Epona

Rulebook

GENERAL OVERVIEW

 Epona is a game for 1 to 6 players in which you represent new equine business owners who are trying to build up their horse business by developing different stables in various locations. To do so, you have to acquire new sites to locate your stables in, hire the best staff, buy new equipment, construct arenas, jump obstacles and race tracks and, of course, acquire horses of different types to make your stables the best in the land.

 These items are represented by cards which each player plays in front of themselves in a tableau. Which types of these you obtain and where you place these cards in your stables will determine how sucessful your overall business becomes. Additional prestige can be gained by breeding your horses to produce the next generations of horses that will ensure your legacy.

 The game is played over 6 rounds with the winner being the player who has the most victory points (depicted as horseshoes) at game end.

 There are 2 variants for playing the game depending on your preferred playing style:

LOWER INTERACTION VARIANT
HIGH INTERACTION VARIANT

Components

54 × Sporting horse cards
– 3 types – racing, showjumping and dressage horses

54 × Working horse cards
– 3 types – carriage, draught and riding horses

22 × Employee cards
– managers and riders

21 × Employee cards
– stablehands and vets

17 × Equipment cards
– horse boxes and carriages

21 × Equipment cards
– obstacles (for showjumping), arenas (for dressage) and racecourses (for flat racing)

47 × Stable cards
– with meadow, mountain and castle locations, 28 × plain, 6 × ③, 7× ⑥ and 6 × ★ stables

6 × Owner cards
(double-sided, symmetric and asymmetric)
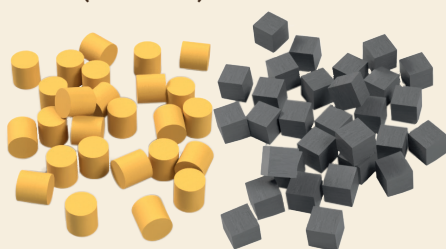
30 × double-sided Foal tokens
(1 and 2 VPs)

36 × Coins of value 1, 15 × Coins of value 3

32 × double-sided Stud tokens

5 × 3 VP tokens

24 × Rider rollers

60 × cubes

6 × Personal letter tiles

7 × Lower interaction tokens
(3 × 2 Breeding tokens, 1 × Additional card token)

1 × Score pad

3 × Player aids

7 × double-sided Selection cards
(used in the **LOWER INTERACTION VARIANT**)

3 × double-sided Player pair cards
(used in both variants)

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Overview of card types

During the game, players play cards into rows to create their different stables. Each row must start with a Stable card. This card will determine what type and number of cards will need to be played into that particular stable row to successfully **COMPLETE** the stable and to unlock an end-game scoring bonus. A Stable is **FINISHED** in the case where the number of cards in the stable requirement is satisfied, but some or all of the card types required are not present. In this case, the player does not gain the completion bonus.

There are 3 types of cards in the game:
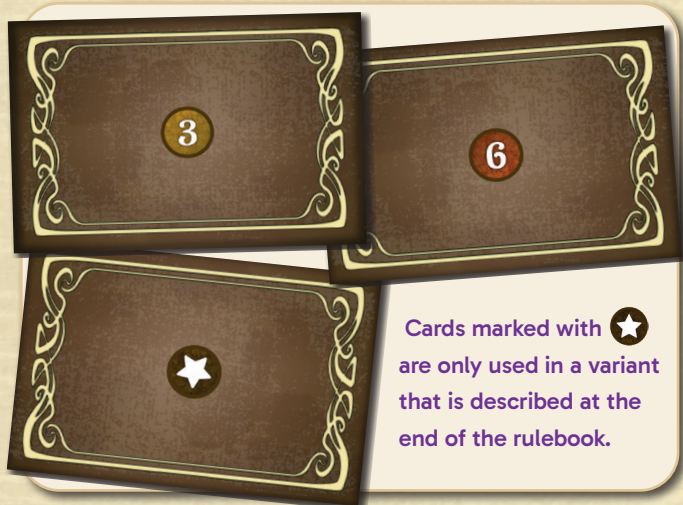
1. **STABLE CARDS**
2. **OWNER CARDS**
3. **ASSET CARDS**

1 STABLE CARDS

1. Stable requirement – **number** of cards

2. Stable requirement – **type** of cards

3. End-game scoring **completion** bonus (brown background) – gained for fulfilling both stable requirements

4. Immediate **completion** bonus (light background) – gained for fulfilling both stable requirements

5. Space for a cube when the stable is completed (its requirements have been met)

6. Space for a cube when the stable is finished (the type requirement has **NOT** been met)

7. End-game scoring bonus for including a certain card type in the stable row; it is gained even when the stable row is not finished or completed

8. Stable type symbol

The Stable cards with symbols on their backs are used during **SET UP** and the others with no symbol are used during the **GAME**:

Cards marked with ⭐ are only used in a variant that is described at the end of the rulebook.

All Stable cards have a stable type symbol on them related to their location – meadow 🏠, mountain ⛰ or castle 💼.

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② OWNER CARDS

Each player receives 1 Owner card at the start of the game which is placed in front of them for the duration of the game. A player will only ever have 1 Owner card. These cards have special effects that can be activated by players during the game.

It is suggested that the symmetric Owner cards (no. 300 - 305) are used for your first few games. A variant with the asymmetric Owner cards (found on the reverse side of the symmetric Owner cards, no. 306-311) is explained at the end of the rulebook.

Owner icon

Upper line of bonuses

Bottom line of immediate bonuses

Starting resources

Player aid for game play (explained later)

Bonuses with a green background indicate on-going bonuses

The players gain bonuses by placing cubes (taken from the common supply) on their Owner card throughout the game whenever they gain the owner icon as a bonus for an action. By placing the cube, the player will either gain an immediate bonus (light brown background) or an on-going benefit (green background). If the bonus provides victory points, these will be scored at the end of the game.

When placing a cube, a player can always place it in any available box in the bottom row, gaining the corresponding bonus. However, if the player has already placed cubes in both boxes paired together in the bottom row, they may instead place their cube in the box in the upper row directly above those two cubes, earning an end-game scoring bonus.

Example of how the bonuses on a symmetric Owner card work:

① *Paul earns an owner icon and places a cube on the black horse discount. He can now pay 1 coin fewer when placing Sporting horses with a coin cost.*

② *Paul triggers another owner icon and places a cube on the square next to his previous cube and immediately receives a one-time bonus of a Stud token and 2 coins.*

③ *After triggering a third owner icon, Paul can place a cube in the upper row (as both boxes below it are filled) to gain 4 VPs during end-game scoring. The cube could also be placed on any of the other immediate bonuses on the lower row, e.g. get 3 coins.*

③ ASSET CARDS

Asset cards are divided into 4 categories:

Ⓐ **Sporting horse cards**   Ⓑ **Working horse cards**   Ⓒ **Employee cards**   Ⓓ **Equipment cards**

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A Sporting horse cards

These cards are **GREY** on the reverse side. Sporting horses are represented by 3 types – racing , showjumping and dressage .

These icons are pictured on the backside of Sporting horse cards.

Price for placing →

Bonus for placing →

Mare or stallion →

Standardbred

← **End-game scoring**

← **Type of horse**

The layout of all other Asset cards follows this format.

B Working horse cards

These cards are **PURPLE** on the reverse side.

Working horses are represented by 3 types – carriage , draught and riding .

Gelderlander

C Employee cards

The cards are **GREEN** on the reverse side and are divided into two groups, each of which contains 2 job types. The first group includes managers and riders and the second has vets and stablehands .

One of the types of Employee cards are riders. When a player places one of these cards, they take a Rider roller from the supply and place it on the card in the white circle. This token can be placed on an appropriate horse before end-game scoring to score additional victory points.

D Equipment cards

These cards are divided into two groups and they are all **YELLOW** on the reverse side.

One group contains two types of transport equipment – horse boxes and carriages ;

the other contains three types of equipment – obstacles , arenas and racecourses .

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General setup

COMMON AREA SETUP

All of the cards that are used in the game have different icons on their backs.

These cards should be sorted into decks based on the back of the cards and then each deck should be shuffled to create 6 face-down decks ①.

The Stable cards with plain brown backs should also be shuffled and placed in a face-down deck next to the other cards ②.

All the Foal tokens, Stud tokens, cubes, Rider rollers and coins should be placed in a common supply that all players can reach ③.

Place the Player pair card for the correct player count on the table and put a cube on the first line ④.

PLAYER AREA SETUP

Each player receives 2 randomly chosen Stable cards: one from the deck with ③ on the back of the cards and the other from the deck ⑥ with on their backs. These 2 Stable cards should be placed in a player's area, one above the other, with space to the right to play Asset cards ①. Each player also receives one Owner card there ②. For the first game, it is recommended that all players take the Owner cards with symmetric powers. All players have the same starting resources – 3 coins and 1 Stud token ②.

Game play

When playing **EPONA** for the first time, it is recommended that players play a 5 round game. Thereafter, the standard game is played over 6 rounds. After the last round, end-game scoring will take place.

A round of play consists of the following 3 steps:
1. **DISTRIBUTION OF CARDS**
2. **PLACING CARDS**
3. **END OF ROUND**

1 DISTRIBUTION OF CARDS

Cards are distributed between players in 2 different ways according to the chosen variant. At the start of the game players decide whether they will play using the **LOWER INTERACTION** or the **HIGH INTERACTION** variant for the full duration of the game. *If any players have decided to keep 1 card in their hand from the previous round, they should lay it down in front of them and only put it back in their hand in phase 2.*

Ⓐ LOWER INTERACTION VARIANT (recommended for 2–4 player games):

In this variant, players start each round by choosing one of the **Selection cards** that are on display. These cards determine which types of cards a player draws into their hand and how many of those cards they can keep in hand for that round. In this variant, players are not affected greatly by the actions of their opponents.

Ⓑ HIGH INTERACTION VARIANT

This variant is based on the **"I split, you choose"** mechanism. In each round of the game, players will be divided into pairs where one player from each pair will draw the cards for that round and divide them into two groups. The other player in the pair will then pick which of the card groups they want to use for that round. The remaining card group will be used by the player who divided the cards. The player who divides the cards will have hard choices to make when deciding between what they would like to try to keep, and what they think the other player in the pair would like. If playing this variant with an odd number of players, there will be a different unpaired player each round that will instead select their own cards for that round.

The **SOLO GAME** is described at the end of this booklet.

Lower interaction variant

SET UP – (shown for 3 players)

In addition to the general set up, the 7 Selection cards should be shuffled (including randomising the fronts and backs) and a number of cards equal to the number of players plus one are displayed for all players to see.

A Lower interaction token pool should also be created with the same number of tokens as Selection cards displayed. If there is an even number of Selection cards displayed, then pairs of the same coloured Breeding tokens should be used. If there is an odd number of Selection cards, the Additional card token should be used as well.

High interaction variant

SETUP

In addition to the general set up, each player will randomly receive a Personal letter tile, labelled from A to F. Note that the letters used in a game will be dependent on the number of players so, for example, in a 4 player game only the letters A to D will be used. The letters E and F would then be returned to the box.

The Player pair card for the relevant number of players is placed in the middle of the table for all

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Some of the Selection cards have a cost to select that card (cost in red background in the top left corner). A player can only choose a card that they can pay for. However, if the only Selection cards available have a cost which the player cannot afford, they must choose the cheapest Selection card available and select their Asset cards as usual, then discard some cards from their selection for 2 coins per card until they can pay the designated cost.

In this variant, one of the Player pair cards (it does not matter which) can be used to track the rounds. A cube is placed on the first line for round 1 and moved down at the start of each round. (The player pairing information is not used in this variant.)

1) A-b c(5)
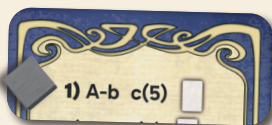
1 Bonus when choosing this card

2 Draw 2 additional cards from the top of any piles

3 Draw 2 cards from this deck

4 Amount of cards that the player may keep in their hand from the drawn cards
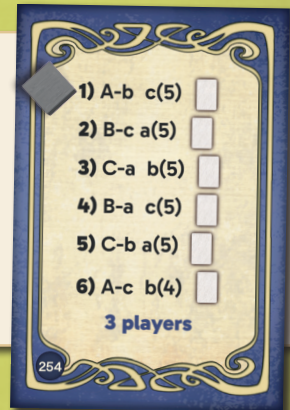
players to see and a cube is placed on the first line to designate the current round.

DISTRIBUTION OF CARDS

The main mechanism in this variant of the game is **"I split, you choose"**.

At the beginning of each of the 6 rounds, players are divided into pairs according to the Player pair card, as pictured here.

1) A-b c(5)
2) B-c a(5)
3) C-a b(5)
4) B-a c(5)
5) C-b a(5)
6) A-c b(4)
3 players
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Each player has a letter tile in front of them. The pairs for the round are determined by the Player pair card. For each designated pair of players for that round, the player with the Personal letter tile corresponding to the **CAPITAL** letter draws and divides the cards for the pair.

This player then draws 1 card from each of the **4 groups** of cards.

The player then takes 2 additional cards of their choosing, not selected from the same group (so, for example,

6) A-c b(4)
3 players

it is not possible to pick 2 green Employee cards as the 2 additional cards, even if they are from different green decks). In total, all players drawing cards will have 6 cards in their hands. Players should do this at the same time.

If there is a player who is not in a pair for this round, they draw the number of cards indicated on the Player pair card in brackets (usually 4 or 5, as pictured above). They choose cards from decks the same way as the other players and keep 3 of those cards in their hand.
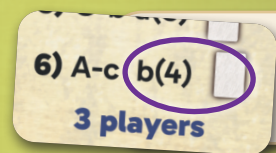
DISTRIBUTION OF CARDS

 The starting player is the player who most recently rode a horse. If no one has recently ridden a horse, choose the starting player randomly.

 Beginning with the starting player and then in clockwise order, each player chooses one of the Selection cards on display and takes the paired Lower interaction token. After choosing one of these cards, they draw cards into their hands from the indicated decks. They then have to decide which cards they want to keep. Players do this simultaneously.

DRAWING CARDS

 Each Selection card indicates which decks the player will draw cards from.

 If there is no indication of how many cards a player can take from an appropriate deck, only 1 card is drawn.

 Example: *Paul pays 1 coin to select this card. Then he draws 7 cards in total – 1 grey, 1 purple, 2 green and 2 yellow and then an additional 1 card from ANY Asset card deck of his choosing. After he looks at the cards, he must choose 3 of them to keep in his hand. The other 4 cards are placed in the discard pile.*

 If a player chooses a Selection card that has a [ ] token with it, that player can draw 1 extra card from **ANY** of the Asset card decks. If the card indicates, for example, that a player can take 2 green cards, they can be taken in any combination from either of the green Employee card decks.

 Example: *Susan, as player A, draws 1 grey (Sporting horse), 1 purple (Working horse), 1 yellow (Equipment card with horse boxes and horse-drawn carriages), and 1 green (Employee card from the deck with managers and riders). In addition, she draws 1 extra purple (Working horse) and 1 extra yellow (on this occasion, an Equipment card with obstacles, arenas and racecourses). In total, she now has 6 cards in her hand.*

ACTION PHASE

DIVIDING CARDS

 After drawing 6 cards into their hands, the player or players who drew the cards now get to look at them and decide how to divide them into 2 groups. There can be any number of cards in each group. For example, the drawn cards could be divided into 2 groups of 3 cards (the most usual) or 2 cards in one group and 4 in the other. The groups of cards are offered to their partner as determined by the Player pair card. The partner then selects their preferred group and takes the cards. The player who divided the cards takes the remaining group.

 Here is an example of how one player has decided to divide the cards they drew.

② PLACING CARDS

 This phase is played simultaneously. Players place gained cards in front of them in their playing area. Asset cards are placed into rows. At the start of each row there must be a Stable card.

 The Asset cards should be placed in such a position in the row so as to maximise their scoring potential, depending on how those particular cards score. The icons used on these cards and how they score are explained in the Player aids.

 In this phase it is also possible to gain new Stable cards and breed horses.

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STABLE CARDS:

5 Each Stable card determines the maximum number of Asset cards that can be placed in that row.

Each stable card determines the types of Asset cards that should be placed in that row to successfully complete it. It is possible that a single card could meet more than one requirement (e.g. one card could be both a Sporting horse and be a mare at the same time).

Some Stable cards have a **line bonus** (top right). If at least one card of the depicted type is included in the stable row then it will score the indicated VPs at the game end. This bonus can only be gained once per row. It can be gained irrespective of whether the stable requirement has been met or not.

End-game scoring **completion bonus** – this is gained when the number of cards requirement as well as the type requirement has been met in the stable row.

Immediate **completion bonus** – this is gained in the same case as the end-game completion bonus above but immediately.

HOW TO PLACE CARDS:

Once players have taken the correct number of cards into their hand, they place them simultaneously into their own tableau.

A Stable card must be at the start of a stable row for Asset cards to be placed to the right of it. However, Asset cards do not have to be placed directly next to one another when they are placed. They can be placed in any of the potential slots in a row. For example, if a Stable card has a 4 card requirement, there are 4 potential card slots next to it.

Not all of the cards that players have received have to be placed into their tableau. Players can keep at most 1 card from one round to the next and then add it to their tableau in future rounds. Cards can be discarded at any time for 2 coins.

Players should aim to place Asset cards in their tableau in such a way to maximise their scoring potential. Different cards score VPs in different ways; some require immediate adjacency, while others may score for cards in their row, column or the entire tableau. These scoring icons are described on the Player aids.

Correct placement of cards, with symbols like this, will allow you to maximise points at the end of the game.

Once a card has been placed, it cannot be moved. The only exception to this is that a player may swap the position of two cards for each "horse box" card they have in their tableau at game end. This will be explained in more detail later.

Some Asset cards have a cost that needs to be paid before they can be placed in a player's tableau. If a player cannot pay this cost the card cannot be placed. However, a player can discard a card from their hand at any time and gain 2 coins.

Example: 2🪙 *To place this card it is necessary to pay 2 coins to the common supply.*

Once a card has been placed, the player receives any immediate bonuses (in the area with the light coloured background) that that card provides. Then, the player checks to see if they have finished the stable row and whether it has been successfully completed or not.

Example: Paul pays three coins to place this card. Once he has placed it, he gains the immediate bonus; in this case, he draws 3 cards from the Sporting horse deck of cards and chooses 1 to keep. The remaining cards are discarded. He then checks to see if the stable row was finished/completed.

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NOTE: This type of bonus cannot be gained more than **ONCE** in a round. If a player triggers this bonus more than once in a round, they can choose to either take 1 coin or score 1 VP (the player can take a Stud token and flip it to the victory point side to mark this).

An example of receiving the owner icon bonus: In this case, the player gets to place a cube on their Owner card and gains any immediate bonuses from there and continues playing.

FINISHING A STABLE ROW:

When a player places the last card in a stable row (determined by the number of cards requirement on the Stable card), the stable row is finished. To mark this, a cube is placed on the Stable card.

If the stable requirements have not been fully met, then a cube is placed into the box with the **RED CROSS**.

If the stable requirement has been fully met, meaning both the number of cards AND the type of cards are included in the row, then the player puts a cube in the box with a **GREEN TICK**. The player then receives any immediate bonuses related to completing the stable (shown in the light brown field). Any victory points (in the dark brown field) will be scored at the end of the game.
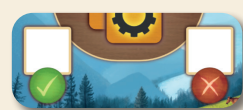
In this example, the player has played the final card into this stable row which is now finished (as it has 3 cards). The stable requirements have also been met as there is both a Working horse *and a female horse in the row. (It would be possible for both requirements to be met by a single card i.e. a female* Working horse *card.) The player places a cube on the box with a tick and gains the immediate bonus – a coin and an owner bonus. There is no end-game scoring bonus for having completed this stable. However, as there is a* vet *in the row the player will score an additional 2 VPs at the end of the game.*

GAINING AND PLACING STABLE CARDS

Each player can have at most 3 unfinished Stable cards. If a player ever has less than 3 unfinished Stable cards (which will always be the case during the first round), they may decide to gain an additional Stable card. When a player wishes to gain a new Stable card, they draw the top 3 Stable cards from the deck and then choose the one they want to keep. It can be placed above or below (but not between) their existing stables. The unselected Stable cards are discarded to the discard pile. Players can have at most 6 stables displayed in their player area, finished or unfinished.

NOTE: In the exceptional case where a player has finished 6 stable rows and still has cards in hand, those cards can be discarded for 2 coins each for end-game scoring.

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BREEDING

During the game, in both variants, there are different opportunities for players to gain additional victory points by breeding their horses to produce offspring. Players can either breed their own horses or they can breed horses from another player's stables.

In the **HIGH INTERACTION VARIANT**, only players who have been paired for that round can breed their horses together.

In the **LOWER INTERACTION VARIANT**, players can only breed horses if they selected the Lower interaction breeding token of the same colour as another player when choosing a Selection card at the beginning of the round. If these paired players breed their horses with each other this round, they both earn 1 bonus VP by taking a Stud token from the central supply, flipping it to the 1 VP side and adding it to their personal supply. This VP is gained in addition to the VPs for breeding as described in the below section and can only be earned **ONCE PER ROUND**.

1) A-b, C-d

In this case, Players A and b can breed their horses with one another. As can players C and d.

Breeding horses from 2 different player's stables: The players involved consider the horses in each others' tableau to see if there are any they would like to bring together to breed. A pair requires a male and a female horse. The player with the mare (the female horse) decides if they wish to breed their female with the other player's stallion (male horse). In order to form a breeding pair, the player with the mare must also have a Stud token. If the owner of the mare is willing to breed their mare with another player's stallion, the owner of the stallion is required to agree to the breeding. The Stud token is flipped over to its point side and is placed on the stallion that is has been bred with. The owner of the mare then takes a Foal token from the supply and places it on that mare. If the male and female horses are of the same type, the Foal token is flipped so that the pink foal side is visible and is worth 2 victory points during end-game scoring. If the two breeding horses are of different types, then the blue side of the Foal token is used; it is worth only 1 victory point.

Breeding horses in a single player's own stables: Breeding in this situation works in the same way as above with the only difference being that the Stud token is returned to the supply rather than being placed on the stallion. The mare and the stallion do not have to be in the same stable row. The Foal token is added to the female horse in the normal way with the appropriate side face up.

IMPORTANT: Male horses can have an unlimited number of Stud tokens on them (as they can be used to breed multiple times). On the other hand, each female horse can have at most 1 Foal token.

BREEDING HORSES IN A SINGLE PLAYER'S OWN STABLES: *In both of these cases, different types of horse are being bred together so the mare (female) will receive a Foal token turned to the blue side for 1 VP at game end. The Stud tokens are discarded to the common supply in both cases.*

BREEDING HORSES FROM 2 DIFFERENT PLAYERS' STABLES:

In this case, two different players are breeding horses of the same type together. The mare will receive a pink Foal token with 2 victory points on it and the stallion will receive the Stud token from the mare's owner.

IMPORTANT: The type of the horse is determined by the icon at the bottom right of the horse card, not by its name. They must match colour and symbol.

NOTE: If a card deck runs out, then cards of that type can be removed from the discard pile, be shuffled and then be placed face down to create a new deck of that type.

TURN TIMING:

- A player places a card in a stable row and gains all of the immediate bonuses indicated on it.
- Then, they check whether the number of cards requirement of the Stable card at the beginning of that row has been met. If it has, then the row is finished and the player checks to see if the type requirement has been met. A cube is then placed on the Stable card in the appropriate box and an immediate bonus is obtained only if the type requirement was met.
- After that, another card can be placed in the player's tableau.
- Instead of placing a card, the player can choose to gain a Stable card (if they have fewer than 3 un-finished stable rows). However, this cannot be done while a card is being placed or while gaining any bonuses.
- Instead of placing a card, the player can also decide to breed their horses. This cannot be done while a card is being placed or while gaining any bonuses.

③ END OF THE ROUND

Once all players have placed as many cards into their stable rows as they wish, the round ends. Players can keep at most 1 card in their hand from one round to the next. There is a reminder of this on the Owner cards.

In the **HIGH INTERACTION VARIANT**, a cube is used to mark the individual rounds so it is moved down to the next round number.

In the **LOWER INTERACTION VARIANT**, the Player pair card with a cube on it should be given to the next player in clockwise order and the cube should be moved to the next row on the card. All players return all Selection cards and Lower interaction tokens. Then, Selection cards and Low interaction tokens are shuffled and prepared for the next round.

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End-game scoring

The game ends after the 6th (5th) round has finished.

Just before final scoring takes place, players may move any Rider rollers they have to cards that require them to gain VPs.

Then, players who have horse boxes in their tableau may swap the position of two cards in their tableau for each horse box they have, if they wish.

If a card is being moved from an already completed stable, this does not change the fact that that stable has been completed and the cube placed on it at that point remains on it. By swapping cards it is not possible to fulfil a stable's requirement that was not met during the game.

SCORING:

Scores are recorded on the Scoring pad provided in the indicated order.

Stable cards

– players count any victory points for the stables where they fulfilled the stable requirement (i.e. it has a cube on the ticked box and gives VPs for its completion bonus).

Any line bonuses are included here as well. The right upper part of the stable card is scored if the condition has been met. It is gained irrespective of whether the stable requirement has been met or not. There is no penalty if the card is unfinished or uncompleted.

Owner cards

– players count the victory points on their Owner card where they have put a cube on an end-game scoring space.

Asset cards in the tableau

– players go through all their placed cards in order (from top left to bottom right) to count all victory points earned by them. Victory points from cards in unfinished stable rows are also included.

Foal and Stud tokens on cards

– players count all the victory points on the Foal and Stud tokens that have been placed on cards in their tableau.

Remaining tokens

– each player receives 1 victory point for every 3 coins and 1 victory point for every 2 Stud tokens they still have in their supply. They also add victory points from earned VP tokens received during the game, i.e. VPs gained during breeding in Lower interactive variant.

The winner is the player with the most VPs. In the case of a tie, the player who has the most cubes on their Owner card is the winner. If there is still a tie, the tied players share the victory.

Solo game

The solo game uses the rules as described above from the **LOWER INTERACTION VARIANT** with the following changes:

SETUP:

The player draws cards from the top of the Sporting horse deck and the Working horse deck until a stallion is revealed from each deck, then places these two stallions next to the play area.

GAME PLAY:

- 6 rounds are always played.
- The player shuffles all 7 Selection cards (again randomising their fronts and backs) and lays out 3 cards, setting the remaining cards aside for future rounds. They then choose 1 and place the other 2 in a separate discard pile, playing the round as usual using their selected card.
- In subsequent rounds, the player draws 3 cards from the Selection card deck. If there are fewer than 3 cards left (as there will be in round 3 and 5), use the remaining cards from the deck then shuffle the discard to fill in the 3 card offer. One card is then selected as usual for play.
- The player can breed their mares with their own stallions, or the 2 drawn stallions that were set aside during set up. In either case, the spent Stud token is returned to the supply.

The goal of the game is to gain as many victory points as possible. We consider **70 VPs** as a good result when getting started. A player who can earn **80 VPs** is an experience horse breeder, and **90 VPs** takes a professional. If you can achieve a score of **100 VPs** or more, you could breed a champion for the Grand National!

Experienced solo players can also use the other variants suggested below.

Game variants

FOR 2 PLAYERS: As a high interaction variant for 2 players we would suggest the following. The Player pair card for 2 players should be used as normal. In rounds 1, 2, 4 and 5, both player should draw 4 cards each (1 card from each of the 4 different groups of cards). Then, both players should divide the 4 cards they received into 2 pairs of 2 cards and offer them to the other player. In that way each player will choose one of the groups of 2 cards that were offered to them and will receive a group of 2 cards that the other player did not choose. Each player will have 4 cards in hand at this point. Each player then discards 1 card and thus will have 3 cards to pick from to play into their tableau.

⭐ **INSTEAD OF** 6 **:** In this variant, during set up all players are dealt 1 random Stable card marked with 3 and 1 random Stable card marked with ⭐. The Stable cards marked with 6 are not used. All other rules remain the same. This variant is played with 6 rounds.

ASYMMETRIC OWNERS: In this variant, players do not use the Owner cards with the yellow backgrounds but instead they use the coloured flip side of those cards.

FOR EXPERIENCED PLAYERS: When players consider themselves to be experienced **EPONA** players and are playing a 1-3 player game, each player can start the game by taking 2 asymmetrical Owner cards along with 2 stable cards with a 6 or a ⭐. Each player then selects an Owner card and a Stable card to use and discards the others.

NOTE ABOUT THE NAMES OF THE HORSES: We kept the name of the horses as they are called in their countries of origin. However, in some cases we had to translate the names into English as we did not think a lot of EU or US players could read Arabic or Cyrillic.

Scoring example:

The player with the most victory points is the winner. In the case of a tie, the player who has placed the most cubes on their Owner card wins. If players are still tied, they share the victory.

Scoring:

Before she scores, Susan will place 2 Rider rollers (1 from the Owner card and 1 from the *Rider card*) on any other cards where she could gain VPs for them.

Susan cannot move any of her cards as she does not have any *Horse box* cards.

Then she scores her stables according to the Scoring pad:

For the 1st and 2nd Stable cards, Susan gains **2 VPs** for each as she has an *Showjumping horse* in the 1st row and a Foal token in the 2nd. She does not gain any end-game scoring bonuses from either of them as there is none on the 1st card and she has not completed the second row.

She then scores **4 VPs** for her 3rd Stable card as it scores **2 VPs** for each pair of mare and stallion in her tableau (she has 2 pairs). For the 4th stable, she gains **3 VPs** for completing the stable and **2 VPs** for the *Arena* in this stable line.

Susan gains **13 VPs** in total for her Stable cards.

Owner card scoring:

Susan gains 1 VP for each completed stable, so in total **3 VPs**.

Asset card scoring:

1st row – there is an *Equipment obstacle card* below the first card which is a *Showjumping horse*, so Susan gains **2 VPs**. The second card (the stablehand) is in a mountain stable row so it scores **3 VPs**. There is one pair of *Carriage* and *Riding horse* in the pool so she gains **2 more VPs** from the *Draught horse* – the last card in the row.

2nd row – even though the Stable card is not finished, Susan still gains VPs from the cards in this row. For the first *Equipment card*, Susan gains **4 VPs** as there are 2 *Showjumping horses* in the column. The 2nd card scores **2 VPs** for itself as it is the only *Riding horse* in the column. The 3rd card gives her **2 VPs** for the 2 *Riding horses* in her tableau. The *Rider card* gives her no VPs.

3rd row – the 1st card awards no VP. She gains **4 VPs** from the *Manager card* as there are 4 *Working horses* around it. For the *Racecourse card*, Susan receives **2 VPs** for 1 pair of *Racecourse* and *Obstacle cards* in her whole tableau. The 4th card has a Rider roller on it, so it gains **3 VPs**.

4th line – Susan gains **2 VPs** for the Rider roller on the 1st card. The 2nd card does not get her any VP as it is not in a castle stable row. The 3rd card gives her **4 VPs** as she has an *Arena* and a *Racecourse* in her tableau.

She gains **30 VPs** in total for the Asset cards in her tableau.

Scoring of foals and VPs on stallions:

Susan gains **7 VPs** in total. (2+1+2 VPs for Foal tokens + 2 VPs for the Stud tokens on the stallion in the bottom row).

Scoring of remaining tokens:

3:1
2:1

She gains 1 VP for for her remaining 4 coins.

In total, Susan has scored **54 VPs**.