Zaibatsu: A Game of ...... for 2-4 players.

In Zaibatsu, you bid for control of companies making many kinds of goods and try to secure a stable economic empire with your own companies supplying all of their own needs, forming a powerful vertical monopoly. (called a *zaibatsu* in Japanese)

Overview: The game is played in four rounds, with two scoring phases, after the second and fourth rounds. Each round, the players will put company cards from their hands into auction piles, then auction each pile in a chosen order. The resources produced by the companies supply other companies, and each operating company adds to the strength of your zaibatsu (i.e. scores points).

Contents: 48 company cards (Mines, Refiners, Manufacturers, and Contractors), XX resource cubes, YY money chips (M green 1s, N blue 5s, and P red 10s), and five auction markers.

The Cards: There are four types of company card, two of which are very similar. Each has a point value in the upper right corner, which is gained only if the company has the necessary resources to operate, and a resource listing along the bottom. What that listing contains varies according to company type.

The most common type is Mine companies: These produce the lowest tier of resource at no cost, and are worth 1 point each. Their resource listing is a rightward-pointing arrow with nothing to its left, signifying the no-cost production. Some produce three resources, all of the same type; others produce two resources, but each one may be chosen to be either of two types, shown by presenting the resource symbol as half of each.

Refiners and Manufacturers are laid out similarly to each other; they both take in two or more resources (of the same or various kinds) and produce one resource. Their resource listing has several resource symbols to the left of an arrow, and one resource of a higher tier to the right. Refiners produce the second tier of resource (brown M and/or green N) and are worth 2 points each; Manufacturers produce the third tier (blue X and/or black Y) and are worth 5 points each.

Contractors, unlike all other companies, produce no resources. Instead, their end products are sold for lucrative contracts, and they are worth 10 points each if they are properly supplied. Their resource listing is two or more resources, with an upward-pointing arrow above them.

Setup: Shuffle the company deck and set out the appropriate number of auction markers for the number of players (see chart below). Each player receives 8-10 M¥ and 3-6 cards, depending on the number of players (see chart). The player who has most recently purchased something from a Japanese company goes first (or determine randomly) and is the <Regulator> for the first round.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Players | Cards | Auctions | Starting Money |
| 2 | 6 | 3 | 1: 9, 2: 10 |
| 3 | 4 | 4 | 1: 8, 2: 9, 3: 10 |
| 4 | 3 | 5 | 1: 7, 2: 8, 3: 9, 4: 10 |

The Round: A round consists of two parts; the deal phase and the auction phase. In the deal phase, each player receives 3-6 cards in their hand (depends on number of players) and then puts them into auction piles. Starting with the round’s <Regulator> and proceeding clockwise, players take turns placing one card face-up onto one of the auction piles. This continues until all player’s hands are empty, every company placed into some auction. (Some auctions may be empty piles. This is OK.) Then proceed to the auction phase.

In the auction phase, players take turns calling auctions on the piles created in the deal phase (again starting with the round’s <Regulator>). When a player calls an auction, the player to their left may call a bid or pass, then each other player, in clockwise order, gets a chance to top the high bid or pass. The player who called the auction gets the final chance to bid; after they bid or pass, the high bidder pays their bid to the bank and takes all companies in the pile, putting those companies face-up in front of them. *Note: This is a single-bid auction. Bidding goes around the table precisely once.* Once an auction is finished, the next player chooses one of the remaining piles and starts that auction. This proceeds until the round’s <Regulator> starts the auction on the final pile of the round; when that auction finishes, the round is over.

At the end of each round except the final round, each player receives 10 additional M¥. The next player to the left becomes the <Regulator> for the next round.

Scoring: After the second and fourth rounds, there is a scoring phase. Each player tries to supply as many of their strongest companies as possible with the resources they need to run, taken from their Mines and whatever Refineries and Manufacturers they can supply. If a company is supplied with the resources it requires, it provides whatever resources it produces and adds to your score; companies which are unsupplied or undersupplied score no points in that scoring phase. If resources are unused, they do not persist; each scoring phase is totally independent.

Important note: While they are not necessary, most players will find it much easier to track which resources they have and need using the resource cubes provided. Some players will also wish to use them between scoring phases to track what they need to acquire in the auctions. In the case of a dispute, it should be resolved by publically working through the requirements with cubes.

End of the Game: After the final scoring phase, players trade their remaining money for points, at a rate of 3 M¥ per 1 point. Your final score will therefore be the total of points from each scoring phase plus the score from your remaining money. The player with the highest score has created the most dominant zaibatsu, and will control wide swathes of the economy for decades! Enjoy your secure wealth, you win!

If multiple players have tied in score, remaining money (after returning the money spent for points to the bank) breaks the tie. If there is \*still\* a tie, you will have to form some kind of gentlemen's agreement to control the economy; neither of you has defeated the other (everyone else, however, has lost out).