

Top 10 Tips for Bluffing in Poker

Bluffing is the key to winning and winning big in poker. Done well it can land you a lot of money on a poor hand, done badly it can leave you out of pocket and with egg on your face.

It is first important to note that bluffing is not always a good option. Everyone has heard of bluffing and most new players think that they need to do it every hand. This is far from true and should only be done once you are confident in your own ability and are aware of the skill levels of the players at the table.

Here are some excellent tips to improve your chances of spotting someone else's bluff and hence improve your own ability to bluff without giving off any signs.

1. Try to observe the players before you start. What do you notice? Are any players doing something specific or gesturing in a certain way before the win or lose a hand?
2. At the end of a hand always take note of the winner. Did he/she do anything during the hand that you think is important? A quickness to bet, eyeballing the chips or maybe a twitch of some sort would be obvious examples.
3. Before playing properly it's a good idea to sit out one or two hands (unless you have an excellent hand) just so as to get a feel for the table and the abilities and styles of the other players.
4. Shaking hands can often be the key to interpreting what a player has. Far from a lack of confidence in their hand it most likely indicates a strong hand and an eagerness to bet that they are trying to conceal.
5. Always pay attention to what is going on at the table, mannerisms and dialogue can give a lot away. Specifically look for players that have bluffed their way to a win/loss.
6. If someone seems to be paying a lot of attention to their chips then there is a good chance that they are counting them and calculating whether or not a risky bet will pay off, hence there is a good chance they are bluffing.
7. The amount of dialogue at the table is also important. Be very aware if a quiet player suddenly becomes talkative or vice versa. If this happens then always be suspicious of their hands as they are likely to be strong.
8. If someone seems to be paying a lot of attention to someone else's hand then there is a good chance that they have a strong hand and are trying to calculate the amount likely to be staked and that they can win.
9. If possible always pay attention to people eyes. Where are they looking? Will they make eye contact? A refusal to make eye contact will often mean, as in real life, that they are hiding something.
10. Be aware of the experts. Some people play a lot of poker and are excellent at masking everything. As well as this expert players can often fake any of the signs above so as to give the impression that their hand is not what it may seem.

Poker is a tough game to learn and get good at. The best way is to practice as much as you can, with your friends, competitions or on line. Remember; don't bluff for the sake of bluffing, especially if you are new to the game as the majority of the time you will get caught out. Know what you're doing and play sensibly. Never gamble with money you can't afford to lose.

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