



**VSIN**

# SUPER BOWL LVI

**LA RAMS -4 • O/U 49.5**

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VS.



# BIG GAME BETTING GUIDE

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**SPORTS RADIO**



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*photos by USA Today Sports Images*

Against the spread - The result of a game including the point spread.

Bad Beat - A bet that looks like the bettor is going to win but doesn't.

Book (Sportsbook) - A place where someone can bet on the outcome of sports events.

Buck - A \$100 bet.

Chalk - The favorite in a game.

Consensus - Percentage of the betting public on each side of a game. The bettor will bet against the "public money" (whichever team more bettors have placed their bets on).

Cover - The betting outcome on a point spread bet. For a favorite to cover it must win by a number higher than the spread. An underdog can cover by losing by a number less than the spread or by winning the game outright.

Dime - A \$1,000 bet.

Dollar - A \$100 bet.

Edge - The advantage a bettor has before a bet is placed.

Even (Even Money) - A \$100 bet to win \$100.

Favorite - A team favored to win a game.

Future bets - A bet on events that will happen further in the future like who will win a division or who will win a championship well in advance.

Handle - The total amount of money wagered on a game.

Handicapping - Researching sports statistics to pick winners.

Hedging - Betting opposite of a previous bet to guarantee winning at least a small amount of money.

Hook - A half-point in the spread.

In-game wagers - Bets made after a game started.

Juice - A commission books win on each bet.

Limit - The maximum allowed wager on a single bet.

Lock - A large favorite.

Long Shot - A large underdog.

Moneyline bet - A bet made if a team will win or lose outright with no point spread.

Nickel - A \$500 bet.

No Action - A game that is no longer taking bets and all wagers are refunded.

Odds maker (Linemaker) - Someone who sets the opening line on a game.

Off the Board - A game bettors can not wager on.

Over - The combined score of two teams is more than what the sportsbook set.

Parlay - A bet that combines multiple games for a higher payout. The more games, the higher the risk but the greater the payout. In order for the parlay to win, each game must win or push (tie). If any of the games lose, the entire wager loses.

Pick'em - A game with no favorite or underdog.

Point spread - Margin of victory set by oddsmakers to attract bets action on both the favorite and the underdog. A favorite must win by a number higher than the point spread to cover the spread. An underdog can cover by losing by a number less than the spread or by winning the game outright.

Puckline - Hockey has a point spread of -1.5 for the favorite and +1.5 for the underdog.

Proposition bets (prop) - A bet on anything that is not directly tied to the outcome of the game. For example, it can be the first team or the first player to score in a game.

Push - When neither team covers the spread (the actual margin of victory lands exactly on the spread), no one wins the bet and all wagers are refunded.

Runline - Baseball has a point spread of -1.5 for the favorite and +1.5 for the underdog.

Sharp (Wiseguy) - A professional sports bettor.

# LEARN THE GLOSSARY FOR SPORTS BETTING

BY JOSH APPELBAUM

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*Whether placing bets on the Super Bowl, March Madness or an MLB game, bettors need to know some fundamentals about how sports wagering works, along with which options are available. This means learning the basics and understanding some of the language and terminology bettors use. Let's look at a few of the must-know terms in the sports betting glossary.*

A



## AGAINST THE SPREAD

The result of a game including the point spread.

B



## BOOK (SPORTSBOOK)

An place where someone can bet on the outcome of sporting events.

C



## CONSENSUS

Percentage of the betting public on each side of a game. Some bettors will bet against the “public money” (whichever team more bettors have placed their bets on).

D



## JUICE

Oddsmaakers place an additional price or tax on every bet, popularly referred to as the “juice.” It is also called the vig, which is short for vigorish. The juice is a commission you must pay the sportsbooks for them to accept your bet.

Juice is added to all bet types, including spreads, moneylines and totals. It will appear as a three-digit number to the right of the spread or total, usually in parentheses. The juice won’t appear in parentheses next to a moneyline price because it’s already factored into the line.

Standard juice is considered to be -110. This is known as 10-cent juice. It means that for every dollar you wager, you have to pay a fee of 10 cents to the sportsbook.

The juice is almost always a negative number that bettors have to pay, but on rare occasions the juice might be a small plus money number, which means bettors could win a few additional cents if their bet wins.

For example, let’s say the Broncos are playing the Raiders. The line will appear as Broncos -7 (-110) and Raiders +7 (-110). The -110 number in parentheses is the juice both sides must pay. This means if you wanted to bet on either team, you would need to risk \$110 to win \$100. If you lose your bet, you lose the \$110 you risked. If you win your bet, you win \$100 and get back the \$110 you risked.

Juice doesn’t stay static. Sportsbooks are constantly adjusting the juice based on the action they are taking in, raising or dropping the juice depending on which side is taking in more money.

Many new bettors assume that to turn a profit betting on sports you have to win only 50.1% of your bets. On the surface, that sounds correct. Just win slightly more games than you lose and you’ll make money. Unfortunately, this isn’t the case. Why? Because of the juice.

If you assume standard -110 juice, this means bettors actually have to win 52.38% of their bets to break even. This is considered the magic number in betting. To turn a profit, you would need to win at least 52.39% of your plays.

Bettors should always shop around and try to place bets at books providing the best and lowest juice.

J



## MONEYLINE

The spread isn’t the only option available to bettors who want to bet either side of a game. The second-most popular way to bet is on the moneyline. The moneyline is based only on which team will win the game straight up. The margin of victory does not matter. It could be one point or 100 points; all that matters is winning the game.

Because favorites win most of their games, oddsmakers force bettors to assume more risk and pay a more expensive price when betting favorites. In other words, a favorite lays “minus money.” On the flip side, because underdogs win less often, oddsmakers need to make them more attractive to bet on, so they add a sweetener to underdogs in the form of a bigger payout, popularly referred to as “plus money.”

Let’s say the Seahawks are 3-point favorites on the spread against Dallas. You like Seattle to win but aren’t sure it will cover the spread. You could instead bet Seattle -150 on the moneyline, which means you would need to risk \$150 to win \$100. If Seattle wins, you win \$100 and get your \$150 back. If Seattle loses, you lose the \$150 you risked. On the flip side, Dallas might be +140 on the moneyline. This means if you risk \$100 on Dallas and they win the game, you would win \$140 plus get back the \$100 you risked.

M







# LESSONS FROM PAST SUPER BOWL TRENDS, SYSTEMS

BY STEVE MAKINEN

@STEVE MAKINEN

Super Bowl Sunday is the sports betting world's biggest day, regardless of which teams are competing for the Lombardi Trophy. While the Super Bowl is only one game, the number of betting options available is beyond comprehension, ranging from the simple point spread to exotic props. You can even bet other sports events that day against the stats or results of the football game. If you've never taken the time to digest all the betting opportunities available on game day, be sure to do so. At the very least, you will be amazed by the creativity of the oddsmaking minds.

This year's Super Bowl will be the 55th in history. With a sample size of 54 previous games, you'll want to consider those results as you contemplate how this year's game might play out, checking for similarities between this year's matchup and past games. How can you know where you're going if you don't understand where you've been?

I'll share some trends and patterns that have emerged from the Super Bowl over the years. Perhaps these will strongly influence your final decisions, perhaps not. Either way, you'll be more knowledgeable about the game's betting history than the friends you're gathering with.

Hopefully, with everything we're offering in this publication and over the next two weeks on our VSiN network and in Point Spread Weekly, you will go in knowing you've prepped accordingly. Part of that preparation should involve looking at the history of the game. So let's look back at 54 years of Super Bowl action, uncovering the stats, trends and systems you'll need to make educated selections.



# SUPER BOWL GAME STAT ANGLES

Over the two-week break between the conference championships and the Super Bowl, both teams will get to know the other's tendencies inside and out. Their excellent coaching staffs will pore over game film and prepare such thorough game plans that nothing will surprise them. Teams that get to this point earn it, and since the NFC's run of dominance ended in the late 1990s, there really hasn't been a physical mismatch in the Super Bowl besides Seattle's 2014 win over Denver. That means the game most often comes down to preparation and execution.

This execution is typically measured by statistics. Rushing yards, passing yards per attempt, turnovers and time of possession are four key stat categories I have found to have a great impact on Super Bowl outcomes. The following trends demonstrate the importance of these statistics.

- Teams that rush for more yards in the Super Bowl are 40-14 SU and 37-14-3 ATS (72.5%). But the Chiefs were outrushed last year by the 49ers 141-129.
- Teams that average more passing yards per attempt in the Super Bowl are 42-12 SU and 36-15-3 ATS (70.6%). The Chiefs' previously dynamic attack produced just 6.38 yards per pass attempt last year, but they still won.
- In the 54 previous Super Bowls, the team that has more turnovers has won just six times SU and eight times ATS (8-35-8, 18.6%). One of the biggest reasons for the Broncos' win in 2016 was forcing four turnovers by the Panthers. In last year's game, the Chiefs and 49ers both turned it over twice.
- Teams that win the time-of-possession battle are 39-15 SU and 38-13-3 ATS (74.5%). The Chiefs were the latest to win on that edge, holding the ball for over 33 minutes on the 49ers last year.
- Teams that hold an edge in at least three of these four key statistical categories are 39-5 SU and 35-8-1 ATS (81.4%). Amazingly, three of those outright losses were in the last six games.
- Teams that win all four categories are 25-0 SU and 23-1-1 ATS (96%). The only ATS loss occurred in Super Bowl XXXIX in Philadelphia's ATS win over New England.

San Francisco won two of the four categories last year and tied in turnovers yet still lost. Turnovers are hard to predict, but the other stats should be relatively predictable for any advanced handicapper or service regularly using sophisticated statistical models for simulation. Projecting these numbers can certainly be worth the effort.

# IN-GAME SCORING, ATS AND MONEYLINE TRENDS

## IN-GAME SCORING TRENDS

- The average winning score is 30.1 with the average losing score at 16.1, an average winning margin 14 ppg. However, 16 of the last 17 games have been decided by 14 or fewer points, a sign of a much more competitive era in the NFL.
- The 2008 Giants became the first team in 33 years to win the Super Bowl without hitting the 20-point mark. The Patriots did it again in 2019 with the lowest winning point total ever, 13.
- Since Pittsburgh's epic 35-31 win over Dallas in Super Bowl XIII in 1979, 25 teams have hit the 30-point mark. Their record: 23-2 SU and 22-3 ATS. Only New England, a 32-29 winner over Carolina in '04, San Francisco in 2013 and New England in '18 failed to cover their point spreads.
- In 21 previous Super Bowls, teams have failed to reach the 14-point mark. Their record: 1-20 SU and ATS (4.8%). This is another trend illustrating just how improbable the Patriots' 2019 win was.
- More on the recent competitiveness of the game: Of the 16 games to be decided by less than a touchdown, seven have been in the last 13 years.

## ATS AND MONEYLINE TRENDS

- Super Bowl favorites are 34-19 SU and own an ATS mark of 25-25-3 (50%), with the 1982 game having been a pick-'em point spread. However, over the last 18 years, underdogs own a 13-6 ATS (68.4%) edge, including 9-4 ATS in the last 13. Kansas City won as the slimmest of favorites in 2020.
- Favorites of a touchdown or more are 3-2 SU but 0-4-1 ATS (0%) in this millennium. But there hasn't been a favorite of that magnitude since the Patriots in 2008.
- The straight-up winner is 45-6-3 ATS (88.2%) in the 54 previous Super Bowls, and the dog has never covered a point spread without winning on a Super Bowl line of fewer than six points. This figure is now the highest of the four playoff rounds. Champions typically leave no doubt.
- Remarkably, the AFC and NFC have split 27-27 outright in the first 54 Super Bowls, but the NFC holds a 27-24-3 (52.9%) ATS edge. However, AFC teams have turned the tide recently with a 5-2 SU and ATS surge in the last seven.
- The team that is the higher playoff seed is just 2-14-2 ATS (12.5%) in the last 24 Super Bowls. Equal seeds matched up in 2011, '14, '15, '16, '18 and '19.
- The team with the better record going into the Super Bowl is 29-18 SU all time but has lost 10 of the last 11, including the 49ers (13-3) against the Chiefs (12-4) a year ago.
- Teams playing in their first Super Bowl against an experienced club are 6-2-1 ATS in their last nine. But this trend is becoming more and more scarce and won't apply this year.



# PREVIOUS SUPER BOWL LINE AND TOTAL PATTERNS

Since the turn of the century, what it takes to reach Super Bowl success has come and gone in waves. In the first few years of the 2000s, it was top seeds or teams that achieved lofty won-lost marks in the regular season fulfilling expectations.

Then something changed. From 2006-13, seven teams that played on wild-card weekend made it to the Super Bowl — and six of them won! The 2006 Super Bowl run by Pittsburgh was significant as I believe it dramatically changed teams' beliefs as to what it takes to become an NFL champion. The Steelers were the first No. 6 seed to emerge with the Lombardi Trophy. The assumptions that winning in the regular season, earning a bye and capitalizing on home-field advantage were the recipe for postseason success were thrown into doubt.

The last seven Super Bowls may represent a return to normalcy, with all but two teams having won at home in their conference title games after enjoying byes on wild-card weekend. However, the fact that underdogs have won outright in four of those seven games is another wrinkle to deal with.

All of this has naturally made it difficult on handicappers who rely on such things as strength ratings and historical templates that have demonstrated the best teams excelling when it mattered most — in the playoffs.

# OVER/UNDER TRENDS AND SIX-POINT TEASER TRENDS

## OVER/UNDER TRENDS

- In the 53 Super Bowl games that have had totals, the Over is 27-25-1 (51.9%). The last two have gone Under, the first time for back-to-back Under results since four straight from 2005-08. The 2019 game went Under in record fashion, falling short of the posted number by 39 points.
- On average, 46.3 points have been scored per Super Bowl, with posted totals averaging 44.7. However, the early years' totals were often in the 30s, dragging down that number significantly. The last 16 years have featured an average posted total of 49.7, with 46.9 scored. Nine of the 16 games in that era went Under.
- In the last 11 Super Bowls with totals in the 50s, the Under is 8-3 (72.7%).
- The 2020 Super Bowl was one of only 17 in which both teams reached the 20-point mark. Fourteen of those went Over. Consider that with the quality of offenses expected in this year's game.

## SIX-POINT TEASER TRENDS

- In terms of six-point teaser trends, favorites have gone 35-18 (66%) while underdogs have gone 35-17-1 (67.3%), very close performance marks. The '82 game was a pick-'em. However, the last 19 seasons have featured a big separation as favorites are just 10-9 (52.6%) while underdogs are 16-3 (84.2%).
- AFC teams are 35-18-1 (66%) and NFC teams are 37-17 (68.5%) in the history of the Super Bowl game on six-point teaser bets.
- Concerning Super Bowl totals, in the 53 games that had posted numbers, Over is 36-17 (67.9%) and Under is 35-17-1 (67.3%) on six-point teasers.



# TEAMS' REGULAR-SEASON OFFENSIVE STATISTICS TRENDS

- Teams that scored more points per game during the regular season are only 5-13 ATS in the last 18 Super Bowls.
- The ability to run the football has been much overrated for Super Bowl success. Teams that averaged more rushing yards per game are just 4-12 ATS since '05. Those that averaged more yards per rush are 6-10 ATS in that span.
- Passing yardage has also meant little in terms of Super Bowl success, with teams owning an edge in total offensive passing yardage going only 8-11 ATS in the last 19 games.
- Big-play potential hasn't been a key ingredient in Super Bowl victories, as teams gaining more passing yards per attempt are on a 6-8 ATS stumble.
- Teams that generated more yardage in the regular season also own no edge when it comes to Super Bowl success, losing nine straight games SU and ATS. Those with yards-per-play edges are 1-8 SU and ATS in that span.
- Offensive yards per point has proven to be an effective statistical indicator for fading teams. Teams that have averaged fewer yards per point are just 5-13 ATS in the last 18 Super Bowls.
- The offensive turnovers statistic has also been quite misleading for Super Bowl handicapping, with teams owning an edge in this stat going just 6-11 ATS in the Super Bowl since '03.
- Teams that converted third-down opportunities more efficiently in the regular season also have a poor trend mark, going 7-12 ATS in the last 19 Super Bowls.

# TEAMS' REGULAR-SEASON DEFENSIVE STATISTICS TRENDS

- Teams that allowed fewer points per game during the regular season are 6-8 ATS in the last 14 Super Bowls.
- Teams that allowed fewer rushing yards per game and fewer yards per rushing attempt have gone just 7-12 ATS in the last 19 Super Bowls, giving the statistical handicapper little reason to consider it when analyzing the games other than fading.
- Super Bowl teams with an edge in passing yardage allowed over their opponent are 11-7 ATS over the last 18 seasons. Finally an edge for the better statistical team!
- Teams with the edge in defensive pass efficiency are 6-3 ATS over the last nine years but just 6-8 ATS in the last 14 Super Bowls.
- Teams that allowed less yardage overall are just 5-9 ATS since '07 but 5-4 ATS since '12 in the Super Bowl. Teams with an edge in yards per play are 6-8 ATS since '07 but 6-3 ATS in the last nine.

- Defensive yards per point should be given serious consideration for Super Bowl Sunday, but only if you are fading the team with the edge 6-9 ATS since '06.
- Teams that forced more turnovers in the regular season are 9-10 ATS since '02 in Super Bowl play, with no streaks greater than two either way.
- Teams that stopped third-down opportunities more efficiently in the regular season are on a 6-5 ATS run in the last 11 Super Bowl games.

Again, very little evidence indicates that having better regular-season defensive statistics provides any advantage in this single high-stakes game. It seems as if we should ignore statistical handicapping. Fortunately, we came up with other trends that might help, most notably those regarding underdogs, won-lost/seed records and outright winners.



# SUPER BOWL BETTING HISTORY

SB# (Date)	FL	FT	NFC TEAM	Score	AFC Team	Score	SU	ATS	Total
1 (1/15/67)	GB -14		Green Bay	35	Kansas City	10	Green Bay	Green Bay	N/A
2 (1/14/68)	GB -13.5	43	Green Bay	33	Oakland	14	Green Bay	Green Bay	Over
3 (1/12/69)	Bal -18	40	Baltimore	7	NY Jets	16	NY Jets	NY Jets	Under
4 (1/11/70)	Min -12	39	Minnesota	7	Kansas City	23	Kansas City	Kansas City	Under
5 (1/17/71)	Dal -2.5	36	Dallas	13	Baltimore	16	Baltimore	Baltimore	Under
6 (1/16/72)	Dal -6	34	Dallas	24	Miami	3	Dallas	Dallas	Under
7 (1/14/73)	Was -1.5	33	Washington	7	Miami	14	Miami	Miami	Under
8 (1/13/74)	Mia -6.5	33	Minnesota	7	Miami	24	Miami	Miami	Under
9 (1/12/75)	Pit -3	33	Minnesota	6	Pittsburgh	16	Pittsburgh	Pittsburgh	Under
10 (1/18/76)	Pitt -6.5	36	Dallas	17	Pittsburgh	21	Pittsburgh	Dallas	Over
11 (1/9/77)	Oak -4.5	38	Minnesota	14	Oakland	32	Oakland	Oakland	Over
12 (1/15/78)	Dal -6	39	Dallas	27	Denver	10	Dallas	Dallas	Under
13 (1/21/79)	Pitt -4	37	Dallas	31	Pittsburgh	35	Pittsburgh	TIE	Over
14 (1/20/80)	Pitt -10.5	36	LA Rams	19	Pittsburgh	31	Pittsburgh	Pittsburgh	Over
15 (1/25/81)	Phi -3	37.5	Philadelphia	10	Oakland	27	Oakland	Oakland	Under
16 (1/24/82)	Pk em'	48	San Francisco	26	Cincinnati	21	San Francisco	San Francisco	Under
17 (1/30/83)	Mia -3	36.5	Washington	27	Miami	17	Washington	Washington	Over
18 (1/22/84)	Was -3	48	Washington	9	LA Raiders	38	LA Raiders	LA Raiders	Under
19 (1/20/85)	SF -3	53	San Francisco	38	Miami	16	San Francisco	San Francisco	Over
20 (1/26/86)	Chi -10	37	Chicago	46	New England	10	Chicago	Chicago	Over
21 (1/25/87)	NYG -9.5	40.5	NY Giants	39	Denver	20	NY Giants	NY Giants	Over
22 (1/31/88)	Den -3.5	47	Washington	42	Denver	10	Washington	Washington	Over
23 (1/22/89)	SF -7	47.5	San Francisco	20	Cincinnati	16	San Francisco	Cincinnati	Under
24 (1/28/90)	SF -12.5	47	San Francisco	55	Denver	10	San Francisco	San Francisco	Over
25 (1/27/91)	Buf -7	39	NY Giants	20	Buffalo	19	NY Giants	NY Giants	TIE
26 (1/26/92)	Was -7	49	Washington	37	Buffalo	24	Washington	Washington	Over
27 (1/31/93)	Dal -6	45	Dallas	52	Buffalo	17	Dallas	Dallas	Over
28 (1/30/94)	Dal -10.5	50.5	Dallas	30	Buffalo	13	Dallas	Dallas	Under

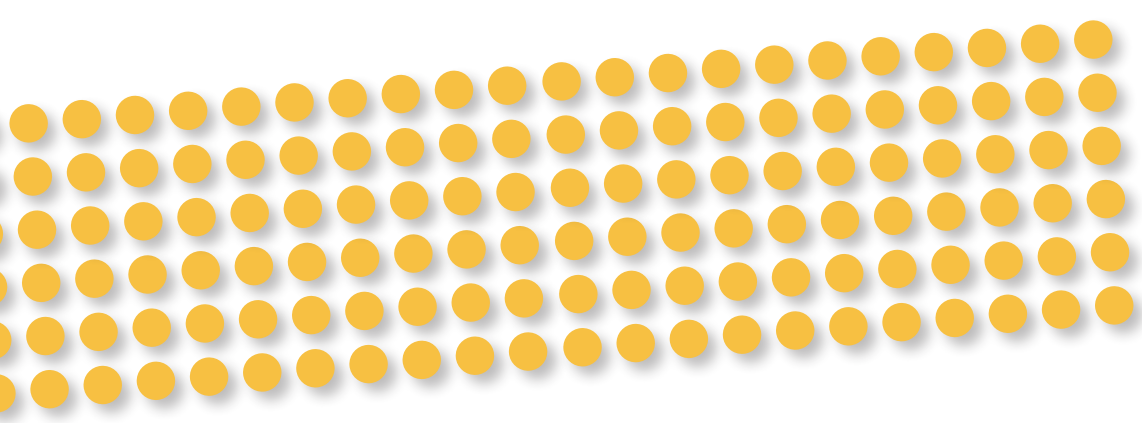
# SUPER BOWL BETTING HISTORY

SB# (Date)	FL	FT	NFC TEAM	Score	AFC Team	Score	SU	ATS	Total
29 (1/29/95)	SF -18	54	San Francisco	49	San Diego	26	San Francisco	San Francisco	Over
30 (1/28/96)	Dal -13.5	52	Dallas	27	Pittsburgh	17	Dallas	Pittsburgh	Under
31 (1/26/97)	GB -14	49	Green Bay	35	New England	21	Green Bay	TIE	Over
32 (1/25/98)	GB -11.5	49	Green Bay	24	Denver	31	Denver	Denver	Over
33 (1/31/99)	Den -7.5	51.5	Atlanta	19	Denver	34	Denver	Denver	Over
34 (1/30/00)	StL -7	48	St Louis	23	Tennessee	16	St Louis	TIE	Under
35 (1/28/01)	Bal -3	32.5	NY Giants	7	Baltimore	34	Baltimore	Baltimore	Over
36 (2/3/02)	StL -14	52.5	St Louis	17	New England	20	New England	New England	Under
37 (1/26/03)	Oak -3.5	44	Tampa Bay	48	Oakland	21	Tampa Bay	Tampa Bay	Over
38 (2/1/04)	NE -7	38	Carolina	29	New England	32	New England	Carolina	Over
39 (2/6/05)	NE -7	47	Philadelphia	21	New England	24	New England	Philadelphia	Under
40 (2/5/06)	Pit -4	46.5	Seattle	10	Pittsburgh	21	Pittsburgh	Pittsburgh	Under
41 (2/4/07)	Ind -6.5	47	Chicago	17	Indianapolis	29	Indianapolis	Indianapolis	Under
42 (2/3/08)	NE -12.5	54	NY Giants	17	New England	14	NY Giants	NY Giants	Under
43 (2/1/09)	Pit -6.5	46.5	Arizona	23	Pittsburgh	27	Pittsburgh	Arizona	Over
44 (2/7/10)	IND -4.5	56.5	New Orleans	31	Indianapolis	17	New Orleans	New Orleans	Under
45 (2/6/11)	GB -3	44.5	Green Bay	31	Pittsburgh	25	Green Bay	Green Bay	Over
46 (2/5/12)	NE -3	53	NY Giants	21	New England	17	NY Giants	NY Giants	Under
47 (2/3/13)	SF -4.5	47.5	San Francisco	31	Baltimore	34	Baltimore	Baltimore	Over
48 (2/2/14)	Den -2	47	Seattle	43	Denver	8	Seattle	Seattle	Over
49 (2/1/15)	Sea -1	47	Seattle	24	New England	28	New England	New England	Over
50 (2/7/16)	Car -4.5	43.5	Carolina	10	Denver	24	Denver	Denver	Under
51 (2/5/17)	NE -3	57	Atlanta	28	New England	34	New England	New England	Over
52 (2/4/18)	NE -4.5	49	Philadelphia	41	New England	33	Philadelphia	Philadelphia	Over
53 (2/3/19)	NE -2	55.5	LA Rams	3	New England	13	New England	New England	Under
54 (2/4/20)	KC -1	53	San Francisco	20	Kansas City	31	Kansas City	Kansas City	Under
55 (2/7/21)	KC -3	55.5	Tampa Bay	31	Kansas City	9	Tampa Bay	Tampa Bay	Under
56 (2/13/22)	LAR -4	49.5	LA Rams		Cincinnati				



# FIVE TIPS FOR BETTING SUPER BOWL PROPS

BY JOSH APPELBAUM  
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Prop bets, also known as propositional bets, exotics, or just “fun bets,” are any kind of bet on a game that isn’t a conventional spread, moneyline or Over/Under bet. Typically the most popular props are props involving key offensive players (over/under total passing yards for Joe Burrow), but there are literally hundreds to choose from.

Props are available year-round for almost all major sports, but they absolutely explode for the Super Bowl. In recent years, the handle (the amount of money accepted by the books) at sportsbooks for prop bets has overtaken the handle for conventional Super Bowl betting.

Before we dig into some Super Bowl prop betting tips, it’s important to note two big ground rules.

First, you cannot parlay props with other props. This means you can’t tie multiple props into the same bet and try to increase your payout.

Second, all the “wacky” props that people like to bet on, including the length of the national anthem, the color of the Gatorade dumped on the winning coach, the first commercial and which songs will be sung during the halftime show are not available in Nevada. The Gaming Control Board does not allow it. So if you’re looking for those bets, you will have to go to another legal slate, such as New Jersey, or to a global (offshore) book.

Here are five tips for Super Bowl prop betting ...



# DON'T BET TOO MANY PROPS



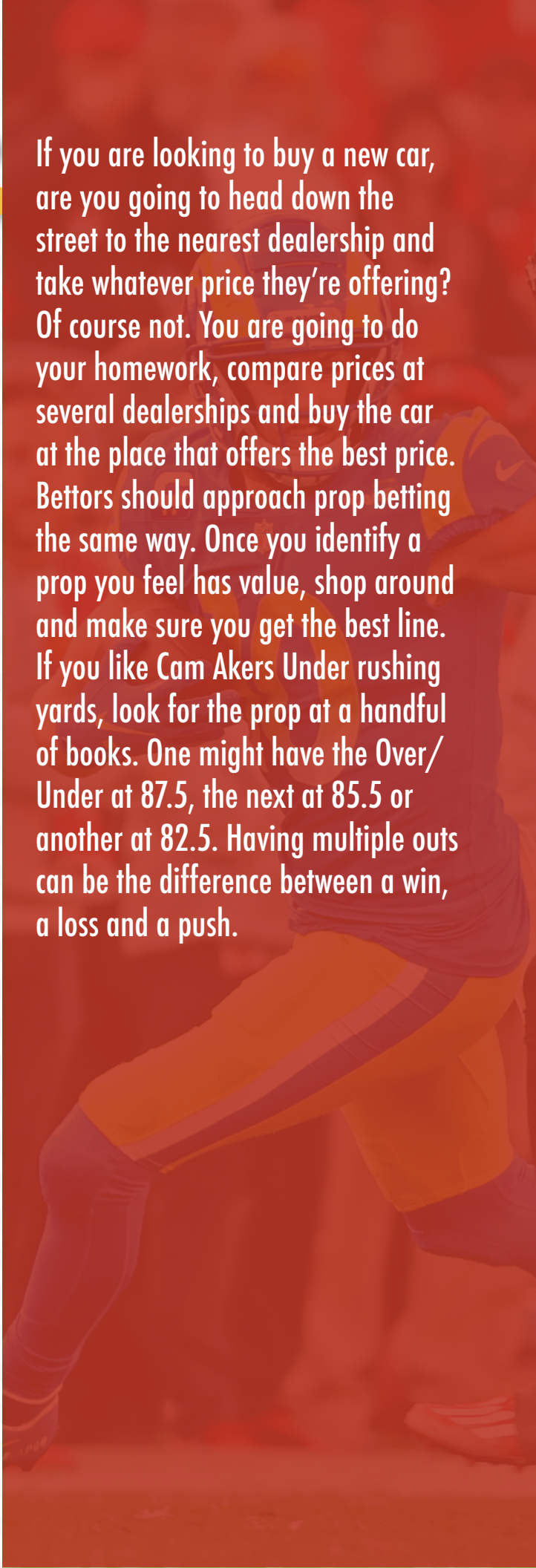
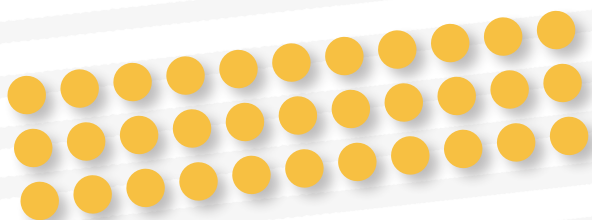
The sheer volume of available Super Bowl prop bets can be overwhelming. If you can think of one, chances are there's a sportsbook offering it. On one hand, this is a gift because you have so many chances to make money. But it can also be a curse and lead you to betting way too many. Don't feel as if you have to bet every single one; instead, pick a few that you feel you have a strong edge on. You would hate to spend two weeks handicapping the game and cash your spread or Over/Under play but then go 5-10 on prop bets and forfeit your hard-earned winnings on the conventional game line.



# SHOP FOR THE BEST LINE




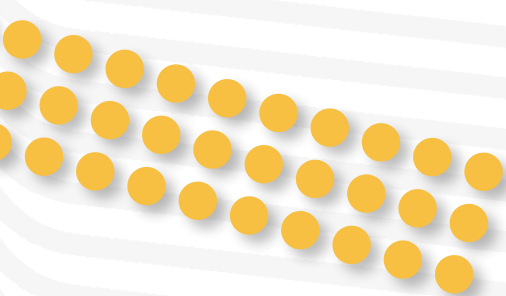
If you are looking to buy a new car, are you going to head down the street to the nearest dealership and take whatever price they're offering? Of course not. You are going to do your homework, compare prices at several dealerships and buy the car at the place that offers the best price. Bettors should approach prop betting the same way. Once you identify a prop you feel has value, shop around and make sure you get the best line. If you like Cam Akers Under rushing yards, look for the prop at a handful of books. One might have the Over/Under at 87.5, the next at 85.5 or another at 82.5. Having multiple outs can be the difference between a win, a loss and a push.

A background image of a football player in an orange jersey and purple pants, running with the ball, overlaid with a semi-transparent red filter.





# LEAN ON “NO” AND “UNDER”



Pros and Joes both love betting prop bets, but they typically approach them from different mindsets. Average Joes gravitate toward Yes, plus-money prices and Over. They want to get rich quick and are mesmerized by the big payouts because they want to turn their \$10 into \$100. They want to bet Overs because they are psychologically biased toward wanting to see a high-scoring, fun, action-packed game. It's no fun to root for an Under. However, the sportsbooks know this and shade numbers toward public sides, which creates added value to go the other way. If pros saw value on Overs, they likely hit them immediately when the props opened. If you're late to the party, all the Over value is gone because most numbers have been bet and moved. As a result, waiting late to take Unders isn't a bad idea. Every year, two wiseguy favorites are to bet "no" on "Will there be a safety?" and "Will the game go to overtime?" Also, sharps aren't afraid to bet favorite numbers for props. They aren't scared off by the minus number as long as they see value.



# DON'T BET THE COIN FLIP

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One of the most popular prop bets is the coin flip. On the surface, it seems like a fun bet. After all, it's either heads or tails. You have a 50-50 chance and if you win, you get paid out before the game even starts. However, it's not exactly a 50-50 shot because sportsbooks juice both sides to -103 or -105 or -110. This is why books love the coin-flip prop: No matter the outcome, they rake in the juice and are guaranteed a profit. Unless you see a book offering even money on a coin flip, you should lay off. The juice isn't worth the squeeze. Also, don't bet one-sided props. If the books are allowing only one option, there is likely a reason behind it. Don't fall into the trap.



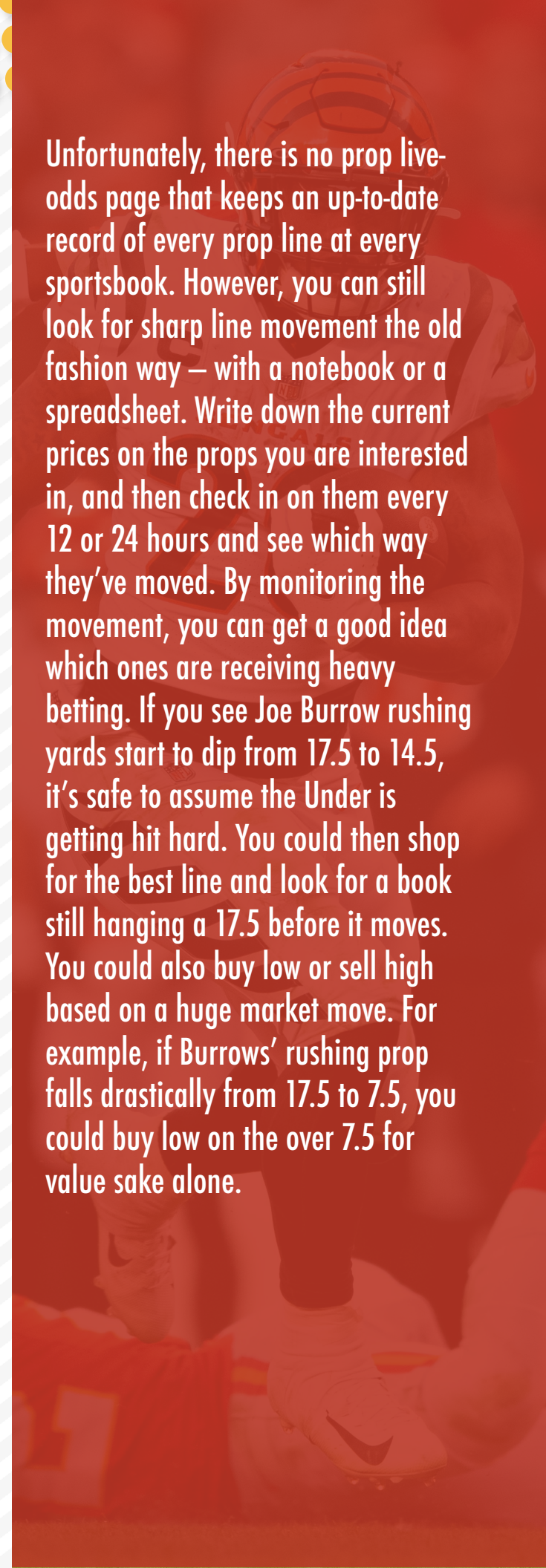


# 5.

## FOLLOW PROP LINE MOVEMENT



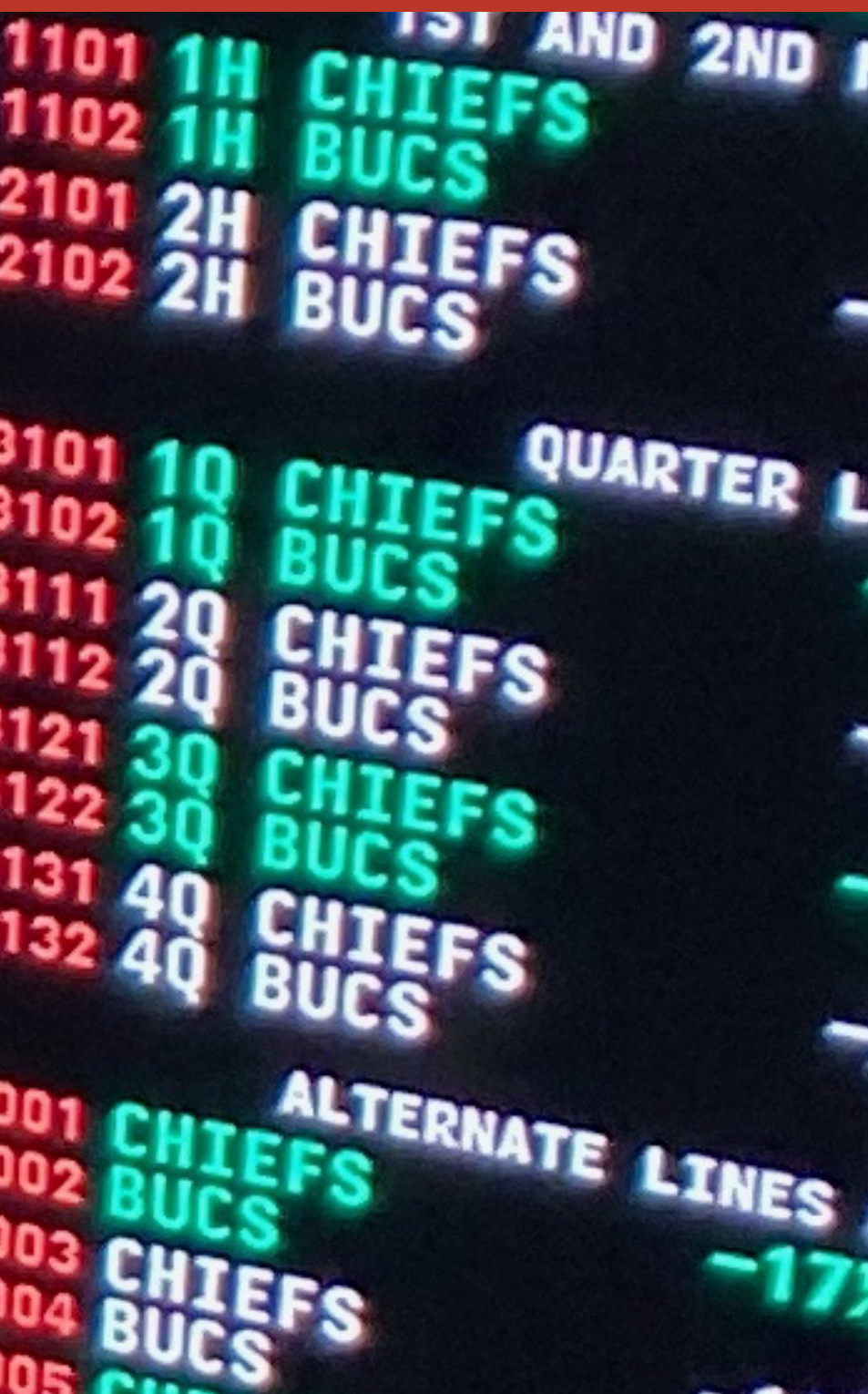
Unfortunately, there is no prop live-odds page that keeps an up-to-date record of every prop line at every sportsbook. However, you can still look for sharp line movement the old fashion way — with a notebook or a spreadsheet. Write down the current prices on the props you are interested in, and then check in on them every 12 or 24 hours and see which way they've moved. By monitoring the movement, you can get a good idea which ones are receiving heavy betting. If you see Joe Burrow rushing yards start to dip from 17.5 to 14.5, it's safe to assume the Under is getting hit hard. You could then shop for the best line and look for a book still hanging a 17.5 before it moves. You could also buy low or sell high based on a huge market move. For example, if Burrows' rushing prop falls drastically from 17.5 to 7.5, you could buy low on the over 7.5 for value sake alone.







# PROP BETTING STRATEGIES FOR THE SUPER BOWL



BY ADAM BURKE

@SKATINGTRIPODS

Remember when you were a kid and you sat down with the toy ads before Christmas to make out your wish list? That's what the prop bet offerings are like for the Super Bowl. Bettors used to run all over Las Vegas picking up thick packets of betting options for the Big Game and would have to hustle from sportsbook to sportsbook to try and pick off the good lines at the good prices.

Apps and automation have changed a lot, but prop betting is still widely regarded as the best way to bet on the Super Bowl. The spread and total for the most scrutinized game of the season with the highest betting handle are going to be extremely tight. Therefore, the sharpest and smartest bettors look to attack the props.

Here are a few basic prop betting strategies to consider before placing a wager:

## SHOP AROUND FOR THE BEST PRICE

Josh mentioned it, but I can't stress enough the importance of shopping around for the best lines on the props that you want. You are doing yourself a major disservice to take a line at -115 when you can find -110 or -105. The break-even percentage (the amount of bets you need to win to break even) at the standard vigorish of -110 is 52.3%. It goes up to 53.49% of bets at -115 and goes down to 51.22% at -105.

These may not seem like big differences, but over your betting career, they can amount to a lot. They are huge differences for those putting down lots of money, but bettors of all bankroll sizes should get in the habit of betting into the best juice.

Sportsbooks must balance a lot of action with props, as some books offer upwards of 1,000 different betting options. One book may be hit heavier on a running back's Over rushing yards, while another one may not have seen much action yet. The book heavy on the Over might have the line at 76.5 and the book that hasn't seen a lot might have the line at 73.5.

Why would you bet into 76.5 when you can bet into 73.5? Your bets may not always win, but you want to set yourself up for the best chance at success. Too many people will say, "What difference does 3 yards make?", or won't even look at the juice. These are cardinal sins for a bettor, especially at Super Bowl time.

## AVOID OVEREXPOSURE AND THINK ABOUT "GAME STATE"

Think back to your thoughts on Super Bowl LV last year. Did you like the Chiefs or the Bucs? What was the process that you used to come to that conclusion? Was there a specific matchup or two that you liked or didn't like?

Too many bettors look at the side that they like or the over and load up on player props that align with what they've already bet. The issue with this? If you're wrong about the game, it can be an extremely costly mistake. In some respects, you almost want to think about a reverse handicap with player props to keep from having too many outcomes tied to one team. If you really like the Bengals, wouldn't that mean the Rams are trailing late and would have to throw a lot? Maybe you look at passing and receiving props over for the team you expect to be trailing and rushing overs for the team you expect to be leading.

This is a concept called "game state". A team trailing by 14 points late will have to throw the ball. A game with a close score means that the offenses will mostly run like normal.

You may really like Cincinnati, but if the Bengals have a big second-half lead, that won't be a positive development for your player props. Unless the game ends up a one-sided blowout and you have a magical Super Bowl – which hasn't happened all that often – you want to have a really diversified portfolio with your prop bets.

Imagine how the game could play out. Think about the players that impacts the most, both positively and negatively. Think about the matchups that look good

to exploit and if those opportunities will be there. Then attack with your player prop wagers.

## ADDITION (+) BY SUBTRACTION (-)

In the era of same-game parlays and the other lottery tickets that get a lot of run from the sportsbook PR teams, bettors are led to believe that getting rich quick happens a lot. We see it on a micro level with these big betting events like the Super Bowl. Everybody wants to bet the big "plus prices" like the +800 on if the game will go to overtime or the +800 that there will be a safety. These things are very unlikely to happen, but fall under the "bet a little, win a lot" category.

We've had 55 Super Bowls and only one has gone to overtime. It took 51 Super Bowls to get the first one. A safety has happened in just six of 55 Super Bowls (the last one was in 2013). Generally speaking, the value in a lot of props is on laying a "minus price" as opposed to betting the plus price. The true odds of most of these events are not remotely close to what the plus-money odds would suggest.

You're more likely to add to your bankroll by betting more to win less instead of betting less to win more. That's by design. The sportsbooks know that bettors will love the idea of making a small wager to win a lot, so the odds look enticing. The reality is that they should look even more enticing, but they don't have to be set that way because bettors will fire away anyway.

## CROSS-SPORT AND NOVELTY PROPS

Most sportsbooks offer cross-sport props and those that are allowed by the rules and regulations of their jurisdictions offer novelty props. Let's start with cross-sport props, which will be something like "Player X Rushing Yards vs. NBA Player Points + Assists + Rebounds" or "Made Field Goals vs. NHL Player Shots on Goal".

These can be really astute opportunities to cash a ticket. Like I mentioned above, think about game state and how you expect things to play out. Player X may not get a lot of chances to run the ball, but the NBA player is participating in a game with a total of 230. He's likely to have a high-scoring environment and a lot of touches.

Novelty props are a lot different and are mostly offered in faraway places. These are props about the TV broadcast, commercials, Gatorade colors and all sorts of other topics. Because these aren't offered in most legal jurisdictions, they won't be of much concern, but my one piece of advice is to thoroughly and critically analyze what the specific house rules are on these bets. They are often open to a lot of interpretation and you're generally not going to sway the house's decision.



Final  
Score

LAST DIGIT OF CHIEFS SCORE AT END OF THE GAME

BETTERS

FOOTBALL

LOOK

SQUARES

SHARP VIA

BY DAVE TULEY

@VIEWFROMVEGAS

Football squares is the most popular way Americans gamble on the Super Bowl.

For the uninitiated, football squares is a grid of 10-by-10 boxes on a sheet of paper or a computer screen. Participants pay a certain amount per square and put their names or initials in random squares without knowing which numbers they'll get for each team. The teams are often shown with one at the top of the page and one on the side. When the grid is filled out, the organizer of the pool randomly selects the numbers — 0 through 9 — for each team and puts them on the grid.

Most pools will have a prize for the score at the end of each quarter, often with a bigger prize for the final score. Winners are determined by lining up the last digit of the score of the team listed on the top of the sheet and the last digit of the score of the team listed on the side of the sheet.

A \$1-per-square pool would have a \$100 prize pool and might award \$25 per quarter or could offer \$20 to the winner of the first, second and third quarters with \$40 for the final score.

The first job of the person running the pool is to determine how much his group

is willing to invest per square. A \$1-per-square game might be suitable for a party or small office of recreational football fans. But many offices can do a \$5 or \$10 pool, and tons of office pools charge \$100 or more per square.

Even before the expansion of legal sports betting in the U.S., football squares had been very popular and law enforcement had mostly ignored the game. That's because while they're technically illegal because they involve consideration (entry fee), a prize and chance, the feds tend to go after only those who run large pools if they take a cut. If that's the case, they're considered to be booking the bets — or running a gambling enterprise. We've seen many high-profile cases of people arrested for running football squares, though not the participants.

No strategy is involved, as you're just hoping to get numbers that give you a better chance of hitting. These include 0 (because it hits if your team is scoreless in the first quarter or lands back on 10, 20, 30 and such the rest of the game), 3 (as 3, 13 and 23 are common for NFL teams) and 7 (7, 17, and 27). The numbers you hope to avoid are 2, 5 and 9. But, hey, anything can happen.





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