

How to Get an Edge on Horse Race Betting

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Basic horse race betting is fairly simple. When you get to the teller, say the name of the racetrack (if it's not the one you're betting at), the race number, followed by how much you want to bet, the kind of bet you want to place and the number of the horse.

An example bet might be "Santa Anita, race four, \$2 for #3, #7 and #5 to show." If you want to do well with horse race betting, you'll need to read the racing program quickly, and make some snap decisions. Long term success is not determined by choosing winners alone, and the key to big money in horse racing is your ability to figure out when a long shot is a sure shot.

Don't Go in Blind

If this is your first time betting, visit the website for the track you're going to. Whether you are betting in a casino or race track setting ask for tip sheets and programs. Tip sheets are picks that are favored by the handicappers at the race.

The program is useful as an insiders magazine, a place for you to read interviews, commentary and other indicators of past performance. Use [handicapping software](#) to help determine which picks will be most profitable for you throughout the day. Get to know anything you can that would help you form a picture of the horses you want to bet on. There will be multiple races for you to bet on, so pace yourself and choose races that you have thoroughly vetted.

Listen to the Simulcast Commentator

In addition to your handicap tip sheet, you can usually find televisions at the track or in the casino. The commentary provided by race track announcers is often useful, and can include up to the minute information that the program may not contain.

Play the Odds

The highest rated horse and jockey combinations often do win the races, so use the race program to help narrow down your choices. Obviously you want the highest payout, so compare the odds listed for each horse with the racing program to see if how that horse and rider combo stacks up against the completion. Try "Show" bets if you are not sure that you can choose a single horse to win.

Don't Stick to Favorites

Statistically speaking, horses that are favored to win often do, but the long shots make or break a good exotic better. Horses with a smaller than average chance of winning often pose the threat of upset, where your bet on the favored horses is upset when the long shot catches up. A quick tip is to scan the racing sheet for horses that are expected to show, but not win.

Long Term Tips

Long-term success in horse racing is about determining which horses are likely to place, and in what order. First build consistency by choosing winners. As you frequent your track, try to talk with the trainers you find there. In a casino setting, use the data you have from your day of betting to look up horses and racers on a computer so that you can learn more about their methods.

The most important advice is to enjoy the day outside. The excitement of watching fit horses race one another, and the heat of the finish, are great excuses to go outside with family and friends.

