

Mombasa: Automa mode

Author: Mauro Gibertoni
Rev. 1.0 - 8 Nov 2017

This rulebook describes a single player variant of MOMBASA boardgame where you play against a dummy player: the Automa.

The actions of Automa are driven by a special deck (the automa deck). The present game mode was developed in order to allow you to play without expend a lot of energy for the opponent actions, so you can focus only on your tactics.

1 Game Set-up

Prepare a standard set-up for a 2-player match.

You can set randomly the four company track using the specific A-B-C-D cards.

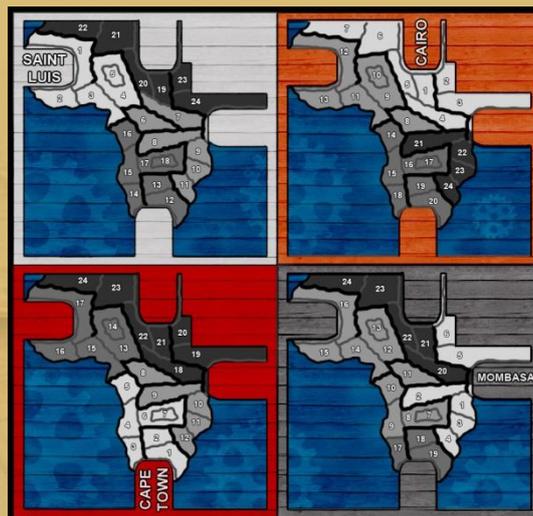
Give to Automa a player board, one initial bonus tile (choose it randomly), three bonus markers, four markers for company tracks, one diamond, one pound and one ink jar marker.

The Automa uses no action card, so don't put any card above the Automa player board.

Give to Automa the initial bonus on the company track indicated by the starting bonus tile.

Take the 8 automa card and build a deck close to Automa's board.

Keep close to Automa's board the expansion diagram.



The first player is chosen randomly.

Tip: give to Automa the purple board and keep for you the green board, because the automa cards use these colors to distinguish your marker by the Automa's marker.

2 Description of Automa turn

You will play following the standard rules, while the Automa will follow easier rules. In next sections we explain how Automa acts in the three phases of the round.

For all topic not explicitly mentioned in the present rulebook please refer to the standard rules.

2.1 Planning phase

Take the automa deck, be sure that all cards are set in the same direction. The priority side shall be visible (see section 3.1).

Shuffle the automa deck, then take the rearmost card of the deck and place it horizontally. The right side depends on the current round. The numbers written in the middle of the card indicate which side is to be used based on the current round number.

For example, if you are going to play the round 4, this is the right side.



This side is used in rounds 4, 5, 6 and 7

This card will remain in this position for the whole current round. It states the reference values valid to establish which player wins the majority on a specific good. All other symbols, except the three symbols on the bottom side, on this card shall be ignored.

The automa cards played afterwards will be placed on these three symbols or in a discard pile. The Automa doesn't use the action slots of the player board, he uses the slots defined by the horizontal card. The section 3.1 clarifies how the automa cards shall be placed once they are played.

The layout of Automa play area is as follows.





Note. Sometime the horizontal card reports a X instead of a number; in this case that space is only a normal action slot which doesn't give any contribution for the majorities.

2.2 Action phase

As in the standard game alternate the actions between you and Automa.

When the Automa shall acts, draw a card from the automa deck and look the action side. The Automa will execute the first applicable action. If no action is available, draw a new card and so on until the Automa executes one action.

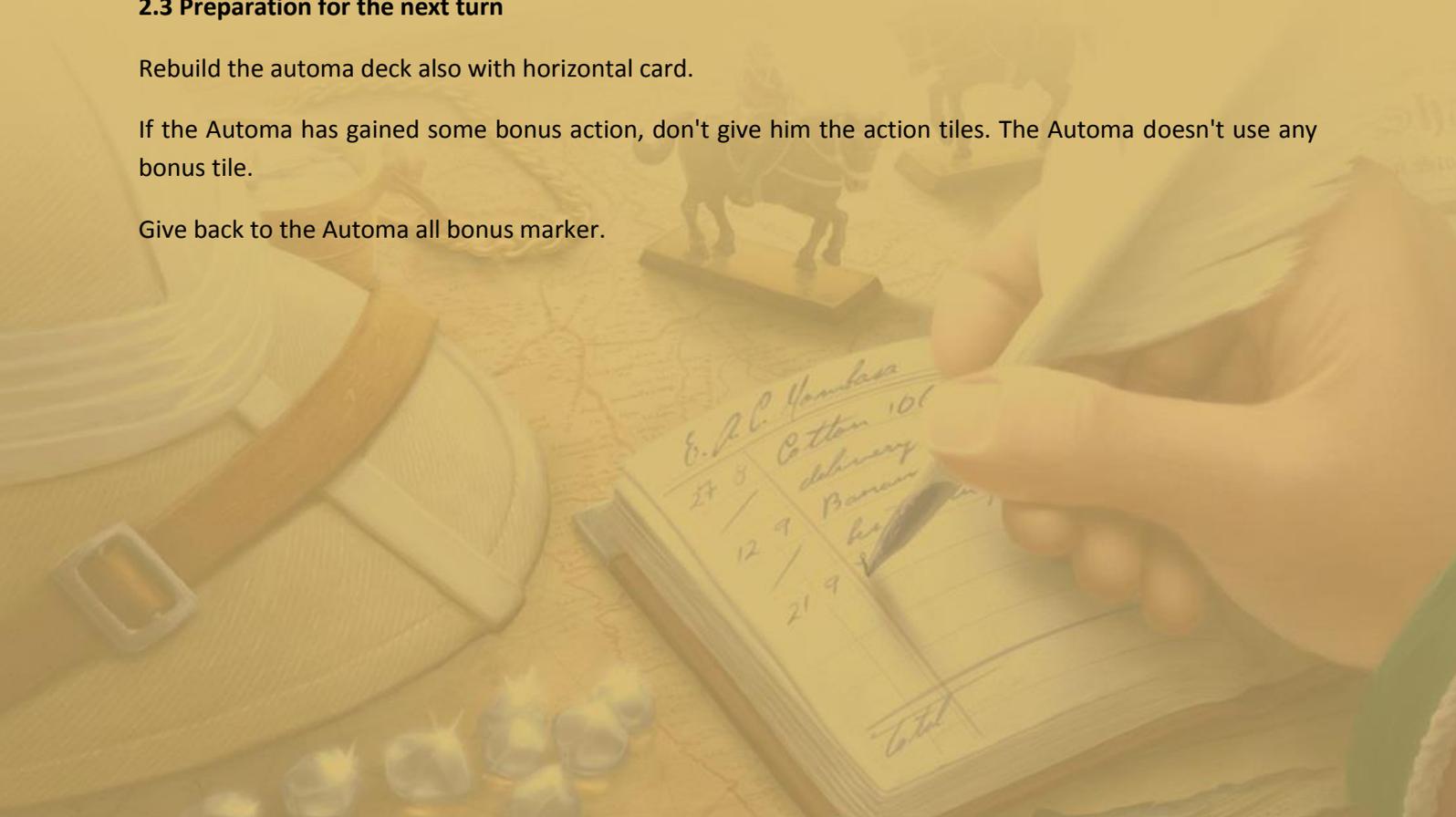
When the automa deck is exhausted, the Automa has completed his action phase for the current round.

2.3 Preparation for the next turn

Rebuild the automa deck also with horizontal card.

If the Automa has gained some bonus action, don't give him the action tiles. The Automa doesn't use any bonus tile.

Give back to the Automa all bonus marker.



3 Automa cards

3.1 Overview about the automa deck

The automa cards report informations on both sides. The front side, named action side, shows the actions, while the rear side, named priority side, shows the criteria with which the actions are performed.



Notice that the informations on the priority side are written in two directions. In rounds 1, 2, 3 apply the yellow half while in rounds 4, 5, 6, 7 apply the orange half.

In general when the Automa shall take one action, draw the first card. The action side of the just drawn card indicated the action executed by the Automa while the priority side of card at the top of the automa deck indicates the criteria for the selected action.



For example, the drawn card states that the Automa shall take a card from the table. The card on top of the deck states that the Automa will take the card with most bookkeeping points.

Special case: when you draw the last card, for the priority please refer to the rear side of the same card.

After a card is used, it is put either on an action slot of the horizontal card or in the discard pile according to the following rules:

- If the action just performed was an bonus marker action, put the card in the discard pile.
- In all other cases (after exploration, taking card, advancement on diamond/bookkeeping/company track) put the card in the first free action slot. The action slots shall be covered in reading order.

During the whole match the Automa uses only three action slots. Once the three slots are covered, the Autom can take only bonus marker actions.

3.2 The priority side

The following pictures clarifies the meaning of the symbols reported on priority side.

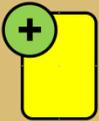


Tie breaking:

- Ties about the cards choice are broken by choosing the first card in placing order (by column from right to left)
- If on the table there are no card with the right criteria, the Automa (as far as he can) takes the card containing a share of the reachest company.
- Ties about the choice of the company are broken by following the alphabetic order of the relative track A-B-C-D.

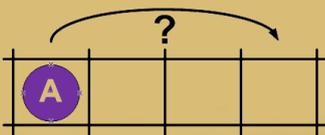
3.3 The action side

In this section we clarify the meaning of the symbols shown on the action side and how every action is performed by the Automa.



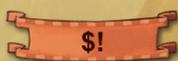
Action: take one card

- The Automa takes one card from the table and put it in a pile. The cards taken by the Automa during the match are relevant only for the counts of the shares during the final score calculation.
- The card on top of the automa deck states the criterion for the choice:
 - o The goods card with the highest score;
 - o The diamond card with the highest score;
 - o The bookkeeper card with the highest score;
 - o The exploration card with the highest score;
 - o The card containing a share of the reachest company.
- After the action put the automa card in the first free action slot.

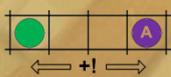


Action: advancement on a company track

- Move the marker on one company track.
- The card on top of the automa deck states the criterion for the choice of the company track. The criterion can be:



The current reachest company



The company where the automa's marker has the greatest advantage



The company where the automa's marker has the greatest handicap



The company where where you have less points at all

Ties are broken by following the alphabetic order of the relative company track A-B-C-D.

- Don't apply to Automa any cost shown on company track, while he gains normally the pounds where indicated.
- You don't gain any coin when the automa's marker advance on a company track.
- The Automa doesn't use the bonus action slots and the permanent bonus reported on the company tracks.
- After the action put the automa card in the first free action slot.



Action: Exploration

- The card on top of the automa deck states the criterion for the choice of the company to expand. The criterion can be:



The current reachest company



The company where the automa's marker has the greatest advantage



The company where where you have less points at all



The company where where the Automa has more points at all

Ties are broken by following the alphabetic order of the relative company track A-B-C-D.

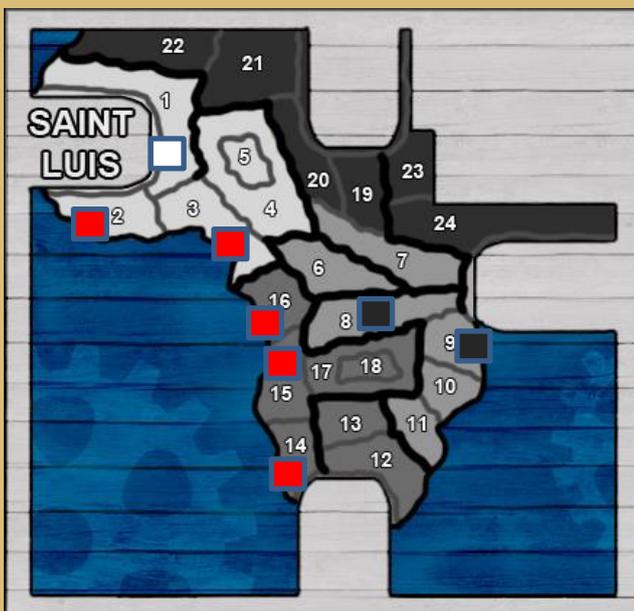
- The card on top of the automa deck states also the number of trading posts to place on the map. The number above the white house defines how many trading posts the Automa places in free areas, while the number above the balck house defines how many trading posts the Automa places in occupied areas. In general the Automa invades the area of the company on whose track you have the most advantage.

When the Automa shall expand a company, he place the trading post on the area with the lowest value by looking the expansion diagram. The Automa shall not respect the costraint about the adjacency.

When Automa expands a company, he picks up the trading posts out from the base, so that the value of the shares increases as much as possible. Viceversa, when Automa undermines another company, he get back the trading posts on the base, so that the value of the shares lowers as much as possible.

- Special cases:
 - o If no free areas are available, don't consider the white houses on the automa card.

- If there no companies where you have advantage on the corresponding track, don't consider the black houses on the automa card.
- Se non ci sono compagnie su cui voi siete in vantaggio rispetto all'Automa, considerate le cassette nere come fossero bianche.
- If Automa can not consider both white and black houses, he doesn't explore at all. In this case the Automa will perform the next action shown on the card.
- The Automa gains normally all bonus of the areas occupied during the exploration.
- The Automa can explore more times per round.
- After the action put the automa card in the first free action slot.



For example, the Automa shall expand the Saint-Luis company with one trading post on a free area and one trading post on an occupied area. Suppose that the initial situation is the one shown in the picture and that you have the most advantage on Mombasa track.

In this case the Automa places the first trading post on area n.4, the area with the lowest score among the free areas. Then the Automa places the second trading post on area n.8, the Mombasa's area with the lowest score. This territory is not adjacent to any Saint-Luis's territory but the Automa shall not respect this constraint.



Action: advancement on bookkeeping track

- Move the ink jar marker until the last book present on Automa's board. The Automa shall not respect the requirements of the books.
- The Automa doesn't gain the benefit reported on the book where he stops.
- The card on top of the automa deck states the number of bookkeeping points that the Automa gains.
- In general when Automa gains bookkeeping points, he spends them in the following way:
 - 1 point: he buys one book A (the first in reading order);
 - 2 points: he buys one book A and one book B (the first in reading order);

- More than 2 points: he buys one book C (the first in reading order) and other books A/B (the first in reading order) until he has points to spend.
- If there is a book with one coin, the Automa try to take it.
- Place the Automa's book in contiguous way. The Automa shall not respect the constraint about the book-A placement.
- After the action put the automa card in the first free action slot.



Action: advancement on diamond track

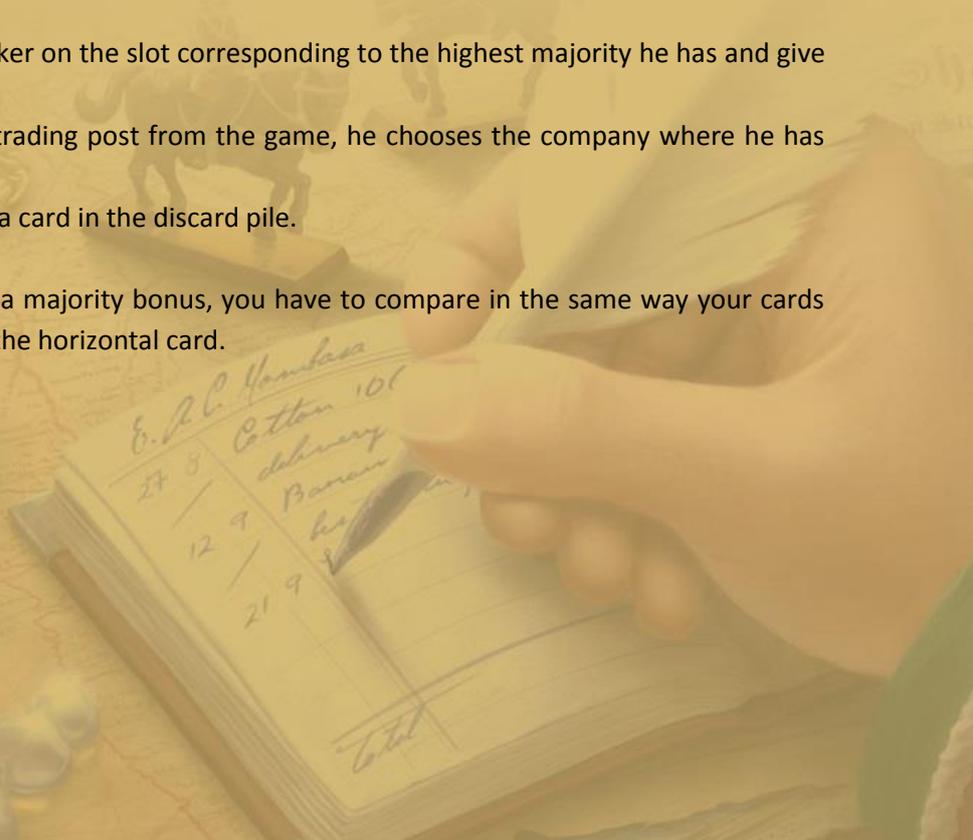
- Move the diamond marker on the track
- The card on top of the automa deck states the number of advancements.
- After the action put the automa card in the first free action slot.



Action: majority bonus

- The Automa can take this action only if has at least one bonus marker and if he has at least one majority. For this scope compare your available action card with the symbols not yet covered on the horizontal automa card.
- Place the Automa's bonus marker on the slot corresponding to the highest majority he has and give him the benefit.
If the Automa can remove a trading post from the game, he chooses the company where he has the greatest advantage.
- After the action put the automa card in the discard pile.

Note. When you want to play a majority bonus, you have to compare in the same way your cards with the available symbols on the horizontal card.





Action: take a bonus action

- The Automa can take this action only if has at least one bonus marker and there is a free bonus action on the table.
- Put the Automa's bonus marker on the corresponding slot on the table.
- The Automa doesn't pay any cost.
- After the action put the automa card in the discard pile.



Action: remove a card

- The Automa can take this action only if has at least one bonus marker and the corresponding slot is free.
- Put the Automa's bonus marker on the corresponding slot on the table.
- The Automa gains 5 pounds.
- After the action put the automa card in the discard pile.



Action: buy card

- The Automa can take this action only if has at least one bonus marker and the corresponding slot is free.
- The Automa takes a card from the table.
- The Automa doesn't pay any cost.
- Use the same criteria of "take a card" action for the choice of the card.
- After the action put the automa card in the discard pile.



Action: first player

- The Automa can take this action only if has at least one bonus marker and he has the standard requirements to become the first player.
- Give the first player marker to the Automa.
- The Automa gains one bookkeeping point.
- After the action put the automa card in the discard pile.

4 Difficulty level

You can increase or lower the difficulty level by simply change the round where you rotate the automa card.

Round 2: very hard

Round 3: hard

Round 4: normal (standard rule)

Round 5: easy

Round 6: very easy

