



Folding Big Pairs Post-Flop
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Being able to play over pairs well post-flop in a 9-handed full ring cash game is a key skill that many players lack, especially 100 big blinds or more deep. Most experienced regulars know when and what situations they will fold their over pairs before they even see the flop. This article will describe the general plan post-flop when we do have an over pair and when we should fold based on our opponent.

I will focus this article on three types of opponents: Regulars (Tight), Fish (Loose), and the unknown opponents we face. The regulars and fish are also spread into two categories: Aggressive and Passive.

Aggressive players by definition are more likely to raise both for value and as a bluff. Contrarily, passive players rarely if ever bluff, and when they do they are afraid to risk their stack. We can use these two classifications to our advantage in that when we are facing an aggressive opponent we will be less likely to fold to his aggression, but if a passive player raises us then we should be more willing to fold our over pair.

Rule 1: When a passive player raises you on any street, then you must slow down. If a passive player raises you on the turn then you should probably fold and even more-so on the river. Passive players do not value bet thinly and rarely if ever raise anything less than top two pair. Thus when we face a raise from a passive player they are going to have our over pair crushed. In order of strength, flop raises are inherently weaker than raises on the turn and river but still strong none-the-less.

Rule 1a: When you are playing against solid regulars and you've been representing a strong hand but they still raise to get stacks in, know the reason why they raise. Regulars are not trying to get you to fold the top of your range on most occasions (which is where we put over pairs) so when they are willing to put their stack in know that most are not bluffing with complete air. Realize that your solid opponent is raising you with a mixture of draws and strong hands and their overall equity against you is going to be higher than that of an aggressive fish.

Rule 2: In a single raised pot going to the flop, you should not be looking to get your stack in post-flop with just an over pair. The exception is when you're up against a big aggressive fish (maniac) of which you shouldn't be folding most top pairs versus him, let alone an over pair.

Rule 3: In a re-raised pot be less likely to fold an over pair. It takes very little combos of bluffs or worse value hands to make it correct to stack off post-flop with the money already in the pot, especially with stacks of 100 big blinds or less. This is a culmination of the two concepts "Commitment Threshold" and "Stack-to Pot Ratio" in the book *Professional No-Limit Hold'em*.

Rule 4: Most opponent's calling ranges will be wider than their betting ranges. Therefore you should be more willing to bet for value than to check/call with your monster hands. An exception would be versus opponents who bet a ton when checked to, and possibly on the river when an obvious draw misses and you're out of position. In that instance you may induce a bluff from an otherwise passive opponent and win a larger pot because of it.

Unknown Opponents: This is the toughest situation to discuss because you are unfamiliar with their ranges. If you have little to no stats or reads on an opponent and you have looked in the recent history to not find anything out of the ordinary, then you usually have to give them the benefit of the doubt and fold when they show aggression. This is the problem with playing without reads and this is why you should try and gather information on your opponents as soon as possible. Also keep in mind if you have no information on them more than likely they have no information on you too and should have little reason to bluff you. So if you are facing a strong raise from an unknown opponent with no history, you should usually give a ton of credit to it.

I hope this article has helped you become less confused on some situations where you should fold over pairs post flop. I also discussed this topic in [2010 Podcast Episode 202](#).

