

**Martin J. Silverthorne**

**Ten Steps  
to Beating  
the *Craps Game!***



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# Ten Steps to Beating the Craps Game

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## INTRODUCTION

Most casino patrons will tell you that you just can't win at casino games, and they will give you a variety of reasons why you can't.

Some believe that the games are rigged. This may be true in a back room sawdust joint, but it is not likely to be the case in any of the glitter palaces in Nevada or Atlantic City. The casinos don't need to rig the games. Every single casino game wins regularly for the house - no chicanery needed!

Other casino losers feel that the reason they can't beat the casinos is that the casino odds are too high - that is, in favor of the house. With casino craps, this is simply not true. While some craps wagers offer odds as high as 16.67% in favor of the house, the best craps wagers have only 0.6% to 1.51% odds against the players. With these wagers, the casino only has a mathematical advantage over the players equivalent to winning \$0.60 to \$1.51 for every \$100.00 wagered. These percentages are lower than the amounts stock brokers charge for most stock transactions! So, at least at the craps tables, the house edge should not prove to be an insurmountable barrier to winning.

Some casino patrons feel that the casinos won't let you win. How this is accomplished is not clear, except maybe in the case of blackjack where a few expert card counters may be asked to leave the blackjack tables and barred from further play. I have never seen a craps player barred from playing craps because of skillful play. I have seen some loudmouths asked to leave and even escorted out of the casino by security guards. But these expulsions had nothing to do with skillful play - these were simply loud obnoxious persons who were disturbing everyone around them. Most casinos will let anyone who conducts himself in a reasonable manner win (or lose) as much as he pleases.

Many people are intimidated by the craps game. When walking up to a craps table for the first time, the many bets marked on the layout and the speed of the game causes potential bettors to feel that this game is just too complicated. The reality is that the best bets in craps are very easy to learn, and the dealers do all of the work in making bet payoffs. One need not be a craps expert in order to be a craps winner.

A final complaint against the casino table games, and more particularly against the craps tables, is that the bankroll required is too large. The truth is that there are ways to win substantial sums at casino craps starting with less than \$50. Yet the same people who are afraid of the investment required to play craps don't think twice about dropping a hundred bucks in slot machine play.

We are running out of excuses not to play and beat the craps tables. Craps games, as played in the United States, England, the Caribbean, Monte Carlo, and even on the cruise ships, are not rigged and offer the players the best chance of winning of any casino game. The basics of the game are easy to learn, and skillful play won't get you barred from playing the game and winning even with a small bankroll. The real reason that most players do not win at craps, or at any other casino game, on a consistent basis is because these persons lack the discipline to win.

Psychologists might tell us that many people have a subconscious desire to lose, for whatever reason. I don't believe that this is true. Most people would like to win, but they become overwhelmed by the many barriers they perceive between them and victory. Somewhere in the battle they simply fold and accept the inevitable proposition of losing.

We are going to show you in ten simple steps how to become a craps winner. If you will follow these steps, you need have no fear of any craps table in any casino, and you will probably become a consistent winner. Possibly the only ingredient you are now missing that has kept you from becoming a consistent winner is a little knowledge and some basic discipline. With this combination, which we are going to give you, you will have no excuses for not joining the small but growing number of craps winners.



## 1. UNDERSTANDING THE GAME

There are many wagers possible in casino craps (also called bank craps). In bank craps, the house banks all of the wagers in contrast to street craps where the players wager against one another. Because the casino acts as the bank, it must earn a small percentage of every wager allowed at the table. With a number of bets offered at casino craps, this percentage is surprisingly small. The house relies on the volume of wagers made at the table, and on the many craps wagers offering outrageous percentages against the players, to make up the difference. So the typical house take becomes about 20% of the player's buy in, even though not a single wager offers the house as much as a 20% edge.



The table on which the game is played is about one and one-half times the size of a billiard table, with high side walls. Around the top edges of the side walls are two grooves called rails where the players keep their chips which are used to make wagers in the game. The table is designed so that each end of the table is identical, with a different section in the center of the table. The center section contains a number of proposition bets, none of which offer favorable odds to the players. For all practical purposes, this section of the table can be ignored.

Each of the end sections have places where as many as eight to ten people may stand and play the game. Each end has its own dealer whose job it is to assist players in making wagers. Standing near the center of the table is the stickman who handles the proposition bets in the center of the table, moves the dice about with his stick, and calls the game. The person seated across from the stickman is the boxman who is in charge of the table. In addition, a floor person stands behind the boxman.

To begin playing the game, one simply walks up to the table and finds a place to stand. The first thing to observe is the amount of minimum and maximum bets (table limits) displayed on a small sign next to the standing dealer. If your bankroll is geared to a table with \$1 minimum bets, it certainly would not make sense to begin playing at \$25 minimum wager table.

The second thing you will do is place your cash on the table near the dealer and request chips. Be careful when doing this not to move your arm into the line of fire when someone is shooting the dice. Wait until the dice have been thrown, and the nearest dealer has taken care of all of the wagers on his end of the table before laying down your money.

The dealer will replace your cash with casino chips, a different color for each denomination, with the typical chips being \$1, \$5, \$25, \$100, and \$500 denominations. Your cash is handed by the dealer to the boxman who places it in a slot in the table where it falls into a dropbox or coffin.

The next thing to observe is the placement of the buck or disc used to mark the shooter's point number. When the person shooting the dice has already established a point number (a 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, or 10), the buck is moved to the box represented by the point number and turned where the white side marked "ON" is facing up. If a shooter has not yet established a point, then the buck will be in the "don't come" box with the dark side marked "OFF" facing up.

It is important to note the position of the buck before beginning wagering as the pass line and don't pass wagers can only be made **before** the shooter has established a point, when the buck is in the OFF position.

After converting your cash to chips, you will stack the chips in the rail directly in front of you. Since there are two rails, many players like to use one rail for betting chips and the other rail for chips from winning wagers. The choice is yours.



To make a pass line wager, don't pass wager, come bet, or don't come bet, place your chips in the appropriate area of the table for the wager you want to make. If the wager loses, the dealer will remove your chips from the table. If the bet wins, the dealer will place your winnings next to your wager.

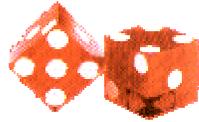
After winning a wager, it is important to pick up your winning chips before the next dice roll as any chips left in a betting area will be considered to be a wager.

When you have finished playing a game or session of craps, you will need to take your chips to the casino cashier to convert the chips back to cash as the table does not provide his service. If you have a large amount of chips, you may ask the dealer to change the chips into larger denomination chips before you leave the table. This is accomplished by asking the dealer for "color change."

There are a few additional rules and procedures you need to understand in order to play casino craps:

- a. Anyone can be the shooter as the dice pass around the table in a clockwise manner. Any person who wants to shoot the dice must make a pass line (front line) or don't pass (back line) wage. The shooter will continue to hold the dice so long as he doesn't seven out. Sevening out means the shooter rolls a seven before he is able to repeat the point number. Any sevens thrown on the rolls of the dice before a point is established (the come out roll) will not cause the shooter to have to relinquish the dice.
- b. When shooting the dice, you must throw or roll the dice hard enough to hit the backboard at the opposite end of the table. This is required so that dice mechanics (persons skilled in manipulating the way dice land) cannot influence the outcome of a dice roll.
- c. Always keep your hands and arms behind the rails when the shooter is shooting the dice. It is not considered acceptable for the dice to hit your arm or hand when they are being thrown.
- d. Don't spill your drink or drop cigarette ashes on the table.
- e. Do tip or token dealers who are courteous and helpful. The dealers' salaries are low, and they depend on tips to make a decent living. It is customary to tip a dealer by making a bet for the dealer. If you wish to do so, tell your dealer that the bet you are making is for the dealers and place your dealer wager on the table.

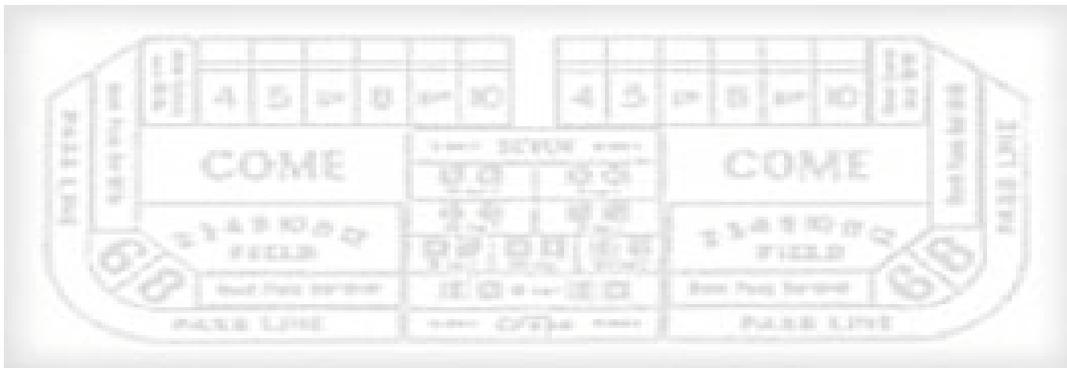
- f. Do make room for other players who want to enter the game. Being crowded is part of the fun of playing craps.



## 2. ONLY WAGER THE BEST BETS

The only wagers you ever want to make at casino craps are those wagers which offer the house an edge of less than 1.5%. These wagers are the Pass Line and Don't Pass wagers, the Come and Don't Come wagers, the Odds wagers which are made in conjunction with these wagers and Placing the Six and Eight.

Pass Line and Don't Pass Wagers are only made on come out rolls, before the shooter has established a point. These wagers are often called line bets, and the wagers are made by placing the chips in either of the two betting areas on the outside of the table betting areas, in easy reach of all players. The house edge on these wagers is about 1.4%.



A pass line wager is an even money wager (it wins an amount equal to the amount wagered) which wins if a 7 or 11 is rolled on the come out roll and loses if a craps number of 2, 3, or 12 is rolled on the come out roll. If any other number is rolled (4, 5, 6, 8, 9, or 10), this number becomes the shooter's point, and the point number must be rolled again before a 7 is rolled. If the point number is made, the same shooter will continue with the

dice with a new come out roll. If a 7 is rolled before the point number, the shooter has sevens out, and the next person will be offered the chance to shoot the dice.

The don't pass wager is also an even money wager. It wins on a come out roll if a 2 or 3 is rolled. If 12 is rolled, the don't pass wager neither wins nor loses as the 12 is barred (in Reno, Nevada, the casinos bar the 2 which accomplishes the same thing). If a 7 or 11 is rolled on the come out roll, the don't pass bet loses. If any other number is rolled (4, 5, 6, 8, 9, or 10) the decision of whether the don't pass wager wins or loses must wait. If the point number is repeated before a 7 is rolled, the don't pass wager loses. If a 7 is rolled before the point number (the shooter sevens out), the wager wins.

**Come and Don't Come Bets** win or lose exactly like pass line and don't pass wagers. The only difference between these wagers is that pass and don't pass wagers are always made before a come out roll, and come and don't come bets are always made after a come out roll. The house advantage for come and don't come wagers is the same as pass and don't pass bets.

Come bets are made by placing the wager in the large area marked "Come." The next roll of the dice determines the fate of the wager. If a 7 or 11 is rolled, the come bet wins; if a 2, 3, or 12 is rolled, the bet loses; if any other number is rolled, that number becomes the "point" for that come bet. The come bet point number must be repeated before a 7 is rolled for that come bet to win. When a point number for a come bet is established, the dealer will move the come bet to the box for that particular number.

Don't Come bets are made by placing the chips in the small area marked "Don't Come." If you are too far from this betting area to reach it, you may have to ask the dealer to place the wager. A don't come bet wins if a 2 or 3 is rolled on the next roll of the dice, and it doesn't win or lose if a 12 is rolled. If a 7 or 11 is rolled on the next roll, the bet loses. Any other number rolled becomes the point number for that don't come bet. The dealer will move the wager to the back part of the box for the don't come point. If a 7 is rolled before this number is repeated, the don't come wager wins. If the number is rolled before a 7, then the wager loses.

**Odds Wagers** are only made in connection with pass line and come wagers and don't pass and don't come bets. Odds bets are only made **after** a point has been established for that particular wager. The odds wager is an additional wager that the point number will be rolled before a 7 for pass and come bets. For don't pass and don't come bets, the odds bet is an additional wager that a 7 will be rolled before the point number is rolled. With odds taken (for pass and come) or laid (for don't pass and don't come), the house edge is reduced to about 0.8% with single odds and 0.6% with double odds, the lowest house edge of any casino wager!

Odds are *taken* with pass and come bets and are *laid* with don't pass and don't come wagers. The payoffs vary depending upon the point number as follows:

<i>Point Number</i>	<i>Payoff with Odds Taken</i>	<i>Payoff with Odds Laid</i>
<b>4 or 10</b>	<b>2 to 1</b>	<b>1 to 2</b>
<b>5 or 9</b>	<b>3 to 2</b>	<b>2 to 3</b>
<b>6 or 8</b>	<b>6 to 5</b>	<b>5 to 6</b>

To properly take odds with a pass line or come wager, the odds wager must be an even number if the point is 5 or 9, so that the correct odds of 3 to 2 can be paid off. If a pass line wager is \$5, and the point is 5 or 9, the appropriate odds would be 2, 4 or 6 for a single odds game.

If the point is a 6 or 8, the odds wager must be a multiple of 5, such as 5, 10, 15 or 25.

With a point of 4 or 10, any amount up to the size of the pass or come bet can be taken with odds. With double odds, the amount taken will be twice the size of the bet, or any lesser amount.

Odds are usually equal to the amount of the pass or come wager, except that the casinos will let you round your odds bets up to the correct amount if you wager at least three chips as your pass line or come wager. Thus, with a \$3 pass line bet, the odds taken for a 4 or 10 will be \$3, for a 5 or 9, \$4 and for a 6 or 8, \$5.

Many casinos now allow double odds which means that the odds bet can be twice as large as the pass or come wager.

In order to lay odds with a don't pass or don't come wager, you must wager a larger amount than can be won. This is because 7 is the easiest number to roll with a pair of dice. When you are laying odds, you are wagering that a 7 will be rolled before the point number. Hence, since this wager is always in your favor, you must wager a larger amount than you can win to equalize the advantage.

The size of a lay bet is determined by the amount which can be won, with the amount of a win determined by the size of your don't pass or don't come bet. For example, if the point is a 4 or 10, and your don't pass wager is \$5, you may lay \$10 against the point number. If the shooter rolls a 7 before rolling a 10, you will win \$5 for the don't pass wager

and \$5 for the lay bet. If the point were 5 or 9, you would lay \$9 to win \$6 for the odds bet. With a point of 6 or 8, \$6 would be laid to win \$5 for the odds bet.

Because of this feature of wagering more than you can win, lay bets are not very popular wagers at the craps table. However, the house percentages are reduced to the lowest of any craps wagers.

Taking odds is accomplished as follows. With a pass line wager the odds bet is made by placing the chips representing the odds wager about two inches directly behind the pass line wager, outside the pass line betting area. With a come bet, the odds bet is placed by the dealer. To take the odds on a come bet, place the chips for the odds wager in the come bet area and tell the dealer "odds on the \_\_\_\_\_" where the blank is filled in by the come bet point number, as in "odds on the five."

Laying odds on a don't pass bet is accomplished by the player placing the chips for the odds wager in the Don't Pass Betting area, with the odds wager resting on the edge of the don't pass wager chips and on the table. To take odds on a don't come bet, place the odds chips on the table so that the dealer can see them and tell him "laying against the \_\_\_\_\_" where the blank represents the don't come number, as in "laying against the five." The dealer will place the odds wager so that it rests on the edge of the don't come bet and the table, like the odds laid with a don't pass bet.

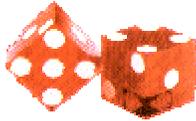
Odds taken with come bets are automatically off on come out rolls, unless you instruct the dealer that the bets are working on come outs. Odds laid are always working.

**Placing the Six and Eight** is the last type of bet which qualifies for our exclusive group of best craps wagers. The house edge on these wagers is 1.51%.

In placing the six or eight, we are wagering that a six or eight will show before a 7 is rolled. The house pays off these wagers at 7 to 6 each so that it is necessary to make the wagers in multiples of 6 units each. For example, we might place the six and eight for \$6

each (total of \$12), \$12 each, \$24 each, \$30 each and so on. On a 25 cent craps table, the six and eight can be placed for \$1.50 each (6 units of 25 cents).

To place the six and eight you will set the chips on the table in the come bet area and instruct the dealer "place the six and eight." Place bets are always automatically off on come out rolls unless you instruct the dealer otherwise. Place bets may be called off or taken down at any time in contrast to pass line and come bets which must remain in place until won or lost. Odds wagers may be taken down or called off at any time, as well as don't pass and don't come bets. It is never advisable to take down don't pass and don't come wagers as once these wagers are established against a point, they have a strong advantage over the house.



### **3. PICKING THE RIGHT BETTING SYSTEM**

There are a number of strategies you can employ in making craps wagers using only these best craps wagers. Some of the betting strategies are flat betting, increasing wagers as you win, increasing wagers as you lose, using betting progressions, and using the concept of parlays.

Flat betting is the most common type of betting you see at the craps table. Flat betting means that each wager is the same as the previous wager. If you are a \$10 bettor, then when flat betting each wager will be for \$10.

Many people believe that the safest way to ensure a high number of winning games is to increase wagers after losses. The advantage of this method of betting is that you only have to win a small number of your wagers in order to show a profit. For example, if your betting plan was to bet \$10, \$20, \$40, and \$80, with your wager to increase after a losing bet, then you would only have to win one wager in four in order to show a profit. Assuming that you lost your first three bets, you would have lost a total of \$70 ( $10+20+40$ ), but won \$80 on the fourth wager for a profit of \$10.

The disadvantage of increasing wagers after losing bets is that you must wager larger and larger amounts of money in order to win a small amount. Assuming that we carried the above betting sequence further, we might have bets of 10, 20, 40, 80, 160, 320, 640, and 1,280 for a total of eight wagers. So long as we win these wagers everything is fine, but what happens when we are called on to wager \$1,280 in order to win \$10, and we lose the wager? Undoubtedly when this occurs, as it will eventually, we will find that we

have not won enough when things were going well to make up for the loss of the entire betting sequence. For this reason, progressions like this (which are called Martingale systems) are not recommended, at least not in the form presented here.

Many professional gamblers advocate the up-as-you-win approach as the soundest approach for winning at gambling. The primary advantage of increasing wagers only after winning is that the bankroll required is much lower than with the up-as-you-lose systems. For example, you might try a betting series of 10, 10, 10, 10, 10 and only increase your wager after a win. Thus, if you won \$10, your next wager would be for \$20. If this bet also won, your next wager would be \$40. Whenever you are able to win three bets in a row with the system, you will have total winnings of \$70 ( $10+20+40$ ), with a total risk of only \$50 ( $10+10+10+10+10$ ).

In general, the up-as-you-lose approach will provide more frequent winnings, but the losses, though occurring less frequently, will be larger than the wins. With the up-as-you-win approach, the opposite will be true. There will be many small losses, and the less frequent wins will be larger.

To compare the effects of flat betting, and increasing wagers after wins or losses, let's assume that we are \$10 bettors, and we are faced with two wins and three losses, like this: LLLWW.

With flat betting we will lose a total of \$10 in this sequence of dice decisions ( $-10-10-10+10+10 = -10$ ). If we increase our wagers after losses, our wins and losses would look this:  $-10-20-40+80+10$ , for a total win of \$20.

If we increase our wagers only once after a winning wager, our wins and losses will be  $-10-10-10+10+20$  and we will break even on the sequence.

As we can see from this truncated example, with either method entailing increasing our wagers, we do better than with flat betting. For this reason, the majority of gambling experts recommend one or both of these strategies involving increasing wagers, rather than flat betting.



An extremely effective betting method is the parlay wager. With a parlay wager, winning wagers together with the winnings are left up for one more wager. The purpose of the parlay approach is to win two wagers back to back, which will win an amount equal to three times the basic wager.

For example, if you are wagering \$10 and win the bet, your next wager will be \$20 consisting of your \$10 wager and your \$10 win on the bet. If the second wager wins, you will have won a total of \$30 in two wagers, with a total risk of only \$10, your initial wager.

There are a number of betting progressions which utilize these concepts. A betting progression is simply defined as a series of numbers which govern the amounts wagered according to the rules of betting employed.

The D'Alembert System requires that bets be raised one level after each loss and lowered one unit after each win. Thus winning bets will always be larger than losing bets, and if the player wins about half of his wagers, the system will produce a profit.

This system can be applied to betting pass line, don't pass, come bets and don't come wagers at craps. The progression used should have no more than ten numbers in it, spaced so that two consecutive wins will offset any previous losses and produce a profit. A sequence like 1 2 3 4 7 12 19 fits this requirement. Here the first wager would be a 3 unit wager. If this wager wins, then the next bet will be a 2 unit wager. If the first wager loses, then the next wager will be for 4 units. The units can be any size chip you wish, whether \$1, \$2, \$5 or even \$25 chips.

The Ascot System is similar to D'Alembert except that winning bets are raised one number in a series of numbers, and losing bets are lowered one number. A typical sequence of numbers for the Ascot System would be 2 3 5 8 15 22 35. While D'Alembert will provide a steady stream of small profits, Ascot will produce a stream of losses until a win is made. An Ascot sequence is completed whenever all of the bets are either won or lost. The first wager is usually the third or fourth number in the sequence, in this case a 5 unit or an 8 unit wager.

The Martingale System is one of the more insidious of the old time systems. As you will recall, this is the system where wagers are doubled after losing bets, thus assuring that when the wager eventually wins, a profit equal to the first wager will be made.



While a Martingale System is too risky for continuous play, it can work well for spot situations. Let's say that you are playing pass line. You will wait for a situation to occur where either four consecutive passes or four consecutive losses for the pass line have occurred. At this point, you will begin betting against the continuance of this trend. If four passes have been made consecutively, you will start wagering against the continuance of this trend by making don't pass wagers. Using a short Martingale series, you might decide to wager 10 20 40 and 80 on the don't pass line. As soon as a don't pass wager wins, you will ensure yourself a win of \$10, so long as the trend of pass line decisions doesn't continue for four more consecutive decisions. Betting sequences like this can be good risks when limited to spot situations, like the one discussed here.

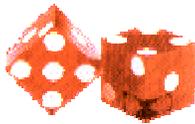
Labouchere, sometimes called the cancellation system, is another of the old time roulette systems which can be used for the even money wagers at craps. With Labouchere, a series of four numbers is used for a betting series, such as 1 2 3 4. These units can represent \$1, \$2, \$5 or any other denomination wager. The object of this betting progression is to win an amount equal to the total of the units, in this case ten units. To begin a series, the total of the two outside numbers are wagered. This first wager will be 5 units (1 + 4). If this wager wins, then the two outside numbers (1 and 4) will be crossed out and the next wager will be the total of the two remaining inside numbers of 2 and 3, for a total of 5 units. If this wager wins also, then the series is completed and a total of 10 units has been won.

When a bet is lost, the amount lost is added to the series, and the next wager is the total of the outside numbers including the lost wager. If the first wager of 5 units was lost, this amount would be added to the series which would now look like this: 1 2 3 4 5. The next wager would be the sum of the two outside number for 6 units. If this wager wins, the two outside numbers will be canceled, and the series will be: 1 2 3 4~~5~~. The next wager will be 2 + 4 for six units, and assuming this bet wins, the last wager will be 3 units. In this series, we won 6, 6, and 3 and lost 5 for a net win of 10.



Labouchere can be a useful winning system so long as limits are set on the size of the wagers made. This system has a way of escalating to large amounts in a short time period, and it is important to limit the exposure to losses in using it.

We have now covered some basics on system development. Many gamblers disparage systems players believing that the typical system player will continue to pursue a system regardless of the amount of money required and will eventually lose all of his money. We do not recommend system play without reasonable limits set up in advance of beginning to play. However, we do believe, and this has been proven time and time again, that the methodical player with a plan and a method for executing the plan will nearly always win more money more consistently than the hunch player.



#### **4. PRACTICE THE SYSTEM AT HOME**

Aspiring baseball players spend hours practicing their skills. They would not think of jumping into a game without having honed their basic skills. Yet every day, people lose thousands of dollars playing casino games like craps with no real understanding of the game, no game plan for beating the game, and no practice of the skills necessary before walking into the casino.

Most of these people believe that no real skill is required to win at craps and that winning and losing are purely a matter of luck.

Professional gamblers will tell you otherwise. Winning at gambling is a lot more than a matter of luck. In fact, many successful professional gamblers will tell you that their luck is only average, or even below average. Yet they are able to win on a fairly consistent basis.

The difference is that the professional will practice his skills until he knows exactly what he will do and not do in every situation which may arise at the tables. He will have a goal in mind for reasonable winnings at a table. He will also know the maximum amount of a loss which he will accept before quitting. And, he will know the betting strategy to use at a table before even starting to play a game.

Many craps players only play the don't pass side of the line. Others will only make pass line and come bets. Either system can make a lot of money, when coupled with a winning betting strategy, sound money management and a thorough familiarity with the

game. Wagering with real money is not the time to try out different systems and "experiment" with methods which might work. The alternative is to do the experimenting at home where the losses only cost a little time.



We recommend that anyone serious about beating the craps game purchase and use a craps layout and a couple of pairs of dice. This paraphernalia is readily purchased in any of a number of stores in Las Vegas for just a few dollars. With a simple layout spread out on the dining room table, it is possible to replicate the action of a real craps game and to practice and perfect different systems for beating the game.

Another benefit of home practice is building the discipline needed to win in a real casino atmosphere. It is one thing to try out a system at home, and it is quite another to try it in a casino. Playing with real money creates a tremendous amount of pressure, and it's a rare person who can muster the discipline to win under real casino conditions without having thoroughly mastered and practiced his winning approach prior to entering a casino.



## **5. RECORD THE RESULTS OF HOME PLAY**

It is not likely that you will master a winning strategy without examining the results of your play in a critical manner. The first step to doing this is to record the results of all of your home practice sessions in a careful and accurate manner.

The minimum information you will want to record for each home session is: the date played, the bankroll used for the session, the betting strategy used, the time spent playing, the net win or loss for the session, and the cumulative amount won or lost playing in this particular manner.

The easiest way to estimate the amount of time played is to record the number of decisions affecting a pass line or don't pass wager. As a rule of thumb, about fifty pass/don't pass decisions occur per hour in a casino craps game. You can use the number of decisions to estimate the amount of time you would have to spend at a casino craps table. If you finish a session in 25 decisions, this equates to about half an hour of casino playing time.

You will find that by recording your results several things will happen. First, you will become more serious about sticking with a particular system because you will be curious about just how well it will hold up. Without recording the results, you will be more likely to stray from your system or even fudge the results, something the unforgiving casino craps table will not let you do.

Secondly, you will begin refining your play. You may presently have a number of superstitions about casino craps, such as the common ones that lady shooters are lucky, or that it is bad luck to have a die fly off the table. In short order, after recording the results of home practice sessions, you will start to see the dice rolls as endless patterns of random dice decisions which is what they really are. With this attitude, you will more calmly examine your own playing habits and strategies, and your play will begin to improve.



## 6. SETTING THE CORRECT TRIP BANKROLL

Money management is one of the most important aspects of winning at craps. Expert gamblers with even "so-so" luck will tell you that they are still able to win because of their money management skills, even when their luck is poor.

The time to begin thinking about money management is at home before even setting foot in a casino. The amount of money required to win is dependent upon your style of play, the length of time you intend to gamble, and, of course, how much you can afford.



Scared money should never be used for gambling. If you need this money for food, shelter, or other basic needs, it is not a good idea to risk it in a gambling contest.

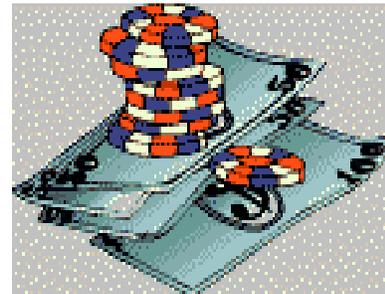
The first rule in determining the amount of money needed for a gambling trip is to decide how much money you will need per gambling session. A session is defined as the normal amount of time which you expect to play at a table before taking a break. A normal session time is from thirty minutes to an hour and a half.

The amount of bankroll needed for a session is based on the size of your minimum wagers and your style of play. For example, if you are a pass line bettor, and the only wager you make is a pass line bet with a single odds wager after the point is established, then this defines your style of play.

If you normally make \$5 pass line wagers and then take odds, the size of your play is known. With these "knowns" we can determine the session bankroll needed. As a general rule of thumb, the session bankroll needed is an amount equal to twenty to thirty times the size of your minimum wager. If you bet \$5 pass line bets, then your session bankroll will be \$100 to \$150. If you take odds along with the pass line wagers, you will need to increase the session bankroll to \$200 to \$300.

If you use a progressive system, your session bankroll is an amount equal to the total amount of the bets in your progression. For example, the Mini-Max Craps System developed by George Stearn requires a session bankroll as low as \$30 because the progression wagers can be made for \$30.

The amount needed for a trip bankroll is based on the size of the session bankroll. For a short trip of two to three days, the trip bankroll should be seven times larger than the session bankroll. For a longer trip, increase the trip bankroll to ten times the session bankroll.

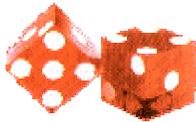


For a \$5 pass line bettor taking odds and planning a five day trip to Las Vegas, the minimum trip bankroll would be \$2,000. Three thousand dollars would be better.

If these amounts seem high, consider that craps is a game where you must be willing to lay down a large amount of money in order to have a reasonable chance of winning. Many bettors who do not adhere to this maxim find themselves tapped out before they ever have a large winning streak.

If you find that the trip bankroll requirement is too large for your pocketbook, you must reduce the size of your minimum wagers so that you can live within your bankroll. If you have only a \$500 trip bankroll, you must confine your wagering to \$1 bets until you have a larger bankroll. Too many persons who do not understand craps try to stretch a small bankroll beyond its capabilities and find themselves losing all of their money in a very short time. It is far better to adhere to these money management guidelines and plan the trip bankroll to match the size of wagering in advance so that this will not happen to you.

The good news is that by limiting your wagering to only the best craps wagers, and by using a betting system which you have practiced and mastered at home, you will have an excellent chance of winning. Even with a small bankroll, you can gradually increase the size of your wagers as your bankroll increases. A \$1 bettor with a \$500 trip bankroll can become a \$2 bettor after his bankroll has been increased to \$1,000. The key in this endeavor is to have the patience to increase the bankroll to the correct level needed before increasing the size of your basic wager.



## 7. USE THE CORRECT SESSION BANKROLL

The most important thing to remember about a session bankroll is that the amount used for one session is the maximum amount that you can lose at a session of craps.

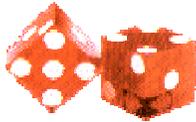
If your session bankroll is \$300, this is the total amount of money you will use at that craps table for that craps session. If you lose this money, you will immediately quit playing and take a break. Actually, the loss when experienced, should be somewhat less than the table stake as the professional player will quit when his stake has been reduced to the point that there are not enough chips left to play the system or strategy correctly. If you are a \$5 pass line bettor who takes odds, and your table stake has been reduced to less than \$10, you cannot make both a pass line wager and back the bet up with odds. It is time to quit.

The importance of quitting and leaving the table after a loss cannot be overly stressed. It is when losing that otherwise disciplined persons take leave of their senses and end up losing much, much more than they intended. As one casino executive expressed it, "People are willing to lose more money than they are willing to win."



On the other side of the coin, when you are winning, it is important to set aside some of your winnings so that you never give back all that you have won. If you are playing with \$300, and you have won \$150, you should set aside all of your winnings and a portion of your original stake if you wish to continue playing. With this strategy, you will be assured that you will not give back all of your winnings.

One trap you must never fall into is to start increasing your wagers when you have been losing. This is a prescription for disaster. If you have an adequate trip bankroll, as we have described, there is no reason to panic after a loss. Take a break away from the tables, and, when you resume playing, you will have a better outlook and realize that one loss cannot defeat you.



## **8. KNOW WHEN TO QUIT**

There are two good times to quit playing. The first is after a loss. The second is after a win.

When you have decided to quit play, you must remove yourself from the casino atmosphere for at least a couple of hours. You can take a swim, go for a walk, eat, sleep, go to a shopping center, or take in a show. But you must leave the casino floor. You cannot spend your entire break time thinking about gambling.

The purpose of this break is to remove the casino influence from your mind. Even the most single-purposed, iron-willed of us are susceptible to casino psychology, and, especially after losing money, we must clear our heads so that our game plan for winning is not destroyed.

In addition to winning or losing a session, there are other good times to quit. You should quit when you think the table is too hot or too cold, you are tempted to overbet, other players are making decisions or bets which upset you, you are losing track of or losing faith in your system, or you are tired and are subconsciously waiting to lose so that you can quit.

The approach we are advocating is one of limiting losses when they occur and protecting wins.



## **9. RECORD EVERY SESSION**

The first thing you will do after every session is to record the results of that session. A notebook should be purchased and used for record keeping. The information you will need to record is the date, the location, the casino, the system used, your session bankroll, the time spent playing, the amount won or lost for that session, and your cumulative win or loss position.

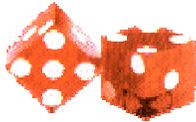
There are several benefits in recording this information. The first and foremost is that it is part of the discipline required to become a consistent winner. The very act of writing down the results of your craps sessions enhances your ability to apply the other disciplines needed to win. Perhaps it is because numbers don't lie. It is hard to kid yourself about how you are doing when the actual results are in black and white.



Another benefit of recording this information is that you will find that it is easier to reach winning goals. After you have practiced a system or strategy at home, you will have a good idea of the system's capabilities and limitations. If you have found that it is reasonable to expect to double your session money every four hours of play, recording your playing results will help you reach this goal

In addition, recording win and loss information will help you adjust your play to fit the circumstances. If you have doubled your trip bankroll, you may decide to increase the size of your basic wagers. On the other hand, if you have had a string of losses, it may be time to reduce the size of your wagers. With all of your wins and losses recorded, it will be much easier to make his kind of decision.

Finally, you will find that recording your playing experiences will increase your enjoyment and actually help you become a better gambler. By focusing some of your energy on recording results of play, you will find that the goal of winning becomes much more focused, and that because of your awareness of your cumulative wins and losses, you will improve your play.



## **10. LEAVE A WINNER**

You are now going to realize the fruits of all of this labor. You are going to leave the casino a winner. The satisfaction you will feel after you have left the glamour of the glittering lights with much more money in your pocket than you brought when you arrived is sweet indeed.

To accomplish this, you will need to make the ten steps to beating the craps game a natural part of your play. These steps are:

**1. Understand the game.** As we have seen, the basics of the game are easy to master. Ten minutes worth of play is worth ten pages of explanation, and you will find that the game is fairly easy to master once you have begun playing.

**2. Only wager the best bets.** The best bets at craps only offer a very slight advantage to the casino, and by confining your play to these wagers, you are in a very good position to win. The only craps wagers you should ever make are pass line, come bets, don't pass, don't come, taking or laying odds with these wagers, and placing the six and eight.

**3. Pick the right system.** The best system for you is one that you understand and that fits your pocketbook. A number of beginner as well as advanced systems are explained in the book *The Best Craps Systems* by Silverthorne Publications. These systems range from very low risk, low bankroll systems to "make a killing" systems which can win or lose thousands very quickly. We favor the low risk systems for most persons as we feel that it is always better to win some money, even if it is a small amount, than to lose a large amount of money with whatever glory that implies.

**4. Practice the system at home.** There is no better place to take losses than in your living room playing for fun. The benefit of home play is that you can experience and master a particular system without the pressures of casino play. Pros always practice and master a system before ever trying it in a casino with real money at stake.

**5. Record the results of home play.** You will accomplish several things when you develop the habit of recording the results of your testing at home. First you will have a good approximation of the results you will realize under actual casino conditions. Any money you lose at home on a test basis cannot hurt your pocketbook. Secondly, by writing down the results of your craps play, you will develop a stronger feel for your system. With results in writing, you cannot "fudge" the results of your play, and this will keep your testing honest. Finally, by getting into the habit of recording every craps session, you will have laid the groundwork for doing the same thing when you are playing in a casino with real money at stake.

6. Set the correct trip bankroll. The benefits of planning your gambling money in advance are enormous. By determining in advance the exact amount to be used for gambling purposes, you are much less likely to get into trouble by risking money which should not be risked.



As we have seen, the trip bankroll also governs the size of bets which you can make, and by establishing a set trip bankroll, you are also setting the stage for your style of play. This is important as your whole purpose in playing craps should be to win. Each additional building block you add to your preparation is one more factor you bring to your side in your battle to relieve the casino of its money.

**7. Use the correct session bankroll.** A logical extension of controlling your money is to limit the amount to be risked in any single session at the craps table. This is what setting the session bankroll is all about. No matter what happens to you, you will never lose more than your session bankroll in a single contest with the casino. If your trip bankroll is at least seven times your session bankroll, then no single loss at the tables can seriously jeopardize your ability to win. Using the correct session bankroll is part of the discipline that you need to make an automatic part of your play.



**8. Know when to quit.** The bane of most gamblers is not that they never get ahead, but that they never seem to quit while they are ahead. On the downside, you will never lose more than your session bankroll in a single contest with the casino. If you lose your session stake, you will immediately take a break from the tables.

The purpose of this break is not to let the dice become luckier for you, it is for you to clear your own mind so that you are relaxed and alert and ready to re-apply all of your winning tools against the tables. If you win a session, either quit while you are ahead or, if you continue to play, set aside all of your winnings and a part of your session bankroll.

**9. Record every session.** You will not become a consistent winner unless you adopt a business-like approach to your gambling. Few businesses with poor record keeping survive, and the same may be said for gamblers. Since you will have started the practice of recording every craps session at home, you will find that recording comes very easily in a casino as well. The first thing you will do after a craps session is to take a few minutes and record the results of your play. You will find in short order that you will enjoy recording the results of your play almost as much as the actual games (especially after a big win).

**10. Leave the casino a winner.** The ten steps described in here are not a magic formula to guarantee success. However, the author has used these exact steps to become a consistent winner at casino craps. There is no doubt that if you take the time to apply the discipline inherent in this program, you will most likely find yourself emerging from the casinos a consistent winner. The time investment is minimal to reach this level of play, and this level of play will literally put thousands of dollars in your pocket.

**BEST OF LUCK IN YOUR ENDEAVOR TO BEAT THE CRAPS GAME!!**

