

3-player game

The 4-player rules are still valid, but :

Players must decide at the beginning of the game if they are going to use 4 or 3 neighborhoods (in which case neighborhood #4 will not be used). Using 3 neighborhoods will make the game more strained!

There are only three gems to win in each port (i.e. the three gems on each 'Ship' card; the large stone now only counts as one gem). The player holding a majority in a neighborhood now wins two gems; the second player wins one gem; the third player wins nothing.

To fill the market, you only use the two smaller gems on the 'Ship' card. These gems are placed on lines 2 and 3 of the market. Brokers cannot be placed on line 1 (which is like line 0 in the 4-player game).

2-player game

This version is played like the 3-player game (but you have to play on three neighborhoods).

Furthermore : Each player takes the 11 brokers of their color, plus four brokers ('4', '2', '1' and '0') belonging to a third color, representing the neutral player. The score token of this neutral player is placed on the starting square next to the markers of both human players. The bet for the turn order is settled normally between the two human players who take the '1' and '2' Order Cards.

Each player places their two brokers as usual (one faceup, the other facedown), plus one neutral broker facedown. A neutral broker can be placed anywhere, but once it is on the board, no player can check its value.

After the broker placing phase, you start counting points. Here are a few modifications for this phase :

The neutral player wins all the ties in which it is involved (there is only one exception: the neutral player can still be beaten by a player who owns the 'Intriguer' card). If the neutral player wins the 'Prince' or 'King' cards, points are normally scored.

If the neutral player wins another card, it is discarded and the player immediately gets a gem instead. When it has to choose a gem color, the neutral player automatically takes the strongest color on the market. If several colors are tied, the leftmost gem is automatically taken (blue, then green, then yellow, then red).

When the neutral player wins a neighborhood, the two gems with the highest values on the market are chosen among those featured on the 'Ship' card. If a white gem is available, it is automatically chosen first and given the color of the most valuable gem on the market (or the leftmost one in case of draw).

If the neutral player has to alter the quotations on the market, priority is given to the colors it owns in the largest amounts. If two or more colors are on a par, the leftmost color is chosen.

At the end of the game, if the neutral player has no gem in one color, points are scored as if the player were in the third place for this color.

Note: If the players are skilled enough, they can raise the neutral player's 'level' by changing the value of the neutral brokers each of them places, to 4, 3, 1 and 0 (and even more, if they want to !)

5-player game

To be able to play this version you must find a fifth color for your pawns (these brokers do not have to be identical to those supplied in the game). The 4-player rules are all still valid, but :

Take one '1' broker and one '3' broker away from your starting pool of eleven brokers (put them back into the box).

To fill the market, use the four gems of the 'Ship' card which has been drawn (counting the big gem twice). Those four gems are placed randomly on lines 0, 1, 2 and 3 of the market. During the broker placing phase, players will consequently be able to place brokers on line 0 (which will grant one victory point, like the other lines).

The bet for the turn order is settled as usual, but do not forget to add Order Card '5'.

In the broker placing phase, players only play three turns instead of four (in other words, they place six brokers – three of them faceup, three of them facedown – instead of eight).

At the end of the game, when basic gems are counted, a player who ends up in fifth position for a specific color scores no points for this color. Likewise, if two players are tied for the fourth place, neither of them scores (which is the normal application of the rule for ties).

The King's Favor

The King's Favor version, which we highly recommend, can be played by 3, 4 and 5 players. In any case, only the first three 'sycophants' score (unless there are ties forcing players to share the points).