

## Conclusion

Well, that brings us, dear reader, to the end of the book. We had to learn a lot of new things: what is "paramahjong", what was the breed of dog, who most often won in the championship of London, how to play by unusual rules, how to make hands at maximum cost, when the thirty-second of December comes and much more. I hope that the trip was difficult, but very interesting and informative. What's next?

First of all, try to consolidate the obtained theoretical knowledge of Mahjong Competition Rules (MCR) which were the focus of mahjong mysteries. Start with the "Green Book" and then try to find other books, for instance, "Handbook on Mahjong Competition Rules. Book One" written by Vitaly Novikov. Secondly, try to use new knowledge of the rules and the features of their application during the game. If you like solving mahjong problems, then you can probably come up with your own, and even share these with the players of your club.

Last but not least, if you enjoyed solving mahjong mysteries then try to participate in the next Sherlock Holmes mahjong mysteries solving contest. The recent one took place in 2021, so the next contest will start in a year or two.

Yours Sincerely,  
Sherlock Holmes (Vitaly Novikov)

## Appendix

### A glossary of terms

⇒ **Bonus set** is a set consisting of one tile of bonus group (“Flower”).

⇒ **“Chi”** is a word for declaring a Chow set.

⇒ **Chow** is a set consisting of tiles of the same suit with three consecutive numbers.

*Example:* 

⇒ **Concealed set** is a set of tiles all of which were taken from the wall.

⇒ **Deal** (hand) is everything that occurs between an initial distribution of tiles and either someone declaring “Hu” (winning) or all tiles having been picked from the wall (draw).

⇒ **Declaration** is a player’s statement (word) with the intention to declare mahjong or set.

⇒ **Fan (valuable combination)** is a feature in a complete hand related to certain factors or a combination thereof: hand structure, the presence of certain tiles in the hand, a method of getting of winning tile etc.

**Note:** Word “fan” is merely a number of scoring element in a table of valuable combinations. A complete table of fans in Mahjong Competition Rules is given in “Appendix” ([Table of Mahjong Competition Rules fans.](#)). Each fan is worth a certain number of points depending on its complexity.

**Note:** In the text of the book, the term “Subfan” is sometimes used, which means one of the possible implementation of the main fan, for example, fan #30 **Pure Shifted Chows**, step 1.

⇒ **“Flower”** is a special set consisting of one tile of a bonus group (types “Flowers” or “Seasons”). “Flower” is also the word for declaring a Flower set.

*Example:* 

⇒ **“Green Book”** is a set of rules for Mahjong Competition Rules. The first edition of the “Green Book” dates back to 1998 when the State Sports Committee of China officially recognized mahjong as a sport.

⇒ **Group** is a selection of tiles having some characteristics in common.

⇒ **Hand** is all tiles belonging to one of the players.

**Note:** “Hand” (in the narrow sense) is sometimes called “standing” tiles.

- ⇒ **Hand value** is the total value of all fans scored in complete hand.
- ⇒ **"Hu"** (from Chinese 和 or 胡 «hú») is a word for declaring mahjong (winning).
- ⇒ **Joint** is a group of relatively connected single-suited tiles.
- ⇒ **Knitted Straight** is a special straight consisting not of conventional Chows but of three different "knitted" sequences (1-4-7, 2-5-8, 3-6-9) in three different suits.



- ⇒ **Kong** is a special set consisting of **four** identical tiles. There are three types of Kongs: Concealed, Melded and Promoted. "Kong" is also the word for declaring a Kong set.



**Note:** Concealed Kong in the solutions is shown with the indication of the tile pattern, for



- ⇒ **Mahjong** is an intellectual board game of Asian origin for four people. The aim of the game is to collect a complete hand ("mahjong") with at least one valuable combination.

- ⇒ **Melded set** is a set which contains one tile taken from a discard.

- ⇒ **Move** is a set of actions of one player. Move always starts upon receiving a tile into the player's hand (from the wall or from a discard of another player) and ends by discarding a tile off the hand or declaring "Hu" (mahjong).

- ⇒ **Pair** is a set consisting of two identical tiles.



- ⇒ **Pattern** is a tile decorated in a unique manner. The number of patterns in a mahjong set varies depending on the rules (27 in Sichuan, 34-37 in Riichi, 42 in MCR, 43 in American etc).

**Note:** Tile "pattern" can alternatively be defined as "unique tile face".



- ⇒ **Pung** is a set consisting of three identical tiles. "Pung" is also the word for declaring a Pung set.



- ⇒ **Self-Drawn** is to win by taking a fresh tile from the wall.
- ⇒ **Set** is the structural element of a hand. There are different kinds of sets: melded (exposed) and concealed, fixed and free ones.
- ⇒ **“Standing” tiles** are player’s tiles which are not part of melded sets.
- ⇒ **Wait** is the state of the player’s hand when one tile is missing to complete a hand. The term “wait” is also used to refer to the totality of tiles that complete the hand.
- ⇒ **Wall** (“Great”) is mahjong tiles, built in the form of a square – each section being two tiles high.
- ⇒ **Wall** (player’s) is the part of the “Great” Wall located directly in front of the player.
- ⇒ **Wall break** is the imaginary plane between adjacent stacks (of two tiles high) of the Wall.  
**Note:** Wall break is indicated mechanically by separating two adjacent stacks of tiles from each other.
- ⇒ **Win by discard** is to win on a tile discarded by another player.  
**Note:** Win by discard also includes winning with Robbing the Kong.

Table of Mahjong Competition Rules fans (valuable combinations).

Points	Fan #	Fan Name	Fan Description
88	1	Big Four Winds	Pungs or Kongs of all four Wind Tiles.
	2	Big Three Dragons	Pungs or Kongs of all three Dragon Tiles.
	3	All Green	A hand in which the chows, pungs and pair(s) are made up solely of "green" tiles: 2 Bam, 3 Bam, 4 Bam, 6 Bam, 8 Bam, and Green Dragon.
	4	Nine Gates	Holding the 1, 1, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 9, 9 tiles in any one of the suits, creating the nine-sided wait of 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9. (Fully Concealed Hand may be combined if Self-Drawn).
	5	Four Kongs	Any hand that includes four kongs. They may be concealed or melded.
	6	Seven Shifted Pairs	A hand formed by seven pairs of the same suit, each shifted one up from the last. (Fully Concealed Hand may be combined if Self-Drawn).
	7	Thirteen Orphans	A hand created by singles of any 12 of the 1, 9, and Honor tiles, along with a pair of the 13th. (Fully Concealed Hand may be combined if Self-Drawn).
64	8	All Terminals	The pair(s), Pungs or Kongs are all made up of 1 or 9 Number Tiles, without Honor Tiles.
	9	Little Four Winds	A hand that includes three Pungs or Kongs of Wind Tiles, and a pair of the fourth Wind.
	10	Little Three Dragons	A hand that includes two Pungs or Kongs of the Dragon Tiles, and a pair of the third Dragon.
	11	All Honors	The pair(s), Pungs or Kongs are all made up of Honor Tiles.
	12	Four Concealed Pungs	A hand that includes four Concealed Pungs or Kongs (achieved without melding). (Fully Concealed Hand may be combined if Self-Drawn).
	13	Pure Terminal Chows	A hand consisting of two each of the lower and upper terminal Chows in one suit only, and a pair

			of fives in the same suit.
48	14	Quadruple Chow	Four chows of the same numerical sequence and in the same suit.
	15	Four Pure Shifted Pungs	Four Pungs (or Kongs) in the same suit, each shifted one up from the last.
32	16	Four Pure Shifted Chows	Four chows in one suit, each shifted up 1 or 2 numbers from the last, but not a combination of both.
	17	Three Kongs	A hand containing three Concealed Kongs. (Points for concealed sets may be added).
	18	All Terminals and Honors	The Pair(s), Pungs or Kongs are all made up of 1 or 9 Number Tiles and Honor Tiles.
24	19	Seven Pairs	A Hand formed by seven pairs. (Fully Concealed Hand may be combined if Self-Drawn).
	20	Greater Honors and Knitted Tiles	Formed by seven single honors and singles of suit tiles belonging to separate Knitted sequences (for example, 1-4-7 of Bamboo, 2-5-8 of Characters, and 3-6-9 of Dots). Fully Concealed Hand may be combined if Self-Drawn.
	21	All Even Pungs	A Hand formed with Pungs or Kongs of 2, 4, 6, and 8 tiles, with pair of the same.
	22	Full Flush	A Hand formed entirely of a single suit.
	23	Pure Triple Chow	Three chows of the same numerical sequence and in the same suit.
	24	Pure Shifted Pungs	Three Pungs or Kongs of the same suit, each shifted one up from the last.
	25	Upper Tiles	A Hand consisting entirely of 7, 8, and 9 tiles.
	26	Middle Tiles	A Hand consisting entirely of 4, 5, and 6 tiles.
	27	Lower Tiles	A Hand consisting entirely of 1, 2, and 3 tiles.
	28	Pure Straight	A Hand using one each of all the numbers 1 through 9 from any one suit, forming three

16			consecutive chows.
	29	<b>Three-Suited Terminal Chows</b>	A Hand consisting of 1-2-3 and 7-8-9 in one suit (Two Terminal Chows), 1-2-3 and 7-8-9 in another suit, and a pair of fives in the remaining suit.
	30	<b>Pure Shifted Chows</b>	Three Chows in one suit, each shifted either one or two numbers up from the last, but not a combination of both.
	31	<b>All Fives</b>	A Hand in which every set (chow, pung, kong, pair) includes the number "5".
	32	<b>Triple Pung</b>	Three Pungs (or Kongs) of the same number in each suit.
	33	<b>Three Concealed Pungs</b>	Three Concealed Pungs or Kongs (achieved without melding).
12	34	<b>Lesser Honors and Knitted Tiles</b>	Formed by single honors, and singles of suit tiles belonging to separate Knitted sequences (for example, 1-4-7 of Bamboo, 2-5-8 of Characters, and 3-6-9 of Dots - each of the 3 suits must belong to a different Knitted sequence, but not necessarily in this order). <b>Fully Concealed Hand</b> may be combined if Self-Drawn.
	35	<b>Knitted Straight</b>	A special Straight which is formed not with standard chows but with 3 different Knitted sequences, one in each of the 3 suits. For example, 1-4-7 of Dots, 2-5-8 of Characters, and 3-6-9 of Bamboo.
	36	<b>Upper Four</b>	A Hand created with suit tiles 6 through 9.
	37	<b>Lower Four</b>	A Hand created with suit tiles 1 through 4.
	38	<b>Big Three Winds</b>	A Hand that includes one pung (or kong) of each of the three winds.
8	39	<b>Mixed Straight</b>	A Straight (tiles 1 through 9) formed by chows from all three suits.
	40	<b>Reversible Tiles</b>	A Hand created entirely with those tiles which are vertically symmetrical, which means the carved designs look the same if you turn them upside-down. These tiles are the 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8 and 9 Dots, the 2, 4, 5, 6, 8 and 9 Bams and the White Dragon.

	41	Mixed Triple Chow	Three Chows of the same numerical sequence, one in each suit.
	42	Mixed Shifted Pungs	Three Pungs (or kongs), one in each suit, each shifted up one number from the last.
	43	Chicken Hand	A Hand that would otherwise earn 0 points (excluding the Flower Tiles).
	44	Last Tile Draw	Going out (making Mahjong) on a pick of the very last tile of the wall. (Points for Self-Drawn may not be combined.)
	45	Last Tile Claim	Going out (making Mahjong) off the discard which is the last tile in the game.
	46	Out with Replacement Tile	Going out (making mahjong) on the replacement tile drawn after achieving a kong (not on a Flower replacement). When a Flower Tile is taken after Konging, and upon winning on the Flower replacement, points for Self-Drawn may be added (but <b>Out With Replacement Tile</b> does not apply in this case).
	47	Robbing The Kong	Winning off the tile that another player adds to a melded pung (to create a Kong). (The points for <b>Last Tile</b> may not be combined.)
	48	Two Concealed Kongs	A Hand that includes two Concealed Kongs.
6	49	All Pungs	A Hand formed by four Pungs (or Kongs) and one pair.
	50	Half Flush	A Hand formed by tiles from any one of the three suits, in combination with Honor tiles.
	51	Mixed Shifted Chows	Three Chows, one in each suit, each shifted up one number from the last.
	52	All Types	A Hand of valid structure which is composed of 5 different type of tiles (Characters, Bamboo, Dots, Winds, and Dragons).
	53	Melded Hand	Every set in the hand (chow, pung, kong, and pair) must be completed with tiles discarded by other players. All sets must be exposed, and the player goes out on a single wait off another player.
	54	Two Dragons Pungs	Two Pungs (or kongs) of Dragon tiles.



	57B*	One Melded Kong and one Concealed Kong	A Hand that includes one Melded Kong and one Concealed Kong.
4	55	Outside Hand	A Hand that includes terminals and honors in each set, including the pair.
	56	Fully Concealed Hand	A Hand that a player completes without any melds, and wins by Self-Draw.
	57*	Two Melded Kongs	A Hand that includes two Melded Kongs. (One Melded Kong and one Concealed Kong are 6 points).
	57A*	Two Melded Kongs	A Hand that includes two Melded Kongs.
	58	Last Tile	Winning on a tile that is the last of its kind. (It must be clear to all players based on the discards and exposures.)
2	59	Dragon Pung	A Pung or Kong of Dragon Tiles.
	60	Prevalent Wind	A Pung or Kong of the Wind Tile corresponding to the current Prevalent Wind.
	61	Seat Wind	A Pung or Kong of the Wind Tile corresponding to the player's Seat position at the table. (Dealer is East; proceeding counter-clockwise from the Dealer, other players' seats are South, West, North.)
	62	Concealed Hand	Having a concealed Hand (no melded sets) and winning by discard.
	63	All Chows	A hand consisting of all chows, with no Honors.
	64	Tile Hog	Using all four of a single suit tile, without using them as a Kong.
	65	Double Pung	Two Pungs (or Kongs) of the same number in two different suits.
	66	Two Concealed Pungs	Two Pungs achieved without melding.
	67	Concealed Kong	Created when four identical tiles, all self-drawn, are declared as a Kong.
	68	All Simple	A Hand formed without Terminal or Honor Tiles.

1	69	Pure Double Chow	Two identical chows in the same suit.
	70	Mixed Double Chow	Two chows of the same numbers but in different suits.
	71	Short Straight	Two chows in the same suit that run consecutively after one another to make a six-tile straight.
	72	Two Terminal Chows	Chows of 1-2-3 and 7-8-9 in the same suit.
	73	Pung of Terminals or Honors	A Pung or Kong of Ones, Nines, or Winds. (A dragon pung scores 2 points.)
	74	Melded Kong	A Kong that was claimed from another player or promoted from a melded pung.
	75	One Voided Suit	A Hand that uses tiles from only two of the three suits (it lacks any tiles from one of the three suits).
	76	No Honors	A Hand formed entirely of suit tiles, without Winds or Dragons.
	77	Edge Wait	Waiting solely for a 3 to form a 1-2-3 chow, or solely for a 7 to form a 7-8-9 chow. Not valid if waiting for more than one tile. Not valid if the edge wait is combined with any other waits.
	78	Closed Wait	Waiting solely for a tile whose number is "inside" (in the middle) to form a chow. Not valid if waiting for more than one tile. Not valid if the closed wait is combined with other waits.
	79	Single Wait	Waiting solely for a tile to form a pair. Not valid if waiting for more than one tile (for example, holding 1-2-3-4 and waiting on the 1 and 4).
	80	Self-Drawn	Going out (making mahjong) with a fresh tile taken from the wall.
81	Flower Tiles	Each tile carved with Chinese word of Spring (or Summer, Autumn, Winter, Plum, Orchid, Bamboo, Chrysanthemum) will award you one point when you succeed in Hu. Flower replacement to be Hu, the point of <b>Self-Drawn</b> can add.	

**Note:** Due to the existence of two versions of fan #57 **Two Melded Kongs** with different fan value it has been artificially divided into fan #57A **Two Melded Kongs** and #57B **One Melded Kong and one Concealed Kong**.

## About an author



Vitaly Novikov is a mahjong researcher and enthusiast; he is also Moscow champion in MCR and SBR mahjong, multiple prize winner of the MCR Russian Open, and the leader of mahjong clubs in Moscow. He is also a consultant for the MahjongSoft website.

In 2017, his first mahjong book "MCR Beginner's Guide" was published in Russia. His second book "Sherlock Holmes and Mahjong" was published in 2018. In 2019 he published his third book "Sichuan Mahjong? It's that simple!".

In 2009 Vitaly Novikov created the first of a kind mahjong mystery which later became a series. Written for almost a decade, sixty of such mysteries are presented in this book. Some of them were used in three international Mahjong Mysteries Contests "Sherlock Holmes and Mahjong" in 2013-2017 held in the independent Internet newspaper "Mahjong News". After 4 years, in 2021 the 4th contest took place at mahjong platform MahjongSoft. It brought together 40 contestants from 10 countries.

As a sign of valuable contribution to the development of "Mahjong News", Vitaly Novikov was granted the "Mahjong News Star Reporter 2016" award.



This book is recommended by the Mahjong International League and the Russian Mahjong Federation as supplementary learning material for studying MCR mahjong.



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