

Gaming machines in pubs

A quick guide for premises owners



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What are my machine entitlements?

Qualifying alcohol licensed premises are entitled (under Automatic Entitlement) to provide two gaming machines of category C or D upon notification to the licensing authority (LA). Automatic Entitlements are only applicable to alcohol licensed premises, where there are bar facilities available on the premises for the sale and consumption of alcohol.



In order to site more than two category C or D gaming machines, an alcohol licensed premises gaming machine permit must be acquired from the relevant LA by application. It is then at the LA's discretion to consider the application and issue a permit.

Where a gaming machine permit authorises the making available of a specified number of gaming machines in particular premises, this will effectively replace, and not be in addition to, any Automatic Entitlement to two machines.

Where an LA has a concern about the suitability of the premises or licence holder to offer machine facilities to the public, the LA has, in certain circumstances, the power to dis-apply and remove the Automatic Entitlement.

Category of machine	Maximum stake	Maximum prize
C	£1	£100
D non-money prize	30p	£8
D non-money prize (crane grab machines only)	£1	£50
D money prize	10p	£5
D combined money and non-money prize	10p	£8 (of which no more than £5 may be a money prize)
D combined money and non-money prize (coin pusher or penny falls machines only)	20p	£20 (of which no more than £10 may be a money prize)

Change of licence holder

If the licence holder ceases to be the holder of the relevant alcohol licence for the premises, the Automatic Entitlement to the two gaming machines also ceases.

Whoever applies for the new premises alcohol licence would also need to notify the LA under s.282(2) of the Gambling Act 2005 of their intention to use their Automatic Entitlement. A re-notification of the Automatic Entitlement is required only where there is a change in the alcohol licence premises holder (either due to a transfer of licence or application for new licence), not for a change in Designated Premises Supervisor/Designated Premises Manager alone.

Machine requirements

Machines made available for use in a pub should display or have the following information available on them:

Machine category (either C or D)	Supplier details
Return to player percentage	ID plate (for machines after 2007)
No under 18s sign (category C only)	Stake to play and maximum payout
Signposting for gambling support services (eg Gamble Aware)	

It is the responsibility of the business owner to ensure the machine meets the regulatory requirements prior to making them available for use to the public. If a machine fails to meet the requirements above, it is the business owner and not the machine supplier that is liable for this failure.



Crane grab machines which have an element of chance are category D gaming machines. For further information on these machines see:

- Skill with prize machines: A quick guide for licensing officers
- Non-complex cat D gaming machines

Sourcing machines

All machines must be sourced and maintained by a Gambling Commission licensed supplier. There are certain maintenance and repair activities which may need to be carried out on a day-to-day basis, for which additional licences or permits are not required. For more information visit the [gaming machines](#) section of our website.

Machines supplied by an unlicensed machine supplier are considered illegally supplied machines and pose a serious threat to the licensing objectives.

If a machine is illegally supplied this poses a risk to the first licensing objective of keeping crime out of gambling. A machine that does not meet the regulations and technical standard requirements may also risk the fair and open licensing objective and therefore pose a risk of harm to members of the public interacting with these machines.

If you have any concerns about a supplier or wish to verify that they are licensed by the Gambling Commission you can do so by [visiting the register](#) on our website or contact our confidential intelligence line (0121) 230 6655.

A machine ID plate and supplier details may, in some cases, be found on the same plate or sticker, particularly where a manufacturer is also the supplier. Displaying supplier details directly on the machine is not a statutory requirement; however an operator should have and be able to share knowledge of their supplier and their details where necessary.





What are my responsibilities?

Pubs that choose to make machines available to the public must only do so during the hours that the premises licence allows the sale of alcohol. They should also adhere to the ***Code of practice for gaming machines in clubs and premises with an alcohol licence***. This is also available on the British Beer and Pub Association website, alongside with further information on additional responsibilities.

The code of practice particularly emphasises the importance of preventing underage access to machines not suitable for those under 18 (category C and above). It is the responsibility of the Designated Premises Supervisor to ensure that any machines made available on the premises are supervised either by staff or other means, in order to prevent under-age access on under 18 prohibited machines.

In circumstances where a pub function room may be open for hire, any machines available in the functions room may be available for use* under the alcohol premises licence. Therefore the code of practice applies and must be upheld in the function room also, in particular regarding supervision.

Machines games duty

For machines where at least one of the prizes on offer is cash, and it is more than the smallest cost to play the machine, you must pay Machine Games Duty (MGD).

If MGD applies to you, you'll need to register and complete regular returns. For further details visit: www.gov.uk/who-pays-machine-games-duty

Further information on our website

- [Poker in pubs - a quick guide](#)
- [Facilitating betting in pubs and clubs is illegal](#)

* We consider that a gaming machine is 'available for use' if a person can play it. If a customer is able to put a machine into use for example, by switching it on at the mains or simply removing a notice on the screen – it is also considered as available for use.

www.gamblingcommission.gov.uk

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