

# GAMBLING COMMISSION



**What to look out for when  
gambling online**

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It is estimated that there are more than 2,000 gambling websites available on the internet. Here are some things that you will want to look out for when considering whether to gamble online and which company to gamble with. You should also have these issues in mind when gambling via mobile phone or the TV.

## Who am I gambling with?



### ■ Check if the gambling operator is licensed by a regulator

A gambling regulator is generally responsible for setting the conditions under which gambling companies operate and monitors that they meet those requirements.

In Britain the Gambling Commission (the Commission) regulates gambling in the public interest with the aim of keeping gambling fair and safe for all. It does this by setting out the conditions by which its licensees must operate and the technical requirements that licensees' equipment and systems must meet.

A gambling company that is not regulated may not be fair or safe to gamble with. They may be operating unlawfully and there may be a risk of something going wrong when gambling. Where a gambling company says it is regulated, you can cross-check with the regulator's website to ensure that it is licensed.

**A website address with .co.uk does not always mean it is based in Britain or that it is regulated by the Gambling Commission**



### ■ Check where different gambling products are regulated

Many gambling companies are regulated in more than one jurisdiction and so their various products may be regulated by different regulators. Often the name of the regulator will be displayed on the homepage of the gambling website (the Commission requires this of the companies it licenses) and within the terms and conditions, but you should check where each particular product is regulated.

For example the betting may be regulated in Britain while the casino games are regulated in a different country. You may also find that clicking on a link within one website takes you to another webpage. This may be run under a licence issued by another jurisdiction and you may not even realise that the gambling activity is regulated elsewhere.



### ■ Look for clear contact details for the company

Before starting to gamble, you should ensure that you know some basic details about the company. For example, where are they licensed and how you can contact them. You may need this if you have any queries on its gambling products before you decide whether to gamble.



### ■ Be aware of the complaints procedure

There should be clear information about how to make a complaint against the gambling company and how your complaint will be dealt with. In the event that you make a complaint and are not happy with the outcome it should be clear what further steps you can take. Operators licensed by the Commission are required to ensure that a complaint is referred to an independent body if you are not satisfied with how it has been handled. The Commission monitors companies to ensure complaints are dealt with appropriately and looks for trends which indicate where licensees might not be doing what they should.



### ■ Comments from other consumers in forums

There are various forums on the internet where customers can discuss their experiences of particular gambling websites. This may be a useful way of finding out whether other customers have a favourable view of the company. Be aware that some websites may receive a fee for recommending you to certain gambling websites.

## What am I signing up to?

### ■ Are the company's terms and conditions easily available and clearly explained?

Before you gamble, you should ensure that you have read and understood the company's terms and conditions for each gambling product. Often the conditions attached to introductory or sign-up bonuses can be complex, for example there may be minimum play requirements before bonuses can be paid or withdrawn.

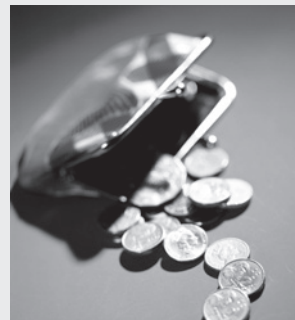
### ■ Check if you get your funds back if the company becomes insolvent

You should find out the company's position before depositing your money. Some gambling websites protect customer funds but others do not. A Commission licensed operator is required to make clear whether or not customer funds are protected and if so how.

### ■ Will the company ensure your personal details are safe?

You should look for a company's privacy policy. This should explain what it will do to protect your personal information. Also, you should know whether the company is subject to other data protection requirements.

## Are there measures in place to help you gamble responsibly?



Check if the website allows you to set limits on the amount of money you can deposit or gamble and review your gambling transactions. This will enable you to keep track of your spending.

Check if the company provides links to responsible gambling information. This should provide information on what you can do if you think you are developing a gambling problem, including how to exclude yourself from gambling on that website.

**If you are uncertain about any aspect of a gambling website then you should think seriously about whether to gamble on that website...**

## How do I know the game is fair?

### ■ Check that rules of the game or bet are clearly explained

You should be able to understand from reading the information on the website how each game works, what the prizes are and what your chances of winning are. If, after reading the information you are still not clear, you should not gamble on that site.

### ■ Does the software and game need to meet minimum technical requirements set by the regulator and does it include independent testing?

This is a complex area as many overseas licensed companies will meet different standards and testing requirements depending on where they are regulated. Individual products within gambling websites will also often be subject to different requirements as they are often regulated in different countries.

Here in Britain, the Commission requires its licensed companies to meet technical standards and testing requirements. For example, these ensure that the software that determines the result of a game is fair and is independently tested before it is released. These companies are also required to have controls in place to protect the information and software on their systems from tampering.

If you are unsure of the technical standards and testing requirements that products regulated overseas are required to meet, you should contact the operator or the relevant regulator.

## Does the website prevent underage people from gambling?



It is important to check that the website has appropriate steps to verify the age of those that are gambling. The website should support the use of filtering software to prevent access by underage persons.

The gambling site should make clear that underage gambling is not permitted and take active steps to verify that customers are of legal age to gamble. In order to verify that an individual is of legal age to gamble and for other reasons such as combatting fraud, a gambling operator will need certain information including name, date of birth, address and payment details.

## Buyer beware!

**It is your responsibility to satisfy yourself that you are happy to deposit money with an online gambling company. You should exercise the same caution when gambling online as you would when purchasing any goods or services via the Internet.**

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**keeping gambling fair and  
safe for all**

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