TrendCue Gold

User Manual

Expert Advisor for MetaTrader 5 | Gold (XAUUSD) | Version 1.00

This manual shows you how to install TrendCue Gold, choose a preset, adjust the settings and check that everything works. It explains every input of version 1.00 and the nine presets, and answers the most common questions. You do not need programming knowledge. If you are new to automated trading, read Section 1 first and test on a demo account before you trade real money.

Key terms used in this manual

Equity	Account balance plus the profit or loss of open positions.
Risk of a trade	The money a trade would lose at its stop loss, calculated when the order is placed.
Risk target	The risk the EA aims for, as a percentage of equity (default 0.50 % per trade).
Lot, minimum lot	The trade volume. Most brokers' smallest gold volume is 0.01 lot.
Working order	A pending order waiting at a price. The dashboard calls a strategy with a working order **ARMED**.
Server time	The broker's clock, shown in the **Market Watch** window. All times in the EA are server times.
Hedging account	An MT5 account type in which every trade is a separate position. TrendCue Gold requires it.
Preset (.set file)	A saved set of inputs that you load in one click.

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1 Quick start

1.1 What you need

- **Account type: MT5 hedging account.** It is required because the four strategies trade independently and can hold positions at the same time (Section 2). The first journal line and the dashboard title show your account type.
- MetaTrader 5 on Windows, or on a Windows VPS. Keep the terminal up to date.
- Your broker's gold symbol: usually `XAUUSD`, sometimes with a suffix such as `XAUUSD.i` or `XAUUSDm`, or named `GOLD`. TrendCue Gold trades only spot gold quoted in US dollars: on any other chart it trades the broker's gold symbol, never the chart's symbol. If it finds several or none, it opens no trade and says so: set **Trading Symbol (Auto if empty)** (Section 3.7).
- The broker must allow automated trading on your account.
- The terminal must stay open and connected while the EA trades. A VPS is recommended.

1.2 Installation in seven steps

1. **Install the EA.** Buy TrendCue Gold in the **Market** tab of the terminal (Toolbox) or on mql5.com. The terminal installs it under **Navigator** → **Expert Advisors** → **Market**. Then copy the nine preset files from the presets ZIP on the product page: in MetaTrader choose **File** → **Open Data Folder**, open the folder `MQL5\Presets` and paste the `.set` files there.
2. **Open the gold chart.** Choose **File** → **New Chart** and select your gold symbol. Set the chart to **M15**, the recommended timeframe (Section 1.3). Use **one** chart only.
3. **Attach the EA.** Drag TrendCue Gold from the Navigator onto the chart. The settings window opens.
4. **Load and review the preset.** On the **Inputs** tab press **Load** and select a preset (for example `01_Risk_Percent.set`). Review its values before you continue. The prop-firm presets 04 and 05 need one more value: your initial balance (Section 4.4).
5. **Enable Algo Trading.** On the **Common** tab tick **Allow Algo Trading** and press **OK**. In the main toolbar switch on **Algo Trading** so that the button is active (green). Older MetaTrader versions call it **AutoTrading**.
6. **Check the dashboard and the journal.** The dashboard appears in the top-left corner of the chart. Open the Toolbox (**Ctrl+T**) and select the **Experts** tab: the EA prints a startup summary (table below). Read it once on your account.
7. **Confirm that it works.** Use the checklist below. It is normal for no trade to open for hours or even days: every strategy waits for its own conditions.

Startup summary in the Experts journal

Line begins with	What it tells you
`TrendCue Gold v1.00 on ...`	Version, symbol, account type (hedging or netting) and the magic numbers the EA reserves on this symbol.
`Broker specification ...`	Your broker's contract size, minimum lot, lot step, stops level, swap, margin for the minimum lot and the money value of a 1.00 price move at the minimum lot.
`Sizing: ...`	The sizing mode and the risk target or fixed lot of each enabled strategy.
`Broker minimum lot ...`	What the EA does when the risk target needs less than the minimum lot (Section 3.2).
`Fixed-lot sizing: ...`	Shown instead of the previous line when fixed-lot sizing is selected.
`Protection: ...`	Every protection, limit and weekend rule that is switched on.
`Prop-firm limits: ...`	Only when the prop-firm floors are on: initial balance, day start and the floors in money.
`WARNING ...`	A valid setting that will not do what you may expect, for example a fixed lot below the broker's minimum.

Checklist: is the EA running correctly?

- The name TrendCue Gold appears in the top-right corner of the chart, and Algo Trading is switched on.
- The dashboard status shows **TRADING**. Between the Friday cut-off and the weekly market open it shows **WEEKEND PAUSE**, which is normal.
- Each enabled strategy shows **ON**, **ARMED**, **LONG** or **SHORT**. Disabled strategies show **OFF**.
- The journal shows no line beginning with `Input settings:` and the `Sizing` and `Protection` lines match what you intended.

1.3 Chart timeframe

M15 is recommended because it shows the trades clearly. The strategies do not depend on the chart timeframe: each uses its own fixed internal timing, so trading is identical on every timeframe (verified trade by trade from M1 to D1 in the Strategy Tester). If you change the timeframe while the EA runs, it keeps its positions, working orders, limits and statistics.

1.4 One copy per account

Run **one** TrendCue Gold per account, symbol and magic number base. A second copy on another chart of the same terminal refuses to start and explains why. Copies in two different terminals, for example on your PC and on a VPS, cannot see each other and would manage the same orders: never run the same account in two places at the same time. Remove any older TrendCue version from the account first; the duplicate check does not detect it.

1.5 Daily operation

- **Restarts are safe.** After a restart of the terminal, the VPS or the EA, positions and working orders are recognised by their magic numbers; the daily-loss state, the drawdown peak and prop-firm halts are restored; statistics are

rebuilt from the account history.
- **Removing the EA** from the chart sends one cancellation request for each of its working orders. If the connection is down, the trading session is closed or the broker refuses, an order can remain, and the journal says so: check the **Trade** tab and delete it by hand. Open positions keep their stop loss and take profit on the broker's server but are no longer managed: no trailing and no account protection. Closing the chart or the terminal cancels nothing; the EA picks up its orders again when it runs again.
- **Changing inputs** restarts the EA with the new values. Open positions and working orders are kept.
- **Updates** are free for buyers. Install a new version from the **Market** tab of the terminal; the EA switches to it when it is reloaded on the chart.
- **Manual trades** on the same account are allowed. The EA manages only its own orders, but its account limits measure the whole account equity.

2 How TrendCue Gold trades

- **Four independent strategies.** Strategy 1 to Strategy 4 each decide when to trade and where the stop loss and take profit go. Each has its own switch, risk setting, magic number and line on the dashboard. They share one execution engine, one set of risk checks and one statistics report.
- **One position per strategy.** When a strategy's position opens, its other working orders are cancelled. Only a fast price jump that fills two of its orders at the same moment can give it two positions.
- **Entries** are made only with pending (working) orders, never at market. A working order is withdrawn when its setup is no longer valid, when price moves too far away, when it expires, or when the free margin can no longer carry it (it is placed again when the margin allows).
- **Exits.** Every position has a stop loss and a take profit on the broker's server from the moment it opens. Stops are only ever moved in the trade's favour, never against it. If a position loses its stop loss (for example after manual editing), the EA restores it, and closes the position if it cannot.
- **No grid, no martingale, no averaging down.** Trade size comes from your settings and current equity, never from previous losses.
- **Priority.** The strategies are evaluated in the order 1, 2, 3, 4. When two signals compete for the last free position or the last part of a risk limit, the lower-numbered strategy gets it.
- **Smart Risk** (Strategy 3, switchable; Strategy 4, always on) reduces a trade to half size or skips it in unfavourable conditions: unusually high volatility, a spread that is wide compared with the stop distance, a stop that is tight compared with current market noise, or an EA position already open in the same direction. Working orders of these strategies are checked again while they wait: an order can be withdrawn or replaced by a smaller one, never by a larger one.
- **Server requests.** In normal trading the EA sends only a few trade requests a day. After errors it retries with growing pauses; a *too many requests* answer pauses new orders for one minute; an internal budget of 400 requests per server day starts holding back new orders and stop changes at 320 requests. Closing positions, cancelling orders and restoring a stop loss are never held back.
- **Trading sessions.** The EA sends no trade request while your broker's trading session for the symbol is closed (daily break, weekend or holiday; **Market Watch** → **Specification**), even if quotes still arrive. Orders, stop changes and closes that fall due meanwhile are sent when the session opens. If the server still answers *market closed* during a published session, the EA sends nothing for 5 minutes, then 10, 20 and at most 30 minutes while the answer repeats.
- **Hedging account required.** On an MT5 hedging account every trade is a separate position, so the strategies can trade independently. Netting accounts, which merge all trades on a symbol into one position, are not supported and were not backtested. If the EA is attached to a netting account anyway, it lets only one strategy at a time hold a position or working orders, and it makes no entry while the symbol holds a position it does not own, such as a manual trade.

3 Input reference

The inputs appear in seven groups, in this order, on the **Inputs** tab. The name in bold is exactly what MetaTrader shows; the small grey name below it is the internal name used in `.set` files and Strategy Tester reports. "Default" is the value of preset 01. The EA checks your values when it starts. An invalid value stops it with a journal line that begins with `Input settings:` or names the input (Section 6.5).

3.1 ===== STRATEGIES =====

Input	Default	What it does and when to change it

Strategy 1
`InpStrategy1_Enable`
Strategy 2
`InpStrategy2_Enable`
Strategy 3
`InpStrategy3_Enable`
Strategy 4
`InpStrategy4_Enable`
	true (each)	**true**: the strategy may open new trades. **false**: it opens nothing new and its working orders are cancelled; a position it already holds is still managed until it closes at its stop, target or trailing stop.
		When to change: to run fewer strategies, or use presets 06–09 (one strategy each). *Example:* Strategy 2 = **false** leaves three strategies trading. If all four are **false**, the EA opens no new trades and only manages positions it already holds.

3.2 ===== POSITION SIZING =====

Input	Default	What it does and when to change it
Position sizing (all strategies) `InpSizingMode`	**Risk % of equity per trade (target)**	**Risk % of equity per trade (target)**: the volume is chosen so that the stop loss would lose the strategy's target percentage of current equity. The volume is rounded *down* to the broker's lot step, so the risk stays at or below the target, except at the minimum lot (see below). This is the estimated initial risk, not a guaranteed maximum loss: a gap or slippage can make a loss larger. **Fixed lot per trade**: every trade uses the strategy's fixed lot, whatever that risks. This one setting applies to all four strategies.

Strategy 1 target risk per trade, % of equity
`InpStrategy1_RiskPercent`
Strategy 2 target risk per trade, % of equity
`InpStrategy2_RiskPercent`
	0.50 (each)	The risk target of one trade of this strategy. Used only with risk-% sizing. Allowed: above 0 and up to 20.
		Example: equity 20,000 USD and 0.50 → the stop loss would lose about 100 USD.
		When to change: lower it (for example 0.25) for more caution. Up to four strategies can hold positions at the same time: four trades at 0.50 % can risk about 2 % of equity together.

Strategy 3 target risk per trade, % of equity (before Smart Risk)
`InpStrategy3_RiskPercent`
Strategy 4 target risk per trade, % of equity (before Smart Risk)
`InpStrategy4_RiskPercent`
	0.50 (each)	As above. For Strategies 3 and 4 this is the value *before* Smart Risk, which can only reduce it (to half or to no trade).

Strategy 1 fixed lot (fixed-lot sizing)
`InpStrategy1_FixedLot`
Strategy 2 fixed lot (fixed-lot sizing)
`InpStrategy2_FixedLot`
Strategy 3 fixed lot (fixed-lot sizing)
`InpStrategy3_FixedLot`
Strategy 4 fixed lot (fixed-lot sizing)
`InpStrategy4_FixedLot`
	0.01 (each)	The volume of every trade of this strategy. Used only with fixed-lot sizing; must be above 0 and is rounded down to the lot step. A fixed lot does *not* give a fixed risk: the risk depends on each trade's stop distance and is printed with every order.
		Limits: a lot below the broker's minimum makes the strategy skip every trade (a `WARNING` line at startup says so). Smart Risk can halve the lot of Strategies 3 and 4; at 0.01 lot a halved trade (0.005) cannot be traded and is skipped.

Allow broker minimum lot (real risk can exceed the target) `InpAllowMinLot`	**true**	Risk-% sizing only. Decides what happens when the risk target needs a volume smaller than the broker's minimum lot (common on smaller accounts): **true**: the minimum lot is traded anyway. The calculated risk is then *higher* than the target and is printed with the order. **false**: the trade is skipped, so no trade risks more than its target.

Input (continued)	Default	What it does and when to change it
Minimum-lot risk limit `InpUseMinLotRiskLimit`	**false**	Works only when the minimum lot is allowed. **true**: the minimum lot is traded only if its risk is at most the next input; otherwise the trade is skipped. *When to change:* to accept a limited overshoot above the target on a small account, for example “trade the minimum lot only while it risks at most 2 %”.
Max risk of a minimum-lot trade, % of equity `InpMinLotMaxRiskPct`	**2.0**	The ceiling used by the minimum-lot risk limit. Allowed: above 0 and up to 100 while the limit is on. If it is lower than a strategy’s risk target, the minimum lot is never used for that strategy (a `WARNING` line says so).
Strategy 3 Smart Risk (reduce or skip in unfavourable conditions) `InpStrategy3_SmartRisk`	**true**	Switches Smart Risk (Section 2) on or off for Strategy 3. Strategy 4 always uses Smart Risk and has no switch. *When to change:* normally keep it on; the backtests in this manual use it. With **false**, Strategy 3 always trades its full size.

> **The risk target is a target, not a guarantee**
>
> Example: equity 2,000 USD, target 0.50 % = 10 USD. For this trade’s stop distance, 0.01 lot would lose 25 USD at the stop (1.25 % of equity). The risk target needs only 0.004 lot, which is below the minimum lot of 0.01.
>
> - Minimum lot allowed, no limit (default): the EA trades 0.01 lot. Calculated risk 25 USD = 1.25 % of equity.
> - Minimum lot allowed, limit 1.0 %: skipped, because 25 USD is more than 1 % (20 USD).
> - Minimum lot not allowed (preset 03): skipped.
>
> Every order line in the journal states its calculated initial risk, for example `risk 25.00 USD = 1.25% of equity (broker minimum lot; target 0.50%)`.

Situation (risk-% sizing)	Minimum lot not allowed	Allowed, no limit (default)	Allowed with limit
Risk target needs at least the minimum lot	traded, risk at or below the target	traded, risk at or below the target	traded, risk at or below the target
Risk target needs less than the minimum lot	skipped	minimum lot traded; calculated risk printed	minimum lot traded only if its risk is within the limit, otherwise skipped
Smart Risk reduced a trade below the minimum lot (Strategies 3, 4)	skipped	skipped	skipped
Not enough free margin for the order	skipped	skipped	skipped

Fixed-lot sizing is not affected by the minimum-lot settings.

3.3 ===== CAPITAL PROTECTION =====

All limits in this group are off by default. They measure the *account* equity, so manual trades and other EAs on the same account count too, but they only ever close TrendCue Gold’s own positions.

Input	Default	What it does and when to change it

Portfolio risk limit
`InpUsePortfolioRisk`
Max combined open risk of EA trades, % of equity
`InpMaxPortfolioRiskPct`
	false
	3.0
		When on, a new entry is refused if the money that all EA positions would lose at their current stops, plus the largest working order of each other strategy, plus the new trade, would exceed this percentage of equity. A stop at or beyond breakeven counts as zero. It never closes positions. Allowed: above 0 and up to 100.
		Example: equity 10,000 USD, limit 3 % = 300 USD, current open risk 220 USD, new trade 100 USD → refused (320 USD). Strategies 3 and 4 (Smart Risk) instead reduce the trade to the 80 USD that still fit, as long as at least half of it fits.
		Limit: it is checked when an order is placed. Working orders that fill later, or together in one fast move, can lift the combined risk above the limit.

Input (continued)	Default	What it does and when to change it

Daily loss limit
`InpUseDailyLoss`
Max daily loss, % of the day's starting equity
`InpMaxDailyLossPct`
	false
	5.0
		When on, the limit is hit when equity falls this percentage below the equity at the start of the server day. New entries then stop, working orders are cancelled and, if chosen below, EA positions are closed. The halt clears automatically at the start of the next server day.
		Example: day start 10,000 USD, 5 % → hit at 9,500 USD equity.
		Limit: it reacts *after* the loss. With "block", open positions can still lose more until their own stops.

Drawdown limit
`InpUseMaxDrawdown`
Max drawdown from the equity peak, %
`InpMaxDrawdownPct`
	false
	20.0
		When on, the limit is hit when equity falls this percentage below its highest value (measured since the EA first ran on the account, or since the last reset). New entries stop until you reset the peak or switch the limit off; working orders are cancelled; EA positions are closed if chosen below.
		Example: peak 12,000 USD, 20 % → hit at 9,600 USD equity.

Reset drawdown peak and halt (applied once when switched on) `InpResetDrawdownPeak`	**false**	When you switch it from **false** to **true** and press **OK**, the EA sets the peak to the current equity, clears the deepest-drawdown value and lifts a drawdown halt. It acts once. Switch it back to **false** afterwards; a later reset needs **false** then **true** again (see the box below).
When the daily-loss or drawdown limit is hit `InpLimitAction`	**Block new entries, keep open positions**	**Block new entries, keep open positions**: no new trades, working orders cancelled, open positions continue with their stops, targets and trailing. **Block new entries and close EA positions**: in addition, every EA position is closed at market.

Block new entries or close all? How to reset the drawdown peak

Block stops new risk but lets open trades finish: losses can continue until each position's own stop. **Close** also ends the open trades at once, at the market price of that moment. Neither option touches manual trades or other EAs. The daily-loss state and the drawdown peak are kept across restarts (in terminal global variables whose names begin with `TCG_`; the Strategy Tester always starts fresh).

To reset the drawdown peak: (1) open the EA settings (double-click the EA name in the chart corner, or right-click the chart → **Expert list**); (2) set **Reset drawdown peak and halt** to **true** and press **OK**; (3) check the journal line `Drawdown peak reset to the current equity ...`; (4) open the settings again, set it back to **false** and press **OK**.

Limits reduce risk; they are not guarantees

All limits react to equity. Price gaps (for example at the weekly open), slippage, fast markets and several working orders filled at the same moment can carry a loss beyond a limit before it acts. A position cannot be closed while the market is closed.

3.4 ===== PROP-FIRM LIMITS (OPTIONAL) =====

Fixed equity floors in money, calculated from the initial balance of a prop-firm (funded or evaluation) account. Off by default. Presets 04 and 05 switch them on (Section 4.4).

Input	Default	What it does and when to change it
Prop-firm loss limits (fixed equity floors) `InpUsePropLimits`	**false**	Switches the floors on. Switching it off also lifts a floor halt.
Initial balance of the prop-firm account (required when on) `InpPropInitialBalance`	**0.0**	The account's starting balance as the firm defines it, for example **100000**. Required: the EA refuses to start with 0, or when the current balance is below 60 % of the value entered (a protection against typing errors).
Daily loss allowance, % of initial balance `InpPropDailyLossPct`	**4.0**	Daily floor = balance at the start of the prop-firm day minus this percentage of the *initial* balance. Set it below the firm's own daily limit.
Overall loss allowance, % of initial balance `InpPropMaxLossPct`	**8.0**	Overall floor = initial balance (static) or highest day-start balance (trailing) minus this percentage of the initial balance. Set it below the firm's own maximum loss.

Input (continued)	Default	What it does and when to change it
Overall loss floor `InpPropMaxLossType`	**Static: initial balance minus the allowance**	**Static: initial balance minus the allowance**: the floor never moves. **Trailing: highest day-start balance minus the allowance**: recalculated once per prop-firm day; it can only rise. Choose the type your firm uses.
Prop-firm day start, server hour 0-23 (the next hour is watched too) `InpPropDayStartHour`	**1**	The server hour at which the firm's trading day begins. The EA also treats the following hour as a possible day start and applies the stricter result, because a firm's clock and the broker's server clock can differ by one hour around daylight-saving changes. Allowed: 0–23.

How the floors work. The binding floor is the higher of the daily and the overall floor. The EA:

- refuses a new entry when its stop, together with every open stop and every working order, could take equity below the floor;
- cancels working orders while they could do so;
- when equity reaches the floor: closes every EA position, cancels its working orders and blocks entries, until the next prop-firm day (daily floor) or until the prop-firm limits are switched off or their settings changed (overall floor);
- keeps a halt across restarts. The dashboard shows both floors and the room left above the binding floor.

Example (static): initial balance 100,000 USD, daily 4 %, overall 8 %. Balance at the day start 101,500 USD → daily floor 97,500 USD; overall floor 92,000 USD; binding floor 97,500 USD. With the trailing type and a highest day-start balance of 106,000 USD, the overall floor would be 98,000 USD.

> **When the room above the floor is smaller than one trade**
>
> No new trade is opened when the room between equity and the floor is smaller than one trade's risk. With the *trailing* floor this can last indefinitely, for example after a drawdown of about 7 % from the highest day-start balance with an 8 % allowance. The journal then shows `order blocked: prop-firm floor ...` and the dashboard shows the small room left. To continue, lower the risk per trade or raise the allowance, always staying below the firm's own limit.

3.5 ===== TRADE MANAGEMENT =====

Input	Default	What it does and when to change it
Opposite trades between strategies `InpOppositePolicy`	**Allow: strategies trade independently**	**Allow: strategies trade independently**: on a hedging account a long and a short from different strategies can be open at the same time. **Block: no trade against an open EA position**: no strategy opens a trade against an open EA position, and opposite working orders are cancelled when a position opens. *When to change:* if you prefer to hold only one direction at a time.
Max open EA trades (0 = no limit) `InpMaxPositions`	**0**	When an order is placed, EA positions plus the working orders of the other strategies (each could fill) may not exceed this number. After every fill, working orders that would now exceed it are cancelled. *Example:* **2** → at most two EA trades at a time. *Limit:* one fast price jump can still fill two working orders at the same moment.
Max EA trades in one direction (0 = no limit) `InpMaxSameDirection`	**0**	Open EA positions in the new trade's direction (long or short) may not exceed this number. Checked when an order is placed; after every fill, working orders that would exceed it are cancelled. The same fast-jump limitation applies.
Max spread for new entries, points (0 = off) `InpMaxSpreadPoints`	**0**	No new entry or working order is placed while the spread is wider than this. It applies when an order is placed, not when a working order fills. Points are your symbol's smallest price step, the same unit the dashboard uses for the spread. *Example:* if the dashboard usually shows 15–25 points, a limit of **40** avoids entries during unusually wide spreads.
Weekend: no new entries after the Friday cut-off `InpFridayProtection`	**true**	From the cut-off hour on Friday until the end of Sunday (server time) no order is placed and working orders are cancelled. Open positions are kept over the weekend.

Input (continued)	Default	What it does and when to change it
Weekend: close EA positions at the Friday cut-off `InpWeekendClose`	**false**	**true**: closes every EA position at the cut-off and blocks entries in the weekend window, whatever the previous input says. *When to change:* if you do not want to hold positions over the weekend gap, or if your prop firm forbids it.
Friday cut-off hour, server time `InpFridayCloseHour`	**21**	The hour on Friday (0–23, server time) from which the weekend rules apply. For the weekend close, choose an hour safely before your broker's Friday market close.

3.6 ===== DASHBOARD =====

Input	Default	What it does and when to change it
Show dashboard `InpShowDashboard`	**true**	Shows the on-chart panel (Section 5). Switching it off does not change trading. The panel is not drawn in non-visual Strategy Tester runs.
Reporting period `InpReportPeriod`	**All account history**	The period of the closed-trade statistics on the dashboard: **All account history**, **Current year**, **Current month**, **Current week** (from Monday) or **Today**, in server time.

Dashboard X offset, pixels
`InpDashX`
Dashboard Y offset, pixels
`InpDashY`
	12
	28
		The panel's distance from the left and top edges of the chart. Change them if the panel covers something you need to see.

3.7 ===== GENERAL =====

Input	Default	What it does and when to change it
Magic number base (Strategies 1-4 use base +1, +2, +8, +10) `InpMagicBase`	**7777100**	The EA marks its orders with magic numbers: Strategy 1 = base + 1, Strategy 2 = base + 2, Strategy 3 = base + 8, Strategy 4 = base + 10. Numbers base + 1 to base + 10 are reserved; do not use them for other EAs on the same symbol. *When to change:* rarely, for example for a second, separate configuration on the same account, never on the same symbol at the same time. *Important:* do not change it while EA positions are open: positions with the old numbers would no longer be managed.
Max slippage for market orders, points `InpSlippagePoints`	**50**	The largest price deviation accepted for market entries and closes. A larger value fills more reliably in fast markets at a possibly worse price; a smaller value can lead to refused orders.
Trading Symbol (Auto if empty) `InpTradingSymbol`	**empty**	Empty: the chart's symbol if it is spot gold quoted in US dollars, otherwise the broker's only such symbol. Enter a symbol (for example `XAUUSD.i`) when the chart says several or none were found; any other instrument is refused.

4 Presets

Each preset lists every input and starts with comment lines that explain it. Load it with **Inputs** → **Load**. After loading you can change any value and keep your own version with **Save**.

4.1 The nine presets

File	Purpose and main settings	Intended use and limitations	You must enter
`01_Risk_Percent.set`	The EA defaults. Four strategies, 0.50 % target each, minimum lot allowed (no limit), no portfolio, daily or drawdown limit, no new entries after Friday 21:00, opposite trades allowed.	Standard choice for accounts large enough for the risk target. On smaller accounts the minimum lot can risk much more than 0.50 % (Section 4.3).	nothing
`02_Fixed_Lot.set`	All four strategies trade a fixed 0.01 lot.	Constant volume. The risk varies from trade to trade and is printed with each order. Strategies 3 and 4 skip trades that Smart Risk would halve.	nothing
`03_Conservative.set`	Strict 0.50 % per trade (minimum lot never used to exceed it), portfolio risk limit 3 %, daily loss limit 5 % (block new entries).	Larger accounts that want strict sizing. On smaller accounts most or all trades are skipped: below roughly 6,000–12,000 USD one minimum lot often risks more than 0.50 % (2026 gold volatility).	nothing
`04_FTMO_2Step.set`	Prop-firm floors: daily 4 %, overall 8 % **static**; day start 01:00 server time (02:00 watched too); minimum lot only while it risks at most 1 %.	Evaluation stages of a two-step challenge with a 5 % daily and 10 % static maximum loss. No news filter; positions are held over weekends unless the weekend close is on.	**initial balance**
`05_FTMO_1Step.set`	As 04, but daily 2 % and overall 8 % **trailing**.	One-step challenge with a 3 % daily and 10 % trailing maximum loss. Best-day or consistency rules are not managed; the trailing floor can stop new trades for good (Section 3.4).	**initial balance**

`06_Strategy_1.set`
`07_Strategy_2.set`
`08_Strategy_3.set`
`09_Strategy_4.set`
	One strategy only (Strategy 1, 2, 3 or 4); otherwise the EA defaults.	To run or test one strategy alone, or as a starting point for your own combination. One strategy trades less often than four, and its results differ from the combined portfolio.	nothing

4.2 Which preset should I choose?

- **First installation on a normal account:** `01_Risk_Percent.set`.
- **You want the same volume on every trade:** `02_Fixed_Lot.set`.
- **You never want a trade to risk more than its target:** `03_Conservative.set` (expect skipped trades on small accounts).
- **Prop-firm evaluation:** `04` for two-step rules with a static maximum loss, `05` for one-step rules with a trailing maximum loss. Enter your initial balance and read Section 4.4.
- **Small account, but you want trades:** start from `01`, switch on **Minimum-lot risk limit** and set **Max risk of a minimum-lot trade** (for example 2.0), and consider the **Portfolio risk limit**. You accept a higher risk per trade than 0.50 %.
- **One strategy only:** `06`–`09`.

4.3 Account size and the minimum lot

On gold, one 0.01-lot trade can risk more money than 0.50 % of a small account. In 2025–2026 (real-tick backtests, 100-ounce contract, minimum lot 0.01) one minimum-lot trade risked at its stop: Strategy 1 median 23 USD (90th percentile 44 USD), Strategy 2 median 26 USD (46 USD), Strategy 3 median 34 USD (59 USD), Strategy 4 median 22 USD (34 USD). The table shows what one such trade at the median risk means for different account sizes.

Equity	0.50 % target	Strategy 1	Strategy 2	Strategy 3	Strategy 4
500 USD	2.50 USD	4.6 %	5.2 %	6.8 %	4.5 %
1,000 USD	5.00 USD	2.3 %	2.6 %	3.4 %	2.2 %
2,500 USD	12.50 USD	0.9 %	1.0 %	1.4 %	0.9 %
5,000 USD	25.00 USD	0.5 %	0.5 %	0.7 %	0.4 %
10,000 USD	50.00 USD	0.2 %	0.3 %	0.3 %	0.2 %
25,000 USD	125.00 USD	0.1 %	0.1 %	0.1 %	0.1 %

In the same period about 90 % of minimum-lot orders fitted a 2 % risk from roughly 3,000 USD of equity, 1 % from roughly 6,000 USD and 0.50 % from roughly 12,000 USD. These are not minimum deposits; they show when the default target can be honoured. The figures move with the gold price, its volatility and your broker's contract size. The startup line `Broker specification` shows the value of a 1.00 price move at the minimum lot on your account.

4.4 Prop-firm presets 04 and 05

The comments in these two preset files refer to an "FTMO preset guide": this section is that guide. TrendCue Gold is not affiliated with or endorsed by FTMO or any other prop firm; FTMO is a trademark of its owner. **No preset and no setting can guarantee that a challenge is passed or that no rule is breached.**

Rules the presets were built for (as published by FTMO and read on 24 November 2026; check the firm's current rules before every challenge): two-step, maximum daily loss 5 % and maximum loss 10 % static, both of the initial balance; one-step, maximum daily loss 3 % and maximum loss 10 % trailing at the end of the day. Each preset keeps a buffer of 1 % (daily) and 2 % (overall) below those limits. FTMO's day resets at midnight CE(S)T, which on its MetaTrader 5 server is 01:00 server time for most of the year and 02:00 for a few weeks around daylight-saving changes; day start **1** watches both hours. For reference, in the 2022–2026 backtest of preset 04 at 100,000 USD (real ticks) the worst trading day lost 3.35 % of the initial balance. Future days can be worse.

Not handled by the EA:

- **News.** There is no news filter. Working orders and stops can execute during restricted news times on accounts where the firm restricts news trading.
- **Weekend holding.** If your account type forbids holding over the weekend, set **Weekend: close EA positions at the Friday cut-off** to **true** and choose a cut-off before the market closes. Holiday breaks are not handled.
- **Best-day or consistency rules** are not managed.
- **Gaps and slippage** can carry equity past a floor, and past the firm's limit, before positions close. This is why the presets keep a buffer.
- **Exit commissions** are not part of the entry check. Manual trades and other EAs count only through equity.

Checklist: (1) read the firm's current rules and adjust the allowances if they changed; (2) enter the initial balance and keep day start **1** on FTMO's server (check your firm's day start otherwise); (3) compare the dashboard line `Prop-firm floors: daily ... | overall ...` with the limits shown by the firm; (4) one chart and one terminal only; (5) know that there is no news filter.

5 Dashboard and journal

5.1 The dashboard

Part	What it shows
Title line	`TRENDCUE | GOLD`, the trading symbol (and the chart's, if different), the account type and the version.
Top row	**STATUS**, **BALANCE**, **EQUITY**, **REALIZED P&L** (closed trades in the reporting period), **FLOATING P&L** (open EA positions) and **DRAWDOWN / MAX** (current and deepest equity drawdown from the peak, in %).
Status values	**TRADING**: normal operation. **WEEKEND PAUSE**: weekend window. **TRADING OFF**: algorithmic trading or the account's trading permission is off. **DAILY LOSS HALT**, **DRAWDOWN HALT**, **PROP LIMIT HALT**: a limit is active (Section 6.4).

Part	What it shows
Strategy table	One row per strategy and a **PORTFOLIO** row. Columns: **STATUS** (**ON** waiting, **ARMED** working order placed, **LONG** or **SHORT** position open, **OFF** disabled), **TRADES**, **WIN %**, **NET P&L**, **PF** (profit factor), **AVG R** (average result in multiples of the money risked at entry), **MAX DD** (deepest drawdown of closed trades, in money) and **FLOATING**.
Footer lines	Strategies switched on, positions and pending orders (with limits), the combined open risk (calculated at the current stops) in % of equity, the current spread in points; the daily-loss, drawdown, minimum-lot and weekend settings and the reporting period; when on, the prop-firm floors and the room left.

Statistics are built from the account's trade history, so they survive restarts and include trades closed while the terminal was off.

5.2 The Experts journal

Besides the startup summary (Section 1.2), the journal records every order with its calculated initial risk, for example (illustrative values):

```
Strategy 2: BUY 0.05 at ..., SL ..., TP ..., risk 49.60 USD = 0.50% of equity
```

When an entry is skipped or blocked, the journal says why, in a line such as `Strategy 1: entry skipped: ...` or `Strategy 3: order blocked: ...`. Each reason is printed when it first appears or changes (at most once an hour) and repeated once a day while it lasts. Section 6.6 lists the reasons.

6 Troubleshooting

6.1 The EA does not open trades

Waiting is normal: each strategy trades only when its conditions are met, and several quiet days can pass. If you expect activity, check in this order:

1. Dashboard status. **TRADING OFF**: switch on **Algo Trading** in the toolbar and **Allow Algo Trading** in the EA settings; an account opened with the investor (read-only) password cannot trade. **WEEKEND PAUSE**: wait for the new week. A **HALT**: see Section 6.4.
2. Strategy status. **OFF** means the strategy is disabled in the inputs.
3. The Experts journal: the latest `entry skipped` or `order blocked` line names the reason (Section 6.6).
4. The startup lines: a `WARNING` line, the minimum-lot rule in force, the spread filter and the position limits.
5. The trading symbol: the line `Trading symbol: ...` names it; if the chart shows `TrendCue Gold opens no trade: ...`, set **Trading Symbol (Auto if empty)**.

6.2 An order was skipped because of risk or the minimum lot

With risk-% sizing, the EA skips a trade when the risk target needs less than the minimum lot and the minimum lot is not allowed, or when the minimum lot would risk more than the minimum-lot limit. The journal line shows the money and percentage the minimum lot would have risked. Your options: accept the skip (strict sizing); allow the minimum lot with a limit you are comfortable with; or use fixed-lot sizing. A larger account lets the target be honoured more often (Section 4.3). A trade is also skipped when the free margin does not cover it.

6.3 Smart Risk reduced or skipped an order

Strategies 3 and 4 halve or skip a trade in unfavourable conditions. The journal states the condition, for example:

- `Smart Risk: no trade (spread too wide for the stop)`
- `Smart Risk reduced the trade to half size (high volatility)`

A halved trade that falls below the minimum lot is skipped by design: the minimum lot never undoes a Smart Risk reduction. Only Strategy 3's Smart Risk can be switched off; the backtests in this manual keep it on.

6.4 A protection blocks trading

- **DAILY LOSS HALT**: entries resume automatically at the next server day.
- **DRAWDOWN HALT**: entries resume after you reset the drawdown peak (Section 3.3) or switch the drawdown limit off. Review your risk settings before you reset.

- **PROP LIMIT HALT**, daily floor: entries resume on the next prop-firm day. Overall floor: the halt is permanent until you switch the prop-firm limits off or change their settings; do so only if the firm's own rules allow you to continue.
- Blocked trades without a halt (`order blocked: prop-firm floor ...`): the room above the floor is smaller than one trade's risk (Section 3.4).

6.5 The EA refuses to start

Journal message	What to do
`Input settings: enter the initial balance of the prop-firm account ...`	Enter the initial balance (presets 04 and 05), or switch the prop-firm limits off.
`Input settings: the account balance ... is below 60% of the initial balance ...`	Check the initial balance you entered.
`Input settings: ...` (other text)	A limit is outside its allowed range or negative; correct the input named in the message.
`Strategy N: risk percent must be above 0 and at most 20.`	Correct that strategy's risk target.
`Strategy N: fixed lot size must be above 0.`	Correct that strategy's fixed lot.
`Magic number base must be positive, the Friday cut-off hour 0-23 ...`	Correct the magic number base, the cut-off hour or the slippage.
`TrendCue Gold is already running on another chart that trades ...`	Another copy trades the same gold symbol on this account with the same magic base. Keep one chart only.
`Symbol specification is not available.`	Wait for the terminal to connect and load the symbol, then attach the EA again.

6.6 Reasons printed in the journal

The line contains	Meaning
`trading is not allowed`	Algorithmic trading or an account permission is off.
`daily loss limit is active` / `drawdown limit is active`	A capital-protection limit is active.
`prop-firm ... floor reached` / `prop-firm floor: with every stop hit ...`	A floor was reached, or the trade could take equity below a floor.
`weekend window`	After the Friday cut-off.
`spread ... is above the limit`	The spread filter.
`max open EA trades reached` / `max EA trades in this direction reached`	A position limit.
`an opposite EA position is open`	Opposite trades are set to block.
`portfolio risk limit`	The combined open risk would exceed the portfolio limit.
`risk-based volume is below the broker minimum lot`	The minimum lot is not allowed and the target needs less.
`minimum-lot risk limit`	The minimum lot would risk more than its limit.
`fixed lot ... is below the broker minimum lot`	Raise the fixed lot.
`not enough free margin`	The free margin does not cover the order.
`Smart Risk`	Strategy 3 or 4 halved or skipped the trade.
`netting account`	The account is a netting account, which is not supported, and the symbol is held by another strategy or by a position the EA does not own. Use an MT5 hedging account.
`the broker's ...`	The broker's trade mode, stops level, volume limit or pending-order limit prevents the order.
`held back`	The internal request protection paused new orders after errors or a *too many requests* answer, or the trading session is closed (`held back: the trading session is closed`).

Lines that begin with `DAILY LOSS LIMIT hit`, `MAX DRAWDOWN LIMIT hit` or `PROP-FIRM ... FLOOR reached` mark the moment a limit acted. `Trading session of ... closed at ...` (at most once an hour) and `Trade requests for ... resume at ...` mark a closed trading session; `The trade server answered "market closed" ...` marks an unannounced closure, after which the EA pauses its requests. To read older messages, right-click in the **Experts** tab and choose **Open**: the folder `MQL5\Logs` holds one log file per day.

6.7 If you need support

Most questions are answered by the journal and this manual. If you still need help, send a message through MQL5 (private message or the product's comments) with:

1. the EA version (first startup line) and the MetaTrader 5 build (**Help** → **About**);
2. your broker, the account type (hedging or netting, demo or real) and the symbol name;
3. the preset you loaded, or screenshots of all input groups;
4. the startup lines: version, `Broker specification`, `Sizing`, `Broker minimum lot` and `Protection`;
5. the journal lines around the event with the date and server time, or the day's log file;
6. a screenshot of the chart with the dashboard, and what you expected compared with what happened.

7 Backtest reference and risk disclosure

Default settings (preset 01)	MetaTrader 5 Strategy Tester backtest, not live trading
Test conditions	XAUUSD, every tick based on real ticks (history quality 99 %), 1 January 2022 to 21 November 2026, 10,000 USD, leverage 1:100, 100-ounce contract, the test server's spreads and commission
Net profit	+12,179 USD (final balance 22,179 USD)
Profit factor | winning trades	1.60 | 51.5 % of 936 trades
Maximum equity drawdown	8.35 % (relative, tick by tick)
Profitable calendar months	68 % (40 of 59)
Longest time without a new equity high	235 days
Return per calendar year	2022 +6.4 %, 2023 +13.1 %, 2024 +10.2 %, 2025 +28.5 %, 2026 (to 21 November) +30.3 %
Preset 03 (Conservative), same test	Net profit +12,353 USD, maximum equity drawdown 8.35 %, profit factor 1.61, 935 trades

Read these figures with care. They are one historical path: a quiet market in 2022, then a strong rise of gold from 2024 to 2026. The best calendar year (2026) produced 42 % of the net profit, and the best 5 % of the trades produced more than the whole net profit. Results depend on the broker's spreads and costs: in a cost test, adding 0.50 USD per ounce to every round trip reduced the net profit by about one fifth, so a low-cost account matters. Results on a smaller account also differ because of the minimum lot (Section 4.3). You can repeat the test with the free demo in the Strategy Tester (preset 01, "Every tick based on real ticks", 10,000 USD); your broker's data will give different figures.

> **Risk disclosure**
>
> Trading gold with leverage carries a high level of risk and may not be suitable for every investor. You can lose more than a planned amount when prices gap. Past results, including every backtest mentioned in this manual, do not guarantee future results. TrendCue Gold does not guarantee profits, the passing of any prop-firm challenge, or the prevention of any rule breach. Test on a demo account before you trade real money, and only trade with money you can afford to lose.