

tower

a game of buying and building

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1-4
PLAYERS



45
MINUTES



8+
AGES

You love the smell of architecture in the morning. Of course, if there are two smells you love, the first is architecture and the second is a rich king who wants a tower to be built. Not that you go around sniffing rich kings, but when the opportunity presents itself you don't see any reason to avoid breathing heavily through your nose.

Fortunately, a fragrant king has graced you with his presence and, as it so happens, he wants a tower. Thanks to your dynamic three-step tower finishing program, you have convinced the king that your contributions to a tower are what he's looking for. After all, your family has been in the tower making business ever since that one guy did that one thing with columns.

Unfortunately, the king informs you that he has also hired other architects to help with the tower since they also have a process. You know exactly who those "others" are and by gum you'll show the king you can build it faster. Heaven knows you can't build better than them since they "measure" and "use better materials," but by your grandfather's drafting pencil, you can build fast. Plus when it's done, you'll make it so that no one can add to it. It's all in the angles, and a few structural weak points.

Before leaving, the king pulls out a few gems and asks if it would be enough to get started. Mesmerized by the brilliance of the gems, you shake yourself and admit that they'll be enough for now. After all, you can ask for more later. Architecting is an expensive business, especially the way you do it. Finally, the king gives you directions to his land and departs.

Upon reaching the land in question, you behold all the kingdom has to offer. Boy does the kingdom behold a lot of sand. But you've made towers out of worse stuffs and as long as you can get a few crucial things, this tower will go up and you'll get paid before it has a chance to fall down. Hey, the king never asked for the tower to last. And if that fails, blame the other architects.

object of the game:

Players collect gems and then race their opponents to buy the items they need before they are out of stock. The players then use their purchased items to construct segments of the tower. The first player to construct her third tower segment (the top of the tower), therefore leaving her cake-topping, architectural trademark for all to see, is the winner! Will you be the player whose mark is forever left on the tower?

components:

18 building material tokens ♦ 12 tower segments ♦ 4 builder meeples
 4 player tableaus ♦ 90 gems ♦ 10 black market passes ♦ 18 build cards
 24 black market cards ♦ 1 bag ♦ 8 tiles: 6 market stalls, 1 palace, 1 Salil

Citizens of Meeplestand (expanded game)

1 jail tableau ♦ 4 wanted cards ♦ 1 Lutfi tableau ♦ 3 apprentice cards
 1 die ♦ 3 meeples: 1 white royal guard, 1 yellow stand-in, 1 red runner



apprentices



black market



player tableaus



build



wanted



meeples



jail

lutfi



tower segments



tiles



bag



gems

die



black market passes

water



clay



lumber



straw





setup:

- ◆ All players should be within reach of the cards, pieces, and market stalls. Randomly decide a start player.
- ◆ Take the 90 gems and the 10 black market passes and place them in the bag. Shake well so that the contents are mixed up.
- ◆ For a 4-player game, use all market stall tiles and build cards.
- ◆ For a 3-player game, remove the market stall and all build cards with a () icon, and return them to the box. Also return the 3 building materials indicated on the returned market stall.
- ◆ For a 2-player game, follow the above instructions and repeat for all components with a () icon.
- ◆ Take the palace & market stall tiles and set them faceup on a table. It does not matter how they are laid out, so long as they are all completely visible; the layout has no bearing on the outcome of the game. These tiles make up the city. Refer to the image above for a possible setup of a city in a 4-player game.



straw



clay



green
gem



lumber



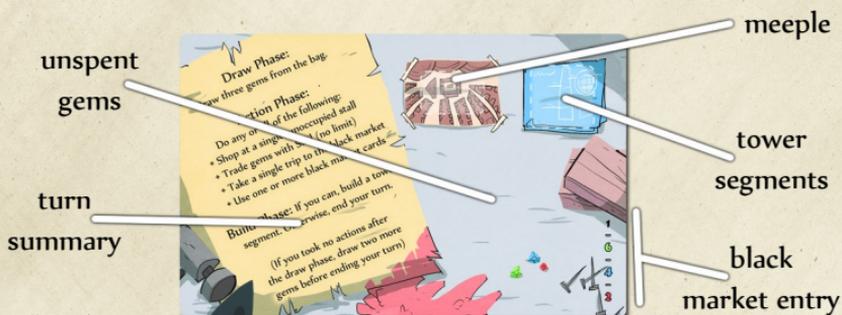
water



blue
gem



red
gem



- ◆ Now, take the building materials and place them in the appropriate spaces on each market stall; place one straw token in each yellow space, one lumber token in each brown space, one clay token in each red space, and one water barrel in each blue space.
- ◆ Shuffle the build deck and the black market deck, and set them facedown near your city.
- ◆ Place the Salil tile faceup near your city (explained on page 10).
- ◆ Each player takes a tableau, selects a colored builder meeple, and couples it with the three like-colored tower segments.
- ◆ Finally, each player draws a build card, which shows what a player must collect in order to build a tower segment. Each player's build card should be placed faceup so that it is visible to all other players, unless you are playing a 2-player game; with 2 players, build cards should be placed facedown and kept secret.

how to play:

Your turn consists of three phases: the **draw phase**, the **action phase**, and the **build phase**. During the **draw phase**, the king's bookkeeper lackadaisically reaches into the reserves and provides you with funds for the day—simply reach into the bag and randomly draw three gems. For the **action phase**, you may execute any or all of the following actions, in any order:

- ◆ Buy one or more items from a single market stall: if an item (or multiple items) depicted on your build card is available in an unoccupied market stall, and you have the required gems to purchase it, you may set your meeple on top of the market stall and exchange your gems for the item(s). Whenever gems are spent, they are discarded next to Salil (p. 10). You may only visit one stall per turn, and you cannot buy items you don't need.
- ◆ Make as many trades with Salil as you like (p. 10).
- ◆ Visit the black market **once** and/or use black market cards (p. 8).

As soon as you choose not to or cannot execute any more actions, move on to the **build phase**:

For the **build phase**: If you **have not** acquired all of the items depicted on your build card, then skip this phase; however, if you **have** acquired all of the items listed on your build card, then declare it to the other players, return the items to the markets (any available space is fine, so long as the space matches the item), set 1 of your 3 tower segments in the center of the palace tile, discard your build card, and finally, draw 3 new build cards—pick 1 to keep, and discard the other 2. If the build deck is exhausted, shuffle the discard pile to form a new deck. Subsequent tower segments built by any player are stacked on top of the original segment, forming a tower.

After the build phase, your turn ends immediately and play passes to the left. If you **did not execute any of the above actions during the action or build phases**, then draw 2 more gems from the bag before ending your turn.

build cards:

The king has supplied each player with a team of builders who diligently work behind the scenes on the tower's construction—you didn't really think it would just be up to you to construct entire floors of the tower, did you? Using your own architectural plans, your construction team provides you with lists of supplies it needs in order to continue working.

Each build card has five building materials depicted on it. In order to build a tower segment and move forward in the game, collect all of the materials on your build card.



the markets:

A quick tour of the city's markets seems to suggest that there is no consensus on the value of the local currency. Whether it be ignorance, confusion, or good old fashioned price-gouging, you'll find very little consistency in the way of prices... except for Hesham's general store—you can always expect that crook to fatten the markup!

No haggling:

The prices in each market are what they are! You must pay in exact change, and there are no substitutions!

Maximum Occupancy of One:

A shopkeeper can only tend to one customer at a time; if your meeple shops at a stall, that stall is inaccessible to everyone else until you leave.

No loitering:

You may only end your turn with your meeple on a market stall if you purchased something from that stall earlier in the same turn.



the black market:

Following the announcement of the competition, a small black market emerged from the back alleys of the city streets. Hoping to capitalize on the scarcity of materials throughout the markets, this group has smuggled in foreign building materials and attracted some very seedy individuals. Savvy shoppers will notice the **black market passes** (gems painted jet-black) that have already begun circulating throughout the kingdom. These defaced gems serve as an invitation to those who know how to use them.

When looking for a competitive edge, players can visit the black market. The black market is not a market stall, so visiting it will not block other players from doing the same on their turns; do not move your meeple to the black market deck. There are 10 black market passes in the bag which grant immediate access, but players may also buy their way in with gems (to the tune of 6 **green**, 4 **blue**, or 2 **red** gems). The black market always benefits the buyer, and often at the expense of other players by granting access to occupied market stalls, facilitating theft, etc. **Remember, though**, that the gems spent on a black market card only grant access to the card; when the time comes that you choose to use the card, **you must also pay whatever price is indicated on the face of each card, near the bottom.**



title

common thief

“Just point me in the right direction, and I’ll take care of the rest!”

flavor text

Steal one material from an opponent. You must be able to build a tower segment before the end of this turn.

directions

4

cost to use

cost to enter black market

(repeated for each card you plan to take)

*For example, after gaining entry to the black market with two black market passes, Erin selects both a **Common Thief** card and a **Dubious Concoction** card to keep. To use the **Common Thief** card, Erin must first pay the thief four gems, as indicated at the bottom of the card. These can be gems of any type; the hired thug just wants some gems!*

When you enter the black market, three thugs will appear to offer goods and services—draw 3 cards, secretly choose 1 that you want to keep, and place the remaining 2 cards back **on top** of the deck. If you plan to purchase more than 1 card in a single turn, you may do so, but must declare it to the other players and pay the appropriate fee before entering. Then, you still only draw 3 cards, but select however many cards you paid for upfront from those 3. You are limited to having no more than 3 black market cards at any time. You may use as many of your black market cards as you like on your turn, so long as you are able to pay their hiring fee at the time of use. Used black market cards are discarded. If the black market deck is exhausted, shuffle the discard pile to form a new deck. **NOTE: You can only visit the black market once per turn, so make it count!**

1 **red** gem
 or
 2 **blue** gems = Any 1 gem
 or
 3 **green** gems

1 **black market pass** = Any 2 gems



Salil, the Tax Collector:

Salil is the kingdom's devious tax collector, who often carries copious amounts of gems on his person that he collects from the local market stalls. He's been known to make trades with those interested, but his terms are anything but fair. Still, when in need, Salil can be a powerful friend.

Whenever gems or **black market passes** are spent, they are discarded next to wherever the Salil tile is placed. If you need a specific gem, you can trade your gems for one of the discarded gems. The transfer rates are listed next to Salil: 3 **green** gems for any gem in the discard pile, 2 **blue** gems for any gem in the discard pile, one **red** gem for any gem in the discard pile, or one **black market pass** for any *two* gems in the discard pile. Players are even permitted to trade with Salil in the same turn that they spend gems. For example, Daniel spent two **blue** gems on an item, and then traded a **red** gem to reclaim one of the **blue** gems that he had just spent. He then bought a second item from the store he occupied.

Black market passes cannot be obtained from Salil, even with an *Experienced Thief* card (Apparently, he is rewarded handsomely for turning these in to the authorities); they remain there until the gem

bag becomes empty. If the gem bag becomes empty, all of the gems and passes with Salil are put back into the bag.

NOTE: Remember, you can only exchange your gems for another gem if it is currently with Salil. At the beginning of the game—and each time that Salil returns his funds to the bookkeeper (the bag)—he has nothing to offer.

kingdom-wide shortage:

On the rare occasion that **no** players at all are able to buy any needed materials due to a shortage, players can substitute their needed materials for any other material until the next tower segment is built.

endgame:

The first player to build three tower segments is the winner!

variants:

- ◆ For a **less-aggressive** and more friendly variant, try playing with the build cards facedown so that they are kept secret.
- ◆ For an **advanced** game, randomly place all of the materials in **any** open space at the start of the game. Then, whenever a player builds a tower segment, he/she can return the materials to any open space at all—the material does not have to match the space!

credits:

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Citizens of Meeplestand

Tower includes three interchangeable mini-expansions to add more variety to your experience. Each expansion highlights a bit of the city.

the apprentices:



Setup: Lay the three apprentice cards side-by-side near the city. Set the yellow meeple on top of the Stand-In card, and the red meeple on top of the Runner card. The Bully card has no meeple.

The Apprentices adds three additional actions to Tower. Three young people, eager to help, await the orders of whoever is willing to hire them:

◆ **The Stand-In (Cost—any single gem):**

Are you currently unable to buy an item in one of the market stalls, but want to make sure that no one else can have it either? If you hire the stand-in, he will occupy an available market stall and save your place in line until the start of your next turn.

◆ **The Bully (Cost—either 1 blue or 1 red gem):**

If you hire the bully, he will go to a market stall occupied by another player or apprentice and force 'em out! Afterwards, you are free to shop there if you wish to do so.

◆ **The Runner (Cost—1 red gem):**

Are you burdened by the fact that you can't be in two places at once? Well, with the runner, you (technically) can! If you hire the runner, you can buy one or more items at two different stalls! The runner will book it to whatever stall you send her to, buy the item(s), and occupy the stall until the start of your next turn.

There are three restrictions for The Apprentices:

- ◆ You can only hire one apprentice during your turn.
- ◆ You cannot hire an apprentice two turns in a row; if you hire **any** apprentice one turn, **all three** apprentices will be unavailable to you on your following turn.
- ◆ An apprentice can only be hired by one player at a time; if you hire an apprentice, the helper is unavailable to other players until the start of your next turn.

How to hire an apprentice:

You may hire an apprentice at any point during your action phase, so long as you did not hire an apprentice during your previous turn. To hire an available apprentice, simply pay the required cost, take the chosen apprentice's card to show that you are the current employer, and carry out the action. If you hired the stand-in or the runner, place the meeple on the applicable shop tile--the bully has no meeple.

the royal guard:



Setup: Set the jail tableau near the city and place the white meeple (the guard) on top of it. Set the wanted cards off to the side.

The Royal Guard allows players to steal gems from Salil. At the start of your action phase, you may steal any two gems from Salil's current supply; however, doing so will earn you a "wanted" card, which means:

- ◆ You will no longer be able to steal from/make trades with Salil.
- ◆ You will be hunted by the Royal Guard at the end of each turn.
- ◆ You will not be able to shop at a market stall occupied by the Royal Guard, although all other players without a wanted card may.

Aside from that, your turn will continue as normal.

Hunted: Unless no one has a wanted card, players will roll the die at the end of their turns and the Royal Guard will rush to the market stall that matches the die result (if playing with less than four players and the die would send the guard to a stall that is not in play, roll again). If the guard goes to a market stall that a wanted player does not occupy, then the shop is unoccupied to all players that are not wanted while the guard investigates; however, if the guard goes to a stall that a wanted player **does** occupy, then he/she will be arrested and go to jail with the guard. If a player goes to jail as the result of an opponent's roll, then that opponent draws one gem as a "reward."

If you were arrested, you **must** pay three gems to be released from jail at the start of your next action phase.

There are two ways to get rid of a wanted card:

- ◆ At the start of your action phase, you may "clear your name" and discard the wanted card by paying Salil one red gem. Otherwise, you can let it ride and remain a wanted criminal!
- ◆ If you get arrested, discard the wanted card immediately.

Lutfi, the automated player:



Lutfi is an artificial-intelligence player that may be used to make smaller gameplay sessions bigger. Two players can include Lutfi to use the three-player setup, and three players can include Lutfi to use the four-player setup. You can also include Lutfi to enjoy a solo game by using the two-player setup. Use an unclaimed builder meeple to represent Lutfi—he is not meant to participate in a four-player game.

Because Lutfi is not part of the contest (he is working on his own home, which is a bit of a fixer-upper), he never drafts build cards, does not collect/use gems, and cannot win the game. Draw a single build card and give it to Lutfi. At the start of the game, roll the die and place Lutfi on the market tile that matches the die result (if playing with less than three players and the die would send Lutfi to a tile that is not in play, roll again). Then, on Lutfi's turn (he should always go last), move Lutfi clockwise to the nearest, unoccupied shop.

- ◆ If the market that Lutfi has just arrived in has a building material in stock that Lutfi needs, he will take the cheapest, valid item (players must agree on what item is the cheapest) and add it to his collection. This market is now **occupied** by Lutfi.
- ◆ If the market does not have a material in stock that Lutfi needs, then he collects nothing; lay Lutfi down flat until his next turn, indicating that the shop is now **unoccupied**.

Repeat this process for each of Lutfi's turns. Each time Lutfi collects all the materials on his build card, put all of the materials back and give Lutfi a new build card; he will begin the process again and again. If possible, players can use black market cards against Lutfi as if he were another player.

Solo Play: If playing a solo game, then Lutfi will feel embarrassed for the king and join the contest—give him a set of tower segments. The only difference is that Lutfi will build a tower segment whenever he fills a build card. The first player to build three segments wins! For a more difficult game, try to build all three segments before Lutfi can build two... or (for a really tough game), before he can even build one!

compatibility:

- ◆ The Bully can kick Lutfi out of a market (lay Lutfi down; do not remove him), but never the Royal Guard.
- ◆ A Preferred Customer card will let you share a market with an apprentice or Lutfi, but not the Royal Guard if you are wanted.
- ◆ If Lutfi cannot move to any market at all, have him shop at the same stall again.

turn summary

Draw Phase:

Draw three gems from the bag.

Action Phase:

You may execute any or all of the following actions:

- ◆ Purchase one or more items from a single store.
 - ◆ Make trades with Salil.
 - ◆ Enter black market once and/or use black market card(s).
-

Build Phase:

If you have all of the building materials listed on your build card:

- ◆ Discard build card.
- ◆ Return building material items to markets.
- ◆ Place tower segment on palace tile.
- ◆ Draw three new build cards; pick one, discard the other two.

... otherwise, skip the build phase.

(If you do not execute any actions during the action or build phases,
draw an additional two gems from the bag)

End your turn, pass play to the left.

The game ends immediately after a player builds
her third tower segment.