

DALE OF MERCHANTS

Base rules

Credits	p.2
Game overview	p.3
Card overview	p.3
Game setup	p.4
Turn overview	p.6
Action phase.....	p.6
Technique action....	p.7
Market action.....	p.8
Stall action.....	p.9
Inventory action	p.9
Refill phase.....	p.10

4 player team rules

Setup and gameplay	p.11
-------------------------	------

1 player solo rules

Setup and gameplay	p.12
Mono's decisions.....	p.12
Acquire.....	p.12
Mono's turn	p.13

Other resources

Appendix	p.14
Rules summary	p.20



Prefer to learn by watching?
You can check out our video tutorial at
snowdaledesign.fi/learn-dom .

CREDITS

Game design: **Sami Laakso**

Solo mode design: **Sami Laakso**

Solo mode development: **Bartek Szopka**

Illustrations: **Sami Laakso, Jesús Delgado**

Graphic design: **Sami Laakso**

Editing: **Sami Laakso, Ville Reinikainen**

Development assistance: **Bartek Szopka**

World building: **Jordan Lee MacCarthy**

Card themes and flavour texts: **Sami Laakso, Ville Reinikainen**

Proofreading and feedback: **Ville Reinikainen, Bartek Szopka, Jared McComb**

Playtesting and advice: **Olli Helin, Seija Helle, Kevin Hernandez, Juha-Matti Jaakkola, Rami Lyytikäinen, Eero Kesälä, Mark Maharddhika, Jasperi Mahlamäki, Tommi Mansikka, Lauri-Matti Nurmi, Maria Oksanen, Niklas Oksanen, Nadezhda Penkrat, Janne Pietikäinen, Ville Reinikainen, Layane Souza Barros**

Special thanks to **Mason Weaver** for his fan solo variant *The Company*, **Benjamin Tham** for further developing it, and to **Jeff** for his fan solo variant *The Guild*. While their variants are very different from Mono, they inspired us to make it!

© 2027 Snowdale Design snowdaledesign.fi

All rights reserved.



GAME OVERVIEW

Dale of Merchants is a deck building card game where you compete in a trading competition. As a merchant, your goal is to complete your **stall**. Once a player builds the 8th stack in their stall, they immediately win the game!

You need to choose what actions to take and with what cards, as each card can be used in multiple ways. Just as important is to balance between purchasing new cards and letting go of your old ones to get closer to victory! You can also customise the gameplay by choosing different animalfolk decks each time you play.

CARD OVERVIEW

Card effects often allow you to bend the rules of the game, overriding this rulebook. Resolve a card's effects in the order they are written.

Many cards use **keywords**, explained in the appendix, starting from page 14.

Animalfolk cards

Each animalfolk deck contains 15 animalfolk cards. These cards have values ranging from 1 to 5 and are the core element of the game. All animalfolk cards have an animal icon on their top left corner.



Clutter cards (junk) ♻️

You will start each game with several junk cards in your deck, used primarily to purchase new cards. If you run out of junk, use other cards as substitutes.



Mono cards 🐾

The automated opponent in the solo mode is called Mono, and it uses its own cards to play against you. Their use is further explained on page 12.



Card icons 📄

The word "card" is replaced by icons and card sources are not usually written. Unless otherwise specified, drawing cards happens from your deck and everything else from players' hands.

📄 = 1 card

📄📄 = 2 cards

📄📄📄 = 3+ cards

We also want to thank the people who contributed to the original games, on which the anniversary editions are built.

Development assistance: **Seppo Kuukasjärvi**

World building: **Talvikki Eskelinen, Jason Ahokas**

Card themes and flavour texts: **Seppo Kuukasjärvi**

Proofreading and feedback: **Jens Bischoff, Tuomas Tervonen, Topher Wong**

Playtesting and advice: **Aro Laaksonen, Laura Kesälä, Ville Kuusinen, Jarmo Niinisalo, Esa Salminen, Sami Soisalo**



GAME SETUP

To begin, choose a number of animalfolk decks based on player count and take them with their related components from the box.

				
3 decks	3 decks	4 decks	5 decks	4 decks

*Solo rules are explained on page 12 and team rules on page 11.

Change the feel of the game by choosing different animalfolk decks. You can use the included deck cards or our online tool to help you.



snowdaledesign.fi/dom-decks



- Form each player's **deck** by giving everyone a single 1-value card from each chosen animalfolk deck and a number of junk cards until each player has a total of 10 cards. Shuffle the facedown decks.



Example of a player deck in a 2-player game

- Each player forms their **hand** by drawing cards from their deck equal to their hand size (5 by default).
- Leave space near each player for their **discard**, **stall**, and **schedule**.

- Return the unused 1-value animalfolk cards to the game box. Form the **market**, called the **supply**, by shuffling the remaining animalfolk cards (valued 2–5) facedown together.
- Place the market board next to the supply. Form the **market** by drawing 5 cards from the supply one by one and placing them faceup on the slots on the board (starting from the right).
- Leave space near the market for the supply's discard, called the **bin**.
- Form the **junkyard** by placing the remaining junk cards faceup near the playing area.

The player who woke up the earliest today should start the game by taking the first turn. Alternatively, you can choose the starting player randomly.



TURN OVERVIEW

During the game, players take turns in a clockwise order until someone wins by building their 8th stack in their stall. A player's turn consists of four phases:

1. **Start of turn** - Effects may trigger
2. **Action phase** - Perform one action p.6
 - **Technique** - Play a technique card p.7
 - **Market** - Purchase a card from the market p.8
 - **Stall** - Build a stack in your stall. p.9
 - **Inventory** - Discard cards from your hand p.9
3. **Refill phase** - Fill your hand back to 5 cards p.10
4. **End of turn** - Effects may trigger

Nothing happens during your start or end of turn, unless you have specific cards that trigger during them.

ACTION PHASE

Perform **one** action of your choice. The 4 available actions are described on the following pages, and two key concepts below.

Technique p.7

Market p.8

Stall p.9

Inventory p.9

Often awards you with bonus actions .

When can I use my passive cards?

Before each of your actions, you may use the passive cards in your hand. Reveal the card and resolve its effects **without** discarding it. Each passive card can be used once per turn.

Some passive cards provide their effect elsewhere or at a different time as stated on their effect text.

Passive



How are cards kept in decks and discards?

Keep cards in all decks facedown and in discards faceup. You may look through the cards in discards at any time, but may not reorder them.

Technique action

Play technique cards to resolve powerful card effects and create combos.

To play a technique, place a technique card from your hand faceup in front of you in your schedule. Then resolve the effects in the order they are written on the card. After you have fully resolved the card's effects, discard it.

Technique



What is my schedule?

It is the location played technique cards stay in while you resolve their effects. Cards there are unaffected by other effects. In case multiple effects would resolve at the same time, at the start of your turn for example, you choose the order to resolve them.

If the effect asks for more cards than there are available, perform it with the maximum amount of cards available. However, if any deck has fewer cards than you or anyone else needs new cards from it, shuffle its discard to form a new deck.

If the technique card has a bonus action icon , perform another action after resolving the card's immediate effects. The bonus action is always awarded on the turn the card is played, even if the card remains in your schedule and has delayed effects.



What can I do after playing a technique with a plus .

Continue your action phase by taking any of the four usual actions. If you choose to play another technique card which also has a plus , you get to continue your turn again!

You are only awarded with the bonus action if you play the card as a technique action, not if you use it for any other action.



Market action

Purchase new, useful cards from the market to improve your deck.

A card’s **price** on the market is equal to its **value** plus the **added cost** printed on the board above its slot (increasing from +0 to +4).

To purchase, discard cards from your hand with a combined total equalling or exceeding your chosen card’s price. All cards used must be necessary to complete the purchase. After discarding the cards you used to purchase, place the newly purchased card **into your hand**.

What does it mean that all cards must be necessary?

If you can leave some cards out while still being able to complete the purchase, you have to do so. For example, you are allowed to buy a card priced at 5 (4 + 1) with two 4-valued cards (total of 8) even if you have a 5-value card in your hand. However, you cannot use the 5 and a 4 together, as then the 4 would be redundant.



When do I fill the market?

Whenever there is an empty slot in the market and you have resolved the current effect (not just after the market action), you need to refill the market.

Slide all cards in the market to the rightmost empty slots. Then draw new cards from the supply to fill the empty slots, starting from the right.



If the supply ever runs out **and you need cards from it**, shuffle the bin to form a new facedown supply. If the supply and bin run out at the same time, the market will be only partially filled.

Stall action

Build a stack in your stall to get closer to victory.

Each player’s stall has room for 8 stacks of cards with ascending total values from 1 to 8. At the time of building, the total value of your first stack must be exactly 1, the next exactly 2, and so on. They have to be built in ascending order from 1 to 8.

To build a stack, choose any number of animalfolk cards from a **single set** from your hand with their values adding up exactly to the required amount. Place them in front of you into your stall faceup in a way that leaves all card values visible. A stack must be completely built in a single action. You cannot build a partial stack and continue to add to it later.



Example of a player's stall with the first 6 stacks built

In some cases, card effects can modify your stacks’ values or manipulate the cards in them. That is fine. After a stack is finished, it does not matter what its value is or what cards are in it. The total value of your next stack is only determined by the number of stacks you have already built, not by what is in them.

How do I win the game?

Once a player builds their 8th stack, **the game ends immediately** and they are celebrated as the winner of the game.

Try to balance between purchasing new cards and building stacks. Don’t rush it though, as the cards in your stall can no longer be used for other actions, and you could run out of steam. Just try to not let your opponents get too far ahead.

Inventory action

Discard any amount of undesired cards from your hand, even zero, to hopefully draw better ones from your deck.

Why and when should I take the inventory action?

It is often best to end your turn by purchasing or building. Still, it might sometimes be worth it to end your turn with an inventory action if you got a lot of value from playing technique cards, or if you need a particular card to finish a stack.

REFILL PHASE

After you have performed your chosen action and possible bonus actions, you immediately move to your refill phase.

Draw cards until you reach your hand size (5 by default). If your hand already exceeds your hand size, **do not discard the extra cards**. Only the player whose turn it is fills their hand.



The default hand size is 5

Whenever your deck runs out and **you or anyone else needs new cards from it**, shuffle your discard and use it to form your new deck.

If you do not have enough cards to fill your hand **during refill phase only**, draw junk cards from the junkyard until you reach your hand size. If needed, use cards not in play as substitutes for junk.

Remember, the game ends immediately when someone builds their 8th stack!



If you have any comments, questions, or suggestions, you can join our friendly Discord server at snowdaledesign.fi/discord or email us at info@snowdaledesign.fi.

You can find the official FAQ at snowdaledesign.fi/dom-faq.

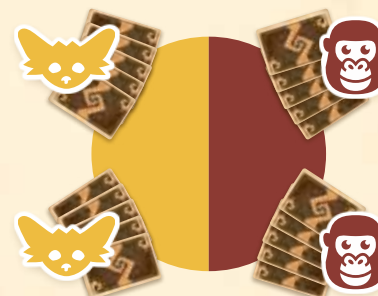


4 PLAYER TEAM RULES

With 4 players, you can form 2 teams to reduce downtime and introduce additional depth to the gameplay.

Game setup

Form 2 teams of 2 players, teammates sitting next to each other. The player who woke up the earliest today, or a random one, is the starting player.



Gameplay

On the first turn of the game, only the starting player plays. Afterwards, teams take turns where **both** teammates go through their turn's four phases together at the same time, one phase at a time.

However, you cannot begin an action or use a card effect if your teammate is currently resolving one. Wait for them to complete their effect and then collectively choose who plays next.

Each team has a single stall. The number of stacks needed to win the game is increased to **10**, with values 1 to 10. You may build a stack together, with both players contributing cards to it. This still counts as a build action for only one of the contributing players.

You may show your cards to your teammate.



The number of stacks needed to win a team game is 10

1 PLAYER SOLO RULES

A multinational trading corporation *Members of the Opalescent New Order*, also known as *Mono*, is wiping out local trade. Will you resist its overwhelming might or be swept away?

Play against an automated opponent, called **Mono**. Just like any other player, it has its own deck, discard, hand, and stall.

Game setup

Follow the regular 2-player setup rules, but when forming Mono's deck, also shuffle the 3 Mono cards  matching the chosen animalfolk decks into it. Mono's deck will have 13 cards.

Keep Mono's hand of cards facedown during setup and your turns.

You take the first turn.

If, after resolving an effect or filling your hand, you have any Mono cards  in your hand, place them on Mono's discard.



Gameplay

Follow the regular rules concerning winning, losing, and playing your turn. Mono has distinct rules to follow on its turn, seen on the right.

Mono does not use animalfolk card effects.

Mono's decisions

New cards are placed in random order to the left of Mono's hand (on top of its facedown hand on your turn).

When Mono chooses cards from its hand, the market, any discard, or any stall, prioritise cards from **left to right** and then from **top to bottom** depending on the source. When Mono chooses a card with the lowest value, it prioritises **junk before other 1-valued cards**.

If multiple Mono cards in Mono's schedule would trigger at the same time, resolve them in the order they were originally played.

Acquire

Many Mono cards have the **acquire** keyword.

When Mono plays a card with **acquire** and has more stacks than you, it prioritises purchasing instead of building this turn. However, at 7 stacks, Mono always prioritises building in hopes of winning the game!

What if I keep losing to Mono?

Don't get discouraged! Mono has a different playing style with each deck combination, some being harder to beat than others. While challenging, Mono should still always be winnable.

Try to utilise your cards the best you can before committing them to your stall!



Start of Mono's turn

Reveal Mono's hand without reordering its cards.

Leftmost Mono card 



Technique action

- If Mono has Mono cards  in hand, it plays its leftmost Mono card.
- Mono does **not** play animalfolk cards.

Mono played a card without 

Mono played a card with  or had no Mono cards .

Mono tries to take the **stall** or **market** action. If it fails in what it prioritises first, it tries the other before continuing to fill its hand.

- By default **or** if Mono has 7 stacks, it prioritises the **stall** action.
- If Mono played a Mono card with the **acquire** keyword **and** Mono has more stacks than you (but less than 7), it prioritises the **market** action.

Stall action

- Mono builds stacks in order from 1 to 8, but the value of each stack **can** exceed its required value.
- Mono uses as few cards as possible to build.
- Mono **can** mix different animalfolk sets in stacks.
- Mono **cannot** use Mono cards to build.

Market action

- Mono purchases the leftmost card it can afford.
- Mono uses as few cards as possible to purchase.

Refill

Discard any clutter (Junk) left in Mono's hand.

Turn any leftover cards in Mono's hand facedown.

Fill Mono's hand to 5 by placing cards from its deck facedown on its hand.



New cards

End of Mono's turn

APPENDIX

You can find all keywords and game-specific rules here. The rules are ordered based on which game they first appeared in, and there is space after them for rules stickers from future games.

Toss

keyword

When you **toss** a card, place it onto a location based by its type.

- *Junk* → Junkyard
- *Animalfolk* → Bin
- *Mono* → Mono's discard

Acquire

keyword 

Only Mono cards  can have the **acquire** keyword. When Mono plays a card with **acquire** and has more stacks than you, it prioritises purchasing instead of building this turn. However, at 7 stacks, Mono always prioritises building in hopes of winning the game!

Alert

game mechanism

If, after resolving an effect or filling your hand, you have any cards with an alert  **in your hand** that belong to someone else, resolve their alerts in your chosen order.

All Mono cards  have an alert, which returns the card to Mono's discard.



Ocelot die

game mechanism  1

The ocelot die  has these sides: 0  1  2  2  3  3

Copy

keyword  1

Cards with the **copy** keyword can imitate other cards. When a card **copies** another one, it **copies** it in its entirety, including its set, value, card type, and effect. It does not matter if later the card you **copied** is no longer where it was when you **copied** it originally.

Copying ends if you discard the card or have it in your hand at the end of your turn.



Marbled polecat die

game mechanism  2

The marbled polecat die  has these sides:  1  1  2  2  3  3

Snowshoe hare die

game mechanism  3

The snowshoe hare die  has these sides:      

Store

keyword  3

When an effect asks you to **store** cards, place those facedown in your schedule. You may look at your **stored** cards at any time. Place all your **stored** cards into your hand at the start of your next turn.

Gold

game mechanism    4

When paying for cards **spend**, or **finish**, you may use your gold  to cover some or all of the price. Each gold  is worth 1 and you cannot overpay with it.

When purchasing, Mono  uses gold  before cards.

There is considered to be an unlimited number of coins.



Spend

keyword   4

Before you play a card with the **spend** keyword, you must pay the amount next to **spend** using the same rules as purchasing cards.

Spend X is always followed by a range of values. The exact amount you pay (up to the maximum) determines the value of X. You may overpay for the maximum value similarly to purchasing cards from the market.

Resolve each **spend** separately.

Finish

keyword   4

When you play a card with the **finish** keyword, resolve any effects preceding **finish** and leave it in your schedule. If the card gives a bonus action , gain it now.

During your action phase, you may **spend** the amount next to **finish** to resolve any effects after the keyword and discard the card. This does not count as an action.

Resolve each **finish** separately.

Giant pangolin dice

game mechanism  5

Both giant pangolin dice  have these sides:      

Source  and **destination**  on giant pangolin cards are determined by the result on the corresponding pangolin die:

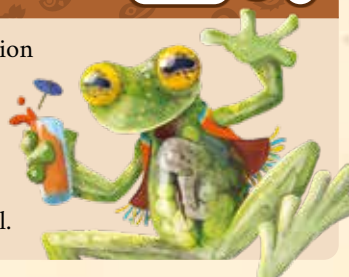
 Hand (random)  Deck (top)  Discard (top)

Repeat

keyword  5

A card with **repeat** can also be played as a technique action from any position in your discard. If played from the discard, after fully resolving the technique effect, place the card on the bottom of your deck.

Repeat techniques are played from your hand as normal.



Clock 🌍

game mechanism



6

When you play with any 🌍 deck, players need to keep track of time with their own clock 🌍.

At the start of each of your turns, move the clock 🌍 to **dawn** 🌅.

Cards from 🌍 decks have parts that are active only during a specific time of day when you play such card. After you have resolved the immediate effects of **any** technique card, advance your clock 🌍 one step: **dawn** 🌅 → **day** ☀️ → **night** 🌙.



Clocks cannot move backwards from **dawn** 🌅 or forwards from **night** 🌙.

Mono's clock 🌍 does **not** reset to **dawn** 🌅 at the start of Mono's turn and it **can** move forward from **night** 🌙 to **dawn** 🌅.

Future games will have rules stickers which you can apply here and on the following pages.



RULES SUMMARY

After setup **p.4**, players take turns in clockwise order.

Start of turn

Effects may trigger.

Action phase

p.6

Take a single action from the four available ones.

You may also use each passive card's effect in your hand once during your action phase without discarding them.

Technique action

p.7

Place a technique card into your schedule, resolve its effects, and discard it once fully resolved.

If the card has a bonus action icon , perform another action after this one.

Stall action

p.9

Place cards into your stall with their total matching the next stack to build it.

Each individual stack can only have cards from a single animalfolk set, and no junk!

Market action

p.8

Purchase a new card from the market by discarding cards with a combined total equal to the chosen card's price. Place the new card into your hand.

Inventory action

p.9

Discard any amount of cards from your hand, even zero.

Whenever there is an empty slot in the market after a resolved effect, slide the cards in the market to the right and fill any empty slots from the supply!

Refill phase

p.10

After your chosen action and possible bonus actions, draw cards from your deck until you reach your hand size (5 by default).



End of turn

Effects may trigger.

Once a player builds their 8th stack, the game ends immediately and they win!