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Responsible gambling
tips and strategies

Play it safe, know the facts.



The risks and rewards
of gambling

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Know your limit, play within it.



Responsible gambling tips and strategies



Here's a safe bet – know the facts before you gamble









Gambling has provided entertainment and fun to people around the world for thousands of years. The decision to gamble is a personal choice. For some people the chance to win is exciting, but for others gambling is a way to avoid their problems. Gambling can be a risky business. If you gamble, know the facts before you bet.

To reduce the risks associated with gambling, remember:

-  You pay to play – so just like dinner and a movie, gambling entertainment has a price. Set your budget before you gamble – take only the cash you can afford to lose and leave the plastic at home.
-  The longer you play, the more you pay. When your money is spent, gambling longer won't help you get it back.

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-  Gambling should never be seen as a way to make money. Hope to win, but be prepared to lose.
-  The odds are never in your favour. The "house" always has the advantage, and there is no system that allows you to gain the edge.
-  If you are lucky enough to win, pocket the money – putting it back into the game is a losing proposition.
-  Gambling won't solve your problems, but it can make them worse – you will never get back time that you spend away from your family and friends.
-  Plan how long you will play before you go and take breaks often.
-  Balance gambling with other kinds of leisure activities.
-  Making poor choices around gambling may happen more often if you are feeling lonely, angry, depressed or stressed.
-  Using alcohol or other drugs when you gamble can interfere with your ability to control your gambling.

To talk to someone confidentially about problems with gambling, call 1-888-795-6111. It's free.

Problem
Gambling
Help Line:
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Gambling in B.C.



Regulation and Operation of Gambling

The Criminal Code of Canada gives provincial governments the authority to provide gambling within their jurisdictions.

The Gaming Policy and Enforcement Branch (GPEB) is a branch of the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General. GPEB regulates all gaming in B.C., ensures the integrity of gaming companies, workers and equipment, and investigates allegations of wrongdoing. This mandate includes regulatory oversight of the British Columbia Lottery Corporation (BCLC), all gaming service providers and gaming workers, B.C.'s horse racing industry and licensed gaming events. The Branch also manages responsible gambling programs and the distribution of gaming funds. GPEB carries out its mandate under the authority of the provincial Gaming Control Act, Gaming Control Regulation, and Canada's Criminal Code.

Horse racing in B.C. is regulated by the Racing Division of GPEB. The Branch develops fair and appropriate rules, provides effective management of racing events, and licenses participants in the horse racing industry.

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All commercial gambling (except horse racing) is operated under the authority of a provincial Crown corporation, British Columbia Lottery Corporation (BCLC). Only BCLC (through its contracted service providers) and charitable organizations licensed by the Province are legally authorized to provide gambling. BCLC conducts, manages and operates commercial lotteries, casinos and bingo games. BCLC also offers a selection of games through its Internet site, PlayNow. The majority of BCLC's product sales and operational services are delivered through private companies who are under contract to BCLC. There are over 4,100 lottery retailers, 17 casinos (two of which are located at race tracks), 15 commercial bingo halls, and 12 community gaming centres in B.C.

Net gaming revenue from BCLC is distributed to the Province of British Columbia. For more information on where the money goes, visit:

<http://www.pssg.gov.bc.ca/gaming/revenue/index.htm>

<http://www.bclc.com/documents/annualreports/BCLCAAnnualReport0607.pdf>

In 2003, government established its Responsible Gambling Strategy. This Strategy promotes responsible gambling and effectively addresses problem gambling. Its main components are public awareness and education, treatment and prevention, research, training, evaluation and policy development. As part of this Strategy, the Problem Gambling Program provides free counselling services to problem gamblers and others who may be affected by problem gambling behaviour. The 2007/08 budget for the Strategy is \$7 million.

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Myth Busting

Can you tell the facts
from the myths?

Myth Busting

MYTH: If I play more than one slot or one poker hand at a time, I'll increase my chances of winning.

FACT: The odds of winning do not get better if you play two machines. You may win more often by playing two slot machines or poker hands at a time, but you will also lose more often. Remember, over time the more you gamble, the more it costs you.

MYTH: If a certain card comes up often in a poker game, I bet on it because chances are it will come up again very soon.

FACT: There are over 2.5 million possible hands in a card deck. Cards played in past hands do not predict what cards will show up in the next hand. Betting on that basis is a bad bet.

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When it comes to gambling, can
you tell the facts from the myths?

Gambling has provided entertainment and fun to people around the world for thousands of years. The decision to gamble is a personal choice. For some people the chance to win is exciting, but for others gambling is a way to avoid their problems. Gambling can be a risky business. If you gamble, know the facts before you bet.

Here are some common myths that can create problems when you gamble.

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Myth Busting:

When it comes to gambling,
can you tell the facts from the myths?

MYTH: Today is my lucky day; I know I'm going to win.

FACT: There is no magic in gambling. No thought or feeling that you may have will help determine whether you win or not.

MYTH: I can control the game with positive thinking and my lucky charm.

FACT: When you gamble the only thing you can control is you. Nothing about the way you play will change your chances to win. Gambling is designed to make more money for the "house" than it pays out to players. Whether it's in a casino or a bingo hall, nothing you do will change that, not even bringing along your lucky charm.

MYTH: This machine hasn't paid out for a long time, so I'm due for a win.

FACT: Slots have no memory; they operate randomly at all times. Slot payout percentages do not change no matter how long you play. Random number generators determine winning and losing combinations, so the fact that you have been losing so far does not mean you will win soon or at all.

MYTH: If I keep playing, I can win back what I've lost so far.

FACT: The longer you play the more it will cost you. Chasing losses won't solve your gambling or financial problems. There is no way to predict a win. What happens in future plays is not in any way related to what has happened in past plays.

MYTH: Some slots are hot and some are not.

FACT: All slots have random number generators that ensure a random outcome every time you play. Slots are programmed to pay out less money than you put in, so in the end the machine will win. Each play is separate from the last, and you can never predict a win. It doesn't matter what you do – how you push the button, where the machine is located on the floor, or what time of day it is – the results are always random. As part of the "house" advantage, slots in B.C. keep on average about 8% of all money played over the life of the game.

MYTH: When I play the lottery, I have a better chance of winning with my lucky numbers.

FACT: The lottery game does not know or recognize your lucky numbers. Numbers are drawn randomly, so no particular number combination is more likely than another to come up in the next draw. The likelihood of winning (and losing) with a number combination such as 1,2,3,4,5,6 is exactly the same as if you play using your favourite numbers. The odds of winning Lotto 6/49 are approximately 1 in 14 million.

MYTH: I almost won, so a win must be close.

FACT: Close doesn't count. It may appear close to you, but actually a losing combination is just that; in reality, there is no such thing as "nearly winning." What happens in future plays is not in any way related to what has happened in past plays.

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Facts you should know

Online Gambling

Gambling has provided entertainment and fun to people around the world for thousands of years. For some people the chance to win is exciting, but for others, gambling is a way to avoid their problems. If you bet money on any game of chance you should have the facts before you bet.

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- facts you should know

Gambling on the Internet is more widely available than ever before. Some gambling sites advertise themselves as "poker schools" where you can go to learn about the games (these are often .net sites). From there it is easy to move into betting money on games (these are .com sites). But what do you know about the people behind the Internet gambling sites? Some estimates put the number of online gambling sites at over 2,500. Experts project the value of this industry at over \$14 billion, and, remember, this is an industry designed to make profit for the owners, not the players.

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Facts you should know

In British Columbia, all gambling is regulated by the provincial government and only British Columbia Lottery Corporation (BCLC) is legally authorized to provide gambling through the Internet.


This means if you are playing typical casino-style games such as Texas Hold'em, Blackjack, Roulette and slot-type games (which are not offered on BCLC's site), you are playing at your own risk.

These facts may help you decide if playing on the Internet is worth the risk:



.com gambling sites

-  Are operated offshore and outside of the jurisdiction of Canadian law;
-  Are not regulated – that means that there is no way to ensure the games are fair, so you play at your own risk;
-  May not pay you fairly, even if you win and there is nothing you can do about it;
-  Offer you no way of knowing who else is playing in the same game. One person with four different accounts could be playing against you, which means you could be in a stacked game without knowing it. There is no way to ensure the games are fair;
-  Often don't have game odds posted on their gambling sites, so it is impossible to tell who sets the odds, if they are accurate, or if the operator frequently changes the odds without posting the information for the players;
-  Are nothing like playing video games, so your skill at video games will not help you if you gamble on line;
-  Are usually collecting information about you, such as your play habits, account information, and other personal information that can then be sold to other companies;
-  Could be "fake" companies that never pay out their wins.










.net gambling sites:

-  Generally offer free games with increased odds of winning, which helps novice players have more winning experiences and tends to lead players to believe winning is easy;

.net gambling sites:

-  Often offer incentives and credits that are available only to players who register on their .com sister site where you play for money, not for free;
-  May become boring, but moving to .com sites is a very risky move that could lead to gambling that gets out of control.

If you gamble on line – know the facts and be aware of the risks

-  Choose only regulated sites to ensure you are in a fair game.
-  When you bet, you are betting real money, and it could be gone in minutes leaving you in debt and in trouble.
-  Gamble only with money you can afford to lose.
-  Set a spending limit. When the money you budgeted is spent, it is no longer your money so don't waste more money trying to get it back – you stand to lose much more.
-  Decide in advance how long you intend to play and set a timer. Stop when the time is up.
-  Take frequent breaks.
-  Gambling can be a good way to have fun, but like any other kind of entertainment, you are paying for the fun.
-  If you are playing because you need money, you are in the wrong game. Online gambling is there because it makes money for the operators. The odds are always stacked against you.
-  Some online gambling sites offer self-imposed betting limits, which is a way to decide before you start how much you can afford to play. Look at your favourite sites for this option. If they don't offer it, look around at other sites where this option is available.

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Texas Hold'em

- just fun or just too much?

Texas Hold'em

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- just fun or just too much?

Texas Hold'em is the current rage. Whether it's tournaments on TV, private games, online poker sites or casino card rooms, poker is often the game of choice for people who like to gamble. But if you're playing because you need money, you are in the wrong game.









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Texas Hold'em - just fun or just too much?

In British Columbia, all gambling is regulated by the provincial government and only British Columbia Lottery Corporation (BCLC) and charitable organizations licensed by the Province are legally authorized to provide gambling. If you play in an unregulated game, you are playing at your own risk.

Here's the deal:

-  Card games such as Texas Hold'em are based on chance (the luck of the draw) and the outcomes are always random and unpredictable. There is no "system" that can guarantee you a win.
-  It is easy to get caught up in the excitement of the moment and bet more than you can afford, so always set a budget and play with money you can afford to lose.
-  You may be very skilled at reading other players, but you could still lose your shirt if you bet too much. Remember, another player may be able to read you better than you think.
-  Even if Texas Hold'em is shown on TV sports channels, it is not a sport – it is gambling. If you lose in a round of golf or a boxing match, you know when it's over. In poker it isn't so easy to know when it's over. You don't know what card is coming next or what's in the other person's hand. You don't know how bad things are until it's too late. Don't risk your rent; play with your entertainment budget to keep the fun in the game.
-  If you are playing on line, look for gambling sites that offer self-imposed betting limits. This is a good way to decide before you start how much you can afford to play.
-  Most online gambling sites are not regulated, and there is no way to ensure the games are fair or if other players are teaming up against you, so you play at your own risk.
-  Decide in advance how long you intend to play and set a timer. Stop when the time is up.
-  Gambling can be a good way to have fun, but like any other kind of entertainment, you are paying for the fun.

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