



RIICHI SEMINAR

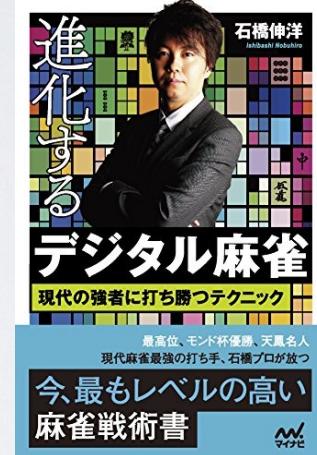
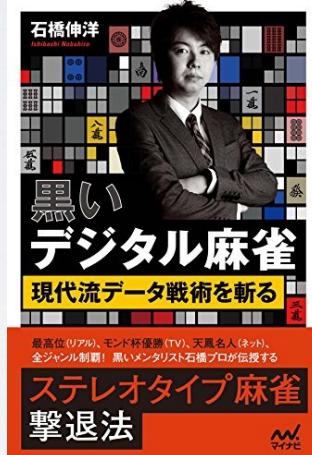
Daina Chiba
30 July, 2017

OUTLINE

1. How to Get Better
2. WWYD (Tibet Style)
3. Advanced Tile Efficiency
4. Deduction
5. How to Get Even Better

DISCLAIMER

A lot of the materials are from mahjong strategy books written in Japanese.



I. HOW TO GET BETTER

What to think about when we
think about improving
mahjong skills



TWO STEPS IN LEARNING

- **Step 1:** Learn **theories**

riichi vs dama, push vs fold, etc.

(Riichi Book I: <https://goo.gl/YmzXzn>)



- **Step 2:** Learn **exceptions** to the theories

Know when basic theories don't apply

THEORY & EXCEPTIONS

- **Step 1:** theory — “Riichi a pinfu-only hand.”
- **Step 2:** exception — “Don’t riichi with a pinfu-only hand **if leading in South-4.**”

This exception then **becomes a refined theory** — “Don’t riichi when you have a yaku if leading in South-4.”

...which means that there will be an **exception to this new theory** as well!

West: 16400



North: 23900



South-4

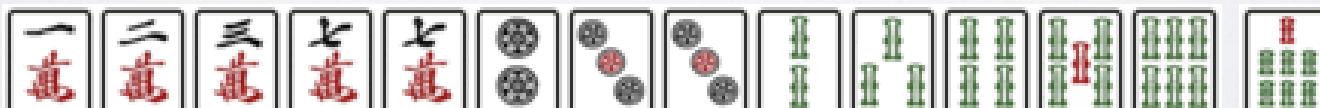
• x 0
... x 0



South: 24000



East: 35700

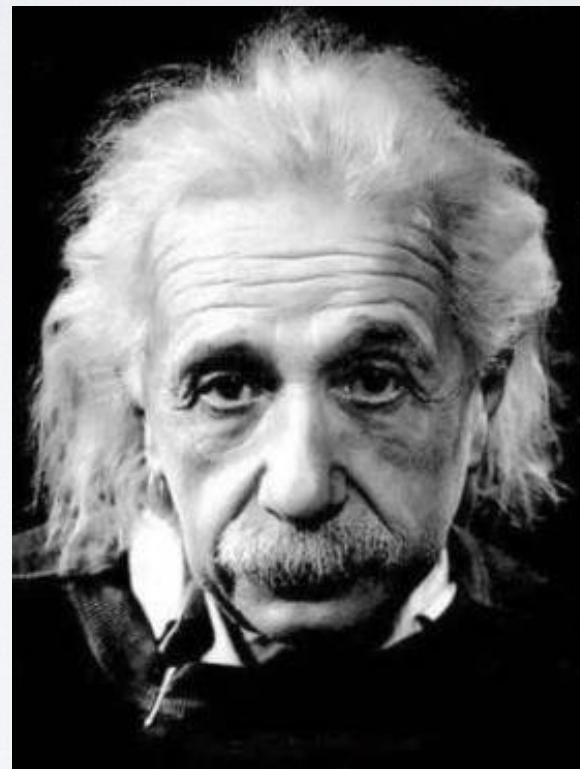


WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

- Pinfu-only hand, but leading in South 4 → dama?
 - But, notice the following:
 - if South gets mangan tsumo, you'll fall to 2nd;
 - even if you deal mangan to 4th, you'll still be 1st;
 - if you riichi, South will be likely to fold to avoid 4th.
- You should riichi!

LEARNING NEVER ENDS!

- Learn theory
(riichi a pinfu-only hand).
- Learn exception
(dama if leading in South 4).
- Learn exception to exception
(riichi depending on score distribution).
- Learn exception to exception to exception...



"Once you stop learning, you start dying"

~ Albert Einstein ~

DIGITAL VS ANALOGUE?

- **Digital approach**

- rely on **systematic** strategy principles
(often derived from statistical analyses)
- **goal:** to make choices that are correct on average (in the long run)

- **Analogue approach**

- rely more on **situational factors** than on general principles
- **goal:** to make choices that are correct in a particular instance



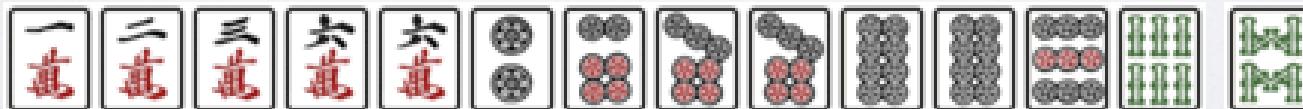
ANALOGUE TRAP

- The two approaches are complementary (digital = theory, analogue = exception).
- **Warning:** the more you learn about exceptions, the more susceptible you may become to **overthinking** (*analogue trap*)!

West: 25000



North: 25000



South: 25000



East: 25000



East-1

• × 0
... × 0



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TYPICAL OVERTHINKING

I have 2 dora here, but this is a yaku-less hand with a bad wait...

Come to think of it, my right player may be collecting souzu as well...

My left player is obviously doing hon'itsu or chin'itsu in souzu! He will never discard 7s!

Let's keep it dama for now, and hope to draw 5-sou to make it pinfu...

Do NOT think like this!

AVOIDING ANALOGUE TRAP

Statistical analyses have demonstrated that **riichi is better than dama by a huge margin** with a yaku-less 2-dora hand. → you'd better just riichi here.

- Collecting information about situational factors is not that difficult.
- What's more difficult is to know **when (not) to ignore them**.

DIGITAL & ANALOGUE

- When theories say A is unambiguously better than B, just do A even when situational factors suggest otherwise.
- The analogue approach becomes useful **when the digital theory is rather ambiguous.**
- Instead of blindly following theories, try to understand the **logic behind theories.**

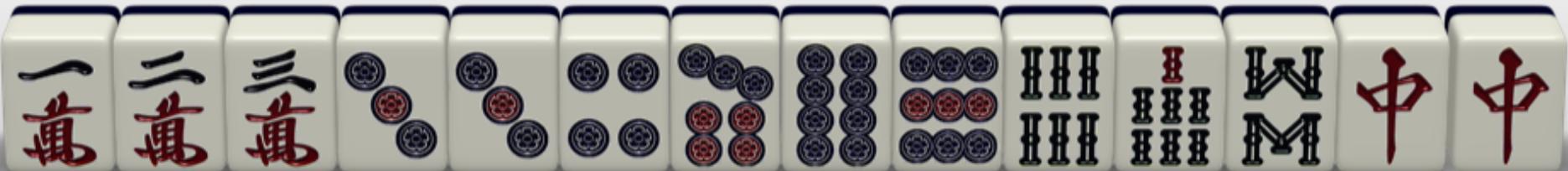
WHEN TO BE ANALOGUE: EXAMPLE I



East-1, 7th turn, dora is 1m.

What would you discard? Call riichi?

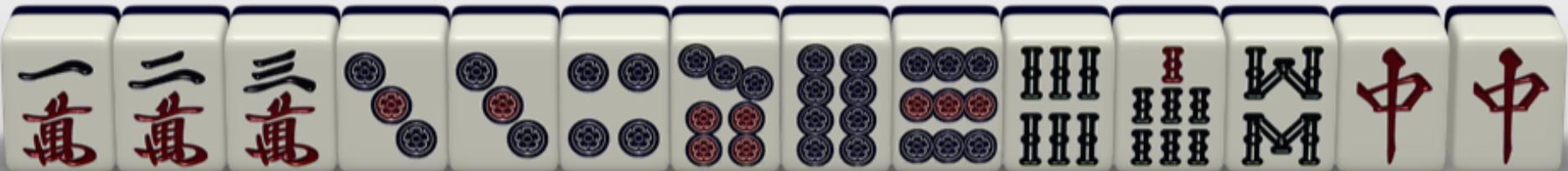
(Hint: What did I say in Riichi Book I...?)



遁 tenhou.net

Digital theory (Riichi Book I) says **discard 4p and riichi**, and here's the logic behind it:

- the expected win-rate will be **about the same** if you discard 3p or 4p, **statistically speaking**;
- given this, discarding 4p is better as the hand will be more expensive, on average (2600 vs 5200/2600).



遁 tenhou.net

“About the same” means that which discard choice is better will **depend a lot on situational factors.** This is where some analogue thinking becomes useful:

Suppose it's South-4 and you'll be 1st if you win any hand.

- If someone is doing hon'itsu and you can't expect honor tiles to come out easily, discard 3p to make for 2-5p wait.
- If pinzu tiles are being expensive on the board, discard 4p to make for 3p-chun dual-pon wait.

WHEN TO BE ANALOGUE: EXAMPLE 2

Riichi-only (1300) hand — riichi has a very low value

- **riichi is slightly better** when you have a good wait or you are the dealer
- **dama is slightly better** when you have a bad wait.

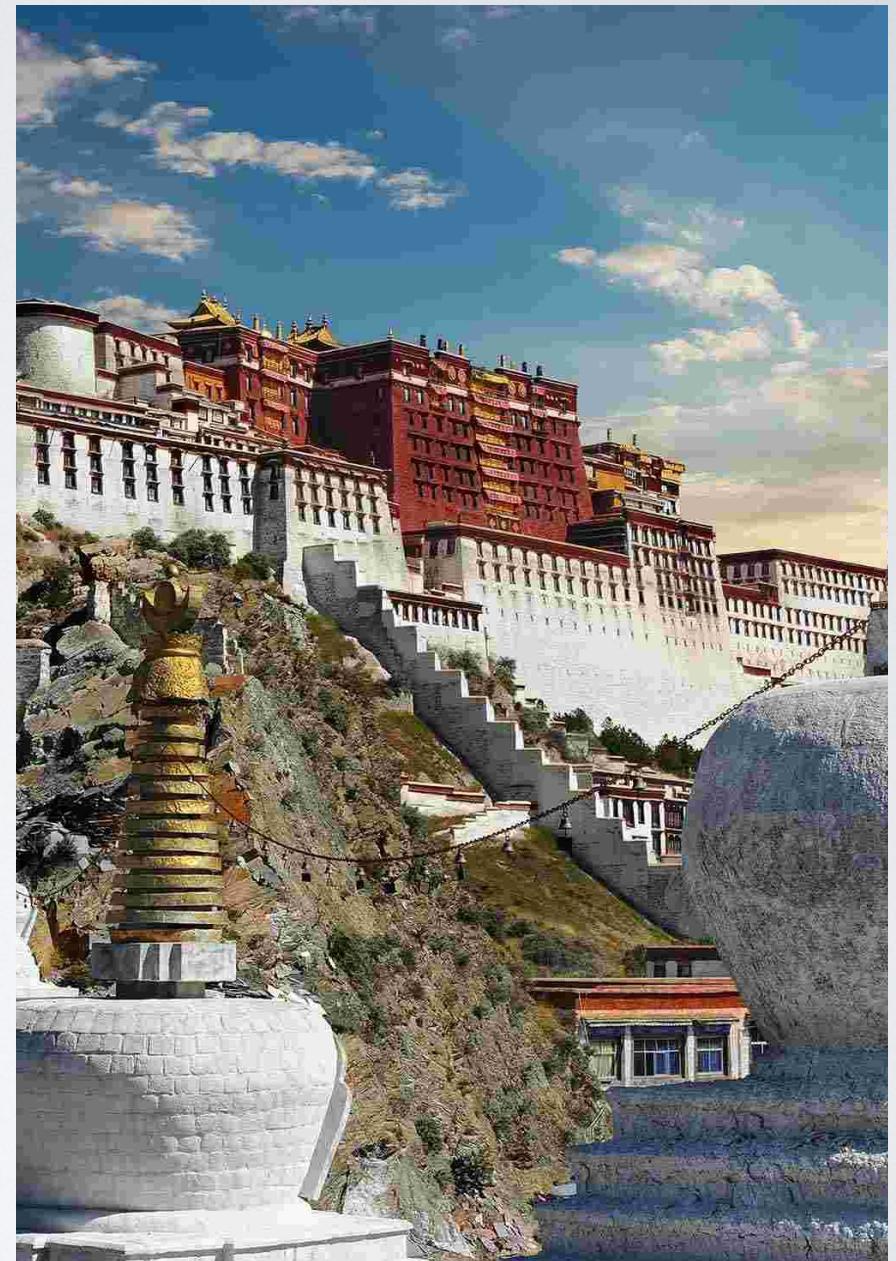
Use analogue information to decide whether or not to riichi.

WHAT WE WILL DO TODAY

- We are going to learn **a few theories** not covered in Riichi Book I (to be covered in Book II).
- We will see some **exceptions** to the theories as well.

2. BASIC TILE EFFICIENCY

wwwYD,Tibet Style



TIBET RULE

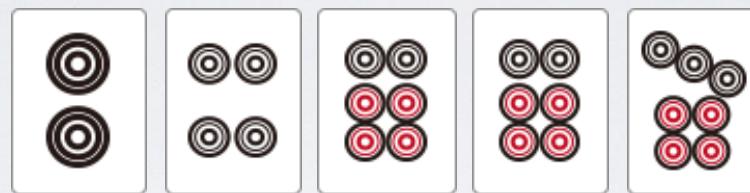
- A teaching method where we use fewer (4, 7, or 10) tiles per hand to simplify the game
- No yaku & no dora; **pure tile efficiency**
- To review basic tile efficiency, we will do a series of Tibet-style **WWYD** (What Would You Discard?) quizzes.

4-TILE TIBET WWWYD

- 5 tiles in a hand, so you need to discard one to make **the head** + **one group** (run or set)
- Alternatively, you can assume you have just made a third pon of dragons:



WWWYD QUIZ I



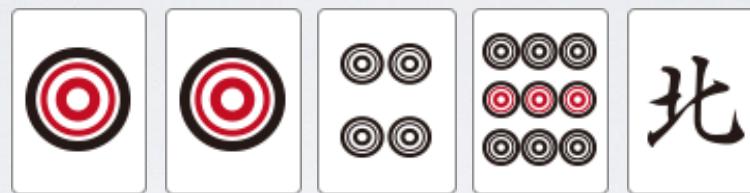
WWWYD QUIZ I



Discard  to make the hand ready.

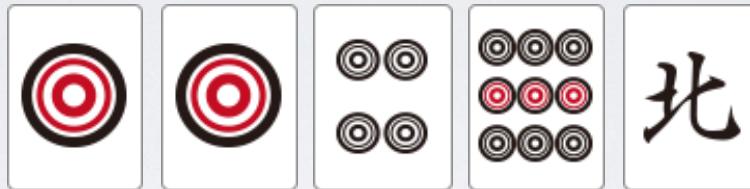
Easy!

WWWYD QUIZ 2



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WWYD QUIZ 2

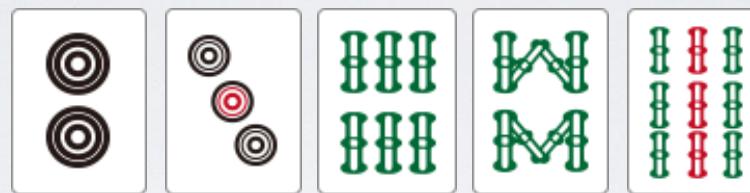


Discard  to maximize tile acceptance.

Number tiles are better than honor tiles.

Easy!

WWWYD QUIZ 3



WWWYD QUIZ 3



Discard



, as it's redundant.

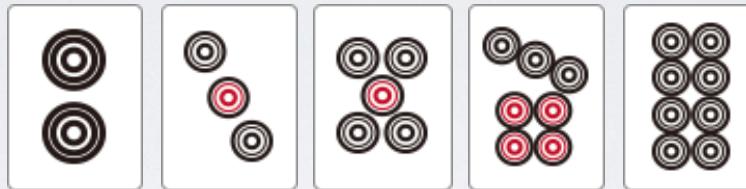
I of 124, and 9 of 689 are useless.

Easy!

WWWYD QUIZ 4



WWWYD QUIZ 4



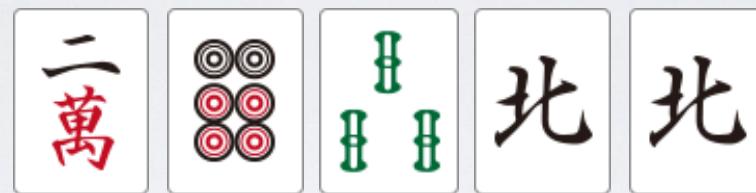
Discard , as it's redundant.



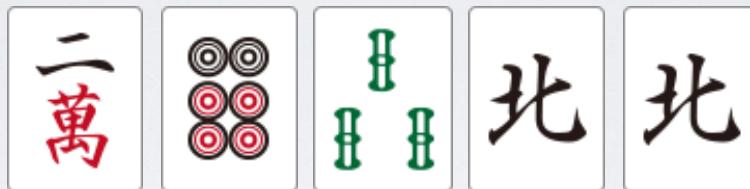
5 of 235 and 5 of 578 are useless.

Easy!

WWWD QUIZ 5



WWYD QUIZ 5

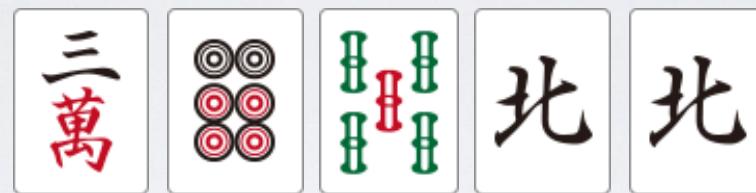


Discard , as it's least likely to create **a side-wait proto-run.**

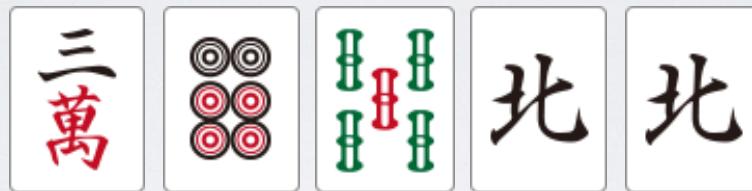
When you compare **floating tiles**, “inner” numbers are much better than “outer” numbers:

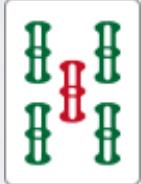
3,4,5,6,7 >> 2,8 > 1,9

WWWD QUIZ 6



WWYD QUIZ 6



Discard , as it creates the worst side waits.

- 3, 6, 5 equally likely to create a side-wait proto-run
- However, some side waits are better than others.

SIDE WAIT PROTO-RUNS

- 1-4 and 6-9 waits are the **best!**
(1 and 9 are more likely to be discarded)
- 2-5 and 5-8 waits are **OK.**
- 3-6 and 4-7 waits are the **worst.**

Notice:

- A floating 3 makes for 1-4 or 2-5 side wait (best or OK);
- A floating 4 makes for 2-5 or 3-6 side wait (OK or worst);
- A floating 5 makes for 3-6 or 4-7 side wait (worst or worst).

FLOATING TILES

- **Theory:** when you compare floating tiles, **inner numbers are better** than outer numbers:

3,4,5,6,7 >> 2,8 > 1,9

- **Exception:** among the inner numbers (3–7), **the outer ones (3,7) are better** than the inner ones (4,6 or 5):

3,7 > 4,6 > 5 >>> 2,8 >> 1,9

WWYD QUIZ 7



WWWYD QUIZ 7



Discard

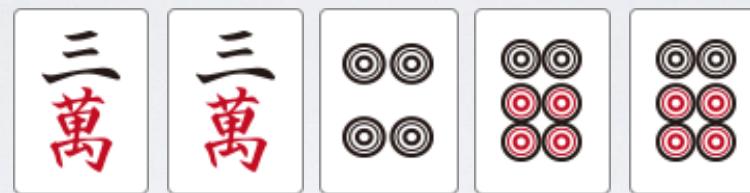


2 and 8 are equal, but is better than ,

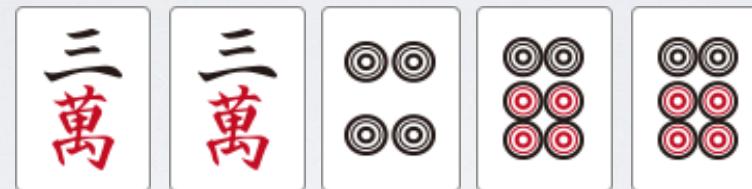
as it's connected to the pair of



WWYD QUIZ 8



WWYD QUIZ 8



Discard



- If you have can create side wait
- If you have can create side wait (without causing furiten).

7-TILE TIBET WWWYD

- 8 tiles in a hand, so you need to discard one to make **the head + two groups** (run or set)
- Assume you have just made a second pon of dragons: 

WWWD QUIZ 9



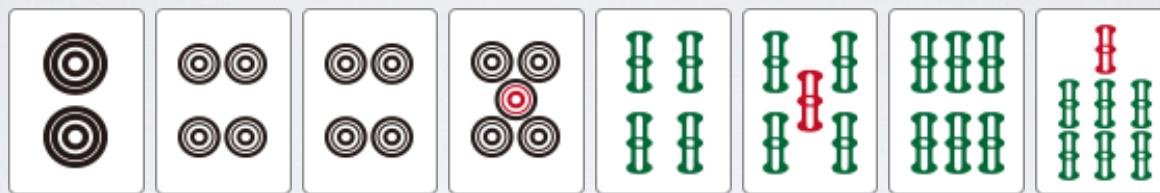
WWYD QUIZ 9



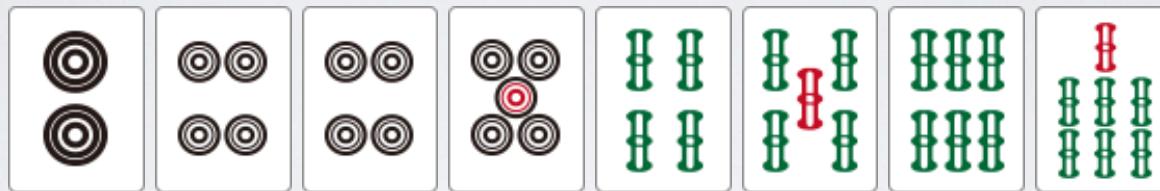
Discard

- We already have two side-wait proto-runs (78p and 67s), so we need to get rid of 24m.
- Discard 4m first, as **it's more dangerous.**

WWWYD QUIZ 10



WWYD QUIZ 10



Discard to have

- If souzu grows, discard 5p to make 4p the head.
- If you get the head in souzu, discard 4p to get 3-6p side wait.

SUMMARY SO FAR

- When you compare floating tiles...
 - number tiles > honor tiles
 - 3,4,5,6,7 > 2,8 > 1,9 (likelihood of side wait)
 - 3,7 > 4,6 > 5 (likelihood of better side wait)
- When you have 2+ redundant tiles, **discard the middle one** first.

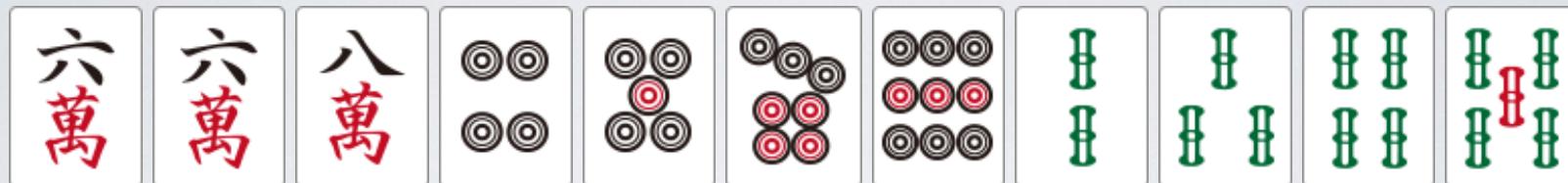
Now do 10-tile Tibet, where the **block theory** becomes important.

10-TILE TIBET WWWYD

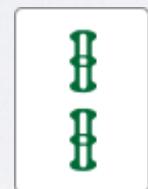
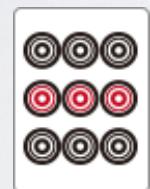
- 11 tiles in a hand, so you need to discard one to make **the head + three groups** (run or set)
- Apply the **four-block method**.
- Assume you have just made a pon of dragons:



WWWYD QUIZ II

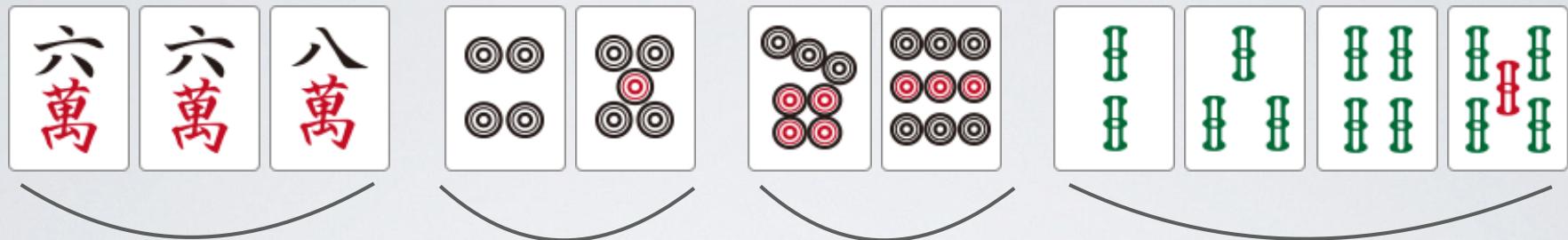


WWYD QUIZ III

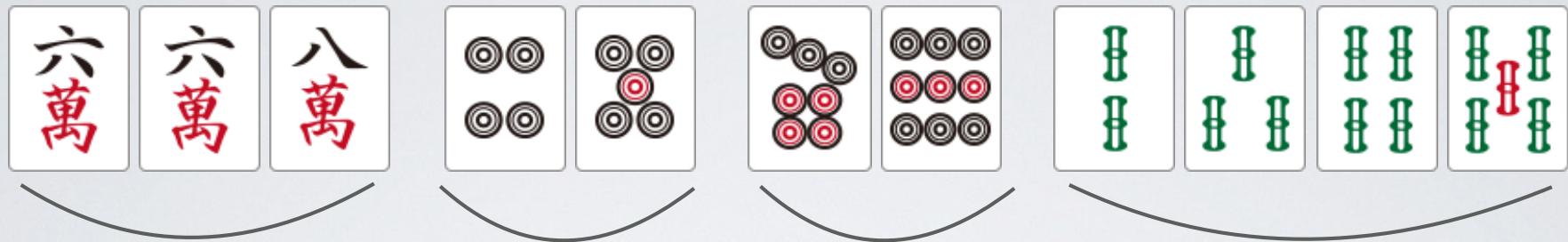


Hint: How do we split the hand into **4 blocks**?

WWWYD QUIZ II

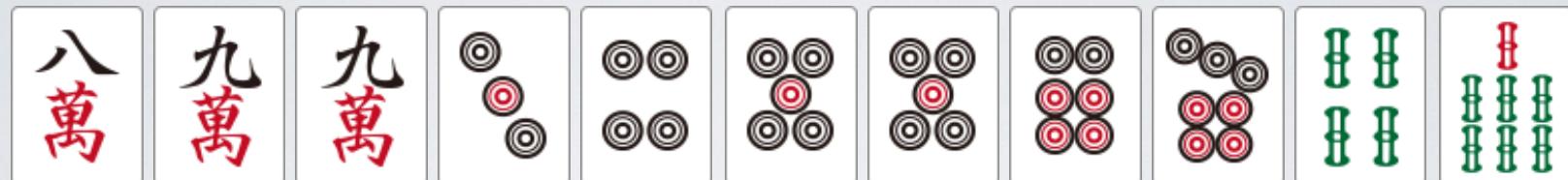


WWWD QUIZ III

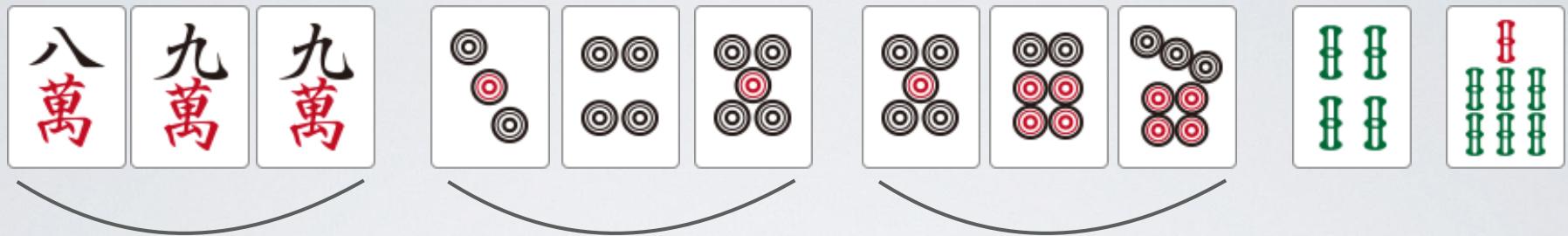


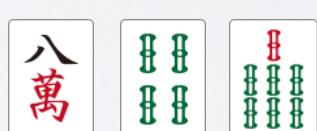
-  is obviously an integral part of one of the four blocks.
- Comparing two floating tiles,  and  ,  is connected to a run.
- Discard .

WWWYD QUIZ 12



WWWD QUIZ 12

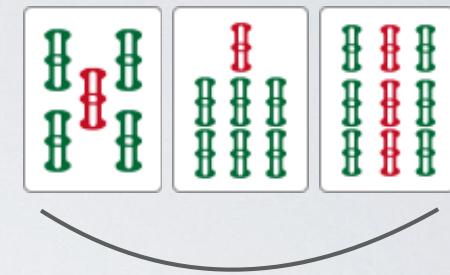
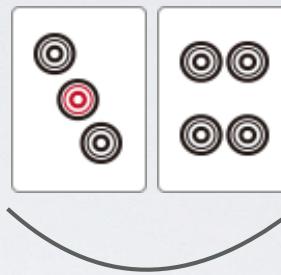


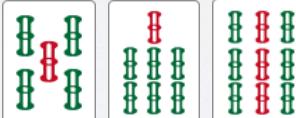
- We already have three blocks, so we need a fourth block.
- Compare three floating tiles, .
- Discard .

WWWYD QUIZ 13



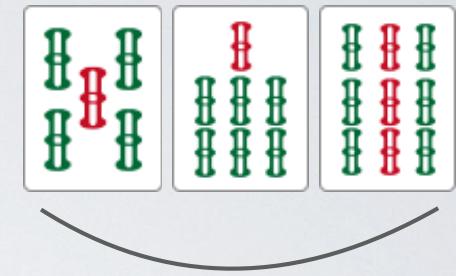
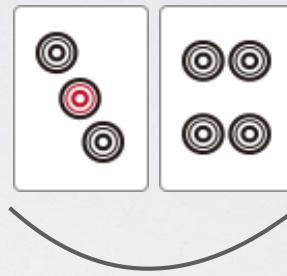
WWYD QUIZ 13



Compare  and .

Which one should we keep?

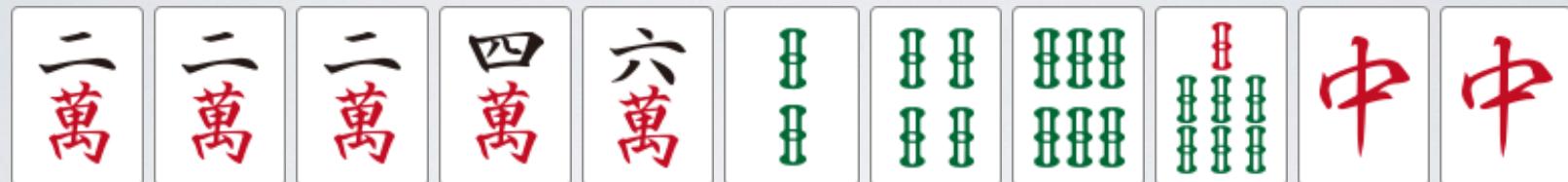
WWWD QUIZ 13



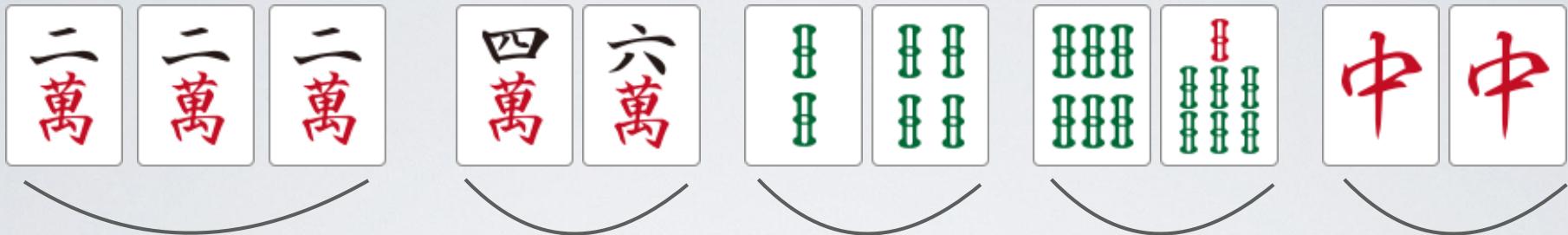
The  block is the weakest.

Discard  first. (if you draw 4m, discard souzu)

WWWYD QUIZ 14

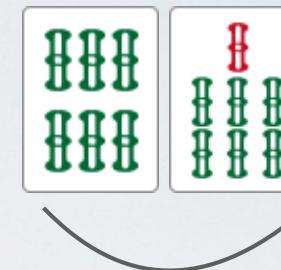
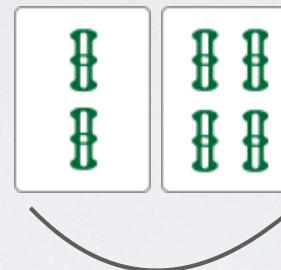


WWYD QUIZ 14



- We have five blocks, so need to get rid of one.
- Compare and .
- Which one should we keep?

WWYD QUIZ 14



- Drawing creates a side-wait proto-run .
- Drawing does not create a new side-wait proto-run.
- Discard (then). [corrected on 4 Aug]

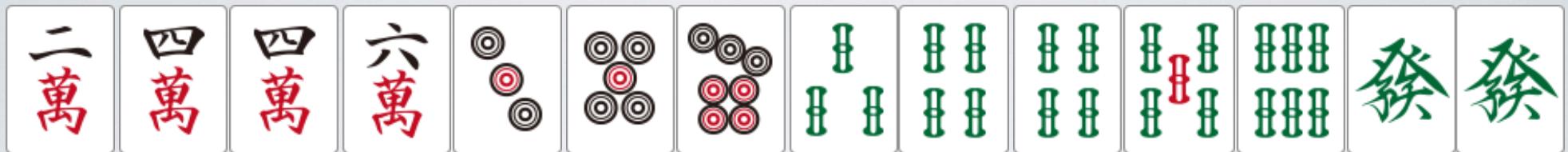
NON-TIBET WWWYD

| 4 tiles in a hand, so you need to discard one to
make **the head + four groups** (run or set)



Apply the **five block method**.

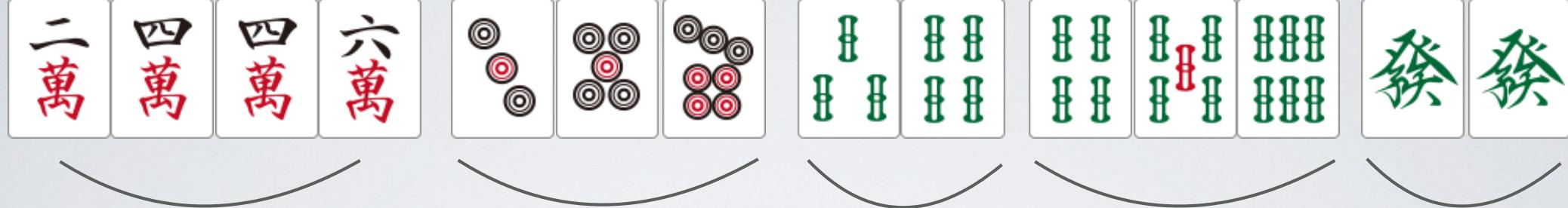
WWWD QUIZ 15



Dora:



WWWD QUIZ 15



- We already have five blocks.
- Each block should have at most three tiles.
- Discard

WWWYD QUIZ 16



WWYD QUIZ 16

一萬 一萬 三萬

伍萬 六萬 七萬

七萬



三萬

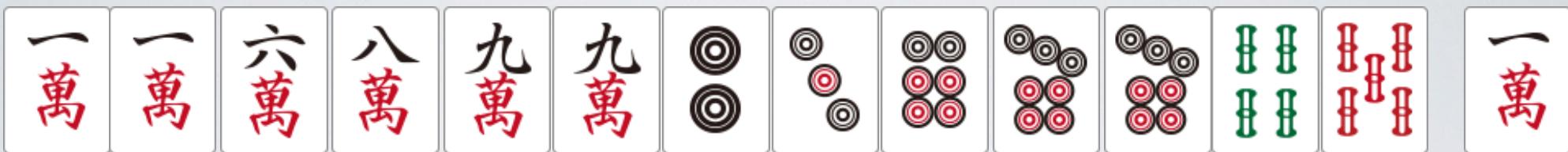
三萬

三萬

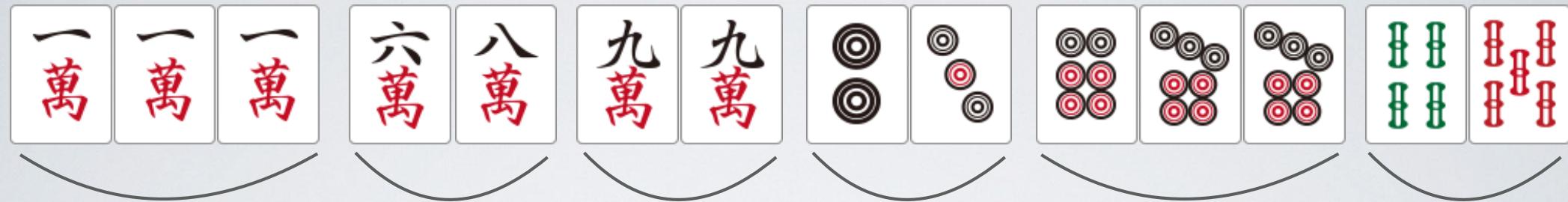
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- Need a fifth block, so we decide which of the three floating tiles (七萬, 三圈, 三球) to keep.
- Discard 三圈.

WWWYD QUIZ 17

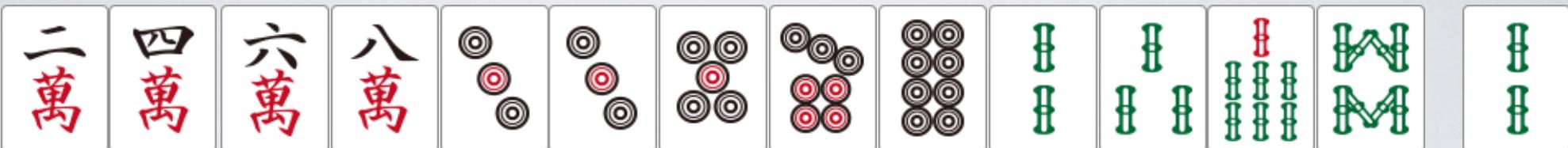


WWWD QUIZ 17



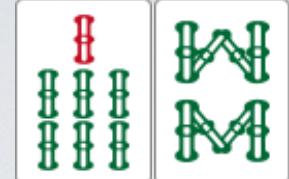
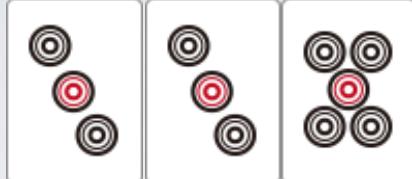
- There are six blocks, so get rid of the weakest.
- Discard After that, each time side wait gets complete, discard , then .

WWWYD QUIZ 18



WWYD QUIZ 18

二萬 四萬 六萬 八萬



- We already have five blocks.
- Each block should have **at most three** tiles.
- Discard 二萬 (not 八萬, not to kill sanshoku of 678).

THE FIVE-BLOCK METHOD

Riichi Book I has a dedicated chapter on the five-block method.

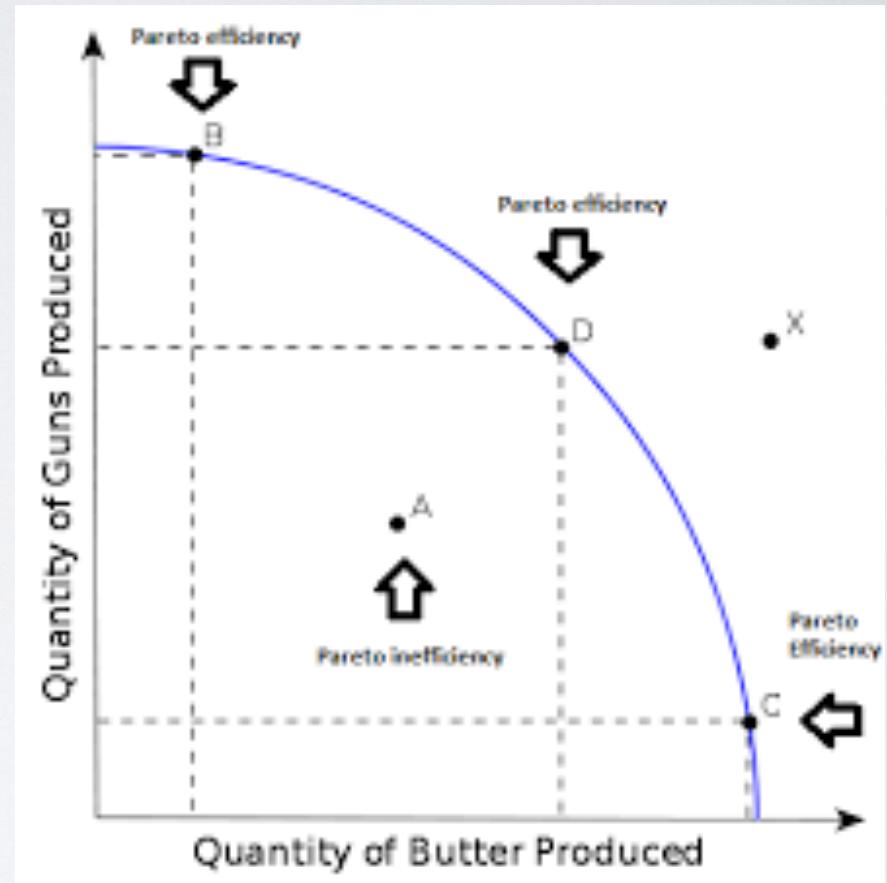
To review some of the basic principles:

- When there are four blocks, discard the least useful floating tile.
- When there are six blocks, discard the weakest block.
- Each block should have at most three tiles.

Coffee break



3. ADVANCED TILE EFFICIENCY



SELECTED TOPICS ON TILE EFFICIENCY

1. Six-block or five-block?
2. To sakigiri or not to sakigiri?
3. Lock-in the head or a run?

(More topics will be in Riichi Book II)

I. SIX-BLOCK METHOD

There is such a thing called the **six-block** method.

1. Most of the time, the five-block method works better than the six-block method. **[theory]**
2. In some rare occasions, the six-block method may work as well. **[exception]**

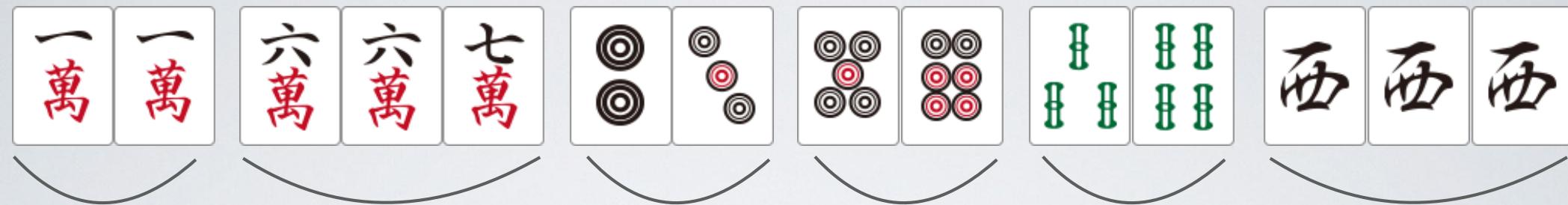
WWWD?

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WWYD?



The **five-block** method

- When there are six blocks, discard the weakest block.
- Discard

The **six-block** method

- Keep all six blocks for now (and decide which block to cut later)
- Discard

FIVE VS SIX

There is no difference in tile efficiency at this moment (accept 28 tiles):

2向聴(14枚)

標準形(七対国士を含む)の計算結果 / 一般形

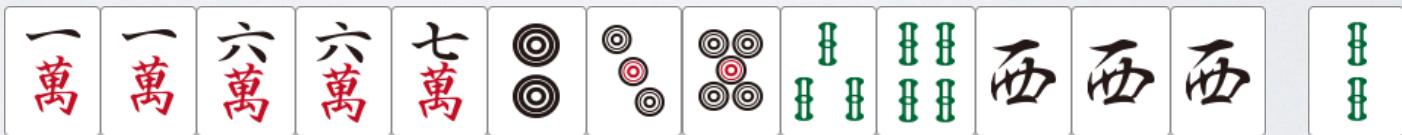
打	萬	摸	[五	八	○	●●	●●	●●	●●	28枚]
打	●	摸	[二	五	六	八	●●	●●	●●	28枚]
打	●○	摸	[萬	萬	萬	萬	●●	●●	●●	28枚]
打	●●○	摸	[萬	萬	萬	萬	○	●●	●●	28枚]
打	●●●○	摸	[萬	萬	萬	萬	●○	●●	●●	28枚]

Note: read Rosti's guide (<https://goo.gl/yzctDm>) on how to use this.

FIVE VS SIX

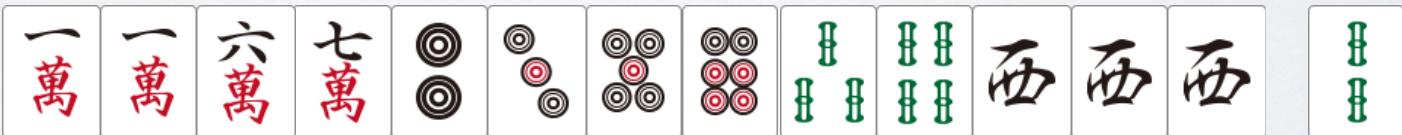
However, it makes a difference when the hand advances from 2-away to 1-away.

- Five blocks



Tile acceptance: 6 kinds-**20** tiles (**perfect 1-away**)

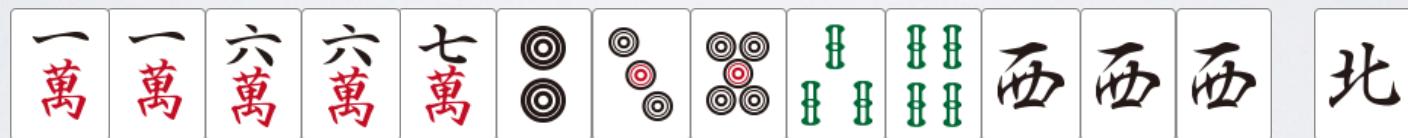
- Six blocks



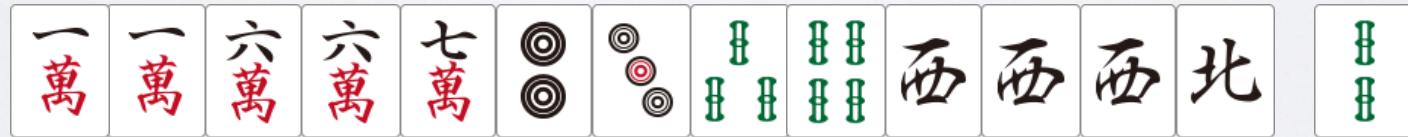
Tile acceptance: 4 kinds-**16** tiles (side n' side 1-away)

FIVE VS SIX

The five-block method also allows you to keep a safety tile (without any loss of tile efficiency when in 2-away).



Discard (keep as a safety tile).



Discard (make the hand perfect 1-away).

MERITS OF THE FIVE-BLOCK METHOD

The five-block method works better to **maximize tile efficiency.**

- Sometimes, we may want to sacrifice efficiency for higher scores.
- We will see a few **exceptional** situations where we apply the six-block method instead.

EXCEPTION I

WWYD?



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We had five sufficient blocks before drawing 3p (perfect 1-away).

- Discarding the 3p we drew is perfectly fine (five-block method)
- However, if we keep the 3p, the hand is 1-away from sanshoku (six-block method)

EXCEPTION 2

WWYD?

東1局6巡目西家 ドラ



tenhou.net

東1局6巡目西家 ドラ



遞 tenhou.net

- Five-block method: discard



- Six-block method: discard



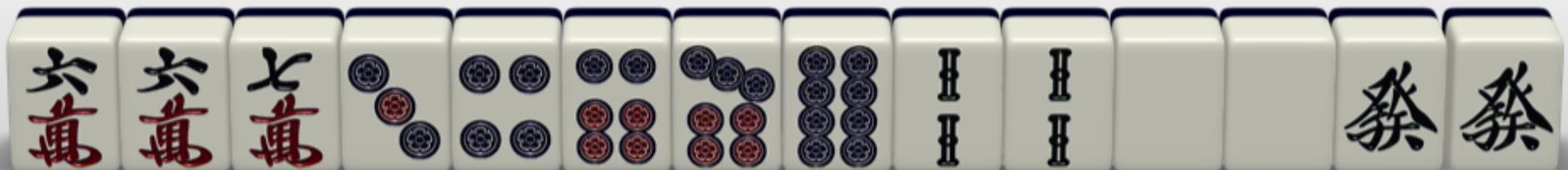
The six-block method allows you to:

- keep the possibility of sanshoku;
- postpone your choice of which proto-run to discard.

EXCEPTION 3

WWYD?

東1局6巡目西家 ドラ 



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東1局6巡目西家 ドラ

I
I



題 tenhou.net

- Five-block method: discard or or
- Six-block method: discard

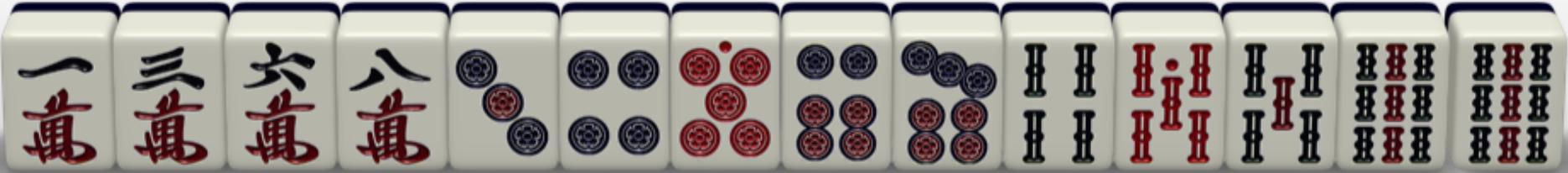
The six-block method allows you to postpone your choice of which pair or proto-run to discard.

EXCEPTION 4

WWYD?



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- Five-block method: discard or
- Six-block method: discard

The six-block method allows you to postpone your choice of which of the two weak proto-runs to discard.

MERITS OF THE SIX-BLOCK METHOD

The six-block method allows you to **postpone** your choice.

- May increase the hand value (more yaku / dora)
- Decide later = could make choices with **more analogue information**

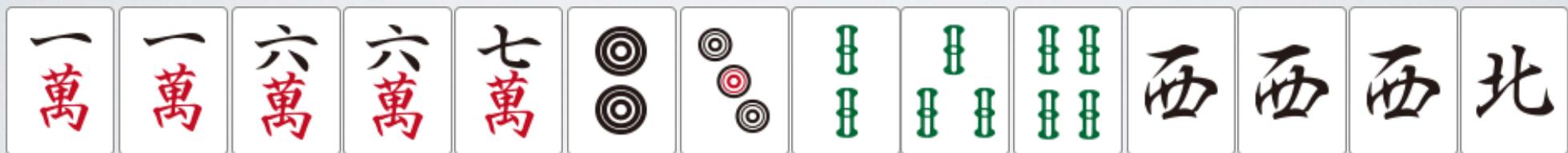
Keep in mind that these come with a cost (loss in tile efficiency)!

2. To Sakigiri or Not to Sakigiri

–Safety vs Efficiency

SAKIGIRI OR NOT?

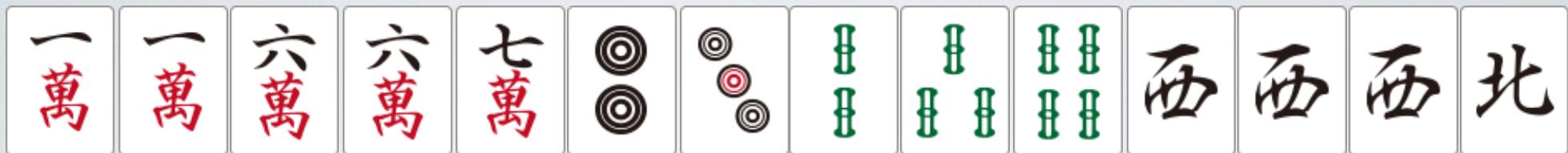
One of the hand examples we saw above:



- Discarding 北 is more efficient. **[theory]**
- Discarding 六萬 is called sakigiri. **[exception]**

“Saki” (= in advance) “giri” (= cut/discard)

DON'T SAKIGIRI



六萬 of 六萬 六萬 七萬 is called a follow-up tile.

- A follow-up tile increases tile efficiency (allows you to accept **4 more** tiles = **efficiency loss is 4 tiles**).
- Sakigiri (= discarding a follow-up tile) allows you to keep a safety tile, but this is **too inefficient** most of the time!

DON'T SAKIGIRI 2

東1局6巡目東家 ドラ



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- doesn't increase tile acceptance **at the moment.**
- However, upon drawing , tile acceptance doubles (12 → 24 tiles) if you keep .
- Keep , and discard .

DON'T SAKIGIRI 3

東1局6巡目東家 ドラ 此

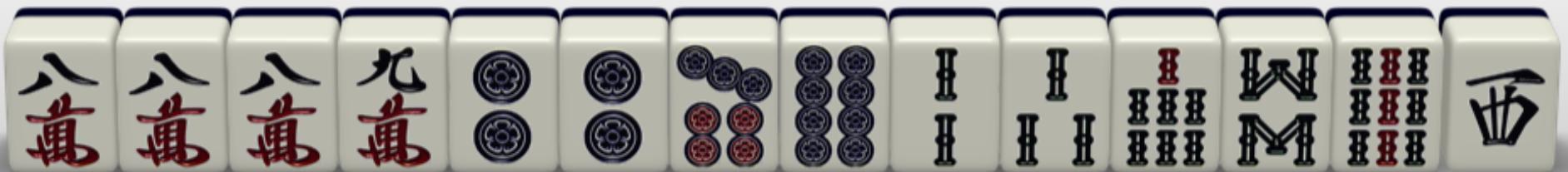


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- Again, 六萬 doesn't increase tile acceptance **at the moment.**
- However, once you draw 七萬, tile acceptance doubles.
Drawing ◎◎◎◎ also helps if you keep 六萬.
- Keep 六萬, and discard 西.

DON'T SAKIGIRI 4

東1局6巡目東家 ドラ 此



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- 九萬 doesn't increase tile acceptance, but it lets you keep the possibility of sanshoku of 789.
- Keep 九萬, and discard 西.

DON'T SAKIGIRI 5

東1局6巡目東家 ドラ 



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-  doesn't increase tile acceptance, but it lets you pon the dora (then discard 3s).
- Keep , and discard .

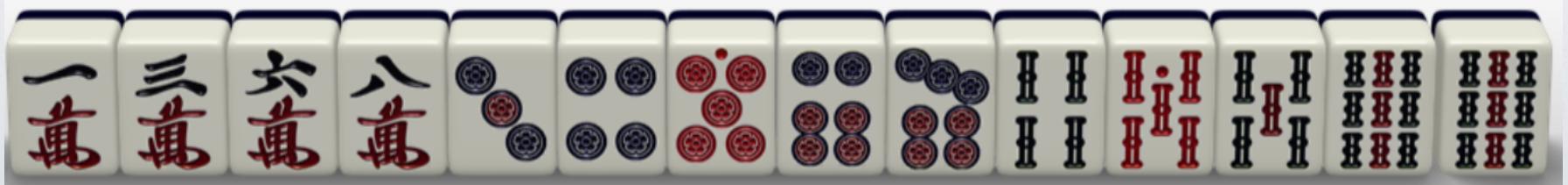
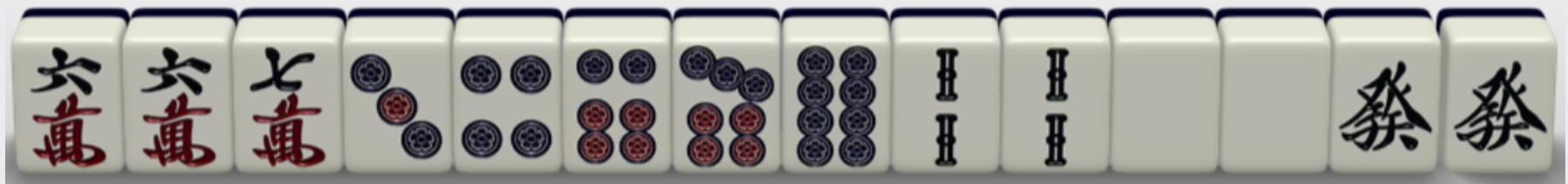
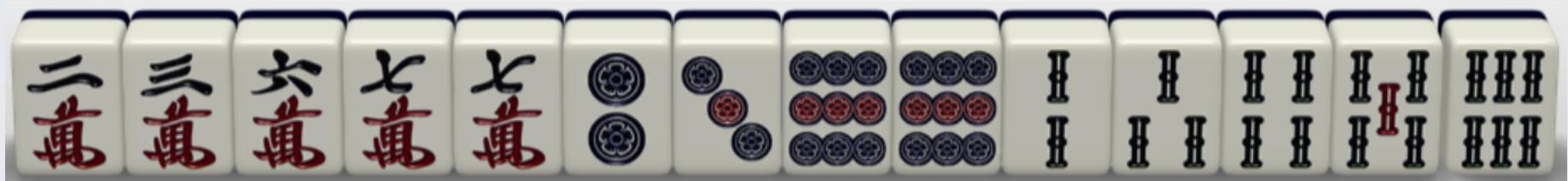
EXCEPTIONS

Three kinds of situations where it is OK to sakigiri:

1. Six-block method
2. 2-away from ready
3. Lock-in a dora proto-run

EXCEPTION I: SIX-BLOCK METHOD

Hand examples we have seen above:



EXCEPTION 2: 2-AWAY



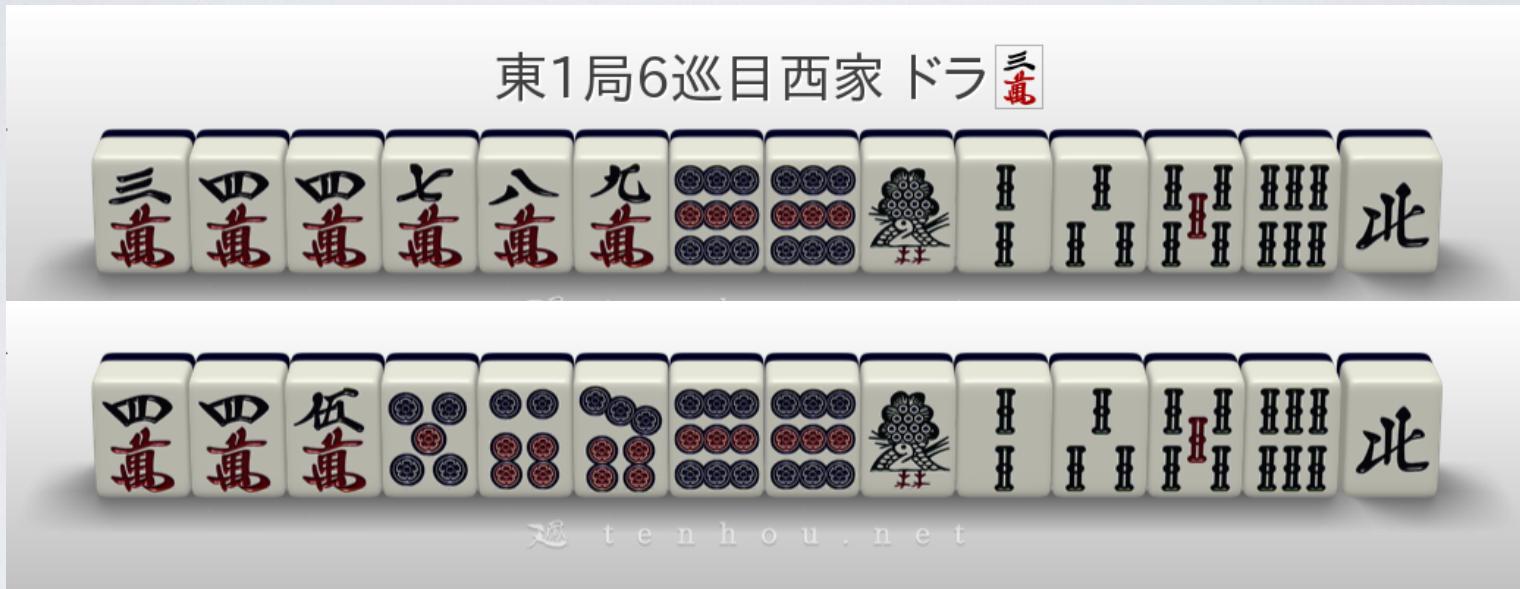
- Sakigiri 3m is OK (efficiency loss = 2 tiles).
- Recall that efficiency loss was bigger (4 tiles) when you sakigiri with a 1-away hand.

EXCEPTION 3: DORA



- Sakigiri to **lock-in** the dora proto-run
- is the dora indicator here:
 - more dangerous
 - one copy of it is already used up (loss in efficiency is 3, not 4)

EXCEPTION 3: DORA



Sakigiri  to **lock-in** the dora proto-run in both cases.

EXCEPTION 3: DORA



Sakigiri to **lock-in** the dora proto-run

3.

To Lock-in the Head or a Run?

WWYD?



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HEAD OR A RUN?

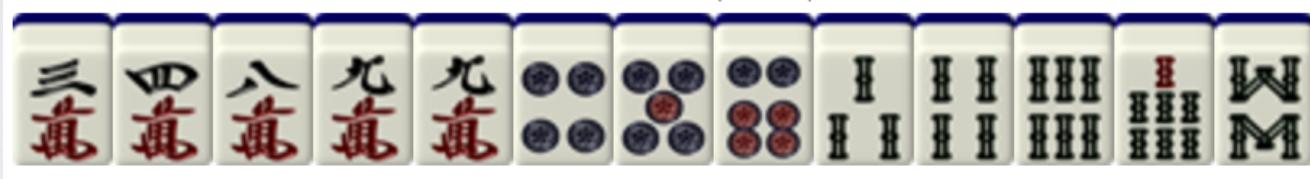


- Discarding = lock-in a run ()
- Discarding = lock-in the head ()

Let's see which one is better and why.

TILE EFFICIENCY

- Lock-in the head (discard ) = 4 kinds-**16 tiles**



- Lock-in a run (discard ) = 8 kinds-**28 tiles**



So it's better to lock-in a run...?

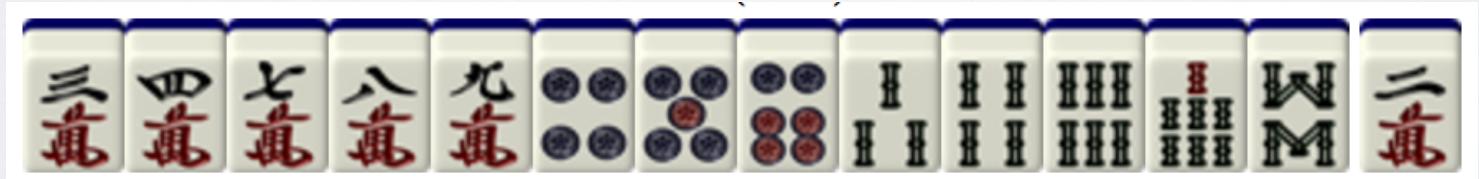
WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

- Locking-in the head (4 kinds-16 tiles):



If you draw 25m or 25s first, the final wait is **always side wait**.

- Locking-in a run (8 kinds-28 tiles):



If you draw 25m or 25s first, the final wait will be **single wait**.

SIDE WAIT TENPAI

- Lock-in the head (discard 七萬) = 4 kinds- **16 tiles** to make for side-wait tenpai.



- Lock-in a run (discard 九萬) = 4 kinds- **12 tiles** to make for side-wait tenpai.



HEAD OR A RUN



With a side n' side 1-away hand (two side wait proto-runs), **lock in the head!**

Discard



LOCK-IN THE HEAD

This theory is applicable even more with an open hand, because you can call chii.



Discard  to lock in the head.

Otherwise, you'd get single wait after calling chii.

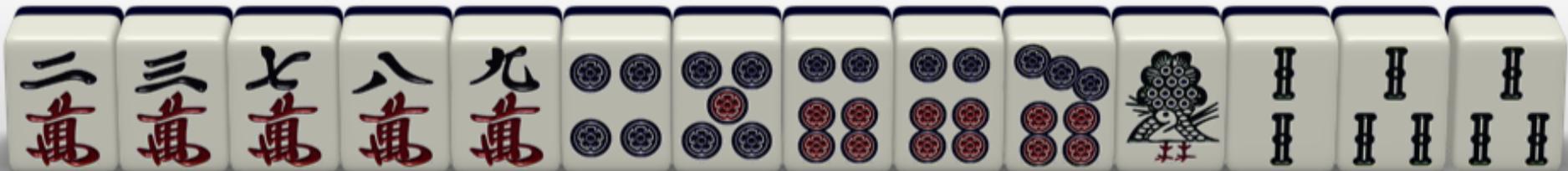
LOCK-IN THE HEAD

Lock in the head (rather than a run) with a side n'
side 1-away hand **[theory]**

Exceptions:

1. Toward the end of a hand (tenpai payment)
2. When you have **connected blocks**

CONNECTED BLOCKS I



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Discard  to lock-in a run.

When you have connected blocks (456p + 67p), it's better to lock-in a run.

Drawing 14m, 47p, or 36p to make for side wait.

CONNECTED BLOCKS 2



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Discard to lock-in a run.

Connected blocks (456m + 78m) = lock-in a run.

- Drawing 4578m or 23p to make for side wait.
- If you draw 14p first, discard 4m to go for 5-8m nobetan wait.

REVIEW EXERCISE I

WWYD and why?



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REVIEW EXERCISE 2

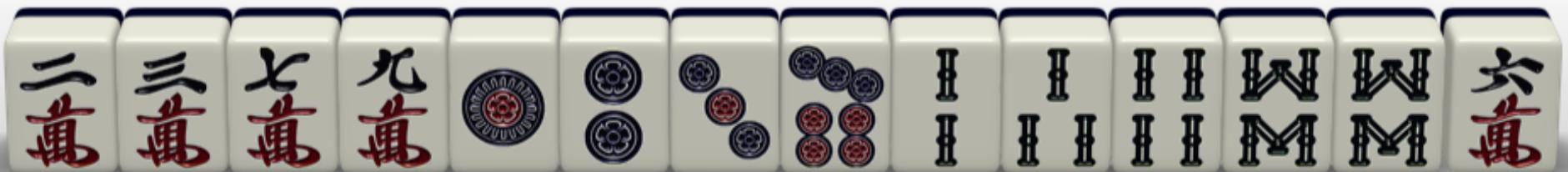
WWYD and why?



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REVIEW EXERCISE 3

WWYD and why?



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REVIEW EXERCISE 4

WWYD and why?



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REVIEW EXERCISE 5

WWYD and why?



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REVIEW EXERCISE 6

WWYD and why?



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Coffee break



4. DEDUCTION

Knowing the Unknown



MAHJONG = IMPERFECT INFORMATION GAME

We wish we knew:

- What riichi'ed opponents' waits are;
- What tiles are still live in the wall;
- What tiles are more likely to be discarded by the opponents;
- How expensive the opponents' hands are, etc. etc....

Skills of **deduction (reading)** may come in handy.

CAVEAT EMPTOR

Keep in mind:

- Deduction is NOT an exact science!
(always a danger of misreading information)
- Even the correct information may not be helpful.
(you won't win any points by guessing the waits correctly)
- Better to **concentrate on fundamentals** first
(e.g., tile efficiency, riichi judgement, etc.)

WHY LEARN DEDUCTION?

- Deduction allows you to achieve **a better mix of digital and analogue** approaches.
- That being said, always be mindful of the analogue trap! Too much confidence in reading backfires.

North: 25000



East: 25000



South: 25000

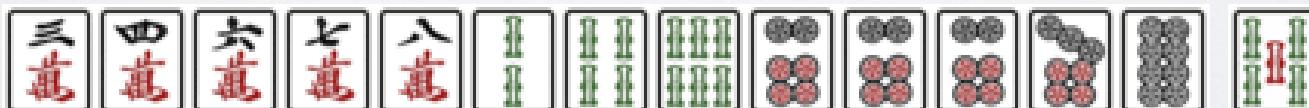
West: 25000

East-1

● × 0
··· × 0



中 比 南 發 西



ANALOGUE TRAP, REVISITED

- Facing player is obviously doing hon'itsu/chin'itsu in manzu.
- No one other than me has discarded manzu.
- Dora is manzu.

Ignore all these discouraging analogue info, and just riichi.

Makes **absolutely no sense** to win a 3900 dama hand in East-1.

READING WHAT?

In the order of importance

1. Reading the wall
2. Reading the waits of an open hand
3. Reading the hand values of an open hand
4. Reading the waits of a riichi hand
5. Reading the hand values of a riichi hand

We'll cover 1 today. The rest will be covered in Riichi Book II.

WHY THIS ORDER?

Riichi'ed hands are almost impossible to read.

- 13 hidden tiles; unknown draws.
- The hand values can vary widely by chance = no point in guessing.

Open hands are easier to read.

- Fewer hidden tiles in a hand
- The last “draw” before tenpai is often known.
- Can have a good estimate of the hand values.

WALL READING

It's the most important of all, for it can be used the most often!

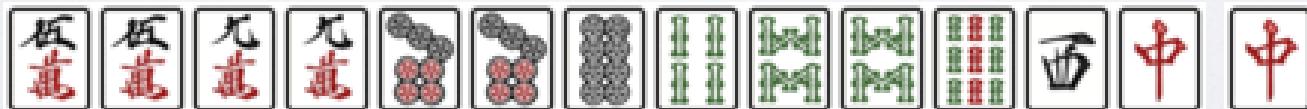
- Reading open/riichi hand can be used only when opponents open their hand / declare riichi.
- Let's see an example before learning the technique.

West: 2500

North: 25000



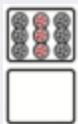
East: 25000



South: 25000



East-1

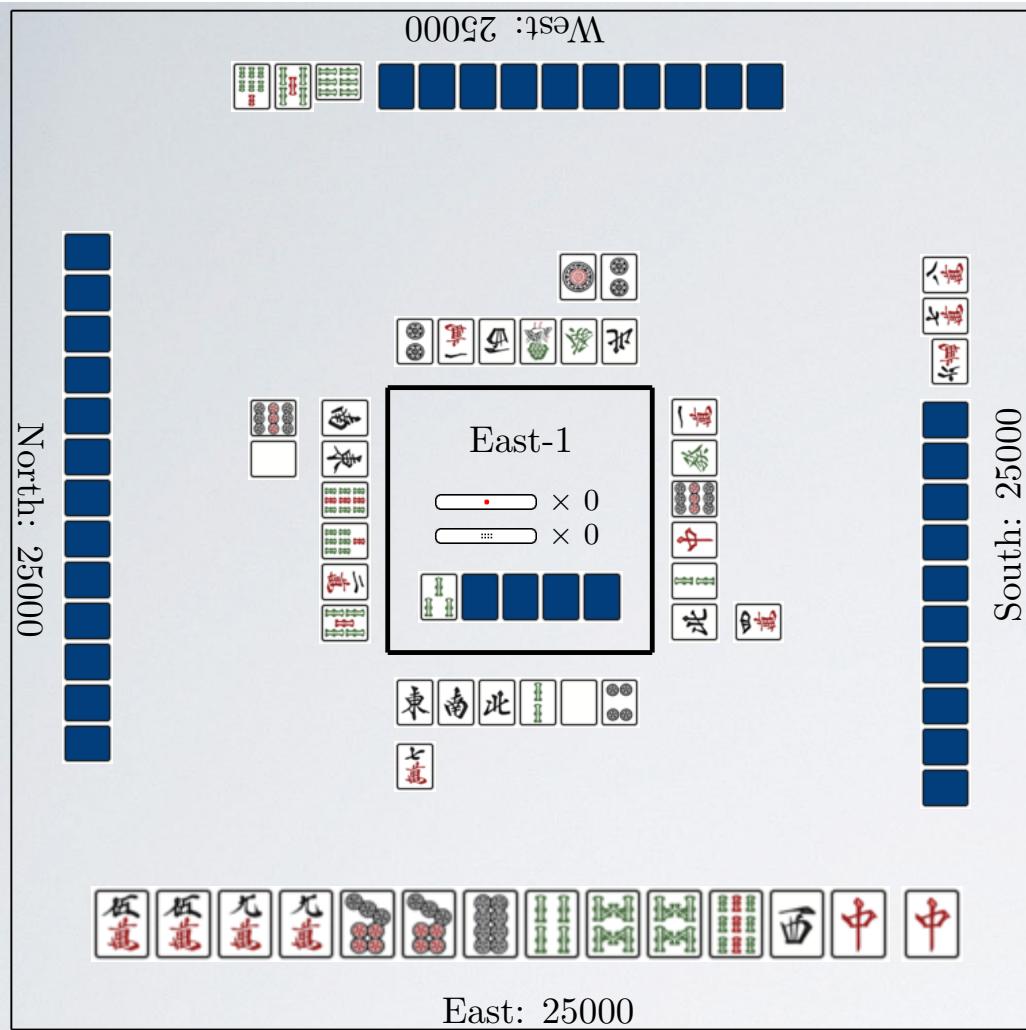


WWYD?

東1局8巡目東家 ドラ



- Definitely keep the dora, 
- Also, keep  (1 copy discarded = extremely good wait)
- Choice boils down to:  vs .



[Deduction (analogue)]

- All fanpai are dead, and yet both South and West players are open.
 - Both of them are most likely to be doing tan'yao.
 - They don't have any 9s.
- North has discarded 9s then 7s very early, so he doesn't have any 9s, either.

(invisible) 2 copies of 9s must be live in the wall.

(invisible) 3 copies of 8p may or may not be live in the wall.

[Theory (digital)]

1 copy of 9s out = 2 are live
0 copy of 8p out = 3 are live

→ keep 8p.

→ Keep 9s.

6 TIPS FOR WALL READING

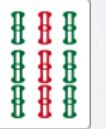
Tip I: When someone is doing a **flush hand**, the suit being collected by him will be a scarce suit

- He may already have lots of tiles in the suit.
- Other players may not easily discard tiles in the suit.

→ Try to avoid the suit if possible.

TIP 2: EARLY DISCARD

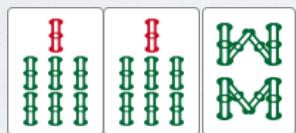
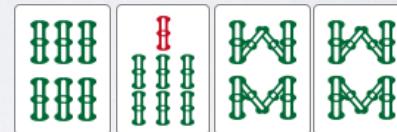
Tip 2: A tile discarded early (and the ones next to them) are **unlikely to be held** by the discarer.

If someone discarded  early, he is unlikely to have , , or .

→ they are **likely to be live** in the wall.

PROOF BY CONTRADICTION

Suppose someone *had* any of the following in his hand:

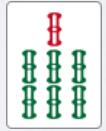
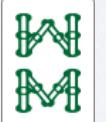


If this were true, he would not discard 8s early.

→ 8s was discarded because it was an isolated tile.

TIP 3: MIDDLE-GAME DISCARD

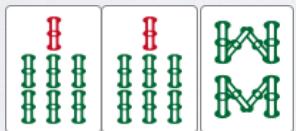
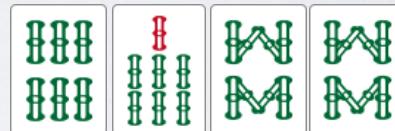
Tip 3: Tiles next to the one discarded in/after middle-game are **likely to be held** by the discarer.

If someone discarded  (from his hand) in/after middle-game, he is likely to have either , , or another copy of .

→ they are **unlikely to be live** in the wall.

TIP 3 = INVERSION OF TIP 2

A middle-game discard of  (tedashi = discard from the hand) is likely to be from one of the following



rather than from a lone 8s.

8s was kept until then because it was not an isolated tile.

TIPS 1, 2, 3

Summary so far:

1. Flush hand = scarce suit
2. Early discard = neighborhood likely live
3. Middle-game discard = neighborhood unlikely live

In light of these, WWWYD in the following situation?

West: 25000



North: 25000

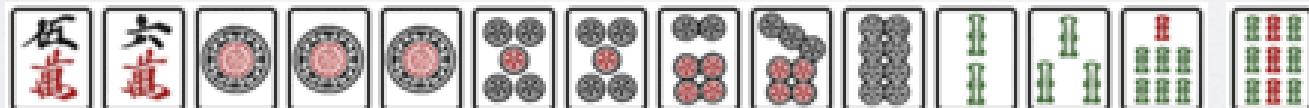


East-1

● × 0
··· × 0



South: 25000



East: 25000

東1局9巡目東家 ドラ



遞 tenhou.net

[Theory] (without reading)

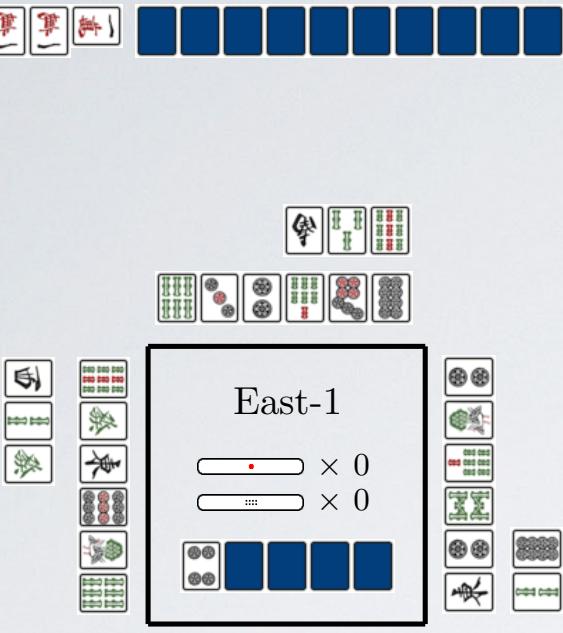
- There are six blocks, so need to cut one.
- The choice boils down to: vs vs
- : side wait (8 tiles of - invisible)
- : side wait (6 tiles of - invisible)
- : closed wait (3 tiles of invisible)

Tile-efficiency-wise, the ordering is: > >

North: 25000



East: 25000



West: 25000



Discard 56m!



伍 萬 六 萬

- West is obv. doing flush hand; not sure about South & North, but manzu tiles are **really scarce**.
- It's possible that none remains live in the wall.



South: 25000

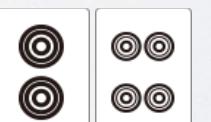
- Really good (1-4 is the best kind of side wait).
- Souzu is very cheap on the board.



- Closed wait, and I copy out.
- However, Tips 1 and 2 tell us that no one is likely to have 8s = all 3 copies likely to be live in the wall.

TIP 4: CLOSED-WAIT PROTO-RUN

Tip 4: When someone discards a closed-wait proto-run () with the **inner one first** (i.e., discard  first,  next), he is **unlikely to have**

- (1) more copies of the discarded ones (), and
- (2) the ones that are next to them ().

TIP 4: WHY?

Relatively easy to see that discarding  implies no more 

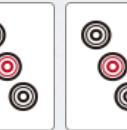
Having , , or  after discarding  means he initially had



not impossible, but very unlikely.

TIP 4:WHY? — DISCARD ORDER

Why can we deduce that discarding  implies he is unlikely to have  ?

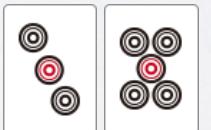
Having  means that he initially had    .

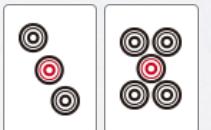
From this shape, he would discard  first,  next.

TIP 4'

Tip 4': When someone discards a closed-wait porto-run ( ) with the inner one first (i.e., discard  first,  next), he is **unlikely to have**

(1) more copies of the discarded ones (, and

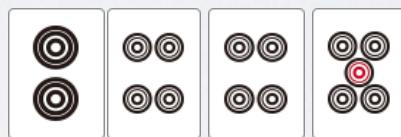
(2) the ones that are next to them (, , , ,

(2) the ones that are next to them (, , , ,

(3) (possible to have the outside one )

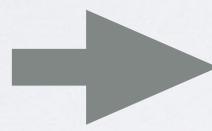
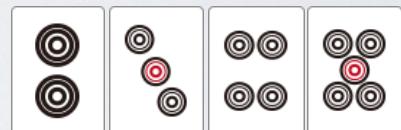
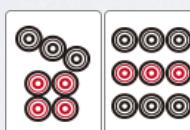
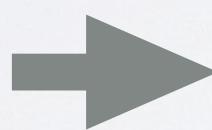
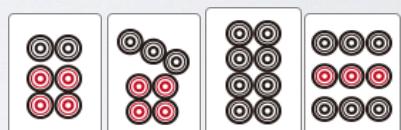
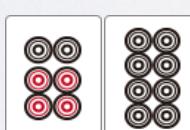
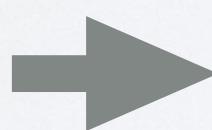
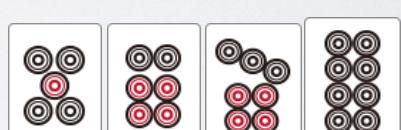
TIP 4': LOGIC

If someone initially had  first,  next.



Note: it's possible that he had 

TIP 4: SUMMARY

- Discard   Unlikely to have .
- Discard   Unlikely to have .
- Discard   Unlikely to have .
- Discard   Unlikely to have .

Can't say anything about more inside ones (46, 35, 57)

TIP 5: EARLY DISCARD (2)

Tip 5: The inner suji tile of a tile discarded early is **likely to be held** by the discarer.

- If someone discarded  early, he is likely to have 
- If someone discarded  early, he is likely to have 

Not too reliable for 1 and 9; more reliable for 7 (=4) and 3 (=6)

TIP 6: TEDASHI & SWAP

Before explaining Tip 6, I need to introduce several key terms in Japanese:

- **Tsumogiri** (tsumo = draw, giri = cut/discard)

to discard a tile that you've just drawn

- **Tedashi** (te = hand, dashi = put smt out from)

to discard a tile from your hand; antonym of tsumogiri

- **Karagiri** (kara = fake, giri = discard)

a variant of tedashi; to discard a tile from your hand that is identical to the one you've drawn.

TSUMOGIRI VS TEDASHI

Tedashi tiles **give out information** to the opponents.

- When you have a choice between tsumogiri and karagiri as a discarer, you should **almost always tsumogiri**.

Karagiri works better only in a few, very rare situations.

- Example (dora : 



Tsumogiri  (do so as fast as possible).

TSUMOGIRI VS TEDASHI

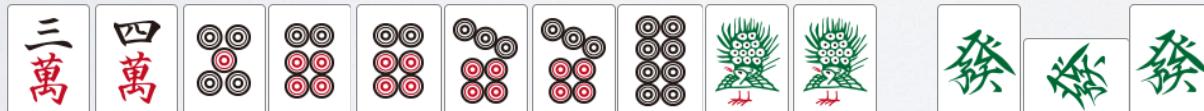
As an observer, you may want to pay attention to the opponents' tsumogiri and tedashi behaviors.

- This becomes critical when reading open hands (to be covered in Riichi Book II).
- There are situations where you may be able to infer that the tedashi tile is actually a karagiri tile.

KARAGIRI & SWAP

A concept related to karagiri is **swapping** = discard a suji tile of the one you've just drawn.

- Example:



Draw

Discarding

= swapping

Discarding

from the hand = karagiri

TIP 6: KARAGIRI & SWAP

Tip 6:

- If you detect karagiri by an opponent, he holds one more copy of the karagiri'ed tile.
- If you detect swapping by an opponent, he holds the suji tile of the discarded tile.

DETECTING KARAGIRI

Pay attention to an “unnatural” tedashi tile.

- When a tedashi tile completes a group in the discard pond
(e.g., tedashi 4p after discarding 3p and 5p)
- When tedashi the same tile discarded a few turns ago
(e.g., tedashi 2p after discarding 2p a few turns ago).

TIPS 4, 5, 6

Summary so far:

4. Reverse-discard closed wait (e.g., 3, then 1)
5. Suji of an early discard (e.g., 9 → 6)
6. Karagiri & swapping

In light of these, WWYD?

West: 2500



North: 25000



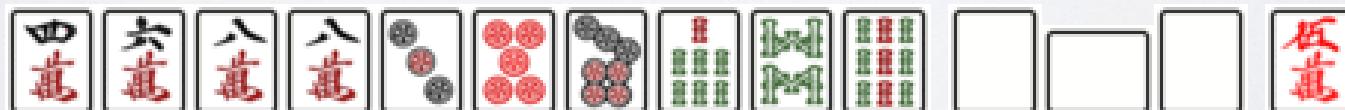
South: 25000



East-1



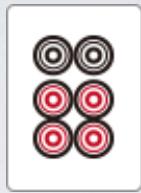
三



East: 25000



VS



[Digital]

- 3 copies of  invisible
- 4 copies of  invisible

[Analogue]

Let's try to read the three opponents' discard ponds.

West: 25000



North: 25000

South: 25000

North

- Discarded  = Unlikely to have 
 - Discarded  = May have e.g.,  ?

South

- Discarded  in the 2nd turn,
then  again

= Very likely to be **swapping**

=  in the hand

Deduction

- Each of the three player is likely to have  in the hand.
 - They are all unlikely to have .
 - Discard  to wait on .

West:

- Discarded  early.
 - Very unlikely to have another.
 - More likely to have had



DEDUCTION (MORE TO COME IN RIICHI BOOK II)

What we covered today is only a tip of the iceberg.

- Reading open hands
- Reading riichi hand
- How to mislead opponents who read

Learning these skills will allow you to enjoy the game in more depth!

5. HOW TO GET *EVEN BETTER*

What you should do after this
seminar



KEYS TO GET BETTER

- Study strategies
- Play a lot of games
- Review and discuss your games with others

THREE DIMENSIONS

Sports and games can be classified along three dimensions:

- **Manipulation:** movement of a body
- **Cognition:** collect and process information quickly
- **Judgement:** analyze information and strategize

COGNITION, JUDGEMENT, AND MANIPULATION

- Chess (exclusively judgement)
- Short-distance sprint (exclusively manipulation)
- Marathon, golf (manipulation + judgement)
- Tennis, football (manipulation + judgement + cognition)
- Poker (mostly judgement)

MAHJONG

- **Manipulation** mostly irrelevant
- **Judgement** is important, but not as much as you may think (luck plays a huge role).
- **Cognition** is what distinguishes mahjong from other mind sports.
 - Read the discard pond and realize when another player is pursuing a flush hand, nearing tenpai, etc.
 - Recognize important tile shapes quickly
 - Count the number of blocks in a hand, and identify redundant tiles quickly

HOW TO GET BETTER

To get better:

- Study theories & exceptions (**for judgement**)
- Play a lot (**for cognition**)
 - Just playing a lot won't be enough;
 - Must make conscious efforts to train our cognitive ability during the game.

PLAY A LOT WHERE?

Tenhou is the way to go, hands down.

- “But, Tenhou is all about 4th place avoidance; I don’t like it.”
- “But, I can’t concentrate when playing on my computer...”
- “They play with red fives, and pon/chii like crazy. It’s all luck.”
- “I don’t read Japanese.”

These are **ALL BS excuses!**



NO MAN IS AN ISLAND

Review your games / discussing strategies with others

- Explaining things to other people helps you clarify your own thought process.
- Writing a blog / articles / books will also help.

ONLINE FORUMS

- Competitive Riichi Hub: <https://discord.gg/pjVEtn>
- Mahjong Discord Channel: <https://discord.gg/t2Wk4V>
- Osamuko FB group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/osamuko/>
- Mahjong Reddit: <https://www.reddit.com/r/Mahjong/>

Hope to see many of you there!



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