



Table Rules and House Variations

What you'll get from this lesson: Adapt to any table by learning the small variations each group plays — and settling them before the first deal.

Sit down at three different tables and you may meet three slightly different games. That's normal. American mahjong has a shared core, but each group adopts its own “table rules” for the details. Knowing they exist — and asking about them — makes you an easy guest anywhere.

Common Table Rules to Settle Up Front

Courtesy pass?

some tables skip it

Blind passes

which passes allow them

Thrower pays**double**

common, not universal

Jokerless bonus

often a doubling

Conflicting claims

priority order

Do-overs

when a slip can be fixed

Original checklist. These are the points that most often differ from group to group — a quick chat before the first deal saves confusion later.

Settle the details up front

Before the first hand, it's worth a quick check: Does this table do a courtesy pass? When are blind passes allowed? Does the player who threw the winning tile pay double? Is there a bonus for winning without jokers? A thirty-second conversation prevents most mid-game disagreements.

Be flexible as a guest

When you're visiting a new group, play their way without fuss, even if it differs from home. Flexibility is itself good etiquette — and you'll pick up new variations worth bringing back to your own table.



Find My Mahjong

where players gather

Tip. Flagged for review: several of these variations (blind-pass timing, thrower-pays-double, jokerless bonus) differ by group. We present them as table-dependent rather than fixed — Tracey can confirm the defaults she teaches.