

Top 5 Tips to Win \$100 at the Races

By Jenny Kellner

PLAYING
TO WIN
LEVEL 101



You've handicapped the races. You've chosen the horses you think have the best chance of winning. You've decided how to manage your money. Now what? Turning \$20 into \$100 in a day is very possible, but you have to take some risks. In other words, it sounds safe to bet \$20 to Show on the favorite in each race, but that is not necessarily the surest way to win. Favorites hit the board about 70% of the time; so they are not always your best bet. How then to leave on the plus side? Here are ways to turn a small bankroll into some decent cash.

1. LET IT RIDE

The lowly Show wager – the bet that lets you cash in if a horse comes in first, second or third – can be lucrative if you bet against the favorite in a series of races. Pick the horse with the longest odds that you think has the best chance of coming in the top three in four separate races. Link your bets together – this is called a parlay – by rolling your winnings from the first race you bet into the second race you bet, the second into the third, and the third into the fourth – e.g., letting it ride. If you start with \$20 and hit each – remember, your horses only need to come in third or better – your payoff should be about \$100.

2. BET "OLD FAITHFUL" – THE DAILY DOUBLE

Back in the days when Secretariat was running, the Daily Double was about as exotic as you could get, and it still has its devotees. The double requires you pick the winners of the first two races of the day, or the last two races of the day. Each race in a double is commonly referred to as a leg, as in the first leg and the second leg. (Perhaps this is where the phrase "he doesn't have a leg to stand on" comes from.) Anyway, if you have a lead-pipe cinch in both legs, you are, as the British say, for it. If not, then you need to work in some kind of "wheel" into your bet. If you're confident of a horse in one leg, and can't pick between three horses in the other, "part wheel" the sure thing with the other three – a total of three bets. You can do this forwards or backwards.

3. PLAY AN EXACTA BOX

An Exacta means you bet on the first two finishers in the exact order. An Exacta "box" gives you some leeway – you can pick two or more horses to come in first and second and win if they come in either order. If you love a horse, think a longshot has a chance, and are afraid of yet another horse, you can bet all three in an Exacta box and cash in if any of the three comes in 1-2. Just root like heck for the longshot to come out on top. A \$2 Exacta box with three horses will cost you \$12. P.S. Always cover yourself by betting your key horse to Win.

4. TRY A PICK THREE

You may be intrigued by the huge payoffs from the Pick Six – in which you pick the winners of six straight races – but the Pick Threes offer pretty big payoffs, are easier to hit, and much more affordable to bet. Think of it as a Daily Double plus one. If you bet a \$1 Pick Three using multiple horses, it won't cost you an arm and a leg the way a Pick Six can. Here's one easy play: Bet three horses in the first leg, three in the second and three in the third – a total of \$27.

5. FALL IN LOVE WITH A LONGSHOT

Longshots win every day at every track in the country. In a recent stakes race, the longest shot in a nine-horse field was the horse who won the race last year. This was a horse of obvious quality which was being totally overlooked at odds of more than 35-1. A \$10 wager on the horse to Win returned \$367.50. A \$2 Exacta returned \$370.50. If you had the horse in the Pick Three and hit the other two legs, the payoff was \$1,279 on a \$2 ticket. What's not to love?



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