

LUZON RAILS

A CUBE RAIL GAME DESIGNED BY ROBIN DAVID
ARTWORK BY JESSI CABASAN
ADDITIONAL ART BY TIFFANY MOON

General Concept

In this game, players are rail investors. They will buy stocks in companies, seek to improve those companies and then amass wealth when company dividends pay out. To clarify, players do not own companies, but are simply manipulating companies for their own ends. Each player will have a portfolio of stocks and these portfolios will no doubt overlap. Navigating these conflicting and shared interests is half the fun!

At the end of the game, the player who has the most money is the winner. At this point, it doesn't matter what their portfolio looks like or the condition of the companies – it all comes down to money!

Game Components

- 1 game board
- 27 action cards
- 21 share cards
- 112 track tokens (23 trains in the 5 different company colours)
- 5 six-sided dice to track stock value.
- 20 development tokens
- 1 round tracking disc
- 1 block of paper money

Game Set Up

Place the game board in the middle of the table.

The board has 5 spaces which are used to keep track of the companies. On each of these spaces, place the appropriate share cards and the trains of that company's colour. You will notice that companies have different numbers of shares.

Place the five dice by the side of the share value chart, each with the 1 value face-up.

Note: These dice will track the value of each company by moving along the stock track. The die value represents a company's potential for growth.

Place the round tracking disc on round one.

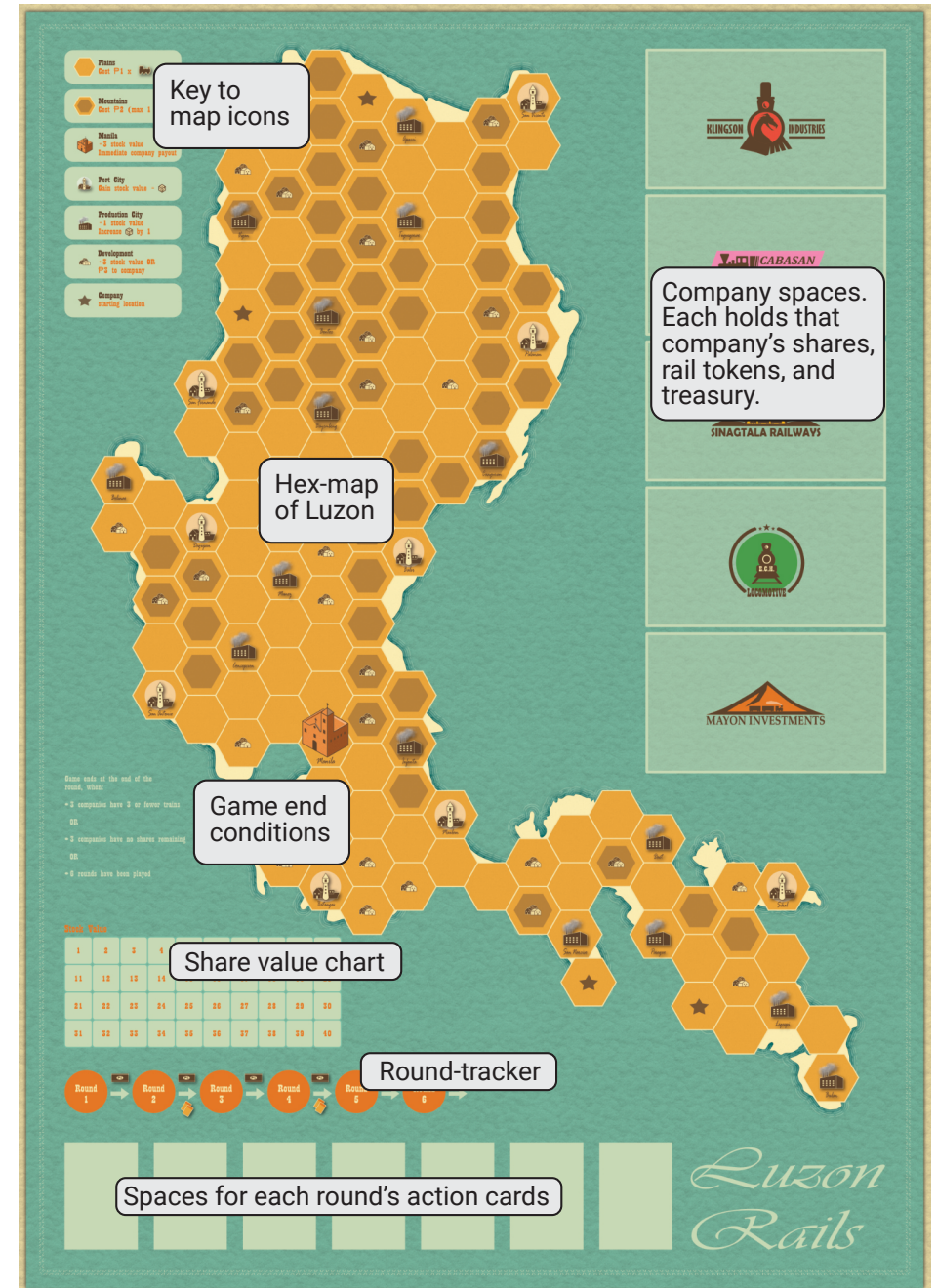
Give each player ₱25 (pesos) and place the remaining money by the side of the board as a bank.

Note: Individual player money is not secret in this game and players should state how much they have when they are asked. However, experienced players may wish to play with individual player money kept secret.

Deal 7 action cards face-up to the 7 spaces at the bottom of the board. Then deal 2 cards to each player, face-down, forming players' hands. Players may look at their hands at any time.

Choose a start player at random.

Proceed to the initial auction.



Initial Auction

Each company will now auction a share. This is done from top to bottom, as they are presented on the board. So the first company is the Klingson Industries.

Place the share above the board, so all players know what is being auctioned.

The start player makes a bid for that share. Then going in a clockwise direction, players raise on that bid or pass. Once a player has passed, they may not later bid during the same auction. The auction continues until all but one player has passed.

That remaining player pays the amount they bid to the company treasury and takes the share to their own display. The company treasury is next to the company's supply of shares and rails.

IMPORTANT: Company treasuries are separate from any players' cash and each of the five companies has their own treasury. When players buy shares, they pay the money to the company's treasury. When a company builds rail, it pays for the rail out of its treasury. There is no other way for players to transfer money from their own funds to a company and there is no way for players to directly pay for building rail.

IMPORTANT: The shares that each player owns is public knowledge and they should be laid out clearly and visibly.

When a player wins an auction during this initial auction stage, they immediately determine where that company will begin on the map. The winning player take one of the company track tokens and places it on a vacant star symbol on the map.

Then the next company share is auctioned (Cabasan Express). When determining the start location for subsequent companies, they cannot start on the same location as another company. Subsequently, the player to win the final share in the initial auction (Mayon Investments) will have no choice about where to place that company's first track token.

Continue until every company has auctioned one share.

Note: At this point, players will not necessarily hold the same number of shares and some players may not have won any shares. Don't worry if you have won no shares - things will change in the first round and having no shares and lots of money can be a powerful position.

Game Play

The first player in the main game will be the player who won the Mayon Investments share. Turns then proceed in a clockwise direction.

On a player's turn, they must choose a single card to play. The card may be in their hand **or** it may be among the 7 cards at the bottom of the board. Once a card has been played, it is placed into a face-up discard pile by the side of the board. Players are free to inspect this discard pile at any time.

IMPORTANT: Card actions are always optional and may be ignored or completed in part.

Players take their turns until all 7 cards at the bottom of the board have been played, which will indicate the end of a round.

Card actions are as follows.

1. Auction a share



The player picks ANY one of the available shares in the company sections of the board. They place this share at the top of the board and an auction is held, with the active player making the first bid. The auctions work the same way as the auctions at the start of the game, with the winning bid paid to the company's treasury and that player taking the share card.

2. Grant company ₱5





The player picks any company and places ₱5 from the bank into the company's treasury.

3. Build track

The player builds track for any company with which they own a share. The following rules apply when placing track.

- New track must be placed adjacent to existing track belonging to that company.
- Plains hexes cost ₱1 multiplied by the number of track on the hex. If this is the first track to be placed there, then the cost is ₱1. If this is the second track, then the cost is ₱2, and so on. 
- Mountain hexes cost ₱2 and each mountain hex may only contain one piece of track. 

If the track is placed on a hex with a city or a development token, the company will also gain value.

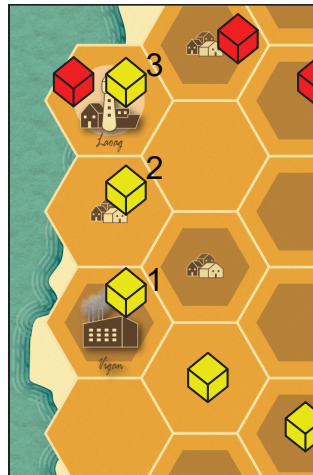
- A production city adds 1 stock value to the company immediately - move the company die on the stock grid to reflect this. A production city also increases the stock die by 1 pip to a maximum of 6 - adjust the die accordingly. 
- A port city increases the stock value of the company immediately, by a figure equal to the current number of pips shown on that company's stock die. 
- A hex with a development **token** (see the next section) increases the company value by 3 or allows the company to take ₱3 from the bank and place it in its treasury. 
- Connecting to Manila immediately increases the stock value of the company by 3. Then the company pays dividends to its shareholders as a once-off bonus. See the "Pay Dividends" section. 

4. Develop hex

The player chooses any hex with a town icon and no existing development token. They place a development token in the hex. If companies already have track on these hexes, they will either gain 3 in stock value or gain ₱3 to their treasury, with the active player making that decision for each affected company.

Turn Example

Joni owns a share in Sinagtala Railways and wants to make that share more valuable, so she plays a card that lets her build more track. She places 3 track, one at a time in the order shown on the right. This ensures that they connect to existing track tokens. She places her first piece in Vigan, which is a production city. This increases the company value by 1 and increases the die value by 1.



Then she connects to a development hex - but it does not yet have a development token, so there is no effect. She may develop it later for further benefits.

Lastly, she connects to Laoag, which is a port city. There is already a red cube here, but seeing as it is a plains hex, multiple cubes are allowed - it will simply cost more to place here. Connecting to Laoag increases the company value by the number of pips shown on the company die.

Finally, she pays the cost for all this track from the company treasury. The first cube cost ₱2, because it was on a mountain hex. The second cost ₱1. The third cost ₱2 because there is already a red cube in the hex. The total paid from the company treasury to the bank is ₱5.

End of the Round

The round ends when the 7 cards below the board have been played.

At the end of each round, all companies pay dividends to the players who own shares in them. They do this in order. The next section details how dividends are paid out.

At the end of each second round, players may discard any cards left in their hands. Then once all the discarded cards are gathered and shuffled, players draw back up to 2 cards from the draw pile. Players should never have more than 2 cards in their hands.

Restock the 7 cards at the bottom of the board.

After paying dividends and restocking cards, move the round tracking disc to the next space and continue with the player who would normally have taken their turn next.

At the end of round 6, the game ends.

Pay Dividends

A company has to pay dividends to its shareholders when that company has reached Manila or at the end of the round.

First calculate share value. To do this, divide the current value of the company (determined by the position of its die on the stock chart) by the total number of shares that company has sold this game (ie, the combined amount of shares players own from that company). Round up any fractions.

Each share earns this amount of money, from the bank, for the player that owns the share.

Example: E.C.H. Locomotive is worth ₱9 and two shares have been sold. Mara owns both of these these shares. She calculates her payout by dividing ₱9 (stock value) by 2 (number of shares) and rounding up. Thus, each share is worth ₱5 and she collects a total of ₱10 from the bank. If the shares were split between two players, the math would be the same, with each player earning ₱5 for their share.

Game Over

The end of the game can be triggered in several ways:

- Six rounds have been played
- Three companies have no shares remaining
- Three companies have three or fewer track tokens
- There are three or fewer development tokens remaining

If any of these conditions are met, the game will end once the current round has finished and dividends for the round have been paid.

Winning

The player with the most money at the end of the game is the winner. If there is a tie, the tied player with the fewest shares is the winner (they managed their portfolio most effectively). If the game is still tied, players share their victory.

General Tips

Do not spend all your money in the initial auction - though you should try to get a share, spending too much will mean you cannot compete for later shares. Money in *Luzon Rails* is quite tight in the early rounds and there are lots of opportunities to buy shares.

Companies need money in their treasury to build track. The primary way that companies can get this money is through selling shares, so make sure you pay enough that the company you buy into can build something useful!

Keep an eye on the cards in the public display and the cards you have in hand. The particular mixture available in a given round can go a long way to determining your strategy. Cards that grant money to a company might change how much you are willing to pay in an auction, for instance.

If developing a company will benefit another player more than you, then think carefully before committing to improving it - let the other player do the hard work!

Winning the first share in Mayon Investments can be quite powerful because you will be the first player to take a turn. You might be able to use this opportunity to cut off other companies on the map or otherwise cause trouble for your opponents.

Credits

Thanks to all the various playtesters over the course of *Luzon Rails*' development. In particular, I would like to thank the members of Playtest Dublin, Duke GameLab, Tiffany Moon, Peer Sylvester, Jessi Cabasan, Wayne Imlach, Patrick Brophy, Ethan Day-Jones, and John O'Connor.

Private Companies Expansion

The private companies inject more variance into Luzon Rails. If you've played an 18xx game before, they should feel very familiar! Once you have played a few regular games, you may wish to include them.

During set up, shuffle the private companies deck and deal one card to each of the five companies in the game, placing it in the company space. Put the remaining private company cards away - they will not be used during this game.

These cards will give each company a special benefit which will apply for the rest of the game. Check each company and apply any effects which may be relevant - these may raise starting stock value, starting capital, or boost other actions that can be taken during the game.