

The Gambling Commission website has recently updated its guidelines to help identify machines requiring a Gaming Licence and those considered Skill With Prizes (SWP's) and not requiring a licence. This is welcome news for collectors of Allwin machines who have long wanted clarification. The following addresses the main points as defined on their site in order for a machine to be classified as an SWP.

Skill with prizes (SWPs)

These are NOT gaming machines. A skill with prizes machine can be sited anywhere.

Skill with prize machines (SWPs) are not caught as gaming machines under the Gambling Act 2005.

SWPs can be sited anywhere and do **not** require a licence.

SWPs do not count towards the machine allowance in alcohol licensed premises.

How to identify the difference between an SWP and a gaming machine

Does the outcome of the game depend entirely on chance?

(YES = GAMBLING MACHINE)

Allwin machines:

The outcome of Allwin games is dependent solely on the player's use of skill and manual dexterity. As players engage with the game, the more skilled they will become. The element of chance is not influenced or controlled by variable mechanics or electronics (there are no revolving reels, roulette wheels, dice etc). The layout of the playfield remains constant for each game with the player in control of the outcome.

Does a suitably skilful player have sufficient time to exercise their skill?

(NO = GAMBLING MACHINE)

Allwin machines:

There is no time limit for a player to play a shot and the outcome is entirely achievable each time. These are circumstances prerequisite for a machine to be considered an SWP.

The maximum stake / prize on an SWP.

(PRIZE OVER £50 = GAMBLING MACHINE)

Allwin machines:

As you don't need a licence or permit for an SWP, there is no legal limit for stake or prizes. However, it would be very difficult to manufacture a genuine SWP machine that is economically viable and offers prizes over £50 (the prize limit set by the industry trade body following discussion with the Gambling Commission). It is rare to find an Allwin machine offering a prize greater than a small stake (usually an old penny, two pence piece or ten pence) all of which are well below the prize limit guidelines.

Does the machine have a compensation mechanism?

(YES = GAMBLING MACHINE)

Allwin machines:

Compensation mechanisms alter the chances of winning depending on the circumstances (for example the amount of money a machine has already taken/paid out). Allwins do not have a mechanism to control the odds of winning, which remain the same each time the game is played regardless of previous paid outs.

Does the game appear to be a gambling machine with associated symbols or graphics?

(YES = GAMBLING MACHINE)

Allwin machines: Gambling machines offer the chance of a big prize according to the outcome of a random generating device (revolving reels, a roulette wheel, playing card generators or similar devices). The livery and symbols are designed to overtly advertise the gameplay and payouts accordingly.

Allwin machines do not present themselves in this way. Typically, they display graphics of stripes, beach balls, cartoon characters and graphics more associated with amusement. SWP's offer a limited reward to a skilful player with the emphasis on the fun aspect rather than financial gain.

It should be noted that backflashes printed with dice, cards or similar images usually associated with gambling machines do not necessarily mark it as a gaming machine. If the gameplay of the machine satisfies the conditions of an SWP, it will be considered an SWP and not require a licence.

<https://www.gamblingcommission.gov.uk/for-gambling-businesses/Compliance/Sector-specific-compliance/Arcades-and-machines/Skill-with-prizes-SWPs.aspx>