

Texas Hold'em pre-flop odds when playing heads-up

Spotting the favourite

In this article we will have a look at the odds for different starting hands pre-flop. The objective is to get a better understanding of the pre-flop odds we are getting when we are up against different kinds of starting hands and if we decide to call to the river.

Pairs

- Pair vs a slightly smaller pair ~ 80% against 20%
- High pair vs small pair ~ 80% against 20%
- High pair vs suited connectors - not dominated hands ~80% against 20%
- High pair vs unsuited connectors - not dominated hands ~80% against 20%
- High pair vs suited hand - not dominated hands ~ 80/85% against 20/15%.
- High pair vs unsuited hand - not dominated hands ~ 85% against 15%
- Pair vs dominated hand ~ 90% against 10%.

Overcards versus pair

- Suited connectors vs smaller pair ~ 48% against 52%. Favourite varies!
- Connectors vs smaller pair ~ 46% against 54% up to 50% against 50%.

Dominated hands

- Unsuited vs unsuited dominated hand ~ 70% against 30%
- Unsuited vs suited dominated ~ 65% against 35%
- Suited vs suited dominated hand ~70% against 30%
- Suited vs unsuited dominated hand ~75% against 35%

Mixed hands

- Varying results ranging from roughly 65 against 35 to 55 against 45.

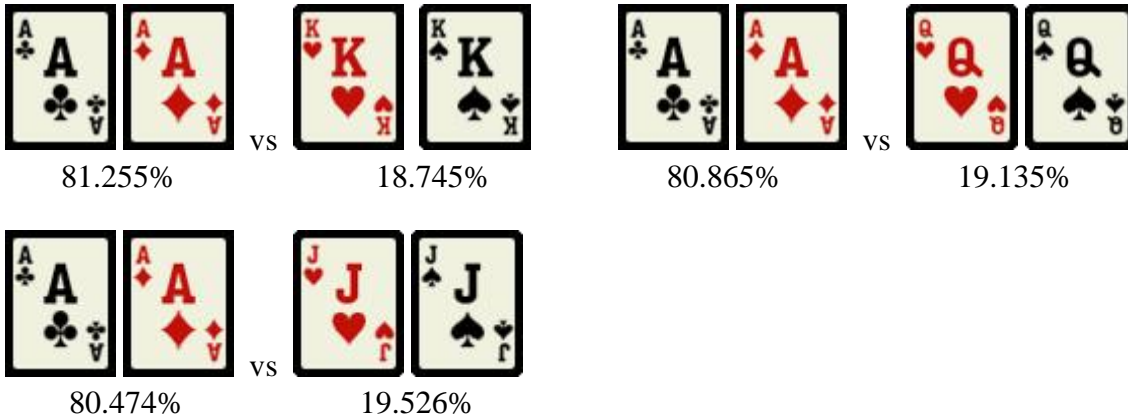
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Pairs

Pair versus a slightly smaller pair

About 80% against 20%. This applies regardless if we are talking about AA vs KK or 66 vs 55. The lower pair is gaining some percents if they are not sharing suit with the higher pair and by keeping distance to the high pair which gives the lower pair more straight possibilities.

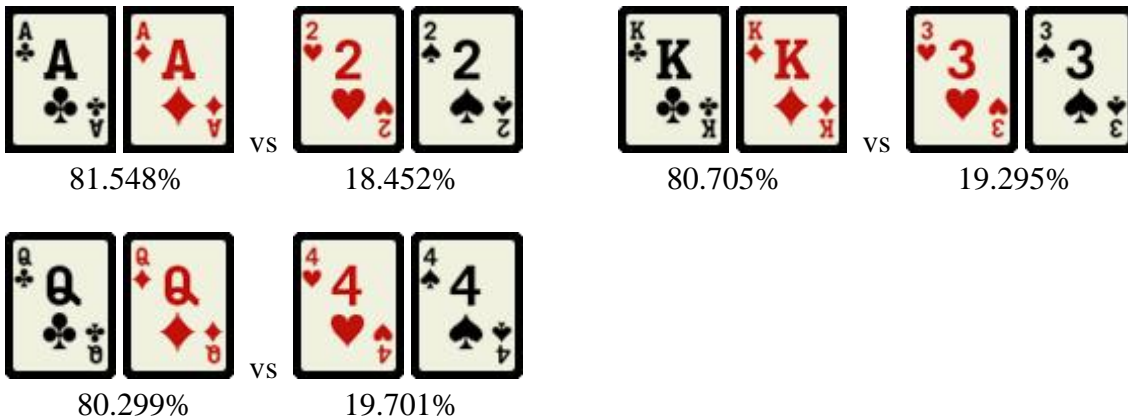
Examples:



High pair versus small pair

80% against 20%. It is a marginal difference compared to the previous example. The small pair will gain some percents if it is not sharing the same suit as the high pair and by not competing for the same straight A-2-3-4-5.

Examples:




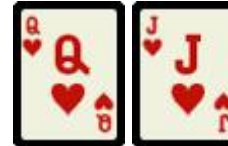

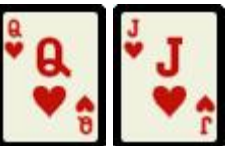

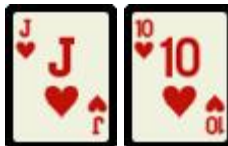

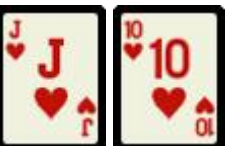

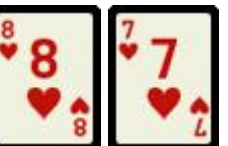




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High pair versus suited connectors

80% against 20%. The suited connectors is gaining some percents by not sharing the same suit as the high pair and when given the possibility to make a straight without using any of the cards in the high pair, as illustrated in the example AA vs 87s below.

Examples:

	vs				vs	
82.315%		17.685%		80.299%		19.701%
	vs				vs	
81.708%		18.292%	78.283%	21.717%		
	vs				vs	
79.692%		20.308%		76.979%		23.021%
	vs					
82.398%		17.602%				

High pair vs unsuited connectors

These starting hands are also 80% against 20% hands. A bigger variation happens when the pair is only slightly bigger than the connectors, thus competing for the same straight and making this a 85% against 15% hand.

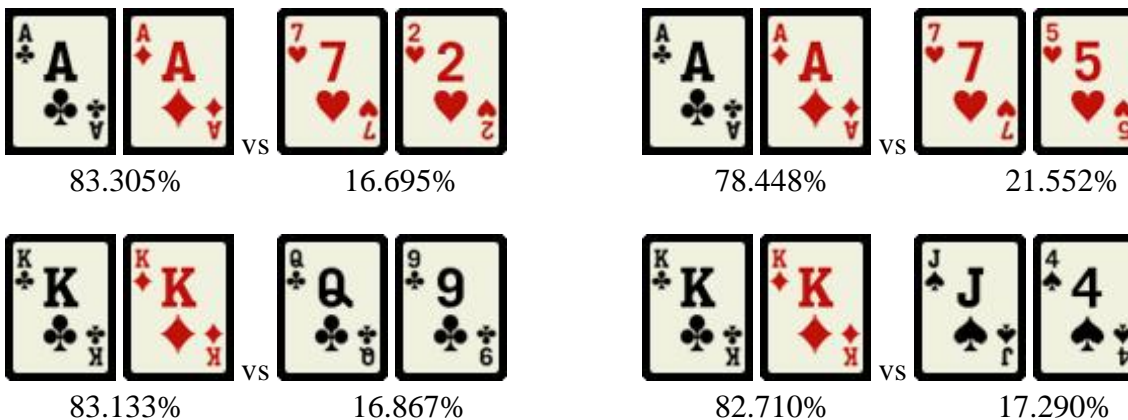
Examples:



High pair vs suited hand

Another 80% against 20% hand with potential of getting up to 85% against 15%. It differs depending on if it is one, two or three gap connectors or even higher gaps. The disadvantage of the suited connectors increases when the gap is big thus having a harder time making a straight. If the both hands are competing for the same straight the suited cards will turn into an even bigger underdog.

Examples:

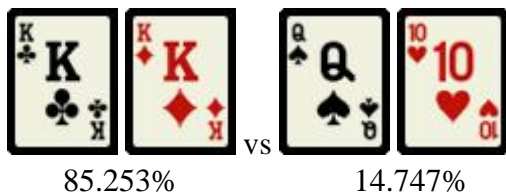
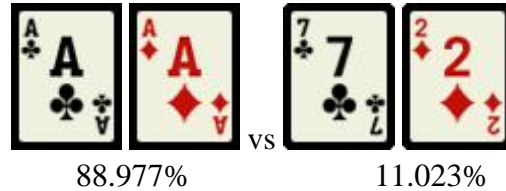


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High pair vs unsuited hand

About 85% against 15%. Factors of negative influence for the unsuited hand are, again, if they are sharing the same suit as the pair, if they are competing for the same straight and the gap between the two cards.

Examples:



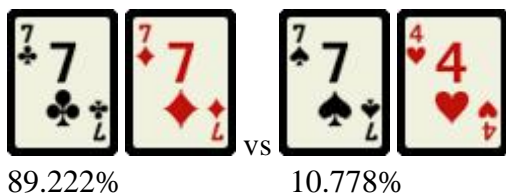
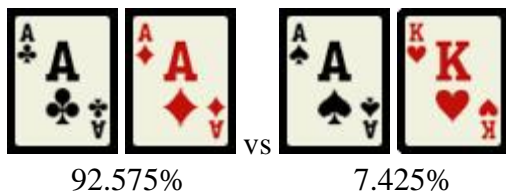
Pair vs dominated hand

The definition of a dominated hand: A dominated hand is a hand that very often will lose to a better hand if played by others. This is most often the case when you are playing a hand consisting of one high card combined with a weak kicker as people usually prefer a starting hand consisting of high cards.

Pair vs unsuited dominated hand.

About 90% against 10% without any bigger variations.

Example:

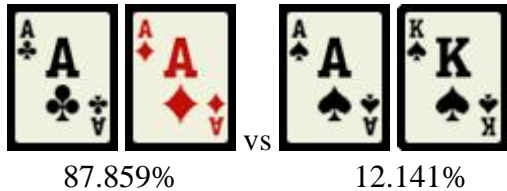


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Pair vs suited dominated hand

About 85% against 15%.

Examples:

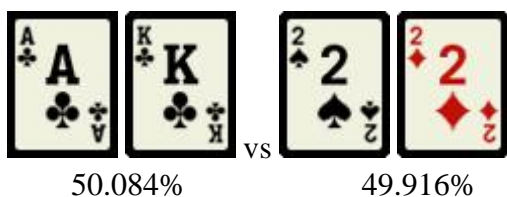
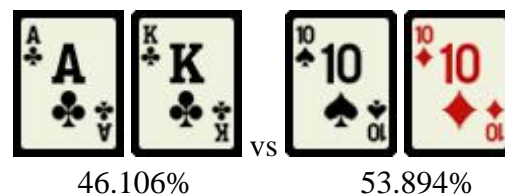
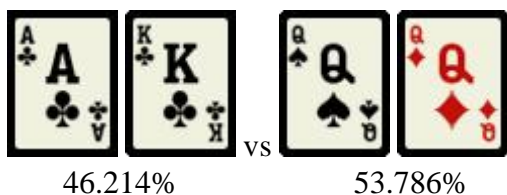


Overcards versus pairs

Suited connectors vs smaller pair

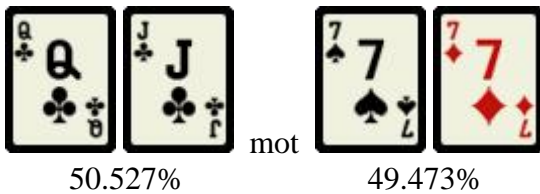
About 48% against 52%. Knowing which hand that is the favourite can be a bit tricky to find out. For example, AKs is an underdog versus all pairs except 22. This due to AK's limited straight possibilities. The only thing that makes AKs a favourite against 22 is the competition for the same straight A-2-3-4-5 and the fact that the straight possibilities for 22 are also very limited.

Examples:

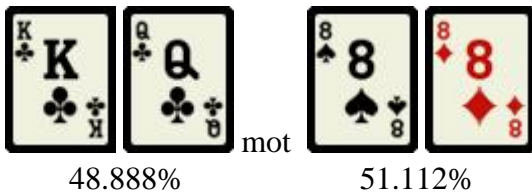


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The best chances for the suited connectors are when they are given full straight possibilities without interference from the smaller pairs. Two examples of this are T9s vs 55 and QJs vs 77.



KQs are not a favourite against 88 even if the interval between the hands is the same as the examples above. This is due to the limited straight possibilities for the high suited connectors.



Suited connectors have the best possibilities when they are medium-sized, giving the hand many straight possibilities, and when they are up against small pairs with few straight possibilities.

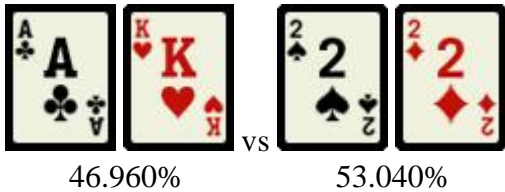
Examples:



Connectors vs smaller pair

About 46% against 54% up to 50/50. The only possibility for the connectors to make a coin-flip (50% against 50% chans) vs a smaller pair is to get maximum help from straight possibilities, not compete for the same straights and when the connectors are up against a small pair with limited straight possibilities.

Not good...



Better.....



Are you surprised ? I guess. It is easy to overplay both AKs and AK. Especially in no limit.



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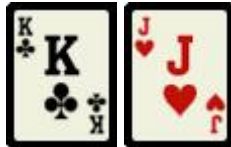

Dominated hands

Unsuited vs suited dominated hand

These hands are about 70% against 30% but the variation is quite big. These values changes quite a lot when we are playing small hands as more pots are split pots. This is caused by the community cards. High cards, pairs etc will more often help both players when we are playing small hands against each other.

In all the previous examples the split pots have been very few, thus these results have been omitted. However, in these examples case there is a good reason for presenting all stats.

	vs	
equity (%)	win (%)	tie (%)
AQ: 73.3134	70.44%	02.88%
A9: 26.6866	23.81%	02.88%

	vs	
equity (%)	win (%)	tie (%)
KJ: 72.2723	68.39	03.88
K5: 27.7277	23.84	03.88

	vs	
equity (%)	win (%)	tie (%)
AQ: 66.9043	56.58	10.32
A9: 33.0957	22.78	10.32

	vs	
equity (%)	win (%)	tie (%)
KJ: 57.7504	36.62	21.13
K5: 42.2496	21.12	21.13

Unsuited vs suited dominated hand

About 65% against 35%. In short we could see that the extra card in the same suit doesn't help the dominated hand much. About 5% differs from the "unsuited vs suited"-results. The same rules as in the first example applies.

Suited vs suited dominated hand

About 70% against 30%. The same rules from the first example applies, i.e the difference in strength between these hands is decreasing when we play small cards heads-up.

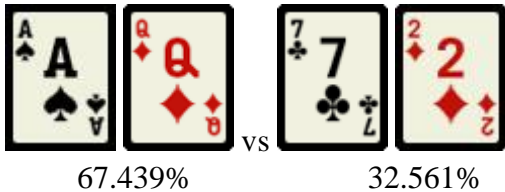
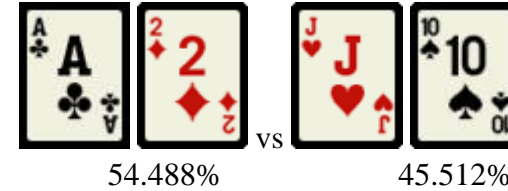
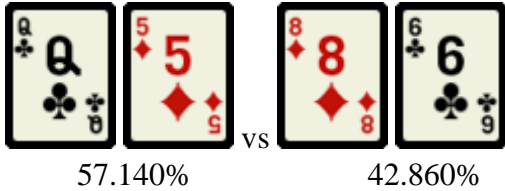
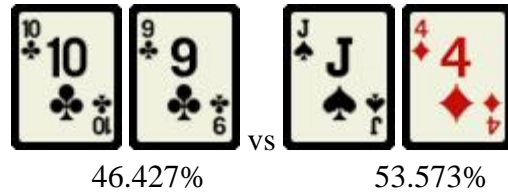
Suited vs unsuited dominated hand

About 75% against 25%. The same rules from the first example applies, i.e the difference in strength between these hands is decreasing when we play small cards heads-up.

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Mixed hands

- Varying results ranging from roughly 65 against 35 to 55 against 45.



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