

3. The slot machine of claim 1, wherein all of said second ends define said curved display surface.

4. The slot machine of claim 1, wherein at least some of said second ends define a flat display surface adjacent to said curved display surface.

5. The slot machine of claim 4, wherein said flat display displays alphanumeric information and said curved display surface displays symbols on said simulated mechanical reels.

6. The slot machine of claim 1, wherein said radius of curvature is in the range of from about 4 to about 7 inches.

7. The slot machine of claim 1, wherein said image display device is a CRT display.

8. A method of operating a slot machine, comprising:

selecting a random outcome in response to receiving a wager;

determining a symbol grouping corresponding to said random outcome; and

displaying said symbol grouping on ends of an array of optical fibers, said ends define a curved display surface having a radius of curvature that approximates the radius of curvature of a mechanical reel.

9. The method of claim 8, wherein said displaying includes transmitting images of said symbol grouping through said optical fibers from an image source.

10. A spinning reel slot machine, comprising:

a plurality of mechanical reels that, in response to a wager, are rotated and stopped to randomly place symbols on said plurality of mechanical reels in visual association with a display area, one of said plurality of mechanical reels having a transparent window at a location where a symbol would normally be present; and

a video display located behind said one of said plurality of mechanical reels and in alignment with said display area, said video display displaying a video symbol when said transparent window stops in said display area, said video symbol being observable through said transparent window by a player of said slot machine.

11. The slot machine of claim 10, wherein said video display provides a backlight for a symbol on said one of said mechanical reels when said symbol stops in said display area.

12. The slot machine of claim 10, wherein said video display displays a video symbol while said transparent window moves through said display area.

13. The slot machine of claim 11, wherein said video display displays a video symbol while said transparent window moves slowly through said display area and displays no video symbol while said transparent window moves quickly through said display area.

14. The slot machine of claim 10, wherein said video display is sized to cover substantially all of said display area.

15. The slot machine of claim 14, wherein said video display provides backlighting for symbols adjacent to said transparent window and simultaneously displays said video symbol through said transparent window.

16. The slot machine of claim 14, wherein said display area includes multiple symbols on said one of said mechanical reels.

17. The slot machine of claim 16, wherein said display includes three symbols.

18. The slot machine of claim 10, further including a lens between said video display and said one of said plurality of mechanical reels.

19. The slot machine of claim 18, wherein said lens has a curved surface near said one of said mechanical reels.

20. The slot machine of claim 19, wherein said curved surface has a radius of curvature that approximates a radius of curvature of said one of said plurality of mechanical reels.

21. The slot machine of claim 10, wherein said video display is comprised of ends of a plurality of optical fibers, said optical fibers transmitting light from an image source.

22. The slot machine of claim 10, wherein said video display is at a fixed location behind said one of said mechanical reels.

23. The slot machine of claim 10, wherein each of said plurality of mechanical reels includes a transparent window and an associated video display.

24. The slot machine of claim 10, wherein each of said plurality of mechanical reels includes a transparent window and said video display provides video symbols for each of said plurality of mechanical reels.

25. The slot machine of claim 10, wherein said video symbol is determined based on the number of rotations of said one of said plurality of mechanical reels.

26. A method of operating a slot machine having mechanical reels, comprising:

selecting a random outcome in response to receiving a wager;

determining a symbol grouping corresponding to said outcome to be displayed by said mechanical reels; and

displaying said symbol grouping on said mechanical reels, at least one of said symbols being a video symbol displayed behind one of said mechanical reels and visible through a transparent window in said one of said mechanical reels.

27. The method of claim 26, wherein said video symbol is displayed by a video display, said video display providing backlighting for symbols on said one of said mechanical reels.

28. The method of claim 26, wherein each of said mechanical reels includes a transparent window and a corresponding video display.

29. The method of claim 26, wherein each of said mechanical reels includes a transparent window and one video display provides video symbols for each mechanical reel.

30. A spinning reel slot machine, comprising:

a plurality of mechanical reels that, in response to a wager, are rotated and stopped to randomly place symbol regions on said plurality of reels in visual association with a display area, one of said plurality of mechanical reels having a miniature image display located at a selected one or more of said symbol regions.

31. The slot machine of claim 30, wherein each of said plurality of mechanical reels has a miniature image display located at a selected one or more of said symbol regions.

32. The slot machine of claim 31, wherein each of said plurality of mechanical reels has a miniature image display located at each of said symbol regions.

33. The slot machine of claim 30, wherein said one of said plurality of mechanical reels has a miniature image display located at each of said symbol regions.