



Gaming machines

A gaming machine is any machine which is constructed or adapted for playing a game of chance by means of the machine, and has a slot or other aperture for the insertion of money or moneys worth in the form of cash or tokens, and offers prizes in money or moneys worth, whether any person playing the game is at risk of losing any money or moneys worth or not.

Most gaming machines are of the reel-based type, also known as fruit machines.

Although machines have a variety of other games and features, the player wins by matching the symbols, possibly fruit, on the central line of the three reels.

Gaming machines are one of the most popular gaming activities. According to the last major prevalence study, 14% of people said they had played fruit machines in the past year.

Current legislation

With a few exceptions, anyone who wants to manufacture, sell, supply or maintain gaming machines must have a certificate licensing them to operate, issued by the Gambling Commission.

Currently, certificates are issued under the 1968 Gaming Act, although further amendments should be expected when the new Gambling Act comes into force in 2007. A consultation is underway now: further details of the implications of the new Act will be published on this website as the information becomes available.

The present regime covers:

- Club or jackpot machines in casinos, bingo clubs and any other clubs;
- 'All cash' amusement with prizes (AWP) machines, mainly in pubs, bookmakers, bingo clubs and adult amusement arcades;
- AWP machines in arcades and other premises

Rules about the size of stakes, prizes and jackpots and who can play where, including age restrictions, are set by statute. There are agreed guidelines about the way information should be displayed on machines.