

HOW TO PLAY ACQUIRE

DESIGNER: Sid Sackson

AWARD: Selected to **HALL OF FAME** by *Games Magazine*

The main object of *ACQUIRE* is to become the wealthiest player by the end of the game. This is done by forming Hotel Chains and obtaining free blocks of stock, shrewdly buying the right stock at the right time, merging Chains to obtain capital and adding Hotels to the Chains in which you have controlling interest to increase their value.

Number of Players: 2 to 6

TERMS

Active Chain: Chain on Board

Board: playing Board

Chain: two or more Hotels on adjoining squares (not diagonally)

Chainmaker: player creating Chain

Chain Marker: colored tile placed on one of the Hotels on Board to designate a Chain

Defunct Chain: an Open Chain which has been taken over by a larger Chain as a result of a Merger

Founder's Bonus: one free block of stock in new Chain awarded to Chainmaker

Hotel: playing tile with illustration of Hotel

Majority Holder's Bonus: lump sum paid two largest Shareholders in a Chain which has just been made defunct, or in an Active Chain at end of game

Merger: two or more Chains connected in one play

Mergermaker: player causing a Merger

Open Chain: Chain of ten or less Hotels

Permanently Unplayable Tile: Hotel which would merge two Safe Chains

Safe Chain: Chain of 11 or more Hotels

Safe Chain Marker: a tile printed with the word "SAFE"; placed on a Safe Chain

Shareholder: player owning stock

Special-Power Marker: colored tile with the words "Special Power"; used in the Special Powers Variant only

Stock Certificate: one block of stock (25 per Chain)

Stock Market: box containing money, Stock Certificates and Chain Markers

Temporarily Unplayable Tile: Hotel which would create an eighth Chain

Tile Rack: plastic rack for holding Hotel tiles

SETUP

Place the Board in center of table and cluster Hotel tiles face-down around it. Each player receives a Tile Rack, an Information Card and \$6,000 in the following denominations:

four \$1,000 bills three \$500 bills five \$100 bills

To determine who plays first, each player draws one Hotel and places it in its matching square on Board. (If two or more Hotels are placed adjacent to each other at this time, they *do not* create a Chain.) The player placing the lowest number starts. In case of a tie for the lowest number, the letter nearest the beginning of the alphabet starts. (For example, 2B precedes 2E or 3A.) Each player draws six face-down Hotel tiles from the cluster on the table and stands them in his Tile Rack facing him.

PLAY

Each player's turn consists of:

I. Placing one of his Hotel tiles on its matching square on Board.

If this Hotel creates a Chain or causes a Merger, all transactions connected with *Creating Chains* or *Merging Chains* are completed before the player's turn continues.

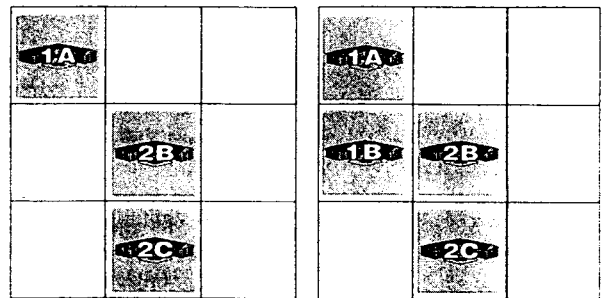
2. **Buying stock.** If, after placing his Hotel, there are one or more Hotel Chains on Board, the player may, if he wishes, buy stock in one or more of them. (See *Buying Stock*.)

3. **Drawing another Hotel tile to replace the one played.** Play rotates clockwise.

UNPLAYABLE TILES: At the end of his turn, a player who has any *Permanently Unplayable Tiles* (Hotels which would merge two or more Safe Chains) may set them aside (out of the game) and draw new ones to replace them. A player may *not* replace any *Temporarily Unplayable Tiles* (Hotels which would create an eighth Chain).

If all six of his Hotels are temporarily or permanently unplayable he must show them. He does not play a tile and can only draw tiles to replace those that are *permanently* unplayable. He may buy stock in the usual manner.

CREATING CHAINS



2 Hotel Chain

4 Hotel Chain

When a player places a Hotel next to one already on Board (rank or file—*not diagonally*), he creates a Chain. For example, Hotels 1A and 2B are on Board but *do not form a Chain* as they adjoin diagonally (not rank or file). Among his six Hotels, the player has 2C and 1B. He places 2C, creating a two-Hotel Chain. (If he had placed 1B, he would have created a three-Hotel Chain.) On his next turn, he places 1B, expanding the Chain to four Hotels. (If, during the setup, two or more Hotels were placed adjacent to each other, the player *adding* another adjacent Hotel creates the Chain.)

The Chainmaker chooses name of Chain from the seven listed on the Information Card, takes the Chain Marker of corresponding color from the Stock Market and places it atop one Hotel in the Chain. He then receives Founder's Bonus of one free block of stock in that Chain. (If, as occasionally happens late in game, the Stock Market has no available stock in that Chain, the Founder's Bonus is not issued.)

A maximum of seven Chains may be on Board at one time. Any Hotel which would create an eighth Chain may not be placed.

MERGING CHAINS

When a player places a Hotel adjacent to two (or more) Chains, he has caused a Merger. The Chain with more Hotels takes over the other. If the Chains are the same size before the merging Hotel was placed, the Mergermaker chooses which Chain takes over. The Chain Marker of the Defunct Chain is removed and returned to the Stock Market. (If more than two Chains are merged by one Hotel, see *Multiple Mergers*.)

A Chain containing 11 or more Hotels is safe and cannot be taken over by another Chain. A player should place a Safe Chain Marker on a Chain as soon as he makes it safe (by Merger or by tile placement). A player may not place a Hotel which would merge two Safe Chains. A Safe Chain may take over an Open Chain (one with ten or less Hotels).

MAJORITY HOLDER'S BONUS. At Merger time, the Stock Market pays compensatory bonuses to the two largest Shareholders in the Defunct Chain (see the Information Card—*Majority Holder's Bonus, First and Second*). In case of a tie for the largest Shareholder, first and second Bonuses are combined and divided equally between tying Shareholders; if Bonuses do not divide equal-

ly into even \$100 amounts, tying players receive the next greater amount. In case of a tie for the second largest Shareholder, the second Bonus is divided equally between the tying players. If only one player holds stock in the Defunct Chain, he receives both Bonuses.

At Merger time all players must publicly display all their stock in the Defunct Chain. No player may withhold any of the stock or otherwise inaccurately display it.

DISPOSAL OF STOCK AT TIME OF MERGER. After the Majority Holder's Bonuses have been paid, each player, *starting with the Mergermaker and continuing clockwise*, handles his stock in the Defunct Chain in one or more of the following ways:

1. **Hold:** Stock may be held in expectation of starting another Chain with that name.
2. **Sell:** Stock may be sold to the Stock Market at a price determined by the number of Hotels in the Defunct Chain *before* the Merger.
3. **Trade:** Stock may be traded on the basis of two blocks of defunct stock for one block of the controlling Chain's stock. (If the Stock Market has a limited number of blocks of the controlling Chain's stock, the player who caused the Merger trades first, followed by the players to his left.)

MULTIPLE MERGERS: When multiple Mergers (Mergers of more than two Chains) occur, the largest Chain takes over the smaller Chains. The smaller Chains are replaced in order of the size of the Defunct Chains as individual Mergers. Majority Holder's Bonuses are paid for the *larger of Defunct Chains* and players dispose of their stock in this Chain. Then the *smaller Defunct Chain is handled in the same manner*. In case of a tie, the Mergermaker chooses the Defunct Chain to be handled first. Bonuses and stock prices are determined by number of Hotels in the Defunct Chain *before* the Merger.

BUYING STOCK

Any player, *after* placing his Hotel, may buy stock in any Active Chain—up to a maximum of three blocks in any one turn. If he is unable to place *any* of his Hotels (see *Unplayable Tiles*), he may still buy stock. His purchase may be in one, two, or three Chains. Price per block varies with number of Hotels in Chain (see Information Card).

A player who runs out of money cannot buy stock but must place a Hotel if he is able. He cannot raise money by selling stock except during the disposal period after a Merger.

Trading and selling of stock between players is not permitted since all transactions are with the Stock Market. When all the stock of one Chain has been sold, players wishing to purchase stock must do so in other Active Chains.

CONCEALING HOLDINGS: At any time, a player may ask how much stock remains in the Stock Market for a particular Chain. All stock purchases and trades must be announced publicly. Stock and money of all players must always be on the table (i.e., not hidden), but can be piled (squared up) so as to conceal exact amounts. No player is allowed to examine another player's holdings or to keep written records of transactions. It is up to the players to remember who owns what and how much.

[**Variant:** Instead of the above rules for concealing holdings, players may agree to place all money and stock on the Board open to inspection by all players. This variant can increase game duration considerably.]

ENDING THE GAME

The game ends when one player, during his turn, announces that either all Chains on Board are safe or that one Chain contains 41 or more Hotels. A player does not have to announce that the game is over if it is to his advantage to continue playing. After announcing that the game is over, the player may finish his turn.

Majority Holder's Bonuses are paid for all Active Chains. All players sell their stock to the Stock Market. Stock in a Chain that is not on Board is worthless. The player with the most money is the winner.

SPECIAL RULES FOR TWO PLAYERS

When two play, the game follows rules for regular *ACQUIRE* until a Merger is made. At this time, the Stock Market is considered to own stock in the Defunct Chain for the purpose of determining Majority Holder's Bonuses. A Hotel is drawn from the cluster on the table to determine how much stock in the Defunct Chain is "owned" by Market. (If 9F is drawn, Stock Market is said to own nine blocks of the Defunct Chain's stock.) Majority Holder's Bonuses are paid to the two largest Shareholders. (If one player has 11 blocks, the other has five and the Stock Market "owns" nine. The player with 11 blocks receives first Bonus and the second Bonus is retained by Stock Market.) The Hotel drawn for Stock Market is returned to the cluster of tiles on the table (even if the Hotel drawn is permanently unplayable). At the end of the game, the Stock Market again competes for Majority Holder's Bonuses for each Active Chain.

SPECIAL POWERS VARIANT

By mutual agreement before the start of the game, players may decide to play with "special powers" that allow them to make unique stock trades and Hotel tile plays. When using this variant, the following rules apply in addition to the normal rules.

During setup, each player is given the set of five special power markers. A set consists of one each of the following markers: "3 Free", "Buy 5", "Trade 2", "Take 5 Tiles", "Play 4 Tiles".

On any given turn, a player may play one (not several) of his Special-Power Markers. A played marker is placed face-up on the corresponding special-power space on the Board where it remains for the rest of the game. The player then follows the instructions on the special-power space. Once played, the same special power cannot be used again by the same player. A special power must be played during the appropriate phase of the player's turn. (For example, all special powers involving stock transactions must be played during the stock buying phase of a player's turn.)

SPECIAL-POWERS CLARIFICATIONS: The following rules are clarifications of the special power instructions printed on the Board.

3 FREE: The three blocks of stock you take this turn are free. These blocks count as a player's total stock purchase for the turn. No additional stock may be purchased from the Stock Market this turn. A player may take less than three free stocks if desired or necessary.

BUY 5: You may buy up to five blocks of stock this turn. These five blocks count as a player's total stock purchase for the turn.

TRADE 2: Trade two blocks of stock you own for one from the Stock Market. You may do this up to three times this turn. Both cards of a 2-block set must be from the same Chain, but each 2-block set may be from a different Chain. All blocks traded must be from Active Chains. In addition to the trades permitted by this special power, a player may also purchase three blocks of stock in the usual manner.

TAKE 5 TILES: Take five tiles at the beginning of this turn, bringing you up to 11. Do not take another tile until down to five at the end of a turn. The usual rules for exchanging Permanently Unplayable Tiles apply.

PLACE 4 TILES: Place up to four tiles this turn. If a tile causes a Merger, it is acted upon before the next tile is placed. Replace all four tiles at the end of your turn.

CREDITS

GAME DESIGN: Sid Sackson
PRINTING: Monarch Services, Inc.

MAP BOARD: Kurt Miller
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