

AMBER

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Art: Ewa Kotowska

INTRODUCTION AND GOAL OF THE GAME

The kingdom has taken over a coastal region and given the land to new barons. They quickly realized that the true wealth of this new region is amber, for which caravans come from the farthest corners of the world. Peasants from nearby villages collect amber, which is bought by merchants from distant lands. The barons know that the one who profits the most from the amber trade will become the most powerful ruler of the new lands.

Players take the role of the barons. Their goal is to build trade routes which connect their castles to villages where the amber is collected and to the other barons' castles where it is traded. To this end, players build roads through wilderness, which will allow their buyers to reach the sources of the amber. Since all buyers can use the roads, it is important to have suitable connections with the road networks built by others. The baron whose castle is connected to the greatest number of villages and castles will become the richest and most respected Lord of the new land.



BOX CONTENTS

Board • 8 wooden villages • 14 gold coins • 92 road construction tiles including: 82 roads, 4 wetlands and 6 shovels • 6 special shovel tiles
6 castle tiles • Game instructions



4. road construction tiles



2. wooden villages



3. gold coins

1. board



5. special shovel tiles



6. castle tiles





THE BASIC GAME

PREPARING TO PLAY

Before the first game, gently punch out the tiles and tokens.

- Put the 6 special shovel tiles away in the box [5]; they are used only in the advanced game.
- Put the board [1] in the middle of the table. Choose a starting configuration from among the possible setups shown in the diagrams. For each number of players, there are several proposed setups for placement of castles and villages on the board. You can find the diagrams further in the rulebook.
- Place the appropriate wooden villages and castle tiles onto board locations as shown on the chosen setup diagram. Place one gold coin on each castle tile and under each wooden village.
- Shuffle all the road construction tiles and deal 6 to each player. Place the remaining tiles face down next to the board. Players should keep their tiles hidden from opponents. Assign castles to players randomly or by mutual agreement. Choose the starting player randomly or by mutual agreement. You are ready to play.



SEQUENCE OF PLAY

Starting with the first player and then going clockwise, players take their turns.

During their turn, a player must:

1. Play 1 tile from their hand to the board according to the rules described below. In certain situations (see the bridge and the roundabout below), the player will be able to place 2 tiles onto the board during their turn.
2. Draw 1 or 2 new tiles from the stack to have 6 in their hand again.

RULES FOR PLAYING ROAD CONSTRUCTION TILES

- A player can play a road construction tile (roads, wetlands, shovels) only at board locations reachable from their own castle by traveling along the road network.
- Roads and wetlands can only be played on empty locations. (*Exception: bridge and roundabout.*)
- A location is reachable if a player can travel from their castle to the location, traveling only through road tiles.
- Two adjacent road tiles must match on the edges where they touch each other: road connecting to road, or non-road touching non-road. It's not allowed for a road edge to touch a non-road edge.
- All roads are neutral and can be used by all players.
- Some roads are one-way roads. These are marked with an arrow showing in which direction a road is passable.
- Each castle tile has 4 separate road segments which are each connected only to the castle itself. I.e. a path which reaches a castle stops there and cannot be traced beyond the castle.

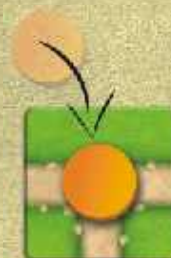
Thus in the first move, a player can place a tile only on one of the 4 locations adjacent to their castle. In later turns, a player can place tiles on locations farther from their castle (thus extending roads which start from their castle), or start a new road from another side of their castle.

Example:



Building a connection to a village:

To build a connection to a village the player must place a road tile onto the same location with the wooden village. The tile is placed directly onto the board, and the wooden village is placed onto the tile. If at the moment of connection, the player is the only player with a connection to the village, then the player collects the village's gold coin. If more than one player is connected to the village, then the gold coin is discarded. Villages do not end a road like castles do; a path may be traced through a village.



Building a connection to another player's castle:

A connection to another player's castle appears at the moment when a player acquires the possibility to travel along roads from their own castle to another player's castle. If the player is the only one connected to the castle, then the player collects the castle's gold coin. If more than one player is connected to the castle, then the gold coin is discarded. A castle's owner is not considered when counting how many players are connected to the castle, and a castle's owner can never collect their own castle's gold coin.

Example:

Red castle is connected to the blue castle

Blue castle has no connection with red castle.



The bridge and the roundabout

The bridge and the roundabout are special tiles which allow reconstruction of existing road tiles. They can only be used in a situation when a player builds a road connecting to a non-road side of a straight road section. The player can then discard the straight section and replace it with the bridge or roundabout in the same turn. The bridge or roundabout must come from the player's own hand of tiles.

Both tiles can be also be used in the standard way, simply placing them on the board according to the normal rules.



Shovels

Shovel tiles are not placed onto the board. They are played to destroy one road or wetland tile (but not a castle tile). There must be a road connection from the player's castle to the tile being destroyed. The shovel and the destroyed tile are both discarded. The resulting empty location can have another tile placed on it later, according to the usual rules.

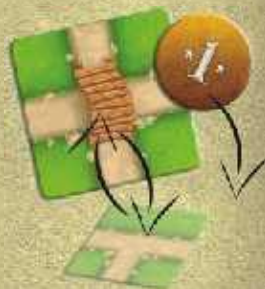


Wetlands

A wetland tile is placed like a road tile: there must be a connection from the player's castle to the desired empty location. Wetlands block connections and no road tile can be built on top of wetlands. Wetlands can be destroyed with a shovel.

INABILITY TO PLACE A TILE

If there is any possible placement, a player must place a tile. But if there is no way for a player to place any tile, then instead of placing a tile, the player must discard a gold coin (if they have any) and discard one tile from their hand and draw one new tile from the stack. The player simply states (without showing their tiles) that they have no playable tiles. If there are no more tiles available in the draw stack, then the player simply passes.



GAME END

The game ends when:

1. Exactly one player has connections from their own castle to all the villages and all the other players' castles. In this situation, this player automatically wins the game. If at the same time, more than one player has a connection to all the villages and other castles, the game continues until condition 2 (described next).
2. If no player wins by the first condition, then the game ends when the tile stack is exhausted, and all players have no more than 3 tiles in their hands. Then each player's profits from the amber trade are calculated.

Each player receives:

- 1 point for each** of their gold coins
- 1 victory point** for each village to which they are connected
- 2 victory points** for each other castle to which they are connected

The player with the most points wins. Ties are possible!



THE ADVANCE GAME

The advanced game works the same as the basic version, with the following changes:

Each player starts with a special shovel tile in the color of their own castle. The player can use it once during the entire game, instead of playing a tile from their hand.

During setup, turn as many tiles face up from the tile stack as the number of players. When drawing a tile at the end of a turn, a player can choose one of the face up tiles or the face down tile from the stack. When a face up tile is taken, immediately reveal a new one from the stack. If a player is drawing 2 tiles, then this process applies for both draws, one after the other. (I.e. if the player first takes a face up tile, a new one is revealed before the second choice.)

GAME ENDS

The game ends the same way as the basic game. Note that the special shovel tiles are not considered part of a player's hand.



DIAGRAMS OF THE INITIAL SETUPS

For 2 players



For 3 players



For 4 players



For 5 players



For 6 players





Your look is an inspiration to me ...
for my wife – Martyna



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