The Seven Cities of Gold

Manual · Version 1.8.1

Tronsoft Games · October 28, 2026

A Solo Game for one player

1. The game

A solo exploration, trade and conquest game in the spirit of the 1984 classic. As a captain of the Crown of Castile you outfit expeditions in Seville, cross the ocean to a New World generated fresh for every career (or to the real coasts of the Americas), chart coasts and rivers, meet seven native nations, trade, found forts, missions and colonies, and search for the legendary Seven Cities of Gold. Every voyage ends before the Crown's Ledger, which pays in royal favour, rank and fortune until you retire at sixty.

2. Starting a career

On the title plate choose your name, a New World — **A Random New World**, generated from a seed and different for every career, or **The Americas**, with the real coasts and great rivers — a difficulty, and optionally a seed (the same seed always makes the same world). Your career begins in 1492, at age 25, and ends at 60.

3. Seville

Before each voyage you outfit the expedition. Crown funds rise with your rank and favour, and with the forts the rival crowns plant; spending beyond them draws on your own fortune.

Purchase	Price	Notes
Caravel	150 d	30 souls; can sail rivers
Nao	260 d	50 souls; steadier in storms; keeps the fleet out of rivers
Man	5 d	at least 5 men to sail
Colonist	8 d	settles at your forts; 20 found a colony
Horse	20 d	two berths; eats at sea, grazes ashore
Food	0.5 d	ten people eat one a day
Trade goods	1 d	for gifts, trade, treaties, missions and mines

Officers serve for one voyage and can die:

Officer	Cost	Effect
Pilot	80 d	crossings 5 days shorter, storms 40% less likely, sees further at sea
Surgeon	70 d	halves deaths from fever, cold and scurvy
Interpreter	60 d	talks bear more news, trade pays 15% more, gifts go further
Friar-superior	50 d	missions cost 15 goods, and convert half again as fast
Sergeant-at-arms	90 d	the expedition fights a quarter harder

The **royal commission** for the voyage is shown here and in the left sidebar; it pays a bonus when fulfilled and a reprimand when not. Choose a course and set sail; the crossing takes 30 days (less with a pilot). **Service record** charts your career so far.

4. Exploring

The chart starts as terra incognita and is revealed as you go; hills, mountains and desert let you see further. Click any charted hex to travel by the quickest charted route, or step with W E A D Z X. Terrain costs days ashore: grassland 1, forest/hills/desert/tundra 2, jungle/swamp 3, mountains 4. Camp to forage (or fish afloat in coastal waters and rivers). Jungle and swamp bring fever; deserts thirst; winter at high latitudes cold and slow going; August–October is hurricane season in the northern tropics.

Six **Wonders** lie on every chart: sight one for the Crown, walk onto it to survey it. On the march you may find ruins with gold, bring down game, lose your way, or — when rations are short — see men desert. A **mounted** column crosses open country faster and fights harder; rough country lames horses, and hungry men eat them.

5. The native nations

Seven nations, each Peaceful, Wary or Warlike, hold the land. Their regard for you (Hostile, Unfriendly, Wary, Welcoming, Friendly) rises with gifts, trade, missions and treaties and falls with raids, extortion and the pressure of colonies and mines. Visiting a town lets you talk, trade for gold, food or the local commodity, give gifts, hire a guide, found a mission, recruit warriors, demand tribute or attack. At a nation's **capital** — its largest ordinary town — you may swear a **treaty of friendship** once they are Friendly (60+, 60 goods), and when it is at war, **broker peace** (40 goods) or **join the war**. Friendly elders may ask a **petition** — goods, food, horses or the survey of a wonder — and answer it with the exact place of a city of gold.

6. The Seven Cities

Rumours from the towns you talk with are drawn as golden circles on the chart, sharper the nearer the teller. Gilded towers show from three hexes away. The rival crowns race you: a city a rival reports first pays only 50% on the Ledger.

7. Forts, colonies, missions and mines

A fort leaves 10 men and 40 food, claims the land around it, keeps stores, and can be a landfall. Colonists from Seville found a colony at a fort; it grows, fills the stores with food and gold, and presses on its neighbours. A garrison (four defence for each man) and colonists hold a fort against sieges by hostile nations. Missions convert their peoples over the years. On hills or mountains within 4 hexes of a colony of 25+ you may open a silver mine (40 goods, 10 colonists): 80 gold of ore a year to its fort.

8. Trade

Every people produces one commodity; Seville buys them all, paying less as you flood a market, which recovers between voyages. Half the proceeds are yours; a quarter count as favour.

Commodity	Base	From
Furs	4	beaver and marten from the northern forests
Silver	6	worked silver from the hill country
Pearls	8	pearls from the warm coastal shallows
Dyewood	3	red dyewood and cochineal from the jungle
Tobacco	3	cured leaf from the plains and woodlands

9. Rivals, privateers, wrecks and wars

From 1494 Portugal, from 1497 England and from 1500 France send expeditions while you are in Seville: they plant forts (ports of call where you may buy food), claim cities and sack towns. From 1497 their privateers hunt fleets carrying treasure; a strong fleet beats them off, a pilot may outrun them, a weak one loses 40% of its gold and cargo. Ships of every crown are wrecked on the coasts — sail onto a charted wreck to salvage it. Neighbouring nations go to war with one another; a nation at war besieges your forts less often.

10. Morale and mutiny

The men's morale starts each voyage at 70. Long weeks at sea, long months ashore, hunger and deaths lower it; gold, a city of gold, a surveyed wonder, a camp and a port of call raise it. Below 25 they may mutiny: pay them (2 gold a man), hang the ringleaders, sail for Seville, or swear to turn for home (they trust you 40 days). Each mutiny costs 30 favour.

11. The Crown's Ledger

Item	Favour
Gold delivered	1 per gold (you keep 20% as fortune)
New land charted	0.4 per hex
Settlement reported	4
One of the Seven Cities	150 (50% if a rival reported it first)
All Seven Cities	400
Wonder sighted / surveyed	30 / 40
New fort / standing fort	90 / 12
New mission / standing mission	70 / 10
People converted / Christian peoples	60 / 6
Colony founded / each colonist	120 / 0.4
Treaty sworn / broken	80 / -60
Peace brokered	100
Petition answered	25
Mine opened	60
Mutiny reported	-30
Massacre reported	-15
Commission fulfilled / failed	its reward / -25% of it

Ranks: Adventurer (0), Captain (300), Commander (900), Admiral (2,000), Governor (4,000), Viceroy (7,500).

12. Honours and the end of a career

Honour	Earned for
First Landfall	Set foot in the New World
The Gilded Towers	Find one of the Seven Cities
The Legend Made Real	Find all Seven Cities
River Captain	Sail 15 hexes of river
Wonder Seeker	Survey three Wonders
Peacemaker	Sign treaties with three nations
Apostle of the Indies	See five peoples converted
Merchant Prince	Sell 3,000 ducats of New World goods
Royal Cartographer	Chart 800 hexes of land
Builder of Forts	Hold four forts at once
Ahead of the Rivals	Report four cities before any rival crown
Clean Hands	Retire after eight voyages with no raid
Viceroy of the Indies	Reach the highest rank
Founder of Colonies	Have 300 colonists living in your colonies
Scourge of Privateers	Beat off three privateer attacks
Bringer of Peace	End two wars between the nations of the New World
Friend of the Elders	Answer five petitions of the elders
Master of Salvage	Salvage three wrecks
Lord of the Mines	Work three mines at once
Beloved Captain	Bring home five voyages without a mutiny, the men in good heart

History gives your career an epithet by how you played, and its chronicle can be read, copied or saved as a text file. Your score — favour plus fortune — enters the Hall of Fame. If the whole expedition dies, the career ends there.

13. Saving

The career is saved automatically in this browser after every action (one save; the Hall of Fame and your settings are kept separately). Continue it from the title plate. Careers saved by version 1.1.0 or

later carry forward.

14. Controls

Action	How
Travel	Click any charted hex: the expedition goes there by the quickest charted route. Keys W E A D Z X step one hex (NW, NE, W, E, SW, SE).
Pan and zoom	Drag the chart to pan; mouse wheel or pinch to zoom; arrow keys pan; + and − zoom; F fits the whole chart; C centres on the expedition; click the small chart at the top left to jump.
Camp or fish	Space, or the Camp/Fish button.
Visit a settlement	Walk into it, or press V beside it.
Marks	M, or Place a mark, then click a charted hex.
Halt	Esc halts a march, or closes an encounter.

Chart toggles: nation borders, rhumb lines to rumours, voyage tracks and the attitude map. Game: sound on or off and an effects volume. The game respects the browser's reduced-motion setting.