

Ave Caesar

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Contents

- 1 Game board
- 6 Chariots
- 6 Coins
- 6 sets of 24 race cards

Find Rome's best chariot driver!

Who will be crowned "Greatest Charioteer of Rome"?

3-6 players compete in a race around the famous Circus Maximus. The winner of a race is the first driver to complete 3 circuits of the course and cross the finish line to collect his laurels (points). This is done by judicious play of the race cards.

Ultimately, the player with the most points after several races (we suggest 4) is winner of the tournament.

How to play

- Select a course
- Setting up
- The race begins
- Visit the *Imperial Alley* after the 1st or 2nd round
- If you finished the race first, you won
- Start the next race

Preparation

Select a race-course; for 3-4 players, we suggest side A, white course, clockwise for the first race. For 5-6 players, side B, yellow course, clockwise.

Every race takes 3 rounds, with every player passing the *Imperial Alley* once.

Setting up

Each player gets a chariot, a coin and the set of cards of one colour. The racing cards have barely enough points for players to complete 3 laps of the course.

Starting positions

Players cut their deck of cards. The one with the highest card puts his chariot on the starting position labelled 1. The others proceed clockwise. Each player shuffles all their cards, including the one cut. (In the case of a tie for first place, the tied players cut again.)

To all chariot drivers

Taking the shortest route on the track uses the least movement points. 3 or 4 players have only 4 points to spare, 5 and 6 players have 6 points spare, so stay close to the shortest possible route. Don't waste movement points.

The race begins

Each player draws 3 cards from their deck. The first player starts by playing a race card, and moving their chariot forwards the number of spaces shown on the card. Players follow in clockwise order. After playing a card, players replenish their hand to 3 cards.

The movement rules

1. The chariots must be moved forwards, never backwards or sideways. They can change the lane at every dashed line by moving diagonally forwards to the next lane. They can not jump over walls.
2. Each player must play a race card and move on their turn even if it is to their disadvantage. A chariot must move exactly the number of spaces shown on the card. If a chariot cannot do so, the player doesn't play a card, and misses their turn.
3. Each space can be occupied by only one chariot.
4. The leading chariot may not play a 6, except at the start of the race. If the leader cannot move (i.e., his hand is all 6es), then he misses turns until someone overtakes him. *Exception: if the leader cannot be passed (e.g., a narrow lane), and has only 6es in his hand, he may play a 6.*
5. A chariot may not jump another. The only way to overtake is in another lane.
6. A chariot may never cross a wall.

The Imperial Alley

Every chariot has to stop in the Imperial Alley once in a race, after the first or second round. The player shouts "Ave Caesar!", and throws their tribute (coin) to Caesar. (The Imperial Alley is the narrow track between Caesar and the wall; see the illustration at the bottom of page 5). *If a player is blocked from going into the Imperial Alley on his second turn, and still has his coin, he must wait (miss turns) until the alley becomes free.*

End of the race

The first chariot past the finish line first, after completing 3 laps and visiting the Imperial Alley once, is the winner. Score as follows:

1st	6 points - congratulations!
2nd	4 points
3rd	3 points
4th	2 points
5th	1 point
6th	honour, and hope for the next race

If a chariot runs out of movement cards before reaching the finish, it gets 0 points.

The next race

We recommend these courses for the remaining races:

Race	3-4 players	5-6 players
1	Side A, white course, clockwise	Side B, yellow course, clockwise
2	Side A, blue course, clockwise	Side B, red course, clockwise
3	Side A, white course, anticlockwise	Side B, yellow course, anticlockwise
4	Side A, blue course, anticlockwise	Side B, red course, anticlockwise

The player who lost the last race gets the first position in the next race, the others follow clockwise. The overall winner is the player gaining the most points after 4 races.

Variants

- **Starting positions:** the winner of the last race may occupy position 1, the one who was second gets position 2 and so on. Adjust the seating order around the table, so everybody takes his turn clockwise.
- **Missed turns:** if a player may not move, they miss a turn and put a card to the bottom of their deck, drawing a replacement.
- **Crash and burn:** if a player is in the lead with only 6es in his hand, his chariot crashes and blocks the square it is in for the rest of the game. This may mean that no-one can win; in this case, no points are awarded for this race.
- **Dishonour:** if a player is blocked from entering the Imperial Alley, he must still move. At the end of the race, players who failed to give Caesar his tribute are executed, and score no points.