

Ducks in Tow

(Solo and Youth modes not discussed here)

Set-Up:

1. Take the 5 Starting Formation cards (cards with no symbol at the top) and selecting them based on the number of players (see bottom right corner), randomly deal 1 to each player face-up onto the table in front of them.
 - This card is considered “complete” and starts a player’s duck row network.
 - The player who received the “First Player” Location card goes first.
 - Each player chooses a color pawn, plastic “tow” piece, and 1 reference card.
2. Separate the 6 Special Action tiles (white border) from the 8 Location tiles (color border), and set-up the board based on player count as shown on page 2 of the rulebook.
 - The dark hex spaces shown in the diagram is where a random Location tile will go. Unused tiles go to the box.
 - The yellow highlighted hexes are where players will place their pawn and tow piece (1 per hex.)
3. Take the Location cards, and if playing with 2-3 players, remove cards that match Location tiles not in your game.
 - Shuffle the Location cards and deal 4 to each player to form their “hand.”
 - Place the remaining deck nearby and flip over 4 cards face-up to form a selection row.
4. Shuffle the Formation cards (transparencies) and randomly select 4/5/6 cards with 2/3/4 players. Place these selected cards nearby for all players to see. Extras go to the box.
5. Place all the food into the Seed bag. The 1st/2nd/3rd/4th player draws 2/3/4/4 food out of the bag into their play area.
6. With 2/3/4 players, place 6/7/8 ducks of each color into the Duck bag. Any extra ducks go back to the box.
 - Draw and place 1 duck per tile in the game, even the tiles with a player’s pawn.

Game Flow:

- Ducks in Tow is played over a number of turns, starting with the first player and going clockwise, until a player reaches 8/7/6 completed Location cards with 2/3/4 players or the last Formation card is claimed. When this happens, each other player in the game gets 1 more turn, then the game ends. (See “End Game” for final scoring.)
- On a player’s turn, they will take up to 4 actions in any order and combination. You can take the same action more than once. The action choices are – **Move, Feed, Shake the Bag, Drop Off, Gift Shop, and Adopt.**
- **Disperse** – This keyword you will see below. When adding a new duck to the board, always add it to a tile that has 0 ducks on it. If several options exist, the active player decides which tile the duck will go on. If all tiles have a duck, then evaluate the tiles with only 1 duck, then 2 ducks and so on. Never disperse a new duck on a tile with a player’s pawn.

Actions:

- **Move**
 - Move your pawn (and all ducks in tow) to an adjacent tile.
 - Multiple players can be on the same tile (per designer on BGG.)
- **Feed**
 - For a single action, as many times as you want, spend 1 matching food (back to the food bag) of a duck on your tile in order to add that duck to a space on your “tow” piece.
- **Shake the Bag**
 - Draw a duck from the bag. If you have a food that matches the duck drawn (and you want the duck) spend the food back to the bag and immediately place the duck on your tow piece.
 - If a player doesn’t have food that matches the drawn duck, or doesn’t want to claim it, “disperse” the duck.
- **Drop Off**
 - Each Location card requires 1-3 ducks of matching color to be in a player’s tow order to complete it. To complete a Location card, your pawn must be on the matching Location tile and you must discard the shown ducks from your tow piece back to the Duck bag. When you do this, draw 1 duck out of the bag randomly and keep the duck in front of you (to be dispersed at the end of your turn, see below under “end of turn.”)
 - A player can complete more than 1 Location card with a single action if all criteria are met for multiple cards.
 - After a Location card is completed, place this card under the leftmost face-up card or on top of the rightmost card (in front of the player) so that all the ducks can be seen in a grid network.
- **Gift Shop**
 - If your pawn is on the tile showing the tripod/camera, then you may take this action.
 - Either... gain 2 food of your choice from the food bag (if you have more than 4 food, discard down to 4 now.)
 - Or... Draw 2 Location cards from the ones face-up and/or from the top of the deck. Don’t refill any cards in the display at this time. If you now have more than 4 Location cards in hand, discard down to 4 at this time.

- **Adopt**
 - If your pawn is on the tile showing the mud/dirt pit, then you may take this action.
 - Remove 2 ducks from your tow piece. Place 1 on any of the matching color dotted-line spaces on your completed Location cards. The other duck is kept in front of you to be dispersed at the end of your turn.

Formation Cards:

- After you take the **Drop Off** or **Adopt** Action, you may claim a Formation card (this does not take up an action.)
- In order to claim a Formation card, you must have the pattern shown within your completed Location card grid network.
- The Formation card can't be rotated or flipped, and they can't extend outside of the grey area on the Location cards.
- Place the Formation card directly on your Location cards to show which ducks are contributing to the card but you can never use the same duck to satisfy more than 1 Formation card.
- The Formation cards claimed are worth the points shown next to the heart icon.

End of Turn:

- Disperse any ducks you placed in front of you during your actions. See under "Game Flow" for a description of this.
 - If dispersing multiple ducks at this time, choose the order they go out onto tiles randomly.
- If you wish, discard any food you own back to the bag, then draw up to 4 food total.
- If you have less than 4 Location cards, draw cards from the display/deck until you have 4 cards in hand, then refill the display from the deck until there are 4 face-up, like during set-up.
- Pass the food bag to the player on your left to signify the start of their turn.

End Game:

- When a player reaches 8/7/6 completed Location cards with 2/3/4 players or the last Formation card is claimed, the end of the game will be triggered. When this happens, each other player in the game gets 1 more turn, then the game ends.
 - Score 1 point for each duck in your longest horizontal "connected row" **for each of the 4 colors**. Gaps in this chain break the row. (See page 6 in the rulebook for a picture example.)
 - Add points earned from claimed Formation cards.
- Most points is the winner.
 - Ties broken by the player with the longest connected duck row, then by the 2nd longest duck row and so on.