

### ConnexOntario

A free and confidential 24/7 helpline for those concerned about their gaming or gambling, or that of a friend or family member. Support is offered in 170 languages.

Call 1.866.531.2600 or visit [connexontario.ca](http://connexontario.ca).

### Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH)

Problem Gambling and Technology  
Use Treatment Services

Visit [camh.ca](http://camh.ca) or call 416-535-8501 (press 2)

### Gamtalk

Online Support for Gambling Issues

Visit [gamtalk.org](http://gamtalk.org)

For more information or to find local support services, visit [ResponsibleGambling.org](http://ResponsibleGambling.org).



## YOU CAN ALSO CONTACT THE FOLLOWING RESOURCES FOR MORE INFORMATION:

### Responsible Gambling Council (RGC)

All in for Safer Gambling

RGC is an independent non-profit organization dedicated to the prevention of problem gambling in Canada and around the world for over 35 years. We believe that gambling should never come at a human cost. By ensuring the right safeguards are in place, we influence positive change and advance responsible gambling standards.

[www.ResponsibleGambling.org](http://www.ResponsibleGambling.org)



RESPONSIBLE GAMBLING COUNCIL

# A Quick Guide to Safer Gambling



RESPONSIBLE GAMBLING COUNCIL

## UNDERSTANDING THE GAME

Many people choose to gamble – and with technology comes increased accessibility through apps, online sites, and social media platforms. Online or off, we buy lottery tickets, play casino games, bet on sports, or play poker or slots. Most people who gamble can do so without developing a problem – but some can't. Understanding the potential risks and how to avoid them is the first step to making informed decisions about your play.

### HIGH-RISK VS. LOW-RISK GAMBLING

People who gamble in a high-risk way lose the sense that it's only a game. They start to view gambling as a way to make money or may think they have special luck or abilities. Often when they lose, they bet more and more to try to win back what's been lost.

Those who gamble in a low-risk way typically think of gambling as just one form of entertainment. They factor gambling into their household budget by setting spending limits and sticking to them. For them, a small gambling loss is the cost of a night's entertainment – just like the cost of a movie ticket or restaurant bill. They don't think of gambling as a way to earn money nor do they expect to win back money they've lost.



## TIPS FOR SAFER PLAY

If you choose to gamble, follow these low-risk strategies to minimize potential harms:

### BEFORE YOU GAMBLE, PREPARE YOURSELF:

- **Be self-aware** – Be self-aware. Don't gamble when you're upset or stressed. Gambling is not recommended if you suffer from anxiety or depression
- **Gambling is not a way to earn or replace income** so don't think of it as a chance to win money for a trip, to pay bills or to pay off debt
- **Decide on a time and budget before you begin.** If gambling online, use the site's pre-commitment tools to set loss and win limits and stop when you reach those limits

### WHILE PLAYING IN-VENUE OR ONLINE:

- **Only gamble with money you have** – never borrow money or use money intended for necessities, like rent or food
- **Take frequent breaks** – move around, get some fresh air, have a coffee or something to eat
- **Don't try to win back what you've lost**
- **Limit** or avoid alcohol and/or other substances while gambling
- **Balance** gambling with other recreational activities
- If you're no longer having fun, **stop playing**
- **You can block sites you don't want access** or set time limits using software like Bet Blocker and GamBan

**For other safer gambling tips, visit [ResponsibleGambling.org](https://ResponsibleGambling.org).**

## SIGNS OF A GAMBLING PROBLEM

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Gambling becomes a problem when it begins to negatively impact areas of your life, like your physical or mental health, school or work performance, finances, and relationships. Safer gambling starts with identifying early signs that you may be going over your limits, such as:

- Feeling guilty, anxious, frustrated or worried about your gambling
- Thinking or talking about gambling more than usual
- Gambling to win back money you've lost or thinking that a "big win" is right around the corner
- Finding it difficult to control or stop gambling, or feeling irritable when you try to stop
- Feeling a sense of emptiness or loss when not gambling
- Borrowing money, selling things, committing (or considering committing) criminal acts to obtain money for gambling
- Having increased debt, unpaid bills, or other financial troubles
- Gambling to escape personal problems or to relieve feelings of anxiety, depression, anger, or loneliness
- Gambling instead of attending family or other social functions or neglecting family or household responsibilities

