FAIYUM

THE STRATEGY GAME IN ANCIENT EGYPT
FROM FRIEDEMANN FRIESE
FOR 1-5 PLAYERS, AGED 12 AND UP

IDEA OF THE GAME

The oasis-like basin Faiyum was artificially built 3,900 years ago by enlarging the Bahr Yussef channel that connected to the Nile to create a regulated flood plain. During the Middle Kingdom of Egypt, this swampland was slowly changed into farmland under the aegis of pharaohs such as Amenemhet III and Sesostris II. They ordered their advisors to build a system of canals and dikes to reclaim the land surrounded by desert and inhabited by crocodiles to turn it into a granary for Egypt.

Now, during the reign of Amenemhet III, you are the pharaoh's advisors, commanded to harvest goods, build roads, found settlements, and do much more for the good of Faiyum! You are being supplied with the necessary manpower, resources, and money, which means that if another advisor needs to use "your" roads, farms, and other buildings, they may do so since everything you build is owned by the pharaoh. The only thing you will own is the only thing that matters: the respect of the pharaoh.

Faiyum is a strategic game for enthusiasts of planning games. The basic rules are simple: Play your cards one by one on your personal discard stack. After playing some or all of your cards, you take them back into your hand in "reverse" playing order, so playing cards in the best order is important. Newly purchased cards go directly into your hand, so the timing of getting and playing them is important, too. Each of the individual cards has easy-to-understand actions, but only by creating the best combined "engine" will you be a master advisor of ***Faiyum***.

This game features a card mechanism reminiscent of deck builders and the market mechanism successfully used in ***Power Grid***. Gain more and more valuable cards, and use the structures built on the game board to your advantage — in other words, for your reputation. In the end, the most cunning advisor who creates the best card combinations will win ***Faiyum***.

GAME COMPONENTS

Each copy of ***Faiyum*** contains:

1 **game board**



50 **cardboard tokens**, consisting of:

- 5 reputation tokens "50/100" (1 per player)



- 4 "-1" discount tokens



- 26 "1" money tokens



- 10 "5" money tokens



- 5 "10" money tokens



- 2 **rule booklets** and 2 **glossaries** (English & German)

257 **wooden parts**, consisting of:

- 5 reputation discs (1 per player)



- 16 settlements



- 8 towns



- 10 workshops



- 5 extensions



- 40 roads



- 4 bridges



- 2 grand bridges



- 30 workers



- 20 wheat



- 20 grapes



- 20 stones



- 10 fish



- 12 roses



- 15 building blocks



- 2 palaces

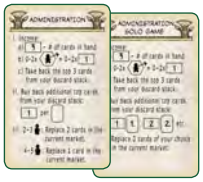


- 38 crocodiles



106 **cards**, consisting of:

- 12 administration overview cards in German and English (10 cards for games with 2-5 players, 2 cards for the solo game)



- 25 starting playing cards marked "S" (5 per player)



- 69 numbered playing cards (56 blue-bordered and 13 yellow-bordered cards)



The numbered cards show individual even numbers from 2 to 128. (We want to have the option to sneak in expansions!)

GAME SET-UP

1. Place the **game board** on the table.

A Place a **settlement** on the red space and a **road** on the dam between the two peninsulas.

B Place a **crocodile** on every wheat (yellow) space and grape (purple) space.

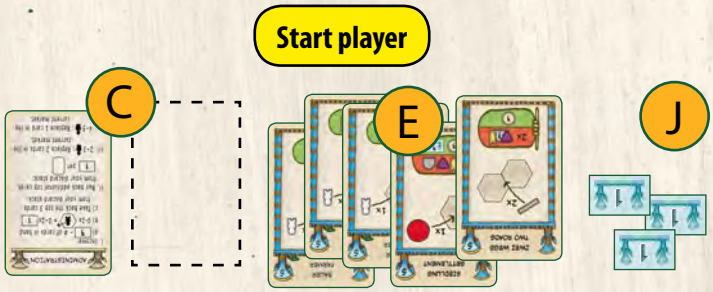
2. Everybody chooses a color and takes the matching colored **starting cards**, **reputation disc**, and **"50/100" reputation marker**, as well as an **administration overview card**.

C You need some space in front of you for your personal play area. Place the administration overview card to one side of the play area. During the game, you also have a personal discard stack for your played cards.

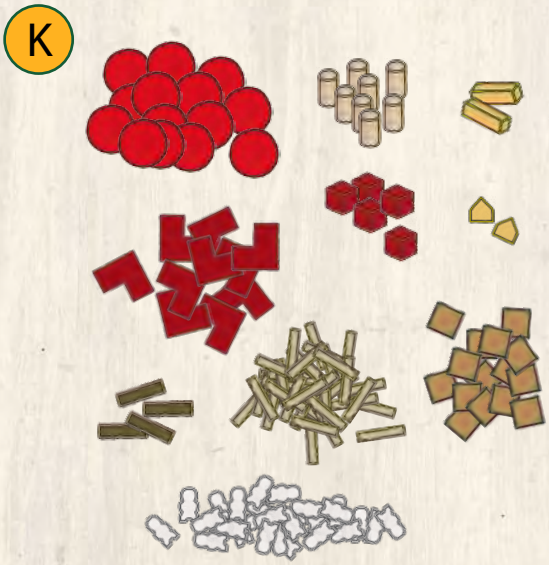
D Place your reputation disc on the "0" space of the reputation track, and your "50/100" reputation marker near the end of the reputation track.

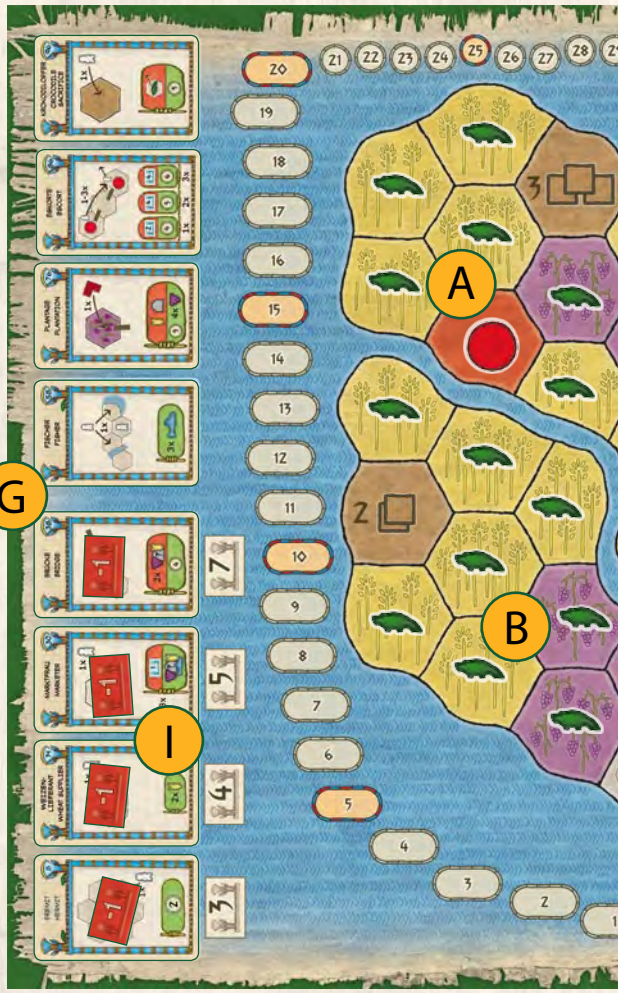
E Take your starting cards in hand.

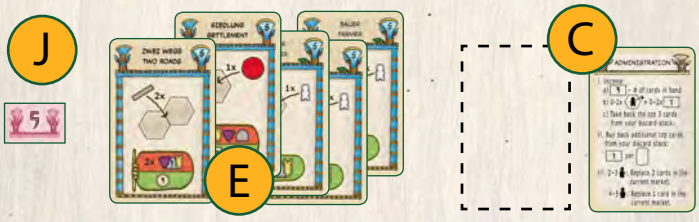
Example for 4 players











3.

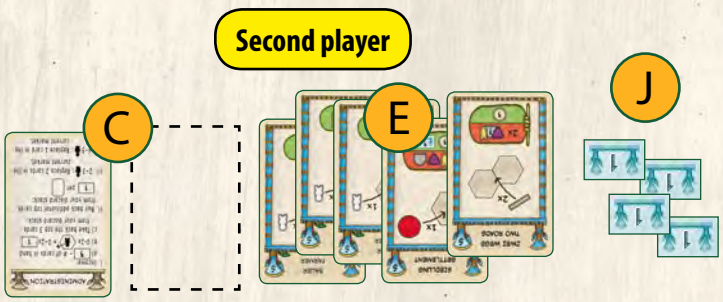
Prepare the **draw pile** and **card market** as follows:

	cards numbered 122-128
2 players	6, 0, 0, 0 reputation
3 players	10, 6, 0, 0 reputation
4 players	10, 6, 3, 0 reputation
5 players	10, 6, 3, 1 reputation

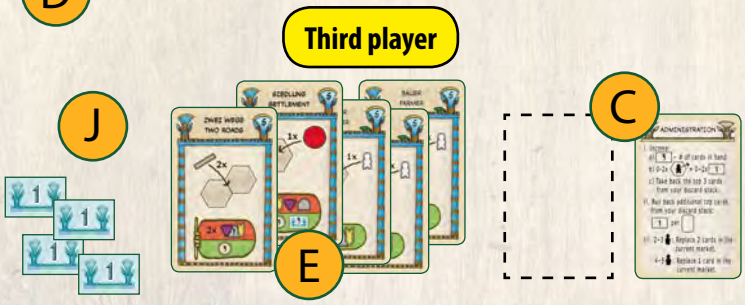
F Take the 13 **yellow-bordered cards** and set aside the cards numbered 114-120. You now have multiple versions of the natural disaster cards numbered 122-128 in hand. Keep only the 4 cards showing your current number of players, and return the other 5 cards to the game box. Place these 4 cards on top of the cards numbered 114-120, then place them to the side.

G Shuffle the 56 **blue-bordered cards** numbered 2-112, and place them face down as a **draw pile**. Draw the topmost 12 cards, then sort them face up by number from low to high. Place the 8 lowest cards face up in ascending order on the spaces of the card market, starting on the left with the lowest number and continuing to the right as the numbers increase.

H Give everyone a chance to examine the highest 4 face-up blue-bordered cards, then shuffle them with the 8 yellow-bordered cards placed to the side. Place these 12 cards as a separate face-down **"final turns" stack** next to the draw pile.







4.

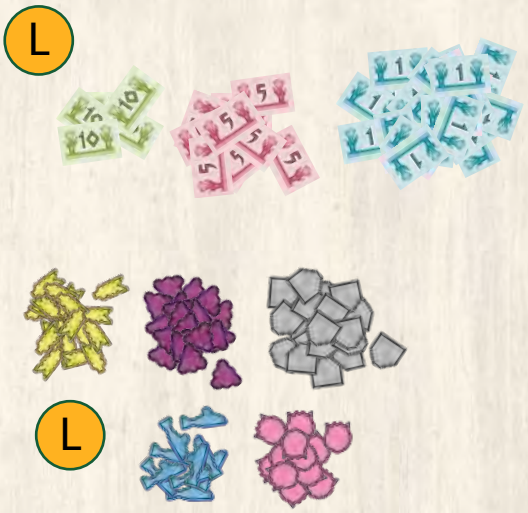
Mark down the 4 lowest cards in the market.

I Place a red discount token on each of these cards.

5.

Choose a player to become the ***first player***!

J The first player takes $3, the second and third players take $4, and the fourth and fifth players take $5.



6.

Place the wooden parts and money tokens in separate supply piles on opposite sides of the game board based on whether they are limited or unlimited.

K These components are limited: workers, settlements, towns, workshops, extensions, roads, bridges, grand bridges, building blocks, and palaces.

L The wheat, grape, stone, fish, and rose resources and the money tokens are not limited, so if you need more than are provided, please use something else as stand-ins.

You are now ready to start ***Faiyum***!

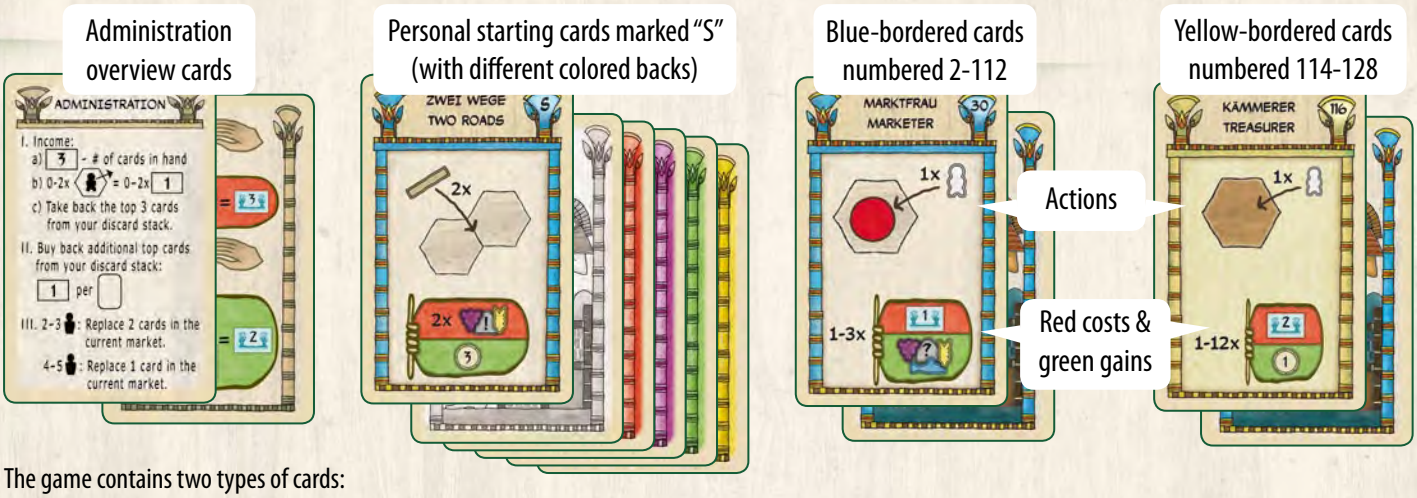
THE GAME BOARD

The game board shows a map of Faiyum, a card market, and a reputation track.



- The **channel** divides Faiyum into **two separate peninsulas** connected only by the **dam**. Also, the peninsulas are surrounded by the **lake**.
- Spaces on a peninsula can be **adjacent** to other spaces on the same peninsula, but spaces on opposite sides of the **channel** are always **separated**.
- The **resource spaces** for grapes (purple), wheat (yellow), and stones (gray) are **undeveloped**; additionally the grape and wheat spaces are swampy and start with **crocodiles** on them. The stone spaces are on higher, dry ground and thus **crocodile-free**. The red space for the first **settlement**, the two spaces on both sides of the dam **connected** by a road, and the four brown **building sites** are **crocodile-free** and already **developed**. The building sites show rough sketches of the monuments to be built, with numbers to show how many building blocks can be placed on each of these spaces.
- The **card market** shows 8 card spaces separated into 2 groups: 4 spaces showing prices for the cards in the **current market**, and 4 spaces for the cards which will be offered for purchase later during the game.
- The **reputation track** shows your reputation gained during the game.

THE CARDS



The game contains two types of cards:

- The **administration overview cards** show the steps you take when using the administration action. The back of these cards reminds you of two general rules in effect when using the playing cards.
- The **playing cards** are divided in three groups. **Personal starting cards** marked "S" have colored backs in the five player colors. The **blue-bordered cards** and the **yellow-bordered cards** have the same backs and show **individual even numbers** from 2 to 128. All three types of cards are played the same way.
- Below its **name**, each playing card depicts an **action** that you must take when you play this card. If a **red cost** is depicted, you must pay this cost to take this action; if a **green gain** is depicted, you must take this gain after taking this action. All playing cards are explained in detail in the glossary.

PLAYING WITH 2 TO 5 PLAYERS VS. SOLO GAMES

For games with 2 to 5 players, we already explained the game preparation on the previous pages and will explain all rules on the following pages.

When playing the solo game, you need to make only a few changes during game set-up and while playing the game. You will find these changes on the final page of this rule booklet.

While tracking your reputation on the reputation track, for games with 2 to 5 players your personal "50/100" reputation token should help you to track all the reputation you gain. When playing the solo game very well, you may need to use two or more of the "50/100" reputation tokens.

HOW TO PLAY

The general rules of ***Faiyum*** are easy, but the game as a whole is complex thanks to the wide spectrum of different actions on the cards. These actions are all explained in detail in the separate glossary, so good news! After learning the general rules and discovering the actions of your starting cards and the cards in the current market, you can jump into playing. Then, each time a new card shows up in the card market, you need only check its actions in the glossary, learning everything as you go.

Beginning with the first player and continuing clockwise, each time it is your turn, take one of the following three actions:

a) Play a card from your hand: Use the actions on the card or get money for it, then place the card face up on top of your personal discard stack.
b) Buy a card from the card market: After paying the appropriate price, take 1 card from the current market into your hand.
c) Carry out administration: Gain income, take cards from the top of your discard stack into your hand, then replace cards in the card market.

Continue to take turns until all 4 natural disasters — the yellow-bordered cards numbered 122-128 — are placed on the rightmost spaces of the card market, which triggers the end of the game.

Before you continue with the rules, let us introduce Ronald. As you will come to realize on the following pages, if Ronald understands the rules, then *everybody* will understand them. Years of experience are 100% proof!

"YES, Ronald, really everybody. Thank you for asking (again)..."

a) Play a card from your hand

In ***Faiyum***, unlike in deck-building games, you do not have the familiar personal draw pile. Instead, at the start of the game, you have all your cards in hand and can play them one after another. After you play a card, place it face up on top of your discard stack.

Play a card from your hand by placing it face up in your play area. You then have two choices:

- **Use the action:** You must use the complete action of the card to gain resources, money, cards, and (of course) game-winning reputation.

  "NO, Ronald, you cannot use only part of an action. If the action is to build 2 roads, you cannot build only 1. Besides, how would you record 1.5 reputation on the reputation track?"



- **Gain $2:** If you cannot or do not want to use the card's action, instead gain $2, taking the money from the supply.

Afterwards, place the card on top of your discard stack. You must keep the cards in this stack in order, with the first card played at the bottom and the latest card played on top. For an overview of these cards, you can slightly fan out the cards to show their titles.

When you play a card to use its action, follow these rules:

- Everything you place or build on the spaces of the game board is **common property** for all players, that is, none of the workers or structures are yours or owned by you. After you place or build something, anyone can use it for their own benefit.

  "NO, Ronald, just because you built that settlement, it is not yours. Anybody can place a worker there."

- The resources, money, and the reputation you gain by playing cards belong solely to you. Resources and money provide the means to pay for actions and new cards, while reputation matters only when it comes to winning ***Faiyum***.

  Roses are wild. Anytime you pay resources, you may replace any needed resource with a rose. You gain a rose only when it is listed in the green box of a card.

  "YES, Ronald, you can pay a single action with 2 or more roses, and each rose can then replace any other required resource because they are WILD!"

- The cards offer four types of actions: harvest actions, build actions, commerce actions, and "other" actions.
  - Resources generally come from cards that offer *harvest actions*. These cards let you place workers upright on **undeveloped** resource spaces (1.). The wheat and grape spaces are still swampy and full of crocodiles, while the stone spaces are on higher, dry ground and are thus **crocodile-free**.



When playing these cards, you gain resources and drain the land to remove crocodiles from it. As a reminder, these cards show a crocodile at both top corners.

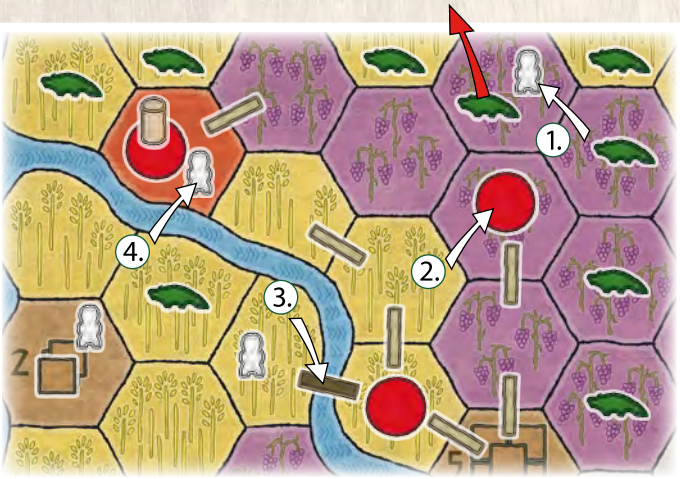
"YES, Ronald, you can place these workers on crocodile-free resource spaces as long as the spaces are undeveloped."

  - The cards that offer *build actions* let you **develop crocodile-free** resource spaces. At the start of the game, the first settlement, the four building site spaces, and the two stone spaces connected by the road on the dam are already **developed**. When playing these cards, you build different structures, such as settlements, workshops, and roads (2.). You can also upgrade settlements to towns or place building blocks on the building grounds. A worker on a space does not interfere with building and remains on the affected space. As soon as you build something on a space, that space is now **developed**, and you cannot use harvest actions on **developed** spaces. Each **crocodile-free** resource space can hold either a settlement or a workshop, but not both.

    The roads and bridges create a network by **connecting** the spaces of the peninsulas. Either they start in a settlement or on a building site, or they extend another road and bridge, including the road that begins the game on the dam. Roads and bridges **can branch out** only on settlements and building sites (3.). Thus, you **cannot build a junction** on a resource space. You gain 1 additional reputation each time you build the first direct connection between two settlements, two building sites, or a settlement and a building site. You do this by placing a road or a settlement on an already connected resource space.

    "YES, Ronald, you gain only 1 additional reputation when connecting settlements and building sites, not 1 reputation for each place. And connecting them a second or third time does not gain you any additional reputation. And YES, we will explain that once more in the glossary!"

  - For all cards that offer *commerce actions*, you place workers upright on **developed** spaces (4.). You will find details for all the cards in the glossary.



Example: *Hedwig plays a harvest action and places a worker on the undeveloped resource space to harvest a grape and remove the crocodile (1.) to gain $1. Angelika plays a build action and places a settlement on the crocodile-free resource space (2.). As that space is already directly connected to the building site, she gains 1 extra reputation. With another build action, Nicole places the bridge, branching out of the settlement (3.). Beth plays a commerce action and places a worker on the settlement, which had already been upgraded into a town (4.).*

- At most one worker can be on each space of the game board. Thus, when you place a worker on a space, that space is blocked for other *harvest* or *commerce actions* until that worker has been removed by a card action or by the **administration** action.



- Each time you need to pay resources, you can replace one of the required basic resources — your choice of grape, stone, or wheat — by paying $3.
- You cannot use money that you gain during an action to pay the costs of that action or to substitute a single basic resource. You must have all of the money and resources required to pay a cost in hand in order to play that card.

  "NO, Ronald, you cannot use the $3 that you will get for building a settlement to 'pay' one stone less than required for the cost of that action!"

- **Important:** If the card actions contradict the general rules explained in this rules booklet, the rules for the cards are always valid.

b) Buy a card from the card market

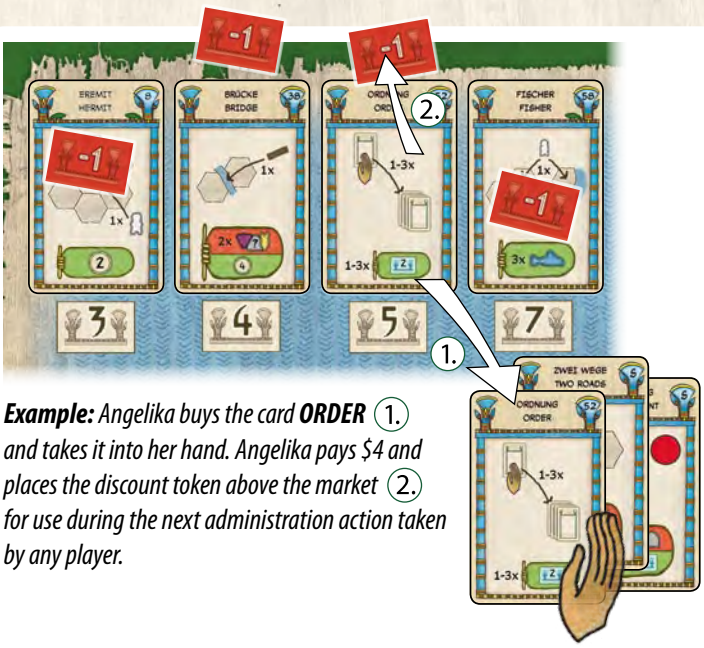
Your key to success in ***Faiyum*** is buying more and more valuable cards from the card market to cleverly combine the different actions on them.

The card market has 8 cards on display sorted in ascending order by their numbers. Only the 4 lowest cards in what's called the **current market** are available for you to buy. The 4 highest cards cannot be bought until they slide down into the current market during the game.

When you take this action, buy 1 of the 4 cards from the current market. Pay the price shown below that card — $3, $4, $5 or $7 — then take that card into your hand. You can play this card on a later turn.

If a discount token is on the chosen card, reduce that card price by $1, thus paying only $2, $3, $4, or $6. Afterwards, place the discount token above the current market as it will be used again in the next **administration** action taken by any player.

Finally, draw a card from the draw pile and place it in the proper numerical order among the other 7 cards in the card market so that all cards are again in ascending order in the whole card market.



Example: *Angelika buys the card **ORDER** (1.) and takes it into her hand. Angelika pays $4 and places the discount token above the market (2.) for use during the next administration action taken by any player.*

c) Carry out administration

The administration action lets you (possibly) gain money, and more importantly, lets you take cards from your discard stack back into your hand. Thus, playing cards in the best order is crucial so that you can leave weak cards at the bottom of your discard stack and take back only the more valuable cards.

When taking the administration action, follow these three steps. Your administration overview card gives you a summary as a reminder.

I. Gain income:

a) First, gain $3 minus the number of cards in your hand, taking the money from the supply. If the result is 0 or negative, do not take or pay any money.

"NO, Ronald, you never lose money. The lowest possible income is $0."

b) Then, remove 0 to 2 upright workers from any spaces on the game baord and return them to the supply. Gain $1 for each removed worker, taking the money from the supply.

"YES, Ronald, by removing workers your fellow players will have first pick at placing workers on these empty spaces. I bet they say, 'Thank you, Ronald!'"
"And YES, Ronald, you usually remove 2 workers as long as there are enough workers placed on all spaces of the game board."

c) Take the top 3 cards from your discard stack into your hand. If less than 3 cards are on your discard stack, take them all. Do not change the order of the remaining cards in your discard stack!

II. Buy back more cards:

Now you can buy back additional cards from the top of your discard stack. Pay $1 to take a card into your hand. You can do that any number of times, and you are not restricted to the income received in step I. Do not change the order of the remaining cards in your discard stack!

III. Replace cards in the card market:

Depending on the number of players, follow these steps:

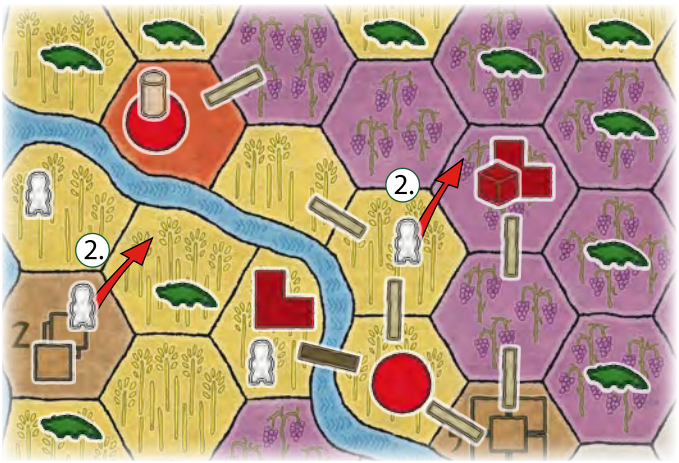
2-3

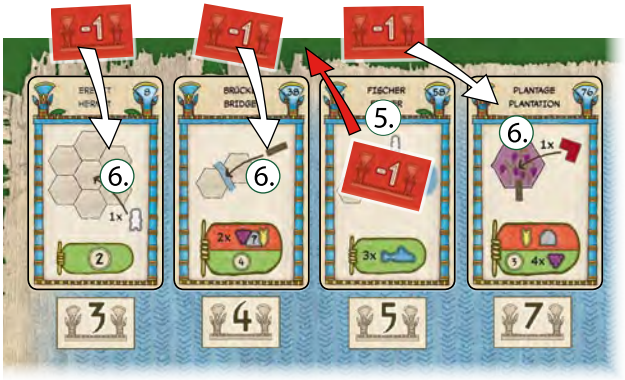
- Remove the lowest 2 cards with discount tokens from the current market and place them in the game box.
- If only 1 card has a discount token, instead remove that card together with the lowest card in the current market without a discount token.
- If no cards have discount tokens on them, instead remove the 2 lowest cards in the current market.
- Place a discount token on each card that remains in the current market that does not already have a discount token.
- Draw 2 cards from the draw pile and place them in the proper numerical order among the other 6 cards in the card market so that all cards are again in ascending order in the whole card market. Do not place discount tokens on the new cards.

4-5

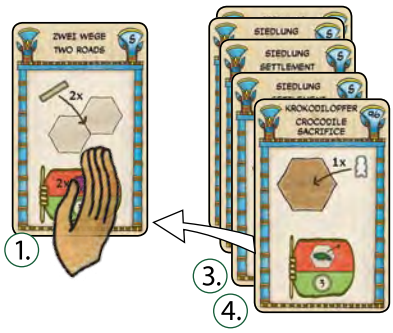
- Remove the lowest card with a discount token from the current market and place it in the game box.
- If no card has a discount token, instead remove the lowest card in the current market.
- Place a discount token on each card that remains in the current market that does not already have a discount token.
- Draw 1 card from the draw pile and place it in the proper numerical order among the other 7 cards in the card market so that all cards are again in ascending order in the whole card market. Do not place a discount token on the new card.

"YES, Ronald, you are absolutely right. You use 2 or 3 discount tokens for the cards during the game. You need all 4 tokens only at the start of the game."





Example: *In a game with 4 players, Angelika takes the administration action.*



In the "Get income" step, first, she gains $2 as she still has 1 card in her hand (1.). Second, she removes 2 workers and gains another $2 (2.). Third, she takes back into her hand the top 3 cards of her discard stack (3.).

In the "Buy back more cards" step, Angelika pays $2 to take 2 additional cards into her hand from the top of her discard stack (4.).

*In the "Replace cards in the card market" step, she removes the **FISHER** (5.) as that card still has a discount token. (With 2 or 3 players, she would also remove the **HERMIT** as it is the lowest card without a discount token.) Then, she places discount tokens on **HERMIT**, **BRIDGE**, and **PLANTATION** (6.).*

Angelika draws a card from the draw pile and sorts it with the other cards of the card market so all cards are again in ascending order. She does not place a discount token on the drawn card.

YOUR FINAL TURNS AND TRIGGERING THE END OF THE GAME



After you draw the last card of the draw pile, continue to draw cards from the "final turns" stack. Aside from cards with actions, this stack contains 4 natural disasters, that is, the yellow-bordered cards numbered 122-128. The natural disasters push the highest action cards into the current market. The natural disasters remain on the rightmost spaces of the card market, even if you empty the current market. You cannot buy the natural disasters!

Continue to take turns until you place the fourth natural disaster in the card market. This triggers the end of the game, after which you can **no longer take the administration action**. On your turn, you now only play a card, buy a card, or quit the game by taking the natural disaster from the card market that offers the most reputation. The other players continue to play until everyone has quit. The last player to quit gains no reputation from a natural disaster card. (With 5 players, there is no fifth natural disaster for the last player when they finally quit the game.)

"YES, Ronald, timing is the key. Taking your final administration action at the right time is crucial. Funnily enough, your fellow players know this, too!"

The player with the most reputation wins the game and can call themselves the most cunning advisor of the pharaoh! In case of a tie, the tied player with more leftover resources and money wins the game.

THE SOLO GAME

When you are playing solo, the pharaoh commands you to take charge of the whole urbanization yourself. You can either play single games in which you attempt to beat your personal high score or accept the pharaoh's challenge and play a campaign in which you try to fulfill different goals and unlock achievements that will help you adjust your plans in a series of games to urbanize Faiyum!

GAME PREPARATION

Follow all steps as described on pages 2 and 3, with these three changes:

C Take the administration overview card for the solo game.

I Do not use the discount tokens in a solo game. Return them to the game box.

J Start the game with $4.

HOW TO PLAY

When playing cards from your hand and when buying new cards from the card market, follow all rules of ***Faiyum*** as explained on the previous pages.

The only changes are during the **Administration** action:

II. When buying back the top cards from your discard stack (beyond the 3 you get for free), you must pay $1 for the first card, $2 for the second card, $3 for the third card, and so on.

III. When replacing 2 cards in the current market, choose these two cards and return them to the game box. Then, draw 2 cards from the draw pile and place them in the proper numerical order among the other 6 cards in the card market so that all cards are again in ascending order in the whole card market.

THE CHALLENGE OF THE PHARAOH

You can play the solo game in single games in which you aim for the best score, or you can accept the challenge of the pharaoh, playing a campaign of several games.

At the start of the campaign, your first goal is to gain at least 150 reputation. If you succeed, you strike off that goal. In your subsequent games, you must fulfill one of the other six goals in whatever order you like, adjusting your decisions depending on the available cards. Again, if you succeed and fulfill one of the other goals, strike it off. You can fulfill only one goal per game, and you can fulfill each goal only once during the entire campaign.

After fulfilling all seven goals, you have finished the campaign successfully, showing the pharaoh that you are the most cunning advisor for Faiyum!

Starting goal

- ☐ Gain at least 150 reputation (Start of the campaign).

Further goals

- ☐ Place 3 bridges.
- ☐ Place 2 palaces.
- ☐ Gain at least 250 reputation.
- ☐ Finish all 4 monuments on the building sites by placing all 15 building blocks.
- ☐ Place 9 workshops.
- ☐ Leave 10 or fewer crocodiles on wheat and grape spaces.

As a bonus, each time you fulfill a goal — including the starting goal — you unlock an achievement. The achievements are sorted in order, so you must unlock them from top to bottom. You can use each unlocked achievement in all subsequent games of the campaign!

Achievements

- ☐ **Game preparation:** Instead of $4, start the game with $10.
- ☐ **Administration:** I.b) Instead of removing up to 2 workers, you can remove up to 3 workers.
- ☐ **Game preparation:** In addition to $10, start the game with 1 fish and 1 rose.
- ☐ **Administration:** I.c) Instead of taking back the top 3 cards from your discard stack, take back the top 4 cards.
- ☐ **Play a card from your hand:** Instead of paying $3, you can substitute a single basic resource by paying $2.
- ☐ **Administration:** III. Instead of replacing 2 cards in the current market, replace only 1 card.

Author: Friedemann Friese
Graphics & Layout: Harald Lieske
Editing: W. Eric Martin, Linus Wolf, Ronald Hrkać, Christian Frank
Production: Henning Kröpke
Copyright 2020, 2F-Spiele, Bremen/Germany

2F-Spiele
Fedelhören 64
D-28203 Bremen
www.2f-spiele.de