

MagicTM Dragon

"The game of 10th and 20th centuries"

A complete hand



Twin



Flush



Flush



Flush



Triplet

奇
龍

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BOOK I — BASIC RULES

I. EQUIPMENT

Magic Dragon™ is played with tiles classified by four different suits. These four suits, shown in the order of appearance in the Figure one below, are: circle (C), stick (S), dragon (D, in dragon Chinese character) and picture (P). Examine and become familiar with these suits.



FIGURE ONE

In each suit, there are 9 different kinds of tiles with a number from one to nine on each tile. There are four identical copies of each of these nine kinds of tiles, giving a total of 36 tiles in each suit and 144 tiles in all. Don't confuse 6 and 9.

Each player receives both a reference card (for versions of games in Book II) and play money in the following denominations:

5- 1 dollar bills, 5- 5 dollar bills, and 5- 10 dollar bills, for a total of 80 dollars. Using real money for gambling is discouraged. The losers use the play money to pay the winner.

II. NUMBER OF PLAYERS

Magic-Dragon™ can be played by two to six players.

However, it is most fun and intriguing with four players. **Basic rules** of the four-person game are described here in Book I. If playing with other than 4 players, see Book II section IX on page 12 for special instructions. In Magic Dragon™, there are no teams.

III. OBJECT OF THE GAME

The object of Magic Dragon™ is to be the first player to arrange a **complete hand**. A complete hand consists of four **sets** of tiles plus two identical tiles (**twins**) in a 14-tile hand. A **set** of tiles can be three identical tiles (**triplets**) or three same suit tiles in consecutive numerical sequence (**flush**). (See section VII, example 1. on page 9) The first player to complete a hand announces "Zappo."

IV. SETUP

Seating arrangement— All the tiles are placed face downward on the table and thoroughly mixed. Each player then draws one tile to determine the seating arrangement. The one who picks the highest number is the first dealer. (The name of "dealer" is used for convenience; the dealer does not serve any special function such as dealing tiles.) If two players draw the same number, they should draw new tiles for a playoff. The person drawing the second highest number will sit to the left of the dealer. Remaining players sit clockwise according to the rank of their drawn tiles.

Unless otherwise noted, the dealer and playing rotate clockwise, i.e., from each player to his left-hand neighbor.

Tile arrangement— After the players are seated in order, all tiles are placed face down and reshuffled. Each person draws and arranges 36 unexposed tiles in front of him to form a wall, 18 tiles across and two tiles high. Each set of two tiles, one top and one bottom, is called a **column**. Figure Two on page four shows this four-sided arrangement.

Starting Side— The first tile to be dealt is determined by the Yin-Yang numbers derived by the players. As they shout "YIN-YANG," each player sticks out one to five fingers. The sum of the number of fingers is the first **Yin-Yang number** (see Section VII, example II). The first Yin-Yang number determines which side is the **starting side** by the following method: The players count around the table clockwise, starting with the dealer as number one, until they reach the Yin-Yang number. The side reached by the Yin-Yang number is the starting side.

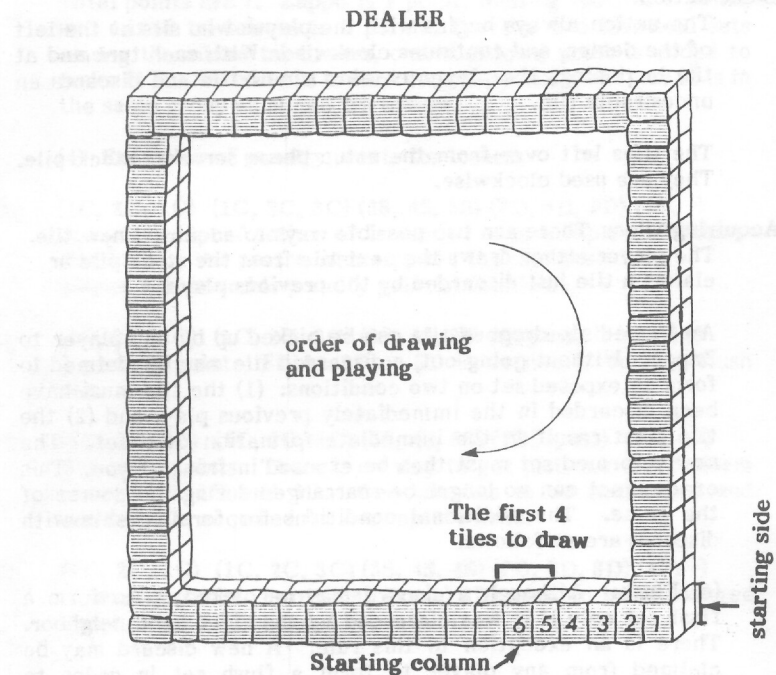
DEALER

Starting Column— After the starting side is chosen, the procedure of sticking out finger(s) is repeated to produce a second Yin-Yang number which determines the **starting column**. The counting begins from the far right of the starting side's row until the second Yin-Yang number is reached. This column is designated as the starting column.

Simpler method— A simpler alternative may be used to determine the starting side and column. The dealer assigns the starting side and the person across from the dealer chooses the starting column of the selected starting side.

Drawing— The player at the left hand of the dealer starts the game by taking four tiles (2 columns, 2 tiles up and 2 down), beginning with the starting column. The other players then take turns drawing four tiles at one time, each player beginning at the column where the previous player stopped. Each player does this 4 times until he possesses 16 tiles. He should place the 16 tiles in a

Figure two (details see example 2 on page 9)



if the first and second Yin-Yang numbers are 11 and 6 respectively.

line with their faces visible only to himself and hidden from other players. Drawing continues clockwise to the next side when one side runs out of tiles. The remaining undealt tiles serve as a **stock pile**, and they remain unexposed during the game.

Each player sorts his 16 tiles in accordance with his strategy. Normally, tiles of the same suit are arranged in numerical sequence for easy reference. Each player then eliminates 3 tiles considered less useful, leaving him with only 13 tiles. The three eliminated tiles are placed face downward in front of each player. After every player has done this, these tiles should then be exposed. These discarded tiles will no longer be used in the game.

V. PLAY



Basic action:

The action always begins with the player who sits at the left of the dealer, and continues clockwise. With each turn and at the beginning, the player obtains a new tile and discards an undesirable tile.

The tiles left over from the setup phase serve as stock pile. They are used clockwise.

Acquiring tiles: There are two possible ways to acquire a new tile. The player either draws the next tile from the stock pile or claims a tile just discarded by the previous player.

An immediate dropped tile can be picked up by any player to Zappo. Without going out, a discarded tile may be claimed to form an exposed set on two conditions: (1) the tile must have been discarded in the immediately previous play, and (2) the tile must result in the immediate formation of a set. The newly-formed set must then be exposed in front of you. This exposed set can no longer be rearranged during the course of the game. The additional conditions for forming sets with discards are as follows:

(a) **Flush:** Although a discard may be picked up to form a flush set only if it was discarded by the right hand neighbor. There is an exception to this rule. A new discard may be claimed from any player to form a flush set in order to Zappo.

(b) **Triplet:** In order to form a triplet, it is acceptable to obtain a discarded tile from **any** player, regardless of seating location. A player planning to claim a discard to make the triplet, he should shout out **Zap** loudly and immediately,

even if it is not his otherwise normal turn. In this unusual case the play does not necessarily go clockwise, and the player(s) in between may lose a turn. Afterwards, play continues clockwise.

(c) **Zappo:** If the immediately discarded tile will complete a player's hand (Zappo), it may be claimed from any player, regardless of his seating location. This is only time that a tile can be picked up to form a twin.

(d) **Competition:** If two players compete simultaneously for the same discard, the order of priority is Zappo > triplet > flush. The player who uses a discard to form a triplet has priority over the one forming a flush, but a player who Zappos has the highest priority. He may obtain a discard to form a flush to Zappo even if someone else needs the same discard to form a triplet.

If two players need the same discarded tile in order to Zappo, the player whose turn would come up earlier wins. In this case triplets do not take precedence over flushes. This principle also applies to the rare occasion when two players have **all natural**. (See scoring section VI on the next page for an explanation of **all natural**).

Discarding tiles: After drawing a tile either from the stock pile or from a discard, if a player does not Zappo, he discards one tile that he deems least useful.

The discard must be exposed and placed in chronological order next to the player's previously discarded tiles in front of him so that other players can examine them easily.

End of game: If a player Zappos to end the game, the person at the clockwise side of the dealer will become new dealer in the next game.

If no player has called Zappo and the stock pile has only 12 tiles remaining, the dealer should declare the game a tie and start a new one.

Congratulations!



Now you know the basic skills for enjoying Magic Dragon™. You may want to play a few games before reading the Book II. The scoring system in the book II is somewhat elaborate, but it contributes greatly to the enjoyment of the game. It is recommended that each loser pays one dollar to the winner.

BOOK II — ADVANCED VERSIONS

VI. SCORING

If one player Zappos and the game ends, the losers pay the winner according to the following formula:

Payment in dollars = Winner's points x Loser's penalty points

Each loser is assessed a penalty point or points for each tile that needs to be obtained or exchanged in order to have a complete hand. (See section VII for examples.) Remember: since all losers have only 13 tiles, they need to obtain at least one more tile to get a complete hand. In addition, a loser may need to exchange tiles to achieve a complete hand. The loser who supplies the last tile for the winner to Zappo will have his penalty point(s) doubled.

The winner scores points according to the winning units in his complete hand. He may choose only one unit from each of the following groups and his total is the sum of points from all groups.

Points	Units	A Group (Complete hand group)
1	Zappo	A complete hand.
9	All natural	A complete hand drawn during Setup before play even begins. In a basic version game, you immediately Zappo by discarding only 2 instead of 3 tiles after the setup phase.
B Group (Discard usage group)		
3	Self touch	A hand completed by drawing the last tile from the stock pile.
2	Clean lobby	The last tile for Zappo drawn from a discard, but no exposed sets. In other words, you complete the hand without using discards except for the last tile.
5	No beggars	A complete hand achieved without using any discards. There are no exposed sets when Zappo.
4	Lonely twin	A hand completed with all sets exposed and last tile drawn from the stock pile to form a twin (opposite of <u>Clean lobby</u>).
7	All beggars	All sets and the twin formed by using discards. This differs from <u>Lonely twin</u> when a discard is used to form the twin, and it is the opposite of <u>No beggars</u> .

2 All flushes
5 All triplets

1 Missing tooth
3 Missing teeth
5 Four seasons

One suit of tiles missing.
Two suits of tiles missing.
Four sets in different suits. (A twin is not a set.) For missing tooth and teeth, a twin is considered. For four seasons, a twin is excluded.
All 14 tiles in the same suit.

3 No head or tail
8 Head and tail
9 Magic dragon

All sets and the twin containing either 1 or 9. A flush set needs only a one or nine among 3 tiles.

F Group (Similar sets group)

1 Mixed twin towers

3 Pure twin towers

Two sets identical in number and suit.

6 Double twin towers

4 Mixed tri-towers

8 Pure tri-towers

Three identical sets.

9 Mixed quad-towers

25 Pure quad-towers

Four identical sets.

-8-

TABLE I: WINNING UNITS

GROUP	PTS	UNITS	PTS	UNITS
A	1	zappo	9	all natural
B	3	self touch	5 7	no beggars all beggars
	2	clean lobby		
	4	lonely twin		
C	2	all flushes	5	all triplets
D	1	missing tooth	5	four seasons
	3	missing teeth	8	pure color
E	3	no head or tail	8	head and tail
			9	magic dragon
F	1	mixed twin towers	6	double twin towers
	3	pure twin towers	8	pure tri-towers
	4	mixed tri-towers	9	mixed quad-towers
			25	pure quad-towers

VII. EXAMPLES

For easy reference in the following examples: C = Circle, S = Stick, D = Dragon, and P = Picture.

(1) **Definition of a set:** A set must be composed of three tiles of the same suit.
 (1C, 2C, and 3C) is a flush set. (1C, 2C, and 3S) is not a flush set.
 (1C, 1C, and 1C) is a triplet set. (1C, 1S, and 1D) is not a triplet set since the tiles differ in suit.
 (1C, 2C, 3C, 4C) is not a set as four tiles do not constitute a set.

(2) **Yin-Yang numbers:** If the sum of the fingers stuck out for the first Yin-Yang number is 11 and for the second it is 6, the person across from the dealer in a four person game is the starting side and the sixth column from the far right end of this side is the starting column. See Figure two on page 4.

(3) **Examples of winning points for winner:**

Points from group B or from **all natural** of group A are not included in these examples, as we cannot tell whether or not tiles were obtained from discards or the stockpile.

A (1C, 2C, 3C) (1C, 2C, 3C) (3S, 4S, 5S) (3D, 3D, 3D) (4P, 4P)
 The winner obtains a total of 4 points: 1 point for Zappo and 3 points for pure twin towers.

(1) **Special dealer rule:** The dealer's points are counted double. He wins and loses at two times the rate of other players. If the dealer wins or a game is tied, he retains the dealership.

(2) **Progressive system:** The number of tiles taken during the initial setup phase has a very strong effect on the complexity of the game. It is a good idea to experiment with different versions in Table II on page 12 a few times to determine your preference.

(a) If every player is a novice, try to play version A in which the scoring system is abolished. Whoever goes out first wins the game by one point. This basic version which is described in book I is appropriate for children.

(b) Intermediate players may enjoy a game with fewer units allowed. They can play a version B game suspending any units worth more than 4 points. Only the units in the left side of Table I are allowed. The version C is recommended for regular play.

(c) Version G is for experienced players. In this version, a player has to have a minimum of three points to Zappo. This would encourage players to arrange more difficult units and make the game more interesting. However, this tends to prolong the game.

(d) If the number of tiles taken during the setup phase is less than 16 (15 or 14 or 13) as in versions D to G, it will take longer to Zappo. This will give players an opportunity to collect more complicated combinations. To start with less than 16 tiles, players simply draw 1, 2, or 3 tiles instead of 4 on their last round of draw in the setup phase. The players then discard enough tiles to have 13 tiles remaining.

(3) **Number of games to play:** The number of games to be played should be agreed upon before starting. If players agree to finish after each person has served as a dealer four times, it is said that 4 **cycles** of games will be played. (If the dealer retains the dealership due to a tie game or dealer's winning, it still counts as one game.)

The following **ULTIMATE CYCLES** which usually last for 2-3 hours are ideal for advanced players. The first cycle of version C is followed by one cycle of version D and then by one cycle of version E. The finale is one cycle of version F. In this arrangement, the number of tiles taken initially in the setup phase is gradually decreased from 16 to 13. The players slowly warm up to the more difficult version F which gives every loser an ample opportunity to recover previous losses.

TABLE II: RECOMMENDED VERSIONS

Version	Experience*	Setup**	Scoring
A Basic	0 (novice)	16-3	Zappo only
B	1-10	16-3	left side of Table I
C	10-30	16-3	all units in Table I
D	20-60	15-2	all units in Table I
E	30-99	14-1	all units in Table I
F	50+	13-0	all units in Table I
G	50+	13-0	can not zappo with less than 3 points

Note: * Experience means the number of games that you have played.

** The first number in the Setup column refers to the number of tiles that each player draws at the beginning of the game, and the second number refers to the number of dead tiles that each player discards before the game begins.

Only a few possible versions are shown in this table for reference. You are not limited to the arrangements in this table; you may rearrange the above variables to create your own versions.

IX. NON-FOUR PLAYER GAME

(1) **Setup phase:** The number of tiles in the stock pile in front of each player during the setup phase varies with the number of players. The following numbers are provided for your reference: two players (36 columns, each column contains 2 tiles, one up and one down), three players (24 columns), four players (18 columns), five players (14 columns with the dealer having 2 extra columns), six players (12 columns).

(2) **Special version for three player game:** To make games faster, remove one suit of tiles. There should be 18 columns (a total of 36 tiles) in front of each player during the setup phase.

(3) **More than 6 persons:** Each player can play with 10 instead of 13 tiles. In this case, only three sets and a twin are required to Zappo.

X. STRATEGY

The more you play this fascinating game, the more fun you will discover. You need **both** luck and strategy to win. Judicious use of the following fundamentals of strategy will make you a consistent winner.

(1) Try to Zappo as early as possible. Do not be too greedy and try to score a high point total. The longer you wait to build high point units, the greater the chance you have of losing to someone with a simpler Zappo hand.

(2) Attempt to get high point units only when an opportunity presents itself.

(3) Watch for consistency in what the player on your right discards. You can try to build units of tiles that he is likely to throw away, thereby increasing your chances of completing your hand. At the same time, watch what the player on your left discards. You can tell, to some extent, what he is collecting, and can attempt to avoid "feeding" him tiles.

(4) Consider the odds for completing a set. For example, if you have 2C and 3C and need either 1C or 4C to form a flush set, you have a total of eight chances (four of 1C and four of 4C). If you have 1C and 2C and need 3C, you have only four chances. Clearly, your odds are better in the former situation.

In order to better estimate your odds, you should examine all players' discard piles and determine which tiles may not be available anymore. You should consider the suits of tiles that others might be collecting. Those possible hidden tiles will affect your chance of obtaining your desired tiles.

(5) Collect adjacent tiles to improve your odds. If you have 1C, 2C, 3C, plus 4C, you can obtain either 1C or 4C to form a twin and a flush set. If you obtain 1C, you can use it to form a twin with your 1C, and the remaining 2C, 3C, and 4C will be a flush set. Since you can acquire 4C to achieve the same goal, you have a total of 6 tiles that can help you to complete your hand. Remember, if you have a single 1C without the adjacent 2C, 3C, and 4C tiles, you have only 3 useful 1C tiles and your odds are reduced in half.

(6) Maximize your chance of winning by retaining groups of adjacent tiles. If you have 1C, 2C, 3C, 4C, 5C, 6C, 7C,

and 8C and need one more tile to form a total of three sets, you can achieve this objective by obtaining either 3C, 6C, or 9C. Therefore, there are ten different useful tiles (one of the 3C and one of the 6C tiles are already in your hand). Your chances are excellent. Remember: if you acquire 9C, you will have a **magic dragon** (9 points).

(7) The combination of adjacent tiles and a twin can be very beneficial. If you have 3C, 3C, 3C, 4C, 5C, 6C, and 7C, and need one more tile to make two sets and one twin, you are in a very good position. Any of the following tiles can help you to achieve this objective: 2C, 4C, 5C, 7C, and 8C. The final results of two sets and one twin are shown below. The newly-acquired tile is in bold print for easy reference.

(3C, 3C), (2C, 3C, 4C) and (5C, 6C, 7C)
 (3C, 3C, 3C), (4C, 4C) and (5C, 6C, 7C)
 (3C, 3C), (3C, 4C, 5C) and (5C, 6C, 7C)
 (3C, 3C, 3C), (4C, 5C, 6C) and (7C, 7C)
 (3C, 3C), (3C, 4C, 5C) and (6C, 7C, 8C)

As can be seen, there are 5 different kinds of tiles for a total of 17 possible chances.

(8) You may acquire higher points by attempting to obtain rare combinations. If you have 2C, 2C, and 3C, and you need to decide which one to discard, there are two considerations: (a) If you discard 2C, you could get 1C or 4C to form a flush, giving you 8 chances (4 for each tile), but (b) if you discard 3C, you only have two chances (only 2 more 2C left) to get another 2C. There is a greater chance to complete the flush with 1C or 4C. However, if you already have triplets in your hand, you may wish to take your chances to collect **all triplets** which would give you more points. This illustrates the delicate balance between a fast Zappo and scoring a higher winning total.

XI. ERRORS AND ETIQUETTE

(1) If, after play has begun, a player is found to have an incorrect number of tiles in his possession, he must continue to play but is not allowed to Zappo.

(2) If a player looks at the top tile of the stock pile out of turn, he must return that tile, and he will be penalized by forfeiting his next turn.

(3) The seating arrangement should be changed after 4 cycles of playing.

XII. GLOSSARY

Basic version: This version of the game is recommended for beginners. It is described in detail in Book I.

Column: A column is consistent of 2 tiles, 1 up and 1 down, which are placed in front of each player face downward during the setup phase.

Complete hand: A complete hand consists of four sets and a twin.

Cycle: A term used to describe the number of turns as dealer for each player. Each player serves as a dealer once in one cycle of a game.

Exposed set: A set of tiles formed using a discard tile. This set is exposed and fixed during the course of the game.

Flush: A set consisting of three sequential tiles of the same suit.

Set: A set of tiles consists of three tiles of identical suit. It can be a flush or triplet.

Starting column: The column that is to be drawn first by the player who sits at the left hand side of the dealer during the setup phase.

Stock pile: The community tiles which are undealt during the setup phase. These tiles are to be used during the course of the game.

Triplet: A set consisting of three identical tiles.

Twin: Two identical tiles. It is a part of the requirement for a complete hand, but it is not a set.

Unit: Winning units are listed in Table I. In general, the reward for each unit is related to the degree of difficulty in making it.

Yin-Yang numbers: The numbers used to identify the starting side and starting column during the setup phase of the game.

Zap: The term used to announce the intention of acquiring a discard to form a triplet set.

Zappo: The term used to announce that you have a complete hand.

USING THIS GAME FOR GAMBLING IS PROHIBITED.
