



ACHILLES
TRADING SYSTEM

ACHILLES TRADE SYSTEM · EDITION EIGHT

THE ACHILLES TRADING SYSTEM

A, B, Classic, Bar, SMC, VF and SS — every feature, what it means,
and how to use it.



Achilles A, SMC, B and Bar running together on a live chart.

A

PRICE PANE

B

LOWER PANE

CLASSIC

LOWER PANE · ORIGINAL

BAR

CONTEXT STRIPS

SMC

STRUCTURE

VF

ORDER FLOW

SS

SCALPING

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2. Start here
3. Achilles A — price levels and confluence
4. Achilles B — the next-gen wave
5. Achilles B Classic — the original wave
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10. Putting it together — how to read them as one
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WELCOME

WHAT THE ACHILLES TRADING SYSTEM IS, AND WHAT IT IS FOR

The Achilles Trading System is a family of seven indicators built to work as one. They were made because most trading tools share the same problem: they tell you what to do, and they never tell you how often that worked. These do the opposite. They are built to **describe the market accurately** — where the important prices are, how stretched things have become, whether real money is moving — and then hand the decision back to you, with an honest note about how much each reading is actually worth.

The seven pieces cover different jobs and are designed to be read together:

- **Achilles A** puts the reference prices on your chart — the bands, the key averages, the day's volume-weighted average price — and keeps a running confluence score in the corner.
- **Achilles B** is the momentum pane: one clear wave, a handful of readings, and a compact card that tells you the state of everything at a glance.
- **Achilles B Classic** is the same engine in the denser, more familiar layout, for traders who already think in that visual language.
- **Achilles Bar** adds context strips — how volatile, how heavy, how bought or sold this session is.
- **Achilles VF** looks inside the candle, splitting each one into the buying and the selling that made it — it needs a TradingView plan that serves seconds data.
- **Achilles SS** is the scalping card: it reads two timeframes side by side — the slower chart you take your bias from and the faster one you trigger on — and tells you whether they agree. It names no side.
- **Achilles SMC** does the structural work: it finds the zones, the untaken highs and lows, and the support and resistance that everything else is measured against.

IT WORKS ON ANY MARKET TRADINGVIEW CARRIES

Nothing here is tuned to a single coin or a single exchange. The calculations use nothing but open, high, low, close and volume, so the suite runs on **crypto, stocks, forex, futures, indices and commodities** — anything you can pull up a chart of. It works on any timeframe from seconds to months, with two caveats: second-based charts need a TradingView plan that offers them, and several of the Confluence Scorecard's checks read four-hour data, so above the 4-hour chart those checks stop adding anything.

⚠ One honest caveat: the volume-based features — the whale flags, the volume strip, the volume profile — need a feed that actually reports volume. Most do. A few spot-forex and index feeds do not, and on those the volume readings will simply sit flat. Everything else still works.

A word on how to read this book. Every feature carries a small label saying whether it ships switched on, whether it is still experimental, and whether its job is to **describe** rather than to predict. Plenty of them say exactly that, on purpose. A tool that describes a level accurately is worth more than a signal you trust for no reason, and this book will always tell you which one you are looking at.

This is a book about the tools. It covers what each feature draws, what it is telling you, and how to read the seven together at a level you are already watching. The testing behind them — what we measured, how, and what came back — is a separate book, and nothing in this one depends on having read it.

START HERE

THREE THINGS TO KNOW BEFORE YOU TURN ANYTHING ON

THE ONE RULE

Structure first, indicators second. Decide where the important prices are — the highs, the lows, the level you actually care about — and only then look at what these tools say is happening there. None of them is a system on its own. Every one of them is a way of describing a level you have already chosen.



Everything switched on at once. A real chart running Achilles A and Achilles SMC with almost every option enabled – shaded zones, session bands, diamonds, crosses, a phase label and two cards, all at the same time. Every one of them is working correctly, and together they are very hard to read. You will not start here: the setup this book recommends turns most of it off, and you add things back one at a time as you find a use for them.



Most trading tools present everything they draw as a signal. This suite separates two different jobs, and labels every feature with which one it is doing. Some features **describe** — they report what has already happened at a price, accurately and without an opinion about what comes next. Others are **experimental** — built, working, and still being learned. Knowing which of your tools is which is most of what separates a consistent trader from a hopeful one:

LABEL	WHAT IT MEANS
ON BY DEFAULT	You will see it the moment you add the indicator.
OFF BY DEFAULT	Present, but switched off so your first chart is readable. Turn it on when you want it.
EXPERIMENTAL	Built and working, but not validated. Treat as a map, not a signal.
DESCRIBES	It reports something the market has already done. Useful for reading a level, but it is not a forecast and not an instruction.

The seven indicators, in one table

INDICATOR	WHERE IT LIVES	WHAT IT IS FOR
Achilles A	On the price chart	Bands, key averages, and a confluence score
Achilles B	Own pane	The momentum wave — current design
Achilles B Classic	Own pane	The original wave, for those who prefer it
Achilles Bar	Own pane	Four context strips, made to sit under Achilles B
Achilles VF	Own pane	Inside the candle — who was buying, who was selling
Achilles SMC	On the price chart	Structure, blocks, levels and sessions
Achilles SS	On the price chart	Two timeframes on one card, and where a stop goes

Your first chart, in order

Add them one at a time, in this order, and look at the chart after each one. The whole point is to notice what each tool changed — which you cannot do if you add seven at once.

	ADD	THEN DO THIS
1	Achilles SMC	On the price chart. It draws more than anything else in the suite, and its defaults are already trimmed for you — the two heaviest options ship switched off. Add it and leave the settings alone for your first session.
2	Achilles A	Also on the price chart. The bands, the key averages and the Confluence Scorecard in the corner.
3	Achilles B	Its own pane, underneath. Not Classic as well — pick one.
4	Achilles Bar	A second pane under Achilles B, if you want the context strips. Skip it entirely if you chose Classic, which already has them.
5	Achilles VF	Leave this one until you are comfortable with the rest. It needs a TradingView plan that serves seconds data, and it is the easiest tool in the suite to misread.
6	Achilles SS	Only if you scalp. It goes on the price chart and reads two timeframes at once, so set its two timeframes to the pair you actually trade before you judge it. On a slow chart it has nothing to say.

Two charts are better than one, and it does not matter much which two. Keep a **slow chart for building your list of levels** — four-hour and one-hour are the usual choice — and a **faster one for watching price arrive at them**. SMC can lock its levels to a higher timeframe, so the fast chart can carry the slow chart's levels without you redrawing anything.

IF THE CHART LOOKS OVERWHELMING, IT IS NOT YOU

Everything ships switched on so that you can see what you have bought. That is a deliberately bad trading chart, and the picture above is what it looks like. Turning things off is not losing features — it is the normal way to use this suite, and the chapter *What ships on, what ships off* tells you exactly what each default is and why.

The two heaviest options — the **Fib retracement** and the **candidate marks** — already ship off. Leave them there until you have a reason to want them.

DON'T RUN EVERYTHING AT ONCE

Achilles B and Achilles B Classic draw the same wave in two designs. **Pick one**. Running both is not more information, it is the same information twice — and two panes of it will crowd the chart you are actually trying to read.

ACHILLES A

SITS ON THE PRICE CHART • PRICE LEVELS AND CONFLUENCE

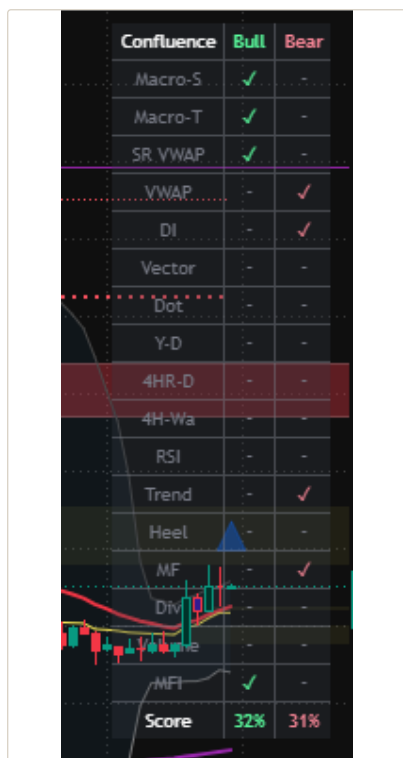
WHAT IT IS

The context layer. It draws a small number of well-known reference prices directly on your candles, and keeps a scorecard in the corner that counts how many separate things currently lean bullish versus bearish.

WHAT IT DRAWS

FEATURE	WHAT IT IS	STATUS	
Achilles Bands	A middle average with a band either side, set a fixed distance out by how volatile the market has been. Price spends most of its time between them, so the edges mark an unusually stretched price — not a reversal. Presets for scalping and day trading change how quickly they react.	ON	
The Achilles Line	Two moving averages in one line. It is drawn on the 21 EMA and coloured by their relationship — green while the 9 is above the 21, red while it is below . One line instead of a crossing pair.	ON	DESCRIBES
200 EMA	The long-term average almost every trader watches. It matters partly because so many people are looking at it.	ON	
SR VWAP	The volume-weighted average price since midnight UTC — the day's true “average cost”. Which side of it price is trading on is the whole reading, and it resets cleanly every day.	ON	
Whale detectors	Marks candles that traded on unusually heavy volume.	ON	EXPERIMENTAL
Confluence Scorecard	Seventeen separate checks in three colour groups, weighted and totalled into a Bull % and a Bear %.	ON	

The Confluence Scorecard — the main event



Seventeen checks, two columns, one score. Each row is an independent question — is the session VWAP bullish, is momentum positive, is the trend up — and each carries a weight earned by how it performed in testing. The bottom row totals them into a Bull % and a Bear %.

This is the part of Achilles A worth learning properly. **Read the two percentages, not the ticks.**

- **Both low and close together** — as in the 32% / 31% above — means the checks disagree with each other. That is a market with no consensus, and it is the most common state.
- **One side clearly ahead** means many unrelated measurements are pointing the same way at once. That agreement is the whole reading, not any individual row.
- **A single tick means nothing.** The card is built on breadth — seventeen separate checks read at once — and any one of them alone is noise.

The rows are not all worth the same. Each carries a weight, and the score divides by the total of those weights, so both percentages always read 0–100 whatever the balance between them. Read a heavier row as one there was more reason to include, rather than as a stronger signal in its own right — and read the percentages, not the rows. The weights themselves stay in the code.

The three colours on the card

Look at the row *labels* rather than the ticks and you will see they are printed in three colours. That is not decoration. The colour tells you what kind of question the row is asking, and how quickly its answer changes.

Gold · macro

Slow context. Where price sits in the bigger picture.

Macro-S · Macro-T · SR VWAP

4HR-D · Trend · 4H-Wa

Blue · trigger

Fast. The rows that turn on the bar in front of you.

Heel · Y-D · VWAP

DI · Vector · Dot

Grey · detail

Supporting texture. Rarely means much on its own.

RSI · MF · Div

Volume · MFI

ROW	GROUP	THE QUESTION IT IS ASKING
Macro-S	Gold	Which way the structure leans on a timeframe above the one you are looking at.
Macro-T	Gold	Whether price is above or below the long-run four-hour average.
SR VWAP	Gold	Whether price is above or below the day's average cost since midnight UTC.
4HR-D	Gold	Whether the four-hour wave has just crossed.
Trend	Gold	The Achilles Line's own colour, expressed as a tick.
4H-Wa	Gold	Whether the four-hour wave is sitting deep in stretched territory.
Heel	Blue	Whether the Achilles Heel condition is currently latched on, and which way.
Y-D	Blue	Whether a wave cross fired <i>from</i> stretched territory rather than from mid-range.
VWAP	Blue	Whether the wave's own average turned up or down on this bar.
DI	Blue	Which side of the directional pair is on top right now.
Vector	Blue	Whether this candle qualifies as a vector candle, and which way it closed.
Dot	Blue	Whether the wave has crossed on <i>your</i> timeframe, at any level.
RSI	Grey	Whether momentum is contracted rather than extended.
MF	Grey	Whether money flow currently leans to the buy or the sell side.
Div	Grey	Whether a divergence fired recently enough to still count.
Volume	Grey	Whether this candle traded heavy against its own recent average, and closed the matching way.
MFI	Grey	Which side of its midpoint the money-flow index sits on.

WHAT THE GROUPING IS FOR

Seventeen ticks looks like seventeen opinions. It is not. Rows that share a colour are reading the same market from similar angles, so they tend to move together — six gold ticks is much closer to *one* firm statement about context than to six independent votes.

Read agreement across the colours, not within one. Gold and blue leaning the same way is the card's strongest state: the slow picture and the fast one are saying the same thing. The same number of ticks piled into a single colour is a much weaker reading, and a card that is all gold on one side and all blue on the other is not a reading at all — it is context and timing disagreeing, which is exactly the moment to wait.

TWO PAIRS THAT GET CONFUSED

VWAP is not SR VWAP. The gold *SR VWAP* row asks where price sits against the day's average cost — a line you can see on the chart. The blue *VWAP* row is about the wave's own average, down in the momentum pane, and asks only whether it ticked up or down. Different questions, different speeds, similar names.

Dot is not Y-D. *Dot* ticks on any wave cross on your timeframe. *Y-D* is the stricter one, and only ticks when that same cross happened from stretched territory. When both tick together the cross came from an extreme rather than from the middle of the range — which is the version worth paying attention to.

On a light chart the three colours darken so they still read against the background — the gold becomes a deep bronze, the blue a navy. The grouping does not change.

The markers on your candles

Achilles A prints small shapes above the candles. Each one means something specific, and there are only five to learn:



Bullish flag

Heaviest-volume candle, closing up



Bearish flag

Heaviest-volume candle, closing down



Blue triangle

Momentum turning up from a low



Yellow & red crosses

Momentum stretched — a caution mark



Blood diamond

The strongest of the caution marks



All of them

Notes, not instructions — see below

THE FLAGS ARE THE ONES TO ACTUALLY WATCH

The **bullish and bearish flags** are the Whale Detector, and they are deliberately rare: they print only on the *heaviest* tier of volume, not merely above-average. An earlier version flagged the lighter tier too and printed so often that the mark stopped meaning anything.

A flag tells you a lot of money changed hands on that candle and which way it closed. It does **not** tell you the move will continue. Treat it as "something happened here worth remembering", and use the level it happened at.

How to use it

Read the SR VWAP first. It answers one question cleanly — is price above or below today's average cost? It resets at midnight UTC so it is never stale, and it is the one line on the chart that tells you which side of the day you are trading on. Above it, buyers have been paying up all session. Below it, they have not.

Then read the scorecard total, never a single row. The card works through breadth — the fact that a number of different things agree at the same moment. One tick on one row means nothing at all, and a run of ticks inside a single colour means a good deal less than it looks like.

Then look at where the ticks sit. This is the reading most people miss. Gold agreeing with blue is the card's strongest state. Gold one way and blue the other is the card telling you to wait: the context has not changed, but the bar in front of you is arguing with it.

WHAT THE CARD IS, AND WHAT IT IS NOT

The Confluence Scorecard is a **summary, not a signal**. It compresses seventeen readings into two numbers so you can see at a glance whether the market currently agrees with itself. That is the whole of the claim: a high Bull % is not a buy, and the card has never been offered as one.

Used well it is a filter on your own idea. You pick the level, you form the view, and then you check whether the rest of the chart is with you or against you. Used badly it becomes the reason for the trade — and a number in the corner of a chart is not a reason.

ACHILLES B

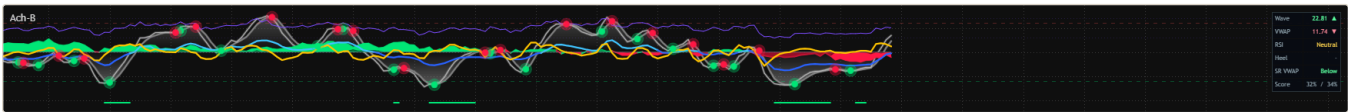
OWN PANE • THE NEXT-GENERATION WAVE DESIGN

WHAT IT IS

The next-generation wave design. Same engine as the original, rebuilt from the display up: one clear wave with a soft glow instead of a crowded field of overlapping lines, a compact readout card that states each reading in plain words rather than numbers you have to interpret, and colours chosen by measuring their contrast on a dark screen rather than by eye. It is the modern version of the layout, and it is where you should start if you are starting fresh.

WHAT IT DRAWS

FEATURE	WHAT IT IS	STATUS
The Wave	The main momentum line. Above zero is bullish pressure, below is bearish. Its <i>turns</i> matter more than its level.	ON
Trigger line	A faster line that crosses the wave. The cross is where the dots come from.	ON
Buy / Sell dots	Mark a wave cross. A "live" dot appears on the still-forming bar in a second colour — it can vanish before the bar closes.	ON DESCRIBES
Money Flow	Whether buying or selling has been dominant, drawn as a cloud behind the wave.	ON DESCRIBES
Money Flow Pressure	A darker cloud inside the money-flow cloud showing how much of that flow is actually backed by volume.	ON EXPERIMENTAL
Momentum Line	Which side is currently carrying the move — lighter above the zero line while buying has the upper hand, darker below when selling does. It moves slowly, so it turns well after the wave does.	ON
RSI	How stretched price is. Banded into three states on the readout.	ON
Achilles Heel	How far a move has stretched compared with the way this market normally behaves. Prints Exhaustion when a move has run unusually far and Pressure at the other extreme.	ON EXPERIMENTAL
The readout card	Six lines: Wave, VWAP, RSI, Heel, Price and SR VWAP — plus the Confluence score.	ON



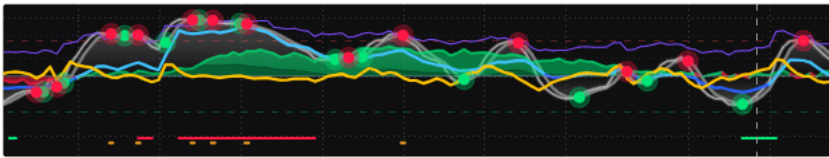
Achilles B, as it actually looks. The wave with its glow, buy and sell dots on the crossings, and the readout card on the right – the rows that tell you the state of everything without reading the lines themselves.

What the wave actually is

If you have not used a momentum oscillator before, this is the part to read twice. The wave is not price. It is a measure of *how hard price is currently being pushed*, drawn on its own scale underneath the chart. Three things about it are worth knowing before anything else:

- **Zero is the balance point.** Above it, buying pressure has the upper hand; below it, selling does. Crossing zero is a change of who is in charge, not a prediction about where price goes.
- **The turns matter more than the level.** A wave that is very high and still rising is a market being pushed hard. The same wave rolling over is that push fading — and it can fade for a long time before price does anything about it.

- **It lags, by design.** Everything the wave knows, it learned from candles that have already closed. A wave that has just turned is telling you about the recent past, accurately. It is not telling you about the next bar.

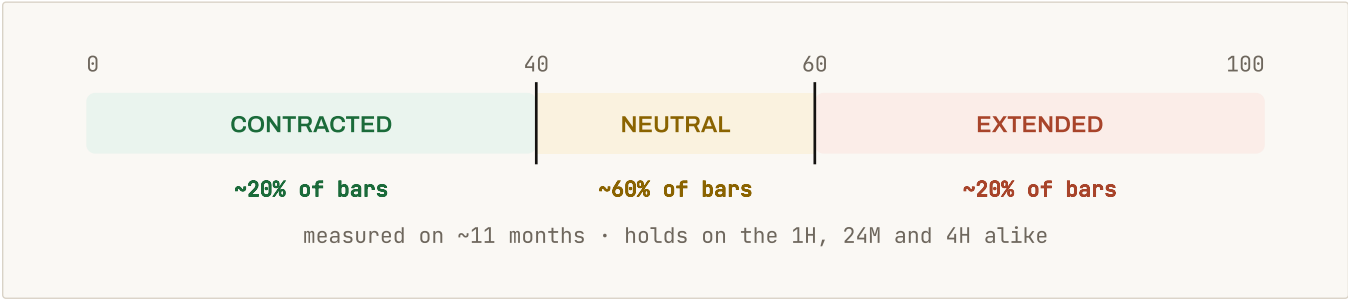


The Momentum Line. One line carrying the balance of pressure, instead of a pair of crossing ones you have to read against each other. Lighter above the zero line while buying has the upper hand, darker below it when selling does.

How to read the card

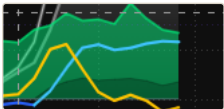
The card is the fastest way in. Each line is one plain-English state rather than a number you have to interpret:

LINE	READS	MEANING
Wave	+12.4 ▲	Momentum and whether it is rising
VWAP	-3.1 ▼	The wave's own VWAP, and its direction
RSI	Extended / Neutral / Contracted	How stretched price is — see below
Heel	Exhaustion / Pressure / -	Whether the stretch reading is firing
Price	Topped 4 / Bottomed 11 / Neutral	Whether the wave last crossed while already at your stretch band, and how many bars ago. Context, not a signal.
SR VWAP	Below / Above	Where the day's average price sits relative to price. Below means price is holding above it — bullish.
Score	32% / 31%	Confluence Bull % and Bear %. Dims when they are within 5 points, because that is a tie.



THE RSI BANDS ARE CALIBRATED, NOT GUESSED

Extended is 60 and above. Contracted is 40 and under. Everything between is Neutral. Those cut-offs were measured on roughly eleven months of data: they put about 20% of bars in each outer band and 60% in the middle, and they do it consistently on the 1-hour, 24-minute and 4-hour charts alike. So "Extended" genuinely means the top fifth of readings — not "above average".



Money Flow Pressure. The darker band inside the cloud is the part of the flow that volume is actually behind. When it sits near zero while the cloud around it is wide, the move is coasting — running on without much behind it.



The Achilles Heel. A red or green track along the floor of the pane, with the same word repeated on the readout card. It tells you whether you are looking at an ordinary move or a stretched one — not which way the stretch resolves.

How to use it

- **Read the card, not the lines.** The pane is there to be glanced at. If you find yourself studying the shape of the wave for several seconds, you are asking it for something it does not have.
- **Use it to describe a level, never to find one.** The wave has no idea where your levels are. Bring it a price you already care about and ask what momentum was doing when price got there.
- **Wave and RSI are different questions.** The wave asks which way price is being pushed. The RSI band asks how far it has already gone. A market can be pushed hard and be stretched at the same time — that combination is common, and it is not a signal.
- **Watch the Score line dim.** When the two Confluence percentages sit within five points of one another the card greys them out on purpose. That is the pane telling you the chart has no consensus, which is the most common state a market is in.

WHAT THE DOTS ARE NOT

The buy and sell dots mark a momentum cross and nothing more. They fire early — often a long way before price does anything — and they fire frequently, in both directions, whether or not the market is going anywhere. **Use them to notice that momentum has shifted. Do not use them as an entry.**

The live dot is worth a specific warning. It appears on the bar that is still forming, in a second colour, and it can vanish before that bar closes. A dot you acted on and then cannot find again did not disappear — it was never confirmed.

ACHILLES B CLASSIC

OWN PANE • THE ORIGINAL DESIGN

WHAT IT IS

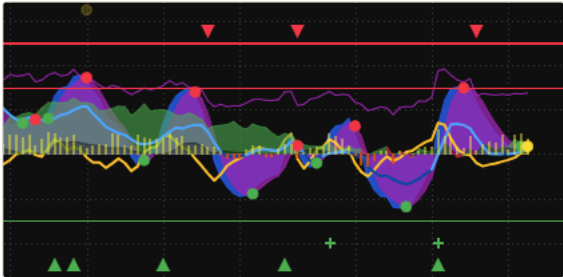
The wave as it was originally built — everything Achilles B has, plus the extra layers that were later moved out or retired. Kept for people who learned on it and prefer the denser display.



Achilles B Classic. If you have used a classic momentum oscillator before, this will look immediately familiar — the filled wave, the dots on the crossings, the yellow money-flow line and the coloured strips underneath. That familiarity is the entire reason Classic still ships: if you already read charts this way, there is no reason to make you relearn it.

Classic adds, on top of everything in Achilles B:

EXTRA FEATURE	WHAT IT IS	STATUS
Odysseus Wave	A second wave beneath the main one that condenses everything the framework is reading into a single shape — weight of evidence bullish above the zero line, bearish below.	ON EXPERIMENTAL
Divergences	Marks where price and the wave disagree.	ON DESCRIBES
The four bars	Money Flow, Volume, Volatility and Heel strips along the bottom. <i>These are now their own indicator — see Achilles Bar.</i>	ON
Market Maker arrows	Marks heavy-volume climax candles.	ON EXPERIMENTAL
EMA cross	The fast and slow moving-average crossover, marked on the pane.	ON DESCRIBES



The Odysseus Wave. It sits flat while the readings are split and swings out as they line up, so you can follow the state of the whole framework without reading every component of it. A dropdown redraws the same reading as bars, a line or a filled area.

WHICH ONE SHOULD YOU RUN?

Achilles B if you want a clean pane and a readout you can take in at a glance. **Classic** if you want everything on screen and are comfortable with a busy chart. They compute the same wave from the same engine — the difference is what is drawn, not what is calculated. Running both is the one combination to avoid: it is the same information twice, taking up two panes.

Classic's extras are all labelled EXPERIMENTAL or DESCRIBES and they are on because Classic is the “everything” build. If you came here for the Odysseus Wave, that is a good reason to run Classic. If you came here because more lines feel like more information, it is not.

IF YOU RUN CLASSIC, YOU DO NOT NEED ACHILLES BAR

The four context strips along the bottom of the Classic pane are the same four that Achilles Bar draws. Bar exists so that people running the cleaner Achilles B can still have them. Running Classic *and* Bar puts the same four strips on your screen twice.

ACHILLES BAR

OWN PANE • MADE TO SIT WITH ACHILLES B

WHAT IT IS

The four context strips from the bottom of Classic, lifted into their own pane so they can be used alongside the cleaner Achilles B. Each strip is a coloured band that answers one question about *what kind of market this is right now*.

STRIP	WHAT IT TELLS YOU	STATUS
Volatility	How active the market is against its own recent range. Dark when quiet, bright when moving.	ON
Money Flow	Green while buying pressure dominates, red while selling does.	ON DESCRIBES
Volume	Brightens when volume runs above its own recent average, and brighter again when the four-hour is spiking at the same time.	ON
Achilles Heel	How stretched the momentum spread is.	OFF EXPERIMENTAL



Achilles Bar. Each strip is one question answered along the whole chart — how volatile, bought or sold, and how heavy the volume. Nothing here points a direction; they describe the session you are trading in.

The Heel strip ships off here for a specific reason: Achilles B already shows the Heel. The same reading appearing twice on one screen looks like two pieces of evidence when it is one. Turn it on if you are running Bar without Achilles B.

Reading the strips

Each strip is one question answered continuously along the chart, so you read them by scanning left to right rather than by looking at one bar. What you are after is *change*: the point where a strip that has been dark for hours lights up is worth more than its colour on any single candle.

STRIP	DARK MEANS	BRIGHT MEANS
Volatility	Price is barely moving against its own recent range. Small moves, and costs that do not shrink to match.	The market is covering ground. Levels g
Money Flow	Green while buying pressure dominates, red while selling does. This is the one strip that carries a direction —	
Volume	Ordinary participation. Whatever is happening, not many people are involved.	Real business is being done. Brightest c
Achilles Heel	The market is behaving within its usual shape.	It has stretched unusually far. Ships off h

The combination worth learning is **volume bright while volatility stays dark**. A great deal of trading, and price going nowhere with it, means the two sides are actually meeting somewhere — which is the one condition under which the finer tools have much to say.

READ THEM AS WEATHER, NOT AS SIGNALS

None of the four strips tells you which way to trade. They tell you what sort of session you are in — quiet or active, bought or sold, ordinary or unusual. That is genuinely useful when deciding *whether* to trade at all, and useless as a reason to pick a direction.

ACHILLES SMC

SITS ON THE PRICE CHART • STRUCTURE, ZONES AND LEVELS

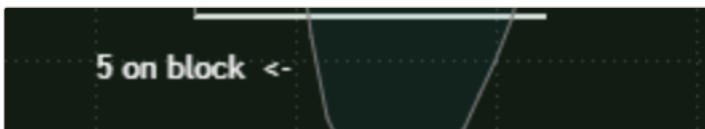
WHAT IT IS

The biggest tool in the suite and the one that does the most drawing. It marks market structure, zones where price previously moved away sharply, and the handful of prices that matter each day. It is also the one you should switch *off* most of.

FEATURE	WHAT IT IS	STATUS
Achilles Blocks	Zones where price moved away sharply, marked as areas to watch on a return.	ON EXPERIMENTAL
Achilles Magnets	Untaken highs and lows — places where resting orders are likely to sit.	ON DESCRIBES
Volume Profile	The price where the most volume traded, plus levels that were never revisited.	ON EXPERIMENTAL
SS/R levels	Swing support and resistance from confirmed pivots.	ON
Market structure	Higher highs, lower lows, and the external bias card.	ON
Daily & prior levels	Today's high and low, yesterday's, and the overnight range.	ON
Vector candles	Colours the heavy-volume candles and leaves the rest as your chart draws them. Two settings turn on the fuller muted look — see below.	ON
Swing Failure finder	Marks where price swept a level and closed back. It can also mark <i>candidate</i> levels where one could happen — that part ships off.	ON EXPERIMENTAL
Fib retracement	Retracement levels of a swing, automatic or hand-placed.	OFF DESCRIBES
Market phases	Brackets each stretch of chart as markup, markdown or a range. A range is only named accumulation or distribution once it has broken, because that name is defined by which way it broke; before then you get a lean with a question mark on it.	ON EXPERIMENTAL
Market sessions	Marks the trading sessions — London, New York, Tokyo, Hong Kong, Sydney and the two Brinks windows. Labels ship on; the shaded boxes ship off.	ON



An Achilles Block, and why it matters. Price traded quietly inside the shaded zone, then left it in a single decisive candle. That zone is where the trading that preceded the move took place – and the horizontal lines carry it forward, so when price returns weeks later you are looking at a level with a reason behind it rather than a line you drew by hand.



Achilles Magnets. The swing highs and lows above and below price that have not been taken yet, each carrying a score so you can see which had serious business done at them. A level drops off the chart the moment price closes through it, so what is drawn is always still live.



Achilles S/R. Horizontal levels at the prices this chart has actually turned at. Supports sit below price in blue, resistance above in purple, each carrying its price in plain text so you can read a level without measuring it against the scale. A level holds until price closes through it, and then either flips – a broken floor becoming a ceiling – or retires.

What SMC gives you that a blank chart does not

Most traders mark structure by hand: draw a line at the high, another at the low, shade a zone where price took off, redraw it all when the timeframe changes. SMC does that work continuously and consistently, and it does it the same way every time — which is the part hand-drawing cannot promise.

WHAT IT FINDS	WHY IT HELPS
Achilles Blocks	The zones price left in a hurry. When price comes back to one, you are trading against a level where something already happened — not a guess. Blocks are tracked from the moment they form and marked when price engages them. When one breaks it is not thrown away: by default it is kept with its job reversed, so a floor that gave way comes back as a ceiling, invisible until price returns to it.
Support & resistance that updates itself	SS/R draws from confirmed swing pivots, so lines appear only once a swing is genuinely complete. They extend forward, retire when price closes through them, and can be locked to a higher timeframe so a 5-minute chart still shows the hourly levels everyone else is watching.
Market structure, marked for you	Higher highs and lower lows identified continuously, with an external-structure card that states the current bias in one word. No more squinting at whether that was really a higher low.
Achilles Magnets	The highs and lows that were never taken — where resting orders are widely assumed to sit. It scores and ranks them, and shows the distance to each, so you can see at a glance what is above you and what is below.
Volume Profile	The price where the most business was actually done, plus the levels price has never returned to. The profile timeframe is fixed, so the levels do not shift under you when you change charts.
Daily and session levels	Yesterday's high and low, today's, the overnight range and the trading sessions — the reference prices most of the market is already reacting to.

WHY THIS IS THE FOUNDATION, NOT A DECORATION

Every other tool in this suite answers the question "*what is happening here?*" — and none of them can answer it until you have decided what *here* means. **SMC is what produces that shortlist of prices.** Blocks and magnets give you a handful of levels with a reason attached; the wave, the score and the strips then tell you what is going on when price arrives at one.

That is the whole method, and it is why this section sits at the structural end of the book rather than the decorative one.

MAKING THE HEAVY CANDLES STAND OUT

SMC colours candles by the volume that traded in them, so the heavy ones are easy to pick out. Out of the box it colours *only* those, and leaves every other candle exactly as your chart already draws it.

That restraint is deliberate. An indicator can only colour the *body* of a candle — the border and the wick keep your own chart's colours — and TradingView draws your candles on top of an indicator's. Anything more ambitious would half-work: muted bodies still wearing their green and red outlines, which looks worse than leaving them alone.

If you want the full effect, where ordinary candles drop back to quiet white and grey so the heavy ones jump off the screen, it takes two steps once:

1. In *Chart settings* → *Symbol*, untick **Body**, **Borders** and **Wick**.
2. In SMC's settings, tick **Also Color Non-Vector Candles**.

SMC then draws every candle itself, and the colouring looks the same on any symbol and any colour theme you use.

How to use it

Blocks and magnets are the two to learn first. A block tells you where price previously left in a hurry. A magnet tells you where unfilled orders probably rest. Between them you get a short list of prices worth caring about — which is exactly the "structure first" the rest of the suite is built on.

THE CANDIDATE MARKS ARE THE NOISIEST THING HERE

The Swing Failure finder can mark every level where a sweep *might* happen. On a busy chart that is dozens of marks that are not signals — they are only places to watch. The switch is called **Show Candidate SFPs**, and it ships **off** for exactly that reason. If you do turn it on, turn it back off the moment the chart stops being readable.

A KNOWN ROUGH EDGE

SMC currently carries around 275 settings, which is more than anyone needs and more than is comfortable to navigate. Trimming that down is active work. If a setting is not described in this book, you almost certainly do not need to touch it.

ACHILLES VF

SITS ON THE PRICE CHART • WHAT HAPPENED INSIDE THE CANDLE

WHAT IT IS

The order-flow tool in the suite. A candle gives you four numbers: where price opened, how high it went, how low, and where it closed. It tells you nothing about *who* was trading. Achilles VF looks inside the candle and splits the volume in two: buyers who would not wait, who paid the higher price on offer, and sellers who would not wait, who took the lower price on the bid. Those impatient traders are the **aggressors**; their buying minus their selling is what order-flow traders call **delta**. VF measures it, and marks six shapes worth a second look.

READ THIS FIRST: IT NEEDS SECONDS DATA

To see inside a candle, VF has to ask TradingView for that candle chopped into short slices — a few seconds each on a fast chart. **Those second-based intervals are a paid TradingView feature, not a feature of this indicator.** Without them VF does not guess: the card prints `NO SUB-BAR DATA` in red and **nothing is drawn at all**. That warning shows even with the card switched off.

TradingView also serves only a few hundred candles' worth of slices, so scroll far enough back and the marks stop — that is the data running out, not the tool failing. Everything else in this book runs on ordinary candles; check your plan before building a workflow around this chapter.

WHAT IT DRAWS

MARK	WHAT IT MEANS	STATUS
Absorption amber diamond, above	One price traded far more than any other in that candle, and both sides were busy there. It marks <i>where a fight happened, not who won</i> .	ON EXPERIMENTAL
Stacked buy green triangle, below	Buyers kept lifting offers through several prices in a row without pausing. Urgency — not correctness.	ON EXPERIMENTAL
Stacked sell pink triangle, above	The mirror image: sellers hitting bids insistently, down through a run of prices.	ON EXPERIMENTAL
Delta divergence red X above, green X below	One side did most of the trading and the candle closed the <i>other</i> way. They pushed hard and got nowhere.	ON EXPERIMENTAL
Trapped longs red circle, above	Price spiked into a long upper wick — the thin line above the candle body — the buying happened up there, then it closed back down. Those fills are underwater.	ON EXPERIMENTAL
Trapped shorts green circle, below	The same shape upside down: a long lower wick sold into, then a close back up.	ON EXPERIMENTAL

Five of the six lean a direction, and they share one grammar: **bearish sits above the candle, bullish sits below**. The X is the one whose reading is inverted — a push that failed means the *other* side won — so its colour has already done that flip for you. Absorption is the exception: above the candle, but leaning neither way. On recent candles VF also boxes the prices that caused a mark. Marks are drawn on **closed** candles only, because a half-formed candle's flow changes shape second by second — that is a switch, and one to leave alone.

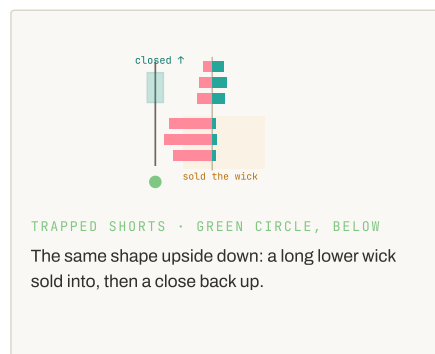
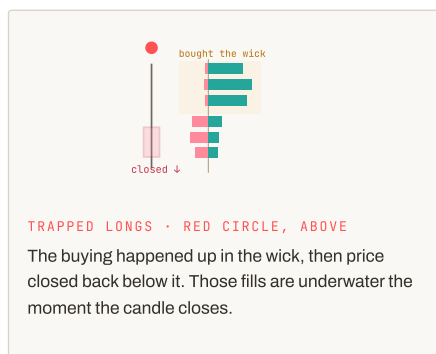
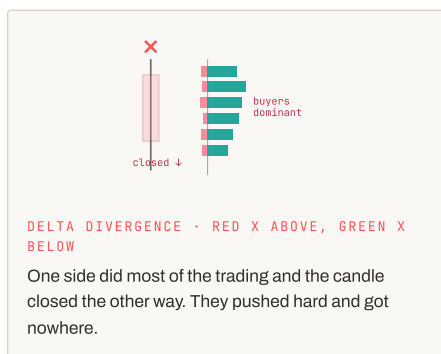
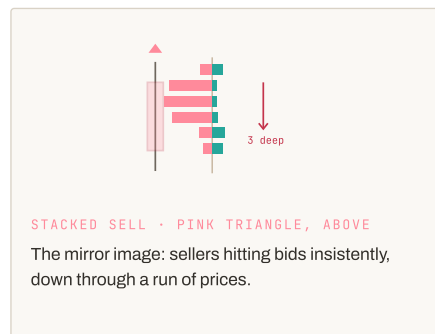
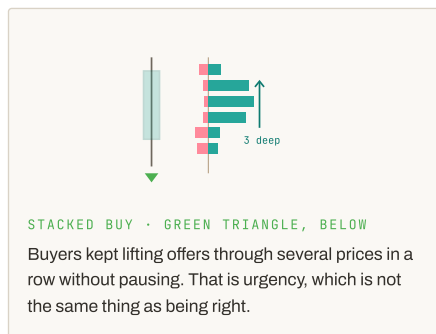
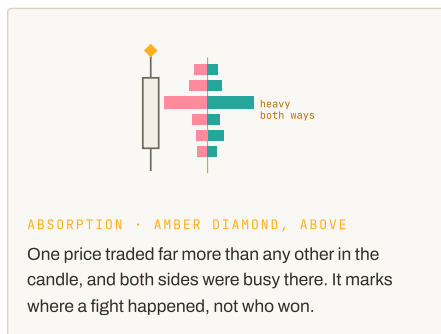


The compact card as it ships – the yellow rows only.

Whenever absorption fires, VF carries that price forward as a horizontal line. **Amber** means price has not been back since; **grey** means it has returned. Same idea as the volume profile in SMC: the untouched levels are the interesting ones.

The six marks, drawn

In each panel below the candle is on the left. To its right is the footprint for that same candle: one row per price, with selling pushing left and buying pushing right. The mark VF prints sits beside the candle, in the colour and the position it will have on your own chart.



ONE HABIT WORTH BUILDING

Read the mark's *position* before its shape. Above the candle is bearish, below is bullish, and that holds for five of the six without you having to remember which symbol is which. The amber diamond is the one exception — it sits above but leans neither way.

How it knows who was buying

The exchange knows which side was the aggressor on every trade. TradingView does not pass that to an indicator. So **VF infers it**: it takes the candle in short slices and asks, for each one, whether price ticked up or down. Up, call it buying. Down, call it selling. It is an old, well-understood technique, and it is a *guess*. **Nothing on this card is read from the exchange's own record of who was aggressive.**

WHAT THE GUESS COSTS YOU

The inference is good in bulk and shaky in detail, and it is worth knowing which is which. **Whole-candle figures hold up well** — the delta, the card, the session total — because the individual slice-by-slice mistakes cancel each other out. Even then, roughly **one candle in ten** ends up with its delta pointing the wrong way, and more than that on charts far faster or slower than a few minutes.

Anything read at a single price is much weaker, because there is nothing to average across. Absorption is the worst affected: barely half the amber diamonds have what an exchange's own record would call absorption behind them. So read a diamond as “a great deal traded here, go and look”, and never as “somebody large defended this level”.

How to read the card

The card in the corner describes the candle that has just closed. It ships **collapsed**: a status line and five yellow rows.

ROW	WHAT IT TELLS YOU
Status line	Confirms VF is getting data and how finely it is slicing, then how long a run of lopsided prices the stacked marks currently demand, against the longest run this chart has managed lately. Red means one of two things : no data at all, or a demand longer than the chart is producing — in which case those marks <i>cannot</i> fire, which is very different from “nothing is happening”.
Signals	Which of the six fired on this candle. When only one is firing it prints in that mark's own colour, so the card matches the chart.
Delta	Buying minus selling for this candle, and the same figure as a share of its volume. Green when net bought, red when net sold.
Open interest	Whether the number of open positions rose or fell, and what that implies alongside the price move — new longs, new shorts, longs closing, shorts closing. Only venues carrying derivatives publish it, so on a spot market, where you buy the asset itself, the row reads <code>n/a on this venue</code> . That is it working, not failing.
Session CVD	Cumulative volume delta: the running buy-minus-sell total for the day, and how many candles it rests on. Read the direction, not the size — the size is an order of magnitude, not a quantity. Early in a session it rests on very few candles, and the row says so.
Flow vs price	Whether flow is up, flat or down for the session, and whether price is. Left uncoloured on purpose: reading a rise in price with no flow behind it as a warning sign did not survive being measured.

THE OTHER FIVE ROWS ARE ONE SWITCH AWAY

Underneath the yellow set sit five more: the candle's volume, how that compares with its recent average, buy and sell volume separately, and the busiest price in the candle (labelled `POC`). They ship hidden to keep the card glanceable. Turn off **Show only the yellow rows** and all eleven appear; nothing stops being calculated meanwhile.

How to use it

- **Level first, flow second.** VF is not a scanner. Start at the level you had already marked, and let VF describe what happened when price got there.
- **Let a mark adjust confidence, never create it.** A trapped-longs circle on a sweep of a level you were watching says something about who got caught. The same circle in the middle of nowhere is noise with a symbol on it.

- **An absorption line is a busy price, not a defended one.** A concrete place to look; not evidence anybody held it.
- **One alert covers all six.** Add an alert on the indicator, choose the option that fires on any of its own signals, and leave the message box alone — VF writes its own.

What it cannot do

EVERY MARK DESCRIBES THE PAST. NONE OF THEM FORECASTS

Every mark describes a candle that has already closed. **None of them forecasts the next one.** A trapped-longs circle tells you, accurately, that some buyers are now underwater; it does not tell you they will be forced out, or when. That gap between “this happened” and “so this will happen” is where most people lose money with order-flow tools, and VF will not close it for you.

If you catch yourself thinking “*VF flagged it, so I will take it*”, that is the exact mistake this book exists to talk you out of.

THE DEFAULTS ARE TUNED FOR FAST CHARTS

VF was built for charts of a few minutes per candle and ships set up for that. A longer candle spans more prices, so a run of lopsided ones stops being unusual and becomes normal, while the divergence X becomes rare.

It adapts rather than breaking: it picks the slice length from the candle length, scales what counts as a stacked run to how wide your candles actually are, and **prints both on the status line, so the adaptation is never invisible.** That width is measured live, so the number moves between a busy hour and a quiet one without you touching anything. The scaling is a rule of thumb rather than a measured setting, and when it demands a longer run than the chart is producing, the red status line says so.

ACHILLES SS

SITS ON THE PRICE CHART • THE SCALPING CARD

WHAT IT IS

A scalper has a problem the rest of the suite does not solve well: the chart you form an opinion on and the chart you actually press the button on are *not the same chart*, and flipping between them loses you the moment. Achilles SS puts both on one card. It reads the same three things on your **structure** timeframe and on your faster **trigger** timeframe, side by side, so you can see in one glance whether the fast chart agrees with the slow one. Around that it draws the levels a stop could go behind, and shades the zone where the trade is too small to be worth its own fees.

READ THIS FIRST: IT NAMES NO SIDE

SS does not tell you to buy or sell, and it has no entry signal. Every row on the card is a **description of what has already happened** on each timeframe. We have measured these readings and none of them earns the right to be called a signal — the chapter *Keeping the chart honest* explains why that sentence appears throughout this book rather than only here.

What it is genuinely good at is the thing a scalper cannot do by eye: holding two timeframes in view at once, and being blunt about cost.



Achilles SS on a 15-minute ETH chart, with the rest of the suite hidden. The card sits bottom left; the grey lines either side of price are the Achilles Bands; the coloured horizontal line is a shelf line, where a stop would go.

THE CARD, ROW BY ROW

ROW	WHAT IT SAYS	WHAT IT IS NOT
Conditions	Where the band's <i>width</i> sits against its own last 200 bars, as a percentile. Below 10 it says Quiet ; above 90, Active ; in between it just prints the number.	Not permission. A high reading is not the opposite of a low one — it is simply a busier market.
Momentum	Rising or Falling on each timeframe: which side of its own slower line the wave is currently on.	Not a fresh turn. It says where the wave <i>is</i> , not that it just got there.
Heel	How <i>stretched</i> the move is rather than which way it points. Pressure means there is still force behind it; Exhaust means it is running out. It stays quiet unless two underlying measures start disagreeing.	Not a reversal call. Exhausted moves can stay exhausted for a long time.
Dot	The most recent wave cross on each timeframe, Up or Down , held on the card for a few bars so you can still see it after it happened. The word live means the cross is on the candle still forming.	A <i>live</i> dot can vanish. Until that candle closes the cross is not final, and acting on it is acting on a number that can be revised.

TWO COLUMNS IS THE WHOLE IDEA

A row that reads the same on both timeframes is telling you something simpler than a row that disagrees with itself. **Disagreement is the normal state** and is not a fault — the fast chart turns many times inside one slow-chart move. The card exists so you can see which of those two you are looking at without changing charts.

CONDITIONS: THE ONE ROW THAT HAS BEEN MEASURED

Every other row on this card is a convention. **Conditions is not.** We tested what follows a narrow band across three coins over 216 combinations, and the result is the opposite of what the squeeze-then-breakout idea would predict: **a pinch is followed by smaller moves, not bigger ones.** On three-minute ETH a fee-sized move happens about 54% of the time normally, and about 33% of the time in the quietest tenth.

The useful reading of that is defensive. When the row says **Quiet**, the honest interpretation is *this is a poor moment to pay a spread* — not *something is about to happen*. It still names no side, and it does not say the Active end is good.

SHELF LINES — WHERE A STOP GOES

The horizontal lines SS draws are called **shelf lines**, and they exist for one job: giving you a price to put a stop behind. The colour names the side each one protects.

LINE	WHERE	WHAT IT IS FOR
GREEN	Below price	Where a long's stop would sit — the shelf the trade needs to hold.
RED	Above price	Where a short's stop would sit.

Because the colour follows the side of price, **a line changes colour the moment price crosses it.** Nothing about the level changed — only which trade it is now protecting. That is geometry, not a signal, and the lines have been measured: a level is worth no more than a made-up line the same distance away.

THE REACH TEST, AND THE FEE DEAD-ZONE

Two settings stop the chart lying to you about what is reachable.

- **The reach test.** You tell SS how long you hold, in bars. Levels further away than that hold plausibly reaches are dimmed, or dropped entirely if you prefer. What is left is the set of levels a trade of *your* length could actually get to.
- **The fee dead-zone.** The shaded band around price is the region where a round trip costs more than the move is worth. A target inside that shading is a losing trade that happens to go the right way. It is drawn rather than left as arithmetic because scalpers

get this wrong constantly — a tighter stop does not reduce your costs, it *raises* them as a share of what you are risking.

HOW TO USE IT

1. **Set the two timeframes first.** They default to 15 minutes for structure and 3 minutes for the trigger. If that is not the pair you trade, the card is describing somebody else's scalp.
2. **Tell it how long you hold.** The reach test and the dead-zone both depend on it, and the default is three bars.
3. **Read the structure column first, the trigger column second.** In that order, always. The fast column is the noisier of the two and reading it first is how you end up talking yourself into the slow one.
4. **Use the shelf line to size the trade, not to enter it.** Find the line your stop would sit behind, measure the distance, and check the target is outside the shaded zone. If it is not, there is no trade here at any win rate.

WHAT IT CANNOT DO

- **It cannot tell you which way to go.** No row leans a direction and none was built to.
- **It cannot rescue a timeframe that is too slow.** On an hourly chart the whole design — short holds, fee-sized moves, a fast trigger column — stops making sense.
- **It does not know your fees.** The dead-zone uses a round-trip cost typical of a retail crypto perpetual. On a different venue, correct it.
- **A live dot is not a closed dot.** It is on the card so you know something is happening, not so you can act before the candle finishes.

PUTTING IT TOGETHER

A READING ORDER FOR A LIVE CHART — STRUCTURE, THEN STATE, THEN THE READINGS, THEN YOU

The chapters so far have taken the tools one at a time. This one is the order you read them in: the rule this book opened with — **structure first, indicators second** — written out as a sequence. Most people work backwards, noticing a mark on the screen and then going looking for a level that makes the mark seem reasonable. Here the level comes first, and the readings only get a say once price is standing on one.

1 · Where are the levels?

Start with **Achilles SMC**, while nothing is happening. You are building a shortlist of prices, and there are three things to take off the chart:

- **Achilles Blocks** — the shaded zones price left in a hurry. The nearest one above price, the nearest one below.
- **Achilles Magnets** — the highs and lows nobody has taken yet. The nearest each way; SMC prints how far away each one is.
- **SS/R levels** — support and resistance from completed swings, shipped as prices on the axis with the lines hidden. Where one lands on a block, write that price down twice.

Three to five prices is plenty, written down rather than remembered. **Nothing on that list is a reason to trade.** It is a list of places where, if price turns up, you have agreed to pay attention.

SMC also *ranks* the magnets, and that ranking is not a queue. A high score means the level has more of the features the scan looks for, not that price will reach it sooner or more surely.

DESCRIBES Use magnets as places, not as an order of arrival.

BUILD THE LIST ON	WHY
4H and 1H	Slow enough that the levels are still there tomorrow. This is where the list comes from.
Your trading chart	Only to watch price arrive. Do not add levels here — a fast chart produces more of them than are worth having.

Rebuild the list when the higher timeframe closes, not continuously. A list you edit every few minutes is not a list, it is a running commentary on what price is already doing.

MAKE THE LIST BEFORE YOU NEED IT

A shortlist built while price is drifting in the middle of nowhere is an honest one. The same list built with price already sitting on something has a habit of becoming a justification for what you had half decided to do anyway.

2 · What kind of market is this?

Now **Achilles Bar**. Is the volatility strip dark or bright — is anything actually moving? Is the volume strip lit, or is this a quiet drift nobody is taking part in? Then the **RSI** line on the Achilles B readout card: Extended, Neutral or Contracted, which says how stretched price already is.

None of this points a direction. It answers a different question — *what sort of session am I in?* — which helps you decide whether to engage at all, rather than which way. And stretched is not the same as about to turn. A market can stay extended for a very long time, and the strips are describing where it has been, not announcing a turn. **DESCRIBES**

WHAT YOU SEE	WHAT KIND OF SESSION IT IS
Volatility dark, volume dark	Nothing is happening. Levels drift, marks mean little, costs eat small moves. The cheapest thing you can do here is nothing.
Volatility bright, volume dark	Price is moving without participation — thin, jumpy, and prone to reversing through your level and back.
Volume bright, volatility dark	A lot of trading in a tight range. Somebody is doing something. This is where absorption marks are worth a look.
Both bright	A live session. The readings mean the most here, and so do the mistakes.

3 · Wait for price to arrive

This looks too obvious to be a step, and it is the one nearly everybody skips. Until price is at one of your prices, the rest of the suite is describing a part of the chart you had already decided you did not care about.

Arriving is not itself information. A block is a reason to **look**, never a reason to **expect**. Price reaches levels all day long and goes straight through most of them, and a shaded box on a chart has no power to stop it.

There is a distinction worth learning here, because it is the difference between two very different-looking charts:

- **A touch** — price reaches your level and trades around it. Ordinary, and common. On its own it tells you almost nothing.
- **A sweep** — price pushes decisively *through* the level, takes out the highs or lows just beyond it, and then closes back on the original side. Something got done on the other side of that level, and whoever traded into the push is now offside.

The sweep is the shape the rest of the suite has the most to say about, and it is also the one that punishes impatience hardest: the natural instinct is to act while price is still pushing through, which is precisely when you cannot yet tell a sweep from a breakout. **The difference between the two is only visible once the candle closes.** Waiting for that close costs you the first part of any move and saves you from every failed one.



Price returning to a block. The box is the level; what you do about it is step five.

4 · What do the readings say here?

Only now the **Confluence Scorecard**, and you read the two percentages, never the ticks. Both low and close together is the ordinary state, and means the checks disagree with one another. One side clearly ahead means the readings are leaning the same way at once.

Read that agreement for less than it looks like. The card has **seventeen** rows, but they are not seventeen independent opinions — which is exactly what the three colours are there to show you. Rows sharing a colour move together, so a high score is often a few things said several ways. Check *where* the ticks sit before you weigh them: gold agreeing with blue is the reading worth having, and a column of ticks stacked inside one colour is not.

Then the **Achilles Heel** row on the same card. The Heel reports that the market has pulled unusually far out of shape, measured against how far out of shape it normally gets; the card prints Exhaustion, Pressure, or a dash when neither is firing. It carries an **EXPERIMENTAL** label everywhere in this book — built and working, and still being learned.

- **Heel firing, score a tie** — one row doing all the talking in a market with no consensus. Thinner than it looks, because the loud thing is the only thing.
- **Heel firing, score one-sided** — the same row with the rest of the card leaning the same way. Broader, and not therefore better: nothing in this book tests the two read together, and those rows are not fifteen independent opinions.

Neither is a signal, and this chapter is not quietly building towards one.

Last, and only if you have it, **Achilles VF**. This is the finest lens in the suite and the easiest to misuse, so it goes last on purpose. You are not scanning for marks; you are asking one question about the candle that just closed at your level: *who was actually trading here?*

- **On a sweep of your level** — a trapped-longs circle after a push up through it, or trapped shorts after a push down, says the people who chased the push are now offside. That is the single most useful thing VF has to say, and it only means anything at a level you had already written down.
- **On a touch** — an absorption diamond says a great deal changed hands at one price. Not that anybody defended it. Go and look at what happened next rather than assuming.
- **Anywhere else** — ignore it. A mark in the middle of the range is noise with a symbol on it, and VF will happily print those all day.

THE LOUDEST THING ON SCREEN IS ONE ROW

Diamonds, crosses, a Heel flipping, a dot appearing — the marks that catch your eye are single readings, and a single reading is the weakest thing this suite produces. They are drawn boldly because they need to be findable, not because they are important. **Brightness is not confidence.**

The wave dots are the clearest case. They appear often, they are impossible to miss, and they mark a crossing that has already happened — frequently a long way before anything turns. Use them to find your place on the wave, not to time an entry.

5 · The decision is yours

By here the tools have done what they can. You are at a price you chose in advance, in a session you have described, knowing whether the readings agree or whether one row is doing all the talking. What happens next is not in this book.

That is not modesty. These tools were built to describe a market accurately, and an entry rule printed here would carry an authority none of them has earned. What the book can give you is the part that comes before the entry, and the part that comes after — both of which matter more to a new trader than the entry does.

WRITE THE IDEA DOWN BEFORE YOU ACT ON IT

Four lines, before anything else. If you cannot fill them in, you do not have an idea yet, you have an urge.

LINE	WHAT GOES IN IT
The level	The price, and where it came from — block, magnet, SS/R, or the SR VWAP. It must have been on your list before price got there.
The read	What the suite is describing at that level, in one sentence. "Swept the magnet and closed back inside, trapped longs, card leaning bear on both gold and blue."
What makes me wrong	The price at which the read is simply no longer true. Decide this <i>before</i> you are in, because afterwards you will negotiate with it.
What I am risking	An amount you have decided in advance and can lose without it changing how you trade tomorrow.

WHY VERY TIGHT STOPS COST MORE THAN THEY LOOK

This is arithmetic rather than opinion, and it surprises most new traders. If you keep the money you are risking constant and halve the distance to your invalidation price, you must double your position size to keep that risk the same. Fees are charged on the size, not on the risk — so **halving the stop doubles what the trade costs you in fees for exactly the same risk.**

Work out your own venue's round-trip fee as a percentage of price, and compare it with how far away your invalidation sits. When the two numbers are close, the trade is paying the exchange rather than you, however the market behaves. A wider invalidation with a smaller position is usually the cheaper way to express the same idea, and it also survives the ordinary noise around a level — which is exactly the noise these tools spend their time describing.

ONE IDEA AT A TIME

The suite will always be describing something somewhere. That is what it is for, and it is also the trap: with seven indicators running there is never a moment when nothing is happening on screen. A shortlist of three to five levels and one idea at a time is what keeps the reading order honest. Everything else is the chart talking to you, which it will do all day whether or not you are listening.

THIS IS A WAY OF READING, NOT A WAY OF TRADING

There are no entries, exits, targets or position sizes in this chapter, and that is deliberate. Nothing in this suite is offered as a way of predicting direction, so a rule telling you when to buy would be a rule with nothing behind it. What you have instead is a chart described the same way every time.

That consistency is worth more than it sounds. It is what lets you look back at a losing trade and tell the difference between a bad decision and a good decision that did not work — and you cannot learn anything from your own trading until you can tell those two apart. **The decision, and the risk that comes with it, is entirely yours.**

WHAT SHIPS ON, WHAT SHIPS OFF

THE EXACT SETTINGS A NEW INSTALL STARTS WITH

Add all seven indicators to a fresh chart and this is what you get. The principle behind the list is simple: **a first chart should be readable, not complete**. Everything switched off is still there, one tick away, waiting for you to have a reason to want it.

Achilles SS — everything on, but check two settings

The card, the shelf lines, the reach test, the fee dead-zone and the Achilles Bands all run by default. Nothing here is noisy. **Two settings are not defaults so much as assumptions**, and they are the first things to correct: the structure and trigger timeframes (15 minutes and 3 minutes) and how long you hold (three bars). Every reachability and cost reading on the chart is computed from those three numbers, so if they are not yours, neither is the chart.

Achilles A — everything on

All six features run by default: the **Achilles Bands**, **The Achilles Line**, the **200 EMA**, the **SR VWAP**, the **Whale Detector** flags and the **Confluence Scorecard**. Nothing here is noisy enough to need hiding, and the scorecard is the reading we most want you to see.

Achilles B — everything on

The wave and its trigger, the buy and sell dots including the live one on the forming bar, money flow and its pressure line, the Momentum Line, RSI, the Achilles Heel, and the full readout card with the SR VWAP row and the Confluence score. The glow and the gradient wash are on too — they are what make one wave readable where four lines would not be.

Achilles B Classic — everything on except one

FEATURE	STATE	WHY
Odysseus Wave, divergences, EMA crosses, Market Maker arrows, all four bottom bars	ON	Classic is the "everything" build. That is the point of it.
Confluence Scorecard	OFF	Achilles A already draws it. Two identical cards on one screen is clutter, not confirmation.

Achilles Bar — three of four strips

STRIP	STATE	WHY
Volatility, Money Flow, Volume	ON	Three different questions, three different answers.
Achilles Heel	OFF	Achilles B already shows the Heel. The same reading twice on one screen looks like two pieces of evidence when it is one.

Achilles SMC — the one with real choices made

This is where the defaults do the most work, because SMC can draw far more than any chart can carry.

ON BY DEFAULT	OFF BY DEFAULT
Achilles Blocks Achilles Magnets, plus the nearest untaken level each side SS/R levels — <i>lines faint, price printed on each</i> Macro External Structure and its card — <i>the higher-timeframe trend read</i> Vector candles and vector zones Volume POC (the busiest price of the day), yesterday's POC and naked POCs Daily open, today's high and low, yesterday's high and low (PDH/PDL) and the overnight range (Psy-Hi/Lo) Market sessions — <i>labels only, no boxes</i> Market phases Swing Failure finder — <i>marks only, no candidates</i>	Fib retracement Candidate SFPs Session boxes Liquidity section on the structure card Colouring of non-vector candles

TWO CHOICES WORTH EXPLAINING

SS/R prints the price on every level. You can read a level without hovering it, and only three are kept each side of price, so the chart does not fill up with lines. If they are still too loud — or not loud enough — the setting is **Level opacity**.

Sessions show labels but not boxes. You can see where each session begins — London, New York, Tokyo, Hong Kong, Sydney and the two Brinks windows — without seven shaded rectangles sitting behind your price action.

The same idea runs through both: keep the information, and spend as little ink on it as the reading allows.

WHY SOME UNVALIDATED THINGS STILL SHIP SWITCHED ON

Three of the defaults — **Achilles Blocks**, **Achilles Magnets** and the **Volume Profile** — carry an **EXPERIMENTAL** or **DESCRIBES** label in this book, and are still on by default. That is deliberate, and it is worth being clear about.

They are on because they are **descriptive tools that do a job no test is required to justify**: they tell you where price previously moved away sharply, where untaken orders sit, and where the most business was done. Those are facts about the chart. What has not been shown is that any of them *predicts* what happens next — and that is what the labels are telling you.

Use them to build your shortlist of prices. Do not use them as a reason to enter. That distinction is the whole point of labelling them at all.

THE TWO BIGGEST THINGS ARE OFF

The **Fib retracement** ships switched off, and so do the Swing Failure finder's **candidate** marks. They are the two that draw the most, and both are experimental. Turn them on one at a time, and give each a few sessions before adding the next — that is the only way to tell whether a tool is helping you or just filling the screen.

KEEPING THE CHART HONEST

ONE QUESTION TO ASK OF EVERYTHING YOU LEAVE SWITCHED ON

There is a single question worth carrying out of this book, and you ask it of every feature still running on your chart: *did it ever change what I did?* Not whether it was interesting. Not whether it looked right afterwards — almost everything looks right afterwards, once you know how the move ended. Whether you acted differently because it was on the screen.

Ask that after several sessions with a feature and the honest answer is usually no. That is not a fault in the tool. A great deal of what this suite draws is accurate and irrelevant to you, because it is describing prices you had already decided you did not care about. Switch those off. What survives the question is your chart, and it will be shorter than you expect, and not the same as anybody else's.

The defaults have already answered it for you a handful of times — the candidate marks, the Fib retracement, the second Confluence card, the Heel strip you would otherwise be reading twice. Every other switch in *What ships on, what ships off* is yours to put through the same test.

The one thing you do not test

The order you read in stays fixed. Levels while nothing is happening. Then what sort of session you are in. Then patience, until price arrives somewhere you chose in advance. Then the readings, and only then the decision. That sequence is set out in *Putting it together*, and it is worth doing identically every time: a chart read the same way every session is the only kind you can compare with last week's.

WRITE IT DOWN, AND WRITE DOWN WHAT HAPPENED

Keep the four lines from *Putting it together* for every idea you act on, and put the outcome underneath. Over a few months that record will tell you more about your own trading than any feature you could add to the chart, and it is where a bad decision and a good decision that did not work finally come apart.

DO NOT REDESIGN THE CHART AFTER A LOSING TRADE

The urge to add something after a trade goes against you is strong and almost always wrong. One loss is not evidence that a feature was missing. Change the chart between sessions, for a reason you can say out loud.

What you are left with is narrower than a system and more honest than one: a way of describing a chart the same way every time — where the levels are, what sort of session this is, and what the readings say when price gets there. That is worth having. It is not a forecast, and reaching the last page has not changed that.

Structure first, indicators second. You choose the level. The tools describe what is happening at it. The decision, and the risk that comes with it, stays exactly where it has been all along.

Every test, in full

The table you have just read is the summary. What follows is the complete record behind it — every test this system has been put through, what each one asked, how it was measured, and what it returned.

It is written for a trader rather than a statistician. Each test leads with its question in plain words, then how it was tested in a sentence, then the number.

Every result is drawn on the same scale: **how big the finding was next to the smallest finding that test could have detected**. That last quantity is called the floor, and it depends on how much data there was. A dot inside the shaded band means the test could not tell.

77	tests, across eleven families of tools
33	produced a result and a floor in the same units, so they can be plotted
29	of those 33 fall inside their own floor — too small for the test to see

Everything we tested, and what it actually showed

87 tests, in plain English. Most indicator documentation has no section like this. This one exists because the alternative — asking you to trust a tool because it looks like it works — is how people lose money slowly.

87 tests run	12 families of tools	43 gave a measurable number	86% of those, too small to see
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The headline, up front. Nothing in this suite has been shown to predict direction. Not one feature — including the one we built a scorecard around, published, and then withdrew. What follows is the evidence, and then why these tools are still worth having on a chart.

How every test came out



How to read every chart here

No test can spot an effect of any size. Below a certain size, a result is indistinguishable from luck — and that size depends on how much data the test had. We call it the **floor**.

So rather than show you results in four different units, every chart here shows one thing: **how big the result was next to the smallest result that test could have spotted.** The shaded band is the floor. A dot inside it means the test could not tell. A dot outside it means the test found something real.

Every measurable test, on one scale

Sorted smallest to largest. The shaded band is each test's own floor.



Entering after the sweep

0

1×

2×

3×+

Price levels and order blocks

Support lines, order blocks, breakers, untouched volume levels and Fibonacci retracements all make the same promise: that certain prices are special, and price behaves differently when it arrives there. Each one was tested against a fake line or zone placed the same distance from price, so the only difference was whether the level was real. None of them beat the fake. The levels are a useful map of where to pay attention; not one of them has been shown to tell you which way price goes next.

Support and resistance levels

NO EFFECT FOUND

Does price respect a real swing high or low any more than it respects a random line the same distance away?

How it was tested. Every swing level was scored forward against a fake line pushed the same distance to either side, with that distance then mathematically extrapolated down to zero.

RESULT

$-0.03 \pm 0.29\text{pp}$ on 1-hour, and $-0.23 \pm 0.21\text{pp}$ once the distance is extrapolated to zero; 24-minute agrees at $-0.35 \pm 0.35\text{pp}$.

← too small to see | big enough to trust →

0.04× the floor

Real levels scored 47.6 / 49.2 / 47.5% against fake lines at 47.6 / 48.5 / 47.0%. Three independent runs put the average outcome at -0.033R to -0.036R. Both check groups agree, four calibration checks pass, and the profile is flat rather than growing with distance. An earlier +1.5pp reading was withdrawn once the fake line was fixed to differ in one respect only.

HOW MUCH DATA

19,688 separate 1-hour trades across eight check symbols, plus a separate 24-minute run

SMALLEST EFFECT IT COULD SPOT

0.0115 to 0.0162R on 1-hour, about 0.6 to 0.8 percentage points; 0.0194R on 24-minute - the best-resolved test in the project

A real swing level is worth nothing over an arbitrary line the same distance from price, so use levels to decide where to pay attention, never as a reason to expect a bounce.

Order block retests

COULD NOT TELL

When price comes back into an order block, does it turn there more often than at any similar zone?

How it was tested. Every armed retest was scored against a matched fake zone - first shifted sideways, then, after that comparison proved rigged, matched instead on how deep the pullback was - and twenty combinations of the block settings were swept alongside.

RESULT

Baseline blocks scored 50.6 / 51.2 / 48.4%, giving +1.9 / -1.0 / -2.5pp against the fake zone.



← too small to see | big enough to trust →

0.80× the floor

The sideways-shifted comparison read +4.6 / +4.8pp and turned out to be an artefact: pullback depth on its own is worth 20pp, the fake running 41.2% in the shallowest tenth to 61.1% in the deepest while the real block sat flat near 55%. Matched properly on depth and timing: +1.6 / +1.2pp on 3-minute and -0.8 / -0.6pp on 1-hour, with a separate control saying the real block is 3.3pp worse than a matching non-swing zone. Not one of the 20 setting combinations cleared +2pp on both check symbols, and 0 of 12 quality groups cleared the smallest effect the test could spot. An archived 50.0% at 1,867 events was withdrawn as an overlapping-trades artefact, and the older "60% versus 33%" claim left nothing above about 6pp on retest.

HOW MUCH DATA

3 symbols on 1-hour and 3-minute, 40,000 bars per symbol; 20 declared setting combinations; 12 quality groups

SMALLEST EFFECT IT COULD SPOT

0.040R, about 2 percentage points - still roughly 1.7 times too coarse to settle it

A block retest looks like a coin flip and the test was not sharp enough to see anything smaller, so treat any future block claim as false until it has been matched on how deep the pullback was.

Twenty-five order block filters

CLAIM DID NOT HOLD

Can any filter sort the order blocks that work from the ones that do not?

How it was tested. About 25 filter variants were tried across two halves of recent data on one symbol, and the two survivors were then re-run on a genuinely different symbol they had never touched.

RESULT

In the build data both winners held in both halves: a minimum block height of 0.75 ATR gave 53.3% against a 49.3% baseline, and a same-bar overshoot rule gave 62.1% at 6 ATR and 68.0% at 7

This test's result and its floor were measured in different units, so the two cannot be placed on the same scale.

ATR, rising cleanly with its own threshold. On the fresh symbol the baseline was 50.0%, minimum height 50.4%, overshoot-6 45.3% and overshoot-7 42.3%. The overshoot rule did not merely fade, it inverted. Separately, ranking blocks by score instead of filtering them gave -0.01 / -0.48 / +0.40pp, and a model using all nine candle features captured only 1.6 to 2.9% of the room available.

HOW MUCH DATA

1,101 events in the build data, 1,117 on the fresh symbol

A filter that survives both halves of one coin over one period, rises neatly with its own setting and comes with a good story can still be pure noise - it only counts once it survives a coin it has never seen.

Breaker retests and the volume filter

CLAIM DID NOT HOLD

When a broken block gets retested by a big-volume candle, does that retest actually work?

How it was tested. Every breaker retest was rebuilt offline across nine coins and three timeframes, then big-volume returns were compared with quiet ones four separate ways, including pairs taken inside the same zone.

RESULT

2x volume versus under-2x: -3.83pp on 1-hour, +4.31pp on 24-minute, -3.07pp on 3-minute. The shipped gate: -3.75 / +5.99 / -2.49pp. Top third against bottom third: -4.84 / +3.57 / -2.89pp.



← too small to see | big enough to trust →

0.91x the floor

Paired inside the same zone: -7.89 / -6.31 / -5.27pp. Not one of the 12 cells cleared its own floor, and the deepest samples lean the wrong way. On a separate run the filter read +1.15pp on the coin it was built on and inverted to -2.26pp and -0.91pp on two unseen coins. The original claim was 60% versus 33% - a 27-point gap.

HOW MUCH DATA

2,369 resolved retests on 1-hour, 1,153 on 24-minute, 11,473 on 3-minute; nine coins; 25,345 blocks became 7,162 breakers

SMALLEST EFFECT IT COULD SPOT

0.0676R, about 3.4 percentage points - 2.8 times the project's best-ever finding

The 27-point gap is not in the data, so treat a breaker as a place on the chart rather than a reason to take the trade - though waiting for the return does cut your risk from about 3 ATR to about 1.73 ATR.

Fibonacci retracement levels

NO EFFECT FOUND

Is there anything special about the 0.618, 0.5 or 0.786 retracement?

How it was tested. The same leg, same bar and same direction were scored with only the ratio changed, measured from the close of the touch bar and compared against a 62-rung ladder running from 0.30 to 0.95.

RESULT

0.618 scored -0.14pp against the mean of the rungs either side, 0.500 read -0.08pp and 0.786 read -0.01pp.



← too small to see | big enough to trust →

0.44× the floor

Against all 62 rungs the three fib ratios ranked 8th / 19th / 34th of 62 on 3-minute and 9th / 43rd / 49th on 1-hour. The whole triple against the same triple nudged 0.01 to 0.06 came to -0.000pp. The only real pattern is depth: +1.7 to +1.8pp at a retracement of 0.44 to 0.53, sliding to -0.77pp at 0.95 - a smooth curve the fib rungs sit on unremarkably. Hand-drawn fibs scored -1.60 and -0.23 against their fake levels, both worse than the fake.

HOW MUCH DATA

nine coins on 3-minute and 1-hour, both check groups

SMALLEST EFFECT IT COULD SPOT

0.32pp (0.0064R) on 3-minute; 0.009 to 0.015R on 1-hour - three to five times finer than the project's best-ever positive result

Price retraces but the golden ratio adds nothing, and if you ever backtest a fib with a resting order sitting at the level you will get a fake winner, because the fill itself only picks the moves that carried on.

Naked point of control as a magnet

WE WITHDREW THIS

Does price get pulled back to an untouched high-volume price more than to any other price?

How it was tested. Each untouched point of control was tracked over a 240-bar horizon against a fake level whose distance was drawn from a different event on the same side, so the two sat the same distance from price on average.

RESULT

The first attempt read +17.3 / +15.2 / +18.1pp and was wrong, because its fake level was built from the day's open and sat a different distance from price.



← too small to see | big enough to trust →

0.05× the floor

Corrected, the naked point of control was reached 88.4 / 88.1 / 87.5% of the time against the fake at 88.2 / 88.1 / 87.8% - a difference of +0.2 / +0.0 / -0.3pp, with the mean distances matching to two decimal places.

HOW MUCH DATA

3 coins on 1-hour, 240-bar horizon of about ten days

SMALLEST EFFECT IT COULD SPOT

about 0.12R, roughly 6 percentage points - and it was the wrong measure anyway

Price reaches a naked point of control 88% of the time inside ten days, and it reaches any old price at that distance 88% of the time too, so it is a price, not a magnet.

Order block zone width

DESCRIBES, CANNOT PREDICT

Does a wider order block make the trade harder to win?

How it was tested. Straight arithmetic - your risk is the zone width plus a 1 ATR buffer, and risk is what R is measured against - checked against how far price actually travelled after each retest.

RESULT

2R was reached in 9 of 22 cases at a 0.45 ATR zone (41%), 7 of 22 at 0.73 ATR (32%), 6 of 22 at 1.00 ATR (27%), 2 of 22 at 1.50 ATR (9%) and 1 of 22 at 2.01 ATR (5%).

This test's result and its floor were measured in different units, so the two cannot be placed on the same scale.

The median move after a retest is 2.34 ATR from the zone edge, 75th percentile 3.92 and 90th percentile 4.56. On 3 ATR of risk the median move is 0.78R - it does not even reach 1R. Drawing the zone to the wicks rather than the bodies changed the outcome in only 2 of 15 paired setups.

HOW MUCH DATA	SMALLEST EFFECT IT COULD SPOT
22 retests; observed widths median 0.62 ATR, 90th percentile 1.16 ATR, maximum 1.60 ATR	not applicable - this is arithmetic, not a measurement

A fat zone demands a bigger move for the same reward and no sample size can argue with that, so past roughly 1 ATR of width the maths stops closing whatever the zone is called - worry about width, not about wick versus body.

Momentum tools

Momentum tools — RSI bands, the 9/21 moving-average cross, divergences, and the buy/sell dots — all claim to tell you when a move is running out or a new one is starting. Tested across tens of thousands of signals on nine coins, every one of them landed on a coin flip, and the yellow dot typically prints about 19 bars before the turn it is supposed to

mark. The only reading that moved off zero moved the wrong way: taking raw wave crossovers loses a small, consistent amount on every trade.

The yellow buy and sell dots

CLAIM DID NOT HOLD

When the yellow dot prints, does price go my way?

How it was tested. Every dot was scored on whether price travelled one average bar's range in its favour before travelling the same distance against it, on three coins and five chart speeds, and was also compared against simply noticing the wave was already deep.

RESULT

50.0% – exactly chance, and flat at every speed: 3-minute 49.43%, 15-minute 50.10%, 30-minute 49.61%, 1-hour 49.38%, 4-hour 51.99%.



← too small to see | big enough to trust →

0.00x the floor

Median 19 bars before the real turn, with price running a median 3.0 ATR against you first.

As a top/bottom finder a random bar marks a pivot 2.9% of the time, the dot 6.4%, 'the wave is simply deep' 9.8%, and 'deep but no dot' 10.5% — the dot loses to plain depth in 29 of 30 cells.

HOW MUCH DATA

22,656 dots on ETH, BTC and SOL across five
timeframes; 22,500 scored for direction; 18,000
oversold episodes

SMALLEST EFFECT IT COULD SPOT

0.021R on the race; per-cell error bars of 0.72 to 2.35 percentage points

The dot only tells you momentum has crossed; it is a coin flip that usually fires around 19 bars too early, so never treat it as an entry.

Every attempt to fix the dot

CLAIM DID NOT HOLD

Is there a filter, a slower chart, or a waiting rule that turns the dot into something worth trading?

How it was tested. About 1,100 rule variants across six angles were screened, the seven that passed were handed to an independent re-tester who ran the control the first screen had skipped, and separately every fast-chart-to-slow-chart pairing, every waiting length from 1 to 21 bars, and resting limit orders were tested against matched controls.

RESULT

All seven died. The closest survivor was +0.38pp against a ± 0.90 pp error bar, and it was the best of 94 tried.



← too small to see | big enough to trust →

0.42× the floor

On data it had never seen, the volume filter reversed: the quietest 2% of dots won 56.46% against the loudest 2% at 52.64%. Waiting failed at every length from 1 to 21 bars; limit orders lifted the win rate to 51-53%, but the same order placed from a random bar did 50.5-52.1%. Lift found on the tuning coin carried over to fresh coins at a slope of 0.20 — about 80% of it was noise.

HOW MUCH DATA

~1,100 variants screened and 7 re-tested, over 22,656 dots; 9 fast-to-slow chart pairs x 16 agreement rules across 174 comparison cells

SMALLEST EFFECT IT COULD SPOT

± 0.90 percentage points on the best surviving filter

Stop hunting for the setting that fixes the dot — filtering it, confirming it on a slower chart, and waiting for a better price have all been tried and none of them work.

The raw wave crossover as an entry

MADE IT WORSE

If I simply buy when the fast wave crosses up and sell when it crosses down, what does that cost me?

How it was tested. Every crossover was scored offline on nine major coins against a control matched on six things, so the comparison bars were as alike as possible apart from the crossover itself.

RESULT

-0.0240R per trade, 3.07 standard errors from zero, against a smallest spottable effect of 0.0219R. The signal lands inside a matching ribbon only 27.3% of the time.



← too small to see | big enough to trust →

1.10× the floor

HOW MUCH DATA

Nine major coins; the signal fires about 13 times a day on the 15-minute chart

SMALLEST EFFECT IT COULD SPOT

0.0219R

This one is not a nothing — trading raw wave crossovers loses a small, steady amount every time, before you even pay fees.

The 9/21 EMA cross

NO EFFECT FOUND

Does the 9 crossing the 21 tell me which way price is going?

How it was tested. The forward outcome after every cross was measured on nine coins and three chart speeds, then 25 other fast/slow pairs chosen in advance were scored on the same machinery.

RESULT

50.2%, 50.3% and 50.7% win rate on ETH, BTC and SOL. On the hour -0.04 to -0.09pp against a floor of about 0.024R;

This test's result and its floor were measured in different units, so the two cannot be placed on the same scale.

on the 3-minute -0.55pp, negative on 9 of 9 coins, against a floor of about 0.012R. Across the 25-pair grid the entire spread is smaller than one cell's own measuring error, and 9/21 ranks 10th, 6th, 20th and 21st of 25. The earlier evidence for 9/21 was withdrawn — its best figure, 50.24%, sits inside its own 0.44 unit of noise.

HOW MUCH DATA

Nine coins on 1-hour, 24-minute and 3-minute, including 313,133 events on the 3-minute; ETH, BTC and SOL re-checked separately

SMALLEST EFFECT IT COULD SPOT

about 0.024R on the hour and 0.012R on the 3-minute; 0.37 to 0.94 percentage points per archived cell

The cross is a coin flip on every coin tested and 9/21 is in no way a special pair, so keep it as a picture of trend, never as a reason to click.

Waiting for a cross before entering

CLAIM DID NOT HOLD

At a level I already like, am I better off waiting for the moving averages to cross before I get in?

How it was tested. The same level, stop and target were traded with only the trigger changed, comparing entering straight away against ten different crossover pairs.

RESULT

Entering immediately: 53% win, +0.282R. Fast pairs (2/6, 3/9, 2/8, 3/8, 3/6, 3/7, 3/10): 36-46% and +0.05 to +0.13R. 4/8: 36% and +0.008R.

This test's result and its floor were measured in different units, so the two cannot be placed on the same scale.

Slow pairs including 9/21: 27-42% and -0.11 to -0.28R. Every crossover lost to entering immediately, and the ranking tracks how slow the pair is.

HOW MUCH DATA

39 pivots on the 3-minute over 365 bars; 38-39 trades per condition

SMALLEST EFFECT IT COULD SPOT

not stated; the spread among neighbouring fast pairs is itself the noise band, and each cell holds only 38-39 trades

Your stop does not move while you wait, so every bar you spend waiting for confirmation buys a worse price for the same risk — thin evidence at 38-39 trades a cell, but it all points one way.

Divergences

NO EFFECT FOUND

When momentum makes a higher low while price makes a lower low, does the turn actually come?

How it was tested. Five ways of spotting a divergence were measured on one coin and re-checked on two coins that had not been used to pick them, then sliced by trend, depth and confirmation, and finally used as a filter on dot entries against the control of taking every dot.

RESULT

On data it had never seen the five detection rules scored 50.31%, 49.81%, 50.18%, 50.40% and 50.37%.

This test's result and its floor were measured in different units, so the two cannot be placed on the same scale.

Slices: against the trend 50.3/50.6%, with the trend 52.7% where it was fitted but 49.9% on the check, deep turn 50.1/50.7%, confirmed 50.6/50.5%. Used as a filter on dots it made things worse — every dot with no filter 40% and +0.002R, classic divergence 38% and -0.065R, trend-aligned hidden divergence 34% and -0.237R.

HOW MUCH DATA

Cells from 480 to 7,862 trades on ETH, BTC and SOL from 15-minute to 4-hour; 820-910 divergences per coin; the filter arm had 32 classic and 29-37 hidden against a control of 269

Divergences describe momentum fading, not a turn arriving — and filtering other signals with them made those signals worse, not better.

RSI bands

COULD NOT TELL

Does an overbought or oversold RSI reading tell me where price goes next?

How it was tested. The bands were first set at 40 and 60, where the top and bottom fifth of readings actually fall on this market over about eleven months rather than the textbook 70/30, and then the move 12 bars later was measured from each band in units of a typical bar's range, counting each move only once.

RESULT

1-hour: contracted +0.079 ATR, neutral -0.104 ATR, extended +0.158 ATR; 24-minute neutral +0.185 ATR. Nothing bigger than about 0.4 ATR anywhere.



← too small to see | big enough to trust →

0.49× the floor

On calibration, median RSI is 49.7 (1H), 50.3 (24M) and 49.7 (4H), and cut points of 40 and 60 give a 21.2 / 58.7 / 20.1 split on the hour, where the old 55 line had been calling a third of all bars 'extended'.

HOW MUCH DATA

About 8,000 bars on 1-hour and 24-minute; 124 contracted, 338 neutral and 203 extended hourly readings, plus 314 neutral on the 24-minute

SMALLEST EFFECT IT COULD SPOT

0.375 to 0.797 ATR depending on the band

Read RSI as how far a move has already stretched, not as where it goes next — and keep the lines at 40 and 60, because at 55 a third of all bars looked 'extended'.

Volume and money flow

Volume tools promise to tell you whether a move has real money behind it: a heavy bar is supposed to confirm a break, and a money-flow reading is supposed to show buying and selling pressure. Testing found no version of that idea that predicts direction — our own money flow, a leading paid indicator's money flow, and the volume filters tried on sweeps all came out at zero or could not be resolved at all. Worse, the flagship rule of the whole

framework, the volume tier ladder, turns out to need a number that does not exist yet at the moment you would trade it.

The volume tier ladder

COULD NOT TELL

My rule says a big-volume 24-minute bar only counts if the hour above it is also big. Does that confirmation step actually sort the moves that follow through from the ones that stall?

How it was tested. Every qualifying bar was scored forward in the direction it pointed, comparing confirmed against partial — first on one coin, then pooled across nine, with the error bars widened to account for nine crypto coins moving together rather than independently.

RESULT

0.208 against a floor of 1.14 at the largest sample — and the gap SHRANK as the data grew, from 0.975 at 895 events to 0.208 at 4,335.

← too small to see | big enough to trust →

0.18× the floor

An effect that gets smaller the more you measure it is a noise estimate, and that is stronger evidence of nothing than either run on its own. 🚫 THE SHARPER FINDING IS NOT THE NULL. Only 204 of 4,335 signal events — 4.7% — are confirmed at all once you restrict yourself to bars that have genuinely closed. The hour above almost never qualifies at the moment the 24-minute bar fires, because that hour is still forming: the signal bar is over half the hour's own volume, so the confirmation is largely the same trades counted twice. ⚠️ A version that peeks at the finished hour looked significant at first, then stopped being significant once the coins' co-movement was accounted for — and its sign flipped between two ways of sampling, which is its own warning.

HOW MUCH DATA

SMALLEST EFFECT IT COULD SPOT

9 coins, 18,749 twenty-four-minute bars and 40,000 hourly bars each; 4,335 non-overlapping signal events after pooling, against 237 on one coin

1.14, and the gap has to beat it on data that is not double-counted

The confirmation step barely happens in real time — under one signal in twenty qualifies when you are honest about which bars have closed. Treat a big-volume bar as a big-volume bar; the tier above it is not adding what it appears to add, and pooling more coins will not change that.

49

The confirming hour arrives too late

CLAIM DID NOT HOLD

The ladder says the hour above must also be twice normal volume, so can you actually read that number when the signal fires?

How it was tested. Worked out how the bars nest inside each other, then measured what share of the confirming hour's volume was the signal bar's own volume.

RESULT

No. The 1-hour bar contains the 24-minute bar that fires, so at the moment of entry that hour is still forming.

This test's result and its floor were measured in different units, so the two cannot be placed on the same scale.

On the two events measured the signal bar was 53% and 54% of the whole hour's volume.

HOW MUCH DATA

arithmetic on bar nesting, plus the two largest events of 2026-08-28

SMALLEST EFFECT IT COULD SPOT

not applicable – arithmetic, not a measurement

Over half of the 'confirmation' is the same trades counted twice, so the ladder has never been tested the way it is actually used, and the unbroken 5-for-5 live record is anecdote against 237 measured events that show nothing.

How rare is high volume, really

DESCRIBES, CANNOT PREDICT

Is a bar at twice its average volume actually a rare event worth reacting to?

How it was tested. Divided every bar's volume by its own 20-bar average and counted how often each level came up, with no other conditions attached.

RESULT

1.0x on 36.19% of bars, 1.3x on 22.40%, 1.5x on 16.71%, 1.75x on 11.81%, 2.0x on 8.49% (1 bar in 12), 2.5x on 4.68% (1 in 21), 3.0x on 2.66%, 4.0x on 1.01%.

This test's result and its floor were measured in different units, so the two cannot be placed on the same scale.

HOW MUCH DATA

every bar on 9 crypto majors, 1-hour, after a 300-bar warm-up

SMALLEST EFFECT IT COULD SPOT

no floor applies – this is a count, not a test

Twice-average volume turns up roughly once every twelve bars, so a big volume number by itself does not make a setup rare or special – whatever rarity a setup has comes from where the bar sits, not how loud it is.

Demanding big volume on the sweep

CLAIM DID NOT HOLD

Does only taking sweeps that arrive with heavy volume make them better trades?

How it was tested. Scored swing-failure entries with and without a rule that the sweep candle trade at least twice normal volume, then stacked that filter on top of the existing entry rule, with a live forward log checked the same way.

RESULT

Filtered +0.121R against +0.086R unfiltered — a gap of 0.035R against a smallest detectable effect of 0.041R.



← too small to see | big enough to trust →

0.85× the floor

Stacked on the entry rule it made things worse: +0.131R against +0.227R for the entry rule alone. Median volume on sweeps was already 2.07x normal.

HOW MUCH DATA

the offline swing-failure sample, plus 21 live sweeps logged forward

SMALLEST EFFECT IT COULD SPOT

0.041R

A sweep is a heavy-volume event by definition, so calling one unconfirmed for low volume is not supported — the best sweep in the live log (6.17 ATR) fired on 0.41x volume, the quietest of all 21.

Our money flow as a signal

WE WITHDREW THIS

Does our money-flow reading tell you anything about where price goes next?

How it was tested. Bars were sorted into fifths by their money-flow reading across three coins and four timeframes, the top-minus-bottom gap was measured, and the whole thing was rechecked on coins the test had never seen.

RESULT

The original -6.5pp contrarian lead reversed to +0.62pp on the fitting coin and +0.86pp on the unseen coins — the opposite sign, and both effectively zero.

This test's result and its floor were measured in different units, so the two cannot be placed on the same scale.

HOW MUCH DATA

453,176 resolved bars (the original claim came from 6,344)

SMALLEST EFFECT IT COULD SPOT

not stated; the run-to-run wobble was 0.20-0.29pp per cell

The eye-catching lead was a two-month accident on one coin; money flow has no shown ability to predict direction, and agreement across horizons on the same bars proves nothing — only a fresh coin does.

A leading paid indicator's money flow

NO EFFECT FOUND

Does the well-known paid indicator's money flow do any better than ours?

How it was tested. Pulled 6,344 bars of the paid indicator's own plotted output straight off the chart, sorted each reading into fifths and measured the top-minus-bottom gap at three forward horizons.

RESULT

Money flow -0.66 / +0.13 / +0.30pp across the three horizons against a 1.44pp per-cell floor. Its RSI -1.25 / -1.63 / -1.65pp, its Stochastic RSI -2.99 / -1.71 / -1.65pp.

 ← too small to see | big enough to trust → 0.46× the floor

Its wave matched ours at a correlation of 1.0000.

HOW MUCH DATA

6,344 bars of 15-minute ETHUSDC.P

SMALLEST EFFECT IT COULD SPOT

1.44pp per cell

The paid tool has no mechanical edge over ours, and its popular free clone reads a different quantity entirely (-6.35 against -1.11 on the same bar), so never quote the clone as if it were the paid number.

What the money flow cloud measures

CLAIM DID NOT HOLD

Is the green-and-red money flow cloud really weighted by volume, and does the darker inner band add anything?

How it was tested. Read the shipped formula line by line, checked a copy of it against the live chart bar for bar, then sorted every bar into blank, an exact copy of the outer cloud, or something new.

RESULT

The outer cloud has no volume term at all – it is candle body divided by candle range, averaged over 60 bars.

This test's result and its floor were measured in different units, so the two cannot be placed on the same scale.

The inner pressure band is blank on 36.8% of 1-hour bars and an exact copy on 19.2%, leaving 44.0% that says anything new (15-minute: 36.9 / 17.3 / 45.8). The code matches its own formula to 5.2e-14.

HOW MUCH DATA

298,200 bars across 3 coins and 2 timeframes, plus 201 bars checked against the code

The name is inherited, not earned: the cloud is a slow read of candle bodies, and on about 55% of bars the volume band is blank or just repeating the cloud – with blank meaning both 'neutral volume' and 'volume disagrees'.

Liquidity and sweeps

The idea is that price runs to where stop orders are resting, takes them out, then reverses — so a wick that pokes through a level and closes back inside should be a reversal worth trading, and a fat pool of orders should pull price toward it. Every tradeable version of that failed testing. The two biggest tests failed the same way: entering after a sweep loses about 3.6% of the money you put at risk on every trade, and it does that while winning 69% of the time. The one genuinely useful thing that survived is a measurement rather than a signal — sweeps only poke about a third of an ATR past the level, so a stop about 1 ATR beyond the wick survives roughly nine out of ten of them.

Entering after the sweep

MADE IT WORSE

If I wait for price to poke through a level and close back inside, then enter with my stop tucked behind the wick, does it make money?

How it was tested. Every sweep was traded exactly as specified — enter at the close of the sweep bar, stop 1 ATR beyond the wick, risk capped at 2 ATR, target the nearest untaken level, real exchange fees charged — and scored against entering at a random bar with the identical stop and target.

RESULT

Sweep entry -0.0362R per trade at a 68.7% win rate, against -0.0325R for the random entry with identical geometry, so the sweep is worse than random.

← too small to see | big enough to trust →

3.62× the floor · beyond the scale

Moving the target does not rescue it: nearest level -0.0362R, 1.0R target -0.0725R, 1.5R -0.0807R, 2.0R -0.0856R, 3.0R -0.0857R, and the sweep is worse than random at every one. Average win 0.155R against a full 1R loss.

HOW MUCH DATA

18,243 trades on six fresh symbols, 1-hour

SMALLEST EFFECT IT COULD SPOT

0.010R — the sharpest test in the whole project

You can win 69% of the time and still lose money, because the wins are small and the losses are full size — and no choice of target fixes it.

The swing failure pattern itself

MADE IT WORSE

Does a wick that takes out a high or low and closes back inside tell you which way price goes next?

How it was tested. Fading the sweep was scored as a race from the sweep bar's close — does price travel 1 ATR the reversal way before it travels 1 ATR against — on nine symbols, with the long/short mix matched, checked in all four calendar quarters and on data it had never seen.

RESULT 49.6% on the data used to build it and 49.3% on data it had never seen.

← too small to see | big enough to trust → 1.50× the floor

Re-run against a matched comparison group it comes out at -1.64pp, which is -0.033R in the reversal direction, and that repeats on both check groups, in all four quarters, and at every sweep size from 0.5 to 2.0. Every slice leaves it there: wick size 49.1-50.3%, swing age 45.3-49.8%, direction 48.8-50.1%.

HOW MUCH DATA

31,710 sweeps, nine symbols, four timeframes

SMALLEST EFFECT IT COULD SPOT

0.022R

Traded mechanically as a reversal the pattern is not even a coin flip — it leans slightly against you, and the lean is smaller than what the fees cost, so it is information about location, not money.

Does a better-looking sweep trade better?

CLAIM DID NOT HOLD

Is a sweep with a long wick and a decisive close back inside a better trade than a scrappy one?

How it was tested. 73 sweeps were split into thirds by how deeply price closed back inside, by wick length and by swing size, with the grading rule written down in advance, and each third was compared against simply taking every sweep.

RESULT

Baseline of all sweeps: 42% win, +0.071R. The 'strong reclaim' third — the deep, decisive close back inside — scored 24% win and -0.292R. The weak reclaim third scored 44% and +0.144R.

This test's result and its floor were measured in different units, so the two cannot be placed on the same scale.

Strong reclaim was negative on all three timeframes: -0.02 / -0.30 / -0.84R. Graded by swing size instead: strong -0.095R, weak -0.179R, both worse than doing nothing.

HOW MUCH DATA

73 sweeps across 30-minute, 1-hour and 4-hour

The most impressive-looking sweep is the worse trade, because a big reclaim means the move already happened and you are entering late.

Big volume on the sweep candle

CLAIM DID NOT HOLD

Does insisting on heavy volume in the sweep candle pick out the better sweeps?

How it was tested. Sweeps were scored with and without a rule demanding at least twice normal volume on the sweep candle, that filter was then stacked on top of the entry rule, and the same idea was recorded live on every sweep as it formed.

RESULT

Filtered scored +0.121R against +0.086R unfiltered – a gap of 0.035R, smaller than the 0.041R the test could see.



← too small to see | big enough to trust →

0.85× the floor

Stacked on the entry rule it made things worse: +0.131R against +0.227R for the entry rule alone. Median volume on a sweep is already 2.07x normal, so the filter screens out almost nothing. In the live log the best sweep recorded (best move 6.17 ATR) fired on 0.41x volume, the lowest reading of any logged sweep. The opposite claim — that heavy-volume sweeps are worse, at 47.5% and 48.5% — did not reproduce when re-tested properly.

HOW MUCH DATA

the 73-sweep offline set, plus 21 independent sweeps logged live

SMALLEST EFFECT IT COULD SPOT

0.041R

A sweep is a high-volume event by definition, so calling one 'unconfirmed' because volume looks low has nothing behind it.

Do bigger liquidity pools pull harder?

CLAIM DID NOT HOLD

The indicator scores every untaken high and low by how much volume sits behind it — does a big score mean price gets there faster, or that the level holds when price arrives?

How it was tested. Every scored level was tracked for how long price took to reach it, how often price closed straight through it within 20 bars, and how a fade of the sweep did, with each level's distance at birth held constant so a nearer level cannot look magnetic for the wrong reason.

RESULT

It runs backwards. From 1-2 ATR away, median bars to first touch by score band was 9 / 10 / 13 / 19; from 2-4 ATR, 22 / 24 / 30 / 42;



← too small to see | big enough to trust →

0.78× the floor

from 4-plus ATR, 43 / 60 / 52 / 77 — a high-scoring level takes about twice as long to be reached, and the check symbols agree almost exactly. Once touched, price closed through within 20 bars 86.2 / 84.7 / 83.4 / 84.8% of the time, flat at every score, and fat levels produced smaller pullbacks first, not bigger (2.39 / 2.18 / 2.06 / 1.83 ATR). About 99% of levels get swept eventually whatever their size, and fading the sweep wins 48-49% across every pool size.

HOW MUCH DATA

34,951 levels price later reached; 43,076 levels scored; about 27,000 sweeps across three symbols and four timeframes

SMALLEST EFFECT IT COULD SPOT

1.16 percentage points on the fade comparison

A big score is not a stronger level, it is a slower target — use it to see where price might eventually go, never to decide whether a level will hold.

The untouched volume shelf as a magnet

WE WITHDREW THIS

Does price get dragged back to an untouched high-volume price more than to any other price the same distance away?

How it was tested. How often price reached the untouched shelf was compared against how often it reached a fake target drawn the same distance away on the same side, after a first attempt that used a fake target sitting at a different distance had to be thrown out.

RESULT The first reading of +17.3 / +15.2 / +18.1pp was wrong.

This test's result and its floor were measured in different units, so the two cannot be placed on the same scale.

Corrected: the shelf was reached 88.4 / 88.1 / 87.5% of the time against 88.2 / 88.1 / 87.8% for the matched fake target — a difference of +0.2 / +0.0 / -0.3pp, with the two average distances matching to two decimal places.

HOW MUCH DATA

3 symbols on 1-hour, 240-bar window (about ten days)

Price reaches an untouched volume shelf 88% of the time within ten days — and it reaches any price at that distance 88% of the time. It is a price, not a magnet.

How far a sweep runs past a level

DESCRIBES, CANNOT PREDICT

How much room does my stop need to survive a stop hunt?

How it was tested. For every sweep, the distance the wick travelled past the level before price turned back was measured as a multiple of that chart's average range, on four timeframes and re-run on a second independent sample.

RESULT

Median depth 0.26 / 0.38 / 0.30 / 0.29 times ATR. 90th percentile 0.93 / 0.95 / 0.90 / 0.71. Largest ever seen 1.65 / 1.33 / 1.22 / 0.89.

This test's result and its floor were measured in different units, so the two cannot be placed on the same scale.

The old claim that 1.5x ATR clears every sweep is dead: the largest observed sweep grew every time a sample was added, 0.89 to 1.22 to 1.33 to 1.65, while the median and 90th percentile barely moved. In dollars the same medians read \$2.98 on 30-minute but \$9.13 on 4-hour, which is why the number must be kept in ATR.

HOW MUCH DATA

85 sweeps across 15-minute, 30-minute, 1-hour and 4-hour, spans of 3.1 to 83.2 days

SMALLEST EFFECT IT COULD SPOT

not applicable — a direct measurement

Stop hunts are shallow: about 1 ATR beyond the swept wick clears roughly nine in ten of them, so surviving one is cheap — but this says how far price pokes, never which way it goes next.

Market structure and phases

This family covers the tool that splits the chart into trends and ranges, then guesses whether a range is accumulation (buyers loading up, break likely up) or distribution (sellers unloading, break likely down). Testing found it is an honest description of what price has already done — it never rewrites history to look right — but it does not forecast. The label is correct about half the time whatever settings you use, its volume ingredient turned out to

be roughly 71% a disguised count of up-closes, and the one reading that looked like it called breakouts was simply watching the break happen.

How often the phase label is right

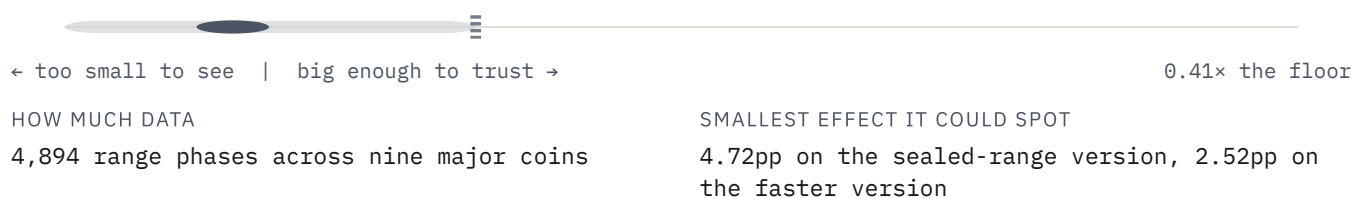
NO EFFECT FOUND

When the chart says a range is accumulation or distribution, how often does it call the eventual break correctly?

How it was tested. Scored each range's first label against the side price actually broke out of, then repeated the scoring at every conviction level from 1 to 7 to see if being pickier helps.

RESULT

First-call accuracy 49.41% / 51.93% / 49.93%; never leaves 48-53% at any conviction level from 1 to 7. Coverage 100%, and the label appears a median of 1 bar into the range.



It is right about half the time no matter how picky you are, so read it as a description of where price has been, not as a call on where it goes next.

Does the accumulation lean call the break

CLAIM DID NOT HOLD

Does the accumulation-versus-distribution reading tell you which way a range will break before it breaks?

How it was tested. Used only ranges that actually broke, froze the reading at the last bar before the break and then further and further back in time, and scored each freeze against how often that side broke anyway.

RESULT

Looked like +5.5 / +9.3 / +10.5pp. Frozen at the last bar it reads +23.4 / +27.5 / +31.0pp; three bars back +9.7 / +11.9 / +17.4pp; ten bars back -0.6 / +7.3 / +6.2pp;



The reading was watching the break form, not forecasting it — any number that shrinks the earlier you take the snapshot was never a forecast.

Is there any volume in the volume term

NO EFFECT FOUND

Does the volume part of the phase engine actually know anything about volume, or is it just counting up-closes?

How it was tested. Replaced volume with a flat 1.0 on every bar and counted how often the vote changed, then ran a version with volume shuffled against price as a fake check, keeping the phases, ranges and every gate identical.

RESULT

With volume replaced by 1.0 the engine casts the SAME vote on 70.9% of ranges (67.0-74.8% across the nine coins). Real minus fake volume: +2.40 / +0.22 / +1.55pp.



← too small to see | big enough to trust →

0.98× the floor

HOW MUCH DATA

nine major coins, 40,000 1-hour bars each
(2022-01 to 2026-08); 4,894 range phases, 4,773
resolved, 167,623 bar readings

SMALLEST EFFECT IT COULD SPOT

2.46-5.45pp (about 0.050-0.110R)

About 71% of the volume term is a disguised up-close count, and taking volume out altogether leaves how often the label is right unchanged (+0.13 / +0.06pp).

The volume term's hidden short lean

NO EFFECT FOUND

The volume part of the engine votes short more often than long by accident – does correcting that make it better at calling direction?

How it was tested. Measured the built-in lean, re-centred it, and re-ran four scoring methods across three splits of the data, two settings and two read points, with a deliberately fake arm run alongside as a check.

RESULT

The lean is real: the shipped version votes 9.6pp net short (12.3pp on the older version). Re-centring removes it, moving the vote to +0.3 to +1.7pp.

This test's result and its floor were measured in different units, so the two cannot be placed on the same scale.

Direction-calling ability does not move — every cell sits inside its own floor, and the fake arm threw up numbers the same size as the real ones.

HOW MUCH DATA

four scoring methods x three data splits x two
settings x two read points, plus a fake arm;
repeated on 24-minute bars

SMALLEST EFFECT IT COULD SPOT

not stated as one number; every cell was inside
its own

Changing how often a tool leans long or short moves the scoreboard without changing whether it knows anything — the third time in this project a result turned out to be that in disguise.

Is the upthrust term's sign backwards

CLAIM DID NOT HOLD

A failed push above the top of a range was flagged as being counted the wrong way round – does that hold up?

How it was tested. Reproduced the original number exactly, re-scored the term against a benchmark that leans the same way it does, compared it against the mirror-image spring term, and tried flipping the sign.

RESULT

Reproduces exactly (43.25 / 46.44 / 48.09 against the flagged 43.4 / 46.6 / 48.7). Scored fairly it reads -1.60 / -1.36 / -2.02pp. Upthrust minus spring is +0.31pp plus or minus 2.05.

← too small to see | big enough to trust → 0.47× the floor

Flipping the sign gives +0.18pp and destroys 86% of the distribution calls (2,354 down to 330).

HOW MUCH DATA

nine coins, three data splits; the original flag came from about 412 pooled ranges on three coins

SMALLEST EFFECT IT COULD SPOT

4.3-5.0pp; 4.33pp for the flip

No code bug here – the alarm came from comparing the term against the wrong benchmark, and flipping it would silence most of the labels for nothing in return.

Adding textbook Wyckoff shapes to the label

MADE IT WORSE

If proper Wyckoff ideas are added – effort versus result, climax, dry-up, shakeout – does the phase label get better?

How it was tested. Built four textbook constructs with thresholds fixed in advance and no tuning, then measured both how quickly the label arrives and how often it is right.

RESULT

All four make the call LATER by 0.71 to 0.98 bars, and none is more accurate (could not tell at 3.2-3.8pp).

← too small to see | big enough to trust → 2.51× the floor

Deleting the volume term and adding nothing does the same damage (-2.99 / -3.15) as the constructs (-2.72 / -4.82).

HOW MUCH DATA

same nine coins, 40,000 bars each, 4,894 range phases

SMALLEST EFFECT IT COULD SPOT

0.11-0.39 bars on speed; 3.3-5.0pp (0.067-0.100R) on accuracy

The textbook shapes make the label arrive later without making it any more accurate – the delay is big enough to measure, the improvement is not.

Does the phase engine repaint history

WORKS AS CLAIMED

Does the phase drawing only name a range after price has genuinely left it, or does it quietly rewrite the past so it looks like it knew?

How it was tested. Replayed the rules in Python from the chart's own bars and compared them against what the indicator actually drew, across the whole timeframe stack, plus a side-by-side check of the offline copy against the live chart.

RESULT

554 of 554 sealed ranges were named only after a real close outside a bracket that was already on screen.

This test's result and its floor were measured in different units, so the two cannot be placed on the same scale.

Price alignment error 0.0000 on every timeframe, and phases tile the chart with no gaps or overlaps. The offline copy matched the live logic on 40,000 of 40,000 bars per coin with 0 mismatches, and 5 of 5 phase names matched the live chart in order.

HOW MUCH DATA

about 39,000 bars (4H 3,114 / 1H 12,453 / 24M 10,515 / 3M 13,087), plus 40,000 bars each on three coins for the copy check

SMALLEST EFFECT IT COULD SPOT

not stated — a correctness check, not an edge test

What you saw live is what you see later, which is more than most phase indicators can say — but drawing honestly is not the same as predicting anything.

Volatility bands

These are the bands drawn around a moving average — the Achilles Bands on the chart, plus the standard Bollinger and Keltner versions of the same idea. The folklore is that a close outside the edge is a snap-back trade, and that the bands pinching together warns of a move coming. Across roughly 24,000 hourly trades on nine coins and five calendar years, neither piece of folklore survived in the form it is usually taught — though the pinch turned out to predict something real once the question was asked about SIZE rather than direction, and pointing the opposite way: fading the band does lose consistently, but the band edge is not what causes it, the leftover is smaller than the round-trip fee, and

switching band type, changing the settings or waiting for a squeeze all measured as nothing.

Fading a close outside the band

CLAIM DID NOT HOLD

When price closes outside the band, should I bet on a snap back?

How it was tested. Every hourly close outside the band was traded in the fade direction, each trade counted once, against a control matched on the long/short mix and against a scrambled version of the tape, with all 88 cells written down before any number was computed.

RESULT Fading loses 1.33pp, on 9 of 9 symbols and all 5 calendar years.

This test's result and its floor were measured in different units, so the two cannot be placed on the same scale.

But the band threshold itself adds only $+0.72\text{pp} \pm 0.38$ over the same rule on ordinary bars, and only $+0.13\text{pp}$ on the second check group. The response is not orderly: the moderate bucket reads higher than the more extreme one. It is $+1.59\text{pp}$ before Oct 2025 and $+0.19\text{pp}$ after. 24-minute reads $+0.29\text{pp}$ and 3-minute reverses sign. Gross $+0.027\text{R}$ against 0.081R of round-trip fees.

HOW MUCH DATA

23,886 trades, nine symbols, five calendar years, 1-hour

SMALLEST EFFECT IT COULD SPOT

not stated as one number

Do not fade a close outside the band on the hourly — but the work is being done by the 20-bar average, not the band, and what is left costs three times more to trade than it pays.

Bollinger versus Keltner, head to head

NO EFFECT FOUND

Would switching to the other common band type be better?

How it was tested. Two teams ran it blind to each other, each matching how often the two band types fire so both were scored on the same number of trades, with no width setting ever tuned against results.

RESULT

Bollinger $+1.333\text{pp}$, Keltner $+0.911\text{pp}$ — a gap of $+0.422\text{pp}$, which is $+0.0084\text{R}$, with a range of -0.008R to $+0.027\text{R}$, against a 1.27pp floor.

← too small to see | big enough to trust → 0.33× the floor

The fitting symbol read -1.74pp , the opposite sign, favouring Keltner. 14 of 15 cells sat below the floor and none cleared on both check groups with the same sign.

HOW MUCH DATA

23,886 Bollinger trades and 18,714 Keltner trades on 1-hour; 48 cells declared for one design, 18 for the other

SMALLEST EFFECT IT COULD SPOT

1.27pp ; the finest either design could resolve was 0.025R on 1-hour and 0.0145R on 3-minute

Keep the band type you already have — not because it won, but because the gap between them is three times smaller than the smallest effect the test could spot.

Middle line or band width

NO EFFECT FOUND

If the two band types differ at all, is it the centre average or the way the width is measured?

How it was tested. One change at a time — swap only the centre average and hold the width measure fixed, then swap only the width measure and hold the centre average fixed.

RESULT

Changing only the centre average gives $+0.057\text{pp} \pm 0.262$ against a 0.73pp floor — the tightest nothing in the whole study.



← too small to see | big enough to trust →

0.42× the floor

Changing only the width measure gives $+0.579\text{pp} \pm 0.498$ against a 1.39pp floor, and the fitting symbol flips sign at -2.22pp .

HOW MUCH DATA

1-hour, nine symbols; trade counts matched to within 0.6% on the centre-line swap

SMALLEST EFFECT IT COULD SPOT

0.73pp for the centre average, 1.39pp for the width measure

The centre average is not where anything lives, so arguing over a 20-bar simple versus a 21 exponential is arguing over nothing.

The band settings sweep

NO EFFECT FOUND

Would a different length or width setting work better than the shipped one?

How it was tested. All 20 combinations of two lengths by two width multipliers by five average types, every cell written down before running.

RESULT 19 of 20 combinations favour price continuing rather than snapping back.

This test's result and its floor were measured in different units, so the two cannot be placed on the same scale.

The shipped 20-bar / 2.0-width / simple-average setting sits mid-pack, and the single cell that leaned the other way on the fitting symbol reversed on both check groups.

HOW MUCH DATA

20 declared cells, nine symbols, 1-hour

Leave the length, the multiplier and the average type exactly where they are — the whole grid is one flat field.

The squeeze

CLAIM DID NOT HOLD

When the bands pinch together, does a real move follow in the direction they point?

How it was tested. Five separate rule families were fitted on one coin and then scored by different people on two coins the fitter never saw, after which the squeeze machinery was ripped out and replaced with "every 16 bars, just bet the direction rule".

RESULT

54.9% right where it was fitted, 50.28% on the two untouched coins. Zero of ten unseen cells beat the 52.5% bar set in advance, and two came out backwards.



← too small to see | big enough to trust →

0.11× the floor

Stripping the squeeze out entirely and using a plain timer scored 50.30% against the full rule's 51.90%. The detector fires on 8.6-9.1% of bars in all nine cells, near-identical across three coins and three timeframes.

HOW MUCH DATA

2,534 fitted events and 5,075 scored on unseen data; 19 agents

SMALLEST EFFECT IT COULD SPOT

52.5% was the bar set in advance – 2.5pp above a coin flip

The squeeze is an alarm clock, not a signal – a timer that ignores the bands completely does the same job.

Never fade the band in a trend

WE WITHDREW THIS

Is the standing rule "only fade the band in a range, never in a trend" actually supported?

How it was tested. The rule was traced back to the study it came from and re-run against the bands that are actually on the chart.

RESULT

The rule was measured on a different band type – a 20-bar exponential average with a 2x average-range width – not the bands on the chart, and it does not carry over.

This test's result and its floor were measured in different units, so the two cannot be placed on the same scale.

Its own numbers were inconsistent anyway: top of band while trending read +0.44 on 30-minute and +1.46 on 1-hour, while ranging read -1.20 and -0.19, and the plain top-of-band reading flipped sign across timeframes at +0.05, +1.18 and -0.63 average-range units.

HOW MUCH DATA

the original study's key ranging buckets held 13 and 19 observations, with samples reused, no control and no second coin

SMALLEST EFFECT IT COULD SPOT

not stated; ranging buckets of 13 and 19

This rule was being issued live every hour for weeks and was measured on the wrong indicator – it is gone, and nothing replaced it.

The biggest number favouring Keltner

CLAIM DID NOT HOLD

One reading in the band study was enormous. Was it real?

How it was tested. The single largest cell — the most extreme 1% of 24-minute bars — was checked against the matching 1-hour cell, split by era, and cross-checked against 3-minute data covering the same days.

RESULT

-10.16pp favouring Keltner on 24-minute, against +3.54pp favouring Bollinger in the matching 1-hour cell — the exact opposite.

This test's result and its floor were measured in different units, so the two cannot be placed on the same scale.

It collapses on an era split, -15.7 in the first half and -3.9 in the second, and is invisible in 3-minute data covering the same days. The second design found the mirror image, its two clearing cells pointing in opposite directions.

HOW MUCH DATA

15 declared readings; 3-minute cross-check covering the same 312 days

When you look at fifteen readings, the biggest one is usually the noise — which is why the bar gets set before looking, not after.

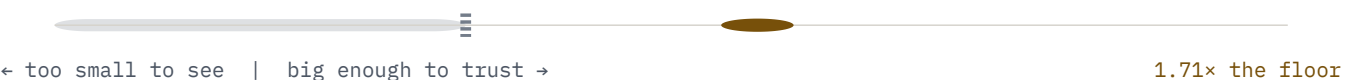
Does a squeeze mean a big move is coming?

WORKS AS CLAIMED

When the bands pinch in tight, is that a warning that a large move is about to start?

How it was tested. Every combination of band length and averaging method was tested on three coins, asking a magnitude question rather than a directional one: how often does the next stretch produce a move large enough to cover the fees?

RESULT 13.0 percentage points against a floor of 7.6.



This is the first result in this document that clears its floor and then repeats on both check coins — and it points the opposite way to the textbook. 115 of 180 combinations clear on ETH, 65 of 150 on ADA and 70 of 180 on DOGE, and EVERY SINGLE ONE OF THEM IS NEGATIVE: after a squeeze the moves that follow are SMALLER, not larger. The widest bands behave the other way, which is what a working gauge should do. On ETH three-minute bars a fee-sized move happens 53.5% of the time normally and about 40% in the quietest tenth of readings. ⚠ The important caveat: once compared against periods of equal ordinary volatility, only 24 to 44 percent of the effect survives, and on ADA none of it does — so the relationship is real but the band is mostly re-describing plain volatility rather than adding to it.

HOW MUCH DATA

200,000 one-minute bars per coin with no gaps, on ETH plus ADA and DOGE as checks, across 180 pre-declared combinations

SMALLEST EFFECT IT COULD SPOT

7.6 percentage points, widened to account for testing 180 combinations at once

A squeeze predicts QUIET, not a breakout — so it is a reason to stand aside, never a reason to get ready. And it says nothing about direction. A plain volatility reading does almost the same job, so no particular band setting has earned the name 'best'.

Fading a touch of the band edge

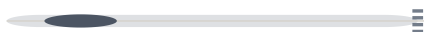
CLAIM DID NOT HOLD

When price reaches the edge of the band, is it stretched enough to be worth fading – and would reaching further out, at a wider setting, work better?

How it was tested. Upper and lower touches were never pooled: each was scored against a control taking the SAME side on bars that did not touch, so a market that simply drifted up over the sample cannot leak in as an edge. That pooling mistake is what produced the withdrawn 2.7-point result, so the design starts from it. Four widths were swept as a dose test rather than a search – if reaching further out really means more stretch, the effect has to GROW with the width, and a flat profile across the four is the signature of nothing. Entries were taken at the open of the bar after the touch, never on the touching bar itself.

RESULT

Fading loses in 135 of the 144 net readings, including all 48 on ETH, and the single best cell anywhere across the three coins reaches only 0.18 of its own floor.



← too small to see | big enough to trust →

0.18× the floor

The chance of merely TOUCHING a fee-sized target does rise after a lower-band touch – 127 of 144 readings are positive on that measure – but the same bars give back more than they gain, which is exactly what the net measure exists to catch. The dose profile is flat or random rather than growing: on three-minute ETH the four widths read -0.034, -0.031, -0.033 and -0.024.

HOW MUCH DATA

200,000 one-minute bars per coin, giving 66,666 three-minute and 13,333 fifteen-minute bars, on ETH plus ADA and DOGE as checks; 96 cells declared per coin, 288 in all

SMALLEST EFFECT IT COULD SPOT

0.177% of price for the best-case cell; the family bar was widened to account for 96 cells being tested at once on each coin

Do not fade a band touch. No width setting rescues it, which is why the shipped 1.5 stays – not because it won, but because nothing beat it. And note the shape of the trap: a rising hit rate next to a falling net is what it looks like when a rule is only picking out volatile bars.

Measuring the band on a slower chart than you trade

WORKS AS CLAIMED

Achilles SS measures its band on the 15-minute chart and reads it on a 3-minute one. Is that better than measuring it on the 3-minute chart directly, and is the band doing the work at all?

How it was tested. The decision was held identical for all three contenders — standing on a 3-minute bar, will the next few bars contain a move big enough to cover the fees? — and only the measurement changed: band on 3m, band on 15m, or a plain average-range reading on 3m. The 15-minute bars were built by grouping five 3-minute bars so the two grids cannot drift apart, and the slow reading is deliberately delayed to the last CLOSED 15-minute bar. Reading the bar still forming would hand the test up to twelve minutes of the future, which is the same mistake that manufactured a result earlier the same day.

RESULT

The 15-minute band separates quiet from active about twice as strongly as the 3-minute one, on all three coins: mean separation 18.1 against 9.2 points on ETH, 5.0 against 2.7 on ADA, 9.3

← too small to see | big enough to trust → 1.45× the floor

against 6.2 on DOGE. On ETH all 12 of its cells clear, with a best of 20.7 points against a floor of 14.3. But the plain average-range reading on 3m lands BETWEEN the two at 12.6 points, so the band itself is not the active ingredient — the slower measurement window is.

HOW MUCH DATA

200,000 one-minute bars per coin on ETH, ADA and DOGE; 36 cells declared per coin

SMALLEST EFFECT IT COULD SPOT

14.3 percentage points for the best cell, widened for 36 cells tested at once

The shipped setting is the right one, and for a reason worth knowing: what helps is measuring volatility over a longer window than the one you are trading, not anything about bands. This is the same quiet-predicts-quiet finding as the squeeze test above, so it is not a second independent result — and like that one it is about the SIZE of the next move, never the direction.

The Confluence Scorecard

The Confluence Scorecard is a 15-part checklist built into the indicator. Every bar it adds up bull and bear votes, weighting each part somewhere between 2 and 14 points out of 100, and prints a score meant to tell you which way the market is leaning. It was once the project's only winning result — a 2.7-point edge on fresh data — until the comparison

behind that number was found to be broken; corrected, the edge is about a third of a point, the weights turn out to carry no information, and the fifteen parts behave like four or five.

The 2.7-point edge, withdrawn

WE WITHDREW THIS

Does the 15-part score tell you which way price is about to go?

How it was tested. The card was re-scored against a like-for-like benchmark that holds its own long/short mix fixed, because the original had compared a signal that trades both ways against simply buying and holding on a sample that drifted down.

RESULT

Originally +2.7pp (+1.49pp and +1.76pp on the two check groups). Corrected: +0.31pp and +0.37pp, pooled +0.34pp. Individual symbols run from -0.80pp to +1.66pp.



← too small to see | big enough to trust →

0.17× the floor

HOW MUCH DATA

32,809 trades across eight check symbols, 1-hour bars, 4.5 years

SMALLEST EFFECT IT COULD SPOT

2 percentage points, the size fixed in advance as worth having

Never quote the 2.7 figure again; the card's real reading is a third of a point, which is nothing you can trade.

Best in ranges and downtrends, withdrawn

WE WITHDREW THIS

Is the card worth more when the market is falling or going sideways?

How it was tested. One trade at a time, split by market phase, scored first against buy-and-hold and then against a benchmark that keeps the card's own long/short mix fixed.

RESULT Originally +0.47pp in uptrends, +2.04pp in ranges, +2.66pp in downtrends.



← too small to see | big enough to trust →

0.41× the floor

Corrected, downtrends turn negative on both check groups at -0.24pp and -0.81pp, ranges fall to +0.99pp and +0.04pp, and uptrends read -0.08pp then +2.41pp.

HOW MUCH DATA

eight check symbols, 1-hour bars, 4.5 years

SMALLEST EFFECT IT COULD SPOT

2 percentage points, set before the test

The phases where the card looked best are exactly the phases where it leans short — it was being paid for the lean, not for the timing.

The card with a real stop and target

NO EFFECT FOUND

Once you trade the card's calls with a real stop, a real target and fees, does it make money?

How it was tested. The calls were run through the trade harness at a 1 ATR stop for 1R and a 3 ATR stop for 3R, counted first on every qualifying bar and then one trade at a time.

RESULT

Counting every bar: -0.0233R at 1 ATR/1R and +0.0652R at 3 ATR/3R. One trade at a time: -0.0341R and +0.0019R, break-even.

 ← too small to see | big enough to trust → 0.02× the floor

The overlapping count inflated the result thirtyfold and made its error bars five times too small.

HOW MUCH DATA

103,305 overlapping bars against 3,702 one-trade-at-a-time trades

SMALLEST EFFECT IT COULD SPOT

0.080R

It breaks even before fees are even in the picture, and any bar-by-bar result should be treated as inflated until it is re-run one trade at a time.

Do the weights do anything

NO EFFECT FOUND

The card weights its parts from 2 to 14 points. Does the weighting change the answer?

How it was tested. The same card re-scored with all fifteen parts weighted equally, picking the same number of signals as the shipped version.

RESULT

Shipped weights give +0.31pp and +0.37pp; equal weights give +0.09pp and +0.56pp. The gap between the two is 0.22pp one way on the first check group and 0.19pp the other way on the second.

 ← too small to see | big enough to trust → 0.11× the floor

HOW MUCH DATA

the same 32,809-trade universe, top 30% of readings

SMALLEST EFFECT IT COULD SPOT

2 percentage points

Stop tuning the weights — both versions read zero, so there is nothing to tune toward.

Drop one of the fifteen parts

NO EFFECT FOUND

Is one bad part dragging the other fourteen down?

How it was tested. The card was re-summed fifteen times, each time with a different part removed; a removal had to beat the full card by 2 points on both check groups to count.

RESULT

Nothing qualifies and nothing comes close. The best candidate, dropping Macro-S (weight 8), gives +0.22pp and +0.93pp.



← too small to see | big enough to trust →

0.47× the floor

Removing the two heaviest parts, SR VWAP and Trend, hurts on both groups: -0.49/-0.24 and -0.10/-0.32.

HOW MUCH DATA

the same 32,809-trade universe, both check groups

SMALLEST EFFECT IT COULD SPOT

2 percentage points on both check groups

There is no part to blame and no part to cut — the card is not one broken row away from working.

Fifteen parts, how many real opinions

DESCRIBES, CANNOT PREDICT

A 15-part score sounds like fifteen opinions agreeing. How many is it really?

How it was tested. A version of the indicator that publishes every part separately was dumped off the live chart, and how closely the parts move together was measured.

RESULT

The card behaves like 3.6 independent votes on 15-minute and 4.7 on 1-hour, against a weight-implied maximum of 6.8 and 7.2 — 53% and 66% of the breadth it claims.

This test's result and its floor were measured in different units, so the two cannot be placed on the same scale.

The three heaviest parts hold 40 of the 100 points and move together at +0.52 to +0.73 (DI against Trend +0.73 and +0.61). The part holding the fourth-heaviest weight, 7 points, votes on only 2.4-2.6% of bars and contributes 0.2 of 100. Two parts agreed on 100% and 97.3% of bars, which is a fixed offset rather than a vote.

HOW MUCH DATA

703 bars each of 15-minute and 1-hour

A high score is not fifteen things agreeing; it is four or five things said several ways, so read it as less confirmation than it looks like.

Does the offline copy match the live card

WORKS AS CLAIMED

Is the copy used for all this testing really the same card that is on the screen?

How it was tested. All fifteen parts were rebuilt in Python by three modules working in parallel and compared bar by bar against dumps of the live indicator's own per-part output.

RESULT

All fifteen parts reproduce bar for bar. The assembled net score is 99.90% exact, the seven misses all being a file's final still-forming bar.

This test's result and its floor were measured in different units, so the two cannot be placed on the same scale.

A real bug was found in the trend-strength code along the way, affecting 11 bars of 13,398 on coins with coarse price steps.

HOW MUCH DATA

13,398 scored bars across nine symbols and two timeframes; 6,745 bars for the assembled score

SMALLEST EFFECT IT COULD SPOT

not stated - this is a correctness check

Everything else measured here is about the real card, not a rough imitation of it.

The score itself, on the card you actually run

NO EFFECT FOUND

Forget the individual parts – does the number the card prints at the top tell me anything about where price goes next?

How it was tested. The whole card was rebuilt offline and checked against the live one bar by bar, then every bar was sorted by its score and the best fifth compared against the worst fifth – and the same comparison was run against a one-line stand-in, price against its 200-bar average, to see how much of any difference was just trend.

RESULT

3.89 percentage points on ETH against a floor of 4.36 – and the one-line stand-in reproduced 94% of it.



← too small to see | big enough to trust →

0.89× the floor

Nothing cleared the bar on any of the three coins: ETH 3.89, BTC 3.12, SOL 3.37, all inside their own floors. [△](#) It took three escalating checks to reach that answer, and the first two both said "positive". Using the card's own ± 40 thresholds gave lopsided groups and made the difference look bigger than it was; accounting for the fact that overlapping trades share most of their outcome shrank it further; and finally comparing equally-sized groups against the dumb stand-in showed almost all of what remained was simply the trend. Every earlier figure for this card is dead: the offline copy it was measured with described a 15-part version summing to 100, and the live card has 18 parts summing to 122, so the score differs on 94.6% of bars.

HOW MUCH DATA

ETH plus BTC and SOL as checks, on a card of 18 parts; the offline copy matched the live one on 276 of 276 consecutive bars across 828 separate numbers

SMALLEST EFFECT IT COULD SPOT

4.36 percentage points

The card is a description of the trend, not a forecast of it. Price against its 200-bar average does almost the same job in one line – so read the score as a summary of what has already happened, never as a reason to click.

Costs and trade geometry

This group is about the money a trade loses before you are right or wrong about direction: exchange fees, and how the width of your stop and the size of your target change what you keep. It is the one corner of the project where something clearly survived testing, but what survived is a cost saving, not a way to predict direction. A round trip costs roughly 0.03 to 0.05R, which is larger than the biggest effect this project has ever measured, and the

popular fixes for it — a tighter stop, a fixed dollar volatility cutoff, banking half early — all made things worse or were withdrawn.

Tighter stops cost more in fees

WORKS AS CLAIMED

If I pull my stop in closer, do I pay less in fees?

How it was tested. Every entry was traded both long and short with the same stop and target and the two averaged, so market drift cancels out exactly, then the whole thing was repeated on a shuffled price tape where no trend effect can exist.

RESULT

At a 1R target the cost runs -0.0958R, -0.0480R, -0.0320R, -0.0240R and -0.0160R as the stop widens from 0.5 to 1.0, 1.5, 2.0 and 3.0 ATR - almost exactly one divided by the stop distance.

This test's result and its floor were measured in different units, so the two cannot be placed on the same scale.

Widening from 1 ATR to 3 ATR saves +0.0333R per trade on the real tape and +0.0332R on the shuffled tape, the same number. The harness matched the fee-only line to 4 decimal places at every stop width.

HOW MUCH DATA

nine symbols on 1-hour bars; the original grid used seven symbols and 3,000 entries each

SMALLEST EFFECT IT COULD SPOT

not applicable - this is arithmetic, matched to 4 decimal places

A 0.5 ATR stop costs six times what a 3 ATR stop costs for the identical dollars at risk, because halving the stop doubles your position size and fees are charged on the position, not on the risk.

What one round trip costs you

DESCRIBES, CANNOT PREDICT

Before I am right or wrong about anything, what does a single trade cost me?

How it was tested. Measured straight off the random-entry comparison arm, which loses money for one reason only: fees.

RESULT About 0.03 to 0.05R per trade.

This test's result and its floor were measured in different units, so the two cannot be placed on the same scale.

HOW MUCH DATA

18,243 trades at a 2 ATR risk cap on the cheapest fee tier

Any idea has to clear 0.03 to 0.05R before it is worth taking, and the largest effect this project has ever measured is smaller than that.

Fee share of risk on each chart

DESCRIBES, CANNOT PREDICT

On each of my charts, how much of the money I am risking goes to the exchange?

How it was tested. Worked the fee out as a share of risk - fee rate times price, divided by twice the ATR, since the method risks about two ATR - then ran it at each timeframe's current ATR and checked the formula reproduced every row of the original fee table.

RESULT

At the 0.060% losing-trade round trip: 4H (ATR 40.99) 1.84%; 1H (ATR 24.37) 3.10%; 24M (ATR 17.24) 4.38%; 3M (ATR 5.41) 13.97%. A winning trade at 0.030% halves every figure.

This test's result and its floor were measured in different units, so the two cannot be placed on the same scale.

At a 0.12% round trip the same formula gives ATR 25 -> 5%, ATR 12 -> 9-10%, ATR 7.50 -> 15%, ATR 5 -> 23%, ATR 3 -> 38%.

HOW MUCH DATA

4 timeframes at one price snapshot (ETH 2,519.40); formula cross-checked against all 5 rows of the source fee table

SMALLEST EFFECT IT COULD SPOT

not applicable - this is arithmetic, not a measurement

Fees are a rounding error on the 4-hour and nearly a seventh of your risk on the 3-minute, so the quieter the chart the bigger the exchange's cut of the same trade.

The do-not-bother floor is a percentage

WE WITHDREW THIS

How quiet does the market have to get before a trade is not worth taking?

How it was tested. Three fixed dollar thresholds had been written down at different times and each treated as a constant; re-deriving the formula showed price sits on top of the fraction, so the figure has to move with the price of ETH.

RESULT

\$7.50, \$5.12 and \$3.76 turned out to be the same quantity measured at three different prices.

This test's result and its floor were measured in different units, so the two cannot be placed on the same scale.

The floor is 0.20% of price: \$3.76 at ETH 1,880 but \$5.04 at ETH 2,519.40, so quoting \$3.76 today understates it by about a third. The 15% cut-off the floor is solved from was inherited convention and was never tested, and the fee gate built on it was about three times stricter than a limit-order trader actually faces (23% assumed, versus about 15% limit-in/market-out and about 8% limit both sides at ATR 4.86). It was deleted as a rule on 2026-08-06.

HOW MUCH DATA

3 previously recorded dollar figures, re-derived at current price

SMALLEST EFFECT IT COULD SPOT

not applicable - this is arithmetic, not a measurement

Never skip a setup because of a fixed dollar volatility figure: the real threshold is 0.20% of price and moves as price moves, and the cut-off behind it was a convention nobody ever measured.

Do wide targets collect extra?

WE WITHDREW THIS

Do moves that get going keep running, so that a bigger target picks up more than a coin flip would pay?

How it was tested. The same both-ways grid, compared against what a coin-flip market would pay after fees, then re-priced once trades sharing the same market move stopped being counted as separate ones, and re-checked on two separate groups of symbols.

RESULT

Originally +0.0238R at a 3 ATR stop and 3R target, against a floor of 0.0676R - the smallest effect that test could spot.



← too small to see | big enough to trust →

0.46× the floor

Re-priced, the range runs about -0.014R to +0.064R and includes zero. The estimate later rises to +0.0312R with 8 of 9 symbols leaning positive, but it fails on both checking groups, it lives disproportionately in one calendar year (2025), and the only slice sharp enough to see the target effect reads negative. That cell's actual net expectancy is +0.0051R.

HOW MUCH DATA

344,763 trades across nine symbols on the dense re-run; 3,702 trades sharing no bars in the earlier version

SMALLEST EFFECT IT COULD SPOT

0.0676R originally; 0.0535R on 1-hour; 0.0308R on the 3-minute cut

Keep wide stops for the fee saving, not because trends were shown to carry - the carrying-on half of the story is the part that died.

Midpoint stop versus far-edge stop

CLAIM DID NOT HOLD

For an order block trade, should my stop sit in the middle of the zone or past its far edge?

How it was tested. Identical entry and identical target on every trade with only the stop moved, then the answer was required to hold for longs and shorts and for the first and second half of the sample.

RESULT

Midpoint stop: 29% win, $-0.091R$ ($n=62$). Stop 1 ATR beyond the far edge: 68% win, $+0.044R$ ($n=59$).

This test's result and its floor were measured in different units, so the two cannot be placed on the same scale.

In 22 of 62 cases the midpoint stop was taken out by a move the wider stop would have survived to reach target, and zero cases ran the other way. Sweeping the multiple, the sign only holds steady across every split from 1.5x ATR (76% win, $+0.087R$) through 1.75x (78%, $+0.081R$) to 2.0x (80%, $+0.077R$); 1.0x ($+0.044R$) and 1.25x ($+0.053R$) both flip sign.

HOW MUCH DATA

65 zones, 62 of them retested, over 360 hourly bars across 15 days

SMALLEST EFFECT IT COULD SPOT

not stated; 62 trades over 15 days on one timeframe

Put the stop past the far edge of the zone rather than at its midpoint - the 22-to-0 count never inverted - but 15 days of data cannot pin down the exact multiple beyond a rough 1.5x to 2x ATR band.

Taking half off at 0.5R

CLAIM DID NOT HOLD

Does banking half the position early and pulling the stop to breakeven make me more money?

How it was tested. The same trades run four different ways, with the result then broken down into win rate, average win and average loss.

RESULT

Plain: 36.5% win, $+0.035R$, average win $+1.94R$, average loss $-1.06R$. All out at 1R: 52.3% win, $-0.015R$.

This test's result and its floor were measured in different units, so the two cannot be placed on the same scale.

Half off at 0.5R plus a breakeven stop: 67.0% win, $-0.032R$, with the average win collapsing to $+0.47R$ while the average loss does not move at all. Reproduced from win rate times average win and loss to four decimal places.

HOW MUCH DATA

a 360,000-bar panel across nine symbols

SMALLEST EFFECT IT COULD SPOT

not applicable - this is a breakdown of the same trades

Taking half off nearly doubles your win rate and turns a small profit into a loss - it relabels losers as winners instead of making the trades better.

Calls Made In Advance

The idea is simple: write the trade down before it happens - the trigger price, the target, the give-up level, the exchange and a deadline - then score it either way once the clock runs out. Six such calls were made between 25 and 29 August, plus three zones drawn by hand with the give-up rule fixed at the moment of drawing. Four of the six calls passed, but two of those wins were handed over by the shape of the trade rather than the idea, the three hand-drawn zones went nought for three, and the one flattering forward record from earlier collapsed once it turned out no pass rule had ever been set before the outcome.

Six calls made in advance

COULD NOT TELL

If I write the trade down before it happens - trigger, target, give-up level, deadline - how often does the call come good?

How it was tested. Six calls were fixed in writing with a trigger price, a target, a give-up level, the exchange and a deadline, then scored on 24-minute closing prices, counting only bars strictly after the trigger bar.

RESULT

4 PASS, 1 FAIL, 1 EXPIRED. Two of the four passes (TEST 2 and TEST 4) were nearly free on their own stated geometry, so on evidence rather than tally the run produced exactly 1

This test's result and its floor were measured in different units, so the two cannot be placed on the same scale.

properly-shaped pass out of 6.

HOW MUCH DATA

6 pre-registered calls, 2026-08-25 to 2026-08-29, ETHUSDC.P on Hyperliquid

SMALLEST EFFECT IT COULD SPOT

not stated as an effect size; the log's own target for a meaningful record is roughly 90 calls

Four out of six reads like a system that works; the honest count is one clean result out of six, which tells you nothing yet.

The one properly built call

COULD NOT TELL

With the target and the give-up level set at sensible distances apart, does the break actually pay?

How it was tested. Named 2026-08-26 with the geometry stated first - trigger a 24-minute close above 2514.90, target 2534.00 (+18.00), give-up 2505.50 (-10.50), 1 to 1.71, break-even 36.8%, deadline 2026-08-28 23:00 UTC - and checked that the target had not already been touched when the trigger fired.

RESULT

PASS - fired at close 2515.60, target 2534.00 hit at 08:24 on a high of 2545.30, worth +18.40. The give-up was never approached (lowest low after the trigger 2516.10).

This test's result and its floor were measured in different units, so the two cannot be placed on the same scale.

The bar that did it ran 29.20 points on 3.23x average volume; the trigger bar itself ran 1.77x.

HOW MUCH DATA

1 call; fired 2026-08-27 08:00, target hit 24 minutes later

The one call out of six that was built properly, and it is still a single trade decided by one 29-point bar.

Two passes that were nearly free

COULD NOT TELL

When a call passes, was there actually anything at risk?

How it was tested. Two of the six passing calls were re-measured afterwards: how far the target already sat when the trigger fired, and what the risk-to-reward really was at the price the trigger actually filled at.

RESULT

TEST 2 risked 41.60 points to make 10.40 - 1 to 0.25, needing an 80.0% win rate just to break even - and its target was already only 4.20 points away when the trigger fired.

This test's result and its floor were measured in different units, so the two cannot be placed on the same scale.

TEST 4 declared 1 to 1.18 and a 45.9% break-even, but the trigger bar's own low of 2483.40 was already 4.90 points through the target, and the close-basis fill landed 14 points past the named level, making the real geometry 1 to 0.38 and the real break-even 72.6%.

HOW MUCH DATA

2 of the 6 pre-registered calls (TEST 2 and TEST 4)

Two of the four wins were handed over by the shape of the trade, not the idea - measure the risk-to-reward at the fill, not at the level you named.

Both range edges named a day ahead

COULD NOT TELL

If you name both edges of the range a day in advance, does price actually close through either one?

How it was tested. Named 2026-08-25 23:20 UTC - up side a 24-minute close above 2469.00 (target 2483.50), down side a close below 2437.80 (target 2419.70), deadline 2026-08-26 15:20 UTC, closing prices only, so a wick through the level does not count.

RESULT

EXPIRED, neither side fired. Best close up 2468.30 - short by 0.70. Best close down 2439.60 - short by 1.80.

This test's result and its floor were measured in different units, so the two cannot be placed on the same scale.

Both edges were wicked through (2474.40 and 2431.60) across a 42.80-point range and neither closed through.

HOW MUCH DATA

39 closed 24-minute bars inside the 40-bar window

Whether you judge a level on closes or on wicks changed the answer more than the market did - on wicks this same call would have fired both ways and been counted twice.

The same call, two exchanges

COULD NOT TELL

Would my call have scored the same if I had used a different exchange's prices?

How it was tested. The first named-level call - a 24-minute close below 2477.60, target 2453.40, give-up 2488.20, 40-bar limit, all fixed in public at 09:00 UTC on 2026-08-25 - was scored on Hyperliquid as written, then re-scored on Binance prices over the identical window.

RESULT

PASS on Hyperliquid - trigger filled 09:36 at 2473.80, target 2453.40 reached 13:12, lowest price after the trigger 2437.50, highest 2485.60, so the 2488.20 give-up was never reached.

This test's result and its floor were measured in different units, so the two cannot be placed on the same scale.

FAIL on Binance - it printed 2489.00 three minutes after the trigger, clearing the give-up by 0.80. A 3.40-point gap between venues flipped the answer.

HOW MUCH DATA

1 call scored twice; resolved 11 bars into a 40-bar window

SMALLEST EFFECT IT COULD SPOT

not stated as a number; the log said roughly 90 such calls would be needed to show a large effect

Name the exchange before the call - a few points of difference between venues can turn the same trade from a win into a loss.

Zones drawn by hand, rule fixed first

CLAIM DID NOT HOLD

When I draw a support or resistance zone myself, does it hold?

How it was tested. Three order blocks drawn on the live chart, each with its give-up rule - a body close outside the zone - stated at the moment of drawing so it could not be moved afterwards, then left alone and scored when price arrived.

RESULT

3 drawn, 3 failed, 0 held. The 2497.70-2506.90 zone broke on its first touch (body close 2493.50, 4.20 below the base).

This test's result and its floor were measured in different units, so the two cannot be placed on the same scale.

The 2496.20-2503.30 zone broke within two cycles (close 2508.60, 5.30 above the top).

The 2483.50-2495.80 zone survived four tests including an 18-point wick and a close 1.20 above its base, then died 96 minutes later on a close of 2471.20.

HOW MUCH DATA

3 zones drawn, 2026-08-27 to 2026-08-29

On the only three zones scored under a rule fixed before the fact, hand-drawn levels went nought for three - and the cleanest-looking one broke fastest.

The forward record that was withdrawn

WE WITHDREW THIS

The level-plus-volume-plus-structure checklist had a 6-out-of-8 record on live breaks - was that real?

How it was tested. The checklist was graded on live breaks over roughly 20 monitoring cycles with a running record of correct and incorrect calls, then the record itself was audited for whether any pass rule had been written down before the outcomes existed.

RESULT

The stated record was 6 correct declines, 1 correct positive, 1 failed positive - WITHDRAWN as unverified on 2026-08-05.

This test's result and its floor were measured in different units, so the two cannot be placed on the same scale.

No success rule was ever set beforehand, so the time horizon and the threshold for each 'correct decline' were chosen once the outcome was already known.

HOW MUCH DATA

8 graded instances

If you decide after the move what counts as being right, you will be right most of the time - which is exactly why the trigger, target and deadline have to be written down first.

Where we got it wrong

This project keeps a list of its own mistakes. Every entry below was once written down as a finding and then failed a check run by the same people who produced it — a signal scored

against the wrong yardstick, a confirmation that could not be read until after the trade was gone, a run of sweeps counted three times over, a record graded once the outcome was already known. The first entry matters most: the only positive result the project ever had turned out to be an accident of the comparison, and it was caught days before it went into print.

The +2.7pp edge that was not there

WE WITHDREW THIS

Was the one number in this project that said something actually real?

How it was tested. The card leans short and the test window drifted downwards, so scoring it against simply buying and holding paid it for its mix of longs and shorts rather than its timing; it was re-scored against a comparison that holds that mix fixed and tests only the timing.

RESULT

Originally reported as +2.7pp. Corrected: +0.31pp on the first check group and +0.37pp on the second, pooled +0.34pp, against a bar of +2pp set before the test.



Individual symbols run from -0.80pp to +1.66pp. The phase pattern that made it look strongest in ranges and downtrends was the mistake itself: corrected, downtrends read -0.24pp and -0.81pp.

HOW MUCH DATA	SMALLEST EFFECT IT COULD SPOT
32,809 trades across eight check symbols, 1-hour bars, 4.5 years; the offline copy matches the live card on 13,398 bars	+2pp, set before the test

Never quote the +2.7pp figure again — a signal that trades both ways has to be scored against something that also trades both ways, or it collects free points for the market's drift.

Our tests were blinder than we said

WE WITHDREW THIS

When a test here says it found nothing, how small a thing could it really have spotted?

How it was tested. The original check wobbled a fake reaction by only 0.03 ATR inside a 0.10 ATR counting band, so every fake landed dead centre and looked easy to detect; it was redone using the real height of an actual order block.

RESULT

A reaction inside a median-height block can sit 0.40 ATR away from the quoted line, 13 times the wobble originally used.



← too small to see | big enough to trust →

0.13× the floor

Recalibrated, the smallest detectable effect moves from 1.03% to 4.02% — from about 1 reaction in 100 to about 1 in 25, roughly 0.18R per trade. Fees are 0.035R and the largest effect the project ever measured was +0.024R.

HOW MUCH DATA

22,687 blocks, median height 0.800 ATR, 90th percentile 1.121 ATR

SMALLEST EFFECT IT COULD SPOT

about 1 reaction in 25, or 0.18R per trade

Read every 'nothing found' here as 'no large effect' — these tests could not have seen an edge the size of the biggest one this project ever measured.

A confirmation you cannot read in time

WE WITHDREW THIS

The volume rule says the hour above must also be heavy — can you actually know that at the moment you would press the button?

How it was tested. Plain arithmetic on how bars nest inside each other, plus measuring how much of the confirming hour's volume was the signal bar's own volume.

RESULT

No. A 1-hour bar contains the 24-minute bar that fires the signal, so when the signal closes its parent hour is still forming.



← too small to see | big enough to trust →

0.35× the floor

On the two big events the signal bar was 51,621 of 97,579 (53%) and 59,690 of 110,159 (54%) of the whole hour's volume — over half the confirmation is the same trades counted twice. Tested using only what was visible at the time, confirmed minus partial is -0.855 ATR against a detection floor of 2.449 ATR, and the usable version fires 17 times in 133 days.

HOW MUCH DATA

Arithmetic plus the two largest live events of 2026-08-28; the measured version ran on 8,000 bars and 237 separate events

SMALLEST EFFECT IT COULD SPOT

2.449 ATR

You cannot read a confirming hourly volume figure until the hour has closed, and by then the entry is long gone — the most trusted rule in the framework had never been tested the way it is used.

The resting order that invented an edge

CLAIM DID NOT HOLD

If I test a fib the way I would actually trade it – an order sitting at the level waiting to be filled – does it work?

How it was tested. The identical test was re-run with entry taken at the level, as a resting order would fill, instead of at the close of the bar that touched it.

RESULT

+2.5pp at the 0.500 level, +7.6pp at 0.786 and +15.5pp at 0.95 – bigger the deeper the level, with confidence readings up to 25.

This test's result and its floor were measured in different units, so the two cannot be placed on the same scale.

It is entirely construction: a bar that reaches a level closes on the favourable side of it 57-58% of the time, and at deep levels the fact that the move is still going guarantees it. This would have been the eleventh false positive.

HOW MUCH DATA

The same nine-symbol panel

Any backtest that fills a resting order at a level is quietly picking the moves that carried on – the fill does the selecting for you, so test at the close of the touch bar instead.

A fake level placed at the wrong distance

WE WITHDREW THIS

Does price get pulled back to an untouched volume shelf more than to any other price?

How it was tested. The first fake comparison level was built from the day's open and sat at a different distance from price, so it was harder to reach for reasons that had nothing to do with being a real level; it was rebuilt at a matching distance on the same side.

RESULT The first attempt read +17.3 / +15.2 / +18.1pp and was wrong.

This test's result and its floor were measured in different units, so the two cannot be placed on the same scale.

Corrected, the untouched point of control was reached 88.4 / 88.1 / 87.5% of the time against 88.2 / 88.1 / 87.8% for the matched fake – a difference of +0.2 / +0.0 / -0.3pp, with average distances matching to two decimal places.

HOW MUCH DATA

3 symbols on 1-hour bars, 240-bar horizon
(about ten days)

SMALLEST EFFECT IT COULD SPOT

not stated in the same units

Price reaches an untouched volume shelf 88% of the time within ten days, and it reaches any other price at that same distance just as often – it is a price, not a magnet.

Thirty logged sweeps that were really sixteen

DESCRIBES, CANNOT PREDICT

How many real, separate swing-failure observations does the forward log actually hold?

How it was tested. Every row of the log was checked for exact duplicates and for repeated pokes at the same price shelf inside a single session.

RESULT

3 exact duplicates – one entry appears three times with an identical timestamp, another twice – and 14 rows collapse into their first because they are repeat sweeps of the same shelf in one

This test's result and its floor were measured in different units, so the two cannot be placed on the same scale.

session. Nine separate shelves were each swept 2-3 times. The 30 raw rows become 16 independent observations against a stated target of about 30; the count has since grown to 21.

HOW MUCH DATA

Every row logged 2026-08-26 to 2026-08-28, about 30 raw rows

SMALLEST EFFECT IT COULD SPOT

not applicable - a count

Poking the same shelf three times in one session is one observation, not three – count shelves, not rows, or the sample inflates and manufactures a result out of nothing.

A record graded after the outcome

WE WITHDREW THIS

Did the level-plus-volume-plus-structure checklist really call breaks correctly six times out of eight?

How it was tested. The claimed live record was re-examined for whether a rule saying what counts as a correct call had been written down before the calls were graded.

RESULT The stated record was 6 correct declines, 1 correct call and 1 failed call.

This test's result and its floor were measured in different units, so the two cannot be placed on the same scale.

Withdrawn as unverified on 2026-08-05: no success rule existed in advance, so both the time horizon and the threshold were chosen once the outcome was already known.

HOW MUCH DATA

8 graded instances over roughly 20 monitoring cycles

Write down what counts as a win before the move happens – grade afterwards and you will be right almost every time, on paper only.

Does the indicator do what it says

Every tool on the chart makes a promise in its name and its manual: this cloud is a money-flow reading, this label marks a market phase, this dot sits on a real swing high. These tests set aside whether any of it predicts price and ask a much narrower question – does the code actually compute the thing written on the label? Mostly yes: the core features rebuild exactly, and the phase labels never rewrite history to look clever. But three features were

not what their names said, including a "money flow" cloud with no volume in it at all and an eight-line ribbon that turned out to be one line.

Is anything in the indicator broken?

WORKS AS CLAIMED

Does every reading on my chart actually compute what its label says it computes?

How it was tested. Four features were rebuilt in plain code from their written formulas and compared value-by-value against the live chart, with the checking rules fixed in writing before any test ran.

RESULT

All four pass. The money-flow replica matches the live plot to within 3.6e-14, and the pressure band to 5.2e-14.

This test's result and its floor were measured in different units, so the two cannot be placed on the same scale.

Divergence markers: 1,004 comparisons, zero false fires and zero misses, all 5 events matched exactly. The scorecard code is byte-identical in both indicators, with 17 bull and 17 bear parts all correctly paired and none left unpaired. Two things do mislead, though: on the hourly the money-flow pressure band is flat on 36.8% of bars and simply retraces the outer cloud on another 19.2%, so it says something new on only 44.0%; and the divergence row stays lit for 10 bars after one event, so the hidden card counts each diamond 9.86 bars for every one you can see. The Dot row lights on 19.89% of all bars (19.76-20.06% across six series).

HOW MUCH DATA	SMALLEST EFFECT IT COULD SPOT
298,200 bars across 3 symbols and 2 timeframes for the money-flow check; 1,004 bar-by-bar comparisons for the divergence markers; 15,576 characters of shared scorecard code compared byte for byte	not applicable - correctness check, no edge was measured

Nothing is broken, but the hidden scorecard and the chart in front of you do not always tell the same story, and the pressure band says nothing new on more than half of all bars.

Do the phase labels rewrite history?

WORKS AS CLAIMED

Does the market-phase label only name a range after price has genuinely left it, or does it quietly redraw the past so it looks like it knew?

How it was tested. The phase rules were replayed in plain code from the chart's own bars and compared against what the indicator actually drew, across the whole timeframe stack.

RESULT

554 of 554 finished ranges were named only after a real close outside a bracket that was already on screen.

This test's result and its floor were measured in different units, so the two cannot be placed on the same scale.

Price alignment error 0.0000 on every timeframe, and the phases tile the chart with no gaps and no overlaps. Switching to smoothed candles changes nothing (identical to $1e-9$), and the labels read the same on the 4H, 24M and 3M charts when anchored to the 1-hour (identical to $1e-8$). Against the live chart the phase names matched 5 of 5, in order.

HOW MUCH DATA

about 39,000 bars - 4H 3,114 / 1H 12,453 / 24M 10,515 / 3M 13,087

SMALLEST EFFECT IT COULD SPOT

not applicable - correctness check; this checks the names and their order, not the exact bar each phase begins on

What you saw live is what you see when you scroll back later, which is more than most phase tools can say - though drawing it honestly is not the same as it being worth trading.

Does the offline copy match the live card?

WORKS AS CLAIMED

When the scorecard is tested over years of history, is it the same card that is actually on my screen?

How it was tested. All 15 parts of the card were rebuilt in plain code and compared bar by bar against 18 dumps of the real card's own output pulled off the live chart.

RESULT

All 15 parts reproduce the live card bar for bar. The assembled score is 99.90% exact over 6,745 bars, and the 7 misses are each file's final still-forming bar.

This test's result and its floor were measured in different units, so the two cannot be placed on the same scale.

A real bug surfaced on the way: rounding dust of about $1e-17$ made two mathematically equal one-tick moves compare as unequal, flipping the trend-direction reading on 11 of 13,398 bars (0.15%), with zero effect on BTC, ETH or BNB.

HOW MUCH DATA

13,398 scored bars across nine symbols and two timeframes; 6,745 bars for the assembled score

SMALLEST EFFECT IT COULD SPOT

not applicable - correctness check, no edge was measured

The live chart only holds about 1,000 bars while the questions needed 40,000, so this copy is what made every later scorecard test possible - and it can be trusted.

Do the levels sit where they claim?

WORKS AS CLAIMED

Is every liquidity level drawn on my chart really on a swing high or low, or are some of them just lines?

How it was tested. Every drawn level was checked against the actual candle data over the full history, with the swing count per 1,000 bars compared across five timeframes and the score checked against the running median volume.

RESULT

3,809 of 3,809 sit on a real candle extreme, and 3,809 of 3,809 are the extreme over the full 15-bar window, with zero swings skipped.

This test's result and its floor were measured in different units, so the two cannot be placed on the same scale.

Swings per 1,000 bars at the same setting: 3m 96.6, 15m 94.8, 30m 94.8, 1h 95.2, 4h 92.4. A score of 5 lands on exactly 1.00x the median volume, each step up about 1.23x. Two faults were found and fixed: 27.5% of levels used to pin at the top score of 10 (16.9% after), and brand-new levels were hidden 56% of the time against 34% for levels over 100 bars old.

HOW MUCH DATA

3,809 levels on 1-hour ETH; density on 3m, 15m, 30m, 1h and 4h; 43,076 levels for the score calibration; 12.8 million level-bars for the age check

SMALLEST EFFECT IT COULD SPOT

not applicable - correctness check, no edge was measured

The lines are drawn exactly where they claim to be and one setting works on every timeframe - but whether a bigger score means a stronger level is a separate question, and no edge was found there.

Does the money flow cloud use volume?

CLAIM DID NOT HOLD

The green and red cloud is called money flow - is it measuring money, or volume, at all?

How it was tested. The shipped formula was read straight out of the code and the darker inner pressure band was traced through its arithmetic, then checked against live readings.

RESULT

There is no volume term in the cloud at all. It is (close minus open) divided by (high minus low), averaged over 60 bars - a slow reading of candle body direction.

This test's result and its floor were measured in different units, so the two cannot be placed on the same scale.

The inner pressure band is forced to sit between zero and that volume-free cloud, so it can never exceed it or take the opposite sign; when volume actually opposes the cloud, pressure draws a flat zero, which looks identical to neutral volume. The same pass found that the plot labelled VWAP inside the oscillator panel is simply the fast wave minus the slow wave, residual exactly 0.0 - true of the paid script and of ours. Both the guidebook and the caption were corrected.

HOW MUCH DATA

source code check plus live 15-minute readings and the audit's bar-by-bar count over 298,200 bars

SMALLEST EFFECT IT COULD SPOT

not applicable - correctness check, no edge was measured

A row you may have been reading as a volume signal is a price-shape average carrying an inherited name, and it can never warn you that volume disagrees because it never looks at volume.

Is an eight-line ribbon really eight readings?

CLAIM DID NOT HOLD

A ribbon of eight moving averages looks like a lot of information - is it?

How it was tested. The ribbon's direction and its width were compared against just the 20 and 55 moving averages on every bar where the ribbon was stacked in order.

RESULT

Ribbon direction matches the sign of the 20 minus the 55 on 100.0000% of bars (275,265 of 275,265), and ribbon width matches the gap between those same two lines on 100.0000%.

This test's result and its floor were measured in different units, so the two cannot be placed on the same scale.

HOW MUCH DATA

275,265 bars - the 76.6% of bars on which the ribbon is stacked

SMALLEST EFFECT IT COULD SPOT

not applicable - correctness check, no edge was measured

The six middle lines cannot carry anything the outer two do not, so it is one reading dressed up as eight.

Fake prices on smoothed candles

CLAIM DID NOT HOLD

If I switch my chart to smoothed candles, are my indicators reading the real price or the smoothed one?

How it was tested. Every price read in the three scripts was routed through the real candles, then every numeric reading on smoothed candles was compared against standard candles on the same bar, matched by timestamp.

RESULT

Before the fix, the same 1-hour bar read wave 17.88 against 11.94, and money flow 41.62 against 16.18. After the fix, 54 of 54 readings are identical, with zero differences.

This test's result and its floor were measured in different units, so the two cannot be placed on the same scale.

HOW MUCH DATA

54 readings across the three scripts (12 + 13 + 29)

SMALLEST EFFECT IT COULD SPOT

not applicable - correctness check, no edge was measured

The indicators were quietly reading prices that never traded - it is fixed now, but any reading taken off a smoothed chart before the fix described something that did not happen.

Order flow from the exchange tape

Every other family in this document works from candles. This one works from the raw trade feed, which records something a candle cannot: for each trade, whether the buyer or the seller was the one crossing the spread to get filled. That is the data footprint charts are built on, and the four patterns below are the ones order-flow teaching leans on hardest. Each was tested against a look-alike built to differ in exactly one respect — the part the pattern actually claims — so the comparison could not be won by volume or by the shape of the candle. None of the four beat its look-alike on either coin. One warning belongs with this family. Partway through, stacked buying appeared to work: it beat its look-alike on six measurements, and then repeated the result on a second coin it had never been tuned on. That is normally strong evidence. It was wrong. The entry price had been recorded one bar too early — before the pattern had finished forming — so every trade was credited with a move that had already happened. Testing on a second market does not catch that kind of mistake, because the mistake travels with the method rather than with the data. Once the

entry was moved to the first price you could actually have paid, the result disappeared on both coins.

Absorption at a price level

When one price inside a bar trades far more than the rest, and both buyers and sellers are active there, does that mark a level where something is about to happen?

How it was tested. Each absorption bar was compared against a bar carrying an equally heavy level where the trading was one-sided instead, so both groups held the same volume and only the two-sided part differed.

RESULT

0.027% of price against a floor of 0.114% on ETH, and the difference runs the other way on BTC.

← too small to see | big enough to trust →

0.24× the floor

Absorption bars do travel further than quiet bars, but so do the one-sided heavy bars they were compared against, and both carry two to three times the volume of an ordinary bar — so what is really being measured is that busy bars move more. The two-sided condition, which is the entire idea behind absorption, adds nothing on either coin. The small difference that remains is positive on ETH and negative on BTC, which is what noise looks like.

HOW MUCH DATA	SMALLEST EFFECT IT COULD SPOT
2,473 three-minute bars of ETH and 1,101 of BTC, built from 1.6 million individual trades	0.114% of price — the smallest difference this much data could have spotted

Heavy levels mark busy bars, and busy bars move more. Whether the trading at that level was two-sided tells you nothing extra, and the tiny difference left over points opposite ways on the two coins.

NO EFFECT FOUND

Trapped buyers and sellers – the sweep, read in order flow

NO EFFECT FOUND

When price spikes through a high and closes back below it, does knowing that the buyers up in that spike were the aggressive ones tell you anything the candle did not already?

How it was tested. Every long-wick rejection bar was compared against an identical-looking rejection bar – same wick length, same closing direction – where the trading inside the wick had gone the other way, so only the order flow differed.

RESULT

0.077% of price against a floor of 0.215% at the most favourable holding time, and smaller everywhere else.



← too small to see | big enough to trust →

0.36× the floor

This is the closest thing in the trade feed to a sweep, which is a setup the system actually trades, and the comparison was deliberately built to ask the sharp version of the question rather than a flattering one: hold the candle identical and change only who was doing the buying. The two groups are indistinguishable at every holding time on both coins.

HOW MUCH DATA

157 trapped-trader bars on ETH and 64 on BTC, against 71 and 33 look-alikes

SMALLEST EFFECT IT COULD SPOT

0.215% of price at the 60-minute holding time

The footprint adds nothing to the rejection candle you can already see. When a sweep prints, checking who was aggressing into the wick does not separate the ones that work from the ones that do not.

Heavy one-sided buying on a bar that closed down

NO EFFECT FOUND

When a bar shows heavy aggressive buying but still closes lower, have those buyers failed – and is it worth trading against them?

How it was tested. Bars where the flow and the close disagreed were compared against bars carrying the same weight of one-sided flow where the close agreed with it, holding the amount of flow constant so that only the disagreement differed.

RESULT 0.017% of price against a floor of 0.090% on ETH.



← too small to see | big enough to trust →

0.19× the floor

On BTC the difference is negative at every holding time, meaning the bars where flow and price disagreed did slightly worse than the ones where they agreed – the opposite of the claim. Nothing on either coin comes close to the floor.

HOW MUCH DATA

218 disagreeing bars on ETH and 69 on BTC, against 801 and 338 agreeing ones

SMALLEST EFFECT IT COULD SPOT

0.090% of price

A bar closing against its own order flow is not a failed push worth fading. On the second coin it leaned the wrong way at every holding time.

Stacked buying or selling up the ladder

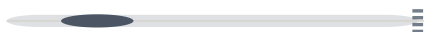
NO EFFECT FOUND

When three or more price levels in a row each show buyers heavily outweighing the sellers just below them, does that stack predict which way price goes?

How it was tested. Stacked bars were compared against bars leaning the same way but only one or two levels deep, so the direction was held fixed and only the depth of the stack changed.

RESULT

0.024% of price against a floor of 0.108%. This is the pattern that briefly appeared to work and did not – see the note at the top of this section.



← too small to see | big enough to trust →

0.22× the floor

With the entry recorded one bar early it beat its look-alike on six measurements and repeated on a second coin; with the entry moved to the first price actually purchasable after the stack had completed, nothing clears on either coin. The first look-alike used here was thrown out as well: comparing a buy stack against a sell stack put the two groups on opposite kinds of candle, so a difference was guaranteed before any trading happened.

HOW MUCH DATA

434 stacked-buy and 319 stacked-sell bars on
ETH, 143 and 106 on BTC, against shallow bars
leaning the same way

SMALLEST EFFECT IT COULD SPOT

0.108% of price

Depth of stacking does not predict direction. The apparent result came entirely from recording the entry one bar before the pattern had finished forming.

Does the order flow improve a sweep you were taking anyway?

NO EFFECT FOUND

I have already spotted the sweep from the chart and I am going to trade it. Does checking who was doing the aggressive buying or selling up in that spike change whether I should?

How it was tested. Every sweep of a confirmed swing level was found first, and then split purely on which side was crossing the spread in the part of the bar beyond the level swept — so both groups are sweeps and only the order flow differs.

RESULT 0.047% of price against a floor of 0.109% at the most favourable measurement.



← too small to see | big enough to trust →

0.43× the floor

The split runs one way on ETH and the other way on BTC: all six ETH measurements say the sweeps that fit the trapped-trader story did slightly worse, and all six BTC measurements say they did slightly better. Six out of six in one direction looks like a finding if you only have one coin, which is exactly why the second one is run. Nothing reaches even three quarters of its floor.

HOW MUCH DATA

361 sweeps on ETH and 140 on BTC, each swing level counted only once no matter how often it was revisited

SMALLEST EFFECT IT COULD SPOT

0.109% of price — and the difference is a fifth of what the fees alone would cost

Once you have found the sweep, the footprint does not tell you whether to take it. The reading you get points opposite ways on two different coins, which means it is not reading anything.

What one side is paying to hold – the funding rate

NO EFFECT FOUND

When everyone is crowded on one side and paying an hourly fee to stay there, are they about to get flushed out?

How it was tested. Every hour was compared against other hours that had seen the SAME size of price move over the previous day but ordinary funding – so the rally is held fixed and only the crowding differs.

RESULT

0.64% of price against a floor of 1.34% at the most favourable measurement. Nothing on either coin reaches even three quarters of its floor.



← too small to see | big enough to trust →

0.48× the floor

This is the first thing ever tested here that is not calculated from price – it is a fee one side is actually paying – which is why it was worth running at all. If anything the conventional reading is backwards: betting against the crowded side was slightly WORSE than not, at almost every holding time on both coins. The matching matters: with it removed the differences roughly double, so a version of this test without the control would have looked considerably more interesting and still not cleared.

HOW MUCH DATA

17,520 hourly settlements per coin over two full years, ETH and BTC, with the price and the funding both taken from the same exchange

SMALLEST EFFECT IT COULD SPOT

1.34% of price

Crowded positioning is not a timing tool. Knowing that longs are paying to stay long tells you nothing useful about the next few hours or days, and the instinct to fade them is if anything the wrong way round.

Samples count separate, non-overlapping events rather than bars, so one large move cannot be counted many times over. Every figure here is reproducible from the logs in this project.

Nothing in this document is advice, and none of it is a reason to take a trade.