



Advanced Joker Play

What you'll get from this lesson: Squeeze extra value from jokers — split them, redeem them, and read what an opponent's joker moves mean.

Jokers are powerful in any hand; used well, they're decisive. A few habits separate players who merely use jokers from those who get the most out of every one.

Where a Joker Can (and Can't) Go

Pung of 5-Dot

✓ joker OK in a group of 3+

Kong of 3-Bam

✓ jokers OK

A pair

✗ no joker in a pair

A single

✗ no joker as a single

Original illustration. Jokers stand in for a tile inside any group of three or more. They may never be used in a pair or as a single tile.

Split, redeem, and read

Don't pile all your jokers into one group if spreading them across two keeps more hands alive. Watch every exposure for a joker sitting on a tile you hold — that's a redemption waiting to happen, letting you pull the joker into your own hand on your turn. And notice when an opponent suddenly discards a joker late: it often means they've given up on winning and are clearing it so no one else can use it.



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where players gather

Watch out. A joker in an exposure is only as safe as the group around it. If you redeem the real tile out from under an opponent, you may quietly stall a hand they were counting on.

Tip. Late in a hand you can't win, discarding your own joker denies it to everyone — a small, sharp defensive move when a rival is one tile away.