o Start

To start a game, select "New Game" from the "File" menu (or use the "Command-N" key combination). Thereafter, you can control your moves through on-screen buttons or keyboard equivalents.

Each game is played by four hands. In the demo, you play the bottom hand (your name should appear in the lower left corner), and 3 other computer players will play the other hands.

Seating Players; Determining Dealer

The computer will roll the dice to seat players and determine the first dealer. Then, the computer shuffles the tiles and arranges them face-down in a square on the playing table. The computer then "deals" the tiles to each player.

Your Hand

Your hand is the row of tiles on the bottom of the screen, with your name in the lower left-hand corner and your "call" buttons in the right hand corner.

Your Turn

Players take turns in a counter-clockwise direction. Once everyone has their tiles, the dealer makes a discard.

On every discard, you will see the discarded tile in the center of the table, in front of the players making the discard. Then you will see each player's call for that tile ("pass", "poong," "chow," "out," etc.). Each player makes a call on every discard.

The normal way to obtain a tile is to draw it from the wall. After the player on your left has discarded, and no other player has made a "meld" call (detailed below), then the computer

draws the next available tile for your hand (displayed slightly to the right of the rest of your hand). Then you choose a tile to discard.

When you are not the dealer, one of the computer players will play first. On hands that begin with you as the dealer, all players will be waiting for your discard. Select a tile from your hand, by clicking on or tabbing to the tile, and click on the "discard" button (or hit the space bar, or drag the tile out to the center of the playing table).

Going Out

Your goal is to "go out." To call "out" or "mah jong," you must use every tile in your hand, plus one extra tile (14 total). Every winning hand will include 4 "melds" and one pair.

Calls & Melds

- Pass - pass on the discarded tile
- Poong - three identical tiles
- Chow - a run of three sequential tiles in one suit
- Kong - four identical tiles
- Pair - two identical tiles
- Out or mahjong - to go out and win the hand

If a meld is formed by using one of the calls poong, chow or kong , it must be displayed immediately and the tiles used are effectively frozen for the rest of the hand.

Pass - when you don't want another player's discarded tile
            - use the space bar or click the "pass" button

Poong - 3 identical tiles

            - "p" on the keyboard, or click the "poong" button

In the normal flow of the game (i.e. by drawing tiles from the wall) one accumulates "poongs" (or triplets of identical tiles). However, there are circumstances where a player has a pair of identical tiles in his hand and another player discards a matching tile. Here a player may call "poong" and claim the tile instead of drawing from the wall. This must be done at the time that the discard is made. This results in the players between the discarding player and the poonging player effectively missing a turn.

There are certain requirements for a call of poong. The player must have a matching pair of identical tiles hidden in his hand. Immediately after receiving the discarded tile, he must display a meld of three identical tiles including the tile which was discarded. Failure to conform to this results in a penalty of 100 points. The penalty points are paid to the eventual winner of the hand.

Note that a call of poong interrupts the normal order of play, unless the discarding player is on your left. It may thus be used as a tactic to deprive other players of a turn. In addition, it increases the number of melds which you hold, but at the expense of a certain amount of flexibility in the playing of the hand.

A poong obtained by a call of "poong" has half the value of a "concealed poong" (i.e. a poong built only with tiles dealt or drawn from the wall).

Chow - a run of 3 tiles in the same suit

- "c" on the keyboard, or click the "chow" button

A call of chow is similar to a call of poong. There are, however, two major differences: Firstly, the tile must be discarded by the player on your left. A call of chow is not valid for any other discard. Secondly, the tile obtained must be used to make a sequential run of three tiles of the same suit.

This implies that, effectively, you may only chow when it is your turn. In all other ways, the same constraints and penalties as for a poong apply.

Kong - 4 identical tiles

- "k" on the keyboard, or click the "kong" button

A kong is, in one sense, an extended poong. It consists of four identical tiles. A kong may be constructed by being dealt, or drawing from the wall, the four identical tiles. Alternatively, the kong may be constructed by having a hidden poong in hand and by calling "kong" on the discard of the fourth tile by another player.

Out - for a completed hand

- "o" on the keyboard, or click the "out" button

If your hand requires only one tile to go out and another player discards that tile, then you may declare out. This call applies no matter if the required tile is needed to complete a poong, chow or pair.

A player may also declare out if, during his turn, a tile drawn from the wall completes the hand.