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Rule: If you're betting the favorite, get the lowest spread possible and if you're betting on the underdog, get the highest spread possible. There are various ways of increasing your odds of winning, but here's one that most people overlook. First, let's take an exaggerated scenario to show what is meant. You've decided that Minnesota as a 12.5 favorite over Chicago will cover the spread. All the houses have Minnesota at -12.5, except The Hilton, which has Minnesota at -5. Now, where do you place your bet? If you place your bet at the Hilton, your odds of having Minnesota cover are much greater than they would be at -12.5. Of course, if Minnesota wins by 13 or more everyone who took Minnesota wins. However, if the Vikings win by anywhere from 6 to 12 points, you win while those who bet at -12.5 lose. The chances of having such a wide difference in the spread are very slim. However, a half point difference is very often the case. In week 3 this season, Chicago at Oakland, Oakland was a 7 point favorite at most houses. The spreads in the newspapers also had Oakland as a 7 point favorite. But, a couple of houses had Oakland at 6.5 and another had Oakland at 7.5. If you had decided to bet on Oakland to cover, you could place your bet at one of the houses that had Oakland a 7 point favorite. But, you would increase your odds of winning if you bet instead at the house that had Oakland at a 6.5 favorite. True, it's only a half point difference. But, that's a half point in your favor. The final score was Oakland 24, Chicago 17. Supposing a \$100 bet, those who bet Oakland -6.5 are \$100 richer than those who took Oakland at -7 and \$210 dollars richer than those who took Oakland at -7.5. True, those who bet Oakland at -7 had a push and lost nothing but while they won nothing, you won \$100. And, all because of a half point difference.

Look for Trends. Use Pro Predictor's many statistical pages to spot trends. If you spot a trend, factor that into your decision. Some teams have other teams' number. In the last four years the 49ers have covered against the Rams 7 of 8 times and the one time they didn't, Young was hurt and they had to play Druckmiller, a rookie. In the last five years, Green Bay has lost 4 out the 5 games played in Detroit. Trends are not guarantees. The trend might not hold and you lose your bet. But, remember the purpose is to increase your chances of winning. Based on past performance, if you bet on the 49ers to cover against the Rams, you're more likely to win your bet than to lose. Consider: I pick a year at random and ask you to tell me how many days are in the year. Your best bet is to say 365 because only 1 in 4 years have 366. True, the year I picked may be a leap year and you lose. But, if we repeat the test, you will win 3 out of 4 times. And that's the idea behind factoring in trends in making your [bets](#).