

# Points Without Panic: A Guided Path to Scoring

## 45-Minute Workshop + 15-Minute Q&A

**Method:** Block Buster (Prompt → Topic → Apply → Reflect)

**Skill Framework:** Triple Step (See It → Solve It → Say It)

**Execution Tool:** ODE (Observe → Decide → Explain; search the digital library for ODE)

### Opening (5 minutes)

#### Prompt

“Think about the last time a hand ended and the table hesitated. No one was upset—but no one was confident either. What made that moment uncomfortable?”

Take two or three short responses. Do not correct or explain yet.

#### Topic

Scoring isn’t complicated because of simple math. It isn’t easy because people simultaneously combine observation, decision-making, and explanation. Today’s session separates those steps so scoring feels calm and predictable.

Briefly explain that the workshop will move through *phases*, and each phase follows the same rhythm, so students always know where they are.



## Phase 1: Core Scoring Mechanics (15 minutes)

**Focus:** Who pays whom

### Prompt

“When someone wins, what’s the very first thing the table needs to agree on?”

Guide them to: *How the hand was won.*

### Topic

Introduce the two foundational outcomes only:

- Win on a discard → discarder pays double; others pay single
- Win by self-pick → everyone pays double

Emphasize: this phase alone solves most scoring confusion.

### Apply

Divide students into **ODE groups**.

- **Observe (See It):**  
One group watches a brief demonstration or hears a called scenario and states only what happened. No payouts. No opinions.
- **Decide (Solve It):**  
A second group determines the correct payout based on the outcome.
- **Explain (Say It):**  
A third group explains the decision once, clearly and calmly.

Rotate roles after one or two scenarios.

### Reflect

“What felt easier once the steps were separated?”

Reinforce that confidence comes from sequence, not speed.



## Phase 2: Bonus Situations – Jokerless Hands (10 minutes)

**Focus:** Payout overlays vs. hand value

### Prompt

“If two hands look the same but one feels ‘more impressive,’ does that mean it’s worth more?”

Let the tension sit briefly.

### Topic

Clarify that jokerless play affects payout, not hand value. It’s a bonus layer—not a scoring rewrite.

### Apply

Using ODE again:

- **Observe:** Compare two identical hands—one with jokers, one without.
- **Decide:** Determine what changes (payout) and what does not (hand value).
- **Explain:** State the difference clearly, without justification or bragging language.

### Reflect

“How does understanding this change how you view jokerless play?”



## Phase 3: Penalties and Dead Hands (10 minutes)

**Focus:** What still happens next

### Prompt

“When someone makes a mistake, what’s the part that feels most uncomfortable at the table?”

Acknowledge the emotional weight without amplifying it.

### Topic

You are not teaching every infraction—only the most common ones:

- Wrong number of tiles
- Mah jong in error
- Misnamed discard

Anchor the phase with one stabilizing rule: A disqualified player still pays a valid winner but cannot win themselves.

Helpful wiki articles:

- Disqualification: <https://mahjlife.com/wiki/tag/disqualification/>
- Penalties: <https://mahjlife.com/wiki/tag/penalties/>
- Mah Jongg In Error: <https://mahjlife.com/wiki/mah-jongg-in-error-and-next-steps-article-197>; <https://mahjlife.com/wiki/tag/mah-jongg-in-error/>

### Apply

ODE roles again:

- **Observe:** Identify the infraction only.
- **Decide:** Answer one question, *what still happens next?*
- **Explain:** Deliver the outcome calmly and definitively.

### Reflect

“How does knowing this rule reduce tension when mistakes happen?”



## Phase 4: House Rules (Optional Awareness Phase – 5 minutes)

**Focus:** Recognition without adoption

### Prompt

“Have you ever played in two groups that scored the same situation differently?”

This normalizes the experience without endorsing it.

### Topic

Explain that practices like doubling the last discard or last pick are **house rules**, not standard scoring. Introduce them as allowances players may encounter, not expectations they should carry.

Reference “allowances” for context if helpful: <https://mahjlife.com/wiki/house-rules-article-50/>

### Apply

- **Observe:** Identify the rule being used.
- **Decide:** Is it standard or a house allowance?
- **Explain:** State the distinction without judgment.

### Reflect

“How does labeling house rules protect your confidence when you play elsewhere?”

### Reflections (5 minutes)

“Which phase gave you the most clarity today—and which phase are you choosing not to worry about yet?”

Reinforce: “You don’t need to know everything. You need to know which phase you’re playing in.”

### 15-Minute Q&A

Guide questions back into the method:

- “Is this a Prompt issue, or are we already in Apply?”
- “Which phase does this belong to?”
- “Are we observing, deciding, or explaining right now?”

