

Pre-Flop Omaha Hi-Lo, Discussing the Best Starting Hands

poker comes in two formats. Traditionally Omaha is played as a high only game, and has a similar format to Texas Hold'em – the only difference being you have 4 cards in the hole as opposed to 2.

[Omaha Hi-Lo](#) works rather differently, as you are ideally hoping to make not one, but two hands. Before moving on to discussing what hands you should be playing, let's get some of the basic principles of the game laid out.

You overall goal in Omaha Hi-Lo is to make two hands... a 5 card traditional poker hand (as you would in most variants) and a 5 card Low hand (which must be 8 or lower, A-2-3-4-5 being the nuts). A hand must consist of any 2 of your hole cards and 3 of the 5 cards from the board. The flop, turn and river works in exactly the same way as it would in Texas Hold'em or standard Omaha poker. You can use your hole cards to make both a High and a Low... so should you be holding A-3-A-Q, and the board shows 2-4-5-J-Q – you can use your A 3 to make both a High and a Low hand – A-2-3-4-5 makes both a straight for High and the lowest possible Low. You are not required to use all 4 hole cards.

With this in mind, let's discuss starting hands.

Ideally an Omaha Hi-Lo will have 2 aces and another 2 low cards. Double suited (e.g. 2 hearts and 2 clubs) would make this even better. These hands allow you to make both a good High hand and a potentially nuts Low hand.

Here are the hands you should always be playing... though never too aggressively as any variant of Omaha is very much a drawing game:

1. A-A-2-3 Double suited
2. A-A-2-4 Double suited
3. A-A-2-3 Suited
4. A-A-2-5 Double suited
5. A-A-2-4 Suited
6. A-A-3-4 Double suited
7. A-A-2-3 Non-suited
8. A-A-2-2 Double suited
9. A-A-3-5 Double suited
10. A-A-2-6 Double suited

There are many other playable starting hands. Your range should be A-A-2-X through to K-K-Q-J. Hands which can only make a High should almost always be folded on the flop if 3 low (below 8) cards land.

About the Author

If you are still unsure as to how to [play Omaha Hi Lo poker](#), you can find many articles around the web with further instructions or tuition. Or, if you are ready to play, [Littlewoods Online Poker](#) offer many tournaments and sit-and-go Omaha Hi Lo games.

Source: <http://www.spivo.com/articles>