

Twisty Tracks

A GAME BY
Jeffrey D. Allers

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GAMES**

Twisty Tracks

A Puzzle Game for 1-4 Players, Ages 6 and Up
By Jeffrey D. Allers

Some people just want to get from point A to point B. For others, the “journey is the destination.” In **Twisty Tracks**, players are rewarded for both!

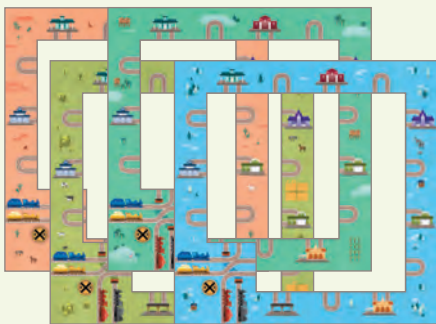
As you build your twisty tracks around towns, through tunnels, and over bridges, you can race to be the first player to reach the most valuable stations. Or you can keep your trains moving by creating longer routes that reward you for showing your passengers the beautiful scenery. Wait too long, however, and you may no longer be able to reach a station at all! The player who has the highest total of points from both their journeys and destinations is the winner!

In **Twisty Tracks**, players collect “travel points” as they build railroad tracks and use their trains to take passengers through scenic landscapes. They try to connect their trains to the best stations, which will score the most points for the connection. But, once a train reaches a station, it can no longer travel to collect points. **Twisty Tracks** can also be played with a variant for younger children.

During each turn, players will place a new track tile, then move their trains that connect to the new track. The tracks twist and turn through tunnels and over bridges, and players may rotate each tile any way they wish before placing it. Every time one of a player's trains crosses a border where 2 tiles meet or where a tile meets the frame, they score a travel point. When a train makes it to a station, the player receives points for that station. The first train or trains to arrive at each station receive the most points for that station, the next trains receive less, and if there are no more spaces left at a station, players receive no station bonus.

COMPONENTS

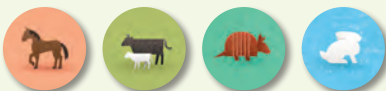
4 frames in 4 player colors



16 trains in 4 colors
(black, blue, yellow, red)



16 station tokens,
4 in each of the 4 player colors



60 track tiles,
15 in each of the 4 player colors



4 scoring markers,
1 in each of the 4 player colors




1 scoring board




Set Up

1. Place the **scoring board** in the middle.
2. Each player takes all of the **frame** pieces of a single color and assembles them as a **frame**. They place their **4 trains** (1 of each color) on the 4 starting tracks on the **frame**, each on its matching color.
3. Each player takes the 15 **track tiles** in their color, mixes them, and places them in a face-down stack next to their **frame**.
4. Each player takes the **scoring marker** in their color and places it next to the “1” space on the score track that runs along the outside of the **scoring board**.

5. Each player takes the 4 **station tokens** in their color and places them next to their **player frame**. With less than 4 players, use station tokens from an unused player color to cover the indicated spaces on the **scoring board**. Place the unused **frames**, **track tiles**, **station tokens**, and **scoring markers** back in the box.

For a 3-player game, cover the spaces marked with the .

For a 2-player game also cover the spaces marked with a .



Playing the Game

The game is played in rounds. In each round, all players take their turns simultaneously:

1. Draw a **track tile** from the top of their stack.
2. Place the **track tile** in their **frame**. It must be placed so that at least one of their trains can move onto or through the new tile!

They may rotate the **track tile** any way they wish before placing it.

All players place their **track tiles** simultaneously without looking at where their opponents are placing. Once a **track tile** has been placed, it remains there for the rest of the game!

3. Move all of the trains that can move in any order. **Trains** may, at times, move from two different adjoining **track tiles**. **Trains** may also move onto the new tile and then through to another **track tile** that was placed previously.

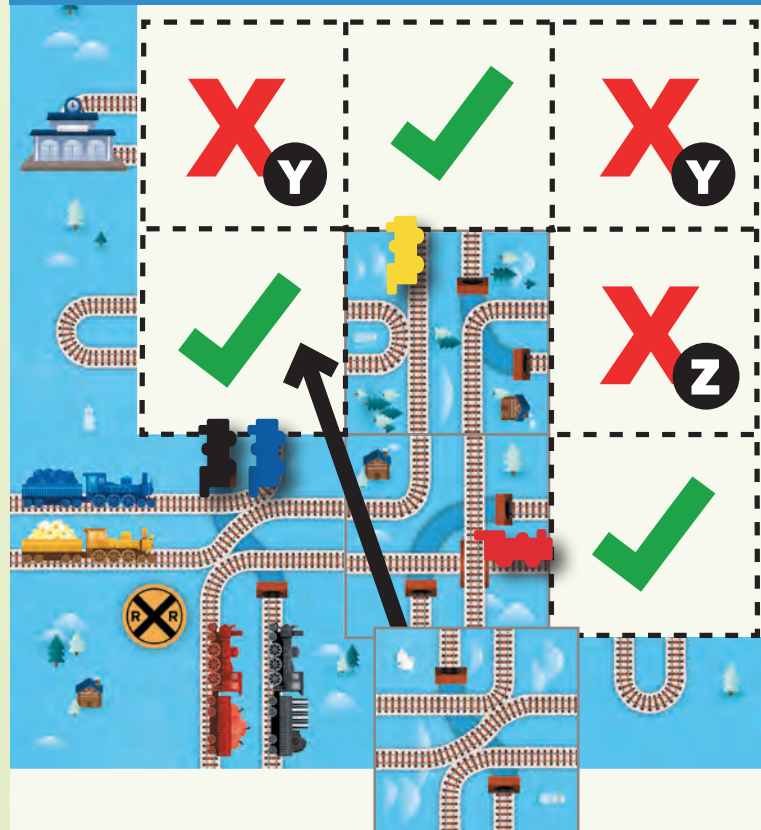
Trains only stop when they reach the end of an unfinished track, when they collide, or when they reach a **station**.

Please note that some tiles have tunnels. **Trains** reaching a tunnel should be moved to where the tunnel exits. (See the example on page 5.)

TRAVEL POINTS

For each of their trains, a player scores 1 travel point for every border the train crosses. (A border can be between two track tiles or between a track tile and the frame.) **Trains** can use the curves on the **frames** or **track tiles** with U-turns to reenter tiles that have already been traveled through to score even more travel points! Players record their travel points by using their **scoring marker** on the **scoring track**.

PLACING A TILE



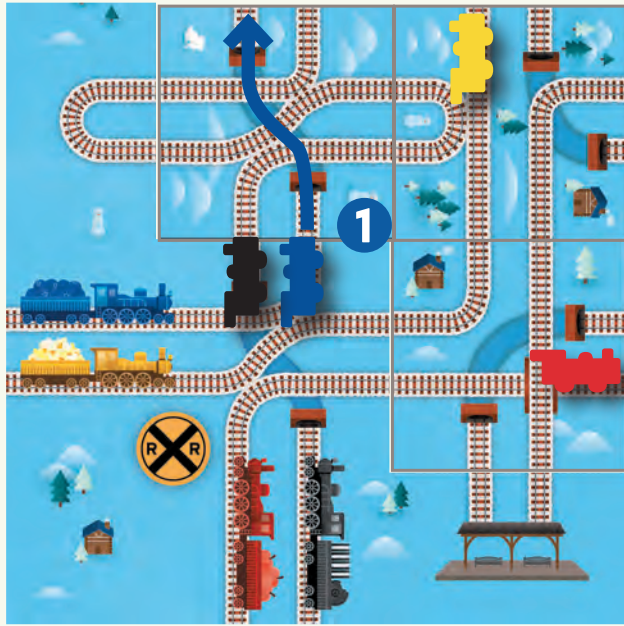
The blue player must place their tile so that at least one of their trains can travel onto it. In the example shown above, two of their trains can.

All of the placements shown with ✓ are legal placements.

Spaces **Y** are improper because they do not extend tracks connected to trains. Space **Z** is improper because its placement doesn't allow any trains to immediately move onto it.



MOVING TRAINS



In this example, the player can move their blue train over 1 **border**, scoring 1 **travel point**. (Note how the blue train moves through the tunnel on the tile.) They also can move their black train over 5 **borders**, scoring 5 more **travel points**. Both trains are ready to continue their trip on a future turn.

UNFINISHED TRACK

Trains remain at the edge of any unfinished track until a new **track tile** is added to the **frame** that extends that track.

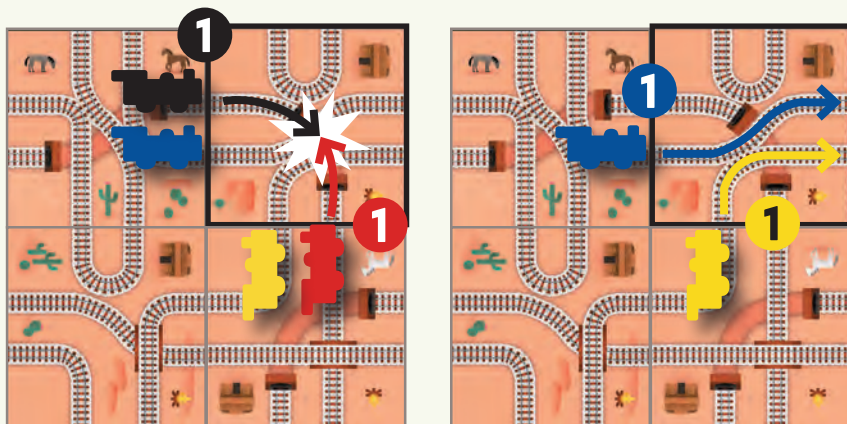
In the example turn, all of the trains end where the track runs out.



COLLISIONS

If two **trains** collide on the same track, both are removed from the game. Neither **train** will score any points for reaching stations! They do, however, score travel points for any borders they crossed before they collided.

COLLISIONS



After the tile is placed, the black and red trains collide and are removed from the game. They do score **1 travel point** each before the crash, however. The other two trains may move onto the new tile as normal.

STATIONS

Each time a player's **train** reaches a **station** on their **frame**, they receive the highest number of points still shown for that particular **station** on the **scoring board**. If more than one player reaches the same **station** in the same round, they all receive the highest number shown on the **station board**.

The player then places one of their **station tokens** over the highest number showing for that **station** on the **scoring board**. If more than one player reaches the **station** at the same time, one player covers the highest number remaining (the number those players scored), and the other player covers the next highest number, etc.

As noted above, all eligible players receive the same points. The placement of the tokens reduces the points for trains that reach stations later in the game.

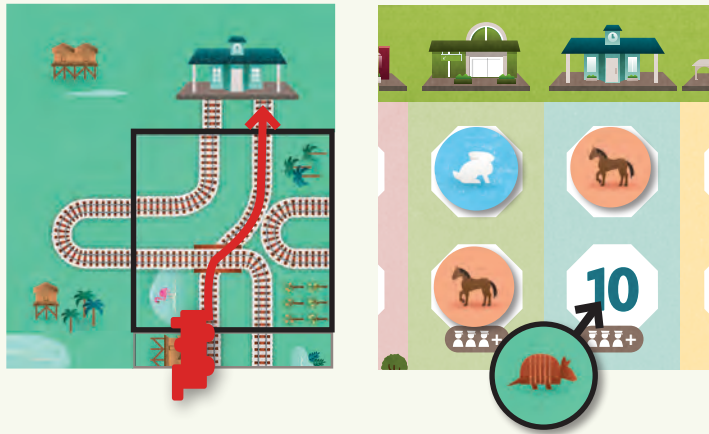
If a player covers the last remaining number at that **station**, any other players who score this turn simply stack their **station token** on top of it.

However, if a player arrives at a **station** with all of its numbers already covered during previous turns, they instead place their token in the straggler space below the **station** points. They receive no points for this **station token**.

Note: *it is possible—and a very good strategy—for a player to reach a high-scoring station with 2 of their trains simultaneously! As usual, both trains score the same number of points, although 2 numbers for that station are then covered.*

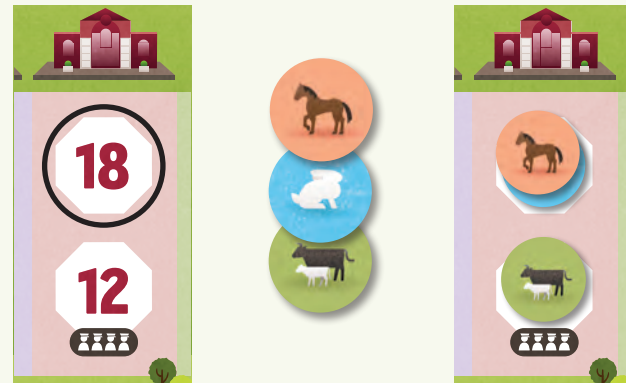


REACHING A STATION



Three different players reach the red station in the same turn. There are only 2 spaces available at the red station. All 3 players receive the top number of **station points** available (18). Two of the **station tokens** cover the 2 available spaces, and the third one is stacked on top. No more trains can score points by going to the red station.

After placing a track tile, the player moves their red train over 2 **borders**, scoring 2 **travel points**. Their train also reached the teal station. Another player has already reached that station once, but fortunately, there is still an open space on the scoring board for that station, worth 10 points. The player places their **station token** on that space. No other trains can score points by reaching the teal station!



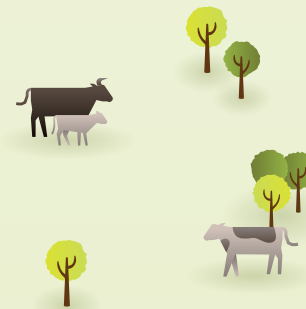
The teal (armadillo) player reaches the green station with their blue train. However, all the spaces on the **scoring board** for that station were already filled in previous rounds.

They must put a **station token** in the straggler area to indicate that the train will not score any points.

End of Game

When a player has no more trains that can move (they have either collided or reached stations), they must pass instead of taking a turn. The game ends when all players have no more trains to move. **The player with the most points is the winner.**

In the case of a tie, the tied player who has placed the most track tiles (i.e., who has stayed in the game the longest) is the winner. If still tied, the tied players share the victory.



Game Variants

There are several variants that make the game more accessible and can also be played as a solitaire puzzle.

VARIANT 1: STATIONS ONLY

In this variant, the players only count points for station scoring. There are no **travel points** awarded. This is a good variant for younger children.

VARIANT 2: TRAVELING ONLY

The goal in this variant is for the players to move **trains** over as many tiles as possible. They want to avoid reaching the stations as long as possible, but they need to be careful not to collide their **trains!** The players only keep track of **travel points**. No station points are awarded. This variant is also good for young children.

SOLITAIRE VARIANTS

Players can play the main game or either variant as a solitaire game, trying to make the highest score possible. We also invite players to make up their own challenges!

CREDITS



GAME DESIGN: JEFFREY D. ALLERS

Jeffrey Allers moved from the U.S. to Berlin in 1994 to work as an architect, where he also discovered the German board gaming scene.

Since then he has organized gaming meetups

and game designer groups, lectured at universities, and led game design workshops in schools. His games have been published around the world, including two previously from Rio Grande Games: Piece o' Cake and Alea lacta Est. Jeffrey now works as a Presbyterian youth pastor and English teacher and lives in southwestern Germany with his wife and twin sons.

The designer wishes to thank all those who playtested the game, especially the Luchsingers (Kris, Jim, Abby & Rachel), Rhett Carson, Jim Mitchell, Ed McKell, Steve Fladda, Jeff Gage, Charlie Adams, Jacob Coon, and Ryan Zwemke.

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