

CEM Rummikub Competition 2026 (School Group)

Guidelines for Participants

Category:	“School Group” (Students from Primary 1 to Form 6)
Participating teams:	Each school may field a maximum of 2 teams, which must be led by a teacher. The total number of competing teams is limited to 40. In the event that registrations exceed this limit, participating teams will be selected via a draw, with the first team listed on the registration form being given priority.
No. of team members:	4 students per team
Competition date:	25/10/2026 (Sunday)
Competition venue:	Macau Fisherman’s Wharf Convention and Exhibition Centre, Hall 3
Check-in Time:	08:30, students must present their name student card or identity card to collect their name sticker and check their assigned competition table
Briefing on competition rules:	09:00 – 09:15, 25/10/2026 (Sunday)
Competition time:	09:30 – 11:30
Award presentation:	11:45, 25/10/2026 (Sunday)
Competition form:	Preliminary, semi-final and final rounds
Supervision:	Each table will be monitored, timed and scored by a judge
Enquiry:	Tel: 8393 1204 (Ms. Cheong); Email: trista.cheong@cem-macau.com
Language:	Cantonese. Non-Cantonese-speaking participants may arrange for interpreter

Remarks:

1. Players must arrive at the competition venue on time. Late arrivals will not be admitted. Any player who **fail to arrive before the briefing begins** will be deemed **absent and to have withdrawn from the competition**.
2. To avoid disruption to the competition, the competition area will be cleared before the start of each round. Players who have completed their matches are not permitted to remain in the competition area to watch other matches or cheer for other players. They may only stay in the designated free zone. During the competition, players must not make excessive noise or interfere with other participants in any way.
3. Any player found cheating will be disqualified.
4. In terms of dress code, participants are recommended to wear their school sports uniform or team uniform for easy identification.
5. If Typhoon Signal No. 8 or above or a Black Rainstorm Warning Signal is in force on the competition day, the competition will be cancelled and rescheduled, with details to be announced separately.

Competition Mechanism

Preliminary Round

Participants will be assigned to groups by random draw prior to the competition, with 4 players per group. Players numbered 1-4 will compete in Group 1; Players numbered 5-8 in Group 2, and so on. In the Preliminary Round, a time limit of **60 seconds will apply per player, per turn.**

A total of 3 games will be played. At the end of each game, the judge at each table will record the score of each player.

After all 3 games have been completed, the judges will immediately tally the players' total scores to determine the winner at each table. A total of 40 players will advance to semi-finals, with rankings determined first by **the number of games won** and then by the **total scores**.

Semi-finals

The qualifying players will be divided into 10 groups of 4 players each. Players advancing from Tables 1-4 in the Preliminary Round will compete at Table 1, while players advancing from Tables 5-8 will compete at Table 2, and so on. Please refer to the table below for details. In the semi-finals, a time limit of **40 seconds will apply per player, per turn.**

Shortlisted players' table no. in the Preliminary Round	1-4	5-8	9-12	13-16	17-20	21-24	25-28	29-32	33-36	37-40
Table no. for Semi-finals	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

A total of 3 games will be played. At the end of each game, the judge at each table will record the score for each player. After all 3 games have been completed, the Organizer will immediately calculate the results. The top 4 players will advance to the finals. Rankings will be determined first by **the number of games won** and then by the **total scores**.

Finals

Players will compete in 3 games. The Organizer will immediately calculate the results to determine the winners. In the finals, a time limit of **40 seconds will apply per player, per turn.**

Competition Rules

1. At the start of each game, players shall, under the judge's supervision, shuffle and draw tiles by themselves to ensure fairness.
2. At the start of the first game of each match, players shall draw a number tile to determine the playing order. The player who draw the highest-numbered tile will play first. The judge will enter each player's information into the timer.
3. Once the playing order has been determined, players may reshuffle the tiles and arrange them into stacks of seven. Under the judge's instructions, each player shall take two stacks (14 tiles in total) in turns. Players may only begin arranging their tiles upon the judge's signal. The remaining tiles will form the pool for use during the game. Play begins with the starting player and proceeds clockwise.
4. After arranging their tiles, players who find that they hold three pairs of tiles of the same color and number may request the judge's permission to reshuffle and restart the game.
5. In the Preliminary Round and Semi-finals, if two or more players have the same number of games won and identical scores, rankings will be determined by the number of tiles remaining on their racks. The fewer the remaining tiles, the better the result / the higher the ranking.
6. The Preliminary Round and Semi-finals consist of 3 games, with a 60-minute time limit for the entire session. If the time limit is reached before a game is completed, any unfinished game will be ended, and face value of the tiles remaining on each player's rack will be counted. The player with the lowest score will be declared the winner of this unfinished game. If there is a tie in the score, the number of tiles remaining on the rack will be counted, the player with fewer number of tiles will be the winner of this unfinished game.
7. In the event of a tie in the finals, players with the same scores will play one additional game to determine the winning order.
8. When the last tile in the pool is drawn by a player, all participants are permitted one final turn in sequence, after which the round concludes.
9. The player can request to take another tile from the pool if his/her tile is placed face up by another player by mistake, and the face-up tile will be put back to the pool.
10. The edition used in the competition is Rummikub Original. Players shall play according to the rules of the game.
11. Timekeeping:
 - a. The "Rummikub Score Timer" app will be used for timekeeping.
 - b. Players will have 60 seconds to play and take tiles per turn in the Preliminary Round, and 40 seconds in the semi-finals and finals. The judge will keep the time for each player. The app will provide an audible alert at the start, at 15-second and 5-second countdowns.
 - c. For fair play, once a player has completed their play and drawn a tile, or intended to end their turn earlier, they must clearly announce "Finish", before the next player may begin their turn and count down.

- d. If 60- or 40-seconds time limit runs out before a player can complete a manipulation, all tiles should be returned to their original positions and 1 penalty tile will be taken from the pool. Other players may assist in restoring the tiles to their original positions. If the tile sets cannot be fully restored, the player of this turn must take these unrestored tiles back to his/her rack in addition to drawing the 1 penalty tile.
- e. Each game ends when a player empties his/her rack and calls out “Rummikub”.
- f. The competition will be conducted in accordance with the aforementioned rules. In the event of any dispute, the Organizer reserves the right of final decision.

12. Scoring:

- a. A player will be declared the winner when he/she is the first to clear all tiles from the rack. The losing players add up the total value of the tiles remaining on their racks, which is recorded as negative score. The winner of the round receives a positive (plus) score equal to the sum of all the losers’ negative points.
 - b. At the end of the competition, the players’ rankings will be determined by the number of games won. In the event of a tie in the number of wins, the winner will be determined by the total score, and the player with the highest score wins.
 - c. At the end of a game, any joker remaining on a player’s rack will carry a penalty value of negative 30 points.
 - d. At the end of a game, if the tiles held by a player do not have enough point to perform an initial play, the total value of their entire rack will be recorded as negative 100 points.
 - e. At the end of a game, if a player has tiles with enough points to make an initial play but fails to do so, the total value of their entire rack will be recorded as negative 200 points.
 - f. If a player deliberately pushes down their rack after a game ends, making it impossible for the judge to accurately record the scores, that player will be penalized with negative 200 points.
 - g. In the rare case that all the tiles in the pool are drawn before any players calls out “Rummikub”, the combined value of the number of tiles remaining on each player’s rack will be used for scoring. The player with the lowest negative score wins that round. If there is a tie in negative scores, the total number of remaining tiles on the rack will be used as the tiebreaker; the player with the fewest tiles wins.
13. Players must raise their hand to get permission from the judge if they need to use the restroom. They will be accompanied by a staff, and the game at the table will be suspended. All players must cover their tiles with black paper to ensure fairness. The game will resume once the player returns from the restroom.
14. If players have any enquiries about the game, they must raise their hand to get permission from the judge before asking.
15. If any player fails to comply with the game rules or deliberately exhibits negative/passive behavior, the judge will issue up to two verbal warnings. In case of a third violation, the judge will first consult the Chief Referee to investigate the matter and determine whether to disqualify the player from that particular game or from the entire competition.

16. All players must complete all scheduled games, otherwise they will be deemed to have forfeited the competition.
17. When the game is over, all players must remain seated quietly. They may only leave the competition venue in an orderly manner upon receiving instructions from the staff after the judge has recorded the scores.
18. The Organizer reserves the right to publicly release the competition results, video recordings and photographs of the competition.
19. No appeals will be accepted. The Chief Referee's decision on the competition results shall be final.
20. The Organizer reserves the right to amend these guidelines in the future.