📈 Retail Equities Trading Plan

Retail equity trading plan — Schwab/Thinkorswim, scaling to $4,000/month.

ⓘ This plan governs all retail equity trading activity through Charles Schwab. Every trade taken must align with the rules and parameters defined here. The goal is not to make money fast — it is to build a process, identify a real edge through MyPropJournal, and scale that edge systematically. When in doubt, do not trade.

🏢 Overview

This is the retail equity trading plan for a Charles Schwab brokerage account. Trading is conducted using **Thinkorswim** for charting and analysis and **DASTrader Pro** for direct-access execution ($150/month). Scanning and screening is handled through **Finviz** and similar tools. Economic data and macro context come from **Trading Economics**.

The focus is on large-cap US equities and their short-dated options — high-liquidity, high-volatility names where price action is readable and order flow is meaningful. This is not a buy-and-hold account. Every position is a deliberate, short-term trade with a defined entry, stop, and target.

This plan is built as a business. A business has a budget, expenses, rules, and performance benchmarks. This account is no different.

🛠️ Tools & Platforms

Tool	Purpose	Cost
Charles Schwab	Brokerage & clearing	Free
Thinkorswim	Charting & analysis	Free
DASTrader Pro	Direct-access execution	$150/month
Finviz	Stock screener & scanner	Free / Elite optional
Trading Economics	Macro & economic calendar	Free
MyPropJournal	Trade journaling & edge discovery	Subscription

⚠️ DASTrader Pro at $150/month is a fixed business expense. This cost must be covered before the account is considered profitable for the month. Month one target is at minimum breaking even on platform costs.

🎯 Primary Objective

This account has one long-term goal: **scale to $4,000/month in consistent net profit** through disciplined process, edge identification, and systematic scaling.

That goal is not achieved by taking big swings. It is achieved by:

1. Trading small and logging everything while the process is being built
2. Using MyPropJournal to identify which setups actually have an edge
3. Scaling daily risk limits progressively as the account grows
4. Sizing up aggressively only on A and A+ setups once the edge is proven through data

> The $4,000/month target is a destination, not a starting point. Do not trade like you are already there. Build the foundation first.

🕐 Trading Hours

All trading is conducted during **regular market hours** only.

- **Pre-market prep:** 8:00 AM – 9:30 AM ET (scanning, news, key levels, economic calendar)
- **Primary session:** 9:35 AM – 11:30 AM ET (highest quality setups, most volume)
- **Secondary session (optional):** 2:00 PM – 3:30 PM ET (only on strong trending days)
- **No trading:** 11:30 AM – 2:00 PM ET (low volume, choppy, avoid)
- **No trading:** After 3:30 PM ET (erratic late-day moves, wide spreads)

> ⚠️ Do not trade the first 5 minutes of the open (9:30–9:35 AM) unless the setup is extremely clear and pre-planned. The open is loud. Let price settle and show its hand first.

📊 Instruments

Primary:

- Large-cap US equities (SPY, TSLA, NVDA, AAPL, AMZN, META, and similar)
- Short-dated options on the above names (0DTE to 5DTE, naked calls/puts only)

Secondary:

- Sector ETFs (XLK, XLE, QQQ) on high-conviction directional days

> Stick to names you know and have traded before. Do not chase unfamiliar tickers because they are moving. Familiarity with how a stock moves is itself an edge.

🧠 Methodology

Trading is based on **technical price action and order flow analysis** — not tips, alerts, social media, or gut feel. The focus is on reading where price is relative to key levels and whether the setup matches a documented playbook.

Core principles:

- Higher timeframe sets the bias — lower timeframe provides the entry
- Key levels matter: prior day high/low, VWAP, pre-market high/low, major support/resistance
- Order flow and tape reading confirm or kill the setup — never fight clear absorption
- Every trade must match a documented playbook in MyPropJournal — no freelancing
- A and A+ setups get sized — B setups get minimum size or are skipped entirely

Scanning approach (pre-market):

- Run Finviz scans for high relative volume, gap ups/downs, and earnings movers
- Cross-reference with Trading Economics calendar for macro risk on the day
- Build a focused watchlist of 3–5 names — do not chase everything that moves

Charting & execution workflow:

- Chart analysis in Thinkorswim (1-day, 15-min, 5-min, 1-min timeframes)
- All order entry and execution through DASTrader Pro for speed and precision
- Hotkeys configured for entries, stops, and scaling out — no fumbling during live trades

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🛡️ Risk Management

> Risk management is the foundation of this plan. Without it, there is no account left to trade. These rules are non-negotiable — they apply every single day regardless of how good or bad the prior session was.

Daily Stop Loss — Scaling Model

The daily stop loss starts conservatively and scales as the account grows. The goal is to protect capital while the edge is being identified, then give the process room to breathe once the edge is proven.

Account Profit Milestone	Daily Stop Loss

$0 – $999 (starting out)	$100/day
$1,000 accumulated profit	$150/day
$2,000 accumulated profit	$200/day
$3,000 accumulated profit	$275/day
$4,000+ accumulated profit	$350/day

Daily stop loss increases are earned by accumulating profit in the account — not by calendar time. If profit is given back and drops below a milestone, the daily stop reverts to the lower tier until the milestone is re-earned.

Per-Trade Risk — Before Edge Is Identified

Until a clear edge has been identified and confirmed through MyPropJournal data, **no single trade may risk more than 25% of the daily stop loss.**

Daily Stop Loss	Max Risk Per Trade (25%)
$100	$25
$150	$37.50
$200	$50
$275	$68.75
$350	$87.50

25% per trade means you can absorb 4 full losers in a row before hitting the daily stop. That is intentional. Early-stage trading is about surviving long enough to collect data, not about maximizing any single day.

Per-Trade Risk — After Edge Is Identified (A & A+ Setups)

Once MyPropJournal data confirms a setup has a statistically meaningful edge (minimum sample size of 30 trades, qualifying win rate and risk/reward), **A and A+ setups may be risked at up to 75% of the daily stop loss.**

Daily Stop Loss	Max Risk on A+ Setup (75%)
$100	$75
$150	$112.50
$200	$150
$275	$206.25

$350	$262.50

A setup is only classified as A or A+ after MyPropJournal analytics confirm the edge. This is not a self-assessment. The data decides. Until the data confirms it, every setup is treated as a B setup with 25% max risk.

Additional Daily Rules

- If the daily stop is hit, trading stops immediately — no exceptions, no revenge trades
- Maximum of 3 losing trades in a row before stepping back and reviewing
- Do not trade on days with major economic events (FOMC, CPI, NFP) unless the setup is pre-planned and sized down 50%
- Never hold options positions overnight

📐 Position Sizing Philosophy

Size is a function of edge confidence, not excitement. The progression looks like this:

1. **No confirmed edge:** Trade minimum size. Collect data. Log everything.
2. **Edge emerging (20–29 trade sample):** Slight size increase on best setups. Still conservative.
3. **Edge confirmed (30+ trade sample, data in MyPropJournal):** Size up A and A+ setups to 75% of daily stop. Keep B setups at 25%.
4. **Edge scaling (consistent monthly profit):** Increase daily stop tier as account milestones are hit. Size follows.

The fastest path to $4,000/month is not trading bigger sooner. It is identifying the 2–3 setups that actually work for you, trading those with conviction, and ignoring everything else.

📈 Monthly Profit Targets & Scaling Roadmap

Phase	Monthly Net Target	Daily Stop	What Changes
Foundation (Month 1–2)	Break even	$100	Build the process, log every trade
Edge Emerging (Month 3–4)	$500–$1,000	$100–$150	Identify best setups in MyPropJournal
Edge Confirmed (Month 5–6)	$1,500–$2,500	$150–$200	Size up A/A+ setups to 75% daily stop

Scaling (Month 7–9)	$2,500–$3,500	$200–$275	Continue compounding, protect drawdown
Target (Month 10+)	$4,000+	$275–$350	Full execution on proven playbooks

> These are targets, not guarantees. The timeline compresses if the work is done consistently. It extends if trades are not logged, reviews are skipped, or risk rules are broken. The process drives the outcome.

💰 Monthly Business Budget

Expense	Cost
DASTrader Pro	$150/month
Finviz Elite (optional)	$39.99/month
MyPropJournal	Subscription
Total fixed costs	**~$190–$200/month**

> This account must cover its operating costs before it is considered profitable. In the foundation phase, breaking even on costs while building process is a legitimate win.

☀️ Daily Routine

- [ ] Check Trading Economics for economic calendar — flag high-impact events
- [ ] Run Finviz scans — build watchlist of 3–5 high-relative-volume names
- [ ] Open Thinkorswim — mark prior day high/low, VWAP, pre-market range on each name
- [ ] Set up DASTrader Pro hotkeys and confirm platform is connected
- [ ] Confirm which playbook setups are in play based on market context
- [ ] Trade the plan — no deviating mid-session
- [ ] Log all trades in MyPropJournal immediately after session
- [ ] Complete trade review on any losing trades
- [ ] Check MyPropJournal analytics weekly for edge confirmation progress

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📋 Edge Identification Checklist

Before increasing size on any setup, confirm all of the following in MyPropJournal:

- [ ] Minimum 30 trades logged under this playbook
- [ ] Win rate is at or above the qualifying threshold for the risk/reward ratio being used
- [ ] Risk/reward ratio is consistent across the sample (not one big winner skewing the data)
- [ ] Setup has been reviewed and documented — not just logged
- [ ] No obvious market condition bias (setup only works in one specific environment)
- [ ] Comfortable executing this setup under pressure without second-guessing

> If any of these boxes are unchecked, the setup is still a B setup. Keep logging. The data will tell you when it is ready.

🚫 What This Plan Is Not

- This is not a day trading course. The methodology is learned by doing and reviewing, not by watching videos.
- This is not a signal service. No one else's alerts, picks, or trades are followed.
- This is not a gambling account. Every position has a defined reason, a defined stop, and a defined target.
- This is not a recovery vehicle. A bad day is logged, reviewed, and learned from — not doubled down on tomorrow.

> This plan is a living document. Review it at the start of each month. Update the daily stop tier as account milestones are hit. The plan only works if it is followed every single day — not just when it is convenient.