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Player's Guide

For the Tandy® Color Computer 3



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Color Computer 3 version programmed by Rick Adams.

Produced by Sherry Whiteley.

Graphics by Doug Barnett.

Special thanks to Gene Schenberg and Patricia Daley.

Player's Guide by Marc Weber.

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*In the Secrets of the Dragon
And the lapping of waves
Each must listen
And hear his own voice*

—Chinese Proverb

The Game

You are about to enter the realm of *Shanghai* — one of the most absorbing computer experiences you'll ever encounter.

This *Player's Guide* will help you get started. It outlines the rules, describes game variations and strategy, and even supplies a bit of history.

But there's one thing that this guide cannot help you with. And it's probably the most difficult part of the game...

Quitting.

The History

Shanghai is based on an ancient Chinese game called Mah-Jongg, the origins of which are as mysterious as the game itself. Some historians date it as far back as the time of Confucius, over 25 centuries ago.

It's believed that Mah-Jongg was first played by sailors and fishermen as a diversion from the monotony of long ocean voyages. Although it began as a card game, in time the cards gave way to bone and bamboo tiles, which were less likely to fly off the decks.

In the 1920s, during Prohibition, Mah-Jongg took the United States by storm, turning many unsuspecting gamblers into ivory tile addicts.

Now Activision brings you an all-new version of this former obsession of sailors, scoundrels, flappers, and moonlighters. As *Shanghai*.

The Set-Up

Before turning on your computer, connect a joystick to the right joystick port. If you think you'll want to compete simultaneously with another player, connect a second joystick to the left port.

Press the *Shanghai* cartridge firmly into the slot and switch the computer on. **NOTE:** Never remove the cartridge while the computer is on; doing so may result in damage to the cartridge.

The *Shanghai* title screen will appear. Choose the color set for your monitor by moving the arrow cursor over the box marked **RGB** or **COMPOSITE**.

You're now ready to begin *Shanghai*. Move the arrow again to the box you've selected, and press the button on the joystick.

The *Shanghai* Main Menu will appear. Select solitaire from the Main Menu by using your joystick to move the arrow to the words **PLAY SOLITAIRE** and pressing the joystick button.

The entire game is joystick driven, so you will not need to use the keyboard except during tournament play.

When you select **PLAY SOLITAIRE**, an arrangement of 144 tiles will appear on your screen in the shape of a dragon.

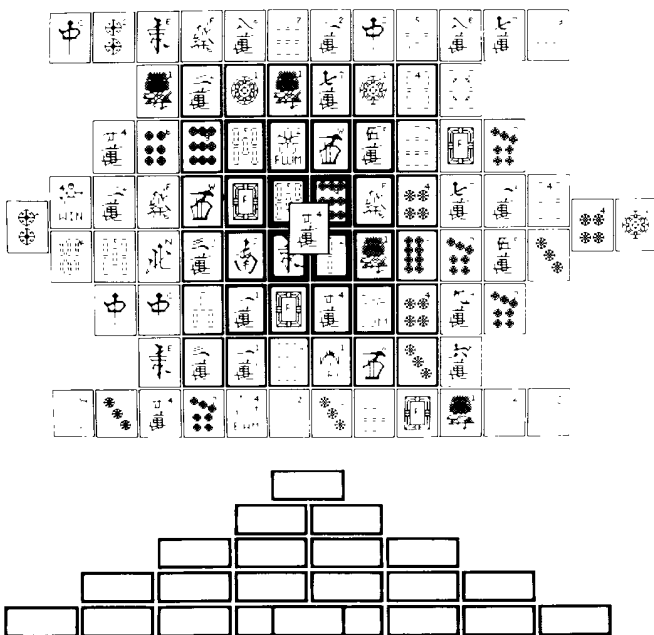
The Dragon and the Object

The position of every tile is random in each game. The Dragon is built by mixing the tiles and placing them in stacks from one to five inches tall. The stacks get taller toward the center of the Dragon.

On screen you view the Dragon from above, so you see only the top tile of each stack. But you can tell how tall a stack is by looking at its edges, shaded in gray.

You should be able to see five distinct layers of tiles. The fifth layer contains only a single tile — the one in the center of the screen.

The object of *Shanghai* is to dismantle the Dragon by taking away tiles in matched pairs.



The Rules

The rules are very simple.

1) You can remove tiles only in pairs. The two tiles of the pair must *match* each other. The next section explains the meanings of the tiles and how they match.

2) Both tiles of a pair must be free. That means there must be nothing on top of them, and each must be free to slide out of the Dragon formation horizontally, either to the right or to the left.

It doesn't matter which part of the Dragon the two tiles are from. All that matters is that they match and that *both* tiles are free.

Techniques

To select a tile:

Use the joystick to move the arrow over a tile, then press the joystick button. The selected tile will flash.

If you decide not to select a tile after all, *unselect* it by placing the arrow over it again and pressing the joystick button, or by selecting **CANCEL** from the menu bar at the top of the screen.

To remove a pair of tiles:

Select one free tile, then another free tile which matches it. Both should flash. To remove them, press the joystick button again with the arrow over the *second* tile you selected.

If you select tiles which aren't free or don't match, you'll receive a warning message in the righthand portion of your screen.

If you decide not to remove a selected pair, *unselect* both of them by pressing the button with the arrow over the *first* tile selected, or choose **CANCEL** from the menu bar.

The Meanings of the Tiles

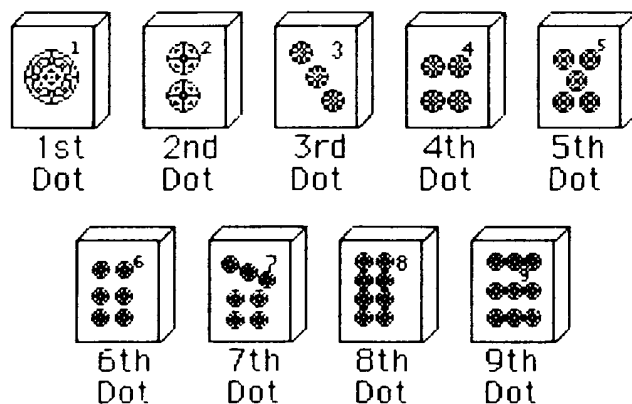
There are 144 *Shanghai* tiles. Of these 108 are divided into suits, much like Western playing cards. But in *Shanghai* there are also 12 Dragon tiles, 16 Winds, 4 Seasons, and 4 Flowers.

The meanings of the tiles are nearly as ancient as the game itself.

(The tiles on your screen may look slightly different from those shown here.)

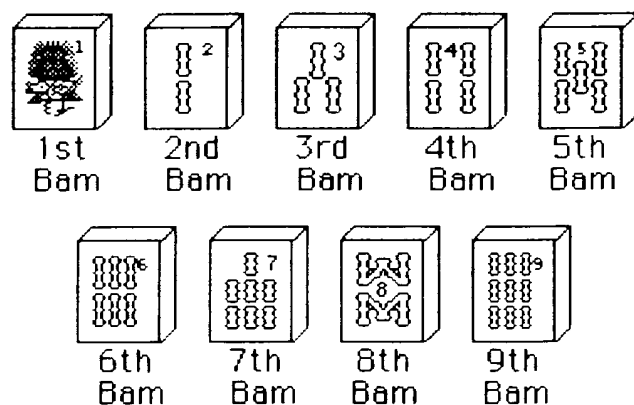
The Suit of Dots

This suit dates back to the original sailor's game. With its resemblance to coins in other ancient games, it probably represents that root of all evil, money.



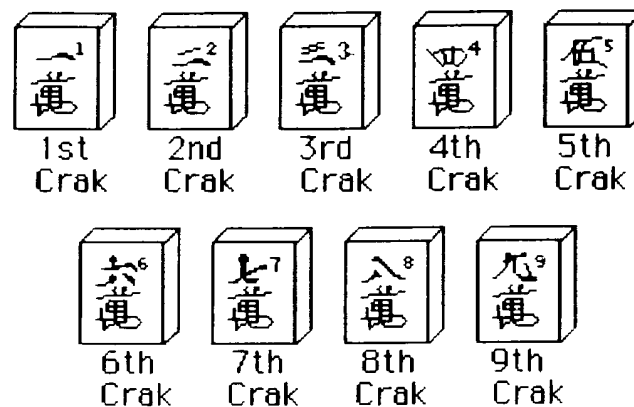
The Suit of Bam

Bam stands for bamboo. Because bamboo was often used in the ancient Orient to make deadly spears, it's thought that this suit represents victory and power.



The Suit of Crak

Also called *characters* or *actors*, Craks may represent actual people or simply the characters that make up the Chinese alphabet.



The Dragons

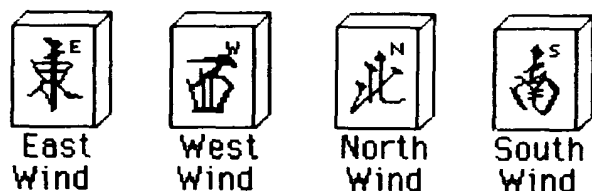
These have a particular meaning for the game. In ancient Mah-Jongg, each of the three Suits was associated with a particular Dragon:

White Dragons were the Dragons of Dots
 Red Dragons were the Dragons of Bam
 Green Dragons were the Dragons of Crak



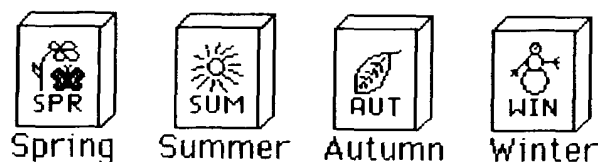
The Winds

Nothing's hidden in the meaning of these four tiles. They represent the Four Winds of the World.



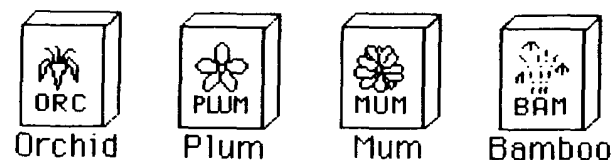
The Seasons

These too have a simple meaning. Added to the game by river gamblers, the four tiles represent the Four Seasons of the Year.



The Flowers

The four flowers – Orchid, Plum, Mum, and Bamboo – were introduced by a medieval princess to add beauty and romance to the game.



Matching the Tiles

In general, you can remove pairs of tiles only if they're identical.

That is, an East Wind can be paired only with another East Wind, a Three of Dots with another Three of Dots, and so on.

But there *are* exceptions:

There are two sets of four tiles that need not be identical to match. These are the *Seasons* and the *Flowers*.

Any two Seasons may be removed as a pair, and any two Flowers may be removed as a pair. For example: Winter matches Autumn, or Spring, or Fall. Orchid matches Plum, or Mum, or Bamboo. Seasons and Flowers never match each other. You can easily identify the Seasons and Flowers by the three or four letters on them (**ORC** for Orchid, for example).

The Main Menu and the Three Ways to Play

At the Main Menu you end games and begin new ones.

The *Shanghai* Main Menu offers different options, including the Three Ways to Play – solitaire, tournament, and challenge *Shanghai*.

SHANGHAI MAIN MENU
PLAY SOLITAIRE
BEGIN AGAIN
SELECT A DRAGON
TOURNAMENT PLAY
CHALLENGE MATCH
RETURN TO GAME

All the options on the Main Menu are explained below.

SELECT A DRAGON

Normally the Dragon that begins a game is a random assortment of tiles. Each Dragon is different, and only some can be played until all the tiles are gone.

SELECT A DRAGON lets you choose from eight predefined winnable Dragons.

Choose **SELECT A DRAGON** from the Main Menu. You'll see a list of Dragons with poetic names. After you've made your selection, you'll be returned to the Main Menu.

Now when you start a game, the Dragon you selected will appear. Choosing **QUIT** from the challenge or solitaire menu bar will unselect the Dragon you have chosen. In tournament, selecting **QUIT** and discontinuing tournament play unselects the chosen Dragon.

BEGIN AGAIN, RETURN TO GAME

These apply *only* to solitaire and are explained below. They are not active in tournament or challenge modes.

Solitaire *Shanghai*

This game is for one player – with no time limitations. Solitaire offers the greatest selection of help options on its menu bar, so it may be the best choice when you're first getting familiar with *Shanghai*.

The Solitaire Menu Bar

MENU. Select this to get to the Main Menu from a game. Return to your game by selecting **RETURN TO GAME** from the Main Menu. Or you can start a new game of solitaire by selecting **BEGIN AGAIN**.

UNDO. At times you'll want to undo your last move and make another. In fact, you can back all the way up to the beginning of a game by repeatedly selecting this option.

FIND will highlight an existing move. You can continue to select this option to find other existing moves. In solitaire, the game's over when a player can no longer find any moves. **FIND** can tell you if all possible moves have been made.

CANCEL. Use **CANCEL** to unselect a selected tile or pair of tiles.

PEEK. If you're curious to see what lies beneath a given tile and you're willing to forfeit the game, use **PEEK**. (Or use it after an unsuccessful game to sharpen your strategy). **PEEK** removes tiles one at a time as you press the joystick button. **UNDO** puts them back.

The number of tiles remaining is displayed at the lower left of the screen.

Remember – **UNDO**, **FIND**, and **PEEK** are extra help. To win a game fair and square, don't use them.

Tournament *Shanghai*

Select tournament *Shanghai* for a bit of friendly competition. Tournament lets multiple players match their skills on the same Dragon formation.

The first player sets a 5- or 10-minute time limit, and the top ten scores are recorded for as long as the computer is on. A clock at the upper left of the screen keeps track of time.

There is a warning beep when there is one minute left in the match.

The Tournament Menu Bar

Only **QUIT**, **UNDO**, and **CANCEL** are options in tournament.

QUIT takes you back to the Main Menu and *ends the game*.

UNDO and **CANCEL** work as described above for solitaire.

The **SELECT A DRAGON** option works in tournament so players can use a predefined dragon if preferred. Using **QUIT** and discontinuing tournament play unselects the predefined dragon.

The number of tiles remaining is displayed in the lower left of the screen. The player's score is displayed in the lower right of the screen.

Challenge *Shanghai*

Challenge *Shanghai* is direct no-holds-barred competition between two players. Two joysticks are required – see “The Set-Up” on page 2.

The players compete on the same Dragon to find the most moves. The players set a 60-, 30-, 20-, or 10-second time limit for each move; a move made within the limit earns one point.

If you can't remove a pair of tiles within the time limit, a beep sounds and your turn ends. A clock in the upper left corner of the screen keeps track of the time remaining.

The number of tiles remaining is displayed in the lower left of the screen.

The player up and the current score are displayed on the right side of the screen.

Only the joystick of the player whose turn it is remains active. A beep sounds when it's time to switch players.

When the two players agree they're finished, choose **QUIT** from the menu bar. A scoreboard appears with both players' scores. If both players miss two turns in a row, the game ends automatically and the scoreboard appears.

Scoring

Each player receives one point for each *pair* of tiles removed.

The Challenge Menu Bar

Only **QUIT** and **CANCEL** are options in challenge. (These options are explained above under solitaire and tournament).

The **SELECT A DRAGON** option works in challenge, so players can continue to use a predefined Dragon if preferred. Choosing **QUIT** unselects the predefined Dragon.

Strategy

In ancient Asia, many books were written on strategy for use in games, in life, and even in love. Strategy is the heart of *Shanghai*. By a player's strategy, all may be lost or gained.

Here are four pieces of advice:

- Concentrate on the tiles that block the most moves. As the game begins, there are four: the two at far right center, the one at far left center, and the tile at the very top of the Dragon in the center of the screen. Try to remove these tiles first.
- *Always* check for triples: if you match a pair of tiles, look for a third (and fourth) free tile that also matches. If you take two out of three matched tiles, take the two that free the greatest number of important moves. When you're unsure what to do with a triple match, leave it and make another move instead.
- If you see all four tiles of a kind free, take them all so they're out of your way.
- Look ahead for as many moves as you can.

