

Absolute Starting Hand Strength in Pot Limit Omaha (PLO) for 6-Max Tables

In Pot Limit Omaha, "absolute" starting hand strength refers to the inherent value of a hand based on its raw equity against a random range (typically ~40-70% vs. random hands), nut potential (ability to make the best possible straights, flushes, sets, or full houses), suitedness (ds = double-suited for two flush draws, ss = single-suited, r = rainbow), connectedness (for straights, e.g., Og = no gaps like JT98), pair strength (for sets), and overall playability (redraws and blockers). Unlike Hold'em, PLO hands run closer in equity (rarely >60% preflop heads-up), so strength is more about multi-way pot viability and postflop dominance rather than pure domination. There are 270,725 unique starting hands, making exhaustive listing impossible, but hands can be ranked into tiers based on solver-derived data and expert charts.

This ranking system draws from comprehensive sources, categorizing hands into 5 tiers (Tier 1: Elite - highest equity/nut potential; Tier 5: Trash - low equity, fold preflop). Tiers are qualitative, with Tier 1 hands having ~65-70% equity vs. random, dropping to <45% in Tier 5. Ranges generalize hand structures (e.g., AA[K-T][K-T]ds = Aces with two broadway cards double-suited); examples include specific cards with suits for clarity. The narrative provides general play advice for 6-max cash games (100BB stacks), assuming mid-stakes; adjust for table dynamics (tighten vs. aggressive players, loosen vs. passive). Always prioritize position: raise wider late, fold marginal OOP.

Tiered Ranking Table

Tier	Strength Description	Ranges	Concrete Examples	Play Narrative
1 (Elite)	Highest equity (~65-70% vs. random); premium pairs with nut flush/straight redraws, double-suited for max potential. Dominate preflop, rarely dominated.	AA[K-T][K-T]ds, AA[J-9][J-9]ds, KK[Q-T][Q-T]ds; focus on ds with 0g/1g connectivity.	A♠A♥K♠K♥ (AAKKds - best overall, set + nut flush + broadway), A♠A♥J♠T♥ (AAJTds - set + wheel/broadway straight + flushes), A♠A♥Q♠Q♥ (AAQQds - double pairs + flush).	Always raise/3-bet/4-bet from any position; get stacks in preflop if possible vs. loose calls. Postflop: Value-bet aggressively with nuts/redraws; avoid overplaying without position. These win big pots multi-way due to equity edge.
2 (Premium)	Strong equity (~60-65% vs. random); high pairs or connected broadways ds, good for nut draws/sets. Playable everywhere but tighten OOP.	AA[8-6][8-6]ds, KK[J-9][J-9]ds, QQ[K-T][K-T]ds, 0g broadway ds (e.g., KQJTds).	K♠K♥Q♠Q♥ (KKQQds - double sets + flush), A♠A♥9♦9♥ (AA99ds - set over set potential + flush), K♠Q♥J♠T♥ (KQJTds - nut straight + flush draws).	Raise first in from HJ+; 3-bet vs. early opens. OOP, call/3-bet selectively. Postflop: Push edges with wraps/flush draws; fold if missing nuts. Ideal for building pots in position.

Tier	Strength Description	Ranges	Concrete Examples	Play Narrative
3 (Strong)	Solid equity (~55-60% vs. random); mid-high pairs ds/ss, 0g/1g rundowns ds, A-high ss with connectivity. Good multi-way but vulnerable to domination.	QQ[J-9][J-9]ds, JJ[T-8][T-8]ds, 0g mid rundowns ds (e.g., JT98ds), A[K-T]xx ss with 1g.	Q♠Q♥J♠J♥ (QQJJds - sets + straight), J♠T♥9♠8♥ (JT98ds - wrap straight + flush), A♠K♥Q♠J♦ (AKQJss - broadway + nut flush draw).	Raise from CO/BTN; call/3-bet vs. late opens. Fold UTG if table aggressive. Postflop: Bet draws aggressively in position; check-fold weak hits OOP. Balance with bluffs for protection.
4 (Playable)	Marginal equity (~50-55% vs. random); low-mid pairs ss, 1g/2g rundowns ss, suited Aces with gaps. Speculative; rely on position and implied odds.	TT[9-7][9-7]ss, 99-66 ds/ss, 1g mid rundowns ss (e.g., JT97ss), Other A ss with 2g.	T♠T♥9♠8♥ (TT98ss - set + straight draw), 9♠8♥7♠6♦ (9876ss - rundown + flush), A♠T♥7♠6♦ (AT76ss - nut flush + weak wrap).	Limp/call from blinds or BTN vs. passive; raise only late if folded to you. Fold early positions. Postflop: Chase nut draws cheaply; fold to aggression without hits. Use for multi-way pots with deep stacks.

Tier	Strength Description	Ranges	Concrete Examples	Play Narrative
5 (Trash/Marginal)	Low equity (<50% vs. random); rainbow/low disconnected, weak pairs r, non-nut A-high r. Poor playability; avoid unless stealing blinds.	55-22 r, 2g low rundown r (e.g., 9864r), Other non-A r with gaps, weak ss like K543ss.	5♠5♥4♦3♣ (5543r - low set potential, no draws), K♦Q♣J♥9♣ (KQJ9r - broadway but no suits), A♠2♥3♦4♣ (A234r - wheel but rainbow).	Fold preflop from all positions unless in blinds vs. folds (steal attempt). Never 3-bet. Postflop: Only continue with monster flops (e.g., quads); high variance, minimal edges. Save chips for better spots.