

Section 3. Easy Mysteries

This section contains very easy-to-solve mysteries.

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Mysteries

3-1. Gentlemen's Draw

"Holmes, there is an interesting article in the latest issue of 'Mahjong News'", Dr. Watson said to Holmes at breakfast.

"At the last London MCR Championship, an extremely quick draw was recorded. Here are the details..."

"There is no need for details. It's rather elementary!", interrupted Holmes.

Question: Please, reconstruct the deal flow and explain what has happened, provided the following assumptions:

- the player(s) made **the least possible number of** declarations (calls)
- the wall contained **the greatest number of** possible tiles
- the rules were MCR and **draw** has been recorded

[Hint](#)

[Solution](#)



3-2. 156 Mahjongs

Mrs. Hudson and the three gentlemen played a deal in a draw. There are no flowers in their hands. All four hands are concealed. Wan Dongtiao, after looking at all hands, says, "If **any** of you discard **any** tile from your hand then **all** three others immediately say "Hu!" "In other words, one can count $13 \cdot 4 \cdot 3 = 156$ possible mahjongs."

Question: Please, reconstruct the hands of the players.

[Solution](#)



3-3. Cleaning Day

While Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson were out conducting their affairs, Mrs. Hudson was cleaning the apartment. She came to the table with two mahjong sets. Suddenly, several tiles from both sets dropped to the floor.

“Heavens!” was the only thing that Mrs. Hudson could say because the thing she saw was so difficult to believe.

There were two groups of fourteen tiles from each set on the floor. In both groups six tiles

were laying “face-up”. Those tiles were *identical* in both groups:



Mrs. Hudson felt the utmost astonishment after she turned over the rest of the tiles.

“I can’t believe it!”

Two different groups of fourteen tiles formed legal mahjong in one suit, though no 24-point fan **Full Flush** could be counted.

Question: Please, reconstruct both hands.

[Hint](#)

[Solution](#)



3-4. Thirteen Tiles from the Wall

Our four friends – Mrs. Hudson, Sherlock Holmes, Dr. Watson and Inspector Lestrade – are playing mahjong. Please solve the following problem. Here is what is known:

- the wall consists of exactly thirteen tiles
- it is Mrs. Hudson’s move
- Mrs. Hudson’s hand is concealed
- all thirteen tiles were taken from the wall during one move

Question: Please, point out the fans in the winning hand (only those which are known *for sure*) provided thirteen tiles were taken from the wall and thirteen valid declarations (calls) were made.

[Hint](#)

[Solution](#)



3-5. Negative Fan

Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson are drinking their morning coffee in the lounge. Watson is reading an article in “Mahjong News”, ‘Curious accident occurred at London’s Mahjong Championship. A player declared mahjong and listed fan(s). The other player has **added** a fan to the winning hand and hence the hand value **decreased**.’

“How can this have happened?” Dr. Watson asked loudly. “And what is the number of this **negative** fan in the ‘Green Book’?” questioned Mrs. Hudson.

“Please, calm down, my friends,” said Holmes. “It’s rather elementary! The matter is...”

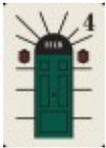
Question: Please, explain what has happened.

[Hint](#)

[Solution](#)



3-6. Mrs. Hudson’s New Fan



There was an ordinary game of mahjong at 221B Baker Street. Mrs. Hudson was sitting at the East position. She looked very carefully at her starting hand (fourteen tiles, no flowers) and said, “Gentlemen! Tiles of my hand form a valid hand structure though I cannot recognize a fan. I have looked at my tiles **up and down** but no way! I wish someday a new fan describing my hand might be added to the list!”

Question: Please, describe Mrs. Hudson’s starting hand and explain what this new fan is about.

[Hint](#)

[Solution](#)

Hints

3-1. Gentlemen’s Draw

Find the place in the game at which nobody can win.

[Solution](#)



3-3. Cleaning Day

Search the “Green Book” for one-suited fans scoring higher than 24 points.

[Solution](#)



3-4. Thirteen Tiles from the Wall

Which two declarations allow one to take more tiles from the wall during the same move?

[Solution](#)



3-5. Negative Fan

Which fan is not valid if a hand has any points?

[Solution](#)



3-6. Mrs. Hudson’s New Fan

Which group of tiles consists exactly of fourteen tiles?

[Solution](#)

Solutions

3-1. Gentlemen’s Draw

Although the players were solid gentlemen, they were playing mahjong for only the second time ever.

So, $13 \times 3 + 14 = 53$ tiles are dealt. The wall contains $144 - 53 = 91$ tiles. The deal has begun. East moves first. He declares “Hu!” Everybody wowed, although it turned out to be a false hu. So, East discards a tile on which... South, West and North declare “Hu” which, in each case, turned out to be a false declaration.

After only **four** declarations during the very first round we have:

- the wall still contains 91 tiles (stays **untouched**)

- **none** of the four players can declare “Hu” anymore (actually, they can declare but at the cost of a penalty score)

And now South, who must make a move after the untaken discard of East, offers to the other players a gentleman's agreement on a draw. Everyone assumes that none of the players will intentionally announce "Hu" to the detriment of himself, and that the game will then end, obviously, in a draw, but only after the taking and discarding of 91 tiles from the wall. The offer was accepted by all players.



3-2. 156 Mahjongs

All four players have thirteen single terminal and honor tiles waiting for **Thirteen Orphans**.



3-3. Cleaning Day

Without a doubt, there are exactly two solutions:

-  , the main fan is #6 **Seven Shifted Pairs** = 88 points
-  , the main fan is #13 **Pure Terminal Chows** = 64 points



3-4. Thirteen Tiles from the Wall

The Wall consists of exactly thirteen tiles. Mrs. Hudson has to move. She takes a tile. “Kong!” and she takes another tile. “Kong!” and she placed two more kongs.

Having four kongs at the table and  in hand she hoped to get a tile for the Pair and mahjong. She drew a Flower.

“Flower!” she took a tile and declared seven more Flowers. The gentlemen followed silently.

After all that, Mrs. Hudson takes another  tile and declares “Hu!”

Fans (counted for sure):

- 88 = **Four Kongs**
- 64 = **Four Concealed Pungs**
- 8 = **Last Tile Draw**

- 4 = Fully Concealed Hand
- 1*8 = Flower Tiles (8 times)



3-5. Negative Fan

The main fan was undoubtedly **Chicken Hand**. A player missed adding another fan (costing less than 8 points), which was added by the other player. Hence, the total hand value decreased (**Chicken Hand** is no longer a valid fan).



3-6. Mrs. Hudson's New Fan

Sherlock Holmes said, "Since you have looked at your tiles *up and down*, I assume that your starting hand is...":



"Wonderful! And the new fan is **Single Reversible Tiles!**" exclaimed Dr. Watson.

