

XAUUSD (Gold) EA Session & Settings Checklist

Gold is not a currency pair with a different name. XAUUSD moves further per hour, gaps harder around US data, and punishes settings copied from EURUSD. Run this checklist before any gold EA trades — on demo or live.

1. Know your broker's gold contract

- ☐ Contract size: 1 standard lot is usually 100 oz. A 0.01 lot still moves about \$1 per \$1 move in gold — check, do not assume.
- ☐ Digits: most brokers quote 2 or 3 decimals. A "30 point" stop means 0.30 on a 2-digit quote and 0.030 on a 3-digit quote. This one setting breaks more gold EAs than any other.
- ☐ Spread at your session: record the typical spread at London open, New York open, and the Asian session. An EA backtested at 20 points dies at a live spread of 45.
- ☐ Swap: gold swaps are heavy. A scalper holding overnight can pay more in swap than it targets in profit.

2. Session rules

- ☐ Highest-quality movement: London open and the London/New York overlap.
- ☐ Highest-risk minutes: US CPI, FOMC, NFP and payroll Fridays — decide in advance whether the EA pauses or trades, and write it down.
- ☐ Avoid the daily rollover window (about 21:00–23:00 GMT, broker-dependent): spreads widen several-fold for a few minutes.
- ☐ Friday: gold frequently trends into the close; grid and martingale EAs should reduce exposure or stop opening new baskets before the weekend gap.

3. Settings sanity check

Setting	Sane starting point	Red flag
Risk per trade	0.25–1% of balance	"Lot = balance / 100" style auto-lot with no cap
Stop loss	Based on ATR or a fixed \$ distance you have backtested	No stop, "virtual stop", or stop wider than 3× take profit
Grid distance	Wider than the average hourly range	Fixed small distance copied from a forex pair
Max floating loss	A hard equity stop you set yourself	"The EA manages risk internally" with no number

The gold rule: if a setting sheet does not state the gold price move it was designed for ("tested 2020–2026, survived a \$300 adverse move"), it was not designed for gold's range at all.