

**Razz (Seven Card Stud Low)**



Razz (Seven Card Stud, played for low only) is a poker game in which the best Ace to Five low poker hand wins the pot at showdown. In Razz, players are dealt seven cards throughout the course of the hand, but only the best five-card low hand possible for each player is used to determine the winner. Note, that unlike in Seven Card Stud Hi/Lo or Omaha Hi/Lo, in Razz there is no ‘eight or better’ requirement to win the pot.

Razz uses the ‘Ace to Five’ or ‘California’ system for ranking low hands. Straights and flushes do not count against a hand, and Aces are always low, so the best possible hand is a ‘wheel’: 5, 4, 3, 2, A. To help understand the ranks of hands, the following sample Razz hands are ranked from least powerful (#1, will rarely win the pot) to most powerful (#12, the nuts):

1. 3, 3, 3, 5, 5
2. K, K, 4, 3, 2
3. 2, 2, 7, 6, 5
4. A, A, T, 9, 8
5. K, Q, J, T, 9
6. K, Q, J, T, 7
7. 9, 8, 7, 6, 5
8. 9, 7, 6, 5, 3
9. 9, 7, 6, 5, A
10. 6, 5, 4, 3, 2
11. 6, 4, 3, 2, A
12. 5, 4, 3, 2, A

Note that an unpaired low hand is always ranked from its highest card downwards. So for example, hand #10 is known as a ‘Six-low’ because its highest card is a Six. Hand #9 is a ‘Nine-low’, and Hand #5 is a ‘King-low’. In poker slang, you distinguish between close low hands by going further down the ranks, so hand #11 would be called a ‘Six-Four low’, which beats hand #10, a “Six-Five low”.

**Rules for Playing Razz:**

**Ante**

Before a game of Razz begins, all players ante a nominal amount (the exact amount depends on the game, and is displayed in the table’s title bar). This is the cost of being dealt into the hand. For example, in the image shown above the ante is $0.10 in a $1/$2 game.

**Third Street**

Each player is initially dealt three cards, two hidden hole cards and one face up. In Razz, the player with the **highest** exposed card is the ‘bring-in’, and is forced to start the action. They must make another nominal bet (again, the exact size of the bring-in depends on the game) or, if they choose, a full bet in the lower betting increment. Action continues clockwise around the [poker table](http://www.pokerstars.com/poker/) until betting is complete for the round.

**Fourth Street**

Each player now receives another exposed card, called ‘Fourth Street’. The first player to act is the player with the strongest (lowest) exposed hand. By rule, this player may either check or bet. The amount will be a small bet ($2 in a $2/$4 game). There is a round of betting.

**Fifth Street**

Each player now receives another exposed card, called ‘Fifth Street’. Again, the first person to act is the player whose exposed cards are lowest. For example, in the image shown above, the player with the Eight-high acts first, as their exposed poker hand is lower than the pair of Sevens and the Queen-high showing for the other two players. The player with the Eight-high can either check or bet the larger betting amount, which he has done in this case.

There is a round of betting.

Starting on Fifth Street and for the rest of the hand, all bets and raises are in big bet increments ($2 in the $1/$2 game shown).

**Sixth Street**

Each player now receives another exposed card, called ‘Sixth Street’. Again, the first person to act is the player whose exposed cards are the lowest. There is a round of betting.

**Seventh Street, or The River**

Each player now receives a seventh and final card, which is dealt face-down and known only to the player to whom the card is dealt. As with earlier streets, the first person to act is the player whose exposed cards have the lowest poker value. There is a final betting round, and if more than one player remains, we reach the Showdown.

**The Showdown - Determining the Winner**

If there is more than one remaining player when the final betting round is complete, the last bettor or raiser shows his or her cards first. If there was no bet on the final round, the player in the earliest seat shows his or her cards first (Seat 1, then Seat 2, and so on). Further hands involved in the Showdown are exposed clockwise around the table.

The player with the best five-card Ace to Five low hand wins the pot. Remember that (unlike Seven Card Stud Hi/Lo and Omaha Hi/Lo), there is no ‘qualifier’; the best low hand wins the entire pot. After the pot is awarded to the best low hand, a new game of Razz is ready to be played.

If two or more hands have the same value, the pot is equally split among them. There is no precedence of suit for the purposes of awarding the pot.

**Player Betting Options**

In Stud, as with other forms of poker, the available actions are ‘fold’, ‘check’, ‘bet’, ‘call’ or ‘raise’. Exactly which options are available depends on the action taken by the previous players. Each poker player always has the option to fold, to discard their cards and give up any interest in the pot. If nobody has yet made a bet, then a player may either check (decline to bet, but keep their cards) or bet. If a player has bet, then subsequent players can fold, call or raise. To call is to match the amount the previous player has bet. To raise is to not only match the previous bet, but to also increase it. Bets and raises in Limit games are in pre-determined amounts.

**Additional Razz Rules and Situations**

* For the purposes of determining the bring-in in Razz, ties in card rank are broken by suit, with the order from highest to lowest being spades, hearts, diamonds and clubs. The highest suit brings in, so if the Queen of hearts and Queen of diamonds are visible at the beginning of the hand, and a Queen is the highest card showing, then the Queen of hearts would have the bring-in. (Note, the ranking of equal hands at the Showdown is not determined by this rule.)
* If the player with the highest card showing on Third Street is all-in for the ante and they are consequently unable to make the required bring-in bet, the bring-in moves clockwise to the next player at the table, regardless of the value of that player’s exposed card.
* Because Stud games are played with eight players but there are only 52 cards in the deck, it’s possible to run out of cards before Seventh Street can be dealt. In this very rare instance, a single ‘community card’ will be dealt face-up on the table, which will be shared by all remaining players.

**Other Stud Variants**

[Seven Card Stud](http://www.pokerstars.com/poker/games/stud/) Hi/Lo. In this variant of Stud, the pot is split between the high hand and the best qualifying ’eight or better’ low hand.