

A GAME BY
JOHNNY EBSEN

AIRMAIL



Players: 2-4

Age: 10+

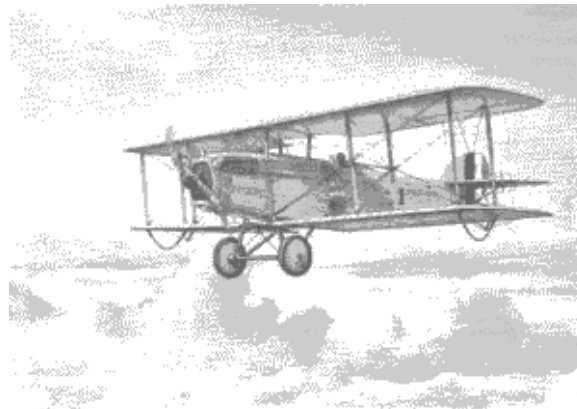
Time to Play: 60 - 90 min.

INTRODUCTION:

Soon after the first flight of an Airplane in 1903, the first interest was expressed for using the Airplane to transport mail. The first official airmail flight dates back to 1911 and was a flight with three letters in California. Soon sporadic airmail flights were conducted in USA, India and the UK. The first big scale use of Airplanes for mail delivery started in the USA in 1918, when the U.S. Airmail service began serving routes between New York, Philadelphia and Washington. U.S. Army Curtiss JN-4 "Jenny" training airplanes, that had become surplus after the end of the World War, was used initially, as it only had to be slightly modified.

With the increased need for scheduled flights, the development of Airfields to accommodate landings in all kind of weather was enforced. This included installation of radio stations and later beacon lights for the guidance of pilots, and reduced the number of casualties, due to weather significantly.

From 1918 to 1927, the Post Office Department built and operated the nation's airmail service, establishing routes, testing aircraft and training pilots. When the Department turned the service over to private contractors in 1927, the system was a point of national pride. Be a subcontractor to the United States Post Office Department and try to get the most lucrative contracts and route your Aircraft(s) efficiently to be more profitable than your competitors and the final victory will be yours.





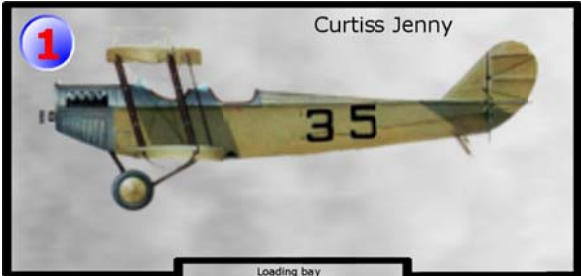


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Per player:

1 Aircraft markers (2 optional)	10 Tower markers	1 Fuel depot card	1 Point marker
			
1 Aircraft overview cards (2 optional)			
			

General:

1 Game board	103 Airmail contracts	3 Math compasses	50 Action cards
			
2 Weather dice (optional)	1 Flight time marker	1 Event tracker	20 Fuel Barrel markers
			
5 Cloud markers (optional)	1 Rule set		
			

GAME END:

The game ends immediately, when a player finishes a contract that brings the Flight Time marker into the “End” space of the Flight Time track, even if the player would still be able to deliver mail bags.

WINNING THE GAME:

Four times during the game, the US Postal department Evaluates the players contribution to the Airmail service. The players receive points depending on the amount and value of contracts they have finished. The US Postal Department also honors any contribution the player has made to develop the Airports, used for the Airmail service, at the end of the game and additionally the player that finished the contract with the highest value also receives points.

The winner is the player with the most points at the end of the game.

GAME PREPARATIONS:

Place the game board in the middle of the table and place the Flight Time Marker on top of the Event marker in the Start space of the Flight Time Track. Distribute three Action Cards to each player and place the remaining cards face up next to the game board. The 3 Math Compasses are placed next to the game board.

Each player receives (in player color) 10 Tower markers, a point marker and the Aircraft marker #1. Additionally each player receives an Aircraft overview card #1 and places it with the “Jenny”-side up in front of him; furthermore each player places their point marker at the “start” space on the point table.



Fig.1: Typical start setup of the Airmail game.

The Airmail Contract Cards are sorted in four stacks according to color and shuffled. In each stack a number of cards according to table 1 is sorted out and placed in a stack. The remaining cards are removed from the game. Then the black contracts are distributed evenly between the players. .Then a number of black contracts are distributed to the players according to table 1.

Table 1:	Start (Black)	Red	Green	Blue
2 player	6 per player	8	8	16
3 player	4 per player	8	8	16
4 player	3 per player	8	8	16

Create a pile with the remaining colors in following order from top to bottom: Red, Green and then Blue.

A start player is determined and he picks one of the Black Airmail Contract Cards he received and places the remaining contracts face up next to the game board, then the next player, clockwise, now chooses a contract etc. until all players have one contract only and the remaining black contract cards are placed face up next to the game board. Again starting with the start player the Aircraft marker #1 is now placed in the starting Airport of the contract. The game is ready to play.

THE GAME BOARD:



Fig.2: Game board

GAME SEQUENCE:

The Players take turn clockwise and each turn allow the players to perform one of the following actions.

1. Fly
- or
2. Take 3 Action Cards
- or
3. Take 1-3 Airmail Contract card(s)
- or
4. Develop 1 Airport
- or
5. Increase fuel storage by 1
- or
6. Buy / Upgrade Aircraft

ACTIONS:

FLY:

For a player to be able to fulfill contracts he has to first pick up the mailbag in the starting airport of the contract and deliver it at the destination airport. In order to do so he has to fly the airplane with a number of stops along the route, as the range of the Airplanes are limited. Each stop has to be within the range of the specific airplane, which can be measured with the corresponding Math compass. If a player chooses to perform the "Fly" action, he is eligible to do as many stops as his number of Action cards allow.

To land in an airfield or airport require the use of an Action card in order to refuel the airplane. This Action card is discarded to the Action card pile when landing, unless an opponent has placed a tower marker in the Airport, then the card is handed to that player. If two opponent players have placed Tower markers in the Airport, the card is handed to the player with the Top marker. If the landing player has an own marker, no matter if lower or upper position, in the Airport, the landing is free and no card is paid.

If the Aircraft passes or ends in a start location of an Airmail Contract Card in the player's possession it can be loaded to the aircraft (if a free loading bay is available). Also if the Aircraft marker is moved into the destination Airport of a loaded Airmail Contract Card it can be unloaded, and is then placed in the finished contracts pile of the player. The loading and unloading does not cost additional actions or Action cards, and there is no limit to the number of cards that can be finished in a turn. As soon as a contract is finished the Flight Time marker on the Flight Time Track is moved one step forward and the player is eligible to place a tower marker in that airport at no extra cost. If there is already a tower marker present, the new marker is placed on top of it. If two markers are already in the Airport the lower marker is removed and returned to the owner and the new marker is placed on top of the marker left. If a player already has a marker in the Airport, no new marker is placed there.

At the end of the player action the Event tracker is moved forward toward the Flight Time marker and eventual events are being performed.

TAKE ACTION 3 CARDS:

When performing this action the player takes three Action cards on hand from the Action card pile. A player may not have more cards than what is given by the Fuel depot card. If this action would take the number of cards on hand above the hand limit, then a reduced number of cards are taken.

TAKE 1 TO 3 AIRMAIL CONTRACT CARDS:

In order to be able to increase the number of Airmail Contract Cards to perform, a player may take between one and three new Airmail Contract Cards from the open Contracts. As soon as they are taken, new cards are unveiled from the Airmail Contract Card pile. Contracts not finished at the end of the game are penalized with -1 point per card. A player may never have more than 5 Airmail contract cards on hand or loaded at any time (not counting finished contracts).

DEVELOP AIRPORT:

The Airports can be developed to be better able to accommodate the commercial aviation. In this action the player may place one Tower marker in any Airport on the game board, it does not have to be close to the aircraft marker. If there is already a tower marker present, the new marker is placed on top of it. If two markers are already in the Airport the lower marker is removed and returned to the owner and the new marker placed on top of the marker left. Tower markers in an Airport allow a player to land without using an Action card and additionally the player with the top most marker receives any Action cards paid for landing in that Airport. This action is not allowed in Airports already having a marker of the player.

BUY / UPGRADE AIRCRAFT

As time passes by, Aircraft's with longer range and more cargo space becomes available. The player may upgrade his Aircraft to a new improved Aircraft type, as soon as the Flight Time Marker has passed the corresponding event on the Flight Time Track. The cost to buy or upgrade to a better Aircraft is varying according to Table 3 and 4, depending on Aircraft type to buy/upgrade to. As soon as the player has paid the cost, the Aircraft Overview card of the player is swapped or turned for the new one.

Table 3: Buying new Aircraft	Price
Curtiss Jenny	3 Action cards
DeHavilland DH-4	5 Action cards
Ford Trimotor	7 Action cards

Table 4: Upgrades	Price
Curtiss Jenny to DeHavilland DH-4	4 Action cards
Curtiss Jenny to Ford Trimotor	6 Action cards
DeHavilland DH-4 to Ford Trimotor	5 Action cards

When updating to a better Aircraft the player swap side of the Aircraft Overview card, everything else stays the same. If a player buys or upgrades to a Ford Trimotor, he needs to swap the Aircraft Overview card and the Aircraft Marker to the #3. The Aircraft Marker is swapped directly with the marker on the game board.

INCREASE FUEL STORAGE BY 1

At the beginning of the game, each player starts with a capacity of six Action cards (hand limit). During the course of the game, the players may increase this capacity up to ten cards. If the player wants to increase the hand limit it is done by placing a Fuel Barrel marker in the appropriate space of the Fuel board.



THE POINT TABLE:

Four times during the game, points are distributed (green point boxes on the Flight Time Track) according to Table 2. The sum of the Airmail Contract Values of finished Contracts are determining the order, with the player having most accumulated value being the 1st etc.

Table 2:	Points #1	Points #2	Points #3	Points #4	Airports
1 st	4	8	12	16	8
2 nd	3	6	9	12	6
3 rd	2	4	6	8	4
4 th	1	2	3	4	2

After the distribution of points each player selects one of his cards and keeps it, and the remaining finished Airmail Contract Cards are discarded.

Additional points are given at the end of the game for the number of Airport markers on the game board (see table 2) and 2 points for the longest route of a finished contract card. If more than one player has the longest route the points are distributed evenly (rounded up).

THE FLIGHT TIME TRACK:

The Flight Time Track is used to track the time passing. Whenever an Airmail Contract is finished the Flight Time Marker is moved one step forward on the track. When a player has finished his flight action the Event marker is moved forward, performing any events that may occur, until it is again underneath the Flight Time Marker.

An event that is depicting an Airplane is symbolizing that a new type of aircraft is available.

An event box saying "Points" initiate the US Postal Evaluation at the end of the current player turn. All players compare the sum of their Airmail Contract values of all finished Airmail contracts. The players are ranked by the US Postal Department based on how much they have contributed and receives points accordingly (see Table 2).

The Cloud boxes are ignored in the basic game.

THE CONTRACTS:

The contracts with the US Post Office Department are represented by cards with four different colors. Each color represents a certain time span in the Airmail era. At the beginning of the game only black cards are dealt to the players, but as soon as contracts are being taken, other color contracts come into play. The contracts laid out open can be chosen with the Take Contracts action and are replaced by the next cards from the Airmail Contract card pile. Contracts not finished at the end of the game are penalized with -1 point per contract. As soon as a Contract has been finished the player is entitled to perform an update of the destination Airport (city is doing this to show the gratitude for being included in the Airmail network) by placing a Tower marker at the appropriate space of the Airport..



Fig.3: Airmail Contract card

THE AIRPORTS:

The Airports are airstrips belonging to medium to large size cities. They can be upgraded to better be able to handle the increasing air traffic, by placing Tower markers in them. On the Game board the Airports can be identified by dots with the colors of the contracts (black, red, green or blue), a city name and a Grey upgrade circle

next to it. The different color shows with which color Airmail Contract Cards they are introduced as potential destination. It always cost one Action card to land and refuel in an Airport unless the player has a Tower marker in the city, then it is free.



Fig.4: Airport

THE AIRCRAFT'S:

The position of an Aircraft on the Game board is marked with the Aircraft marker. In order to see what is loaded on the aircraft the player has an Aircraft Overview Card in front of him with a number matching the Aircraft Marker number. On the Overview card there is one to three Loading bays which will be able to hold one Airmail Contract Card each. The range of the Aircraft's can be measured with the corresponding Math Compass and it is measured from center of an Airport dot to center of another Airport dot.

There is three types of Aircraft's available in the game. The Curtiss Jenny is available at the beginning of the game and has the shortest range. After the event "DH-4 available" on the Flight Time Track has been passed the second Aircraft type becomes available. The DH-4 has the double range of the Jenny and can hold two Airmail Contract Cards. Finally the Ford Trimotor becomes available when the corresponding event is triggered and it has three times the range of the Jenny and holds up to three Airmail Contract Cards.

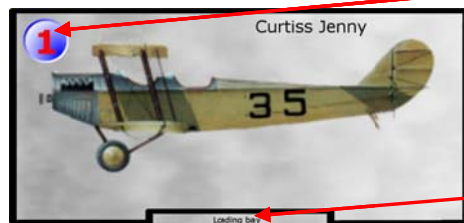


Fig.6: Aircraft Overview card

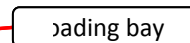
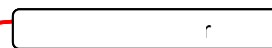


Fig.7: Aircraft Marker

END OF GAME:

The game ends when a player advances the Flight Time marker into the "End" space of the Flight track. Then the fourth and last US Postal Evaluation is being done and points are distributed according to table 2. Additionally the numbers of tower markers on the game board are counted and the players also receive points accordingly (see table 2). The player with the longest route of a finished contract gets an additional 2 points. If more than one player has the longest route the points are distributed evenly (rounded up). The player with the most points is the winner of the monopoly and may alone now fly all postal flights and earn the big bucks.

AIRCRAFT FLEET (EXPANSION #1)

INTRODUCTION:

With an increasing demand for Airmail carriage the opportunity for Airmail companies to expand is huge, but also requires additional planning and preparations. With this expansion the complexity of the game increases, but the amount of Airmail Contract Cards that can be fulfilled rise. The player that is able to organize and utilize the infra structure, he has setup, the best will be victorious. It is not recommended to play this expansion unless you are familiar with the basic rules of the Airmail game.



Fig.8: Setup of the Airmail game including the Aircraft Fleet Expansion

ADDITIONAL GAME PREPARATION AND COMPONENTS:

In addition to the basic game setup, each player receives two additional Aircraft markers (#2 and #3). Each player additionally receives the two aircraft markers #2 and 3 and the corresponding Aircraft Overview cards.

FLYING MULTIPLE AIRCRAFTS:

If a player chooses the “Fly” action, each of the Aircraft’s available on the Game board has to be moved, so that each aircraft at least uses one Action card (free of charge flights do not count). Otherwise no other restrictions apply.

If the player chooses the “Take action cards” action, he may take a number of cards according to table 3.

<i>Table 3:</i>		Number of cards
1 Airplane		3 cards
2 Airplanes		4 cards
3 Airplanes		5 cards

WEATHER (EXPANSION #2)

INTRODUCTION:

During the early years of the Airmail service, even if flying conditions were poor the pilots were forced to fly in all kinds of weather. The head of the Postal Department was unyielding about keeping the mail on schedule in spite of the risk, hoping that it would make the public trust the service more. Tragically, of the 40 pilots hired when the Post Office took over airmail operations, at least half had died by 1920, most from weather-related crashes. This expansion adds the unpredictability and risks of the weather. Do you take the risk and land in poor weather, or do you wait for the weather to clear?

ADDITIONAL GAME PREPARATION:

During the setup of the game, before the players choose a Black contract, the numbered weather die is rolled twice. The outcome is the initial positions of the Cloud markers on the weather starting places in the weather grid, so it can vary between 2 and 4 markers at the beginning.



Fig.9: Typical Setup of the Airmail game including Expansion #1 and #2

ADDITIONAL COMPONENTS:

1 Weather direction die, 1 Numbered die and 5 Cloud markers

ROLLING FOR WEATHER:

During play the time track marker will pass a Cloud box, which indicates that at the end of the player turn that player will roll the Weather direction die once, and the Cloud markers are moved in the rolled weather direction. If the die shows a Cloud symbol, the numbered die is rolled once and the outcome is the position(s) new cloud markers enter the game. In this case the cloud markers on the board are not moved. If not enough cloud markers are available no new markers enter the game, or if one still can be placed, but two should enter, the weather starting place to the most right of the two is used.

LANDING IN BAD WEATHER:

If a cloud marker is positioned in the same hex on the weather grid, as an Airport, this Airport is now in the middle of the bad weather. This means that it becomes risky to land there and a player trying to land there has to roll the numbered die to see if the airplane crashes. If the roll is lower or equal to the numbers given by Table 5, the aircraft crashes and is removed from the game board. A player now has to purchase a new aircraft to replace it.

<i>Table 5:</i>		Crash with
No tower		1-2
One tower marker		1
Two tower markers		Always safe

APPENDIX:

CRITICAL DISTANCES:

JENNY

New York – Airfield #1		✓
Pittsburgh – Airfield #1		✓
Airfield #2 - Airfield #4		✓
Detroit - Pittsburgh		✓
Charlotte - Airfield #3		✓
Chicago - Airfield #4		✗
Airfield #6 - Airfield #9		✓
Airfield #9 - Airfield #14		✗
Oklahoma City - Airfield #13		✗
Oklahoma City - Airfield #17		✗
Dallas - Houston		✗
Chicago - Airfield #11		✗

St. Louis – Oklahoma City		x
Memphis - Dallas		✓
Charlotte - Philadelphia		x
Charlotte - Airfield #4		x
Charlotte - Indianapolis		✓
Denver Billings		x

TRIMOTOR

Philadelphia - Airfield #5		x
Boston - Detroit		✓
Memphis - Pittsburgh		x
Boston - Airfield #4		x
Miami - Charlotte		✓
Washington - Jacksonville		✓
Minneapolis - Airfield #17		✓

