

# Some history

Games of chance are as old as time.

The dice that we know probably dates back more than 5000 years. Dice were used to gamble but also to predict the future. In 2000 BC, the Egyptians used knuckle bones as four-sided dice. Further back in time astragli (little sticks in the form of flint splinters) were used. It is estimated that some astragli that have been found could be as old as 40 000 years. Greeks and Romans also gambled with astragli and even today they are used by Arabic and Native American tribes. In addition to this, the bones of animals were frequently used for gambling. In 1500BC the Chinese had spinning discs to play a form of roulette.

Card games were played in China as early as the 12th century. In the 15th century Leonardo da Vinci is said to have tried to develop a gambling machine. In the Netherlands the first horse races took place in the 16th century. However, the first recorded horse race in England took place in 210 AD. In 1588 Queen Elizabeth 1 approved the first lottery in Britain to raise funds to repair the cinque ports.

The first gambling houses opened in America in 1718 in New Orleans and from 1827 gambling took place day and night. Chicago was the next city to introduce gambling. In 1895, the first slot machine was invented by Charles Fey, a mechanic from San Francisco. A general gambling ban was issued in the United States in attempt to undermine its links with the Mafia. Nevada was the first American State to lift the ban on games of chance in the 1930s.

Source:

National Responsible Gaming - Programme for schools  
2001

Cape Town, South Africa.

GamCare, 1999, A Certain Bet?

Exploring Gambling

United Kingdom.

