

Chinese Mahjong Basic Rules Summary

GAME SETUP • HOW TO PLAY • MELDS • KEY RULES

A quick reference guide to the main rules and gameplay for Chinese Mahjong.

STARTING THE GAME

Build walls, roll dice, deal tiles to begin.

- 1 Agree on the number of rounds (4 deals = 1 round).
- 2 Wash tiles face down. Each player builds a wall 18 tiles long and 2 tiles high; push all four walls together.
- 3 Roll 3 dice to determine the dealer (East). East then counts counter-clockwise (1 = self) to pick the wallbreaker.
- 4 The wallbreaker counts from the right of their wall and breaks there, leaving a gap.
- 5 East takes 4 tiles from the left of the break; players then take 4 each counter-clockwise until everyone has 12 tiles.
- 6 The dealer (East) draws 2 extra tiles (14 total). Others draw 1 extra tile (13 total).

TILE REFERENCE

Each suit has tiles numbered 1–9 (four copies of each tile).

CIRCLES	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
BAMBOO	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
CHARACTERS (CRACKS)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

WINDS

East	South	West	North

DRAGONS

Red	Green	White

MELDS (SETS)

CHOW	PUNG	KONG
Three sequence tiles in the same suit.	Three identical tiles.	Four identical tiles.

HOW TO PLAY

Priority: Mahjong > Kong/Pung > Chow | Tiebreaker: East > South > West > North.

- 1 While 15 or more tiles remain: Draw one, then discard one.
- 2 A discarded tile may be claimed by any player for Mahjong, Pung, or Kong; or by the player to your right for Chow.
- 3 Claimed sets are exposed face-up.
- 4 If you draw the fourth tile of an exposed Pung, you may declare a Kong and draw a replacement (from the back of the wall).
- 5 The hand ends when a player declares Mahjong (4 sets + 1 pair) or the wall is nearly empty.
- 6 Score the hand, then East passes the dealer role clockwise. Each round = 4 hands.

QUICK NOTES



- East starts each hand.
- Play counter-clockwise.
- Always keep 13 tiles until you draw.
- Pung, Chow, Kong and Mahjong calls must be made immediately.
- Each round consists of 4 hands (4 deals).

