

Vejen

A strategic trading game for 2–4 players aged 14 years and up,

by Kai Starck & Thomas Nielsen

As medieval merchants the players build countinghouses on the main trade (Danish: Vejen, pronounced “Vaien”), of Northern Germany and Southern Denmark, inspired by one of the most famous trading routes of that time, the “Ochsenweg” (Ox Road). Many options provide a wide variety in this game: What is the best moment to buy goods in German Thalers or Danish Kroner? Is building a mill and a ship worth the effort? At which point do I invest in a larger and better cart? When do I take out a loan and for which goods? And most important:

Where do I go with my cart to sell my goods for the best possible price?

The chances of winning depend on the money a player earns – and of course on the other players who also try to gather as much wealth as possible.

Game components



Setting up the game

1. Lay out the **game board** on the table. Note the border between Germany and Denmark runs roughly horizontally through the middle of the board.
2. The layout of the **event bar** on the right edge is described on the next page.
3. Put the sorted **goods** and **coins** as well as the **pest markers** within reach next to the game board.

4. The **Noble Goods** are sorted in two stacks (Food/Tools), shuffled separately and put here on their corresponding space.

5. Set the two **Currency markers** to 1 on each of the scales for Danish Kroner and German Thalers.

6. Draw 2 random **Scoring cards** and lay them face-up here. There are goals on the Scoring cards, for which players will be given points **at the end of the game**. Left-over Scoring cards are put back into the box.

7. Shuffle the **Bonus cards** and put them here in a stack face-down. The top two cards are turned over and placed here next to the stack.

8. All Countinghouse cards are placed beside the game board face-up.



9. Each player chooses a **tableau** face-down and takes **all matching game materials** in their colour (4x Countinghouse, Ship, Mill, Upgrade markers: 2x Cart and 1x Spokewheel, 3 Loan markers, Oxcart meeple and Movement marker). Please see *"The players' tableaus"* on page 15 for details.
10. Each player puts their Oxcart meeple and one Countinghouse on their starting city on the game board. The starting city can be found in the top left corner of each tableau. When only 2 or 3 players are in the game, put one Countinghouse from each of the unused colours on their corresponding starting cities.
11. Determine a starting player. He takes the Starting player marker – it will be passed clockwise to the next player at the end of each round.

Event bar

1. Lay out 12 Event cards on the right hand side, next to the game board.
First, draw one of the two “Start” Event cards and lay it face-up next to the word “Start”. Then draw one of the two “Finish” cards and lay it face-up next to the word “Finish”.
Sort the rest of the Event cards by the letters A, B, C, D, E on the back of the cards and shuffle each letter stack separately. Draw two cards of each letter randomly and put them down face-down beside the numbers 2-11. The Event cards will thus be lying out as follows:

1 = Start, 2 = A, 3 = A, 4 = B, 5 = B, 6 = C, 7 = C, 8 = D, 9 = D, 10 = E, 11 = E, 12 = Finish

Put the rest of the Event cards back in the box.

2. The Event marker is put on the “Start” Event card and the second Event card is turned over.

The players’ tableaux

1. Each player gets **two coins** of their starting country’s currency (value 1) and puts them openly in the respective area on their tableau (A).
2. The **Movement marker** is placed on the movement scale on number 3 (**B**).
3. Place on their respective fields:
 - (C) the **Cart Upgrade markers** (2x) and **Spokewheel** – each with the grey side up
 - (D) the rest of the **Countinghouses**, the **Mill** and the **Ship**
 - (E) the 3 **Loan markers**



Goods and currency

Goods can be bought and sold in the cities. In each city it's only possible to buy the goods shown in that city on the game board. Players will use goods to build Countinghouses and to buy Upgrading markers. They are always put into the warehouse at first.

Players may only transfer goods from their warehouse to their Countinghouse cards in a city where they have a Countinghouse. Goods on a Countinghouse card can later be sold in a different city.

The currency in Denmark is **Krone** (👑) and **Thaler** (DT) in Germany.

The game

The game is played over the course of 12 rounds with 4 phases each. The rounds take place in an identical manner:

Phase 1: Event (all players together)

Phase 2: Income (together)

Phase 3: Action (one player after the other)

Phase 4: End of round (together)

The final scoring takes place after the 12th round.

The first two phases and the fourth phase are executed by all players simultaneously. The third phase (Action) is executed by the players one at a time – with each player executing one action, before it's the next players turn.

Phase 1: Event

At the beginning of the round the Event marker is moved to the next Event card (except in the very first round, where it stays on the "Start" card) and this marks the event for the current round. The left side of an Event card always affects the current rate of one or both of the currencies and is modified right away with the currency marker(s). The currencies can only have the values of 1, 2 or 3.

The right side shows the event of this round.



Events with a green hourglass are executed directly at the beginning of the round.



Events with an orange hourglass are valid throughout the complete round.



Events with a red hourglass are executed at the end of the round.

Example: The Danish Krone is fixed at the rate of 2.



The city of Tönning may not be entered during this round.

Now the Event card of the next round is turned over. Thus the players know which event will be taking place in the next round, and they can plan ahead accordingly.

Goods from the warehouse **and** from the Countinghouse cards count towards the valuation of the Event cards.

On page 24 you will find a list of the event cards in the game and their meanings.

Phase 2: Income

All players receive movement points and goods simultaneously.

Movement points are awarded according to the quality of each player's cart. The points are noted on the movement scale of each player's tableau and are available for this player throughout this round for travelling on the game board. It is not possible to transfer movement points from the previous round – thus at the end of each round the movement points are moved down to "0" on all tableaux.

Standard Cart =

3 Movement points



Small Cart =

5 Movement points (warehouse capacity rises to 7)



Large Cart = 7 Movement points (warehouse capacity rises to 9)

Goods: All players receive 1 good per **Countinghouse they have on the game board**, according to the good shown in that city (e. g. 1 Fish for a Countinghouse in Flensburg and 1 Wood for a Countinghouse in Neumünster). The goods are put **into the warehouse** on the player's tableau. With a standard cart the maximum amount possible are 5 goods at a time – the warehouse capacity can be upgraded, however, by buying one or both Cart Upgrade markers to 7 or even 9 goods. If the capacity is not high enough for the goods coming in, the player has to give up goods from their warehouse or refrain from taking these goods respectively.

Kolding: The player gets the top Bonus card from the face-down pile (not from the two face-up cards).

Lübeck: The player may choose between the goods shown.

Example: Bernd pays the goods shown on his tableau for a small Cart from his warehouse and turns the corresponding marker face-up. He now has 5 movement points at his disposal at the beginning of each round and puts his Movement marker on the "5" in Phase 1 (with the standard Cart he would only have 3 movement points available per round). In addition to that his warehouse now has a capacity of 7 goods.



Phase 3: Action

The starting player chooses one of the six Actions and executes it as often as he likes. Then it's the next player's turn in clockwise order. **Travelling** with their oxcart from city to city does not count as an Action and can be done as often as possible during the player's turn before or after executing the Action, as long as the player has sufficient movement points available.

If a player does not want to or is not capable of executing another Action, then they pass and lay their oxcart down to signal just that.

Once a player has passed, the other players may continue to execute Actions in clockwise order as long as they like, until all players do not want to or are no longer capable of executing more Actions. Then the Action phase is over.

Players who have passed cannot enter that round again.

Tip: It is allowed to execute the same Action multiple times during a turn.

Travelling (no Action)

Players can travel from one city to another. The number on the paths connecting the two cities shows the amount of movement points necessary for this trip.



Example: Bernd wants to travel from Schleswig to Flensburg.
Cost: 2 movement points



Example: Bernd wants to travel from Segeberg to Rendsburg.
Cost: 5 movement points


Segeberg >> Neumünster = 2

Neumünster >> Plön = 2

Plön >> Rendsburg = 1

= 5 movement points

Six Actions

- A. Buying
- B. Loading
- C. Refining (only with )
- D. Selling
- E. Building
- F. Upgrading/Activating

The Movement marker is moved to the left on the movement scale, by the points spent. If it is on the “1” and the player needs 2 points to travel on, they cannot travel. If the marker is on the “0”, the player cannot travel in this round anymore. At the end of the round all Movement markers are moved to the “0” on their scale.

Tip: By buying the small or the large Cart players can increase the number of movement points to 5 or even 7 per round.



It is also possible to use the waterways. These are explained in connection with the Ship on page 22.

Action A: Buying

Players can only buy the good(s) shown in the middle space of the city at their oxcart's position. The current price depends on the currency rate of the city's country. Players have to pay in Kroner in cities in Denmark, and in Thalers in all German cities.

The player gives the appropriate amount to the bank. They then receive the good(s) shown and put them in their warehouse.



It's not possible to buy goods in Kolding, Rendsburg and Tönning. In Rendsburg and Tönning players can get a **Bonus card** by paying **any 1 good and 1 Krone/Thaler**, independent of the currency rates. Only in these two cities can players pay with Kroner **or** Thalers, as these cities are positioned in the border region of the two countries.

In Kolding the price of a Bonus card depends on the current rate of the Krone, just as it does when buying goods in Denmark.

When buying a Bonus card players can choose between taking the top card of the Bonus card stack or one of the two open Bonus cards.



In Hamburg, Lübeck and København players can buy 2 (or 3) identical or different goods, as long as they pay for all of them.

Action B: Loading

If an oxcart is located in a city where they have a Countinghouse (see page 22 about how to build a Countinghouse), they may choose the Action “Loading”. The player takes **any good** (or a maximum of two if he has already activated the upgrade “Spokewheel”) from their warehouse and puts it on his Countinghouse card of this city on the tableau. The player may sell the good(s) from their Countinghouse cards with the Selling Action later on in a different city. Only 1 good is allowed on each Countinghouse card. If the player has activated the upgrade “Spokewheel” this capacity rises to 2 goods.

***Example:** Bernd has a Countinghouse in Lübeck. When his oxcart is also in Lübeck he takes 1 Wheat from his warehouse and puts it on his Lübeck Countinghouse card. If he had already activated the Spokewheel, he could have put 1 Wheat and 1 Fish on his Lübeck Countinghouse card as one Action. Later Bernd is in Flensburg, but doesn't have a Countinghouse there (and therefore doesn't have the Flensburg Countinghouse card). He cannot use the Loading Action there.*

Action C: Refining



As soon as a player has built a Mill (see page 22) they may choose the Action “Refining” at any location to get Noble Goods. The player pays the following goods and receives 1 Noble Good from the stack in return:



1 Fish + 1 Wheat = 1 Food



2 of the three goods Peat, Iron and Wood = 1 Tool

The player must always pay 2 different goods to get 1 Tool.

Noble Goods can be used in two different ways:

- to build buildings or to buy Upgrade markers (see “Building / Upgrading”)
- to be sold.



If a player decides to sell a Noble Good, they firstly use the Loading Action and put it on their Countinghouse card. When they sell the good they get the bonus shown on the back of the marker. They may look at the bonus on the back of the Noble Goods at any time. After selling, the Noble Good is returned under the respective stack.

If the Noble Good is used for Building/Activating, the player does not get the bonus.

Important: Noble Goods count as normal goods when Loading and in the warehouse. Their markers are put back under the respective stack, after having been sold or used for building or upgrading.

The Noble Goods have the following bonuses:

Noble Good	Bonus	Meaning	Quantity
		Take 6 Kroner and/or Thalers from the bank.	3
		Take 2 face-down Bonus cards from the stack.	2
		Take 1 Noble Good "Tools".	2
		Take 6 Kroner and/or Thalers from the bank.	3
		Take 2 face-down Bonus cards from the stack.	2
		Take 1 Noble Good "Food".	2

Action D: Selling

The player puts the goods they want to sell from one of their Countinghouse cards back to the common stock. If the player has more than one good on their Countinghouse cards, they may sell more than one good (thus executing the Selling Action more than once).

The proceeds from the sale depend on

- the currency rate of the country in which the goods are sold
- the distance between the city of the Countinghouse card and the current location and
- the number of goods.

It is calculated as follows:

$$(\text{Currency rate} + \text{distance}) \times \text{number of goods} = \text{coins (Kroner or Thalers)}$$

Only goods from Countinghouse cards are to be sold. Goods in the warehouse are only suitable for Building, Upgrading (Spokewheel, Cart) or Loading!

To calculate the **distance** from the city, where these goods were loaded (= Countinghouse card) to the selling location the player has to determine the shortest route between these two cities. Each line between two cities counts as 1, independent of the number of movement points necessary to travel between them.

Waterways are not taken into consideration, only routes by land are regarded. If a city is blocked by an Event card, this city is omitted.

A player may also sell goods from different Countinghouse cards simultaneously. Each value is calculated separately.



Example 1: Bernd's oxcart is in Flensburg, he sells 1 good from his Åbenrå Countinghouse card.
The currency rate of the Krone is 2.
The distance from Åbenrå to Flensburg is 2.
Proceeds: $(2+2) \times 1 = 4$ Kroner

Example 2: Bernd's oxcart is in Kiel, he sells 2 goods from his Ribe Countinghouse card.
The currency rate of the Thaler is 1.
The distance from Ribe to Kiel is 5 routes.
Proceeds: $(1+5) \times 2 = 12$ Thalers

Important: If a player sells goods in a city with a Countinghouse of another player, the owner of that Countinghouse gets 1 Krone (or Thaler, depending on the country of that city) from the player selling the goods. If there are more than one Countinghouse in that city, each owner gets 1 Krone/Thaler.

Goods must never be sold in cities where they were bought. There always has to be a trip between buying and selling.

In Tönning, Rendsburg, København and Hamburg no goods can be sold!

The active player may take out a loan (1 per round), play Bonus cards and fulfill Event cards, without this being an Action (see page 22-24 for details).


Action E: Building

To build buildings (Countinghouse, Ship, Mill) the player has to put goods from their warehouse and/or their Countinghouse cards back to the common stock. See page 21 under "Buildings, Carts, Spokewheel" for details.

Action F: Upgrading

To activate Upgrade markers (Spokewheel, Cart) the player has to put goods from their warehouse and/or their Countinghouse cards back to the common stock. See page 21 under "Buildings, Carts, Spokewheel" for details.

Phase 4: End of round

At the end of each round an event takes place, if the current Event card shows a red hourglass .

The Starting player marker is passed to the player on the left. The movement points on the tableaus are set back to "0", and then the next round starts. At the end of the 12th round the game ends with the final scoring.



Game end

The game ends after the 12th round. All players check whether they fulfill conditions of Scoring cards. For fulfilling the condition(s) the player gets the amount of coins shown on the card. If loans have not been repaid by now, players have the chance to do so. For loans not repaid a penalty of 10 coins per open credit has to be paid. Now all players count their money.

Example:

Bernd has 23 Thalers and 19 Kroner in cash at the end of the game. He has fulfilled one of the Scoring cards (= 15 coins), but he has not paid back one loan (penalty 10 coins).

This is Bernd's final score:

23 Thalers + 19 Kroner =	42 coins
1 Scoring card =	15 coins
1 open loan =	- 10 coins
Total =	47 coins

The player with the highest total score wins the game. Ties are decided with the following tie-breakers:

1. Highest number of buildings
2. Highest number of activated Upgrade markers
3. Highest number of Noble Goods on the tableau
4. Highest number of normal goods on the tableau

If there is no clear winner after this, multiple players have won the game.

Loans

Taking out a loan

The active player may take out a loan at any time, with a total of 3 loans per game and a maximum of 1 loan per round.

This is not counted as an Action.

The player puts one of their Loan markers from their tableau on one of the five goods spaces in the loan table on the game board and takes one piece of the good shown there from the common stock.



Paying back a loan

To pay back a loan the player has to have the respective goods (lower row of the loan table) in their warehouse or on their Countinghouse Cards at the end of the game. The player puts them back to the common stock. After doing so, the Loan marker is taken from the game board.

Penalties

If a player cannot pay back a loan at the end of the game, 10 coins per open loan are deducted as a penalty from their final score.

Example: Bernd takes out a loan for 1 Fish and puts one of his Loan markers onto the purple loan field with the green arrow on the game board. At the end of the game he has 1 Fish in his warehouse and 1 Fish on a Countinghouse card (which he hasn't sold yet). He returns these 2 Fish to the common stock and does not have to pay a penalty for this loan.

Buildings, Carts, Spokewheel

The active player pays goods (from their warehouse and/or their Countinghouse cards) to build buildings or activate Carts and the Spokewheel. The necessary goods can be found on the tableaux.

Building buildings and activating Upgrade markers bring certain advantages to the player:

Buildings can only be built in the current location of a player's oxcart. In addition, Countinghouses, Ships and Mills can only be built in the cities in which the respective building site is shown and is not occupied by another building (in game rounds with only 2 or 3 players not all building sites are valid, some are marked with "3+" or "4" – this means they are only valid for buildings in game rounds with 3 or 4 players respectively).

Upgraded Cart and Spokewheel markers are turned face-up once they have been paid for.

Important: Countinghouses, Ship, Mill and Spokewheel can be built or activated in any order. However, the Cart upgrade has to be completed first with the small Cart and then the large Cart afterwards.

Building/ Activating

Effect

Countinghouse

(+ Countinghouse card)



Quantity: 4
(1 Start Countinghouse
+ 3 additional)

The player gets the corresponding **Countinghouse** card from the stock and puts it on his tableau, where the Countinghouse stood before. From now on he may sell goods which he has loaded in this city.

For each Countinghouses a player has on the board, the player receives goods during the Income phase, according to the city in which the Countinghouse is located (provided there is enough space in the player's warehouse).

As soon as a player sells goods in a city with a Countinghouse of another player, the owner of the Countinghouse gets 1 coin of the local currency from the seller.

Mill



Quantity: 1

With a Mill the player may choose the Action "Refining" at any location.

The Mill does not have to be built at the starting city of the player. Noble Goods are put into the warehouse and count as 1 good as far as the warehouse capacity is concerned.

Noble Goods (Food  and Tools ) are needed to activate certain upgrades.

The player may also sell Noble Goods like normal goods. The player then additionally receives the bonus on the back of that Noble Good marker.

Ship



Quantity: 1

With a Ship the player may also travel over the sea during the Action phase.

One trip over the sea costs 3 movement points, irrespective of the starting city and final destination. Even if the player has built a Ship e. g. in Hamburg they may travel from København to Ribe for 3 movement points.

Sea travel is only possible between Kiel, Ribe, København and Hamburg.

Spokewheel



Quantity: 1

With an activated Spokewheel the player may stock 2 goods – instead of just one – on each of the player's Countinghouse cards and sell the goods from there. Thus more goods can be transported and sold.

Cart



Quantity: 2

With an upgraded Cart the player gets 2 additional movement points at the beginning of the round from now on. In addition, the capacity of his warehouse is then increased by 2 goods.

Small Cart = 5 movement points & 7 goods capacity

Large Cart = 7 movement points & 9 goods capacity

Important: The additional movement points are only available to the player from the next round onwards.

Bonus cards

When a face-up Bonus card has been bought it is replaced by the top card from the Bonus card stack, which is placed face-up. Thus there always are 2 Bonus cards face-up and a card stack face-down.

The active player may play a Bonus card at any time. This does not count as an Action.

Players are only allowed to have a maximum of two Bonus cards in their hand at any time.

Bonus cards which have been played are taken out of the game.

Each Bonus card has two options for the player to choose from: the top half of the card and the bottom half of the card.



Top half:

If the player sells one or more goods in the city mentioned (or owns 5 different goods, for the resp. card), they play the Bonus card and get the additional coins from the bank (Thalers or Kroner freely selectable).
resp.

Raid: The player attacks another player. The attacker may take goods from the warehouse or from a Countinghouse card of the other player. Both players' ox carts have to be at the same city ("same city") or the attacker has to be in a city with a Countinghouse of the player being attacked ("Countinghouse").

... or ...

Bottom half: If a Bonus card is played the player gets the bonus of the bottom half.

Scoring cards

Large Influence



2 Countinghouses built: 10 coins

3 Countinghouses built: 15 coins

Long Journey



2 coins per step for the player's two Countinghouses furthest apart from each other: 2 coins (shortest route)

Warehouse



At least 3 different goods in the warehouse: 8 coins

5 different goods in the warehouse: 15 coins

Noble Goods



1 Noble Good: 3 coins (only once)

2 Noble Goods (different): 10 coins (only once)

Countinghouses



For Countinghouses in Elmshorn, Segeberg, Odense or Esbjerg: 6 coins each

Secret Power



1 Bonus card: 3 coins

2 Bonus cards: 8 coins

Upgrading



Large Cart and Spokedwheel activated: 15 coins

Master Builder



All buildings built (3 Countinghouses, Ship and Mill): 15 coins

Scrimper



Per Loan marker not spent: 5 coins

Bailiff



The player(s) with the most Countinghouses built: 15 coins

Event cards



No Bonus cards are to be bought or played in this round.



The players receive 1 additional movement point at the beginning of the round.



At the end of the round the players may pay the goods shown from their warehouse and/or Countinghouse cards.
In return they get 3-7 coins (value 1), depending on the quantity.



The players receive 1 additional coin of their choice (value 1) at the beginning of the round.



Put a Plague marker on the large ship on the game board. In this round travel over the sea is not possible.



The players may buy movement points for 1 coin each at the beginning of the round. Each player is allowed a maximum of 7 movement points at any time.



A third Scoring card is turned over.



During the complete round no player is allowed to move to a city with another player's oxcart in it. It is however allowed to travel through that city.



The players do not get any income at the beginning of the round.



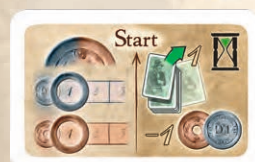
At the end of the round each player gets the coins shown, who has the goods shown in their warehouse and/or on their Countinghouse cards – independent of the number of the single goods. The goods do NOT have to be given away.



During this round players have to pay 1 Thaler or Krone to each other player who has a Countinghouse in a city the travelling player moves on or through. If there are Countinghouses of different players in that city, the travelling player has to pay 1 coin each to all of those players.



Put a Plague marker on this city. In this round the city of Tönning must not be travelled through or landed in. To calculate the proceeds when selling goods the route via Rendsburg has to be used instead.



Both currency rates are put on their 1. Each player draws 2 Bonus cards at the beginning of the round, chooses 1 and puts the other one face-down in the Bonus card stack (which is

shuffled together with the rest of the stack). In addition the players only start with 1 coin in their currency (instead of 2).



Both currency rates are increased by 1. Put one Plague marker on Åbenrå and Itzehoe each. No one is allowed to travel through or land on these cities. To calculate the proceeds when selling goods the next shortest route has to be used instead.

VEJEN is a game by Kai Starck and Thomas Nielsen.

Alexander Jung is responsible for the fantastic illustrations and the graphic design.

For his editorial support and as well as the translation we say thank you to Jürgen Valentiner-Branth (SpielStart.com), also to Hanna und Alex Weiß for their proof-reading. For the production of the prototypes we would especially like to thank the team of the Indego GmbH: Christian, Florian and Georg. I thank my friend and consultant Paul for his good advice about the founding of Spielefaible.

Inventors and publisher thank the following test players and supporters:

Chris & Elli, Die Meusels, Die Anderen, Jamey, Lars, Astrid, Maikel, Oke, Norbert as well as Matilda, Alexander, Peter, Susanne, Gönke, Anke, Susan, Rüdiger and Urte as well as all the test players at gamer's events and fairs. Your supportive criticism and your joy while playing this game has inspired us largely in the realization of this game. Through the close cooperation Kai, Thomas and I have got to know and appreciate each other.

Last but not least I thank my wife Jana and our children Henrika and Tom, who have supported and motivated me to make my dream of founding my own game publishing company come true.

Gaming connects, that's not only true at the gaming table, but also and especially when realizing such a gaming project.



Copyright: Spielefaible

Suggestion? Questions? Criticism?
Please write to: info@spielefaible.de

Spielefaible

Henning Voss

Voss Spezial-Rad GmbH • Alte Schmiede 3 • D-25582 Kaaks • Germany

www.spielefaible.de

Made in Germany