

Fortune Builder(Colecovision) FAQ
Version 1.0.1 copyright 2003
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***** AD SPACE: *****

My home page: <http://www.geocities.com/SoHo/Exhibit/2762>

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1. INTRODUCTION

Fortune Builder was a wonderful little old game for the Colecovision.
You could construct an entire city from a map of relative wilderness
with some roads running through it. But you had to be quick and you had
to think of how multiple buildings interacted with each other. The
instruction tells you how two properties do so--but how do you
efficiently build lumps of three or more?

The game is emulatable now and I find that cvem.exe, the DOS version
that comes with the ADAM emulator, does so better than vcoleco.exe which
freezes when you start to move. Or when I start to move. You probably
need a full screen anyway to see what's going on and when you need a

pause you can just push Alt-Space in the usual way of pausing DOS applications. The one problem with emulation is that ALT-SPACE may speed up the game when you get back to it so you may just want to push - to pause the game.

Unfortunately short of ROM disassembly I can't be sure what's the best way to build things--for instance, how much do roads affect places you build? Is an apartment building with roads on all four sides more lucrative than one with roads on just two? The only thing that is clear is that you need to make enough roads so you can see all your construction while still getting as many buildings in as possible.

This FAQ is intended to describe general principles and strategies for specific areas, brought together with a clear description of how to beat the game in level-4 mode, the hardest. Reading that at the end may be a bit of a spoiler so you may want to try your own style first, and quite frankly I'd love to hear about alternate strategies. I really enjoyed working my way through the game and you should too, although I can't blame you for giving up on level 4--a big reason I wrote this guide.

James Carter's website has the best information on Coleco emulation in general and which ROMs work with which. All but vcoleco seem to work with Fortune Builder.

See: <http://home.comcast.net/~mycoleco/manuals.htm>
(click on Fortune Builder for that manual)

This FAQ isn't fully complete but if anyone is willing to perform various experiments I'd be interested in the results. For instance if we built a cottage and waited around to see its income...then two in a row...then two with one space between them(the month also affects this.) Without save states it's a bit harder to do, but running these sorts of experiments could prove to be very enlightening, and if anyone is game, I'd love to include such seasonal info to make things super detailed.

2. CONTROLS AND TIMING

Fortune Builder uses the Coleco's controls fairly well although it is tedious to move from one area to the next.

Button 1: shows the map, where you can move up/down/left/right
Button 2: shows what you can buy. The left button lets you scroll through three menus:

Road	Commerce	Resort
Road	Apartment	Hotel
Gas	Condo	Boardwalk
Motel	Mall	Amuse Park
Toll Booth	Fast Food	Marina
Bridge	Restaurant	Ski Lodge
	Arcade	Ski Lift
	Factory	Casino
	Power unit	Cottage
	Cinema	Campground
	Ocean Oil	Park
	Stadium	
	Coal Mine	
	Fish Boat	
	Store	

You'll need to get a feel for all of these and also remember that pushing up makes you go DOWN the list above(which is transcribed as shown on the screen.) This is described further in the hints section.

Pushing the # key allows you to select a property, and then pushing the # key allows you to drop one in the cursor/crosshairs in the map view. If you can't place a piece where you've tried, you'll be kicked back to the purchase screen with a 'sorry.'

Button 3: controls finances. You can use the left button to click through and it goes between

- a. general financial info(debts, cash, net worth, income and payments)
- b. borrowing money
- c. repaying money
- d. selling a property(the one that touches the lower left of your cursor.)

If you opt for b mistakenly it's a bit of an annoyance but going to c undoes it really easily and you may even get a break on rising interest rates.

Button 5: scrolls the entirety of your property. Use this when you want to see if that new structure you built is actually getting any visitors(and if not, put in a gas pump or something nearby.)

The beginning of the game asks you for levels 1-4. They differ as follows:

```
level 1 : start with $100000
level 2 : start with $50000
level 3 : start with $25000
level 4 : start with $2500
```

4 sounds intimidating but with loans it's pretty doable. From an investment perspective that means you must make:

```
20 % return on investment in level 1 per year
38 % return on investment in level 2 per year
58 % return on investment in level 3 per year
151% return on investment in level 4 per year
```

Incidentally on level 4 I find that 400% returns for the first two years are par for the course to get a good start. As building cools down you get less on a return on investment. On the other hand at the lower levels your return on investment may increase--because you can't spend all that \$100000 at once!

Additionally what this means, for the mathematically impaired, is that investment can be seen as exponential and thus a rookie to the game may say "I need 30K per year but barely started to get it. I'm way behind." This is the wrong attitude. Most of your money should come in the second half, and a more realistic model might have:

```
$100000
$120000
$150000
$200000
$250000
```

Although after a few times you may be able to emerge victorious after 3-4 short years once you know where to start building. Costlier stuff loan free means more expensive/income bearing property early and more income, period.

The only money thing which you may need to watch out for is the LOAN. The longer you've got money out, the higher the rate gets. If you pay a good chunk back the rate tends to go down too. You can borrow up to

19999(and if you get the wrong amount you can either pay back right away or just push the * button a few times) at a time, but you can borrow in quick succession. If interest payments(or any payments) exceed cash + monthly income then you will have your debts added to and your net worth will plummet. If it goes below zero then your game stops, scrolling the entire territory and then displaying a 'YOU HAVE GONE BANKRUPT' message. This happens at the end of every year or when you have made your fortune(although with different messages) as well.

Oh--push F5 on an emulator (cvem.exe) to disable the sound.

3. PROPERTY DATA

3-1. PRICING

All properties keep their net worth except for roads and bridges. The net worth is recalculated at the end of the month, with any loan payments being calculated via the new interest rate, if it changes.. If you sell a property back you get the same price you bought it for. But you lose precious time that way.

You cannot re-sell ocean oil, fishing boats, or roads. So you need to be careful where you put roads down.

The lowest price for a property comes at the plain green area on most of the map. Beachfront asks for a bit more as does the lighter green mountainous area. The info. below is provided by the Coleco manual pages I put in the credits. I also put in a shape after the price:

```
1 = 1x1
L = * (NE is always vacant)
**
2 = 2x2
```

(Note: the more desirable the location, the more something costs. So try to angle to build(quickly) -more- expensive stuff in the more expensive location for a big profit long term i.e. in trying to win the tough levels.)

ROAD	25-	100	1
GAS	100-	200	1
MOTEL	400-	1000	1 (I use them rarely)
TOLLBOOTH	400-	1000	1 (don't use much, more a 2 player weapon)
BRIDGE	1000-10000	1	(I build 2 sets of 2, to islands)

APARTMENT	800-	1200	2
CONDO	150-	300	1
MALL	4000-	6000	L
FAST FOOD	150-	200	1
RESTAURANT	400-	1000	2
ARCADE	200-	300	1
FACTORY	3000-	5000	L
POWER UNIT	500-	600	1
CINEMA	400-	1000	2
OCEAN OIL	10000-15000	2	(shallow/deep water)
STADIUM	4000-	6000	2 (don't use it much)
COAL MINE	1000-	2000	2 (only good ones are \$2k)
FISH BOAT	500-	750	1 (shallow vs deep water)
STORE	200-	500	1

HOTEL	4000-	5000	2 (most are best built on expensive)
BOARDWALK	4000		2
AMUSE PARK	3000-	4000	L
MARINA	1000		2

SKI LODGE	3000-	4000	2
SKI LIFT	1000		2 (build anywhere white)
CASINO	2000-	4000	L
COTTAGE	30-	75	1
CAMPGROUND	75-	150	1
PARK	5-	100	1

Pricing remains constant throughout the seasons although some properties will generate more immediate income at certain times than others. Ski lifts can come before winter, marinas just before summer.

3-2. INTERACTION MANIFEST

This is also based on the instruction manual and gives a straight up version of what to build next to something else(or not.) I put ?'s by some items that seem logical but are not mentioned in the documentation.

** ROAD **

- + : ALL PROPERTIES EXC. SKI LIFT, OCEAN OIL, FISH BOAT
- : TOO MANY = NOT ENOUGH SPACE FOR THEM

** GAS **

- + : ALL OTHER PROPERTIES
- : TAKES AWAY SPACE FOR OTHERS, TOO DENSE ITSELF -> NO INCOME

** MOTEL **

- + : RESTAURANT, MARINA
- : COTTAGE, HOTEL

** TOLL BOOTH **

- + : NONE
- : ALL OTHERS

** BRIDGE **

- + : ISLAND PROPERTIES
- : NONE REALLY

[bridges don't add to net worth]

***** END ROAD ITEMS *****

** APARTMENT **

- + : FACTORY, CINEMA, STADIUM, MALL, MARINA
- : SKI LODGE, COTTAGE, CAMPGROUND

** CONDO **

- + : (CAN CLUMP TOGETHER)
- : CAMPGROUND

** MALL **

- + : FAST FOOD, CINEMA, APARTMENT, CONDO, ARCADE
- : SKI LODGE, COTTAGE, CAMP, STORE

** FAST FOOD **

- + : STORE, MALL, CINEMA, STADIUM, ARCADE [entertainment]
- : RESTAURANT, SKI LODGE, COTTAGE, CAMPGROUND

** RESTAURANT **

- + : HOTEL, MOTEL, CASINO, SKI LODGE, CONDO, CINEMA, STADIUM, MARINA
- : COTTAGE, CAMPGROUND, FAST FOOD

** ARCADE **

- + : MALL, FAST FOOD, AMUSE PARK
- : COAL, OIL

** FACTORY **
+ : APARTMENT, POWER UNIT, (less: CONDOS)
- : CINEMA, HOTEL, BOARDWALK, SKI LODGE, CASINO, (other recreation)

** POWER UNIT **
+ : SKI LIFT, FACTORY, COAL MINE, STADIUM
- : EVERYTHING ELSE

** CINEMA **
+ : APARTMENT, MALL, FAST FOOD, RESTAURANT, HOTEL
- : SKI LODGE, FACTORY

** OCEAN OIL **
+ : [beach resorts]
- : ARCADE

** STADIUM **
+ : APARTMENT, FAST FOOD, RESTAURANT, POWER UNIT, HOTEL
- : AMUSE PARK, SKI LODGE, COTTAGE, CAMPGROUND

** COAL MINE **
+ : FACTORY, POWER UNIT
- : APARTMENT, CONDO, COTTAGE, CAMPGROUND(residential/recreation)

** FISH BOAT **
+ : STORE
- : (can block BOARDWALK/MARINA)

** GENERAL STORE **
+ : FISH BOAT, FACTORY/industrial, CAMPGROUND, MARINA
- : CONDO, MALL

** HOTEL **
+ : RESTAURANT, CINEMA, STADIUM
- : MOTEL, FACTORY

** BOARDWALK **
+ : resort properties(HOTEL/CASINO/MARINA)
- : FACTORY

** AMUSE PARK **
+ : ARCADE, general
- : STADIUM

** MARINA **
+ : APARTMENT, CONDO, MOTEL, COTTAGE, CAMPGROUND, RESTAURANT, STORE
- : FACTORY

** SKI LODGE **
+ : SKI LIFT, RESTAURANT, COTTAGE, CASINO
- : APARTMENT, MALL, FAST FOOD, FACTORY, CINEMA, STADIUM

** SKI LIFT **
+ : SKI LODGE, CONDO, COTTAGE, CAMPGROUND
- : [none]

** CASINO **
+ : RESTAURANT, HOTEL, SKI LODGE, BOARDWALK
- : FACTORY

** COTTAGE **
+ : SKI LIFT, MARINA, (general)
- : CAMPGROUND, MOTEL, APARTMENT, MALL, FAST FOOD, STADIUM,
RESTAURANT, HOTEL

** CAMPGROUND **

+ : STORE, MARINA, SKI LIFT
- : COTTAGE, APARTMENT, MALL, CONDO, FAST FOOD, RESTAURANT, STADIUM,
HOTEL (MOTEL?)

** PARK **

+ : anything

3-3. ROUGH EVALUATIONS

***** ROADS *****

** Roads are of course very necessary and should be very gridlike. It's easier to create them that way, and they leave more space to 'see' buildings.

** Gas stations are important intangibles you really shouldn't forget. They're not too profitable by themselves but don't cost too much.

** Motels aren't critical but maybe one can be placed by a Marina if no hotel is nearby.

** Toll booths seem more appropriate for 2 player games.

** Bridges aren't critical unless you put them in the right spots.

They'll link nicely to the two islands in the game--you'll need a pair of bridge squares for each one.

***** COMMERCE *****

** Apartments are a must to build early but do mix them with condos and places where apartment dwellers can buy stuff.

** Condos are great to drop into the mix mindlessly. Second only to roads(cottages, which they don't like, are third.)

** Malls are fun L-shaped things that work well with Fast Food. You can put a cinema on the other side of the street. Great in residential areas--I put one in every other residential square

** Fast food doesn't mix well with restaurants or with 'relaxing' resorts--more 'happening' ones work better. These 1x1's work well in 'L's too and might even be good around coal mines, where not much else is.

** Restaurants--don't mix with fast foods but everywhere else they're good. Better around resorts than commerce, around condos than apartments. Good filler for 4x4 blocks boxed in by roads. Not good in the wild.

** Arcades aren't too profitable now but if you're sick of dumping fast food items in 'L's then throw in an arcade. Good with amusement parks too.

** Factories are not terribly easy to place but chained with coal mines and a general store/fast food to the right(positioned above/below) things can work out OK. Good thing to start a game with though.

** Power units are best put in the factories' L's.

** Cinemas are nice solid income boosters with blue collar(apartment/condo/mall) or more upscale environs.

** Ocean Oil seems a bit too risky. I've done well enough without it. If you have money to blow near the end and no space on the map, drop a few in...otherwise...

** Stadiums(err stadia) are weird things and maybe they are best used only once, near a beachfront property, or near a huge housing complex with a restaurant nearby.

** Coal mines work well near the mountains. I put them east of the eastern slopes and next to factories. Don't spread them around or they'll make big problems for areas that don't want uglification.

** Fish boats are nice easy profit but they may get in the way of chain-reaction properties like marinas and boardwalks. My advice is not to build them in the north inlet, but go for it everywhere else.

** General Stores work well with huge chunks of campgrounds or near

fishing boats or even by factories/apartments. Dunno why they're bad near condos, but avoid.

***** RESORT *****

** Hotels are a great part of a complex. Build them near beaches but they may not work well in the mountains if they're around cottages.
** Boardwalks can help enhance beachfront entertainment. I haven't tried them in place of marinas near cottages...
** Amusement parks are fun to drop in. Arcades and fast food joints work well with this L-shape.
** Marinas are easy to forget but if you have roads leading out to the lake, just drop a marina at the end. Be sure to balance them with boardwalks, though, if other resorts are nearby.
** Ski lodges can wait until the end as it takes a while to build a road to them, and then you can't build much property on the way along the road. But they still make good profit when you've worked through everything else.
** Ski lifts are fun to dump in the peaks. They'll welcome the lodges nicely.
** Casinos are great but best on the beach. Put one in the mountains by a ski lodge, too. Fast food joints work well with this L-shape.
** Cottages are great for mass production especially near the inland lake. I like to put them on the peninsula and in the mountains too.
** Campgrounds are great to place at the edges of the map, tucked away from everything else. Put general stores near them every now and then
** Parks are great--may feel neutral but are overall positive--as something to place anywhere nothing else fits in.

4. PLACING STRATEGIES

You have a 63x23 board to place squares on, with the 2x2 crosshairs. After a few games, if you manage to keep up the cash flow, you should be able to cover the whole board before the five years are up. The question is then how can you optimize placing stuff quick vs. placing stuff well? Obviously there's some quibble about building a lot of one thing at the same time, in the same area, and you'll want to concentrate on one general area before moving to the next. To do that it may be helpful to classify them and I try to do that in the 'specific' section.

Note that 1x1 pieces can't be put on the very top or the far left--the 2nd not being a big deal, but the first is a nasty surprise at times. Fortunately you can just fill the top with 2x2's if you want to fill the -whole- board.

You can also try to place some properties on squares where you're not sure if it's water. Often this reveals the map to be a bit different than it seems. Most 1/2-water squares are really land. Experimenting may lead you to realize things you can do with a certain property.

4-1. GENERAL

Here are some tips for using the controls for maximum efficiency:

--If you're ever at a loss for what to do, push 5. This will pause the game(or not penalize you for waiting) and show the areas where you need to go to work.
--Small tricks such as pushing the left button a few times to get to a road or apartment or hotel, or pushing the left button and moving up to get to a condo, should be remembered. You may also want to place your cursor to where you want to drop a property, ASAP.
--Because futzing with the menu can be so annoying, there's nothing wrong with building things all in a row.
--Push up on the rare occasion you need a bridge. I don't use motels

much and gas should also be easy, so roads are easy to learn if not lucrative.

--Other tricks: push buttons, go up twice to place a fishing boat. Then push down to get a store--these two interact well.

--Cinemas are always a nuisance to get to(I always think they should be higher up) but factories and power units are sort of 'stuck in the middle' and go together well. Build them together as the game made things relatively easy for you by making them very reciprocally beneficial.

--Almost everything in the resort front page goes together well. If only the casino was right there, it would be perfect.

--Place the ski lifts all in one swoop over summer of the first year, then forget about building any more. One less thing to save you time.

--Ocean Oil seems worthless. I don't bother with it. It doesn't generate any income.

--go back for cottage/campground building and for casinos. For ski lodges, go forward--in fact since you only need to build a few you might let one lie out in no man's land just so you don't have to go back for it.

--if you want to build two things close together but one doesn't have a road to it yet, don't worry about the road until later, especially if your cash flow is OK. It's more important to get a whole bunch of a certain type of property put down, freeing up some time to think.

A general strategy to make sure everything is covered is as follows:

--never make streets go diagonally. Try to go for a gridlike structure in the midlands.

--use roads sparingly elsewhere although they can be useful--for instance a diversion in the east, a road off to the side, lets you farm out that much more property.

--the gridlike structure needs to be relatively narrow. A height of 2 or 3 should be the maximum. Anything else and you waste squares.

```
+-----+
| LOTS OF CONDOS |
| CAN GO HERE |
+-----+
```

```
+-----+
| HERE YOU CAN PLACE |
| A LOT OF 2x2 ICONS |
| WITH CONDOS BELOW |
+-----+
```

A height of 4 in a long strip is not so hot as you will not really have enough 2x2 icons you can drop in to the mix to make it worthwhile. But I suppose you could do as follows:

```
+---+---+
| 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 |
+---+---+
| 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 |
+---+---+
| 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 |
+---+---+
| 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 |
+---+---+
```

--build a bunch of the same item at once. Skip a square occasionally to place something else later. For instance if you want to make two rows of condos, leave open a square for a gas station, fast food place, and a park. Fill them in later.

--note that some 2x2 items have a hole in the upper right. Place them on the SOUTH side of a street, so you can slip in an extra condo or a park for a bit of extra income. Small details can make the difference...
--apartments seem to work a bit better with roads on two sides...as do factories, etc. So apartments should go in a corner.
--selling something isn't the worst thing you can do as you get a full price for buying back. Just be careful if you are putting roads down that they go the exact place you want them.

--Also if you have an L-shaped property, you can place it 2/3 on land and 1/3 on lake and it will fit in OK. The 3/4 land and 1/4 lake rule works for 2x2 properties but no dice if you put it on 2 squares water and 2 squares land. This is interesting when the water is in the lower left; you can't place a smaller property, but you can place a bigger one.

4-2. SPECIFIC AREAS

Certain specific areas have 'best' ways to paint them. Ideally you want to cover as much ground as possible without having to put in too many roads. Some info will be big picture here but for certain areas an exact map-out seems necessary for full optimization.

THE WATER:

Fishing boats seem to beat out ocean oil hands down. Ocean Oil doesn't generate much income--less than boats after a few months unless you get lucky, it seems. Just don't place the boats too close together or too near water. The best time to place fishing boats is from March to June because the income cycle looks like this(a maximum, lower if two boats are close:)

Dec-Feb: 9 per boat
Mar-May: 30 per boat
Jun-Aug: 39 per boat
Sep-Nov: 20 per boat

You'll nevertheless want to place things in the first year or two, though, and even one fishing boat makes for a good return--294 per year from 750 ~=250% return on the boat over a lifetime. Not bad even adjusting for overoptimism.

SOUTH OF THE BRIDGE, WEST AREA:

This is an ideal place to dump cottages. You'll want to create a road 1 north of the bottom and move it to the left. You can then create another road forking north and another to the west of that. That should leave little unused space--see below.

```
    C
    C=C
MM  C.C=C
MM==CC=C
  CC=CC=C
  CC=CC=CCCC
MM=====
MMCCCCCCCCCg
```

.=park, g=gas

I'm not sure what goes well with cottages other than marinas but this is a quick place to build income properties. The marina to the north can also be accessed via a road from the north, and this can start defining boundaries for the big long road west.

SOUTH OF THE BRIDGE, EAST AREA:

This is a good area to create more expensive properties. First thing-- start building a road 2 above the bottom although you may want to put gas and a motel just east before going with 2x2 properties along the way before the beach(with the exception of a mall.) As in the top area(see 'difficult' section) you can drop in a boardwalk along with the boardwalk on the right, with hotel/casino to the left and then cinema/amusement park to the west of that. A road up and left into the river can provide some more access to hard to reach places. You can and should put a store above the cinema, too, on a spot that would otherwise be wasted. It will help the fishing boats generate income.

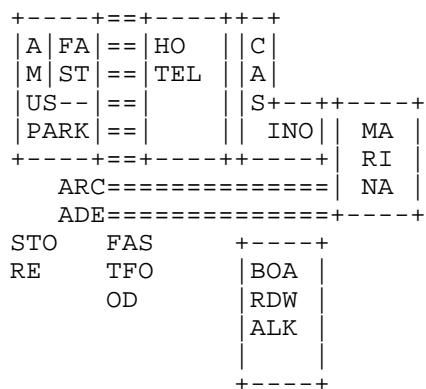
In the upper left area I like to put an amusement park above an apartment complex as follows:

```
====  
L*=  
LL*=  
AA*=CI  
AA*=NE  
=====
```

This covers all the squares nicely.

ISLAND TO THE SOUTHEAST:

This is a great resort area but the way it looks, it may be a bit tricky for you to put the best road down. I discovered the full geography by accident, and it's not intuitive, but you can work it out. The key thing is to start building the end of the road first and then come back up. That helps you make sure you didn't miss anything and although it may mean missing a month of income for something, you'll still do OK. After the dust settles you can build a marina/boardwalk around the bridge but until then this setup should work well.



The store doesn't need road access and will help the fishing boats.

NORTH OF THE ISLAND:

I don't do much fancy here. I try to leave some areas open for marinas and also there should be plenty of time and space to drop in stores-- there will be squares a road can't reach easily, and they can go there. Because they interact poorly with condos and because you'll also have a lot of fishing boats, you'll want to combine them with condos or maybe even campgrounds at the north part of the peninsula. My winning game on expert level often has(with S=store)...

```
MM
MM
C=C
CC=CCBB
=====BB
SCC=CC
CCC=CCMM
=====MM
CCC=C
aa=C [water]
aa=g
====CS
```

a=apartment, g = gas

A key thing to note is when you should turn up and that is when you have reached the edge of the island below--or you only have two icons and a small sliver before you yourself run into a lake.

OTHER BEACH AREA:

Build boardwalks/marinas off to the side with roads so that you can not only get access to all land squares but also get value for them. Apartments can't be bad here but be sure to stick in gas stations along the way. Also when you build stuff you'll probably be dropping fishing boats in first so you need to get a feel for where you can drop them--the wrong place(just left/right of a road to the water) and they may block a marina. Try for amusement parks but don't forget apartment complexes--I like to use 2x2 items here except for the usual casino/fast food complex.

LAND TO THE SOUTHWEST:

This may not be quite as lucrative as the other areas and may be distracting, so you'll want to hit the high income areas first. Still this is a nice place to be dropping property once things get cluttered.

Make a big road going to the west and then have it hook down one square before the edge. You can put campgrounds on both sides but be sure to put a store every 3 squares--on alternating sides of the road. You will also, when you get to the southwest corner, want to build a road to the west. Build two bridges across and cultivate that area with campgrounds, stores and roads. A two-length road up two squares east of the bridge should make all squares accessible via the road, and you can build a couple of marinas to keep campgrounders happy. However along the way you may want to place campgrounds in the area south of the big road to the west--again use roads and marinas judiciously, and use a store in each clump of campgrounds.

```
=====
=====
==CACAC==
==MPMP==
==STCA==
==ORMP==
==CACAC==
==MPMP==
[ocean/marina]
```

THE MIDLANDS:

This is a tricky area to 'get down.' You'll want to keep it into edible chunks and not make the blocks too large. If you have used the strategy where you put a road a square below the top place it can be,

then you can create the following chunks for the area right of the road:

5x3	3	3
	x	x
	4	4

5x2	-----	
	3	3
	x	x
5x3	5	5

A mall in each 5x3 and one 3x4 and one 3x5 along with apartments and condos and fast food in each one--and gasoline in most--should work out well. Of course you'll want to put the mall where the fast food place in its nook is reachable, and near the water you might throw a changeup and place an amusement park instead of a mall. I like to consider this the residential district.

Below this area I throw motels and an apartment and even a mall or a cottage. There'll be some unused area(dump lots of parks) but you could do worse than dump condos mindlessly.

THE MIDLANDS BY THE MOUNTAINS:

I like to use this for industrial purposes. It seems that if you have a road on both sides of a factory it does a bit better so I often just set up 3 roads to the left with factories between the two pairs, and coal mines to the left. The top road can have:

coal mine/store/fast food/motel/gas

Middle road:

coal mine/factory with power unit/fast food and store,
vertically/apartment and motel/gas vertically connected optional.

Bottom road: 2 coal mines, then see above though with cinema against the main road

Below that I can make a few small squares.

3	3	2
x	x	x
4	4	4

Think residential, maybe a mall if no other is near. Cottages can go to the south as it may be a bit too busy for campgrounds yet.

MOUNTAIN RANGES:

I generally dump a few ski lifts in here--5 or 6 in each, spaced two units apart. The ski lifts don't seem to have to touch the lodges so why not dump 'em? I like to drop them around August or so of the first year. They will generate nice income year 'round, especially valuable since most other properties tend to peak at wintertime. Keep the lifts a square or two to the left, at least in the east range, as you may have

coal to the right.

ROADS BY MOUNTAIN RANGES:

Sadly you can't do much resort-wise to the east of the mountain ranges. The coal mines get in the way. But you can make a road north, bend it east, and go north/east and leave a ski lodge at the end with another on the way. You'll want to make the road as straight as possible. Remember casinos interact well with ski lodges and put cottages around too. Fast food can slip inside the casino's "L." If you do things right in the niche between the ranges you can make a road to the left. Put a lodge above the "T" there and a casino below. Remember to drop in a gas station so cars can make it up there.

West of the second mountain range, you want to run a road up the left side, minus one. That allows you to drop cottages on the left. Maybe throw in one gas station for good measure. Make a few long roads to the right, putting cottages around. A casino and a ski lodge close together should do the trick although you may be able to squeeze in a pair.

```
!!  
=====!!  
=+  
=++ !!  
====!!  
 +  
 ++
```

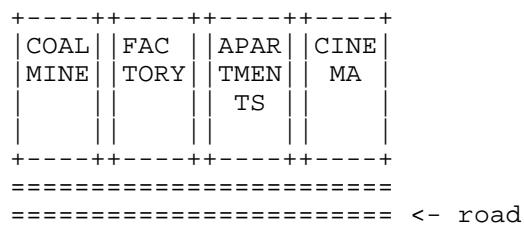
Fill the spaces in with cottages.

Any other spaces can be filled in with parks.

5. STARTING OUT

This is just one of many ways to start out when you have a lot of cash, and I'll be describing the higher risk one later. Beginners: don't just go for dinky gas stations--well, maybe for the first game, if you're worried about going into debt or running out of cash, but you should soon realize you won't need to worry.

So a good way to start is by immediately creating an industrial suburb in the north center. Busting out the two by two blocks immediately. Of course you'll need a bit of road too and although you don't want to go pasting road willy nilly, when you think you have a manageable block and stuff to put on it, by all means build it! You'll need also to get comfortable with what size blocks you like to build with your roads, but it's personal taste--except you have to make sure not to make your roads bend. Here's a good way to start below.



power unit/gas/fast food in the south, condos a bit further from the factory. You can maybe make three such roads, keeping the coal mines relatively close to the mountains. The apartments can be 2west/3south from each other and you might as well put two coal mines together. Condos can go near the mines without too much harm.

Once you get into March/April/May you can start dropping fishing boats in the sea to the east. These provide rather good income and if you drop in a few stores as well the overall payout will be quite good. You can do this all pretty quickly too. Then you will want to bridge the midlands with the eastern part ASAP as the beachfront property will give good income.

It's also a good bet to build ski lifts. They don't need lodges around but you can drop about six in each mountain. The road out west can wait until later when you've packed the midlands.

The next thing to try might be to place some stuff on the island. See the specific place strategies for that. You will of course need to have built the bridges so far.

6. LEVERAGING AND HARDER LEVELS

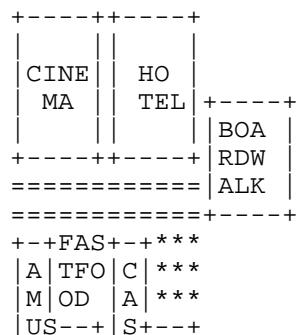
On the easy levels you can just build and build and not have to worry about losing cash. If you do things right it'll soon be rolling in faster than you can spend it. But to get to that point on the harder levels you may have to give yourself a head start.

Leveraging money is a good idea on the harder levels. You can do so serially although the risk is that the loan rate will get very inflated. Basically you don't want to borrow money unless you have to, and if the rate goes up too high try to pay \$500 a month back.

On the third level it's possible to go without loans for a while. You can build the factory-cluster or use the fourth-level strategy. However on level four you really have to use leveraging.

But don't do it right away! The interest rate starts at 6% but in fact taking out money will send it soaring. Wait a month to take out money--but don't be idle. Build something modest--with roads reaching to a profitable sector--borrow \$19999--and build away. It's important to build high income properties or the interest on the loan will still crush you, but I've found that stoking income properties and even getting into 6-figure debt can work out. The interest rate may soar but as long as you're building with an eye on a profit, it should work out OK. I've found it's worthwhile to gamble with casinos, etc. and in fact haven't been able to win except with the following strategy:

- a. Go north to start. Select a cinema. Place it just to the right of the road.
- b. Build a road below the cinema out to the shore. If you have time in January, build a cinema north of the road so there are 2 squares between it and the lake. If you still have time, start building a road 2 squares west of the cinema's left edge. Start walking down.
- c. In February, take out a \$19999 loan. Construct the beachfront as follows.



PARK	INO
------	-----

Here's a case where you need to know the lie of the land. You can't build near the casino in the upper corner, but it can fit as an L-shape. So it is the best thing to build there. You might want to position the boardwalk down one, but it shouldn't make too much of a difference.

With your lakefront resort starting you can probably build a condo and gas station to the left of the amusement park, and then leave space for a 2x2 before the path turns east, with a boardwalk at the end once you have the money.

Along the top of the road you can build stuff like apartments and restaurants--2x2 stuff with the occasional gas station--when you find the time. But I find the next thing to do is either 1) work left creating 3x4 or 3x5 or 4x4 enclosures, with malls, condos and apartments, or 2) build factory based enclaves to the left of the main road, in the upper part.

Once you've got money and a good coverage of the upper part you can go cover the lower bit. Use a boardwalk with the other luxury/commerce places as indicated above, and maybe you can even go on the island and create the lucrative megalopolis described in section 4. Then you can build an extensive sea resort with fish boats and cottages and marinas before going back west.

The midlands are the toughest to figure out what to do with. So much open space and it's not clear what is useful. Most important is that bridges don't seem worthwhile except for in the southwest, to get to the island to the east. I generally don't worry about ski lodges and the like, though, for a while--just fill in the main commerce and once debt starts to get paid off, use the campgrounds in the southwest and the cottages in the south center. If you have the time to do that, then start placing cottages in the mountains by the ski lodges, along with a casino or two. Then you can just start placing marinas and boardwalks as you should have the cash to, and they can't hurt campgrounds/other areas. The final thing to do is to look for squares you couldn't put anything in and just drop a few parks around. The instruction manual isn't clear on this, if cars need access, but it doesn't seem like it. It can't hurt and if you have nothing else to do, you might as well. If you are a real stickler you can look for places that interact poorly and sell/buy back, but I've gotten the board filled after four years with just marinas and boardwalks to buy.

7. GENERAL OTHER STRATEGIES

--when a strike comes up for hotel workers, etc., or there's some other bad news for a property, it will eventually get cleared up. Be prepared to build something and you'll get a nice return immediately.

8. THE BIG MAP

The game is actually on a grid of 64x24. This grid remains the same across games but it's not always clear which squares are fully river and which are buildable. Trial and error may work but take time, so I wrote up this map.

```
.....XXX^.....XXX^^^.....=.....~~~~~  
.....XXX^X.....XX^^X.....=.....i.....~~~~~  
.....XXX^^^.....XXX^X.....=.....i.....~~~~~  
.....XX^^XX....XXX^^X.....=.....i.....~~~~~  
.....XXX^XX.I..XXX^^XX.....=.....i.....~~~~~  
.....XXX^^X..I..XXX^XX.....=.....i.....~~~~~
```

```

.....XXX^^XX..I.XXX^X.....=.....i.....~~~~~....~~~~~  

.....XXX^XX..IIXXX^^X.....=.....i.....~~~~~....~~~~~  

.....XXX^X....IXXX^^X.....=.....i.....~~~~~....~~~~~  

....XXXX^^X....IXXX^^X.....=.....iiiiiii..~~~....~~~~~  

....XXX^^X....IX.XXX.....=.....i..~~~....~~~~~  

....XXX^^X....I.....=.....i...~....~~~~~  

....X.XXX.....I.....=.....i.....~~~~~  

....I.....=.....i.....~~~~~  

....IIIIIIIIIIII.....=.....~~~....iiiiiiiiii..~~~~~  

.....~~~~~....=.....~~~....~~~~~  

.....~~~....~~~....=.....~~~....~~~~~  

.....~~~....~~~....~~~....=.....i..~~~....!~~~~~  

....~~~....~~~....~~~....=.....i..~~~....!~~~~~  

....~~~....~~~....~~~....=.....i..~~~....~~~~~  

....~~~....~~~....~~~....=.....i..~~~....~~~~~  

....~~~....~~~....~~~....=.....i..~~~....~~~~~  

....!....~~~....=.....~~~....~~~~~  

....~~~....~~~....=.....~~~....~~~~~
```

Well, it's not quite perfect yet, but the ?'s are icons that look like water and 1) are if they're part of a river and 2) aren't if they're part of the sea. I'll expound later and also include the roads you can start off with.

```

. = grass
~ = water
= = road
X = mountain, impassable
* = bridge you start with
^ = mountain
i = roads that appear in levels 1, 2 and 3
I = roads that appear in levels 1, 2
(the are no roads except for the center part on level 4.)
! = where I like to build bridges
```

9. MESSAGES AND COOL STUFF

There are many words that put together a message and Fortune Builder reuses several strings in an effort to make for diversity without losing memory. Some pretty clearly follow others. From these messages it's pretty clear that casinos are very risky, and fast foods and such have their pitfalls. I generally don't worry about anticipating them too much or even about what they mean, but if one appears for casinos you should drop what you're doing and build a few. You can always sell the casino and replace it later.

```
--ANGRY PARENTS CLOSE VIDEO ARCADES ... GIVE NO QUARTER TO BESIEGED  
INDUSTRY  
--AVALANCHE BURIES MOUNTAIN RESORTS ... DEVELOPERS PAY STEEP FINES  
--BEACHFRONT DEVELOPERS SPEND THOUSANDS TO REPAIR HURRICANE DAMAGE  
--BIGFOOT HAUNTS RESORTS ... PROFITS DOWN  
--BUREAU OF MINES MANDATES COSTLY SAFETY UPGRADES  
--CASINO OWNERS HIT WITH BIG GAMBLING LICENSE FEES  
--COAL MINES FLOOD ... OWNERS ALMOST GO UNDER  
--COAL MINES REOPEN FOLLOWING DISASTER  
--DIETING CRAZE REDUCES FAST FOOD PROFITS  
--EPA REQUIRES FACTORIES TO INSTALL COSTLY SCRUBBERS  
--EXPERTS SAY FAST FOOD BURGERS CAUSE BALDNESS  
--EXPERTS SAY FAST FOOD BURGERS INCREASE LIFESPAN  
--FACTORY WORKERS GO ON STRIKE/FACTORY STRIKE SETTLED  
--EXTERMINATORS TAKE APARTMENTS TO CLEANERS  
--FISH CATCH STINKS ... PROFITS FLOUNDER (?)  
--FOREST RANGERS EXPOSE BIGFOOT HOAX (this follows BIGFOOT message)  
--GREAT WHITE SHARK EATS INTO BEACH PROFITS
```

```
--HORROR MOVIE REMAKE SCARES OFF MOTEL PATRONS(?)  
--HOTEL INDUSTRY ORDERED TO INSTALL COSTLY SPRINKLERS  
--HOTEL STRIKE SETTLED  
--HOTEL WORKERS GO ON STRIKE  
--LEGISLATURE SAYS CASINO OWNERS MUST CASH IN CHIPS  
--LEGISLATURE REOPENS ARCADES ... OWNERS SEE BIG FISCAL QUARTERS AHEAD  
(this follows 'angry parents' a lot)  
--MINING INDUSTRY HIT WITH HUGE FINES (?)  
--MULTISENSORY VIDEO GAME BOOSTS ARCADE REVENUES  
--NUCLEAR WAR FILM SHATTERS BOX OFFICE RECORD  
--OIL SHORTAGE IS BOON TO COAL INDUSTRY  
--POKER MATCH SWEETENS POT FOR CASINO OWNERS  
--RASH OF FOOD POISONINGS LEAVE RESTAURANTS IN CRITICAL CONDITION  
--RECREATIONAL VEHICLE BOOM BRINGS (TOURISM??) TO CAMPGROUNDS  
--RESTAURANTS FAIL WITH BOARD OF HEALTH ... LARGE FINES COLLECTED  
--SARDINE CATCH YIELDS BIG NET PROFIT FOR FISHING  
--SKI ACCIDENTS ON THE RISE ... LODGES PAY STEP INSURANCE RATES  
--SPRING FLOODS SEND RIVERFRONT PROFITS DOWN THE DRAIN  
--STORMS DESTROY BOATS ... OWNERS SINK CASH INTO NEW GEAR  
--SUPERSONIC COASTER BOOSTS AMUSEMENT PARK PROFITS  
--TERMITES PUT THE BITE ON CONDO OWNERS ... EXTERMINATORS COLLECT BIG  
BUCKS  
--TIGHT PENNANT RACE DRAWS SELLOUT  
--TORNADO DEVASTATES MIDLANDS ... RECOVERY MAY TAKE MONTHS  
--TV MINISERIES 'MONTE CARLO' SPARKS GAMBLING FAD  
--WHALE MIGRATION MEANS MAMMOTH FISH CATCH  
--WINTER OLYMPICS BRING THOUSANDS TO SKI RESORTS
```

I also noted that you can go bankrupt on loans if you continually borrow 19999 on level 4. The effective interest rate jumps to 12% and you're toast if you've borrowed over \$250000. If you wait a month on the other hand, you can borrow absurdly, up or close to a million on level 1 as the rates will be way down.

End of FAQ proper

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10. VERSIONS

1.0.1: sent to GameFAQs 10/08/03 with some interesting(I think) details added.
1.0.0: sent to GameFAQs 10/06/03 to celebrate my having won at level 4! It's now pretty much complete with the info I've given. I'm sure there are alternate strategies or fine tuning that I missed.
0.1.0: sent to GameFAQs 10/02/03 to celebrate my having beaten the game on level 2 for the first time! Only very general strategies with nothing to do with actual interaction are included here.

11. CREDITS

The usual GameFAQs gang. They know who they are, and you should, too, because they get some SERIOUS writing done. Good people too--bloomer, daremo, falsehead, RetroFreak, Snow Dragon/Brui5ed Ego, ZoopSoul(great AIM convo helped my revamp efforts,) and others I forgot.
CJayC for creating GameFAQs.com so that I could post cute little time wasting guides like this.

These thanks double as reference:

James Carter for his excellent page and permission to use the docs therein as reference.

<http://home.comcast.net/~mycoleco/manuals.htm> but check out cv.htm too.
Tom Zlyta for his excellent page and permission to use the docs therein as reference.

<http://www.tomheroes.com/Video%20Games%20FS/video%20games/coleco/Manuals>

/coleco_manuals.htm

The authors' hard work is also appreciated--as is the work of those that came before(Greg Chance/History of Video Games.)