3-Betting Section Introduction

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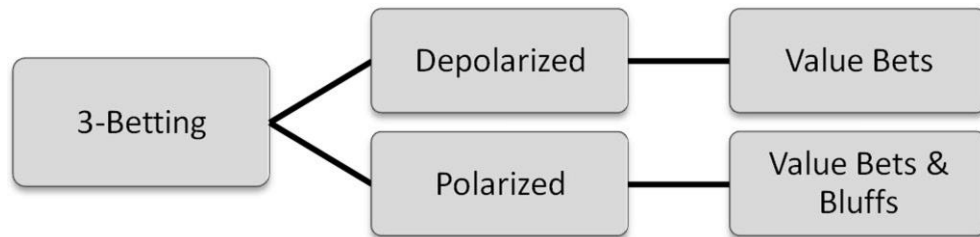
- Defending Against 3-Bets

Defining a 3-Bet

3-Bet: When another player re-raises the pre-flop raise.

- **1st Bet**: The forced blind bets posted by the SB and BB.
- **2nd Bet**: The first pre-flop open-raise.
- **3rd Bet**: The first pre-flop re-raise.

Why We 3-Bet

- There are two primary reasons for 3-betting: for value and as a bluff:
  - **For Value**: When we have a hand that is too good to call, such as AA or KK, and expect to get called by worse hands when we 3-bet.
  - **Bluff:** When we have a hand that is too bad to call, such as A2s or 33, and we expect our opponent to fold to our 3-bet bluff.

Visualizing 3-Betting Ranges

Depolarized

Polarized

Depolarized 3-Bet: A 3-betting range composed solely of value bets. Sometimes called a strong linear range.

Polarized 3-Bet: A 3-betting range composed of a combination of value bets and bluffs.

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3-Betting at the Micro Stakes

- You shouldn't be 3-bet bluffing too often for one specific reason:
  – our opponents' inability to fold to 3-bets.
- 3-bet bluffing too often at the micro stakes quickly becomes an expensive strategy against opponents who have an inability to fold to 3-bets.
- Loose passive recreational players at the micro stakes hate to fold pre-flop and you'll find yourself in a lot of bloated pots with a marginal holding if you 3-bet bluff too often.
- When playing in softer micro stakes games, you'll often see loose passive opponents call 3-bets and 4-bets with a wide array of mediocre holdings.

Fold Equity & 3-Betting

- One vitally important consideration when considering 3-bet bluffing is how often we expect our opponents to fold, i.e. fold equity.

> **Fold Equity**: The additional equity you stand to gain based on the probability that your opponent will fold to a bet or raise.

- The less inclined people are to fold to our 3-bets, the less we should be 3-bet bluffing them and the more inclined we should be to widen our 3-bet value range.

- I'm not saying you shouldn't 3-bet bluff at the micro stakes; I'm saying you should do it sparingly and only in ideal situations – which you'll soon learn about.

- Our 3-betting strategy revolves around maximizing value with a strong depolarized range against weaker opponents much more than it does 3-bet bluffing.

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3-Bet Progression at the Micro Stakes

- I recommend most beginning and struggling poker players follow the below progression when implementing 3-betting into their poker game.
  - Begin with a strong depolarized 3-betting range and don't start applying a polarized range with bluffs until you're comfortable playing in 3-bet pots and understand post-flop dynamics well.
  - Once you're comfortable playing in 3-bet pots and play well post-flop, begin using a depolarized range with a few of the better bluffing hands, looking for ideal spots to bluff – which we'll discuss shortly.
  - From there you can start expanding both your 3-bet value and bluff ranges accordingly.

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Default 3-Bet Sizing

- Our default 3-bet sizing at the micro stakes should be the following, regardless if we're 3-betting for value or as a bluff.

- These are fairly common and accepted 3-bet sizing used by good poker players:
  - **Out of Position**: 3.5x our opponent's open-raise sizing.
  - **In Position**: 3x our opponent's open-raise sizing.

- We 3-bet a larger sizing when we're out of position to encourage our opponents to fold.

- Because it's harder to realize our equity when we're out of position, so we don't mind if our opponents fold pre-flop.