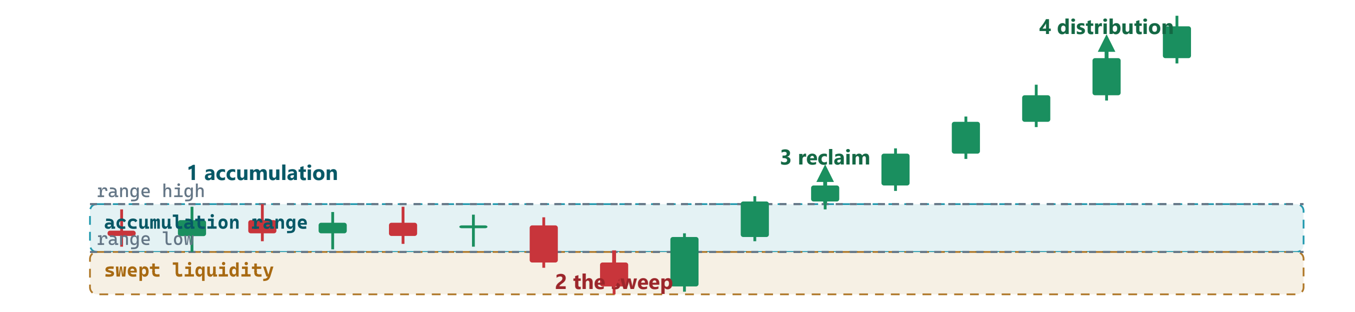
FIELD GUIDE · SMART-MONEY STRUCTURE

The market-maker model (AMD)

A lot of price action follows a repeating three-act shape: a quiet range, a sharp fake move that traps traders, then the real trend. Spotting the three acts helps you read charts more calmly.

QUANTREEF
market microstructure



PHASE 1 · THE RANGE

Accumulation

Price drifts sideways inside a fairly tight band, with clear highs and lows. Nothing looks decisive, so many traders get bored or place stops just outside the range edges. This quiet zone is where positions quietly build up.

PHASE 2 · THE FAKEOUT

Manipulation

Price pokes sharply out of the range, often below the obvious lows, and triggers a burst of stop orders. It looks like a breakdown, but the move does not follow through. This quick sweep gathers the orders resting beyond the range.

PHASE 3 · THE SHIFT

Reclaim

Price snaps back inside the range and pushes past the opposite edge. The failed breakdown flips into an upside break. This reclaim is the first hint that the earlier move was a trap rather than a genuine trend.

PHASE 4 · THE TREND

Distribution

Now the sustained move plays out, candle after candle in one direction. This is the leg most people wanted to catch, but it only becomes obvious after the range and the sweep have already done their work.

Key terms

Accumulation — A sideways range where price coils in a band before a larger move, showing little clear direction.

Manipulation — A fast push beyond the range that triggers resting stop orders, then fails to follow through.

Distribution — The sustained trend leg that unfolds after the range and fakeout are complete.

Liquidity sweep — A quick spike through an obvious high or low that fills clustered orders sitting just beyond it.

How to read & use it

Mark the range first

Before anything else, note the high and low of the sideways band. The clearer those edges are, the more attention they draw and the more orders tend to rest just beyond them. The range is your reference for everything that follows.

A sweep is not a trend

A sharp poke past the range that immediately reverses is a fakeout, not confirmation. A single spike beyond an obvious level is information about where orders sat, not proof the move will continue.

The reclaim completes the story

The pattern only completes once price snaps back and breaks the opposite side. Seeing the reclaim after the sweep is what separates reading the structure from guessing at the low or high.

HOW QUANTREEF USES THIS

Anywhere Quantreef highlights range edges, sweeps, or trend context, it is offering descriptive, educational context about market structure. It is not a signal, a recommendation, or a prediction of what price will do next, and nothing here is trading or financial advice.