

## Hong Kong Mahjong Rules

**Mahjong** is a Chinese game of skill, which involves four players.

Almost similar to gin rummy, the object of **mahjong** is to build sets, as well as get the highest point value. In order to do this, each player selects and discards tiles (the game pieces, bearing different designs) until an entire set of combinations has been made.

**The Hong Kong style of mahjong.**

### The Mahjong set

The basic **Mahjong** set has 136 pieces, which contains 36 distinct kinds of pieces (4 of each kind). There are three suits, which run from one to nine.

#### 1) Bamboos



#### 2) Characters



#### 3) Dots



Furthermore, there are four directional tiles (Winds or Feng), labeled as East, South, West, and North (4 pieces each)



There are also three Cardinal tiles (Dragons or Special Honor Pieces), labeled as Red Dragon, Green Dragon, and White Dragon (4 pieces each).



Lastly, there are eight optional which consist of two sets of four tiles: each series marked 1, 2, 3, and 4.



## Mahjong Flowers

The **flower and season tiles** differ in nature from the suit and honor tiles. There are only 4 flowers (1, 2, 3, and 4) and only 4 season tiles (1, 2, 3, and 4). When drawn, they are declared and a substitute tile is drawn. The flower(s) or season(s) corresponding with the winning player's wind may increase the score.

The **Flowers** are represented by a plum, orchid, chrysanthemum and bamboo, and Seasons by a fisher, woodcutter, farmer and scholar.

Flower	Season/Occupation	Number	Corresponding Wind
Plum	Spring/Fisherman	1	East
Lily/Orchid	Summer/Woodcutter	2	South
Chrysanthemum	Autumn/Farmer	3	West
Bamboo	Winter/Scholar	4	North

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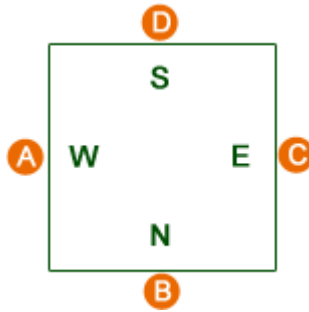
### Hong Kong Mahjong Game Objective

The objective of the **Hong Kong Mahjong game** is to put together a complete set (or "hand"), which contains four sets of threes (either three of a kind of the same suit (or "pung") or a sequence of the same suit (or "chow") and a pair, for total of 14 pieces. Each player starts with 13 tiles. With each turn, a player picks up a 14th tile, and then discards one tile face up in the center of the table. At this point, other players can choose to pass, take the tile to complete a set (pung, chow or kong - we'll describe this later) or to declare a win ("**mahjong**"). The first player who completes the set of 14 tiles wins the hand.

### 1. Determining the Seats.

- a. First, the four players are assigned temporary seats arbitrarily.
- b. Each player throws two dice. The player with the highest number becomes "temporary East", and the other three seats, in counterclockwise order, temporary South, West and

North. See the example below:

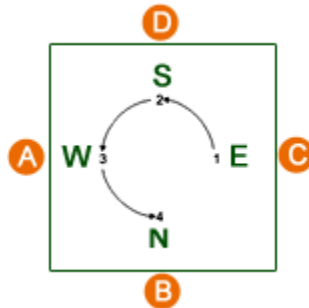


Note that the players are assigned temporary winds in counterclockwise order. (Note the difference to the compass winds).

c. Next, the player who is assigned as "temporary East" mixes four wind tiles, one of each wind, face down on the table and arranges them in a row. At one end of the row, an even-numbered suit tile is placed face up, and at the other end, an odd numbered suit tile. See the example below:



d. Temporary East then throws two dice and counts counterclockwise, starting with himself. The player indicated then picks up the wind tile at the odd end of the row, if the number thrown was an odd number, or even end of the row, if the number was an even number. The other three players, in counterclockwise order, pick up a tile from the same end. Each player then assumes the seat indicated by the tile, which was drawn. Here is an example:



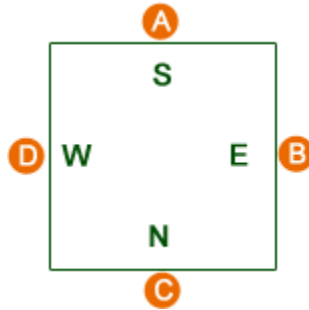
e. The player thus indicated (B) picks up the wind tile at the end of the row, since the number last thrown was an even number (four). In this case, B is East.



f. The other three players, in counterclockwise order, pick a tile from the same end the first wind tile was picked. In this case, C is North, D is West, and A is South.

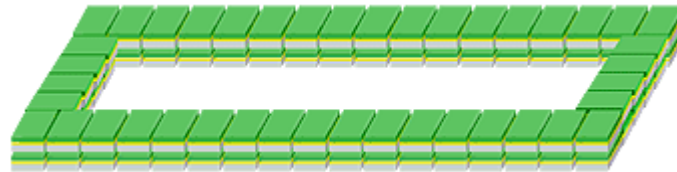


g. This is then becoming the initial position. Note that the winds follow each other in counterclockwise direction in order East, South, West and North (the order in which winds are customarily listed in Chinese) so they do not follow compass directions.

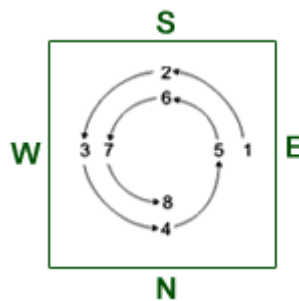


### Hong Kong Mahjong Rules Dealing the tiles / Breaking the wall

a. The 144 pieces, including flowers & seasons (or 136 without flowers & seasons) are mixed and then placed faced down on the table. Each player then selects 36 tiles (or 34 without flowers & seasons) and arranges them face down in a row of 18 pieces (or 17 pieces without flowers & seasons) and 2 tiles high. Then, these rows are pushed forward to form a hollow square in the middle of the table. Below is an example of an unbroken wall:

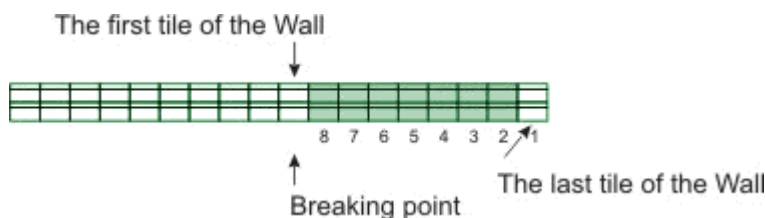


b. To determine which side of the wall to be the starting point, East throws the three dice and counts counterclockwise round the walls, beginning with himself as one (accordingly, numbers 5, 9, 13, and 17 indicate East, numbers 2, 6, 10, 14, 18 indicates South, numbers 3, 7, 11, 15 indicates West and numbers 4, 8, 12 and 16 indicates North).



c. The player indicated then counts off along the tiles of his side of the wall, starting from the right end. Then, this player makes a break in the wall by pushing slightly the tiles to the left of the breaking point. The seven stacks of tiles to the right of the breaking point

are known as Dead Wall (or Kong box); the remaining tiles, starting from the tiles to the left of the breaking point, constitute the Live Wall. The 14 tiles of the Dead Wall are reserved as replacement tiles for Kongs (and Flowers and Seasons, if they are used). The Dead Wall is replenishing so the used supplement tiles are replaced by reserving new tiles from the tail end of the live Wall (however, the supplement tiles are always taken from the left end of the Dead Wall).



- d. East starts the deal by taking the first two stacks of the tiles (i.e., four tiles) from the left of the break, then each of the other three players pick two stacks of tiles in order South, West and North. This is repeated twice so that each player has 12 tiles. East then draws the next stack of two tiles, and South, East and North in turn take one tile each. Thus the dealer has 14 tiles and the other three players each 13 tiles.



The players take each 2 stacks of tiles (i.e., four tiles at a time) from the start of the live Wall, in order East, South, West and North, until each player has 12 tiles. Then East picks one more stack of two tiles and West, South and North pick one tile each (see picture).



Note. A very common variation is that East picks his 13th and 14th tile as illustrated in picture above (note that these two tiles are picked at the same time and South, West and North pick their final tiles only after this). This is called chan-chan because of the sound made by the clicking of the two tiles.

- e. If the dealt hand contains Flowers or Seasons, they are immediately melded (placed face up above and to the side of the hand) and replaced with regular tiles taken from the Dead Wall (East replaces first his extra tiles, then South, West and North). Should a player draw further bonus tiles during this replacement procedure, he immediately takes supplement tiles for these, as well. If a player has a concealed Kong(s) in his hand he may declare it (them) at the same time he takes supplement tiles for Flowers and Seasons.

## Hong Kong Mahjong Rules

### Drawing tiles

The game is now ready and new tiles will be taken from the "Wall" where the drawing of initial hand ended. The dealer (or East) starts the game by discarding a tile face up in the center of the table. South then draws & discards a tile, followed by West and North. Thus, the draw goes counter-clockwise around the table, unless a tile is thrown which a player can claim. In that case, the turn jumps to the respective player's position.

### Game Play

When a player discards a tile, any of the other players may pick up the discarded tile if he

has a set, which may be completed by the discarded tile. However, a drawback of this action is that the player must now expose the completed set to the others, thus providing them a glimpse of what kind of hands he is creating. A player can pick up a discarded tile to complete one of the following sets:

1. **Chow** – Chow is a set of 3 tiles of the same suit in sequence. A player must say “**Chow**” when he gets another player’s discarded tile to form the combination. A **chow** can only be performed if the tile was discarded by the player from the claimer’s left. Here is an example of a **Chow**:



2. **Pung** – Pung is a set of 3 identical tiles. A player must say “**Pung**” when he gets another player’s discarded tile to form the combination. The player then must show the created set and then discard a tile. The next player (counterclockwise) will then have the next turn. Here is an example of a **Pung**:



3. **Kong** – Kong is a set of 4 identical tiles. When a **Kong** is formed with a discarded tile, the player must then expose the set. In addition, the **Kong** cannot be split once exposed. However, if a Kong is made from the existing hand, the player can conceal it from the others. The advantage of concealing a **Kong** is that the player can split the 4 tiles and use one tile to form a **Chow** if necessary. Here is an example of a **Kong**:



Whichever the case, the player then draws from the Dead Wall for a tile and discard as usual.

Note that a player cannot **Kong** a discarded tile to convert an exposed **Pung** to a **Kong**.

More details about **Kong**:

If a player draw from the wall to make a **Kong** in his hand, the player should expose the **Kong** on the table and draw a tile from the Dead Wall to make a correct number of hand, and then discard one piece. If this is the case, two of the **Kong** pieces are placed on the table face up and the two end pieces face down to show that the **Kong** still counts as if still held in the hand.

If a player has a pung on the table and draws the 4th from the wall, the player can place the 4th tile with the pung to make a **Kong**.

4. **Pair** -- An Eye, or a **Pair**, are two identical tiles. It cannot be created with discarded tiles unless to declare a win / **mahjong**, and only one set is allowed in a hand. Here is an example of a Pair:



If two players are claiming a discarded tile at the same time then the Claim Priority is in effect.

- Win has priority over Pung, Kong, and Chow.
- Pung & Kong has priority over Chow.
- If Two Players want to claim the same tile to win, 1st player to claim the tile who sits to the right of the thrower wins.

### Flower Tiles

When a player gets flower tiles, they should be immediately exposed and replaced by another tile from the Dead Wall.

### Waiting to Win

A player with one tile short of winning the game is considered to have a "ready hand". This is called "waiting" because that player is basically waiting for certain tiles to complete his hand.

### Winning

When a player creates a set of hand or "**mahjong**", he wins the game. A winning hand consists of four sets of **chow, pung, or kong, and a pair**.

In **Hong Kong Mahjong** If East (the Dealer) wins the game he stays as East. Also, in case of a Dead Hand, the wind / seating position stays in place. Otherwise, the player to the right becomes the new dealer (East) as the wind / seating position rotate counterclockwise.

### Round

In **Hong Kong Mahjong**, There are 4 rounds: East, South, West and North Round. Within each round, the winds / seating position will rotate as follows: East, South, West, North (counterclockwise). The wind / seat won't rotate if: East is the winner OR dead hand (nobody wins) OR wrong **mahjong** declared. Thus, there are total of 16 hands minimum in one complete game of **Hong Kong Mahjong**.

Below is the complete scoring system:

Set	Fan	Notes
<b>Scores for basic sets</b>		
Pung of Dragons	1	
Kong of Dragons	1	
Pung of player's Own Wind	1	Implies scoring for Pung of Winds
Kong of player's Own Wind	1	Implies scoring for Kong of Winds
Pung of the Wind of the Round	1	Implies scoring for Pung of Winds
Kong of the Wind of the Round	1	Implies scoring for Kong of Winds
<b>Scores for Flowers and Seasons</b>		
Flower of own Wind	1	

Season of own Wind	1	
All Flowers	2	
All Seasons	2	
No Flowers or Seasons	1	
<b>Scores for patterns based on Pungs and Kongs ( = triplets)</b>		
Little Three Dragons	4	(Two Dragon Pungs/Kongs and a pair of the other Dragon)
<b>Scores for patterns based on the whole hand</b>		
Chow hand	1	
Pung hand	3	
One suit and Honors	3	
Seven Pairs	4	
One suit only	6	
<b>Scores for winning</b>		
Self-drawn last tile	1	
Out on the last tile of the Wall	1	
Out on the last discard	1	
Out by robbing a Kong	1	
Out on a supplement tile	1	

## Hong Kong Mahjong Scoring

In addition to the **scoring system** above, there are also the following **special hands** which are difficult to compose but rewards the player with maximum payout!

### 1. Seven Pairs - 4 fan + components



Hand containing any seven pairs.

### 2. Hidden Treasure - 64 fan



Four Pungs, any pair, all concealed, and win by Self-Drawn.

### 3. Three Great Scholars - 64 fan





**Pung** or **Kong** with all three dragons, any **chow**, **pung or Kong**, and any pair. May all be melded.

**4. Little Four Winds** - 64 fan



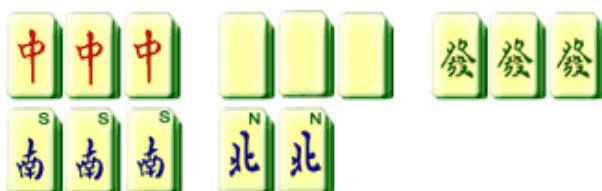
**Pung** or **Kong** of three Winds, a pair of fourth wind, any other set completing the hand. May be all melded.

**5. Big Four Winds** - 64 fan



**Pung** or **Kong** of each Wind, and any pair. May all be melded.

**6. All Honors** - 64 fan



Four **Pungs or Kongs** and a pair of Dragons and Winds. May all be melded.

**7. All Terminals** - 64 fan



Four **Pungs or Kongs** and a pair of 1's or 9's. May all be melded.

**8. Nine Gates** - 64 fan



Three 1's, a sequence of 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and three 9's, all of the same suit, and any other tile of the same suit completing the hand. The hand must be concealed (the winning tile can be a discard). No **Kongs** are allowed.

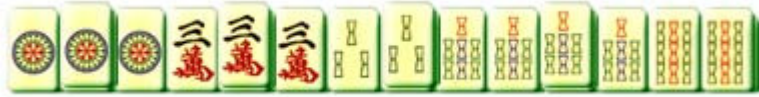
**9. Thirteen Orphans** - 64 fan



One of each Dragon and Wind, 1 and 9 of each suite and 14th tile forming a pair with any of these. The hand must be concealed (the winning tile can be a discard).

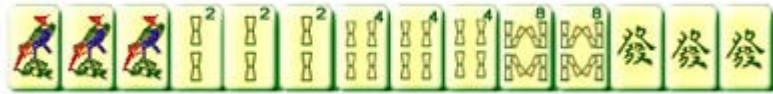
## Hong Kong Mahjong Scoring

### 10. All Kongs - 64 fan



Any four **Kongs** + any Pair.

### 11. Jade Dragon - 64 fan



Jade Dragon: **Pung or Kong** of Bamboos and a **Pung or Kong** of Green Dragon.

### 12. Ruby Dragon - 64 fan



Ruby Dragon: **Pung or Kong** of Characters only and **Pung** of Red Dragon.

### 13. Pearl Dragon - 64 fan



Pearl Dragon: **Pung or Kongs** of Dots only and **Pung or Kong** of White Dragon.

### 14. Heavenly Hands - 64 fan

East declares "Out" with the dealt hand (after supplement tiles, if any)

### 15. Earthly Hands - 64 fan

Non-dealer goes out on dealer's first discard (supplement tiles are allowed)

The one who declares **mahjong** gets to score fan (points). These fan are based on the contents of the **winning hand**. Once the fan is calculated, it is then converted into a payment amount based upon a payment table called "fan-laak" table. The losing players will in turn pay the **winning** player based upon this payment table. Below is the payment table:

Fan	Points	By discard	Self drawn
0	1	1+1+2=4 chips	n/a
1	2	2+2+4=8 chips	4+4+4=12 chips
2	4	4+4+8=16 chips	8+8+8=32 chips
3	8	8+8+16=32 chips	16+16+16=48 chips
4,5,6	16	16+16+32=64 chips	32+32+32=96 chips
7,8,9	32	32+32+64=128 chips	64+64+64=192 chips
10+	64	64+64+128=256 chips	128+128+128=384 chips