

PIONEER RAILS



RULEBOOK

Designed by Matthew Dunstan & Jeffrey D. Allers

OVERVIEW

In Pioneer Rails, you are a railroad owner who has seen an opportunity to expand across the new lands of the frontier. You'll be competing with other railroad owners to plan your railway in the best way possible, connecting establishments to the railroad and satisfying the demands of the locals.

COMPONENTS



1 pad of 80 sheets



20 Playing cards
(10, J, Q, K, A of four poker suits)



15 Goal cards
(5 of each type)



1 Dealer token



1 Eraser



4 pencils



SETUP

1. Give each player a **Desert sheet** and a **pencil**.
2. Decide which side of the sheet will be used. All players must use the same side.
3. Separate the **Goal cards** into the 3 decks according to the symbol on the front of the card, and shuffle each deck separately. Draw 1 from each deck and place them face-up in the middle of the table. Return the other Goal cards to the box, they will not be used in this game.
4. Shuffle the **Playing cards**. Choose a player to be the **Dealer** and give them the Playing cards deck and the **Dealer token**.
5. In a 3 player game only, the final player in turn order writes "+2" in the "???" box. They gain an additional 2 points at the end of the game.

GAMEPLAY

The game is played over 4 rounds, and each round consists of 5 turns.

PLAYER TURN

At the start of a turn, the Dealer reveals 3 Playing cards from the deck face up in the middle of the table.

The Dealer then chooses 1 of these cards to use for their turn, taking it and placing it in front of them.

The other players then choose 1 of the remaining 2 cards to use on their turn, but the card they choose remains in the middle of the table, as other players can also choose it.

Turns are then taken simultaneously. On your turn, you must use the card you chose to:

1. Add to your poker hand; and
2. Extend a railway.

1. ADD TO YOUR POKER HAND:

Write the **value** of the card you have chosen (10, J, Q, K or A) on the next available space at the bottom of your sheet (from left to right, top to bottom). In each round, you are trying to make the strongest poker hand from the 5 values you have chosen that round. The strength of the poker hands are only determined by the value of the cards, and not the suit, which is instead used to extend your railways.



Example: After choosing to use the Queen of Diamonds, you write a 'Q' in the next available space at the bottom of the sheet.

2. EXTEND A RAILWAY

The **suit** of the card you chose in step 1 determines which **railway** you will extend. To extend a railway, draw 3 **tracks** on the edge of hexes. Each track must extend from that railway's **station** or from the end of existing tracks connecting back to that station. However, each track can be drawn on different **railway lines** leading from / belonging to that station. Each railway can have up to 6 different railway lines extending from its station.

A railway line always terminates at a Town. 🏠 Do not continue your railway through a Town. 2 railway lines may never meet, except at a Town.

Up to 3 different railways can connect with each other at the same Town to form a **network**.

After drawing 3 tracks, check to see if any features are now activated.

Mines, Banks, Forts, Rail Yards, and Saloons activate when there are at least as many tracks drawn along the edges of that hex as the number shown at the bottom of that hex.

Cattle hexes are activated when they are separated from other Cattle hexes using tracks.

Towns are activated when a railway connects to them for the first time.

When activating a feature, cross out the feature's symbol on the map and also mark the corresponding section in the scoring area.

If multiple features are activated in the same turn, they can be activated in any order.



Example: After choosing to use the Queen of Diamonds and writing the value of the card at the bottom of the sheet, 3 tracks are then drawn from the Diamonds station.



A feature can be activated with tracks from multiple railway lines. But those lines must not touch each other.

FEATURES



Saloons

Description: Draw tracks along 2 edges of the Saloon hex. Circle the next usable Saloon symbol. You may circle the Saloon symbol for future rounds but you may not circle the Saloon symbol of a previous round.

Ability: At the end of the round, if you have a circled Saloon next to your poker hand, you score double points for that hand.

Example: *This player has completed 2 edges of a Saloon hex. They then circled the next usable ×2 circle symbol. They have 2 Queens and 3 Aces. This would usually score 4 points. But because they have the ×2 bonus for this round, they double the value of this poker hand, scoring 8 points.*



Cattle Ranches

Description: Complete a Cattle Ranch by separating a Cattle hex from all other Cattle hexes. Do this by creating a boundary using 1 or more tracks, the river, mountains, stations, and/or the edge of the map.

Ability: At the end of the game, score points equal to the right-most circled Cattle Ranch symbol.

Example: *This player has drawn 1 track from the Heart Station to a mountain, and 2 tracks from the Heart Station to the edge of the map. This means that the circled Cattle hex has been separated from all other Cattle hexes. The player now circles the left-most available Ranch symbol on the Ranch score track.*





Forts

Description: Draw tracks along 4 edges of the Fort hex.
Circle the left-most available Fort symbol.

Ability: At the end of the game, score points equal to the right-most circled Fort symbol.



Mines/Gold Nuggets

Description: Draw tracks along 1 edge of the Mine hex. Circle 1 of the available Gold Nugget symbols in your scoring area.

Ability: At the end of the game, score 1 point for each circled Gold Nugget (even if crossed off).



Banks

Description: Draw tracks along 3 edges of the Bank hex.

Cross off up to 4 circled Gold Nuggets. Multiply the number crossed off by the multiplier shown in the leftmost empty Bank ($\times 2$, $\times 3$ or $\times 4$), then write this number in the Bank square.

Ability: At the end of the game, score points equal to the sum of your Banks.

Example: *This player has collected 3 Gold Nuggets so far. In this turn, they draw 3 tracks along 3 edges of a new Bank hex. They then cross off the 3 Gold Nuggets from the Gold scoring section to deposit them in the Bank. They multiply the number of Gold Nuggets (3) by the multiplier shown in the leftmost empty Bank square ($\times 2$), scoring them an additional 6 points.*

No more Gold can be deposited at this bank, A bank can only accept gold deposits immediately after it is activated, and up to 4 gold can be deposited in each bank.





Rail Yards

Description: Draw tracks along 3 edges of the Rail Yard hex. Circle the left-most available Rail Yard symbol.

Ability: At the end of the game, score points equal to the highest number of Towns on a single railway line or network, multiplied by the multiplier shown on the right-most circled Rail Yard symbol.



Example: This player has connected the Hearts Station to 2 Towns, and the Clubs Station to 2 Towns. 1 of the Towns is used by both the Hearts Station and the Clubs Station, resulting in those Networks being combined. At the end of the game, this player scores all the Towns in this network (3) and multiplies this by the right-most circled Rail Yard symbol (x4), resulting in 12 points at the end of the game. They have 2 Rail Yard symbols circled because they have drawn 3 tracks around 2 Rail Yard hexes during the game.



Towns

Description: Draw a track to make a railway terminate at a Town. **You cannot continue a railway once it reaches a Town.** If this is the first time the Town has been reached, circle the left-most available Town Symbol.

Ability: Players can cross off a Town from their score track to activate a Town benefit (see right for more details). At the end of the game, score 1 point for each circled Town (even if crossed off).

TOWN BENEFITS

On any turn, 1 or more available Town symbols can be crossed off, each giving you 1 extra **bonus track** per Town used, AND the ability to use 1 of 5 **special benefits**:



Bridge: You may draw a track over the river.



Tunnel: You may draw a track between the 2 hexes of a mountain range.



Shortcut: You may draw a track connecting opposite corners of a blank land hex.



Switch: You may draw a track branching off of a line to start a new line. This is the **only way** to achieve a fork in a railway line.



Suit: You may change the suit of your current card to build **all of your tracks this turn** on a different railway.



You will start the game with 1 circled Town symbol, which you can cross off and use straight away if you wish.

You can cross off one or more Towns to use the bonus track(s) without using a Town Benefit.

Remember, you get 1 extra bonus track this turn for each Town you use.

END OF THE TURN

At the end of each turn, check to see if you have completed any goal cards.

If you are the first to complete a Goal card, circle the 10 points star in the corresponding Goal box scoring area.

If more than 1 player completed the Goal on the same turn, all players who completed the Goal score 10 points.

All players who did not complete the Goal card this turn must cross out the 10 points star.

Goal cards can still be completed in future turns but they are now only worth 5 points.

In this way, every player can score every Goal Card, but only the first player(s) can score 10 points.

Discard the 3 Poker cards used this turn. The deck and Dealer token are then passed to the next player clockwise who becomes the Dealer for the next turn.



END OF THE ROUND

After 5 turns, the round ends. At the end of each round, score points according to the strength of your **poker hand**, scoring double points if you have the Saloon symbol circled for this round. If you do not have the **Saloon symbol** circled, cross it out.

Write the points for your poker hand in the box beside the Saloon symbol.

If this is the end of the fourth round, the game ends and you proceed to **End of Game & Final Scoring**. Otherwise, all poker cards are shuffled together again to form a new deck and a new round begins, starting with the Dealer.

POKER HANDS

1★	2★	3★	4★	5★	6★
Pair	Two Pair	Three of A Kind	Full House (a pair and three of a kind)	Straight (10, J, Q, K, A in any order)	Four of a Kind

END OF GAME & FINAL SCORING

After the fourth and final round score points for your features:

Mines/Gold Nuggets: Score 1 point for each circled gold nugget (even if crossed off).

Bank: Score points equal to the sum of all banks.

Fort: Score points for your right-most circled fort.

Cattle Ranches: Score points equal to the right-most circled Cattle Ranch symbol.

Rail Yard: Score points equal to the highest number of Towns on a single railway line or network, multiplied by the multiplier shown on the right-most circled Rail Yard symbol.

Towns: Score 1 point for each circled Town (even if crossed off).

Also, score points for **completed goals** and sum total of your **poker hands**.

The player with the highest score wins. If there is a tie, then the tied player with the most points from their poker hands wins. If still a tie, the tied players share the victory.

ADVANCED HAND CARD RULE (1-8 PLAYERS)

For expert players, try the following: at the beginning of each round, before drawing 3 Playing Cards to place face-up, deal 1 card to each player face-down. Each player looks at their card, but must not reveal it to the other players. This is your **final** card for the round!

Then continue to play the current round as usual with 3 face-up cards and the Dealer choosing 1 of them, etc.

With this variant, however, you can plan ahead for both your final turn and your poker hand.

5+ PLAYERS

To play the game with 5 or more players, set up the game as normal and choose 1 player to be the Dealer.

At the start of a turn, the Dealer discards 1 card from the top of the Playing deck and announces its suit and value to all players. **This card is not available for any player to choose**, but by knowing which card has been discarded, players know what is less likely to appear in future turns.

The Dealer then turns over 2 Playing cards from the deck face up in the middle of the table, instead of the usual 3 Playing cards.

All players then choose 1 of the 2 face-up cards to use on their turn.

SOLO MODE

SETUP

1. Take a **sheet** and a **pencil**.
2. Decide which side of the sheet will be used.
3. Put a line through the Goal boxes on your sheet. They will not score you points in the solo mode.
4. Separate the **Goal cards** into the 3 decks according to the symbol on the front of the card, and shuffle each deck separately. Draw 1 from each deck and place them face-down in the middle of the table.
5. Then, shuffle **all 3** decks together and draw a number of cards equal to your chosen difficulty level, placing them **face-up** in the middle of the table.

Difficulty	Beginner	Easy	Medium	Hard	Legendary
Additional face-up goals	0	1	2	3	4

6. Return the other Goal cards to the box, they will not be used in this game.
7. Shuffle the **Playing cards**.

GAMEPLAY

At the start of a turn, look at and discard 1 card from the top of the deck. **This card is not available to choose** but by knowing which card has been discarded you will know what is less likely to appear in future turns.

Then turn over 2 Playing cards from the deck face up in the middle of the table, instead of the usual 3 Playing cards.

Then choose 1 of the 2 face-up cards to use on your turn.

At the beginning of rounds 2, 3, and 4 reveal a new Goal card from the face-down Goal cards in the centre of the table.

Do not score Goal cards as they are completed. Instead, remove the completed Goal card from the centre of the table.

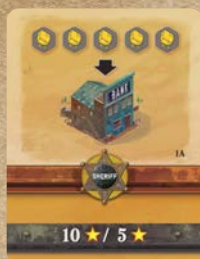
END OF GAME & FINAL SCORE

You must beat a target score of 60 to win the game. For every goal you do not complete that remains in the centre of the table, add 10 to the target score.

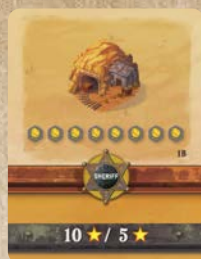
Write the final target score in the box marked ???.



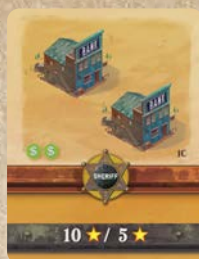
GOAL CARD REFERENCE



Deliver 5 Gold Nuggets to Banks.



Dig up 8 Gold Nuggets.



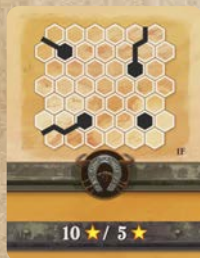
Complete 2 Banks.



Complete 3 Saloons.



Complete 1 Fort.



Connect 3 Stations to the edges of the map.



Build a track along 4 different Mountain ranges.



Complete 5 Ranches.



Build 2 Tunnels from 2 different Stations.



Complete 1 Building with tracks from more than 1 Station.



Connect to 6 Towns.



Connect 3 Towns to the same Station.



Build 2 Bridges from 2 different Stations.



Connect 1 Town to 2 different Stations.



Complete 2 Rail Yards.

ESSENTIAL EDITION CONTENT

This content is not included in the base game. If you do not yet have this content, you can still find it on the Dranda Games webstore!

www.drandagames.co.uk/shop

The Pioneer Rails Essential Edition contains 2 additional maps, with new features and new Goal cards. It also contains an exclusive first-player marker and 2 mini-expansions; Company Owners and Jokers.



FOREST SHEET

OVERVIEW

After expanding your railway network throughout new lands of the frontier, you set your sights North, on the forests and hills. But watch out for the troublemakers camped in those hills! Capture bandits and send them to your jails to earn points. Be sure to catch them quickly and make sure you have enough jail cells because if you don't, they'll escape and you'll lose points!

ADDITIONAL COMPONENTS

1 pad of 80 sheets

6 additional Goal cards (3 Sheriff, 2 Ranch, and 1 Train card)

SETUP

Setup the game as explained on page 3 with the following changes:

1. Use the **Forest sheet** instead of the Desert sheet.
2. Remove Goal cards 1A, 1B, 1C, and 1E. Then shuffle all the new Goal cards (2A, 2B, 2C, 2D, 2E, and 2F) into their correct decks according to the symbol on the front of the cards.



GAMEPLAY

The game is played in the same way as the regular map of Pioneer Rails, with new features and modifications to some existing features.

FEATURES



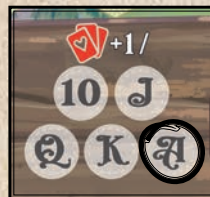
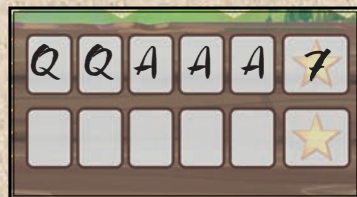
Saloons

Description: Draw tracks along 2 edges of the Saloon hex.

Choose a poker card value to circle (10, J, Q, K, or A).

Ability: At the end of this round and all future rounds, for each of the values in your poker hand that matches a circled value, you score +1 point.

Example: *This player has completed 2 edges of a Saloon hex. They then circled the A circle symbol. They have 2 Queens and 3 Aces at the end of the round. This would usually score 4 points. But because they have the A bonus, they add 3 points to the poker value of this poker hand, scoring 7 points.*

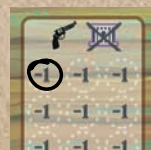


Bandits

Description: Draw tracks along 2 edges of the Bandit hex. **This must be done in a single turn to capture the bandit.** Circle the leftmost Bandit next to 1 of your circled Jail symbols in your scoring area.



If you don't complete a bandit in 1 turn (by only drawing 1 track along the edge of a Bandit hex instead of 2), or if you complete a Bandit but don't have a jail cell to capture them, circle 1 of the escaped bandit symbols. You lose 1 point at the end of the game for each escaped bandit.





Jails

Description: Draw tracks along 3 edges of a Jail hex. Choose any Jail to circle. Those jail cells are now available to use for capturing bandits.

Ability: At the end of the game, score the points shown in each circled Bandit cell.



Forts

Description: Draw tracks along the edges of the Fort hex.

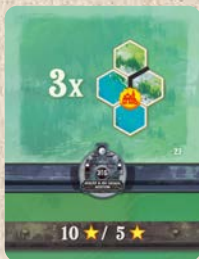
Ability: At the end of the game, score 2 points for each edge marked on the Forts.



Mines/Gold nuggets and Banks are not used on this sheet.

All other features and terrain that are not mentioned above behave in the same way as they do on the Desert sheet.

FOREST GOAL CARD REFERENCE



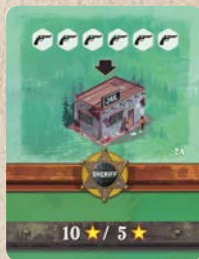
Connect to 3 Towns by the river.



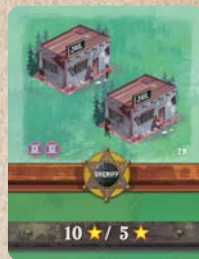
Connect to 3 Towns by mountains.



Build 2 tracks along 3 different Forts.



Deliver 6 Bandits to Jails.



Complete 2 Jails. (this does not mean fill them with Bandits)



Build tracks extending from 4 different stations, connecting to Mountain ranges.

COMPANY OWNERS MINI EXPANSION

COMPONENTS

10 Company Owner cards

SETUP

Shuffle the Company Owner cards and place them in a deck, face down at the centre of the table.

GAMEPLAY

At the start of each round, reveal 1 Company Owner card face up in the centre of the table.

At the end of each round, discard the current face-up Company Owner card to the bottom of the Company Owner deck.

Each Company Owner changes the rules of the game or gives all players a special ability that they can use during the current round.

COMPANY OWNERS REFERENCE



This round, Banks are completed with 2 tracks instead of 3. (Desert map only)



This round, saloons are completed with 1 track instead of 2.



This round, you may sacrifice 1 of your 3 tracks to extend from any station.



This round, when you draw track(s) around a Fort, draw 1 additional track.



This round, Poker hands score double. (If you already have this bonus through an active Saloon, your poker hand scores triple)



This round, you may draw 2 tracks instead of 3. If you do, 1 of the 2 tracks can be a switch.



This round, you may draw 2 tracks instead of 3. If you do, 1 of the 2 tracks can be a bridge.



This round, you may draw 2 tracks instead of 3. If you do, 1 of the 2 tracks can be a tunnel.



This round, you may draw 2 tracks instead of 3. If you do, 1 of the 2 tracks can be a shortcut.



This round, any goals you complete score an additional 5 points

JOKER CARDS MINI EXPANSION

COMPONENTS

2 Joker cards

SETUP

Shuffle the joker cards in with the Playing card deck.



This Joker represents Spades/Clubs



This Joker represents Hearts/Diamonds

GAMEPLAY

At the start of a turn, the Dealer reveals 3 Playing cards from the deck face up in the middle of the table, as usual. If a Joker card is revealed you can choose it in the same way you would any other card.

If you choose a Joker card, write a ★ symbol for the value of the poker card this turn. When scoring your poker hand, a ★ can be used as any value.

Each Joker card is 1 of 2 suits. 1 represents Spades/Clubs and the other represents Hearts/Diamonds. You may extend from 1 of the 2 stations that match the suits the Joker represents. Normal rules apply to extending a railway line with the Joker cards.

You can only choose a Joker if you have not already chosen a joker in this game.

If 2 Joker cards are revealed in the same turn, discard the second Joker card and draw another card from the poker deck.

RULES REFERENCE

START OF THE TURN

Reveal 3 Playing cards. The Dealer then chooses 1 of these cards. (for 5+ players, the first card revealed is discarded) The other players then choose 1 of the remaining 2 cards. (This includes the Dealer in a 5+ player game)

THEN SIMULTANEOUSLY...

Add to your poker hand by using the value of your chosen card AND extend a railway by using the suit of your chosen card. After drawing 3 tracks, check to see if any features are now activated.

END OF THE TURN

Check to see if any Goal cards have been completed. Discard the 3 Playing cards and pass the Playing card deck to the player on the left who becomes the new dealer.

END OF THE ROUND

Score points according to the strength of your poker hand. Then shuffle any discarded Playing cards back into the Playing card deck.

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