

# Intermediate and Advanced Riichi Mahjong Tips and Concepts

Max / LightPinkYoshi

## Introduction:

This goal of this slideshow is to (hopefully) be another mid-high level resource that is available legally in the English speaking riichi mahjong community. It covers a wide range of topics including but not limited to complex shapes, riichi vs dama judgement, push fold, sakigiri timing and judgement and general defensive ideas in tough situations.

## Author Credentials

My name is Max better known online as LightPinkYoshi or LPY. I've played riichi since 2012 and played seriously since about 2018. At the time of writing I am currently 8dan on tenhou, have been in the top league of the American Riichi Mahjong League since its inaugural season and have won tournaments in the US, Canada and China. I have also previously done 2 lectures regarding tournament strategies (<https://youtu.be/HgqAeUS3jHI?si=soUdNpCLWEY-YhZn>) and building value out of nothing (<https://youtu.be/LKdhmm69nqU?si=deWLCNImKymtsZtJ>) on the Riichi Nomi youtube channel. None of this really means anything in the grand scheme of things, but I hope it does provide some credibility to the ideas that I have put in these slides.

# Sources and Acknowledgements

Inspiration for these slides and some of the ideas on them came from the following sources

Kobayashi Go: Super Digital Mahjong

Daina Chiba: Riichi Book 1

Feng's Intermediate Mahjong slides

Miinin: Statistical Mahjong Strategy

Playing way too much mahjong

Jared Tendler: The Mental Game of Poker

Thank you to

Claire

Steve

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Headcube

Snake Shack

Riichi Nomi NYC

Jersey Mike for spiting me into this <3



**thursday** Today at 10:53 PM

im DMing him now



**ninjuh1125** Today at 10:53 PM

i couldn't imagine max putting effort into things he doesn't have to

For general help with ideas and formatting and feedback

# Disclaimer

These slides and their content is just one person's opinion and ideas on what is important for mid to high level riichi mahjong. You dont have to agree with everything that is said here. If you have feedback or questions feel free to reach out to me on discord at LightPinkYoshi

Always remember that Mahjong content exists in a bubble. These are generally correct ideas. Your individual games will have many situations that make what is generally correct worse due to tile availability and/or player / wall reads. It is up to you to decide when general knowledge is applicable and when you can break from the norm.

These slides will notably not cover basic tile efficiency or scoring. There are plenty of resources for those that already exist and you can improve upon them greatly by playing more mindfully and practicing.

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# Early Turn Discard Order

For general cases - your early turn discard choices should go in this order

- Single Guest Winds  $\approx$  to 9 blocked by 6 / 1 blocked by 4
  - Can go in either order depending on if you want to hedge honitsu/safety or deny wind pons
  - Prioritize East cut as non dealer in south - otherwise cut guest winds in order of the player you want to call the least (4th place, player close to you in points, shimocha so you get an extra draw if kamicha pons later)
- Lone 1 and 9 that dont have dora acceptance
- Yakuhai / Seat / Round Wind
  - Prioritize cutting east in East and South in south if you are not the double seat
  - Cut 1 cut yakuhai before live yakuhai
- Lone 2 and 8 that dont have dora acceptance
- Double Wind (East as East Dealer, South as South Round south seat)

This will not always be true and there are plenty of cases to break this order - hedging safety with a bad hand or a big lead, chanta/junchan, honitsu considerations etc, but for normal hands this ordering will serve you well.

## Early Turn Discard Order continued - Honor Dora

- Cut Honor Dora as the last tile in the Early Turn Discard order list from the previous slide - Once you reach that point - consider whether or not your hand is worth playing
- Before cutting honor dora - always be prepared for the reality where it is poned.
  - Do you have the ability to fold to the player whose wind it is if necessary?
  - Are you losing late and just have to grit your teeth and move forward regardless?
    - Don't cut it turn 1 just because your hand is bad. Cutting it turn 1 does not make it impossible to be called, just less likely. But if you cut it from a bad hand and it does get called you now have a much worse hand.
    - With a bad hand, consider never cutting the dora or waiting until someone cuts it first - pairing it can make your bad hand playable.
      - If you don't pair it, why throw other players a dora for a hand you have no desire to play
- This is not to say never cut the honor dora. The majority of the time nothing will happen, and there are many hands that are good enough to fight an honor dora pon. Just don't do so without being prepared for an opponent to have it.

# Complex Shapes to Be Familiar With

## Ryanmen Kanchan

Dont lose kanchan draw to shape fill without reason



3 connected pairs with intervals

Best cut is 4m for both efficiency and flexibility



## Ankou + sanmenchan

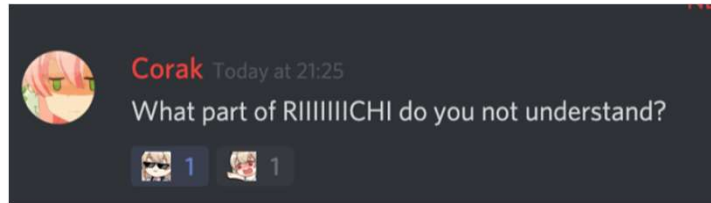
Can cut 7p for extra fu and complex 3 sided wait if needed



# Riichi Vs Dama

Riichi vs Dama is a very gray topic, so rather than saying this is right or this is wrong this section will be situations where dama makes sense.

Any other time:



Riichi is really good. It's so good that it will very rarely be a bad choice, but it might not always be the best choice.

# Riichi vs Dama - Dama Situations

- You should consider Dama in the following situations
  - You have a bad wait and riichi nomi (1 type of tile, 3 or less outs)
  - You have at least 3 han 40 fu in value a yaku and a bad to mediocre wait
  - You have 4 han 30 fu ryanmen after turn 7
    - Prior to turn 7, 4 han dama ryanmen is plus EV to riichi since your winrate is still very high and you have tsumo/ura/ippatsu odds at haneman. It is up to you to decide situationally if you value the higher win rate 7700 more in that circumstance.
  - You're in score situations where winning is more important than the increased value
    - 20k up first place
  - You're chitoi / tanki tenpai trying to find a stronger wait - (dont pass ron)
  - You're waiting on genbutsu to another riichi and have yaku
    - This is situational - assess whether you think the other players are folding and have the tile youre waiting on
      - If your hand's expected value is significantly increased by riichi (2 30 to 3 30 or non dealer 3 30 to 4 30) still riichi if the points would be important.
  - It's all last, you have a yaku, and you have enough points to accomplish what you want (holding placement, overtaking the next place up, confirming 1st)
  - Riichi is less valuable than the points in the middle
    - Pinfu nomi is 1000 —> 2000+ EV on win for riichi - if there are 3000+ points in the middle from honba/leftover riichi sticks, dama
  - Its prior to turn 7 and you have 3x as many wait/value upgrades as win tiles - (do not skip tsumo)
    - I.e. 23457p tenpai upgrades on 1348p, 9p is a higher win rate side grade, and 25p can be sidegrades or upgrades depending on what the other pair in the shanpon would be.
    - You can be pickier about damaing for upgrades if you have a yaku and can ron - otherwise you will spend too long waiting on average and players will catch up with you
      - If you just have a middle kanchan its approximately 6% per turn to upgrade to a ryanmen - 8 tiles of upgrades over 136 tiles, and that ryanmen only gains you 1 additional winning tile since you would win on the other anyway. Not worth waiting

$$\text{Probability of A NOT occurring} = (1 - .06)^{11} = 0.50629820724921$$

## Riichi vs Dama - Riichi

Literally everything else.

These charts on good and bad wait 1st riichi Expected Value from Statistical Mahjong Strategy illustrate this better than I could.

Highly recommend checking out that book if you are someone who learns/understands things via math. Mahjong at its core is a lot of statistics.

Riichi/dama confirmed hand value	Turn 5		Turn 8		Turn 12		Points scored	
	Riichi	Dama	Riichi	Dama	Riichi	Dama	Riichi	Dama
Riichi nomi	500		-100		-600		2600	
Dama 1300pt, Riichi 2600 pt	1600	500	800	0	0	-500	4700	1500
Dama 2600 pt, Riichi 5200 pt	2900	1600	1900	900	800	100	7300	3000
Dama 5200 pt, Riichi 4 han	3800	3800	2700	2600	1400	1300	9000	6000
Dama 6400 pt, Riichi 4 han	3800	4500	2700	3100	1400	1700	9000	6900
Dama 4 han, Riichi 5 han	4800	5300	3500	3700	1900	2100	10900	8000
Dama 5 han, Riichi 6 han	5900	6100	4300	4400	2600	2600	12900	9200
Dama 6 han, Riichi 7 han	6900	8200	5200	6000	3100	3700	14800	12000

Table 1.3: Head start bad shape riichi/dama round balance. Round balance values are computed from data tabulated in Table 1.4. The points scored upon winning differ slightly from the corresponding values for ryanmen riichi due to some differences in ippatsu and tsumo rates.

Riichi/dama confirmed hand value	Turn 5		Turn 8		Turn 12		Points scored	
	Riichi	Dama	Riichi	Dama	Riichi	Dama	Riichi	Dama
Riichi nomi	1300		600		-100		2800	
Dama 1000 pt, Riichi 2000 pt	1900	600	1100	200	300	-300	3700	1100
Dama 1300pt, Riichi 2600 pt	2800	1000	1900	500	900	0	5000	1500
Dama 2000 pt, Riichi 3900 pt	3600	1600	2600	1000	1400	400	6300	2200
Dama 2600 pt, Riichi 5200 pt	4500	2300	3400	1600	1900	800	7600	3000
Dama 3900 pt, Riichi 7700 pt	5500	3400	4200	2600	2600	1600	9100	4300
Dama 5200 pt, Riichi 4 han	5600	4800	4300	3800	2600	2500	9200	6000
Dama 6400 pt, Riichi 4 han	5600	5600	4300	4500	2600	3000	9200	6900
Dama 7700 pt, Riichi 5 han	7000	6300	5500	5100	3500	3600	11300	7800
Dama 4 han, Riichi 5 han	7000	6500	5500	5300	3500	3700	11300	8000
Dama 5 han, Riichi 6 han	8300	7500	6500	6100	4300	4400	13100	9200
Dama 6 han, Riichi 7 han	9600	9900	7600	8200	5100	5900	15100	12000

Table 1.1: Head start ryanmen riichi/dama round balance. Round balance values are computed from game log analysis results tabulated in 1.2. Expected round balance values are rounded to the nearest 10.

# Opening Judgement and Order

The goal of mahjong is not the fastest tenpai - its the fastest win. This is what calling strategy is based on. Calling in a way that leaves you on a good shape to win before other players catch up and you get stuck in a fight with a bad wait and 4 tiles in hand.

Unless your hand is mangan+ or all good shapes - identify the bottleneck tiles for your hand - i.e a 6 to a 78 shape if tanyao or a 7 to a 68 shape. Open your hand by calling for bad shapes first while passing first calls on strong shapes. Ending on a strong multi sided wait makes your win% much higher if someone does catch up and fight you.

Shapes like 344 can be called later. Once you call once or twice you will see less potential calling tiles as players will be more wary of you. They also will fill in naturally much more often than the bad shapes that you should call first.

Pon is usually faster than chi. If you have the opportunity to keep 2 pairs in hand while open - do so.

Once you open though - proceed to tenpai as fast as you can while maintaining safety where possible - especially if you do not have a super valuable hand.

# Opening Judgement and Order

- Most hands you can make a reasonable choice if you want to play them open sometime in the first row. These are a list of cases for strongly considering opening.
  - You have 2+ dora and mediocre shapes.
  - It's 4th place's dealer turn - skipping their deal makes it harder to come back.
  - You are winning in the late game and can proceed reasonably safely. Going from south 2 to south 3 and maintaining first place with a quick open win slices away 33% of the game and makes it harder for you to lose first.
  - You have yakuhai pair or 5 early tanyao blocks. - Even for a cheap hand its good to speed these up, just hold back a bit of efficiency in favor of safety. Balance your open risk with your confidence in being able to fold with a shortened hand / how callable some of the tiles you need are
  - Theres an expensive hand on the board. - You can always fold to it later but 2000 points won is a huge deal when it shuts down the open mangan+. This is especially good if you need tiles that are safe to the expensive hand and/or you don't have to push very much.
    - If you do this - remember, you're often fighting for a cheap hand - so don't be afraid to back off

## Opening Judgement - Keiten

Keiten / being tenpai at exhaust is almost always worth going for unless your score situation needs to hold out for riichi and hoping for the best.

Once you are in the 3rd row you should take calls to tenpai even without yaku. You can still choose to fold if you so choose but the difference in Expected value over riichi with 2-4 draws left and being tenpai with no yaku is very similar because you are unlikely to win that late in the hand anyway. Keiten can even be better since you save yourself the riichi stick.

# Sakigiri: Being safe vs being efficient

Sakigiri: - Conceptually its is very straightforward. - You give up slight efficiency to hold safety so that you can more safely fight later.

In practice - Sakigiri timing and whether or not you should even do it are among the most difficult concepts to incorporate into your game.

Sakigiri is offensive and defensive weapon at the same time. You are sacrificing an acceptable amount of speed to be able to fight more safely later down the road.

Always make sure you are mindful about the tiles your are holding as safety. Just because a tile is usually safe doesnt mean it is safe every hand. And if you arent willing to throw a 1 cut or live dragon into a potential fight than you would be better served just holding maximum efficiency.

# Sakigiri: Being safe vs being efficient

Ignore Sakigiri:

When you have mangan+ - only cut efficiency in favor of safety if those discards are locking in value - ie cut 5 from 455 for safety if dora is 4.

When you are planning on opening - ponning is faster than chi so don't give up pon tiles for safety without good reason.

In the first row - there is plenty of time to draw back safe tiles unless your hand is horrible in which case - consider honitsu which allows you to make use of traditionally safe tiles without having to cut them.

In the third row - at this point it's not sakigiri it's just pushing. So don't sacrifice acceptance to cut a tile that's already quite risky until you have to.

When your shapes need the help - if your shape isn't 2 sided afterward - do not sakigiri.

Hold more safe tiles and Sakigiri:

In the 2nd row ~turn 6-8 - Get ahead of the average riichi turn of 8-9 and set yourself up to fight if you have a hand for it. Safe entry as the 2nd tenpai makes your expected value of fighting much higher and you will have easier choices on the ippatsu turn.

When you are winning. You can afford to sacrifice efficiency to minimize your deal in rate to as many situations as possible.

When the extra efficiency would cost you yaku or is tenpais that you do not want.

When you are open, your shapes are 2 sided anyway and your hand is cheap. - Especially with cheap open hands - consider holding 2+ safe tiles until iishanten.

When someone is threatening honitsu/chinitsu early. Get rid of floating tiles in that suit so that you can deny the hand safely later on.

# Push Fold

If you are just starting out or need basic guidance - this chart from Riichi Book 1 is what I followed to a tee when I was first improving at the game. It is conceptually very simple and makes decisions for you. The hard part is forcing yourself to follow it.

As you become more advanced and play at a higher level - learning to break these rules and push more is crucial

— r ush / fo ld ju dge me nt —

When another player has a ready hand,

Push if **two** of the following conditions are met:

1. Ready hand;
2. High scoring hand;
3. Good wait.

Fold if **two** of the following conditions are met:

1. 1-away (or worse) hand;
2. Low scoring hand;
3. Bad wait.

# Push Fold - Suji Counting

Whether to push or to fold in situations is among the hardest things to get a feel for. Especially because you can make the correct choice and be punished or make the incorrect choice and be rewarded. To make it easier, push fold has been simplified down to a math problem based around live suji.

There are 18 “suji” that are live at the start of any given hand. 1-4,2-5,3-6,4-7,5-8, and 6-9 in each of the 3 suits.

When someone declares riichi - do a quick check of how many suji are live - that is, how many 2 sided waits can you deal into. You can then quickly calculate a rough percentage of your chances of dealing in.

# Push Fold - Suji Counting

Consider the following riichi from toimen.

The following suji are dead - 6-9p, 1-4m, 2-5p, -5s, 5-8m, 5-8s, 4-7s, 3-6p and 6-9m post riichi. This is 9 of the 18 suji - which means this 8p that is live only deals in about 11% of the time to a 2 sided wait. A very reasonable push if this hand was tenpai and for this hand as dealer iishanten - still reasonable to risk.

The biggest thing that you realize with suji counting is that individual pushes almost never have a very high deal in rate and you are getting somewhat unlucky when you deal in. But stacking those chances gets out of hand quickly. Also if you risk 2 suji at once, like a 6s here - (3-6s/6-9s) that doubles the chance.

The next step with Suji Counting is to incorporate other resources like sotogawa which would discount the 1-4p suji and the 1-4s suji - leaving the deal in % of 8p at 1/7 which is 14.2% by just raw math. If you assume that you always deal into a mangan which will not always be the case (the average value of a win is much lower) - 14.2% of 8000 is just 1150 - or similar to the amount that you would lose by being no ten at draw. With this knowledge in mind - we should be prepared to push this 8p for tenpai once we cut the comparatively safer green dragon.



# Push Fold - Suji Counting

One last note on suji counting - make sure you do the math on the stacking live tile pushes together. Pushing from further than iishanten is rough because if you cut a 1/7 tile like this 8p and then follow it up with another live tile. That is now 1/6 to deal in. - Combined thats over a 25% deal in rate for just 2 tiles.

. Most intermediate + mahjong players sit between 10-14% deal in depending on playstyle and experience so opting to push more than one tile will often exceed that rate.



## Mawashi - Playing Around A Riichi

A very important thing to recognize about mawashi is that it's addicting. You end up getting baited into what I call Ego or “Because I can” pushes. And they are pushes - Just because you attached the word mawashi to what you're doing doesn't mean that it isn't still pushing.

Make sure you have a purpose in mind when you mawashi and stick to it. Many players will complain that its always the last tile they cut that deals in when trying to fight, but that's because of course you would cut the worst tile last.

This section will show what types of tiles to look at as ok to cut when trying to play around someone and what situations its best suited for.

# Mawashi - Sotogawa

Sotogawa - playing “behind” early 2 / 3 / 7 / 8 discards

This is the most important defensive tool at an intermediate / advanced level but puts a lot of trust on the opponent to “make sense” with their discards.

Conceptually it's not very difficult - the earlier a tile is discarded by a player - the more likely it is that they don't need anything in that range. But applying it can make defensive choices much much easier when combined with Half suji.



# Mawashi - Sotogawa - Create your Own Nakasuji

We have 3 tiles now that we can use Sotogawa to argue should be safe defensively.

2p and 9s are easy to spot - but the 4p should also be safe and is a very important usage of Sotogawa.

Because the 7p passed the riichi - in our heads we can count the 4p as Nakasuji. Because if we think the 1p is safe due to sotogawa - we should also consider the 4p safe. Defensively our concepts are all built around ryanmen - if 14p is sotogawa and 47p is impossible than we should be comfortable pushing 4p if possible.

This concept and working it into my game was the single biggest change I made to eventually make Houou.

Sometimes you will deal in cutting sotogawa. When this happens make a note to return to the hand and see if you can follow the progression. Was it a mistake? A deliberate trap? Just an unusual progression. Even though Sotogawa is a defensive resource it is still pushing and will not always be safe - so make sure you are doing it with a purpose in mind.

Even though I identified all 3 of those tiles are potentially safe due to sotogawa I still folded to this riichi because there is very little reward for testing this.



# Setting yourself up to gyakuten over multiple hands

Play with an awareness of the score situation from south 2 onward and take multi step paths to overtake a position or secure your placing.

The goal for every all last situation is to be within mangan tsumo range of increasing placement and / or out of mangan tsumo range from the person below you.

Mangan tsumo is the easiest hand value to aim for consistently to make score changes.

Remember - this is within 10000 points of non dealer and 12000 points of dealer.

Essentially - dont be afraid to win 2000 or 3900 point hands in south 2 and 3 to set yourself up for more consistent win conditions in all last rather than aiming to get it all in one go each hand.

# General Defense

## Good Suji vs Bad Suji

Make sure you know the shapes that you can deal into when you are cutting suji. If cutting suji to a 5 - you can feed 13 kanchan, 79s kanchan, and 2/8 tanki/shanpon. (and shapes like 1112/7778)

Suji can also be susceptible to one chance/kabe. If you see 3 of the 1s then the 2 is safer of course.

Make sure you are taking correct stock of which suji tiles have tiles around them missing.

The same goes for terminal suji - tiles like 1s and 9s tend to be naturally discarded. If they are live there is often a reason.

Sometimes you'll cut the safest tile in your hand and deal in. If this happens - ask someone to gut check for you and just shrug it off as unlucky. No tile besides genbutsu has a 0% deal in rate but minimizing your chances of dealing in every single time you play defense is what allows people to hit 10-11% deal in rates.

## Riichi Defense - Be Prepared to defend vs a 2nd player

The game doesn't suddenly become a 1v1 when someone declares riichi.

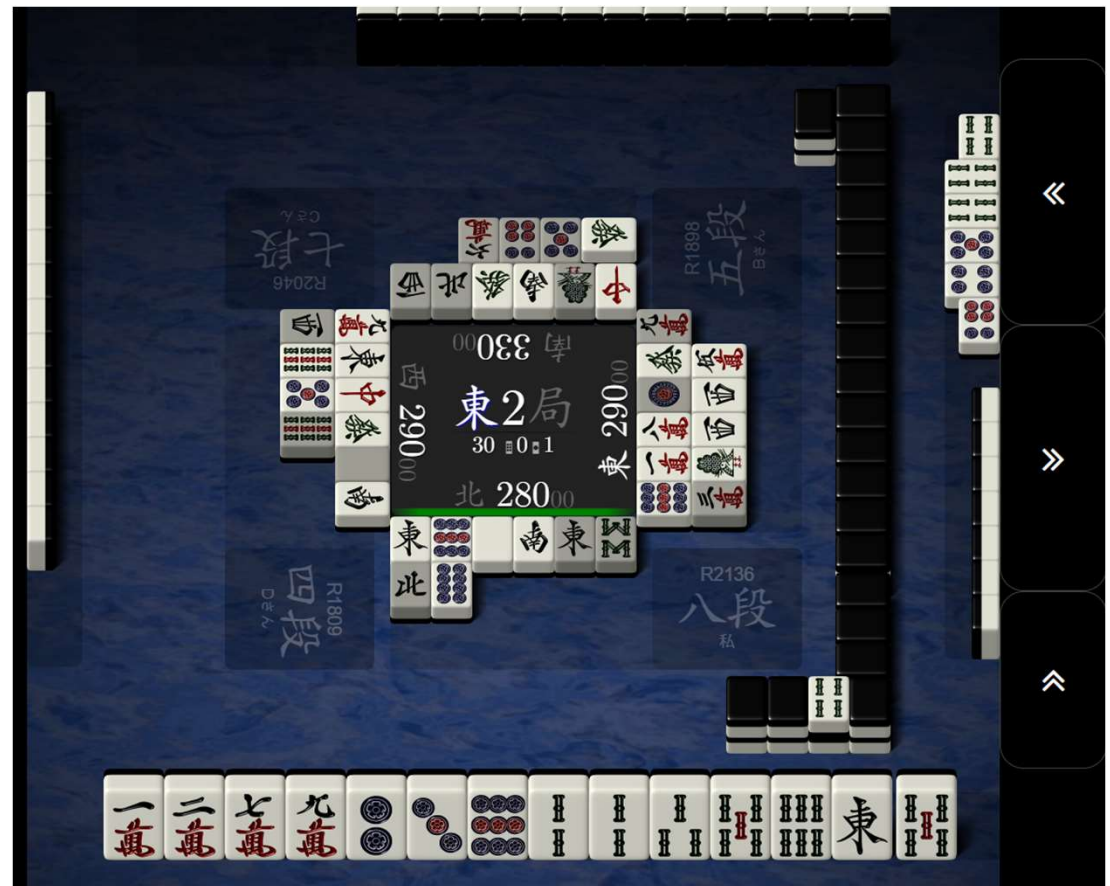
The first thing to look for when someone riichis is how the other players react. If they are pushing - their hand is often scary, or they have no defense. And you can play more defensive if your hand is borderline to let the other hands kill each other.

This also impacts the order in which you should cut your safe tiles. Even if a player appears to be folding - dont be caught stranded when a second riichi comes. Tiles safe to a riichi stay safe forever - so make sure you hold safety to other players when you can while folding.

# Riichi Defense - Be Prepared to defend vs a 2nd player

Brief example regarding discard order post riichi to show the concept.

Play 9p before 9m here. East is guaranteed to be safe to everyone so playing that first is fine but functionally 9p and 9m both only deal into hell wait tanki that was not trapped pre riichi so its very unlikely. Kamicha pushed 9s 2 turns ago so its possible they may declare riichi in which case we want to have the 9m in hand instead of the 9p.



## Riichi Defense - Fold with Callable tiles to the open player

If you've decided to fold a hand to a riichi look for opportunities to fold with callable tiles to open players. Especially if they are pushing.

If you can convince the open player to fight - the odds of you paying out to tsumo or being no-ten at draw decrease significantly.

Even if the open player decides to fold later - you have slimmed their options down or possibly killed ippatsu with no risk to yourself.

Remember, it doesn't matter how many tiles someone calls from you as long as you don't give them the last one.



# Dama Defense

I am very bad at spotting dama and honestly generally think I would rather feed damas than fold to ghosts. Long term that has been what's good for me.

That being said - there are a few signs you can look for.

Being in the 3rd row in general with no activity from anyone. Its worth considering the waits your tiles can deal into before pushing.

“Safe tile” being cut from hand mid 2nd row or later. - The tile was in hand as a form of sakigiri - consider why it would come out now rather than later.

Players pushing tiles vs open value. If someone has a dora pon / other expensive hand threat and a player is not folding - they are very often dama but dont have the value/confidence to fully fight the expensive hand.

Dama becomes a lot better when you are in a strong first - so make sure to watch those players carefully to avoid bleeding more points

## Open Defense

The first thing to consider when defending vs an open hand is do you actually care about their hand. - Keep track of the dora and the potential value someone could have hidden in the rest of their hand. If you see 2 aka dora and the regular dora isnt compatible with tanyao - you can almost just ignore someone's open tanyao if your hand is worth fighting.

That being said - people don't open for total garbage very often - especially when they call early - keep the possibilities of their hand in mind. Before you assume tanyao - check for any missing yakuhai. Are you ok with dealing in if they have dora pair behind? Things to think about when fighting any open hand.

# Open Defense - Last Tedashi

The general rule of thumb has been to suspect tenpai after 3 calls, 2 calls 2nd row, or 1 call last row but rather than that - pay attention to anyone who has made 2 calls. Or anyone who is open after turn 8. By turn 8 at least one player is iishanten or better on average - so the player who has manually sped up their hand is worth paying attention to.

Another big sign the open player is tenpai is just like dama defense - a typically not useful tile comes out of their hand - ie an open tanyao cuts a non seat wind north or a 9s thats safe to 2 players. When that safe tile comes out - its typically the tedashi before that that has a high chance of being related to the wait. This is why its good to pay attention to open players at typical tenpai turns instead of just once they show you they are tenpai.

When you suspect the open player is tenpai - pay very close attention to the last tile they cut from their hand. The last tile out of their hand is very often related to the wait. (ie a 445 cuts a 4).

If a player you thought was tenpai tedashis a 5, make sure to consider that they could have just swapped it out for the red 5 of that suit and their wait may still be related to the tedashi before the potential 5 swap out.

When an open hand cuts a pair - if the pair cut is back to back it is very unlikely that they are tenpai, but the next tedashi should set off alarm bells. Its unlikely that they are tenpai because they would have to be iishanten, decide to cut a pair, and then on the very next draw connect to their other shape. Possible, but not frequent.

However - if there are tsumogiris between the pair cut or a call between the pair, the hand is very likely tenpai and its fairly likely not related at all to the pair cut. Just accept that youre either pushing or folding at that point.

Once a player opens - pay close attention to the tiles that come out from kamicha afterward. Those can represent a backup range of safety since the open player would likely call those if they could. Note here: This primarily applies to tiles cut after they open - Remember what was discussed about your own open judgement - they could need tiles that were cut previously but decided not to open in favor of trying to open on weaker shapes.

# Basic Tedashi Tracking - What it means - when to Karagiri

When to Karagiri

When Open: While tenpai or iishanten and you are cutting from tiles that are unrelated to your wait.

This is due to the previous section. Strong players will track the changes you make after you open your hand - so throw off the range of tiles they expect you to be progressing in by swapping out tiles that are already locked into your hands shapes.

When Closed:

To give the illusion of progress with bad hands.

When dama to break a tsumogiri streak if the tile is away from your waiting shape.

When tenpai:

When you are cutting genbutsu to a riichi. This combined with a pause can make it look like you folded and bait a deal in from a player that may have been wary of you previously.

DO NOT KARAGIRI IF YOU DONT KNOW WHAT INFORMATION YOURE CONVEYING. It's very ok to just tsumogiri everything in these situations.

## Basic Wall Reading

A quick note on this section - The manga Tetsunaki no Kirinji and specifically the first 2 arcs and the finale of the 3rd arc of Tetsunaki no Kirinji: Kabukichou-Hen are quite good for what concepts people who discuss wall reads are actually looking at. It was written in consultation with Shibukawa-Pro, a top class M-leaguer and title holder, and is well written in that regard.

## Basic Wall Reading

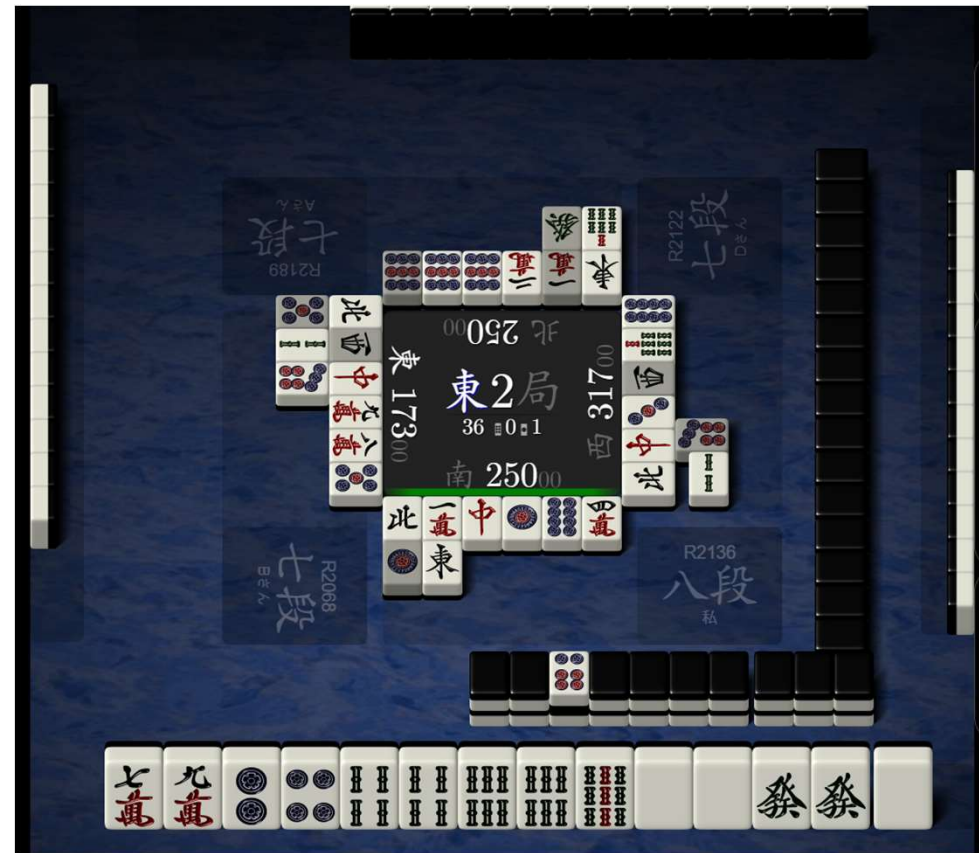
Wall reading at its core is essentially looking at your opponents discards and asking - does it make sense for them to have this tile in their hand. This borrows heavily from the previously discussed concept of sotogawa.

Look at all of your opponents discard order and try to follow the hand progression - I'll show an example on the next slide.

# Basic Wall Reading

Take this riichi example from earlier. If you look at just shimochas hand - try to identify ranges of tiles you expect them to not have and to have. The ordering of their discards tells us that we can expect 1-3p and 7-9s to be available. The late 8p suggests that dora 7p may not be available, but they could also have just been greeding it as a floating tile. Lastly - you expect the riichi to have some tiles around lower souzu - after all - why would you cut 2s or 8p after 3p or 7s unless you had some use for those tiles.

Practice doing this for one player at a time to follow progressions or just identify ranges - and then check the other opponents hands as well. Looking at kamicha and toimen - upper souzu is missing - so they likely have some of it. Toimen specifically only cut 7s when forced so that may have been from a shape in that range. Manzu is also missing everywhere - so those are tiles to give careful thought before discarding.



# Basic Wall Reading

See to our right here. As we suspected - shimocha has neither of upper souzu or lower pinzu, but the upper souzu are still unavailable. Shimocha did also have a dora pair though that was more something potentially true than a read.

One more thing to consider when wall reading is the tiles players fold with. Both non riichi opponents played genbutsu to the ippatsu turn. While this is normal - if the opponents continued folding but the genbutsu 3pin that could progress our hand did not come out - i would feel confident that it is in the wall. Since it is not a tile shimocha is likely to have and our opponents would fold with it if they had it.



# How to Improve on your own

- “Improve on your own” is a bit of a misnomer here. It's certainly possible to get better by yourself, but you make it a lot harder if you don't try to seek out assistance.
  - Participate in What Would You Do (WWYD) channels as both an answerer and a poster. Don't be afraid to disagree with what seems to be a common opinion or just ask why this and not that? People might be quick to tell you you're wrong, but it's less that you're wrong and more that that is what your current knowledge level is at.
  - From a posting point of view - make note of situations that confused you in your games. When I play I keep a notepad of hands I want to go back to after the game to get outside opinions on or just to check what was going on. I screenshot those and dm them to my friends or put them in public channels to get feedback on if my thoughts were matched. I do this a lot so sorry and thank you to everyone who deals with getting spammed by me.
  - Obviously full log reviews are very good as well, but respect other people's time. It takes quite a while for someone to go through a game with you and you need to be an active part of that conversation as well or else they're just doing the work for you and you're not getting anything out of it. Mortal and Naga are both good AI if you use them correctly for this kind of thing, though getting a human perspective on things is desirable as well at least to me.
    - If you do use Mortal and Naga - use them Well!
      - Find your mistakes and make sure you understand them. If the robot wants you to do something make sure you get the idea or ask someone you think might understand it better if you don't.
      - Find your good plays. It's very easy to tunnel on the decisions a robot said was wrong but if you play a situation you didn't feel confident in well, let yourself be proud of that. Positive reinforcement is just as good if not better for actually learning.

# How to Improve on your own - Continued

- Study Every Nth game
  - Set yourself a number of games (5/10/etc) and study every single one of those games on that interval.
    - For example - At this point I at least glance at the majority of games I play but I try to take a deep dive every 5th game to look for mistakes I wasn't aware I was making.
  - It's very easy to take a game where you get 4th because you lost a few fights, post it around, get told yeah there were a few small mistakes but nothing super impactful - just unlucky, and just continue on in blissful obliviousness of the mistakes you're actually making that make impact.
  - The game where you got 2nd but should've won if you didn't take an unnecessary fight from 1st is just as big of a mistake as the game where you got 4th due to your own misplays. The goal of studying is to play as many situations as possible to the best of your ability. Results will come from improvement if you give them time.
- Actually Play the Game Online
  - For those of you who have regular in person play - I am very jealous. However, the unparalleled access to information that online games have are the best study tools.
  - Information overload is a very real thing. You can learn all you want but if you don't play you'll never truly know it deeply enough for it to be useful in game.
  - The general process for learning goes along these lines
    - 1. Learn something new. 2. Play some games with new topic in mind. 3. Have worse results because you're thinking about new concept. 4. Play enough with new concept that you no longer have to think about it. 5. Have better results because you're now a better player with more tools and knowledge ingrained - so your brain is free to think about more new information.
    - 3 and 4 are very crucial steps. If you don't actually play enough to ingrain a concept and study logs to ensure that you're implementing it correctly it will either become something you forget about or have to devote too many mental resources to which will cause you to make other mistakes due the brain's inability to consciously juggle more than a few concepts while playing.

## Conclusion

Honestly this is just a bunch of thoughts that I have put together and I plan to keep updating as an evolving project. If there's a topic you'd like me to talk about more in depth or just in general or you have questions about some of the concepts or where I am getting some of these assertions please do not hesitate to ask. I am almost always available on discord @LightPinkYoshi but I can also be reached via email at [maxmajoulalt@gmail.com](mailto:maxmajoulalt@gmail.com)

Thanks so much to everyone who helped me with this. I hope to continue to see more English content made so that we can all keep getting better together. Thank you!