

West of Africa



*A Game by Martin Schlegel
for 2 to 5 players*

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1. INTRODUCTION

In the late Middle Ages, the Canary Islands had faded into obscurity from a European point of view. There was neither gold nor silver and the islands did not play a role as a trading post because the north-south trade of that time went through the Sahara.

In 1312 the Genoese merchant and seafarer, Lancelotto Malocello, effectively “re-discovered” the Canary Islands. During the 15th century, the archipelago was conquered by the Spanish. The new Spanish masters pushed agriculture, cultivating sugar cane, wine and grain, which quickly gave the islands a certain economic value and importance.

In *West of Africa*, the players cultivate goods, try to sell them profitably and build settlements. Each player has his own deck of cards. Each turn the players select cards from their deck and then try to conduct successful actions, always keeping the actions of the other players in mind.

2. COMPONENTS

Each copy of *West of Africa* contains:

- 1 game board
- 5 player aids (backprinted in English/German)
- 65 playing cards (13 per player)
- 20 settlements (wood)
- 15 workers (3 each in five player colors: red, white, blue, green, yellow)
- 5 ships (1 each in the five player colors)
- 15 marker cubes (3 each in the five player colors)
- 7 Alcalde markers
- 40 goods markers (20 sugar cane, 10 wine, 10 grain, in the player colors)
- 2 rulebooks (English and German)

The Game Board

The *West of Africa* game board shows the seven Canary Islands. For game purposes they have been divided into three regions:

- the West, consisting of La Palma, La Gomera, and El Hierro,
- the Center, consisting of Tenerife and Gran Canaria,
- the East, consisting of Lanzarote and Fuerteventura.

La Palma, La Gomera, El Hierro, Tenerife and Gran Canaria have individual spaces for cultivating goods. It is only possible to cultivate the good shown on the space.

Tenerife, Gran Canaria, Lanzarote, and Fuerteventura have individual spaces that allow foundation of a settlement. Founding a settlement costs 6, 9, or 12 gold, depending on its location.

Note: Tenerife and Gran Canaria have spaces that allow the cultivation of goods or the founding of a settlement.

Each island has its own *warehouse* where the cultivated goods of all players are stored until sold. Each warehouse stores all kind of goods with unlimited capacity.

Islands are connected by *sea links*. Each island has a harbor with one, two, or five moorings. **Note:** The second mooring of Tenerife and Gran Canaria is only available in a 4- or 5-player game.

At the left and right edge of the game board (west of La Gomera and east of Fuerteventura) there are two stylized ships which serve as bases for the player workers. The *gold track* on top of the game board shows the player wealth.

Important: If two or more players have the same amount of gold, the gold marker that is on top (in the direction of the game board edge) wins. The victory point track is located at the bottom of the board. *If one or more players reach 25 or more victory points, the last game turn is triggered.*

In the center of the board (east of the Tenerife warehouse) the player order track and the settlement track are depicted.

Note: With two or three players there will be four settlements per game turn, with four or five players there will be six settlements a turn.

The Player Components

At the start of the game each player receives one player aid and – in his player color – one ship, 3 workers, 8 good markers (4 sugar cane, 2 each of wine and grain), 13 cards and 3 marker cubes. *These are used on the gold track, the victory point track and the player order track.*



The Settlements

West of Africa contains 20 wooden settlements. They will be built on settlement spaces on the islands.



The Alcaldes (Mayor)
Each island has its own *Alcalde*-Marker. The player who is *Alcalde* (“mayor”) of an island puts the corresponding marker in front of himself. Only the current *Alcalde* of an island may found a settlement on it.

The Playing Cards

West of Africa contains 65 playing cards– five identical sets of 13 cards each (one set per player). *The cards determine the player actions in a game turn and the order in which the players conduct their actions.* The cards have values from 0 to 8, and -4.



3. AIM OF THE GAME

The players cultivate sugar cane, wine and grain, sell these goods, become *Alcalde* of an island and found settlements.

The founding of settlements, being an island’s *Alcalde* and gold earn the players victory points. The player who conducts successful actions and surprises the other players at the same time will win a game of *West of Africa*!

4. GAME PREPARATIONS

Note: We first explain the four and five player rules. You will find the changes in two and three player games at the end of the rulebook.

One player places the game board on the table and puts six settlements on the settlement track. The other settlements and the seven *Alcalde* markers are placed next to the board.

Each player takes a player aid and, in his player color, one set of cards (13 cards), a ship, 3 workers, 8 goods markers (4 sugar cane, 2 wine and 2 grain) and 3 marker cubes. One cube is

placed on space 0 of the victory point track, one next to the player order track and the third on space 15 of the gold track.

Important: Because being closest to the upper edge of the gold track is important, the cubes are placed randomly here – one beneath the other on space 15.

Each player places two workers on the ship west of La Gomera and one on the ship east of Fuerteventura.

The players put their personal ship, the cards, the goods markers and the player aid in front of themselves.



5. SEQUENCE OF PLAY

West of Africa is played in game turns. Each turn consists of three phases:

- I. **Selecting Cards** (done simultaneously by all players)
- II. **Conducting Actions** according to the selected cards (in player order)
- III. **Game Turn End**

Important: During the whole game any ties between players are decided via the gold track. The player who has *more gold* wins a tie or is first in the player order. If there is a tie on the gold track the player whose marker cube arrived first and is thus further “to the top” wins (see the gameboard). Whenever a player moves his marker on the gold track, he places it on the uppermost empty space. *Players with more gold therefore have advantages.*

Example: Tanja receives 6 gold and moves her marker cube from space 21 of the gold track to space 27, directly beneath Marion’s red marker cube. During a tie Tanja loses against Marion but will be victorious against three other players.



I. Selecting Cards

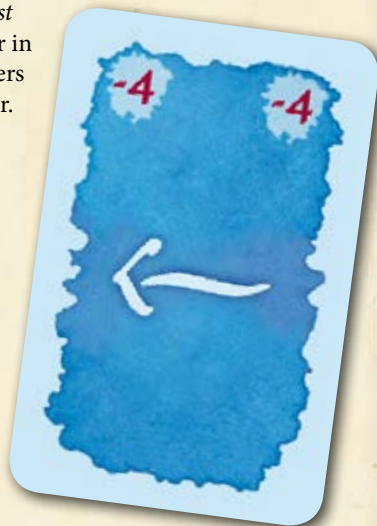
The players select actions in this phase. Player order is determined by the player actions chosen. Each player selects **one to five** cards from his set and puts them face-down in front of himself.

Important: Up to four cards are free; the fifth card costs **4 gold**. The player must have this gold available *at the start of his player turn*; i.e., he may not receive it *during* his turn by selling goods.

As soon as all players have selected and placed their cards, everyone adds up the numbers on the selected cards. The players tell their sums but do NOT show their cards. **The minus card** only reduces the sum but does not allow an action.

The player with the *lowest sum* becomes start player in phase II. The other players follow in ascending order. The position on the gold track decides who acts first in case of a tie. This is marked on the player order track accordingly.

Example: Angelika selects a total of four cards (sum of 9). Marion has taken three cards (sum of 10) and Tanja five cards (sum of 4). Tanja first has to pay 4 gold for her



five cards. Afterwards she becomes the start player, followed by Angelika and then Marion.



II. Card Actions

In player order, the players conduct all their actions.

The player whose turn it is, turns over his cards and then conducts actions with the following rules in effect:

- The player may freely choose the sequence of his actions. E.g., he may first move his workers and then cultivate or vice versa.
- He has to fully complete an action before starting the next. He may not first move a worker, then cultivate, and then move another worker.
- He does not have to conduct an action. He may select cultivation and then decide to not cultivate anything. He also does not have to use all action points on a card.
- The player may use cards several times in a turn. If he has selected Tenerife, cultivation and selling. He may use the Tenerife card for cultivation and selling. He may select Tenerife, La Gomera and cultivation to cultivate goods on both islands.
- A player may only conduct actions according to his selected cards. He may not play Tenerife and cultivation to cultivate goods on La Gomera.
- If he selects one or more minus cards, these are given to the player to his left.
- Each player takes back all cards at the end of his turn.

First game turn, special case “ship”: In the first turn each player, when it is his turn, places his ship at an empty mooring.



Example: Tanja has placed her ship already at the La Palma mooring; therefore Angelika chooses the La Gomera mooring for her ship when it is her turn.

Action: Move Workers

With this action, the players move their workers from island to island. They need their workers for cultivating goods and for determining the Alcaldes.

If a player wants to move workers, he has to select the **Move Workers** card. An **Island Card** is not necessary.



When it is the player's turn, he receives four action points to move his workers. The following general rules are in effect:

- He may divide the action points freely between his workers or move only one of them. He does not have to use all action points.
- One action point moves one worker from the ships to La Gomera or Fuerteventura or from an island along a sea link to a connected island.

Example: Marion chooses the card *Move Workers* to move her workers. She moves one worker from the ship to La Gomera and a different one from the ship via La Gomera to Tenerife. The fourth action point is used to move the worker at Gran Canaria to Tenerife.



Action: Cultivate Goods

With this action the players cultivate goods on the Western and Central islands. The Eastern islands do not have any spaces for cultivating goods.

If the player wants to cultivate goods, he has to play at least **two cards**: The **Cultivate Goods** card and at least one island card. The island cards determine where the players may cultivate goods.



When it is the player's turn, he decides which goods he wants to cultivate, one kind or several ones plus on how many spaces he intends to cultivate goods. The following general rules are in effect:

- The player takes one of his goods markers and places

it on an empty and corresponding space (e.g., wine on a wine space) on the selected island(s). He may cultivate as many goods on the selected islands as he wants, however, he needs to have the correct goods markers available and he may only place one marker per space. If a goods marker has already been used to cultivate or is in a warehouse, he may not use it for cultivation until it becomes available again.

- The player pays 3 gold per goods marker used with this action. *The player moves his marker backwards on the gold track by three spaces per good.*
- If the player has one or more of his own workers on an island where he wants to cultivate, these workers *may* reduce the cultivation costs. Each worker used decreases the costs for *each* space to be cultivated on the island by 1 gold (e.g., if the player uses all three of his workers on an island, cultivating goods is completely free). The player may use any number of his workers on an island and also not use any of them in this way.
- Workers used to decrease the costs leave the island after their “help”. The player places each of them on one of the two ships on the game board. He decides freely to which ship(s) the workers are moved.
- **A special case:** It is possible to cultivate a space, use a worker (who has to return to a ship) and then move him with the card **Move Workers**. *The “help” of the worker does not count as worker movement.*
- **Note:** The islands in the Center region have some spaces with a dual function. The player may *either* cultivate a good or found a settlement here. There is always only one of the options available; if a good is cultivated on such a space, it may not be used to found a settlement. Once a settlement has been founded on such a space, no good may be cultivated here for the rest of the game.

Example: Angelika selects the cards *Cultivate Goods, La Palma and La Gomera*. She cultivates 2 wine and 1 sugar cane at La Palma. Normally she has to pay 9 gold for these three spaces. However, she uses two of her workers and therefore only has to pay a total of 3 gold. She returns both workers to the worker ship west of La Gomera. At La Gomera she cultivates 1 grain and pays 3 gold.



Action: Sell Goods

With this action, the players sell their goods from the warehouses of the islands. This action is not possible in the first game turn.

If the player wants to **sell goods**, he has to play **at least two cards:** the **Sell Goods** card and at least one island card. The island card(s) determine where he may sell goods.



When it is the player’s turn, he decides where and how many goods he would like to sell. The following general rules are in effect:

- The player may sell any amount of all kinds of his goods that are located in the warehouses of the selected islands.
- The price per goods marker depends on the region where it is sold and is independent of the kind of good:
 - in the West the player receives 6 gold per good,
 - in the Center 9 gold per good,
 - in the East 12 gold per good.
- The player immediately marks his income on the gold track. *However, he can only have a maximum of 45 gold; any excess is lost.*

Example: Marion selects *Sell Goods, Gran Canaria and Fuerteventura*. She has 3 wine in her warehouse at Gran Canaria and 2 sugar cane in her warehouse at Fuerteventura. She sells both goods at Fuerteventura and one of the goods at Gran Canaria for a total of 33 gold. She now has 41 gold on the gold track and decides to keep her last good at Gran Canaria to not waste any gold.



Action: Found Settlement

With this action the player finds settlements on the Eastern and Central islands. The Western islands do not have any spaces to found settlements. This action is not possible in the first game turn.

If the player wants to **found settlements**, he has to select **at least two cards:** the **Found Settlement** card and at least one island card. The island card(s) determine where he may found settlements.



When it is the player’s turn he decides where and how many settlements he may found. The following general

rules are in effect:

- **Important:** Only the Alcalde of an island may found settlements on it.
- For each settlement to be founded, the player takes one settlement from the settlement track and places it on an empty settlement space of the selected island.
- Founding a settlement costs the following gold: in the plains, 6 gold, on slightly higher ground, 9 gold, and in the hills or mountains, 12 gold. *The player moves his marker on the gold track backwards accordingly.*
- The player gets 3 victory points per settlement founded (no matter what the costs) and advances his marker on the victory point track accordingly.
- In each game turn, only the settlements on the settlement track are available to founded. If a player takes the last settlement from the track, no further settlements may be founded that turn.
- **Note:** The islands in the Center region have spaces with a *dual function*. The player may *either* cultivate a good or found a settlement here. Only one of the options is available; if a good is cultivated on such a space, it may not be used to found a settlement. If a settlement has been founded on such a space, no good may be cultivated here for the rest of the game.

Example: Tanja selects Found Settlement, Tenerife and Lanzarote. She is Alcalde on both islands and may found settlements there. She founds a settlement on Tenerife for 6 gold and blocks one of the sugar cane spaces there. Angelika just cultivated sugar cane on the other space. On Lanzarote, Tanja founds two more settlements for 15 gold. Now the settlement track is empty; therefore no further settlements may be founded this game turn. Tanja moves her marker on the gold track back 21 spaces and receives 9 victory points on the victory point track.



Action: Move Ship

With this action the players move their ship from harbor

to harbor along the sea links. A ship may transport goods, in addition, it is helpful when an island's Alcalde is determined.

If the player wants to **move his ship**, he only has to play the **Move Ship** card. Playing an island card is not necessary.



When it is the player's turn, he decides how he wants to move his ship. The following general rules are in effect:

- The player may move his ship a maximum distance of 3 harbors along sea links. Harbors occupied by ships of other players count.
- A harbor either has one, two or five moorings. Each mooring may be occupied by a single ship. The Tenerife and Gran Canaria harbors each have a mooring that may be only used in a 4- or 5-player game. **4/5**
- If the ship movement ends in an occupied harbor (all moorings contain a ship), one of the ships already there has to make way. It is moved in movement direction of the active ship to the next empty mooring. Therefore, if the ship comes from the west, e.g. from La Gomera and ends its turn at Gran Canaria where all moorings are occupied, one of the ships at Gran Canaria will be moved to Fuerteventura. If Fuerteventura is occupied, it is moved to Lanzarote which has space for all player ships. If a ship is moved away from La Gomera the owner of the displaced ship may decide if he moves it to La Palma or El Hierro. El Hierro also has space for all player ships. Important: Ships only have to make way at the end of the movement of an active ship.
- If there are two ships at Tenerife or Gran Canaria, the active player decides which ship has to make way.
- Each ship may transport a maximum of three of the player's own goods. The goods are transported from one island's warehouse to another island's warehouse. Goods never stay on a ship – they are always moved to a warehouse. Each warehouse may hold all kind of goods of each player; the capacity of a warehouse is unlimited.
- A ship may change direction during movement, such as a move from Fuerteventura to Gran Canaria, pick up goods from the warehouse and then transport these goods to the warehouse of Fuerteventura and/or Lanzarote.
- A ship may pick up and deliver goods from and to a warehouse "while moving." For example, it may start at La Gomera, pick up goods at Tenerife (although all moorings are occupied) and then bring the goods to Fuerteventura. Ships at Tenerife are not affected by this.

Example: Marion selects the Move Ship action and moves her ship from La Gomera to Tenerife where she picks up 3 sugar cane from the warehouse. Tanja's ship at the harbor of Tenerife is not affected by this and stays at its mooring. Marion continues the ship's movement to Fuerteventura. Angelika's ship there occupies the single mooring and therefore has to make way to Lanzarote. Finally, Marion transfers the three goods to the Fuerteventura warehouse.



Action: Minus Card

With this card the player reduces the sum of all selected action cards to be able to play earlier in the game turn.



If the card is selected, the player subtracts "4" from the sum. The player may, if he has them, select more than one **Minus Card** in a turn.

At the end of his turn he transfers the card(s) to the player to his left.

Extended example: Angelika is Alcalde at Tenerife and Fuerteventura. She selects five cards and has to pay 4 gold when it is her turn. She selects Tenerife, Fuerteventura, Sell Goods, Cultivate Goods and Found Settlement. Now Angelika has a lot of options, however, she does not have to do everything. When it is her turn, she decides what she will do:

- She sells goods located at the warehouses of Tenerife and/or Fuerteventura.
- She cultivates goods at Tenerife.
- She founds settlements at Tenerife and/or Fuerteventura (if there are still settlements on the settlement track).

III. Game Turn End

When all players have conducted their actions according to the selected cards, the game turn ends. Each player takes back all his cards – they are all available in the next game turn. **Exception:** Minus Cards are to be handed to the left neighbor.

Now the following actions are conducted in order:

- **Victory points for the most gold:** The two players with the most gold on the gold track receive 1 victory point each.
- **Goods move to the warehouses:** All cultivated goods are moved to their island's warehouses.
- **Alcalde determination:** The Alcalde for each of the seven islands is determined. Each player adds up his influence on an island: each of his goods in the warehouses is worth 1 point, each of his workers is worth 2 points and his ship in the harbor is worth 2 points. The player with the most points becomes Alcalde of the island and receives the corresponding marker that is placed in front of the player. He stays Alcalde till the end of the next game turn. If there are neither goods, nor workers, nor ships at an island, no player is Alcalde on it. In that case the former Alcalde returns the marker next of the gameboard.
- **Victory Points for the Alcades:** Each Alcalde marker now earns the owner 1 victory point.
- **Refill settlements:** The settlement track is refilled with settlements from the pool.

6. GAME END

If at the end of a game turn...

- One or more players have 25 or more victory points and/or
- all 20 settlements are founded on the islands,

one additional (last) complete game turn is played. Afterwards each player receives 1 victory point per 10 gold (rounded down) on the gold track.

The player with the most victory points wins the game. If there are several players with the same amount of points, the gold track breaks the tie.

7. CHANGES IN TWO- OR THREE-PLAYER GAMES

The following changes are made during set-up with two or three players.

2 players: A total of eight settlements are placed on the settlement spaces with costs of 6 gold.

During the game, the following rules are in effect:

- The settlement track only has 4 settlements (and is refilled to 4 at the end of a game turn).
- Tenerife and Gran Canaria each have only one mooring.
- Only the player with the most gold receives 1 victory point at the end of a turn.

3 players: One settlement is placed on one of the settlement spaces with a cost of 6 gold on each island (four total).

During the game, the following rules are in effect:

- The settlement track only has 4 settlements (and is refilled to 4 at the end of a game turn).
- Tenerife and Gran Canaria each have only one mooring.



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for 2 to 5 players*

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