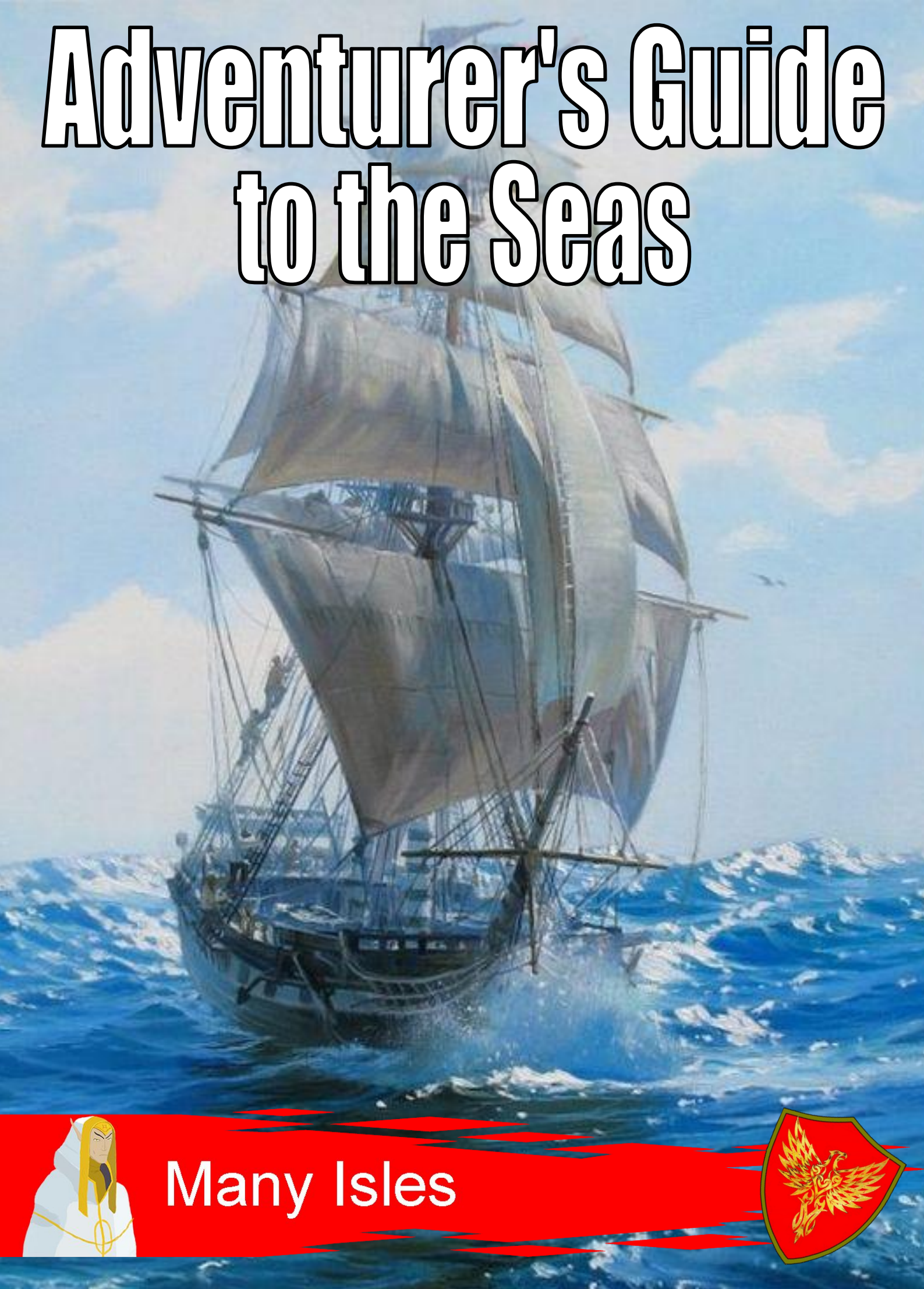
Adventurer's Guide to the Seas



Many Isles

1 - Equipment

A seagoer must be ready to face the dangers of the ocean. To this assist a creature in this adventure, a number of items exist, as can be seen in the "Oceangoer's Gear". Ships are also a necessity for braving the waters, the table "Ships" lists a sample number of mighty vessels.

Some protective items, such as basic **Comfort**, **Sun Protection** and **Warmth Level** gear, is presented in the Adventurer's Guide to the Wilderness.

Oceangoer's Gear

Name	Price	Effect	Weight
Bait (10)	5 cp	Used for fishing, see Chapter 4	n/a
Barrel	2 sp	Stores up to 20 units of food or water	10 lbs.
Bunk	1 gp	Increases Comfort level by 2	80 lbs.
Tank	1 gp	A massive container built into a ship, stores up to 80 units of water	120 lbs.
Fishing Tackle	1 gp	Tool used for fishing, see Chapter 4	1 lb.
Hammock	2 sp	Increases Comfort level by 1	1 lb.
Long Line	3 gp	Tool used for fishing, see Chapter 4	5 lbs.
Tarp	6 sp	A water resistant tarp, grants Sun Protection over a 10 foot square	3 lbs.
Wood for Repair	9 sp	See sidebar	30 lbs.

Barrel. A round, sturdy wooden container fastened with metal hoops. Can be rolled for transport, great for keeping salted foods.

Tank. A large wooden container built directly into a ship.

Hammock. A bit of sturdy cotton, can be strung on two walls or pillars withou occupying space on the ground.

Tarp. A large tarp that is usually stretched over a hollow-hull vessel to protect its occupants from water, or on larger ships for protection from the beating sun.

Tools and their Uses

There are a number of standard D&D 5e tools which are also used by sailors.

Navigation. Navigator's Tools are almost a must-have for a ship's crew. Find out more about navigation in chapter 3.

Repair. A creature with Carpenter's Tools and a supply of wood (see the gear above) can spend 10 minutes working on a ship, restoring it 20 HP.

Ships

A sailor without a ship is like a trader without a wagon. Ships come in all shapes and sizes, braving the dangers of the ocean to carry people or goods, wage war, or show off.

The table below lists a number of vessels ready for use in your sailing adventure. For rules on sailing, check out chapters 2 and 3.

Ships

Name	Cost	Crew	Space	Damage Threshold	HP	Propulsion
Battleship	25,000 gp	60	120	25	500	Sails +4
Canoe (Sails)	20 gp	2	4	10	20	Sails +2, Oars +6
Freighter	3000 gp	5	30	15	300	Sails +6
Frigate (4 masts)	100,000 gp	80	300	50	500	Sails +2
Galley	2500 gp	15	25	20	150	Sails +4, Oars +7
Light Sailor	800 gp	2	5	8	50	Sails +1
Patroller (Denise)	2500 gp	3	18	10	100	Sails +3
Patroller (Dwarven)	12,000 gp	4	15	20	150	Sails +4
Rowboat	10 gp	2	3	5	20	Oars +8
Sailor	2600 gp	3	10	10	100	Sails +1
Stormvessel (Dwarven)	20,000 gp	13	25	35	400	Sails +3, Oars +6
Warship, Light	3000 gp	30	30	25	400	Sails +5, Oars +8

Cost. A typical shipyard would ask that amount of money for the ship. Prices vary depening on availability and work; for example, a battleship (made out of dark oak) would cost much more in the south, where this resource isn't readily available.

Crew. This is the minimal amount of people requires to man this ship. Otherwise, it cannot be correctly controlled.

Space. This amount of Medium objects or creatures can fit on the vessel. Large creatures take 4 spaces, small ones half.

Damage Threshold. Any damage less than the number given here doesn't affect the ship, as it is considered superficial.

Propulsion. See "Heavy Ships", chapter 2.

Weaponry

For naval combat (see chapter 5), vessels will need to be armed. For this purpose, a list of weapons has been included here!

Cost. A single one of these weapons costs the indicated price.

Period. More so than ships, their armaments have evolved over the ages. To use a certain weapon, the given date must have passed, or it doesn't even exist yet.

Crew. This amount of creatures is necessary to man each piece of armament. If the weapon is standard of the given ship, this crew is already included in the ship's crew above.

Space. The weapon takes up this much space on a vessel. If the weapon is standard of the given ship, this space is not deduced from the ship's space given above.

Ship Armament

Name	Cost (Piece)	Period	Crew (Piece)	Space
Ballista	10 gp	Yes	3	3
Catapult	30 gp	Yes	5	5
Heavy Cannon	2000 gp	8 OW	6	8
Heavy Ballista	60 gp	800 b. OW	3	4
Ship Cannon	100 gp	3 OW	2	2

Special Weaponry

Name	Cost (Piece)	Crew (Piece)	Space
Grapple Hooks	9 gp	min. 2	n.a.
Heavy Ram	60 gp	n.a.	n.a.
Ram	70 gp	n.a	n.a
Spiked Gangplank	14 sp	1	1

Description

Each armament is unique, and has its own fireteam group sizes. The group's size and the weapon's effects are noted here.

Ballista. A mounted crossbow firing large bolts, or flaming ones. 5 sp per shot, or 1 gp per shot for flame version.

Single (1). Standard on Patroller. 5 hex, 40% chance to hit, 1d10x6 damage to hull, 1d10 damage to sail or 1d10x4 damage to sail if flaming

Cohort (8). Standard on Battleship x2, Warship. 5 hex, 90% chance to hit, 2d10x6 damage to hull, 2d10 damage to sail or 2d10x5 damage to sail if flaming

Catapult. A highly imprecise and imperfect weapon. Mainly used for shore assault. 4 sp per shot.

Single (1). Fires only in semi-circle from fore or aft, depending on position. 9 hex, 10% chance to hit, 2d4x20 damage to hull, 2d4x2 damage to sail

Heavy Cannon. A huge cannon with smooth bore but massive power. Does a massive roar and flame. 20 gp per shot.

Single (1). Fires only in semi-circle from fore or aft, depending on position. 8 hex, 45% chance to hit, 2d12x20 damage to hull or 2d12 damage to sail

Ship Cannon. A man-sized iron barrel mounted on a small cart, firing balls ejected through directly ignited black powder. Does a lot of smoke. 1 gp per shot, or 3 gp per shot for chained version.

Single (1). Fires only perpendicularly on assigned side. 5 hex, 20% chance to hit, 2d4x20 damage to hull, 2d4 damage to sail or 2d4x10 damage to sail if chained

Sixer (6). Fires only perpendicularly on assigned side. 5 hex, 30% chance to hit, 3d4x20 damage to hull, 3d4 damage to sail or 3d4x10 damage to sail if chained
Brigade (20). Standard on Frigate. Fires only perpendicularly on assigned side. 8 hex, 80% chance to hit, 4d8x20 damage to hull, 4d8 damage to sail or 4d8x20 damage to sail if chained

Grapple Hooks. A number of hooks attached to ropes. When a ship is on the neighboring or same hex as another, its crew can throw their grapple hooks. The likelihood of success is 50%, and increases by 0.5 for each crew member above 2 that throws a hook. On a success, the other ship is hooked to this one, and can only sail in the same direction as it. As a further action, the throwers can pull the two ships into the same hex.

Heavy Ram. When this ship enters another ship's space, it deals damage to that ship's hull equal to 30 x this ship's speed.

Ram. When this ship enters another ship's hex, and this ship has moved more than 4 hexes without turning, it is stuck in the other ship, and either vessels' speed is halved. Its hull takes damage equal to 10 x the distance this ship covered in a straight line, to a maximum of this ship's total speed. One ship drags the other with it.

Spiked Gangplank. When this ship enters another ship's hex, the plank can be dropped. Both ship's speed is halved, and they drag each other along.

Using Armaments on Non-Ships

Due to the destructive power of ship-borne weapons, characters may try firing upon creatures manning a ship, or creatures on the shore. In this case, the DM should determine the weapon's statistics and effectiveness.

2 - Sailing and Climate

When sailing, one must pay great care to the weather and how it might affect one's own health and endurance. Weather, whether good or rough, is likely to have a great influence on a ship voyage.

A ship voyage, such as one between the prosperous merchant city of Denise and the trade hub of Longhorn Bay, is divided into days. Each day, the total distance covered should be calculated using the tables below.

Roughness is an indicator of how strong the sea is or how opposite wind or current pushes a ship the other way. Other factors, such as weather (seen in "Climate" below) affect this number, as do the different types of ships (see chapter 1). It cannot be below 0, and shouldn't be above 12.

Daily Travel Distance

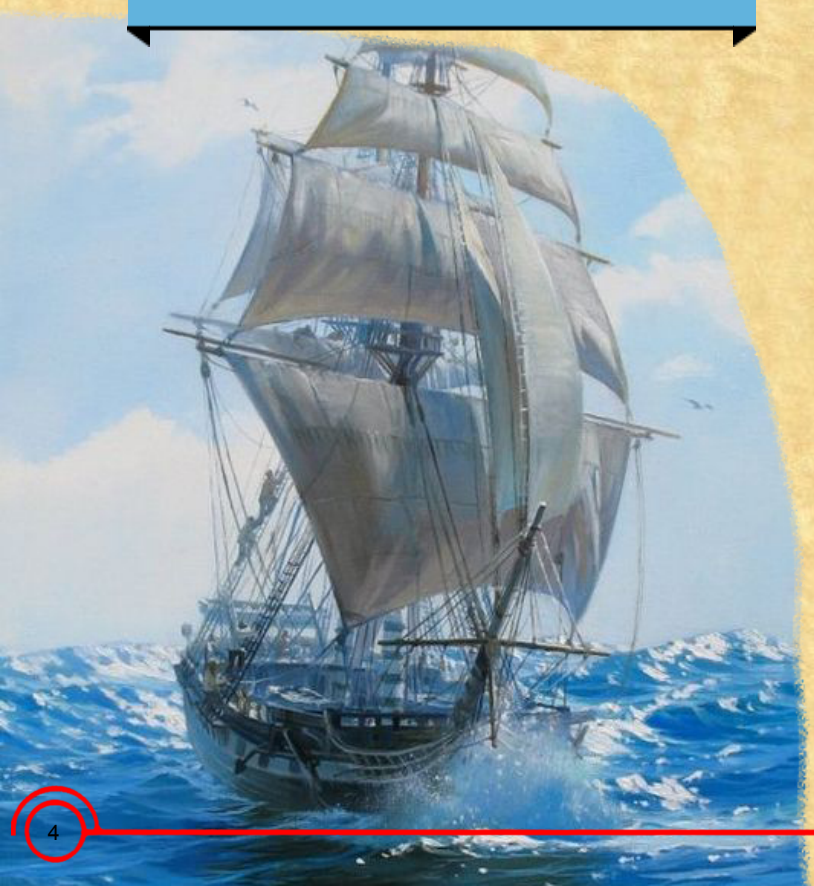
A vessel at Roughness 0 travels at 120 miles a day (a day meaning sailing through the day and night). This number is reduced by 10 for each Roughness level, meaning a ship does not make any progress if Roughness is at 12. Travel Distance cannot be 0; however, at the DM's discretion, a Roughness of 13 or above might entail that the ship drifts in a direction other than the intended one.

Multiple Calculations

A ship may have two methods of propulsion, such as oars and sails. This means that varying Roughnesses can be caused by it. Weather effects, such as ***Oil Sea***, could make the oar's increased Roughness more profitable as the weather's Roughness targets only sails.

Ambient Effects

Next to rough weather and heavy ships, ambient effects could affect the roughness of a trip. Such effects could include a naturally rough sea. For example, the Pear Sea in Colupan is legendary for its numerous waves; a trip's Roughness could be increased by 1d4. Such decisions are left over to the DM and his world.



Heavy Ships

Few vessels have a perfect form and large sails. The "X +Y" property of a ship indicates by how much the Roughness level for the daily travel distance should be increased depending on ship type. X shows the propulsion method, any Y shows the increase in Roughness when this method is used. This number may represent a heavy vessel (such as a denisian freighter), too small sails, or mediocre propulsion (such as oars).

The addition of cargo to a vessel is likely to push it deeper into the waters and affect its speed. At the DM's discretion, Roughness increases as cargo is loaded.

Climate

There are four seasons in the Many Isles, with gray areas between them and fluid transitions going from one into the next. The weather in a certain season will likely affect a vessel's speed (meaning, the Roughness level), and cause difficulties to the creatures aboard a ship. Shipwrecks, hypothermia, and spoiling food can all be connected to different sorts of bad weather. For effects such as Temperature Level and other health hazards, see chapter 4, "Health".

Below are listed various types of weather that may be caused by climate seasons, and what they actually mean. Under the list are shown the different periods of the year, and which effects they cause.

Hail Storm. Balls of ice fall from the sky. Roughness increases by 4, Navigation DC (chapter 3) is increased by 7. For every hour spent out in the open, a creature gets 3d12 bludgeoning damage, except if they are sufficiently armored. Considerable damage may be caused to the ships and its sails, possibly even sinking small craft.

Heavy Rain. Rains pelt the ocean, falling down and obscuring the view. Roughness increases by 3, Navigation DC (chapter 3) increases by 7.

Oil Sea. The sun beats down, and the sea is completely flat, with not even the slightest ripple going through it. Roughness increases by 9 for ships using Sails.

Rough Sea. Waves are high and crash against the ship. Roughness increases by 2.

Storm. Fierce swaths of rain beat the land. Roughness increaces by 5, Navigation DC (chapter 3) increases by 7.

Strong Sun. The sun truly beats down. If a creature doesn't have Sun Protection (see the Wilderness guide), it must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw for every hour it spends in the sun, +1 for every previous hour they made the check. On a fail, their sight flimmers. They must rest in shadow for an hour within 10 minutes, or fall unconscious and take 20 damage for every hour in the sun. Water can lower this DC by 1 for every unit drunk (see chapter 4 for more information).

High Summer

During high summer, the sun beats down, and the weather doesn't change much. The seas remain flat as oil, but no wind blows.

Weather	Temperature	Effect
Good	30	Strong sun, Oil Sea

Water. Every creature needs an additional unit of water each day spent travelling in high summer.

Late Summer

Temperatures have lowered, and the climate has suddenly become wet. Heavy rains pelt oceangoers, but winds have picked up nicely.

Weather	Probability	Temperature	Effect
Good	50%	30	Strong sun, Oil Sea
Rainy	40%	10	Heavy Rain
Storm	10%	10	Storm

Autumn

The climate is slowly turning colder as winter arrives. Daily weather remains similar to late summer.

Weather	Probability	Temperature	Effect
Cloudy	60%	15	Oil Sea
Rainy	35%	10	Heavy Rain
Storm	5%	10	Storm

Early Winter

Temperatures suddenly drop, and rainfall stops being a problem. Bits of snow occasionally fall, disappearing under thrashing waves.

Weather	Probability	Temperature	Effect
Cloudy	60%	5	
Snow	35%	0	Rough Sea
Storm	5%	0	Storm

High Winter

The cold has noticeably increased, and small ice shelves can be seen bobbing up and down the oceans.

Weather	Probability	Temperature	Effect
Clear, Cloudy	60%	-5	Rough Sea
Storm	35%	-5	Storm
Hail storm	5%	-10	Hail storm

Ice Shelf. If the climatic zone is fitting, it is likely that the oceans are frozen until thaw. In that case, Roughness is at 12 and cannot be altered. Weather effcts still happen as normal, except that unfitting ones (such as Rough Sea) are ignored.

Thaw

Winter is finally over, and the weather starts calming down, with temperatures rising again.

Weather	Probability	Temperature	Effect
Cloudy, clear	60%	10	
Rainy	35%	5	Heavy Rain, Rough Sea
Storm	5%	5	Storm, Rough Sea

Spring

Warmth spreads, and the weather calms down.

Weather	Probability	Temperature	Effect
Cloudy, clear	70%	20	
Rainy	20%	5	Heavy Rain
Bright day	10%	5	Oil Sea

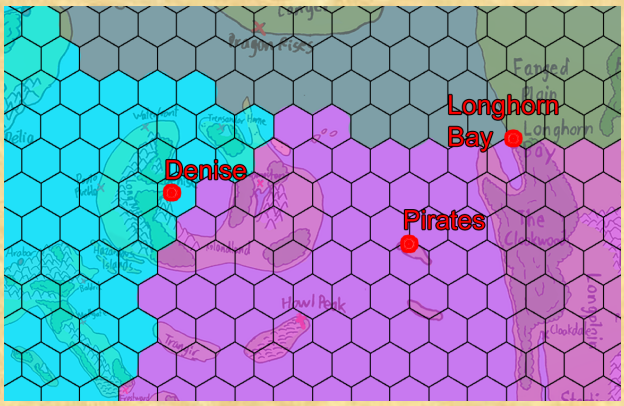
3 - Navigation

When sailing, it is essential to keep track of one's location.

This chapter assumes that most Navigation checks are made by a creature proficient in Navigator's Tools using them in a situations where they can be applied (such as a gnomon during the day or kamal in the night). If this isn't possible, because of a material lack or overcast skies, the DM may decide that a check (such as one based on the coastline) can still be made, or whether it has disadvantage or a set maximal result.

The Map

For the purpose of the sailor's navigation, divide the ocean area the party is sailing into hexagons, each representing a day's travel. You will likely have to change the scale day by day as Roughness changes, so a mental map would be best. Then, mark the starting position - where the party enters the area - as START, and their objective as END.



Then, divide the ocean into different areas. For example, you can color each area's hexagons differently. Each area should have a different style: in the example above, the pink area is teeming with dangerous pirates, the blue area is full of merchant vessels, and grey indicates orcish and goblinoid waters. Make sure you have a number of random encounters available for each area, to give it its flavor.

Navigation

Once you've got your map set up, it's time to throw the party and their navigator in there and see how they make do!

Each day when the navigator makes a Navigation check, label the sides of the hexagon in which the ship is in this way. The best possible general direction for the party to follow is labelled 1 and the worst is labelled 6. Some directions can have equal benefit, which results in a shared value and the next number being skipped (for example in this case there are two 2s and two 4s, and therefore the numbers 3 and 5 are skipped).

More Frequent Rolls

If the party is sailing less than 200 miles, you might want to ask for Navigation checks twice per day, or more often, as is the case with the example image above. In that case, navigators might need to make checks in unsuitable environments, such as during the night.

The navigator of the party must make a daily Navigation check to see how well they direct the ship. Various environments, such as weather of chapter 2, can affect this check. A creature proficient with Navigator's Tools and the ability to use them (usually clear skies), they can make a plain roll using those tools. However, if the skies are overcast, they may attempt comparing their way with visible coastlines and spotting other ships. The table below is to be used if Navigator's Tools are unavailable. It assumes the navigator has maps. The added (Night) indicates this event is supposed to occur at night. The total effect granted by this table can at most be 0.

Rolling Without Tools

Effect	Event
-6	No Navigator's Tools
-5	No Map
+1/+5	On a trade route
+4	Coastline visible (Day)
+2	Coastline visible (Night)
+1	Lighthouse visible (Night)

Once all the variations to the navigator's check have been determined and the die rolled, compare the result of their roll with the table below. Direction taken indicates which hexagon side they proceed through.

Compasses?

In contrast to european medieval people, who had compasses from the 13th century on, the people of the Many Isles don't have any - because there is no magnetic north pole.

Navigation Roll

Result	Direction Taken
1-3	6
4-6	5
7-9	4
10-12	3
13-15	2
16+	1

For maps which skip hexagon numbers due to doubling, achieving a number not attached to a direction can be rounded to the next one down.

4 - Health and Diseases

It's important for a creature to care for their health, as food and weather on a sailing trip are likely to affect an unprepared sailor. Additionally, diseases due to unbalanced diet or bad weather can be found in the next chapter.

Temperature

A creature's **Warmth Level** represents how warmly it's dressed, and how well it resists temperature. Every point of warmth level increases the effective temperature on a creature by 10; meaning, a Warmth Level of 2 makes a temperature of 10 into 30, and one of -2 into of -10. Temperature is defined by the weather, as seen in chapter 2.

At night, temperatures usually lower by 10.

Resistance to fire lowers the effective temperature by 10, but no less than 0, and resistance to cold increases it in such a way. Vulnerability does the opposite.

Overheating and Undercooling

If a creature's effective temperature is too great or too low, it might suffer ill effects.

Overheating. If a creature's effective temperature level (outdoors temperature+Warmth Level times 10) is over 30 degrees, it overheats, and must make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw. This DC increases by 1 for every hour spent overheating. If a creature fails this, it gains 1 level of exhaustion. From exhaustion level 3 on, the creature is also unconscious.

Undercooling. If a creature's effective temperature is under 10, it's undercooling. It must make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw. This DC increases by 1 for every hour spent undercooling. If a creature fails this, it gains 1 level of exhaustion. From exhaustion level 3 on, the creature is also restrained. Additionally, it is likely the creature is frostbitten: see "Diseases" below.

Food and Water

A creature needs to eat and drink to survive. On a ship, most food and all water must be brought along from the land.

Dietary Needs per Day

Type	Amount
Food	1 unit (a ration)
Water	1 unit (a quarter gallon)

Food and water can be stored in barrels and other containers, as seen in chapter 1.

Fishing

To supply themselves with food, a creature may attempt fishing. To do so, they must have either Fishing Tackle or a Long Line available, as seen in chapter 1.

Tackle Fishing

To fish using a tackle, a Wisdom (Nature) check with Fishing Tackle must be made to see if a fish is hooked, against a DC chosen by the DM based on fish sparsity. A single check requires 15 minutes of time. On a success, the character must make another Wisdom (Nature) check with Fishing Tackle, contested by the fish's Acrobatics or Athletics. If the character succeeds, they succesfully pull out a fish.

Each time a fish is hooked, whether it is reeled in or not, a piece of bait (see chapter 1) is consumed and must be replaced.

Depending on its size, a fish gains a bonus to its save.

Fish Save Bonus per Size

Size	Bonus
Tiny	-3
Small	0
Medium	+5
Large	+10

Long-Line Fishing

The more common method used for fishing is the long line. This is a 200-foot long string which can be fastened from a ship's stern, adorned with 70 hooks, each of which must be baited using the bait as seen above. The number of fish caught increases the longer the line is left in the water.

Reeling a line out requires 10 minutes; reeling it in requires 30 minutes.

Fish Caught

Hours	% Bit	Caught
1	30	21
2	50	35
3	70	49
4	80	56
5	90	63

When a long line is reeled in again, all hooks must be baited anew.

Half of the fish caught are Tiny, the other half is Small.

Fish Food

A Tiny fish usually grants half a unit's worth of food. A Small one grants 2, Medium 8, and Large 32.

Diseases

Next to the bacterial diseases presented in the Adventurer's Guide to the Wilderness, which are a major threat on land, deficiency diseases - caused through insufficient nutrients of one kind or another - are the greater danger at sea. Exposure is another kind of disease presented here.

Starving and parched are included as deficiency diseases, for the obvious threat they pose to people. Deficiency diseases cannot be healed magically.

These diseases can be introduced by the DM at any time, and have no fixed rules for when a creature is affected by what. Each disease's description includes its causation.

Name	Cause
Anaemia	Deficiency
Frostbite	Exposure
Parched	Deficiency
Pneumonia	Exposure
Scurvy	Deficiency
Starvation	Deficiency

Anaemia

A creature that has insufficient blood is likely to have anaemia. It can be caused through insufficient diet (notably insufficent iron), loss of blood, or other diseases resulting in less blood available to the creature.

A creature affected by this deficiency disease has pale skin and is often dizzy. It suffers under these conditions:

- Its Strength and Constitution scores are reduced by 2.
- Its rests take twice as long to be completed.
- It has disadvantage on attack rolls, saving throws and ability checks in the first round of combat, and it must make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw at the start of its first turn or fall unconscious until the start of its next turn.
- It has disadvantage on any Intelligence-related rolls.

Anaemia must be cured by removing that which causes the disease. If severe loss of blood was the cause, the creature should recover 6d6 days after it was first affected if its wounds were closed and it ate well. If a disease is the cause, the anaemia will fade 3d4 days after that disease was caused. If food deficiency was the cause, the creature should eat iron-rich foods, such as meat, beans, or seafood. It recovers quickly once it has a good access to such foods.

Frostbite

This disease is caused by severe exposure to cold. From a mechanical standpoint, a creature is likely to be frostbitten if it gains more than 2 levels of exhaustion due to undercooling (see "Temperature" above). Frostbite is caused by the freezing of parts of the creature's body.

A frostbitten spot on a creature's body is cold, white and hard. If heated, the spot turns red and full of blisters. Mechanical detriments, such as direct damage or a permanent disadvantage to attack rolls if a hand was affected, are at the DM's discretion.

To heal a frostbite, the affected spot (and the whole creature) should be warmed up. When this is done, the affected spot turns red and large blisters form. If the fluid in the blisters is transparent, a full recovery is likely; if they contain blood, tissue loss is likely, which will result in permanent damage to the creature's body.

Thawing of the frostbite must be done through warm water or similar, without too much heat, as this will deal great damage. The thawed area should be free of any pressure and wrapped into bandages. It is likely to infect if treated incorrectly, and a thawed area re-freezing causes considerable damage.

Parched

A creature starts being dehydrated a day after not drinking a unit of water, as seen above in "Food and Water". After two days without drinking, they are seriously parched; on the third day, they die. While thirsty, it suffers these effects:

- The creature has disadvantage on all ability checks, saving throws and attack rolls.
- Its speed decreases by 10 feet.

Drinking an unit of water results in parchedness not increasing. Drinking units above the necessary requirement reduces the days spent being parched by 1 per unit drunk, until all effects wane.

Pneumonia

This illness is usually caused by infection through bacteries, viruses, or fungus after another disease, thirst, hunger or bad weather weakened a creature's immune system. It consists of fluids or pus entering the lungs and causing a creature to sneeze violently and often.

A creature affected by pneumonia suffers these effects:

- It coughs repeatedly and hardly. Pus, fluids, or blood may come out of the creature's mouth.
- The creature is constantly exhausted: it gains two permanent levels of exhaustion.
- The creature repeatedly vomits: it must eat two units of food a day, or special foods that don't cause vomit.

A creature can recover by staying in a dry and clean environment, ending exposure and any diseases or effects reducing their health, and hoping that everything will be well. Usually, magical healing is necessary for recovery.

Scurvy

A creature that doesn't eat enough fruits, especially citrus, is likely to suffer from scurvy. Its gums start bleeding, it develops red rashes, loses its appetite, and may even lose its teeth if left untreated for too long.

No immediate mechanical effects are caused by this disease, but a creature may well slumber into starvation as it refuses to or cannot eat.

Although scurvy can take a long while to cick in, it also needs a fair amount of time to be healed. This can be done by eating fruits, but might take months and have no effect. Magical healing can stop gums from bleeding and teeth falling out, but these reappear quite rapidly.

Starvation

A creature starts starving a week or so after not getting any food. This considerably weakens its immune system, and exposes it greatly to exposure diseases such as pneumonia and frostbite, but also any infectious diseases, causing most creatures to die of reasons other than starvation.

A creature dies after month without food. While starving, it suffers these detriments:

- Disadvantage to all physical ability-related rolls
- -5 to Strength score

A creature can recover by eating again. However, if it is already at an advanced stage, it is just as likely to die of hunger than to digest the food and recover.

5 - Naval Combat

What happens when pirates approach your freighter? When two clashing nation's navies run into each other? Battle!

Setting Up Combat

Before combat begins, the following must be prepared.

- A hex grid must be laid out, with a miniature for each vessel partaking in combat.
- A captain and a pilot must be chosen for each vessel.
- The direction of wind and currents, as well as the roughness of the sea and visibility lack, must be noted.

Crew

Characters and NPCs should be distributed amongst the roles shown below.

Captain

The captain is the person responisble for a ship's actions during naval combat.

During the ship's initiative, the captain may order where the ship should go, and where its men should fire.

Pilot

The pilot is the man at the rudder that follows his captain's orders. He pilots the ship to the best of his ability, and bad weather and such likely affect the precision of his piloting.

Fireteam

The term fireteam encompasses any amount of groups of creatures manning weapons, be they bows, catapults, or cannons. A group should consist of the a number of members shown for each weapon in chapter 1, and can act independently.

Ship's Crew

As you've noted, a vessel requires a minimal amount of crew to function, as shown in chapter 1. Subtract from that amount shown on the table the role of captain and pilot, as well as all fireteam members that are manning standard weaponry, also shown in chapter 1. Any missing members must be working the ship's sails and other parts, and are therefore unavailable for combat as, say, additional fireteam groups.

Environment

Before beginning combat, you should set interesting environment factors.

Wind

During battle, these are relatively important. Decide in which direction the wind blows, and how strong it does so (strentgth being measured in a number that can be negative or positive).

Wind direction effectively dictates a hex side on which no ship using sails may go.

Currents

Current strength should also be measured in hexes from 0 upwards and going in a certain direction. You could place different currents in different locations.

Terrain

A variety of ambient effects could be present in the battlefield. Treacherous reefs in secret hexes might deal damage to ship's hulls when they enter, or cawing birds destroy a vessel's sails if it approaches a shore too closely. Monsters such as sirens could be littered around the battlefield, pouncing any creatures too unwary to the DM's evil machinations.

A Combat Round

Once the battlefield has been set up on a hex map, and the ship tokens placed in their position, combat may begin. It is ordered in turns.

Ship's Initiative

A captain rolls for initiative on a d12, adding their Intelligence modifier to the roll. The higher the number, the earlier his ship will act.

A captain can also settle for any number beneath what he actually rolled, so he can act in concert with allies and read visual orders before attacking.

Initiative is rerolled on each new round.

Environmental Effects

Some environment's effects are passive, such as currents; they apply before the first ship acts. All vessels are moved a number of hexes in the direction of the current. Any other such passive effects apply then as well.

Breaking Round Structure

Much like land combat, it is possible for a fireteam or even a pilot to prepare actions based on outside events. When the trigger occurs, a prepared action is accomplished, and the interrupted action then continues if possible.

What about the Players?

As you have noticed, naval combat is based on orders and actions taken by each creature individually, and the captain's orders are absolute. However, this doesn't mean the players must act in this way: let them work together and devise great strategies as their characters act separately.

A Ship's Turn

Once a ship's initiative has been reached, it may act. A vessel has two action options: movement and action. Any number of things may be performed during an action, which can be split as wished over movement. The captain gives all these orders at the beginning of the ship's turn, and the ship's crew then accomplishes these orders to the best of their ability.

Movement

This is accomplished by the pilot, and the ship itself. First, find the ship's speed: it's the vessels daily travel distance (120 - 10*Roughness), divided by 10, in hexes. This gives a maximal speed of 12 hexes per turn. Add a number equal to the wind's speed to this speed, if the vessel is using sails.

A ship's pilot must then make two Wisdom checks: one for direction, and one for distance. A vessel cannot go against the wind.

Direction

This check's DC equals to the current roughness level. Then, compare the result to this table to see how far off the mark the ship veers.

Difference	Direction taken
8+	Two hex sides off
1-7	One hex side off
-0	On the mark

To determine to which side of the hex the ship turns, take the direction of the wind. The ship turns away from it. If it is going to directly away from the wind, the direction turned is chosen randomly.

A ship's total speed is reduced to 0 if it deviates from its previous direction by more than one hex side.

Speed

When the captain gives orders for which direction to turn, he also orders how fast (eg, the amount of hexes) the ship should go.

This is rolled against a DC of 13. The result is compared to this table to see how far the vessel actually goes.

Difference	Direction taken
8+	2d4 hexes off
1-7	1d4 hexes off
-0	On the mark

Whether the ship is too slow or too fast is determined by the wind speed: if it is negative, the ship's too slow. If it is 0, this is chosen randomly.

A ship cannot go faster than its hex per turn speed as calculated above.

Actions

A ship can take any number of actions during its turn, which can be interspersed at any moment during the vessel's movement. The timing can be ordered by the captain or chosen by the groups taking the actions.

Instead of taking an action, a group can prepare said action, taking it when the given condition is fulfilled. This is likely to be outside of a turn.

Attack

This is the most common action. All fireteam groups attack once, when they choose to. Some have restrictions (such as ship cannoneers needing to be perpendicular to a target to attack). Any group can only attack or prepare once during a turn.

To attack, a group must specify what target it is firing at. The target must be in range. Then, it must aim for sails or hull; on a hit, the appropriate damage is dealt. For disabling and sinking a ship, see below.

Repair

If a ship's hull HP is at or below half (see below), any additional crew members (creatures above the minimal crew requirements) that aren't completing any other action may attempt reparing a vessel.

A number of creatures at least equal to the ship's damage threshold must labor at repairing the vessel. At the end of their action, the ship's hull regains an amount of HP equal to the number of creatures that worked on it.

Sails cannot be repaired in combat.

Message

Using a semaphore as seen below, a ship can message allied or enemy vessels using this system. The DM may rule this is impossible or restricted due to things such as bad weather or cannon smoke. This action can be taken (or prepared) twice during a turn.

Special Actions

Certain ships have special actions, such as dropping assault gangplanks or ramming other vessels. These are taken when it is fit, depending on the specific action's description.

Boarding a Ship

It is likely that in some encounter, two ships come too close to each other. If two vessels are in the same hex, you can assume that they can board each other, if both parties have that intention. Here, naval combat shimmers over into typical combat; play the rules as usual, and allow a defensive ship to cut the grapple hooks and attempt escaping, for example.

Disabling or Sinking a Ship

A ship's HP as shown in chapter 1 indicates how well it resists outside forces before sinking. A ship with 0 HP is immediately blown to bits. However, this HP can be refined into hull and sail.

Hull and Sail HP

A ship's total AC is given in its row in chapter 1. 20% of that HP is located in the sail, and 80% (rounded up) is located in the hull.

A ship is affected differently depending on whether it loses HP in the sail or in the hull.

Hull

The hull represents the entirety of the floating surface, including the interior and deck. If it is reduced to half its HP or less, it starts sinking. If it is reduced to 0 HP, the entire ship sinks and can no longer be used in combat.

The hull can be repaired during a fight; see above.

Sail

The term sail represents the vessel's rigging and sails. If it is reduced to half HP or less, the ship's speed is reduced by half. If it is reduced to 0 HP, the ship is immobilized.

Naval Spells

In a world of battle, it is useful for ship crews to have mages along with them. Be it for spotting enemy vessels or absolutely annihilating them, magical implements are useful to any captain.

All spells presented here are exclusive to this guide. They are official 5eS and can accordingly be found in the general Spell List, but if you create your own, you'll have to add them manually.

Quickswim

1st-level Mystication

Casting Time. 1 action
Range. Touch
Components. V, S, M (a fish scale)
Duration. 1 hour
Classes. Cleric, Druid, Paladin, Psion, Ranger Witch

A willing creature you touch gains a swimming speed of 60 feet.

Higher Levels. You can target an additional creature for each slot level above 1st used.

Sink

2nd-level Transmutation

Casting Time. 1 action
Range. 60 feet/1 hex
Components. V, S, M (a fish scale)
Duration. 1 hour
Classes. Druid, Maleficar, Ranger, Sorcerer, Witch, Wizard

You cause a creature you can see within range to sink. It must make a Strength saving throw or be affected by the spell. On the start of each of its turns, it sinks by 15 feet into any fluid. If it must breathe and is submerged, it starts suffocating. It can still move upwards or sideways in the fluid. Every minute, the creature can attempt the throw again, ending the effect on a success.

Detect Ship

3rd-level Abjuration (Divination)

Casting Time. 1 action (Ceremony)
Range. Self
Components. V, S, M (a spyglass)
Duration. Concentration, up to 6 hours
Classes. Cleric, Witch, Wizard

You gain the ability to discern the presence of ships around you. You perceive ships located within a distance of 5 miles, regardless of current visibility.

For the duration, whenever a ship enters this range, you can attempt discerning information about it. You can also use your action in ship combat or normally to attempt such a check on a single ship again.

Not Visible: You sense the presence of ships other than your own in the area. A DC 14 Wisdom check allows you to determine the direction and distance of a ship. If you succeed on the check, you continue to be aware of this information until that ship is no longer in range of the spell.

Within Sight: If a ship is actually within sight, you can gain additional information by studying the vessel as an action, such as the type of ship, its speed and course, its armaments, or its allegiance. You need not be able to see the vessel clearly—a spot on the horizon is sufficient, as long as you are looking through the material component. An Intelligence check will reveal information at the discretion of the DM. This spell cannot penetrate illusions.

Higher Levels: When cast using a 4th-level spell slot or higher, the range for ships you can detect increases by 5 miles per spell slot above 3rd.

Favorable Wind
3rd-level Evocation

Casting Time. 1 action
Range. 3 hexes
Components. S
Duration. Concentration, up to 1 hour
Classes. Druid, Sorcerer, Wizard

You produce a spout of wind. When you cast this spell, choose one of the two options below:

Favorable Wind. You target a ship you can see within range. For the duration, if the target uses Sails as Propulsion, its roughness decreases by 3. The spell ends if the target goes out of range.

Destructive Wind. You target a ship you can see within range. Make a spell attack roll against its damage threshold: on a hit, the target takes 3d4x10 damage to its sail.

Higher Levels. When cast using a slot above 3rd level, you can target an additional ship for each slot level above 3rd.

Depthsurge
8th-level Evocation (Telekinesis)

Casting Time. 1 action
Range. 5 hexes
Components. V, S, M (a spyglass)
Duration. Instantaneous
Classes. Druid, Sorcerer, Wizard

The air in a 10 foot radius column 60 feet high above the water suddenly transforms into a gushing mountain of spray as you smash the ocean upwards to smite your foe. Each creature or object in the area takes 8d6 bludgeoning damage. Any creature struck by this attack must then succeed on a Dexterity saving throw or be driven 10 feet away from the center of the blast. If a ship is in the area, it takes 8d6x10 damage to the hull.

The base of the column must touch a large body of water, or else the spell fails. You center the effect at or below the water's surface.

Maelstrom
8th-level Transmutation

Casting Time. 1 action
Range. 6 hexes
Components. V
Duration. Concentration, up to 1 hour
Classes. Druid, Sorcerer, Witch, Wizard

A 2 hex radius circle centered on a point you can see within range becomes a treacherous maelstrom. The area must be fully covered in water at least 60 feet deep. Any ships in starting their turn in the area must have their pilot make a Wisdom check against your spell save DC to move to a space adjacent to the maelstrom as their movement.

Any creatures, or ships that fail their movement, that start their turn in the area are immediately pulled to the center, taking 5d10 bludgeoning damage or 5d10x5 damage to a hull, and crash into the center. A ship or creature starting its turn in the center takes the same damage again. A creature is then pushed 60 feet into the water and is no longer under the spell's effects; a ship similarly breaks and sinks when it reaches 0 hp.

As an action, you can move the maelstrom up to 3 hexes, pulling any ships in the center along with it.

Semaphores

Although not strictly part of combat, semaphores are a neat and the almost only way to perform inter-ship communication. A few sample systems are included below. It is also the only way for allied ships to communicate and coordinate: a creative DM will require a captain to push back his initiative until after the mothership to see their message (from the message action) before being able to act.

Standard Code
Most vessels in the Many Isles know this code and have the available banners. It is hoisted on the tallest mast, in a series of long strips of a certain color.

Isle's Fanion. The uppermost banner is a blue and yellow striped strip, representing standard code.

Star. A red strip beneath the fanion shows an request for communication. If combined with a Guard, it is an order to stop. Two such strips - a Double Star - demands immediate aid, as the vessel is sinking. A triple, the Bloody Star, shows hopelessness and announces the vessel is lost.

Jack. This green strip shows that the vessel wants no trouble; it's a sign of leave me alone, and I'll leave you alone. A Jack and a Golden means the vessel is ready to pay - in money or food - to be left alone.

Golden. A yellow strip representing surrender. A Jack and a Golden means the vessel is ready to pay - in money or food - to be left alone.

Messenger. A blue strip directly beneath the fanion means the vessel is on an urgent mission and will not stop.

Guard. This white strip with golden stripes represents an official or military vessel, patrolling or on similar authority's business. If combined with a Star, it is an order to stop.

Stranger's Fanion. If there is no Isle's Fanion, and instead a green and yellow striped strip, it indicates another semaphore system is in use. A red and yellow version indicates a combination of both.

Denise's Bannering

Vessels of the marine empire of Denise, and some other nations surrounding it, adopted this method of banners. It is done by attaching square rigid banners at the aft of a ship.

If all bannering is removed, this represents a farewell as the vessel is lost.

Type Banners

These banners show a ship's purpose. They are rarely combined with each other, and sit on top of the bannering bar.

Merchant. If the uppermost banner is red, it shows it's a merchant's ship, which have a sacred position for Denise people. The respective merchant's crest is shown on the banner. If a merchant is actually on the ship, the same banner is hoisted as a flag on the main mast. High Merchant's ships have a purple banner.

Soldier. Vessels on authoritative business, patrolling or otherwise, hoist a small blue banner adorned with Denise's sickle moon. The main sails are usually also light blue with a moon.

Pleasure. Ships that are neither traders nor authorities hoist a pink banner.

Status Banners

These indicate messages a ship wants to pass to another one. When they are changed, a bugle is usually sounded to alert the opposite vessel of this altering.

Arrow. A white banner with a white banner with a golden cross indicates that the vessel's other banners are to be acknowledged or responded to, or armed intervention is to follow.

Dragon. A red banner with a green cross serves as "Do not Disturb" sign, and also indicates the vessel will fail to react or respond to any bannering.

Guard. A white banner is used to demand for the other ship to stop.

Investigator. A white banner with a single golden stripe is used to show that people from this vessel will board the other.

Maiden. A red banner with a single golden stripe is a request for help.

Marshall. A blue banner with a single golden stripe indicates an order to follow.

Messenger. A red banner is used to request communication with another vessel.

Slave. This black banner indicates a vessel has seen and acknowledges any messages from the other ship.

Strategic Banners

These banners are larger than other ones, and are usually hooked atop a mast or below the other banners. Sone status banners can also be used as strategic banners: in that case, they are larger to show the difference.

Fire/Water. A blue banner with a single red dot indicates an order to open fire. Red background with blue dot, Water, orders to stop firing.

Investigator (Strategic). A white banner with a single golden stripe is an order to a targeted ship to board the other targeted ship.

Receiver. The banner beneath this yellow strip indicates a ship supposed to receive the message. Allied vessels previously define banners to be used to indicate different ships, called indicators. Multiple indicators show more than one ship is designed as the Receiver.

Targeter. Banners beneath this orange strip indicate ships targeted by current strategic banners, such as Fire. The indicators of a Targeter usually represent classes of vessels, defined previously.

The Many Isles thank you!

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