



Weekly Study Session

STOP PLAYING YOUR CARDS — START PLAYING THEIR RANGE





Why the River Matters

Stop asking:

“How good is my hand?”

Start asking:

**“How does my hand perform against
THEIR range?”**

Your two cards are only one piece of the
puzzle.

You also need to consider:

- Position
- Preflop action
- Board texture
- Bet sizing
- Villain's tendencies
- Previous streets

Your hand doesn't exist in a vacuum.



- **What Is a Range?**

- A range is the **collection of hands your opponent can realistically have.**
- Example:
- Villain opens UTG.
- We shouldn't think:
- “He has AK.”
- We think:
- **AA–22, AK, AQ, AJ, KQ, KJ, QJ, suited connectors, etc.**
- Then we narrow it down based on what happens.
- Poker is the process of eliminating possibilities.





Start With Preflop Action

Before looking at your own cards, ask:

What does their preflop action tell me?

Consider:

Position

- UTG range = tighter
- BTN range = wider
- SB/BB = different structures

Action

- Limp
- Open raise
- 3-bet
- Cold call
- 4-bet

Sizing

A 3-bet to 3BB and a 3-bet to 12BB may represent very different populations.

Build the range BEFORE you try to beat it.



- Every Action Changes the Range
- Think of the range as a funnel.
- Preflop
- **Wide range**
- 
- Flop call
- **Some hands eliminated**
- 
- Turn call
- **Even more hands eliminated**
- 
- River bet
- **Now we're looking at a much smaller range**

Key Concept:

Ranges don't stay static.

Every action tells you something.





Don't Put Them on ONE Hand

This is **range thinking vs hand thinking**.

Villain raises preflop.

You have:

A♠ K♦

Flop:

K♣ 9♥ 4♠

Don't immediately think:
“I have top pair. I'm ahead.”

Think:

What does villain's range contain?

- Sets
- KQ
- KJ
- KT
- AA
- QQ
- JJ
- TT
- 99
- 98s
- Bluffs

Now ask:

How does AK perform against that entire range?



The Tunnel Vision Trap

Common recreational thought process:

"I have AA."

→ **"I'm never folding."**

"I have top pair."

→ **"I have to call."**

"I have a flush draw."

→ **"I have to continue."**

"I have AK."

→ **"I probably have the best hand."**

Better thought process:

"What hands does villain have that take this action?"

Then:

"How does my hand perform against those hands?"



The Board Tells a Story

Ask:

Who benefits from this board?

Example:

Villain raises preflop.

Hero calls.

Flop:

A♠ 7♦ 2♣

Turn:

K♥

River:

Q♣

Suddenly the board heavily interacts with hands like:

- AK
- AQ
- KQ
- JT

The important question isn't:

“Did I hit my hand?”

It's:

“How did this runout affect both ranges?”



Range vs Range

This is where poker gets really interesting.

Hero's range

Maybe contains:

- Strong Ax
- Medium pairs
- Draws
- Some bluffs

Villain's range

Maybe contains:

- Strong Ax
- Pocket pairs
- Kx
- Missed draws

Now compare them.

Ask:

Who has more strong hands?

Who has more medium-strength hands?

Who has more bluffs?

Who has the nut advantage?

This helps

determine:

Bet / Check / Call / Fold



HAND EXAMPLE

1/\$2 Cash Game — 100BB Effective

Hero: **BTN**

Villain: **BB**

Hero raises to \$5

Villain calls.

Flop — \$11

Q♠ 8♠ 3♦

Villain checks.

Hero bets \$4.

Villain calls.

Turn — \$19

K♥

Villain checks.

Hero bets \$13.

Villain calls.

River — \$45

2♣

Villain checks.

Hero holds:

A♦ Q♦

DON'T ASK:

“I have top pair. Should I bet?”

ASK:

“What does villain reach the river with?”



0025 Breaking Down the Range

After calling flop AND turn, villain's range could contain:

Strong hands

Q8s

- 88
- 33
- KQ
- K8s

Medium hands

- QJ
- QT
- Q9s
- 99
- TT
- JJ

Draws / missed hands

- JT_s
- T9_s
- ♠ flush draws

Now Hero has:

A♦Q♦

What worse hands call a river bet?

QJ

QT

Q9s

What better hands call?

KQ

K8

88

33

THAT is the decision.

Not:

“I have top pair.”

But:

“Is there enough worse in his range that can pay me?”



The DCP Range Checklist

Before making a big decision, run through this:

- 1. What was their preflop range?**
- 2. What hands continue on the flop?**
- 3. What hands continue on the turn?**
- 4. What hands take THIS action now?**
- 5. What value hands are possible?**
- 6. What bluffs are possible?**
- 7. Where does MY hand rank against that range?**





STOP LOOKING AT YOUR CARDS

The question isn't:

“What do I have?”

The question is:

“What does my opponent have?”

And then:

**“How does my hand perform
against it?”**

Poker becomes much easier when
you stop trying to **guess one hand**
and start trying to **construct a range.**



DCP TAKEAWAY

-  **Don't play your cards.**
-  **Play against their range.**
-  **Every action narrows the range.**
-  **The better you get at putting people on ranges, the less you'll fall into tunnel vision.**



"No-limit holdem, hours of boredom followed by moments of sheer terror" - Tom McEvoy

