



FLAWLESS POKER GUIDE SERIES

8-Player Tournament / Sit-and-Go Study Guide

Short-handed single-table NLHE, a practical reference for online play

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A BRIGHTER GAME AHEAD · PLAY · TRACK · IMPROVE · WIN



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Flawless Poker · 8-Player Tournament / Sit-and-Go Study Guide · October 2026 edition. Study material for use away from the table; charts and ranges are approximate guidelines, not solver output.



Study material, not a live aid. This guide is for study and review **away from the table**. It is not meant to be used in real time during play, and poker sites restrict outside assistance while you are in a hand. Review it before and after sessions.

All charts and numbers are approximate, general guidelines. They are not exact solver outputs. Correct play depends on your opponents, ante structure, payout structure, and stack sizes. Treat them as a baseline to learn from and adjust. Check age and legal requirements for your location, and only play with money you can afford to lose.

I. How 8-handed SNGs work

- **Format.** A sit-and-go (SNG) starts as soon as its seats fill. All players get the same starting stack, blinds rise on a fixed timer (regular, turbo, or hyper speeds), and play continues **without breaks until one player has all the chips**. Finishing order sets the payout. Prize pool is the total of all buy-ins minus the site fee (rake).
- **Site notes (verify in the lobby, formats change).** Many sites' rules describe SNGs as running until one player holds all chips, and that same-hand busts are ranked by chip count at the start of the hand (equal stacks tie and split the prizes). On many sites, standard SNGs are commonly 6-max or 9-max; 8-player tables mostly show up in special formats such as **8-Bomb** (8 players, **mandatory preflop straddles**, so blinds and dynamics differ from the standard game). Click any SNG in the lobby to see its **prize split, starting stack, and blind levels** before you register, and study those numbers first.
- **Why 8 players is a distinct game.** Compared with 9-handed, ranges are slightly wider and the field is thinner. Compared with 6-max, you still have a real early-position and a more meaningful bubble.

Typical payout structures

Structure	Places paid	Typical split	Bubble is	Effect
Winner-take-all (WTA)	1	100%	2nd	No ICM pressure; chips are worth their face value (chip-EV) apart from the need to win
Top 2	2	65/35 or 70/30	3rd	Strong ICM, especially 3-handed. Tighten up and avoid coin flips for stacks
Top 3	3	50/30/20 (or ~55/30/15)	4th	Classic SNG bubble at 4-handed. Big stacks abuse mid stacks
Top 4 or flatter	4	e.g., 40/30/20/10	5th	Flatter pay, less pressure to win, more pressure not to bust early

Example: eight \$10 buy-ins with a 5% fee give a prize pool of about \$76 after fees (site fees vary). Top 3 at 50/30/20 pays about \$38 / \$22.80 / \$15.20.

How payouts change strategy

- **Flatter payouts** (the 2nd and 3rd prizes are large relative to 1st) make survival more valuable, so ICM pressure is greater and you avoid marginal all-ins.
- **Top-heavy payouts** (WTA, 70/30) reward accumulating chips, so aggression and calling wider for stacks are better.
- **Fewer places paid means the bubble comes later** in the game and the short-stack players face the tightest call decisions.



- Winning is always worth more than 2nd; don't fold your way into a small-money finish when you have the edge over your opponents.

2. Positions at an 8-handed table

Clockwise from the left of the big blind: **UTG, UTG+1, LJ (Lojack), HJ (Hijack), CO (Cutoff), BTN (Button), SB, BB.**

Group	Seats	Notes
Early	UTG, UTG+1	5 to 6 players left to act behind you, so tightest ranges
Middle	LJ, HJ	Widen gradually
Late	CO, BTN	Most profitable seats; steal blinds and act last postflop
Blinds	SB, BB	Invested money, but acting first postflop (except BB vs SB/limp). SB is the worst seat overall

- Postflop, the **button acts last**. Preflop, the **BB acts last** (after SB).
- Before the hand, note who is on your left: an aggressive player behind you makes your steals and opens harder.
- Short-handed, **blinds come around every 8 hands**, so folding costs about 1.5bb (plus ante if present) per orbit. As blinds rise, that cost is quickly meaningful for shorter stacks.

3. Preflop opening ranges by position (8-handed, approx.)

Approximate first-in raising ranges at roughly **30-100bb effective** with no ante. "s" = suited, "o" = offsuit, "+" = that hand and stronger. Percentages are the approximate share of all 1,326 starting-hand combos. Fold rare mixed hands at your discretion; these are guidelines, not laws.

Position	Approx. %	Sample range
UTG	~11-12%	66+, ATs+, KTs+, QTs+, JTs, T9s, A5s-A4s, AJo+, KQo
UTG+1	~14%	55+, A9s+, A5s-A3s, KTs+, QTs+, JTs, T9s, 98s, ATo+, KQo
LJ	~18%	44+, A8s+, A5s-A2s, K9s+, Q9s+, J9s+, T9s, 98s, 87s, ATo+, KJo+, QJo
HJ	~20-21%	33+, A7s+, A5s-A2s, K8s+, Q9s+, J9s+, T8s+, 98s, 87s, 76s, ATo+, KTo+, QJo
CO	~26%	22+, A2s+, K6s+, Q8s+, J8s+, T8s+, 97s+, 87s, 76s, 65s, A9o+, KTo+, QTo+, JTo
BTN	~40-45%	22+, any suited Ax and Kx, Q4s+, J6s+, T6s+, 96s+, 85s+, 75s+, 64s+, 54s, A2o+, K8o+, Q9o+, J9o+, T9o, 98o
SB (folded to)	~35-45%	Raise or limp wide; vs a tight BB, raise more. Fold trash like 72o-type hands

Sizing. Open about **2 to 2.5bb** from early and middle positions and about **2 to 2.2bb** from the button (a min-raise is fine at short stacks). With an ante, open a bit wider. Add **1bb per limper** when isolating.

Facing an open (approximate guidelines)

- **3-bet for value:** QQ+ and AK from any position; add JJ/TT/AQ against late-position steals.
- **3-bet as a bluff (in position or from the blinds):** suited wheel aces (A5s-A2s), suited connectors/broadways with blockers such as KQs or KJs, more often against a CO/BTN opener.
- **Call:** pairs (esp. in position), suited broadways, suited connectors, and AJs/KQs, plus BTN/CO flats with a broader range.



- **BB defense:** vs a button min-raise, defend roughly **45-55%** of hands (getting a good price); vs early-position opens, roughly **20-30%**.
- **Fold to 4-bets** without a premium (QQ+/AK at deep stacks).
- Against **very tight** opponents, respect their opens and tighten up. Against **loose or weak** players, isolate and widen.

4. Stage-by-stage strategy

Early stage: deep stacks (roughly 40-100bb)

- Play close to a standard cash-game style: **value-bet strongly, play position, take small pots without big hands.**
- Speculative hands (suited connectors, small pairs, suited aces) go up in value because of **implied odds** at deep stacks, but only in position and against players who will pay you off.
- **Don't risk your whole stack without a strong hand.** Early busts pay nothing, but you also can't win by sitting still: blinds rise fast in turbos.
- Take notes on opponents (who is loose-passive, who folds to 3-bets, who overbets), as they compound across hands.
- Avoid marginal spots with big stacks vs big stacks. The gain from small pots is low compared to the risk of bust.

Middle stage (roughly 15-40bb)

- **Steal blinds and antes.** Stacks are shallower and folds are more likely. Open wider from CO/BTN/SB, especially vs tight blinds.
- Prefer **3-bet/fold or 3-bet shove** over flat-calling out of position.
- Continuation bets get smaller (about 25-40% pot) or turn into shoves at about 15bb or less.
- Look for **short stacks that will shove** and avoid entering pots against them unless you have a hand you'd call with.
- Keep stack size in mind: a 20bb stack that folds constantly loses about 1.5bb per orbit, or ~7% of stack.

Bubble stage (one elimination away from the money)

Covered in detail in section 7. In short, **ICM matters**: pick spots against players who can't afford to call, avoid big-stack confrontations that risk your survival, and avoid coin flips when you are one of the middle stacks.

Three-handed and heads-up

- **3-handed (top 3 paid, the money is locked in):** the pay jumps are large (e.g., 20% to 30% to 50%), so ICM continues to matter, but your ranges widen because blinds hit every third hand. Button opens are very wide (60%+), the SB and BB defend wide against small raises, and shoves get very wide when stacks are under 10bb.
- **3-handed in a top-2 structure (this is the bubble):** the shortest stack should generally avoid confrontations with either stack, and the big stack should pressure the medium stack.
- **Heads-up:** ICM ends (only a 1st/2nd difference remains), so chips are close to chip-EV. See section 8.



5. Stack-depth strategy (in big blinds)

Effective stack	Plan	Key ideas
40bb+	Full postflop game	Position matters; speculative hands are playable in position; bet for value; 3-bet sizing at about 3x in position
25-40bb	Fewer speculative calls	Open-raise or fold; 3-bet or fold; c-bets are smaller; avoid stack-committing bluffs without equity
15-25bb	"Reshove zone"	Open-raise and fold to shoves; 3-bet shove over late-position opens with hands like A _J , KQ, TT+, A5s; avoid flat-calling opens out of position
10-15bb	Steal or shove	Raise/fold or shove; shove wide over min-raises when the raiser folds often; call shoves according to price
6-10bb	Push/fold	Shove or fold; a limp or a small raise is rarely right
3-6bb	Desperate push/fold	Shove any reasonable hand; wait only if a hand is really trash and position is bad

M-ratio: $M = \text{stack} / (\text{SB} + \text{BB} + \text{antes})$. It is the number of orbits you can survive. M under 10 means you should be looking at shoves; under 5 means "shove first, ask later" with any playable hand. Since BB units already include the blinds, both bb and M tell a similar story.

Effective stack is the smaller of your stack and the stack of the player you are in a pot with. A 25bb stack facing a 6bb shove only risks 6bb in that pot, but a bigger stack still to act behind you can put your whole 25bb at risk, so count who covers you.

6. Push/fold: shove and call ranges (approx., 3-15bb)

These are **approximate first-in shoving percentages** in an 8-handed game with roughly chip-EV (no ICM) and no ante. With antes, shove somewhat wider. With ICM pressure, and if callers are tight or big stacks, tighten (see section 7). Ranges are described as approximate **top X% of hands**, ordered by hand strength/playability (pairs, A_x, suited broadways and connectors first).

Shoving (first in, folded to you)

Position	3-5bb	6-8bb	9-12bb	13-15bb
UTG / UTG+1	~30-40%	~17-22%	~10-14%	~8-10% (often min-raise/fold instead)
LJ / HJ	~40-45%	~25-30%	~17-20%	~12%
CO	~50%	~35%	~25%	~18%
BTN	~65%	~48%	~38%	~28%
SB (only BB behind)	~85%+	~65%	~50%	~40%

Examples of the **shape** of these ranges:

- **~8%:** 77+, ATs+, KQs, AJo+ (very tight; early position at ~10-12bb)
- **~15%:** 44+, A7s+, A9o+, KTs+, KJo+, QJs, JTs
- **~25%:** 22+, A2s+, A5o+, K9s+, KTo+, Q9s+, QJo, J9s+, T9s
- **~32%:** any pair, any ace, K7s+, K9o+, Q8s+, QTo+, J8s+, JTo, T8s+, 98s, 87s, 76s
- **~40%:** the above plus all suited kings, Q5s+, J7s+, T7s+, 97s+, 86s+, 65s, 54s, K7o+, Q9o+, J9o+, T9o
- **~50%+:** all pairs, aces and suited kings, most Q/J/T suited hands, most suited connectors and gappers, K4o+, Q7o+, J8o+, T8o+. You fold only the worst offsuit hands.



Shoves vs a big blind that is tight or short are more profitable; vs a chip-leading BB who calls wide, tighten.

Calling a shove (approximate call ranges)

You are	Facing	5bb	8bb	10-12bb	15bb
BB	SB or BTN shove	~50%	~35-40%	~30%	~22-25%
BB	CO or earlier shove	~30-35%	~22%	~15-18%	~12%
Any position	UTG/MP shove (players behind)	~20%	~12%	~9%	~7%

Key ideas for calling:

- The **price you are getting** is what drives the call: with a 10bb shove and a BB that already has 1bb in, you might need only ~33% equity to call.
- Ranges of the shover matter far more than absolute hand strength:** a shover with a wide range means calling wider. If a tight player shoves from UTG at 8bb, you need a premium.
- Dominated hands (like A5o vs AK or K9o vs KQ) get much worse** against tight shove ranges. Suited connectors gain little.
- With ICM pressure (especially if the pay jump is coming), tighten your calls a lot:** calling ranges shrink about 30-50% for medium stacks facing shoves from big stacks.
- Take the pot down** when a shove would win the pot without a fight; a wide steal with 8bb from BTN wins about 1.5bb of blinds/antes many times.

Remember: these tables are a rough map, not exact. ICM, the field's calling tendencies, and antes can move the numbers a lot.

7. ICM and bubble play

ICM (Independent Chip Model) converts chip stacks into prize equity. The main takeaway: **chips you win are worth less than chips you lose**, because a stack doubling up does not double your prize equity, but busting drops you to 0 (or just a small prize).

Example A (top 3 paid, 50/30/20, four players left). Stacks 4000 / 3000 / 2000 / 1000 (40% / 30% / 20% / 10% of chips):

Stack	Chip share	ICM prize equity
4000 (big)	40%	~33.6% of pool
3000	30%	~29.5%
2000	20%	~23.6%
1000 (short)	10%	~13.3%

The big stack has far less equity than its chips suggest, and the short stack has more. **Equity is compressed toward the middle.**

Example B (the "risk premium"). Four left, top 3 paid 50/30/20, stacks 4000 / 4000 / 1500 / 1500. If the two big stacks go all-in against each other, the winner has about 44% of the pool and the loser gets 0 (4th place). A big stack's current equity is about 32%. So they need roughly **73% equity** to call (not 50%) to break even in prize money. That is why calling an all-in against another big stack near the bubble is often a mistake without a very strong hand, and why **short stacks are the ones who benefit** from those two stacks fighting.

Example C (top 2 paid, 65/35, 3-handed). Stacks 5000 / 3000 / 2000: equity is about 44.4% / 32.6% / 23.0%. The short stack (20% of chips) has 23% equity, so it can wait for the two bigger



stacks to clash.

(Computed with the standard Malmuth-Harville ICM model. Use a free ICM calculator to study your own spots away from the table.)

Who to pressure

- **Medium stacks** who are afraid of busting before the short stack. They fold a lot when the cover stack shoves or raises.
- **Tight players** who fold too much near the money.
- Players who **cannot call without risking their tournament life**, i.e., stacks that would be crippled by a loss and can only call with the very top of their range.

Who to avoid

- **Big stacks** that can call you off and don't fear losing: if you're a mid stack, don't open-shove into a big stack that is behind you with a marginal hand.
- **Maniacs** who call too wide when you don't want to gamble.
- Players with **less to lose (short stacks) who will shove wide**: don't call them with marginal hands when a bigger stack can still act behind you; wait for hands that beat their wide ranges.

Tactics by stack size on the bubble

You are...	Tactics
Chip leader	Raise a lot (about 40-60% of hands first in), especially vs mid stacks. Isolate and avoid confrontation with the second-biggest stack unless you have a real hand. Don't pay off shorter stacks needlessly; let them bust each other.
Medium stack	The most vulnerable, so fold more and avoid marginal all-ins. Let the shorter stacks bust, then find spots to steal from tighter players.
Short stack	Shove within push/fold ranges, since blinds erode you; a fold is rarely "free". Pick spots where the big stacks are fighting each other, or where the blinds are tight. Nothing is gained by waiting too long.

- On the **true bubble (one away from the money)**, keep a quick count: how many hands until the shortest stack is forced all-in? If the short stack is about to blind out, you can wait; if not, apply pressure.
- After the bubble bursts, **expand ranges immediately**: the opponents who were tight are still tight for a few hands, so steal.

8. Heads-up and 3-handed basics

Heads-up (HU) basics

- The **button is the small blind** and acts first preflop but last postflop. Open **~70-90%** of hands (a min-raise, 2 to 2.5bb, or a limp at some depths) at 20-40bb; the BB defends **~55-70%** against a min-raise and less against bigger sizes.
- Every hand has value: any ace, king, pair, and most suited or connected cards are playable. **Aggression pays**: raise, 3-bet lightly, c-bet often on dry boards, and check back medium-strength hands (they have showdown value).
- Weak hands with **blockers** (e.g., A5s) and gutshots make good bluffs; medium pairs are strong enough to call down often.
- Watch tendencies: does your opponent fold to 3-bets, c-bets, or check-raises? **Exploit the biggest leak first**.



- **HU push/fold (about 10bb or less):** the SB shoves about ~55-60% at 10bb, ~65-70% at 8bb, and most or all hands at 5bb or less. The BB calls ~35-40% vs a 10bb shove, ~45-50% vs 8bb, and ~55-60%+ vs 5bb.
- Pay jumps between 1st and 2nd exist, but with just two players it is close to chip-EV. Don't fold hands that are clearly profitable calls.
- **Big stack in HU:** pressure by raising a lot and using small sizing to avoid giving the short stack good odds. **Short stack:** push/fold with correct ranges, and don't wait for a premium.

3-handed play

- Blinds come around fast: **you post a blind in two of every three hands** (SB or BB). Widen accordingly.
- **Button:** open very wide (often 60%+); the SB should mostly raise or fold at short stacks, the BB defends wide against min-raises.
- With **top 3 paid**, the ICM still matters (20% / 30% / 50% example), but not as much as on the bubble. With **top 2 paid**, this is the bubble: see section 7.
- Make use of position: in 3-handed, the button is a great seat; use it to attack the short stack's blinds or pressure the medium stack.

9. Bet sizing (approximate guidelines)

Situation	Typical sizing
Open raise	2 to 2.5bb (2 to 2.2bb from BTN/short stacks); +1bb per limper
3-bet in position	~3x the open (e.g., 7 to 8bb vs 2.2bb open)
3-bet out of position (incl. blinds)	~3.5 to 4x the open
4-bet	~2.2 to 2.5x the 3-bet (or shove at short stacks)
C-bet dry flop (A72, K83)	~25-33% pot
C-bet wet flop (JT8, 986)	~50-66% pot
Turn	~50-75% pot, often larger for value or protection
River, thin value	~33-50% pot
River, polarized (strong value or bluff)	~66-100% pot
Stacks under ~20bb	Often use a shove or a small bet that commits you (~1/3 pot)

- **SPR (stack-to-pot ratio):** when the SPR is under about 3 with a strong hand, you are basically committed; plan the hand to get all in.
- **Bluffs need a plan and a story.** A bet that doesn't represent a believable hand will get called.
- At short stacks, **fold equity** (how often the opponent folds) is what makes shoves work; if the opponent won't fold, shove only with real hands.

10. Common leaks

1. **Playing too many hands out of position early** (especially weak offsuit hands from early positions).
2. **Not adjusting to stack size:** playing 15bb like 100bb; open-limping; calling raises with marginal hands.
3. **Ignoring ICM on the bubble:** calling or shoving at the wrong times, or being the medium stack that gambles.



4. **Over-folding blinds** (giving up the BB for free) or **calling too much** without a plan.
5. **Waiting too long to push**: getting blinded down to 4-5bb and then having no fold equity.
6. **Missed value or too-thin bluffs**: passive with strong hands; bluffing players who never fold.
7. **Autopilot c-betting** every flop with no plan for later streets.
8. **Not using position and notes** to find opponents' patterns.
9. **Spew after a bad beat** (see tilt section).
0. **Multi-tabling too many tables** so decisions become automatic and sloppy.
1. **No review**: repeating the same mistakes for months.

II. Bankroll management and buy-in guidelines

SNG variance is high. Rough guidelines (adjust for your ROI, format, and comfort):

Format	Suggested minimum bankroll
Regular-speed SNGs (top 2-3 paid)	~30-50 buy-ins
Turbo / hyper-turbo	~50-100 buy-ins
Winner-take-all, heavy-variance formats, mystery bounty, bomb variants	~75-100+ buy-ins
Recreational player who accepts risk of ruin	~20-30 buy-ins (not advised for serious play)

- Typical results have a standard deviation of about **2 buy-ins per game**, so over 100 games the standard error of ROI is roughly 20 percentage points. A **100-game sample tells you little about your true ROI**; a few hundred to a thousand is more meaningful.
- **Moving up**: consider it after a clear sample and comfortable cushion (e.g., 40-50 buy-ins for the next level). **Moving down**: step down at about 25-30 buy-ins of the current level, and treat it as a normal part of the process, not a failure.
- **Rake counts**. Winning ROI has to overcome the fee (~4% or more at many levels; special formats may charge more). Make sure the format's rake doesn't destroy your expected profit.
- Keep poker funds **separate** from living expenses. Never play scared money or chase losses. Set deposit and time limits, and use the site's responsible-gaming tools if you need them.
- Track results (buy-in, finish, format, date) in a spreadsheet or tracker to know your real ROI and ITM by format.

12. Tilt control

- **Know your triggers**: bad beats, coolers, getting sniped, sessions after a long day, being stuck.
- **Set stop-loss rules before you play**, e.g., "stop after 3 buy-ins lost in a session" or "stop after 2 tilt-driven mistakes."
- **Between games**: stand up, breathe, hydrate, and go for a quick walk; don't instantly register for the next SNG.
- **Reframe**: short-run results in SNGs are mostly variance. Judge your decisions, not outcomes ("Was the shove +EV?" not "Did it win?").
- **Play well-rested** and avoid alcohol or heavy distractions while playing.
- **Have a fallback list**: if you feel tilt building, quit tables, do something else, and review the session later with a cool head.
- **Don't keep playing higher buy-ins** to "get even."



13. Post-session review checklist

- [] Did I follow my bankroll and stop-loss rules?
- [] Note **3 biggest hands** (won or lost) and one note for each: what did I know, what did I do, what could I do better?
- [] Review **every bust-out hand**: position, stack depths (bb), the range I put the opponent on, and what I would do again.
- [] Check **bubble decisions**: were my calls and shoves consistent with ICM? Check spots with an ICM calculator.
- [] Review **push/fold spots** (below 15bb): compare with a push/fold chart or trainer after play.
- [] Did I **steal enough**, or fold too many blinds/late positions?
- [] Did I **respect the stack sizes** of players behind me?
- [] Any **tilt or autopilot** signs? What was the trigger?
- [] Note **opponent tendencies** worth remembering.
- [] Update results tracker (ROI, ITM, buy-in level).
- [] Pick **one leak** to fix next session (one is easier than five).

14. Mini-quiz (18 questions)

1. Eight \$10 buy-ins go into a SNG with a 5% total fee. What is the prize pool (roughly)?
2. Which payout structure creates the least ICM pressure, and why?
3. In a top-3-paid 8-player SNG, how many players are left when the bubble is in play?
4. Name the two positions that are usually the most profitable seats at an 8-handed table.
5. Roughly what percentage of hands is a standard UTG open at 8-handed?
6. About how often do you open the button at 8-handed with about 40bb (approx.)?
7. At about 15-25bb, what is a common approach to facing an open from a late-position raiser with a hand like AJs or TT?
8. Under about 10bb effective, what is the standard play with most hands you choose to enter the pot with?
9. Which players are best to pressure near the bubble?
0. Four players are left in a top-3-paid SNG. Two big stacks (4000 and 4000) and two short stacks (1500 each). Roughly what equity does a big stack need to call an all-in against the other big stack?
1. As a chip leader on the bubble, which type of stack should you pressure the most?
2. When you are the medium stack on the bubble, what should you generally do with marginal hands facing an all-in from the chip leader?
3. Heads-up: the button is which blind, and what part of hands should it open roughly?
4. What is a typical c-bet size on a dry flop (like K72 rainbow)?
5. What is M-ratio, and what M level means you should consider push/fold play?
6. How many buy-ins are commonly recommended as a bankroll for regular-speed SNGs, and for turbos?
7. Why is a 100-game sample of results unreliable for judging your true ROI?
8. Name two habits for controlling tilt during a session.

Answers

1. About **\$76** (\$80 minus the ~5% fee). Exact fees vary by format.



2. **Winner-take-all** has the least ICM pressure: only first place pays, so chips are worth their face value (chip-EV), and survival has no extra value.
3. **Four players.** The 4th-place finisher is the last player out before the money (the bubble).
4. The **button and cutoff**.
5. About **11-12%** of hands (a tight range such as 66+, ATs+, KTs+, QTs+, JTs, AJo+, KQo).
6. About **40-45%** of hands (with a wider range vs weak blinds and a tighter one vs aggressive players).
7. **3-bet shove (or 3-bet/fold)** rather than flat-calling out of position. That uses fold equity and avoids tricky postflop spots with a short stack.
8. **Shove or fold** (push/fold). Limp and small raises are rarely best.
9. **Medium stacks** who fear busting, tight players who fold too much, and players who cannot call without risking their tournament life.
10. About **73%**. The stack's equity today is about 32% of the pool, and winning gives ~44%, so it needs far more than 50%.
 1. The **medium stacks**, who have the most to lose and fold too often. Avoid the second-largest stack unless you have a real hand, and let the shortest stacks bust on their own.
 2. **Fold**: avoid marginal all-ins, since the ICM risk premium is highest for medium stacks facing a stack that covers them. Take the chips from short stacks instead.
 3. The **small blind**; it opens a wide range (around 70-90% of hands at moderate stacks, when the BB is not too aggressive).
 4. About **25-33% of the pot** (small, since the board is dry and favors the raiser).
 5. $M = \text{stack} \div (\text{SB} + \text{BB} + \text{antes})$, the number of orbits you can survive. **Around $M < 10$** it is time to think about shoving, and under 5 you are in push/fold mode with most hands.
 6. About **30-50 buy-ins** for regular-speed SNGs and **50-100** for turbos (more for WTA or high-variance formats).
 7. SNG results have a standard deviation of roughly 2 buy-ins per game, so 100 games give a standard error of ~20% ROI. Variance dominates the sample.
 8. Any two of: set a stop-loss before playing; take a break after a bad beat; judge decisions, not outcomes; avoid playing tired or drinking; don't move up in stakes to get even; play fewer tables.

This guide is approximate, general study material. It is not legal, financial, or gambling advice. Play responsibly, and only where online poker is legal for you.



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ABOUT FLAWLESS POKER

Flawless Poker publishes study guides for online No-Limit Hold'em players: cash games, sit-and-gos and multi-table tournaments. Every guide pairs practical ranges and plans with numbers computed from equity, ICM and simulation models, so you can understand why a play works, not just what to do.

Play responsibly. Real-money poker is for adults only: 18+ (21+ where required by local law). Check that online poker is legal where you live. Play within your means, only with money you can afford to lose, and never chase losses. Set time and deposit limits before you play.

If gambling stops being fun, help is available. In the US, call or text 1-800-GAMBLER (1-800-426-2537). Elsewhere, contact your local problem-gambling helpline.

Study material, not a live aid. These guides are for study away from the table, not for real-time use during play. Charts and ranges are approximate guidelines, not solver output.