Dale of Merchants 3

The Grand Continental Railway

2 - 4 players • Ages 10 & up • 20 - 40 minutes







Full steam ahead! While global sea trade has brought great prosperity, landlocked nations could not partake in its gifts. But a new invention has put great changes into motion. The age of the railway is here.

The Continental Transport Corporation was founded with an ambitious goal: to build a railway network that spans all of Africa. The responsibility of negotiating the track's path and overseeing its construction rests on the shoulders of the Railway Manager, an open position to be filled.

With a handful of talented merchants, the board of directors is holding a trading competition to choose the Manager. Prospects are free to use almost any means in order to gain the upper hand over their fellow competitors.

Are you a visual learner? We have created a video tutorial which you can watch at *snowdaledesign.fi/learn/dom3* .

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Components

- 110 cards
  - 6 animalfolk decks with 15 cards in each
    - *Archiving Desert Monitors*
    - *Discontent White-headed Lemurs*
    - *Scheming Green Magpies*
    - *Sharing Short-beaked Echidnas*
    - *Superstitious Snowshoe Hares*
    - *Prepared Grizzled Tree-kangaroos*
  - 20 junk cards
- 1 market board
- 1 hare die with sides

Other games in the series



Dale of Merchants 3 is fully compatible with the entire Dale of Merchants series. You can freely mix and match the animalfolk decks between all of the games.

If you have only played the original Dale of Merchants before, make sure to check out the sections in this rulebook highlighted in green (like this one).

We never planned to create Dale of Merchants 3, but during the development of Dale of Merchants Collection, it did not take long for us to end up with a dozen new decks. It became apparent that the best course of action would be to split six of them into a separate game. Sami seems to never run out of new deck ideas! While we wait for that to happen, please enjoy these new ones.

Credits

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Special thanks to all **2850 Kickstarter backers** who helped to make this game a reality. You're superb!

Visit our homepage for the official FAQ, tournament rules, leaderboard, and more at *snowdaledesign.fi/dale-of-merchants-series*.

If you have any comments, questions, or suggestions, contact us at *info@snowdaledesign.fi*.

We also read and follow conversations over at BoardGameGeek *boardgamegeek.com/boardgame/299452/dale-merchants-3*. Feel free to post questions there and we will answer them as soon as we get a chance.

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Game overview

In Dale of Merchants, players take the roles of animalfolk merchants learning new techniques, trading goods, and managing their stocks. The first player to finish their **astounding merchant stall** is the winner of the game and the new Railway Manager!

The transportation of goods via land is at a turning point. While many nations and organisations still move goods with caravans, an increasing number are embracing railways. This revolution is now coming to Africa, beginning from Velamunti. Mongooses, monitors, foxes, crocodiles, and many others have set aside their differences to make railways come true.



Card overview



1. Value, set icon, and possible bonus action icon ✚
2. Card and set name
3. Card type
4. Effect and flavour text
5. Game icon (The Grand Continental Railway)

Card types

There are different card types in the game: technique and passive animalfolk cards and also rubbish junk cards. Some card effects allow you to bend the rules of the game. In case of such rule conflicts, the text on the cards overrides the rulebook. Always resolve a card's effects in the order they are written.

Some cards use **keywords** which are explained on page 15.

Technique

Technique cards can be played as a *technique action*. A bonus action icon ✚ on the card rewards the active player with a bonus action after using the technique.

Passive

Most *passive cards* have effects which apply when you have the card in your hand. Some passive cards can provide their effects elsewhere if their effect text states so. When you use a card for its passive effects, show the card to other players and fully resolve its effects.

Rubbish

Players start the game with multiple *junk cards* in their decks. Junk is primarily used to purchase new animalfolk cards from the market.

Desert monitors value information unconditionally – everything is worth saving. Who knows what will spark the imagination of future generations? Even the most mundane things others classify as junk might have an important role tomorrow!



Game setup

Choose as many animalfolk decks as there are players, **plus one deck**. Return the other animalfolk decks into the game box. You can change the feel of the game by choosing animalfolks whose playstyles match your group's. For example, *Sharing Short-beaked Echidnas* borrow cards from other players while *Prepared Grizzled Tree-kangaroos* are good at protecting their own valuables. There's a list describing all of the animalfolks and special rules regarding the ***Snowshoe Hares'*** die on the last page of this rulebook.

The player who woke up the earliest today should start the game. When playing consecutive games, one of the losing players should be the starting player of the next game.

Easy-going folks are slow starters. Their lifestyle often leads to late nights and weird sleeping habits. It's not uncommon to meet an echidna in the middle of the night and hear "good morning".



1. Form each player's starting *deck* by giving everyone one card valued 1 **from each of the chosen animalfolk decks** and a number of junk cards until each player has a **total of 10 cards**. Shuffle the decks. The remaining junk cards form a separate *junk pile*.
2. Return the unused animalfolk cards valued 1 to the game box. Shuffle the remaining animalfolk cards valued 2–5 together to form the *market deck*.



Example of a 2 player setup

3. Place the *market board* next to the market deck. Draw **5 cards** from this deck one by one and place them faceup on the slots on the board (starting from the right) to form the *market*.
4. Each player draws cards from their own deck equal to their hand size, which is **5** by default, to form their starting *hand*.

A *Player's discard pile*

B *Player's merchant stall*

C *Market's discard pile*

An online deck selection tool can also be used to pick the decks for your game effortlessly. You can access it at *snowdaledesign.fi/decks*.

Turn overview

During the game the players take turns in a clockwise order. A player's turn consists of an action phase followed by a clean-up phase.

1. Action phase - Perform **one** of the following actions

a) Market action - Purchase a card from the market

b) Technique action - Play a technique card

c) Stall action - Build a stack in your stall

d) Inventory action - Discard cards from your hand

2. Clean-up phase

1) Fill your hand back to 5 cards

2) Slide cards and fill empty slots in the market

1. Action phase - Perform one action

Perform **one** of the following four actions.

NOTE: Cards are placed faceup on all discard piles. Players may look through all discard piles at any time but not reorder them.

a) Market action - Purchase a card from the market

Buy 1 card from the market by paying its price in a combination of any cards from your hand. Your cards are worth their printed value when used to purchase new ones. A card's price in the market is equal to its value plus the (possible) added cost printed on the market board above the slot. Moving to the left, the added costs increase one by one from +0 to +4. Place the cards you used to purchase **on your discard pile** and then place the newly purchased animalfolk card **into your hand**.

NOTE: You may overpay, but all cards you use for the purchase must be necessary for reaching the price of the new card. If you could withhold one or more cards and still be able to pay the price, you must do so. Cards left in your hand do not matter. For example, you are allowed to buy a 5 cost card using two cards each valued 4 (totalling 8) even if you have a card valued 5 in your hand. However, you cannot use the 5 and 4 together, because the 4 would be redundant.

b) Technique action - Play a technique card

Play 1 technique card from your hand. Show the card and resolve the effects described in its effect text. The effects always happen in the order they are written on the card.

Place technique cards in front of you for the duration of their effect. These cards are in your *schedule*. They are unaffected by other effects until they are fully resolved. In case multiple effects of cards in your schedule resolve at the same time, you choose the order those effects resolve in. **After a technique card's effects have been fully resolved**, place it on your discard pile unless told otherwise.

NOTE: If you cannot draw, take, or exchange the exact amount of cards specified by the effect, perform it with the maximum amount of cards available. However, if any deck runs out and you or anyone else needs new cards from it, shuffle its discard pile and use it to form a new deck. Searching a deck (even if it has 0 cards) never triggers the forming of a new deck.



Some folk have less patience than others and are always after the next shiny thing. For most of them, this is possible because of their social status and excessive wealth.

If the card has a bonus action icon ✚, perform another action after resolving that card's **immediate** effects. The bonus action is always awarded on the turn the card is played, even if the card remains in your schedule and has delayed effects. Your bonus action can be **any** of the four usual actions. If you use your bonus action to play another technique card that also has a bonus action icon ✚, you then perform another action – and so on.

NOTE: The bonus action is awarded **only** when a card is played using its technique – not if it is used to purchase from the market or played into your stall.

When you need to discard or **throw away** multiple cards at the same time, you choose the order in which they go to their designated destination.

Whenever an effect lets you guess something about a card, show the card to everyone so they can confirm the result.

Stay sharp! Getting the most out of your tricks can require patience and saving resources for later.



c) Stall action - Build a stack in your stall

Each player's individual merchant *stall* has room for 8 *stacks* of cards that have ascending total values. The total value of your first stack must be exactly 1, the next exactly 2, and so on. They have to be built in ascending order from 1 to 8. The cards you use to build stacks in your stall can no longer be used for other actions.



Placing your possessions on display in your stall both protects them and gets you closer to victory. However, timing is key as building up the selection of your stall too early can leave you without powerful plays during the endgame!

To build a stack, choose any number of cards that belong to a **single animalfolk set** from your hand, whose values add up to the required amount, and place them in front of you into your stall. Stacks are placed faceup with all card values visible. You cannot build a partial stack and continue to add to it later.



Example of a player's stall where the first 6 stacks have been built

In some cases certain card effects can modify your stacks' values or manipulate the cards in them. That is fine. After a stack is finished, **it does not matter what its value is or what cards are in it**. The total value of your next stack is only determined by the number of stacks you have already built.



While the judges tend to be on the loose side when it comes to enforcing the rules, they are quite strict about not messing with other participants' stalls. Still, some folks find ways to work around even that.

d) Inventory action - Discard cards from your hand

Place any amount of cards from your hand into your discard pile. You may use this action to discard 0 cards.

2. Clean-up phase

Clean-up happens immediately after the active player has performed their chosen action and possible bonus actions. Clean-up is still considered a part of the active player's turn and they may use passive effects of certain cards.

1) Fill your hand back to 5 cards

Draw cards from your deck into your hand one by one until you reach your **hand size**, which is 5 by default. If the number of cards in your hand already exceeds your hand size for any reason, **do not discard the extra cards**. You should always reach at least your hand size by the end of this part of the clean-up phase, even if cards are removed from your hand during it. Only the active player fills their hand.



A continued supply of new orders and smart managing of your wares is essential in keeping organised. Careful measurements can help protect your items as your competitors try to hinder you any way they can.

Whenever your deck runs out and **you or anyone else needs new cards from it**, shuffle your discard pile and use it to form your new deck. Searching a deck (even if it has 0 cards) never triggers the forming of a new deck.

If your deck and discard pile run out **at the same time** and you need to draw new cards during clean-up (and **only** during clean-up), **draw junk cards from the junk pile** to fill your hand to your hand size. Unlike all other card types, there is considered to be an unlimited number of junk cards. In the rare case the junk pile runs out, use cards from the decks that are not in play as substitutes for junk cards.

2) Slide cards and fill empty slots in the market

Move the cards in the market to the rightmost empty slot one by one starting from the right. Then draw new cards from the market deck one by one to fill the empty slots, again starting from the right.



Market keepers have many tricks to get rid of less wanted products. For example, simple gift wrapping can make anything more desirable. A surprise for the customer and a sale for the vendor is a win-win situation!

If the market deck ever runs out **and you need cards from it**, shuffle the market's discard pile to form a new market deck. If the market deck and discard pile run out at the same time, the market will be only partially filled.

Winning the game

Once you build **the 8th stack in your merchant stall**, the game ends immediately and you are celebrated as the winner.

Huge projects, like connecting two sides of an entire continent with a railway, take enormous amounts of time and effort. The leader of such feats must be chosen wisely, as they will be under pressure from both tight schedules and logistical nightmares.



4 player team rules

In 4 player games the players can join forces to create teams. This reduces downtime and also introduces additional depth to the gameplay. We recommend trying out the team rules after playing a couple of games using the normal rules.

Setup

Form 2 teams of 2 players. Teammates should sit opposite each other so that each player has an opponent on both sides and a teammate across the table.

During setup, choose **4 animalfolk decks** instead of 5 to include in the game.

NOTE: The game comes with 20 junk cards. You need 4 more for the team rules. If you do not have additional junk cards from other Dale of Merchants games, take 4 cards valued 1 from a single animalfolk deck not used in the current game and use those as substitutes for junk cards.

Trading competition organisers usually seek guidance from the prestigious Guild of Extraordinary Traders. The Guild often recommends a team competition if the winner's position needs a close partner in their work – a representative negotiating for the railway's path, for example. Teams with a strong background in co-operation and heightened sense of community tend to perform well.



Changes to the normal rules

Players in the same team share a merchant stall. The number of stacks needed to win the game is increased to **10**, with the values of stacks increasing from 1 to 10 similarly to the normal rules. The team that first builds their 10th stack wins the game.

When you build a stack, your teammate can help you build by adding one or more cards to the stack. However, the active player must contribute at least 1 card to the stack. Remember to fill your hand **only during the clean-up phase of your own turn**.

Some cards refer to opponents. All other players (excluding your teammate) are your opponents.

All communication is public.

Keywords

Throw away

When you **throw away** a card, place it into a location determined by its type.

- If it is a *junk card*, place it on the junk pile.
- If it is an *animalfolk card*, place it on the market's discard pile.

Store

When you play a technique card, or use an effect, with the keyword **store**, place the cards you wish to **store** facedown on the card with the keyword. You may look at your own **stored** cards at any time. **Stored** cards are untargetable by any effects other than those from the card they are **stored** on.

Archiving Desert Monitors

Discard mastery - Monitors excel at manipulating their discard piles. Do you have great cards in your discard? Useless junk in your deck? Even a beginner will have the right cards in the right place in no time after taking a lesson from the monitors.

Discontent White-headed Lemurs

Replacing cards - Lemurs are rather impatient and get tired of their items faster than anyone else. Getting rid of old cards and trying out new things is second nature to them. Don't get too attached to your cards and introduce the lemurs to your game!

Scheming Green Magpies

Guessing and stealing - Magpies are choosy thieves. They try to steal only specific items and nothing more. You need to keep an eye on your opponents if you want to utilise magpies to their full potential. For advanced players only!

Sharing Short-beaked Echidnas

Borrowing - Echidnas borrow cards from everyone. Their only saving grace is the fact that they always leave something as a replacement. Add them in when you want a lot of interaction between players without straight-out stealing.

Superstitious Snowshoe Hares

Making predictions - Statistics and calculations or blind trust in beliefs from previous generations? Hares introduce luck, but you can do a lot to play around it with precise timing and careful preparations.

Any time you roll the hare die and get a result of , you may choose to reroll the die to change your result.

Prepared Grizzled Tree-kangaroos

Stashing and protecting - Kangaroos are excellent at hiding their valuables and creating diversions for mischief-makers. However, their techniques are useful even when no one is playing dirty.