

What's gambling really costing you?



1G (1). 1220. LG21100

More than you think.

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1800 858 858



What's gambling really costing you?



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What's gambling really costing you?



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A million to one.

**That's your chance of hitting the
jackpot on a gaming machine.**

Help is close at hand



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You can speak to someone in your language.
We have counsellors who speak languages other
than English and interpreters are available.

We support people who gamble – and their
families and friends.

Info about the odds

Betting on gaming machines?

Published by
The Office of Responsible Gambling
GPO Box 7060, Sydney NSW 2001

www.responsiblegambling.nsw.gov.au

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1-English. 1220. LG31100

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You may play the pokies for a quick flutter or even a longer session of gambling, but how much do you really know about these gaming machines and how they work?

Poker machines are designed to make a profit for the venues licensed to operate them. In NSW, those venues are hotels, registered clubs and the casino. While poker machines can be a fun way to spend money, they are not designed to help people make money. Although you may win some money in the short-term, in the long-term it is virtually impossible to come out ahead.



What is a game of chance?

Gaming machines are games of chance. Whether you win or lose is totally a matter of luck.

In games of chance there are no playing methods or patterns that can have any effect on whether you win or lose. Gaming machines contain a computer program known as a random number generator.

Each time you press the button to play a game, the computer program randomly selects the position of each symbol or picture.

The NSW Government checks the operating programs for all gaming machines to ensure that they meet strict technical standards. It is illegal for anyone to tamper with machines or change the operation of a gaming machine without prior approval.

Gaming machines cannot think or remember. They are operated by computer programs that produce random outcomes.

How do gaming machines work?

Gaming machines have reels which feature symbols or pictures. The symbols assigned to each stopping

position on each reel are programmed into the machine. These positions are permanent and do not change from game to game. The other positions on the reel have other symbols permanently assigned.

The random choice of stopping position is done separately and independently for each reel. On a machine with five reels and 35 possible stopping positions on each reel, there are about 52 million possible stopping combinations.

Each gaming machine is designed differently and has different odds of winning the maximum prize, but generally your chance of winning the jackpot is no better than a million to one, and may be much lower than this.

In the long run, the machine is designed to come out ahead and you will lose money.

Can you improve your odds?

No – outside factors do not have any bearing on the outcome of a gaming machine game, including previous games.

This means it is impossible to predict a gaming machine's behaviour. Each symbol that comes up is chosen randomly.

It does not make a difference whether:

- you play a machine straight after someone else has had a big payout from it
- you play a machine that has not had a big payout over a long period of time
- you play at certain times of the day or night
- you play on certain days of the week
- you press the buttons a certain way.

You cannot alter the outcome of a pokies game.

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Info about your chances

Betting on casino table games?



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Casino games of chance or skill can be entertaining for people who enjoy placing their bets on wheels spun, cards dealt and dice rolled.

But casinos are there to make a profit. Each game has a house margin. This is the overall percentage of money wagered that is retained by the casino, also known as the house. The lower the house margin, the higher the proportion of money that is returned to players.

Skilled players may be able to reduce the house margin playing games of skill, but the house margin cannot be changed on games of chance, no matter the betting strategy.

In the long run, most players are unlikely to come out ahead. Each game must be conducted in accordance with rules approved by the Independent Liquor & Gaming Authority.

How often will your number come up?

Blackjack

Blackjack is a card game of chance and skill in which players may improve their chance of winning by using a better strategy. After receiving two cards from the dealer, the player can choose to be dealt more cards so as to have a total score closer to 21 than the dealer's total – without going over 21. Face (picture) cards count as 10, aces count as 1 or 11 and the cards 1 to 10 count as their face value. The house margin for Blackjack is generally less than 1% for skilled players.

Caribbean Stud Poker

This card game is a game of chance and skill, and is based on five-card stud poker. For an initial 'stake' or 'ante', players receive five cards face down while the dealer receives four cards face down and one card face up. If a player thinks they cannot beat the dealer's hand, they can forfeit their stake. To play on, the player's next bet must be twice the original stake. The best poker hand between each player and the dealer wins. There are also jackpot bets available. The house margin for Caribbean Stud Poker is about 5.5%, which includes an allowance for the jackpot.

Baccarat

Baccarat is a game of chance where numbered cards less than 10 count as their face value; aces are worth 1; and 10s and face (picture) cards are worth 0. Two cards are dealt to both the player's hand and the banker's hand, then depending on the totals of those first two cards, a third card may be dealt. These totals are read as if the first digit does not exist – so a hand totalling 15 becomes 5. The winner of the game has the total card value closest to 9. Players can bet on the player's hand or the banker's hand, or bet that the hands will tie. The house margin for Baccarat is around 1.2%.

Sic Bo

In Sic Bo, three dice are rolled and players try to predict various combinations, totals and outcomes. House margins for each type of bet vary from 2.8% (big, small or combinations of two dice) to 16.2% for a specific triple. Sic Bo is a game of chance, so there are no betting strategies to reduce these margins.

Craps

Craps is a game played with two dice where players may wager on any combination of the two dice. Players are given the chance to roll the dice provided they have a wager on the win line or don't win line. As seven is the most common combination, many of the wagers are based on the Shooter rolling a seven or not rolling

a seven. The house margin on Craps varies greatly from 16.67% for a wager on any seven (one roll) to 0.85% on win odds. The overall house margin is about 2%.

Roulette and Double Zero Roulette

A game of chance, the Australian roulette wheel has 37 numbers on it: 18 red, 18 black and one zero, or in the case of Double Zero roulette, 38 numbers. The wheel is spun in one direction and a small non-metallic ball in the other. Players can bet Straight Up (betting the ball lands on a specific number), or bet on combinations of numbers, red or black, odd or even and low or high (whether the number is between 1 and 18 or 19 and 36 inclusive). The house margin is 2.7% for roulette and 5.26% for Double Zero roulette.

Pai Gow

Another game of chance, Pai Gow translates as make nine. Pai Gow is played with 32 tiles. Twenty-two of these tiles form 11 Identical Pairs and the remaining 10 tiles form five Mixed Pairs. After the game has been dealt, each player and the Bank (or house) needs to construct two separate hands with their four tiles called a Low Hand and a High Hand. The player's hands and the Bank's hands are then compared to determine who wins. The house margin for Pai Gow is 1.5%.

Can you improve your odds?

No – not in games of chance – because dice and spinning wheels have no memory. In games of chance the house margin is determined by the rules.



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1800 858 858



What's gambling really costing you?

Most people gamble at one time or another. It may be on poker machines, at the TAB, on the lotteries or at the casino. For many people, gambling is fun, entertaining and causes no harm.

However, for some people, gambling can become a problem. Gambling can come at a high cost - financially, emotionally and personally. Gambling can be harmful for the person who gambles, and their family and friends.



How do I know if gambling is a problem?

If gambling is causing stress or anxiety, it might be a sign that it's a problem. Other signs that gambling is causing harm are:

- feeling guilty, anxious or depressed about gambling
- losing control of how much time or money is spent on gambling
- withdrawing from family and friends
- trying to win back losses by continuing to gamble
- borrowing money or selling valuables to gamble
- falling behind with bills or signing up for new credit cards
- thinking about gambling every day
- lying about gambling

If you or someone you know is experiencing any of these signs, it's important to reach out for information and support. You can contact GambleAware, a free and confidential service for people who gamble, *and* their families and friends.

It's never too late to get help – you can reach out today.

Help is close at hand

You can get information and support by contacting GambleAware.

GambleAware has a confidential phone service that provides information, support and referrals. It's available anytime: 24 hours a day, seven days a week. It's a free call – in fact, the number won't even show up on your bill.

If you prefer typing to talking, then 24/7 chat is available at www.gamblinghelponline.org.au.

There are also GambleAware counselling services across NSW. To find one near you call 1800 858 858 or look up your local service at www.gambleaware.nsw.gov.au/i-need-support.

There are specialised support services available for women, those who identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, and for people who speak languages other than English.

Financial counselling and legal assistance is also available if you're facing financial or legal challenges due to gambling.

If you're not ready to talk to a counsellor, there are options such as self-exclusion from venues or online, self-help resources online at the GambleAware website and a special section for family and friends that outlines simple actions you can take if you're worried about a loved one.

For more information, or to get support today, call 1800 858 858 or visit gambleaware.nsw.gov.au

2G. 1220. LG22100

Help is close at hand.

To find out what support
is available for you, visit
gambleaware.nsw.gov.au
or call **1800 858 858**.



Need a break from gambling?

You can ban yourself from
gambling here.
See the Gaming Manager for
more information or call
GambleAware 1800 858 858.

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