Mastering In-Position Play: A Detailed Study Guide

This study guide is designed to reinforce your understanding of the poker strategy presented in "Ask THESE 3 Questions to Make $100/hr in Poker." It focuses on a simplified, repeatable approach to in-position, pre-flop raiser scenarios in heads-up pots, aiming to improve your decision-making and profitability.

Quiz: Short Answer Questions

Answer each question in 2-3 sentences.

1. **What are the three core questions a player should ask themselves when in an in-position, heads-up pot as the pre-flop raiser?**
2. **Differentiate between an "uncapped" and "capped" opponent's range. Provide an example of an action that would indicate a capped range.**
3. **Explain why betting small on the flop with a bluff is often preferred when the opponent is uncapped but likely to fast play their strong hands.**
4. **Describe the recommended strategy for value hands on the flop when the opponent is uncapped and *will* fast play their strong hands.**
5. **When an opponent is uncapped and *will not* fast play their strong hands, what is the general strategy for both bluffs and showdown value hands on the flop?**
6. **After an opponent checks back the flop, how does this action typically change your assessment of their range for subsequent streets?**
7. **What are "inelastic hands," and why is understanding their presence important when an opponent is capped?**
8. **When an opponent is capped and has inelastic hands, how do bluffs and value hands generally approach betting on the turn, and why?**
9. **Explain the general difference in river betting strategy between value and bluff hands when an opponent is capped but *does not* have inelastic hands.**
10. **According to the source, what is the ultimate goal of simplifying poker strategy, and why is it particularly effective in live poker?**

Quiz Answer Key

1. The three core questions are: "What's their range? Are they uncapped or capped?", "Will they fast play their strong stuff on this board?", and "What is our hand? Do we have value, showdown value, or a bluff?" These questions form the basis of the decision-making flowchart.
2. An "uncapped" range means the opponent can still have all of the strongest hands on the board, indicating they haven't taken actions to narrow their potential holdings. A "capped" range means they have taken actions (like checking back a strong hand on the flop) that suggest they do not hold the strongest possible hands.
3. Betting small with a bluff in this scenario allows the opponent to fast play their strong hands by raising, which in turn caps their range. This capping provides a clearer understanding of their holdings, creating more profitable bluffing opportunities on later streets.
4. For value hands when the opponent is uncapped and will fast play their strong hands, the recommended strategy is also to bet small on the flop. This encourages opponents with strong hands (like sets or two pair) to put more money into the pot immediately, leading to a "cooler" situation where your strong hand gets maximum value.
5. When an opponent is uncapped and *will not* fast play their strong hands, both bluffs and showdown value hands are generally recommended to check back on the flop. This is because betting small won't cap their range effectively, and betting big won't get them to fold strong hands, leading to undefined ranges and difficult subsequent streets.
6. When an opponent checks back the flop, especially after showing initial passivity (like a big blind call to a pre-flop raise), their range typically becomes capped. Live players, in particular, are often unbalanced and would bet their strong hands, so checking indicates a lack of the nuts or near-nuts.
7. "Inelastic hands" are those that an opponent is highly unlikely to fold, even in response to large bets, usually because they feel invulnerable or are top-tier hands for their perceived range. Understanding their presence helps determine if big bets will be called or folded, influencing the profitability of value bets and bluffs.
8. When an opponent is capped and has inelastic hands, both bluffs and value hands generally want to go big on the turn. Value wants to extract maximum money from hands that won't fold, while bluffs aim to get calls on the turn from these inelastic hands, setting up for a fold on the river when those hands become elastic.
9. When an opponent is capped and *does not* have inelastic hands on the river, value hands generally go small to ensure calls from marginal holdings that are sensitive to sizing. Conversely, bluffs go big to maximize fold equity against hands that are now elastic and can be pushed off.
10. The ultimate goal of simplifying poker strategy, especially in live poker, is to avoid overcomplicating decisions with concepts like GTO balance. By focusing on a simple, repeatable set of questions, players can quickly arrive at the correct decision, leading to higher profitability and becoming a "Crusher" more efficiently.

Essay Format Questions

1. Analyze the role of "fast play" in the presented strategy. Discuss how understanding an opponent's propensity to fast play dictates different lines for value, showdown value, and bluff hands on the flop when they are uncapped.
2. Compare and contrast the strategic approach to betting with bluffs when an opponent is capped versus uncapped on the turn. Provide specific examples from the source to illustrate these differences and the reasoning behind them.
3. The source emphasizes adapting to opponent tendencies. Discuss how the concept of "inelastic hands" and its application on the river demonstrates this adaptive quality, particularly concerning the interaction between pot size, stack depth, and perceived opponent range.
4. Explain how the strategy's emphasis on "capping" the opponent's range on earlier streets facilitates more profitable decisions on later streets. Provide examples of how different actions (betting small, checking back) contribute to this process for bluffs and showdown value.
5. Critically evaluate the core philosophy of simplifying poker for live play as presented in the source. Discuss the advantages and potential limitations of this approach compared to more complex GTO-based strategies, considering the target audience (players earning under $100/hr).

Glossary of Key Terms

* **Uncapped Range:** An opponent's range of possible hands that still includes the strongest possible hands for the given board. This means they haven't taken any action to narrow their holdings, such as checking a hand they would normally bet for value.
* **Capped Range:** An opponent's range of possible hands that has been narrowed by their actions, indicating they are unlikely to hold the strongest possible hands. For example, checking back a strong hand on the flop can cap their range.
* **Fast Play:** The action of betting or raising a strong hand aggressively, typically to build the pot, protect against draws, or extract value immediately.
* **Value Hand:** A hand that is strong enough to beat a significant portion of an opponent's likely calling range, from which you want to extract money.
* **Showdown Value (SDV):** A hand that is not strong enough to bet for value but might be the best hand if it goes to showdown without further betting. Players with SDV often aim to control the pot size or induce bluffs.
* **Bluff:** A weak hand with little or no chance of winning at showdown, used to represent a stronger hand and induce an opponent to fold.
* **Heads-Up Pot:** A poker pot contested by only two players.
* **In Position (IP):** Being the last to act in a betting round, typically having a strategic advantage due to gathering information from opponents' actions.
* **Pre-Flop Raiser (PFR):** The player who made the last raise before the flop, often indicating strength and taking the initiative in the hand.
* **Big Blind (BB):** The forced bet placed by the player to the left of the small blind, determining the minimum bet size.
* **Button (BTN):** The player position on the table that acts last in most post-flop betting rounds, indicating an in-position advantage.
* **Flop:** The first three community cards dealt face up on the board.
* **Turn:** The fourth community card dealt after the flop.
* **River:** The fifth and final community card dealt after the turn.
* **Bet Sizing:** The amount of chips a player chooses to wager, which can convey information about hand strength or type (value/bluff).
* **Monotone Board:** A board where all community cards are of the same suit, making flushes very likely.
* **Dry Board:** A board with few or no immediate draws (straight or flush).
* **Wet Board:** A board with many potential straight and/or flush draws.
* **Dynamic Board:** A board where many turn or river cards can significantly change the strength of hands or create new nuts.
* **Static Board:** A board where subsequent cards are unlikely to drastically change the nuts or relative hand strengths.
* **SPR (Stack-to-Pot Ratio):** The ratio of a player's remaining stack size to the current size of the pot. It influences decision-making, particularly concerning committing chips.
* **Check-Back:** Choosing not to bet when it's your turn to act, often indicating weakness or a desire to control the pot.
* **Check-Raise:** Checking to an opponent with the intention of raising if they bet.
* **Floating the Flop:** Calling a bet on the flop with a weak hand (often with little or no made hand) in position, intending to bluff on a later street.
* **C-bet (Continuation Bet):** A bet made on the flop by the player who made the last pre-flop raise, continuing their aggression.
* **EV (Expected Value):** The average outcome of a decision or action over the long run, often expressed in chips or monetary value. A "positive EV" play is profitable over time.
* **GTO (Game Theory Optimal):** A strategy in poker that is theoretically unexploitable by opponents, balancing various lines to prevent opponents from gaining an edge. The source explicitly discourages overcomplicating with GTO for live poker.