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Heads-up poker is the art of playing against just one opponent. I say a
rt because,

unlike ring games or tournaments, heads-up poker truly is a
n art form.

In most poker games, you will face many opponents and only be directly involved
in a small percentage of the overall hands. In heads-up, however, you will pay blinds each h
and and be put into many difficult situations.

For that reason, you will need to learn to play poker quite differently than you may be used to playing in other
formats of the game.

In this guide to playing heads-up poker, we will tackle some main concepts of such games, teach you how to approach playing in and out of position, and give you a few
pointers to lead you in the right direction.

Mind that this is only the first step towards becoming a great heads-up poker player, as it can take years to master
, even for the best of us.

Main Differences between Heads Up and Ring Games

The obvious difference between a 6-max or ring game and heads-up is the number of players at the table,
and this one would be obvious even to a completely ignorant bystander.

Since it's only you against your opponent in a heads-up match, many things change quite
drastically. First and foremost, both you and the other player are in blind positions
on each hand.

The player on the button also acts as the small blind, while the other player pay
s the big blind.

Like in all other formats, the player with the button plays last on al
l following streets but will act first pre-flop.

As you are always in the blinds, and the number of opponents is minimal, you have every reason to play way mor
e hands than you would in a ring game. In fact, in many heads-up matches, it is correct
to play almost all hands from the button and a very high percentage of hands in the big blind a
s well.

While you could previously profitably play various hands in position and wait to