



# Recommended Bookmakers

Your Bet Bank Alerts guide to the bookies!

[www.BetBankAlerts.co.uk](http://www.BetBankAlerts.co.uk)

Inside Mr X's exclusive guide to the bookies...

- Who to place your Bet Bank Alerts bets with – and why...
- Top 10 bookies reviewed...
- Which websites are easy to use (and which ones aren't!)
- Why sometimes it pays to pick up the phone...
- Discover which sports each bookie specialises in...
- Get the most from your bookmaking accounts – markets to look out for...

# Welcome to your Bet Bank Alerts guide to the bookies!

One of the most common questions I get from members is, 'What bookies do I need to have an account with?'...

Of course, each bet is different. So the bookies I quote in your Bet Bank Alert text message tips will vary depending on the event.

But there are certain bookies that I would class as 'recommended.' Established bookies that will take a decent-sized bet, offer a wide range of markets, have a telephone betting service and a user-friendly website. And I've listed and reviewed them for you in this exclusive guide...

As well as the big High Street names, I'll also point you towards other bookmakers that are well worth having accounts with for placing your Bet Bank Alerts bets.

Different bookies specialise in different sports and markets – and each has their own 'personality' in the sports betting world. Having myself worked for some of these firms over the years – and having been in the industry for the best part of three decades – I know the bookies like the back of my hand.

- For advice on opening betting accounts and placing bets, check out the help and advice on the [Bet Bank Alerts website](#).

## The Big Three – High Street bookies

I'll start with the household names – the three biggest UK bookies – William Hill, Ladbrokes and Coral.

I'd recommend you have an account with at least one of these. All three offer a wide range of markets in their shops, over the phone and online. They're all massive companies, so your money will be safe as houses in accounts with them. Generally they'll all take a good-size bet and stand by their opinion on a bet or price.

### William Hill

Open an account: [www.WilliamHill.com](http://www.WilliamHill.com)

Phone: 0800 223 311 (Freephone)

Betting shops: Over 2,000 across the UK

The William Hill website is my pick of the big three bookies' sites. The day's big events are always flagged up on the homepage and finding your bet by Sport is made simple by the big list of categories across the top of the screen.

A wide range of markets and events are covered – having a William Hill account will come in particularly useful for your weekly Bet Bank Alerts bets on football Match Results and rugby Handicaps. Recommended.

Useful to know...

- It takes a big swing of money for Hills to dramatically cut their odds. And I find they also stand by their prices in the smaller markets, often offering industry-best Corner Handicaps on live football matches, for example.

## Ladbrokes

Open an account: [www.Ladbrokes.com](http://www.Ladbrokes.com)

Phone: 0800 777 888 (Freephone)

Betting shops: 1,900 shops nationwide.

Ladbrokes is another huge, established bookmaker. Having an account with them will come in useful for many of your Bet Bank Alerts bets – in particular tournament winner bets, football Match Result markets, tennis bets and rugby Handicaps.

The site looks good and hosts a wide range of bets – but they are not always easy to find. You have to put the time in to navigating the menus and scrolling through the list of bets.

However the site redeems itself with an excellent online 'Bet Slip' (always shown on the right of the screen), that calculates your potential winnings with the 'Check Bet' button, clearly shows your current selections and works out the odds on doubles, trebles and accumulators.

Useful to know...

- Ladbrokes are the top bookie for Asian Handicap football bets – a market that often provides bets for us in Bet Bank Alerts. As well as the top UK divisions Ladbrokes also cover European and Rest of World leagues, and their online Asian Handicap 'coupon' lists all games with a useful explanation of what the handicap means and what results it pays out on.
- Many of the tennis Match Winner bets I recommend – one player to beat another – will be with Ladbrokes. They are in the small group of bookies that go by a 'One-Ball' rule, paying out on the Match Winner if the match starts but is not completed. Useful, for example, when we're betting based on injury news and the opponent 'retires' during the match. See the 'Betting Rules' page of the [Bet Bank Alerts website](#) for more on the rules on tennis payouts.

## Coral

Open an account: [www.Coral.co.uk](http://www.Coral.co.uk)

Phone: 0800 328 4273 (Freephone)

Betting shops: Over 1,600 shops in the UK

You'll find 1 quote bets available with Coral most weeks. A good bookie for all major sporting events, tournament markets and Match Result bets – and one you will often place a Bet Bank Alerts rugby Handicap bet with.

Coral's site is not the most modern – but once you find the Sport and event you're after the coupons and bets are clearly displayed. The online Bet Slip is good, too – showing your bet selections and potential returns.

Useful to know...

- The 'Next 5 Sport Events' and 'Next Live Betting' lists on the homepage show the matches starting soon – a good shortcut to your bet when I send out an alert close to kick off.
- Coral also go by the 'One-Ball' rule for tennis match bets (see above).

## Recommended Bookies – The Best of the Rest

Having accounts with William Hill, Ladbrokes or Coral will all come in very useful for placing your Bet Bank Alerts bets. But thanks to the massive growth in online betting since the turn of the century – and the fierce competition between the bookies – you'll often find the best price on a bet, or a bet not available on the High Street, with one of these firms...

### Paddy Power

Open an account: [www.PaddyPower.com](http://www.PaddyPower.com)

Phone: 0800 0565 265 (Freephone)

Irish bookie that likes to put a bit of 'fun' in to betting – offering Specials and Novelty bets on everything from Wayne Rooney getting sent off to The X Factor winner and even the next James Bond.

It's not all fun and games though – Paddy Power offer a mountain of sports betting markets and these can provide us with excellent betting opportunities...

As well as all the normal Match Result bets, the Paddy Power website also has a huge selection of 'Under and Over' bets on total Goals and Corners for live football matches and Total Points for rugby matches. Sometimes as many as 80 markets are available on a single match!

Use the Sports list on the left of the screen to find your way through the massive selection of bets on the website.

Useful to know...

- Being an Irish bookmaker, Paddy Power has good coverage of the Gaelic sports and Irish events – areas other bookmakers might not offer you a bet on.

## Stan James

Open an account: [www.StanJames.com](http://www.StanJames.com)

Phone: 0800 211 222 (Freephone)

Stan James is one of the top bookmakers outside of 'The Big Three,' and also has High Street betting shops.

A massive range of markets are on offer – Stan James go to town with big events, offering 20+ bets for live rugby matches and 35+ for live football. They also have a wide range of markets on cricket, tennis, golf and many other sports.

There are no fancy gimmicks on the website – finding your bet by Sport and event is straightforward. And the online Bet Slip is one of the best around – it shows the bet you've selected, the betting options (doubles, trebles, stakes etc) and how much you stand to win.

Having an account at Stan James will come in useful for placing many of your Bet Bank bets. Their prices often tend to go up earlier than several other bookies – and they often have standout prices on tennis, football and rugby matches.

Useful to know...

- Stan James is one of the top bookies for 'In-Running' betting, offering markets on matches and events during play - around the clock.

## Boylesports

Open an account: [www.Boylesports.com](http://www.Boylesports.com)

Phone: 0800 44 00 00 (Freephone)

Irish bookies Boylesports are relatively new on the scene – established in 1989 – but are now a big player, especially online. They've made their presence felt by offering a wide range of markets and by regularly going up with industry best prices.

For example, during the Rugby World Cup and Six Nations, Boyles were offering Evens for both legs of their Match Handicap bets – a better price than the standard 10/11 or less offered by other bookies.

As well as the football and rugby, Boyles have a particularly good range of golf and snooker markets.

The website is very similar in style to the Stan James one – the menus and Bet Slip are presented in the same clear way (and if anything the Boylesports site has a more modern look to it).

Boylesports may not be one of the best-known bookies (yet) – but they offer an excellent service and a wide range of bets. Having an account with them will definitely come in useful for placing many of your Bet Bank Alerts bets – and for getting the best odds, too.

Useful to know...

- Boylesports regularly put up unique ‘Soccer Specials’ – for example most weekends they offer enhanced accumulators on Match Results, and bets on Highest Scoring Games and Total Goals Scored from the weekend’s Premier League games. These markets often feature some good value prices.

## Skybet

Open an account: [www.Skybet.com](http://www.Skybet.com)

Phone: 08000 724 221 (Freephone)

Skybet is a top online bookie with a large range of bets on all sports, and excellent coverage of live events - no surprise seeing as they’re part of the Sky TV empire. You can even watch certain Sky Sports matches live on the Skybet website and bet in-play on the same screen.

They often go up early with their prices, and can also be relied upon to think up additional bets and Specials alongside the normal Match Result, Outright Winner and Handicap Bets.

For example, Skybet are always one of the first bookies up with Champions League prices after the draw for the next rounds has been made – ditto with other Cup competitions – and they were the first bookie to put up prices for the 2010 Winter Olympics.

The Skybet website has a few bells and whistles – plenty of flashy images and icons on screen – and some users do find it a bit clunky to use. However the sheer number of bets on offer, especially for live matches, makes it worthwhile.

Skybet covers all the markets I generally target with your Bet Bank Alerts bets – and I’ll occasionally recommend a bet or price with them that isn’t available at many other bookies. An account well worth having.

Useful to know...

- Skybet offer a huge range of bets on live football matches, with 60+ markets available before kick off including Goals, Corners and Booking Points. You can also bet many of those markets in-play.
- Skybet make a habit of offering the best prices on Under or Over 2.5 Goals bets – markets that I keep a close eye on.

## Betfred

Open an account: [www.Betfred.com](http://www.Betfred.com)

Phone: 0800 73 11 210 (Freephone)

Betfred prides itself on being 'the world's biggest independent bookmaker,' and on offering 'bonus' bets and enhanced odds of football, racing and other sports - founder Fred Done refers to himself as The Bonus King. There are also over 800 Betfred betting shops in the UK.

All major sports are covered, and although there aren't as many specific markets on offer as some other bookies - all your day-to-day Match Results, Outright Winner and Handicaps are there. And prices are usually competitive.

The Betfred website isn't the most attractive you'll come across – there's a lot to take in on the homepage screen. But using the Sport menus on the left of the screen (as with most bookies' websites), finding and placing your bet is simple enough.

All in all Betfred is a solid all-rounder, and a bookie I'll often mention for your Bet Bank Alerts football and rugby bets.

Useful to know...

- Betfred founder Fred Done is a famous Man Utd fan – he opened his first ever betting shop in Manchester way back in 1967 – and Betfred often offer Specials bets and best prices on Man Utd games. In 2005, Fred lost a £1 million bet with rival bookmaker Victor Chandler that Man Utd would finish above Chelsea in the 2004/5 Premier League season (!).

## Blue Square

Open an account: [www.BlueSq.com](http://www.BlueSq.com)

Phone: 0800 5870500 (Freephone)

Blue Square are one of the original online bookmakers. And they've gone from strength to strength since the turn of the century, offering live coverage of European matches on their website and numerous in-play bets.

A wide range of markets is on offer on all sports, and on a weekly basis several of the Bet Bank Alerts bets I recommend will be available with Blue Square – so having an account with them will come in useful. They are often competitive with their rugby Handicaps and prices...

But Blue Square's biggest selling point is their football coverage. They price up leagues from all over the UK, Europe and the Rest of the World with Match Result coupons for everything from the English Premier League to Finnish Veikkausliiga and the Japanese J-League!

For live TV matches Blue Square offer dozens of football markets, often with a slightly different slant to the bets on offer with other bookies.

For example, for live Premier League games you can bet on a team to win the Corners Match Bet (win the most corners) and Booking Points Match Bet (team to get the most yellow and red cards) – bets you won't find covered by many other bookies.

The Blue Square website is very clear and well presented – in fact I rate it as one of the 'best-looking' bookie sites out there. Find your bet using the sport by sport menus, then scroll down the list for all the bets on a particular match or event. Recommended.

Useful to know...

- Since 2007, Blue Square have been the sponsors of English football's top non-league division – with the old 'Football Conference' becoming the 'Blue Square Premier.' Blue Square offers a wide range of bets on matches in this lesser-known division, with 'big match' coverage of weekly live matches.

## Recommended Betting Exchange – Betfair

Open an account: [www.Betfair.com](http://www.Betfair.com)

Phone: 0844 871 0000

Most of the bets I advise in my Bet Bank Alerts service are with the 'traditional' bookies, where a set price is offered and you are betting direct against the bookmaker. You either win or lose.

However - the best price on certain bets can often be found on the betting exchanges. Betfair is the leading betting exchange. Members set their own odds for events and put up how much money they are prepared to bet. If your bet wins you pay a small commission (around 5%) on your profits.

Because of the competitive pricing on Betfair – and because you're betting against other people's opinions on a bet – you sometimes find higher odds on certain markets than those available with the traditional bookies. When a best price is available on Betfair, I will mention it in your Bet Bank Alerts text message tip.

As well as 'backing' a bet to win as normal, Betfair also give you the opportunity to 'lay' a bet – that is, to bet on something not happening. Occasionally I will recommend a bet on Betfair in order to guarantee a profit from one of our previous bets.

For example, if we backed Tiger Woods to win a golf tournament at 2/1 on the first day's play on Thursday, we could then 'lay' him at a shorter price to guarantee a profit (or a no-loss result) if Tiger went into the final day's play at the top of the leaderboard.

The Betfair website is massive, covering hundreds of bets and events. The betting screens are laid out differently to traditional bookies, so take care to read the help and advice sections on their site before you start to bet on there. If you press the wrong button, you could end up placing your bet not to win by accident.

Having a Betfair account is not essential for following my Bet Bank Alerts tips. But having one will certainly come in useful every now and then for getting the best odds on a bet or for guaranteeing a profit from a particular bet.

## Telephone betting - Sometimes it pays to pick up the phone...

Though the Internet is a fast and accurate way of placing your bets - don't forget about telephone betting - the person-to-person way has several advantages.

For instance, bookies often set their internet prices to come down if a certain limit on bets for an outcome has been reached - leaving screens with no prices on them at all. This is an understandable fail-safe mechanism from bookmakers who don't want to be taken unawares by the gamble of the century. But these fail-safe limits are often very low and just a steady trickle of bets can trigger them. Depending on how efficient the staff are, and the mood of the trading manager, is how quickly the internet prices go up again.

But if you don't want to sit around in limbo while they make up their minds - why not give the firm a call? Ask for a price and an amount on the outcome you are interested in and the operator will likely refer your call to one of the trading staff. You will often get what you ask for - or close to it - on a bet that is showing blank on internet screens.

Similarly - if your request for a bet on the internet is met with 'your stakes are too high message,' ring up and ask for the amount you want - in many cases you will be given a sum greater than the internet was set to accept.

- For more on how to place bets and open an account with the bookies – online and over the phone - head to the Bet Bank Alerts website:  
[www.BetBankAlerts.co.uk](http://www.BetBankAlerts.co.uk)

I've given you my guide to the bookies – now it's time to start cashing-in! Keep an eye on your emails ready for your next Bet Bank Alerts tips...

Best wishes,

*Mr X*

Bet Bank Alerts

<http://www.BetBankAlerts.co.uk>

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