



ONLINE GAMBLING

FACT SHEET

Online gambling refers to internet gambling, and gambling on mobile devices.

In Aotearoa New Zealand, the only authorised providers of online gambling are the Lotteries Commission (Lotto) and TAB New Zealand (TAB), while offshore online gambling is unregulated.

However, it is not illegal for New Zealanders to gamble on offshore online gambling websites.

Recent industry estimates suggest that \$415 million was lost by New Zealanders in 2022. By 2033, losses from offshore online gambling are expected to increase to between \$650 and \$900 million. Transactional data from banks also indicates the number of people gambling on overseas sites continues to grow.

Data shows that men across all age groups gamble on overseas websites more than women. However other research also showed that younger males, Asian and Māori are more likely to have participated in overseas gambling and are more likely to be considering this form of gambling.

Risks of online gambling



Speed of play

Speed of play is one of the most concerning aspects of online gambling. Whether it is online pokies, online scratchies, virtual table games, or even online sport wagering, you can play more games in a short period of time.

This means you have to play more frequently to keep the play going – so you lose more money. The speed of these games requires full concentration, and that makes it easy to lose track of how long you've been playing.

The faster you play, the more you lose.



24/7 access

The Internet brings a form of gambling that never stops right into our homes and into our pockets via our smartphones.

People who may have found casinos or other gambling venues inaccessible now have unlimited access to lottery sites, casino sites, and poker sites.

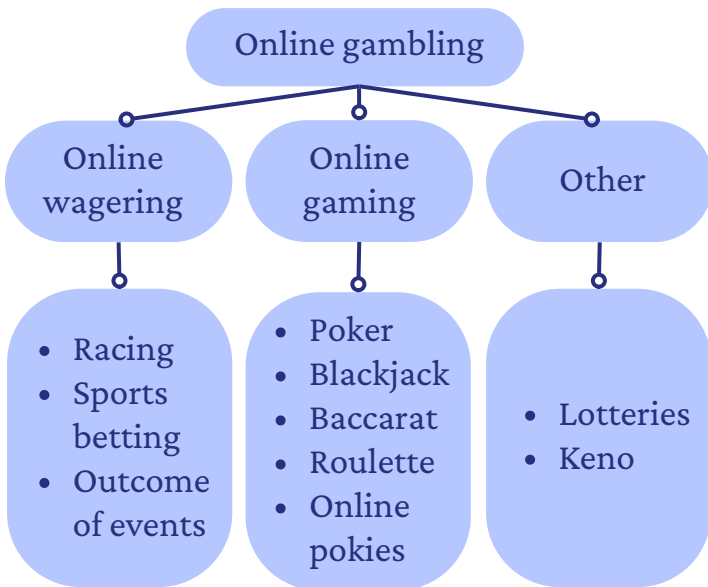
For those already at risk of boredom or loneliness, having 24/7 access to electronic gambling sites puts them at even greater risk of developing gambling problems.





Products are even more addictive than in-person gambling products

The Australian Productivity Commission puts the different types of online gambling products into the following groups:



The differences between these groups are far less than the differences between their offline counterparts.

This is because of the speed of play, the repetitive nature, and the intermittent reinforcement with colour and sound.



Poor tools to stop people from gambling underage

Although operators claim they prioritise the prevention of underage gambling through “sophisticated age verification techniques” the fact is these are easily circumvented by children as these products are continuously streaming into homes or mobile devices.



Lack of safeguards to protect players

Online gambling can create huge regulatory problems as there are no national boundaries. The remote gambling environment makes it hard to police and that leaves it open for gambling operators to be less than scrupulous in making sure their sites abide by local gambling laws.



The ease of hiding harm from online gambling

Online gambling takes gambling out of casinos, bars and clubs and moves it into the home. This allows problem gamblers to become even more anonymous and asocial.

Staff in physical venues are required to have host responsibility training to identify and help people who may be at risk of developing problems with gambling (although this is not always enforced). No such host responsibility exists with online gambling.



Virtual versus real gambling

‘Practice sites’ offer free games and free trials, with pop-up messages linked to pay sites. Practice sites tend to allow more winning streaks, but once a gambler plays for real money the odds are considerably reduced.

Practice sites are increasingly offering ‘play for free, win for real’ options. This means they can use the ‘money’ they win on the free sites to bet on the real gambling sites, slowly pulling them in until they start to spend their own money.

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