

NMJL CARD & HAND SELECTION QUICK REFERENCE CHEAT SHEET

The NMJL card is typically organized into 10 sections with several hands under each category.

The 10 Sections of the NMJL Card

Section	What It Focuses On	What It Tells You
Year	Current year (e.g., 2025)	Mix of numbers + singles (Soap as 0)
2468	Even numbers	Strong pattern-based hands
13579	Odd numbers	Similar to evens, different grouping
369	Specific number set	More structured, less flexible
Any Like Numbers	Same number repeated	Flexible—can use any number
Addition Hands	Math-based patterns	More complex combinations
Consecutive Run	Sequential numbers	Still singles—not true runs
Quints	Groups of five	Joker-heavy hands
Winds & Dragons	Honor tile hands	Less number-based
Singles & Pairs	Singles + one pair	No Jokers allowed

On the right side, you'll see symbols that can change the hand

Symbol	Meaning	What It Changes
X	Exposed	You can call and expose tiles
C	Concealed	No calling (except final tile)




Hand-Building Strategies

Instead of trying to select a line or hand, first try narrowing it down to a core category.

If you have . . .	Do this . . .
Lots of even numbers	Go to 2468.
Multiple identical numbers	Check Any Like Numbers.
Strong honor tiles	Look at Winds & Dragons.

How to Read the Hands

Colors don't represent specific suits, but they do indicate how many suits you need to use.

Color Meaning	One color: All tiles same suit	Two colors: Two different suits	Three colors: Three different suits
Example	444 = 	6666 = 	333 = 

Letters represent specific tiles. Dragon tiles use color to indicate which tile is needed.

Letter	N	E	W	S	D	F		
Example					 or  or 			
Tile Name	North	East	West	South	White Dragon	Red Dragon	Green Dragon	Flower

Choosing a Hand from the NMJL Card

During the first few passes of the Charleston, stay flexible. It's too early to commit to one specific hand, and the tiles you receive can quickly change your direction. But as the Charleston progresses, look for these patterns to emerge.

Clusters of the same number (multiple 4s, 6s, and so on)	Pairs (these are especially valuable)	Even or odd groupings (2468 or 13579 hands)	Tiles that naturally group across suits
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Strategy Tip: Because you cannot call tiles to complete a pair or single unless you are going Mah Jongg, pairs and singles are often the hardest parts of your hand to complete. So keep pairs and singles instead of passing them during the Charleston exchange.