

Jonathan Little's

Poker WorkBook

Volume 1

**15 INTERACTIVE HAND QUIZZES
FROM POKERCOACHING.COM**

Bet Go All-In Call
Check Fold
Raise Reraise



Jonathan Little

Jonathan Little's Poker Workbook: Volume 1
15 Interactive Hand Quizzes From [PokerCoaching.com](https://www.pokercoaching.com)
By Jonathan Little

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Exclusive Bonus

Bonus Hand Quiz #1 of 15

Hand No.34468Blinds: 100K/200K
Ante: 25K

Tournament

Pot: 175.00K

Good TAG

4.68M

Good LAG

2.08M

Good TAG

26.88M

Good TAG

10.18M

Good LAG

13.98M

folds

Good TAG

20.98M

Good TAG

23.98M

Powered by **reMyP**

AK

jcardshark

Fold

Call

Raise to 500,000

Raise to 700,000

As a bonus for purchasing this book, I am making the 15 hands that are presented in this book available to you as interactive quizzes.

To access the 15 interactive hand quizzes, visit:

<http://pokercoaching.com/workbook/bonus>

Acknowledgments

Huge thanks to my business partners Dan Stanley and Albert Hart for helping make this book look presentable. Infinite thanks are owed to Suzan Baroni and Ken Adams for editing the text. Finally, thanks to you, my students. You inspired me to create PokerCoaching.com, which in turn inspired this book. My work would not exist without you. Thank you for letting me live my dream.

Introduction

My training site PokerCoaching.com started off as an experiment to see if I could find a better way to teach my students how to develop the fundamental skills required to succeed at poker. While watching training videos of world-class players play in real time is great, I thought the lack of interactivity was a problem. I decided to develop interactive quizzes so my students could compare their skills to mine in real time, getting immediate feedback on spots where I disagree with their strategies. After putting in just a bit of time working on their games, my students started seeing improvements, and eventually, significant, life-changing wins.

Jonathan Little's Poker Workbook: Volume 1 is a brief sampling of what you can expect at PokerCoaching.com. The only difference is PokerCoaching.com's quizzes are in a video format whereas these are in written form. This book presents 15 hands, five from me (Jonathan Little), five from Matt Affleck, and five from Alex Fitzgerald. While our strategies may differ from time to time, we are all long-term professional poker players who have stood the test of time. By studying our strategies and comparing your skills to ours, you will be able to see the holes in your game and can then work to plug your leaks.

In each quiz, there will be questions with corresponding answers ranked from 0 to 10 points. While these scores are arbitrary, they are meant to give you an understanding of how we think each answer fares in relation to the others. Sometimes, a few answers will be close and other times, there is a clearly correct answer. If you find that you are often choosing the right answer, or an answer that gets a high score, you are playing well. If you seem to choose answers that receive 0 points almost every time, you have lots of work to do!

I hope you enjoy progressing through this book as much as I enjoyed putting it together. While this is only Volume 1 of the series, the plan is to have many more volumes so you can continue improving your skills using this printed format. If you like testing yourself against world-class players, be sure to sign up for your free trial of PokerCoaching.com by visiting <http://pokercoaching.com/workbook/free>.

Thanks for reading and have fun!

~ Jonathan Little

Chapter 1 by Jonathan Little

About Jonathan Little

Jonathan Little is a professional poker player, coach, author, and commentator. He has won two World Poker Tour titles and has final tabled two others, earning him the Season 6 World Poker Tour Player of the Year award. He has total live earnings in excess of \$6,600,000. Jonathan owns and operates the training sites PokerCoaching.com and FloatTheTurn.com, and posts a weekly educational blog and podcast at JonathanLittlePoker.com. When he is not traveling the high stakes live tournament circuit, he is home in Manhattan with his wife Amie and son James.

You can follow Jonathan on [Twitter @JonathanLittle](https://twitter.com/JonathanLittle).



Set Up

The following hands are from the final table of a tough \$10,000 buy-in High Roller event. You have a big stack of roughly 120 big blinds. The six other stacks at the table vary, with the shortest being only 11 big blinds. Your opponents probably think you are on the tight side, but certainly competent and capable of making plays when it makes sense. You are already in the money and the tournament uses a standard payout structure.

Getting Value from the Effective Nuts While Protecting Your Range
With blinds at 100,000/200,000 with a 25,000 ante, you pick up A-K in the lojack seat at a 7-handed final table with a 24,000,000 stack.



Should you:

1.

Fold

Call

Raise to 500,000

Raise to 700,000

Score:

1.

Fold (0 Points)

Call (1 Point)

Raise to 500,000 (10 Points)

Raise to 700,000 (6 Points)

You should raise with all your playable hands. Perhaps if your opponents were terrible, there would be some merit in limping with some hands, but even then, A-K should be raised for value. When choosing your raise size, choose an amount that allows some worse hands to call, allowing you to extract additional value after the flop.

You raise to 500,000 and only a good, tight aggressive player with 10,400,000 calls from the big blind.

The flop comes Ah-Ac-8c. The pot is 1,300,000. Your opponent checks.



Should you:

2.

Check

Bet 400,000

Bet 700,000

Bet 1,200,000

Score:

2.

Check (2 Points)

Bet 400,000 (10 Points)

Bet 700,000 (8 Points)

Bet 1,200,000 (5 Points)

As the preflop raiser, a tiny flop bet should be your default play on uncoordinated boards that should connect well with your range. A-A-x is as uncoordinated as they come. Betting larger is only a good idea if it is obvious due to physical tells that your opponent likes his hand and will happily pay off large bets on all three streets.

You bet 400,000 and your opponent calls.

The turn is the (Ah-Ac-8c)-2s. The pot is 2,100,000. Your opponent checks.



Should you:

3.

Check

Bet 600,000

Bet 1,300,000

Bet 2,000,000

Score

3.

Check (0 Points)

Bet 600,000 (5 Points)

Bet 1,300,000 (8 Points)

Bet 2,000,000 (10 Points)

In general, you would like to apply maximum pressure on the opponent due to him having a medium stack and wanting to outlast the short stacks. Betting large ensures he either gets all-in on the turn or river with his Aces while also protecting against flush draws. The only time a large bet does not maximize value is when the opponent has exactly a marginal made hand, but even then, he may decide your large turn bet indicates lots of bluffs in your range, which may induce him to hero-call.

You bet 2,000,000. Your opponent thought for a while before folding 9c-7c, one of the draws you don't mind forcing to fold.

Score:

1.

Check (7 Points)

Raise to 500,000 (3 Points)

Raise to 850,000 (10 Points)

Raise to 1,200,000 (4 Points)

It is important to first try to figure out the small blind's limping strategy. In the high stakes games, at this point in time, most players limp with their entire playable range from the small blind when everyone folds to them. Keeping that in mind, against an extremely wide range, you should raise your best hands for value. While A-9 is far from premium, it can extract significant value from the opponent's worse A-x hands as well as various hands containing two somewhat coordinated cards. If for some reason you thought your opponent planned to limp with the intention of reraising, you should be more inclined to check to ensure you get to see the flop. When choosing your raise size, pick an amount he would call with some portion of his range, while forcing him to fold some amount of the time. Notice if you min-raise, he will call essentially every time, and he won't be making much of a mistake, due to his excellent pot odds. However, if you raise too large, he will only put money in with hands that dominate yours.

You raise to 850,000 and your opponent calls.

The flop comes Js-8s-4c. The pot is 1,900,000. Your opponent checks.



Should you:

2.

Check

Bet 700,000

Bet 1,200,000

Bet 1,900,000

Score:

2.

Check (5 Points)

Bet 700,000 (10 Points)

Bet 1,200,000 (8 Points)

Bet 1,900,000 (4 Points)

Both betting and checking are fine, but in general, you should use a small bet that forces your opponent to play somewhat straightforwardly by making most of his junk and marginal hands fold. While checking behind is perfectly fine, you will often find yourself in a difficult spot if he bets the turn and river. Also, you have lots of backdoor draws, so betting can never be too bad unless you expect to frequently get check-raised.

You bet 700,000 and your opponent calls.

The turn is the (Js-8s-4c)-6d. The pot is 3,300,000. Your opponent checks.



Should you:

3.

Check

Bet 900,000

Bet 1,700,000

Bet 3,300,000

Score:

3.

Check (10 Points)

Bet 900,000 (6 Points)

Bet 1,700,000 (2 Points)

Bet 3,300,000 (4 Points)

While you could keep betting to try to make your opponent fold all hands worse than a Jack, checking with the intention of giving up is fine. If you think he will rarely fold his best hands to significant pressure and may even decide to hero-call down, bluffing too often becomes a significant mistake. If you decide to bet, you should either bet small with the intention of firing again on the river or large with the intention of giving up on most rivers.

You check behind.

The river is the (Js-8s-4c-6d)-Th. The pot is 3,300,000. Your opponent bets 1,800,000 out of his 10,850,000 stack.



Should you:

4.

Fold

Call

Raise to 5,000,000

Go all-in

Score:

4.

Fold (9 Points)

Call (2 Points)

Raise to 5,000,000 (10 Points)

Go all-in (9 Points)

This is an interesting spot because, in reality, you should likely continue betting the turn with Q-9 and 9-7, but there is no way for your opponent to know that is the strategy you are likely to employ. You should, however, definitively check behind with T-T, which improved to a set. When figuring out which hands to bluff on the river, you should strive to have a 9 in your hand because having a 9 makes it much less likely your opponent has the straight. While your overall river range should rarely raise because most of it will be either marginal made hands or junk, you should raise as a bluff from time to time, because there are also a few premium hands you want to raise for value. Since most of your hands that have a 9 also have a pair, it is fine to bluff with all your unpaired 9s, although that may not be the case if you use an overly aggressive preflop strategy that includes raising all combinations of 9-5, 9-3, and 9-2. It is difficult to know which raise size is best, but in general, most players will call a raise with the same range when faced with an all-in or almost an all-in, often making the smaller size ideal when bluffing (just don't let your opponents know your strategy!).

You raised to 5,000,000. Your opponent folded Kc-7c, which he was also bluffing with. It is impossible to know whether or not he would have folded a made hand, making it difficult to know if your bluff was great or hopelessly optimistic.

Tricky Preflop Spot

With blinds at 125,000/250,000 with a 30,000 ante, a good, loose aggressive player raises to 550,000 out of his 8,500,000 stack from the lojack (also first position in this situation). You pick up Ad-Js in the hijack seat.



Should you:

1.

Fold

Call

Reraise to 1,200,000

Reraise to 1,500,000

Score

1.

Fold (8 Points)

Call (6 Points)

Reraise to 1,200,000 (7 Points)

Reraise to 1,500,000 (10 Points)

While calling may seem like a good idea, because in general, you don't want to play a large pot with A-J against what is likely a strong early position raise, since all your opponents play well, it is too likely that someone yet to act will reraise, forcing you to fold. Also, the initial raiser could easily have you dominated, which is not where you want to be. So, folding is a perfectly viable option. Reraising is also a decent option. While it will often result in the initial raiser going all-in, it will put him in a tough spot with the weaker part of his range, such as 7-7, A-J, K-Q, and 9-8s. That said, if he is simply going to go all-in with his entire preflop raising range, either calling or folding is a much better strategy because you will usually not be getting the correct pot odds to justify calling an all-in.

You 3-bet to 1,500,000. Everyone folds around to the preflop raiser, who pushes all-in for 8,500,000 total.



Should you:

2.

Fold

Call

Score:

2.

Fold (10 Points)

Call (0 Points)

The first thing you should consider when deciding whether or not to call an all-in are your pot odds. This time, you have to put in roughly 7,000,000 to win a pot that will be 17,530,000 if you call, meaning you need to win 40% of the time to break even (7M/17.53M). While calling may be tempting because you beat all your opponent's bluffs and are flipping against the medium pairs, you must make an easy fold. Against a reasonable range including 9-9+, A-Js+, A-Qo+, and K-Qs, your A-Jo only has 31% equity. If the opponent is instead pushing 7-7+, A-Ts+, A-5s – A-2s, A-Jo+, K-Js+, and K-Qo, your A-Jo still only has 43% equity, making it roughly break-even. So, unless the opponent is an absolute lunatic, you should fold.

You decided to fold. Your opponent had T-T, one of the few hands you were flipping against. Even though you should have called if you knew your opponent's exact hand, folding will work out well for you in the long run because you were in bad shape against your opponent's range.

Standard Big Blind Situation

Four-handed with blinds at 150,000/300,000 with a 45,000 ante, a good, tight aggressive player raises to 650,000 out of his 20,600,000 stack from the button. The small blind folds. You have Jd-2d in the big blind.



Should you:

1.

Fold

Call

Reraise to 1,500,000

Reraise to 2,100,000

Score

1.

Fold (2 Points)

Call (9 Points)

Reraise to 1,500,000 (3 Points)

Reraise to 2,100,000 (10 Points)

Both calling and folding J-2s are perfectly fine options when facing a small raise from late position, but when playing against strong opponents who are not raising with only premium hands, it is important to develop a bluffing range. In general, you should call with a decently wide range from the big blind when facing a small raise, so if your opponent is inclined to 4-bet or fold when facing a reraise, your bluffs should be hands that are on the cusp of playability. This often includes offsuit K-x, Q-x, and suited J-x hands. While you should not reraise too often with these holdings, doing so will make you much more difficult to play against.

Score:

2.

Check (1 Point)

Bet 900,000 (8 Points)

Bet 1,800,000 (10 Points)

Bet 3,200,000 (7 Points)

While J-high is far from a strong hand, betting on a board that should be good for your range is the only play that makes sense. Really, there should be very few hands you plan to check-fold on high card boards as the preflop reraiser. When choosing your bet size, you have to determine if you are going to bet once with the intention of giving up if called, or multiple times. If you plan to bet once, you should bet large, but if you plan to barrel on various turns, you should bet smaller. Also, you will tend to find that most strong players are unwilling to release even marginal pairs to one bet, which should lead you to prepare to fire multiple bullets.

You bet 1,800,000. Your opponent calls.

The turn is the (Ad-Qh-6s)-Kc. The pot is 8,100,000. Your opponent has 16,700,000 remaining in his stack.



Should you:

3.

Check

Bet 3,000,000

Bet 5,500,000

Bet 7,200,000

Score

3.

Check (3 Points)

Bet 3,000,000 (10 Points)

Bet 5,500,000 (4 Points)

Bet 7,200,000 (6 Points)

While you would have preferred to see a diamond on the turn, a King is not the worse card, as it gives you a gutshot straight draw. While betting on this turn feels a bit optimistic because your opponent will never fold an Ace and most of his Queens should have at least a gutshot straight draw to go along with it, if you consider your entire range, you will see that you have a significant range advantage. Assuming you want to remain balanced, you should continue betting this hand, mainly because you certainly want to keep betting your sets and two-pairs. When choosing your bet size, you should choose an amount that either sets up a reasonably sized river all-in or ensures your opponent will fold all his non-premium hands.

You bet 3,000,000. This time the opponent folded Qd-9d, which is one of the hands your turn bet targeted. If your opponent called your turn bet, you should almost certainly continue betting the river, again due to wanting to remain balanced when betting your sets and two-pairs.

Flopping Two-Pair

Three-handed with blinds at 250,000/500,000 with a 75,000 ante, a good, tight aggressive player raises to 1,100,000 out of his 20,500,000 stack. You are in the small blind with 9c-8c with an 18,600,000 stack.



Should you:

1.

Fold

Call

Reraise to 2,600,000

Reraise to 3,200,000

Score:

1.

Fold (1 Point)

Call (10 Points)

Reraise to 2,600,000 (5 Points)

Reraise to 3,200,000 (8 Points)

Both calling and reraising are fine options. Given you do not want to reraise and have to fold to an all-in, calling with your decently strong suited connector makes logical sense. If for some reason you thought the raiser would fold too often to a reraise, that would become the best play.

You call and the big blind calls as well.

The flop comes 9d-8d-6h. The pot is 3,500,000.



Should you:

2.

Check

Bet 1,100,000

Bet 2,500,000

Bet 5,000,000

Score:

2.

Check (8 Points)

Bet 1,100,000 (2 Points)

Bet 2,500,000 (10 Points)

Bet 5,000,000 (4 Points)

While you should rarely have a leading range, the key time to consider leading is when the flop is incredibly good for your range and quite bad for your opponents' ranges. While both opponents could have easily connected with this board, it is a bit of a disaster if the flop checks through because there are lots of turn cards that could either improve an opponent to the best hand or make it difficult for you to get paid off. Leading in this situation with some of your best value hands and draws has some merit, especially if you think the preflop raiser will often take the passive route when checked to.

You bet 2,500,000 and only the button calls.

The turn is the (9d-8d-6h)-8h. The pot is 8,500,000 with 15,000,000 remaining in your stack.



Should you:

3.

Check

Bet 3,500,000

Bet 7,000,000

Go all-in

Score:

3.

Check (2 Points)

Bet 3,500,000 (10 Points)

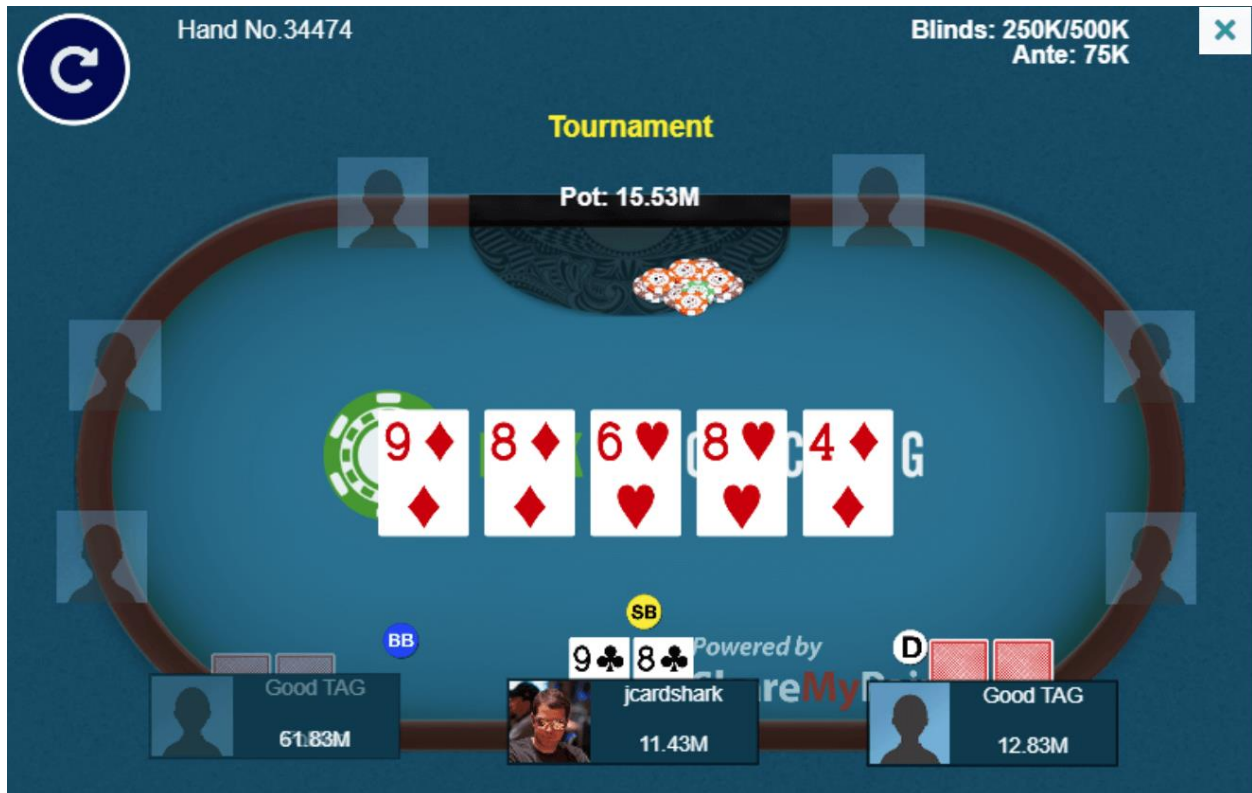
Bet 7,000,000 (5 Points)

Go all-in (2 Points)

When you turn the full house, you should certainly keep betting. It is quite likely the opponent has an overpair, top pair, or a draw that will be unable to fold. Checking, looking to either check-call or check-raise is not a good strategy because many players will check behind with their marginal hands on this turn and if they do bet, it will often be with the intention of folding to a check-raise. Betting small ensures you continue to build the pot against almost all of your opponent's range whereas making a large bet will force your opponent to fold his draws and marginal made hands.

You bet 3,500,000 and your opponent calls.

The river is the (9d-8d-6h-8h)-4d. The pot is 15,500,000 and you have 11,400,000 remaining in your stack.



Should you:

4.

Check

Bet 3,500,000

Bet 8,000,000

Go all-in

Score:

4.

Check (2 Points)

Bet 3,500,000 (3 Points)

Bet 8,000,000 (4 Points)

Go all-in (10 Points)

On the river, the only play that makes sense is to go all-in for about 2/3 of the size of the pot. As on the turn, if you check, your opponent will check behind with many of his marginal made hands, opting to only bet with full houses and flushes, which will call your 2/3 pot bet. The only hands you may miss value from are busted straight draws, but even then, those hands should strongly consider giving up on the river because when you check, you could easily have a decently strong hand. While most competent opponents will fold some of their top pairs and overpairs, betting is still the right play as it allows you to bluff with some of your busted draws.

You decided to go all-in. This time your opponent made a good fold with Qh-9h.

You continued playing your best but eventually lost heads-up when your 3-3 could not hold against A-5 for all the money. It is not all bad though, because you cashed for \$175,000.

Chapter 2 by Matt Affleck

About Matt Affleck

Matt Affleck has been supporting himself through poker since 2006, cashing for over \$2,600,000 in live poker tournaments. While attending the University of Washington, he developed his poker skills through single-table and multi-table tournaments online. After Black Friday, Matt decided to stay in the USA and has traveled the live circuit playing both tournaments and cash games throughout the country. His personal site MattAffleck.com is an excellent educational resource for poker players of all skill levels.

You can follow Matt on [Twitter @mcmattopoker](https://twitter.com/mcmattopoker).



Set Up

The following hands were played in a \$5/\$5/\$10 No-Limit Hold'em cash game session at Bellagio. This game was live streamed on Twitch with hole cards shown on a 30-minute delay. The minimum buy-in was \$1,000 and the maximum was \$2,000. You started the session with \$2,000. It is important to note that there are three blinds in this game of \$5, \$5, and \$10, which occasionally changes the general strategy a bit compared to a "normal" two-blind game.

The game consists of a few regulars who play all the time as well as a few recreational players who are playing due to the game being streamed.

Score:

1.

Check (4 Points)

Bet \$30 (2 Points)

Bet \$50 (10 Points)

Bet \$70 (5 Points)

Bet \$100 (1 Point)

This is a very uncoordinated flop that you should continuation bet at a high frequency. Due to the low nature of the flop (4s and 9s compared to Jacks and Aces), it is more likely that both players missed. You will want to continuation bet as a bluff with most of your unpaired hands, therefore you should bet with your strong hands as well. If you were in position, I would prefer a small bet of around 33% pot because this flop is so uncoordinated and should not significantly improve either player's range. Since you are out of position, I prefer sizing up a bit to 50% pot. This charges his hands like A-J more to call and realize their equity. Due to the lack of coordination on this board, I dislike the larger bet sizes of 70 and 100. It will be hard for the opponent to have a hand that can call a bet that large.

You bet \$50 and the opponent calls.

The turn is the (9h-4h-4d)-2s. The pot is \$200.



Should you:

2.

Check

Bet \$50

Bet \$100

Bet \$150

Bet \$200

Score:

2.

Check (6 Points)

Bet \$50 (1 Point)

Bet \$100 (10 Points)

Bet \$150 (5 Points)

Bet \$200 (2 Points)

Thinking about your opponent's range, it is safe to assume his range is roughly a 4, 9, Ace-high with two over cards, flush draws, and smaller pocket pairs. In this situation, you are either way ahead or way behind. You do not have a ton of hands to bluff with due to the lack of draws. Your best bluffs are flush draws and hands with two over cards to the 9. Since you are way ahead or way behind, you should use a smaller bet sizing with a hand that should frequently be ahead of your opponent's hand. For this reason, I prefer a 50% pot bet of \$100. If you bet larger (\$150 or \$200), there is a chance your opponent mostly calls with hands that beat you. Checking is also an option since you may only get one more street of value from your hand. Against curious opponents though, I always prefer betting to checking.

Score:

3.

Check (5 Points)

Bet \$150 (1 Point)

Bet \$250 (10 Points)

Bet \$400 (8 Points)

Bet \$500 (3 Points)

The board ran out quite cleanly for you. None of the obvious draws completed and if you had the best hand on the flop, you are still likely to have the best hand. Given the obvious flush draw missed, you should continue betting with your best made hands, including Q-Q. This allows you to bluff with a few of your missed draws in order to possibly fold out hands like weak 9s, 8-8, and 7-7. If the river was the 6h instead of the 6d, you should instead check Q-Q.

Choosing the right bet size on the 6d river is tricky. You could choose a large bet size of near full pot that allows you to bet with polarized range of effective nuts or nothing. You could alternatively choose a smaller size of 50% pot that allows you to bet a wider range of decently strong, but non-nut hands like T-T and A-9, looking to target the weaker parts of your opponent's range. Since your opponent could still be slow playing a hand like 9-9 or A-4, and you do not have many 4s in your range, I think the smaller size is better. It encourages calls from many marginal hands you beat, like T-9, while allowing you to bluff with the few bluffs in your range for a cheap price.

You bet the slightly suboptimal amount of \$400. Your opponent raises to \$1,400.



Should you:

4.

Fold

Call

Go all-in

Score:

4.

Fold (10 Points)

Call (2 Points)

Go all-in (0 Points)

When faced with this river raise, you have an incredibly easy fold. You bet your Q-Q for thin value since the flush draw missed. Your opponent is indicating that he has a premium hand such as 9-9, 6-6, 2-2 or A-4. You have no reason to believe he is not acting in an honest manner. If he is bluffing, his most likely holdings are flush draws or a 9. Since you have the Qh in your hand, you can eliminate a few busted flush draws such as Qh-Jh and Qh-Th from this opponent's range, reducing the possible bluffs he can have.

You make the wise fold and later find out by watching the replay of the stream that you were against 9-9, for the flopped full house.

Score:

1.

Fold (0 Points)

Call (10 Points)

Reraise to \$90 (5 Points)

Reraise to \$120 (3 Points)

Reraise to \$150 (1 Point)

In general, you just want to call preflop raises with your small pocket pairs. These hands tend either hit hard with effective nut hands or completely miss, some say they are hot or cold. In these scenarios, you want to keep pots small preflop since there are many flops where you won't want to continue. For that reason, calling is the standard play in this situation. If your opponent in the hijack is raising with too many hands, you could make a sophisticated play of 3-betting the small pocket pair, allowing you to take the betting initiative. Instead of your opponent betting the flop and winning most of the time when you fail to connect with you board, you have the ability to easily pick up the pot when your opponent fails to connect.

Scores:

2.

Check (0 Points)

Bet \$50 (2 Points)

Bet \$100 (10 Points)

Bet \$135 (8 Points)

Bet \$200 (6 Points)

You definitely want to bet this flop. While you should occasionally slow play with your sets, this is not the right time. The pot is multiway, and the board is fairly coordinated, containing two high cards. It is extremely likely someone else connected with this board and will pay off your bet. Since the board is coordinated, you should often bet a bit larger than you normally would. I prefer betting 75% pot, or \$100. Using a larger size would make it difficult for you to get paid off by worse made hands when your holding is a bit weaker, such as when you have K-Q or K-J, because a large bet size would force most worse made hands to fold. Remember to always take your entire range into consideration, not just your exact hand.

You bet \$100 and only the button calls.

The turn is the (Ks-Tc-6s)-Qs. The pot is \$335.



Should you:

3.

Check

Bet \$150

Bet \$250

Bet \$300

Bet \$400

Score:

3:

Check (7 Points)

Bet \$150 (4 Points)

Bet \$250 (10 Points)

Bet \$300 (5 Points)

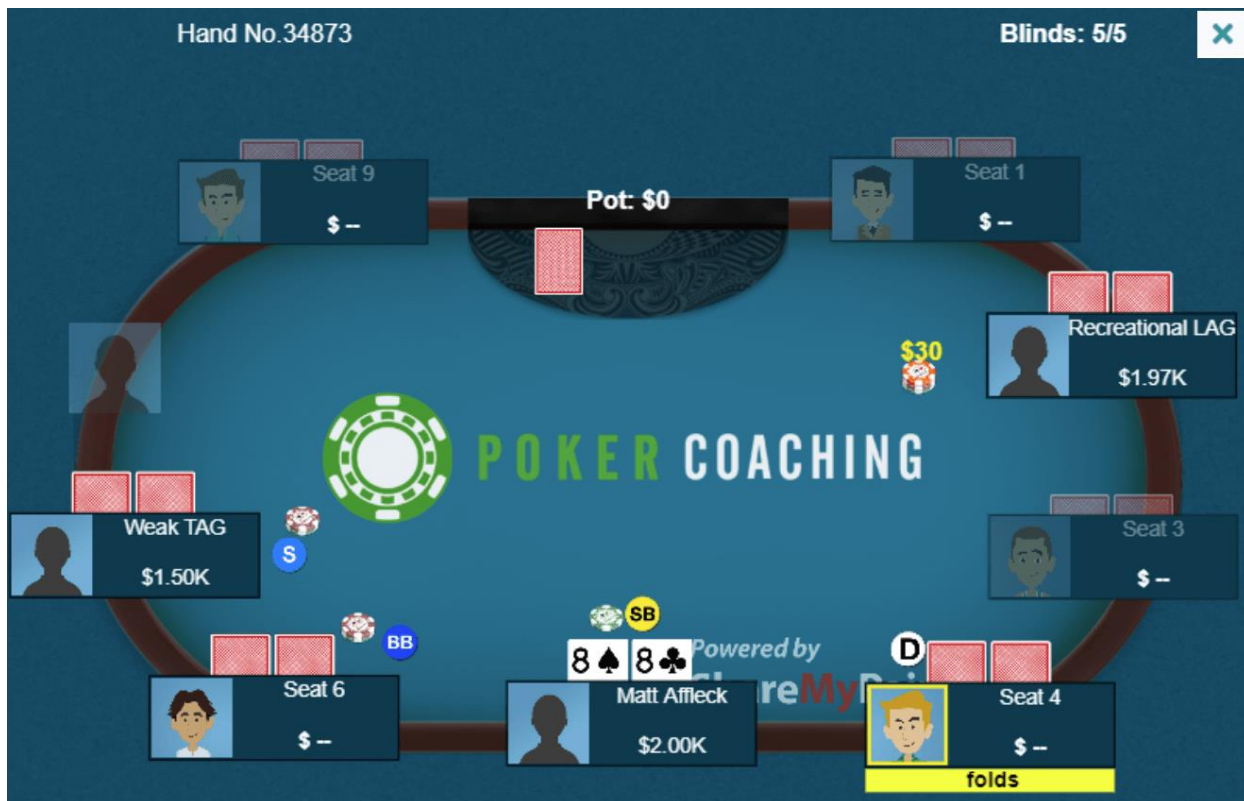
Bet \$400 (1 Point)

The majority of poker players are scared to bet this obviously scary turn card with bottom set. However, there are a lot of hands that can call a reasonable bet that you can extract value from, such as K-Q, K-J, Q-J, and any hand containing the As or Js. The only hands that can confidently raise your bet are flushes (sometimes the opponent will just call with weaker flushes) and perhaps A-J (again, this hand may just call). I believe most opponents play too passive in this spot, so I choose to bet with my sets most of the time. I like a nice 67% pot bet of \$250 to charge the draws a hefty price to see the river. If you get raised, you should usually not fold, mainly because you have 10 clean outs to the full house and will often be getting the correct pot odds. On top of that, your opponent may be semi-bluffing, making you a significant favorite.

You bet \$250 and your opponent folds.

Flopping an Overpair

Everyone folds to a loose, aggressive recreational player who raises to \$30 from the hijack seat. Everyone folds to you in small blind with 8s-8c.



Should you:

1.

Fold

Call

Reraise to \$90

Reraise to \$120

Reraise to \$150

Score:

1.

Fold (0 Points)

Call (10 Points)

Reraise to \$90 (2 Points)

Reraise to \$120 (6 Points)

Reraise to \$150 (4 Points)

Again, you have one of those hot and cold hands with 8-8. Although, as your pair gets larger, 3-betting for value becomes a more comfortable option. Had the raise come from the button, a 3-bet may be in order, but against the hijack, you should tend to call, mainly because the hijack should only be raising with reasonably strong hands. If you decided to 3-bet, you should make it about four times your opponent's raise. You want to charge the in-position player a premium to see the flop, so I prefer 3-betting to \$120 better than to \$90. With no antes though, \$150 is just too large to consider.

You decide to call. The big blind folds and the straddle 3-bets to \$120. The hijack calls.



Should you:

2.

Fold

Call

Reraise to \$360

Reraise to \$480

Go all-in

Score:

2.

Fold (0 Points)

Call (10 Points)

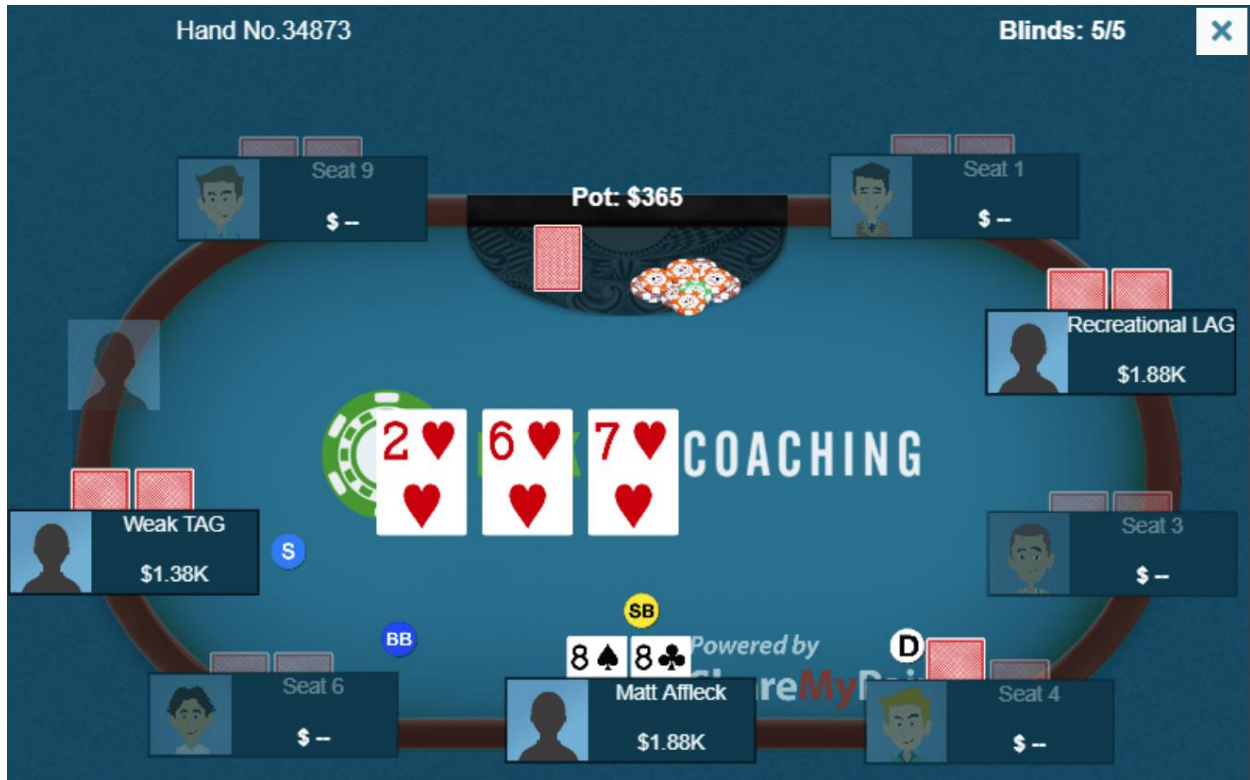
Reraise to \$360 (2 Points)

Reraise to \$480 (3 Points)

Go all-in (1 Point)

Calling is your only option. This is the perfect set up for you to call since you have a hand that will either flop huge, allowing you to play a gigantic pot, or miss completely, allowing you to easily release and get out of the way. You do not want to 4-bet, re-opening the action because it bloats the pot with a marginal hand, thus resulting in you possibly getting blown off your chance to flop a set.

You call. The flop comes 7h-6h-2h. The pot is \$365.



Should you:

3.

Check

Bet \$150

Bet \$250

Bet \$350

Score:

3.

Check (10 Points)

Bet \$150 (4 Points)

Bet \$250 (0 Points)

Bet \$350 (0 Points)

Multiway, you should almost always check to the players who have position on you. The straddle's preflop 3-bet clearly represents strength and you have no additional information to prove otherwise. When you check and the straddle bets, you get to see how the hijack responds before making your decision. This is an extremely important concept in multiway pots referred to as "relative position".

Score:

4.

Fold (10 Points)

Call (3 Points)

Raise to \$480 (0 Points)

Raise to \$600 (0 Points)

While this flop may appear great for 8-8 because there are no overcards, the straddle is representing a bigger pair than yours. Once the hijack decides to call, you are likely against two strong ranges. Without a heart in your hand, there are essentially no good turn cards for you. Almost every card will either bring an over card to your pair or put a 4-flush on the board. On top of which, when you take your bad position into account, you have an easy fold. If the hijack instead folded, you should usually call in the hope that the straddle has A-K or some other unpaired hand you are ahead of, but against two players, it is nearly impossible that you have the best hand and will be able to make it to the showdown.

You fold. You later find out by watching the stream that the straddle had Ks-Kc and the hijack had Ah-Js.

Bomb Pot

The next hand is unique in that it starts with what is referred to as a “bomb” pot. A bomb pot is where every player puts in \$50 before the flop and the hand goes straight to the flop. There is no preflop betting, simply a \$450 pot going to the flop with all players having a completely random hand. Bomb pots are a fun way to spice up the game because you get to compete for 45 big blinds in a nine-way pot, which essentially never happens. After the flop, the hand plays out as any other hand, with the small blind acting first.

You are in the cutoff with Qh-Jh.

The flop comes Ts-9d-4h. The pot is \$450.

The action checks around to the hijack, who bets \$200. You each have \$2,450 remaining in your stacks.



Should you:

1. Fold
- Call
- Raise to \$500
- Raise to \$700
- Raise to \$900
- Raise to \$1,100
- Go all-in

Score:

1.

Fold (0 Points)

Call (7 Points)

Raise to \$500 (3 Points)

Raise to \$700 (10 Points)

Raise to \$900 (5 Points)

Raise to \$1,100 (3 Points)

Go all-in (0 Points)

This is a very interesting spot. Since there was no action preflop, every player sees the flop with 100% of preflop starting hands. That means the bettor can easily have hands like T-9o, T-4o, and 9-4o that would never be played under normal circumstances. It also means he may be betting marginal made hands such as top pair or decent medium pairs for protection, all of which would benefit from making the remaining eight players fold whatever equity they have.

In addition to having the open-ended straight draw, you also have two strong overcards and a backdoor flush draw, increasing your equity over a naked open-ended straight draw. Even against top two-pair, you still have lots of equity.

Taking all these factors into account, plus the fact that you would like to raise with your premium made hands such as sets, two-pairs, and overpairs, I think raising makes the most sense. A \$700 raise risks about the size of the pot and gives you a great chance to steal it. Even if your opponent calls, you can push all-in on the turn when it brings any heart, King, or 8. If the turn is a Queen or Jack, I would usually check behind. If the flop bettor goes all-in, you will be pot committed and have to make the crying call. There is a good chance he may shove a hand like A-T that you are flipping against.

When choosing your raise size, you could make it \$500, but then, you should strongly consider folding if you get jammed on. If you raise to \$900 or more, it screams to your opponent that you are never folding, which is fine with your exact hand, but you certainly want your opponent to push all-in when you have a premium made hand. Remember to always take your entire raising range into account, not just your exact hand.

You raise to \$700 and everyone folds to the hijack who thinks for about three minutes. He eventually smiles and folds As-Ac face-up.

Score:

1.

Fold (5 Points)

Call (0 Points)

Raise to \$20 (5 Points)

Raise to \$30 (7 Points)

Raise to \$40 (10 Points)

Raise to \$50 (3 Points)

When first to act, you should raise all hands you choose to play to conceal the strength of your range. Limping is not a viable option unless your opponents are completely oblivious to your actions, which is essentially never the case in a \$5/\$5/\$10 game. While folding is certainly a viable option due to you being in first position, I think big suited hands play well enough when deep-stacked to warrant a raise. I prefer to up my raise size from early position to 4 big blinds. I use a smaller raise size of 3 big blinds from late position.

You raise to \$40 and the button calls. The big blind 3-bets to \$180.



Should you:

2.

Fold

Call

Reraise to \$420

Reraise to \$550

Reraise to \$600

Score:

2.

Fold (6 Points)

Call (10 Points)

Reraise to \$420 (0 Points)

Reraise to \$550 (3 Points)

Reraise to \$600 (3 Points)

Playing 300 big blinds deep, Qc-Tc plays well enough to justify seeing a flop from in position against the 3-bettor. If you were shallower, perhaps 200 big blinds deep or shorter, you should fold. 4-betting this hand is not ideal. When choosing to 4-bet bluff, I prefer to have an Ace or King blocker in my hand. If the 3-bettor is an especially skilled player, you should lean toward folding. Against weaker opponents, you should usually call because you will have larger implied odds.

Score:

3.

Fold (0 Points)

Call (10 Points)

Raise to \$500 (0 Points)

Raise to \$600 (0 Points)

Raise to \$700 (0 Points)

Calling is the only play that makes sense. Your top pair is much too strong to fold. You also have some backdoor straight draws to improve your equity. Especially from in position, you should call to see what develops on the turn. I would never raise with this particular hand. It is a bit too weak to raise for value and you are certainly not going to make any better hands fold. Being in position, there are a lot of ways you can see a somewhat cheap showdown. There may be merit in raising K-K or A-Q, but Q-T is too weak.

You call.

The turn card is the (Qs-8d-7s)-Th. The pot is \$855. Your opponent checks.



Should you:

4.

Check

Bet \$360

Bet \$450

Bet \$625

Bet \$800

Score:

4.

Check (0 Points)

Bet \$360 (7 Points)

Bet \$450 (10 Points)

Bet \$625 (5 Points)

Bet \$800 (3 Points)

When you improve to top two-pair on this coordinated turn, you have an easy value bet. There are very few hands that beat you, meaning you have the effective nuts. You also have lots of options for your bet size. When determining which size to use, I begin by thinking about which hands I want to bet for value. I would usually bet with all sets, two-pairs, A-A, K-K (if you didn't 4-bet them preflop) and A-Q. Next, you want to consider your hands that could semi-bluff, including your flush draws, such as As-Ts, Ks-Qs, and various hands containing a 9, such as T-9s and 9-8s. Since you have lots of value hands that would like to bet, you should also bet with a lot of semi-bluffs. However, you don't have a ton, so use a medium to small bet sizing, like \$450 or \$360. This gives your entire range a good price to bet. It also builds a pot, allowing you to make a large polarizing river bet on a variety of cards.

You choose the slightly smaller than optimal bet size of \$360 and your opponent calls.

The river is the (Qs-8d-7s-Th)-8s. The pot is \$1,575. Your opponent checks.



Should you:

5.

Check

Bet \$500

Bet \$750

Bet \$1,000

Bet \$1,250

Score:

5.

Check (10 Points)

Bet \$500 (0 Points)

Bet \$750 (3 Points)

Bet \$1,000 (1 Point)

Bet \$1,250 (4 Points)

This is possibly the worst card in the deck for your top two-pair because you now lose to all flushes, A-A, and K-K. Perhaps more importantly, it is nearly impossible for you to bet for value because there should now be very few bluffs in your range, meaning your opponent should rarely make a hero-call.

Checking and taking your free showdown is easily the best option. You still beat a few hands like A-Q, J-J, and A-K. It is very difficult for you to be called by a worse hand if you make a “normal” bet, so if you are going to bet, you should choose a small sizing of \$750. The option I actually like better is to turn your full house blockers into a bluff by betting \$1,250. You would certainly keep betting with your full houses and flushes, so you should at least consider turning your hand into a bluff to make your opponent fold his A-A and K-K. However, you should only attempt this bluff against players who are capable of making a big fold.

You decided to check and your opponent wins the pot with K-K.

You end up a small loser on the session.

Chapter 3 by Alexander Fitzgerald

About Alexander Fitzgerald

Alexander Fitzgerald is the world's most active multi-table tournament coach, with over 1,000 clients. He has lived on four different continents and has cashed for over \$3,000,000 in online tournaments. His blog can be found at PokerHeadRush.com and he can be contacted for tournament coaching at assassinatocoaching@gmail.com.

You can follow Alexander on [Twitter @TheAssassinato](https://twitter.com/TheAssassinato).



Set Up

The following five hands took place during the last year in live poker tournaments. In 2016, I made a conscious decision to play more live poker. This was difficult for me because I teach so many students on a regular basis. However, in the seven events I played, I was able to make a WPT final table, another small final table, and finished deep in the money in the WSOP Main Event and another WPT main event.

What really helped me be more consistent was an emphasis on improving my technical skills. I've accepted that my live reading skills are subpar, so what follows is an exploration into how you can put your live opponents on ranges more effectively.

For simplicity's sake, all blind levels have been adjusted to 500/1,000 with a 100 ante. These standardized blinds will allow you to more easily digest the material.

Taking Advantage of Aggressive Players

This first hand took place in Prague. The action was fast and furious, with many young European pros making me fold with their consistent aggression.

Most people don't realize it, but selectively choosing the hands with which you enter pots will help you overcome these overtly aggressive fields. Let's pick a spot on the precipice to start.

With Jd-Td on the button and 70 big blinds, everyone folds to the lojack. The overly aggressive lojack, in his early 20's, raises to 2,500, for 2.5 big blinds. The hijack folds. The cutoff, another 20-something 3-bets using a small sizing to 6,000.



Should you:

1.

Fold

Call

Reraise to 14,500

Reraise to 18,000

Score:

1.

Fold (5 Points)

Call (0 Points)

Reraise to 14,500 (10 Points)

Reraise to 18,000 (8 Points)

I really like to use, what I call a “4-bet semi-bluff” here.

If you have been quiet throughout the day, your opponents will logically assume that you are a tight player. They are playing their little war games, and assume any other bluffing-style player would have joined them by now.

If you look at your hand, look at your chips quickly, and then make a small 4-bet, you will look exactly like a rock with Aces.

The initial raiser will fold because he doesn’t have much invested and he likely doesn’t have much of a hand.

The 3-bettor will usually flat call you, try to crack your “Aces”, and then fold when he doesn’t.

While this may not seem like much, you will pick up almost 10 big blinds if everyone folds. That’s close to your exact expectation with a pair of Aces! It’s like dealing yourself the best hand in Hold’em, if you can pick good times to run this semi-bluff.

Simply folding is never out of the question, however. In fact, that’s what I do 95% of the time when facing a raise and a reraise.

I never cold call the 3-bet because it costs too many chips to fold when one of these aggressive players bets the flop and I (likely) miss.

A larger 4-bet is fine, but you have a decent hand if you get called, so I’d save the larger cold 4-bet for a real junky hand, like A-2o.

You 3-bet to 14,500. The initial raiser folds. The 3-bettor calls.

The flop comes 9c-4h-4c. The pot is 33,800. The cutoff checks to you on the button. You have 45 effective big blinds remaining in your stack.



Should you:

2.

Check

Bet 11,500

Bet 15,500

Bet 20,000

Score:

2.

Check (0 Points)

Bet 11,500 (10 Points)

Bet 15,500 (7 Points)

Bet 20,000 (5 Points)

You should continuation bet 11,500 because that looks exactly like a big pair that is trying to milk value out of your opponent. It's very unlikely he will continue with any hand that has not solidly hit the board. For this reason, a bigger bet probably won't increase your fold equity much more than a small bet. The hands that hit are going to defend, and the hands that missed are going to fold.

If you are worried about a check-raise bluff from your opponent, rest assured most people will not do that. Actually, in an intensive session I did with a group of poker players, I found only one player out of 30 who was capable of this bluff. And, even if they were, they did not attempt it every time. Most of the time even the overly aggressive players just gave up!

You bet 11,500 and your opponent folded, giving you the pot.

Cornering an Online Reg

This hand took place in Prague during the fifth level of play. A self-proclaimed online tournament regular is at the table. He speaks with a North American accent and seems very tired and jet lagged. He wore a shirt emblazoned with a popular poker site, and he mentioned he qualified for this event in a \$33.00 satellite tournament. He had been raising frequently. The one hand he tabled from early position was 10-7s.

He raises to 2,500 from the lojack. It folds around to you on the button with 7d-5d.



Should you:

1.

Fold

Call

Raise to 6,000

Raise to 7,500

Score:

1.

Fold (5 Points)

Call (0 Points)

Raise to 6,000 (8 Points)

Raise To 7,500 (10 Points)

Folding is the usual play and for a reason. You have a terrible hand. Although some strong players can make this work as a call, it isn't the best idea if you do not have a ton of experience at No-Limit Hold 'em tournaments.

Any 3-bet is preferable to a flat call, but using a larger 3-bet makes your hand look more like a big hand trying to get maximum value. 3-betting large makes it very difficult for your opponent to 4-bet and then fold to an all-in. If he calls and then folds on the flop, you have made considerable money.

If he is going to call that much money out of position, then he better have a great plan for the flop. Most players seem to be more conservative when they call 3-bets from out of position, opting to check-fold most of the time when they fail to improve.

Score

2.

Check (0 Points)

Bet 6,500 (5 Points)

Bet 8,000 (10 Points)

Bet 10,000 (8 Points)

You should bet a solid amount of about 8,000 on this board. If you bet small, you somewhat cap your range, as many overpairs and sets would bet larger on such a coordinated board. There is no need to bet 10,000 though; all hands that will fold to 10,000 will also fold to 8,000.

You bet 8,000. Your opponent calls.

The turn is the (8d-3c-2c)-Qh. He checks to you.



3.

Should you.

Check

Bet 10,000

Bet 15,000

Bet 20,000

Score:

3.

Check (0 Points)

Bet 10,000 (5 Points)

Bet 16,000 (10 Points)

Bet 20,000 (7 Points)

When the turn brings an overcard, you should usually bet again. Your opponent likely would have check-raised his sets and overpairs on the flop due to its coordinated and dangerous nature. His hand range is capped at one-pair-style hands, draws that missed, and some Ace-highs.

Despite his range being weak, he is unlikely to fold to a 10,000 bet. It's not threatening, and you'd likely bet more with an overpair or set.

20,000 is a threatening bet, but the extra expenditure doesn't justify the few more hands you'll perhaps get to fold.

A 16,000 bet is in the sweet spot that will make numerous better hands fold while not risking excess chips.

You bet 16,000 and your opponent calls.

The river comes the (8d-3c-2c-Qh)-5c. There is 65,300 in the pot. You have 36,000 effectively behind. Once again, he checks to you.



4.

Should you:

Check

Bet 20,000

Go all-In

Score:

4.

Check (0 Points)

Bet 20,000 (0 Points)

Go all-in (10 Points)

Going all-in is your only viable option.

This player has identified himself as a “poker player”. It is important to him to be seen as such. Secondly, he has traveled a long way to play in this tournament.

He has defined his range as mostly one-pair hands. He would have likely check-raised with a set, combo draw, or nut flush draw at some point, and he would have 4-bet premium overpairs before the flop.

His range is capped at one-pair, and a flush draw just came in. Even if you gave him every plausible flush draw, he only has flushes 20% of the time. That’s another way of saying he missed that river 80% of the time. And it’s far more likely that number is 85% or 90% given the possibility of him check-raising premium flush draws at some other juncture.

Finally, in live tournaments, people have to turn their hand face-up when they call an all-in. He is only five levels into a tournament he has traveled halfway around the world to play. The worst thing that could happen to him would be to hero-call on the river, show down one-pair, and be shown a flush. If he folds, he still has a very comfortable stack.

This is why I don’t like it when people split the difference with a smaller bet. If he calls the 20,000 chip bet and is wrong, he can just muck without showing anyone his cards. There’s no embarrassment, there’s no pressure.

Put him under the bright lights. If you get caught, you get caught. Such is life.

You decided to go all-in. He went into the tank for three minutes, but eventually folded.

Score:

1.

Fold (0 Points)

Call (10 Points)

Reraise to 7,500 (8 Points)

A 3-bet is a good idea during the “fighting” stages of the tournament when you have more of the “kill or be killed” regs raising with any two cards. This hand has a ton of value against their ranges, and it’s likely your opponent will flat a 3-bet with a weaker 10 or Ace, and then go broke on the flop if he makes top pair.

Against a solid reg, however, you can assume he’s more disciplined when facing 3-bets, and more skilled postflop than the average player. Blowing up the pot size from out of position against this type of player is not advisable.

Score:

2.

Check (10 Points)

Bet 3,000 (8 Points)

I actually do not find leading out on this flop to be a bad play. Many players say it is, but that is because a few years ago players would raise leads much more frequently. These days, people call far too wide.

A healthy leading strategy would include A-8, A-5, 8-8, 5-5, 7-6, and two hearts. Occasionally, to really muddy up the range, I'll lead out with top pair versus a loose opponent. If I do this, however, I have to make sure to triple barrel, because any turn or river check will be interpreted as, "Hey, I have a missed draw or one-pair. Please play accordingly." Unsurprisingly, people play pretty damn well when they know exactly what you have.

That said, in this case you check. He bets 3,000.



Should you:

3.

Call

Raise to 9,000

Score:

3.

Call (10 Points)

Raise to 9,000 (0 Points)

There is actually a great deal of merit to check-raising top pairs on this board.

The main reason is because most regulars assume you won't do it without a set or two-pair. If they're the suspicious type, they'll notice that range does not include many combinations, resulting in them calling you down with too many weaker pairs, trying to prove you wrong.

The only time I ever won a pot against Dominik Nitsche was with this play. He is 100 times the poker player I am, but when I check-raised A-K on a similar board, I knew he'd underestimate the value portion of my range, and sure enough he called down with a weak pair.

In this hand, however, your kicker is weak. So, you should call to control the pot size. It's also a good idea to let your opponent keep firing with all his bluffs.

You call.

The turn is the (Ah-8h-5s)-2s. There's 12,300 in the pot. You have oodles of chips behind with 86 big blinds each.



Should you:

4.

Check

Bet 6,000

Score:

4.

Check (10 Points)

Bet 6,000 (8 Points)

There is a great deal of merit in leading the turn here.

On the flop, your opponent was likely to bet with his entire range because you only completed from the big blind and then checked to him. On the turn, however, he is likely to check back many draws, thinking you often have an Ace or an 8 that isn't folding due to the innocuous turn card.

If you lead, however, you must bet the river. Otherwise, you perfectly define your hand for him, allowing him to make optimal bluffs and value bets.

In this hand, against a solid opponent, you should check. Your opponent is a little too solid to always pay off a turn bet with just a draw. He may not pay off a thin river value bet as often as the young gunslingers do, either.

You check. He bets 6,000.



5.

Should you:

Call

Raise to 18,000

Score:

5.

Call (10 Points)

Raise to 18,000 (0 Points)

You can check-raise turned flush draws on occasion in tough cash games, especially if your stack is a little shallower. In that case, you are playing with the same players consistently and don't want your check-raising range on the turn and river to only contain value hands.

In a tournament setting where you will play only a few hands with your specific opponent, there is no need to work in bluffs like that.

I call. You call. We all call.

The river is the (Ah-8h-5s-2s)-3d. The pot is 24,300.



Should you:

6.

Check

Bet 12,000

Score:

6.

Check (10 Points)

Bet 12,000 (0 Points)

If you lead out, it will look exactly like a flush draw that missed. Your opponent could put in a large raise to test you, and then you will be put in a horrible position.

That's not to say it's a horrible play. There are some very skilled players who can lead here to induce a raise from their opponent's missed draws. The only problem is, that's an extremely difficult play to time correctly. You could easily bet and then call a raise, only to give A-Q a ton of your stack.

I'm not good enough to execute that play; you're probably not either. Let's not try to be Tom Brady at the line.

Score:

7.

Fold (10 Points)

Call (0 Points)

I am a huge fan of folding in this spot.

If there is one thing I have been working at this last year, it's been not to give away a river bet.

At face value, this seems like a basic call. You have tons of chips, there are multiple missed draws possible, you have top pair. Why are you folding?

Well, pocket Aces on average makes you about 10-12 big blinds per deal. Have you ever heard a guy say, "Oh, I could win poker tournaments too if I got dealt Aces four times like that one kid!"

Well, every time you bet 10 big blinds on the river and get called by a worse hand, you just dealt yourself Aces. Every time you call a 10 big blind bet on the river and are wrong, you just got dealt Aces while you were in the restroom.

It's actually worse than that, but to keep things simple, it is a good visualization technique to realize how important river bets are to both win and save.

Think about it: What is he betting that you beat?

Missed draws. Think of all the missed draws. List them out. K-Q of hearts? How many combinations are there of that hand?

One. The answer is one.

Now how many A-K combinations are there? There are eight. Two suited combinations and six unsuited ones.

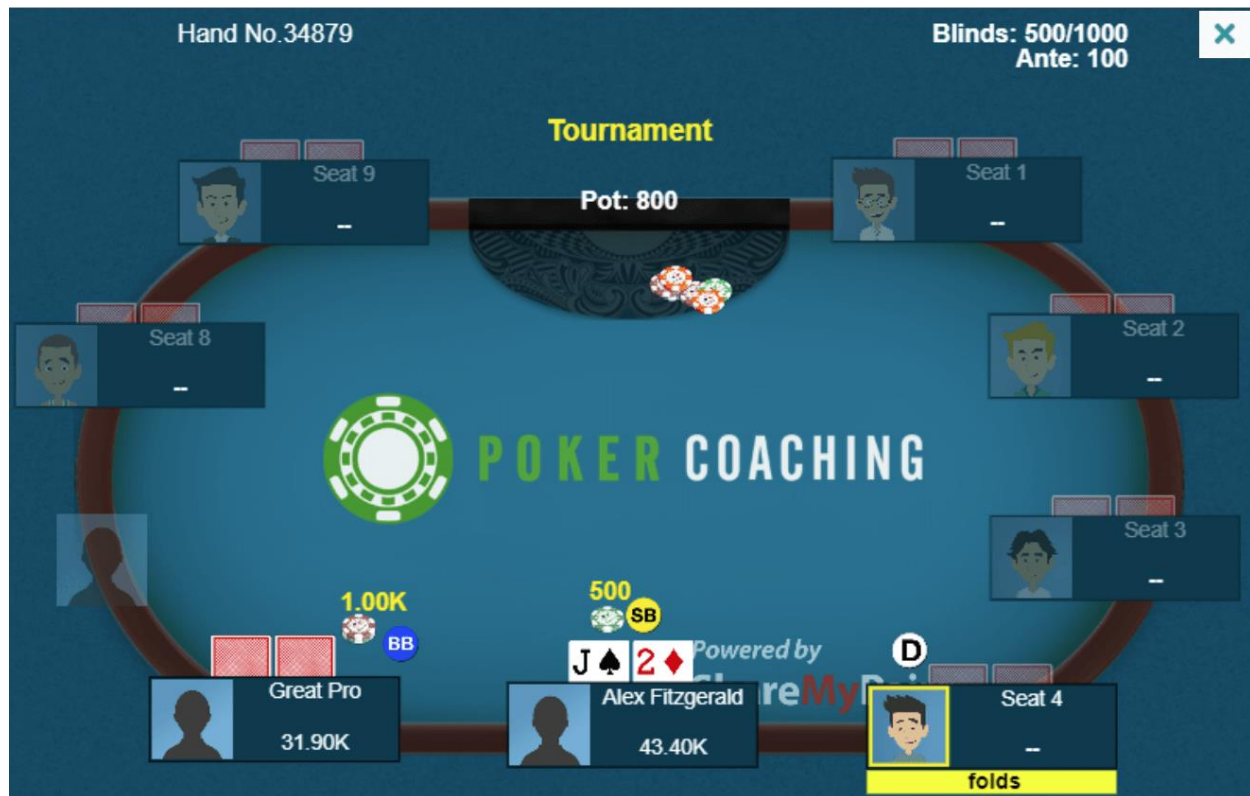
K-Qs, K-Js, K-10s, Q-Js, Q-10s, Q-9s, J-10s, 10-9s: All those missed flush draws account for exactly one type of top pair. You haven't even gotten into the A-Q and A-J combinations. Also, most of his weaker Aces that he would continue betting have made two-pair.

If you don't know what to do on the river, just fold. People are awful at bluffing, and they call too often. Most people subconsciously pick this up and adjust their river betting ranges to expect more calls. Don't pay them off!

Stuck In The Small Blind

You have the pleasure of having a young German pro, who is ridiculously good at poker, seated to your direct left. He seems to have an answer to everyone's standard plays. He is focused and disciplined.

It folds around to you in the small blind (with the pro in the big blind). You have J-2o.



Should you:

1.

Fold

Call

Raise to 3,000

Raise to 5,000

Score:

1.

Fold (8 Points)

Call (6 Points)

Raise to 3,000 (3 Points)

Raise to 5,000 (10 Points)

I raised to 5,000. The young German reg looked at me like I was an idiot. He grumbled, “You really don’t want to play with me do you?” and folded.

He was right. I didn’t want to play with him, and thanks to the mathematics of this play, I didn’t have to. I have asked many world-class professionals with which hands they would continue against a 5 big blind raise. Most tell me that if they knew nothing about their opponent, they would fold hands as strong as A-2o. I probably would too, because nine times out of ten the 5 big blind raise is a huge hand that’s afraid of being cracked, like Q-Q or J-J.

However, if they are folding A-2o, they are begging to be exploited. They are folding 80% of the time or more, and this raise (despite its large size) only needs to succeed 67% of the time to be immediately profitable. If your opponents have a hole in their game where they are going to fold too often, you might as well put them in that spot and make them fold too often.

The Unchanging Board

This hand took place in Las Vegas in a small stakes tournament at Planet Hollywood. The player in the big blind is a bored regular from around the area.

The action folds around to you with 9h-8h in the cutoff and you raised to 2,500. Only the big blind calls.

The flop comes Jh-3c-2c. He checks. You bet half pot with your backdoor draws, and he calls.

The turn is the (Jh-3c-2c)-5d, essentially changing nothing. He checks to you with 45 effective big blinds remaining in your stack. There are 12 big blinds in the pot.



Should you:

1.

Check

Bet 6,000

Bet 12,000

Score:

1.

Check (0 Points)

Bet 6,000 (10 Points)

Bet 12,000 (5 Points)

I used to never double barrel in this situation, but I've gradually added it to my repertoire.

The reason I have done this is because deep-stacked regulars will not fold Ace-high on hit-or-miss boards (like this one) anymore. They also never fold Ace-high from the big blind to a preflop raise.

That means on this flop, the vast majority of the opponent's calling range is dominated by Ace-highs that are unlikely to call a second barrel. So, barrel away, just as you would with your strong hands, and pick up the almost free pot.

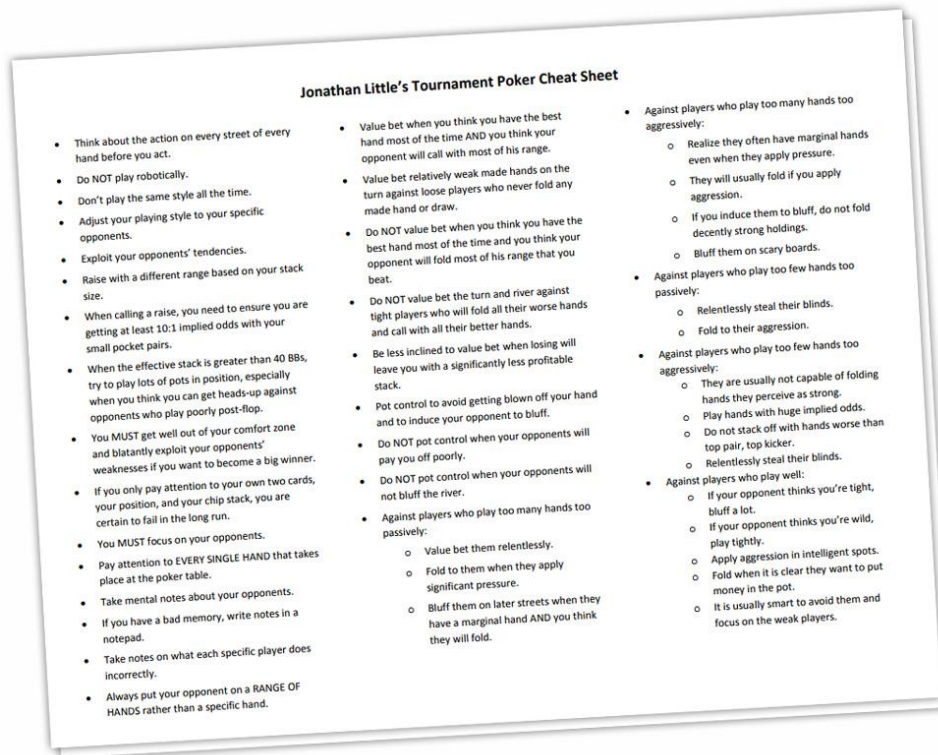
You bet 6,000 and your opponent quickly folded.

Conclusion

Thank you for taking the time to test yourself with these hand quizzes. If you want to continue to test your skills and improve your strategies, be sure to sign up for your free trial membership at <http://pokercoaching.com/workbook/free>.

Thanks for reading and good luck in your games!

Exclusive Bonus



I created a tournament poker cheat sheet to help you before, during and after tournaments.

In this 2-page PDF, I reveal:

- 43 tournament tips
- 6 things you should focus on BEFORE a tournament
- 11 things you should focus on DURING a tournament
- 6 things you should focus on AFTER a tournament

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