

## ONLINE GAMBLING

Although relatively new on the scene, online gambling offerings have exploded worldwide in recent years. The number of sites has grown from about twenty in 1995 to almost 2,500, just twenty years later. Today, online gambling generates approximately \$40 billion in revenues throughout the world.

Many traditional games of chance are offered online. Anyone who can transfer cash electronically can participate in a whole range of games: lotteries, sports betting, bingo and casino games (tables and slot machines).

*Other tools to promote low-risk gambling habits are available.*



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*Tips, information  
and resources*



A GAME SHOULD  
REMAIN A GAME

# ONLINE GAMBLING

## WHO PLAYS ONLINE?

In Québec, 2.3% of people who like to play games of chance (96,000 persons) have bet money on one or several Internet games, particularly poker, which is the most popular.

## A DISTINCT COMMUNITY

Generally speaking, online players:

- Are men between 18 and 44 years of age.
- Started to play using demo money.
- Play more frequently and bet on a great variety of games.
- Spend more than players who don't play online.
- Are more likely to experience, either regularly or occasionally, negative consequences due to their gambling habits (financial problems, criticism from people around them, etc.) than players who do not play online.

This situation has been observed all over Canada and elsewhere in the world.

# A *virtual* WORLD

Some characteristics of online gambling can lead players to gamble excessively or beyond their means:

-  Accessibility: When games are offered 24 hours a day, it's easy to lose track of time and to play longer than planned.
-  Easy: Games can be played anonymously in the comfort of one's own home.
-  Attractive virtual universe: We can disassociate ourselves from reality.
-  Quick pace: Bets, winnings and losses are accelerated.
-  Electronic payment: We can forget that bets are placed with real money, which increases the risk of betting more than planned or playing to make up for losses.
-  Illusion of control: We can lose sight of the fact that chance remains an important part of gambling online.

## IT IS THEREFORE CRUCIAL TO SET MONEY AND TIME LIMITS (DURATION AND FREQUENCY OF PLAY), AND TO STICK TO THEM

It should be noted that, in Canada, only sites managed by provincial lottery corporations—Loto-Québec's online gaming website for example—are legal. All other sites, whether or not their practices are honest and secure, are illegal.

In fact, some illegal sites delude unsuspecting players regarding potential winnings by using very effective promotional strategies and questionable processes, including:

-  Misleading players by offering higher rates of return on free demo sites.
-  Questionable financial practices, such as not paying out the winnings that are due to players or withholding players' deposits.

## A GAME SHOULD REMAIN A GAME

If online gambling is affecting your life, has become your only form of entertainment or you or your loved-ones are experiencing negative consequences due to your gambling, take a break.

If you are concerned with your own gambling habits or those of a loved one, call

**GAMBLING: HELP AND REFERRAL** at 1-800-461-0140 or go to [aidejeu.com](http://aidejeu.com).

