

Trash Poker

Trash Poker is a poker variant similar to knock poker, but with betting rules. Each player is trying to build a poker hand over a series of rounds to win a showdown at the end of the betting or get all other players to fold. The betting is done with chips, and an ante should be decided before the game (usually one chip).

The Deal

Each player must pay the ante into the pot to start the round. Any players that don't pay the ante are out of the round. The dealer deals each player in the round five cards and the play starts with the dealer. At any point in a round a player may fold their hand and drop out of the round but not have to pay any more into the pot.

The Play

Building Phase

Starting with the dealer and following to the dealer's left, each player takes a turn to try and improve their hand before the betting phase. On a player's turn, they may opt to Draw, Pass, or Knock. If they choose to draw they can draw into their hand a card from the top of the deck, or the top card of any other player's discard pile, and then discard one of the cards in their hand face up into their own discard pile in front of them. A player must pay one ante into the pot every time they draw. A player may also pass, paying one ante into the pot to skip their turn and not end the building phase. And finally if a player wishes to end the building phase they may skip their turn to knock, they do not need to pay an ante to knock but can no longer draw. The building phase ends once the turn gets back to the first player who knocked.

Betting Phase

Starting with the player who first knocked, the players now do a round of betting on their hands. Following normal poker rules a player may bet, raise a bet, call, check or fold. The betting ends once the last bet or raise has been matched by all remaining players who haven't folded.

Showdown

Any players who haven't folded now show their hands and the pot goes to the player with the best poker hand, splitting the pot in the case of a tie. The dealer then passes to the left of the last dealer. If all but one player has folded, they win the pot without having to show their hand.

Additional Rules

In the case that someone runs out of chips during a hand and can no longer ante or call bets, they may remain in the hand but can no longer draw or bet, but the pot doesn't go to a split pot, if that player wins they can still win the entire pot.

Jokers

Joker cards are wild and are considered as whatever card would be the best for the hand, but losing ties in the case that that hand would tie with a matched hand with no jokers, for example a pair of aces would beat a single ace and a joker acting as an ace.

Black Spot or Anti-Joker

A black spot card can be added to the deck (if using a deck with two jokers the colorless joker can be considered the anti joker). The black spot is a cursed card, and if it's in a player's hand when cards get shown in a showdown that player can't win the hand, no matter what other cards they hold. However, if a player wins a hand by everyone else folding and then reveals the black spot card, the players who folded must pay the winning player double their pot contribution for the round (a player can't be forced to pay more than they have). If the black spot is used it's important to keep each player's pot contribution separate for this purpose.

Trash Poker was created by Ian Walker and is included here with his permission