



EMA Riichi Referee Seminar

Farnham, Surrey, United Kingdom

6 October 2016



Agenda

- Tentative agenda, breaks included
 - 10:00 – 10:15 Introduction
 - 10:15 – 10:45 Referee role
 - 10:45 – 11:15 Rules motivation
 - 11:15 – 12:15 Rules
 - 12:15 – 13:00 Lunch
 - 13:00 – 14:00 Etiquette
 - 14:00 – 14:30 Behaviour
 - 14:30 – 14:45 Questions
 - 14:45 – 15:30 Test (and feedback)
 - 15:30 – 16:00 Walk through of answers



Introduction

- Short introduction of the trainers
 - Tina
 - Morten
 - Henrik
- Short introduction of the participants
 - Name
 - Country
 - Experience as referees



Objectives of this seminar

- Purpose
 - To certify EMA riichi referees
 - In the longer term to create a common European standard for refereeing at official EMA certified competitions
 - Forum for discussions with other referees
- Content
 - The content is split into 3 major parts:
 - Rules and regulations
 - Behaviour
 - Certification
 - The content is focused on riichi (but there is another seminar for MCR)



Expectations

- The participants are expected to show interest for
 - Understanding and exercising the rules and fair play
 - Being a referee and help players with clarifications and guidance
 - Making sure EMA certified tournaments are refereed in a proper and orderly manner
- Preparation – did you read?
 - EMA riichi rules, 2016 edition
- The material can be found from:
http://mahjong-europe.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=51&Itemid=136





Referee Role



Referee role overview

- Expected from players
- Functional roles
- Equipment
- Scoring
- Disagreement between referees
- Referees and organisers
- How to handle emergencies
- Language challenges



Expected from players

- The basic principles of the tournaments are politeness and respect towards each other
- The basis for the refereeing is that players are
 - Friendly
 - Fair players
 - Honest
 - Competitive
 - Regarding referees as helpers
 - Having the mindset that they should help each other
- If a player acts very annoyed or aggressive, it is more likely a problem with the player than with you (though tempers may rise in the heat of the fight)



Functional roles 1 / 7

Overview

- Head referee
 - Responsible for coordinating the team of referees at larger tournaments, typically also functions as a referee
- Referee
 - The single referee of a small tournament, or one of several at a larger tournament
- Arbitrator
 - Makes the final decision at larger tournaments if a referee's decision is appealed
- Each functional role is described in more details in the following slides



Functional roles 2/7

Head referee

- Responsible for coordinating the preparations of the referee team (this may vary a lot)
- Responsible for coordinating consistency in the rulings
- Final authority if there are no arbitrators
- Main contact to the tournament organizers
- Responsible for collecting feedback to EMA and the rules committee



Functional roles 3/7

Referee

- Responsible for refereeing ideally no more than 5-8 tables
- Players must call referees immediately in case of problems, as the referee cannot make a decision about an incident that happened earlier
- Referee decisions should delay the game as little as possible
- If a player complains, the referee can tell the player to “shut up and play” (if sure) or contact other referees (if in doubt)
- Should note players with problematic behaviour and share with the other referees
- Responsible for giving feedback to EMA and the rules committee when single referee
 - Players can give feedback through the EMA Observer (though it will not change any decisions from the tournament)



Functional roles 4/7

Arbitration committee

- Arbitration committee regulations specified for WMC 2007
 1. Organization Committee of the First Mahjong Culture Exchange Congress and World Mahjong Championship (Class A competition) shall establish Arbitration Committee (3-5 persons), examined and approved by Secretariat of World Mahjong Organization.
 2. Arbitration Committee should consist of Mahjong authoritative persons with representative and aptitude, director of committee will appointed by organizing committee.
 3. Arbitration Committee will operate under article 12 and 13 of <Mahjong Competition Rules>.
 4. Members of Arbitration Committee shall observe the competition not interfere umpires' works.
 5. A special department will appointed if dispute is related with no-contest matters.
 6. Arbitration Committee should resolve appeals democratically and timely.
- Note especially item 4
- Please note that no arbitration rules have been agreed for riichi – the ones shown here and on the next slides will work until something is specified



Functional roles 5/7

Arbitrator

- Arbitrators play a background role
- They cannot interfere with the referees' decisions, rather they must wait for a referee to come and present a problem
- An arbitrator should expect hers/his decisions to create a precedent
- Arbitrators should survey the referees and make sure that the refereeing is consistent, e.g. by talking to the referees in the breaks
- In special cases it may be possible to help a player if there was a wrong decision, but often the moment will have passed
- The arbitration may take place in a committee of arbitrators, ideally from several countries
- Some members of the arbitration committee may be players in the tournament (at this time)



Functional roles 6/7

Arbitration case: Paris

- In Paris MCR 2009 one player left before the last session (to catch the flight home)
- There was no arbitration committee, so an ad-hoc committee was assembled for discussions
- A decision was made for then and the future
- The player was not disqualified but a substitute player was used – so you cannot leave a tournament to save your ranking
- Issues ruled by an arbitration committee may lead to discussions in EMA bodies and subsequently changing of rules



Functional roles 7/7

Arbitration lifecycle

- Example of how a discussion could develop
 1. A player calls for a referee
 2. The referee talks to the players and makes a decision
 3. The player is unhappy about the decision and complains to the referee
 4. The referee reconsiders (and maybe checks the rules), but in the end tells the player that the decision is final
 5. If the player is still unhappy about the decision, the player can make a formal written complaint to the arbitration committee within 30 min of the end of the session (with a 200\$ complaint fee in cash, or equivalent in Euro or local currency – to make sure to get only relevant complaints)
- The referee could also decide in item 4 to go and talk to an arbitrator, but this is not something a player can request, and it is considered an informal instance



Equipment

- What a referee should keep at hand
 - Rules
 - Pen and paper
 - Calculator (referees are often called to fix adding mistakes)
 - Watch
 - Sign, T-shirt, cap or something like this clearly stating “Referee”



Scoring

- The referee's responsibility in relation to scoring
 - The referee should always point out if there is a calculation mistake on the scoring sheet (in a break in the play)
 - The referee should always interfere if a player seems to be obstructing the game or cheating
- The basic rule in riichi is that players help each other scoring
- A referee who witnesses incorrect scoring should interfere
- It is okay to score in Japanese, but the other players (or the referee) can ask to get it repeated in English



Disagreement amongst referees

- If there are more than one referee, there must always be a head referee to make the final decision (or a head arbitrator)
- There may still be a chance that referees disagree, but a decision must be made, so the game can continue
- The referees should then settle the issue away from the players, and involve the head referee and possible arbitrators
- Even if the original decision is changed, it will not always be possible to change at the table



Referees and organisers

- A referee must always know whom to contact from the organising team
- It must be clear who is responsible for what, e.g. checking table and tiles in the morning
- Organisers provide substitutes, and referees should know how to get hold of them if suddenly needed
 - Substitutes will always score $-15,000$ points and $-15,000$ uma, i.e. a total of $-30,000$ points for that session
 - If they participate from the start of a session (also after being inserted because of a $+10$ min delay), they get their place in the way that they can prevent another player from scoring e.g. $15,000$ uma and there can be two players with $-15,000$ uma
 - If they are inserted in the middle of a session, the other players will score $-5,000/5,000/15,000$ uma
- The EMA Observer can bring feedback to the organisers about irregularities, e.g. a substitute procedure not working



Language challenges

- EMA referees are expected to speak and understand English fairly well
- The referee must make sure that everyone at a table understand hers/his decisions – this may involve using more languages, or translations by other players at the table
- There may be situations where a player and the referee cannot speak the same language (should be known by the organisers in advance)



How to handle emergencies

- Referees may encounter a variety of problems
 - Missing or discolored tiles
 - Table break down
 - Timer break down
 - Fire alarm going off
 - Player illness
 - Player threatening to leave because of a referee decision
- Be prepared! And talk to the other referees and organisers

Know e.g. where

- spare tiles are located
- to find substitutes
- there are escape routes





Rules Motivation



Rules motivation overview

- Motivation vs. actual rules
- Penalty types
- Motivation for penalties
- Taking tiles
- Invalid hands
- Revealing info
- Obstructive play
- Cheating



Motivation vs. actual rules

- Please note the abstraction between this chapter and the next
 - As we cannot describe every possible issue, a larger number of possible problems are not covered by the rules
 - Thus, referees must know the motivation for the penalties to be able to make proper decisions during a tournament
- Motivation – this chapter – is about “Why”
 - The need for rules and the different types of penalties
 - In many cases a referee will have to make a ruling based on the judgement of a given situation
 - It is important to learn what level to use from the increasing scale of penalties 1) requests, 2) dead hand and 3) severe penalties
- Rules – next chapter – are about “How”
 - Here the actual or “strict” rules are explained
 - Focused on selected aspects that the referees should know well



Penalty types

- Requests (i.e. not a penalty)
 - There are no formal warnings in riichi, but a referee can request that a player does something right or stops doing something wrong
 - Players should be told when they do something wrong that they should do right in the future (in some cases it could be a couple of warnings before they are penalized for obstruction)
- Dead Hand
 - Player cannot win the current hand
 - Player cannot chow, pung or kong during the current hand
- Point penalties
 - Chombo is a penalty of 20,000 points deducted after uma (tournaments), or mangan paid to the other players (social play)
 - Other point penalties are simply noted and deducted after uma
 - Being late is penalized with 1,000 points per minute up to 10 min, further delay means a player is substituted
 - Deliberate obstructive behaviour is penalized with 8,000 or 12,000 points
 - Severe or repeated cases are penalized with 12,000 to 48,000 points
- Disqualification



Motivation for penalties

- Rules and regulations are violated
 - Accidentally, the player is nervous, clumsy
 - Unknowingly, the player is inexperienced
 - Deliberately, the player tries to gain advantage
- Irregularities are disturbing
 - Breaks flow of play
 - Breaks concentration
- The more disturbing to the game, the harder the punishment; if the hand cannot continue, it must be punished harder than if the hand can continue
- Deliberate disturbances are punished hard
- We expect players to help each other and aspire to play fair!



Taking tiles

- Erroneous calls are disturbing
 - Erroneous ron/tsumo/mahjong call most disturbing
- Set claimed in wrong way is disturbing
 - Should be: 1 Call, 2 Reveal, 3 Claim
 - Discard before or after claiming the tile
- Drawing tiles from wrong place can be used for a player's advantage
 - Mainly happens by accident and is correctable
- Taking the winning tile
 - The winning tile should be left in the opponent's discard (this is in contrast to MCR)



Invalid hands

- A hand with an open false set is dead
 - With a false set a player cannot be allowed to win
- Swap-calling
 - Dead hand after the swap tile has been discarded
- Riichi with open set(s)
 - Dead hand as the player has disclosed to be ready
- Calling ron or tsumo with invalid hand
 - Dead hand or chombo
- Calling chow, pung, kong, ron or tsumo with a declared dead hand
 - Chombo



Revealing info

- Revealing tiles
 - Players can gain advantage
 - Most often revealing of tiles happen by accident
 - Too many tiles shown from a wall or a hand for the game to continue fairly (referee's judgement) results in a chombo penalty
 - In severe cases the referee can penalize for obstruction
- Passing information
 - Whether true or false, passing info can give advantage or disadvantage to players
 - A penalty of dead hand should be decided depending on the severity of the offense in the situation
- Destroying wall or discard floor before scoring is done
 - It is always important that the dora tile(s) can be identified
 - When a player wins after riichi, the ura dora tile(s) must be easily identified
 - Typically, the hand will end if something has gone wrong (a player will get a chombo), but the walls and discards should not be disturbed until a score is agreed upon



Obstructive play

- It is expected that it is quite rarely that someone must be penalized for obstructive behaviour – normally issues can be handled by requests
- Examples of obstruction could be
 - Serious disturbance, to the point where play can't continue, e.g. too many tiles revealed
 - Deliberate obstruction, like stalling for time
 - Severe passing information, e.g. precise info about player strategy
 - Failing to comply to repeated requests from the referee
- Penalty is at the referees discretion (8,000-12,000 points increasing to 48,000 points), deducted after uma
- Several times of obstructive behaviour results in immediate disqualification



Cheating

- A player caught cheating is immediately disqualified
- Cheating undermines the tournament
- Serious accusation; evidence must be clear





Rules



Rules overview

- Common irregularities
- Some selected rules
- Changing calls
- Scoring
- Penalties
- Re-deals and counters
- When kong is not allowed after riichi declaration
- Furiten
- Riichi penalties overview

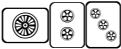



Common irregularities

- Too few or too many tiles
 - Cannot be corrected and results in a dead hand
- Erroneous call of chow/pung/kong
 - Request player to be more careful in the future
- Erroneous call of ron/tsumo/mahjong
 - Chombo if the hand is shown (otherwise dead hand)
- Drawing a tile from a wrong place in the wall
 - Correctable until the tile is placed in the hand
 - If the tile is placed in the hand, the game just continues (even if it is from the dead wall)
 - Request player to be more careful in the future



Some selected rules

- Some rules are quite specific for EMA, and they are thus emphasized here (see also Selected scoring principles)
- There are no red fives, no abortive draws and no Nagashi Mangan
- The final east player cannot end the game by winning her hand like in Japan; the game will go on as long as east wins a hand or declares herself tenpai in an exhaustive draw
- Swap-calling not allowed: It is not allowed to pon or chow a tile and discard the same tile immediately afterwards (or a tile at the other end of a chow, e.g. chow  and discard )
- More than one player can win at the same time, e.g. three players simultaneously going out on the same discard will not result in an abortive game, rather the discarder will have to pay all three winners
- Timing rules are described under etiquette



Changing calls

- Calls should not be changed, so the first call is the valid one
- It is, however, accepted to change calls if the correction is very quick
- But a wrong of call ron, tsumo or mahjong is quite disturbing
- So a call of "pung, no ron" is accepted, and player will get the ron
- But a call of "ron, no pung" is a claim for ron and cannot be changed to pung
- If the player cannot make the ron it will result in a dead hand if no tiles or the two tiles for pung are revealed
- If more tiles are revealed the player will get a chombo



Scoring 1 / 6

Selected scoring principles

- All players at the table are responsible for ensuring that every winning hand is scored correctly and to the maximum points
- Two or three players can win at the same time, in which case the feeder settles the payment one at a time (paying any counters to all winners)
 - If there are any riichi sticks not won by the player who declared riichi, they are claimed by the first winning player after the discarder (to his right)
- Edge, closed or pair wait may be claimed even if the hand is waiting for other tiles, e.g. with waiting combinations (on or) or (on)
 - Note that points for wait cannot be claimed in cases where the player himself has exhausted some of the tiles, e.g. is not edge wait with
- If a player uses the next-to-last tile to make a kong and make tsumo on the last tile, he will get only one yaku as last tile does not combine with after a kong
- Yaku can only be added up to 11 (Sanbaiman)
- Yakuman do not add up, so one yakuman is maximum
- 4-30 is not rounded to mangan payment (as in some rules)



Scoring 2/6

How to calculate

- The algorithm shown below is for non-limit hands, i.e. for scores below mangan
- The base value of the hand, bv , is calculated as follows with x fan and y minipoints (already rounded up to whole tens)

$$bv = y * 2^{(x+2)}$$
- This value rounded up to next hundred is the base value for a non-east player; the base value for east is twice bv rounded up to next hundred (east pays or gets double)
- In case of tsumo, the non-east players pay bv rounded up to next hundred and east pays (or gets) double
- In the case of feed, the feeding player must pay four times bv rounded up to next hundred, or three times the doubled bv rounded up to next hundred if the winner is east
- Note that counters and riichi bets must be added to the score after rounding if relevant



Scoring 3/6

Calculation example

- This is how to calculate a hand of 2 fan and 90 minipoints

$$bv = y * 2^{(x+2)} = 90 * 2^{(2+2)} = 90 * 16 = 1,440$$

- East tsumo: East will get twice bv (2,880) from each, i.e. 2,900 each or 8,700 all in all
- East ron: One player will pay six times bv (8,640), i.e. 8,700
- Non-east tsumo: East pays twice bv (2,880) and the others pay bv (1,440), i.e. 2,900 and two times 1,500 or 5,900 all in all
- Non-east ron: Feeder pays four times bv (5,760), i.e. 5,800
- Note that counters and riichi bets must be added to the score after rounding if relevant



Scoring 4/6

Special feed context

- There are a few situations where an action is considered so silly that the offending player must pay more if that hand is won
- These situations are (sets can be pung or kong)
 - When one player has two visible sets in dragon, and the offending player discards the third dragon and it is claimed
 - When one player has three visible sets in winds, and the offending player discards the fourth wind and it is claimed
- In these cases, the offending player must pay all in case of tsumo and half in case of feed (by someone else than himself), and the other players pay that amount less
- Please note that the above is also true if a player has declared riichi and discards offending tiles for this reason (in this case the silly thing was to declare riichi)



Scoring 5/6

Last hand of the session

- Some things must be noted when the players approach the last couple of hands of the session
- Either the game ends when the players have completed a full east and south round
- Or in the case where the gong sounds the current hand must be finished and one more played
- This is done to ensure that everyone has a chance to adapt their play to the situation and try to gain one or more positions, furthermore, it ensures that someone cannot gain an advantage by stalling the game
- In both cases, the following applies to any counters or riichi stick at the end
 - The counters are simply ignored
 - Any remaining riichi sticks from the last hand or earlier hands are given to the player with most points (or shared if more players have the same amount of most points)



Scoring 6/6

Uma – the winner's bonus

- The uma is a mechanism designed to reward the players who do best at the table (just like the table points in MCR) – and thus to reward the players who keep an eye on the scores and try to gain a position in the end game
- It is important that it actually makes a difference in the score to make people fight for their position
- Since the EMA riichi include ura dora but not red fives, the uma has to have a value comparable to the point scores before uma
- For these reasons EMA has decided on an uma of –15,000/–5,000/5,000/15,000
- In the case of ties the uma from the two positions is summed and split, e.g. if the two first positions are tied, each player will get an uma of 10,000



Penalties 1 / 3

Destroying wall

- Let's say a player A has declared riichi and wins her hand
- She starts counting her yaku, leaving the dora and ura dora for last
- Meanwhile, player B starts destroying the wall, also the dead wall
- When player A gets to the dora and ura dora, they cannot be found anymore, so she calls the referee – what would you do?
- You should check if the players remember the dora marker – if a majority can agree on the marker it will be considered the dora marker
- Otherwise it may have to be chosen randomly – but there must be one
- The ura dora should be chosen randomly, preferably from the tiles than constituted the dead wall
- Player B gets a point penalty of 8,000 points (after uma)



Penalties 2/3

Mobile phones

- A phone ringing can be very disturbing to other players and texting can be used to cheat, so both should be strongly discouraged
- The referee must decide how much disturbance it creates and decided on an appropriate penalty if any (deducted after uma)
- If a player's phone starts ringing during a session, it could result in a point penalty of 8,000 points (and the player should be told to turn off the phone)
 - If the phone rings again, the point penalty should be 16,000 (and the phone should be confiscated for that session)
- If a phone rings and a player starts talking during a session, the point penalty should start at 16,000 points (confiscate the phone)
- If a player texts during a sessions the point penalty should be 12,000 point
 - If the player does it again there should be a point penalty of 24,000 points (confiscate the phone)



Penalties 3/3

Claiming a false set




- It can happen that someone claims a false set, e.g. chows for or pungs for
- If the problem is corrected before discard there are no penalties, and shown tiles are just put back on the hand
- This is the case both when the player notices the mistake himself and when other points it out
- In principle a player could call a false pon to prevent a valid chi – this must of course not be allowed
- If the player has discarded and thus have an open, invalid set, the hand is dead and that player cannot win
- But the hand has not been declared dead by the players or a referee, and this means that there is no chombo penalty for claiming more sets (but that should of course be prevented)
- The hand is declared dead if all four players at the table agree that it is dead, or if a referee has declared it dead



Dealer rotation 1/5

Tenpai

- In case of exhaustive draw, players may declare themselves tenpai, i.e. show if they were ready, to get the points from being tenpai
- It is not mandatory to reveal this information, but the hand must be shown by anyone claiming to be tenpai – and it must be shown by anyone who has declared riichi
- It is possible for a player to be tenpai even if that player is furiten, needs a tile where all four have been discarded or used by others, or if there is no obvious yaku on the hand
- It is not possible to be tenpai if the player has a dead hand, or if the player has all four of a tile in sets and is only waiting for an imaginary fifth tile, e.g.

- (waiting for ) or
- (waiting for the pair on  or )



Dealer rotation 2/5

Repeated deals

- A player retains the deal (aka east stays) in the following cases
 - East wins the hand (also if there are other winners)
 - East is ready in an exhaustive draw
 - The hand ends in chombo
- The deal is passed on in the following cases
 - The hand is won but not by east
 - East is not ready in an exhaustive draw



Dealer rotation 3/5

Counters

- A counter is added in the following cases
 - East wins the hand (also if there are other winners), east is ready in an exhaustive draw, east is not ready in an exhaustive draw (the counters are passed on to the next east)
- Counters are not added in the following cases
 - The hand is won but not by east, the hand is aborted because of chombo
- The counters are removed when someone other than east wins a hand (and east is not one of more winners)
- The value represented by the counters (number of counters times 300 points) must be paid to everyone winning the hand, or split on three in the case of tsumo
- If the game stops – either by time or by last hand in south round – the counters are just ignored



Dealer rotation 4/5

Chombo

- If a win happens at the same time as a chombo, the chombo is voided
- A chombo does not count as a played hand
- Players who have declared riichi are not obliged to show their hands – and they get their riichi stick back
- There are five possibilities of chombo
 1. Invalidly declaring a win (including making ron when furiten)
 2. Declaring riichi on a hand that is not waiting (determined only if the player wins or there is an exhaustive draw)
Note: If the hand is only considered noten because it was declared a dead hand after the riichi declaration, it is not considered a chombo, and only the noten penalty is paid
 3. Making an invalid concealed kong after having declared riichi (determined only if the player wins or there is an exhaustive draw)
 4. Claiming a tile after the hand is declared a dead hand
 5. Play cannot continue due to a mistake of a player, e.g. exposing too many tiles for the game to continue fairly



Dealer rotation 5/5

Summary table

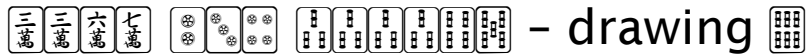
Event	Deal pass?	Add counter?	Counter reset?
East player wins the hand (there may be other winners)	No	Yes	No
Non-east player wins the hand	Yes	No	Yes
Exhaustive draw, east is tenpai	No	Yes	No
Exhaustive draw, east is not tenpai	Yes	Yes	No
Chombo	No	No	No



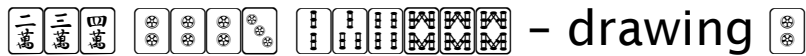
When kong is not allowed after riichi declaration 2/2

- But he is not allowed to make a kong in the following 4 cases

1. No kong when drawing non-kong tile, e.g.



2. No kong when changing waits, e.g.



Waits would be changed from , and to

3. No kong when changing waiting structures, e.g.



Here both (closed wait) and (edge wait) are possible (when no kong)

4. No kong when changing combination types, e.g.



Here a kong would change the dots from chows to pungs (and that is not allowed – even if pungs are preferred)



Furiten 1/2

Furiten

- A player cannot win her hand on discard if she has discarded a tile she could use for completing the hand (but she can still make tsumo); the hand is still furiten if there is no yaku with the discarded tile, but there is with some other tile
- The penalty would be a chombo
- The player may change the hand to avoid being furiten (if she has not declared riichi), but it can take some time
- Please note it can be quite complicated to spot all waiting tiles, see some examples below

- Furiten if  or  has been discarded



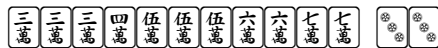
- Furiten if ,  or  has been discarded



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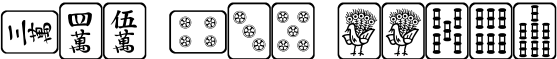


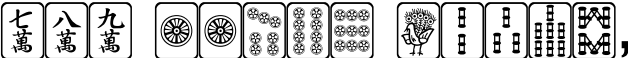




- Furiten if ,  or  has been discarded



Furiten 2/2

Temporary furiten

- If someone cannot or will not say ron to a discarded tile that completes the hand, he is furiten until he has made a call or picked a tile
- A player has this hand , so he needs the dragon pung to have a yaku; if someone discards  and the player immediately afterwards discards , he cannot say ron to that dragon (but he can pung it)
- A player has this hand , and she wants to get it from a specific player to overtake that person; if someone discards , and the relevant player discards  immediately after she cannot say ron to that discard



Riichi penalties overview

No penalty ¹	Dead hand	Chombo ²	Point penalties ³ Severe penalties
Exposing few tiles from wall, dead wall or any hand	Invalid riichi declaration (open hand, or failing to call "riichi" or rotate the discard)	Exposing a problematic amount of tiles from wall, dead wall or any hand	Late by up to 10 minutes: 1,000 points penalty per minute
Claiming a false set (before discard the problem can be fixed)	Failing to take a claimed tile before the next two players have discarded	Making an invalid concealed kong after having declared riichi ⁴	Late by more than 10 min: substitution, -15,000 points and -15,000 uma
Taking or showing a tile from the dead wall (if not required by kong)	Too few or too many tiles on the hand	Declaring riichi on a hand that is not ready ⁴	Obstructive play, e.g. stalling for time or severe cases of revealing tiles or information
Prematurely destroying the wall or discard floor (if it does not affect scoring)	Erroneous ron/tsumo call (tiles not shown)	Erroneous ron/tsumo call (tiles shown, see rules section 5.1.2)	Severe disturbance such as cheating or repeated obstruction results in immediate disqualification
Erroneous chow/pung/kong call	Claiming a false set (after discard)	Claiming a tile with a declared dead hand	
Passing information (minor)	Passing information (serious)		
Taking a tile from a wrong place in the wall	Swap-calling		

1 Repeated cases or refusal to follow requests may lead to obstruction penalty

2 A penalty of 20,000 points deducted after uma (tournaments), or mangan paid to other players (social play)

3 Unspecified point penalty is at the referees discretion: 8,000-12,000 points increasing to 48,000 points (after uma)

4 Only determined in case the player wins or there is an exhaustive draw (no chombo if declared dead after riichi)





Etiquette



Etiquette overview

- General guidelines
- Conferring with players
- Passing information
- Handling the tiles
- Counting points
- Timing rules
- Leaving the table
- Substitutes
- Cultural differences



General guidelines

- Dead hand
 - Should only be given for irrecoverable offences that may have caused someone to benefit in some way, and for the earlier specified cases
- Point penalties
 - Usually given as additional penalty to a dead hand or in case a dead hand doesn't make sense (such as when a hand is already dead or over)



Conferring with players 1 / 2

Understand what happened

- Talk and listen to the entire table before making your decision
- Do not let yourself be bullied by one player's opinion
- It is important that all the players understand what is going on, and that they don't feel overruled



Conferring with players 2/2

Quarrelsome players

- Players should not argue with the referee; if anyone does they should be requested to stop, and other referees should be advised
- In case of repeated or severe misbehaviour disqualification is in order
- Do not be intimidated – the grudge is rarely with the referee
- It is important that the players do not call the referee for every little thing even if they are right; the referee should request anyone doing this to handle the issue with the other players



Passing information

- Revealing information about a player's hand or strategy, e.g. about what he might be waiting for, is often severe enough to cause a dead hand and perhaps even also a point penalty
 - First time, it should be pointed out by the other players that the behaviour is unacceptable, but repeated cases should be punished
- Revealing info when trying to be helpful is considered proper behaviour and sportsmanship (this is different from MCR)
 - This could be e.g. preventing people from drawing from the wrong end of the wall, reminding them to pick a replacement tile after a kong, or stopping them claiming an invalid set
 - It is also acceptable to point out if a player has a dead hand, e.g. by having too few or too many tiles
- Voluntary body language such as pointing or gesturing is considered passing info on a par with speaking
- Body language such a flinching when throwing a dangerous tile is common and should only be punished in severe cases



Handling the tiles 1 / 6

Building the wall

- Players should take care to mix the tiles face down
- The tiles must be thoroughly mixed before building the walls
- The dice must only be thrown after the wall is build (and the start gong has sounded)



Handling the tiles 2/6

Discards and claiming tiles

- Discards should be placed in rows of six
- The discarder must take care that the discarded tile is visible for all the other players at the same time
- Claimed tiles should be turned to indicate who they are claimed from
- Declared sets should be clearly visible, and normally placed right of the player's hand
- There are no penalties for not doing this unless the offence is repeated
- If a player discards before taking a claimed tile, he must take the tile before the next two players have made their discards
 - Failure to do so results in a dead hand



Handling the tiles 3/6

Exposing tiles

- Exposing a few tiles is not penalized – even from the dead wall – exposed tiles are placed back in the wall or hand
- Exposing tiles during the deal is not penalized, if the situation is problematic for the play there is a re-deal (no penalties)
- If too many tiles are exposed during the game, play cannot continue; this is a judgment that depends on the circumstances and the progression of the game
 - As a rule of thumb, play cannot continue if a large fraction of the wall is destroyed or revealed from an opponent's hand (examples on next slide)
 - If the game cannot continue, the offending player receives a chombo penalty
 - If the mistake happened due to no mistake on a player's part, there is a re-deal (like chombo, but without any point penalty)
- After the hand ends, players should not expose tiles from the wall or the dead wall
- Exposing tiles on purpose in severe or repeated cases is obstruction



Handling the tiles 4/6

Exposing tiles – examples

- Early in the game, a player pushes the wall by mistake and exposes 5 tiles – can the game fairly continue?
 - Yes, the wall is still long, so 5 tiles is not too many
- Late in the game, a player pushes the wall by mistake and exposes 5 tiles – can the game fairly continue?
 - No, this time too much information is revealed by exposing the 5 tiles
- A player has a concealed hand, and an opponent exposes 1-2 tiles by mistake – can the game fairly continue?
 - Yes, this is a minor fraction of the players hand, but more tiles would cause a chombo
- A player has 3 open sets, and an opponent exposes 1 tile by mistake – can the game fairly continue?
 - No, one tile will disclose too much about the player's strategy



Handling the tiles 5/6

Playing with tiles

- People should not play with their tiles or anything else for that matter
- Tiles should be kept in a straight line in front of you (except when picking new tile)
- Players should not disturb the discards during scoring, as it is important that e.g. furiten can be seen
- Players not complying with this should be requested to do so, and ultimately be penalized for obstruction if they refuse



Handling the tiles 6/6

Turning wrong dora marker

- It happens now and then that a player turns the wrong tile in the dead wall as dora marker during the deal
- If this happens after the players have seen (most of) their hands, a re-deal would be inappropriate (as this could then be used to cheat)
- If the players decide to swap the turned tile with the intended dora marker they can do this, but if they call the referee the answer must be to put the shown tile back and turn the proper dora marker
- If the players have not seen their hands, they can again swap tiles in the dead wall if they wish, but if they call a referee the answer must always be to re-shuffle and re-deal
- Turning the wrong dora tile is subject to penalty if repeated several times



Counting points 1 / 2

Scoring the hand

- A winning player should count the score of his hand himself, but if anything is not scored to the maximum the other players must help
- If players are in doubt how to score a hand, they can also ask help from a referee (but this should happen rarely)
- If a player is taking a long time to score the hand, the other players should help to avoid delay
- When a player is scoring the other players should pay attention and explicitly not discuss their own hand or look at the remaining tiles in the wall



Counting points 2/2

Using sticks

- Players should put the sticks on the table where all players can see them during the exchange
- Players are obliged to count up their sticks when asked to by opponents – and this should be done generally when playing the last two dealers in the south round (at the start of the hands)
- It is appropriate to write down the scores on a piece of paper for easy reference and checksum
- The game continues if a player's score goes below zero; the player borrows score sticks from an opponent or the referee



Timing rules

- The most recent discard can be claimed by any player for a pung or kong until the next player draws
- The most recent discard can be claimed for a win by any player until the next player discards, except in case of tsumo
- Players are expected to play at a reasonable pace, but there are no specific time limits – this means that if a player takes a long time to say chi, another player can still say pon (immediately after)
- A player drawing tiles too fast for the other players to have time to call, or repeatedly taking an overly long time, can be penalized for obstruction at the referee's discretion
- If a player is drawing a tile too fast for the other players to call, the call is allowed and the drawn tile is replaced in the wall
- It is impossible to time every move, so if a majority of players at the table agrees it was too late, it was
- A player cannot ask other players to wait



Leaving the table

- The sessions (hanchan) are so short that players are not allowed to leave the table during a session
 - Of course they can pick up a bottle of water or such during a shuffle, but they should ask the other players first
- Players who leave the table without the permission of all other players at the table, should be requested to stay and most likely be penalized for obstruction unless they have a very good reason



Substitutes

- If all players are not at the table when the session begins, the missing players should be located quickly
- Players who have not arrived at the tournament in a timely manner should be replaced by substitutes
- If there are not enough substitutes to fill a table, the organizers should be contacted and advised to remove a table from the tournament



Cultural differences

- Be aware of cultural differences
- Some players have different ways of doing things that are not in direct conflict with the rules but may still offend or confuse other players





Behaviour



Referee behaviour overview

- Referee styles
 - During sessions
 - When to approach a table
 - How to act at the table
 - Sharing observations
- } Usually where the challenges are



Referee styles

- There are different referee styles
 - Omnipresent: sees all (maybe) and interfere a lot
 - Invisible: acts only when called upon, or when observing severe irregularities
- In EMA we expect self arbitration as much as possible from the players, and that they do not call the referee for petty mistakes
- Thus, we lean towards the invisible referee, but obstruction or cheating cannot pass unpunished



During sessions

- Referees should spread their attention over all the tables in their responsibility area
- More time can be used at one table, e.g. if there are only inexperienced players
- A referee should take care not to act in a way that give hints about hands
- Polite interference is needed if spectators are making too much noise, disturbance or give hints through their behaviour
- Not every situation that can arise can be covered by the rules, so referees are expected to apply common sense



When to approach a table

- Unnecessary interruptions should be avoided, but there are four typical situations when a referee should approach a table
 - If called by one or more of the players
 - If the players are noticeably arguing
 - If there seems to be some confusion
 - If obstruction or cheating is observed
- Mistakes on the scoring sheet should be handled in the breaks between hands



How to act at the table

- At the table, the referee must first understand the problem by listening to all players at the table (this may involve translation)
- The referee should listen to all, and ask questions so she/he knows if everyone agrees what happened
- When the ruling is made, everyone must understand it (again, translation may be required)
- If a player disagrees there should not be a debate; appeals are handled after the session
- In rare events where the referee feels unable to solve the problem, the head referee may be called



Sharing observations

- Referees should share observations with each other
- If there has been special situations, maybe the arbitrators should be involved
- Subjects that should be shared in the breaks
 - New rulings (i.e. something that is not well defined in rules or regulations)
 - Rulings where a referee has had doubts
 - Player behaviour may be shared if someone has been troublesome





Questions?

Please ask if you have any questions about anything that has been discussed today





Test and Feedback



Test

- To achieve certification, each participant must pass an individual written test
- You have 35 min to answer 25 questions, at least 17 must be correct
- You are not allowed to use the slides or any other material
- We keep the test as we want to re-use the questions next time
- This also means that we ask you not to discuss the actual questions in the test in the presence of people who are not certified
- Please fill in the feedback form after the test
- The correct answers will be quickly reviewed at the end
- If you fail, you are welcome to participate in the seminar at a later time and try the test again
- Certificates will be distributed later when we have had time to review the answers
- If you do not pass we will tell you how many correct answers you had



