

For a long time, I have looked for a way to get all my friends together every week to hang out and catch up with each other. We tried having a pool night, but that didn't work. My friend Mickey, you see, hates pool. He is notoriously clumsy and nearsighted, and cannot hit a ball to save his life. We couldn't come up with a movie night, because we couldn't all agree on movies. Finally, we decided to have a poker night. Although none of us are big gamblers, or even big card players, nonetheless we thought it was a good social occasion. We would all get together, have a few drinks around the folding poker table, and catch up on the week's happenings.

I went down in the basement and found all my poker supplies. I had a poker chip set and a folding poker table that was ancient. It had been in the family since I was a kid. It was my dad's folding poker table. I remember sitting at it when I was a child, watching all the men sit there with serious faces, staring at their cards. It had been in the family for even longer than that, I suspected. There were stains all over the folding poker table and dents in the legs. For a moment, I contemplated getting a different fold up poker table. I knew that folding poker tables were cheap, and it did not look like this one would last long. Nonetheless, I am always loathe to get rid of something that still works well. I decided to keep it.

My friend Sam actually commented on my folding poker table on the first night. He is a notorious neat freak, completely anal-retentive and grossed out by anything that is the slightest bit out of order. When he saw the cracks and stains on the folding poker table, he looked downright squeamish. I didn't care. I thought that if my table had him rattled, so much the better.

You see, Sam is a mathematical genius. I expected him to be great at cards because he is great at anything that involves mathematical reasoning. Nonetheless, when we sat down in the folding chairs and dealt a few hands, it became clear that Sam could not hold his own. Although he probably understood cards in theory, when it came down to the actual game he could not think clearly. I Ended up as the big winner that night.