

TECH EMPIRE • Rules

Source: <https://tablepress.space/tech-empire/rules/> · Rebuilds with the site.

TECH EMPIRE

You are always rich in the wrong currency. 2–4 players · 25 min · ages 8+ · 36 capital + 12 Deals + 4 Shocks + 2 table cards (54)

> This game is about being rich in the wrong currency, felt as the public scramble to convert before a deal closes, decided by whether you spend a rare matching card now or let money talk and take the hit.

Deals hit the valley. Match the Need, buy it with Funds, or ride along with a friend. The next Deal is already showing. Save the big card — or spend it and watch the better Deal land in someone else's lap.

What is in the box

- 2 table cards (How to play, How you score) — leave them out
- 36 capital cards. Four kinds, numbers 1 to 9:
 - Connections ○ (social)
 - Funds □ (money)
 - Patents △ (ideas)
 - Influencers ◇ (political)
- 12 Deal cards
- 4 Shock cards

No dice. No board. No app. A pencil for scores. Print from <https://tablepress.space/tech-empire/print.html>

How to start (under 2 minutes)

Put the 2 table cards out. Mix the 36 capital cards. Give 6 each. Put 3 face-up as the Bench.

Mix the 12 Deals with the 4 Shocks. Flip cards until you have a Deal in play and a next Deal face-up beside it. If a Shock appears, tuck it under the Deal you just flipped. It lasts for that Deal only. Read it when that Deal is in play.

Youngest plays last on the first Deal. Going left, the person to their left plays first.

Play until 6 Deals have closed (dumped Deals count). Four people: still 6 cards, still 6 closes.

How you win

Most Reputation. Write it as you go.

A turn

Play one capital card onto the Deal in play, or pass. If you pass, you may trade one card from your hand with one Bench card.

Then the next person, going left, does the same. After everyone has had one chance, the Deal closes.

What a card can do

Match. If your card's kind is the Deal's Need, your big number competes to win.

Funds □ may play on any Deal. If the Need is not Funds and Funds win, that winner scores 1 less. If a matching card and a Funds card show the same number, the matching card wins.

Connections ○ may play on a Deal that does not need Connections. That is a ride. A ride cannot win. If someone takes the Deal, each rider scores 1.

Pass is always legal.

Who takes the Deal

The biggest competing number takes it (matching, or Funds, or a Shock that lets another kind play). Later player wins a true tie.

If nobody played a matching card or Funds, dump the Deal. Nobody scores. It still counts as a close.

After a Deal

If you played a card, draw 1: take a Bench card or the top of the pile. Fill the Bench back to three.

The person with the lowest score plays last on the next Deal. Bring the next Deal forward. Flip a new next Deal (Shocks tuck under the Deal they arrive with).

How you score

- The Fame printed on each Deal you took (2, 3, or 4), minus 1 if Funds won a Deal that did not need Funds
- +1 per ride that paid
- +2 for every different Need among Deals you took (one kind +2, two kinds +4, three +6, all four +8)

Sample turn

The Deal in play is Meet-Up Night (Need Connections, Fame 2). The next Deal is Prestige College (Need Connections, Fame 3).

Bo plays Alumni Thread (Connections 3).

Cam plays First Hire (Connections 9) and takes the 2 points. Cam had the 9. Cam spent it.

Ana passes and trades a leftover Patents 1 for a Bench Connections 4. She can see Prestige College coming.

Prestige College comes forward. Ana plays Warm Hello (7). Cam has only Advisory Seat (6) left. Ana takes 3.

Cam was richer. Ana waited. The better Deal was the one that showed next.

Stuck? Read this

I cannot match and I have no Funds. Ride with Connections, or pass (you may trade with the Bench).

The leader passes. The next person is first to play a card. That is legal.

My hand is empty. Draw after you play. If the pile and Bench are both empty, you pass. You are not out of the game.

The Bench is empty. Draw from the pile. Do not fill the Bench.

Two people reach for the same Bench card. It is the person who is drawing or trading now.

The pile is empty. Play the cards you have. Keep going until 6 Deals have closed.

Everyone passed. Dump the Deal. Flip the next one. The game does not freeze.

A Shock and a Deal arrive together. The Shock is only for that Deal. Then it goes away.

Talent Raid. No rides this Deal. Connections may still try to win a Connections Deal.

Downturn. Funds may not play unless the Need is Funds.

Patent Thaw / Hometown Bill. Patents or Influencers may play on any Deal this time, at full strength, and they can win. They do not pay the Funds tax.

We tied for the night. Most different Need kinds, then most rides, then the single highest Fame Deal.

I could win this Deal but I pass. That is allowed. You may be saving for the next Deal.

Last Deal kingmaking. Legal. Ride with the person you want, or spend the card.

2 people

Give 8 each. Bench of 3. Play until 8 Deals have closed. The next Deal is still showing. If one person passes,

the other may play one card or pass. Then it closes.

Young table (8–9 years)

Ignore the +2 per Need kind for the first two Deals. Add it after that. An adult may read the table cards out loud once. Play the big number. The italic line is extra.

So everyone can play

- Kinds have a word and a mark. Do not teach them by color.
- Numbers are 1 to 9, printed big. There is no A, J, Q, or K.
- Six cards may sit in a row in your hand.
- You never need two hands at once. Trade with the Bench one card at a time.
- “Three people,” not “3p.” Say “half” only if you house-rule it — the printed game uses full numbers and a 1-point tax instead.