

# CAPITAL CITY™

## RULES FOR PASSENGERS



# CAPITAL CITY™

By James Ernest  
A Game for 3-6 players

Howdy partners, and welcome to **Capital City!** In this here fast-playing card game, you've got one year to help build the most famous town in all the West!

Each season of the year, the train will bring in city slickers and kinfolk from the east to help you run your new businesses on Main Street. Hire your workers carefully, keeping in mind that members of the same family inspire each other to work harder!

In Capital City, Dollars are useful, but Victory Points are even better. The object of the game is to accumulate the most Victory Points. At the end of the year, the player with the most Victory Points wins the game and becomes the new Mayor of Capital City!

### COMPONENTS:

**Victory Point Tokens:** 1 point (x30), 2 points (x20), and 5 points (x10)



**Dollar Tokens:** \$1 (x30), \$2 (x20), and \$5 (x10)



**Rulebook:** (1)

**Character deck:** 54 cards (6 nine-card Families)



**Building deck:** 36 cards



**Priority cards:** 6 cards (numbered 1-6)



**Season cards:** 4 cards (Spring, Summer, Fall, and Winter)



**Reference cards:** (6)

### Preparation:

**Building Deck:** Shuffle the Building Deck and place it in the center of the table.

**Character Deck:** Characters, represented by animals, are organized into Families by last name and color. Choose a number of Families to be used in the Character deck based on the player count:

Players	# of Families
3	4
4-5	5
6	6

Remove unchosen Families from the game, then shuffle the Character deck and deal one card to each player, face up, as their starting City Founder. Place the remaining Character deck beside the Building deck.

### Characters and Buildings

*Capital City* is about attaching Characters to Buildings. Different Characters are suited to different jobs, and their skills are indicated by the three types of symbols that connect them to Buildings: Stars, Gears, and Hearts.

To work at a Building, a Character's symbol (printed at the bottom of its card) must match and complete the symbol on the Building (printed at the top of its card) to which it is attached.



Buildings earn Victory Points or Dollars for their owner when Characters attached to them activate, as described in the rules below.

Some Buildings require two Characters before they are "fully staffed" and can provide earnings; these Buildings have two symbols instead of one.

**Season Cards:** Arrange the Season cards face up in a stack with Spring on top, followed by Summer, Fall, and Winter.

**Priority Cards:** Use a number of Priority cards equal to the number of players. For example, if there are four players, use cards 1-4. With the highest number on top, stack these in descending order.

**Starting Dollars:** Give each player \$10 in starting money. We suggest five \$1 tokens and one \$5 token. Set the remaining Dollar tokens aside as a **cash reserve**.

**Starting Player:** The player whose City Founder's first name is first alphabetically. This player will bid first in the Spring auction.

**Seasons:** The game is played over four seasons, and each season consists of six steps as described below: *Setup, Auction, Choose Characters, Purchase Buildings, Attach & Activate, and Reset*.

### Step 1: Setup

To start each season, create the Train and Main Street, referring to the current Season card for its specific setup instructions.

**Train:** A Train is composed of a number of Character cards equal to the number of players plus one; for example, four cards in a three-player game. Deal the Train **face down**

from the Character deck and fanned out at the start of the season so that players can see which Families are on the Train, but cannot identify the exact Characters. A player's face-down Characters should always be in full view.



Train setup

**Main Street:** Deal Building cards face up in the center of the table, visible to all players, to create Main Street.



Main Street

### Step 2: Auction

Players now bid for Priority cards, whose numbers determine player order for the rest of the season, using the following auction process.

**Starting Bidder:** In Spring, the first bidder is the Starting Player. In later seasons, the player who won Priority 1 in the previous season bids first. Bidding then proceeds to the left (clockwise) around the table.

When it is their turn to bid, players must do one of the following:

- Bid by placing \$1 into the pot (center of the table),



- Take the top Priority card (i.e., the highest number available) AND all the money from the pot (sometimes this amount will be high; sometimes it will be zero).

Once a player takes a Priority card, they are out of the auction. The process continues until all Priority cards are taken.

### Auction Example

Four players—Alice, Barkley, Casey, and Don—are bidding for Priority cards 1-4.

Alice is the first to bid. She doesn't want to go fourth (Priority 4), so she puts \$1 into the pot, but so do Barkley, Casey, and Don.

It's Alice's turn again. She still doesn't want fourth, so she puts in another \$1 on her turn.

### Seasonal Setup Rules

**Spring:** There is **one** Train this season. Main Street consists of a Building count equal to the **number of players plus two**.

**Summer and Winter:** There are **two** Trains in these seasons. Main Street consists of a Building count equal to the **number of players plus one**.

**Fall:** There is **one** Train this season. Main Street consists of a Building count equal to the **number of players**.



There is now \$5 in the pot, and it's Barkley's turn. He decides to take Priority card 4 AND the \$5 from the pot.

The auction proceeds to Casey, who doesn't want to go third, so she puts \$1 in the pot and is matched by Don. Alice decides that the third position is good enough, so on her turn she takes Priority card 3 and the \$2 from the pot.

After that, only Casey and Don remain in the auction. Casey decides that Priority 2 is good; she takes that card and gets no cash. Then Priority card 1 automatically goes to Don as he is the only player left in the auction.

#### Auction Summary

Alice paid \$2 but collected \$2, so she broke even on the auction and took Priority card 3. Barkley paid \$1 but took \$5; he made a profit of \$4 and took Priority card 4. Casey and Don each paid \$2 and got no cash in return, but took Priority cards 2 and 1, respectively.

#### Auction Strategy

Typically, players who want to go earlier in the turn order pay the most to do it. Some auctions end quickly, while others are hotly contested. The length will depend on many factors, including players' cash and cards and whether they want to go early or late in the order of play. In some circumstances players might prefer a higher Priority number, which allows them to go earlier in Step 5: Attach & Activate.

#### Step 3: Choose Characters

Starting with Priority 1, players look at the Characters on the Train and choose one from it. That Character is placed **face down** in front of them, but with the **card back clearly visible** to

other players. The Train is then passed to the next player in the priority order.



The last player will have two cards to pick from and will choose one; the other is discarded to the bottom of the Character deck.



Except for the starting City Founder cards, all Characters stay face down until they are played. Players can always look at their Characters after choosing them.

**Two Trains:** In seasons with two Trains, the player with Priority 1 decides which Train to take first and chooses a Character from it. (A player may not look at both Trains at the same time.) After a Character is chosen from the first Train, that Train is immediately passed to the next player in priority. Repeat this sequence with the second Train while the first is still being passed. Keep the Trains separate and moving around the table, making sure they remain in the chosen order.

#### Attach & Activate Examples

**Example 1:** Early in the game, Alice attaches a Green Character to her Post Office, a 1-Character building. That Character activates, and because its Building is fully staffed, Alice has her choice of 1 Victory Point or \$2 (as shown on the card) as earnings. She chooses the \$2. There are no other Green Characters in play, so nothing else activates.



**Example 2:** Later in the same round, Don attaches a Green Character to his 2-Character Building, the Boarding House. This Building is not yet fully staffed, so Don earns nothing, but Alice's Green Character at the Post Office activates again. This time Alice chooses to earn 1 Victory Point.



**Example 3:** In the following season, Alice attaches another Green Character, this time to her Haberdashery, a now fully staffed 2-Character Building (the other Character in the building is Blue). Alice now receives earnings from the Haberdashery AND from the Post Office (her choice of Victory Points

or Dollars for each Building) because they each have a Green Character attached. In addition, all other players get to choose and activate ONE of their Green Characters. Unfortunately, Don's Boarding House is not yet fully staffed, so it still earns nothing.



**Example 4:** Later that same round, Don attaches a second Green Character to his Boarding House. The newly attached Green Character activates first (earning Don his choice of 1 Victory Point or \$2) and then causes Don's other Green Character to activate, so he receives earnings from the Boarding House again (choosing again between 1 Victory Point or \$2)! As before, all other players get to choose and activate ONE of their Green Characters.



**IMPORTANT:** Remember to announce Characters one at a time as they are attached, so everyone knows which Families are being activated. Players should pay close attention

#### Step 4: Purchase Buildings

During this step, players may purchase a Building on Main Street.

Starting with Priority 1 and proceeding in priority order, players may buy **one** Building, paying the **Deed** cost in Dollars as shown on the card.



Place purchased Buildings face up on the table in front of the buyer. Available Characters are not attached to Buildings until the next step. Payment for the Deed cost is made to the cash reserve.

Players may decline to purchase a Building (either because they are out of money or because they simply don't wish to buy). In this case, the player **collects \$5** from the cash reserve.

Any Buildings left on Main Street at the end of this step are discarded to the bottom of the Building deck.

#### Step 5: Attach & Activate

This step happens in **REVERSE** priority order, starting with the **highest** priority number.

During this step, players may **attach** Characters to their Buildings by matching up the symbols (Stars, Gears, and Hearts). Players may attach some, none, or all of their chosen Characters, including their initial City Founder, during their turn. Characters may be attached in any order; however, they must be announced and attached one at a time. Once

a Character is attached, it can't be detached or moved to another Building.

When first attached, a Character **activates**. An activated Character causes its Building to produce earnings in either Victory Points or Dollars **IF that Building is fully staffed** (i.e., all Character slots are full). Otherwise, that Building doesn't provide any earnings at this time.



Then activate other Characters from the **same Family** in this order:

1. ALL other Characters from the same Family belonging to the **current** player. (This may allow a Building to produce earnings twice!)

2. ONE Character from the same Family belonging to **each other player** (those players each choose the Character and earnings type).

Repeat this process every time a new Character is attached to a Building. Remember, Buildings that are not fully staffed earn nothing for their owners.

to other players' Family choices so that they can earn their Victory Points or Dollars during each activation.

#### Step 6: Reset

Once the player with Priority 1 finishes Step 5: Attach & Activate, that's the end of the season. It's now time to reset the table for the next season.

Return the Priority cards, in descending order, to the middle of the table. Advance the Season stack to the next card and follow the new season's specific setup rules for the Train and Main Street. Attached Characters and purchased Buildings remain with their owners in full view, as do the unattached Character cards they have from previous seasons.

#### END OF GAME

At the conclusion of Winter, the game ends and Dollars are converted to Victory Points at a rate of \$10 to 1 Victory Point (leftover Dollars don't count). Add converted Victory Points to any existing Victory Points already earned. The player with the most Victory Points wins!

If there is a tie, leftover Dollars are the tie-breaker. If two players have the same number of Victory Points and leftover Dollars, they are both awarded the title of Mayor. This allows them to cover for each other and take twice as many vacations!

#### STRATEGY

Running out of Dollars can deprive players of choices, so they need to produce enough cash to keep from getting stuck. But remember that Victory Points win the game; whenever a

player feels they have enough money, they should always choose Victory Points. Balancing these two objectives is the key to winning!

Choosing Characters of the same Family from the Train can potentially help players get big payoffs on their own turn, but they may find that their Characters activate much less often on other players' turns. Alternatively, attaching Characters from a variety of Families gives a player more chances for earnings on other players' turns.

A player's Characters may activate more often when that player has the highest-numbered Priority card, because they will go first in Step 5: Attach & Activate, but it depends on which Characters are chosen and activated by other players!

We highly recommend playing a few times to discover the many different strategies in Capital City, and remember: even the worst players can get lucky! Above all, have fun and try to help others do the same!

#### Credits

**Game Design:** James Ernest and Ray Wehrs  
**Illustrations and Art:** Brian Bowes  
**Game Development:** Chris Leder and Zach Weisman  
**Art Direction and Graphic Design:** Andy Hepworth  
**Editor:** John Michael Arnaud

**Special thanks to all playtesters,** including Vye Alexander, Ellen Beeman, Bob DeDea, Jeremy Holcomb, Sean Patrick Fannon, Eugene Fasano, Rick Fish, Don Flinspach, Julie Haehn, Joshua Howard, Dave Howell, Paul Hubbard, Owen Jungemann, Rachael Kaufflung, Chris Leder, Derek Mantey, Colleen McGaughey, Nora Miller, Carol Monahan, Jamey Ostby, Cathy Saxton, Tom Saxton, Marc Schmalz, Craig Stockwell, Paul Peterson, Boyan Radakovich, Bill Runkle, Carinn Seabolt, Loren Tozer-Kilts, Shel Tozer-Kilts, Wendy Wallace, Zach Weisman, Cassidy Werner, Jeff Wilcox, and many more!

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