



# COKER INSTRUCTIONS

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## 1 Introduction

Chaos Poker (colloquially known as Coker) started as an abstract web of ideas conceived in a drunken haze by a group of twenty-something academics with an affinity for gambling, rule-making, and definitely not cocaine. The seemingly incoherent trains of thought followed that fateful night were conglomerated, translated, and polished by yours truly. The end result, besides countless hours of procrastination, is the game you are about to play.

If you know how to play Texas Hold'em, then you essentially know how to play Coker. The motivation for Coker was a method for adding a little madness to your standard Hold'em game. There are a few things that may be unfamiliar to the regular player, but in general, all rules that apply in Hold'em (dealing, betting order, blinds, etc.) apply to Coker (unless otherwise stated).

Lastly, for those players with less time on the tables, do not be scared by the idea of adding more rules to an already complicated game. If anything, I view Coker as a way to even the playing field—it's hard for even the most weathered shark to calculate the odds of losing their five-of-a-kind hand to a flush house (yes, this has happened). Don't be afraid to put a raise a few bucks, bluff the chip leader, or even go all-in. Remember: it's only money.

## 2 Setup

### 2.1 Texas Hold'em

For an in-depth guide to playing Texas Hold'em, visit this link: <https://tinyurl.com/texas-holdem-guide>.

### 2.2 What you will need

Besides the items provided, a Coker game requires:

- A deck of standard playing cards (including two Jokers)
- Poker chips
- Small Blind, Big Blind, and Dealer markers. Preferably, there are the type you get in a set of poker chips, but they can be any sort of marker as long as each position is distinguishable from the other
- A bowl, preferably one that makes a clanging sound when chips are deposited in it
- The final page of this instruction manual (the board)

### 2.3 Format, Rule, and Magic Cards

There are three cards each hand that affect the way the game is played. Those cards are the Format, Rule, and Magic Cards, and they each have different functions. The Format card changes the way the game is played, the Rule card changes the abilities of the cards themselves, and the Magic card indicates the Magic hand, the hand type that results in the winner taking the contents of the Magic Pot.

To start each hand, one of each card should be flipped up and placed on the board. Each card is changed with a different frequency:

- **Format (33 in total):** Every hand
- **Rule (22 in total):** Every round
- **Magic (14 in total):** When the Magic Hand wins

A round is defined as a complete circle of the Dealer chip around the table. When the game begins, remember who starts as Dealer, then change the Rule card every time the Dealer marker returns to this player.

To win the Magic Pot, you must win a hand, either by having the best hand at showdown or by getting all other players to fold, with the Magic Hand type. If a hand is won by causing all other players to fold, the hand type is frozen at its current rank—the remaining community cards are not dealt out. To win the Magic Pot, the winning hand must be exactly the Magic Hand (i.e., a full house does not count as a pair because it contains a pair). Most Magic Hand types are straight-forward, but some depend on table position and community cards. For instance, if the Magic card is “Small Blind”, then the player in the Small Blind position can win the pot with any hand.

## **2.4 Jokers**

Jokers can be played as any card in the deck, and may be decided by the player at showdown. If a Joker is part of the community cards, each player may choose what the card is at showdown. The order of the showdown does not matter—players should choose the card that makes their hand the best possible.

# **3 Gameplay**

## **3.1 Start of Game**

To begin, decide who will be Dealer first (this is often done by dealing out cards until the first Jack comes up; this person is the first Dealer). Remember who the first Dealer was, as the Dealer marker returning to this player will indicate the start of a new round, which means a new Rule card is flipped. The first Dealer will get the Dealer marker placed in front of them, one player to their left will be the first Small Blind, and one player to the Small Blind’s left will be the Big Blind.

## **3.2 Start of Hand**

The Dealer must put a small blind in the Magic Pot; make sure that this action is witnessed or heard by another player (thus, the metal bowl suggestion) or you will most assuredly be accused of cheating the Magic Pot. Flip over a new Format card, if the Dealer marker is back at the first Dealer, flip over a new Rule card, and if the Magic card was just won, flip over a new Magic card. These face up cards are in play for this hand.

## **3.3 End of Hand**

After the hand is complete, rotate the Big Blind, Small Blind, and Dealer markers one space counter-clockwise.

## **3.4 End of Game**

A good event for deciding when the game is over (assuming all of the chips have not gone to one player) is when the last Format card is used. In the instance where there is money left in the Magic Pot at this point (or whenever the game is deemed over), deal each player (even those that are out) a hand. There are no bets or blinds for this final Hold'em hand, and the winner of this hand will take the Magic Pot.

# **4 Hand Order**

1. Flush Five (five-of-a-kind of all the same suit)
2. Flush House (a full house of all the same suit)
3. Five-of-a-kind (five cards of the same rank)
4. Royal Flush (a straight flush that goes from ace to ten)
5. Straight Flush (a straight of all the same suit)
6. Four-of-a-kind (four cards of the same rank)
7. Full House (three-of-a-kind and a pair of different ranks)
8. Flush (five cards of the same suit)

9. Straight (five cards of consecutive rank, aces may be high or low)
10. Three-of-a-kind (three of the same rank)
11. Two Pair (two pairs of different rank)
12. Pair (two of the same rank)
13. High Card (yikes)

## 5 FAQs

**Q:** Isn't this a lot like Balatro?

**A:** I would like it on record that WE THOUGHT OF THIS BEFORE WE KNEW ABOUT B\*LATRO. Yes, it is true that B\*latro came out before Coker. Yes, it is true that many of the format and rule cards were stolen directly from B\*latro. Yes, the good folks at B\*latro would most likely have sufficient ground to pursue legal action. No, I do not have further comment.

**Q:** What's up with this White Elephant card?

**A:** I was going to a White Elephant and needed to bring a gift. Because of the short notice, I decided I would gift an advantage card in Coker. Anyways, congrats on the shitty gift Becca.

**Q:** What does the Magic card "2-6 pair" mean?

**A:** This Magic card refers to any pair with rank between 2 and 6 (inclusive).

**Q:** How does Low Man Wins work?

**A:** For this card, you must use the best hand available given your cards. Think of it this way: if you were playing online poker, whatever hand would the computer say you have, that's your hand.

**Q:** What about the Magic card "River"?

**A:** To win the Magic Pot when the Magic hand is "River", the river card (i.e., the last community card) must change who the winner of the hand is. If this card does not go to showdown, then the Magic Pot cannot be won on this hand.

F

Change every hand

R

Change every round

M

Change when it wins