

Chapter 1

Introduction

Letter from the Author

Congratulations! You've just downloaded the best poker e-book on the internet. I'm sure you've heard that before so I'll just let the rest of this book speak for itself. The difference between this e-book and all the rest will be obvious once you begin reading.

Making a lot of money at poker is possible for anyone who makes the effort to become a better poker player. The big winners in poker aren't these guys you see in movies who can "read your soul" or play by "feel." They are human just like the rest of us.

What makes them great is how methodical they are. They meticulously study strategy, they take notes on their opponents and they constantly replay hands in their heads or on PokerTracker in an effort to see where mistakes could have been avoided. They set clear goals and always strive to improve their knowledge.

Online poker has proven itself to be here for the long haul. The US government has tried to prevent its citizens from playing poker, but the demand and the outrage is too great. People want to choose for themselves how they spend their money and no ridiculous law will be able to change that.

At this very moment, people are making hundreds of thousands of dollars playing online poker. It may be hard to believe at first, but you'll soon see that it's very realistic to make over \$100,000 a year playing medium-stakes poker. That's right, you don't even have to be a high stakes genius to make \$100,000 at poker; you just have to be a decent medium stakes grinder.

If you look online, you'll see that I'm not exaggerating this at all. If anything, I'm under-representing the possibilities of poker. Take *Full Tilt Poker* for instance. They have high stakes no limit tables with buy-ins going all the way up to \$100,000. Seven figure months are not uncommon for the players who win at those stakes.

About the Author

My name is SmackinYaUp and I started playing poker in December of 2004. I started out a losing player and saw poker as nothing more than an entertaining diversion. Back then, I had no idea how much life-changing money I would soon be earning through poker.

I played small stakes games throughout 2005. I read up on poker strategy and improved my game, but I didn't set any goals. Because I didn't set any goals, I never really advanced beyond 200NL.

In early 2006, I set a long term goal to play as high as I possibly could and made it a short term goal to work my way up to 400NL. By the time June came around, I was playing 8 tables of 1000NL and making a killing. That month I made over \$40,000 playing poker. I haven't looked back since.

Here's a PokerTracker screenshot from one of my poker databases:

Game Level	Total Hands	Vol. Put \$ In The Pot	Vol. Put \$ In From SB	Folded SB To Steal	Folded BB To Steal	Att. To Steal Blinds	Won \$ WSF %	Amount Won
NL (\$50)	69	40.58	66.67	100.00	100.00	46.67	64.29	\$4,319.20
NL (\$20) (6 r	58	17.24	20.00	100.00	100.00	41.67	33.33	(\$729.50)
PL \$2000 (6	223	32.74	55.43	100.00	100.00	15.00	54.29	\$2,007.00
NL \$1000 (6	57,365	17.14	19.05	89.43	85.42	25.25	37.73	\$22,649.97
NL (\$10) (6 r	3,573	17.44	22.44	86.03	81.99	25.77	35.45	\$721.80
NL (\$10)	23	8.70	25.00	100.00	100.00	0.00	50.00	(\$56.00)
29 Levels	200,630	19.82	23.86	88.63	83.59	26.36	36.88	\$56,254.41

Sample from Chapter 9, sections A, B and D:

Chapter 9

Advanced Strategy

Board Textures

The term "board texture" refers to how favorable the board looks for your hand and your opponents' likely hands. Being able to read and understand the board texture is a critical skill for every poker player. Fortunately, it's not a tough skill to learn and eventually it will come natural to you.

For example, let's say you have a pair of tens, make a preflop raise and get called by 4 people. If the flop comes something like AKQ, you could say the board texture looks terrible for your tens. There are three big cards out there and 4 people called your preflop raise so it's likely someone already has your tens beat. This is an obvious example but that's how it's done.

Hand reading will be covered in its own chapter soon, but let's go ahead and throw a little hand reading in now. Let's say a really tight player raises preflop from early position. This guy rarely raises preflop and it's even rarer for him to raise from early position so you figure he has to have something like AK, JJ, QQ, KK or AA. Just by doing this much you've already done a little hand reading.

Continuing the example, let's say the flop brings three low cards - something like 2d3s8c. This is a good board texture for your opponent because he likely has a high pair in his hand and is soundly beating anything on the board. This would be a bad time for you to

try to pull a bluff because you can't really represent anything other than a flopped set. Very rarely can you get an opponent to fold a big pair on an unconnected, unsuited board.

It's this combination of putting your opponents on hands and reading the board texture that will give you a major advantage at the no limit tables. Just being able to roughly guess your opponents' ranges of raising hands is a great start if you can apply that knowledge to what's showing on the board.

Once you master the art of estimating your opponents' preflop hand ranges, you can narrow down the list of likely hands by observing how your opponents play *after* the flop. Every time there is a showdown, take a look at each opponent's cards and see what type of hand he was playing. Keep an eye out for draws, weak hands, medium-strength hands and monsters. Notice how each opponent plays his hands from *in position* and *out of position*.

Does your opponent play his draws fast, with lots of bets and raises? Does he play his medium-strength hands with much gusto or does he play them as if he's unsure of how to proceed? Does he always slowplay his monsters or does he play them fast? If you constantly ask yourself these types of questions (and record the answers) you'll get to know your opponents much faster than you could by just trying to wing it and go by "feel."

Table Image

Table image is all about perception. It is how you *perceive* your opponents and how your opponents *perceive* you. If you win six pots in a row without a showdown, your opponents will perceive you to be an aggressive, bluff-happy player. It doesn't matter if you've bluffed every single time or just happened to be on a hot rush of cards. All that matters is that your opponents have seen you take down six pots in a row.

It pays to be aware of your table image at all times. Let's say that after winning those six pots in a row you look down and find that you've been dealt yet another strong hand - a full house. Most of the time you would want to slowplay a full house for a street or two to give everyone else a chance to catch up or make a second-best hand. This time, however, you'd probably want to start betting and raising right off the bet.

You've taken the last six pots down so if you bet yet again, your opponents are likely to think you're just out stealing another pot. By playing to your table image, you won't have to rely on one of your opponents getting a second-best hand because there is also a good chance that one of them will get frustrated enough with you that they'll try to take a stand against you.

This is pretty basic stuff so far but the table image concept gets poker players into trouble all the time because of the following fact:

Table image comes into play for loose and aggressive players WAY more than it does for tight, solid players.

People notice loose players and tend to forget about tight players. Tight poker players get in trouble with this because they overestimate the effects of their table image. They'll try to pull off a big bluff because they haven't won a pot in two hours and think they can get away with it. These bluffs fail because fish don't notice tight players. On top of that, fish love trying to catch big bluffs.

There are two ways to use table image to your advantage:

1. Conscious manipulation
2. Use of your natural table image

Conscious manipulation means making certain plays in a conscious effort to manipulate your table image. If you want people to call more when you have strong hands, you would want to steal more pots when in late position and show your cards after successful bluffs.

Some poker players take it to the extreme and show their cards every single time they steal a pot, no matter how small. This is a surprisingly effective tactic because it irritates the other players at the table to no end. They'll think that you're some kind of cheap hot-shot wannabe. When you constantly show your bluffs, the other players will want to teach you a lesson in humility. Use this to your advantage! Not only will your strong hands get more calls, but you'll also get to laugh at all the crazy comments you'll see in the chat box.

The use of your natural table image is something you should be doing all the time. Like I said before, always be aware of your table image. If you've been getting crappy cards for the last hour, your late position steals will be more effective. Just don't go overboard with the stealing because people don't notice tight players like they notice loose players.

If you've had a lucky streak and hit a few strong hands recently, you will need to lower your bluff frequency and increase the speed at which you play your strong hands. There's not a better feeling in the world showing a big bluff and then getting a hand like AA on the very next hand. Use that table image!

Before we move on to the next section, I have a few last words of wisdom to pass on to you:

The looser your table image, the more you should value bet your marginal made hands.

What this means is that if you have a loose or reckless table image, you can get away with betting weaker made hands than you could if you had a tight table image. Why is this so? Because if your opponents see you as loose, they will open up the range of hands

with which they call you. Sometimes you can bet hands like 2nd pair, medium kicker and get calls from even weaker hands.

Now if you have a tight image, you can't get away with betting such marginal hands. Your opponents see you as tight so they won't make nearly as many loose calls. Bets in this case have negative expected value because your opponents will fold everything that you can beat and will only call with hands that are beating yours.

How to Read Hands - The 4 Step Formula

Hand reading is obviously a critical skill in poker since the entire basis of a winning strategy is to play as close as you can to the way you'd play if you could see your opponent's hand. The secret to hand reading lays in *betting patterns*.

Betting patterns refer to the sequence of actions opponents take during the course of a hand. There are only five different actions an opponent can take during a hand: fold, check, call, bet and raise. It's pretty simple when broken down like that but these five actions can be arranged in an almost infinite number of betting patterns.

Being able to identify and understand betting patterns is one of the most powerful skills you can have in no limit holdem. If you've never heard of this concept before, don't worry; you probably already use it to some extent without knowing it. Poker players who consciously study this area can gain a tremendous advantage over their opponents.

Let's use a simple example to demonstrate what I'm talking about.

Say you're playing a .50/\$1.00 no limit game and are dealt a pair of aces. A decent tight-aggressive player in middle position limps in and it folds around to you in late position. You make a \$5 preflop raise, the blinds fold and the guy in middle position calls your raise.

The flop brings something like 5QQ and looks pretty safe. He checks, you bet \$9 and he calls.

The turn brings a 4, he checks again and you bet \$19. Again, he calls.

The river brings a 9 and suddenly your opponent leads out with a \$35 bet.

Damn! What do you do now?

Well, you make a read on his hand using the following four step formula:

- 1. Analyze each street of his play and try to imagine what kind of hole cards would make YOU play the same way as him**

- 2. Put it all together and analyze his betting pattern as a whole**
- 3. Make your prediction using a combination of this formula and any additional reads you've already picked up on your opponent**
- 4. Assign percentages to the likelihood of his having certain hands**

Let's work through this formula together to figure out what he has.

1. Preflop - Your opponent had something worth playing in early position, but it probably wasn't strong because he only limped in. If he was slow-playing a big pair like AA or KK, he probably would have let you know by pulling a limp-raise.

Flop - Your opponent checked and then called a bet on a 5QQ flop. At this point it looks like he's just being stubborn. He knows it's not very likely you have a queen because two are showing on the flop. He might have a medium pocket pair and doesn't think you hit anything. It's also possible that he has pocket fives for a flopped full house. There's a slightly smaller possibility that he has a queen, but that wouldn't make sense for a decent player in early position. Decent players usually come in for a raise with high cards like AQ and KQ. A tight-aggressive wouldn't normally limp in from early position with AQ or less and then cold call a raise from a player in late position. That would be a highly passive play.

Turn - The turn card doesn't change anything. It's highly unlikely that either one of you believes the 4 improved the other's hand. What does change is how worried you should be. Your opponent checks to you again and he calls yet again. Either he's being extra stubborn or he's slowplaying you with something. Pocket fives are starting to look pretty likely. There's still a chance he has a queen even though that wouldn't make any sense if he truly is tight-aggressive.

River - The board is 5QQ49 and now your opponent leads out with a huge bet. This bet represents massive strength because you have been betting into him all the way down. He has to know you have something strong but he's betting big despite that.

2. Put it all together - Your opponent has checked and called you all the way down but has suddenly placed a huge bet on the river. You've been representing strength by betting on every street but this hasn't fazed him at all. This is either a monster hand or an elaborate bluff. It would be a pretty ballsy bluff considering how much strength you've shown so far.
3. Make your prediction - He has to have at least a full house or 3 of a kind to be willing to bet into you on the river. My guess is he flopped the full house while holding 55. It's also possible that he got stubborn with 44 on the flop and then ran

into a miracle turn. It doesn't really matter which one of those he has though because they both do the same thing.

He might have a queen but we decided that most tight-aggressive opponents wouldn't play a queen from early position and then call a pre-flop raise. That would be a pretty fishy play for a tight-aggressive player but surprises do happen.

4. Assign percentages - this is the most difficult part in the process. It's a skill that develops with experience. Try to get as close as you can to a total of 100%. If you end up well short of 100%, that means you are dealing with a wide range of unknown hands. This will happen sometimes so you just have to play as carefully as you can. As you develop your hand reading skills, you'll get closer and closer to 100% every time.

In the example above, I would place about a 70% chance on him having a full house, a 20% chance he has a queen in his hand and a 10% chance he's making a weird bluff. This is more of an art than a science so the numbers will never be exact. Feel free to adjust these numbers based on your reads and past experience with the opponent in question.

That's it for the four step process. It's not easy but it is simple. If you practice this every hand you play and every hand you observe, your skills will grow at a tremendous rate.

Thank you for downloading this free preview of the eBook Kill No Limit! That was just a small taste of the great strategy you'll find inside this e-book. I hope you found this chapter useful and I invite you to visit my website at www.KillNoLimit.com to get your own copy of the complete Kill No Limit Kit.

Inside the Kill No Limit Kit you'll get all the following poker tools:

1. *The complete Kill No Limit eBook*
2. *Two-and-a-half hours of cash game video filmed by top no limit poker players*
3. *Three starting hand charts*
4. *One Microsoft Excel worksheet containing those hand charts*
5. *One Microsoft Excel worksheet used for tracking your bankroll and taking notes*
6. *One poker odds chart*
7. *A copy of the free program "PokerStove."*
8. *One article to help you get started with PokerStove.*