



# ADVANCED POT-LIMIT OMAHA

Volume III: The Short-Handed Workbook



*Jeff Hwang*



# Advanced Pot-Limit Omaha

Volume III

The Short-Handed Workbook



By  
**Jeff Hwang**

**Dimat Enterprises, Inc.**

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Jeff Hwang and Dimat Enterprises are donating \$1 to Merlin USA for every copy sold of this book. For more information on Merlin USA, see the back pages of the book.

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*Texas Hold'em Odds and Probabilities: Limit, No-Limit, and Tournament Strategies*, by Matthew Hilger, 2006

*The Poker Mindset: Essential Attitudes for Poker Success*, by Ian Taylor and Matthew Hilger, 2007

*Winning Poker Tournaments One Hand at a Time: Volume I*, by Eric "Rizen" Lynch, Jon "PearlJammer" Turner, and Jon "Apestyles" Van Fleet, June 2008

*Internet Texas Hold'em New Expanded Edition*, by Matthew Hilger, January 2009

*Advanced Pot-Limit Omaha: Small Ball and Short-Handed Play*, by Jeff Hwang, June 2009

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# Upcoming Titles

*Winning Poker Tournaments One Hand at a Time: Volume III*, by Eric “Rizen” Lynch, Jon “PearlJammer” Turner, and Jon “Apestyles” Van Fleet, Fall 2010

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*Deep Stacked*, by Neil Myers, 2011

*To Joy Joy, Jon B., and Randy W. a.k.a. The 2010 WSOP Bluff Crew; and to the good people in poker doing good things.*



# Table of Contents

[Introduction](#)

[Diagnostic Test](#)

[Part I: Leakfinder](#)

[Part II: The Pre-Flop Playing Map](#)

[Part III: \\$0.25-\\$0.50](#)

[Part IV: \\$0.50-\\$1](#)

[Part V: \\$1-\\$2](#)

[Part VI: \\$2-\\$4](#)

[On Good Cause](#)

[Acknowledgements](#)

[About the Author](#)

[Glossary](#)

# Introduction

Welcome to *Advanced Pot-Limit Omaha Vol. III: The Short-Handed Workbook*. Now as you might expect, this workbook assumes that you have already read my first book, *Pot-Limit Omaha Poker: The Big Play Strategy*, as well as both *Advanced Pot-Limit Omaha Vol. I: Small Ball and Short-Handed Play* and *Advanced Pot-Limit Omaha Vol. II: LAG Play*, and that you are familiar with the concepts, skills, and strategies presented in those books. That said, it is not actually *necessary* that you've read all – or *any* – of those books. In fact, it's not even really necessary for you to have even *played* pot-limit Omaha (PLO) before.

But if you haven't done any of those things, my guess is that you're probably not going to make it past the 50-question diagnostic test at the start of this book.

**Using This Book** This book is designed to help you plug any leaks you might have in your game, while providing enough practice at a fairly wide range of stakes in order to make sure that you fully understand how to apply the skills and concepts we've discussed thus far.

We begin with a 50-question diagnostic test covering the finer points of the game. Every question relates to at least one specific skill or concept, whether it be the stack-to-pot ratio (SPR), big-pot vs. small-pot hands, the straight draws, check-raising, value-betting the river, picking off bluffs, floating, or c-betting. That said, if you miss a question, the answers will point you back to the original discussion, so you know what part of your game you need to work on.

If you miss anything, my suggestion is that you work on it until you can get them all right.

Once you have successfully completed the diagnostic test, you will be ready for Part I: Leakfinder. In Leakfinder, I will present 38 hands in their raw format without commentary. It will be your job to identify any playing errors made by any of the players in the hand. Doing so will allow you to expose any leaks not just in your play, but in your opponents' play as well.

In Part II: Pre-Flop Playing Maps, I will give you a set of 30 starting hands in four different situations: opening fire on the blinds, attacking the limper, playing out of position, and 3-betting vs. Small Ball. Your task here is simply to write down how you play each of those 30 starting hands in each of those situations.

The remainder of the book consists of 162 full practice hand quizzes from short-handed online play, at stakes ranging from \$0.25-\$0.50 to \$2-\$4 with a \$0.75 ante. Part III: \$0.25-\$0.50 consists of 18 hand quizzes from \$0.25-\$0.50 blind play, while Part IV: \$0.50-\$1 includes 54 hands. There are 46 hands in Part V: \$1-\$2, and 44 more in Part VI: \$2-\$4.

In the practice hand quizzes, you will be tested at every step of the hand; your responses will be graded on a standard 10-pt. scale.

I figure this should keep you busy for a while.

And so, without further ado, turn the page and get started.

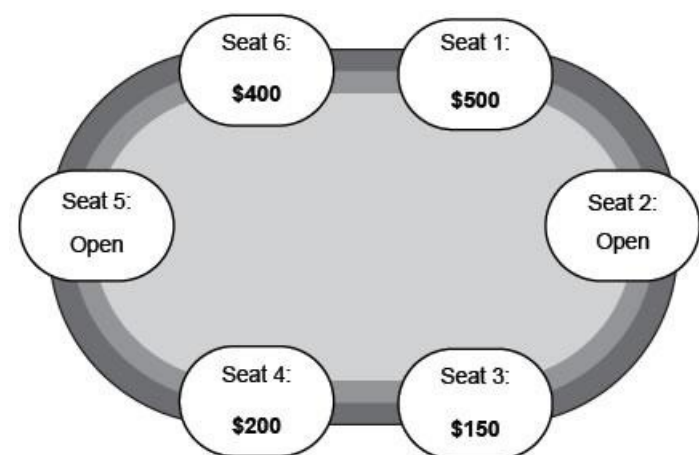
# Diagnostic Test

What follows is a 50-question diagnostic test covering a wide range of topics from game selection and seat selection, to the application of SPR, the straight draws, floating, c-betting, and value-betting the river. Every concept discussed in *Pot-Limit Omaha Poker: The Big Play Strategy* or *Advanced Pot-Limit Omaha Vol. I* or *Vol. II* is fair game.

Consider every possibility – some questions may have multiple correct answers, while others may have answers with differing degrees of “correctness.”

# Game Selection and Seat Selection

1. It's a \$1-\$2 game online.



You plan to buy in for the \$200 maximum. Assuming all else is equal – you know nothing about the players at the table – which seat do you take?

- a. Seat 2
- b. Seat 5
- c. Neither

2. There are two tables at \$1-\$2 online (6-max, deep) with open seats.

Table #1

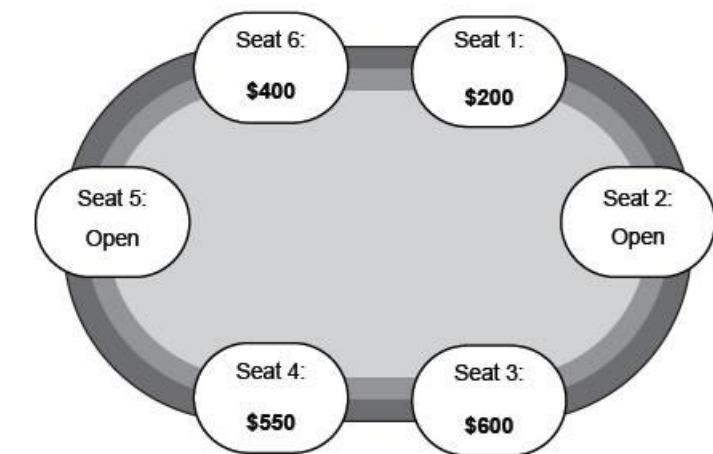
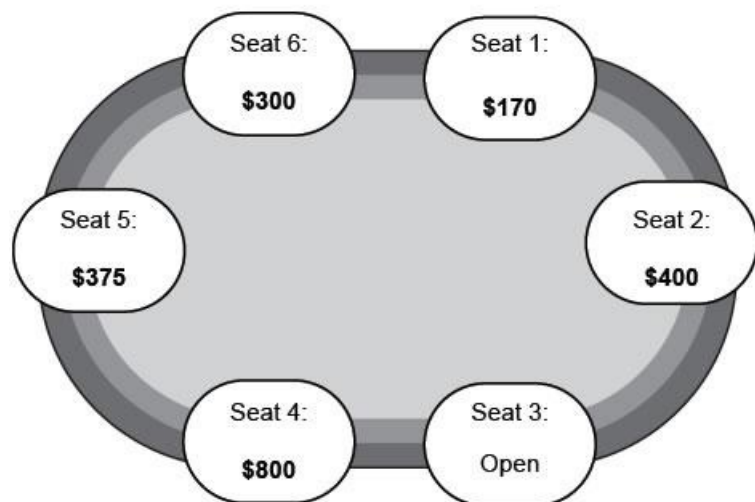


Table #2



You plan to buy in for the \$400 maximum. The player in Seat 6 on Table #1 is a regular who plays virtually every hand when on the

button, and plays his position well. The other players are non-descript. Which seat do you take?

- a. Seat 2, Table #1
- b. Seat 5, Table #1
- c. Seat 3, Table #2
- d. None of the above





# **Game Selection and Seat Selection: Answer Key and Analysis**

Questions #1 and #2 deal with game selection and seat selection.

1. a 2. d

In question #1, you have a choice between two open seats. The problem with Seat 5 is that you have two big stacks to your left and two small stacks to your right. Moreover, all else being equal, we can assume that the players with the two bigger stacks are tougher players, and presume that the player with the \$150 (75BB) stack in Seat 3 is not tough until he proves otherwise. Seat 2 should be the best option.

For question #2, the best answer is (d) none of the above. I don't see the upside in taking Seat 2 on Table #1, as you have a couple of big stacks on your left, but a small one directly to your right. The problem with Seat 5 on Table #1 is that while you would have position on the big stacks, you are being blocked by the player in Seat 6 on your left. What would happen is that you'd essentially get to play one hand every round – your button.

You can find better spots than the ones provided by Table #1.

The problem with Seat 3 on Table #2 is that the player directly to your left has a 400BB stack. Not only is he less likely to be an idiot than a player with a 100BB stack, but you really don't want to play having to give up position to this player five out of six hands every round. Seat selection is discussed in *Advanced Pot-Limit Omaha Vol. I* in Part VIII: Miscellaneous Topics, while the impact of stack sizes on our play is discussed in *Advanced Pot-Limit Omaha Vol. II* in Part II: The LAG Approach.

## Post-Flop Hand Valuation

3. It's a \$1-\$2 game online, six-handed, with \$200 stacks. You are dealt J♠ T♣ 9♦ 3♥ on the button. The UTG player and cutoff limp in front of you. You limp in. The small blind completes, and the big blind checks. The flop comes T♦ 9♥ 4♣. It gets checked to the cutoff, who bets \$10. Do you:
- Fold?
  - Call?
  - Raise?
4. It's a \$1-\$2 game online, six-handed, with \$200 stacks. You are dealt J♦ J♣ T♦ 4♥ on the button. Only the UTG player limps in front of you. You limp in. The small blind completes, and the big blind checks. The flop comes K♦ J♥ 2♣. The small blind checks. The big blind bets \$8, and the UTG player folds. Do you:
- Fold?
  - Call?
  - Raise?
5. It's a \$1-\$2 game online, six-handed, with \$200 stacks. You are dealt A♣ K♦ Q♣ 9♥ on the button, and open with a raise to \$7. The small blind – a loose-player who likes to 3-bet from the small blind – re-raises to \$23, and the big blind folds. You call. The flop comes Q♥ 7♦ 2♣. Your opponent bets \$46. Do you:
- Fold?
  - Call?
  - Raise all-in to \$177?
6. It's a \$1-\$2 game online, six-handed, with \$200 stacks. You are dealt J♠ T♦ 8♠ 6♣ on the button. The UTG player and cutoff both limp. You limp. The small blind completes, and the big blind checks. The flop comes Q♦ 6♠ 6♥. It gets checked to the cutoff, who bets \$7. Do you:
- Fold?
  - Call?
  - Raise?
7. It's a \$1-\$2 game online, six-handed, with \$200 stacks. You are dealt J♠ T♦ 8♠ 6♣ on the button. The UTG player and cutoff both limp. You limp. The small blind completes, and the big blind checks. The flop comes J♦ 6♥ 6♠. It gets checked to the cutoff, who bets \$7. Do you:
- Fold?
  - Call?
  - Raise?
8. It's a \$1-\$2 game online, six-handed, with \$200 stacks. You are dealt J♠ T♦ 8♠ 6♣ on the button. The UTG player and cutoff both limp. You limp. The small blind completes, and the big blind checks. The flop comes 8♦ 8♥ 6♠. It gets checked to the cutoff, who bets \$7. Do you:
- Fold?
  - Call?
  - Raise?
9. It's a \$1-\$2 game online, six-handed, with \$200 stacks. You are dealt T♠ T♦ 9♠ 4♦ on the button. The UTG player and cutoff both limp. You limp. The small blind completes, and the big blind checks. The flop comes K♥ K♦ T♥. It gets checked to the cutoff, who bets \$7. Do you:
- Fold?
  - Call?
  - Raise?
10. It's a \$1-\$2 game online, six-handed, with \$400 stacks. You are dealt A♣ J♣ T♦ 9♥ on the button. The UTG player, hijack, and cutoff all limp in. You raise to \$13. Both blinds fold, but everybody else calls. The flop comes J♥ 8♣ 7♣, giving you the nut straight. It gets checked to the cutoff, who bets \$55. Do you:
- Fold?
  - Call?
  - Raise?
11. It's a \$1-\$2 game online, six-handed, with \$200 stacks. You are dealt Q♣ J♦ T♣ 4♣ on the button. The UTG player and cutoff limp in. You limp. The small blind completes and the big blind checks. The flop comes 9♣ 8♠ 7♥. The small blind bets \$10, and it gets folded to you. Do you:
- Fold?
  - Call?
  - Raise?

12. It's a \$1-\$2 game online, six-handed, with \$200 stacks. You are dealt  $Q\clubsuit T\clubsuit 9\spadesuit 8\spadesuit$  in the button. The UTG player folds. The hijack opens with a raise to \$7. You re-raise to \$24, and only the hijack calls. The flop comes  $8\heartsuit 7\heartsuit 6\heartsuit$ , giving you the nut straight. Your opponent bets \$51. Do you:

- a. Fold?
- b. Call?
- c. Raise to \$176 all-in?

13. It's a \$1-\$2 game online, six-handed, with \$200 stacks. You are dealt  $J\heartsuit T\spadesuit 9\heartsuit 8\spadesuit$  on the button. The cutoff opens with a raise to \$7. You re-raise to \$24, and both blinds fold. The cutoff re-raises to \$75. You call. The flop comes  $Q\heartsuit 4\heartsuit 3\heartsuit$ , giving you a flush. Your opponent bets \$125 all-in. Do you:

- a. Fold?
- b. Call?

14. It's a \$1-\$2 game online, six-handed, with \$400 stacks. You are dealt  $J\heartsuit T\spadesuit 9\heartsuit 8\spadesuit$  on the button. The cutoff opens with a raise to \$7. You re-raise to \$24, and only the cutoff calls. The flop comes  $Q\heartsuit 4\heartsuit 3\heartsuit$ , giving you a flush. Your opponent bets \$35. Do you:

- a. Fold?
- b. Call?
- c. Raise?

15. It's a \$1-\$2 game online, six-handed, with \$400 stacks. You are dealt  $A\heartsuit K\heartsuit J\clubsuit 7\clubsuit$  on the button. The UTG player opens with a raise to \$7, and it gets folded to you. You call. Both blinds call. The flop comes  $Q\heartsuit T\heartsuit 4\heartsuit$ , giving you a 13-card nut wrap with the nut flush draw. The small blind checks. The big blind bets \$28, and the UTG player folds. Do you:

- a. Fold?
- b. Call?
- c. Raise?

16. It's a \$1-\$2 game online, six-handed, with \$400 stacks. You are dealt  $A\heartsuit K\heartsuit Q\clubsuit J\clubsuit$  on the button. The UTG limps in, and it gets folded to you. You raise to \$9. Both blinds call, and the UTG player calls. The flop comes  $Q\heartsuit T\heartsuit 4\heartsuit$ , giving you top pair with a 13-card nut wrap. Both blinds check. The UTG player bets \$36. Do you:

- a. Fold?
- b. Call?
- c. Raise?

17. It's a \$1-\$2 game online, six-handed, with \$400 stacks. You are dealt  $A\heartsuit K\heartsuit J\clubsuit 4\clubsuit$  on the button. The UTG raises to \$9, and it gets folded to you. You call. Both blinds call. The flop comes  $Q\heartsuit T\heartsuit 4\heartsuit$ , giving you a 13-card nut wrap. The small blind bets \$36, and it gets folded to you. Do you:

- a. Fold?
- b. Call?
- c. Raise?



# **Post-Flop Hand Valuation: Answer Key and Analysis**

Questions #3 through #17 deal with post-flop hand valuation and the application of the Stackto-Pot Ratio (SPR).

3. b 4. b

In question #3, you have bare top two pair in a high-SPR situation (SPR 20); similarly, in question #4, you have middle set in a high-SPR situation (SPR 25). That said, bare top two pair and middle set are small-pot hands too strong to fold for one bet, but not strong enough to want to raise and bloat the pot. Thus, flat-calling is the best play in both cases.

5. c

In question #5, you have top pair in a low-SPR situation. The play is to shove.

6. b 7. b

8. c

9. b

Questions #6 through #9 deal with trips, the underfull, and overfull in high-SPR situations. In mid-to high-SPR scenarios, undertrips is a bluff catcher at best, while the underfull is a small-pot hand. That said, the best play in question #6 (undertrips), question #7 (underfull), and question #9 (underfull) is to smooth call and keep the pot small in all three cases. In question #8, the play should be to raise with the overfull and re-draws -- a big-pot, high-SPR hand with freeroll potential against another 8-6-x-x hand.

10. b 11. c 12. c

In questions #10 through #12, you flop the nut straight of varying quality. In question #10, you have the bare nut straight (no re-draw) in a mid-SPR situation (SPR 7); the play here should be to smooth call and bet if the board changes and your opponent checks, or otherwise call him down unless the board changes and your opponent keeps betting (in which case you will likely fold). In question #11, you flop the nut straight with straight and flush re-draws -- a big-pot hand and potential freeroll opportunity should you be up against the bare nut straight. In question #12, you have the bare nut straight, but in a low-SPR situation; in contrast to question #10, the play here should be to raise and shove all-in.

13. b 14. b

In questions #13 and #14, you flop a jack-high flush (or queen-high, technically). The difference between the two questions is SPR, though your action should be the same: Call. In question #13, you have an ultra-low SPR situation (SPR < 1), and thus can't reasonably fold a flush heads up all-in for one bet, as your opponent's range here is any four cards. In question #14, you have the same flush, but against a possible steal bet in a mid-SPR situation (SPR 7.4); the play here is to call and play a small pot.

15. c 16. c 17. b

In questions #15 through #17, you flop a 13-card nut wrap. However, your action will vary depending on what else you have to go with it. In question #15, you have a 13-card nut wrap with the nut flush draw, and thus raising the first bet on the semi-value/semi-bluff should be automatic regardless of SPR. In question #16, you have top pair with the 13-card nut wrap, which is also a big-pot hand and potential dominating draw; this, too, should be an automatic raise against the first bet regardless of SPR.

In question #17, however, you have the bare 13-card nut wrap. Meanwhile, the small blind has led out into three opponents, and is unlikely to be bluffing. That said, with the bare 13-card nut wrap, you are not a favorite against much of anything (you are not even a favorite to make a straight, but rather will make a straight about 49.9% of the time). The play here is to smooth call.

Big-pot hands vs. small-pot hands are the subject of Chapter One: The Big Play Objectives, in *Pot-Limit Omaha Poker: The Big Play Strategy*. Meanwhile, the big-pot vs. small-pot hands and using SPR are discussed in depth in *Advanced Pot-Limit Omaha Vol. I* in Part II: Advanced Concepts.

# The Straight Draws

18. It's a five-way pot after the flop, and a high-SPR situation. The flop is 9-8-3 rainbow. Generally speaking, ignoring suits, which hand do you like best in this situation: T-7-6-4, J-T-7-6, or Q-J-T-9?

- a. T-7-6-4
- b. J-T-7-6
- c. Q-J-T-9

19. Which of the following hands has the most nut outs on a 9-8-3 rainbow flop? K-Q-J-T, Q-J-T-7, J-T-7-6, or T-7-6-5?

- a. K-Q-J-T
- b. Q-J-T-7
- c. J-T-7-6
- d. T-7-6-5

20. Which of the following flops gives Q-T-9-5 a 13-card wrap?

- a. K-J-4
- b. J-8-3
- c. 8-7-4

21. Which of the following flops gives J-T-9-8 a 13-card nut wrap?

- a. T-7-2
- b. 9-7-2
- c. 8-7-2
- d. 7-6-2
- e. All of the above

22. Which of the following flops gives J-9-8-7 13 or more nut straight outs?

- a. T-8-4
- b. 6-5-3
- c. T-7-2
- d. Q-T-4
- e. All of the above

23. Which of the following flops gives J-T-9-7 13 or more nut straight outs?

- a. 9-8-3
- b. 8-7-2
- c. 8-6-3
- d. T-8-2
- e. All of the above



# The Straight Draws: Answer Key and Analysis

Questions #18 through #23 deal with the straight draws in Omaha.

18. c

In question #18, the T-7-6-4 hand flops a 17-card wrap, but with only seven nut outs. The J-T-7-6 hand flops a 20-card wrap with 14 nut outs. However, the Q-J-T-9 hand for top pair and the 13-card nut wrap dominates both hands, despite having only a 13-card draw. Heads up, the Q-J-T-9 hand is about a 60%/40% favorite over the J-T-7-6 (20-card wrap) hand and a 77%/23% favorite over the T-7-6-4 hand.

The J-T-7-6 hand (20-card wrap) is the strongest against a bare set (against A-A-9-9 for bare top set, for example), but the Q-J-T-9 hand (top pair and 13-card nut wrap) is the best all-purpose hand, assuming you don't know what you are up against.

19. b

In question #19, the answer is the Q-J-T-7 hand, which yields a 16-card nut wrap. The K-Q-J-T flops a 13-card nut wrap; the J-T-7-6 flops a 20-card wrap with 14 nut outs; meanwhile, the T-7-6-5 for the 16-card sucker-end wrap only has six nut outs and is garbage in a multi-way pot on this flop.

20. b

In question #20, the answer is (b) J-8-3, and the answer is undisputable.

21. e

In question #21, the answer is (e) all of the above, as all of those flops give J-T-9-8 a 13-card nut wrap.

22. b and c 23. b and c

In question #22, both (b) 6-5-3 and (c) T-7-2 yield a 13-card nut wrap. The T-8-4 flop yields a 17-card wrap with 11 nut outs (four queens, four sevens, three eights). The Q-T-4 flop is no good for J-9-8-7 in multi-way action, yielding 13 straight outs but only three nut outs (three eights).

In question #23, both (b) 8-7-2 and (c) 8-6-3 yield a 13-card nut wrap for the J-T-9-7 hand. (a) 9-8-3 and (d) T-8-2 give the J-T-9-7 top pair and 17-card wraps. And the reason I included this hand in addition to the J-9-8-7 hand is that J-9-8-7 cannot physically flop top pair and a 17-card wrap, while the J-T-9-7 hand can. Just something to think about.

The straight draws are covered in depth in Chapter 3 of *Pot-Limit Omaha Poker: The Big Play Strategy*.



# Advanced Post-Flop Skills

24. It's a \$1-\$2 game online, six-handed, with \$200 stacks. You are dealt Q♣ 9♦ 4♠ 3♠ in the big blind. The UTG player and button both limp in. The small blind completes, and you check. The flop comes J♦ T♣ 2♥. The small blind bets \$8. Do you:

- a. Fold?
- b. Call?
- c. Raise?

25. It's a \$1-\$2 game online, six-handed, with \$200 stacks. You are dealt A♠ T♠ 9♠ 4♥ on the button. The cutoff opens with a raise to \$7, and only you call. The flop comes 7♦ 6♥ 2♠, giving you a gutshot straight draw. Your opponent bets \$12. Do you:

- a. Fold?
- b. Call?
- c. Raise?

26. It's a \$1-\$2 game online, six-handed, with \$200 stacks. You are dealt A♠ K♦ J♠ 5♠ on the button. You open with a raise to \$7, and only the big blind calls. The flop comes 8♠ 7♠ 4♠. Your opponent checks. Do you:

- a. Check?
- b. Bet?

27. It's a \$1-\$2 game online, six-handed, with \$200 stacks. You are dealt A♠ K♦ J♠ 8♠ on the button. You open with a raise to \$7, and only the big blind calls. The flop comes T♠ 9♠ 2♠. Your opponent checks. Do you:

- a. Check?
- b. Bet?

28. It's a \$1-\$2 game online, six-handed, with \$200 stacks. You are dealt J♠ T♦ 9♠ 8♥ on the button. You open with a raise to \$7, and only the big blind calls. The flop comes K♠ 7♠ 6♥. Your opponent checks. Do you:

- a. Check?
- b. Bet?

29. It's a \$1-\$2 game online, six-handed, with \$200 stacks. You are dealt J♠ T♦ 9♠ 8♥ on the button. You open with a raise to \$7, and only the big blind calls. The flop comes K♠ 7♠ 2♥. Your opponent checks. Do you:

- a. Check?
- b. Bet?

30. It's a \$1-\$2 game online, six-handed, with \$200 stacks. You are dealt A♠ Q♠ J♥ T♦ on the button. You open with a raise to \$7, and only the big blind calls. The flop comes K♠ 7♦ 2♥. Your opponent – a non-descript opponent – checks. Do you:

- a. Check?
- b. Bet?

31. It's a \$1-\$2 game online, six-handed, with \$200 stacks. You are dealt A♠ Q♠ J♥ T♦ on the button. You open with a raise to \$7, and only the big blind calls. The flop comes K♠ 7♦ 2♥. Your opponent – an extremely weak player who never check-raises – checks. Do you:

- a. Check?
- b. Bet?

32. It's a \$1-\$2 game online, six-handed, with \$200 stacks. You are dealt A♠ K♥ Q♠ T♦ on the button. You open with a raise to \$7, and only the big blind calls. The flop comes Q♥ 6♦ 3♥. Your opponent – a tough opponent who check-raises with some frequency – checks. What do you do?

- a. Check?
- b. Bet?

33. It's a \$1-\$2 game online, six-handed, with \$200 stacks. You are dealt Q♠ J♦ T♠ 2♥ on the button. The UTG player limps in, and it gets folded to you. You limp in. The small blind completes, and the big blind checks. The flop comes 9♠ 8♦ 3♥. Everybody checks to you. You bet \$8, and only the big blind calls. The turn is the K♠. Your opponent checks. You bet \$24, and your opponent calls. The river is the 4♦. Your opponent checks. Do you:

- a. Check?
- b. Bet?

34. It's a \$1-\$2 game online, six-handed, with \$200 stacks. You are dealt K♠ Q♦ J♥ 4♠ in the big blind. The UTG player and button both limp. The small blind completes. You check. The flop comes T♦ 9♠ 4♥. The small blind checks. You bet \$8, and only the UTG player calls. The turn is the 8♠. You bet \$24, and your opponent calls. The river is the 3♠. Do you:

- a. Check?
- b. Bet \$15-\$20?
- c. Bet \$30-\$45?

d. Bet \$60-\$72?

35. It's a \$1-\$2 game online, six-handed, with \$400 stacks. You are dealt A♠ T♦ 9♠ 3♣ on the button. The UTG player opens with a raise to \$7, and only you call. The flop comes J♠ 6♦ 2♠. Your opponent bets \$17, and you call. The turn is the 7♣. Your opponent bets \$51, and you call. The river is the 8♥. Your opponent checks. Do you:

- a. Check?
- b. Bet \$25-\$50?
- c. Bet \$75-\$100?
- d. Bet \$125-\$153?

36. It's a \$1-\$2 game online, six-handed, with \$400 stacks. You are dealt A♦ J♣ T♦ 7♣ in the small blind. The cutoff opens with a raise to \$7, and only you call. On which of the following flops might you attempt a check-raise?

- a. 9♦ 8♣ 2♦
- b. T♠ 9♠ 3♠
- c. 8♠ 8♦ 3♠
- d. J♥ 5♠ 4♦

37. It's a \$1-\$2 game online, six-handed, with \$400 stacks. You are dealt K♦ K♠ 9♦ 4♣ in the big blind. The cutoff opens with a raise to \$7, and only you call. The flop comes 5♠ 5♦ 2♣. Do you:

- a. Check-fold?
- b. Check-call?
- c. Check-raise?
- d. Bet?

38. It's a \$1-\$2 game online, six-handed, with \$200 stacks. You are dealt J♠ J♦ T♠ 8♦ on the button. The UTG player opens with a raise to \$7. The hijack re-raises to \$24, and the cutoff folds. You call. Both blinds fold. The UTG player calls. The flop comes 8♠ 7♣ 4♠. Both opponents check. You bet \$72, and only the UTG player calls. The turn is the 7♥. Your opponent bets \$104 all-in. Do you:

- a. Fold?
- b. Call?

39. It's a \$1-\$2 game online, six-handed with \$400 stacks. You are dealt A♠ T♦ 8♣ 3♥ on the button. The UTG player and cutoff limp in. You limp. The small blind completes, and the big blind checks. The flop comes A♦ A♥ 4♦. It gets checked to the cutoff, who bets \$8. Only you call. The turn is the 9♦. Your opponent checks. You bet \$20, and your opponent calls. The river is the 2♥. Your opponent bets \$20. Do you:

- a. Fold?
- b. Call?
- c. Raise?



# Advanced Post-Flop Skills: Answer Key and Analysis

Questions #24 through #39 cover advanced post-flop skills, including floating, c-betting, check-raising, checking-and-calling, value-betting the river, and the bluff raise.

24. a 25. b

Floating/drawing is the main subject of questions #24 and #25. In question #24, you have a bare half-nut openended straight draw in a four-way pot. You are in the big blind, and the small blind has led into you. In this case, you don't have a strong enough draw to merit a call on its own merits; and in a four-way pot with two players left to act behind you, this is an awful spot to attempt a float.

In question #25, you are heads up with position on the pre-flop raiser, and have flopped the nut gutshot with a backdoor nut flush draw. In contrast to the previous question, this is an excellent floating spot against a possible weak-stab c-bet, and the first bet in a heads-up pot.

Floating is the subject of Part I of *Advanced Pot-Limit Omaha Vol. I*.

26. a 27. b 28. b 29. a 30. a 31. b 32. a

Questions #26 through #32 deal with c-betting. The answers to these questions are somewhat variable -- if the answer key says checking should be the play, it doesn't mean betting is necessarily wrong, and vice versa.

In question #26, you should generally check behind with the bare nut flush draw. Again, betting isn't necessarily wrong, but the standard play should be to check behind.

In question #27, you have a nut gutshot with the nut flush draw. This should be bet 100%, as you have enough draw that you cannot get check-raised off of it.

Similarly, in question #28, the 13-card nut wrap with a flush draw should bet. However, in question #29, the bare flush draw with some backdoor wrap possibilities should generally be checked back, though -- again -- betting isn't necessarily wrong.

In question #30, you hit a pivot card with the backdoor nut flush draw. Checking is the preferred play, though betting is not incorrect. That said, with the same hand against a known weak player in question #31, you should go ahead and bet.

The pivot card is discussed in Part II of *Advanced Pot-Limit Omaha Vol. I*.

In question #32, you have top pair with improvers in what is essentially a high-SPR situation (SPR 12.9). Again, betting isn't necessarily wrong, but checking behind is generally the correct play. That said, in a low SPR situation (SPR  $\leq$  4), the play would be to bet and commit if check-raised.

C-betting frequency is covered in Part I of *Advanced Pot-Limit Omaha Vol. II*.

33. b

Question #33 deals with following through, or The Betting Machine as discussed in Part II of *Advanced Pot-Limit Omaha Vol. I*. "The Power of the Big Draw" and the ability to "bet it like you have it" until somebody else says that they "have it" is discussed in Chapter Two of *Pot-Limit Omaha Poker: The Big Play Strategy*. Playing on the draw is covered in Chapter Five of the same book.

34. b or c 35. d

Questions #34 and #35 concern value-betting the river, as discussed in Part III of *Advanced Pot-Limit Omaha Vol. I*.

In question #34, your opponent should be keenly aware of the possibility that you have a straight. Checking is clearly incorrect, because your opponent is simply going to check behind if he has anything to show down; meanwhile, there aren't any draws for him to have missed, so the likelihood is that he has something to show down. Meanwhile, a big bet of \$60-\$72 is also incorrect, as it should be blatantly obvious to your opponent by now that you have the straight.

What you need to do is create some doubt in your opponent's mind. A token bet of \$15-\$20 may look like a blocking bet, and may be small enough to draw a curiosity call. Meanwhile, a half-pot bet of \$30-\$45 or so may look like a follow-through bet, and may be more likely to draw a call from some of your more sophisticated opponents -- particularly those that know you well, and have seen you make token value bets before.

In question #35, you called the c-bet on the semi-bluff float with the nut flush draw on the flop, turned a gutshot, and hit it on the river. Your hand is well-disguised, and calls for a bigger bet in the \$125-\$153 range.

36. a, b, or c

Question #36 deals with check-raising, as discussed in Part III of *Advanced Pot-Limit Omaha Vol. I*. Generally speaking, all of the flops except (d) J♥ 5♠ 4♦ are good check-raising candidates. The 9♦ 8♣ 2♦ flop yields a top-end 17-card wrap with the nut flush draw, with which you would be comfortable playing a big pot with. The T♠ 9♠ 3♠ flop -- putting out a possible flush -- is a good candidate for a

check-raise bluff, as is the 8♠ 8♦ 3♣ paired-board flop.

On the other hand, the J♥ 5♠ 4♦ flop gives you top pair with improvers. That said, rather than check-raise and bloat the pot, the more prudent play may be to either lead out or check-and-call.

37. b

Question #37 deals with checking-and-calling, which is also covered in Part III of *Advanced Pot-Limit Omaha Vol. I*.

38. b

Question #38 deals with picking off bluffs -- also covered in Part III of *Advanced Pot-Limit Omaha Vol. I*. This hand is actually a copy of a hand I played during the \$2,500 PLO event at the 2010 World Series of Poker.

The key here is hand reading. My opponent here is representing any hand that beats whatever I have. In this case, I have jacks up. The problem is that if my opponent actually had any of the hands that beat me, he would have shoved on the flop given the stack sizes.

If he had 8-8-x-x, 8-7-x-x, 7-4-x-x, or 4-4-x-x, he more likely would have shoved on the flop. Moreover, this is an awfully strange way to play A-A-x-x, K-K-x-x, or Q-Q-x-x, unless he has a flush draw to go with it; but in that case, he also would more likely have shoved on the flop.

Basically, if he had any of the hands that beat me, he would have shoved all-in on the flop.

The most likely case is that my opponent has the bare nut flush draw, and maybe something like A-K-Q-J with the nut flush draw, given his pre-flop raise. That said, this is still not an easy call to make, where even if I am right, I am still not much better than a coin flip against A-K-Q-x with nut clubs, because any overcard also beats me.

But in the end, I made the call, because I felt pretty strongly that I had the best hand, and I wouldn't have respected myself if I didn't make the call. My opponent showed A-K-Q-5 with the nut club draw. The 9♠ hit the river, and I won with the straight.

39. c

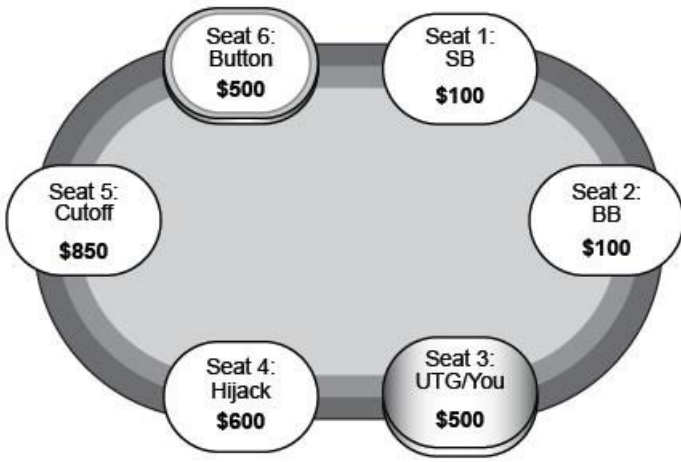
Question #39 concerns the bluff raise, which is also covered in Part III of *APLO Vol. I*. The hand in question is also a copy of a hand I played in the \$2,500 PLO event at the 2010 WSOP, though I actually had A-J-T-3 in the real hand.

By the river, it should be apparent that my opponent does not have A-9-x-x for the nut overfull, but more likely either has bare trips or maybe A-4-x-x, A-2-x-x, or 4-4-x-x, or maybe trip aces with a flush, and is looking for a cheap showdown. I know he doesn't have A-9-x-x, but *he* doesn't know that *I* don't have it. The play here is to put in a bluff raise, which I did in the actual hand.

My opponent folded as planned.

# Pre-Flop Play

40. It's a \$1-\$2 game online, six-handed, with \$200 stacks. You are dealt  $K\heartsuit K\spadesuit Q\clubsuit 4\heartsuit$  in the small blind. The cutoff opens with a raise to \$7, and the button re-raises to \$24. Do you:
- Fold?
  - Call?
  - Reraise?
41. It's a \$1-\$2 game online, six-handed, with \$400 stacks. You are dealt  $A\heartsuit A\heartsuit T\spadesuit 5\spadesuit$  in the small blind. The UTG player opens with a raise, and it gets folded to you. Do you:
- Fold?
  - Call?
  - Reraise?
42. It's a \$1-\$2 game online, six-handed. You (\$200) are dealt  $A\heartsuit A\heartsuit T\spadesuit 5\heartsuit$  in the big blind. The UTG player (\$65) opens with a raise to \$7, and it gets folded to you. Do you:
- Fold?
  - Call?
  - Reraise?
43. It's a \$1-\$2 game online, six-handed, with \$200 stacks. You are dealt  $Q\heartsuit Q\heartsuit J\spadesuit T\heartsuit$  on the button. The UTG player opens with a raise to \$7, and it gets folded to you. Do you:
- Fold?
  - Call?
  - Reraise?
44. It's a \$1-\$2 game online, six-handed, with \$200 stacks. You are dealt  $J\heartsuit T\clubsuit 9\heartsuit 6\clubsuit$  on the button. The UTG player opens with a raise to \$7, and the hijack calls. The cutoff folds. Do you:
- Fold?
  - Call?
  - Reraise?
45. It's a \$1-\$2 game online, six-handed, with \$200 stacks. You are dealt  $K\heartsuit 6\heartsuit 3\clubsuit 2\clubsuit$  in the small blind. The button opens with a raise to \$7. Do you:
- Fold?
  - Call?
  - Reraise?
46. It's a \$1-\$2 game online, six-handed, with \$200 stacks. You are dealt  $K\heartsuit 6\heartsuit 3\clubsuit 2\clubsuit$  in the big blind. It gets folded to the small blind, who raises to \$6. Do you:
- Fold?
  - Call?
  - Reraise?
47. It's a \$1-\$2 game online, six-handed, with \$200 stacks. You are dealt  $Q\heartsuit J\heartsuit 8\heartsuit 8\heartsuit$  in the small blind. The button opens with a raise to \$7. Do you:
- Fold?
  - Call?
  - Reraise?
48. It's a \$1-\$2 game online, six-handed, with \$200 stacks. You are dealt  $Q\heartsuit J\heartsuit 8\heartsuit 8\heartsuit$  in the big blind. It gets folded to the small blind, who raises to \$6. Do you:
- Fold?
  - Call?
  - Reraise?
49. It's a \$1-\$2 game online, six-handed, with \$200 stacks. You are dealt  $J\heartsuit T\heartsuit 9\heartsuit 8\heartsuit$  in the big blind. It gets folded to the small blind, who raises to \$6. Do you:
- Fold?
  - Call?
  - Reraise?
50. It's a \$1-\$2 game online, six-handed. You are dealt  $A\heartsuit K\heartsuit Q\heartsuit J\heartsuit$  UTG. The table looks like this:



**Do you:**

- Fold and play on?**
- Call?**
- Raise?**
- Fold and leave the game?**





# Pre-Flop Play: Answer Key and Analysis

The remaining 11 questions deal with pre-flop situations, most of which are fairly unambiguous.

40. a 41. b 42. c

Questions #40 through #42 deal with blind defense. In question #40, you have K-K-x-x in the small blind, facing a raise and 3-bet. I'll put it this way: The small blind is not worth defending in general, and definitely not with K-K-x-x against a 3-bet. There is no upside in 4-betting, either, where you are either a decent dog against A-A-x-x or a marginal favorite against everything else.

In question #41, you have A-A-x-x with a suit and some straight possibilities. However, A-A-T-5 with a suited ace is not a strong hand out of position with deep stacks. This should be a call.

In question #42, however, your opponent is relatively shallow. If you re-raise, you can make it \$22 to go. If (when) your opponent calls, there will be \$45 in the pot, with \$43 left to play. As a general rule, if you can make it a one-bet affair, then 3-betting A-A-x-x out of position is the correct play.

43. b 44. b

Questions #43 and #44 concern 3-betting vs. Small Ball. In question #43, Q-Q-J-T with a suit is a premium-class hand that you would raise with behind any number of limpers. However, you don't want to 3-bet with hands with single pairs in them (other than A-A-x-x), as you are most likely to flop a dry overpair (or underpair), which can be difficult to play accurately after the flop.

In question #44, you have J-T-9-6 with a suit, a speculative class drawing hand. You might consider 3-betting behind a lone raiser; however, behind a raise and a call, you have little chance of isolating the raiser with a 3-bet. Thus, flat-calling and seeing the flop should be the preferred play.

45. a 46. a or b

Questions #45 and #46 deal with value of position. You should not be defending or 3-betting from the small blind with K-6-3-2ds, though I see people do it all the time. You *can*, however, defend the big blind against an open raise from the small blind in a BB vs. SB matchup, though you can also fold, too.

47. a 48. b

Questions #47 and #48 are similar to question #45 and #46, except that Q♠ J♦ 8♠ 8♥ is a better hand than K-6-3-2ds. That said, the answers are about the same -- you should not defend the small blind with Q-J-8-8 with a suit, which is not as strong a hand as it might appear to some. Meanwhile, 3-betting with this hand in the BB vs. SB matchup in question #46 is also incorrect, given the pair in the hand.

49. c

In question #49, you have a premium-class hand worthy of a 3-bet in a BB vs. SB matchup.

50. b or d

In question #50, you have a premium-class drawing hand, but the situation is FUBAR. You are 250BBs deep, and out of position against all of the guys who have you covered, but only have position against the two blinds, who are only 50BBs deep. Your hand is relatively strong, but without the positional advantage and the ability to control pot size, there is a lot of downside to this situation, and not a lot of upside.

Again, your hand is pretty strong, but you would not be giving up much by simply folding and leaving the game. Either way, whether you choose to play the hand or not, you should pick up and leave the game before posting another blind.

# Diagnostic Test: Final Grade

Total Score	Grade	Comment
46 - 50	A	Excellent. This is a good start.
41 - 45	B	Passable, but there is room for improvement.
36 - 40	C	You have some work to do. I can recommend a good book or three.
< 36	F	Are you <i>trying</i> to lose?

## Part I: Leakfinder

In Leakfinder, I will present a hand in its raw format. It is your job to think through all aspects of the hand, and identify any playing errors. Some of the mistakes might be yours, some will be your opponents. Some hands contain multiple leaks. Some of the leaks are more subtle, while others might be more blatant.

Some of the hands are from my own play, while some are from instructional videos you can find online. Some of those hands were played by the instructors themselves, while one or two were part of hand history reviews.

The goal of this exercise is not only to identify possible leaks in your own play, but also to identify exploitable errors in your opponent's play at the table. Doing so will allow you to more accurately gauge the opposition.

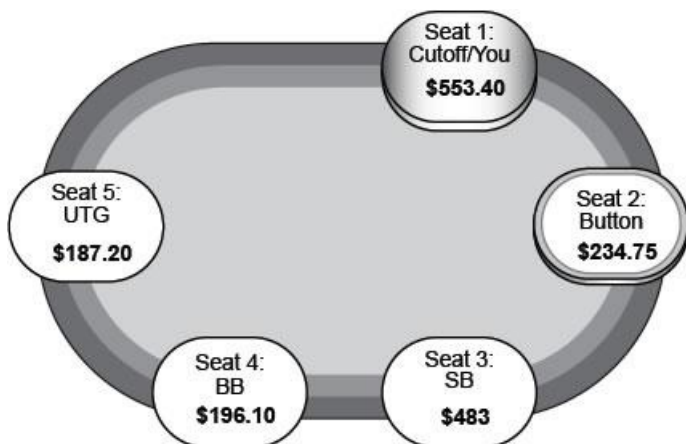
Keep your eyes peeled. Good hunting!

### Hand #1

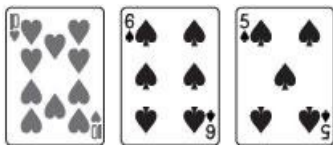
The game: \$2-\$4 online (6-max), five-handed

Your position: Cutoff

Your hand:



Pre-flop: The UTG player folds. You (\$553.40) raise to \$14. The button and small blind fold. The big blind (\$196.10) calls.



Flop (\$30): Your opponent bets \$16. You raise to \$76.50. Your opponent calls.



Turn (\$183): Your opponent checks. You check.



River (\$183): Your opponent bets \$52. You fold.

The Leak K-7-6-5 with a suit is an OK open from the cutoff. The problem with this hand is the raise on the flop with bottom two pair in this mid-SPR situation (SPR 6). Bare bottom two pair is a small-favorite/big-dog type of hand, with which you are a big dog against a lot of otherwise small-favorite/big-dog type hands like a bigger two pair.

It's tempting to raise this weak-stab donk bet and make your opponent pay to draw. However, if you get any action whatsoever -- even from as little as top pair -- you are not going to like it. You are a 55%/45% favorite over A♥ K♦ Q♠ T♣ for top pair and draws to bigger two pair and trips, for example, but only a 51%/49% favorite against A♥ Q♠ J♥ T♣ for top pair and backdoor hearts (and without a king for you to block), and a 41%/59% dog against A♠ K♦ Q♠ T♣ for top pair and a flush draw.

From there, it gets worse. You are a 27%/73% dog against T♠ 6♥ 2♣ 2♦ for bare top two pair, and an 18%/82% against A♠ J♠ T♠ 6♥ for top two pair with a flush draw.

And then you are a 6%/94% dog against T♠ T♠ 2♥ 2♣ for bare top set.

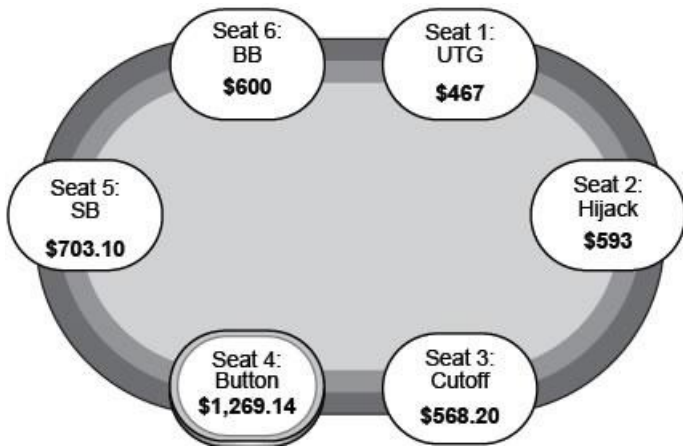
Against the drawing hands, you are a 54%/46% favorite against 9♣ 8♣ 7♥ 2♦ for the bare 13-card nut wrap, but a 45%/55% dog against T♠ 9♣ 8♣ 7♥ for top pair and the 13-card nut wrap, and a 39%/61% dog against 9♣ 8♣ 7♥ 2♠ for the 13-card nut wrap with a flush draw.

Really, you are not a favorite against much of anything that will give you action if you raise, and you are not a big favorite against anything, period.

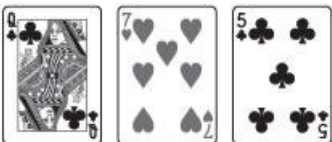
Rather than raise and turn your hand into a bluff, the play here should be to either flat call the donk bet and see what your opponent does on the turn, or otherwise fold.

Hand #2

The game: \$3-\$6 online (6-max), six-handed



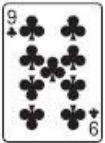
Pre-flop: The UTG player (\$467) limps in. The hijack folds. The cutoff (\$568.20) raises to \$27. The button (\$1,269.14) calls. Both blinds fold. The UTG player calls.



Flop (\$87): The UTG player bets \$87. The next player -- the pre-flop raiser -- raises to \$174. The button folds. The UTG player calls.

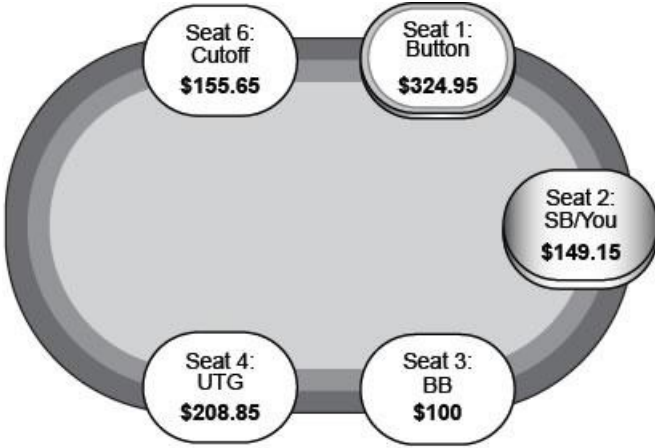


Turn (\$435): The UTG player bets \$266 all-in. The other player calls.

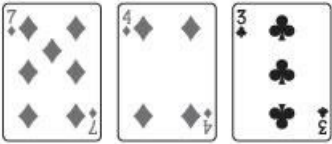


River (\$967): The UTG player shows T♥ 7♠ 5♠ 3♠ for two pair. The cutoff shows Q♠ Q♦ J♥ 5♦ for a set of queens.  
**Hand #3**

The game: \$0.50-\$1 online (6-max), five-handed  
 Your position: Small Blind  
 Your hand:



Pre-flop: Everybody folds to you. You (\$149.15) limp in, and the big blind (\$100) checks.



Flop (\$2): You bet \$2. Your opponent raises to \$5. You call.



Turn (\$12): You check. Your opponent bets \$6. You call.



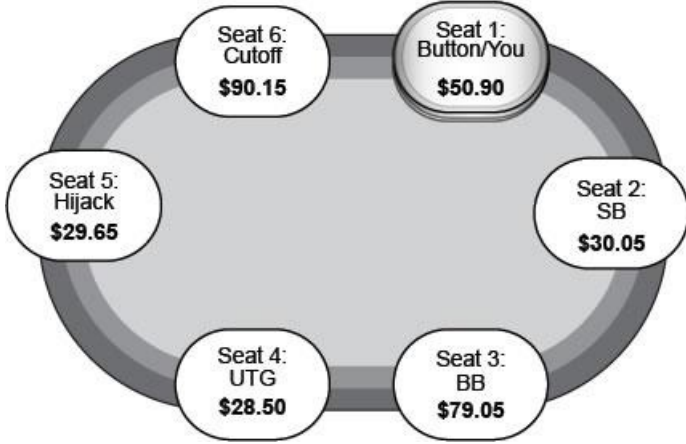
River (\$24): You check. Your opponent checks, showing K♥ J♠ 4♥ 3♦ for two pair, fours and threes. You win.

The Leaks Hand #2 presents a similar problem to the previous hand, except that this time the player in question -- the UTG player -- is playing out of position with a true garbage hand. T-7-5-3 should have been folded UTG pre-flop regardless of suits, and should have been folded on the flop to the raise as well. I suppose the bluff attempt on the turn is justifiable.

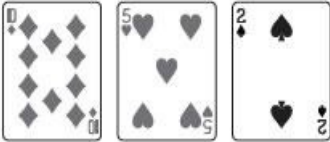
In Hand #3, the big blind flopped bottom two pair on a board with a possible straight on it. As in Hand #1, his error is raising on the flop, probably in an attempt to "define" his hand. That's just not the right play. His play should have been to call on the flop, and maybe call a turn bet at his discretion.

**Hand #4**

The game: \$0.25-\$0.50 online (6-max), six-handed  
 Your position: Button  
 Your hand:



**Pre-flop:** All three players in front of you (\$28.50, \$29.65, and \$90.15, respectively) limp in. You (\$50.90) call. The small blind (\$30.05) calls, and the big blind (\$79.05) checks.



**Flop (\$2.85):** Everybody checks to you. You check.



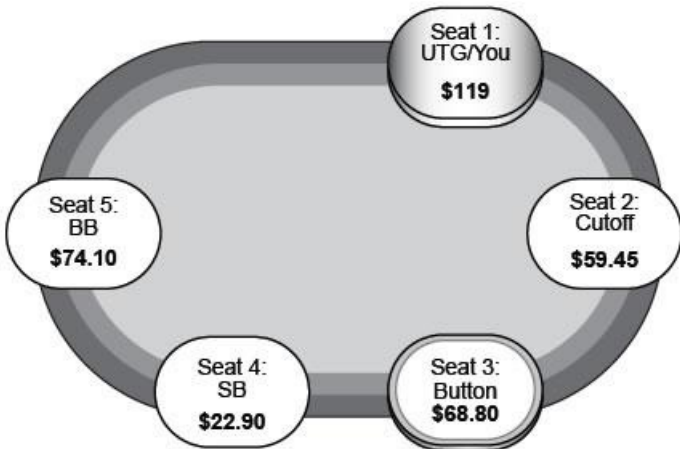
**Turn (\$2.85):** Both blinds check. The UTG player bets \$1.50, and it gets folded to you. You fold. Both blinds fold, and the UTG player wins the pot.

**Hand #5**

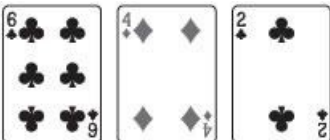
The game: \$0.25-\$0.50 online (6-max), five-handed

Your position: UTG

Your hand:



**Pre-flop:** You (\$119) limp in. The cutoff (\$59.45) limps in. The button folds. The small blind (\$22.90) calls, and the big blind (\$74.10) checks.



**Flop (\$1.90):** Both blinds check. You check. The cutoff checks.



Turn (\$1.90): The small blind checks. The big blind bets \$1.90. You fold. The cutoff and small blind both call.



River (\$7.35): Both blinds check. The cutoff bets \$3. The small blind folds. The big blind calls. The cutoff shows  $K♥ K♠ Q♥ 4♥$  for a set of kings. The big blind shows  $K♠ Q♠ 2♦ 2♥$  for a set of deuces.

The Leak In Hand #4, the limp on the button is standard. That said, the player in question should have bet the flop with the overpair once everybody checked to him on the button. Generally speaking, you should bet top pair or better from the button in these limped pots; and if you get called, it is usually pot/pot/half-pot or pot/pot/showdown (a.k.a. The Betting Machine from Part II of *APLO Vol. I*, or “bet it like you have it”).

In Hand #5, 8-7-6-3 with a suit is a speculative class wrap hand with 16-card nut wrap potential. Limping UTG is OK. But once you get to the flop, you flop top pair and a gutshot, and the blinds have checked to you in a steal position, this hand should be bet.

# Basic Pre-Flop Play

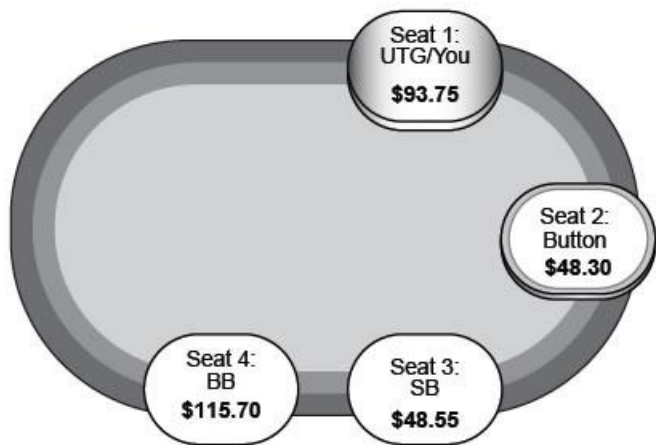
Hands #6 through #9 go together.

## Hand #6

The game: \$0.25-\$0.50 online (6-max), four-handed

Your position: UTG

Your hand:



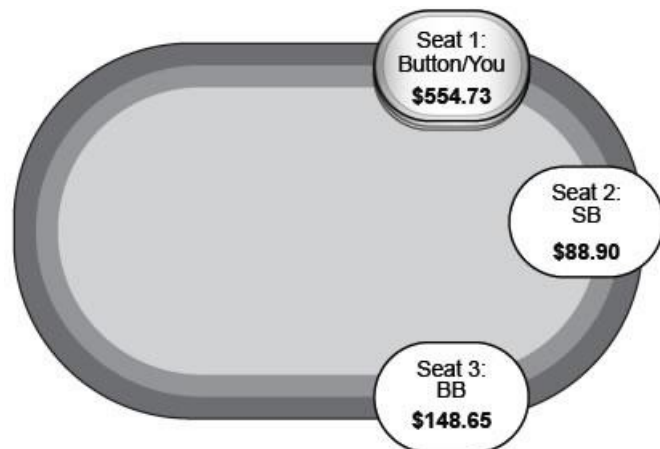
Pre-flop: You (\$93.75) fold UTG. The button (\$48.30) raises to \$1.75. Both blinds fold.

## Hand #7

The game: \$1-\$2 online (6-max), three-handed

Your position: Button

Your hand:



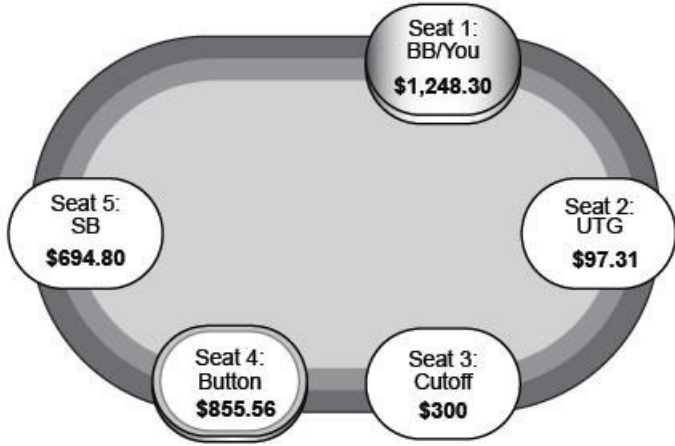
Pre-flop: You fold. The small blind (\$88.90) raises to \$6. The big blind folds.

## Hand #8

The game: \$3-\$6 online (6-max), five-handed

Your position: Big Blind

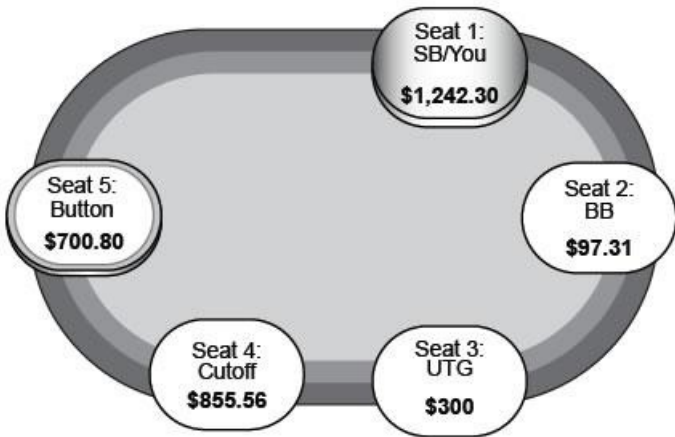
Your hand:



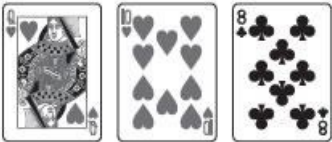
Pre-flop: Everybody folds to the small blind (\$694.80), who opens with a raise to \$18. You fold.  
**Hand #9**

The game: \$3-\$6 online (6-max), five-handed  
 Your position: Small Blind  
 Your hand:

This is the very next hand.



Pre-flop: The UTG player folds. The cutoff (\$855.56) limps in. The button (\$700.80) raises to \$27. You (\$1,242.30) call. The big blind (\$97.31) and cutoff call.



Flop (\$106): You check. It gets checked to the button, who bets \$80. You fold, and the other two players both fold.

The Leaks Hands #6 through #9 are from instructional videos. I don't normally give people shit about playing tight, but I just don't see how you can fold A-K-T-2 with a suited ace UTG playing four-handed, or A-7-5-2 with a suited ace on the button playing three-handed, or A-8-7-3 with a suited ace in the big blind in a BB vs. SB matchup.

Really, I don't see *tight* players folding these hands in these situations at *any* stakes.

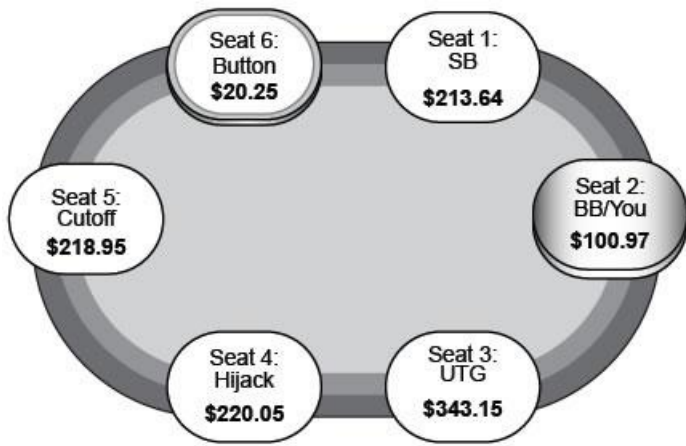
And then the same player defends the *small* blind to a raise holding Q-J-8-8, which is a worse hand than it looks playing from out of position.

I suppose an argument could be made for folding bottom set on this board.

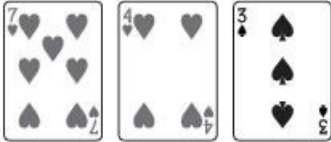
**Hand #10**

The game: \$1-\$2 online (6-max), six-handed  
 Your position: Big Blind  
 Your hand:

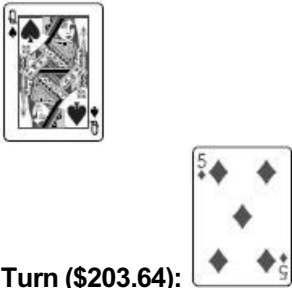




**Pre-flop:** The UTG player (\$343.15) calls. It gets folded around to the small blind (\$213.64), who calls. You check (\$100.97).



**Flop (\$5.70):** The small blind bets \$5.70. You raise to \$22.80. The UTG player folds. The small blind re-raises to \$74.10. You re-raise all-in for \$98.97 total. The small blind calls.

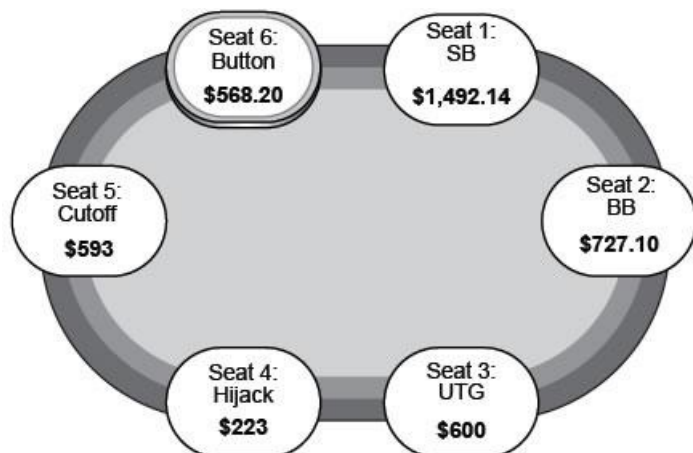


**Turn (\$203.64):**  
**River (\$203.64):** The small blind shows J♥ T♦ 6♦ 5♥, and you split the pot.

The Leak Yeah, the big blind got freerolled holding the bare nut straight. This hand is straight out of Chapter One from my first book (figuratively speaking). In a high-SPR situation (SPR 17), the play with the bare nut straight is to flat call the bet and represent a draw. In doing so, your opponent may keep betting weaker hands when behind (when he doesn't have a straight), while potentially giving you the opportunity to steal the pot later in the hand when he does have the same straight but the board changes (i.e. the board pairs or flushes).

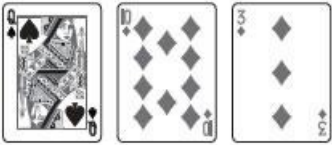
**Hand #11**

The game: \$3-\$6 online (6-max), six-handed



You are merely a spectator in this hand.

**Pre-flop:** The UTG player folds. The hijack (\$223) limps in. The cutoff and button both fold. The small blind (\$1,492.14) calls. The big blind (\$727.10) raises to \$24. Both the hijack and small blind call.



Flop (\$69): Both blinds check. The hijack bets \$69. The small blind calls, but the big blind folds.



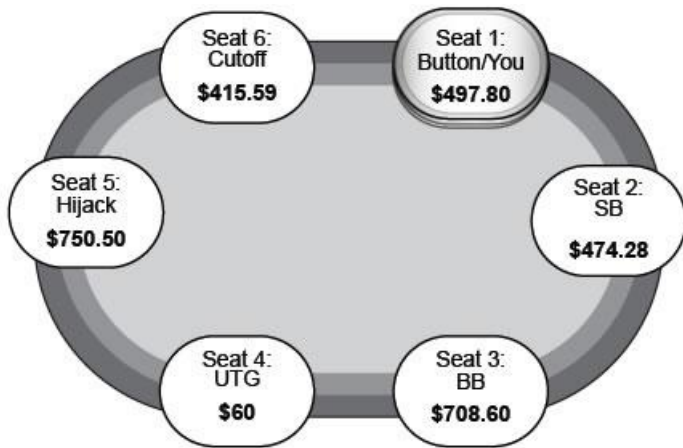
Turn (\$207): The small blind checks. The hijack bets \$130 all-in. The small blind calls.



River (\$467): The small blind shows  $K\heartsuit 8\heartsuit 7\heartsuit 5\heartsuit$ . The hijack shows  $A\heartsuit K\heartsuit J\heartsuit 9\heartsuit$  and wins with the straight.

The Leak The hijack probably could have afforded to put in a raise pre-flop with  $A\heartsuit K\heartsuit J\heartsuit 9\heartsuit$ , a premium-class drawing hand. That said, the real culprit in this hand is the small blind, who check-called the flop with the bare second-nut flush draw. This is a no-no.  
**Hand #12**

The game: \$3-\$6 online (6-max), six-handed  
Your position: Button  
Your hand:



Pre-flop: The UTG player folds. The hijack (\$750.50) raises to \$18. The cutoff (\$415.59) calls. You (\$497.80) call. Both blinds fold.



Flop (\$60): The first player bets \$54. The cutoff folds. You call.



Turn (\$168): Your opponent bets \$120. You raise to \$240. Your opponent calls.



River (\$648): Your opponent sets you all-in for \$168.80. You call. Your opponent shows  $Q\clubsuit J\clubsuit J\heartsuit 5\clubsuit$  for Jacks full.

The Leaks The flat call pre-flop is acceptable. That said, the flop call with the overpair and gutshot is pretty thin in this three-way pot, with the first player leading into two opponents on a board with two Broadway cards on it.

I'd tend to give him some credit for a hand.

Now *that* said, the worst play the player made was on the turn: When the board pairs giving you aces up and your opponent bets, the play is to flat call. If you raise, you are not getting a worse hand than aces up to play with you for stacks.

By the river, you have to know you are beat once you raised your opponent on the turn and got called. However, pot odds are a consideration here, since this is a relatively small all-in bet and you do have the nut straight.

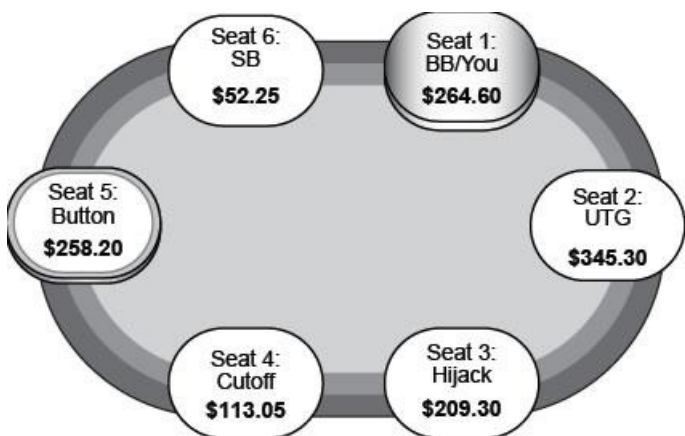
On the other hand, if you just flat call the turn, you probably save the rest of your stack once your opponent puts you all-in on the river for \$288.80 in a \$408 pot rather than for \$168.80 in a \$648 pot. I think once you flat call the turn, your opponent should give you credit for a hand, and if he still shoves the river, it probably means he can beat your straight.

### Hand #13

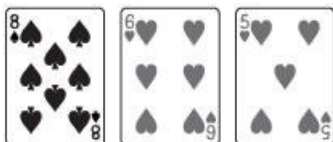
The game: \$1-\$2 online (6-max), six-handed

Your position: Big Blind

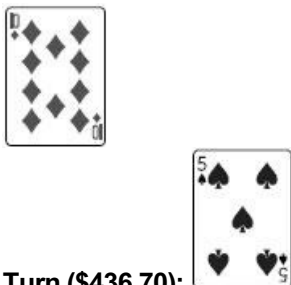
Your hand:



Pre-flop: The UTG player (\$345.30) limps in. The hijack (\$209.30) raises to \$9. The cutoff (\$113.05) calls. The button folds. The small blind (\$52.25) calls. You (\$264.60) call. The UTG player folds.



Flop (\$36.10): The small blind checks. You check. The hijack bets \$27. The cutoff and small blind both fold. You raise to \$117.10. Your opponent re-raises all-in for \$200.30 total. You call.



Turn (\$436.70):

River (\$436.70): Your opponent shows T♥ 9♠ 7♣ 6♦ having flopped the nut straight.

The Leaks Starting with the flop, there is something suspect about the UTG player limping in and then folding to the raise. I think if you are going to fold to a raise, you probably shouldn't limp in UTG to begin with.

But the worst play of the hand belongs to the big blind, check-raising the flop with the second-nut straight plus two pair for a re-draw in this mid-SPR (SPR 5.5) situation.

Remember, the bare *nut* straight is a small-pot, low-SPR hand. This is not the bare nut straight. If you check-raise and get action,

you are either going to be a small favorite over a set (though you do have two pair for blockers), or maybe a combo draw like two pair with a flush draw; or you are going to be a big dog against the nut straight.

Moreover, the bettor is not likely to be bluffing on this board in a four-way pot, which makes it more likely you are up against the nuts.

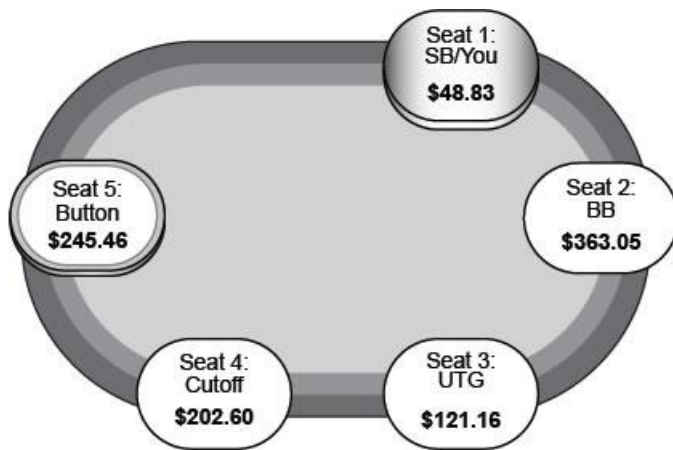
That said, you are probably better off calling the bet on the flop, and then perhaps leading out or otherwise check-raise shoving the turn. At least once you get to the turn, you are much more likely to be able to play for the rest of your stack with hands you can beat, such as two pair -- a hand that might have otherwise folded to a check-raise on the flop, but might commit on the turn if you just flat call.

#### Hand #14

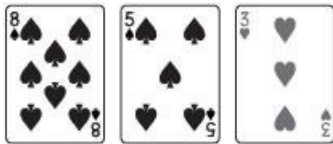
The game: \$1-\$2 online (6-max), five-handed

Your position: Small Blind

Your hand:



Pre-flop: The cutoff posts a big blind and a dead small blind. The UTG player folds. The cutoff (\$202.60) opens with a raise to \$7. The button folds. You (\$48.83) call. The big blind (\$363.05) calls.



Flop (\$20.90): You check. The big blind checks. The button bets \$20.90. You call. The big blind folds.



Turn (\$61.80): You bet \$20.93 all-in. Your opponent calls with  $Q♥ J♠ 9♠ 9♣$ .



River (\$103.66): You lose.

The Leaks For starters, this is an awful call from the small blind. Secondly, the player in question flopped a bare openended straight draw on a two-flush board, and the SPR is 2 -- shove-or-fold territory. This means that check-calling is generally not an option.

That said, the downside to check-raising is that with an SPR of 2, your opponent is less likely to fold than he might be if you lead out. Because if he bets \$20.90, there is not much he is going to fold for \$20.93 more, even just on principle. And considering that you don't really have anything, you don't want to pot-commit your opponent.

The better play in this spot is to lead out. At least this way you give your opponent a chance to fold a weak flush draw or whatever.

Or, if you don't like either option, you should be check-folding rather than check-calling.

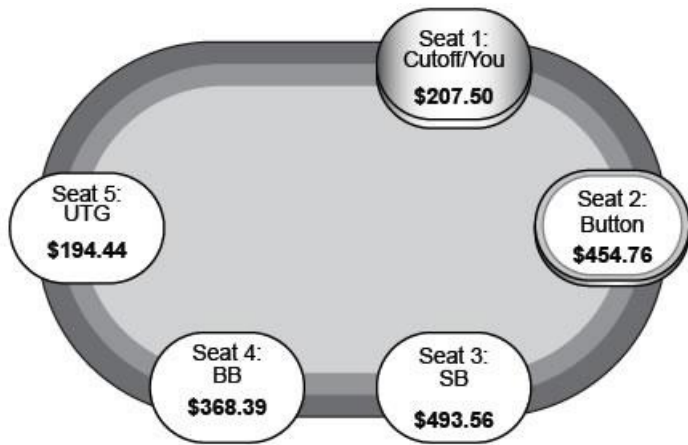
...Unless -- and I am going to throw this option out there -- check-calling might be acceptable if you are planning to bet the turn no matter what -- a stop-and-go reverse float. This way, you might win the pot if spades hit as well, unless your opponent has spades himself (as he did in this hand).

### Hand #15

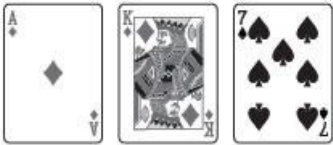
The game: \$1-\$2 online (6-max), five-handed

Your position: Cutoff

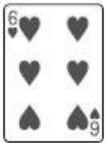
Your hand:



Pre-flop: The UTG player (\$194.44) limps in. You (\$207.50) raise to \$8. The button and the small blind fold. The big blind (\$368.39) and limper call.



Flop (\$23.75): Both opponents check to you. You check.



Turn (\$23.75): The big blind bets \$20, and the UTG player folds. You fold.

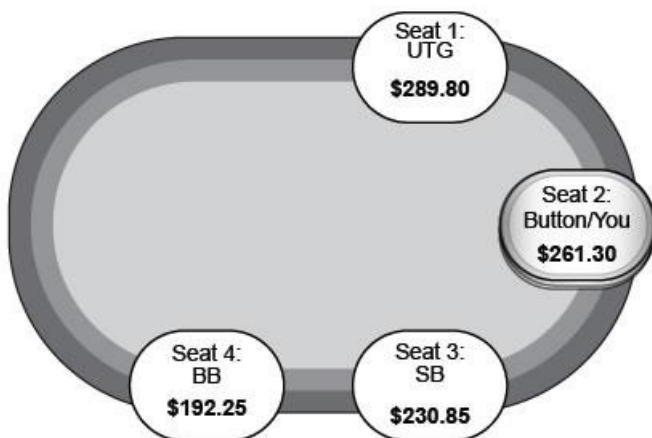
The Leaks You should either bet the flop or block the turn bet with a combo float. The player clearly missed that he picked up a second nut gutshot straight draw on the turn as well. I think he gave up this hand too easily.

### Hand #16

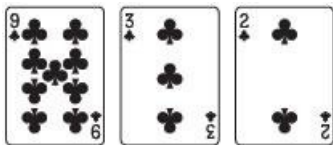
The game: \$1-\$2 online (6-max), four-handed

Your position: Button

Your hand:



Pre-flop: The UTG player (\$289.80) limps in. You (\$261.30) raise to \$9. The small blind (\$230.85) calls. The big blind folds and the UTG player calls.



Flop (\$27.55): The small blind checks. The UTG player bets \$2. You raise to \$24. The small blind folds. The UTG player calls.



Turn (\$75): The UTG player checks. You check.



River(\$75): The UTG player bets \$10. You call. The UTG player shows A♠ Q♦ T♦ 4♣.

The Leaks Four-handed, A-Q-T-4 with a suit should probably be raised from UTG, though limping is acceptable.

The UTG player made an interesting play with the min-bet and call on the flop. In isolation, this play looks terrible – and probably is terrible – though in aggregate it actually is not as bad a play as it looks: Once the player gets raised here, he can probably figure that the button has either the dry ace, the nut clubs, or air, as the other player is more likely to flat call with a non-nut flush than raise with it.

And by calling here and representing a flush, the UTG player may successfully slow the other player from betting the turn if he has air, which opens the door for the UTG player to bet the river and steal the pot.

Now all that said, the UTG player screwed up the play – assuming he had one – by betting \$10 into a \$75 pot on the river. That bet needed to be more in the \$40-\$60 range.

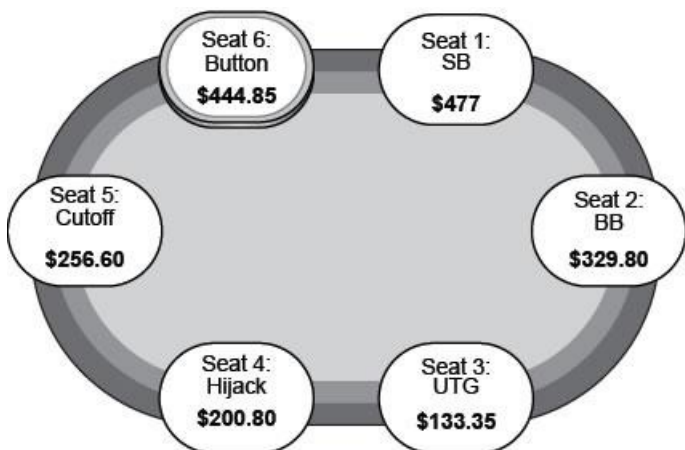
The button's play is OK, I suppose. The isolation raise before the flop is on the loose side, and I'm not sure I raise that flop, either. But OK.

### Hand #17

The game: \$1-\$2 online (6-max), six-handed

Small Blind's Hand:

Big Blind's Hand:



Pre-flop: The cutoff (\$256.60) opens with a raise to \$7. The button folds. The small blind (\$477) re-raises to \$23. The big blind (\$329.80) calls. The cutoff re-raises to \$92. The small blind folds. The big blind calls.



Flop (\$204): The big blind sets the other player all-in for \$164.60. The cutoff calls.



Turn (\$533.20):

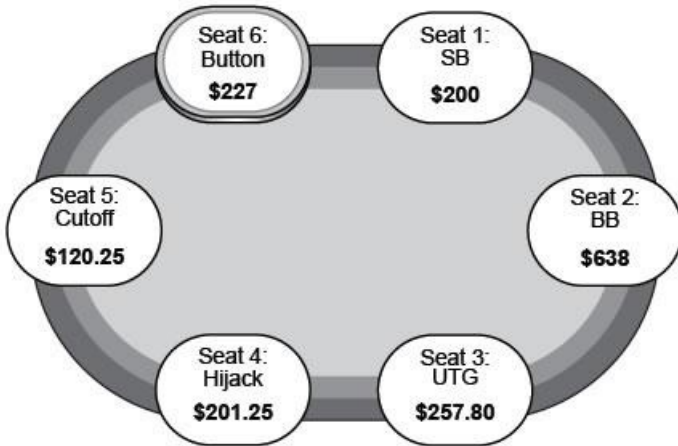
River (\$533.20): The cutoff shows A♦ A♥ 9♠ 8♠.

The Leaks The post-flop play here is not the issue. The issue is that I don't see 3-betting out of the small blind with 8-6-6-5 being correct; or if that is correct, then I don't see folding to the 4-bet from the cutoff being correct. The play from the small blind should have been to either flat call the initial raise or fold.

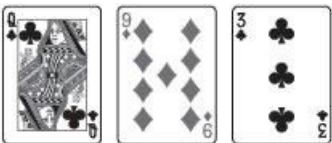
That said, the big blind did make a loose call pre-flop knowing that the player behind him was likely to come along and possibly even 4-bet. The big blind can probably afford to wait for a more premium-class rundown in this spot, as opposed to a marginal-class hand like K-J-T-6 with a top gap and dangler.

**Hand #18**

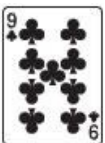
The game: \$1-\$2 online (6-max), six-handed



Pre-flop: The UTG player folds. The hijack (\$201.25), cutoff (\$120.25), and button (\$227) all call. The small blind (\$200) calls. The big blind (\$638) calls.



Flop (\$9.50): The small blind bets \$9, and only the big blind calls.



Turn (\$26.65): The small blind bets \$24, and the big blind calls.



River (\$73): Both players check. The big blind shows A♣ 9♥ 6♣ 4♣ for the nut flush, and the small blind shows A♠ 7♥ 6♣ 3♠ for two pair.

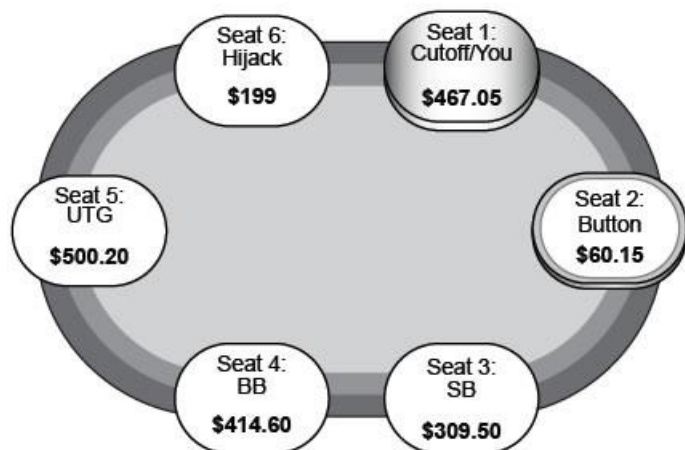
The Leak With bare bottom pair, this is a bad bet from the small blind into three players, and particularly on a flop like this one with all kinds of straight and flush draw possibilities on it. The follow-through bet on the turn is OK, and shutting down on the river is acceptable once called on the turn.

### Hand #19

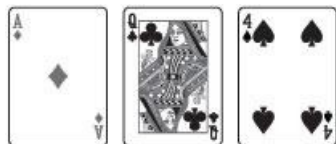
The game: \$1-\$2 online (6-max), six-handed

Your position: Cutoff

Your hand:



Pre-flop: The UTG player folds. The hijack (\$199) opens with a raise to \$7. You (\$467.05) re-raise to \$24. The button folds. The small blind (\$309.50) calls. The big blind (\$414.60) folds. The hijack calls.



Flop (\$71): Both opponents check to you. You check behind.



Turn (\$71): The small blind bets \$71. The hijack folds. You call.



River (\$213): Your opponent bets \$58. You fold.

The Leak The player in question screwed this one up on the flop. He has a set of queens in a low SPR situation (SPR 4 against the small blind, and SPR 2.5 against the hijack). The play should have been to bet the flop and commit.

Instead, he made a mess of the hand by checking and giving the free card.

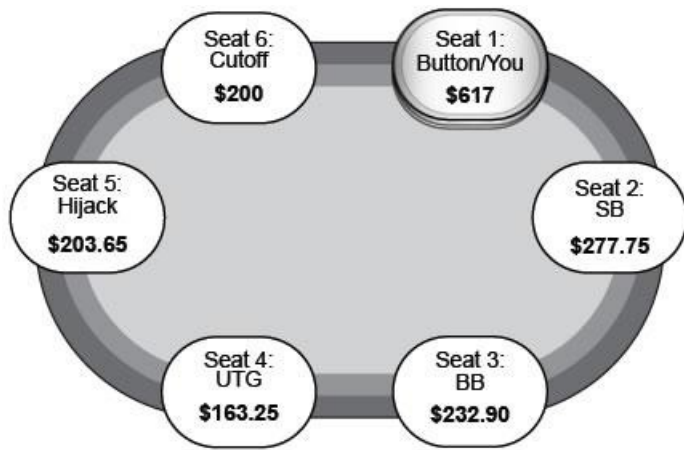
Meanwhile, sitting only 100BBs deep with the original pre-flop raiser, the 3-bet pre-flop is also somewhat suspect. Generally speaking, you should prefer to have deeper stacks to 3-bet with the double-paired – but non-A-A-x-x – hand. With 100BB stacks, this is essentially a pump-and-shove 3-bet situation in which the result would be a low-SPR situation on the flop if only the hijack (the original pre-flop raiser) calls, or a worse situation in which you get 4-bet by A-A-x-x.

I can't say I haven't 3-bet with this hand in this spot with 100BB stacks myself; I'm just saying you should generally avoid doing so.

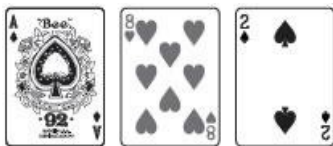
### Hand #20



The game: \$1-\$2 online (6-max), six-handed  
Your position: Button  
Your hand:



Pre-flop: The UTG player folds. The hijack (\$203.65) calls. The cutoff folds. You (\$617) call. The small blind folds. The big blind (\$232.90) checks.



Flop (\$6.65): Both opponents check to you. You bet \$6, and only the big blind calls.



Turn (\$18.10): Your opponent checks. You check behind.



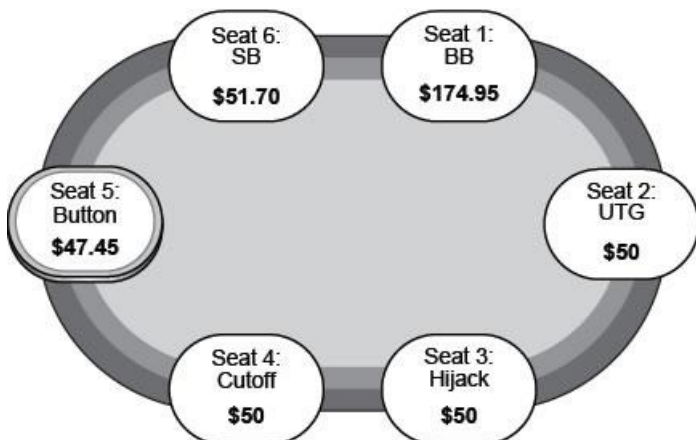
River (\$18.10): Your opponent bets \$8. You fold.

The Leak The rule is this: Once you start betting at the pot, you play virtually every hand as if you flopped the nuts until your opponent plays back at you.

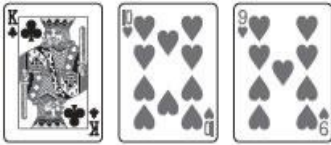
Once you bet the flop, you should also be betting the turn. Meanwhile, after checking the turn with a possible flush draw on the board, calling the \$8 river bet should be almost mandatory, unless you have a very good read on your opponent.

I plucked this one off of an instructional video as well.

Hand #21: The Worst Hand Ever Played The game: \$0.25-\$0.50 online (6-max), six-handed



Pre-flop: The UTG player (\$50) raises to \$1.75. Everybody folds to the small blind (\$51.70), who calls. The big blind (\$174.95) calls.



Flop (\$5): The small blind checks. The big blind bets \$4.50. The UTG player raises to \$18.75. The small blind calls. The big blind re-raises and sets the table all-in. The UTG player and small blind both call.

The UTG player has Q♣ J♠ 8♣ 4♣; the small blind has Q♠ J♣ 9♠ 8♠, and the big blind has K♥ J♥ T♣ 7♣.

The Leaks This is one of the all-around worst-played hands of Omaha I have ever seen.

This hand was part of a hand history review from an instructional video, in which the instructor discussed hands played by one of his students. As a consequence, you expect by default that one of the players played the hand poorly -- only the player in question wasn't the only one.

This is a three-way pot on the flop with an SPR of about 10 -- mid-high SPR territory.

The UTG player opens with a raise with Q-J-8-4s -- not a good hand, particularly from UTG (though I can't say I haven't done worse). But then he raises on the flop with the bare nut straight, no re-draw, which is not the correct play with the bare nut straight in a deep-stack situation.

I'm not sure what the big blind is thinking with top two pair and the second-nut flush draw. His blind defense is OK, and his bet on the flop is fine as well. It turns out that he is a 60%/40% equity favorite heads up against the Q-J-8-4 hand, and in fact even has 62% equity in a three-way pot with Q-J-8-4 and another bare straight like Q-J-9-8 (for example).

But if you give the small blind -- who just called the raise -- credit for A♥ 8♥ 6♣ 5♠ for the nut flush draw, then the big blind's equity in a three-way pot drops to 33%. Give the small blind K-K-2-2 for top set instead, and the big blind's equity is 36%. However, assuming both hands are unknown, give one player A♥ Q♥ 6♦ 5♦ for the nut flush draw and a gutshot, and the other player K-K-2-2 rainbow for top set, and the big blind's equity drops to 19%. Give one player A♥ Q♥ 6♦ 5♦ and the other K♠ K♦ Q♣ J♦ for top set and the straight, and the big blind's equity drops to 6%.

Basically, what I am getting at is that there is no way for the big blind to determine that he has 62% equity (huge favorite) in a three-way pot rather than 6%-36% (small-favorite/big-dog).

The threat of the nut flush draw or top set alone should make the big blind's perceived equity in the 6%-36% range.

I think the big blind overplayed his hand in this situation.

The small blind, too, flops the bare nut straight, but then makes the mistake of calling the raise. This should be a fold with the bare nut straight sitting this deep. But then, now that the small blind has decided not to fold, his play should be to re-raise all-in rather than flat call, as he has less than one bet remaining and can try to shut out the other player.

The actual equities were 62% for the big blind with K♥ J♥ T♣ 7♣ for top two and a flush draw, and a gutshot to a split; 20% for the Q-J-9-8 hand, and 18% for the Q-J-8-4. That said, the problem with the way all three players played the hand is that they all made decisions that depended on their opponents making a worse play than they did.

What I mean is, it is quite difficult for any of the players in the hand to play for stacks in an SPR 10 situation and get way the best of it. Raising with the bare nut straight in a high mid-SPR situation can only be correct if the opposition is going to shove with a bare set, bare two pair, a sucker straight draw drawing dead, or maybe bare gutshot or bare flush draw. Calling the bet and raise cold with the bare nut straight from the small blind can only be correct if both the big blind and UTG player are messing around with worse hands than yours -- in which case, shoving all-in would be better than calling. And re-raising from the big blind with top two pair and the second-nut flush draw can only be correct if the small blind is cold-calling the bet and raise with the bare nut straight (which he shouldn't be doing), and not top set or the nut flush draw (which might make more sense).

I think the player in the big blind got exceptionally lucky that both opponents just happened to have the straight, and with no re-draw.

PLO Tip: You should tend to avoid playing in such a way that depends on your opponents playing worse than you are.

# 3-Betting/4-Betting/5-Betting

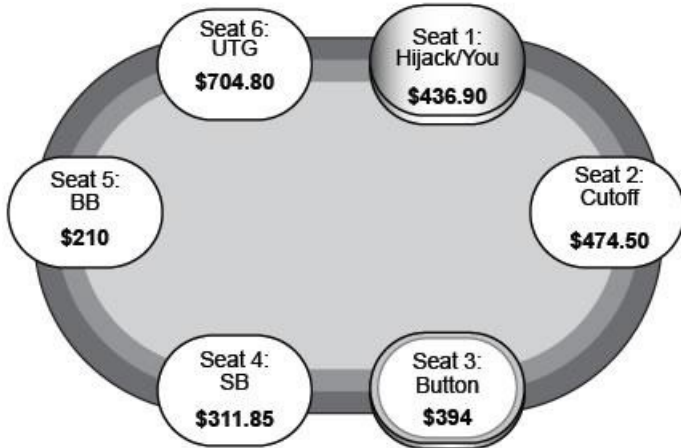
Hands #22 through #30 deal with 3-betting, 4-betting, and 5-betting. Your job is to figure out what the error is, and which player is making the error.

## Hand #22

The game: \$2-\$4 online (6-max), six-handed

Your position: Hijack

Your hand:



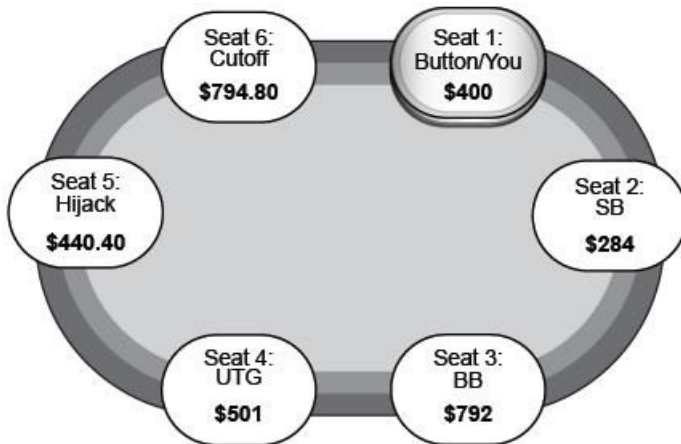
Pre-flop: The UTG player folds. You (\$436.90) open with a raise to \$14. The cutoff (\$474.50) re-raises to \$48. Everybody folds back to you. You re-raise to \$82. Your opponent re-raises to \$252. You fold.

## Hand #23

The game: \$2-\$4 online (6-max), six-handed

Your position: Button

Your hand:



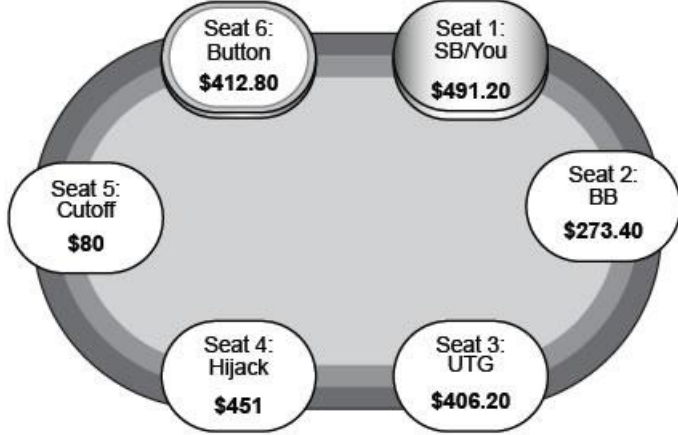
Pre-flop: The hijack (\$440.40) opens with a raise to \$12. The cutoff folds. You (\$400) re-raise to \$42. The small blind folds. The big blind (\$792) re-raises to \$140. The hijack folds. You fold.

## Hand #24

The game: \$2-\$4 online (6-max), six-handed

Your position: Small Blind

Your hand:



Pre-flop: Everybody folds to you in the small blind. You (\$491.20) raise to \$12. The big blind (\$273.40) re-raises to \$32. You re-raise to \$96. Your opponent folds.

The Leaks Rule #1: Don't 3-bet with a hand you don't want to get 4-bet with, and don't 4-bet with a hand you don't want to get 5-bet with.

Rule #2: Don't 3-bet and then fold to a 4-bet when you are going to be heads up with the positional advantage.

All three of these hands came from instructional videos. In Hand #22, the player opened with a raise with a fairly premium hand, got 3-bet by the player behind him, and responded by 4-betting for whatever reason. But then he got 5-bet, decided he was dominated by A-A-x-x, and opted to fold.

I just don't see 4-betting being the correct play here, particularly if you are planning to fold to a 5-bet.

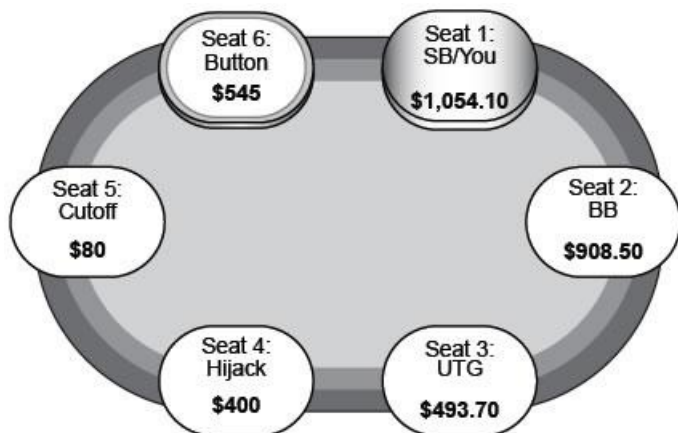
In Hand #23, the player 3-bet with A-Q-T-4 with a suited ace, but then got 4-bet from the blinds and folded when he was going to be heads up with position, again fearing domination. My take is if you are going to fold to a 4-bet, you should just flat call the first raise; and then if you are going to be heads up with position, just don't fold.

In Hand #24, the big blind 3-bet in a BB vs. SB matchup, but then folded to a 4-bet for whatever reason, thus violating both rules.  
Hand #25

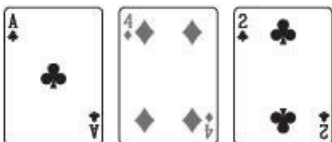
The game: \$2-\$4 online (6-max), six-handed

Your position: Small Blind

Your hand:



Pre-flop: The UTG player (\$493.70) raises to \$12. The hijack and cutoff fold. The button (\$545) calls. You (\$1,054.10) re-raise to \$52. The big blind folds. The UTG player and button both call.



Flop (\$158): You check. The UTG player bets \$128. The button raises all-in for \$493 total. You fold. The UTG player calls.



Turn (\$1,041.40):

River (\$1,041.40): UTG player: A♦ J♣ T♦ 5♣

Button: A♥ J♣ 5♥ 3♣

The Leak A-K-8-7ds is not a premium hand in any Omaha game, and 3-betting out of position is not a good idea in general, much less with a sub-premium hand.

I also don't see checking top pair, probable live draws to top two pair, and a flush draw to be the right play in this low-SPR situation on the flop. The play should be to bet and commit, particularly since you already represented A-A-x-x when you 3-bet before the flop. Even if you bet and get action, it would be hard for a single opponent to have both a better hand *and* a better draw than you. That said, once you 3-bet pre-flop and put yourself in this low-SPR situation, you are pretty much committed to betting the flop and going with it.

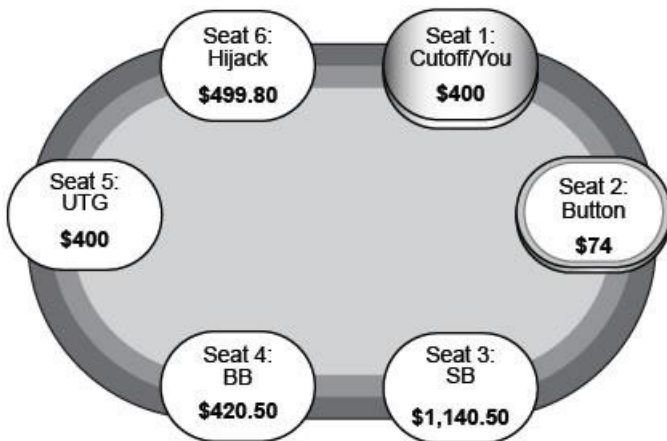
The UTG player did what the small blind should have done. The player in the small blind just got lucky that it went bet and then shove, against which you can legitimately argue that a fold is correct against two opponents, as now it is harder for the small blind to have either the best hand or the best draw. As it turned out, the player shoving on the button flopped both a wheel *and* a bigger flush draw than the small blind had.

Hand #26

The game: \$2-\$4 online (6-max), six-handed

Your position: Cutoff

Your hand:



Pre-flop: You (\$400) open with a raise to \$14. The button and small blind fold. The big blind (\$420.50) re-raises to \$44. You re-raise to \$134 to make a point and discourage the big blind from 3-betting you out-of-position. Your opponent re-raises and sets you all-in for \$400 total. You call.



Flop (\$800):



Turn (\$800):

River (\$800): The big blind shows A♥ A♣ 5♣ 2♥ for a pair of Aces.

The Leak Why 4-bet? I don't understand why people think this is a strong play. In doing so, the player merely negated his positional advantage.

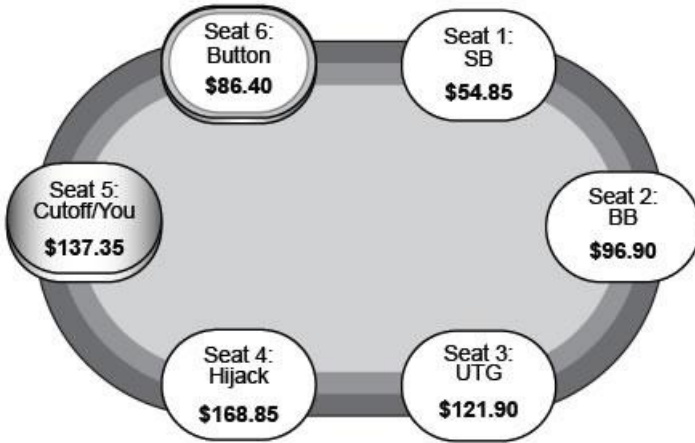
I plucked this one off of an instructional video. Looking back, I can't remember which player was which, but I hope the player in the cutoff seat was not the instructor (which it probably was).

Hand #27

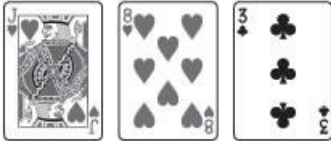
The game: \$0.50-\$1 online (6-max), six-handed

My position: Cutoff

My hand:



Pre-flop: The UTG player (\$121.90) opens with a raise to \$3. The next player folds. I (\$137.35) re-raise to \$10.50. The button (\$86.40) re-raises to \$36. The small blind folds. The big blind (\$96.90) re-raises all-in to \$96.90. The UTG player folds. I fold. The button calls all-in for \$86.40 total. The big blind shows K♦ K♥ Q♦ 5♥. The button shows A♥ A♦ 8♠ 3♠.



Flop (\$186.80):



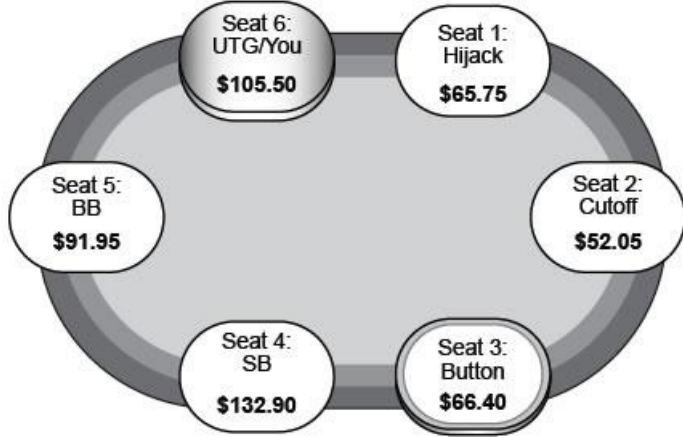
Turn (\$186.80):

River (\$186.80): Hand #28

The game: \$0.25-\$0.50 online (6-max), six-handed

My position: UTG

My hand:



Pre-flop: I (\$105.50) limp in UTG. The next player folds. The cutoff (\$52.05) raises to \$2.25, and the button (\$66.40) calls. The small blind folds. The big blind (\$91.95) re-raises to \$9.75. I call. The cutoff now re-raises to \$41.50, and the button folds. The big blind now re-raises to \$91.95 all-in. I fold. The cutoff calls all-in to \$52.05 total.

The cutoff shows K♣ K♦ J♥ 7♥. The big blind shows A♣ A♥ Q♦ 2♣.

Flop/Turn/River (\$116.35):

The Leaks In Hand #27, 5-betting with K-K-x-x is not the right play. K-K-x-x is not a huge favorite over much of anything, and basically you are just praying nobody has A-A-x-x. K♦ K♥ Q♦ 5♥ is:

- 58%/42% against A♣ Q♣ J♦ T♠ or 9♠ 8♠ 7♣ 6♣
- 55%/45% against A♣ 8♣ 7♠ 6♠
- 52%/48% against A♥ 8♥ 7♣ 6♣, where K-K-x-x hand has one live suit
- 35%/65% against A♣ A♠ 5♠ 4♦, for aces, but the K-K-x-x hand has two live suits
- 31%/69% against A♣ A♥ 7♥ 6♣ (hearts dominated)
- 27%/73% against A♥ A♦ 7♥ 7♦ (both suits dominated)
- And 37%/63% against the actual hand, A♥ A♦ 8♠ 3♠.

Shoving is no better the gambling. The correct play with K-K-x-x facing a two, 3-, and 4-bet is to fold.

In Hand #28, the button makes a couple of errors with a worse K-K-x-x hand. If he doesn't raise with the sub-premium K-K-x-x hand, he does not face a 3-bet from the big blind. And if he does not face a 3-bet from the big blind, he does not have to think about 4-betting with K-K-x-x against a hand against which he has no idea whether he is the favorite or the dog, and cannot be better than a 3:2 favorite either way.

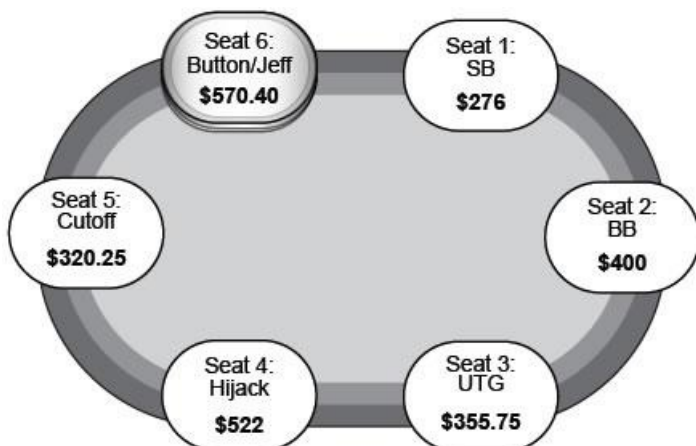
They say that PLO is a high-variance game. And surely it is, but there is a lot of excess variance being created by the players themselves making plays like these.

Hand #29

The game: \$2-\$4 online (6-max), six-handed

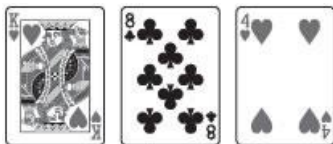
My position: Button

My hand:

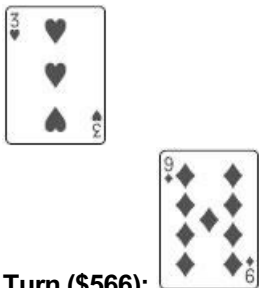


Pre-flop: It gets folded to me, and I (\$570.40) open with a raise to \$14. The small blind (\$276) re-raises to \$46. The big blind (\$400) now re-raises to \$152.

Action: I fold. The small blind calls.



Flop (\$318): The small blind bets \$124 all-in, and the big blind calls. The small blind shows Q♠ T♦ 7♥ 4♠ for bottom pair. The big blind shows Q♥ J♠ T♥ 8♠ for a pair of eights with a heart draw.



Turn (\$566):

River (\$566): The big blind wins with the flush.

The Leaks I really don't understand what these guys are thinking.

Let's start with the small blind. He 3-bets with Q-T-7-4 (single-suited nonetheless) out of position, and to what end? He's not deep enough to scare anyone, as if raising is supposed to scare someone who has position on you. And if the big blind folds, I call, and the flop comes as it did, what would have happened is that the small blind would have bet because he has the initiative and thinks I should fear him, when the reality is that I am just going to shove with my top pair.

The big blind's play doesn't make much sense, either. Sure, Q-J-T-8ds is a "premium" hand, but all PLO hands are basically drawing hands, except for A-A-x-x all-in pre-flop; and if you've gotta see a flop, A-A-x-x is also basically a drawing hand.

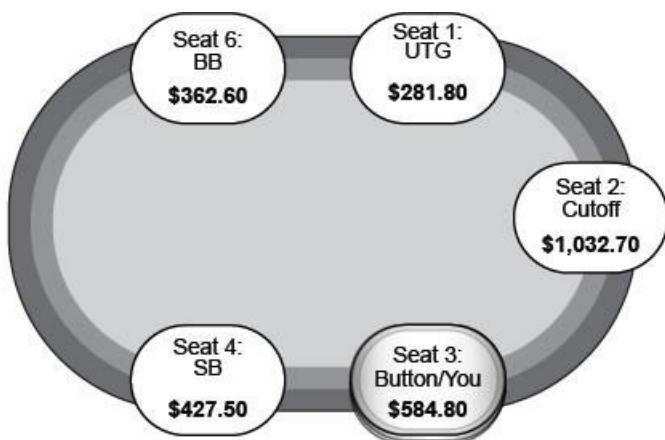
Sure, if the big blind knew the other guy had precisely Q-T-7-4 single-suited -- against which he is a 63%/37% favorite -- his isolation play is a good value play. Otherwise, what he is doing is not better than gambling, given the stack sizes. Because he has to know that his 4-bet is getting called or re-raised about 99% of the time -- either by me or the small blind -- after which point there will be less than one bet left on the flop regardless of who does what, and everybody will be virtually committed to the pot if they catch any piece of the board or any draw whatsoever.

Hand #30

The game: \$2-\$4 online (6-max), five-handed

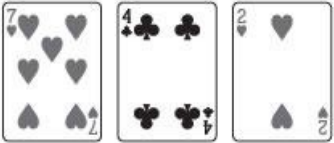
My position: Button

My hand:



Pre-flop: The first two players fold. I (\$584.80) open with a raise to \$14, and the small blind folds. The big blind (\$362.60) re-raises to \$44. I re-raise to \$134, and my opponent calls.





**Flop (\$270):** My opponent bets \$228.60 all-in. I call. My opponent shows  $T\heartsuit T\clubsuit 7\heartsuit 5\heartsuit$ .



**Turn (\$727.20):**

**River (\$727.20):** The Leak This is another really bad hand to 3-bet with from the big blind, and out of position to boot. It is hard to be better than a 2:1 favorite pre-flop in this game, but I am a 69%/31% favorite against the T-T-7-5 hand. I am also a 72%/28% favorite after the flop.

The pair in his hand is a rather significant handicap. With a hand like J-T-7-5 rainbow for a pair of sevens, for example, my opponent improves to a 39%/61% dog.

You should tend to avoid 3-betting with single pair hands other than A-A-x-x, and you should tend to avoid doing much 3-betting out of position period.

# A-A-x-x

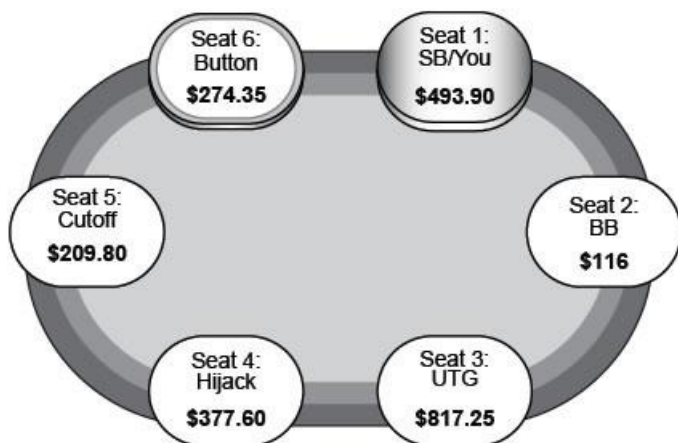
Hands #31 through #33 deal with A-A-x-x hands.

## Hand #31

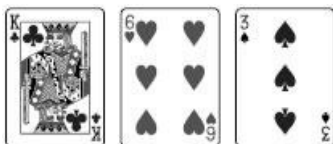
The game: \$2-\$4 online (6-max), six-handed

Your position: Small Blind

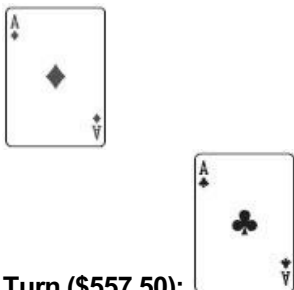
Your hand:



Pre-flop: The cutoff (\$209.80) opens with a raise to \$8. The button (\$274.35) calls. You (\$493.90) re-raise to \$36. The big blind folds. The cutoff folds. The button calls.



Flop (\$81): You bet \$68. Your opponent raises all-in for \$238.35. You call.



Turn (\$557.50):

River (\$557.50): Your opponent shows  $K♥ T♠ 9♥ 7♠$ .

The Leak The small blind is simply too deep to make this 3-bet out of position without truly premium aces. Because if you don't flop a set or a flush draw with this hand, then you wind up making plays like this one.

As it turns out, the player got lucky and was a 57%/43% favorite on the flop against the K-T-9-7 hand. But against K-T-9-6 for top two pair, the A-A-x-x hand becomes a 29%/71% dog. Against K-K-T-9 for top set, the A-A-x-x hand drops to about a 15%/85% or 16%/84% dog, depending on suits.

Against  $7♥ 6♠ 5♥ 4♠$  for a pair and a 13-card nut wrap, the A-A-x-x hand is a 44%/56% dog.

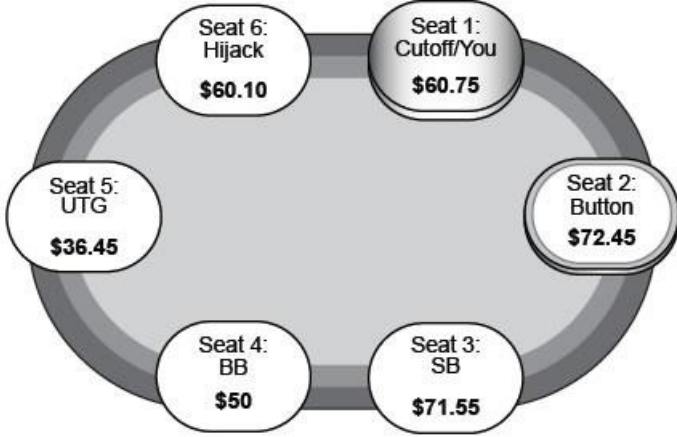
Basically, it is hard for the A-A-x-x hand to be more than a marginal favorite on this flop, but pretty easy for it to be a small to big dog. I think in aggregate, the small blind will prove to have overplayed his A-A-x-x hand in this spot.

## Hand #32

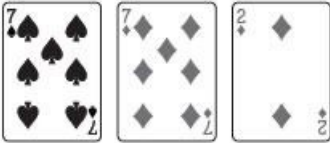
The game: \$0.25-\$0.50 online (6-max), six-handed

Your position: Cutoff

Your hand:



**Pre-flop:** The UTG player (\$36.45) limps in. The Hijack folds. You (\$60.75) raise to \$2. The button (\$72.45) calls. The small blind (\$71.55) calls. The big blind folds.



**Flop (\$8.10):** Everyone checks.



**Turn (\$8.10):** Everyone checks.



**River (\$8.10):** Everyone checks.

The small blind shows  $T\clubsuit 9\spadesuit 8\heartsuit 6\clubsuit$  for nothing, and the UTG player shows  $Q\clubsuit 9\heartsuit 4\clubsuit 2\clubsuit$  for queens up. The button mucks. You win.

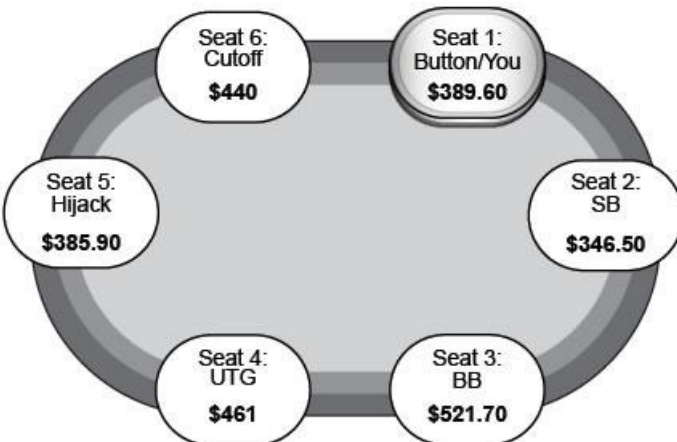
**The Leak** The problem with this A-A-x-x hand wasn't the way the hand was played after the flop, but rather the way it was played before it. A-A-9-2 rainbow is an awfully weak hand to try to attack a limper with, as it is a one-dimensional hand that pretty much needs to flop a set in order to be played strongly after the flop.

**Hand #33**

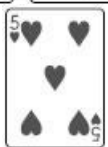
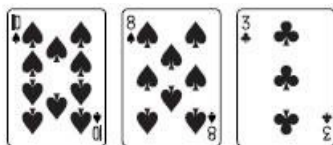
**The game:** \$2-\$4 online (6-max), six-handed

**Your position:** Button

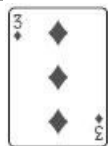
**Your hand:**



**Pre-flop:** The first three players (\$461, \$385.90), and \$440, respectively) all limp in. You (\$389.60) raise to \$26. The small blind folds. The big blind (\$521.70) and UTG player (\$461) both call. The hijack (\$385.90) re-raises to \$136. The cutoff folds. You re-raise all-in for \$389.60 total. The big blind folds. The UTG player calls, and the hijack calls all-in.



**Flop (\$1,167.10):**



**Turn (\$1,167.10):**

**River (\$1,167.10):** UTG Player: 9♠ 7♠ 5♦ 2♠

Hijack: A♠ A♠ 9♦ 6♥

**The Leak** The player on the button made a similar error to the player in the previous hand, only worse -- this player raised behind *three* limpers with A-A-5-3 rainbow, another hand that will have some difficulty flopping hard. Of course he got lucky and made a full house with his side cards to outdraw 9-7-5-2ds and another crap A-A-x-x hand.

The hijack with the A-A-9-6 rainbow hand played it OK.

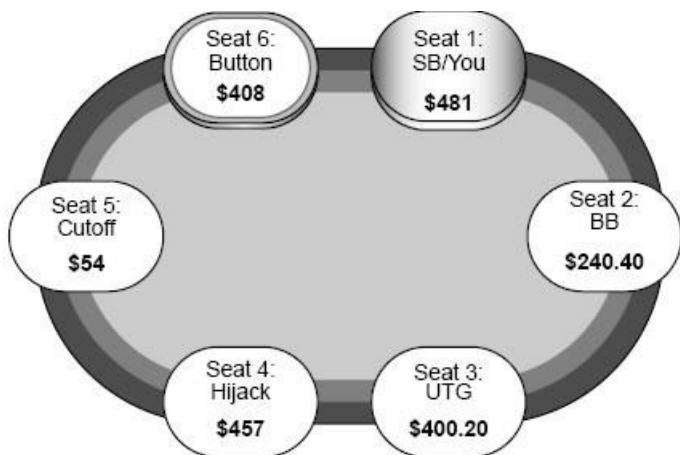
The UTG player with the 9-7-5-2ds did *not* play the hand OK, and got what he deserved.

**Hand #34**

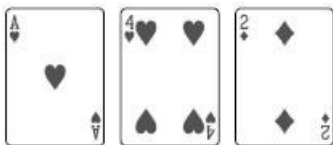
**The game:** \$2-\$4 online (6-max), six-handed

**Your position:** Small Blind

**Your hand:**



**Pre-flop:** Everybody folds to you in the small blind. You (\$481) raise to \$12. The big blind (\$240.40) -- a loose 3-bettor who has 3-bet you and then folded to a 4-bet in a previous hand -- re-raises to \$36. You call.



**Flop (\$69):** You check. Your opponent bets \$69. You fold.

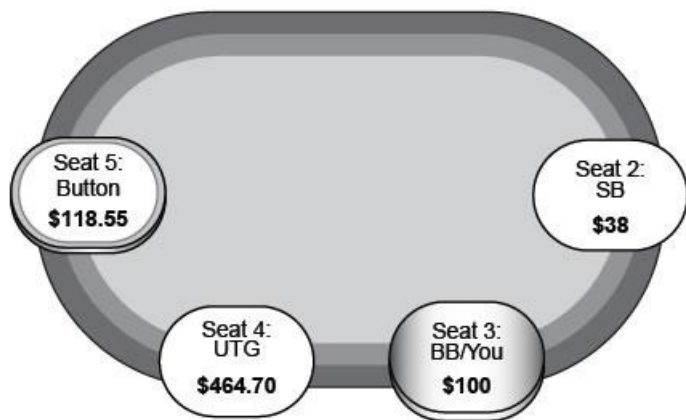
**The Leak** The open raise from the small blind with this suited ace hand is somewhat defensible. However, folding top pair with probable live draws to top two pair in this low-SPR situation (SPR < 3) is awfully weak. The play here should have been to check-raise the other player all-in.

**Hand #35**

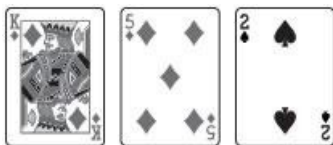
The game: \$0.50-\$1 online (6-max), four-handed

My position: Big Blind

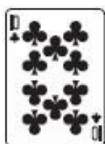
My hand:



Pre-flop: The UTG player (\$464.70) opens with a raise to \$3.50, and it gets folded to me. I (\$100) call.



Flop (\$7.50): I bet \$7.50, and my opponent calls.



Turn (\$22.50): I bet \$22.50, and my opponent calls.



River (\$67.50): I bet \$66.50 all-in. My opponent calls, showing A♦ A♠ 9♦ 9♠ for aces up. I win with the underfull.

The Leak The UTG player flopped an overpair and the nut flush draw in a heads up pot, in what is basically a high-SPR situation (SPR 13) -- judgment territory. That said, heads up in this SPR 13 situation, there should have been a raise at some point in the hand, whether on the flop or the turn.

I'm not saying the outcome would or would not have been different in this particular hand, but generally speaking, there is no question the UTG player underplayed his hand.

A raise with the overpair and nut flush draw is all purpose. He might have earned a fold with a raise on the turn -- if not the flop -- in this particular hand. And certainly if I had less of a hand -- like bare top pair -- then he would have earned a fold. Alternatively, if I had a drawing hand or combo hand like a pair of kings with a smaller diamond draw, the UTG player would have been raising for value. Ditto if I have a wrap, with or without diamonds.

As it turned out, the UTG player was a 57%/43% favorite over my two pair and gutshot on the flop. He would have been a 75%/25% favorite over K♣ Q♦ J♦ 4♣ for a pair of kings and smaller diamonds, and a 67%/33% favorite over 7♦ 6♦ 5♣ 4♣ for a pair with a 13-card nut wrap and diamonds -- an otherwise pretty strong hand.

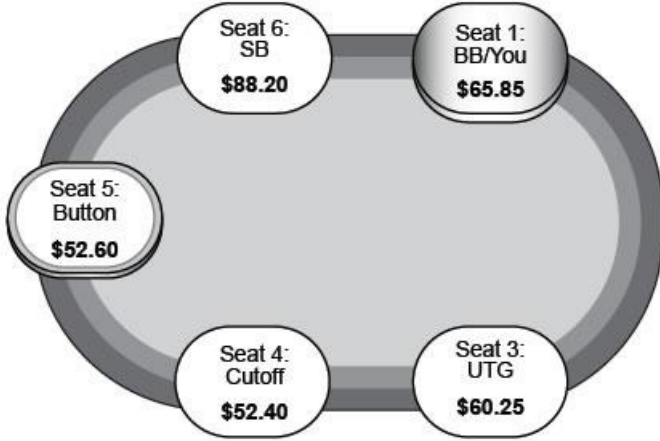
And pretty much worse case, he would only have been a 36%/64% dog against K-K-Q-J for top set, which I am not that likely to have heads up.

Hand #36

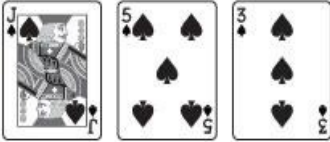
The game: \$0.25-\$0.50 online (6-max), five-handed

Your position: Big Blind

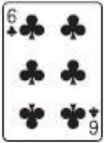
Your hand:



**Pre-flop:** The button (\$52.60) opens with a raise to \$1.75, and the small blind folds. I (\$65.85) call.



**Flop (\$3.75):** I bet \$2.50. My opponent raises to \$6.50, and I call.



**Turn (\$16.75):** I check. My opponent checks.



**River (\$16.75):** I check. My opponent checks, showing  $Q\heartsuit T\spadesuit 8\clubsuit 8\heartsuit$  for a queen-high flush.

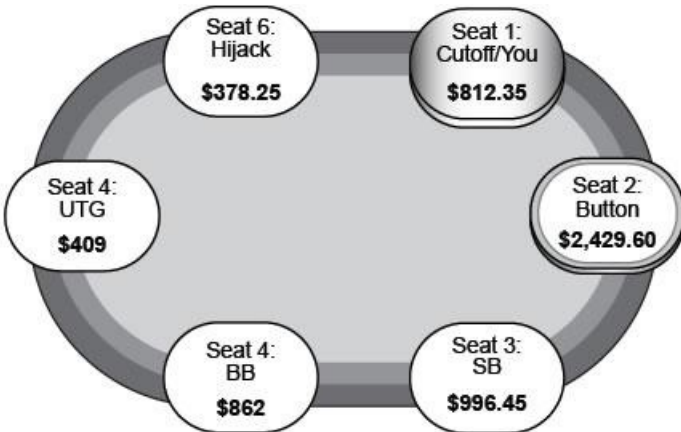
**The Leak** The button overplayed his queen-high flush by raising on the flop. He atoned for his error by checking back the turn, and then got lucky the board paired.

**Hand #37**

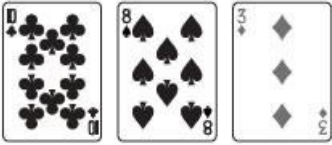
**The game:** \$2-\$4 online (6-max, deep) with \$0.75 antes, six-handed

**Your position:** Cutoff

**Your hand:**



**Pre-flop:** The first two players fold. You fold. The button (\$2,429.60) opens with a raise to \$18.50, and the small blind folds. The big blind (\$862) re-raises to \$62, and the button calls.



**Flop (\$130.50):** The big blind bets \$112. The button raises to \$416. The big blind now re-raises to \$799.25 all-in, and the button calls, showing  $K♥ J♦ T♦ 9♥$  for top pair and the nut opened straight draw. The big blind shows  $A♥ A♠ Q♥ T♥$  for a pair of aces.



**Turn (\$1,729):**

**River (\$1,729):** The big blind wins with the pair of aces.

**The Leak** The big blind overplayed his bare A-A-x-x hand on the flop in this mid-SPR situation (SPR 6). He was a 46%/54% dog against the actual hand, but a 38%/62% dog against  $T♦ 9♥ 8♠ 2♣$  for bare top two pair, and a 24%/76% dog against  $J♣ T♦ 9♥ 8♠$  for top two pair with an opened straight draw. He is also a 12%/88% dog against  $K♣ J♥ T♠ T♦$  for top set.

He is a 59%/41% favorite against  $K♣ 8♥ 4♦ 2♦$  for middle pair, but a 66%/34% favorite against  $K♣ T♠ 4♦ 2♦$  for top pair with a king kicker, probably because making trip tens does not beat the A-A-x-x hand in this case, as it gives the A-A-x-x hand trip tens with an ace kicker.

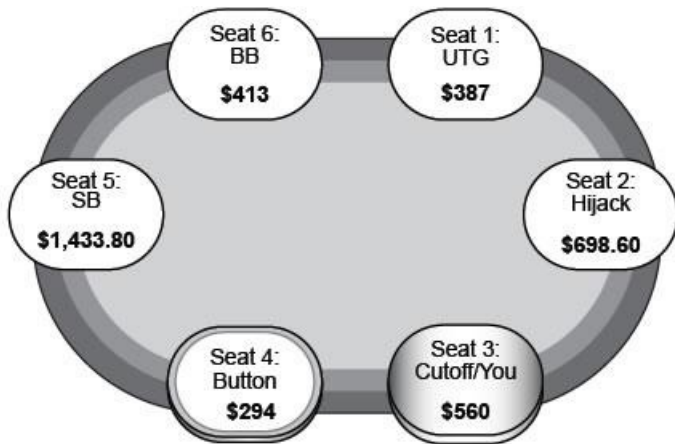
I think this is a small-favorite/big-dog scenario for the A-A-x-x hand, and thus 3-betting on the flop is not the correct play.

**Hand #38**

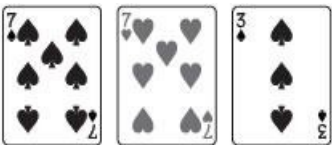
**The game:** \$2-\$4 online (6-max), six-handed

**My position:** Cutoff

**My hand:**



**Pre-flop:** The first two players fold. I (\$560) limp in. The button folds. The small blind (\$1,433.80) limps in, and the big blind (\$413) checks.



**Flop (\$12):** Both opponents check. I bet \$8. The small blind raises to \$36, and the big blind folds. I call.



**Turn (\$84):** My opponent bets \$84. I call.



**River (\$252):** My opponent bets \$252. I raise to \$436 all-in, and my opponent calls, showing T♠ 7♦ 5♥ 4♠ for trip sevens.

The Leak Well, I think it's pretty clear my opponent overplayed his trips here. Let's say I give him credit for a nice play on the flop. It's conceivable – however unlikely – that I call him with something like A-A-x-x or Q-Q-x-x on the turn trying to pick off the follow-through bluff, as I clearly called the check-raise on the flop with something similar (K-K-x-x).

So there is an off chance that my opponent's T-7-5-4 hand is still good.

But on the river, once I raise my opponent, there's about a 99% chance I can beat trip sevens with a ten kicker. And so even if I give him credit for the rest of the hand, he should not have paid off the raise on the river.

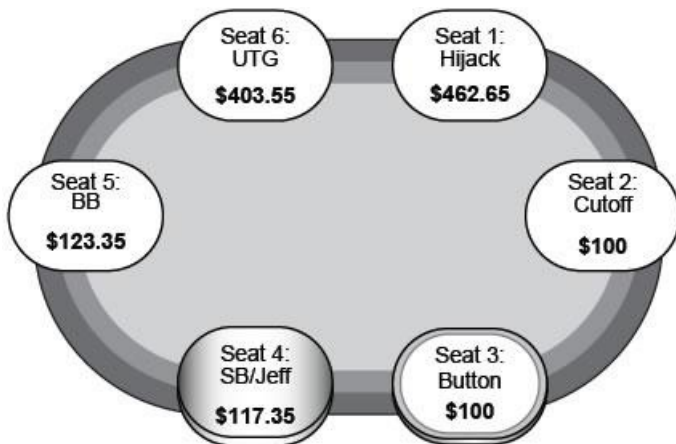
Now that said, I think most opponents who can call the turn bet will likely show you trip sevens or better, and I am not sure my opponent should even have bet the river at all with the undertrips, except maybe as a bluff, or maybe a small blocking bet.

**Hand #39**

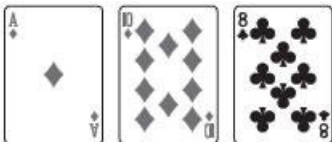
**The game: \$0.50-\$1 online (6-max), six-handed**

**My position: Small Blind**

**My hand:**



**Pre-flop:** The UTG player folds. The hijack (\$462.65) limps in, and the next two players both fold. I (\$117.35) call, and the big blind (\$123.35) checks.



**Flop (\$3):** I check, and it gets checked around.



**Turn (\$3):** I bet \$2. The big blind raises to \$7, and the hijack folds. I call.



**River (\$17):** I check. My opponent checks, showing K♠ Q♦ Q♣ 8♥ for two pair, aces and queens. I win.

**The Leak** The big blind's raise on the turn is incorrect. His raise is not getting called by less than an ace, and so there is no value in the raise; meanwhile, he sacrificed pot control in the name of "protecting" his hand. The play should have been to smooth call



and try to show the hand down on the river, or otherwise likely fold to a second bet.

# Part II: The Pre-Flop Playing Map

In Part II: The Pre-Flop Playing Map, we are going to map out your pre-flop playing approach. There are four basic situations covered here:

1. Opening Fire on the Blinds
2. Attacking the Limper
3. Playing Out of Position
4. 3-Betting vs. Small Ball

For each of the four situations, you are given a set of 30 hands, which are identical for each situation. Your task is to fill in each box with the action *you* would take in each situation for each particular hand.

This is *not* an exercise in “right” and “wrong,” but rather an exercise in how you think about starting hands and pre-flop play. My personal responses are given on the page following each situation. It is not necessary for your answers to match up with mine; what’s more important is the way that you think about your own responses.

# Opening Fire on the Blinds

**The situation: It is a \$1-\$2 game online (6-max) with 100BB stacks. You are on the button, and everybody has folded to you. Do you fold, call, or raise with the following hands?**

Hand	Action
1. A♥ K♠ Q♥ J♠	
2. J♠ T♦ 8♥ 6♠	
3. K♥ Q♠ T♥ 2♦	
4. Q♠ Q♦ T♠ 5♥	
5. 7♠ 7♦ 4♥ 2♠	
6. A♥ K♦ T♥ 2♠	
7. K♠ T♦ 8♠ 4♥	
8. J♠ T♦ 9♥ 8♠	
9. Q♠ Q♦ J♠ J♥	
10. A♠ 9♠ 8♦ 7♦	
11. J♠ J♦ 6♥ 5♦	
12. 8♠ 7♦ 6♥ 5♦	
13. 7♠ 6♦ 4♠ 2♦	
14. A♠ A♦ 9♠ 8♦	
15. A♠ A♦ T♠ 5♥	
16. Q♠ J♦ T♠ 7♥	
17. T♦ 9♠ 8♦ 6♥	
18. A♠ A♦ 9♥ 5♠	
19. Q♦ 9♦ 8♠ 7♥	
20. T♦ 8♠ 7♦ 6♠	
21. J♠ 6♠ 4♦ 3♥	
22. T♥ T♦ 8♠ 3♦	
23. T♠ 9♦ 8♠ 2♥	
24. Q♠ T♦ 9♥ 5♦	
25. Q♠ Q♦ J♠ T♦	
26. Q♠ J♦ T♥ 9♠	
27. T♠ 7♦ 6♠ 5♥	
28. J♠ 9♦ 8♠ 6♦	
29. K♥ K♠ Q♠ 2♥	
30. J♠ T♦ 7♠ 6♦	

# Opening Fire on the Blinds: My Answers

The situation: It is a \$1-\$2 game online (6-max) with 100BB stacks. You are on the button, and everybody has folded to you. Do you fold, call, or raise with the following hands?

Here's how I answer:

Hand	Action
1. A♥ K♠ Q♥ J♠	Raise
2. J♠ T♦ 8♥ 6♠	Raise
3. K♥ Q♠ T♥ 2♦	Raise
4. Q♠ Q♦ T♠ 5♥	Call
5. 7♠ 7♦ 4♥ 2♠	Fold
6. A♥ K♦ T♥ 2♠	Raise
7. K♠ T♦ 8♠ 4♥	Fold/Call/Raise
8. J♠ T♦ 9♥ 8♠	Raise
9. Q♠ Q♦ J♠ J♥	Raise
10. A♠ 9♠ 8♦ 7♦	Raise
11. J♠ J♦ 6♥ 5♦	Call/Raise
12. 8♠ 7♦ 6♥ 5♦	Raise
13. 7♠ 6♦ 4♠ 2♦	Call/Raise
14. A♠ A♦ 9♠ 8♦	Raise
15. A♠ A♦ T♠ 5♥	Raise
16. Q♠ J♦ T♠ 7♥	Raise
17. T♦ 9♠ 8♦ 6♥	Raise
18. A♠ A♦ 9♥ 5♠	Call
19. Q♦ 9♠ 8♠ 7♥	Raise
20. T♦ 8♠ 7♦ 6♠	Raise
21. J♠ 6♠ 4♦ 3♥	Call/Raise
22. T♥ T♦ 8♠ 3♦	Call
23. T♠ 9♦ 8♠ 2♥	Call/Raise
24. Q♠ T♦ 9♥ 5♦	Raise/Call
25. Q♠ Q♦ J♠ T♦	Raise
26. Q♠ J♦ T♥ 9♠	Fold/Call
27. T♠ 7♦ 6♠ 5♥	Raise/Call
28. J♠ 9♦ 8♠ 6♦	Raise
29. K♥ K♠ Q♠ 2♥	Call/Raise
30. J♠ T♦ 7♠ 6♦	Raise/Call

For the most part, I will raise with most hands I will play, with the main exception being dry pairs (Q♠ Q♦ T♠ 5♥, A♠ A♦ 9♥ 5♠, and T♥ T♦ 8♠ 3♦, as well as J♠ J♦ 6♥ 5♦ and K♥ K♠ Q♠ 2♥) and small, speculative class drawing hands (7♠ 6♦ 4♠ 2♦) and marginal "Small Ball" hands (J♠ 6♠ 4♦ 3♥). I will also tend to play most hands other than trash, which includes hands such as K♠ T♦ 8♠ 4♥, 7-7-4-2 unsuited, and Q-J-T-9 unsuited (virtually all unsuited hands are trash in my book, as they lack real big-pot potential without the ability to make a straight with the flush re-draw; dry big pairs such as A-A-x-x or K-K-x-x are speculative at best).

Note the variable responses for some of the hands. For instance, I may open-limp with J♠ 6♠ 4♦ 3♥ or T♠ 9♦ 8♠ 2♥ against most opponents, but may raise if the blinds are extremely tight. I will tend to raise with T♠ 7♦ 6♠ 5♥, but there is nothing wrong with open-limping with that hand, either.

With hands like K♥ K♠ Q♠ 2♥ or J♠ J♦ 6♥ 5♦, my default play is to limp and play a small pot, though I may venture a raise if the blinds are complete pushovers.

I can't say I've never played K♠ T♦ 8♠ 4♥ on the button. I would say calling or raising are not much better or worse than folding for some players, but that most players are probably better off simply folding the hand.

# Attacking the Limper

**New scenario: It's a \$1-\$2 game online (6-max) with 100BB stacks. You are on the button, and only the UTG player has limped in front of you. Do you fold, call, or raise with the following hands? How do your answers change if the UTG player is a strong player or weak player, or if the blinds are loose or tight?**

Hand	Action
1. A♥ K♠ Q♥ J♠	
2. J♠ T♦ 8♥ 6♠	
3. K♥ Q♠ T♥ 2♦	
4. Q♠ Q♦ T♠ 5♥	
5. 7♠ 7♦ 4♥ 2♠	
6. A♥ K♦ T♥ 2♠	
7. K♠ T♦ 8♠ 4♥	
8. J♠ T♦ 9♥ 8♠	
9. Q♠ Q♦ J♠ J♥	
10. A♠ 9♠ 8♦ 7♦	
11. J♠ J♦ 6♥ 5♦	
12. 8♠ 7♦ 6♥ 5♦	
13. 7♠ 6♦ 4♠ 2♦	
14. A♠ A♦ 9♠ 8♦	
15. A♠ A♦ T♠ 5♥	
16. Q♠ J♦ T♠ 7♥	
17. T♦ 9♠ 8♦ 6♥	
18. A♠ A♦ 9♥ 5♠	
19. Q♦ 9♦ 8♠ 7♥	
20. T♦ 8♠ 7♦ 6♠	
21. J♠ 6♠ 4♦ 3♥	
22. T♥ T♦ 8♠ 3♦	
23. T♠ 9♦ 8♠ 2♥	
24. Q♠ T♦ 9♥ 5♦	
25. Q♠ Q♦ J♠ T♦	
26. Q♠ J♦ T♥ 9♠	
27. T♠ 7♦ 6♠ 5♥	
28. J♠ 9♦ 8♠ 6♦	
29. K♥ K♠ Q♠ 2♥	
30. J♠ T♦ 7♠ 6♦	

# Attacking the Limper: My Answers

It's a \$1-\$2 game online (6-max) with 100BB stacks. You are on the button, and only the UTG player has limped in front of you. Do you fold, call, or raise with the following hands?

My answers:

Hand	Action
1. A♥ K♠ Q♥ J♠	Raise
2. J♠ T♦ 8♥ 6♠	Call/Raise
3. K♥ Q♠ T♥ 2♦	Call/Raise
4. Q♠ Q♦ T♠ 5♥	Call
5. 7♠ 7♦ 4♥ 2♠	Fold
6. A♥ K♦ T♥ 2♠	Raise
7. K♠ T♦ 8♠ 4♥	Fold
8. J♠ T♦ 9♥ 8♠	Raise
9. Q♠ Q♦ J♠ J♥	Raise
10. A♠ 9♠ 8♦ 7♦	Raise
11. J♠ J♦ 6♥ 5♦	Call
12. 8♠ 7♦ 6♥ 5♦	Raise
13. 7♠ 6♦ 4♠ 2♦	Call
14. A♠ A♦ 9♠ 8♦	Raise
15. A♠ A♦ T♠ 5♥	Call/Raise
16. Q♠ J♦ T♠ 7♥	Call/Raise
17. T♦ 9♠ 8♦ 6♥	Raise
18. A♠ A♦ 9♥ 5♠	Call
19. Q♦ 9♦ 8♠ 7♥	Call
20. T♦ 8♠ 7♦ 6♠	Call/Raise
21. J♠ 6♠ 4♦ 3♥	Call
22. T♥ T♦ 8♠ 3♦	Call
23. T♠ 9♦ 8♠ 2♥	Call
24. Q♠ T♦ 9♥ 5♦	Call
25. Q♠ Q♦ J♠ T♦	Raise
26. Q♠ J♦ T♥ 9♠	Fold
27. T♠ 7♦ 6♠ 5♥	Call
28. J♠ 9♦ 8♠ 6♦	Call/Raise
29. K♥ K♠ Q♠ 2♥	Call
30. J♠ T♦ 7♠ 6♦	Call

For the most part, when playing behind a limper, I tend to revert back to full-ring strategy, which is to raise with the premium-class hands and limp in with the speculative and marginal hands. However, if I think the limper is a particularly weak player and/or if the blinds are particularly tight, I may put in a raise with hands such as J-T-8-6 double-suited, K-Q-T-2 with a suit, Q-J-T-7 with a suit, T-8-7-6 double-suited, or J-9-8-6 double-suited -- hands that are not premium-class hands in multi-way pots, but which perform well enough in short-handed pots with the positional advantage.

And though I did otherwise with the hand presented in this chapter, I generally limp in with a hand like K♥ K♠ Q♠ 2♥ -- the double-suitedness doesn't do that much for me as having another connector would, as in K-K-Q-J or K-K-Q-T with a suit.

# Playing Out of Position

It's a \$1-\$2 game online, six-handed (6-max) with 100BB stacks. You are UTG. Do you fold, call, or raise with the following hands?

Hand	Action
1. A♥ K♠ Q♥ J♠	
2. J♠ T♦ 8♥ 6♠	
3. K♥ Q♠ T♥ 2♦	
4. Q♠ Q♦ T♠ 5♥	
5. 7♠ 7♦ 4♥ 2♠	
6. A♥ K♦ T♥ 2♠	
7. K♠ T♦ 8♠ 4♥	
8. J♠ T♦ 9♥ 8♠	
9. Q♠ Q♦ J♠ J♥	
10. A♠ 9♠ 8♦ 7♦	
11. J♠ J♦ 6♥ 5♦	
12. 8♠ 7♦ 6♥ 5♦	
13. 7♠ 6♦ 4♠ 2♦	
14. A♠ A♦ 9♠ 8♦	
15. A♠ A♦ T♠ 5♥	
16. Q♠ J♦ T♠ 7♥	
17. T♦ 9♠ 8♦ 6♥	
18. A♠ A♦ 9♥ 5♠	
19. Q♦ 9♦ 8♠ 7♥	
20. T♦ 8♠ 7♦ 6♠	
21. J♠ 6♠ 4♦ 3♥	
22. T♥ T♦ 8♠ 3♦	
23. T♠ 9♦ 8♠ 2♥	
24. Q♠ T♦ 9♥ 5♦	
25. Q♠ Q♦ J♠ T♦	
26. Q♠ J♦ T♥ 9♠	
27. T♠ 7♦ 6♠ 5♥	
28. J♠ 9♦ 8♠ 6♦	
29. K♥ K♠ Q♠ 2♥	
30. J♠ T♦ 7♠ 6♦	

# Playing Out of Position: My Answers

**It's a \$1-\$2 game online, six-handed (6-max) with 100BB stacks. You are UTG. Do you fold, call, or raise with the following hands?**

**My answers:**

Hand	Action
1. A♥ K♠ Q♥ J♠	Raise
2. J♠ T♦ 8♥ 6♠	Call/Raise/Fold
3. K♥ Q♠ T♥ 2♦	Fold/Call/Raise
4. Q♠ Q♦ T♠ 5♥	Fold/Call
5. 7♠ 7♦ 4♥ 2♠	Fold
6. A♥ K♦ T♥ 2♠	Raise/Call
7. K♠ T♦ 8♠ 4♥	Fold
8. J♠ T♦ 9♥ 8♠	Raise
9. Q♠ Q♦ J♠ J♥	Raise
10. A♠ 9♠ 8♦ 7♦	Raise
11. J♠ J♦ 6♥ 5♦	Fold/Call
12. 8♠ 7♦ 6♥ 5♦	Raise
13. 7♠ 6♦ 4♠ 2♦	Fold/Call
14. A♠ A♦ 9♠ 8♦	Raise
15. A♠ A♦ T♠ 5♥	Call/Raise
16. Q♠ J♦ T♠ 7♥	Call/Raise
17. T♦ 9♠ 8♦ 6♥	Raise
18. A♠ A♦ 9♥ 5♠	Call
19. Q♦ 9♦ 8♠ 7♥	Fold/Call/Raise
20. T♦ 8♠ 7♦ 6♠	Raise/Call
21. J♠ 6♠ 4♦ 3♥	Fold
22. T♥ T♦ 8♠ 3♦	Fold
23. T♠ 9♦ 8♠ 2♥	Fold
24. Q♠ T♦ 9♥ 5♦	Fold
25. Q♠ Q♦ J♠ T♦	Raise/Call
26. Q♠ J♦ T♥ 9♠	Fold
27. T♠ 7♦ 6♠ 5♥	Fold
28. J♠ 9♦ 8♠ 6♦	Raise/Call/Fold
29. K♥ K♠ Q♠ 2♥	Call
30. J♠ T♦ 7♠ 6♦	Call/Fold/Raise

**The answers when playing UTG in a six-handed game depend a lot on the players behind you. In extremely passive games where nobody is raising pre-flop, I've limped in with most of these hands and taken a flop. But in aggressive games where I can expect a raise behind me, I would fold everything but the premium-class hands, and perhaps a top speculativeclass drawing hand such as A♥ K♦ T♥ 2♠ with a suited ace (a speculativeclass hand in multi-way pots), or Q-J-T-7 with a suit, with which I may limp in and try to see the flop multi-way.**

**I will still raise with most of the premium hands in an aggressive game, though I prefer to call with a premium-class hand with a pair such as Q♠ Q♦ J♠ T♦, as the pairs are tough to play out of position when they miss the flop.**

**Usually, the solution in a tough, aggressive game is either to tighten up out of position or -- better yet -- leave the game and find a better one.**



### 3-Betting in Position vs. Small Ball

It's a \$1-\$2 game online, six-handed (6-max) with 100BB to 200BB stacks. You are on the button, and the cutoff has opened with a raise to \$7 in front of you. Do you fold, call, or re-raise with the following hands? For which hands might stack size affect your decision?

Hand	Action
1. A♥ K♠ Q♥ J♠	
2. J♠ T♦ 8♥ 6♠	
3. K♥ Q♠ T♥ 2♦	
4. Q♠ Q♦ T♠ 5♥	
5. 7♠ 7♦ 4♥ 2♠	
6. A♥ K♦ T♥ 2♠	
7. K♠ T♦ 8♠ 4♥	
8. J♠ T♦ 9♥ 8♠	
9. Q♠ Q♦ J♠ J♥	
10. A♠ 9♠ 8♦ 7♦	
11. J♠ J♦ 6♥ 5♦	
12. 8♠ 7♦ 6♥ 5♦	
13. 7♠ 6♦ 4♠ 2♦	
14. A♠ A♦ 9♠ 8♦	
15. A♠ A♦ T♠ 5♥	
16. Q♠ J♦ T♠ 7♥	
17. T♦ 9♠ 8♦ 6♥	
18. A♠ A♦ 9♥ 5♠	
19. Q♦ 9♦ 8♠ 7♥	
20. T♦ 8♠ 7♦ 6♠	
21. J♠ 6♠ 4♦ 3♥	
22. T♥ T♦ 8♠ 3♠	
23. T♠ 9♦ 8♠ 2♥	
24. Q♠ T♦ 9♥ 5♦	
25. Q♠ Q♦ J♠ T♦	
26. Q♠ J♦ T♥ 9♠	
27. T♠ 7♦ 6♠ 5♥	
28. J♠ 9♦ 8♠ 6♦	
29. K♥ K♠ Q♠ 2♥	
30. J♠ T♦ 7♠ 6♦	

# 3-Betting in Position vs. Small Ball: My Answers

It's a \$1-\$2 game online, six-handed (6-max) with 100BB to 200BB stacks. You are on the button, and the cutoff has opened with a raise to \$7 in front of you. Do you fold, call, or re-raise with the following hands? For which hands might stack size affect your decision?

My answers:

Hand	Action
1. A♥ K♠ Q♥ J♠	3-Bet/Call
2. J♠ T♦ 8♥ 6♠	Call/3-Bet
3. K♥ Q♠ T♥ 2♦	Call
4. Q♠ Q♦ T♠ 5♥	Call
5. 7♠ 7♦ 4♥ 2♠	Fold
6. A♥ K♦ T♥ 2♠	Call
7. K♠ T♦ 8♠ 4♥	Fold
8. J♠ T♦ 9♥ 8♠	3-Bet/Call
9. Q♠ Q♦ J♠ J♥	3-Bet/Call
10. A♠ 9♠ 8♦ 7♦	3-Bet/Call
11. J♠ J♦ 6♥ 5♦	Call
12. 8♠ 7♦ 6♥ 5♦	3-Bet/Call
13. 7♠ 6♦ 4♠ 2♦	Call
14. A♠ A♦ 9♠ 8♦	3-Bet/Call
15. A♠ A♦ T♠ 5♥	3-Bet/Call (stack size)
16. Q♠ J♦ T♠ 7♥	Call/3-Bet
17. T♦ 9♠ 8♦ 6♥	3-Bet/Call
18. A♠ A♦ 9♥ 5♠	Call/3-Bet (stack size)
19. Q♦ 9♦ 8♠ 7♥	Call/3-Bet
20. T♦ 8♠ 7♦ 6♠	3-Bet/Call
21. J♠ 6♠ 4♦ 3♥	Call/3-Bet
22. T♥ T♦ 8♠ 3♦	Call
23. T♠ 9♦ 8♠ 2♥	Call
24. Q♠ T♦ 9♥ 5♦	Call
25. Q♠ Q♦ J♠ T♦	Call/3-Bet (stack size)
26. Q♠ J♦ T♥ 9♠	Fold
27. T♠ 7♦ 6♠ 5♥	Call/3-Bet
28. J♠ 9♦ 8♠ 6♦	3-Bet/Call
29. K♥ K♠ Q♠ 2♥	Call
30. J♠ T♦ 7♠ 6♦	Call/3-Bet

Generally, I will 3-bet the premium hands *not* containing single pairs (such as Q-Q-J-T with a suit), but flat call with marginal hands or single-paired hands, assuming the hands are at least single-suited. The speculative or worse rundown hands (such as T-8-7-6, Q-J-T-7, or J-9-8-6) are also generally good enough to 3-bet, particularly when double-suited in 100BB stack play.

I will go either way with hands marked with a 3-Bet/Call or Call/3-Bet, listed in order of preference. The hands marked with (stack size) are dependent on actual stack sizes. The shorter the stacks, the more likely I am to 3-bet with the weaker A-A-x-x hands, while the deeper the stacks, the more likely I am to flat call. However, in the case of Q♠ Q♦ J♠ T♦, I will generally flat call, but may consider a 3-bet if my opponent is weak and the stacks are *deeper* – such as in the 200BB range or deeper – as my 3-bet now functions as a pot builder. On the other hand, if my opponent is the type to 4-bet light out of position, I will more likely flat call with Q♠ Q♦ J♠ T♦ than 3-bet, as I do not want to bloat the pot with an aggressive opponent when I am likely to flop a dry pair.

## Part III: \$0.25-\$0.50 PLO

The 18 hands in Part III are from \$0.25-\$0.50 blind 6-max PLO games online. Overall, the competition is pretty weak at these stakes, and you can generally afford to play pretty straight-forwardly.

Responses are graded on a standard 10-pt. scale. A score of 8-10 points on any given question reflects a correct response, with a 10-pt. score generally reflecting the best response. In other words, for any given question, there may be two (or more) correct answers – an 8-pt. response and a 10-pt. response – though one may get the slight edge. A score in the 4-pt. to 7-pt. range means the play is acceptable, though there are clear, superior options. Anything less than 4 pts. generally reflects an incorrect response.

At the end of each chapter, tally up your scores, and see how your responses grade out overall.

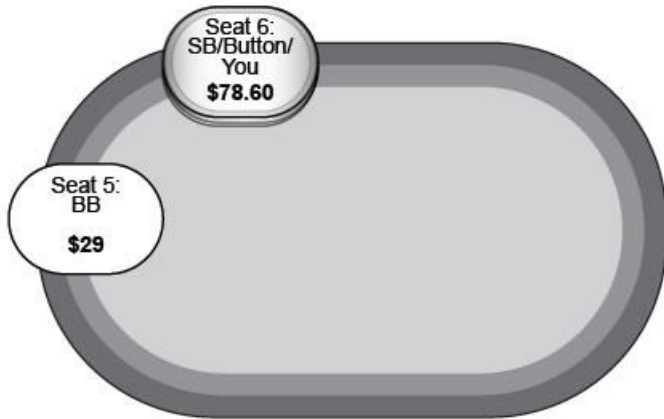
Note that the way the hand was played is not necessarily correct at every decision point. As such, you will do better to determine what you believe the best response to be rather than look ahead and try to cherry pick the responses.

Also note that on a few of the 162 practice hand quizzes in this book, the pre-flop decision is ambiguous enough so as not to be graded. For example, rather than agonize over whether it is correct to open raise with Q-8-6-5 with a suit from the hijack or cutoff seat, we'll just say that you did it and evaluate how you play out the rest of the hand.

Hand #1: 13-Card Nut Wrap The game: \$0.25-\$0.50 online (6-max), heads up

Your position: Small Blind/Button

Your hand:

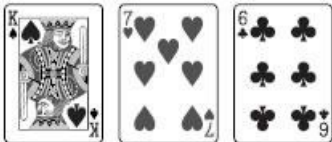


Pre-flop: You are first to act.

1. Do you:

- a. Fold
- b. Call
- c. Raise

Action: You (\$78.60) raise \$1.50, and your opponent (\$29) calls.



Flop (\$3): Your opponent bets \$2.

2. Do you:

- a. Fold
- b. Call
- c. Raise

Action: You raise to \$9, and your opponent calls.



Turn (\$21): Your opponent checks.

3. Do you:

a. Check

b. Bet

Action: You set your opponent all-in for \$18.50, and he calls, showing K♥ 6♦ 4♣ 2♦ for two pair.



River (\$58): You win.

Hand #1: Grades and Analysis 1. a(0), b(5), c(10). Calling is better than folding, but heads up, you should generally be raising with this otherwise marginal rundown hand with a dangler.

2. a(0), b(5), c(10). Again, calling is better than folding. But against the first bet in a heads up pot -- a possible steal bet -- you should put in a raise on the semi-bluff with your 13-card nut wrap.

3. a(10), b(5). You are clearly behind. You do have the initiative, and thus can only check if you know you are going to get called if you bet. The problem here is that your opponent only has \$18.50 left -- less than one bet -- and thus is unlikely to fold if he has anything to call you with. If instead your opponent had, say, \$50 or \$60 remaining, betting and calling a raise or otherwise betting through the river would be the correct play. Because in the latter case, your bet has the benefit of leverage.

But in this case, the play should have been to check. My bad.

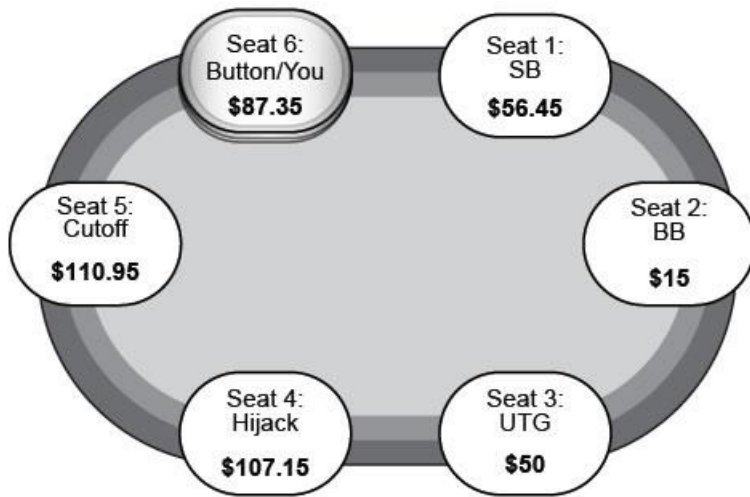
On the bright side, at least now you know I don't always make the correct play in this book!

Score: \_\_\_\_\_

**Hand #2: AKJ5, 3-Betting Before the Flop The game: \$0.25-\$0.50 online (6-max), six-handed**

**Your position: Button**

**Your hand:**

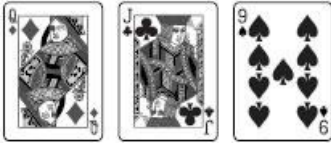


**Pre-flop: The UTG player folds. The hijack (\$107.15) opens with a raise to \$1.75, and the cutoff folds.**

**1. Do you:**

- a. Fold**
- b. Call**
- c. Raise**

**Action: You (\$87.35) re-raise to \$6. Both blinds fold, and the hijack calls.**



**Flop (\$12.75): Your opponent checks.**

**2. Do you:**

- a. Check**
- b. Bet**

**Action: You check.**



**Turn (\$12.75): Your opponent bets \$8.**

**3. Do you:**

- a. Fold**
- b. Call**
- c. Raise**

**Action: You call.**



**River (\$28.75): Your opponent checks.**

**4. Do you:**

**a. Check**

**b. Bet**

**Action: You check. Your opponent shows J♠ 9♣ 9♦ 8♣ for a set of nines.**

**Hand #2: Grades and Analysis 1. a(0), b(10), c(5). With a speculativeclass Broadway wrap hand, a call is generally in order. A 3-bet would be enterprising against the right opponent.**

**2. a(10), b(2). With a pair and the nut gutshot and the initiative, you should generally check behind.**

**3. a(0), b(10), c(2). With two pair, the nut gutshot, and now a diamond draw, you cannot fold for one bet. Raising is unnecessary unless you think you are bluffing your opponent off a better hand, which I think is unlikely to happen given the way the hand has played thus far. What I mean is, if your two pair is beat by a bigger two pair or a set, your opponent is unlikely to give you credit for checking the nuts on the flop, and thus will be unlikely to fold to a raise.**

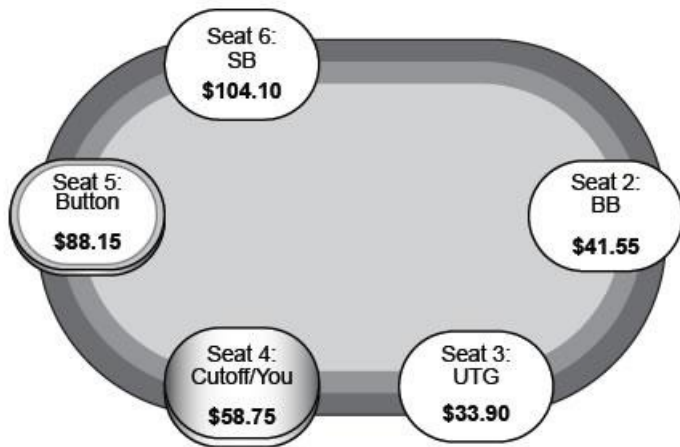
**4. a(10), b(0). You have enough to showdown. There is no value in betting, and betting as a bluff would be futile given the way the hand has been played.**

**Score: \_\_\_\_\_**

**Hand #3: Overpair and Nut Flush Draw** The game: \$0.25-\$0.50 online (6-max), five-handed

**Your position: Cutoff**

**Your hand:**

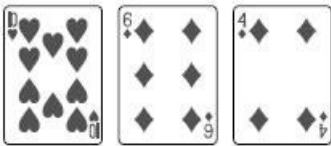


**Pre-flop: The UTG player folds.**

**1. Do you:**

- a. Fold**
- b. Call**
- c. Raise**

**Action: You (\$58.75) raise to \$1.75. The button (\$88.15) calls. The small blind folds. The big blind (\$41.55) calls.**



**Flop (\$5.50): The big blind checks.**

**2. Do you:**

- a. Check**
- b. Bet**

**Action: You bet \$5.50. The button raises to \$22, and the big blind folds.**

**3. Do you:**

- a. Fold**
- b. Call**
- c. Reraise**

**Action: You re-raise to \$57 all-in. The button calls, showing K♦ J♠ T♠ T♣ for top set.**



**Turn (\$119.50):**

**River (\$119.50): You lose.**

**Hand #3: Grades and Analysis 1. a(0), b(10), c(8). With a suited ace – and a second suit for backup**

**– you can make a case for raising with this J-J-x-x hand. That said, I think most players are better off limping in and trying to see a cheap flop.**

2. a(2), b(10). With an overpair and the nut flush draw, this hand should be bet. Checking with the intention of raising is a thought, but I prefer not to risk giving a free card with the jacks overpair – check-raising with A-A-x-x is more palatable, as there are no overcards to the aces. I'd give credit to checking with the bare nut flush draw.

3. a(0), b(4), c(10). With an SPR of 10.4, this is judgment territory.

You need 43.1% equity to justify shoving here, assuming you are going to get called 100% of the time (You must put in \$51.50 to shove, in what will be a \$119.50 pot if called).

You are a 55%/45% favorite over T? 9? 8? 7? for top pair, a 13-card nut wrap and a flush draw, as well as a backdoor flush draw; a 57%/43% favorite over 9♦ 8♦ 7♥ 5♥ for a 16-card nut wrap and a flush draw with a backdoor flush draw; a 46%/54% dog against T♦ 9♦ 8♥ 6♥ for top two pair, a gutshot, and a flush draw with a backdoor flush draw; a 48%/52% dog against T♦ 8♣ 7♣ 6♥ for top two pair with a double-nut gutshot.

You are also a 74%/26% favorite against K♦ Q♦ J♥ T♣ for top pair and the second-nut flush draw.

You are well above 43.1% against all of these possible hands.

On the other hand, you are a 29%/71% dog against K♦ J♠ T♠ T♣ for top set or K♦ Q♦ T♠ T♣ for top set and smaller diamonds.

Let's say your opponent has a non-set hand half the time and a set half the time, and that the five hands given represent his range; in that case, you will have 56.0% equity half the time. If you have 29% equity against a set, and are up against a set half the time, then you only have 42.5% equity on average. But if your opponent only has a set 40% of the time, then you will have 45.2% average equity.

Or, if there is some chance your opponent might fold to a re-raise, a re-raise would also be profitable.

Alternatively, if your opponent is a complete nit and will only raise with a set, then you are toast.

My view is that re-raising is a close play. But at the same time, I think you have too much hand to fold; and if you are going to call, then given these stack sizes, you should probably go ahead and shove and give your opponent a chance to fold.

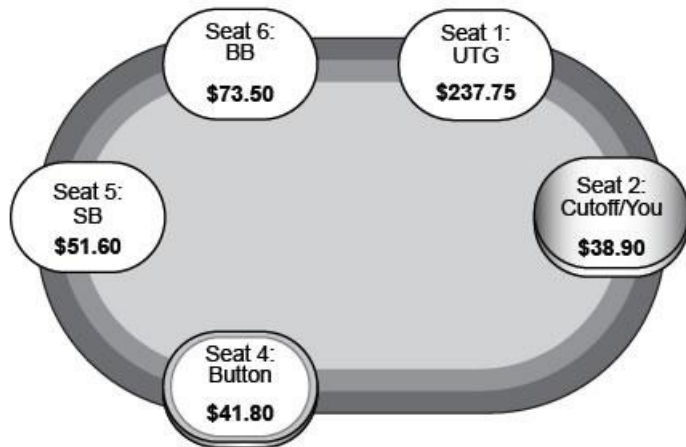
Score: \_\_\_\_\_



**Hand #4: 17-Card Wrap The game: \$0.25-\$0.50 online (6-max), five-handed**

**Your position: Cutoff**

**Your hand:**

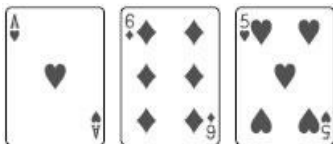


**Pre-flop: The UTG player (\$237.75) limps in.**

**1. Do you:**

- a. Fold**
- b. Call**
- c. Raise**

**Action: You (\$38.90) limp in. The button (\$41.80) limps in. The small blind folds. The big blind (\$73.50) checks.**



**Flop (\$2.25): The first two players check.**

**2. Do you:**

- a. Check**
- b. Bet**

**Action: You bet \$2.25. The button folds. Both the big blind and UTG player call.**



**Turn (\$9): Both opponents check.**

**3. Do you:**

- a. Check**
- b. Bet**

**Action: You bet \$4. The big blind folds. The UTG player calls.**



**River (\$17): Your opponent checks.**

**4. Do you:**

- a. Check**
- b. Bet**

Action: You check. Your opponent shows A♠ J♠ 2♥ 2♣ for aces up, and you win with the straight.

Hand #4: Grades and Analysis 1. a(5), b(10), c(0). T-8-7-4ds is a Small Ball hand that generally dictates a limp in late position behind a limper. Folding from the cutoff would be tight, but not the worst play.

2. a(2), b(10). From a steal position, the top-end 17-card wrap should be bet, two hearts or no hearts on the board.

3. a(5), b(10). You got two callers on the flop, and picked up diamonds on the turn. Checking is OK. However, nobody else has shown strength, and I like following through, particularly since straight and flush draws might give up now that the board has paired.

4. a(10), b(4). Having hit the straight on this board, you should probably check and show down.

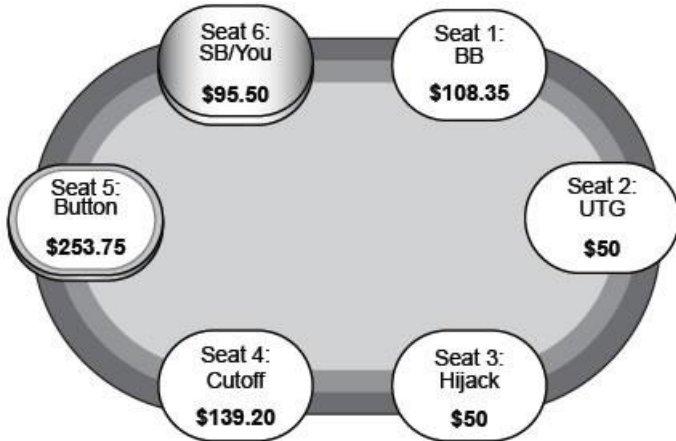
Score: \_\_\_\_\_

**Hand #5: Wrap OOP**

**The game: \$0.25-\$0.50 online (6-max), six-handed**

**Your position: Small Blind**

**Your hand:**



**Pre-flop: The UTG player (\$50) opens with a raise to \$1.75. It gets folded to the button (\$253.75), who calls.**

**1. Do you:**

- a. Fold**
- b. Call**
- c. Reraise**

**Action: You (\$95.50) call. The big blind (\$108.35) calls.**



**Flop (\$7): 2. Do you:**

- a. Check**
- b. Bet**

**Action: You check, and it gets checked around.**



**Turn (\$7): 3. Do you:**

- a. Check**
- b. Bet**

**Action: You bet \$7. It gets folded to the button, who calls.**



**River (\$21): 4. Do you:**

- a. Check**
- b. Bet**

**Action: You check, and your opponent checks, showing A♣ J♦ 7♣ 6♦ for two pair. You win with the flush.**

**Hand #5: Grades and Analysis 1. a(8), b(10), c(0). You have a speculative class wrap hand with 16-card nut wrap potential. Really.**

you would do OK just folding your small blind to a raise pretty much every time. That notwithstanding, with the button having called, you expect to play a multi-way pot if you call, which is really what you want with this type of hand when playing out of position.

Reraising would be a mistake.

2. a(10), b(2). You have a 13-card wrap, but only a 7-card nut draw. You don't want to bet out here into three players and get raised. 3. a(2), b(10). Having turned the nut straight with a flush re-draw, the play is to bet and hope to draw action -- preferably a raise. What you definitely don't want is to check and have the turn get checked through.

4. a(10), b(2). Now you have a weak flush and have a real decision to make. Well, not really, because betting is only the right play if you think your opponent might have the same straight and might be willing to try to pick off a bluff at the river. Otherwise, the play should be to check and call, and try to induce a bluff, or otherwise limit the damage if behind.

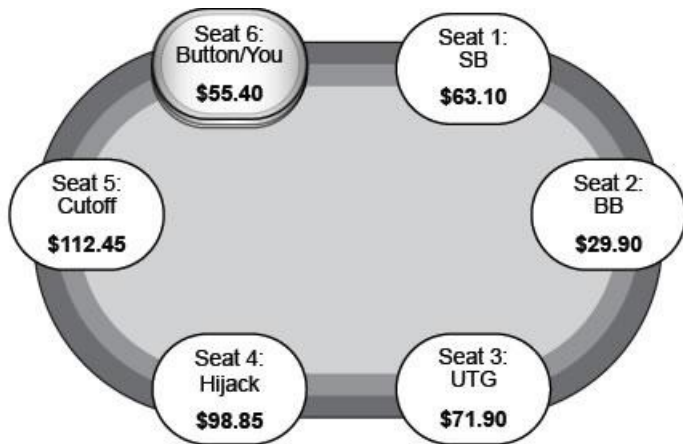
Score: \_\_\_\_\_

**Hand #6: One Barrel, Or...**

**The game: \$0.25-\$0.50 online (6-max), six-handed**

**Your position: Button**

**Your hand:**

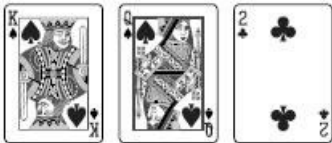


**Pre-flop: It gets folded to you.**

**1. Do you:**

- a. Fold**
- b. Call**
- c. Raise**

**Action: You (\$55.40) raise to \$1.75, and only the small blind (\$63.10) calls.**



**Flop (\$4): Your opponent checks.**

**2. Do you:**

- a. Check**
- b. Bet**

**Action: You bet \$4, and your opponent calls.**



**Turn (\$12): Your opponent checks.**

**3. Do you:**

- a. Check**
- b. Bet**

**Action: You bet \$8.75 and your opponent folds.**

**Hand #6: Grades and Analysis 1. a(0), b(5), c(10). Calling is acceptable, but raising and opening fire on the blinds should be the preferred play.**

**2. a(2), b(10). With no hand and no draw, a c-bet is in order.**

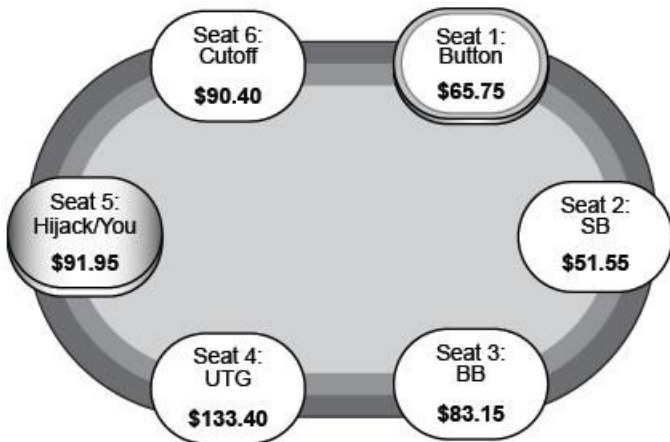
**3. a(4), b(10). Checking would be giving up. You can only check if you give your opponent credit for a flush. But generally speaking, you should follow through and take at least one more shot at this pot.**



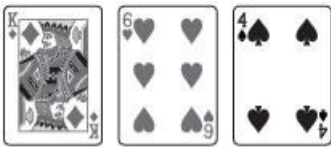
**Hand #7: Opening Fire on the Blinds The game: \$0.25-\$0.50 online (6-max), six-handed**

**Your position: Hijack**

**Your hand:**



**Pre-flop: The first player folds. You (\$91.95) open with a raise to \$1.75, and only the big blind (\$83.15) calls.**



**Flop (\$3.75): Your opponent checks.**

**1. Do you:**

- a. Check**
- b. Bet**

**Action: You bet \$3.75, and your opponent calls.**



**Turn (\$11.25): Your opponent bets \$11.**

**2. Do you:**

- a. Fold**
- b. Call**
- c. Raise**

**Action: You call.**



**River (\$33.25): Your opponent checks.**

**3. Do you:**

- a. Check**
- b. Bet**

**Action: You check. Your opponent shows A♠ A♥ 9♠ 7♥ for a pair of aces, having turned the nut spade draw. You win with two pair.**

**Hand #7: Grades and Analysis 1. a(8), b(10). You can go either way here with the middle pair and nut gutshot, though at \$0.25-\$0.50 I would be more inclined to bet.**

2. a(10), b(8), c(0). You turned the middle two pair, which is enough to pick off a bluff (reverse float). That said, there is another round of betting to be played, and if you are not comfortable calling two bets down if need be, then folding may be the better option.

3. a(10), b(5). If you are betting, it is clearly as a bluff. That said, you have enough to show down.

**Score:** \_\_\_\_\_

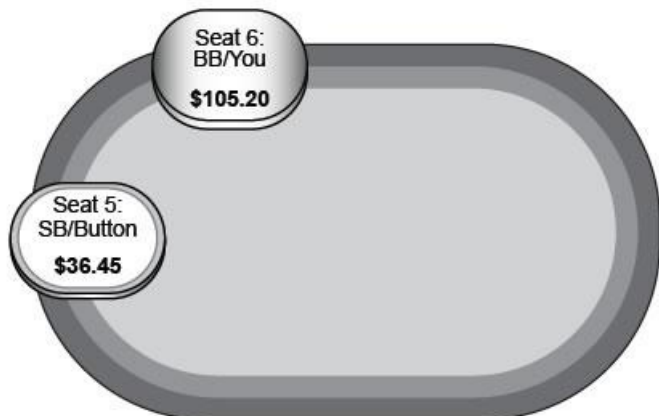


**Hand #8: Heads Up OOP**

**The game: \$0.25-\$0.50 online (6-max), heads up**

**Your position: Big Blind**

**Your hand:**

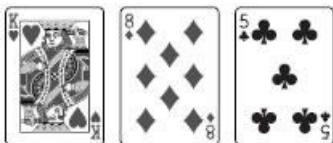


**Pre-flop: The SB/Button (\$36.45) opens with a raise to \$1.50.**

**1. Do you:**

- a. Fold**
- b. Call**
- c. Reraise**

**Action: You (\$105.20) call.**



**Flop (\$3): 2. Do you:**

- a. Check-fold**
- b. Check-call**
- c. Check-raise**
- d. Bet**

**Action: You check. Your opponent bets \$3, and you call.**



**Turn (\$9): 3. Do you:**

- a. Check-fold**
- b. Check-call**
- c. Check-raise**
- d. Bet**

**Action: You check, and your opponent bets \$6. You raise to \$27, and your opponent re-raises to \$31.95 all-in. You call. Your opponent shows A♣ A♥ 9♠ 2♣ for a bare pair of aces.**

**4. Who is the favorite in this matchup?**

- a. You**
- b. The other guy**



River (\$72.90): You lose.

Hand #8: Grades and Analysis 1. a(0), b(10), c(5). I suppose this is an OK hand to 3-bet with 73BBs deep.

2. a(0), b(10), c(6), d(8). I think check-calling is the best option, as it allows you to draw value from your pair. Checking with the intention of raising would be enterprising in this mid-high SPR situation (SPR 11.7), though perhaps unnecessarily dangerous -- you do have top pair. Leading out is OK. Check-folding, however, is probably too weak in this situation.

3. a(0), b(2), c(10), d(8). Having picked up the flush draw with less than two bets left to play, check-raising now becomes a strong option. Leading and calling a raise is also a viable option.

4. a(0), b(10). You are actually a 45%/55% dog in this matchup.

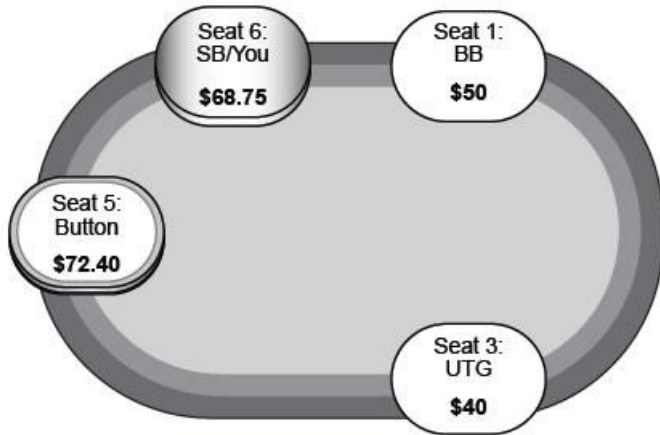
**Score:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Hand #9: 9-8-7-6 from the SB**

**The game: \$0.25-\$0.50 online (6-max), four-handed**

**Your position: Small Blind**

**Your hand:**



**Pre-flop: The UTG player (\$40) posts a \$0.50 blind to enter the game, and checks his option. The button folds.**

**1. Do you:**

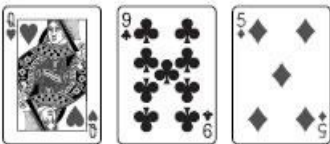
- a. Fold**
- b. Call**
- c. Raise**

**Action: You (\$68.75) raise to \$2. The big blind (\$50) re-raises to \$6.50, and the UTG player folds.**

**2. Do you:**

- a. Fold**
- b. Call**
- c. Reraise**

**Action: You call.**



**Flop (\$13.50): 3. Do you:**

- a. Check-Fold**
- b. Check-Call**
- c. Check-Raise**
- d. Bet**

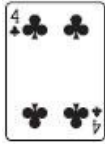
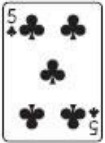
**Action: You check. Your opponent bets \$8.50. You raise to \$39. Your opponent re-raises all-in to \$43.50, and you call. Your opponent shows  $A\clubsuit A\heartsuit K\spadesuit J\clubsuit$ .**

**4. Are you the favorite?**

- a. Yes**
- b. No**

**5. Do you play your opponent's hand the same way?**

- a. Yes**
- b. No**



**Turn (\$100.50):**

**River (\$100.50):** Your opponent wins with a bigger flush.

**Hand #9: Grades and Analysis 1. a(2), b(10), c(5).** It is never really wrong to fold the smallblind. But hey, you've got a premium-class rundown. Calling from this position is the preferred play. If you choose to raise, you'd better know what you are doing after the flop.

**2. a(2), b(10), c(5).** I don't generally fold after getting 3-bet. Reraising (4-betting) is a viable option at 100BBs deep because if you re-raise the full pot to \$20 and your opponent calls, then there will only be one bet left. That said, I prefer calling.

**3. a(8), b(0), c(10), d(10).** You flopped middle pair and an inside wrap in a low-SPR situation. However, some of your straight outs are tainted, as an eight would give a J-T-x-x hand a bigger straight. You could check-fold; alternatively, you could either lead out and commit, or go for a check-raise and give your opponent a chance to bet-fold.

**4. a(0), b(10).** No, you are actually a 42%/58% dog.

**5. a(10), b(4).** Yes and no. I would have bet the full pot rather than \$8.50 on the flop, but yes I would have committed with the overpair and gutshot in the low-SPR situation.

Note that if your opponent had  $A\clubsuit A\heartsuit K\heartsuit 3\clubsuit$  without the gutshot, you would only be a 47%/53% dog, and your play on the flop would have been profitable even if your opponent did not fold to the raise.

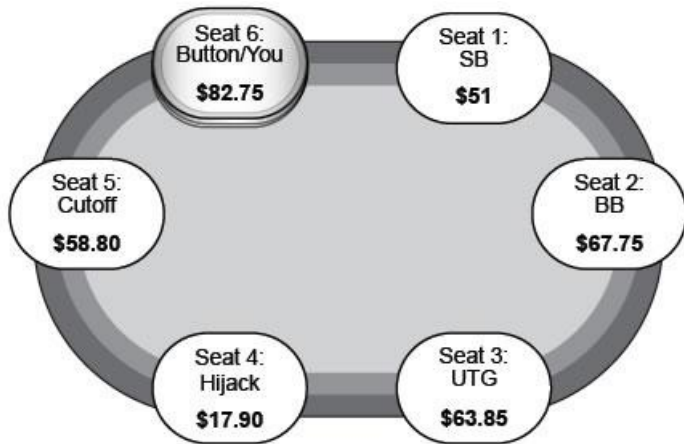
**Score:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Hand #10: KKQJ**

**The game: \$0.25-\$0.50 online (6-max), six-handed**

**Your position: Button**

**Your hand:**

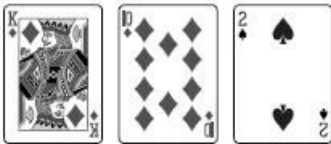


**Pre-flop: The first two players fold. The cutoff (\$58.80) opens with a raise to \$1.75.**

**1. Do you:**

- a. Fold**
- b. Call**
- c. Reraise**

**Action: You (\$82.75) call. The small blind (\$51) calls. The big blind folds.**



**Flop (\$5.75): The small blind checks. The cutoff bets \$5.75.**

**2. Do you:**

- a. Fold**
- b. Call**
- c. Raise**

**Action: You raise to \$23. The small blind folds. The cutoff re-raises all-in to \$57.05. You call. Your opponent shows A♦ Q♦ T♠ 8♠ for middle pair, the nut gutshot and the nut flush draw.**

**3. Who's the favorite?**

- a. You**
- b. The other guy**

**4. Do you play your opponent's hand the same way?**

- a. Yes**
- b. No**



**Turn (\$119.85):**

River (\$119.85): You lose.

Hand #10: Grades and Analysis 1. a(0), b(10), c(2). With a single, non-A-A-x-x pair, 3-betting is generally not the right play.

2. a(0), b(2), c(10). With top set and the nut openended straight draw in a mid-high SPR situation (SPR 10 with the cutoff), you want to build the pot now with your big-pot hand.

3. a(10), b(0). You are a 62%/38% favorite.

4. a(10), b(0). Yeah, he played the hand pretty much the only way he could in this mid-SPR (SPR 10) situation.

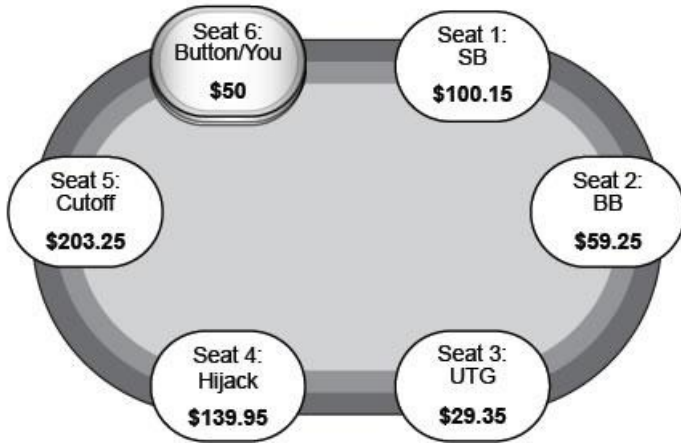
Score: \_\_\_\_\_

**Hand #11: KQQJ**

**The game: \$0.25-\$0.50 online (6-max), six-handed**

**Your position: Button**

**Your hand:**



**This hand took place later in the same session.**

**Pre-flop: It gets folded to you on the button.**

**1. Do you:**

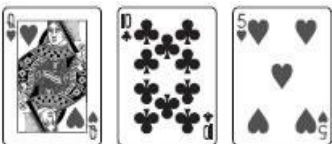
- a. Fold
- b. Call
- c. Raise

**Action: You (\$50) open with a raise to \$1.75. The small blind folds. The big blind (\$59.25) re-raises to \$5.50.**

**2. Do you:**

- a. Fold
- b. Call
- c. Reraise

**Action: You call.**



**Flop (\$11.25): Your opponent bets \$11.25.**

**3. Do you:**

- a. Fold
- b. Call
- c. Raise

**Action: You raise all-in to \$44.50, and your opponent calls, showing A♦ K♠ J♦ 7♣.**

**4. Do you play your opponent's hand differently?**

- a. Yes
- b. No





Turn (\$100.25):

River (\$100.25): You win.

Hand #11: Grades and Analysis 1. a(0), b(2), c(10). This should be an open-raise with a premium-class hand.

2. a(0), b(10), c(0). I don't see 4-betting being the correct play with queens. To 4-bet, you would basically be praying that your opponent doesn't have A-A-x-x or K-K-x-x; and then even if he doesn't, you aren't really a big favorite against anything else yourself.

3. a(0), b(2), c(10). As before, with top set and the nut openended straight draw, you want the money in on the flop.

4. a(10), b(5). Well, personally, I probably don't 3-bet pre-flop from the big blind. But having made that mess, I probably do what he did and bet/shove the flop, though he turned out to be a 24%/76% dog on the flop.

This hand is a makeup hand for the previous one. I didn't want you reading through this book with a bad taste in your mouth.

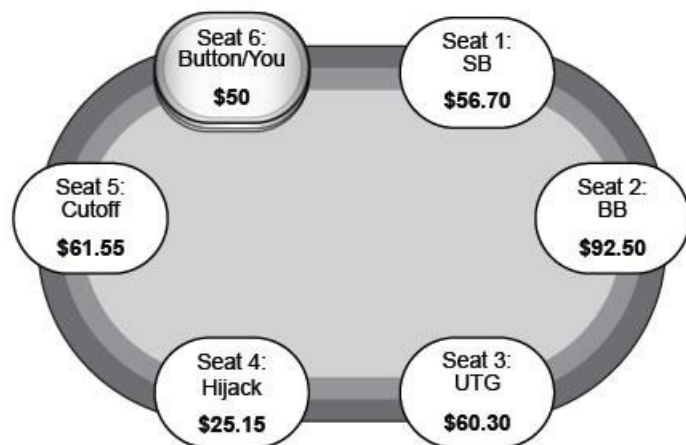
Score: \_\_\_\_\_



**Hand #12: Undertrips The game: \$0.25-\$0.50 online (6-max), six-handed**

**Your position: Button**

**Your hand:**



**Pre-flop: It gets folded to you.**

**1. Do you:**

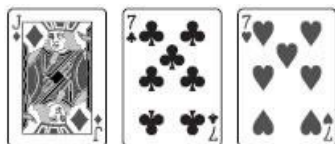
- a. Fold
- b. Call
- c. Raise

**Action: You (\$50) raise to \$1.75. The small blind (\$56.70) calls. The big blind (\$92.50) re-raises to \$7.**

**2. Do you:**

- a. Fold
- b. Call
- c. Reraise

**Action: You call. The small blind folds.**



**Flop (\$15.75): Your opponent bets \$15.75.**

**3. Do you:**

- a. Fold
- b. Call
- c. Raise

**Action: You call.**



**Turn (\$47.25): Your opponent checks.**

**4. Do you:**

- a. Check
- b. Bet

**Hypothetical Action: You check.**



Hypothetical River (\$47.25): Your opponent sets you all-in for your last \$27.25.

5. Do you:

a. Fold

b. Call

Hand #12: Grades and Analysis

1. a(0), b(5), c(10). I like opening fire on the blinds; despite the top gap, you do have some nut wrap potential.

2. a(0), b(10), c(0). Reraising is out of the question with this hand; so is folding in position.

3. a(0), b(10), c(4). Folding for one bet would be too weak. Raising is OK in this low SPR situation (SPR < 3), but not the best play - your opponent will simply fold to the raise when he has nothing, whereas he may bet the turn again with air if you just call.

4. a(10), b(0). Here's the situation, you have less than one pot-sized bet remaining. Having turned the underfull, you do not fear giving a free card, as you are not easily outdrawn. Meanwhile, your opponent is not likely to have any of the hands that could easily outdraw you, as he would likely have set you all-in on the turn himself had he had an overpair or trips.

And at the same time, your opponent is more likely to have bet all of those same hands that he could check-call a turn bet from you.

Basically, betting is pretty much the wrong play. The play should be to check and try to induce a bluff on the river.

5. a(0), b(10). Given the way the hand has been played, you cannot fold here for one more bet.

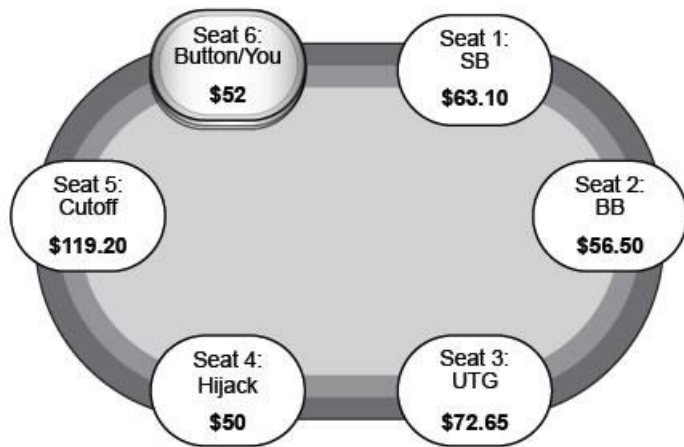
In the actual hand, I bet the turn for whatever reason, and my opponent folded.

Score: \_\_\_\_\_

**Hand #13: 3-Betting Before the Flop The game: \$0.25-\$0.50 online (6-max), six-handed**

**Your position: Button**

**Your hand:**

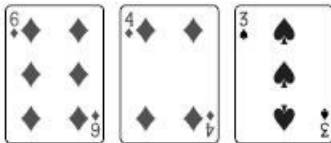


**Pre-flop: The UTG player folds. The hijack (\$50) opens with a raise to \$1.75, and the cutoff folds.**

**1. Do you:**

- a. Fold**
- b. Call**
- c. Reraise**

**Action: You (\$52) re-raise to \$6. It gets folded back to the hijack, who calls.**



**Flop (\$12.75): Your opponent checks.**

**2. Do you:**

- a. Check**
- b. Bet**

**Action: You check.**



**Turn (\$12.75): Your opponent bets \$10.50.**

**3. Do you:**

- a. Fold**
- b. Call**
- c. Raise**

**Action: You raise to \$44.25. Your opponent calls all-in for \$44 total, showing 8♥ 7♦ 5♦ 5♥, having both flopped and turned the nut straight with a diamond re-draw.**



**River (\$100.75): You lose.**

**4. Did you misplay this hand?**

**a. Yes**

**b. No**

Hand #13: Grades and Analysis 1. a(0), b(10), c(9). You could go either way here. I give calling the extra point because of the extra spade in your hand, but neither play is necessarily "wrong."

2. a(10), b(5). Betting is rarely wrong. That said, with a nut gutshot, a fistful of overcards and having hit a pivot card on the flop, checking is a superior option.

3. a(0), b(2), c(10). An all-in raise is unequivocally the best play in my book. You have a pair plus 13-card nut wrap (minus the diamonds) against a possible steal bet.

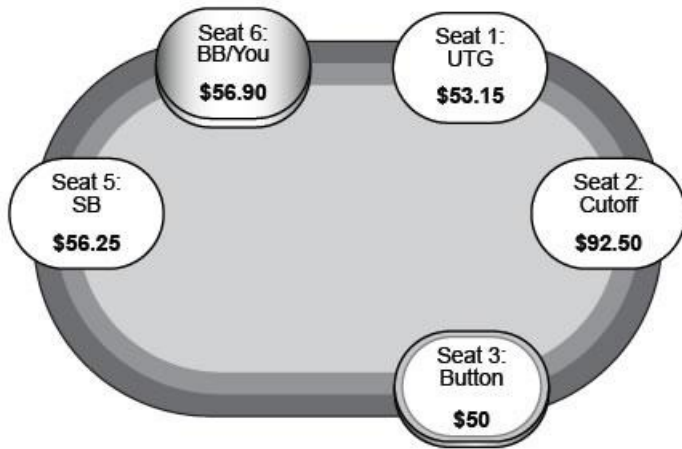
4. a(0), b(10). If anything, your opponent made a mistake by checking the flop and letting you get this close to outdrawing him. This time he just happened to flop the stones with stone re-draws, and you *still* turned a great chance of beating him.

Score: \_\_\_\_\_

**Hand #14: BB vs. SB, Attacking the Limper The game: \$0.25-\$0.50 online (6-max), five-handed**

**Your position: Big Blind**

**Your hand:**

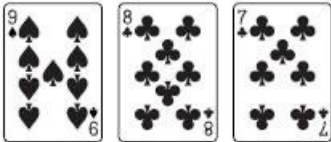


**Pre-flop: Everybody folds to the small blind (\$56.25), who calls.**

**1. Do you:**

- a. Check
- b. Raise

**Action: You (\$56.90) raise to \$1.50, and your opponent calls.**

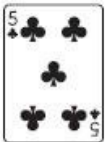


**Flop (\$3): Your opponent checks.**

**2. Do you:**

- a. Check
- b. Bet

**Action: You check.**



**Turn (\$3): Your opponent checks.**

**3. Do you:**

- a. Check
- b. Bet

**Action: You check.**



**River (\$3): Your opponent checks.**

**4. Do you:**

- a. Check
- b. Bet

Action: You check. Your opponent shows A♠ T♥ 9♥ 2♠ for a pair of nines, and you win with the straight.  
Hand #14: Grades and Analysis 1. a(8), b(10). This is a decent enough hand to attack the limper with.

2. a(10), b(4). You have bottom two pair and double-sucker straight draws. Rather than bet and risk getting blown off a hand/draw that may have value, the better play is to check.

3. a(10), b(2). Well, now you have a straight on a flush board, and still have the full house draw. I think a pot-control check is still in order.

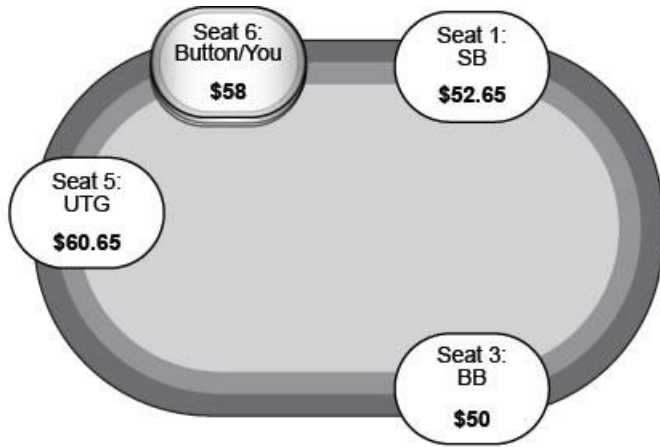
4. a(10), b(2). There is little value in betting, and you have enough to show down.

Score: \_\_\_\_\_

**Hand #15: Middle Set The game: \$0.25-\$0.50 online (6-max), four-handed**

**Your position: Button**

**Your hand:**

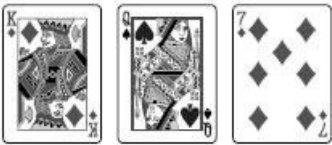


**Pre-flop: The UTG player folds.**

**1. Do you:**

- a. Fold**
- b. Call**
- c. Raise**

**Action: You (\$58) limp in. The small blind folds. The big blind (\$50) checks.**



**Flop (\$1.25): Your opponent checks.**

**2. Do you:**

- a. Check**
- b. Bet**

**Action: You bet \$1.25, and your opponent calls.**



**Turn (\$3.75): Your opponent checks.**

**3. Do you:**

- a. Check**
- b. Bet**

**Action: You bet \$3.75, and your opponent calls.**



**River (\$11.25): Your opponent checks.**

**4. Do you:**

- a. Check**



**b. Bet**

**Action: You check. Your opponent shows J♦ T♠ T♣ 4♦ for a straight, having flopped the openended straight draw, turned a smaller set with a smaller flush draw, and rivered the straight.**

**Hand #15: Grades and Analysis 1. a(0), b(10), c(2). The play with the dry queens is to limp in and see a cheap flop.**

**2. a(0), b(10). Of course you are betting middle set.**

**3. a(4), b(10). Checking is only correct if you can somehow give your opponent credit for a straight. The thing is, having picked up the flush draw and a gutshot to go with your set, you cannot be check-raised off your hand. This hand should be bet.**

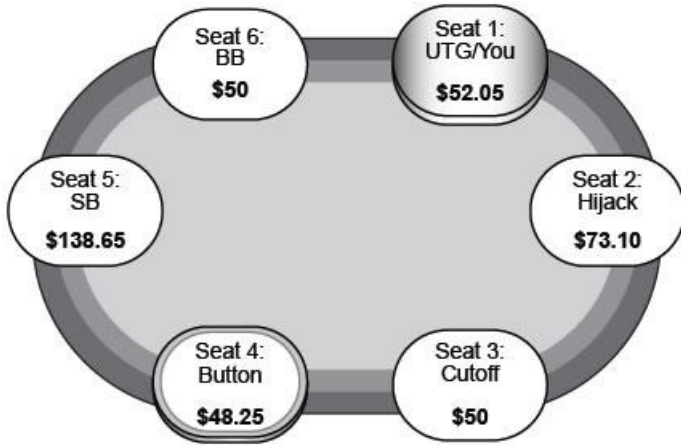
**4. a(10), b(0). There is little-to-no value in betting. The play is to check and show down.**

**Score: \_\_\_\_\_**

**Hand #16: Opening Fire on the Blinds The game: \$0.25-\$0.50 online (6-max), six-handed**

**Your position: UTG**

**Your hand:**

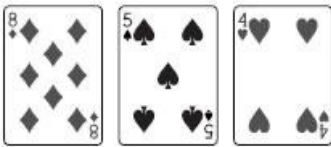


**Pre-flop: You are first to act.**

**1. Do you:**

- a. Fold?**
- b. Call?**
- c. Raise?**

**Action: You (\$52.05) raise to \$1.75, and only the small blind (\$138.65) calls.**



**Flop (\$4): Your opponent checks.**

**2. Do you:**

- a. Check?**
- b. Bet?**

**Action: You check.**



**Turn (\$4): Your opponent bets \$2.**

**3. Do you:**

- a. Fold?**
- b. Call?**
- c. Raise?**

**Action: You call.**



**River (\$8): Your opponent bets \$4.**

**4. Do you:**

- a. Fold?
- b. Call?
- c. Raise?

Action: You call. Your opponent shows A♣ A♥ 9♣ 6♠ for a pair of aces, and you win with top two pair.

Hand #16: Grades and Analysis 1. a(0), b(8), c(10). A-Q-T-9 with a suited ace is a premium-class hand. Raise it up.

2. a(10), b(5). You hit a pivot card of sorts with the 8♦, you have a handful of overcards, and a backdoor nut flush draw. This is a good spot to take the free card.

3. a(0), b(10), c(4). You picked up top pair and a nut gutshot, and are facing a weak-stab steal bet. You must block this with a combo float.

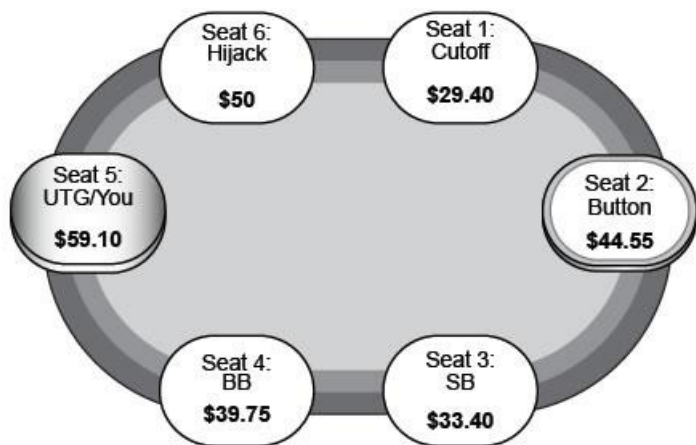
4. a(2), b(10), c(0). With top two pair, you have too much hand to fold against a possible follow-through bet. But at the same time, there is little value in raising, either.

Score: \_\_\_\_\_

**Hand #17: Flush The game: \$0.25-\$0.50 online (6-max), six-handed**

**Your position: UTG**

**Your hand:**

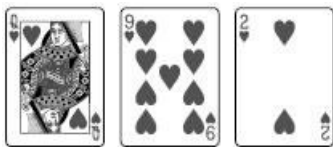


**Pre-flop: You are first to act.**

**1. Do you:**

- a. Fold?
- b. Call?
- c. Raise?

**Action: You (\$59.10) open with a raise to \$1.75, and only the small blind (\$33.40) calls.**

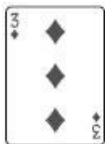


**Flop (\$4): Your opponent checks.**

**2. Do you:**

- a. Check?
- b. Bet?

**Action: You check.**

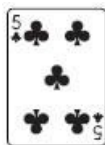


**Turn (\$4): Your opponent checks.**

**3. Do you:**

- a. Check?
- b. Bet?

**Action: You check.**



**River (\$4): Your opponent bets \$4.**

**4. Do you:**

- a. Fold?
- b. Call?
- c. Raise?

Action: You call. Your opponent shows Q♠ J♥ T♥ 4♥ for a bigger flush. You lose.

Hand #17: Grades and Analysis 1. a(0), b(8), c(10). I don't mind opening with 9-8-7-6ds UTG.

2. a(10), b(5). Betting isn't wrong. That said, a small flush is basically a one-bet hand -- maybe two at most against the right opponent. I'd be more inclined to check back the flop and play a small pot.

3. a(10), b(8). You can either check this and call any bet on the river -- or otherwise bet the river yourself -- or you can bet, after which you will likely look to check and showdown the river if called. I prefer checking and making this pot a one-bet affair.

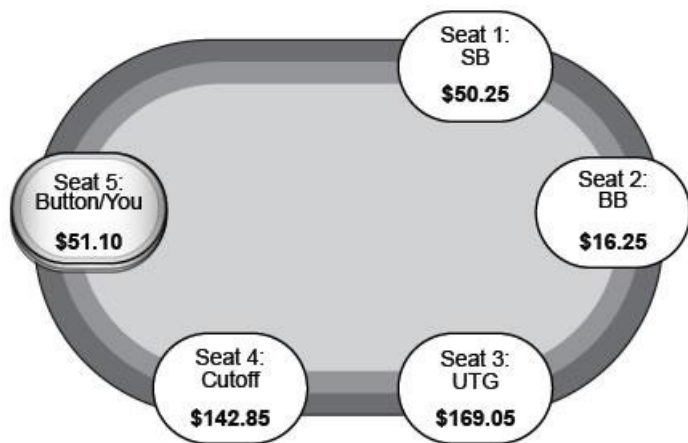
4. a(2), b(10), c(0). You can't reasonably fold the flush for one bet heads up. Folding, however, is better than raising -- you have enough to showdown, but probably not enough to raise for value.

Score: \_\_\_\_\_

**Hand #18: 3-Betting Before the Flop The game: \$0.25-\$0.50 online (6-max), five-handed**

**Your position: Button**

**Your hand:**

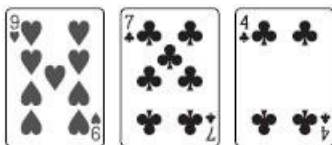


**Pre-flop: The UTG player folds. The cutoff (\$142.85) raises to \$1.75.**

**1. Do you:**

- a. Fold?**
- b. Call?**
- c. Reraise?**

**Action: You (\$51.10) re-raise to \$6. Both blinds fold, and the cutoff calls.**



**Flop (\$12.75): Your opponent checks.**

**2. Do you:**

- a. Check?**
- b. Bet?**

**Action: You bet \$12.75. Your opponent raises to \$51, putting you allin for \$33.35 more, or \$46.10 total.**

**3. Do you:**

- a. Fold?**
- b. Call?**

**Action: You call. Your opponent shows A♠ A♣ 7♥ 4♠ for bottom two pair.**

**4. Who is the favorite?**

- a. You?**
- b. Your opponent?**



**Turn (\$104.95):**

**River (\$104.95): You win.**

**Hand #18: Grades and Analysis 1. a(0), b(10), c(8). 9-8-6-5 with a suit is a near-premium class hand, which should be good**

enough for a 3-bet.

2. a(0), b(10). You have top pair and a 17-card wrap. In this low-SPR situation ( $SPR < 4$ ), this should be a bet and commit, despite the presence of the two clubs on the board.

3. a(0), b(10). You are essentially pot-committed.

4. a(10), b(0). You are a 63%/37% favorite on this flop.

**Score:** \_\_\_\_\_

### Part III: Final Grades

Hand #1:	_____
Hand #2:	_____
Hand #3:	_____
Hand #4:	_____
Hand #5:	_____
Hand #6:	_____
Hand #7:	_____
Hand #8:	_____
Hand #9:	_____
Hand #10:	_____
Hand #11:	_____
Hand #12:	_____
Hand #13:	_____
Hand #14:	_____
Hand #15:	_____
Hand #16:	_____
Hand #17:	_____
Hand #18:	_____

Total Score:	_____
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Total Score	Grade	Comment
635 - 700	A	Excellent. If you scored in the 635 - 700 range, then you scored either 8, 9 or 10 on every question, or you might have missed a few at most but hit the bulk of them on the head. Your game is rock solid.
574 - 634	B	OK. The bottom of this range represents a 7 point per hand allowance.
520 - 573	C	No good. In this range, you are giving up 7-10 points per hand. There are holes in your game that require fixing before you can safely move ahead.
< 520	F	Are you <i>sure</i> you're not trying to lose?



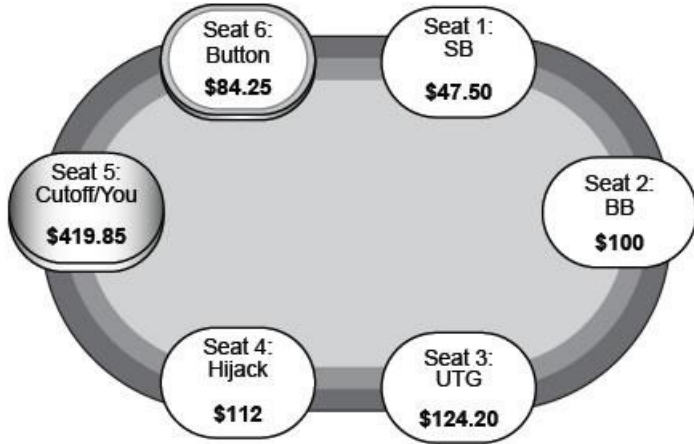
# Part IV: \$0.50-\$1 PLO

Part IV consists of 54 hands from \$0.50-\$1 games online, the last five of which are from deep-stack ante games. The competition at \$0.50-\$1 is pretty comparable to what you might find in a typical small-stakes game live at \$1-\$2, \$1-\$3, \$2-\$3, or \$1-\$2 with a \$5 bring-in. That is, you will start to find some pretty competent players at these stakes, but the games are still soft overall.

**Hand #1: Pair Plus Flush Draw and 17-Card Wrap** The game: \$0.50-\$1 online (6-max), six-handed

**Your position: Cutoff**

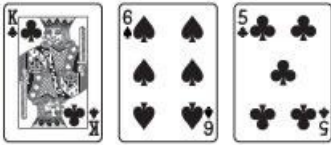
**Your hand:**



**1. The first two players fold. Do you:**

- a. Fold
- b. Call
- c. Raise

**Action: You (\$419.85) open with a raise to \$3.50, and only the big blind (\$100) calls.**



**Flop (\$7.50): Your opponent checks.**

**2. Do you:**

- a. Check
- b. Bet

**Action: You bet \$7.50. Your opponent calls.**



**Turn (\$22.50): Your opponent bets \$22.50.**

**3. Do you:**

- a. Fold
- b. Call
- c. Raise

**Action: You raise and set your opponent all-in for \$89 total. Your opponent calls with J♣ J♠ 8♣ 7♠.**

**4. Should you be concerned?**

- a. Yes

b. No

5. Did you misplay the hand?

a. Yes

b. No

6. Did you get outplayed?

a. Yes

b. No



River (\$200.50): You split the pot with the same straight.

Hand #1: Grades and Analysis 1. a(0), b(5), c(10). You have a premium-class rundown with a suit in the cutoff seat, and it has been folded to you. This is an excellent opportunity to open fire on the blinds.

2. a(0), b(10). You have a pair, a top-end 17-card wrap and a flush draw. This should be bet 100%.

3. a(0), b(2), c(10). You now have the nut straight with a flush re-draw, straight out of Chapter 1, Book 1. This is what we play for -- freeroll opportunities. That said, you cannot capitalize on a freeroll opportunity unless you raise. Too many beginning players just call here.

4. a(10), b(2). Yeah, you *should* be concerned -- you are getting freerolled yourself, as your opponent has the same straight with a bigger flush draw. If you answered "No," you get two points for having no fear.

5. a(0), b(10). As far as I am concerned, you played this hand the only way it could be played.

6. a(0), b(10). Saying that you got outplayed would be giving your opponent too much credit. He just happened to have the same straight draw with a bigger flush draw, and he just happened to hit the same straight with a bigger flush re-draw.

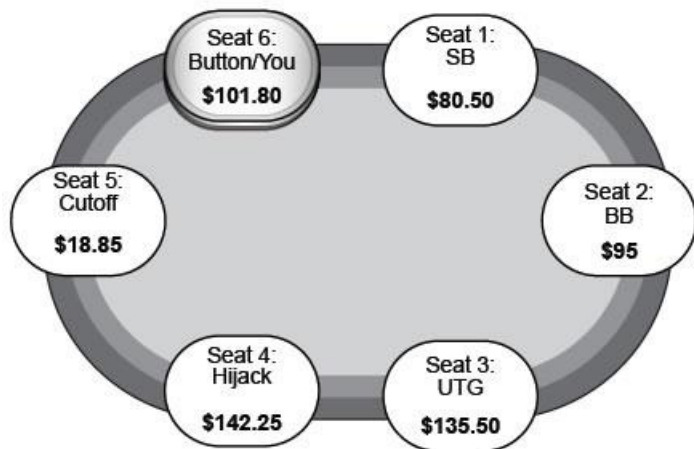
There are a lot of other hands he could have had to call on the flop, and he could conceivably have had K-9-x-x or bare 8-7-x-x to lead out on the turn.

Score: \_\_\_\_\_

**Hand #2: Attacking the Limper The game: \$0.50-\$1 online (6-max), six-handed**

**Your position: Button**

**Your hand:**

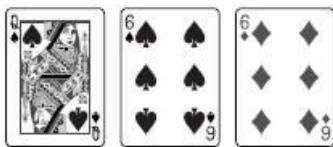


**Pre-flop: The UTG player (\$135.50) calls. The next player folds. The cutoff (\$18.85) calls.**

**1. Do you:**

- a. Fold**
- b. Call**
- c. Raise**

**Action: You (\$101.80) raise to \$4.50, and only the two limpers call.**



**Flop (\$15): The UTG player checks. The next player bets \$13.35 all-in.**

**2. Do you:**

- a. Fold**
- b. Call**
- c. Raise**

**Action: You call. The UTG player calls.**



**Turn (\$55.05): The UTG player checks.**

**3. Do you:**

- a. Check**
- b. Bet**

**Action: You check.**



**River: The UTG player checks.**

**4. Do you:**

- a. Check
- b. Bet

Action: You check. The CO shows A♠ J♥ 7♠ 4♠, and the UTG player shows 9♠ 8♠ 8♥ 7♦, and your A-A-x-x is good.

5. Rate the UTG player's play in this hand:

- a. Good
- b. Not good
- c. Atrocious

### Hand #2: Grades and Analysis

1. a(0), b(5), c(10). Double-suited aces warrants a raise in position behind any number of opponents.

2. a(0), b(10), c(0). You can't fold aces up for one bet. Meanwhile, raising is incorrect, as you run the risk of getting sandbagged by the hands that beat you (trip sixes, Q-Q-x-x, Q-6-x-x) while potentially shutting out the hands that you can beat but might call if you flat call (K-K-x-x, A-Q-x-x).

3. a(10), b(4). You have to be at least somewhat concerned about the UTG player's overcall on the flop. His hand is most likely a six, K-K-x-x, Q-Q-x-x, or maybe A-Q-x-x, with an off chance of it being something worse if he is awful. The play should be to check behind and make this hand a one-bet affair.

4. a(10), b(0). With the third diamond appearing, there is little value in betting, if there was ever any value in betting this river. Showing this hand down is the clear best play.

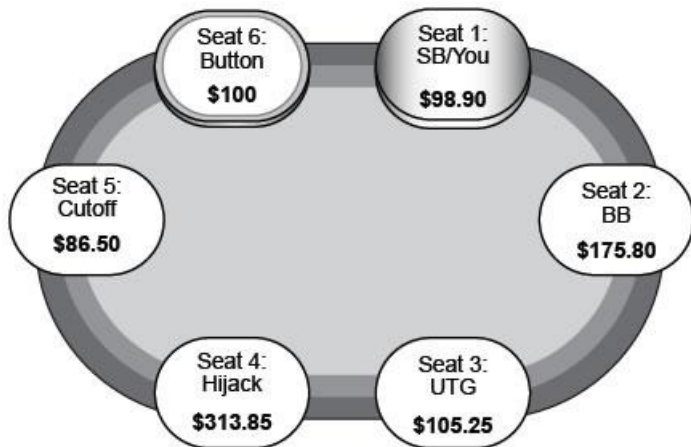
5. a(0), b(8), c(10). The all-in player's play is understandable with the nut flush draw; the UTG player's overcall with that hand was atrocious, as there was about a 0.5% chance his eights were good on the flop, and roughly about the same probability that his flush draw was live against two opponents.

Score: \_\_\_\_\_

**Hand #3: Q-Q-x The game: \$0.50-\$1 online (6-max), six-handed**

**Your position: Small Blind**

**Your hand:**

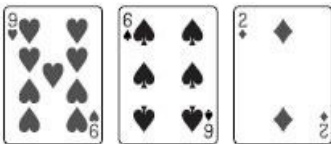


**Pre-flop: The UTG player folds. The hijack (\$313.85) limps in. The cutoff and button both fold.**

**1. Do you:**

- a. Fold**
- b. Call**
- c. Raise**

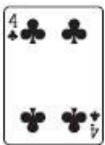
**Action: You (\$98.90) call. The big blind (\$175.80) checks.**



**Flop (\$3): 2. Do you:**

- a. Check**
- b. Bet**

**Action: You bet \$3. The big blind folds. The other player calls.**



**Turn (\$9): 3. Do you:**

- a. Check**
- b. Bet**

**Action: You bet \$9 and your opponent calls.**



**River (\$27): 4. Do you:**

- a. Check**
- b. Bet**

**Action: You check. Your opponent checks, showing A♥ T♥ 8♦ 7♠ for a busted wrap.**

**5. Rate the hijack player's play in this hand:**

- a. Good
- b. OK
- c. Not Good
- d. Bad

### Hand #3: Grades and Analysis

1. a(2), b(10), c(0). Raising from here with this hand would be an awful choice. Folding is better than raising, but probably a bit weak. In fact, if the big blind is such a maniac that you are truly concerned about the big blind raising, then you should pick up and find another game.

2. a(5), b(10). I like leading with the overpair and the nut gutshot. This hand can have potentially deceptive value, while you don't really want to give a free card.

3. a(5), b(10). Checking isn't wrong; if your opponent is the type to bet if you check, a check-raise may be in order. Otherwise, betting is the superior play -- you don't give a free card, and your hand is fairly well disguised. You may be able to draw extra action by leading out, where check-raising would give your hand away and perhaps limit your upside.

4. a(10), b(5). Betting isn't necessarily wrong -- but if you give your opponent credit for being on the draw, then he is not likely to call a bet, but he might bet if you check.

5. a(8), b(10), c(2), d(0). The hijack's play wasn't bad. I probably would have raised pre-flop with the A♥ T♥ 8♦ 7♠, but a raise is not necessarily automatic from the hijack. Flat-calling the flop with a bare 13-card nut wrap is also the standard play; it is more difficult for him to raise against my bet when I am leading from the small blind, as I am probably not bluffing from the small blind.

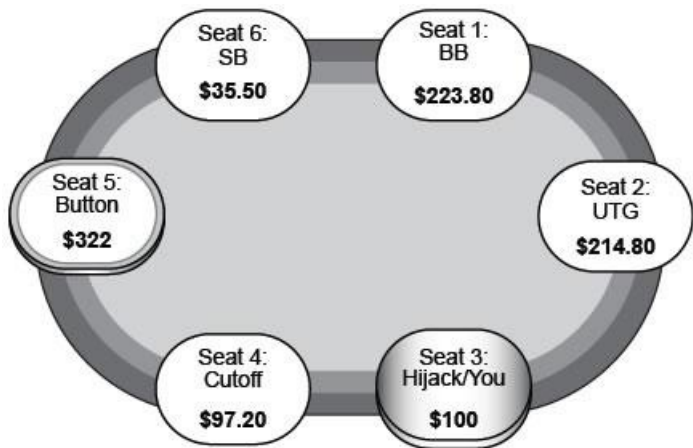
Checking back the river was also the correct non-play, because if I (in the small blind) have a draw like T-8-7-x myself, then I am betting the river. In other words, I may or may not have bet the river again with a made hand, but I am almost certainly betting a missed draw. And so if I am checking, it is because I have something.

Score: \_\_\_\_\_

**Hand #4: Middle Set The game: \$0.50-\$1 online (6-max), six-handed**

**Your position: Hijack**

**Your hand:**



**Pre-flop: The UTG player (\$214.80) limps in.**

**1. Do you:**

- a. Fold**
- b. Call**
- c. Raise**

**Action: You (\$100) limp in. The cutoff (\$97.20), button (\$322), and small blind (\$35.50) all limp in. The big blind (\$223.80) checks.**

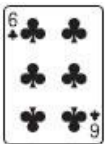


**Flop (\$6): The small blind bets \$6, and the big blind calls. The UTG player folds.**

**2. Do you:**

- a. Fold**
- b. Call**
- c. Raise**

**Action: You call, and the cutoff calls. The button folds.**



**Turn (\$30): The small blind bets \$15. The big blind folds.**

**3. Do you:**

- a. Fold**
- b. Call**
- c. Raise**

**Action: You call. The button folds.**



**River (\$60): The small blind bets \$13.50 all-in.**

**4. Do you:**

a. Fold

b. Call

Action: You call. The small blind shows Q♣ 9♥ 9♦ 6♥, for queens full of sixes.

Hand #4: Grades and Analysis 1. a(0), b(10), c(2). J-J-8-7 double-suited is not a premium hand in Omaha.

2. a(2), b(10), c(0). Middle set is a small-pot hand in this high-SPR situation (SPR 16 with the big blind).

3. a(0), b(10), c(0). You can't fold for one bet here, and there is still the button in the pot. Meanwhile, the small blind only has another \$13.50 left. The play here is to smooth call and try to draw an overcall from the button, and then play for the small blind's stack on the river if the button folds, or most likely one more bet at most if the button calls.

4. a(0), b(10). The Q♣ is not a great card, but it is not necessarily all that likely to beat you, either. Your opponent might have Q-J-x-x or Q-Q-x-x, but he could also just as easily have A-K-T-x with diamonds, in which case the Q♣ appearing on the river looks like a good scare card for one last shot. And getting better than 5:1 to call, this is a tough fold here.

Score: \_\_\_\_\_

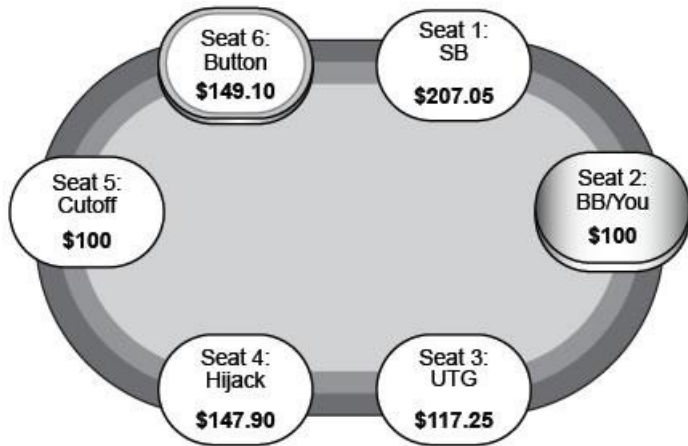


**Hand #5: 13-Card Nut Wrap OOP**

**The game: \$0.50-\$1 online (6-max), six-handed**

**Your position: Big Blind**

**Your hand:**

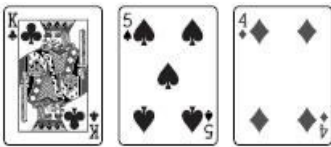


**Pre-flop: The UTG player folds. The hijack (\$147.90) opens with a raise to \$3. The cutoff (\$100) calls. The button and small blind fold.**

**1. Do you:**

- a. Fold
- b. Call
- c. Raise

**Action: You (\$100) call.**



**Flop (\$9.50): 2. Do you:**

- a. Check-Fold
- b. Check-Call
- c. Check-Raise
- d. Bet

**Action: You check. The hijack bets \$5, and the cutoff folds.**

**3. Do you:**

- a. Fold
- b. Call
- c. Raise

**Action: You raise to \$24.50. Your opponent re-raises to \$83.**

**4. Do you:**

- a. Fold
- b. Call
- c. Reraise

**Action: You call.**



**Turn (\$175.50): 5. Do you:**

- a. Check**
- b. Bet**

**Action: You bet \$14 all-in, and your opponent calls, showing  $A♥ K♥ K♦ Q♣$ .**



**River (\$203.50):**

**Hand #5: Grades and Analysis 1. a(0), b(10), c(5). This hand is too strong to fold. Sitting 100BBs deep, you can probably get away with 3-betting.**

**2. a(0), b(5), c(10), d(8). You flopped fairly strong with the 13-card nut wrap. Betting out is OK; however, there's a good chance that the pre-flop raiser will put in a c-bet on this relatively clean flop, in which case you can put in a check-raise. Meanwhile, you can afford to give a free card if it comes down to it, because you are on the draw yourself.**

**3. a(0), b(5), c(10). I am inclined to raise against the c-bet.**

**4. a(0), b(8), c(10). Well, you can't fold, and calling will leave you pot-committed with less than 1/10<sup>th</sup> of a pot-sized bet left to play. There's no real difference between calling and re-raising, so long as you plan on committing on the turn.**

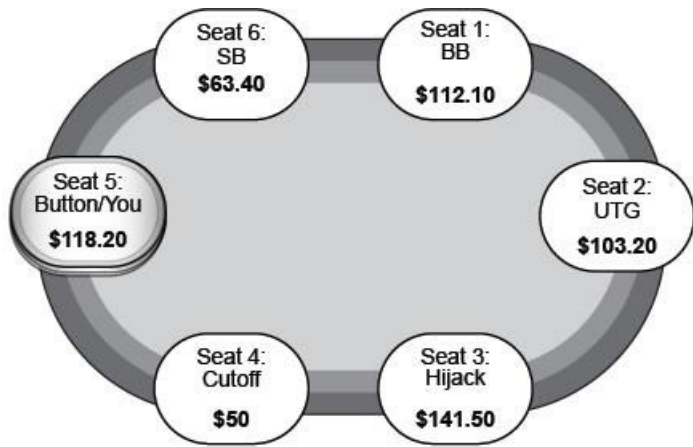
**5. a(0), b(10). Your move here is all-in no matter what. Having made the straight, you cannot give the free card, as there is little-to-no upside in checking with less than 1/10<sup>th</sup> of a pot-sized bet left to play.**

**Score: \_\_\_\_\_**

**Hand #6: Top Two Pair The game: \$0.50-\$1 online (6-max), six-handed**

**Your position: Button**

**Your hand:**

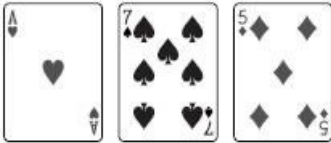


**Pre-flop: The UTG player folds. The hijack (\$141.50) opens with a raise to \$3.50, and the cutoff folds.**

**1. Do you:**

- a. Fold
- b. Call
- c. Raise

**Action: You (\$118.20) call. The small blind (\$63.40) and big blind (\$112.10) call.**



**Flop (\$14): Both blinds check. The next player -- the pre-flop raiser -- bets \$11.**

**2. Do you:**

- a. Fold
- b. Call
- c. Raise

**Action: You call. The small blind calls, and the big blind folds.**



**Turn (\$47): The small blind bets \$47. The next player raises to \$127 all-in.**

**3. Do you:**

- a. Fold
- b. Call

**Action: You call all-in for \$103.70 total. The small blind calls \$1.90 all-in for \$48.90 total. The small blind shows 6♣ 6♠ 4♣ 2♦ for a pair of sixes with a sucker-end openended straight draw, and the other player shows A♣ Q♥ T♥ 7♣ for top two pair with re-draws to bigger two pair.**



**River (Main Pot \$160.70, Side Pot \$109.60): You scoop the pot with the nut flush.**

Hand #6: Grades and Analysis 1. a(0), b(10), c(2). This is not a great 3-betting hand. On the other hand, you should not be folding a suited ace with connectors (plus a Broadway card) on the button.

2. a(0), b(10), c(4). Top two pair is a small-pot hand, against a possible weak-stab c-bet or not.

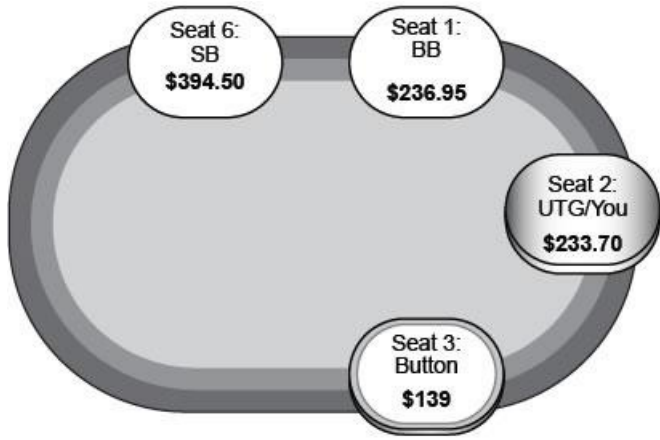
3. a(0), b(10). Having picked up the nut flush draw to go with the top two pair, it is harder to fold here. Even if you gave the small blind credit for the wheel, you are getting 3:1 on your money for the main pot. That said, you would pretty much have to give the other player credit for A-A-x-x in order to fold.

Score: \_\_\_\_\_

**Hand #7: Playing Out of Position The game: \$0.50-\$1 online (6-max), four-handed**

**Your position: UTG**

**Your hand:**



**Pre-flop: You (\$233.70) are first to act.**

**1. Do you:**

- a. Fold**
- b. Call**
- c. Raise**

**Action: You open with a raise to \$3.50. The button (\$139) calls. The small blind folds. The big blind (\$236.95) calls.**



**Flop (\$11): The big blind checks.**

**2. Do you:**

- a. Check**
- b. Bet**

**Action: You bet \$11. The button folds. The big blind calls.**



**Turn (\$33): Your opponent checks.**

**3. Do you:**

- a. Check**
- b. Bet**

**Action: You bet \$33, and your opponent folds.**

**Hand #7: Grades and Analysis 1. a(0), b(8), c(10). Four-handed UTG, you have enough to open fire on the blinds, though limping with this sub-premium hand is OK.**

**2. a(4), b(10). You have top pair and a gutshot wheel draw, but no draw to top two pair, and there is a player left to act behind you. I favor betting here and representing the A-A-x-x or A-K-x-x or whatever and trying to take the pot down here.**

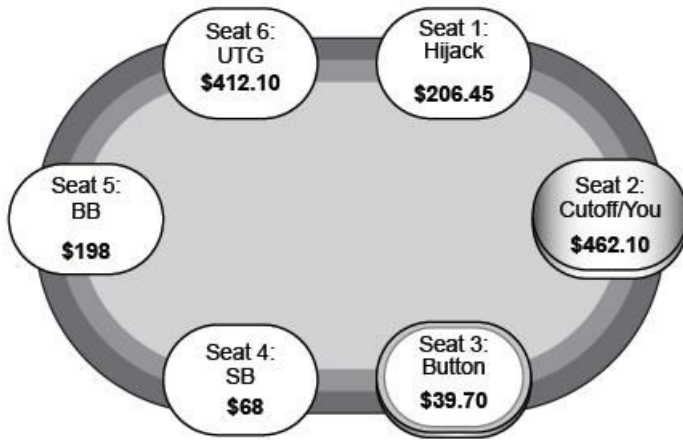
**3. a(2), b(10). You should follow through with another bet and show down the river unimproved.**

**Score: \_\_\_\_\_**

**Hand #8: Playing Out of Position The game: \$0.50-\$1 online (6-max), six-handed**

**Your position: Cutoff**

**Your hand:**

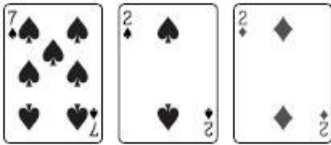


**Pre-flop: The UTG player and hijack fold.**

**1. Do you:**

- a. Fold**
- b. Call**
- c. Raise**

**Action: You (\$462.10) open with a raise to \$3.50, and only the button (\$39.70) calls.**



**Flop (\$8.50): 2. Do you:**

- a. Check**
- b. Bet**

**Action: You bet \$6, and your opponent calls.**



**Turn (\$20.50): 3. Do you:**

- a. Check**
- b. Bet**

**Action: You bet \$13, and your opponent folds.**

**Hand #8: Grades and Analysis 1. a(0), b(5), c(10). The play should be to open fire on the blinds.**

**2. a(2), b(10). Your hand is too weak to give a free card. You pretty much have to bet this.**

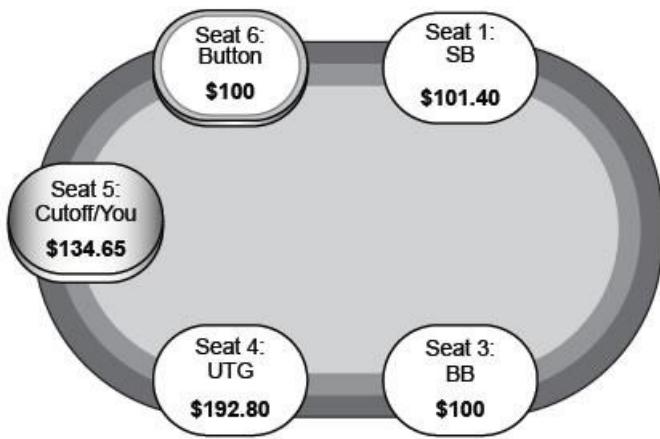
**3. a(5), b(10). You have a decision to make, depending on how light you think your opponent would call on the flop. Your opponent could have an overpair – which he might be willing to fold to a second bet, if it is something like Q-Q-x-x or smaller – or he might be floating. It is either check-fold (maybe even check-raise), or bet again.**

**Score: \_\_\_\_\_**

**Hand #9: Top Two Pair The game: \$0.50-\$1 online (6-max), five-handed**

**Your position: Cutoff**

**Your hand:**

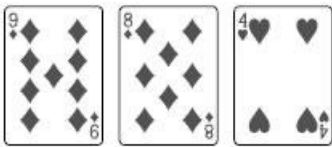


**Pre-flop: The UTG player folds. You (\$134.65) open with a raise to \$3.50. The button folds. The small blind (\$101.40) re-raises to \$11.50, and the big blind folds.**

**1. Do you:**

- a. Fold**
- b. Call**
- c. Raise**

**Action: You call.**



**Flop (\$24): Your opponent bets \$16.**

**2. Do you:**

- a. Fold**
- b. Call**
- c. Raise**

**Action: You raise to \$72. Your opponent re-raises all-in to \$89.90.**

**3. Do you:**

- a. Fold**
- b. Call**

**Action: You call. Your opponent shows A♣ Q♣ Q♣ T♣ for a pair of queens, and a gutshot.**

**4. How do you like your opponent's play in this hand?**

- a. Great! I would have played it the same way.**
- b. OK! But I might not have played it the same way.**
- c. Not good. I probably would played it differently.**
- d. Bad. Bad.**





Turn (\$203.80):

River (\$203.80): You win.

Hand #9: Grades and Analysis 1. a(0), b(10), c(0). You can't fold heads up with position, and 4-betting is no better than gambling.

2. a(0), b(2), c(10). It is a lowish-SPR situation (SPR 5) – judgment territory, but close enough to a low SPR that you might treat this as a low SPR situation – and you have top two pair with the second-nut diamond draw. The play is to raise.

3. a(0), b(10). Well, you're not folding.

4. a(0), b(4), c(10), d(5). The main problem I have with the small blind's play is 3-betting with Q-Q-x-x out of position, because all he can do is pray you don't have A-A-x-x and 4-bet. 3-betting with Q-Q-x-x is a small-favorite/big-dog decision where you cannot be a big dog in position at 100BBs deep.

Other than that, I bet the flop with his hand, too – only I bet the pot and commit in this low-SPR situation (SPR < 4) rather than bet two-thirds of the pot and commit.

So 3-betting before the flop is no good in my book. Betting and committing with the overpair and nut gutshot is OK in this low-SPR situation, but I would have bet the pot myself.

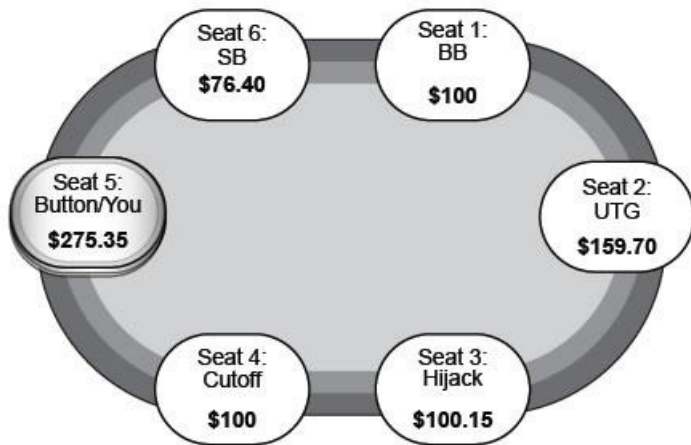
Score: \_\_\_\_\_



**Hand #10: Flush The game: \$0.50-\$1 online (6-max), six-handed**

**Your position: Button**

**Your hand:**

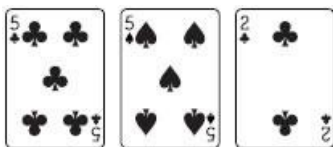


**Pre-flop: It gets folded to you.**

**1. Do you:**

- a. Fold**
- b. Call**
- c. Raise**

**Action: You (\$275.35) open with a raise to \$3.50. The small blind folds, but the big blind (\$100) calls.**

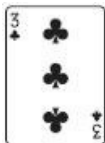


**Flop (\$7.50): Your opponent checks.**

**2. Do you:**

- a. Check**
- b. Bet**

**Action: You check.**



**Turn (\$7.50): Your opponent bets \$5.**

**3. Do you:**

- a. Fold**
- b. Call**
- c. Raise**

**Action: You call.**



**River (\$17.50): Your opponent checks.**

**4. Do you:**

- a. Check**

**b. Bet**

**Action: You check. Your opponent shows K♥ J♣ T♣ 2♥ for a bigger flush.**

**Hand #10: Grades and Analysis 1. a(5), b(8), c(10). You could go either way with K-8-7-4ds. Folding isn't necessarily wrong, either.**

**2. a(10), b(5). Betting isn't wrong, but your flush draw may have some value.**

**3. a(5), b(10), c(0). You made a small flush on this paired board. Raising can only be correct if you could see your opponent's hole cards and were certain he had a bigger flush with which he might fold to a raise. Otherwise, you can't fold the flush for one bet. I mean you *can*, but you shouldn't.**

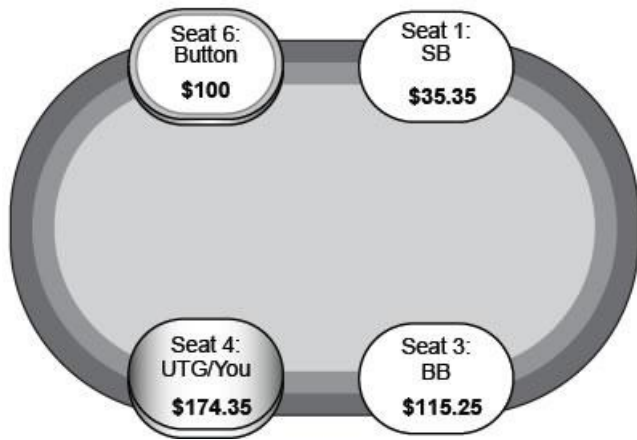
**4. a(10), b(0). There is little or no value in betting the flush. You should check and show this down.**

**Score: \_\_\_\_\_**

**Hand #11: Top Pair The game: \$0.50-\$1 online (6-max), four-handed**

**Your position: UTG**

**Your hand:**

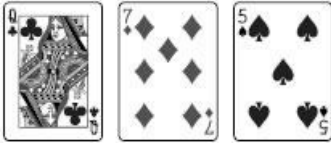


**Pre-flop: You are UTG.**

**1. Do you:**

- a. Fold**
- b. Call**
- c. Raise**

**Action: You (\$174.35) raise to \$3.50. The button folds. The small blind (\$35.35) calls. The big blind folds.**



**Flop (\$8): The small blind checks.**

**2. Do you:**

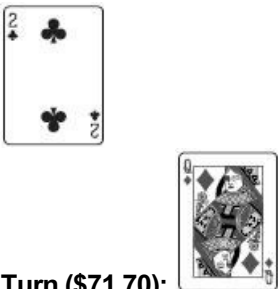
- a. Check**
- b. Bet**

**Action: You bet \$8. The small blind raises to \$31.85 all-in.**

**3. Do you:**

- a. Fold**
- b. Call**

**Action: You call.**



**Turn (\$71.70):**

**River (\$71.70): The small blind shows  $Q\heartsuit 9\heartsuit 6\spadesuit 4\clubsuit$ , and you win with a full house.**

**Hand #11: Grades and Analysis 1. a(0), b(5), c(10). Raising is really the only option.**

**2. a(0), b(10). You have top pair in a low-SPR situation (SPR 4). This situation demands a bet.**

**3. a(0), b(10). Top pair in a low-SPR situation means that you are committing.**