



You can find the addresses of all cantonal counselling centres at [www.sos-spielsucht.ch/en/help/](http://www.sos-spielsucht.ch/en/help/)

SOS Gambling Addiction is a collaborative project by 16 cantons to prevent or reduce the problems caused by gambling.

### Do you have any questions about gambling? Do you or someone you know have a gambling problem?

- 24-hour helpline: 0800 040 080 free of charge and anonymous (German)
- Written consultation on line (German): [www.sos-spielsucht.ch/en/help/](http://www.sos-spielsucht.ch/en/help/)
- Gamblers and their relatives can find a lot of information, even in English, at [www.sos-spielsucht.ch/en/](http://www.sos-spielsucht.ch/en/)

### Counselling centres provide support

- Every canton has a counselling centre for gambling addicts
- Face-to-face consultations in strict confidentiality
- For gamblers and their families
- Ask about consultations in your mother tongue and whether an interpreter can be made available.



# Gambling problems? What can I do?

[www.gamblingaddiction.ch](http://www.gamblingaddiction.ch)



## What is gambling?

- The outcome of the game mainly depends on chance.
- The game is played for money or other valuables.

## What games of chance are there?

Roulette | poker | slot machines | lottery | sports and horse-race betting | scratch cards | dice and card games | tombola | and many others.

These games are often also available on the internet.

## Illegal gambling

It often cannot be seen at first glance whether a game of chance is illegal. In Switzerland, only the Swiss casinos and lottery companies offer legal games of chance. Regional tombolas and so on require authorization from the competent authorities. Games of chance on the internet may only be organized by the Swiss lottery companies. All other online gambling is illegal in Switzerland.

Anyone organizing illegal gambling is punishable by law. Individuals taking part in illegal gambling are not punishable. However, they have no legal right to the winnings if the organizer refuses to pay out. In the event of prosecution there is also the risk that any money bet or won will be seized.

## Why is gambling so addictive?

- You hope more and more that you'll win big even though the chances of winning are extremely low
- You have the feeling you can control the outcome
- Near-misses encourage you to keep playing because they give you the impression that you're close to winning
- You want to make up for gambling losses by continuing to play
- You're excited and feeling lucky helps you forget your problems
- You believe you can earn a living from games of chance

## Potential signs that you have a gambling problem

- You play more and more often for longer periods
- You increase the stakes
- You can't stop thinking about games of chance
- You lie about your losses and try to conceal your gambling
- You don't pay your bills and borrow money to get by
- You give up other leisure activities
- You neglect your friends, family, and obligations (e.g. your job)
- You feel stressed and experience physical and mental symptoms
- You can't manage to control, limit or stop your gambling

**Gambling can become an addiction, just like the consumption of tobacco or alcohol. Gamblers often don't recognize they are becoming addicted until it's too late. So it's important to break the vicious circle as early as possible and change the outcome. Often the first step is talking to someone about the problem.**

## Relatives are also affected

Often the whole family is affected by the gambling problem. Financial difficulties, lies and feeling betrayed make them feel helpless and powerless. It is important not to face these problems alone and to talk to someone you trust. Counselling centres also provide support for gamblers' relatives.

## Self-assessment for gamblers

1. When you're gambling have you ever felt the need to bet more and more money?
2. Have you ever lied to people who are or were important to you about the extent of your gambling?

**If you answered one or both of these questions with Yes, you may have a gambling problem and it is advisable for you to seek help.**