

ADMIRALS:

A game of Fleet Actions
in the Golden Age of Fighting Sail



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I. INTRODUCTION

"Admirals" is a game which recreates, in a stylized fashion, the movements and interactions of fleets of sailing warships during the late 17th, 18th, and early 19th centuries. The purpose is to allow the player to take the role of the commander of a fleet of sailing warships and explore the choices and challenges which faced his historical counterpart.

II. DEFINITIONS

Point: The playing area is marked with "points" that form a geometric pattern similar to a grid of regular hexagons. This grid regulates the movement and gunnery of the ships.

Group: All of the ships of a particular squadron that are currently located on a single point. A Group does not include stragglers, prizes, or ships that have struck, even if they are on the same point.

Squadron: All of the ships acting under the orders of a single Admiral. A squadron will typically consist of four to nine ships, in one to three Groups.

Division: Fleets of sailing warships were commonly formed into three divisions for the purpose of facilitating command and control. A Division may consist of one or more squadrons, and is typically controlled by a single player (the Admiral).

Flagship: A ship designated by a marker, flag or pennant as the one which carries the Admiral. The location of the flagship serves a locus for command and control of the fleet.

Gunnery Die: A ten-sided die, the number of which rolled for a gunnery attack is determined by the Gunnery Dice chart.

Target Number: The numerical result required on a Gunnery Die to cause damage to an opposing ship. A roll equal to or less than the Target Number results in one damage step to the target Group.

Captains Roll: A six-sided die, rolled to determine whether the captains of a Group of ships will seize the initiative in a boarding battle or maneuver.

III. BASICS

Each ship in the game is represented by a counter, flat, or miniature. Whichever of these is used should be marked with flags or labels that identify its nationality and, optionally, the ship's name and rate. If not using a roster to keep track of damage states, the ship should also display its initial Strength Rating, for ease of reference. The Admiral's flagship should be marked in some distinctive way (a flag, pennant, or marker).

Also required for play are 6-sided and 10-sided dice (about a half dozen of each will work well), and the various markers and cards that are provided in the files that come with the game.

The playing area.

The Groups of ships move across the playing area from point to point. The distance between the points represents about a third of a nautical mile, and the points should be placed on the gaming area far enough apart to accommodate three ships, end to end, on each point (see the Appendix for details). The number of moves each Group makes in the course of a turn is affected by their attitude to the wind and the sail setting ordered by the controlling player (the "Admiral"). The relative speeds of the ships (0-3) do not change with changes in the strength of the wind; rather, the length of the turn is adjusted, since in lighter winds the ships will take longer to move the same distance. Since a longer turn means that the guns will fire more times during a move of the same distance, the amount of damage inflicted during the turn is increased proportionally as the wind speed decreases. Each turn in Strong Winds expends 6 minutes of game time, with Medium and Light Wind turns lasting 12 or 24 minutes, respectively.

The Scenario.

Either the gamemaster (if there is one) or the players, by agreement, select the ships to be used by each side, and their starting positions relative to each other as well as to any land masses (which, naturally, are impassable to ships) or shoals, unless the players are using the Grand Tactical Module in which case the starting positions will already be determined. If the wind speed and direction are not pre-determined by a scenario, the players will have to agree on the initial wind speed and direction, and on whether to use the optional rules for changes in the wind.

The starting time for the game should be determined ahead of time, either by the scenario or by the agreement of the players, or by any suitable random method, so that the time of nightfall can be ascertained, most actions at sea during this era ending with darkness if one fleet or the other had not fled or been destroyed by that time.

The ship ratings.

Each ship is assigned a Strength Rating, based on the number and size of its guns. A Group will use these Strength Ratings to determine the result of attacks on opposing ships. The number of Gunnery Dice rolled will vary with the speed of the ships and the strength of the wind, reflecting the amount of time the target Group spends in the gunnery arc of the attacking Group. Damage inflicted by enemy attacks will reduce the strength of the ships and/or the number of moves they will make in a turn.

The suggested ratings in the following charts are intended to reflect broadside weight relative to contemporaneous vessels. Comparisons between ratings from different charts are meaningless, since different algorithms were used for each one.

Early Anglo-Dutch Wars, 1650-1660

# of Guns	28-32	34-38	40-44	48-54	60-66	70-80	90 plus
Rating	2, 3	4	5	6	7	8	9, 10

Later Anglo-Dutch Wars, 1660-1675

English

Guns	28-34	40-44	50-56	60-66	70-78	80 plus
Rating	2, 3	5, 6	7	8	9	10, 11

Dutch

Guns	28-34	44-50	58-68	70 plus
Rating	2, 3	4, 5	6, 7	8, 9

War of the League of Augsburg/War of the Spanish Succession/Great Northern War, 1688-1720

Guns	Frigate	50-58	60-64	68-74	80-84	90	94-98	100	104 plus
Rating	2	3	4	5, 6	6, 7	8	8, 9	11	12

War of the Austrian Succession/Seven Years War, 1740-1760

Guns	Frigate	50	60	64	70	74	80-90	100	100 plus
Rating	1,2	3	4	5, 6	5	7, 8	8, 9	10, 11	12, 13

Fourth Anglo-Dutch War/American War of Independence, 1776-1784

Guns	Frigates	50-54	64-68	74-76	80-84	90-98	100	100 plus
Rating	1, 2	3	5, 6	7, 8	8	8, 9	10, 11	12, 13

French Revolution/Napoleonic Wars, 1793-1815

Guns	Frigates	64	74	84-90	98-100	110-112	118-130
Rating	2, 3, 4	7	8	9	10	11	12, 13

Optional Wind Changes.

A change in wind speed or direction occasionally had an effect on the conduct or outcome of naval actions. If these changes are not specified by a scenario, then the players may wish to include the chance of a random change during the game.

At the beginning of the Signals Phase of each turn, either the Gamemaster or one of the players should roll two D10, with one being designated as wind speed and the other as wind direction. If the die result

is a "1", then roll it again for the exact change to be made.

Wind Speed: 9 or 10=Wind increases by one level. 8 or less=Wind decreases by one level.

Wind Direction: Odd=Wind changes 60 degrees counter-clockwise. Even=ditto, clockwise.

If a Wind Speed change reduces the wind below Light, then the fleets are becalmed. All ships remain on the points they currently occupy until the wind increases again. Gunnery is only allowed between ships on the same point because the smoke from the guns is no longer dispersed and visibility is reduced to near zero. Boarding actions may take place between ships that are already "muzzle-to-muzzle", but no new Close Actions may be initiated.

If a Wind Speed change increases the wind from Strong, then gale conditions exist. Effective gunnery is impossible, and the ships may no longer tack or move Close Hauled. Until the wind is reduced again to Strong, all ships will move at a speed of 1 (since they will be under much reduced sail in an attempt to keep control of the ships and avoid damage) and all damaged ships which fail their movement rolls will take an additional step of damage and move 1 point directly downwind. No repairs are possible under gale conditions.

The Turn Sequence.

The game is played by performing a series of activities, in the sequence given below. All the activities performed by the players must take place in the designated phase for that activity, and once all activities for each phase have been completed, the next phase is begun.

The sequence is as follows:

I. MOVEMENT PHASE (See Section VI.)

1. First Movement Step

Frigates may take an optional "free" move.

2. Second Movement Step

Ships moving a speed of 3 will move.

The ships that moved may then fire, or be fired upon.

3. Third Movement Step

Ships moving a speed of 2 will move, followed by ships moving a speed of 3.

The ships that moved may then fire, or be fired upon.

4. Fourth Movement Step

Ships moving a speed of 1 will move, followed by ships moving a speed of 2, and then by ships moving a speed of 3.

The ships that moved may then fire, or be fired upon.

II. BOARDING PHASE (See Section VII.)

Ships which are "muzzle-to-muzzle" check to see if Boarding Actions are initiated, and these Actions, if any, are resolved.

III. SIGNALS PHASE (See Section V.)

The Gamemaster (or one of the players) checks to see if the wind speed or direction has changed, if this option is being used.

The players then make the signals for the subsequent turn.

IV. REPAIR PHASE (See Section VIII.)

Ships which are eligible may attempt to make repairs.

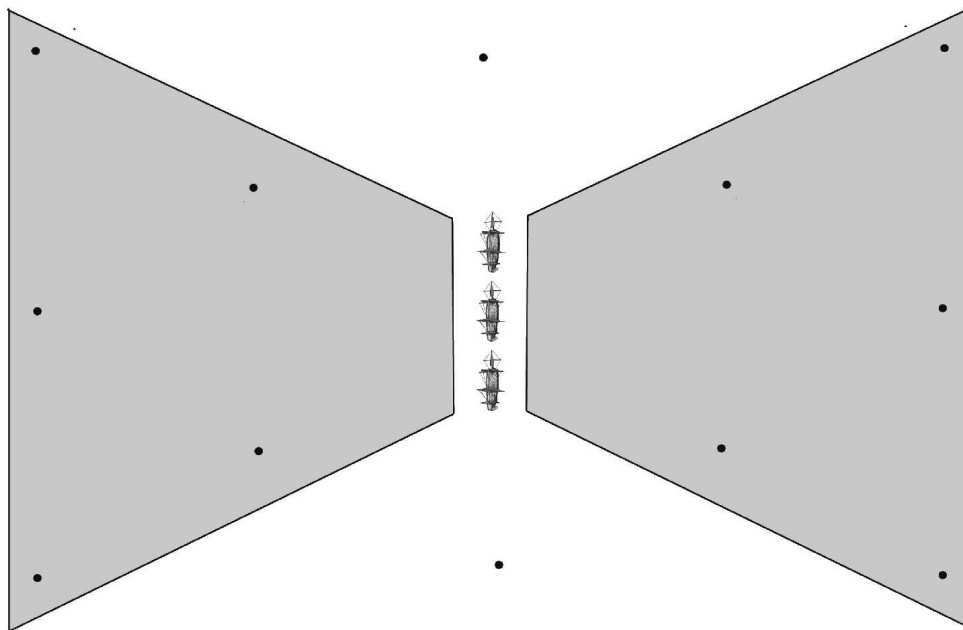
IV. FORMATIONS

The ships of each Group are arranged to reflect the formation the Group is in. Three formations are possible; line ahead, line of bearing, or "bunch" formation.

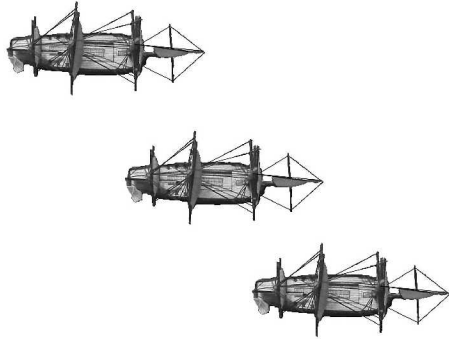
Line Ahead:



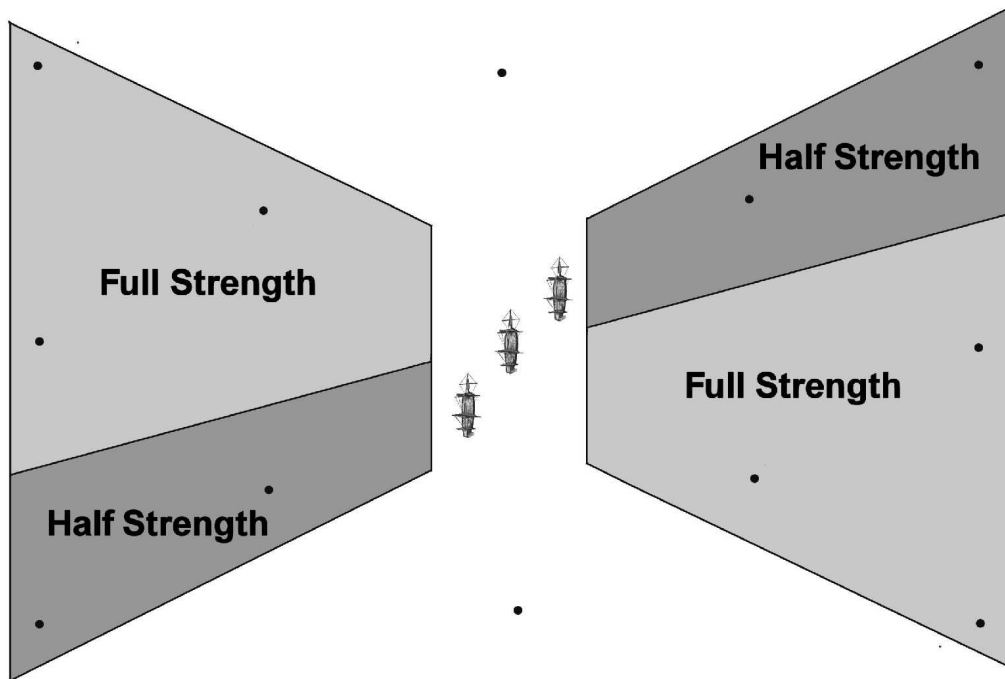
In Line Ahead, all the ships' guns will bear from both broadsides. Movement is simple, with succeeding ships merely following the leader, but large fleets in this formation take considerable time to complete a maneuver. A Group in Line Ahead may attack enemy ships which are on the two points adjacent to either side, or on the three points immediately beyond those, as shown in the following diagram:



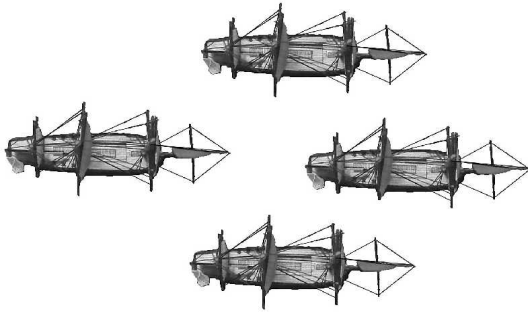
Line of Bearing:



In Line of Bearing, the line of battle can be shifted port or starboard more quickly, but adjacent ships may mask some of the Group's guns.



"Bunch":



This formation is mandatory when a Group contains four or more ships. (Note that Groups that contain more than six ships may have collisions - see Section VII.) The ships are arranged randomly on the point, except that it should be made clear which ship is leading and which is bringing up the rear.

Neighboring ships will mask some of the Group's fire, but it is useful for concentrating strength when attempting to overwhelm a portion of an enemy fleet. The guns of a Group in Bunch formation covers the same points as a Group in Line Ahead, but its attack strength is equal to the total of the three smallest ships in the Group.

V. SIGNALS

An Admiral controls the ships of his squadron through the use of signals, made by displaying different combinations of variously colored flags at different highly visible points in the flagship's rigging. The signal books of the age of sail often contained hundreds of flag combinations, occasionally combined with signal guns or sail configurations, designed to convey the Admiral's intentions to the Captains of all the ships of his squadron. One or more Groups will act together under the command a flag officer (i.e. an Admiral). The Groups which compose a squadron will act on the Admirals orders if they are on the same point as the flagship, or on points adjacent to the one where the flagship is located. All those ships belonging to a squadron which are not on the same or adjacent points are considered "Stragglers", and will follow different movement rules until they rejoin their squadron (see Section VI).

In this game, signals are displayed by three elements;

- 1) By the heading of one of the ships in a Group, indicating a change of course
- 2) By a "speed marker", which indicates the amount of sail the Admiral wishes to be set, and
- 3) By a signal card placed at the edge of the playing area, which conveys the Admirals general intent for all or part of his fleet.

1. Ship Heading

The players will indicate changes of heading for each squadron, beginning with the most downwind and working to windward. If a squadron is not clearly and completely upwind of another, the players should roll off. The squadron with the lower result will make its heading change first.

When the Admiral wishes his squadron to change direction he will rotate one of the ships of a Group or Groups, during the Signals Phase, to face the new direction. He may select any point adjacent to the one the Group is currently on except the one immediately to the Group's rear or the one directly upwind of the point the Group is currently on. If he wishes a Group consisting of more than one ship to move in Line Ahead, he will rotate the leading ship and all the trailing ships will "follow the leader", in succession. If he wishes the ships of the Group to turn together, forming to or from Line of Bearing, he will rotate the second ship.

A Group which is "close hauled" may be ordered to tack by turning the lead ship two points left or right. That Group's next move will consist of rearranging the Group to face in the new direction, on the same point. If a damaged ship fails its movement roll (see Damage Effects), it has "missed stays" and cannot complete the tack. Instead of simply not moving, which would be the result of a normal movement roll failure, it falls one point downwind, ending in a "broad reach" on the opposite tack. Note: A Squadron which is tacking in succession (that is, each Group advances to the point on which the leading Group tacked before following suit) is given a speed of 0 during the turn in which one of its Groups is tacking to avoid the possibility of collision with tacking ships ahead, or leaving ships in the rear of the squadron behind.

2. Speed Markers

The Admiral will place a marker, numbered 0 to 3, face down next to his flagship during the signals phase. The number indicates what speed the squadron will move in the upcoming turn. The speed displayed may not exceed the maximum speed allowed by the facing of any of the ships of that squadron (including those which are indicating a change of heading) relative to the wind direction (see Section VI). These markers are revealed after all have been placed.

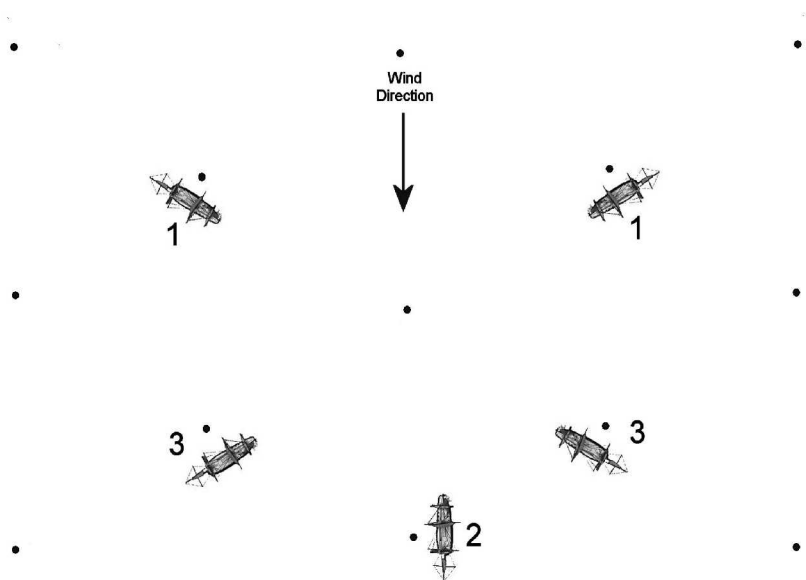
3. Signal Cards

These are used to convey the general intentions of the Admiral for the movement of all or part of his fleet, relative to the rest of his ships, or relative to the enemy. In the Signals Phase, the Admiral may place one Signal Card of his choice on the edge of the playing area (accompanied, if desired, by a "distinctive" flag, indicating a specific portion of the fleet for whom the signal is intended.)

VI. MOVEMENT

Groups are moved from point to point in a four-step sequence, determined by their speed. First, the frigates and smaller unrated ships get an optional free move. Second, all squadrons which are moving a speed of 3 move. In the third step, squadrons moving a speed of 2 move, followed by those with a speed of 3. Finally, in the last step, the squadrons with a speed of 1 move, followed by those with a speed of 2, then those with a speed of 3.

The maximum speed a Squadron may move is determined by the attitude of its component ships to the direction of the wind, as illustrated below:



Squadrons which are "close hauled" may move a maximum of 1; Squadrons whose ships are "running before the wind" may move a maximum of 2; Squadrons whose ships are on a "broad reach" or "sailing large" may move up to 3. The Admiral may order a speed from 0 up to the maximum allowed for the slowest Group under his command (the one which has the slowest indicated speed for the direction it is facing relative to the wind). A speed of 0 may not be placed in two consecutive turns. When the movement step for their indicated speed arrives, the Squadron's Groups are moved to the next point ahead, as indicated by the Admiral's orders. When more than one squadron has the same speed indicated, the most windward one has the choice of either moving first or deferring to the next squadron downwind. (To determine if a squadron is windward of an opposing squadron, i.e. has the "weather gauge", imagine a line at right angles to the wind, passing through the point on which the opposing squadron's most upwind Group is located. If all of a squadron's Groups are on points upwind of this line, then that squadron has the "weather gauge", a position which grants significant initiative advantages.)

Ships which are not on the same point as the their squadron's flagship or a point adjacent to it are considered Stragglers. They do not move as the Squadron to which they are assigned; rather, they move at the best speed for the direction they are facing relative to the wind, in the direction of the point immediately astern of the Squadron's flagship (that is, the direction they move must not take them further from that point), until they are once again adjacent. They may turn to face a new point after any move, except the point directly upwind or the point directly astern.

Frigates (and smaller, unrated vessels) do not move in the same way as the ships of the line. They are not organized in Groups, nor do they form part of the line of battle; they move independently, as individuals. Frigates may always move in the first movement step, and thereafter may move in any step for the maximum move for the direction they are facing at the time. Frigates always have the option not to move in any movement step, if the player so desires. A frigate move is made to any adjacent point, except the one directly upwind or the one directly astern, after which it remains facing in the direction it has moved.

VII. CLOSE ACTION, BOARDING, AND COLLISIONS

A Group may move to a point on which another Group is already located.

Many captains and subordinate admirals were reluctant to commit their ships to close action, mainly because the increased effectiveness of smoothbore artillery at short range could mean the destruction or loss of their command. (This was particularly true before the middle of the 17th century when some ship captains were also the ship's owners, hired by a government to quickly increase the size of the fleet. These captain/owners were understandably loth to risk the total loss of their investment in the states' interest.) When a Group is about to make a move to a point that is already occupied by another Group, the player who commands it will make a "Captains Roll"; on a D6, a result of 5 or 6 the Group will complete the move, but on a result of 1-4 it will veer one point left or right if one of those points is vacant and not directly upwind. Add one to the die if the Admiral is displaying a signal requiring his ships to close ("Engage More Closely", "Lay the Enemy On Board" or "Pass Through the Enemy Line"), and/or if the fleet has the "Bold Captains" characteristic.

A Group which is moving to a point on which a Close Action is already taking place that involves a friendly flagship does not need to make a Captains Roll.

If a Group actually moves to a point already occupied by another Group that is not already on a parallel course and is not involved in a Close Action, the moving ships might veer to a course parallel to that of the ships that were already there, even if this is not what the Admiral intended. Upon moving into such a situation, another "Captains Roll" is made; if successful, the Group maintains its course. If the roll fails, the Group makes the minimum necessary turn to conform to the heading of the Group that already occupied the point.

A Group that includes the flagship never needs to make a Captains Roll, but will always comply with the Admiral's wishes.

Close Action:

If two Groups end the move on the same point and are not moving on parallel courses (either in the same or opposite direction) there may be consequences such as collisions, fouling, close actions or boarding attempts. There are two possible cases, depending on whether the two Groups are friendly or enemy:

If the Groups belong to opposing fleets, they may become involved in Close Action. Roll a D6 for each ship on the point, and place the die next to the ship for which it was rolled. If any of the D6s match, then those ships are paired off in a gunnery battle at "Muzzle-to-muzzle" range (and are eligible for possible Boarding Actions in the Boarding Phase.) No more than two ships may engage any single enemy ship in Close Action. If a third ship of the same Group rolled a matching number, that roll is ignored. The remaining ships, not involved in Close Action are considered to be maneuvering for firing position against their opponents on the point and will resolve their gunnery vs each other at "Pistol Shot" range). They will not exit the point until all the enemy ships have struck.

If both Groups belong to the same fleet, then collisions may occur. roll a D6 for each ship on the point, and place the die next to the ship for which it was rolled. If any of the D6s match (i.e., have the same number of pips showing) then the ships with which they are associated have collided. Roll another D6 for each pair of ships that have collided; an even result means that no fouling has occurred, but those ships will not move when their respective Groups make their next move. Leave the D6 next to the ship(s), or replace it with some other kind of marker to indicate which ships are affected. An odd result means that the ships have fouled, and they will not move again until they have unfouled.

Ships on points which contain more than six ships, even if they are friendly and on the same heading, must make a collision check each time they move.

Boarding:

Ships which are involved in a gunnery duel at "Muzzle-to-Muzzle" range may possibly become involved in a boarding action. In the Boarding Phase the player controlling each ship makes a Captains Roll, adding one to the die result if their fleet has the "Bold Captains" characteristic, and/or if the Admiral is flying the "Lay the Enemy On Board" signal. If either Captains Roll succeeds, a boarding battle is initiated.

Once a boarding battle is initiated, in this and each subsequent Boarding Phase each player will roll a D6 and add the result to his ship's current strength. The ship belonging to the player with the lower total loses one strength point; if the result is a tie, both ships lose a strength point. If at the end of any Boarding Phase the strength of one ship is half of its opponents' strength or less, that ship becomes a Prize.

VIII. GUNNERY

At the conclusion of each of the second, third and fourth movement steps, any Groups that have moved in that step may fire, or be fired upon. (The exceptions are Frigates and Stragglers, which always execute gunnery attacks as if they were moving a speed of 3). The Group executing a gunnery attack (excepting those which are on the same point as the opposing ships) must have a target on one of the points upon which its guns will bear (see the illustrations in Section IV.)

Executing Gunnery Attacks

To execute the gunnery attack, the Admiral of the attacking Group rolls the number of D10s indicated by the Gunnery Dice chart (see the Quick Reference Card) which cross-indexes the speed of the faster moving of the two Groups (the target and the attacker) and the strength of the wind. Each die which is equal to or less than a "Target Number" results in damage to the target Group, doing one step of damage to an opposing ship.

The Target Number needed to inflict damage is determined by totaling the strength of the attacking ships. This total is then divided by 3, dropping any fractions.

The Target number is further halved (rounding fractions up) if any of the following apply:

- If the target Group is one point distant ("Half-cannon shot")
- If the target Group is two points distant ("Cannon shot")
- If the point on which the firing Group is located contains more than three ships (because some of the ships' guns will be masked by other ships on the point)

These modifiers are cumulative. If the Target Number is 1 before halving, then no effective attack is possible and the gunnery results in no damage.

Thus, if a Group has a total strength of 21, the Target Number at "Pistol Shot" range will be 7. If that same Group is in "Bunch" formation (four or more ships) at "Cannon Shot" range, the Target Number would be 1 (7, halved for one point distance is 4, halved again for two points distance is 2, halved again for more than three ships is 1).

Distributing Damage

Damage steps are distributed one at a time, going to the least damaged ship in the target Group. If two or more ships are equally damaged, the damage step goes to the smallest (that is, the one with the lowest initial Strength). If the attacking ships are "crossing the T" of a target Group, all the damage steps are applied to the closest ship.

Damage steps are of two types: they may affect the target ship's movement, or its strength. How the damage steps are distributed between these two types is determined by the range at which the gunnery attack occurred, and any gunnery doctrine in use by the fleet executing the attack (see the Quick Reference Card).

At Cannon-shot range (2 points distant) all damage distribution is "Normal" (doctrine did not affect damage at this range, which officers of the period referred to as the range of "random shot"). Some navies were trained to fire by preference at the enemy's hull (Low Doctrine) making damage to the enemy's strength more likely. Others preferred to fire at the enemy's sails (High Doctrine), making the impairment of the enemy's movement more likely. (This will vary by scenario). At Half-cannon-shot and Pistol-shot ranges, applicable doctrine will determine the distribution of damage steps. In the absence of any doctrine, damage will be distributed as "Normal". At Muzzle-to-muzzle range (only in Close Action) all damage is distributed as Low Doctrine, simply because of the inability of the guns to elevate more than a few degrees.

For each damage step distributed, roll a D6 and refer to the Damage Rolls section of the Quick Reference Card to determine whether the step is applied to the target ship's strength or movement. Cumulative damage can be recorded on a roster, or by the use of markers or small D6s adjacent to the damaged ships, or by marking the ships themselves. (I prefer temporary marks on the ships' bases, since it keeps all the information necessary to play the game on the table, reducing the time lag and confusion inherent in referring to rosters. Marks on the bases also interfere less with the aesthetics of the wargame table than markers or dice. I record movement damage with marks at the bow of the ship and strength damage with marks at the stern, or different colors of marks for each type, to avoid confusion.)

Effects of Damage

Strength and movement damage affect the ships differently. Strength damage reduces the effective strength of the ship by one for each step taken. Movement damage, on the other hand, may affect the ability of a ship to maintain station with its Group. Each time a ship with movement damage is to move, a D6 is rolled; if the result is equal to or greater than the number of movement damage steps, the ship moves normally. If it is less than the number of movement damage steps, then the ship does not advance to the next point with its Group

(note that it is not necessary to roll for a ship with only 1 damage step to its movement, since it is not possible to roll less than 1). If it falls behind enough to no longer be adjacent to its squadron's flagship, it is considered to be a Straggler, and should be marked as such for easy identification during subsequent movement steps.

If a ship has 7 or more damage steps to its Movement, or if the number of damage steps to its Strength equals or exceeds its initial Strength, it will strike if it is fired on by an enemy ship. If an enemy ship moves to a point occupied by a ship or ships which have struck and no friendly ships are present on the point, the struck ships become Prizes.

A "Struck" ship may not execute gunnery attacks or participate in boarding battles, but it continues to move under the control of its original commander until taken as a Prize. Prizes may not execute gunnery attacks or participate in boarding battles, but move under the control of the players whose ship made them a Prize.

Repairs:

Strength losses (representing dismantled guns and crew casualties) are not easily replaced during the course of a battle, but sailing ships were capable of limited repairs to sails, spars and rigging. In the Repair phase of the turn, ships with more than two movement damage steps may roll to remove one step of damage. To be eligible for Repairs, the ship must not be an eligible target for an enemy ship, either by not being in an enemy ship's arc of fire or by being masked by friendly ships. Repairs may never reduce a ship's movement damage to less than two steps.

Since the turn length is different at different wind strengths (plus the fact that repairs to spars and rigging are more difficult with higher winds and seas) the roll on a D6 to successfully repair a damage step is determined by the current wind strength:

Light	4+
Medium	5+
Strong	6

IX. THE GRAND TACTICAL MODULE

Warfare at sea has always been primarily about maneuver, but never more so than during the Age of Sail, when the movement of ships was entirely dependent upon the wind. An Admiral's skillful handling of his fleet in the approach to battle could have a significant effect on the outcome of the ensuing fight. Since a fleet of sailing warships in line of battle could extend across miles of ocean, it is difficult to represent this aspect of naval battles using miniatures and tactical rules simply because of the space such an endeavor would require. This module is therefore offered as a means to that end.

To give the players a way to play out the approach of two opposing fleets, printable ocean hexes and counters are provided to be printed out and mounted on cardboard. Each counter represents a Group belonging to each fleet, and the geomorphic hex boards are marked with hexes representing about a nautical mile each. Frigates are not represented individually; they are assumed to be with the squadrons to which they belong. Since the horizon could be as far as 20 miles (in perfectly clear conditions, which was not typical, depending on the season and the location of the battle), several of these boards may be needed to cover the area between the two fleets.

Up to three Groups may occupy a single hex, and all Groups of a Squadron must be in the same hex as the Group containing the Flagship, or one immediately adjacent to it.

In the Grand Tactical module, each turn in Strong Winds takes 20 minutes of game time, with turns at Medium and Light Winds taking 40 and 60 minutes, respectively.

The movement mechanics used in the Grand Tactical module mimic those in the main rules in that the speed of the fleets in their respective attitudes to the wind is the same (i.e., 1-3). Each fleet or squadron is moved in turn, with the player controlling the most windward formation choosing whether to move first or to allow his opponent to move first. When each formation moves, it is advanced in the direction the Groups are facing (if in line abreast) or in a line following the path of the leading Group (if in line ahead), up to the number of hexes allowed for the slowest Group in the Squadron to which it belongs. After moving, the players may turn any or all of their Groups to face any other hex side except the one directly upwind.

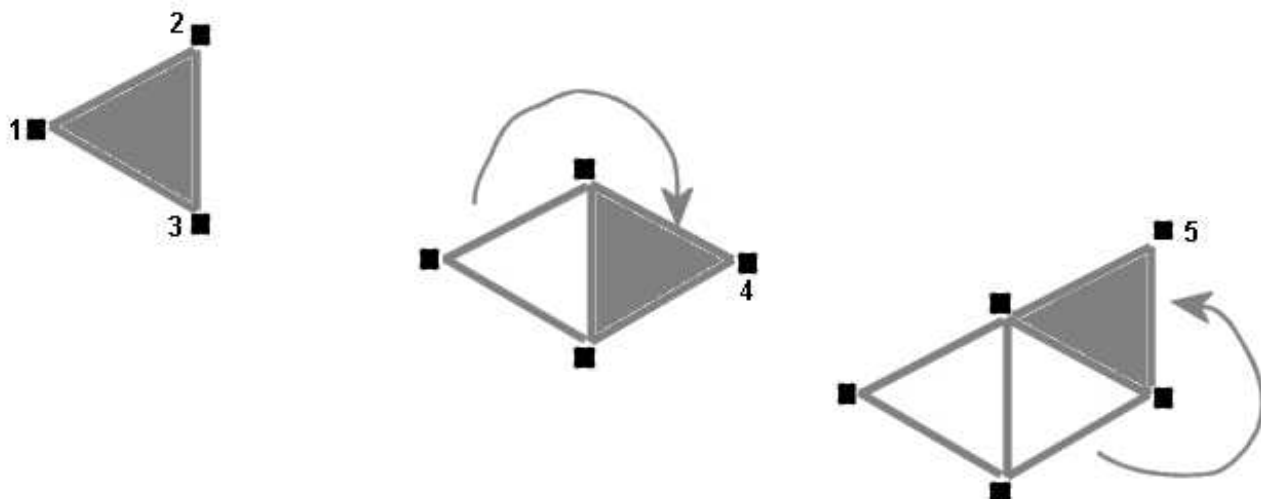
When the fleets have approached close enough that the distance between any two of their opposing Groups is four hexes or less, the players should switch to using the sequenced movement used in the main rules. When a position is reached in which a Group of ships would enter the same hex as an opposing Group on their subsequent move, the action is transferred to the gaming area with the miniatures for the Groups that were about to meet placed at a distance of three points from one another, and all the other Groups arranged in the same relative positions indicated by their locations on the Grand Tactical boards. Finally, place the frigates belonging to the respective squadrons within three points of the flagship of the player that commands them. Then the action begins, using the main rules.

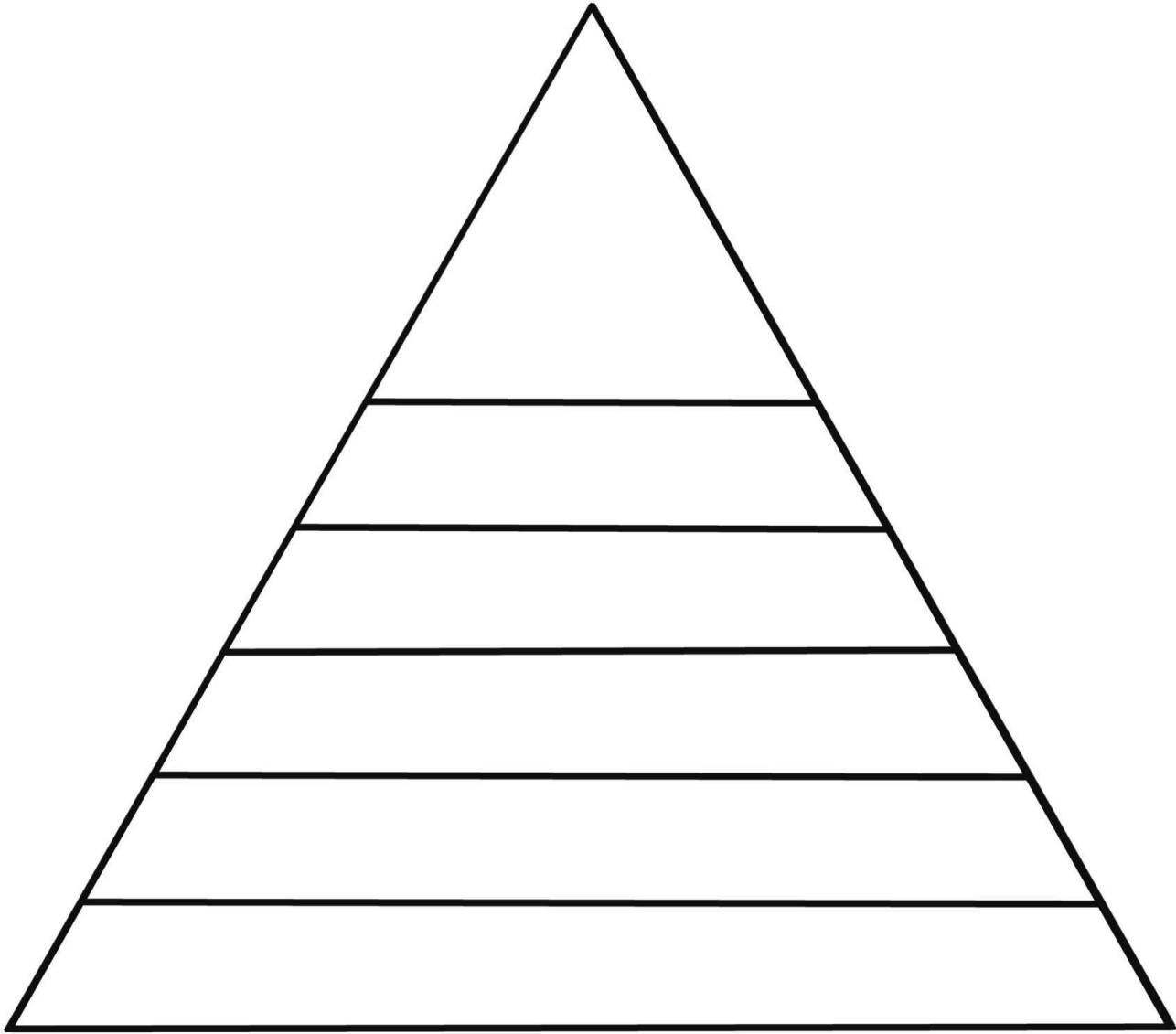
X. APPENDIX: Laying Out the Playing Area

The playing area is laid out by placing "points" on the surface at regular intervals. These points are occupied by the Groups in the scenario, and are used to regulate movement and determine ranges and arcs of fire. The points may be marked on the playing surface by any means convenient for the players; marks on a large sheet of paper or tag board, or pieces of tape or small adhesive labels on a tabletop or cloth, for example.

A triangular template is included for placing the points. Print the template and glue it to a cardboard backing, and cut it along the appropriate outline to create an equilateral triangle with sides as long as required by the ship models, counters or flats that you will be using. The distance between points should be at least enough to accommodate three ships, end to end. (If three ship lengths is greater than the largest triangle in the included template, you'll have to create a larger equilateral triangle to use in laying out your points).

Use the template to locate each of the points (see illustrations below). Begin by placing the template on the playing surface, and mark one point at each vertex (illustration 1). The location of a new point is determined by flipping the template so that two of its vertices remain on two existing points (illustration 2). Repeating this procedure over the entire playing surface will yield a grid of points (illustration 3) which works geometrically much like the traditional hex grid in many other wargames.



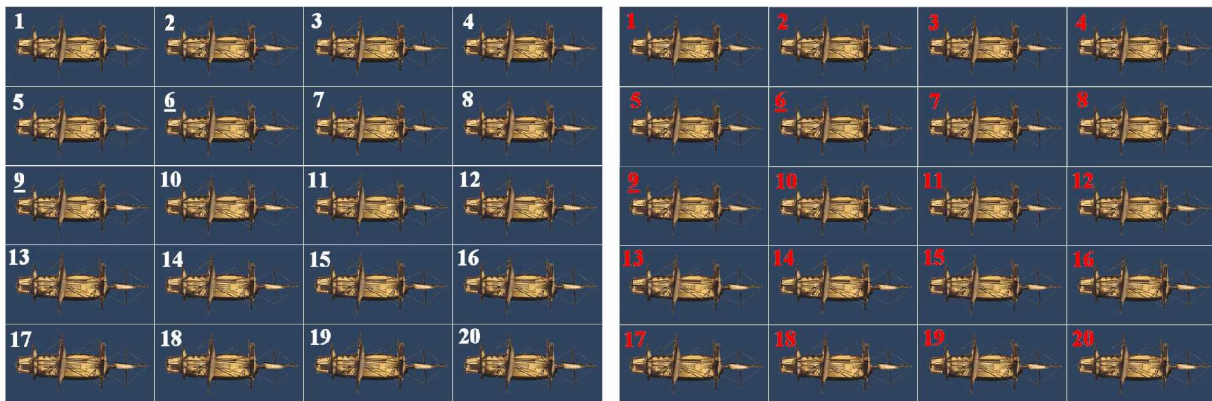


Template for laying out points on the Playing Area.

Hex boards for the Grand Tactical Module:



Counters for the Grand Tactical Module:



For examples of what a game of "Admirals" might look like, see the photo sets on my Flickr page:
https://www.flickr.com/photos/war_artisan/sets/72157633234784442/
https://www.flickr.com/photos/war_artisan/sets/72157636290581086/