

Mahjong (Chinese) for Beginners

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SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11 Mahjong	12	13	14	15	16
17	18 Mahjong	19	20	21	22	23
24	25 Memorial Day	26 Mahjong	27	28	29	30
31						



Goals

- Learn to play mahjong
- Enjoy playing mahjong
- Become good at playing mahjong
- Proficiency at 12 weeks

Mahjong

- Originated in China in the 1800s
- Originally a gambling game
- Over 90% of players in the U.S. are female
- It is similar to gin rummy, but is played with 144 tiles instead of 52 cards.
- Many different variations
- We will be playing a “simplified” version of Chinese mahjong.

MAH • jong

Mahjong is like learning a new language

- Letters—the different tiles
- Words—the different combinations of tiles that have meaning that others can understand
- Sentences—assembling the appropriate tile combinations (the “words”) to create a winning hand, known as a MAHJONG

Suits

		Numbers								
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Suits	Circles 筒									
	Bamboos 索									
	Characters 萬									

4 of each = 108 tiles

Honors

Winds				Dragons		
East	South	West	North	Red	Green	White
東	南	西	北	中	發	白
						

4 of each = 28 tiles

Pop Quiz

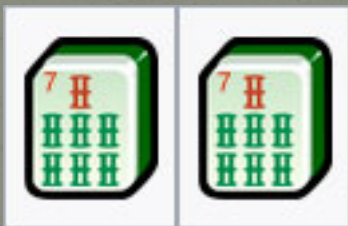
1. How many tiles in a Chinese mahjong set?
2. How many different suits?
3. Name the different suits?
4. How many different tiles in each suit?
5. What are the two types of Honor tiles?
6. Name the three dragons?

There are only 4 "words" in mahjong

- Eyes
- Pung
- Kong
- Chee

Eyes

Two of a kind, a pair
(suits, winds or dragons)



Pung

Three of a kind
(suits, winds or dragons)



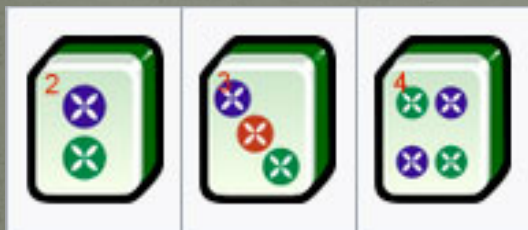
Kong

Four of a kind
(suits, winds or dragons)



Chee

A consecutive numerical sequence
of 3 tiles in a single suit
(no dragons or winds)



Pop Quiz

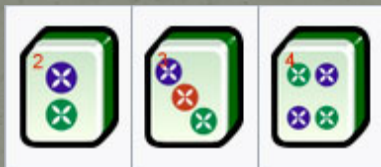
- What is four-of-a-kind called?
- What is a consecutive sequence in one suit called?
- What is three-of-a-kind called?
- How many tiles in eyes?

The MAHJONG

- A MAHJONG is essentially a complete sentence using the available types of “words” (eyes, pungs, kongs, and chees).
- The first player to complete a MAHJONG wins the game and announces “Mahjong!”

But, what constitutes a MAHJONG?

- A MAHJONG has five parts: 4 sets + 1 pair of eyes
- The 4 sets can be ANY combination of pungs, kongs, or chees



Pop Quiz

1. How many pairs of eyes in a mahjong?
2. How many sets in a mahjong?
3. What is the minimum number of tiles in a mahjong?

Mahjong fluency

- Letters—circles, bamboos, characters, winds, and dragons
- Words—Just 4 meaningful tile combinations (eyes, pungs, kongs, and chees)
- Sentence (Mahjong)—4 sets (pungs/kongs/chees) + 1 pair of eyes

Bit of a problem

- Suits – $3 \times 9 \times 4 = 108$ tiles
- Honors – $7 \times 4 = 28$ tiles
- $108 + 28 = 136$

Flowers

- Composed of FLOWERS and SEASONS, but they are both referred to as “flowers”

Flowers					Seasons				
No	Image	Name	Character	Direction	No	Image	Name	Character	Direction
1		Plum blossom	梅	East	1		Spring	春	East
2		Orchid	蘭	South	2		Summer	夏	South
3		Chrysanthemum	菊	West	3		Autumn	秋	West
4		Bamboo	竹	North	4		Winter	冬	North

Flowers (continued)

- Flowers CANNOT be used to form eyes, pungs, kongs, or chees.
- They are immediately melded and replaced with a new tile from the flower wall.
- Presence or absence of specific flowers will eventually be used when scoring the winning hand.

Points

All Chees	1	All chees and eyes in varying suits
Dragon	1	Pung or kong of any dragon (red, white, green)
Prevailing Wind	1	Pung or kong of the prevailing wind
Seat Position Wind	1	Pung or kong of the wind of your seat position
No Flower	1	Winning hand has no flower
Your Flower	1	Winning hand has a flower corresponding to your seat number
Self-Drawn Tile	1	Self-drawing the final tile to complete a mahjong
Robbing the Kong	1	Mahjong by taking a tile from a player making an exposed kong
Single Wait for Eye	1	Holding a single tile waiting for its mate to form eyes
Middle Tile (Closed Wait)	1	Waiting for the missing inside tile to form a chee
End Tile (Edge Wait)	1	Waiting for a missing 3 or 7 tile of a terminal chee
Two Suits (Missing one suit)	1	A hand with tiles from only 2 suits and no honors
Twins	1	Two identical chees, same numerical sequence of the same suit
Consecutive/ Short Sequence/ Short Straight	1	Two sequential chees in the same suit (2-3-4-5-6-7) including 7-8-9 + 1-2-3
No Terminals/ No Honors	1	A hand with no dragons, winds, 1's, or 9's
Concealed Kong	1	A kong all self-drawn, melded face down is optional
Tile Hog	1	Use all four copies of a tile but not as a kong
All Concealed	1	All elements concealed
All Exposed	1	All elements exposed & mahjong on other's discard
Bottom of the Sea	1	Winning on last tile from the live wall
Bouquet	2	Mahjong hand has all 4 flowers or seasons
Mixed Dragon	2	1 thru 9 of three sequential chees in 3 suits
Terminals w/Honors	2	All sets and eyes contain a 1, a 9, or an honor tile

All Pungs (Triplet Hand)	3	4 sets of pungs/kongs + eyes (any suit or honors)
Hybrid	3	A hand containing only one suit and honors
Pure Dragon	3	1 through 9 in one suit plus one set and eyes
Triple Mixed Chees	3	3 chees of same numerical sequence in all 3 suits
All Five Suits (One of Everything)	3	A hand containing sets/eyes of a wind, a dragon, and all 3 suits
Terminals	3	All sets and eyes having a 1 or 9 within
Lower Four	3	Hand contains only tiles 1-4
All Fives	3	All sets and eyes contain a 5
Upper Four	3	Hand contains only tiles 6-9
All Honors	6	All sets and eyes are honor tiles, points for dragons & winds can be added
Seven Sisters	6	7 pairs of any tiles
All One Suit	6	Chees/pungs/kongs/eyes all in one suit
All Evens	6	Pungs/kongs and eyes of suit tiles with even numbers
Lower Three	6	Hand contains only tiles 1-3
Middle Three	6	Hand contains only tiles 4-6
Upper Three	6	Hand contains only tiles 7-9
Little Three Dragons	6	Pungs/kongs of 2 dragons + the other dragon for eyes + 2 sets
Little Four Winds	6	Pungs/kongs of 3 winds & eyes of other wind + any set
Big Three Dragons	9	Pungs/kongs of all 3 dragons + 1 set & eyes
Big Four Wind	9	Pungs/kongs of all 4 winds and eyes in any variety
13 Orphans	9	1 & 9 of 3 suits, 1 of each honor & 1 tile to match for eyes
Big 7 Pairs	9	7 pairs consisting of 1's & 9's and honors only
Hand from Heaven	9	Dealer's hand opens as a mahjong
Hand from Earth	9	Getting mahjong on dealer's first discard or first drawn tile
18 Monkeys/4 Kongs	9	4 sets of kongs + eyes in any suits or honors (18 tiles)

Updated 2/24/2026

Questions?

Name tags