

## super-simple naval combat for any edition

**Ships have Armor Class.** AC is the same as leather armor for peaceful/clumsy ships and chain mail for warships/maneuverable ships.

**Ships have Hit Points.** Most ships have 1 HP per minimum crew. Warships typically have 30 HP.

**Ships have a speed.** 30 feet/round (about 3 mph) is average. Ships have no maneuverability class or facing.

**Ships have initiative.** Ships have no initiative bonus. All crew and passengers act on the ship's initiative.

**Ships fire ranged weapons.** Each round, a ship may fire one weapon per 10 max HP. Ballistae do 1d8 damage and catapults 1d10. Attack rolls are made as a level 1 fighter and have the same range as a shortbow. Every 10 passengers may fire 1 volley of arrows (1d6 damage).

**Individuals can attack a ship.** Divide individual damage by 10, rounding down. Ship weapons do x10 damage to individuals. The DM arbitrates non-damage spells. Ships save as a level 1 fighter.

**Ships collide.** Boarding follows normal D&D melee rules. A galley with a ram does 2d10 damage and may sail through a destroyed ship or back up from a whole one.

**Crew die in battle.** The crew takes one casualty for each HP of ship damage (half killed, half unconscious at 1 HP).

**SAMPLE SHIPS:** HP and speed vary +/-50% based on ship quality.

**boat:** open boat, raft, keelboat. Spd 20. HP 3. AC as leather.

**longship:** Can land on shore. Spd 35. HP 10. AC as chain.

**galley:** heavy rowed ship. Spd 30. HP 30. AC as leather.

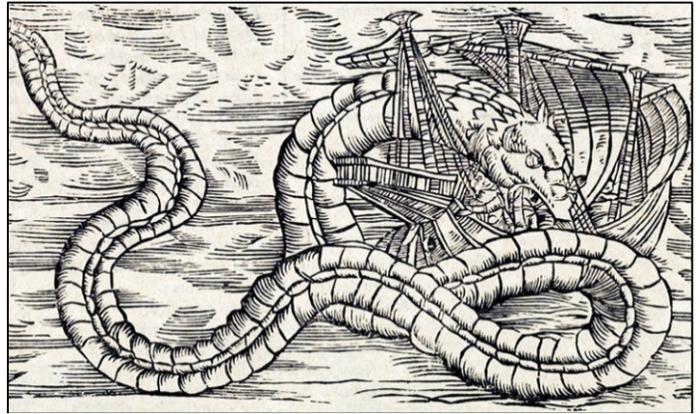
**sailing ship:** merchant ship. Spd 30. HP 20. AC as leather.

**warship:** armed sailing ship. Spd 35. HP 30. AC as chain.

**leviathan:** Absurdly large ship. Spd 25. HP 50+. AC as chain.

**Technologically advanced ship:** Stats as previous ship types, but AC as plate mail, d12 weapons, and/or speed +10.

## AND THAT'S IT!



**Optional rules:** The DM doesn't need to use these rules until the players start asking about advanced tactics: can we aim at their sails? Can we fire flaming arrows?

**Crit Location:** On a critical hit against a ship, the attacker may forego extra damage for one of the following:

**1) Sail Damage:** The ship's speed is slowed by 10 until the crew skips a turn for repairs.

**2) Called Shot:** The attack (non-critically) hits a specific character or object.

**3) Weapon Hit:** A ship weapon is destroyed.

**Fire:** If a flaming weapon crits, or an attacker fumbles a flaming weapon, or the ship rolls 1 on a save vs fire, the ship burns. It takes 1d6 damage on the opponent's turn. On its turn, its crew has a 50% chance to put out the fire.

**Wind Direction:** Occasionally, strong winds affect navigation. Only rowed ships can go directly into strong wind. For instance, in a strong north wind, you can't sail north (but you can sail NW and NE).

**Officer Actions:** This rule is meant to involve multiple players on each turn. On the ship's initiative, a PC can use his/her turn to take an officer action. If you want important NPC ships to have skilled officers, add +1, +2 or +3 to the ship's AC, attack rolls, and damage rolls.

**Captain: Order broadside:** The captain's player chooses an enemy to attack this turn. Add the captain's Int or Cha bonus to the ship's damage rolls against that enemy.

(Pre-Third Edition: Int bonus: 1/2 the number of bonus languages. Cha bonus: 1/4 max henchmen.)

**Master Gunner: Aim weapons:** The Master Gunner's player rolls the ship's weapon attacks, adding his or her Dex bonus (pre-3e: reaction bonus) to the attack rolls.

**First Officer: Fill in:** The first officer may take any officer action that is not being performed this turn.

**Helmsman: Con the helm:** The helmsman's player moves the ship. If the ship moves, add the helmsman's Dex bonus (pre-3e: AC bonus) to the ship's AC.

**Ship Surgeon: Operate:** Must have clerical/healing skill. The surgeon's player tracks damage to the ship. If the ship lost any HP last turn, the surgeon restores 1 ship HP.