

Mah Jongg American Rules

The Tiles

There are four **Winds**: North, East, West, and South. In the US, we arrange them as **NEWS**. In the UK, these tiles are arranged ESWN - **E**at **S**oy **W**ith **N**oodles. There are 4 of each Wind making a total of 16 Winds.



There are eight **Flowers**. Different sets have different images. In our American version sets, the Flowers represent the four seasons. The numbers on the tiles for Flowers mean nothing in the game of Mah Jongg.

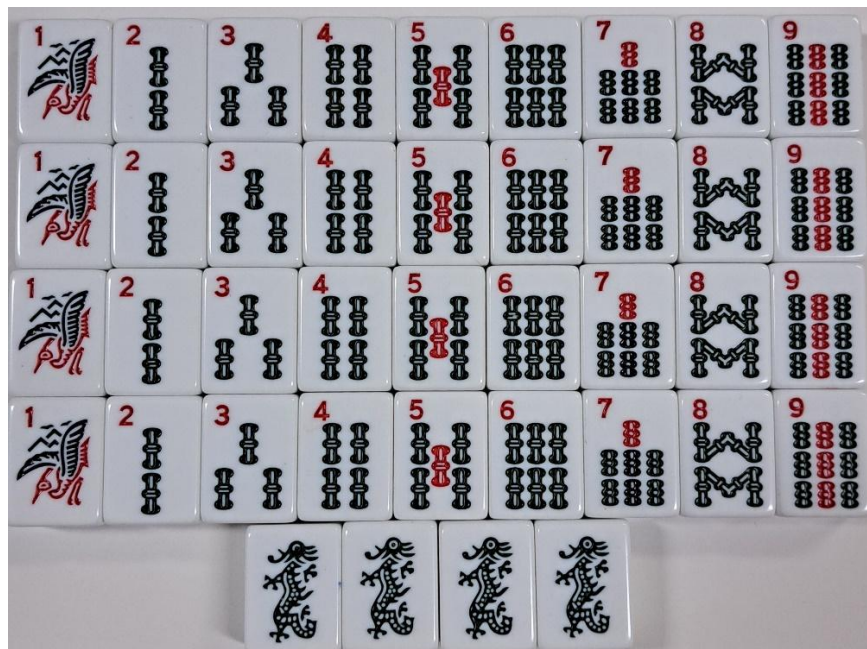


There are 8 **Jokers**



The **three** suits are **Bams**, **Craks**, and **Dots**.
Each suit consists of tiles numbered 1 through 9 and a dragon.

Bamboo "**Bams**"



The 1 of Bams is a bird. We call it “**One Bam Bird**”.
The Dragon in the Bam suit is called “**Green**” or “**Green Dragon**”.

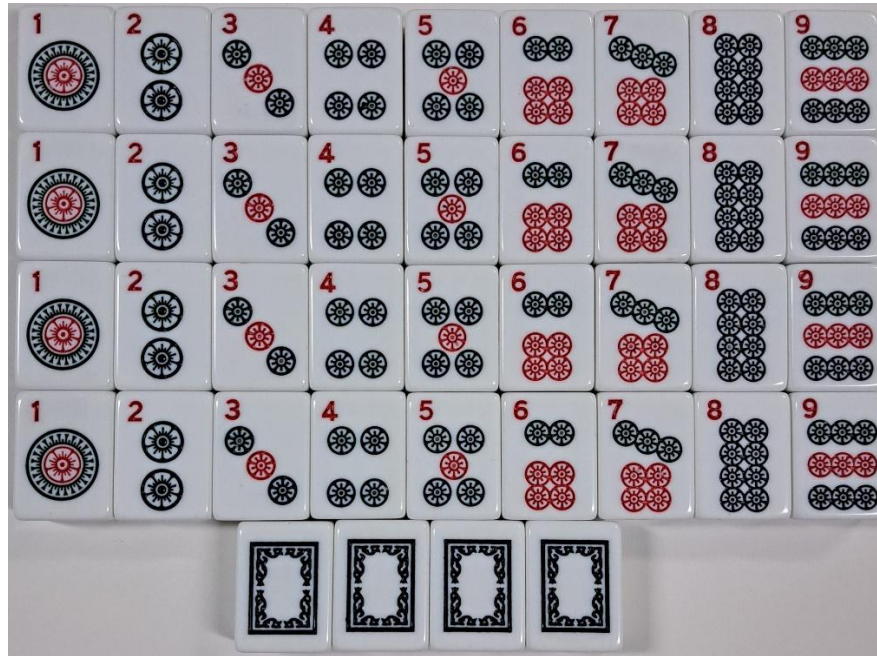
Characters “**Craks**”

The Dragon in the Crak suit is called “**Red**” or “**Red Dragon**”.



“Dots”

The Dragon in the Dots suit is called “**Soap**”. Soap can also be used as a **zero** when constructing a hand that has the year in it.



Step by Step Instructions on How to Play

1. The tiles are mixed well (called **Washing the Tiles**), then they are placed face down in the middle.
2. Players randomly pick tiles and line them up along the front of their racks with 19 tiles across and 2 tiles high for a total of 38 tiles.
3. Play starts by each player throwing **the dice** to see who will be East first. The highest score becomes East.
4. Depending on the **House Rules**, East may choose to roll one or two dice to break her wall. She pushes her wall out and brings back to her wall the number on her dice. East can choose not to break her wall.
5. East takes a pile of 4 tiles. Each player also takes four tiles going round robin to the right (counterclockwise). When each player has 3 piles of 4 (12 tiles), East takes the first and third tile on top. Each player takes one tile.

6. When East has 14 tiles and all the other players have 13 tiles, then all players may “**rack**” their tiles and look at their cards to determine which **hand or hands** their tiles could most closely become.

The Charleston (“ROLLOR”)

Each player selects three tiles from their hand that they can pass facedown to another player.

Right each player passes 3 tiles to their right

Over (across) each player passes 3 tiles to the player across from them

Left (first left) each player passes 3 tiles to the player to their left

Left (second left) each player passes 3 tiles to their left and makes a house (two tiles on bottom and one on the top)

Over (across) each player passes 3 tiles to the player across from them

Right each player passes 3 tiles to their right

Optional each player may choose up to 3 tiles to pass to the player across from them. Options are to pass no tiles, one, two, or three tiles

Etiquette – *it is suggested to **not** pick up the piles given to you until all players have received theirs from their neighbor. This also reduces confusion on what part of the Charleston is in play*

Stopping the Charleston - Anyone may stop the Charleston after the first left. Often this occurs if a person has tiles that may be good for one or two hands and doesn’t want to lose any of their tiles.

7. Once the Charleston is completed, East discards a tile and the game begins.
8. The player to East’s right will pick up the first tile in the wall, rack it, and discard a tile they do not need.
9. Play continues to the right (counterclockwise). If a player needs a tile discarded by another, they must call it before the next player draws and racks their tile. Called tiles must be played (see rules section)
10. If more tiles are needed, new walls are pushed out in clockwise order (to the left which is opposite the way the game is played)
11. When a player has all the tiles needed to complete their hand, they say “**Mah Jongg**” and put the tiles on top of their rack so the other players can see.

12. If no one wins, the game is called a **Wall** game.
13. When additional games are played, the player to the right of the previously East person now is East.

The Card:

- An '**X**' to the right of the hand indicates a calling hand. You can call a tile someone discards to use in your hand.
- A '**C**' to the right of the hand indicates a concealed or non-calling hand. You cannot call a discarded tile.
- Different colors mean different suits in a hand indicates the number of suits required.
- If the entire hand is all in black, then all the tiles for the hand must be the same suit (craks with red dragon, bams with green dragon, or dots with white dragon).

Cards and other Mah Jongg related merchandise can be purchased from the National Mah Jongg League at www.nationalmahjonggleague.org. New cards are issued annually and go into play in April each year. Do **not** purchase cards from any other outlet than the National Mah Jongg League.

Play for free at <https://mahjong4friends.com/>

Other interesting websites are ilovemahj.com, ohmymahjong.com, myfairmahjong.com, thatmahjongmoment.com, and luxemahjong.com. Good products at Yellow Mountain Imports <https://www.ymimports.com>

Mah Jongg, That's It! Facebook group
www.facebook.com/groups/MahJonggThatsIt

Mah Jong in Dutchess County NY Facebook Group
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/3116031215451856>

Hudson Valley Mahjong Club
www.facebook.com/groups/863640622851835