True or False?

DISPELLING POPULAR SLOT MACHINE MYTHS

If a slot machine hasn't paid out for a while, it's due for a win.

False. Slot machines operate randomly at all times – no matter how many wins or losses have occurred in the past. A machine that has not paid out for a while has no greater chance of paying out in the future.

A slot machine can tell the difference between maximum and minimum bets.

False. The number of coins played – or the amount of a wager – does not affect the outcome of a game. It only affects how much a player may win or lose.

Players can determine a machine's odds by counting the symbols on each reel.

False. Because multiple numbers generated by the RNG can correspond to the same symbol on a reel, there are many more number combinations possible than are visible to the eye. Even though there may be only 15 symbols on a reel, there can be thousands of virtual stops.

Using a player's club card will increase the chances of winning a jackpot.

False. The RNG that determines the outcome of each play is not linked to the player's club card reader. The RNG cannot tell whether a card is inserted or not, so the outcome of the game is not affected.

After hitting a jackpot, a player should move to a new slot machine. The machine currently in play is not likely to hit again.

False. The odds of winning another jackpot on the next play are the same as they were before hitting the jackpot. There is no such thing as a "hot" or "cold" slot machine.

Slot machines are highly addictive.

False. Research has found no evidence that slot machines lead to greater rates of gambling addiction.

For more information about slot machines, their impact and how they are regulated, read "Demystifying Slot Machines and Their Impact in the United States," available on the AGA website. To learn more about different types of gaming machines and how they work, read "Introduction to Slots and Video Gaming," available at www.igt.com.

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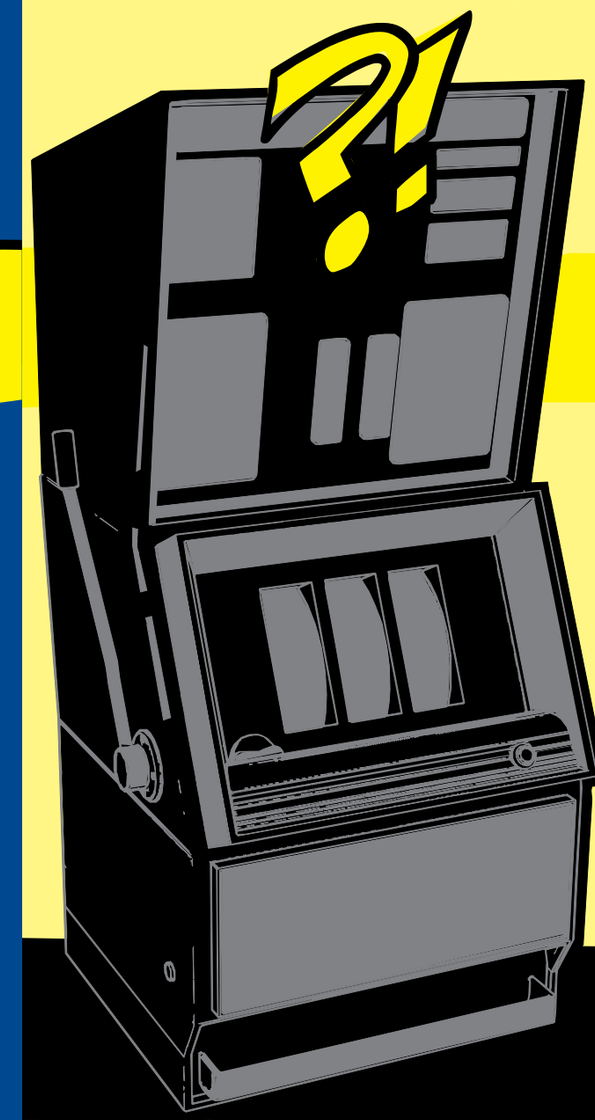
Taking the Mystery Out of the Machine

A GUIDE TO UNDERSTANDING SLOT MACHINES

The slot machine.

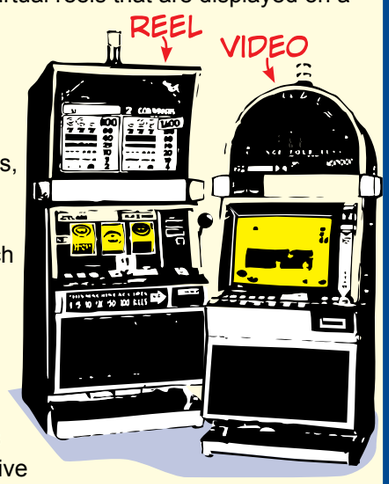
It's America's favorite casino game and one of the most widely recognized symbols of commercial gaming. Yet most people know very little about slots. A close look at these machines reveals how they are made, how they operate and how they are regulated.



TYPES OF MACHINES

The slot machine has captured the imaginations of gamblers for more than 100 years. Modern slot machines feature thousands of different games, as many as 200 paylines and a variety of betting limits.

There are two basic types of slot machines in today's casino – mechanical reel and video slot machines. Mechanical reel machines have actual physical reels that spin when play begins, while video slot machines have virtual reels that are displayed on a video monitor.



Within these two main categories are additional types of machines, including progressive slot machines in which the top payout award continues to grow as more money is added to a machine, as well as machines that offer interactive bonus games when certain symbols appear on the payline.

No matter what type of machine you play, most slot machines operate in pretty much the same way.

HOW IT WORKS

To understand how a slot machine works, it's important to understand the Random Number Generator (RNG), a tiny computer that determines where the reels stop during each slot machine play.

Even before a player approaches a slot machine, the RNG is cycling through millions of number combinations. Each number in the combination corresponds to the different symbols on the slot machine reels. Multiple numbers can correspond to the same symbol, which is called a virtual stop.

Here's a look at what happens once slot machine play begins.

- The player pushes a button or pulls a lever to initiate play.
- In that instant, the RNG picks the number combination highlighted in its system at that given moment, and each reel stops in the position that corresponds to that number.
- If the numbers and accompanying symbols on the payline match a winning combination, the game processor notifies the player through the screen.
- The game processor simultaneously calculates the amount won based on the odds of the game and the amount wagered.
- The win is paid or added to the player's credit meter.
- With each new play, this process repeats in exactly the same way, independent of the events that happened before.

FROM CONCEPT TO CASINO FLOOR

Slot machines are created with one goal in mind – to ensure that players are entertained when playing them. Machine production is a complex process involving many decisions, from determining betting options to artwork and theme. Designers pay attention to cultural and technological trends to ensure that new games are on the cutting edge.

It takes approximately 12 to 18 months to produce a new slot machine game.

Once a game is crafted, it often is tested with a focus group of customers. It then is sent to a private lab to confirm it works properly and meets state regulatory requirements and/or is submitted to state regulators for approval.

ENSURING COMPLIANCE

Every year roughly $265 million is spent on regulating the gaming industry, including slot machines. Before reaching the casino floor, slots are subjected to lengthy compliance tests in order to be approved by regulators. Those tests make sure the games are fair and reliable.

Often, a single slot machine game must be approved by regulatory bodies in more than 200 different gaming jurisdictions.

Technicians perform regular maintenance on the machines once they are on the floor, and regulators perform check-ups if problems arise – all to ensure the machines continue to operate as they should.

RESPONSIBLE PLAY

Since the 1970s, the popularity of slot machines has exploded. But, during that time, research from Harvard University and other institutions has shown that the rate of gambling disorders has held steady at 1 to 3 percent of Americans. There is no research indicating slot machines trigger addiction.

The average customer spends $108 when visiting a casino – an amount that, when adjusted for inflation, has changed little during the past 35 years.

Slot machines should not be considered a way to earn money. They are intended only to provide gaming customers entertaining – and often exciting – experiences.

CONSTANT EVOLUTION

Slot machines have come a long way in the past 100 years, and, as we look to the future, that evolution will continue. Already on today's casino floor, you can find games that allow people to play together and share bonus rounds, and server-based games that allow players to pick from a variety of games on a single machine. Wherever technology takes us, the games will continue to be fair, regulated and, above all, fun!

BY THE NUMBERS

59: The percentage of Americans who consider slot machines their favorite casino game.

88-98: The percentage slot machines return to players. For every $100 wagered, one might lose approximately $2 to $12.

1899: The year in which Charles Fey invented the first slot machine, the Liberty Bell.

30,000: The number of people employed at companies that produce slot machines and/or other casino games. These employees earn $2.1 billion annually.

2,250: The number of regulators who oversee the gaming industry. Ensuring that slot machines operate correctly is among their many responsibilities.

833,000: Approximately the number of slot machines operating in the U.S.

$38.7 Million: The largest slot machine jackpot ever won.

1,200: The average number of individual parts in a slot machine.

275: Approximately the number of pounds an upright slot machine weighs.