

# HARE & TORTOISE

A clever race game with a classic theme

**Generic rules for all versions © 2010 by David Parlett**

The following rules of Hare & Tortoise apply to all versions of the game, though different editions have slightly different rule-sheets. There are four main editions:

1. That of the original game first published by Intellect Games in 1974;
2. That of Ravensburger Games in 1979 and its sub-licensees in Europe;
3. That of Gibsons Games in 1987, also Abacus-Spiele and Rio Grande Games in 2000;
4. That of Ravensburger (again!) in 2008 and Gibsons (again!) in 2010.

## Players

3 to 6 (best for 4 or 5), older children and adults.

## Playing time

Depends on the number of players and how well they know the game, but allow somewhere between 12 and 15 minutes per person. (For the whole game, not for each move!)

## Equipment

1 game board, 6 counters ("runners"), 18 lettuce cards, 15 hare cards, and carrot cards in denominations of 1-5-10-15-30-60 (or 1-3-6-10-15-20 in the 1974 Intellect edition.)

## The general idea

Hare & Tortoise is a race game with a difference. Instead of rolling dice to find out how far to move, you can always move forwards as far as you like, so long as you can pay for it. Payment is made in units of energy called carrots. You start with 65 of these and can earn more by carefully choosing which square to land on. The further you move in one turn, the faster the cost of moving accelerates. This makes Hare & Tortoise not a game of chance but one of strategy and player interaction.

If you play like a hare, taking great leaps forward at each move, you risk running out of carrots too fast and then losing valuable time trying to replace them in order to continue.

If you play like a tortoise, plodding along as cheaply as possible, you will save a lot of carrots but risk leaving it too late to catch up with the others.

The skill of the game lies in choosing which square to move to, and deciding whether play hare-wise or tortoise-wise depending on your position. The fun of the game lies in changing other runner's positions by overtaking them - or even moving backwards. Sometimes it pays to leap ahead. Sometimes it's best to lag behind. But it's always up to you to make the right decision.

## Setting up

Set the board up where everyone can reach it conveniently. Decide the order of seating and play by any agreed means (such as by age, giving priority to the youngest, or by prowess, giving priority to the loser of the previous game).

Each player chooses a runner of their preferred colour and places it in the space marked START.

Each player receives carrot cards totalling 65 made up as follows: one 30, one 15, one 10, two 5's. (Some editions have five or six players receiving an additional 30, making 95 in all, but this is no longer recommended.) Carrots are what you have to pay in order to move. Hold them like a hand of playing-cards during the game so that no one knows exactly how many you have left.

Each player also receives three lettuce cards. Each lettuce can be exchanged for carrots when you land on a lettuce square. You must change all your lettuces for carrots before you are allowed to get home.

Each player also receives one race card. This contains useful information and is for reference only.

Separate the undealt carrot cards into their various denominations and place them on the board in the numbered spaces constituting the "carrot patch". Throughout play, all carrot payments are made into or out of this area.

Put any undealt lettuce cards back in the box. They won't be needed.

Shuffle the Hare cards and place them face down in a convenient spot.

### Object of the game

To be the first to get your runner HOME in accordance with the these two conditions:

- You must cash all your lettuce cards on the way round. You can only do this by landing on lettuce squares, which are few and far between.
- You must not have too many carrots left over when you reach home. The first to reach home may not have more than 10 left unused after paying for their last move, the second may have up to 20, the third up to 30, and so on.

### How to move

You can move your runner forwards to any unoccupied square except a tortoise square (to which you can only move backwards.) You can travel any distance you like so long as you have enough carrots to pay for the move. The cost depends on the number of squares you move, as follows:

To move -  
 1 square costs you 1 carrot  
 2 squares costs  $1+2 = 3$  carrots  
 3 squares costs  $1+2+3 = 6$  carrots  
 4 squares costs  $1+2+3+4 = 10$  carrots  
 5 squares costs  $1+2+3+4+5 = 15$  carrots,

and so on. You can find the cost of moving further by consulting the scale of carrot charges printed on your Race Card. (Or by applying the formula  $c = (d^2+d)/2$ , where  $c$  is the number of carrots and  $d$  the distance to be moved.) Later in the game you may move backwards instead of forwards, but only to a tortoise square.

Moving backwards costs nothing - in fact, it is a way of earning carrots, as explained later.

### Where to move

There are five different types of square you can land on: Numbers, Carrots, Lettuces, Hares, and Tortoises. Each of these offers a special way of earning more carrots. But note that:

You must always pay your carrots in before you can move.  
 You can't pay with any carrots you may gain from the square you move to.  
 You may never move to a square occupied by another player's runner.

**Number squares.** When you land on a number square you do nothing immediately. When your turn comes round again, check whether the number you are on corresponds to your position in the race. If it does, you must draw extra carrots from the patch before making a move. The number you draw is 10 times your position - that is, 10 if you are in 1st position on a "1" square, 20 if in second position on a "2" square, and so on. The squares marked with a flag numbered 1-5-6 always stand for 1st position, but they also represent 5th or 6th position if there are five or six players. Carrots are only earned if the number corresponds to your position when you move away from the square, not when you land on it. If someone else goes past you while you're waiting, they change your position and may prevent you from getting any carrots.

**Carrot squares.** When you land on a carrot square you do nothing immediately. When your turn comes round again you have three choices. You may, if you wish, stay where you are instead of moving off. This entitles you to draw 10 carrots from the patch - or, if you are nearly home and have too many, to pay 10 carrots into the patch. This is called "chewing a

carrot". You can stay on the same carrot square for as long as you like, so long as you pay or draw 10 carrots at each turn. Alternatively, you can just pay and move in the usual way instead of missing a turn.

**Lettuce squares.** A lettuce square enables you to discard one lettuce in exchange for a number of carrots, so you may only land on one if you have at least one lettuce left to exchange. Lettuce squares are therefore very valuable, as there are not many of them, and you don't want lettuces but you do want carrots.

When you land on a lettuce square you do nothing immediately, except to turn your runner upside down to show you have just got there. On your next turn, you turn it right way up and "chew a lettuce". This is done by discarding one lettuce card to the "compost heap" (back in the box) and drawing a number of carrots from the carrot patch. The number to draw is equal to 10 times your current position in the race. For example, if you are lying in 1st position when you chew the lettuce, you win 10 carrots; if 2nd, 20; and so on.

You may not move away on the same turn as chewing a lettuce (give it time to digest!), but you must move away on your next turn. You can't just stay there and chew another one.

**Tortoise squares.** You can only move backwards to a tortoise square, never forwards. Doing so costs you nothing. Instead, you immediately draw 10 carrots for each step it took to reach the tortoise square - for example, 10 if it was immediately behind you, 20 if two squares back, and so on.

You may only move back to the nearest tortoise square behind you, and only if it is unoccupied. Subject to this rule, however, you may move back from any tortoise square to another, and make a whole series of such moves on successive turns, possibly earning hundreds of carrots in the process

**Hare squares.** Hare squares are for players who like taking chances. When you land on a hare square, and have paid for your move, you perform an action known as juggling the hare. In the latest editions (2008, 2010) you do this by drawing the top card from the pile of hare cards, following the instruction printed on it, and returning it to the bottom of the pile. These instructions tend to favour tortoises rather than hares, so it is generally safer to land on a hare square when you are further behind in the race and least safe when you are up front.

Give 10 carrots to each player lying behind you in the race (if any)

*(a) If you haven't enough carrots, give them five each; if still not possible, one each.*

*(b) A player who doesn't want extra carrots may throw them to the carrot patch.*

If there are more players behind you than in front of you, miss a turn. If not, play again.

*If equal, of course, play again.*

Restore your carrot holding to exactly 65

*If you have more than 65, pay extras to the carrot patch; if fewer, draw extras from the carrot patch.*

Draw 10 carrots for each lettuce you still hold

*If you have none left, miss a turn.*

Free ride! Your last turn costs nothing

*Retrieve the carrots you paid to reach this square.*

Lose half your carrots

*Pay them into the carrot patch. If you have an odd number, keep the odd one.*

Show us your carrots!

*Count your carrot cards face up to the table so that everyone will know how many you have left.*

Shuffle the hare cards and receive from each player 1 carrot for doing so

*Do not replace this card at the bottom of the pack but include it in the shuffle.*

There are two of each card except the last, making a total of 15.

Note. If you are playing an older (pre-2008) version, the procedure is different. See below for details.

**Getting Home**

You get home by moving your runner forwards to the HOME flag immediately beyond the last square and making the required payment. You may only do this if -

1. You have cashed all your lettuces and have none left, and
2. The number of carrots you have after paying for your last move is not more than 10 times your position in the race - that is, not more than 10 if you get home first, not more than 20 if you come in second, and so on.

You may wish to go on playing for position. In this case the player who got home first remains in the first position as far as the other are concerned. For example, in a four-player game the player in the rear is always 4th, no matter how many others have reached home. It is important to remember this when using lettuce and number squares.

**Getting stuck**

If you run out of carrots - or for any other reason cannot make a legal move on your turn to play - you must start the race again. Replace your runner in the Start position, restore your carrot holding to the number you started with (65 or 95), and move off immediately. You needn't take any more lettuces, however - those you have already chewed remain out of the game.

**VARIATIONS****Juggling the hare (old style)**

In older (pre-2008) editions, you roll the die (or, in the original Intellect game, randomly draw one of the cards numbered 1 to 6) and add the number you get to your current position in the race, which will also be 1 to 6. This gives you a number from 2 to 12, and you then obey the instruction of that number printed on your race card as follows:

- 2 Move back to the last vacant hare square (if any).
- 3 Miss a turn.
- 4 Move back to the last vacant carrot square (if any).
- 5 Chew a carrot. (Draw 10 out or pay 10 in).
- 6 Restore your carrot holding to exactly 65.
- 7 Free turn. (Reclaim carrots paid to reach this Hare square.)
- 8 Lose exactly half your carrots. (If there's an odd one, keep it.)
- 9 Have another turn.
- 10 Move forward (free) to the next vacant carrot square (if any).
- 11 Chew a lettuce. (If you have any lettuces, treat this hare square exactly as if it were a lettuce square.)
- 12 Restore your carrot holding to exactly 65.

**Hare & Tortoise for two players**

You each start with 95 carrots and 5 lettuces, and move two runners round the board. The winner is the first to get both runners home.

You each play in turn, and at each turn are free to move either one of your runners, but not both. When one of your runners lands on a lettuce square, however, you must use your next turn for chewing a lettuce and the turn after that for moving it away.

When bringing your first runner home you may have any number of carrots and lettuces left over, but the usual rules apply to bringing your second runner home. That is, all five lettuces must have been chewed, and the number of carrots left over must not exceed 20 if it comes home second or 30 if third.

**Partnership Hare & Tortoise**

Four may play as two teams of two, six as three teams of two players or two teams of three, and moves must be taken in an order preventing two members of the same team from playing consecutively. The winning team is the first to get all its runners home.

Members of a team follow the rules of play just as if they were playing for themselves alone. No one, for example, may move a partner's runner. The only difference is that they will try to help one another by leaving themselves in good positions while spoiling the positions of their opponents.

Members of a team may also give one another information and advice, but not in secret - it must be equally open to everyone, including the opponents.

## **CHANGES FROM EARLIER EDITIONS**

---

### **Juggling the hare.**

Juggling the hare is a chance element included only for those who like such things. I never land on hare squares myself, and, if everyone agrees not to, the skill factor is greatly enhanced. Even so, I believe the influence of this chance element is minimal, especially in the latest (2008-2010) version.

My original intention was that you roll a die to get a number from 1 to 6, add this to the numerical value of your position in the race (1, 2, 3 etc), and obey the instruction corresponding to the resultant total.

Intellect changed rolling a die to drawing one of six numbered cards, as they thought it demeaning to include a die in the novel concept of a diceless race game. Ravensburger went further and simply got you to draw a hare card and obey the instruction printed on it. The way they did this effectively thwarted my intention that juggling the hare should tend to favour players lagging behind in the race and be less worth while for the current leaders. Gibson and Abacus ceded to my original idea of rolling a die and adding its result to your position.

However, in the latest versions (2008-2010), I have combined the two ideas by printing on the hare cards instructions that do succeed in favouring those in the rear over those further ahead in the race.

### **Getting home.**

In the original game, no one was allowed to get home with more than 20 carrots left over. By the time Ravensburger published their edition, I had changed this rule to the one below. (10 for the first home, 20 for the second, and so on.)

### **Rearrangement of squares.**

The most substantial revision involved a rearrangement of the opening and closing squares of the race-track for the 1987 Gibson edition. Previously and originally, the first lettuce square lay seventh from Start, enabling the first player to reach it in one move. By 1987 I felt that this gave the starter too great an advantage, and accordingly moved it to the 10th square so as to make it less profitable to reach it in one move. This change necessitated some additional minor rearrangements of preceding squares. At the same time, I changed the last four squares immediately preceding Home, for reasons I hope are obvious.