

## Article 3

### Understanding Hand Strength After The Flop

[Pokerlist.org](http://Pokerlist.org)

For the most part, post flop play is determined by the strength of your hand and the relative hand strength of your opponent's hand range. It sounds really complicated but it really isn't.

On the flop when the three community cards are dealt, you will have a better understanding of the strength of your hand and whether or not you should bet.

If you have some type of made hand you have to decide if you likely have the best hand. It will almost become second nature to ask yourself how the flop could have changed the strength of your hand?

**Let's take a look at the strength of hands to consider after the Flop.**

Monster hands don't occur very often and include quads, boats, flushes, and straights.

These hands are almost certainly the best hand if it goes to showdown and should be played like the nuts.

You want to create big pots when you have monster hands. The second category is very strong hands, which include sets and two pair hands.

Whenever you have these hands you likely have the best hand.

Sure, you will sometimes lose with set over set, but if you are not playing sets and two pairs like the nuts, quite often you will not be extracting maximum value.

Overpairs and top pair hands are the next group of strong hands.

Depending on your opponents, with these hands you can usually expect to extract three streets of value when you are doing the betting.

Be careful with these hands though, if a passive player

raises on the turn or river, one pair is usually never good. You have to ask yourself, if this player is not capable of bluffing, would a worse hand raise for value?

Probably not with just a pair.

Keep in mind that your overpair when you have AA is still only a pair, so don't play it like the nuts on scary boards. Medium strength hands include pairs which are not top pair. Against aggression, you are usually getting away from the hand, especially in multi-way pots where you likely don't have the best hand.

In heads up situations then a single pair which is not top pair could likely be the best hand. It really depends on the opponent.

The next group is drawing hands which include flush draws, straight draws, and combo draws such as flush/gutshut draws, etc.

Even though at this stage they are not a made hand they can very easily make the winning hand at later streets.

If you are getting good pot odds you should call the bet.

You want to consider implied odds as well and the likelihood of getting paid off if you do hit the draw.

If you don't have a hand which fits in one of the categories above then you have nothing.

If that be the case then the only way to win the hand is to try and bluff.

If you can represent a hand on the flop with a continuation bet if you were the pre flop raiser then by all means take a stab at the pot, especially if your opponent is tight and playing a fit or fold strategy.