

Contents at a Glance

| | |
|---|-------------------|
| <i>Foreword</i> | <i>xxi</i> |
| <i>Introduction</i> | <i>1</i> |
| <i>Part I: Casino Gambling Basics: Everything You Need to Know to Start</i> | <i>7</i> |
| Chapter 1: Casino Gambling 101: The Inside Scoop..... | 9 |
| Chapter 2: Taking a Quick Stroll Through the Casino..... | 25 |
| Chapter 3: Probability, Odds, and a Bit of Luck: What You Need to Succeed | 39 |
| Chapter 4: Managing Your Money in a Casino..... | 53 |
| Chapter 5: Minding Your Gambling Manners..... | 69 |
| <i>Part II: Conquering the Table Games</i> | <i>83</i> |
| Chapter 6: Will Bluff for Food: Poker | 85 |
| Chapter 7: The Easiest Game to Beat: Blackjack..... | 109 |
| Chapter 8: Rolling the Dice: Craps | 127 |
| Chapter 9: Spinning Wheel Goes Round n' Round: Roulette | 147 |
| Chapter 10: Not Just For High Rollers: Baccarat | 161 |
| Chapter 11: Tackling the "Riskier" Table Games | 173 |
| <i>Part III: Beyond the Tables: Slots, Video Poker, Sports Betting, and More</i> | <i>191</i> |
| Chapter 12: Mastering the Machines: Slots..... | 193 |
| Chapter 13: Scoring Big in Video Poker..... | 211 |
| Chapter 14: Striking the Mother Lode: Keno and Bingo..... | 229 |
| Chapter 15: From the Cubs to the Bears: Sports Betting | 245 |
| Chapter 16: More than Just the Derby: Betting on Horse Racing..... | 263 |
| <i>Part IV: Taking Casino Gambling to a Different Level</i> | <i>279</i> |
| Chapter 17: Casino Gambling: Online and in the Comfort of Home | 281 |
| Chapter 18: The Wild World of Tournaments | 293 |

| | |
|--|------------|
| <i>Part V: The Part of Tens</i> | 307 |
| Chapter 19: Ten Cool Places to Gamble | 309 |
| Chapter 20: Ten (Or So) Common Casino Gambling Mistakes to Avoid | 317 |
| Chapter 21: Ten Ways to Score Comps | 323 |
| <i>Part VI: Appendixes</i> | 329 |
| Appendix A: Glossary | 331 |
| Appendix B: Important Resources | 339 |
| <i>Index</i> | 343 |

Table of Contents

Foreword.....*xxi*

Introduction..... **1**

About This Book.....2
Conventions Used in This Book2
What You're Not to Read.....3
Foolish Assumptions3
How This Book Is Organized.....3
 Part I: Casino Gambling Basics: Everything
 You Need to Know to Start4
 Part II: Conquering the Table Games4
 Part III: Beyond the Tables: Slots, Video Poker,
 Sports Betting, and More4
 Part IV: Taking Casino Gambling to a Different Level4
 Part V: The Part of Tens.....5
 Part VI: Appendixes.....5
Icons Used in This Book.....5
Where to Go from Here.....6

*Part I: Casino Gambling Basics: Everything
You Need to Know to Start* **7**

Chapter 1: Casino Gambling 101: The Inside Scoop **9**

Entering the Casino: What You're Up Against10
 Marketing their way to your wallet10
 Accepting the odds: The house rules10
 Protecting your money with a plan.....11
 Identifying the colors of the rainbow12
Playing the Games: What's Your Poison?.....12
 Touring the table games13
 Turning to machine games.....15
 Betting on ball games and fast horses.....16
Gambling Near and Far: Where to Find Casinos.....17
 Nevada: Viva the gambling state!17
 Atlantic City: Vegas of the east18
 Diving into on-the-water gambling19
 Indian gaming: Cashing in on less glitz.....19
 Beyond the borders: Gambling abroad20
 Betting on the Internet.....20
Measuring Your Gambling IQ.....21

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Chapter 2: Taking a Quick Stroll Through the Casino | 25 |
| (Casino) Knowledge Is Power..... | 26 |
| Navigating the Casino Maze..... | 26 |
| Getting in is the easy part | 27 |
| Slot machines: Place them and they will come | 28 |
| Table games: Penetrating the inner circle..... | 28 |
| The bar: Quiet escape — or not?..... | 29 |
| Cashing out: Heading to the cashier’s cage | 30 |
| Meeting the Casino’s Cast of Characters | 31 |
| In the pits: Serving the table players | 32 |
| Slot employees: The reel dealers | 33 |
| Management: Running the tables | 34 |
| Maintaining a Safe and Secure Environment | 36 |
| Security personnel: The human touch | 36 |
| Surveillance: The eye in the sky..... | 37 |
| Taking safety into your own hands | 38 |
| | |
| Chapter 3: Probability, Odds, and a Bit of Luck: What You Need to Succeed | 39 |
| Defining Luck: A Temporary Fluctuation | 39 |
| Understanding the Role of Probability | 40 |
| Identifying independent events | 41 |
| Recognizing dependent events..... | 41 |
| Factoring in the odds | 42 |
| Examining How Casinos Operate and Make Money: House Edge..... | 42 |
| Charging a fee | 43 |
| Paying less than the true odds | 44 |
| Muddying the odds | 44 |
| Calculating the Odds in Casino Games | 45 |
| Identifying payoff odds | 46 |
| Getting an edge on the house edge..... | 47 |
| Avoiding Myths, Magic, and Other Superstitions | 47 |
| Going with your hunches | 48 |
| Playing a lucky machine | 49 |
| Breaking the law of probability | 49 |
| Forecasting the trends | 49 |
| Succumbing to selective memory | 51 |
| Relying on betting systems | 50 |
| Quitting early | 51 |
| Chasing rainbows | 52 |
| | |
| Chapter 4: Managing Your Money in a Casino | 53 |
| Setting a Budget and Sticking to It | 54 |
| Playing within your means | 54 |
| Determining your daily limits | 55 |
| Sizing up your bets..... | 56 |

Keeping your bets consistent56
 Limiting your losses56
 Looking at Casino Credit and Its Risks58
 Grasping casino credit.....58
 Crediting yourself with an account59
 Using markers against casino credit.....60
 Knowing When Enough Is Enough61
 Knowing the odds of failure62
 Knowing thyself62
 Resisting the urge to chase losses63
 Sipping, not sinking.....64
 Recognizing a gambling addiction64
 Understanding Taxes and the Law65
 Deducting your losses and taxing your wins65
 Unreported winnings: Don't fool the IRS.....66
 Counting comps for tax purposes.....66
 Lowering your gambling tax67
 Keeping a gambling log.....67
 Sharing with Uncle Sam upfront68
 Wagering with a group: Who pays the tax?68

Chapter 5: Minding Your Gambling Manners 69

Dressing (And Acting) the Part70
 Getting comfortable70
 Dressing up for evenings71
 Smoking permitted (sometimes).....71
 Drinking encouraged.....72
 Playing Well with Others: Minding Your Table Manners73
 Knowing your limits73
 Joining a game74
 Thou shall not touch . . . and other table commandments.....74
 Giving Gratuities to Dealers and Others75
 Tipping your dealer.....76
 Tipping other casino employees78
 Avoiding the Appearance of Cheating.....80

Part II: Conquering the Table Games.....83

Chapter 6: Will Bluff for Food: Poker 85

Uncovering the ABCs of Casino Poker86
 Paying homage to hand hierarchy87
 Knowing the dealer90
 Following basic poker etiquette90
 Betting the Farm (Or Other Parcels of Real Estate).....91
 Grasping the betting basics92
 Following betting limits92

| | |
|--|-----|
| Knowing when to check or fold | 93 |
| Upping your knowledge of raising | 93 |
| Bluffing: When deception pays | 94 |
| Betting when you're low on chips | 94 |
| Checking Out the Most Popular Versions | 95 |
| Playing Seven-Card Stud | 95 |
| Holding your own at Texas Hold'em | 99 |
| Flirting with Omaha/8 | 102 |
| Avoiding Poker Pitfalls | 103 |

Chapter 7: The Easiest Game to Beat: Blackjack109

| | |
|---|-----|
| Dealing Out Blackjack Basics..... | 110 |
| Setting the scene | 110 |
| Valuing your cards..... | 111 |
| Preparing to Play..... | 111 |
| Finding a table: Strategic seating | 112 |
| Purchasing chips | 113 |
| Homing in on house rules | 114 |
| Dealing what's in the cards | 115 |
| Betting Your Bottom Dollar..... | 115 |
| Playing Your Hand..... | 116 |
| Exercising your options..... | 116 |
| Going beyond Lady Luck..... | 117 |
| Strategizing in the computer age | 120 |
| Making a side bet..... | 121 |
| Drawing the dealer's curtain..... | 122 |
| Looking at payouts..... | 123 |
| Blackjack protocol: How to avoid trouble..... | 123 |
| Identifying Common Mistakes | 124 |

Chapter 8: Rolling the Dice: Craps127

| | |
|---|-----|
| Setting the Craps Stage..... | 127 |
| Casting the dice | 128 |
| Surveying the lay of the table..... | 129 |
| Getting to know the craps crew..... | 131 |
| Shooting for the whole table..... | 132 |
| Minding Mr. Manners at a craps table | 132 |
| Walking through Craps, Step by Step | 133 |
| Buying in..... | 133 |
| Coming out (no, not of the closet): The first roll in craps | 134 |
| Making a point | 134 |
| Relying on Strategy to Place the Best Bets | 135 |
| The pass-line bet | 136 |
| The come bet | 136 |
| The don't-pass line bet | 137 |

The don't-come bet139
 The odds bet139
 Avoiding "Sucker" Bets142
 Resisting the lure of Big 6 and Big 8.....142
 Swearing off the place bets142
 Steering clear of buy bets.....143
 Laying off lay bets143
 Passing up field bets144
 Saying no to proposition bets.....144
 Finding out the hard way.....146

Chapter 9: Spinning Wheel Goes Round n' Round: Roulette147

Getting the Spin on Roulette Basics148
 Starting with the wheel.....148
 Taking in the table layout149
 Betting with chips of a different color151
 Dealing with the croupier152
 Betting: The Inside (and Outside) Scoop153
 Knowing your (table) limits153
 Making inside bets: Long shots and big payouts154
 Making outside bets: Better odds but lower payouts.....155
 Reciting Roulette Etiquette156
 Improving Your Odds.....157
 Starting with the basics157
 Playing a European wheel158
 Avoiding Strategies That Don't Work.....159
 Basing your plays on history.....159
 Blaming wheel bias159
 Buying into betting systems160

Chapter 10: Not Just For High Rollers: Baccarat161

Counting Down the Baccarat Basics.....162
 Formal baccarat: High stakes, high rollers164
 Minibaccarat: Less glitz, lower stakes166
 Stepping into Baccarat167
 Positioning yourself to play167
 Betting the banker (or the player)168
 Dealing the hand.....168
 Drawing for another card169
 Avoiding Baccarat Time Wasters172
 Wagering on ties172
 Note taking and keeping score172
 Counting cards.....172
 Relying on instinct.....172

Chapter 11: Tackling the “Riskier” Table Games173

| | |
|---|-----|
| Cruising for Caribbean Stud Poker | 174 |
| Playing the game: An overview | 174 |
| Assessing your odds | 176 |
| Betting in Circles with Let It Ride..... | 177 |
| Playing the game: An overview | 177 |
| Understanding the payout | 179 |
| Implementing some simplified strategy | 180 |
| Avoiding a side bet..... | 181 |
| Picking Up on Pai Gow Poker..... | 181 |
| Playing the game: An overview | 182 |
| Calculating your odds..... | 184 |
| Implementing some strategy | 184 |
| Tripling Your Fun with Three Card Poker | 184 |
| Playing the game: An overview | 185 |
| Reckoning your odds | 187 |
| Avoiding the Riskiest Table Games..... | 187 |

Part III: Beyond the Tables: Slots, Video Poker, Sports Betting, and More 191**Chapter 12: Mastering the Machines: Slots193**

| | |
|--|-----|
| Understanding How to Play the Slots | 194 |
| Playing the game: Easy as pushing a button..... | 195 |
| Dissecting the innards: How slots work | 196 |
| Getting wise to virtual reel-ality | 196 |
| Entering the coinless age: Cashout tickets | 197 |
| Identifying Differences in Slot Machines | 198 |
| Increasing wagers with multipliers | 198 |
| Zigzagging for multiple paylines..... | 199 |
| Tuning in to theme machines | 200 |
| Working the progressive slots | 200 |
| Engaging in interactive machines | 200 |
| Getting a Handle on Slots Odds..... | 202 |
| Stretching Your Money at the Slots | 203 |
| Reading the payable | 203 |
| Choosing the type of machine | 204 |
| Choosing the denomination you bet..... | 204 |
| Hitting an empty casino..... | 205 |
| Playing full credits on progressive games..... | 206 |
| Maximizing your fun | 206 |
| Honing Your Slot Etiquette..... | 207 |
| Saving a machine | 207 |
| Playing two machines at once: Double trouble | 208 |
| Minding your manners..... | 208 |

Playing for Comps208
 Taking advantage of the comps209
 Signing up for a slot club.....210
 Cashing in on cash rebates210

Chapter 13: Scoring Big in Video Poker211

Poker? Slots? Characterizing Video Poker211
 Contrasting video poker and slots212
 Distinguishing between video and traditional poker.....212
 Understanding the allure.....213
 Playing the Game.....214
 Making your bet.....214
 Stretching your bankroll.....214
 Making your best hand in one draw215
 Collecting your winnings.....215
 Putting Your Money on the Best Machines.....216
 Holding out for the highest payout216
 Comparing short-pay and full-pay machines217
 Advancing to progressive machines218
 Playing Jacks or Better: The Best Bet for Beginners218
 Analyzing the payout219
 Adding strategy to the equation.....220
 Sticking to the system . . . no matter what223
 Investigating Other Video Poker Machines224
 Walking on the wild side.....224
 Multitasking with Multi-Game Play226
 Exploring other machines227

Chapter 14: Striking the Mother Lode: Keno and Bingo229

Catching On to Keno Basics.....230
 Playing the game230
 Filling out your ticket: X marks the spot231
 Winning and collecting234
 Exploring keno variations236
 Improving Your Odds at Keno237
 Figuring Out the ABCs of B-I-N-G-O238
 Setting the scene: The cast, crew, and props238
 Playing B-I-N-G-O down the line240
 Spicing up cover patterns241
 Uncovering bigger prizes with coverall.....242
 Calling Forth Winning Bingo Strategies.....242
 Seeking the ideal bingo venue242
 Winning at bingo: Odds aren't all that bad (sometimes)243

Chapter 15: From the Cubs to the Bears: Sports Betting 245

| | |
|---|-----|
| Defining Sports Betting: The Legal Kind, That Is | 246 |
| Betting on a wide world of sports | 247 |
| Making money for the house | 248 |
| Leveling the Betting Field with Lines and Point Spreads | 248 |
| Setting the money line | 249 |
| Defining point spread..... | 249 |
| Being a total winner | 250 |
| Moving the line | 251 |
| Eyeing the exotics (bets, not dancers)..... | 252 |
| Placing Your Bet in a Sports Book | 254 |
| Reading the board | 255 |
| Redeeming your winnings | 257 |
| Rounding Up Sports Betting Differences..... | 257 |
| Tackling football wagers..... | 257 |
| Slam-dunking basketball bets | 258 |
| Taking a swing at baseball betting | 258 |
| Knocking around some boxing bets..... | 259 |
| Lining up hockey wagers..... | 259 |
| Understanding Handicapping Basics..... | 259 |
| Relying on Strategic Handicapping..... | 260 |

Chapter 16: More than Just the Derby: Betting on Horse Racing . . . 263

| | |
|---|-----|
| Identifying Different Racing Formats | 263 |
| Betting in a Casino: Inside the Race Book..... | 265 |
| Understanding and Reading the Sheets | 266 |
| Placing Bets in the Race Book | 267 |
| Understanding the system: The feeling is mutuel..... | 268 |
| Sticking to straight bets..... | 269 |
| Experimenting with exotic bets | 270 |
| Placing your bet at the window | 270 |
| Winning strategies for your wagers | 271 |
| Getting a Hand on Horse Racing: Handicapping Basics | 271 |
| Digesting the race data: The Daily Racing Form | 272 |
| Assessing the speed factor | 273 |
| Contemplating pace | 274 |
| Showing a bit of class | 274 |
| Rounding into form | 276 |
| Considering other factors | 276 |
| Trip handicapping..... | 277 |

Part IV: Taking Casino Gambling to a Different Level...279

Chapter 17: Casino Gambling: Online and in the Comfort of Home281

Mapping the Legal Landscape281
 Understanding How Online Casinos Work.....282
 Connecting with cyberspace283
 Getting up to speed with practice games.....283
 Setting up an account284
 Paying to play284
 Accessing your winnings285
 Locating the Best (and Safest) Online Casino Games286
 Taking the first step: Online watchdogs286
 Sticking to reputable software suppliers.....287
 Checking out license origin.....288
 Identifying other signs of a good site.....288
 Selecting the best games for Internet play.....289
 Taking Advantage of Promos and Giveaways.....291

Chapter 18: The Wild World of Tournaments293

Sizing Up Tournaments: Which One Is Right for You?.....294
 Betting on the Most Lucrative Tournaments.....295
 Taking advantage of overlays296
 Finding a freeroll (Who says you can't get a free lunch?)296
 Entering a Tournament (And Knowing What to Expect).....297
 Eyeing the competition over cocktails298
 Playing with fixed chips.....298
 Seating yourself in the tournament section.....299
 Strategizing to Eliminate the Competition.....299
 Incorporating basic strategy for tournament success299
 Soaring over the poker crowd300
 Tabling a win with table tournaments303
 Maneuvering through slot and video-poker tournaments304

Part V: The Part of Tens307

Chapter 19: Ten Cool Places to Gamble309

Living Large in Las Vegas310
 Landing on Boardwalk: Atlantic City310
 Touring Tahoe and Reno311
 Cruising the High Seas311

| | |
|---|------------|
| Rolling on the River (or Lake) | 312 |
| Exploring Native American Casinos | 313 |
| Collecting Chips in Connecticut..... | 313 |
| Striking Gold in California | 314 |
| Finding Hidden Treasures in the Caribbean | 315 |
| Joining the Jet Set | 315 |
| Chapter 20: Ten (Or So) Common Casino Gambling Mistakes to Avoid | 317 |
| Gambling at All | 317 |
| Failing to Keep Records..... | 318 |
| Bouncing Around Like a Pinball | 318 |
| Looking for Luck in All the Wrong Places | 318 |
| Giving Up Too Easily | 319 |
| Breaking the Law (Of Averages)..... | 319 |
| Relying on Betting Systems..... | 320 |
| Being Seduced | 320 |
| Losing It Online | 320 |
| Taking It to the Limit, One Too Many Times..... | 321 |
| Overindulging | 321 |
| Blaming Others..... | 322 |
| Chapter 21: Ten Ways to Score Comps | 323 |
| Ask and Ye Shall Receive..... | 324 |
| Impressing the Boss with Club Card Mileage | 324 |
| Finding the Weakest Link | 325 |
| Betting More When the Boss Is Looking | 325 |
| Betting Less When the Boss Isn't Looking..... | 326 |
| Making the Bathroom Your Second Home..... | 326 |
| Looking Like You're Losing | 326 |
| Greasing the Wheels | 326 |
| Never Looking a Gift Horse in the Mouth..... | 327 |
| Behaving with Courtesy and Respect..... | 327 |
| Part VI: Appendixes | 329 |
| Appendix A: Glossary | 331 |
| Appendix B: Important Resources | 339 |
| Books | 339 |
| Magazines..... | 340 |
| Web Sites | 340 |
| Gamblers Anonymous | 342 |
| Index..... | 343 |