



Gambling has become an accepted part of America's mainstream culture, comparable to leisure activities such as attending movies, athletic events and the theater. A large majority of Americans who gamble do so recreationally without adverse consequences. However, for some, gambling is no longer entertainment and has become something they need to do rather than something they want to do.

This brochure describes how you can gamble responsibly and "keep it fun."

Characteristics of Responsible Gaming

- Responsible gamblers understand that gambling by its nature entails risk and that the odds of winning are with the house.
- Responsible gaming is done socially, with family, friends or colleagues.
- Responsible gaming is done for limited amounts of time, both in frequency and duration.
- Responsible gaming always has predetermined, acceptable limits for losses.

Setting Personal Guidelines

You can establish your own limits and provide direction to others by developing a set of personal guidelines to determine whether, when and how much to gamble.

1. The decision to gamble is a personal choice.

No one should feel pressure to gamble, or feel that he or she must gamble to be accepted.

2. Gambling is not essential for having a good time.

Gambling should not be perceived as necessary for having fun and being with friends.

3. What constitutes an acceptable loss needs to be established before starting to gamble.

Any money spent on gambling should be considered the cost of entertainment; people should only gamble with money they can afford to lose. For those who choose to gamble, it is essential to know when to stop.

4. Borrowing money to gamble should be avoided and discouraged.

Borrowing money from a friend, relative or any other source of funds with the intention of repaying with gambling winnings is always high-risk and inappropriate.

5. There are times when people should not gamble.

Never gamble when under the legal gambling age; when it interferes with work or family responsibilities; when in recovery for addictive disorders or dependencies; when the form of gambling is illegal; when gambling is prohibited by organizational policy; or when trying to make up for prior gambling losses ("chasing" losses).

6. There are certain high-risk situations during which gambling should be avoided.

Avoid gambling when feeling lonely, angry, depressed or under stress; when coping with the death of a loved one; to solve personal or family problems; or to impress others.

7. Excessive use of alcohol when gambling can be risky.

Irresponsible alcohol use can affect a person's judgment and interfere with the ability to control gambling and adhere to predetermined limits.

**Keep gambling what it should be—entertainment.
Know how to set limits, and know when to stop.**