

- » Entering the world of casino gambling
- » Tallying up the casino's many offerings
- » Pinpointing casinos on the gambling map
- » Testing your gambling aptitude

Chapter **1**

Casino Gambling 101: The Inside Scoop

In spite of the popularity of Jack Nicklaus and Arnold Palmer during golf's first golden era, Gary Player was always a fan favorite. The South African's diminutive size made for a less-than-intimidating physical presence in the tee box. But Player's welterweight appearance belied a heavyweight swing.

Believe it or not, casino gambling is a lot like golf. And, no, not because both games are about going for the green. Golf is all about technique, skill, and knowledge. And masters of the game are inspiring to watch. With swings as graceful and elegant as a ballet dancer's leap, they make each challenging stroke look effortless. The pros seem to play as smoothly as those on the PGA tour. But, as in golf, the successful player has gathered important knowledge and studied effective strategies to finesse the outcome in their favor.

In other words, casino pros aren't winners just because they're lucky, any more than Jordan Spieth is a golf god because the angels of the green have smiled upon him. The greats of the poker tournament circuit may look like they could take the table in their sleep — but they're skilled, savvy, and have studied the game diligently.

It's okay if you're not planning to become the Jordan Spieth of blackjack . . . or the Brooks Koepka of Keno . . . or the Xander Schauffele of slots (say that ten times fast). Your gambling aspirations should look like your golf ambitions: Play a little better, win more often, and enjoy the experience as much as possible. And you have every reason to believe that you can attain your goal. But success requires knowledge, strategy, and some skill. You've come to the right place. This chapter (and book) can provide the preparation you need to help you find your swing in the casino.

Entering the Casino: What You're Up Against

The first secret to gambling success is to understand the inner workings of the casino world before you're seduced by the flash and dazzle. Casinos are sophisticated and highly successful enterprises — and they don't get that way by giving away money. Your best bet, then, is to be aware of basic casino operations so you can manipulate the experience to your advantage.

Marketing their way to your wallet

They see you coming from miles away. They know exactly who you are, how much money you make, what you like and dislike, and whether you're married, single, or divorced. Who are these omniscient watchers who track your secrets? The IRS? CIA? Al-Qaeda?

None of the above. I'm talking about the marketing gurus at modern casinos. They're constantly studying reams of data on millions of gamblers to develop profiles of guests who most willingly spend their discretionary income on a couple of hours of distraction.

Nothing is left to chance in a modern casino. Every possible element, from the design of the wallpaper to the thickness of the carpet, is there to draw you in and keep you gambling as long as possible. All the colors, sights, sounds, and sensations serve one purpose: to make you happy — even when you lose.

Accepting the odds: The house rules

The casino's first commandment is "The house shall always win." A couple of games permit sharp players to break even or eke out a small edge occasionally. But

casinos are in business to make money, so winning is a losing proposition for most players.

Why? Three good reasons:

- » In many games, the casino doesn't pay out *true odds*.

In roulette, for example, the odds of betting on the right number are 37 to 1. That means you can expect to guess right once for every 37 spins of the wheel. But if you win, the payout is only 35 to 1 — or \$35 profit for every \$1 you bet. The difference between 37 and 35 seems small, but that discrepancy actually gives the house one of its biggest edges. (Refer to Chapter 3 for an explanation of *true odds* and Chapter 9 for more info on roulette.)

- » The casino has a *house edge* — a mathematical advantage over the player in any game. Throughout the casino, players must overcome odds that aren't favorable to winning. (Read more about the edge in Chapter 3.)

Your goal is to find games where the casino has the lowest edge. Craps is a great example. This fun, exciting game offers great odds — if you stay away from the bad bets. We explore craps in Chapter 8.

To get the lowdown on house edge in other games, check out the individual chapters in Parts II and III.

- » The house charges a *vigorish* (commission) in some games, such as sports betting. (Check out Chapter 15.)

Protecting your money with a plan

For most people, developing a strategy for doling out their gambling bankroll can keep them out of serious trouble. Set a budget and stick to it. Consider contingencies (such as losing your bankroll in the first few minutes of your visit) and know how to respond when your wallet gets whacked.

Your strategy, however, is only as good as your willpower. Nothing jacks up casino profits faster than undisciplined gamblers. If you're an impulsive type, then gambling may leave your bank account looking like it just went 15 rounds with a heavyweight boxing champion. (Refer to Chapter 4, where we discuss important money-management issues.)

Now, it's certainly true that most people can save their money by avoiding casinos altogether. So, for folks who don't want to lose money: Don't gamble! But the conservative and prudent path in life isn't the only choice. (And that would make for a very short book.) Gambling can be a great way to spice up a vacation and

break out of a boring routine. Gambling is all about taking a risk — exposing yourself to a chance of loss.



WARNING

Don't overdo it. Government studies show that as many as 1 in every 25 adults has a problem with compulsive gambling. Think about that the next time you sit down at a blackjack table. Several people in the pit probably shouldn't be there. Could you be one of them? Gambling addiction is a serious matter. (Refer to Appendix B for some helpful info.)

Identifying the colors of the rainbow

Knowledge is power and is your only ally against the formidable forces that threaten to separate you from your hard-earned cash. One piece of knowledge you definitely need, particularly if you're going to wade into the shark-infested waters of table games, is the varying colors and matching denominations of standard casino chips, the little round tokens you use when you bet.



REMEMBER

The casinos make this bit easy for you because the chips also have a denomination printed on them so that you know the red chip, for instance, is worth \$5 and the green chip is worth \$25. The following is a standard list of casino-chip colors, as well as their corresponding values:

- » White: \$1
- » Red: \$5
- » Green: \$25
- » Black: \$100
- » Purple: \$500
- » Burgundy or Yellow: \$1,000
- » Brown: \$5,000

Playing the Games: What's Your Poison?

Casino games are as diverse as the people who play them — and that's part of the fun. You may think of craps as a rough-and-tumble game, played by hustlers and wiseguys, but step into a casino, and you're just as likely to spot an angelic-looking nurse rolling dice next to a cursing cowboy from Texas. And because no game has a precise player profile, don't restrict yourself to the few games you think suit you. Give each one a try and see where it takes you.



TIP

Although the majority of casino visitors prefer slot machines, chances are, if you're reading this book, you're willing to try new ways to gamble. After you read this book and know which games have the best odds, take a quick walk around the casino floor to see where you want to start and give several of them a try.

Touring the table games

In a casino, the tables come in all shapes and sizes, from the stadium shape of poker tables, to the half-round crescent of blackjack, and to the long rectangular craps tables. And the table is just about all they have in common.

Unspoken rules seem to govern the table games. Most casino guests have discovered from experience to avoid the taboos: holding your cards with two hands, touching chips in the betting circle after the cards are dealt, and throwing the dice so wildly that they fly over the rail and end up in somebody's drink. You can discover general casino etiquette in Chapter 5 and more game-specific rules in most chapters. However, before you worry about acting properly, this section includes a brief overview of the main table games that you may encounter in a casino.

Poker: Boosted by Internet and TV tournaments

Poker rooms have been a staple at Nevada casinos since the 1940s. But it took the advent of the Internet to transform poker from a backroom game into something akin to an international sport, complete with major events, television coverage, and superstars. Starting in 2004, the online poker boom created an insatiable American market for poker that has resulted in more than 20 states legalizing live casino poker, card rooms, poker clubs, or online poker.

The Internet was the catalyst, but the underlying appeal of the game is even simpler: Good players can consistently win. In poker, you compete against other players rather than the house. And with honed skills and intimate knowledge of the game, you can have a significant edge over those other, less-prepared gamblers.



TIP

Hiding your emotions is a requisite skill for a successful poker player. They don't call it a *poker face* for nothin'! So, if you can't control your nervous ticks when you bluff, or if your eyes get as big as saucers when you make a full house, either play your poker online or put a bag over your head. (For other tips, read Chapter 6.)

Blackjack: The best odds

Blackjack (also called 21) has been the most popular table game in casinos for nearly 60 years. The card game always draws a loyal crowd because it's easy to understand, provides good camaraderie, and offers great odds (around a 1percent house edge if you play your cards right). If you memorize blackjack's basic

strategy (that is, the optimal way to play every hand), your chances of winning at blackjack are better than at virtually any other game in the casino.

Blackjack also is intriguing because each hand is like a movie clip — with you as the star. Each game has an opening scene (the deal), the simmering suspense (the dealer's hidden card), the moment of truth when the hero (you!) makes a dramatic choice, and finally, the conclusion, where the hero wins or loses. The trick, of course, is to have more happy endings than tragedies. (Chapter 7 provides a thorough look at the best blackjack strategies.)

Craps: Backslaps, high-fives, and cheerleaders

This dice game draws a raucous crowd and has many of the best bets in the casino. Some guests find the noise and the complex layout of craps to be a little intimidating. But before you slink back to your comfort zone, consider this fact: The house advantage is low in craps, making this game a great bet. Just be sure you stick with the best craps bets.

Furthermore, craps is like a sporting event, with its dramatic swings of luck, high-fives, backslaps, and noisy cheering section. Every roll has a home team (players who bet with the dice) and an opposing team (wrong-way bettors) that gets dirty looks and ridicules from the hometown fans. Now, if they just had those big foam *We're No. 1* fingers, the experience would be complete (though it would make rolling the dice a little harder). For more on craps, check out Chapter 8.

Roulette: The place for eccentric hunches

The spinning wheel of roulette symbolizes the world of casino gambling. This popular, entry-level game is ideal for novice gamblers because it requires absolutely no skill, concentration, or complex strategies. You simply bet on the number or possible numbers the ball will land on. A table full of players can be quite sociable, although not as rowdy as a craps game. Roulette gives you a chance to play your eccentric hunches on a single number, a combination of numbers, or on an even-money wager that can just extend your playing session. Refer to Chapter 9 for more on roulette.

Baccarat: Part tuxedo, Part T-shirt

Although blackjack and poker appeal to the masses, baccarat is a card game that traditionally drew a more 'civilized' crowd. But don't be intimidated; everyone is welcome, even if you don't own a tuxedo. Check out baccarat for a game that's simple to play (just bet on the bank) and has fair odds. For the complete lowdown on baccarat, read Chapter 10.

Let It Ride, Pai Gow, and other table games

Beyond the traditional favorites, several other table games have developed a strong following. Today, most casinos intersperse Caribbean Stud poker, Let It Ride, Pai Gow, and three-card poker tables throughout their pits.



WARNING

These games are fun diversions when you need a change of pace, but a word of caution: Don't play too long. These games have odds that may make you wish you'd gotten mugged instead of going gambling. Unless you have a passion for these games (along with a bottomless bank account), don't make a habit of playing them. You'll learn why in Chapter 11.

Turning to digital and automated games

For some folks, the intimidation factor of table games is too much to bear. It's heartbreaking, yes, but luckily nearly all casino operators — through the goodness of their hearts — thoughtfully accommodate shy gamblers by supplying acres of go-solo gaming machines.

Not only are casinos normally filled to the brim with slot machines, video poker, and other solo games, but you can also find automated, dealer-free versions of the table games. Even the timidest gambler can enjoy a satisfying time at these machines. There's no bluffing by other players, no angry gamblers if you hit or stand at the wrong time, no pressure to tip the dealer after a big win, and no embarrassment about breaking table rules. The lone gambler squares off against a machine (or, in the case of the loony gambler, against several machines at once).



REMEMBER

Just remember that the best and worst that the casino has to offer are often sitting side by side. We'll cover the no-dealer version of each table game in that game's chapter. This section looks more closely at slot machines and video poker, which are two entirely different beasts. They have very different rules and very different odds. This section also briefly discusses keno and bingo.

Slot machines: From one-armed bandit to high-tech robotic

At one time, slot machines were simple devices. You put a coin in, you pulled a lever, and the reels spun. When they stopped, you heard the soothing sounds of clinking coins . . . or painful silence. Sure, you spent only a nickel or a quarter, but that silence was so painful that you couldn't help but put in another coin.

If you've been in a casino recently, you know how everything about gaming machines has changed. The humble one-armed bandit is now a sophisticated robotic master thief with enough computing power to fly a mission to Mars. This

soulless adversary even plays you a little song while it gleefully sucks up all your coins (or bills). Sure, the games still have some reminders from the past (like fruit or bells on the paylines), but today's slots are digital, not mechanical. The most popular game in the casino is essentially a noisy, elaborate video game and offers some of the worst odds in the house.

Slot machines occupy all that space on the casino floor for a good reason — people love to pump money into them, and they're available in practically any denomination — from pennies to dollars. If you're a person who just can't say *no* to their alluring call, make sure you read Chapter 12, so you can pick a worthy game with a better-than-average payout table.

Video poker: Not your Aunt Beatrice's kitchen-table game

Like slots, video poker offers a solo gambling experience, yet the two games are very different. Slots are primarily about luck, but video poker requires a certain amount of skill and technique. And just because you've played some kitchen-table Five-Card Draw with your Aunt Beatrice, don't assume you can break the bank at video poker. Several variations confront the casino guest, and you want to master the strategies before you decide whether to hold 'em or fold 'em.



TIP

The strategies for video poker can be a little complicated (see Chapter 13), but the reward for that extra work is worth it. Video poker offers perhaps the best odds of any game in the house — at least for those who play correctly.

Keno and bingo: Two old standards

Keno and bingo have many similarities, and both have a long history and a loyal following. Longtime gamblers know keno as a casino staple and a great way to stay in action while sipping on your soup in the coffee shop. Bingo is less common in big casinos, but it's making a comeback in some states and has become very popular overseas.

There is not much strategy to playing either game other than hoping to get lucky, but you'll learn the basics in Chapter 14 and give a quick overview for anyone unfamiliar with how to play either game.

Betting on ball games and fast horses

There's nothing quite like traveling to a casino to sit back in a comfortable chair, have a cold one, and watch sports on TV. Why not just stay home and do the same

thing? In a casino, you're viewing sporting events and horse races on the massive displays in today's best *race books* and *sports books*. These plush, high-tech rooms draw fans to cheer their favorite teams or horses. And best of all, the casino is ready and willing to take your bet on just about any sporting event.

Sports betting: Thrill of victory, the agony of defeat

Thanks to a 2018 U.S. Supreme Court decision, you can now place legal sports bets in over 20 states. (You can make some sports bets online as well. Read Chapter 17 for more info.) When you're in a sports book, you may notice that the employees are strangely unemotional when the crowd cheers for one team or another. Why? Because the house takes a *vigorish* (a small commission) from every wager, virtually ensuring a profit on every bet.

Casino guests can find all kinds of betting opportunities in the wide world of sports, including football, basketball, baseball, hockey, tennis, boxing, golf, and special events. But being a great sports fan doesn't make you a natural winner at the sports book. Why? Point spreads and money lines add complex challenges to the process. But understanding how to handicap and analyze sports statistics can simplify that process — and help you improve the odds of winning. (See Chapter 15 for more on sports betting in a casino.)

Horse racing: A run for your money

If you love a day at the track, the racebook is going to feel like home sweet home. After all, through the modern miracle of simulcasting, you can enjoy a day at several tracks at once, without leaving your cozy chair. Casinos dedicate luxurious space and resources to keep fans happy: leather seats, private work desks, and stacks of publications full of data on the ponies. And just when you think the experience can't get any better, the cocktail server hands you a double espresso to get your brain into high gear before the race day starts. Comfortable? Good, now you just need to pick some winners.

In both horse racing and sports betting, your understanding of handicapping and external factors can improve your chances of winning. And both kinds of betting favor gamblers who take a contrarian view. When you go against the grain — and you're right — you win bigger than when you bet with the crowd. (Read Chapter 16 for more about horse racing.)

Gambling Near and Far: Where to Find Casinos

Formerly quarantined to select areas, today's casinos are nearly everywhere, making gambling — in some form or another — possible in almost every state. Only two states (Hawaii and Utah) have no legalized gambling. The main reason for this explosion is that the stigma of gambling has mostly been removed from our society. Although the previous generation generally viewed gambling with moral indignation, today's attitudes are more relaxed, and many people consider casinos fun entertainment rather than one of the seven deadly sins.

This section looks more closely at the different types of gambling locations. Although Las Vegas and Atlantic City are still popular destinations for casino gambling, hundreds of other options are also waiting for you. (Flip to Chapter 19 for ten cool places to gamble.)

Nevada: Viva the gambling state!

For decades, Nevada was famous for being the only U.S. state where casino gambling was legal. That limitation changed when the state of New Jersey legalized gambling in the late 1970s (although only in one town, Atlantic City). And, despite the growth of casinos elsewhere in the United States, the Silver State remains the king of casino gambling with more than 200 commercial casinos.

Las Vegas reigns supreme

Las Vegas is the jewel in the crown and is, far and away, the biggest gambling destination in the world. Also known as *Sin City* or *Lost Wages*, Vegas is a unique agglomeration of palm trees, fountains, neon lights, and 150,000-plus hotel rooms among a wild mishmash of must-see architecture.

From its forbidden-fruit beginnings to its mobster adolescence to its starring role in a few hit TV shows, Vegas exudes a frenetic energy that makes the city a unique place in American pop culture. And Vegas takes full advantage of its iconic position. New hotel/casino complexes continue to rise from the desert floor at an astounding pace. As of 2021, half of the ten biggest hotels in the world were located within a few miles of each other on the Las Vegas Strip.

The city is still primarily known for its gambling — after all, where else can you expect to find slot machines in grocery stores and airports? But in the late 1990s — for the first time in its history — gambling money amounted to less than half of

the total revenue brought in by the Vegas casino industry. And that change means people from around the world are seeing the city as a resort (or convention) destination first and a place to gamble second.

If you're eager to learn more about Las Vegas, check out *Las Vegas For Dummies* by Mary Herczog (Wiley).

Tahoe and Reno: Quieter cousins

Before Las Vegas rose to prominence, Reno was the epicenter of gambling in the United States, and casinos around Lake Tahoe frequently hosted celebrities, such as Frank Sinatra and his buddies. Now, their southern Nevada competitor easily eclipses both Tahoe and Reno, but these two intriguing cities remain good alternatives for visitors that don't care for the Vegas speed-of-light pace.

As “the biggest little city in the world,” Reno's Wild West frontier spirit and gambling accessibility appeal to many travelers. Tahoe also boasts gambling opportunities on the Nevada side of the border while promising superb skiing in winter, a wealth of lake activities in summer, and spectacular mountain scenery year-round.

Atlantic City: Vegas of the east

In the late 1970s, New Jersey took the bold step of legalizing gambling to revitalize Atlantic City. The transformation hasn't always gone smoothly, but today, Atlantic City's casino industry is healthy. As one of the biggest gambling spots in the United States, it sees billions of dollars in wagers every year.

Although the Atlantic City Boardwalk can't rival the Vegas Strip, it does offer a unique blend of glitz and glamour in a carnival atmosphere and a seaside setting. More importantly, the location means convenience for people on the East Coast — they no longer have to fly cross-country just to play blackjack.

Connecticut: Betting with the Yankees

The Constitution State legalized tribal gaming in the early 1990s, and the state hasn't looked back since. With its proximity to Boston, New York City, and other lesser megalopolises of the northeast, Connecticut spent many years as the only alternative to Atlantic City. While it can't compete with the size of New Jersey's gaming industry, Connecticut hosts two of the three largest casinos in the United States: the Foxwoods and the Mohegan Sun resorts.

Diving into on-the-water gambling

Some people may not understand why gambling can be legal on the water but illegal on land. Nevertheless, if your state has a river running through it or you live on the coast, you're likely to find a casino within driving distance. (Of course, take your motion-sickness pills and be prepared to walk the plank.)

Riverboat casinos: A piece of the past

New laws and regulations have revived an icon from America's colorful past — riverboat casinos. Although these contemporary vessels bear little resemblance to the fabled paddleboats that plied the Mississippi, gambling fun is still rollin' on the river.

Most casino voyages are “cruises to nowhere” that last one to three hours. Some floating casinos don't even leave the dock, but they're in compliance with state gambling laws because they're on the water. Typically, these casinos are smaller than the big boys in Vegas and aren't always open 24 hours, but they usually offer most of the same games.

Cruise ships: Sailing for international waters

What could be finer than cruising off the coast of Carolina? Okay, maybe cruise ships don't hit those waters often, but they do sail nearly everywhere in the world, including hot spots (like the Caribbean and the Panama Canal) and scenic destinations (like Alaska and Mexico).

Nearly every cruise line takes advantage of international waters (where gambling is legal) by offering casinos onboard their ships (open only during certain hours and only when the ship is in international waters). These casinos have most of the same games and similar odds as regular land-based casinos (with a few differences), so if you don't mind your dice rolling funny when a big wave hits, cruising may be just the ticket for you.

Tribal gaming: Cashing in on less bling

A 1988 law paved the way for tribes to legalize gaming inside states that otherwise had no casino presence. Since then, a cascade of reservation-based casinos have opened and dramatically changed the landscape of casino gambling across the country. Today, 30 states have some form of tribal gaming. Oklahoma and California have dozens of casinos, ranging from full-service megaresorts to truck stops with slot machines. Most major cities in the United States are a short drive away from a tribal gambling location.

Tribal gaming generates billions of dollars in revenues every year and provides significant competition for more traditional gambling destinations. In fact, the combined gaming revenue of all tribal casinos constitutes about half of all gaming revenue in the U.S.

Native American casinos typically offer the same machines and table games that other gambling capitals have. However, many don't allow alcohol consumption and have betting limits that are lower than you'd expect in Las Vegas or Chicago. Nevertheless, the success of tribal gaming speaks volumes about the quality of the casinos. So, if you can live without exploding volcanoes, fancy fountains, and cocktails, you're bound to enjoy the friendly, less spectacular tribal casinos (see Chapter 19).

Beyond the borders: Gambling abroad

If you feel stuck in a gambling rut, traveling abroad for gaming may just be the adrenalin shot you need. Most foreign casinos offer the same or similar games as casinos in the United States, with little twists and bits of flare that just might prompt you to write a postcard to a friend about it. Canada and the Bahamas have some of the best casinos on this continent. Or, if you're looking for something more exotic, check out Macao or the South of France.



REMEMBER

But customs differ around the world, so you may be surprised at the rules across the pond. Many European casinos charge an entry fee, and many of them require more-formal attire. (Pack a coat and tie or evening dress if you plan on playing in Europe.) Travelers should also be aware that the American traditions of megacasinosaurs and multithousand-room resorts are rare overseas.

Betting on the Internet

Gambling and cyberspace seem to be made for each other. Through the conduit of the Internet, casinos and gaming companies can invite themselves directly into the homes of gamblers. People can play anonymously and comfortably, without ever leaving the house.

Considered the last frontier for gaming, cyberspace has now been settled — if not fully tamed. Online gaming (check out Chapter 17) represents a multibillion-dollar industry worldwide that continues to grow exponentially every year. In spite of its convenience and fun, however, online gambling has two serious drawbacks.

- » **The whole casino experience is missing.** You don't have any table camaraderie, shows, restaurants, or cocktail servers for variety and entertainment. The purists may not care, but many people gamble for the experience as much as for the game itself.
- » **Quality, reliability . . . and honesty vary.** While many states license and regulate online gaming, residents of those that don't might be drawn to offshore casinos that aren't subject to uniform standards for customer service, fair play, or financial stability.



WARNING

Internet gambling has serious temptations for the undisciplined player. You can wager and play — and lose — at a breakneck pace when gambling online. And you don't have the typical safety checks, like a companion who urges you to stop throwing good money after bad.

Measuring Your Gambling IQ

As you'll learn throughout this book, people who find the greatest pleasure in gambling do so with

- » Realistic intentions
- » An understanding of the odds
- » An informed strategy
- » Some skill, depending on the game

To paraphrase the character Tevye in *Fiddler on the Roof*, it's no great shame to lose at gambling — but it's no great honor, either. Gambling can be a fun experience whether you win or lose . . . but it's a lot more fun when you win.

In that spirit, the book aims to arm you with the understanding and knowledge you need to maximize your enjoyment and success at casino gambling. Before you take a step into a casino, here are ten quick questions to measure your grasp of gambling and the world of casinos. If you answer them all correctly, congratulations! And if not? Don't worry; after you read *Casino Gambling For Dummies*, you'll ace this test — and the many gambling experiences you encounter in the future.

The questions

- 1. To come out ahead overall at sports betting, you need to win approximately**
 - A. 50 percent of the time.
 - B. 53 percent of the time.
 - C. 20 percent of the time.
- 2. You're playing Annie Duke at the final table of the World Series of Poker. She makes a big bet and then starts blinking her eyes rapidly. Is she**
 - A. Flirting with you?
 - B. Having contact problems?
 - C. Bluffing?
- 3. At which game would you lose more per hour (on average)?**
 - A. Playing a 25¢ Double Diamond slot machine
 - B. Playing \$1 video poker
 - C. Playing single-deck blackjack for \$100 a hand
- 4. You're at the roulette table, and a black number has come up five times in a row. What are the odds that the next number will be red?**
 - A. 47.3 percent
 - B. 75 percent
 - C. 50 percent
- 5. How many states have legalized gambling?**
 - A. 48
 - B. 52
 - C. 2
- 6. Players who bet on the pass line in craps are hoping the first roll is a**
 - A. 12
 - B. Yahtzee
 - C. 7

- 7. What is the minimum number of innings required for an over/under baseball bet to be official?**
- A. 2
 - B. $8\frac{1}{2}$
 - C. $4\frac{1}{2}$
- 8. Video poker is adapted from what poker game?**
- A. Texas Hold'em
 - B. Strip poker
 - C. Five-card draw
- 9. Which of these games can you play while in the bathroom?**
- A. Keno
 - B. Bingo
 - C. Slots
- 10. Where is the biggest casino in the world currently located?**
- A. Macao
 - B. Oklahoma
 - C. Nevada

The answers

- 1. B.** In sports betting, a gambler needs to win approximately 52.4 percent of their bets to break even because the house charges a commission (or *vigorish*) on every bet.
- 2. C.** This could be a trick question because Annie Duke has bluffed and flirted on the same hand. However, rapid eye blinking is often an indicator of bluffing.
- 3. C.** Surprisingly, playing high-stakes blackjack can be easier on your wallet than low-limit slot machines. Assuming you know basic strategy (see Chapter 6), your loss in a good single-deck game should be less than \$14 an hour. Likewise, video poker (9/6 Jacks or Better) is a good bet and also will only set you back about \$14 an hour. Neither one of those is very bad, considering that three quarters going into the slot machine every spin adds up to more than \$15 an hour.
- 4. A.** No matter how many times one color or number comes up, the odds for the next spin aren't related to past spins. And the answer isn't 50 percent because there are also two green numbers (0 and 00) on the roulette wheel (in addition to the 18 red and 18 black numbers).

5. **A.** Currently, 48 states offer some form of legal gambling, but just 20 years ago, there were casinos in only two states, so **C** was a reasonable answer. However, if you picked **B**, you may want to retake that high school geography class.
6. **C.** Seven is an automatic winner for pass line bettors on the come-out roll (first roll). **B** is incorrect because prowess at Yahtzee rarely translates into winning at the craps table — the pit boss is never happy when you try to throw all five dice.
7. **B.** Even though a Major League Baseball game is sometimes an official result after $4\frac{1}{2}$ innings, an over/under bet is invalid unless the game goes at least $8\frac{1}{2}$ innings.
8. **C.** Video poker has many versions, but all are based on five-card draw. So, you never need to worry about losing your shirt (or your socks) at this game.
9. **A.** Keno is one of the few games in which you don't have to be present to win. It's even possible to play from your room or the buffet line.
10. **B.** Believe it or not, the Winstar World Casino in Thackerville, Oklahoma, has more gaming square footage than any other casino on the planet. No, this wasn't some colossal surveyor's error; Winstar is the only option for two major markets: Dallas/Fort Worth and Oklahoma City.

