



Poker

What is poker?

Poker is a card game involving chance and skill and is therefore classed as gaming under the Gaming Act 1968. Players bet into a communal pot during the course of a hand, and the player holding the best hand at the end of the betting wins the pot.

Where can poker be played?

Gaming in Great Britain can take place on a domestic occasion in a private dwelling but not in a public place. Gaming for commercial profit is allowed but only if the operator has a certificate of consent from the Gaming Board and it takes place on licensed premises.

Can poker be run in a private members club?

Equal chance gaming can take place in a private members club. The club must have a membership of not less than twenty-five and must be formed for the general benefit of its members and not for commercial gain for the proprietor or any such persons. Gaming must not be the principal purpose for which the club is established or conducted. No bankers' games are allowed.

Where the club is registered by the licensing authority they can charge members up to a limit of £2 per day. Clubs that have not registered can only charge 60p per day.

Can poker be run for charity or good causes?

Equal chance gaming can also be held at entertainments not held for private gain and money can be raised for the club or other organisation on whose behalf the entertainment is promoted. No kind of bankers' games can be played. The whole of the proceeds of the payments received from players must, after deduction sums equivalent to the reasonable cost providing the facilities for the games, be applied to purposes other than private gain.

Players are allowed to make one payment up to £4, there is no limit on the stakes, but these must all be returned to the winners. Prizes or awards in cash and kind may be made by the promoters up to a maximum value of £400 in respect of all the games played at any given entertainment. If a series of entertainments are held at the same premises on the same day the overall limits of both charges and prizes remain the same, but where a second or subsequent entertainment of a series is held on a day or days following the first entertainment a charge of up to £4 can be made at each entertainment in the series and, similarly prizes or awards of up to £400 can be distributed at each entertainment in the series.

If the series of entertainments is so organised that only players who have played in at least one earlier entertainment in the series, held on a different day, are entitled to take part in the final entertainment, then, for the final entertainment, prizes or awards of up to £700 can be distributed.