



Mahjong Lesson Plan: Teaching Your Friends How to Play

Goal:

Build understanding before jumping into a game. This order helps players learn the tiles, the NMJL card, and how hands come together.

1. Tile Breakdown

- Lay out tiles by suit (Dots, Bams, Craks) with matching dragons.
 - Discuss melds: Single, Pair, Pung (3), Kong (4), Quint (5).
 - Jokers: only in groupings of three or more identical tiles. Never in singles or pairs.
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2. The Object of the Game

- Goal: Match your tiles to a hand on the NMJL card.
 - Every game has three parts: **Dealing, the Charleston, and Game Play.**
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3. Reading the Card

- Colors show suit relationships, NOT linked to a suit:
Color change = suit change; same color = same suit.
 - Numbered categories (Year, 2468, 13579, 369) use those numbers only.
 - Named categories (Like Numbers, Consecutive Runs, etc.) are flexible.
 - **Parentheses** expand or limit the hand.
 - **Build several hands to confirm understanding.**
 - Review rules: concealed vs. exposed and when you can take a discard.
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4. The Charleston

- Passing tiles to improve your hand toward a category.
 - Use the sprinkler analogy or Right Over Left Left Over Right (ROLLOR) for passing.
 - Sort tiles by relationships, not a specific hand.
 - After passing, keep multiple options and let your draws guide your direction.
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5. Guided Play

- Start playing once they understand the relationships between the card and tiles.
 - Don't play open-handed; seeing others' tiles will impact their decisions.
 - Have one experienced player observe and coach.
 - NO Blanks, they confuse beginners.
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Tips

- Focus on learning, not winning.
 - Mahjong takes patience and practice.
 - Celebrate small wins, a smooth Charleston, smart pivot, or well-read hand!
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