

# Inventory of Gambling Situations (IGS) User's Guide

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Inventory of Gambling Situations (IGS): User's Guide,  
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# Section 1: Introduction

Overview of the IGS

Advantages of the IGS

Description of the IGS

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# Overview of the IGS

This manual provides problem gambling therapists and researchers with guidelines for using the Inventory of Gambling Situations (IGS). The IGS is a 63-item self-report questionnaire and is easily administered in either online or paper-based format. The IGS converts its results into an individualized Client Profile that details the situations in which that particular client has gambled excessively during the past 12 months.

In structure and design, the IGS is similar to the Inventory of Drinking Situations (IDS; Annis et al., 1987) and the Inventory of Drug Taking Situations (IDTS; Turner et al., 1997). All three tools were developed at the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) and are widely used in Canada and the United States, as well as in many other countries.

In contrast to screening and diagnostic tools whose purpose is to detect gambling problems, the IGS's role is to help the therapist develop an individualized treatment plan for people with gambling problems.

The IGS (like the IDS) is based on the perspective that excessive gambling is a behavioural and cognitive pattern that has been learned—and thus can be changed.

The overall score on the IGS, or the scores on some or all of its subscales (known as Problem Index Scores), often will be appreciably higher for people who have problems with gambling than for people who do not have such problems, even if they do occasionally gamble recreationally. However, in themselves the scores are not an indication of a gambling problem.

Rather, the IGS is designed to give the therapist and client insight into the client's specific gambling pattern by identifying those types of situations that are most likely to trigger problem gambling behaviour.

Ideally, the IGS will help therapists teach clients to identify and address their own areas of vulnerability. As with most self-report instruments, the utility of the IGS profiles

depends on clients' willingness to be honest about themselves and their gambling behaviour.

Often an addiction problem can seem so overwhelming that clients can't identify a first step toward solving it. The IGS gives them a clear outline of the areas they need to work on. By exploring and ranking a person's most problematic gambling triggers, the IGS can help both therapists and clients:

- recognize previous situations in which the client has had problems with gambling
- anticipate future situations in which the client is likely to be at risk of gambling or of gambling excessively
- develop an individualized plan for treatment and/or aftercare
- work on developing strategies for coping when in high-risk situations.

While the IGS was originally developed for use as part of a cognitive-behavioural treatment program, the information that the IGS supplies about a client's risk situations is important for use in a broad range of treatment approaches, including:

- approaches based on a 12-step model of recovery
- psychodynamic therapy
- structured relapse prevention.

The information provided by the IGS can be used in both individual and group counselling programs with clients whose gambling problems range from mild to severe.

## Advantages of the IGS

The IGS is a well-validated assessment tool that provides a systematic profile of the antecedents, or triggers, of a client's problematic gambling behaviour.

While many therapists elicit this kind of information in assessment interviews with their clients, the IGS offers a simple way to develop an individualized profile of each client's risk situations. This information can then be applied in a number of ways, including:

- supplementing or focusing the assessment interview
- planning the client's treatment
- preparing an aftercare plan.

The IGS offers a number of advantages to therapists, researchers and clients, including the following:

- The IGS can be administered using either a paper-based form or an interactive online program at [www.ProblemGambling.ca](http://www.ProblemGambling.ca).
- The online version automatically scores the client's responses and generates a report with a Client Profile—in the form of a bar graph—showing the client's level of risk in 10 types of situations as well as a list of specific high-risk situations for that client.
- The IGS questionnaire is easily administered. Once the client has been introduced to



the IGS, he or she can complete the questionnaire independently—using either the online or paper-based version. It takes about 20 minutes to complete the questionnaire.

- Where there are barriers such as low literacy or language problems, either version can also be completed with the therapist's help.
- The IGS can be used as both a research and a clinical tool.

Research shows the IGS to have good internal consistency, reliability and validity.

## Description of the IGS

The IGS in its initial development followed a classification system based on the work of Alan Marlatt and his associates on relapse prevention and addictive behaviours (Marlatt, 1978, 1979a, 1979b; Marlatt & Gordon, 1980, 1985).

Modified by findings from research with people who gamble, the “high-risk” classification system was revised for the IGS to include situations more specific to gambling.

The IGS has 10 subscales. Some are derived from Marlatt and Gordon (but see also Turner et al., 1997) and some from a number of items specifically related to gambling situations.

## Subscales of the IGS

- Negative Emotions (10 items)
- Conflict with Others (7 items)
- Urges and Temptations (9 items)
- Testing Personal Control (7 items)
- Pleasant Emotions (5 items)
- Social Pressure (7 items)
- Need for Excitement (6 items)
- Worried about Debts (5 items)
- Winning and Chasing (6 items)
- Confidence in Skill (5 items)

Two IGS items are not included in any of the subscales, but still may be clinically useful:

- #2, “When I was able to gamble without anyone knowing”
- #10, “When I wanted to prove to others that I was worthy of respect.”

In completing the IGS, clients are asked to indicate how frequently—during the past 12 months—they have gambled heavily in each of 63 situations, using a four-point scale ranging from “never” to “almost always” (see sample form, p. 18). Taken together, the Problem Index Scores on the 10 subscales constitute a situational risk profile for that individual.



# Section 2: Guidelines for using the IGS

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Using the online format

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“Step 1: Details”

“Clinician details”

“Client details”

Consent

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Printing and saving reports

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## Administering the IGS

The IGS should be administered by a therapist using the online format located at [www.ProblemGambling.ca](http://www.ProblemGambling.ca). It should take approximately 20 minutes to complete.

The IGS is also available in a paper-based version from Dr. Nigel Turner ([nigel\\_turner@camh.net](mailto:nigel_turner@camh.net)). This version is generally used when therapists want to administer the IGS in a group setting. If the paper-based version is used, the client's responses can be entered into a computer and scored using the IGS software. Responses can also be scored using SPSS software; the SPSS syntax is provided in Appendix 3, p. 37.

Typically, the therapist administers the IGS as a part of an initial assessment to determine how frequently and in what situations the client has gambled heavily during the previous 12 months (see IGS sample questionnaire in Section 3, p. 18).

Clients define "heavy gambling" in terms of their own patterns and perceptions of what constitutes "heavy." Clients answer each of 63 items using a four-point scale where 1 = never, 2 = rarely, 3 = frequently and 4 = almost always.

### WHEN NOT TO ADMINISTER THE IGS

The IGS should not be given when a person is under the influence of alcohol or other drugs, or is experiencing withdrawal. Under these conditions, the reliability and validity of the IGS would be suspect.

### USING THE ONLINE FORMAT

#### **"Terms of use"**

Before using the IGS or any portion of it, users must first read and accept the Terms of Use. If you have any questions about the Terms of Use, please contact [webmaster@problemgambling.ca](mailto:webmaster@problemgambling.ca).

#### **"Step 1: Details"**

The IGS is completely anonymous and absolutely no personal information, including any client identifiers, will be accessible by anyone at CAMH. For research purposes, one of the authors of this screening tool (Dr. Nigel Turner) would like to collect a few demographic details from consenting IGS users. A consent form will be shown to the client on the computer screen. This data will only be used for research if the individual consents to it by checking the statement "I consent to the use of my information for statistical purposes." The only mandatory field is "Completed by." As mentioned above, if the person does not consent to the use of his or her information, the data can be excluded. If a person does not consent, they can still use all features of the IGS website.

**“Clinician details”**

There are two fields in this section:

- “Clinician organization” (optional): Enter the name of the clinic, hospital or organization referring the client to fill out the IGS
- “Completed by” (mandatory): Asks if the IGS is being filled out directly by the client, by the therapist or by someone else, such as a concerned family member or friend. Only data entered by a client will be used to validate the IGS.

**“Client details”**

“Sex” (optional).

“Problem status” (optional) asks the client to indicate which one of the following categories best describes his or her gambling behaviour:

- social gambler
- moderate problem gambler
- severe problem gambler
- former problem gambler.

**Note:** This question is intended to give the therapist (and researchers) an indication of the client's perception of his or her own gambling behaviour. It is not to be used as a substitute for screening.

“Racial ancestry,” “Age,” “Country” and “Province/state” are all optional fields.

**Study Consent**

Consenting to the collection of the above information is not mandatory in order to access the IGS tool. Individuals may proceed to the IGS without granting consent. As part of our ongoing effort to ensure quality, Dr. Nigel Turner is collecting data that will be used to verify the validity of the IGS. Participation in this quality assurance research is voluntary and the IGS is available for use by anyone regardless of whether they consent to have their data used in the research.

**“Step 2: Questionnaire”**

Clients are asked to read each item carefully and to select the response that most accurately describes how frequently they gambled heavily when they were in that situation during the past year.

The IGS automatically scores the responses and calculates the raw scores and a Problem Index Score for each subscale (see Section 1, above). The 10 Problem Index Scores are displayed in the form of a table, and this constitutes the Client Profile. These are grouped into four clusters—Negative Emotions, Temptation Situations, Positive Affect Situations and Gambling Cycle Situations—which are displayed in bar graphs. Asterisks and red coloured bar graphs indicate a high score on an IGS subscale (Problem Index Scores predominately greater than 60). The two items not included in any subscales (#2 and #10) are also scored.

The IGS also produces a PDF, which contains the bar graphs, plus a list of the 10 subscales from highest to lowest risk for heavy gambling for that person. The report also lists the specific situations—that is, the items—in which that client “frequently” or “almost always” has gambled heavily.

### Printing and saving reports

Note: The online version of the IGS does not save your client's scores. You will need to save the results to your own computer by clicking on “Save Report.”

After all 63 questions have been answered, click “Submit.” The client's scores will be displayed on the screen. In order to save the results, click “Save report.” You will then be given the option to Open, Save or Cancel. Click “Save” (you can name the file anything you like). This will save the results on your computer as a PDF (portable document format) file.

An example of a computer-generated IGS report is included in Section 3, p. 25.

## USING THE PAPER-BASED FORMS

Please contact Dr. Nigel Turner ([nigel\\_turner@camh.net](mailto:nigel_turner@camh.net)) for more information on the paper-based IGS forms.

Instructions for completing the IGS are provided on the questionnaire, allowing most clients to complete it on their own. If a client has trouble reading or understanding the questions, the therapist should help administer the questionnaire.

After the client completes the questionnaire, the results are entered into the online IGS for scoring. If the Internet is not available, the questionnaire can be scored by hand, using the instructions on p. 11.

## Scoring the IGS

Responses to the 63 items in the IGS are assigned to 10 categories or subscales listed in Section 1 (page 11), and a Problem Index Scores is provided for each subscale.

Scores for the two items not included in the subscales are recorded at the end of the report (as mentioned above, these items are included for their clinical utility). This section also contains scores for two more items:

- #20, “When I was drinking / using drugs”
- #29, “When I was in trouble with the law because of my gambling.”

These two items *are* included in the subscales, but are repeated here because they indicate important facts about the client that may not be directly related to gambling

but that might complicate the person's recovery if not given attention. Although presented together in the results, these items do not constitute a subscale and should be interpreted separately for clinical purposes.

## HAND SCORING

IGS scores can also be computed manually. The client will have entered a value for each of the 63 items: 1 for "Never," 2 for "Rarely," 3 for "Frequently" and 4 for "Almost always." To calculate the IGS subscale Problem Index Scores, follow these steps:

1. Add up the scores for the items in each subscale to obtain a raw score (see Table 1 below for the items included in each subscale).
2. Subtract from each total the number of items in the subscale (e.g., 10 items for Negative Emotions, or 5 for Confidence in Skill).
3. Calculate the average score per item in the subscale by dividing the result of Step 2 by the number of items in the subscale.
4. Convert the average score to a number between 0 and 100 by taking the result from Step 3, dividing it by 3 and then multiplying this result by 100. This will yield a Problem Index Score between 0 and 100 for each subscale.

**Table 1. IGS subscales, including number of items and item numbers**

Note: some items are included in more than one subscale.

SUBSCALE	NUMBER OF ITEMS	ITEMS INCLUDED IN SUBSCALE
Negative Emotions	10	7, 11, 21, 34, 37, 41, 51, 53, 54, 61
Conflict with Others	7	13, 23, 32, 33, 43, 61, 63
Urges and Temptations	9	12, 14, 17, 22, 31, 35, 42, 53, 62
Testing Personal Control	7	9, 24, 25, 36, 47, 48, 56
Pleasant Emotions	5	4, 16, 28, 38, 49
Social Pressure	7	6, 18, 20, 30, 44, 49, 58
Need for Excitement	6	5, 44, 45, 50, 52, 55
Worried about Debts	5	8, 26, 29, 39, 60
Winning and Chasing	6	1, 19, 33, 45, 46, 59
Confidence in Skill	5	3, 15, 27, 40, 57

**Example**

The Confidence in Skill scale consists of five items: 3, 15, 27, 40, 57. Suppose a person taking the IGS had the following scores on the items in this subscale: 3, 3, 2, 4, 4.

1. The raw score for the subscale is  $(3 + 3 + 2 + 4 + 4) = 16$ .
2. Subtract the number of items in the subscale:  $16 - 5 = 11$ .
3. Divide the result of Step 2 by the number of items in the subscale:  $11 \div 5 = 2.2$ . This is the client's average score for the items in this subscale.
4. Convert to a Problem Index Score by dividing result in Step 3 by 3 and then multiplying by 100: Thus,  $(2.2 \div 3) \times 100 = 73.3$ .

This person has a high score on the Confidence in Skill subscale, which could mean that, for this person, gambling may be triggered by erroneous—that is, overly optimistic—beliefs about his or her ability to beat the odds.

## Interpreting the IGS

The IGS can be interpreted from two related perspectives:

- Problem Index Scores
- Client Profile.

### PROBLEM INDEX SCORES

Problem Index Scores (the scores for each subscale), which result from the calculations above, permit comparison across subscales that contain different numbers of items.

#### Overall impression of subscale scores

A preliminary interpretation of a respondent's scores on each IGS subscale may be made on the following basis:

- Between 0 and 25 is a fairly low score. Someone scoring in this range will have answered "never" or "rarely" on all of the items in that particular subscale.
- Between 25 and 60 is a moderate score. Someone scoring in this range will have answered "frequently" or "almost always" to at least one item in the subscale.
- Above 60 is a high score. Someone scoring over 60 will have answered "frequently" to most of the items or "almost always" to more than one item in the subscale.
- Above 70 is a very high score. Someone scoring over 70 will have answered "frequently" or "almost always" on most of the items in the subscale.

As a general rule, a score above 60 should be treated as clinically significant. However, people differ considerably in their criteria for selecting "rarely," "frequently"



or “almost always,” so comparing individuals with each other, or comparing an individual against an arbitrary standard, is questionable.

Instead, a person's scores on one subscale should be compared with his or her *own* scores on another subscale. The higher scores indicate situations where the problems are likely to be more serious, relative to the situations for which the scores are lower—regardless of what the absolute score numbers might be.

It is possible to consider the Problem Index Score for each subscale separately. However, more information can be gained by viewing the client's pattern (profile) of scores across all 10 categories of situations that involve heavy gambling.

### **Hierarchy of risk situations**

A hierarchy of risk situations can be constructed by ranking the respondent's Problem Index Scores for each of the 10 IGS subscales from highest to lowest (see the example on p. 12 of the steps in calculating a subscale score). The situations with the highest rank represent the situations in which that person is likely to be at greatest risk for gambling.

Sometimes clients enter treatment after they have already addressed their situations of highest risk. With such clients, it may be helpful to examine the next-highest risk situations. Such situations may take individuals by surprise—and so lead to gambling behaviours—simply because they occur less frequently. As long as the client remains unprepared for and unaware of these (albeit less risky) situations, these triggers remain powerful and are a common cause of relapse over the longer term.

### **Identifying triggers**

The IGS can be a good tool for raising awareness in both the client and the therapist. Clients can be invited to consider and discuss any connections between their various triggers.

It is also helpful to look at clients' responses to individual items. The responses can be useful jumping-off places for discussion. With 63 items, there may be triggers that affect the client but which they have not previously noticed or consciously identified.

## **CLIENT PROFILE**

The Client Profile is displayed as a bar graph on the printed report of the IGS results; click “Submit” to output the graph and then “Save report” to save the results to your computer. The Client Profile can be viewed on a number of dimensions, which are discussed below.

### Four clusters of IGS subscale scores

Client Profiles tend to cluster into one of four patterns (see Table 2, below):

- negative affect situations
- positive affect situations
- temptation situations
- gambling cycle situations.

(Of course, individual Client Profiles may also indicate other kinds of patterns.)

Table 2. Four typical clusters of IGS subscales

CLUSTER	SUBSCALES
Negative affect situations	Negative Emotions Conflict with Others
Positive affect situations	Pleasant Emotions Social Pressure
Temptation situations	Urges and Temptations Testing Personal Control
Gambling cycle situations	Need for Excitement Worried about Debts Winning and Chasing Confidence in Skill

### Differentiated Client Profiles

A differentiated profile, with clearly defined peaks and valleys across the 10 subscales, suggests that for the client there are specific high-risk situations that are likely to trigger heavy gambling. Differentiated profiles may have either relatively high or relatively low elevation. A differentiated profile provides a useful guide for both the therapist and client in developing an individualized treatment plan.

Although differentiated profiles can be of many types, two common types are “positive” and “negative.”

#### POSITIVE PROFILES

Generally where the profile is positive, the client has reported more frequent gambling in situations that are positive in nature. By positive we do not mean that the gambling is healthy. Rather, a positive situation is one in which the anticipation of a

positive mood (e.g., being happy) from gambling is a trigger for gambling heavily. It is also related to the idea of positive reinforcement of the behaviour. People who have been positively reinforced for gambling (e.g., wins, being the centre of attention) will seek out this positive reinforcement. For such a client, peaks occur for the Positive Emotions and/or Need for Excitement subscales. Often the scores for Testing Personal Control and Social Pressure are also higher.

People who have a positive profile generally gamble for fun and excitement. People who gamble without problems occasionally have positive profiles, but their overall scores tend to be lower than those of people with gambling problems. People who gamble for the “action,” who tend to prefer the more interactive and skills-based games, are more likely to have positive profiles than negative profiles.

#### NEGATIVE PROFILES

Negative profiles reflect more frequent gambling in situations involving negative emotions and/or conflict with others, and so there are peaks for these subscales. These profiles also often include elevated scores in the Urges and Temptations and Worried about Debts subscales. People who gamble as a way of dealing with problems and stress in their lives are likely to have this pattern.

#### MIXED PROFILES

Many Client Profiles show peaks for subscales that reflect both positive and negative situations. These mixed profiles usually indicate that although the client is gambling to satisfy a need for excitement, he or she also has suffered serious consequences as a result of the gambling behaviour.

### **Undifferentiated client profiles**

If a profile is relatively flat across the 10 risk categories, it is considered to be undifferentiated. Such profiles can be of either generally high or generally low elevation. For example, with an undifferentiated profile of high elevation (Problem Index Scores predominately greater than 60), the client is reporting frequent heavy gambling across all situations. An undifferentiated profile presents a challenge in that it would seem to indicate that no situation is more—or less—problematic than any other.

There may be a number of reasons for an undifferentiated profile. The client may have been gambling for long enough that the behaviour has become the standard response to virtually every need, and thus has become generalized across all categories of risk situations. Some clients may tend to exaggerate (high elevation profile) or minimize (low elevation profile) their gambling in their responses. Thus an undifferentiated profile of low elevation may reflect either a low level of gambling problems or a low current motivation for change.

The therapist should consider whether the profile is an accurate reflection of the client's gambling, based on other sources of information and on discussion with the client. A flat profile is not very helpful in pinpointing risk situations and developing

coping strategies. In most cases, however, even clients who have been gambling heavily for years are able to identify, with supplementary questioning by the therapist, examples of situations where they are at particularly high risk. The therapist should explore with the client the situational components in a few recent episodes where the client gambled heavily. This kind of discussion will often be sufficient to demonstrate to the client the value of this approach and will help the person learn to differentiate risk situations. Having the client monitor his or her urges to gamble in some detail, and/or keep a log of his or her emotional states, can also help the client differentiate between the relative risk for gambling in different situations.

### **Working with the client profile**

Having obtained the Client Profile, the therapist should present it to the client and ask whether it seems to be an accurate reflection of his or her gambling experience and behaviour.

Clients should be encouraged to discuss how their gambling varies across different types of situations and to elaborate on areas of particularly high risk for gambling. This discussion provides clients with feedback on their assessment results. It can also help clients to understand their particular high-risk situations and to engage them as active collaborators in the treatment process.

### **USING THE IGS AS A RESEARCH TOOL**

The IGS was designed for clinical use but, as with the Inventory of Drug Taking Situations (IDTS) and the Drug-Taking Confidence Questionnaire (DTCQ), it can also be used as a research tool. For instance, it might be used to help understand and predict relapse, or to evaluate changes in gambling behaviour in response to treatment. (In the latter case, a three- to six-month time frame would be preferable.) The IGS can also be used to identify different motives for gambling, and thus can be used to search for different clusters of gamblers.

The sub-scale scores of the IGS can be obtained from the PDF output. For research purposes, the raw IGS scores may be needed. The online program is not set up to provide raw scores so the paper and pencil version may be needed. Instructions for scoring the raw data are given in Appendix 2 (p. 37).

# Section 3: IGS questionnaire and tools

IGS QUESTIONNAIRE: SAMPLE CLIENT FORM

SUBSCALES OF THE IGS: IN FOUR CLUSTERS

Negative affect situations

Positive affect situations

Temptation situations

Gambling cycle situations

SAMPLE IGS REPORT

## IGS questionnaire: Sample client form

### INVENTORY OF GAMBLING SITUATIONS (IGS)

Listed below are a number of situations or events in which some people gamble heavily.

Read each item carefully, and answer in terms of your own gambling over the past year.

- If you "NEVER" gambled heavily in that situation, circle "1."
- If you "RARELY" gambled heavily in that situation, circle "2."
- If you "FREQUENTLY" gambled heavily in that situation, circle "3."
- If you "ALMOST ALWAYS" gambled heavily in that situation, circle "4."

	I GAMBLED HEAVILY			
	NEVER	RARELY	FREQUENTLY	ALMOST ALWAYS
1. When I almost won and felt that I would win very soon.	1	2	3	4
2. When I was able to gamble without anyone knowing.	1	2	3	4
3. When I decided that this time I would use good gambling strategies.	1	2	3	4
4. When I was happy.	1	2	3	4
5. When I wanted some action.	1	2	3	4
6. When someone encouraged me to bet.	1	2	3	4
7. When I was depressed.	1	2	3	4
8. When I was about to get caught unless I came up with some money fast.	1	2	3	4
9. When I started to believe that gambling was no longer a problem for me.	1	2	3	4
10. When I wanted to prove to others that I was worthy of respect.	1	2	3	4
11. When I didn't want to have to think.	1	2	3	4
12. When I talked myself into gambling.	1	2	3	4
13. When other people didn't seem to like me.	1	2	3	4

	I GAMBLED HEAVILY			
	NEVER	RARELY	FREQUENTLY	ALMOST ALWAYS
14. When I was in a situation in which I was in the habit of gambling.	1	2	3	4
15. When I saw a good opportunity that I hated to pass up.	1	2	3	4
16. When I felt confident and relaxed.	1	2	3	4
17. When everyday life seemed boring.	1	2	3	4
18. When people around me expected me to gamble.	1	2	3	4
19. When I was winning and wanted to keep on winning.	1	2	3	4
20. When I was drinking / using drugs.	1	2	3	4
21. When I couldn't stand things any more and needed to get away.	1	2	3	4
22. When I suddenly had an urge to gamble.	1	2	3	4
23. When I had an argument with a friend.	1	2	3	4
24. When I decided to try to limit my gambling.	1	2	3	4
25. When I felt I wasn't getting what I was entitled to.	1	2	3	4
26. When I was afraid of the people to whom I owed money.	1	2	3	4
27. When I felt confident about my gambling skills.	1	2	3	4
28. When everything was going well.	1	2	3	4
29. When I was in trouble with the law because of my gambling.	1	2	3	4
30. When someone challenged me to a bet.	1	2	3	4
31. When I saw something that reminded me of gambling.	1	2	3	4
32. When there were fights at home.	1	2	3	4
33. When I felt that I had gone too far to go back.	1	2	3	4
34. When I felt bad about myself.	1	2	3	4

	I GAMBLED HEAVILY			
	NEVER	RARELY	FREQUENTLY	ALMOST ALWAYS
35. When I felt like taking a risk.	1	2	3	4
36. When I felt sure that I could spend time in a gambling situation without gambling.	1	2	3	4
37. When I felt under a lot of stress.	1	2	3	4
38. When I felt content with my life.	1	2	3	4
39. When I was worried about my debts.	1	2	3	4
40. When I felt that I could profit from careful gambling.	1	2	3	4
41. When I felt empty inside.	1	2	3	4
42. When I had money in my pocket.	1	2	3	4
43. When I felt people mistrusted me.	1	2	3	4
44. When I was in a social situation and other people were gambling.	1	2	3	4
45. When I saw signs that my luck was with me.	1	2	3	4
46. When I needed to win back the money I lost gambling.	1	2	3	4
47. When I convinced myself that I was a new person and could make a few bets.	1	2	3	4
48. When I wanted to feel in control for a little while.	1	2	3	4
49. When I wanted to celebrate.	1	2	3	4
50. When I began to think how exciting or relaxing a little gambling would be.	1	2	3	4
51. When I was lonely.	1	2	3	4
52. When I was looking for excitement.	1	2	3	4
53. When I just couldn't think about anything but gambling.	1	2	3	4
54. When I felt under a lot of pressure from family members.	1	2	3	4



	I GAMBLED HEAVILY			
	NEVER	RARELY	FREQUENTLY	ALMOST ALWAYS
55. When I had free time.	1	2	3	4
56. When I wanted to prove that I could make a few bets without going too far.	1	2	3	4
57. When I knew it was a "sure thing."	1	2	3	4
58. When I was out with friends and they suggested we gamble.	1	2	3	4
59. When I felt that I needed just one more winning streak to fix everything.	1	2	3	4
60. When people were pressuring me to come up with money.	1	2	3	4
61. When I was angry.	1	2	3	4
62. When gambling was easily available.	1	2	3	4
63. When someone criticized me.	1	2	3	4

## Subscales of the IGS in four clusters

Note: Some items are included in more than one subscale

### NEGATIVE AFFECT SITUATIONS

#### Negative Emotions

(07) When I was depressed.

(11) When I didn't want to have to think.

(21) When I couldn't stand things any more and needed to get away.

(34) When I felt bad about myself.

(37) When I felt under a lot of stress.

(41) When I felt empty inside.

(51) When I was lonely.

(53) When I just couldn't think about anything but gambling.

(54) When I felt under a lot of pressure from family members.

(61) When I was angry.

**Conflict with Others**

- (13) When other people didn't seem to like me.
- (23) When I had an argument with a friend.
- (32) When there were fights at home.
- (33) When I felt that I had gone too far to go back.
- (43) When I felt people mistrusted me.
- (61) When I was angry.
- (63) When someone criticized me.

**POSITIVE AFFECT SITUATIONS****Pleasant Emotions**

- (04) When I was happy.
- (16) When I felt confident and relaxed.
- (28) When everything was going well.
- (38) When I felt content with my life.
- (49) When I wanted to celebrate.

**Social Pressure**

- (06) When someone encouraged me to bet.
- (18) When people around me expected me to gamble.
- (20) When I was drinking / using drugs.
- (30) When someone challenged me to a bet.
- (44) When I was in a social situation and other people were gambling.
- (49) When I wanted to celebrate.
- (58) When I was out with friends and they suggested we gamble.

**TEMPTATION SITUATIONS****Urges and Temptations**

- (12) When I talked myself into gambling.
- (14) When I was in a situation in which I was in the habit of gambling.
- (17) When everyday life seemed boring.
- (22) When I suddenly had an urge to gamble.

- (31) When I saw something that reminded me of gambling.
- (35) When I felt like taking a risk.
- (42) When I had money in my pocket.
- (53) When I just couldn't think about anything but gambling.
- (62) When gambling was easily available.

### **Testing Personal Control**

- (09) When I started to believe that gambling was no longer a problem for me.
- (24) When I decided to try to limit my gambling.
- (25) When I felt I wasn't getting what I was entitled to.
- (36) When I felt sure that I could spend time in a gambling situation without gambling.
- (47) When I convinced myself that I was a new person and could make a few bets.
- (48) When I wanted to feel in control for a little while.
- (56) When I wanted to prove that I could make a few bets without going too far.

## **GAMBLING CYCLE SITUATIONS**

(These scales are unique to the IGS. In contrast to the other three clusters, they are conceptual events in the cycle of gambling problems rather than an empirical cluster of situations.)

### **Need for Excitement**

- (05) When I wanted some action.
- (44) When I was in a social situation and other people were gambling.
- (45) When I saw signs that my luck was with me.
- (50) When I began to think how exciting or relaxing a little gambling would be.
- (52) When I was looking for excitement.
- (55) When I had free time.

### **Worried about Debts**

- (08) When I was about to get caught unless I came up with some money fast.
- (26) When I was afraid of the people to whom I owed money.
- (29) When I was in trouble with the law because of my gambling.
- (39) When I was worried about my debts.
- (60) When people were pressuring me to come up with money.

**Winning and Chasing**

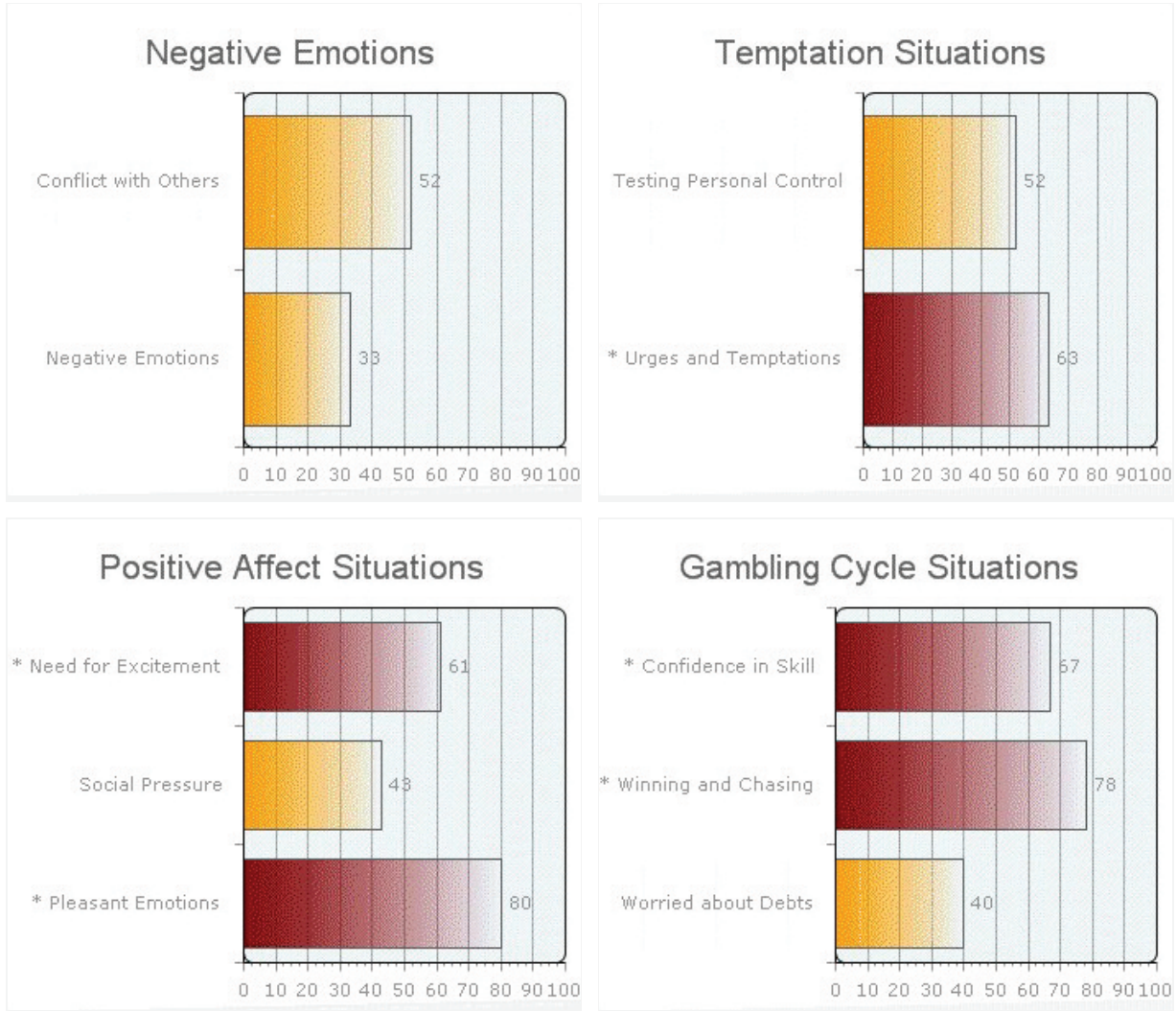
- (01) When I almost won and felt that I would win very soon.
- (19) When I was winning and wanted to keep on winning.
- (33) When I felt that I had gone too far to go back.
- (45) When I saw signs that my luck was with me.
- (46) When I needed to win back the money I lost gambling.
- (59) When I felt that I needed just one more winning streak to fix everything.

**Confidence in Skill**

- (03) When I decided that this time I would use good gambling strategies.
- (15) When I saw a good opportunity that I hated to pass up.
- (27) When I felt confident about my gambling skills.
- (40) When I felt that I could profit from careful gambling.
- (57) When I knew it was a “sure thing.”

## Sample IGS report

The next four pages show a sample Inventory of Gambling Situations report.



### Notes:

Asterisks and Red Bar Graph indicate a high score on an IGS Subscale.



## IGS Subscale Scores / Client Profile

Rank	SubScale	Index Score
1	Pleasant Emotions	80
2	Winning and Chasing	78
3	Confidence in Skill	67
4	Urges and Temptations	63
5	Need for Excitement	61
6	Conflict with Others	52
7	Testing Personal Control	52
8	Social Pressure	43
9	Worried about Debts	40
10	Negative Emotions	33

### Extra Items

Extra Items	Index Score
When I was drinking/using drugs.	4
When I was able to gamble without anyone knowing.	3

The items above are not part of any sub scale, but are included individually because they may be useful in treatment and/or their content may need special attention.

## Guidelines:

The following is provided as a guide to interpreting your scores.

- 0 to 25: you are rarely triggered by this situation
- 25 to 50: you sometimes are triggered by this situation
- 50 to 75: you are frequently triggered by this situation
- 75 to 100: you are very frequently triggered by this situation

A high score on an IGS scale indicates the type of situation in which you have often gambled heavily in the past. This information can be very valuable to a therapist and client in treatment planning. When you are aware of what particular situations trigger you, it will be easier to plan specific strategies that are targeted to the problem.

Please note that the IGS does not diagnose if a person has a problem. It only indicates which situations tend to be problematic. Scores for individual items are listed in front of each item. A score of 4 = always, 3 = frequently, 2 = rarely and 1 = never. Items with high scores (3 and 4) are situations in which you are most likely to gamble. Items with low scores (1 and 2) are situations in which you are less likely to gamble. If you are concerned about your scores on any of these scales, please talk to your therapist.



## Top Four IGS Subscale Scores

### 1. Pleasant Emotions      Score 80

Question	Your Answer
When I was happy.	4
When I felt confident and relaxed.	3
When everything was going well.	4
When I felt content with my life.	3
When I wanted to celebrate.	3

A high score indicates that you may gamble excessively when you are feeling good. You may gamble impulsively without worrying about consequences. You may need to find new ways to enjoy yourself when you are feeling good, as well as ways to avoid getting carried away by the fun of gambling.

### 2. Winning and Chasing      Score 78

Question	Your Answer
When I almost won and felt that I would win very soon.	4
When I was winning and wanted to keep on winning.	4
When I felt that I had gone too far to go back.	4
When I saw signs that my luck was with me.	4

A high score indicates that you may gamble excessively when you are winning, chasing losses or dreaming of winning. It is likely that you become caught up and gamble longer than you intended to. People who score high on this sub scale often believe that if they keep gambling they will recoup their losses. You may need to learn about the true odds of winning, and also about how to cope with the feelings that are raised by winning and chasing.



## Top Four IGS Subscale Scores

### 3. Confidence in Skill      Score 67

Question	Your Answer
When I decided that this time I would use good gambling strategies.	3
When I saw a good opportunity that I hated to pass up.	3
When I felt confident about my gambling skills.	4
When I felt that I could profit from careful gambling.	3

A high score indicates that you may gamble excessively when you are confident about your skill or system. You may have some mistaken beliefs about how odds work. Even though some games seem to benefit from skills or knowledge, there is still too much randomness to assure wins over the long term. It is helpful to add up your wins and losses over time, rather than focusing on individual wins.

### 4. Urges and Temptations      Score 63

Question	Your Answer
When I talked myself into gambling.	3
When I was in a situation in which I was in the habit of gambling.	3
When I suddenly had an urge to gamble.	3
When I saw something that reminded me of gambling.	3
When I felt like taking a risk.	4
When I had money in my pocket.	4
When gambling was easily available.	3

A high score indicates that you may gamble excessively when gambling is easily available, or when events or circumstances make you think of gambling. You may need to pinpoint the events or circumstances that trigger you. Then you can develop strategies to cope with cravings and find new ways to reduce or respond to gambling triggers. For example, since access to money is a common trigger, it is usually helpful to limit your access to cash or credit.



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# Appendix 1: Client's guide to interpreting IGS results

This section can be shared with clients to help them understand their IGS results.

## What do the scores mean?

The IGS does not diagnose whether a person has a gambling problem. The IGS does show you the type of situations in which gambling has been a problem for you in the past. This information can be very valuable to you and your therapist when you are developing a treatment plan together. When you are aware of what particular situations trigger your gambling behaviours, it will be easier for you to plan strategies that are specifically targeted to the problem as you experience it. Your responses to the questions on the IGS form are organized into 10 categories, or subscales:

- Negative Emotions
- Conflict with Others
- Urges and Temptations
- Testing Personal Control
- Pleasant Emotions
- Social Pressure
- Need for Excitement
- Worried about Debts
- Winning and Chasing
- Confidence in Skill

The IGS report lists a Problem Index Score for each subscale.

PROBLEM INDEX SCORE	EXPLANATION
0–25	You rarely or infrequently gamble in this type of situation.
25–60	You sometimes gamble in this type of situation.
60–75	You frequently gamble in this type of situation.
75–100	You very frequently gamble in this type of situation.

You and your therapist can use your scores to help you develop coping strategies. You may choose to work on the situations where you seem to have the most problems with gambling, since without coping strategies for these situations you are more likely to return to gambling. Often people recognize on their own that these situations are serious triggers for their gambling behaviours, so you may already have ideas on how to handle them.

Another approach is to start with situations that are moderately problematic. Mastering these situations is usually easier. Accomplishing your goal can improve your confidence and make it easier to cope with more problematic situations. For example, suppose you had a score of 55 for Need for Excitement, but a score of 70 for Negative Emotion. You would first work on dealing with the excitement issue—by learning new ways of enjoying yourself—and then focus on dealing with negative feelings. You also need to consider the urgency of the circumstances and the availability of support, as well as a variety of other factors. You and your therapist should work together to develop a plan of action.

## Explanation of IGS categories (subscales)

### NEGATIVE EMOTIONS

A high score indicates that you may gamble excessively to escape from or cope with feelings such as depression, loneliness or frustration.

You may need to learn to deal with these negative emotions without gambling. If gambling is causing problems in your life and so increasing the negative feelings, you may need to work in a positive way to resolve the problems.

### CONFLICT WITH OTHERS

A high score indicates that you may gamble excessively when you are in conflict with the people in your life.

You may need to work on managing problems in your relationships. This can involve a number of approaches, such as learning skills in communication, conflict management or anger management; or seeking relationship counselling.

If the conflicts are related to your gambling, addressing the gambling problem will gradually reduce the level of conflict. Some people “manufacture” arguments so they have an excuse to gamble. When this is the case, it is helpful to address the real reasons you want to gamble.

### **URGES AND TEMPTATIONS**

A high score indicates that you may gamble excessively when gambling is easily available, or when events or circumstances make you think of gambling.

You may need to pinpoint the events or circumstances that trigger you. Then you can develop strategies to cope with cravings and find new ways to reduce or respond to gambling triggers. For example, since access to money is a common trigger, it is usually helpful to limit your access to cash or credit.

### **TESTING PERSONAL CONTROL**

A high score indicates that you may gamble excessively when you are trying to prove to yourself that you don't have a gambling problem, are trying to limit your gambling or are spending time at gambling venues while trying not to gamble. You may find it shameful or embarrassing to have a gambling problem. Or you may believe that you should be strong enough to resist—even if gambling is right in front of you.

You may need to look realistically at how effective your attempts to control your gambling are.

### **PLEASANT EMOTIONS**

A high score indicates that you may gamble excessively when you are feeling good. You may gamble impulsively without worrying about consequences.

You may need to find new ways to enjoy yourself when you are feeling good, as well as ways to avoid getting carried away by the fun of gambling.

### **SOCIAL PRESSURE**

A high score indicates that you may gamble excessively when people around you want to gamble. Gambling may be part of your social life.

You may need to work on deciding for yourself whether you want to gamble. If your close friends gamble frequently, you may need to find other activities to share with them. Talk to your friends about your gambling. They may support your efforts to change. You might also consider developing new friendships.

### NEED FOR EXCITEMENT

A high score indicates that you may gamble excessively when you are bored and in need of excitement. You may particularly enjoy activities that are exciting or give you an “adrenaline rush.”

It may be helpful to look for other exciting leisure activities that are not harmful to you. You may also need to make sure you have enough activities to keep you busy.

### WORRIED ABOUT DEBTS

A high score indicates that you may gamble excessively when you are in debt and need money. You may try to get the money back by gambling again. This will likely worsen the financial problem and trigger more gambling.

You may need to break the cycle by looking at alternative ways of managing your money and dealing with your debts.

### WINNING AND CHASING

A high score indicates that you may gamble excessively when you are winning, chasing losses or dreaming of winning. It is likely that you become caught up and gamble longer than you intend to. People who score high on this subscale often believe that if they keep gambling they will recoup their losses.

You may need to learn about the true odds of winning, and also about how to cope with the feelings that are raised by winning and chasing.

### CONFIDENCE IN SKILL

A high score indicates that you may gamble excessively when you are confident about your skill or system. You may have some mistaken beliefs about how odds work. Even though some games seem to benefit from skills or knowledge, there is still too much randomness to assure wins over the long term.

It is helpful to add up your wins and losses over time, rather than focusing on individual wins.

### SPECIAL ITEMS

These items appear at the end of your IGS report.

#### **Special item #2: “When I was able to gamble without anyone knowing”**

A score of 3 or 4 on this item may mean that you are in the habit of concealing your gambling from family and friends. You may be so accustomed to gambling in these

circumstances that you do so whenever you get the chance.

You may need to look at arranging your life and finances to make it harder to gamble. You may also want to think about the way in which habit is controlling your decision-making.

**Special item #10: “When I wanted to prove to others that I was worthy of respect”**

A score of 3 or 4 on this item may indicate a problem with self-esteem, or may suggest that money and winning are important to your self-esteem.

You may want to look at alternative ways to feel good about yourself.

**Special item #20: “When I was drinking / using drugs”**

A score of 3 or 4 on this item could indicate an alcohol or other drug problem that might need treatment.

You should also explore with your therapist the relationship between substance use and gambling: does drinking (or using other drugs) trigger your gambling, or does gambling trigger your drinking, or both?

**Special item #29: “When I was in trouble with the law because of my gambling”**

A score of 3 or 4 on this item suggests that you and your therapist should look at the relationship between your legal problems and your gambling.

Do legal troubles trigger the gambling or have the legal problems resulted from previous gambling, or both?

## Interpreting responses to individual IGS items

The IGS report also gives you your score for each question. A score of 4 = almost always, 3 = frequently, 2 = rarely and 1 = never.

Items with high scores (3 and 4) are situations in which you are most likely to gamble. Items with low scores (1 and 2) are situations in which you are less likely to gamble.

If you are concerned about any of your scores, please talk to your therapist.





# Appendix 2: Working with the ICS data

## Subscale codes

ne = Negative Emotions

co = Conflict with Others

ut = Urges and Temptations

tpc = Testing Personal Control

pe = Pleasant Emotions

sp = Social Pressure

ex = Need for Excitement

db = Worried about Debts

wc = Winning and Chasing

sc = Confidence in Skill (*ski* in SPSS syntax; see below)

**SPSS SYNTAX FOR COMPUTING IGS SUBSCALE SCORES**

```
compute totigrs = rnd(((mean(igs1 to igs63)-1)/3)*100).
compute neigrs = rnd(((mean(igs7,igs11,igs21,igs34,igs41,igs51,
igs54,igs53,igs37, igs61)-1)/3)*100).
execute.
* igs17.
compute coigrs = rnd(((mean(igs13,igs23,igs32,igs43,igs33,igs63, igs61)-
1)/3)*100).
compute utigrs =
rnd(((mean(igs12,igs22,igs31,igs42,igs53,igs62,igs14,igs17,igs35)-1)/3)*100).
compute tpcigrs = rnd(((mean(igs9,igs24,igs36,igs47,igs56,igs48, igs25)-
1)/3)*100).
compute peigrs = rnd(((mean(igs4,igs16,igs28,igs38,igs49)-1)/3)*100).
* perhaps drop 49 as well.
execute.
compute spigrs = rnd(((mean(igs6,igs18,igs30,igs44,igs58, igs20, igs49)-
1)/3)*100).
execute.
compute exigrs = rnd(((mean(igs5,igs44,igs50,igs45,igs52, igs55)-1)/3)
*100).
compute dbigrs = rnd(((mean(igs8,igs26,igs39,igs60, igs29)-1)/3)*100).
compute wcigrs = rnd(((mean(igs1,igs19,igs33,igs46,igs59,igs45)-1)/3)*100).
compute skigrs = rnd(((mean(igs3,igs15,igs27,igs40,igs57)-1)/3)*100).
execute.
```