







# **A GAMBLERS GUIDE TO CUTTING DOWN OR GIVING UP**

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# 1 THE GAMBLER'S GUIDE TO CUTTING DOWN OR GIVING UP

If you have any concerns about your gambling then this guide is for you.

Whether your difficulties with gambling are small or large, you will find the practical tips in this guide very helpful. They are based on the success that many gamblers have had in changing their gambling habits.

You may choose to invite friends or family members to look through this booklet so they will be able to understand how best to support you.

If you have urgent problems (e.g. you cannot pay your debts, you have legal problems, your relationship is breaking up), then you will find it helpful to contact one of the services listed at the back of this guide. Even if you are seeking other help, you can still make a start by using this guide for change.

## 2

**WHAT IS A GAMBLING PROBLEM?****YOU HAVE A GAMBLING PROBLEM IF YOU THINK THAT YOU:****(tick the one that apply)**

- Spend too much money on gambling so that you run short for other things (eg household expenses, health costs, transport, other recreations)
- Spend too much time gambling so that you don't have enough time for important activities (eg time with your family, work, other leisure activities)
- Think about gambling most of the time so that your concentration for other things is poor (eg work, conversations)
- Find it difficult to resist any opportunity to gamble or find it difficult to stop once you have started.

If you have experienced just one of the above, then it is best to try to cut down or give up gambling.

## 3

**AM I READY TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT MY GAMBLING?**

The answer to this question depends on whether you think the disadvantages of gambling outweigh the benefits of gambling for you at this time. It is difficult to change a habit like gambling until you believe that change is necessary.

Let's start with the benefits. Tick the boxes of those that apply to you, and then add any other benefits you can think of.

**I GAMBLE FOR:**

- excitement
- the challenge
- relaxation
- the chance to win money
- to socialise

**ANY OTHER BENEFITS?**

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

Now circle the ones that are most important to you.

Now let's turn to the disadvantages of your gambling. Again, tick the boxes that apply to you and add any other disadvantages that you can think of.

- I'm losing too much money.
- I'm getting into debt
- I'm spending too much time gambling
- I'm thinking about gambling too much
- I feel like I am losing control over my gambling
- My work is suffering
- My family life is suffering
- I'm becoming anxious or depressed

**ANY OTHER DISADVANTAGES?**

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

Now circle the ones that are most important to you.



## 4

## MORE MOTIVATION FOR CHANGE

We have looked at the benefits and the disadvantages of gambling. Now let's do the flip side and look at the benefits of cutting down or giving up and the disadvantages of cutting down or giving up gambling.

(Why bother to look at this angle on change? Because the clearer you are as to why you need to change your gambling habit, the stronger the decision will be to change. And strong decisions will help see you through the tough times when you have strong urges to gamble heavily.)

Let's start with the benefits of cutting down or giving up gambling. Tick the boxes of those that apply to you, and then add any other benefits you can think of.

- Money to spend on other things
- A less stressful life
- Healthier relationships
- Time to get involved in interesting activities

**ANY OTHER BENEFITS?**

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

Circle the benefits that are most important to you.

Now let's look at the possible disadvantages of cutting down or giving up. Only tick those that apply to you.

- I will miss the stimulation of gambling.
- I will have to give up dreaming of a big win
- I will not see my gambling friends
- I will find it hard work to break my gambling habit

### **ANY OTHER DISADVANTAGES?**

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

Circle the disadvantages that are most important to you.

### **TIME FOR CHANGE...?**

On balance, is it now time to cut down or give up?

- Yes, it's definitely time I changed my gambling habit.
- I'm still not sure? (Read on, as the rest of the guide may help you decide.)
- My gambling is OK for now. (You may still wish to look through this guide to help prevent problems with your gambling developing. Alternatively, you might prefer to return to the guide later.)

If you have decided that it is time for change, the next decision you need to make is whether to cut down or give up completely. It's your choice.

## 5

**CUTTING DOWN OR GIVING UP?**

You may be able to succeed in cutting down and controlling your gambling if (tick those that apply):

- You are still able to choose when to gamble and how much to gamble
- You are not chasing a big win to try and get back your losses
- You believe that you will lose most of the time when you gamble and are prepared to pay a price for recreational gambling
- If you can have a balanced life meeting all your obligations (eg family, friendships, work, financial) and still gamble.

If you can tick all of the above boxes, then it may be possible to cut down and control your gambling. Make sure you are being honest with yourself. It is very easy to delude ourselves when we are passionate about something. However, a warning: controlling your gambling is not easy, and many excessive gamblers find it easier and less complicated to give up.

It is probably more appropriate for you to give up gambling if (tick those that apply)

- You have been gambling heavily for many years
- Your whole life has become centred on gambling
- Recently you have had great difficulty in controlling when you are going to gamble and for how long you are going to gamble
- You spend all the money you have on hand gambling
- You believe you can beat the system and win
- You are desperate to win back your losses

If you have ticked any one of the above boxes, then it is highly recommended that you give up gambling.

Make a contract with yourself now, and if possible share it with someone close who is supporting you.

### **I HAVE DECIDED TO:**

- Cut down my gambling
- Give up gambling

I understand that I may change my goal later.

## 6

**TAKING A BREAK FROM GAMBLING**

Even if you have decided to try to cut down and control your gambling, it is a good idea to first stop for 2-3 weeks and see how it feels to be without gambling in your life. If the idea of a break from gambling horrifies you, it may be a sign that you need to give up! If you try to stop for 2-3 weeks, but you experience a strong urge and begin to gamble again, it is a warning that you will probably be better off to give up gambling altogether.

If i am giving up gambling, do i have to give up all forms of gambling?

There is no set answer to this question. Some gamblers find that they can occasionally buy a lotto or raffle ticket without feeling an urge to return to the casino, the pokies, the horses/dogs, or to sports betting. Others find that any form of gambling whatsoever rekindles an urge for more gambling. Therefore, the safest policy seems to be to give up all forms of gambling.

# 7

## SETTING LIMITS ON MY GAMBLING

### 1. SPENDING LIMIT

For those who are giving up gambling, the limit is obviously \$0. It's more complicated for those who want to cut down. How much can you afford to lose? Controlled gambling is a recreation, and you must be prepared to pay for it. Any win is a bonus, but regular gamblers will lose overall! You may need to work out a budget to know exactly how much you require for all of your ongoing commitments. Financial counsellors (who can be accessed through the services listed at the rear of the guide) can help you to manage your debts and to draw up a budget.

Controlled gambling is not only about how much you can afford to lose each month or week, but also working to a limit for each session of gambling. It is not a good idea to save up your gambling allowance and then spend it all in one go. That's too risky as it hurts to lose a lot of money in a short time, and may result in you chasing your losses.

So now it's time to decide.

My limit for any one session of gambling is \$ \_\_\_\_\_

My limit for a week is \$ \_\_\_\_\_

## 2. HOW MANY DAYS GAMBLING IN A WEEK?

The next decision is to decide on a maximum number of days gambling in a week. Controlled gamblers do not have more than one session of gambling in a day, and do not gamble every day of the week.

I shall not gamble more than \_\_\_\_\_ days in a week.

Now multiple your \$ limit for a session by the number of days gambling in a week.

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ per session x \_\_\_\_\_ days/week  
= \$ \_\_\_\_\_ week

Is your weekly total more than the amount you had budgeted for (on the previous page?). If so, you will have to reduce your dollar limit for a session or the number of days on which you will gamble, and then do the calculation again until your weekly limit is not exceeded.

### 3. A TIME LIMIT FOR EVERY SESSION

Controlled gambling also requires you to set a maximum time limit for a session of gambling. Put another way, gambling for many hours at a time is usually associated with people losing control over their gambling.

I will not gamble for longer than \_\_\_\_\_ minutes in any one session.

The money, frequency and time limits you have set can be reviewed and lowered at any time if you discover they are set too high to really achieve tight control over your gambling.



## 8

**KEEPING TRACK OF MY GAMBLING**

It is very hard to change any habit without keeping a record of what's going on. You will only know if you have really cut down your gambling if you keep an accurate record. This is particularly important with gambling because the occasional win can make it difficult to remember how much you actually wagered and lost.

Even if you are giving up, it will be useful to keep a non-gambling diary of your urges to gamble (forms are included at the back of the guide). You can look back at the end of each week and see when and where you were tempted to gamble, and what you did instead of gambling. Diary sheets are included at the back of the guide (and you can photocopy them to give you enough for the next few months). They will help you to understand:

- in which gambling venues you are best able to control your gambling (and the ones that are dangerous for you)
- the days and time of the day that are best for you to control your gambling (and the ones that are dangerous for you)
- which of your moods poses a risk for your gambling (some people get carried away when they are feeling high, others when they are feeling low)
- which activities work for you as substitutes for gambling
- how much you have spent on gambling and whether you have stuck to your limit.

Here are two examples of record keeping for gambling on the pokies and race betting. You will notice that these diaries are not about keeping a record of overall wins and losses. Keeping a running record of overall wins and losses is like running a business, and means that too much emphasis is still being placed on trying to 'square the books' or get ahead. That is a dangerous approach to gambling. It is better to place all the emphasis on how much you were willing to bet (without using your winnings), and whether this was within your limit or not. We only record winnings in the diary to see whether we were able to walk away with them.

## GAMBLING DIARY

DAY	TIME	PLACE & PEOPLE	FEELING & THOUGHTS BEFORE	BETS	WON	WINS KEPT	FEELINGS & THOUGHTS AFTER
Mon 12th Aug	12:00 - 12:30  3:15 - 3:30	Hutt St TAB with Jim	Need to win back losses to repay Jim  Desperate. Borrowed \$50	\$50 \$100 \$50	\$85	-	Felt a fool for not walking away with the win Pissed-off.

**TOTAL BETS** \$200

## GAMBLING DIARY

DAY	TIME	PLACE & PEOPLE	FEELING & THOUGHTS BEFORE	BETS	WON	WINS KEPT	FEELINGS & THOUGHTS AFTER
Wed 14th Aug	10:30 - 2pm	High Noon Saloon	Bored, but confident that I will only spend \$20 Should not withdraw \$50, but did!	\$20  \$65	About 120 x 5 cent credits (\$6) \$20	-  \$5	Frustrated - lost \$20 in 30 mins Angry with my self. Feel machine is due to payout

**TOTAL BETS**    \$85

From keeping this record, this TAB gambler became more aware that he should not gamble when feeling desperate to win a large amount. Controlled gambling can only occur when you are not focussed on winning! This gambler was very upset after losing. A controlled gambler accepts losses as the price to be paid for the entertainment of gambling. Notice also that his friend Jim was with him both times. Perhaps they encourage each other to gamble excessively.

The poker-machine gambler can now see that there is a link between boredom and betting too much. Being close to an ATM while playing has also made it more difficult to stick to a limit. This player wanted more time for his/her \$20 (30 minutes was frustratingly short), so perhaps playing on 1 or 2 cent machines would be better. There is a danger of chasing losses when feeling angry about losing more than can be afforded, and while believing a win is due.

Notice that in both examples we have not bothered to calculate actual losses (\$115 for the TAB gambler after allowing for the \$85 win, and approximately \$65 for the poker machine gambler after allowing for credits won and the \$5 pocketed). What is more important is the total amount bet in relation to setting limits for controlled gambling.

Now fill in the following diary sheet for a recent week of typical gambling. (If there is not enough space on the next page, use a diary sheet at the back of the guide to complete this task.)

## GAMBLING DIARY

DAY	TIME	PLACE & PEOPLE	FEELING & THOUGHTS BEFORE	BETS	WON	WINS KEPT	FEELINGS & THOUGHTS AFTER

TOTAL BETS FOR THE WEEK: \_\_\_\_\_

## 9

**HIGH RISK TRIGGERS**

Your gambling diary will help you to identify the high-risk triggers that tip you over into excessive gambling. Look closely at the detail in your weekly diary to understand the things that pose a risk for you in your gambling and the situations that help you maintain control.

List any high-risk triggers and low risk (control) situations that you are aware of in the chart below.

	<b>HIGH RISK TRIGGERS</b>	<b>LOW RISK SITUATIONS</b>
<b>DAYS</b>		
<b>TIMES</b>		
<b>PLACE &amp; PEOPLE</b>		
<b>FEELINGS</b>		
<b>THOUGHTS</b>		
<b>MONEY ISSUES</b>		

Here is a list of commonly experienced high-risk triggers and low-risk situations. Did you have some of these in your table of high-risk triggers and low-risk situations? If you spot any others that apply to you, go back and add them to your table. Add any others that you can think of.

## HIGH-RISK TRIGGERS

- feeling bored, down or stressed
- feeling lucky
- gambling to win
- passing by a venue
- cash on hand
- reading gambling material
- gambling alone
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

## LOW-RISK SITUATIONS

- stable mood
- know and accept the real odds of winning and losing
- don't need to win – no debts
- avoid favourite venues
- restrict access to cash and credit – set a limit for each session
- time spent on other activities
- emphasis on social gambling
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_



## NON-GAMBLING URGE DIARY

DAY	TIME	PLACE & PEOPLE	THOUGHTS TO COMBAT URGE	ALTERNATIVE ACTIVITIES TO GAMBLING	FEELINGS & THOUGHTS AFTER NOT GAMBLING
Wed 7th	7pm	Having counter meal at pub before going home – feeling lonely	Reminded myself that once I start I find it hard to stop  Always lose in the long run	Phoned Joan and told her to expect a visit by 8	Very pleased at resisting urge and enjoyed visiting Joan more than I would have enjoyed gambling

This gambler can look back at the end of the week and clearly identify high-risk triggers that lead to a strong urge to gamble. Being in a pub and feeling lonely are experiences to be avoided. The remedy was straightforward. Once the call to Joan was made, the urge to gamble started to subside and an enjoyable evening was had without gambling.

## 10

**HELPFUL TIPS TO REDUCE THE RISK OF GAMBLING OR GAMBLING HEAVILY**

Cutting down or giving up gambling relies heavily on your ability to cope with high-risk triggers. We have seen that one way of coping is to structure your gambling in a low risk way (eg limit access to cash and credit) instead. Always remember that the closer you get to high-risk triggers, the more likely it is that you will begin to experience strong urges to gamble heavily. Here is a list of many strategies that excessive gamblers have found useful. Add to the list if you have any other suggestions.

**GIVING UP YOUR GAMBLING:**

- Take alternative routes when driving or walking so that you do not pass the venues that you find most tempting.
- Socialise in places without gambling. Don't sit around watching others gamble – the temptation to join in may be too great.
- Plan alternative activities (it is best that you arrange to meet someone) to clash with gambling (more on this later).
- Avoid results and advertising matter relating to gambling –flip past that section, or quickly turn to another channel on the radio/TV.
- Don't talk about gambling with other keen gamblers.
- Arrange to bar (exclude) yourself from gambling venues if you are having great difficulty in resisting the urge to gamble. (See the section on Self-Barring at the back of the guide for more detail on how to go about self-barring.)

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

### **CUTTING DOWN YOUR GAMBLING:**

- Don't gamble when you have urgent debts and never borrow money to gamble.
- Limit access to cash and credit. With ATMs planted in venues, it is important not to carry your ATM and credit cards with you, otherwise temptation may overcome you. Don't carry your cheque book with you. Set up bank accounts so that most of your money cannot be accessed via ATMs, and get the bank to lower your daily withdrawal limit. You are breaking the law if you seek credit from the gambling venue to gamble. Tell your friends, work-mates and family not to lend you money for gambling, even if you ask for it.
- Carry a card in your wallet/purse with your money and time limits written on it as a reminder.
- Keep an eye on the clock. Take a break every 15 minutes and don't gamble past the time limit you have set.

- Place and seal your winnings in a separate pocket or hand them over to a friend - this helps to guard against impulsive decisions to gamble with winnings.
- Don't gamble alone. Arrange to gamble socially - place the emphasis on the socialising, not the gambling.
- Don't gamble with friends who gamble heavily.
- Don't mix alcohol with gambling. Three standard drinks will cloud most people's judgement and lead to impulsive gambling.
- Never gamble with the expectation of winning.  
(For both cutting down and giving up.)
- Write on a card 2-3 reasons why you should not gamble or should not gamble heavily. Place this card in your purse/wallet so you have to see it when you reach in for cash. Stick a copy of this card on your pin board or fridge door at home.

Get help to deal with any stress or moods that are contributing to your gambling (see your GP and/or a counsellor/psychologist or contact one of the services listed at the back of this guide).

## 11 FAULTY GAMBLING BELIEFS

It is very difficult to cut down or give up gambling if you believe that you can win at gambling. Some of the following beliefs you may only experience when gambling (when sitting at home you can see they are illogical). Other beliefs will be more firmly held and you may have to work hard at changing your thinking. Tick any of the following faulty beliefs that you have experienced.

I am over-due for a big win, or a favourite horse or machine is over-due to win/payout. (If this were true, every gambler would be a winner!)

My luck must change. (Luck cannot beat the odds!)

A near miss (when I almost won) means a big win is close. (The cards, dice, horses, tickets or pokies don't know they have just had a near miss! Near misses do not improve your chances of winning, but may excite or frustrate you. Beware of the effect of near misses on your thinking and emotions.)

I can bring luck by doing certain things in a certain way. (This is superstitious behaviour.)

I can win by following a system or by being a skilled gambler. (In fact, all gambling is set up so that you will lose if you keep going back.\* That is how the gambling industry can be sure of winning!) For example, as a regular gambler you can expect to lose out of every dollar gambled:

- 13 cents on poker machines
- 16 cents at the TAB
- 30–40 cents on lotteries
- 3 cents at roulette
- 1 cent with skillful play at Blackjack, but most gamblers lose much more than this (it's easy to become emotional when losing and to start betting against the odds).

\*Obviously one massive jackpot lottery win could see you in front. But at odds of many millions to one, there may be more chance of a meteorite landing on your head!

## 12 CORRECTING YOUR FAULTY THINKING

It is very important that you become aware of what you are saying to yourself when you are tempted to gamble or to gamble heavily. Prepare in advance some counter arguments that challenge your irrational thoughts. Write them down now. One common example is given:

Irrational thought: My luck must change

Counter thought: Luck does not determine the outcome: the set odds do. An occasional win will never offset my past losses.

1. Irrational thought: \_\_\_\_\_

Counter thought: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Irrational thought: \_\_\_\_\_

Counter thought: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Irrational thought: \_\_\_\_\_

Counter thought: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Irrational thought: \_\_\_\_\_

Counter thought: \_\_\_\_\_



## 13 COPING WITH STRONG URGES TO GAMBLE

You can expect to experience strong urges to gamble when you are giving up, or strong urges to continue a session beyond your limits when you are trying to cut down. Urges are normal and can be resisted. Resist urges for a short while and they will gradually fade away. After a few months any urges you experience will become less intense.

How will I cope with strong urges? You can reduce the chances of experiencing strong urges by avoiding the high-risk situations discussed earlier in the guide. But high-risk situations cannot be completely avoided. So, to cope:

- Distract yourself by doing something that requires your complete involvement (eg talking to a friend, fixing something, going to a movie).
- Be prepared for strong urges. When they arrive, run through your reasons for not gambling or for sticking to your limit.

If you feel you are going to give in to your urges to gamble, then do a deal with yourself and postpone gambling for an hour or two. By then, your gambling may have subsided and you will be able to resist the temptation.

## 14 COPING WITH LAPSES

It is perfectly natural to have a lapse and to start gambling again or to go over your limit. A habit like gambling is seldom changed overnight. Lapses do not indicate that you are a failure or that you have to continue to gamble.

The best way to cope with a lapse is to have a plan for lapses. A plan can involve strategies like:

- call a friend or family member to talk about your gambling
- make sure your access to money is limited.

**ADD SOME OTHER LAPSE STRATEGIES THAT YOU THINK WOULD BE USEFUL FOR YOU:**

- \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

You may be able to prevent a lapse from occurring by recognising a gradual slide towards a lapse.

Recognise when you begin to:

- Justify to yourself why it would be OK to start gambling or to gamble heavily again. If you spot this happening, return to the earlier part of this guide and repeat the exercise where you weigh up the benefits and disadvantages of gambling. The best way to avoid a lapse is to remain strong in your motivation and commitment to giving up or cutting down. Keep on reminding yourself why you need to change.
- Put yourself at risk on purpose. For example, you may find yourself driving or walking past a gambling venue and looking in or increasing the amount of cash you are carrying with you. Recognise that this is not random behaviour, but a slide towards a lapse. Put your lapse plan into action!

## 15 SOLVING PROBLEMS

Changing our habits often requires a lot of problem solving. We have to work out how to avoid or cope with high-risk situations and triggers. We may have to solve problems to reduce our stress levels. Sticking to our goals is often a challenge, and we can be sure that life will seldom be free of problems of one sort or another.

Problems can easily overwhelm us if we:

- panic
- grab at the first obvious solution
- keep using failing strategies.

Problem solving is a skill! This skill can be easily learnt and makes a powerful difference to achieving our goals. There are 4 basic steps to a problem solving approach:

1. Clearly and specifically define the problem.
2. List as many possible solutions as you can (it helps to have someone else contributing). Even write down ones that seem a bit far-fetched. Creative ideas can sometimes be the solution. (This step is often referred to as 'brainstorming'.)
3. Now look at your list and cross out the suggestions that don't appeal to you at all. Look at the remaining ones and select the most likely solutions. Then rank them in order of preference.
4. Try out one strategy and see if it works. If it doesn't work, try the next one on your list. Keep trying until you succeed. You may need to return to Step 2 and have a fresh 'brainstorm' with some other friends, family members or professional helpers contributing.

Here's an example.

**1. Problem defined:**

I feel like some stimulation after finishing my evening shift and would rather go gambling than go home where everyone is sleeping.

**2. Brainstorm possible solutions:**

- Change to a day job
- Search for a group of shiftworkers who meet for company late at night
- Have a hobby room set up at home
- Enrol in a course of study and complete assignments at night

**3. I like my job and a new one would be hard to get. No space to set up a hobby room in the flat. I would enjoy a social group to have a drink with a few times a week. I do want to get a Diploma, and that could lead to promotion and a change to a day shift.**

So I selected:

- Search for a group of shiftworkers who meet for company late at night
- Enrol in a course of study and complete assignments at night

**4. What happened?**

Discovered that some of my coworkers felt the same and now we meet twice a week for a drink or two at a pub without pokies. Have enrolled in a course - 1 hour of study is enough for me to unwind.

With practice you will become skilled at this approach to problem solving.

## 16 ALTERNATIVES TO GAMBLING

It is difficult to cut down or give up gambling unless you find other activities to fill the gap that is left in your life. These activities need to satisfy the needs you were meeting through gambling. If gambling gave you a sense of excitement or challenge, then look for another activity that will also give you a buzz. If you found gambling relaxing, then find a relaxing replacement.

Start getting involved now! Sitting around home pining for gambling will almost certainly result in a return to excessive gambling. You may need to experiment with a number of different activities until you find one or more of interest. Your local council and library will have a large list of groups, clubs and organisations that meet in your area. Make a start now and list a few activities that you will explore. It may be helpful to discuss this with a friend or family member.

I will make inquiries about the following activities by the end of next week:

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

## 17 REWARD YOUR PROGRESS

Satisfaction at achieving your goal of not gambling or gambling less is a powerful reward in itself. But in the early stages of change, when the going is often tough, it can help to reward yourself for achieving your goals.

Begin by giving yourself a small treat for achieving your goal each day, and then a bigger reward for a successful week and perhaps a celebration at the end of a month. Don't be afraid to spend some money on this reward, as you will have saved a lot by not gambling (or not gambling so much). Rewards can be things like (tick those that appeal to you and add a few):

- Going to the movies
- A meal out
- Buying gear for a hobby
- New clothes
- A weekend away

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

## 18 REPAIRING RELATIONSHIPS

Relationships often come under great strain because of excessive gambling. It is natural that family members and partners will want to know whether you are succeeding in cutting down or giving up gambling. They may find it difficult to trust you after the shock and disappointment of finding out about your past gambling losses. Share with them your successes and your lapses, and involve them in solving your problems.

If you find that your family relationships continue to experience a lot of tension then seek professional help (perhaps one of the services listed at the back of this guide).



# CONGRATULATIONS

Getting this far in the guide is a major achievement, and suggests that you will be successful in modifying your gambling habit (even if you have an occasional lapse).

Return to the guide as often as necessary to remind yourself of the principles involved in achieving change.

And if you feel you need further help, the services at the rear of this guide are highly recommended. They have counsellors and therapists who have been trained in helping people with gambling problems.

## GAMBLING DIARY

DAY	TIME	PLACE & PEOPLE	FEELING & THOUGHTS BEFORE	BETS	WON	WINS KEPT	FEELINGS & THOUGHTS AFTER

TOTAL BETS FOR THE WEEK: \_\_\_\_\_

## GAMBLING DIARY

DAY	TIME	PLACE & PEOPLE	FEELING & THOUGHTS BEFORE	BETS	WON	WINS KEPT	FEELINGS & THOUGHTS AFTER

TOTAL BETS FOR THE WEEK: \_\_\_\_\_

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DAY	TIME	PLACE & PEOPLE	FEELING & THOUGHTS BEFORE	BETS	WON	WINS KEPT	FEELINGS & THOUGHTS AFTER

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## NON-GAMBLING URGE DIARY

DAY	TIME	PLACE & PEOPLE	THOUGHTS TO COMBAT URGE	ALTERNATIVE ACTIVITIES TO GAMBLING	FEELINGS & THOUGHTS AFTER NOT GAMBLING

## NON-GAMBLING URGE DIARY

DAY	TIME	PLACE & PEOPLE	THOUGHTS TO COMBAT URGE	ALTERNATIVE ACTIVITIES TO GAMBLING	FEELINGS & THOUGHTS AFTER NOT GAMBLING

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## 19 SELF-BARRING

In South Australia, if you have a gambling problem you may bar (exclude) yourself from accessing gambling products provided by various gambling providers, and seek removal from loyalty data bases of lottery providers.

Through self barring, your normal rights of access to the specified gambling product are suspended. The gambling provider is expected to take reasonable steps to prevent you from accessing the gambling product which you are barred from.

They also have the right to remove you if you are found in a gambling area in breach of the self-barring agreement.

You can choose to bar yourself in three different ways.

1. You can apply to the Independent Gambling Authority to be barred from the casino or from licensed gaming areas of hotels and clubs. You will have a short interview and your photograph will be taken. After a 3 day 'cooling off' period a decision is made by the Director of the Authority as to whether your application is granted. During the 3-day cooling off period you can withdraw your application. The barring order is put in place for a minimum of 12 months. At the end of 12 months you can make an application to have it lifted.

**OR**

2. You can personally contact the gambling provider and ask them to take you through the self-excluding process.

**OR**

3. You can seek the assistance of a gambling counsellor who will support you through the process.

For more information about self-barring, you can contact the Independent Gambling Authority on 8226 7233, or the agencies listed at the end of this guide.

# GAMBLING HELP SERVICES

Gambling Help Services provide FREE and confidential counselling and assistance

## METROPOLITAN SERVICES

### Eastern

- Relationships Australia SA Tel: 08 8223 4566 (Adelaide)

### Northern

- Relationships Australia SA Tel: 08 8250 6600 (Salisbury, Elizabeth and Ridgehaven)

### Southern

- Relationships Australia SA Tel: 08 8377 5400 (Oaklands Park including Noarlunga and Aldinga outreach)

### Western

- Relationships Australia SA Tel: 08 8340 2022 (Port Adelaide)  
Tel: 08 8245 8100 (Hindmarsh)

## COUNTRY SERVICES

### Adelaide Hills

- Relationships Australia SA Tel: 08 8223 4566 (Mount Barker outreach)

### Barossa

- Relationships Australia SA Tel: 08 8250 6600 (Gawler and Nuriootpa outreach)  
Tel: 1800 182 325 (Country Free Call)

### Eyre and Western

- UnitingCare Wesley Country SA Tel: 1300 456 946 (Whyalla and Port Lincoln)

### Far North

- UnitingCare Wesley Country SA Tel: 1300 456 946 (Port Augusta)

### Fleurieu and Kangaroo Island

- Relationships Australia SA Tel: 08 8377 5400 (Victor Harbor and Kingscote outreach)  
Tel: 1800 182 325 (Country Free Call)

### Limestone Coast

- Lifeline South East (SA) Tel: 08 8723 2299 (Mount Gambier)

### Murray Mallee

- Relationships Australia SA Tel: 08 8582 4122 (Berri, including Waikerie, Loxton and Renmark outreach)  
Tel: 08 8223 4566 (Murray Bridge outreach)  
Tel: 1800 182 325 (Country Free Call)

### Yorke and Mid North

- UnitingCare Wesley Country SA Tel: 1300 456 946 (Port Pirie and Kadina)

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## TARGETED SERVICES

### Aboriginal Gambling Help Services

- Flinders University Tel: 08 8182 4911 (North/West Metro)  
Tel: 08 8204 6982 (Southern Metro)
- Aboriginal Family Support Services Tel: 08 8641 0907 (Port Augusta)  
Tel: 08 8582 3192 (Berri)  
Tel: 0418 499 649 (Murray Bridge)  
Tel: 08 8683 1909 (Port Lincoln)
- Ceduna Koonibba Aboriginal Health Service Tel: 08 8626 2600 (Ceduna)

### Aboriginal Gambling Therapy Service

- Southern Adelaide Local Health Network Tel: 08 8204 6982 (Adelaide)

### Cambodian Gambling Help Service

- Relationships Australia SA Tel: 08 8245 8100 (Hindmarsh)

### Chinese Gambling Help Service

- Overseas Chinese Association Tel: 08 8445 1677 (Findon)

### Vietnamese Gambling Help Service

- Community Access and Services SA Tel: 08 8447 8821 (Athol Park)

### Multicultural Gambling Help Service

- Relationships Australia SA Tel: 08 8245 8100 (Hindmarsh)

### Criminal Justice Gambling Help Service

- Offenders Aid and Rehabilitation Service Tel: 08 8218 0700 (Adelaide)

### Intensive Therapy Gambling Help Service

- SA State Intensive Gambling Help Service Tel: 08 8232 3333 (Metro/Country)

### Lived Experience in Gambling Program

- Relationships Australia SA Tel: 08 8245 8100 (Hindmarsh)

### Gambling Helpline

- For immediate help 24/7 free and confidential Tel: 1800 858 858

### Gambling Help Online

- For 24/7 free online counselling [www.gamblinghelponline.org.au](http://www.gamblinghelponline.org.au)

**CALL THE GAMBLING HELPLINE  
ON 1800 858 858 - IT'S FREE,  
CONFIDENTIAL AND AVAILABLE 24/7**

Funded through  
the Gamblers  
Rehabilitation Fund



**Government of South Australia**

Department for Communities  
and Social Inclusion

[www.problemgambling.sa.gov.au](http://www.problemgambling.sa.gov.au)



