

## Tournament Guidelines and Rules

Our tournaments are based on the National Mah Jongg League (NMJL) rules as published in Mah Jongg Made Easy (2020). We have made some modifications to the value of penalties and bonuses. In addition, there are supplemental and tightened rules to ensure fairness, avoid errors, and minimize disputes.

Any questions about scoring or rules should be addressed by the director and not by the players. If a question arises during the game, raise your hand to involve the director because only the director is authorized to arbitrate disputes as to rules or scoring. The director's ruling will be final. Also, arguing with the director may be grounds for immediate disqualification.

### Etiquette and Sportsmanship

We value the quality of our tournaments and the culture of our community, so we have established a Zero Tolerance Policy regarding poor sportsmanship. Upon the first complaint for poor sportsmanship, the offending player will be asked to refrain from discourteous activity. If there is another complaint, the offending player will be disqualified from the current game, may be expelled from the current tournament, and will likely be banned from participating in future tournaments.

All Players are required to display the NMJL card during tournament play.

Mobile devices must be set on Airplane Mode during tournament play.

Keep your hands in front of your rack, not on top or on the sides of the rack unless picking a tile.

At the end of each round, please show respect to those still playing by sitting quietly or leave the room until the next round is ready to begin.

### Table Rotation

If you are sitting in an "A" (EAST) Seat – Stay where seated after each round

If you are sitting in a "B" (SOUTH) Seat – Go UP 1 table after each round

If you are sitting in a "C" (WEST) Seat – Go DOWN 2 tables after each round

If you are sitting in a "D" (NORTH) seat – Go UP 2 tables after each round

### Points

**Incomplete Game** – If a round ends before a game can be completed, each player gets a score of zero for that game.

### Wall Game

Plus 10 points – For qualified players only. Players who declared mah jongg in error or had a hand declared dead are disqualified and will receive zero for that hand.

**Winning Hand** – Value to points (i.e., 25 value equates to 25 points) on the card plus bonuses that apply.

Plus 10 points – Bonus to a player who picks their winning tile.

Plus 20 points – Bonus to a player who wins a hand with no jokers (excluding Singles and Pairs hands).

### Penalties

Zero 0 points – Penalty to a player with a hand declared dead.

Zero 0 points – Penalty to a player who declares mah jongg in error. Any player who throws in their hand also gets zero points and the game continues. However, if one player does not throw in their hand, that player gets plus 10 points.



Minus 10 points – Penalty to a player who peeks at a blind pass.

Minus 10 points – Penalty to a player who discards the winning tile to a hand with no exposures or one exposure.

Minus 10 points – Penalty to a player who declares another player’s hand dead in error. Your own hand can then be declared dead.

Minus 20 points – Penalty to a player who discards the winning tile to a hand with two exposures.

Minus 25 points – Penalty to a player who discards the winning tile to a hand with three or more exposures.

Minus 25 points – Penalty to a player who misnames a discard resulting in mah jongg. The winner gets the point value of the hand they were attempting to play.

**Scorecard Verification** – EAST and WEST will verify scores for each other and NORTH and SOUTH will verify scores for each other. If a score is blank, it will be considered a zero.

Changes to scores will not be made once they have been accepted by the scorekeeper. In the event of a dispute, all four (4) players should be present for verification with the Director.

### [Supplemental and Tightened Rules](#)

#### **Called Tile**

You must verbally call for a discarded tile. If you don’t call the tile while picking it up, you can’t have it and must be placed back on the table.

If you call a discard for an exposure or mah jongg and touch it, it’s yours. The discarded tile must be placed on the flat part of the rack. If the tile is placed in the sloped part of the rack, your hand can be declared dead.

#### **Joker Exchanges**

Joker exchanges must be verbalized even if the exchange is from your own rack. If the joker is in another player’s rack, there must be a hand-to-hand exchange. If you put the tile on the table without verbalizing the exchange, then the tile is considered a discard.

#### **Mah Jongg In Error**

If a player declares mah jongg in error and makes an exposure other than the one using the discard, that player’s hand can be declared dead. If a player realizes they are not ready for mah jongg, they may renege the declaration if they made only one exposure using the discard and did not expose any other tiles from their hand but they are committed to the exposure.

#### **Dead Hand Declaration**

In addition to NMJL rules, these are valid reasons for declaring a hand dead:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• They have the wrong number of tiles</li><li>• They picked out of turn</li><li>• They picked and racked from the wrong wall</li><li>• They picked and racked from the wrong end of a wall</li><li>• They did a joker exchange before their turn begins</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• They exposed a concealed hand</li><li>• They exposed a hand that is not on the card</li><li>• Their hand is impossible to complete</li><li>• They have invalid exposures</li></ul>
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#### **3-Player Games**

The Charleston will be omitted in a 3-player game. For the 4th game, each player will roll the dice to determine who will be East.

