

TOUR OF ALAMEDA

A bicycle racing game with a little mischief,
for 2 or more players ages 4 and up.

This is the exciting Tour of Alameda! "Tour" here is a fancy word for a big race, made up of a series of smaller races, called stages. Each stage will have a winner, who will get two (2) points, and whoever has the most points will be the champion! In this game, instead of actually hopping on our bikes, we race by playing cards from our hands.

Each player will have a deck of numbered cards representing different speeds ("speed cards"), numbered from one (the slowest) to ten (the fastest!) plus a single Monkey Wrench card. There should also be a way to keep track of points, and a yellow jersey to show who is the leader.

Set aside your Monkey Wrench and shuffle the rest of your cards. Draw five (5) of the speed cards and put the Monkey Wrench in your hand, for six (6) cards total. Set the other cards aside as your deck. Give the leader jersey to the oldest player, to start.

A stage is a mini-race, worth two (2) points. Each stage is made up of a few "legs" — during each leg, each player will play a single card. It works like this: Each player picks a card from their hand to play this leg, and places it face down in front of themselves. When all the players have played, they flip up their cards one at a time, starting with whoever has the leader jersey and proceeding to their left. If someone flips up a Monkey Wrench, pause for a moment, and deal with that before the next player shows what they played.

The player who played the Monkey Wrench (the "Monkey") chooses any other player (the "Wrenched"). The Monkey takes and plays the card the Wrenched played for this leg, whether it's already face up or still face down. Then the Wrenched draws a card (without looking) from the Monkey's hand and plays it face up in front of themselves; that is now their card for the leg. If the Wrenched had also played a Monkey Wrench, both players draw from each other! And yes, the Monkey can take the card another monkey took (making the other monkey draw from their hand), but they can only ever take cards that were played this leg.

When all players' cards are face up, add the distance each player traveled this leg to their distance so far this stage. When more than half of the players have played monkey wrenches — or, in the last stage, if everyone runs out of cards! — the stage is over. If it isn't over, everyone draws another card and plays another leg. Remember, everyone should always have 5 speed cards in hand, unless their deck is empty. Any player who has not played their monkey wrench will have a sixth card in hand.

When the stage is over, whoever went the farthest wins the stage and gets two points! If there's a tie for first place, they each get one point. (If there are four or more players, and first place was not a tie, everyone in second place gets one point.) After awarding points, give the leader jersey to the player with the most points; if there's a tie, leave it where it is.

If the players can draw up to 5 cards in hand at the end of the stage, everyone takes their monkey wrench back into their hand, and plays another stage. When the players can't draw enough cards to play a stage, the tour is over! Whoever has the most points wins. If there is a tie, add up the cards left in hand. Whoever has the most distance in hand wins. If they're still tied, they get to share the honor!

Game Overview

- One deck per player
- Play once through deck
- 2 points per stage
- Most points wins!

Stage Summary

- 5 speed cards in hand
- Play one card at a time
- Draw to replace
- Monkey Wrench up to once per stage
- Ends when most have Monkey Wrenched

Monkey Wrench

- Steal one played card
- They get a random card from your hand

Variations for Younger Players

Typically, each deck would have three each of 1 through 6, two each of 7, 8, and 9, and a single 10, in addition to the Monkey Wrench. To make the game shorter or a little easier for younger players, you may wish to reduce the number of cards available, the hand size, or both. For instance, for very early players, you might use only three each of 1, 2, and 3, two each of 4 and 5, one 6, and use a hand size of 3 speed cards.

Advanced and Optional Rules

There are a few advanced rules provided. They all make the game a little deeper or more fair in some way. Once you are familiar with the basic game, I recommend adding them to your play. Just be sure everybody agrees on which ones are in play before you start.

The Breakaway

During a leg, a player in the lead who still has their Monkey Wrench does not draw a card after playing. Once they are not in the lead, or play their Monkey Wrench, they draw back up to 5 speed cards as normal.

Endurance Stages

If a stage has gone on for more than 4 legs (cards), give a point to the leader after the 5th leg, again at the 7th, the 9th, and so on until the stage ends. Not recommended in a two-player game without Breakaway.

Mountaineer

If a player plays a 4 or lower, and it is the highest card played this leg, they get one point.

Rest

After each stage, each player may choose to put their entire hand of speed cards — but not their Monkey Wrench, of course — on the bottom of their deck, and draw a new hand to start the next stage.

Time Trial Stages

If enough Monkey Wrenches are played on the first leg to end a stage, everybody plays one more card, and the stage ends after that second leg.