



THE MODERN C-BETTING BLUEPRINT

Building the Solver Engine and Applying the
Tactical Brakes in Tournament Poker

The Outdated Myth

Initiative dictates action.

Always c-bet if you were the last aggressor preflop.

Bet to “find out where you are”.

The GTO Reality

The C-Bet is a tactical tool to capitalize on mathematically verified advantages.

On average, after an open-raise, GTO c-bets 60-70% of the time. This means 30-40% of the time, betting is a fundamental mathematical error.

Driven entirely by two pillars:
Range Advantage & Nut Advantage.

Range vs. Nut Advantage Matrix

Range Advantage
(Who holds more overall equity?)

High Range, Low Nut
High Frequency, Small Sizing
Realize equity, protect against getting blown off.

High Range, High Nut
High Frequency, Large Sizing
Extract maximum value.

Low Range, Low Nut
Check Heavy
Preservation mode.

Low Range, High Nut
Low Frequency, Large Sizing
Bet polarized—infrequently, but heavily.

Nut Advantage

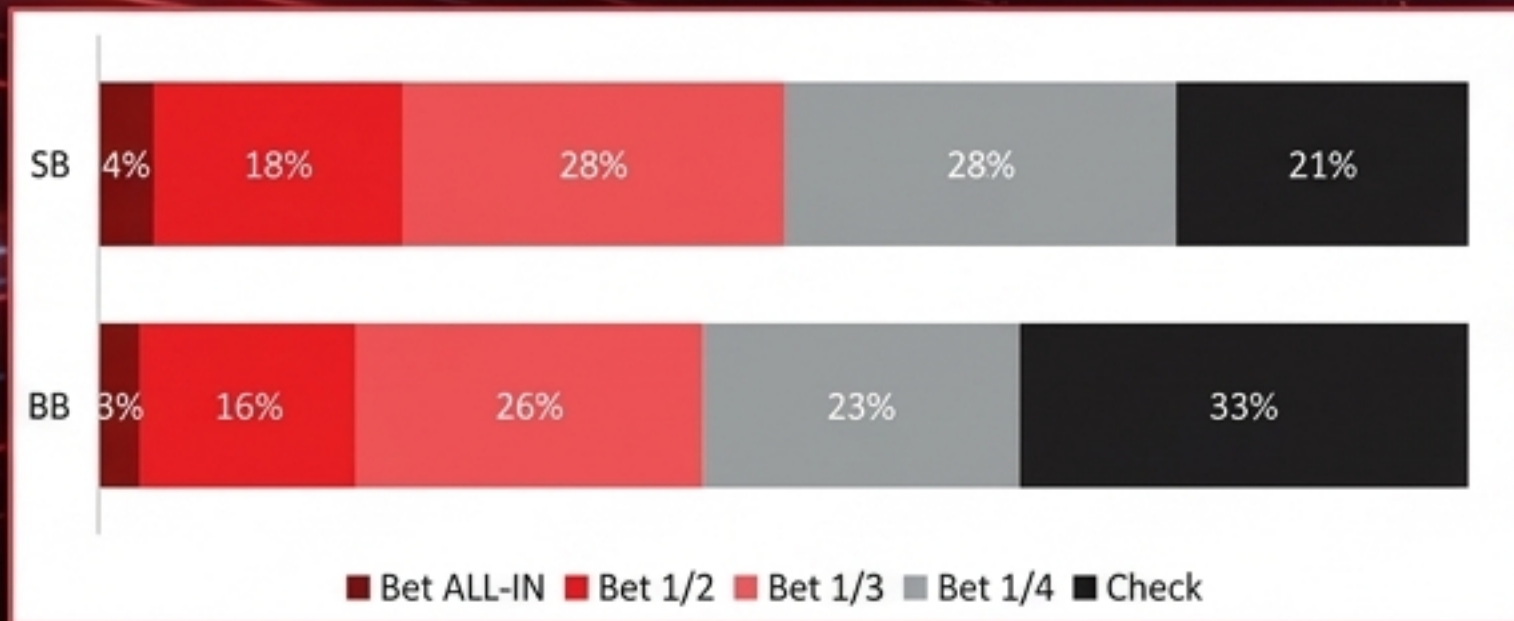
(Who holds a higher proportion of 2-pair+ hands?)

The Positional Burden Shift

Out of Position (OOP)

Constricted Strategy

- ✂ Betting from OOP prevents IP from realizing equity for free, but exposes a capped range to a positional informational disadvantage.
- ✂ Default: Check 100% in single-raised pots.



In Position (IP)

Expansive Strategy

- ✂ IP checks realize equity. Betting forces the OOP player to react.
- ✂ Default: Bet 100% on dry/high boards or 3-bet pots.

Board Texture Sizing Grid

Board Texture	Strategic Output	Recommended Sizing
Dry, High-Card, or 3-Bet Pots [K♠][8♦][3♣]	Bet 100% of Range	Small (25-33% Pot)
Wet, Low-Card, Deep Stacks [9♠][8♠][7♦]	Polarized Range (Bet Strong/Draws, Check Medium)	Large (66-75% Pot)
OOP Single-Raised Pot Any Texture	Protect Range	Check 100% (No Bet)

The Concentration of Power in 3-Bet Pots

Nut Advantage Skew

IP Nut Advantage: 85%

OOP Capped: 15%

1 Dynamics:

3-bet pots feature concentrated ranges and a significantly lower Stack-to-Pot Ratio (SPR).

2 The IP Aggressor's Edge:

The 3-bettor holds a massive nut advantage (holding AA, KK, QQ, AK, AQ—hands the caller typically 4-bets preflop).

3 Execution:

On dry, high-card flops, the IP 3-bettor can apply relentless pressure, c-betting nearly their entire range for a tiny sizing (10-25% pot). The caller's capped range will struggle to defend.



The 5 Tactical Brakes

Knowing how to bet is the engine. Knowing exactly when to check is how you win tournaments.

Firing c-bets into these five specific scenarios is the mathematical equivalent of flushing chips down the toilet.

Brake #1: Extreme ICM Pressure

ICM CRITICAL: 100%



The Scenario:

You are on the money bubble with 25bb. The **Chip Leader** (65bb) calls from the Small Blind.

The Flop:

J♥ T♥ on **9♦ 7♦ 4♣**

The Logic:

While tempting to c-bet a gutshot and two overs, you must play **defensively**.

Getting check-raised here by the big stack forces a devastating decision: call and risk tournament life in a bloated pot, or fold away equity.

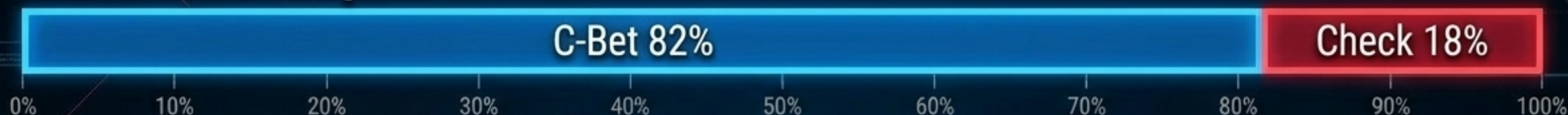
The Output:

CHECK. Avoid eager aggression when a big stack can leverage your tournament life against you.

Brake #2: OOP in Wide Range Battles

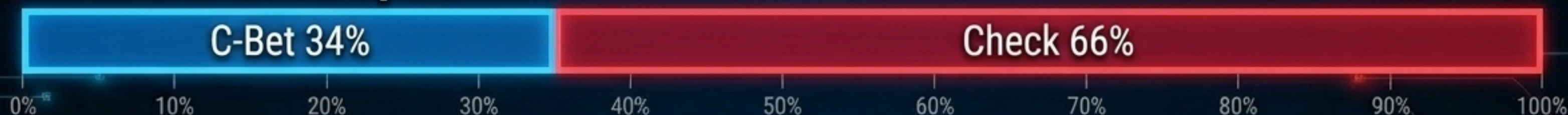
The Flop: **Q♥ J♦ 5♣** (25bb effective)

Scenario A: UTG Opens



UTG C-Bets 82%, Checks 18% (Early position ranges index heavily on top-end value)

Scenario B: Cutoff Opens



Cutoff C-Bets 34%, Checks 66%

The Logic:

When opening wider (CO), your range is filled with medium-strength hands, marginal draws, and misses. You cannot only check the misses; you must check strong hands to protect the equity of the middle and bottom of your range.

Brake #3: The Multiway Equity Drain

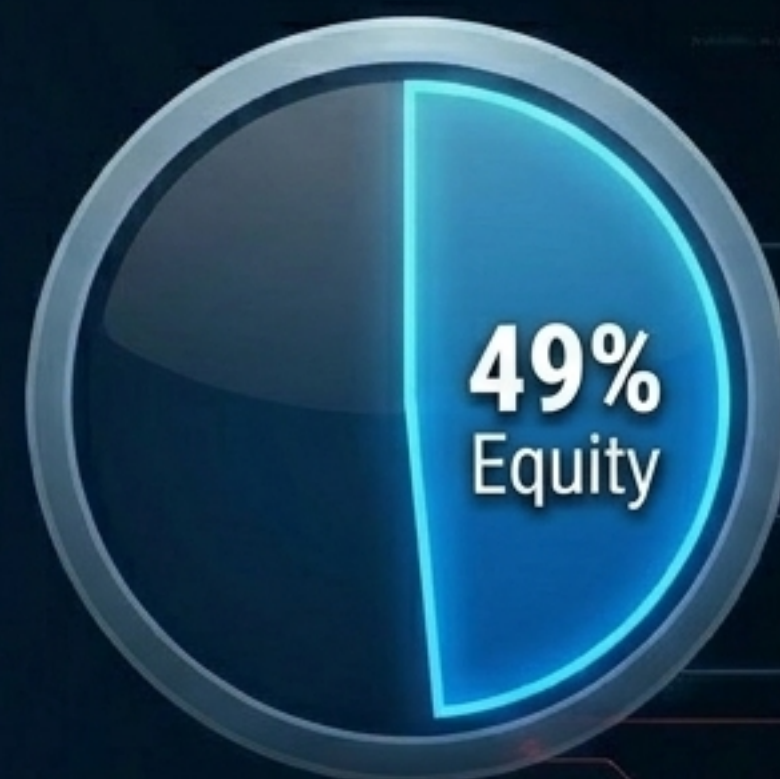
The Setup: You open **A♣ 4♣**. The Flop is **A♠ K♥ 9♦**.



Heads Up vs QTs



3-Way vs QTs, K8s



4-Way vs QTs, K8s, 33

The Logic:

As equity decreases due to multiple opposing ranges, frequency must drop proportionally. Multiway pots mean less c-betting.

GTO Exception:

You can c-bet wider if up against exactly two opponents and both are trapped in the blinds.

Brake #4: Low, Connected Flops IP vs the BB

The Setup:

[7♦][6♦][5♣]

Hi-Jack opens, Big Blind defends.
Flop: (25bb effective)

The GTO Reality:

This flop is so beneficial to the BB defending range that the solver elects to lead out 42% of the time.



The Human Adjustment:

Human opponents rarely lead out over half the time when they flop the nuts or strong draws.

Consequently, their checking range contains far more hidden strength than the solver anticipates.

The Output:

If the BB checks this texture, you must heavily check behind.
Do not fire blindly into disguised strength.

Brake #5: The Check-Shove Equity Trap

The Setup: Hi-Jack dealt $[K\clubsuit][7\clubsuit]$. BB defends. Flop: $[8\diamondsuit][6\diamondsuit][2\clubsuit]$. BB checks.

The Trap: It is tempting to bluff with an overcard and backdoor draws. However, betting exposes you to a high frequency of BB check-raises (24% frequency).

The Cliff (Betting):

Facing a 50% pot check-raise or an all-in shove, $[K\clubsuit][7\clubsuit]$ is forced to fold, completely blowing you off your equity realization.

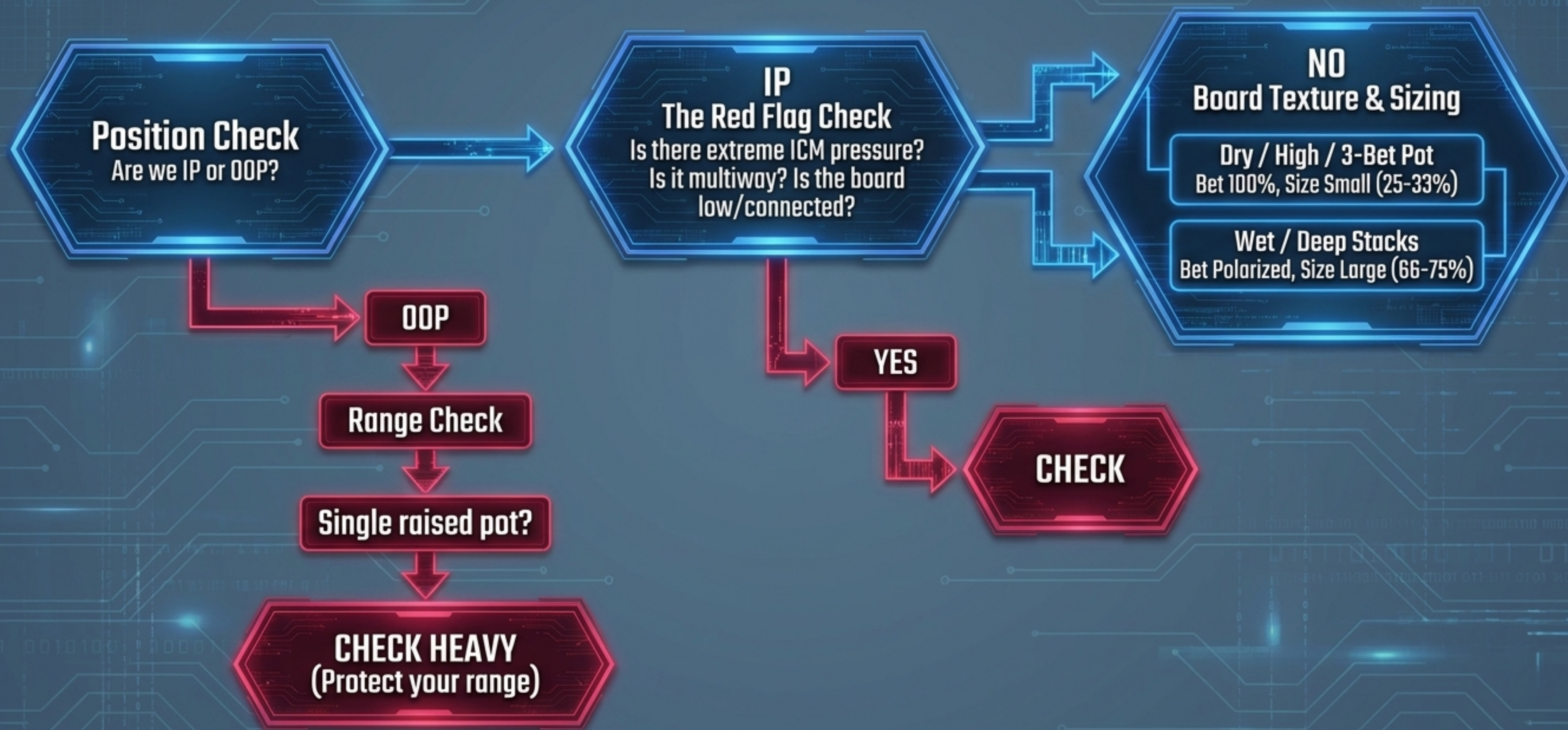
FLOP NODE
(Check)

TURN NODE
(Realized)

The Bridge (Checking):

Checking preserves your hand and guarantees you realize your equity on the turn.

The Master C-Bet Decision Matrix



Solver strategies shouldn't be treated as a master, but a servant.

The math provides the baseline. Identifying the exceptions, adjusting for human tendencies, and knowing when to apply the brakes is what separates the auto-bettors from the champions.

Build your engine, but master your brakes.