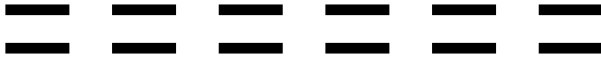


# EMPIRE BUILDER



## Quick Start Manual

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## Introduction

### The American rail of the 1800's.

Though England can claim Richard Trevithick as the father of steam locomotion (1801) the actual origins of the railroad date back to 1556 and German physicist Georgius Agricola's idea of running mining carts on a track of wooden poles.

Early on, Americans drew much from Agricola's inspiration, employing horse-drawn wagons on primitive railroads. But in 1830 Peter Cooper introduced the Tom Thumb, a steam locomotive that was light enough to run on domestic lines, and a whole new era was born. By 1850 U. S. tracks stretched 9,000 miles. Within a decade the rails tripled and the first transcontinental railroad was begun. By the turn of the century, American enterprises had built five transcontinental railroads--the rail network spread in all directions and totaled over 193,000 miles.

## Objective

In Empire Builder you can capture the entrepreneurial spirit of America and build your own railroad empire. You and up to five other tycoons are locked in a power struggle that spans the continent as players race to create railroad empires by connecting cities throughout the continent. Deliver a variety of commodities to cities demanding those goods---making huge profits if you play your cards right. Different demand cards makes each game unique. Be a mogul-in-the-making during an era of unprecedented wealth.

## Winning the Game

The first player to achieve the winning conditions wins the game. In a Quick Start game (the default settings) you must amass \$250 million and connect 5 major cities first to win. In other games the winning conditions are set by the player creating the game. Within the game, you can view the set conditions by clicking on the Game Opts subheading under the File pull down menu.

Empire Builder is a tightrope act, you must balance the cost of building track against the short and long term returns--all the while adapting to the changing Demand cards.

Against the best, one false step is all it takes.....

## Creating the Game

After you have successfully logged on to the MPG-Net Lobby, click on the Games door. At the next screen, click on the Board Games door, then click on the door labeled Empire Builder. This will put you in the Empire Builder pub, from which you can talk, create games and invite players as you would in other MPG-Net games.

To play Empire Builder you must first create a game. At the far right of the Gold Game Bar, you will see a new icon, a train. This is the Empire Builder game icon. Click on this icon and you will see three icons on a blue bar. From left to right is the Create Game icon (a bust being sculpted), the Run Game icon (a running shoe), and the Invite icon (a card on a plate). Click 'Create Game' and the Create Game screen appears. You can change the parameters of the game from this screen...but we suggest initially playing with the Quick Start settings to learn the game. When you have finished, click OK.

This will automatically bring up the Invite screen, which is one of the functions of the Communications Screen. Play by yourself or invite up to five players. Select an online player and click Invite. The player(s) you have selected will receive your invitation and may reply. When you receive the 'RSVP' from the person you have selected, acknowledge and click the Run Game icon. This will bring up a menu of Empire Builder games. To start the game, select the game you wish to play and click Play Game. The other player(s) you have invited will receive instructions to proceed to the pub, select, and play the selected game.

If you create a game but can find no one to play at this time, or if you decide not to play at this time, the game will be automatically stored unless you delete or cancel it. If you create a game, or play halfway through a game before stopping, this menu will allow you to Load, Select, and Play the game in the future.

While the game is loading you will see the Empire Builder title screen. After this you will see the Game Screen.

## The Game Screen

On your Game Screen you will find the:

- Menu Bar
- Game Map
- Game Controls Panel
- Player information and Demand Cards

## Tool Tips

When you point to a specific button or feature of the Empire Builder screen a message appears telling you what it is. You may toggle these messages off and on by clicking the Tool Tips option on the Help menu.

## Menu Bar

The Menu Bar is at the top of the screen and functions as any menu bar. Click on the Menu bar heading to access the pull down menus. Most of the functions you will use are more easily accessed from the Game Control menu. The menu heading Regional, toggles the map between Regional and Global views. The Exit command is located under the File menu heading.

## Game Map

Empire Builder is played on a map of the continental US and a small portion of Canada. Red hexes represent major cities, red squares represent mid-size cities and orange circles represent small cities, black dots represent mileposts, and black triangles represent mountains. Mileposts are cheaper to build track through than building across mountains or rivers.

\*Note\* The Legend heading under the About menu displays this information.

The **Regional** map allows you to easily see the area in which you are building. Use the arrows on the scroll bar to move around this map. The **Global** map allows you to look at the entire playing board. You will want to use the Global map to plan your strategy for making runs. You can toggle between these two maps either by clicking on the Regional or Global heading in the menu bar, or, by clicking on the Map icon to the right in the Game Controls window.

### Notes:

- To display both the global and regional maps, click the Toggle Map button, and then position the windows by dragging so that they are not directly on top of each other. **All components of the Game Screen can be dragged and moved in the same manner.**
- In the Regional Map, right clicking on a city will bring up information about that city.
- In the Global Map, right click on a location to orient the Regional Map to that location when you switch map windows.

## Game Controls Panel

The Game Controls Panel has most of the functions that you will use throughout the game. Initially, this window is to the far right, under the Menu Bar heading Help.

## Player Status Display

At the very top of the Game Controls Panel is the Player Status Display. Which player's turn it is, and, during your turn, what phase you are in is displayed in this window.

\*Note\* You can also determine the player turn by placing the mouse pointer on the Player Display window. A Tool Tip will display player turn information.

## Movement / Building Remaining

This area displays the cost of Surveyed track, the Movement remaining, and Building moves remaining.

### **End Turn**

Some Empire Builder options automatically end your turn, otherwise click on this button to end your turn.

### **Draw Demand Cards**

You may on occasion wish to draw new cards if the cards you have cost too much to use, yield too little revenue to make them profitable, or are impossible to play given the current layout of your track. Selecting this option will end your turn.

### **Telegraph**

Click on this icon to communicate with other players in the game. Click on the box of the player(s) you wish to communicate with (and your own to see your message displayed), and type your message in the text window. Hit <Enter> to send the message. If you send a message to specific players instead of all players the word “whispers” appears. This window also displays messages from the Empire Builder Advisor.

*\*Note\** You can toggle this last function off by clicking the Messages Option on the Windows menu. But! this also disables the Auto Pickup / Deliver message which notifies you when you reach a city where you can pickup or deliver items on your selected Demand Cards.

### **Survey**

Click on this icon to survey track before you build it. Please see ‘Playing the Game’ for more on this subject.

### **Dump Load**

Select this when you have a full train and wish to load some more profitable cargo. You don’t get paid for dumping a load.

### **Build Track**

After you are satisfied with your surveyed track, click on this icon to build the track.

### **Pick up Load**

Choose this to pick up cargo when you reach the appropriate city.

### **Upgrade Train**

For \$20 million you can upgrade your freight train to either heavier (carries more freight) or faster (more moves per turn). When you amass another \$20 million and wish to upgrade to super freight--heavier and faster--click on this icon again.

### **Deliver Load**

When you have reached your cargo destination, select this icon to deliver your cargo and receive your payment.

**Move**

Turns begin in the movement phase. If you do some surveying before you move, click on this icon to bring the movement phase back.

**Automove**

This icon automatically moves your train along a straight route, but stops for directions when you reach cities, or options in the track.

**Map toggle**

Use this icon, a map of the United States, to move back and forth between Regional and Global maps.

**Disasters**

Choose this to display the areas affected by recent events. Periodically, natural and man-made disasters occur ...which can undo the best laid plans of mice and moguls.

**Display Loads**

If you click on your Demand cards you will notice commodity icons and dollar signs appear on the maps. While it is helpful to have the icons and dollar signs on the map to remind you where to pick up and deliver, during moving and surveying these 'flags' can obstruct your view. Click again to turn off the 'flags'.

**Other areas of the Game Screen.****Player Display Window**

In the lower right hand corner is your Player Display Window. This window shows your player 'face', your name, the type of train you have, the amount of cash on hand, and on the bottom, the cargo you are carrying. You can change your game face by clicking on it. This will bring up a window with multiple 'face' options. Select a new face by clicking on it.

Player Display windows for the other players in the game are initially arranged on the left hand side of the screen. You can move them by dragging them by the top of the window. Click and hold down with the LMB on the player face or train to display his / her loads and Demand cards. When you let up, the Demand cards revert back to yours. Point at the face with the mouse pointer for Turn information.

**\*NOTE\*** In your Player Display Window a crossing gate will open and the light will turn green when it's your turn.

**Demand Cards**

At the bottom of the screen, under the Game map, are the Demand cards. A player starts the game with three Demand cards. Each card show three possible 'runs' that a player can make. A 'run' consists of delivering the commodity pictured to the destination

shown and receiving the amount shown. Clicking on any run will show the locations of that commodity on the map, as well as the destination city.

Example: Buffalo needs copper and is willing to pay \$29 million for its delivery. Clicking on this run will display a dollar sign at Buffalo and copper icons in those cities which provide that commodity. After looking at all three demand cards, players may then determine where to most economically build track to make the deliveries profitable.

**\* Note \*** Once you have completed one run on any Demand Card, that Demand Card is replaced by a new one, with a new set of runs. Wait and see how this new Demand Card affects your building and moving plans.

## Playing the Game

In a Quick Start game, each player begins with \$60 million dollars, a freight train (which you receive on the fourth turn) and the wits God gave 'em at birth. In a customized game you begin with \$40 million and receive your train on Turn 3.

### Building Track

Until you receive your train, you can only survey and build track. You can spend up to \$20 million per turn to build track.

Decide where you will build your first track, based on your demand cards. This should connect a city that provides a commodity with the city that will pay for it. You **MUST** start your track from either a major city, or your own track.

Now that you have a plan you're ready to start surveying. Click on the Survey button. Place the mouse cursor on the edge of the city you wish to build track from, and, holding down the left mouse button, begin connecting the mileposts in a line that will become your rail. You can stop and begin again. You may also Survey track by clicking from milepost to milepost.

**\* Hint \*** Try to build an efficient line. This will save you money in building your track and time in running your train.

As you survey for your rail, note how the cost increases in the Movement / Building remaining box. This indicates how much you will spend on your proposed rail should you decide to build it. Terrain effects the amount of money necessary to build a track. If you decide not to build along the surveyed line, retrace your steps and redraw, or click on the survey button again to clear the map and begin anew.

You can survey past your financial limits, but the track will only build as far as \$20 million each turn. When you are satisfied press the Build Track button. Don't worry if the track does not yet connect the two cities you need. You have more turns to do so. On your next turn continue laying your track.

### Notes on Building Track:

- ◆ ALWAYS try to build OUT from a major city, it's cheaper. You can build out from a major city up to two times a turn.
- ◆ You must build track either from a major city, or your own already existing track.
- ◆ You can CROSS another players track but you cannot build ON their track.
- ◆ Move first, then build. Building will end your remaining movement.
- ◆ Make sure you build one step ahead, otherwise, you may find yourself stranded.
- ◆ You can either build OR upgrade your train in a turn...but not both.
- ◆ When a track is flooded out all bridges must be rebuilt.
- ◆ Only TWO players can build track to a small city. Only THREE players can build track to a mid-size city.
- ◆ You do not have to build up to the \$20 million dollar limit. Instead, you may wish to build less track and spend your money upgrading your train.

### **Borrowing Money**

You might find that your resources run out before your limits do. You can borrow money from the bank (the default is \$5 million). Click on the Command menu heading and then Borrow \$. **Remember**, though, this money must be paid back at **100% interest**. The Debt window will appear. You may turn it off or move it to another part of the screen. You can also display the debt window by clicking on the Window menu heading and the Debt submenu heading.

### **Running your Freight Train**

Depending on the game, on your 3rd or 4th turn your friendly conductor will notify you that your freight train is ready. Place the train by clicking on the city that will provide your load of commodities.

### **Loading**

Click on the Load button and choose the cargo you wish to load. The train you start with can only carry two loads at a time. It is always a good idea to carry a full cargo load, regardless of whether you have a destination for both cargoes. As the Demand cards turn, your second load might become valuable, or, you might find benefits in having a second load during Disasters.

### **Moving**

The train you start the game with can only move 9 mileposts at a time. There are several ways to move the train. After clicking the Move button, you can click on any milepost in the direction you wish to move to instigate movement. Empire builder will automatically move you the allotted amount in that direction. This method of movement will also move you through cities. You may also move by clicking from milepost to milepost, by dragging the train along mileposts or by using the Automove button.



**Notes on Moving:**

- ◆ If you don't have a rail line to where you want to go, use someone else's. This will cost you \$4 million dollars per turn.
- ◆ Remember that there are no U-turns on a rail line. You can change directions only in cities.
- ◆ Be sure you know where you're going to. There is no 'undo' or 'backtrack' .

**Deliver load**

When you have reached your destination click on the Deliver load icon. Select the cargo to deliver and click OK. You will automatically receive payment. You may deliver more than one cargo at a destination (both tobacco and cars to Los Angeles) but may only deliver the same type of cargo once (Los Angeles won't take two loads of tobacco).

**Upgrade**

You can make your train either faster (12 mileposts per turn) or heavier (able to carry three loads instead of two) for \$20 million dollars. To upgrade click on the Command menu heading. Select upgrade train. Click in the box beside your selection.

**\* Note \***

- ◆ You can only upgrade once per turn.
- ◆ You cannot upgrade and build in the same turn.
- ◆ Upgrade your train after movement. Upgrading will end your turn.
- ◆ For another \$20 million dollars you can upgrade to Superfreight, which is both faster and heavier (12 moves and three loads). Click in the box beside this selection.