cards contained in the first distinct set in combination with the initial hand of two cards being declared one winning hand, and another winning hand having a highest poker hand ranking being declared among players utilizing the
community cards contained in the second distinct set in combination with the initial hand of two cards;

p) paying each of the players with the one winning hand and the another winning hand a preestablished amount of the pot; and

r) wherein steps (a) to (p) are repeated to continue play and begin subsequent rounds, if necessary.

15. The method of claim 13, wherein the dealer deals and places the cards from a predetermined number of decks of playing cards.

16. The method of claim 13 or 14, in which the deck of playing cards is a standard deck of fifty-two playing cards.

17. The method of any one of claims 1 to 16, wherein a variable number of a plurality of players can play the card game.

18. The method of any one of claims 8 to 17, wherein each of the players have a unique playing position at the casino table.

19. The method of claim 18, wherein the unique playing position of each of the at least two players at the casino table is sequentially numbered.

20. The method of any one of claims 14 to 19, wherein the gaming table has a minimum and a maximum limit set for placing the first wager.

21. A method for playing a virtual card game on a computer device comprising a processor for executing a set of instructions, and involving at least two players and a virtual dealer
comprising:

(a) displaying a wagering area on a display screen for the computer device where the at least two players place a first wager to start the card game;

(b) displaying a betting area on the display screen for the computer device where the at least two players can place a bet, call or fold, as necessary, the bet being added to a jackpot, an amount of the jackpot being displayed on the display screen;

(c) the virtual dealer dealing an initial hand of two "hole" cards to the at least two players, the cards which have been dealt to the at least one player being displayed in respective Player Hand Areas on the display screen;

(d) the processor beginning a first round of betting after the two cards have been dealt, whereby the at least two players can place a bet, an amount of the bet being placed into a pot;

(e) the processor arranging a collection of community cards comprising nine cards from the deck face down into first and second distinct set areas on the display screen, each of the first and second distinct set areas having four separately distinct cards and one shared card displayed therein, whereby the shared card intersects the two distinct sets, and wherein the community cards which are displayed in any one of the first and the second distinct set areas are usable, in any combination with the initial hand of two cards, by the at least two players to form a five card poker hand;

(f) the processor turning two of the community cards in the first distinct set area face up on the display screen;

(g) the processor turning two of the community cards in the second distinct set face up on the display screen;
(h) the processor beginning a second round of betting after the two of the community cards in the first distinct set and the two of the community cards in the second distinct set have been turned face up on the display screen, whereby the at least two players can place another bet, if necessary, an amount of the another bet being placed into a pot;

(i) the processor turning a final two of the community cards in the first distinct set area face up on the display screen;

(j) the processor turning a final two of the community cards in the second distinct set area face up on the display screen;

(k) the processor beginning a third round of betting after the final two of the community cards in the first distinct set area and the final two of the community cards in the second distinct set area have been turned face up on the display screen, whereby the at least two players can place a further bet, if necessary, an amount of the further bet being placed into a pot;

(l) the processor turning the shared card which intersects the two distinct sets face up on the display screen;

(m) the processor beginning a final round of betting after the shared card which intersects the first and the second distinct set areas has been turned face up on the display screen, whereby the at least two players can place a final bet, if necessary, an amount of the final bet being placed into a pot;

(n) the processor turning up the at least two players initial hands of two cards on the display screen;
the processor allowing the at least two players to form the five card poker hand by selecting any combination of the community cards contained in only one of either the first distinct set or the second distinct set, in combination with the initial hand of two cards;

the processor examining the at least two players completed hand to determine a poker hand ranking thereof, with a hand having a highest poker hand ranking among players utilizing the community cards contained in the first distinct set in combination with the initial hand of two cards being declared one winning hand, and another winning hand having a highest poker hand ranking being declared among players utilizing the community cards contained in the second distinct set in combination with the initial hand of two cards;

the processor paying each of the players with the one winning hand and the another winning hand a preestablished amount of the pot; and

the processor repeating steps (a) to (q) to continue play and begin subsequent rounds, if necessary.

A computer device comprising a processor for executing a set of instructions for playing a virtual card game involving at least two players and a virtual dealer comprising:

displaying a wagering area on a display screen for the computer device where the at least two players place a first wager to start the card game;

displaying a betting area on the display screen for the computer device where the at least two players can place a bet, call or fold, as necessary, the bet being added to a jackpot, an amount of the jackpot being displayed on the display screen;
the virtual dealer dealing an initial hand of two "hole" cards to the at least two players, the cards which have been dealt to the at least one player being displayed in respective Player Hand Areas on the display screen;

the processor beginning a first round of betting after the two cards have been dealt, whereby the at least two players can place a bet, an amount of the bet being placed into a pot;

the processor arranging a collection of community cards comprising nine cards from the deck face down into first and second distinct set areas on the display screen, each of the first and second distinct set areas having four separately distinct cards and one shared card displayed therein, whereby the shared card intersects the two distinct sets, and wherein the community cards which are displayed in any one of the first and the second distinct set areas are usable, in any combination with the initial hand of two cards, by the at least two players to form a five card poker hand;

the processor turning two of the community cards in the first distinct set area face up on the display screen;

the processor turning two of the community cards in the second distinct set face up on the display screen;

the processor beginning a second round of betting after the two of the community cards in the first distinct set and the two of the community cards in the second distinct set have been turned face up on the display screen, whereby the at least two players can place another bet, if necessary, an amount of the another bet being placed into a pot;

the processor turning a final two of the community cards in the first distinct set area face up on the display screen;
(j) the processor turning a final two of the community cards in the second distinct set face up on the display screen;

(k) the processor beginning a third round of betting after the final two of the community cards in the first distinct set area and the final two of the community cards in the second distinct set area have been turned face up on the display screen, whereby the at least two players can place a further bet, if necessary, an amount of the further bet being placed into a pot;

(l) the processor turning the shared card which intersects the two distinct sets face up on the display screen;

(m) the processor beginning a final round of betting after the shared card which intersects the first and the second distinct set areas has been turned face up on the display screen, whereby the at least two players can place a final bet, if necessary, an amount of the final bet being placed into a pot;

(n) the processor turning up the at least two players initial hands of two cards on the display screen;

(o) the processor allowing the at least two players to form the five card poker hand by selecting any combination of the community cards contained in only one of either the first distinct set area or the second distinct set area displayed on the display screen, in combination with the initial hand of two cards;

(p) the processor examining the at least two players completed hand to determine a poker hand ranking thereof, with a hand having a highest poker hand ranking among players utilizing the community cards contained in the first distinct set in combination with the initial hand of two cards being declared one winning hand, and another winning
hand having a highest poker hand ranking being declared among players utilizing the
community cards contained in the second distinct set in combination with the initial
hand of two cards; and

(q) the processor paying each of the players with the one winning hand and the another
winning hand a preestablished amount of the pot.

(r) the processor repeating steps (a) to (q) to continue play and begin subsequent rounds,
if necessary.

23. The computer device of claim 22, wherein the device for playing the card game is implemented
as a kiosk.

24. The method of claim 21, wherein the at least two players further comprise a real player, and
a virtual, computer controlled player.

25. The method of claim 21, wherein a progressive building jackpot is added to the game, an
amount of the progressive building jackpot being displayed on the display screen.

26. The computer device of claim 22, wherein the processor further comprises means for allowing
the at least two players to each place a side bet to enter a progressive building jackpot, the side
bet being paid or collected in accordance with a pre-established rules set of rules, and wherein
the progressive building jackpot is connected to other on-going virtual card games having the
same or substantially similar rules, the other on-going virtual card games being run at a same
location as the virtual card game, or elsewhere.

27. The method of claim 25, wherein the progressive building jackpot is connected to other on-
going card games having the same or substantially similar rules, the other on-going card
games being run at a same location as the virtual card game, or elsewhere.
28. The method of claim 27, wherein the other on-going card games are run simultaneously in occurrence with the virtual card game.

29. The method of claim 27, wherein the accumulated jackpot can be contributed to, and won by a player at any of the other on-going card games or the virtual card game.

30. The method of any one of claims 15 to 21, wherein the preestablished amount of the pot is half of the pot, the half of the pot being awarded to each of the players with the one winning hand and the another winning hand.

31. The computer device of claim 22, wherein the display screen is a touch screen.

32. A method of playing a card game involving a dealer and at least two players using at least one standard deck of playing cards comprising the steps of:

(a) the at least two players making a wager to participate in the card game;

(b) dealing an initial hand of two cards face down to each of the at least two players;

(c) conducting a first round of betting among each of the at least two players after the two cards have been dealt, an amount of the betting being placed into a pot;

(d) arranging a collection of community cards comprising nine cards from the deck face down into a first and a second distinct set each having four separately distinct cards and one shared card therein, whereby the shared card intersects the two distinct sets, and wherein the community cards in any one of the first and the second distinct set are usable, in combination with the initial hand of two cards, by each of the at least two players to form a five card poker hand;

(e) turning at least one of the community cards in each of the first and the second
distinct set face up;

(f) conducting a second round of betting among each of the at least two players after the at least one of the community cards in each of the first and the second distinct set have been turned face up, an amount of the second round of betting being placed into the pot;

(g) turning any of the remaining community cards in each of the first distinct set and the second distinct set face up;

(h) conducting a third round of betting among each of the at least two players after the any of the remaining community cards in each of the first distinct set and the second distinct set have been turned face up, an amount of the third round of betting being placed into the pot;

(i) turning the shared card which intersects the two distinct sets face up;

(j) conducting a final round of betting among each of the at least two players after the shared card which intersects the two distinct sets has been turned face up, an amount of the final round of betting being placed into the pot;

(k) each of the at least two players turning up the initial hand of two cards;

(l) each of the at least two players forming the five card poker hand by selecting any three of the community cards contained in only one of either the first distinct set or the second distinct set, in any combination with the initial hand of two cards;

(m) examining each of the at least two players completed hands to determine a poker hand ranking thereof and determine a winning hand, with the hand having a higher poker hand ranking being declared the winning hand;
(n) paying the player with the winning hand a preestablished amount of the pot; and

(o) wherein steps (a) to (n) are repeated to continue play and begin subsequent rounds, if necessary.