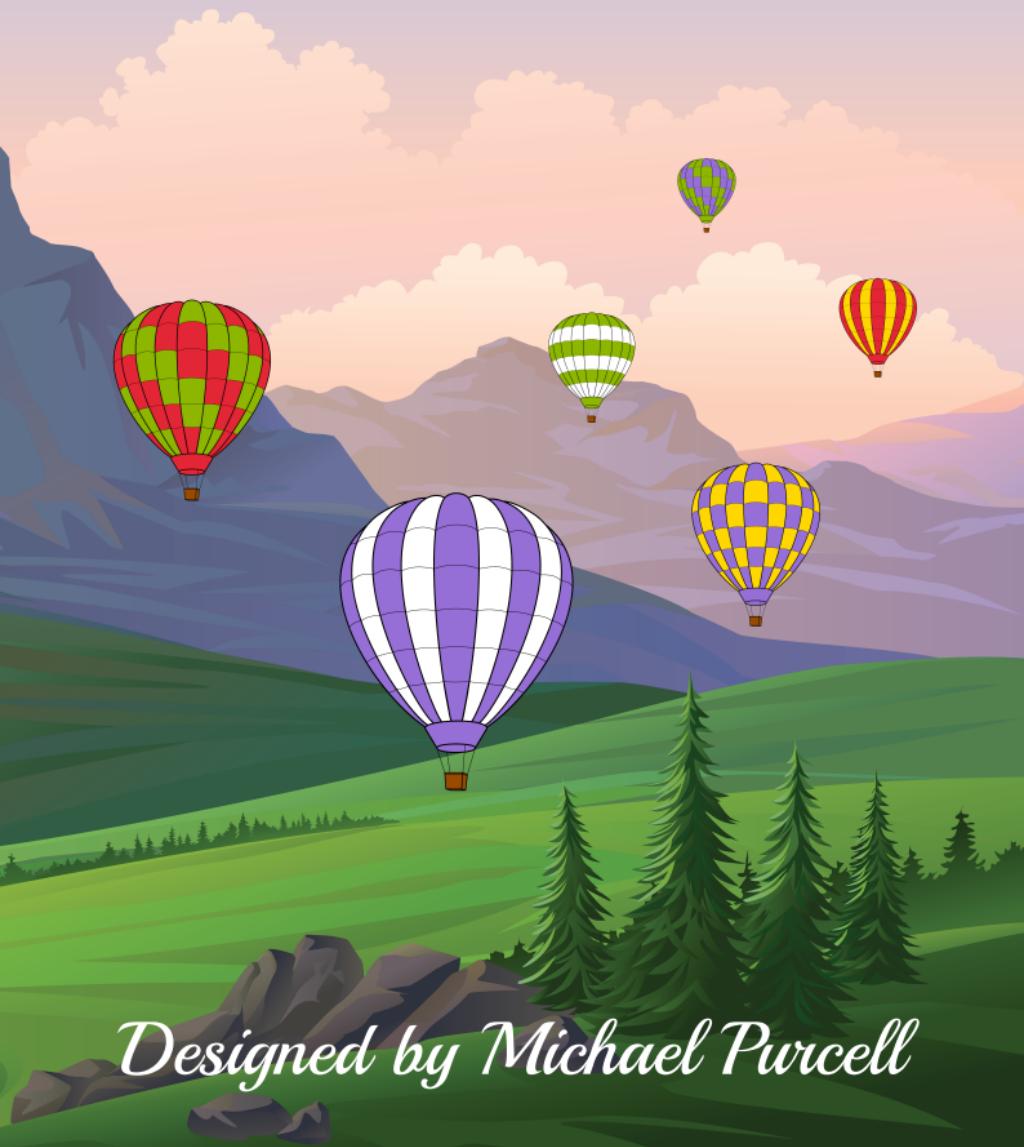


# ALOFT



*Designed by Michael Purcell*

# **Overview**

Aloft is a game for one to five players. It can be played in about thirty minutes and is intended for players who are at least eight years old.

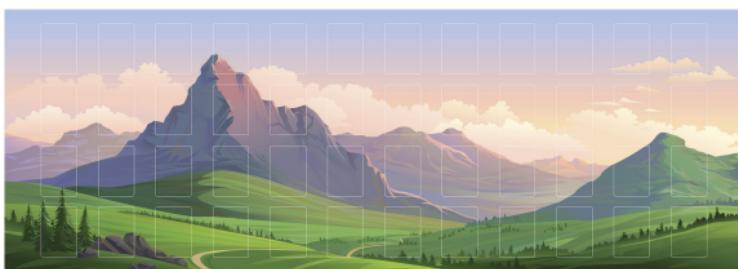
During the game, you will launch a flight of hot-air balloons. Each player will be affiliated with a different color and you will try to ensure that your balloons end up in the best positions in the resulting formation.

# **Components**

- 13 balloon cards
  - 10 regular balloon cards
  - 3 special shape balloon cards
- 13 scoring tokens
- 5 truck cards
  - 4 launch-zone truck cards
  - 1 safety truck card
- 5 color cards
- 1 game board

# Set Up

1. Deal one color card at random to each player. Do not reveal this card to the other players until the end of the game.
2. Place the launch-zone truck cards in a single row below the four leftmost columns of the the game board.
3. Place the safety truck card below leftmost launch-zone truck card.
4. Display the balloon cards in a single row below the launch zone.
5. Place the scoring tokens nearby for use when scoring at the end of the game.



1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13



# **Gameplay**

On your turn, you will perform either one or two actions:

1. If any balloons are flying, move a truck.
2. Advance a balloon.

The game ends when the lead truck moves past the rightmost column of the game board. If this happens on your turn, you should advance a balloon as usual and then proceed to **Scoring**.

## **Move a Truck**

If any balloons are flying, then before you advance a balloon you will move a truck. Trucks always move from left to right.

When you move a truck, you will either

- Move a launch-zone truck.
- Move the safety truck.

The safety truck must always be between (or even with) the lead truck and the last truck.

## Moving a Launch-Zone Truck

If the launch-zone trucks are in adjacent columns, then you should move the rightmost truck one column to the right.



Otherwise, the launch-zone trucks will be in two groups which are separated by one empty column. You should move the rightmost truck from the first group one column to the right.



If moving a launch-zone truck would cause the last truck to pass the safety truck, then you must move the safety truck.

Any balloon on a launch-zone truck should accompany that truck when it is moved.

## **Moving the Safety Truck**

To move the safety truck, you should move it one column to the right.

If moving the safety truck would cause it to pass the lead truck, then you must move a launch-zone truck.



## **Advance a Balloon**

Throughout the game, each balloon will advance through a series of states: packed, unpacked, inflated, and flying at altitudes ranging from one to four. All balloons begin in the packed state.

On your turn, you should advance one balloon of your choice. If you cannot advance any of the balloons, then you should skip this step.

To advance a balloon, you move a balloon from its current state to the next.

**Unpack:** To advance a balloon from the packed state to the unpacked state, place it horizontally on a launch-zone truck.

- You may not place a balloon on a truck that has a balloon on it.

**Inflate:** To advance a balloon from the unpacked state to the inflated state, turn it so that it is placed vertically on its truck.

**Launch:** To advance a balloon from the inflated state to the flying state, move it to the bottom row of the game board above its truck. It will then be flying at an altitude of one.

**Ascend:** To advance a balloon that is flying, move it up one row. It will then be flying at an altitude one more than before.

- Balloons that are flying may never be orthogonally adjacent to one another.
- The maximum altitude at which balloons can fly is four.

## **Scoring**

Use the scoring tokens to indicate the number of points scored by each balloon.

1. Place the scoring token numbered “1” on the leftmost balloon in the bottom row of the formation.
2. Scanning from left to right, place scoring tokens on the remaining balloons in the bottom row of the formation, placing the token with lowest remaining number on each balloon as you encounter it.
3. Proceed to the next highest row of the formation. Continue in this fashion, scanning from left to right and bottom to top, until each balloon that is flying has been assigned a scoring token.

Your score is the sum of the scores for all of the balloons with which you are affiliated (i.e. that match your color card). The player with the highest score wins the game.

## **Solo Mode**

Aloft can also be played as a one-player game. This is similar to the multi-player version, differing in the following ways:

- You will not use the color cards or the scoring tokens. You will only use two of the special shape balloon cards.
- You will shuffle the balloon cards before dealing them out in a single row below the game board. If you choose to unpack a balloon on a given turn, you must unpack the first (leftmost) remaining balloon.
- Balloons that are flying and that share a color may never be diagonally adjacent to one another.
- Your score is equal to the number of adjacent columns required to contain the formation plus a three point penalty for every balloon which you failed to launch.

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