



Giving advice about how to be a frugal gambler may often be like telling a 300-pound chow hound to gobble just one helping at all-you-can-eat Vegas buffets. Once you start gambling in Las Vegas or at any other casino, you can easily become hooked, and throw frugality to the winds.

Understand the reality. Las Vegas doesn't provide all those big shows, bright lights, cheap rooms and buffets just to be nice. It's because they expect you to forget moderation while you're in Sin City, and gamble away lots of money. Seniors with strong resolve and iron wills can find ways to have all the fun of casino gambling. Maybe some hints from some wise old gamblers can help when you venture into those glittering gyp joints.

1. Frugality starts with how you manage costs. Check with your favorite hometown or online travel agency for package deals that offer inclusive price for flights and hotel stay. There are frequent promotions that reduce the costs as much as 50 percent. Even better if you book your stay on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday nights. The highest prices are during holiday times and weekends.
2. Sign up for a free player's card. You're immediately on an electronic list that measures how much you bet and for how long. If you hang around the casino long enough, it earns free rooms, meals, entertainment and cash.
3. Dealers want you to keep playing, and they'll explain odds and answer any question you may

have. Remember that casino betting is based on math, and the more you learn, the better the odds.

4. Choose a table game you can learn thoroughly, and understand the odds. Obviously, the casino is favored, but you can be more frugal by choosing to play where the odds are higher for the player. For example, if you play blackjack, your chances are two to one against you. If you play slot machines, the odds are three to one against you.

5. If you're new at casino gambling, set a spending limit. For example, take \$200 to the table with the lowest required bet per game of roulette, craps or blackjack, usually \$5. If you'll be in the casino for several days, set a daily loss and win limit, and quit for the day when that happens. There are many other fun things to do, such as entertainment, sightseeing, swimming and spa.

6. Don't be tempted to go beyond a set daily loss limit, even if you hope your luck will change. Tomorrow's another day, and maybe a fresh start is what's needed to turn your luck around.