

Preflop Charts: Open Raise in 6-max Poker Cash Games

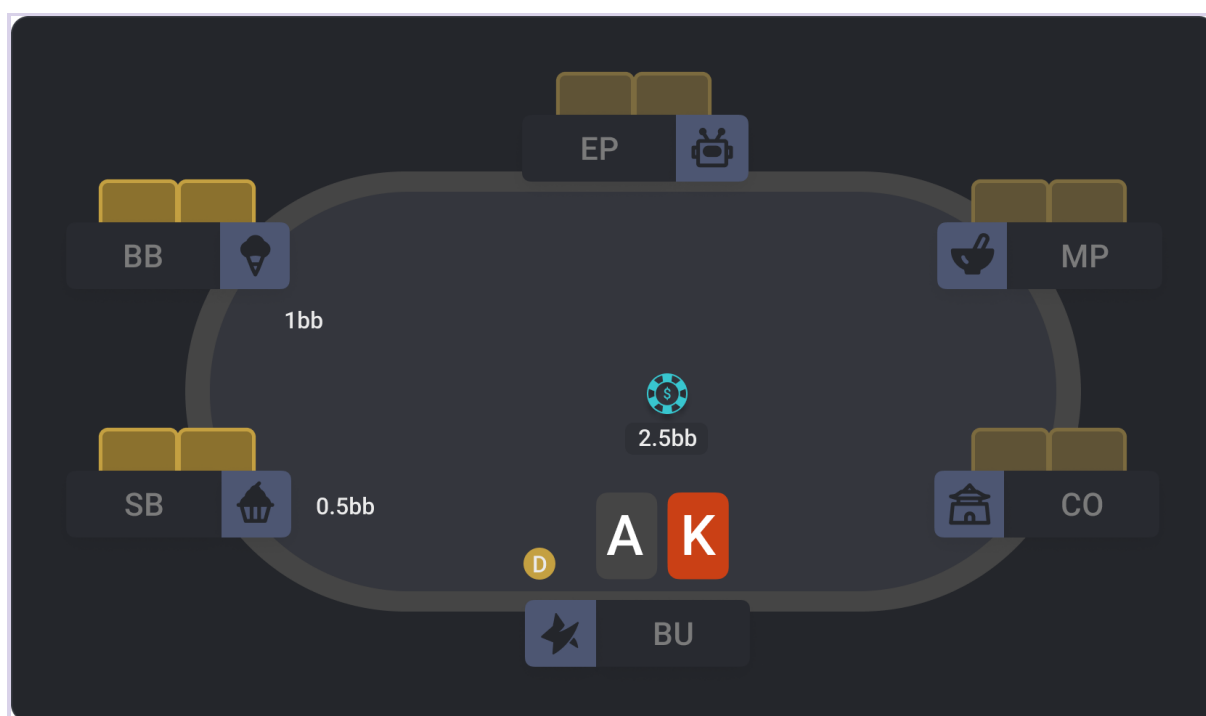
by [Nick Korolev](#), in consultation with other pro players.

In this article, I'll show you the opening hands charts from all positions in a classic 6-max poker cash game. I will explain how to use these preflop ranges and when to consider deviations from a given strategy. I recommend using the charts in [Freebetrange](#) poker tool - they're available right after signing up.

Definitions

We'll start with position definitions. In a classic short-handed poker game, there are 6 players, and their positions at the table are called accordingly: EP, MP, CO, BU, SB, BB.

A Raise on preflop is considered an Open Raise (in other words - Raise First In, RFI) if there is no one who entered the game by raise or limp before that Raise happened.

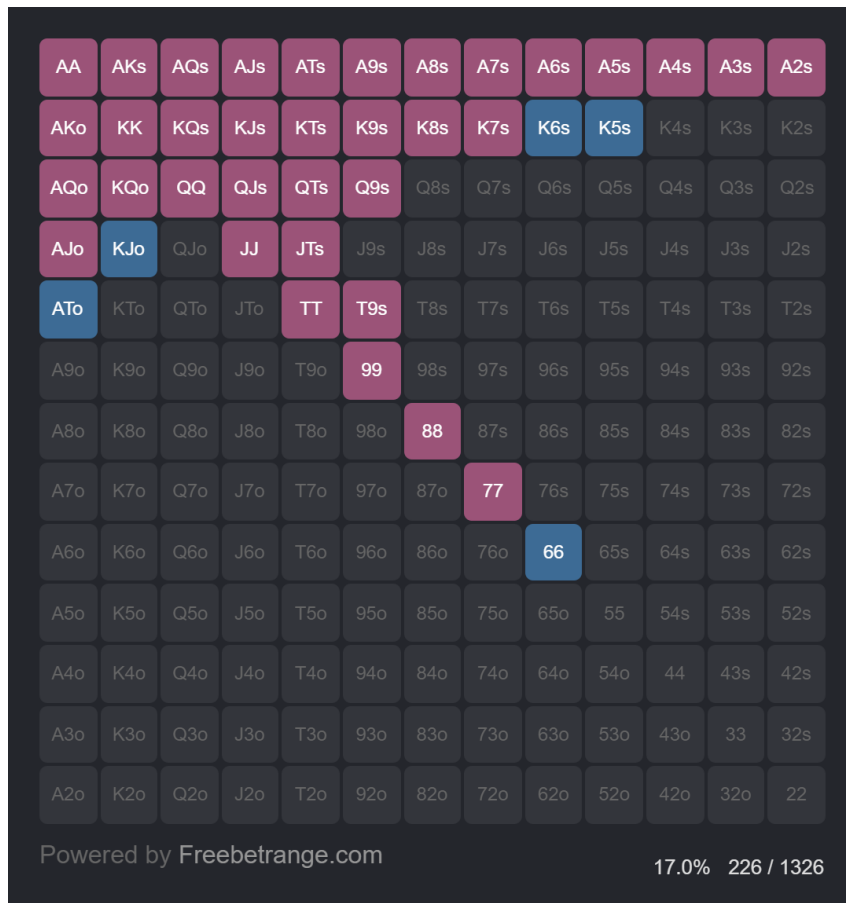


Recommended sizing for opening raise is 2.5bb from all positions except SB. From Small Blind we usually use a slightly increased 3bb sizing, to avoid giving the player in the big blind too good odds for a call.

Let's look at the ranges of open raises from each position separately.

Early position (EP), or Under The Gun (UTG)

If you are sitting in an Early Position, you're very first to act when a hand is started. Logically, as you have the entire table to act after you, you'll have the tightest opening range among all the positions. The balanced opening range from the early position would include 15-17% of all starting hands.



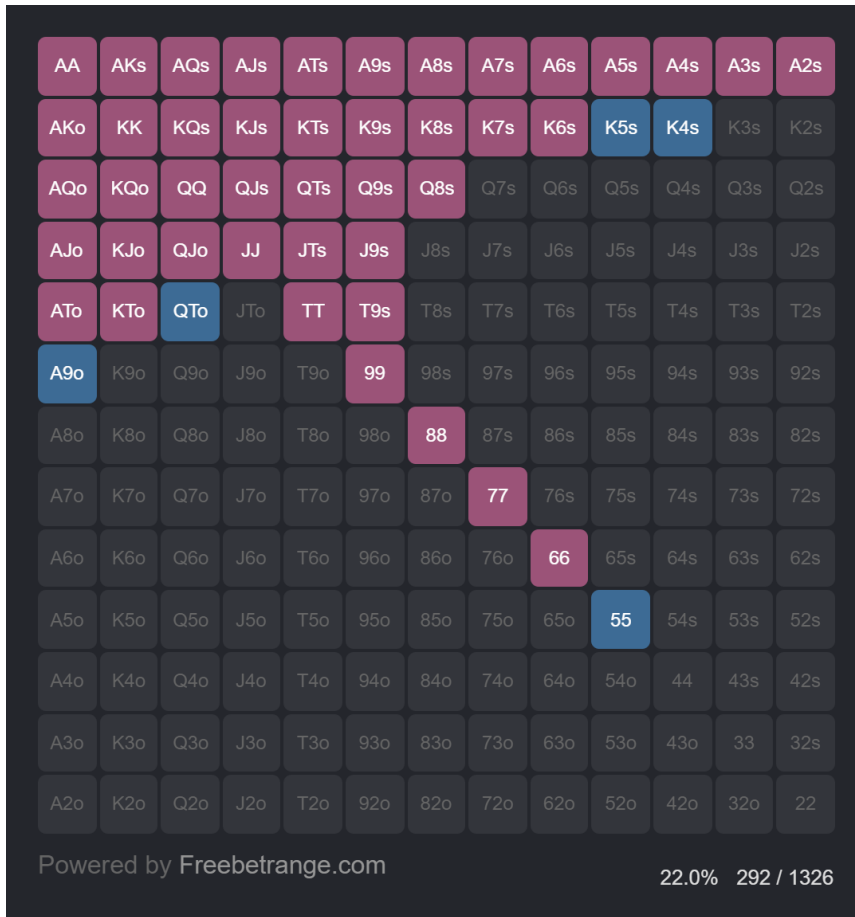
Early position Open Raise chart. Purple hands - always raise. Blue hands - raise only when a weak player is on the big blind.

As you can see we have to fold a lot of playable hands from the UTG position at the poker table. You can try to play more hands, but an analysis of millions of hands speaks clearly that even the best players will be losing money in the long run if they deviate too much from the mentioned range.

Note that the range is dynamic, that is, it implies adjustment to the features of the opponents acting after you on preflop. We can take risks and enter the game with a wider range if we potentially end up in a profitable spot with a weak player.

Middle position (MP), or Hi-Jack (HJ)

The second position to act on preflop and your opening range becomes a bit wider. You can profitably enter a game by open raise with 19-22% of hands.

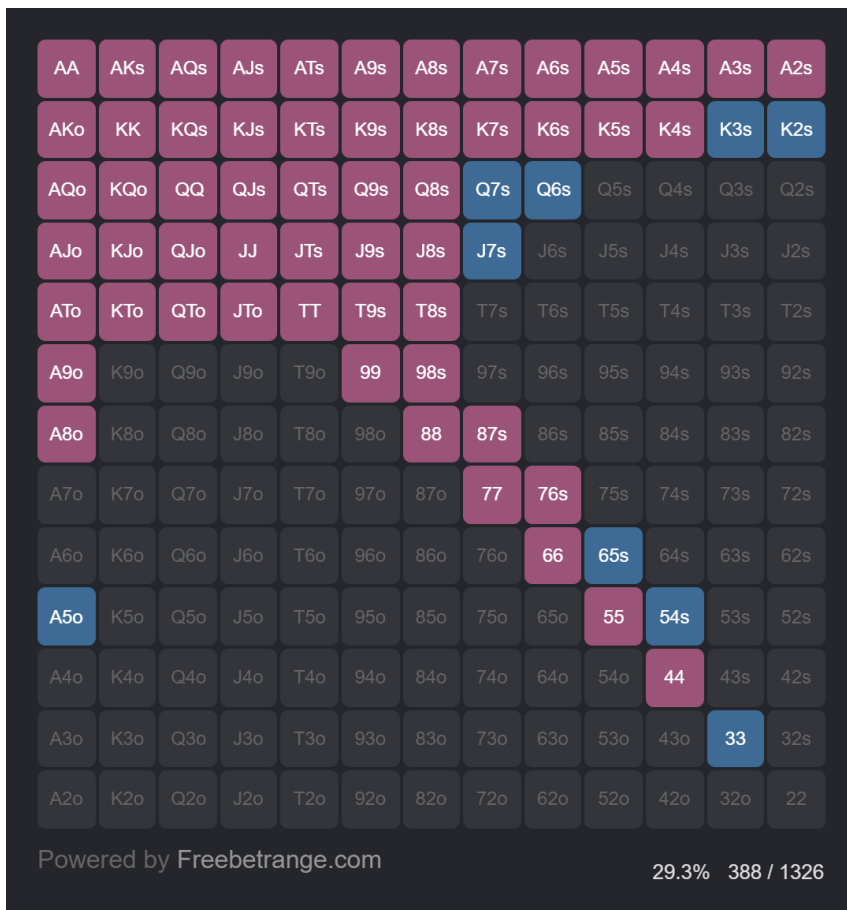


Middle position RFI preflop range. Purple hands - always open raise. Blue hands - raise only when a weak player is on the big blind.

Compared to the early position, we can open more off-suited Broadway, suited K-high, Q-high, and J-high hands. And again we take into account table structure: we open more hands in case we have an increased probability of a call from a weak player.

Cutoff (CO)

We're just one position away from the Button. Only 4 players to act after us, and obviously, we can open raise more hands than from the previous position. Good players' RFI range from the Cutoff position usually contains 25-30% of starting poker hands.



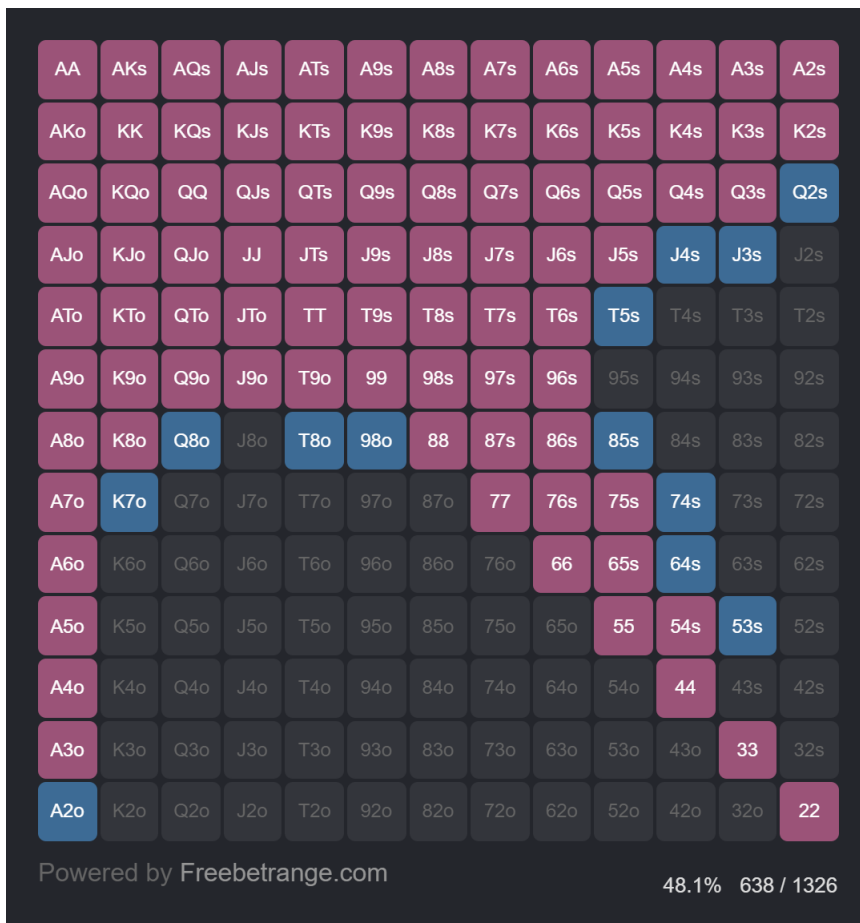
Cutoff Open Raise preflop chart. Purple hands - always raise. Blue hands - optional raise (If BTN is a tight player and/or BB is a weak player).

When we are in the Cutoff seat, we have only one obstacle to being in a great position postflop - the player on the Button. So if you know that this player is tight and doesn't come into play often, feel free to play more hands.

Button (BTN or BU)

The best position in poker. This is where you will earn the most money. You are one of the last to act preflop. There are only two players behind you, who will also be out of position with you postflop if they enter the game (they will be forced to act first).

All of these facts suggest that you need to play a wide range of hands. And it's true: the RFI of a good player in this position varies from 40 to 48%.



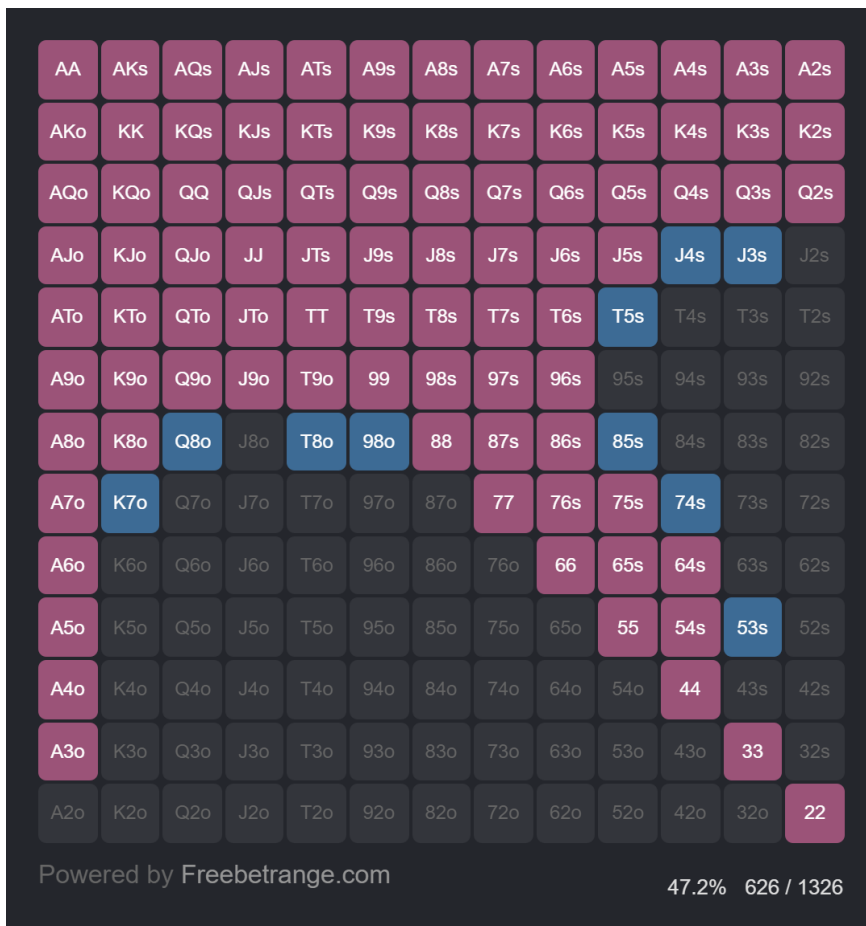
Button RFI range. Purple hands - always raise. Blue hands - optional raise (If SB and BB are weak or tight players).

The Button is also the position from which you most need to evaluate the playing style of your opponents behind you. If the blinds are very tight, you should definitely open more hands, as you will often just win the pot preflop. If the players behind you are weak, you should also expand your range so that you are in position and can exploit your opponents' postflop weaknesses. But be careful if there are aggressive players behind you: they know that you are opening a wide range from the Button and can often re-raise, that is, "3-Bet" you.

Small Blind (SB)

You are left 1-on-1 with the player in the Big blind. Since the chances of them being dealt a good hand are slim, you can open raise with a wide range here. However, remember that your opponent has already made a mandatory bet and will be less willing to leave the pot. Also, they will be in position postflop, so it'll motivate them to call or even 3bet you more often and aggressively than against other positions.

A balanced opening range from the small blind includes 39-47% of hands.

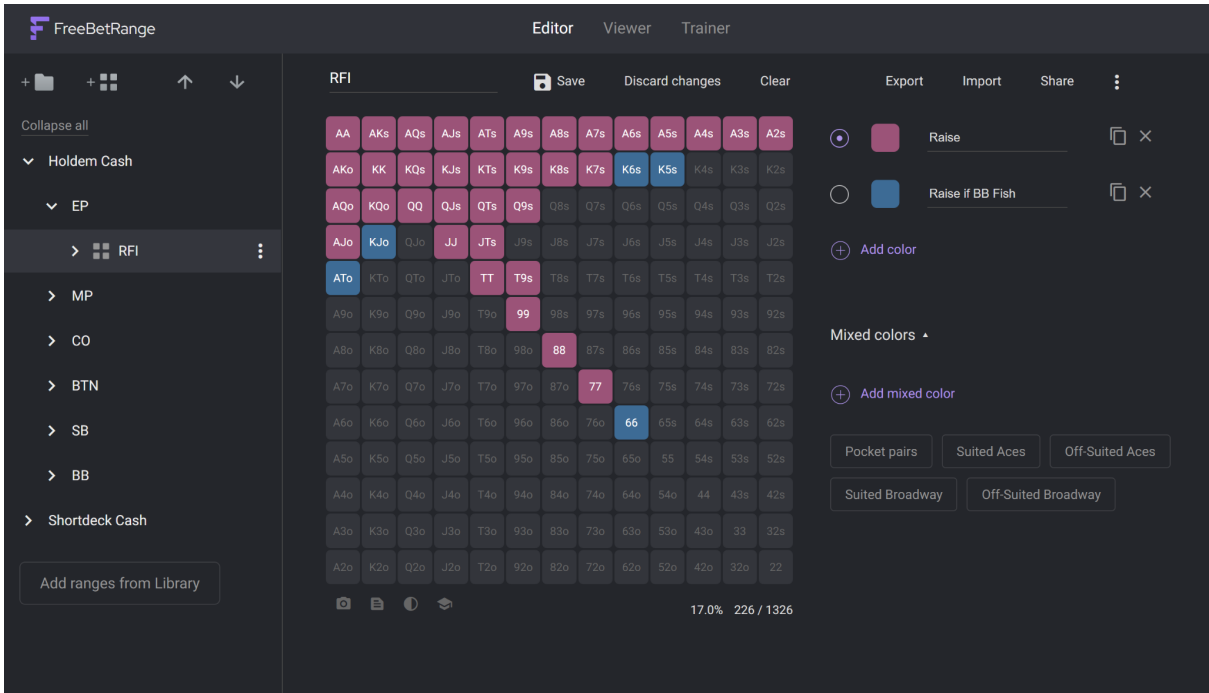


Small Blind RFI chart. Purple hands - always raise. Blue hands - optional raise (If BB is weak or folds too often).

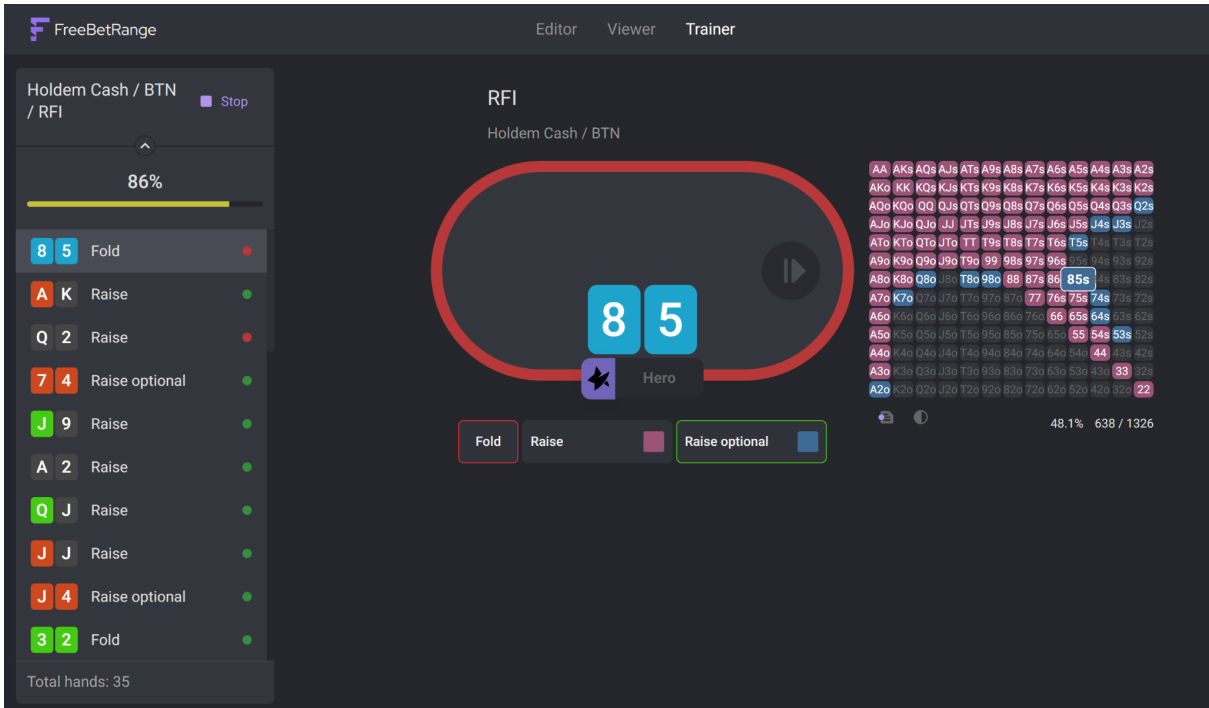
Conclusion

Open raising is one of the most fundamental preflop actions. It is very important to use the correct ranges as they shape your play on all subsequent streets. Use our charts as a base, and don't forget to adjust your ranges according to the playing styles of the opponents after you.

If you sign up for [Freebetrangle](https://Freebetrangle.com), you'll have all the mentioned charts at hand in an intuitive Editor. So if you think you'll need to adapt them a bit to your style, you can easily do that.



You'll also have [Viewer](#) that visualizes your strategy, and [Trainer](#) that will help you to practice your ranges as it's a real table:



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