

POKER HAND READING CHEAT SHEET

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THE LOOP • RUN IT ON EVERY STREET

01

Who is this?

Tight or loose. Passive or aggressive. Decide before the cards matter.

02

What did they start with?

Position plus preflop action sets the range.

03

What did this street remove?

Board, then action. Would this player do this with this hand? If not, it's gone.

04

Commit before the next card.

Then compare at showdown. Never add hands back.

PLAYER TYPES

TYPE	PLAYS	BET MEANS	CHECK MEANS	RAISE MEANS
Rock (tight-passive)	Few hands: pairs, big aces	Strong made hand. Rarely bluffs.	Not much; they check medium hands	The nuts. Believe it.
Station (loose-passive)	Most hands	Something real; they'd rather call	Anything at all	Very strong
TAG (tight-aggressive)	Disciplined by position	Value or a planned bluff	Medium strength, or gave up	Strong, with some bluffs
LAG (loose-aggressive)	Wide, especially late	Anything; sizing and street tell more	Rare, and usually weak	Polarised. Count it.
Maniac	Nearly everything	Almost nothing; betting is default	A hand worth protecting	Barely more than a bet

OPENING RANGES BY POSITION (9-HANDED, TYPICAL PLAYER)

POSITION	SHARE	ROUGHLY
Under the gun	10–15%	77+, AQ+, AJs, KQs
Middle	15–20%	55+, AJ+, KQ, ATs+, suited broadways
Cutoff	25–30%	Any pair, suited aces, connectors 76s+
Button	40–50%	Most suited, offsuit broadways, small connectors
Small blind open	35–40%	Wide; a raise beats a limp
Big blind defend	Very wide	Anything with a price

Widen for loose players, tighten for rocks.

WHAT PREFLOP ACTIONS DO TO A RANGE

- **Raise:** the top of the range, sized to the player. A rock's raise is pairs and big aces; a LAG's is a third of the deck.
- **Limp:** playable but not strong. A limp-raise from a rock is AA or KK.
- **Three-bet:** premiums from most players. From a LAG, add suited aces, connectors, and blockers.
- **Cold call:** removes the very top (would have reraised) and the very bottom (would have folded). Middle pairs, connectors, broadways live here.

BOARD TEXTURE

BOARD	EXAMPLE	A BET MEANS	A CALL MEANS
Dry	K-7-2 rainbow	Made hand or air. Aggressive players bet their whole range here.	A pair, or a float from an aggressive player
Wet	J-T-9 two-tone	More strength than usual; checking a good hand is expensive	Pairs and draws in about equal measure
Paired	9-9-4	Often a bluff from aggressive players; a monster from passive ones	A pocket pair, or trips playing slow
Ace-high	A-8-3	The preflop raiser bets almost everything	Weak ace, middle pair, or a stubborn pocket pair

POSTFLOP ACTIONS, BY PLAYER

- **C-bet on a dry board** from an aggressive player: says little. Their whole range does it.
- **Check** from an aggressive preflop raiser on a dangerous board: removes the strongest hands. From a passive player: removes almost nothing.
- **Call**: keeps pairs and draws (and, from a station, overcards). Removes hands that can't stand a bet and, usually, hands strong enough to raise.
- **Raise from a passive player**: the loudest signal in poker. Top of range. Believe it.
- **Second barrel on a brick turn** from a TAG: more value-heavy than the flop bet.
- **Check-call on a brick** from a passive player: keeps exactly what the flop kept.
- **River bet from a passive player**: value almost every time.
- **River overbet from a LAG**: nuts or nothing. The earlier streets decide which.

COMBINATIONS

16

any unpaired hand
(4 suited + 12
offsuit)

6

any pocket pair

4

a suited hand
(one per suit)

- One card of an unpaired hand visible (board or yours): **12**. Two visible (one of each): **8**.
- Pocket pair with one card out: **3**. Two out: **1**.
- **Blockers**: every combination that includes a card you can see is gone. Holding the ace of the flush suit removes the nut flush.
- **Worked**: K-9-4 rainbow, you hold A-K. KQ/KJ/KT = 8 combos each (24). Sets 99/44 = 3 each (6). TT/JJ/QQ = 6 each (18). 48 combos; you beat 42.

SIX QUESTIONS BEFORE YOU ACT

- 1 Who is this player?
- 2 Does this bet make sense as value? As a bluff? For this player?
- 3 What range did they start with?
- 4 How many combos beat me, and how many don't?
- 5 What has each street removed?
- 6 Am I reading their hand, or defending mine?

PRACTICE

Repetitions with feedback are the only thing that make this automatic. motleylab.com/poker/soul-read/practice deals fifteen free hands against five opponent types in your browser and grades every range you commit to, A+ to F. The Soul Read app on Google Play adds three modes and thirty free hands. One payment, no subscription, works offline.

BET SIZING

- **Small**: wants a call, doesn't love the board, or a cheap probe.
- **Large / overbet**: polarised: very strong or a bluff. From a passive player, drop the bluff half.
- **Min-raise** from a recreational player: often a monster trying to look weak.
- **A change** from that player's usual sizing is information by itself.

TIMING (LIVE)

- **Fast call**: a hand with a clear plan: a draw, or a pair that isn't folding.
- **Long pause, then raise**: frequently strong.
- Timing only means something against that player's baseline. Watch first.

THE MISTAKES

- **One-hand fixation**. Deciding early and bending every action to fit.
- **Adding hands back**. Removed on the flop means removed.
- **Ignoring the player**. The same line means different things from a rock and a maniac.
- **Reading your hand instead of theirs**. Their range first, then compare.
- **Calling a passive player's raise a bluff**. It almost never is.
- **Skipping the count** when the decision is close. Fifteen seconds, usually the answer.