



PALACE QUEST

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Rulebook



1-6



8+



60 min



Est. 1989



Concept and objective

The Sultan wants a new palace built, and you've been given the commission!

Great riches await you if you satisfy the Sultan! But beware! If you can't solve the tasks you're given, you will have failed in the Sultan's eyes and you lose the game.

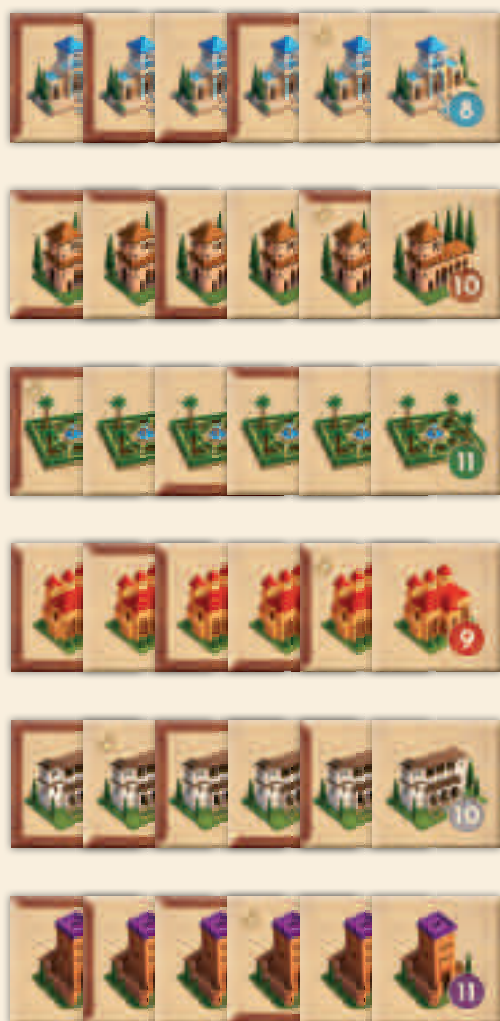
Do you have what it takes to build the Alhambra and master the Sultan's tasks?

Components

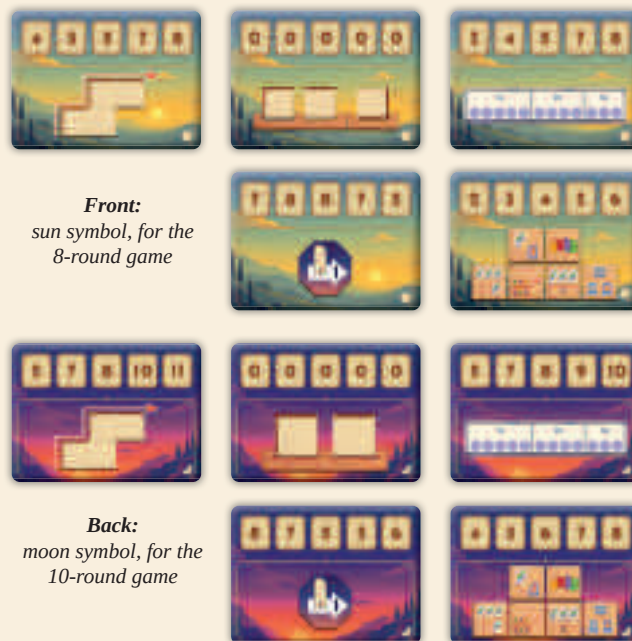
108 Gem cards



36 Buildings (6 per color)



5 Tasks



Front:
sun symbol, for the
8-round game

Back:
moon symbol, for the
10-round game

1 Final
marker



Scoring cards A and B
(not required for this game)

1 Final task

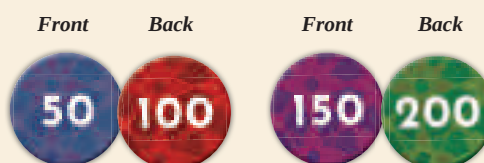


Back



Front

2 score tiles



Front

Back

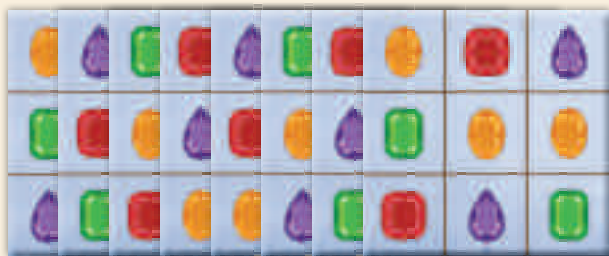
Front

Back

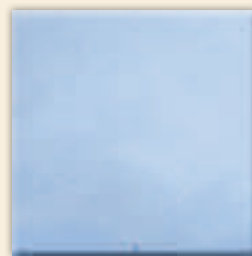
12 Deeds



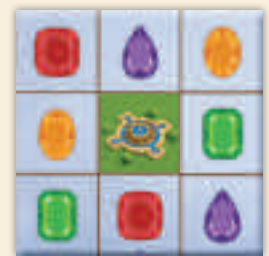
8 Terrain tiles (all different)



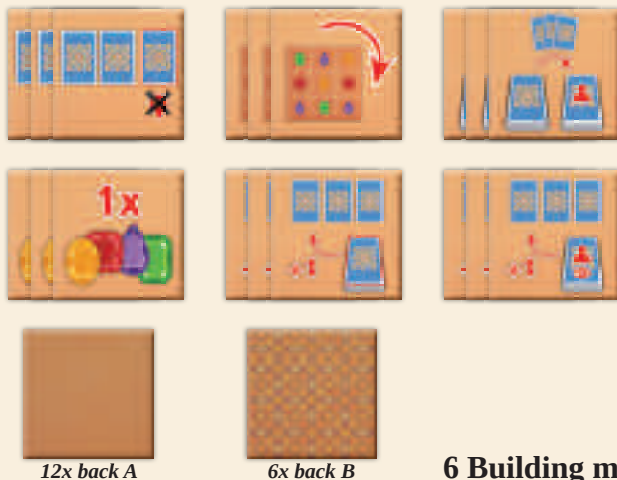
Back



1 Starting terrain tile



18 Bonus tiles (6 with a different back)



1 Task track (two-part)



10 Donation markers (2 of each)



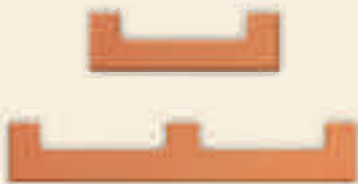
6 Building marker standees and tiles



1 Score marker standee and tile

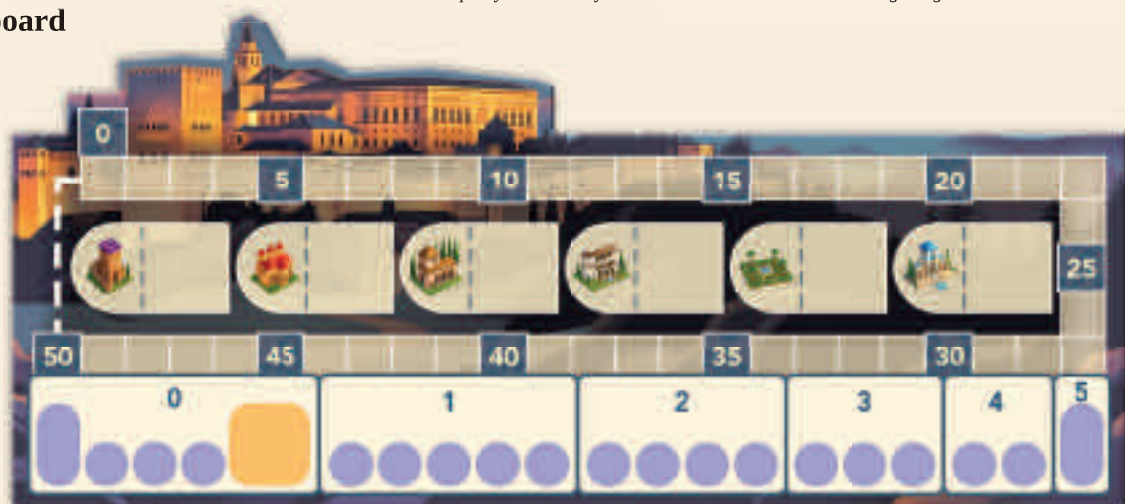


2 Reserve tiles (one 1-space and one 2-space)



Note: It's up to you whether you use the standees or the tiles during the game.

1 Main board



Game setup (example of the base game with 8 rounds and 3 players)

The terrain:

- 1 Place the **starting terrain tile** in the middle of the table.
- 2 Shuffle the **8 terrain tiles** and place them as a face-down stack.
- 3 Place the **12 deeds** next to the terrain tiles.

The tasks:

- 4 Assemble the **task track** and place it on the table, with enough space from the starting terrain tile.
- 5 Place the **5 tasks** in random order, sun-side up, on the open spaces of the task track.

For your first game, find the following **donation markers**:

1x value 1 / 2x value 2 / 2x value 3.

Shuffle them face down and place 1 marker on each of the 5 donation spaces of the task track. The remaining markers are not needed for this game and go back in the box.



- 6 Take the **final task** and place it sun-side up next to the last task of the task track.
- Then take the **final marker** and place it at the number 60.



The gem cards:

- 7 Designate a player as the Site Manager.
First, sort out the following **cards** from each gem color once:

Purple gems: 1, 3, 5, 7, 9
Yellow gems: 1, 4, 5, 6, 9
Green gems: 2, 4, 5, 6, 8
Red gems: 2, 3, 5, 7, 8



Put these 20 cards back in the box.

- 8 Shuffle the gem cards and draw **10 cards for each of the 5 tasks**, placing them as a face-down stack beneath the tasks.
 9 Draw **8 cards** and place them as a face-down draw pile next to the terrain tiles.
 10 Distribute the **remaining 30 cards** among the players according to the following table:

Players	Site Manager	2	3	4	5	6
1	30	x	x	x	x	x
2	14	16	x	x	x	x
3	10	10	10	x	x	x
4	6	8	8	8	x	x
5	6	6	6	6	6	x
6	4	4	4	6	6	6

Place the cards you received as a face-down stack in front of you.

The buildings:

Sort out the 6 buildings with the moon symbol and put them back in the box.

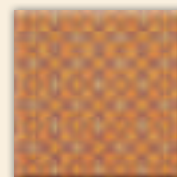


- 11 Shuffle all the **buildings**, draw 3 for each of the 5 tasks, and place them as face-down stacks on the gem cards beneath the tasks.
 12 Draw 9 buildings and place them as 3 face-down building stacks of 3 to the left of the first task. These are used in the first 3 rounds.
 13 From the 6 remaining buildings, the Site Manager draws one and places it face down in front of them. Put the other 5 buildings back in the box.

Tip: In the first game, feel free to play with the “Swapping buildings” module (p. 15). This will give you a few more opportunities to get the buildings you need.

The main board:

- 14 Place the **main board** next to the terrain tile stack.
 15 Sort out the **6 bonus tiles** with back B and place 1 face up on each bonus space next to the buildings.



- 16 Shuffle the remaining tiles and place them as a face-down stack next to the main board.
 17 Place the score pawn on space 0 of the score track.
 18 Place the two score tiles next to the score track.
 19 Place the **6 building markers** on the starting space of the building track.
 20 Place the **2 reserve tiles** next to the main board. You have 3 reserve spaces for this game.

The market:

Decide on a spot where you can collect several gem cards.

Note: The remaining material is not needed for this game — it is used in the 10-round variant and the modules.

Concept and objective

In Palace Quest, you play over **8 rounds**. Your goal is to fulfill all the tasks set by the Sultan.

By the **end of round 3**, you must have **fulfilled the first task**. That's because, at the start of round 4, the Sultan checks whether you've mastered the first task.

If you've **fulfilled** it to their full satisfaction, you may **go ahead** with the round. If you **haven't fulfilled it completely**, you must **give up gem cards** to stay in the game. How many cards you must give up depends on the task.

If you don't have enough cards to pay, you lose the game. If you manage to fulfill all the tasks and have collected enough points by the end, you win the game.

How to play

A round in detail

A round consists of four phases:

1. Preparing to build

2. Choosing buildings

3. Collecting gem cards

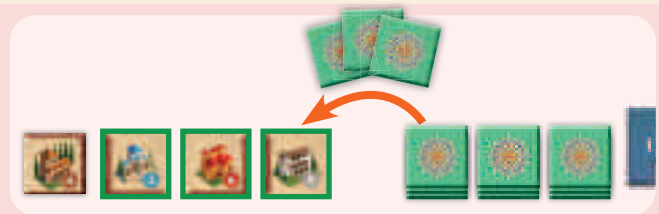
4. Constructing buildings

1. Preparing to build

Round 1:

Draw buildings:

The Site Manager takes the 3 buildings from the building stack on the left into their hand, plus the building already lying in front of them.



Round 2–3:

Activate bonus tiles:

Place the bonus tiles lying above the main board next to the terrain tile stack. They are now available for use.

Clear the market:

If more than 2 gem cards are in the market, the Site Manager decides which 2 cards stay in the market. The rest go to the discard pile.

Draw buildings:

See Round 1.



Round 4–8:

First, the Sultan checks whether the **current task** has been fulfilled.

If it has not been fulfilled to their full satisfaction, you must give up gem cards as a donation.

If you can no longer make the donation, the game ends immediately and you have lost. The individual tasks and donations are explained in detail on page 12.

Once you have fulfilled the task, or were able to make the donation, play continues as follows:

Bonus tiles and clearing the market:

As described for rounds 2–3, the Site Manager activates the bonus tiles and clears the market.



Draw buildings:

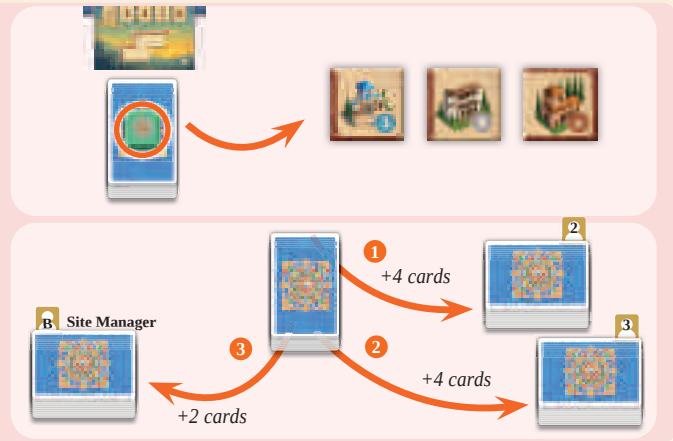
The Site Manager takes the 3 buildings from beneath the corresponding task into their hand.

Deal out gem cards:

The Site Manager now deals out the gem cards from beneath the corresponding task to the other players.

Starting with the player to their left and continuing clockwise, they deal 2 cards to each player at a time, until all 10 cards have been dealt. In doing so, one player may end up with **more than 2 cards**, or **none at all**.

Place the gem cards face down on top of your card stack.

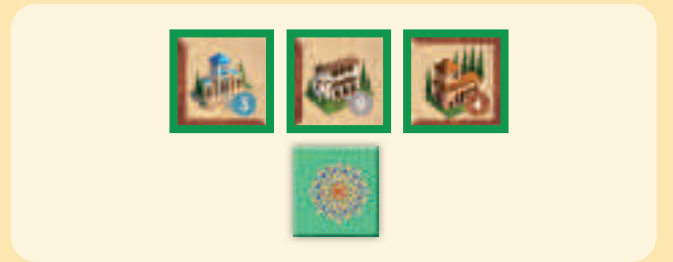


2. Choosing buildings

The Site Manager chooses 3 of the 4 buildings in their hand and places them face up in the middle. These buildings can be built this round.

They place the remaining building face down in front of them.

Important: The Site Manager alone decides which 3 buildings are chosen.



3. Collecting gem cards

To be able to construct buildings later, you must now collect **gem cards**, which you'll use as payment.

The player to the left of the Site Manager starts, and the others follow clockwise. On your turn, reveal the top card of your gem cards. Everyone may discuss whether this card could help with building one of the proposed buildings, but the final decision rests with the player whose turn it is. You may decide to accept the card or decline it.

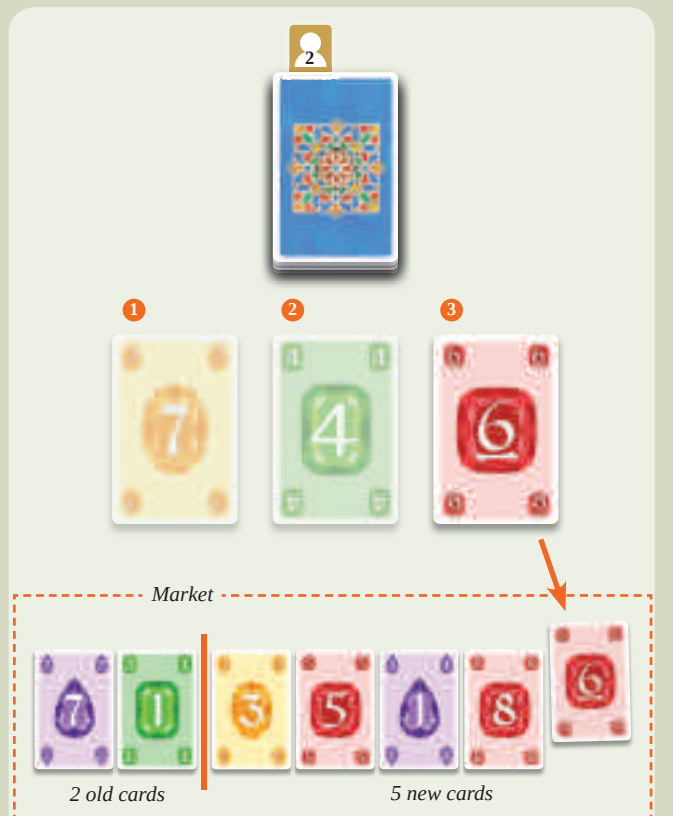
If you accept the card, play it into the middle onto the market.

If you decline the card, it goes onto the general discard pile. Then you reveal the next card, and you decide again. Keep doing this until you accept a card and play it onto the market.

Then it's the next player's turn clockwise. This is repeated 4 times, so that a total of 5 new gem cards end up in the market. If a player has no cards left, they are not skipped — there will simply be fewer cards in the market as a result. There may still be cards there from the previous round; these do not count toward the limit of 5 cards.

Note: Depending on the number of players, some players may take a turn up to 2 times, or not at all.

Caution: Each player only has a limited number of cards, so don't decline too many!



Example: Sophia rejects the first two gem cards. She accepts the red 6 and places the card in the market. There are now a total of 7 cards in the market, 2 from the previous round and 5 new gem cards.

4. Constructing buildings

Six different types of buildings can be built in the Alhambra. Once all the gem cards are in the market, you jointly decide which buildings you want to, or can, build on which spaces of the terrain tiles.

The following applies:

- Each of the 3 buildings must either be built or placed in the reserve.
- Buildings from the reserve may also be built now in addition, against exact payment — see *Reserve* (p. 10).
- You may discuss everything, but the final decision rests with the Site Manager.



Paying and building

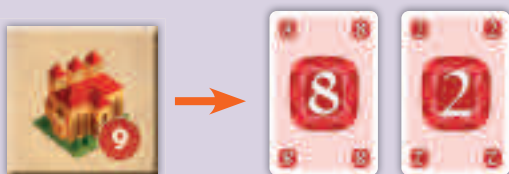
The Site Manager chooses a construction space on the terrain where they want to build a building. This must be paid for with the gem type (color) specified on that construction space.

Overpaying:

The value of the gem cards must be at least equal to the cost of the building in order to build it.

The cards used for building are placed on the discard pile, and the building is placed on the construction space according to the building rules.

Players do not get a refund for excess gems.



Example: The building costs 9 gems. The players pay with 10 gems. The extra gem paid is lost.

Paying exactly:

If you pay exactly and have placed the building according to the rules, the corresponding building marker advances to the next open space on the building track. If a space is occupied by a building marker, it is skipped, until the building marker can be placed on the first open space.

This naturally also applies to buildings built from the reserve.

Multiple building markers may stand on the starting space and on the two outermost spaces, so the starting space is never skipped.



The building rules:

The construction spaces on the terrain tiles specify the gem type (color) you must pay with if you build a building there.

The number on the building determines the minimum number of gems you must pay.



No “holes” (completely enclosed empty areas) may be created.



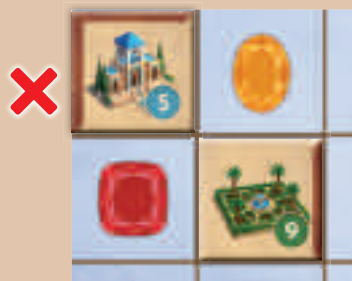
Only matching sides may border each other, i.e., the touching sides must either both show a city wall or both not.



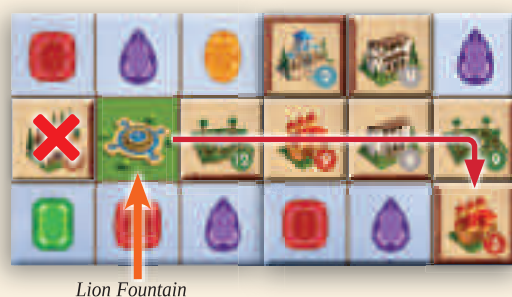
All buildings have the same orientation (i.e., all roofs always point in the same direction).



Every new tile must border the Alhambra on at least one side (i.e., you may not build “across a corner”).



Every new building must be reachable “on foot” from the Lion Fountain, without having to cross a city wall or leave the tiles.

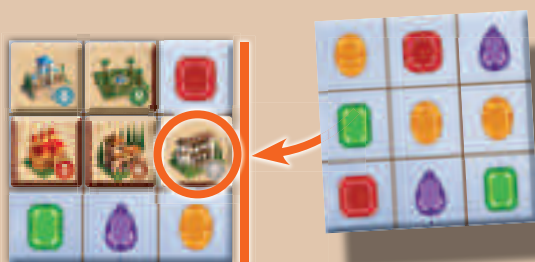


Expanding the terrain:

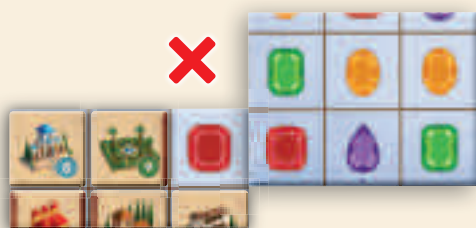
If the new building is built on an edge space, the Site Manager decides whether the terrain tile on top of the stack is laid down.

The following rules must be observed:

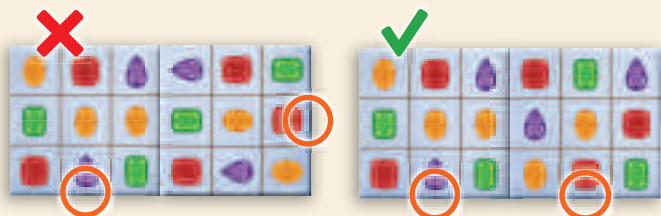
The new terrain tile may only be placed on the side adjacent to the building just constructed.



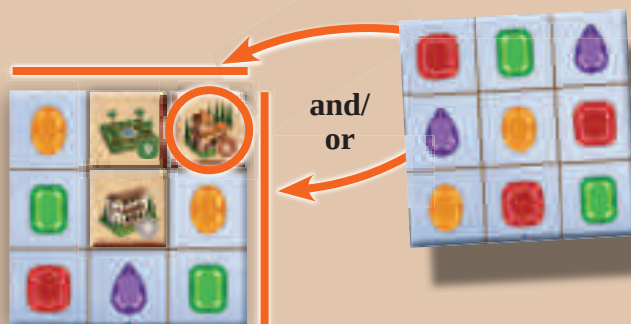
The terrain tiles must lie fully flush against each other; they may not be offset or shifted.



The orientation of the terrain tile must be the same as that of the starting tile (see point).



If the building was constructed on a corner space, the Site Manager may lay 1 terrain tile on each of both edges.

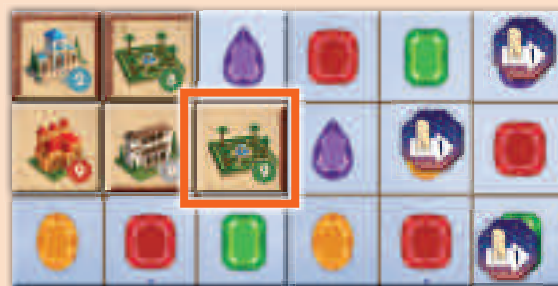


Deeds:

3 deeds are placed on the new terrain tile: one on the middle construction space, and one each on the two corner spaces facing away from the line where the tiles touch.

If fewer than 3 deeds remain, you may no longer lay a new terrain tile.

Now reveal the top terrain tile from the stack.



Taking deeds:

If a building is built on a construction space with a deed, the corresponding building marker advances to the next open space on the building track (*just as with paying exactly*).

Return the deed to the supply next to the terrain tile stack.

Important: If a building is paid for exactly and built on a space with a deed, the corresponding marker on the building track advances by 2 spaces instead.



Example: You paid for the building exactly and built it on a deed space. As a result, the building marker advances 2 spaces.

Neighborhoods:

If a building is built adjacent to **at least one other building of the same type**, you receive the bonus tile from the corresponding bonus space on the main board.

Place this tile above the main board for now. It's only activated at the start of the next round — you can't use it yet this round.

A new tile from the stack is placed on the now-empty bonus space, as long as tiles remain.

- The Site Manager decides on the use of an active tile during the round.
- You may use several bonus tiles in a single round.

The bonuses of the tiles are explained in detail on page 13.



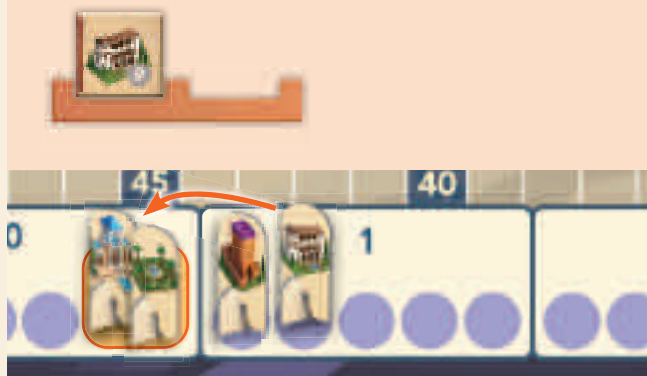
Reserve:

If you can't or don't want to build a building, you must place it on an open space in the reserve. If you have no open space left, the game ends immediately and you have lost.

If you place a building in the reserve, you must move the corresponding building marker back to the next open space.

If you place several buildings in the reserve, you may choose the order freely.

If you want to build a building from the reserve, you must pay the building cost exactly. In this case, too, your building marker advances 1 space.



Building scoring

Every time a building marker advances on the building track, a **scoring** takes place for that building type.

Multiply the number in the zone of the corresponding building marker by the number of matching buildings in your Alhambra.

Advance your score pawn on the score track by the resulting amount.

Important: If you pay for the building exactly and build it on a construction space with a deed, the building marker is advanced two spaces, but only **one building scoring** takes place.



Example: There are 3 white buildings in the Alhambra.
The marker is in zone 2.

$$3 \times 2 = 6 \text{ points}$$

End of the round

Once all 3 buildings have either been built or placed in the reserve (and any buildings from the reserve have possibly been built), the round ends. The Site Manager passes the face down building in front of them to the player on their left. That player becomes the new Site Manager and may look at the building they were given. Now the next round begins.

End of the game

If you have fulfilled all 5 tasks, the game ends after round 8. A **special scoring** follows, awarding the following points:

- **2 points** for every unused bonus tile.
Both activated and not-yet-activated tiles count.
- **1 point** for every section of your longest city wall.
(See Tasks, page 12.)
- **5 minus points** for every building in the reserve.

Now check whether you've reached at least as many points as the Final task requires. If so, you've **won the game** and are the Sultan's new court builders.

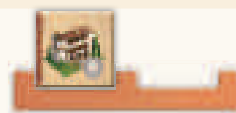
If you have fewer points, you've fallen just short and **lost the game**.



Example: 3 remaining bonus tiles $\times 2 = 6$ points



Example: The longest wall consists of 15 wall sections = 15 points



Example: 1 building in the reserve = -5 points

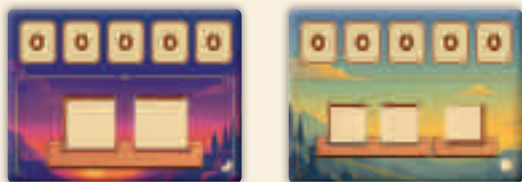


Example: You reached 64 points and thereby won the game!

Reserve task:

When checked, no tile may be in the reserve.

If there are tiles there, you must give up as many cards for each tile as the donation marker shows.



Final task:

After the end of round 8, check whether you've reached the required number of points.



Fulfilling tasks

Once you've **fulfilled** the current task, continue with **Preparing to build** and focus on the next tasks.

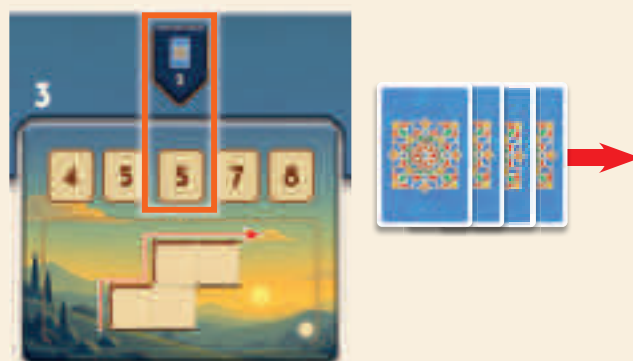
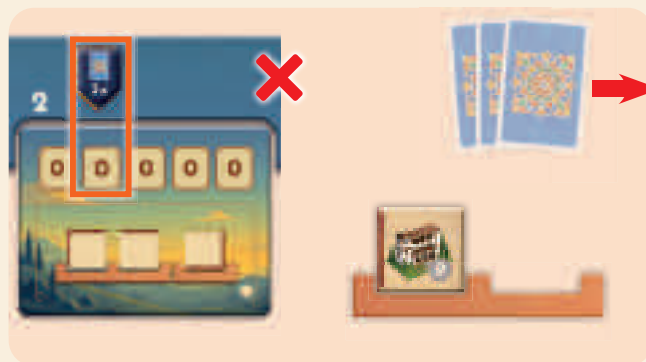
If you **can't fulfill** the task, you can still fulfill it by making a donation of gem cards:

The size of the donation is the difference between your result and the required condition (*number*).

Multiply this difference by the number on the donation marker. That's how many gem cards you must give up as a team in order to fulfill the task.

You decide together who places how many cards from their own stack onto the discard pile. If you can't agree, the Site Manager decides.

If you've given up enough cards, the task is fulfilled and you continue with the round. If you don't have enough cards, the game is lost.



Example: The longest wall must consist of 5 wall sections, but yours only has 3.

- $5 - 3 = 2$ (Difference between condition and your result)
 - 2×2 (Difference $\times$ number on donation marker)
- = 4 gem cards must be paid.

The bonus tiles

The bonus tiles can be used by the Site Manager at different times to give you an advantage. When the Site Manager uses a bonus tile, it is flipped to its back side and remains next to the terrain tile stack, it is now inactive. You may use multiple bonus tiles in a single turn.

Grand Market

Preparing to build – clear the market:

All gem cards remain in the market.



Market Expansion

Collecting gem cards:

After you've placed 5 cards in the market, the Site Manager draws one more gem card from the draw pile and places it face up in the market.



Gem Choice

Collecting gem cards – instead of playing a card:

The Site Manager allows a player, instead of revealing their cards, to search their entire stack for one gem card and place it in the market. That player then shuffles their cards to form a new stack.



Terrain Knowledge

Constructing buildings:

When laying a new terrain tile, the Site Manager may choose its orientation freely. All other rules still apply.



Gem Find

Collecting gem cards:

The Site Manager allows a player to draw three gem cards from the draw pile and place them face down on their own stack.



Construction Space Wild

Constructing buildings:

A building must be paid for with cards of a **single gem color**, but may then be built on a construction space showing any gem color.

Even if the color was switched, a purchase still counts as correctly paid, as long as it was paid exactly.



Extended variant: 10 rounds

For a longer game, you can also play over 10 rounds.

Changes to setup:

During setup, you don't need to sort out any buildings or cards — all of them are used.

For the tasks and the final task, use the moon side and place them on the task track as usual (dark side up).

Place the final marker at the 90 of the final task.

You only have two reserve spaces; put the 1-space reserve tile back in the box.

Draw 15 buildings and place them as 5 face-down stacks of 3 to the left of the first task. These are used in the first 5 rounds.

50 cards now remain, distributed as follows:



Players	Site Manager	2	3	4	5	6
1	50	x	x	x	x	x
2	24	26	x	x	x	x
3	16	16	18	x	x	x
4	12	14	12	12	x	x
5	10	10	10	10	10	x
6	8	8	8	8	8	10

Changes to how the game is played:

The same rules apply as in the base game.

During preparing to build in rounds 1–5, the same rules apply as for rounds 1–3 in the base game. You must fulfill the first task at the start of round 6; the other task rounds follow as rounds 7–10.

Variations

Modules to increase the challenge:

Donation markers:

There are additional donation markers with the value 4 and X.
 With the value-4 donation marker, you must give up 4 gem cards.
 With the X donation marker, the Sultan doesn't accept a donation.
 If you don't fulfill the task, you've lost the game.

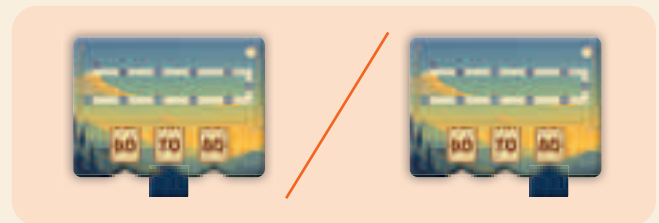
At the start of the game, you can choose any combination of 5 donation markers to use for this game. The higher the values, and the more X donation markers among them, the greater the challenge.

Reserve:

Another challenge is to play with only the 2-space or only the 1-space reserve tile.

Final task point target:

The final task's point target can also be varied. To do this, simply place the Final marker at the point value you want to reach.



Modules to ease the challenge:

Helper cards (8-round variant only):

Shuffle the sorted-out gem cards and draw 3 cards, which you give to the Site Manager as a shared stack.

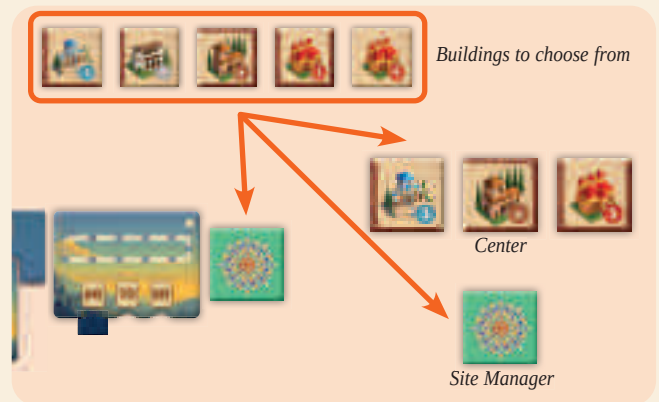
If, during the game, a player on their turn has no cards left (and only then), the Site Manager may give that player a card from the shared stack, which is then handled as usual.

Swapping buildings

During setup, at point 13, place the remaining 5 buildings as a face-down stack next to the main board instead of back in the box.

During phase 2. Choosing buildings, the Site Manager may take one additional building from the stack next to the main board into their hand, on top of the 4 buildings they already have. The Site Manager then chooses 3 of the 5 buildings and places them face up in the middle. One remaining building is placed face down next to the final task.

At the end of the game you gain following minus points:



Number of buildings next to the final task	Minus points
1	0
2	1
3	3
4	6
5	10



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