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The Trading Audit Pack

Four self-audits you can run in about thirty minutes: your risk rules, your pre-market routine, how you review a trade, and how you review a week. Score yourself honestly and you'll know which one habit to fix first.

1 • Risk rules

Sizing, stops, and how much you have on at once.

2 • Pre-market routine

What you check before the open, every day.

3 • Trade review

Grade the process, not the outcome.

4 • Weekly review

Turn notes into one change for next week.

How to score. For every line, mark 2 if you do it every time and could show it written down, 1 if you do it sometimes or only in your head, 0 if you don't do it yet. There are no trick questions, and no score here is a grade on you as a trader. It's a map of where your process leaks.

Educational material only. Not financial advice. Trading involves risk of loss.

Risk rules

If you only fix one thing, fix this. Sizing decides how long you survive while you learn everything else.

The 1 / 2 / 6 sizing rule

1%

Default risk per trade: the most you lose if the stop is hit.

2%

Hard maximum per trade, for your highest-conviction setups only.

6%

Total open risk across every position at once. At 6%, no new trades.

Risk is not position size. 1% risk means the distance from entry to stop, times shares, equals 1% of the account.

Account	\$25,000
Risk at 1%	\$250
Entry \$50.00, stop \$48.00 → risk per share	\$2.00
Shares = \$250 ÷ \$2.00	125 shares

A worked example of the arithmetic, not a trade idea. Slippage and gaps can make a real loss larger than planned.

- | | | |
|----|---|-------|
| 01 | I know my risk per trade in dollars before I enter.
Not "a small position." A dollar figure, worked out from the stop. | 0 1 2 |
| 02 | My default is 1% or less, and I never go above 2%.
If you have to think about it, write it on a sticky note next to your screen. | 0 1 2 |
| 03 | I add up my total open risk, and I stop adding at 6%.
Five trades at 1% each is 5% open risk, even if they "feel" different. | 0 1 2 |
| 04 | My stop is decided before I enter, at a level that proves me wrong.
A stop placed because the loss "hurts" is not a plan. Know where the idea is invalid. | 0 1 2 |
| 05 | I never widen a stop once I'm in.
Tightening to protect gains is fine. Moving it further away is adding risk you didn't plan. | 0 1 2 |
| 06 | I check whether my open positions are really the same trade.
Three tech names into the same index move is one bet with three tickets. | 0 1 2 |
| 07 | I have a written daily loss limit, and I stop when I hit it.
Pick the number when you're calm, not after the third loss. | 0 1 2 |
| 08 | I size down after a losing streak, not up.
Trying to win it back with size is how a bad week becomes a bad year. | 0 1 2 |

Pre-market routine

The best trades are usually planned before the open. A short, repeatable routine stops you from reacting to every candle.

- | | | | | |
|----|---|---|---|---|
| 01 | I check the economic calendar for the day. | 0 | 1 | 2 |
| | Rate decisions, inflation and jobs reports can move everything at a set time. Know when they land. | | | |
| 02 | I check earnings dates for anything I hold or plan to trade. | 0 | 1 | 2 |
| | Holding through earnings by accident is a gap risk you didn't size for. | | | |
| 03 | I note the broad market's direction and key levels. | 0 | 1 | 2 |
| | The major indexes, where they closed, and where they are pre-market. Most stocks move with the tide. | | | |
| 04 | My watchlist is short, and every name has a plan. | 0 | 1 | 2 |
| | Entry trigger, stop, and the reason it's on the list. If a name has no plan, it's not on the list. | | | |
| 05 | I've worked out position size for each planned trade already. | 0 | 1 | 2 |
| | Doing the math at the open, under pressure, is where sizing mistakes happen. | | | |
| 06 | I write down what I will not do today. | 0 | 1 | 2 |
| | "No trades in the first 5 minutes." "No adding to losers." Your personal rule-breaks, named in advance. | | | |
| 07 | I check my own state before I trade. | 0 | 1 | 2 |
| | Tired, angry, distracted, or chasing yesterday's loss? Size down or sit out. Sitting out is a position. | | | |

A ten-minute template

Calendar → earnings → index levels → watchlist plans → sizes → "won't do" list → state check.

Same order every day. Once it's habit it takes ten minutes, and the routine itself becomes a filter: no plan, no trade.

Trade review

A good trade can lose money and a bad trade can make it. Review whether you followed your process, because that's the only part you control.

- | | | | | |
|---|--|---|---|---|
| 01 | I record every trade the same day. | 0 | 1 | 2 |
| A notebook or a spreadsheet is enough: date, ticker, setup, entry, stop, exit, size. | | | | |
| 02 | I write down why I took it before or right after the entry. | 0 | 1 | 2 |
| The reason written after the result is always better than the real one. | | | | |
| 03 | I record the result in R, not just dollars. | 0 | 1 | 2 |
| R = result ÷ planned risk. It lets you compare trades of different sizes honestly. | | | | |
| 04 | I mark whether the trade followed my plan: yes or no. | 0 | 1 | 2 |
| Entry, size, stop, and exit. One "no" anywhere makes it a "no." | | | | |
| 05 | I grade the process separately from the outcome. | 0 | 1 | 2 |
| Followed the plan and lost: good trade. Broke the rules and won: a bad habit that got paid. | | | | |
| 06 | I note the trades I skipped or froze on. | 0 | 1 | 2 |
| Missed entries and hesitation are part of your behavior, too. | | | | |

One-line trade card

Copy this into your notes for every trade:

date | ticker | setup | entry | stop | exit | size | R | plan followed? (y/n) | one lesson

My most common rule-break, honestly:

Weekly review

Notes only help if you read them. Thirty minutes at the end of the week turns a pile of trades into one decision.

01	I review my week on a fixed day, every week.	0 1 2
	Put it in the calendar like a meeting you can't skip.	
02	I count how many trades followed my plan.	0 1 2
	"7 of 10 followed the plan" tells you more than the week's P&L.	
03	I look at my results by setup.	0 1 2
	Which setups paid, which bled? You can only drop what you've measured.	
04	I pick one change for next week, and only one.	0 1 2
	Five resolutions get forgotten. One gets done.	
05	I check last week's change: did I actually do it?	0 1 2
	A review that never changes your behavior is just a diary.	

Your score

AUDIT	MAX	YOUR SCORE
1 · Risk rules	16	
2 · Pre-market	14	
3 · Trade review	12	
4 · Weekly review	10	

My risk rules in one sentence:

What to fix first: any audit under half marks, starting with Risk rules. If risk scores under 8, stop there. Write your 1 / 2 / 6 rule down and trade smaller until it's automatic. Everything else comes after you can stay in the game.

Run the pack again in a month and compare. The goal isn't a perfect score, it's a higher one.

Who made this

This pack is free, and it stays useful whether or not you ever use anything else from us.

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