

The House Edge

A Player's Guide

Casino games, such as American Roulette, Blackjack, etc, are 'bankers' games' and, as such, are games of 'unequal chance'.

The nature and structure of these games therefore gives an advantage to the casino (the House). This is called the House 'Edge', and it gives a measure of the percentage that a casino would expect to retain, on average, from each hand or spin, given normal patterns of play. In very simple terms, it largely works in two ways:

- In games such as Blackjack, for example, the dealer wins all bets from losing players, even if their own hand is also Bust. This is because the dealer 'holds the bank'. By contrast, a player will only win if their own hand beats that of the dealer
- In other bankers games, like American Roulette, the 'Edge' is achieved by the casino paying slightly less than the 'true' odds for a particular bet. For example, the true odds for a single American Roulette number to win are 36 to 1, since there are 37 compartments on the wheel. However, winning bets are actually paid at 35 to 1

The 'Edge' is a universally accepted feature of International casino gaming and, in fact, is often less in the UK than that applied in many other countries. None the less, the casino industry and the Gambling Commission both support a policy of openness and clarity towards those participating in UK gaming, so we aim to make players aware of the House 'Edge' and help them understand the way it is applied.

Only the basic House 'Edge' percentages are illustrated with our 'How to Play' information. However, please note that these figures will vary in certain playing conditions. In Blackjack, for example, the 'Edge' can fluctuate widely (both for and against the House) depending on the techniques applied by individual players. There are many books and websites dedicated to the best playing strategy to assist players in developing their own technique.