

RIALTO

A game by Stefan Feld

for 2 to 5 players. Playing time: 45-60 minutes.

ABOUT THE GAME

Venice is known for its bridges and gondolas - and that is what this game is about.

Take on the role of a Venetian noble, deploy councilmen to important districts, and construct buildings and bridges to gain power and influence.

A district's value depends on how well connected it is with other districts - so the player who best distributes his councilmen and builds the most beneficial buildings and bridges will become the eminence grise of Venice!

COMPONENTS



1 game board

Displays the 6 districts of Venice, the Victory point and Doge tracks, and offers room for the supply.



5 player boards

Used to organize each player's buildings, gold, and councilmen.



77 cards

11 each of Doge, Gold, Building, Bridge, Gondola, Councilman, Joker. Used to carry out actions (see p.5).



18 councilmen in each of 5 colors

Will be placed in the districts and may be worth victory points at the end of the game.



2 counters in each of 5 colors

Used on the Victory point and Doge tracks. See p.2 for details about the Doge track.



1 district token

Indicates the current district.



60 building tiles

5 each of 12 different buildings. Buildings are worth victory points and provide special abilities (see p.8).



6 bridge tiles

Placed between districts and defining their values (see p.5-D). Each tile has 2 values between 3 and 6.



6 gondola tiles

Placed between districts and defining their values (see p.5-E). Each tile has a value of 1.



30 gold coins

Needed to activate the special abilities of buildings.



6 round tiles

Values: 1-6. Indicate the order in which the districts will be played through.



2 bonus tiles

For each side of the Grand Canal. Used to indicate if the district bonus has been awarded (see p.5-E/F).

SETUP

- 1 Put the **game board** on the table. Leave some free space next to it for the card rows.
- 2 Randomly distribute the **6 round tiles** face-up among the 6 districts.
- 3 Put the **gondola tiles** on the gondola space.
- 4 Shuffle the **bridge tiles** face-down and put them in a stack. Put this stack face-up on the bridge space such that only the topmost tile is visible.
- 5 Put the **bonus tiles** indicating the district bonuses (see p. 5-E/F) on the bonus spaces on each side of the Grand Canal.
- 6 Sort the **building tiles** by color and value and put them on the building spaces.
- 7 Put the **gold coins** as indicated on the game board.
- 8 Thoroughly shuffle all the **cards** and put them face-down in a stack next to the game board.
- 9 Randomly determine a **starting player**.
- 10 Each player takes **1 player board** and the counters of his color.
- 11 Beginning with the player to the right of the starting player and in counter-clockwise order, each player puts one counter on the first space of the **Doge track**. *See below for details on the Doge track.*
- 12 Each player puts the other counter on space "3" of the **Victory point track** in any order.
- 13 Each player puts 5 of his **councilmen** on his player board (personal supply) and the remaining ones as indicated on the game board (general supply).
- 14 **Coins:** Beginning with the starting player and in clockwise order, each player takes a number of coins depending on the number of players:
 - **2 players:** 1 - 2
 - **3 players:** 1 - 2 - 3
 - **4 players:** 1 - 2 - 2 - 3
 - **5 players:** 1 - 2 - 2 - 2 - 3
- 15 **Starting buildings:** Beginning with the player to the right of the starting player and in counter-clockwise order, each player chooses and takes one building of value 1. In a 2- or 3-player game, each player must choose a different building; in a 4- or 5-player game no more than 2 players may take the same building.

DOGE TRACK

The Doge track indicates the players' influence on the Doge.

The Doge track:

- breaks all ties
- defines the play order whenever it matters unless explicitly stated otherwise

When two or more counters occupy the same space on the Doge track, the order between them is from top to bottom.



FLOW OF PLAY

The game is played over 6 rounds with each round consisting of 3 phases. In each such phase, buildings of a certain color may be activated for their special abilities.

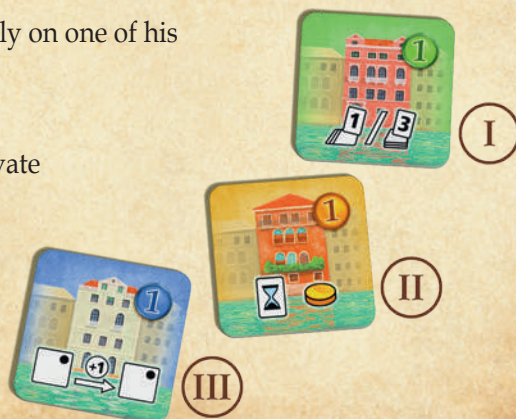
To activate a special ability, a player needs to put **one coin** from his supply on one of his available buildings (see p.8 for an overview of all buildings).

Quick overview:

Phase I: Each player gets 8 cards and keeps 7 of them. Players can activate **green buildings** to get or keep more cards.

Phase II: The players play their cards over 6 stages to carry out actions A-F. They can activate **yellow buildings** to support these actions.

Phase III: Players can activate blue buildings to gain those buildings' benefits.





Phase I – preparation, get cards and activate green buildings



- **District token:** Move it into the district of the current round. The order the districts are played through is defined by the round tiles (in round 1, put the district token on tile 1, etc.).

Note: This is the district to which Councilmen will be assigned during this round (see p.5-F).

- **Card rows:** Lay out a number of card rows next to the game board, each consisting of 6 face-up cards, equal to one more than the number of players. The card icons need to be clearly visible.

Note: For a better card distribution place one card per row at a time.

When the draw pile is empty, thoroughly shuffle all the discarded cards to form a new draw pile.

- **Select cards:** In the order indicated by the Doge track, each player
 - takes one entire card row (i.e. 6 cards),
 - then 2 cards from the face-down draw pile,
 - and his leftover cards from the previous round (if any) into his hand.

Players may get more cards via **green buildings** (see p.8).

- **Reduce hands:** Each player may only keep **7 cards** for the next phase and has to discard any extra cards. Some **green buildings** may increase this number when activated. Each player has to keep their **own, face-down** discard pile (this avoids confusion with the draw pile and simplifies shuffling later on).



Example: Card rows in a 2-player game



Phase II – play cards and activate yellow buildings



This phase goes through **6 stages (A-F)**. In each such stage, players may play cards of a specific type and add Jokers if needed. Each type of card corresponds to a specific action (see next page).

General rules for each stage:

- **Starting player:** In the **first stage (A)**, the player furthest ahead on the Doge track is the starting player. In each of the following 5 stages, the starting player will be the player who got the bonus in the previous stage.

Note: If in any of these stages nobody plays any cards, the starting player does not change in the next stage.

- **Cards:** Beginning with the starting player and **in clockwise order**, each player gets a single turn to play any number of cards matching the current stage. A player does not need to play as many cards as possible - he may even play none at all and simply pass. He may keep leftover cards for the next round.
- **Actions:** Each player may carry out actions according to the number of cards he played.
- **Bonus:** The player who has played the most cards gets a bonus in addition to his actions (see ex. 1). The bonus will not be awarded if nobody plays any cards.

In this phase, players can activate their **yellow buildings** (see p. 8 and ex. 2).

Notes:

- The Doge track breaks any ties for the number of cards played and defines play order when carrying out actions (see p.2).
- At the end of each stage, each player puts his played cards face-down on his discard pile.
- Each player's hand size needs to be clearly visible at all times.



Example 1: In stage A (Doge), Red plays 3 Doge cards, Blue plays 2, and Yellow only 1. Red gets the bonus.



Example 2: A player has activated his yellow building in stage B (Gold) to play a Doge card as 2 Gold cards. He has also played a Joker. Hence, the cards he has played count as 3 Gold cards. If he gets the bonus, he will get 4 gold coins in total, otherwise only 3.

The cards and their associated actions:

A Doge

In the order indicated by the Doge track, each player **advances 1 space on the Doge track** per card played. If a counter enters an already occupied space, it is put on top of the other counters.

Bonus for most cards played:

The player advances 1 additional space on the Doge track when moving his counter.



B Gold

For each card played, that player collects **1 Gold coin** from the general supply and puts it on the designated space of his player board.

Bonus for most cards played:

The player gets 1 more gold coin.



C Building

Each player may choose a **building** with a value equal to or lower than the number of cards played. He then puts the building on a free space of his player board.

A player may have any number of the same type of building. (See p.8 for more details on buildings and special cases).

Bonus for most cards played:

The player adds +1 to the number of cards played.



D Bridge

Per card played each player gets **1 victory point**. Players who did not play any Bridge cards lose **1 victory point**.

Bonus for most cards played:

The player gets 1 more victory point and places the next bridge tile on a free connection between two districts. He may decide how to orient the bridge.



E Gondola

For each card played, that player moves **1 of his councilman** from the general supply to his personal supply.

If a player has no more councilmen in the general supply, he gets 1 victory point per missing councilman instead.

Bonus for most cards played:

The player places a **gondola tile** on a free connection between two districts. He then puts **1 of his councilmen** from the general supply into one of these two districts. If the player has no more councilmen in the general supply, he gets 1 victory point instead **and** may use a councilman from his personal supply or from a district.

District bonus:

The first player to have at least one of his councilmen in each of the three districts on one side of the Grand Canal, immediately gets 5 victory points and turns the corresponding bonus tile face-down.



F Councilman

For each card played, that player moves **1 of his councilmen** from his personal supply to the current district.

If a player has no more councilmen in his personal supply, he may move councilmen that he has already placed on the board.

Bonus for most cards played:

The player puts 1 more councilman into the current district.

District bonus:

See E: If more than one player happens to accomplish this during the same stage F, each one of them gets the bonus.



* Joker

A player may add one or more Jokers to cards played in phase II. He cannot play a Joker on its own.

However, if a player has no cards of the required type, he may play 2 Jokers instead, but they only count as 1 card of the required type! He may then add further Jokers as per usual.





Phase III – activate blue buildings



Blue buildings (see p. 8) can only be activated in this phase. As usual, they are activated by putting a coin on them.



Example: A player activates his blue building of value 1. He returns his green building of value 2 and takes a green building of value 3.



End of a round



Remove the coins from activated buildings and return them to the general supply.



END OF THE GAME



The game ends at the end of round 6 with a final scoring.

Final scoring

- Each player gets a number of victory points equal to half of the total number of leftover **councilmen** and **coins** in his personal supply (rounded up).
- Each player gets victory points for his **buildings** according to their values.
- Finally, there is a scoring in each district.

In each district, players are ranked by their number of councilmen in that district. They get a number of victory points according to their rank. Ties are broken by the Doge track (see p. 2):

- **Rank 1:** total value of all adjacent bridge and gondola tiles.
- **Rank 2:** half of the value of rank 1 (rounded down).
- **Rank 3:** half of the value of rank 2 (rounded down).
- etc. (no points for a player with no councilmen in the district)

Note: To keep track of which districts have already been scored, remove the councilmen from an already scored district or turn its round tile face-down or remove it from the board.



The player with the most victory points wins the game.

Ties are broken by the Doge track.

Example: District 4 is adjacent to bridges of values 5 and 4, and two gondolas (value 1). Hence, ranks 1/2/3/4 get 11/5/2/1 victory points, respectively.

CREDITS

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ADDITIONAL VARIANT FOR 2 PLAYERS

The standard 2-player game already works well. For players who like more competition and/or would like to play a more challenging version of the game, we suggest the following variant. In this variant, the players play against a neutral player and against each other. The neutral player does not get any victory points, but he is present on the Doge track, he competes for the stage bonuses in phase II, and he places councilmen in the districts.

We recommend playing by the standard rules a few times before trying out this variant.

Setup and general rules:

- The **neutral player (NP)** is the starting player. Randomly determine who will be sitting to the left of the NP. This player gets 1 gold coin, the other player gets 2 coins. Lay out 3 card rows.
- The NP starts with all of his councilmen in his personal supply. Leave some space on the table for his cards.
- The NP does not get any victory points, nor coins, nor does he build buildings. However, he has a counter on the Doge track.
- The NP uses his other counter to mark the connection between district 1 and the adjacent district with the lowest number. The counter indicates where the NP will build a bridge or gondola if he gets the corresponding bonus in stages D or E of phase II.

Notes:

- The players may choose to build a bridge or gondola on the marked connection.
- When a tile has been placed on the marked connection, a new one has to be marked: Determine the district with the lowest number that has at least one free connection left. Among the free connections, choose the connection pointing to the district with the lowest number. Place the counter there (see ex. 2).



Example 1: The counter is placed in-between districts 1 and 3 as there is no connection between districts 1 and 2

Phase I

After both players have completed **phase I**, draw 7 cards for the NP and turn them face-up. Sort the cards by type in the order A – F, adding all Jokers to the Councilman cards (F).

Phase II

During **phase II**, the NP is mostly considered a normal player:

- A Doge:** his counter is moved on the Doge track
- B Gold:** no action (but may prevent a player from getting the bonus)
- C Building:** no action (but may prevent a player from getting the bonus)
- D Bridge:** (only if he gets the bonus, otherwise no action): Place the bridge on the marked connection such that the lower number points to the district with the lower round number. Then move the counter to the next eligible connection according to the rules above.
- E Gondola:** (only if he gets the bonus, otherwise no action): Place the gondola on the marked connection. The NP puts 1 councilman each in **both** adjacent districts. Then move the counter to the next eligible connection according to the rules above.
- F Councilman:** The NP places councilmen into the current district as usual, thus, influencing the final scoring. The NP has an infinite number of councilmen. If he runs out of them, just use the councilmen of another unused color instead.



Example 2: All the connections from district 1 have already been established, hence the counter needs to be placed on the connection between districts 2 and 3.

Stage E/F: If the NP fulfills the requirements for the district bonus, turn the bonus tile face down.

Phase III

In **phase III**, the NP does not carry out any actions.

THE BUILDINGS

Every building provides a special ability that can be activated by putting a coin on the building during the appropriate phase. A player can only activate buildings that do not have a coin on them (i.e. each building can only be activated once per round). At the end of each round, all the coins will be removed from the buildings and returned to the general supply.

Special cases:

- If a player is allowed to take a building of a value greater than 4, he takes a building of value 4 first, then another one with a value equal to or lower than the difference.
- Each player only has space for 7 buildings. When a player needs more space, he may return one of his buildings to the general supply. He gets a number of victory points according to the value of the returned building.

Each building is associated with a specific phase in which it can be activated, according to its color:

Green buildings for phase I (can be activated AFTER all players have taken a card row each):



The player may either take 1 face-up card from the leftover card row, or draw 3 cards from the draw pile.



The player may keep 1 more card for the current round.



The player may either take 1 face-up card from the leftover card row, or draw 3 cards from the draw pile.

Additionally, he may keep 1 more card for the current round.



The player may either take 1 face-up card from the leftover card row, or draw 3 cards from the draw pile.

Additionally, he may keep 2 more cards for the current round.

Yellow buildings for phase II:



Delay: The player passes his regular turn to get another one after each player has had one turn.

Additionally, he gets 1 coin from the general supply.



The player may play exactly 1 card as 1 of another type.

Example: In stage A, 1 Gold card may be played as 1 Doge card to advance 1 space on the Doge track.



This building is considered a Joker card when activated.

It is possible to combine this with a Joker card from hand to replace a card type that a player does not have in hand, as 2 Jokers may be played as any one card.



The player may play exactly 1 card as 2 of one other type.

Blue buildings for phase III:



The player may return one of his buildings to take a building of the same color worth exactly one more than the returned building.

The new building cannot be activated during the current round.



The player gets 1 victory point and may take 1 of his councilmen from the general into his personal supply. If the player has no more councilmen in the general supply, he gets 1 additional victory point instead.



The player advances a number of spaces on the Doge track equal to the current position of his counter.

Example: If a player's counter currently is the 3rd on the track, he may advance it 3 spaces.



The player gets 3 victory points.