



The Table, the Set, and Your Rack

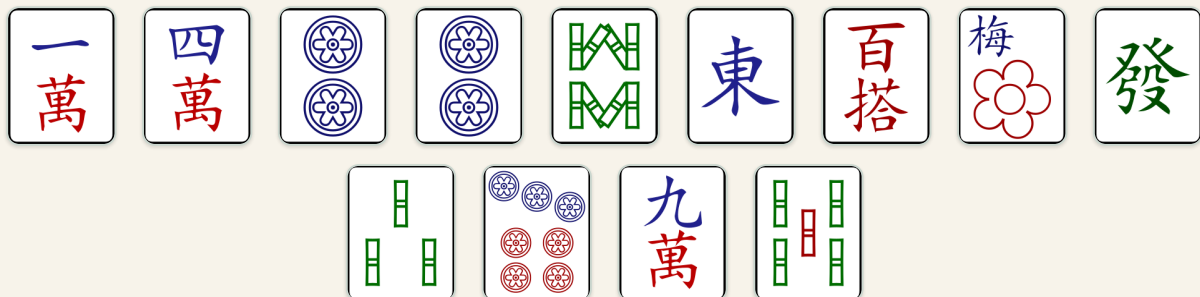
What you'll get from this lesson: Know the equipment and how a table is arranged before the first tile is dealt.

A mahjong set comes with more than tiles. You'll also find **racks** (one per player), often with **pushers** attached, a pair of **dice**, and sometimes a little box for keeping score or bets. Four players sit around a square table, one on each side.

Your rack keeps your secrets

Each player's tiles live on a sloped rack that faces you and hides your hand from everyone else. You'll sort your tiles here, plan your hand, and only reveal a group when you claim a tile or win. Keeping your tiles up on the rack — and out of sight — is both good manners and good defense.

Your Rack — Tiles Face You, Hidden From Others



Original illustration. You sort your 13 tiles on the sloped rack so only you can see them; exposed groups get placed face-up on the flat top later.



What you need to start

To play in person you need three things: a set (with the racks and dice), the current card, and three other players. Learning online is even simpler — an app supplies the tiles and the card, so all you really need is a device and a few minutes. Either way, you'll want your own copy of the card in front of you, which is the very next thing we'll learn to read.