1. What are the three core questions to ask in poker to determine the best strategy in a heads-up, in-position, pre-flop raised pot?

The strategy revolves around answering three sequential questions to rapidly determine the optimal play. The first question is "What's their range?", which helps determine if an opponent's hand range is "capped" or "uncapped." The second question, "Will they fast-play their strong stuff on this board?", depends on the answer to the first. If the opponent is uncapped, this question helps predict their aggressive tendencies. If the opponent is capped, this question is replaced by, "Do they have inelastic hands?" The final question, "What is our hand?", classifies your hand as "value," "showdown value," or a "bluff."

2. What is the difference between a "capped" and "uncapped" range in poker, and why is this distinction crucial?

An "uncapped" range means the opponent can still hold very strong hands on the board that they would likely not fold, such as sets or two pairs. This occurs when their actions (e.g., calling pre-flop, checking the flop) haven't limited their strongest possible holdings. A "capped" range, conversely, means the opponent has taken actions (e.g., checking back a turn when they would normally bet a strong hand) that indicate they do not possess the absolute strongest hands. This distinction is crucial because it dictates subsequent strategic decisions. When an opponent is capped, you can apply more pressure, particularly with bluffs, as their range is weaker.

3. How does the concept of "fast-playing" affect strategic decisions in poker?

"Fast-playing" refers to an opponent's tendency to bet or raise aggressively with their strong hands. This tendency is influenced by the board's dynamic nature. On "wet" or "dynamic" boards (boards with many straight or flush draws, or where many turn cards can change the nuts), players are more likely to fast-play their strong hands to protect them or build the pot. On "dry" or "static" boards (boards with few draws, where the nuts are unlikely to change on later streets), opponents might check strong hands, as they feel "invulnerable" and are less worried about being outdrawn. Understanding whether an opponent will fast-play helps determine whether to bet small to encourage them to raise (if they fast-play), or to check back to gain more information or set up a later bluff (if they won't fast-play).

4. How should you adjust your betting strategy on the flop based on whether an opponent will "fast-play" their strong hands?

If an opponent *will* fast-play their strong hands (common on wet, dynamic boards), the general strategy is to bet small with all hand types (value, showdown value, and bluffs). This small bet encourages opponents with strong hands to raise, effectively "capping" their range if they just call. For bluffs, this allows you to define their range and apply pressure on later streets. For value, it extracts more money from their strong hands. For showdown value, it aims to induce calls from weaker hands and set up profitable bluff-catching lines on later streets if they fold stronger hands. If an opponent *will not* fast-play their strong hands (common on dry, static boards, or in scenarios where they fear a specific hand like Ace-King in a 3-bet pot), value hands generally bet big to extract maximum value, while showdown value and bluffs often check back. Checking back with bluffs in this scenario allows you to gain more information about their hand strength on later streets.

5. How do "inelastic hands" influence betting decisions on the turn and river?

"Inelastic hands" are those an opponent is unlikely to fold, regardless of bet size. This concept is primarily relevant when an opponent is already "capped." If an opponent has inelastic hands on the turn, bluffs typically bet big to extract calls on the turn, intending to fold them on the river. Value hands also bet big to get maximum value from these hands. On the river, the strategy diverges: if the opponent *still* has inelastic hands (e.g., strong overpairs in a large pot), value bets big to extract value, while bluffs bet small, aiming to fold out weaker, more elastic hands. If the opponent *does not* have inelastic hands on the river (e.g., weak top pair in a smaller pot), bluffs bet big to force folds from a wide range, while value bets small to ensure calls from sensitive, elastic hands.

6. When should bluffs and value hands play similarly, and when should they diverge in their betting strategy?

Bluffs and value hands generally play similarly on the turn when the opponent is "capped," especially if the goal is to get the opponent to put in more money (either to set up a fold on the river for bluffs, or to extract value for value hands). In these "capped" scenarios, both bluffs and value might go big or small on the turn depending on whether the opponent has inelastic hands. However, bluffs and value hands often diverge in strategy on the river, particularly if the opponent's hands are "elastic" (sensitive to bet sizing). Bluffs typically go big on the river to force folds from a wide, elastic range, while value goes small to ensure calls from those same elastic hands. When opponents are "uncapped," bluffs and value frequently have different goals and thus different strategies on both the turn and river. Value wants to build the pot against a strong, uncapped range, while bluffs aim to get the opponent to "cap" their range for a more profitable bluff on a later street.

7. Why is simplifying your poker strategy important, especially for those not yet earning high hourly rates?

The core message emphasizes that complex GTO (Game Theory Optimal) or balanced strategies are unnecessary for crushing live poker, especially for players earning under $100/hour. Overcomplicating the game with detailed calculations and intricate balancing acts bogs down decision-making. Instead, focusing on a "simple set of questions" that are "repeatable" allows players to quickly and accurately determine the correct answer in any given hand. This simplified approach leads to faster decision-making and better results by focusing on exploitative play against common live player tendencies, such as passive play, calling too much pre-flop, and raising too many strong hands.

8. How does the type of board (static vs. dynamic) influence an opponent's "fast-playing" tendencies?

The "static" versus "dynamic" nature of the board significantly impacts whether an opponent will fast-play. A "static" board is one where the nuts are unlikely to change on subsequent streets (e.g., Ace-7-Deuce dry, where Ace-Ace or Ace-7 are very strong). On such boards, opponents often feel invulnerable and may check strong hands, as they are not worried about future cards hurting them. A "dynamic" board, conversely, is one where many turn cards can change the nuts or bring in strong draws (e.g., Jack-9-Deuce with a flush draw). On dynamic boards, players are much more likely to fast-play their strong hands, either to protect them from draws or to build a pot before a "scare card" appears. This distinction is more crucial than merely classifying a board as "wet" or "dry" when predicting fast-play.