

Foreword

Background

This is a translation of “Fully Compatible with Online Mahjong! 100 Latest Techniques of Strong Players” by the 10d-rated player Higa Hidehito. The original translations were shared anonymously and are reproduced here with modest changes.

Foreword From The Author

Whether internet mahjong is real mahjong has been debated for eternity. True, mahjong did develop as a board game with tangible tiles, and the physical experience of playing in a parlor is different than playing virtually. For instance, in “real mahjong” one can evaluate people’s gestures and mannerisms, and in internet mahjong, one can read lags on tiles.

However, the true essence of mahjong is situational judgment. If one does not refine their ability to judge situations, their skills will not improve. In this aspect, internet mahjong proves superior for growth than “real mahjong”. Online, all games leave a record, and game logs can be easily be reviewed with access to a computer. Over time, many situations, some wildly different, and some very similar with only slight variations, can be evaluated to determine the factors that influence decision-making. Discussions and study sessions are facilitated by the ease of having a virtual record. These discussions can happen among experts, whose insights can be shared widely over the internet. This is an environment where complete beginners can engage with exciting mahjong situations and grow stronger.

This book introduces the latest techniques from players of the internet mahjong era. The book format is to ask famous and strong players, including Tenhou, to answer “WWYD?” questions while providing their explicit reasoning behind each decision. Many of the respondents are active in the internet mahjong community.

Some say internet mahjong is not good preparation for “real mahjong”, but many of the Tenhou players interviewed here also play in parlors. These players talk the talk and pon the ton. Some of these high-ranked Tenhou players have won major in-person tournaments, and others use parlors as a way to make extra income.

A strong mahjong player can adapt to different rulesets. This book primarily focuses on the Tenhou ruleset, but also presents situations involving free rules. Dive in and see the illuminating and thoughtful situational judgments of the experts for yourself.

-Hidehito Higa

Rulesets

The situations shown in this book are either played with the Tenhou ruleset or are Free Rule. The games are hanchan unless otherwise stated. Double/Triple ron is allowed (no headbump). Games continue to West if all players are below 30000 points after all last. The game ends if a player busts below 0 points. The game ends if the dealer holds the lead at the end of all last.

For Tenhou matches, the penalty for fourth place is overwhelming. The uma is assumed to be +75, +30, 0, and -120, for placements of first, second, third, and fourth, respectively.

For Free Rule matches, the uma is +30, +10, -10, and -30, for placements of first, second, third, and fourth, respectively. Shugi¹ is also in play, with each shugi chip worth the equivalent of 5000 points.

Reading the Bakyo

Discarded tiles with a black dot ● over the tile are tsumogiri.

Shaded  are aka dora.

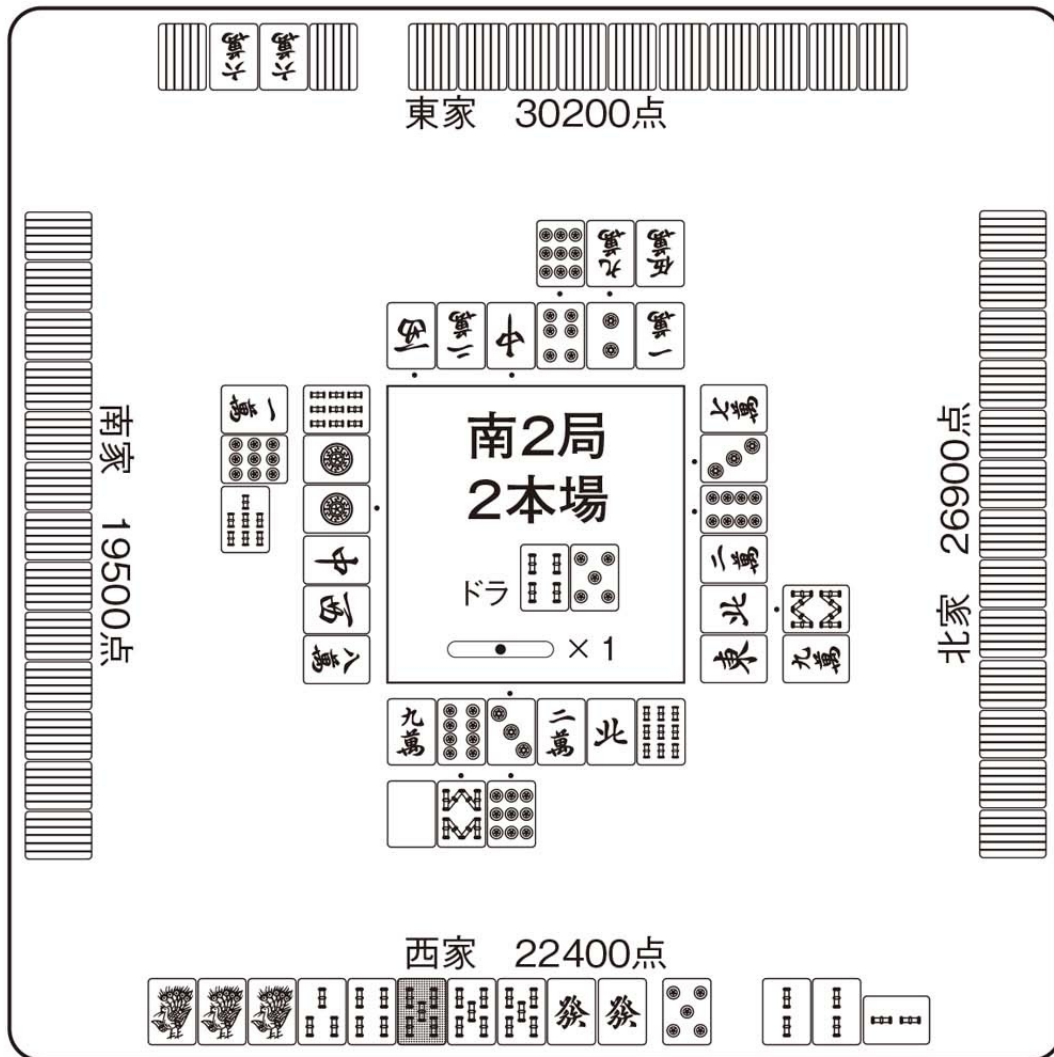
The dora tile in the center of each image, and labeled ‘Dora’ in the tables is the dora, not the dora indicator.

¹A money bonus, awarded (usually) for aka dora, ippatsu, and ura dora. On ron, the player who deals in pays a shugi chip to the winner, and on tsumo, all three players pay one shugi chip each to the winner. These are converted to money and are separate from any uma calculations based on placement.

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Q1 - Push/Fold Judgment #1 - Tenhou



Bakyo

Round	South 2
Honba	2
Sticks	1
Dora	

East	30200
South	19500
West (You)	22400
North	26900



Question

You have drawn a dora tile immediately after kamicha has declared riichi. Do you push?

Answers - Q1


Asapin (Tenhou):



This may be the most dangerous tile after the matagi suji . However, based on the current scores, if we fold here, we are forced to play offense, and there is about a 40% chance that we will be in last place entering South 3. Therefore, we should push with the  and if we deal in, we hope to recover our points during our last dealership.


Mega Zetton (9d):



Even if we fold, there is a possibility that we will be last after the round ends. Given the estimated standings, we should push and discard the .

Takeoshan (Tenhou):

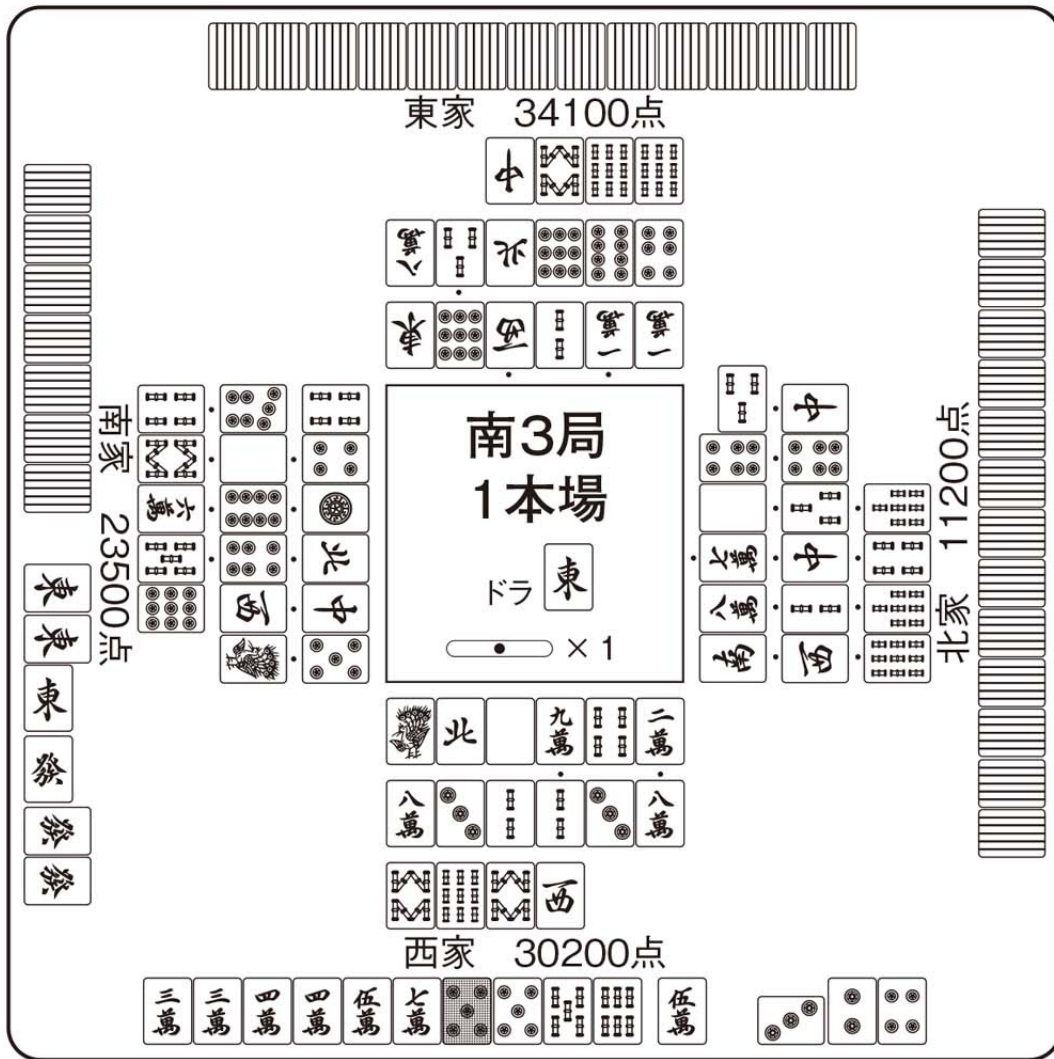


This is a riichi from last place. If he wins it would be bad, and it would be even worse if we deal in. Recovery will be rough if we get hit by the kandora and the kan ura. While this is not a suji that has passed, I would like to try to pull through with the one-chance  triplet. If we are lucky, we can even regain tenpai. This is a situation which is the epitome of endurance where we avoid dealing in.

Author's summary:

The fact that even Tenhouis have differing answers is what makes decision-making in mahjong interesting. This was actually one of my actual games, and I was quite lost once the kandora was revealed. I pushed and won, but I feel like folding is a possible option.

Q2 - Push/Fold Judgment #2 - Tenhou



Bakyo

Round	South 3
Honba	1
Sticks	1
Dora	東

East	34100
South	23500
West (You)	30200
North	11200

Question



There is an early riichi and a dora pon while you are folding with ryuukyoku approaching.

South (who called the pon on the dora) discards . Do you push to maintain tenpai or fold?

Answers - Q2


VenusSay (9d):

 fold.

There is no way  can be discarded. Rather than thinking about why we should not discard it, is there any reason to discard it? Kamicha's  discard does not feel like he is folding, and if we deal in now what are we but a fool...








[Zaika] (10d):

Depends on the status of the game.



Kamicha's last discard is a  from the hand. On Tenhou, with the riichi from last place and one more draw, it would not be strange at all to fold here. If this was an actual game, we have to determine whether the discard was done without hesitation, or after some thought. For the former, it would be that he has karagiri'd to maintain tenpai so we take care and fold. For the latter, it would appear that he is folding by discarding his pair so we push.

Nemata (7d):

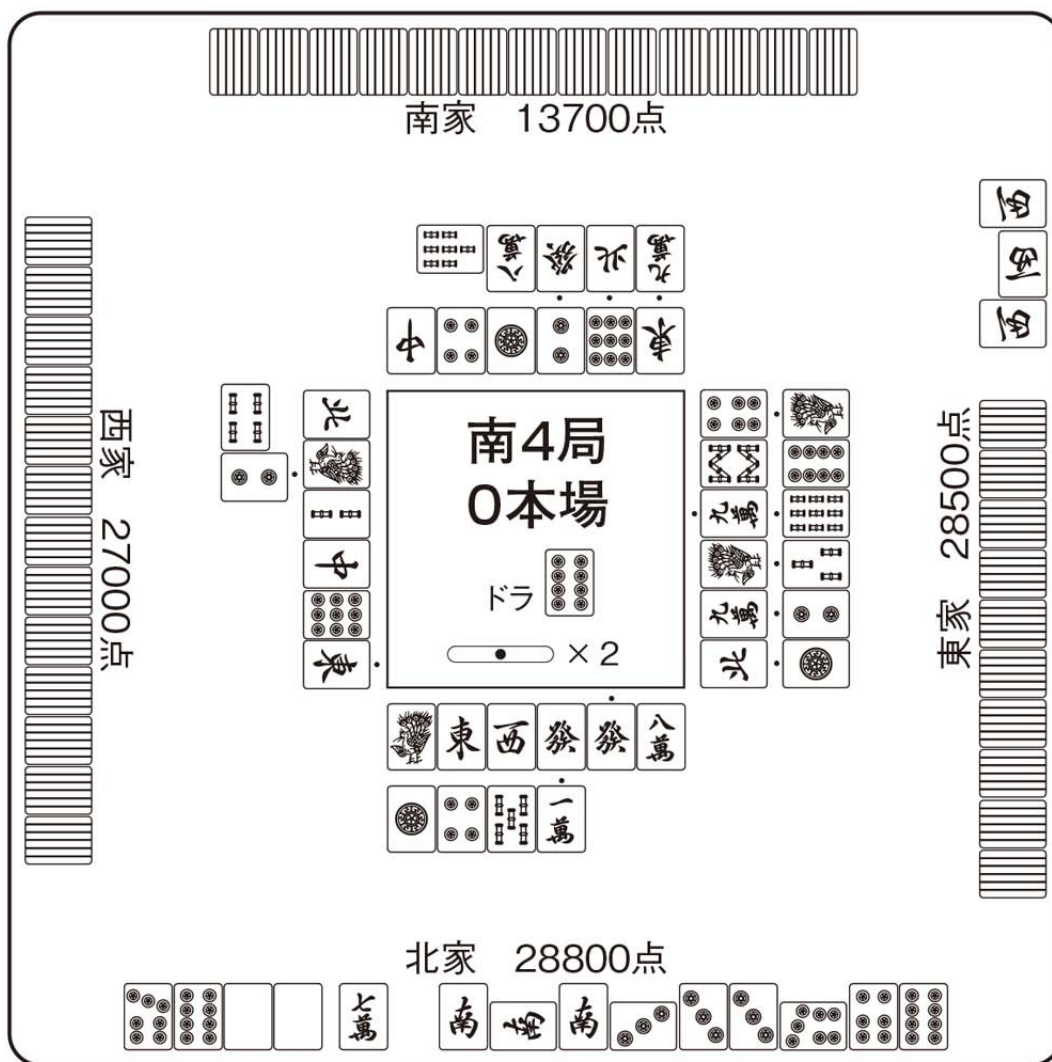
 push.

 may deal in, but if kamicha pushed with  earlier and now discards  from his hand, it can either be a mentsu slide or karagiri to maintain tenpai. We see four , so it is not a mentsu slide, and we see three , so the odds of karagiri to maintain tenpai are low but non-zero. Given these odds, the more likely scenario is that he drew a dangerous tile and folded with . As such, there should not be much issue if we cut the  and maintain tenpai.

Author's summary:

This is question about discard reading. It is quite important in mahjong to determine how to carry out risk assessment. I read kamicha's  discard as folding against the last place's riichi, so I discarded .

Q3 - Push/Fold Judgment #3 - Tenhou



Bakyo

Round	South 4
Honba	0
Sticks	2
Dora	

East	28500
South	13700
West	27000
North (You)	28800

Question

If we win, we will be first. However, we are currently in a pinch as we are sandwiched by two riichis! We too are in tenpai, so do we push or fold?

Answers - Q3

Saionji Yasuko (9d):



tsumogiri push.

If you are in ryanmen tenpai and winning lets you take first, you generally push. Even if we deal in to kamicha's haneman, we still only end up third and the worst case is we enter West. Furthermore, we have no absolutely safe tiles so there is little merit to folding.

Yakin (10d):



tsumogiri push.

We have no tiles to fold with and if we win we get first place. In the worst case even if we deal in there is another round so we push with .

Ritsumisan (9d):




tsumogiri push.

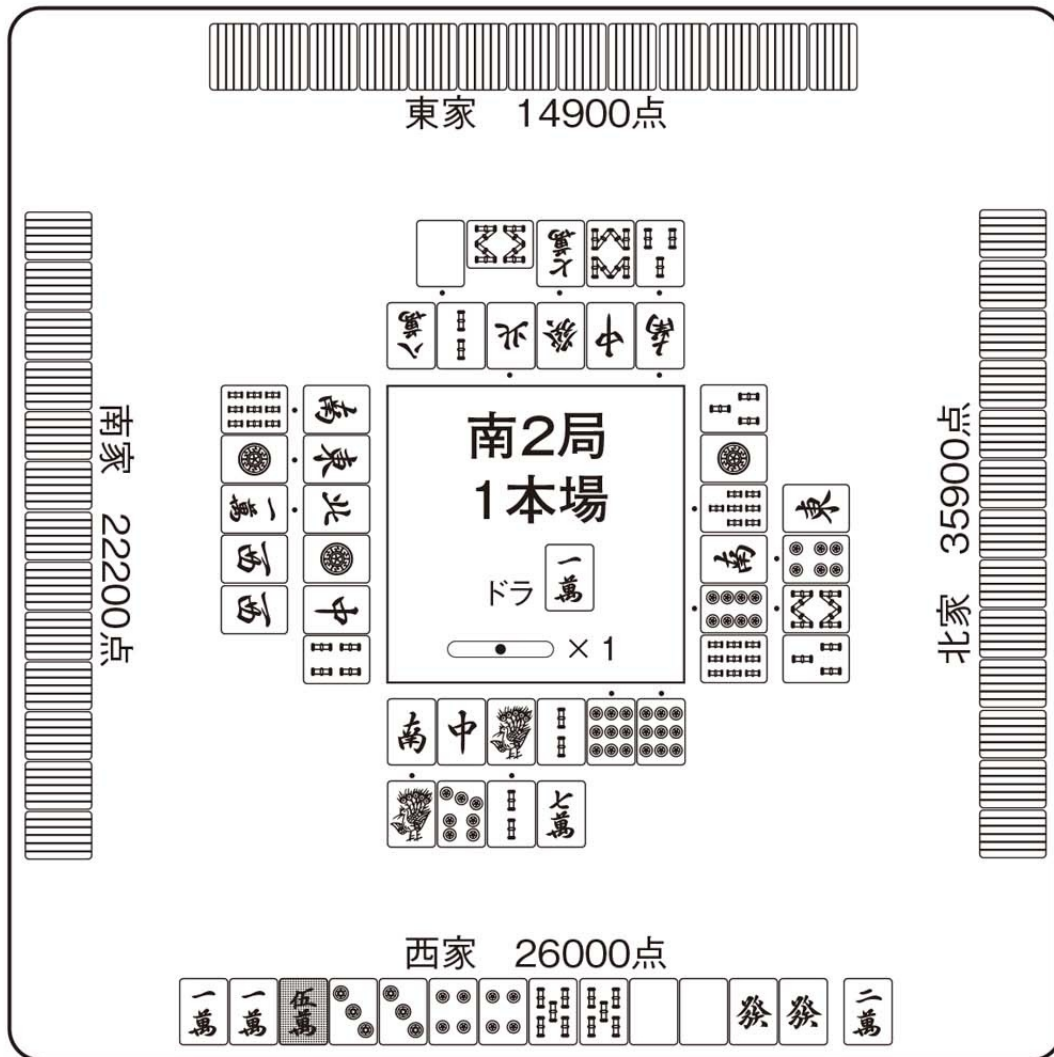


looks like it would pass, but it's not completely safe. The suji count is low, so we push. Even if we deal in to kamicha we avoid last, and if we deal in to toimen we enter West. If we fold here and toimen wins it's frustrating, so we try to win while making peace with the possibility of dealing in. However, if we are absolutely certain we can fold in the later stages of the game, we can fold.

Author's summary:

This is a question about how while it is the norm to fold against two riichis, we should push in such a case. Everyone's answers are the same. In the actual game I folded with , but I should have pushed.

Q4 - Push/Fold Judgment #4 - Tenhou



Bakyo

Round	South 2
Honba	1
Sticks	1
Dora	一萬

East	14900
South	22200
West (You)	26000
North	35900



Question

Our chiitai dora 3 hand has plenty of value. While the bottleneck is the tanki wait, do we push against toimen's riichi? If we push, do we riichi?


Answers - Q4

Doppo (Tenhou):

 fold.


We don't push, and instead discard . If we deal in, our chance of getting last increases. While we see 4 dora, we do not have enough information to confirm that the dealer's hand is low value. It's also important that we are currently second. Since we have 4 genbutsu and the nakasuji  which will likely pass, we should be able to fold.



Mizuki (10d):

 dama push.

While this is a dealer riichi from last in South, if toimen wins there is a high chance that we will be last given the current scores. As such, there is great merit in crushing the dealer's hand and we should not fear dealing in. With such a hand, we should have no issue pushing anything other than double musuji.

Kawamura Akihiro (9d):

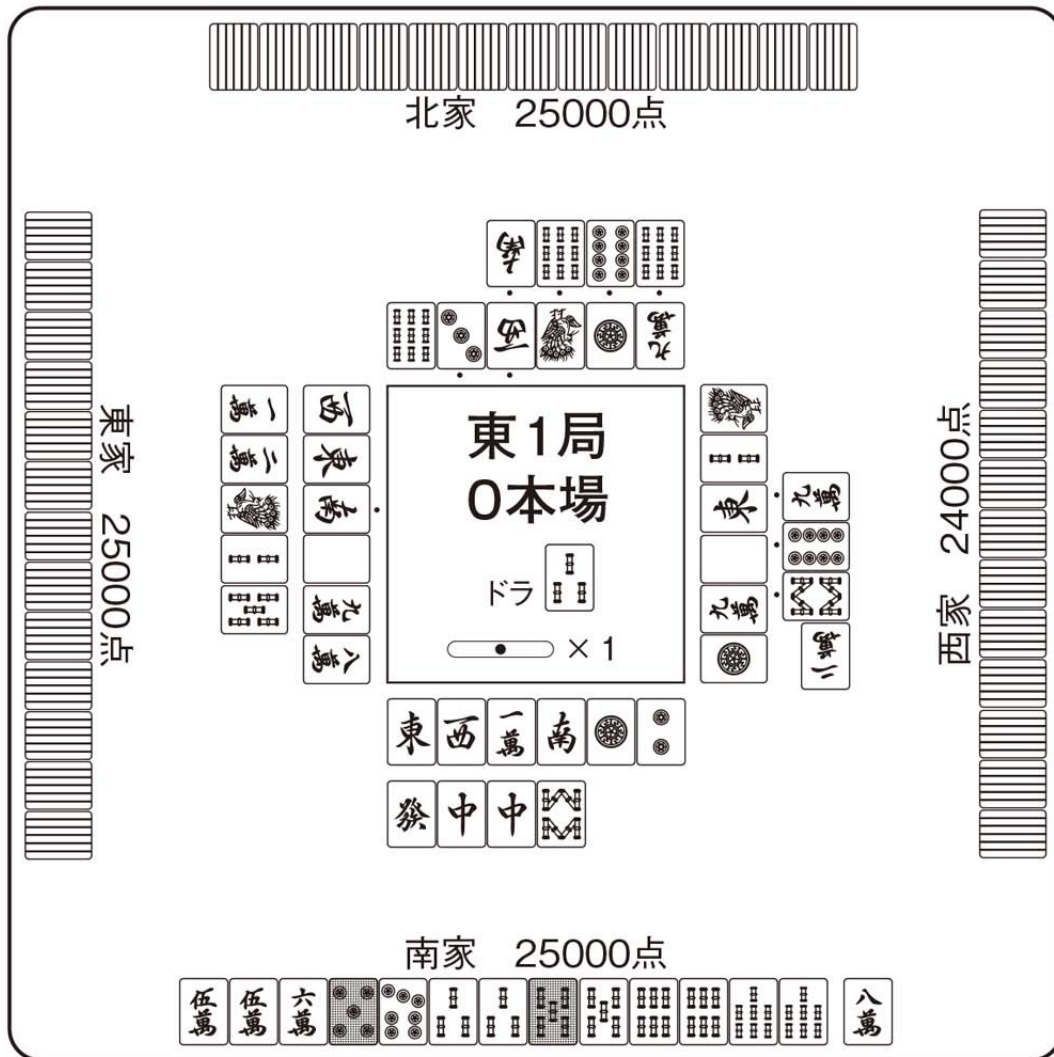
 dama push.

Given the current turn order there is a high chance of ryuukyoku. It's also South 2 so even if we fold there is a chance we will be last. Finally, the suji count against the dealer is relatively low so we push with . If we draw any other musuji we can even push with , but we cannot push anymore musuji after that.

Author's summary:

The Tenhou's judgment is to fold, while the others want to push. While we do want to push with our high value hand, considering the turn order it is a safe choice to fold here.

Q5 - Push/Fold Judgment #5 - Tenhou



Bakyo

Round	East 1
Honba	0
Sticks	1
Dora	

East	25000
South (You)	25000
West	25000
North	25000












Question

There is a non-dealer riichi out. We are currently in iishanten, and have a fairly high value hand. We don't have many safe tiles, so do we push? Or do we attempt to fold?

Answers - Q5



Tenko (10d):

 push.

Since the one who called riichi has discarded , the risk of a shanpon wait is low, and all  are visible, eliminating the possibility of an  kanchan. Additionally, since we have two , the odds of  or  are low. Furthermore, should the  deal into  ryanmen, their hand will not contain the aka , such that the value would be low if we deal in. If we riichi our hand it is 12000, and there are 11 suji left so we push with the /. We take this low-risk high-return gamble.


Shibukawa (10d):

 push.

Since we are going to push with , there's not much difference in pushing with .

Inaho Volcano (10d):

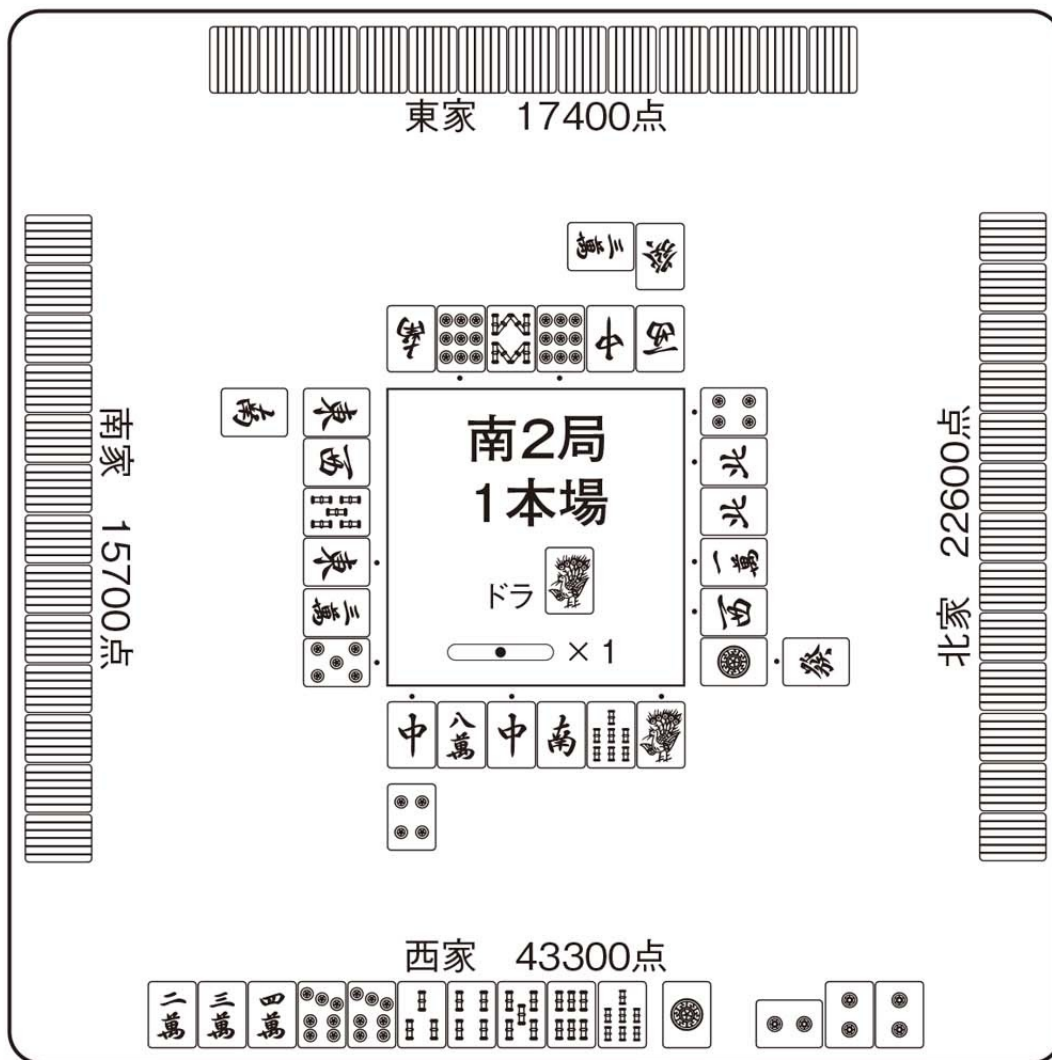
 push.

We have to absolutely push here. We have many dora in our hand so the riichi's value should be low. Do not take the option of discarding the nakasuji  just because you fear ippatsu. It's East 1, the scores are even, and we have a hand that can reach baiman, so there is no reason to fold. Pushing is the only choice!

Author's summary:

In Tenhou, you fold in most situations. "We fold if we are in tenpai, much less iishanten!" is the modern mahjong theory. Nevertheless, today's question is about how we should push even in iishanten if there is great return to be had.

Q6 - Push/Fold Judgment #6 - Tenhou



Bakyo

Round	South 2
Honba	1
Sticks	1
Dora	

East	17400
South	15700
West (You)	43300
North	22600



Question

The dealer has declared riichi. We draw the one-chance on the ippatsu turn while in tenpai with a sanmenchan wait. Do we push or fold with the ?

Answers - Q6










shoot39 (10d):

 push.

If our tenpai was a bad shape, we would fold with . However, if our tenpai was bad shape but waiting on dealer genbutsu, I would still push .

Amagi Kotaro (10d):

 push.

There are five manzu suji, five pinzu suji and five souzu suji remaining. In addition, given the earlier  discard followed by the honor discards, a  wait looks unlikely, and after the  pon the / one-chance also looks unlikely. It does not seem likely that it is a shanpon or tanki wait. Our wait is a sanmenchan with  being genbutsu to dealer, and we only have  as genbutsu for folding. Even if the average deal-in value of riichi ippatsu exceeds 10,000, discarding  looks advantageous. The fact that we may not be able to successfully fold after discarding  is also a big factor.

Kunihikomaru (10d):

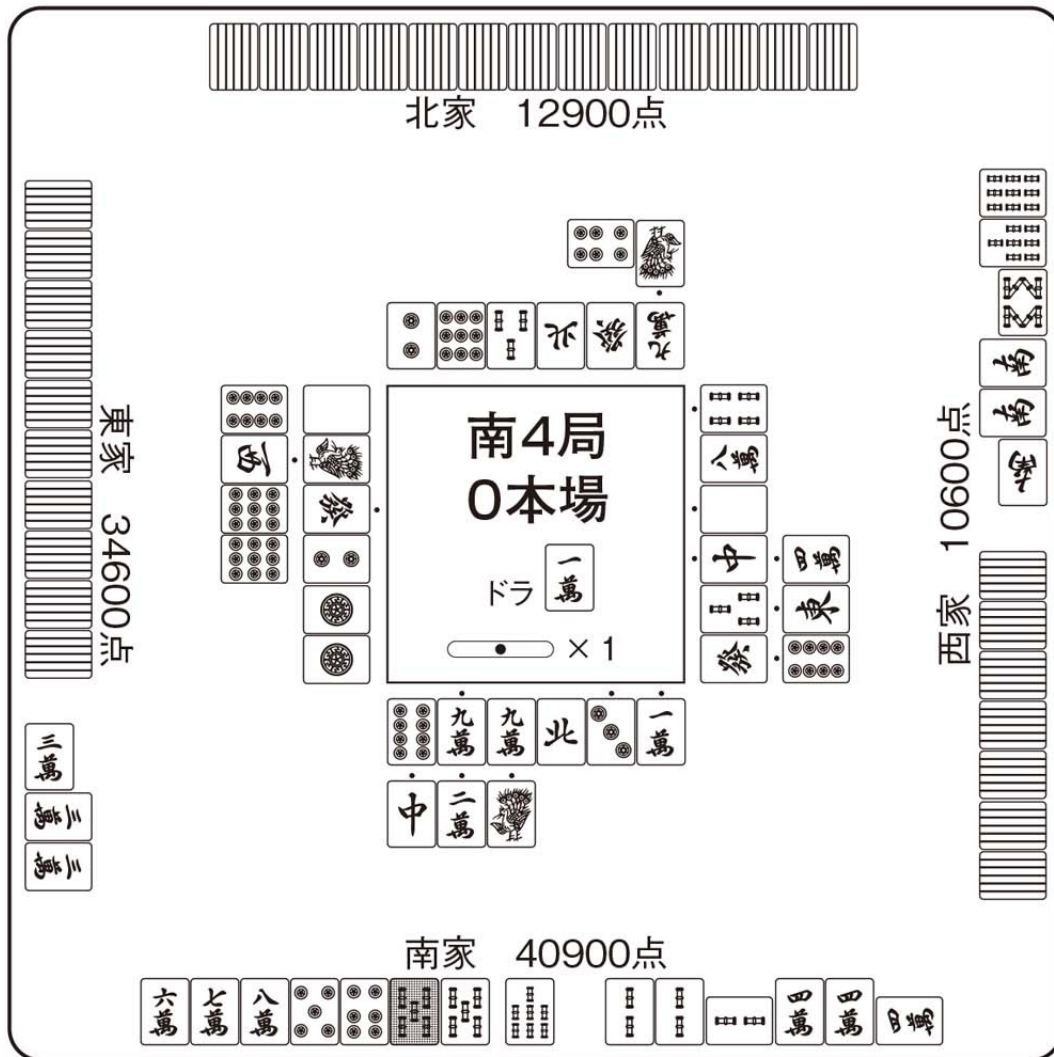
 push.

Even against the dealer riichi ippatsu turn, we won't hold this tile given that we are in tenpai with only 1 genbutsu. If we had around 3 genbutsu and it was the second half of the game we could consider folding.

Author's summary:

It's difficult to judge whether to push against dealer riichi. Even if it's easy to push against non-dealer riichi with a sanmenchan, it's hard to do so against the dealer. There are probably many players who would push and deal in with a similar shape and think "I shouldn't have pushed it". The strong would say, "You have to push when it is time to push!"

Q7 - Push/Fold Judgment #7 - Tenhou



Bakyo

Round	South 4
Honba	0
Sticks	1
Dora	一萬

East	34600
South (You)	40900
West	10600
North	12900

Question

We are first in all last, with a difference of 6300 between us and second. Last place has called on yakuhai to avoid last. In addition, third place (who is trailing us by around 30,000) has declared riichi. We are currently in tenpai. What is the right move here?

Answers - Q7

Please give cola (Tenhoui):



push.

The score difference between shimocha and toimen is minor, so it is unlikely either has a high value hand. It's hard to imagine the riichi has any other yaku. Dealing into mangan would drop us to second, but if we fold and the dealer wins, or if we are the only one in noten there is a chance we will be overtaken. We push because this round should be ended by any of the three non-dealers.

macjr (10d):




fold.

We focus on the call by last place. Prior to riichi, West and North had a 3300 point score difference, and therefore a minimum hand value of 2000 points is required to avoid last place. Given that there was no reaction to our dora discard on turn 6, West has a high chance of having at least 1 aka. Given we do not want East to win with 5800 points and end the game, we await West and North's win.

Cheetah (10d):



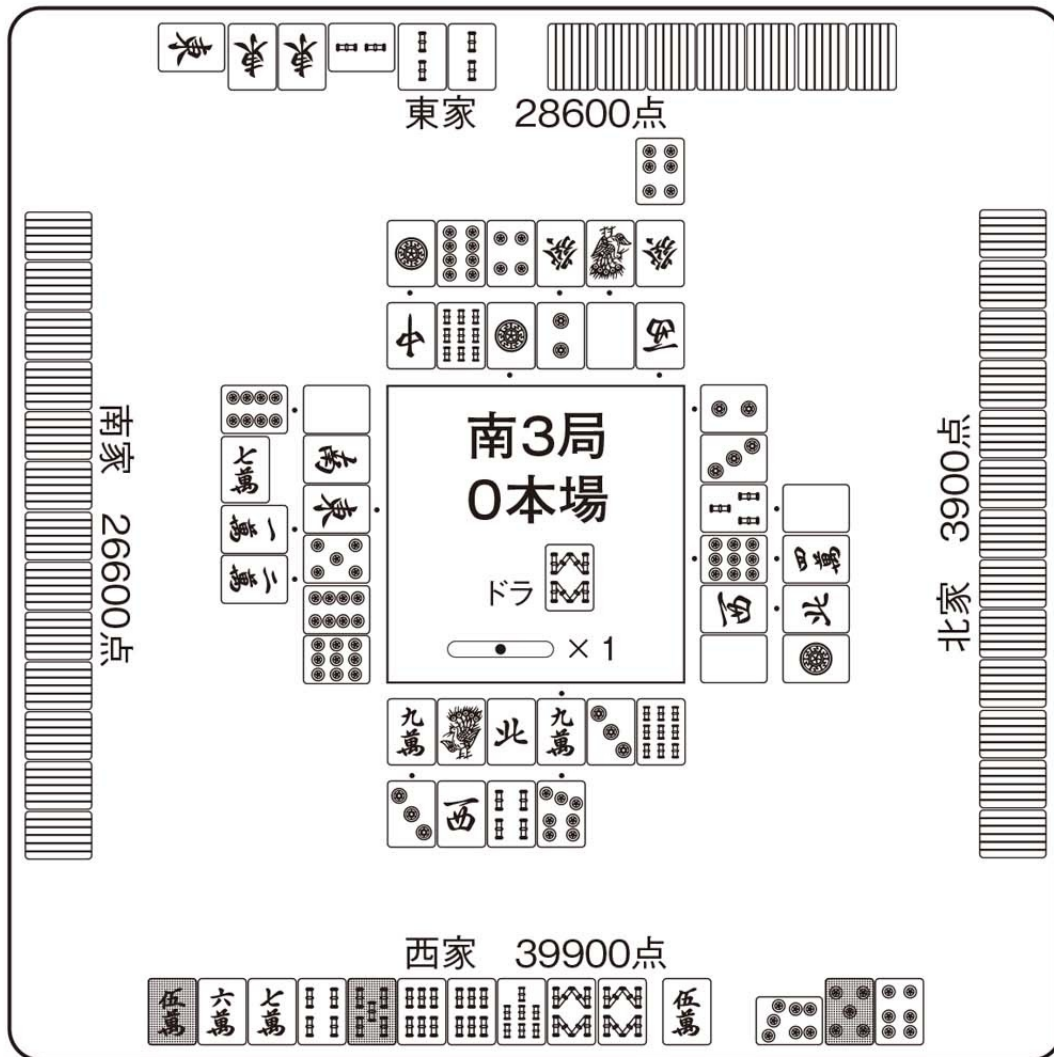
fold.

The dealer's hand does not look that fast, so we leave it to third and fourth place. It is hard to discard  on the ippatsu turn.

Author's summary:

It's fine to push if we are second, but this is a judgment to fold and leave it to second and third to fight it out. If we fold, there is a possibility we will be second. In my situation, given that fourth is desperately trying to win, I leave it to the others. This is a game where our winrate increases with us reaping the rewards while doing nothing. If this were real life, people are not going to like me (laughs).

Q8 - Push/Fold Judgment #8 - Tenhou



Bakyo

Round	South 3
Honba	0
Sticks	1
Dora	

East	28600
South	26600
West (You)	39900
North	3900


Question

Dealer has called twice and kamicha has riichi'd. We are in first and there is no need to push... but we have a lot of dora and aka. What do we do?

Answers - Q8


Ritsumisan (9d):

 push.

We are in haneman tenpai in first place right before all last, but kamicha has riichi'd. Since we only have  as genbutsu there is no guarantee that we can fold successfully. It may be fine to fold if it's against dealer's riichi, but not against a non-dealer riichi. As we have a total of 5 dora, the riichi shouldn't be that expensive so we can push to some extent with musuji.

Fastest-kun (9d):

 push.

Even if we want to betaori, we don't have many safe tiles. As such, it is advantageous to push with  as we try to win while playing slightly defensively.

bakase (8d):

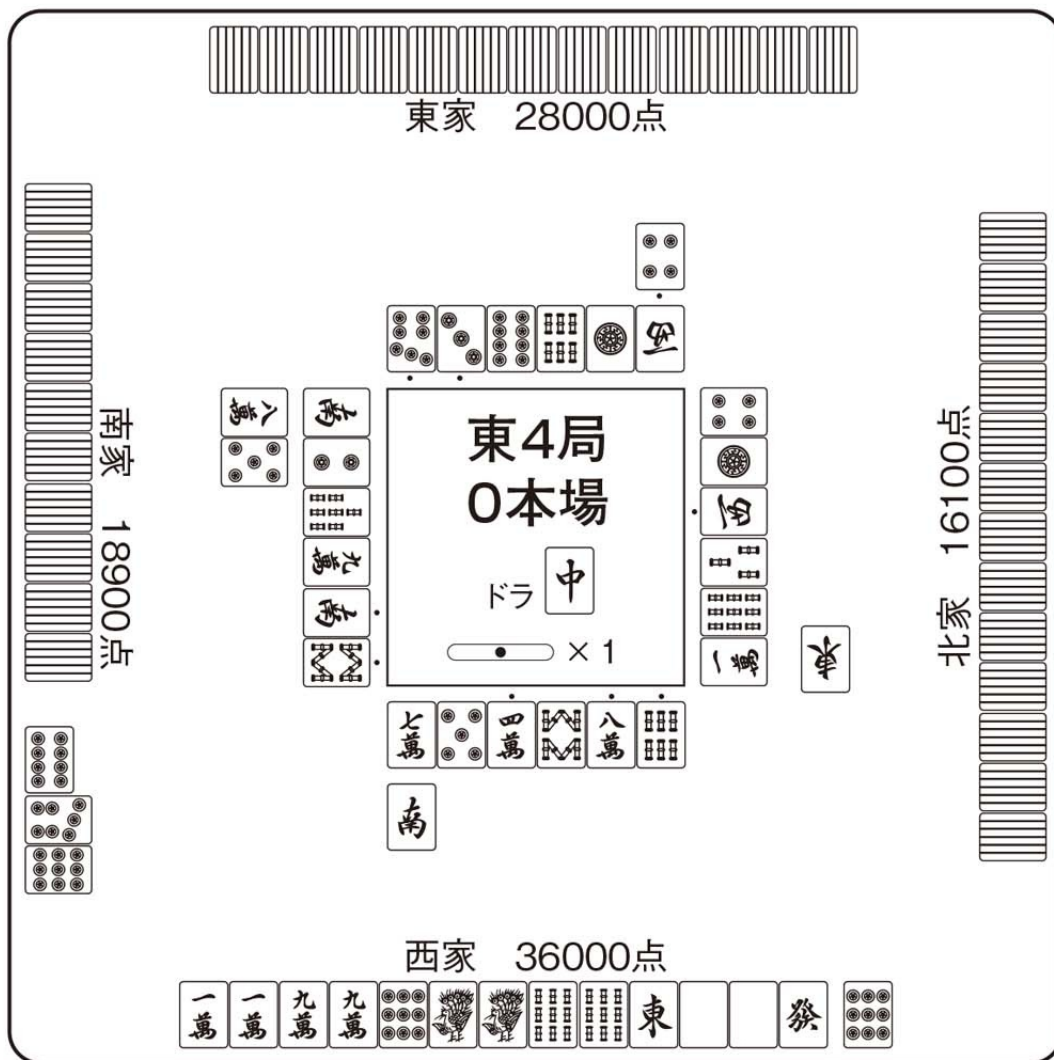
 push.

We don't want to push since we are first. But we only have 1 safe tile, so we have no choice but to push. That's why I'm such a small fry... I'm sorry.

Author's summary:

The point of this question is that we have gathered the aka and dora. Comparatively, there is a high possibility that the value of the other players' hands is low. While there is always the risk of dealing in and getting hit by the uradora, we should not worry too much about it given it's around a 30% chance of that happening. If we deal in to kamicha's cheap riichi, we can at least cope knowing that we have advanced the round.

Q9 - Push/Fold Judgment #9 - Tenhou



Bakyo

Round	East 4
Honba	0
Sticks	1
Dora	中

East	28000
South	18900
West (You)	36000
North	16100



Question

We are in tenpai with a pretty chiitai hontourou. However, shimocha has riichi'd. Do we wait on the dora indicator 發? Or do we wait on shimocha's genbutsu 東?

Answers - Q9


Sakurako (9d):

 dama.

We take a tanki wait on . There are few honors out, and we are concerned about kamicha's push. We fold if we get any dangerous tile. This is a situation where we don't need to push recklessly, so I don't think we should test our luck by discarding .





Saury (8d):

 dama.


The one who has riichi'd may have had a  triplet, but the odds of winning on a tile that has just been discarded are quite large. Since we have an expensive hand there is some merit in pushing. If we don't win after tsumogiri-ing a few rounds, we may choose to tsumogiri riichi depending on the situation.

One way traffic (8d):

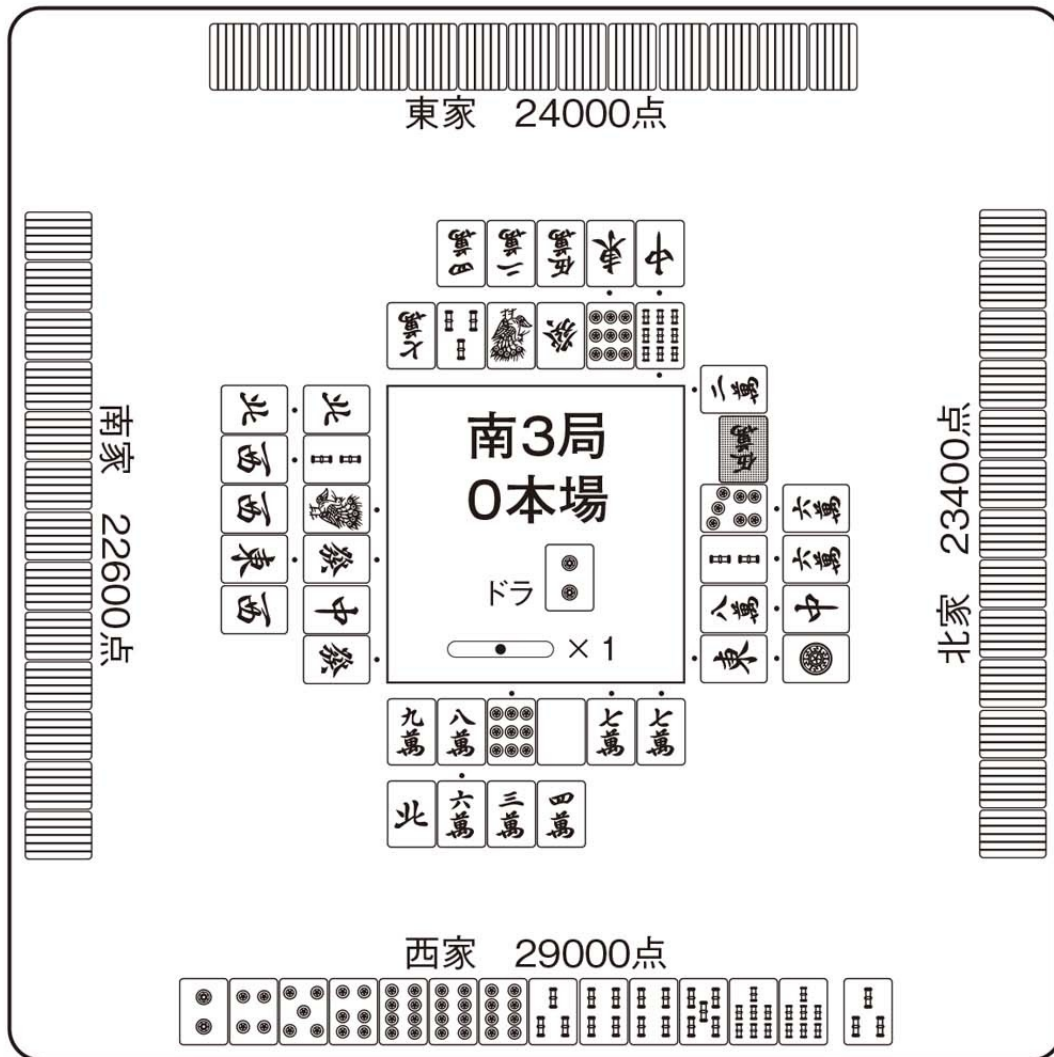
 dama.

First we note the risk of dealing in. We don't see dora  anywhere, and given the discards there is a high risk that shimocha is chiitai on tanki . Kamicha pushing with  may be also backed by an honor so it's dangerous there too. We are currently first, so it wouldn't be bad if the second place's dealer turn gets tsumo'd by last place's riichi. Given the danger of the shonpai  and relative scores, the increased odds of winning our hand by waiting on genbutsu does not fit the current situation.

Author's summary:

I really love the idea of waiting waiting on genbutsu in competitive mahjong, but we have to be careful given Tenhou's emphasis on avoiding last. As stated by the two strong players above, pushing and waiting on genbutsu is surprisingly not a fit for the current situation. For now, we cut the .

Q10 - Push/Fold Judgment #10 - Tenhou



Bakyo

Round	South 3
Honba	0
Sticks	1
Dora	

East	24000
South	22600
West (You)	29000
North	23400

Question

We are in first place with tenpai for tanyao and possible iipeikou right before all last.

However, we must cut the dora to take tenpai. Furthermore, shimocha has declared riichi and our wait is his genbutsu. What do we do?

Answers - Q10

Biribiri Billy (10d):

  fold.

If we deal in to a hand worth 7700 or above our placement will be awful in all last so we cannot discard the dora. Even if we deal in we should try to keep the value to below 5200 which will not be as fatal a blow. As such, we discard the tiles that are likely to pass or only deal in to a low value hand accordingly.



Chronos (10d):

 dama push.





We don't have safe tiles. Although we want to avoid last, we push due to the point return and riichi stick we get if we win our hand. If we get more safe tiles we will fold so dama for now.

Aoyama Gakuin 4th Year (10d):

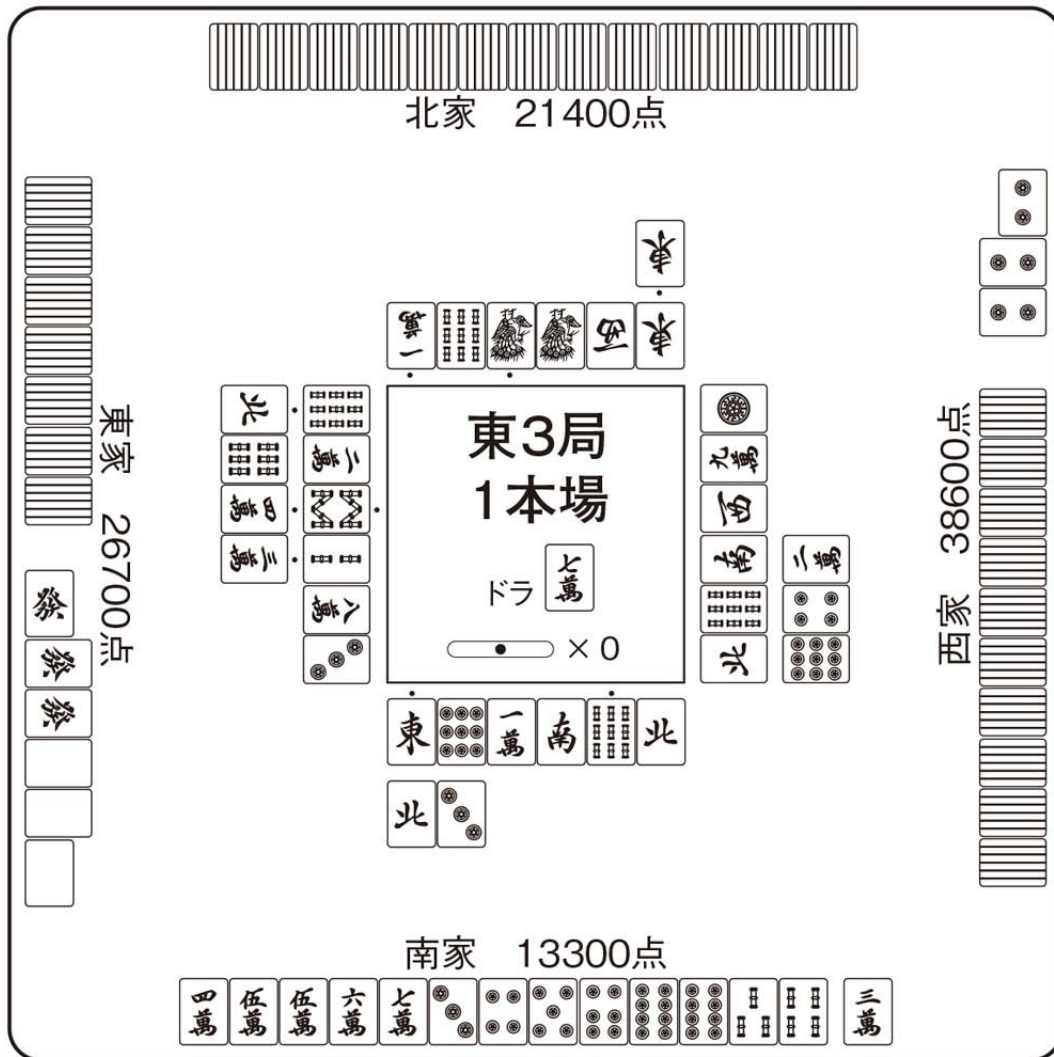
  fold.

After the  discard we may not be able to fully fold, but it's right before all last so we should be prudent. If we have no safe tiles next turn we discard the  which is the most walled off.

Author's summary:

While we have somewhat created a hand with value, how should we view the risk of discarding the dora  here? In my opinion, the damage we will take if we deal in given the next round is all last greatly raises the hurdle to push. After discarding , if we don't have genbutsu we may be in a situation where we try to fold with the three . While it's true that we are waiting on genbutsu, it would appear quite difficult to rely on  coming out. It's better to choose to fold with all our might here.

Q11 - Push/Fold Judgment #11 - Tenhou





Bakyo

Round	East 3
Honba	1
Sticks	0
Dora	七萬

East	26700
South (You)	13300
West	38600
North	21400





Question

It's East 3 and we are dead last with a tanpin sanshoku tenpai. Kamicha looks like he has a monster hand, but we need points. Do we cut the safe  or do we cut the  for the chance of sanshoku? Do we riichi?

Answers - Q11


Doppo (Tenhou):

 riichi.

While the chance of dealing in is not zero, after West's  has passed and the / are discarded we should not get hit by a ryanmen wait. Taking the points situation into account, it's worth taking the risk. If we had more leeway in points we could discard  and dama.




Ultra Riichi (10d):

 riichi.


We are last by a substantial margin and are granted a takame sanshoku chance so we lean towards discarding .

Mom is dinner ready yet? (8d):

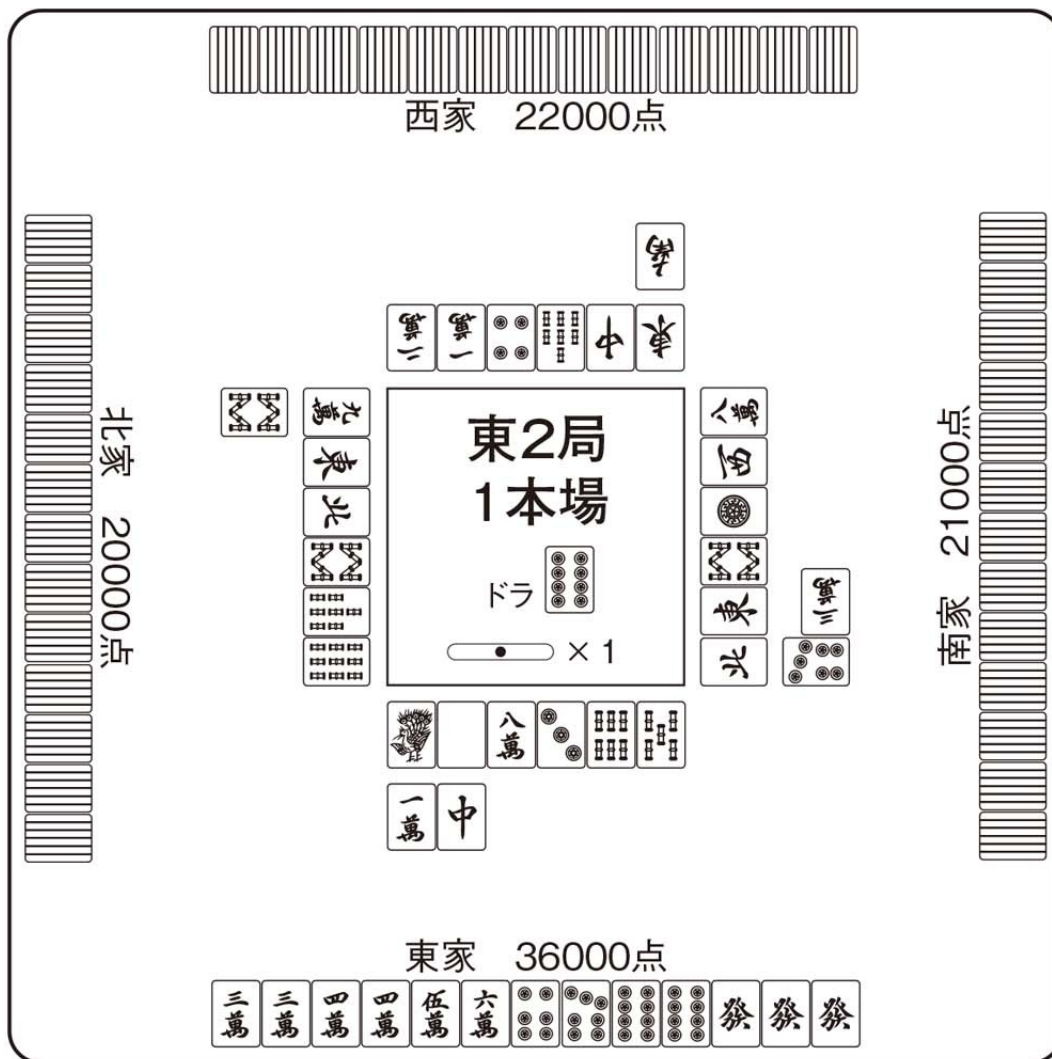
 riichi.

Kamicha has not passed on calling / and we do not have confirmed sanshoku, so we discard . Even though we may have dodged busting out from a yakuman deal-in, we still need points to escape fourth place, so we riichi to maximize value.

Author's summary:

There may be some who are thinking "Where have I seen this before?" This is one of the questions from "Modern Mahjong Strategies: Chapter on Actual Games". To be honest, this is the log from my 5d demotion match. I chose  riichi. As stated by the strong players, we need to place emphasis on gaining points. Given we are last, we should bear more risk. In the end, I dealt into the daisangen and demoted (cries).

Q12 - Push/Fold Judgment #12 - Tenhou



Bakyo

Round	East 2
Honba	1
Sticks	1
Dora	



East (You)	36000
South	21000
West	22000
North	20000


Question

It's East and we are first with 36000 points. We are iishanten for yakuhai dora 2. Shimocha has declared riichi, and we can pon on the riichi declaration tile for tenpai. Do we pon and take tenpai? Or do we pass?


Answers - Q12

Crazy Sparrow (Tenhou):

 pon discard .



It's too convenient to think that you can reach tenpai by only cutting safe tiles. Even if you succeed in doing so, you would still push even if you draw a dangerous tile later. There is clearly merit in taking a risk and the shape is good enough for tenpai. It's aida yon ken¹, but I don't think  is more dangerous than the other musuji.


Mahjong world (9d):

Do not call .


We are currently somewhat in the lead, and as such we should try to reach tenpai without cutting dangerous tiles. If we deal in to a mangan here, the result of the match becomes unclear again....







tj-micro (9d):

 pon discard .

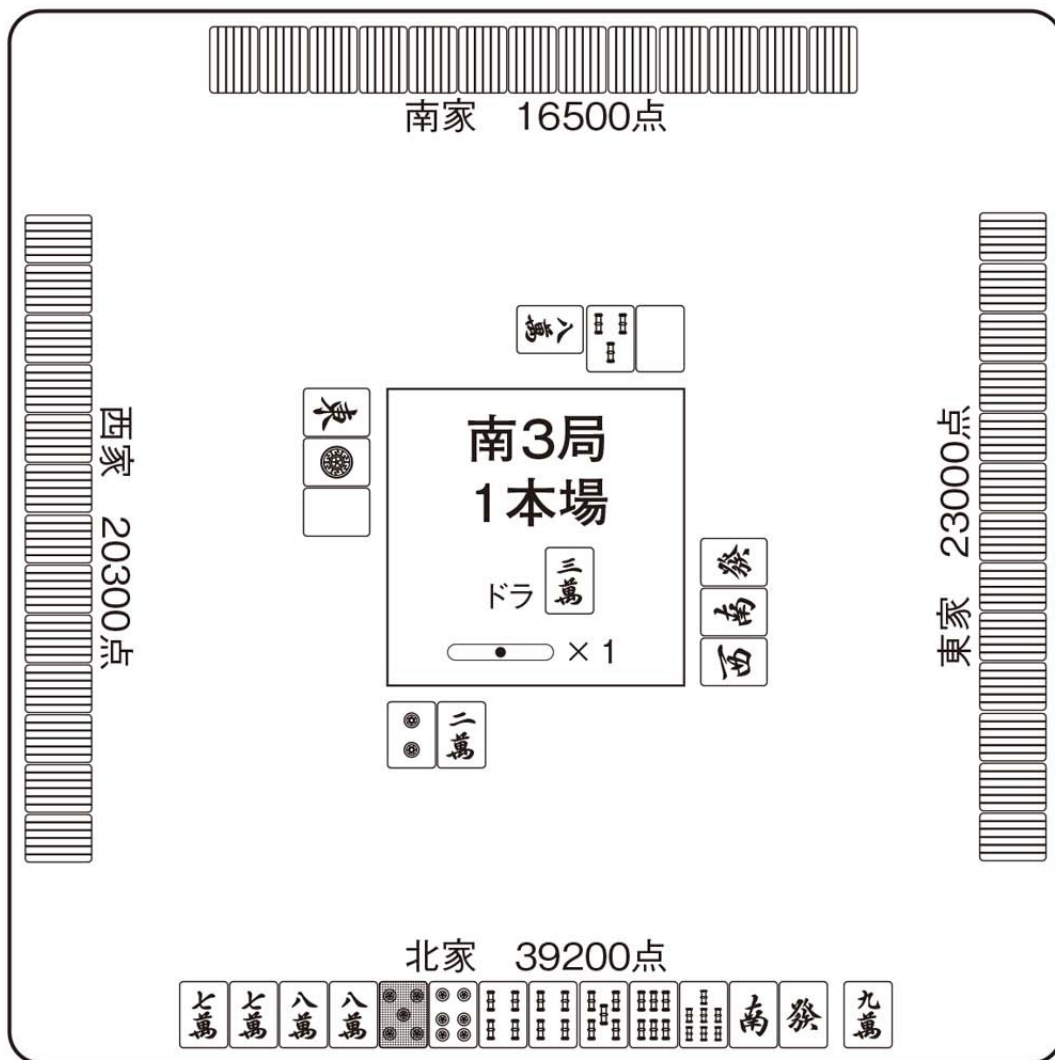
While we are first, we still want points. There are many suji that have not yet passed, and we have a decent value hand so we call on .

Author's summary:

People often fall into the thought in Tenhou that "We must fold no matter what". In order to win, we must face situations where we have to take some risk. As such, we must be aware of the situations where we have to push. In this situation, while the opinions of the strong players are somewhat divided, I think it is good to push for tenpai with  given that we have canceled ippatsu.

¹TL note: a discarded ,  is thought to make the middle four tiles  dangerous, see <https://kinmaweb.jp/mahjong-yougo/aidayonken>

Q13 - Push/Fold Judgment #13 - Tenhou



Bakyo

Round	South 3
Honba	1
Sticks	1
Dora	三萬

East	23000
South	16500
West	20300
North (You)	39200

Question

It's right before all last, and we do not have much reason to push given we are currently first. Toimen (South) has declared riichi. Should we discard one of the once-discarded honor tiles or instead fold with the genbutsu 八萬?

Answers - Q13

Futokunaio (Tenhou):



I think we are going to discard it regardless, and we can take ryanmen-ryanmen iishanten so we push the once-discarded honor.

Greed (10d):



Given the point situation we absolutely do not want to deal in. It's a fast riichi on turn 3, and we have 2 genbutsu. Our hand is a good shape iishanten, and if we want to fold with our remaining tiles or if we reach tenpai without drawing any dangerous tiles we will also discard . Given toimen's point situation, the odds of him ignoring double are much lower than him ignoring . And with the discards, we can almost ignore the possibility of him reaching tenpai with two .

Folk Craft (10d):

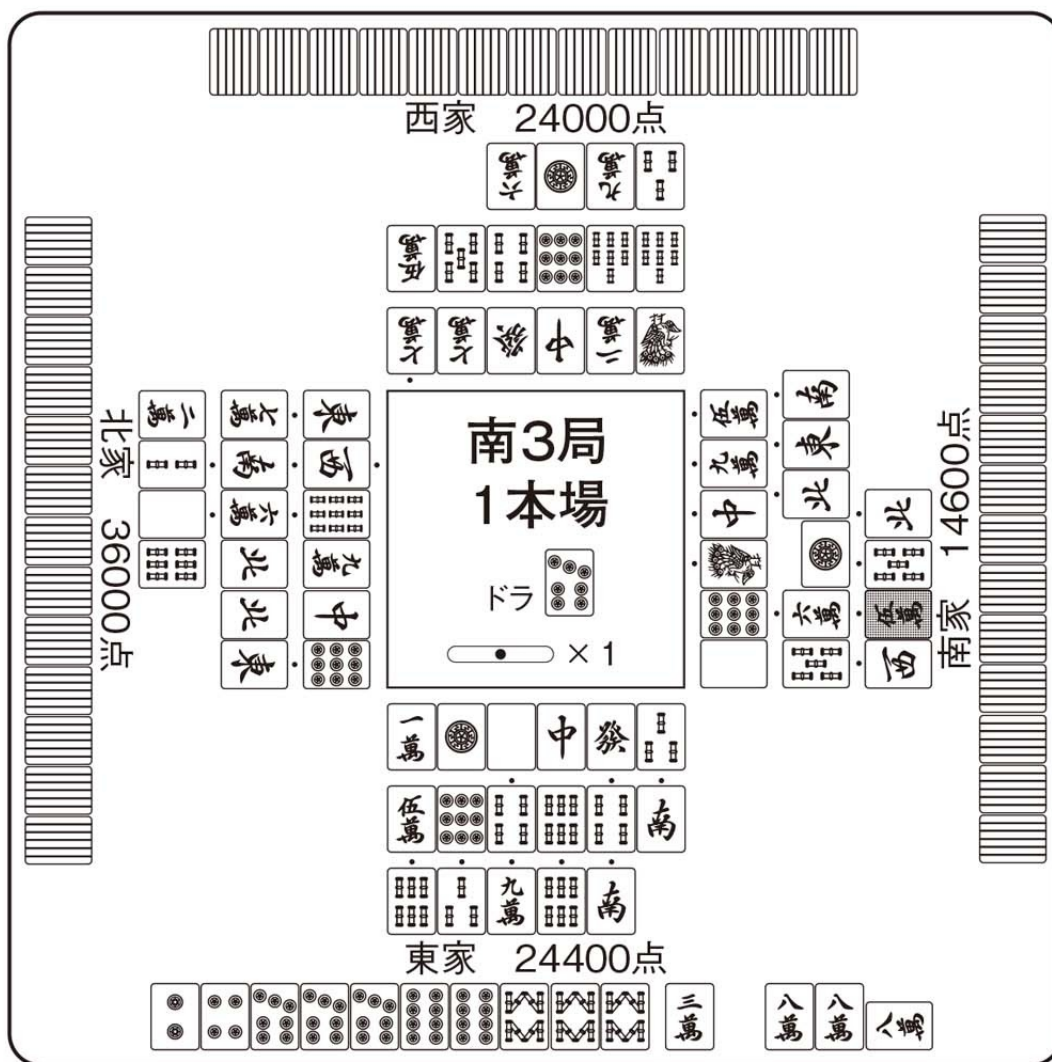


Given that both one copy of and have been discarded the risk of dealing in is almost zero. Even if we hit tenpai we do not riichi, as our point situation is good enough to dismantle our hand once we get even one dangerous tile. We try to win while avoiding discarding any dangerous tiles.

Author's summary:

This is a question of how far can we push safely. All the strong players think that the once-discarded honor tiles will not deal in. Since we have a hand that is close to tenpai, it's ok to push a bit. I would also push.

Q14 - Push/Fold Judgment #14 - Tenhou



Bakyo

Round	South 3
Honba	1
Sticks	1
Dora	

East (You)	24400
South	14600
West	24000
North	36000

Question

We are in tenpai with dora 3 and there is one turn left. We have drawn the live . Do we push with the ? Or do we fold with the that looks likely to pass?

Answers - Q14




Mega Zetton (10d):

 push.

It's suji so it's likely to pass, and the hand value is quite big if we inadvertently win so we push. It's also possible to fold and let the round advance to all last; however, the score distribution entering all last will not guarantee us to avoid fourth place, so we should heavily emphasize scoring a win.

Chikuki (10d):


 push.

1. We have no tiles that are completely safe.
2. Although the wait is bad shape it's still tenpai for dealer mangan.
3.  was cut before riichi, so the odds of  being safe are slightly higher than the suji that passed later. (It should not be a kanchan  wait unless it's related to some hand yaku)


If we had more than 2 completely safe tiles, it would be advantageous to fold given toimen appears to be in noten and we can proceed to all last aiming for second place.

Tajimanami (10d):

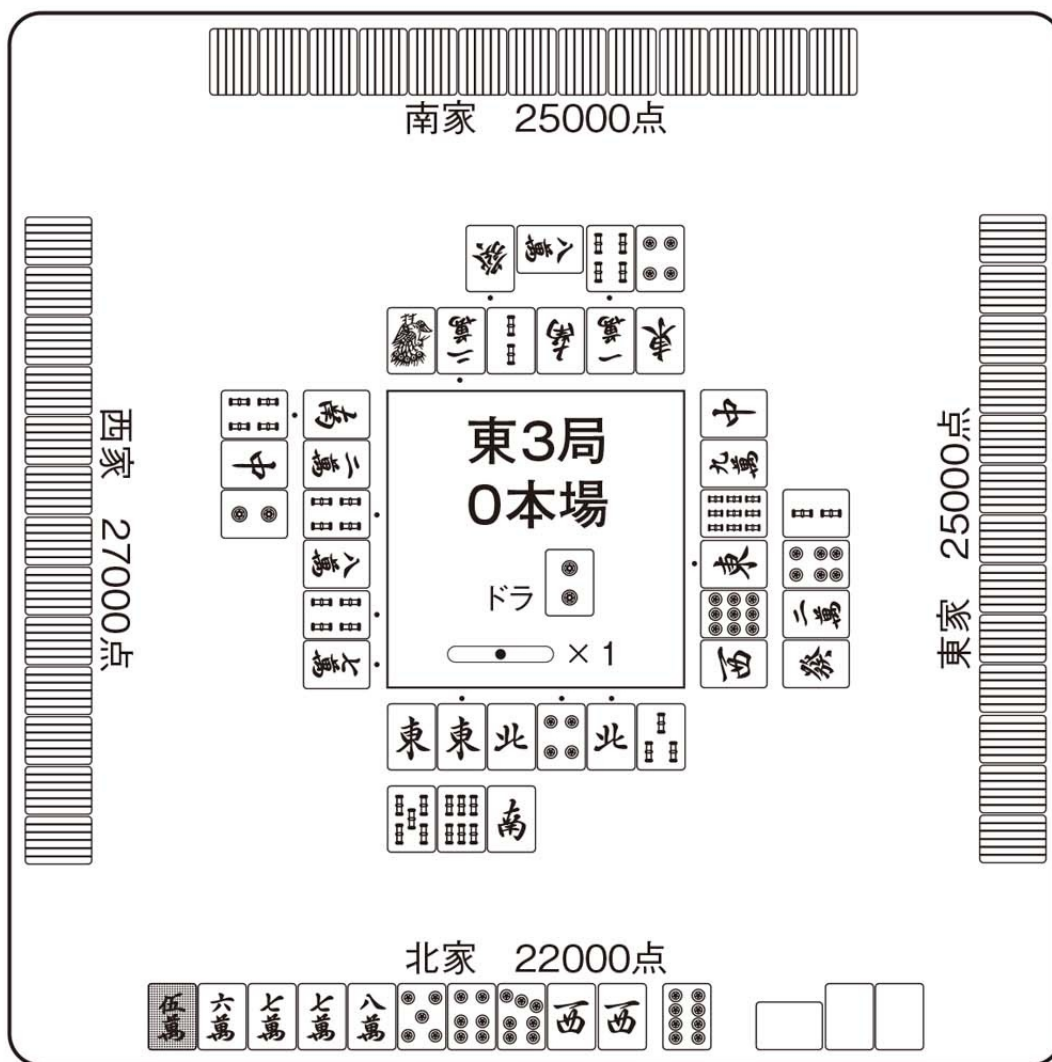
 push.

We have no completely safe tiles so discard .


Author's summary:

While it is generally correct to fold in the last turn given the high risk, this time we have a situation where the hand is high scoring and the discarded  is suji, lowering the risk of dealing in. The question is then how would the strong players think about this situation. In reality, everyone's answer is the same. Given that we still have a chance to win and the risk isn't that great it's go time. Picking up wins like this may make the difference.

Q15 - Push/Fold Judgment #15 - Tenhou





Bakyo

Round	East 3
Honba	0
Sticks	1
Dora	


East	25000
South	25000
West	27000
North (You)	22000




Question

It's currently the mid game of East 3, and we are in tenpai with a decent / wait. It's also not too difficult to fold against the riichi. However, kamicha's actions are quite suspicious... Do we push or fold?


Answers - Q15



Asapin (Tenhou):

 push.

It's non-dealer vs. non-dealer, it's no longer the ippatsu turn for the riichi, and we are in ryanmen tenpai for 2000 points with six tiles remaining. This is not a situation where yomi is particularly effective, so the digital decision is to push. Kamicha has pushed with the dora  so it's likely he is in tenpai, but it's highly likely that he is in a bad shape wait for the genbutsu . As such, his actions do not really affect the danger of .




taroo (10d):

 mawashi.


If it was just toimen's riichi we can push, but given Kamicha's dora  discard he is likely in tenpai. Given he is dama he may be waiting for riichi genbutsu, and we are unsure of his hand value so we cut . We try to do our best to keep our hand in a shape where we can recover.

nannanda- (9d):

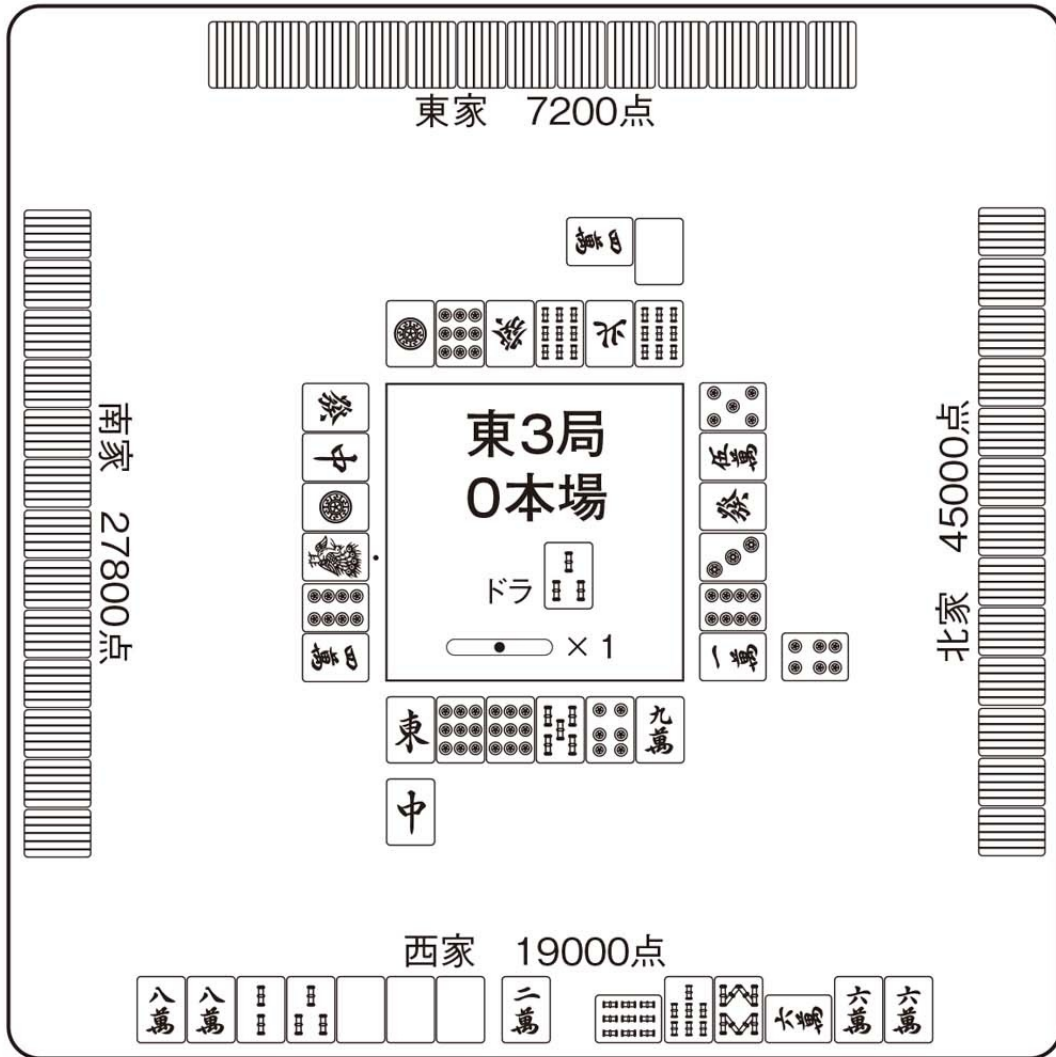
 fold.

If it's just toimen's riichi there is meaning in pushing but kamicha's dora discard is quite intense. If it's the discard from dora ankou with a chiitai dora 2 hand or menhon then there is only loss in discarding . Shimocha's last  discard is also unnatural, so we pray that  passes.


Author's summary:

This time everyone's choices are all different. As expected of the first Tenhou, Asapin has quite a deep read. Meanwhile, taroo's decision of  is the most balanced play. Given our current hand, it would be quite difficult to push like we normally do.

Q16 - Push/Fold Judgment #16 - Tenhou



Bakyo

Round	East 3
Honba	0
Sticks	1
Dora	

East	7200
South	27800
West (You)	19000
North	45000


Question

It's the ippatsu turn against dealer riichi and we are currently in dora matagi ryanmen tenpai. It's still turn 7, do we push a bit? Or do we fold with genbutsu?

Answers - Q16

Please give cola (Tenhoui):

 push.

We reluctantly push since we are in ryanmen tenpai, there are quite a few turns left, and there are many suji that have not yet passed. We consider folding at the third row of discards. If  passes and we draw musuji we try to progress by mawashi.


Shibukawa (10d):

 push.

We push for now. The wait is good, and it's rough if toimen wins.

Saionji Yasuko (9d):

 push.

Discard . There is a good chance of winning with good shape tenpai, and it's too early to rely on ryuukyoku. We should ignore riichi and zentsu until around turn 13.






Author's summary:

In contrast to Q15, this time everyone's choices are identical. Even though there are similarities between the two scenarios, the small differences greatly influence the push-fold judgment. The point this time is "remaining turns" and "the lack of suji that have passed". Given that it's still early, our ryanmen edge wait has a good chance of winning despite it being dora matagi.

Answers - Q17




Doppo (Tenhou):

 mawashi.

We do not take tenpai. We are afraid of  which may have been next to the dora , with a potential  shape (with potential aka) before riichi. On the other hand,  is kabe, and  is genbutsu, so they are likely to pass. Isn't it better to take kuttsuki iishanten¹ and hope we stick on the manzu instead?

Inujyarashi (10d):

 riichi.

 does not seem too dangerous, and our hand has a decently high value of 5200 so we push even if the point situation is fairly even. It's South 1 and last place may overtake us, so it's even more reason for us to chase. It's a bad move to revert from tenpai, given the opponent is in tenpai and it's quite late turn-wise. It's difficult to say that we can get any good improvements to this hand if we discard  and dama, given that the only good improvement is the  tsumo draw. Any other tiles which improve the wait lower the value of our hand.

Saisoku-kun (9d):

 riichi.

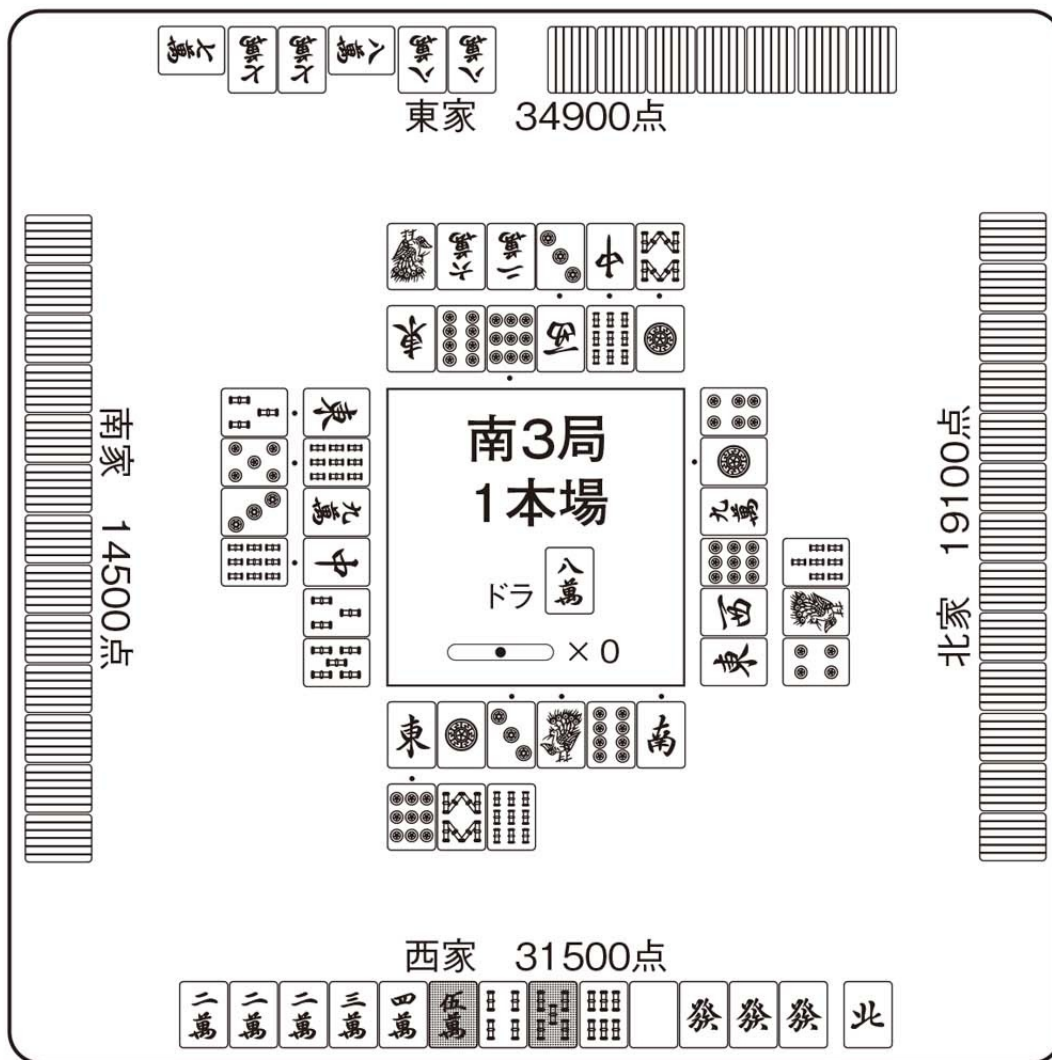
There do not appear to be many drawbacks to attacking and riichi looks advantageous.

Author's summary:

Everyone's choices are slightly different. The point is that last place is only slightly behind us. If we want to crush our opponent's hand, we cannot dodge but rather have to win our hand. Coupled with the chance to get more points, I also choose to riichi.

¹'sticky' iishanten, an iishanten structure with wide acceptance characterized by two floating numbered tiles

Q18 - Push/Fold Judgment #18 - Tenhou







Bakyo

Round	South 3
Honba	1
Sticks	0
Dora	八萬

East	34900
South	14500
West (You)	31500
North	19100

Question

Dealer (toimen) has ponned  and , and we see  and  in their discards. We need to be cautious since the dora has been called... But we are also in tenpai for a high scoring hand. Push or fold?

Answers - Q18

Yuusou:

push.

The and which are excellent tanki candidates have been tsumogiri'd on turns 7 and 8. We can assume the discarded on turn 10 is related to his hand, and likewise for the discarded on turn 12. With these assumptions, toimen's hand could be as follows when was discarded:

一萬	一萬	一萬	六萬	七萬	七萬	八萬	八萬	花	三三	三三		
一萬	一萬	一萬	六萬	七萬	七萬	八萬	八萬	花	三三	三三	北	北
一萬	二萬	三萬	六萬	七萬	七萬	八萬	八萬	花	三三	三三		

If or were to deal in, we would assume it's from the above shapes. Given the current score situation, it's hard to imagine toimen opening on while holding the pair. As such, is more dangerous than .

Hayato (10d):

fold.

If we win this hand we close the gap between us and first, but if we deal in we are suddenly fighting for last place avoidance. Once dora has been poned we fold.

Rei of Nanto (9d):

push.

Toimen held longer than , so it looks more like tanyao than a somete¹ hand. Cut .

Author's summary:

Yuusou's read is amazing. He is some kind of tile magician! Even among the highest level players there aren't many who read hands to such a degree. If you can't make these kind of reads, given the point situation I think it's better to fold with the .

¹single-suit, honitsu/chinitsu

Answers - Q19

Futokunaio (Tenhou):

 riichi.

The ratio of winning to dealing in is around 2:1. We may hesitate if no dora were visible. However, we see four dora, making it unlikely we drop to last upon deal-in, so we riichi.

taroo (10d):

 riichi.

We see 2 dora, and we have 2 akadora in our hand, so it's fine to push against dealer's riichi. Even if we deal in to the dealer here, we can still try to fight for last avoidance with the other two. However, given that kamicha will be first in all last he will shibori against us making it possibly a hard fight.

Mizuki(9d):

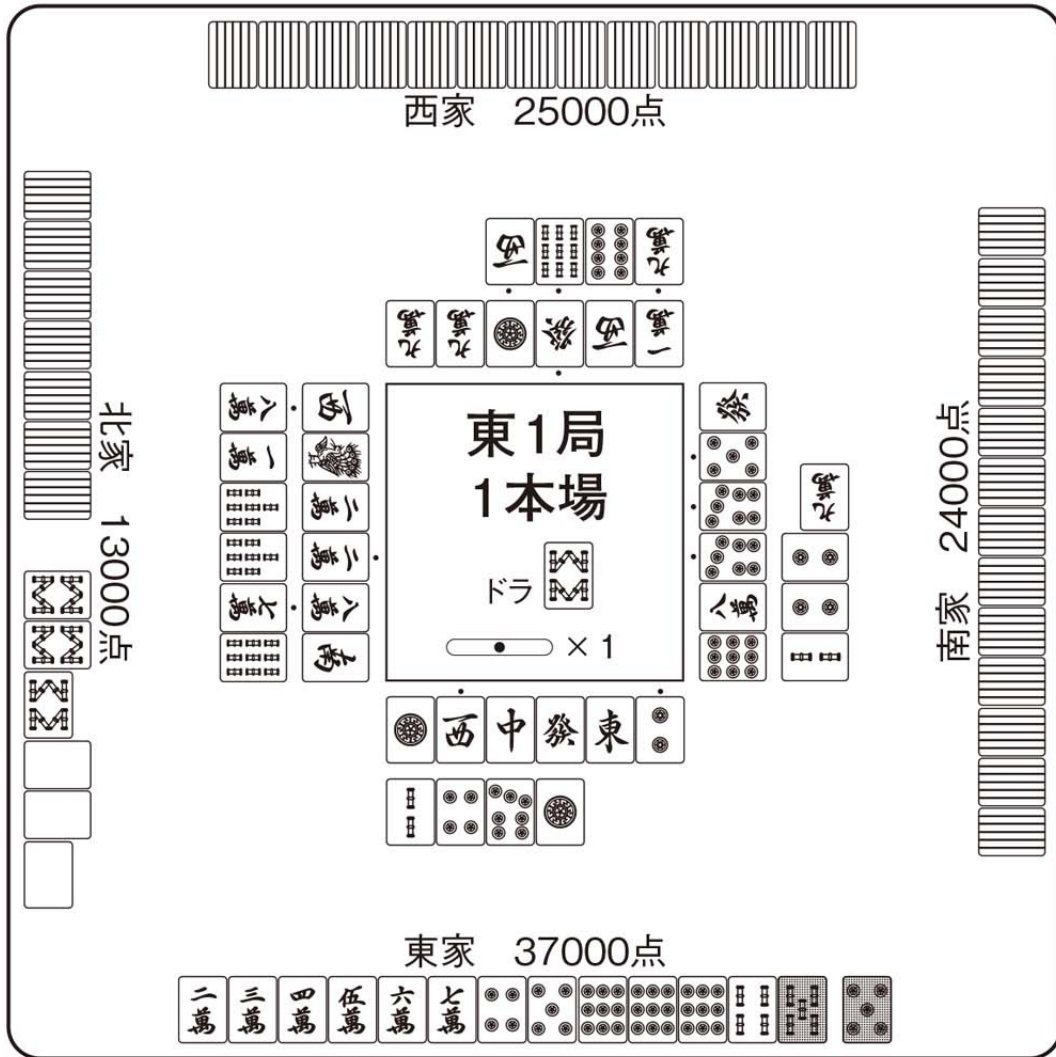
 riichi.

While it's possible to be last if we deal-in to the dealer, we shouldn't be too worried about the worst case scenario given our potential return. The deal-in rate for chasing a riichi is around 15%, and in this scenario, only a subset of those deal-ins are expensive enough to matter.


Author's summary:

Pushing against dealer riichi can be scary, but we generally want to push valuable hands with good waits. The question is how we are to balance these two thoughts. The key point this time is that many dora are visible. Furthermore, as everyone has pointed out, dealing in should not have a major effect, so the answer is to push.

Q20 - Push/Fold Judgment #20 - Tenhou



Bakyo

Round	East 1
Honba	1
Sticks	1
Dora	

East (You)	37000
South	24000
West	25000
North	13000

Question

We are sandwiched between a dora pon and a riichi while holding a no-yaku dora 2 tenpai. Since we won East 1 with a dealer mangan, we don't really want to recklessly lose points... What do we do here?

Answers - Q20





nakajuun (10d):


 riichi.

We are dealer in East 1 and the lead isn't comfortable enough so we chase with our own riichi.





fukami (9d):


 riichi.



We are in ryanmen tenpai with 2 aka, so we will rarely fold. Given the shimocha's  discard and the  pair discard,  should be able to pass. Kamicha's tedashi  after ponning the dora may be likely that he is discarding his safe tile, so his tenpai status is still uncertain. As such, we easily riichi.

tajimanami(8d):

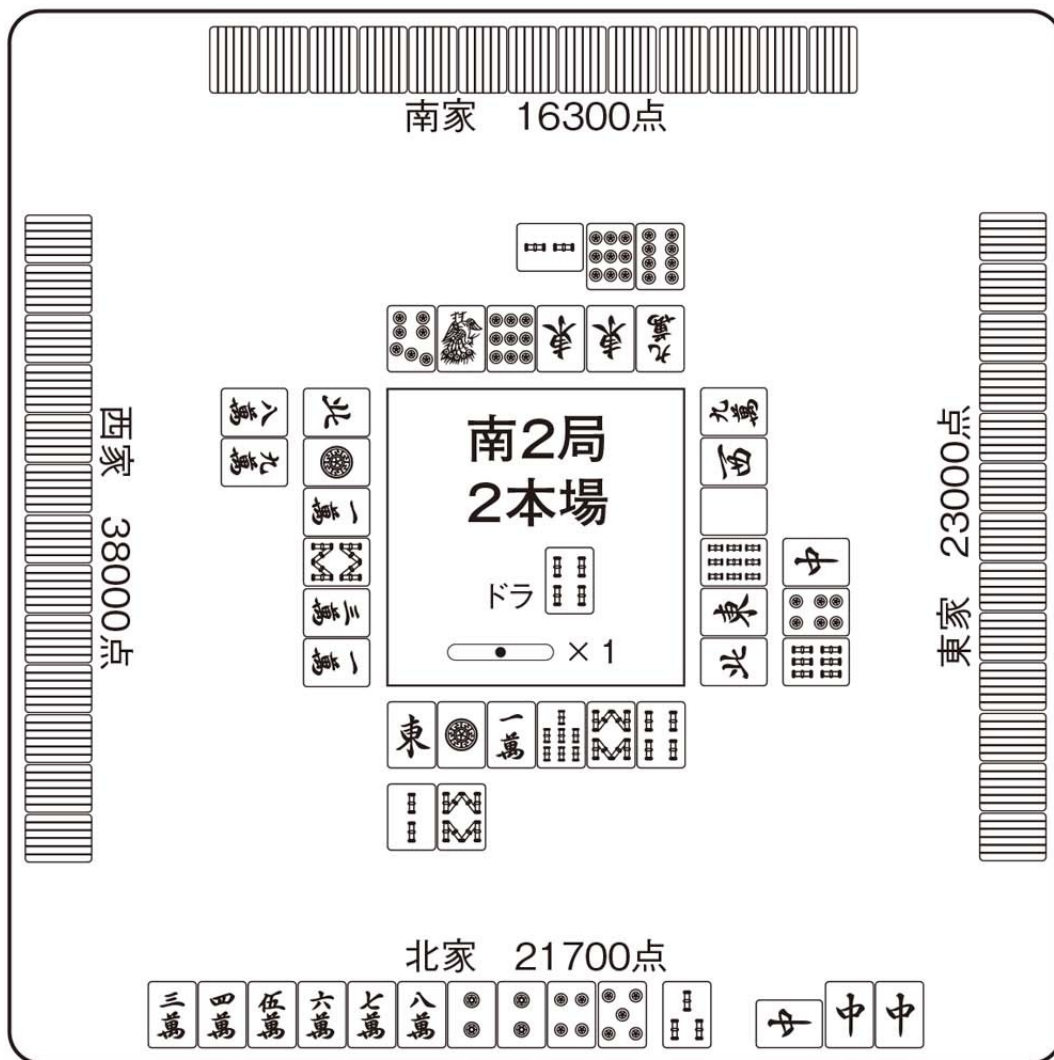

 riichi.


 should easily pass after seeing shimocha's  pair discard. Kamicha's  tedashi seems to have advanced his hand, but we have no tiles safe against both. We are in good shape tenpai for 7700+ points, so we riichi.

Author's summary:

Everyone has decided on 
 riichi. It's still East 1, and we do not have a safe lead. Since we are dealer with a relatively high scoring hand and good wait, we should attack assertively. There's a lot of cases where we crush the opponent's hand by winning here.

Q21 - Push/Fold Judgment #21 - Tenhou



Bakyo

Round	South 2
Honba	2
Sticks	1
Dora	

East	23000
South	16300
West	38000
North (You)	21700


Question

It's South 2, Turn 7 and we are in ryanmen tenpai for chun nomi. South has declared riichi and we have drawn the dora indicator during his ippatsu turn. Do we discard it?

Answers - Q21




Takeoshan (Tenhou):

 push.

We don't want to push, but it's a situation where we don't have a single safe tile. So we pray and push with . Given last place's pond does not have the suji of our winning tiles, we can't rely on others dealing into us while folding. Once we get safe tiles, we should prepare to give up on our hand.




Zaika (10d):

 push.

We are currently in ryanmen tenpai, and there is a big return in going from third to second if we win. If the deal-in rate between  and  has a difference of 5% or more, we would discard . However, since we cannot read any information from toimen's pond, it's better to maintain our tenpai status for now.

Iniesta (10d):

 push.

The riichi declaration tile was , and the fact that toimen did not call on kamicha's  does not mean  is slightly more likely to pass. However, we have no safe tiles so we push. If we were to win, it would be the best scenario as we would be second. However, once we get safe tiles we betaori.



Author's summary:

It's scary because it's next to dora, but after giving it some thought we can only push. The replies all say to push for now, but given our poor prospects we should be ready to fold. Today's answer is to push for now, but to fold once it is possible to do so.. Even if we push, it does not mean we push endlessly. Remember it well.

Answers - Q22

Yui-chan's papa (10d):

 riichi.

We riichi since it's a wait involving a terminal tile. However, based on intuition, we note the  is twice cut. If we dama for three turns our hand may improve and we can always take tenpai by pon on the .









Mimizu (9d):

 dama.


We dama because the hand is not certain to win. The others also should be aiming to advance the last place's dealer turn. Let us not draw any attention to ourselves and work together to displace the dealer.

Ultra Riichi (9d):

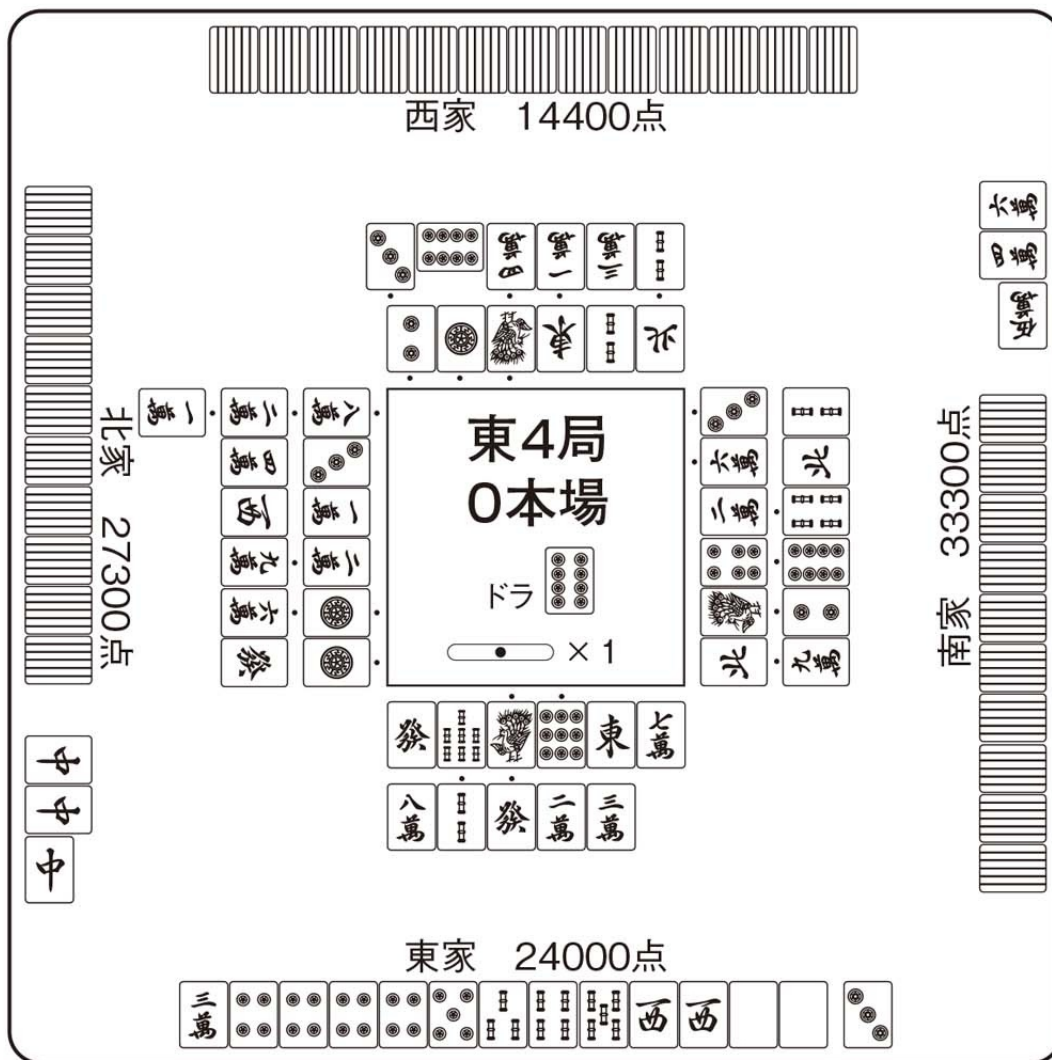
 dama.

We would riichi if we didn't have a  pair. Riichi locks us into a one on one battle against the last place dealer, scaring the others into holding on to  /. Rather than expecting the dealer to discard   after our riichi, it's better to pon  and wait for the   from everyone.

Author's summary:

No matter how you look at it, this seems like a riichi judgment question. However, it can also be a question of push/fold when we think about whether we want to firmly pit our hand against the dealer's by declaring riichi, or if we take the more flexible option to wait for improvements and retain the ability to fold. This riichi does not greatly increase hand value and the relative placements after winning with riichi are unlikely to be much different than if we won by chun nomi. Here, we should aim to maximize win rate, and anticipate ponning the  while keeping the option to fold.

Q23 - Push/Fold Judgment #23 - Tenhou



Bakyo

Round	East 4
Honba	0
Sticks	1
Dora	

East (You)	24000
South	33300
West	14400
North	27300

Question

We have the tiles to fold, but our draws have been good and we have reached tenpai. The shanpon honor wait isn't bad. Do we chase toimen's riichi here?


Answers - Q23


Inaho Volcano (10d):

 riichi push.

The wait isn't bad and we don't have to cut a dangerous tile to riichi. As such, we should try and maximize the point gain from our East dealer round. A tsumo win also gives us a decent boost in value from fu so we have more reason to riichi. However, remaining dama leaves us with the possibility to win our hand while always being able to fold, so it's not all that bad either.

macjr (10d):

 riichi push.

We are dealer and our wait is good, so we should riichi without much thought. It's also possible that we win off the other players dropping the  pair if they run into a lack of safe tiles. Even though last place has declared riichi, the current point situation does not confirm last place avoidance even if we fold, so we riichi as usual.

Nemata (7d):

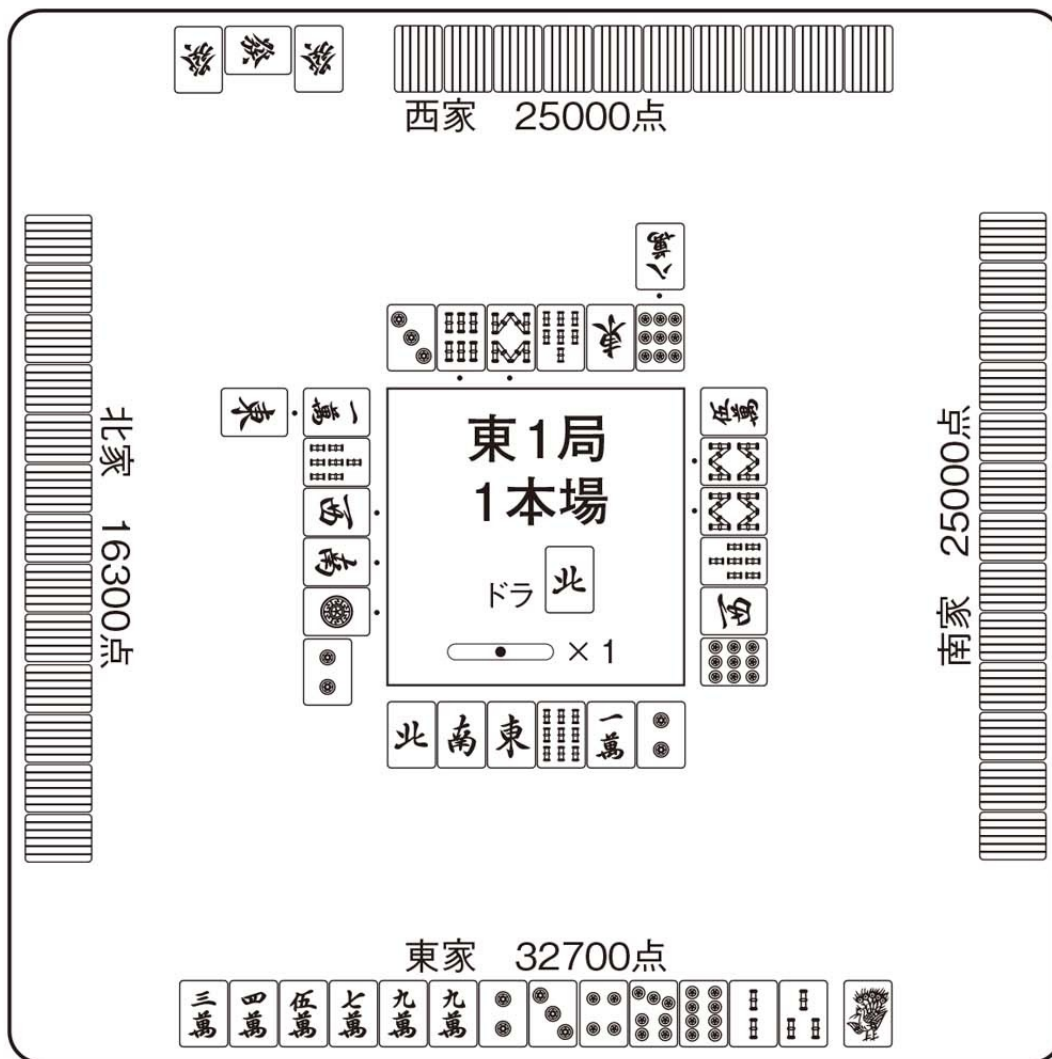
 riichi push.

Even if we drew a dangerous tile next turn, we still wouldn't fold against toimen's riichi, so we chase.

Author's summary:

This time it's a push/fold question on whether to push with riichi, or fold with dama. The replies have all stated that the honor wait is good, as we are aiming for a win off players who are trying to fold. It's a rare case that even though we have a lot of safe tiles and a low value hand, we chase the riichi.

Q24 - Push/Fold Judgment #24 - Tenhou



Bakyo

Round	East 1
Honba	1
Sticks	1
Dora	北

East (You)	32700
South	25000
West	25000
North	16300

Question

It's East 1, and after winning 7700 points, we are in pinfu tenpai against a non-dealer riichi. Do we push with riichi? Dama? Or fold?

Answers - Q24

Crazy Sparrow (Tenhoui):



riichi push.

It's East 1, and our lead is nowhere near comfortable. We are the dealer, and given that we are not waiting on genbutsu, we have no issue riiching.

hayato (10d):




riichi push.

It's cheap and the wait isn't that great despite being ryanmen, but since it's our East dealer turn we riichi. A deal-in for 3900 is about the same as if we folded and kamicha tsumos a mangan. So it's fine to attack when it's our dealer turn.

Rei of Nanto (9d):



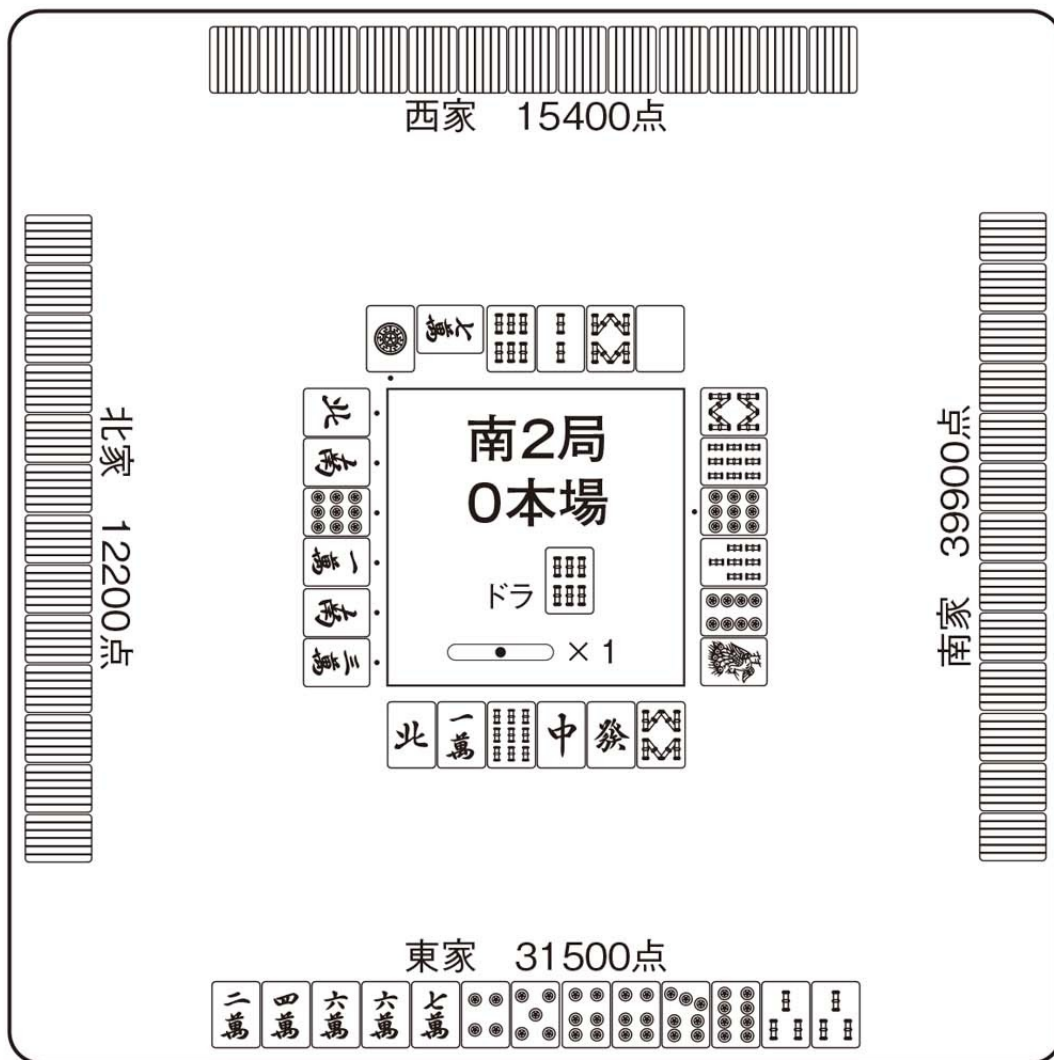
riichi push.

Even if we know it's not a safe tile, there is merit to pushing. This riichi is dependent on the amount of  in the pond. If there is only one, we riichi. If there are three, we dama and wait and see, folding depending on the situation. Two being discarded is a bit awkward, but since it's our dealership in East 1 in a hanchan we riichi. Our riichi judgment would be different if it was not our dealer turn, and we were pushing against dealer riichi.

Author's summary:

From the answers, it's clear that our lead is not safe. If it were South, we might take a different approach. However, despite the weakened wait and cheap riichi pinfu, the strong players have all boldly decided to push.

Q25 - Push/Fold Judgment #25 - Tenhou



Bakyo

Round	South 2
Honba	0
Sticks	1
Dora	



East (You)	31500
South	39000
West	15400
North	12200

Question

We are in second place as dealer in South 2. Toimen has declared riichi and we are currently in iishanten. If we chii on kamicha's we will be in tenpai. How do we proceed?



Answers - Q25



shoot39 (10d):

 chii discard .

Chii and take the  wait. We push all the way until around turn 12.




Chronos (10d):

 chii discard .




If we do not call and instead proceed closed, there is little chance of achieving a good shape and high value hand. As such, we try to call and stop toimen's hand. To be clear, the reason we take the shanpon wait is not due to  being likely to come out against the riichi. We drop the safe  for tenpai because this not a must-win hand.

Folkcraft (10d):

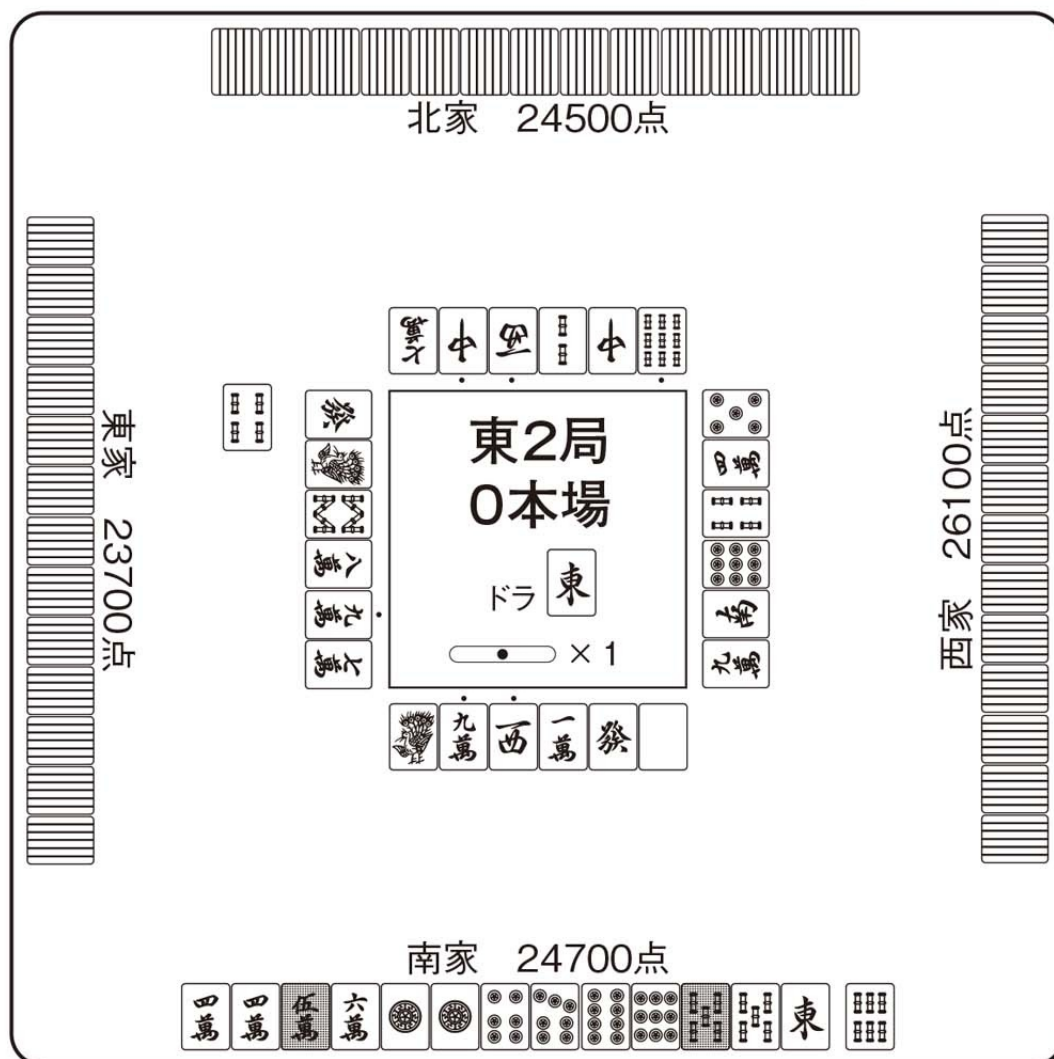
 chii discard .

Given toimen's riichi declaration tile  came out after the dora discard, it's certain that the wait is related to the tile. In addition, there must be some value to the hand given that he discarded the dora, so we cannot discard . If we draw musuji afterwards we mawashi with .

Author's summary:

It is still early in the round. If we take tenpai here, it's huge if we can steal the opponent's win. If we do nothing, we lose points. The second key point is whether we discard the dangerous . The replies are divided, but it's best to compete against toimen without taking any unnecessary risk. As such, we chii on  and cut , trying our best to safely win.

Q26 - Push/Fold Judgment #26 - Free Rule



Bakyo

Round	East 2
Honba	0
Sticks	1
Dora	東

East	23700
South (You)	24700
West	26100
North	24500


Question

It's free rule and we have two aka in our hand, but the dealer has declared riichi. We don't have any safe tiles, so do we push? Or do we cut the safest possible tiles?

Answers - Q26



Cheetah (10d):

Discard .

We cut  and try to get a feel while stalling 2 turns. Whether we push or fold depends on how many safe tiles we draw.



Fukami (9d):

Discard .


We push with the  discard. Even with 2 aka, we don't generally push from ryanshanten but we have no choice since we have no safe tiles. We discard the dora , as all the other tiles are required for our hand. We push until we can get two genbutsu or until we find another path to fold.

Kawamura (9d):

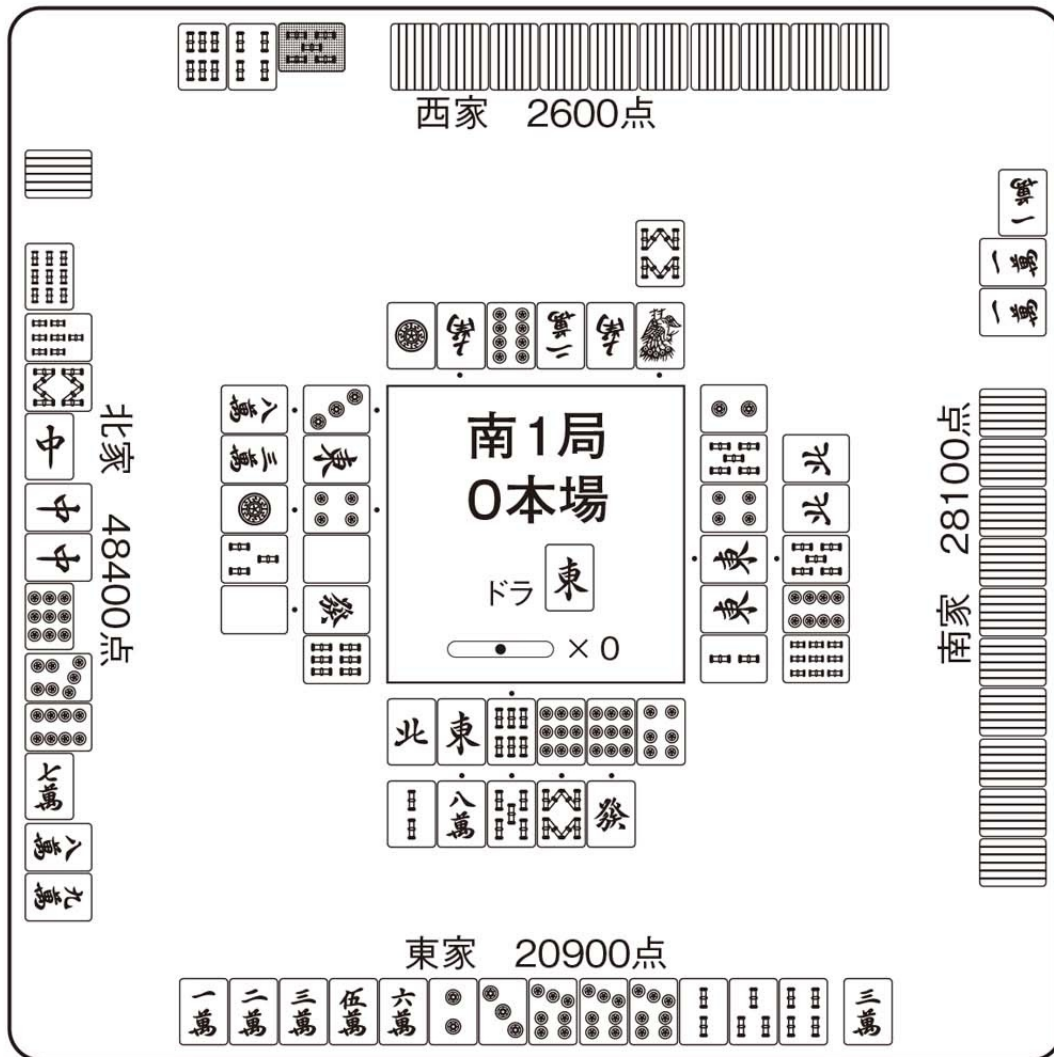
Discard .

 is the safest tile and we are in good shape ryanshanten, so we discard . It's typical of beginners to fear dealing in to a high value hand and hold onto winds and honors.

Author's summary:

It may be difficult for people to determine when to push when playing under free rule. Here, we push because we have no safe tiles and we have two aka. Compared to Tenhou, the threshold for pushing in free rule is much lower. I also cut , and got my hand into a shape worth fighting for.

Q27 - Push/Fold Judgment #27 - Free Rule



Bakyo

Round	South 1
Honba	0
Sticks	0
Dora	東

East (You)	20900
South	28100
West	2600
North	48400

Question

We are in third place and it's our dealer turn in South. We have a wide iishanten, but our opponents have all called. Do we still push hard? Or do we fold?

Answers - Q27



Futokunaio (Tenhou):

 push.

Shimocha may be going for Chinitsu, but it would be great if we could bust toimen and get second. As such, we maximize our offensive potential. If we riichi, we may even score a direct hit on kamicha.



Saika (10d):

 push.


The board is in a weird state. I think toimen was tricked into discarding  to help kamicha escape furiten. That's how I feel the situation is, and if so, we should instantly cut . If I'm wrong, sorry.

Biribiri Billy (9d):

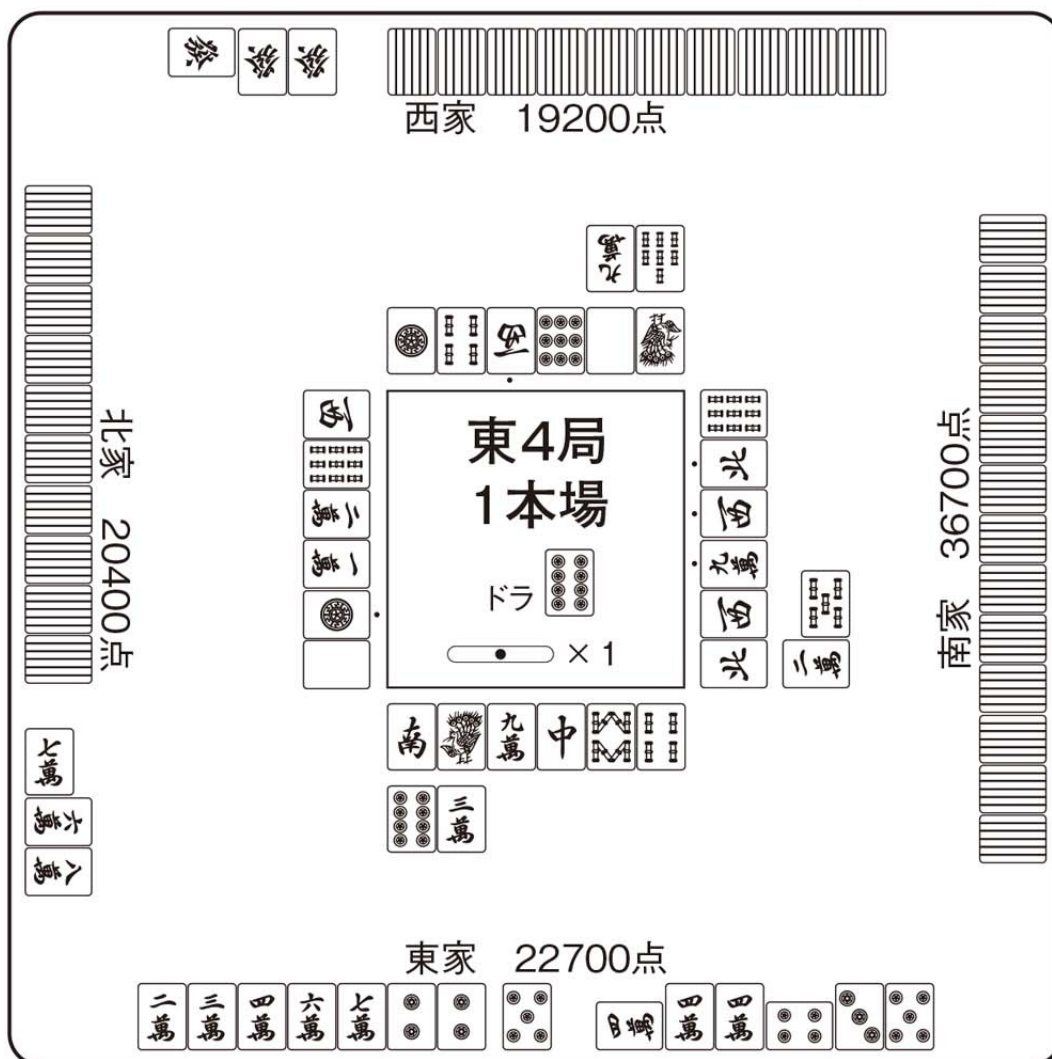
.

We don't want to fold here, but  looks too risky so we discard  to open the possibility of calling. If it deals into shimocha who has been making suspicious moves, I'm honestly going to smash my mouse.

Author's summary:

Compared to Tenhou, riichi is stronger under free rule, and calling is often looked down upon. However, people still call to advance shugi hands, so it's difficult to gauge hand value for push/fold judgment. Kamicha is certainly in tenpai, but we're not sure about shimocha and toimen. I, like Futokunaio-san and Saika-san, pushed with the , aiming for riichi.

Q28 - Push/Fold Judgment #28 - Free Rule



Bakyo

Round	East 4
Honba	1
Sticks	1
Dora	

East (You)	22700
South	36700
West	19200
North	20400

Question

We are dealer with ryanmen tenpai in East 4. It's the non-dealer's ippatsu turn. We have not seen any aka, so pushing is risky. We have genbutsu in the lower manzu, so we can dodge if needed. Do we push or fold?

Answers - Q28

Doppo (Tenhou):


 push.

If we are playing for money then we always pushing. There are three reasons:

1. There are many remaining suji.
2. The shugi rate is relatively high, so we lose a lot on tsumo.
3. Our final placement will be influenced by our ability to renchan this hand.

Nannanda- (9d):

 fold.

We don't push. If it wasn't ippatsu we could push back slightly, but the return for our hand is too small. It's basically a loss if we push it against the riichi. We betaori from .

Mahjong World (9d):

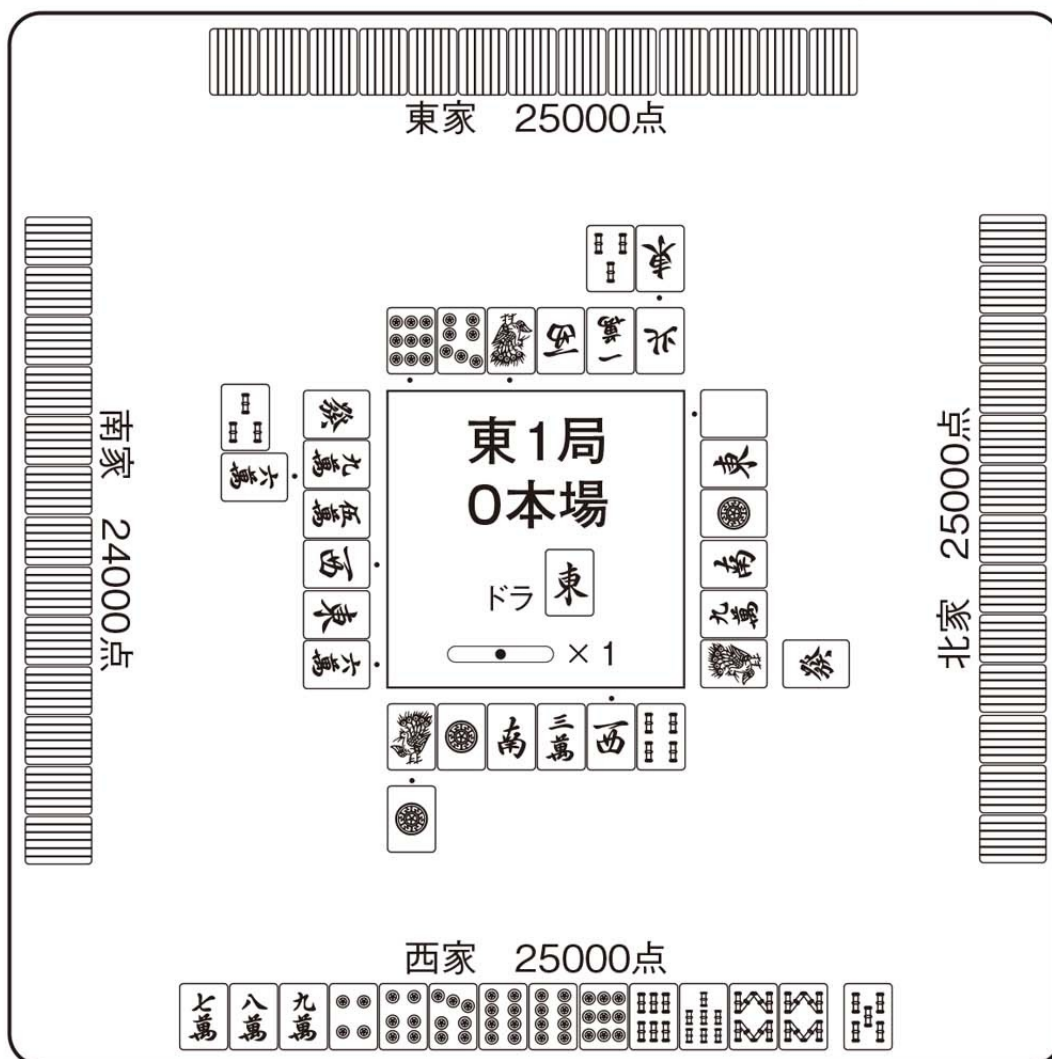
 push.

Even if our hand is cheap, we are dealer with good shape tenpai. The ruleset should not confuse us - be prepared to push.

Author's summary:

How aggressive should we be with good wait tenpai, with no dora visible? The replies are divided, so perhaps it is up to one's playstyle. I would push. Since it's free rule, higher placements matter more, and our renchan is important. Ippatsu is annoying but, I believe it is important to have the courage to boldly step forward with tenpai.

Q29 - Push/Fold Judgment #29 - Free Rule



Bakyo

Round	East 1
Honba	0
Sticks	1
Dora	東

East	25000
South	24000
West (You)	25000
North	25000


Question

It's East 1, and there is a non-dealer riichi. We can take tenpai for bad shape riichi nomi. Do we take tenpai and dama? Or do we fold?

Answers - Q29

Sakurako (9d):

 fold.

Since it's free rule we can imagine pushing one , but the return of oikake riichi on a 1300 point bad wait hand is too low. As such, we drop the manzu.

bakase (8d):


 fold.

We don't push. Once upon a time, somebody won while chasing a with bad wait riichi nomi...but this is not typical. We should do everything that is the exact opposite of pushing.

We cut  earnestly.

Mom is the meal ready yet? (8d):

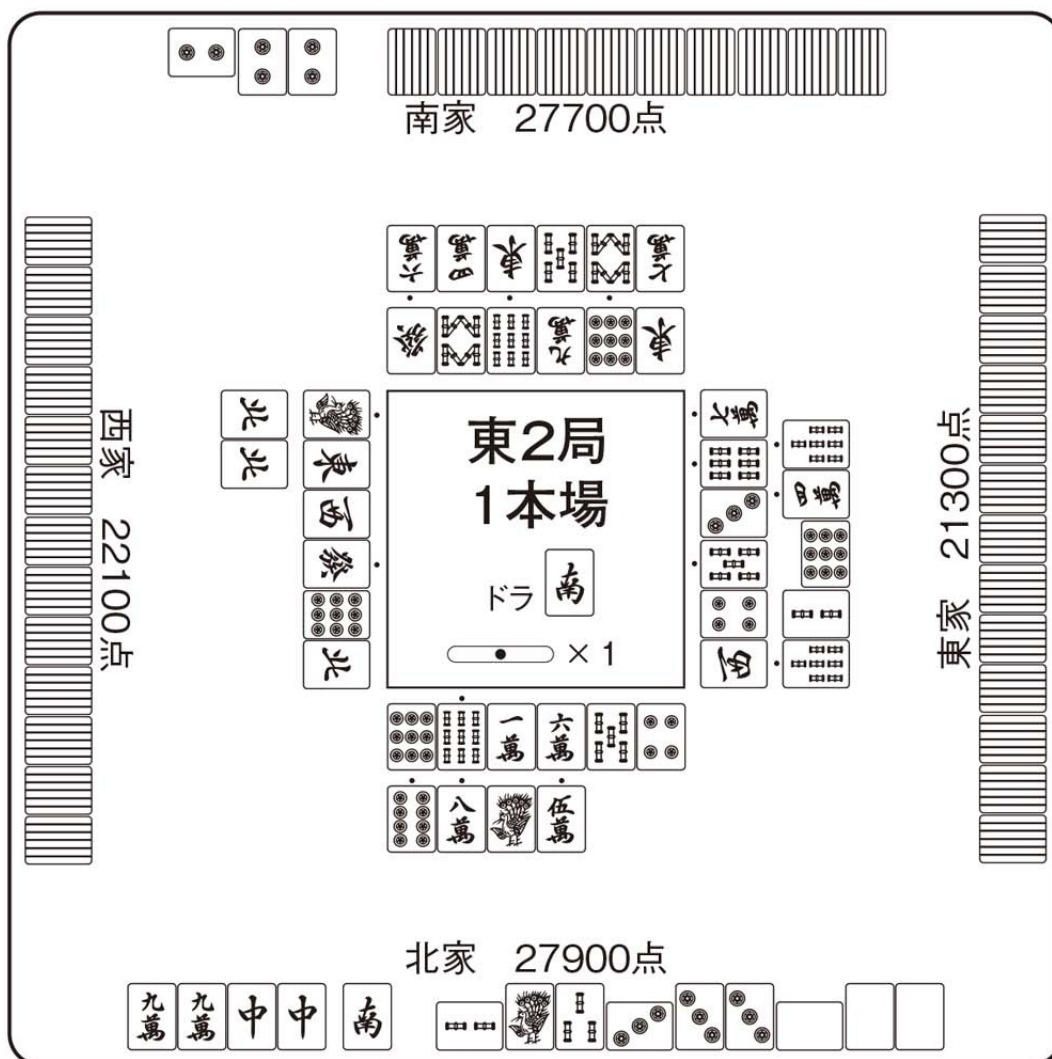
 dama push.

We discard  and take tenpai. We do not chase with riichi. Since we have few safe tiles and it is early, we push slightly. Once we gather more safe tiles, we immediately fold.

Author's summary:

What do we do when facing an early riichi with bad shape tenpai? The answers slightly vary, but the gist is to fold. Tenhou may have ingrained the idea of not pushing if the hand value is low, but plenty of people would riichi regardless in this ruleset. Even with tenpai, when considering the risk and return, sometimes the correct choice is to fold.

Q30 - Push/Fold Judgment #30 - Free Rule



Bakyo

Round	East 2
Honba	1
Sticks	1
Dora	南

East	21300
South	27700
West	22100
North (You)	27900

Question

We foolishly called three times and got chased. We now face dealer riichi, but have a decent tenpai so...we obviously push anything! Right? Even the dora?

Answers - Q30






Shibukawa (10d):

 fold.

It's dangerous to two players, so we don't push this kind of dora with this kind of hand.





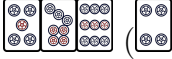
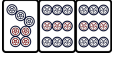


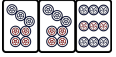
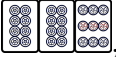
Amagi Kojirou (9d):

 fold.


We can't tell when toimen has called, and he seems to be pushing. Kamicha appears to be folding, but may also be mawashi. The riichi declaration tile, , was tedashi after many middle-tile discards. As such, a tanki or chiitoi possibility is low, and given the  discards, odds are the dealer has a good shape tenpai. The  is dangerous against toimen, so we fold with  which is suji to .

Kunihikomaru (9d):

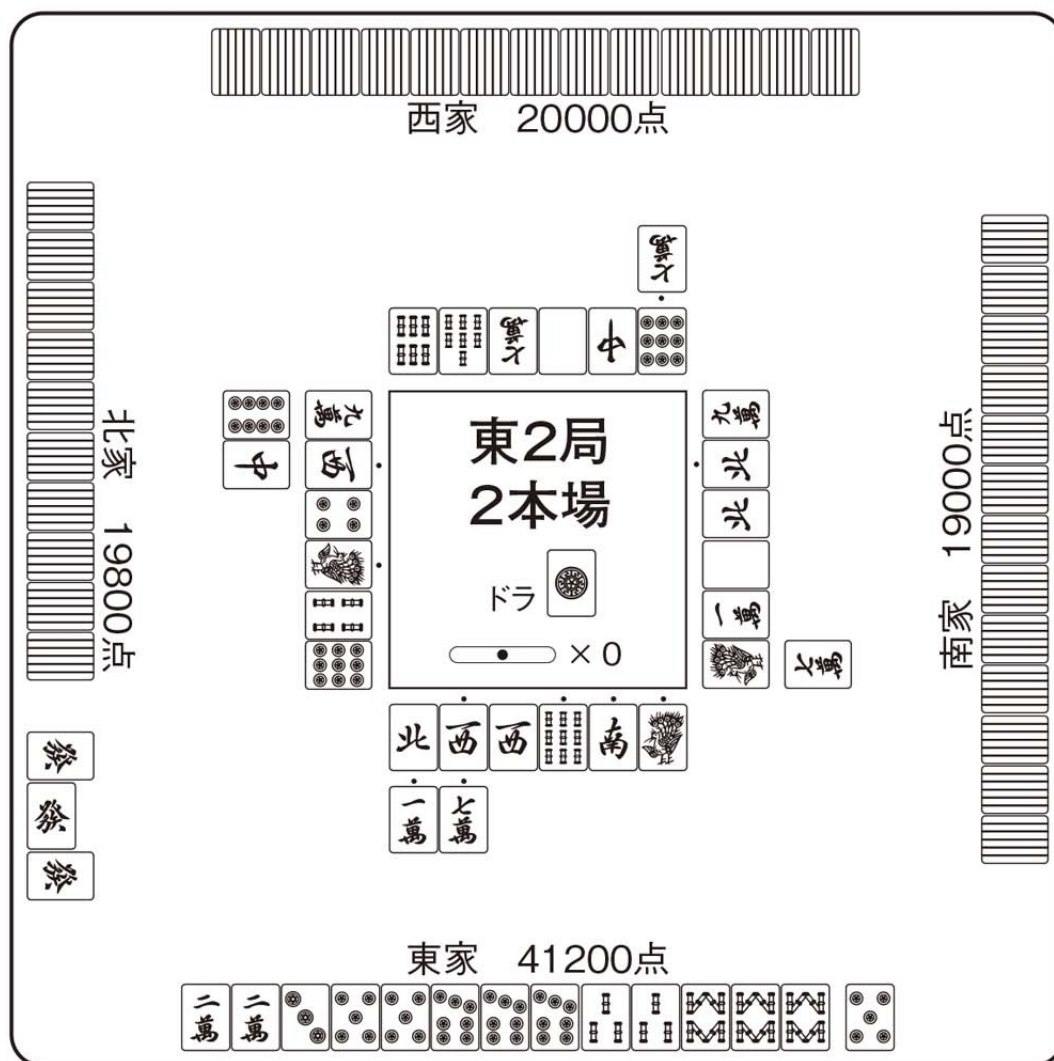
 fold.

This  is quite dangerous against the dealer so we cannot discard it. Accordingly, we drop the  pair.  is dangerous because the  was not discarded from either  (sakingiri would be abnormal) or  (since we see all four ). Therefore, the  was probably being cut from either  or , and the final wait is a shanpon.

Author's summary:

The replies all state to fold with . It's too scary to discard the dora here. Our hand does not have the value for pushing. Toimen may also be in tenpai.

Q31 - Riichi Judgment #1 - Tenhou



Bakyo

Round	East 2
Honba	2
Sticks	0
Dora	

East (You)	41200
South	19000
West	20000
North	19800

Question

We are dealer and first in the early stages of the game, and in tenpai for suuanko with our draws. Do we riichi?

Answers - Q31



Futokunaio (Tenhou):

Don't riichi.

We dama. I think the possibility of our winning tile coming out is higher if we dama, rather than riichi and pressure kamicha to fold.

Greed (10d):

Riichi.

The scores of the other three are pretty much tied, and it is difficult for them to push against dealer riichi in this situation. Given our shanpon wait and the tiles being  and , it's not like they will easily come out. As such, we try to suppress them with our riichi and aim for tsumo.

nakajuun (10d):

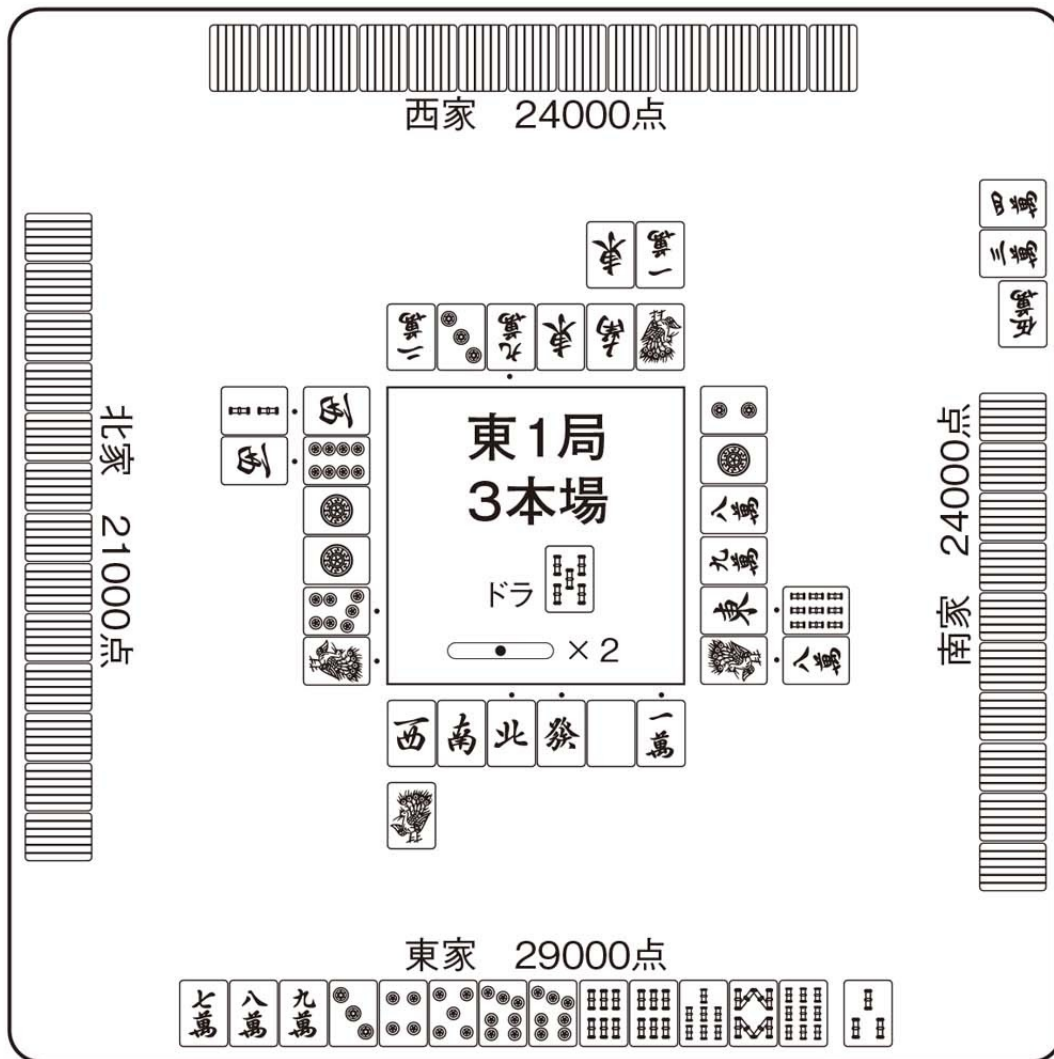
Riichi.

We riichi. The score situation lets us effectively pressure the players to our sides, and even if there is another riichi our hand is not well-suited for folding. If we win with 18000 points we are almost guaranteed first, and if we hit ura for 24000 our first is guaranteed.

Author's summary:

The question is about how we should play when our hand has good value. Depending on the type of player you are, the decision is always split between aiming for more points, or taking the guaranteed points and slowly building your lead. I would riichi.

Q32 - Riichi Judgment #2 - Tenhou



Bakyo

Round	East 1
Honba	3
Sticks	2
Dora	

East (You)	29000
South	24000
West	24000
North	21000

Question

We are dealer and there are two riichi sticks. However, our hand has many possibilities for improvement. Do we riichi or dama?

Answers - Q32

Saika (10d):

Don't riichi.

The merit of being dealer is not the possibility of renchan but rather the scoring potential. Rather than placing emphasis on speed with your calls or relying on preemptive riichis to suppress others, we should actively aim for hands that would let us make a decisive strike. As such, we dama and wait for improvements to our hand.

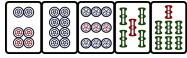


Cheetah (10d):

Don't riichi.

We have a lot of improvements which will improve the shape of our hand. We have not seen a single dora, so we are afraid of others pushing back against us.

Iniesta (10d):

Don't riichi.

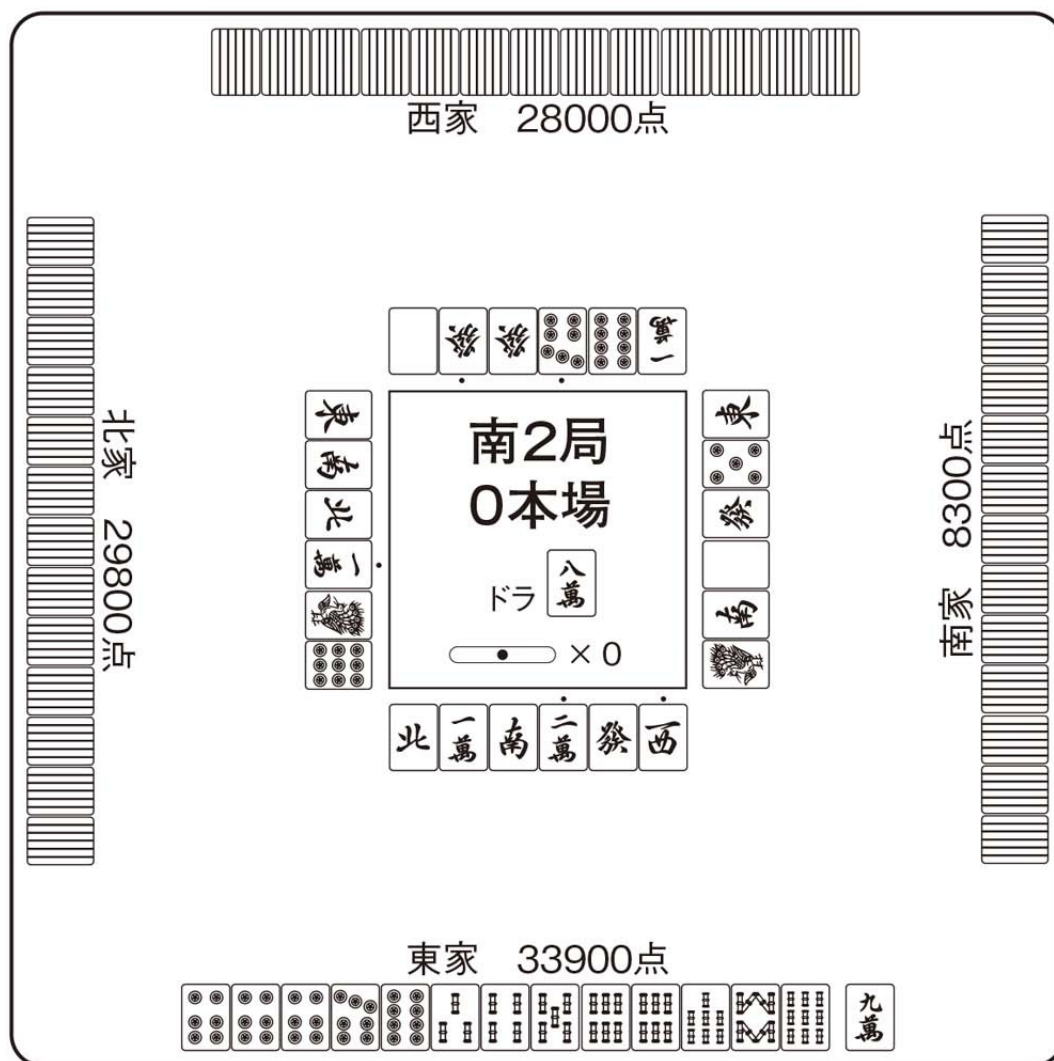
We do not riichi. If we take into consideration  as well as , we have 7 types of tiles that can improve our hand. To try and suppress others with our tactical riichi (dealer riichi) just because we want the kyoutaku¹ is a waste of our hand. We riichi once our hand improves. We riichi even if we draw . At least this way we do not deal-in if we draw the dora after riichi.

Author's summary:

The question is about balancing the desire for renchan versus going for a high scoring hand. When this question was asked on Twitter, there are quite a few people who choose to riichi. This time, the three 10d players have all said it is better to wait for improvements to our hand for a higher value. I also dama'd in my actual game.

¹deposited points for the winner (riichi sticks and honba)

Q33 - Riichi Judgment #3 - Tenhou



Bakyo

Round	South 2
Honba	0
Sticks	0
Dora	八萬

East (You)	33900
South	8300
West	28000
North	29800

Question

We are dealer in South, and our hand has potential for good improvements... Do we riichi or dama?

Answers - Q33

Shibukawa (10d):

Riichi.

We riichi. Even if we wait for improvements, the only good improvements are if we draw



are so-so. Our wait is fine enough as dealer so we try to suppress others.

shoot39 (10d):

Riichi.

We riichi. Our hand isn't that high value but the wait on  is strong so we riichi.

Chronos (10d):

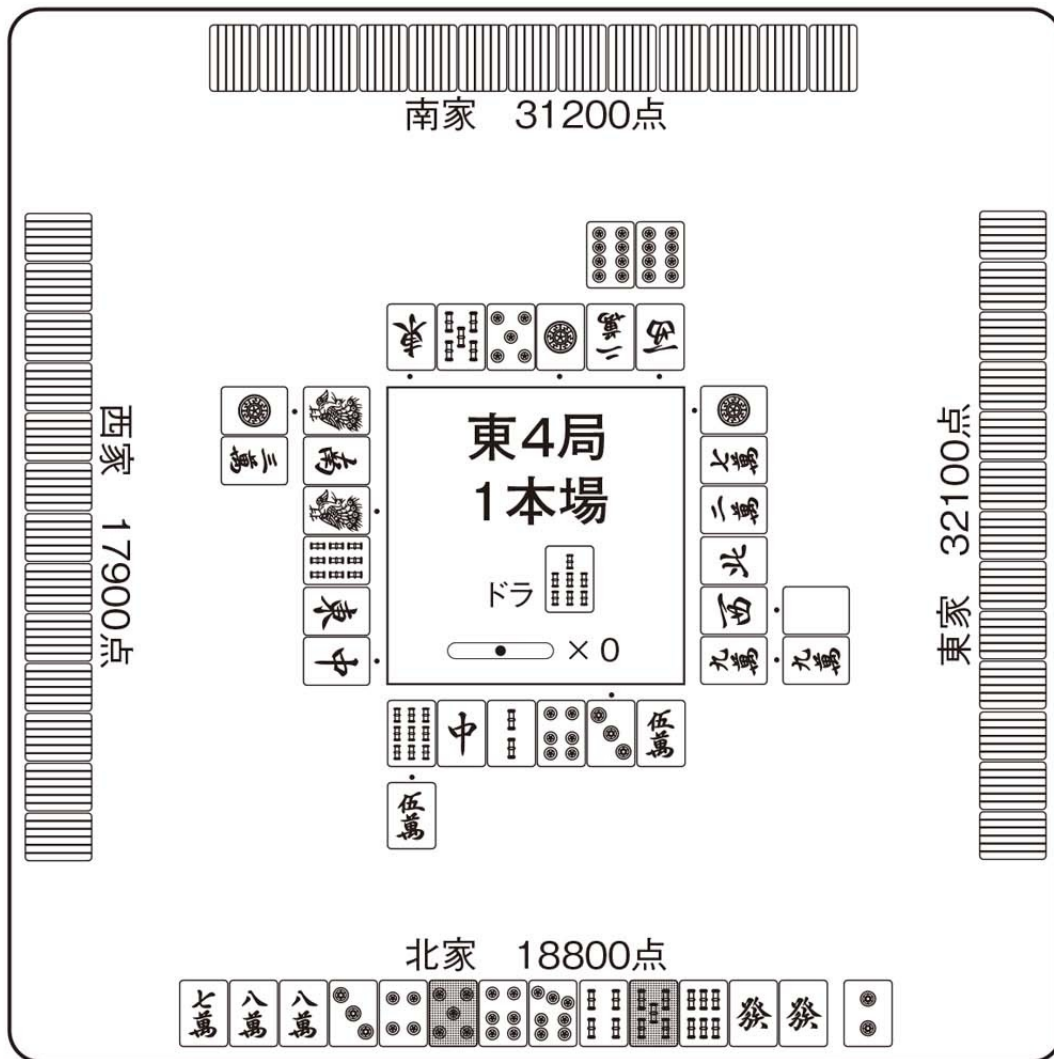
Riichi.

We riichi. Given the current situation, our wait is good. Even if we dama, few improvements actually translate into increased hand value.

Author's summary:

Like in question Q32, this question also revolves around whether to wait for improvements to our hand. The answers are unanimous in riiching. Here, the wait is good enough prior to improvement, and our status as dealer emphasizes speed in winning. I dama'd in my actual game waiting for improvements, but if I encounter the same situation again, I think I would riichi.

Q34 - Riichi Judgment #4 - Tenhou



Bakyo

Round	East 4
Honba	1
Sticks	0
Dora	

East	32100
South	31200
West	17900
North (You)	18800




Question

We are going to riichi, but we can choose between a simple ryanmen and a decent shanpon. Which wait do we take?

Answers - Q34










Please give cola (Tenhou):

Discard  riichi.

With a 5200 point hand already, we do not need to force an extra han by waiting on . There is no proof that   are depleted, so if we are going to fight we should simply take the riichi on the ryanmen with more available tiles. Even with dora 1, we should take the ryanmen.






Rei of Nanto (9d):

Discard  riichi.


Usually discarding  is better in such cases, but this time discarding  is better without a doubt. If we discard  followed by  in Houou level rooms,  is not coming out. If we discard , it may be read simply as a   discard and  will become a blind spot. While the number of available tiles is lower with the shanpon, the ease of our winning tiles coming out and added value make up for it.

Saury (8d):

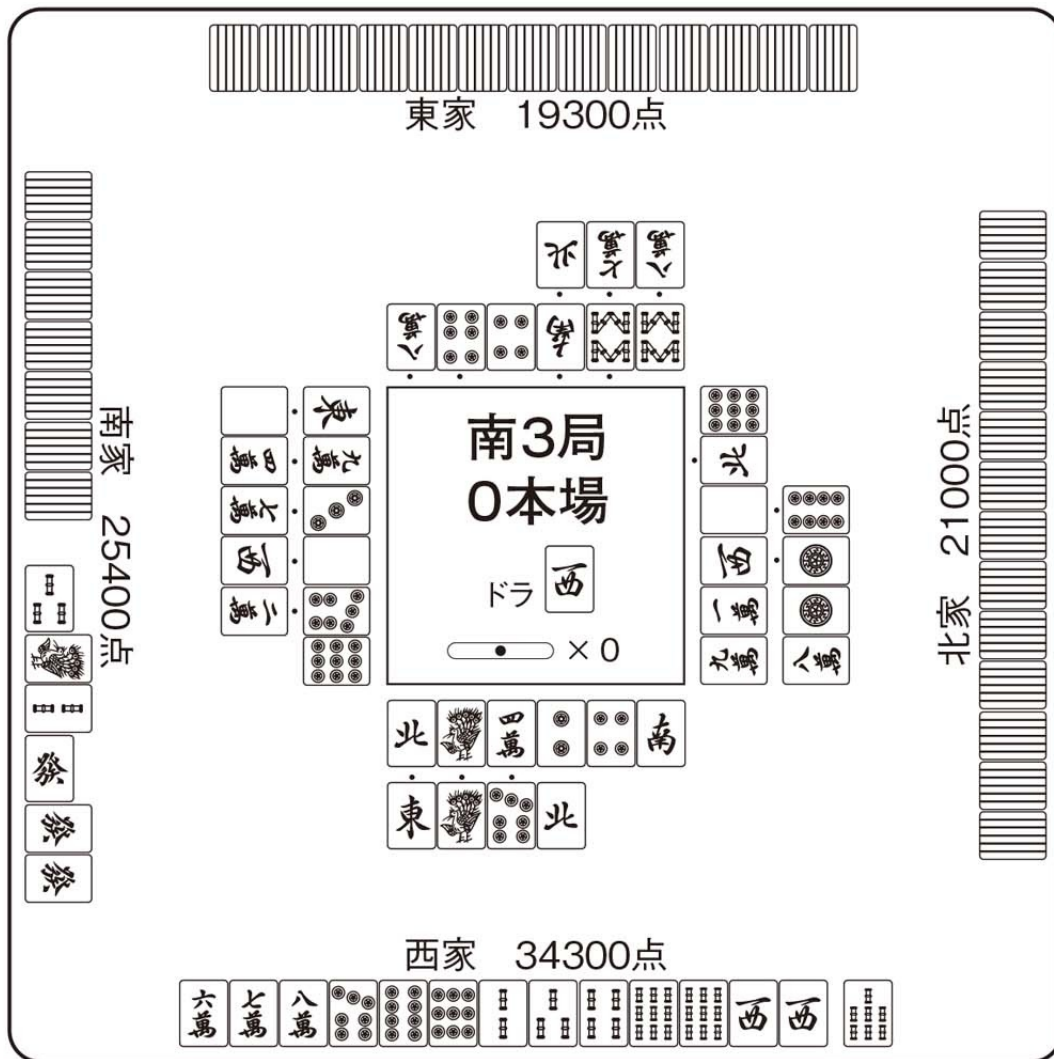
Discard  riichi.

There is no information on the  or  wait being good, and others may think we are taking a kanchan wait on  so it may not be easy for  to come out. If we have only one aka we may wish to seek the additional 1 han from the , but since we have two aka and a good value hand we should take the wait that is easier to tsumo.

Author's summary:

This kind of shape comes out occasionally, and the question is how which option we should pick. My mind has been perpetually troubled by this question. The in-depth analysis that lead to each reply should give you good direction on how to proceed. In my actual game, I choose to discard  for riichi.

Q35 - Riichi Judgment #5 - Tenhou



Bakyo

Round	South 3
Honba	0
Sticks	0
Dora	西

East	19300
South	25400
West (You)	34300
North	21000

Question

We are in tenpai with a dora 2 hand worth pushing, but the dora wait is dead. The kanchan and shanpon wait have the same amount of tiles. However, before deciding our wait, should we riichi?

Answers - Q35



Mecha Zetton (10d):

Do not riichi.

We do not riichi. If we deal in to kamicha's mangan, we have a chance of being last. As such, we do not take any risks and leave it to kamicha to settle this round. Even if he gets a mangan tsumo, we are pretty much in an agari top¹ situation next round.




Folkcraft (10d):

Do not riichi.

We fold with . We are currently in first, the point gain from riichi is minimal, and the risk of dealing in is high. If we riichi, we have the chance of forcing second place to back off, but that would also lead to a high chance of the last place dealer getting renchan, which is bad for us. Given that kamicha has called twice in addition to discarding the dora , we can determine he is highly likely to be in tenpai.

One way traffic (8d):

Do not riichi.

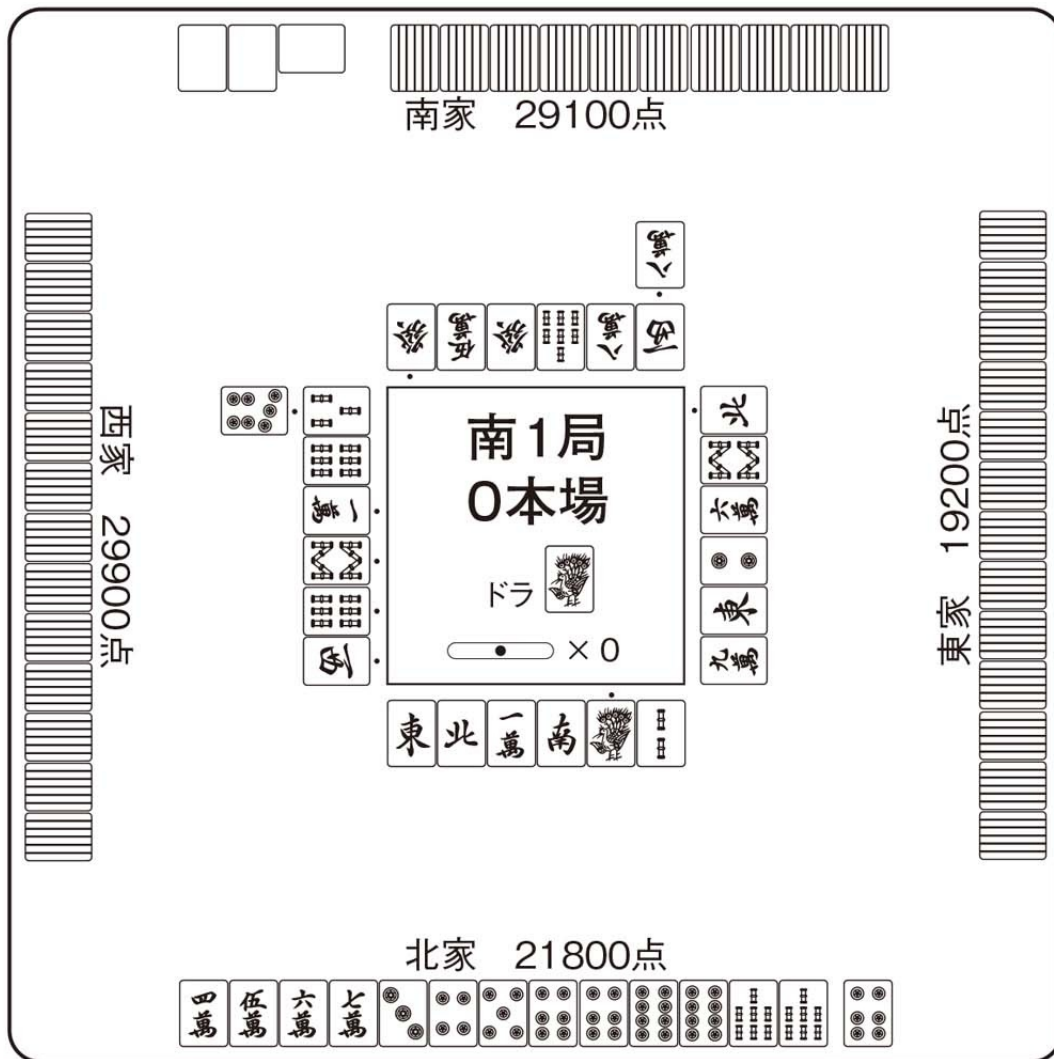
If kamicha wins with a 7700 point hand, he is going to be first in all last. In addition,  does not seem likely to come out given the pond. As such, we refrain from riichi. Kamicha is probably tenpai. If we remain dama, it is highly unlikely we will win via tsumo.  can be called, so we try to circumvent that with the  discard.

Author's summary:

To me, this pattern is the same as a chiitai with one tile discarded, and I would generally be in the riichi camp. However, given the point situation and the importance of avoiding last place in Tenhou, I would dama to avoid trouble. Perhaps, it may even be better to fold as stated in the replies.

¹taking first place upon winning any hand regardless of value

Q36 - Riichi Judgment #6 - Tenhou



Bakyo

Round	South 1
Honba	0
Sticks	0
Dora	

East	19200
South	29100
West	29900
North (You)	21800



Question

We are in tenpai with yaku (1 han). Riichi looks OK, but we can also wait for improvements. Do we riichi?

Answers - Q36

Takeoshan (Tenhou):

 riichi.

We wish to get improvements from the manzu yonreikei, but we have already seen four of the  . Even if we hit tenpai on manzu it's still a questionable decision. Given that it's hard to wait for improvements on anything but manzu, we fix this as our final hand. We take the advantages from a preemptive riichi.


Biribiri Billy (10d):

 dama.

While our waits are on tiles that are difficult for the other players to use, we have few winning tiles so we dama. This is not meant to be a strategic dama to advance the dealership. Riiching is not a bad choice either. I would riichi once I get a good shape.

Amagi Kotaro (9d):

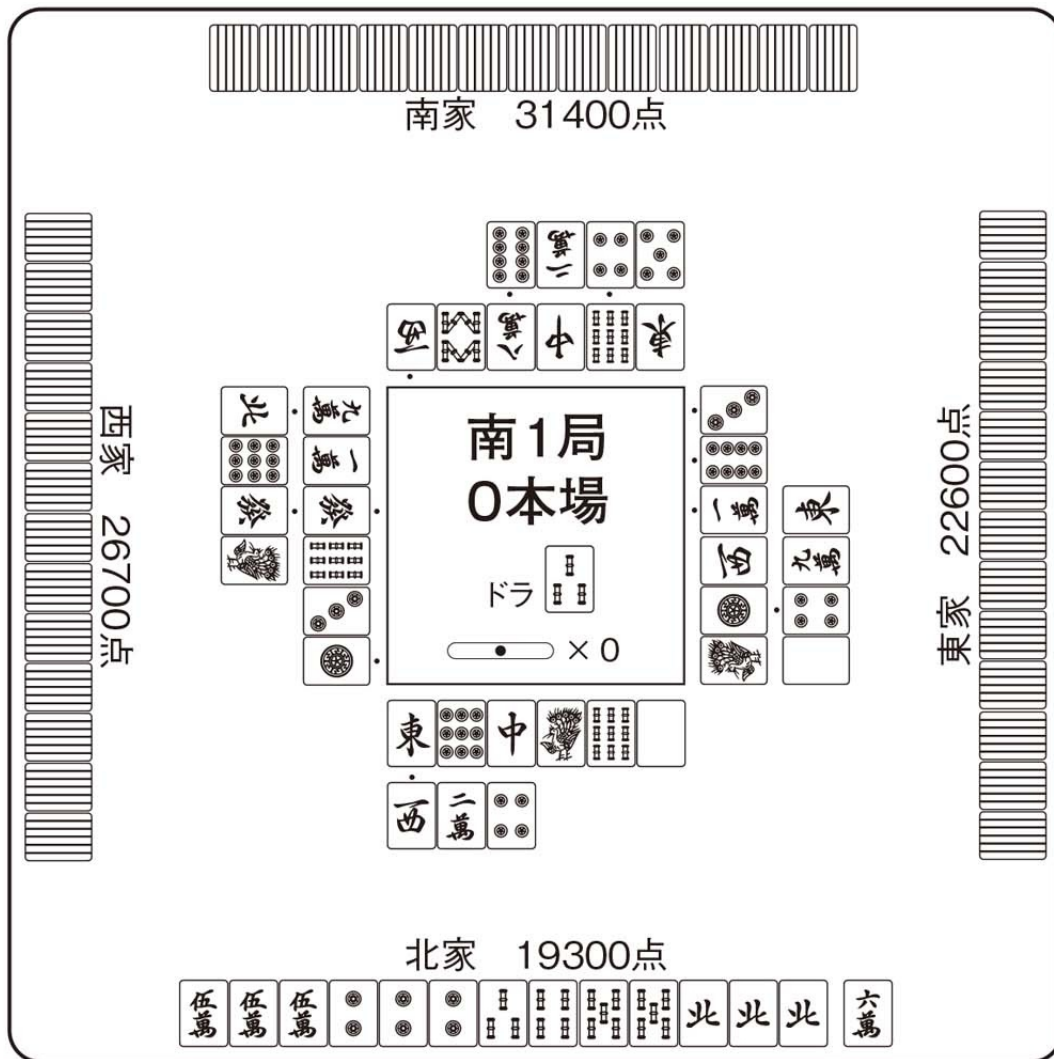
 dama.

If we don't take tenpai here, we may miss out on winning. However, it's unlikely that we can get any improvements on the manzu given the amount of remaining tiles. We want to try to sweep away shimocha's dealer turn with toimen's help. If we riichi, the odds of toimen folding increases. As such, we dama after our  discard.

Author's summary:

This question is on how we use a hand that already has 1 han, and how it causes confusion to the player's decision. The Tenhou has chosen to take advantage of the preemptive riichi, while the latter two have taken the option of waiting for improvements for a better shape. Both have their strengths and weaknesses, so take them into consideration.

Q37 - Riichi Judgment #7 - Tenhou




Bakyo

Round	South 1
Honba	0
Sticks	0
Dora	二

East	22600
South	31400
West	26700
North (You)	19300



Question

We have a sanankou hand with suuankou potential. We have drawn  giving us tenpai with a ryantan wait with the possibility of losing sanankou. Do we riichi? Or do we stay dama?

Answers - Q37



Crazy Sparrow (Tenhou):

 riichi.

We can either discard  for dama or discard  and riichi. Since winning either would greatly increase our odds of avoiding last, we take the option with higher odds of winning. Even if another riichi had already been declared, the 6 tile difference leads us to riichi regardless. There is not much return in waiting for the suuankou improvement, so we do not need to think about it.



Yui-chan's papa (10d):

 riichi.


Rather than wait for  to come out, we should try to rely on us tsumoing given the turn order. We want to have a strong wait in the event other players try to strike back at us. If we did not have dora, I would have discarded  and dama'd.

Yuusou:

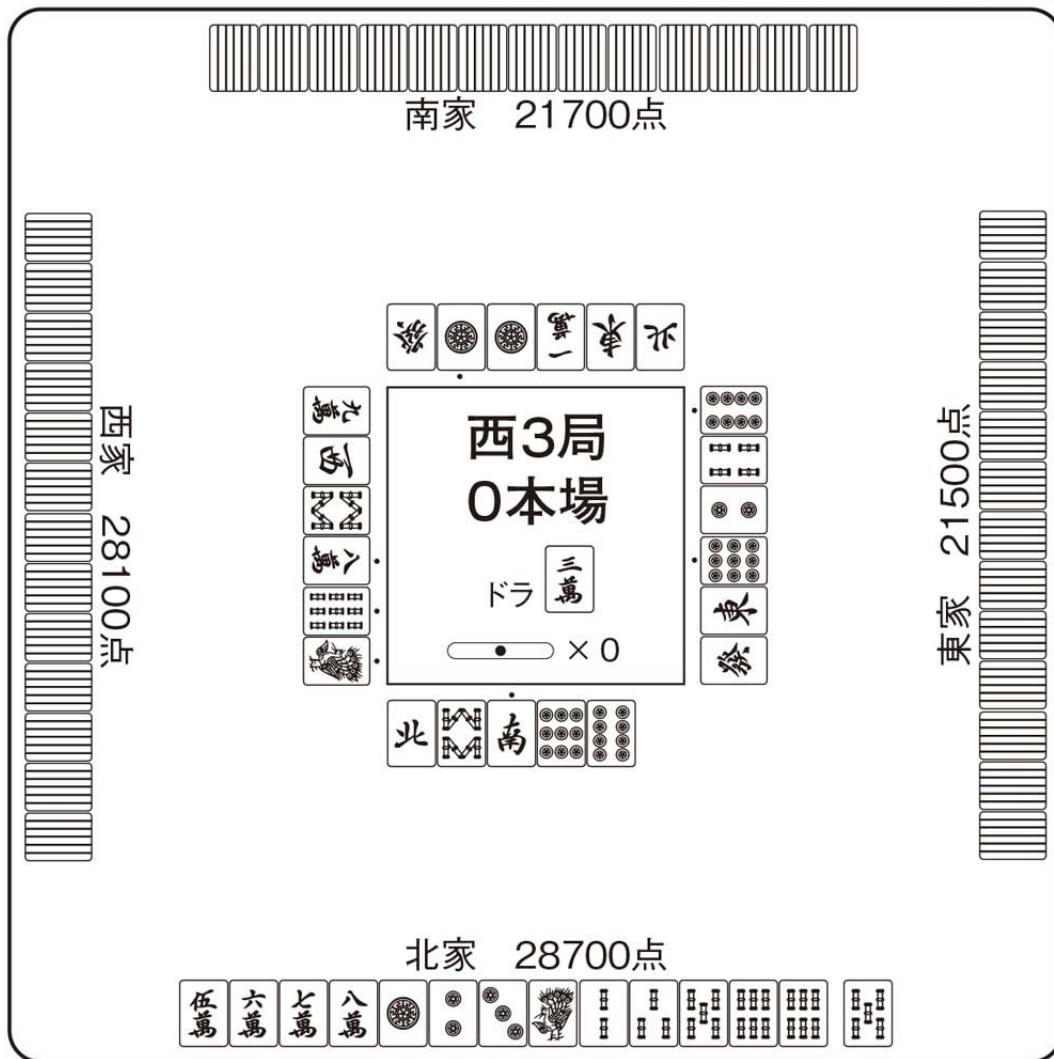
 riichi.

Regardless of what we discard, we are going to riichi as long as we did not draw into an ankou. It looks difficult for both kamicha and toimen to use the upper manzu, and the tiles look to still be alive in the wall so we cut  for the riichi. I suspect there are at most two  left in the wall, and the middle Souzu seem to be in the hands of the other players, weakening the souzu wait. We take a rather easy wait given the state of the remaining tiles.

Author's summary:

While there is romance in going for yakuman if we see the possibility, the replies are sobering. There is a uniform reply of discarding  and declaring riichi. Rather than going for the slow yakuman, we should just take the immediate mangan in front of us. This is an iron-clad rule that should be memorized.

Q38 - Riichi Judgment #8 - Tenhou



In West, the game ends once someone exceeds 30000 points.

Bakyo

Round	West 3
Honba	0
Sticks	0
Dora	三萬

East	21500
South	21700
West	28100
North (You)	28700


Question

We will be first if we win with 1300 points. We are currently in tenpai, but the shanpon wait is poor. Do we riichi? Do we dama? Or do we not even take tenpai?

Answers - Q38



taroo (10d):

Don't riichi.

If we riichi, toimen and kamicha will fold, making it a one on one between you and the last-place dealer. Upon folding, their discards may be called by the dealer given the scores, which would be unfavorable to us. Therefore, we discard  and regress from tenpai, aiming for dama pinfu. If we get a better wait we riichi.




Ultra Riichi (9d):

Don't riichi.

It would completely lock us in a direct competition the last-place dealer, and the  shanpon is difficult to win with, so we regress from tenpai by discarding .

Nemata (7d):

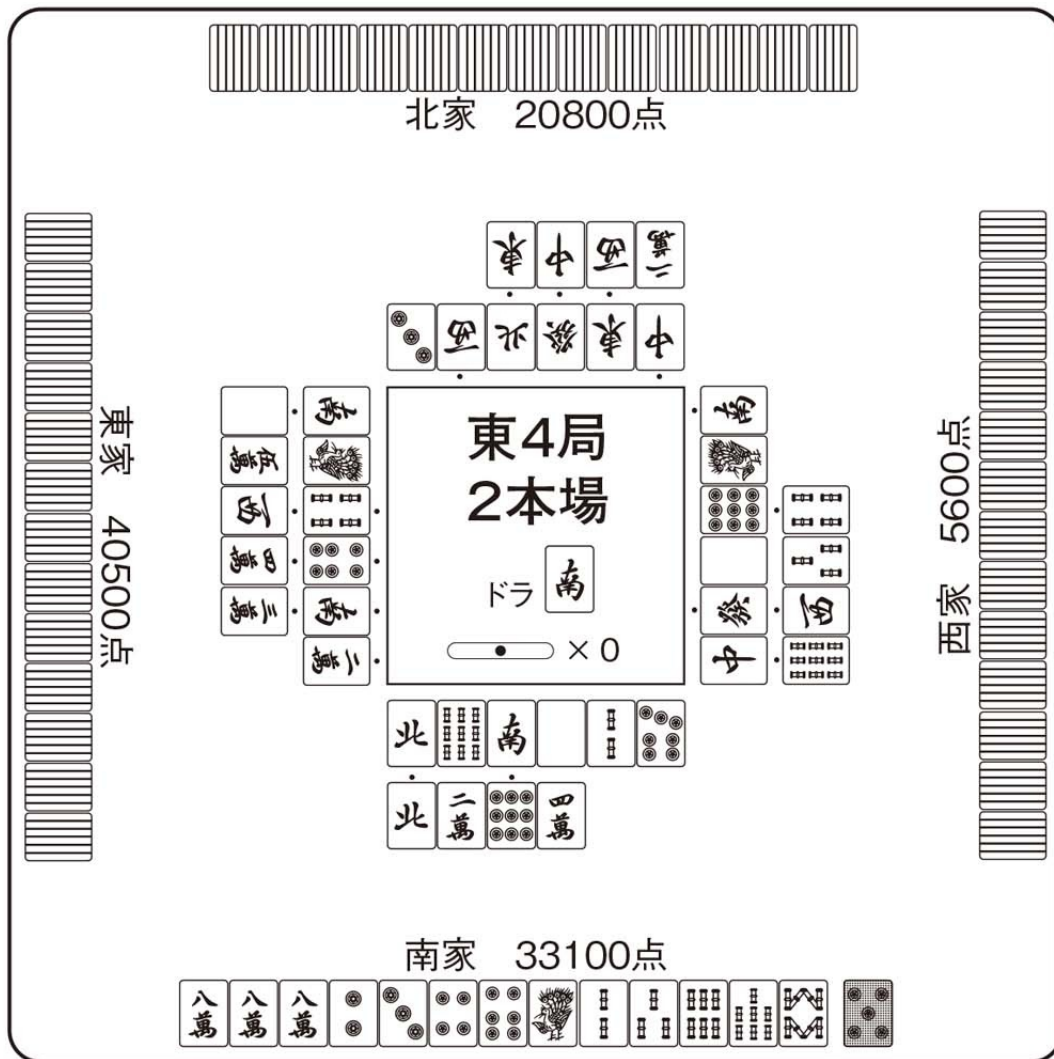
Don't riichi.

There is little change in our win rate if we were to revert to kuttzuki iishanten, wait for good shape, then instantly riichi. I also feel that it's also good for reducing the odds of us dealing in and dropping to last. We riichi once we get a good shape, so we discard  here. This is so that if we draw the aka  and discard  later, our total score would exceed 30000 points even if we were to dama.

Author's summary:

The question is concerns the limits of the modern theory of the overwhelming advantage of preemptive riichi. Here, cracks appear when faced with a terrible shanpon wait on adjacent tiles. Since we have many improvements, shimocho is dealer, and our hand is currently in bad shape, the replies have all stated that it is advantageous to regress from tenpai.

Q39 - Riichi Judgment #9 - Tenhou





Bakyo

Round	East 4
Honba	2
Sticks	0
Dora	南

East	40500
South (You)	33100
West	5600
North	20800



Question

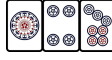
We are currently in no yaku tenpai, and we have drawn the aka . That would be great, but we already discarded the ... Do we take the furiten sanmenchan riichi or do we choose another option?

Answers - Q39

Asapin (Tenhou):


 riichi.

There is not much difference in the  nobetan riichi and the furiten  riichi. However, given the current point situation, a 2600 or 5200 point win is not that great for us.

As such, we aim for the oyakaburi¹ and go for the  furiten riichi. Even if shimocha busts, we will take second so we don't need to worry.


Tenko (10d):

 riichi.

Shimocha and toimen's hands look like they are progressing slowly, so it appears to be a fight between us and the dealer. We can still deal in to the dealer once and be fine, but given the possibility of others pushing against us, we take the easier to win  wait. The 6 remaining tiles for this wait should suffice.

Ritsumisan (10d):

 riichi.

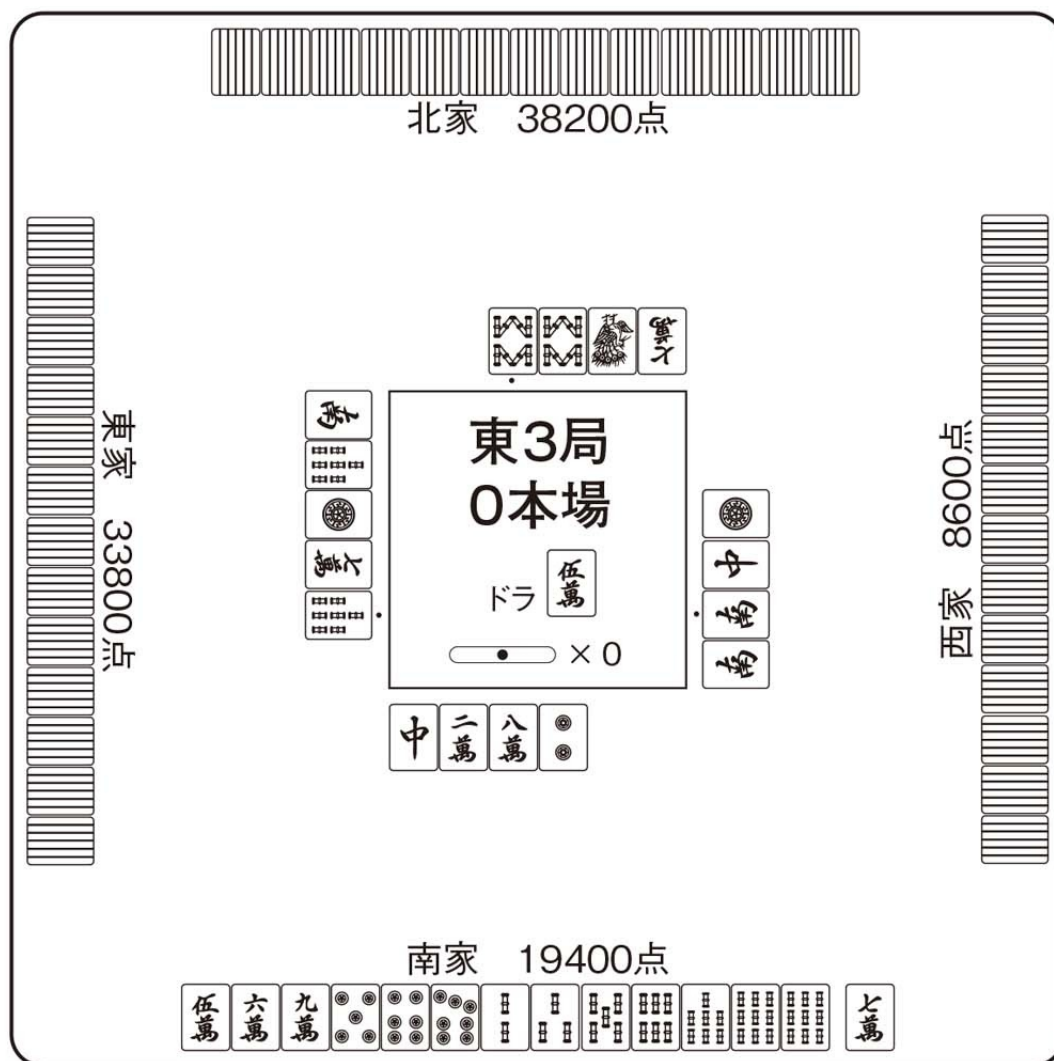
Even though it's a sanmenchan riichi, we are in furiten so we are afraid of pushing. On the other hand, if we discard  and riichi, can we really expect the other players folding to deal in to us? The key point is the current pond. The dora has been exhausted, and we have 1 aka. Even if others push against us it would likely be cheap, and we take the wait with more available tiles to try and tsumo for first.

Author's summary:

There is quite the resistance against declaring a furiten riichi, and this is especially the case in Tenhou. In my actual game, I declared the furiten riichi while harboring doubt. However, seeing as the replies have stated that a furiten riichi here is fine, I should have played with more confidence (laughs).

¹non-dealer tsumo in the context of the dealer being penalized

Q40 - Riichi Judgment #10 - Tenhou



Bakyo

Round	East 3
Honba	0
Sticks	0
Dora	伍萬

East	33800
South (You)	19400
West	8600
North	38200

Question

We have a confirmed mangan hand even without riichi in the early game... Do we dama and take the confirmed mangan? Or do we go for the haneman riichi?

Answers - Q40

Saionji Ritsuko (9d):

 riichi.

If our score was closer to last place we would dama to avoid last, but with the point situation in East standard riichi judgment applies. Even if we have ryanman mangan in the early game, we should riichi without thinking.

Kawamura Akihiro (9d):

 riichi.

If shimocha gets a mangan tsumo we would be tied with him, and it's still East. It should be fine to riichi this round and collect points. It feels like Tenhou is the only place where you can be so on the fence with a ryanmen. The right decision is to riichi in most situations.

tj-micro (9d):

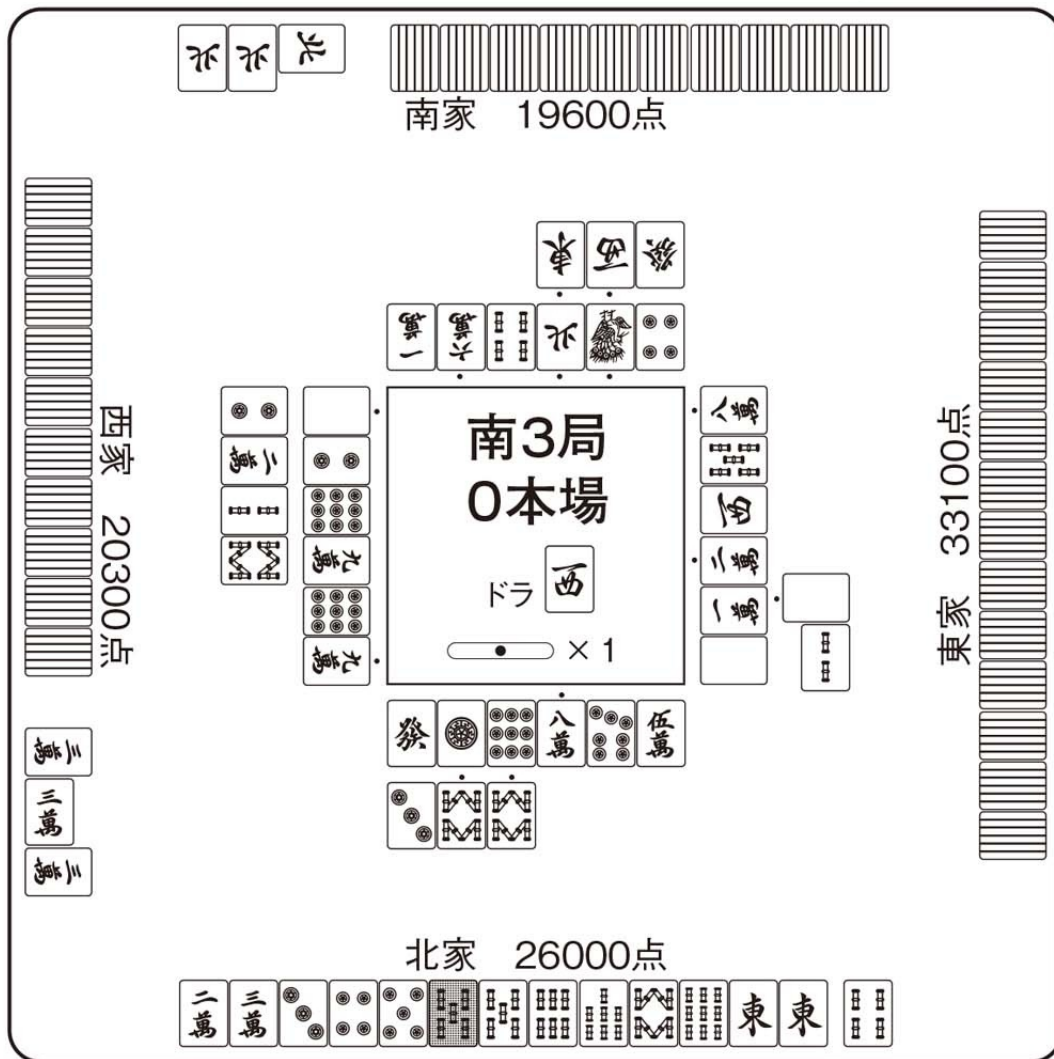
 riichi.

If we dama it seems that we can win, but emphasis should be placed on gaining more points after all. So I say we go for the riichi tsumo for haneman.

Author's summary:

“We should dama because Tenhou emphasizes defense” is a common saying I frequently hear, but mahjong is a game you cannot win without gaining points. Then, in what situations should we dama to get the confirmed points? The replies have stated that even in Tenhou, given it's still East we should try and gain as many points as we can. mahjong is a game where you do not know what will happen until the end. All Last is only the beginning! As such, we should try to collect as many points as we can.

Q41 - Riichi Judgment #11 - Free Rule



Bakyo

Round	South 3
Honba	0
Sticks	1
Dora	西

East	33100
South	19600
West	20300
North (You)	26000

Question

The dealer has declared an early riichi, but we are in tenpai waiting on his genbutsu. Do we riichi to maximize value? Or do we dama waiting for genbutsu?

Answers - Q41


Inujyarashi (10d):

Riichi.

Since it's Free Rule, we riichi for sure. The points are good and the wait is ideal, and we would never fold from dama. If we wait on the genbutsu for 2000 points, second place is not guaranteed. We aim for first with either the ura for 8000 or the tsumo for 5200. If we dama here, we are not going to win.


VenusSay (9d):

Riichi.

If we chase, the others will still discard the , and given the rules we aren't going to fold. In addition, we have a good shape so we should just riichi. The point situation is good for us, and we can also take the dealer's riichi stick. If we decide to go for it here, there is a good chance we get first!

Fukami (9d):

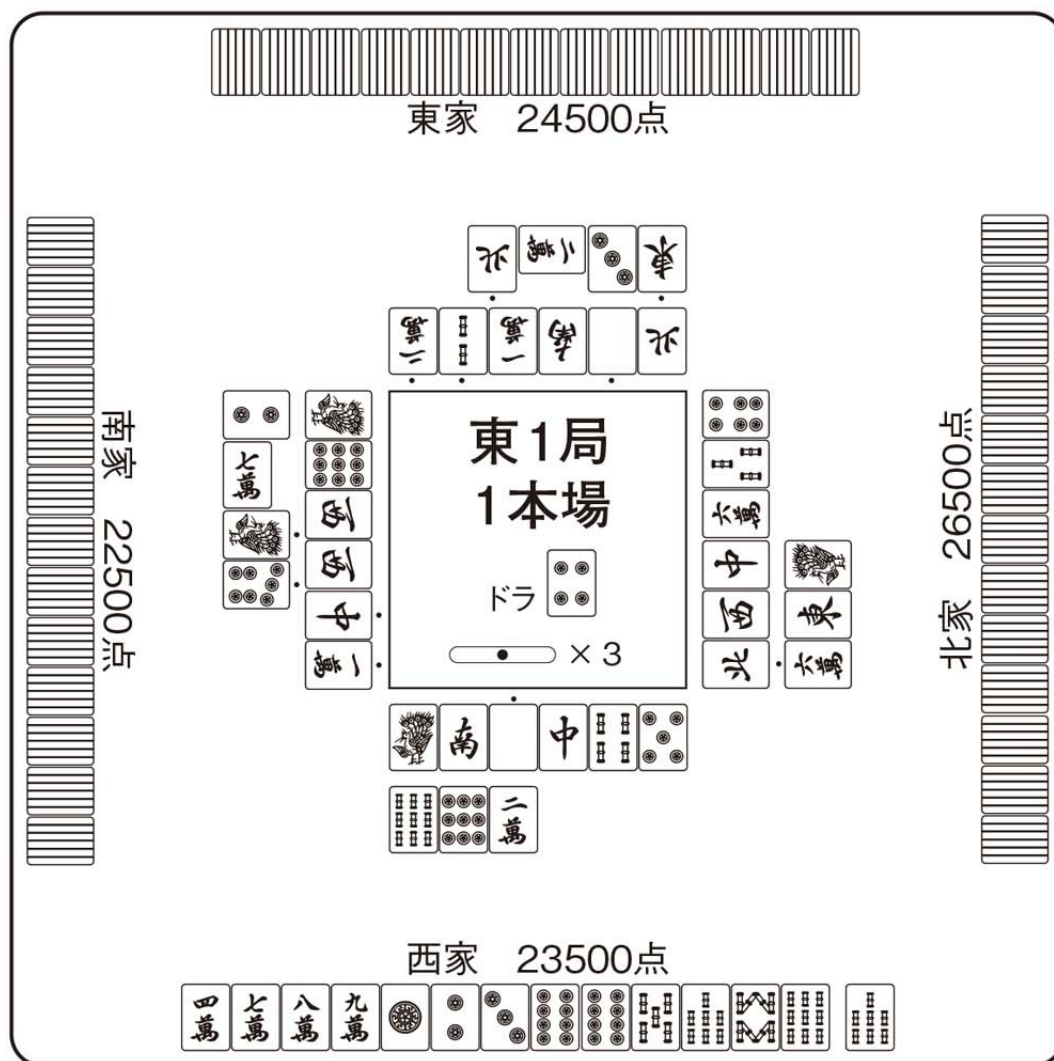
Riichi.

If we riichi and win, we have a good shot at first. Even if we dama, it's not guaranteed our tiles will come out (the  genbutsu seems to be with kamicha, and toimen does not seem to have any). If we were 20000 points behind first we might dama. The shugi in our hand does not influence our decision.


Author's summary:

Many believe if there is a dealer riichi and we are waiting on genbutsu, we should dama. However, since its Free Rule and we have a chance for top we should push. The replies have reached a consensus. If we can take first, we should just decisively riichi!

Q42 - Riichi Judgment #12 - Free Rule



Bakyo

Round	East 1
Honba	1
Sticks	3
Dora	

East	24500
South	22500
West (You)	23500
North	26500








Question

Toimen has declared riichi, and the dealer has chased. Usually we would fold, but we have stumble into bad wait tenpai. There are three riichi sticks for the taking. Do we riichi?

Answers - Q42

Kunihikomaru (9d):

 fold.

 could pass, but we regress from tenpai. We determine that the matagi of the dealer's , the  should be a unlikely wait so we discard  first. We fold with , , and , in that order.

Nannanda- (9d):

 Riichi.

We do not have safe tiles against both riichis and there is no guaranteed path to folding, so we are only left with the option to riichi. We will likely lose, but our deal-in rate shouldn't be too high.

bakase (8d):

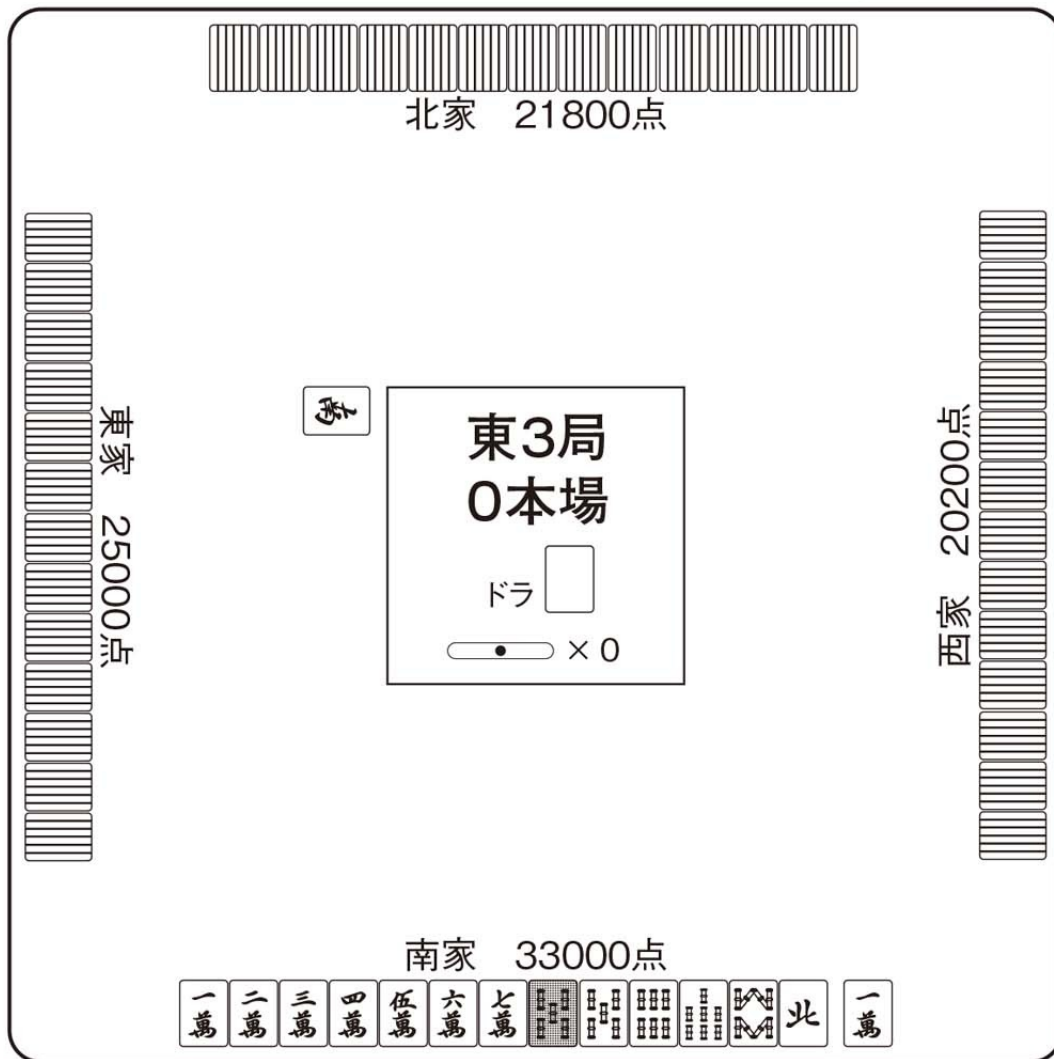
 Riichi.

Our hand is actually worth 4600 points. However, this question is not really a value judgment - we would fold if we had safe tiles. But we don't, so we chase. It's probably stated in Horiuchi's book that the data barely supports chasing in this situation.

Author's summary:

Given our bad wait chasing seems foolish. In Tenhou, we would fold no question, but what about under Free Rule? As the value of the hand is sufficient (this time due to the kyoutaku), and we have no safe tiles it's fine to push! It's also fine to fold, if you have the tiles for it.

Q43 - Riichi Judgment #13 - Free Rule



Bakyo

Round	East 3
Honba	0
Sticks	0
Dora	<input type="text"/>

East	25000
South (You)	33000
West	20200
North	21800


Question

We have a chance for double riichi! We also have 1 aka which gives us shugi under free rule, but our hand has many possibilities for improvement. We must decide between preemptive riichi or the chance to improve our hand value. What should we do?

Answers - Q43

Chikuki (10d):

Don't riichi.

We do not take the double riichi. We do not even riichi even if there were a dotted ¹ with shugi under free rule. There are many good improvements so we try to draw those.

hayato (10d):

Don't riichi.

Double riichi dora 1 gives decent value, but our hand has a lot of improvements for a good shape, so we dama. Even if there is value in riichi, we do not double riichi with this shape in either free rule or Tenhou. I like my waits wide.

Aoyama Gakuin 4th Year (10d):

Don't riichi.

Dama. We want to riichi after our hand gets pinfu.


Author's summary:



What should we do when trying to balance confirmed points and hand shape? I would have almost certainly double riichi'd till now, but seeing the replies, it may be better to sacrifice some points if our hand has good chances for improvements. Aka gives shugi so we may try and draw more of those as well. This has been a good lesson for me.

¹basically a joker tile that completes any hand on tsumo


Answers - Q44





macjr (10d):

Don't riichi. Discard .

Dealer is last and seems to be going for a somete hand in souzu, so waiting on  is rough if he decides to strike back. It's still early, there are potential improvements, and we are in the lead. We do not take risks for no good reason. We riichi if we get a good shape in souzu, or pon the  and search for a good wait.

sakurako (9d):

Don't riichi. Discard .

Don't riichi, and don't even take tenpai. Discarding  gives us good improvements on 5 tiles, , which isn't amazing. However, it's still better than calling riichi on a bad shape 3200 hand waiting on dealer's somete suit. Think the odds of winning the shanpon upon drawing  are better than the kanchan .

Mom is the meal ready yet? (8d):

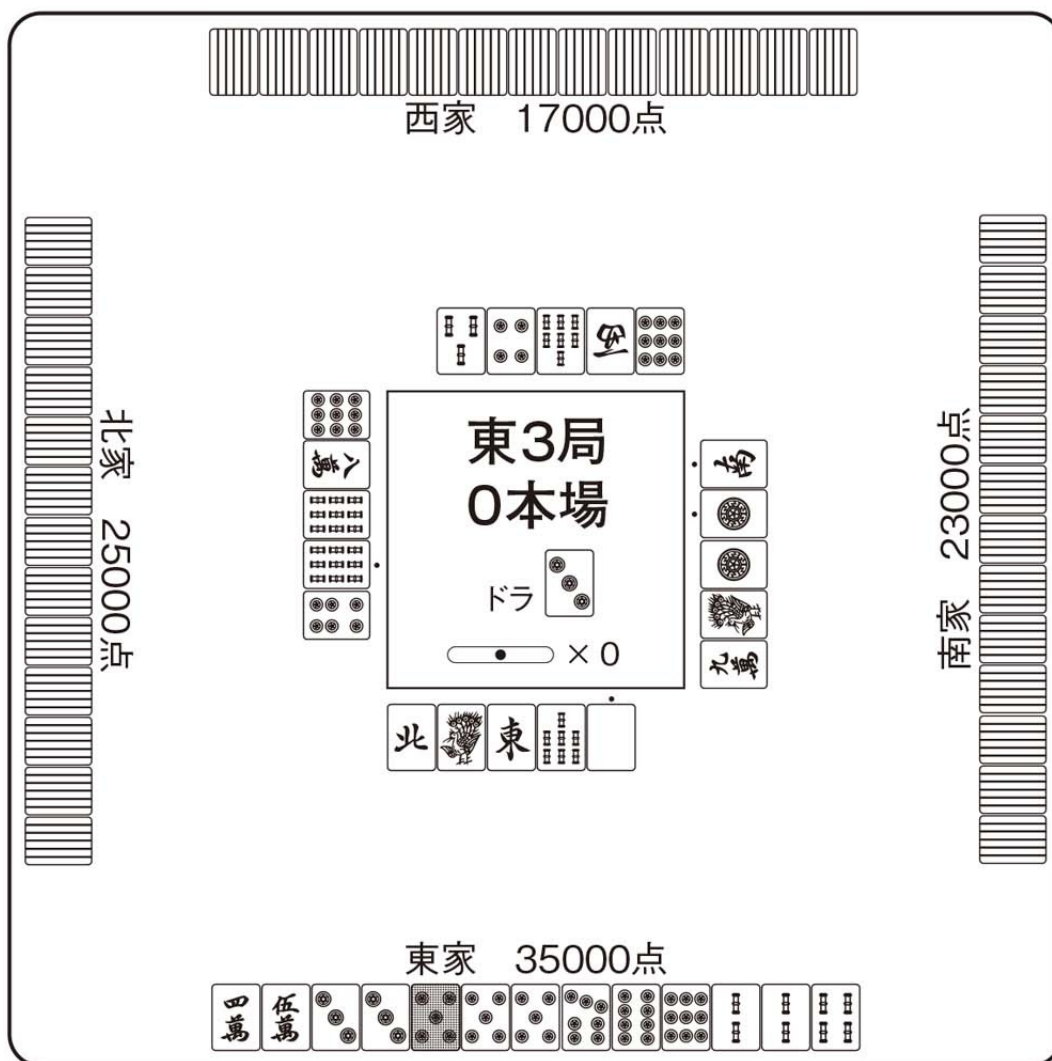
Riichi .

We riichi everything! If we are confused...riichi! If we enter tenpai with a closed hand, it's pretty much our final hand.


Author's summary:

Mahjong is a game where there is an advantage in declaring a preemptive riichi, with some room for flexibility. My style would have been to riichi, but two of the replies have decided to practice restraint on calling riichi given the dealer's discards. We should be aware of the critical information and evaluate our riichi decisions with care.

Q45 - Call Judgment #1 - Tenhou




Bakyo

Round	East 3
Honba	0
Sticks	0
Dora	


East (You)	35000
South	23000
West	17000
North	25000

Question

We are dealer in closed iishanten with three dora. Kamicha has discarded the  which allows us to shift to tanyao. Do we open our hand and call?

Answers - Q45

Rei of Nanto (9d):


Call chii on .

We call. Even if we try our best to remain closed, it's likely going to be a bad shape. As such, the odds of us winning with an open hand are higher than riichi. After calling, we aim to call

 and discard the .




Mimizu (9d):

Call chii on .

We chii and discard . We have sufficient points. We call as it seems to have a better win rate than staying closed. After calling, my focus would be to disguise our hand by judiciously discarding our remaining tiles.

Nemata (7d):

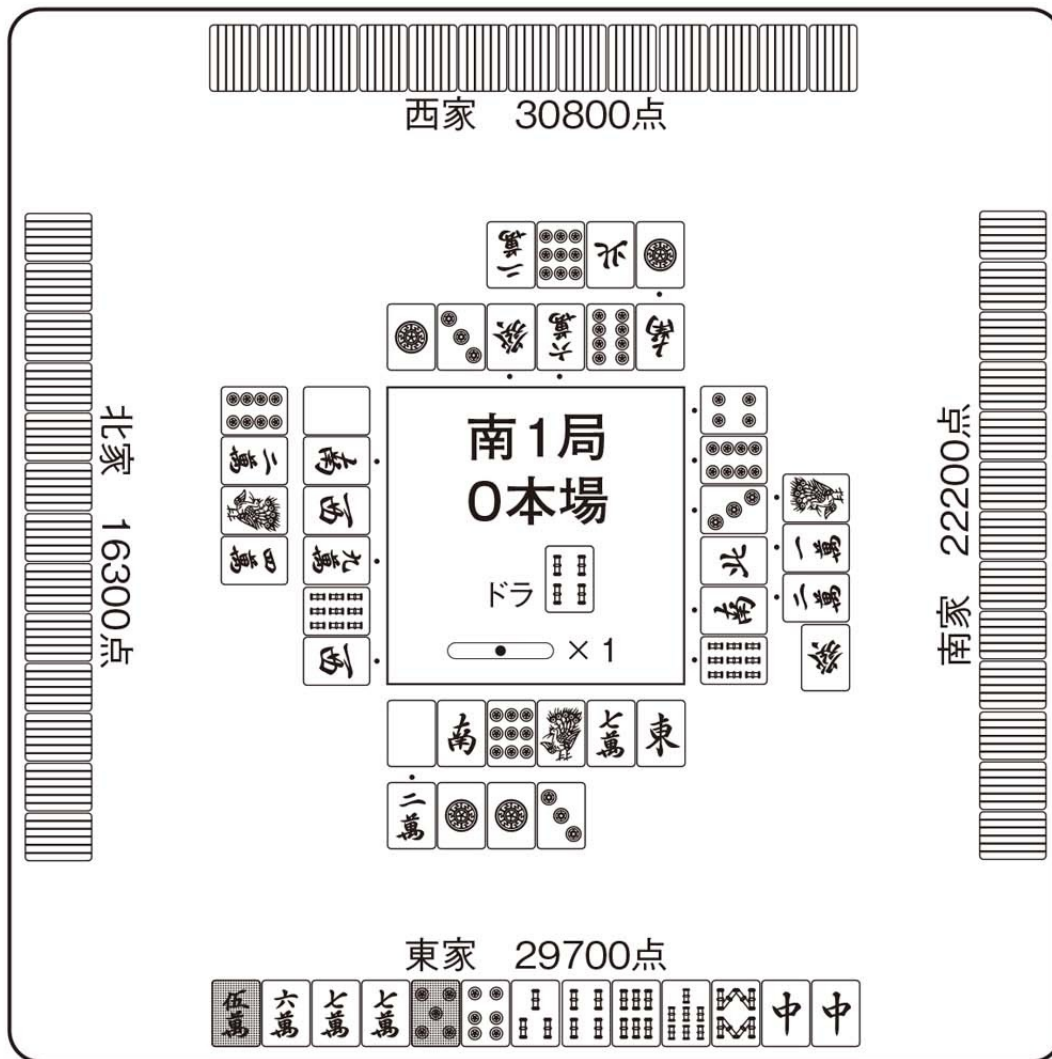
Call chii on .

Chii with  and discard . Rather than chase closed tenpai, we sacrifice immediate acceptance to access calls on the , which should clearly increase our winrate. We have 3 dora so our hand value will not decrease much.

Author's summary:

It would be questionable a short while ago to call from a closed hand when we can draw into riichi, but the replies all have stated to chii. I ignored the tile in my actual game and won with riichi, but I was thinking whether taking the chii was better when I did not call. However, I have now received confirmation that chii here is good.

Q46 - Call Judgment #2 - Tenhou



Bakyo

Round	South 1
Honba	0
Sticks	1
Dora	

East (You)	29700
South	22200
West	30800
North	16300


Question

We are in iishanten for an expensive closed hand as dealer, but shimocha has declared riichi.

Kamicha has discarded , which lets us shift into tanyao. Do we chii, or do we aim for riichi?

Answers - Q46



Crazy Sparrow (Tenhou):

Call chii on .

We call and discard . After discarding  we still have two dangerous floating tiles, so we may even consider folding once we have around 2-3 genbutsu.



Sakurako (9d):

Call chii on .


We chii and discard the  pair. With a 11600 point hand and 2 ryanmen we generally push, and restricting ourselves to riichi would give our opponent more chances to draw, which we do not want. We should at least give ourselves the option to chii the  genbutsu and enter tenpai.

Fukami (7d):

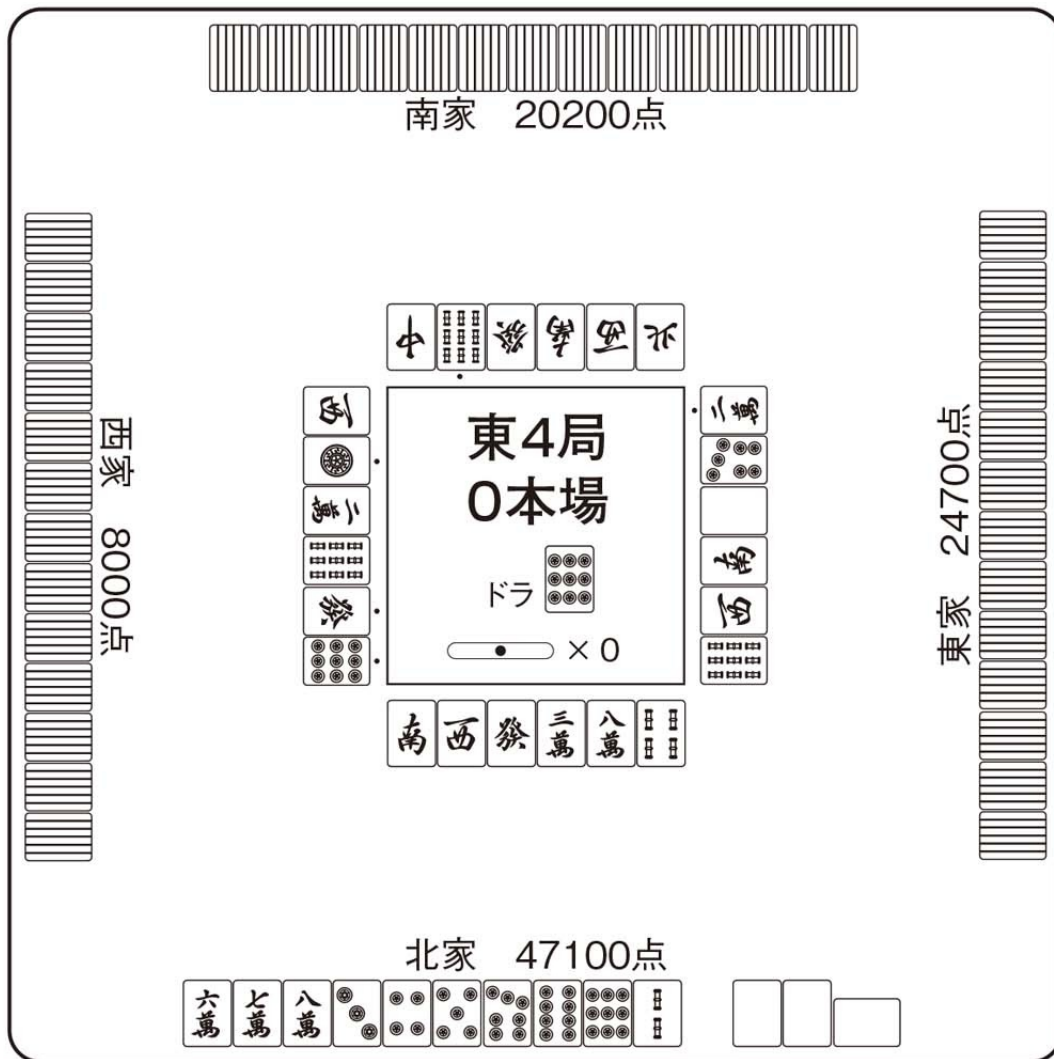
Call chii on .

If we chii, the discarded tile is  which, surely, is relatively safe. Opening this hand does not sacrifice many points. It's easy to call on the , which is the riichi genbutsu. With these considerations, we should instantly call here to move from a closed hand to tanyao. However, given it's already turn 11, if we cannot hit tenpai and draw a dangerous tile, we should fold and not be reckless.

Author's summary:

I faintly remember this hand raising quite a stir when it was posted on my blog. I also had obviously called chii here and discarded . It's not like it's bad to aim for riichi, but opening enables us to use discards from other players. In order to win at mahjong, it's best to be flexible and make full use of tanyao.

Q47 - Call Judgment #3 - Tenhou



Bakyo

Round	East 4
Honba	0
Sticks	0
Dora	

East	24700
South	20200
West	8000
North (You)	47100


Question

We are currently in tenpai with a tanki wait when kamicha discards the dora . Calling worsens our wait but the value of our hand would increase. Do we chii here?

Answers - Q47

hayato (10d):

We do not chii.

Even if we chii, we have to trade our potential good shape for a . In addition, we should focus more on defense against the dealer and kamicha with their genbutsu rather than go on a dora tanki wait for several rounds. I would chii if we need points.

nakajuun (10d):

We do not chii.

While it would be good if we win on the dora tanki after calling, our hand has the potential to change from tanki to a nobetan or aryanmen wait. As such, we should ignore the calling here. We are first, so we should place more focus on winning our hand.

Kunihikomaru (9d):

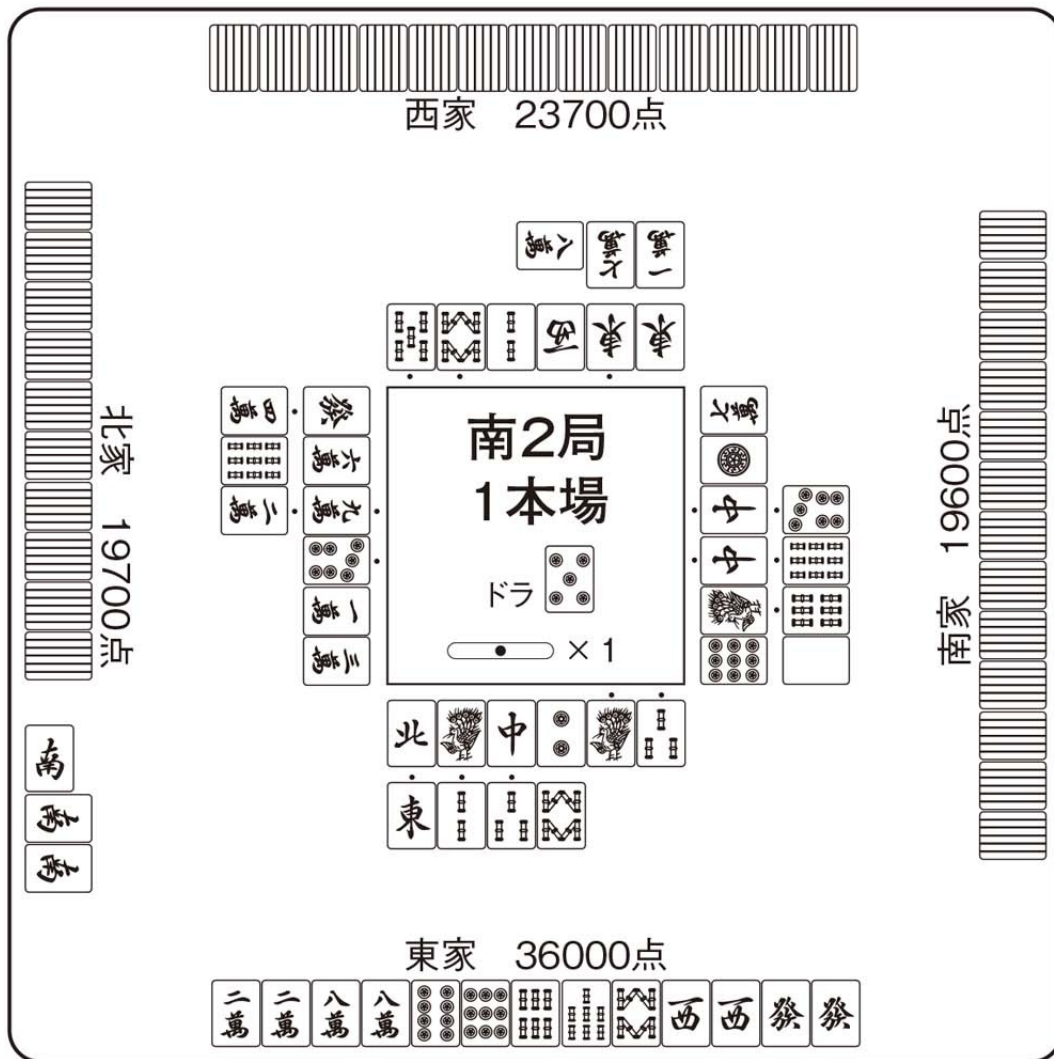
We do not chii.

If this was East 1 with everyone at their starting scores I would chii. But given the point situation, our first priority is to kick the second place off his dealer turn and maximize acceptance for winning our hand. Furthermore, calling reduces our ability to defend against potential riichi. If there was more honba, or if we could bust kamicha with a mangan, then perhaps taking the chii would be appropriate.


Author's summary:

I chii'd the dora in my actual game, but the replies have all said to not call! It's true that given the point situation, we should place more emphasis on defense. If we need points then we would call, but given our lead it's hard to recommend calling here.

Q48 - Call Judgment #4 - Tenhou



Bakyo

Round	South 2
Honba	1
Sticks	1
Dora	

East (You)	36000
South	19600
West	23700
North	19700


Question

We are dealer in South, and toimen has declared riichi. We are first so we should not be reckless here. Do we call to cancel ippatsu to minimize the point loss on tsumo?

Answers - Q48


Biribiri Billy (10d):

We do not pon.

We do not see dora, so we do not want to discard any tile that would have even a low chance of dealing in. If our hand progresses, and kamicha discards , we can chii for tenpai. Even if we reach tenpai, we would not progress recklessly.

Mahjong World (9d):

Pon. Discard .

We are approaching the endgame with first place on our dealership. So we pon to cancel ippatsu, and discard . We have 4 tiles relatively safe against 3 players, so we can fold safely.

Saury (8d):

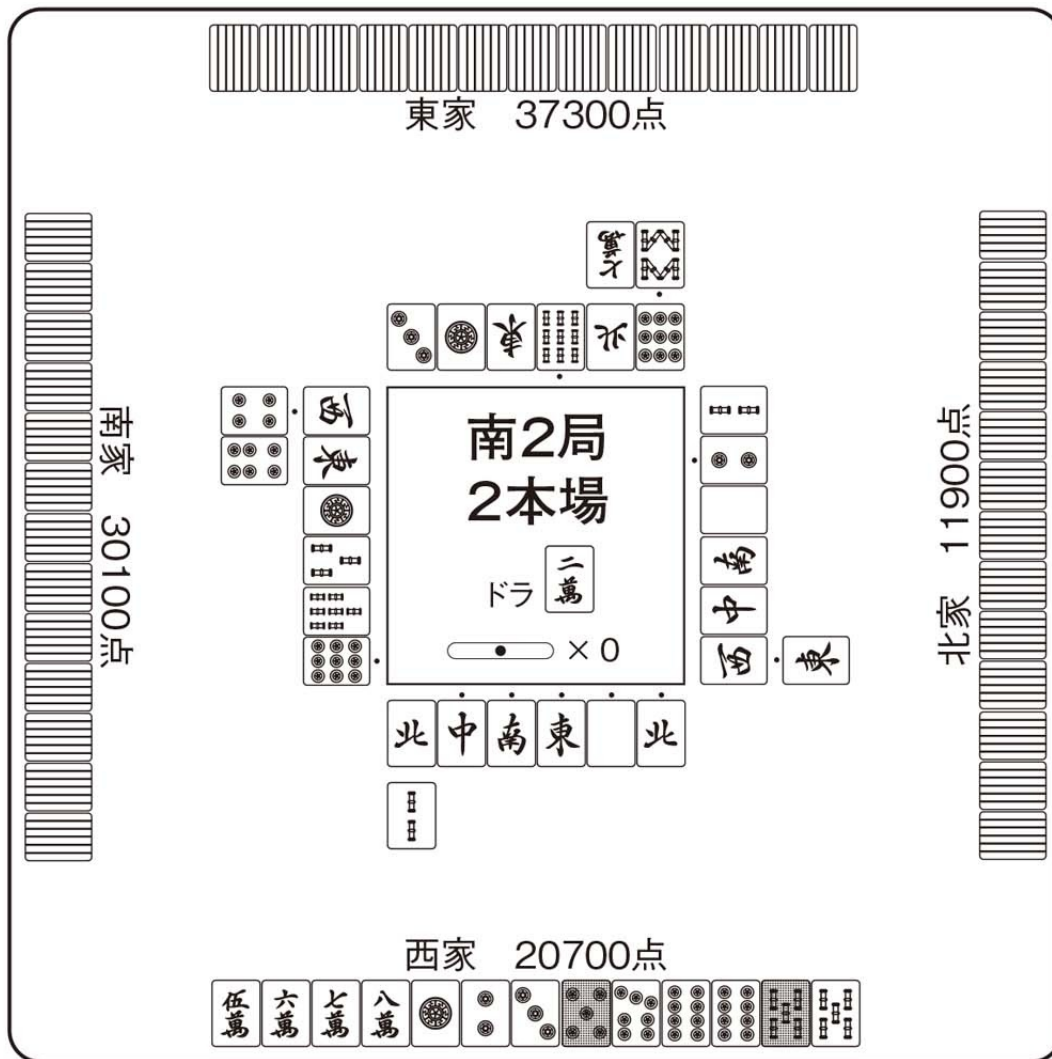
We do not pon.

We have 3 safe tiles and 2 almost certainly safe tiles. However, we would be in trouble if others declared riichi. The odds of ippatsu are low, and it's only 1 han so we do not need to be too worried.

Author's summary:

The effectiveness of canceling ippatsu is often debated, and is the point of today's question. I had the same decision as Mahjong World, but I think the more defensive choice of the other two players is also correct. After all, the odds of ippatsu are quite low. I am the sort of person who tries to do something to the best of my effort, but perhaps I should be more prudent in how I take risks.

Q49 - Call Judgment #5 - Tenhou



Bakyo

Round	South 2
Honba	2
Sticks	0
Dora	二萬

East	37300
South	30100
West (You)	20700
North	11900

Question





With our point situation, we try to avoid last, but see the possibility of overtaking second place. We are currently in an awkward iishanten, and it seems difficult to reach closed tenpai.

Kamicha has discarded  which lets us shift into tanyao. Do we chii?

Answers - Q49



Iniesta (10d):

We do not chii.

Rather than call and wait for the  and tanyao change, we should stay closed and wait for the manzu to extend. Once our manzu has extended, we will choose whether to discard  or  depending on the remaining amount of . By preemptively declaring riichi with good shape tenpai, we stifle the ability of shimocha to escape fourth.


Mecha Zetton (10d):

We do not chii.

If we try to shift towards tanyao by calling, then discarding  to solve the  bottleneck, we get a new bottleneck in our lower pinzu. As such, we do not call. Our main strategy would be to wait for manzu to extend and riichi on a ryanmen.

Ultra Riichi (9d):

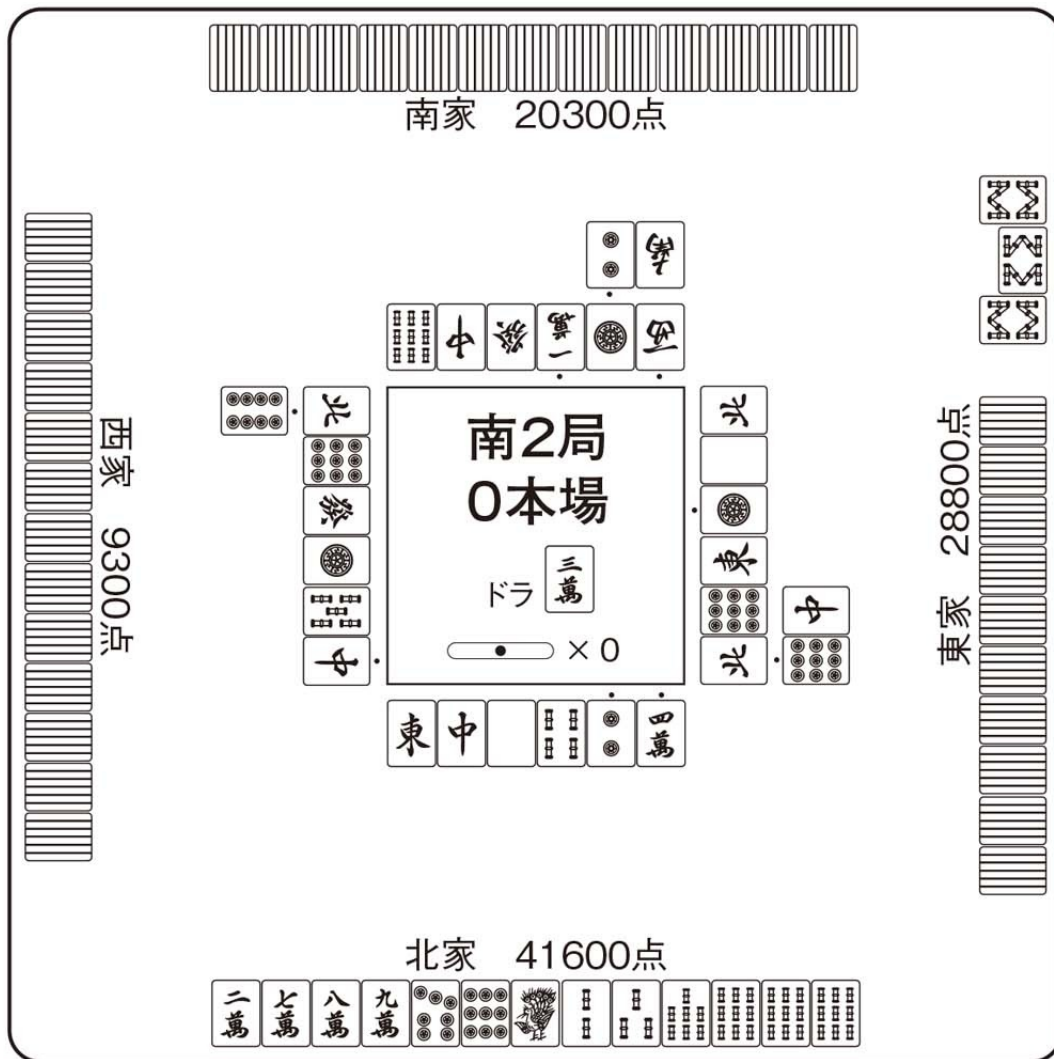
We do not chii.

We ignore it. While we complete one mentsu, we have to dismantle another mentsu by discarding . As such, not calling should have a much greater acceptance for our hand.

Author's summary:

The theme of this question is “when should we shift into tanyao?” As expected, the replies have stated that trying to force tanyao by dismantling a mentsu when we are iishanten is no good. We should exercise some restraint in forcing tanyao, a point I need to self-reflect on (laughs).

Q50 - Call Judgment #6 - Tenhou





Bakyo

Round	South 2
Honba	0
Sticks	0
Dora	三萬

East	28800
South	20300
West	9300
North (You)	41600



Question

We are iishanten for junchan sanshoku. However,  has been ponned, and it does not look like we can win. Now, kamicha has discarded . Do we call?

Answers - Q50



Takeoshan (Tenhou):

We chii.

While there is only one  left, the difference between tenpai and noten is astronomical. The wait can still improve afterwards upon drawing a terminal tile. Finally, we can still fold completely with  which is strong. We chii to take tenpai, but we do not push too hard once the game progresses.


taroo (10d):

We chii.

We take tenpai for now and discard , hoping to draw into tanki tenpai. If we win with the remaining  before our hand improves, then we are lucky. Rather than think of getting points as the game progresses, we should focus on not letting the dealer win. The ideal situation is if South or West declares riichi and the dealer folds.

Aoyama Gakuin 4th Year (10d):

We do not chii.

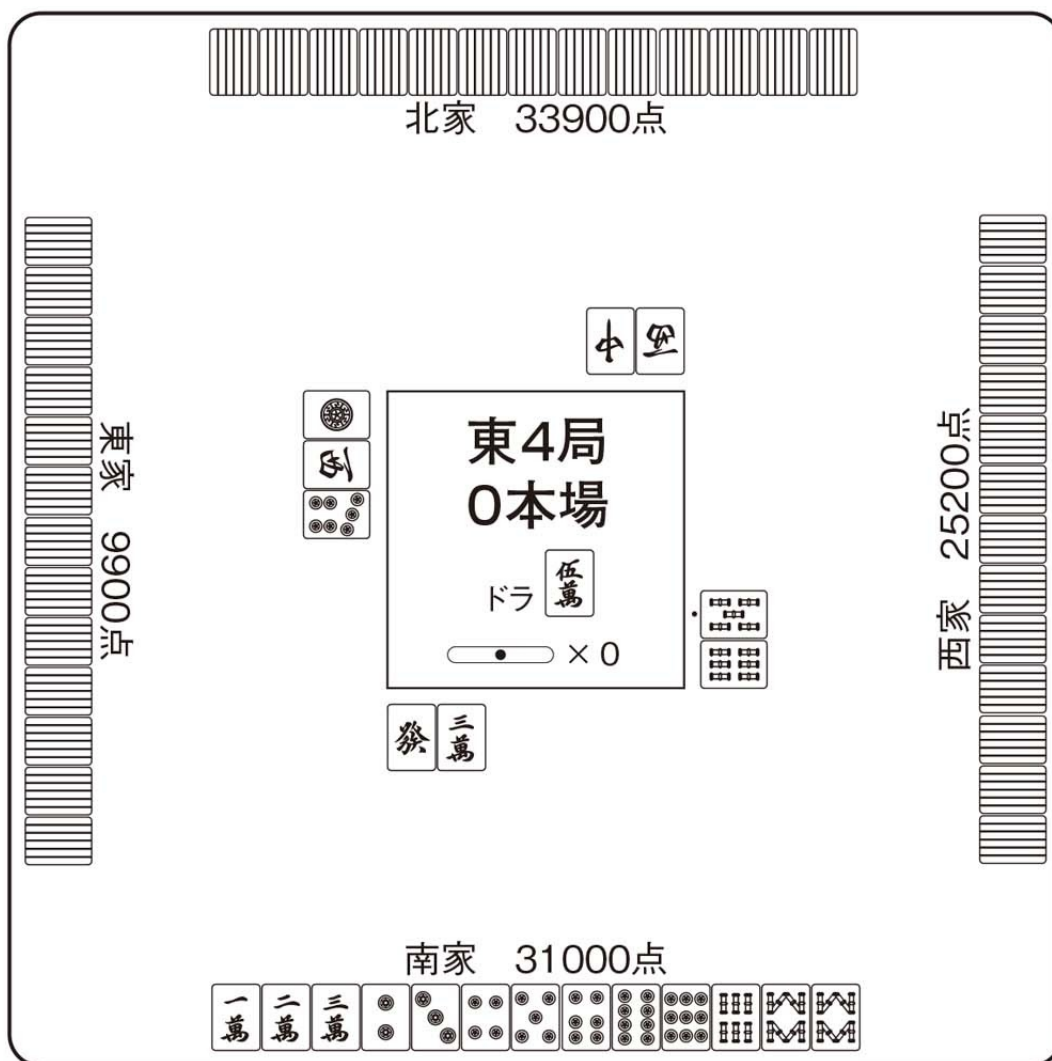
It is not worth it to fight against the dealer's call with the remaining . We should try to shibori¹ against the dealer while trying to get safe tiles against potential riichis from the other two players.

Author's summary:

Rather than what would happen if we call, this question is about understanding the situation even prior to the call. While calling increases our risk and some may choose to fully focus on defense, calling lets us have a chance of winning while not exposing ourselves too much. This time, I think calling would be the more flexible choice.

¹to choke, by withholding potentially useful tiles

Q51 - Call Judgment #7 - Tenhou




Bakyo

Round	East 4
Honba	0
Sticks	0
Dora	伍萬

East	9900
South (You)	31000
West	25200
North	33900


Question

We want to advance last place's dealership. It is worth calling  to reach a quick tenpai?

Answers - Q51

Doppo (Tenhou):

We do not chii.

Do not call. It is still early, and drawing  is painful as we will be unable to recover our hand. We would chii if our head was a yakuhai.

Yui-chan's papa (10d):

We do not chii.


We do not call. It's still the last round of East, and it's too early to call. We will surely draw to complete our weakest shape (laughs). We do not give up on drawing into tenpai and proceed closed.

Yuusou:

We do not chii.



We do not call for the following reasons:

- 1) It's still early turn-wise.
- 2) It's East 4.

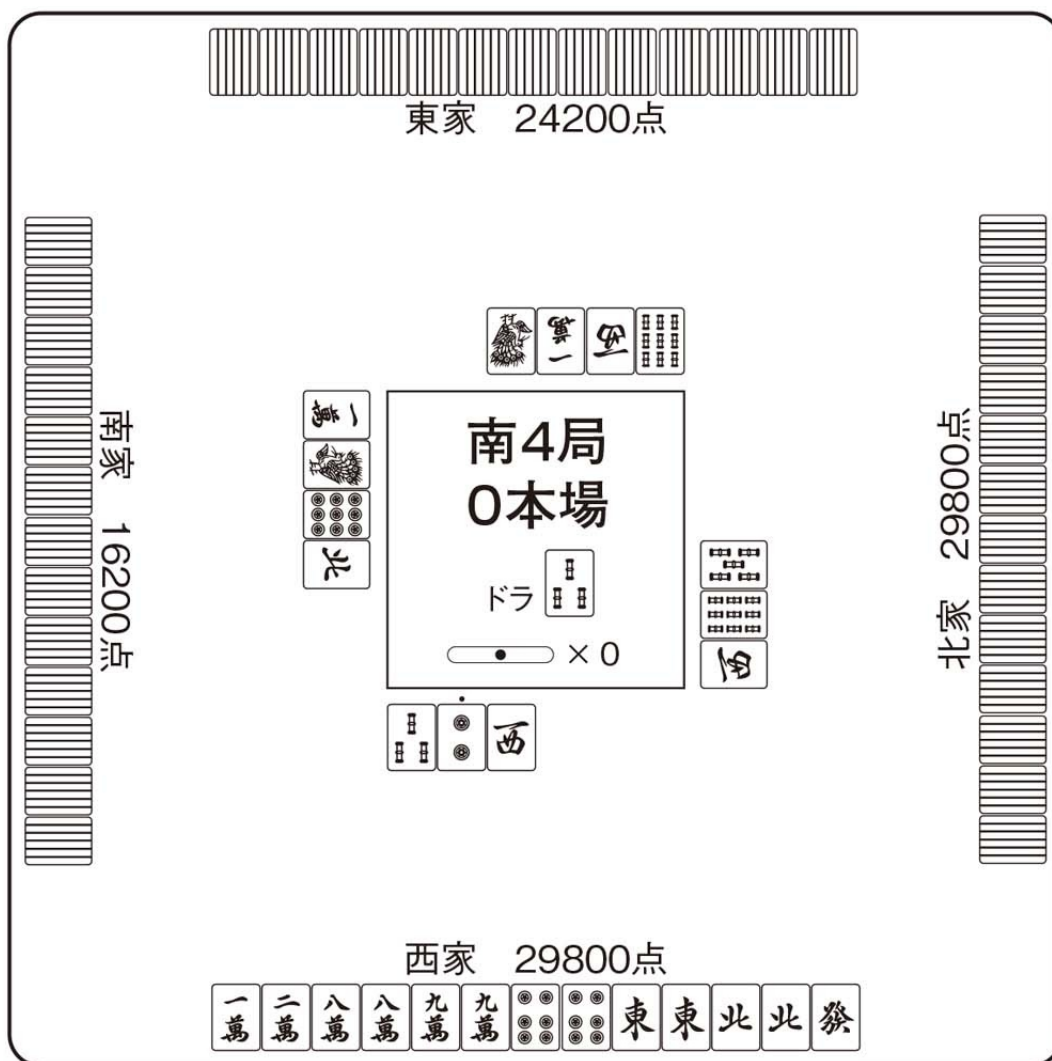
3) We will have no yaku if we draw .

Shimocha appears to be attempting a somete hand in the dora suit manzu, so it's also difficult to justify pushing if we take apart our hand for 1000 points with low winning chances. We do not call, and once we draw into better shapes, we dismantle the penchan.



Author's summary:

When I asked this question on Twitter, I received quite a few replies wanting to call here. However, the replies here are all consistent in not calling. While it's generally correct to call into tenpai, the risk of drawing a backfire is huge. It is likely we draw , and after opening, we can only win with . Calling is a mistake here.

Q52 - Call Judgment #8 - Tenhou



Bakyo

Round	South 4
Honba	0
Sticks	0
Dora	 

East	24200
South	16200
West (You)	29800
North	29800

Question

We are currently in chiitai iishanten, but we can pon and switch to honitsu. Do we call on the

?

Answers - Q52

Please give cola (Tenhoui):

Pon 此.

We call for the following reasons:

- 1) Based on the score distribution, it is unlikely that the game will end with us in last place.
- 2) We can aim for first even with ryuukyoku (we are in front of the dealer).
- 3) The other potential pons are strong.

Despite chiitai having good defense and offense while being able to hold safe tiles, we'd rather pressure the dealer and take the initiative by going for a fast win.

Cheetah (10d):

We do not pon.

We ignore it once and call from the next tile. While it's fine to advance by calling, we also want to aim for the instant tenpai for chiitai.

One way traffic (8d):

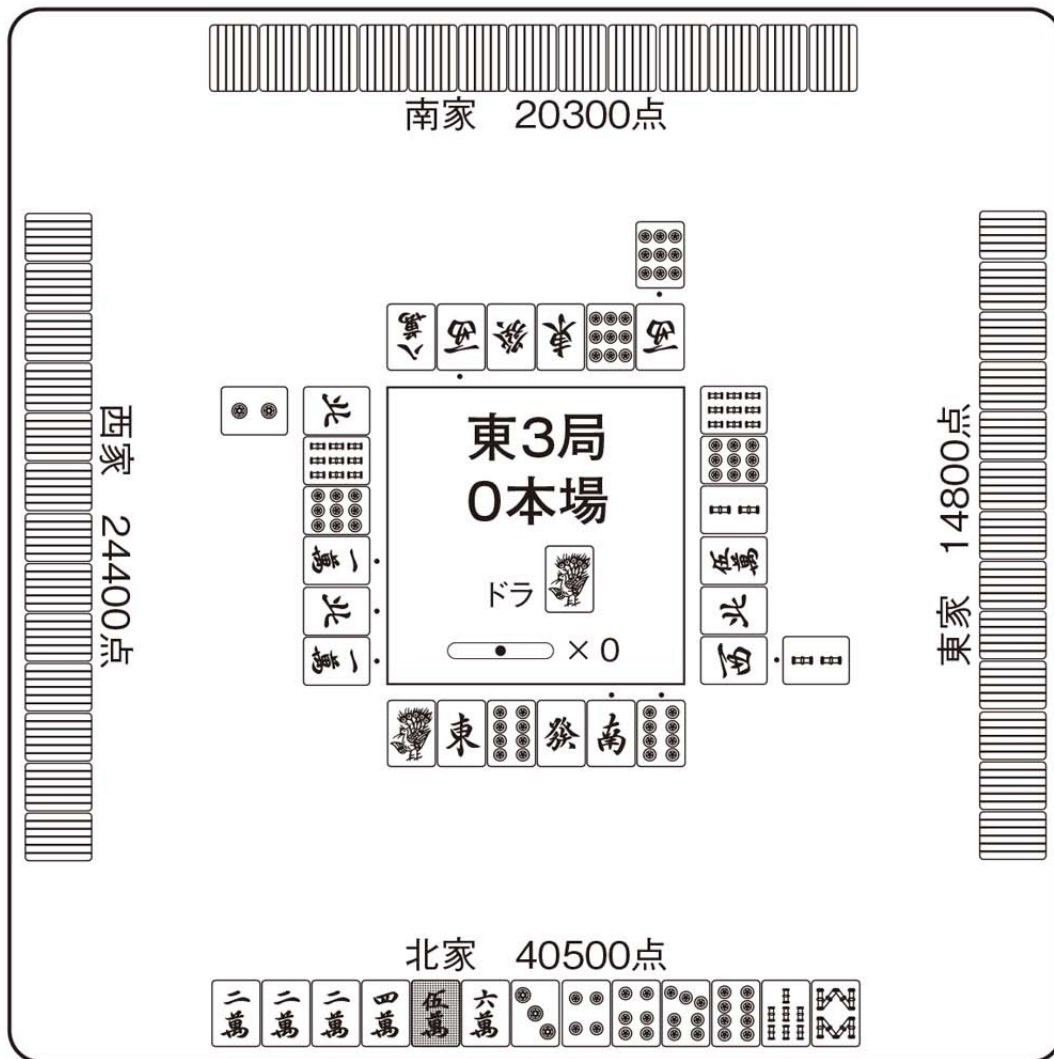
Pon 此.

We aim for first since it's unlikely we drop to last. We have relatively good tiles for calling, and kamicha should not shibori against us even if we go for a somete hang. As such, calling should give us a higher win rate and keiten rate.

Author's summary:

Chiitai is hard to reach tenpai with. While it's a good yaku for aiming for expensive hands, it's not suited when in a race to win. In that case, the replies have stated that it is advantageous to enthusiastically call. We of course have to take into account the point situation, but in general we should remember that calling here is better! What a pon!

Q53 - Call Judgment #9 - Tenhou



Bakyo

Round	East 3
Honba	0
Sticks	0
Dora	

East	14800
South	20300
West	24400
North (You)	40500


Question

We are in first place with over 40000 points. We want the round to advance quickly, so do we chii on the and take early tenpai? If we do, which wait do we take?



Answers - Q53



Futokunaio (Tenhou):

Chii  discard .

Given the point distribution, there is greater value in taking tenpai and advancing the round compared to chasing points. Our current wait is not bad, and we have improvements so we obviously take the  tanki.


Saika (10d):

Chii  discard .

The point distribution is good for us to advance the round; however, it is still East 3. If the  were not twice-cut, we might hold off on calling. Here, we take the  tanki and wait for improvements to manzu.

Tenko (10d):

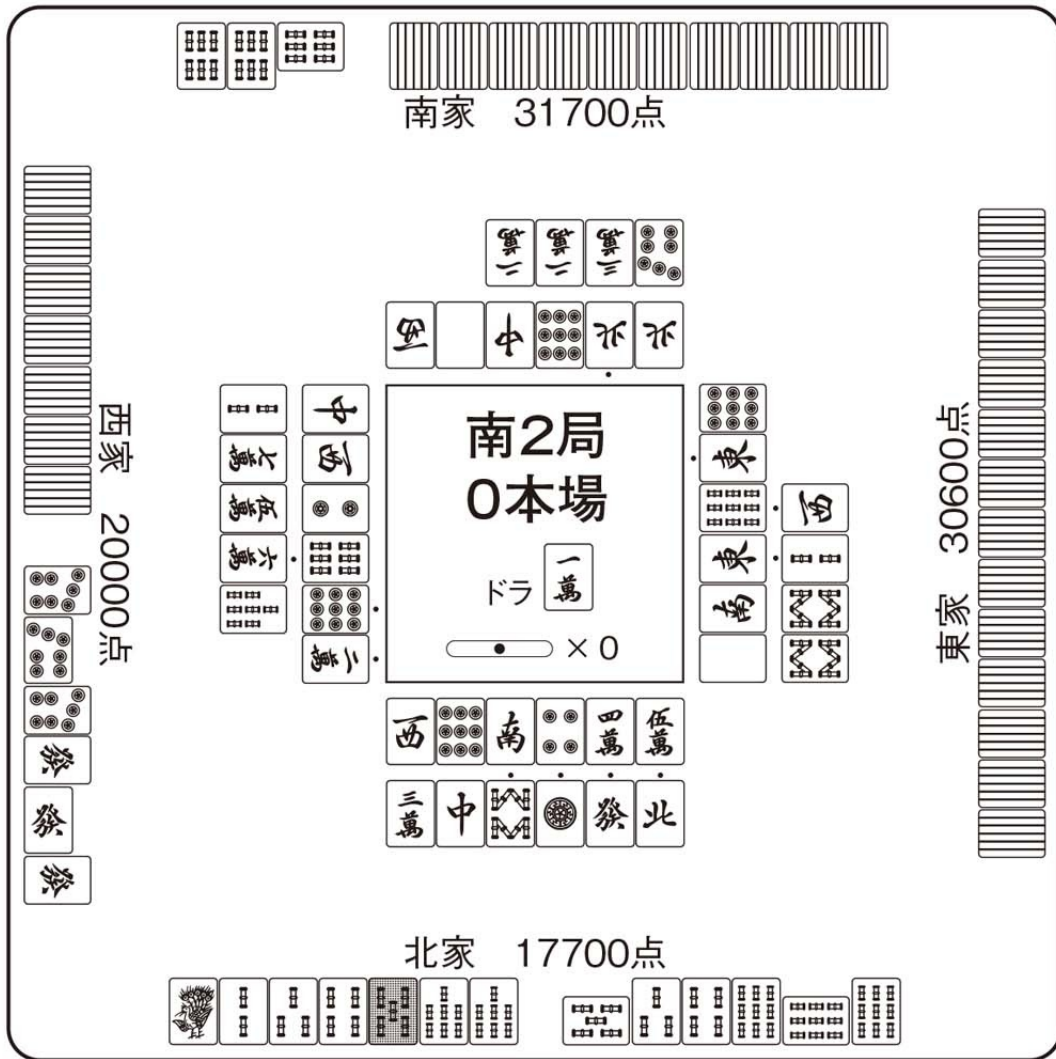
Don't chii.

Our tenpai is confirmed to be a good shape and our acceptance at iishanten is 25 tiles which is more than sufficient. Even in first, we should take caution to not suddenly lower the quality of our tenpai by calling. In general, we aim for a closed hand, but we will chii only on .

Author's summary:

This is a difficult question on how to balance our hand given that going closed also seems to work. Many players would ignore the call and go for a closed hand. Tenko-san usually works in a jansou where closed hands have shugi. However, as stated by the other two replies, we call for the immediate tanki tenpai while waiting for improvements in manzu. In this hand, the improvement possibilities reduce concern over the poor quality tanki wait.

Q54 - Call Judgment #10 - Tenhou



Bakyo

Round	South 2
Honba	0
Sticks	0
Dora	一萬

East	30600
South	31700
West	20000
North (You)	17700



Question

We are currently in chinitsu tenpai and desperately want to win. However, our wait is currently not great. The has now been discarded. Do we pon?


Answers - Q54




Asapin (Tenhou):

Pon  discard aka .

Our wait is currently very bad, so we pon and discard . The general rule for hands mangan and above is to favor a good wait over points, so we try to win with a somewhat doable 8000 hand rather than an impossible 12000 hand. Aka  seems safe against the others, so we take the widest acceptance.




Mizuki (10d):

Pon  discard aka .

This is akin to an even point situation where we should emphasize the win rate when the hand value is mangan. It's likely that kamicha is holding the , so the  wait may not be able to win. However, compared to the penchan  wait, the difference in winrate is analogous to the difference between a good shape and bad shape wait. If the point situation was even, we would choose a good shape mangan over a bad shape haneman, and we should apply the same judgment here.

Tajimanami (8d):

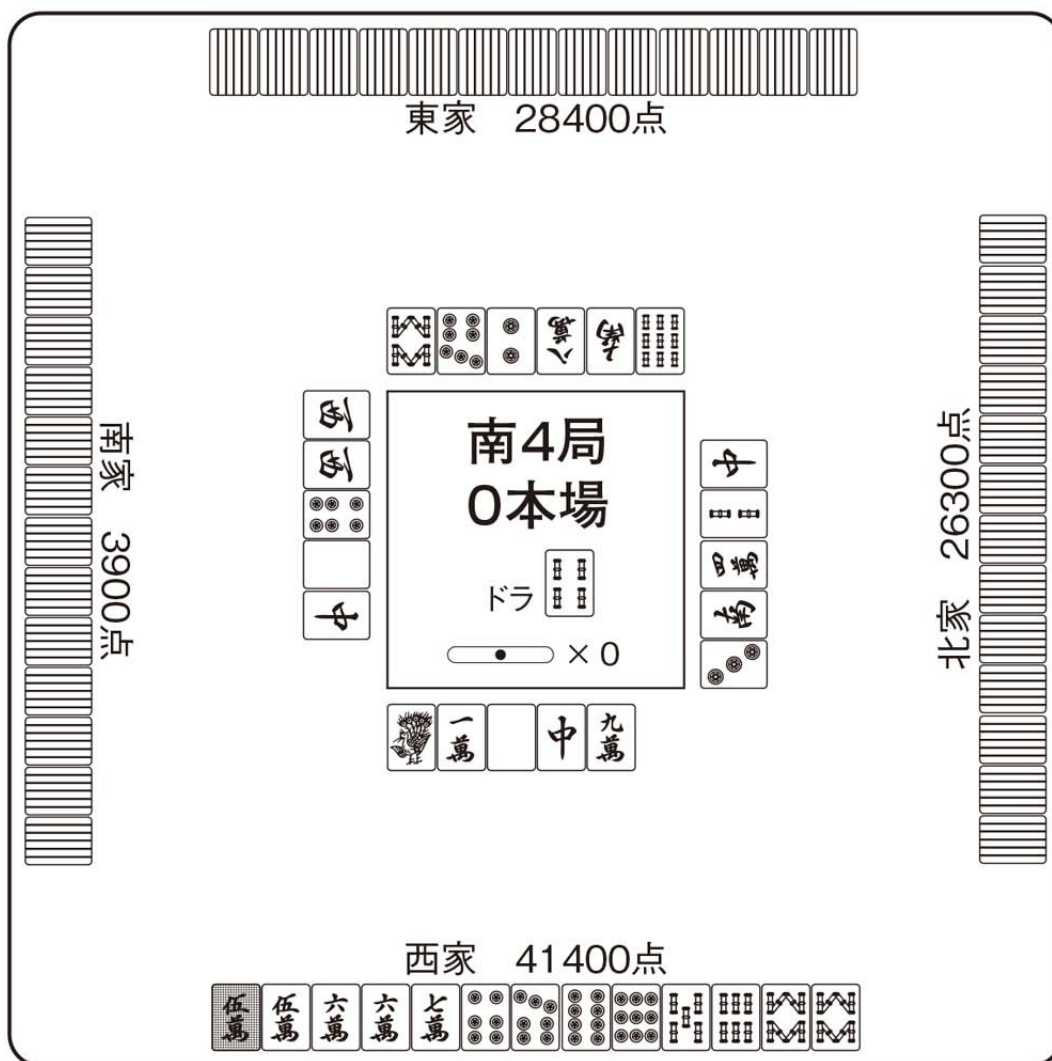
Don't pon.

If we call and discard aka , the odds of the  coming out is so low with the possibility of it being hoarded. As such, there isn't much difference in acceptance. If we pon and discard , there's also not much difference in acceptance. Therefore, I think it's good to maintain the current shape!

Author's summary:

While there may be a mental barrier in dropping your hand from haneman to mangan, it's important to take the guaranteed mangan. We are currently last, so I think it's good to be aggressive here.

Q55 - Call Judgment #11 - Free Rule



Bakyo

Round	South 4
Honba	0
Sticks	0
Dora	



East	28400
South	3900
West (You)	41400
North	26300





Question

We want to take tenpai as soon as possible, but do we pon and lose our head? Do we call on this ?

Answers - Q55




macjr (10d):

Pon  discard .

After calling, it's awkward to chii , but in exchange we can chii on  or pon on . Our  will become more favorable, and we may bust kamicha. We lose two genbutsu against the dealer, but he would get first anyways on mangan tsumo. We still take second after a 12000 point deal-in, so we call.


Aoyama Gakuin 4th Year (10d):

Don't call.


We ignore the . Rather than go on the tanki wait after drawing  after calling, it's sufficient to confirm our ryanmen wait and chii into tenpai. We also want to hold the dealer genbutsu .

tj-micro (10d):

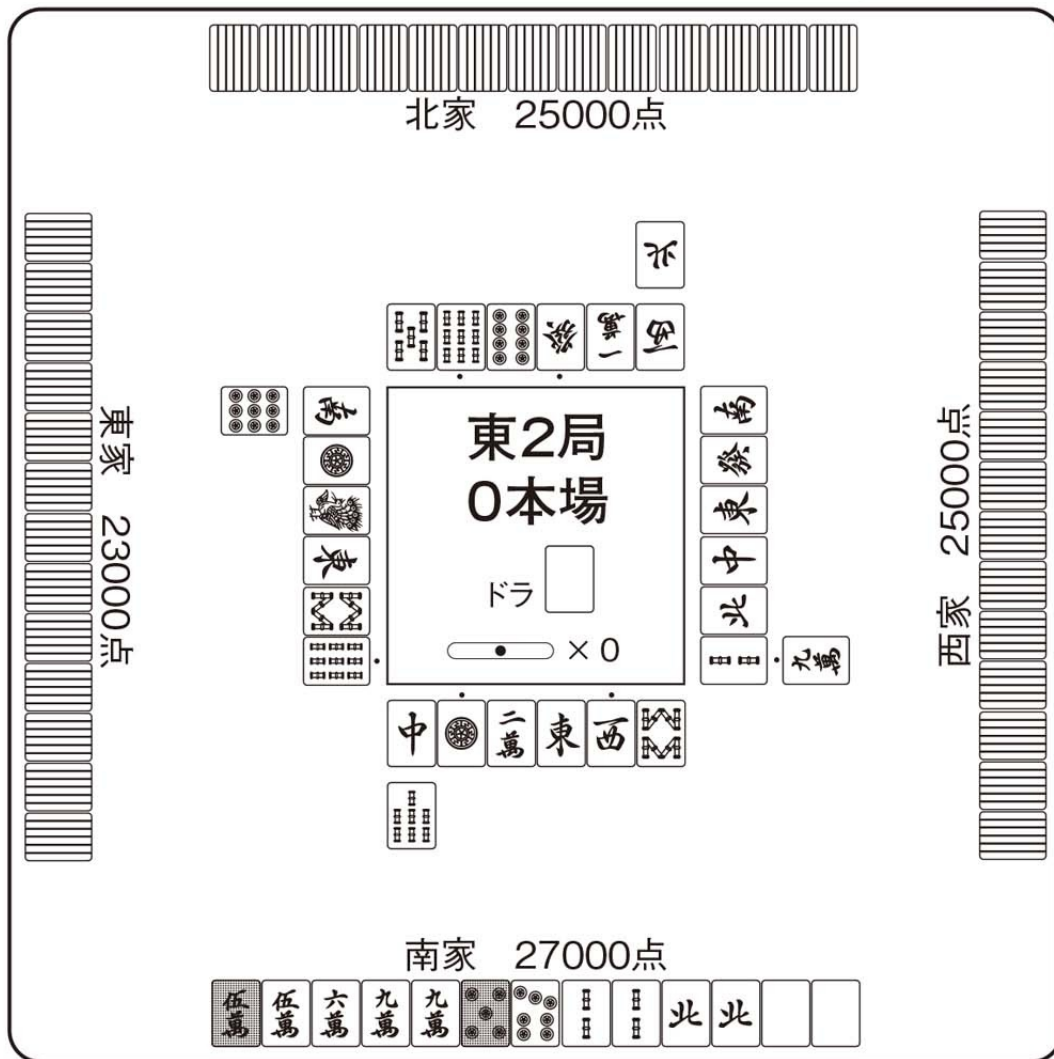
Don't call.

Calling  does not speed us up much and will likely lead to a bad tanki wait.

Author's summary:

I covered this hand on my blog, the responses were divided. Even the experts here are divided. I am completely in the call camp. We ignore the  which leads to a tanki wait, and if we draw it ourselves we take tenpai and wait for improvement. Our acceptance seems wide, but after hearing the replies on why not calling is also fine, I think ignoring the call here is also correct. I think this is a decision based on your playstyle.

Q56 - Call Judgment #12 - Free Rule



Bakyo

Round	East 2
Honba	0
Sticks	0
Dora	<input type="text"/>

East	23000
South (You)	27000
West	25000
North	25000



Question

It's yet another question about breaking chiitai iishanten to call. This time it's with yakuhai dora and two aka under free rule. Do we call the or ignore it?

Answers - Q56




nannanda- (9d):

Don't call.

If calling made it easier to win, we would, but our final shape would be a shanpon for  and  anyways. Therefore, it's appropriate to maintain our chiitai iishanten. We get ready to insta-riichi regardless of the tanki. After all, we are not folding this no matter what right?



Saionji Ritsuko (9d):

Don't call.

The  are once-cut, so calling would not speed up our hand much. I'm sorry for ignoring the question in its entirety, but I would have called pon on West's last  discard and discarded .

Kunihikomaru (9d):

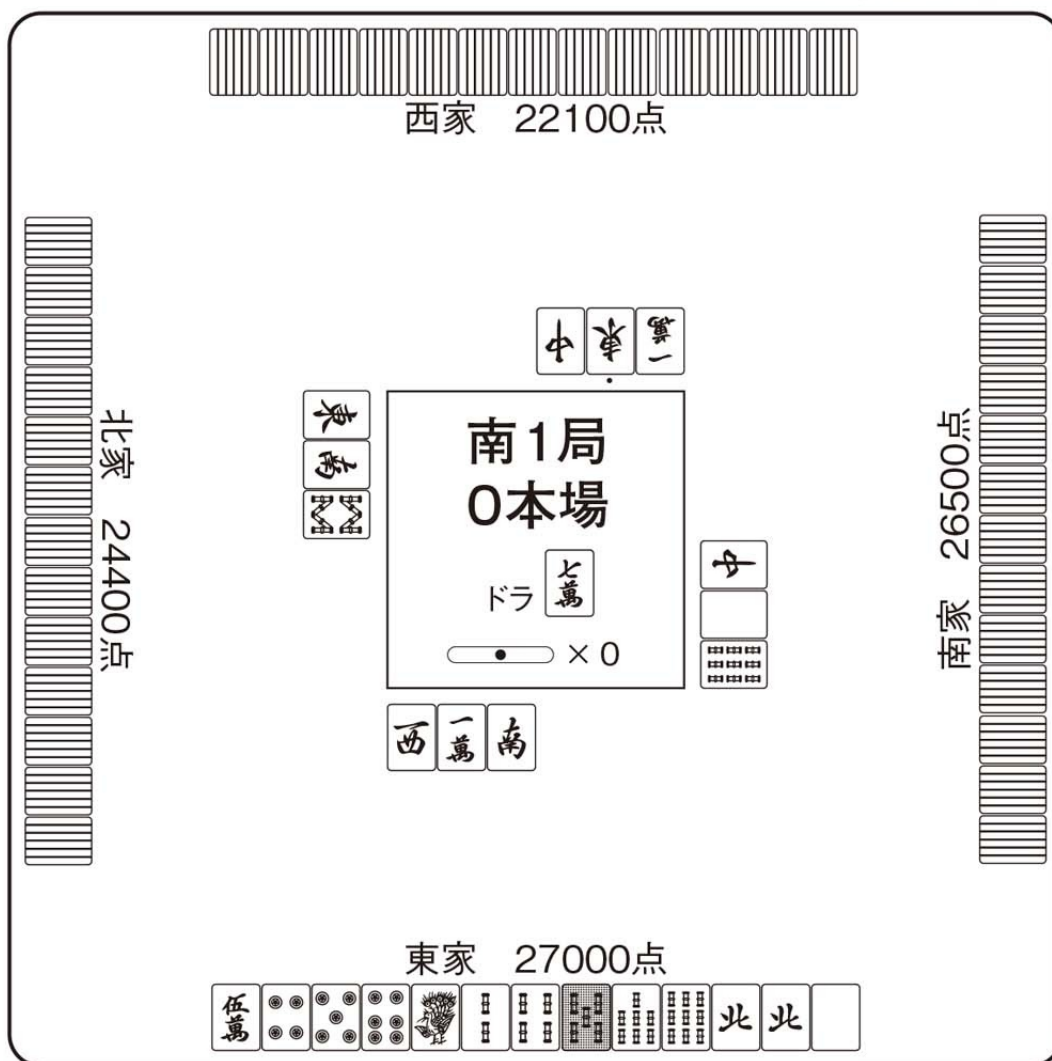
Don't call.

We ignore the tile. In modern mahjong, the general trend is that toitai is thought to be faster than chiitai, but I may be old-fashioned. In addition, all yakuhai other than  have been discarded so I think that the dora  will most likely not be discarded unless the opponent is in tenpai.

Author's summary:

This time the consensus is to not call. The ease of calling, the advantage of riichi, the existence of shugi, etc. all play a big role in how we make decisions in mahjong. I would also proceed closed here. We want to get the tsumo shugi while decisively striking a blow to the other players.

Q57 - Call Judgment #13 - Free Rule




Bakyo

Round	South 1
Honba	0
Sticks	0
Dora	七萬



East (You)	27000
South	26500
West	22100
North	24400




Question

Our hand has two bad shapes, one aka, and a distant ittisu. If we stay closed it would be a bit rough. Do we call on the .

Answers - Q57



Greed (10d):

Call  discard .



We are entering South with a minor lead so the value of winning a hand is quite high. Given that we can confirm at least one shugi, we chii. Our hand lets us use  as our head candidate and as safe tiles, so we can keep it until we hit tenpai. It's also great that we can use both the aka  and .



Inujyarashi (10d):

Call  discard .

We definitely chii here. Proceeding closed is way too slow, and we are not constrained to push for extra value. We chii on . The  as our head provides strong defensive abilities.

bakase (8d):

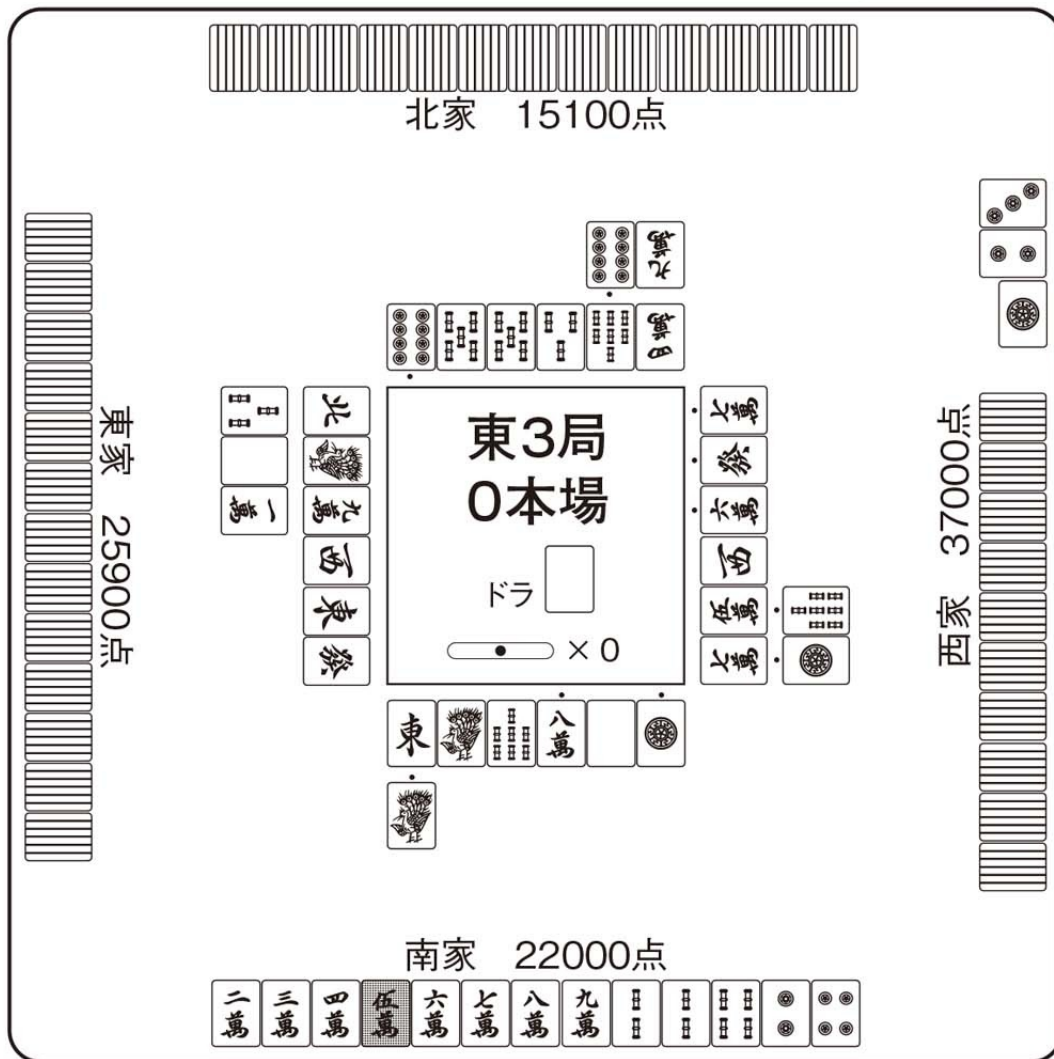
Call  discard .

We chii. This is absolute. We do not stop. This is because it brings us so close to tenpai. If we ignore the  and wait for  to extend, we will never reach tenpai.

Author's summary:

I generally have the impression that ittsu generally leaves you with bad shapes and the difference between the takame and yasume is quite big. However, calling here gives us a great advantage. For those who are good at calling, they will surely make good use of this bad shape. The replies have all stated to chii here. Given that we can guarantee a safe tile, it's even more reason to chii. I concur.

Q58 - Call Judgment #14 - Free Rule




Bakyo

Round	East 3
Honba	0
Sticks	0
Dora	<input type="text"/>

East	25900
South (You)	22000
West	37000
North	15100


Question

Yet another ittsu question. The difference this time is that with the  chii, we can confirm our yaku while taking a bad shape tenpai. Given the point distribution, we may also want to try for riichi. As such, do we call?

Answers - Q58


Chikuki (10d):

Chii  discard .



We chii. Looking at our hand by itself, we would wish to not call and go with riichi. However, given the low amount of , we chii.



shoot39 (10d):

Chii  discard .



We chii. Toimen and shimocha discards are going off the rails. However, given that we have seen the dora discarded, we should take tenpai quickly, and  is a tile we should discard earlier rather than later.

VenusSay (9d):

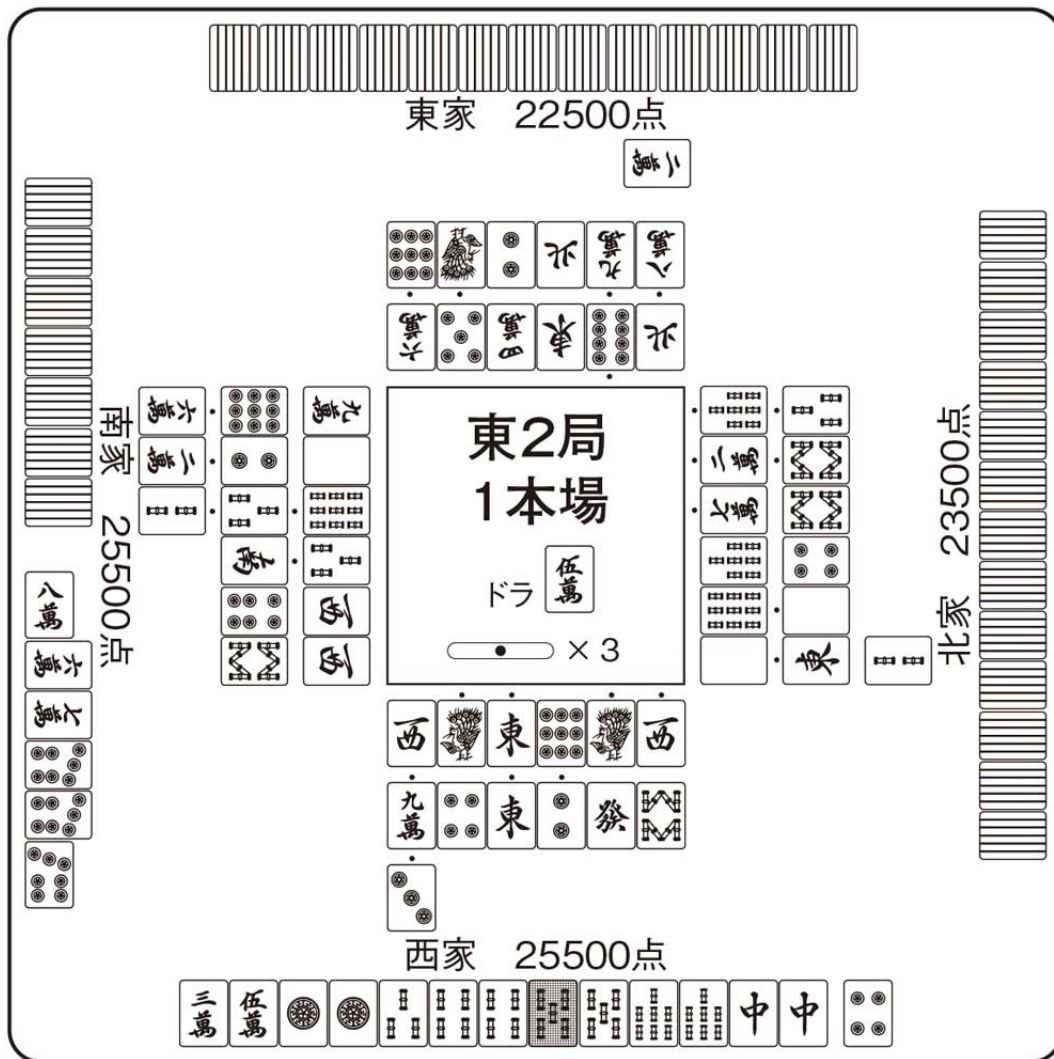
Chii  discard .

The chii isn't great but given that there are few  left and  appears to be held by shimocha and toimen. Call.

Author's summary:

The last question was about an ittsu far from tenpai, so we call to advance shanten. This time, we have a real chance for closed iritsu, so I thought ignoring the call was fine. The replies realize that  is dwindling so the judgment is to chii here. As expected, taking tenpai preemptively is important. Even if we have a bad shape tenpai, drawing  would solve our problem. Another reason to chii would be to advance kamicha's dealer turn.

Q59 - Betaori Judgment #1 - Tenhou



Bakyo

Round	East 2
Honba	1
Sticks	3
Dora	

East	22500
South	25500
West (You)	25500
North	23500







Question

We have no genbutsu on the dealer's riichi ippatsu turn. Kamicha has also called. We can't hit tenpai so we should fold, but... (Kamicha called pon on and discarded , called chii on and discarded)

Answers - Q59











Mizuki (10d):

Discard .

Toimen's wait is most likely a shanpon for  and something else, so the shonpai  is dangerous. The discard order suggests that  is unlikely to deal into toimen. While we cannot ignore the fact that  is somewhat dangerous against kamicha, such that discarding our two copies of  may provide two turns of safety against kamicha, guarding against dealer ippatsu takes priority. As such, we discard the  which is safer against the dealer.



Amagi Koutaro (9d):

Discard .



The dangerous tiles in our hand are likely to be the middle souzu and the dora. I feel uneasy with the dealer discarding   early then discarding  for the riichi. Given that we see four , we can confirm that there is no sanshoku in the lower numbers, so the wait is likely to be a shanpon for  and something else. If we were to try and determine the other shanpon wait, it's difficult to let go of the souzu or the . We pray that this is not a case of the    shape, and discard .

Kawamura Akihiro (9d):

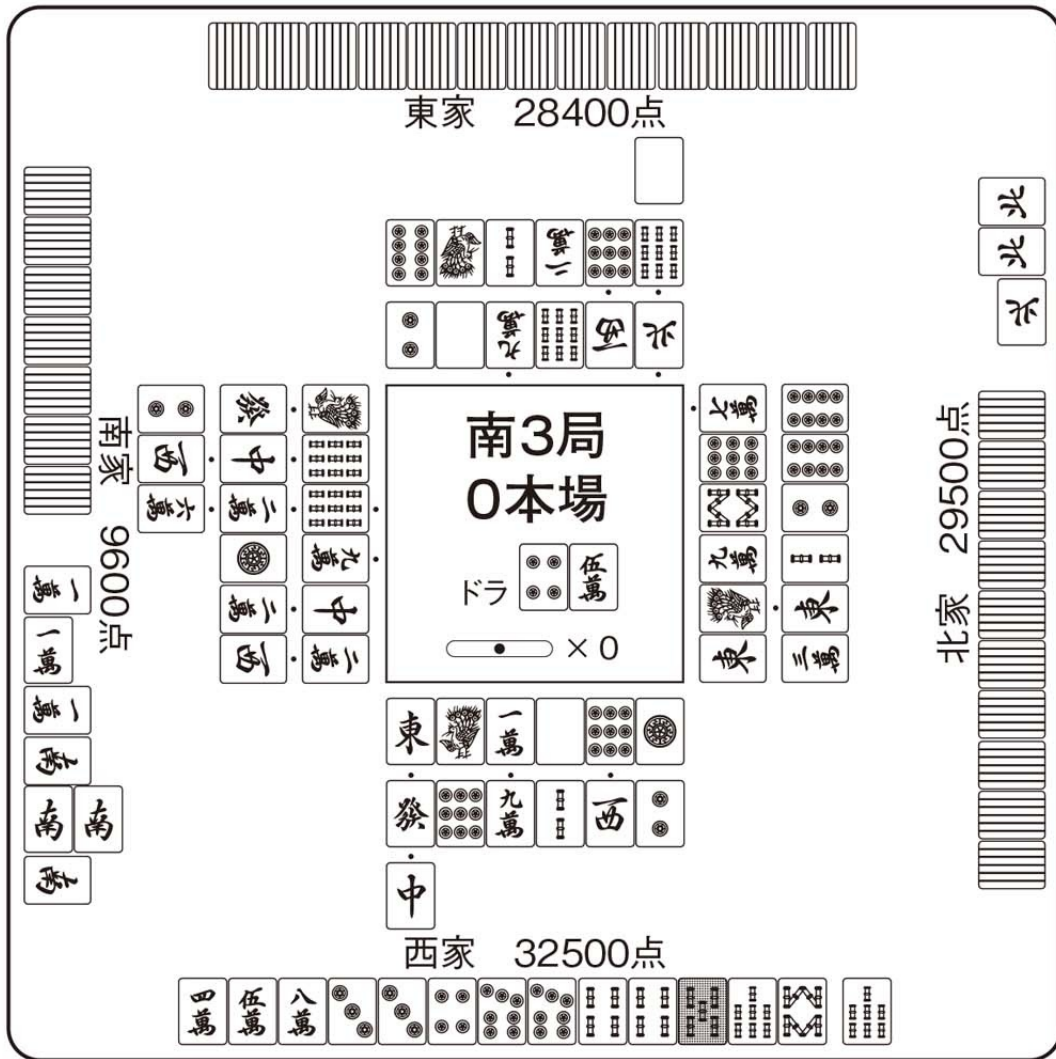
Discard .

The danger of  has not changed much, so we discard  to tide us over for two turns.

Author's summary:

When we betaori, the fundamental question is: "Which tile do we discard?". When at a loss, we should rely on the basics like suji, kabe, the possibility of honors and winds, etc. The honor  looks to be relatively safe, but the hands it deals into may be quite expensive. As such, I see the suji  as slightly more favorable.

Q60 - Betaori Judgment #2 - Tenhou



Bakyo

Round	South 3
Honba	0
Sticks	0
Dora	

East	28400
South	9600
West (You)	32500
North	29500

Question

We definitely do not want to deal in to kamicha who has kan'd double . However, we don't seem to have any safe tiles... How do we fold? (After the pon, was discarded, after the kan, was discarded, and after the pon, was discarded)

Answers - Q60

macjr (10d):

Discard

We discard the which is genbutsu to shimocha. If we don't get more safe tiles, we discard , dangerous against shimocha. Given kamicha's tedashi of , he certainly has , so discarding our two may also be an option. However, there may have been a shift from a kanchan wait on to a wait, so we discard tiles that are confirmed to pass against one player.

fukami (9d):

Discard

We are completely at a loss on how to proceed, so we wish to discard a pair for two turns of safety. It would appear that kamicha confirmed the as his head, then called the pon on , discarding with a tedashi after. As such, it would appear that the was a slide (it cannot be karagiri since we see four). Given the above, the possible wait would be a wait from and not a wait from , so discarding appears to be the safest against dealing in.

bakase (8d):

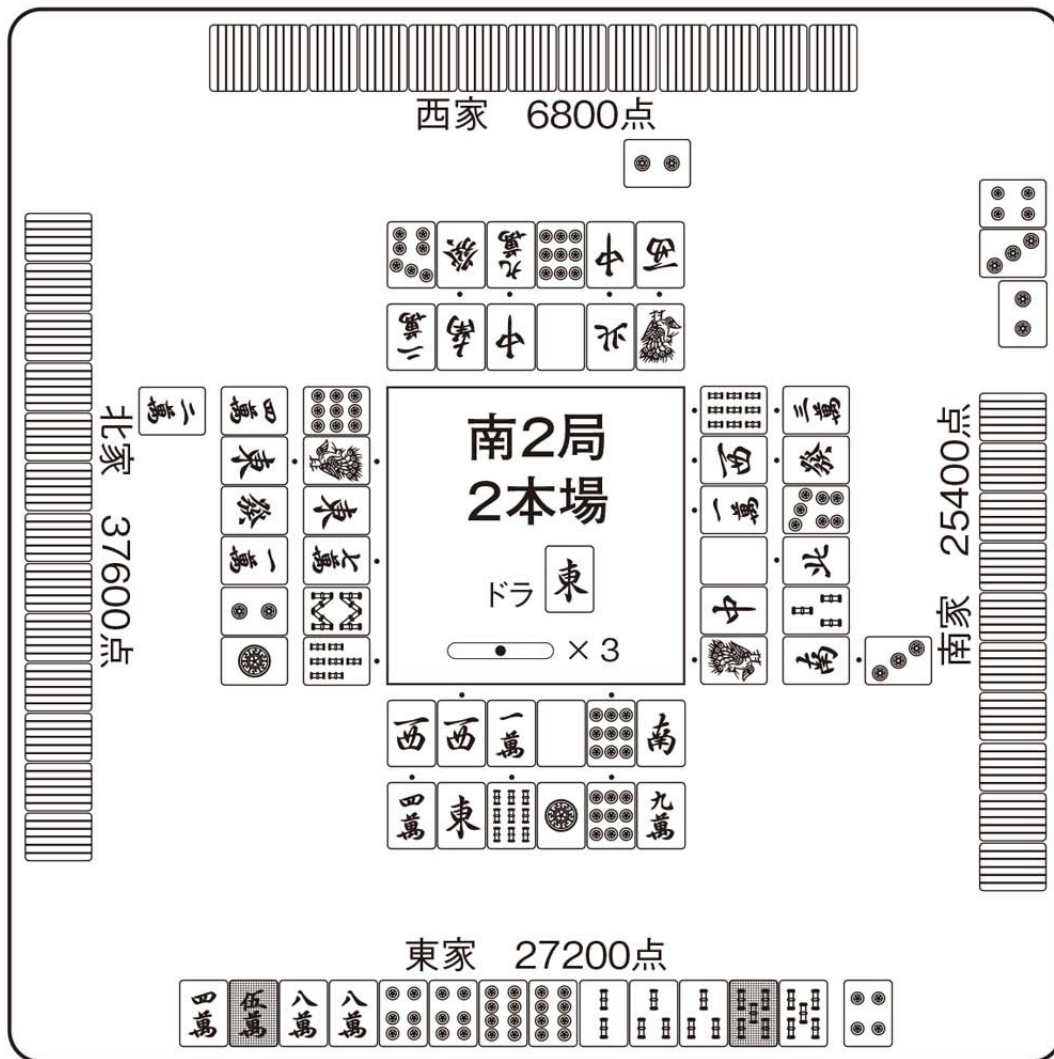
Discard

I don't know what to do here (laughs). It's either or , but we go with so we don't get hit by a triple ron?

Author's summary:

When we think about betaori, we cannot develop tunnel vision against one hand. Instead, consider all factors. The replies have stated that while it's true that we do not want to deal in to kamicha, we have no definite proof that any tile will be safe, so we should first discard tiles with the potential to pass all players. Here, I think that discarding the genbutsu to shimocha is a good play.

Q61 - Betaori Judgment #3 - Tenhou



Bakyo

Round	South 2
Honba	2
Sticks	3
Dora	東

East (You)	27200
South	25400
West	6800
North	37600



Question

We are dealer. Last place has declared riichi, and on the ippatsu turn, we have neither genbutsu or suji. How do we fold here?

Answers - Q61




takeoshan (Tenhou):

Discard .

We fold by discarding the  pair. It looks like the riichi is related to tanyao? As such, it's hard to discard the inner tiles. We pray that the  discard was to shift the hand inwards.

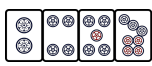

Chronos (10d):

Discard .


We see most of the dora, so our sole concern is folding against the riichi.  was likely a safe tile, and given the  discard order, there is a high chance that the hand has shapes related to the two tiles. As such, pinzu is more dangerous than usual. We consider dropping a pair for two turns of safety, but this is the ippatsu turn, and we are chiitai iishanten, so we discard the tile most likely to pass, the one-chance .

Cheetah (10d):

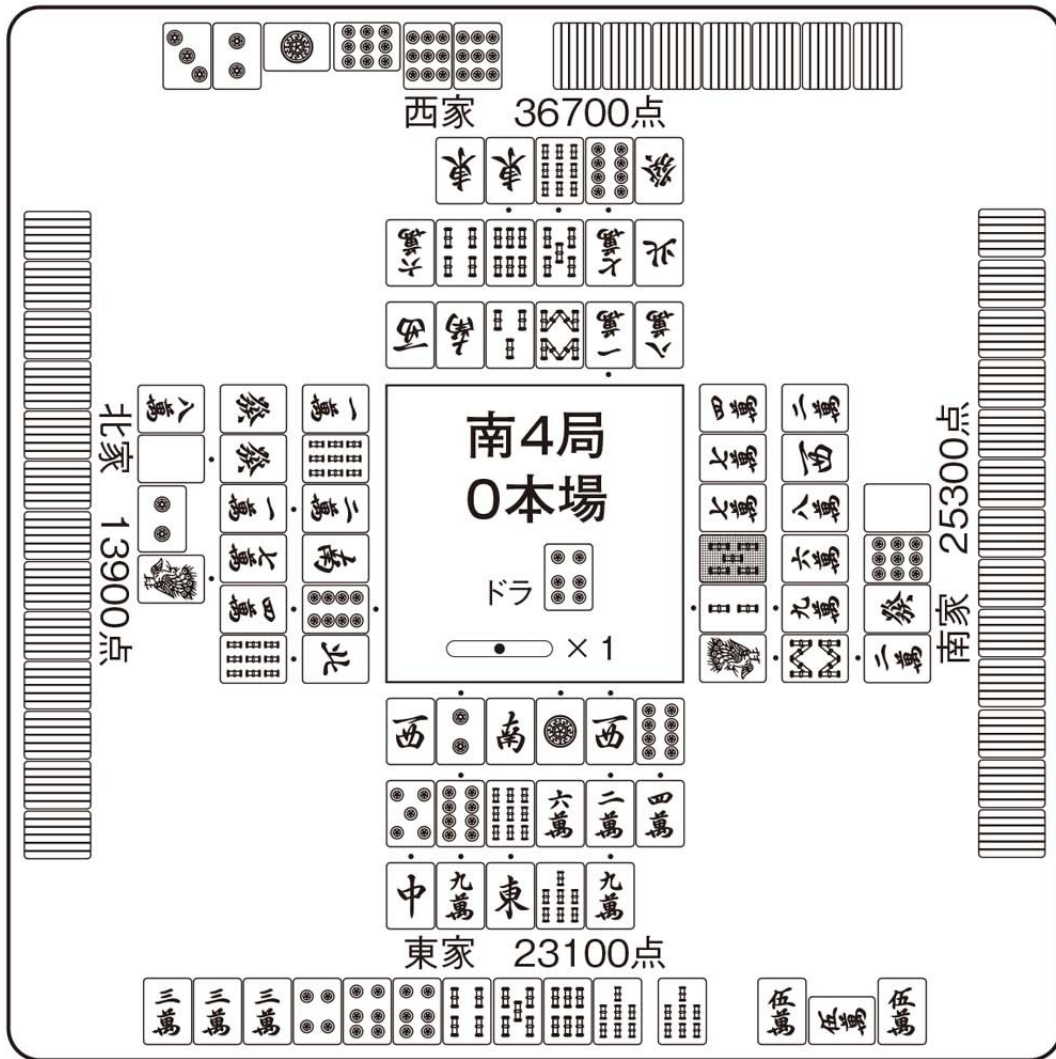
Discard .

Given the discard order, it is unlikely that he is holding a  shape. In addition, we need to think about whether there was lag on the  shimocha discard.

Author's summary:

This is a rare case where the replies are all split. Given our current information, there's only a minor difference between the decisions. I agree with Cheetah's reasoning, and would add that I believe the urasuji of the riichi declaration tile is generally safe, and would discard .

Q62 - Betaori Judgment #4 - Tenhou



Bakyo

Round	South 4
Honba	0
Sticks	1
Dora	

East (You)	23100
South	25300
West	36700
North	13900



Question

It's all last, and we are surrounded by danger. Toimen appears to go for a somete hand while kamicha has declared a late riichi. How do we fold here?

Answers - Q62




Yui-chan's papa (10d):

Discard .

While acknowledging the possibility of aka ryanmen, I instinctively choose to discard . If I were not dealer, I would contemplate discarding  if I believed shimocha and toimen were in noten.
























Rei of Nanto (9d):

Discard .

After briefly panicking we should realize the  is double one chance and it can't be a shanpon wait. Kamicha did not respond to  either. The  discard was early so it is unlikely to be a kanchan wait.

Ultra Riichi (9d):

Discard .

While we have one-chance tiles in both manzu and souzu, kamicha's early   discard raises the possibility of a shift from the   shape to a   shape upon drawing . Therefore, a   is likely and we do not cut . When selecting from the souzu one-chance tiles,    , we note it would be unusual to  discard on turn 2 from a         ryankan. Thus, I'll go with the option that is least likely to deal into a kanchan.







Author's summary:

This is case of what is more reliable, the ease of discarding souzu or the double one-chance in manzu. While I understand the reasoning behind the replies, I would like to think that the safety brought by the double one chance is marginally more reliable here.

Answers - Q63


Crazy Sparrow (Tenhou):

Discard .

Given the dealer's  discard in that order, the chance of a manzu wait is low. It's more likely that the  was discarded from the  shape rather than the  shape, so we choose  relying on the safety of one-chance.  appears to also be safe, but we do not discard it in case of a tanki wait.






taroo (10d):

Discard .





We are first in South 3 and our hand in bad shape, we fold against the two riichis. We discard the one chance  which is genbutsu to shimocha.




hayato (10d):

Discard .

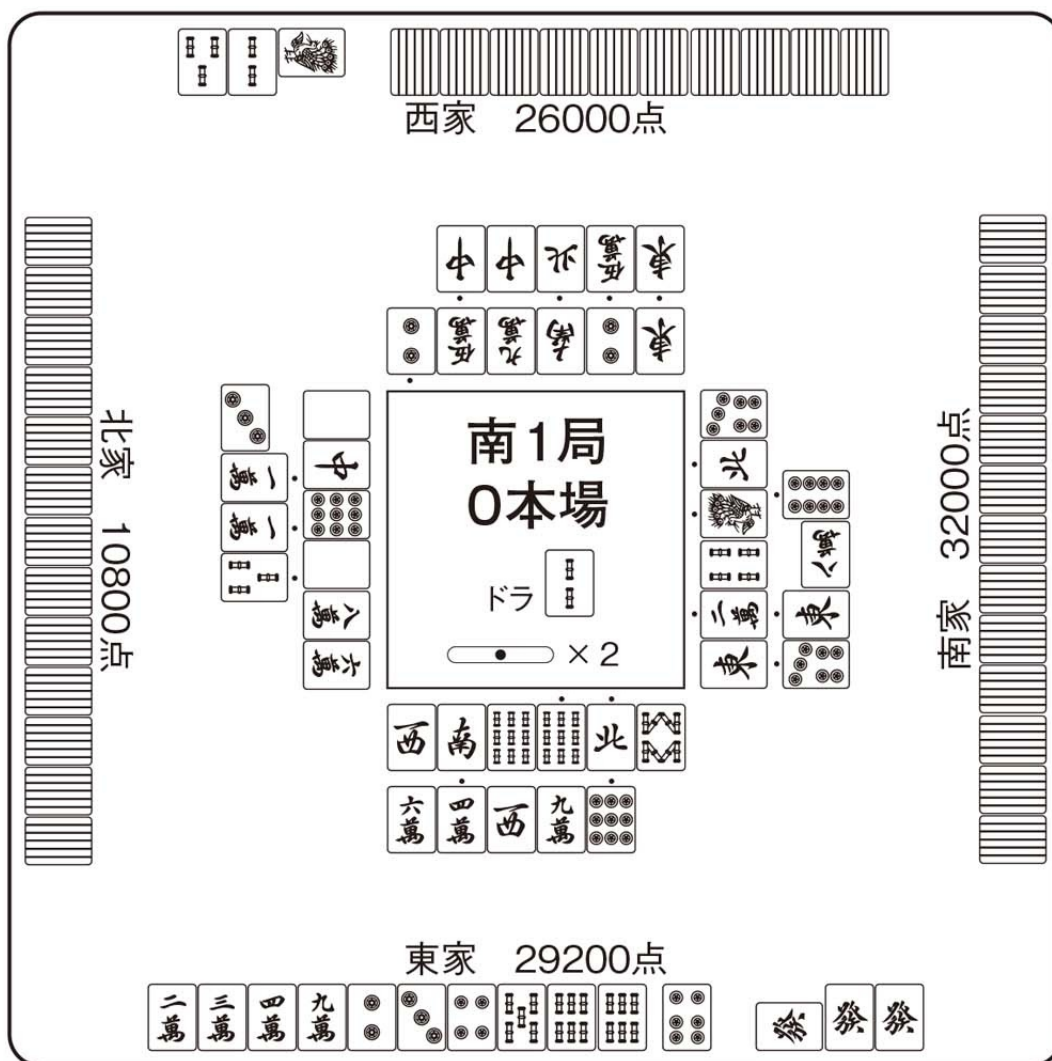
I feel uneasy not seeing a single honor or wind discarded from shimocha, and have a bad feeling about . While I'm slightly wary of the one-chance , the odds of the  being sakigiri from the  shape are low given the current scores so I choose .

Author's summary:

 are genbutsu to shimocha but may deal into the dealer.  is suji against the dealer and is sotogawa¹ against shimocha. The replies have chosen to discard shimocha's genbutsu first based on the dealer's discard order, reasoning he would not sakigiri  here. In addition,  is one-chance, so it should be the correct answer given the information.

¹outer tiles of early number tile discards; in this instance,  is sotogawa against shimocha due to the early  and  discards

Q64 - Betaori Judgment #6 - Tenhou



Bakyo

Round	South 1
Honba	0
Sticks	2
Dora	

East (You)	29200
South	32000
West	26000
North	10800

Question

We are dealer in South, currently second, and facing two riichis. While we want to fully fold, we can't seem to find a safe tile... What should we discard here?

Answers - Q64

Shibukawa (10d):

Discard .

We definitely do not want to deal in to kamicha's riichi as he is in last place. We have to risk potentially dealing in to shimocha, and discard .








Aoyama Gakuin 4th Year (10d):

Discard .






We may deal in to shimocha, but we still discard . We have no choice since we do not want to deal in to the last place's riichi.

Saisoku-kun (9d):

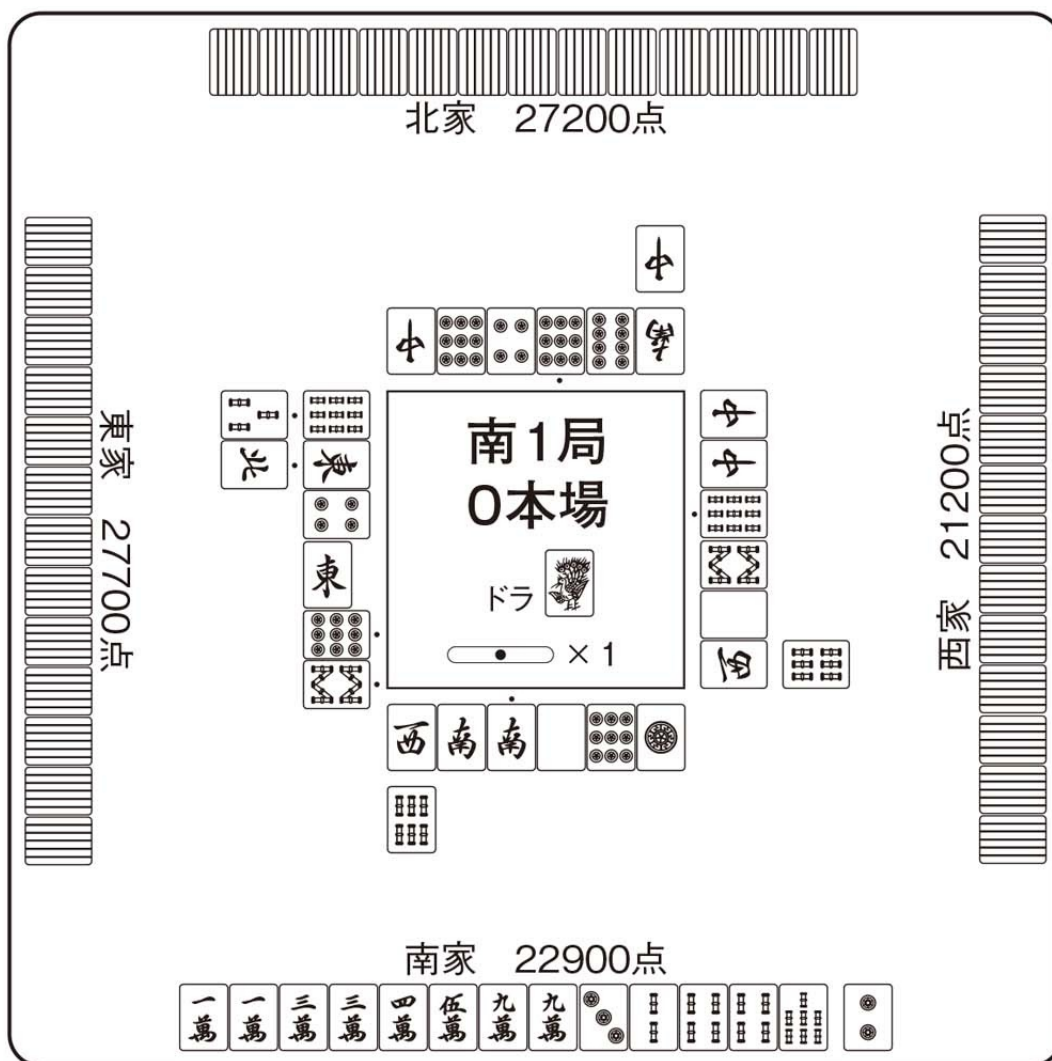
Discard .

We do not push our cheap iishanten hand against two riichi, and completely fold. Shimocha's  discard came out after his isolated , indicating the  was likely discarded from a complex shape. Therefore, the risk of  has increased. Given the fourth-place penalty, our main priority is not dealing in to last place. If  passes, then the safety of  also increases, so I think  is advantageous here.


Author's summary:

First, we should choose a tile that absolutely does not deal in to kamicha given the point distribution. This is clearly stated in all three replies, so we decide between  and . It's also true that shimocha's  is alarming. As such, I would choose to discard . While it's true that  is likely to pass, this is not the time to test the waters.

Q65 - Betaori Judgment #7 - Tenhou



Bakyo

Round	South 1
Honba	0
Sticks	1
Dora	

East	27700
South (You)	22900
West	21200
North	27200










Question

We are trying to fold against the dealer's riichi and have run out of safe tiles. How do we fold from here?

Answers - Q65





Iniesta (10d):

Discard .

We discard the  that are sotogawa to  (either is fine, but there is a possibility of a penchan wait on  so we start with ). We discard  next. There is a slight kabe so  should be better than . If the wait is  with a potential of tanyao, discarding  would also lower the deal-in score so we start from the terminal.






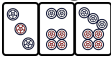




VenusSay (9d):

Discard .




We discard the  which is sotogawa to the  discard on turn three. Next is , followed by .

Nemata (7d):

Discard .

The riichi declaration tile is , so it is likely the  was a floating tile. As such, the wait is unlikely to involve the . There is a slight chance of a penchan wait on  so we start with . If we cannot draw genbutsu or  we fold with , then  and  (the deal-in rate of these tiles is lower, and  avoid tanyao) in that order.



Author's summary:

One theory of folding is to select ankou or toitsu when without genbutsu, but sometimes the discarded tiles also show a path to survival. This time, the  provides the path. While there are situations where the  may be a sakigiri discard, the replies indicate it is too early to consider that. All replies have decided to discard .

Answers - Q66






Mecha Zetton (10d):

Discard .

We would rather discard , which is safe against at least one player, than discard the  which is risky against two players. We do not want to deal in to last place.


Tenko (10d):

Discard .


Any choice is risky, but we discard  since four  are out, eliminating the possibility of a kanchan wait, and the odds of a shanpon wait on  are reduced since one  has been discarded. Souzu is highly likely to deal in against both kamicha and toimen, so we make the choice to discard .

shoot39 (10d):

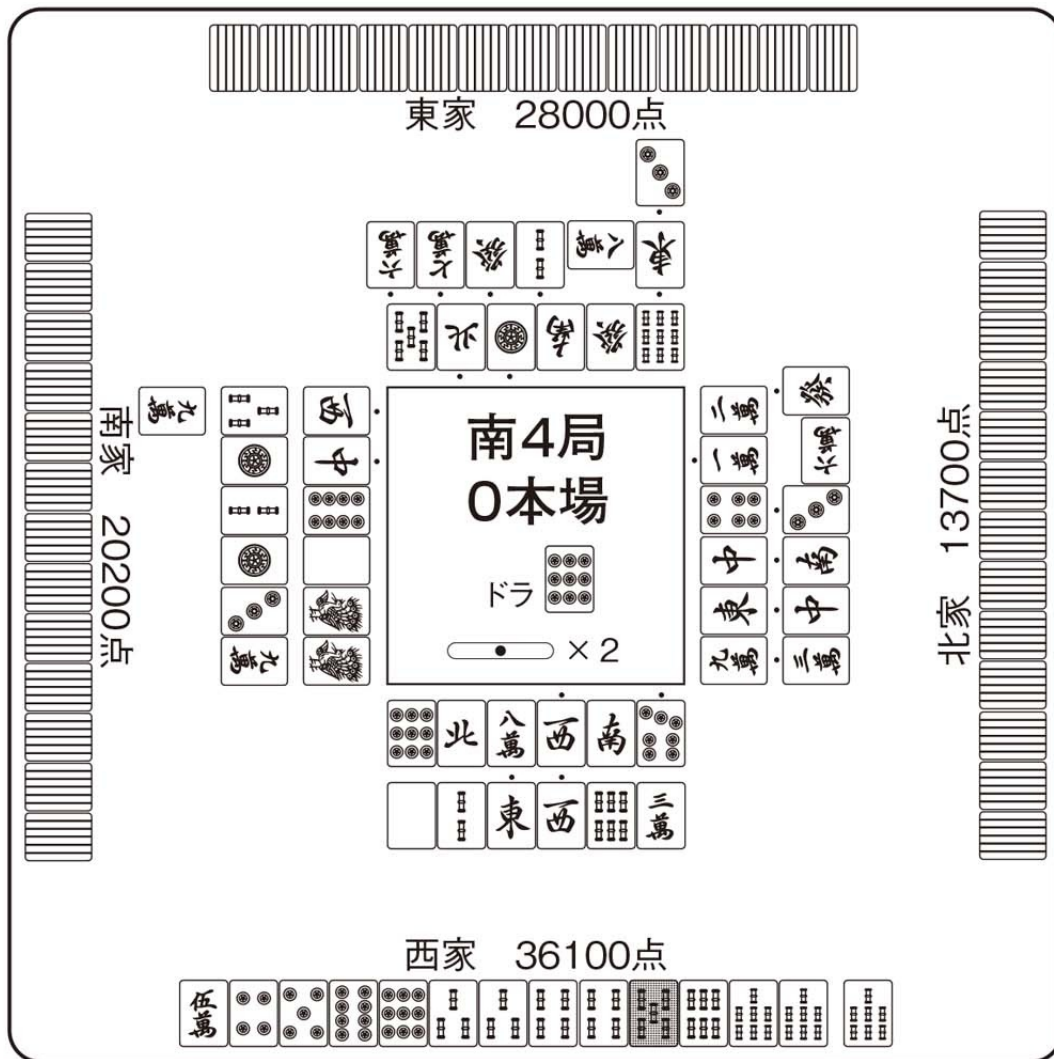
Discard .

It appears that both kamicha and shimocha are folding. As such, I think that we should discard the  that either player is likely to be holding.

Author's summary:

This is a question where any discard carries risk. In the actual game, I used up all my time and still dealt in (I'll intentionally omit what I dealt in to [laughs]). With all the information available, I think that the  discard stated in two of the answers is a good choice.

Q67 - Betaori Judgment #9 - Tenhou



Bakyo

Round	South 4
Honba	0
Sticks	2
Dora	

East	28000
South	20200
West (You)	36100
North	13700

Question

We are in first place in all last and two opponents have declared riichi. Of course we want to fold, but we have no safe tiles. So, what do we discard here?

Answers - Q67

Futokunaio (Tenhou):

Discard .

We still end up first if we deal in to shimocha up to 5200 points. Even if we deal in to a mangan, we enter West. Here, prioritize discarding dealer's genbutsu.

Mimizu (9d):

Discard .

This is a situation where we want to avoid a double ron, so we discard tiles that are guaranteed to pass against one player. Even if we deal in to shimocha's mangan, we are still first place so we prioritize discarding toimen's genbutsu.

Folkcraft (10d):

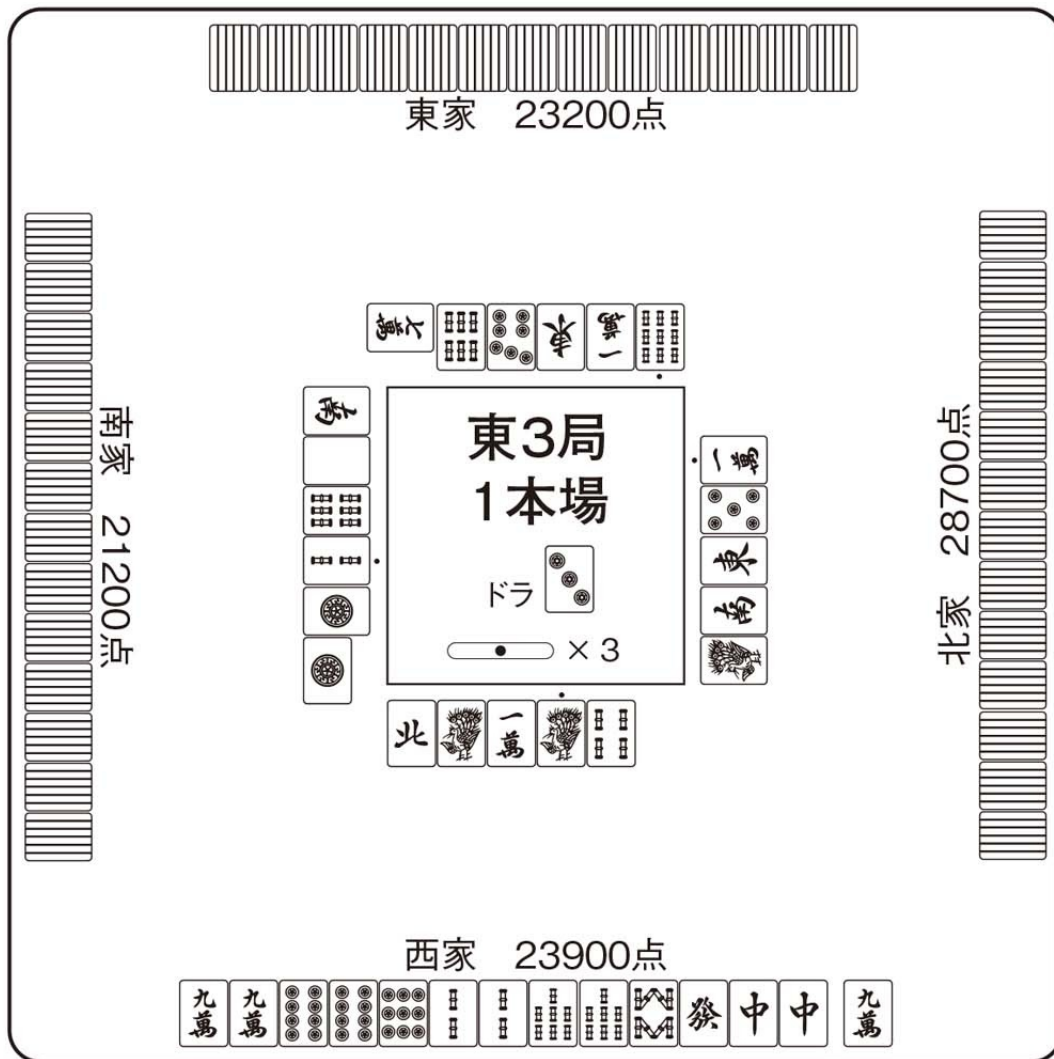
Discard .

Rather than risk dealing in to the dealer, essentially guaranteeing him overtaking us, we may be able to retain our first place if we deal in to shimocha. Here, we prioritize discarding the dealer's genbutsu.

Author's summary:

"Do not deal in to last place" is a common refrain throughout this book. However, we need to assess each situation independently and determine when rules can be broken. Here, we have to realize that dealing into last place, while not ideal, is far preferable to dealing into the dealer. The replies echo this point with unanimous reasoning.

Q68 - Betaori Judgment #10 - Tenhou



Bakyo

Round	East 3
Honba	1
Sticks	3
Dora	

East	23200
South	21200
West (You)	23900
North	28700




Question

It's only turn six and we are suddenly facing two riichis! We are in chiitoui iishanten, a hand not worth pushing. So, what do we do?

Answers - Q68

Asapin (Tenhou):

Discard .

Kamicha has discarded the  pair, and the odds are low that he is waiting on tiles near  or a shanpon. However, the dealer's discards reveal very little. In these scenarios, we prioritize safety against dealer, but I don't think there is any safer tile in our hand than .


Chikuki (10d):

Discard .

We fold by discarding . It's a live tile but the odds of honors dealing are low.


Mahjong World (9d):

Discard .

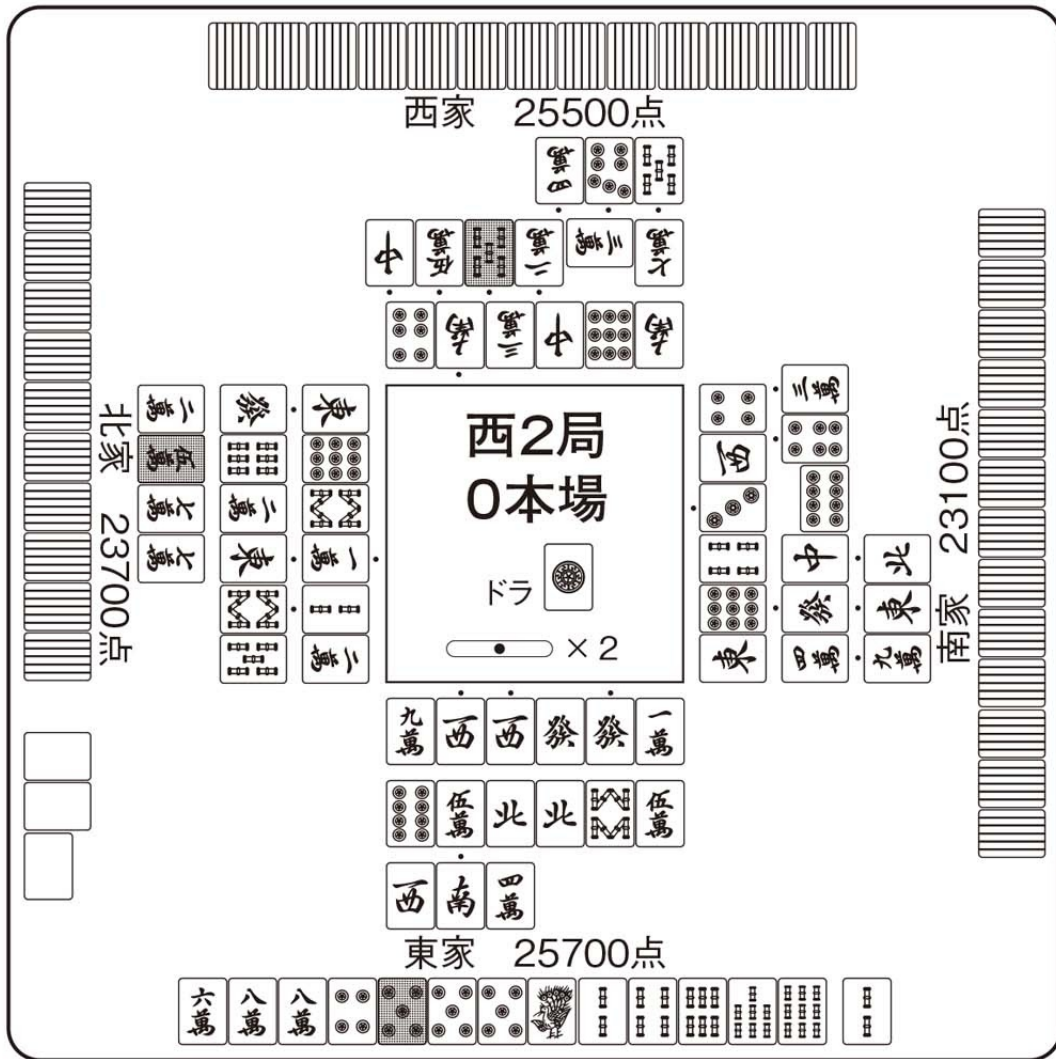
We discard  here. If we deal in here, it can't be helped. It occasionally happens sometimes though (laughs).

Author's summary:

What we should do if we are facing two riichis and have no genbutsu against the dealer?

Here, the replies have determined we have no choice but to discard the low-risk . It's easy to automatically discard honors and winds against riichi, but we should only discard them after ensuring that we have no better tiles to discard. We should always proceed with such care (this also serves as a warning to myself).

Q69 - Betaori Judgment #11 - Tenhou



Bakyo

Round	West 2
Honba	0
Sticks	2
Dora	

East (You)	25700
South	23100
West	25500
North	23700



Question

We are in West and it's instantly over if we deal in. Furthermore, we are in the worst possible situation: no safe tiles against two riichis. Given it's late game and almost nothing will pass, what should we discard here?

Answers - Q69







Please give me cola (Tenhou):

Discard .

If we deal in, it's either to a shanpon or tanki wait. Given toimen's manzu discard order, it should normally pass. Shimocha may have a shanpon wait, but kamicha appears to have  in his hand. As such, it's a tough decision but the  appears to be the safest.












Mom is the meal ready yet? (8d):

Discard .

Our discard candidates are , , and . The South player's oikake riichi appears to be a good shape wait given that he discarded  before declaring riichi. Furthermore, the West player discarded  the turn right before declaring riichi, so  appears safest.

Saury (8d):

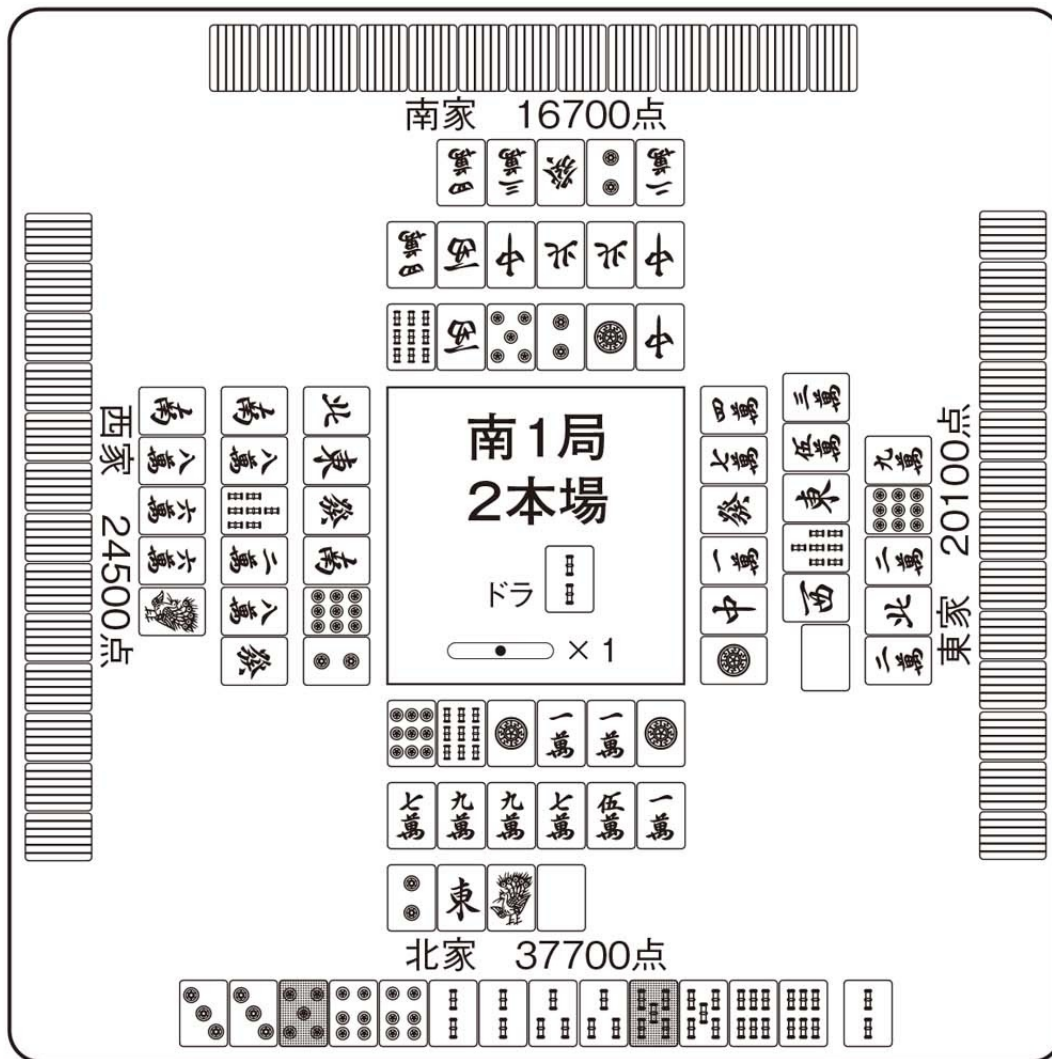
Discard .

The tiles that do not deal in to a ryanmen are , , and . We see four  and three  so it's likely that someone is holding either a pair or triplet of . As such, the danger of dealing in to a shanpon wait is too high. We see a lot of components that would make up a possible  shape, so shanpon and kanchan waits are less likely. There is no such safety apparent for , so we choose .

Author's summary:

There is a lot of information in the late-game discards. Our survival depends on our ability to combine all sources of information, from hand reads, elimination of waits, to insight gained from the discard order. All is revealed in the discards.

Q70 - Betaori Judgment #12 - Tenhou



Bakyo

Round	South 1
Honba	2
Sticks	1
Dora	

East	20100
South	16700
West	24500
North (You)	37700



Question

We are in first place, and we have nothing safe right before the dealer's final turn! The discards seem unhelpful at first glance. We are also currently in tenpai, but what is the true cost of pursuing keiten... What do we discard here?

Answers - Q70

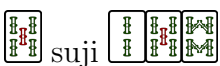
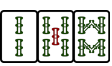
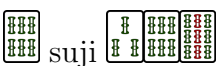
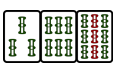






Biribiri Billy (10d):

Discard .

All  have been discarded, so we choose to discard , the only tile that does not have a kanchan (and penchan) wait.



Greed (10d):

Discard .





The  suji  and the  suji  are dangerous, so they are out. If we discard aka  and deal in, the aka will add one additional han so it is out. The danger of  are slightly increased as one is dora and one is dora-adjacent, so they are out too.  has no chance of dealing in to a kanchan, but the possibility of a shanpon wait remains. Since we have the aka , we read it as unlikely shimocha would take a  kanchan. We discard .

Ritsumisan (9d):

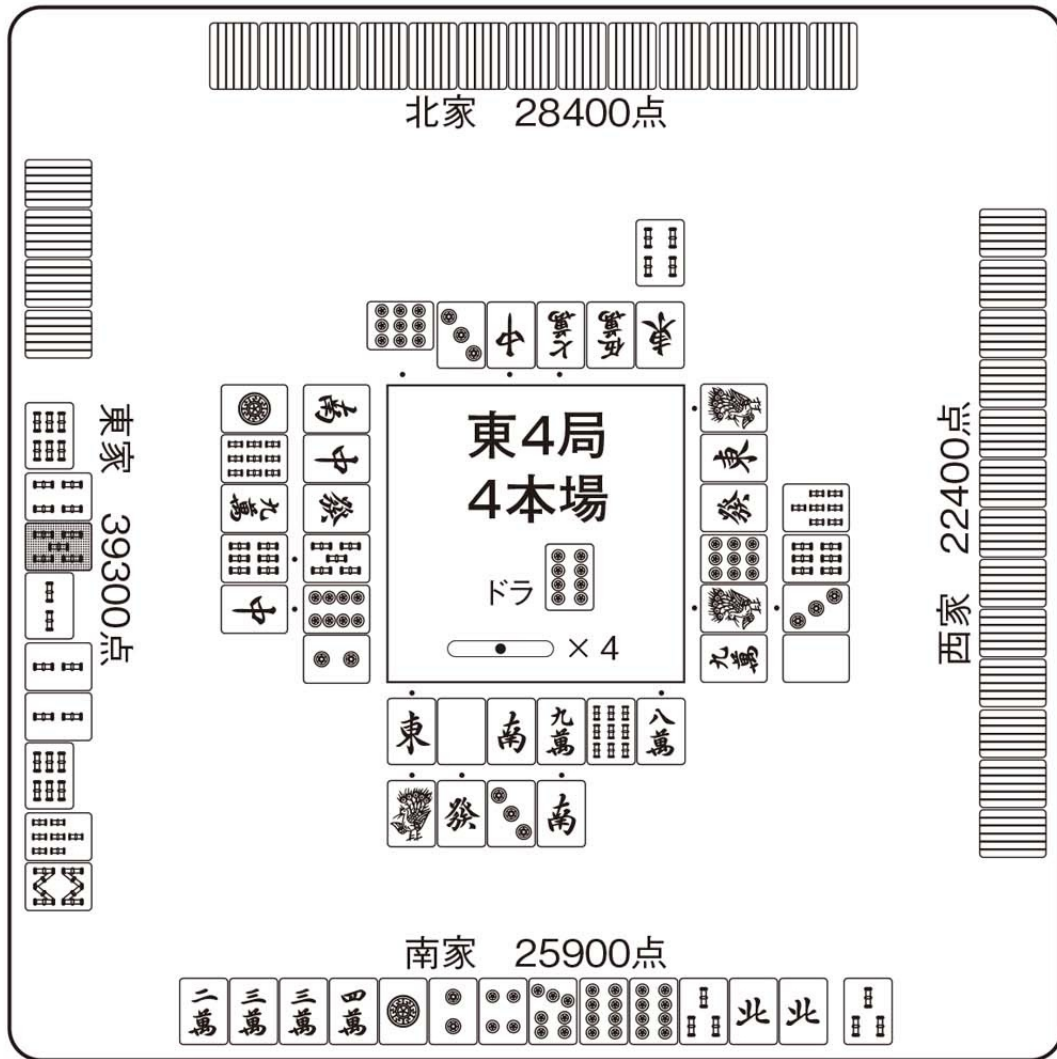
Discard .

We have no choice but to discard  to take tenpai. It's dangerous because  is dora, but we have no other safe tiles, we have non-zero winning chances, and the noten payments are substantial. We discard dora here.

Author's summary:

This is a difficult question with many options, as reflected in the variety of replies. The difficulty stems from either using incomplete information to justify discarding pinzu, or to discard dora for tenpai because the other options rely on incomplete information. I would choose to discard  because the dealer discarded  on turn 1, and we see many  discards, reducing the number of possible  waits.

Q71 - Betaori Judgment #13 - Tenhou



Bakyo

Round	East 4
Honba	4
Sticks	4
Dora	

East	39300
South (You)	25900
West	22400
North	28400





Question

Toimen has declared riichi and the dealer has called three times. We want to fold but do not see a clear path. What should we do here? (Kamicha chii'd and discarded , chii'd on (the riichi declaration tile) and discarded , chii'd and discarded)

Answers - Q71

nakajuun (10d):

Discard .

 may deal into a kanchan or penchan wait from toimen. Toimen's discards look normal, but if it's chiitai, there is not much difference between the  and , so we discard .

Saionji Ritsuko (9d):

Discard .









The discards make me doubt dealer is going for a somete hand. As such, we simply choose our safest tile, the guest wind.

Kunihikomaru (9d):

Discard .

I think the  is less likely to deal in than the  here, so I choose to discard .

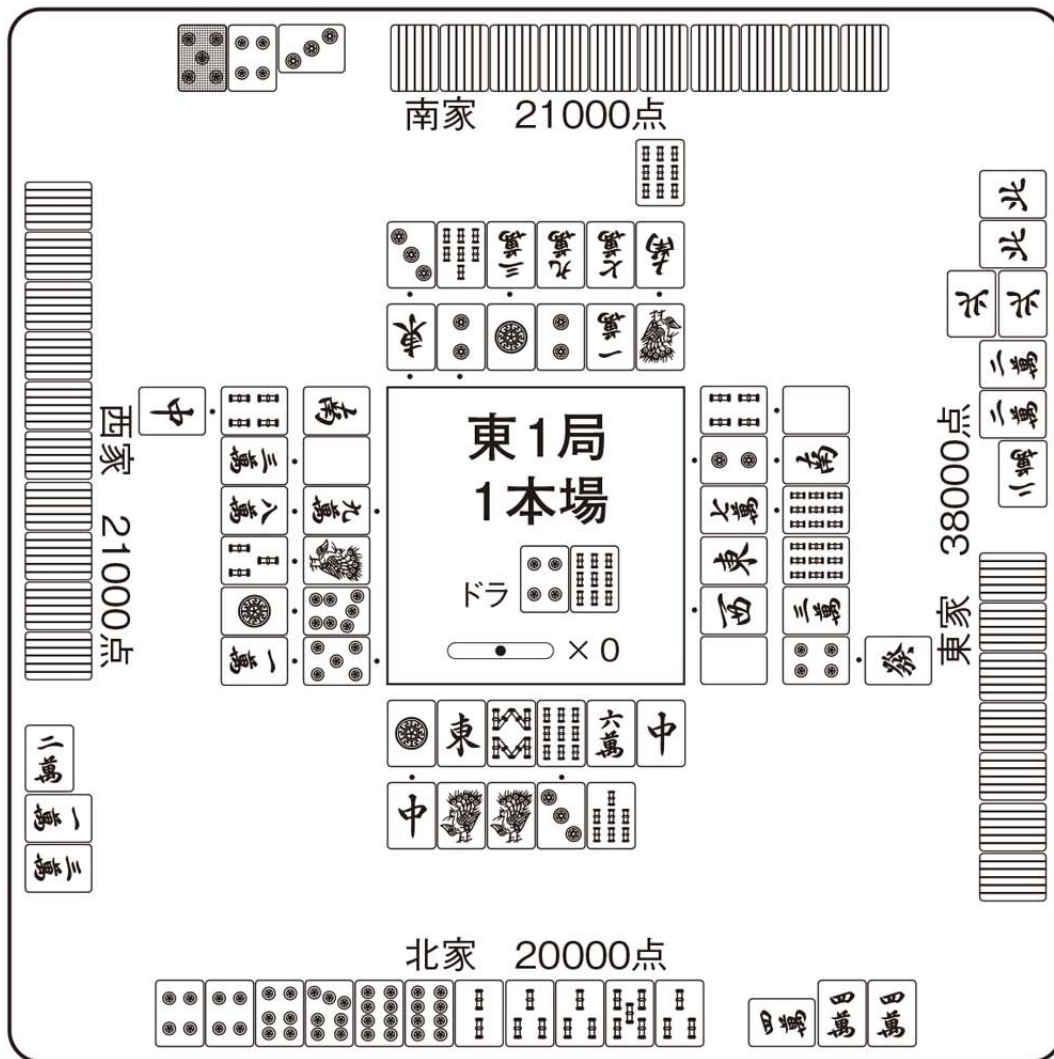
Author's summary:

This is a question that was taken from the logs of the first Tenhou, Meijinsen. While the replies have narrowed the choice to either  or , they are divided over their final decision. I would also discard , as toimen discarded  and . In addition, given that toimen is the pro Suzuki Taro, South tried to fold with  and dealt in. He deliberately rejected a ryanmen wait on a potential pinfu hand, opting for a  and  shanpon. As expected of black digital...

TL note: the logs of this game can be found here:

<https://tenhou.net/0/?log=2011092520gm-0009-10011-a394c41f>

Q72 - Betaori Judgment #14 - Tenhou



Bakyo

Round	East 1
Honba	1
Sticks	0
Dora	

East	38000
South	21000
West	21000
North (You)	20000




Question

We are at a loss after everyone has called. It seems like no matter what we discard, someone will declare ron... What should we discard here?

Answers - Q72





Inujyarashi (10d):

Discard .

For shimocha, all yakuhai are exhausted and there is a strong stench of toitoi, so it's hard to discard the shonpai . In addition, many suji have been exhausted against toimen, so trying to fight against both of them with  is quite dangerous. As such, we discard  to fold. When there is a call and the yaku is uncertain, I think that it is good to quickly check all the yakuhai that have been discarded, and then determine the danger of each tile given the possibility of any yaku being tied to them.



Sakurako (9d):

Discard .




While the safety of a tile is largely controlled by what lag was on there on which tile and the call order, I think  is the safest tile here. I think it's a rare case that toimen would have a floating  and then draw a  after calling on the .

One way traffic (8d):

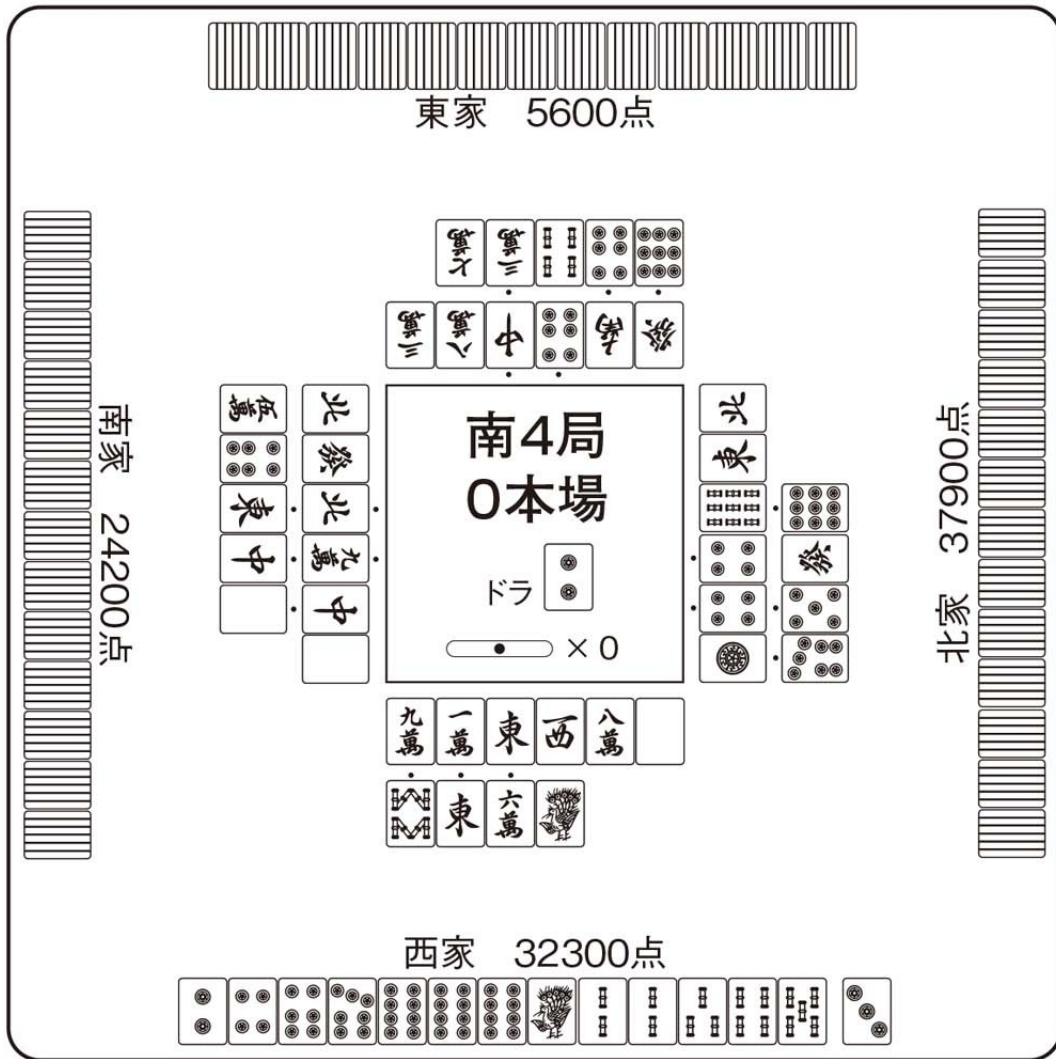
Discard .

The dora is the least likely to deal in. I think there may be a bad shape wait on , and  has the danger of toitoi.

Author's summary:

The replies this time are all aligned: discard the dora . When folding, there are quite a few people who would not chose to fold with the dora given the consequences if it were to deal in. However, the replies have all decided to go with the  discard given that it is the most likely to pass in the current situation, even if  is the dora. This should be a lesson for all.

Q73 - Overall Techniques #1 - Tenhou



Bakyo

Round	South 4
Honba	0
Sticks	0
Dora	

East	5600
South	24200
West (You)	32300
North	37900




Question

It's all last and we can have the option to take tenpai. We can dama to end the game, or aim for first place with riichi. What do we do and which wait should we take? Do we just take the usual pinfu ryanmen wait, or the irregular tanyao three-sided wait?

Answers - Q73

Please give cola (Tenhou):

Discard  dama.

We are currently in all last with the dealer in last place. We should think about prioritizing ending this game with the current standings. Even if we riichi, we are not guaranteed first with a win. We also want to avoid a fight with the dealer going full zentsu¹. The reason for choosing  over the  discard is safety, and not a play for value upon drawing aka .


Cheetah (10d):

Discard  riichi.



Quite a lot of the middle Pinzu have been discarded, so we take the irregular wait given that it looks very easy to win on.

Mahjong World (8d):

Discard  dama.

Souzu is expensive this round, and in contrast while  is quite exhausted it looks like a good wait. As such, I take the irregular wait. However, given the discards the dealer may riichi soon, so we dama since taking second is acceptable in Tenhou.

Author's summary:

The question is what wait we should take given the situation. All the replies have stated to discard the . There is not much difference in acceptance, but we do not see much of the lower Souzu while seeing quite a few of the middle-upper Pinzu. In this situation, the replies have all chosen to apply the technique of waiting on the color that is heavily discarded. Of course, I would also discard  here.

¹pure offense without regard for dealing in

Answers - Q74

Shibukawa (10d):

Do not skip ron.

We take the ron in unlikely event of an kokushi tsumo, which will put all our efforts to waste. Speaking of which, why haven't we declared riichi?


Sakurako (9d):

Do not skip ron.

To skip ron, we need a clear and unambiguous goal with guaranteed return. Here, the goal is muddled, as we want to ron first place, conditional on not already having drawn the winning tile. In addition, the return (placement of first) is not guaranteed. While the situation does not appear to be too dangerous, the danger of kokushi should be slightly higher than usual.

Ultra Riichi (9d):

Do not skip ron.

The possibility of kokushi has not been exhausted right? Shimocha's recent discards, like , suggest a push, so we take the win.

Author's summary:


When one should skip ron in Tenhou generally boils down to one of two situations.




- 1) To escape fourth
- 2) To aim for first in a low-risk situation

This question regards the latter. The experts agree: although the risk is low, we should still take the win. That may sound harsh, but I have experienced being overtaken in similar situations many times in real games. We should abandon our presumption of safety here.

Answers - Q75


Asapin (Tenhou):

Discard  riichi.

Toimen is pushing hard against the dealer's call, so most likely he is in good shape iishanten or in tenpai. He likely has a taatsu in the upper Pinzu, so for us to riichi on the tanki  would be foolish, especially if we were chased. It's also possible shimocha is using , so  is a better wait here.




Saisoku-kun (9d):

Discard aka  dama.


We have sufficient value in our hand, so I view it advantageous EV-wise to improve our odds of winning, even marginally. As such, I prefer to discard the aka  and dama.

Nannanda- (9d):

Discard  dama.

If we riichi here, it would be a waste of a stick. No respectable player would deal  if we discard the aka  and riichi. Our dama hand is sufficient value, so we take the  wait, more likely to be in the wall.




Author's summary:

This question is about the effect of discarding an aka to riichi. The replies have all stated that discarding the aka to riichi to suji trap the other players is a pointless thought. However, the approaches are slightly different.. The final choice is a matter of preference, and I would support the  discard riichi since it is still East 1.

Answers - Q76


taroo (10d):

Discard .

It's still early, and we should attempt to confirm our sanshoku. If we draw  we riichi even if it's tanki. If we draw  we furiten riichi. We could also discard  here, and there isn't much difference between the two options. Here, it's fine to not take the head-start riichi, and we can push this hand against anyone except last place.



Chikuki (10d):

Discard .


We reject tenpai by discarding . It's a waste to go for bad shape 2600 here. Although aren't many improvements here, we reject tenpai given it's early, the potential value of the hand, and the chance of a good shape wait. You could consider this as a switch to haneman iishanten.

Inasaku Volcano (10d):

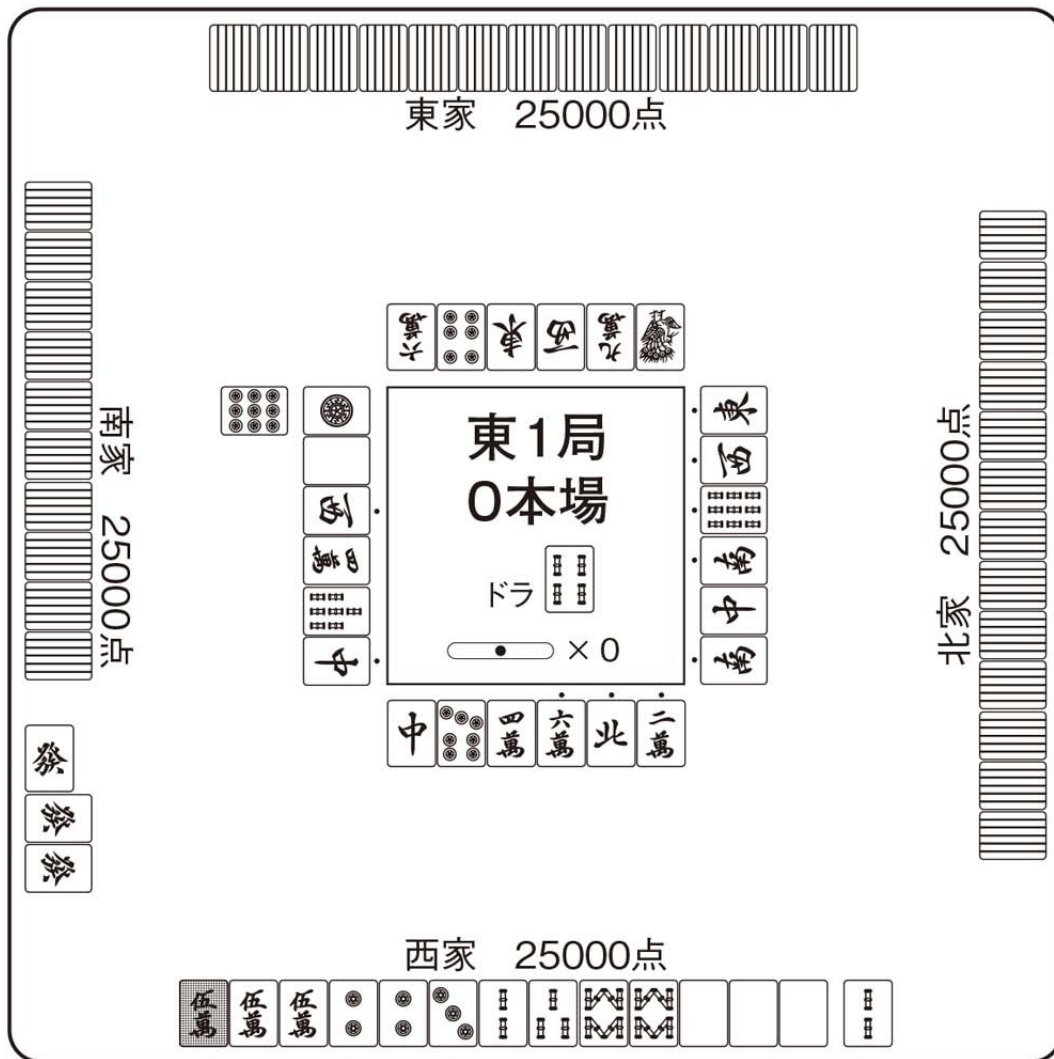
Discard .

It's still early, it's bad shape, and our hand has decent improvements. As such, I do not want to cap it at 2600 points and rely on aka or ura. This hand can reach haneman, and we can use it to first for first. If we were to draw the backfire , depending on how late in the round it is, we could proceed by dropping .

Author's summary:

This question is about how strictly we adhere to the theory of "head-start riichi is always correct". The replies state that here, we should regress from tenpai. Given that we can instantly get back to tenpai by changing our wait, it's fine to regress from tenpai here. I choose to discard  here, aiming for the highest scoring potential.

Q77 - Overall Techniques #5 - Tenhou



Bakyo (Note: Tonpuusen)

Round	East 1					
Honba	0					
Sticks	0					
Dora	<table border="1" style="display: inline-table;"> <tr> <td> <table border="1" style="display: inline-table;"> <tr><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td></tr> </table> </td> </tr> </table>	<table border="1" style="display: inline-table;"> <tr><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td></tr> </table>				
<table border="1" style="display: inline-table;"> <tr><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td></tr> </table>						

East	25000
South	25000
West (You)	25000
North	25000



Question

It's a tonpuu WWYD question! This hand could be huge, but in tonpuu, we anticipate everyone will be actively calling! How do we adapt to these strategies... How should we proceed?

Answers - Q77






Aoyama Gakuin 4th Year (10d):

Discard .

Our tiles for calling pon are near the edges, and the other players' discards are shifting inwards so I believe it should be easy to call. It's difficult to abandon the toitoi mangan, but we should definitely chii . Our chii judgement on  will depend on the speed of the other players.




Kawamura Akihiro (10d):

Discard .


At first glance the choice is between  or , aiming to pon for toitoi. But if we advance closed, we can lock in value with riichi, making the choice between  or . There is no merit in confirming the  ryanmen here as our hand has enough value with riichi.

Mimizu (10d):

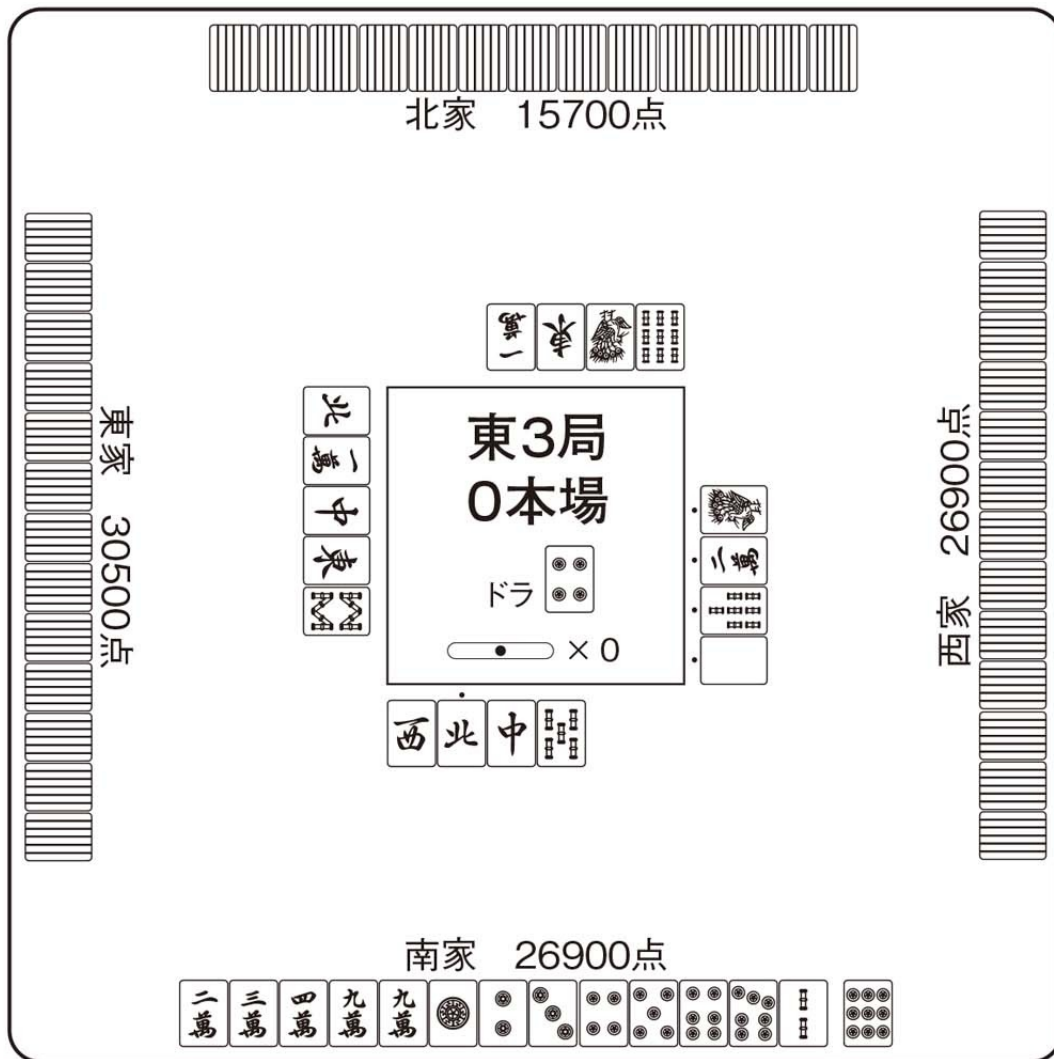
Discard .

We choose to discard the tile that maximizes winrate. The merit of discarding  is only manifested when we win with . We should place greater emphasis on the strength of the  tenpai.

Author's summary:

In a hanchan we may consider moving towards suuankou, but the speed of hands in tonpuu changes the thinking. As such, if we do not consider calling to advance our hand, we will be slower than the others, losing initiative. The replies have not even mentioned suuankou at all, and determined that either proceeding with toitoi or a closed hand will give us a much stronger wait. I believe that discarding  here is a good choice, as it will make our hand easier to win.

Q78 - Overall Techniques #6 - Tenhou



Bakyo (Note: Tonpuusen)

Round	East 3
Honba	0
Sticks	0
Dora	


East	30500
South (You)	26900
West	26900
North	15700

Question

It's another tonpuu WWYD. If this was a hanchan, this would be a clear-cut ittsu dora 1 insta-riichi. Given that it's right before all last in a tonpuu game, do we riichi here?


Answers - Q78

macjr (10d):

Discard  dama.


If we win 5200 points here, we will be entering all last in first place. If we tsumo or get a direct hit on kamicha, the other players will be forced to fight against each other, allowing us to take first place if someone wins with a cheap hand. Given the point distribution, kamicha and shimocha are unlikely to push against us if we were to riichi. However, last place will likely push against us, which should raise concerns.






Greed (10d):

Discard  dama.


We are tied for third place right before all last. If last place wins a mangan tsumo in all last, we will drop to fourth. A 5200 point win here, enables us to enter all last in first place. As such, we dama here to maximize our odds of winning. We will accept pinfu if it is available to us, and may even riichi depending on our wait.

Yui-chan's papa (10d):

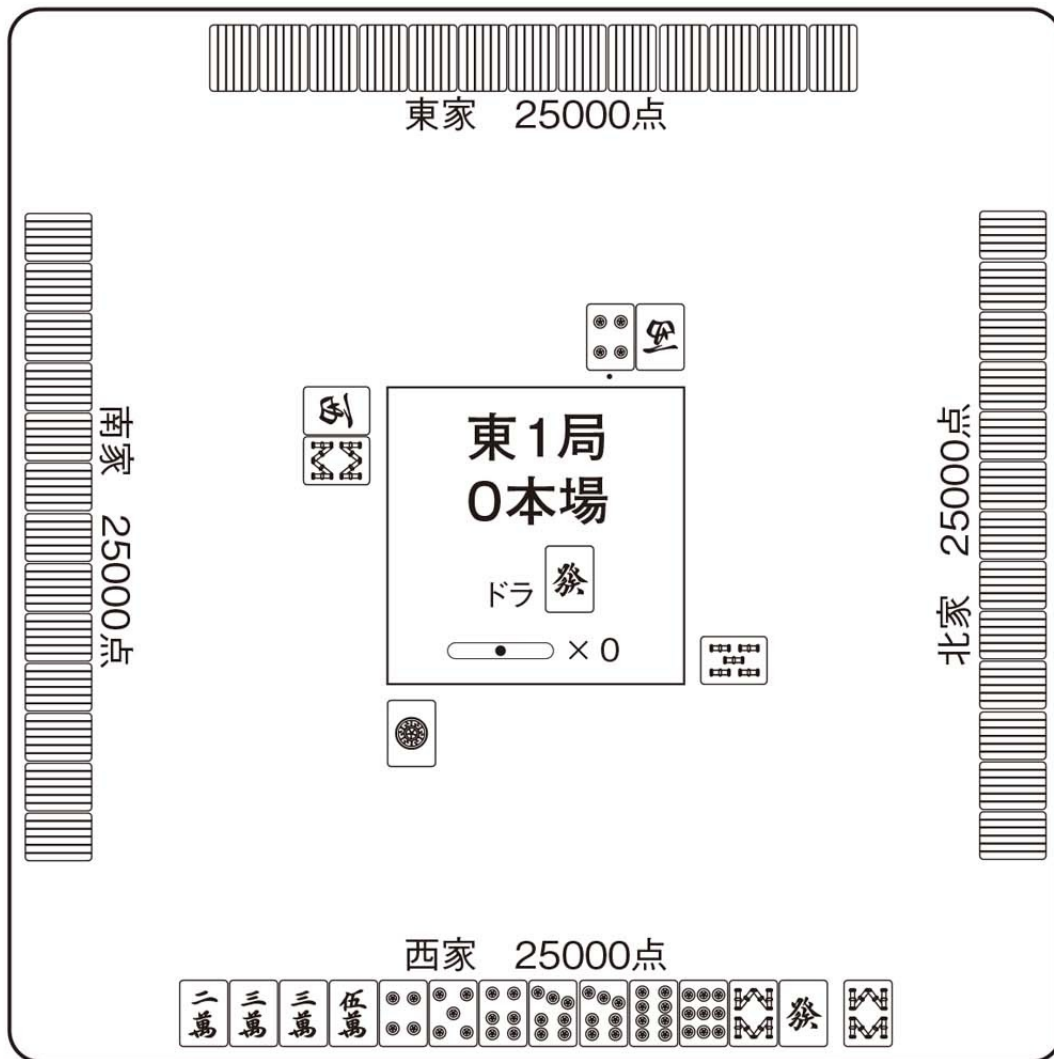
Discard  dama.

The value is decent, and our  wait is likely to be discarded. To justify riichi, we would need a better wait given that toimen will push against us. We riichi if our hand improves by drawing , , or . We tsumogiri .

Author's summary:

I vaguely recall from way back that it is generally more efficient to dama a 5200+ hand in a Tenhou tonpuu game if the scores are close to the starting points. Everyone agrees on , and some may riichi upon an improved wait. However, it's probably safer to dama if it's a bad shape.

Q79 - Overall Techniques #7 - Tenhou



Bakyo

Round	East 1
Honba	0
Sticks	0
Dora	發


East	25000
South	25000
West (You)	25000
North	25000






Question

It's turn two and we are already in iishanten. Our hand has overlapping acceptance, and it does not appear we need to rush to tenpai. We also currently have the dora tile floating in our hand. Do we discard the dora here? Or do we keep it?

Answers - Q79

Crazy Sparrow (Tenhoui):

Discard .

We discard the dora since our hand is in such good order, and there is no need for us to force mangan with our current hand. However, this hand will more or less have one mentsu in Manzu and three mentsu in Pinzu, so I think discarding  has some merit (But to be clear I absolutely do not recommend it). The reason why  should be discarded before  is to camouflage the   wait.



Iniesta (10d):

Discard .

We discard the dora and maintain our iishanten. The points are currently even among the players, so we prioritize our own acceptance and discard unneeded tiles. It's even better to drop it early on turn two, because the odds of it being called let alone dealing are lower than in later turns. Hence, we discard it now.

Saionji Yasuko (9d):

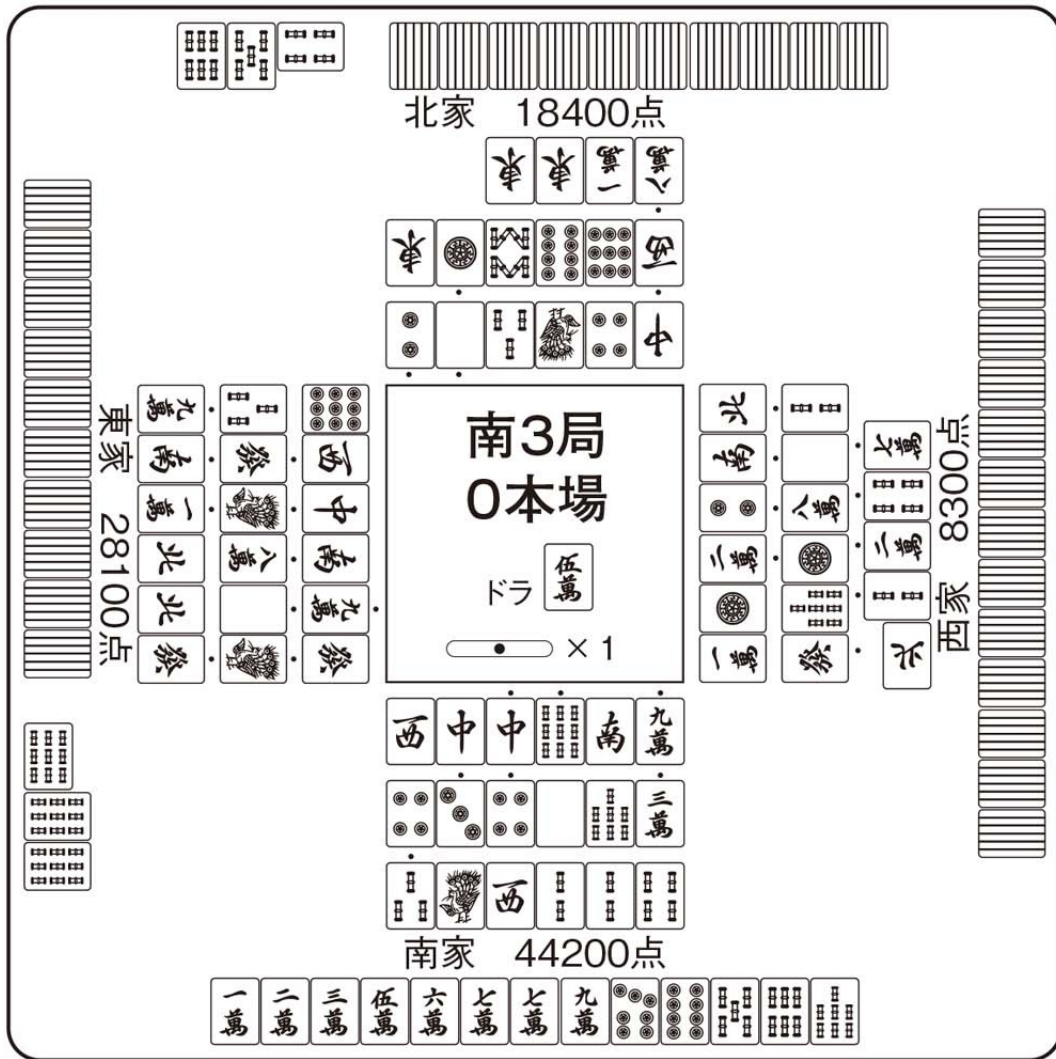
Discard .

We want to preserve both the chance of a ryanmen tenpai if we were to draw  , and the chance of improvements to the Pinzu. As such, there are no tiles we can discard other than the dora.

Author's summary:

This is a question of when to discard dora. We should give up on the dora early if we are not going to use it. I think this should be one of the basics on how to play when the scores are even. Our good iishanten provide further motivation to quickly discard the dora. It would be the worst if we were to hold onto the dora for too long, then deal in with it or let it be called.

Q80 - Overall Techniques #8 - Tenhou



Bakyo

Round	South 3
Honba	0
Sticks	1
Dora	伍萬



East	28100
South (You)	44200
West	8300
North	18400

Question

We have a wide lead right before all last. The next turn is the haitei, and the last place who has riichi'd discards 七萬. Do we call here (and what do we discard)?



Answers - Q80

Rei of Nanto (9d):

Pon  discard .



The objective is to let the riichi player tsumo and advance the round right? The dealer has more or less appeared to have folded this round. Even if the dealer were still pushing, calling would still be the right choice. It's possible the haitei may deal in to the dealer, but we are still first if the deal-in is values at dealer mangan or lower. However, if we can be overtaken by a dealer mangan we should not do anything we will regret and instead ignore the discard.

One Way Traffic (8d):

Pon  discard .


It's troublesome if dealer renchans, and our point gap widens if there is a tsumo due to oyakaburi. Furthermore, if last place is revived point-wise, then all last would be a showdown of speed, increasing the possibility of a cheap win.

Nemata (7d):

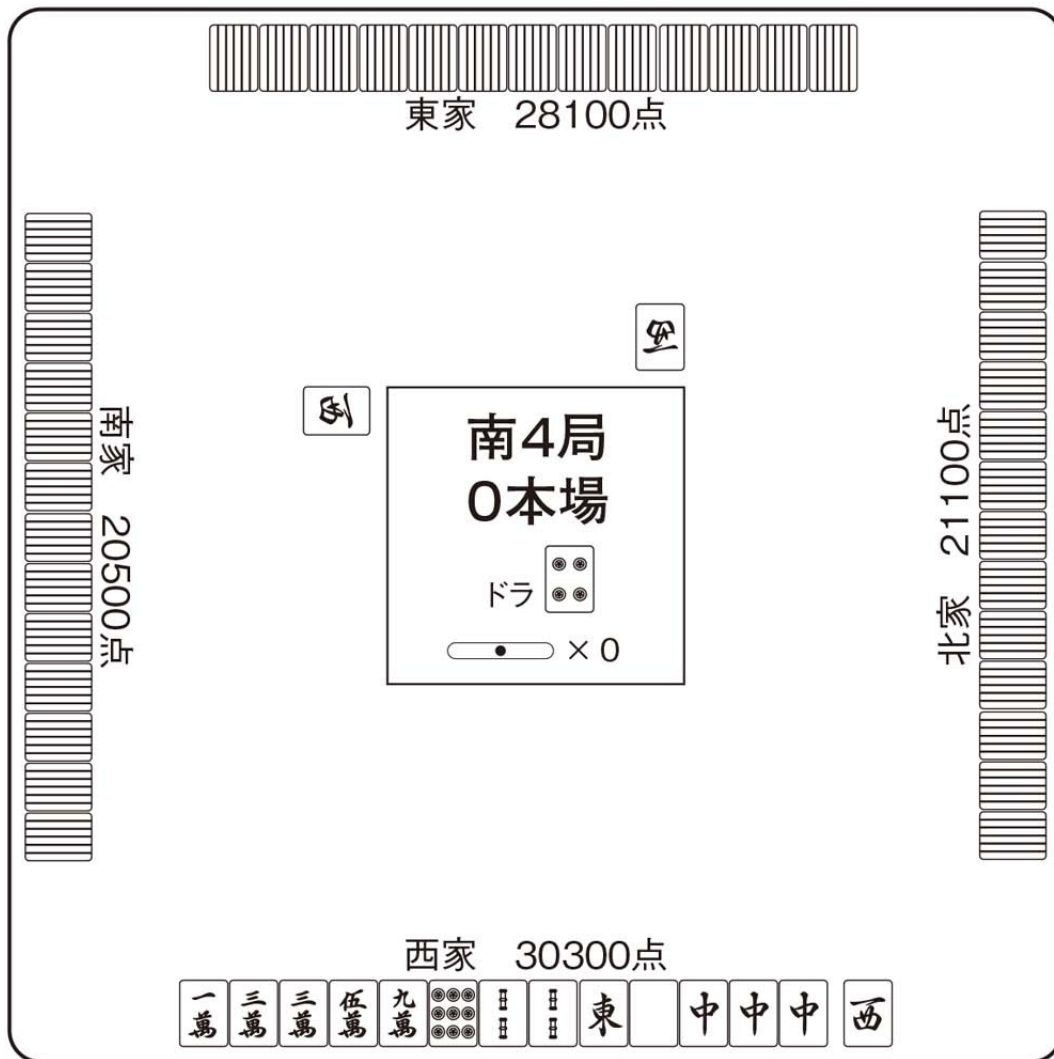
Pon  discard .

If the last place who has riichi'd wins, then we advance from the second place dealer's turn. This increases our odds of ending up first so we give the player who has riichi'd more draws.

Author's summary:

There might be some who are confused by this question, but this type of pon is a very effective technique to advance the game in our favor. Winning a game of mahjong is not always only decided by winning your own hands. I would obviously pon the  here as well.

Q81 - Overall Techniques #9 - Tenhou



Bakyo

Round	South 4
Honba	0
Sticks	0
Dora	●● ●●

East	28100
South	20500
West (You)	30300
North	21100

Question

It's all last and our hand isn't amazing, but we have a yakuhai ankou. Two consecutive have been discarded... Do we also discard the as is standard (if not, WWYD)?

Answers - Q81




Mecha Zetton (10d):

Discard .

We deny suufon renda¹, and discard  early to reduce the chance of dealer calling it.



shoot39 (10d):

Discard .

Our hand is likely to win so we discard . Shimocha has a 15% chance of holding , and the odds of suufon renda is around 10% when the third consecutive copy is discarded. Our own hand is strong defensively, is sanshanten, with the ability to call. Even if we draw  again next turn, we are still in a better shape than risking the 10% chance of suufon renda.

VenusSay (9d):

Discard .

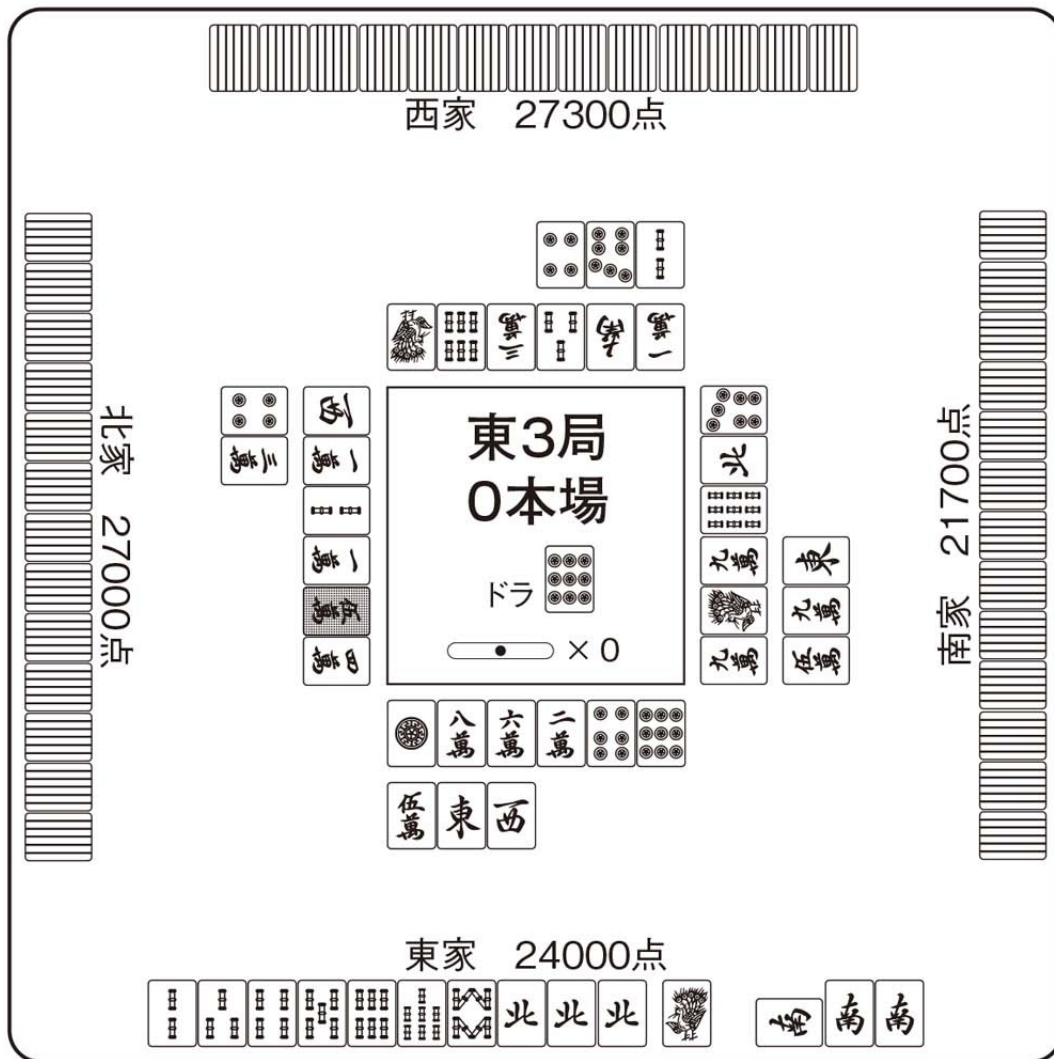
It's a worse wait (compared to ) , difficult to become a taatsu, and difficult to call on. So we start by discarding .

Author's summary:

This may be a minor point, but even rare occurrences require attention. We have a chance for agari top, so we take care to not accidentally discard a tile removing the possibility. While the odds of suufon renda are low, the replies have all elected to deny any possibility of it occurring. Some may say that there is little difference in your initial discards, but if you want to be stronger you should always be thorough!

¹four-wind abortive draw, in which the hand is aborted when all four players' discards are the same wind

Q82 - Overall Techniques #10 - Tenhou



Bakyo

Round	East 3
Honba	0
Sticks	0
Dora	

East (You)	24000
South	21700
West	27300
North	27000


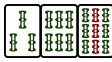

Question

We are tenpai for honitsu right now, and have drawn a tile that lets us change our wait. Considering the ease of winning and the possible hand values, what wait should we take?

Answers - Q82








Takeoshan (Tenhou):

Discard .

Two copies of both  have been discarded, so we choose the  wait. The yasume is 2900 which is lower value than winning from the nobetan wait, but the reason we switch is for a chance at 5900 points with the .


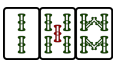
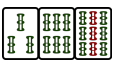



Yuusou:

Discard .

While two  have been discarded, we see no  or . Given that toimen and shimocha do not appear to need , we discard  and take the  wait. We wait for the  discard from kamicha and shimocha when toimen (who appears to have a fast hand) declares riichi.

Ritsumisan (9d):

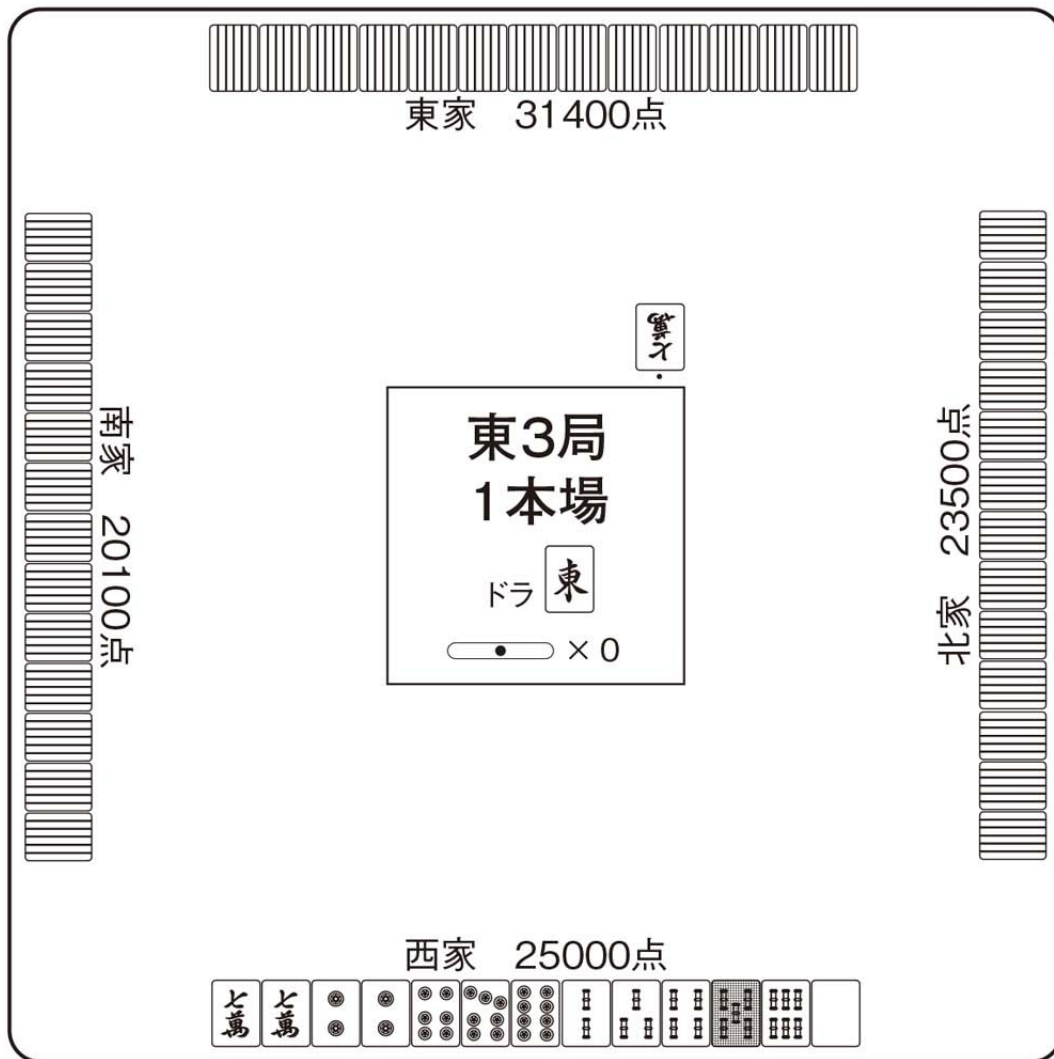
Discard .

We have three choices: , , and . All waits have 7 tiles remaining, and it's much easier to win off the other players if we discard  here instead of communicating hand progression via souzu overflow. Point wise, the takame is 5800 points. While the  ankou gives a confirmed 3900 points, the yasume of discarding  is 2900, not much of a difference.

Author's summary:

The tiles remaining for each wait is the same, so it's about choosing whether to take the confirmed 3900 points or aim for the takame 5800 points. The consensus is to aim for the 5800 points. If we have a 1/3 chance to double our score, then that should be the better option. A good player considers the winning chances and value, but an excellent player reads the discards to determine who is holding our winning tiles. We should all learn from this.

Q84 - Overall Techniques #12 - Free Rule



Bakyo

Round	East 3
Honba	1
Sticks	0
Dora	東


East	31400
South	20100
West (You)	25000
North	23500



Question

Our haipai is iishanten with one aka. We want to win as soon as possible! Suddenly, a 七萬 is discarded that lets us instantly take tenpai. So, do we call pon on it?

Answers - Q84


Tenko (10d):

Do not call on .

We ignore the . To call on the first discard of East 1 for 2000 points when we can easily go for a closed hand is nonsense. Our current shanpon tiles  can accept improvements. We aim to increase our value by aiming for riichi, tsumo, etc.

Chronos (10d):

Do not call on .

We ignore the . The odds of us getting first are much higher if we aim for riichi, and I don't think our average shugi gain would change that much either (excluding double riichi).

Saury (8d):

Call pon on  and discard .

There's not much difference between calling and not calling, so either choice is fine. Personally I would call to win quickly. That's all there is to it.

Author's summary:




In Free Rule, aka has shugi attached to them, so the norm is to win as fast as possible. However, the replies have decided that we should not be so hasty, and instead aim for more points given the possibility of hand improvements. You may think: "aka is worth 5000 points, so I want to speed to tenpai and win by tsumo (tsumo gives three times the shugi)!" However, do not fall into such a trap (laughs).

(TL note: if you ron someone with shugi attached, only the person you ron has to pay you a shugi chip. However, if you tsumo, all the other three players have to give you a shugi chip each.)

Answers - Q85



nannanda- (9d):

Discard .

Once we tedashi the  it should be obvious to the others it's a tanki, but a good player would have suspected we were waiting on  when our last tedashi was . Our discards do not make it certain we are honitsu, so they may not fear the jigoku tanki. To be honest, I don't think there is much difference between the options.



Fukami (9d):

Discard .



We wait on the jigoku tanki likely to be casually discarded by the other players. If our dora triplet were open and not ankou, they would be more alert and less likely to drop the . In that scenario, I would keep the  tanki.

Mom is the meal ready yet? (8d):

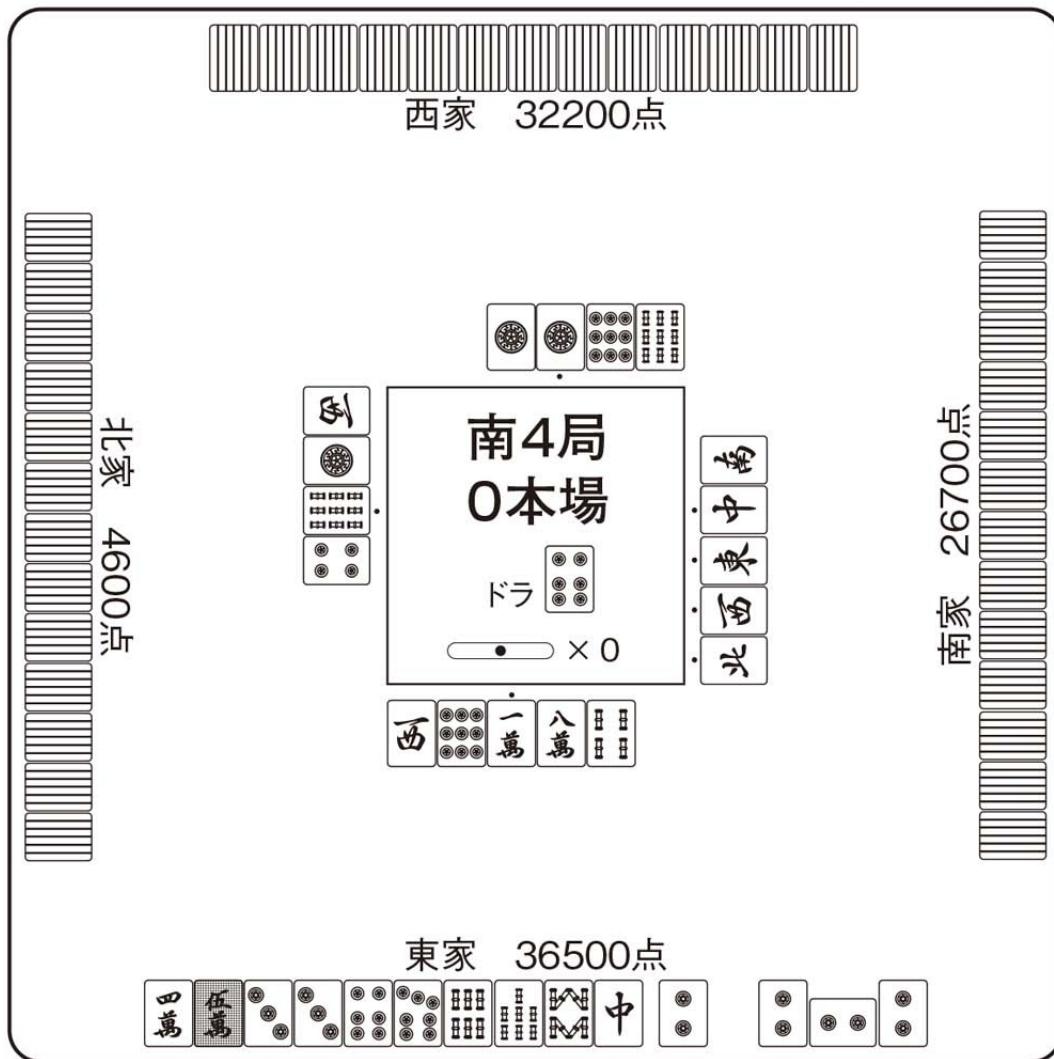
Discard .

We take the  wait due to the amount of available tiles. If someone were to betaori and draw the last , it's likely they would keep it. We emphasize the number of available tiles.

Author's summary:

We are choosing between the number of tiles available and the likelihood of the tiles being discarded. The replies suggest there is little difference between the waits, but in the push-centric Free Rule, I would choose the jigoku tanki here as  is more likely to be discarded. I pray that the last copy is not in the dead wall as I discard the  (laughs).

Q86 - Overall Techniques #14 - Free Rule



Bakyo

Round	South 4
Honba	0
Sticks	0
Dora	

East (You)	36500
South	26700
West	32200
North	4600

Question

We are iishanten as dealer currently in agari top. We want to win ASAP, and we have drawn the , which allows us to kan. There is some risk in the kan. Do we kan?


Answers - Q86


Biribiri Billy (10d):

Do not kan .


If the others riichi, we will likely have to push. However, if we deal in, there is a chance that we will still remain first if the hand has few dora or uradora. As such, we do not needlessly increase the number of dora.

Saika (10d):

Do not kan .

It's agari top. We may have kan'd if our hand was more disjointed, to progress the hand with the rinshan tile, or if shimocha was likely to call on . Neither of the above apply to the current situation. As such, we do not kan, and instead tsumogiri.

hayato (10d):

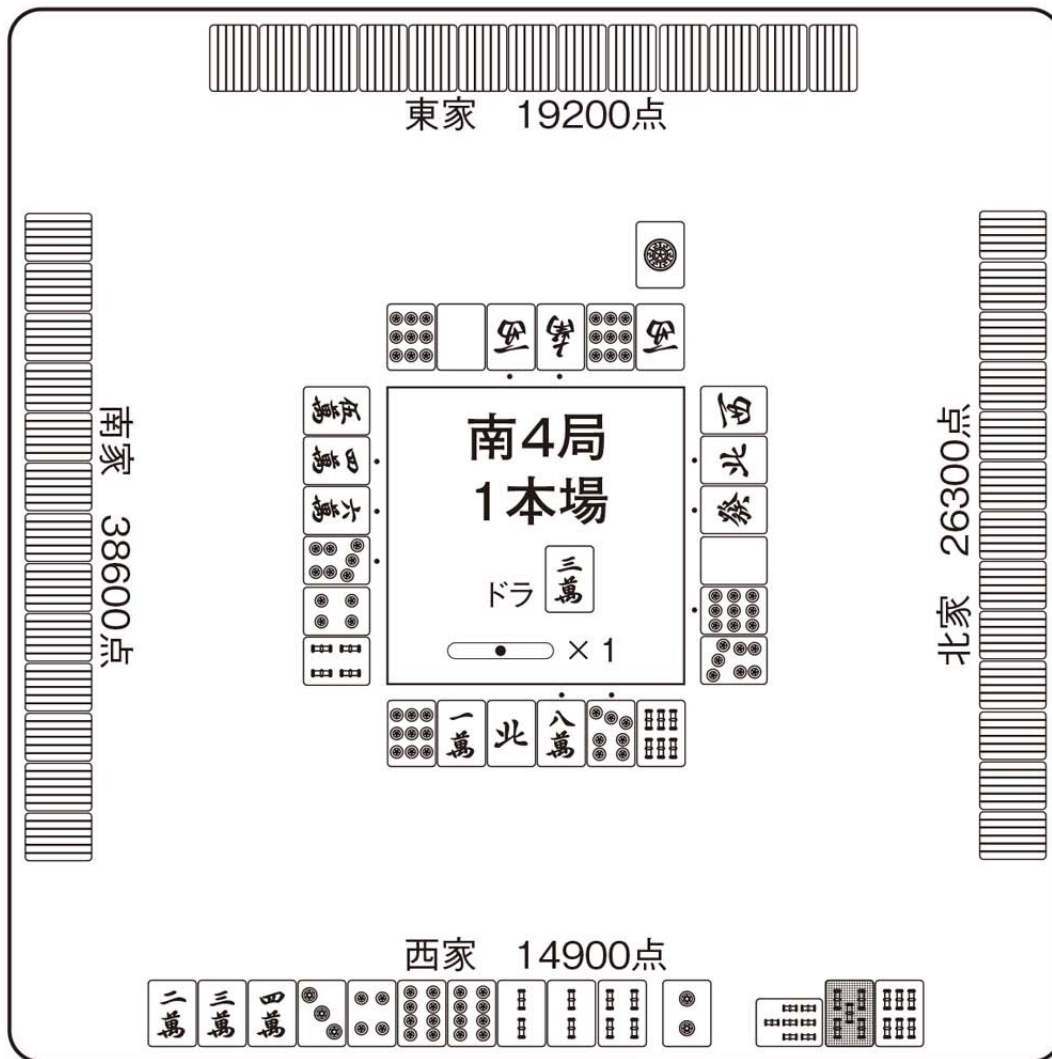
Kan .

There are drawbacks to calling kan, but here we want to win no matter what, so we prioritize our chances of winning. We want to reach tenpai ASAP by increasing our amount of draws.

Author's summary:

The replies are quite cautious about kan. Without a proper assessment, a kan would risk devastating our first place. This time, the replies are divided, but I would not kan here as the risk of ura dora is too great if everyone else but me were to proceed closed. It's a bit too much to kan just for a single draw...

Q87 - How to Play in All Last #1 - Tenhou




Bakyo

Round	South 4
Honba	1
Sticks	1
Dora	三萬

East	19200
South	38600
West (You)	14900
North	26300





Question

It's all last, and we avoid last place if we win. However, we can aim for second place if we discard  for sanshoku. If we go for the shanpon wait instead, we have no chance at second place but the wait seems better. Which wait do we take?

Answers - Q87



Asapin (Tenhou):

Discard .

Even in scenarios where we could take second place upon tsumo or on ron, our first priority should be to avoid the impending last place. Shimocha appears to be trying to sashikomi, so it's unlikely they would discard our . It's more reliable to wait for  or  which are harder to use, than aim for the .



Kunikomaru (9d):

Discard .


Since it's Tenhou rules, we discard  for better win rate. If we were playing for money, we would discard  since the difference in win rate is small, and tsumo would enable us to take second.

Nemata (7d):

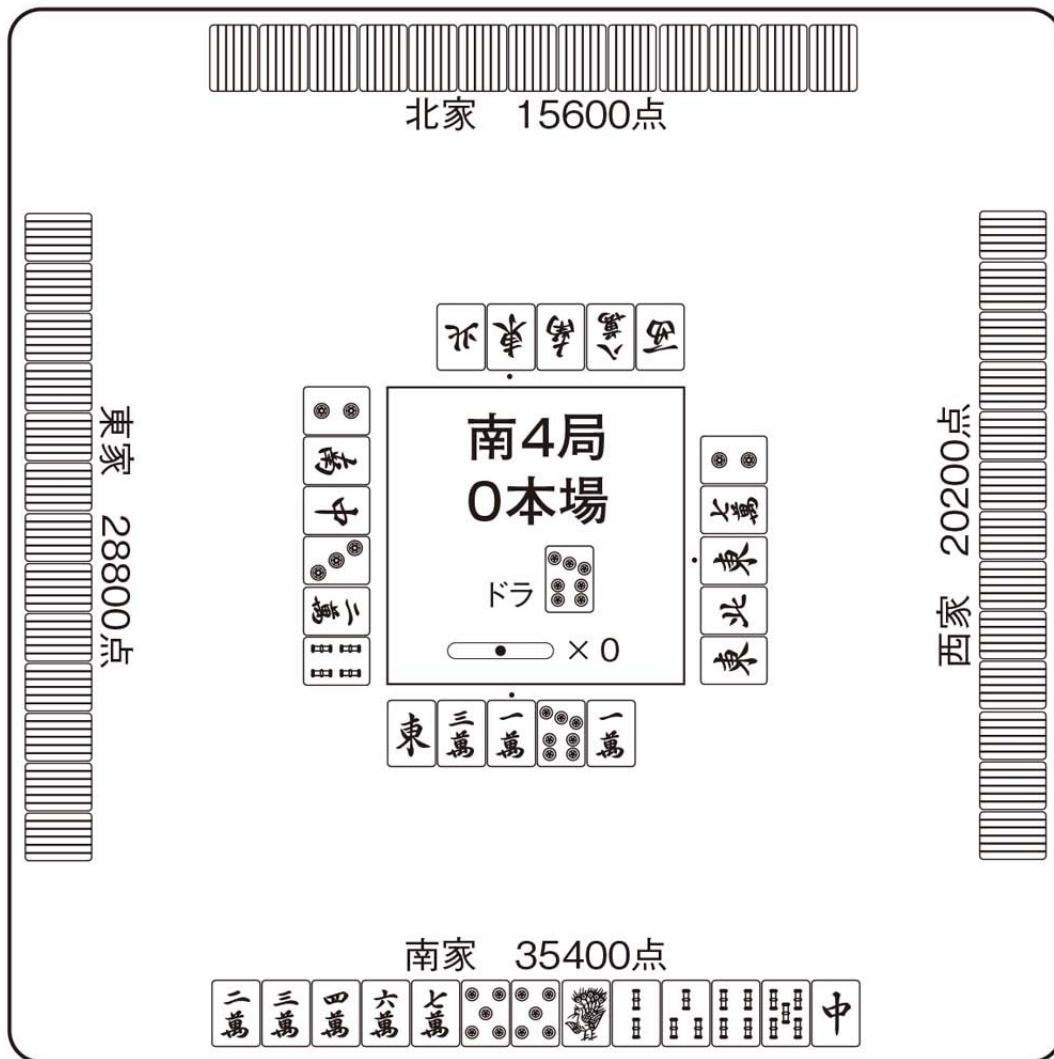
Discard .

If we take the kanchan wait, we have a 50% chance of getting second place as we need to either tsumo or get a direct hit. A win on  gives us 165 rank points, and a win on  gives us 187.5 rank points. Since the point difference between the two waits is not even 1.15x, the strength of our wait is far more important. (*Author's Note: The player in this WWYD is 9d, so the point calculation is based on his profile).

Author's summary:

The replies have all agreed on discarding . Tenhou is about prioritizing last place avoidance, so even if we have a chance of obtaining second place, we should still first aim to maximize our chances of escaping fourth. While the nature of mahjong is to aim for higher placement, in Tenhou, we exercise self-restraint.

Q88 - How to Play in All Last #2 - Tenhou



Bakyo

Round	South 4
Honba	0
Sticks	0
Dora	

East	28800
South (You)	35400
West	20200
North	15600


Question

It's agari top in all last. We are in iishanten for closed pinfu, but kamicha has discarded . Do we call on this tile?

Answers - Q88

Takeoshan (Tenhou):

Call  discard .

We call on . We confirm tanyao, and our hand is now ready to call.


Iniesta (10d):

Do not call.

While calling increases our chances of getting first place, we do not want to reduce the amount of tiles in our hand if last place were to riichi and we needed to fold. Kamicha (who is dealer) will not fall into last place even if he deals in to last place's mangan, and has no reason to assist our hand development with his discards. We would call if we could expect kamicha's assistance.

Folkcraft (10d):

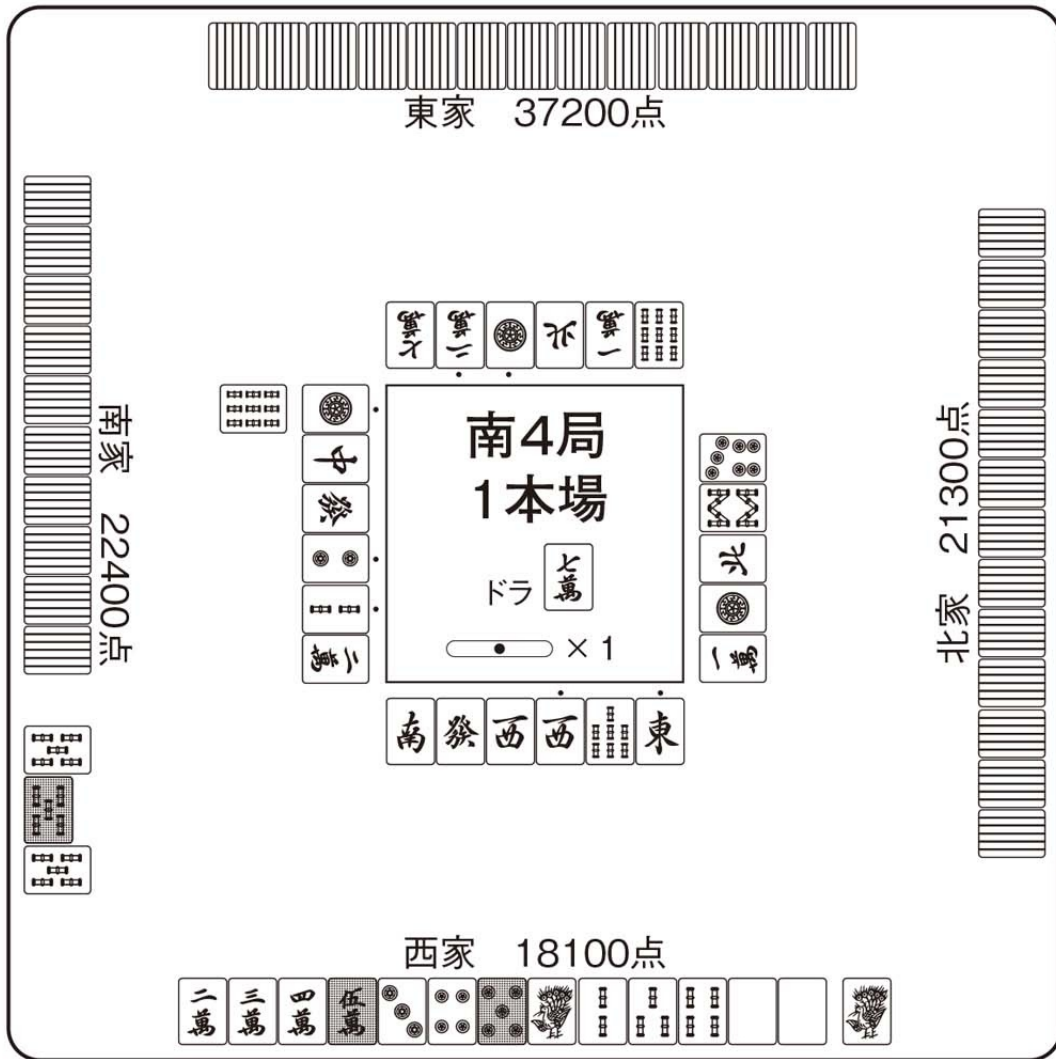
Call  discard .

It's agari top, so we should take the option that gets us closer to winning, no matter how minor. Rather than ignore this  and attempt to draw a copy ourselves, it's faster to call here and confirm tanyao.

Author's summary:

The question is about whether we should call on a completed mentsu when it's agari top. Tenhou players give off the image of being very aggressive in this type of calls. Calling is probably the correct answer. However, we should recognize the risk of reducing the amount of tiles in our hand.

Q89 - How to Play in All Last #3 - Tenhou



Bakyo

Round	South 4
Honba	1
Sticks	1
Dora	七萬

East	37200
South	22400
West (You)	18100
North	21300



Question

We are in last place in all last, but have hit tenpai with a shanpon wait. If we riichi and the round reaches ryuukyoku, we are still last even after collecting noten penalties. However, if we do not riichi, we can only ron with . What do we do here?


Answers - Q89


Shibukawa (10d):

 dama.

If we riichi, the odds of everyone folding is too high, and  won't easily come out. If we dama, the value is sufficient even on tsumo, and we can quickly win if the  comes out.


hayato (10d):

 dama.

Everyone seems to be trying to win their hand, so we can expect the  to easily come out. While the others seem to be advancing, we may want to riichi to shut down their hand progression. However, our wait is weak and difficult to tsumo so we dama. Our discard pool reveals little so it may be interesting to riichi, but considering that it's over for us at ryuukyoku, proceeding with dama is more reliable here.

bakase (8d):

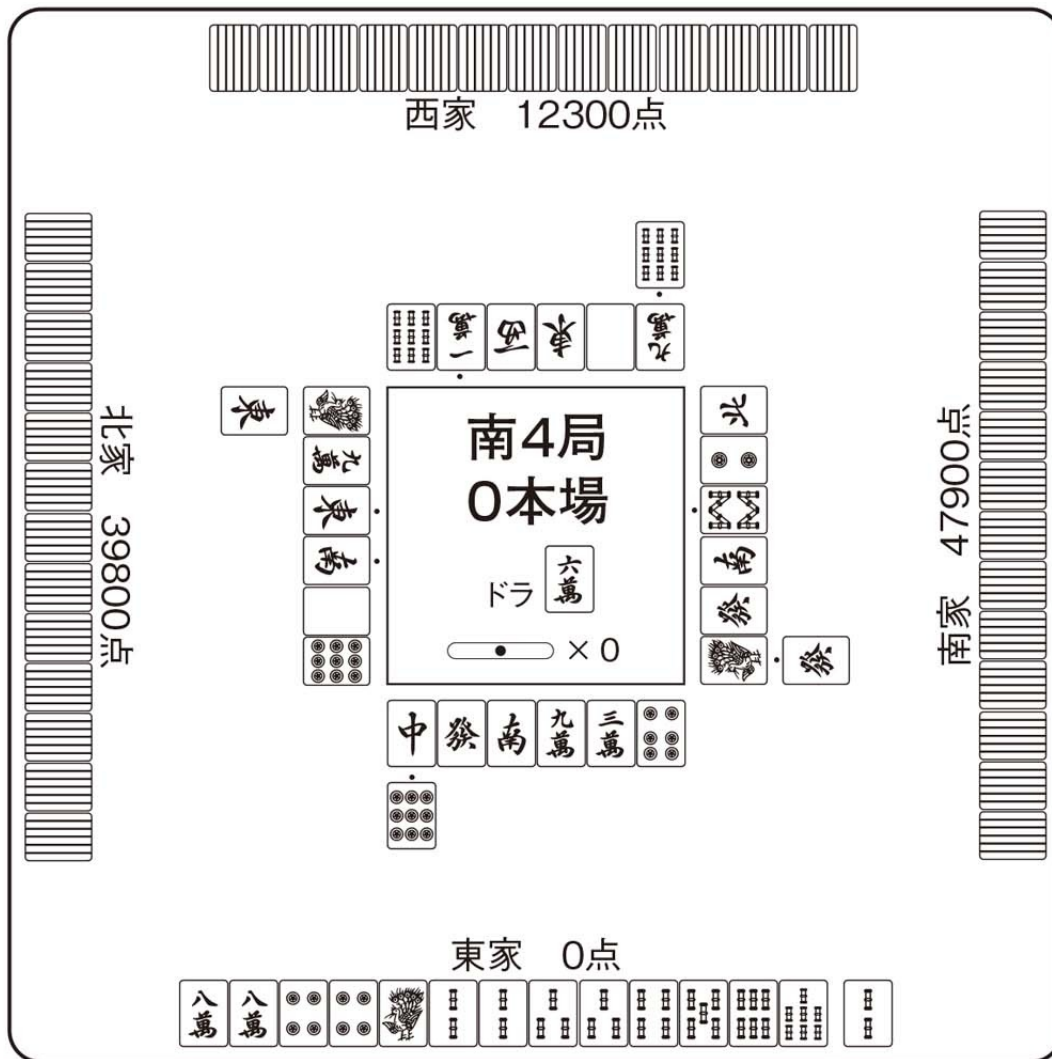
 riichi.

We riichi. We definitely riichi. I do not want to lose the chance of winning off . ...wait, is that why I can't win?

Author's summary:

This is a very personal question for me, and is from one of my actual games. I dama'd. I dealt with this question on my blog, but I recall being quite lost on whether riichi or dama was better. Given the replies, I think dama was better after all. While we may want to riichi, the risk of ryuukyoku is too high.

Q90 - How to Play in All Last #4 - Tenhou




Bakyo

Round	South 4
Honba	0
Sticks	0
Dora	六萬

East (You)	0
South	47900
West	12300
North	39800

Question

We are on the verge of being busted out! We need to win by any means necessary or it's all over. We have hit tenpai, but cannot riichi. However, if we discard , we can call for tanyao. What do we do here?

Answers - Q90


Cheetah (10d):

Discard .

We do it because our hand should be easily recoverable for wait we can win on.



Saionji Yasuko (9d):

Discard .




Discarding  does not give us many good improvements, and we are not at the stage where we need to desperately pursue keiten. As such, we regress from tenpai and maximize tanyao potential.


Saisoku-kun (9d):

Discard .

Discarding  regresses our shanten but opens us up to call for tanyao. It also lets us win from other players, and it seems like a quick win. Furthermore, we could reverse our fortune and take third with tsumo sanankou tanyao. As such, we discard .

Author's summary:



To take tenpai by discarding , or to pursue tanyao with a  discard... I discarded  in my actual game. To be fair, there are some possible improvements and we can win via tsumo.

However, the consensus is to discard . mahjong often puts you in positions where the immediate tenpai is not the most advantageous choice. Remember: the goal is not tenpai, but to win. As such, take care not to put the cart before the horse.

Answers - Q91





Sakurako (9d):

Discard .

It seems difficult to win with our hand, so our main plan is to assist the dealer. However, given the  discard, there is a chance that he is holding the dora. As such, we discard  and try to read the lag. We want to advance the dealer's hand without dealing in. However, we still try to win and won't dismantle our taatsu to assist the dealer. We can push up to around mid-game.


Yuusou:

Discard .


We discard , , and  first. Toimen, who is last place, has discarded  (his seat and round wind) on turn 2. If shimocha calls on any of the three discards, we will dismantle our pinzu or souzu to assist the dealer. If all three discards are ignored, we will decide what to do next based on our draws and the discard pool.

One Way Traffic (8d):

Discard .

Given the point situation, winning is less important than trying to assist the dealer. It should be fine if we discard any of our middle tiles. If I am forced to make a choice, then I would choose the  which would let me easily understand if the dealer has any dora.

Author's summary:

The replies are divided in which tile to discard, but all replies state to assist the dealer. As such, what we discard does not make much difference. In the game, I discarded , with my primary focus on assisting the dealer.

Answers - Q92

Yakin (10d):

 dama.


Toimen and shimocha have essentially equal scores, and the game continues even if we tsumo a baiman. As such, I think that if we riichi here, all three players would make it difficult for us to win. Dama is good enough, since tsumo will get us second place, and a ron on kamicha for 12000 helps us avoid last place.

Chronos (10d):

 dama.


Declaring riichi will lower our winrate. Given the scores, if we win a mangan hand we can escape last place, so we do not lower the our winning chances.

Mahjong World (9d):

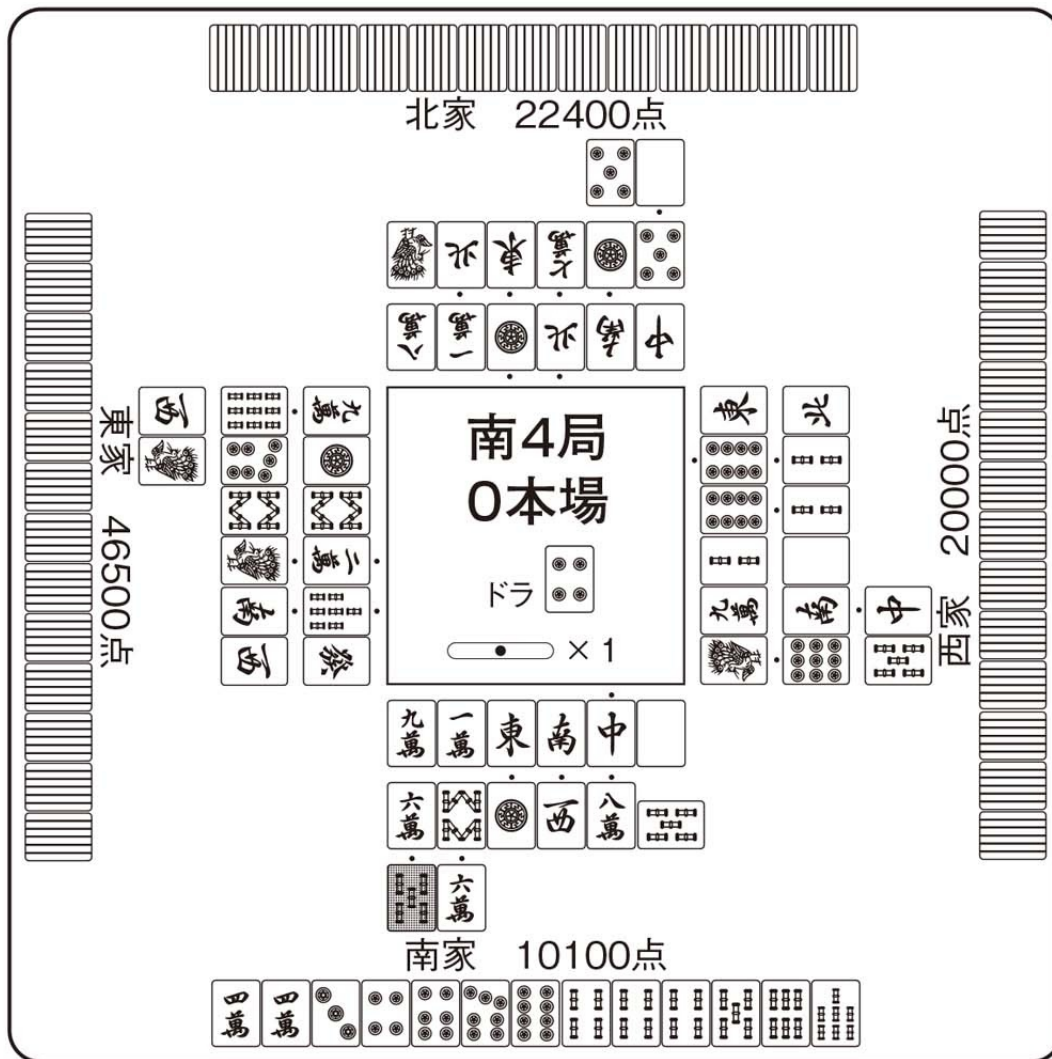
 dama.

We elect to dama here. Our hand has sufficient value, and we are currently last place so we want to increase our win rate no matter what. The gap between us and first place is too wide, so our goal is to avoid last place. If we are lucky, we can get second place.

Author's summary:

The replies this time have all elected to dama. If we were to riichi and win off , we would be guaranteed second place. I made this scenario a question because I had the above thought during my real game... That way of thinking is too naive. (laughs) We should think about winning our hand first.

Q93 - How to Play in All Last #7 - Tenhou



Bakyo

Round	South 4
Honba	0
Sticks	1
Dora	

East	46500
South (You)	10100
West	20000
North	22400

Question

We are in last place in all last. We have declared riichi, and if on tsumo we avoid last place... Suddenly, the second place player has discarded the deal in tile. If we take the ron, we have to hope for ura dora... Do we take the ron on the ?

Answers - Q93


Biribiri Billy (10d):

 ron.

There are few turns left, and we expect toimen to be folding... However, since he discarded a tile next to the dora, he is most likely tenpai. As such, we rely on the uradora.

Mizuki (10d):

 ron.

The chance of uradora is about 30% and the odds of us tsumoing before ryuukyoku are around 25%. Additionally, given that toimen has discarded the super dangerous , the tsumo odds are probably around 20% since he is likely in tenpai and may win before us. For a moment, forget the “average odds” for winning a ryanmen tenpai - in this do-or-die scenario, there are few turns left and our opponent is likely in tenpai. There are very few cases where we should skip ron if we suspect others are in tenpai.

Mom is the meal ready yet? (8d):

 ron.

While there are four turns left to tsumo, I think that the odds of hitting uradora are greater than the odds of us tsumoing before ryuukyoku.


Author's summary:


This is a question about skipping ron in all last. While I have faced this situation many times, it takes quite a bit of courage to rely on uradora. The replies agree to take the ron given the 30% chance of uradora. To read the odds and put it all on a single gamble ... is that not the essence of mahjong?

Answers - Q94

Chikuki (10d):

 riichi.

The  wait isn't great, and it's too bad that we have to drop two placements to riichi.

However, it's even worse to dama and not be able to win off . We will drop to last place if dealer gets a mangan, but I think that the return of riichi here matches the risk given the scores.

shoot39 (10d):

 riichi.

We won't be last if kamicha or shimocha gets a mangan, and we will end up first if we riichi for 2000 points. Given the above, our wait can come from anyone. It's also notable that our wait is genbutsu to dealer.

Ritsumisan (9d):

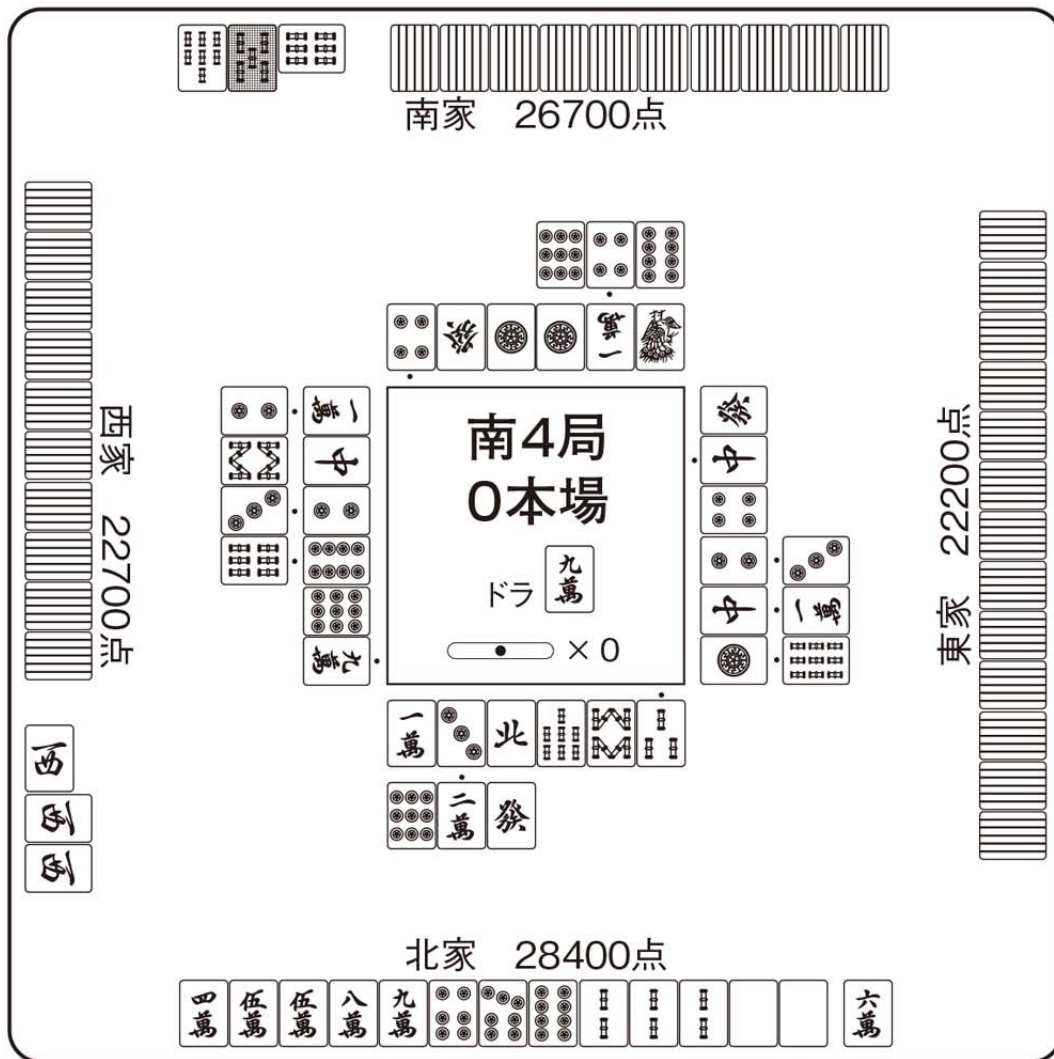
 dama.

The moment we riichi we drop to third place, and we will be last place if the dealer gets a mangan or higher. Given the point situation, both kamicha and shimocha will push, so the risk is high even if we expect our hand to win. If we dama and tsumo, we will cross 30000 points and end the game. We wait for tsumo.

Author's summary:

It's all last, and if we riichi we instantly drop in placement. This is a question about managing risk. Two of the replies have stated that the return of the riichi is good enough. While we are concerned about the dealer pushing, I think it's better to aggressively attack.

Q95 - How to Play in All Last #9 - Tenhou



Bakyo

Round	South 4
Honba	0
Sticks	0
Dora	九萬

East	22200
South	26700
West	22700
North (You)	28400



Question

It's all last and our hand has one dora. Our hand can push us over 30000, ending the game. If we do not riichi, we cannot win off others. However, dealing in may cause us to drop to last place. So, what do we do here?

Answers - Q95


Futokunaio (Tenhou):

 dama.

It's dangerous to riichi with a bad shape if the dealer is in a must-push scenario. If  is discarded we call. While  can deal in to the players with open hands, if we fold here there's a high chance that we will be in a worse position later. As such, we still push for now.


taroo (10d):

 dama.

We are currently first, and if we deal in to a mangan we instantly drop to last place, so we proceed with the low risk move. Toimen needs 3900 to hit first, so it's not terrible to deal in to him and take second. We are most fearful of the last place's dealer turn, so while we look to call pon on the , we may consider passing if we think we will lose safe tiles against the dealer.

Rei of Nanto (9d):

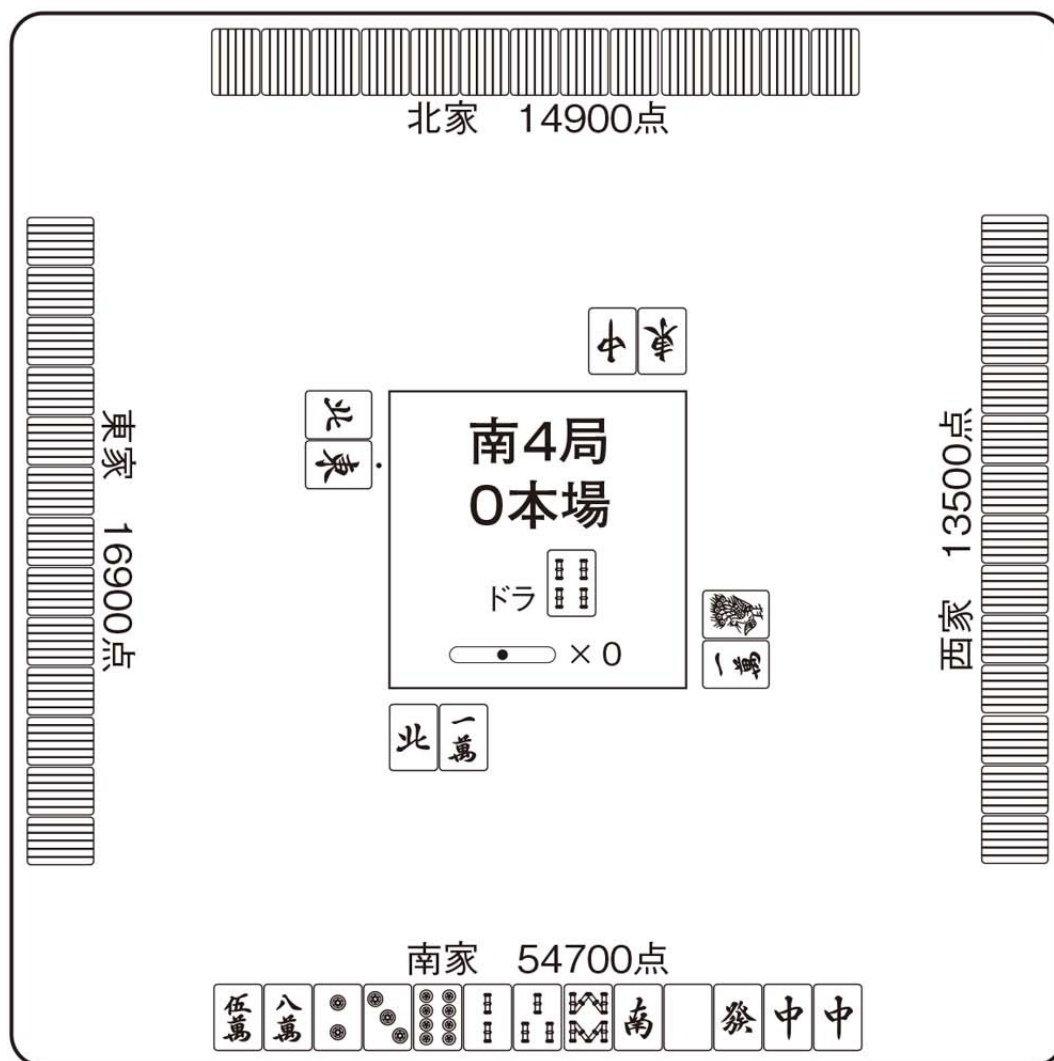
 dama.

We do not riichi whether it's free rule or tenhou rules. Last place is not going to fold on his dealer turn. We can still meet the conditions for agari top if we get a .


Author's summary:

It's a fight in all last, and usually we would riichi to take first. However, the consensus is to dama since other factors are at play. We have yakuhai as our current head, and we can still win if we call pon. We should not take unnecessary risks by calling riichi, and instead proceed with the more flexible option.

Q96 - How to Play in All Last #10 - Tenhou



Bakyo

Round	South 4
Honba	0
Sticks	0
Dora	


East	16900
South (You)	54700
West	13500
North	14900

Question

We are South seat in all last. We have a massive lead, and it's agari top. Our hand is a mess, but North has discarded . Do we pon?

Answers - Q96


Nannanda- (9d):

Do not call on .


It's a round where everyone else is desperately trying to win, and there is no need for us to butt in. We do not want to deal in to the dealer, and our focus should be to assist the non-dealers as needed.


Amagi Kojiro (9d):

Pon  discard .


We call on yakuhai and progress our hand by discarding . We want to try and gather more copies of the winds and honors if possible. We should approach this round knowing we can deal in to anyone but the dealer.

Ultra Riichi (9d):

Do not call on .

We ignore  for now. We still don't know whether we are going to win our hand or assist others, so we want some time to figure it out. We have sufficient points anyways.

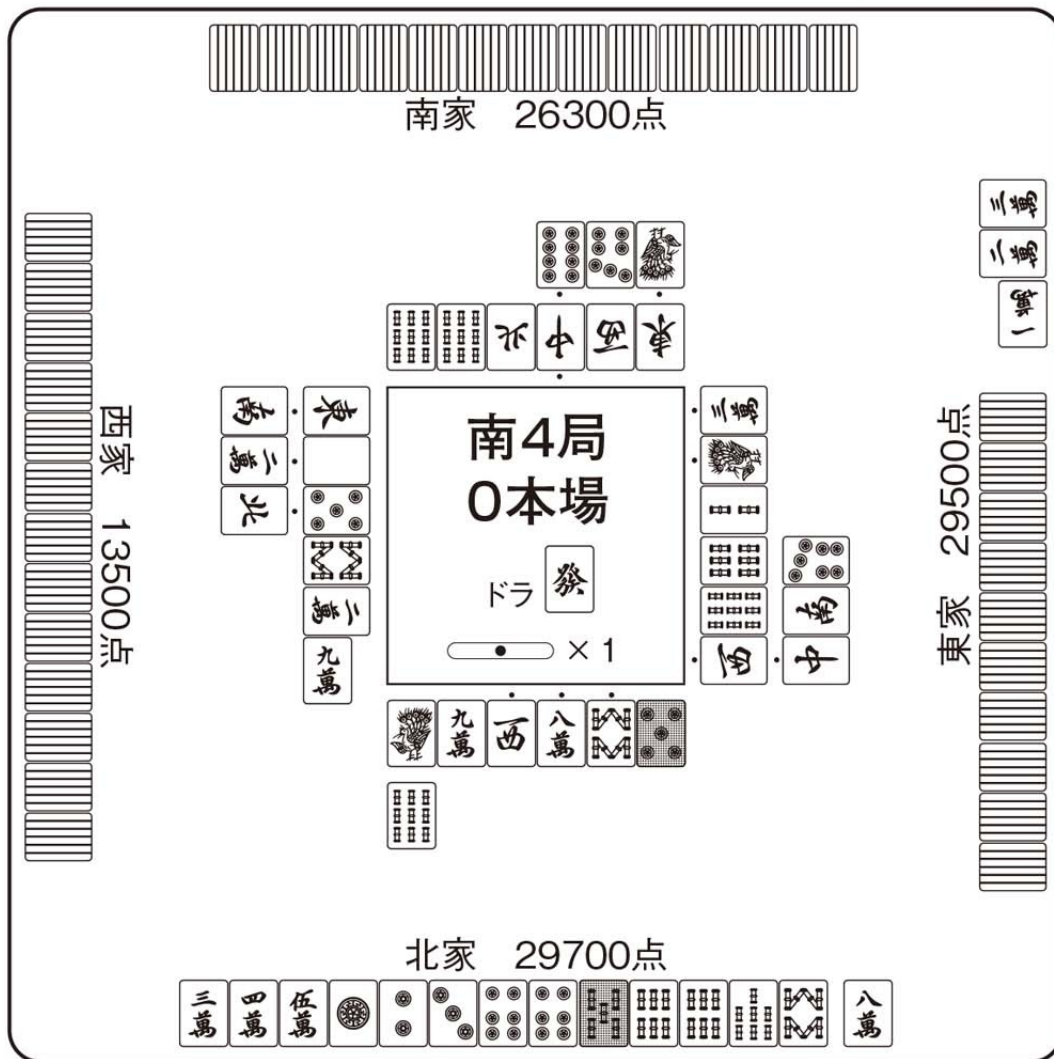
Author's summary:

While the replies are split on calling the , they all recognize two points.

- 1) Do not deal in to the dealer
- 2) Assist the non-dealers

One of the perks of having a sizable lead is the ability to control the placement of other players. The context here is Tenhou, but I have made great use of placement control in other aspects of my professional mahjong career. Rather than focusing on your own win, there is strategy in letting others win while playing defensively. This time, I did not call but focused on assisting others.

Q97 - How to Play in All Last #11 - Free Rule



Bakyo

Round	South 4
Honba	0
Sticks	1
Dora	發

East	29500
South	26300
West	13500
North (You)	29700


Question

We have a razor-thin lead for first place, and kamicha has declared riichi. We are trying to survive and maintain tenpai, but we have drawn a dangerous tile, 八萬. Do we push with the 八萬?

Answers - Q97

Crazy Sparrow (Tenhou):

 dama.

We push a bit while maintaining dama. However, we retreat when we confirm that the other two players have folded. We push as long as the dealer is pushing (noten penalties are critical here). If toimen is the only one pushing, we retreat when it's approaching ryuukyoku (around three turns left or so). We also stop when we draw the dora .


Please give cola (Tenhou):

 dama.


Even though we keep first place upon kamicha tsumo haneman, we push since we only have one safe tile. In certain situations we consider folding, such as: when the round is approaching ryuukyoku and our win rate drops, when the dealer appears to be in noten, etc. However, I think it's fine to push given that it is agari top.

Tenko (10d):

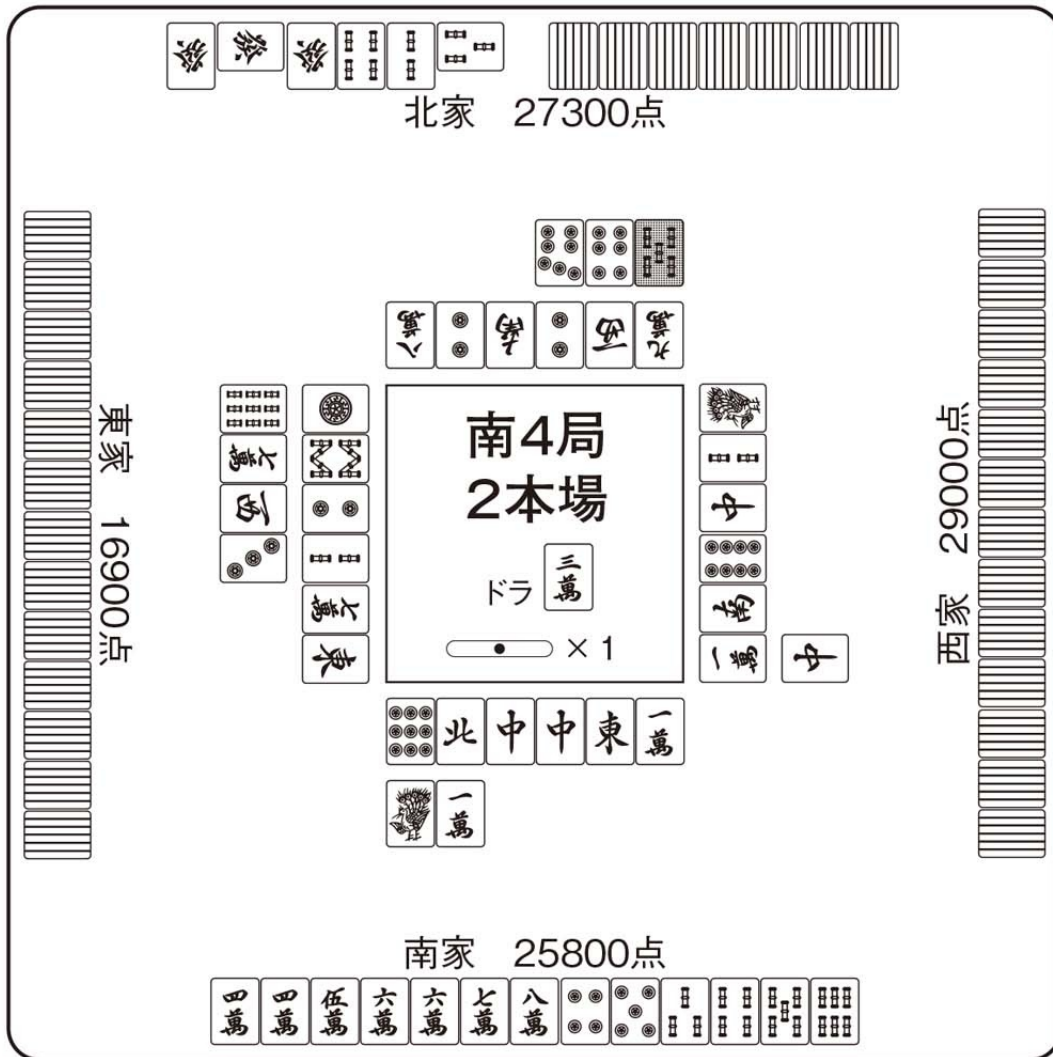
 dama.

We have so few safe tiles that it is hard to fold, and there are many suji that have not passed, so we push with . We dama and hope to maintain our current position with the other players exchanging points.

Author's summary:

There are quite a few situations where it may be fine to fold in Tenhou, but it's better to push under Free Rule. A strong mahjong player can make these delicate adjustments to their playstyles based on the ruleset. I would also discard  and dama here.

Q98 - How to Play in All Last #12 - Free Rule





Bakyo

Round	South 4
Honba	2
Sticks	1
Dora	三萬

East	16900
South (You)	25800
West	29000
North	27300




Question

It's all last, and we are tanyao iishanten. If we call on kamicha's  we are in tenpai. While the kyoutaku is up for grabs, we do not have enough value for first unless we get a direct hit. What do we do with this  (and WWYD if we call)?


Answers - Q98





macjr (10d):

Chii  discard .

Toimen's discards are alarming.  has good acceptance, but I don't think we have time to ignore this call.  is risky, but even if we deal in to toimen's mangan we don't drop to last place so we push here. We aim for a direct hit on shimocha with the . However, we do not skip ron.

Saika (10d):

Don't call on .

We do not chii.  is a good wait, but discarding  is dangerous.  is safe, but it is unclear if  is a good wait. If we had sufficient information to determine that taking tenpai here is advantageous, we would chii. However, we do not. We take the option that ensures the result we want (first place).

Saury (8d):

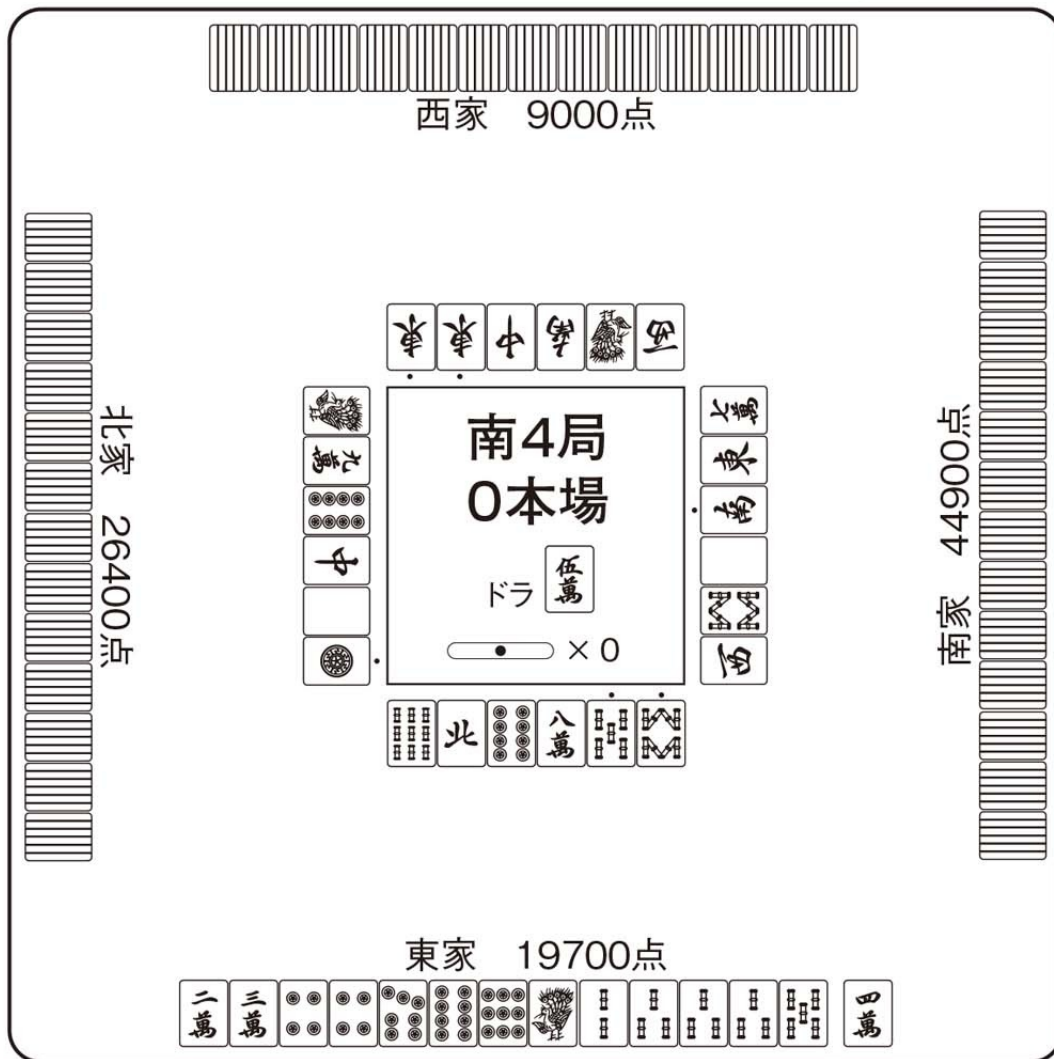
Don't call on .

If we hit a good shape tenpai we riichi, and it may be fine to riichi with a bad shape tenpai depending on the situation.

Author's summary:

The constraint of getting a direct hit is crippling, so we want to ignore the call and aim for first. However, toimen also appears to be in tenpai. We should base our decisions after taking into account the above, but I want to riichi given that the shugi rates would guarantee us first place. As such, I ignored the call. If the second copy is discarded, I would reluctantly call.

Q99 - How to Play in All Last #13 - Free Rule



Bakyo

Round	South 4
Honba	0
Sticks	0
Dora	伍萬


East (You)	19700
South	44900
West	9000
North	26400



Question

It's all last, and we are the dealer in third place. Our hand is in tenpai with a bad shape. Do we riichi with this shape?


Answers - Q99



Mecha Zetton (10d):

Discard  Riichi.

It's a kanchan with few improvements so we instantly riichi. We are using a lot of , so a kanchan  wait isn't that bad.




Greed (10d):

Discard  Riichi.

We see three , there aren't many improvements to the lower Souzu, and the kanchan  wait isn't bad so we riichi. If it were Tenhou, riichiing would be difficult as a toimen mangan tsumo could drop us to last place. However, the fourth place penalty is less severe under Free Rule.

Kawamura Akihiro (9d):

 dama.

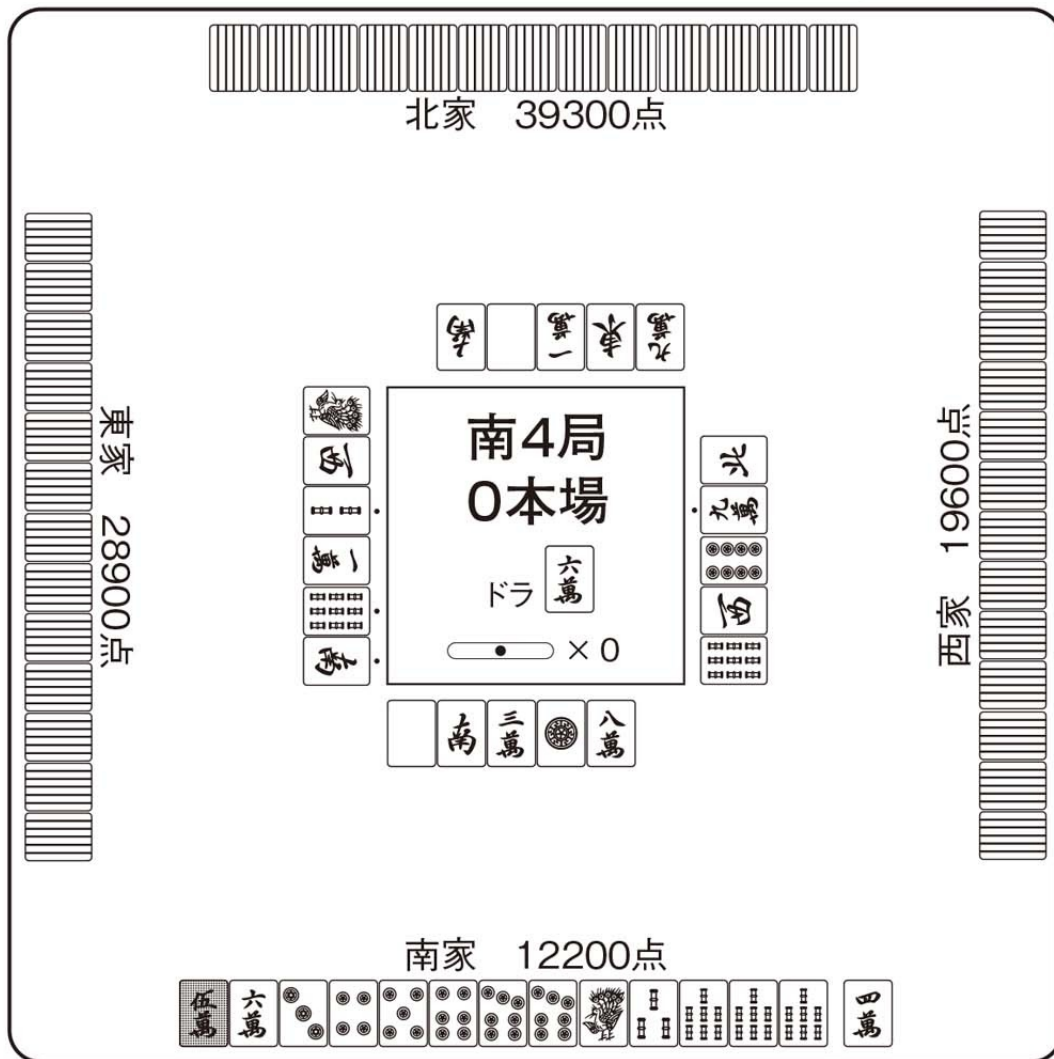
We can take the kanchan wait if we want to instantly riichi and rely on the amount of remaining tiles. However, I do not have much trust in the bad shape tenpai given that two players have discarded  prior to winds and honors. While insta-riichi may be fine, I would discard  and dama hoping for improvements. If none come, I would karagiri or kotegaeshi riichi to fish out the .

(TL Note: Kotegaeshi is a way of shuffling the tiles in your hand to disguise whether you have tsumogiried. Check out Suzuki Taro's video on how to do it: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R4EdcFPIHVw>)

Author's summary:

The question is about whether to declare bad shape riichi nomi as dealer. While the dealer generally wants to emphasize speed, there is a tendency to want to turn around our situation in one shot in all last. The consensus (generally) is to riichi.

Q100 - How to Play in All Last #14 - Free Rule



Bakyo

Round	South 4
Honba	0
Sticks	0
Dora	六萬

East	28900
South (You)	12200
West	19600
North	39300

Question

It's all last, and if we take the early riichi and tsumo (or get a direct hit on shimocha), we rise in placements. However, we can get some improvements to our hand. Do we riichi? Or do we choose another option?

Answers - Q100




Inujyarashi (10d):

Discard .

We can build on Souzu and Pinzu to some extent and while the improvements are limited, we may obtain second place with a haneman tsumo. If we reach midgame, we reluctantly riichi.

Yui-chan's papa (10d):

Discard .


We regress from tenpai by discarding . If we have this much potential, we want to riichi with a strong shape. If we draw  before we obtain the , we proudly take the furiten riichi.

VenusSay (9d):

Discard  riichi.

This is a superb riichi for agari last! If this were Tenhou, I would probably not riichi but... However, this has a pretty good chance of becoming a mangan, and has value in doing so! It's an easy instant riichi!

Author's summary:

“With a good shape aim for tsumo” is one mantra in mahjong, but it's more difficult to be decisive on whether to riichi a bad shape. This time, the replies are divided. Should we pursue a good shape because of the added shugi on tsumo, or should we just riichi the bad shape? Modern mahjong insta-riichi theory espouses the benefits of the latter, but in some cases it is effective to regress from tenpai if it is early in the round. I would also discard  and regress from tenpai.