FIELD GUIDE

# The dropping odds field guide

What a dropping odds alert actually means, how to turn a sharp price into a fair price, and how to know whether any of it is working. Twelve cards, free, with the numbers from our own tracking.

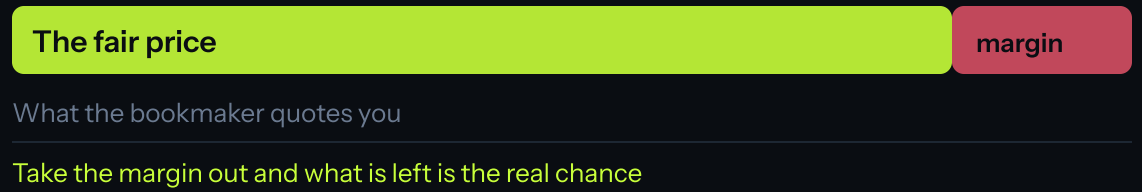


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THE IDEA

# A sharp price, with the margin taken out, is the best guess anyone has

Every price has a margin baked in: the bookmaker's cut. Take it out of a sharp book's price and what is left is the closest thing there is to the real chance of that result. We call it the fair price. If your own bookmaker pays more than the fair price, you are being paid over the odds. If it pays the same or less, there is nothing there, however good the bet feels.






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THE DROP

# A price that falls fast is information, and your bookmaker is late to it

Sharp prices move for a reason: a line-up, an injury, or money from people who are usually right. Smaller books copy those moves, but not instantly. That delay is the whole opportunity. A dropping odds alert is not a tip about who wins; it is a message saying the market just learned something and your book may not have caught up.






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THE RULE

# The fair price is your floor, not a target

One rule decides every bet: your bookmaker's price has to be higher than the fair price right now. Not the price in the alert, not the price ten minutes ago. If the fair price is 2.10 and your book pays 2.30, your edge is 2.30 ÷ 2.10 − 1 = +9.5%. If your book pays 2.05, you pass, even though the alert was real.

| YOUR BOOK PAYS | FAIR PRICE | EDGE | WHAT YOU DO |
|---|---|---|---|
| 2.30 | 2.10 | +9.5% | Bet |
| 1.85 | 1.76 | +5.1% | Bet |
| 3.10 | 3.05 | +1.6% | Marginal |
| 2.05 | 2.14 | -4.2% | Pass |



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TRUST

# The limit tells you how much the price is worth believing

Next to every line there is a maximum stake. It is the clearest signal of confidence there is: a price that accepts $2,000 is backed by real money, one that accepts $100 is barely an opinion. Pre-match with a high limit, the fair price is a solid reference. In-play with a low limit, it is mostly noise, and you are better off skipping it.



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SHAPES

# Two drops of the same size are not the same drop

How a price got there matters as much as how far it fell. A clean fall, with no bounces, is money arriving. A fall that has already bounced back is the market changing its mind, and the value is usually gone. A fall where the bookmaker also raised its limit is the strongest one of all: it dropped the price and asked for more money at the same time. A market that closes mid-fall is telling you it does not want to be on the other side.






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THE CLOCK

# Late drops are worth far more than early ones

This is the part most people get wrong. In our own tracking, drops that land in the last three hours before kick-off beat the margin-free closing price between 76% and 84% of the time. Drops more than twelve hours out beat it barely more than half the time. The same percentage fall, days apart, is two completely different bets. If you only take one thing from this guide, take this one.






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# Asian and European handicaps are not the same bet

Sharp books quote Asian handicaps; many high-street books quote European ones. They share the numbers and nothing else. An Asian handicap has two outcomes and can give you your stake back; a European one has three (1, X, 2) and never refunds. Asian −1 with a one-goal win is a push. European −1 with a one-goal win is a loss. Quick test: if your bookmaker's handicap has a draw option, it is European.

| AT YOUR BOOKMAKER | SAME BET AS THE ASIAN LINE |
|---|---|
| Back the team to win outright (the 1 or the 2) | -0.5 |
| Double chance, 1X or X2 (the same as European +1) | +0.5 on the same team |
| Draw no bet | 0 |
| European -1 (the team must win by two or more) | -1.5 |


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IN-PLAY

# In football in-play, the handicap starts from the current score

Sharp books price the rest of the match, not the whole match. Say it is 2-0 and the away side is priced at +1.5. The sharp book means the away side must not lose the remaining minutes by two goals or more, so a final 4-1 wins and a final 5-1 loses. Many bookmakers count the whole match instead, and for that same bet they need +3.5. The rule: take the sharp line and subtract the goals your team is already ahead by. Here the away side is two goals behind, so +1.5 – (–2) = +3.5. Get this wrong and you are comparing two different bets.



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THE ROUTINE

# From alert to bet, in under a minute

One: the alert lands, and you look at the score it came with and the limit. Two: you open the line and read the fair price now, not the one in the message. Three: you check your bookmaker has the same line, same period, same side. Four: if your price is higher than the fair price, you bet it; if not, you let it go without arguing. Five: you write it down. The whole thing gets faster with practice, and the window is short.



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STAKE

# Bet in units, and treat a zero as an answer

One unit is one percent of your bankroll. How many units a bet deserves depends on the price and on how big the edge is: a thin edge at a long price deserves less than a fat edge at a short one. When the suggested stake comes out at zero, that is not a bug; it is the method saying the edge does not pay for the variance at that price. Raising it by feel is how good methods get ruined.

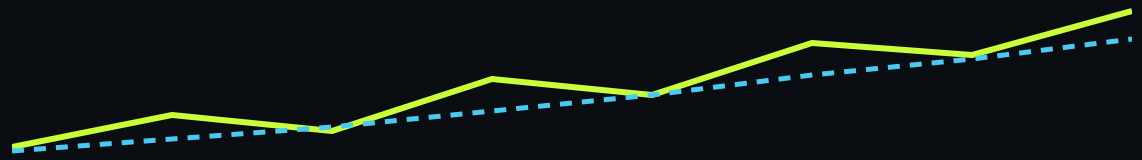


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THE SCOREBOARD

# Closing line value is the only honest way to know if this works

Whether a single bet won tells you almost nothing. What tells you something is whether you keep taking prices better than where the market closes. Beat the closing price often enough and the profit follows, even through a bad month. Lose to it and you are losing slowly whatever this week's results say. Track every bet, look at your average closing line value, and judge the method by that rather than by your bank balance.



what you actually made

what your closing line value said you should



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LIMITS

# What we would not do

We would not chase a price that has already corrected: if your book has moved, the alert is history. We would not raise the minimum drop to keep only the very best: each one is worth more in expected value, but so few arrive that you add up fewer units. We would not bet a line we have not matched exactly, period for period. And we would not promise anyone a profit: this is a way of getting a small edge, repeatedly, with swings in between. Bet only what you can afford to lose.



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