LIGHTNING TRAIN™

Steer your railway company through a land of strategic opportunity in *Lightning Train*, a bag-building train game.

Build your bag to improve your company's resources, then place your chips to open stations and train lines across eight regions of North America. There's a fortune to be made by delivering goods to the cities that need them... but will you work together, or look to cut out the competition? Which stations do you need to secure a route to victory? How can the powerful lightning trains accelerate you past your rivals?

All aboard the *Lightning Train*!

Overview

LIGHTNING TRAIN is a **bag-building** strategy game where players compete to run the most successful railway company.

You'll pull chips at random from your own bag to determine what you can do on your turn. You'll also buy new chips, adding to your future options.

Players use train chips to build **rail lines** between cities. The main way to get new train chips is with the **Lightning Train** icon.

Each city is either a producer of various types of **goods**, or is a place where a **station** can be built to receive those goods.

Most points are scored when a **delivery** of goods is made to a station that requests them. Goods always move along the fewest number of rail lines possible—the most direct route. Each player scores for each of their rail lines used in a delivery.

At the end of the game, the player with the most points is the winner!

> I'm Conway the Conductor! Look for me throughout this rulebook for advice on various aspects of the game.
>
> When you're ready to explain the rules to your group, first make sure everyone understands these basics from the Overview:
>
> ▶ The chips you pull from your bag determine what you can do each turn, and you'll buy more chips as you play.
> ▶ You'll use train chips to build rail lines. Lightning Train icons are the main way to get more train chips.
> ▶ Rail lines are used to move goods to stations that request those goods.
> ▶ You score points when your rail lines are used to make a delivery.

Components

Double-sided game board

84 market chips

27 station tokens
15 large, 12 small

Lightning Train market token

42 goods tokens
6 each of: cattle, crops, gold, oil, passengers, steel, and textiles

6 delivery tokens and 2 delivery/contract tokens

7 neutral station markers

8 loan chips

6 🔢 ✚ chips

Player Components

These components come in four different colors, one for each player. Only the blue components are shown here.

Company board

Go Public board and Industrialize board
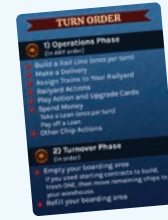
Score marker and 6 station markers

Company bag

54 train chips
48 basic trains and 6 locomotives

Each player also gets a set of these components:

Helper card

4 power chips

7 starting chips

Throughout these rules, any reference to a "train chip" means either a basic train or a locomotive.

25 mogul cards
includes both upgrade and goal cards
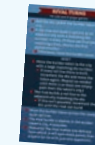
20 action cards

15 production cards

10 setup cards

For Solo and/or 2-Player Games

Die

Rival Turns helper card

4 builder tokens

8 region cards

2 dynamite tokens

A Place the game board in your playing space. Use the side shown here for 3 or 4 players. For 1 or 2 players, use the other side.

Place the Lightning Train market token on the 25-point space of the score track.

Scan here to learn how to play the game by watching a video.

B Place the starting goods tokens. TWO of these goods go in the following cities (each marked with a dashed outline):

Crops in **Sacramento**

Gold in **Deadwood**

Cattle in **St. Louis**

Textiles in **Toronto**

Passengers in **New York City**

Steel in **Pittsburgh**

Crops in **Raleigh**

Place the remaining goods tokens in a supply next to the game board.

C Shuffle the market chips face down to create a market supply next to the game board.

Reveal six market chips, one at a time, and place them on the game board in the market.

The market is divided by cost into eight compartments. The markings on the bottom edge of each market chip show which compartment you place it in. Place each chip in the leftmost empty slot of the indicated compartment.

Each compartment has slots for only one or two chips. If a compartment fills up, set aside any new market chips you would place there. Once you've placed six chips in the market, return any that you set aside to the game box. (You won't use them in this game.)
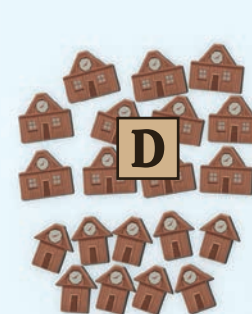
Note that these rules for placing market chips are **only used for setup**. During the game, different rules for the market allow a chip to be added to a full compartment.

Stack the 6 🟩1 ✚ chips off the board next to the 🟩2 compartment .

Place the loan chips in the bank, to left of the market.

4

D Separate the station tokens by size—large and small. Shuffle each group face down and place it in a supply next to the game board.

D¹ Shuffle the setup deck and reveal one card. For each city on it:

Find that city on the board, and reveal a station of matching size from the supply. Place it on that city.

Place a neutral station marker on the top of the station.

In a game with four players, skip the two cities on the card marked "1-3." (Place only five stations, not seven.)

Return all cards from the setup deck to the game box.

D² Reveal two more stations of each size and place them in the spaces on the game board next to the loans in the bank.

C

NE

MW

A

S

SW

A

D¹

E Shuffle the action deck and place it near the game board.

Prepare the mogul deck.

For your first game, it is recommended that you remove four cards (marked "advanced" on the bottom): Creative Accounting, Industrial Magnate, Lease Agreements, and Meal Ticket.

Shuffle the mogul cards, **deal two to each player**, then place the remaining deck near the action deck.

F Give each player a helper card for reference, then continue to each player's personal setup on the next page.

G Take a company board and place it in front of you.

Take all 54 train chips matching your board's color and place them in a personal supply near you. Keep the 6 locomotives separate from the 48 basic trains.

Take the six station markers of your color and place them on the station slots of your company board.

Take a set of the four power chips and place them on your company board in the marked slots (in any order).

Take an Industrialize board and a Go Public board. Place them below your company board, with the sides face up that are shown here.

H Take a company bag, then put 10 chips inside:

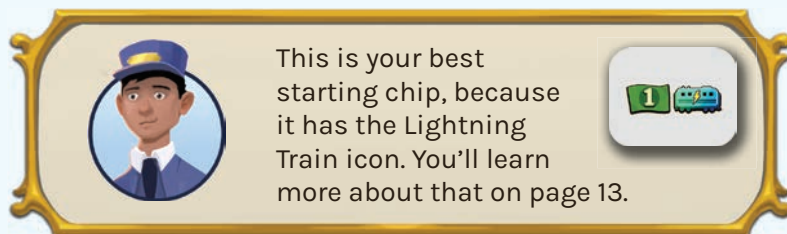Three basic trains, taken from your personal supply.

A set of the seven starting chips (which includes three starting contracts).
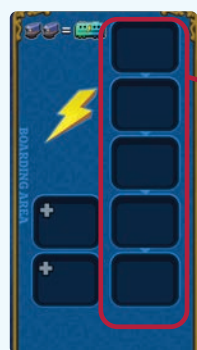
Then, mix the 10 chips inside your bag and draw five at random. Place them on your company board, in the five basic slots of your boarding area.

If you draw all three of the starting contracts—or none of them—return all five chips to your bag and redraw. (Repeat as necessary, until your five chips include exactly one or two starting contracts.)

This is your best starting chip, because it has the Lightning Train icon. You'll learn more about that on page 13.

I Place the score marker of your color on the game board, on the starting space of the score track.
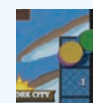
J Determine a first player randomly. That player shuffles the production deck and returns three cards from it to the game box without looking at them. They place the remaining 12-card deck in front of them.

During the game, play will proceed clockwise from this first player.

K Players take these tokens and place them near their company boards:

The first and second player each take two delivery tokens.

The third and fourth player (if any) each take one delivery token and one delivery/contract token.

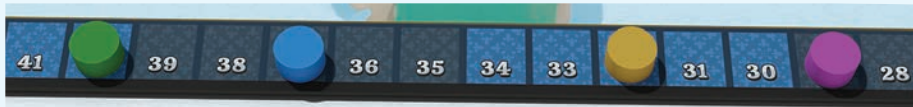Additional setup is required for a 2-player or solo game. See pages 16-19.

Round Structure

LIGHTNING TRAIN is played over a number of rounds. Each round proceeds as follows:

1) Reveal a production card. The first player reveals the top card of the deck. Usually, it tells you to add two goods to the game board. Take the goods from the supply and place them on the city (or cities) named on the card. Then put the card in a discard pile for production cards.

2) Award subsidies. Check every player's position on the score track. The track is divided into zones of alternating shades called subsidy tiers. For each *complete* tier between a player and the leader (or tied leaders), they take one Lightning Train—**up to a maximum of two Lightning Trains** (page 13).

> Help the first player remember to reveal a production card! It's easy to forget when they're excited to take their next turn.
>
> Don't worry about subsidies at the start of your first game. No one gets any in the first round.
>
> Turn order never changes. The same player keeps the production deck in front of them for the whole game.

The green player is in the lead with 40 points. They receive no subsidies. Blue is at 37 points. There isn't a complete subsidy tier between them and green, so they also receive no subsidies. Yellow is at 32 points. There is one complete subsidy tier (35-39) between them and the leader, so they take one Lightning Train. Purple is at 29 points. There are two complete subsidy tiers between them and the leader, so they take two Lightning Trains—the maximum a player can get from subsidies.

3) Players take their turns. Each player takes one turn, beginning with the first player and proceeding clockwise.

Continue playing rounds until the end of the game is triggered (page 15).

Player Turns

Each player turn has two phases:

1) Operations Phase. In this phase, you make decisions for your railway company. You can take any of the following actions, in any order. You may take the same action more than once, unless a limit is specified.

> **Build a Rail Line** (limit once per turn)
> **Make a Delivery**
> **Assign Trains to Your Railyard**
> **Railyard Actions**
> > **Line Storage** (used with Build a Rail Line)
> > **Secure Contract**
> > **Build Station** (limit once per turn)
> > **Use Explosives**
> > **Industrialize** (limit once per **game**)
> > **Go Public** (limit once per **game**)
> **Play Action and Upgrade Cards**
> **Spend Money**
> > **Take a Loan** (limit once per turn)
> > **Pay off a Loan**
> **Other Chip Actions**

When you can't take any more actions (or don't want to), you declare the end of your operations phase and proceed to...

2) Turnover Phase. This phase is cleanup from your current turn, and preparation for your next one.

> **Empty your boarding area**
> **Refill your boarding area**

The parts of a turn are detailed on the following pages.

> The helper card you get during setup reminds you about all these parts of a turn.

Build a Rail Line

A rail line is a series of train chips played on an empty path between two cities on the game board. Rail lines are used to make deliveries.

You may build only one rail line each turn. To build one, you must meet the following requirements:

1) You must have a **contract** for the region where you are building. If the path crosses a region boundary, a contract for *either* region is sufficient.

2) You must be able to **fill every slot of the path** using train chips. Generally, these must come from your boarding area (and/or Line Storage, page 10). However, if you have a station in the city on either end of the rail line, you may take and use one basic train from your supply. (One only, even if you have a station on both ends.)

3) The rail line must have a direct **connection** to at least one of the following:

▶ One of the starting cities on the eastern seaboard (with a sunrise above its name).

▶ A city where you have a station.

▶ One of your existing rail lines.

4) **If it is a mountain path** (marked with brown slots), **you must be able to tunnel** by having at least one tunnel icon this turn: on a chip in your boarding area, on an action card you've played, or by taking the Use Explosives railyard action to tunnel (page 11).

If you meet all the requirements, place the required train chips on the slots of the path. If there are any star icons in the slots at the ends of the path, **score 1 point for each icon on** *one* **of the ends**.

Sabrina wants to build a rail line between Vancouver and Calgary. To meet the requirements, she has:

1) a contract for the Northwest region;

2) four train chips—three in her boarding area, and a station in Vancouver (letting her take one basic train from her supply);

3) a connection—in this case, the station in Vancouver;

4) a tunnel icon on a chip in her boarding area (because this is a mountain path).
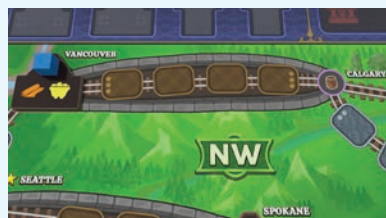
Sabrina places her four train chips on the four slots on the path. The ends of this path each show 3 star icons, so Sabrina scores 3 points.
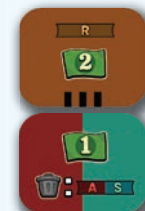
Contracts

There are eight regions on the game board.

A	Atlantic	**R**	Rockies
MW	Midwest	**S**	South
NW	Northwest	**SW**	Southwest
NE	Northeast	**W**	West

If a chip in your boarding area has a region's label, it provides you with a contract for this turn. Some chips provide contracts for more than one region.

With these two chips in her boarding area, Sabrina has contracts for three regions. The top chip provides a contract for the Rockies region. The bottom one provides a contract for two others: Atlantic and South.

You can also gain a contract using the Secure Contract action (page 10).
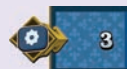
You won't always use all your contracts each turn, but having extras gives you more options.

Scoring Points

Any time you score points, advance your score marker on the score track (around the edge of the game board). Certain things happen when you reach specific scores (stopping on them exactly, or passing them).

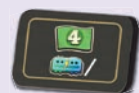**3** Choose one of the power chips on your company board (placed during setup) and move it to your warehouse. *(This happens at 3, 10, and 15 points.)*

6 Draw an action card.

19 If you have at least one card in your hand, draw a card from either the mogul deck or the action deck. Then discard a mogul or action card from your hand. (It can be the one you just drew.)

4 The first time *any* player reaches 25 points, move the Lightning Train market token (placed here during setup) to the **4** compartment of the market. For the rest of the game, any player may spend **4** on their turn (page 12) to take a Lightning Train (page 13).

If you pass 100 points, you do not claim any of these rewards again.

Make a Delivery

A delivery uses a series of rail lines to move goods to a city that wants them, from the closest connected producer city.

You may make any number of deliveries during your turn. However, **each delivery requires** either:

▶ A 🪵 icon on a chip in your boarding area or an action card you've played this turn (each icon allowing one delivery); or

▶ Spending one of the delivery tokens that you received during setup, returning it to the game box. (For the third and fourth players, this can be the delivery/contract token.)

To make a delivery, do each of the following steps in order:

1) **Choose a station** with at least one goods request—a visible goods icon. If the station has two requests, choose one.

2) Identify the *closest connected producer city* that has a face-up goods token corresponding to the request:

▶ "Connected" means there must be an *unbroken route* of rail lines between the two cities (belonging to any players).

▶ "Closest" means you must use the *fewest number of rail lines* possible. (Rail lines, not train chips.)

    If there is a tie, you must use the route with the most locomotive chips.

    If there is still a tie, choose between the tied options.

3) **Award points** for the route. For each rail line along the route, its owner scores 1 point. (Again: rail line, not train chip.) Also, if the destination station has a player's station marker on it, that player scores 1 point.

4) **Take the goods token** from the producer city and **put it face down on the station**, covering the corresponding goods request icon. (Each request can only be met once during the game.)

> Two neutral rail lines are already built out of San Francisco (to Sacramento, and to Coloma). No player scores points for these lines.
>

Brayden wants to make a delivery. He has no 🪵 icons in his boarding area, so he spends one of his delivery tokens.

He selects the station in Detroit, choosing crops from the two available goods requests. The closest connected producer city for crops is Raleigh, with a route of three rail lines connecting them. Two of these rail lines are green, belonging to Brayden, so he scores 2 points. The third rail line belongs to the yellow player, Alan, so he scores 1 point. The station itself has a neutral station marker, so no one scores a point for it.

Brayden takes one of the two face-up crops tokens from Raleigh and places it face down on the crops request in Detroit.

Detroit still has a steel request that could still be delivered to it later in the game. Raleigh still has one crops token that could be delivered to a different station with a crops request.

A station always has to bring goods from the closest connected producer city. But a producer city doesn't always end up delivering to the closest station wanting that good.
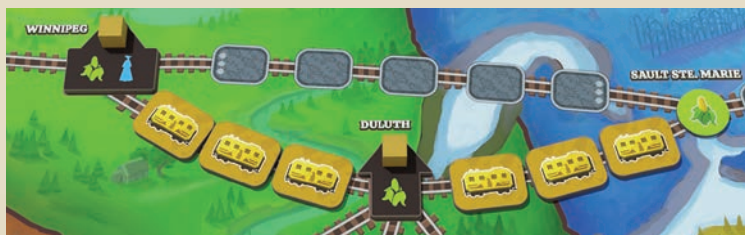

Here, Sault Ste. Marie only has one crops token. Both Winnipeg and Duluth want crops. If Alan decides to make a delivery, he can choose the station in Winnipeg, even though Duluth is closer. The Winnipeg route would use two of his rail lines instead of just one for the Duluth route, so Winnipeg will score him an extra point.

Assign Trains to Your Railyard

Your railyard consists of six different areas on your company board, each with its own railyard action. There are slots for chips in each area. Each slot may hold one train chip (a basic train or locomotive.)

To assign a train chip to your railyard, move it from your boarding area to an empty slot on one of the railyard actions. **A red banner on an action indicates a station requirement**: if you haven't built that many stations (or more), you can't assign a train chip to that action.
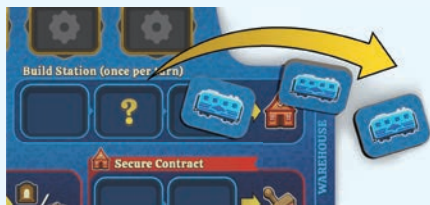
To take a railyard action, spend the required number of train chips by moving them from that action to your warehouse (off your company board, to the right of it).

You are not required to take an available railyard action; you may leave the train chips there until you decide to take the action, even on a future turn. Once a train chip is assigned to a railyard action, it can't be moved except by spending it to take the action.

You can't end your operations phase while you still have any train chips in your boarding area and an empty slot in your railyard where you could assign them.

Railyard Actions

Line Storage

You do not take this railyard action on its own. Instead, when you are taking the Build a Rail Line action, you may use the train chip stored here as part of that rail line.

Secure Contract

You may spend two train chips from here to choose any one region. You gain a contract for that region for the rest of your turn. (It's not represented by a chip.)

The third and fourth players can take this action by spending the delivery/contract token they received during setup (returning it to the game box), even if they have no stations built.
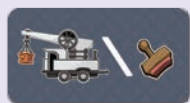
Build Station

You begin the game with six station markers on your company board. Each one allows you to build a station in a non-producer city that doesn't already have one.

You may take this action only once each turn. To build a station, you must meet BOTH of the following requirements:

1) You must have a **contract** for the region where you are building. (The same contract can be used to build a station and a rail line during the same turn.)

2) Each city shows a cost to build there. You must **spend that many train chips** from this railyard action.

If you meet the requirements:

▶ Choose a face-up station from one of the slots next to the bank, and move it to the city where you are building. The station size must match the city.

▶ Take the *leftmost* station marker from your company board and place it on the top of the station. If the marker came from a space showing a reward, gain the reward.

▶ Refill the now-empty slot next to the bank with a new station token of the same size from the station supply.

Chicago requires a Midwest contract and two train chips. Brayden has the contract in his boarding area and three train chips on his Build Station action. He spends two of the three, moving them to his warehouse. He selects one of the two available large stations and places it in Chicago. Then he takes the leftmost station marker from his company board and places it on the new station. Finally, he replaces the station token he took, refilling the empty slot with a large station from the station supply.
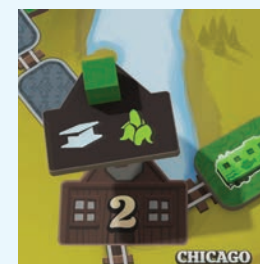
Play Action and Upgrade Cards

Your cards are kept secret in your hand until you choose to play them. There are two different kinds of cards you can play: action cards and upgrade cards. (Upgrade cards are one of two kinds of mogul cards. The other kind, goal cards, aren't played until the end of the game.)

An **action card** immediately gives you something when you play it. Place the card in a discard pile near the action deck.

When you play Fast Track, you take a Lightning Train and may build one additional rail line this turn.

An **upgrade card** is played face up next to your company board. It gives you an ongoing benefit for the rest of the game. Most upgrade cards have a station requirement. If you haven't yet built that many stations (or more), you can't play the card.

To play Finance Office, you must have built three or more stations. Once played, during each of your turns for the rest of the game (including this one), you score 1 point if you generate 7 money, and an additional point if you generate 8.

If a card doesn't seem useful, you don't necessarily have to play it. When you reach 19 points, you get to draw a new card and then discard one.

Clarifications for specific cards are on page 22.

Use Explosives

You may spend two train chips from this action for one of two effects:

Tunnel — You may tunnel this turn (build rail lines on mountain paths).

OR

Construction — You may build one additional rail line this turn.

If you spend your trains here and then fill the slots again, you can use this action more than once a turn. With enough trains, you could tunnel and build an additional rail line on the same turn, or even build three rail lines.

Industrialize

You may spend two train chips from this action to flip your Industrialize board to the other side. You can do this only once per game, and afterward can assign no more train chips to this action.

The back side of the board has two more ✚ slots, which become part of your boarding area. (Turnover Phase, page 14.)

Industrializing is a good idea if you have a lot of ✚ chips.

Go Public

You may spend three train chips from this action to flip your Go Public board to the other side. You can do this only once per game, and afterward can assign no more train chips to this action.

Once you have flipped your board, your railway is a public company, bringing these benefits shown on the back side of the board:
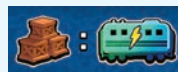
You take one Lightning Train (page 13) for each 🟫 icon you have. This happens in all your future turns, and also immediately on the turn where you flip the Go Public board.

Whenever you generate **7** or more on your turn (including on the turn that you flip the Go Public board), you score 2 points.

Spend Money

With this action, you buy new chips from the market. Begin by adding up the money values on all the chips in your boarding area. This is the total amount of money you can spend this turn. You may buy as many chips as you can afford. Any money you don't spend is lost at the end of your turn. If you trash a chip that generated money, you're still able to spend that money this turn.

The cost of a chip is determined by the compartment it is **currently** in (ignoring the markings on the chip itself). When you pay this cost, take the chip and **place it in your warehouse**. (It does nothing now; you must wait to use it until a later turn, when it's in your boarding area.) After each chip you buy, restock the market (see below).

> **Most** chips do nothing when you first gain them. However, when you gain a chip with the conductor icon, immediately take a locomotive from your personal supply and place it in your warehouse.

In addition to the market chips on six of the market slots, four compartments offer another way to spend money:

For **2**, you may buy one of the **1** ✚ chips (placed next to the compartment during setup), if any are remaining.

For **4**, if the Lightning Train market token has been moved to this compartment (Scoring Points, page 8), you may take a Lightning Train (next page).

For **7**, you may take a Lightning Train and score 1 point.

For **8**, you may take two Lightning Trains and score 1 point.

Loans

You may choose to take a loan to increase the money you can spend during your turn.

Take a loan — Take a loan chip from the bank, placing it in your warehouse. If you do, you gain **1** more to spend this turn. You may take a loan *only once each turn*, and only if the bank has a loan chip.

Pay off a loan — If you have a loan chip in your boarding area, it does nothing. But you may spend **4** to return it to the bank. Each loan you still have at the end of the game is worth -2 points.

> Note that taking a loan does *not* help you trigger "bankroll" effects; you must actually generate the money these require.

> Loans might sound like a bad deal, but if a loan lets you buy a strong chip you couldn't otherwise afford (especially early in the game), you should consider it!

Restocking the Market

There must always be chips on six of the slots in the market. If there are ever fewer (for example: immediately after you buy a chip), reveal a new market chip from the face down supply and add it to the market as follows:

Each market chip has markings on the bottom edge to show its *initial* cost. Place the new chip in the leftmost empty space of that compartment.

If all slots in the compartment are full, create an empty slot for it by sliding each chip there one slot to the left. (In a compartment with two slots, the empty slot will then be the *rightmost* slot.) If the next compartment is also full, slide *those* chips to the left, as necessary to make room. In this way, the cost of a chip may decrease, if it's forced out of its initial compartment. If a chip is ever forced left out of the **1** compartment, trash it (return it to the game box).

Sabrina buys a market chip on her turn. Now only five of the market's slots are full, so she reveals a new chip from the market supply. Its markings show an initial cost of 3, so it takes the leftmost slot of that compartment.

*Brayden buys a chip for **2** on his turn, then immediately reveals a new chip. It also has an initial cost of 3, so it takes the empty slot in that compartment.*

*Alan buys a chip for **4** on his turn. Again, the replacement chip for the market shows a cost of 3. Chips slide to the left as shown to make room for this. In doing this, one chip moves to the **2** compartment, reducing the cost to buy it.*

Lightning Trains

A Lightning Train is an extra train chip. Each time you trigger a Lightning Train icon, take one basic train chip from your personal supply and place it in the lightning zone of your boarding area. The lightning zone has no slots, so you may place any number of Lightning Trains there during a turn.

You take one Lightning Train for each of the following:

Each Lightning Train icon on the chips in your boarding area.

Every *two* conductor icons on the chips in your boarding area.

> Building rail lines uses up your train chips. Lightning Trains are how you get more.

If your company is public (Go Public, page 11), each venture icon in your boarding area. (This is in addition to the icon's usual effect.)

Most often, you trigger Lightning Train icons when you refill your boarding area (Turnover Phase, page 14). But they can also be triggered at other times, such as when you play a card, and when you award subsidies at the start of each round (page 7).

Other Chip Actions

Most chips in your boarding area help you take the actions described on the previous pages. Some chips provide other actions, that you take separately during your turn:

Score points.

You score 1 point for this chip.

Bankroll. Some chips give you a benefit based on the amount of money you generate during your turn. If you generate the amount shown (or more), you gain the benefit shown. Taking a loan does *not* help you trigger these effects.

This chip always gives you 2. If you generate a total of 7 or more this turn—including the 2 from this chip—it also gives you 2 points.

Build a station. You pay nothing from your Build Station railyard action. It does not count against your limit of one station per turn. You may build even if the Transcontinental Railroad was established in a previous round (page 15).

If you choose to trash this chip from your boarding area, you build a station.

Stations required. Some chips give you a benefit based on the number of stations you have built. If you have built the number shown (or more), you gain the benefit shown.
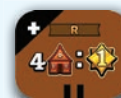
This chip always provides a contract for the Rockies region. If you have built 4 stations or more, you also use it to score 1 point (even if this chip is already in your boarding area when you build your fourth station).

See the back cover for details on other icons that appear on chips.

In this phase, you first empty and then refill your boarding area. As you take your turnover phase, the next player can begin taking the operations phase of their turn.

**Empty your boarding area** as follows:

First, if you used any starting contract chips to build this turn (a rail line, station, or both), choose ONE that you used and trash it. (Return it to the game box.)

> Trashing your starting contracts is usually a good idea. But if you *really* want to keep them, there's a little trick you can use. If you build using a different contract for the same region (like another chip), then you can keep the starting contract.

Next, move all remaining chips from your boarding area to your warehouse (off your company board, to the right). You may look at the chips in your warehouse at any time.
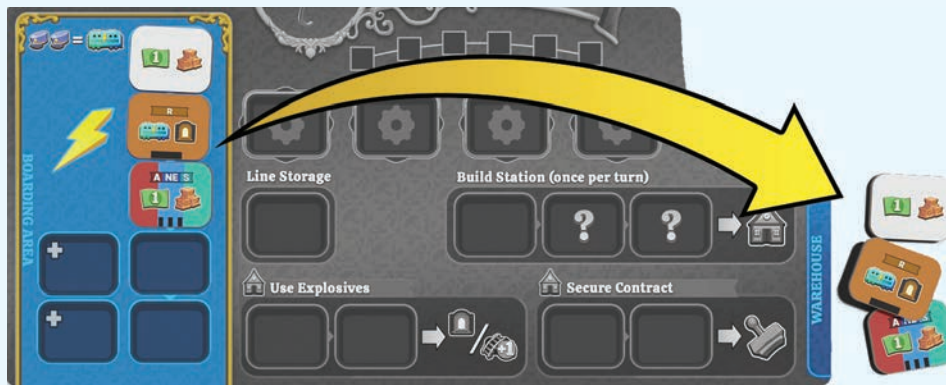
Refill your boarding area by drawing chips at random from your company bag *one at a time*, placing each chip in an empty slot in your boarding area.

Each regular chip you draw must be placed in one of the five basic slots.

If you draw a ✚ chip place it instead in one of the two ✚ slots (or, if you have flipped your Industrialize board, four ✚ slots; page 11). If all your ✚ slots are full when you draw a ✚ chip, place it in a basic slot instead.

Stop drawing new chips immediately once all five of the basic slots in your boarding area are full. Don't forget to check for any Lightning Train icons you may have triggered!

> You may skip your turnover phase in the final round of the game, as there is no need to prepare for another turn.

Bag Building

Each player starts the game with a matching set of 10 chips. But as you spend money to buy new chips, your potential will grow—and diverge from that of your opponents.

You place each new chip that you buy in your warehouse. **Whenever you need to draw a chip from your bag and find it's empty**, take all the chips from your warehouse, put them in your bag and mix them up, then draw.

> Generally, chips flow from your warehouse to your bag to your boarding area, and finally back to your warehouse.
>
> Each time you refill your bag from your warehouse, your pool of chips will be stronger. This is why trashing chips helps too, by getting rid of weaker chips so that you'll draw the better ones more often.

Transcontinental Railroad

The Transcontinental Railroad is established the moment there is an **unbroken route of rail lines connecting New York City and San Francisco**. The current player's turn is paused for scoring:

Determine the route of the Transcontinental Railroad (as if making a delivery from New York City to San Francisco):

- ▶ Use the fewest number of rail lines possible.
- ▶ If there is a tie, use the route with the most locomotive chips. If there is still a tie, the player whose turn was paused chooses between the tied options.

For **each locomotive chip** on the route, its owner **scores 2 points**. (Even for multiple locomotives on the same rail line.)

The current player then resumes their turn.

Last Call for Stations!

The round in which the Transcontinental Railroad is established is the **last round in which players can build a station**.

> If the game ends because the production deck is empty, and the Transcontinental Railroad is never established, nobody scores points for it.

Triggering the End

The end of the game is triggered if the Transcontinental Railroad has been established, and specific cities are connected to it:

- ▶ In a game with 3 or fewer players, **either** Houston or Seattle (or both).
- ▶ In a 4-player game, **both** Houston and Seattle.

The end can be triggered during the same round that the Transcontinental Railroad is established—possibly even at the exact same moment, if the connections to Houston and/or Seattle are already in place.

When the end conditions are met, **finish playing the current round, and then play one final round**.

Alternatively, the game ends immediately at the end of round 12. (The production deck will be empty, so round 12 *is* the final round.)

Final Deliveries

After the end of the final round, each player may make one final delivery, starting with the first player and proceeding clockwise. (No 🪵 icon or delivery token is required.)

When it's your turn to make a Final Delivery, if you still have any of your delivery tokens (including a delivery/contract token), you may spend them to make additional deliveries.

Scoring

Each player loses 2 points for each loan chip they still have (anywhere—in their bag, boarding area, or warehouse).

Each player reveals and scores all of their goal cards (a kind of mogul card that isn't played during the game).

Sabrina reveals the Northwest Mogul goal card. She has rail lines connected to four different cities in the Northwest region, scoring 7 points.

The player with the most points wins! If there's a tie for most points, those players share the victory.
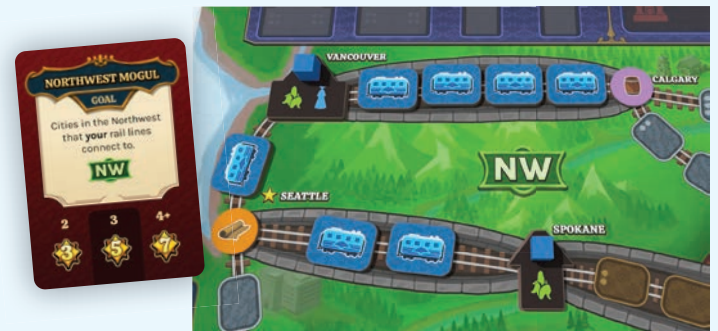
In a solo game, you play against two rivals (virtual players that you manage). These rivals build rail lines and stations, and make deliveries— all using a series of large and small die icons associated with each city on the opposite side of the game board.

A rival does not score points in all the ways a human player does. **They only score points from three things**:

▶ Deliveries
▶ Having locomotives on the Transcontinental Railroad
▶ Goal cards (which they obtain and score only at the end of the game)

Setup

Complete all steps of regular setup as though you are the first (and only) player. Then select two unused colors for your two rivals. Make piles of train chips for each rival (basic trains and locomotives). Place the station markers of the matching color beside each rival's chips. Place each rival's score marker on the starting space of the score track.
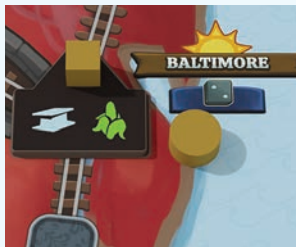
Use the two builder tokens matching your rivals' colors. Place the first rival's token on the game board next to Baltimore. Place the second rival's token next to Charleston. In each of those cities, if there isn't already a station there, the rival builds one: reveal a new station from the supply of the matching size, place it in the city, and place one of their station markers on it.

Place the die and Rival Turns helper card in easy reach.

Place one dynamite token near your company board. (The second is used only for special play modes using Dire Wolf Game Room companion app.)
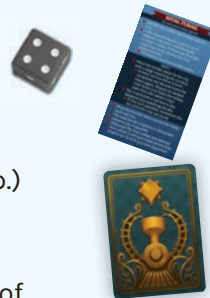
Set the region cards aside, to be used at the end of the game.

Choose a level of difficulty. Before regular rounds begin, each of your rivals (in order) takes the number of bonus rival turns indicated. These use the usual rules for rival turns (see the next page), **except that they make no deliveries**. On the most advanced level, each rival also begins the game with points.

Difficulty	Bonus Rival Turns	Starting Points
Passenger	3	
Dispatcher	4	
Conductor	5	
Tycoon	5	🔟

Round Structure

In each round of a solo game, you are the first player. Reveal a production card as usual, but **do not award subsidies** (as described on page 7).

Each time you take your player turn and reach the turnover phase, empty your boarding area, but don't refill it right away. Instead, each of your two rivals takes a rival turn (as though they are two players seated in clockwise order from you).

Once you have completed the two rival turns, *then* refill your boarding area to conclude the round.

Dynamite

Once per game, you may spend your dynamite token. When you do, trash all six chips in the market.

Next, restock the market with only five chips, not six. For the rest of the game, the market will have only five chips available. When restocking, use the method for replacing chips during the game (not the special method described in the setup).

Rival Turns

Begin each rival turn by rolling the die. Check the city where that rival's builder token is currently located. If there's an adjacent empty path from there directly into a city that has a matching die number, the rival builds a rail line on that path, using train chips from its supply. If the rival cannot build a rail line, reset the builder token so that it can do so.

Resetting the Builder Token

A rival builds a rail line every turn. So when you roll the die and get a number it can't use, you must reset the builder token as follows.

Move the builder token to the city with a **large** die number matching the die result. If every rail line from *that* city is already built, then **increment** the die result (adding 1 to the number, changing from 6 to 1 when necessary), and move the builder token to the city with a large die number matching the new result. Repeat this as needed until the builder token arrives in a city with at least one adjacent empty path.

Once the builder token arrives in a city with at least one adjacent empty path, use the current die result to build a rail line from there. If the result doesn't match any of the available paths out of the current city, leave the builder token where it is, and increment the result until you find an empty path for the rival to build on.

When there is more than one option for building a rail line, build to the city whose name comes first alphabetically. Use **one locomotive** in each rail line a rival builds until it runs out of them; fill all other slots with basic trains. A rival **scores no points for building a rail line**.

After the rival builds a rail line, move the builder token to the newly connected city. The rival then builds a station in that city if one can be built there (and they have a station marker remaining). Take the station token (from the slots next to bank) that matches the city's size and die result. Place it on the city, and place one of the rival's station markers on it. Refill the station slot as usual.

Sarah is in her turnover phase and has just emptied her boarding area. It's time for her to manage her rivals' turns.

For her first rival, Sarah rolls the die and gets a ⚄. The rival's builder token is currently in Coloma. The only adjacent city that has a ⚄ is San Francisco, but there is a rail line built from Coloma to San Francisco. Sarah must reset the builder token.

Sarah resets the builder token by moving it to Kansas City (the city with the large ⚄), which has at least one empty path. St. Louis has a ⚄ (among other numbers) next to it, but that rail line has been built. Sarah increments the die result to ⚅, and now the rival builds the rail line between Kansas City and Omaha. Sarah then moves the builder token to Omaha, and the rival builds a station there.

If Sarah had reset the builder token to Kansas City and found that every rail line from there was already built, she would have incremented the die result from ⚄ to ⚅, moved the builder token to Detroit (the city with the large ⚅), and continued looking there for a place where the rival could build.

Next, Sarah manages her second rival's turn. Finally, she will complete the round by refilling her own boarding area.

Rival Deliveries

Once a rival is finished building (including any station it may have built), it makes one delivery. Look for *any* delivery from which the rival will earn more points than any other player. (If there is a tie for most points, it will make the delivery as long as it isn't a three-way tie.)

Sarah is managing her second rival's turn. After she rolls the die and uses the result to build a rail line, move the builder token, and build a station, she looks for a delivery the rival can make. She finds a delivery that scores 2 points for the rival and 2 points for herself. This is a valid delivery, because even though Sarah earns as many points as the rival, it earns more points than the other rival.

> Later in the game, as more cities are connected by rail lines, it may take you a little while to find where a rival will deliver goods. You don't need to find the best possible score for a rival delivery.

Game End

When the Transcontinental Railroad is established, score it as you would in a regular game. If this happens on a rival's turn, and there is a tie where it must choose a route, you choose instead. Just like you, your rivals can't build a station after this round.

The end of the game is triggered just as it would be for a 3-player game: when the Transcontinental Railroad has been established, and Houston or Seattle (or both) is connected to it, complete the current round, then play one final round. (Or complete round 12.)

Instead of the usual Final Deliveries for each player, shuffle the region cards (that you set aside during setup), then reveal the top card.

Each region card lists a number of cities in one region. In the order shown (from top to bottom), check each city to see if it has a station with any goods requests. Make deliveries according to the usual rules, from the closest connected producer city. If there is a tie you can't resolve by the most locomotive chips, you choose between the tied options.

Once you've checked each city on a region card and made all possible deliveries, reveal the next region card and repeat the process. Continue revealing cards until you've gone through all the region cards.

Finally, each of your rivals scores two goal cards. For each rival, reveal cards from the mogul deck until you have revealed two goal cards. (Ignore any upgrade cards you reveal.) Check the conditions of the goal cards and score accordingly for the rival.

For the goal cards Big Spender and High Finance, the rival always scores the most points possible.

2-Player Game

In a game for 2 players, Conway the Conductor plays with you as a third player. He doesn't score points, but he does build rail lines and stations, using a series of large and small die icons associated with each city on the opposite side of the game board.

Each round, the **second player manages one of Conway's turns before taking their own**.

> Since I don't score points, I can't win the game. I'm here to mix things up.

Setup

Once the first player shuffles the production deck, the **second player** places the die and Rival Turns helper card in easy reach, and prepares Conway's components.

Make a pile for Conway of basic train chips in an unused color. (He does not use locomotives.) Place the matching station markers nearby.

Place the builder token of Conway's color on the game board in Baltimore. If there isn't already a station there, he builds one: reveal a new station from the supply of the matching size, place it in the city, and place one of Conway's station markers on it. Then, before regular rounds begin, Conway immediately takes one turn (as described on the next page).
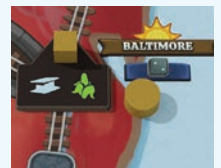
Conway's Turns

If you're familiar with the rules for how rival turns work in a solo game, my turns work almost the same way. The differences are that I don't have locomotives, and I don't make deliveries.

Begin by rolling the die. Check the city where the builder token is currently located. If there's an adjacent empty path from there directly into a city that has a matching die number, Conway builds a rail line on that path, using train chips from his supply. (When there is more than one option, build to the city whose name comes first alphabetically.) **If Conway cannot build a rail line**, reset the builder token so that he can do so.

After Conway builds a rail line, move the builder token to the newly connected city. Conway then builds a station in that city if one can be built there (and he has a station marker remaining). Take the station token (from the slots next to bank) that matches the city's size and die result. Place it on the city, and place one of Conway's station markers on it. Refill the station slot as usual.

Resetting the Builder Token

Conway builds a rail line every turn. So when you roll the die and get a number he can't use, you must reset the builder token as follows.

Move the builder token to the city with a **large** die number matching the die result. If every rail line from *that* city is already built, then **increment** the die result (adding 1 to the number, changing from 6 to 1 when necessary), and move the builder token to the city with a large die number matching the new result. Repeat this as needed until the builder token arrives in a city with at least one adjacent empty path.

Once the builder token arrives in a city with at least one adjacent empty path, use the current die result to build a rail line from there. If the result doesn't match any of the available paths out of the current city, leave the builder token where it is, and increment the result until you find an empty path for Conway to build on.

Mark, player 1, completes his turn. Before Sarah, player 2, begins hers, she manages Conway's turn. She rolls the die and gets a 🎲.
The builder token is currently in Oklahoma City, and the 🎲 *matches a die number next to Albuquerque. Conway builds the rail line between Oklahoma City and Albuquerque. Sarah then moves the builder token to Albuquerque, and Conway builds a station there.*

For a more complex example of using the builder token, see the example in the "Rival Turns" section on page 17. (The first rival's turn is another way that one of Conway's turns could happen.)

Game End

When the Transcontinental Railroad is established, score it as you would in a regular game. If this happens on Conway's turn, and there is a tie where he must choose its route, the second player (who is managing Conway's turn) chooses for him. Like the players, Conway can't build a station after this round.

The end of the game is triggered as it would be for 3 players, with "Final Deliveries" for the human players.

Mergers & Acquisitions

Experienced players of *LIGHTNING TRAIN* may choose to add this mini-expansion to the game.

Components

8 private company tokens
double-sided

Setup

Roll the die (normally used only in solo and 2-player games) and look for your result below.

Place the 8 private company tokens on the game board, each one in the middle of the path between the indicated pair of cities. The last path listed is **blocked**; mark it using the back side of one of the ⬡7 tokens.

You may instead use the Dire Wolf Game Room companion app to place the private company tokens. The app also explains how to use the back sides of certain tokens that are not addressed here in these rules.

Feel free to experiment with your own custom setups for the private company tokens.

⚀

3	Dodge City — Omaha
4	Spokane — Seattle
5	Birmingham — St. Louis
5	Atlanta — Raleigh
6	Chicago — Detroit
6	Albuquerque — Oklahoma City
7	El Paso — Houston
🪨	Albuquerque — Las Vegas

⚁

3	Detroit — Louisville
4	Louisville — St. Louis
5	Billings — Cheyenne
5	New Orleans — Birmingham
6	Duluth — Sault Ste. Marie
6	Dallas — St. Louis
7	Salt Lake City — Coloma
🪨	Detroit — Toronto

⚂

3	Dodge City — Oklahoma City
4	Billings — Spokane
5	Louisville — Raleigh
5	Boston — Montreal
6	Dallas — El Paso
6	New York City — Pittsburgh
7	Winnipeg — Sault Ste. Marie
🪨	Salt Lake City — Coloma

⚃

3	Los Angeles — Las Vegas
4	Winnipeg — Duluth
5	Baltimore — New York City
5	Chicago — St. Louis
6	Duluth — Omaha
6	Montreal — Sault Ste. Marie
7	Dallas — St. Louis
🪨	Chicago — Duluth

⚄

3	Atlanta — Louisville
4	Albuquerque — Phoenix
5	Montreal — Toronto
5	Baltimore — Pittsburgh
6	Duluth — Deadwood
6	Los Angeles — Phoenix
7	Salt Lake City — Cheyenne
🪨	Dallas — Oklahoma City

⚅

3	Las Vegas — Coloma
4	Detroit — Louisville
5	Dallas — Oklahoma City
5	Chicago — Duluth
6	Salt Lake City — Portland
6	Winnipeg — Calgary
7	Omaha — Cheyenne
🪨	Boston — Montreal

Private Companies

Each private company token represents a rail line held by an independent railway company that does not cooperate with the players.

▶ No deliveries can be made using a private company's rail line.

▶ A private company's rail line can't be used when establishing the Transcontinental Railroad. (It also can't be used to trigger the end of the game by connecting to Houston or Seattle.)

A private company's rail line can be acquired by a player during their operations phase, if the line is connected directly to either:

▶ One of the starting cities on the eastern seaboard (with a sunrise above its name).

▶ A city where you have a station and/or an existing rail line.

If you meet the requirements, you may acquire the rail line by spending the amount of money shown on the private company token. Remove the token from the game board and immediately fill the now-empty path with train chips **from your supply**. If you wish, one of these chips can be a locomotive. This is not considered building a rail line: **you do not score any points** for the line, and it **does not count against your limit** on building rail lines for the turn.

A private company owns the rail line between Albuquerque and Oklahoma City. Sabrina wants to acquire it on her turn. She has a connection with her rail line from Dodge City to Oklahoma City. She spends 6 and removes the private company token. Then she takes 3 basic trains and 1 locomotive from her supply and places them on the path from Albuquerque to Oklahoma City. Sabrina does not score 2 points for this, but can still build one rail line later on her turn.

Blocked Paths

A blocked token eliminates the path underneath it for the entire game.

Solo Games

In a solo game, your two rivals are able to acquire a private company's rail line and build there. However, since they have no money, you must check a rival's score instead. When a rival has at least three times as many points as the cost shown on a private company token, it is *eligible* to build that rail line. It still makes its building decisions using the builder token. Unlike for a human player, acquiring a private company's rail line *does* count for a rival as the one rail line it can build during their turn.
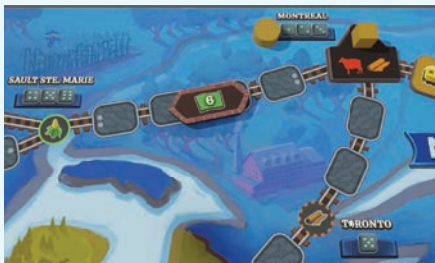
Mark is taking a turn for a rival, and the builder token is in Montreal. Mark rolls a 5, matching numbers in both Sault Ste. Marie and Toronto. Since a rival resolves situations like this alphabetically, it will try to build the rail line to Sault Ste. Marie. However, the rail line between there and Montreal is held by a private railway company, and costs 6 to acquire. If the rival has at least 18 points—three times the cost of the token—the rival will acquire that rail line and build on it.

If the rival has 17 points or fewer, then it isn't eligible to build that rail line, and so will build the one between Montreal and Toronto instead. (And if this rail line was already built, the rival would be unable to build a rail line here, and Mark would then reset the builder token.)

2–Player Games

In a game for 2 players, Conway the Conductor cannot acquire a private company's rail line.

Card Clarifications

Big Spender — Look at the markings on the bottom edges of your chips to determine if they cost 💵5 or more. (It does not matter if you paid less for the chip during the game.)

If you trash a chip during the game, it can't be counted.

Commuter Rails — The point you get from this can be multiplied by a payoff icon.

Creative Accounting, Ironworks, Revenue Steam, etc. — Upgrade cards take effect immediately on the turn that you play them. For example: on the turn you play Ironworks, you take one Lightning Train.

Express Train — Extra points from other cards (such as Surprise Venture and Distribution Network) are part of "your points for that delivery," and are scored again by Express Train.

You can play two Express Train cards for the same delivery to triple your points for that delivery.

Industrial Magnate — Connecting to different cities that each produce the *same* good (oil, steel, or textiles) doesn't help you score more for this card.

Lease Agreements — Although you may build a rail line from a neutral station or an opponent's station, you still need a contract for the region.

Surprise Venture — If the station receiving the delivery is yours, you get a point for it.

Strategy Tips

It may sound counterintuitive, but trashing your chips is a good thing. When you remove weak chips from your bag, you'll draw the stronger ones more often. So try to trash your starting contracts and improve your bag by buying better contracts from the market.
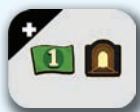
✚ chips are powerful because they let you pull more than five chips per turn from your bag. If you have a lot of ✚ chips, you should consider taking the Industrialize railyard action so that you don't run out of ✚ slots when you refill your boarding area.

Because locomotives are ✚ chips, they're very strong to have in your bag. While you do eventually want to use them to build rail lines (and hopefully score points for the Transcontinental Railroad), it's often best in the early parts of the game to use a locomotive for a railyard action. Get it to your warehouse and then back to your bag; because a locomotive takes a ✚ slot in your boarding area, it's better to pull from your bag than a basic train.

Deciding which station to build and where is important. For your first game or two, try to build an early station that's somewhat close to a producer city that has a good it's requesting. Then try to build rail lines to accomplish that delivery. Think about how you're going to reach 3 points quickly, because that will get you your first power chip!

Your two delivery tokens may not last long. Adding a 🛢 icon or two to your bag allows you to make consistent deliveries throughout the game.

Credits

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Executive Producer
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Special thanks to:
The "weekend warriors":
Robert Cranshaw, Ken Dennen, Doug Dyer, Brian Koziol

All of the awesome Dire Wolf Digital team members, and their friends and families, who helped to playtest *LIGHTNING TRAIN*.

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Reference Guide

Action card. Draw a card from the action deck. (Action cards are played during your turn, page 11.)

Action/Mogul card. When you reach 19 points, if you have at least one card in your hand, draw a card from either the mogul deck or the action deck. Then discard a mogul or action card from your hand. (It can be the one you just drew.)

Any contract. Choose any one region. You gain a contract for that region for the rest of this turn.

Bankroll. If you generate the amount of money shown (or more) during your turn, you gain the benefit shown. Taking a loan does not help you trigger bankroll effects.

Bonus. When filling your boarding area, place a chip with this icon in one of the ✚ slots. If all your ✚ slots are full when you draw a ✚ chip, place it in a basic slot instead. (Page 14)

Build a station. When a chip allows you to build a station, you pay nothing from your Build Station railyard action. It does not count against your limit of one station per turn. You may build even if the Transcontinental Railroad was established in a previous round.

Conductor. This icon has two functions:

▶ When you first gain a chip with the conductor icon, take a locomotive from your personal supply and place it in your warehouse.

▶ For every *two* conductor icons on the chips in your boarding area, you take a Lightning Train.

Construction. You may build one additional rail line this turn. (Page 8)

Lightning Train. Take a basic train chip from your personal supply and place it in the lightning zone of your boarding area. (Page 13)

Loan. You may take *one* loan during your turn to gain 💵1 more to spend. (This does not help you trigger bankroll effects.)

If you have a loan chip in your boarding area, you may spend 💵4 to return it to the bank. (See "trash.") For each loan you still have at the end of the game, you lose 2 points. (Page 12)

Mogul card. Draw a card from the mogul deck. There are two kinds of Mogul cards: **upgrade**, which you play during your turn (page 11); and **goal**, which you reveal and score at the end of the game (page 15).

Money. The total money value on all the chips in your boarding area is the amount you can spend this turn. (Page 12)

Payoff. Each time you earn points from building a rail line this turn, double those points. (Page 8)

Points. Any time you score points, advance your score marker on the score track. Certain things happen when you reach specific scores. (Page 8)

Stations required. Some chip effects, upgrade cards, and railyard actions require a certain number of stations. If you have built the number of stations shown (or more), you get the benefit shown.

Trash. Choose a chip from your boarding area or warehouse and remove it from the game (return it to the game box). Some chips *require* that you trash them when you use them, such as those with "other chip actions" (page 13), and starting contracts (as specified on page 14).

When you trash a loan, return it to the bank instead of the game box.

Tunnel. You are allowed to build rail lines on mountain paths (marked with brown slots) during this turn.

Venture. You may make one delivery. (Page 9)

In addition, if you have a Public Company (page 11), you take a Lightning Train.