

Tacara

Tactical car racing

English rules by Lisa M. Hunt

Eggert-Spiele
Dahlenkehre 1 D
21077 Hamburg
Tel. 0407609428
E-Mail eggertspie@aol.com

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The strategy car racing game for 3 to 10 players ages 10 and up

Goal:

As in every car racing game, the point is to be the first person to cross the finish line.

Tacara is a car racing game that is easy to learn; easy to learn, but hard to win. In this game, there are no dice or event cards to blame failure on; if you lose, you employed bad tactics or, in other words, the winner is also the best tactician.

Contents:

- 1 playing board
- 10 race cars
- 30 wooden chips (3 x 10 colors)
- 30 turbo chips (white)

Rules

Setup:

Playing time depends on the length of the chosen race. A race from Start 1 to Finish Line 1 will take about 15 minutes per car. Racing from Start 1 to Finish Line 2 with 4 cars will take about 45 minutes. Depending on the number of players and the length of time you want to play, each player takes 1 to 3 cars. For each car, he also takes 3 wooden chips in the car's color. He immediately places one chip on the center square of the shift table: this is the neutral square. The other two are used for determining and recording the turn sequence. Each player also receives 3 turbo chips (white chips) marked with the point values 1, 2, and 3, shown by the dots on their faces.

Start positions are determined using the position markers (the colored chips). Put one chip per car into the bag and then draw them out one at a time. The first chip drawn determines which car takes start position 1, the second start position 2 and so on.

After drawing all the chips, put them back in the bag, and place the cars on the board in starting order: this is the first turn. Draw the chips out of the bag again and place them on the "Current Turn" row; this determines turn order for turn 2. Put the chips into the bag a third time and draw them out to determine the turn order for turn 3. Once the chips for the current turn have been used up, the chips in the "Next Turn" row are moved to the "Current Turn" row and new chips for the "Next Turn" row are drawn.

Setup is finished; now the race can start.

Clarification of Example 2:

If the shift chip in Example 1 had just been placed in Position 3, where the cars must move 4 spaces forward and 2 spaces up, the car would only be able to first move up and then forward.

If the shift chip was placed at 3 over and 4 forward, the car would have to either not move or else crash. In the example, the player has already moved the shift chip.

Such opportunities can also cause a crash. If a car moves into a space it cannot enter, hits the walls or another car, it suffers damage. Flip the car over in the last legal space it can enter. Over the course of the next few turns, move its shift chip back to the neutral square as quickly as possible. When the chip reaches the neutral square, flip the car back on to its wheels; it can begin to accelerate away from the neutral square again. The faster you go, the longer you wait before moving again after you crash.

Depending on the number of cars are in the race, you can use different spaces. With 3 to 4 cars, only the gray spaces can be used; with 5 to 6 cars, the green and yellow fields may be used and with 7 or more you can use the red spaces. The blue squares represent the pits, but otherwise count as gray spaces.

Gentlemen, Start Your Engines:

When starting, the cars move in the order of their start positions. After the first turn, determine the turn order of the next two rounds randomly (see Setup), by gathering all the turn chips and drawing them out of the bag. They're laid out in the order drawn, so that everyone can see when his turn is in the current turn and the next turn. Determine the turn order in the third and following rounds the same way.

Winning:

In our example (Start 1 to Finish 1) the race lasts about 30 turns. The winner is the first person to cross the finish line. If because of turn order, there are still cars left to move after someone crosses the finish line, they still take their turns. If any of the remaining cars also cross the finish line in that turn, the car furthest past the finish line wins. If two cars are tied, the car closest to the inside wins.

In general, the last turn must be played out completely. If a car crashes before it crosses the finish line, it must stop until it is ready to go again, that is, when its shift chip is on the neutral space again.

Turbo Chips:

At the beginning of the race, each car received three turbo chips. These are used to vary the car's speed. By playing a chip, a player can, in addition to his normal turn, move the car the number of spaces indicated by the dots on the chip. The turbo chips can be used before or after the player's move. After using a chip, it must be put back in the pool. If a player uses two or more chips, he can combine these special actions in any order.¹ This can be very useful during acceleration, braking and especially when negotiating curves.

¹For example, you might first move the number of dots shown on the chip, then shift and move as usual, and then use another chip or chips to move more spaces. You can never shift more than once in a turn. - Clarification by Peter Eggert.

How do you get new chips? Each turn, you may decide to take a chip instead of shifting and moving. Place the chip under the car. There are only two limitations:

- You can only exercise this option once per space. On your next turn, put the chip in your pool and move your car as dictated by the shift chip.²
- If there are chips in the pool, you can draw 3 turbo chips by stopping in the refueling spaces, which are the spaces marked "T" in the pits. When making a pit stop, place the shift chip in the neutral square. Cars can only refuel once during a race.

Game Variations:

If the game is not tactical enough, the drafting rule can be used.

Drafting:

If the car directly in front of you moves before you, you can move out of turn and go next.

If another car passes a car that is directly in front of you, you can take advantage of the draft and accelerate one square faster. That means that in your turn you can either move the shift chip one space further or move one more space after your regular turn in any direction (except diagonally).

Speed:

If you feel the game is lasting too long and you have nerves of steel, try reducing the turn time, to 30 seconds per car, for example. As the game speeds up it also becomes more hectic, allowing more mistakes to creep in, and sharpening both your pain and your agony, if you can stand it.

Points:

Tournaments can be run using the Formula One model, in which points are awarded for the first 6 finishers.

The author is happy to answer your questions and suggestions. Otherwise, I hope you have fun!

Peter Eggert

²If your shift chip is in the neutral space, you can still choose not to move that turn, but you cannot draw any more turbo chips for that space since it has already been used for that purpose. - Clarification by Peter Eggert