

Automobile





Dedicated to the memory of John Daniels,
who hopefully is gaming elsewhere now.

Automobile is about the early car industry, from around 1896 to 1930. During this period Henry Ford pioneered mass production techniques, while William Crapo Durant bought up car companies on the brink of collapse to form General Motors. Alfred P Sloan then took this disparate group of companies and made it into the largest business on the planet. Walter Chrysler, having mastered the complexities of the steam train, turned his attention to producing the most advanced cars of the period. Many of the modern features of the car, such as the starter motor, were invented and developed by Charles Kettering at Delco. Finally, we have one of the greatest car salesmen of the period, Charles Howard. All of these giants of the American car industry are central to this game. You must decide which of their talents you wish to use to further your own company's growth..


















As with the real automobile industry your aim in this game is to make the most money from building and selling cars. You start with \$2000 and have the option to take out a maximum of two loans

The game is played over four turns. Each turn will see players building factories and producing cars. Cars are grouped into three models, those for the middle-class market, those for the mass market, and those for the premium market. Demand varies within each of these markets during the length of the game. You will have some idea of the potential demand but not a complete picture. Thus you must be careful not to produce too many cars.

As the game progress so your losses will mount up, as represented by black cubes and discs. You can reduce your losses by closing factories and choosing certain characters. Not controlling the level of your losses is a quick way to lose the game. An extensive example of play is given at the end of the rules.

The game is for three to five players and should take around two to three hours to play.

Components

		
2 tokens per player	28 Car pieces per player	8 Distribution pieces per player
		
6 Factory pieces per player	5 Parts factory pieces	12 Closed Factory pieces
		
Approx. 40 R&D cubes*	Approx. 40 Loss cubes*	10 Loss discs
		
3 Bonus sales markers	4 Reduced Price markers	
		
1 Ford marker	1 Sloan marker	1 Chrysler marker
		
2 game markers	16 Demand tiles (4 x 2, 3, 4, 5)	
		
Paper money	1 cloth bag	

* Please note that there are only approximately forty each of the white and black cubes. Errors will occur in production. As long as you have a number of each type of cube that is close to forty then you will have sufficient to be able to play the game. If the number of cubes falls markedly short of forty then please email me and I will send replacements.

Starting the game

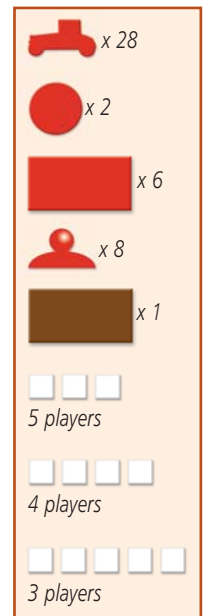
Each player selects a set of pieces, which will consist of twenty eight car pieces, eight distribution pieces, six factories, and two player tokens. Each player also takes one parts factory and a number of R&D cubes, depending on the number of players. If there are three players then each player starts with five R&D cubes, if there are four players then each player starts with four R&D cubes, and with five players each player starts with three R&D cubes.

Place all of the demand tiles in the cloth bag.

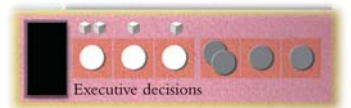
Place all of the loss cubes and discs, along with the remaining R&D cubes by the side of the board to form a stock.

Place any unused parts factories back in the box, they cannot be used in the game

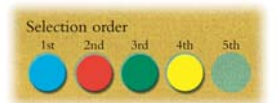
Sort the money into piles of the same value and place by the side of the board to form a bank. Give each player \$2000.



Place one closed factory piece on the space marked on the Executive Decisions display. Place the remaining closed factory pieces by the side of the board. Place one bonus sales marker on each space indicated on the Executive Decisions display. Place two reduced price markers on the first space indicated on the Executive Decisions display, then place one each on the two following spaces.



Randomly determine who the first player will be. The order of play at the beginning of the first turn will go clockwise from the first player. Mark the order of play by placing one player token for each player on the Selection Order track.



Place R&D cubes on the Character spaces as indicated, as well as placing the Ford, Sloan, and Chrysler markers.



The Board

Car model track

Made up of 26 car models. The least advanced model is the Duryea. The most advanced model is the Cadillac 452.

Turn track

Shows value of Loss points. Also indicates how many demand tiles are drawn.

Loan boxes

Turn sequence track

Sales boxes

Three price ranges, high, mid, and low. There are two boxes for the mid and low price ranges. A player will sell at the lower value if he reduces his prices.

Distribution display

You place distributors here, who will help you sell cars.



Production costs and capacities

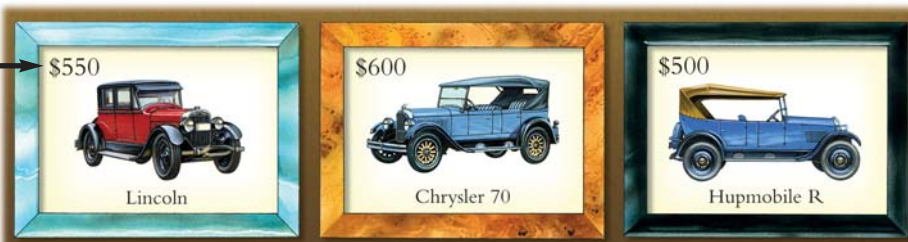
Character display

Selection order

Executive Decisions display

Car models

Cost per Factory



High price model, sells only at \$200 per car.

Mid price model, sells at either \$150 or \$100 per car.

Low price model, sells at either \$100 or \$70 per car.

Turn Sequence

The game is divided into four turns. In each turn you must complete the following phases:

1. Draw demand tiles
2. Select characters
3. Player actions – 3 rounds
4. Sell cars via Howard
5. Sell cars via distributors
6. Executive decisions
7. Sell cars via demand tiles
8. Losses
9. End of turn

Place one black marker on the first space of the Turn Sequence track. As you complete each phase move the marker on one space.



Phase one: Draw demand tiles

There are sixteen demand tiles, numbered from two to five. Each player will draw either one or two tiles, depending on the turn. You keep the values on the tiles that you draw secret from the other players. You know some of the potential demand for cars, but you do not have complete information.



In the first turn each player draws one tile. These tiles will determine the demand for mid-priced cars.

In the second turn each player draws two tiles. The higher value tile will be used to determine demand for mid-priced cars, the lower value tile will be used to determine demand for low-priced cars.

In the third and fourth turns each player draws two tiles. The higher value tile will be used to determine demand for low-priced cars, the lower value tile will be used to determine demand for mid-priced cars.

The turn track reminds you about how many demand tiles should be drawn by each player, and which type of car receives the higher value tile.



Players themselves never draw a third demand tile for high-priced cars. During the third and fourth turns one tile will be drawn to determine demand, at the point where players reveal their demand tiles. Also note that during the fourth turn an extra single demand tile is drawn and added to demand for low-priced cars.

Phase two: Select characters

There are six characters in Automobile, each of whom had an important role in the development of the industry. Each character confers a special ability on the player who selects him. The order of the characters is also important, as it determines the order of play.

The order in which each player can select a character is shown on the Selection track. Going from left to right on that track each player should take his player token and place it in a Character box.



Each character can only be selected by one player in a turn.

Three characters have tokens on them, Ford, Sloan, and Chrysler. If you select one of these characters then you take the token. The tokens on Sloan and Chrysler help to remind you to discard loss cubes. The one on Ford is used to remind you to use his special ability.

Each character is also marked with zero to three white squares, which indicates how many R&D cubes a player takes when he selects this character. These cubes should already be placed on the spaces and are taken immediately by a player when he selects that character.

Ford – Henry Ford is the most famous car manufacturer in history and is renowned for



his development of mass production techniques. If you have selected this character then you may build one factory, or parts factory, in a location that you already have one or more factories in. You may do this when it is your turn to perform an action. You complete this special action in addition to your normal action, either before or afterwards. Place the Ford marker back on the Character box to show that you have used the ability.

Kettering – Charles Kettering was one of the foremost innovators of the time, working in the laboratories of Delco. When you select this character you take three R&D cubes from the stock, as indicated in the character box.



Sloan – Alfred P Sloan organised the disparate companies that were part of General Motors into an efficient corporation. Sloan effectively wrote the book on management theory. If you have selected this character then during the Losses phase, after loss points have been allocated but before players have to pay for them, you discard half, rounded up, of the points you have.



Howard – Charles Howard was the most successful car salesman of the period, (and the owner of famous race horse Seabiscuit). At one point in time he was responsible for selling one out of every eight cars sold in California, which explains his great wealth. During the Sell Cars phase you must sell two of your cars to this box. You will get the highest price for doing so.



Durant – Billy Durant was a financial genius who pulled together the companies that formed General Motors. He was able to buy companies such as Cadillac and Oldsmobile at the point when they were short of capital for growth. He made and lost fortunes repeatedly, being a major speculator on the US Stock Exchange. He eventually lost everything in the Wall Street Crash. If you select this character you must immediately build one factory in a unoccupied model space. You must still expend R&D cubes if you wish to build in a space ahead of the most advanced factory. You can use the R&D cube that you take when you select this character to do so. You must still pay to build the factory.



Chrysler – Walter Chrysler was an excellent manager and innovator, an all-round talent. He worked his way up from the bottom, starting in the railroad business. If you select this character then you take two R&D cubes. During the loss phase you discard a number of loss points equal to the present turn number, e.g. in the third turn you would discard three loss points.



This phase ends when all players have selected a character. The order of play is determined by the characters selected, going from left to right.



EXAMPLE: Here the order of play would be green – red – blue – yellow.

Phase three: Player actions

The Player Action phase consists of three rounds.

In a single round each player must perform one action. The order of play is determined by the characters selected in the previous phase, going from left to right on the Character display.

When it is your turn to perform an action you must choose from the following:

Build factory

Place distributors

Take two R&D cubes

Produce cars

Close down factory

You can choose to perform the same action in different rounds.

ACTION Build factory

You may build one or two factories in one car model space. This may be an empty model space or one already containing your factories.

The cost to build one factory piece is shown in the model space. There may also be a cost in R&D cubes.

Car model spaces generally have to be built in order, going clockwise around the board. The top left model, marked Duryea, is the first space that can be built in. Once a space is built in the next model space along becomes available to be built in, which in the case of the Duryea would be the Oldsmobile Dash. However, it is possible to skip model spaces.

To build in a model space that is one box further on from the most advanced occupied space, (that is, a space with one or more factories in), costs one R&D cube, in addition to the financial cost of building each factory. If you wish to skip one space and build further ahead of the most advanced space then you would have to pay three R&D cubes in all. If you wished to skip two spaces then you would need to pay six R&D cubes. This R&D cube cost is paid to allow you to build in a model space, it is not the cost per factory built.



EXAMPLE: Blue has already built one factory as he selected the Durant character. Green chooses to skip a space and build the Franklin A. He decides to build two factories, which costs him \$600 and three R&D cubes.



The R&D cost for skipping spaces is an arithmetic progression, as shown above. You pay the cube cost for the space plus each preceding one. Thus at the start of the game it would cost one R&D cube to build in the Duryea space, three cubes to build the Oldsmobile space, and six cubes to build in the Franklin space. There is no upper limit to the number of spaces that you can skip.

If a model space has been skipped over then it can still be built in. There is no R&D cost for doing so.

A model space can only have factories belonging to one player built in it.

A model space can have a maximum of three factories and one parts factory built in it.

You cannot build in a model space containing a Closed factory piece.

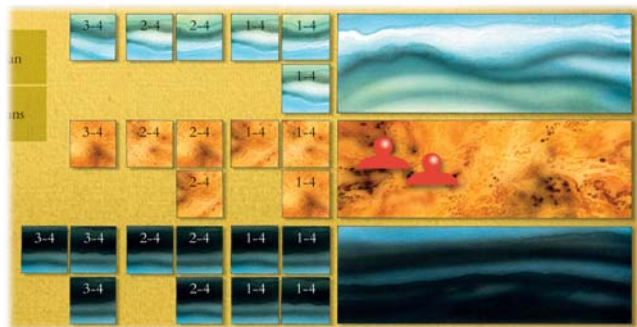
Parts Factory Each player has one parts factory.

You can build a parts factory instead of a factory. A

parts factory costs \$500 to build, irrelevant of the cost of the model space you are building it in. A parts factory will reduce the cost to produce cars of that model. As you only have one such factory you can only ever have one on the board at any one time. If you close down a parts factory it goes back into your stock of pieces, and can be rebuilt during a subsequent action.

ACTION Place distributors

You can increase your sales potential by establishing a national distribution network. As a single action you can place up to three of your distribution pieces on the Distribution display. This is divided into three large boxes, corresponding with the three price ranges for cars. You place your pieces within one of the large boxes. You can place them in the same or different boxes. There is no upper limit to the number of distribution pieces that can be placed in a large box. A box can contain pieces belonging to different players. The number of pieces you have, eight, is an upper limit to the number you can place.



It always makes sense to place distributors in the mid-priced box initially, as when you use them later they can move up or down one level. It also pays not to place too many as each distributor who does not sell a car will be removed from the display and will gain the owner one loss point.

Note that in the first two turns the only market for high priced cars is on this display. Similarly, the only demand for low-priced cars in the first turn is on this display.

ACTION Take two R&D cubes

This action is fairly self-explanatory. Take two R&D cubes from the stock. There is no upper limit to the number you can hold, although the stock itself is a limit on the total number that can be taken.

ACTION Produce cars

If you select this action then you can produce cars in every location that you have factories in.

The number of cars that you can produce in a model space depends on the number of factories you have in that space.

The Production table tells you the minimum and maximum number of cars that can be produced, depending on the number of factories in the space. Note that the range varies depending on the price of the car.

	\$100	\$70	\$50
Production	1-2	1-3	1-4
	3-4	4-7	5-9
	5-6	8-11	10-14
			-\$20

If you do produce cars in a space then you must build at least the minimum stated on the Production table. You cannot build more than the maximum allowed, as shown on the table.

You can choose not to produce cars in a car model space.

The cost to produce one car is shown on the Production Costs table.

	\$100	\$70	\$50
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This is the cost per car produced in a space. If you have a parts factory in a space then the cost per car is reduced by \$20, e.g. it would cost \$30 to produce one low-priced car instead of \$50.

The cars produced by each factory should be placed in the same space.



EXAMPLE: Blue has produced the maximum of three cars while green has opted to produce the minimum, which is four for two factories.

You need to think carefully about how many cars you produce as any unsold ones will gain you loss points, as well as losing you the money you spent on them, (unsold cars are also removed from the track). The minimum and maximum production restrictions only affect the number of cars that can be built in an action round. They are not a limit on the total number of cars that can be built during the entire turn on a particular space.

ACTION Close down factory

As an action you can close down all of your factories in one car model space. When you do this you discard half the number of loss points you have, rounding up. For each factory, (including a parts factory), that you remove from the space you take an amount of money equal to the cost of building it less \$100. When you close down a factory you place a closed factory piece in the location. This stops anybody else building there and will count as a factory when calculating losses. Your factory pieces go back into your stock.

If a parts factory is in the location then you will receive \$400 for closing it down.

The number of closed factory pieces in the game does not limit the number of times this action can be taken. If all twelve are on the board and more are required then take closed factory pieces from the earliest points on the track, their removal should not impact on the game.



EXAMPLE: Green decides to close down the factories in the Franklin space. Both must be closed down. One closed factory piece is placed in the space. Green receives \$400 from the bank. Note that the blue factory will still receive loss cubes as if the green factory were still open.

Loans

You may find yourself in a situation where you need additional cash. You can take up to two loans during the game, at any point where you need the cash. You mark how many loans you have taken by placing one of your tokens in one of the two Loan boxes. For each loan that you take out you receive \$500 in cash from the bank. During the Losses phase you must pay \$50 interest on each loan. You cannot pay back any loans until the end of the game. At the end of the game you must pay off all loans you have at \$600 per loan, (banks were not very nice then, as if they are any better now!).

1 loan

2 loans

Phase four: Sell cars via Howard

The player who selected the Howard character must now sell two of his cars to the Howard box. They can be from different spaces. The seller sells at the higher price if the car is mid-priced or low-priced, i.e. either at \$150 for a mid-priced car or \$100 for a low-priced car. The seller takes the money immediately. The cars should then be returned to his stock.

Phase five: Sell cars via distributors

Going in player order each player has the opportunity to sell one car through one of their distribution pieces. You then repeat this procedure until all players have sold as many cars as they can through their distributors.

All of your distribution pieces should start this phase in the three large boxes to the right. When it comes to your turn to sell a car you can move one of your pieces to one of the tracks to the left. The piece must be moved to an empty space. The three tracks correspond with the three price ranges for cars. The track you move to allows you to sell one car of that price range. A distributor in the high price box can be moved over to the high priced row or down to the mid priced row. A distributor in the mid priced box can be moved over to any of the three rows. A distributor in the low priced box can be moved to the mid or low priced rows. When you move a piece to a space you take one of your cars from a space that matches the price and place it in one of the corresponding sales boxes. You always sell for the highest price within that price range. Repeat this process until all players have used all of their pieces. You cannot choose not to sell if you have the potential to.

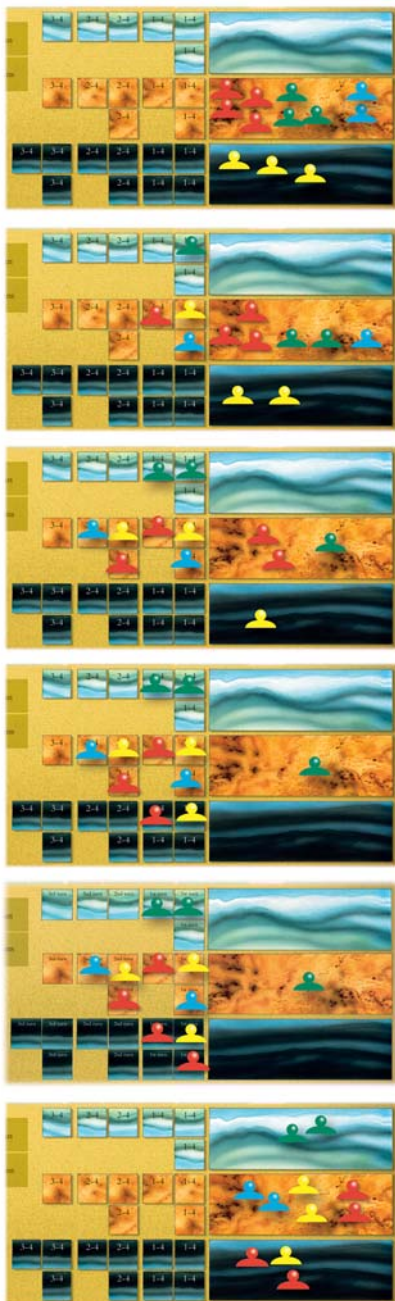
The number of potential sales increases as the game progresses. In the first turn only boxes marked '1-4' can be sold to. In the second turn only boxes marked '1-4' or '2-4' can be sold to. From the third turn onwards all boxes can be sold to.

Players now collect money for the cars they have sold. The cars should now be removed from the sales boxes. The distribution pieces should be moved to the large box to their immediate right, i.e. all pieces in the low priced row are moved to the low priced box.

If a player cannot use all of his distribution pieces then he removes those that are unused and returns them to his own stock. He also takes one loss point for each piece removed.

EXAMPLE: Yellow is the first player and has the option to sell mid or low priced cars. He decides to sell a mid-priced car. Red and blue do the same and green sells a high priced car. Note that yellow could not use any of his distributors to sell high priced cars, as that would mean moving up two 'levels' rather than one.

Play proceeds with each player using one distributor at a time. As it is the second turn only six mid-priced cars can be sold. Yellow and red both have low-priced cars so can sell those at the end. Green is left with one unused distributor, which means he takes one loss cube and removes the distributor. The remaining distributors are then moved to the right, as shown. Yellow earns \$400, red earns \$500 blue earns \$300, and green earns \$400.



Phase six: Executive decisions

It's best to think of this as a pause in the selling process, one that allows players to increase the sales potential of their cars. It may also result in the order of play changing for next turn.

In player order each player has the opportunity to make one executive decision. This procedure is then repeated until all players have passed. The executive decisions that a player can choose are:

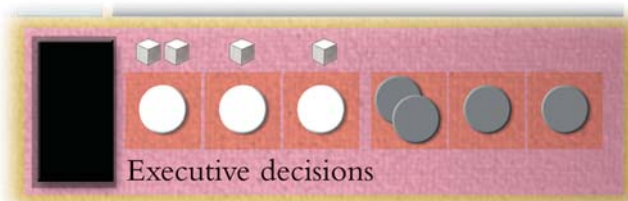
Close one factory

Buy one bonus sales marker

Take two/one reduced price markers

Pass

Only one player can select the Close Factory action. The action works in exactly the same way as the action described in Player Actions. If a player selects this action he takes the closed factory marker from the space indicated and uses this to mark the model space in which he closed his factories. This also indicates that no one else can select this action this turn.



There are three bonus sales markers available to be purchased. The first marker costs two R&D cubes, the remaining two markers cost one R&D cube each. As an executive decision a player can buy one such marker. The first player to buy a marker must buy the one that costs two R&D cubes. When you buy a bonus sales marker you place it immediately on one of your model spaces. You can only have a maximum of one bonus sales marker in a space.

There is one stack of two reduced price markers and two individual markers. As an executive decision you can take either the stack of two markers or one of the individual markers, and then place them/it on one of your model spaces. If you take the set of two markers you must place them in the same space. Once you have placed reduced price markers in a location you cannot place any more such markers there this turn. It is possible for a space to contain both reduced price markers and a bonus sales marker. You cannot place reduced price markers in a high price model space.

If you do not choose one of the above executive decisions then you must pass. You move your token from the Character box it is in to an empty space on the Selection Order track. You place it on the first empty space from the left. As tokens are removed to this track the order of character selection is determined for the following turn.

Bonus sales and reduced price markers will increase the number of cars you sell in each round of selling, although they still do not guarantee you selling everything.

Phase seven: Sell via demand tiles

Players now reveal their demand tile/s. In the first turn players will only have one demand tile each. These tiles should be placed in the mid-priced Sales box. In the second turn each player will have two tiles. Of the two tiles that a player has the one with the higher value should be placed in the mid-priced Sales box. The lower value tile should be placed in the low-priced Sales box. In the third and fourth turns the higher value tile should be placed in the low-priced boxes and the lower value tile should be placed in the mid-priced boxes. In the third and fourth turns one tile should be drawn from the bag and placed in

the high-priced Sales box. In the fourth turn one tile should also be drawn from the bag and placed in the low-priced boxes.

These tiles dictate the total number of cars that can be sold in each price range. There are two sub-boxes for mid and low priced cars, as it is possible for players to reduce their selling prices. The two sub-boxes within a price range still constitute one price range for the purpose of demand.



EXAMPLE: In the second turn the higher of each pair of tiles is for mid-priced demand, while the lower value one is assigned to the low-priced demand. Total demand for mid-priced cars is sixteen cars, total demand for low-priced cars is eleven cars.

The order of selling cars is determined by the position of the cars on the model space track. Cars are sold from the most advanced space, going backwards to the least advanced space. One car is sold from each space. This process is repeated until the demand for each price range is met. Any unsold cars will result in their owners taking a loss point. They are then removed and returned to their owning players.

Each single bonus sales and reduced price marker allows you to sell one extra car in each round of selling. If the space contains one or two reduced price markers then all cars in that space must be sold at the lower price, which is \$100 for mid-priced cars and \$70 for low priced cars. You then go to the next occupied space, going backwards, and the owner of that location must now sell one or more cars, depending on bonus sale and reduced price markers. Note that a location could potentially have a combination of bonus sales and reduced price markers in it.



EXAMPLE: The order of selling would go yellow-red-green-blue. Each space would sell one car, except for red, who would sell two cars during each 'pass through'.

You repeat this procedure until players have sold as many cars as they can, which depends on the amount of demand for each price range. Players then take cash for each car they have sold, depending on which Sales box it is in.

Players also take one loss point for each car they have not sold.

Players now retrieve all of their cars from the board. All bonus sales and reduced price markers are removed from the board.

Phase eight: Losses

The emerging car companies became some of the largest industries of the time. Managers were not used to running such massive organisations, which led to inefficiencies, represented by loss points in this game.

You now check to see which locations receive loss points. You go backwards from the most advanced car model space in a particular price range. The first occupied space receives no loss points, the next occupied space receives one loss point, the next one two loss points, and so on. A space with a closed factory piece in it will affect the number of loss points given to spaces further back, i.e. it counts as an occupied space even though it does not directly receive loss points.



EXAMPLE: Yellow would take no loss points, neither would red. Green would take one loss point and blue would take two loss points.

Loss points are represented by cubes and discs. Each cube is worth one loss point, each disc is worth five loss points.

If you select Sloan then after taking any loss points you discard half, rounded up. e.g. if you had nine loss points you would discard five of them, leaving you with four.

If you selected Chrysler then after taking any loss points you discard a number of them equal to the present turn number.

You must now pay an amount between \$10 and \$40 per loss point you hold, depending on the turn. The exact amount is shown above the present turn box. You retain these points. You can only get rid of them by selecting Sloan or Chrysler, or by closing down a location.

\$10	\$20	\$30	\$40
1st turn	2nd turn	3rd turn	4th turn

If you have one or more loans then you must pay \$50 per loan you have taken out.

Phase nine: End of turn

Remove all demand tiles from the board and place them back in the bag. Make sure all cars have been returned to their owning players.

Make sure the Ford, Sloan, and Chrysler tokens are placed in their respective Character boxes.

Make sure the Executive Decision display is restocked as necessary, as shown during the set-up of the game. Also restock the Character display with R&D cubes. Unclaimed R&D cubes do not carry over between turns.

Move the turn marker forward one space.

You are now ready to start a new turn.

The game will end after four turns have been completed. If it is the fourth turn then you can skip this phase and go on to determine final positions.

Winning the Game

At the end of the game players receive the full cash value of each factory they have on the board. The value of a factory piece is the amount it cost to place in its location. Note that players also receive the cash value of a parts factory, \$500.

Players add this cash to the amount they already hold.

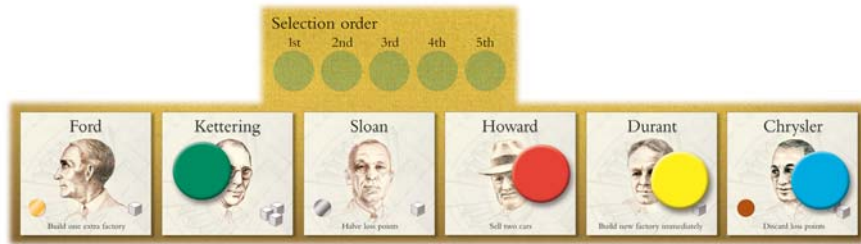
Players must now repay any loans, at a cost of \$600.

The player with the most cash left is the winner. In the case of a tie the player earliest in the order of play wins.

Example of Play

The first two turns of a game are covered here. It is a four player game.

In the first turn the initial order of play is red-yellow-green-blue. In that order players then select characters. Red selects Howard and will be able to sell two cars automatically later in the turn. Green takes three R&D cubes. Yellow takes one R&D cube and immediately builds one factory. Blue takes two R&D cubes and also takes Chrysler's special token. Later in the turn the blue player will be able to discard one loss point. The order of play for player actions will now go green-red-yellow-blue.



First turn, first action round: Yellow has already built in the Duryea model space using the Durant character action. Green builds one factory in the Oldsmobile model space. This costs \$250 and one R&D cube. Red decides to take two R&D cubes. Yellow builds one factory in the Maxwell model space, for a cost of \$350 and three R&D cubes. Blue pays \$300 and one R&D cube to build one factory in the Sears Autobuggy space.



Second action round: Green builds two factories in the Thomas Flyer space, at a cost of \$800 and one R&D cube. Red pays \$400 and three R&D cubes to build one factory in the National space. Yellow and blue both choose to place three distributors on the Distribution display.

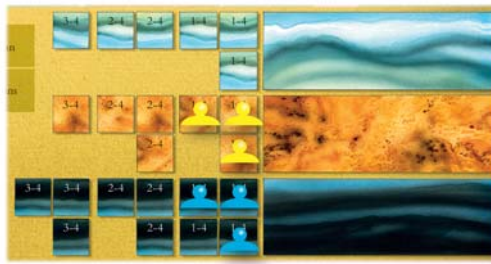


Third action round: Green produces ten cars in all, at a cost of \$700. Red produces two cars at a cost of \$200. Yellow produces six cars at a cost of \$420 and blue produces three cars at a cost of \$150.

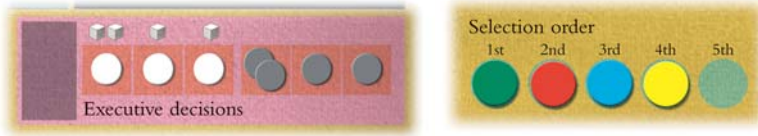
Sell via Howard: Red must sell both of his cars via Howard. Each car sells at \$200. Red takes \$400 from the bank.



Sell via Distributors: Yellow and blue are not competing with each other and so automatically sell three cars each via their distributors. Yellow sells his cars at \$150 each, making \$450. Blue sells his cars at \$100 each, making \$300.



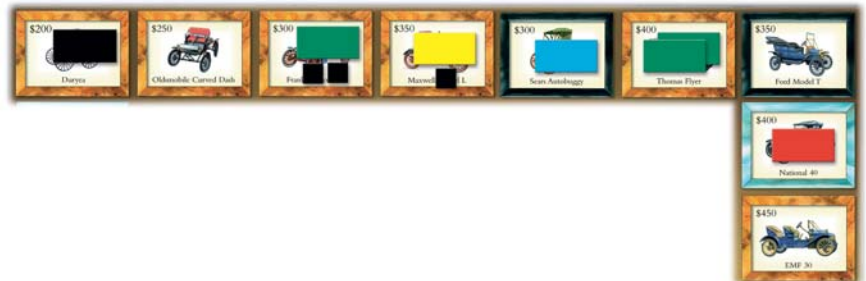
Executive Decisions: Green and red decide against taking an Executive decision and so move their tokens to the Selection Order display. Yellow decides to close a factory down. He takes his factory from the Duryea space and replaces it with the black closed factory piece. He takes \$100 from the bank. Blue passes. Yellow then passes. Selection order for next turn is now determined.



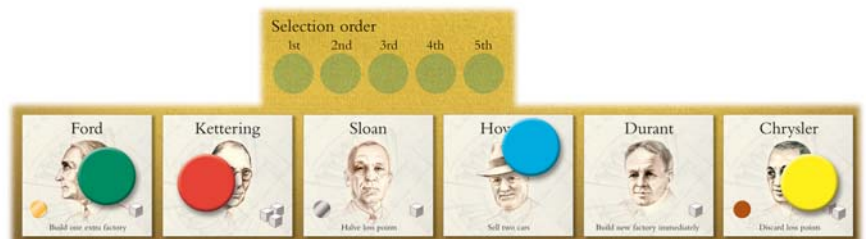
Sell via demand tiles: Players reveal their Demand tiles. Only green and yellow have any cars to sell. Selling will start with the Thomas Flyer and work backwards, with one car from each space being sold. Each car will be sold for \$150. There are thirteen cars in all and only demand for twelve. One car will be left unsold on the Thomas Flyer space. Green will take one loss point for this. Yellow sells all three of his cars, taking \$450 from the bank. Green sells nine of his cars, taking \$1350.



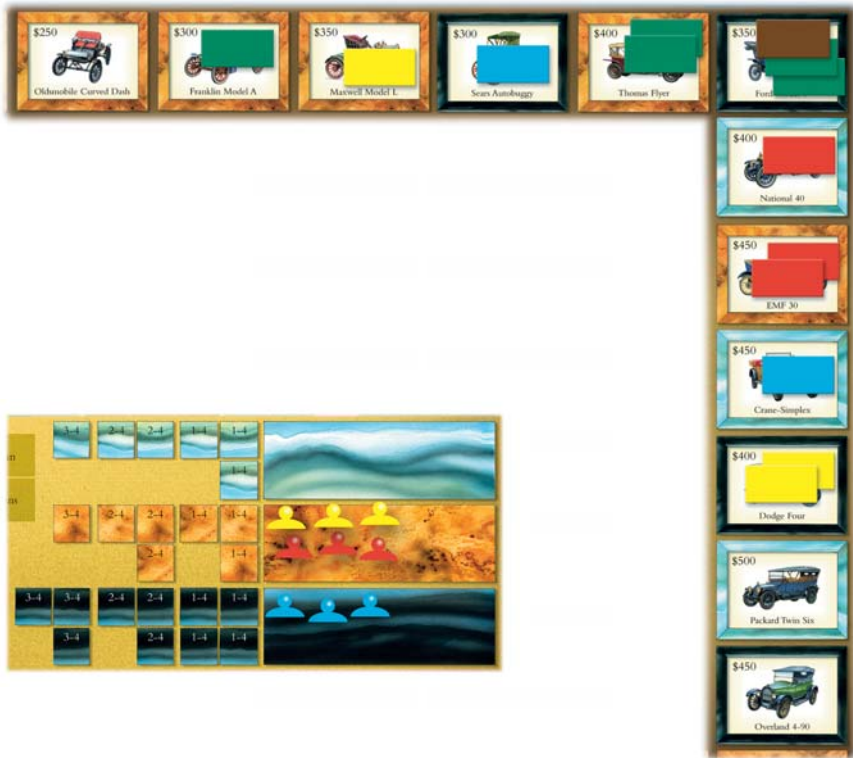
Losses: Loss cubes will be allocated as shown. Red and blue avoid taking any loss points. Yellow has taken one loss point and so pays \$10. Green has two from factories, plus the one taken for the unsold car, making three in all. Green pays \$30 to the bank.



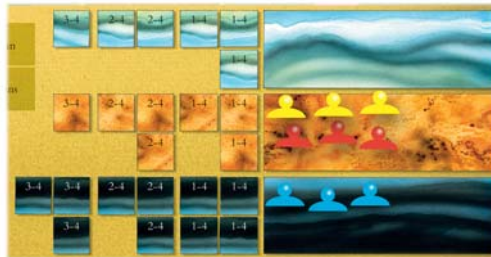
Second turn: Green selects Fords, red selects Kettering, blue selects Howard, and yellow selects Chrysler.



First action round. Green builds two factories and a parts factory in the Ford Model T space. The extra factory build is allowed as Green selected the Ford character. Costs \$1200 and no R&D cubes. Red builds two factories in the EMF space. Blue builds one factory in the Crane Simplex space. Yellow builds two factories in the Dodge space.



Second action round. Green produces cars, five on the Ford space, seven on the Thomas Flyer space, and three on the Franklin space. The Model Ts are reduced in cost due to the parts factory, to \$30 per car. Greens's total expenditure is \$850. This is more money than green has and he has to take a loan for \$500. Red places three distributors. Blue builds one factory in the Overland space. Yellow takes two R&D cubes.



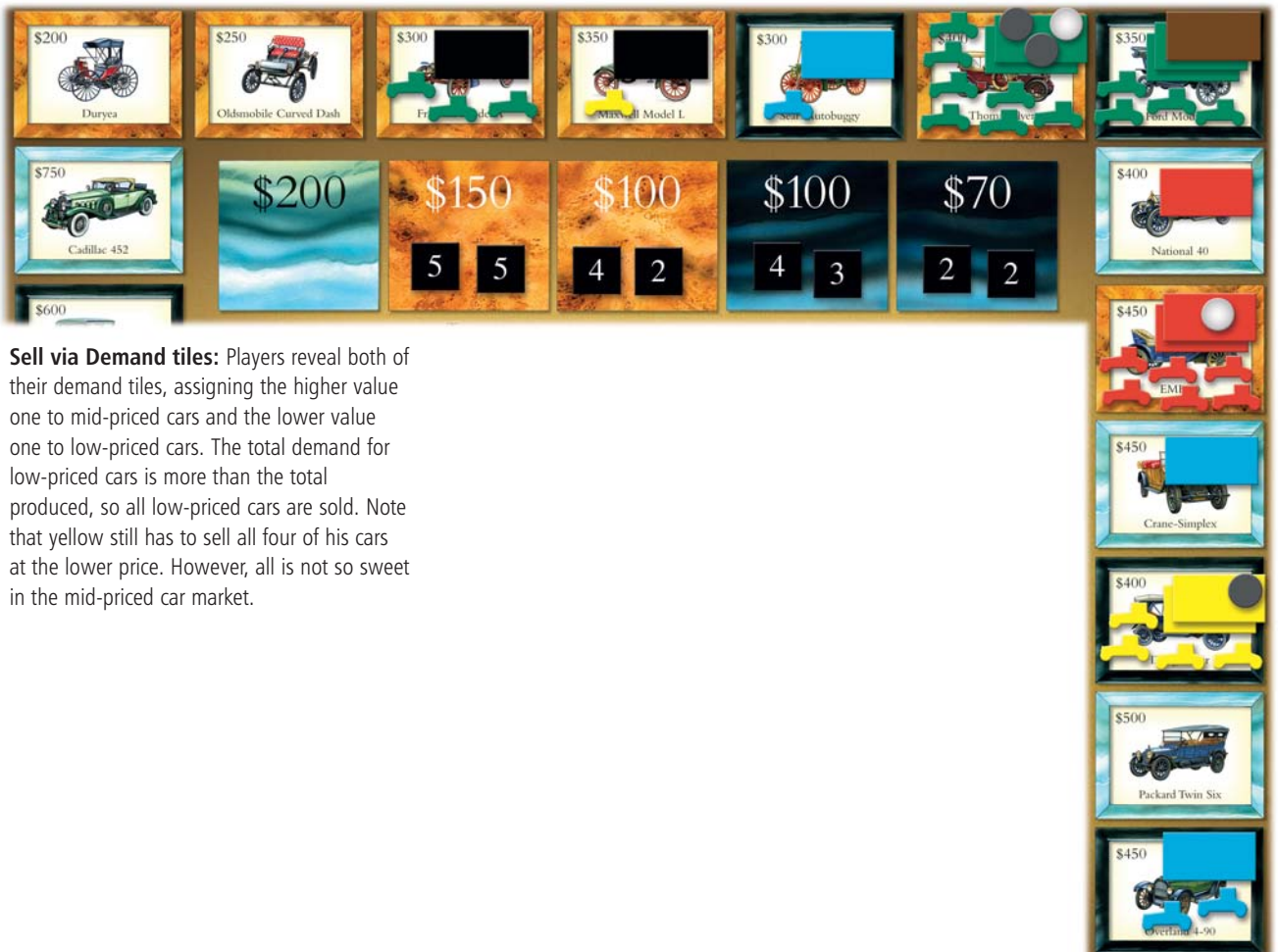
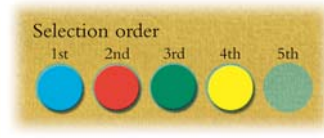
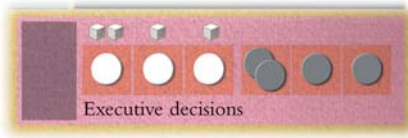
Third action round: Green closes down the Franklin factory and takes \$200 from the bank. He also discards two of his three Loss points. All the remaining players produce cars, as shown.

Sell via Howard: Blue sells his two Crane Simplexes, gaining \$400 in the process.

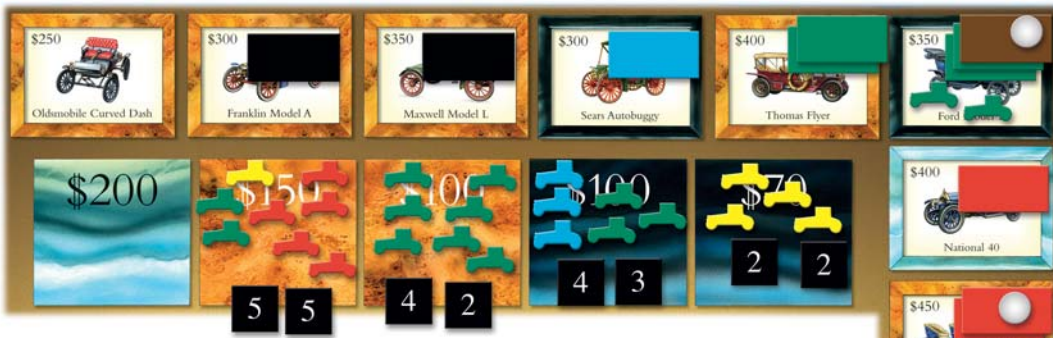
Sell via Distributors: Players sell cars as above. Yellow chose to sell a low price car with his last distributor. Red earns \$550, blue earns \$300, and yellow earns \$400. Note that blue could not have used his distributors to sell high priced cars as they can only go up or down one 'level', which is why blue chose to sell his high priced cars via Howard.



Executive decisions: Green pays two R&D cubes to buy the first bonus sales token. He places it on the Thomas Flyer space. Red buys the second one for one R&D cube and places it on the EMF space. Blue passes. Yellow closes down the Maxwell factory, discarding one loss point and gaining \$250 for doing so. Green then takes the two reduced price markers and places them on the Thomas Flyer space. Red passes. Yellow also decides to drop his prices and takes one reduced price marker and places it on the Dodge Four space. Green and yellow then pass.



Sell via Demand tiles: Players reveal both of their demand tiles, assigning the higher value one to mid-priced cars and the lower value one to low-priced cars. The total demand for low-priced cars is more than the total produced, so all low-priced cars are sold. Note that yellow still has to sell all four of his cars at the lower price. However, all is not so sweet in the mid-priced car market.



In the first round of selling red will sell two EMFs due to the presence of one bonus sales marker. Green will sell four Thomas Flyers, the additional three due to the presence of one bonus sales marker and two reduced price markers. Yellow will sell his final Maxwell, then green one Franklin. In the second round of selling red will sell another two EMFs, green his remaining three Flyers, then his remaining Franklin. Red can only then sell one more EMF before the total number of cars sold matches the demand of sixteen. Green's Flyers will all have sold at \$100. Red must take one loss point.



Loss points: Losses are assigned as shown. Green takes three loss points, which add to the one cube already held, making four loss points, which costs him \$80. Yellow has one loss point but discards this as he selected the Chrysler character, (he could've discarded two points but only had one in hand). Red takes one point, which adds to the one he received for the unsold car, making two loss points and requiring a payment of \$40. Blue takes three loss points and pays out \$60. Note that if a player had a factory in the Oldsmobile space he would have had to take an additional four loss points.



Designer Notes

I'm not sure to what degree serendipity is cited as a major contributor to any game design but it would have to get a major credit with this one. To expand; I find that second-hand bookshops are a great place to search for new themes. By a series of events too complicated to recount I found myself in a bookshop in Sedburgh that had a lovely illustrated book on aeroplanes. That set me thinking about doing a game loaded with images of old aeroplanes. Having done that design, which may be produced some day, I then settled on cars as the next logical theme to handle in this manner. Fortunately this was just before a trip to Hay-on-Wye, which is the second-hand book capital of Britain, if not the world. Even the garage had books on sale, one of which had exactly the kind of illustrations I was looking for. I thought I would have to get Peter Dennis to re-do these for the final game but a quick Google search told me that the original artist was alive, still working, and lived about twenty minutes from my partner's parents' house in Cornwall. Mike Atkinson, the artist in question, kindly offered to reproduce the original car images for me, as well as extra art for the box cover.

Even the final production was improved by error. I thought I had ordered twenty four demand tiles for each game but then found that I had only asked for sixteen. For some reason this actually makes the game work better than the original version, so a narrow escape there!

I'm also pleased at the way that the design has come together. Just having an interesting theme is no guarantee of a good design. It's surprisingly hard to find good books on the history of the car industry. You will see many with pretty pictures in but few that discuss the actual history. The particular setting for Automobile, in America, was selected due to the relative wealth of texts that covered the lives of the main figures, such as Ford and Chrysler. From the very first play test I could sense that the game had potential. That's pure chance. I've designed hundreds of games and the vast majority require a lot of work to turn them into something that's mildly enjoyable. Automobile was pretty much developed in one long weekend at a games convention, Baycon to be specific.

As I have stated in other Treefrog games, I'm not going to bore you with tips or strategies. The game is all about making money, you either have the talent to do that or you're a teacher.

Martin Wallace

Credits

Game designed by Martin Wallace

Car illustrations and cover by Mike Atkinson, supplementary illustrations by Peter Dennis

Graphic design by Solid Colour

Playtested by a huge number of people, including Simon Bracegirdle, Andy Ogden, Richard Spilsbury, Geoff Brown, Don Oddy, Stewart Pilling, Jerry Elsmore, James Hamilton, Martin Hair, Chris Boote, Richard Dewsbury, Tony Simons, Chris Dearlove, Philip Honeybone and lots of people at Baycon, Sorcon, Leiria Con, and Stabcon.

Thanks to Mary and Ravindra Prasad, Henning Kröpke, Mik Svellöv, Pete Card, and Larry Levy.

Special thanks to Julia Bryan.

You can check out the latest Warfrog games at: www.warfroggames.com

You can contact Warfrog at: martin@warfroggames.com

The rules to 'Automobile' are © Martin Wallace 2008.

Car and cover illustrations © Mike Atkinson 2008.



Player Aid

Turn Sequence

1. Draw demand tiles
2. Select characters
3. Player actions – 3 rounds
4. Sell cars via Howard
5. Sell cars via distributors
6. Executive decisions
7. Sell cars via demand tiles
8. Losses
9. End of turn

Player Actions

Build factory

Build one or two factories in one car model space. Cost per factory is shown in location. Must expend R&D cubes to build ahead of leading factory, first space one cube, second space three cubes, third space six cubes, and so on. If you build in an empty space behind the leading factory then you pay no R&D cubes. May build parts factory instead of one factory, costs \$500.

Place distributors

Place up to three distribution pieces on the Distribution display.

Take two R&D cubes

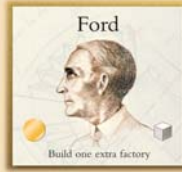
Produce cars

May produce cars in all model spaces that you have factories in. If you choose to produce in a space the minimum and maximum production depends on the number of factories in the space. Cost per car shown on the Production display. Reduce cost per car by \$20 if there is a parts factory in the space.

Close down factory

Remove all of your factories from one car model space. Place closed factory piece there. Discard half loss points, rounded up. Take cash from bank equal to the individual cost of each factory less \$100.

Character Descriptions



Once during the Action Rounds phase you can build one factory in a space that you already have a factory in. Return the Ford marker when you take this benefit. You may use this benefit even if your main action is not to build a factory. You could also use it in conjunction with the build factory action to allow you to build three instead of two factories in a space. You may choose to build your parts factory instead of a regular one. You also take one R&D cube.



When you select this character you simply take the three R&D cubes from the box.



During the Loss phase, after you have taken all of the losses required but before paying for them, you discard half of your loss points, (rounding up). You also take one R&D cube.



During the Sell via Howard phase you must sell two of your cars. You sell for the higher price.



Immediately upon selecting this character you build one factory. You must build in an empty space. You can use the R&D cube gained from this character towards the cost of building the factory. You still pay the cost of the factory.



During the loss phase you discard a number of loss points equal to the present turn number, i.e. on the second turn you would discard two loss points. You do this after taking losses but before paying for them. You also take two R&D cubes.

		\$100	\$70	\$50
Production		1-2	1-3	1-4
		3-4	4-7	5-9
		5-6	8-11	10-14
				-\$20