ANIMALS ON BOARD

**A game by Ralf zur Linde and Wolfgang Sentker
for 2 to 4 players, aged 8 and up**

Each player has his own ark and wants to take as many animals on board as he can. Unfortunately, some guy called Noah claims all animal pairs for himself and has obtained an anti-pairing law. Therefore, any animal that a player has exactly twice on board at the end of the game must be discarded. However, you can circumvent the law if you manage to gather three, four or even five animals of a species. These are considered a herd and are not only permitted, but are even more valuable. It could be so easy if it wasn't for one small issue: to form a herd, there usually is no way around getting a pair first... When the arks depart, will you win the game by having the most valuable single animals and herds on board?

Components

20 food crates	**4 arks**
4 break flags	**1 starting player flag**

60 animal tiles
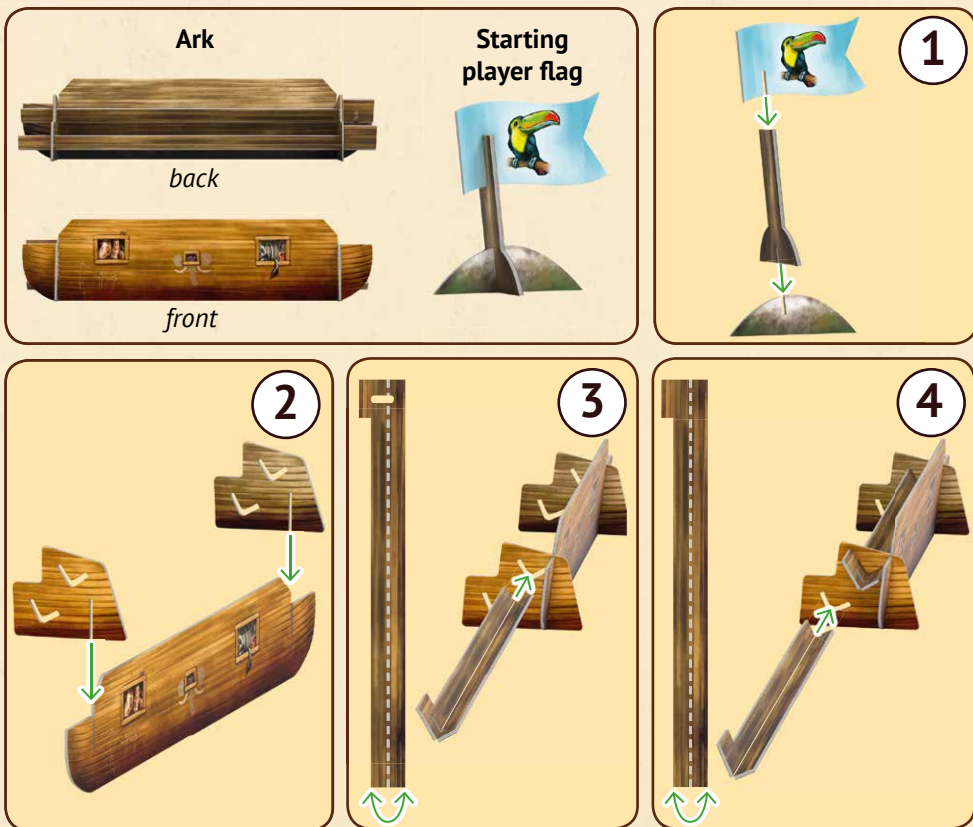
There are 12 species in total.

Of each species, there are five tiles, numbered 1 to 5.

back

Before the first game:

Carefully detach all cardboard pieces from the punch boards.

Then assemble the starting player flag and the arks as follows:

Ark	Starting player flag
back	
front	

1

2

3

4

Setup

1. Each player receives an **ark**, which he places in front of him. The arks serve as tile holders so that each player can see the his own animal tiles but not those of the other players.

2. Give each player a **break flag**, which he places in front of him.

3. According to the number of players, use **animal tiles** as follows:

In a 4-player game, use all 12 species (60 animal tiles in total).

In a 3-player game, use 10 species (50 animal tiles in total). Therefore, you must remove the 5 tiles of 2 species of your choice and return them to the box.

In a 2-player game, use 8 species (40 animal tiles in total). Therefore, you must remove the 5 tiles of 4 species of your choice and return them to the box.

Shuffle the animal tiles you will be playing with face down and form any number of face-down *draw stacks* with them. Place these stacks a little to the side since you need the center of the table as your central play area.

4. Place the 20 **food crates** next to the draw stacks as a *general supply*.

5. Now, each player takes 1 food crate and places it in sight of all players next to his ark as his *personal supply*.

6. Give the **starting player flag** to the oldest player. He places the flag next to his ark.

7. Finally, each player draws 3 animal tiles from any draw stack and looks at them. He chooses one of these tiles and places it on a bracket of his ark, without showing it to the other players.

After all players have placed one tile on their ark, each of them places his two remaining tiles **face up** in the central play area where they form a big animal group.

Central play area
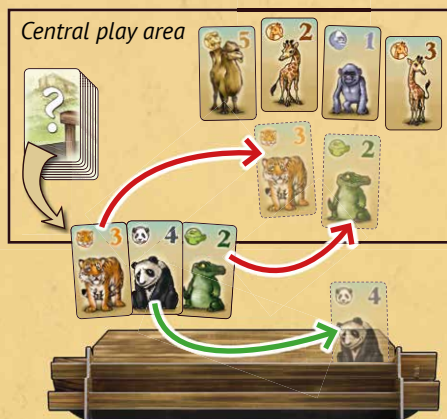
Playing the game

Animals on Board is played over several rounds. The game ends at the end of the round in which at least one player has fully loaded his ark (owning 10 or more animal tiles).

Start of a round

At the start of each round, the animal group in the central play area must be filled up. First, move any animal tiles in the central play area close together. Then draw animal tiles from any draw stacks and add them to the animal group until your reach the correct tile number for your player count:

- **In a 4-player game**, the animal group must comprise exactly 12 face-up tiles and 1 face-down tile.

- **In a 3-player game**, the animal group must comprise exactly 10 face-up tiles and 1 face-down tile.

- **In a 2-player game**, the animal group must comprise exactly 8 face-up tiles and 1 face-down tile.

Note: There is no specific order to the animals in the group. You can arrange the tiles in any way you like (for example, to gain a better overview of the animals contained).

Attention: No player may see the front of the face-down tile when it is placed. Also, there may never be more than one face-down tile in the central play area, so if the face-down tile from the previous round is still lying there, do **not** add another face-down tile.

What is an animal group?

- At the start of each round, there is one big animal group in the central play area. This group will gradually be divided up to form more and more smaller groups during the round.

- The tiles which form an animal group distinguish themselves by lying closely together and by clearly being separated from other animal groups.

- It does not matter which animals and species form an animal group.

- A single animal tile lying on its own is also considered an animal group.

The player with the starting player flag takes the first turn of the round. Then play proceeds in a clockwise direction with players successively taking one turn each.

When it is your turn, you must perform exactly <u>one</u> of the two possible actions:

EITHER

**Action A)** Split one animal group in two animal groups and take one food crate.

OR

Action B) Take one animal group onto your ark and drop out of the round.

Action A) *Split one animal group*

Choose <u>one</u> animal group in the central play area that comprises at least 2 tiles. Divide the tiles of that group by forming exactly <u>two</u> animal groups with them. To which of the two groups you allocate each tile is up to you, as long as you end up with exactly two new groups that each comprises at least 1 animal tile. You may not rearrange tiles of any other groups!

Important: After you have formed the two new groups, take exactly <u>1 food crate</u> from the general supply and place it in your personal supply next to your ark.

Example: In the central play area, there are currently 4 animal groups (A,B,C,D).
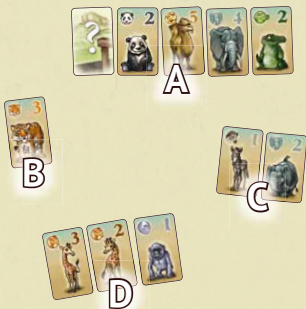
On her turn, Nina chooses group A and forms two new animal groups from its tiles.

Then she takes 1 food crate from the general supply and places it in her personal supply.

Attention: No player is allowed to have more than <u>5 food crates</u> in his personal supply. If you would receive your sixth food crate (by performing action A), you must return 1 food crate to the general supply instead (reducing your personal supply to 4 food crates).

Action B) *Take one animal group onto your ark*

Choose <u>one</u> animal group from the central play area and spend **one food crate for each animal tile** contained in that group. Return those food crates form your personal supply to the general supply. Then remove the group from the play area and place its tiles on the brackets of your ark.

• You must always take the entire group and return the exact number of food crates needed.

• If you do not have enough food crates for a certain group, you cannot take it.

• If the face-down tile should be part of the acquired group, place it on your ark like any other tile (without showing it to the other players).

Important: By performing this action, you automatically drop out of the current round. Thus, you will not have another turn during this round and are skipped henceforth.

> **Note:** After performing this action, plug your ***break flag*** into the slot at the upper right side of your ark to indicate that you have dropped out.
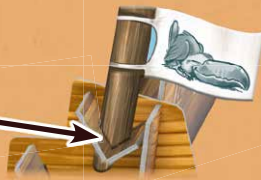
If you should be **the first player** to drop out of the current round, also take the starting player flag and place it next to your ark. This means you will be the starting player of the next round.

Example:
Nina wants to take on board the shown animal group that comprises the face-down tile, one panda, and one elephant.
Since the group comprises 3 tiles, she must return 3 food crates to the general supply for this. Then she removes the 3 tiles from the central play area and places them on her ark.
Afterwards she puts her break flag up and also places the starting player flag in front of her, as she is the first player to drop out of the current round.
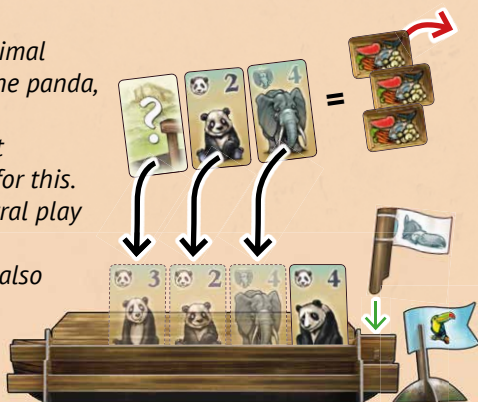
Attention: As soon as you take an animal group on board that brings your total animal count to 10 or more tiles, you must announce this immediately to the other players. Since each ark has only room for 10 animal tiles, place any tiles in excess of this number face up on the table in front of you for now. (You are still considered the owner of those tiles.)

General notes and special cases:

- If you should not be able to perform action A (because there are no divisible groups left), you must perform action B instead.
- In the unlikely event that you can perform neither action A nor B, you must forfeit your turn entirely.
- Your personal supply of food crates must be visible to all players at all times.
- If a player wants to know how many animals you have on your ark, you must tell him (but not what they are).

End of a round

After any player's turn, if there is only <u>one</u> player remaining in the round, this remaining player gets one final turn to perform either action A or B. Then the round ends.

Now, if there is at least one player with a fully loaded ark (owning 10 or more animal tiles), the game ends. Otherwise, a new round begins.

Attention: Before starting the next round, all players must remove their break flags from their arks and place them in front of them again.

End of the game

The game ends when at the end of a round at least one player owns <u>10 or more animal tiles</u>.
Then each player must perform the following steps to prepare for the departure of his ark:

1. First, he must return to the box any of his species of which he owns **exactly 2 tiles**.

2. Then he lines up his remaining tiles (sorted by species) on his ark.

> **Attention:** Each ark has only room for 10 animal tiles. If a player still owns more than 10 animal tiles now, he must reduce them to 10, returning any excess tiles to the box. It is up to him which animal tiles he discards. However, he may not reduce any of his species in a way that would cause only 2 of its tiles to remain on his ark.

3. Finally, the ark of the player departs. He shows it to his fellow players and calculates his victory point total. Please note in this context that each tile on his ark is considered either a **single animal** (because it is the only tile of its species on the ark) or a **herd animal** (because there are at least 3 tiles of its species on the ark).

The player calculates his victory point total as follows:

• Each *single animal* is worth the **number** of victory points **printed** on it.

• Each *herd animal* is automatically worth **5 victory points** (no matter which number is printed on it).

• Each *food crate* that the player has left in his personal supply is worth **1 victory point**.

Example:

The game has ended and Nina prepares for her departure.

She owns 11 animals in total:

Since she has exactly 2 elephants, she must return these to the box.

This leaves her with the following animals on her ark:
• 1 crocodile (single animal)
• 1 tiger (single animal)
• 3 giraffes (herd)
• 4 pandas (herd)

Also she still has 2 food crates left.

Upon departure, she thus receives the following victory points:

4 + 2 + 4 x 5 + 3 x 5 + 2 = **43**

The player with the highest victory point total wins the game.
In the case of a tie, the tied player who has more **different** species on board wins.
If this does not break the tie, the victory is shared.