
STRATEGY SERIES



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HUNT OR BE HUNTED

Stop-Loss Hunting Secrets &
Liquidity Manipulation

Your stop-loss was not bad luck.
It was the plan. Learn to see it. Learn to survive it.

By **AVIK KANRAR**

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First Edition · 2026 · Free Educational Series

FREE COURSE

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Author's Note

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I have a confession.

Before I understood stop-loss hunting, I lost money. Consistently. I would find the perfect setup, place my stop-loss exactly where every YouTube video and trading book told me to, press buy... and watch in horror as price dropped JUST enough to hit my stop, then shot up exactly where I predicted. Every. Single. Time.

I thought I was unlucky. I thought the market hated me personally. I thought maybe trading was rigged and I should quit.

Then I learned the truth: the market IS rigged — but not against everyone. Only against those who do not understand the game. Banks and institutions NEED your stop-loss to fill their orders. Your loss is not a bug in the system. It is a feature. It is how the system works.

This course is the guide I wish I had when I started. It will show you exactly how stop-loss hunting works, where NOT to place your stops, how to spot a hunt before it happens, and most importantly — how to PROFIT from the very mechanism that used to destroy you.

Stop being the prey. Become the hunter.

Avik Kanrar

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PART I

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THE UGLY TRUTH

What they never told you about why you keep losing

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01

CHAPTER 1

What is Stop-Loss Hunting?

The mechanism that makes 95% of traders lose

Close your eyes and remember the last time this happened to you: You found a beautiful trade setup. The trend was in your favor. The indicators confirmed your direction. You placed your entry, set your stop-loss just below the obvious support level — exactly where every tutorial told you to put it — and you waited with confidence.

Then, within minutes or hours, price dropped. It sliced through your support level like a hot knife through butter. Your stop-loss triggered. Your trade closed at a loss. And then — as if the market was laughing at you personally — price immediately reversed and shot up to your original target. Without you on board.

That was not bad luck. That was not a random fluctuation. That was a stop-loss hunt — a deliberate move by institutional players to collect the liquidity sitting at your stop-loss level. And it happens every single day, in every single market, to millions of retail traders around the world.

Stop-Loss Hunting Defined

A stop-loss hunt occurs when large institutional players (banks, hedge funds, market makers) intentionally push price to a level where they know retail stop-loss orders are clustered. When those stops are triggered, they create a surge of orders that the institution uses to fill their own massive position — in the opposite direction. Your loss literally becomes their entry ticket.

WARNING

This is not a conspiracy theory. This is documented market mechanics. Institutions need counterparty orders to fill their positions. The most efficient source of those orders? Your stop-loss. Understanding this changes everything.

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CHAPTER 2

Why Institutions Hunt Your Stops

The economics of being the biggest player in the room

Imagine you want to buy a house in a small village. There are only 10 houses for sale. If you quietly buy one, the price stays stable. But what if you need to buy ALL 10 houses? The moment the village learns a rich buyer is in town, every seller raises their price. By house number 5, you are paying double. That is the problem institutional traders face every single day.

A large hedge fund wanting to buy \$200 million worth of Bitcoin cannot just click 'buy' on Binance. There are not enough sellers at the current price to fill that order. If they try, the price would spike upward before they finish, and they would end up paying much more than they wanted. They need a POOL of sellers — a large number of sell orders all hitting the market at the same time.

Where is the biggest pool of sell orders? Right below the obvious support level, where millions of retail traders have placed their stop-loss sell orders. Every single one of those stops is a pending sell order. When the institution pushes price down to trigger those stops, all those sell orders execute simultaneously — creating the massive pool of liquidity the institution needs to buy at a discount.

Retail Trader vs Smart Money — Same Chart, Different Eyes

RETAIL TRADER

- 1. Sees support level
- 2. Places stop just below
- 3. Stop gets hit
- 4. Exits at a loss
- 5. Watches price reverse

VS

SMART MONEY

- 1. Sees stop-loss cluster
- 2. Pushes price INTO stops
- 3. Triggers cascade of sells
- 4. Uses selling as their entry
- 5. Rides the real move up

THE BRUTAL MATH

Here is the brutal math: if 10,000 retail traders each have a \$100 stop-loss below support, that is \$1,000,000 in sell orders waiting to be triggered. That is exactly the liquidity a fund needs to fill a \$1,000,000 buy order. Your collective pain is their precise entry. Once you see it, you cannot unsee it.

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CHAPTER 3

Where Do Hunts Happen?

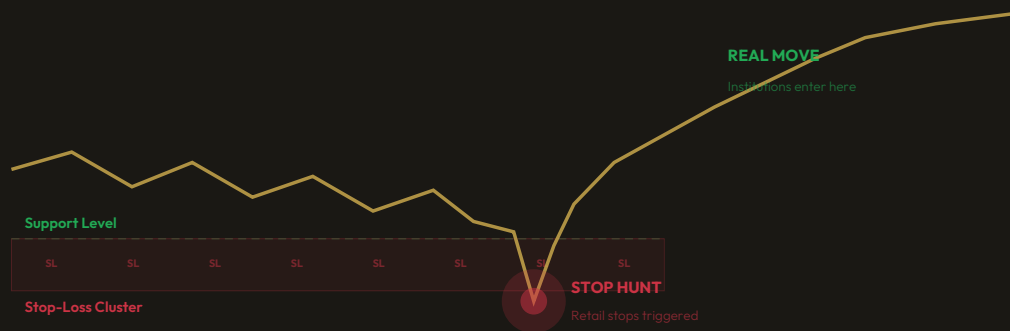
The map of every hunting ground on your chart

Stop-loss hunts do not happen at random price levels. They happen at predictable, identifiable locations – the same spots where retail traders are TAUGHT to place their stops. Institutions do not need to guess where your stops are. They know exactly where you put them because you all learned the same rules from the same books.

The 7 Most Hunted Locations

1. Just below obvious support levels – the #1 hunting ground
2. Just above obvious resistance levels – where short sellers place stops
3. Below equal lows – multiple lows at the same price scream 'stop-losses here!'
4. Above equal highs – same concept, opposite direction
5. Below round numbers – stops below \$50,000, \$100, etc.
6. Below trendlines – retail draws a trendline, places stop just below it
7. At the previous day/week high or low – very common institutional targets

Anatomy of a Stop-Loss Hunt



THE OBVIOUS LEVEL RULE

If a price level is 'obvious,' it is dangerous. If every trading tutorial would tell you to place your stop there, that is exactly where the institution will aim. The more obvious the level, the more stops are clustered there, and the more attractive it is as a hunting target.

PART II

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SURVIVAL GUIDE

How to stop being the prey

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CHAPTER 4

Where NOT to Place Your Stop-Loss

The levels that get hunted every single day

Now that you understand WHY hunts happen and WHERE they happen, the most urgent question is: how do you protect yourself? The answer starts with understanding where NOT to place your stop-loss — because the most 'logical' placement is often the most dangerous.

Where NOT to Place Your Stop-Loss



The Smart Stop-Loss Rules

Rule 1 — Add a Buffer: Never place your stop exactly at support/resistance. Add 1-2% extra beyond the level. This extra room often saves you from the hunt wick.

Rule 2 — Use ATR: The Average True Range indicator measures normal price volatility. Place your stop 1.5-2x ATR beyond the key level. This accounts for normal market noise plus hunt wicks.

Rule 3 — Stop Behind Structure: Instead of placing stops at the obvious level, place them beyond the NEXT structural level. For example, if support is at \$100 and the next structure is at \$95, place your stop at \$94.

Rule 4 — Accept a Wider Stop: A wider stop means a smaller position size (to keep the same \$ risk). That is fine. It is better to have a small position that survives than a large position that gets hunted.

WIDER STOP = MORE WINS

Here is a counterintuitive truth: a wider stop-loss actually IMPROVES your win rate. Yes, you risk more points per trade — but you compensate by reducing your position size. The result? You survive the hunt, stay in the trade, and ride the real move. Your net profit often increases because you stop getting stopped out of winning trades.

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CHAPTER 5

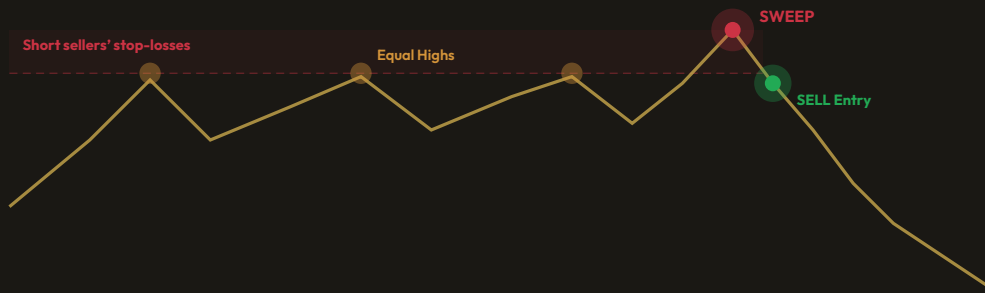
Equal Highs & Equal Lows Traps

The neon signs that say HUNT ME

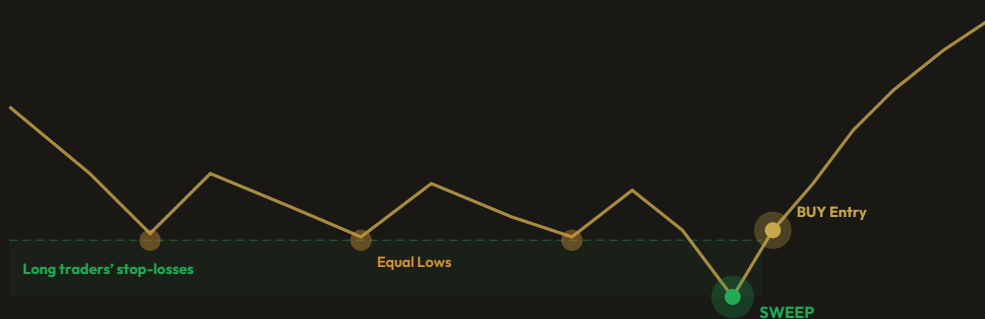
If there is one pattern on a chart that screams 'stop-loss hunting incoming,' it is equal highs and equal lows. When price touches the same level two or three times without breaking through, retail traders see 'strong support' or 'strong resistance.' But smart money sees something completely different: a PILE of stop-loss orders waiting to be collected.

Think about it: every time price bounces off a support level, more traders add long positions with stop-losses just below it. By the third bounce, the stop-loss cluster below that level is enormous. It is like a pile of gold sitting in an unlocked vault. Institutions are not going to walk past it.

Equal Highs Sweep — Buy-Side Liquidity Hunt



Equal Lows Sweep — Sell-Side Liquidity Hunt



How to Trade Equal Highs/Lows

- Step 1: When you see equal highs or equal lows forming, do NOT place a trade at that level. You are walking into a trap.
- Step 2: WAIT for the sweep. Let price break through the level and trigger the stops.
- Step 3: Watch for a strong reversal candle after the sweep (engulfing, hammer, pin bar).
- Step 4: Enter in the direction of the reversal. Your stop goes beyond the sweep wick.
- Step 5: Target the opposite liquidity pool (if lows were swept, target the highs, and vice versa).

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CHAPTER 6

Spotting a Hunt Before It Happens

The early warning signs that save your capital

What if you could see a stop-loss hunt coming BEFORE it happens? What if the chart gave you warning signs that said 'danger ahead, either widen your stop or stay out'? Good news — it does. Hunts leave clues before they strike, and learning to read these clues is one of the most valuable skills in trading.

The 5 Warning Signs of an Incoming Hunt

1. Multiple touches at the same level: Each touch adds more stops. Three or more touches = high probability hunt incoming.
2. Decreasing volume on bounces: Each bounce from support/resistance has less conviction. The market is getting tired — ripe for manipulation.
3. Slow, grinding approach: When price slowly creeps toward a key level instead of bouncing sharply, institutions are positioning for the sweep.
4. Divergence on RSI/MACD: Price makes equal lows but RSI makes higher lows — this divergence often precedes a sweep-and-reverse.
5. Time of day: Hunts cluster around market opens, session overlaps, and low-liquidity periods. If a key level is near during these times, be extra cautious.

WARNING

When you see 3 or more of these warning signs together, either: (A) widen your stop-loss significantly, (B) reduce your position size, or (C) stay completely flat until the hunt happens. There is no shame in sitting out. The best trade is often no trade.

PART III

BECOME THE HUNTER

From victim to predator — profiting from the hunt

07

CHAPTER 7

How to Profit FROM Stop Hunts

Turning the weapon against its makers

This is the chapter that transforms you. Everything you have learned so far was about DEFENSE — understanding hunts, avoiding them, surviving them. But now we go on offense. Now you learn to position yourself ALONGSIDE the institutions, entering where they enter, and riding the move that they create.

The strategy is elegantly simple: instead of placing your trade BEFORE the hunt (where you get stopped out), you WAIT for the hunt to happen, then enter in the opposite direction. You let the institutions do their dirty work, and you ride the aftermath.

The Hunt-and-Reverse Strategy

1. Mark the obvious level where you expect a hunt (equal highs/lows, strong S/R)
2. Wait patiently for price to sweep through that level. Do NOT pre-enter. Do NOT predict. Wait.
3. Watch for the wick — the sweep will usually appear as a long wick that goes beyond the level and immediately pulls back. This is the hunt in action.
4. Confirm with a reversal candle on the lower timeframe (engulfing, pin bar, or CHoCH)
5. Enter your trade in the direction of the reversal. Your stop-loss goes just beyond the hunt wick.
6. Your target is the opposite liquidity pool — if sell-side liquidity was swept, target buy-side liquidity above.

WHY THE R:R IS INSANE

This strategy naturally gives you incredible risk-reward ratios — often 1:3, 1:5, or even higher. Why? Because your entry is at the extreme of the hunt (very low for buys, very high for sells) and your target is the opposite extreme. The distance between the two extremes is your profit potential.

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CHAPTER 8

The Hunter's Entry Model

Your step-by-step framework for every hunt trade

Now let us turn the strategy into a precise, repeatable system. This is the model you will use for every single hunt-based trade. Print it. Memorize it. Follow it without deviation.

The Hunter's Playbook — How to Profit from a Hunt



The Hunter's Checklist

Before EVERY hunt trade, confirm ALL of these:

1. There is a clear liquidity pool at an obvious level (equal H/L, strong S/R)
2. Price has swept beyond that level (the wick exists)
3. A reversal candle has formed on the 5-min or 15-min chart
4. Volume spiked during the sweep (real participation, not just a random wick)
5. Your stop-loss is beyond the sweep wick with a small buffer
6. Your risk-reward is at least 1:3
7. You are risking no more than 1-2% of your account

ALL 7 boxes must be checked. No exceptions. No shortcuts.

09

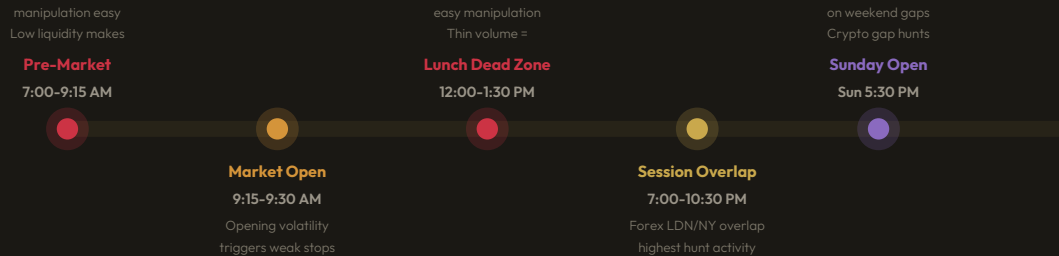
CHAPTER 9

When Hunts Happen — Timing

The clock that tells you when to be on high alert

Stop-loss hunts do not happen randomly throughout the day. They cluster at specific times when institutional players are most active or when market liquidity is thin enough to make manipulation cheap. Knowing WHEN hunts are likely to happen gives you a massive advantage.

When Do Hunts Happen? — The Hunting Hours



The Most Dangerous Times (IST)

Pre-Market (7:00-9:15 AM): Low liquidity before Indian markets open. Easy for institutions to push price.

Market Open (9:15-9:30 AM): The flood of overnight orders creates chaos. Weak stops get hit immediately.

Lunch Hour (12:00-1:30 PM): Volume drops dramatically. This thin liquidity is perfect for hunts.

London-NY Overlap (7:00-10:30 PM): The highest volume period in forex. Institutions use this session for their biggest hunts because the liquidity they collect is enormous.

Sunday Open (5:30 PM): The crypto and forex markets reopen with potential gaps. Weekend stop-losses get massacred.

DANGER WINDOW PROTOCOL

If you have an open position and one of these danger windows is approaching, either tighten your stop-loss, take partial profits, or close the position entirely. Being in a trade during a high-risk hunting window without extra protection is asking for trouble.

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CHAPTER 10

The Hunter's Mindset

The identity that transforms your trading forever

You have now learned everything you need to know about stop-loss hunting — what it is, why it happens, where it happens, when it happens, how to survive it, and how to profit from it. But none of this matters if you do not adopt the right mindset. Knowledge without identity change is just trivia.

You Are No Longer a Retail Trader

From this moment forward, you do not think like a retail trader. You do not place stops where tutorials tell you. You do not chase breakouts. You do not panic when price moves against you. You are a hunter. You wait. You watch. You let the trap spring. And then you strike.

Patience Is Your Superweapon

The hunt-and-reverse strategy requires extraordinary patience. You might wait hours or even days for a setup. Most of your screen time will be spent watching, not clicking. This feels unproductive — but it is the most productive thing you can do. Every minute you spend waiting saves you from a losing trade you would have taken impulsively.

The Market Is a Chessboard, Not a Casino

Retail traders treat the market like a slot machine — pull the lever and hope for the best. Institutions treat it like chess — every move is calculated, every opponent's likely response is anticipated, and the endgame is planned before the first piece moves. You now know the chess moves. Play accordingly.

Your Hunter's Oath

I will never place my stop at the obvious level.
I will always ask: 'Where is the liquidity?'
I will wait for the hunt before I enter.
I will confirm with a reversal candle and volume.
I will risk no more than 2% per trade.
I will be patient when the market tests me.
I will accept losses as part of the process.
I will never revenge trade after being hunted.
I am the hunter. Not the hunted.

THE FINAL TRUTH

Every professional trader was once a retail trader who got hunted repeatedly. The difference is they decided to understand the game instead of quitting. You have just made the same decision. Welcome to the right side of the market.

Quick Reference Sheet

Stop Placement Rules

Never: Just below support or just above resistance

Always: 1.5-2x ATR beyond the key level, or beyond the next structural level

Buffer: Add 1-2% extra room beyond the obvious level

Hunt-and-Reverse Strategy

1. Mark obvious liquidity level ☑ 2. WAIT for sweep ☑ 3. Confirm reversal candle + volume ☑ 4. Enter opposite direction ☑ 5. SL beyond sweep wick ☑ 6. Target opposite liquidity pool. Min R:R = 1:3

Warning Signs of Incoming Hunt

Multiple touches + Declining volume + Slow grind approach + RSI divergence + Danger time window = HIGH probability hunt

Most Dangerous Times (IST)

Pre-market 7-9:15 AM | Market open 9:15-9:30 AM | Lunch 12-1:30 PM | LDN/NY overlap 7-10:30 PM |

Sunday open 5:30 PM

The Hunter's Checklist

Liquidity pool visible ☑ | Sweep happened ☑ | Reversal candle ☑ | Volume spike ☑ | SL beyond wick ☑ | R:R 1:3+ ☑ | Risk 1-2% ☑

Glossary

- ATR** — Average True Range — measures normal price volatility over a period.
- Buy-Side Liquidity** — Stop-losses clustered above swing highs or equal highs.
- Equal Highs** — Multiple swing highs at the same level — a liquidity magnet.
- Equal Lows** — Multiple swing lows at the same level — a liquidity magnet.
- Hunt Wick** — A long candle wick that sweeps a level and immediately reverses.
- Liquidity** — Clusters of pending orders (stop-losses) that institutions target.
- Liquidity Pool** — An area where a large number of stop-loss orders are concentrated.
- Market Maker** — An institution that provides liquidity and can influence short-term price.
- Retail Trader** — Individual traders trading with personal capital (not institutional).
- Sell-Side Liquidity** — Stop-losses clustered below swing lows or equal lows.
- Smart Money** — Institutional traders: banks, hedge funds, algorithmic systems.
- Stop Hunt** — Deliberate price manipulation to trigger clustered stop-loss orders.
- Stop-Loss Cluster** — A concentration of stop-loss orders at a single price level.
- Sweep** — Price moving through a liquidity level to trigger stops before reversing.
- Wick** — The thin line above or below a candle body showing price rejection.



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ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Avik Kanrar

Founder of cRyPtO sMaRt — a platform dedicated to making cryptocurrency and trading education accessible to everyone.

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