Unnamed Ship Card Game

Version 1.5

# Overview

This document describes a 2-player card game based on a fictional naval confrontation in the present day between the world’s most powerful navies. In the game, each player plays with their own 40 card deck. The goal of the game is to exhaust your opponent’s deck of cards.

To add additional strategic depth to the game, players may also customize their decks. There are constraints on how decks can be customized (see Deck Construction), for instance a deck may only use cards belonging to a single “roster”. The two rosters currently in the game are the US Navy and the Russian Navy. Rosters have more than 40 cards in them, so players can pick and choose which cards they would like to use in their decks.

# Terminology

This section will be a useful reference while reading this manual. It is not necessary to memorize (or even understand) all of the terms presented before continuing through the manual.

## General Terminology

* Roster: A collection of cards that can be used together in a deck. Rosters are based on the navies of real world countries or alliances such as the US Navy, European Union Naval Force, or China People’s Liberation Army Navy.
* Play Surface: the play surface can be a table, floor, bench, or whatever physical area the two players agree on.
* Play Area: The play area is the part of the play surface in front of the player where they may play their cards. Each player has their own play area.
* In Play: A card is considered in play if it is in the play area of either player.
* Under Control: A card is considered under control of player X if it is in the play area in front of that player. Most cards come into play under the control of the player that played them, unless stated otherwise. In some cases, control of cards can be changed during play.
* Deck: Decks are collections of cards belonging to each player that are placed next to the play area of each player. Players can select which cards are in their deck prior to play (see Deck Construction).
* Discard Pile: The discard pile is where cards that are discarded are placed. Cards in the discard pile should be placed face-up, and either player may inspect either their own or their opponent’s discard pile at any time. Like cards in a player’s hand or deck, discarded cards are inactive and do not directly affect play.

## Card Terminology

* Type: Every card has a type. Different types of cards have different rules governing them. The types of cards are:
  + Territory
  + Tactic
  + Strategy
  + Squadron
  + Submarine
  + Ship
* Action Card: Tactic and strategy type cards are both considered action cards.
* Military Asset Card: Squadron, submarine, and ship cards are considered military asset cards.
* Asset Card: All military asset cards as well as territory cards are considered asset cards.
* Class: the class of a card is the title of the card. For a ship card, it will generally include the word “class”. Examples of classes are: “Nimitz Class CVN”, “That’s the Spirit”, or “Vladivlastok”.
* Name – a name is an additional piece of information on a card that does not affect play. Names are used to distinguish between cards when deck building. An example of a name might be “Squadron 1”, “Tactic B” or “USS Abraham Lincoln”. Territories do not have different names as there is only one territory of each class.
* Description: This is the area of the card in which the special abilities of the card are listed.
* Special abilities: These take the form “<Name> : <Effect>” or just “<Effect>” and describe special rules governing a card.
* Logistics: If listed on a military asset, this is the amount of logistics *required* to use the asset. If listed on a territory, this is the logistics *capacity* of the territory. See Deployment Step under Turn Sequence for more information.

# Deck Construction

Unless you are playing a prototype of the game with pre-made decks, part of the game involves the creation of decks. During deck creation, players get the opportunity to tailor the cards in their deck to their playstyle. Creating a deck from scratch should only be attempted by experienced players, so it is recommended that players initially use one of the provided deck lists (see Deck Lists).

If you do intend to create your own deck, it must adhere to the following constraints:

* Decks must contain exactly 40 cards.
* Decks must be composed of cards belonging to only a single roster. The roster a card belongs to is indicated on the card itself.
* Decks may only contain one of each card. Take care: although two cards may look like the same card in most respects, they may differ by having a different name. For instance, the USS Theodore Roosevelt and USS Abraham Lincoln are two different cards despite being the same class (Nimitz) and having the same statistics and abilities.
* Decks must contain at least 5 territories.

# Play Rules

## Overview

The game is organized into rounds. During each round, each player takes a turn. Turns are always taken in the same order. The game continues, round after round, until one player has won.

## Win Condition

The goal of the game is to reduce your opponent’s deck to zero cards. A player wins the game when the opposing player is called upon, for any reason, to draw or discard a card from their deck but is unable to because they have no remaining cards.

## Selecting Who Goes First

Before the game starts, one player must be selected to go first. If this is the first game being played in a session of games (a session being a socially-defined concept left to the players), both players should roll a die with the higher roller of the two deciding which player goes first. The player selected is known as the starting player. If this is not the first game of the session, the loser of the last game should determine which player goes first.

## Before Play

Once the starting player has been determined, both players must shuffle their decks and draw a 5 card hand. If either player has no territory cards in their hand, they may shuffle their hand back into their deck and draw a new hand. This may be done until both players have at least 1 territory card.

Because the game is won by reducing your opponent’s deck to zero cards, it can be helpful to both players to be able to quickly identify how many cards remain in their opponent’s deck. This number is not a secret and both players must correctly report the number of cards they have in their hand or in their deck if asked. In addition, both players may agree to organize their deck into stacks of 5, drawing cards from those stacks in a set order. This can make it easier to “eye-ball” the count of another player’s deck without having to constantly count it.

## Turn Sequence

Each player’s turn is broken up into the following 9 steps:

1. **Territory Buyback Step:** If your opponent controls any of your territory cards, you may return any number of these territories to your control by discarding 3 cards from your deck for each card you wish to return. Cards return to your control immediately, and their logistics may be used when calculating total logistics during the deployment steps.
2. **Draw Step:** First, the current player may select any number of cards in their hand and discard them. They then must draw one card for each card discarded this way and one additional card. If this is the first round and the current player played first, that player does not draw an additional card. They may choose discard no cards, in which case they would generally only draw one card.
3. **Deployment Step:** The current player may play asset cards from their hand according to the following rules. Unless otherwise indicated, these asset cards are put into the play area under the current player’s control:
   1. They may play only a single territory card per turn unless stated otherwise.
   2. They may never have in-play military assets whose combined logistics exceeds the combined capacity of their controlled territories. Face-down military assets may not flip if that flip would cause total logistics to exceed capacity. If a player’s logistics capacity changes such that their military assets would now exceed their total capacity, they must immediately return military assets to their hand until this deficit is accounted for. A carrier may not be returned to hand without returning its associated aircraft, although aircraft may be removed by themselves.
   3. Military assets with the Hidden special ability may be played face down. These cards may be looked at by their controller at any time but not by the opposing player. Face-down cards have a logistics requirement of 0.
   4. They may not have more face-down military assets than they have territories
   5. Air squadrons may only be played “on” a territory or carrier. That squadron is “stationed” on the asset on which it is placed.
4. **Action Step:** Either player, starting with the current player, may now alternatingly play action cards. Whenever a player plays an action card, their opponent has an opportunity to respond by playing their own action cards. The first player will then get a chance to respond…and this repeats until one player does not play a card in response. Card effects are then evaluated in order of last played -> first played. If a card’s effect is no longer possible, that card simply does nothing. If both players consecutively decline to play an action card, this step ends.
   1. Tactic cards are single-use and are discarded as soon as their effect occurs. Strategy cards are persistent and remain on the board.
   2. A player may only have a single strategy card in play at once. A player may choose to discard an in-play strategy card at any time.
5. **Attacks Step:**
   1. The following steps repeat until the current player indicates they would not like to declare any additional attacks:
      1. **Attack Declaration Step:** The current player declares an attack. An attack must be declared against a territory or player. They must also indicate which military assets under their control are going to take part in the attack and indicate their damage order. Damage order is the order in which these military assets will take damage during the Combat Step. The current player must respect the following additional rules:
         1. A military asset may only be declared as taking part in a single attack per turn unless otherwise indicated.
         2. Before a face-down military asset can attack, it must be flipped. A face-down squadron on a carrier may be flipped, but does not have to be. If it does not flip, it does not take part in combat, but would still be destroyed if the carrier it is stationed on is destroyed. Flipping military assets is subject to the same rules in this step as it would be during the Deployment Step.
         3. Military assets may only take part in an attack against a player if that player controls no territory. Submarines may ignore this rule.
         4. Squadrons may only attack if they are stationed on a carrier that is also attacking, unless otherwise indicated.
      2. **Pre-Combat Action Step:** There is now an additional Action Step with the caveat that only Tactic action cards may be played.
      3. **Defense Declaration Step:** The opposing player now declares which of their military assets will be defending. This process is subject to similar rules as the Attack Declaration Step:
         1. The defender must also declare a damage order.
         2. A military asset may only take part in a single defense per turn
         3. A face-down military asset must be turned face up to defend. The same rules for face-down squadrons also apply.
         4. Squadrons may only take part in a defense if the attack is against a territory on which their stationed or if they are stationed on a carrier that is also taking part in the defense.
      4. **Combat Step:**
         1. **Ambush Damage Step:** Both players add up the attack of all declared combatants that have the Ambush ability. That combined attack value is known as the damage value.Military assets are then destroyed in each player’s declared damage order until attack minus the defense of destroyed military assets is less than the defense of the next military asset. Destroyed military assets are immediately discarded.
         2. **Normal Damage Step**: Players now each add up the total attack of their non-ambush combatants and again inflict damage according to the same rules. Any ambush damage which was not necessary to destroy previously removed military assets is added to normal damage. For instance, if a player deals 3 ambush damage and kills one military asset with 2 defense in the ambush damage step, the remaining 1 damage is then added to their normal damage total.
         3. Other Rules:
            1. If a carrier is destroyed, any squadrons stationed on it may still participate in the combat step. At the end of the combat step, they are returned to their controller’s hand.
      5. **Post-Combat Action Step:** There is now another action step where only action cards can be played.
      6. **Assault Step:** This step only occurs if all defending military assets were destroyed during the combat and post-combat action steps, and if at least one attacking military asset remains.
         1. If attacking a territory: If the sum of the assault statistic of all surviving attacking military assets is greater than the shore-defense of the attacked territory, the attacking player immediately takes control of the territory. They may move it to their side of the play area. This territories logistics capacity is not considered part of the total logistics capacity of the player until the end of this turn. If a players military assets are now made invalid by the loss of their territory due to face-down or logistics constraints, they must resolve this immediately by returning cards to their hand by the same rules as during deployment.
         2. If attacking the opposing player: The defending player must discard cards from their deck equal to the combined assault statistic of surviving attacking military assets.
6. **Final Action Step:** Another action step in which all action cards can be played.
7. **Submarine Withdrawal Step:** The current player may now return any number of submarines under their control to their hand.
8. **Second Deployment Step:** Same rules as the first deployment step, except that newly conquered territories do not count towards the logistics capacity of the player’s territories.
9. **Normal Withdrawal Step:** The current player may now return any military assets under their control to their hand.

# Special Ability Rule Clarifications

* [+x Help Defense]: Help defense is a modifier added to the first ship in the damage order during combat. This allows ships which are not necessarily first in the damage order to contribute to defense. Help defense is effective against ambush attack.
* Commerce Raider: Military assets with commerce raider use their attack instead of their assault statistic when determining damage against a player. They still use their assault statistic when assaulting a territory.

# Deck Lists

Deck lists are currently TBD. For now, please use the pre-made decks included with this manual.

### Deck Strategies

The USN deck has powerful carriers and aircraft that outclass any ships on on the Russian side. The USN strategy involves trying to prolong the game and play defense while it can gather the logistics and necessary cards to dominate with its carriers. Alternatively or in addition, the USN can try to build an unstoppable mass of Burke and Ticonderoga class ships. Because all these ships have the AEGIS special ability, they become much more powerful when used in groups.

The Russian deck has powerful offensive ships with generally lower logistics requirements than their western counterparts. The Russian Navy will have a hard time fighting the USN at full strength, so the best strategy is to force combats early in the game before the USN player is fully deployed. The Russians must also rely on their numerous submarine fleet to damage their opponents deck directly when the USN player defends their territories with their capable aircraft.