



PREVIEW COPY RULEBOOK

2-5 Players • Age 14+ • 15 Min/Player

Game design by Tyler & Brendon Cheves
Artwork by Marie Bergeron



English Rulebook (Draft)
Jun 4, 2025

INTRODUCTION

Red Dog Junction is a fast-paced board game of high-stakes trading, crew-building, and strategic maneuvering in the far reaches of space. As the captain of a rogue freighter, players navigate the lawless frontier, mining valuable commodities, salvaging lost cargo, and making high-risk trades at the notorious Red Dog Junction. Rival captains compete for fortune, and deception is always an option.

WATCH

Skip the rulebook and watch a how to play video.



COMPONENTS



5 Space Ships

Used to move between locations and carry commodities.



15 Super Deals

Obtain gold at the Haberdashery using commodities.



Deck of 86 Cards

Determines actions that are available to each player on their turn.

- 5 Unique Officers
- 18 Boosts
- 9 Agents
- 19 Cowboys
- 9 Miners
- 4 Outlaws
- 4 Rascals
- 4 Rustlers
- 9 Scavengers
- 5 Player Aids



11 Location Tiles

Where players mine commodities, make trades, obtain gold, and store their loot.

- 4 Planets
- 1 Red Dog Junction
- 1 Haberdashery
- 5 Home Bases

230 Commodity Cubes

The main currency of the game.

- 30 Scrap (black)
- 30 Gas (purple)
- 30 Ice (blue)
- 30 Oxygen (green)
- 30 Ruby (red)
- 30 Whiskey (brown)
- 50 Gold: These are the main goal of the game.

7 Dice

6 six-sided dice matching each commodity.
1 four-sided gold die. These set the commodity trading rates at Red Dog Junction.



GOAL OF THE GAME

Obtain the most victory points through hiring crew and officers, mining and trading commodities, and storing as much gold as possible before the gold supply runs out.

SETUP

In this game, your table becomes **space**.

- 1 Place the location tiles on the table. Scatter all of the **scrap** cubes in space between the location tiles and place the rest of the cubes on their matching location tiles with **Gold** and Whiskey placed on the Bank/ Distillery. For a 2-3 player game, return 10 gold to the box.
- 2 Give each player a Home Base and place a ship on it. Give starting cards to each player using the player number  in the bottom right corner of the cards. Place unused starting cards in the box. Each player should have 3 **Cowboy** cards, 1 **Agent** card, 1 **Miner** card, and 1 **Scavenger** card.
- 3 Shuffle remaining cards together, then place them in a face down draw pile somewhere in space. Flip over the top six cards and place them in a row near the draw pile. These are the cards available for purchase each turn.
- 4 Separate the Super Deal tiles into two piles (1 pile for the 6 **gold** tiles and 1 pile for the 8 **gold** tiles). Place these two piles face up on top of the Haberdashery tile.
- 5 Roll a six-sided die to determine the first player. Give a single **gold** cube to players 1 and 2. Next, give 2 **gold** cubes to players 3 and 4. Then, give 3 **gold** cubes to player 5.
- 6 Roll the 6 six-sided dice and randomly place them on the labelled locations on the Red Dog Junction tile. Then, place the gold die onto the middle of the same tile and set its value to 1.



ON YOUR TURN

Each player takes two actions on their turn. Actions can be taken in any order and the same action may be taken twice in one turn.

- **Move** to space from a dock, or move to a dock from space
- **Load and/or unload** your ship at your base
- **Purchase** a card
- Complete a **Super Deal**
- Perform a **Crew action** - mine, trade, salvage, swap, or displace. (Action limit determined per crewmember in crew)
- Perform an **Officer action** - see card reference
- Perform a **Boost action** from a card you previously purchased
- **Pass** and take no action

END OF TURN

- **Discard** played Boosts
- **Jettison** commodities above your ship's cargo capacity

GAME CONCEPTS

Capacity and Jettison: The **capacity** of your ship at the end of your turn is set by the number of cowboys in your crew. There may be situations when you gain more commodities than your capacity. At the end of the turn, **jettison** down to your capacity by placing extra commodities into space.

Mining and Trading for Commodities: All commodities can be traded at the Red Dog Junction. **Gas**, **Ice**, **Rubies**, and **Oxygen** can be mined at planets.

Paying with commodities: When you spend commodities, return them to the locations where they can be acquired. Commodities used for trades or Super Deals must be on your ship.

Docks: There are 6 docks at Red Dog Junction and one dock on the rest of the location boards. Only **one** ship can be on a dock at a time.

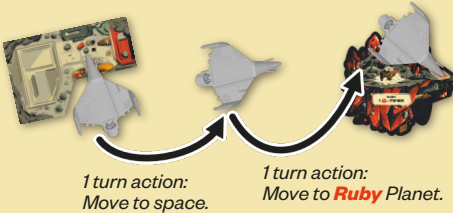


ACTIONS

Move: A player may move their ship from one location to another. Space is always between locations. Moving to any location other than space is called "docking".

While docked at Red Dog Junction, a player may **taxi** and move from one dock to another without first going to space.

For example, if a player wants to move from their home base to the **Ruby** planet, they must first take one action to move to space, then another action to dock on the **Ruby** planet. Players may end their turn at any location, including space, but they can never dock in another player's home base.



Load/Unload Commodities: While docked at their home base, a player may load and/or unload any amount of commodities between their home base (storage) and their ship (cargo).

Unload commodities to use them to buy cards and gold for points at the end of the game. Commodities in your storage are safe!



Use a Boost Card: After purchasing a Boost card, in a separate action, you may play it to resolve its effect. Once played, Boost cards are discarded.



Tip! All cards are face up and visible to all players. Keep an eye for unused boost actions and prepare for trouble.

Complete Super Deal: While docked at Honest Jose's Haberdashery, a player may receive gold using the prices of either of the top Super Deals cards.

For example, if one of the top cards is two **ruby** (red), two **oxygen** (green), and two **gas** (yellow) for eight **gold**, then the player may remove two **ruby**, two **oxygen**, and two **gas** cubes from aboard their ship and replace them with eight **gold** cubes from the bank. The **ruby**, **oxygen**, and **gas** are returned to their planets. Take the Super Deal tile and place it next to your Home Base.



Purchase a Card: From any location, a player may purchase **one** additional Crew, Officer, or Boost card by using commodities from their storage. A player may purchase from the six available face-up cards. Pay the cost located in the upper left hand corner of the card returning the commodities to their location tiles. Replace the card from the deck.

For example, an **Outlaw** costs two **rubies** (red) **OR** three **gold**. **Officers** always cost a combination of two commodities.

For example, the **Mayor** costs four **rubies** (red) plus four **oxygen** (green). Boosts always cost one **gold**. Any purchased card is replaced in the card display by the next face-down card in the draw pile at the end of the turn. Immediately after purchasing, any newly hired Crew or Officer is added to your existing crew. Boost cards are added face-up next to your Crew to be used as a later action.



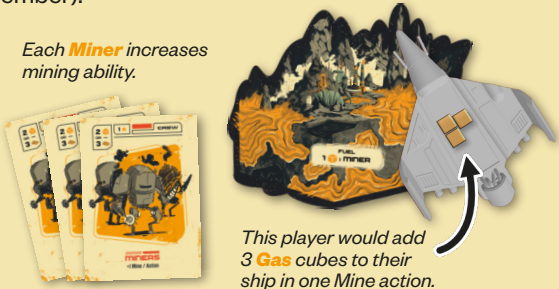
CREW ACTIONS

To perform a crew action, choose one type of your crew and activate their ability. The more matching crew cards you have, the more you can use that ability in a single action (limit determined per crewmember).

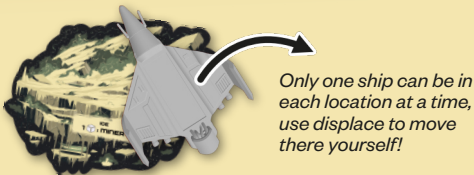
Mine: While docked on a planet, a player may mine one commodity on that planet per Miner.

For example, if a player has three **miners** and is docked on the **Gas** planet, they may mine three **gas** (yellow) cubes per action. To do this, take three **gas** from the bank and place them aboard the player's ship. Only one ship at a time may be docked on any given planet.

Each **Miner** increases mining ability.



Displace: A player may undock any ship from its location into space. For example, a player with two **Rustlers** may displace two ships (including their own) as a single action.



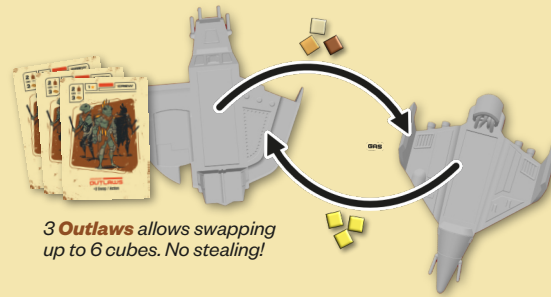
CREW ACTIONS

Swap: From space, a player may swap commodities aboard their ship with the same number of commodities aboard another player's ship also in space.

For example, if a player has three **Outlaws**, they may swap 6 commodities.

Salvage: From space, a player may take one commodity also in space and place it aboard their ship.

For example, a player with two **Scavengers** may pick up any two commodities in space and place them aboard their ship.



2 **Agents** means you can make two die adjustments, one die adjustment and one trade, or two trades.



Increase or decrease dice with **Agents** to improve your trades.



Trade: While docked at Red Dog Junction, a player may perform trades using the cargo aboard their ship. There are six docking locations at Red Dog Junction and only one ship may dock at each location. Players docked at Red Dog Junction may taxi their ship from one dock to another as a single move action.

The dice adjacent to the player's ship determine the eligible trades.

- 1 For example, if there is a **scrap** (black) die set to 3 and a **whiskey** (brown) die set to 5 on either side of the ship's location and the **gold** d4 is set to 1 in the middle, then there are three possible trades available.
- 2 In this example, if the player has two **Agents** and they want to trade **scrap** for **gold**, they can trade 6 **scrap** for 2 **gold** as an action.

Alternatively, players can use their **Agents** to increase or decrease any adjacent 6 sided die by 1.

For example, if a player has two **Agents**, they may use the first **agent** to decrease the **black** die by 1 then use the second **agent** to perform the trade which is now two **scrap** for five **whiskey** instead of three **scrap** for five **whiskey**.

END OF GAME

When the last gold cube has been removed from the bank, each player gets exactly two more turns, starting with the next player. Then, the game is over. Alternatively, the game is over immediately when the last card of the deck is turned over.

- **Gold in storage:** 1 point each.
- **Purchased Crew and Officers:** Points listed on cards.
- **Super Deals:** 1 point each.

The player with the most victory points wins: If two or more players tie in victory points, the player with the most unused Boost cards wins. If there is still a tie, the player with the most crew wins.

GAMEPLAY VARIANTS

Trail Boss Mode: A faster, more aggressive start

- Setup starting Crews for each player as normal.
- Place all Officer cards in a pile and shuffle.
- Deal one Officer card to each player.
- Each player chooses one extra Crew card (except Rascals) from the deck.
- Shuffle the deck and start the game.

Posse Mode: Draft your crew before playing

- Remove extra starting cards. For example, if there are four players, remove the starting Crew cards for Player 5.
- Give each player a single Cowboy card.
- Shuffle all remaining Crew, Officer, and Boost cards into a deck.
- Deal nine cards to each player from the deck.
- Players take turns selecting a card and then passing the hand of remaining cards to the player on their left.
- Continue game setup as usual.
- Start the game with these ten cards as each player's starting Crew, Officers, and Boosts.

SOLO PLAY

Trailblazer Mode: A faster, more aggressive start
Setup normally as a two player game. The solo player is Player 1 and the Automa is Player 2.

Player 1 plays a standard game with all regular rules, except they **get three actions per turn** instead of two.

The Automa plays a modified, simpler game:

- The Automa's ship capacity is always 12.
- Stack the Automa's crew next to its home base.

On the Automa's turn, remove the last card from the display, place it on top of the Automa's Crew stack, and take an action based on that card.

- **Any Boost:** Add one gold from the bank to the Automa's home base and discard the boost.
- **Cowboy:** Move the Automa's ship to its home base and unload any cargo.
- **Scavenger:** Move the Automa's ship to space and salvage three commodities. The Automa always salvages in this order: gold, whiskey, mined commodities, scrap.
- **Agent:** Move the Automa's ship to Red Dog Junction (Player 1 chooses which dock) and immediately trade all resources aboard the Automa's ship 1:1 for gold.
- **Miner:** Move the Automa's ship to a planet (Player 1 chooses any unoccupied planet) and mine three resources.
- **Rustler:** Move both ships to space.
- **Outlaw:** Move both ships to space and swap six commodities aboard the ships (if available) to benefit the Automa.
- **Rascal:** Move the Automa's ship to Honest Jose's Haberdashery and immediately make the eight gold Super Deal. Place the 8 gold aboard the Automa's ship and place the Super Deal tile at the Automa's home base.

At the end of the game, score normally.

FAQ

How many officers and crew can I have?

There is no limit.

Do Boost cards count as victory points at the end of the game?

No, Boost cards do not count towards your victory point total at the end of the game. They can however influence a tiebreak.

Can gold be jettisoned into space?

Yes, gold and any other cargo can be jettisoned into space.

What happens if the deck runs out of cards?

The game ends immediately.

What happens if the bank runs out of a commodity?

Nothing. If a commodity runs out, then nobody can obtain that commodity until more is added to the bank.

Can I trade with commodities in my storage?

No, you may only perform trades while you are at Red Dog Junction, unless a specific card you own tells you otherwise.

Can I trade with other players?

No trading is allowed.

Which commodities can I use to buy cards?

You may use only commodities from your storage to buy cards. Cargo aboard your ship may not be used to buy cards.

What happens to scrap when I use it to trade or buy cards?

Whenever scrap is used to trade or buy cards, it goes back into space. All scrap in the game should be in space and not in the bank.

Are there any cards that manipulate dice at Red Dog Junction?

Yes, there are several Boost cards and one Officer card that manipulate the dice.

Can the card display be refreshed?

No, there is no action to refresh the card display. Players may only choose to purchase the cards currently in the card display.

Where can I find the latest version of the rules?

A living version of the rulebook will be available on our website at <https://waterworks.studio/red-dog-junction> and on BoardGameGeek.

CREDITS

Game Design: Tyler and Brendon Cheves

Game Development: Sean Wittmeyer

Art and Graphic Design: Marie Bergeron

3D Modeling: Dmitry Ivanilov

Solo Mode: Justin Cyr

Official How to Play Video: Peaky Boardgamer

Theme and Narrative Support: Rob Wolff and Duncan Wilson

Primary Playtesters: Brian Blaney, Skyler Berg and the hundreds of other playtesters at Stumptown Gamecrafters Guild.

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