



A GUIDE TO RESPONSIBLE PARTICIPATION IN GAMBLING



PLAY

RESPONSIBLY



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RESPONSIBLE GAMBLING

Advice for participating in games of chance responsibly

YOUR BEST BET

There are many ways to enjoy games of chance as a fun and entertaining activity. It all starts with having the right information about how this GAME works and how it can stay fun even with the risks involved.

STAY INFORMED

Being informed about games of chance is your BEST BET.

OUR MISSION

This guide was created with the goal of making games of chance as safe as possible for players and providing the information needed to develop safe practices.

Our mission is to promote a culture of RESPONSIBLE participation in games of chance.

In this guide, you'll find practical tips for safe gambling, as well as insights into the challenges that can come with this form of entertainment.

The information provided is based on some of the latest research in the field and is intended for the general public.

Enjoy this activity as a form of ENTERTAINMENT, not as a way to make money!



Responsible gambling includes all practices related to participation in games of chance aimed at reducing the risk of harm:

- ▶ Accepting that games of chance are only a form of ENTERTAINMENT
- ▶ Keeping CONTROL over your behavior
- ▶ Set limits on your deposit and play session
- ▶ Not gambling with the goal of MAKING MONEY
- ▶ UNDERSTANDING how games of chance work, including the risks and odds
- ▶ Using LOW-RISK strategies while playing
- ▶ Recognizing and accepting the UNCERTAINTY that comes with gambling



MAYBE YOU HAVEN'T HEARD THE TERM **RESPONSIBLE GAMBLING** BEFORE – BUT THERE'S A GOOD CHANCE THE INFORMATION IN THIS BROCHURE WILL HELP YOU PARTICIPATE IN GAMES OF CHANCE MORE SAFELY AND RESPONSIBLY.

UNDERSTANDING THE GAME

Many people choose to participate in games of chance out of curiosity, for FUN, or as a social activity.

Most people who bet do so WITHOUT LOSING CONTROL of their behavior.

Understanding the potential risks and how to avoid them is a key step in deciding whether or not to participate in games of chance.

PLAYING SAFELY

People who play for fun and enjoyment understand that they can lose, and they accept the risks involved in games of chance.

- Players who maintain control over their behavior are, above all, in control of how much money they spend and how much time they invest.
- Responsible gambling fits into a balanced lifestyle and does not interfere with other areas of life or lead to problems.

LOW-RISK GAMBLING

The game is played purely for entertainment. The player includes gambling expenses in their household budget, sets a financial limit, and sticks to it. A small loss is seen as the cost of entertainment for that day, similar to going to the movies or out for dinner. They do not see gambling as a way to make money, and there is no expectation to win back the money they've lost.

HIGH-RISK GAMBLING

The player **LOSES SIGHT** of the fact that this is **JUST A GAME**. They see gambling as a way to make money, possibly believing they're on a lucky streak or have special skills. When they lose, they often continue playing in an attempt to win back what they've lost.

USE A LOW-RISK STRATEGY!

Before You Play:

- ▶ Remember: games of chance are **ONLY A FORM OF ENTERTAINMENT** that involve expenses, **NOT** a way to earn money.
- ▶ Learn how the games you plan to play work, and even more importantly, understand the expected costs involved.
- ▶ Set a maximum deposit limit and stick to it.
- ▶ Only gamble with money you can afford to spend for this purpose, and do not borrow money to gamble.
- ▶ Create a monthly budget for all your expenses, including gambling.

PLAY FOR FUN!





ALWAYS BE AWARE
OF THE RISK

During the game

- ▶ Resist the urge to chase losses. Don't try to WIN BACK LOST MONEY — this only leads to even greater losses.
- ▶ Take regular breaks while playing. Eat something during your breaks, go for a short walk, or set a timer on your phone to help limit how long you play. Always take breaks while playing.
- ▶ Avoid alcohol or drugs. Participating in games of chance under the influence of psychoactive substances can impair your judgment.
- ▶ Always keep track of how much money you have and how much you're wagering. Don't lose sight of your spending during a single game.
- ▶ Separate your winnings from the money you planned to spend.
- ▶ Pay attention to your emotions. Losing is part of the game. It's normal to feel frustrated or angry after a loss. But if those feelings happen regularly, it may be time to explore other types of entertainment.

STICK TO YOUR LIMITS!

After the game

- ▶ Revisit the limits you've set for your gambling sessions and deposits and reflect on what motivated you to play and how you feel now. If you're not feeling good, that's a sign you need a change — take a break, or spend less time or money next time.
- ▶ Use your winnings to take your friends out for a drink or buy a gift for a loved one — perhaps a trip if your winnings are bigger. Don't put all of your winnings back in the game or double your wagers.
- ▶ Balance gambling with other enjoyable activities.
- ▶ It's important to know that gambling carries risk. To keep it fun, you need to stay aware of the risk and learn how to minimize it.

WHEN GAMBLING BECOMES A PROBLEM

Participating in games of chance becomes a problem when it starts to negatively affect other areas of your life, such as your physical or mental health, job performance, financial situation, or relationships.

Problem gambling refers to any type of participation in gambling that goes beyond normal boundaries of fun, recreation, or leisure.

Family and friends often notice the problem before the person affected does. They can be a crucial source of support for someone trying to regain control over their behavior.

GAMBLING ADDICTION

For some people, participating in games of chance can turn into a HABIT.

In such cases, frequent gambling may lead to chemical changes in the brain, which affect a person's ability to regulate emotions, thoughts, and actions. These changes can lead to repeated, uncontrolled behavior as the person seeks to recreate the same emotional effects, such as the euphoria or excitement they felt before.

Over time, it becomes harder to resist the urge to play this kind of game, and that urge increases in both frequency and intensity.

In cases of problem gambling, the effect is similar to that of alcohol or psychoactive substances.



RISK FACTORS

- ▶ History of trauma or mental illness
- ▶ Loneliness, depression, or anxiety
- ▶ Family history of alcoholism, substance abuse, or gambling addiction
- ▶ Tendency to act impulsively or seek stimulation when bored
- ▶ Lack of understanding of how gambling works
- ▶ Irresponsible financial management
- ▶ Financial difficulties or other stressful life events
- ▶ Belief that lost money can be recovered by gambling more
- ▶ A large win early in the game
- ▶ Teenagers and young people are more at risk than adults



WARNING SIGNS OF A PROBLEM

- ▶ Feeling guilty, tense, frustrated, or anxious
- ▶ Thinking about gambling more than usual
- ▶ Gambling to win back money you've lost, believing a big win is just around the corner
- ▶ Struggling to control or stop gambling; feeling irritable when trying to stop
- ▶ Feeling empty or restless when you're not gambling
- ▶ Borrowing money, selling belongings, or considering illegal activity to fund gambling
- ▶ Mounting debts, unpaid bills, or worsening financial issues due to gambling
- ▶ Using gambling as an escape from personal problems or to relieve anxiety, depression, anger, or loneliness
- ▶ Choosing to go gambling instead of attending family or social events; neglecting family responsibilities or household duties

Even one of these factors can increase the risk of gambling no longer being just entertainment, but a risk factor for behavior with potentially harmful consequences.



DON'T BE ASHAMED TO SEEK HELP

Who to contact?

If you recognize yourself in the situations described above and self-help strategies are not helping you regain control over your behavior, IT'S TIME TO SEEK HELP!

www.gamblingtherapy.org

www.gamblersanonymous.org/ga/

www.gamcare.org.uk/

Fewer than 10% of people who have problems with gambling will seek professional help. The most commonly cited reason for not reaching out to mental health professionals is FEELING ASHAMED.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- ▶ Speak to our staff
- ▶ Talk to your family, friends, or colleagues
- ▶ Contact mental health professionals – see the phone numbers listed above

