A game by David V. H. Peters and Harry Wu for 2 - 5 players

Rich merchant families travel along the Silk Road looking for profitable bargains. The players act as merchants trying to marry into these

Samarkand

families and take control of their business. Who will establish the most relationships and will be the winner in the end?

Game components

• **1 game board** – showing a map, divided into spaces. At the top and bottom of the map there are 10 family domains, each containing various stacking spaces.



• **20 family tiles** – 2 of each merchant family.



• **120 Camels** – 12 of each color of the merchant families.



• **50 relationship markers** – 40 gray and 10 dark green, 5 for each family.

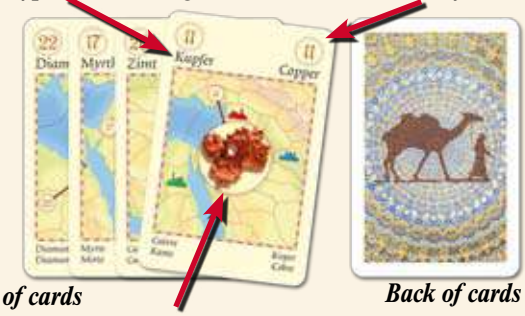


The back of each relationship marker is showing 1 victory point.

• **33 goods cards and 33 goods markers** – showing the same goods as shown on the map.

Goods type

All goods have their own identification number.



Front of cards

Back of cards

Goods image and position on the map.



Front of goods markers - goods image and identification number.

Back of goods markers - 1 victory point.

• **6 easy reference cards** – details of scoring victory points.



• **75 Dirham** – 34 copper coins (value 1), 28 silver coins (value 2), 13 gold coins (value 10).



• **1 rules leaflet** • **1 linen bag** (2-player-game only).

Please note: You'll find the rules changes for the 2-player-game on page 6!

Setup for 3 - 5 players

Place the **game board** in the middle of the gaming area.

One camel is placed on each starting space of its corresponding color. The remaining **11 camels** of each color and the **family tiles** are placed on their respective stacking spaces of the same-colored family domains.



Starting space

The **goods markers** are placed on their corresponding spaces on the map.

Four gray and one dark green relationship markers are stacked on the relationship space of each family domain. A dark green marker **must** be on top of each stack.



Shuffle **all goods cards**. Deal **2 cards** to each player as their hand. Place all remaining cards on a face down pile beside the map.



Give 10 Dirhams to each player - this is their starting capital.



All remaining coins are placed beside the game board as common supply.

Up to 2 pieces (camels) may occupy each space of the map. That's why there are 2 ship symbols on the water spaces.





Common supply of coins

Land space

Starting space

Goods space

Water space

Family symbol

Marriage portion

Family domain with stacking spaces for: Relationship markers, family tiles, camels, and coins.

Each domain also shows the symbol of the family's starting space and the due marriage portion.

Object of the game

As members of merchant families the players marry into other wealthy merchant families. They expand the trading routes of these families and establish trade relationships with other families. The player having gained the most victory points with relationships and goods will be the winner at the end of the game.

Playing the game

The youngest player begins, the other players follow in clockwise order. The active player must perform one of two possible actions:

- **Marry into a merchant family**
- **Expand the trading route of a family**

These actions are now explained in detail:

Marry into a merchant family

When marrying into a merchant family the player must pay the **marriage portion** shown in the family's domain from their own capital. They place the coins on the family's treasury space and take **1 family tile** which they place in front of themselves on the table. If a family has none of their family tiles left nobody can marry into this family anymore.

Important: Players may hold any number of family tiles - but only 1 of each family.

The player then draws the **top 3 goods** cards from the face down deck on their hand. The number of hand cards is limited, depending on the number of players:

Limits of hand cards:

3 players	.....	10 cards
4 players	.....	7 cards
5 players	.....	6 cards

When drawing cards players must obey these rules:

- They **must keep at least 1 card**. This means they discard 0 to 2 cards; **these may be cards they held on their hand before**.
- After discarding the **card limit** must be met.
- If a player had reached the **card limit** already **before marrying** they still may marry into a family, but are **not allowed to draw** any **more cards**.

Discarded cards are placed on a face down discard pile beside the game board.

When the deck of goods cards is exhausted the discard pile is shuffled and used as new face down draw pile.

Please note: Players should make sure to keep their own capital, the family treasuries and the common supply of coins separate at all times.



When marrying into a merchant family, you pay the marriage portion shown and take a family tile.



Draw 3 cards and …

… discard 0, 1 or 2 cards.

Example (4 players): Carl's hand limit is 7 cards. His current hand is 5 cards and he decides to marry. He draws the top 3 face down goods cards and has to discard at least 1 card in order not to exceed the limit. If he marries again he is not allowed to draw any further cards.

If Carl would discard 2 cards he would draw 3 new cards when marrying next time, because his hand would be below the limit.

Expand the trading route of a family

When expanding the trading route of a family by **1 or 2 spaces** the player places 1 or 2 camels of that family on adjacent spaces. In order to do so they must own at least 1 family tile of the family and the family must still own a sufficient number of camels..

The following rules have to be obeyed when **placing camels** on a land or water space:

- A camel may only be placed on a space adjacent to a space already containing a camel of the same color.
- **No more than 2 camels** may occupy **any space.** The camels on a space **must** be of **different color.**

Expanding a trading route **by 1 space is free.** The player simply takes one of the family's camels and places it on the map.

When expanding a trading route **by 2 spaces** the family must pay **1 Dirham** from their family treasury into the common supply.

The same rules apply for placing the second camel as for the first one. The second camel must not necessarily be placed adjacent to the first one, but must belong to the same family.

In case a family's treasury is **empty** their trading route can be expanded by **1 space only** each turn.

Goods spaces

When placing a camel on an unoccupied goods space the player does the following:

- They take the goods marker from the map and place it in front of themselves. Each marker is worth **1 victory point** at the end of the game.
- If any player (including the active player) owns the goods card corresponding to this goods space **they may sell it now.** They place the card face up in front of themselves and are paid **3 Dirhams** from the common supply. They may **never** take this card back on their hand, but it still counts against the card limit. No victory points are awarded for sold goods cards at the end of the game.

When placing a camel on a space already occupied by 1 other camel the player does not collect any goods marker. Also no player may sell their corresponding goods card now (this can only be done when placing the first camel on a goods space).

Please note: This action can not be performed during the first round, because a player must first be married before they can expand that family's trading route.





Example: Barbara has married a member of the Levants and now wants to expand that family's trading route by 2 spaces. She pays 1 Dirham from the Levants' family treasury into the common supply. She then takes two camels from the family's domain and places one on an adjacent land space, the other one on a ship of the adjacent water space.

Expanding a trading route by 1 space only is for free.



Please note: Nobody is forced to sell their goods card. A goods card may be worth up to 8 victory points at the end of the game.



Example: Julia was the first placing a camel on the space "Diamond-22". She takes the goods marker, placing it in front of herself. She also owns the diamond goods card but does not want to sell it, so she keeps it on her hand.

New trade relationship between two merchant families

By placing a camel on a **land space** already occupied by one other camel the player establishes a new **trade relationship** between these two families.
For this purpose it doesn't matter if the land space is a goods space or a starting space.

No relationships can be established on **water spaces**. Any camels there pass each other by without ever meeting each other.

Both families benefit from their **first** established relationship. All members of the active family (whose camel was just placed) and all members of the inactive family (whose camel was occupying the space already) are paid a **bonus**.

All players owning at least 1 family tile of the **active** family are paid **3 Dirhams** each from the common supply; all players owning at least 1 family tile of the **inactive** family are paid **1 Dirham** each. Players owning family tiles of both families concerned qualify for both bonuses.

Additionally the active player (the player who just established the trade relationship) takes the **top** relationship markers of **both** families. Each marker is worth **1 victory point** at the end of the game.

Only the 1st established relationship between any two specific families grants bonuses and relationship markers. Any further encounters of these two families are without consequences.



Example: Chris is a member of the Byzant family (owning a Byzant family tile) and establishes a new trade relationship with the Levant family. He takes 1 camel from the Byzant domain and places it on a space occupied by a red camel. Chris is paid 3 Dirham; Julia is a member of the Levant family and is paid 1 Dirham.

Chris now takes the top relationship marker both of the Arabic and Persian family and places them in front of himself. This ends his turn.

After a player has finished their turn all players have to check if one of the two game end conditions is met. If this is not the case the next player in clockwise direction takes their turn.

End of the game and winner

The game ends **immediately** if one of the following two game end conditions is met:

- **Each family has established at least one trade relationship.** This means there are no more dark green relationship markers anywhere on the board.

Or

- **One family has established 5 relationships with other families.** No relationship markers of this family are left in their domain.

The round is not completed.
Now **scoring** is following …

Scoring

Victory points are awarded to the players for:

• Goods cards • Goods markers
• Relationship markers • Cash

Goods cards

All players reveal their goods cards from their hand. Players gain victory points (VP) for each of their **own** revealed goods card if **camels** are occupying the **corresponding goods space:**

• Goods space without any camels ..... **0 VP**
• Each camel of any **other** family ..... **1 VP**
• Each camel of any **own** family ..... **4 VP**

Goods markers

Each own goods marker ..... **1 VP**

Relationship markers

Each own relationship marker ..... **1 VP**

Cash

Each Dirham ..... **1 VP**

(Each coin counting as many Dirhams as imprinted.)

Each player adds all their victory points. The player with the most victory points is the winner of the game. In case of a tie all tied players are winners.



Example: Barbara owns the goods card "Flax", gaining 5 VP for it: 4 VP for the red camel on the corresponding goods space (being a member of the red family) and only 1 VP for the yellow camel (she does not belong to the yellow family).

Hint: Scoring is very easy if all VP gained are paid cash!

*Don't forget: Cards sold during the game for **3 Dirhams** do not generate any VP.*



The easy reference cards are very helpful for scoring. Their front shows all possible victory points for goods cards, the back displays all other ways of gaining victory points.

Rules changes for 2 players

Setup

For a 2-player-game the **hand limit is 10 cards**.

Only **1 family tile** of each family is placed on the board. All remaining family tiles are put in the linen bag. All other setup steps remain unchanged.

Playing the game

Each time a player is **marrying into a family** they draw a tile from the bag.

- If the drawn tile belongs to a family into which **nobody has married** so far it is **removed from the game.** It is placed face up beside the game board clearly visible for both players.
- If the drawn tile belongs to a family into which a player has married before it is placed on the appropriate stacking space of the family's domain.

This procedure ensures that two family tiles of some families will come into play.

Important: In a 2-player-game players are allowed to marry into the same family twice! This may make sense because the family treasury is refilled.

Even if a player owns both tiles of a certain family they still gain only the **basic VP** when scoring their goods cards and likewise are paid the **basic bonuses** only when establishing new trade relationships.

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