

FREE RIDE USA

The train game from
Friedemann Friese
for 1-5 players

GAME OVERVIEW

During the 1950s, the network of railway lines in USA was modernized because of new diesel locomotives. This allowed people to travel to the major cities to visit the beautiful old and new structures all want to visit and experience.

In **Free Ride USA**, you are in charge of rebuilding the railway lines that connect the major cities in America. Then, you move your train along the growing rail network to carry passengers to visit the famous structures in these cities. Moving your train along your railway lines and state-owned railway lines is free. If you use railway lines owned by your fellow players, you must pay them, which converts their lines into state-owned railway lines.

To collect passengers, you can choose from an open display of city cards representing different travel routes of passengers. Move your train to one of the cities on display and choose that travel route by picking up this starting city card together with the destination city card. When your train arrives at the destination, you fulfill this travel route and gain victory points for both cards at the end of the game.

At first, you can only take care of a single travel route. Later, your train can carry two travel routes at the same time and travels faster along the network of railway lines.

The goal of **Free Ride USA** is to visit as many different cities of America as possible.

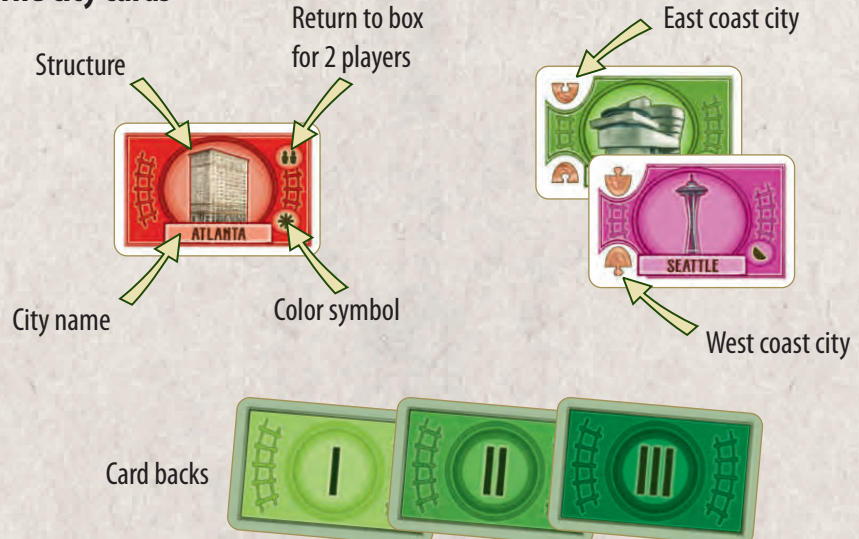
GAME COMPONENTS

Your copy of **Free Ride USA** contains:

- 1 game board
- 135 city cards (3 stacks with 45 cards, each marked "I" to "III")
- 140 rail tokens
- 5 train tokens (1 each in 5 player colors)
- 16 player mats (1 train and 2 coaches in 5 player colors, plus 1 train for the solo challenge)
- 125 ownership tokens (25 each in 5 player colors)
- 5 "rails under construction" tokens (1 each in 5 player colors)
- 60 coins
- 1 first player signal tile
- 1 rule booklet



The city cards



 **East-west connection:** when an east coast and west coast city are directly below each other in the public display, so they "interlock" in a complete puzzle symbol, they form an East-west connection. Of course, this is also true for a West-east connection.



GAME PREPARATION

A

Place the **game board** on the table.

- 1 Place all **rail tokens** and **coins** in separate supplies next to the game board.

B

Everybody chooses a color.

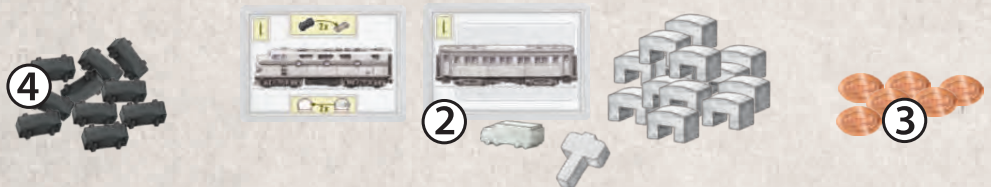
- 2 Take all your **25 ownership tokens**, your **train token**, the **"rails under construction"** token, and the **train** and **coach mats** marked "I", and place them in front of you.
- 3 Take **6 coins** from the supply.
- 4 Depending on the number of players, take the following number of **rail tokens** from the supply.

# of players	2	3	4	5
# of rail tokens	15	12	10	8

- 5 Place the **coach mats** marked "II" of all players next to the supply of rail tokens. Return unused player components and the **green solo train** marked "I-III" back to the game box.




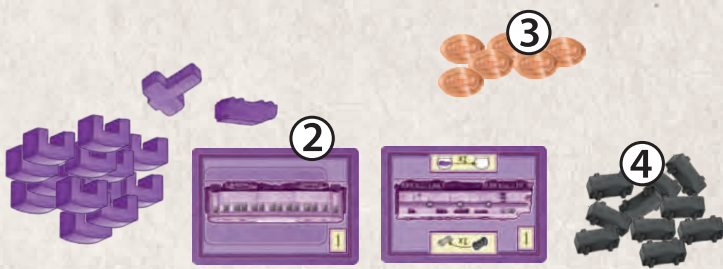
Example for 4 players



C Take the **city cards** and sort them in 3 stacks sorted by the numbers "I" to "III" on their card backs. Each of the three stacks contains one each of the 45 cities on the game board.

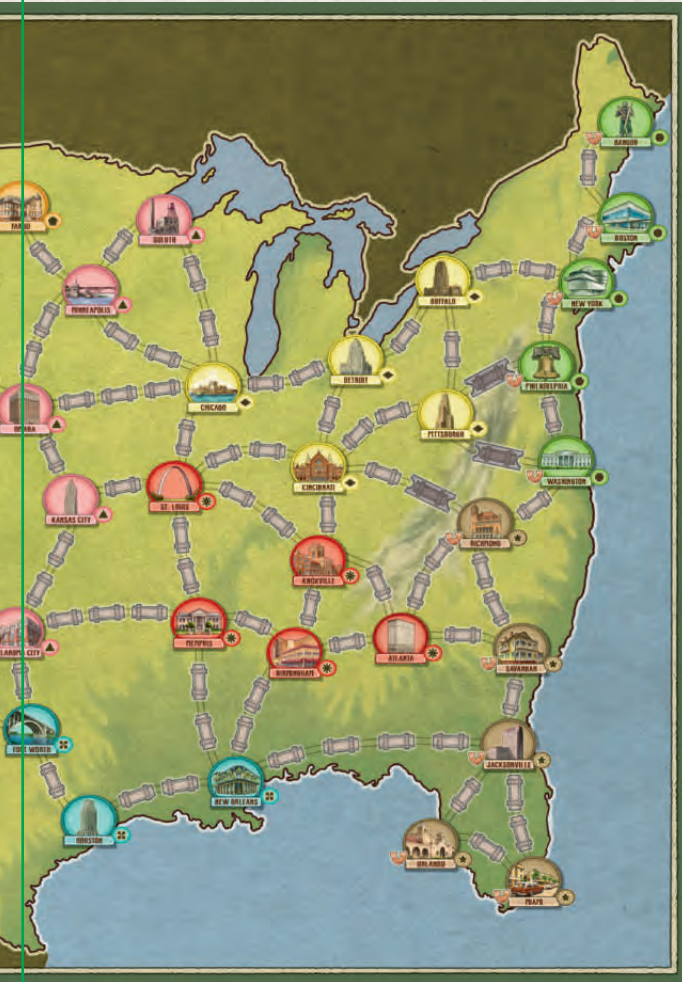
For 2 players: return the city cards marked on the top right to the game box (one card for each city). Afterward, each of the 3 stacks contains 30 cards, and each city is only in two of the three stacks.

- ⑥ Shuffle each stack separately and place them as face down draw stacks next to the game board.
- ⑦ Start drawing cards from the draw stack "I" and place them one after the other in columns next to the game board, creating 3 travel routes, each consisting of 3 cards. For each travel route, always place the first city card next to the game board, followed by the other two cards.
- ⑧  **East-west connection:** place 2 coins on the complete puzzle symbol of each East-west connection. In rare situations, if there are two East-west connections in the same column, only place 2 coins on the center city card.



D Choose a first player using any method you prefer.

- ⑨ The first player places the first player **signal tile** next to their train mat and keeps this tile for the whole game.



E You are ready to start **Free Ride USA!**



THE MAIN IDEAS OF *FREE RIDE USA*

Before explaining the game in detail, we will give you a quick overview of the two central concepts of *Free Ride USA*. Afterward, as you will see, all the rules will fall into place.

Railway lines: you are rebuilding railway lines between cities. A railway line is rebuilt when you have placed rail tokens on all of the track images between two cities. When you need new rail tokens, you can buy them while rebuilding rails with coins or must take a whole action to do that. There are three kinds of railway lines: your lines, lines owned by fellow players, and state-owned lines. When you travel along railway lines, you pay nothing to travel on yours and state-owned. However, to travel on a fellow player's line, you must pay them 1 coin to convert their line to state-owned. From then on, traveling on that line is free for all players. Keep this in mind: as coins are limited, you should carefully balance the rebuilding of your lines with the conversion of fellow players' lines to state-owned lines.

Travel routes: during the game, you can choose from 6 travel routes in the public display. Each travel route consists of 3 city cards, and each offers two different options. Take 2 of the 3 city cards without changing their order: Either take the top (starting) and center (destination) city cards OR take the center (starting) and bottom (destination) city cards. Return the third city card of the travel route to the game box.

HOW TO PLAY

Free Ride USA is played in three parts: Prologue, Main Game, and Finish.

During the **Prologue**, choose your first travel route and place your train in the matching starting city.

In the **Main Game**, rebuild rails that connect cities with railway lines, move your train from city to city to fulfill travel routes, or take rail tokens. On your turn, choose 1 of the following 3 actions:

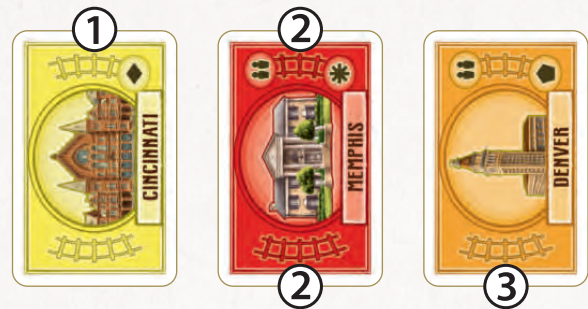
- **Rebuild rails:** spend up to 2 construction points to connect the cities by rebuilding railway lines. If you need additional rail tokens while rebuilding, you can pay 1 coin to take 5 rail tokens from the supply.
- **Ride the train:** move your train up to 2 cities along rebuilt railways to fulfill your travel routes.
- **Take rail tokens:** take 5 rail tokens from the supply without spending a coin.

After triggering the **Finish**, you can also withdraw your service. Quit the game by removing your train from the game board.

After everybody quits the game, count up your victory points and determine the winner of *Free Ride USA*.

You cannot reverse the travel route or choose the first and third cards for your travel route. Keep this in mind: try to move your train into regions where you can easily pick up the next travel route without losing too much time.

In *Free Ride USA* it is always all about these decisions: do you rebuild railway lines, or move your train? Do you wait for better travel routes on display, or snatch the best travel routes from under your fellow players' noses?



Example: for this travel route you can either choose Cincinnati ① as starting city and Memphis ② as destination city, or Memphis ② as starting city and Denver ③ as destination city.

Solo game: please read all of the following rules, as they are the same for the *Free Ride USA* solo game, too. You will find necessary additional adjustments for the solo game on page 10 of this rule booklet.

PROLOGUE

Choose your first travel routes and place your trains in the matching starting cities.

Starting with the first player and continuing clockwise, everybody chooses 1 travel route:

- The starting player chooses 1 of the 3 available travel routes. Each travel route consists of 3 city cards, and each offers two different options. Take 2 of the 3 city cards of the travel route of your choice, but do not change the order of the cards: Either take the top card as your starting city and the center card as your destination city OR take the center card as your starting city and the bottom card as your destination city, while returning the remaining city card of the travel route to the game box.
- Place your train on the starting city on the game board. Then, place both cards of your travel route on your coach, with the destination city on top. Your coach can only take a single travel route, and you cannot simply discard it underway. You first need to fulfill this travel route during the action *Ride the train* before you can pick up a new travel route.

- Add 2 travel routes from the draw stack "1" to the public display, before the next player in turn order selects their travel route. The second player has a choice of 4 travel routes and so on, until the fifth player has the choice of 7 travel routes. Everybody places their train on different starting cities of their travel routes, as there is only one of each in the first stack.

- **👤👤 For 2 players:** after the first player chooses their travel route, add another 3 travel routes, so the second player has a choice of 5 travel routes.
- **🔄 East-west connection:** when you choose an East-west connection, take the 2 coins and place them with your other coins. When adding a new East-west connection to the display, place 2 coins on it, too.
- At the end of the Prologue, make sure to fill up the display to a total of 6 travel routes, regardless of the number of players.



Example: while playing with 4 players, Natalie starts the Prologue and picks up the travel route from Phoenix to Los Angeles ①. She passes on the East-west connection and returns Richmond to the game box and the coins of the East-west connection to the supply ②. She places her train on Phoenix ③ and places both city cards on her coach; Los Angeles on top ④. Then, she adds 2 travel routes to the public display ⑤ (including a new East-west connection ⑥), so Ann has a choice of 4 travel routes. After Nikki and Debbie picked up their first travel routes, too, they fill up the public display to 6 travel routes. Then, Natalie starts the Main Game.

MAIN GAME


Connect cities by rebuilding rails, move your train along rebuilt railway lines to fulfill travel routes, or take rail tokens.


During your turn, always choose 1 of the following 3 actions:


Rebuild rails

Rebuild rails to connect the cities with railway lines.


Follow these rules:

-  **Spend construction points:** as shown on your train mat, spend up to 2 construction points to place 1 or 2 of your rails on the map to rebuild railway lines between the cities. To mark your ownership, place an ownership token on top of the first rail token of each of your railway lines.

-  **Basic railway space:** spend 1 construction point to place 1 rail token on a basic rail space.

-  **Tunnel space:** spend 2 construction points to place 1 rail token on a tunnel space. If you only have 1 construction point left, you can still place 1 rail token on such a space, but turn the rail token 90° as a reminder that you need to spend another construction point in a later turn to finish the rail on this space.

- **Accessible railway lines:** you can rebuild a railway line if your train can move to that new line via rebuilt railway lines, either your own lines, state-owned railway lines, or the railway lines of fellow players.

-  **Partial construction:** you can start to rebuild a railway line, but you are not forced to finish it in consecutive turns. As a reminder for an unfinished railway line, take your “rails under construction” token and place it next to affected railway line until you finish it in a later turn.

- **Suspend construction:** if you have “rails under construction”, you may take the actions *Ride the train* and *Take rail tokens* in between. However, you must finish your railway line between two cities before starting your next railway line. After you finish a suspended railway line, take back your “rails under construction” token.

- **Build someone else’s railway line:** you can also continue to build a suspended railway line of a fellow player if your train could move to a city of that line. Pay the necessary construction points and use your rail tokens. The fellow player keeps the ownership of that railway line. If you take the action *Ride the train* and your train moves on that line, you pay the other player and it becomes state-owned.

- **The great network:** when all railway lines are connected on the game board, you may rebuild any railway line as all of them will be connected to the network.

- **Paid rail tracks replenishment:** if you only have 1 or 0 rail tokens left you can buy more rail tokens as part of the action *Rebuild rails*. Pay 1 coin to the supply and immediately take 5 rail tokens from the supply. Then, continue with the action *Rebuild rails*. **Note:** if you cannot or do not want to pay 1 coin, you must choose the action *Take rail tokens* to gain new rail tokens.



Example: Debbie places 2 rail tokens and connects St. Louis with Cincinnati. She marks the railway line with a white ownership token ①.

Next, Ann places 1 rail token to connect Kansas City with St. Louis ②. As Debbie's and her railway lines now connect, Ann places the second rail token to connect Cincinnati with Detroit ③. She marks both railway lines with purple ownership tokens.


Nikki only has 1 rail token left and pays 1 coin to take another 5 rail tokens ④. She places 2 rails tokens on the railway line between Oklahoma City and Memphis and marks one of them with a yellow ownership token ⑤. As a reminder, that she needs to finish this suspended railway line later, she places her yellow “rails under construction” marker next to this railway line ⑥.




Ride the train

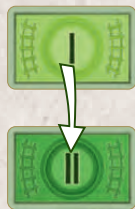
Your main goal in *Free Ride USA* is to fulfill as many travel routes and to collect as many different city cards as possible.

Follow these rules:

- 
From city to city: as shown on your train mat, move your train up to 2 cities along rebuilt railway lines. Always move from city to city, the length of a railway line between cities does not matter. Although everybody starts in different starting cities, you may have your train on or move through cities with fellow players' trains.
- Cost-free rides:** if you use your own railway lines and state-owned railway lines, the movement is free of charge.
- Paid rides:** if you want to use the railway line of a fellow player, you must pay them 1 coin. If you do, convert their line into a state-owned railway line. The fellow player takes their ownership token back.
- Fulfill travel routes:** you start the Main Game with a travel route on your coach. You cannot discard a travel route underway. Only if your train reaches or passes through the destination city, you fulfill the travel route and place both city cards face down on your score pile. You may look at these cards at any time but should avoid showing them to your fellow players.
- Pick up a new travel route:** you can pick up a new travel route when your coach is empty as explained in the Prologue. To do so, your train must start in, reach, or pass through a city that is a starting city of one of the 6 travel routes in the public display. Depending on the travel routes in the public display, you may need to take the action *Ride the train* several times to reach a starting

city. You cannot pick up a travel route when taking the actions *Rebuild rails* and *Take rail tokens*.

- 
East-west connection: when you choose an East-west connection, take the 2 coins and place them with your other coins. When adding a new East-west connection to the display, place 2 coins on it, too.



- The second coach:** after depleting the draw stack "I", continue to draw cards from the draw stack "II". At the

end of your turn in which you drew the first cards of the second draw stack, everybody takes the second coach mat marked "II" from the general supply and

adds it to the train in front of them. From now on, you can carry two travel routes on your coaches at the same time. The same rules apply for both coaches for fulfilling and picking up each travel route.



- The faster train:** after depleting the draw stack "II", continue to draw cards from the draw stack "III". At the

end of your turn in which you drew the first cards of the third draw stack, everybody turns their train mat over to show the faster train. From now on, move your

train up to 3 cities along rebuilt railway lines. You still only have 2 construction points for the action *Rebuild rails*.

- Fill up the public display:** at the end of the action *Ride the train*, refill the public display with 6 travel routes.



Example: Ann moves her train 2 cities. First, she moves on her own railway line from Detroit to Cincinnati ①. Then, she pays 1 coin to Nikki ② and converts Nikki's railway line between Cincinnati and Knoxville to state-owned. Nikki removes her ownership token from that line ③, before Ann moves from Cincinnati to Knoxville ④. She fulfills her current travel route and places both city cards face down on her score pile ⑤.

There are no starting cities located in the immediate vicinity in the public display. Thus, Ann must ride her train before she can pick up another travel route.



Take rail tokens

If you do not have coins or want to save them, you can take rail tokens with this action. You cannot rebuild rails, move your train, or pick up a new travel route.

Follow this rule:

- **Cost-free rail tracks replenishment:** if you only have 1 or 0 rail tokens left, take 5 rail tokens from the supply without paying for them.

Example: Debbie needs more rail tokens but does not want to pay for them. She passes on rebuilding rails and only takes 5 rail tokens.



FINISH

After connecting the cities with railway lines and fulfilling travel routes all over America, it is time to withdraw your service.

When you deplete the draw stack "III", continue to take the three actions of the Main Game. During the action *Ride the train*, you can now also quit the game by withdrawing your service:

- **Withdrawing your service:** during the action *Ride the train*, you can move the train and fulfill travel routes once again or refrain from further rides, before you withdraw your service. Remove your train from the game board and place it in front of you.
- **Satisfied passengers:** if you fulfilled your last travel routes, so both of your coaches are now empty or were already empty before the last train ride, gain 1 coin from the supply and place it with your other coins.
- **Sudden Withdrawal:** if you still have one or two travel routes on your coaches when withdrawing the service, return them from your coaches to the game box. You do not get a coin.

- **Exception - new passengers:** if you pick up a travel route during the action *Ride the train* and you cannot fulfill with the same action, you cannot quit the game and must continue your service with at least one more action.

- **Special payments:** when you quit the game, your fellow players continue to play by taking their turns. Each time it is your turn again, gain 1 coin from the supply.

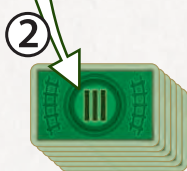
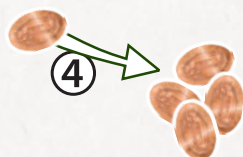
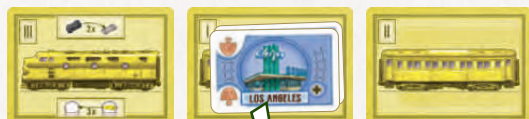
- **The final round:** when the last player quits the game, the current round is finished. So that all players played the same number of turns, the remaining players, up to the player to the right of the first player, each gain 1 coin from the supply.



Example: Nikki moves her train to Los Angeles ① and fulfills her last travel route ②. Even if she could move to one more city, she withdraws her service. Nikki removes her train from the game board ③ and places it in front of her. She takes 1 coin from the supply, as all her passengers are satisfied and both her coaches are empty ④.

If Nikki would have withdrawn her service without fulfilling the last travel route, she would have returned the city cards to the game box and not received a coin.

As long as the other players continue to play, Nikki takes 1 coin each time it is her turn.



FINAL SCORING

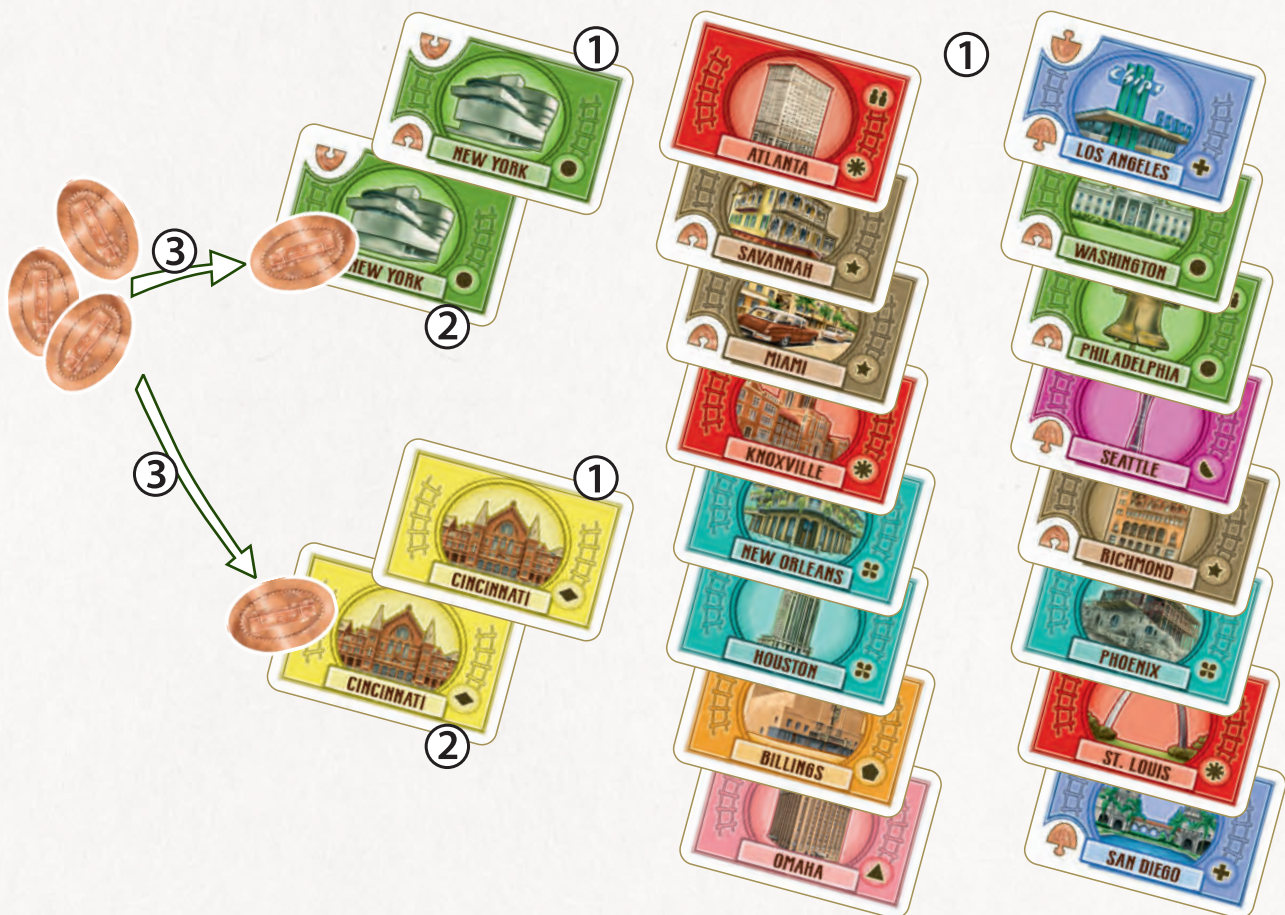
After everybody has withdrawn their service, count up your victory points:

- 5 victory points for the first fulfilled card of each city.
- 2 victory points for the second and third cards of each city.
- 3 victory points for each coin.

The easiest way to add up your victory points: place a coin on each of the second and third cards, so each of these sets counts 5 victory points.

If you have the most victory points, you are the greatest train conductor and win **Free Ride USA!**

In case of a tie, the tied player with more different fulfilled cities wins the game. If there is still a tie, all tied players share the win.



Example: Natalie fulfilled travel routes with 18 different cities ① and 2 second cards of Cincinnati and New York ②. She has 5 coins at the end of the game.

To easily add up her victory points, she places one coin each on the second cards for Cincinnati and New York ③.

Natalie scores a **total of 109 victory points**: 90 victory points for 18 different city cards, 10 victory points for 2 sets with second city cards and coins, and 9 victory points for the remaining 3 coins.



THE *FREE RIDE USA* SOLO GAME

In this solo challenge, you need to rebuild the network of railway lines on your own so that you can fulfill all 30 travel routes!

Game preparation

Follow the game preparation as explained on pages 2-3 with the following changes:

- Start the game with 40 coins and all rail tokens. Place the remaining 20 coins in a supply next to the game board.
- You do not need the ownership tokens.
- Take the green solo train mat and both green coach mats.
- Return the city cards marked on the top right to the game box (one card for each city). Afterward, each of the 3 stacks contains 30 cards, and each city is only in two of the three stacks.



Example: you start with a complete solo game train!

Prologue

Fill the public display with 6 travel routes before choosing your first travel route and placing your train on the matching starting city.

Main Game

At the start of each turn, pay 1 coin to the general supply. Then, choose one of the two available actions:



Rebuild rails

As shown on your train mat, spend up to 5 construction points to rebuild rails, following the same rules as explained on page 6.



Ride the train

As shown on your train mat, move your train up to 5 cities along rebuilt railway lines, following the same rules as explained on page 7.



East-west connection: when you choose an East-west connection, take the 2 coins and place them with your other coins. When adding a new East-west connection to the display, place 2 coins on it, too.

When you start drawing city cards from the draw stacks "II" and "III", you do not gain any additional bonus.

Finish & Final Scoring

You lose the solo challenge if you spent all coins and did not fulfill all 30 travel routes.

You win the **Free Ride USA** solo challenge if you fulfill all 30 travel routes, so both the public display and both your coaches are empty. Count your victory points as follows and check your score in the table.

- 5 victory points each for the first fulfilled card of each city. Do not score victory points for the second fulfilled card of each city.
- 3 victory points for each coin.

Victory points	Title
< 226	Intern
226-230	Apprentice
231-235	Assistant
236-240	Train Conductor
241-245	Engineer
246-250	Manager
>250	General Manager

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THE RETURNED CITY CARDS FOR  2 PLAYERS AND  THE SOLO GAME



The structures in *FREE RIDE USA*



Albuquerque
KiMo Theatre
(1927)



Atlanta
Candler Building
(1906)



Bangor
Paul Bunyan Statue
(1959)



Barstow
Palm Springs Alexander Homes
(1957)



Billings
Fox Theatre
(1931)



Birmingham
Alabama Theatre
(1927)



Boston
Harvard Graduate Center
(1950)



Buffalo
Buffalo Central Terminal
(1929)



Cheyenne
Union Pacific Railroad Depot
(1887)



Chicago
Buckingham Fountain
(1927)



Cincinnati
Cincinnati Music Hall
(1878)



Denver
Daniels and Fisher Tower
(1911)



Detroit
Fisher Building
(1928)



Duluth
Fitger's Brewery Complex
(1930)



El Paso
Rio Grande River



Fargo
Old Main at North Dakota State University
(1892)



Fort Worth
Paddock Viaduct
(1912)



Houston
Gulf Building
(1929)



Jacksonville
Eight Forty One
(1955)



Kansas City
Power & Light Building
(1931)



Knoxville
Ayres Hall
(1921)



Los Angeles
Chips Coffee Shop
(1957)



Memphis
Graceland
(1939)



Miami
Ocean Drive
(1915)



Minneapolis
Lock and Dam No. 1
(1932)



New Orleans
French Quarter
(18th Century)



New York
Guggenheim Museum
(1959)



Oklahoma City
Sonic Drive In Headquarter
(1953)



Omaha
Hotel Fontenelle
(1915)



Orlando
Orlando Health/Amtrak Station
(1926)



Philadelphia
Liberty Bell
(1752)



Phoenix
Mystery Castle
(1930s)



Pittsburgh
Cathedral of Learning
(1926)



Pocatello
Yellowstone Hotel
(1916)



Portland
St. Johns Bridge
(1931)



Richmond
Main Street Station
(1901)



Sacramento
Elks Tower
(1926)



Salt Lake City
Salt Lake Temple
(1893)



San Diego
Museum of Us (Balboa Park)
(1915)



San Francisco
Golden Gate Bridge
(1937)



Savannah
The Gingerbread House
(1899)



Seattle
Space Needle
(1961)



Spokane
Monroe Street Bridge
(1911)



St. Louis
Gateway Arch
(1965)



Washington DC
White House
(1952, Truman Reconstruction)