

Friday, Advance Inactive Cities:

If any cities have red chips on them (these come from Saturday Auctions, described later), take one chip off each city and put it into the Bank. If this is the last chip on that city, the city becomes Active and its card turns face up.

Technically, Friday happens to each player in order starting with the player on the Button. This matters only if two cities are coming up and they would both put their owners over 30 points. If this isn't the case, Friday can be a simultaneous day.

Saturday, Auction one City:

Turn over the next City card in the deck. This city is now up for Auction. This Auction is a little different from the Auction at the beginning of the game.

Starting with the Button and proceeding to the left, players may either bid or pass. If you bid, you must bid higher than the current bid, and if you pass you drop out of the Auction.

The highest bidder takes his bid (in red chips) and splits it into two even piles. Put one stack into the Bank, and put the other on the city, with your counter marking the stack. If there is an odd chip, it goes on the city. One chip will be removed each turn (on Saturday) until the city becomes Active.

The player who won the bid takes the Button and the City card, face down. This city is currently "Inactive."

Inactive cities do nothing. They don't make counters, they don't have railway stations, they aren't worth points, and they don't cost any Food. When the city becomes Active, you will turn the card face up and leave the counter that marked your bid in the city, to mark it as yours.

Other Items of Note:

Ghost Towns: Sometimes no one will bid on a city. In that case, you remove the City card from the game, and proceed to bid on the Button as described below.

Bidding for the Button: If no one bids on the city, or if there are no cities left to buy, players spend Saturday bidding for the Button. The Auction has the same structure, but you bid in chips of any color. Simply state the number of chips you will pay; if you win the bid you can pay in any mix of colors.

When you buy the Button, you can give it to *any player*, thus controlling exactly when in the turn you will act. You might want to act first if you're about to win, or last if you need the income from other people's Rocket upgrades.

If no one buys the Button, it stays where it is. Note that while buying the Button lets you put it anywhere, buying a city always gives the Button to you.

Trading: You can trade Gold for Food with other players or with the Bank at any time. Trading with the Bank is expensive: The Bank will always give you 1 of what you want for 3 of what you have. Other players may offer you a better deal.

You can't trade anything except Food and Gold, and you can't trade on future income. Okay, you can trade pretty much anything if your group will allow it, but it's against the rules.

Being open to trades is a good way to strengthen your lead; be wary of trading with a player who's too far ahead of you!

Winning:

You are trying to reach a score of 30 points or more. Points represent political influence, and 30 points is enough to suddenly make you the governor of California. Okay, that makes no sense, but nevertheless that's the goal of the game.

Red chips are worth one point each. The Active cities you own are worth one point for each red dot. (Inactive cities aren't worth points.) Know-how cards are worth two points each.

Be sure to check your score whenever you activate a city, get a Know-how card, or collect red Chips. No matter what day of the week it is, the first player to reach 30 points wins.

Strategy Hints:

Auction Strategy: When you bid on a city, you are bidding both in points and time. Be aware of how many turns will pass before your city will become Active.

Even if you don't want a city, don't let the last bidder have it cheap. You can always just let a city starve rather than letting someone else buy it for less than it's worth.

As we said, bidding on the starting city is a crucial phase in this game. Understand where the best cities lie, looking at their connections to long strings of claims, their population, and their proximity to other County Seats. Don't let anyone have the best County Seat too cheaply.

Other Strategy: There are many paths to victory in this game, which you'll only learn with experience. You can take a military approach, building strong cities and then stealing resources from the people who need them; a banker's approach, making trades with anyone who needs what you have; a scientific approach, trying to control one or more of the Know-how cards by staying on top of the technological curve; a balanced approach, quietly taking cities as cheaply as you can and saving your Gold until you're ready for your first Moon Shot; or a "lucky me!" approach, sending all your people to your Rocket in the hopes of going out with one very lucky roll.

Population Variant: You probably noticed that Population is a meaningless number, except on the County Seats, where it only determines who gets the Button on the first turn. In the Population Variant, the number of thousands of residents, rounding up, is the maximum number of counters that city can hold. For example, Little Elk (Pop. 2011) can hold no more than 3 counters.

We're throwing this variation in as a change of pace for highly skilled players. Feel free to ignore it.

One False Step for Mankind

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One False Step for Mankind was designed by **James Ernest** with help from the usual fearless Cheapass Games Guinea Pigs, including **Nathan Clarenburg, Falko Goettsch, Joshua Howard, Dave Howell, Owen Jungemann, Andrew Lockwood, Elizabeth Marshall, Cathy Saxton, Jeff Vogel, and Eric Yarnell**. Cover art by Phil Foglio, interior art by James Ernest. Tell us what you think! Better yet, tell your friends!



Game Components:

Players: 3-6

Playing Time: 3-4 Hours

Package Contents:

- 8 Board Sections
- 1 Deck of 33 City cards
- 18 Rocket System cards (6 sets of 3)
- 3 Know-how cards
- 6 "Days of the Week" cards.

You Also Need:

- Poker Chips:** 100 chips in 4 colors: Red, Yellow, Green, and Gray
- Counters:** 40 for each player
- Dice:** Two 6-sided dice
- Button:** A Button or Token to designate the leader
- Paper Clips:** Three small paper clips or one large paper clip for each player.

Setting Up:

One False Step for Mankind requires a fair amount of setup. But what else would you expect in a 3-hour game?

Build the Board: Choose any five board sections and build them into a map. The boards are designed to fit together in many different ways, so no two maps are ever the same. Some possible layouts are shown in the diagram at left.

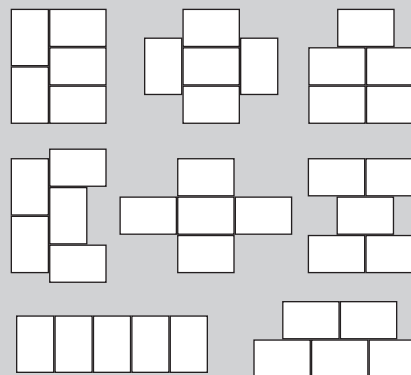
No matter how many players you have, you will always use five boards. You can choose your favorite boards, or you can pick them randomly. To make the map more stable, you can pin the boards together with sticky-notes (on the back).

Build the Deck: Look through the deck of City cards and remove the cities that are not on your map. Each card has a number showing which board it's on, to make this easier.

Next, find the cards for all the County Seats on the map. County Seats are the cities with stars. These cities will be auctioned at the beginning of the game. If there are more County Seats than players, draw one County Seat for each player, and put the extras back into the deck.

Shuffle the deck and put it face down beside the map.

Some Possible Board Layouts:



Set Up the Players: Players start with 20 red chips (Influence, also part of your score), 4 green chips (Food), and zero yellow chips (Gold). The rest of the chips start in the Bank. Gray chips can represent ten chips in any other pile. Instead of gray, you could just use more red, green, and yellow chips. If you have no chips, you can also keep score on paper.

Players need roughly 40 counters in their color. You can use as many as it takes, but 40 is probably enough. You can also use dice to represent large piles of counters on the map.

Each player gets a set of three Rocket System cards, which represent the three aspects of your Moon Rocket technology: Guidance, Life Support, and Fuel. These cards are described in detail under **Thursday: Rockets and Moon Shots**.

Each player gets a Days of the Week card.

The Know-how cards start in the Bank. These are described under **Thursday: Rockets and Moon Shots**.

Give the Button to a random player. It's the responsibility of the player with the Button to keep the game moving. When you're on the Button, don't shirk this weighty task!

The Starting Auction:

At the beginning of the game you will auction off the County Seats you set aside during Setup. County Seats are roughly equivalent in all respects except their connections, which will vary with the map. Buying your starting city at the right price is critical, so study the board before you begin.

Starting on the Button, players must either bid on one of the available County Seats or pass.

If you have no bid out, you must bid. If you have a bid out, you must pass, but passing doesn't put you out of the auction. Other players can outbid you, and bring you back in.

To show your bid, place a number of red chips on the County Seat you wish to buy, and mark those chips with a counter to show that they are yours. If that city already had a bid on it, your bid must be higher. When you outbid another player, that player takes back his chips and his counter.

The Auction ends when every available County Seat has a bid on it. Players take the cards representing their County Seats and put them face up on the table in front of them.

A City card that's face up on the table in front of you is called an "Active" City. You can buy more cities later in the game, but the Auction guarantees that everyone starts with one.

Players mark their cities on the map with a single counter. Put all the red chips spent in the Auction into the Bank. (Subsequent Auctions will be handled differently.)

The player who bought the County Seat with the *biggest population* takes the Button for the first week. (This is the only time that population matters. See the *Population Variant* at the end of the rules if you're curious about how else to use it.)



Rounds of Play:

The game proceeds in rounds, also called **weeks**, which are composed of the following steps, or **days**:

Sunday: Populate Town Cards

Monday: Stake Claims

Tuesday: Collect Income

Wednesday: Pay Expenses

Thursday: Rockets and Moon Shots

Friday: Advance Inactive Cities

Saturday: Auction One City.

Each player has a Days of the Week card to help remember the turn order. The player on the Button is responsible for calling the game and making sure everyone is on the same day.

Some of these days are simple, and can be taken at the same time by all players. Others are more complex, and must be taken in order beginning with the player who has the Button.

The Button moves between rounds, going to the player who buys the city at the end of the week. Because of this, it's possible to keep the Button for several turns in a row.

Sunday, Populate Town Cards:

On Sunday, all players place one new counter in the *middle* of every Active City card they own. Counters represent people.

If there are counters on the *Train icon* of a City card, those counters now drop into the middle of that City card. They were "on the Train" heading to that city.

Monday, Stake Claims:

Starting on the Button, players may now place all the counters from their City cards onto the board. The player with the Button places all of his counters first, then the next player to his left places all of his, and so on.

Although Monday is labeled "Stake Claims," you actually have several options with each counter you place on Monday. With each, you may do one of the following:

1) Stake a Claim: Place the counter on an unoccupied Gold Mine or Farm that's connected to the city on the map. (Ex., if you have a counter on your Farmington Card, you can put it on any open claim that's connected to Farmington.) Gold Mines are the yellow circles; Farms are the green rectangles.

"Connected" to the city means that the claim is either directly attached to the city (by a line) or by a string of claims you already own. Connections can continue through several connected claims, but they can't go through another city, even another city you own.

2) Jump a Claim: You can try to take over a claim that someone already owns. This is called "jumping" a claim.

The claim must be connected to the city your counter came from, as described above. The owner of the claim gets to defend it. (In court, mind you, not in combat!)

To settle the dispute, each player rolls one die and adds the number of counters in a connected city. The *defender* can choose *any* connected city he owns; the *attacker* must use the

city the counter came from.

The higher total (the die roll plus the city counters) wins the dispute. In a tie, the defender always wins.

The winner of the dispute occupies the claim and the loser's counter is removed from the board.

If you jump a claim that is not connected to any city (because its original ties have been cut off), the defender has no support, and will always lose.

3) Strengthen a City: Place your counter into the city on the map. (Ex., placing the counter from the Farmington card directly into Farmington.) A counter placed in a city adds a defensive and offensive bonus to contests you fight over claims connected to that city, as described above.

Cities can hold any number of counters, so it may be useful to replace larger piles of counters with dice showing the correct number. It helps if you can color-code these dice, but by the time you need them it's usually obvious who owns the city.

4) Put the Counter on the Train: You can send your counter on the Railroad to another city. Put the counter on the *Train icon* of one of your Active cities, where you want the counter to go. It will arrive in that city on the following Monday. You can keep a counter "on the rail" by sending it to the city it came from, just to keep it from going onto the board.

Railroad icons can hold any number of counters. They will all move into the center of that City card on the next Monday.

Why use the Railroad? Because once counters are on the board, they never move again, unless they are removed from a disputed claim. Keeping your people on the rail keeps your options open, though it does cost you income in the short run.

5) Put a Counter on Your Rocket: You can place the counter on your Rocket.

Your Rocket is represented by three Rocket System cards. Counters on the Rocket will convert into bonus points if your next Moon Shot is successful. Obviously, this is risky until your Rocket is in good working order. Towards the end of the game, sending counters to the Rocket can really improve your score!

Your Rocket can hold any number of counters. They will sit there until your next Moon Shot, at which point they will go away whether they have been converted into points or not.

Tuesday, Collect Income:

Tuesday (Income) is a simultaneous step; it's simple enough that all players can take it at the same time. For every Farm you own, you collect one green chip (Food) from the Bank. For every Gold Mine you own, take one yellow chip (Gold).

Wednesday, Pay Expenses:

This is also a simultaneous step. In fact, it's usually fine to take Tuesday and Wednesday at the same time, but technically you do earn your income before you have to pay your expenses.

All your cities require Food. Each city costs a number of green chips equal to the number of green dots on that City card. Pay this Food to the Bank.

You can choose to starve a city if you don't wish to pay for it. If you starve a city, you lose control of it immediately. The

City card goes on top of the deck, and it will be auctioned at the end of the week.

When you relinquish control of a city, you remove all your counters from the city itself, but *not* from the surrounding claims. Those claims will continue to produce income until someone else jumps them.

Thursday, Rockets and Moon Shots:

Moon Shots are the primary means of earning points in this game, since each successful roll earns you one red chip. Starting on the Button, each player may upgrade his Rocket Systems on Thursday and/or make one Moon Shot.

1) Upgrading your Rocket. Your Rocket starts as a 1/1/1, meaning that you have absolutely terrible Guidance, Fuel, and Life Support Systems. To represent the state of your Rocket, use a small paper clip on each System card to mark the current value of the system. At the beginning of the game, mark all three systems at "1."

To improve a system to the next level, you must pay the amount of Gold indicated on that level. For example, going from level 4 to level 5 costs 5 Gold. Going from 5 to 7 costs 17. You can upgrade as many systems and as many levels as you wish on one turn. All the money you pay goes to the Bank, unless someone holds the Know-how for that system.

Know-how: If you are the first player to reach a new level of sophistication in any system, you take the Know-how card for that system. Know-how cards are worth 2 points. In addition, when players make improvements, they must now pay *you* one Gold for each level they upgrade, as long as they are at or below your current level, then pay the rest of the cost to the Bank. This doesn't increase the *total* cost of improving; it just diverts one Gold per level to the player with the Know-how.

If another player exceeds the level of the current Know-how, the fee for that upgrade goes entirely to the Bank, then *that* player steals the Know-how card.

2) Taking a Moon Shot: Making it to the Moon is quite tricky, but you can earn points just for trying.

To take a Moon Shot, pay 4 Food. This represents the party you must throw to get points out of your attempt. (Ironically, the public never get tired of attending Moon launches, no matter how many they have already seen.)

Roll two dice for each Rocket System. The number you must roll is shown by the dice on the Rocket cards: you must roll that number or higher to succeed. (You don't have to match the dice on the cards; 6 + 4 is just as good as 5 + 5.) If the roll is a success, you earn one red chip. If you succeed on all three systems, you will earn a total of three red chips. There is no penalty for failure.

If you have any counters on your Rocket, and all three systems work, you will earn a bonus red chip for each counter. These counters go away regardless of the success of your Rocket. If you get to the Moon, you have more loyal supporters, and if you didn't, well, you don't.

Level	Roll	Price
1	1	0
2	2	1
3	3	2
4	4	3
5	5	6
6	6	7
7	7	10
8	8	13
9	9	17
10	10	21