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# Why Powerball jackpots are bigger than ever before

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AP PHOTO/ALAN DIAZ

A customer showed her Powerball tickets for Wednesday's drawing on Tuesday in Hialeah, Fla. Because of a switch to lottery rules made in 2015, Powerball jackpots of late have been bigger than usual.

By [Matt Rocheleau](#)

GLOBE STAFF AUGUST 24, 2017

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It's not your imagination: Powerball jackpots of late have been bigger than usual.

Six of the 10 largest jackpots in the game's 25-year history were reached either in 2016 or 2017, including Wednesday night's drawing for \$758.7 million — the second-largest grand prize ever — won by [someone who bought their ticket in Massachusetts](#).

Why have jackpots reached new heights?

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The rules of the game changed recently.

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In October 2015, [a switch](#) was made that made it tougher to win the jackpot but bettered contestants' odds of winning smaller prizes. On the other hand, the slimmer odds of winning the grand prize have increased the likelihood of larger jackpots.



## **These things are more likely than you winning the jackpot**

The odds of winning the Powerball jackpot were a staggering 1 in 292 million. The odds of achieving sainthood is just 1 in 20 million.

**So you didn't win Powerball. Don't worry, you can still be happy**

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Under the old setup, players chose five numbers ranging from 1 to 59 and also chose a sixth number, the Powerball, which ranges from 1 to 35. Contestants had a 1 in 175 million chance of capturing the grand prize.

Under the new parameters, players must choose five numbers ranging from 1 to 69, and the Powerball is now chosen from between 1 and 26. Your odds of hitting the jackpot now? A staggering 1 in 292 million.

The game has undergone several other evolutions during its history that have made it increasingly difficult to win the jackpot.

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The jackpot odds were about 1 in 55 million when Powerball started in 1992.

## Largest jackpots in Powerball history

Drawings after Oct. 2015 rules change highlighted below.

Rank	Jackpot	Drawing date	State(s) where winning tickets sold
1	\$1.586 Billion	Jan. 13, 2016	California, Florida, Tennessee
2	\$758.7 Million	Aug. 23, 2017	Massachusetts
3	\$590.5 Million	May 18, 2013	Florida
4	\$587.5 Million	Nov. 28, 2012	Arizona, Missouri
5	\$564.1 Million	Feb. 11, 2015	North Carolina, Puerto Rico, Texas
6	\$487.0 Million	July 30, 2016	New Hampshire
7	\$448.4 Million	Aug. 7, 2013	Minnesota, New Jersey, New Jersey
8	\$447.8 Million	June 10, 2017	California
9	\$435.3 Million	Feb. 22, 2017	Indiana
10	\$429.6 Million	May 7, 2016	New Jersey

SOURCE: Powerball

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