

I would like to start a new tradition. At the beginning of each year, I will write a poker strategy email covering some advanced calculations and techniques. I will call it Greg's Poker School. I hope you find it useful. Let me know if it improves your game!

~~~ Chapter 1: Playing AK ~~~

The subject of our first chapter is playing ace-king. Ready?

AK is bullshit.

There are only three possible outcomes if you play this bullshit hand:

1. You miss the flop entirely (the "full of shit" scenario). Have fun check-folding this shit like a chump or bluffing all the way to the river like a batshit-crazy lunatic.
2. You hit the flop but it's obvious you have an A or K so everyone else just folds (the "who gives a shit" scenario). Congratulations, you just won a few shitty big blinds.
3. You hit the flop but someone else hits it harder (the "in deep shit" scenario). Shit! I hope you enjoy losing your entire stack and your will to live.

These are the only options. There is no flop that is good for bullshit AK.* You either miss, hit an obvious hand, or get the shit beaten out of you.

* = Technically, a flop of TJQ rainbow is a good flop for AK. But it's the only one. Enjoy waiting ten thousand hands or whatever for that shit.

Look, I'll show you. Here is every hand where I was dealt bullshit AK, suited or not, in yesterday's uncapped buy-in game.

Category 1: Full of Shit (missing the flop entirely)

- Hand: 1644

- Greg: [A ♣, K ♥]
 - Flop: [7 ♥, T ♠, 6 ♦]

- Hand: 1744

- Greg: [A ♠, K ♠]
 - Flop: [T ♦, T ♥, 5 ♠]

- Hand: 1777

- Greg: [A ♣, K ♣]
 - Björn: [7 ♥, 2 ♥] re-raised to \$9 preflop

- Hand: 1799
 - Flop: [4 ♣, 7 ♦, 8 ♠]
 - Greg: [A ♥, K ♥]
 - Flop: [3 ♠, 8 ♠, 9 ♥]

What the shit? Are there any face cards in this deck? Note: if you like Björn's 7-2 porn here, just wait.

Category 2: Who Gives a Shit (hitting but everyone else folds)

- Hand: 1650
 - Greg: [A ♠, K ♥]
 - Flop: [6 ♣, 2 ♣, A ♣]
- Hand: 1861
 - Greg: [A ♥, K ♠]
 - No flop (won preflop)

Oh good, won some shitty blinds. Having AK is just as good as having the instructions card and an expired bus pass in your hand if everyone else is just going to fold.

Category 3: In Deep Shit (hitting but someone else hits harder)

- Hand: 1524
 - Greg: [A ♦, K ♥]
 - Björn: [3 ♦, 3 ♥]
 - Flop: [A ♥, 5 ♠, 3 ♠]
 - River: A ♥, 5 ♠, 3 ♠, J ♥, [A ♣]
 - Outcome: Lost \$43.24

That's pretty bad, right?

No, that ain't shit. Let me show you this bullshit hand. The second-best part is that this happened after I explained all of the above points about AK to the table, telling them about how much bullshit AK is. The best part is that I had just finished making dinner, so this was going to be *my very last hand of the evening*.

- Hand: 1918

- Greg: [A , K ]
- Kai: [7 , 2 ] re-raised to \$10 preflop
- Flop: [7 , A , 7 ]
- Outcome: Lost \$148.33

Yes, I lost \$148.33 on that bullshit, dogshit, horseshit, apeshit hand. So let me recap. I was dealt AK eight times. Four times it missed entirely, because AK is bullshit. Twice everyone folded and I didn't win shit, because AK is bullshit. And twice I got the shit kicked out of me, because AK is festering, maggot-ridden bullshit. The 7-2 re-raises prove that *literally any two cards* are better than bullshit AK.

This concludes chapter 1 of Greg's Poker School. I hope it made you a better player, or some shit.

That last 7-2 hand warrants a very special award. Here is one final award to finish off 2022. Its name is its own explanation.