



Mahjong Competition Rules



Corrected edition 2023
English translation

Contents

- The mahjong set 3
- The basics of the game 5
- Object of the game 8
- Thirteen combinations worth 1 point 12
- Ten combinations worth 2 points 14
- Four combinations worth 4 points 16
- Seven combinations worth 6 points 17
- Ten combinations worth 8 points 19
- Five combinations worth 12 points 21
- Six combinations worth 16 points 23
- Nine combinations worth 24 points 25
- Three combinations worth 32 points 27
- Two combinations worth 48 points 28
- Six combinations worth 64 points 29
- Seven combinations worth 88 points 31

The mahjong set

A complete mahjong set has 144 tiles, divided as follows:

Dots



Numbered 1 to 9, with four of each: 36 tiles in total.

Bamboo

Numbered 1 to 9, with four of each: again 36 in total.

Bamboo 1 stands out because it shows a mythical bird, called *Pe-ling* in Chinese, which means 'sings beautifully'.



Characters

Numbered 1 to 9, with four of each: once more 36 in total.

The lower red character stands for the number 10,000. The upper characters give the numbers 1 to 9.



Dragons

Divided into the red dragon (often marked with the letter C), the green dragon (marked F) and the white dragon (marked P), with four of each: 12 in total.

The Chinese characters on the dragon tiles are *Chung* (middle) for the red dragon, *Fa* (growth) for the green dragon and *Po* (blank) for the white dragon.



Winds

Divided into the east wind (E), south wind (S), west wind (W) and north wind (N), with four of each: 16 in total.

The letters on the wind tiles stand for the English names East, South, West and North.



Bonus tiles

There are eight bonus tiles, divided into two groups of four that can be told apart by the colour of their Chinese character. The numbers on the tiles correspond to the four players' seats: East (1), South (2), West (3) and North (4). The tiles take no part in the actual play, but they give the player bonus points (provided the player goes mahjong with a valid hand of at least 8 points).



The bonus tiles are also known as seasons and flowers.

Dice

Two dice are needed, but most mahjong sets contain four. They stand out for their small size and unusual pips: the 1 is a hollow (red or blank) and the four pips of the 4 are red instead of black.

The Chinese regard red as a lucky colour, and if anything needs to bring luck, it is the dice.

The basics of the game

Winds

Mahjong needs four players. Each player takes the name of one of the four points of the compass: East, South, West and North. Mahjong is also known as the Game of the Four Winds. As in nature, the four winds have fixed positions relative to one another. In mahjong, however, South sits to the right of East rather than to the left.

Direction of play

This reversed order shows once again that mahjong is a celestial game. Look up at the sky and ask yourself where South and East lie, and you will find that East is indeed to the right of South, and that going from East to South means moving anticlockwise. Mahjong is played anticlockwise, from East to South to West to North.

Four rounds

A complete game of mahjong consists of four rounds, called winds. Each wind consists of four hands, so sixteen hands are played in all.

You do not have to play a complete game. You can agree on a time limit or on how many winds you will play.

Prevalent wind

Every round has a prevalent wind. In the first round the east wind prevails, in the second round the south wind, in the third the west wind and in the fourth round the north wind. East is the most important wind in the game, because East always starts every hand and every round. The title of East passes from player to player. As soon as the first East becomes East again, one wind (round) has been played and the next wind begins. East starts the second round, but South is the prevalent wind.

Choosing seats

Before play can begin, the opening ceremony decides who sits where and who starts the game as East. Leaving this to chance gives every player an equal chance and rules out any arbitrariness. One tile of each wind is turned face down and shuffled, and each player then draws a wind tile. The player who draws East chooses a seat. South sits to East's right, North to the left and West opposite.

It is wise to carry out the opening ceremony with due care, out of respect for the game and for the spirits, who never miss a game of mahjong!

Building the wall

At the start of every hand the tiles are thoroughly shuffled, lying face down on the table. The Chinese call this ceremony 'the twittering of the sparrows'. After shuffling, each player builds a wall 18 tiles long and two tiles high. The four walls are pushed together to form a square, with the right-hand end of each wall left free. The square symbolises the Great Wall of China.

To give evil spirits no chance to meddle with what happens inside the square, it is advisable to close the wall firmly on all sides.

Breaking the wall and dealing the tiles

Once the wall has been built, East throws two dice. Starting with East, the number of pips thrown is counted anticlockwise round the table to decide on which side the wall is broken. The player on that side then also throws the two dice, adds the two throws together and counts off that number from the right to decide where the wall is broken. The two tiles at that point are taken out of the wall and placed on top of the wall to the right. This is called the dead wall. East then takes the next four tiles, followed by South, West and North. When every player has taken four tiles three times (12 tiles), East takes the first and third tiles of the row (East starts with 14 tiles), and South, West and North each take one more tile (South, West and North start with 13 tiles). The two dice are placed next to the player who is East.

Bonus tiles

Before play starts, each player may take a new tile from the dead wall for every bonus tile. East draws replacement tiles first. If East draws another bonus tile, East takes another new tile. South, West and North follow. Now you may look at your tiles. Stand them upright in front of you, making sure the other players cannot see their faces, and sort them by type so you have a clear overview.

It is wise not to sort your tiles the same way every time, so the other players cannot know in advance where your suits are.

Object of the game

The object of the game is to be the first to go mahjong. A mahjong hand consists of four sets of three (or four) tiles and a pair of identical tiles. Other mahjong hands are also possible (limit hands, more on which later). The sets are called chow, pung and kong.

Chow

A chow is a run of three consecutive tiles in one suit. You can complete a chow with a tile you draw from the wall (concealed chow) or with the tile your left-hand neighbour discards (melded chow). In the second case you call 'chow', lay your two tiles face up on the table and add the third, discarded tile. There are no chows of winds or dragons.



Pung

A pung is a set of three identical tiles. You can complete a pung with a tile you draw from the wall (concealed pung) or with a tile any of the players discards (melded pung). You call 'pung', lay your two tiles face up on the table and add the third, discarded tile. This is a melded pung. If you complete your pung with a tile from the wall, it stays on your rack as a concealed pung.



Kong

A kong is a set of four identical tiles. There are three ways to make a kong:

1. From a discard. You have a concealed pung on your rack and the fourth tile is discarded. You call 'kong', lay your three tiles face up on the table and add the fourth tile. You now have a melded kong.

2. Concealed. You have a concealed pung and draw the fourth tile from the wall. You now have four identical tiles on your rack, but it only becomes a kong once you have declared it. You therefore lay the kong face down on the table to show that it is a concealed kong.

3. On the table. You have a melded pung on the table and draw the fourth tile from the wall. You may add this tile to your pung, turning it into a melded kong.



Because completing a kong leaves you one tile short of going mahjong, you take a loose tile from the dead wall. If you forget to take a new tile, you have a dead hand: a hand with too few tiles to go mahjong.

Pair

A pair consists of two identical tiles. You can form a pair with a tile drawn from the wall or taken from the table. Taking it from the table is only allowed if that tile gives you mahjong.

Drawing and discarding

East starts the game by discarding one of their fourteen tiles. Each player lays their discards in front of them in rows of six, one row below the other. Discards are placed face up. Beginners may find it helpful to name each tile as they discard it, but this is not customary at tournaments played under the official Chinese rules.

South, to the right of East, then draws a tile from the start of the live wall and decides whether to swap it for one of their other concealed tiles. You therefore always hold thirteen tiles and go mahjong with the fourteenth. South is followed by West, West by North, North by East and so on. This sequence is interrupted when a player wants to claim a discard for a melded pung, a melded kong or mahjong. You do not have to wait for your turn to do so. Once you have punged or konged and discarded a fourteenth tile, play continues with the player to your right.

Replacement tile

When you have formed a kong or drawn a bonus tile, you take a loose tile from the dead wall.

Waiting hand

Once your hand is just one tile short of completion, you have a waiting hand. There are then three ways to go mahjong with the fourteenth tile: the winning tile completes a pair, a pung (kong) or a chow. The winning tile may be drawn from the wall or taken from the table.

Mahjong

When a fourteenth tile completes your hand, you call 'Mahjong' and lay all your tiles face up on the table. You may also use the Mandarin Chinese word *Hu*. The other players check that you really do have mahjong and you then count the points (more on this later). A winning hand must be worth at least 8 points (bonus tiles do not count towards these 8 points). The discards stay on the table while the points are counted. This matters for points such as those for Last Tile.

The abacus

To count the points of the winning hand, an 'abacus' is made with the discarded tiles. A tile face down stands for 10 points and a tile face up for 1 point. The bonus tiles are counted last. Only the winner's points are counted.

Settling the score

The player who discarded the winning tile pays the winner the value of the winning hand plus the 8 base points. The other two players pay only the 8 base points. If the winner goes mahjong with a tile from the wall (self-drawn), every player pays the value of the winning hand plus the 8 base points. A player who claims mahjong incorrectly (false mahjong) pays a penalty of 10 points to each player. Play then continues. The east wind moves on and the previous South now becomes East.

Drawn game

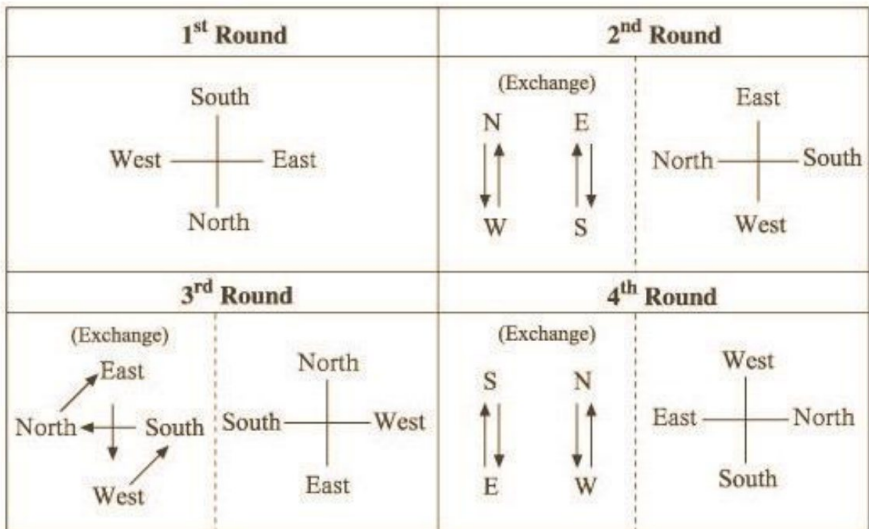
The game is drawn when the last tile has been used and no player has gone mahjong. No points are counted.

End of a round

When all four players have been East once, the round is over and the next round begins with a new prevalent wind. In the first round the east wind is the prevalent wind, in the second round the south wind prevails, in the third round the west wind and in the fourth round the north wind.

Changing seats

After each round, players change seats according to the diagram below.



Thirteen combinations worth 1 point

1. Pure Double Chow (*twee zuivere chows*)

1 POINT

Two chows with the same numbers in the same suit.



2. Mixed Double Chow (*twee gemengde chows*)

1 POINT

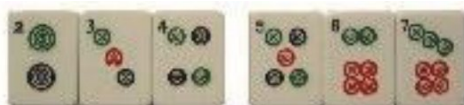
Two chows with the same numbers in different suits.



3. Short Straight (*kleine straat*)

1 POINT

Two chows in the same suit that follow on from each other.



4. Two Terminal Chows (*twee hoeksteen chows*)

1 POINT

Two chows, 1-2-3 and 7-8-9, in the same suit.



5. Pung of Terminals or Honours (*pung hoek en windstenen*)

1 POINT

Any pung of ones, nines or winds (other than the prevalent wind or your seat wind).

6. Melded Kong (*open kong*)

1 POINT

A kong lying face up on the table.

7. One Voided Suit (*een ontbrekende soort*) **1 POINT**

A hand in which one of the three suits (dots, characters or bamboo) is missing.

8. No Honours (*geen winden of draken*) **1 POINT**

A hand made up only of dots, characters and bamboo.

9. Edge Wait (*wachtend op randsteen*) **1 POINT**

Waiting for a 3 or a 7 to complete a chow and go out.

10. Closed Wait (*wachtend op middelste steen*) **1 POINT**

Waiting for the middle tile of a chow to go out.

11. Single Wait (*wachtend op sluitpaar*) **1 POINT**

Waiting for the tile that completes your pair to go out.

12. Self-Drawn (*zelf gepakt*) **1 POINT**

Going out with a tile drawn from the wall.

13. Flower Tile (*gelukssteen*) **1 POINT**

Each bonus tile added to a winning hand of at least 8 points.

Ten combinations worth 2 points

14. Dragon Pung (*pung van draken*)

2 POINTS

A pung of dragons, concealed or melded.

15. Prevalent Wind (*heersende wind*)

2 POINTS

A pung of the prevalent wind (the wind of the round), concealed or melded.

16. Seat Wind (*eigen wind*)

2 POINTS

A pung of your own seat wind, concealed or melded.

17. Concealed Hand (*gesloten spel*)

2 POINTS

A fully concealed hand, going out on a tile discarded by another player.

18. All Chows, No Honours (*alleen chows*)

2 POINTS

A hand of chows only. The pair may not be a wind or a dragon.



19. Tile Hog (*vier dezelfde stenen*)

2 POINTS

The winning hand contains all four copies of the same tile, spread over two or more sets (so without declaring a kong).

20. Double Pung (*dubbele pung*)

2 POINTS

Two pungs with the same number in two suits.



21. Two Concealed Pungs (*twee verborgen pungs*)

2 POINTS

Two pungs concealed on your rack.

22. Concealed Kong (*verborgen kong*)

2 POINTS

A kong concealed on your rack. It is laid out face down and you take a replacement tile from the dead wall.

23. All Simple (*eenvoudige stenen*)

2 POINTS

A hand made up only of tiles 2 to 8, with no terminals or honours.



Four combinations worth 4 points

24. Outside Hand (*buitenspel*)

4 POINTS

A hand in which every set contains a terminal or an honour.



25. Fully Concealed Hand (*geheel verborgen spel*)

4 POINTS

A fully concealed hand, going out on a tile you draw from the wall.

26. Two Melded Kongs (*twee open kongs*)

4 POINTS

A hand containing two melded kongs.

27. Last Tile (*laatste steen*)

4 POINTS

Going out on a tile of which three are already on the table. The other three must be visible in the players' melded sets or among the discards.

Seven combinations worth 6 points

28. All Pungs (*alleen pungs*)

6 POINTS

A hand made up of four pungs and a pair.



29. Half Flush (*schoon spel*)

6 POINTS

A hand of one suit combined with winds, dragons or both.



30. Mixed Shifted Chows (*gemengde oplopende chows*)

6 POINTS

Three chows, one in each suit, each shifted up by one number.



31. All Types (*alle soorten*)

6 POINTS

A hand in which all five tile types are present in the sets.



32. Melded Hand (*open spel*)

6 POINTS

Every set in the hand has been completed with tiles discarded by the other players.

33a. Two Kongs: One Melded, One Concealed (*een open en een verborgen kong*)

6 POINTS

One melded kong and one concealed kong.

34. Two Dragons (*twee draken*)

6 POINTS

Two puns (or kongs) of dragons.

Ten combinations worth 8 points

35. Mixed Straight (*gemengde straat*)

8 POINTS

Three chows, 1-2-3, 4-5-6 and 7-8-9, in three suits.



36. Reversible Tiles (*omkeerbare stenen*)

8 POINTS

A hand made up entirely of tiles that look the same upside down. Characters do not qualify, but the white dragon and a number of bamboo and dots tiles do.



37. Mixed Triple Chow (*drie gemengde chows*)

8 POINTS

Three chows with the same numbers in three suits.



38. Mixed Shifted Pungs (*drie gemengde oplopende pungs*)

8 POINTS

Three pungs in three suits, each one number higher than the last.



39. Chicken Hand (*kippenspel*)**8 POINTS**

A hand that scores no other points. The winning tile must be discarded by another player, and it may not be the only tile that can complete the hand.

**40. Last Tile Draw** (*laatste steen getrokken*)**8 POINTS**

Going out on the last tile of the game, drawn from the wall. No point is scored for Self-Drawn.

41. Last Tile Claim (*laatste weggelegde steen*)**8 POINTS**

Going out on the last tile of the game, discarded by another player.

42. Out with Replacement Tile (*winnen extra steen na kong*)**8 POINTS**

Going out on the tile from the dead wall after declaring a kong. This does not apply to a tile drawn after a bonus tile.

43. Robbing the Kong (*kongroof*)**8 POINTS**

Winning on the tile another player draws from the wall to turn a melded pung into a kong. You 'rob' that tile to win.

33b. Two Concealed Kongs (*twee verborgen kongen*)

A hand containing two concealed kongs. Since 1 January 2007 this hand has been worth 8 points. A combination of one melded kong and one concealed kong is worth 6 points.

Five combinations worth 12 points

44. Lesser Honours and Knitted Tiles (*minder troefstenen & verweven straat*) 12 POINTS

A hand of tiles from the knitted straight (see 45) combined with single winds and dragons. Neither the knitted straight nor the winds and dragons are complete.



45. Knitted Straight (*verweven straat*) 12 POINTS

A hand with a special straight of 1-4-7, 2-5-8 and 3-6-9 in three suits, combined with any set and a pair.



46. Upper Four (*hoogste vier*) 12 POINTS

A hand of tiles 6, 7, 8 and 9 only, in pungs or chows. No winds or dragons.



47. Lower Four (*laagste vier*) 12 POINTS

A hand of tiles 1, 2, 3 and 4 only, in pungs or chows. No winds or dragons.



48. Big Three Winds (*grote drie winden*)

12 POINTS

A hand with three pungs (or kongs) of winds.



Six combinations worth 16 points

49. Pure Straight (*zuivere straat*)

16 POINTS

A hand with three chows in one suit.



50. Three-Suited Terminal Chows (*driekleurs hoeksteen chows*)

16 POINTS

A hand with 1-2-3 and 7-8-9 in one suit (two terminal chows), 1-2-3 and 7-8-9 in a second suit and a pair of 5s in the third suit.



51. Pure Shifted Chows (*drie zuivere oplopende chows*)

16 POINTS

Three chows in one suit, each shifted up by one or two numbers.



52. All Fives (*overal vijven*)

16 POINTS

A hand in which every set contains a 5, so the pair must be two 5s.



53. Triple Pung (*drievoudige pungs*)

16 POINTS

Three pungs of the same number in three suits.



54. Three Concealed Pungs (*drie gesloten pungs*)

16 POINTS

A hand with three concealed pungs.

Nine combinations worth 24 points

55. Seven Pairs (*zeven tweelingen*)

24 POINTS

A hand of seven pairs. It may include a kong, which then counts as two pairs.



56. Greater Honours and Knitted Tiles (*alle troefstenen & verweven straat*)

24 POINTS

One of each honour tile (ESWNPCF: 7 tiles), completed with 7 tiles from the knitted straight (147-258-369). **NB** Also valid when the knitted straight is complete (147-258-369) and combined with five different dragons and winds.



57. All Even (*alleen even pungs*)

24 POINTS

A hand of pungs of 2s, 4s, 6s and 8s, with a pair of one of these tiles.



58. Full Flush (*zuiver spel*)

24 POINTS

A hand of tiles from a single suit.



59. Pure Triple Chow (*drie zuivere chows*)**24 POINTS**

Three identical chows in one suit, for example 4-5-6, 4-5-6, 4-5-6 in dots.

**60. Pure Shifted Pungs** (*zuivere oplopende pungs*)**24 POINTS**

Three pungs in one suit, each one number higher than the last.

**61. Upper Tiles** (*hoogste drie*)**24 POINTS**

A hand of tiles 7, 8 and 9 only, in pungs or chows. No winds or dragons.

**62. Middle Tiles** (*middelste drie*)**24 POINTS**

A hand of tiles 4, 5 and 6 only, in pungs or chows. No winds or dragons.

**63. Lower Tiles** (*laagste drie*)**24 POINTS**

A hand of tiles 1, 2 and 3 only, in pungs or chows. No winds or dragons.



Three combinations worth 32 points

64. Four Shifted Chows *(vier zuivere oplopende chows)*

32 POINTS

Four chows in one suit, each shifted up by one or two numbers.



65. Three Kongs (drie kongen)

32 POINTS

A hand with three kongs, concealed, melded or both.

66. All Terminals and Honours *(alleen hoek en troefstenen)*

32 POINTS

A hand made up entirely of ones, nines, winds and dragons.



Two combinations worth 48 points

67. Quadruple Chow (*vier zuivere chows*)

48 POINTS

Four chows with the same numbers in one suit.



68. Four Pure Shifted Pungs (*vier zuivere oplopende pungs*)

48 POINTS

Four pungs in one suit, each one number higher than the last.



Six combinations worth 64 points

69. All Terminals (*alleen hoekstenen*)

64 POINTS

A hand of pungs of ones and nines only.



70. Little Four Winds (*kleine vier winden*)

64 POINTS

A hand with three pungs of winds and a pair of the fourth wind.



71. Little Three Dragons (*kleine drie draken*)

64 POINTS

A hand with two pungs of dragons and a pair of the third dragon.



72. All Honours (*alleen troefstenen*)

64 POINTS

A hand of pungs of winds and dragons only.



73. Four Concealed Pungs (*vier gesloten pungs*)

64 POINTS

A fully concealed hand with four pungs.

74. Pure Terminal Chows (*zuivere hoeksteen chows*)

64 POINTS

A hand of two upper and two lower terminal chows in one suit, with a pair of 5s in the same suit.



Seven combinations worth 88 points

75. Big Four Winds (*grote vier winden*)

88 POINTS

A hand with pungs (or kongs) of all four winds.



76. Big Three Dragons (*grote drie draken*)

88 POINTS

A hand with pungs (or kongs) of all three dragons.



77. All Green (*jade spel*)

88 POINTS

A hand made up exclusively of the 2, 3, 4, 6 and 8 of bamboo and the green dragon.



78. Nine Gates (*negen poorten*)

88 POINTS

A concealed hand with a pung of ones and a pung of nines in one suit plus the tiles 2 to 8, waiting on any tile from 1 to 9 in that suit.



79. Four Kongs (*vier kongs*)

88 POINTS

A hand with four kongs, melded, concealed or both.

80. Seven Shifted Pairs (*zeven zuiver oplopende tweelingen*) **88 POINTS**

A hand of seven pairs in one suit (pure), each one number higher than the last.



81. Thirteen Orphans (*dertien wezen*) **88 POINTS**

A hand with one of each wind, each dragon, each one and each nine, with one of these tiles doubled.

