

Introduction

Universal Breakout is a fully automatic Expert Advisor for MetaTrader 4 and MetaTrader 5, designed for trading based on the breakout of a pre-formed price range. The strategy is aimed at users who prefer a systematic approach to trading and want to use proven rules instead of making decisions manually.

The EA is distributed free of charge because I believe that quality algorithmic tools should be accessible to everyone. This lets any trader get familiar with my approach to developing trading systems, evaluate the quality of the strategy's implementation, and independently test its performance on historical data or a live account.

This guide is not an instruction for installing or launching the EA. It assumes you are already familiar with MetaTrader and have successfully installed **Universal Breakout**. Here you'll find information to help you better understand how the strategy works, learn the purpose of each parameter, choose suitable trading conditions, and get the most predictable results when using the EA.

Universal Breakout MT4: <https://www.mql5.com/en/market/product/84400>

Universal Breakout MT5: <https://www.mql5.com/en/market/product/93732>

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How the Strategy Works

Range breakout trading strategies are among the most well-known and long-used approaches in trading. Their basic idea is simple: if the price breaks through a predefined level, this may indicate a shift in the balance between buyers and sellers and the start of a new directional move.

Various reference points can be used as breakout levels: the previous day's or week's high and low, the trading session range, price channels, support and resistance levels, and a range formed over an arbitrary period of time. Despite the differences in how the levels are built, the principle stays the same — a position is opened only after the price moves beyond the boundaries of a predefined range.

Universal Breakout belongs precisely to this class of strategies. Its main feature is that how the range is built is fully determined by the user. Instead of using fixed rules, such as a breakout of the Asian session or the previous day, the EA lets you choose the time the range is built and the number of candles used to define its boundaries. Thanks to this, the same algorithm can be adapted to different markets, timeframes, and trading ideas.

After the range is built, the EA automatically places two pending orders: **Buy Stop** above the upper boundary and **Sell Stop** below the lower boundary. If the price triggers one of the orders, the opposite one is deleted, and the open position is managed according to the selected risk-management and trade-management settings.

It's important to understand that a range breakout by itself doesn't guarantee a successful trade. Some breakouts lead to a strong impulse move, while others turn out to be false and quickly return back into the range. That's why the strategy's effectiveness is determined not only by the breakout itself, but also by how the range is built, the trade-management parameters, and the quality of the research behind it.

In the following sections, we'll take a detailed look at the Universal Breakout parameters and explain how each of them affects the range formation, entry points, and trading results.

Parameter Description

This section describes in detail every parameter of the Universal Breakout EA.

Not all parameters affect trading results equally. The most important ones are the settings responsible for building the range, market entry points, and calculating the Stop Loss and Take Profit levels. These are what define the strategy's logic and have the biggest impact on test results.

The money-management, position-management, and service parameters are standard for most Expert Advisors, so they are described more briefly.

Time and Range

GMT

Defines the time offset of the broker's trade server relative to GMT (UTC).

Important! This is the most important parameter of the EA and, at the same time, the most common source of user questions. Despite its simple purpose, an incorrect GMT setting causes the range to be built on different candles, and the test results end up significantly different from live trading results.

For this reason, a detailed guide to setting up the GMT parameter is provided in a separate section below.

Box Start Hour

Defines the hour at which the EA starts searching for the high and low used to build the trading range.

Changing this parameter effectively changes the trading strategy itself, since the range will be built on a different segment of the market.

Box Size (Candles)

The number of previous candles used to determine the range's high and low.

Together with the **Box Start Hour** parameter, it defines how the range is built. Changing this parameter has a significant effect on trade frequency and overall trading results.

Money Management

Lot Calculation Type

Selects the method used to calculate the trade volume.

Fixed Lot

The size of the fixed trade volume.

The Amount of Risk per Transaction

The amount of risk per trade, as a percentage of the current balance, when using dynamic volume calculation.

Percentage of the Balance

Calculates the trade volume as a percentage of the current balance.

Entry and Exit

Deviation from Extremes

The offset of the pending-order placement levels relative to the range's high and low. Lets you place orders not directly on the range boundary, but at a specified distance from it.

Order Expiration Time (0 - Off)

The lifetime of pending orders, in minutes. If neither order is triggered within the specified time, both orders are automatically deleted.

StopLoss Type

Selects the method used to calculate Stop Loss.

The EA supports a fixed Stop Loss and a dynamic Stop Loss calculated relative to the opposite boundary of the range.

Fixed StopLoss

The size of the fixed Stop Loss, in points.

Offset from the Opposite Side

An additional Stop Loss offset relative to the opposite range boundary when using dynamic mode.

TakeProfit Type

Selects the method used to calculate Take Profit.

A fixed Take Profit size is supported, as well as automatic calculation relative to the Stop Loss size.

Fixed TakeProfit

The size of the fixed Take Profit, in points.

Coefficient from StopLoss

The coefficient used to calculate Take Profit relative to the Stop Loss size.

For example, a value of 2 means the Take Profit will be twice the size of the Stop Loss.

Trade Management**Breakeven Type**

Selects the mode for moving the position to breakeven.

Breakeven Distance

The amount of profit that, once reached, triggers the Stop Loss move.

Breakeven Profit

The profit level to which the Stop Loss will be moved.

Trailing Type

Selects the trailing-stop algorithm.

Trailing Distance

The distance between the current price and the Stop Loss.

Trailing Step

The minimum step for changing the Stop Loss.

Trailing Min. Profit

The minimum profit required to activate the trailing stop.

Trailing Candles Timeframe

The timeframe used for the candle-based trailing stop.

Number of Candles

The number of candles used to calculate the candle-based trailing stop.

Close Order Type

Enables or disables the early position-closing feature.

Number of Minutes from Opening

The minimum time after the position is opened, after which early closing can be performed.

Close with Minimal Profit

The minimum profit required for early position closing.

Trading Restrictions

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday

Allows or prohibits opening new trades on individual days of the week.

Close Orders on Friday

Deletes unfilled pending orders on Friday.

Closing Time Friday

The time at which pending orders are deleted on Friday.

Service Parameters

MagicNumber

A unique EA identifier that lets MetaTrader distinguish its trades from those of other EAs.

Comment

A comment that is automatically added to opened orders.

How to Correctly Set the GMT Parameter

The most common mistake is entering **your own time zone**.

here. This is incorrect.

The **GMT** parameter must always match **the broker's trade-server time**, not the time of your computer, city, or country of residence.

For example:

- You might be located in Thailand (GMT+7).
- Your VPS might be running in Germany (GMT+2).
- Your computer might show a different time.

None of this **matters**. The EA relies exclusively on the broker's server time.

Trading on a Live Account

When working on a live or demo account, it's recommended to set the value to **Auto**.

In this mode, the EA automatically detects the trade server's GMT, so no additional action is required from the user.

Testing in the Strategy Tester

During testing, MetaTrader doesn't provide the EA with information about the trade server's GMT. For this reason, it can't be detected automatically.

That's why, when testing, the **GMT** parameter must be set manually.

To do this, simply run the EA once on a regular chart. The info panel will show the current GMT value of the broker's trade server. Use this value when running the test.

If GMT Is Set Incorrectly

An incorrect GMT value causes the EA to start searching for the range at the wrong time. As a result:

- the range is built using different candles;
- entry levels are calculated differently;
- trades are opened at the wrong time;
- test results stop matching live trading results.

That's why, before starting any research, it's recommended to first make sure the **GMT** parameter is set correctly.

Choosing a Broker and Trading Account

Order execution quality has a significant impact on the results of trading breakout strategies. Even with identical EA settings, results can differ depending on a particular broker's trading conditions.

That's why, before you start trading, it's recommended to pay attention not only to the spread size, but also to other trading account parameters.

Minimum Trading Account Requirements

For Universal Breakout to work properly, it's recommended to use an account with the following characteristics.

Parameter	Recommendation
Minimum Deposit	from 100 USD
Leverage	from 1:10
Account Type	ECN or RAW
Trading Tools	Forex, Indices, Stocks, Commodities

Using ECN or RAW accounts helps minimize trading costs and achieve the most accurate execution of trading signals.

Key Factors When Choosing a Broker

Spread

The smaller the spread, the closer the trade's opening price is to the calculated entry point.

This is especially important for breakout strategies, since market entry happens at a moment of high activity, when even a small increase in the spread can noticeably affect the final trading result.

Stop Level

Stop Level defines the minimum distance from the current price at which the broker allows pending orders to be placed.

If you use the Trailing Stop feature, it's recommended to choose a broker with a minimal or zero Stop Level. With a large Stop Level, the EA won't be able to move the Stop Loss close enough to the current price, which will cause the trailing stop to behave differently and trading results to deviate from what's expected.

Slippage

One of the most important factors is order execution quality.

Even if two brokers offer the same spreads and the same trading conditions, actual trading results can differ significantly because of slippage.

Unfortunately, execution quality can't be assessed in advance. No broker publishes real slippage statistics, and it can only be determined through extended testing of the EA on a live trading account.

That's why, when selecting the recommended brokers, the main focus was not only on spread size, but also on order execution quality under real trading conditions.

Recommended Brokers

During the development of Universal Breakout, various brokers and account types were tested.

Based on the results of extensive testing, two brokers were selected that showed the most stable results when trading not only Universal Breakout, but also other automated trading systems, including scalping EAs and EAs built on classic trading strategies.

Vantage — the Optimal Choice for Small Deposits

Vantage is the optimal choice for most users, especially if the trading account size is between **50 and 1000 USD**.

Parameter	Value
Account Type	RAW
Recommended Deposit	from 50 USD
Average spread XAUUSD	13 cents
Stop Level	20 points
Suitable for Universal Breakout, scalpers, and most automated strategies	
Open an account with Vantage	Website Registration

Why I Recommend Vantage

- Excellent order execution quality.
- Low spreads on major trading instruments.
- Stop Level equals 0, which is especially important for breakout strategies.
- Well suited for trading with small deposits.
- This is the broker I used to test a large portion of my EAs.

If you're just starting to use Universal Breakout or plan to trade with a small deposit, Vantage is the most optimal choice.

Exness — for Larger Trading Accounts

If your trading capital exceeds **1000 USD**, I recommend considering Exness.

Parameter	Value
Account Type	RAW
Recommended Deposit	from 1000 USD
Average spread XAUUSD	8 cents
Stop Level	0 points
Suitable for professional algorithmic trading	
Open an account with Exness	Registration

Why I Recommend Exness

- Very high order execution quality.
- Minimal trading costs.
- Excellent conditions for large trading accounts.
- Stable operation of automated trading systems.
- One of the best options for long-term use of algorithmic strategies.

If your deposit size allows for an account of 1000 USD or more, Exness will be an excellent choice for automated trading.

Practical Recommendations

During the development and testing of Universal Breakout, a lot of practical observations have been gathered that will help you avoid the most common mistakes and get the most stable trading results.

Don't Judge the Strategy by a Few Trades

Any trading strategy has both winning and losing trades. Don't draw conclusions about an EA's quality after just one or a few trades.

For an objective assessment, it's recommended to analyze results over a sufficiently long period of time, and only after enough statistics have accumulated.

Watch for Updates

New versions of Universal Breakout may include bug fixes, algorithm improvements, and additional features.

Before the start of a new trading week, it's recommended to make sure you're using the latest version of the EA.

Use the Recommended Trading Conditions

Even with identical settings, trading results can differ between brokers.

To get results as close as possible to the published monitoring, it's recommended to use the brokers and account types specified in this guide.

Use a VPS for Round-the-Clock Trading

If you plan to use the EA on a live account, it's recommended to run it on a VPS. This ensures uninterrupted MetaTrader operation regardless of your home computer, internet connection quality, or power outages.

VPS for MetaTrader

For several years, I've personally selected servers for algorithmic trading and tested various configurations. As a result, I've found optimal solutions that ensure stable operation of MetaTrader and automated trading systems.

If you don't want to deal with choosing a VPS, installing MetaTrader, and setting up EAs yourself, I can take care of these tasks for you.

If you're interested in this offer, contact me on Telegram at [@djermoloff](https://www.mql5.com/en/users/dj_ermoloff).

I will set up a dedicated virtual machine for you on my server, fully prepared for running MetaTrader.

Cost: 80 USD per year.

The price includes hosting up to **three simultaneously running MetaTrader terminals**.

Why This VPS

Unlike most standard VPS providers, my servers were initially configured not for general-purpose use, but exclusively for algorithmic trading in MetaTrader.

The server uses a maximally lightweight operating system, with all components and services unrelated to running MetaTrader removed or disabled. As a result, CPU time and RAM are almost entirely available to the trading terminals rather than being spent on background OS processes.

This approach provides several advantages at once:

- maximum MetaTrader performance;
- EA operation without delays or freezes;
- stable operation even when running several terminals at once;
- optimal conditions for round-the-clock automated trading.

How to Improve Trading Results

Universal Breakout was created as a free EA to help traders get familiar with the range breakout trading strategy, learn to research the market, and discover their own trading patterns.

However, as they gain experience, most traders run into the same set of questions.

Why do some breakouts turn into strong moves while others turn out to be false? How can weak signals be filtered out in advance? How should a profitable trade be managed so as not to give most of the profit back to the market?

It was precisely to solve these problems that I developed **Session Breakout PRO**.

Unlike Universal Breakout, Session Breakout PRO is not just an EA for range breakout trading, but a full-fledged platform for building, researching, and automating professional breakout strategies.

What's New in Session Breakout PRO

Filtering False Breakouts

One of the main causes of losing trades is false breakouts and entries into the market after the main impulse has already ended.

Session Breakout PRO uses several independent filters that let you assess the quality of a trading signal before opening a position. This helps reduce the number of weak entries and focus on the most promising market situations.

More Flexible Strategy Settings

Universal Breakout implements a basic set of parameters, sufficient for researching most breakout models.

Session Breakout PRO significantly expands the configuration options, letting you adapt the strategy to different trading sessions, financial instruments, and individual trading styles.

Intelligent Position Management

The work is only just beginning once a trade is opened.

Session Breakout PRO offers several position-management algorithms, including various types of trailing stops, impulse-development analysis, profit-locking after a strong move, and protection against a reversal impulse.

This approach lets you make decisions based not only on the entry point, but also on market behavior after the range breakout.

Who Session Breakout PRO Is For

While Universal Breakout lets you get familiar with range breakout trading, Session Breakout PRO is designed for traders who want to move to the next level.

It's a good fit for those who:

- want to improve the quality of their trading signals;
- independently research and optimize strategies;
- use breakout strategies in live trading;
- want maximum flexibility in configuration and trade management;
- are looking for a professional tool for long-term automated trading.

If you're serious about trading and want significantly more options for market analysis and trade management, Session Breakout PRO is the logical next step after Universal Breakout.

Session Breakout PRO MT5: <https://www.mql5.com/en/market/product/175994>

Session Breakout PRO MT4: <https://www.mql5.com/en/market/product/175995>

Signal (live account): <https://www.mql5.com/en/signals/2378603>

Frequently Asked Questions

Why doesn't the EA open trades?

First of all, keep in mind that Universal Breakout **does not constantly look for entry points**. The EA opens trades only at a predefined time, in line with the selected range breakout trading strategy.

To make it easier for you to monitor the EA's operation, the moment the pending orders are placed is marked on the chart with a **vertical line**. If that time hasn't arrived yet, the absence of trades is normal EA behavior.

If the time has already passed but the orders were never placed, first check that the **GMT** parameter is set correctly, and make sure automated trading is enabled and the current day of the week is allowed for trading.

Why do the tester results differ from live trading?

It's impossible to get completely identical results.

During testing, MetaTrader doesn't account for real slippage, order execution delays, or the execution characteristics of a specific broker. That's why test results are always a model, not an exact copy of live trading.

Do I need to change GMT when switching to daylight saving or standard time?

If you use **Auto** mode, you don't need to do anything. The EA automatically detects the current GMT value of the broker's trade server and, if necessary, accounts for the change on its own.

If you use a fixed GMT value, you need to change this parameter yourself whenever the broker shifts the trade server time for daylight saving or standard time.

Can I use GMT = Auto in the Strategy Tester?

No.

During testing, MetaTrader doesn't provide the EA with information about the trade server time, so GMT can't be detected automatically.

When testing, the GMT parameter must be set manually.

Can the EA be used on other trading instruments?

Yes.

Universal Breakout is not tied to a specific trading instrument and can be used on Forex, indices, metals, CFDs, and other markets.

However, it's recommended to select your own strategy parameters for each instrument. You can learn more about the research and optimization process in the “Universal Breakout Testing and Optimization Guide”.

Can I use a different timeframe?

Yes, but it has no practical purpose.

Universal Breakout always analyzes data from the **H1 timeframe**, regardless of which chart it's attached to. The timeframe is hard-coded into the EA's algorithm, so changing the chart period doesn't affect its operation or trading results.

You can attach the EA to any timeframe, but the results will be exactly identical to running it on the H1 chart.

Can I run multiple instances of the EA at the same time?

Yes.

You can run several instances of Universal Breakout at the same time, for example on different instruments or with different sets of parameters. In this case, it's recommended to assign each instance its own **MagicNumber** value, so the EAs can manage their orders independently.

Other Products

My goal is not to release as many products as possible, but to create tools that genuinely help with market research and can be used in live trading. That's why every product goes through extensive testing and verification on my own trading accounts.

If you liked Universal Breakout, you might also be interested in my other products for MetaTrader. Most of them are part of the same ecosystem and were created to solve various technical-analysis and algorithmic-trading tasks.

Indicators

	Lets you set the number of bars on the left and right for fractal formation, filtering out minor local extremes and highlighting only the market's most significant peaks and troughs.	Free
	A market structure indicator built on fractals.	Free
	Trend direction analysis across multiple timeframes at once.	Free
	A multi-currency, multi-timeframe trend monitor for professional trading.	\$37



A trading-signal indicator based on classic market patterns and price formations that traders have used for over 100 years.

\$197

Download [MT4](#) | [MT5](#)



An indicator for trading **Gold (XAUUSD)** on the **M1 timeframe**, designed to find short-term price-movement scenarios.

\$147

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An RSI divergence indicator with an improved signal-search algorithm, focused on more accurate divergence detection and automatic alerts.

Free

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A divergence indicator for MACD with an improved signal-search algorithm, focused on more accurate divergence detection and automatic alerts.

Free

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A divergence indicator for Stochastic with an improved signal-search algorithm, focused on more accurate divergence detection and automatic alerts.

Free

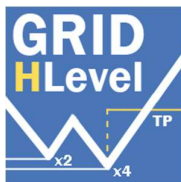
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Expert Advisors

Work on new trading systems is ongoing.

Every EA goes through a long cycle of research, optimization, and mandatory verification on a live trading account. Only after obtaining stable statistics and confirming the strategy's effectiveness is it published for general use.

My goal is not to release as many products as possible, but to create genuinely reliable tools capable of performing consistently in live trading.



A tool for traders using averaging strategies. It helps automate order-grid management and is aimed at generating stable income while consciously accepting the risks typical of such strategies.

Free

Download [MT4](#) | [MT5](#)



A hybrid automated EA for generating stable income. It uses three independent trading strategies, which helps reduce the risks typical of classic averaging systems. It has been running on a live account since 2019 and shows **more than 3000% profit**.

\$437

Statistics since 2019 are available on [Myfxbook](#)

Download [MT4](#) | [MT5](#) | [Signal \(live account\)](#)



A professional version of the EA for trading price-range breakouts.

\$197

Download [MT4](#) | [MT5](#) | [Signal \(live account\)](#)

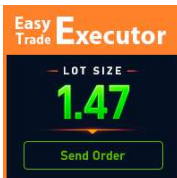
Trading Tools



A position-size calculator that lets you quickly calculate the trade volume based on a given risk, Stop Loss size, and trading-account parameters.

Free

Download [MT4](#) | [MT5](#)



A manual trading panel with one-click position opening, automatic risk-based volume calculation, and built-in trade-management tools.

\$30

Download [MT4](#) | [MT5](#)



A prop-trading monitoring panel that displays the current drawdown, daily limits, and remaining risk margin, helping you stay within prop-firm rules.

Free

Download [MT5](#)

Trading Signals

If you're interested in following the development process of new trading systems, I recommend subscribing to my trading signals.

EA trading signals: https://www.mql5.com/en/signals/author/dj_ermoloff

These are the accounts where I test new trading ideas, run forward testing of EAs, and gather performance statistics under real market conditions.

Once a strategy proves its effectiveness on a live account, it becomes the basis for a new free or commercial product.

So subscribing to my signals is a chance to see new products before their official release.

Thank you for your trust, and I wish you successful research, stable trading, and new profitable strategies!