
Slot Features Explained

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There are several features involved in online slots, each with their own specific functions and effects on gameplay. If you're planning on **playing slots**, understanding these features will help you make sense of what's happening on screen and get more enjoyment from your sessions. Here's a rundown of the most common slot features you'll encounter.

Scatter Symbols

Scatter symbols are among the most important symbols in any slot game. Unlike regular symbols that need to appear on a specific payline to count, scatters can land anywhere on the reels and still trigger their effect. There are a few different things scatters can do:

Payouts regardless of position: Traditional scatters award a payout whenever a certain number appear anywhere on the reels, regardless of whether they're on an active payline. Typically you'll need at least two or three scatters to receive a payout, with bigger prizes for landing more.

Triggering bonus features: This is probably the most common function of scatter symbols. In many slots, landing three or more scatters triggers a bonus round - usually a **free spins feature** or a pick-and-click bonus game. The number of scatters you land often determines how many free spins you receive, so landing four or five can be much more rewarding than landing three.

Scatter multipliers: In some games, scatter symbols carry multipliers. If two scatter multipliers land, they might double your win. Three could quadruple it, and four or more could multiply it several times over. The exact mechanics vary from game to game, so it's always worth checking the payable.

Wild Symbols

Wild symbols are often described as the joker of the slot world, and for good reason. A wild can substitute for most other symbols on the reels, helping to complete winning combinations that might otherwise have fallen short. For example, if you land two matching symbols on a payline with a wild next to them, the wild acts as a third matching symbol to create a win.

However, wilds typically don't substitute for scatter or bonus symbols - though this rule does vary between games, so always check.

There are several variations of wild symbols that you'll come across:

Standard wilds: These simply substitute for other symbols. They appear, help complete a win if possible, and that's it.

Expanding wilds: When an expanding wild lands on a reel, it stretches to cover the entire reel. This can create multiple winning combinations across different paylines simultaneously.

Sticky wilds: These wilds stay in place for a set number of spins, giving you multiple chances to benefit from them. They're especially valuable during free spins rounds.

Walking wilds: After landing, these wilds move one position across the reels with each spin until they walk off the edge. Each new position creates fresh opportunities for winning combinations.

Multiplier wilds: As covered in our [multipliers guide](#), some wilds carry a multiplier value. Any win involving that wild is multiplied by the displayed amount - a 3x multiplier wild triples the payout.

Stacked wilds: These appear as multiple wild symbols stacked on top of each other on a single reel, increasing the chances of forming several winning lines at once.

Bonus Rounds

Beyond free spins, many slots feature interactive bonus rounds that take you away from the regular reels entirely. These might involve picking items to reveal prizes, spinning a prize wheel, climbing a trail for increasing rewards, or playing a simple mini-game.

Bonus rounds usually offer the biggest payouts in a slot game and are often what keep players coming back. The variety of bonus game designs is enormous - developers are constantly coming up with creative new formats to keep things fresh and entertaining.

Gamble Feature

Some slots include a gamble feature that lets you risk your winnings for a chance to double or even quadruple them. Typically this involves guessing the colour or suit of a face-down playing card. Guess correctly and your win is multiplied; guess wrong and you lose the lot.

It's a high-risk feature and definitely not for everyone, but it can add an extra bit of excitement after a decent win. Most games that include this feature also give you the option to collect your winnings without gambling, so it's entirely your choice.

Cascading Reels

Also known as tumbling reels or avalanche reels, this mechanic removes winning symbols from the reels after a win and replaces them with new symbols dropping in from above. If the new symbols form another winning combination, you get paid again, and the process repeats. This can result in multiple consecutive

wins from a single spin.

Many slots pair cascading reels with increasing multipliers, so each consecutive cascade in a chain boosts the multiplier applied to your win. This combination can produce some seriously big payouts.

Megaways Mechanic

A more recent innovation, the Megaways mechanic changes the number of symbols on each reel with every spin. This creates a variable number of ways to win - often up to 117,649 or more. The unpredictability adds excitement, and Megaways slots are typically high-volatility games where big wins are possible but less frequent.

Understanding The Paytable

Every slot has a paytable that explains all the symbols, features, and payouts for that particular game. Before you start playing a new slot, spend a minute looking through the paytable. It tells you which symbols are worth the most, how bonus features are triggered, and what special mechanics are in play. This information helps you understand what to look out for and what the game's key selling points are.

For more on how slots work, browse our [slot and casino guides](#).

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