

# THE NO B.S. GUIDE TO THE TOP SEVEN INTERNET POKER SITES

The purpose of this guide is to share my opinions on the best sites that currently exist to play Texas Hold'em on the internet. I am not affiliated with ANY of these sites.

There are many listings that rate sites currently on the net and most of them tend to say the same things: "this site has good graphics and lots of loose players," meaning that you can easily win money. Maybe this is due to the fact that the people making the "list" simply don't want to offend any sites. But, most of the information you find really doesn't mean much of anything. The fact is all sites have some juicy games with poor players playing. You just have to find the games!

In any case, I have chosen my top seven sites that I like to play poker on. If a site is not on the list, either I don't enjoy it that much or I did not feel it was as good as some of the others. Sometimes things change on the various sites, but I keep this guide up to date so that my students are constantly kept up to speed on the sites they should be playing on. These seven sites are, in my opinion the best sites for your money.

1. **POKER STARS-** There are many reasons Poker Stars is currently the best site going. The first of which is that it simply has the most players playing on it at any one time. ( During peak hours on the weekend over 150,000 is common and over 100,000 most other times)

What this means to you, the player, is more games. It is a very nice luxury to be able to find pretty much any game at any dollar level and not have to sit and wait hours for it after you have signed up. Also, if you play cash games, if you don't like the table you are currently playing at, simply find another. If you bust out of a Sit-n-Go, just sign up for another one and you will likely be playing in less than 5 minutes.

Poker Stars has excellent, easy to use features, and many top pros endorsing the site. They have many excellent Freeroll games and a weekly \$1 million dollar guaranteed tournament, the highest in the world.

The software is updated frequently and there are seldom any snags when playing. Play is quick and easy to follow and you can play multiple tables quite easily.

Poker Stars has been the foremost purveyor of Micro Tables and there is no rake at these tables. The rake for most Poker Stars cash games and tournaments tends to be less than other sites as well.

Poker Stars has a huge variety of games (no limit, pot limit, razz, horse, etc) and dollar levels for all tastes. Poker Stars was one of the first sites I joined when I started playing internet poker. It has only gotten bigger and better with time. I have never had any problems with Poker Stars in any way shape or form. This is my favorite site to play on.

The only critique I can think of, is that Poker Stars probably has the lowest first time sign up bonus, but the site more than makes up for it in other ways. Just sheer number of players playing on the site means you can ALWAYS find the game you want in the denomination that you want.

If you plan to play internet poker on just one site, it should be Poker Stars. It gives you the greatest flexibility, variety, and value for your money.

2. **FULL TILT-** Full Tilt is a great site. It boasts a number of top pros, many of whom you may find playing on the site at any one time.

Full Tilt has build up a lot of momentum over the last few years and become one of the bigger players in the crowed internet poker kingdom.

Their software is excellent and everything that you will use functions perfectly and smoothly.

All the functions on Full Tilt are easy to use. Their hand history is excellent, appearing on screen in the form of the poker table with everyone who went to showdown cards showing. This is one of many very usable functions.

All your game statistics are readily available and easy to decipher and use.

The tournament history function is nice too, it comes up right on screen instead of in an email.

Full Tilt is a fun site with many animated icons that you can choose from. You can even make them show emotions. There is just something about being a happy, mad, or confused, lizard or monkey, that makes the game more fun!

Like Poker Stars, the backgrounds change, and there are many ways to “customize” the game to your tastes, including where you sit at the table, table view, etc.

Full Tilt has created a fun and unique environment in which to play poker.

They offer a 100% sign up bonus that you earn back over a 90-day period. (nice if you don't play much for a week or so. You still have plenty of time to earn your bonus)

Basically, sign up bonuses at all sites work the same way: You are credited up to a certain amount for your first deposit only. You can only make that deposit once, so you should be willing to deposit the maximum amount that you intend to play at any given site. You can always draw it back out later.

You then are awarded your bonus, usually incrementally based on your play. In other words, you have to play to get your bonus. It's a bit like a slot card at a casino, for every dollar you "wager" or "gamble" you are credited with 'X' amount toward your bonus. When you have built up enough credit, your bonus is released.

Full Tilt is also the leader is offering "knockout" tournaments where you are paid for each player that you "bust out" of a tournament. (the amount you are paid varies in accordance to the dollar level game you are playing) There are also bounties placed on the pros that you may find playing as well.

I love to play the "knockout" tournaments, as it is a great way to earn back your buy in or more, even if you don't place in the money. Don't get carried away by staying in hands that you shouldn't just to try and "knock" players out, though!

The Refer-a-friend program is also a nice little kick-back that some other sites do not offer. Basically, you are credited with a certain amount of money if someone you refer to the site signs up a new account and deposits a certain amount dollar amount.

There is a relatively large amount of players to be found playing at any one time (usually in the 60,000-75,000 neighborhood) meaning you can always find a game that fits your playing level.

It is updated regularly and rarely if ever experiences any problems.

Full Tilt is a great site that I highly recommend. I play on it often and enjoy it every time that I do. This site is not a bad choice at all if you decide to only play on one site.

3. **POKER PARTY-** Poker Party is an excellent site in most every way.  
\*\*\*\*ALERT!!!! AT THIS TIME POKER PARTY HAD STOPPED  
ACCEPTING DEPOSITS FROM US PLAYERS\*\*\*\*

Poker Party is a very easy to use, intuitive site that has a ton of nice features from an "interactive" tutorial to their Tell-a-friend bonus program.

They offer an incredibly wide variety of tournaments and some great Freerolls as well. You even get free entry into a \$5,000 freeroll with sign up, which is a pretty good deal.

There is a “bad beat” bonus jackpot that no other site offers. (if you lose a hand at a qualifying table with quads, 8’s or better, you win the jackpot!)

Poker Party is very inventive with their various tournaments and promos, offering things that other sites do not, just to keep the games interesting and fun. You can even create a private table for you and your friends to play at!

Yes, you can even view some of their very clever poker party commercials on the site!

Poker Party is no doubt the most original and inventive of the sites. They continually come up with innovative tournaments and aspects for the game that you won’t find anywhere else.

It is a high traffic site, there are in the neighborhood of 70,000 players playing during peak hours, and you will find pretty much all levels of games and various games that you want to play.

Excellent customer service with 24 hour phone support email support.

This site ranks right up there with Poker Stars and Full Tilt. If you choose to play only on this site, you could do a lot worse!!!

4. **BODOG-** Bodog is not a new site but is relatively new to offering a poker room.(2004) The actual site itself is one of the older ones in the business, having been going since about 1995! Bodog is a site that is really going after new traffic, as I am sure you have seen by their massive advertising campaign. They were also helped immensely by Jamie Gold winning the 2006 WSOP while playing for Bodog at the time.

The site is well thought out and clean. They offer an excellent sign up bonus of 110%.

Bodog also offers satellites to the WSOP as well as WPT qualifiers. They have a very nice \$100,000.00 guaranteed weekly tournament as well. The reason I mention weekly tournaments like this, is that they guarantee to award \$100,000 in prizes spread among the players that place in the money. This is a pretty nice feature for a tourney with a low buy in.

Another thing I really like about Bodog, is that they steadfastly support US players, with sites like Poker Party no longer taking deposits from US players, this is something that we US poker players really need to be aware of. It is necessary to support the sites that do continue to accept US players, despite all the legal mumbo-jumbo, or there may not be any around in the future for us to play on!

The features are easy to use, especially the hand history function. You can customize your game to a great extent. This software was updated in 2006 and I would say that they hit a home run, creating one of the smoothest playing pieces of software out there. Everything functions flawlessly.

Like Full Tilt, you (the player) are always seated in the center, really a nice feature to have, as you can always find where you are at when your table is changed, etc. Especially useful if you play more than one table at once. Bodog allows only 3 tables to be played at a time, but for most of us, that is enough, and probably all we can play (well) at a time anyway!

There are on average about 11,000 players playing on Bodog, so relatively few compared to some of the other major sites, but the traffic does seem to be building.

There is a good selection of games offered, however, and you can find tournaments available in generally whatever level you are looking for. You will even find some more “exotic” games like 5-cards stud.

You will find traffic at pretty much all the different games, but the majority of players are saturated in the Hold'em games. That doesn't say anything negative about the site, just that, that is the way the current poker trend continues to run. (good for us no limit hold'em afficianados!)

They offer a leader board promo where if you accumulate enough points, you can play against David Williams, Evelyn Ng and Josh Arieh.

The free play money tables are great to learn on as well.

Overall, Bodog is a great site that seems to only be getting better. This is not a bad choice at all to play on, but I probably would not make it my only choice. I enjoy this site, but would like it more if it had a little more traffic. In any case, Bodog deserves props for a lot of the things they are doing.

5. **DOYLES ROOM**- Aside from obviously being the poker site endorsed by poker legend Doyle Brunson, Doyles Room is another, excellent, well put together site.

It offers several unique features that I think make for a very good value.

First, they offer up to a \$660 matching sign up bonus. This is one of the higher amounts that you get for a deposit bonus.

Another interesting little tidbit is the free entry to a \$55 tournament when you sign up. That is a very good deal that you will not find anywhere else. A \$55

tournament is nothing to sneeze at and there is the potential to win a lot of money in this tournament!

Traffic is not huge on this site, with about 12,000 the average of players playing at any one time. But, traffic does seem to be building.

It offers all the different games you could want, with the ability to play up to five table at one time. The features like hand history, etc are well thought out and easy to use.

Doyle himself plays on this site and you can find him by his screen name. He even offers a weekly “bounty” tournament that he, his son, and various friends of his compete in.

The support is good, the tournaments offered are very good, with excellent free rolls, and a weekly \$175,000 guaranteed tournament.

There is a Refer-a-friend program, action points award, pretty much every bonus and feature that you could want.

I like this site a lot, it is fun to play on and has everything you could want, except more players. Hopefully it will continue to grow in player traffic.

6. **SPORTSBOOK.COM**- Sportsbook.com is one of two sites in kind of a new breed of sites that are for US players only. Like many other sites, it is an all-encompassing gambling site, with other games available besides the poker room. The site itself is very well established, the poker room is simply the newest addition. The fact that they are accepting US players at this point (along with credit card deposits) makes them one of the more attractive options for the newer sites.

The software does not seem to be anything special, but it is functional and does what it is supposed to, which is really all you need in site software. Hand histories, etc all work very well. It seems that they really made an effort to have the functions that you actually need and use, work well. This is a nice thing to see, as the “junk” that clutters up some sites doesn’t help you to play better poker anyway.

It offers a very good sign up bonus, up to \$800, which is earnable over 90 days. They advertise easy deposits from credit cards and they deliver. As I am sure many of you know, it can be very frustrating to try and fund your poker account with credit cards. Somehow, Sportsbook.com has overcome this for the most part. Anything that makes me internet gambling experience less frustrating is all right by me!

The hand history statistics are excellent on this site. There are a number of games, but not yet a huge number of players. Average is about 8,000 at this time.

Some excellent freerolls are offered as well as WSOP package tournaments, etc. They actually offered a WSOP package in 2007 that you could enter for free. Nice bonus, for a potential of a \$10,000+ package!

The freeroll that you want to get into, is a \$100,000 monthly freeroll, which is also a great deal to be able to participate in for nothing.

There are also some features such as, playing blackjack at the same time as you play poker, if such distractions interest you!

All in all, this is a very good site with a number of nice features. It could simply benefit from cultivating a few more players. This is one of two sites that I really hope continue to increase traffic and expand. It is an excellent site that caters to US players and those sites are getting to be few and far between!

7. **PLAYERSONLY.COM-** PlayersOnly is another relatively new site that is for US players only. It is a very highly modernized site. You will find a more graphic site with music and more advanced graphics, etc than you will find at any other site.

It is obvious that this site was very well thought out and is meant to be cutting edge. If you are looking for the future of internet gaming, this is probably the template for sites that we will be seeing more and more of. Very interesting site.

By the way, you can turn off the music if you get tired of it. I know I liked it at first but after a while was wishing for silence! If you are a male player, you will like this site, there are a number of “women” around the site at all times. (check the site out, you will see what I mean.)

Table statistics are available both at the table and in the lobby, an interesting feature of “chat” is saved with the hand histories so that you can recreate the entire experience of the hand, right down to who said what! This is a novel concept that is not offered elsewhere.

You can “grade” your opponents according to their skill level. You can play up to 4 tables at once. All the software seems to function flawlessly and does what it is designed to do. No problems or glitches to report.

You can play up to ten tables at once, there is an excellent sign up bonus of up to \$1000 at a 125% match! This is the highest sign up bonus that I know of, at least in a site with much activity.

There is a daily lottery, WSOP prize packages, and many other interesting little promos to keep you coming back. You will probably find that you want to check and play on this site more often, simply to find out what bonus they are offering next!

Pretty much all game forms are available including Texas Hold'em, Omaha, Omaha hi-lo, 7-card stud and 7-card stud hi-lo. You will also find many tournaments being played at all times, with a lot of traffic at the tournament tables.

The million dollar freeroll series is especially of interest. This is one of the best freeroll promotions currently being offered. You do have to go through a series of qualifying, but for a tournament that has free entry, it is a great deal with potentially huge gain.

You can also accumulate "gold chips" as you play which can be used for free tournament tickets. This is in addition to FPP (frequent player points) which are awarded as 1 FPP for each \$1 rake in ring games, regardless of whether or not you put money into the hand. This is unusual compared to most sites. Most make you play your money to earn a point. What this means, is that tight, conservative, play is favored.

This site has around 8,000 players at once, so it could benefit from more traffic as well, but overall I see this as a very nice up and coming site that is easy to play on. I like some of the little bonuses that are offered, these are nice things to have a free chance at when you are going to be playing and spending your money anyway!