

A large, stylized American flag graphic is centered in the background, featuring a blue field with white stars and red and white stripes. The flag is set against a circular backdrop with a light blue outer ring and a light red inner ring.

MAKING MONEY WITH BINGO



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www.allamericanbingo.com



STARTING A BINGO IN MISSOURI

First, you must determine whether your group meets the legal requirements necessary to obtain a bingo license by answering the following questions:

- Is your organization a bona fide religious, charitable, fraternal, veteran or service organization, exempt from federal income taxes as provided in section 501(c)(3), 501(c)(4), 501(c)(5), 501(c)(7), 501(c)(8), 501(c)(10) OR 501(c)(19)?
- Has your organization been in existence for at least five years?
- Have you had at least 20 members for each of the last five years?

If the answer to all three of the above questions is yes, your charitable organization meets the legal requirements necessary to obtain a bingo license in Missouri.

NOW WHAT IS YOUR NEXT STEP?

WHERE WILL YOU PLAY?



Before you can apply for a bingo license, you must know where you are going to conduct your bingo game. Does your organization own or lease a building? Will you rent space in an existing bingo hall? How many people do you expect to seat? Do you have enough tables and chairs?

The first thing any organization should do before applying for a bingo license is to visit as many bingo games in their community as possible. See how many players they are averaging. Pick up a copy of their program for future reference! If you are looking for a hall to rent, talk to them about availability.

If you plan to use your own building, measure to see how many tables you can place in the room(s) you intend to use for bingo. We recommend 6'-8' rectangular tables for maximum capacity. Plan to have 4' - 5' aisles between your tables, and expect to comfortably seat 4 players per table. Don't forget to check the seating capacity that your local Fire Department has established for your building!

Consider options for separating smokers from non-smokers. Completely separate rooms with separate ventilation systems is the best situation, but beyond the reach of many groups' budgets. More and more communities are regulating smoking issues, so be certain to check your local ordinances.

WHAT KIND OF BINGO EQUIPMENT WILL YOU USE?

When applying for a bingo license, the Gaming Commission will want to know what equipment you will be using to conduct your game. If you are renting space in an established hall, you will need to "buy in" to their equipment. The hall will then provide you with a co-ownership agreement signed by all co-owners.

If you plan to play in your own hall, you will need to contact a licensed supplier and discuss your equipment needs. It is not necessary to purchase the equipment at this time, but there must be a signed purchase agreement sent in with your license application. Take a good look at your hall to decide how many flashboards and monitors you need. A player should be able to see a flashboard and a monitor from any seat in the hall!



This sounds complicated and difficult, but your hall provider and/or supplier can work with you to make this absolutely painless!

CHOOSE A DAY AND TIME FOR YOUR GAME



There are several things you should consider in choosing the day and the time that you will run your Bingo game:

- What is the competition doing? Try not to compete with an established game in your area.
- When is your hall available?
- What is the best day and time for your volunteers?
- Consider a Friday, Saturday or Sunday if it works for your group.
- When choosing a time, remember that you can sell pull tabs two hours prior to the start of Bingo, but not before 10:00 am.

APPLYING FOR A BINGO LICENSE

Now it's time to apply for your license. There is a blank application form in this binder, behind the "License Application" tab. You can also find this form, as well as all of the other state rules, regulations and forms at www.mgc.dps.mo.gov.



Start at the top and answer each question to the best of your ability. If you have questions, call the Missouri Gaming Commission at 1-866-801-8643. When you are finished, mail the application and all supporting documents to them at:

Missouri Gaming Commission
Charitable Games Division
P.O. Box 1847
Jefferson City, MO 65102

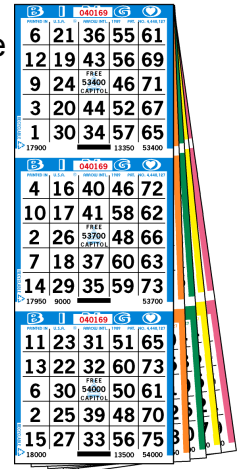
When they have processed this, they will return it to you with requests for any additional information they need. **DO NOT PANIC!** Almost every license application is returned for more information at least one time. They will work with you to get everything completed correctly.

WHILE YOU WAIT FOR YOUR LICENSE

PLANNING YOUR PROGRAM

Now it's time to pull out all of those programs you collected when you were visiting other bingos. Answer the following questions:

1. How many games, not including the progressives, do you want to play?
2. Do you plan to play Early Birds?
3. How many of the games do you want to be in your regular book and how many will be sold outside the book (loose sheets or small book)?
4. How much do you plan to pay out?
5. What are your "House Rules"?
6. Will you play a progressive game? You are allowed to play two in Missouri, and we recommend that you take advantage of this.
7. What pull tab and event games will you play?



#1: HOW MANY GAMES WILL YOU PLAY?

This varies widely by region. Some games play as few as 12-14 regular games with larger prizes per game. In some areas, the players like to play as many as 25 regular games, with smaller average prizes. Look at what the most successful games in your area are doing, and then plan accordingly.



#2—WILL YOU PLAY EARLY BIRDS?

Early Birds are games, generally sold outside of your main packet, which are played 20-30 minutes before the start of your first regular game. These can be quick games with small payouts to get players warmed up and keep your early arrivals busy. Some groups play one large Early Bird game to get people in the hall and excited as early as possible. Some smaller games play Early Birds as 50/50 or 60/40 games, with the winners getting a percentage of the sales of Early Bird paper.

#3—WHAT MAIN BOOK WILL YOU USE?

Bingo books come in many different shapes and sizes. Most groups sell primarily 9on (nine faces on a sheet) books with anywhere from 10 to 25 sheets per book. Other cuts, such as 3on vertical, 6on vertical, and 18on horizontal are also available. You will want to keep this as simple as possible, so that your lines of people waiting to purchase books move as quickly as they can. We recommend a 9on main book, a 9on add-on book and either a 3V or a 6V strip (for people that want to play a few more cards but can't handle another 9on). 18on books are a nice convenience for people that play lots of cards.



#4—HOW MUCH WILL YOU PAY OUT?

Maximum in Missouri is \$3,600.00, not counting the progressives. You will need to pay out AT LEAST as much as the other games in your area to be competitive. If you cannot pay out the maximum at the beginning, consider multi-tier games that give players the chance to win larger pots, while most often paying out a consolation prize (see green page).

When dividing your payouts among your games, plan to have at least two games with big prizes during each half. You are allowed one \$500 game, which most groups have at the very end of their session, but you can have as many \$499 games as you like, as long as you stay under the maximum payout of \$3,600.00.

#5—WHAT ARE YOUR HOUSE RULES?

House rules are designed to let your players know, up front, what is allowed and not allowed at your game. This is a great place to state your progressive rules in detail. You should state whether or not children will be allowed in the hall during your games (state law says that no one under 16 may play bingo, but does not ban children from the hall). Almost every hall has a rule that states that you must bingo on the last number called, and that it is the player's responsibility to make certain that the caller hears them.

Sample programs may be found on the _____ sheets that follow. Look at their house rules and you will see some examples of what should be covered in yours.



#6—WILL YOU PLAY PROGRESSIVE GAMES?

PROGRESSIVE GAMES

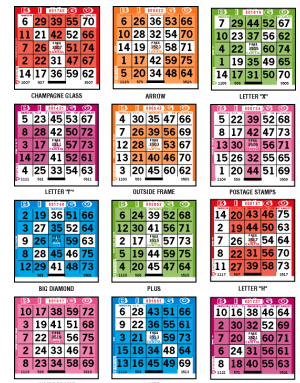
In Missouri, you are allowed to play two progressive games. We strongly recommend that you take advantage of this. A well planned progressive game can make thousands of dollars for your charitable organization.

There are two primary ways to play a progressive game. The first way requires covering a set pattern within a certain number of balls called. The second way is called Hot Ball and requires for the winner to have won with a pre-announced Hot Ball number (See yellow page for more Information on Hot Ball progressive.).

There are a few basic rules for all progressive games:

1. Progressive game rules must be fully described and posted. If you are playing the “number of balls” version, you must have a sign that shows pattern being played, number of balls required for a jackpot, jackpot total and consolation prize. For a Hot Ball progressive, post the Hot Balls for the evening, the jackpot total and the consolation prize. A dry erase board works very well for these signs.
2. The jackpot prize cannot start at an amount larger than \$1000. The prize cannot be raised more than \$250 each week. The consolation prize must remain lower than the progressive prize.
3. The progressive game MUST continue until the prize is awarded. Once you have begun a progressive game, it MUST be played to completion before you change the rules.
4. For the first ten weeks, the number of balls called or the number of Hot Balls may stay the same, but it is not required. You can increase each week, every other week, halfway through, or hold it steady for the first ten weeks. At the eleventh week, the number of balls (or Hot Balls) must increase by at least one ball every week until the game is completed and the prize awarded.
5. The prize must increase each week (even the first ten weeks). The maximum that the prize may be increased each week is \$250. If you want the prize to never be more than \$1199.00, you must give it away the week that it hits \$1199.00. You may not hold it and continue raising the numbers.
6. You must maintain cash reserves in your bingo checking account to cover the progressive prize being offered.

Many games use preprinted bingo cards for their progressive games. These sheets are already marked for many of the most popular patterns, like “Letter X”, “Big Diamond”, “Kite”, etc. (See red page for a complete listing.) Preprinted sheets allow players to play more cards, and increase your per player spend. Many games offer a 6on sheet for \$2 each, with three 6on sheets (or one 18on sheet) for \$5.



#7: PULL TABS AND EVENT GAMES



PULL TABS are also called pop opens, break opens, Nevada tickets, cherry bells, pickle cards, instant bingo and bowl games. The object of the game is to open the perforated windows on the back of the ticket and match the symbols inside the ticket to the winning combinations on the front of the ticket face or the flare card. The winning ticket is turned in for a monetary prize.

Pull tabs are available in quarter, fifty cent and dollar denominations, with top prizes ranging from \$25 to \$5000. A wide variety of pull tabs will increase your sales, and your profits, dramatically.

Your organization may legally begin selling pull tabs two hours before your first bingo game. This will encourage your players to come in early and buy more pull tabs. A table or booth should be set up in a high traffic area of the hall to display and sell tabs. Have volunteers also selling pull tabs on the floor before and during the bingo game. This allows your players to purchase tabs and redeem small winners for additional tabs without leaving their table, and their bingo cards! Pull tab sales and payouts must be completed by the end of your last bingo game. Most groups close tab sales 3-4 games before the end to allow time to for all winners to be processed.

Teach your workers how to sell pull tabs effectively. Ask players if they would like to purchase tabs with their winnings or with their change from other purchases. Talk to the players about what they like, and dislike, about the games. Wish them luck, and congratulate them when they win. And always remind the players of what your organization does with the funds you have raised. If they know about all the good work your organization does in your community, they will likely spend more money.

EVENT TICKETS are pull tabs, with a twist. They contain instant winners, like a pull tab, but there are also “Hold” tickets that are played after all tickets are sold.

There are two primary types of event tickets. The first, and most popular, is the Derby or Race style. “Hold” tickets show a horse (or car, dog, rubber ducky, etc.) with a number. This number corresponds with the downline on the flashboard, and the horse that completes their downline first wins the race. There are also bingo ball “Hold” tickets which are paid based on numbers called with the bingo blower.

The second style is the Dab ticket. These tabs have “Hold” tickets with multiple bingo balls on them (usually three to five balls). Players play these like a bingo sheet, and dab the numbers as they are called with the bingo blower.



Event tickets are simple to run and extremely profitable. Since all tickets are sold during the session and before the large winners are paid out, the paperwork is easy and the profits go straight to the bank!

JOB DESCRIPTIONS

- 1. The Caller**
- 2. Cashier(s)**
- 3. Floor Workers**



1. The Caller

Your caller will set the tone for your entire bingo operation. He or she is the conductor of the evening, making sure that everything runs smoothly and on time. The caller is the entertainer, keeping everyone attentive, informed and occasionally amused. Some of the responsibilities of the caller are to:

- ❖ Arrive early enough to setup and/or check the sound system, turn on the blower, flashboards, monitors, etc.
- ❖ Place the 75 bingo balls in the masterboard, checking each ball to ensure that it is not cracked or broken. Ask a player to verify that all of the balls are in place and in good condition before the start of the game.
- ❖ Begin the evening's session on time! Welcome all attendees, read a list of promotions and upcoming events, and read the house rules. Briefly review the program, highlighting the prizes to be won and the total guaranteed payout, including the consolation prizes.
- ❖ Begin the first game with, ***"We are now ready to start the first game. Your first ball is in the monitor."***
- ❖ Before each game, inform the players of the game number you are on and the color paper they should be playing on. Tell them what the prize is and explain the game being played. For example, ***"We're ready to play game number three. It is the green card in your main book. This is our first BIG game of the night, with a \$250 prize! We're playing a Letter "X" as shown on the flashboard. Good luck!"***
- ❖ Call the numbers in a clear, distinct tone of voice at the rate of 7 to 15 seconds per ball. Your bingo committee will predetermine this rate. If your blower has a timer, use it to help you establish a rhythm and pattern of calling.
- ❖ Remind players to make themselves heard when they have a bingo. It is the player's responsibility to make certain that the caller hears them and stops the game.
- ❖ When ***"Bingo"*** is called, stop the game and verify the winning card numbers. This process will vary due to differences in blowers. Make certain that the last number called is included in the bingo.
- ❖ If the winner(s) has a valid card, announce that you have a good bingo (or two, three or more good bingos). Tell them what the winner(s) will be paid. If the bingo is not valid, tell the crowd and resume calling numbers.
- ❖ Make announcements throughout the evening, encouraging players to purchase pull-tabs, raffle tickets, extra sheets for special games and refreshments. Also announce upcoming events and look for opportunities to remind the players of what your organization does for the community. Be witty or humorous, but do not tell long stories or jokes. Keep the game moving.

- ❖ Announce intermission, setting a time limit for everyone to purchase extra cards, pull tabs, refreshments, etc. This should be no more than 15 minutes. If your door prizes or raffles are drawn at the end of intermission, make certain that everyone knows exactly what time that will be.
- ❖ After intermission, announce when pull-tab sales will conclude, usually when there are four games left to play. This allows time to reconcile prior to the end of the session. Remind the players again one game before the cut-off so they can get winners redeemed and make last minute purchases.
- ❖ At the end of the evening, thank everyone for coming and invite them back. Take one more opportunity to remind them when your next session is, as well as any upcoming special events. The caller should speak to as many of the players personally as possible as they leave.

A few other things to consider:

- ❖ Some of the most successful bingo halls treat their caller as a special entertainer. They introduce him/her at the beginning of the evening and lead a round of applause at the end. If your caller is entertaining and fun to watch, it gives players one more reason to look forward to your game.
- ❖ Your caller should be thoroughly trained and knowledgeable about your equipment and its operation. Mistakes will happen, but they **MUST** be kept to a minimum. The integrity of your game depends upon an accurate, confident, well-trained caller.
- ❖ The caller should constantly be aware of what is happening in the hall. Potential problems should be identified and solved before they disrupt the game. A good caller can use humor to defuse many situations, as well as reminding players of the House Rules when necessary.

2. Cashiers

The job of a cashier varies widely from hall to hall, based on the size of the game and the number of volunteers available. If at all possible, it is best to have separate cashiers for each product line. At the very least, you should have separate cash trays for paper, pull tabs and novelty/promotional items.

- ◆ The chairman will bring the start-up cash and divide it as needed. Cashiers should prepare their registers and recount allocated money. Any discrepancies should be reported immediately.
- ◆ Product lines should be readied for selling. Bingo books should be laid out in a manner making it easy to quickly prepare players' orders. Pull-tab dispensing machines should be full, and tabs to be sold manually should be precounted into \$5 stacks. Ink and novelties should be "faced" and pricing should be visible.
- ◆ Once you begin selling, remember to greet all customers in a friendly, helpful manner. Make sure they understand the different pricing options. Ask if they would like "extras", whether they are early birds, main books or progressives.
- ◆ Pull-tab cashiers will sell tabs, as well as redeem winners. Keep all winning tickets, after defacing them in some manner. A permanent marker or a hole punch work well for this. Most games just draw a line down the middle of the ticket. Make certain that winners over \$100 are signed by the player.
- ◆ When sales are finished for the evening, count your cash drawer and inventory in the manner established by your bingo chairman.

3. Floor Workers

Floor workers are the key to extra profits. A positive, cheerful, knowledgeable person selling extra sheets, pull-tabs or raffle tickets on the floor can increase your “per player spend” dramatically. Some players will buy more because someone asked them to buy more. Many like the convenience of having the product come to them, so they don’t have to miss a single number called. Floor workers do many different jobs, and your best floor workers will switch back and forth as the session continues, selling the product that is most in demand at that time. Some of your responsibilities as a floor worker include:

- ❖ Being knowledgeable of the game and the various ways that a player can bingo. Be alert for new or confused players and offer assistance immediately.
- ❖ Before bingo starts, walk around and try to sell pull-tabs. Tabs are your biggest opportunity for extra profits, so promote them. Joking with the players and chatting briefly as you walk around the room will make their experience more enjoyable, and you will sell more!
- ❖ Greet the players and thank them for coming. Try to learn as many players’ names as possible.
- ❖ After bingo begins, remember to be courteous. These people are here to play bingo! Do not chat with the other workers, or stand between the players and the flashboard or monitors. This will disturb the players and make you much less effective as a salesperson.
- ❖ Continue to circulate in your area while the numbers are being called. Watch for people who want to buy extra sheets or tabs during the game. Tell players to raise their hand if they need assistance. Be ready to replace winning pull-tab tickets as needed. Keep the action going for your avid pull-tab players, but don’t interfere with their bingo.
- ❖ When a player has a bingo, make sure the caller hears them. If necessary, yell “**Bingo**” and make sure that the caller hears you and stops the game.
- ❖ When the caller is ready, take the winning card to another table and read the free space number so that the card may be verified. Let a player at the table see that the number on the card is the number being verified. If you do not have verifying equipment, call back the numbers slowly and clearly so they can be verified.
- ❖ If the player has a valid bingo, get the prize money from the cashier and pay the player. Remember to congratulate the player and make sure they know that you are happy they won!
- ❖ Between games, ask the players if they want extra sheets or pull-tabs.
- ❖ Never let a player hear you speak negatively about your game, your organization or your pull-tabs, even in a joking manner. If the player thinks that you feel the tabs are a rip-off, you will have a hard time selling anything to him or her or anyone they are sitting near.

SO YOU'VE RECEIVED YOUR BINGO LICENSE NOW WHAT?

CHOOSE A STARTING DATE AND PROMOTE, PROMOTE, PROMOTE!

Missouri Rules & Regulations limit advertising expenses to 2% of total receipts available for charitable purposes (net profit) from the previous year. New licensees will be allowed to estimate the funds available for advertising for the first two calendar quarters of operation. After six months, the total must be based on the actual receipts. This means that if you expect your bingo to earn a profit of \$1000 per week, your maximum advertising budget will be \$86 per month. Obviously, this will not buy a lot of media advertising. There are still many things you can do.

- Flyers are an excellent, inexpensive way to promote your bingo game. Your supplier should be able to help you design a flyer to let players know the three W's of your bingo— **Where** will your game be held. **When** will it be held, and finally, **Why** they will want to attend. Are you giving away door prizes? Holding a raffle? Planning a special game to benefit a specific charity? All of these are questions that can be answered with a simple flyer.
- Take your flyer and distribute it to every business and organization in your town and the surrounding area. Tell them what your charity does for the community and ask them if they would be willing to help. Hotels, retirement communities, colleges, Veteran's organizations, day care centers all of these can help you let the community know about your bingo.
- Plan and distribute a monthly calendar of events, with different specials and activities for each week. Make sure that players hate to be gone a single week, because of what they will miss!
- Form a partnership with a local business. Offer to hand out coupons and flyers for their business at your bingo game if they will hand out your flyers to their customers.
- Purchase an inexpensive item, like an ink pen, a small knife or a lighter, with your name and the day and time of your bingo. Hand them out at events besides your bingo so that you will reach people who are not already attending.
- Join forces with another charitable organization that does not play bingo, but needs to raise money. Have a special flyer designed for them to hand out to their friends and family. Offer to make a donation to their organization for every flyer returned to your bingo. If they get their members to participate as a fundraiser, you've got as whole new crew of volunteers out there drumming up business for your bingo. The money you pay them will count as a charitable donation, not against your advertising budget!

