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CHAPTER 1 - THE BASICS

Introduction

Welcome to the golden age of the battleship! In the early 20th century, the battleship was the principle expression of military and economic power. Massive guns mounted on floating castles of steel decided the fate of nations. Naval Thunder: Clash of Dreadnoughts allows you to recreate on the tabletop, epic naval battles where columns of mighty steel dreadnoughts hurled thunderous broadsides at each other while lighter ships sparred back and forth between the battle lines.

Naval Thunder is designed to be fast paced, easy to learn, and a lot of fun. Extensive research to ensure the rules produce historically congruent battle outcomes is integrated into the rules “behind the scenes”. We do the work, so you don’t have to. Instead of spending a lot of time doing math or checking tables, you are free to focus on commanding your battlefleet and to wrestle with the same kinds of tactical decisions the historical admirals faced in battle. Naval Thunder can accommodate any size battle from single ship duels, to recreating huge fleet actions like the battle of Jutland.



The basic rules are presented in the order of the game turn to make it easy to walk through the rules and learn them. Optional rules have been carved out and placed at the end to allow players to tailor the pace of play and level of detail to their individual preference or to the size of the game they are playing.

What You Need to Play

Naval Thunder requires just a few things to play. You will need:

- Ship miniatures or counters to represent the ships. The rules support any scale of miniatures/counters from 1/1800 to 1/6000.
- A tape measure.
- A hard plastic or wooden ruler for ship movement.
- Several 10-sided dice.
- The markers in the back of this book which represent shell splashes, bridge and rudder criticals, ongoing fires, ongoing flooding, and smoke.
- Copies of the ship data cards for each fleet. You will write on these copies to keep track of hull damage, remaining turrets, and other critical damage effects.

Dice Terminology

Naval Thunder uses only 10 sided dice and refers to them as d10s. Instructions to roll a given number of dice will be shown as a number in front of the d10 to signify the number of dice to be rolled. For example, the instruction to “roll 2d10” means to roll 2 ten-sided dice. In some cases the result will be totaled, while in others each die will be considered separately.

The Ship Data Card

The top row of the data card gives the name and the combat value of the ship. The combat value is an approximate assessment of the contribution of a ship to the capabilities of a fleet. The more ships that are included in each fleet, the better the combat value numbers will be at predicting the relative strength of each.

Comparing the combat values of individual ships of different types (a battleship vs. a light cruiser for example) doesn't address the different roles each ship is designed for. Therefore, an equivalent point value of light cruisers might not be the equal of a battleship, simply because the light cruisers are not designed to engage the same kinds of targets as battleships. However, comparing the total combat values of two divisions of battleships gives you a fair indication of the relative strength of each.

The next row shows the class and base target number needed to hit the ship. The base target number is the number before modifiers that a player must roll on a d10 in order to score a hit and varies by the type of ship.

The class section provides a variety of information needed to move, shoot, resolve damage, and determine the ship captain's willingness to stay in the fight. Towards the upper right corner you will find the armor value of the ship in a box labeled armor. The ship's armor value is a number generated by applying a calculation to the ship's historical armor data, considering armor type, armor scheme, and armor thickness by location. An armor value of 4 represents an unarmored destroyer, while an armor value of 16 represents a heavily armored dreadnought.

Pay close attention to the hull value of the ship, as it determines how much punishment the ship can absorb before it sinks, explodes, or is reduced to a burning hulk that has to be abandoned and scuttled.

The next four sections provide all the necessary details about the weapons the ship carries. The main and secondary battery layout sections show how the guns are arranged on the ship and are used to determine which guns may be brought to bear on a target during the

Monarch						429	
Orion class Battleship (6+)							
Hull	89						
Speed	5					Armor	16
Move Step	Battleship			Shoot Step	Battleship		
Command	Crew		Flagship?	Y []	N []		
Main Battery Layout							
Size	Guns/Turret	# of Turrets		Arcs of Fire			
13.5"	2	[2]		F/P/S			
13.5"	2	[1]		P/S			
13.5"	2	[2]		A/P/S			
Secondary Battery Layout							
Size	Guns/Turret	# of Turrets		Arcs of Fire			
4"	1	[8]		P			
4"	1	[8]		S			
Gun Data							
Weapon	S	M	L	Pen	DMG		
13.5"	14	28	42	11	6		
4"	4	8	12	1	2		
Torpedoes							
Size	S	M	L	Arc	Number		
2.5" (4)	3	6	9	P	[1]		
2.5" (4)	3	6	9	S	[1]		
2.5" (14)	3	6	9	A	[1]		
Orders							
Turn #	Movement	Main Guns Target			Torp Target		
1							
2							
3							
4							
5							
6							
7							
8							
9							
10							
11							
12							

course of the game. Below that is the gun data section, which provides the game statistics for all the types of gun the ship carries. Lastly, the torpedoes section provides information about the torpedo armament the ship carries (if any) including both their layout as well as their game statistics.

Finally, at the bottom of the data card space is provided for you to record movement orders, targets for the main battery weapons, and torpedo attacks.

Printing Ship Data Cards - You can use the snapshot tool within Adobe Acrobat Reader to easily select and print ship data cards for your fleet. Follow the path Tools → Select & Zoom → Snapshot tool. This will allow you to drag a box around each data card you have chosen and create an image capture of the data card. Paste the data cards into Microsoft Word or a similar application. Make sure the page orientation is set to landscape and then print them off. You can adjust margins or print settings as necessary to ensure each data card fits on the printed page.

Setup

Selecting and Organizing Forces - Both players should build fleets for themselves from different fleet lists (unless you want to try some hypothetical civil-war scenarios). Fleets can be built either to an agreed upon point limit, using historical orders of battle, or in whatever way the two players decide.

In historical scenarios, the ships will already be grouped into their historical divisions. If you are building your own fleet list, you must group your fleet into divisions of ships. A division is a group of ships that maneuver and fight together as a unit. You must obey the following rules when organizing your ships into divisions:

- Each division must consist of between two and eight ships. Light cruisers and destroyer flotillas are an exception to this rule and can be organized into their own single ship divisions.
- Your fleet is limited to a number of divisions equal to $\frac{1}{2}$ the number of data cards representing ships in the fleet, rounded down. Thus, a destroyer flotilla counts as a single data card, and all ships of light cruiser size and larger each count as a separate data card.
- Ships that move in different movement steps (see Chapter 2 - Movement) cannot be part of the same division.

Flagships - Each division must have a designated flagship. If this flagship is sunk, forced to drop out of line, or otherwise unable to continue as the flagship, the flag may be transferred to another ship in the division. (See declare transfer of division flag in Chapter 5 - The End Phase). Note that destroyer flotillas always count as containing their own division flagship at any time they do not have an assigned flotilla leader.



In specific historical scenarios some ships other than destroyer flotillas or light cruisers may start the game as flagships for their own single-ship divisions, depending upon the actual order of battle. In all other cases, ships of armored cruiser type or larger must start the game in a division consisting of at least two ships with a designated flagship.

Once you have organized your ships into divisions, you must select one ship from each division to serve as the division flagship. Put a check mark in the Y box of the flagship indicator in the class section of the data card.

Next, select one ship from your fleet to serve as the fleet flagship. The fleet flagship can also be a division flagship, but this is not a requirement. On the fleet flagship's data card *circle* the Y box in the flagship indicator portion of the data card to indicate that it is the fleet flagship. The fleet flagship must be of armored cruiser type or larger in any fleet that has one. You only have one fleet flagship and that flag cannot be transferred, so guard it well!

In the box labeled command, fill in a 10 for the fleet flagship, and an 8 on all other ships. Leave the box labeled crew blank unless you are playing with the crew ratings optional rules.

Operating Independently - Any time a ship is not part of a division with a designated division flagship, that ship is operating independently. A lone flagship for a division in which all other ships have been detached or removed from play is still considered to be its own division with a flagship and is therefore not operating independently.

Historically it was very difficult to integrate stray ships back into division formations during the press of combat. Frequently, single ships were ordered back to port, especially if heavily damaged. Thus, ships operating independently have a chance each turn of deciding to retreat, or being ordered back to home base by the fleet admiral (see command checks in Chapter 5 - The End Phase).

Deploy Forces - In historical scenarios, initial deployment positions are fixed. For all other games, use the following deployment rules.

Mark the center point of each long table edge. Each player rolls 2d10, re-rolling ties. The player with the highest total is considered the winner. The loser picks a long table edge and deploys his entire fleet within 12" of that edge. All ships must be deployed to the left or right of the center point -- the fleet may not straddle the center of the deployment area. Ships are grouped into their divisions and placed in line ahead or line of bearing formation. Formations are described in Chapter 2 - Movement.

Next, the winner of the deployment roll deploys his fleet within 12" of the opposite long table edge, choosing on which side of the center point he will deploy. This gives winner of the deployment roll some control over the initial engagement distance.



Turn Order

The turn order for Naval Thunder seems lengthy at first, but as you play the game you learn that it is a simple set of brief steps that are repeated several times each turn.

I. Movement Phase

A. Battleship Movement

1. Battleships write movement orders
2. All battleships move simultaneously

B. Cruiser Movement

1. Cruisers write movement orders
2. All cruisers move simultaneously

C. Flotilla Movement

1. Flotillas write movement orders
2. All flotillas move simultaneously

II. Shooting Phase

A. Battleship Shooting

1. Record targets for torpedo attacks
2. Record targets for main battery weapons
3. Place splash markers on enemy ships
4. Determine which guns can shoot
5. Roll to hit
6. Determine armor penetration
7. Calculate and apply damage
8. Resolve criticals
9. Pick up splash markers

B. Cruiser Shooting

1. Record targets for torpedo attacks
2. Record targets for main battery weapons
3. Place splash markers on enemy ships
4. Determine which guns can shoot
5. Roll to hit
6. Determine armor penetration
7. Calculate and apply damage
8. Resolve criticals
9. Pick up splash markers

C. Flotilla Shooting

1. Record targets for torpedo attacks
2. Determine which guns can shoot
3. Roll to hit
4. Determine armor penetration
5. Calculate and apply damage
6. Resolve criticals

D. Torpedo Resolution

1. Roll to hit
2. Apply damage
3. Resolve criticals

III. End Phase

A. Make damage control checks

B. Make command checks

C. Declare transfers of division flag

D. Pick up one color of smoke marker (optional rule)

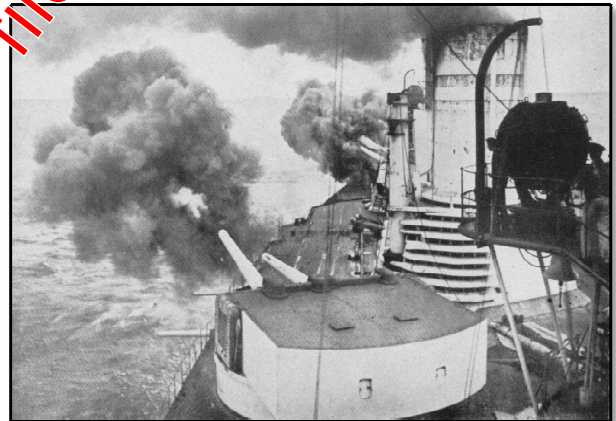
E. Roll for wind direction (optional rule)

Movement Phase Overview - The movement phase is broken into three sub-steps and all ships are assigned to move in one of these three steps according to their type. Heavier ships move first giving a maneuverability advantage to lighter ships as they are able to see and react to the movement of the heavier ships.

During each step record movement orders for all ships of that type in both fleets, then both sides move their ships of that type simultaneously. Players should not “spy” on their opponent’s movement as they move their own ships. Although movement orders are recorded, there is some latitude at the time ships are moved to determine the exact degree of course changes. Players should have an intended destination and bearing in mind for their ships before commencing their move and not allow the movement of enemy ships in the same move step to alter their plan. In practice, if both sides are actually moving simultaneously, there is usually little opportunity to observe and adjust to the movements of the opposing player. For players who prefer to eliminate any chance of fudging, a movement initiative system is described Chapter 7 - Optional Rules

Shooting Phase Overview - Like the movement phase, the shooting phase is broken down into steps. The first three steps are similar in concept to the three steps of the movement phase. Each type of ship is assigned to a particular shooting step, although the assignments are not necessarily the same as the movement steps.

All shooting within each step is considered simultaneous. However, all damage is resolved and applied at the end of each step, so ships that shoot in an earlier step have a chance to damage ships that shoot in a later step before they can fire. Heavier ships have an advantage over lighter ships during the shooting phase as the weight and volume of their fire during the early shooting steps can suppress the enemy's ability to respond in the later shooting steps.



All the torpedo attacks declared in the first three steps are resolved simultaneously in the fourth shooting step, torpedo resolution. This delay represents the time it takes for torpedoes to reach their target.

End Phase Overview - The end phase consists of several administrative steps that resolve the ongoing effects of the action of the current turn, and prepare the combat zone for the next turn.