* **When should I use small three-bets pre-flop?**
* Small three-bets pre-flop are highly effective when you're in position against a "fish" (a weaker, less experienced player) and have multiple "rags" (tight, predictable players) or pros behind you. The primary goal is to isolate the fish, allowing you to play more pots heads-up and in position, where you have a significant advantage. This strategy is hard for rags to exploit because they typically play a 4-bet or fold strategy and are reluctant to cold call. While it misses out on some pre-flop value with very strong hands, you can counter this by occasionally including premium hands like Aces and Kings in your small three-bet range to keep opponents guessing. However, if you have multiple fish behind you, a small three-bet is less necessary; you can bet big with strong hands as fish are inelastic and unlikely to exploit your sizing.
* **Why use a tiny bet on an Ace-high board in a four-bet pot?**
* On an Ace-high board in a four-bet pot, a very small continuation bet (c-bet) (e.g., 10-12% of the pot) is effective for extracting value from hands like Pocket Kings, Queens, or Jacks that your opponent might hold. These hands are often "forced" to call a tiny bet. If your opponent has an Ace, you're likely to stack them regardless of your bet size. The strategy is to get that one street of value. After this small flop bet, checking your entire range on the turn can be beneficial. If your opponent has an Ace, they'll often bet, allowing you to stack them. If they have Kings, Queens, or Jacks, checking to them encourages them to check back, and you can then size your river bet to get those hands to fold if you're bluffing, or get a small amount of value if you have a premium hand like Aces. This approach maximizes value against the top of your opponent's range while keeping their range wide and weak for profitable bluffs.
* **When is it advisable to make a small c-bet in a three-bet pot as the pre-flop raiser?**
* When c-betting in a three-bet pot as the pre-flop raiser, a small bet (e.g., 30-35% of the pot) is often optimal. The larger the absolute size of the pot, the smaller your bet needs to be to achieve your goals. This sizing encourages your opponent to raise with their strong hands (allowing you to get more money in when you have a monster) and call with their weaker hands (which you often have drawing dead). This strategy is also beneficial for bluffs, as it keeps your opponent's range wide and weak. If they check-call the flop, you can narrow their strong hand possibilities and potentially bluff profitably on later streets against a capped range.
* **When should I use a small bet on the turn when my opponent is "uncapped"?**
* Using a small bet on the turn when your opponent is "uncapped" (meaning their range is not limited to specific strong hands, often because hands that would be very strong would have already raised on earlier streets) is effective for several reasons. For instance, if the board is wet and dynamic, a small bet encourages opponents with strong but vulnerable hands (like trips, e.g., A-10 on a T62 board) to put in more money, as they dislike slow-playing. It also entices weaker hands or draws (e.g., pocket sevens, backdoor flush draws) to call, which you might want to keep in the pot if you're bluffing or have them drawing thin. This small sizing allows you to stack opponents when they have top-of-range hands that are never folding, and also allows for profitable bluffs on the river against a weakened range if they just call the turn.
* **Why use a small bet on the turn when my opponent has a very "elastic" range?**
* When your opponent has a very "elastic" range on the turn (meaning they are price-sensitive and more likely to fold to larger bets), choosing a small bet size is crucial. This strategy entices your opponent to continue with a wider array of hands that you might have drawing thin or dead (e.g., 9x, pocket tens, wheel draws). If you have a value hand, this allows you to extract more value by keeping these hands in the pot. If you are bluffing, a small turn bet carries these weaker, price-sensitive hands to the river, setting up a more profitable river bluff. A large turn bet, in contrast, would often fold out these weaker hands, leaving your opponent with a stronger range on the river and making your bluffs less effective.
* **When should I consider a small river bluff?**
* A small river bluff can be highly profitable in several situations. One is when your opponent's range is mostly comprised of missed draws or weak hands that will fold to a small bet, especially after they have called large bets on earlier streets (which suggests they fast-play strong hands and call with many draws). A small bet is efficient, achieving the desired fold without risking too much. Another good spot is when your opponent is elastic on the river. If you've played the hand in a way that allows your opponent to arrive at the river with a wide and weak range (by using small, enticing bets on earlier streets), a small river bluff can effectively fold out their "elastic crap" (weak, price-sensitive hands). This conserves chips if you run into the top of their range while still being highly profitable against their weaker holdings.
* **Are there situations where betting small on the river for value is beneficial?**
* Yes, betting small on the river for value can be beneficial, particularly against aggressive opponents. While against a very passive opponent you might bet large to extract maximum value from their strong hands, against an aggressive player, a small river bet with a strong value hand (like top set or a nut flush) can look like thin value. This can induce an aggressive opponent to "spaz out" and bluff-raise with weak hands or bricked draws, leading them to put in more money than they might have if you had bet large. It can also ensure you get calls from strong hands like trip Queens, while still offering the potential for an aggressive opponent to overplay.
* **Why is it important to vary bet sizes, rather than always betting big with bluffs and small with value?**
* It's crucial to vary bet sizes and avoid predictable patterns like always betting big with bluffs and small with value. As the sources illustrate, small bets can be incredibly powerful for both value and bluffing in specific situations. For value, small bets can entice weaker hands to call, string opponents along, and even induce bluffs from aggressive players. For bluffs, small bets can build a pot and carry weaker hands to later streets, setting up more profitable river bluffs against capped or elastic ranges. Opponents who think you're always bluffing big or value betting small will be exploited by a sophisticated sizing strategy that uses both small and large bets in diverse ways, making your play less predictable and more profitable.