

BLACKJACK BASIC STRATEGY

The LEARNING LADDER

Ruleset assumed: 6–8 decks

3:2 blackjack • Dealer hits soft 17 (H17)

Double after split (DAS) • No surrender

Split aces receive one card only

No re-split aces

LEVEL 4:

SPLITS

Always split:

A,A • 8,8

Never split:

5,5 • 10,10

Split 7,7 vs Dealer 2–7 • Split 6,6 vs Dealer 2–6.

Split 2,2 and 3,3 vs Dealer 4–7 • Split 4,4 vs Dealer 5–6

Split 9,9 vs Dealer 2–6,8,9 (not 7)

LEVEL 3:

Soft Hand Doubles

Dealer 5–6: Double Any A • Dealer 4–6: Double A4–A6 • Dealer 3–6: Double A6–A7

Default rules: Hit soft 17 or less. Stand soft 19 or better.

Soft 18 follows dealer-based double rules.

LEVEL 2:

Hard Hand Doubles

Hard 11: Double vs any dealer upcard in H17 games. In S17 games, double vs 2–10 only.

Hard 10: Double vs Dealer 2–9. Otherwise, hit.

Hard 9: Double vs Dealer 3–6. Otherwise, hit. Hard 8 or below: Never double.

LEVEL 1:

Assume the dealer's hidden card is a 10.

What do you do?

Dealer shows 7–Ace → Dealer is strong. • Hit until you have a hard 17 or better.

Dealer shows 2–6 → Dealer is in the bust zone. • Do not take a card that could bust you.

• Exception: Hit 12 vs Dealer 2 or 3.