

Section 1. Paramahjong Mysteries

“Paramahjong” mysteries are not really mahjong mysteries, they are “**around**” (“para”) mahjong. The reader is given the opportunity to recollect some very general facts about mahjong and some very basic rules in this section.

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Mysteries

1-1. Bamboo Image Tile

Dear reader, are you ready?

Please, consider a typical mahjong game set.

Question: How many "tiles with a Bamboo image" are in a typical mahjong set?

[Hint](#)

[Solution](#)



1-2. The Hound of the Baskervilles



Mrs. Hudson was invited to watch a game of mahjong for the first time ever. The session was conveniently arranged right at 221B Baker Street. The game was played by Sherlock Holmes, Dr. Watson, Inspector Lestrade, and a very special guest — Wan Dongtiao (万筒条), clerk of the Chinese embassy, an experienced mahjong player.

Just after the game had finished, Mrs. Hudson asked, "It is very strange. Why was the name of such a breed of **dog** mentioned during the game? If only the **Hound of the Baskervilles** might be of such a breed, then Sir Charles Baskerville might escape the curse."

Question: What breed of dog Mrs. Hudson heard during the mahjong game?

[Hint](#)

[Solution](#)



1-3. Hand Structure? It's Elementary!

Sherlock Holmes explains to Mrs. Hudson that the simplest winning **hand** in mahjong has fourteen tiles in **3-3-3-3-2** distribution.

"Holmes! It's rather elementary!"

Question: What ingenious insight came to Mrs. Hudson?

[Hint](#)

[Solution](#)



1-4. Robbery of the Century

"Heavens! The world is falling apart!" exclaimed Mrs. Hudson while bringing morning coffee to Holmes and Watson.

"Here is an article. Please, listen carefully", 'Three solid gentlemen were mixed up in a robbery of a police chief. Loot was taken only by one of them. The whole event was observed by at least two dozen other gentlemen.' "Heavens!"

"Mrs. Hudson, please, calm down! Oh, it's rather elementary. Look only at..."

Question: What should Mrs. Hudson take a look at? Please explain what has happened.

[Hint](#)

[Solution](#)



1-5. How many points does Mrs. Hudson have?

So, Sherlock Holmes, Dr. Watson, Inspector Lestrade and Mrs. Hudson are playing mahjong at 221B Baker Street. At the table Mrs. Hudson has:





The last tile taken (from the wall) is .

Question: How many points does Mrs. Hudson have (MCR Rules)?

[Hint](#)

[Solution](#)



1-6. Three Tiles Pattern — a Mahjong Prank

The current item is a paramahjong Sherlock Holmes joke. Don't try too hard to solve it!
“What the hell is going on here?” – these are the exact words of Inspector Lestrade, sitting at some mahjong tournament and recalculating his tiles.

“1, 2, 3, .., 12, 13, again 13! I would understand it if I had three tile patterns in 12 but NOT in 13 tiles!”

The matter is his hand is: .

So, something definitely went wrong. Nevertheless, this happens at official tournament.

Question 1: Please, explain what has happened. What are Rules set of this official tournament?

Question 2: What country is hosting such a tournament?

[Hint](#)

[Solution](#)

Hints

1-1. Bamboo Image Tile

Search thoroughly amongst the Bamboo suit tiles and ... Flower tiles.

[Solution](#)



1-2. The Hound of the Baskervilles

Check declaration words.

[Solution](#)



1-3. Hand Structure? It's Elementary!

Mrs. Hudson needed just 5 seconds to get the answer.

[Solution](#)



1-4. Robbery of the Century

The whole affair takes place at a mahjong table.

[Solution](#)



1-5. How many points does Mrs. Hudson have?

Why are tiles shown in several layers?

[Solution](#)



1-6. Three Tiles Pattern — a Mahjong Prank

Which mahjong sets may contain more than 4 copies of the same tile?

[Solution](#)

Solutions

1-1. Bamboo Image Tile

Let's take a look at a typical mahjong set. There are thirty-three tiles with a Bamboo image:

four identical tiles of Bamboo suit tiles numbered from 2 to 9 ( ,  ,  ,  ,  ,  ,  ,  , ) and one tile of the "Bamboo" flower (). Bamboo-1 is typically depicted in a form of a bird ().



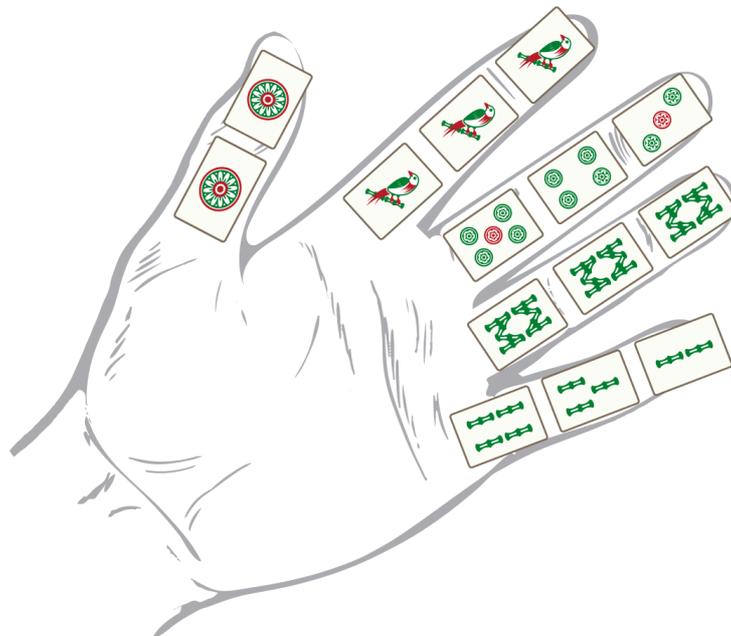
1-2. The Hound of the Baskervilles

Mrs. Hudson noticed that Wan Dongtiao took a Chow and pronounced "Chi!" The next two calls with Flower replacement sounded like "Hua!", "Hua!" Altogether – "Chi-Hua-Hua".



1-3. Hand Structure? It's Elementary!

Mrs. Hudson unintentionally looked at her hand and bent her fingers slightly. "What is it?" she thought. Four fingers consist of 3 phalanxes, and a thumb – of 2 only. "That's exactly 3-3-3-3-2!"



1-4. Robbery of the Century

Mrs. Hudson was reading ... 'Mahjong News'. The article was about a mahjong hand. Inspector Lestrade declared a Kong which was robbed by all **three** other players. Only one could win under MCR Rules. This took place at the MCR London Championship with dozens of spectators.



1-5. How many points does Mrs. Hudson have?

Since this is a paramahjong mystery there would be no rational solution.

Please look at the rows of tiles – 6+6+2 – and read carefully what is written in the question:

“Last tile taken”.

The above tiles are in the **discard** zone! No points are won and the game is still going on.



1-6. Three Tiles Pattern — a Mahjong Prank



During some mahjong tournament, Inspector Lestrade has got a hand with only three tiles

patterns in 13 tiles: .

To gain experience in catching Yakuza, Inspector Lestrade was sent to Holland to play Washizu mahjong – a kind of Japanese mahjong which is popular amongst Japanese mobsters. Mahjong sets were ‘Washizu extended’, where there are up to 6 tiles of the same pattern in order to play with various level of transparency – from 1 to 3 transparent tiles of 4. Mahjong sets for the tournament were prepared by Dutch police officers who did not play mahjong. They had received very clear instructions: “Count exactly 136 tiles from each set and place them at the table.”

