



CHESAPEAKE MAHJONG

NEW PLAYER SERIES

HOW TO READ THE NMJL CARD

YOUR ROAD MAP TO A WINNING HAND

The National Mah Jongg League card changes each year and lists the hands that may be made in American Mahjong. At first it can look like a code - these basics will help you decode it.

Start With the Symbols

- Numbers 1-9 represent numbered suit tiles. The same number can be a Bam, Crak or Dot depending on the color pattern shown in the hand.
- N, E, W and S represent the four Wind tiles.
- D represents a Dragon. Which Dragon you need depends on the suit/color pattern of the hand.
- F represents a Flower. All Flower tiles are interchangeable.
- 0 represents the White Dragon (often called Soap) when it appears as a zero on the card.

Color Is a Clue

- The colors printed on the card represent different suits - they do NOT mean Bam, Crak or Dot specifically.
- When a hand uses more than one color, those colors tell you which groups must be in different suits.
- Read the hand from left to right and notice how the tiles are grouped. Spaces between groups matter.

Check E or C

- E = Exposed. The hand may include exposures during play.
- C = Concealed. The hand must generally remain concealed until Mahjong, so pay close attention before calling a discard.

A Simple Way to Scan the Card

1. Look at the section: YEAR, 2468, ANY LIKE NUMBERS, CONSECUTIVE RUN, 13579, WINDS/DRAGONS, etc.
2. Look for hands that match the strongest patterns already on your rack.
3. Check the color/suit requirements and the spacing between groupings.
4. Check whether the hand is Exposed or Concealed before committing.

BEGINNER TIP

Do not try to read the entire card at once. Start by finding two or three possible hands that work with your strongest tiles, then narrow your choices as you play.

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