



FLAWLESS POKER GUIDE SERIES

NL50 6-Max Profit-Protection Study Guide

EDITION · OCTOBER 2026

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



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Flawless Poker · NL50 6-Max Profit-Protection 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 **away from the table**. It is not for real-time use while you play. Poker sites restrict outside assistance during hands. Read it before and after sessions.

All charts and numbers are approximate, general guidelines. They're simplified baselines, not solver outputs. Adjust for your opponents and the rake. Only play with money you can afford to lose.

1. The game and the bankroll

Game: 6-max No-Limit Hold'em, \$0.25/\$0.50 blinds (NL50). Full buy-in = **\$50 = 100bb**.

Bankroll	Status	Rule
\$2,000+ (40+ BI)	Comfortable	Play NL50 freely; consider NL100 shots at \$4,000+
\$1,000-\$2,000 (20-40 BI)	Standard	Play NL50 with the session rules below
\$800-\$1,000 (16-20 BI)	Warning	NL50 only on your best days, and tighten stop-losses to 2 BI
Under \$800 (16 BI)	Move down	Drop to NL25 (\$25 buy-ins) until you're back to \$1,000

- Move back up only after the bankroll is back at **\$1,000 or more**. Don't use one lucky session as your reason.
- The bankroll is money set aside **only** for poker. Never top it up from rent or bill money.

Why buy in for the full 100bb (not short)

- The guide's ranges and postflop rules assume 100bb.
- Short stacks (20-40bb) give up implied odds with suited connectors and small pairs, and they get stuck in awkward 3-bet/shove spots.
- Strong regulars play best against short stacks. Weak players pay off most when **deep** stacks are involved.
- **Rule:** buy in for \$50, and top up to \$50 whenever you drop below about \$40 (auto-top-up if the client offers it).

2. "Protect profits" starting-hand chart (opening, no one has raised yet)

These ranges are **tighter than standard** on purpose: fewer marginal spots, simpler decisions. Open-raise to **2.5bb (\$1.25)**, plus 1bb for each limper.

Position	~% of hands	Open these hands (RFI)
UTG (LJ)	~12%	22+, ATs+, KTs+, QTs+, JTs, T9s, AJo+, KQo
HJ	~16%	22+, A9s+, A5s-A4s, KTs+, QTs+, J9s+, T9s, 98s, ATo+, KJo+
CO	~24%	22+, A2s+, K9s+, Q9s+, J9s+, T8s+, 98s, 87s, 76s, A9o+, KTo+, QJo
BTN	~35%	22+, A2s+, K7s+, Q8s+, J8s+, T8s+, 97s+, 86s+, 75s+, 65s, 54s, A7o+, K9o+, Q9o+, J9o+, T9o
SB (folded to you)	~28%	Raise to 3bb: 22+, A2s+, K8s+, Q9s+, J9s+, T9s, 98s, 87s, A8o+, KTo+, QJo

Limpers: with 1-2 limpers, raise (iso) only with roughly your HJ range, minus small pairs and suited connectors. Raise to 4bb + 1bb per limper. Limp behind with small pairs from late position only.



3. Facing a raise

3-bet size: **3x** the open in position, **4x** out of position. Against weak micro-stakes players, 3-bet **mostly for value**.

Their open from	3-bet (value)	3-bet bluff (few)	Call (in position)	Fold
UTG/HJ	QQ+, AK	none	JJ-22, AQs, AJs, KQs, QJs, JTs, T9s	AQo and everything else
CO	JJ+, AK, AQs	A5s	TT-22, AQo, AJs, ATs, KQs, KJs, QJs, JTs, T9s	Everything else
BTN (you're SB/BB)	TT+, AK, AQ	A5s, A4s	see blind defense	—

- **Facing a 4-bet:** continue with QQ+ and AK only. Fold JJ and below unless the player is wildly aggressive.
- **Facing a 3-bet after you open:** 4-bet QQ+, AK. Call JJ-99, AQs, AJs, KQs, and suited connectors (in position only). Fold the rest.
- From the SB, prefer **3-bet or fold** over calling.

Blind defense (kept simple)

- **BB vs BTN/SB open (2.5bb):** call 22+, any suited ace, K9s+, Q9s+, J8s+, T8s+, 97s+, 86s+, 76s, 65s, A9o+, KTo+, QTo+, JTo. 3-bet TT+, AK, AQ.
- **BB vs CO open:** call 22+, A2s+, KTs+, QTs+, J9s+, T9s, 98s, 87s, ATo+, KJo+. 3-bet JJ+, AK.
- **BB vs UTG/HJ open:** call 22-JJ, ATs+, KTs+, QJs, JTs, T9s, AQo. 3-bet QQ+, AK.
- **SB:** 3-bet or fold. Call only with pairs and strong suited Broadway hands against a late-position open.

4. Simple postflop rules (micro-stakes TAG)

1. **Value-heavy, few bluffs.** Micro-stakes players call too much. Bet your good hands big: 66-75% of the pot on wet boards, 33-50% on dry boards.
2. **C-bet** heads-up in position on dry/high boards (A-x-x, K-x-x) about 33%. **Check** more on wet, middle boards (9-8-6, J-T-7) when you missed.
3. **Multiway pot = no bluffs.** Bet top pair with a good kicker or better, plus strong draws.
4. **Pot control with one pair.** With top pair/weak kicker or middle pair, aim for 1-2 streets of value, not 3. Check back the turn or river when you're unsure.
5. **Big river raise from a passive player = fold** everything except the nuts or close to it. At NL50, those raises are almost never bluffs.
6. **Turn check-raise from a passive player:** without two pair or better, usually fold.
7. **Draws:** semi-bluff strong draws (flush draw + overcards, open-ended straight draw + pair) in position. Call with weaker draws only when the pot odds or implied odds fit (call ~25% of the pot or less for 8-9 outs on the flop).
8. **Don't bluff calling stations.** Bluff only players who've shown they can fold, and on scary cards that fit your range.
9. **Stack-off guideline (100bb):** top pair is rarely good enough for all 100bb. Two pair or better usually is, except against very tight players on wet boards.



Pot odds quick check	Bet size	Equity you need
	1/3 pot	20%
	1/2 pot	25%
	2/3 pot	29%
	Pot	33%

5. The session system

Rule	Setting at NL50
Buy-in	\$50 (100bb), topped up below \$40
Stop-win	+\$25 to +\$50 (+50% to +100% of the buy-in)
Trailing stop	Once you're up \$50, quit if you drop back to +\$30. Once you're up \$75, quit at +\$50
Stop-loss	-\$100 to -\$150 (2-3 buy-ins) per session
Time limit	60-90 minutes per session (max ~1,000 hands at 1-2 tables)
Break	10-20 minutes, away from the screen
Daily max	3 sessions or -\$150 total for the day (3 buy-ins), whichever comes first
Daily stop-win (optional)	+\$150 → done for the day
Tables	1-2 at most while learning this system

The rebuy routine (after every session)

1. Hit the stop-win, stop-loss, trailing stop, or time limit → **leave all tables right away** (finish the current hand only).
2. Write the session in the log (below).
3. **Sweep:** move session profit out of the playing balance (see §7) so you start the next session at \$50.
4. Take a 10-20 minute break: stand up, drink water, no poker videos or hand replays.
5. Run through the checklist. If every item passes, sit down with a **fresh \$50 buy-in**, ideally at a new table.

Pre-session / break checklist (tilt check)

- [] Am I calm? No anger over the last bad beat, rating 3 or lower on a 1-10 tilt scale?
- [] Am I trying to "win back" losses? (If yes → stop for the day.)
- [] Rested, sober, not hungry, no distractions?
- [] Under today's loss limit and session count?
- [] Bankroll still at \$1,000 or more? (If not → NL25.)
- [] Timer set for the session length?
- [] Stop-win, trailing stop, and stop-loss numbers written down?
- [] Will I take only chart hands and leave the marginal ones?

Leave right away if: you've made 2+ calls "just to see," you've opened hands outside the chart, you're replaying a beat in your head, or you've raised your stakes mid-session.



Session log template

#	Date	Start	End	Mins	Hands	Buy-ins used	Result (\$)	Why I stopped	Tilt (1-10)	Notes / hands to review
1								stop-win / stop-loss / trail / time		
2										
3										
Day										Bankroll end: \$_ Swept: \$ _

6. Rake and table selection

- At NL50, rake takes a noticeable share of small pots. Opening tight and **avoiding limp-heavy multiway pots preflop** cuts how much rake you pay. Check your site's current rake/cap and any rakeback in the cashier or lobby.
- Pick tables with:** a high average pot, a high "players/flop" %, and one or two players who limp a lot or play every hand.
- Leave tables where:** 4+ players open aggressively and 3-bet often, or the weak player has left.
- Seat:** try to have the loose/weak player on your **right** (you act after them).
- Some sites use anonymous-style tables, so judge the table by what you see in the first 20-30 hands.

7. Profit protection for the bankroll (sweeps and withdrawals)

Bankroll level	Sweep rule
Under \$1,000	Keep all winnings in the bankroll until it reaches \$1,000
\$1,000-\$2,000	At the end of each week, withdraw 25-50% of the week's net profit
Over \$2,000	Withdraw everything above \$2,000, or keep it to move up to NL100 (only with \$4,000+)

- Track **net** results. Don't count "withdrawn" money twice.
- Set a monthly cash-out day. Money you've withdrawn is out of the game. Never redeposit it to chase losses.
- Within a session, the "sweep" is a mental reset: every session starts at \$50, whatever happened before.

8. The honest section: what these rules do and don't do

- Stop-wins and stop-losses don't change your long-run expected value.** Poker is one continuous session. Your win rate depends on the decisions you make in each hand, not on when you leave. Splitting play into "sessions" doesn't lock in profit.
- Leaving a soft table while ahead can cost money.** If you're a favorite at the table, every hand you skip there loses expected winnings. The best time to leave is when the *game* gets worse or *you* play worse, not when your results look good.
- Variance at NL50 is huge.** A typical standard deviation is about 80-100bb per 100 hands. Example for a solid winner at +5bb/100:



Sample	Expected profit	Rough ± 1 SD range ($\approx 68\%$)	Rough ± 2 SD ($\approx 95\%$)
1,000 hands	+\$25	-\$120 to +\$170	-\$260 to +\$310
10,000 hands	+\$250	-\$200 to +\$700	-\$650 to +\$1,150
50,000 hands	+\$1,250	+\$250 to +\$2,250	-\$750 to +\$3,250

(Approximate; assumes $SD \approx 90bb/100$.) Even winning players regularly hit **10-20 buy-in downswings**. That's why the bankroll needs to be 20-40 buy-ins.

- **The real value of these rules is discipline:** they stop tilt sessions, protect against fatigue, force breaks, cap your worst days, and turn profit into money you've actually withdrawn.
- **Sensible exceptions:** if you're up to the stop-win but the table is very soft, you're playing well, and you're within the time limit, you may stay. Switch to the **trailing stop** (e.g., quit if you drop \$20 from your peak). Never make an exception to the **stop-loss** or the daily loss limit.

9. One-page quick reference

Item	Rule
Bankroll	\$1,000-\$2,000 (20-40 BI). Below \$800 $\rightarrow$ NL25
Buy-in	\$50 (100bb), top up below \$40
Open size	2.5bb; +1bb per limper; SB 3bb
Opening %	UTG ~ 12 , HJ ~ 16 , CO ~ 24 , BTN ~ 35 , SB ~ 28
vs UTG/HJ raise	3-bet QQ+/AK; call pairs and good suited hands in position; fold AQo-
vs 4-bet	QQ+, AK only
BB defense	Wider vs BTN/SB; tight vs UTG; SB 3-bet or fold
Postflop	Value-bet big, few bluffs, no multiway bluffs, one pair = 1-2 streets
River raise from passive player	Fold unless near-nuts
Stop-win	+\$25 to +\$50
Trailing stop	Peak +\$50 $\rightarrow$ quit at +\$30
Stop-loss	-\$100 to -\$150
Session time	60-90 min, then a 10-20 min break
Daily cap	3 sessions or -\$150
Sweep	Weekly 25-50% of profit; anything above \$2,000 out
Remember	The rules protect your discipline, not your EV. Never break the stop-loss

Approximate guidelines for study away from the table, not for use during play.



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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.

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