

Advice on Penny Slots

1. While slot companies allow the casino to set penny slots paybacks between about 85% and 95%, the general average seems to be about 89%. High limit slots are usually, but not always, looser - perhaps 93% on average. These are averages. So a casino might have some penny slots set to 92% and some to 85%.
2. Casinos look at the "Hold %", which is equal to 100% - Payback %. An 85% Payback slot has a 15% Hold. A 95% Payback is a 5% hold. You lose your money 3 times faster on a 15% hold slot vs. a 5% hold slot. So, a casino with an average of 93% payback vs. another casino with an 86% payback is a hold of 7% vs. 14% - a 200% difference in how fast you lose your money.
3. Reno/Sparks Nevada casinos have the loosest penny slots (on average) with paybacks of 93% - 94% (6% - 7% hold). Vegas Strip casinos have paybacks of 88% - 89% (11% - 12% hold). See www.RandomSSSlots.com for more stats, and graphs that show changes over time. In general, games that came out over five years ago are slightly looser than more recent games.
4. Progressive slots skim off money from the top to fund the bank that pays out the progressive. A simple progressive might skim off 2 - 3% in payback. A slot that features a lot of different slot levels might skim off 15% to 25% to fund the progressives because these games are designed for people that like to win progressives. If you never win a progressive (as is the case for most of us) avoid progressives. If you like to max bet, maybe you might occasionally win a progressive.
5. Licensed games that feature movies, TV shows, rock bands, etc., pay the rights owners to use their images and sounds. So, maybe a percent or so of your money goes to pay these licenses. Further, these games are often set tighter because they aren't in the casino very long.
6. A few games tell you that a larger bet means a more favorable payback. Sometimes the machine actually has a looser payback. Sometimes the machine just gives you more features, but the net payback is about the same. The rules don't always tell you.
7. Common myths some players believe in that don't work include:
 - a. The machine behaves differently if you have your player's card inserted or not. Fact: it makes no difference; however, using a player's card increases your chance of getting free play and other offers from the casino.
 - b. Frequent cashing out fools the machine that you are a fresh player and you will win more often. Fact: it makes no difference. You just waste more paper; but, your money does last longer because you are spending some time cashing out and reinserting tickets.
 - c. Pressing the Stop button to stop the reels at just the right time means more wins and bonuses. Fact: it makes no difference. The reels will stop where they want to; but, you will lose your money faster because you are spending less time waiting for the reels to stop. There is an exception to this rule - some new skill-based games are just starting to appear where player action can make a difference. Such games will make it clear that skill makes a difference.
 - d. Banging on the buttons hard and rubbing the screen brings luck. Fact: makes no difference; but, you do wear out the button faster and get more germs from the screen.