

THE MAHJONG RULES



@SOBAMFUN
512-568-0175
HELLO@SOBAMFUN.COM

AMERICAN MAHJONG

BY SO BAM FUN

WELCOME TO AMERICAN MAHJONG, A GAME OF STRATEGY, SKILL, AND A LITTLE BIT OF LUCK! THIS GUIDE IS DESIGNED TO HELP YOU LEARN THE FUNDAMENTALS AND FEEL CONFIDENT PLAYING ON YOUR OWN.

WHAT YOU'LL LEARN IN THIS GUIDE:

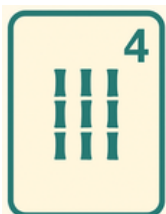
- 1 GET TO KNOW THE TILES
- 2 MASTER THE NATIONAL MAHJONG LEAGUE CARD
- 3 SET UP THE GAME
- 4 LEARN THE CHARLESTON
- 5 START TO PLAY
- 6 HOW TO CALL
- 7 PLAY WITH JOKERS
- 8 WIN MAHJONG
- 9 "NEVER" REMINDERS



1 GET TO KNOW THE TILES

IMPORTANT NOTE: MAHJONG SETS MIGHT HAVE TILES THAT DO NOT LOOK EXACTLY LIKE THE BELOW.

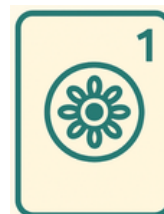
SUITS



BAMS



CRAKS



DOTS



GREEN



RED



SOAP

DRAGONS

EACH SUIT CONTAINS NUMBERS 1-9 AND IS PAIRED WITH A DRAGON (BAMS WITH GREEN, CRAKS WITH RED, DOTS WITH SOAP), WITH 4 OF EACH NUMBER AND 4 OF EACH DRAGON.

WINDS



NORTH



EAST



SOUTH



WEST

THERE ARE 4 OF EACH WIND.

FLOWERS



THERE ARE 8 FLOWERS.

DON'T HAVE SUITS
AND CAN BE USED
INTERCHANGEABLY

JOKERS



THERE ARE 8 JOKERS.

MASTER THE NATIONAL MAHJONG LEAGUE CARD

IN AMERICAN MAHJONG, THE CARD LISTS ALL POSSIBLE WINNING HANDS — EACH A 14-TILE COMBINATION. THE GOAL OF THE GAME IS TO BUILD ONE OF THESE LINES FASTER THAN OPPONENTS.

CARD SECTIONS

THE CARD CHANGES EVERY YEAR, BUT THESE 9 SECTIONS REMAIN THE SAME

- YEAR – CONTAINS CURRENT YEAR (SOAPS USED FOR “0”)
- 2468 – EVEN NUMBERS ONLY
- ANY LIKE NUMBERS – ALL THE SAME NUMBER
- QUINTS – 5-OF-A-KIND
- CONSECUTIVE RUNS – NUMBERS IN ORDER
- 13579 – ODD NUMBERS ONLY
- WINDS & DRAGONS – MAINLY WINDS AND DRAGONS
- 369 – ONLY 3, 6, AND 9
- SINGLES & PAIRS – ONLY SINGLES AND PAIRS

COLORS

COLORS SHOW HOW MANY SUITS TO USE, NOT WHAT SUIT TO USE (E.G., GREEN DOES NOT MEAN TO USE BAMs, AND RED DOES NOT MEAN TO USE CRAKS)

- 222 444 6666 8888 → IF A LINE IS ALL BLACK, IT HAS TO BE IN ONE SUIT BUT CAN BE ANY SUIT
- 222 444 6666 8888 → IF A LINE IS IN TWO COLORS, IT HAS TO BE TWO SUITS
- 222 444 6666 8888 → IF A LINE IS IN THREE COLORS, IT HAS TO BE IN ALL THREE SUITS
- 22 444 DDDD 666 88 → IF A LINE WITH A DRAGON IS LISTED IN ONE COLOR, THE DRAGON MUST MATCH THE SUIT OF THE NUMBERS

VALUES

- THE VALUES TELL YOU HOW DIFFICULT A LINE IS: (E.G., 25 IS THE EASIEST)
- C = CONCEALED: CANNOT CALL DISCARDED TILES (EXCEPT THE LAST ONE YOU NEED), BUT CAN JOKER SWAP.
- X = EXPOSED: YOU CAN CALL DISCARDS.

NOTES

- NOTES (IN PARENTHESES) EXPLAIN RESTRICTIONS OR OPTIONS
- TERMINOLOGY:
 - SINGLE: 1 SINGLE TILE
 - PAIR: 2 IDENTICAL TILES
 - PUNG: 3 IDENTICAL TILES
 - KONG: 4 IDENTICAL TILES
 - QUINT: 5 IDENTICAL TILES

SET UP THE GAME

DEALING DISTRIBUTES THE TILES TO CREATE EACH PLAYER'S STARTING HAND, SETTING THE STAGE FOR THE GAME.

1 BUILD THE WALL



LINE UP TILES AGAINST YOUR RACK 19 TILES ACROSS AND STACKED 2 HIGH (19 STACKS OF TWO = 38 TILES TOTAL)

2 CHOOSE THE DEALER



EVERYONE ROLLS THE DICE.
HIGHEST ROLL = DEALER

3 BREAK THE WALL

1. DEALER ROLLS THE DICE AGAIN
2. COUNTS THAT MANY TILES FROM THE RIGHT SIDE OF THEIR WALL
3. PLACES PUSHER ONE AFTER THE LAST TILE YOU COUNTED TO "SPLIT" THEIR WALL
4. PUSHES THE REMAINDER OF THE TILES TOWARDS THE CENTER WITH THEIR RIGHT HAND

4 DRAW TILES

1. DEALER DRAWS 4 TILES (2 STACKS OF 2) FROM THE FAR END OF THE WALL
2. EVERYONE CONTINUES GRABBING 4 TILES IN A COUNTER-CLOCKWISE ORDER UNTIL EVERYONE HAS 12 TILES
3. THE DEALER THEN TAKES THE 1ST AND 3RD TILE TO HAVE 14 TILES
4. EVERYONE ELSE GRABS 1 TILE TO HAVE 13



REMINDER: DEALER CAN MAKE A TAIL WITH 2 TILES ON THE LEFT-HAND SIDE OF THE PUSHED OUT WALL TO REMIND PLAYERS TO PICK TILES FROM THE RIGHT-HAND SIDE OF THE WALL



REMINDER: WHEN THE WALL RUNS OUT, THE PERSON TO THE LEFT OF THE DEALER PUSHES OUT THEIR ENTIRE WALL. IF SOMEONE ONLY RECEIVED 2 TILES, THEY COMPLETE THEIR DRAW WITH THE NEW WALL

LEARN THE CHARLESTON

THE CHARLESTON IS AN EXCHANGE OF TILES WITH OTHER PLAYERS
TO GET AN IDEA OF WHAT SECTION TO PLAY

THE CHARLESTON (MANDATORY)



REMINDER: DO NOT PICK TILES UP UNTIL EVERYONE PASSES! THE FIRST CHARLESTON IS "ROL" – RIGHT OVER LEFT

RIGHT

1. PASS 3 TILES TO THE RIGHT FACE DOWN
2. PICK UP AND RACK THE 3 TILES

OVER

1. PASS 3 TILES ACROSS FACE DOWN
2. PICK UP AND RACK THE 3 TILES

LEFT

1. PASS 3 TILES TO THE LEFT FACE DOWN
2. PICK UP AND RACK THE 3 TILES

BLIND PASS: ON THE THIRD PASS (FIRST LEFT AND SECOND RIGHT), PLAYERS MAY CHOOSE TO MAKE A 'BLIND PASS.' THEY CAN PASS 1-3 OF THE TILES THEY JUST RECEIVED DIRECTLY TO THE NEXT PLAYER WITHOUT LOOKING AT THEM. IF THEY PASS FEWER THAN 3, THE REMAINING TILES MUST BE SELECTED FROM THEIR OWN HAND TO COMPLETE THE PASS.

THE SECOND CHARLESTON (OPTIONAL)



REMINDER: EVERYONE MUST AGREE TO THIS, ANY ONE PERSON CAN NIX IT! THE SECOND CHARLESTON IS "LOR" – LEFT OVER RIGHT

LEFT

1. PASS 3 TILES TO THE LEFT FACE DOWN
2. PICK UP AND RACK THE 3 TILES

OVER

1. PASS 3 TILES ACROSS FACE DOWN
2. PICK UP AND RACK THE 3 TILES

RIGHT

1. PASS 3 TILES TO THE RIGHT FACE DOWN
2. PICK UP AND RACK THE 3 TILES

COURTESY PASS



REMINDER: THIS HAPPENS EITHER AFTER THE FIRST OR SECOND CHARLESTON

EACH PLAYER TELLS THE PERSON ACROSS FROM THEM HOW MANY TILES THEY WISH TO PASS (0-3 TILES). PLAYERS THEN EXCHANGE THE NUMBER OF TILES EQUAL TO THE LOWER OF THE TWO NUMBERS

START TO PLAY

OVERVIEW OF PLAY

1

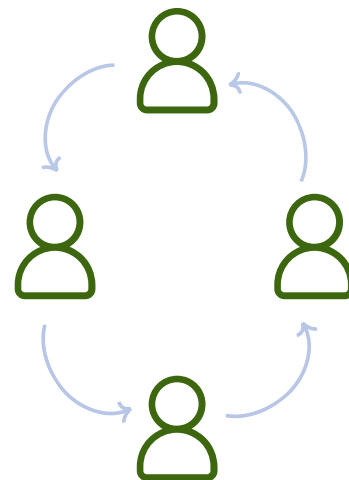
THE DEALER BEGINS THE GAME WITH 14 TILES WHILE EVERYONE ELSE STARTS WITH 13. THE DEALER DISCARDS ONE TILE TO BEGIN THE GAME.

2

IF NOBODY WANTS TO “CALL” THAT TILE, PLAY CONTINUES COUNTER-CLOCKWISE.

3

THE NEXT PLAYER DRAWS A TILE FROM THE WALL AND DISCARDS ONE IN TURN. THEY CAN KEEP THE TILE THEY DREW AND DISCARD FROM THEIR RACK OR DISCARD THE TILE THEY DREW.



REMINDERS



WHEN A PLAYER DISCARDS A TILE, THEY MUST PLACE THE TILE FACE UP IN THE MIDDLE OF THE TABLE AND ANNOUNCE THE NAME OF THE TILE OUT LOUD (EX. FOUR BAM)



THE ONLY TILE THAT CAN BE “CALLED” IS THE ONE THAT WAS JUST DISCARDED. ALL OTHER TILES IN THE CENTER CAN NO LONGER BE PICKED UP EVER IN THE GAME. THEY ARE KNOWN AS “DEAD TILES”

PUSHING OUT WALLS

WHEN THE WALL THAT IS PUSHED OUT RUNS OUT OF TILES, THE PLAYER TO THE LEFT PUSHES OUT THEIR ENTIRE WALL. THE ONLY TIME THE WALL IS “SPLIT” IS WHEN THE DEALER BEGINS THE GAME.

6

HOW TO CALL

ANY PLAYER CAN PICK UP THE DISCARDED TILE IF THEY CAN COMPLETE A GROUP OF 3 OR MORE LIKE TILES OR IF IT IS THE LAST TILE REQUIRED TO WIN MAHJONG

STEPS TO "CALL":

- 1 SAY "CALL"
- 2 PICK UP THE DISCARDED TILE
- 3 DISPLAY THE GROUP ON YOUR RACK
- 4 DISCARD A TILE
- 5 GAME CONTINUES TO THE RIGHT

REMINDERS



THE PLAYER MUST "CALL" THAT TILE BEFORE THE NEXT PLAYER DRAWS A TILE AND PUTS IT IN THEIR RACK



IF YOU NEED TIME TO THINK ABOUT CALLING A TILE, SAY "PAUSE" TO STOP THE GAME. SAY "UNPAUSE" TO RESTART PLAY



ONCE YOU EXPOSE A GROUP OF TILES ON YOUR RACK, IT STAYS THAT NUMBER OF TILES (EX: THREE 3 DOTS CAN NEVER BECOME 4 3 DOTS)



YOU CAN CALL FOR A SINGLE, PAIR, OR UNLIKE TILES IF IT IS THE LAST TILE YOU NEED TO MAHJONG

PLAY WITH JOKERS

JOKERS CAN ONLY BE USED IN GROUPS OF 3+ LIKE TILES AND CAN BE USED IN PLACE OF ANY TILE (E.G., NOT PAIRS, NEWS OR 123)

REMINDERS



JOKERS CAN BE USED IN PLACE OF ANY TILE: SUITS (INCLUDING DRAGONS), FLOWERS, WINDS



IF SOMEONE DISCARDS A JOKER, IT IS DEAD AND CANNOT BE CALLED FOR



JOKER CAN'T BE USED FOR PAIRS, SINGLES OR UNLIKE TILES (EX. NEWS, 135, 2468) BECAUSE THEY ARE NOT GROUPS OF 3 OR MORE LIKE TILES

JOKER SWAP



REMINDER: IF YOU DRAW OR HAVE THE TILE NEEDED TO REPLACE A JOKER ON SOMEONE'S RACK (INCLUDING YOUR OWN), YOU CAN TAKE THE JOKER AND REPLACE IT WITH THE NECESSARY TILE ONLY ON YOUR TURN

1

ALWAYS DRAW FIRST

2

SAY "JOKER SWAP"

3

REPLACE THE JOKER WITH THE NECESSARY TILE

4

RACK THE JOKER

5

DISCARD A TILE

8

WIN MAHJONG

YOUR RACK WILL ALWAYS HAVE 13 TILES, BUT YOU NEED 14 TILES TO WIN. YOU MUST DRAW OR CALL FOR THE 14TH TILE

- 1 DRAW OR CALL FOR THE WINNING TILE
- 2 SAY "MAHJONG"
- 3 EXPOSE THE WINNING TILE
- 4 TELL THE GROUP WHAT LINE YOU WENT FOR, SO THEY CAN VERIFY YOUR WIN

!!! REMINDER: YOU CAN CALL FOR A TILE THAT DOES NOT COMPLETE A GROUP OF 3 OR MORE LIKE TILES IF IT IS THE LAST TILE NEEDED TO MAHJONG (E.G., PAIRS, NEWS, 123)

9

NEVER REMINDERS



NEVER CALL FOR A TILE IN A SINGLE, PAIR, OR GROUP OF UNLIKE TILES (UNLESS IT IS THE LAST TILE YOU NEED TO WIN MAHJONG)



NEVER USE A JOKER IN A SINGLE, PAIR, OR GROUP OF UNLIKE TILES



NEVER ADD OR CHANGE A GROUP OF TILES THAT HAS BEEN EXPOSED ON YOUR RACK ONCE YOU HAVE DISCARDED



NEVER LOOK AT A TILE BEFORE A BLIND PASS



NEVER DRAW TILES FROM THE DISCARD PILE, ONLY FROM THE WALL



NEVER CALL FOR A JOKER THAT HAS BEEN DISCARDED