



Learn the lingo of
MAHJONG

This short little guide will introduce you to the lingo of mahjong: the words you'll hear over and over as you learn about the tiles and the card. Familiarize yourself with these and learning the game will be a breeze!

**Let me help you get your
mahj-on!**



Mahjong
Melanie

Craks

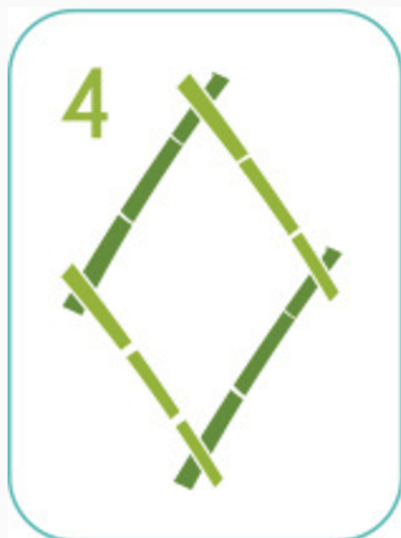
(Short for Characters)



One of the 3 **suits**

Bams

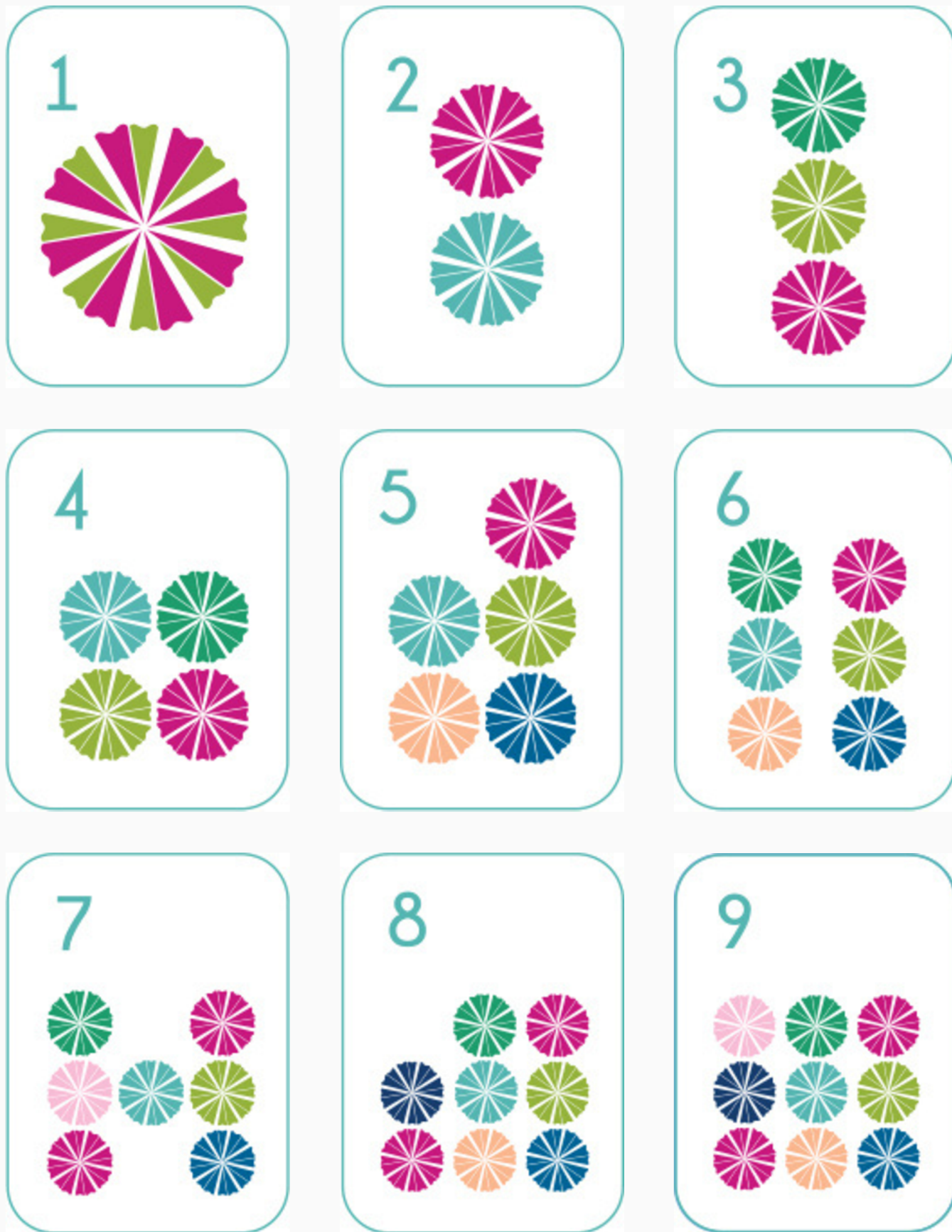
(Short for Bamboo)



One of the 3 **suits**

Dots

(Self-explanatory)



One of the 3 **suits**

Red Dragon

(matches craks)



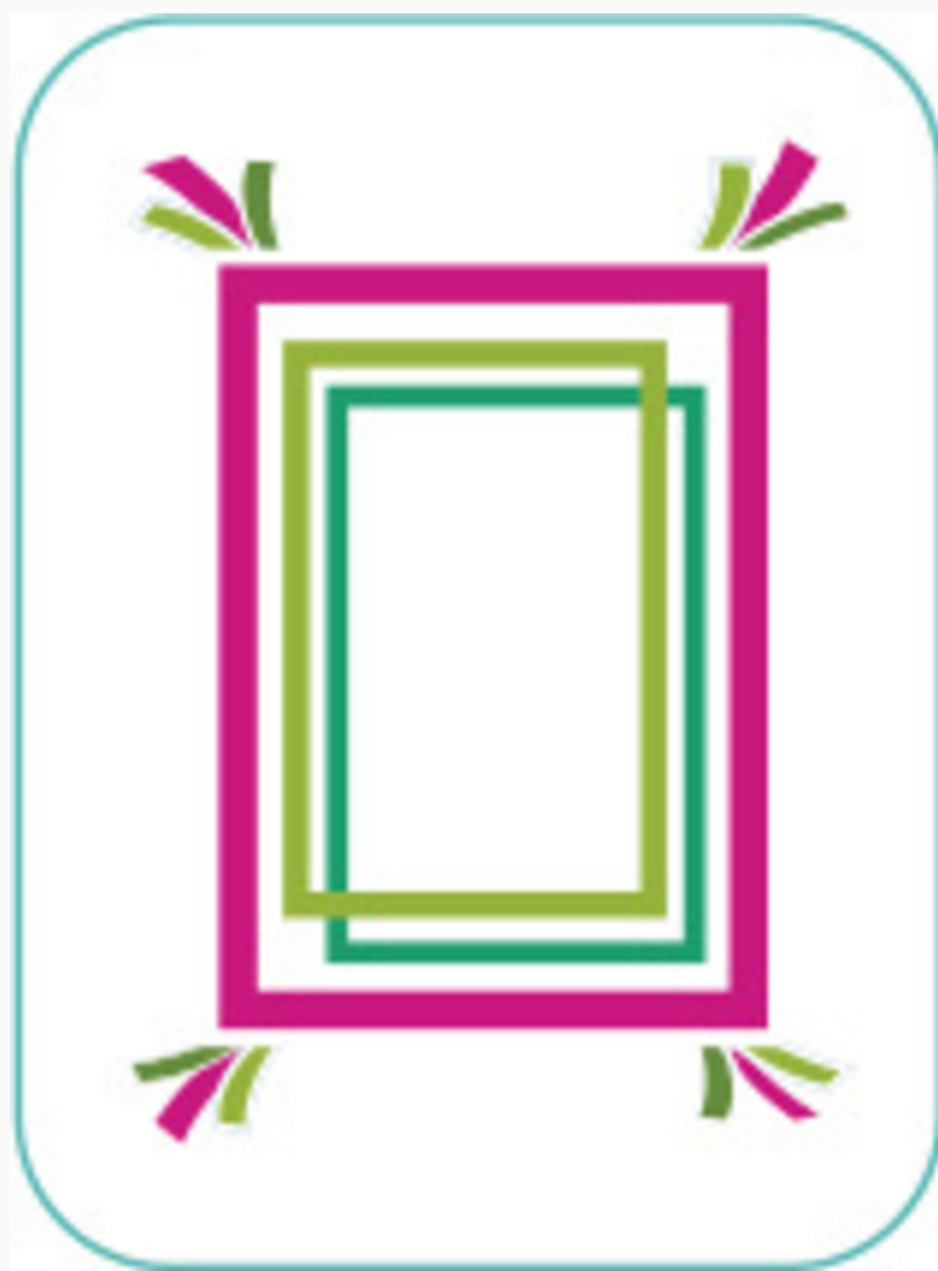
Green Dragon

(matches bams)



White Dragon

(matches dots)



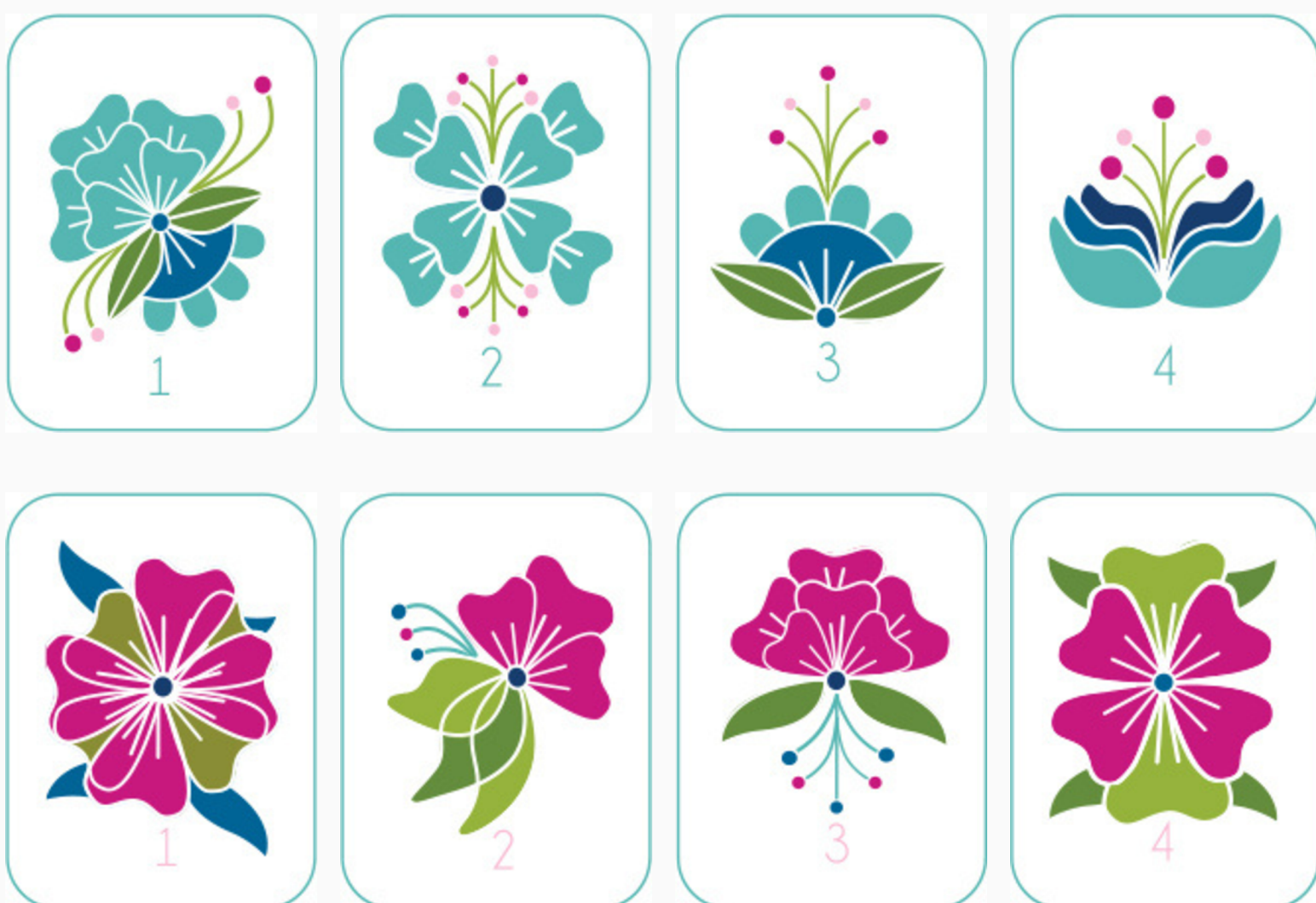
Also usually called **Soap** and the tile that you use when you need a zero.

Bird Bam



The 1 bamboo tile traditionally features a bird, which is affectionately known as the **Bird Bam**. Whenever a bird bam is discarded, feel free to toast your fellow players!

Flowers



There are 8 flower tiles in American mahjong and although each one features a different image (and some include numbers), they can all be used interchangeably.

Winds



There are four wind tiles, each one representing one of the cardinal directions. You will almost always see them ordered to spell the word **NEWS**.

Jokers



The wild card of mahjong! There are 8 jokers in the game and you generally want as many as you can get!

Blanks



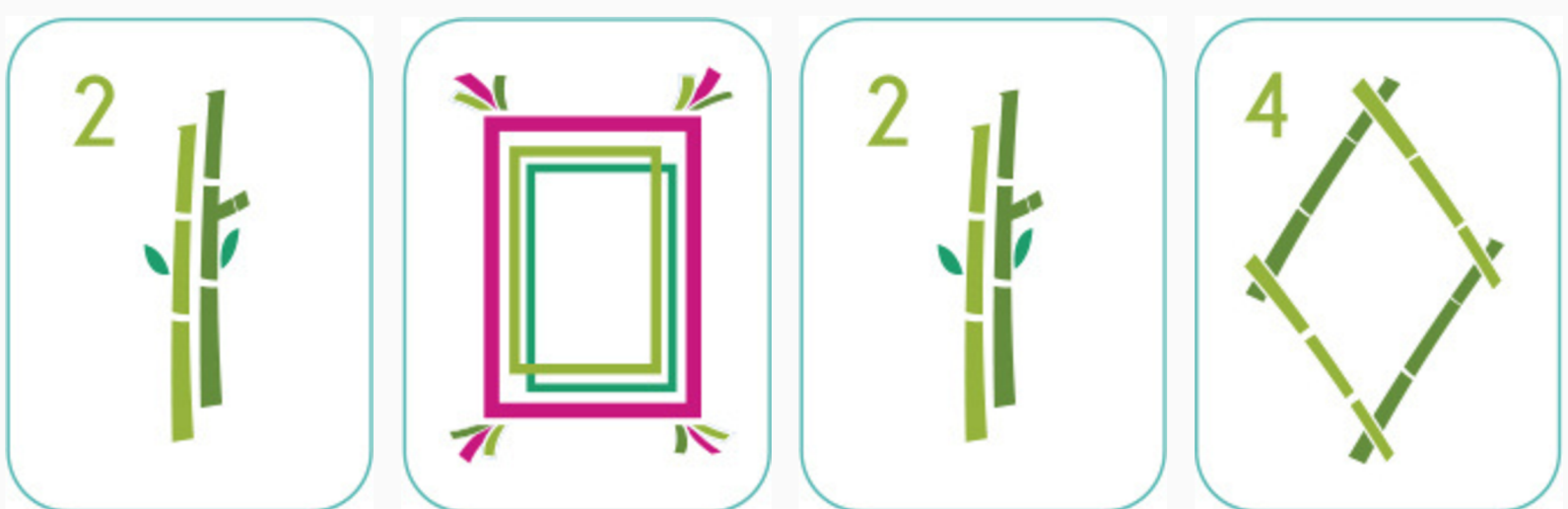
Blanks don't really have anything to do with the game of mahjong but they are included in each set. In Mahjong 101, we'll discuss their purpose and how some people have incorporated them into the game.

Single

A **single** tile that appears as part of a line



The tiles that make up “NEWS” are all considered singles, as are all the tiles that make up a grouping of the current year.



Pair

A grouping of **two** identical tiles



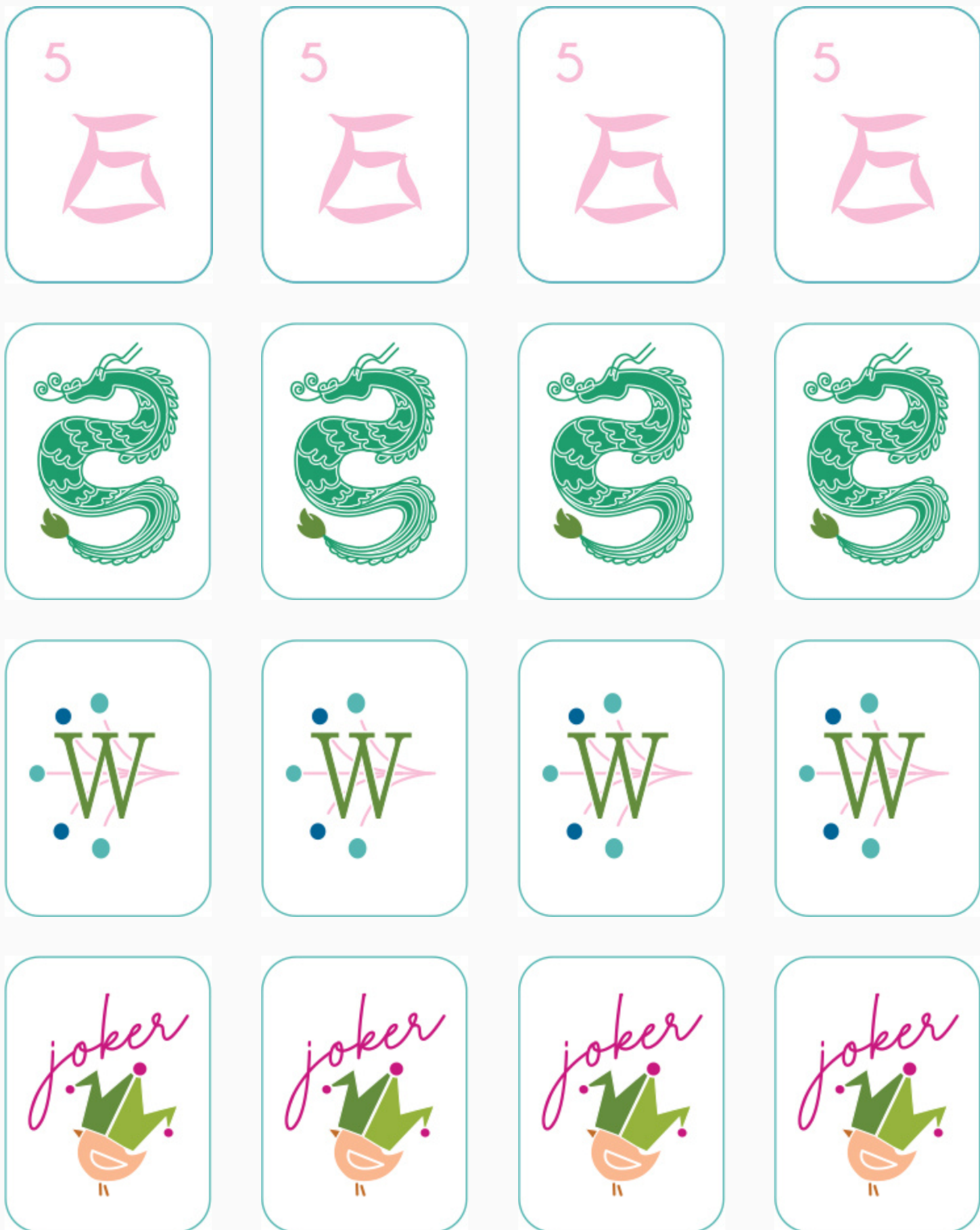
Pung

A grouping of **three** identical tiles



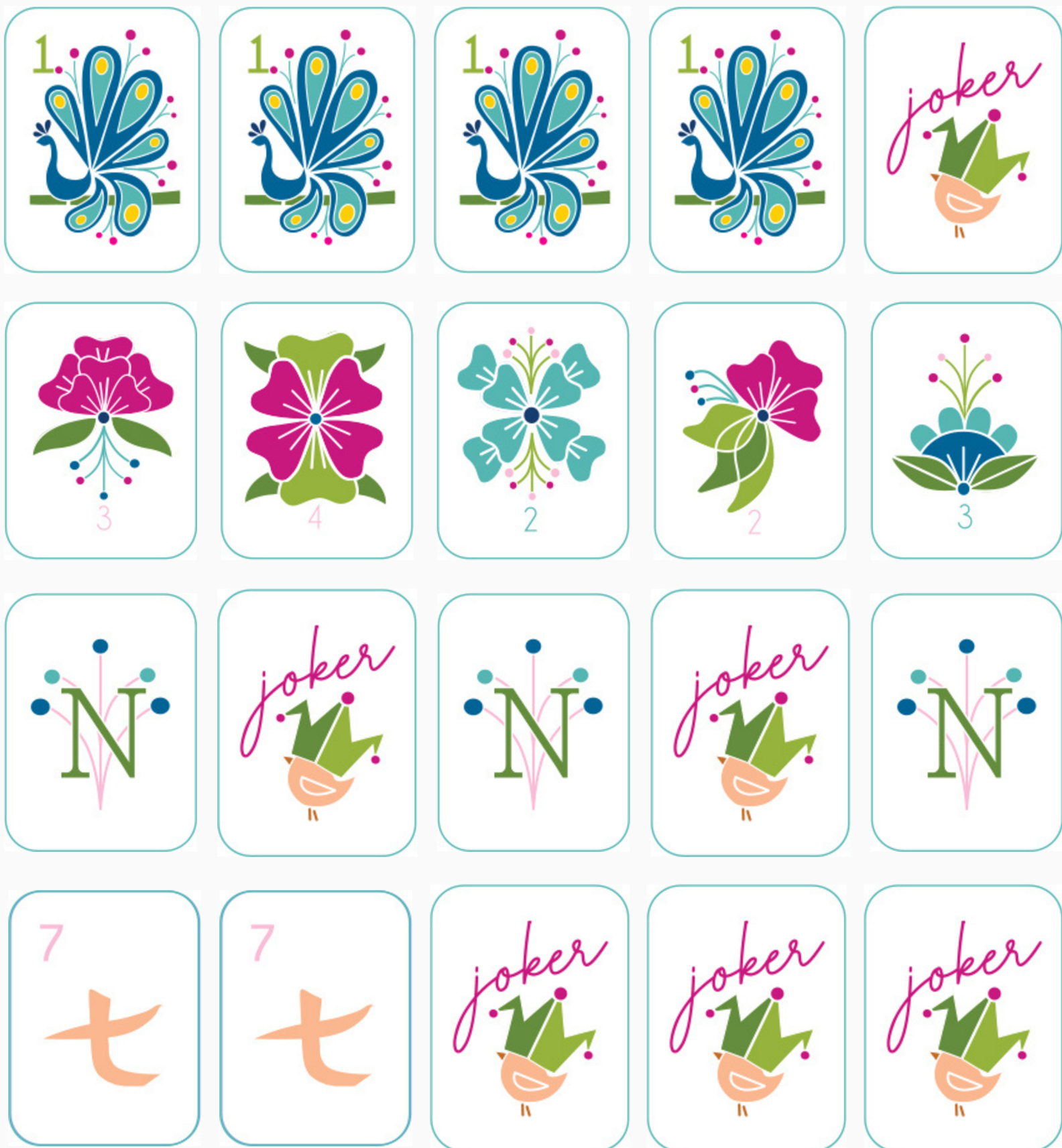
Kong

A grouping of **four** identical tiles



Quint

A grouping of **five** identical tiles



The Card

The listing of all valid mahjong hands for the current year



A new card is published every year in April. Cards for even-numbered years are red and cards for odd-numbered years are blue.

The Line

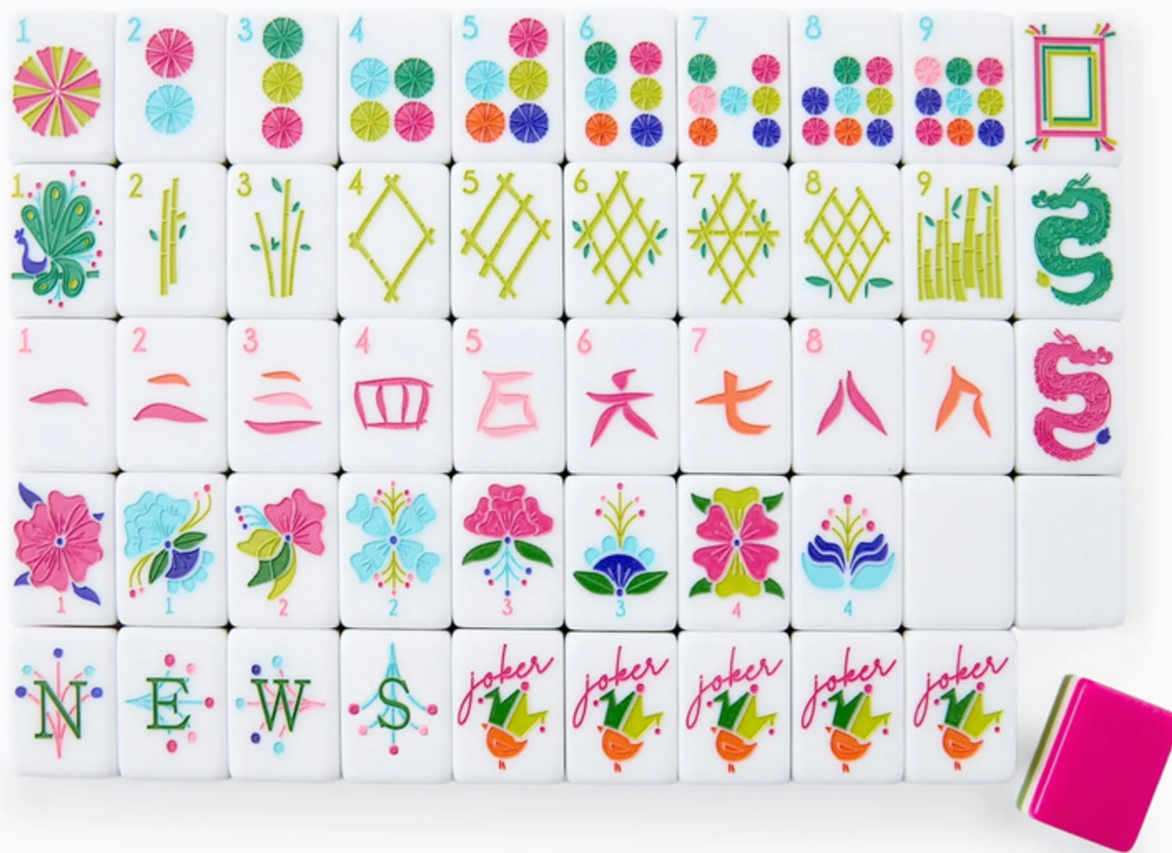
The particular set of tiles that you need to call mahjong, listed on the National Mahjong League Card. This can also be called a hand. Line is used because there are lines of hands listed on the card, and you will choose one to focus on as you draw and discard. This is what lines look like*:

FF 2222 44 66 8888
11 DD 111 DDD 111
NNNN EEE WWW SSSS

Understanding the card is the hardest part of American mahjong--but even this isn't difficult compared to many other games! I will tell you exactly what these numbers and letters mean in class, but this is what we mean when we talk about "lines."

*Sample lines are from I Love Mahj's free downloadable practice card!
Get your copy at ilovemahj.com.

That's it!



If this has piqued your curiosity to learn this fun game, give me a call and let's schedule a teaching session for you and your friends!

MAHJONG MELANIE

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Tiles in this guide are from Oh My Mahjong's Dandy set,
available at ohmymahjong.com.