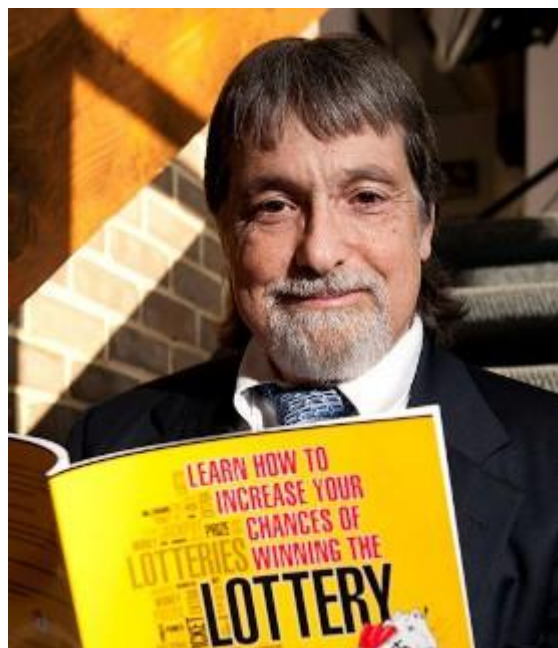


LOCAL

Mega Millions Fever: How To Increase Your Odds Of Winning

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Richard Lustig with his book. (CBS Detroit)

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*First of all, Lustig, a native of Orlando, Fla., who wrote the book "[Learn How To Increase Your Chances of Winning The Lottery](#)," said you should never spend more than you can afford.

"Decide what your budget is, don't spend grocery money, don't spend rent money, think about it, there are going to be millions of people who are going to lose tomorrow night, so don't be one of those unfortunate people who wakes up saying 'how am I going to live?'"

*Once you've decided how much to spend, choose your favorite sequence of numbers — and use them time and time again.

“Never play quick picks ... You never increase your chances when you buy quick pick. Your odds are always the same, the worst odds. But when you buy your own sets of numbers and keep playing them, your odds get better,” Lustig said. “It’s not the individual numbers, it’s the set of numbers that matters.”

*Join a pool to increase your odds. Draw up a simple agreement, have everyone sign it, make copies of the tickets that belong to the pool, never mix individual tickets with pool tickets — and you should be fine.

“Pools are good because you’re increasing your odds of winning without spending too much,” Lustig said, adding that it’s silly to worry about cutting your winnings if you win in a pool instead of individually. ” With \$500 million, if you win, and you’re in a pool of 10 people you’re still going to get \$50 million each,” he said.

So, what makes Lustig so sure this is the right way to play? He’s won a jackpot seven times, including a big take of \$842,000.

He explained that when the lottery came to Florida 23 years ago, “I was like everyone else, I had no method, and like everybody else I was losing 99 percent of the time. There’s got to be something you can do so you’re not throwing money down the drain. As I kept writing down more ideas and accumulating more ideas, I kept winning — \$50, \$500 — as I kept increasing my method, then I won my first grand prize.

“When I won my fourth lottery grand prize, I knew it was working.”

He also suggested going against the tide by grabbing some scratch-off tickets, which you have much better odds of winning.

“Don’t grab a bunch of different kinds because they’re calling to you, that’s the worst thing in the world you can do ... If you have a \$100 budget, divide it by 10. Buy 10 \$10 tickets, and get them in a row, the same kind. If you buy 10 in a row of the same kind, odds are almost every time you’ll find a winning ticket in there.”

So, what’s he buying today, scratch offs or Mega Millions?

“I will be buying Mega Millions for tomorrow, it would be stupid if I didn’t,” Lustig said.

If you don’t stay up to watch the 11 p.m. Friday lottery draw, [check the winning numbers here](#) Saturday morning. Mega Millions jackpot is a joint lottery of New York, Ohio, Georgia, Illinois, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Jersey and Virginia.