

Jon Friedl:

Hello. This is Jon Friedl and you're listening to Episode 3 of Professor Slots.

Narrator:

Jon Friedl, from the Professor Slots blog, reveals all his slot machine casino gambling strategies, as well as tips and tricks for thriving in the casino environment. Choose winning slot machines and identify your gambling goals, being entertained, earning comps, winning take home cash or combining them. Jon has won 90 taxable jackpots and a luxury car in 9 months of slot play and made a profit at slots gambling since 2013.

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Welcome to Episode 3, Assessing Casinos for Success in Alaska. Assessing Casinos for Success is the first of three easy steps to readily improve overall baseline slot machine gambling performance, plus Alaska slot machine gambling. This episode details the first of three ways to readily increase overall baseline odds of winning to improve slot machine gambling performance through a process of assessing casinos available to slot enthusiasts. In this week, we will also examine the current conditions for Alaska slot machine gambling. Remember to visit professorslots.com/subscribe, again that's professorslots.com/subscribe, to get my free report, Revealing ... The Top 7 Online Resources for Improving Your Gambling Performance, Including the One I've Used as a Top Tier Slot Machine Gambler.

Visiting a casino is an enjoyable and entertaining experience for many people. Within the United States, casino gambling is a mid \$30 billion industry. As recently as 2014, there were 508 commercial casinos in the United States, this is not counting the tribal casinos. Roughly 20 years ago in the United States, only six states offered commercial casinos, now 18 states do, plus 30 states offer tribal casinos, but only two US states don't offer some form of legalized gambling. Utah doesn't offer legalized gambling, primarily for religious reasons. Hawaii doesn't offer legalized gambling because they did an economic study showing that the tourism industry provides a far, far better return on the investment of the land that the casino would be on. It is, therefore, reasonable to assume that the economic conditions seen in the United States, driving a business case for casinos opening their doors, mirrors similar conditions found around the world. In essence, casinos have become a go-to place when people go out at night. Because casinos have become more commonplace, most people have more than one casino available to them locally, meaning people have a choice to make.

But not all casinos are created equal. There are different styles of casinos, in terms of facilities, gambling options and how they are run. Which casino is the right one for you? How do you decide or assess them? In the following section, I'll explain different types of casinos, how to locate slot machine venues near you, make the most of state gaming commission information, what to look for when physically visiting a casino and online resources for gathering casino information.

Caution - when planning to gamble money playing slot machines, it is important for players to know how much money they can afford to spend without financial difficulty or hardship. They need to be aware of the monetary risks involved and only play games with money they can comfortably afford to lose.

It might surprise you to know that there is more than one type of style of casino. There are casino resorts, slots parlors, racinos, tribal casinos, there's even truck stops and cruise ships. I'll detail these in a moment.

There's also different gambling options, sometimes combined, that are available at each of these different styles of casinos. There's gaming machines, table games, dog or horse track racing with pari-mutuel wagering, perhaps simulcast. As slots enthusiasts, we're primarily interested in playing slot machines or, at a minimum, electronic gaming machines. That's an important distinction I'll get into a bit later.

The first step to assessing casinos for success for us slot enthusiasts is to determine how many gambling establishments near us actually have slots. So I'm going to give you your first homework assignment. How many gambling establishments near you have slots? If there is more than one such place, you'll need to perform casino assessments.

The word casino can be used specifically or quite generally. In general, it is used to describe any gambling establishment. Specifically, it is used by gaming regulators to often describe one particular type of casino. Strictly speaking, for many state gaming jurisdictions, the word casino refers to a gambling establishment legally allowed or licensed to have table games available, including cards, dice and roulette style games, as well as video poker.

Casino resorts typically have a wide variety of multi-purpose facilities, including a large square footage property, inside and out. There's generally a conference center, has music venues, nice hotel, possibly a golf course, should be lots of dining options, including a celebrity chef brand. In general, it's someplace nice to take a vacation for a few days.

Slots parlors typically only have electronic gaming machines. They're generally large capacity gambling establishments that specialize in supporting slot enthusiasts only. The term slots parlor implies a small room, due to its historical use in Prohibition and before. Using the general definition of casinos, casinos that don't have table games or racing, due to a state licensing restrictions, are often considered to be slots parlors. The primary distinction is slot machines only and no table games like craps, roulette, poker or black jack. Slots parlors aren't generally allowed to have video poker machines, as states often consider video poker as requiring a higher form of licensing requirement similar to table games.

Racinos have simulcast, that is, off-track remote betting or live track racing, with pari-mutuel wagering available. These are dog or different types of horse racing, including horses pulling wheeled vehicles. State regulations often restrict gaming licenses at racinos to exclude table games, video poker and sometimes even slot machines. Racinos are often called pari-mutuel facilities for the type of competition style wagering performed at race tracks. Pari-mutuel is a

French term for mutual betting. It's often used in sporting events of short duration having a ranked order finish. It's a betting system where all bets of a particular type are placed together into a pool, taxes and a house take are removed from that pool, payout odds are calculated by sharing the pool among all winning bets, often the top three. And the final payout is not determined until the pool is closed to further betting.

Besides casino resorts, slots parlors and racinos are several other locations where slot machines may be found legally, if permitted by the state. In the case of Illinois, also approved by local area municipalities, these other types of casinos are riverboat casinos. This is a type of casino that had to originally undock before gambling could commence on the property, but most states with riverboats have relaxed that restriction. There's cruise ship gambling. In international waters, there is no state gambling requirements, so some coastal US states and countries offer day or longer cruises, traveling 13.8 miles offshore to international waters before gambling can commence.

There's also truck stops, bars and other businesses. This is where the state has allowed for these smaller businesses to receive a license allowing them to offer a few gaming machines.

Community bingo halls, now some states allow these traditional bingo game centers to maintain a few electronic gaming machines. These gaming machines could be called slot machines, although I don't consider them traditional slot machines.

Then there's private slot machine ownership. Every state has different laws on whether or not a slot machine can be privately owned. Some say it's legal, some say it's not legal, and some say that the slot machine has to be an antique of a certain number of years old.

There can also be a relatively unique mix of gaming offered. For example, Iowa leads the way in licensing racinos to not only offer slots, but include table games.

And then there are Native American aka tribal casinos, which require some special attention. I'll talk a little bit about them here, but they really do deserve an extra segment all to their own. With tribal casinos, recognized tribes may negotiate with states to create a State Tribal Compact. Once negotiated, the State Tribal Compact must be Federally approved. This was all allowed, originally established through the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act (IGRA), enacted as a US Federal law in 1988. This act will require a significant amount of time to explain, so tribal casinos deserve their own full length podcast segment, which I'll do in the future.

For now, understand that states and tribes negotiate a compact or agreement. This compact is usually separate from state gaming regulations for commercial casinos. Knowledge of the state's gaming requirements should not be expected to apply to tribal casinos. Note that there is usually a large sign at the entrance to many tribal casinos and you'll notice, at the bottom, it says "not subject to state law." If the hair on the back of your neck has begun to rise up, you're beginning to understand the situation.

If you mostly gamble at tribal casinos, I highly recommend Chapter 8 from Robert Nersesian's *The Law For Gamblers, a Legal Guide to the Casino Environment*. This chapter 8 is entitled *Indian Gaming: OMG, WTF*.

So let's talk about finding slot machine venues near you. Do you know how many locations in your state have slot machines available for gambling? This can actually be more difficult than it seems. In some states, the state gaming board conveniently lists all casinos, the specific definition of casinos, but neither slots, parlors nor racinos are listed. In other states, it's relatively easy to find a list of commercial casinos, but not a list of the tribal casinos. In some coastal states, casinos don't exist except as day cruises into international waters. In yet other states, state gaming regulations allow electronic gaming machines at truck stops. Due to the term truck stops not being carefully defined as a legal term by these states, several of these states now have small businesses across their state getting approved to install their own gaming machines because trucks stop there, even if it's a bar.

There are several online resources for locating gambling establishments. There are several online resources compiled in my free report, available at professorslots.com/subscribe, and also within a weekly online resource that I'm putting together, *Slot Machine Casino Gambling State By State*. I talked about that a bit in the last episode and I will have another few comments to make in a moment.

Of course, which gambling establishments with slot machines are available to you is highly dependent on your location. Perhaps you're planning a trip to gamble in another state, perhaps you're near a state line, or perhaps you'll limit yourself to casinos within a reasonable driving distance.

Other ways to find slot machine venues near you is understanding that casinos like to market themselves, so you can expect nearby casinos to advertise via billboards along most expressways. Useful online searches can be done using keywords casino and the name of your state, resulting in information such as a map of casinos listed in order of distance from your current physical location, Wikipedia entries for all the gambling establishments within your state, links to official state run gaming board or commissions, and casino directory web pages providing casino information as a free service. Again, as always with internet searches, be sure to verify any results. Frankly, some online sources are far better than others. Not all of these websites are as up to date as they might otherwise be.

Also keep in mind that new casinos are always opening, even though it sometimes takes years to get state approval and then to finish the construction of the facility.

Now let's take a moment and talk about state run gaming commissions. Gambling is legal in the United States, but gaming regulations are controlled by each state which, if gambling is not completely illegal, typically provide a state run gaming commission, regulating a state lottery, charitable gaming and commercial casinos. They're in charge of licensing of commercial casinos, the equipment used at those casinos, and even casino personnel. But the state is also in charge of negotiating state tribal compacts with recognized Native American tribes, which then has to

be submitted for Federal approval. I'll go into detail on that in a moment. A few states allow state tribal compacts to be negotiated or enforced through their state gaming boards, but most do not combine commercial and tribal casinos.

In general, the mission of state gaming commissions is to protect and educate the citizens of their state from the dangers of unregulated gambling. I'm going to say that again. In general, the mission of state gaming commissions is to protect and educate the citizens of their state from the dangers of unregulated gambling. Note that word "educate." State gaming commissions educate their citizens on casino gambling of their state. Make use of this resource. This is your tax dollars at work. The educational information provided varies widely from state to state, but it's all good information, if not critical, to improving your baseline gambling performance.

As an online resource for my audience of slot enthusiasts, I began a weekly blog series several months ago. As of this recording, I've already completed the first 20 US states, US territories or Federal District in order alphabetically. The final segment of each of my podcasts, starting with the last episode, will cover the condition of gambling for one of these, working again alphabetically through them. For instance, later in this episode is Alaska slot machine casino gambling. These state blogs are available on professorslots.com/state, in alphabetical order. You can see which ones are completed and which ones have not been completed, but when they are due to come out. There are 56 US states, US territories and Federal District. The full set of 56 blog articles will be completed June 21st, 2018. After completing all articles, I'll start again from the beginning and update each, 56 weeks after its original publication. The intent is to provide a state relevant resource on slot machine casino gambling and to keep it updated so it's no more than 56 weeks old from its last evaluation. There are a lot of dynamic changes occurring within the United States regarding casino gambling and an approximately once per year evaluation of state gaming conditions will likely require it be updated annually.

So let's find the best casino experience for you or how to go about doing so. Let's say you've done your homework and found all of the gambling establishments with slot machines in your state of interest, located within what you consider a reasonable driving distance.

Before I get into specific details in how to assess a casino for success, I need to mention personal preferences. I have them, you have them. Some are flexible, others are not. There is an element of assessing casinos which involves your personal preferences, like what you consider a reasonable driving distance. Two episodes from now, I'll be talking about identifying your personal gambling goals, a topic which is somewhat important now. If your gambling goal is maximizing take home cash, personal preferences hardly matter. You go where the money is. However, if maximizing entertainment is your goal, then your personal preferences force the assessment to now include evaluating casino entertainment venues, like restaurants, golf courses and any other number of amenities.

So let's talk about performing a physical assessment. The process of assessing casinos involves performing an onsite physical assessment of all open to the public areas. This physical assessment should occur at the time of day and the day of week when you are most likely to or usually gamble. This is a scouting trip. It has a completely different focus than a visit for

gambling purposes, so no bankroll is required for this trip. To be clear, avoid bringing any gambling money, focus on the assessment. Relax, look around, stay awhile, have dinner if that's your preference. What do you see? Are people happy? Is it noisy? How does the staff look? By the way, if the staff looked happy, that's not necessarily a positive aspect. If they looked weary but professional, that might be a little better. Make sure to visit the restroom. Restroom cleanliness despite it being a busy night is good. The object of this physical assessment is to compare it to another casino. It would be normal to consider taking notes, but I do not recommend doing so within the casino itself. It is best to do it in the car after leaving the casino. Why? Because the use of electronic devices as a gambling tool is a felony in some US states and taking notes on paper, well, I've done that, and been asked rather quickly by gentlemen in suits what exactly was I doing.

Performing a physical assessment is like an audit. The same questions need to be asked every time the physical assessment is performed. Sometimes the assessment isn't of a different place, but for the same place at a different time, perhaps a year later, six months later. Assessments of this type are not entirely objective, but, due to personal preferences being a factor, can be quite subjective. That's okay. For these reasons, and while not entirely necessary, it may be helpful to have a checklist to make sure, at a minimum, everything that needs to be looked has been. So I have created a one page Casino Physical Assessment Checklist in the form of a downloadable PDF from my website. This checklist is available to you free at professorslots.com/cpalist, that's professorslots.com/cpalist. In return for this checklist, I request that you provide your email address for addition to my mailing list. I suppose it's not free, I suppose that is the cost.

The best online resource for assessing casinos for success is quite possibly the state gaming commission of the state you are interested in. Why? Their customer is you. The two best online search engines is Google and perhaps, surprisingly, YouTube. Use both, but read, listen and watch carefully. Most of the available information is an opinion. I have complete confidence you can find online resources to assess nearby casinos, after all, you found me.

However, my primary concern is making you aware of, and hopefully avoiding, sources of misinformation specific to assessing casinos. Here are a few. First off, be very wary of casino reviews, as these are often paid marketing pitches and may not be entirely forthcoming. Casino directories are not always up to date and clarity can be lacking. Visiting the main webpage of a casino of interest is of limited usefulness. It's primarily there for marketing again to peak your interest and pull you in, not to necessarily answer any detailed questions. Calling casinos is also of limited usefulness. They are set up to take reservations and not much else. Be prepared to ask specific questions, restaurants, golf course, smoking parlor, slots? Few states provide negotiated state tribal compacts as easily defined public documents.

But remember, the most valuable bit of information for you, that can be found via online resources, is payout percentages. Payout percentages is the amount of money paid out by a casino to its patrons divided by the total money taken in. Sometimes this payout percentage is for the casinos in a region of the state, for the entire casino, for all slots in the casino, for each denomination of a slot machine within a casino. Hold percentages is very similar. It's 100 minus the payout percentage, so this would be the percentage of money kept by the casino divided by

the total amount of money taken in. The payout percentage is based on past performance, usually a monthly total, and it's for millions of dollars, so using it to predict future performance is something that many people do, but it is also a statistical average. So if you see that you have a 93% payout percentage, and you want to say "well, if I spend \$100, I will get back \$93," that's only in terms of the long run. It may not be specifically happening for \$100 as it did happen for millions of dollars.

State provided payout and hold percentages can be limited to different commercial casinos, perhaps often excluding racinos and tribal casinos also within the state. If payout percentages are available from reputable online resources, they may be limited to state required minimums, maximum, ranges or even that there are no legal restrictions for payout percentages. Whatever the case, this is highly valuable information for assessing casinos, if not necessarily good news all the time.

Assessing casinos for success is a combination of an onsite non-gambling visit and searching through online resources. One onsite should be all that is necessary to compare two or more casinos, take careful notes after leaving the casino, if all onsite visits do not occur in quick succession. Online searches should include, as a minimum, investigating the state gaming commission for any available payout percentages.

If your assessment results in not being able to identify any difference between two casinos, consider that your answer. Remember to perform reassessments annually, or sooner, if another casino opens or an existing casino re-opens after being heavily renovated.

Educate yourself about your ongoing casino options. Casino assessment is an easy skill to learn fairly quickly, but it does take a bit of practice. But as a result of learning it, the financial value is there for the taking.

For now, that's everything I wanted to say about assessing casinos for success. Before going on to the next portion of this episode, I wanted to remind everyone that the next podcast episode will include the second step to readily improving your baseline slot machine casino gambling performance, choosing candidate slot machines. In that episode, I'll talk about how to read paytables, as well as a goodness ratio I've developed to determine if a specific slot machine is a candidate slot machine for you to use or, instead, should be avoided at all cost. Show notes for this episode are available on my website at professorslots.com/e3, that's professorslots.com/e3. It includes an embedded audio player, a full transcript, a downloadable version of this audio file, a place to leave comments about the show, a link to my Google Play and iTunes pages to leave a rating or review, and my social media sites for sharing. Again, this is available in the show notes for this episode at professorslots.com/e3.

Finally, a limited amount of relatively inexpensive personal coaching is available for those that would like my personal attention in a 50 minute one-on-one session. See my website at professorslots.com/coaching. I'm doing my best to present all the information that I've gathered into this podcast, with a summary available on my blog, but if you would like me to hold your hand through some of this, I am available.

So we're moving to the last segment of this podcast episode, Alaska slot machine casino gambling. It is difficult to start an introduction with a conclusion, but it is quite obvious Alaska slot machine gambling does not exist. For example, there are not casinos located in Alaska. However, there are certainly gambling options stirring in Alaska, several which are well worth understanding and appreciating. There are 10 community bingo halls across 9 cities, with a grand total of 92 gaming machines. Again, these gaming machines are not traditional slot machines, although they may have a slot for coins and they may have lights and moving wheels, but basically they are electronic gaming machines that simulate bingo. Juneau has two community bingo halls offering Class II gaming options, specifically bingo and pull-tabs.

Without slot machines in Alaska, the legal statutes related to gambling are almost entirely non relevant, given our emphasis on slot machine casino gambling. Certainly there are state gaming regulations in Alaska, including establishing legal definitions as to what is and is not a gambling enterprise, a social game and many other terms. In general, Alaska gambling laws are very restrictive and, frankly, even a bit quirky. For example, some Alaska gaming regulations involve charity betting on dog mushing contests. It's understandable, it's the state sport. Other more common state gaming regulations involves rule for pull tab games, which are paper based lottery cards. Also, the private ownership of a slot machine in Alaska is legal. It is legal to privately own a slot machine in Alaska.

Regarding the state gaming commission for Alaska, strictly speaking, there is none. However, Class II gaming facilities, that is to say bingo and similar games, are under the authority of the Federal National Gaming Commission, NIGC, which was established by the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act of 1986.

Also, within the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act is the definitions for Class I, Class II and Class III gaming, which are definitions used by many states even without Indian gaming. I'll briefly mention here, Class I is tribal ceremonies, Class II, as I mentioned already, is bingo and similar games, Class III is everything else.

In 1960, the Alaska State Legislature voted to approve charitable fundraising for raffles, lotteries, bingo games, pull-tabs, and 15 other games, including various racing. Most recently in 2008, voters were asked if they wanted to legalize gambling and establish an Alaska gaming commission. The vote failed, with 61% of voters against it. There have been extensive prior efforts to legalize gambling in Alaska, a few of which will be discussed in a moment.

There are two NIGC approved gaming facilities with bingo in Klawock and Metlaktia. Klawock is a tribal facility operated by the Klawock Cooperative Association. Metlaktia is a tribal facility operated by the Metlaktia Indian Community. There are also four other community bingo halls, in the organized village of Kaka Bingo located in Kaka, Alaska, Sun'aq Tribal Bingo located in Kodiak, Alaska, Sitka Tribal Bingo located in Sitka, Alaska, Tlingit and Haida Community Bingo located in Juneau, Alaska.

In summary, Alaska slot machine casino gambling does not exist, as there are no casinos in the state. The difficulty facing tribes with developing casinos is two-fold. First, the land they are to

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be constructed on must be a trust or restricted land, which is extremely limited in Alaska; second, the more usual issue of a state not yet approving casino style gaming.

On the next episode of Professor Slots, part one of Episode 4 will be about the second of three steps, choosing candidate slot machines. There will have an introduction, I'll talk about two separate odds of winning, I'll talk about matching bankrolls to denomination and credits, how to read a slot machine's paytable, how to avoid the worst slot machines, and then provide a summary.

The second half of the episode will be about the US territory of American Samoa slot machine casino gambling. As usual, I'll have an introduction, I'll talk about relevant legal statutes on gambling, I'll talk about slot machine private ownership, the state gaming commission, rather in this case, the US territory gaming commission, gambling establishments, and a summary.

This is the end of another great episode of the Professor Slots' podcast. Show notes for the episode can be found at professorslots.com/e3, that's professorslots.com/e3.

I plan to have the next episode come out very soon for you, where I'll have amazing content for the show.

So if you are someone who wants better success at slot machine casino gambling, please subscribe to the show and, if you have a moment, head on over to iTunes and leave a rating and review. That would help so much.

Until the next episode, have fun, be safe and make good choices. Bye.