

# How To Gamble Responsibly?

## Introduction To Responsible Gambling

Gambling in online casino rooms is becoming one of the most popular activities for many casino enthusiasts. Convenience and simplicity are quite attractive features when choosing to gamble online. However, every pleasure, if not practiced responsibly, leads to negative consequences. For example, if you abuse alcohol or drugs, you will get a harmful outcome – addiction. It's the same with gambling. While online gambling can bring tons of excitement, it can also be highly addictive.

You would ask: “So, how to enjoy gambling avoiding negative consequences”? We would say – be aware of your gambling habits and do it responsibly.

Awareness is a key factor that helps to minimize gambling-related harm. You should always monitor if the money or time you spend on gambling hasn't drastically increased. If you notice that signs of an unhealthy relationship with gambling are evolving – take action before it's too late. Spotting early signs and symptoms of problem gambling will help you avoid further harm. Awareness is the first step that leads to responsibility.

Always remember that gambling should be treated as a fun activity. It's all about entertainment and not a way to generate income. When the fun stops, giving way to problem gambling, you should be prepared. You can either take a break from gambling until you take control back or exclude yourself from gambling for good. Awareness helps to understand the potential dangers and negative consequences gambling can bring.

We believe that every new and existing casino player needs to have a stable and robust mindset before starting gambling. The right mindset is the best way to reduce the chances of becoming a problem gambler.

In this guide, you will be introduced to the myths and truths about gambling. You will also learn about the main dangers, and negative consequences gambling can bring. You will explore the first signs and symptoms of problem gambling, which, of course, you shouldn't ignore. You will discover three phases of gambling and how it can lead to addiction. Finally, you will find ten things you should take care of first before starting gambling. That might be the key, helping you to enjoy gambling responsibly.

## Popular Myths & Truths About Gambling

Over the years, gambling got surrounded by various myths and common misconceptions. For players who lack knowledge about gambling, every myth brings additional damage. People tend to justify their actions by applying different misconceptions. It misleads them into believing that gambling is about winning money, or it is a way to escape from stress.

We took a look at some of the most commonly held popular misconceptions in gambling and did our best to debunk myths with the truth. Here are ten common myths and truths about gambling:

**Myth.** Gambling solves financial issues.

**Truth.** Gambling, if not done responsibly, will cause financial issues. You will always lose by gambling in the long run.

**Myth.** Everything I lost, I can win it back in the long run.

**Truth.** It's impossible to win in the long term. Odds are always in the casino's favor.

**Myth.** I can predict the outcomes of a specific casino game and win money.

**Truth.** In casino games, every round is randomized. Therefore, each bet has a different and unpredictable outcome, which is independent of the previous one.

**Myth.** Gambling is a way to escape stress.

**Truth.** Usually, in the long run, gambling is the cause of stress.

**Myth.** Casino games are rigged.

**Truth.** Casinos don't need to cheat. Odds are in the casino's favor anyway. Thus the house always wins in the long run.

Yet, some online casinos tend to adapt various myths into their marketing strategies. It tricks people into believing that they can win lots of money and change their lives. And the truth is rather the opposite. On PlayAware, we aim to deliver various online casino reviews with the correct information only. We seek to provide truthful and accurate information about responsible gambling and the negative consequences it can bring if not done responsibly.

## What Are the Main Dangers of Gambling?

As implied in the last lessons, gambling, if not enjoyed responsibly, can be the cause of many problems. Online gambling is more acceptable and accessible than ever before. While the information about the best online casinos and their generous bonus offers is everywhere, information about the possible dangers is left aside. Often people's lives are destroyed because of the lack of knowledge about the negative consequences gambling can bring. In the following list, you will learn the main dangers of gambling:

**Financial problems.** Players who cannot accept losses, tend to invest more and more money into gambling. Trying to win back losses can cause debts and lost savings.

**Physical and mental health issues.** Recent studies have found that gambling addiction causes stress, anxiety, and depression. It can induce pathological, disordered, or compulsive gambling, as well.

**Damaged relations.** Not only that but financial and health dangers are a threat for both players who gamble and their relatives or friends. As a result, relationships get damaged.

**Committing suicide.** People who have problems in gambling, if not offered help, are significantly more likely to attempt suicide.

On PlayAware, we focus on informing players about possible negative consequences. We feel that all the dangers of gambling should be spoken straightforwardly. It will play an essential role in forming a correct mindset for online gambling.

## When Should You Stop Gambling?

Problem gambling occurs when a person's behavior towards gambling changes causing an unhealthy obsession with negative consequences. A problem gambler is the one who spends too much time and money on gambling. A person with problem gambling influences his own life and the lives of significant others negatively. However, the problem gambler feels sad about it and yet shows no desire to stop gambling.

If you or people around you notice the signs of problem gambling early enough, further harms can be avoided. Gamblers showing symptoms below should stop gamble immediately and seek professional help. Now let's take a look at the list of problem gambling symptoms:

- Gambling too much to win back losses. Sometimes it's called "chasing" losses. Some players are trying to win back the money they have already lost. And the result is the opposite – they end up losing more.
- Lying and hiding gambling problems from your spouse, family, or friends.
- Stealing or committing other crimes to get money to fund your gambling obsession.
- Borrowing money to finance your gambling habit. Sometimes not only from your family, friends, coworkers but from financial institutions, as well.
- Not paying bills and spending money on gambling instead.
- Hiding your financial situation and having conflicts over money with your partner or relatives. Even though you earn a wage, constant gambling can significantly reduce your income.
- Not being able to stop gambling. It can be difficult to stop gambling, and the idea itself irritates you.
- Spending money on gambling you cannot afford. Or gambling until you run out of money.
- Constantly thinking about gambling. A real obsession appears when you cannot stop thinking about the last time you gambled, and the next time you will.
- Gambling to escape from stress or to feel better. You see gambling as a therapy to forget.

Problem gambling causes dangers not only to the gambler himself but also to the people around him. Spotting and recognizing the symptoms above is very important when it comes to saving the life of your loved ones.

Although gambling problems can develop with anyone, some people are more vulnerable than others. These include:

- teenagers and young adults,
- people who have depression or anxiety,
- people who have a problem gambler in their family (genetics and learned behavior),
- people who drink heavily and use illegal drugs,
- people with specific personality characteristics, for example, a highly competitive person.

### **Three Phases of Gambling & Addiction**

In the last lesson, you learned about symptoms that give away if a person is a problem gambler. But what happens when those symptoms are acute? A person will likely develop a gambling addiction. Gambling addiction (also known as pathological gambling disorder) – is an

impulse-control disorder. If you are a compulsive gambler – you are not able to control your urges to gamble despite the negative consequences it brings. Every player with a compulsive disorder follows a pattern of three gambling phases:

- **The winning phase.** It all starts with the first experience of a win, which delivers lots of excitement and pleasure. A person grows self-esteem and unreasonable optimism. Often fantasizes about his next big winning. In general, gambling is seen as a positive and fun activity. A person identifies himself as a gambler and doesn't feel any real problems in gambling.
- **The losing phase.** Then comes the period when a player's personality changes begin to develop. A person becomes obsessed with gambling and needs to bet more and more to feel the same excitement. He replaces his usual activities with gambling, letting his work and family life suffer. Every significant loss pushes the gambler to win back the money as soon as possible. Financial problems appear shortly, but the hope for the big win remains. Decreasing self-esteem leads to anxiety or even depression. A person often denies the problem, even tries to quit gambling, but ultimately fails.
- **The desperation phase.** During the last phase financial situation keeps worsening, and the pressure grows. A person can no longer pay debts and may even engage in criminal activity. The gambler faces significant problems at work, develops eating and sleep disorders — symptoms of anxiety, depression, and irritability increase, giving way for the thoughts of suicide.

Nearly 50% of people struggling with problem gambling, especially in the last phase, have thoughts of suicide.

## **Recognize the First Signs of Problem Gambling**

Throughout the guide, you learned how some players develop unhealthy gambling habits that lead to addiction. You discovered symptoms that indicate if a person has a problem with gambling. The good news is that there are also early signs which can show if a person has a risk of developing an addiction. Remember, that addiction cannot happen overnight. Explore the following signs and be prepared:

- Thinking about gambling more than you should do. Thoughts about gambling start to occupy your mind more often.
- Replacing other occupations with gambling. It becomes one of your main leisure activities.

- Increasing betting size to get more excitement. To get the adrenaline pumping, you start betting with more significant amounts.
- Not following your gambling rules. If you promised yourself to gamble for 1 hour with €20, but you ended up losing €100 after 2 hours – it's time to worry.
- Feeling sad or angry after losing money. It's time to ask yourself: "Is gambling still a fun activity for me"?
- People around start asking about your gambling habits. Yes, that's right. Often people around you can see changes in your behavior much better than you.

If you notice any of these signs – it's time to take action. The earlier you identify them, the sooner you can start working with yourself to avoid negative consequences in the future. Now let's move on to the last lesson of how to gamble responsibly.

## **10 Things You Should Learn Before Starting Gambling**

In the last six lessons, you heard a bunch of negative things about gambling. You might think that there are loads of dangers and harms in the world of gambling. Good. We wanted to show the price you will pay if you don't gamble responsibly. Just remember that every pleasure has the other side of the coin. So does gambling. In the last lesson, we would like you to learn ten things before starting gambling:

1. Always remember that online casinos are paid entertainment.

It might sound too simple, but you need to understand that online casinos are doing business. Their business is to offer gambling entertainment for their clients online. For every investment in online gambling services, they expect a return in money. It means casinos will always win in the long run.

2. Learn about online casino games before starting to play.

It is crucial to learn about the casino games you are about to play. Knowing the rules of Blackjack or Roulette will make online gambling more exciting. Understanding the odds or RTP (return to player) of online slots will give you more knowledge of how slot machine games work. On PlayAware, you will find all the necessary information about gambling, including dozens of guides about different online casino games. Read them first, before making your first deposit.

3. Play only with money you can afford to lose.

Spending your last euro on gambling is a very bad decision. Always plan your finances responsibly when it comes to gambling. If you cannot afford it – don't gamble.

4. Don't ever think that you can earn money from gambling.

We will repeat it: gambling should be treated as a fun activity and not a means to generate income. Or to put it another way: the house (not you) always wins in the long run.

5. Understand the ups and downs.

You need to understand that when it comes to gambling, it's impossible to win every time. One day you can hit the jackpot, and another day you can experience a significant loss. The odds are not in your favor to win each gaming session.

6. Play when you are in the right mood.

Bad emotions, stress, or even the influence of alcohol can make things complicated. Bad decisions come in a bad mood. To avoid negative consequences, always check your emotional level before gambling. If you are not in a mood – don't gamble!

7. Be in charge. When the fun stops – you stop.

You should always be the one who is in charge. Once you feel that there is no fun anymore and you decide to quit playing, stop gambling, and leave the gambling site.

8. Spot the first signs of problem gambling (which we discussed in lesson 5).

If you noticed that something doesn't seem right and you are thinking about gambling more than you should, check the signs listed in lesson 5. You might be in bad condition, and you should consider stopping gambling. To protect yourself from negative consequences, step away from gambling until you take control back.

9. Challenge yourself with questions.

Gambling should be a fun and exciting activity. Every now and then, you should ask yourself: "Why do I gamble"? If you get the answer honest enough and it is all about fun, then you are fine for the moment.

10. Set deposit and time limits.

Sometimes when gambling becomes too exciting, it can slip from your control. Implement a deposit or time limit. In this way, you can prevent yourself from negative consequences. The majority of the online casinos offer those functions. In fact, we recommend setting the deposit limit right after you create an account in your preferred online casino room. It can help you to avoid money losses you didn't plan.

## **Conclusion**

After reading this guide, you explored the dangers, and adverse outcomes irresponsible gambling could bring. You also learned to spot the early signs and symptoms of problem gambling. Not only that, but you discovered how gambling addiction develops, causing a threat to a person's life. Finally, in the last lesson, we presented ten things you should do before starting gambling.

We hope that this guide will help to build a proper mindset for every new and existing player. We seek that you enjoy online gambling responsibly without negative consequences.