

## INTRODUCTION TO MAHJONG

Mahjong is a four-player imperfect information game that originated in China with a long history of more than 3000 years. In 1998 the All-China Sports Federation founded a universal competition standard called National Standard Mahjong (Guóbiāo Mǎjiàng in Chinese pronunciation), which we adopt in this competition. Mahjong involves strategy and a certain degree of luck, and the uncertainty brings to the game a lot of fun and challenge. Different from Mahjong's varieties in Asia, e.g., Riichi Mahjong (Japan), National Standard Mahjong encourages the players to adopt aggressive strategies, which makes the competition watchable and attractive.

In Mahjong we call the game pieces as tiles, and different combinations have different scores. The overall concept in Mahjong is to build sets of tiles, and get the highest point value. There are many versions of Mahjong, and this e-book will focus on National Standard Mahjong rules.

## UNDERSTANDING THE MAHJONG SET

A Mahjong set is rather like a standard deck of cards. The tileset is split into:

- The 3 suits
- The 4 directional tiles
- The 3 cardinal tiles
- The 8 optional Flower and Season tiles.

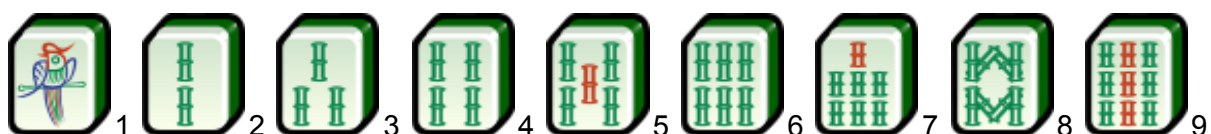
### THE 3 SUITS

Instead of 4 suits in a deck of playing cards, you have 3 suits, running from 1 to 9 rather than 1 to 10. The suits are:

- Bamboos
- Characters
- Dots

The Mahjong set contains 4 of each of these tiles. Tiles 1 and 9 of each suit are called Terminals. Tiles 2 to 8 are Simples.

### **BAMBOOS**



## CHARACTERS



## DOTS



## THE 4 DIRECTIONAL TILES

There are 4 directional tiles, also referred to as the 4 Winds or Feng. These are East, South, West and North. The Mahjong set also contains 4 of each of these tiles. These are Honor Tiles. Note that the Winds are reversed – they are counted counter-clockwise (ESWN) as this is the way the Chinese traditionally list their compass directions.



## THE 3 CARDINAL TILES

There are also 3 Cardinal tiles, also referred to as the three Dragons or Special Honor Pieces. These are the Red Dragon, Green Dragon, and White Dragon. The Mahjong set also contains 4 of each of these tiles. These are Honor Tiles.



## THE 8 OPTIONAL FLOWER AND SEASON TILES

The Mahjong set also contains 8 optional tiles – 4 Flowers and 4 Seasons. There are only one of each of these tiles, not 4 as with all other tiles in the set.















= The Flowers



= The Seasons

There is no need to remember the names of these tiles, as their only purpose is for scoring. If and when a Flower or Season is drawn, they are immediately declared and a substitute tile is drawn. They score additional bonus points, and these points are further increased if they correspond to the player in question's own Wind.

Number	Flower	Season	Corresponding Wind
1	 Plum	 Spring	 East
2	 Orchid (Lily)	 Summer	 South
3	 Chrysanthemum	 Autumn	 West
4	 Bamboo	 Winter	 North

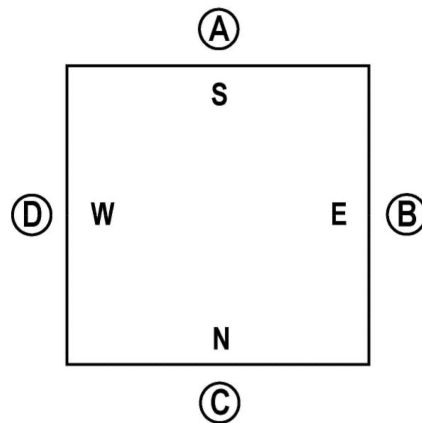
## STARTING A GAME

### THE ORDER OF PLAY

To start play, the players each draw one of the 4 Winds. The player who draws the East Wind will take the East side of the table – in the below example:

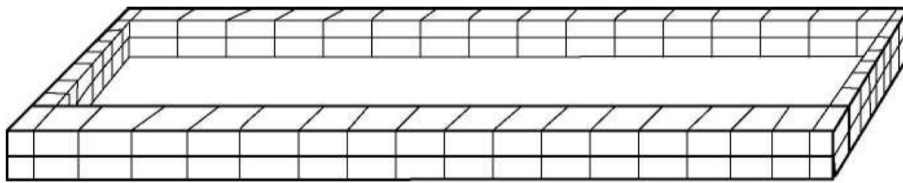
- Player A has drawn the South Wind
- Player B has drawn the East Wind

- Player C has drawn the North Wind
- Player D has drawn the West Wind.



### **MAKING THE WALL**

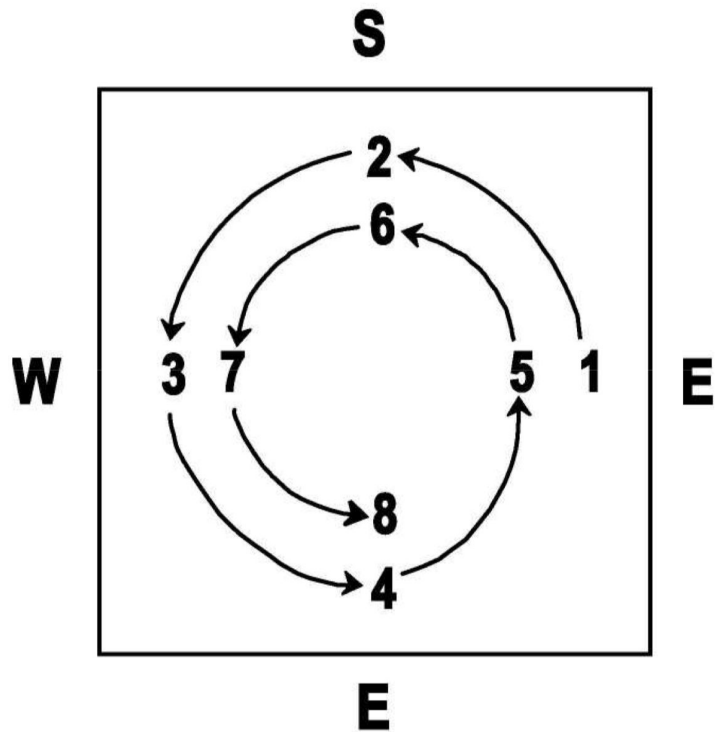
All 144 pieces are mixed up and placed face down on the table. They are moved randomly, as in shuffling a deck of cards. Each player then selects 36 tiles each and arranges them two tiles high in a long line. These 4 lines are then joined to make a square called the “Wall”.



If playing without Flowers and Seasons, the players select 24 tiles each. On Botzone, we will not show the process of making the wall but ensure that the wall is randomly made. Considering the fairness and easy for recapping the match, we record the random seed in logs.

### **BREAKING THE WALL**

To determine where to “Break the Wall” or where to start drawing tiles from, the player who is in the East Wind position throws two dice and adds the total together. So if he throws 4 and 3 he totals this to seven and counts seven counter-clockwise around the Wall sides, counting his own part of the wall as 1, South’s as 2, West’s as 3, etc. So 7 takes him to West’s part of the Wall.

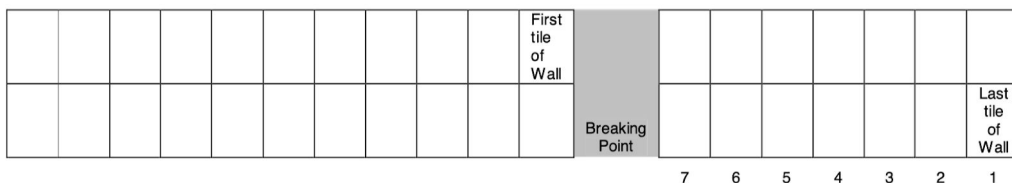


Then that player (in this case West) also throws the dice and adds the numbers together. Starting at the right-hand end of his part of the Wall, he counts the thrown total along, and when he comes to the last 2 tiles, he breaks the wall with a gap at this point by pushing the left-hand tiles slightly further to the left to make a gap. This is now the breaking point, where tiles will be drawn from.

### THE DEAD WALL

Counting from the breaking point of the Wall, to the right is the Dead Wall (also known as the Kong Box) and to the left is the Live Wall.

The Dead Wall tiles are reserved to be used as replacements to be drawn if a player draws a Flower or Season tile, if these are used, or if a player makes a Kong (which requires him to draw a replacement tile).



DEAD WALL

The Dead Wall is always 14 tiles, so although replacement tiles are taken from the left end of the Dead Wall, it always remains counted off as 14 tiles. The process above will not be

shown on Botzone. We simulate the action of drawing tiles from the dead wall by calling the bot to notify which tile it draws.

## **DEALING THE TILES**

East always goes first. They take the first four tiles from the live wall, then South does the same, followed by West and North. Tiles are taken like this until everyone has 12 tiles.

Then East takes a final 2 tiles, and everyone else takes 1.

- East takes 4 tiles
- South takes 4 tiles
- West takes 4 tiles
- North takes 4 tiles
- East takes 4 tiles
- South takes 4 tiles
- West takes 4 tiles
- North takes 4 tiles
- East takes 4 tiles
- South takes 4 tiles
- West takes 4 tiles
- North takes 4 tiles
- East takes 2 tiles
- South takes 1
- West takes 1
- North takes 1

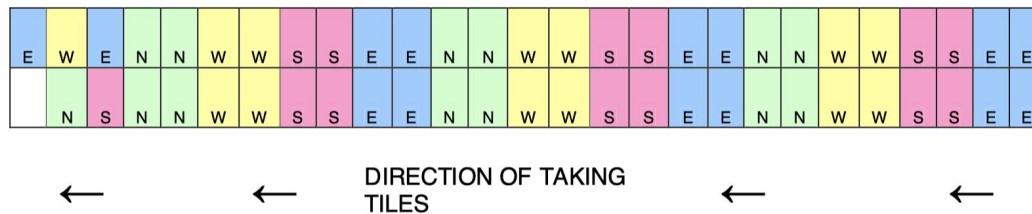
There are 2 variants of this – both regarding how east selects his final 2 tiles.

1. East takes a stack of two tiles together then everyone else takes 1.

N	S	E	N	N	W	W	S	S	E	E	N	N	W	W	S	S	E	E	N	N	W	W	S	S	E	E
	W	E	N	N	W	W	S	S	E	E	N	N	W	W	S	S	E	E	N	N	W	W	S	S	E	E

←      ←      DIRECTION OF TAKING TILES      ←      ←

2. East takes the top tile and the next but one top tile together, then everyone else takes 1. This is called chan-chan representing the sound made when East clicks the last two tiles onto one another to pick them up!



This leaves East (the dealer) with 14 tiles, and the other players with 13 each. On Botzone, we simplify the dealing as allocating 13 tiles to one bot at one time.

## **REPLACEMENTS**

If any Flower or Season tiles have been drawn, the players in turn (starting with East) place them face up to the side of the board and drawn replacements from the Dead Wall. If a Flower or Season tile is drawn from the Dead Wall it is immediately declared and replaced. Also, if any player has a concealed Kong in his hand, he can declare it and draw a replacement tile.

## **DRAWING TILES**

Now each player will take new tiles from the Wall, starting where the original deal ended.

- East (Dealer) has an extra tile in his hand, and so starts by discarding a tile of his choice face up in the center of the table – in the middle of the square surrounded by the Wall.

- Then, unless the tile is claimed, each player in turn will draw a tile and then make a discard, moving around the table East -> South -> West -> North.

- When a tile is claimed, the player claiming the tile then discards and play continues from there – thus breaking the sequence of play.

## **GAMEPLAY**

### **CLAIMING A TILE**

Whenever a discard is made, any player can use the discard to make a set with tiles in his hand. Then they reveal the set they have made to the other players, giving away some data on his developing hand. There are rules governing when a tile may be claimed, which depend on the type of set being made:

## CHOW

A Chow is a "run" or sequence of 3 tiles in the same suit.



To make a Chow the player declares out loud "Chow" and takes the discarded tile. A CHOW CAN ONLY BE MADE FROM THE DISCARDS OF THE PLAYER TO YOUR LEFT, NOT FROM OTHER PLAYERS.

## PUNG

A Pung is a set of 3 identical tiles. The player says "Pung" out loud and takes a discard to make a Pung. They then show the created set and discards a tile. The next player then takes their turn.



## KONG

A Kong is a set of 4 identical tiles. If formed from a discarded tile, the player declares "Kong" out loud and exposes the set. If drawn from the wall the player may retain it as concealed. The advantage in concealing a Kong is that the player can later split it and use one of the tiles to make a Chow if they wish.



If the player draws from the wall and makes a Kong, he still needs a replacement tile. So he places the 4 tiles on the table with the outside ones face up and the inside 2 face down, indicating it is a concealed Kong. Then he may draw a replacement.

The player then draws a replacement tile from the dead wall and discards as usual.

You are not permitted to use a discarded tile to make a declared Pung into a Kong, but you can draw a tile from the wall and use it to make a Kong from a declared Pung you have already placed on the table.

## PAIR

An Eye or Pair is 2 identical tiles. You cannot make a Pair from a discard unless it is to go out and declare Mahjong. Only one pair is allowed in a hand.



## TWO PLAYERS CLAIMING A DISCARD

If 2 players try to claim the same discard, the priority is as follows:



1. Going out (declaring Mahjong).
2. Kong or Pung
3. Chow
4. Where 2 players claim the same tile for Mahjong, the player to the right of the thrower wins.

### **FLOWER TILES**

Whenever a Flower tile is drawn, it should immediately be exposed and a replacement drawn from the dead wall. Some game variations allow for the idea that if a player holds all Flower tiles he automatically wins the game.

### **WAITING TO WIN**

When a player only needs one more tile to make Mahjong, he has a "ready hand". This is called "Waiting".

### **WINNING**

When a player creates a hand of complete sets and a pair, this is Mahjong, and he declares this out loud. A winning hand is four sets of Pungs, Chows, or Kongs and a Pair.

### **ROTATION AND ROUNDS**

After each hand, the Wind or seating position rotates counterclockwise. This also happens in the event of a dead hand (where nobody wins).

There are 4 rounds:

- East
- South
- West
- North

In each round, the seating position changes so a player plays each seat in each round. This means if a player starts as East in the east round, he will play as follows:

Round		Hand	Seating position
1	East	1	East
		2	South

		3	West
		4	North
2	South	5	East
		6	South
		7	West
		8	North
3	West	9	East
		10	South
		11	West
		12	North
4	North	13	East
		14	South
		15	West
		16	North

### **BASIC SCORING**

Hand containing:	Score:
4 Chows	2 points

4 Pungs or Kongs	6 points
1 Dragon Pung or Kong	2 points
A pair of Dragon Pung	6 points
Pung/Kong of Winds that matches the round or seat	2 points
Flowers/Seasons tile	1 point each
Win by self-drawn	1 point

## SCORING HANDS IN MAHJONG

There are 81 scoring hands, or ways to end a game in Mahjong. These are as follows:

- 13 hands score 1 point
- 10 hands score 2 points
- 4 hands score 4 points
- 7 hands score 6 points
- 9 hands score 8 points
- 5 hands score 12 points
- 6 hands score 16 points
- 9 hands score 24 points
- 3 hands score 32 points
- 2 hands score 48 points
- 6 hands score 64 points
- 7 hands score 88 points

These hands can also be classified by type – there are:

- 10 Honor tile-based scoring hands

- 16 Chow based scoring hands
- 19 Pung based scoring hands (including 5 concealed hands)
- 2 seven Pairs scoring hands
- 7 Suits based scoring hands
- 8 Terminal based scoring hands
- 2 Knitted tiles scoring hands
- 12 Types of Wait scoring hands (including 2 concealed hands)
- 5 Special hands

## THE 7 HANDS THAT SCORE 88 POINTS

### **Big Three Dragons (大三元)**

A hand with triplets or quads of all three dragons.



### **Big Four Winds (大四喜)**

A hand with triplets or quads of all four winds and an Eyes(pair).



### **Nine Gates (九宝莲灯)**

Collecting number tiles 1112345678999 of one suit without melding, and completing with anyone tile of that suit. If you collect the form of 1112345678999, any one tile of that suit can complete your hand.



### **Seven Shifted Pairs (连七对)**

Seven pairs hand with successive seven numbers in one suit.



### **Four Kongs (四杠)**

A hand with four quad melds (regardless of open or closed).



### **All Green (绿一色)**

A hand consisting of only green tiles, i.e. .



### **Thirteen Orphans (十三幺)**

Collecting all thirteen terminal and honor tiles for one, plus one of them.



## THE 6 HANDS THAT SCORE 64 POINTS

### **All Terminals (清幺九)**

A hand consisting of only terminal tiles, i.e. number 1 or 9 tiles.



### **Little Three Dragons (小三元)**

A hand with two dragons be triplets or quads, and the rest of the dragon be pair.



### **Little Four Winds (小四喜)**

A hand with three winds be triplets or quads, and the rest of the wind be pair.



### **All Honours (字一色)**

A hand consisting of only honor tiles.



### **Four Concealed Pungs (四暗刻)**

A hand with four closed triplets or quads.



### **Pure Terminal Chows (一色双龙会)**

A hand with two Two Terminal Chows and a pair of number 5 in one suit, i.e. 11223355778899 in one suit. This cannot be treated as Seven Pairs hand.



## THE 2 HANDS THAT SCORE 48 POINTS

### **Quadruple Chow (一色四同顺)**

A hand with four identical sequences.



### **Four Pure Shifted Pungs (一色四节高)**

A hand with four number triplets or quads in one suit with successive numbers.



## THE 3 HANDS THAT SCORE 32 POINTS HANDS

### **Four Pure Shifted Chows (一色四步高)**

Four chows of the same continuous number sequence in the same suit, each shifted either one or two numbers up from the last, but not a combination of both.



## Three Kongs (三杠)

A hand with three quad melds (regardless of open or closed)



## All Terminals and Honours (混玄九)

A hand consisting of only terminal and honor tiles. It can be combined with "Seven Pairs".



## THE 9 HANDS THAT SCORE 24 POINTS

## Seven Pairs (七対)

A hand with seven pairs. Four identical tiles can be treated as two pairs.



## Greater Honours and Knitted Tiles (七星不靠)

A hand consisting of 7 tiles from these 9 tiles: number 1, 4 or 7 of one suit; number 2, 5 or 8 of the second suit; number 3, 6 or 9 of the third suit. And all 7 honors.



### All Even Pungs (全双刻)

A hand consisting of only even number pongs.



### Full Flush (清一色)

A hand consisting of only one suit of number tiles.



### Pure Triple Chow (一色三同顺)

A hand with three identical sequences in the same suit.



### Pure Shifted Pungs (一色三节高)

A hand with three number triplets or quads in one suit with successive numbers.



### Upper Tiles (全大)

A hand consisting of tiles of numbers 7, 8 and 9.



### Middle Tiles (全中)

A hand consisting of tiles of number 4, 5 and 6.



### Lower Tiles (全小)

A hand consisting of tiles of numbers 1, 2 and 3.



## THE 6 HANDS THAT SCORE 16 POINTS

### Pure Straight (清龙)

A hand with three sequences 123, 456 and 789 in one suit.



### Three-Suited Terminal Chows (三色双龙会)

A hand with two Two Terminal Chows in two suits, and pair of number 5 in the last suit.



### Pure Shifted Chows (一色三步高)

Three Chows in one suit each shifted either one or two numbers up from the last, but not a combination of both.



### All Fives (全带五)

A hand with number 5 tiles be contained in all four sets of three tiles and the pair.



### Triple Pung (三同刻)

A hand with three same number triplets or quads in all three suits.



### Three Concealed Pungs (三暗刻)

A hand with three closed triplets or quads.



## THE 5 HANDS THAT SCORE 12 POINTS

### Lesser Honours and Knitted Tiles (全不靠)

A hand consisting of fourteen tiles from these 16 tiles: number 1, 4 or 7 of one suit; number 2, 5 or 8 of the second suit; number 3, 6 or 9 of third suit; and all honor tiles.



### Knitted Straight (组合龙)

A hand with the following form of 9 tiles: number 1, 4 or 7 of one suit; number 2, 5 or 8 of another suit; number 3, 6 or 9 of them remained suit. These 9 tiles are treated as three sequences (see examples), or as a part of Lesser



Honours and Knitted Tiles.



### Upper Four (大于五)

A hand consisting of number tiles of 6, 7, 8 or 9.



### Lower Four (小于五)

A hand consisting of number tiles of 1, 2, 3 or 4.



### Big Three Winds (三风刻)

A hand with three winds be triplets or quads.



## THE 9 HANDS THAT SCORE 8 POINTS

### Mixed Straight (花龙)

A hand with three sequences 123, 456 and 789 in three suits.



### Reversible Tiles (推不倒)

A hand consisting of tiles whose picture is point-symmetric. Including, Dots 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9 and Bamboos 2, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9.



### Mixed Triple Chow (三色三同顺)

A hand with three same number sequences in all three suits.



### Mixed Shifted Pungs (三色三节高)

A hand with three number triplets or quads in three suits with successive numbers.



### Chicken Hand (无番和)

A hand that would otherwise earn 0 points excluding points from Flower Tiles.



### Last Tile Draw (妙手回春)

Hand completion with the last tile of the wall.

### Last Tile Claim (海底捞月)

Winning off another player on the last tile (of the game).

### Out with Replacement Tile (杠上开花)

Hand completion with supplemental tile when you melding quad.

## Rob Kong (搶杠和)

Winning off the tile that somebody adds to a melded pung (to create a Kong).

### \*Two Concealed Kongs (双暗杠)

A hand containing two closed quads.

## THE 7 HANDS THAT SCORE 6 POINTS

## All Pungs (碰碰和)

A hand with four triplets or quads.



### Half Flush (混一色)

A hand consisting of one suit and honor tiles.



### Mixed Shifted Chows (三色三步高)

A hand with three sequences in each suit, each shifted up one number from the last.



### All Types (五门齐)

A hand containing these five types: characters tile, circles tile, bamboos tile, wind tile and dragon tile.



## Melded Hand (全求人)

Every set in the hand (chow, pung, kong, and pair) must be completed with tiles discarded by other players. All sets must be exposed, and the player goes out on a single wait off another player.

### Two Dragon Pungs (双箭刻)

A hand containing two dragon triplets or quads.



## THE 4 HANDS THAT SCORE 4 POINTS

## Outside Hand (全帶幺)

A hand that includes terminals and honors in each set, including the pair.



### Fully Concealed Hand (不求人)

A hand without melding (other than "Concealed Kong") and completed by drawing a tile.

### Two Melded Kongs (双明杠)

A hand with two open quads, or one open and one closed quads.



### Last Tile (和绝张)

Winning on a tile that is the last of its kind. Three of the other tiles on the table already revealed to all players (discarded or melded).

## THE 10 HANDS THAT SCORE 2 POINTS

### Dragon Pung (箭刻)

A hand with a triplet or quad of dragon tile.



### Prevalent Wind (圈风刻)

A hand with a triplet or quad of Prevalent wind.

### Seat Wind (门风刻)

A hand with a triplet or quad of Seat Wind.

### Concealed Hand (门前清)

A hand without melding (other than "Concealed Kong") and completed by discarded tile. If you complete your hand with your draw, the point of Fully Concealed Hand is given instead.

### All Chows (平和)

A hand with four sequences and number tile pair.

### Tile Hog (四归一)

A hand with the same four tiles, other than a melded quad.



### Mixed Double Pung (双同刻)

A hand with two same number triplets or quads in two suits.



### Two Concealed Pungs (双暗刻)

A hand with two closed triplets or quads.



### Concealed Kong (暗杠)

A hand with a closed quad.



### All Simples (断幺)

A hand consisting of no number 1, 9 and honor tile.



## THE 13 HANDS THAT SCORE 1 POINT

### **Pure Double Chow (一般高)**

Two identical chows in the same suit.



### **Mixed Double Chow (喜相逢)**

Two chows of the same numbers but in different suits.



### **Short Straight (连六)**

A hand with two successive sequences in a suit, like 234567.



### **Two Terminal Chows (老少副)**

A hand with two sequences 123 and 789 in a suit.



### **Pung of Terminals or Honours (幺九刻)**

A hand with triplet or quad of number 1, 9 and non-special wind (i.e. neither Seat nor Prevalent Wind) tile.



### **Melded Kong (明杠)**

A hand with open quad.

### **One Voided Suit (缺一门)**

A hand that uses tiles from only two of the three suits, lacking any tiles from one of the three suits.

### **No Honours (无字)**

A hand without any honor tile.

### **Edge Wait (边张)**

A hand completion with the situation there is only one tile name to complete because you have the incomplete sequence in edge (12 or 89).

### **Closed Wait (嵌张)**

A hand completion with the situation there is only one tile name to complete because you have the incomplete sequence lacking center (like 24 and 79).

### **Single Wait (单钓将)**

A hand completion solely waiting on a tile to form a pair.

### **Self Draw (自摸)**

A hand completion by draw.

### **Flower Tile (花牌)**

Whenever a player has or draws a Flower Tile, declare "花 huā" (meaning "Flower" in Chinese) and get supplemental tile. This is counted as 1 point.

## **Note**

1. Winning with the Fan necessarily concealed (Nine Gates, Seven Shifted Pairs, Thirteen Orphans, Four Concealed Pungs, Seven Pairs, Greater Honors and Knitted Tiles, Lesser Honors and Knitted Tiles) by Self-Drawn, only 1 point for Self-Drawn is scored. Fully Concealed Hand is not scored.
2. The Fan can be accumulatively scored with Seven Pairs are as below: All Green, All Terminals, All Honors, All Terminals Or Honors, Full Flush, Upper Tiles, Middle Tiles, Lower Tiles, Upper Four, Lower Four, Reversible Tiles, Last Tile Draw, Last Tile Claim, Half Flush, All Types, Tile Hog, All Simple, One Voided Suit, No Honors, Self-Drawn.
3. All Pungs is not accumulatively scored with All Terminals, All Honors, All Terminals Or Honors (mandatory rules).
4. A winning hand with a melded kong and a concealed kong is accumulatively scored for a special Fan of Melded Kong And Concealed Kong which scores 5 points.
5. Only one of the Kong-based Fan (Four Kongs, Three Kongs, Two Concealed Kongs, Melded Kong And Concealed Kong, Two Melded Kongs, Concealed Kong, Melded Kong) can be scored simultaneously. Only one of the Pung-based Fan (Four Concealed Pungs, Three Concealed Pungs, Two Concealed Pungs) can be scored simultaneously. A Kong-based Fan and a Pung-based Fan can be scored respectively. Two Concealed Pungs is not accumulatively scored with Two Concealed Kongs.
6. Melded Kong, Concealed Kong, Last Tile Drawn can be accumulatively scored without With Replacement Tile.
7. The Fan necessarily lacking at least one suit (Big Three Dragons, Little Three Dragons, Big Three Winds, Quadruple Chow, Four Pure Shifted Pungs, Four Pure Shifted Chows, Reversible Tiles) can be accumulatively scored with One Voided Suit, except Reversible Tiles. Reversible Tiles is not scored with One Voided Suit (mandatory rule).

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