

Buried treasure

You probably all know that a pung of Dragons can double your hand. And also a pung of the right sort of Wind.

But you can also double your hand if, along with one or more of these Dragon or Wind pungs (or just a pair of them), you have collected pungs or kongs in the same suite.

There's another sort of double when you have one or more sets of Dragons or Winds, but pungs of tiles in different suites. You can get a double if all the sets are concealed.

Now, what happens if you have pungs (but no kongs) in the same suite AND all the sets are concealed?

It's not an extra double. It's the special hand of Buried treasure – 1,000 points.

Note that you can also (optionally) have pungs of Dragons or Winds as well.

One point about this particular concealed hand. Unlike normal concealed hands, it is not destroyed if you claim the last pung or pair to go Mah-Jong.

Knitting and Triple knitting

More times than you would wish for you are dealt a mixture of tiles from two or three suits, and virtually no honour or major tiles.

One's first reaction tends to be despair and to think that maybe next time it will be better.

However, there is some hope. Because you could consider going for the special hand of Knitting. Or maybe Triple knitting. Both score 500 points.

Knitting is when you get 7 pairs of the same numbers in any 2 suits.

Triple knitting is when you get 4 sets of the same numbers in the 3 suits, plus a pair with the same numbers in any 2 suits.

As with a number of the special hands you are hampered because you cannot claim a pung or kong along the way. And also your inevitable discards of Dragons and Winds makes it evident that you are collecting one of these particular special hands.

The upside is that other players have little idea of what particular tiles you are looking for.

Imperial Jade

Pungs / Kongs of the green tiles and a pair.

Green tiles are Green Dragons and 2s, 3s, 4s, 6 and 8s of Bamboos.

As early as 3000 B.C. jade was known in China as the 'royal gem'.

In the art and culture of the Chinese empire, jade has always had a very special significance, roughly comparable with that of gold and diamonds in the West.

Today, too, this gem is regarded as a symbol of the good, the beautiful and the precious.

The rarest is imperial jade (which is jadeite with the element Chromium). It is a deep green in colour and very valuable.

Purity

Purity is when all your sets in your Mah-Jong hand are pungs and/or kongs of the same suit. For example, all Circles.

It's a bit unusual in that it doesn't give you a fixed score. Instead you double your basic score three times. And that's also true if you're fishing when someone else goes Mah-Jong.

What happens if you also have your own Season? You might think that you have another double. But you don't.

In special hands the Seasons are always scored and doubled separately. So if you did have your own double going Mah-Jong with Purity, you would get an extra 8 points (4 doubled).

So Purity may not be the best option to go for if you have your own Season and (say) the chance of a pung of Dragons.

For example.

A hand with 4 exposed minor pungs in the same suit (Purity), plus your own Season, would give you a basic score of:

$$8 \text{ (for the pungs)} + 20 = 28$$

Doubling 3 times gives 224

$$\text{Your own Season gives } 4 \times 2 = 8$$

$$\text{Total score} = 232$$

A hand with 3 exposed minor pungs in the same suit and an exposed pung of Dragons, plus your own Season, would give you a basic score of :

$$6 \text{ (for the pungs)} + 4 \text{ (Dragons)} + 4 \text{ (Season)} + 20 = 34$$

You would have 4 doubles: no chows, pung of Dragons, all the same suit and some honour, your own Season

Doubling 4 times gives a total score of 544

The wriggling snake

You may like trying to get Knitting.

If you decide to collect for this, you may find that you are getting more of one set than another.

If so, it may be worth considering collecting for The wriggling snake.

Or at least keep this in mind as an option.

To get The wriggling snake you need 2 ones and a run from 2 to 9, all in the same suit. All characters, all circles or all bamboos.

You also need one of each of the four Winds.

It's quite a difficult one to get.