

# How to Play

# MAH-JONGG



## INTRODUCTION

**MAHJONG** is a game of skill coupled with wit and fortune. It originated in China, and dates so far back into ancient times of about two thousand years ago, through many dynasties, this game became to emperor game in palace since Ming dynasty, that it is said Mahjong was the imperial clan game in ancient China.

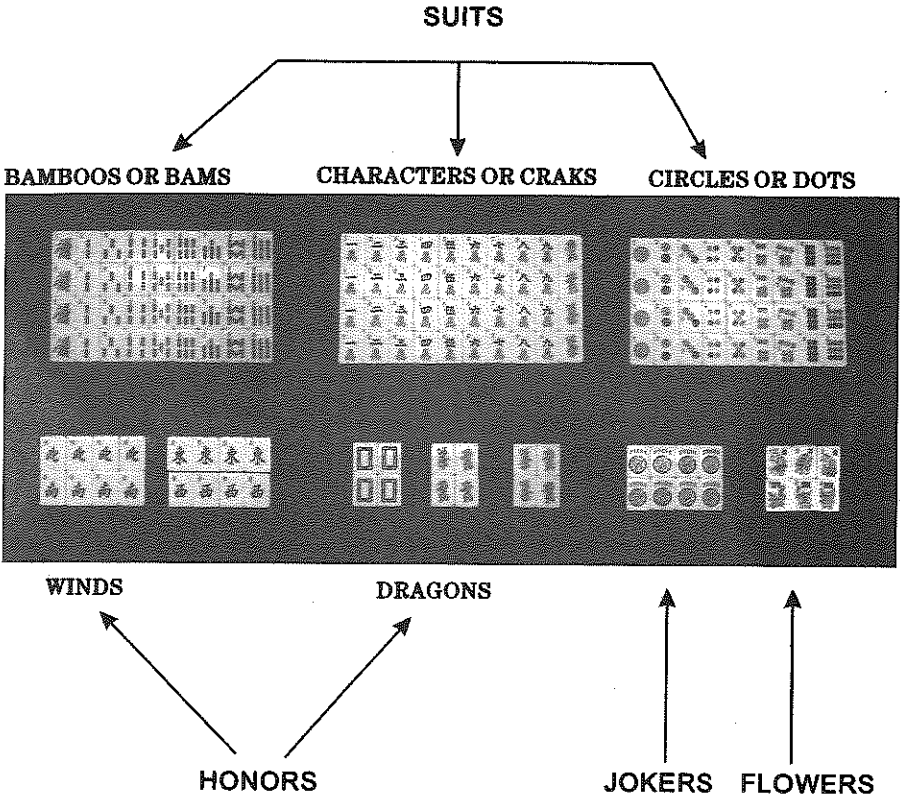
To learn to master the art of Mah Jong, this pictorial guide has been compiled in order to lessen the time it takes for you to learn this game, so that the many enjoyable hours of playing Mah Jong will soon be yours.

## OUTLINE

1. Identify your tiles.
2. Identify all other items used in playing Mah Jongg.
3. To Start
  - Selection of East
  - Build Wall, Break Wall
4. To Play
  - Exchange
  - Round
5. Mah Jongg Winner

**STEP I Identify your tiles.**

You will find your Mah Jongg set has 164 tiles, You need only 152 tiles for playing Mah Jongg. The extra tiles are given to you as spares.



This simple chart lets you view all 152 tiles in their family arrangement, making them easy to recognize instantly.

**NOTE:** The 152 tiles are divided into 4 main groups.

1. HONORS (with 28 tiles)
2. SUITS (with 108 tiles)
3. FLOWERS (with 8 tiles)
4. JOKERS (with 8 tiles)

**HONORS** are divided into 2 sub groups, **WINDS** and **DRAGONS**.  
**WINDS**--16 tiles

**HONORS**  
28 tiles

**DRAGONS**--12 tiles

**WINDS (16) NOTE:** All 16 winds have the initial of their wind in the upper left hand corner of each tile. This makes recognizing winds quite easy

**DRAGONS (12) NOTE:** Dragons are divided into 3 different colors.  
There are 4 red dragons.  
There are 4 white dragons with a blue border.  
There are 4 green dragons.

**SUITS** are divided into 3 sub groups, **CIRCLES**, **BAMBOOS** AND **CHARACTERS**.

**SUISS**  
108 tiles

**CIRCLES**--36 tiles  
**BAMBOOS**--36 tiles  
**CHARACTERS**--36 tiles

**CIRCLES** are usually called Dots. There are 36 **BLUE DOT TILES**, 4 of each number, from number 1 to number 9.

**NOTE:** Circles or Dots on each tile represent the number on the tile.

**BAMBOOS** are usually called Bams. There are 36 **GREEN BAM TILES**, 4 of each number, from number 1 to number 9.

**NOTE:** The figure on these Bams resembles Bamboo. These tiles are also numbered in the upper left hand corner.

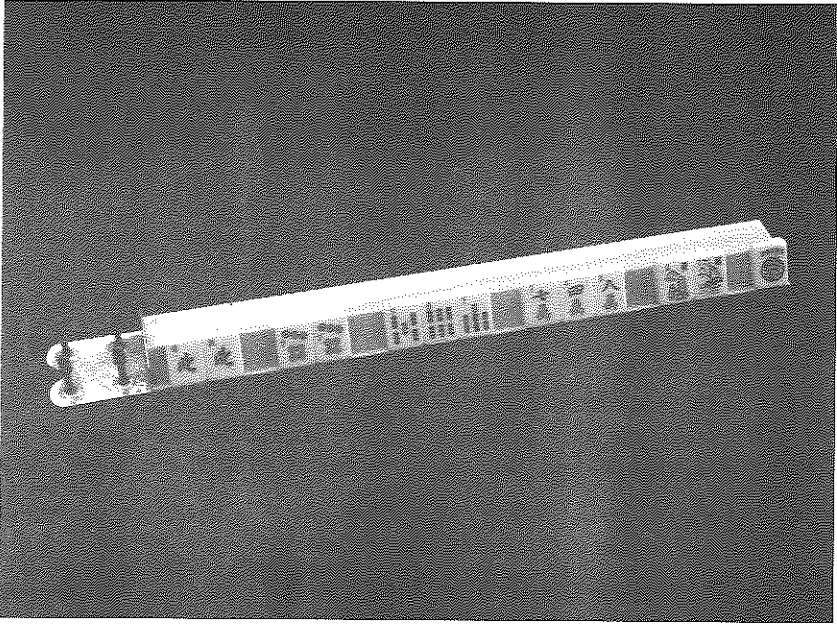
**CHARACTERS** are usually called **CRACKS**. There are 36 **RED CRACK TILES**, 4 of each number, from number 1 to number 9.

**NOTE:** Cracks are also numbered in the upper left hand corner.

**FLOWERS** There are 8 **FLOWER** tiles.

**JOKERS** There are 8 **JOKERS** which are used as **WILD** tiles. This means a player can substitute a **JOKER** for any tile to help improve his hand.

**STEP II Identify all other items used in playing Mah Jongg.**



**RACK** Every player has his own rack to hold his tiles while he is playing Mah Jongg. The little nail-like projections on the left of each rack is a place to hold the player's chips.

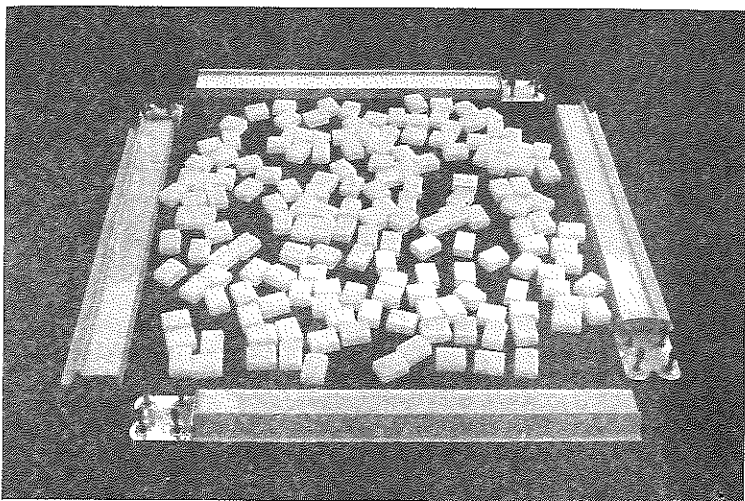
The rack in this picture is holding 13 tiles and several chips. Each player receives 13 tiles unless he is East, in which case East has an advantage of one extra tile. Thus East has 14 tiles.

**NOTE:** In the picture above we have assembled our tiles in order. All HONORS SUITS, FLOWERS and JOKERS together in their proper order. This is an example of the correct way you set up your tiles in order to better organize your thoughts.

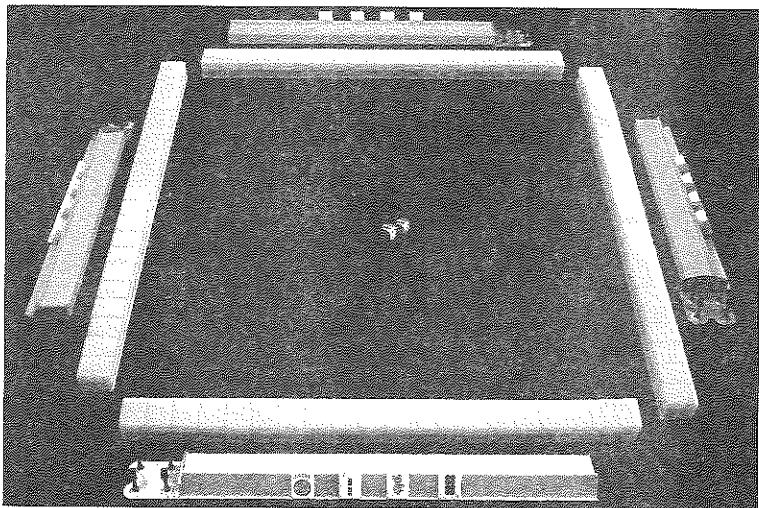


### STEP III To Start

- A. Racks are placed in a square, one rack in front of each player.
- B. All 152 tiles are mixed and placed face down in the center of the square formed by the racks.



- C. All four players throw the dica. The player with the highest number becomes East.
- D. To Build the Wall.  
Each player builds a wall of tiles face down in front of his rack two tiles high. All 152 tiles should now be part of the wall.

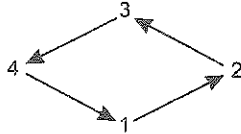


After each player sets his tiles and his goal, he is ready to start the first Exchange, or Charleston, which is compulsory.

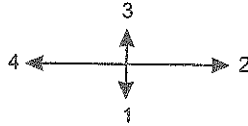
This is an exchange of tiles at the start of the game. It is a chance to improve your hand by getting rid of unwanted tiles.

The three (3) steps to the First Exchange are:

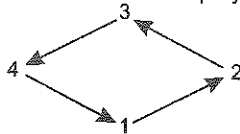
1. Each player passes 3 unwanted tiles to his right.



2. Each player passes 3 unwanted tiles to the player opposite him.



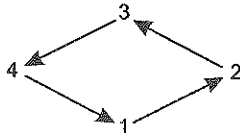
3. Each player passes 3 unwanted tiles to the player at his left.



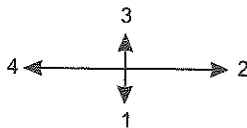
The Second Exchange of tiles is OPTIONAL.

All players must agree to the Second Exchange.

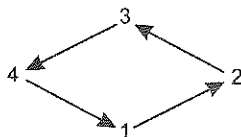
1. Each player passes 3 unwanted tiles to the player at his left.



2. Each player passes 3 unwanted tiles to the player opposite him.



3. Each player passes 3 unwanted tiles to his right.



NOTE: Once you start the Exchange you must complete all 3 steps.

If you are satisfied with your tiles and do not wish to exchange, then you may pass the 3 tiles given to you without looking at them. This is called a **Blind Pass**.

No Jokers are passed during an Exchange.

All other tiles may be passed.



## STEP IV TO PLAY

Each player, working clockwise from East, picks up the next tile from the wall. He then looks at it and places it concealed on the flat top part of his rack. Then he discards one unwanted tile, (placing the discarded tile face up in the center made by the racks). He then places the concealed tile on his rack. A player must always keep only 13 tiles on his rack at one time. If, by error, a player has more tiles, or less tiles, than the 13 (other than East, who has 14 tiles) his hand is considered dead.

**A DEAD HAND** means the player may no longer continue playing Mah Jongg until the game is won, or over. The player with the dead hand keeps his hand concealed. He does not show his hand to any other player until the game is completed.

If a player needs a tile discarded by another player and the tile is now in the center of the square, he must follow these rules:

- a. If the player's hand is a **CONCEALED HAND**, he can only call for a tile from the center of the square, only if it is the last tile he needs to complete Mah Jongg.
- b. If the player's hand is an **EXPOSED HAND**, he can call for any tile needed to complete either a Kong, Pung, Quint or Mah Jongg, as long as this particular tile is the last tile needed to complete the Kong, Pung, Quint, or Mah Jongg.

**A Round** is the process of each player continuing to pick up a tile from the wall and discarding an unwanted tile face up, in the center of the square formed by the racks.

Rounds are continued until a player wins Mah Jongg by matching his tiles with a particular hand.

If no one wins and all tiles are used, another wall is built and players continue to play until someone wins.

## STEP V SCORING

Numerical values are given to each hand. This is predetermined by the players when they make up the hands before the game begins. Chips are used to pay the winner.

If a player wins Mah Jongg due to the fact that another player discarded the one tile needed to complete his hand, that player who discarded the tile must pay double the worth of the hand. All other players pay the winner the single worth of the hand.

## DEFINITIONS

### BLIND PASS

In the Exchange or Charleston, a player takes the three tiles from one player and passes them to another player, without looking at them. In this way, the player's original tiles have not been changed. Players use the blind pass if they want to keep all their original tiles.

**CONCEALED HAND** A player who is trying to obtain a hand which is valued as concealed, may pick up a discarded tile from the center of the square formed by the racks—ONLY if it is the LAST tile he needs to win Mah Jongg.

**DEAD HAND** If a player makes an error, either picking up too many tiles or having too few tiles, his hand is considered DEAD. He may not continue playing Mah Jongg until the game is over. He keeps his "DEAD HAND" out of view of all other players until the game is won. He must still pay the winner the full value of the hand.

**EAST** Is host hand has an advantage of one more tile than all other players—14 tiles, instead of 13 tiles.

**EXCHANGE** Is a three step process used by all players in an effort to improve their hand. Each player passes three unwanted tiles to another player. ( For sequence of passes see page 12 ).

**EXPOSED HAND** If a player is trying to obtain a hand which is valued as exposed, he may pick up a discarded tile from the center of the square formed by the racks, if it is the left tile he needs to complete a Kong, Pung, Quint or Mah Jongg.

**HAND** The main goal in Mah Jongg is to match your tiles with a HAND. A HAND is a grouping of 14 tiles made up by the players before the game starts. Several hands are usually made up and one copy is given to each player.

**KONG** 4 of a kind with the same numerical value.  
Example--4 number 8 Bams is Kong.

**PUNG** 3 of a kind with the same numerical value.  
Example--3 number 5 Craks is a

**QUINTS** 5 flowers

**ROUND** Each of the four players, having picked up a tile and discarded a tile, comprises one round.

## RULES

No player may pick a tile out of turn.

No player may look at more than one tile each time he picks a tile from the wall.

If two players both claim a discarded tile, the tile is awarded to the player who needs it as the last tile to complete Mah

If a player has too few tiles or too many tiles, his hand is considered 'dead'.

Once a player discards a tile, it cannot be exchanged.

To claim a tile, the player must name the tile correctly.

If Mah Jongg is called in error and no one exposes his hand, the game continues.

If Mah Jongg is called mistakenly and a hand was exposed, the player with the exposed hand is out of the game.

If Mah Jongg is mistakenly called and all but one player exposes his hand, the game is over.

If a player wins Mah Jongg because of a tile discarded by another player, the player who discarded the tile pays double the worth of the hand.

If a player wins Mah Jongg without calling for a discarded tile and without using a joker, the value of the hand is doubled.

Bettor must always be concealed.

The bettor pays and/or receives full value of the hand he is betting.

## PENALTIES

WARNING - No Penalty.

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A player with a deed hand can not complete the game. He must keep his tiles concealed until the game is over. He must pay the winner.

Play must stand.

If a tile is incorrectly named, it may not be claimed.

No penalty.

The player with the exposed hand must pay winner.

The game is over and all pay the player with the unexposed hand.

Player who discarded tile pays double to winner.

All players pay double--the value of the winning hand.

If number is shown before the end of the game, all bets are cancelled.

All penalties or awards received by the player backed by the bettor, are also charged to the bettor.

## EXAMPLES OF HANDS

3-3-3 Bams	4-4-4 Bams	3-3-3-3 Dots	4-4-4-4 Dots			E. 25 pts.
5-5-5 Craks	6-6-6 Craks	7-7-7-7 Bams	8-8-8-8 Bams			E. 25 pts.
1-1-1 Dots	9-9-9 Dots	2-2-2-2 Craks	3-3-3-3 Craks			E. 25 pts.
1-1 Dots	2-2 Dots	3-3 Dots	4-4-4 Dots	5-5-5 Dots	F-F Flowers	C 15 pts.
5-5 Bams	6-6 Bams	7-7 Bams	8-8-8 Bams	9-9-9 Bams	F-F Flowers	C 15 pts.
3-3 Craks	4-4 Craks	5-5 Craks	6-6-6 Craks	7-7-7 Craks	F-F Flowers	C 15 pts.
3-3 Dots	4-4 Dots	5-5-5 Dots	6-6-6 Dots	F-F-F-F Flowers		E. 25 pts.
1-1 Bams	2-2 Bams	3-3-3 Bams	4-4-4 Bams	F-F-F-F Flowers		E. 25 pts.
5-5 Craks	6-6 Craks	7-7-7 Craks	8-8-8 Craks	F-F-F-F Flowers		E. 25 pts.
4 red Dragons		8-8 Craks	4 East Winds	4 West Winds		E. E. 20 pts.
4 white Dragons		8-8 Dots	4 South Winds	4 North Winds		E. 20 pts.
1-1-1 Dots	1-1-1 Bams	1-1-1 Craks	3 North Winds	F-F Flowers		C. 20 pts.
4-4-4 Dots	4-4-4 Bams	4-4-4 Craks	3 south Winds	F-F Flowers		C. 20 pts.
9-9-9 Dots	9-9-9 Bams	9-9-9 Craks	3 east Winds	F-F Flowers		C. 20 pts.
1-1-1 Dots	9-9-9 Craks	4-4-4 Bams	5-5-5 Babs	F-F Flowers		E. 15 pts.

E. EXPOSED HAND  
 C. CONCEALED HAND  
 pts. POINT VALUE OF HAND