

Market Structure Checklist and Reference Sheet

1. High Time Frame (HTF) – Big Picture / Context

- **Examples:** Monthly, Weekly, Daily (depending on style).
 - **Purpose:**
 - Provides the macro structure (Stage 1–4 cycle).
 - Shows the largest supply & demand zones.
 - Defines whether you should be looking for longs, shorts, or staying out.
 - Helps you avoid trading against institutional flows.
 - **Analogy:** “30,000 ft view” of the market.
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2. Intermediate Time Frame (ITF) – Trend / Control

- **Examples:** Weekly/Daily (for swing), 4H/1H (for intraday), 15m (for scalping).
 - **Purpose:**
 - Confirms who is in control (buyers vs sellers).
 - Identifies swing highs/lows and trend direction.
 - Filters setups — keeps you trading *with* momentum, not against it.
 - Connects the HTF context to the LTF execution.
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3. Lower Time Frame (LTF) – Execution / Entry

- **Examples:** Daily/4H/1H (for swing), 15m/5m/2m (for intraday/scalp).
- **Purpose:**
 - Provides the actual trade entries and exits.

- Zooms into supply/demand zones and candlestick setups.
 - Finds precise levels for stop loss and targets.
 - Uses patterns like COG, pause breakouts, or micro S&D zones.
 - **Analogy: This is where you “pull the trigger.”**
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How They Link Together

- **HTF = Should I trade? (Big picture bias)**
 - **ITF = What direction? (Trend filter)**
 - **LTF = Where exactly? (Entry + Risk management)**
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Examples by Trading Style

- **Position / Wealth Building → HTF: Monthly | ITF: Weekly | LTF: Daily**
- **Swing Trading → HTF: Weekly | ITF: Daily | LTF: 4H / 1H**
- **Intraday Trading → HTF: Daily | ITF: 4H / 1H | LTF: 15m**
- **Scalping → HTF: 1H | ITF: 15m | LTF: 5m**

1. Start with the Higher Time Frame (HTF) – Big Picture Context

- Identify which stage of the market cycle (1–4) price is in.
 - Mark major **supply and demand zones**.
 - Note the overall **trend** (uptrend, downtrend, or sideways).
 - (Optional) Locate the **20/200 EMA** relative to price.
 - (Optional) Highlight key **support and resistance** levels.
 - Confirm whether the market is in Stage 2 (buying focus) or Stage 4 (shorting focus).
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2. Move to the Intermediate Time Frame (ITF) – Trend Confirmation

- Define **who is in control** (buyers or sellers) by observing trend.
 - Look for **swing highs and swing lows** to confirm trend direction.
 - Is price making HH/HLs or LH/LLs?
 - Confirm the macro HTF stage aligns with the ITF trend (macro Stage 2 + micro Stage 2 = green light to buy).
 - Disqualify trades where the ITF trend contradicts the HTF structure.
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3. Drop to the Lower Time Frame (LTF) – Trade Execution

- Identify **entry zones** (valid supply/demand zones, pause-breakouts, or COG setups).
 - Use candlestick confirmation (COG, BT, TT, accumulation/distribution volume).
 - Optional - Watch for candlestick signals around the key level: WRBs (momentum), NBs (slowing momentum), BTs (bottoming tails), TTs (topping tails)
 - Select the appropriate **entry type** (set & forget, confirmation entry, breakout entry).
 - Place **stop loss** just beyond the supply/demand zone or candlestick signal.
 - Define **target** at prior pivot high/low or opposing zone.
 - Ensure **Reward-to-Risk of at least 2:1**.
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4. Final Trade Filter – Before Pulling the Trigger

- Does HTF context, ITF trend, and LTF entry **all align**?
 - Are HTF / ITF / LTF all saying uptrend or downtrend?
- Is institutional activity visible
 - Is price in a zone?
 - Are we around EMAs and are they rising or declining?
- Does the stop loss make sense?

- Is it above or below a swing point?
 - Is it above or below a zone?
 - Have I journaled the setup before entry?
 - Am I risking no more than my pre-defined % of account?
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5. Post-Trade

- Log trade details (timeframe analysis, entry reason, exit reason).
- Review whether multi-time frame alignment was correct.
- Note emotional discipline (did you follow plan or deviate?).
- **Review trade log weekly!**
 - Analyze performance over a collection of trades
 - Identify strengths/weaknesses and questions
 - What were the mistakes? How much did they cost?
 - Return to education, labs, and coaches looking for answers