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Best Trading Games for Learning Candlestick Patterns

Three games that actually put candles in front of you, and an honest comparison with every other way people learn.

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Read online: https://traderange.net/blog/best-trading-games-candlestick-patterns-goswdl5a/



Almost everyone learns candlestick patterns the same way: a chart of forty little diagrams, screenshotted from a blog post, stared at for an evening and forgotten by Thursday. The diagrams are not the problem. The problem is that recognising a **hammer** in a clean textbook illustration is a completely different task from spotting one in a real chart, in real time, next to five candles that almost look like hammers too.

That gap closes with repetition and immediate feedback — which is what a game gives you and a PDF does not. But most "trading games" lists pad themselves out with games that have nothing to do with candlesticks, so this one is deliberately short. Three games here genuinely put candles in front of you. After those, the more useful half of this article: an honest comparison with every other method people use, several of which beat all three at something.

Why pattern recognition resists reading

Pattern recognition is a perceptual skill, not a factual one. You are not trying to remember that a shooting star has a long upper wick — you already know that after five minutes. You are trying to reach the point where your eye flags it before your brain has finished reading the ticker.

Perceptual skills respond to three things: a high volume of examples, variety in those examples, and a correct answer delivered within a second or two of your guess. This is the same structure that teaches radiologists to read scans, and it is why a static cheat sheet fails: one clean example per pattern, no variety, no feedback at all.

- Volume: dozens of decisions per sitting, not one open position you check twice an hour.
- Variety: real market data, so the patterns arrive with the noise attached rather than idealised.
- Immediate correction: you are told you were wrong while the chart is still in front of you and you can still see why.
- Honesty: a score is hard to argue with. It is easy to nod along to a pattern guide; it is much harder to score 4 out of 10 and pretend you knew it.

> **Patterns are a vocabulary, not a strategy**
>
> Knowing what a bearish engulfing looks like tells you what the market just did — it does not tell you to sell. Pattern recognition is the reading step. Position sizing, risk, timeframe and context are separate skills, and nothing on this page replaces any of them.

Four properties that make practice stick

Whatever tool you pick, these decide whether the hours turn into skill. They apply equally to a game, a replay session or a flashcard deck — and they are the standard the games below get held to, including where one of them falls short.

1. Real price data rather than hand-drawn illustrations, so the pattern comes wrapped in the noise it will be wrapped in when it matters.
2. Fast rounds. If a single go takes twenty minutes you will do it twice and stop. Under two minutes and it survives a bad week.
3. A visible score, streak or hit rate, so improvement is measured rather than felt.
4. Some form of pressure — a timer, a limited number of guesses, or an opponent — because reading a chart calmly at your own pace is not the skill you need.

The three games that actually teach candle reading

TradeRange runs seven games. Three of them are relevant here, and the article says so rather than stretching the other four to fill a listicle. They map onto two different skills: naming a pattern, and acting on one.

1. CandleDojo — name the pattern

CandleDojo is the only game on the platform built specifically around candlestick patterns. One formation appears each day, you pick it from a multiple-choice list, you get three attempts, and a correct answer is worth fifteen points. The pattern is chosen deterministically from the date, so every player worldwide gets the same one on the same day and the leaderboard is a real comparison rather than everyone grading their own private puzzle.

It drills eight formations chosen to cover the structural range rather than to pad a list: single-candle shapes like the doji and hammer, two-candle reversals like the engulfing pair, and three-candle sequences like the morning star. A round takes under a minute.

> ⚠ **Two honest limits on CandleDojo**
>
> It draws stylised candles, not real market data — so it breaks the first rule in the list above, deliberately. Idealised shapes are the right call for learning names, but they are not what a live chart looks like. And with eight patterns on a daily rotation, the cycle repeats every eight days. Treat it as a vocabulary drill you finish, not a practice you do forever: two or three clean cycles and you have taken what it has.

PLAY TODAY'S CANDLEDOJO

2. CandleDirect — call what happens next

Naming a pattern and acting on one are different skills, and **CandleDirect** is where the second starts. You get eighteen real 15-minute candles pulled live from a randomly chosen liquid US-listed ticker, and you call one thing: eight candles from now, will the close be above or below where it is now? Then it reveals them. Five points if you were right.

This is where the first rule gets satisfied. The data is real and messy, the ticker is different every round, and there is no daily lockout — it is built as a continuous loop, a round takes under ten seconds, and you can run twenty in a coffee break. It is also the game that most reliably humbles people who have just finished reading a pattern guide, which is far better information to have in week one than in month six.

One discipline point: judge yourself on a rolling fifty calls, not five. There is no streak bonus and the scoring is deliberately flat, so the only number that means anything is your hit rate over enough rounds for luck to wash out. Anything hovering near 50% means you are guessing — and knowing that is itself progress.

3. Buel — the same call, with people watching

Buel is CandleDirect as a live multiplayer room. You create a room, share the code, and up to twenty players see the same eighteen-candle chart at the same time. Everyone has ten seconds to call up or down, simultaneously — there is no discussion phase and no turn order. Three points per correct call across ten rounds, with a live leaderboard updating between questions.

What it adds over CandleDirect is a clock and an audience. Ten seconds is short enough that you have to read the chart rather than reason your way through it, which is much closer to the real constraint than practising alone at your own pace. It also works well as a classroom or trading-group exercise, since everyone answers the same question and the disagreements become visible immediately.

THE THREE CANDLE-READING GAMES COMPARED ON WHAT THEY TRAIN AND WHAT DATA THEY USE.

GAME	WHAT IT TRAINS	DATA	FORMAT	ROUND LENGTH
CandleDojo	Naming the eight core patterns	Stylised textbook candles	Daily multiple choice — three tries	Under a minute
CandleDirect	Calling direction from a real setup	Real 15-minute market candles	18 shown — 8 hidden — up or down	Under ten seconds
Buel	The same call under time and social pressure	Real 15-minute market candles	10 rounds — 10 seconds each — up to 20 players	About three minutes

What about the other four games?

TradeRange also runs Stockle and Stockle Multiplayer, where you deduce a ticker from sector, country, market-cap and revenue clues; AlgoBattle, where you trade eight turns against a momentum or mean-reversion model; and CryptoSim, a paper account on live crypto prices. They are worth playing. None of them is a candlestick tool, and this article is not going to pretend otherwise — CryptoSim reappears below where it actually belongs, in the paper-trading comparison.

The eight patterns CandleDojo drills

These are the formations the daily puzzle rotates through. Between them they cover the single, double and triple-candle structures that almost every other pattern in the literature is a variation on. Learn these eight properly and a harami, a piercing line or a hanging man is a small adjustment rather than a new thing to memorise.

THE CANDLESTICK PATTERNS USED IN CANDLEDOJO'S DAILY PUZZLE.

PATTERN	CANDLES	STRUCTURE	WHAT IT SUGGESTS
Doji	1	Open and close almost identical with wicks both sides	Indecision — neither side won the session
Hammer	1	Small body at the top of a long lower wick	Bullish reversal — a push down that was rejected
Shooting Star	1	Small body at the bottom of a long upper wick	Bearish reversal — a push up that was rejected
Bullish Engulfing	2	A large up candle whose body covers the previous down body	Bullish reversal — buyers overwhelmed the prior session

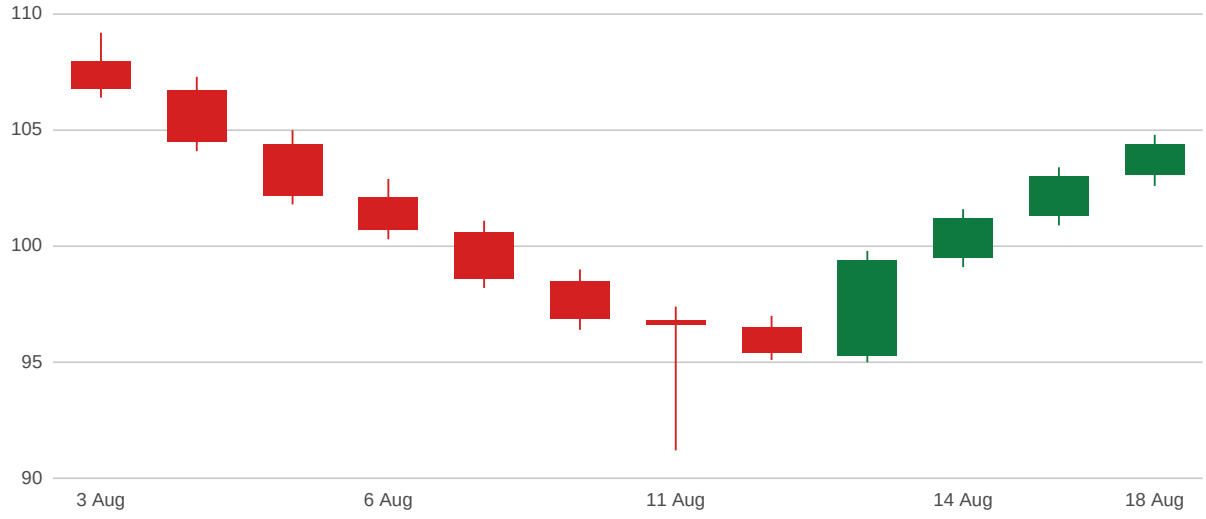
PATTERN	CANDLES	STRUCTURE	WHAT IT SUGGESTS
Bearish Engulfing	2	A large down candle whose body covers the previous up body	Bearish reversal — sellers overwhelmed the prior session
Morning Star	3	Down candle then a small-bodied pause then a strong up candle	Bullish reversal — selling exhausted then reversed
Evening Star	3	Up candle then a small-bodied pause then a strong down candle	Bearish reversal — buying exhausted then reversed
Three White Soldiers	3	Three long up candles closing progressively higher	Continuation — sustained and orderly buying

That table is the cheat-sheet version, and it has the cheat sheet's weakness: every pattern arrives pre-labelled and alone. Here is what the same two patterns look like with the noise left in.

Worked example one: a bottom that looked broken

A hammer and a bullish engulfing inside one real-looking sequence

CANDLES 1-6 FORM THE DOWNTREND. CANDLE 7 IS THE HAMMER. CANDLE 9 IS THE BULLISH ENGULFING THAT CONFIRMS IT. IN A TEXTBOOK THESE ARRIVE LABELLED; ON A CHART THEY ARRIVE LIKE THIS.

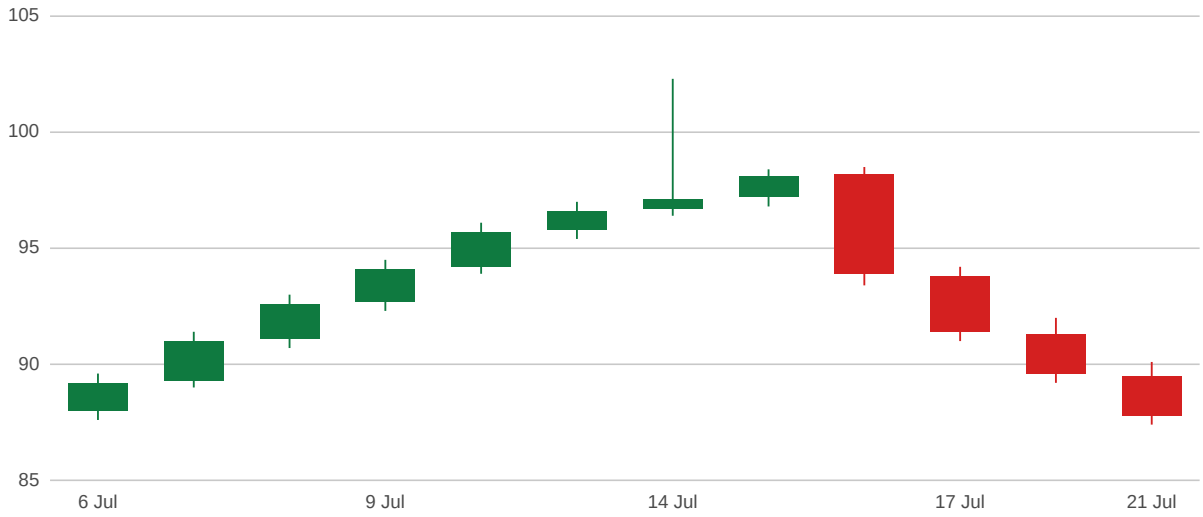


Notice what the illustration version leaves out: **candle 8**. It is a small red candle sitting between the hammer and the confirmation, and in the moment it looks like the reversal failed. Every cheat sheet shows you candle 7 followed immediately by candle 9. Learning to sit through candle 8 is most of the actual skill, and it is precisely what a static pattern chart — or a stylised game rendering — cannot teach you.

Worked example two: the same structure inverted

A shooting star and a bearish engulfing at the end of an uptrend

CANDLE 7 IS THE SHOOTING STAR — A LONG UPPER WICK REJECTED. CANDLE 8 RECOVERS AND MAKES IT LOOK LIKE A FALSE ALARM. CANDLE 9 IS THE BEARISH ENGULFING THAT SETTLES IT.



Same shape, mirrored, same trap in the middle. If you can see both without being told which one you are looking at, you have learned the pattern. If you can only see them once somebody has drawn a box around the relevant candles, you have learned the picture.

Every other way people learn this, compared

Three games is not a curriculum. This is the rest of it — what each method genuinely teaches better than a game, and where it quietly wastes your time. Most people should be running two or three of these at once rather than picking a winner.

Paper trading and broker demo accounts

The classic method: a simulated brokerage account with a fake balance and real order types, offered free by most large brokers. Its genuine advantage is **execution mechanics** — market versus limit orders, stop-losses, margin, partial fills, and what it feels like to hold a position that is 3% against you and drifting. No pattern game teaches any of that, because no pattern game has an open position. TradeRange's CryptoSim sits at the light end of this category: live Binance prices, a $1,000 USDT paper balance, long or short.

The weaknesses are repetition and stakes. One trade may occupy an entire session, so you might make four decisions in an afternoon where CandleDirect would have given you sixty. And a fake balance is famously easy to stop caring about — people size positions in a demo account in ways they never would with their own money, training a habit they then have to untrain. Use it for mechanics, not for judgement. Longer version: Trading Games vs Paper Trading.

Contest and fantasy portfolio games

The school-competition format: everyone gets a virtual million and whoever has the most in three months wins. Good at generating interest, genuinely useful for learning what an order ticket looks like, close to useless for candlestick work.

The structural problem is the prize. A contest ranked by total return over a fixed window rewards enormous concentrated bets, because the winner is whoever got luckiest with the most risk. That is the opposite of the behaviour you want, and the feedback arrives weeks after the decision, by which point you cannot remember what you were thinking. Recruitment, not training.

Chart replay and bar-by-bar simulators

Replay tools step a historical chart forward one candle at a time so you can decide without seeing the future. This is the closest thing to a flight simulator retail trading has, and it is the best tool on this entire page for learning *sequencing* — how a pattern builds, what it looks like three candles before it completes, and how often it half-forms and dissolves. It is the single best answer to CandleDojo's stylised-candle limitation.

Three caveats. It is slow, so reps per hour are an order of magnitude below a pattern game. It is trivially easy to cheat by scrolling forward or recognising the period from the price level, and people cheat without noticing. And meaningful replay is usually behind the paid tier of a charting platform. Excellent tool, second in the sequence rather than first.

Backtesting and rule testing

The unglamorous one, and the only method here that answers the question every other method dodges: **does this pattern have an edge at all?** Encode a rule, run it over years of history, count. What people usually find is that most single-candle patterns are close to a coin flip in isolation and only start to mean anything in combination with trend, location and volume.

Worth doing early, precisely because it is deflating. The failure mode is overfitting — tuning a rule until it looks brilliant on the exact data you tuned it on — which is why any result should be checked on a period you did not touch while building it. For whole portfolios rather than single setups, TradeRange's custom ETF backtester covers that horizon with CAGR, Sharpe, Sortino, drawdown and sector exposure against real price history.

Flashcards and spaced repetition

Spaced-repetition decks work, for definitions, and the scheduling algorithm is better than your instincts about what to review. They are the closest non-game equivalent to CandleDojo, and they share its exact weakness: you end up excellent at matching the word "harami" to a clean diagram and no better at reading a chart.

If you use flashcards, put **screenshots of real charts** on the front and the pattern name on the back — never illustrations. A deck of thirty real screenshots beats two hundred idealised drawings, and building it

yourself is itself good practice.

Cheat sheets, posters and infographics

The default starting point for most people and the weakest tool here. No feedback, no variety, one idealised example per pattern, and it produces the specific illusion of competence that makes people stop practising. It has one legitimate use: a reference you glance at for ten seconds when you have forgotten which way round the evening star goes. Pin it up, then go and do reps somewhere else.

Books and structured courses

A good book gives you something no game does: coherent structure, the history of where these patterns came from, and the context that turns a shape into a signal. Steve Nison's work on Japanese candlesticks is still the standard English reference. A structured course adds sequencing and, sometimes, someone to ask.

The trap is confusing having read about patterns with being able to see them — the two feel identical from the inside and are not remotely the same. Treat the book as the syllabus and the games as the homework. Be alert to the course market too: a large slice of it is priced on aspiration rather than content.

Video and short-form content

Free, abundant, and good for one thing specifically: watching somebody talk through a chart in real time shows the reasoning process, which a static diagram cannot. Watching a competent trader narrate why they are ignoring a textbook-perfect hammer is genuinely instructive.

The problem is selection. Nobody posts the clip where the pattern failed and they lost, so every example you see worked — which quietly teaches you that patterns are far more reliable than they are. Short-form is the worst offender. Watch for reasoning, never for hit rate.

Communities, Discords and signal groups

A good community gives you other people marking up charts, which is a fast way to meet readings that differ from yours and have your own reasoning challenged. That is real value — and it is roughly what a Buel room delivers in a more structured form, since everyone answers the same question and the disagreements surface immediately.

The risk is drift into copying. A group that posts calls rather than reasoning trains you to follow, not to read, and paid signal groups in particular have an incentive structure that does not point towards your education. Judge a community by whether people explain *why*.

Prop-firm evaluations

Increasingly common as a practice route: pay a fee, trade a simulated account against strict drawdown rules, get funded if you pass. The rules impose genuine discipline and the pressure is closer to real than any free demo. But you are paying — often repeatedly — for a simulated account, and the drawdown limits

reward a specific risk-averse style that may not be what you are trying to learn. It is not a place to learn what a hammer is. Arrive able to read a chart, or not at all.

Small-size live trading

The only method with real skin in the game, and the only one that teaches the emotional half of trading, because that half does not activate when the money is fake. Trading a single share teaches you more about your own hesitation than a hundred demo trades.

It is also the most expensive teacher on the list and it charges by the mistake, with a delay. Recognition errors CandleDirect corrects in two seconds for free take a week and a loss to correct here. The sensible order is obvious: free reps first, then live small — not the order most people actually use.

The comparison in full

EVERY METHOD ON THIS PAGE COMPARED ON THE PROPERTIES THAT DECIDE WHETHER PRACTICE TURNS INTO SKILL.

METHOD	TYPICAL COST	FEEDBACK SPEED	DECISIONS PER SESSION	REALISM	MAIN FAILURE MODE
Pattern-naming games	Free	Instant	High	Low — stylised candles	Names without chart transfer
Direction-calling games	Free	Instant	Very high	High — real intraday data	Confusing a 50% hit rate with skill
Chart replay	Free tier to paid	Fast	Medium	High	Trivially easy to peek at what comes next
Paper trading	Free	Delayed	Low	High	Fake money is easy to stop caring about
Contest portfolio games	Free	Weeks	Very low	Low	Rewards the recklessness that wins contests
Backtesting	Free to paid	Batch	Not applicable	Statistical	Overfitting a rule to the data you built it on
Flashcards	Free	Instant	High	Very low	Teaches words rather than charts
Cheat sheets	Free	None	None	Very low	The illusion of competence
Books and courses	Paid	None	None	Not applicable	Confusing having read it with being able to do it
Video content	Free	None	None	Varies	Only successful examples ever get posted
Communities	Free to paid	Varies	Low	Varies	Copying calls instead of learning to read
Prop-firm evaluations	Recurring fee	Fast	Low	High	Paying to practise what free tools cover
Small-size live trading	Real money at risk	Immediate and costly	Low	Total	Learning cheap lessons at an expensive price

Separate decisions produced by a 30-minute session

ILLUSTRATIVE ORDERS OF MAGNITUDE RATHER THAN A MEASUREMENT — BUT THE RATIO IS THE POINT. RECOGNITION IS BUILT BY DECISION COUNT, AND THE METHODS DIFFER BY MORE THAN TENFOLD.



Which method for which stage

Most arguments about whether games or paper trading are "better" are really arguments between people at different stages. The right tool changes roughly every few weeks as your bottleneck moves — and note that the games cover two rungs of this ladder, not seven.

THE LEARNING LADDER — MATCH THE TOOL TO THE BOTTLENECK YOU CURRENTLY HAVE.

STAGE	WHAT YOU ARE TRYING TO DO	BEST TOOLS FOR IT
0 Vocabulary	Name the eight core shapes reliably	CandleDojo and real-screenshot flashcards
1 Transfer	Find those shapes on messy real charts	Manual chart mark-up and chart replay
2 Direction	Turn a reading into an actual call	CandleDirect and Buel
3 Context	Judge when a pattern matters and when to ignore it	Chart replay and a written trade journal
4 Execution	Manage an open position and use order types	CryptoSim then a broker demo account
5 Validation	Test whether the edge is real	Backtesting and the ETF backtester
6 Money	Trade with genuine consequences	A live account at the smallest size that is not zero

The common wrong order

Most people go straight from a cheat sheet at stage 0 to real money at stage 6, skipping every stage where mistakes are free. The stages in between are not optional extras — they are where the mistakes are supposed to happen.

A weekly routine that actually sticks

The most common failure is not picking the wrong tool, it is six enthusiastic hours followed by nothing for a month. Recognition is built short and frequent. Something like this survives contact with a real week:

1. Daily, under a minute: CandleDojo, for the first two or three weeks. After that you have seen the full eight-pattern cycle several times and it becomes maintenance rather than learning — keep it if the streak motivates you, but stop counting it as practice.
2. Three times a week, ten minutes: CandleDirect until you have made twenty calls. Log the hit rate somewhere you will see it again, and only judge it across fifty.
3. Once a week, three minutes: a Buel room if you have anyone to play with. The ten-second clock is the point.
4. Once a week, thirty minutes: open a real chart with no game attached and mark up every pattern you can find. This is the transfer step, it is non-negotiable, and it is specifically the thing CandleDojo's stylised candles cannot give you.
5. Once a fortnight, one hour: a chart replay session on a period you have never looked at, making a written decision at every bar.
6. Once a month: backtest one rule you actually believe in. Expect to be disappointed roughly half the time, and treat that as the method working.

How to tell whether any of it is working

Feeling more confident is not evidence — confidence rises fastest in the first two weeks, when you know least. Use these instead:

- Your CandleDirect hit rate over a rolling fifty calls, not five. Fifty is roughly where noise stops dominating.
- Speed on CandleDojo: can you name the pattern in under two seconds, or do you have to reason it out? Reasoning it out means it has not become perceptual yet.
- The transfer test, which matters more than either: on a fresh real chart with nothing highlighted, can you mark up patterns without prompts and defend each one?
- Whether you can also name the ones you decided to ignore, and say why. That is the context skill, and it arrives later than recognition.
- Whether your paper trades follow a rule you wrote down beforehand. If they do not, you are practising improvisation, not a method.

> ⚠ **Three mistakes that waste the practice**
>
> Learning forty patterns before you can reliably spot four. Treating a pattern as a signal rather than one piece of context. And practising only inside the game — a high CandleDojo score with no real-chart mark-up is a score, not a skill.

Common questions

Which game should a complete beginner start with?

CandleDojo. It is the shortest, it is multiple choice, and it teaches the vocabulary CandleDirect and Buel assume you already have. Move on once you have cycled its eight patterns cleanly a couple of times.

Does CandleDojo use real market data?

No. It renders stylised candles built to show each formation clearly. That is the correct trade-off for learning names — an ambiguous real-world hammer is a bad first example — but it does mean CandleDojo alone will not teach you to spot patterns on a live chart. CandleDirect and Buel use real 15-minute market data; pair them.

How long does it take to learn candlestick patterns?

The definitions take an evening. Reliable recognition on real charts takes a few weeks of daily practice — most people find the core eight become automatic somewhere between two and six weeks of short daily reps, provided some of those reps are on real charts. Judging when a pattern actually matters takes considerably longer, because that is a context skill rather than a recognition one.

Are these trading games free?

Yes — every game on TradeRange is free to play. A free account is only needed to save scores and appear on the leaderboard.

What about Stockle, AlgoBattle and the multiplayer games?

Good games, wrong article. Stockle and Stockle Multiplayer are deduction puzzles built on fundamentals clues — sector, country, market cap and revenue — with no candlestick component. AlgoBattle is an eight-turn trading duel against an algorithmic opponent, which trains execution and discipline rather than pattern reading. Play them because they are fun, not because you expect them to teach you what a doji is.

Is paper trading better than trading games?

For different things. Paper trading is better for order mechanics and managing an open position over time. Games are better for recognition, because they produce roughly ten times as many decisions per hour with instant feedback on each. Sequence them rather than choosing: games first, paper trading once recognition is no longer the bottleneck.

Do candlestick patterns actually work?

In isolation, most single-candle patterns are close to a coin flip — backtest one and see. They become useful as context: the same hammer means very different things at the bottom of an extended downtrend, in the middle of a range, and against a level that has already held three times. Learn them as a language for describing what happened, not as a set of buy signals.

How many patterns do I actually need?

Fewer than any cheat sheet implies. The eight in CandleDojo cover the structural range, and most remaining named patterns are variations on them. Being fast and reliable on eight beats being vague about forty by a wide margin.

What timeframe should I practise on?

The one you intend to trade, because the same pattern behaves differently on a 5-minute chart and a weekly one. CandleDirect and Buel both use 15-minute candles, which suits intraday practice; if you plan to trade daily charts, do your real-chart mark-up there rather than assuming it transfers.

Can a game replace real trading experience?

No, and nothing here claims to. Games build the reading skill cheaply and quickly. Risk management, position sizing and the emotional side of holding real money on the line are learned elsewhere — an argument for pairing games with a demo account and eventually a small live one, rather than choosing between them.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- ✔ Candlestick recognition is a perceptual skill, so it responds to decision volume and instant feedback — the two things a game supplies and a cheat sheet does not.
- ✔ Only three of TradeRange's seven games are candle-reading tools: CandleDojo for naming patterns, CandleDirect for calling direction on real data, and Buel for doing the same against a ten-second clock.
- ✔ CandleDojo uses stylised candles and cycles eight patterns, so it is a vocabulary drill you finish rather than a practice you do forever.
- ✔ Real-chart mark-up is the non-negotiable transfer step. A high game score without it is a score, not a skill.
- ✔ Chart replay is the best tool for learning how a pattern builds; backtesting is the only one that tells you whether it has an edge at all.
- ✔ Paper trading and demo accounts still teach order mechanics and holding a position better than any game — the next stage, not a competing choice.
- ✔ Cheat sheets, contest portfolio games and short-form video are the weakest options here, mostly because none of them corrects you.
- ✔ Short and daily beats long and occasional. Five minutes a day for a month outperforms one six-hour weekend by a wide margin.

PLAY CANDLEDOJO TRY CANDLEDIRECT

KEEP READING

- How do candles work? — the anatomy of a candlestick >
- Trading Games vs Paper Trading: What's the Difference? >
- What Is TradeRange? >
- When to stop trading — FOMO and revenge trading >
- All TradeRange games >
- Build and backtest a portfolio with My Portfolio >

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