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Understanding Roulette Odds and Payouts

by Steve Bourie

Roulette is a game of probability and there is no skill involved in playing the game. Therefore, you are basically relying on luck to win.

Normally, this would mean that there is no such thing as a bad roulette player because everyone is relying on luck in order to be a winner. However, there are some variations in the game of roulette where the casino's mathematical advantage over you can change. So, a smart roulette player would always be looking for a roulette game with the lowest casino edge for the house.

Read on to learn how you can find the best roulette games to play.

Roulette is basically a game of pure luck

There are several different bets you can place on the roulette table and your chances to win will vary considerably, depending on the bets you make. Naturally, the harder it is for your bet to win, the more the casino will pay you for your winning bet.

In roulette, players can place bets on a single number, on multiple groups of numbers, on red or black, whether the number is odd or even, and whether the numbers are 19–36 (high) or 1- 18 (low). There are also column bets and dozens bets.

The dealer (also known as a croupier in European casinos) will spin a wheel in one direction and then spin a small white ball in the opposite direction around a sloping circular track that runs around the outer rim of the wheel. All of this is done to determine the winning number.

A double zero roulette wheel in action

As the ball loses strength, it will pass through an area of deflectors, fall on the steering wheel and enter one of the 37 or 38 spaces, depending on whether the roulette's style is American with zero (0) and double zero (00), or European with only one zero (0).

Roulette Odds

When discussing roulette odds you should understand that there are two different types of roulette games offered and each has its own unique house advantage against the player.

Those two roulette games are differentiated by the number of zeroes they have on their wheels and they are referred to as either single zero, which has just one zero (0), or double zero, which has two zero pockets (0 and 00).

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zero roulette game have a casino advantage of 5.26 percent, except for the 5– *number* bet where the edge is 7.89 percent.

The five-number bet in roulette should be avoided!

To make the 5-number bet you simply place your chip(s) in the upper left corner of the number 1 box. If any one of those five numbers (0, 00, 1,2,3) comes in you'll win and the casino advantage on this bet is 7.89 percent. This is the worst possible bet you can make on a roulette table with a double zero wheel and you should always avoid making this bet.

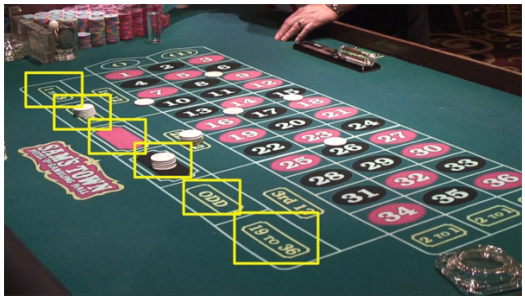
We should also mention that there are now some casinos that have triple-zero roulette wheels. These are also very bad games that should be avoided because the casino edge on all of the bets on these games is a very high 7.69 percent!

Roulette Payouts

Roulette offers a surprising number of betting options, but the bets are straightforward enough. To be sure you get the correct payout, you will want to make sure that you put your chips in precisely the right place on the table. Missing a payout because your chip is not in the right spot would be very disappointing!

Roulette payouts are generally stated as "x-to-1", which means that for every dollar you bet, you will win x dollars, plus you will get back your original bet. For example, the single number bet in roulette offers a payout of 35-to-1. If you win, you will get paid $35, plus you get to keep your original $1 bet. All of the individual numbers on a table layout are referred to as "inside" bets.

On the other side of the table are the sequences of bets which are "outside" the 37 or 38 numbers on the table. Each of these bets refers to a particular set of numbers or colors. If the ball lands on 0 or 00, you will lose on any of these outside bets.



Even-money outside bets in roulette

The "outside" bets include:

Red or Black – This bet pays even money (1-to-1) if the ball lands on the color you chose. So, if you bet $20, you would win $20, plus you keep your original $20 bet.

Odd or Even – This bet pays even money (1-to-1) if the ball lands on the odd or even section you chose. So, if you bet $20, you would win $20, plus you keep your original $20 bet.

Low or High – This bet pays even money (1-to-1) if the ball lands on a number from 1 to 18 and you bet low, or if the ball lands on a number from 19 to 36 and you bet high. So, if you bet $20, you would win $20, plus you keep your original $20 bet.

Columns – The amounts on the arrangements organized into three columns of twelve costs each. A "column" bet wins if the ball lands on one of the numbers in the column you select. This bet pays 2-to-1 when you win. So, if you bet $20, you would win $40, plus you keep your original $20 bet.

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The dozens bets in roulette

Dozens – In total, 36 numbers are on the table so that you can bet or on the first dozen (1-12), or the second dozen (13-24), or the third dozen (25-36). Also, this bet spins 2-to-1. This bet pays 2 to 1 when you win. So, if you bet $20, you would win $40, plus you keep your original $20 bet.

Besides the "outside" bets, you can also bet on specific amounts and sets of numbers on the "inside" of the layout. These bets win less often, but when you win, the payouts are higher. The house edge on the "inside" bets is the same as the house edge on the "outside" bets.

The interior bets are:

Straight-up – This is a bet based on one specific number. It offers a payout of 35-to-1. So, if you bet $2, you would win $70, plus you keep your original $2 bet.

A split bet in roulette

Split bet – A bet that is on two neighboring numbers. You put the chip on the line between the two numbers to make this bet. This bet pays 17-to-1. So, if you bet $2, you would win $34, plus you keep your original $2 bet.

Street bet – This bet includes three numbers on the same row. You put your bet on the line outside of the three numbers in the row where you desire to win. This bet pays 11-to-1. So, if you bet $2, you would win $22, plus you keep your original $2 bet.

Double Street bet – This bet covers two adjoining rows of numbers and it pays 5-to-1. So, if you bet $2, you would win $10, plus you keep your original $2 bet.

A corner bet in roulette

Corner bet – Some people may also call this a quarter bet or a square bet. There is a corner that makes a square where the bet is on. Also, it's a bet on four numbers. Winning on this kind of bet pays 8-to-1. So, if you bet $2, you would win $16, plus you keep your original $2 bet.

Five-number bet – This is the only interior bet that has a different house edge, 7.89 percent, rather than the standard house edge of 5.26 percent on all other inside bets. As stated previously, it is also the worst possible bet to make on a double zero roulette game. This bet pays 6-to-1. So, if you bet $5, you would win $30, plus you keep your original $5 bet. That would be a total of $35.

However, there is a smarter way to make this bet and here is how to do it. If you simply broke that $5 bet down into five single $1 bets and placed them on each of those five numbers then when you win you would be paid $35, plus your original $1 chip. That would be a total of $36, rather than the $35 which you would

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Roulette has been a favorite among gambling fans since the 18th century. There are a variety of ways to bet on the roulette table and some bring huge payouts if they win. Other bets are more likely to happen, but they will give you a lower payout.

If you are going to start with real money in this kind of game, you should make the effort to be aware of the chances of winning for each particular bet. Of course, those odds are also affected by the type of roulette you are playing, with a single zero game being much better than a game using a double zero wheel.

There are two main groups of bets: inside bets and outside bets. The names derive from the bet positions on the layout of the table. Outside bets have more chances of winning, but much smaller payouts. On the other hand, inside bets, have considerably bigger payouts but less probability of winning.

Keep in mind that the maximum bet limit is always much higher for outside bets than it is for interior bets. The reason for this is because casinos don't want to worry about paying out too much money on outside bets because the maximum payout is only 2-to-1.

If you like to play it safe, try to stick to the outside bets because they have much better odds of winning. Most of these are known as 'even money' bets because they cover pretty much half of the possible outcomes – except for the number zero and double zero.

The roulette wheel has become the face of the casino industry itself. However, it is always helpful to understand the game so that you know how to play roulette in detail before you start.

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