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Blackjack basic- strategy cheat sheet — the complete six-deck (S17, DAS) reference, with the reasoning behind the moves

The full hit / stand / double / split / surrender grid for a six-deck, dealer-stands-on-soft-17 game, plus the expected-value logic behind the non-obvious cells.

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Educational reference on casino table-game mathematics — not gambling advice, not an app, no affiliate links.

2026 edition · Week 22 · An encyclopedia of the table

How to read this chart

Rows are your hand; columns are the dealer's up-card (2 through Ace). Each cell is the play with the highest expected value for a six-deck game where the dealer stands on soft 17 (S17), double after split is allowed (DAS), and naturals pay 3:2. **Dbl** = double if allowed, otherwise hit. **Spl** = split. **Std** = stand. Cells marked * are late- surrender spots (surrender if offered, otherwise hit).

Premise: 6 decks · dealer stands on soft 17 · double after split allowed · late surrender available · naturals pay 3:2. Under H17 a few cells shift; under 6:5 naturals the chart is unchanged but the edge roughly quadruples.

Hard totals

Hand	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	A
5–8	Hit	Hit	Hit	Hit	Hit	Hit	Hit	Hit	Hit	Hit
9	Hit	Dbl	Dbl	Dbl	Dbl	Hit	Hit	Hit	Hit	Hit
10	Dbl	Dbl	Dbl	Dbl	Dbl	Dbl	Dbl	Dbl	Hit	Hit
11	Dbl	Dbl	Dbl	Dbl	Dbl	Dbl	Dbl	Dbl	Dbl	Hit
12	Hit	Hit	Std	Std	Std	Hit	Hit	Hit	Hit	Hit
13	Std	Std	Std	Std	Std	Hit	Hit	Hit	Hit	Hit
14	Std	Std	Std	Std	Std	Hit	Hit	Hit	Hit	Hit
15	Std	Std	Std	Std	Std	Hit	Hit	Hit	Hit*	Hit
16	Std	Std	Std	Std	Std	Hit	Hit	Hit*	Hit*	Hit*
17–21	Std	Std	Std	Std	Std	Std	Std	Std	Std	Std

Soft totals (hand containing an Ace counted as 11)

Hand	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	A
A,2 (13)	Hit	Hit	Hit	Dbl	Dbl	Hit	Hit	Hit	Hit	Hit
A,3 (14)	Hit	Hit	Hit	Dbl	Dbl	Hit	Hit	Hit	Hit	Hit
A,4 (15)	Hit	Hit	Dbl	Dbl	Dbl	Hit	Hit	Hit	Hit	Hit
A,5 (16)	Hit	Hit	Dbl	Dbl	Dbl	Hit	Hit	Hit	Hit	Hit

A,6 (17)	Hit	Dbl	Dbl	Dbl	Dbl	Hit	Hit	Hit	Hit	Hit
A,7 (18)	Std	Dbl	Dbl	Dbl	Dbl	Std	Std	Hit	Hit	Hit
A,8 (19)	Std	Std	Std	Std	Std	Std	Std	Std	Std	Std
A,9 (20)	Std	Std	Std	Std	Std	Std	Std	Std	Std	Std

Pairs (splitting)

Hand	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	A
2,2	Spl	Spl	Spl	Spl	Spl	Spl	Hit	Hit	Hit	Hit
3,3	Spl	Spl	Spl	Spl	Spl	Spl	Hit	Hit	Hit	Hit
4,4	Hit	Hit	Hit	Spl	Spl	Hit	Hit	Hit	Hit	Hit
5,5	Dbl	Dbl	Dbl	Dbl	Dbl	Dbl	Dbl	Dbl	Hit	Hit
6,6	Spl	Spl	Spl	Spl	Spl	Hit	Hit	Hit	Hit	Hit
7,7	Spl	Spl	Spl	Spl	Spl	Spl	Hit	Hit	Hit	Hit
8,8	Spl	Spl	Spl	Spl	Spl	Spl	Spl	Spl	Spl	Spl
9,9	Spl	Spl	Spl	Spl	Spl	Std	Spl	Spl	Std	Std
10,10	Std	Std	Std	Std	Std	Std	Std	Std	Std	Std
A,A	Spl	Spl	Spl	Spl	Spl	Spl	Spl	Spl	Spl	Spl

The five lines to memorise first

- Always split Aces and 8s; never split 10s or 5s.
- Double 11 against everything except an Ace; double 10 against 2–9.
- Stand on 12–16 against a dealer 2–6 (weak up-cards); hit them against 7–Ace.
- Always hit or double soft 17 or below — a single card cannot bust a soft hand.
- Stand on hard 17+ and on soft 19+, always.

Why the non-obvious cells are correct

Every stand-or-hit decision on a stiff hand (12–16) is a comparison against the dealer's bust frequency. The dealer busts about 42% of the time showing a 5 or 6, but only about 21% showing a 10. So you stand into the likely bust against small cards, and improve your hand against big ones.

Dealer bust frequency by up-card (multi-deck, S17)

Up-card	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	A
Bust %	35	37	40	42	42	26	24	23	21	12

What each rule change costs you

Rule change (worse for player)	Approx. edge added
Naturals pay 6:5 instead of 3:2	+1.4 pp
Dealer hits soft 17 (H17)	+0.2 pp
No double after split	+0.14 pp
No surrender	+0.08 pp

Full derivation of every figure at betcanon.com/first-principles/blackjack-basic-strategy-table/

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