

SURFACE ACTION

- I. **Introduction.** *Surface Action* is a game of naval surface combat in the Second World War. Miniatures mounted on card stock bases represent ships or groups of ships; these are maneuvered across a 4 by 6 foot area, such as a table top. Six-sided dice are used to determine various events, such as gunfire and torpedo hits and the results of damage control.
- II. **Game Turns.** Play proceeds by game turns. Each turn is equivalent to 5 minutes of elapsed time and consists of the following phases:
- A. **Sighted Ship Torpedo Firing.** Players record targets of torpedoes and place torpedo markers for sighted ships firing torpedoes.
 - B. **Sighted Ship Movement.** Sighted ships move across the playing surface.
 - C. **Un sighted Ship Torpedo Firing.** Players record targets of torpedoes and place torpedo markers for unsighted ships firing torpedoes.
 - D. **Un sighted Ship Movement.** Unsighted ships move across the playing surface.
 - E. **Torpedo Combat.** Players determine torpedo hits against eligible targets.
 - F. **Sighting.** Ships try to sight unsighted opposing ships.
 - G. **Gunfire Combat.** Ships shoot guns at each other, noting the hits scored.
 - H. **Damage Control.** Ships with damage attempt to remove the effects of the damage with damage control.
 - I. **Damage Resolution.** Ships determine the damage resulting from the gunfire and torpedo hits they received.
 - J. **Card Draw.** Each player draws one or more cards from his or her card deck.
- III. **Movement.** Ships move across the playing area, to the extent of each ship's speed. Each inch on the playing area represents 1000 yards of distance. An inch of speed per turn equals 6 knots.
- A. Each turn, the players each roll a die, with the highest roll going last in each movement phase. (Roll again in case of a tie.) Each player then moves his or her ships or formations.
 - B. Ships may turn using the turn guide. Ships other than BBs or BCs turn on a circle with a diameter of 1.25 inches. Each turn of 30° (or any fraction of 30°) takes ½ inch of movement. BBs and BCs use a 2.5 inch circle. Each turn of 30° (or any fraction of 30°) takes 1 inch of movement.
 - C. Ships may enter the playing surface from their friendly edge. Once exited, ships may not reenter the playing surface.
 - D. **Formations.** Ships may be organized in formations of up to 8 ships when they enter the playing surface or are initially set up. A ship may leave a formation at any time, but may join a formation only through off-surface organization. All ships organized in formations begin one after the other in a line, with permitted intervals of up to 2 inches between ships.
 - E. **Formation Speed.** Formations move at a speed equal to the speed of the slowest ship minus ½ inch.
 - F. **Unplanned Movement.** Any ship or formation except the fleet flagship or the formation containing the fleet flagship is subject to unplanned movement. When the player wants to move that ship or formation, the player rolls two dice, adds the result, and consults the Unplanned Movement Table.
 - G. **Flagship Replacement.** If a flagship is sunk or leaves a formation, the formation must move straight at its previous speed (subject to unplanned movement) for 1 turn while a new flagship is designated.
 - H. **Recording Ship Movement.** Use a counter laid behind the formation to show the turns the ship or formation made in a turn, with the number signifying the degrees turned divided by 30, with the fractions rounded up. For example, a counter of 4 would be placed behind a ship that made turns totaling 120 degrees. The formation may turn as a line, with each ship in the formation turning as it reaches the same point, or all ships in a formation may turn simultaneously by the same amount and in the same direction.
- IV. **Sighting.** Players place blank counters on the playing surface until the ships that they represent are spotted. Each blank represents one formation of ships. Players record the composition of each formation represented by a blank counter. Spotting ships depends on whether the scenario is taking place during the day or night. Once spotted, ships remain spotted for the entire scenario. Scenario rules may allow players to use dummy formation markers.
- A. **Day Scenarios.** Any ship that fires its guns or is within a range of 36" from an enemy ship is placed on the surface. Any dummy within 36" of an enemy ship is removed from play. These sighting distances may be changed by scenario special rule.
 - B. **Night Scenarios.** Depending on the scenario, the normal sighting range is 4" to 18" as specified by scenario rule. In either case, dummies are not removed until they are subject to a successful sighting attempt. To sight at this range, the sighting player must roll a die for the following number or less:

1. Imperial Japanese Navy	4
2. Royal Navy, Kriegsmarine	3
3. Italian Navy	1
4. All other navies	2
 5. A player rolls 1 die for each unsighted ship (or dummy) counter that he or she is attempting to sight. Note that only one die is rolled to spot a formation of ships, regardless of the number of ships in the formation. On a successful roll, all ships in the formation are spotted.
 6. Ships on fire are automatically sighted at 12" greater than maximum visual night sighting range.
 7. Ships shown to have radar automatically sight all targets within their radar ranges.
 8. A dummy cannot sight. A player cannot make a sighting roll unless he or she has a ship within the appropriate range. Players may elect not to make sighting rolls.
 9. **Night Firing.** Before a ship fires guns or torpedoes in a night move, it must roll less than or equal to its night sighting value. Ships roll once for torpedoes and again for guns. On a "6", the weapons are fired at the closest friendly ship visible and not in the firing ship's formation. The roll for torpedoes is made after the player places torpedo counters and records which ships are firing.
- V. **Gun Combat.**
- A. Ships fire guns ship by ship. The player moving last fires all of his or her ships first -- although combat results are not applied until after all fire is completed.
 - B. A ship may fire all of its guns in a turn, subject to the restrictions on firing arcs. It may not, however, fire of one battery at more than one target in a turn. Ship batteries have three values, expressed in the form n-n-n. The first number is the number of dice rolled for fire into the 60° arc centered on the ship's bow, the second is the number rolled for fire into the 120° arcs centered on either side of the ship, and the last number is for fire into the 60° arc centered on the ship's stern.
 - C. To fire a ship's guns, determine the guns to be fired, declare their target, and find the number of factors and hit values for guns. The number of factors is found in the ship data given for each scenario. The basic hit values are given by range (measured in inches) in the weapons table for each scenario.
 1. Roll a number of dice equal to the number of gun factors bearing, as modified by damage or maneuvering effects. Any rolls at or below the hit value are potential hits.
 2. Determine the target's size value. For guns, this is the left-hand number in the target size entry. Roll dice equal to the number of potential hits scored; any rolls at or below the target's size value are actual hits.
 3. Adjust the gun's basic penetration value for range by subtracting 1 for each range band beyond the closest. Then, add the target's armor value from the gun's adjusted penetration value. Note that adding a negative armor value number results in a lower adjusted number. Ships with heavy armor have a negative armor value. Roll dice equal to the actual number of hits; any rolls at or below this number are effective hits. Sometimes, the scenarios refer to the gun's penetration factor as a "power factor."
 4. Mark the target with the number of effective hits. A die placed by the target with the spots recording the number of hits can be useful for this.
 - D. **Maneuver Effects on Firing.** Ships' maneuvers may lessen the effectiveness of their gun fire (but not their torpedo fire).

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1. Ships with *early fire control* systems fire at ½ strength if they turn during a move, and cannot fire at all if they spend ½ or more of their move turning.
2. Ships with *regular fire control* systems fire at ½ strength if they spend ¼ or more of their move turning, and cannot fire at all if they spend ¾ or more of their move turning.
3. Ships with *advanced fire control* systems fire at ½ strength if they spend ½ or more of their move turning.
4. The turn modifier to gunfire apply to all ships in a turning formation, whether the individual ship has turned or not.
- E. *Night gunfire hit values* are decreased by 1 at ranges beyond 6". Maximum night gunfire range is the normal night sighting distance for the scenario, as modified by the target's condition -- from 4" to 18".
- F. A ship with secondary batteries can use them to illuminate any sighted ship within 12" with starshell. This permits all ships within 12" of the illuminated ship to fire on it.
- G. Combat die roll values are never reduced below 1, except that modified gunfire penetration values of less than 1 are adjusted to 1 but with only S and F hits counting. Keep track of these non-penetrating hits separately.

VI. Torpedo Combat.

- A. Torpedoes use the same three die roll combat resolution process, with 2 exceptions.
 1. They are launched at the beginning of a turn.
 2. Their penetration values are not adjusted for range.
- B. Torpedo factors may take a number of forms. A single number indicates torpedo factors that can fire into either broadside arc. Two numbers divided by a slash indicates 2 sets of torpedo factors, 1 bearing into each broadside arc. A number in parentheses indicates torpedo reloads.
- C. To be a torpedo target, a ship must end its turn within range and within a 120° side arc of a ship firing torpedoes. Place torpedo markers on the playing surface to record ships firing torpedoes. Note on scrap paper the firer, number of factors fired and target for each counter. Dummy torpedo markers may be freely placed. Resolve attacks after target ships have moved.
- D. A ship's torpedo size value is the number to the right of the slash in the ship's size entry. Note that ships can have different size value for gunfire and torpedo combat.
- E. A torpedo target reduces its size to 1 if it maneuvers to place the center of the torpedo marker targeted on it so that the marker is in its 60° bow or stern arc.
- F. Torpedoes may only be fired once per ship unless specially noted. Players should use pencil and paper to keep track of torpedoes fired and their targets.
- G. Torpedoes fired at stationary targets or in circumstances where the side owning the target ships has not yet sighted enemy ships always use a size value of 6.
- H. *Night torpedo hit values* are not decreased. Without a fire on the target or the target having fired guns in the previous turn, maximum night torpedo range is the normal night sighting distance for the scenario -- from 4" to 18".
- I. A player may always elect not to resolve torpedo combat, thus preserving some uncertainty as to whether torpedoes were fired.
- J. Combat die roll values for torpedoes are never reduced below 1, except that modified torpedo penetration values of less than 1 are adjusted to 1 but with only P and F hits counting. Keep track of these non-penetrating hits separately.

VII. Damage Resolution.

- A. In the damage resolution phases, each ship rolls one die for each effective hit it sustained in the previous gunfire or torpedo combat phase. Consult the appropriate table (based on the weapon type and ship class) to determine the effects of the hit. The effects are then recorded by placing the appropriate hit marker on the ship, or by noting it in the "Hits" section of the scenario data sheet.
- B. When a ship's capabilities are reduced by ½, fractions of ½ or greater are rounded up.
- C. An M (main battery) or S (other batteries) hit can result in an explosion sinking the ship or a fire. If such a hit is scored, immediately roll one die and consult the appropriate scenario rule. When the scenario rule gives M or S hit effects for a

particular navy, it is speaking in terms of hits on ships of that navy.

- VIII. Damage Control. In the damage control phase, the players may attempt to remove the effects of one hit on each ship by rolling one die the ship's damage control rating. If a fire is burning on the ship, that must be the first damage that the player attempts to repair. If a 6 is rolled in a damage control attempt (for damage other than fires), the damage becomes permanent. For fires, see the damage tables below. Note that the sequence of phases prevents damage control from being used to repair damage from gun hits received in the turn of the damage control attempt.

- IX. Card Decks. At the start of a scenario, players form card decks and card hands in accordance with the following instructions.

- A. Players draw hands and cards as specified by scenario rule.
- B. Event Cards. As players draw cards from their decks, they may draw event cards that can subsequently be played on ships or formations on the playing surface. The effects of these cards and the timing of their play are explained on the cards themselves.

- X. Convoys. Some *Surface Action* scenarios feature convoys. Convoys cannot fire or take evasive action.

Gunfire/Bomb Damage Chart

	BB/BC	CA	CL/AKL	DD/TB/AKS
1	P	P	PP	PP
2	M	P	P	PP
3	S	M	M	TP
4	T	S	S	MP
5	--	T	T	M
6	--	--	--	T

-1 to the die roll at ranges beyond 24 inches.

Gunfire/Bomb Damage Chart

	CV	CVL	CVE
1	P	PP	PP
2	P	P	PA
3	A	A	A
4	A	A	A
5	S	S	S
6	S	S	S

-1 to the die roll at ranges beyond 24 inches.

Torpedo Damage Chart

	BB/BC/CV	CA/CVL	CL	DD/TB/CVE
1	P	PP	Sunk	Sunk
2	P	PP	PP	Sunk
3	P	P	PP	TPP
4	M	P	PM	PP
5	M	M	P	PP
6	--	M	M	MP

P: lose ½ original speed

M: lose ½ original main guns, check for explosion or fire

S: lose ½ original other guns, check for fire

T: lose ½ original torpedoes

A fire (F) always starts on a natural 6 rolled on each table (5 or 6 for carriers; for carriers with readied planes: 1 fire on a 2-4, 2 on a 5 and 3 on a 6). Roll each turn in the Damage Control Phase for each fire. On the first roll, a fire is extinguished if the roll is equal to or less than the ship's damage control number. A 5 or 6 on any fire roll causes a roll on the gunfire damage table.

A ship with 2 P hits or 3 F hits may not use guns or torpedoes or operate aircraft. A ship with 3 P hits sinks. A ship with 5 F hits is abandoned.

BB/BC means battleship or battlecruiser. CA means heavy cruiser or armored ship. CL means light cruiser. DD/TB means destroyer, destroyer escort or torpedo boat. CV means a fleet carrier. CVL means a light carrier. CVE means an escort carrier.

Random Movement Chart

Roll (2D6)	Result
2	Left 180 degrees
3	Left 90 degrees
4	Straight
5-9	No random movement
10	Straight
11	Right 90 degrees
12	Right 180 degrees

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