



Mah Jong
Game of the Four Winds

Materials for U3A groups
Produced by Susan Fifer





Mah Jong – game of the Four Winds



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Mah Jong – game of the Four Winds

Introduction

The materials in this pack were put together for a Mah Jong course started in Barnet U3A in September 2008. I used the rules that I had been taught by Sybil Hammond at Lea Valley U3A and which were based on those supported by the British Mah Jong Association (BMJA)

Many people have played Mah Jong, either at home when they were children or while on holiday. Many have sets at home but are not sure how to play and find the small handbooks included in their sets have lost a lot in translation from the original Chinese. Unlike Bridge classes, where there is no shortage of tutors, finding someone to teach Mah Jong in a U3A group is more difficult. I hope that these materials will enable a group to learn some of the basics themselves if no tutor is available or if anyone who has played a little would like some support in helping others to learn.

It is worth taking time at the beginning to learn the tiles and the suits before playing the game. Unlike card games, where most of us are familiar with the suits, Mah Jong has a whole new set of suits and tiles to be learned. This is part of its fascination.

In the early weeks we started each session with a quiz which acted as a reminder of some of the basics that had been covered in the preceding session. After this everyone was given a sheet setting down these basics and then we played a game. Any questions that arose during the game provided the material for the following week. This meant that the material followed the natural learning of the players rather than the players having to follow a pre-determined course. The quiz sheets themselves often threw up a variety of answers depending on how people had interpreted the questions. This also proved valuable. Most people kept their quiz sheets and their corrected answers as an additional learning tool.

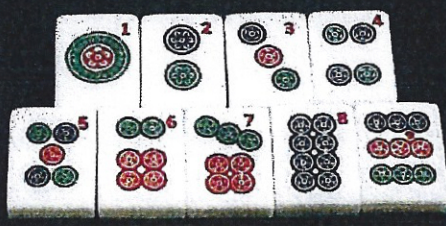

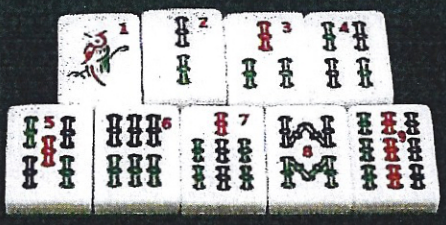
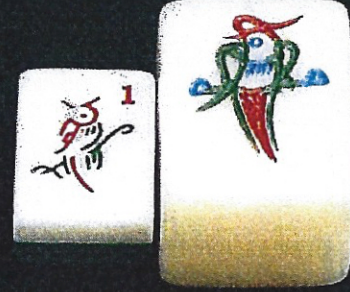
The book that we use in addition to these materials is in the Know the Game series. Mah-Jong (Know the Game) (Paperback) by Gwyn Headley and Yvonne See. Revised 3rd edition published September 2008 by A & C Black. ISBN-13: 978-0713689518. £6.99 (cheaper on Amazon.)

Finally, I would like to thank Sybil Hammond for teaching me Mah Jong and for providing comments on this material.

Susan Fifer
January 2009

Mah Jong – game of the Four Winds

Sheet 1: Tiles

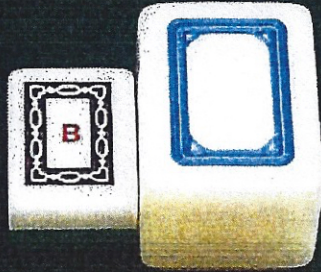
1		<p>This suit is called CIRCLES. It contains 9 tiles. There are four of each tile in a Mah Jong set ie 36 circle tiles.</p>
2		<p>This suit is called CHARACTERS. It contains 9 tiles. There are four of each tile in a Mah Jong set ie 36 character tiles. In sets for use in the far east, the numbers 1-9 don't always appear on the tiles.</p>
3		<p>This suit is called BAMBOO. It contains 9 tiles. There are four of each tile in a Mah Jong set ie 36 bamboo tiles. The one bamboo looks like a bird.</p>
4		<p>In different sets, the one bamboo may look slightly different.</p>

5



These are the DRAGON tiles – Red, Green and White. There are four of each tile in a Mah Jong set ie 12 dragon tiles. They are called honour tiles and score more points than ordinary tiles.

6



In different sets, the white dragon may look different (as can the other dragons.)

7



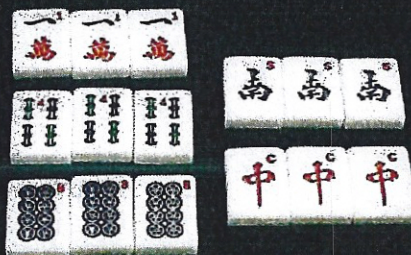
These are the WIND tiles. There are four of each tile in a Mah Jong set ie 16 wind tiles. They are called honour tiles and score more points than ordinary tiles. You get bonuses if you are holding a set or a pair of your own wind at the end of the round (eg if you are South and you are holding the South wind tiles.)

8



These are FLOWER and SEASON tiles. They are not used for making sets but give you bonus points at the end and allow you an extra turn during play. They are often elaborate and vary from set to set.

9



These are the sets you are trying to collect. They are called PUNGS and consist of three identical tiles. If you pick up the fourth tile in a set this is called a KONG and scores extra points and an extra turn during play.

Mah Jong – game of the Four Winds

Sheet 2: Basics 1

- 1 Four players is the norm though it is possible to play with three. Each person plays as an individual.
 - 2 The tiles are used in a similar way to cards. There are suits, high/honour tiles and ordinary tiles.
 - 3 As with many card games, the object is to collect sets by picking up and discarding tiles. Discarded tiles can be picked up by other players. Discarded tiles are placed face up so you can always see what has been played. As you discard a tile you must call out what it is eg “three bamboo”, “nine characters”, “white dragon.” Stick to the circles, bamboo and characters names for the suits. Don’t use variations such as “rings”, “boo” or “cracks” as this can be confusing for other players.
 - 4 Sets can be displayed or held concealed in the player’s hand until the end. Concealed sets earn more points than displayed sets.
 - 5 The object is to collect a full hand of sets and go out before any other player. When you only require one more tile for Mah Jong, you are required to alert other players by calling ‘fishing.’
 - 6 If it is unlikely that you can get a full hand of sets, then your strategy is to stop any other player doing so and force a draw.
 - 7 As in bridge, the players are identified as North, South, East and West. Unlike bridge, the order in Mah Jong is:
East South West North
- Remember this with the following mnemonic:
- E**at **S**oy **W**ith **N**oodles
- 8 Unlike most card and board games, the order of play moves **anti-clockwise** round the table.
 - 9 The ‘winds’ (ESWN) move round during the course of the game. For example, the person who starts as South will become East in the next round (subject to certain conditions being met.) East will become North and so on.
 - 10 There are three parts to the game, each with its own rules and rituals: setting up, playing and scoring.

Mah Jong – game of the Four Winds

Sheet 3: Quiz 1

- 1 In which suit is there a picture of a bird on the 'one' tile?
- 2 What is the order of the four winds?
- 3 In Mah Jong, when are you 'fishing'?
- 4 How many tiles are in a 'pung'?
- 5 Flower and season tiles are used to make sets. True or false?
- 6 Apart from flowers and seasons, how many of each tile is in a Mah Jong set?
- 7 What is a 'kong'?
- 8 Does play move clockwise or anti-clockwise round the table?
- 9 Which set of tiles are known as Red, Green and White?
- 10 When you discard a tile, what must you do at the same time?

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Sheet 4: Ordinary Mah Jong hands - examples

These hands each have 14 tiles arranged in **four pungs and a pair**. They are 'clean' in that only one suit is used. You can have Winds and Dragons in addition to this suit and still remain 'clean'. Put together some more Mah Jong hands and check with other players at your table that these fit the rules covered so far.

1						

2						

3	伍 ⁵ 萬	伍 ⁵ 萬	伍 ⁵ 萬	六 ⁶ 萬	六 ⁶ 萬	六 ⁶ 萬
	癸 ^F	癸 ^F	癸 ^F	南 ^S	南 ^S	南 ^S
			三 ³ 萬	三 ³ 萬		

4	一 ¹ 萬	一 ¹ 萬	一 ¹ 萬	四 ⁴ 萬	四 ⁴ 萬	四 ⁴ 萬
	七 ⁷ 萬	七 ⁷ 萬	七 ⁷ 萬	八 ⁸ 萬	八 ⁸ 萬	八 ⁸ 萬
						

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Sheet 5: Basics 2

Setting up the tiles

- 1 At the start of each hand the tiles are mixed (known as 'washing the tiles.') East doesn't take part in this mixing but calls "Pow" to make the other players stop. Each player then builds a double row of 18 tiles (ie 36 in all.) With only three players, a fourth wall must be constructed.
- 2 The walls are pushed together to make a perfect square. This is to keep out the bad luck dragons. To make the square work, each wall should be 'outside' on the right edge and 'tucked in' on the left.
- 3 At the beginning each player rolls the two dice. The player with the highest number becomes East. The other players become South, West and North anti-clockwise. This rolling of the dice only happens once at the very beginning of a session of Mah Jong.
- 4 After each Mah Jong call, the winds move round to the right (anti-clockwise) for the next hand unless the Mah Jong was called by East. In this case the winds remain as they were. A player can only be the East wind for three consecutive hands. After this the winds must move on.

Breaking the wall and dealing the tiles

- 5 East rolls the two dice. Count the total on the dice round the table (anti-clockwise), starting with East as 1. Wherever the counting finishes, this is where the wall will be broken.
- 6 The player sitting at that wall rolls the dice again and adds the total to the number that East rolled. For example, if East rolled 7, the wall would be broken by West. West rolls 5 so the total is 12.
- 7 Count this total starting from the right hand end of the wall to be broken. The last pair of tiles in the count is lifted out. This will go on top of the 'kong box'. The previous six pairs of tiles are also removed and put in the middle to form the kong box. There is now a gap in the wall.
- 8 Deal four tiles (two pairs) in turn from the left of the gap to the players in the following order E, S, W and N. When all players have 12 tiles, deal one tile to each player in turn giving them 13 tiles. Deal a final tile to East (so that East has 14 tiles.)

Flowers and seasons in the dealt hands

- 9 If you receive any flowers or seasons in the original deal, expose these face up to one side. These are replaced from the kong box before play starts. If more than one player has flowers/seasons, then they are replaced in the order of play ie E, S, W, N. If you happen to pick up a flower or season from the kong box, declare it and draw a replacement.
- 10 Remember flowers and seasons are not playing tiles but can be used in scoring at the end of a hand.

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Sheet 6: Quiz 2

- 1 At the start of a Mah Jong session, how do you decide who will be East?
- 2 When you build the wall, how many tiles are in front of each player? (Remember the tiles are stacked two deep.)
- 3 What is a Pung?
- 4 When the tiles are 'dealt' from the wall, who receives them first?
- 5 What is the 'kong box'?
- 6 How many tiles are in the kong box at the beginning of each round?
- 7 If you pick up a flower or a season tile when you are dealt your tiles, what do you do with it?
- 8 Who has 14 tiles at the start of the game?
- 9 What determines if a hand is 'clean.'
- 10 An ordinary Mah Jong hand consists of

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Sheet 7: Basics 3

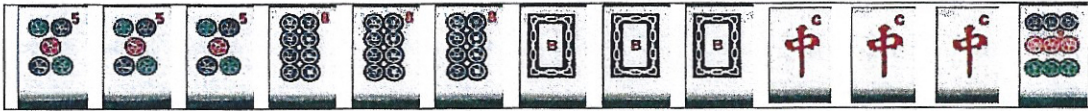
- 1 Players South, West and North all start with 13 tiles in their hands. East starts with 14 tiles and opens the proceedings by discarding a tile, leaving 13 as playing tiles. (When you only have 3 players, the 'ghost at the table' can never be the East wind ie one of the 3 present must be the East wind.)
- 2 Players take turns to draw tiles from the wall starting from the point where the deal finished. Confusingly, the wall tiles are used in a clockwise direction, even though the players' turns move anti-clockwise. (It may help to set up the tiles and do a dummy run taking and discarding tiles without making sets just to see how this works.)
- 3 You play with 13 tiles but need 14 tiles for Mah Jong. The last tile you pick up which completes your Mah Jong hand gives you the 14th tile (because you will not be discarding a tile this time.)
- 4 Throughout the game you should only have 13 playing tiles. Do not count any flowers, seasons or the 4th tile in any kong (set of 4) among your playing tiles. These are only used for bonus points at the end.
- 5 If you pick up a flower/season tile or make a kong during the game, you replace it with a tile from the 'kong box', not from the wall. Remember to discard a tile at this point or you will end up with too many. Conversely, don't forget to take your replacement tile or you will end up with too few tiles in your hand.
- 6 During the game only the most recently discarded tile is available for picking up and can be claimed by any player. When someone picks up a discarded tile, play continues with the next player to the right. This may mean that one or even two people miss their turn.
- 7 You can only pick up a discarded tile when you can use it immediately to make a pung or a kong ie you must already have two tiles in your hand (3 for a kong).
- 8 Sets only need to be 'exposed' (displayed) when you pick up a discard and call 'Pung.' If you pick up a tile from the wall and it makes a pung keep quiet about it! (no call, no exposure.)
- 9 You must call 'fishing' during your turn when you get to the point where you only need one tile for Mah Jong. If you don't declare you are fishing, you cannot subsequently go Mah Jong and must discard and play on. (You can, of course, call 'fishing' at this point, but it may be too late to get the tile(s) you want.)
- 10 Winds and dragons are 'honour' tiles and score higher points. Ones and nines are also considered as 'major'/honour tiles for point scoring purposes.

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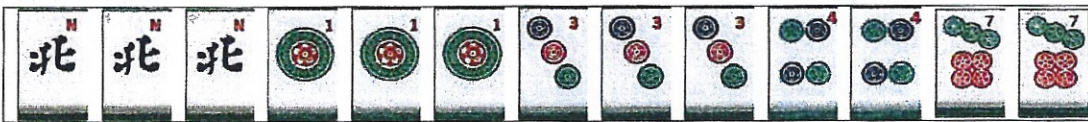
Sheet 8: Fishing hands

In each of the fishing hands below, only one tile is needed for the player to call Mah Jong. What is that tile (and why?) Some hands may offer a choice of two possible tiles for Mah Jong.

1



2



3



4



5



6



7



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Sheet 9: Quiz 3

- 1 How many playing tiles should you have during the course of a game?
- 2 How many tiles do you need for Mah Jong?
- 3 Which player can pick up a discard?
- 4 What must you have in your hand before you can pick up a discard for a pung?
- 5 All pungs and kongs must be exposed. True or false?
- 6 Name any two types of 'honour' tiles.
- 7 If you only have three players, which wind can you not use for the fourth place?
- 8 What is meant by 'washing the tiles'?
- 9 Sometimes players find themselves with 12 or 14 tiles in the middle of the game. What mistakes might have been made to leave them with too few or too many tiles?

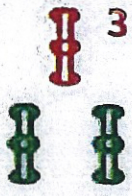








12 tiles →

14 tiles →

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Sheet 10: Chows

A Chow is a consecutive run of three tiles in the same suit (bamboos, circles or characters.) Winds and dragons cannot be formed into chows.

1				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only one chow per hand is allowed. • Chows are not allowed during a goulash (a special hand played after a draw.) • Chows are not allowed when there are only three players.
2				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A chow has no scoring value. • If you call Mah Jong with no chows, you get an extra double on your score. • A chow can be useful if you want to go out early to avoid losing heavily to players trying to make special hands which attract high scores.
3				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You can complete a chow with a tile from the wall or from a discard. • The discard can only come from the person to your immediate left (ie the player before you) unless you are fishing for Mah Jong in which case you can take it from any discard.

Holding a concealed chow in your hand is useful if you need to go out quickly. You need to make sure, however, that you are not stopping yourself making pung(s) or kong(s) by keeping the tiles you need in a chow (all pungs and kongs score something; a chow scores nothing.) Once you have exposed a chow, you cannot use the tiles in a pung or a kong.

The suit of your chow should be the same as that of any pungs you are collecting, if your hand is to remain clean.

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Sheet 11: Playing a Goulash

- 1 A goulash is played when a hand ends in a draw ie no one calls Mah Jong and all the tiles have been used up. (There may still be tiles in the kong box but these are not used.) Everyone keeps the same wind as in the drawn hand.
- 2 Set up the walls and deal out the tiles in the normal way.
- 3 Expose any flowers or seasons and take replacement tiles from the kong box.
- 4 The **two bamboo** can be used to replace any tile. You cannot use more than one of these 'jokers' (two bamboo) in any pung or kong. A two bamboo can be used to make the pair in the Mah Jong hand.
- 5 Before play starts, East exchanges three tiles (face down) with the player opposite. The other two players also exchange three tiles.
- 6 East then exchanges three tiles with the player on his/her right. The other two players also exchange three tiles.
- 7 East then exchanges three tiles with the player on his/her left. The other two players also exchange three tiles.
- 8 If there are only three players and you have to exchange with the 'space' take three tiles at random from the wall and replace them with your tiles. If you happen to pick up a flower or season during this process, declare it and take a replacement from the kong box.
- 9 Play then continues in the normal way.
- 10 If someone inadvertently discards a two bamboo during the game, it can only be picked up and played as a two bamboo and **not** as a joker. While it is unlikely that anyone would collect a pung/kong of two bamboos during a goulash, it could be of use in special hands such as Knitting or Wriggling Snake (to be covered later in the course.)
- 11 Remember: You cannot use chows during a goulash.

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Sheet 12: Quiz 4

- 1 What is a chow?
- 2 How many points does a chow score?
- 3 Name one occasion when you can't play chows.
- 4 Why is the two bamboo so useful in a goulash?
- 5 If East is the player who calls Mah Jong, the winds stay the same in the next round (so East stays as East.) How many times can East retain the East Wind before the winds must move round?
- 6 When is a goulash played?
- 7 Unlike other hands, what else happens in a goulash before play actually starts
- 8 True or false? At the start of a goulash, the winds stay the same as in the previous hand ie East remains East etc.
- 9 What is the difference between a pung and a kong?
- 10 What happens if you find you have a Mah Jong hand but you haven't called 'fishing' on your previous turn?

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Sheet 13: Precedence and Kongs

- 1 If two players call for the same discarded tile, the one nearer the right of the discarder has precedence if both require it for the same purpose ie both for a pung or both for Mah Jong.
- 2 If one of the players needs the tile for Mah Jong while the other only needs it to complete a pung then the Mah Jong has precedence.
- 3 A pung has precedence over a chow.

Making a kong (set of four tiles)

There are four possible scenarios

- If you have a pung (set of 3) exposed and someone discards the 4th tile **you cannot pick it up.**
- If you have a pung exposed and you pick up the 4th tile from the wall yourself, you call 'Kong' and add the tile to the 3 showing. Take a replacement from the kong box.
- If you have a pung hidden and someone discards the 4th tile, you call 'Kong', pick up the discard and expose all 4 tiles. Take a replacement from the kong box.
- If you have a pung hidden and you pick up the 4th tile from the wall yourself, you call 'Kong' and place the tiles face down in front of you (ie so other players can't see what they are.) Take a replacement from the kong box.







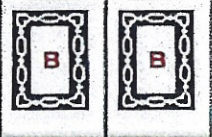


Robbing the Kong

- 1 If you are fishing for Mah Jong, you may find that another player already has a pung of the tiles you want and then picks up the fourth tile to make a kong. You would therefore be unable to complete your hand.
- 2 In this case you can 'rob the kong' and take the fourth tile at the time when the kong is declared.
- 3 In practice the only time you can rob the kong is when you are creating a 'special hand' (which will be covered later) or a chow (which doesn't score any points.)
- 4 Robbing the kong gives you an extra double on your score because it happens so rarely.

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Sheet 14: Simple scoring

After a player has called Mah Jong, all hands are scored. All players get points according to the table below.

		Exposed	Concealed
	Chow	0	0
	Pung of minor tiles (2-8)	2	4
	Pung of major tiles (1s, 9s, Winds & Dragons)	4	8
	Kong of minor tiles (2-8)	8	16
	Kong of major tiles (1s, 9s, Winds & Dragons)	16	32
	For each flower or season		4
	For a pair of any Dragon		2
	For a pair of your own wind		2
	For a pair of the wind of the round		2

In addition, the player who went Mah Jong gets **20** points. If the final tile to go Mah Jong was drawn from the wall (ie not from a discard) then that player gets an extra **2** points.

Various doubles are then applied to these points, some for all players and some only for the player calling Mah Jong.

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Sheet 15: Quiz 5

- 1 How many points do you score for an exposed pung of dragons?
- 2 How many points do you score for a concealed kong of five bamboo?
- 3 How many points does a player get for calling Mah Jong?
- 4 How many points do you get for each flower or season in your hand?
- 5 How many points do you get for a chow?
- 6 If you have a pung of a suit exposed and someone discards the fourth tile you can't pick it up. True or false?
- 7 You are holding a pair of South winds at the end of the game. You are South and the wind of the round is East. How many points can you claim?
- 8 You are holding a pair of North winds at the end of the game. You are North and the wind of the round is North. How many points can you claim?
- 9 Major/honour tiles give you more points than minor tiles. What kind of tiles count as major/honour tiles?
- 10 Which hands are scored at the end of a game?

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Sheet 16: Prevailing wind/ Wind of the round

- 1 Each player is allocated a wind at the start of the game and these winds 'move round' the table after each Mah Jong has been called and scored. The only time these winds don't move is when the player with the East wind has called Mah Jong. In this case the winds stay the same for the following hand. This can happen up to three times in succession after which the winds must move round.
- 2 Holding a **pair** of your own wind gives you two points. Holding a **pung or kong** of your own wind rewards you with a double when the scores are calculated (whether or not you are the player calling Mah Jong.)
- 3 In addition to the individual winds, there is a 'prevailing wind', known as the 'Wind of the Round.' As you might expect, this prevailing wind is East at the beginning of the game. This wind stays the same until all the individual winds have gone round once. After this, the prevailing wind changes. The following chart shows how this works using as an example the player who starts as West.

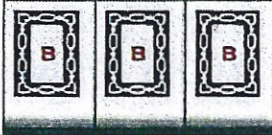






Hand	Individual winds	Wind of the round
1	West (N went Mah Jong)	E
2	South (S went Mah Jong)	E
3	East (S went Mah Jong)	E
4	North (W went Mah Jong)	E
The individual winds have gone round once and the player who started as West is now West again. The wind of the round therefore changes to South.		
5	West (W went Mah Jong)	S
6	South (E went Mah Jong)	S
7	South (W went Mah Jong)	S
8	East (N went Mah Jong)	S
9	North (N went Mah Jong)	S
The individual winds have gone round once again and the player who started as West is now West again. The wind of the round now changes to West. There were five hands in the round because East won hand 6 and so all the winds stayed the same for hand 7.		
10	West (S went Mah Jong)	W
11	South (S went Mah Jong)	W

- 4 Holding a **pair** of the wind of the round gives you two points. Holding a **pung or kong** of the wind of the round rewards you with an extra double when the scores are calculated (whether or not you are the player calling Mah Jong.)
- 5 In hand 10, if West had a pung/kong of West winds, he/she would score two doubles.

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Sheet 17: Scoring - doubling

Once you have worked out the points for your hand, you can then score various doubles. Some of these apply to all players and some only for the player calling Mah Jong.

All players		
		One double for every pung/kong of dragons.
		One double if you hold a pung/kong of your own wind
		One double if you hold a pung/kong of the wind of the round.
		One double if you are holding your 'own' flower. 1 = East 2 = South 3 = West 4 = North
		One double if you are holding your 'own' season. 1 = East 2 = South 3 = West 4 = North
		Two doubles for holding a full set of flowers (bouquet) – this includes the double for your own flower.
		Two doubles for holding a full set of seasons – this includes the double for your own season.

The Mah Jong player		
All one suit with winds and dragons		One double for being clean.
No chows		One double (assuming that chows were allowed in this hand.)
All concealed		One double
All majors (ones, nines, winds and dragons)		One double
If you are East		One double
One double for any of the following ways of going Mah Jong:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - with the last tile from the wall - with the final discard - with a tile from the kong box - by robbing a tile from another player making a kong - when you are fishing after your first discard (original call) 		

Mah Jong – game of the Four Winds

Sheet 19: Scoring practice

Try to score the Mah Jong hands shown below. In each case information is given which may influence the scoring ie the Player's own wind, the prevailing wind of the round, whether or not a goulash was played. Flowers/seasons and kongs are shown where appropriate. **Where a pung or kong has a green backed tile showing, this means it was concealed.** Assume there were four players.

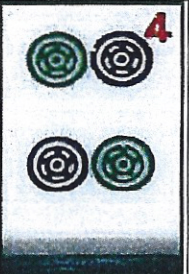
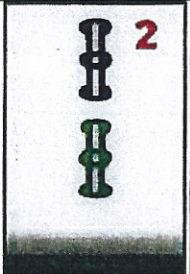
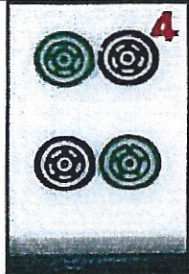




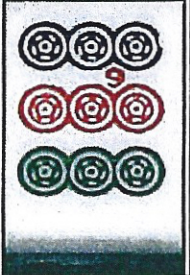

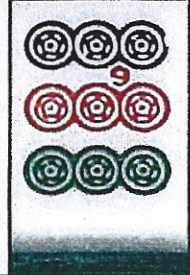



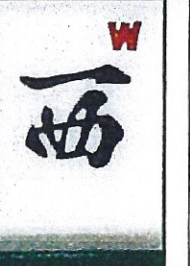




- Work out the point count first. (Don't forget 20 for going Mah Jong)
- Work out the doubles and apply to the score.

1	Player: South Wind of round: East Goulash: No Player went Mah Jong with a discarded tile.					

2 Player: North Wind of round: East Goulash: No
 Player went Mah Jong with a tile taken from the wall.

3 Player: West Wind of round: West Goulash: Yes
 Player went Mah Jong with the last discarded tile.

Mah Jong – game of the Four Winds

Sheet 20: Finer points of the game

Flowers and seasons

1 In some sets the flower and season tiles don't have numbers but have the names of the flowers and seasons they represent written or abbreviated on them. If you are playing with such a set, they are 'allocated' as follows:

- 1=plum 2=orchid 3=chrysanthemum 4=bamboo
- 1=Spring 2=Summer 3=Autumn 4=Winter

2 The flowers and seasons are also linked to the winds so that you can claim doubles for holding your own flower/season tile when you score.

- 1 = East 2=South 3=West 4=North

Playing 'dirty'

3 If you make a Mah Jong using only one suit, your hand is said to be 'clean.' It can, of course, include Winds and Dragons and still be considered as clean. A clean hand earns the Mah Jong caller an extra double on his/her score.

4 There is nothing to stop you collecting pungs/kongs from more than one suit. Your hand is then said to be 'dirty' and you can't claim the extra double.

5 Some players feel that, by playing dirty hands, it becomes very difficult for other players to make a Mah Jong or to try for some of the special hands which can score higher points.

6 As with playing Chows, it probably makes for a better game if you try to avoid dirty hands but recognise that there will be occasions where you have no choice. This usually arises when you have started to collect tiles for a special hand and then realise that you are not going to be able to complete it. In order to maximise your score or even to go Mah Jong with what you have in your hand, you may need to play 'dirty.'

Mah Jong – game of the Four Winds

Sheet 21: Introduction to Special Hands

- 1 Most versions of Mah Jong play the basic/ordinary hand of 'four pungs and a pair.'
- 2 Special hands allow you collect different combinations of tiles. They are usually more difficult to complete and therefore attract higher scores (though you can be left with nothing if your gamble doesn't pay off!)
- 3 Some versions of Mah Jong (particularly in the US) and those played in the UK with the 'Max Robertson' rules have dozens of such hands, many of which you are statistically very unlikely to complete. The BMJA rule book that we are using limits itself to 19 special hands. Only 6 or 7 of these tend to come up regularly and we will incorporate these gradually into our game.
- 4 Some special hands do not use pungs or kongs and therefore have to be kept concealed until the very end, with all your tiles picked up from the wall rather than from discards. As compensation, you may get a part score if you are fishing for a special hand when another player goes Mah Jong.
- 5 Hands are scored with a 'limit' or a 'half-limit'. We will use a limit of 1000, so a half limit will be 500. Part scores for players who are fishing may be one fifth (200) or two fifths (400) of a limit.
- 6 If you have flowers and seasons, these can be added to your score but any doubles for having your own flower/season only apply to the flower/season total and not to the 'limit' figure. The 20 points for going Mah Jong and other points for taking the last tile etc do not apply.
- 7 If you are East and go Mah Jong with a special hand then your whole score is doubled.

Mah Jong – game of the Four Winds

Sheet 22: Special hands 1

All pair honours

					
					
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seven pairs of honour/major tiles (ones, nines, winds or dragons.) • Scores a half limit (500) • All concealed but the last tile can be picked up from a discard. • Fishing gives you one fifth of a limit (200) 			









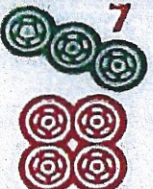
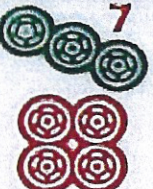
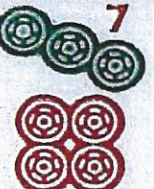


13 Unique Wonders

					
					
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One of every major tile (13 unique tiles) • The 14th tile can be any major tile. • Scores a limit (1000) • All concealed but the last tile can be picked up from a discard. • Fishing gives you two fifths of a limit (400) 			

Mah Jong – game of the Four Winds

Sheet 23: Special hands 2

Purity

					
					
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Four pungs/kongs and a pair, all from the same suit. • No Winds, Dragons or Chows • Can be exposed or concealed. • Work out your point score in the normal way and then double it three times. • Fishing also gets three doubles. 			

Wriggling snake

					
					
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One of each Wind. • A pair of 1s and a run of 2-9 all in the same suit. • Scores a limit (1000) • All concealed but the last tile can be picked up from a discard. • Fishing gives you two fifths of a limit (400) 			






Mah Jong – game of the Four Winds

Sheet 24: Special hands 3

Knitting

					
					
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7 pairs of tiles in any two suits. • No Winds or Dragons • All concealed but the last tile can be picked up from a discard. • Scores a half limit (500) • Fishing scores one fifth of a limit (200) 			

Triple knitting

					
					
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Four sets of three tiles in the different suits plus a 'mixed' pair • No Winds or Dragons • All concealed but the last tile can be picked up from a discard. • Scores a half limit (500) • Fishing gives you one fifth of a limit (200) 			

Mah Jong – game of the Four Winds

Sheet 25: Special hands 4

Buried Treasure

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Four concealed pungs in one suit with Winds/Dragons and a pair. No kongs. • All tiles must be picked up from the wall. • Scores a limit (1000) • Fishing scores two fifths of a limit (400) 			

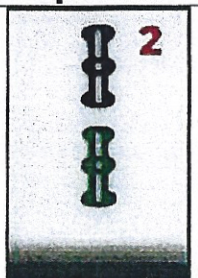
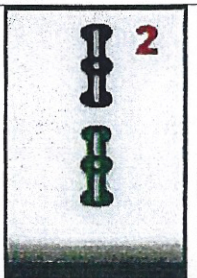
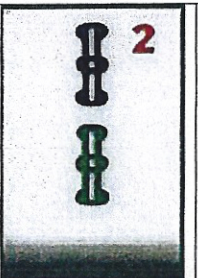
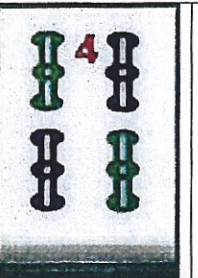
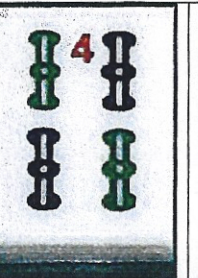
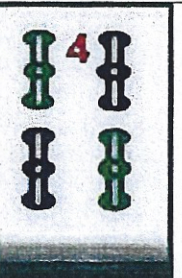
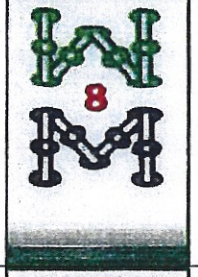
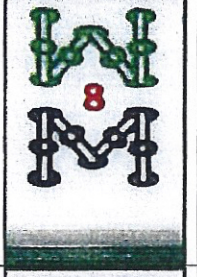




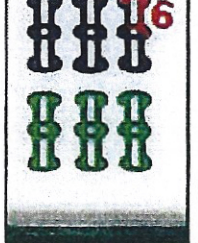
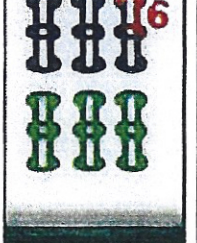
Fourfold Plenty

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Four kongs and a pair. Kongs can be concealed or exposed. Suits can be mixed. • Scores a limit (1000). Fishing hand score two fifths of a limit (400) 					

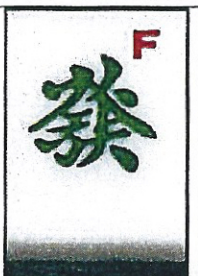




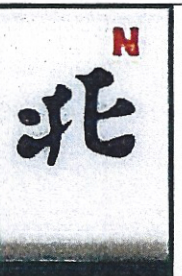






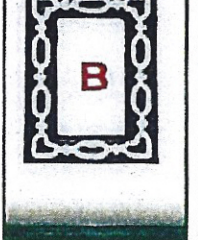
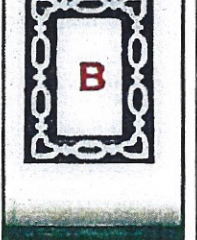
Mah Jong – game of the Four Winds

Sheet 26: Special hands 5

Imperial Jade

					
					
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Four pungs/kongs of the 'green' tiles and a pair. • The 'green' tiles are the green Dragons and the 2, 3, 4, 6 and 8 of bamboo. • Can be exposed or concealed. • Scores a limit (1000) • Fishing scores two fifths of a limit (400) 			

All Winds and Dragons

					
					
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Four pungs/kongs and a pair of Winds and Dragons. No suit tiles. • Can be exposed or concealed. • Scores a limit (1000) • Fishing scores two fifths of a limit (400) 			




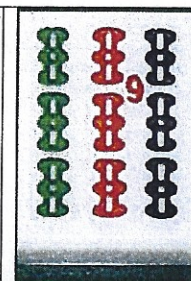
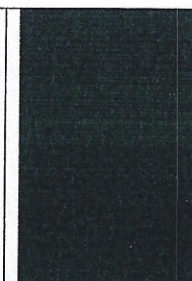
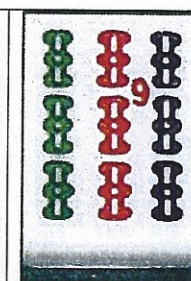
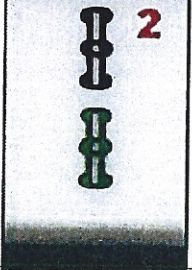
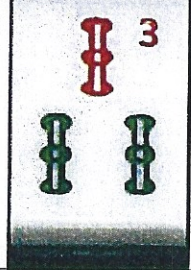
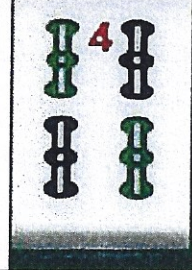
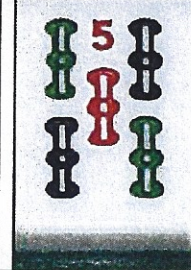
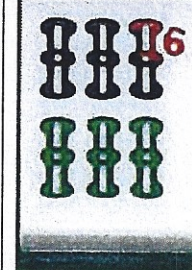
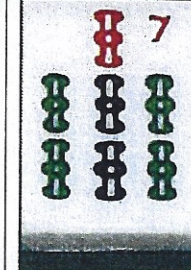
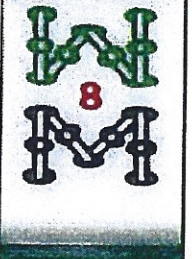
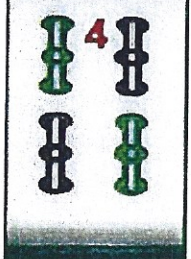
Mah Jong – game of the Four Winds

Sheet 27: Special hands 6

Heads and Tails

					
					
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Four pungs/kongs of the 1s and 9s and a pair. • No Winds or Dragons. • Can be exposed or concealed. • Scores a limit (1000) • Fishing scores two fifths of a limit (400) 			

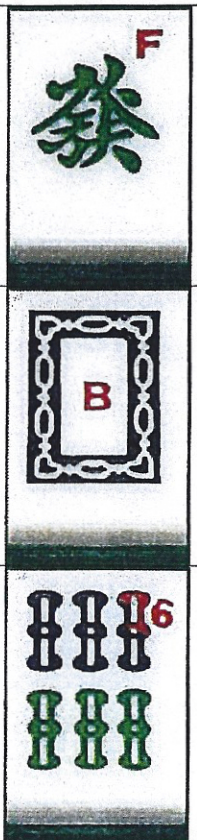
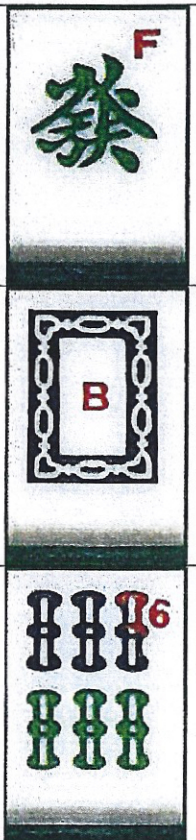
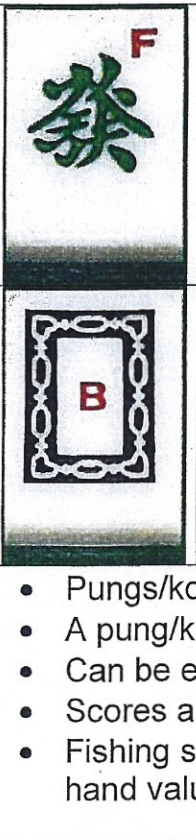
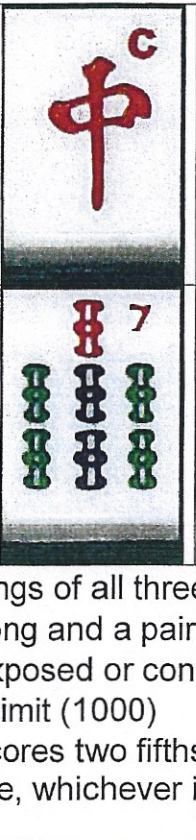
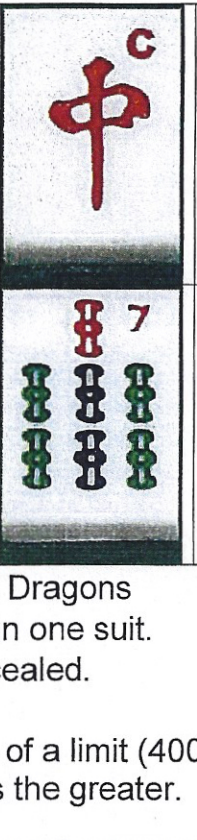
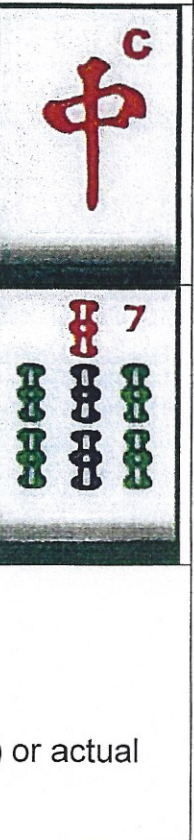
Gates of Heaven

					
					
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One suit only. Concealed pungs of 1s and 9s. • A run from 2 to 8 plus a further tile from the same suit. • Scores a limit (1000) • Fishing scores two fifths of a limit (400) 			




Mah Jong – game of the Four Winds

Sheet 28: Special hands 7

Three Great Scholars

					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pungs/kongs of all three Dragons • A pung/kong and a pair in one suit. • Can be exposed or concealed. • Scores a limit (1000) • Fishing scores two fifths of a limit (400) or actual hand value, whichever is the greater. 					

Four Blessings Hovering over the Door

					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pungs/kongs of each of the four Winds plus a pair of any tile. • Can be exposed or concealed. • Scores a limit (1000) • Fishing scores two fifths of a limit (400) or actual hand value, whichever is the greater. 					

Mah Jong – game of the Four Winds

Sheet 29: Special hands 8

The final five special hands all relate to the tiles dealt at the beginning of the game or to the last tile picked up for Mah Jong. They are extremely rare and all score a limit (1000). Part scores for fishing are not applicable.

1 Heaven's Blessing

- The 14 tiles dealt to East give a complete Mah Jong hand.

2 Earth's Blessing

- South, West or North can go Mah Jong with the first discard made by East.

3 Twofold Fortune

- A player completes a kong, draws a tile from the kong box and completes another kong.
- The replacement tile for this second kong gives the player Mah Jong.

4 Gathering the Plum Blossom from the Roof



- The player must be fishing for the **5 circles**
- To score the limit, this tile must be picked up from the kong box as a replacement for a flower, season or a kong.

5 Plucking the Moon from the bottom of the Sea



- The player must be fishing for the **1 circle**
- To score the limit, this tile must be drawn as the last tile from the wall.

Mah Jong – game of the Four Winds

Sheet 30: Penalties

1 Incorrect hands

When you find yourself with **too few tiles** (usually as a result of not taking a replacement for a kong or a flower/season.)

- You may not go Mah Jong nor correct the error by taking another tile.
- You may not claim a discard for a pung or a chow if it leaves you with no tile to discard.
- If another player goes Mah Jong, you may count your score.

When you find yourself with **too many tiles** (usually as a result of not throwing a tile away after you have picked up a replacement tile from the kong box.)

- You may not go Mah Jong nor correct the error by discarding a tile.
- You may not count your score if another player goes Mah Jong.

2 False naming of discards

If you name a discard wrongly and another player claims it, this may reveal what they are collecting.

- If someone claims it for a chow, pung or kong, the player who named the tile wrongly should pay 50 points to the claimant.
- If someone claims it for a Mah Jong, play stops immediately and the discarder must pay the Mah Jong player his/her full score and settle the other players' debts to the winner.
- No other settlements between players take place.

3 False declaration of Mah Jong

- As long as no other player has exposed his/her hand, play may continue with no penalty to the player who called in error.
- If any other player has exposed his/her hand as a result of the false call, the player who called in error must pay each of the other players a half limit (500)

4 Incorrect claiming of a discard for pung, kong or chow

- If the mistake is corrected before the next player makes a discard there is no penalty.
- If the next discard has been made, the erroneously declared set remains on the table and play continues. The player cannot go Mah Jong.

5 Letting off a cannon (giving a player Mah Jong when certain tiles are exposed.)

- If nine tiles of the same suit are exposed in front of the fishing player, you may not discard a tile of the same suit.
- If three pungs of Winds are exposed, no 4th Wind may be discarded.
- If two pungs of Dragons are exposed, no player may discard a tile of the third dragon
- If three pungs of 1s and/or 9s are exposed, no players may discard any other 1 or 9.
- When three pungs of green bamboos or green Dragons are exposed, no player may discard any other 'green' tile (green Dragon, 2, 3, 4, 6 or 8 bamboo.)

In all the above cases, the offending player has to reimburse the other two players what they had to pay the winner as well as settling his/her own debt to the winner.

Mah Jong – game of the Four Winds

Sheet 31: Playing elsewhere

The rules we use were set out by the BMJA (British Mah Jong Association) in an attempt to simplify the large number of variants that were in use. If you play with other people who don't use the BMJA rules this shouldn't stop you from playing but there are some things that you might want to clarify first so that the game is still enjoyable for everyone. Assume that the 'host's' rules take precedence!

- 1 Most of the Mah Jong **special hands** we play are common to other versions. Where there are many other limit/special hands played, don't try to learn these if you're only playing for a session or two. Play the hands you know but anticipate that others may call Mah Jong with hands you don't know. In the US, new hands come out every year. In the UK many people play from a set of hands taken from a book by Max Robertson.
- 2 **Starting** – some versions only throw the dice once to determine where the wall is broken. In the Chinese game, each player takes his/her own tiles from the wall as it is thought to be bad luck for another player to touch your tiles.
- 3 **Playing dirty** - not allowed in some versions (US in particular?); totally acceptable in other versions where the aim is to get out as quickly as possible.
- 4 **Kong box** – is this used for playing once the wall tiles have been exhausted? (For us, the game is drawn when the wall is gone, even if there are still tiles in the Kong box.)
- 5 **Chows** - we are only allowed one per hand and then not in a goulash or when three people are playing. In the Japanese and Chinese versions in particular any number of chows is allowed. (There are some special hands composed entirely of Chows. We don't play these.)
- 6 **Swapping tiles in a goulash** – this is sometimes called a Charleston. In some games East is allowed to decide that tiles should be swapped at the start of any hand, even if the hand is not a goulash.
- 7 **Goulash** – is the two bamboo used as a 'wild card'/joker or do they *add* in the blank tiles for this purpose? (We can *replace* the two bamboo with the blanks to make it easier during a goulash; you wouldn't do this if the White Dragon in the playing set was also a blank tile as is sometimes the case.)
- 8 **Wriggling Snake** – must the pair be the 'one' tile or can it be any suit tile?
- 9 **Imperial Jade** – is a Pung of Green Dragons mandatory for a Mah Jong? (not in our game.)
- 10 **Flowers and seasons** – are these used? If they are, do they give you extra points and possibly doubles when you score or do they just allow you to draw a tile from the Kong box, effectively giving you another turn?
- 11 **Scoring** – What 'limit' is used and how strictly is it applied? We use 1000 in special hands but allow people to claim more than this with ordinary Mah Jong hands through the system of doubles. Some scoring systems round to the nearest 10 points and use scoring sticks. In some Chinese and Japanese versions only the Mah Jong player gets points ie there are no points for coming 2nd (or 3rd or 4th!)
- 12 **Penalties** – some groups are stricter about this than others.

Name: _____		Date: _____		Wind of the Round _____					
Opponents									
Wind	Number of hand	Name:		Name:		Name:		Win	Lose
		Receive	Pay	Receive	Pay	Receive	Pay		
	1								
	2								
	3								
	4								
	5								
	6								
	7								
	8								
	9								
	10								
	11								
	12								
Totals:									
Subtract:									
Final totals:									

Name: _____		Date: _____		Wind of the Round _____					
Opponents									
Wind	Number of hand	Name:		Name:		Name:		Win	Lose
		Receive	Pay	Receive	Pay	Receive	Pay		
	1								
	2								
	3								
	4								
	5								
	6								
	7								
	8								
	9								
	10								
	11								
	12								
Totals:									
Subtract:									
Final totals:									

Mah Jong – game of the Four Winds

Quiz answers (some may be open to discussion and interpretation!)

Sheet 3: Quiz 1

- 1 Bamboo
- 2 East, South, West, North
- 3 When you only need one tile to go Mah Jong
- 4 Three
- 5 False. They give you bonus points when you score but are not used to make sets.
- 6 Four
- 7 A set of four identical tiles
- 8 Anti-clockwise
- 9 Dragons
- 10 Say what it is.

Sheet 6: Quiz 2

- 1 Roll two dice. The player with the highest score becomes East.
- 2 36 (a double row of 18 tiles)
- 3 A set of three identical tiles
- 4 East
- 5 A separate group of tiles used to provide replacements for bonus tiles such as flowers and seasons.
- 6 14
- 7 Declare them and replace them with tiles from the kong box.
- 8 East
- 9 It should only contain one suit (though it can contain pungs of winds and/or dragons.)
- 10 Four pungs and a pair.

Sheet 8: Fishing hands

- 1 9 circles
- 2 4 circles or 7 circles
- 3 1 bamboo or 3 bamboo
- 4 1 character or 8 characters
- 5 North wind
- 6 Green dragon
- 7 6 bamboo or white dragon

Sheet 9: Quiz 3

- 1 13
- 2 14
- 3 Any player
- 4 Two tiles which are identical to the discard you want to pick up.
- 5 False
- 6 Winds, dragons, ones and nines
- 7 East
- 8 Mixing them up before each hand begins.

- 9 12 tiles – you forgot to take a replacement from the kong box for a flower, season or kong
- 14 tiles – you forgot to discard a tile after taking a replacement from the kong box for a flower, season or kong.

Sheet 12: Quiz 4

- 1 A run of three tiles in the same suit.
 2 0
 3 When you play a goulash/when there are only three players.
 4 It acts as a joker/wild card.
 5 3
 6 When a hand finishes in a draw ie no one calls Mah Jong before the last tile in the wall is used up.
 7 Players exchange three tiles with each of the other players.
 8 True
 9 A pung consists of three tiles while a kong consists of four identical tiles.
 10 You can't go Mah Jong but must discard a tile and play on. You can call 'fishing' at this point and see if you can make Mah Jong later.

Sheet 15: Quiz 5

- 1 4
 2 16
 3 20
 4 4
 5 0
 6 True
 7 2
 8 4
 9 Winds, dragons, ones and nines
 10 All hands are scored.

Sheet 19 : Scoring practice

- Hand 1 864 each from North and West, 1728 from East
- 20 for Mah Jong
 - 4 for exposed major pung (one bamboo)
 - 4 for exposed major pung (red dragon)
 - 4 for concealed minor pung (six bamboo)
 - 16 for exposed major kong (nine bamboo)
 - 4 for flower/season tile
 - 2 for pair of wind of the round (East)
 - **Total points 54**
 - **Double – clean hand (all one suit with winds/dragons)**
 - **Double – no chows**
 - **Double - pung of dragons**
 - **Double – own flower/season**

Hand 2

352 each from South and West, 704 from East

- 20 for Mah Jong
- 2 for taking last tile from wall rather than a discard
- 0 for the chow (2,3,4 characters)
- 2 for exposed minor pung (eight characters)
- 4 for exposed major pung (north wind)
- 8 for concealed major pung (south wind)
- 0 for pair (nine characters)
- 8 for 2 flower/season tiles
- **Total points 44**
- **Double – clean hand (all one suit with winds/dragons)**
- **Double - pung of own wind (North)**
- **Double – own flower/season**

Hand 3

4352 each from South and North, 8704 from East

- 20 for Mah Jong
 - 2 for exposed minor pung (four circles)
 - 2 for exposed minor pung (eight circles)
 - 4 for exposed major pung (west wind)
 - 32 for concealed major kong (nine circles)
 - 0 for pair (six circles)
 - 8 for 2 flower/season tiles
 - **Total points 68**
 - **Double - clean hand (all one suit with winds/dragons)**
 - **Double - pung of own wind (West)**
 - **Double - pung of wind of the round (West)**
 - **Double - own flower**
 - **Double - own season**
 - **Double – going Mah Jong with the last discarded tile.**
- Can't claim a double for 'No Chows' as this was a goulash where chows are not allowed.**