

Design for Fundraisers

The most common structure for a fundraiser tournament would be a re-buy tournament. The reason for re-buys is to allow players to continue playing even if they bust out in the early part of the game. During a fundraiser you will want to give guests more opportunities to donate as well as have a good time. That's a little hard to do if your guest goes broke in the first round of your four hour poker / casino night! For this reason, re-buys are usually the most popular fundraiser tournaments. Keep in mind that your tournament will be affected by whichever structure you choose to use. Players tend to play conservatively (tight), if they know they cannot re-buy, and will play more aggressive (loose), if they know that they can re-buy if they go broke. You can expect inexperienced players to be more active when given the opportunity to re-buy.

At the start of the tournament players will take their seats either by assignment or at random. Players that have paid but do not arrive by start time will have a designated seat and chips. The blinds will be deducted by the dealer accordingly. Players that would like to enter late can do so for the first hour. If you choose to allow add-ons, players can purchase additional chips (as long as they meet the requirements set forth). If a player loses all of their chips they can re-buy for the first hour. At the end of the first hour (typically four blind levels) there will be a break, and at this time players that would like to add-on may for the final time. At this point, if you would like to open the add-ons to everyone, regardless of the chips they have, it is a good way to encourage some final donations from everyone.

From this point on there will be no new players, any players that have not yet showed are disqualified, and there are no more add-ons or re-buys. Any player that loses all of their chips after the first break is out.

The Tournament Director is to consider the best interest of the event and fairness, as top priority in decision making. Unusual circumstances can, on occasion, dictate that the technical interpretation of the rules be set aside, in the interest of fairness. The Tournament Director's decision is final. The host of the event should make this clear to any and all players in advance of payment.

Timing your event

When planning a fundraiser it is important to consider the timing of the tournament. Most parties are planned to last four hours or less. If you go over it can cause many problems. Caterers, halls, restaurant staff, DJ / MC's, bar tenders, and dealers, are all affected. It can be costly and chaotic when an event goes overtime.

There are basically four factors that affect the length of the tournament; the players starting amount, if you offer re-buys, the blind levels, and the number of entrants.

You should have a good estimate of the number of entrants. If you have no idea you may book too many tables and dealers, or not enough. Having player pre-register and pay is the best way to insure a seat for every player, and no wasted tables.

One important point to focus on is the **blind schedule**. This is a predetermined structure of the blind amounts and the time limits at which they will be increased. For fundraisers and private games it should be set accordingly, as it is the only way to control the timing of the tournament. If you have to be finished by a specific time, and the blind levels are too long you will not be able to finish the tournament. If they are too short, players will be forced out quickly and less likely to re-buy, or participate in the future and may be upset they paid at all. The tournament director should control and adjust the levels accordingly to stay in the time frame. At the beginning of the tournament there should be an "anticipated" schedule, with a clear disclaimer, that **it may change**, at the discretion of the tournament director and host, based on time restrictions.

Poker Tournament Structures

There are several different structures that may be used for poker tournaments. Most of the tournaments that you see on television, such as the WSOP, use a freeze-out structure. For any event you can pick the structure you prefer as long as it is clear to the participants before the start of the tournament. Listed below are the ones pertinent to fundraisers.

Freeze-out

Players receive equal amounts of chips and are eliminated from the tournament as soon as they lose all of their chips. Once you lose your chips, you're gone!
This type of structure is fine for professionals and casinos but may be a bit too harsh for a friendly poker tournament during a fundraiser party.

Re-buy

You can buy more chips when you go broke or when you are close to going broke. Some tournaments allow only one re-buy while some tournaments allow multiple re-buys. The re-buy period is limited to the first few blinds levels. The drawback to this is for the experienced player they feel that the inexperienced players have too many chances to win. The positive side is that every time someone buys back in, more money is being donated to the charity, and the prize pool.

Shootout or Shotgun

Each table plays down to one winner. All the table winners then face each other.

Free Roll

A tournament that costs nothing to enter. There is no buy-in fee, players play for fun or for prizes put up by the host.

Guaranteed Payout

A tournament with a guaranteed minimum payout regardless of the number of players that show.

Poker terms you should know:

buy-in

The amount that a player pays to enter the tournament.

(In the case of fundraisers, either poker or casino nights, the fee they pay for their entry to the event may include food, beverage, and entertainment other than gambling. Entry into the tournament may be included or additional. Keep this in mind if you choose to offer re-buys.)

re-buy

If you lose **all of your chips, or fall below a specified amount**, you can pay the entry fee again and get the full amount of chips you started with. This must be done **before** the start of the next hand.

Some tournaments allow only one re-buy while some tournaments allow multiple re-buys.

The re-buy period only lasts for the first several blinds levels (usually the first hour).

(if the original buy-in included food, beverage etc. the re-buy fee may be adjusted accordingly)

pre-buy

Players may opt to pay an additional fee at the start of the tournament and receive more chips.

This must be done before the start of the tournament and usually replaces "re-buys". You may choose this option if you are restricted by time as re-buys will cause the tournament to run slower.

(if the original buy-in included food, beverage etc. the pre-buy fee may be adjusted accordingly)

add-on

Players can buy a predetermined amount of chips for a predetermined amount of money,

Offered to all players during the break at which the re-buy period ends,

regardless of how many chips they already have.

Blinds

This is the name given to the forced bet that the first two players must post before the cards are dealt. The amount dictates the minimum bets for that level and they are increased as the

tournament progresses. The player positions that must post the blinds will rotate around the table.

The amounts are predetermined as well as the times at which they are increased.

blind level

The amount of the small and big blinds at any given time.

blind schedule

Predetermined structure of the blind amounts and the time limits at which they will be increased.

This is flexible and should be set accordingly as it is the only way to control the timing of the tournament. If you have to be finished by a specific time and the blind levels are too long you

will not be able to finish the tournament. If they are too short players will be forced out quickly

and less likely to re-buy or participate in the future and may be upset they paid at all.

ante

Amount posted by all players before the hand is dealt to force players to have a stake in the hand and encourage them to play more aggressively. In Texas Holdem tournaments antes are introduced at a predetermined level and increased along with the blinds.

They may be implemented at the directors discretion if time restraints call for it.

Poker terms you should know:

Dealer Button

Large chip that designates where the dealer will start dealing from. The first card dealt goes to the person to the left of the person that has the dealer button, the person with the button gets last card dealt. The button rotates clockwise around the table after each hand.

Small Blind

The first person to the left of the person with the dealer button is forced to put half of the minimum bet up as a stake in the hand about to be dealt. This blind bet will count toward the players first bet but will be relinquished if they choose to fold their hand. There may be times when there is no small blind posted & the dealer will inform the table of this.

Big Blind

The person to the left of the small blind must put up the total minimum bet as a stake in the hand about to be dealt. They will then have the option to make a raise after all other players have acted. There will always be a big blind and it will move clockwise around the table after every hand. If a player is not at the table when they are "in the blind" the dealer will take the appropriate amount from the players chips for the pot.

Pot

The chips that have been wagered are collected by the dealer after each betting round and this makes the pot.

Side Pot

If one or more players has wagered all of their remaining chips (they are "all in") betting may continue among the other players & these chips are separated. This is a "side pot".

Check

To pass on your option to bet.

Bet

The first wager in a round of play is a bet all other actions in that round will be "calls" or "raises" In no limit poker you may bet as much as you have on the table as long as it is at least the amount of the "big blind".

Call

To match a bet with an equal amount. If a player says "call" but does not have enough chips to cover the bet then that player is "all in"

Raise or Re-raise

To increase a players bet & the minimum raise is the amount of the original bet.

To make a second raise is a re-raise

The minimum re-raise is the amount of the previous "raise"

There is no maximum in "no limit".

Fold

To surrender your hand and forfeit any stake in the pot.

All In

Declaration by a player that indicates they are wagering all of their remaining chips.

Other players in the hand may ask the dealer to count the chips and declare the amount.

If there is a bet and a player does not have enough chips, they can call with their remaining chips, which will make them "all-in".

Chop Pot

When two or more players have equal hands the pot is divided equally. In the event of an odd amount in the pot the extra chip will go to the first person to the left of the dealer button.

The Board

The community cards in the center of the table David Giunta 973-338-9520