

THE MAHJ REPORT

The Game Night Host Kit

*Six pages to print once, keep in the tile box,
and stop re-litigating the same things every month.*

-
- 1 Getting Started Seven steps, ten minutes, done once
 - 2 How Your Table Keeps Score The standard, what to add, and the one trap worth knowing about
 - 3 Your House Rules The worksheet nobody ever fills in, which is why the argument keeps happening
 - 4 Season Standings Eight game nights, twelve players, one page
 - 5 Teach a New Player in Ten Minutes Tested on twelve beginners at once
 - 6 Mahjong Night Bingo For the table. It never takes long.
-

Pages 2 and 3 are the ones to fill in, and they live in the box forever. Page 5 goes to whoever brings a friend. Page 6 is just for fun.

Getting Started

About ten minutes, once, and then you never set anything up again. Only you need the app. Nobody else in your group downloads a thing.

- 1 **Create your group**
One account, one group, and you are the host. This is the only login anybody ever makes.

- 2 **Add everyone to your roster** BEFORE YOUR FIRST NIGHT
Names only. No emails to collect, no invitations to chase, no accounts for anyone else. **Add every person who ever plays, including the ones who turn up twice a year.** Being on the roster does not put someone at the table, it just means they are there to pick from when a night comes around, and they can RSVP and see their own stats. This is the step everything else depends on, so it goes before the first night, not during it.

- 3 **Set your rules and scoring**
Page two of this kit is what gets typed in here, and you can change any of it later without losing anything. Page three, the house rules, is for the tile box rather than the app, since most of it is table etiquette the app does not need to know about.

- 4 **Get the night on the books** TWO WAYS IN
 - Already have a date? Go straight to Schedule Session, then send the RSVP link to your group.
 - Still picking one? Propose two or three options and send one link. Your players answer without downloading anything, and you lock the winning date once the replies are in.

Either route gets you RSVPs. A date locked from a poll brings its answers across with it, but send the RSVP link anyway if you want everyone to actually confirm.

- 5 **Set the table when everyone arrives**
Pick who actually turned up from your roster, and split them across tables if you are running more than one. Your roster is the whole pool. Tonight is just the people in the room. You can also randomize the seating, which is the simplest way to stop being accused of always putting someone at Lindsey's table. Lindsey always wins.

- 6 **Log each hand as it happens**
At the table, not afterward from memory. Tap who won and what they won with. About six seconds. This is the only thing you do during the night.

- 7 **Let the season build itself**
Standings, Grand Champion, and Hot Hand come straight out of the hands you logged. You never total anything up, and it carries across the whole season.

If you only remember one thing

Build the roster before your first night. Everyone, not just the regulars. It takes four minutes when you are sitting still and it is genuinely annoying to do while eight people are waiting for you to deal.

How Your Table Keeps Score

Decide it once here, and it all maps straight onto the settings in the app.

The standard, and your version

This is what the app starts you with, and none of it is required. Write your own number in the right column, or write **OFF** to switch something off completely.

WHAT SCORES	STANDARD	OURS number or OFF
Mahjong The base. Every win earns it.	2	
Jokerless hand Won without using a single joker.	1	
Concealed hand Won with nothing ever exposed.	1	
Each consecutive win Back to back wins in the same night.	1	
Hot Hand minimum Nights you have to play before you qualify for best average, so one lucky night cannot win it.	2	
Session win bonus To whoever wins the night overall, on top of the hands they already scored.	1	

And if two people tie for the night, the session bonus goes:

☐ Split it, half each **STANDARD**

☐ Both get the full bonus

☐ Nobody gets it

Splitting keeps the per night total constant, so tied nights cannot inflate the season. Both getting the full bonus is more generous. Neither is wrong.

Worth adding

- ☐ **First mahjong at each table** **MY FAVORITE**

One point to whoever finishes the first hand at their own table, or award it once for the whole night instead, whichever fits how many tables you run. Breaks a surprising number of ties before they happen.

Points
- ☐ **Self-drawn win**

Won on a tile you picked yourself rather than one someone discarded.

Points
- ☐ **Penalty for discarding the winning tile** **WE PLAY THIS**

Spreads scores out and separates players who would otherwise finish level. Read the note below before you turn this one on.

Minus
- ☐ **A point just for showing up**

Awarded for attending, win or not.

Points
- ☐ **Wall game**

Nobody wins the hand. Most tables score zero, but a small number gives a player whose hand fell apart a reason to keep watching and play defensively instead of checking out. Keep it low, and consider splitting it across the table: one point at a table of four is a quarter each. Barely registers on a night, breaks ties over a season.

Points

If you add the penalty, add attendance too

The discard penalty works, but it creates a problem that only shows up late in a season. The player who comes every night collects penalties all year, while someone who came twice sits near zero and quietly finishes above her. Zero is a great score if you never play. A point for showing up fixes it, so the regulars stop being punished for being the regulars.

Your House Rules

Every table plays a little differently, and almost nobody writes it down. Then a new player asks a question, three people answer differently, and the hand stops. Fill it in once and keep it in the box.

A note on the tags. Items marked **NMJL** have an official answer in the National Mah Jongg League rules, so what you are recording is whether your table follows it or bends it. Items marked **TABLE RULE** have no official answer at all. They are yours to decide, and a lot of players do not realize that.

How many Charlestons do we play? **NMJL**

First is required, second is by agreement. Some tables always do both.

Are blind passes allowed, and how many tiles? **NMJL**

Up to three, after the first left pass and on the last right.

Do we take the courtesy pass, and up to how many? **NMJL**

Zero to three across the table. The lower number wins. Always optional.

What happens when someone passes a joker in the Charleston? **TABLE RULE**

Passing one is against the rules. What you do about it is not covered.

What is the penalty for a false mahjong? **TABLE RULE**

The penalty attaches to exposing the tiles, not to saying the word. Caught before they turn over, there is no penalty at all.

Do we play a hot wall or a cold wall? **TABLE RULE**

Neither one is in the NMJL rules. Plenty of players think they are.

Is there a penalty for feeding someone the winning tile? **TABLE RULE**

Also not an official rule.

Do we use blank tiles, and how? **TABLE RULE**

Not every set has them and not every table allows them.

On a wall game, does anybody pay? **TABLE RULE**

How do we score, and do we play for anything? **TABLE RULE**

Card values, your own points, a running season, or nothing at all.

Anything else this table does that a newcomer would not guess?

Season Standings

One row per player, one column per game night. Mark a win, or write in points if your table plays that way. Total on the right.

PLAYER	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	TOTAL

End of season

Grand Champion

Most wins across the whole season.

Hot Hand

Best average, so the person who cannot make every night still has a shot.

Dates, if you want them: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

Teach a New Player in Ten Minutes

The mistake everyone makes is explaining the whole game before dealing a single tile. Do this instead. It was built for a room of twelve beginners and it works one on one just as well. Do not mention scoring. Do not mention the Charleston yet.

0 to 2

Name the tiles. Do not explain them.

Three suits: Bams, Craks, Dots, numbered one to nine, four of each. Then the extras: winds, dragons, flowers, jokers. Hand them the tiles while you say it. Sorting tiles is how the names stick, not hearing them.

2 to 4

Say the goal in one sentence.

You are trying to collect fourteen tiles that match one line on the card. That is the entire game. Everything else is detail, and detail can wait.

4 to 6

Show the card. Point at two sections. Stop.

Do not read it to them. Show them that it is a menu, that each line is one possible hand, and that the sections have names. Pick the two simplest looking lines and say "either of these would win." Close the card.

6 to 8

Deal one hand face up. Skip the Charleston.

Everybody's tiles visible to everybody, including yours. No passing. Play a few turns out loud, saying what you are looking for and why you are throwing what you throw. Nobody learns anything from a hand they cannot see.

8 to 10

Give them the two rules that never change.

Then start a real hand. They will get plenty wrong and it will not matter, because the goal for a first night is that they finish one hand, not that they win one.

The two rules that never change

1. A joker can never stand in for a single or a pair. Only groups of three or more.
2. You can only call for a tile that completes a single or a pair if that call is your mahjong.

Two more that come up on a first night: a joker that has been discarded is dead, nobody can claim it, not even to win. And only the most recent discard is live. Anything older is buried.

Mahjong Night Bingo

Mark them off as they happen. It never takes long.

Someone forgot her card	"I have nothing" then wins	A wrong mahjong called	Joker swap attempted	Rack rearranged four times
Wall built wrong	"Whose turn is it?"	Called it, then never mind	A dead hand	Phone out for a rack photo
Tiles knocked over	House rule debated	FREE	The wall runs out	Snack break mid hand
"I almost had it"	Charleston restarted	Someone counts twice	Next month's date set	A blind pass
Flower passed grudgingly	The card quoted wrong	Two wins in a row	A glass gets refilled	"Is this a mahjong?"

ONE LAST THING

If the paper starts feeling like work

Paper is genuinely fine. Plenty of tables have kept score on the back of an envelope for twenty years and nobody is unhappy about it. But there are two moments where it stops being fine, and if you have hit either one, you already know it.

Picking the night

Eight people, one group text, forty messages, and somehow still nobody knows if Tuesday works. This is the part paper was never going to help with.

Remembering the season

Who is actually winning. Who has not made a night since April. Who deserves Hot Hand. The sheet on page four holds one season. It does not add anything up for you.

The Mahj Report

Propose a few dates, send one link, watch the answers come in. Log a hand in seconds at the table. Standings that carry across the whole season and work out Grand Champion and Hot Hand on their own. Your scoring and house rules from pages two and three, saved where the whole group can see them, and applied automatically to every hand you log.

Nobody but you needs the app. Your players RSVP and see their own stats with just a name, no download, no login. Free to try for fourteen days.

themahjreport.com

Made by a host who got tired of the group text. If your table has a house rule worth stealing, send it to hello@themahjreport.com and it might end up in front of a few thousand other tables.