riichi, at a glance

Japanese Mahjong

Mahjong Tilework
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A finished hand is not a winning hand

Four sets and a pair may only be declared a win if the hand also holds at least one yaku, a named pattern from the list. Dora add to the score but never meet this requirement. Everything else here follows from that one rule.

Yaku worth knowing

YAKU	WHAT IT IS	HAN
Riichi	Concealed, declared one from winning	1
Ippatsu	Win in the first go-round after riichi	1
Menzen tsumo	Concealed, won on your own draw	1
Pinfu	Concealed, four runs, worthless pair, two-ended wait	1
Tanyao	No terminals, no honors	1
Yakuhai	Triplet of dragons, seat wind or round wind	1 ea
Sanshoku	The same run in all three suits	2 / 1
Ittsu	1 to 9 of one suit, as three runs	2 / 1
Chanta	Every set holds a terminal or honor	2 / 1
Chiitoitsu	Seven pairs, concealed only	2
Toitoi	All triplets, no runs	2
Honitsu	One suit plus honors	3 / 2
Chinitsu	One suit, nothing else	6 / 5

Two numbers means concealed, then open. Only values both our detailed sources agree on are printed here.

Riichi

- Declare only with a **concealed** hand one tile from winning, and not in the last few draws.
- Call riichi, discard, put out a 1,000 point stick. The hand is locked from then on.
- Worth 1 han by itself, which can be the only reason the hand may win at all.
- **Ippatsu** adds a han for winning in the first go-round after. Any claim or kong cancels it.
- **Ura dora** are read from under the dora indicators, and only a riichi winner turns them over.
- European rules: win and the stick comes back; otherwise the winner takes it. A drawn hand leaves it for the next winner.

Furiten

- If any tile you are waiting on is already in **your own** discards, you cannot win on a discard.
- You can still win on a tile you draw yourself.
- It counts for every tile in a multi-sided wait, not only the one you want.
- Pass up a winning discard and you are furiten until your next draw.
- After declaring riichi it does not lift: miss one and you are furiten for the rest of the hand.

Dora

- A tile is turned up in the dead wall. The dora is the **next** tile in sequence after it, not the one shown.
- Each dora in your hand adds a han. None of them is ever a yaku.
- Declaring a kong turns up another indicator.
- Many sets carry one red five per suit, counting as dora. The European competition rules dropped them.

The limit hands

LIMIT	HAN	NON-DEALER	DEALER
Mangan	5	8,000	12,000
Haneman	6 or 7	12,000	18,000
Baiman	8 to 10	16,000	24,000
Sanbaiman	11 or 12	24,000	36,000
Yakuman	the great hands	32,000	48,000

Paid by the discarder. On your own draw all three pay a share, the dealer double.

Scoring, in short

- **Han** are the doubles: add up the yaku, then add one per dora.
- **Fu** are minipoints for the shape: a base, more for triplets and kongs, more again for concealed ones and for terminals and honors. Round up to the next ten.
- At five han and above, stop counting fu.
- Nobody wins and the wall runs out: whoever was one tile away is paid by whoever was not, 3,000 in all. All four or none, and nothing moves.

Agree these first

Riichi has no single authority, and published rulebooks differ on:

- Red fives, in or out.
- What thirteen han or more pays.
- Where a near miss rounds up to mangan.
- Whether a hand can be abandoned early.
- How late riichi may be declared.

Our own drawings and our own words, checked against published sources listed at mahjongtilework.com/japanese-mahjong/. Nothing here is from the National Mah Jongg League's card.