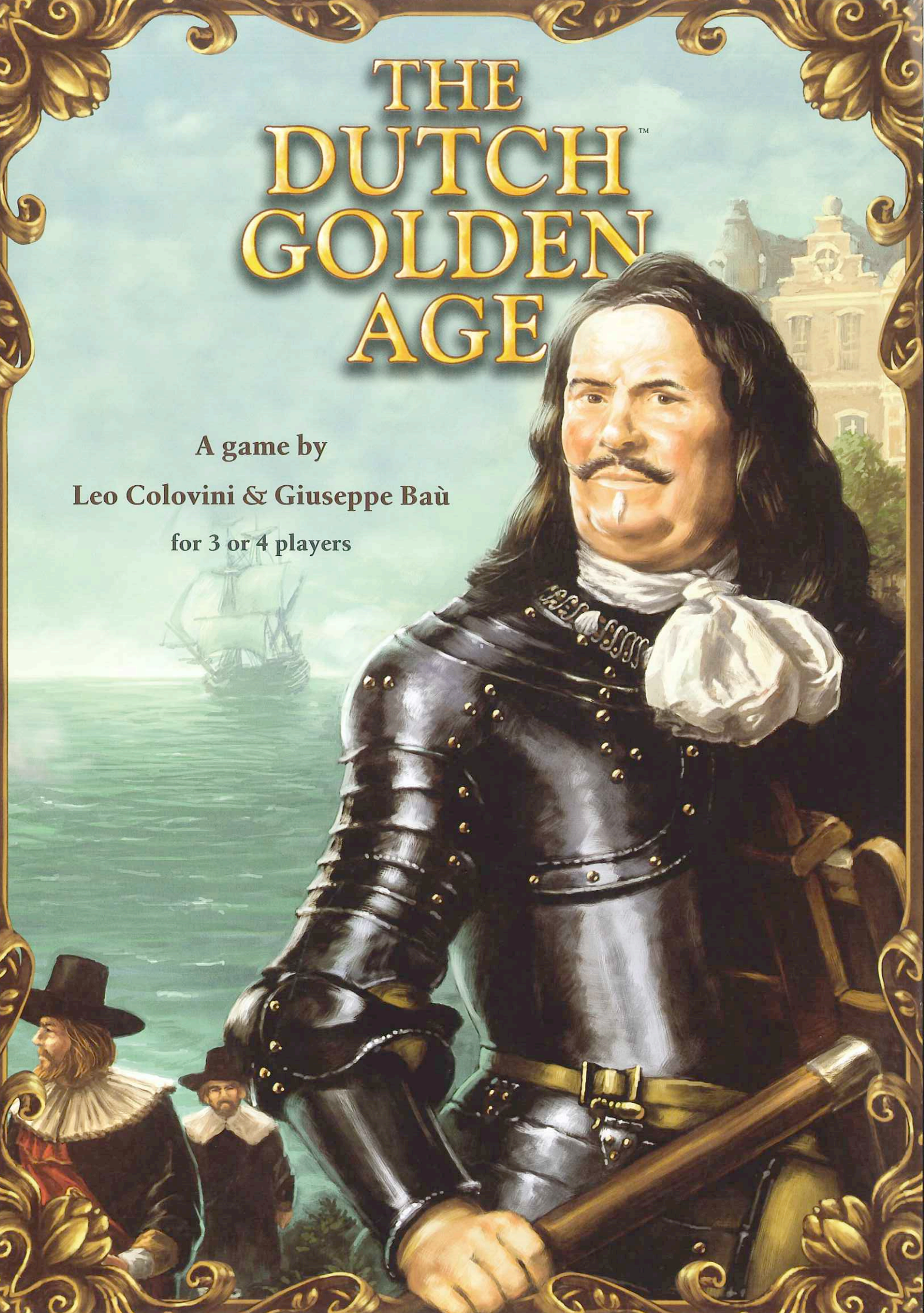


# THE DUTCH GOLDEN AGE™

A game by

Leo Colovini & Giuseppe Bau

for 3 or 4 players





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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Around 1600, a Golden Age started in the Northern provinces of the Low Countries. Despite an ongoing war with Spain, they managed to build a considerable trade network. In 1602, the United East-Indian Company (VOC) was founded, the first ever company with shares. A maritime trade and transport network to the Far East was established, with fortified trade posts along the way. The Portuguese were swept aside. Soon, huge fortunes were made, especially in the spice trade. The use of military force was not shunned, and ships were heavily armed.

The Low Countries developed steadily in many areas. Religion became predominantly protestant. The Seven Provinces were led to glory by Johan de Witt, an astute statesman who built an effective, modern navy led by superior admirals. Control of the seas was vital and the English fleet suffered several sound defeats at the hands of Tromp and De Ruyter.

Rich entrepreneurs were influential from many European ports to the Far East and the West Indies. As besieged cities fell, the Catholic Spanish were slowly but steadily pushed back. William of Orange, murdered in 1584, lived on in the hearts of his people as the Father of the Fatherland.

Meanwhile, success also loomed in other fields. In science, the philologist Lipsius, the naturalist Leeuwenhoek, the philosopher Spinoza and, last but not least, the father of the “law of nations,” Hugo Grotius all advanced their expertise considerably. In arts, the “Flemish School” with Rubens and Van Dyck and the “Dutch School” with Frans Hals, Jan Steen, Vermeer, and Rembrandt became famous.

In *The Dutch Golden Age*, the players try to amass victory points in a variety of fields (culture, trade, arts etc.). The first player who accumulates 33 points is the overall winner.

## 2.0 COMPONENTS

Each copy of *Golden Age* contains:

- 1 large game board
- 27 culture cards
- 22 arts cards
- 21 investment cards
- 21 spices cards

- 19 colony cards
- 20 movement tokens in four colors (blue, red, green, yellow), five per player
- 24 influence markers in four colors (blue, red, green, yellow), six per player
- 1 Steward pawn
- 60 guilders coins in three denominations (0.5 guilders, 1 guilder, 5 guilders)
- 2 dice
- 1 rules booklet

If any of these parts are missing or damaged, we apologize for the inconvenience and ask that you contact us to receive any replacement parts needed.

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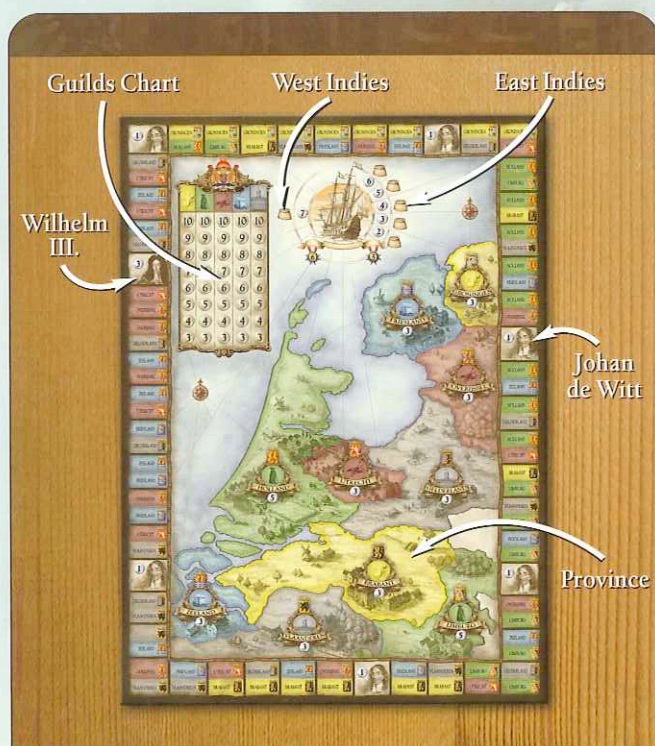
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## 2.1 The Game Board

The game board represents the Low Countries (the Netherlands in the 17th century). It is loosely divided into 10 provinces, colored and named differently. The game board is bordered by a province track. The Steward pawn is moved along this track. Most of the boxes on it show two different provinces. Six others are merchant boxes depicting a governor. The last box shows Steward Willem III.

At the upper left is the Guilds Chart with five colored columns corresponding to the five colors of the provinces.

The West Indies (one “box”) and the East Indies (five “boxes”) are located at the top corners of the board.





## 2.2 The Cards

**Golden Age** includes 110 playing cards. They are of five different types, all colored differently.



### 2.2.1 Culture Cards

The 27 grey cards are mainly related to cultural advancements.

### 2.2.2 Arts Cards

The 22 brown cards show the famous painter Rembrandt van Rijn.



### 2.2.3 Investment Cards

The 21 yellow cards show the involvement of the players in investments (growing tulips, contracts at the stock exchange).

The 21 orange cards show different kind of spices from the new world.



### 2.2.5 Colony Cards

The 19 blue cards allow the players to equip a naval vessel to sail to the colonies.



## 2.3 The Movement Tokens

Each player has five wooden movement tokens that are placed and moved on the game board.

## 2.4 The Influence Markers

Each player receives six cardboard influence markers that are used on the Guilds Chart, in the Indies, or on the game board.



## 2.5 The Steward Pawn

The Steward is moved from box to box on the province track around the game board.

## 2.6 Money

**Golden Age** includes coins in three different denominations: 0.5, 1 and 5 guilders.



## 2.7 The Dice

The two dice are used to move the Steward around the province track on the game board.

## 3.0 STARTING PLAY

- ❖ First, the game board is placed on the table.
- ❖ The cards are sorted by color into five decks. Each deck is shuffled separately. Afterwards the decks are placed, face down, next to the game board.
- ❖ The guilders are sorted by denomination and put within easy reach of the players. They form the “bank.” Each player receives 10 guilders.



- Each player chooses a color and takes the respective movement tokens and influence markers.

The oldest player is the starting player.

- Placing an influence marker:** Beginning with the starting player and continuing in clockwise order, each player places one influence marker into one province on the game board. Each province may only contain *one* influence marker. The other four influence markers form the player's reserve.
- Placing two movement tokens:** Beginning with the starting player and continuing in clockwise order, each player places two movement tokens in provinces on the game board. They may *not* be placed in provinces containing an influence marker and *no more than two* movement tokens may be in one province (however, they may belong to different players) at this time. The other four movement tokens form the player's reserve.
- The last acting player now decides where the Steward will start—he chooses on which of the six merchant boxes of the track the Steward is placed.

## 4.0 GENERAL COURSE OF PLAY

**Golden Age** is played in player turns. The starting player conducts his player turn, then the player to his left, and so on (clockwise) until a winner is determined. During his player turn a player does the following:

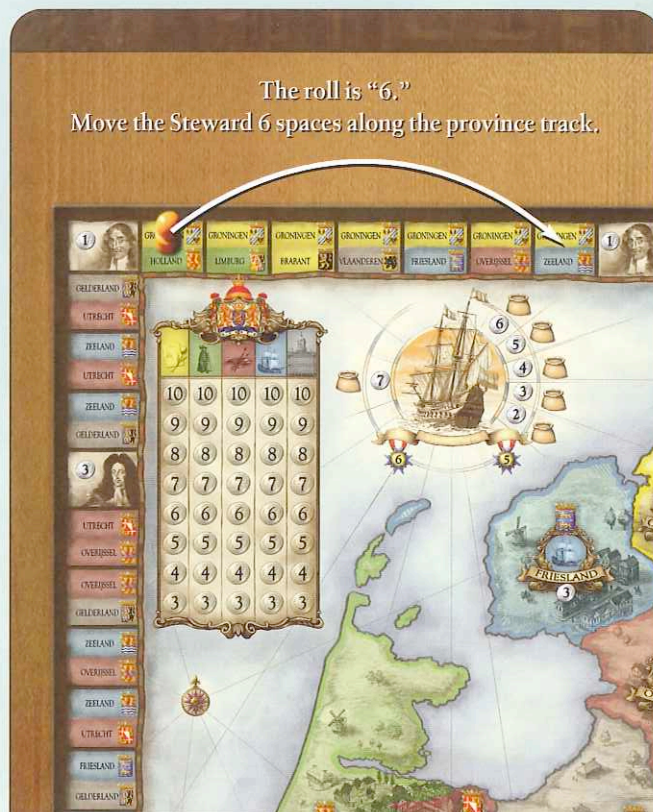
- He rolls the dice and moves the Steward.
- He takes actions (free and special) in any order as follows:
  - 2.1 He performs as many free actions as he intends. Free actions are:
    - Moving one movement token,
    - Gaining the control of a guild on the Guilds Chart,
    - Placing a new influence marker.

**Note:** A player may always perform free actions (as long as he intends to conduct it and can do so...) as many times as he likes and in any order.
  - 2.2 He performs special actions with his own influence markers. Each influence marker entitles a player to purchase a specific card or a movement token per player turn, depending on the position of the influence marker. After each such action, the corresponding influence marker is flipped over onto its inactive side.
  - 2.3 He may conduct auctions.
- At the end of a player turn, a player adds up his victory points and declares his score.
- When a player is done, he flips his influence markers back to their active sides.

**Note:** Free actions can be combined with special actions and auctions. Therefore, a player could first conduct a free action, then do an auction, then perform a special action and finally conduct another two free actions.

## 5.0 MOVING THE STEWARD

The acting player rolls both dice and moves the Steward clockwise the number of spaces equal to the sum of the two dice.



Depending on the space where the Steward stops, the players receive the following payment:

- The space shows two different provinces:
  - Each owner of tokens or markers in these provinces receives:
    - 1 guilder per movement token
    - 2 guilders per influence marker
- The space shows a merchant:
  - Each player receives 1 guilder.
- The space shows Steward Willem II:
  - Each player receives 3 guilders.

**Note:** There are some culture cards that influence the Steward's movement and payments; see 7.5.

## 6.0 FREE ACTIONS

Free actions may be conducted as many times and in any order the players wish.

**Remember:** Free actions may be alternated with special actions and auctions.

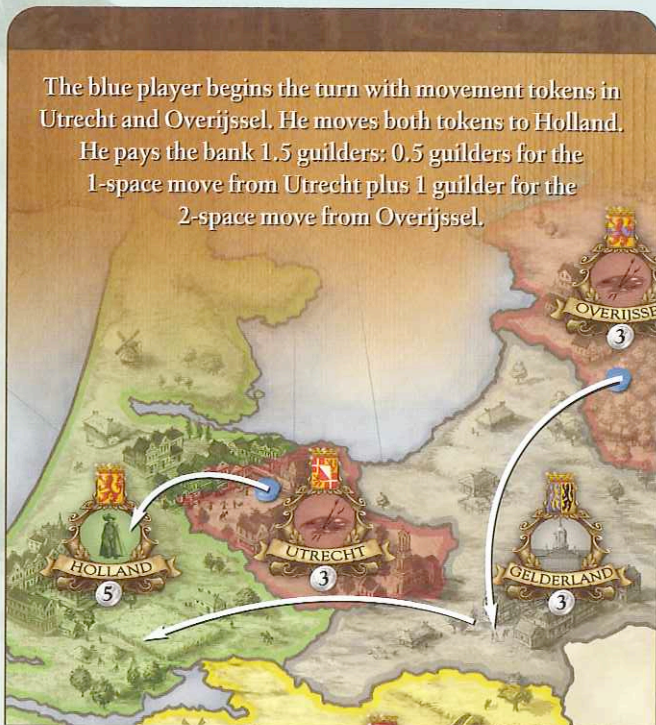
**IMPORTANT:** Free actions are not free in terms of payment (see below)!

### 6.1 Movement

A player moves one movement token from a province to an adjacent province, paying 0.5 guilders per province entered. A player may move a movement token several times and may also move different movement tokens—each movement costs 0.5 guilders. The money is put back into the “bank.”



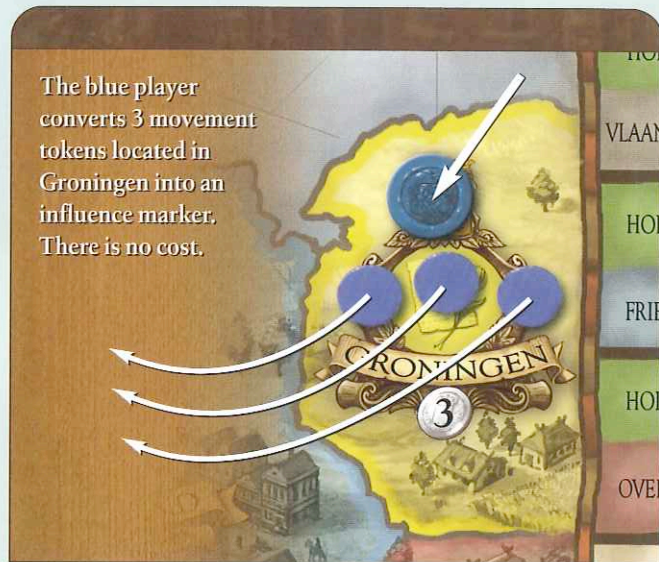
There is no limit to how many movement tokens may be moved into a single province on the game board (but see 3.0).



### 6.3 Creating a new influence marker

When a player has *three* movement tokens in a single province, he may, if he wants to, replace all three of them by one of his influence markers that is not in use. There is no cost.

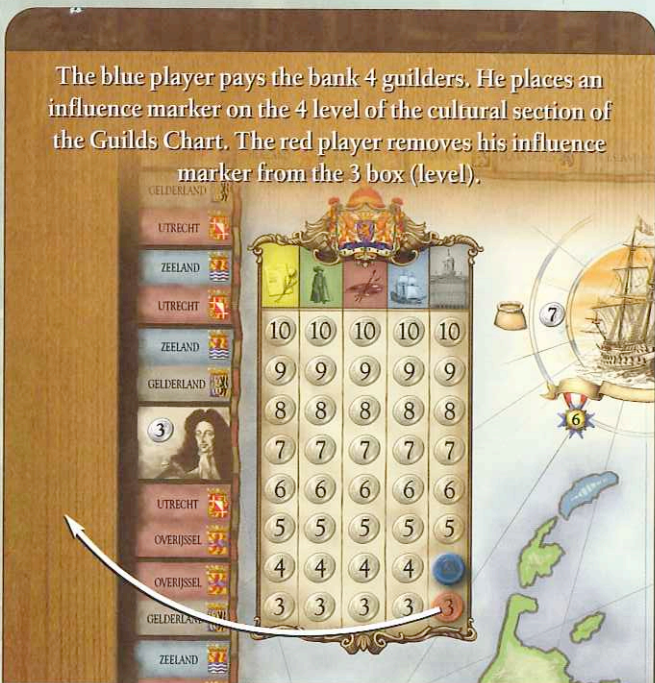
Only one influence marker (not one per player!) may be placed in any one province.



### 6.2 Guild Control

A player may take over control of one (or more) of the colored guilds on the *Guilds Chart*. A player pays as many guilders into the “bank” as listed in the bottom-most empty space of the corresponding column of the Guilds Chart.

**Example:** If there is currently no influence marker on a column, a player pays 3 guilders (the number in the bottom-most box of the column) and places one of his influence markers into that box. If another player wants to take over that guild, he has to pay 4 guilders (the number in the next empty box) and places an influence marker into that box. The other player gets his influence marker back and puts it into his reserve. The next player who wants to take over control has to pay 5 guilders, etc. However, see 6.3 below.



**Note:** If a player does not have an influence marker in his reserve, he may take one from any other space of the board and transfer it to the new spot. If he removes an influence marker from the **Guilds Chart**, that guild becomes unoccupied and the next player placing a marker in the column would only have to pay 3 guilders.

## 7.0 SPECIAL ACTIONS

Each influence marker on the game board (no matter if it is in a province, on the Guilds Chart, or in the Indies), entitles its owner to conduct *one* special action. The effect of such an action depends on the color of the province or guild.

A player either spends 3 guilders to purchase a card of the corresponding color or he creates a new movement token for 5 guilders. However, taking a special action is never mandatory. If a player does not want or cannot buy something, he may put that special action up for auction (if the corresponding influence marker is in a province and not on the Guilds Chart or in a colony box), see 8.0.

As soon as a player conducts a special action, he flips over his influence marker (to the side with the crossed out action) as a reminder.



### 7.1 Green Actions

Green is the color of population and reinforcements and is not related to cards. A player may use the green provinces (Holland and Limburg) and the green guild to create additional movement tokens.



Each appropriate influence marker allows a player to spend five guilders to place a new movement token from his reserve into any province of the game board—even if the chosen province already contains other movement tokens and/or an influence marker.

**Note:** *If there is no movement token in a player's reserve, he cannot conduct this action.*

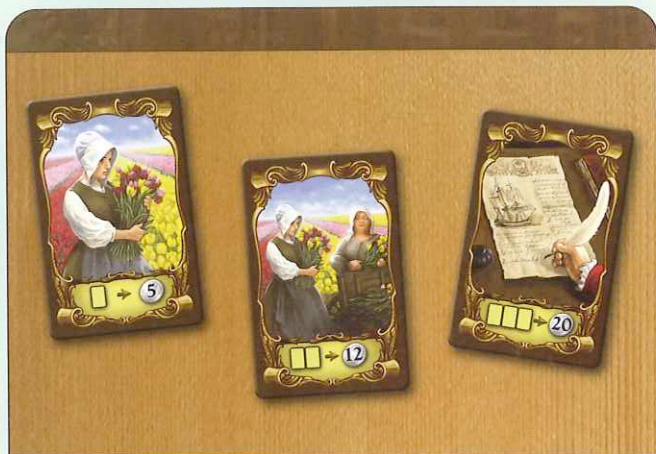
If a player places a movement token in a province that already has at least two others of his movement tokens **and** no influence marker, he may immediately replace those three movement tokens for an influence marker from his reserve.

## 7.2 Yellow Actions

Yellow is the color of investments. A player may use the yellow provinces (Brabant and Groningen) and the yellow guild to purchase investment cards.

Each appropriate influence marker allows a player to spend three guilders to pick the top card from the yellow deck and take it. The three yellow types are:

- ✿ *One girl with tulips:* at any time, it may be exchanged for five guilders from the bank,
- ✿ *Two girls with tulips:* two of these cards may be exchanged for 12 guilders from the bank at any time. A single card of this type has no value.
- ✿ *Shipping company:* three shipping company cards may be exchanged for 20 guilders from the bank at any time. One or two shipping company cards do not have any value.



After such cards have been exchanged for money, they are discarded.

Money received from cards may be used immediately, e.g., to conduct different free or special actions.

## 7.3 Brown Actions

Brown is the color of the arts. A player may use the brown provinces (Utrecht and Overijssel) and the brown guild to purchase arts cards and to pay the painters.

Each appropriate brown influence marker allows a player to spend three guilders to pick the top card from the brown deck and take it or to make a 1 guilder payment to a painter.

When a player purchases an arts card he places an order for a painting with the artist. Each painting has a victory point value (between three and eight). A player places the card face up in

front of him. However, victory points are only scored when the painting is “finished.” The more victory points a painting gives, the more time the “artist” needs to complete it and the more times a player has to pay him.

The grey coin on the card tells a player how many times he has to pay the artist one guilder until the painting is finished (and the player receives victory points).

**Example:** *To receive the victory points for a 6 victory points painting, a player has to do 4 payments. Each time, 1 guilder is placed on the card. When the last payment has been made, a player immediately receives the indicated victory points.*



**Remember:** *Each time a player may conduct a brown special action, he may choose to either buy a new brown card for 3 guilders or to pay an artist 1 guilder. A player cannot do both with one action.*

## 7.4 Blue Actions

Blue is the color of the colonies. A player may use the blue provinces (Zeeland and Friesland) and the blue guild to purchase colony cards.

Each appropriate influence marker allows a player to spend three guilders to pick the top card from the blue deck and take it. The blue cards depict one of the following:

- ✿ a sailing ship,
- ✿ a captain,
- ✿ a cannon,
- ✿ the Dutch East India Company logo. *This card serves as a joker.*



As soon as a player has a set of three different cards (one naval vessel, one captain and one cannon where one or more jokers may substitute one component each), he sails to the colonies.

He discards the three cards used and places an influence marker into one colony box of his choice (numbered from 2 to 7).

**Note:** *Spaces 2 to 6 only have room for one influence marker (not one per player). Space 7 (West Indies) has room for any number of influence markers.*





**Note:** Each joker can be used for one of the components; therefore a player could use more than one joker if he has them available.

The colonies are special influence markers that allow a player to invest in spices (see 7.6).

### 7.5 Grey Actions

Grey is the color of cultural advancement. A player may use the grey provinces (Vlaanderen and Gelderland) and the grey guild to purchase culture cards.

Each appropriate influence marker allows a player to spend 3 guilders to pick the top card from the grey deck and take it. There are several different culture cards:



☛ **Windmill:** each of these cards is immediately played and gives the player 2 victory points.

☛ **Governor:** each of these cards represents the governor of a province and is worth 1 victory point. Moreover, each time the Steward stops on a box representing that province, the owner of the card receives 1 extra guilder (in addition to any money a player may get for influence markers and movement tokens).



☛ **Dice:** this card allows a player to determine the result of the dice roll. When used, the card is discarded.

- ☛ **Investment:** the same as a yellow card;
- ☛ **Arts:** the same as a brown card;
- ☛ **Colony:** the same as a blue card;
- ☛ **Spices:** the same as an orange card.

### 7.6 Orange Actions

Orange is the color of the spice trade. A player may use the boxes of the colonies to purchase spice cards.

Each appropriate influence marker allows a player to spend two to seven guilders (depending on the number in the colony box in question) to pick the top card from the orange deck and take it. Spice cards work as investment cards but guarantee a much higher average return.



**Remember:** There are five colony boxes in the East Indies. There may be only **one** influence marker in each colony box.

The West Indies work differently. There is no limit for influence markers in this colony box. Colonies in the West Indies are more costly but are also worth more victory points, see 9.0.

### 8.0 AUCTIONS

If a player decides *not* to use the special action of an influence marker on the game board (but *not* a marker on the Guilds Chart or in a colony box), he may auction off this special action.

The bidding is started by the player to the left of the acting player and continuing in clockwise order. The minimum opening bid is 0.5 guilders and the minimum raise is 0.5 guilders.

A player may pass, but he may not later make another bid for the same special action.

When all but one player have passed, the auction stops and is won by the player who made the last bid. The winner gives the money to the player who initiated the auction and performs the special action immediately. Conducting the action does not cost additional money.

**Example:** Barack won an auction and paid 2 guilders to George for a blue action. He now picks the top blue card and takes it. Barack does not have to pay 3 more guilders for the card to the bank.

**Remember:** There is never an auction for an influence marker on the Guilds Chart or in a colony box, only for influence markers on provinces.

**Note:** Auctions are very important because they allow a player to receive money that may again be spent in the same player turn.



## 9.0 WINNING THE GAME

A player receives the following victory points (VPs):

|                         |                                                                                                                                                |
|-------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Movement token</b>   | 1 VP per token in provinces                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Influence marker</b> | 4 VPs per influence marker on the game board<br>5 VPs per influence marker in the East Indies<br>6 VPs per influence marker in the West Indies |
| <b>Arts</b>             | 3 to 8 VPs per finished painting                                                                                                               |
| <b>Windmill</b>         | 2 VPs                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>Governor</b>         | 1 VP per governor                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Money</b>            | 1 VP per 10 guilders (a player does <i>not</i> count money placed on arts cards)                                                               |

A player does *not* receive victory points for influence markers on the Guilds Chart.

At the end of each game turn, each player adds up his points and declares his score.

The first player to reach 33 points is the winner of the game.

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