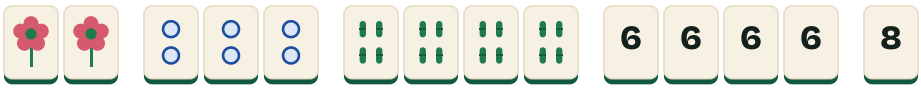
CHEAT SHEET

How to read the mahjong card

On the card, a line looks like this:

FF 222 4444 6666 8 X 25

The same line in tiles:



A pair of flowers, three 2s in one suit, four 4s in a second suit, four 6s in the third suit, and a single 8 in that same third suit. Jokers can go in the 2s, the 4s and the 6s, not in the flowers or the single 8. Example made up for teaching, not a line from the official card.

Colors

Same color: same suit. Different colors: different suits.

Which suit is your choice. Don't read the card's red as Craks or its green as Bams.

A dragon printed in a group's color goes with that suit: Red with Craks, Green with Bams, Soap with Dots.

Letters and numbers

1 to 9: suit tiles. **N E W S**: the winds. **F**: a flower, any of the eight.

D: a dragon, in the color of its group.

0: a Soap, used as zero to spell years. As a zero it belongs to no suit, whatever its color.

A note in parentheses ("any 2 suits") can widen or narrow the line. Read it first.

X or C, then the value

X: you may call a discard to complete a group, then lay that group face up.

C: the hand stays concealed. The only discard you can call is the last tile, for mahjong.

The number is what the hand is worth. Concealed hands are usually worth more.

Jokers, read from the line

A tile written once, or a pair: always real tiles, never a joker.

A joker goes only in a group of three or more of the same tile.

The sections

Most years: the year, 2468, any like numbers, quints, consecutive runs, 13579, winds and dragons, 369, singles and pairs, and some years Addition Hands.

Start with the heading that matches most of your tiles.

After the deal

Look for two or three lines that fit what you hold, then use the Charleston to move toward them.

Ten lines in mind at once is how new players freeze.

Not affiliated with the National Mah Jongg League