# HOW TO RUN A BIG GAME

INTRODUCTION

Congratulations, you are preparing to run your first *Catan: Big Game*™! There are many things to prepare before the event begins. This kit will allow you to run *Catan: Big Game* for groups from 12 to 1200 (and beyond!). It can be intimidating to think about running a single game of *Catan* for a large number of people, but we hope that these materials, and this document, helps ease you into the concept and gets you ready for a unique Catan experience!

CONCEPT

If you have never seen a big game in action, there a few things that you need to visualize before you begin. The first thing to wrap your head around is the setting you are simulating with this game. Imagine a large circular archipelago of islands with 2 players on each island. It would be awesome if you could set up your tables in a giant circle so that you could duplicate this circular configuration, but most play spaces (and local fire codes) will prevent you from doing this. So we have come up with a clever way to set up the boards to meet a variety of physical plant requirements so that you can run the game. You simply "break" the ring apart and reassemble it in a zig-zag fashion so that players can interact as if they were sitting in a large circle.

This circular setup
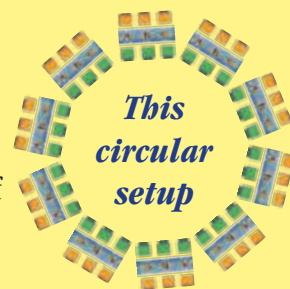
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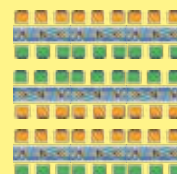
COMPONENTS

For each set of six players, you need 1 Big Game Kit. Each *Big Game Kit* contains:

- 3 Catan Big Game Boards (Board A, B, and C)
- 6 Player Pieces (die cut cardboard pieces)
- 120 Resource Cards (24 copies of 5 different resources)
- 33 Development Cards
- 1 Deck of Dice (37 cards to simulate die rolls)

You will also need:

- A timer (most smart phones can manage this function)
- Some additional big game kits to handle "shadow boards" (more on that later)

There are some additional materials that are optional, but will make your game go more smoothly. These items will be discussed later in this manual.

PLAY SPACE

Catan: Big Game (CBG) is very simple to plan and set up if you use standard 6 foot x 30 inch banquet tables. The planning and design is much easier because each of these tables holds exactly 3 CBG boards (6 players). You can, however, use whatever size tables you wish, but the planning will be a bit more challenging. You will need tables wide enough to fit the boards with enough extra space for the players to keep their pieces, cards draw piles, etc. (24" wide is the minimum, 30" is better).

Each CBG board is 23.5" inches long, so when you place the boards on tables, you can determine how many boards will fit on your table space (3 boards on a 6' table, 4 boards on an 8' table, etc.). You will also need 2 chairs for each CBG board (one for each player on that board). The number of players you have combined with the type of tables you have (& their configuration) determines the number of shadow boards you will also need (see *Shadow Boards* section).

SHADOW BOARDS

A shadow board is a board that does not have players on it, but is used to track the progress of a neighboring table. If you have a group of 12 players all sitting at a long table, you will need 12 CBG boards PLUS 2 shadow boards (14 boards total):
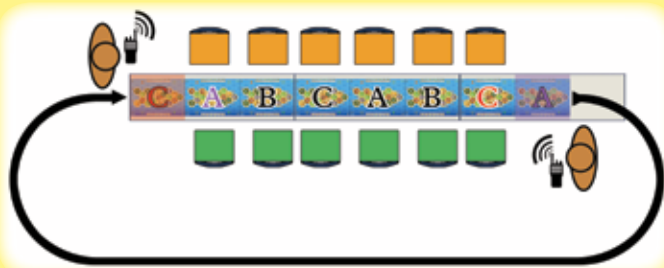
The red "C" on the left and the Purple "A" on the right are shadow boards that mirror the player board at the other end of the table.

Shadow boards mirror what is happening on the "neighboring" player boards at the end of the table players cannot see (remember, we are simulating a giant circular archipelago), so that the players at the ends both know what and where their neighbor is building. Administrators managing the shadow boards are responsible for communicating what new pieces that are added to the board as well as facilitating card trades from the other end of the table. So, using the illustration above, if the red C player builds a road on their board, that information would be communicated to the administrator at other end of the board, and that administrator would place a duplicate of that road on the shadow board "C". Walkie-talkies are great for this, or some other electronic way to pass along that information ("place a red road starting at the 5-6-9 intersection, towards the 10 Ore hex, please"). If you can, your Administrators should practice communicating placement information before the game starts. They should also be familiar with the rules of Catan in general.

Every gap in a table setup will require at least one administrator, and a pair of shadow boards, Because boards may not go down in perfect sets of three on tables, you will need to do a mockup of your play space, calculate how many boards and what letters will be on each, then determine what your shadow board letters are, and then add up your total shadow boards by letter. Whichever letter has the most copies needed is the number of extra kits you will need to correctly shadow every table set.

In a pinch, you do not have the perfectly alternate A–B–C in small sections. If you find that you have miscounted, as long as no two that are the same are together (no A–A or C–C), you can improvise to get shadow boards properly placed.

BOARD LAYOUT & SETUP

The layout of the boards is fairly simple. Note that each board has a SUN side of the board, and a MOON side of the board. If you are using a single long table, make sure that all boards have the suns on the SAME side of the board. Any set of tables in a single row will always have their symbols on the same side of the board (whether there are gaps or not).

If your setup uses multiple rows, you MUST ALTERNATE suns and moons to create a serpentine board. The image here shows what a three row setup would look like.
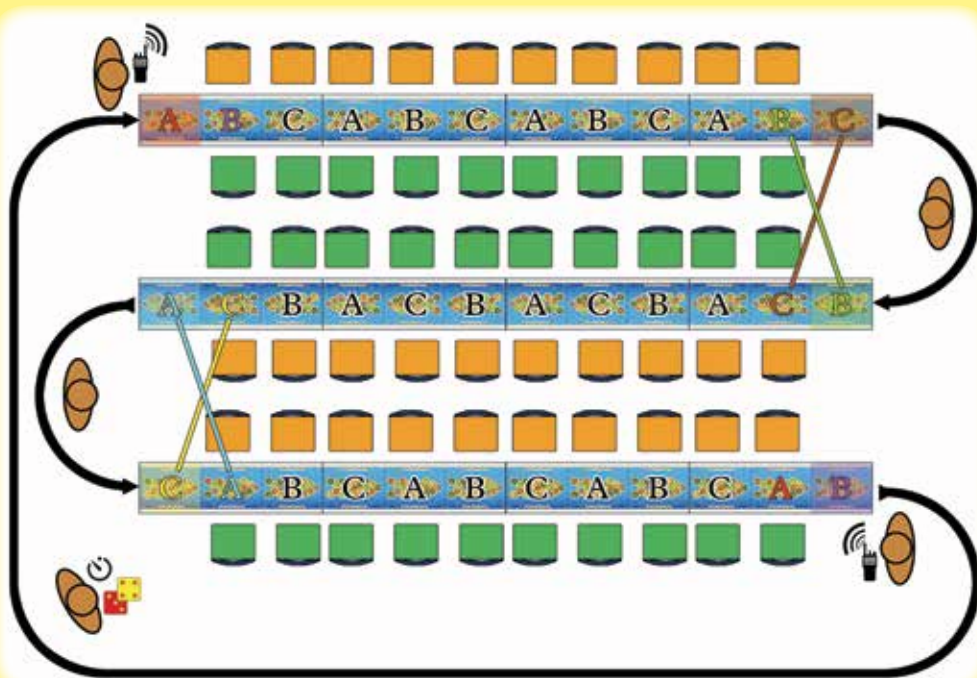
SEATING

There are two very important rules for seating players in the Big Game:

1. Players must always be seated as a group, with NO empty seats between them. When you seat players, start at the end of your first table, and evenly fill your tables on both sides. Do not leave any empty seats when seating players.

2. Players MUST always have a player seated across from them. Catan Big Game requires an even number of players. If you have an odd number of players, have an extra administrator available to sit in the empty seat to make an even number of players.

When seating very large groups of players (100+), it is easiest if you have your line file in to one end of a row of tables. You then have one of your administrators split this line into 2 lines, one for each side of the table (sun side and moon side). Have the players go all of the way down to the end of the row before taking their seat so that people sitting down do not get in the way of people filing in. This allows groups of friends who were standing in line together to sit across from one another instead of all sitting side-by side. We have found that this is how people generally prefer to play.

ADMINISTRATORS

All of your administrators should have a reasonable understanding of both the rules of *Catan*, *Catan: Seafarers* and the specific rules for the *Catan: Big Game*. Calculate the number of administrators required as follows:

1	to handle the timing and to call out the dice rolls
2	needed for the ends of your board, one at each end (however large that board may be). We recommend that they use walkie-talkies or text each other. They need to be able to constantly communicate.
+1	for every gap in your board (every time you have an gap in your tables, or you move to another row of tables)

This may seem like a lot of people, but this is the minimum number required to both track the shadow boards in real time for players, and to quickly communicate trading requests from table end to table end. You will find it VERY difficult to use less administrators, and for larger events, we recommend two administrators per gap to speed up the transfer of information.

For Example:

The CBG setup shown at the bottom of page 3 is for 60 players. Here's what you need to run a CBG using this setup:

12	Catan Big Game Kits
4	Administrators for the shadow boards (minimum)
1	Administrator to run the timer, make the die rolls (and call them out) for each turn
2	Communication devices
12	Tables (assuming 6' x 30")
60	Chairs
1	Timer (a stopwatch or the like)

Please note that the boards (shaded in various colors) at the ends of the tables are shadow boards. No players sit at these boards. The administrators populate them as the corresponding boards develop.

TRADING

Administrators who are positioned at the ends of table not only manage the shadow boards, but also must also communicate trading requests from one end of the gap to the other. Remember that each player needs five others that they can trade with, which means that the end players of each table will be able to trade with the end players of their "connected" table. If a trade offer is accepted, players should simply trade with their own bank to complete the trade. Communicate trade offers as quickly as possible (remember, players are on a tight clock), and be clear what the trade offer is ("Have ore, need sheep" is better than "trading ore for sheep").

TIMING

We suggest 60-second turns for the first fifteen turns. After the fifteenth turn, it's a good idea to pause the game and remind the players of the robber rules:

- If you have more than seven resource cards, discard half, rounded down (as in regular Catan).
- A second number is rolled. If a seven, the robbers move back to the deserts. Otherwise, each robber moves to the hexes matching the new number (for example, if a "5", each robber moves to the "5" hex on each half of the player boards). On a 2 or 12, only one robber will move to a production hex (the other moves to the desert on the other half of the board).
- If a knight is played, you may move one robber back to its desert hex, taking one resource from the bank matching the hex that the robber was standing on.

After turn 15, use 75-second turns. If you would like, you can shorten any turn when a seven is rolled to 60 seconds without disrupting the game. This ensures that almost any game will end in 90 minutes or less!

Another method you can consider is to have all of your dice rolls done prior to the event, and listed out (note which side is playing for each number as well, and make sure to have a second roll ready for all 7s). Whether you use dice or the dice deck to generate these numbers, it allows you to focus on the timing rather than both timing and generating dice rolls. Have a minimum of 80 rolls available, though you should need less.

DIE ROLLS FOR EACH TURN

It is easiest to simply roll 2 six-sided dice and call out the results (For Example: "Moon Players' roll a 9!"). Each kit also comes with a "deck of dice" that you can use instead of traditional dice. The advantage of these decks is that they will closely follow the typical distribution of dice rolls for two six-sided dice. This means that each number (2-12) should predict close to "normal." We recommend, per the rules, that you not use the last five cards for each pass through the dice deck, in order to not make the rolling too predictable as the deck runs out.

VERIFICATION

When someone reaches 25 points, make sure that they know to stand up or otherwise immediately alert the administrators that there might be a winner. Once that win is verified by the head administrator, the winning player is announced, and everyone cheers!

CLEAN UP

After the game is over, we suggest that you provide each player with a plastic bag (a zip-close snack bag should be sufficient) to put their pieces into in order to assist with pickup.

CREDITS & LEGAL STUFF