

# North American Railways

A game for 3-5 players  
by Peer Sylvester

## Rules



3-5



12+



45min

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## 2. COMPONENTS

Each *North American Railways* copy contains:

- 30 shares (six cards each in the five colors of the railway companies)
- 5 starting cities (tan colored background).
- 36 cities (white colored background)
- 10 marker tokens (two each in the five colors of the railway companies)
- Play money (in the denominations of \$100, \$200, \$500 and \$1000)
- 1 starting player token

## The Shares

*North American Railways* contains 30 shares; 6 each in the colors of the five companies.

The players purchase these shares to gain an interest in these companies. By increasing the rail networks, the companies raise their profits and the players increase their wealth.



## 1. INTRODUCTION

North America in the 19th century: The players are wealthy entrepreneurs investing in the early railway companies whose expanding rail networks gradually connect even remote cities of the North American continent.

The players purchase shares of railway companies and hope to make enormous profits doing so.

*North American Railways* is a mechanically simple yet complex economic strategy game.

## The Cities

*North American Railways* has 36 cities which connect the rail networks of the companies.

Each city has values for costs and income. Moreover, a city may show up to three From Coast to Coast symbols that determine the share value of the company at the end of the game.



## The Start Cities

*North American Railways* contains 5 start cities. They are the base of each company's rail network. Each start city only has an income number.

## The Marker Tokens

*North American Railways* comes with 10 marker tokens; 2 each in the colors of the five companies. One marker token is used to mark the capital of a company, the other is given to the director (the player holding the majority of shares of the company).



## The Play Money

*North American Railways* has play money in the following denominations: \$100, \$200, \$500 and \$1000. They are used to trade shares and to allow the players to connect cities from the treasuries of the railway companies.



## The Starting Player Token

*North American Railways'* starting player for each turn receives the starting player token.



### 3. AIM OF THE GAME

The players try to earn the most profit by trading shares and expanding the rail networks of the five railway companies. The player with the most money at the end of the game is the winner and becomes the next "Rail Baron."

### 4. GAME PREPARATIONS

The 30 share cards are shuffled. Afterwards, one player takes the topmost two cards and puts them back into the game box – they are not used in this game.

The remaining shares are placed in four columns of seven cards each. The cards should all be placed in the same orientation.

One player places the ten marker tokens, sorted by color of the railway companies, above the share cards. Next to those a player puts the stack of the five starting cities.

Next, the 36 cities are shuffled. Afterwards they are placed in four columns of nine cities each. The cities should be placed in the same orientation as the shares.

The play money is divided into denominations and forms the bank. According to the number of players, each player receives this starting amount of money:

- 3 Player: \$2000
- 4 Player: \$1700
- 5 Player: \$1400

**Note:** The players may (and should) keep their own money hidden during the game. All shares, the treasury of the companies and the cities are always "open".

The starting player is determined randomly. He receives the starting player token.

### 5. SEQUENCE OF PLAY

**North American Railways** is played in game turns. Each turn consists of three phases in this order:

**Phase I: Trade Shares:** The players purchase shares of the five companies.

**Phase II: Buy Cities:** The players expand the rail networks of the five companies.

**Phase III: Receive Income:** The players receive money according to the value of the five companies.

#### PHASE I: TRADE SHARES

In this phase the players purchase shares of the five companies. Beginning with the starting player and then continuing in clockwise order each player may act once.

When it is a player's turn, he **has to** select one of the shares, which are **at the bottom** of one of the share columns

Now he has three options:

**1. The player selects one of the shares of a company that has no director:** The player takes the share and pays an amount of money to found the company. However, the amount paid must be at least \$100 and also must be divisible by 100 (\$200, \$300, etc.).

The player pays the money into the treasury of the company, i.e., he places it next to the marker token of the company. Afterwards, he takes the second marker token of the company. This tells all players that he is the current director of the company.

Finally, he puts one of the start cities above the treasury of the company to found its rail network.

**Example:** Marion purchases the first share of the blue company. She decides to pay \$600 for the share. To found the company she puts that money next to the blue marker token (the company treasury). Above the money she puts a start city – this is the start city of the company's rail network. Because she has the majority of shares of the blue company she is its director and takes the second blue marker token.



**2. The player selects a share of the company he is already director of:** The player takes the share and pays a fixed price of \$1000. Half of it (\$500) is paid into the capital of the company, the other half into the bank.

**3. The player selects a share of a company whose director is a different player:** In this case, the player suggests any purchase price to the director (again, at least \$100 and a sum that is divisible by \$100). The player may not suggest a price that he cannot pay. However, he may suggest a price that the director cannot pay.

The director now has the choice to let the player go ahead with that purchase or to purchase the share himself for the suggested price.

a) If the director allows the player to make the purchase, that player takes the share and pays half of the purchase price into the treasury of the company (rounded up, if needed) and the other half to the bank. If the player now has at least as many shares of the company as the director, he takes the marker token and becomes the new director of the company.



b) If the director purchases the share himself at the suggested price of the player, he takes the share. He pays half of the purchase price into the treasury of the company (rounded up, if needed). However, the other half is not transferred to the bank but to the other player.

Because the player did not purchase a share in the latter case, he may select another share from the available ones or simply end his player turn.

If he selects a new share, he has to choose a different company. If this share again is bought by the director, he may select another share of another company, etc. This continues until the player purchases

a share, he has chosen all shares of all possible companies (and the directors have purchased all of them,) or if he finishes his turn voluntarily.

**Example:** Marion selects a share of the red company whose director is Angelika. Marion fixes the price at \$800. Angelika decides to purchase the share herself and pays half of the sum, \$400, into the company treasury and the other half to Marion. Next, Marion selects a share of the green company and determines a price of \$900. Daniela is director of the green company and lets Marion buy the share at that price. Marion takes the green share; \$500 are paid into the company's treasury and \$400 to the bank.

## Quick Reference for all Share Trading options

1. The player buys the first share of a company and finds it	The player determines the price (multiple of \$100)	All the money goes to the company treasury
2. The player buys a share of a company he is already director of	The player pays the fixed price of \$1000	\$500 goes to the company treasury; \$500 goes to the bank
3a. The player chooses a share of a company of another director and the director says "ok"	The player determines the price (multiple of \$100)	Half of the money (rounded up) goes to the company treasury, the other half to the bank
3b. The player chooses a share of a company of another director and the director buys the share himself	The director pays the determined price (multiple of \$100).	Half of the money (rounded up) go to the company treasury, the rest to the other player.

## Exceptions:

- When a player has no money at all, he takes \$200 from the bank and does not select a share on his player turn.
  - In rare cases where one player is director of all companies whose shares are at the bottom of the share columns and he has less than \$1000, he chooses a share and pays all his money. Half of it, rounded up if necessary, goes into the company treasury, the other half to the bank.
  - If there are no shares remaining, the *Trade Shares* phase ends immediately.
- This phase end when all players have had a turn.

## PHASE II: BUY CITIES

In this phase, the players may expand the rail networks of the companies by "buying" new cities. Beginning with the starting player, and continuing in clockwise order, the players continue to take turns until they pass and leave this phase. This phase ends only after all players have passed.

When it is a player's turn, he chooses a company for which he has at least one share and selects one of the cities in the bottom column (just like with shares.)

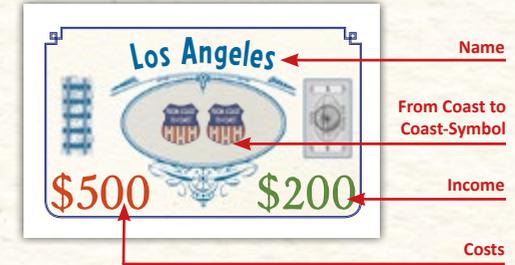
The costs printed in red have to be paid by the player out of the **treasury** of the selected company. The player puts the purchased city openly above the treasury and marker token of the company (next to the start city).

The player may only select a city which he can afford with the company's treasury; he may not add his own money. If all companies of which the player has shares of do not have enough money to buy any of the cities at the bottom of the columns, the player *has to pass* and leave the phase.

A player may only buy one city for the same company in this phase. As a reminder, he turns one of his shares of the company by 90° after he has acted for a company.

Now it is the next player's turn. If different players own the corresponding shares, they may all buy one city for the company. In other words: If the company has enough capital, each shareholder may buy one city for the company. *Companies with several shareholders thus have an advantage.*

This phase ends when no player can or wants to acquire a city for a company (*all players have passed*). All players now turn their shares back to the standard position.



## PHASE III: RECEIVE INCOME

In this phase, the players receive income from the companies. To make this as easy as possible, the companies should be "resolved" one after the other; the money is then paid to the players who have shares of the company in question.

The income of the companies is determined by the number of cities (*the length of the rail network*). Each city brings in as much money as the green number states. The sum of the *green* numbers of all cities is *evenly* divided between owned shares.

**Note:** It is handy to count the number of purchased shares and then place the money accordingly onto the various shares. Each player then gets the money according to his shares. Often the money cannot be divided completely. In this case, the director of a company receives an extra \$100. If afterwards, there is still some money that cannot be divided, the non-divisible amount goes into the company's treasury.

### Connected Cities



### Company's Capital



### Marker Token of the Company



**Examples:** The red company has an income of \$400. Marion is the only one owning red shares and therefore receives the full \$400.

The blue company has an income of \$800. Angelika is director and has two blue shares while Daniela has one. Therefore Angelika receives \$500 (2x \$200 for her shares plus \$100 for being director). Daniela gets

\$200 for her share; the remaining \$100 go the company's treasury.

When all income has been determined and money paid, the current starting player hands the starting player token to the next player in clockwise order. The new starting player starts a new game turn with phase I.

## 6. GAME END

A game of *North American Railways* ends when one or more of the following cases occur:

1. At the end of phase I (*Trade Shares*) there are less shares remaining to be traded than players participating in the game.
2. At the start of phase II (*Buy Cities*) there are five or less cities available to be purchased.
3. In phase II (*Buy Cities*) no city is purchased.

In all three cases the current game turn is completed – with one change in phase III (*Receive Income*):

- If the income of a company cannot be divided evenly, the director does not get an extra \$100 and instead receives half of the non-divisible remainder.

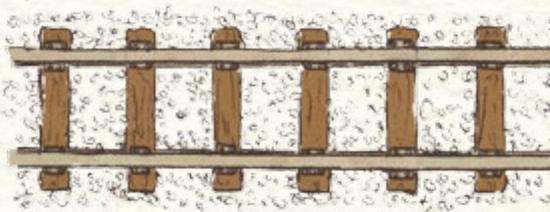
## Final Payment

At the end of the game the companies pay the following additional money:

- Each company pays \$100 for each "Coast to Coast-symbol" on cities of its rail network **per share**. The sum of the Coast to Coast-symbols is the value of the shares at the end of the game.

**Example:** The cities in the rail network of the green company have a total of 9 Coast to Coast-symbols. Angelika owns three green shares, therefore she receives an additional \$2700 (3x \$900).

Now the wealthiest player is the winner. If there is a tie, then the player among the tied ones that had his player turn first in the last game turn is the winner.



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