

American Mahjong Safe Tiles Checklist



Quick-Reference Guide for Defensive Play

Safe Discard Hierarchy

- 1 Tiles already discarded by the dangerous player — they don't need them.
- 2 Tiles where 3+ are visible (exposed or discarded) — hard for anyone to use the last one.
- 3 Winds/Dragons seen in discards with no calls — likely dead.
- 4 Tiles outside all visible exposure suits/numbers — no connection to any revealed hand.
- 5 Tiles matching an opponent's exposure pattern —
 **MOST DANGEROUS. Avoid.**

During Game Checklist

- ☐ Scanned all exposures after each turn
- ☐ Counted jokers visible on the table
- ☐ Identified the most dangerous opponent
- ☐ Narrowed opponent's likely card section
- ☐ Checked east position before discarding
- ☐ Who's closer — me or them?
- ☐ Made a conscious push/fold decision
- ☐ Chose safest available discard

Exposure Quick Read

WHAT YOU SEE EXPOSED	LIKELY CARD SECTION	DANGER LEVEL	TIPS
Even number group (e.g. 2-4-6-8)	2-8	Lower risk	Other even tiles, same suit
Odd number group (e.g. 1-3-5)	1-5-7 / Odds	Lower risk	Other odd tiles, same suit
Consecutive group (e.g. 6-7-8)	Consecutive run	Higher risk	Adjacent numbers, same suit
Matching numbers across suits	Like numbers	Higher risk	Same number, other suits
Five-of-a-kind (joker heavy)	Quints	Higher risk	That number, any suit
Pairs already exposed	Singles & Pairs	Medium risk	Specific tile matches

Charleston Defense

GOAL	WHAT TO DO	KEY TIP
Pass safely	Avoid passing flexible tiles (tiles that fit many hands)	Cluster of related tiles coming up — pass riskier tiles, NOT tiles that fit that section.
Don't give information	Pass tiles with duplicates already in your hand	All Winds/Dragons coming up — pass a strong number instead.
Break connections	Pass numbers that appear in few and fixed tiles this year	Random, unconnected tiles — safer to pass (low risk of helping a hand).
Stop information flow	Be cautious with tiles that could complete a run or pair	Remember: stronger tiles become visible — keep your hand as hidden as possible.

Endgame Rules

- 1 **Don't break pairs** of tiles that haven't appeared elsewhere — you may release a winning tile.
- 2 **Don't discard tiles matching an opponent's exposed suit/number pattern** unless you've seen enough to confirm safety.
- 3 **Don't throw a joker-replaceable natural tile** toward a dangerous player.
- 4 **Don't panic-discard** if your drawn tile is dangerous. Find a safer throw from your hand, even if it means abandoning your own plan.
- 5 **Don't chase your hand** in the final third of the wall if you're not close to ready — play defense.