

Introduction

Hi, if you clicked on this you most likely you want to learn how to play for Yakuza or to watch Akagi, and my goal is for you to be able to do so, but before I start on the guide, I'd like to point out a few things

-This guide is focused on mahjong videogames, the info I'll give you is not enough for playing in real life

-I'll be using mostly Japanese terms, with the English equivalent written on screen but not mentioned

-I will omit some details, but you'll quickly learn them through play

Tiles

There are 2 main groups of tiles, suits and honors. Suits are divided in 3 groups, Man or characters, Pin or dots and Sou or bamboo, all of which go from 1 to 9. Honors are divided into dragons, which have 3 types (Red, Green, and White) and winds (East, West, North and South) there's 4 of each of type of tile for a total of 136.

Basics

Each player has a hand made up of 13 tiles plus an extra one on their turn, the goal of the game is to have a hand made up of 4 melds and a pair (there are two exceptions to this, but I won't delve into them). A meld is made up of either a triplet, which is 3 of the same tile, or a sequence, like 1-2-3 or 5-6-7, etc. 1 and 9 are considered terminal tiles, that means suits don't wrap around, so 9-1-2 and 8-9-1 aren't valid sequences. This, however isn't enough to win, as your hand also needs a yaku, which is a property that adds han, that's used for scoring.

Open and closed hands

Before I go into what yaku is, I have to explain the concept of open and closed hands, your hand starts out closed and remains as such for as long as you don't make any calls, making a call will automatically and irreversibly open your hand for that round, there are three types of calls

Chi: When you have two tiles of a sequence and the player on your left discards one tile which could complete it, you can call chi to make it a sequence

Pon: When you have a pair and any player discards a tile which could turn it into a triplet, you can call pon to turn it into one

Kan: The most complex call, it can work similarly to pon, when you have a triplet, you can call kan to turn it into a quad whenever any player discards the 4th tile, which for the purposes of scoring is basically a triplet unless the tile you formed a quad from is a dora (More on dora on [timestamp required]), if you called pon earlier in the round, and draw the tile you called pon from, you have the

option to turn into a kan. Finally there's an exception to what I said earlier, if you happen to draw all 4 of the same tile, you can call a closed kan, as the name implies, it will not open your hand.

Basic yaku

There are a lot of yaku, and if you play long enough you'll more or less know all of them eventually, but for now, I'll only delve into essential yaku

Riichi: When you're in tenpai, you have the option to call riichi, when you call riichi, you wager 1000 points and lock your hand in place until you either draw the tile you need to win, someone else discards it, or another player wins

Small tangent: Tenpai is the state of being one tile away from a complete hand, for example, you can have 3 melds and a pair, and be waiting for your sequence to be complete

Tanyao: For a tanyao your hand needs to have no honors, ones or nines

Iipekou: It's when you have two identical sequences in a closed hand, though in most games it looks like 3 consecutive pairs

Yakuhai: It's a triplet of either the round wind, the seat wind, or any of the dragon tiles

Small tangent: the round wind is often in the center of the table in videogames, most of the time it's gonna be east or south. The seat wind changes almost every round and is also often in the center, most games depict all of them, but your seat wind is the one in front of you

Menzen tsumo: Menzen tsumo is a luck based yaku, which simply requires drawing your winning tile while your hand is closed

Pinfu: The final and most complex of what I deem basic or essential yaku, it requires that your hand is purely made up of sequences, to already have the pair done, to have no dragons, round wind or seat wind, and to be waiting on at least two tiles, like hand which is waiting on

Dora and Ura dora

Dora is an element of chance that could improve your hand value, each dora you have adds han, but dora itself doesn't count as a yaku, the way the dora indicator works for number tiles is that the next number to the dora indicator is the dora, so if the 4 Sou is the dora indicator, that means 5 Sou is the dora, on the event that a 9 is the dora indicator, it will wrap around and 1 will be the dora, for dragons it works on the alphabetical english names, so Green>Red>White, and if White is the dora indicator, it wraps around and Green is the dora. For winds they follow East>South>West>North and it also wraps around. If you called riichi, you have access to Ura dora or reverse dora, they work the same way as regular dora, but you can't see them unless you win after declaring riichi, they're completely luck based. Finally, if a kan call is made by any player, a new dora indicator is revealed, and a corresponding ura dora will be revealed for any player who wins after declaring riichi.

Basics of scoring

To be honest with you, since I don't play IRL, I don't fully understand the scoring system, however, it can be handy to at least know some of it, hand scoring is mostly based on han, each yaku adds some han to your hand, the yaku I showed you add only one han, but some add more, you also get one han from each dora and ura dora you have in your hand, if you have 5 han (though in some cases 3 or 4 is enough) your hand counts as mangan and is worth 12000 if you're dealer and 8000 if you're not, 6 and 7 han count as Haneman which is worth 1.5x mangan, 8, 9 and 10 are baiman and worth 2x mangan, 11 and 12 are sanbaiman and worth 3x mangan, and finally 13 or above is a counted yakuman and worth 4x mangan

Where to go next

If you want to learn about other yaku or want more info on a specific element, I highly recommend Light Grunty's Riichi mahjong guide, which in combination with the mahjong wiki, I used to learn how to play, I also sometimes stream my matches on Twitch ([link in the description](#)) so if you want to see someone more experienced play feel free to drop by, that's all for this video, thanks for watching.