

EL GAUCHO

A TACTICAL TAKE-THAT AND SET COLLECTION GAME
FOR 2-4 PLAYERS BY ARVE D. FÜHLER

GAME IDEA

In “El Gaucho”, you take the role of a cattle baron sending your gauchos to the Pampa to collect as much and as stately cattle as possible.

Your gauchos exercise their abilities at the dice rodeo. The better they do during training, the easier they catch cattle in the field. Be smart and get in your opponents’ way with mean tricks by snatching the most valuable cattle from under their noses, or hire a cattle thief to abduct one of their animals.

At home, you sort your cattle by race and assemble them in herds only to sell them later for as many Pesos as possible.

GOAL OF THE GAME

Make the most money by selling Herds of Cattle throughout the game and at its end. The bigger your Herd, the more money you will get. However, selling a lot of small Herds should not be underestimated. Also, use the Special Actions whenever possible!

COMPONENTS

- 1 game board showing
 - the Pampa (*consisting of 4 Pastures*)
 - 6 Action Areas (*the Steppe and the Estate, with 4 colored Action Spaces per Action Area*)
 - and the Dice Rodeo, which is surrounded by
- 4 fences
- 4 Scoring Tiles (*money bags*) in the 4 player colors with values 100/200
- 4 Money Indicators (*wooden discs, 1 per player color*)
- 60 Cattle Tiles: 12 tiles with values 1-12 (*big numbers*) in each of the 5 races (*colors*)
- 32 Gaucho Tokens (*8 per player color*)
- 9 dice
- 1 black Start Player Token

Note: *This rule book assumes a 4-player game.*

Rules that only apply in 2- or 3-player games are marked in a different color.

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Realization and Rule Book: **Christwart Conrad**

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SETUP

Place the **game board** on the table. Assemble the 4 **fence pieces** (1) such that they fit in the indentations on the game board (1). The fence surrounds the **Dice Rodeo** (2). In a 2- and 3-player game, remove 4 and 2 dice from the game, respectively. Place the remaining **dice** (3) in the fenced-in area.

In a 2-player game only: Take the 12 **Cattle Tiles** of one race and use 6 of them to cover the Pasture spaces only used in 3- and 4-player games (i.e. the River and Forest Pastures).

Put the remaining 6 tiles of that race back into the game box.



Shuffle the remaining Cattle Tiles face down and place them in the **Pampa** as follows: Fill the Pastures one by one with Cattle Tiles beginning with the smallest **Pasture** (4) (i.e. the bottom row). In each Pasture, place **one** face-up Cattle Tile **after another** on each **Pasture Space** (5) of that Pasture. **Constraint:** Stop placing any more Cattle Tiles in a Pasture as soon as the total Cattle Value (i.e. the big numbers) of all the placed tiles in that Pasture is 20 or more.

In a 3-player game, do not place any tiles on the Forest Pasture spaces, which are only used in 4-player games.



Example of how to place Cattle Tiles on the Pastures:

A) The total Cattle Value of the tiles in the smallest Pasture is below 20.

However, you do not place any more tiles in this Pasture as it is already full.

B) In the next Pasture, the first two Cattle Tiles have a total value of 18, so you need to add another tile. This tile has a value of 5, so the total value is now greater than 20. Therefore, you do not place any more tiles in this Pasture.



River Pasture
(only used in 3- and 4-player games)

Forest Pasture
(only used in 4-player games)

8

Place 4 Cattle Tiles face-down in a pile on the **Steppe space** (6).

Place the leftover Cattle Tiles in a face-down **draw pile** (7) next to the game board.

Choose your player color. Take the Scoring Tile and 7 Gauchos of the chosen color.

In a 2- and 3-player game, take all 8 Gauchos of your color.

Place your Money Indicator on space "0" of the **Pesos Track** (8).

The player who was in South America most recently or who rolls highest with 2 dice becomes the Start Player and receives the **Start Player Token**.

Tip: Before you start the game, you should now take the time to explain it to all participants.

PRELIMINARY ROUND

Each player draws 3 Cattle Tiles (*5 in a 2-player game, 4 in a 3-player game*) from the draws pile and look at them. Now choose: keep any one of those tiles, or keep 2 of values 8 or less, or keep all 3 if their values are 4 or less. Remove the tiles you did not choose from the game.

In a 3-player game, use 2 of the discarded Cattle Tiles to cover the Forest Pasture spaces. 

After all players have chosen their tiles to keep, place them face up in front of you. These are the first members of your Herd(s) of Cattle. Place each race in its own separate row.

PLACING A GAUCHO ON AN UNOCCUPIED ACTION SPACE:



Beginning with the player to the right of the Start Player and in counter-clockwise order, place 1 of your Gauchos on an Action Space of your color. In this preliminary round only, each player must choose a different Action Area.

COURSE OF PLAY

The Start Player rolls all the dice in the Dice Rodeo. On your turn, you choose 2 of the available dice, place them in front of you and carry out your actions. Then the player to your left takes his turn by choosing 2 dice etc. The number of available dice decreases for each subsequent player. The last player in turn order can only choose from 3 dice. At the end of the round, the player to the left of the Start Player becomes the new Start Player and another round is played in the same fashion.

ACTIONS

You try to collect Cattle Tiles. Using the dice, you can claim Cattle Tiles in the Pampa. At the end of the round, you can collect the claimed tiles if all of the tiles in the Pasture are claimed.

With each chosen die, you can carry out one of the following actions. Alternatively, you can combine your dice to carry out an action according to the total value of those dice. In this case, you would only carry out a single action.

ACTIONS IN THE PAMPA

This is where your Gauchos catch Cattle. You have 3 options:



- A) **Place** a Gaucho from your supply **upright** on an unoccupied Cattle Tile. To do so, you must use 1 or 2 dice with a total value equal to the **big number** on the tile.



- B) **Lay** a Gaucho from your supply **flat** on an unoccupied Cattle Tile. To do so, you must use 1 or 2 dice with a total value equal to the **small number** on the tile.



- C) **Raise** one of your lying Gauchos on a Cattle Tile. To do so, you must use 1 or 2 dice with a total value equal to the **small number** on the tile.

Example 1 of an entire turn: you use a 5 and a 6 to place a Gaucho on a Cattle Tile of value 11 (A).

Example 2: You can achieve the same result by doing the following: You use a 5 to lay a Gaucho on the Cattle Tile of value 11 (B). You then use another 5 to raise that Gaucho (C).

A)



B)



C)



ACTIONS IN THE ACTION AREAS



This is where you can claim Special Actions for **future** turns. **Tip:** *Special Actions are the key to victory.*

Place one of your **Gauchos** on the **unoccupied** Action Space of your color in one of the Action Areas.



With a 1, 2 or 3 on a die, you can occupy the **SORT**, **WISH** or **IMMEDIATE SALE** Action Space. The other Action Spaces require a specific dice value.

Reminder: *You can combine two dice (2+3) to occupy an Action Space (=5).*

Constraint: You cannot place more than one Gaucho on an Action Space. You cannot occupy an Action Space and use it on the same turn. In other words: you may not use a Gaucho right after you placed him. Also, you cannot place a Gaucho on an Action Space that you have just used. However, you may place a Gaucho on one Action Space and use another one on the same turn.

No Gauchos left: If you run low on Gauchos in your supply, you may remove any of your Gauchos from Action Spaces and any of your lying Gauchos from the Pampa.

Reminder: *The dice you use must always match the required values exactly. If there are no matching dice available for the action you wish to take, you are out of luck. You still take 2 dice and place them of you.*

COLLECTING CATTLE AT THE END OF THE ROUND

After all players have carried out their actions, for each Pasture in the Pampa, check if all of the Cattle Tiles in that Pasture are occupied. From each such **completely occupied** Pasture, remove your **standing** Gauchos and the tiles they are standing on.

Note: *Cattle Tiles with lying Gauchos remain in their Pasture.*

Example:

In this Pasture, players do not collect their Cattle as not all of the tiles are occupied.

In this Pasture, the players collect the tiles with standing Gauchos. The lying Gauchos stay in the Pasture.

In this Pasture, all the tiles are occupied but none of them have a standing Gaucho on it. Therefore, nothing happens here this round.



Return the removed Gauchos to your personal supply. You can use them again later. Organize the collected Cattle Tiles in rows in front of you, one row per race. Each row represents a Herd of Cattle. Continue Herds from previous rounds, if possible. Always add new tiles to the **right** of a Herd. If you receive more than one tile of the same race (*from one or more Pastures*), you may choose the order in which you add the tiles to the Herd.

Example:



display before



new cattle



display after

Definition of a Herd:

A Herd consists of Cattle of the same race, which are either organized in ascending (*example A: 3, 5, 6, 9*) or descending order (*example B: 11, 10, 8, 2, 1*) **from left to right**. As soon as you would have to add an inappropriate tile to a Herd, you have to start a new Herd with that tile and sell the Herd you could not add the tile to (see *Handling a Sale*).

A



B



Example: The white Herd has to be sold now. The black Herd could still grow. The brown Herd cannot grow any more by adding collected Cattle, but it will only be sold when another Cattle Tile of the same race is about to be added (or at the end of the game). (Exception: Special Actions, see there)



Tip: Usually, you want to sell as often as possible. However, sometimes it is wise to wait until a Herd grows bigger before selling it.

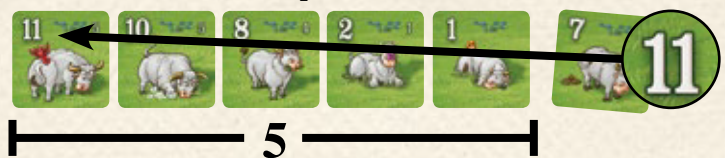
HANDLING A SALE

When you are about to add an inappropriate tile to a Herd, you have to sell the Herd. All the tiles in a Herd have to be in either ascending or descending order. When selling a Herd, each tile in the Herd is worth a number of Pesos equal to the single highest Cattle Value in that Herd. In other words, multiply the number of tiles in the Herd with the single highest Cattle Value of that Herd.

Example A: $4 \times 9 = 36$



Example B: $5 \times 11 = 55$



Move your Money Indicator on the Pesos Track accordingly. When you complete a full circle around the track for the first time, place your Scoring Tile with “100” facing up on the space of your color next to the “0” space. When you complete a full circle for the second time, turn your Scoring Tile to “200”. Remove the sold Cattle Tiles from the game. Keep the inappropriate tile as it is the first member of a new Herd now.

Refill the Pastures in the Pampa:

Start with the smallest Pasture that needs to be refilled. Draw tiles from the draw pile and place them one by one on the empty Pasture Spaces. Stop adding more tiles to a Pasture when the total Cattle Value of that Pasture is 20 or more, or when it is full. Cattle Tiles that are already there (*due to lying Gauchos*) count towards the total Cattle Value of the Pasture. It is even possible that a Pasture cannot be refilled at all due to the tiles that are already there.

USING SPECIAL ACTIONS

On top of your regular Dice Actions, you can take Special Actions by removing your Gauchos from the corresponding Action Spaces.

Except **SORT**, you can take any number of actions on your turn—in any order and at any time you like. To do so, remove the Gaucho from the Action Space and carry out the action. You can use the removed Gaucho right away. You may remove a Gaucho from an Action Space without using the action.

THE ACTIONS IN DETAIL:

Reminder: Except **Sort**, you can only carry out actions on your turn.

Sort (Stall):



You can place one Cattle Tile that you have just collected anywhere within its Herd, even at the very beginning.

This is the only action that you can take **outside your turn**, namely when collecting Cattle at the end of the round or at the end of the game.

Example: Normally, you could only add Cattle of value 10 or higher to this Herd. By using the “Sort” action, however, you can add Cattle of any value (but of the same race!) anywhere in the row, where it is appropriate.



Wish (Hero of the Rodeo):



You may pretend to have an additional die showing any number you like (between 1-6).

Example 1:

You pretend to have a 6, so you can place a Gaucho on the Steppe action without using a physical die.

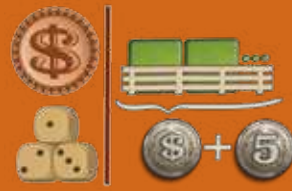


Example 2:

Using two physical 4's and a pretended 4, you can claim a Cattle Tile of value 12.



IMMEDIATE SALE (Estancia):



Immediately sell one of your Herds with at least 2 Cattle in it and receive an additional 5 Pesos.

STEAL CATTLE (Cattle Thief):



Using the Cattle Thief, you can steal a Cattle Tile of your choice from one of your opponents. Add the stolen tile to the right of your Herd of the same race. If the stolen tile is inappropriate, immediately sell that Herd and start a new one with the stolen tile. (*In this case, you cannot combine this action with IMMEDIATE SALE as both trigger a sale.*) If you do not have any Cattle of the same race as the stolen one, simply start a new Herd with it in a new row. (*You cannot combine this action with SORT as the latter can only be used when collecting Cattle at the end of a round.*) The player you stole from receives indemnity from his insurance. He may immediately move his Money Indicator on the Pesos Track by a number of spaces equal to the value of the stolen tile.

Example for Immediate Sale and Steal Cattle: You remove your Gaucho from the STEAL CATTLE Action Space and steal a Cattle Tile of value 10 from one of your opponents. He receives 10 Pesos. You add the stolen tile to the appropriate Herd, which now looks like 4-6-9-10. You then remove your Gaucho from the IMMEDIATE SALE Action Space to sell that Herd. You receive $4 \times 10 + 5 = 45$ Pesos and move your Money Indicator accordingly. The Gauchos you removed return to your supply.

RAISE/REPLACE GAUCHOS (Overseer):



When using this Special Action, you can either:

- raise 1 or 2 of your lying Gauchos in the Pampa OR
- replace 1 of your opponent's lying Gauchos with a standing one of your own.

Your opponent takes his Gaucho back and receives indemnity from his insurance.

He may immediately move his Money Indicator by a number of spaces equal to the value (big number) of the lost Cattle Tile.

Example 1: You remove your Gaucho from the Action Space and raise 2 of your Gauchos lying on a Cattle Tile of value 10 and 9. You return the removed Gaucho to your supply.



Example 2: You remove your Gaucho from the Action Space and place him on a Cattle Tile of value 11, where an opponent's Gaucho is lying. Your opponent receives 11 Pesos and returns the Gaucho to his supply.



SECRET CATTLE (Steppe):



Secretly look at all of the tiles in the Steppe and choose 1 or 2 of them. If you choose 2, they both must be of value 4 or lower. Place the chosen tiles on empty Pasture Spaces in the Pampa. Then place one of your Gauchos on each of the chosen tiles. (*In the very unlikely situation that there are not enough Pasture Spaces left, you cannot carry out this action to its full extent.*) After that, replenish the Steppe from the draw pile so that there are 4 available tiles again.

Example:

You remove your Gaucho from the Action Space and look at the 4 tiles of the Steppe. You choose 2 tiles of small value (4 or lower), namely a "2" and a "4". You then place the tiles on empty Pasture Spaces, namely one of them in the smallest Pasture and the other one in the second smallest Pasture. Finally, you place a Gaucho on each of those 2 tiles.

In 2- and 3-player games, you (obviously) cannot use the covered Pasture spaces.



END OF THE GAME

As soon as the draw pile is empty, play one more regular round.

(So, if this happens during a round, because you had to replenish the Steppe, finish that round and then play another one. If it happens at the end of a round when collecting Cattle, only play one more regular round.) Since the draw pile is empty, you do not add any more tiles to the game board.

After the additional regular round, there is a final round without dice. It is played like a regular round but no dice are rolled in the Dice Rodeo. This means, the players can only use the Action Spaces they have claimed but not used yet.

Example of the end of a 3-player game:

Red is the Start Player, followed by Blue and Green.

Blue uses the **SECRET CATTLE** action. When replenishing the Steppe, he draws the last tile from the draw pile, thus triggering the end of the game.

Green carries out his turn. Then the round is over. The three players play another regular round with Blue as the Start Player. After all players have finished their turn, the final round without dice is played.

In this, Green is the Start Player.

He uses the **RAISE GAUCHOS** action and raises 2 of his lying Gauchos so that he can collect the Cattle Tiles they were lying on. Red uses the **CATTLE THIEF** to steal a Cattle Tile from Green. He then sells a Herd via the **IMMEDIATE SALE** action. Blue uses the **WISH** action to place a Gaucho on a Cattle Tile of value 6. In one of the Pastures, all the Cattle Tiles have been claimed, so they are now being collected.

Then the players proceed with the Final Scoring.

FINAL SCORING

After the final round without dice, collect the remaining Cattle Tiles from the Pampa that have standing Gauchos on them and add them to your Herds (selling Herds you cannot add to and forming new ones as usual).

Ignore Cattle Tiles with lying Gauchos on them as well as remaining Gauchos on Action Spaces, if any.

Finally, sell all of your remaining Herds. Single Cattle Tiles (i.e. Herds with only one tile) are sold for face value, e.g. a single Cattle Tile of value 9 is worth 9 Pesos (=1x9 as per the normal rules).

The player with the most Pesos wins. In case of a tie, there are multiple winners.

Tip for players who tend to forget when they placed a Gaucho on an Action Space:

When taking a Gaucho off an Action Space or placing him on one, also place a Marker on that Action Space. This way, you will not forget you have used the Action Space already. At the end of your turn, remove all of the Markers.

RULES SUMMARY FOR A 4-PLAYER GAME

Setup

- fill Pastures row by row (stop at a Total Cattle Value of 20)
- 4 Cattle Tiles in the Steppe
- 7 Gauchos per player

Preliminary Round

- 3 Cattle Tiles per player, keep one (any value), two (max. 8 each), or all (max. 4 each)
- place 1 Gaucho on an unoccupied Action Space (counter-clockwise)

Course of Play

Start Player rolls all the dice and takes two for his turn (plus Special Actions):

- place Gaucho **upright** on Cattle Tile (big number)
- place **lying** Gaucho on Cattle Tile (small number)
- **raise** Gaucho (small number)
- **place** Gaucho on Action Space

The other players follow in clockwise order. Then collect cattle, if any.

The player to the left of the current Start Player becomes the new Start Player.

Special Actions

Sort (only when collecting cattle): place tile anywhere in the Herd (even at the beginning)

Wish: additional dice of any value

IMMEDIATE SALE: sell a Herd (min. 2 tiles) and receive 5 more Pesos

STEAL CATTLE: steal 1 tile from an opponent and add it to your herd.*

RAISE/REPLACE GAUCHOS: raise 2 lying Gauchos OR replace an opponent's Gaucho with 1 of your own (placing him upright).*

*opponent receives Pesos = Cattle Value

SECRET CATTLE:

look at Steppe tiles, choose 1 (or 2 of value 4 or less) and place it on an empty Pasture space with an upright Gaucho on it

Collecting Cattle

Players collect Cattle Tiles with **upright** Gauchos if all tiles in a Pasture are occupied. Organise your Cattle in Herds. Refill Pastures, beginning with the smallest one.

Selling Herds

Sell a Herd when about to add an inappropriate tile.
Revenue = # of tiles x highest value

End of the Game

When draw pile empty, play 1 more regular round plus 1 final round without dice. Collect all Cattle Tiles with **upright** Gauchos. Sell all Herds.