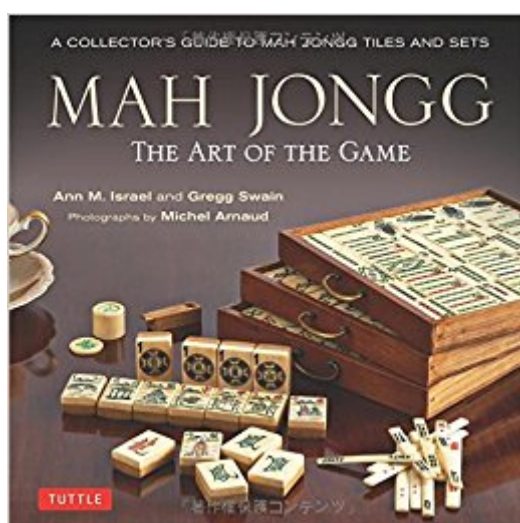


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# Mah Jongg: The Art Of The Game: A Collector's Guide To Mah Jongg Tiles And Sets



## Synopsis

"I thoroughly enjoyed this book. Whether used as a reference or a beautiful keepsake, it's a very worthy addition to the world of Mah Jongg." —Ruth Unger, President, National Mah Jongg League

This is the first book to fully capture the story of the exotic and exciting game of Mahjong or "Mah Jongg", offering an intimate look at the history of the game as well as the visual beauty of the tiles. When authors Ann Israel and Gregg Swain began playing Mahjong, they were unaware of the vintage collections that existed not only in the United States but also across the globe. Slowly, they started to collect their own sets of Mahjong and as their collections grew, so did their appreciation of the history of, and interest in, the game. Finding few references, Israel and Swain set out to create a book that chronicles the early beginnings of the game and documents Mahjong sets from the most basic, made simply of paper, to the most precious materials such as ivory and mother-of-pearl. Recognized and respected scholars and game experts have collaborated with Israel and Swain, contributing important chapters on the game's history and its pieces as well as technical information on the tiles. Lastly, great collectors from around the globe have shared their incredible sets and memories for the first time in one book for everyone to enjoy. With hundreds of beautiful new images by renowned photographer Michel Arnaud, and including historical documentation and ephemera, *Mah Jongg: The Art of the Game* fills the void between the past's and today's game, providing vision, inspiration and resources. Anyone who has ever been intrigued by a Mahjong tile will find in these pages visually stunning photographs that will entice them into becoming an enthusiast of the timeless game of Mahjong.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"[[Mah Jongg: The Art of the Game](#)], an elegant new coffee table book written and photographed by three people with Columbia County connections. For many players, there's a social ritual to the whole game experience. For the authors and photographer of the book, however, it's so much more. It's about the art of the Mah Jongg tiles and sets: their histories, their design, the materials used, the varied symbols and scenes depicted on the tiles." [Rural Intelligence](#)"Offering an intimate look at the history of the game as well as the visual beauty of the mah jongg tiles, this book chronicles sets from the most basic, made simply of paper, to the most precious material such as ivory and mother-of-pearl. Recognized and respectable scholars and game experts contribute important chapters on the game's history and its pieces as well as technical information on the tiles. Lastly, great collectors from around the globe have shared their incredible sets and memories for the first time in one book for everyone to enjoy. The perfect gift for the mah jongg maven in your life." [Southern Jewish Life Magazine](#)"Mah Jongg: The Art of the Game [[Mah Jongg: The Art of the Game](#)] delves into [[Mah Jongg: The Art of the Game](#)] cast-stone tiles and ambitious manufacturers' experiments with plastics and composites like Pyralin and Ebonite." [New York Times](#)"I thoroughly enjoyed this book. Whether used as a reference or a beautiful keepsake, it's a very worthy addition to the world of Mah Jongg." [Ruth Unger, President, National Mah Jongg League](#)"This handsome book is the first to give a history of the tiles used in the game of Mah Jongg. The concept of the game and the symbols on the tiles are explained, and then the wide variety of materials used in making the tiles is discussed and illustrated. Presented in brilliant color and beautifully designed, Mah Jongg: The Art of the Game would be a welcome addition to the bookshelf or coffee table of any art lover. For Mah Jongg players, it's a must!" [Elizabeth Stillinger, author of The Antiquers and A Kind of Archeology: Collecting American Folk Art 1876-1976](#)"What a great book [[Mah Jongg: The Art of the Game](#)] The many international manufacturers, the culture craze, and variations in decorative elements have all been pulled together by Ann Israel and Gregg Swain in a very readable and incredibly well-researched book, that not only is chock-full of useful information but laden with wonderful illustrations. Next time a set comes across my desk, I'll not only know more about it, but can refer the owner to the definitive source for all Mah Jongg set knowledge." [Lark Mason, Lark Mason Associates, Antiques Roadshow](#)"From Tuttle Publishing comes this absolutely gorgeous book Mah Jongg: The Art of the Game, by Ann M. Israel and Gregg Swain, with photographs by Michel Arnaud, packed with 192 pages of beautiful illustrations showcasing the

occidental experience of Mah Jongg [Ã¢â¬Å] Using a mix of historical black and white with contemporary full color exhibitions, the authors unravel through their pages Mah Jongg's history, lore, art, beauty and fantasy into one of the most extensive displays of Western Mah Jongg art and accessories as one will probably ever see." Ã¢â¬ÅMahjong News"A book about the game of Mah Jongg sounds extremely individualized, but might serve to the broader interests of those with a passion for art history." Ã¢â¬ÅBennington Banner

Ann Israel grew up in Detroit and now lives in New York City. She has been writing Advice for the Lawlorn, a weekly syndicated column for attorneys, published by American Law Media since 1994. Gregg Swain grew up, and continues to live, in New York City, where she developed her love and knowledge of art. She loves Mah Jongg because it allows her to socialize with wonderful friends while playing with beautiful tiles.

This fabulous book, the first of its kind, is a richly illustrated, informative and treasured resource in my library. It enabled me to identify and learn fascinating details about one of my sets from a photo that matched it exactly. As a Mah Jongg player and art history enthusiast, I was in awe of the beauty, depth and breadth of the information revealed within. This marvelous book will continue to both inspire and capture the attention of Mah Jongg players and collectors alike as word of its existence sweeps the globe! Giving new meaning to the term "Eye Candy" it is difficult to put down once started, so give in to the temptation and read it all at once!

I remember the sound of the clacking tiles being mixed and the bams, cracks and dots being called as they were discarded from when I was growing up. Whether you're a player like me or just fascinated by the designs of the tiles, this book is for you. The authors dispel many of the myths that have surrounded the game - no it doesn't date from the time of Confucius; yes it was based on a Chinese card game. But besides tracing the origins of the game and explaining its roots and its history, the book illustrates with sumptuous photographs some of the most beautiful sets I've ever seen. What a great gift to yourself or any Mah Jongg player you know.

This book is absolutely beautiful! If you are interested in a gorgeous book with fabulous photographs that tell the story, culture and history of the game of mah jongg and the tiles, this is the book for you. What a great gift for your mah jongg friends. I absolutely love mine.

This book is truly a visual feast for mah jongg enthusiasts and for those interested in learning about the origins of the game. It explores in depth the artistry of the tiles and the history of the Asian influences on the symbols and characters and also has chapters on unusual materials and the very popular Bakelite plastic that was used in so many of the vintage sets we see today. With heavy glossy pages and lots of informative chapters and wonderful pictures, this book just can't be beat!

Interesting read; great pictures.

A feast for the soul of the mah jong player. Beautifully illustrated, this book is a must have for all mah jong players. It is a one of a kind reference book. After receiving mine, I ordered 3 more copies for the rest of my group. Kudos to Ann Israel, Gregg Swain, and Michel Arnaud.

Very enjoyable. Learnt interesting information about the game. Beautiful photographs. The mah jong set I learned to play on is mentioned in this book and is a Chinese bakelite set in a beautiful caramel colour with chamfered edges; lovely to see it again. Keep up the good work.

Beautiful photos and narrative about Mah Jongg.

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