

Recommended Ways to Avoid the First Bet: A Collaboration of Experience

Going into gambling establishments for any reason is a HUGE risk, and one you don't need to take. Toilets can be found elsewhere, and self-exclusion can be accomplished online.

Avoid carrying money as much as possible. Some members use a single card so that their partners/family/friends can keep track of where the money is spent; others get receipts. In this way everything can be accounted for.

Make sure you attend meetings regularly and frequently (at least once a week, but in the early days you will really appreciate more).

Barriers are extremely useful. The more hurdles you have to jump before being "able" to bet, the less likely you are to do it.

Let your loved ones know about ALL your debts! This can seem a horrendous task to the new member, but pages 19 and 20 of "Towards the First 90 Days" explains why it is important.

Every day, first thing in the morning, look at yourself in the mirror and tell yourself that you will not gamble that day. Congratulate yourself each night if you haven't.

Register with self-exclusion schemes. This makes it EXTREMELY difficult to place a bet even when your addiction wants you to.

Share. The more you can tell the room, the more the room can help you. Remember, it is likely there will be someone in the room that has lived through what you are experiencing.

Avoid ways of getting hold of money secretly. This includes handing over your IDs to avoid withdrawing money in-branch. Sometimes, it can even mean handing over anything you could pawn, like jewellery and car log books.

Never have access to accounts to which you don't need access. This includes knowing login details for online banking.

One call or text is all it takes to speak to another GA member.

Not sure if something is right? Ask! If you have a question, call or text someone. It is not advisable to wait until your next meeting.

Your addiction wants secrecy and solitude! Try not to give yourself time or opportunity to gamble. This means keeping loved ones informed of where you are and for how long you'll be there etc.

Make sure you cancel any running bets and close all your betting accounts. Having a partner or a family member present while doing this will help avoid a slip.

Only you know how conniving and devious you were when gambling. Adopt as many safeguards as possible to counteract this.

Unhappy with life? Give GA 90 days. After attending GA for just 90 days, we believe your life will have changed dramatically for the better. After all, what have you got to lose?

Someone strong. Handing over your finances to a loved one who will question forcefully why you "need" money will really help you. Not being trusted with money is hard but very beneficial at the beginning. No one is saying this is forever.