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SEAFARER'S HANDBOOK

A SOURCEBOOK OF FANTASY
ADVENTURE ON THE HIGH SEAS

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CREDITS

LINE DEVELOPER

Greg Benage

WRITING

Kurt Brown, Mark Chance, Lizard, David Lyons, James Maliszewski, Mike Mearls, Brian Patterson

INTERIOR ILLUSTRATIONS

Andy Brase, Paul Butler, Mitch Cotie, Alan Dyson, David Griffith, Eric Lofgren, Kenneth Kay, Brian Schomburg, Tyler Walpole

GRAPHIC DESIGN

Brian Schomburg

COVER DESIGN

Brian Schomburg

EDITING

Greg Benage

ART DIRECTION

Brian Wood

LAYOUT

Greg Benage

PUBLISHER

Christian T. Petersen

PRINTING

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FANTASY FLIGHT GAMES

2021 W. County Rd. C

Roseville, MN 55113

651.639.1905

www.fantasyflightgames.com



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WELCOME!

Fantasy Flight Games is pleased to present the *Seafarer's Handbook*, the third volume in our **Legends & Lairs** line of sourcebooks for the d20 System. The *Seafarer's Handbook* is the definitive resource for fantasy adventure on and below the high seas.

In this book, you'll find a wealth of information for both players and DMs. Whether you want to create a seafaring character, design a new ship, resolve ship-to-ship combat, or create a whole campaign based on or under the sea, you'll find this book an invaluable aid.

Chapter 1 is intended for players who want to create characters uniquely suited to seafaring campaigns. This chapter presents new races, feats, equipment, magic items, and spells designed for seafaring adventurers.

Chapter 2 provides a detailed discussion of seafaring campaigns, presenting information on sea conditions, ships, officers, crews, seafaring expeditions, seafaring nations, and ports of call.

Chapter 3 presents information on running fantasy campaigns below the surface of the ocean. The physical characteristics of the undersea world are described and information is provided on its adventure locations, hazards, monsters, and civilizations.

Chapter 4 provides complete rules for designing and constructing your own ships and vessels. These rules are fully compatible with the d20 System core rules, as well as the ship combat rules introduced in this book.

Chapter 5 provides 20 complete and fully detailed ship designs, including the ghost ship template. Each entry offers a complete description, detailed deck plan, and illustration of a seafaring vessel.

Chapter 6 introduces all-new rules for resolving ship-to-ship combat and boarding action based on the d20 System. Using these rules, DMs can fully incorporate fantasy naval combat into their ongoing campaigns.

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SEAFARING ADVENTURERS

RACES

This section presents full descriptions of three major aquatic races. These descriptions allow you to incorporate merfolk, half-merrow, and aquatic elf PCs into your campaign. **Open Game Content** in this section includes the names, abilities, traits, and game statistics of the races, as well as all material derived from the d20 System Reference Document. Background, description, and flavor text is designated as closed content.

MERFOLK

It is a common conceit among landbound scholars that most sea-dwelling races are descended from land-dwelling stock, magically transformed, perhaps, or touched by the elemental plane of water. Sea elves, merfolk, and the like, they feel, are offshoots of the land-dwelling races. A minority of scholars, though, takes the opposite view—that life emerged from the sea onto land, and the sea-dwelling races are the original stock, with air breathers the offshoots and deviants. Which of these is true may never be settled, but it remains that the most human of the undersea races, the mer-

folk, have much in common with their surface kin—more than many suspect.

The traditional view of merfolk, as described in the core rules, is an oversimplification of their society based on a small subculture. The reality is that merfolk society mimics surface-man society in its breadth and diversity. Anywhere in Underwave that it is possible to live, one finds merfolk, from dwellers in vast cities along the continental shelf to roaming nomad tribes in the infinite cold depths of the outer sea.

Personality: Merfolk are similar to humans in many ways. The only truly noticeable difference is, overall, a higher degree of patience and general conservatism. The sea is always changing, but it has long, slow, rhythms compared to the surface world. Merfolk cultures rise and fall, empires expand and crumble, but they do so on a more leisurely timescale. While not nearly as slow-paced as elves or other long-lived races, merfolk still tend to take their time about things, relative to humans. This is not to say that hotheaded, quick-thinking, impulsive merfolk do not exist—they are just rarer than their human counterparts.

Physical Description: Merfolk resemble humans from the waist up. Their lower



bodies, however, are fishlike, with brightly colored scales and strong fins. Genitalia on both men and women are not visible to casual inspection. Despite the piscine aspects, merfolk are mammals (albeit wholly aquatic ones) and give birth to live young. The human half is usually pale-skinned, almost white, while facial features tend to resemble those of the dominant human culture in the area. Merfolk in colder seas tend to be bulkier, with a layer of fat to help provide warmth, while southern merfolk, especially those who dwell in shallow seas where the sunlight can be reasonably intense, tend to be thinner and darker than the racial average. The most distinctive aspect of merfolk physiology is the tail, which ranges from four to eight feet in length across different merfolk subcultures. Tails tend to be dark or dim-colored among cold-climate merfolk, but are brightly hued and garish in the warm-water subraces. Merfolk tails, and especially tailfins, are often used to express emotion and feeling, with a subtle twist of a fin or ripple in a muscle revealing a great deal about the current mental state of an individual.

Relations: Merfolk dislike half-merrow, but also recognize them as blood-kin, and so usually permit them to dwell in their soci-

eties. Depending on circumstances and competition, merfolk may be close friends or blood enemies to sea elves. Merfolk tend to view surface humans with disdain, as clumsy cripples who can traverse the sea only in boats, and who cannot swim much better than infants. A number of merfolk, especially the young and the mischievous, enjoy appearing at the surface briefly to tease humans before diving out of reach. Others, especially those who live where humans have begun extensive fishing operations, are actively hostile, sabotaging boats from below and then killing the crew as they are cast into the water.

Alignment: Any. Merfolk, much like humans, have no basic racial alignment tendencies, other than a slight propensity for law over chaos and, likewise, a slight preference toward neutrality rather than extremes of good or evil.

Merfolk Lands: Merfolk dwell almost everywhere in Underwave and adapt both their culture to their surroundings and their surroundings to their culture. They live as nomadic tribes and as builders of great empires. They can dwell a few hundred feet from the shoreline or three miles below the surface and a thousand miles from the nearest exposed landmass. Merfolk tend to reshape their environment, especially compared to sea elves. They turn kelp forests into farms and force reefs to grow into city walls, rather than working with the natural growth of the coral. Many merfolk cultures raise and herd fish that they have domesticated over the centuries.

Since there are fewer impediments to travel underwater than there are on land, merfolk cultural regions tend to be very large: The same styles of naming, dress, and art cover regions far larger than most human nations.

In a few rare instances, human cultures on small islands or archipelagos might find themselves “conquered” by merfolk, if they depend on access to the seas for survival. Such societies end up producing goods the merfolk cannot (such as forged metal), in return for permission to fish or travel from island to island.

In general, merfolk are divided into three broad cultural groups, though there are countless variations within these groups. Their society is as diverse as human society.

SHORE MERFOLK

These cultures live very close to land, in water 20 to 50 feet deep. They have access to easy food and resources, and often have good relations with their air-breathing neighbors. As such, they tend towards a laid-back lifestyle, often building only simple shelters or tools, and spending most of their time relaxing.

SHELF MERFOLK

This is the baseline merfolk culture for underwater campaigning. These people dwell primarily at the bottom of the sea along the continental shelves. They are the most settled culture, establishing farms, cities, and kingdoms. They have access to the resources of the seabed near the shore and to the freedom of the deep sea.

DEEP MERFOLK

These cultures dwell far from land, in the deepest parts of the sea. They are nomadic hunters, following herds of fish. They have access to few resources and are very primitive technologically. On occasion, they deal with human or other seafaring cultures that venture out far from shore, sometimes cooperating on whale hunts or the like in return for weapons or jewelry. They also regularly raid shipwrecks for salvageable materials. Some tribes of deep merfolk, if they have had harsh encounters with humans, will actually attack and sink ships, though this is very rare.

Religion: Merfolk worship a wide range of gods, though their religious focus differs somewhat from those of humans. Thus, while nearly every human culture has a deity of fire, almost no merfolk culture does. They tend to have a range of gods who focus on many different aspects of life underwater: a god of fish, a god of currents, a god of the sea floors, a god of the open waters, and, usually, a single god whose province is “the upper world,” meaning the sky, dry land, sun, and the moon or moons. Many human gods overlap with undersea gods, with some area of responsibility shifted, emphasized, or de-emphasized. Some merfolk cultures, especially those with little contact with surface humans, have pantheons unrecognizable to land dwellers.

No specific merfolk gods are provided here; the DM should examine his campaign pan-

theons and alter deities as appropriate. A group of merfolk dwelling in an area heavily influenced by Greek mythology, for example, might have Poseidon as the lord of the gods, with a merfolk-style Hera as his wife; all the gods might dwell on a mountain whose base is at the deepest part of the sea and whose summit is still miles from the surface. Apollo and Zeus may merge into a single sky god, while Diana loses her role as goddess of the moon, but is strengthened as a goddess of the hunt. All of the clerical domains shift appropriately.

Language: Merfolk speak Aquan, and those who dwell close to the surface or near shipping lanes usually speak Common as well. Sea Elf dialects and Cetacean, the language of dolphins and whales, are commonly learned tongues.

Names: Merfolk have a wide range of cultures and a wide range of names. Lineage may be matrilineal or patrilineal, and naming conventions reflect this. Achievement (Foeslayer, Talespinner) or job-oriented (Fisher, Weaver) surnames are less common relative to human cultures; appearance (Longtail, Greeneye) or environmental (of the West Canyon, Redreef) surnames are more so. Long-established merfolk societies probably have reached the stage where names are simply passed on without regard to original meaning, just as many humans named “Baker” have never been near an oven. Common first names include the following and many others.

Male Names: Gorathal, Methorni, Rothenil, Altha, Nerrith.

Female Names: Toshki, Garesh, Lorreshi, Shabal.

Adventurers: Merfolk adventure for many reasons. There is no single overwhelming motivation. Some are simply questing for profit, others for experience. Some seek revenge for wrongs real or imagined; others are motivated to go forth and right wrongs. Curiosity is a major factor—to see something truly different in Underwave, one must often travel far and there is a lot to see. Merfolk and sea elves often adventure together.

MERFOLK RACIAL TRAITS

- **Medium-size:** As Medium-size creatures, merfolk have no special bonuses or penalties due to their size.



- Merfolk base swimming speed is 50 feet; their base speed on land is 5 feet.
- +8 racial bonus on Swim checks: If a merfolk's tail is crippled or seriously injured, this bonus may be reduced or eliminated.
- Swim is always a class skill for merfolk.
- Merfolk are considered aquatic creatures, and suffer no penalties for normal skill use or combat underwater, except where otherwise noted.
- Merfolk are versatile and learn quickly. They receive a bonus skill point at each level, and a bonus feat at 1st level.
- Automatic Languages: Merfolk automatically speak the native language of their culture, as well as Aquan.
- Merfolk have low-light vision out to 60 feet.
- Merfolk are extremely clumsy and weak on land—literally fish out of water. They can survive breathing air for only half an hour before they begin to suffocate. Use the standard suffocation rules for these purposes (DMG 88). Merfolk out of water also suffer a -2 circumstance penalty on all Fortitude saves, and a -4 circumstance penalty to Dexterity.

Favored Class: Any. When determining whether a multi-class merfolk suffers an XP penalty, his highest-level class does not count. This differs from the merfolk described in the core rules, and is intended to allow merfolk to fulfill the same generalist role undersea as humans do on land. DMs are free to ignore or change this rule. If the campaign is not focused on aquatic adventuring, the following favored classes are recommended.

Shore merfolk: Bard
 Shelf merfolk: Fighter
 Deep merfolk: Barbarian

MIREFOLK

A few groups of merfolk have moved inland, dwelling in deep swamps and mires. Often, these areas were once connected to the open sea, such as a swampy river delta, but have since become landlocked. Mirefolk are statistically identical to merfolk, except that their vision and hearing are as well adapted to air as to water. Culturally, mirefolk tend to be very primitive, dwelling in crude underwater huts very much like beaver lodges. They hunt and fish throughout their swamps, and some practice simple forms of aquaculture. A few groups of mirefolk have managed to create more advanced civilizations, and humans may be surprised to find that beneath the still waters of a seemingly uninhabited swamp, an entire city awaits.

Mirefolk may shun all human contact, may be at war with humans encroaching on their territories, or may have mutually beneficial arrangements with humans and other races. They tend to always be in conflict with lizardfolk, troglodytes, and other evil swamp-dwellers.

HALF-MERROW

Merrow are brutal aquatic ogres who have no social organization beyond tribal bands and raiding parties, with most foregoing even that to live in isolated family units. Some, however, are cunning and self-controlled enough to find roles in the more violent sectors of undersea civilization, and from those few (and from the

consequences of war and raiding) come the race of half-merrow. Stupid, ugly, and very strong, they fulfill a valuable role in the often-violent realms below the waves.

Personality: While exceptions exist, the average half-merrow is a brute, skilled at violence and little else. Some choose to become champions of the weak, using their might to destroy those who would harm others. Most, shaped by prejudice and harsh treatment, become thugs and bullies. Those few who choose more intellectual pursuits still know they have their strength to fall back on, and this tends to shape their worldview and philosophy. While their raw intelligence is often suspect, their willpower and perception can be as strong as anyone's, and half-merrow sometimes find themselves serving divine powers—most often dark ones, but occasionally those of a more benign nature.

Physical Description: Half-merrow are similar to their merrow parent in general build and outline, but softened a bit by their merfolk blood. Their faces are slightly less brutish, their frames and musculature somewhat more refined and graceful. They stand seven- to eight-feet tall, and their hair tends to be black, brown, or gray, and very coarse. They are often scarred by countless battles, and bear disfigurements and poorly set bones as marks of pride. About 15 percent of half-merrow have the fish tail of their merfolk parent; the rest retain their merrow parent's bipedal stance (see Racial Traits) A player choosing the half-merrow race may pick either one.

Relations: Half-merrow are generally outcasts and have few close allies. Reef and kelp elves both look on them as barely-sentient brutes. Merfolk consider them useful but dangerous. Tritons tend to see them as likely allies of the sahuagin and respond as such. An individual half-merrow can prove his or her merit to any of these races, but it takes time and effort.

Alignment: Any, though most tend to be chaotic and usually neutral or evil.

Half-Merrow Lands: Half-merrow dwell wherever merfolk or merrow are likely to come into contact. This includes areas near river mouths, or close to shore, or other places where merfolk and humans are likely to congregate, since such places lure merrow raiders.

Religion: Half-merrow worship whatever gods they were raised to worship, or seek out deities of power and strength who are not too picky about followers. Ogre gods are usually willing to accept half-merrow supplicants and clerics.

Languages: Half-merrow speak Aquan and often learn Merrow. Those who deal with the flatlands often speak Ogre as well.

Adventurers: Half-merrow adventure for a variety of reasons. Many simply like to fight, finding pleasure in the act of conflict itself, without regard for reason or purpose. Others seek power, most often wielded crudely and for little long-term gain. Some seek to overcome their heritage and become heroes, battling the actions of the evil and prejudices of the good with equal vigor. A few are driven on a more personal quest to find their places in the world, trying to balance their conflicting legacies.

Most half-merrow are barbarians, at least in part. Rangers are uncommon but not unknown, and a sizeable minority of half-merrow is disciplined enough to learn the skills of a fighter. Druids are also found, with the raw power of the race helping them to serve as a living incarnation of the fury of nature. Their low Dexterity makes them relatively poor thieves, but some find the more direct aspects of the rogue's way to their tastes. Those of good wisdom who dwell in more civilized parts of Underwave may become clerics, often supplementing this with a fighting class to become ardent and deadly warriors for their chosen faith. Half-merrow sorcerers are rare. Half-merrow wizards are more rare still, as are monks and bards. The half-merrow who has no levels as a barbarian or a fighter is very unusual; most half-merrow begin in one of these classes and change as their adventuring life opens new roads for them. Still, there is no rule mandating that it must be this way.

Names: Half-merrow may adopt merfolk names or may choose merrow names, which tend to be two syllables and crude, such as Riggluch, Gorbarg, and Blegrech. A small minority finds the simple humor of ironic nicknames to their liking, taking the name Tiny or Minnow.

HALF-MERROW RACIAL TRAITS

- +4 Strength, +2 Constitution, -2 Intelligence, -2 Dexterity, -4 Charisma: Half-merrow are strong and hardy, but their ogre heritage makes them dull, clumsy, and crude.
- Medium-size: As Medium-size creatures, half-merrow have no special bonuses or penalties due to their size.
- Half-merrow base speed is 40 feet swimming and 30 feet on land. If they have the merfolk fishtail, their swimming speed is 50 feet and their speed on land is 5 feet.
- Low-Light Vision: Half-merrow see four times as far as a human in the dim murk beneath the waves.
- Imposing Demeanor: Half-merrow may use Strength, rather than Charisma, as the ability modifier for Intimidate, and Intimidate is always considered a class skill for them.
- Swim is always a class skill for half-merrow.
- Half-merrow receive a +6 racial bonus on Swim checks if they are non-tailed, and a +8 racial bonus on Swim checks if they are tailed.
- Natural Armor: Half-merrow skin is very thick, giving them a +1 natural bonus to AC.
- Clumsy: Half-merrow fingers are thick and blunt, giving them a -2 circumstance penalty on any fine manipulation skills, such as Pick Pockets or Disable Device.
- Oversize: While not quite Large creatures, half-merrow are at the very upper end of Medium-size and must pay 20 percent more for armor and clothing.
- Amphibious: Half-merrow without a fish tail are capable of breathing air, though they prefer water. They suffer a -1 circumstance penalty on all rolls—skill and ability checks, attack rolls, damage rolls, saving throws, etc.—when out of water more than two hours.
- Automatic Languages: Aquan.
- Favored Class: Barbarian. A multiclass half-merrow's barbarian class does not count when determining whether he suffers an XP

penalty. Half-merrow are creatures of the undersea wilderness, and the lust for battle runs hot in their veins.

AQUATIC ELVES

While most intelligent beings adapt their environment to themselves, elves have always sought to meet nature halfway, changing their physiology and culture to best meld with the lands in which they live. This is true beneath the waves as well as on the surface. Adapted to an underwater life, sea elves have further split into two sub-races: coral elves and kelp elves. Both are similar to each other, as well as to standard surface elves, but there are important distinctions.

Personality: Like most other types of elves, aquatic elves favor individual freedom over structure, though coral elves are somewhat more organized than kelp elves. With extraordinarily long lives and the vastness of the undersea to explore, aquatic elves are even more predisposed to exploration and experimentation than their land-bound relatives. Individuals often leave their community for 20 years or more, experiencing life in all of its variety, then return to tell what they have seen. The slow pace of change underwater fits the patient elven outlook on life perfectly.

Physical Description: Aquatic elves are the same height and weight as surface elves, and have nearly identical body types. The main differences are in skin and hair coloring. Kelp elves have skin that ranges in color from pale to deep green, and translucent emerald hair. Coral elves' skin color ranges from blue-green to green, and they have pale white or blonde hair. All aquatic elves have delicate webbing between their fingers. Coral elves dress in clothing of brightly colored fish hide and shells, while kelp elves prefer clothing woven of treated seaweeds. Both live to be about 700 years old, reaching maturity at around 110.

The ears of aquatic elves, while retaining the distinctive elven taper, are somewhat smaller than those of surface elves and can be folded flat against the head to reduce drag while swimming. Aquatic elf eyes, in turn, are slightly larger than those of the surface elves, and are usually gold, green, or gray.

Relations: Aquatic elves tend to get along well with shore-dwelling surface elves. They react moderately well to human sailors and fisherfolk who treat their lands with respect and do not despoil the seas. They view half-merrow as barely controlled animals. They are tolerant of merfolk, but often find themselves competing for living space.

Alignment: Aquatic elves are almost all chaotic good in nature, though coral elves tend to lean slightly more toward neutral good, seeing some value in order. If there is a flaw in the aquatic elf personality, it is their overwhelming curiosity and desire for new personal experiences, which sometimes causes them to ignore the needs of others—or on rare occasion, inflict harm—in the pursuit of some new sensation, sight, or knowledge. Aquatic elves who turn wholly to evil almost invariably do so as a consequence of this all-consuming curiosity.

Aquatic Elf Lands: Coral elves dwell in fantastic castles shaped from naturally occurring coral reefs, which are usually found in the tropical waters of the world. Over centuries, their artisans and magicians work to slowly transform the reef into a city. The reef provides them with food, shelter, and many other resources, and they protect the reef ecosystem and the sea around it. Kelp elves are nomads of the kelp beds, ranging from near shore to the vast floating mats of the deep sea, and tend to have little in the way of permanently anchored construction.

Religion: Both coral and kelp elves worship the elven sea god described in core rules (MM 86), along with a broad pantheon of specialized underwater deities such as Merellion Corvathian, deity of explorers, and Nellior Makarail, the master of the currents.

Language: Aquatic elves speak an Aquan dialect of Elven, which is comprehensible to surface elves but which they have difficulty pronouncing. As with most aquatic races, writing is generally unimportant, but they do maintain a simplified version of Elven script that is easily carved into stone when permanent written records are required.

Names: Other than a tendency to use aquatic elements in their family names, aquatic elves follow the same naming conventions as surface elves.



Adventurers: Aquatic elves do not so much take up adventuring as a profession as simply find adventure happening to them as a consequence of their curious natures. Nearly all aquatic elves experience a powerful wanderlust in their second century of life and take on whatever roles seem to satisfy that need. Many study the arcane arts and become wizards, while some find they have the gift of sorcery. Bards and rogues are very common, as are rangers. Pure pursuit of the fighting arts is uncommon, but many who dwell in the wilder parts under the sea may have gained a level or two of fighter. Barbarians are very rare, but certain bands of kelp elves have been reduced to this state, and even a few coral elf civilizations have collapsed, causing the once-proud castle builders to live as savages in the ruins of their ancestor's homes.

AQUATIC ELF RACIAL TRAITS

- +2 Dexterity, –2 Constitution: Like their land-dwelling kin, sea elves are graceful but frail.
- Medium-size: As Medium-size creatures, elves have no special bonuses or penalties due to their size.



REEF WARRIOR

Coral elves, as their name indicates, are closely bound to the reefs within which they live. A few, however, take this bond to an extreme. As a coral reef is a symbiotic community of many different species, reef warriors seek to become part of this community, entering into a strange relationship with the coral. They become devoted defenders of their community, and they are also bound to it in perpetuity.

The reef warrior is an oddity. Once he embarks on this path,

he begins to change, becoming progressively more alien. Coral elves honor and respect the reef warriors among them, but they also fear them. Their ability to vanish into the reef or to appear anywhere in a city at will can be unnerving even to a placid elf. Reef warriors are prone to making odd comments and strange pronouncements, their minds attuned to perceptions of which others cannot conceive. The existence of reef warriors is not discussed among non-elves, which is one reason sahuagin believe ghosts patrol coral elf castles.

This class is not suitable for PCs in most campaigns, but it may be used by DMs to create truly unique, alien, and memorable denizens of the deep.

Hit Die: d10.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a coral elf reef warrior, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Race: Coral elf.

Alignment: Neutral, lawful neutral, or neutral good.

Base Attack Bonus: +5.

Feats: Skill Focus (Swim).

Hide: 4 ranks.

Swim: 6 ranks.

Special: If a reef warrior travels more than 10 miles from his native reef, he takes 1d3 points of temporary Constitution damage per day until he returns. His bond to the reef is so great that he cannot leave it.

- Aquatic elves' base speed on land is 30 feet, and their base swimming speed is 40 feet.
- Gills: Aquatic elves can survive out of water for one hour per point of Constitution. After that, they begin to suffocate (DMG 88).
- Low-Light Vision: Coral elves can see four times as far as a human in conditions of dim light. Kelp elves can see five times as far.
- Coral elves are automatically proficient with the light crossbow and short spear. Kelp elves are automatically proficient with the short spear and net.
- Immunity to magic *sleep* spells and effects.
- +2 racial bonus on Will saves versus enchantment/charm spells and effects.
- +2 racial bonus on Search, Spot, and Listen checks
- +8 racial bonus on Swim checks
- Swim is always a class skill for aquatic elves.
- Favored Class: Wizard (coral elf); ranger (kelp elf). A multiclass coral elf's wizard class and kelp elf's ranger class do not count when determining whether the character suffers an XP penalty for multiclassing. As with the surface elves, wizardry comes naturally to the civilized coral elves, and kelp elves are often drawn to the ranger's role as a wandering protector.

THE REEF WARRIOR

Class Level	Base				Special
	Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	
1	+1	+2	+0	+2	Reef bonding
2	+2	+3	+0	+3	Coral skin +1
3	+3	+3	+1	+3	Sustenance, bonus feat
4	+4	+4	+1	+4	Coral skin +2, alien presence -1
5	+5	+4	+1	+4	Meld, reef attunement
6	+6	+5	+2	+5	Coral skin +3, bonus feat, alien presence -2
7	+7	+5	+2	+5	Spikes
8	+8	+6	+2	+6	Coral skin +4, alien presence -3
9	+9	+6	+3	+6	Bonus feat
10	+10	+7	+3	+7	Coral skin +5, reefwalking, alien presence -4

CLASS SKILLS

The reef warrior's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Heal (Wis), Hide (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Listen (Wis), Scry (Int), Search (Int), Spot (Wis), and Swim (Str).

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the reef warrior prestige class.

Reef Bonding: At 1st level, the character has allowed many of the organisms that compose his home reef to meld and enter into a symbiotic relationship with him. The character gains a +2 competence bonus on Search, Spot, Wilderness Lore, Move Silently, and Hide checks when within 500 feet of the reef.

Coral Skin: A light growth of stony coral covers the character's skin, giving him a +1 natural bonus to Armor Class. This increases to +2 at 4th level, +3 at 6th level, +4 at 8th level, and +5 at 10th level.

Sustenance (Ex): At 3rd level, as long as the character is in water where there is ample life (near the shore and the surface), he can obtain nutrition from the countless tiny organisms that fill the water and feed the coral. He no longer needs to eat; his symbiotes sustain him.

Alien Presence (Ex): As the coral symbiotes continue to grow in a reef warrior's body, he

becomes more distant and strange. His senses become attuned to odd things; his mind becomes slowly less his own and more the mind of a collective. At 4th level, this results in a -1 penalty to Charisma, and this penalty increases to -2 at 6th level, -3 at 8th level, and -4 at 10th level.

Meld (Su): If the reef warrior takes a full-round action, he can literally meld into the reef, becoming effectively invisible and appearing as just an odd-shaped outcropping. A Spot check (DC 25) is needed to notice him. Combined with sustenance, this means a reef warrior can guard a room or corridor indefinitely, simply appearing out of the wall when invaders approach. The reef warrior can do this a number of times per day equal to his Constitution bonus.

Reef Attunement (Su): With a successful Scry (DC 15) check, the reef warrior can "tune in" any part of the reef, perceiving events as if he were standing at the point to which he is attuned. The attunement lasts for a number of minutes equal to the reef warrior's class levels, and can be done a number of times per day equal to the reef warrior's Wisdom bonus.

Bonus Feat: At 3rd level and every three levels thereafter the reef warrior may choose a bonus feat from the fighter's list of bonus feats.

Spikes (Su): The reef warrior may cause sharp coral spikes to grow out of his flesh. Any armor he wears must be specially designed to accommodate this, increasing the base cost of the armor by 50 percent. If the

reef warrior makes a successful grapple attack, the spikes deal 2d6 points of piercing damage. The reef warrior can also form the equivalent of a halbspear at will, so he is always armed.

Reefwalking (Sp): At 10th level, the reef warrior can *teleport* from one part of the reef to another. This is a standard action and the reef warrior can use this ability a number of times per day equal to his Wisdom modifier.

SKILLS

This section presents new rules for using existing skills underwater, as well as new skills of special importance for aquatic campaigns. All text in this section is designated as **Open Game Content**.

SKILL USE UNDERWATER

The underwater environment changes the way some skills work. This section details what changes, if any, apply to skills. Any skill not listed works normally underwater. This section is written from the perspective of land-based characters acting underwater, unless otherwise noted. For example, musical instruments that rely on air to produce noise will not work underwater whether the character using Perform is a dwarf or a merfolk—but the merfolk have created suitable instruments for underwater use and are skilled with them.

ALCHEMY

Alchemy as practiced by land dwellers is virtually useless underwater because the techniques of distillation, mixing, etc., were all developed on dry land. However, the denizens of Underwave have a counterpart skill called Underwater Alchemy (see New Skills) that differs greatly in technique but produces identical results. This skill must be learned separately from normal Alchemy, but characters with at least 5 ranks in Alchemy can gain a +2 synergy bonus on Underwater Alchemy checks.

GAME EFFECTS

- The standard Alchemy skill cannot be used underwater, but 5 or more ranks in Alchemy grants a +2 synergy bonus on Underwater Alchemy checks.

CLIMB

Your character's ability to climb underwater depends on his buoyancy (see Combat, page 49, for more information). Floating characters have an easier time climbing up, but experience more difficulty climbing down. They may also have trouble climbing surfaces that are not vertical but merely sloped: Because they are buoyant, there is a chance they will drift away from the surface they are climbing. Of course, a floating character who fails a Climb check floats upward and can easily swim back to where he was climbing and try again. In most cases, sinking characters climb normally.

GAME EFFECTS

- Climbing Up, Floating: DC -3
- Climbing Down, Floating: DC +1
- Horizontal/Sloped Climbing, Floating: DC +1
- Sinking or Balanced: no effect

CRAFT

This is a broad skill. Some crafts, such as blacksmithing, simply do not work underwater; others, such as weaving, must be relearned due to new materials and techniques, while still others, such as carving, work much as they do on the surface. The DM must rule on each craft, categorizing them as needed.

GAME EFFECTS

- Craft cannot be used underwater: all skill checks fail
- Craft has different techniques underwater: all DCs increased by 3-5 until a minimum of 1 rank has been gained while having the opportunity to learn underwater techniques
- Craft can be used normally underwater: no effect

DISABLE DEVICE

The effects of water on vision are described on page 45; Disable Device is one of the skills affected.

GAME EFFECTS

- All skill checks are at -2 unless the character's eyes or visual organs are protected. If a character has gained 1 rank in this skill while having the opportunity to practice it underwater, this penalty is negated.



DISGUISE

Disguises that rely on hairpieces, makeup, and other props may fail underwater, since the components are unlikely to be designed for long-term immersion. The DM must rule on whether or not a particular disguise attempt is likely to involve such components. A waterproof disguise kit is available (see Equipment, page 24).

INTUIT DIRECTION

This skill is difficult to use underwater, as the subtle cues used to sense location are unavailable beneath the surface. Gut instinct is all that is left. It is extremely easy to get lost in the vast emptiness of the sea.

GAME EFFECTS

- All skill checks are at -5 unless the character has gained 2 ranks in this skill while having the opportunity to practice it underwater.

JUMP

In most cases, a Swim check is all that is needed. If the character needs to leap to grab a falling object, being a good swimmer is a benefit.

GAME EFFECTS

- 5 or more ranks in Swim grants a $+2$ synergy bonus.
- Characters who are floating (see buoyancy, page 49) continue to drift in the direction of the jump for one to six feet before stopping.
- Characters may not make running jumps.

LISTEN

Sound travels far underwater but is also easily distorted. Thus, it is easier to detect the presence of a sound, but harder to detect exactly what it is or where it came from.

GAME EFFECTS

- Characters gain a $+4$ circumstance bonus on Listen checks to hear or detect sounds, but suffer a -4 circumstance penalty to identify them or locate their source.

MOVE SILENTLY

Move Silently checks are made normally underwater. However, opposed checks follow the rules listed for Listen checks, above.

OPEN LOCK

Underwater environments interfere with clear vision and present a challenge to fine manipulation and dexterity.

GAME EFFECTS

- Characters suffer a –2 circumstance penalty on all checks unless the character's eyes or visual organs are protected from the water.

PERFORM

Many tasks covered by this skill are impossible underwater. Instruments relying on the flow of air do not function at all; most stringed instruments are likewise useless. Percussion instruments may function at the DM's discretion. To juggle buoyant objects, the performer must toss them down and then catch them as they come up—a neat trick if one can manage it. Storytelling and the like work normally if the character can speak underwater.

GAME EFFECTS

- Most instruments do not function unless the DM rules otherwise.
- Characters suffer a –2 circumstance penalty on Perform checks to juggle non-buoyant objects and a –4 penalty on Perform checks to juggle buoyant objects using the technique described previously.

PICK POCKET

Once again, the underwater environment imposes a number of small hindrances on this skill: You float, your mark floats, random currents can jostle either unpredictably, and so on.

GAME EFFECTS

- Characters suffer a –2 circumstance penalty on all skill checks unless the character has gained 1 rank in the skill while having a chance to practice underwater.

READ LIPS

This is another skill affected by the poor visibility underwater.

GAME EFFECTS

- The maximum range of this skill is 15 feet while the subject is underwater.

RIDE

Most underwater creatures are considered “very different” mounts for purposes of this skill, unless the character has specifically trained to ride them.

GAME EFFECTS

- Characters receive a –5 penalty for riding an underwater creature, unless the creature is the character's chosen mount.

SEARCH

Search is impacted by the poor visibility underwater.

GAME EFFECTS

- All ranges relating to vision are halved underwater. The character must be within 5 feet of the object he wishes to search.

SPOT

Spot is impacted by the poor visibility underwater.

GAME EFFECTS

- All ranges relating to vision are halved underwater, so all Spot checks suffer a –1 circumstance penalty for every 5 feet of distance.

TUMBLE

Tumble can be used to perform aquatic acrobatics but requires some care due to the exotic environment.

GAME EFFECTS

- 5 or more ranks in Swim grants a +2 synergy bonus on Tumble checks. However, failure by more than 5 means the character has become disoriented and floats off in a random direction for 2d10 feet before reorienting. A character with no ranks in Swim suffers a –2 circumstance penalty on Tumble checks underwater.

WILDERNESS LORE

Knowledge learned in the surface world is less useful underwater. Unless characters have made a special study of underwater survival, their skill is significantly reduced.

GAME EFFECTS

- All Wilderness Lore checks suffer a -4 circumstance penalty until the character has gained 2 ranks in the skill while having the opportunity to use it underwater.

SKILL VARIANT

ALCHEMY, UNDERWATER (INT; TRAINED ONLY)

This is an underwater variant of the Alchemy skill. Members of aquatic races or those with prolonged experience underwater may learn it. Any character who has Alchemy as a class skill also has Underwater Alchemy as a class skill.

Check: The character can make alchemical items underwater, using the fireless and airless techniques developed by seaborne races. Some items the character can make are found in the item descriptions. To determine how much time and material it takes to make an alchemical item, use the DCs listed below and the rules for crafting items found in the Craft skill description (PHB 65).

The DM may allow an alchemist to perform other tasks related to Alchemy, such as identifying an unknown substance or a poison. Doing so takes one hour.

Task	DC
Make kelp armor	DC 15
Make glowmold catalyst	DC 20
Make acid bulb	DC 25
Make jellyfish paste	DC 23

Retry: Yes, but in the case of making items, each failure ruins the half of the raw materials needed, and the character has to buy the necessary raw materials again. For identifying substances or potions, each failure consumes the cost per attempt.

Special: The character must have alchemical equipment to make an item or identify it. For identifying items, the cost represents additional supplies the character must buy. Purchasing and maintaining an alchemist's lab grants a +2 circumstance bonus on Alchemy checks but does not affect the cost of any items made using the skill.

FEATS

This section presents rules for resolving the use of feats in aquatic environments. It also presents a selection of new feats uniquely suited for aquatic campaigns. All text in this section is designated as **Open Game Content**.

EXISTING FEATS

Most feats work properly underwater. This section provides guidelines for those that work differently in underwater environments.

Armor Proficiency: To use aquatic armors properly, a character must gain the Aquatic Armor Proficiency feat (see page 18).

Deflect Arrows: Against arrows fired from normal (surface) bows and crossbows, the base DC is only 15, as such missiles are not designed for underwater use. Against arrows fired from crossbows built by aquatic races, the normal rules apply.

Far Shot: Remember to apply the range reduction for weapons fired underwater before applying the effects of this feat.

Mobility: If using the optional positional advantage rules (see page 48), defending characters with Mobility gain a +4 competence bonus on their Swim checks for the opposed check.

Point Blank Shot: Due to the problems with both missile weapons and vision underwater, this feat is only useful within 15 feet. This reduced range does not apply if the character does not suffer from visibility problems *and* if the character is using a missile weapon designed for underwater use.

Track: Tracking is very difficult underwater; swimming creatures leave no discernable trace unless exotic senses or magic are at work. Unless the creature being tracked left signs of passage along the sea floor, or otherwise encountered some material that could be affected by its passage, all DCs are increased by 20 in addition to all other modifiers.



NEW FEATS

AMPHIBIOUS ENDURANCE [GENERAL]

You have steeled your body to the rigors of life on land and learned how to breathe air for longer periods than is normal for your race.

Benefit: Water-breathing creatures can survive out of water for two hours per point of Constitution, after which the effects of suffocation begin (DMG 88).

Normal: Water-breathing characters without this feat should refer to their racial description to determine how long they can remain on land without suffocating.

Special: Must be a member of a water-breathing race, such as aquatic elves or sahuagin.

AQUATIC ARMOR PROFICIENCY [GENERAL]

You are proficient with all types of aquatic armor.

Benefit: Normally, a surface-dwelling character is not proficient in any type of aquatic armor (see Equipment, page 24). However, taking this feat allows the character to be proficient in any type of aquatic armor for which he has a corresponding proficiency. In other words, if the character is proficient with light and medium armor, taking this feat allows him to use light aquatic and medium aquatic armor normally. This feat needs to be taken only once, regardless of how many types of armor the character is proficient with. This feat applies only to surface dwellers. If aquatic characters need to learn to use flatlander armor, they may take a corresponding feat called Surface Armor Proficiency.

BARROOM BRAWLER [GENERAL]

You can dish it out and take it in a tavern fight.

Prerequisites: Con 13+, Toughness.

Benefit: You gain +4 hit points for the purposes of defending against subdual damage (PHB 134). In addition, your unarmed attacks do 1d4 points of subdual damage plus your Strength modifier (1d3 for Small creatures).

Special: A character may not take this feat more than once.

CAST-IRON STOMACH [GENERAL]

You can consume the most unpleasant fare without so much as a second thought.

Prerequisite: Con 13+.

Benefits: You derive nourishment from spoiled food and can avoid dehydration by drinking seawater with few ill effects. By subsisting on these unusual provisions, you double the amount of time you can go without fresh food and water.

Normal: A character without this feat can go without food for three days, after which time he must make a Constitution check (DC 10, +1 for each previous check) or take 1d6 points of subdual damage. A character without this feat can go without fresh water for one day plus a number of hours equal to his Constitution score, after which he must make Constitution checks as described above, with similar effects for failed checks.

Special: For this feat to take effect, you must have access to formerly edible foods and a supply of salt water. Otherwise, you are just as vulnerable to starvation and dehydration as any other character.

CHILD OF THE SEA [GENERAL]

The blood of an intelligent aquatic creature flows through your veins.

Benefit: At some point in the near or distant past, you had an ancestor who was a member of an aquatic species. This gives you a greater ability to hold your breath. For every five points of Constitution, you may hold your breath for one hour before having to surface for air.

Special: A character may only gain this feat at 1st level.

CREATE MANIKIN [ITEM CREATION]

You can create a manikin—a small representation of a living person—through which you can direct spells that affect the person the manikin represents.

Prerequisite: Spellcaster level 12+.

Benefit: A manikin serves as a focus for the transmission of spells against a target not currently within the spell's range. To use it, you must collect objects and items connected to the person you wish the manikin to represent. These items must be either parts of the person (hair, teeth, nails, etc.) or something they have worn or held for many years. These objects and items are then placed into a tiny effigy that takes 1 day for each level of the person the manikin represents, as well 2,000 gp for each level. Once created, activating the manikin costs 1/25 of this cost in XP.

A newly created manikin is good for 10 uses, after which it becomes useless. The manikin can be reactivated by spending half its cost in gp and XP. Doing so takes half the time it took to create it, during which the creator must meditate upon it and visualize the person in whose image it has been made. Afterward, the manikin is again active and possesses 10 more uses.

Any spell may be cast upon an active manikin. Provided the target is on the same plane as the manikin and is not protected by spells such as *antimagic field* or the like, he undergoes the full effects of the spell cast upon the manikin. Of course, the person gets the usual saving throw and spell resistance checks to avoid the spell's effects. Any spell cast on the manikin that would normally have an area of effect greater than a single target is limited to affecting only the person in whose image the manikin is made. Thus, a *fireball* cast upon the manikin would deal damage only against that person and not anyone who would normally be within the area of effect of the *fireball*.

The manikin is a magical item and appears as such under *detect magic* and similar spells. It is unaffected by the spells cast upon it. However, it is susceptible to damage by spells and physical attacks directed at it by others, including the caster's allies. For this purpose, the manikin is considered to have 0 hardness and 5 hit points.

Special: The secret of manikin creation is rare and often limited to secretive cults and religions. The DM may wish to restrict this feat to characters who have made friendly contacts with these groups.

ENDURANCE SWIMMER [GENERAL]

You are very adept at swimming while carrying a heavier-than-normal load.

Prerequisites: Str 13+, Endurance.

Benefit: You suffer a -1 penalty on Swim checks for every 20 pounds of armor and equipment you carry, up to your maximum load.

Normal: Characters without this feat suffer a -1 penalty on Swim checks for every five pounds of armor and equipment carried while swimming.

FOOL'S LUCK [GENERAL]

You have an innate ability to turn bad situations to your advantage.

Benefits: Once per day, you may choose to ignore the effects of a failed roll of any sort (attack roll, saving throw, skill check) and convert it into a success, provided you can explain how what at first appeared to be a failure was, in fact, a success. For example, you make a swing in a crowded cabin on a ship and fail to hit the evil buccaneer that threatens your life. You choose to invoke Fool's Luck and explain that you did not actually miss the buccaneer. Instead, you were taking advantage of the close quarters to initiate a feint, which you then followed up with a quick attack at close range when the buccaneer moved in to strike you. If the DM agrees to this explanation, you may roll normal damage against the buccaneer, as if he had been hit in the first place. The DM should give wide latitude for explanations to invoke this feat, but he is under no obligation to accept any given explanation, especially if he feels it is outlandish or implausible.

Special: You may take this feat more than once. Each subsequent acquisition of the feat increases the number of times it may be used each day by one.

GREAT LUNGS [GENERAL]

You can hold your breath longer than the average person.

Prerequisites: Con 13+, Endurance.

Benefit: You can hold your breath for a

number of rounds equal to four times your Constitution score.

Normal: Characters lacking this feat can hold their breath for a number of rounds equal to only twice their Constitution score.

IMPROVED POSITIONAL ADVANTAGE [GENERAL]

You are highly skilled at combat maneuvering underwater.

Prerequisite: Swim skill, base attack bonus +4 or higher.

Benefit: You may attempt to gain positional advantage (see Combat, page 48) against more than one opponent simultaneously. Each time this feat is chosen, you increase the number of melee opponents you can attempt to maneuver around by 1. You make a single Swim check with a -2 circumstance penalty for each additional opponent, while all of your opponents make separate checks. The results are applied independently; thus, you might end up gaining a significant edge on one foe while inviting an attack of opportunity from another.

LOOKOUT [GENERAL]

You are capable of spotting creatures, vessels, and other objects from a great distance, provided you have an elevated position from which to survey your surroundings.

Benefit: For every five feet of elevation above the terrain you are observing, you triple the distance you can see without penalty to your Spot checks. For example, if you were standing in a 10-foot-tall crow's nest, you could see up to 60 feet without penalty, or up 120 feet at -1, up to 240 feet at -2, and so on.

Normal: Characters who lack this feat incur a -1 penalty for every 10 feet of distance between themselves and the creature or object they are attempting to spot.

NAVAL HERITAGE [GENERAL]

You come from a family with a proud tradition of service aboard seagoing vessels.

Benefit: You receive a +2 circumstance bonus on Charisma ability checks and Charisma-based skill checks when dealing with other characters who also possess this feat. In addition, you gain a +2 circumstance bonus on skill

checks relating to naval operations and information, as you spent your formative years aboard seagoing vessels.

Special: A character may only take this feat at 1st level.

NOTORIOUS [GENERAL]

You are well known as a dangerous cutthroat not to be trifled with.

Benefit: You get a +4 bonus on all Intimidate checks when dealing with someone who has had occasion to hear of your infamous deeds and unpleasant demeanor.

Special: A character cannot take this feat more than once.

PARRY [GENERAL]

You can deflect a melee attack against you with your own weapon.

Prerequisites: Dex 13+, base attack bonus +3 or higher, Expertise.

Benefit: On your action, you may choose to hold one or more of your normal attacks until an opponent attacks. The opponent rolls his attack normally to determine if he hits. If he succeeds, you may then make an opposed attack roll against a DC equal to your opponent's final attack result. If you succeed, you have parried the blow and struck your opponent's weapon (PHB 136). Using parry does not provoke an attack of opportunity. If, at the end of the round, you have any unused parry actions, they are lost and may not be transferred to the next round.

Normal: Characters who do not possess this feat may not attempt to parry.

PARRYING WEAPON [GENERAL]

You can use an off-hand weapon as if it were a shield.

Prerequisite: Two-Weapon Fighting.

Benefit: When wielding a weapon in your off-hand that is at least one size category smaller than you are, you can defend yourself with the weapon as if it were a buckler. No armor check penalty applies, but normal arcane spell failure does. You cannot use the weapon to both attack



and defend in the same melee round.

POLAR BEAR SKIN [GENERAL]

Your skin is better able to withstand the effects of extremely cold water than an average person's.

Benefit: You take only one point of subdual damage from hypothermia per minute of exposure to very cold water.

Normal: Characters without this feat take 1d6 points of subdual damage per minute immersed in very cold water.

PORT SAVVY [GENERAL]

You know all the ins and outs of life in the seedy ports of call that sailors use as stopover points in their journeys.

Benefit: You get a +4 bonus on all Gather Information checks when used in a seaside port city.

PRESSURE SURVIVAL [GENERAL]

You are extremely tolerant to the pressures of the deep.

Prerequisite: Swim skill.

Benefit: You get a +4 circumstance bonus on all Fortitude saves to resist the harmful effects of pressure.

RIPOSTE [GENERAL]

You may attempt to turn a successful parry into an additional attack against your opponent.

Prerequisites: Base attack bonus +6 or higher, Parry.

Benefit: If you made a successful parry this round, you may make a free melee attack against the opponent you parried. The attack is at your highest attack bonus and all normal modifiers apply. No matter how many parries you have made, you may make no more than one riposte per round, unless you are affected by magic items or spells that increase the number of actions you may make in a round, such as *haste* or *boots of speed*.

ROPE CLIMBER [GENERAL]

You are as comfortable climbing ropes and rigging as you are walking on the ground.

Prerequisite: Dex 13+.

Benefit: You gain a +2 circumstance bonus on all Balance and Climb skill checks so long as ropes and rigging are involved. Thus, making your way up to a crow's nest would qualify for the bonus, but climbing a sheer rock cliff would not. In addition, if you are attacked while climbing a rope or rigging, you may choose to negate either the attacker's +2 bonus or the loss of your Dexterity bonus to AC, but not both (PHB 64).

SEA BROTHER [GENERAL]

An intelligent aquatic race considers you a friend and is well disposed toward requests you make of them.

Benefit: You gain a +4 bonus on all Charisma ability checks and Charisma-based skill checks when dealing with a chosen aquatic race.

Special: A character may take this feat multiple times, although he must choose a different aquatic race each time.

SEA DOG [GENERAL]

You have a knack for endeavors relating to sea travel.

Benefit: You get a +2 circumstance bonus on all Profession (sailor) and Use Rope skill checks.

SCURVY DOG [GENERAL]

Your body is accustomed to unhealthy conditions and resists disease better than people who live in less-squalid environments.

Prerequisite: Con 13+.

Benefit: You gain a +4 bonus on all saving throws against disease, whether to prevent infection, prevent each instance of repeated damage, or to recover from disease.

SHANTY MAN [GENERAL]

You are very familiar with the songs of the sea and can sing them with such zest and aplomb as to gain the confidence of sailors everywhere.

Prerequisite: Perform skill.

Benefit: You get a +2 circumstance bonus on Perform checks before an audience composed largely of sailors and other sea travelers. A successful performance grants you a +2 circumstance bonus on Charisma checks, as well as Bluff and Diplomacy checks, when dealing with someone who heard your performance.

SHOREWALKER [GENERAL]

You are an experienced traveler in the surface world.

Prerequisites: Member of a native aquatic race.

Benefit: You have trained in combat on land as well as underwater and have learned to use your senses properly when venturing into the flatlands. This has the following effects:

- You suffer no Spot, Search, or Listen penalties when on land.
- You do not suffer the -1 circumstance penalties on attack rolls and Armor Class.
- You suffer only a -2 circumstance penalty on Jump and Tumble checks when on land.

The problems with aquatic armor on land cannot be overcome by skill or training; this is why land dwellers rarely see armored sea folk on dry land.

STORM SENSE [GENERAL]

You are so finely attuned to changes in temperature, wind, and air pressure that you can reliably predict the onset of storms and other weather.

Benefit: By taking just a few moments to study your surroundings, you can tell if a storm of any sort will affect your current location within the next three hours. For the purposes of this feat, “storm” includes rain showers, thunderstorms, hurricanes, and any other weather phenomena that are accompanied by high winds or precipitation (rain, snow, sleet, etc.). Storm sense can also predict the arrival of magical effects and creatures that mimic storms if those effects are already active at the time the character studies his surroundings for signs of their approach.

SWING-BY ATTACK [GENERAL]

You can swing from a rope past a foe and attack at the same time.

Prerequisite: Climb skill, Rope Climber.

Benefit: When you are swinging from a rope and use the charge action, you may move and attack as with a standard charge and then move again (continuing the straight line of the charge). Your total movement for the swing-by attack cannot exceed the total allowed for the swinging charge. You do not provoke an attack of opportunity from the opponent that you attack.

Limit: The benefit is lost if you are in armor heavier than light armor or you are carrying a heavy load.

TAIL SLAM [GENERAL]

You are trained to use your powerful tail and flukes as a weapon.

Prerequisite: Merfolk or tailed half-merrow only.

Benefit: You may make a powerful sweep with your tail to slam opponents backward. The opponent must be within 10 feet of you, and

there must not be anyone directly between you and the target. You and the defender make opposed Strength checks. You gain a +4 bonus for each size category greater than Medium-size or a -4 penalty for each size category below Medium-size. The defender gets a +4 circumstance bonus if he has more than 10 ranks in Swim. If the defender loses the Strength check, he is shoved back 5 feet, provoking an attack of opportunity if he enters another character’s threatened area.

You do not need to move to use the Tail Slam. In many cases, your tail never actually touches your opponent, as the maneuver creates a powerful surge of water that can bowl the target over. Anyone slammed while casting a spell must make a Concentration check (DC 10 + spell level + the number of points by which the target failed the opposed Strength check).

Using this feat is a standard action that provokes attacks of opportunity. This feat may only be used underwater and can only affect underwater targets.

TAIL WALKING [GENERAL]

You have learned to use your tail while out of water somewhat more gracefully than most of your kind.

Prerequisite: Merfolk or tailed half-merrow only.

Benefit: Your base land speed increases to 10 feet.

TWO-WEAPON DEFENSE [GENERAL]

You can attack and defend with a weapon in each hand. You can fight defensively while still making your normal attacks each round.

Prerequisites: Dex 13+, Two-Weapon Fighting.

Benefit: Your penalty for fighting defensively is reduced by 2, but you still gain a +2 dodge bonus to your AC for the round.

Normal: See Fighting Defensively (PHB 124).

Special: The Ambidexterity feat increases the dodge bonus to +4. You can only use this feat if you wield a weapon in each hand.

WATERFRONT NATIVE [GENERAL]

You grew up in an area close to water—an oceanside town, a fishing village on a river, even a lakeside city. You are especially adept at operating in and under the water.

Prerequisite: Must come from an area bordering an ocean, sea, major river, or large lake.

Benefit: You learn the Swim skill as a class skill. You may also designate a skill that is normally penalized, such as Disable Device, as one that you have trained with underwater. You must have the minimum number of skill ranks specified in the skill description to negate the penalty. Furthermore, this feat can only be applied to a skill if the description notes that the penalty can be negated with training.

Special: This feat can only be chosen at 1st level.

WEAPONS OF OPPORTUNITY [GENERAL]

You can use mundane objects as weapons in combat.

Prerequisite: Base attack bonus +4 or higher.

Benefit: You can use virtually any mundane object that you can lift as if it were a weapon. You attack with all normal bonuses, including those from applicable feats. Damage for a weapon of opportunity depends on its size. Consult the following table.

Size	Damage	Critical	Range Increment
Tiny	1d3	x2	10 ft.
Small	1d4	x2	10 ft.
Medium-size	1d6	x2	10 ft.
Large	1d8	x2	10 ft.

EQUIPMENT

This section covers equipment that might be used by land-dwellers planning an expedition to Underwave. The following section presents equipment crafted and used by the aquatic races. The text in this section is designated as **Open Game Content**.

Aquatic Quiver: This is not so much a quiver as a back-mounted bandolier, intended to hold arrows in place during the tumbling and turning that is common underwater. A normal open quiver is extremely likely to spill arrows during even casual maneuvering.

Disguise Kit, Waterproof: This functions identically to the standard disguise kit, except that the components contained within are designed to remain functional even during prolonged immersion. It also includes such useful props as green hair dye and false webbing for fingers and toes.

Goggles: Featuring thick plates of clear glass held together by leather straps, these are usually the product of gnomish craftsmen. They have the positive effect of improving visibility underwater, eliminating any penalty to Search, Disable Device, and other skills requiring close work. However, they also magnify and refract, resulting in a -1 circumstance penalty on all attack rolls.

Sailor's Wax: Sailor's wax is an alchemical gel that costs 5 gp to manufacture and has a DC of 13 to create. A single jar of the ooze covers one suit of Medium-size armor or two suits of Small armor, or 10 Medium-size weapons, or 20 Small weapons, or 40 Tiny weapons. It takes about an hour to apply it to armor and about five minutes to apply it to weapons. Once applied, it protects the item from normal (but not magical) rust for two days. It is intended primarily for use on underwater expeditions, as routine day-to-day exposure to incidental moisture can be dealt with by normal equipment maintenance.

Scroll, Waterproof: This is a scroll written with water-resistant inks on water-resistant parchments, and then sealed in a watertight container. This process adds 10 percent to the cost of the scroll. Non-waterproof scrolls are useless within five minutes of continuous exposure to water.

Swimming Gear: Another gnomish invention, swimming gear consists of webbed paddles that fit over the feet, and webbed gloves for the hands, all made of masterwork-quality leather treated with sailor's wax during the tanning process. These treatments make the gear permanently waterproof. Swimming gear grants a +2 circumstance bonus on Swim checks.

EQUIPMENT†

Item	Cost	Weight
Aquatic Quiver	5gp	1 lb.
Disguise Kit, Waterproof	250gp	8 lb.
Goggles	5gp	1 lb.
Sailor's Wax	10gp	—
Scroll, Waterproof	see text	—
Swimming Gear	100gp	2 lb.

However, the movement speed of a character wearing the paddles on land is halved, and Disable Device, Open Lock, and Pick Pocket checks suffer a -2 circumstance penalty if the character is wearing the webbed gloves.

UNDERWAVE EQUIPMENT†

The tools and materials used by those on the surface are not always available to those who dwell below it. Metal, for example, is almost entirely denied the races of the sea: While soft metals, such as gold, can be hammered, it is almost impossible to shape any metal that requires the heat of a forge. Further, most metals do not last long in water—rust and corrosion quickly take their toll. Finally, the weight of heavy metal armor is unwelcome to races that must move freely in three dimensions. Other materials denied to the dwellers in the undersea include clay, paper, and wood. All of these factors affect the nature and construction of undersea equipment. Of course, many undersea cultures have developed their own substitutes for many of these materials.

The aquatic environment alters the basic design of even the simplest items. Any container must be sealed tightly or the contents are likely to drift. Jars, for example, usually have screw or latch mechanisms to hold the lids in place. Projectiles cannot be stored in open containers such as quivers, but must be strapped in place. Objects float, sink, or drift depending on their buoyancy, but the fact that movement easily takes place in three dimensions means an individual is much more likely to tilt or tip a container during normal activity than they are on land, and this means extra precautions are necessary. Also, very few items handled in day-to-day life on land are naturally lighter than air, but many items used undersea are lighter and less dense than a like volume of water.

The primary materials available to the underwelters include all of the following.

Stone: Rocks can be harvested from the sea floor and shaped to fill many needs. The main limit on shaping stone is that one needs a harder stone—or metal—to work it, so most equipment is made of relatively soft rock, such as flint, or easily chipped stone, such as obsidian.

Kelp (and other plants): While used primarily as food, kelp and similar seaweeds have other uses. Sea elves have learned to weave it into garments and even treat it using alchemical processes to make it as tough as leather.

Coral: Coral is, or can be, as hard as stone, and can be shaped as it grows. Races that dwell among coral reefs have learned how to turn the reefs into fortress-factories—living castles that produce tools and weapons. Without the ability to forge or dry clay, coral is the material of choice for producing hard containers.

Shell: While the shells of giant clams and some turtles are large enough to form armor by themselves, the shells of smaller creatures are still useful. Sharpened, they can form knives and spearheads; sewn together, they can form armor. Many are intricately patterned and shaped, and serve as jewelry and currency.

Bone: Easily shaped and readily available, bone is useful for tools, weapons, and decoration. Bone needles form the basis of undersea sewing, and bone is used in countless simple tools, from eating utensils to buttons and hooks.

Scales: Most of the larger fish yield skins that can be transformed into leather, and heavily armored fish produce armor nearly as good as metal plate.

UNDERWAVE ARMOR

Armor	Cost	Armor Bonus	Maximum Dex Bonus	Armor Check Penalty*	Arcane Spell Failure	Weight
<i>Light armor</i>						
Soft kelp	7 gp	+1	+8	0	0%	7 lb.
Stiffened kelp	15 gp	+2	+7	0	5%	10 lb.
Light scale	30 gp	+2	+6	0	10%	8 lb.
Bone mail	30 gp	+3	+5	-1	15%	10 lb.
<i>Medium armor</i>						
Medium scale	75 gp	+4	+5	-2	20%	15 lb.
Small shell	60 gp	+5	+4	-3	20%	20 lb.
<i>Heavy armor</i>						
Large shell	500 gp	+6	+3	-4	30%	30 lb.
Heavy scale	2,000 gp	+7	+2	-5	40%	25 lb.

For purposes of compatibility, all costs are given in gold pieces. If the DM wishes to run an all-aquatic game or wishes to deal with intercultural trading as a theme, he should invent an undersea standard coin—perhaps a rare shell or mineral growth. Of course, undersea denizens have access to all the gold, silver, and copper lost in shipwrecks—and that can be quite a bit.

* For obvious reasons, undersea armor is constructed for minimum interference with the motions needed for swimming. For this reason, the weight of the armor is halved for purposes of determining the penalty to Swim checks and for determining buoyancy. The armor check penalty is generally lower for all undersea armors, while the maximum Dexterity bonus is higher. This is deliberate: The nature of motion and combat undersea demands maximum flexibility. The drawback is that undersea armor tends to offer inferior protection when compared to surface armor, and is more expensive, reflecting the increased work involved in producing it. Undersea armor is also less effective against metal weapons.

Undersea armor is designed for use in a perpetually wet environment. While shells, for example, do not decay in air, the materials used to bind them into suits of armor dry out rapidly. Treated kelp quickly decays when dry, and the fleshy backing of scale armor likewise weakens when out of water. For this reason, all

undersea armor becomes useless when out of water for an extended period of time.

Kelp: -1 AC for each hour after the first
 Bone: -1 AC for each hour after the first 12
 Shell: -1 AC for each hour after the first 8
 Scales: -1 AC for each hour after the first 8

ARMOR DESCRIPTIONS

Soft Kelp: The lightest and most flexible type of undersea armor, this armor is fashioned from kelp that has been treated alchemically to enhance toughness and resiliency. The armor is still very pliant and is woven in thin layers. It is usually pale green in hue.

Stiffened Kelp: Somewhat tougher than soft kelp and woven in thicker layers, this armor offers more protection at some cost in comfort and mobility. It is dark emerald green and is often decorated with small, brightly colored mollusks that cling to the armor. The treatment process prevents them from digesting it.

Bone Mail: This is armor formed of small shards of bone, tied together with kelp rope or fish leather.

Small Shell: Small shell armor consists of a soft kelp undergarment with many small shells sewn into it for added protection. The shells are often chosen for decorative as well as protective value, and each suit of this armor is a unique work of art. Some of the more practical

UNDERWAVE EQUIPMENT

Item	Cost	Weight
Acid bulb	90 gp	1/4 lb.
Crossbow, aquatic light	45 gp	4 lb.
Crossbow, aquatic heavy	90 gp	6 lb.
Glowmold lantern, hooded	10 gp	3 lb.
Glowmold lantern, bullseye	15 gp	3 lb.
Glowmold fuel	3 sp	1/4 lb.
Jellyfish paste	360 gp	n/a
Spell shell	5 gp	1/2 lb.

undersea races choose shells for their camouflage potential in a specific environment. This increases the cost by a factor of three (it's difficult to find shells of the right colors and arrange them in precisely the right patterns), but grants a +2 circumstance bonus on Hide checks.

Large Shell: This armor uses larger shells to form the main components—the breast plate, shoulder plates, and so on—and links them together with smaller shells and bone pieces to provide excellent protection, though at a significant cost in weight and flexibility.

Light Scale: This is armor composed of small, light scaled hide taken from fish and then alchemically hardened. It is most often used by deep-dwelling races (such as deep merfolk) whose access to kelp forests or even shells is difficult, as they live in the vast spaces between the surface and the bottom. It offers moderate protection and good flexibility. Scale armor is sometimes called fishleather armor, but the primary protection comes from the hard scales.

Medium Scale: Used by the same cultures that use light scale, this armor is made of heavier plates from large, better-armored fish, and several additional layers of smaller scales as well.

Heavy Scale: Heavy scale is made from several layers of carefully prepared fishleather reinforced with large scales. This thick, heavy armor grants little mobility, but offers much security. Merfolk dressed in heavy scale, especially with fish-skull helmets, are responsible for many legends of “sea devils” and the like.

Any undersea armor can be made as masterwork armor, with the usual effects described in the core rules.

Shields are very difficult to use underwater—so difficult that no undersea race uses them. The only shields that are usable underwater are those that have the waterbane property (see Magic Items, page 40). These can be used as normal shields with the appropriate proficiency.

TOOLS AND SUPPLIES

The civilizations of Underwave have existed at least as long as the civilizations of the surface—possibly longer. While limited in resources, they are not limited in resourcefulness, and they have created a wide range of unique items to enable them to thrive without fire or metalworking. A few items are presented here, and this should serve as an inspiration for more extensive lists if the DM chooses to run an all-aquatic campaign.

Acid Bulb: An acid bulb is a unique alchemical item. It consists of a thin, hard, spherical shell that is filled with acids. It is usually attached to the end of a long thrusting weapon, such as a spear. If the wielder of the spear succeeds with a touch attack against his target, the bulb shatters, unleashing deadly acid into the water. This disperses quickly but does terrible damage while it is present.

The target struck must make a Reflex save (DC 18) or take 3d6 damage (save for half). If he fails the Reflex save, he must also make a Fortitude save (DC 15) to avoid accidentally inhaling the acidic water. If he fails this save, he takes 1d6 points of temporary Constitution damage as well. All those within 5 feet of the target must likewise make a Reflex save (DC 15) or take 1d6 points of damage (save for no damage). If the Reflex save is failed, the character must make a Fortitude save (DC 12) or take 1d4 points of temporary Constitution damage. All those who



failed their Reflex saves take 1d4 points of damage on the following round, and then the acid has dispersed. Additional bulbs placed on the same weapon (for example, on each tine of a trident) deal an additional 1d2 points of damage. Outside of the water, the bulbs are much less effective, as the liquid they contain is designed to disperse in water, not air. They deal only 1d6 points of damage, affect only the target struck, and there is no chance of inhaling the acid. The acid still deals 1d4 points of damage to the target on the second round.

Crossbow, Aquatic: Except for the weight and price, these bows function exactly as light and heavy crossbows, using identical statistics. However, they do not suffer any of the usual penalties on ranged attacks when used underwater.

Glowmold Fuel: Glowmold is a fungus that thrives underwater. It has natural phosphorescence but does not provide sufficient illumination for good visibility. However, when an alchemical catalyst is added, the glow brightens dramatically, creating light equivalent to that of a torch. A fuel package consists of a supply of glowmold and a supply of catalyst. The lantern is designed to intake small amounts of catalyst at a time; each usage supplies 15 minutes of light, with a total burn time of four hours per package. Changing a fuel package takes two full rounds; both glowmold and catalyst must be carefully placed in the lantern. Glowmold is cool to the touch and cannot be used to start fires or cause damage.

Glowmold Lantern: The lantern itself is composed of thin sheets of hardened fish leather darkened to opaqueness, with a bone framework. The bullseye lantern has only a single shutter; its other sides are coated with a special wax to reflect the light in a single direction. It illuminates a cone 60 feet long and 20 feet wide at the end, and it burns for four hours on a single unit of glowmold fuel. A lantern can be carried in one hand. The hooded lantern is a standard lantern with shuttered or hinged sides. It clearly illuminates a 30-foot radius and burns for four hours on a single unit of glowmold fuel.

Jellyfish Paste: This is a viscous, translucent white paste made by a skilled alchemist from the deadly tentacles of poisonous jellyfish. Those of evil alignment spread it (very care-

fully) onto spear and trident tips, and the agony it induces are quite extreme. Jellyfish Poison: animal nerve; contact DC 15; paralysis and 1d8 Con; 1d6 Dex; Alchemy DC 23.

Spell Shell: One of the main difficulties facing wizards in Underwave is the problem of writing down their spells. Parchment is inadequate for many reasons. A number of solutions are available, but the most common one is engraving the spells on turtle shells that have been suitably cleaned and smoothed. A single shell holds one spell level, with 0-level spells fitting two to a shell. Each shell is slightly larger than a human hand. Typically, a small hole is drilled in each shell, and the shells are stored on a thin strip of leather formed into a ring.

SPELLS

This section presents rules for using magic underwater, as well as a new clerical domain and a large selection of new spells suited for use in an aquatic campaign. The text in this section is designated as **Open Game Content**.

The following are general guidelines to help DMs judge how spells work underwater. Specific decisions must be made on a case-by-case basis.

- Spells with verbal components require a Spellcraft check (DC 10 + spell level) to cast successfully, unless the caster is under the influence of a spell that grants the ability to breathe water.
- If a spell has material or focus components, consider the effect of the aquatic environment on them. Fine powders become mud or paste, dried plants become sodden, and so on. The components can be stored in watertight containers, but casting a spell with components in such containers requires a Spellcraft check (DC 10 + spell level). Any metamagic feats that allow a character to ignore material components are extremely useful.
- If a spell has the Fire descriptor, it simply fails. At the DM's discretion, such a spell may produce a cloud of steam or boiling water that deals half the damage normally caused by the spell, and that dissipates after one round.

- Spells that create mists or clouds (*acid fog*, *cloudkill*, *fog cloud*, and so on) are less effective underwater. The spell has normal effect on the first round, half effect on the second round, and then dissipates unless the spell specifies otherwise. For example, *cloudkill* cannot be cast underwater at all. Aquatic casters have learned versions of these spells that actually change the water, rather than trying to create a gas or mist, and these spells work normally. Sorcerers and wizards can learn these variant spells without counting them against their spells known, if they already know the standard versions. These are simple variants, not new spells. These "aquatic mist" spells do not work on land unless cast into a body of water. For example, from a lakeshore, a properly trained wizard could cast *aquatic cloudkill* into the lake.

- Spells with the Sonic descriptor deal double damage and have double range underwater. This can cause deadly backlash effects if the caster is not careful.

- Any ice created by a spell (such as a *wall of ice*) floats to the surface unless weighted down or anchored. *Ice storm* deals normal cold damage but only 1d6 points of impact damage. Other spells should be adjusted similarly.

UNDERSEA DOMAIN

Granted Power: You get a +4 circumstance bonus on all Swim checks; Wilderness Lore (underwater) is a class skill.

- 1 Buoyancy.** Caster may control his weight for purposes of buoyancy.
- 2 Ink Cloud.** Creates a dark patch of ink that blocks sight.
- 3 Air Breathing.** The target creature or creatures can breathe air.
- 4 Aquatic Form.** The target permanently gains the Aquatic template.
- 5 Sphere Of Air.** The target is surrounded, and trapped in, a globe of air.
- 6 Sink.** A target ship is ruptured violently.
- 7 Acid Fog, Aquatic.** Fog deals acid damage.
- 8 Whirlpool.** A powerful underwater vortex is created.
- 9 Elemental Swarm.** Summons 2d4 Large, 1d4 Huge elementals (water only).

BARÐ SPELLS

1ST LEVEL

Merfolk's Blessing. Target gains bonus on Swim checks and increased swimming speed.

3RD LEVEL

Message in a Bottle. Caster may send a message to any location on the same body of water.

CLERIC SPELLS

3RD LEVEL

Air Breathing. The target creature or creatures can breathe air.

Transmute Water to Blood. Caster changes normal water into blood.

4TH LEVEL

Compass Curse: The target becomes disoriented and confused.

Wisdom of the Watery Grave. Caster gains the ability to speak with the spirits of the dead who perished in a body of water.

6TH LEVEL

Nautomancy. Caster imbues ship with spells.

7TH LEVEL

Tidal Wave. Caster creates huge wall of water.

DRUID SPELLS

1ST LEVEL

Compass. The caster can determine directions with perfect accuracy.

3RD LEVEL

Air Breathing. The target creature or creatures can breathe air.

Resist Nature. The target creature or creatures are highly resistant to non-magical heat or cold.

4TH LEVEL

Improved Water Breathing. Target can breathe water and does not suffer damage from pressure effects.

Sailor's Call. A large popoise is summoned to aid the caster.

Shape Reef. The druid can alter the shape of a coral reef.

8TH LEVEL

Tidal Wave. Caster creates huge wall of water.

Whirlpool. A powerful underwater maelstrom is created.

RANGER SPELLS

0-LEVEL

Sea Eyes. Alters the subject's eyes to permit easy underwater vision.

2ND LEVEL

Compass. The caster can determine directions with perfect accuracy.

4TH LEVEL

Sailor's Call. A large popoise is summoned to aid the caster.

SORCERER/WIZARD SPELLS

0 LEVEL

Sea Eyes. Alters the subject's eyes to permit easy underwater vision.

1ST LEVEL

Buoyancy. Caster may control his weight for purposes of buoyancy.

Compass. The caster can determine directions with perfect accuracy.

Merfolk's Blessing. Target gains bonus on Swim checks and increased swimming speed.

2ND LEVEL

Iron Fists. Target deals normal damage with unarmed attacks, rather than subdual damage.

3RD LEVEL

Air Breathing. The target creature or creatures can breathe air.

Ink Cloud. Creates a dark patch of ink that blocks sight.

Message in a Bottle. Caster may send a message to any location on the same body of water.

Sea Hag's Visage. Caster takes on the appear-

ance of a sea hag, dealing ability score damage to any who look at him.

Shield of the Kuo-Toa. Caster creates magical shield that provides deflection bonus to AC and may disarm or grapple attacking enemies.

Transmute Water to Blood. Caster changes normal water into blood.

Underwater Sense. Caster can locate creatures underwater.

4TH LEVEL

Compass Curse: The target becomes disoriented and confused.

Improved Water Breathing The target creature or creatures gain enhanced underwater survival abilities.

Waterways. Caster instantly transported from one aquatic location to another.

5TH LEVEL

Aquatic Form. The target permanently gains the Aquatic template.

Sphere of Air. The target is surrounded, and trapped in, a globe of air.

Sink. A target ship is ruptured violently.

6TH LEVEL

Acid Fog, Aquatic. Fog deals acid damage.

Nautomancy. Caster imbues ship with spells.

SPELL DESCRIPTIONS

ACID FOG, AQUATIC

Conjuration (Creation) [Acid]

Level: Sor/Wiz 6, Undersea 7

Components: V, S, M/DF

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)

Effect: Fog spreads 30 ft., 20 ft. high

Duration: 1 round/level

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: Yes

This spell functions identically to *acid fog*, except that it works underwater.

AIR BREATHING

Transmutation

Level: Clr 3, Drd 3, Sor/Wiz 3, Undersea 3

Components: V, S, M/DF

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Touch

Target: Living creatures touched

Duration: 2 hours/level (see text)

Saving Throw: Will negates (harmless)

Spell Resistance: Yes (harmless)

The transmuted creatures can breathe air freely. Divide the duration evenly among all the creatures the character touches. This spell does not grant any other abilities; a merfolk who can breathe air thanks to this spell is still only able to move slowly and clumsily on land.

The spell does not enable air-breathing creatures to breathe water.

AQUATIC FORM

Transmutation

Level: Sor/Wiz 5, Undersea 4

Components: V, S, DF

Casting Time: 1 hour

Range: Touch

Target: 1 creature

Saving Throw: Fortitude negates

Spell Resistance: Yes

This spell grants the Aquatic template to the target creature. Once the spell is complete, the spell cannot be reversed by *dispel magic* and similar magic—only a *wish*, *limited wish*, or *miracle* can undo the transmutation. After the spell has taken effect, the changes made to the target are considered natural in origin—the spell's magic is involved only in initiating the transformation, not sustaining it.

Such powerful magic does not come without a cost, however. The drastic strain this places on the target creature's body causes a permanent loss of one point of Constitution. The character's Constitution score can still be raised normally. The caster must expend 500 XP for the transmutation to take effect.

BUOYANCY

Transmutation

Level: Undersea 1, Wiz/Sor 1

Components: V, S, M/DF

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Touch

Target: 1 creature per caster level

Duration: 1 hour + 10 minutes/level

Saving Throw: Fortitude negates (harmless)

Spell Resistance: Yes

When this spell is cast, the target creatures gain the ability to add or subtract a num-

ber of pounds equal to the caster level times 5, solely for purposes of determining buoyancy. Thus, if a 3rd-level caster uses this spell, the target may increase or decrease his total weight (including carried equipment) by 15 lb., but only to determine if he is buoyant.

CLEARWATER

Divination
Level: Clr 0, Drd 0, Rgr 1
Components: V, S, DF
Casting Time: 1 action
Target: You
Duration: 1 hour/level
Saving Throw: No
Spell Resistance: No

When this spell is cast, any debris, silt, or other fine obstructions cluttering the water are made invisible to the eyes of the caster, allowing him to see clearly. No object more than one square inch in size is rendered invisible—this spell does not allow the caster to see through walls or kelp forests.

COMPASS

Divination
Level: Drd 1, Rgr 2, Wiz/Sor 1
Components: V, M/DF
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Personal
Target: You
Duration: 10 minutes/level

The caster can locate any direction he wishes with unerring accuracy. By concentrating and uttering the verbal components of the spell, he gains the ability to know any compass direction for the duration of the spell. This spell does not grant the ability to locate specific structures, places, or locales, however; it is limited to absolute directions.

Material Components: A metallic needle and a dish of water.

Focus: A lodestone fragment.

COMPASS CURSE

Transmutation
Level: Clr 4, Sor/Wiz 4
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Touch
Target: Creature touched

Duration: Permanent
Saving Throw: Will negates
Spell Resistance: Yes

The caster places a unique type of curse upon the target, who becomes so confused and disoriented that he is unable to find his way anywhere without assistance. The target misreads maps, mistakes landmarks, and otherwise errs in attempting any journey undertaken after having failed his saving throw. Until the *compass curse* is removed, all of the target's travels take 10 times longer to complete, due to his inability to find his bearings and follow even the simplest directions. As noted above, another may lead the target to his intended destination since the *compass curse* affects no one except the creature touched by the spellcaster. In all other respects, this spell is identical to *bestow curse*.

IMPROVED WATER BREATHING

Transmutation
Level: Drd 4, Sor/Wiz 4
Components: V, S, M/DF
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Touch
Target: Living creatures touched
Duration: 3 hours/level (see text)
Saving Throw: Will negates (harmless)
Spell Resistance: Yes (harmless)

The transmuted creature(s) can freely breathe water. Furthermore, the affected creatures suffer no ill effects due to water pressure. Divide the duration evenly among all the creatures the caster touches. The spell does not make creatures unable to breathe air.

This spell may be made permanent via the *permanency* spell, provided the caster of the *permanency* spell is at least 9th level and expends 500 XP.

INK CLOUD

Conjuration (Creation)
Level: Sor/Wiz 3, Underwater 2
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft. level)
Effect: Ink cloud that spreads in a 30-ft. radius, 20 ft. high
Duration: 10 minutes/level
Saving Throw: None
Spell Resistance: No

A billowing cloud of thick ink, similar to that produced by an octopus, spreads rapidly from the point the caster designates. The dark ink obscures all sight, including darkvision, beyond 5 feet. A creature within 5 feet has 1/2 concealment (attacks suffer a 20 percent miss chance). Creatures farther away have total concealment (50 percent miss chance, attacker can't use sight to locate the target). Strong currents or turbulent water disperse the ink in 1d4+1 rounds.

IRON FISTS

Transmutation
Level: Sor/Wiz 2
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Touch
Target: Creature touched
Duration: 1 round/level

The character can grant a single creature (including himself) the ability to deal normal damage with his hands and feet, instead of subdual damage. In addition, armed opponents do not get attacks of opportunity when the creature makes an unarmed attack while under the effects of this spell. However, the creature with *iron fists* still gets attacks of opportunity when an unarmed opponent makes an unarmed attack against him (provided they too are not under the effects of *iron fists* or do not possess the Improved Unarmed Strike feat or monk ability).

MERFOLK'S BLESSING

Transmutation
Level: Brd 1, Sor/Wiz 1
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Target: One creature
Duration: 10 minutes/level
Saving Throw: Fortitude negates (harmless)
Spell Resistance: Yes (harmless)

The character may confer on a creature the supernatural ability to swim with great ease and speed. A creature targeted by *merfolk's blessing* gains a +10 circumstance bonus on all Swim checks while under the spell's effects. In addition, he gains a movement rate of 50 feet while swimming. If this rate is less than his underwater movement rate, his current rate is increased by 20 feet for the duration of the spell.

Material Component: A fish scale.

MESSAGE IN A BOTTLE

Transmutation [Language-Dependent]
Level: Brd 3, Sor/Wiz 3
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Unlimited (see below)
Target: One creature
Duration: Until discharged (destination is reached)
Saving Throw: None
Spell Resistance: No

The character can place a written message in a bottle and drop it into a body of water. Provided the intended recipient of the message can be reached by traveling along the same body of water or by means of connected bodies of water, the bottle unerringly delivers its contents to him. This means that a bottle dropped in a lake travels along any rivers connected to that lake to reach its destination, entering as many other bodies of water as it must (and can) to reach its target. Because the bottle is small, it is assumed to be able to make use of all but the tiniest streams to reach its destination.

There are, however, several further restrictions on the use of *message in a bottle*. First, the bottle enchanted by this spell does not travel instantaneously to its intended recipient. Instead, the bottle travels at a speed of five miles per hour per level of the spellcaster. Therefore, a 6th-level wizard who casts this spell can expect the bottle to travel toward its destination at 30 miles per hour. Second, the bottle has only a limited ability to appear in the hands of its intended recipient if he is not within a short distance of the water's edge. The bottle travels no more than 400 + 40 feet per level of the spellcaster from the edge of the body of water from which it came. If the intended recipient is not within this range when the bottle arrives at the point closest to his current location, the spell discharges without effect and its message is destroyed. The spellcaster must know the intended recipient personally and have a rough idea of his present whereabouts. As long as the recipient's assumed location can be reached by means of water travel, the bottle makes its way to him without fail. Finally, the message can contain no more than 50 words or the spell will not function.

Material Components: A piece of paper and a glass bottle.

NAUTOMANCY

Evocation

Level: Clr 6, Sor/Wiz 6**Components:** V, S**Casting Time:** 10 minutes**Range:** Touch**Target:** See below**Duration:** See below**Saving Throw:** None**Spell Resistance:** Yes (harmless)

By means of this enchantment, the caster can transfer some of his currently prepared spells to a seagoing vessel he touches. The size of the vessel affected by this spell varies based on its length. Spellcasters can successfully use *nautomancy* on vessels no longer than 20 feet + 5 feet per level. That means a 12th-level wizard could affect a vessel no longer than 80 feet. Only divine and arcane abjuration spells can be transferred to the vessel. The number and level of spells that the vessel can be granted depends on its length. Multiple castings of *nautomancy* cannot exceed this limit. If for some reason (energy drain, for example), the character's limit of 6th-level spells drops below the current number of active *nautomancy* spells, the most recently transferred spells are dispelled.

Length of

Vessel (ft.)	Spells Transferred
1-25	one 1st-level spell
26-50	up to two 1st-level spells
51-75	up to two 1st- and one 2nd-level spell
76-100	up to three 1st- and two 2nd-level spells
101-125	up to three 1st-, three 2nd-spells, and one 3rd-level spell
126+	up to four 1st-, three 2nd-, and two 3rd-level spells

The transferred spells operate according to the character's level, so the caster determines characteristics of range, duration, and area.

Once the character has cast *nautomancy*, he may not prepare another 6th-level spell to replace it until he either activates all the spells transferred to the vessel or the vessel is destroyed. To activate a transferred spell, one must be in physical contact with the vessel and concentrate for a moment to do so. The caster may choose to activate one, all, or only some of the transferred spells, as he wishes. If he should be slain before all the transferred

spells have been activated, those remaining are immediately dispelled.

RESIST NATURE

Transmutation

Level: Drd 3**Components:** V, S, DF**Casting Time:** 1 action**Range:** Touch**Target:** 1 creature per caster level**Duration:** 1 hour/level (see below)**Saving Throw:** Will negates (harmless)**Spell Resistance:** Yes (harmless)

This spell renders the subjects virtually immune to damage from normal extremes of heat and cold. It offers no protection, however, against magical or other attacks that use heat and cold. Thus, a person protected by *resist nature* could stroll comfortably in the arctic without any special protection, but would take full damage from the breath weapon of a white dragon. This spell is especially useful to those who plan to venture into the ocean depths, where extreme cold is a constant problem. The spell absorbs 12 points of damage each round from environmental effects that have no supernatural, extraordinary, or spell-like source. Divide the duration evenly among the targets of the spell.

SAILOR'S CALL

Conjuration (Summoning)

Level: Drd 4, Rgr 4**Components:** V, S, DF**Casting Time:** 1 full round**Range:** Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./level)**Effect:** One summoned creature**Duration:** 1 round/level (D)**Saving Throw:** None**Spell Resistance:** No

This spell summons a single large (6 HD) porpoise that attacks any aquatic creatures within the range of the spell. The porpoise appears anywhere the character wishes within the spell's range and attacks to the best of its abilities. *Sailor's call* does not grant the caster the ability to communicate with the porpoise or otherwise direct its actions. It attacks whatever enemy creatures are closest to it until either they are all dead, outside the spell's range, or the spell's duration has elapsed. The porpoise disappears at the end of the spell's duration, after it has completed its last attack that round.

SEA EYES

Transmutation

Level: Sor/Wiz 0, Rgr 0**Components:** V, S, M**Casting Time:** 1 full round**Range:** Touch**Target:** 1 creature or self**Duration:** 1 hour per caster level**Saving Throw:** Fortitude negates (harmless)**Spell Resistance:** Yes

This simple dweomer alters the eyes of a land-dwelling creature to permit clear underwater vision. It offers no additional or enhanced vision; it merely negates the penalties for underwater sight and protects the eyes from the natural irritants in the water (especially in salt-water). The material component is a quartz hemisphere.

SEA HAG'S VISAGE

Illusion (Glamer)

Level: Clr 3, Sor/Wiz 3**Components:** V, S**Casting Time:** 1 action**Range:** Personal**Target:** You**Duration:** 2d4 rounds**Saving Throw:** Will negates**Spell Resistance:** Yes

The character transforms his appearance into the horrible visage of a sea hag. Any creature that sees him must make a successful Will saving throw or take 2d6 points of temporary Strength damage. *Sea hag's visage* cannot reduce a target to a negative Strength score, but anyone reduced to Strength 0 is helpless until he regains at least one point of Strength. Creatures who successfully save are immune to further effects of this casting of the spell.

SHAPE REEF

Transmutation

Level: Drd 4**Components:** V, S, DF**Casting Time:** 1 action**Range:** Touch**Target:** Portion of coral reef, up to 10 cu. ft. + 1 cu. ft./level**Duration:** Instantaneous**Saving Throw:** None**Spell Resistance:** No

The character can form a portion of a reef into any shape that suits the character's purpose. For example, the character can open a passage, form a room, raise a set of bars to trap a creature, or seal off a chamber. The character can even cause an object (such as a crude spear) to form and be detached from the reef.

SHIELD OF THE KUO-TOA

Abjuration

Level: Sor/Wiz 3

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 1 action

Target: Creature touched

Duration: 1 minute/level or until discharged

Saving Throw: Will negates (harmless)

Spell Resistance: Yes (harmless)

Aquatic kuo-toas use the body oil they secrete to coat their shields, giving them a sticky surface. The coated shields gain the ability to hold fast any creatures or items that come into contact with them. *Shield of the kuo-toa* brings into existence a shimmering magical field around the touched creature that averts attacks. The spell grants a +2 deflection bonus to AC. In addition, anyone who makes an unsuccessful

melee attack against a target under the effects of *shield of the kuo-toa* must make a successful Reflex save (DC 14), or the attacker's weapon sticks to the shield and is yanked out of his grip. Creatures that use natural weapons are automatically grappled if they fail the Reflex save and become stuck.

Material Component: A strip of flypaper.

ΣΙΠΚ

Evocation (Force)

Level: Undersea 6, Wiz/Sor 5

Components: V, S, DF

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10ft./level)

Target: 1 ship

Duration: Instantaneous

Saving Throw: No

Spell Resistance: Yes

Most of those who travel the sea suspect the existence of this spell, as such magic is the only explanation for some marine disasters. When cast, the spell creates a powerful force inside a ship's hull that ruptures the ship, causing it to sink rapidly. The spell deals 1d10 points of



damage per caster level to any single ship's hull, and is targeted below the waterline. This damage ignores the hull's hardness, as it is generated within the structure. Few ships can survive such an attack and remain floating. This spell is granted by underwater gods to protect their lands against intruders, though some evil clerics use it to support extortion operations aimed at surface dwellers.

SPHERE OF AIR

Evocation

Level: Sor/Wiz 5, Undersea 5

Components: V, S, M/DF

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

Target: 1 creature

Duration: 10 minutes/level

Saving Throw: Reflex negates

Spell Resistance: No

This spell can be either benign or malign, depending on its target and purpose. The spell creates a sphere of air 10 feet in diameter, and the target is enclosed within it. The inner surface of the sphere is a magical energy field with an effective hardness of 15 and 20 hit points. It is very difficult to break.

The air within the sphere is breathable, and indeed, continues to refresh itself for the duration of the spell. This spell can keep an air-breather alive underwater for some time—or suffocate a water breather.

The sphere can be moved at the caster's mental command at a speed of 15 feet per round. A Concentration check (DC 10) is needed to maintain control if the caster takes damage or is otherwise distracted. If the sphere is uncontrolled, it remains in place for one round and then begins floating upward.

Aquatic spellcasters trapped in the sphere are unable to cast spells requiring a verbal component; the words of power they know cannot be pronounced correctly out of water.

The caster of the spell can cast any spell he knows through the sphere without disturbing or disrupting it, provided he is touching the sphere at the time of casting.

There are many non-combat uses for this spell. Alchemy, pottery, and metal forging all work better in air; some aquatic mages make an

effective career out of providing airy environments for craftsmen, enabling them to make items otherwise impossible underwater.

TIDAL WAVE

Evocation

Level: Clr 7, Drd 8, Water 6

Components: V, S, DF

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Long (400 ft. + 40 ft./level)

Area: 5 ft./level (S)

Duration: 1 round

Saving Throw: See text

Spell Resistance: No

When the character casts *tidal wave* near a body of water, a huge wall of water appears that collapses on top of creatures and structures, causing great damage. Those affected by the spell are shocked for one round, during which time they can neither move nor attack. Spellcasters caught in its area of effect must make Concentration checks (DC 20 + spell level) or lose any spells they are preparing to cast.

Creatures possessing 2 Hit Dice or fewer are immediately killed and washed away if they are in the area of effect of the *tidal wave*. Creatures possessing three or more Hit Dice take 7d6 points of damage (Reflex half, DC 15). All structures and objects, except those made of stone or harder materials, collapse in the wake of the *tidal wave*. Creatures within a collapsed structure take 7d6 points of damage (Reflex half, DC 15), just as if they had been caught directly in the path of the *tidal wave*.

TRANSMUTE WATER TO BLOOD

Transmutation

Level: Clr 3, Sor/Wiz 3

Components: V, S, M/DF

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)

Area: Up to two 10-ft. cubes/level

Duration: Permanent

Saving Throw: See text

Spell Resistance: No

This spell transforms normal water (whether fresh or salt) of any depth into blood. Creatures caught in the spell's area of effect are allowed a Reflex save to swim away or otherwise escape. The blood is harmless to non-aquatic creatures. Water-breathing crea-

tures unable to escape the effects of *transmute water to blood* begin suffocating immediately, unless they can hold their breath long enough to leave the area. The blood created is of the same type as its caster, so an elf sorcerer would transmute the water to elven blood, while a human wizard would transmute it to human blood.

Material Component: A drop of the caster's own blood.

UNDERWATER SENSE

Divination

Level: Sor/Wiz 3

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)

Area: Cone

Duration: 10 minutes/level (D)

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: No

The caster can locate creatures underwater within the spell's area of effect. *Underwater sense* negates the effects of both *invisibility* (whether by spell or special ability) and poor visibility. However, the spell is less effective in detecting creatures lacking central nervous systems, such as undead, oozes, and constructs. The spell's range is halved for the purposes of those creatures. Finally, illusions or other phantasmal creatures do not fool *underwater sense*, since it can only detect real underwater creatures.

WATERWAYS

Transmutation [Teleportation]

Level: Sor/Wiz 4

Components: V, M

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Personal and touch

Target: The character and touched objects or other touched willing creatures weighing up to 25 lb/level

Duration: Instantaneous

Saving Throw: None and Will negates (object)

Spell Resistance: No and yes (object)

This spell instantly transports you from one watery location to another. Distance is not a factor and interplanar travel is not possible. You can bring objects and willing creatures weighing no more than 25 lb. per caster level. Objects held or in use (attended) by

another person receive saving throws and spell resistance checks, while the character does not.

To use *waterways*, the caster and any objects or willing creatures he is bringing with him must leap into a body of water deep enough to submerge them to activate the spell. They then travel instantaneously through the Astral Plane to another body of water, which must also be deep enough to submerge them, where they emerge into the Material Plane. Anything that blocks or otherwise hinders astral travel affects *waterways* as well.

In all other respects, this spell functions identically to *teleport*, including the need for familiarity with your intended destination and the chance of mishaps. Consult the core rules (PHB 264) for the necessary information and tables.

WHIRLPOOL

Evocation [Water]

Level: Undersea 8, Drd 8

Components: V, S, DF

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Long (400 ft. + 40 ft./level)

Effect: Whirlpool 10 ft. wide at base, 30 ft. wide at top, and 30 ft. tall

Duration: 1 round/level

Saving Throw: Reflex negates (see text)

Spell Resistance: Yes

This spell creates a powerful vortex of spinning water that moves through the water, along the ocean bottom, or just under the surface at 60 feet per round. The caster can concentrate on controlling the whirlpool's movement or specify a simple sequence, such as move straight-ahead, zigzag, circle, or the like. Directing the whirlpool's movement or changing its programmed movement is a standard action. The whirlpool always moves during the character's turn in the initiative order. If the whirlpool exceeds the spell's range, it moves in a random, uncontrolled fashion for 1d3 rounds—possibly endangering the caster or the caster's allies—and then dissipates. The character cannot regain control of the whirlpool, even if it comes back within range.

Any Large or smaller creature that comes in contact with the whirlpool must succeed at a Reflex save or take 3d6 points of damage. Medium-size or smaller creatures that fail the first save must succeed at a second one or be

sucked into the whirlpool and held suspended in its powerful currents, taking 1d8 points of damage each round with no saving throw. The caster may direct the whirlpool to eject any creatures suspended within it at any time, depositing the hapless souls wherever the whirlpool happens to be when they are released.

The top of the whirlpool cannot pass above the surface of the ocean, but it can touch it, sucking in swimmers and endangering ships. Any swimmers sucked into the whirlpool take damage as noted above. If they are not capable of water breathing, they will begin to drown. The DC of Swim checks needed to avoid drowning is the same as the DC of the spell's saving throw. Further, once the whirlpool dissipates or has ejected them, they will be as much as 30 feet below the surface of the water, and must make Swim checks as appropriate to return to the surface. These checks are at the normal DC for swimming in the current conditions.

If the whirlpool is created under or touches a ship, the ship begins to be pulled into or around the vortex. If the ship is Small, such as a lifeboat or rowboat, it will simply be sucked in unless the crew of the ship can succeed at a Profession (sailor) check equal to the saving throw DC of the spell. This check must be made for each round the ship is in contact with the whirlpool. If a boat is sucked in, all of the crewmembers must make Reflex saves as above, but suffer a circumstance penalty of -2. The boat itself takes 5d10 points of damage per round to a specific location on its hull. This location is different each round, so the boat can sustain multiple hull breaches (see page 163).

Larger vessels cannot be sucked down, but they can be spun around, inflicting significant damage to the ship as it is twisted and turned. If the pilot of the ship fails a Profession (sailor) check against the DC of the spell, the ship is spun on its axis in the direction of the spin of the whirlpool, taking 3d10 points of damage to a specific location on its hull. As with smaller vessels, the whirlpool can inflict multiple hull breaches, one each round, as long as the ship is in contact with the vortex.

WISDOM OF THE WATERY GRAVE

Necromancy [Language-Dependent]

Level: Clr 4

Components: V, S, DF

Casting Time: 10 minutes

Range: See text

Target: One creature

Duration: 1 minute/level

Saving Throw: Will negates (see text)

Spell Resistance: No

Wisdom of the watery grave is a variation of *speak with dead* and operates under the same restrictions as that spell, with the following exceptions. First, *wisdom of the watery grave* does not require that the caster possess the corpse of the person to whom he directs his questions. All that is necessary is that the caster be located on or in a body of water (being aboard a seagoing vessel counts for the purposes of this spell) and that he know the name of an intelligent creature that has died in the same body of water. The exact details of the death do not matter, so long as the corpse was lost somewhere in the body of water. Whether he drowned or was eaten by a shark makes no difference for the effects of this spell. Second, *wisdom of the watery grave* always provides complete answers rather than partial ones, despite the current condition of the corpse with whom the caster is communicating. In fact, the spell functions even if the target's corpse has long since disintegrated or been otherwise destroyed by the effects of water.

MAGIC ITEMS

This section presents a selection of new magic items of particular value in aquatic campaigns. The text of this section is designated as **Open Game Content**.

NEW SPECIAL ABILITY: WATERBANE

A weapon or suit of armor enchanted with *waterbane* is a valued prize to anyone who spends time in Underwave, whether as a native or as a visitor. Such items effectively ignore water entirely. A *waterbanned* broadsword, longbow, or mace can be used as effectively on the ocean floor as it can be on land. *Waterbanned* armor is weightless, solely for purposes of Swim checks and determining buoyancy. Furthermore, a *water-*



baned weapon ignores the damage reduction of any creature with the Water type and deals an additional 1d6 points of damage to such creatures. *Waterbane* items can be easily identified underwater by the effervescent aura that surrounds them. Bringing such a weapon into the presence of a water elemental or any creatures closely linked to elemental water, such as tritons, is often considered grounds for attack without mercy. *Waterbane* is a +1 enhancement for purposes of determining weapon cost.

NEW MAGIC ITEMS

Amulet of Untarnished Steel: This amulet looks like a small round disk made from a piece of rusty metal. When worn, it protects the wearer's metal possessions, including weapons and armor, from the natural and magical effects of rust, such as the attack of a rust monster. The amulet's effects are not permanent, however. Should the wearer remove the amulet, his metal possessions are again susceptible to rust. Likewise, any metal possessions not in physical contact with the wearer are likewise vulnerable. *Caster Level:* 5th; *Prerequisites:* Craft Wondrous Item, *protection from elements*; *Market Price:* 30,000 gp; *Weight:* —.

Amulet of Protection against Aquatic Creatures: This amulet looks like a large piece of ornate coral and provides the wearer with protection against water-dwelling creatures. The amulet grants a +4 enhancement bonus to both Armor Class and any saving throws that result from an attack against the wearer by aquatic beings, whether intelligent or unintelligent. *Caster Level:* 7th; *Prerequisites:* Craft Wondrous Item, *shield*; *Market Price:* 36,000 gp; *Weight:* —.

Amulet of Storm Dispersal: This amulet looks like a metallic lightning bolt and allows the wearer to disperse any storm or inclement weather within a five-mile radius for 1d4+1 hours. The amulet can only be used once per day. *Caster Level:* 18th; *Prerequisites:* Craft Wondrous Item, *resist elements*, *storm of vengeance*; *Market Price:* 8,100 gp; *Weight:* —.

Boots of Water Walking: These fine boots made of shark leather allow the wearer to walk across the surface of water, as if he had cast *water walk* on himself. *Caster Level:* 7th; *Prerequisites:* Craft Wondrous Item, *water walk*; *Market Price:* 12,000 gp; *Weight:* 1 lb.

Coracle of Xaren: This item looks like a large metallic clamshell large enough to seat seven passengers within one half. The coracle is, in fact, an underwater vehicle that can be operated by the mental commands of the person sitting in the seventh seat, who acts as its pilot. Once both halves of the clamshell are closed, the coracle provides sufficient oxygen for all seven of its passengers to survive for 24 hours before having to surface. In addition, a series of transparent portholes open, which allow the pilot and the passengers to view their underwater surroundings. The coracle can safely descend to a depth of 500 feet without ill effects. It has the following characteristics.

Speed: 50 feet
Hardness: 5 (hull)
Hit Points: 50 (hull)

The *coracle of Xaren* possesses no weapon or means of external illumination, although a mental command allows the pilot to create *light* for the duration of any journey. *Caster Level:* 15th; *Prerequisites:* Craft Wondrous Item, *animate object*; *Market Price:* 100,000 gp; *Weight:* 2,000 lb.

Crossbow of the Sea God: This +3 light crossbow functions identically to others of its type, except that it can be fired underwater without any penalty. *Caster Level:* 7th; *Prerequisites:* Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *fly*; *Market Price:* 18,335 gp.

Daoud's Marvelous Maritime Map: This large (10x10 feet) gem-encrusted wooden board contains an inlay made of a pale blue metal, upon which are inscribed all manner of lines and compass points. Characters possessing Profession (sailor) or similar skills immediately recognize the markings as navigation lines used by sailors to plot their course and direction on a map. If the map is placed on a flat surface with the blue inlay facing upwards on a seagoing vessel of any size and the command word is spoken, the magic item activates. The inlay comes alive with magical energies and produces a moving representation of every large object and creature (10 feet or longer) within 30 miles of the map's current location. The map is centered on its current location and depicts anything it can detect that is either on the surface of the water or within 25 feet of the surface. The map does not label the objects and creatures it depicts, but it does use a standard set of symbols that differentiate classes of objects and creatures from one another. Thus, a boat appears different from a whale or an island. The map may operate continuously for up to six hours, after which time it must be left unused for 24 hours before it can be used again. *Caster Level:* 15th; *Prerequisites:* Craft Wondrous Item, *animate objects*, *true seeing*; *Market Price:* 81,000 gp; *Weight:* 150 lb.

Figurehead of Protection: These magical wooden carvings are designed to be placed upon the prow of a seagoing vessel. When in position, they act as a ward against the type of creature depicted in the figureheads. Thus, a mermaid figurehead protects the ship from attacks by merfolk, while a sahuagin figurehead protects the ship from attacks by those aquatic creatures. The figurehead protects not only the ship itself, but also its crew, passengers, and cargo. Any individual belonging to the species depicted in the figurehead must make a Will save (DC 20) to come within 50 feet of the ship. If the first save is successful, the creature must make subsequent saves at the same DC for any hostile action it intends to take against the ship, its crew, or its cargo. The figurehead is considered 10th level for the purposes of caster checks against spell resistance.

The figurehead's effects are active as long as the carving is attached to the ship or until it is destroyed. The figurehead has hardness 10 and 25 hit points. *Caster Level:* 12th; *Prerequisites:* Craft Wondrous Item, *glyph of warding*; *Market Price:* 27,000 gp; *Weight:* 300 lb.

Helmet of the Crab: This magical helmet is made of a strange chitinous material reminiscent of the exoskeleton of a crab or a lobster. The wearer of the helmet is granted a +1 enhancement bonus to Armor Class. If the faceplate is kept down, the wearer also gains 360° vision, which makes him impossible to surprise. Furthermore, the helmet grants the wearer the ability to peer around corners that intersect his current location at no more than a 90° angle. *Caster Level:* 7th; *Prerequisites:* Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *clairvoyance/clairaudience*; *Market Price:* 5,800 gp; *Weight:* 3 lb.

Lacedon Cloak: This unpleasant-looking tattered cloak grants its wearer a +2 enhancement bonus to Armor Class. It also gives him the ability to use the spell *ghoul touch* six times per day. The DC for resisting the effects of the *ghoul touch* is 15. *Caster Level:* 7th; *Prerequisites:* Craft Wondrous Item, *ghoul touch*; *Market Price:* 4,750 gp; *Weight:* 1 lb.

Master Wheel: This item is a large, ornate ship's wheel made of wood and reinforced with metal. When installed on a vessel capable of using it (generally a ship of 60 feet in length or more), the ship's speed is doubled. The wheel also allows its owner to command the ship mentally without being physically present at the wheelhouse—or even aboard the ship. The owner can be as far away in miles as the maximum normal speed of the ship onto which the wheel has been placed. Thus, if the wheel has been placed on a sailing ship, its owner may command it from as far away as two miles. While under the mental command of its owner, however, the ship may not move at its increased speed. That power can only be activated if someone (not necessarily the owner) is physically at the helm of the ship, using the wheel to guide its course. *Caster Level:* 12th; *Prerequisites:* Craft Wondrous Item, *haste*, *spectral hand*; *Market Price:* 72,000 gp; *Weight:* 75 lb.

Potion of Water Breathing: This potion



normally takes the form of a viscous gray-green liquid that stinks like a week-old dead squid and tastes worse. Nonetheless, any sailor who has the gold will try to own one of these and keep it on his person at all times, as it can turn a fatal accident at sea into a mere annoyance. The potion grants *water breathing* as if cast by a 5th-level caster. *Caster Level:* 5th; *Prerequisites:* Brew Potion, *water breathing*; *Market Price:* 750 gp; *Weight:* —.

Ring of Aquatic Survival: This ring is among the most desired of items by those who adventure underwater, as it promises a solution to most of the problems of underwater survival in a single small package. While it is worn, it grants *improved water breathing*, *freedom of movement*, and *sea eyes*. The ring is normally forged of gold and set with a perfect black pearl. While similar in many ways to the *pearl of the sirines* (DMG 223), this item does not need to be held, merely worn, and thus, is much more useful. *Caster Level:* 8th; *Prerequisites:* Forge Ring, *improved water breathing*, *freedom of movement*, *sea eyes*; *Market Price:* 130,000 gp.

Ring of Wind Protection: This ring protects a 10-foot area surrounding the wearer from the effects of all winds, whether natural or magical, including the attacks of air elementals and spells such as *gust of wind*. The ring also protects against the adverse effects associated with winds, such as extreme cold during a blizzard or flying sand during a sandstorm. *Caster Level:* 12th; *Prerequisites:* Forge Ring, *gust of wind*, *endure elements*; *Market Price:* 2,000 gp.

Rod of the Waves: This foot-long rod is made of a strange blue metal and encrusted with sand and shells. The rod possesses *create water* and *water breathing*, usable at will without draining any charges. In addition, the rod allows the wielder to use the following powers at the cost of the number of charges listed in parentheses after the power: *summon monster VII* (huge water elemental, 10 charges), *tidal wave* (10 charges), and *waterways* (5 charges). *Caster Level:* 15th; *Prerequisites:* Craft Rod, *create water*, *summon monster VII*, *tidal wave*, *water breathing*, *waterways*; *Market Price:* 40,000 gp.

Ship of the Gods (Artifact): This remarkable

vessel is almost certainly one-of-a-kind, for there have never been reports of others. If additional examples of it exist, they must be in such faraway lands as to have no impact on the events of most kingdoms. In any event, the *ship of the gods* is a minor artifact whose magic is so powerful that no living wizard or sorcerer is capable of reproducing it.

The ship looks very much like an ordinary warship, a single-mast vessel 100 feet in length, capable of carrying up to 160 soldiers in addition to its crew of 60 to 80. Unlike ordinary warships, the *ship of the gods* can travel 15 miles per hour (130 ft./round), with an emergency speed of 25 miles per hour (220 ft./round). The ship can also travel on the open sea and need not stick to the coast, as do most ordinary warships. In cases of dire emergency, the captain can command the ship to fly at 25 miles per hour for a maximum of 10 minutes.

The *ship of the gods* is well armed, possessing the ability to fire a single 6d6 *fireball* up to a range of 1,000 feet. The *ship* can shoot one *fireball* per round at any target that is directly in front of it. There is no ability to aim the *fireball* beyond turning the ship's prow to face the direction the captain wants the *fireball* to go. The *fireball* has a 20-foot diameter area of effect and its targets get the usual Reflex (DC 23) save to avoid taking full damage. In all other respects, the weapon functions exactly like the *fireball* spell.

The *ship* and all who remain aboard it are completely resistant to the effects of fire-based attacks, whatever their origin. The ship possesses spell resistance 30, making it extremely difficult to damage by magical means.

Sharkskin: This magical +3 leather armor grants the wearer a +10 enhancement bonus on Swim checks, as well as the ability to breathe underwater. Underwater movement rate is equal to the wearer's normal rate. In addition, sharkskin gives the wearer a +2 damage bonus to any piercing weapons he wields while wearing it. *Caster Level:* 9th; *Prerequisites:* Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *water breathing*; *Market Price:* 11,160 gp.

Staff of the Kuo-Toa: This large exotic weapon is similar to that used by kuo-toa whips when fighting against enemies of their species. The staff has large pincers on one end that deal

1d10 points of damage, have a threat range of 20, and deal double damage on a successful crit. The staff has a 10-foot reach, so it cannot be used successfully against an opponent adjacent to the wielder. If the wielder strikes an opponent that is at least Small and no bigger than Large in size, he may choose to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. If the wielder gets a hold on his opponent, he may then squeeze the victim for 1d10 points of damage each round until the opponent is dead or the hold is broken.

In addition, the staff grants the wielder keen vision that enables him to see even invisible, ethereal, and astral creatures. This keen vision also grants a +4 competence bonus on both Spot and Search checks. *Caster Level:* 5th; *Prerequisites:* Craft Magic Armor and Armor, *see invisibility*; *Market Price:* 2,440 gp.

Trident of the Sea: This +1 trident can be thrown underwater as if it were a halfspear, which gives it a greater range than non-magical tridents used on land. The trident also possesses the quality of returning. Finally, the weapon has a +3 bonus when used against unintelligent aquatic creatures (Intelligence 2 or lower). *Caster Level:* 7th; *Prerequisites:* Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *invisibility*, *telekinesis*; *Market Price:* 18,000 gp.

COMBAT UNDERWATER

This section presents new rules and guidelines for resolving combat underwater. The text of this section is designated as **Open Game Content**.

Where there is life, there is conflict, and where there is intelligent life, there is war. This is as true under the water as it is above the ground, but while the fact of combat remains unchanged, the nature of combat is considerably different. This section discusses some of the most obvious differences and offers rules to simulate them, always keeping in mind the concept of the maximum gain in fun for the minimum gain in complexity. In keeping with that sentiment, many things are abstracted. Further, a lot of attention is paid to the idea that many undersea conflicts



involve normally surface-dwelling PCs interacting with undersea natives. DMs running an undersea-intensive campaign can use these rules as a solid base to build on.

The main issues when fighting underwater, compared to the surface, include the following.

Movement and Environment: You do not run underwater; you swim. This section summarizes rules for swimming, and offers some additional options to make underwater adventures more than an endless series of Swim checks. It also discusses the effects of cold and pressure.

Lighting and Vision: Most of Underwave is dark, and even that which is brightly lit is often clouded by sudden murk. Further, water distorts light so vision is badly blurred. The section on vision details the game effects of these conditions.

Weapon and Armor Efficiency: Water is much more dense than air. Blunt weapons are very difficult to use, and even slashing weapons are somewhat limited. Thrusting and piercing weapons are preferred. Further, ranged weapons lose their power quickly, because it is more difficult for a missile to travel through water than through air. As for defense, it is nearly impossible to use a large shield efficiently, and bulky armor is a death sentence when every round requires a Swim check.

These game effects are detailed in the combat and equipment sections.

Living and Dying in Three Dimensions: Beings accustomed to fighting in only two dimensions are at a serious disadvantage against natives whose combat training includes looking above one's head and below his feet at all times. Everything from flanking to attacks of opportunity changes underwater. These game effects are detailed in the combat section. Enterprising DMs might adapt these rules to combat in magical anti-gravity zones or on strange planes of existence where gravity is non-existent, but that is beyond the scope of this book.

MOVEMENT AND ENVIRONMENT

A successful Swim (or Strength) check allows a character to swim at 1/4 his normal speed as a move-equivalent action, or 1/2 speed as a full-round action. The Swim check is rolled each round at DC 10 for calm water, DC 15 for rough water, and DC 20 for stormy water. A failure means the character makes no progress through the water, while missing by 5 or more means the character begins to drown.

Swimming underwater accrues a -1 penalty to the Swim check for each round underwater due to the strain of holding one's breath. This penalty is eliminated if the character is the beneficiary of any magic that grants the ability to breathe water. A swimming character also suffers a -1 penalty for every 5 pounds of gear instead of an armor check penalty. Fatigue damage is calculated every hour that a character swims; make a Swim check against DC 20 and take 1d6 points of subdual damage on a failed roll.

Fast-moving water or currents deal 1d3 subdual damage per round on a failed Swim or Strength check (DC 15). Impacts with things such as rocks cause 1d6 normal damage. On a failed check, the character makes another check to keep from going under.

If you are under the influence of *water breath-*

ing, freedom of movement, or improved water breathing, you can swim at 1/2 speed without making Swim or Strength checks under normal circumstances. You must only make a Swim check each round during stressful situations such as combat. In these situations, you can move at 1/4 normal speed as a move-equivalent action, or 1/2 speed as a full-round action.

Aquatic creatures (i.e., native underwater races) move at full swim speed without a roll and may even “run,” provided they move in a straight line. Aquatic creatures only need to make Swim checks when attempting unusual maneuvers.

Attempting to walk along the sea floor is extremely difficult. If you are not buoyant, you move at only 1/4 your speed if you take a double move, and 1/8 your speed with a normal move (minimum of 5 feet).

HOLDING YOUR BREATH

You can hold your breath for a number of rounds equal to twice your Constitution score in non-strenuous circumstances. Then you start making Constitution checks every round; the DC begins at 10 and increases by 1 each round. If the check fails, you begin to drown. You fall unconscious (0 hp) in the first round; in the second round, you drop to -1 hp and are dying. In the third round, you drown.

PRESSURE

Deep water also causes problems due to the increase in pressure. For every 33.9 feet of depth, pressure increases by one additional atmosphere (14.7 pounds per square inch). This means that at a depth of 200 feet, the pressure on a submerged character increases by just less than 90 pounds. A character who swims too deep will be literally crushed by the weight of the water around him.

Water pressure damage can be accounted for by applying 1d6 points of damage per minute for every 100 feet below the surface a character is. A Fortitude save (DC 15, +1 for each previous check) negates the damage. Objects are not immune to this damage.

The normal *water breathing* spell does not protect against pressure; the spell *improved water breathing* does. Aquatic natives are, for game purposes,

immune to pressure effects. However, sudden changes in pressure may cause damage. If you travel upward or downward more than 200 feet without stopping for at least one minute for each 100 feet, you must make a Fortitude save (DC 15) or take 1d6 points of subdual damage. This applies to characters under the influence of *improved water breathing*, as well.

COLD

Cold water brings the danger of hypothermia with it. When swimming in cold water, characters take 1d6 points of subdual damage per minute of exposure. *Endure elements* (cold) or similar higher-level spells prevents this damage. If the DM wishes, this damage can be increased considerably in particularly cold waters.

Water Temperature	Damage
40–50°	2d6 subdual damage
below 40°	1d6 normal damage + 2d6 subdual damage

PERCEPTIONS UNDER WATER

Deep water poses problems due to differences in visibility and in the speed of sound. Sunlight cannot penetrate water at all past a depth of 650 feet, and even at a depth of a few feet the world becomes very dim as particulates in the water diffuse the light. Non-burning lighting devices such as sunrods or spells that create light come in handy.

All ranges relating to vision are halved due to the diffusing effects of the water. For example, sunrods only penetrate to a 15-foot radius instead of their normal 30 feet; Spot checks suffer a -1 penalty per 5 feet of distance rather than the typical 10 feet; and characters must be within 5 feet of an object to make a Search check rather than the normal 10 feet.

The blurring effect of water hinders fine-detail vision. There is a -2 penalty on all checks involving detail work, such as Disable Device (see Skills, page 14).

Saltwater is painful: If a character's eyes are exposed to the water (he is not wearing goggles, for example), a Fortitude save (DC 15) is required once per minute for the character to keep his eyes open and

VISIBILITY EFFECTS

Water**Conditions**

Some silt, occasional flotsam

Effect

Normal

Thick but intermittent silt or muck, considerable debris

–4 on all Spot checks; targets more than 30 feet distant have 1/2 concealment

Thick, constant silt

Cannot see clearly beyond 15 feet; all targets beyond that range have 3/4 concealment

avoid squinting or otherwise limiting his vision.

These rules apply to optimal conditions in clear water. Most water is not so optimal. Again, aquatic creatures are better adapted to these conditions than surface dwellers. The DM must determine the conditions of the surrounding water and apply the effects from the following chart. The DM should always use the worst possible condition—in other words, if the characters are within 10 feet of the surface but there are thick clouds of silt, use the latter condition to determine vision effects.

Darkvision and low-light vision eliminate penalties due solely to distance from the surface, but neither does anything about the problems of silt and flotsam. Further, low-light vision becomes useless beyond 500 feet; there is simply no light that far down. If it is night or the sky is overcast, this depth is halved.

Sound travels four times faster in water than in air. This makes it hard to determine the origin or source of noises and sounds. Underwater explosions are especially dangerous, due to the increased effects of concussion. At the DM's discretion, the sonic effect of explosions may be increased significantly. For example, a thunderstone might require a Fortitude save of DC 20 rather than its normal DC 15, and may cause physical damage of 1d4 or more. Also, characters gain a +4 circumstance bonus on Listen checks to hear sounds, but suffer a –4 penalty to locate their source due to directional ambiguities. Be sure to consider this rule when resolving Move Silently checks.

UNDERWATER COMBAT

Resolving combat in three dimensions is difficult and adds much unwanted complexity. These rules are designed to allow combat underwater to “feel” different from surface combat, while keeping the changes minimal and simple. Thus realism may be fudged a bit in the name of playability.

WEAPONS

Weapons designed for combat on land become much less useful underwater, and armor that provides adequate mobility in a two-dimensional world becomes much less useful in a three-dimensional one.

Bludgeoning weapons are virtually useless underwater. Attacks with them suffer a –6 circumstance penalty.

Slashing weapons are somewhat less effective underwater. Attacks with slashing weapons must overcome significant water resistance, and suffer a –3 circumstance penalty.

Piercing weapons are preferred for underwater use. They suffer no significant penalties, since they are designed for thrusting and therefore encounter minimal resistance.

All ranged and thrown weapons are considerably less effective underwater, since it takes more energy for a projectile to travel through water than through air, and small shifts in current can easily divert a missile from its target. To reproduce this effect, all range increments are halved underwater. Slings do not function underwater at all. Merfolk and sea elves make



crossbows that work perfectly well underwater (see Equipment, page 24).

Wooden and metal weapons suffer ill effects (rot and rust) from prolonged exposure to water. After each day fully submerged, the item must make a Fortitude save (DC 10 +1 per day of immersion) or be rendered useless. Sailor's wax protects both weapons and armor from this effect.

ARMOR

The effects of armor on Swim checks (due to weight) are already documented in the core rules. In addition, prolonged exposure to the underwater environment is not favorable for most surface armors. Metal rusts and leather rots. This is normally not an issue when the character is taking a quick dive or wading across a river, but spending days underwater (due to a spell or device that grants the power to breathe water) is a different story. As a simple rule, for each day underwater, armor must make a Fortitude save (DC 10 +1 per day of immersion) or lose one point of armor bonus. This reflects rust, rot, the accretion of grit in the joints, and so on. Masterwork armor gains a +2 quality bonus to these saves on the first day, +1

on the second day, and no bonus thereafter. If the campaign world presupposes regular contact between the surface and subsurface worlds, then water-resistant oils and alchemical solutions, such as sailor's wax (see Equipment, page 24) might be available.

Shields are virtually impossible to use underwater. Attempting to use one larger than a buckler grants no bonus to Armor Class, and, indeed, causes armor class to *drop* by an amount equal to the armor bonus of the shield. A buckler grants no bonus but also does not interfere sufficiently to be an issue. A shield can be worn on the back, but it hinders movement slightly (-2 circumstance penalty on all Swim checks, in addition to the weight of the shield).

There is one more vital issue to consider regarding armor: helmets and vision. Most suits of armor come with a helmet designed to protect as much of the head and face as possible. In most cases, this is not a concern, even underwater. However, in the case of breastplate and full plate armor, the traditional accompanying helmet restricts vision underwater. Seeing the world through a thin slit is fine when one is facing opponents on the

ground, but underwater, an attack can easily come from above or below. Even during standard one-on-one melee, opponents can shift their relative positions up or down dramatically during a combat round.

A character wearing these types of armor must deal with limited vision. In game terms, if the helmet is not removed, the character suffers a -2 circumstance penalty on attack rolls and may not make attacks of opportunity. If the helmet is removed, the armor bonus is reduced by 1. Armor can be specified as having a helmet with a wider field of vision; this has no additional cost. Buying a new helmet for an existing suit of armor costs 1/10 the cost of the armor itself. A masterwork helmet must accompany masterwork armor.

Metal weapons are not common in Underwave; it is very difficult to forge them, and they tend to rust. There are exceptions, though. The dwarves of the Sunken Mountain (see page 86) make weapons with the *waterbane* enhancement (see page 39). Shipwrecks sometimes yield metal weapons treated with sailor's wax, which protects them for some time. Merfolk who have conquered islands often have metal tips for spears and tridents.

Because metal is much harder than most other materials used in the construction of weapons, it reduces the armor bonus of undersea armor by 1, but never to less than 0.

COMBAT MANEUVERING

Combat on land is akin to a game of chess; combat underwater is a three-dimensional ballet. Two combatants swirl and dive around each other, spinning wildly as they seek an opening in the opponent's defenses. With more combatants, the fray becomes even wilder—two groups at war resemble a whirling mass of weapons, armor, and blood.

However, the tactical nature of d20 System combat makes this difficult to represent without hopelessly bogging down game play. The following simplified system is presented to help abstract the constant jostling for position in three dimensions.

These maneuver rules are optional. They add some complexity to the game and make a high Swim score very important, possibly unbalancing other skills in some campaigns. The

DM and the players should experiment a bit to see if these rules work well in their games. They provide a major advantage to aquatic natives fighting non-aquatic creatures, as the former have extraordinarily high Swim scores compared to the latter. This may or may not be desirable, depending on the needs of the campaign.

POSITIONAL ADVANTAGE

As a move-equivalent action, a character in melee may target an opponent he is in combat with and declare an attempt to gain a positional advantage. This is resolved by an opposed Swim check, with both characters' base attack bonuses added in.

For every 5 points by which the person attempting to gain the advantage beats the defender, he gains a +1 dodge bonus to Armor Class and a +1 circumstance bonus on attack rolls against the defender until the attacker's next action. In addition, the attacker may make a 5-foot adjustment, including ascending or descending.

If the attacker's Swim check beats the defender's check by less than 5, no bonuses are gained, but the attacker may still make a 5-foot adjustment. If, however, the attacker's Swim check is less than the defender's, the attacker is unable to make the adjustment and he provokes an attack of opportunity from the defender, even if the defender has already taken an attack of opportunity this round. Any other combatants who threaten the attacker may also make attacks of opportunity, but only if they would otherwise be able to do so.

Example

Arinn, a merfolk warrior, has Swim +14 and a base attack bonus of +4 and is in combat with a sahuagin ranger. The sahuagin has Swim +9 and a base attack bonus of +3. Arinn decides to perform a deft surge up and to the right, attempting to gain a positional advantage. Arinn gets a total of 31, while his opponent gets a result of 23. Arinn beat the sahuagin by more than 5 but less than 10, so Arinn gains a +1 circumstance bonus on his next attack roll, and a +1 dodge bonus to his AC against the sahuagin. Arinn can also take a 5-foot step to represent his change of position.

BALANCE

Dexterity and balance are also important considerations for characters fighting underwater. The normal dodge and weave maneuvers practiced in land-based combat will set a warrior tumbling underwater. To reflect this, a character must make a Swim check (DC 15) or have his Dexterity bonus to AC reduced by half. A character with 5 or more ranks in either Tumble or Balance gains a +2 synergy bonus on this check. To avoid having to make an extra roll each round, this check can be made only once at the beginning of an encounter. A character who takes the refocus action may re-roll this check. Aquatic natives do not need to make this check as they are trained to fight in aquatic environments.

BUOYANCY

To greatly simplify the issue of buoyancy underwater, we can define any character as floating, sinking, or balanced. The normal weight checks for swimming may be used in place of this system; this simply adds detail. The normal rules presume the character cannot breathe water and is trying to stay afloat; these rules are aimed at those who can breathe underwater (magically or naturally) and are trying to maintain their position.

These rules cover attempts to hold position while remaining still or moving slowly. If the character is swimming, use the normal Swim rules. The buoyancy of a character also affects some skills, such as Climb and Jump.

Characters carrying less than five percent of their body weight in dense material (i.e., metal armor, weapons, rocks) are **floating**. Floating creatures naturally float upward. Unless an effort is made to stay down, floating creatures ascend at a rate of 5 feet per round. No Swim check is required to stay down if the character has any ranks in swimming at all, but all Swim checks in combat or other situations where precise control is needed suffer a -2 circumstance penalty. If the character has no ranks in Swim, a Swim check (DC 10) is needed to keep from floating upward. Creatures that float to the surface won't necessarily be able to maintain a position with their head above water. Characters still have to make Swim checks to avoid drowning.



Characters carrying more than 10 percent of their body weight in dense material are **sinking**. A Swim check (DC 15 +1 per 10 percent of body weight carried) is needed each round, or the character sinks 5 feet. Aquatic natives have much better control of their buoyancy. They are never floating, and the base DC to control position when sinking is only 10.

Example 1

A half-elf wearing leather armor (15 lb.) drinks a potion of water breathing and dives into a deep lagoon, looking for a magic ring she heard was lost there. She is carrying a halfppear that weighs three pounds for a total carried weight of 18 pounds. She weighs 80 pounds, so she is carrying 22 percent of her body weight. The DM rules that the leather armor is not very dense and halves its weight for buoyancy purposes, bringing the total to 12 pounds, or 15 percent of her weight. She is sinking only slightly and must make a Swim check (DC 15) to maintain position.

Example 2

The half-elf's companion, a human fighter, who is wearing chainmail, dives in after her. He weighs 160 pounds and is carrying a heavy lance, for a total weight of 50 pounds. This totals roughly 30 percent of his body weight, and it is all dense material. The fighter must make a Swim check (DC 18) each round. If the character fails the check, he begins sinking at a rate of 5 feet per round. The character suffers a -1 circumstance penalty on the Swim check for every 5 pounds of weight carried, so he will have a -10 penalty on the check.

Example 3

At the bottom of the lagoon are some sahuagin outfitted in the finest medium scale armor. Since aquatic armor is specifically designed for underwater use, it weighs only 15 pounds for the purposes of buoyancy. The sahuagin spears weigh three pounds, for a total weight carried of 18 pounds. Sahuagin weigh about 140 pounds on average, so this is 12 percent of their body weight. They are sinking, but only need to make a Swim check (DC 10) to swim upward or remain steady.

Note that even aquatic races tend to sink if wearing even moderate armor or carrying a light load. This is why underwater civilizations develop at the bottom of the sea: Civilized, tool-using beings carry weight. Nomadic

merfolk who dwell in the deep far from any land usually carry nothing more than a spear strapped to their backs.

Also note that aquatic races may always take 10 on Swim checks. Combined with their +8 racial bonus, the DC of the Swim check must be at least 18 before they need to roll. This allows them to maneuver in decent armor while much less burdened surface folk plummet or struggle to maintain position.

These rules make any battles between land dwellers and sea dwellers very one-sided if they occur underwater. This is intentional. Adventurers who think they just need to drink some *potions of water breathing* and head off to loot and plunder beneath the seas will find themselves in serious danger. Aquatic expeditions and adventures always require careful preparation and outfitting.

AQUATIC CREATURES ON LAND

Just as land dwellers are disoriented underwater, so too does being on land inconvenience sea dwellers. On land, gravity is onerous and movement becomes difficult. Eyes and ears adapted to life underwater are overwhelmed—everything is too bright and too sharp, and sounds are distorted. Armor that is comfortable and flexible underwater becomes deadweight on land. And the graceful moves of underwater combat cannot be performed in the gravity and unresponsive air of the surface world.

As a simple rule, apply the following modifiers to aquatic beings struggling to deal with life in the flatlands.

- Aquatic creatures suffer the same penalties to skills and senses on land as land dwellers do underwater. Aquatic creatures suffer a -4 penalty on Jump and Tumble checks.
- Base attack bonus and Armor Class are both reduced by 1.
- Aquatic armor is not designed for land use. Increase the armor check penalty of all aquatic armors by 2.
- For races that regularly venture onto land (such as sahuagin), assume that creatures encountered on land have gained the Shorewalker feat.

SEAFARING CAMPAIGNS

This chapter presents a wealth of information on creating, running, and playing in a seafaring campaign. Unless otherwise indicated, all text in this chapter is designated as closed content.

The seas of the world have long been linked with adventure, whether exploration, piracy, trade, or conquest. On the sea, intrepid adventurers can find wealth, war, and entirely new worlds. For those capable and daring enough to venture beneath the waves, the oceans are teeming with life and dangers unknown to landlocked civilizations. Adventurers who seek their fortunes on or beneath the seas have ample opportunities to gain wealth, power, and fame.

ADVENTURE AND THE SEA

Adventure and the sea are natural partners. To travel on the sea is to put oneself at the mercy of the natural world. It is to brave the unknown, even sailing along well-traveled routes. For those venturing under the sea, nature is even more dangerous and the unknown even more prevalent. When adventurers travel the sea, the

situation calls for more than a series of encounters. To live up to the adventurous reputation of the sea, the DM must stress the might of nature, the danger of the weather and the waves themselves, and he must play upon the unknown.

ELEMENTS OF SEA ADVENTURE

The major elements of the sea adventure are nature and the unknown. The ship and crew at sea must contend with the potency of natural forces and weather, waves rising dozens of feet over the side of the ship and crashing down, and with the often-fierce winds that render ranged combat difficult at best. Adventurers must face the dangers of unknown enemies and threats sailing upon the sea or lurking beneath the waves. The DM must keep these things in mind when designing and running nautical adventures to establish the unique sense of adventure that can be found on the sea.

Before leaving port, every seaman prays for fair weather and swift voyage. This is much more than a wish that the trip be pleasant; it is the expression of a supplicant who knows that he is placing himself at the mercy of the whim of nature and the gods. Clear weather and good winds can make a seaman's life simple and bring him swiftly and safely home. Bad weather robs him of sleep



and safety, as the men of the sea must battle the hostile elements to keep their ship afloat and bring it to its destination.

On the sea, the unknown abounds. Enemy warships and pirates or privateers all await seagoing vessels. Pirates in particular have plagued sea trade for as long as ships have traveled the seas. Add to these dangers the uncertainty of the monsters of the deep. Sea serpents, krakens, and great whales all lie under the waves. While the sea is a hostile environment to the surface races, to these creatures it is a natural and comfortable home. The unknown lies beyond and below the ship at sea, and the crew can only receive warning through the vigilance of the lookout. In many cases, warning is not enough.

In a fantasy world, sea monsters are not the worst that can be encountered. Merfolk are mischievous, but not really dangerous—unless they feel threatened. When adventurers and seamen run into merfolk who become immediately hostile it should be a clue that something more is wrong. This may lead the characters into an adventure beneath the waves to help the merfolk against the aggressions of an evil priest of the sea goddess. Kuo-toa or sahuagin can both be cunning and violent adversaries, intelligent enough to devise almost any evil plan and capable enough to enact it. An encounter with a band of such creatures at sea can be worse than an attack by any but the most fearsome of aquatic predators.

To create adventure on the sea, the threats of nature and mystery should be included when possible. Conditions at sea can vary wildly across a course of weeks or even hours, and a DM should be prepared to change the environmental threats confronting the PCs regularly. This allows the players to get a sense of what their characters are living through and helps establish the dangers of sea travel. Extreme conditions should not be overused, but the weather and feeling of tension and uncertainty must be present to create the atmosphere of adventure.

Wind and weather have significant effects on life at sea and may present dangers on a daily basis that only skill and patience can conquer. An encounter at sea is made more dangerous and exciting by having the encounter take place during a storm. While the crew must struggle to keep the ship afloat, the adventurers must fight off attacking pirates or sea monsters. The characters can be kept aware that, even if they win their fight, the ship may be lost and they may be cast into the sea in whatever boats, rafts, or floating debris they can find.

This sense of tension adds excitement to the seagoing campaign. It prevents encounters with the creatures of the sea from becoming routine. Once an encounter begins, it is important to keep it moving. The characters have no time to stop and analyze their situations, and the feeling of surprise and suddenness adds to the excitement. The DM must try to reproduce this feeling for the players by keeping events moving. By not allowing the action to slow, the players are more easily drawn into what their characters are experiencing.

Encounters themselves should be varied when possible. The DM should pay careful attention to which aquatic creatures can survive out of the water. Such creatures can attempt to board the ship and claim it for their own purposes. Since the majority of marine life cannot long survive out of the water, air-breathing opponents rising out of the sea to attack the ship or crew can provide a significant change of pace.

It can also introduce a type of threat the players had not previously considered.

Purely aquatic creatures unable to breathe air prefer to bring the ship and crew into their environment before an attack. Boring a hole in the ship, guiding the vessel into dangerous waters, or simply luring the crewmembers overboard might accomplish this. It is simplest to encounter aquatic creatures when the characters seek adventure under the waves, but the effort to rescue a captured crewmember or stop an attack on the hull of the ship can bring adventurers into the aquatic environment.

Ship-to-ship encounters are also an important part of a seagoing adventure. An approaching ship comes within spotting range long before the vessels are close enough to attack, so surprise and ambush are less common than with land adventures. It may be important, however, to capture the treasure of an enemy vessel, or one of her crew, or to keep another vessel safe. Such consideration can add a twist to an otherwise straightforward combat encounter.

COASTS AND ISLANDS

Those areas of land bordered by the sea are heavily influenced by it. Coastal villages and port cities rely on the sea for food and foreign trade. The mouth of a river is an ideal location to establish trade, and a city built there develops mercantile interests. This city, once a strong sea trade has developed, comes to rely on trade for wealth and prosperity as well as some basic necessities. Thus, strong trade creates a powerful city while weak trade causes a port city to dwindle or be abandoned entirely.

The wealth brought by sea trade also attracts barbarians or foreign powers. The threat of raids or war is felt more strongly near the sea, as enemies may move more swiftly by sea than by land. A port city or coastal nation must build defenses and prepare for attack by jealous neighbors. Also, the need to protect trade routes against piracy gives rise to a strong naval presence and a larger shipbuilding industry.

The need for defense, as well as an interest in foreign trade, gives rise to sea exploration. Port cities invest in attempts to locate other ports with which to trade. Long exploratory voyages require a great deal of supplies, particularly food and water, and ships at sea must resupply

at whatever ports are available. This need for supplies is one reason that port cities develop as trade centers, and is also a source of the cultural exchange that tends to exist in such cities. Foreign vessels coming to port to purchase rations and establish new trade bring with them new races, new ideas, and greater wealth.

Similar in many ways to coasts, islands are even more dependent on the sea than are the continental port cities. Island societies have access to limited land resources and must learn to exploit the resources of the sea in order to grow. Any goods that cannot be produced locally, such as livestock, grains, cloth, spices, or wood, must be acquired by trade with foreign powers. Islands have no land access to other peoples or cities, and travel and trade by ship takes on primary importance to the island economy. As trade and wealth increases, the society may grow beyond what local resources can support. Thus, just as with coastal port cities, the life of island cultures depends on healthy trade with neighbors over the sea.

Island nations universally expend resources to establish a military presence on the sea. While societies of other lands must protect their borders from foreign powers, islands are bordered only by the sea. Blessed with protection from land invasion, islands must focus instead on the threat of attack by sea. An island nation wishing to protect itself from foreign powers must control the seas that surround its borders. It must patrol the seas regularly to defend against raids and pirate attacks, and to protect the commercial interests that help sustain the society.

Any exploration or expansion to be had by an island nation must also be done by sea. Thus, island societies develop an interest in sea exploration as a way of discovering lands beyond their own. An interest in creating a new trade route for exotic goods begins with an expedition to discover foreign lands or to find new routes to places already known. Military interests also demand the exploration of nearby islands and coasts.

These strong ties between the sea and the nearest lands allow almost any type of land adventure to be included in a sea-based campaign. Upon returning from an expedition, adventurers may find problems in their home that require investigation. A simple resupply stop at a foreign port or uncharted island

may uncover new threats and foes to be vanquished. Many times, the attempt to locate or explore an unknown island or faraway port is the impetus for a seagoing adventure in itself. Of course, any of these uncharted lands may hold unknown dangers for the eager adventurers. Travelers going into unknown lands are wise to be prepared for anything.

SHIPS AT SEA

Any expedition at sea, whether for trade, war, or exploration, is spent mostly on the ship itself. Relatively little time, if any, is spent in foreign lands, so it is natural that the ships themselves become the setting for many sea-based adventures. A particular expedition might be undertaken for trade, war, piracy, or exploration, but regardless of purpose, all ships must be prepared to defend themselves if attacked on the open sea or in unknown lands. Crews and captains often welcome adventurers for the added strength and protection they provide in times of trouble.

Trade: Trade is the principle interest of any sea-going society, and most vessels at sea are involved in trade. The majority of ship owners, however, do not personally accompany their vessels. Instead, ship owners hire others to command their ships and make trades in their places. Competent adventurers may find opportunities to command such commercial voyages, plying the seas in an effort to generate more wealth both for themselves and for their benefactors.

Perhaps more natural to many adventurers is a job as a soldier or guard on a merchant ship. Any ship must be prepared to defend itself in case of attack, and none must be more wary than trading ships. The richest vessels on the sea are the greatest prizes for pirates. The soldiers on a ship have a job much like the guards of land caravans, though they may also be expected to help with the running of the ship, depending on their abilities. Adventurers who are interested in such work—particularly those who are also skilled as sailors—can find rewarding employment throughout the trading seasons.

War: Though not as plentiful as trading ships, warships offer a little more opportunity for adventure. For a nation at peace, the main function of the navy is to patrol the seas and

protect the society's mercantile interests. Such patrols are similar to duty in a land garrison—the soldiers man the ship and watch for enemy activity. In peaceful, civilized waters these patrols become routine. However, with the activity of undersea creatures and the threat of barbarian raids or pirate attack, a simple patrol in uncertain waters can become an adventure of its own.

For a nation at war, its navy becomes far more active—and grows considerably with the commandeering of merchant and private ships for the war effort. For naval vessels at war, there are endless tasks to be accomplished, including simple attacks on enemy merchant and warships, establishing or attempting to bypass a blockade, continuing patrols in a more hostile environment, or any other special mission that might become necessary.

Whether during peace or war, the threat of pirates always exists. To answer this threat, ships may be sent to hunt down and defeat particular pirate vessels. Given the skill of pirate crews and the cunning of their captains, this can be a difficult task to accomplish.

Of course, there are threats other than pirates. A military ship might be tasked to deal with any significant threat facing the society. Summoned elementals, dragons, sea serpents, or outposts of evil undersea races are just a few of the dangers that adventurers might be asked to dispatch.

Piracy: Piracy has always been associated with adventure on the sea, and a campaign might focus on the role of pirates themselves. Pirates are independent adventurers who hunt other ships, particularly merchant vessels, for their wealth. Pirates might also seek wealth on land—on islands or within rich port cities. Not all pirates are evil. Like bandits on land, pirates may seek their fortunes at the expense of an evil regime and use their skills to fight against those in power for the greater good.

Similar to the pirates are the privateers. Privateers, while still private citizens, receive commissions from a sovereign nation to perform their acts of capture and plunder. Thus, adventurers asked to combat threats or enemies on behalf of their nation are acting as privateers. Those adventurers set out on expeditions to capture enemy vessels or otherwise neutral-



ize threats and are free to claim whatever treasures their opponents possessed.

Exploration: Ships may also sail for purposes of exploration. Explorers seek new ports for trade or new routes to cities that are otherwise difficult to reach. Such mercantile expeditions are similar to trading voyages, but greater dangers must be faced. An explorer cannot know what threats might arise, and many times is not even certain how to reach the destination. Nevertheless, great wealth can be amassed through mercantile exploration by daring and victorious captains.

Missions of exploration may also be undertaken not for trade, but to discover new lands for conquest, settlement, or exploitation. The wealth of civilized lands has already been claimed and fought over by the nations of that land, while new lands may be blessed with untold riches untouched and undiscovered by anyone. Such is the hope of these explorers, who seek out the completely unknown and hope to return with fame, wealth, and glory. The explorer who brings news of an untouched, untamed wilderness may be granted rights to that land, to settle and tax in the name of his king or queen.

While they are rare, some explorers seek only the knowledge of what lies over the horizon. Cartographers and scholars are always interested in knowledge of new lands and new people and are sometimes given to pursuing that knowledge across the unknown sea. Such an explorer must find a wealthy patron to provide a ship, or possess this wealth himself. These expeditions of pure exploration offer an opportunity for adventure unfettered by the temptations of wealth and land. They offer the opportunity to seek what is new simply for the excitement of being there and experiencing it. Of course, even a scholarly voyage requires some protection, and the lure of the unknown can be an irresistible draw for true adventurers.

WEATHER

The weather is extremely important to seagoing vessels. Wind, rain, and clouds determine their environment. Depending on these factors, a vessel might have a swift, easy journey or it might spend months lost at sea. More than just travel time, these factors can incite mutiny. Captains have lost ships due to bad weather and uncertainty—not just to the ocean, but to angry or frightened crews.



Wind speed directly determines the speed of the ship, and too much wind can break masts, tear sails, and blow water onto the deck. High winds also cause rough seas, which can toss the largest ships around like toys. In the midst of such a chaotic environment, the crew must work harder than ever to prevent the ship from being blown over, sent off-course, or damaged beyond repair. For most ships' crews, the goal is simply to survive a heavy storm with the ship intact. Afterwards, they must determine their position again and try to find the way to their destination.

Rain and fog both limit vision, and may make it difficult for seamen to locate dangers to the ship such as reefs, sand bars, or rocks in the water. Limited vision also makes it difficult to find another vessel or to spot a safe port or island. Civilized lands build lighthouses to help ships find their way to port and avoid hazards in the sea, but in many places the ship's crew are on their own. No one likes to approach an unknown coast in the fog. Too many times, a watery grave awaits those unaware of the hazards.

Cloud cover, while not serious unless a storm comes, can blanket the sky in gray and white. Unable to see the stars, any ship out of sight of land may lose its way. Reliable navigational instruments are rare and pilots must guide themselves by the stars. When clouds or storms hide the stars, even the best pilots can lose their way. Once the clouds have passed, the ship's course must be confirmed. When ships stray, days, weeks, or months may be lost. Ships

ration out their supplies and try to leave as much room for cargo as possible. A delayed voyage can run the ship out of food or water before a safe port is reached, and a hungry crew can be more dangerous than the worst storm.

Rules for resolving the effects of weather on sea travel and combat are presented in Chapter 6 (see page 170).

HAZARDS

The animal hazards of the sea are numerous, and aquatic races with malevolent intelligence can be a significant hazard of their own. These dangers, however, can be fought and defeated. The environmental hazards of the sea must be detected, avoided, or simply endured. Perhaps the most dangerous of the undersea environmental conditions is the temperature and pressure of the water itself. Those dangers are well known and constant, but there are other, more rare dangers in the seas. There are other hazards that can appear suddenly and for which there are no defenses but vigilance.

Icebergs: Where glaciers or ice sheets meet the sea, the movement of the ice can push the edge into water that is deeper than the thickness of the ice. As this happens, portions of the ice break off and form icebergs. When they form, icebergs are enormous, with a height of up to 500 feet above the surface of the water. The majority of the iceberg, however, remains underwater. Surface currents push icebergs further from the poles and glaciers that form them, and they can float thousands of miles away from their origin, reaching well into temperate regions.

Icebergs are a hazard on the sea for two principle reasons. First, the mass of ice beneath the surface can puncture a ship beneath the waterline and cause it to sink. Even when moving slowly, the sheer mass of an iceberg imparts it with a great deal of force in such a collision. A maneuverable ship, however, should be able to avoid icebergs as they approach. Use the ramming rules (see page 166) to resolve collisions with icebergs. Treat typical icebergs as Colossal, stationary objects.

Second, icebergs can cause a hazard to aquatic races. While most sea creatures can easily avoid the slow-moving icebergs, an undersea settlement must be abandoned at the approach of an iceberg, unless some means of deflecting or destroying it can be found. Not only can the mass of the ice destroy the structures of an aquatic settlement, but the ice also cools the surrounding water. Just as with currents, changes in the temperature of the surrounding water can pose a serious threat to marine life, and intelligent races are no exception.

Waterspouts: A waterspout is simply a tornado that forms over a large body of water. The powerful winds of the funnel pick up water from the surface of the sea, and waterspouts appear as huge inverted cones of swirling water rising into the sky. The mass of the water collected slows the winds and prevents the funnel from lifting off of the surface and jumping as tornadoes do on land. Despite the slower winds and more predictable movement, however, waterspouts still present a significant danger. Normal storms and rough seas can threaten to break the masts of a ship, tear sails, or even flip a vessel over and sink it. The heavy storm that accompanies a waterspout can damage the sturdiest ships, and the high winds and extremely low pressure of the waterspout itself can destroy them outright. If a ship collides with a waterspout, its sails and masts take 6d6 points of damage, and Strength checks against these structures' Break DCs are made as described in the ship combat rules (see page 160). The dangers posed by waterspouts do not extend far beneath the surface of the sea where the winds cannot reach.

Whirlpools: A whirlpool is a body of water spinning in a circular motion. They have a central depressed area and sometimes a vortical cavity in the center. This cavity draws surrounding floating objects toward the center and underwater. Whirlpools are caused by the meeting of opposing currents or tides, by the force of wind on the water, or by undersea currents running into offshore rocks.

Most whirlpools are simply giant swirls of water. Sailing ships can be becalmed in such a whirlpool and held in the center by the force of the water, or they might be swept against rocky coastlines. Oared vessels may be able to overcome the force of the current, but whirlpools can still be a significant hazard. Whirlpools

with a vortical cavity can become quite violent and the suction produced by the swirling water can drag down even the largest ships. Whirlpools of either type pose no threat to undersea life, though they can inhibit the movement of marine creatures.

A ship that comes into contact with a non-vortical whirlpool at least as large as the ship moves in a random direction for 1d4 rounds unless the crew makes a successful Profession (sailor) check (DC 15 + 2 for every size category larger the whirlpool is than the ship).

If a vortical whirlpool's size category at least equals the size category of a creature or ship that comes into contact with it, the creature or ship may be sucked in and submerged. Creatures must make Swim checks (DC 20) or be sucked in and thrust under the surface. The creature is pulled 1d6 x 10 feet below the surface, plus 10 feet for every size category of the whirlpool above Medium-size. The effects of pressure, temperature, and drowning are resolved normally. The crew of a ship must make a Profession (sailor) check (DC 15 + 2 for every size category larger the whirlpool is than the ship) or the ship sinks.

SEAGOING VESSELS

Seagoing vessels of all types are vital to any nautical campaign. Travel between adventure sites would be impossible without them, and they serve as adventure sites of their own. Battles waged on the open seas are fought ship to ship, through boarding actions and siege weapons. The life of an adventurer on the sea is tied to and dependent on the safety and welfare of the ship and the crew that mans it.

The materials used to construct seagoing vessels limit their size. In most cases ships are built of wood. Beams are soaked in water until they become flexible. They are forced into their intended shape and allowed to dry. The shaped beams are then assembled into their final form. Wooden ships, however, cannot be built longer than about 200 feet as the wood loses its structural integrity at such a large size and does not stand up to rough seas. Other materials may be restricted more or less, depending on their resilience. For complete rules on ship construction, see Chapter 4.

CREW AND COMPLEMENT

Many tasks are required for the successful running of a ship, most of them hard, grueling work. Crewmembers are called upon at any time of day or night to combat the capricious whim of weather to which ships at sea are subjected. The uncertain conditions under which crewmembers work, as well as the long hours and dangers of sea travel, mark seagoing as a profession for the young. Officers on a ship are divided into two types: specialists who hold a position of importance and prestige, and those in actual command of the vessel and crew. Officers are older than most crewmembers, in part because their rank requires more study and training. Also, their duties are neither as tiring nor as dangerous as the crews'; as a result, specialists and commanders have longer life expectancies.

Crew: In civilizations with steady demand for trade by sea, crewmembers may be considered professional seamen and can become quite skilled at their work. It is only in such societies that a real organized system for training and pursuing a career emerges. In societies with less seagoing interest, crewmembers may be soldiers or civilians with no real skill picked almost at random. In such situations, there may be less or no training in how to handle a ship. Regardless of the actual level of training or experience, the same tasks and roles must be filled. Naturally, these roles are called by other titles in different cultures.

Seamen begin their careers as pages. Pages start while still children, between the ages of eight and 10 for humans. Their duties are the least specialized tasks on board—cleaning the ship or acting as servants and messengers. Pages are required to obey any orders given to them by members of the crew, unless they are fortunate enough to have a patron among the officers of the ship. On small ships with fewer crewmembers, there may be no pages or a single page that serves captain and crew.

As pages grow older, they become apprentices. This occurs between the ages of 17 and 20. Apprentice duties focus on those tasks that youth and vigor leave them best equipped to handle. They act as lookouts, man the oars or sails, and are responsible for moving cargo, supplies, and equipment. Apprentices must obey orders from other crewmembers, but they are not required to act as servants.

At about age 20, apprentices become full crewmembers and may be called sailors, rowers, oarsmen, or seamen. A letter of certification sometimes accompanies this distinction. The tasks for the seamen revolve around the actual handling of the ship, particularly those duties that require skill and experience. These sorts of jobs include handling the helm, rigging during complicated maneuvers, and making minor repairs to the ship. After some years on the job, seamen with sufficient ability and the opportunity for training might ascend to the ranks of artillerists or officers. In some societies, slaves who are not considered seamen, or even part of the crew, man the oars.

Soldiers or guards may be included as part of the crew. Archers, crossbowmen, and infantrymen are favored for this work. When possible, archers or crossbowmen are positioned on the mast or in the rigging to more easily fire on enemy vessels. Infantry soldiers, or marines, are assigned the task of carrying out or defending against boarding attempts. The bulk of ship-to-ship fighting falls to the marines who are armed with polearms or swords. Some ships carry no soldiers and rely on the seamen for defense.

Artillerists are expert seamen who also know how to work the artillery pieces on board the ship, such as ballistae or light catapults. Many ships are not armed with such weapons and do not have artillerists on board. When artillerists are present, however, they are responsible for the proper functioning of the weapons, including loading, aiming, firing, and repairs. On vessels with a significant number of such weapons, particularly warships, there is also a chief artillerist or sergeant who commands the artillerists in battle.

Specialists: The specialists on a ship are responsible for keeping the ship and its contents in good order. For those tasks that can be assisted by unskilled labor, volunteers or conscripts from the crew may assist the specialists. For the most part, however, their tasks are handled alone. Only the largest ships have need of the full complement of specialists. Smaller vessels have fewer specialists and may have none at all.

Anything but minor repairs are handled by specialists who form a repair team: the carpenter, caulker, and diver. The carpenter repairs any of

the wood components that become damaged. The carpenter is also tasked with the construction of a launch or raft as necessary or temporary cabins for important passengers. The caulker has to maintain the hull of the ship, using sealant to stop leaks and seal punctures. The diver works from the outside of the hull to repair any damage that the carpenter and caulker cannot.



The scribe, or scrivener, and the cooper occupy themselves with the contents of the ship. The scribe registers cargo and verifies that contents are delivered properly to their legal owners. He is also responsible for writing wills and recording any judicial proceedings that occur on board. The cooper's task is to keep the containers on board in good repair, particularly the barrels of wine, water, and salted provisions.

Other specialists included on voyages whenever possible are those with spellcasting ability. In some societies these specialists are the most rare, while in others, spellcasters are present on nearly every ship and may even take on the duties of officers. Priests act as ministers of faith and healers, and may have different roles, depending on their abilities. Wizards and sorcerers may be battlemages specializing in ship-to-ship combat, weather wizards who control winds and weather to make expeditions safer and faster, and diviners and advisers who keep the officers informed of events and threats that might affect the ship, crew, and voyage.

Commanders: The commanders of a ship range from those of limited authority to those in absolute command of the expedition and the crew. Officers of lesser rank include the steward, boatswain, guardian, and the oarmaster. The three officers who hold real command are the pilot, the master, and the captain.

The steward's duties are the care and dispensation of the food stores on the ship. On many vessels, the steward doubles as the chief cook. Some command of the crew is necessary in this

position, and the steward might have the authority to stifle grumbling about rations, prevent mutinies, and punish members of the crew caught stealing food from the stores. Many stewards use their positions to line their own pockets at the expense of the seamen on board, and the reputation of stewards in general suffers from the acts of such men.

The boatswain on a ship acts as a messenger, relaying the orders of the pilot and the master as they relate to steering a course and handling cargo. It is the boatswain's duty to see that orders are carried out correctly and in a timely fashion. The boatswain also acts as a supervisor on-board, directing the handling of the anchors, yards, sails, and other equipment on the ship.

The guardian acts as a helper to the boatswain. He works at the opposite end of the ship and assists the boatswain in directing the crew. The guardian's primary function, however, is to command the subordinate boat or launch if one is on board. Such boats are sent out to test waters and find a safe passage for the ship to follow. They might also be used to tow sailing ships if the wind dies.

The oarmaster is found only on those vessels that have oars and rowers. His duty is to maintain the speed and oversee the rowers. Two seamen assist him—one for each side of the ship. They mark the stroke for the rowers and keep the oars working together. The work of rowers is hard, thankless, and some-



times forced. Oarmasters earn reputations for cruelty because it is their responsibility to keep the oars moving under any circumstances.

The pilot, or navigator, is responsible for guiding the ship from its port of departure to its destination. Pilots also must keep the ship safe from storms or accidents by avoiding hazards whenever possible. The pilot must know how to chart a course and check the position of the ship by the stars, or by instruments if they are available. Competent pilots are also familiar with the waters through which they sail and are aware of known dangers and challenges along the route. They should also be able to predict weather by the natural signs at sea and know the speed of the ship by observing the way in which the prow breaks the waves.

The master of a ship acts as an economic administrator. His duties include buying and loading supplies, finding, loading, and accounting for cargo, and paying taxes and salaries after the voyage is complete. If storms and waves make it necessary to dump some of the cargo, the final decision rests with the master. The profits and costs of expeditions are his responsibility, and the best masters are shrewd businessmen.

The captain of a ship is in overall military command of the vessel. It is the captain's duty to rally the crew to the defense of the ship in case of attack. It is also the captain who is responsible for the artillery, guards, and soldiers on board. Many times, the captains of ships are completely unfamiliar with nautical matters. Instead, they might be non-naval military officers, gentlemen or nobility, or wealthy investors given the prestige of rank.

Trading ships: Trade is the principle reason for travel on the sea. Business enterprises ranging over the sea engage vessels to transport goods between ports. On such ships, the business of shipping is the most important factor and concern. The master of trade ships is the real authority, unless the owner of the ship is aboard as well. Sometimes trade ships do not have a captain at all, though a member of the crew might be named to direct defenses in case of attack. In other cases, the master also fulfills the role of captain, reinforcing his authority over the expedition and the crew.

Primitive trading vessels are under the command of a single officer who acts as pilot, master, and captain. In most cases, this officer is also the owner of the ship and undertakes the expedition for his own profit. Crewmembers are relatives or friends, or may simply be hired for the duration of the voyage.

Warships: Military vessels are under the command of the captain of the ship. Military vessels also establish a regimented chain of command so that in times of crisis there is no uncertainty as to who is in charge of the ship. While the captain is certainly at the top of this chain of command, his second might be the pilot, master, boatswain, or oarmaster. There might even be additional officers on board whose sole duty is as a first officer and who are charged with taking command of the ship should the captain be unable to continue in his duties.

Many times, warships do not have a master on board. Authorities in port may handle the master's duties, or the roles of master and steward might be combined. Warships, however, always have a contingent of soldiers on board. Vessels equipped with oars put marines at the oars. When the vessel makes contact with an enemy, the marines abandon the oars and enter the battle. In this case, the oarmaster also commands the marine unit. Of course, warships

have spellcasters aboard whenever possible, to provide their magical talents in assisting during battle or recovery.

Primitive warships focus on holding as many marines as possible, because engagements are decided solely by boarding attacks, and these soldiers are the only crew aboard the ship. The single officer, the captain, is responsible for leading the men into battle. After conducting the intended raid or attack, the captain sees the crew safely home, with each soldier carrying whatever treasure he could claim along the way.

Pirates: A pirate captain is analogous to the leader of a gang of bandits. Pirate captains take on the duties of captain, rallying the pirates to attack or defense, but they also act as the pilot. It is rare that a pirate captain allows anyone else to determine the course the ship takes. Most pirate captains are also in control of whatever cargo is on board, since they are reluctant to trust others with their treasure. The lesser officers of steward, boatswain, guardian, and oarmaster may or may not be present on pirate vessels. When they are present, the boatswain or oarmaster sometimes acts as second-in-command. They keep the crew in order when the captain is not around, whether he is sleeping or gone ashore. Successful pirates who share their good fortune with their crews are unlikely to have problems with betrayal or mutiny, but for the most part pirate ships must be on careful guard against such difficulties.

Primitive pirate vessels are in most ways identical to primitive warships. The distinction lies in the fact that whereas warships represent the interests of a nation or tribe, pirates seek only their own interests. They are a group of barbarians who take to the seas to attack other vessels and claim their victims' cargo as bandits do on land. Such gangs are led by the oldest, the best warrior, or someone with a similar position of authority, whether from birth or ability.

Privateers: Privateers are individuals commissioned by a nation to attack enemy vessels. The manner in which they conduct themselves can be similar to pirates. Privateers who are former military officers, however, are more likely to run their vessel as if it were a warship. They tend to prefer a regimented chain of command and distinct ranks among the crew. Since the privateer is a private individual who owns his

own vessel, he may run it in almost any way he wishes. Authorities of the nation that commissioned a privateer often ignore his illegal activities. As a result, privateers have a great deal of freedom of action. In primitive societies, there is no real distinction between warships and privateers.

Explorers: Ships on exploratory missions, in contrast to other sorts of ships, are led by the pilot. The pilot is the sole member of the crew with the background to understand mapping and charts, and is placed in overall command for purposes of completing a mission of discovery. The pilot may take on the role of captain as well, if he has the background to manage the defense of the ship. Otherwise there might not be a captain, and even when a captain is present, his strictly military authority takes a secondary role.

The exception to this is in missions of exploration commissioned directly by a sovereign. In such cases it is possible for the sovereign to command a military captain to seek out or explore new lands, and the captain, if he cannot navigate, must find a suitable pilot to assist him. On such commissioned voyages, soldiers are included with the crew for the defense of the interests of the crown. Artillerists, however, are only rarely included as the weapons of war are expensive and not of particular use during a mission of exploration.

Exploratory missions are long and uncertain, and the specialists on board can take on greater importance. Since it is unknown when the vessel might reach port, repairs and resupply must be handled along the way. Spellcasters, particularly those skilled in divinations, are especially welcome as they can help ease the uncertainty of the expedition.

Primitive explorations may be undertaken by private individuals, particularly those with an interest in trade, or by the military. Thus the explorers of primitive societies are also the traders and warriors, and their organization and means of command are the same as primitive trading vessels and warships.

MOTIVE POWER

Motive power describes the means employed to move the ship. The two basic forms of motive power are oars and sails. There are variations of these types, but the



majority of seagoing vessels are of a standard form. In societies where both forms of motive power are available, oars and sails are often combined, particularly on military craft.

Oars: Oars are manned by crewmembers and use leverage to push the ship through the water. The smallest vessels might have only two oars, both manned by a single rower. Larger ships are built with hundreds of oars on each side of the ship, in two or three banks. One or more rowers handle each oar.

The principle advantage of oars is the increased maneuverability they offer. An oared vessel can be turned more quickly than a sailing ship. Of course, rowers are needed to man the oars and the crew requirement of ships with oars is much larger than that of a purely sailing ship. The increased crew size means that the vessel holds less cargo. Warships, however, are measured by the number of soldiers they can carry onboard. On such vessels, soldiers man the oars. When the ship encounters an enemy, the soldiers abandon their oars and join the battle. Other types of vessels might use oars, depending on the preference of the captain and the requirements of the expedition.

There are many variations of oars, including several primitive versions. Paddles and poles are both used to push smaller vessels such as rivercraft, and are not seen on seagoing ships. Paddlewheels are another variation of oars, where a large wheel is fitted with a series of boards. Crewmembers turn the wheel, and the paddles propel the vessel through the water. Paddlewheels are not very maneuverable but require fewer crewmembers than standard oars. Another variation, which provides added stability as well as requiring additional rowers, is a wooden outrigger framework. This is built onto either side of the ship and slightly raised. Rowers sit above the water and use their oars to propel the vessel. If the ship becomes unstable, one side of this external frame touches the water and stabilizes the ship.

Sails: Sails are sheets of cloth—or sometimes reeds, animal skins, or any other suitable material—set on vertical masts to catch the wind. The force of the wind drives the ship forward. Primitive sailing ships typically have a single square fixed-sail set on a mast. On more advanced sailing ships, there are a number of square and triangular sails set on as many as five masts. The sails of these craft can be turned to catch wind blowing at an angle to the ship's direction of movement. This allows the ship to turn more rapidly and continue to move under less-than-favorable wind conditions.

Sails have a significant advantage in speed, and can easily overtake most vessels without sails. In addition, sailing ships require a much smaller crew than oared ships, because the actual work of moving the ship is done by the wind. Sailing vessels, however, face an additional threat that other ships do not. A sailing ship can be becalmed, meaning that the sails are not able to catch enough wind to move the vessel. When this happens, a sailing ship is unable to move under its own power unless it also has oars, and must wait for the wind to pick up. Ships with fixed sails, which are unable to turn to catch the wind, are becalmed more easily than advanced designs. These primitive ships are equipped with oars as a backup to their sails. More advanced vessels are able to catch even unfavorable winds and may be built without oars. Sailing ships lacking oars are intended for hauling cargo, whether a merchant's trade goods or a pirate's spoils. The space and weight freed up by the lack of oars and rowers allows these vessels to carry more.

The variations in sails revolve around size, placement, and construction material. As sailing ships grow more advanced, the number of sails increases, as does their flexibility. Sailing vessels may also be fitted with an outrigger for stability, and it is possible for oars or additional sails to be placed on this frame.

DRAFT

The draft of a ship is the depth of its hull below the waterline. Ships are designed as either deep or shallow draft, depending primarily on where they are designed to travel. Of course, ships may be built of almost any size and with almost any draft. The distinction between shallow- and deep-draft vessels may be blurred, but most ships are easily classifiable as one or the other.

Deep: Ships with a deep draft leave a significant portion of the ship under the waterline. Such ships are designed for use on the open sea. Their large displacement of water allows them to remain stable in rough water or storms. The sizable hull may also be used for the storage of cargo. These advantages lead to the exclusive use of deep-draft vessels for long voyages. They are also favored for any voyage over rough waters or open sea because of their superior balance.

Due to the depth at which the hull rests, deep-draft vessels are unable to approach coastlines and cannot navigate any except the largest of rivers. These restrictions lead to the construction of docks away from the coastline. Deep-draft vessels may approach these docks without running aground. In case no docks or suitable mooring point are available, most deep draft ships carry subordinate vessels—the ship's boats. These smaller boats can be lowered into the water and a landing party can row into the shallower waters that the ship cannot reach.

Deep-draft trading ships are favored for their increased cargo capacity. If such ships are available, they are used for long trade routes, expeditions across open sea, or anywhere else they are capable of traveling. Warships are built with a deep draft by societies that go to war on the open sea, or that must cross or patrol significant bodies of water. Pirate ships and privateers use deep-draft vessels wherever trading ships use them; they must be able to reach their victims. Ships intended for exploration almost always have deep drafts, for such missions usually involve long voyages.

Shallow: Shallow draft vessels, including rafts and barges, have a flat or nearly flat bottom. They are designed to travel along rivers, lakes, or near coastlines. Shallow-draft ships cannot carry as much cargo or supplies as vessels with a deeper draft, so they are favored only for short trips along rivers and coasts. These ships, however, have the ability to put ashore easily and can traverse rocky waters and sand bars much more safely than deep-draft ships. Thus, they may avoid pursuit from deep-draft vessels under most circumstances.

Shallow-draft ships have difficulty with the currents of the open sea, which can set such ships spinning or sink them outright. Since storms and rough waters pose such a threat to shallow-draft ships, these vessels rarely travel out of sight of the coast. It is difficult for a shallow-draft vessel to overcome these limitations on its own. Several such ships traveling as a squadron, however, might lash themselves together. In doing so, they are less likely to be flipped or tossed by rough waters. This method may also be employed to help the vessels resist boarding attempts or other attacks.

Shallow-draft trading ships are favored for river trade, but they also find significant use in managing trade routes between cities along a coastline. Because of the ease with which a shallow-draft vessel crosses waters unsafe for deep-draft ships, pirates or privateers who hunt shallow-draft trading vessels are forced to use the same sort of ships. Barbarians and raiders who use rivers to strike deep into enemy territory and to outrun hostile armies favor these ships. Shallow-draft ships are used as warships for rapid movement of troops into areas difficult to reach by deep-draft ships, such as landings on enemy coastlines. Enemy cities are attacked directly at the docks or seawall by shallow-draft vessels. Shallow-draft ships are also sometimes lashed together to form temporary bridges or barricades.

UNDERWATER VESSELS

Most surface races lack the ability and knowledge to construct ships that would allow them to travel under the sea. Aquatic civilizations, however, sometimes construct such vessels for themselves. Most of these vessels are similar to surface chariots, carts, and wagons, and teams of fish or other aquatic animals pull them. Standard oars are useless underwater, but some undersea ships make use of modi-

fied paddlewheels, screws, or propellers for thrust and are manned by a team of rowers. Other aquatic ships use sails—in formations that look strange to visitors from the surface—to catch undersea currents. Most undersea currents move too slowly, but this method has found use in limited applications.

One of the initial problems faced by designers of underwater vessels is ballast. That is, a vessel can easily be constructed to naturally rise to the surface of the sea or even to sink to the bottom. Controlling the depth of the vehicle while in motion, however, can be tricky, even if animals power the vessel. Air-filled bladders—similar to those used by some types of seaweed and aquatic animals—and stone weights are used to provide this ballast.

Aquatic races do not make their vessels airtight. Most are built of wood or woven strands of kelp. They are allowed to fill almost completely with seawater, except for those sections dedicated to providing ballast. Since aquatic races do not normally walk, they have no need for decks on their vessels. Instead they build hollow ships and use internal partitions to separate living quarters, work areas, and cargo room.

PORTS OF CALL

Almost as important as the ships themselves are the ports and cities that service seagoing vessels. These cities thrive and grow with the trade provided them by the sea. For the peoples that come to the port cities, they provide new homes and exposure to diverse cultural elements. For seagoing vessels, they provide rest and resupply, as well as the profits that drive the sea trade. To adventurers, they provide a base of operations and a diverse assortment of arms, armor, and gear.

Trade is the driving force that provides port cities with prosperity. The wealth and affluence brought by foreign trade bring political power. The people and cultures participating in trade provide these cities with their life. The three aspects of port cities that distinguish them from any other urban environment are the strengths that these cities come to rely upon: trade, politics, and culture.

SEA TRADE

Surplus goods and commodities are transported by sea routes to locations where they can be profitably sold. Those profits are used to purchase more goods, which are taken back to the original port. In this way, a city can export those resources it does not need in exchange for products of greater use. This underlying principle is the basis for the prosperity that sea trade brings to a port city. While natural resources available in an area can ultimately restrict its potential growth, sea trade offers access to additional goods and commodities that allow port cities to grow larger than what local resources would support. The growth and variety of products available in a successful port city attract more trade. This cycle continues and the potential of a port city is redefined. Growth is limited by its capabilities and efficiency at trade rather than the locally available natural resources.

Any form of trade helps a society to prosper. Trade by sea is more effective than by land because the lower cost of sea travel results in a more efficient exchange of goods across greater distances. This efficiency rewards sea trade by returning greater profits. The increased profit encourages merchants and investors to expand their mercantile fleets and sea trade with other ports. Port cities only rely on land caravans to access resources unreachable by sea.

A port city established with sea trade has access to a larger market than would otherwise be possible. Ships sailing from the port can reach a great distance, giving merchants access to a wide variety of ports, markets, and buyers. This range of options allows merchants to ship their products across a large area and sell in those markets where prices are highest. The profit returned by the sale of these goods is higher than would be possible in local markets. Traders are able to bring more wealth into the city, which they spend on services and goods. This feeds increasing wealth and profits into the economy of the port city and attracts new people and businesses.

As trade increases, tradesmen in a port city specialize in producing those goods that return the most profit. Production of goods or materials that are more easily acquired through trading partners across the sea is reduced or eliminated.



and more profitable production sought. This process of specialization of production improves profits and wealth. The port city concentrates on those goods that it produces more cheaply than its trading partners do. Goods that are less expensive to acquire through trade are not produced locally. This specialization increases the interdependence of port cities—they become reliant on goods from trading partners that are too expensive or difficult to produce locally. Any interruption of trade will cut off the supply of necessary goods as well as stopping the influx of wealth. Such a turn of events can cripple or destroy the greatest port cities.

POLITICS

The wealth and growth resulting from successful trade increases the affluence of port cities as compared to neighboring societies. This gain in prestige stems mainly from the economic dependence of surrounding states and on the greater military capability of wealthy port cities. As a result wealthy port cities become the center of political influence for their regions or the capital of a new sovereign state.

Economic Dependence: The economic dependence of landlocked societies on neighboring port cities ensures the political ascension of those port cities. This dependence arises not only from the opportunities for trade represented by the port city, but also from investments in local economies of the neighboring states. Once the dependence of a significant majority of neighboring cities has been accepted, the port city may establish itself as the political capital of a new nation. Those cities and towns already dependent on the port city are unable to resist these political machinations. Often they do not wish to resist, as they recognize the benefits of allegiance to their benefactor.

Smaller cities and states in the region of a port city find it advantageous to take their surplus goods and products to port for trade. The larger market available in the port city and the opportunity for trade with foreign merchants visiting the port allow smaller, landlocked societies to take some advantage of international trade. The larger number of buyers available in the port market allows the neighboring states to sell their goods for a larger profit. They also have the opportunity to

acquire exotic goods in exchanges that are otherwise not available in the local area.

Neighboring states come to rely on these trade advantages. This reliance forces the smaller states to accept the political preeminence of the port city. The port can restrict the trade opportunities for dependent states by establishing import quotas or tariffs that reduce their ability to transport or sell goods. The economic welfare of the neighboring states is dependent on these trade opportunities and they are forced to accede to the demands or pressures of the port city in order to avoid such restrictions.

Port cities may invest some of their wealth in the economies of neighboring states. These investments may be based on humanitarian principles—attempts to improve the quality of life in neighboring states. The investments might also be loans or outright purchases of loyalty or fealty by the wealthier state. Whatever the intentions of the port cities making these investments, their wealth and position allows them to improve the economic conditions of their neighbors for their own gain.

Neighbors receiving loans or gifts owe their economic condition to the wealthier state. While a single debt does not assure political allegiance owed to the port city, the effects of investments over the course of years or decades establishes a long-term adherence to the political wishes of the patron city.

Military Capability: The military capability of cities increases with the growth and wealth of the city. Port cities are no exception to this, and as trade brings new growth and prosperity the military assets of the port city increase as well. With greater population comes more conscripts. With wealth comes better equipment for the troops as well as the support of mercenary troops.

The most direct means by which military power may result in political ascension is through the conquest of neighboring states. The military of port cities, however, is concentrated in naval forces and it can be difficult for a port city to conquer landlocked states. The threat of conquest, or of any military action, can render societies susceptible to the political aspirations of larger and more powerful neighbors. Thus, the military buildup associated with growth and success may lead to conflict with small-

er states, and this conflict may lead to their domination.

Another possible reaction to the military growth of port cities is a request for protection. Neighboring cities may request the protection of the wealthy port city, in the form of garrison troops or assistance in war. Such assistance or agreements subjugate the weaker states just as surely as economic dependence. Domination by mutual defense, however, is even quicker than by economic dependence. Once troops are stationed in or supporting the weaker cities, it can be difficult to remove those soldiers without making political concessions.

MIXING CULTURES

Foreign trade brings with it foreign cultures. Merchants, tradesmen, workers, and investors from other lands travel to the port city to make deals or seek their fortunes. Once they arrive, they establish settlements or neighborhoods of their own. Distinct cultures divide the city into sections, though the original culture remains dominant. Each cultural section develops its own governance, but all are still subject to the authority of the dominant culture. Both geography and customs divide the sections and cultures of the city, though these distinctions may blur over time. To help establish the character and texture of a particular port city, the DM should consider these factors and how they will affect the attitudes and prosperity of the different cultural groups present.

Port cities with mixed cultures should be designed as any other city, using the core rules (DMG 137). When determining racial demographics, divide the largest portion of the population among the dominant races as appropriate. Alternatively, each culturally differentiated section of the city can be designed as a separate isolated community whose total populations equal the size of the port city. This second method allows the DM to establish independent power centers for each sub-community as well as detailing the demographics within each division.

Geographic Divisions: When settlers arrive from a foreign culture to establish a presence in a port city, they remain together. For reasons of comfort and safety in an unfamiliar environment, workers and businessmen stay with their own type. The support gained by living among

similar people develops geographic divisions within the city. The bulk of the city might be human, with one area occupied by dwarven workers and merchants and another the home of halfling tradesmen and their families. These divisions tend to be very strong during the early part of cultural intermingling and may weaken over time. There will almost always, however, remain noticeable dividing lines between different races and cultures.

Customs: Cultural differences run deeper than the geographic divisions between peoples. The strongest distinctions can be found in their customs: the gods they worship, the ceremonies they undertake, and their beliefs in right and wrong. Even after geographic divisions have faded, the differences in customs remain strong. Human societies tend to adapt their culture more easily than other races and humans are more likely to adopt the customs of the races around them. Cities established between human societies of different customs develop a unified culture that is a mixture of elements of both original cultures. There are always factions holding to the original customs, but these factions grow smaller and less significant with the passage of time.

Conflict: Unless cultural balance is reached between different peoples in the city, conflict will exist. This conflict is passive—preferential treatment when dealing with members of the same culture, for instance—unless some event sparks active hostility. If the conflict becomes active, there may be demonstrations, protests, political demands, criminal activity, open rioting, or even civil war. Clearly, there are many possible levels of conflict. The most extreme outbreaks—mass violence or armed uprising—occur rarely but can cause significant damage and turmoil.

LIFE IN THE PORT CITY

This section presents detailed discussions of several elements of life in a medieval port city. Each subject is followed by a concrete example based on the island city of Kaaluntor. This port can be dropped into your own campaign or used as inspiration for cities of your own design. The text of this section is designated as closed content. The city and NPC stat blocks at the end of the section are designated as **Open Game Content**.

Life in a port city revolves around the schedule of trade. Different cities are affected to a greater or lesser extent, depending on their local resources and the quantity and regularity of sea travel. All port cities, however, follow certain patterns of development. Just as any city grows around its resources, situated to access those resources most easily, so too does a port city grow around its main port and docks. This focus of growth occurs not only geographically, but also socially.

KAALUNTOR

Kaaluntor is a port city established by the Kirscha (sing. Kirsch), a nation of humans organized along clan lines. Kaaluntor is built on the island of Ochel, the largest of the volcanic islands inhabited by the Kirscha. Ochel covers approximately 400 square miles and has almost 300 miles of coastline. Kaaluntor was built on the southeastern edge of the island and has a wide harbor directly to the north. The city's port is located to the north and east. Trade in this port city was established between the humans of the islands and the merfolk who live nearby. Not many years ago, trade ships arrived from Nethrin, another nation of humans from across the sea.

Kirscha: The Kirsch clans remained independent during many centuries of trade and war. With the discovery that the seas around their islands were populated, the Kirscha unified. War against the merfolk was narrowly avoided and slowly trust and trade began to develop between the two races. Even though they avoided war, the Kirscha remained unified. The heads of each clan formed a council and elected a clanlord from their number. The clanlord is elected for life, and the position has become hereditary with the consistent election of the heir of the previous clanlord. The current clanlord is a cunning man of middle years named Piolsh.

Kaaluntor is the *de facto* capital of the Kirsch nation. The clan council meets in Kaaluntor and its members have lodgings within the city, as well as with their own clans on different islands. It is the largest port and the base of trade with the merfolk and Nethrin. The capital of Kirsch would relocate to a different island and port if another clanlord were elected, but it has not changed in four generations.



The Kirscha have always had interest in trade and acquisition, first between the clans and then with the merfolk. They consider themselves a practical people and, despite their sense of fair play, it is a tradition among them that during a trade either party may lie outright. It is up to each to determine the worth of the trade. When a trader is fooled into buying something of little value, he will often laugh at himself along with his colleagues. Only a fool buys something sight-unseen, regardless of the reputation of the seller.

For travel between their volcanic islands, the Kirscha developed shallow-draft oared vessels. Each island was essentially self-sufficient and the volume of trade between them was initially low. Additionally, the waterways between islands are often treacherous and rocky with common coral growth. These complications make deep-draft vessels inconvenient for trade between clans. With the arrival of Nethrin vessels, the Kirscha have started experimenting with different drafts and styles of ships.

Trade with merfolk began with nets or baskets hung underwater from the sides of

boats. Goods for trade or sale were placed within. This allows the merfolk to inspect the goods themselves before any deals are made. With Nethrin merchants, trade is handled at port markets. While the Kirscha consider the merfolk worthwhile and amusing people, the Nethrin are seen as pompous and self-righteous. The Kirscha assume the representatives of Nethrin have noticed their prejudice, but most do not care about insulting the outsiders.

Merfolk: The merfolk of Kaaluntor are a colonial settlement from a great kingdom they call the White Palace. They have a small community undersea at the southwest edge of the city. While their community is smaller than either the Kirscha or Nethrin, they have enjoyed good trade with the surface races. Despite their promising trade and contact, however, the merfolk of Kaaluntor do not grow by immigration—no others of their kind have ever come from the White Palace. The merfolk have begun to suspect the truth, that their colony was lost. They cannot be certain of the way home, however, and have stayed near Kaaluntor.

The tribe elders rule the small merfolk community in a kind manner. These elders are the great great grandchildren of the merfolk who first made the voyage. They do not, however, rule alone. During the first meetings between the Kirscha and the merfolk, when it seemed that there would be war, a great bronze dragon revealed herself to the merfolk and demanded that they maintain the peace with the humans. The dragon, whom the merfolk know as Waverender, has not revealed herself to the humans of the islands. The Kirscha believe that tales of Waverender are simply stories of a merfolk god under a new name.

Since they were exposed to the ingenuity of human kind, the merfolk have experimented with undersea vessels of their own. Their principle designs are chariots or “wagons” drawn by whales, porpoises, or large fish. The elder merfolk Coesh, a highly skilled bard, is working on enchanting special stones to control the movement of undersea water. She hopes to build an undersea vessel with sails similar to those used by Nethrin traders.

Nethrin: The Nethrin expeditions began with explorers seeking new trade routes or unclaimed land. They found the islands of the Kirscha and attempted to establish trade. There were some difficulties at first, when the first Nethrin traders felt the savages of the islands were lying to them. In the end, however, the traders decided that the primitive peoples of the island simply did not know any better.

The Nethrin traders use deep-draft roundships with significant cargo capacity to trade large quantities of resources and, sometimes, to bring Nethrin people to settle in Kaaluntor. Some of these new residents are diplomats, but most are merchants or tradesmen. For tasks of simple labor, Nethrin traders hire locals.

Nethrin, the humans claim, is a land of great honor and wonderful magic. As proof of this claim, they show that their trade ships are accompanied by weather mages to assure swift voyage. The Nethrin community within Kaaluntor, itself large enough for a sizable town, publicly obeys the laws of the Kirscha. In private, however, they try to educate what they see as the savage people of the islands and show them the ways of proper civilization. So far they have met with little success.

These efforts are led by Taelim, a potent weather mage from Nethrin. In truth, the wizard was all but banished from his home for his dishonorable acts. He was sent as a representative to this distant, primitive society as a form of punishment. Though he detests the assignment, it was more acceptable than execution. While he owes his life to his aristocratic family and their political connections, all he feels is anger and betrayal at being sent so far from his rightful place. He sometimes takes out his anger on the unimportant “primitives” near him, but for the most part he keeps hold of his temper and tries to make the most of his deplorable situation.

THE WATERFRONT

Those classes of people unwelcome or uninterested in the city—such as seamen or transients—find their needs nearest the port. Such people often have no means of land transportation and it is inconvenient for them to travel across the city. Along the waterfront are the warehouses for the storage of incoming cargo as well as the inns and taverns these visitors frequent. Other businesses appeal to the interests of the laborers and seamen. Tradesmen and craftsmen offer their goods and services to the trade ships and their crews, travelers, or merchants conducting business in the area. These tradesmen may establish their shops anywhere along the waterfront, or they may gather in the port market. A port market, if one exists, will also be frequented by those merchants who wish to secure a ship for transporting cargo or to purchase incoming cargo from the masters or merchants seeing to its delivery. The port market and the docks are also home to tax collectors who claim a portion of the profits for the crown.

Waterfront areas, because they are home to many travelers and local workers, are culturally and racially diverse. During times of low cultural conflict, this diversity allows customs to intermingle and helps to establish a real unified culture of the port city. When conflict grows, the waterfront can be the most dangerous part of the city. It is not unknown for merchants to travel to the docks only with a dozen armed guards to protect them from ruffians and thieves who wish them ill.

Life on the waterfront follows a routine established by the tides. Ships arrive when the tide is in and depart when the tide goes out again. Tidal areas go through this cycle

once or twice per day. When the tide is coming in, laborers and crew can be found unloading and moving cargo. When the tide goes out again, those workers hurry to resupply the ships and load new cargo in time to sail with the tide.

KAALUNTOR'S WATERFRONT

The waterfront of Kaaluntor is populated primarily by Nethrin and Kirsch seamen and laborers. The tide comes in and out twice each day, and those who live by the waterfront measure their days beginning with the first tide in, several hours before dawn. After incoming ships are unloaded, there is a lull of activity during which the Kirscha have breakfast, usually fish and bread. The same workers load supplies and cargo onto outgoing ships for the midmorning low tide. Afterwards, the morning laborers are done and a different set of workers wakes around noon and readies for their own work.

Trade is regular enough in Kaaluntor that this near-constant schedule of work is normal throughout nine or ten months of the year. Work on the waterfront is not easy for most, but it does not take long. Wages for laborers are poor, but most are young and unattached with no one to support but themselves. Living by the docks is equally inexpensive, and dockside sleeping stalls are often as much as the laborers can afford. This low lifestyle contributes to the unappealing sights and scents of the port of Kaaluntor. The native Kirscha, however, are less affected and offended by life at the docks than are the proud Nethrin traders.

Along the docks, Kirscha and Nethrin humans can be found intermingling with the merfolk and with each other. Most often, these people are travelers, laborers, or merchants. Occasionally an aristocrat, professional, or tradesman might have business at port, but these sorts of people are rare by the docks of Kaaluntor. Those laborers who consistently work for the Nethrin traders are viewed with some suspicion by their own kind. This suspicion does not run as deep as the prejudice against the Nethrin, however, and many Nethrin traders work through Kirsch middlemen in an attempt to get better prices.

Not technically a part of the waterfront, the merfolk have established their community beneath the waves some distance from the

docks. They meet Kirsch and Nethrin traders at the docks and do not venture further into the surface city. Both themselves and the humans, however, consider their community a part of Kaaluntor. The merfolk have a small say in the workings of the clan council, as they are allowed to send a proxy to council meetings. The merfolk community consists of homes and a water market they built themselves. Sometimes humans attend this undersea market, but it requires magic for them to survive there.

THE MARKETS

Markets appear in any urban environment as a centralized place for inhabitants to acquire the goods and supplies they need for day-to-day life. Due to the larger quantity of trade in a port city, however, the markets can be larger and more numerous. A market established by or for the ships' masters is a trade market. A middle market or common market is the largest market, and the one frequented by the majority of the inhabitants of the port city. Additionally, there may exist a high market.

A trade market may be established for the exchange of trade goods and the brokerage and chartering of expeditions. While services and basic goods are provided, the trade market is principally intended to provide a place of business for ships' masters to arrange cargo and transport. A trade market might not resemble a standard market because of its focus on the mechanics of trade. Some such markets may exist only unofficially within a tavern frequented by ship owners, masters, and investors. Of course, a trade market may be established in any part of the port city, but it is often near the port for the convenience of those whose lives are focused on the sea. If sea trade is monopolized by a particular group of merchants, they may also wholly own the trade market as a guild or company building.

The common market is the traditional market in a medieval urban center. It is a place where goods and services are offered by and for the common folk of the city. In a port city, the function and purpose of a common market is no different from any other city. The proper functioning of the common market may, however, depend on timely shipments of raw materials and goods for sale. If there are problems with or interruption of sea trade, certain items or materials simply may not be available. The

common market is found within the area of the city populated by the common citizens; those who work in the market live nearby and may form a large part of the community.

A high market is similar to a common market, but is frequented by the wealthy or the elite. As a result, high markets focus on luxuries, exotic goods, or items of high or even masterwork quality. Often established far from the port, high markets may be situated within a section of the city reserved for the wealthy or aristocratic.

Such markets may also have restrictions such as dress code, social status, or other rank or prestige. Commoners may be barred entry unless they work for the merchants of the high market.

KAALUNTOR'S MARKETS

In Kaaluntor, the trade market is located only two streets from the docks. A series of inns host the business transactions between Nethrin traders and Kirsch merchants. The mock generosity arising between the human businessmen led to a custom of always settling business over drinks. Many Kirsch merchants are convinced that Nethrin traders cannot hold their drink and use this custom as an opportunity to take advantage of them.

Natives call the Kaaluntor common market the fish market. It has been the traditional marketplace for the sale of seafood and merfolk goods for generations. The arrival of Nethrin traders has somewhat changed the nature of this market. It now includes some exotic items not previously available in Kaaluntor. The Kirscha, not certain of the usefulness of these new goods, have exhibited no demand for them. This fact has led to a great deal of frustration among Nethrin traders, who are convinced that the ignorant natives need to be educated before they can properly appreciate the superior Nethrin goods.

Kaaluntor has no established high market. The Nethrin leaders, particularly Taelim, have been



pressing for the creation of such an exclusive market. He finds it uncomfortable to mingle with commoners and too inconvenient to search for items of real quality in the common market. Instead, he sends servants in his place until a suitable high market can be established. The clanlord Piolsh has feigned ignorance as a way of brushing aside Taelim's arrogance.

TEMPLES AND SHRINES

The mixed culture found in many port cities may support the faiths of a large number of gods and goddesses. The gods of the dominant and wealthiest sub-cultures have the most prominent temples, but even a minor household goddess may have her own shrine set on private grounds. In particularly religious societies, the temples may be formed into a religious quarter where the priests hold power and all the inhabitants of the city go to pray. The faiths of a port city may be less centralized, and it is possible to find small temples in almost any part of a city.

Shrines, much like larger temples, may be found anywhere. Shrines serve as the place of worship for passive, humble, or unpopular deities. In a mix of cultures, poorer inhabitants may be forced to construct their own humble shrines to beloved gods and goddesses. In this way they can show respect even if they cannot devote wealth. Shrines also exist as a place to offer private tribute and pray for the safety of friends and family at sea.

Religious observances by seamen are often short and personal. The majority of their time is spent at sea and the short breaks between voyages are not enough to support a significant religious effort on their part. Of course, seamen might also worship at the same temples as the rest of the populace. If seamen are of a different culture or follow other gods, they rarely have time, energy, or wealth enough to establish more than small shrines where they can offer their prayers and tribute.

KAALUNTOR' S TEMPLES AND SHRINES

The Kirsch pantheon has an established set of temples near the common market. Burnt offerings or gifts of oil or coin are given weekly, along with prayers for safety and welfare. Kirsch seamen attend these temples as well, and the god of the seas is said to favor the seamen above all others. No temple to the merfolk god exists on the surface, but he has a temple among the merfolk and a shrine by the docks. Human seamen sometimes make offerings to the god and pray for his protection while on the sea.

The Nethrin gods have shrines in the section of the city they dominate, the Nethrin quarter. Kirsch laborers paid by the traders and craftsmen who came from Nethrin built these buildings. Nethrin aristocrats have begun the construction of a larger temple, but it is not yet complete. There is no religious conflict between Nethrin and Kirscha, primarily because the Nethrin gods teach patience and understanding as a matter of honor, and the Kirsch people ignore the Nethrin beliefs as irrelevant. There are some among both human nations who believe the Kirsch and Nethrin gods may be the same deities under different names, but their cultures are too different to allow definitive proof.

ARISTOCRATS AND THE HIGH SECTOR

The ruling classes of society prefer to dwell apart from commoners and the docks, to preserve the dignity of their positions. In more "advanced" societies this difference can be quite pronounced. This may be accomplished by establishing a walled inner city where only those of gentle or noble birth—and their servants and retainers—may pass. The high sector is also built as far from the docks as is possible.

Noblemen and gentry are the most likely to have means of transportation on land and the greater distance to port is no inconvenience

to them on their rare visits. Even if this distinction is not so well defined, those who are familiar with the city can feel it. People who spend their time in the high sector, if they are not aristocrats themselves, are servants, soldiers, couriers, or wealthy merchants with business to attend.

The high sector, distinct or not, is more than the homes of the wealthy and the rulers. It is the area where political matters are resolved. In this section of the city, councils, senates, advisors, and aristocrats meet to discuss and decide policy. Ambassadors, dignitaries, and aristocrats from other realms are welcomed into the high sector as befits their status. This is the true seat of power, and only in the most enlightened cultures are commoners allowed to even attend the discussions of policy and government.

The high market, if it exists, is also within the high sector. Even if there is no high market, professionals whose services are required or preferred by the ruling class are allowed to establish places of business for the convenience of their patrons. There may also be temples of prestigious or powerful gods located here, and it is to these temples that the aristocracy goes to pray. The high sector is designed so that the gentry or noblemen do not need to leave this section of the city on normal occasions. Because of this, when they do leave the high sector it is a matter of note.

KAALUNTOR' S HIGH SECTOR

The high sector of Kaaluntor houses the homes of the clan chiefs and their servants. The grandest building is the council hall, though it is only slightly larger than the home of the clanlord of the Kirscha, Piolsh. The Kirscha are not an overly proud people, and their rulers attend the temples near the common market with the rest of their kin. The Nethrin leaders also live in the high sector, but only rarely leave this section of the city. When they do, it is typically to meet important arrivals at port or to visit the shrines of their gods in the Nethrin quarter. Naturally, the merfolk leaders have no homes or presence in the high sector.

FARM MARKETS

Landlocked towns and villages in the region of a port city trade at the city by means of caravans. Farmers, shepherds, and ranchers bringing goods and food into the port city for sale travel overland to reach their destination. Thus,

while a port city might concentrate on the flow of trade from the docks, there also exists a secondary flow of trade from dependent communities in the area.

In a very small port city, this second flow of trade and traffic might be directed to the common market along with the bulk of the sea trade. Larger cities, however, face difficulties as a number of wagon caravans attempt to move through the streets to reach a centrally located common market. Thus as port cities grow they establish a farm market on the landward side of the city.

Temporary shelters or second homes may be established around this market for the use of farmers and merchants coming into the city from that side. If food is grown by a serf class unable to leave their lands, the representatives and servants of their lord establish residences and storage buildings. There are also laborers, tradesmen, and professionals who cater to the needs of these people. In time an entirely new section of the city develops. Depending on the culture, the farm market may be considered a higher or lower social class than the common market.

KAALUNTOR'S FARM MARKET

Ochel is a sizeable island, well settled by the Kirscha. While the quantity of trade coming from the landward side of Kaaluntor is insignificant compared to the port, a greater percentage of the land trade is in the form of food and supplies necessary to the city. Furthermore, the land trade is carried out completely by the Kirscha. These facts lead the people of Kaaluntor to afford more respect to the landward farm market trade than its size might indicate. The "wagon gate quarter" of Kaaluntor is about half the size of the waterfront area, but a wide variety of natives can be found there.

GAME STATISTICS

All text from this point to the end of the chapter is designated as **Open Game Content**.

KAALUNTOR, JEWEL OF OCHEL

Size: Large city
Population: 19,331 (82% Kirscha, 14% Nethrin, 3% merfolk, 1% other races)
Power Centers/Alignment: Monarchy (clan-

lord Piolsh) with clan council/LG
 Merfolk elders advised by Waverender, very old bronze dragon/LG
 Magocracy (weather mage Taelim)/LE
Religions: Kirsch pantheon, Nethrin pantheon, merfolk god
Military: 40 archers, 150 marines, 10 naval galleys, and approx. 1,000 reserve conscripts

PIOLSH, CLANLORD OF THE KIRSCHA

Male Human Ari2/Exp3/Rog8: CR 12; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD: 2d8+2 plus 3d6+3 plus 8d6+8; hp 62; Init +6 (Dex, Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 17 (+2 Dex, +3 armor, +2 ring); Atk +14/+9 melee (1d10+6 plus 1d6 fire/19-20, +4 *flaming bastard sword*), +11 melee (1d4+3/19-20, +2 *dagger*), +13/+8 ranged (1d8+1/x3, +1 mighty composite longbow); SA Sneak attack +4d6; SQ Evasion, uncanny dodge (Dexterity bonus to AC, can't be flanked); AL LG; SV Fort +4, Ref +9, Will +11; Str 14, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 16, Cha 16.

Skills and Feats: Appraise +13, Bluff +19, Diplomacy +21, Innuendo +12, Read Lips +7, Search +7, Sense Motive +13, Spot +16, Swim +12, Use Magic Device +15, Use Rope +14, Wilderness Lore +15; Ambidexterity, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (bastard sword), Improved Initiative, Skill Focus (Diplomacy), Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (bastard sword).

Possessions: +4 *flaming bastard sword*, +2 *dagger*, +1 *leather armor*, *cloak of the manta ray*, *ring of water walking*, *ring of protection* +2, *wand of summon monster II* (38 charges remaining, 4th-level caster), *scroll of detect thoughts* (4th-level caster), *scroll of identify and mage armor* (2nd-level caster), *potion of charisma*, +1 mighty composite longbow, clanlord's longship.

COESH, MERFOLK ELDER

Female Merfolk Brd17: CR 17; Medium-size humanoid (merfolk, aquatic); HD 17d6+17; hp 73; Init +7 (Dex, Improved Initiative); Spd 5 ft., swim 50ft.; AC 25 (+3 Dex, +8 bracers, +4 ring); Atk +14/+9/+4 melee (1d8+2/x2, +3 *trident*), +19/+14/+9 ranged (1d10+4/19-20, +4 *coral heavy crossbow*); SQ Bardic music, bardic knowledge; AL NG; SV Fort +6, Ref +13, Will +12; Str 9, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 16, Wis 16, Cha 20.



Skills and Feats: Concentration +11, Decipher Script +11, Diplomacy +25, Escape Artist +11, Gather Information +15, Hide +9, Knowledge (nature) +11, Listen +13, Perform +23, Scry +15, Spellcraft +17, Use Magic Device +21; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Craft Wondrous Item, Improved Initiative, Martial Weapon Proficiency (trident), Maximize Spell, Scribe Scroll

Possessions: *Bracers of armor* +8, +4 coral heavy crossbow, +3 trident, ring of protection +4, staff of life (41 charges remaining), wand of magic missile (18 charges remaining, 5th-level caster), ioun stone (lavender and green ellipsoid, 8 spell levels absorbed), scroll of control weather, eyebite, mass suggestion (16th-level caster).

Spells Known (cast 4/6/5/5/4/4/1; DC 15+spell level): 0—*detect magic, ghost sound, light, mage hand, mending, read magic*; 1st—*charm person, cure light wounds, expeditious retreat, identify, silent image*; 2nd—*cure moderate wounds, detect thoughts, hold person, invisibility, summon monster II*; 3rd—*charm monster, confusion, dispel magic, scrying*; 4th—

break enchantment, cure critical wounds, improved invisibility, legend lore; 5th—*control water, dream, greater dispelling, summon monster V*; 6th—*control weather, eyebite, mass suggestion*.

WAVERENDER

Female Very Old Bronze Dragon: CR 19; Huge dragon (water); HD 30d12+240; hp 427; Init +5 (Dex, Improved Initiative); Spd 40 ft., fly 150 ft. (poor), swim 60 ft.; AC 38 (–2 size, +1 Dex, +29 natural); Atk +42 melee (2d8+13, bite), +36/+36 melee (2d6+6, 2 claws), +36/+36 melee (1d8+6, 2 wings), +36 melee (2d6+19, tail slap), +41 melee (2d8+19, crush); SA Breath weapons, frightful presence (DC 31), spell-like abilities; SQ Damage reduction 15/+2, blindsight (270 feet), immunities (sleep, paralysis, electricity), keen senses, *water breathing*; SR 26; AL LG; SV Fort +25, Ref +18, Will +26; Str 37, Dex 12, Con 27, Int 28, Wis 29, Cha 29.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +34, Concentration +33, Diplomacy +39, Escape Artist +26, Gather Information +34, Heal +39, Hide +31,

Knowledge (arcana) +39, Knowledge (nature) +39, Listen +41, Move Silently +21, Scry +39, Search +39, Spellcraft +39, Spot +41, Swim +39; Alertness, Cleave, Great Cleave, Hover, Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Quicken Spell-Like Ability (detect thoughts), Weapon Focus (bite).

Special Attacks: Breath weapons: line of lightning (18d6 electricity, Reflex save DC 31 for half) or cone of *repulsion* gas (1d6+30 rounds, Will save DC 31). Spell-like abilities (13th-level caster, DC 19+spell level): At will—*speak with animals*, *detect thoughts* as a free action; 3/day—*create food and water*, *polymorph self*, *fog cloud*.

Possessions (may be worn or used in humanoid form): *staff of power* (35 charges remaining), +3 *keen scimitar*, *ring of protection* +3, *ring of major elemental resistance*, *bottle of air*.

Spells Known (cast 6/9/8/8/8/8/5, 13th-level caster, DC 19+spell level): 0—*dancing lights*, *detect magic*, *detect poison*, *disrupt undead*, *guidance*, *light*, *prestidigitation*, *read magic*, *resistance*; 1st—*bless*, *command*, *cure light wounds*, *obscuring mist*, *sanctuary*; 2nd—*animal messenger*, *calm emotions*, *cure moderate wounds*, *hold person*, *shield other*; 3rd—*cure serious wounds*, *daylight*, *dispel magic*, *stone shape*; 4th—*cure critical wounds*, *discern lies*, *screaming*, *sending*; 5th—*mark of justice*, *raise dead*, *true seeing*; 6th—*analyze dweomer*, *heal*.

Taelim, Nethrin Weather Mage

Male Human Wiz12: CR 12; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD 12d4+24; hp 55; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 19 (Dex +2, bracers +4, amulet +3); Atk +10/+5 melee (1d4+4 plus 1d6 cold/19-20, +1 *frost dagger*), +8/+3 ranged touch attack (by spell); SQ Familiar benefits; AL LE; SV Fort +6, Ref +6, Will +11; Str 16, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 19, Wis 13, Cha 13.

Skills and Feats: Alchemy (Int) +16, Concentration (Con) +14, Diplomacy (Cha) +7, Gather Information (Cha) +6, Innuendo (Wis) +6, Knowledge (arcana) (Int) +19, Scry (Int) +13, Spellcraft (Int) +19; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Craft Wand, Craft Wondrous Item, Iron Will, Quicken Spell, Scribe Scroll, Spell Mastery, Weapon Focus (dagger).

Special Qualities: Familiar benefits: Grants Taelim Alertness when within reach, share

spells, empathic link (1 mile), familiar may deliver touch spells, speak with familiar.

Possessions: *Ring of wizardry (II)*, *bracers of armor* +4, *amulet of natural armor* +3, +1 *frost dagger*, *wand of suggestion* (42 charges remaining).

Spells Prepared (cast 4/5/9/5/4/3/2; DC 14+spell level): 0—*detect magic*, *detect poison*, *light*, *read magic*; 1st—*charm person*, *magic missile*, *ray of enfeeblement*, *true strike* (2); 2nd—*blur*, *darkvision*, *detect thoughts*, *flaming sphere*, *invisibility*, *Melf's acid arrow*, *protection from arrows*, *resist elements*, *see invisibility*; 3rd—*dispel magic*, *hold person*, *lightning bolt*, *phantom steed*, *water breathing*; 4th—*ice storm*, *lesser geas*, *polymorph other*, *stoneskin*; 5th—*cone of cold*, *prying eyes*, *summon monster V*; 6th—*control weather*, *Otiluke's freezing sphere*.

REVESH

Male Viper Familiar: CR 1/3; Tiny magical beast; HD 1/4 d8 (12 HD); hp 27; Init +3 (Dex); Spd 15 ft., climb 15 ft., swim 15 ft.; AC 23 (+2 size, +3 Dex, +8 natural.); Atk +9/+4 melee (poison, bite); Face/Reach 2 1/2 ft. by 2 1/2 ft. (coiled)/0 ft.; SA Poison (Fort DC 11, 1d6 Con/1d6 Con); SQ Improved evasion, speak with animals of its type, scent; SR 17; AL LE; SV Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +8; Str 6, Dex 17, Con 11, Int 11, Wis 12, Cha 2.

Skills and Feats: Balance +11, Climb +12, Hide +18, Listen +8, Spot +8; Weapon Finesse (bite).

UNDERSEA ADVENTURES

The surface of most campaign worlds is dominated by water, with oceans reaching depths of six miles or more. The sea is a realm of forests and mountains, fertile plains and barren deserts, spaces and voids broad beyond the imaginings of those who huddle together in the claustrophobic confines of the civilized surface world. And yet, this undersea world, many times the size of the surface world, remains mostly unexplored and unnoticed, with only the surface considered important or relevant. No more!

This chapter of the *Seafarer's Handbook* reveals the world below the waves. Whether as the stage for an epic quest of surface folk, or as the setting for an entire undersea campaign, the marvels and perils of the deep await. All text in this chapter, except for game rules and statistics derived from the d20 System Reference Document, is designated as closed content.

The lands under the sea are referred to as Underwave, while those who dwell in the water call the surface world the Flatlands or the Barrens. To those who live in the water, the relentless tug of gravity, the harsh glare of the unfiltered sun, and the thin, wispy medium in which beings live combine to make the surface world seem an unforgiving and hostile place.

The material presented here is designed to provide the necessary information for a DM to run an all-aquatic campaign. To fully realize such a campaign, the DM still needs to do a considerable amount of work, but these rules should provide plenty of guidelines and inspiration.

Finally, the purpose of these rules is not to provide a “hard science” analysis of life underwater, but to offer a fantasized view of the undersea world that inspires and enriches an aquatic fantasy campaign. Obviously, there is no intention of inaccuracy and suspension of disbelief is important in a campaign, but fun and flavor sometimes take precedence over accuracy. Thus, the undersea world described in this book is one of sea elves wearing alchemically treated kelp armor, half-merrow druids commanding water elementals, and merman necromancers raising armies from the drowned dead. Real-world limits and conditions are noted, but the DM should feel free to discard them at will if it suits his vision of his world—create arctic coral reefs a thousand miles long, or fill the tropical seas with mile-high kelp forests—it’s your world. Rule 0 applies to geology and biology as much as to anything else! Those looking for a less fantastical (but certainly no less intriguing and fascinating) version of undersea are advised to check their local library or bookstore for detailed information on the topic.

UNDERWAVE

The subsurface world is vaster in both surface area and volume than the world above; it is also somewhat emptier. While no part of the ocean is truly devoid of life, many parts are so barren as to seem that way. Civilization underwater tends to cluster around the life-rich zones, often defined by a single dominating feature. This section discusses some of the most common points around which societies—or adventures—grow.

Beyond specific locations and environments, DMs planning on running a game set in Underwave should simply consider the alienness of this world. Key concepts include all of the following.

Size: The ocean floor is many times the size of the exposed landmasses of most campaign worlds. Furthermore, not just the floor is inhabited; life exists throughout the depths. The vastness can be daunting; the distance between two outposts of civilization can be larger than a continent. The exact density of undersea civilization is up to the DM—it may well be that most of the Underwave is settled, but this is unlikely.

Dark: It is always dark, all the time, not far below the surface: no day, no night, no stars, no sun, and no moon. Timelessness and a deep sense of isolation afflict surface dwellers who spend prolonged periods of time in the deep voids.

Alien: Most of the life in the deep is profoundly unfamiliar. The DM should emphasize odd colors and shapes, strange creatures that drift by the characters, and odd tableaux. A fantasy world can include many of the more bizarre creatures evolution long ago discarded in the real world.

Vast regions under the sea lie uncharted and unclaimed by any intelligent life. Mountains, hills, slopes, rolling plains, and deep valleys mark this wilderness, much as on land. Any sort of land terrain may be found under the waves. The living creatures that inhabit these regions vary by climate. Each creature is adapted to its particular niche in the sea, and most have difficulty in other conditions. Most living

things exist in the shallowest depths of the sea, where the strongest light penetrates. This extends anywhere from as little as 100 to 150 feet in murky coastal waters to as much as 650 feet. Though the sea is much deeper than this, an average of 16,000 feet, no plant life survives in the lightless depths beyond 650 feet. Below that level, only scavengers and predators exist, feeding either off of the organic debris constantly raining down from above, or on the other animals that survive in the depths.

The shallowest part of the sea, where the water is no deeper than 600 feet, is called the continental shelf. As land slopes into the sea, it extends along this continental shelf until it reaches the edge and drops rapidly into the deep sea. In some areas the continental shelf may be almost nonexistent while in other places it may extend for many miles away from shore. Because light reaches throughout the area of the continental shelf, it becomes the home for a much larger variety of plant life than can be found elsewhere in the ocean. Creatures that dwell in shallow waters are also found in greater variety. Large predators find it more difficult to maneuver on the continental shelf.

There are also mountainous ridges in the deepest parts of the ocean furthest from land where volcanic activity can create tremendous cones of rock. Where these cones of rock break the surface of the water, they encounter the erosive forces of wind and air, and form volcanic islands far from any landmass or continental shelf. Volcanic islands do not provide a safe haven from large predators, but they do host a variety of plant life and sometimes become havens and breeding grounds for amphibious animals.

Any sort of wilderness adventure from land might also be found under the sea, for the waters are home to an even greater number of creatures than the land. Most of the time, however, adventurers travel through underwater wilderness on their way to some other location. To this end, DMs can use the aquatic wilderness encounter lists in the core rules (DMG 133) to construct lists of appropriate creatures for their own underwater wilderness areas.

Though these lists are useful for generating significant encounters underwater, DMs and players should still pay attention to



the smaller marine life. Areas rich with smaller fish become popular hunting areas for larger aquatic predators, and careful attention to the activity of such fish may warn of the approach of sharks or other hazardous creatures. Of course, patrols or bands from nearby aquatic civilizations may also travel through the Underwave wilderness. Such groups of intelligent, armed marine life may present a significant hazard depending on their ability.

The warmest waters are found in tropical zones near the equator. The temperatures of these waters can rise as high as 79°F at the surface, with temperatures only slightly cooler during winter months. A great variety of sea life can be found in the warm waters of tropical climates, including many beautifully colored and dangerously poisonous marine species. Octopi, squid, sharks, and many kinds of snakes are commonly encountered in warm waters.

Temperate waters hold less variety than do the tropical seas, but they are still home to many types of marine life, both benevolent and malicious. Temperate waters may be considered the most civilized regions of the sea, as

they are home to aquatic elves and merfolk, the two most familiar cultures of Underwave. They are also host to significant fishing industries, a main staple of food for coastal and island cultures. Octopi, squid, and sharks are relatively common in temperate waters, as they are in tropical areas. There are also many more whales, both herbivores and predators.

While warmer waters host a greater variety of life, the cold waters of the arctic regions are more densely filled with marine creatures. The temperature of the cold waters can be as low as 30°F, and exposure in these waters risks hypothermia as well as drowning (DMG 85). There are fewer intelligent aquatic creatures capable of surviving the extreme temperatures, and the vast majority of cold-water environments are untamed wilderness. Common fish, sharks, whales, and other marine mammals such as seals and walrus dominate the cold waters of the far north and south.

Below a depth of about 350 feet, the temperature of the sea drops rapidly to about 41°F in all areas. The deep sea is perpetually cold, and the abundant life adapted to warm and tropical

waters cannot normally survive in these depths. In addition to the risk of cold damage from hypothermia, the environment of deep waters poses the risk of great pressure (see page 45). Creatures native to the seas are more resistant to this pressure and only take pressure damage when they exceed their normal depth. Of course, the light from the surface of the sea does not extend far into these cold reaches so adventurers rarely travel so far down. For those courageous enough, the deep waters are home to giant squid, a variety of whales and sharks, and the dreaded krakens. The deepest recesses of the underwater world, including the vast caverns of the Underdeep (see page 85) are home to some of the strangest creatures ever known, including fish that can devour prey up to twice their own size and luminescent monsters that hunt by the light of their own bodies.

UNDERSEA TERRAIN

At the sea floor, all types of land formations can be found. In fact, the terrain of the sea floor can be even more dramatic than that found on land because the undersea environment causes less erosion to rock formations than similar terrestrial features. Seawater is slow moving and does not significantly change temperature through seasonal shifts.

Plains: The plains of the sea floor can be incredibly expansive. Sediment from the sea above constantly drifts down to the ocean floor where it settles until disturbed by the movement of the water around it. The plains of the ocean are made up of stretches of such sediment, smoothing out the edges of rock formations beneath. This ground is not as hard or as solid as normal land due to the lightly packed sediment. Objects drifting down from above are partly buried in the layers of sediment and many creatures also burrow into the rich, soft soil for camouflage. While the soil itself may be flat, there are still innumerable marine creatures who make their home on the sea floor, including sponges, worms, shellfish, crustaceans, starfish, and anemones. These creatures, as well as the leafy, branching canopy of plant life that covers the sea floor in the areas where light reaches, provide a shifting panorama of life even where the terrain is otherwise flat and featureless.

Hills and Mountains: Hills and mountains are just as numerous and varied in the sea as they

are on land. Because of the weaker erosive forces, however, undersea mountains are taller and rockier than their counterparts on land. Mountains are found in the deepest parts of the ocean, though some mountainous formations on or near continental shelves extend out of the water and form islands near the coastline.

Hills and mountains tall enough to reach the shallower depths of the sea host the same variety of plant and animal life as the plains. In the deep sea, creatures crawl or glide across the surface of hills and rocky terrain and may cling to or grow from the sides and slopes of mountains. At great depths, however, the variety of life is much smaller and creatures are less numerous. Most marine life has difficulty adapting to different depths due to pressure. Because of this limitation, undersea mountains may prove to be an impenetrable barrier to sea creatures. Larger creatures are much less likely to suffer from this restriction.

Caves: Undersea caves and cavern complexes can be some of the most treacherous and dangerous terrain in the sea. Even when the sea is well lit, caves are blanketed in darkness. Any type of marine life may lair in undersea caves. Attempting to explore or even pass too near inhabited caves may bring an attack by sharks, rays, or other predators. Normally passive sea creatures, such as squid and octopi, might also be roused to attack if they feel their lairs are being invaded. Undersea caves might have air trapped within, and some intelligent sea monsters, particularly dragons or krakens, take advantage of such air-filled caves to house humanoid servants or livestock.

In more isolated undersea caves, there exist entire species of fish and other marine life that have adapted to the darkness. Creatures native to undersea caverns are blind and colorless and depend on sensing the vibrations in the water caused by the movement of other creatures. While most such creatures pose no threat to Medium-size or even Small adventurers, it is possible for larger predators to have adapted to such conditions. Even small fish in those environments may use poison or might swarm to attack larger prey.

The Underdeep is a vast warren of deep-sea caves that extends across and beneath the ocean floor (see page 85).

Valleys and Trenches: Valleys under the sea may be broad, sweeping depressions or only narrow trenches that divide the rocky bottom. Valleys rarely exist on the continental shelf, where they are principally the recessed regions between islands or continental landmasses. These shallow valleys are identical in essentials to the plains and small hills found in these depths. The recessed areas receive less sunlight than more exposed terrain, but this has little real effect except to provide some additional places for predators or prey to hide.

The trenches of the deep sea are the regions of the ocean most hostile to surface life. It is all but impossible for creatures from the surface to survive at all in the great pressure that exists at the ocean floor. At the average depth of 16,000 feet, an adventurer from the surface would suffer 160d6 damage from pressure per minute. The trenches in the sea floor may descend another 10,000 to 20,000 feet or more. What might survive at those depths is unknown. Certainly only the strangest and sturdiest of beasts would be able to adapt to the hostile conditions and rarity of food. Some claim that the trenches and caverns of the sea floor are the entrances to the Underdeep. It is uncertain how any living thing from the surface might successfully travel to such a place or survive there, but it is sure to require potent magic.

UNDERSEA ENVIRONMENTS

KELP FORESTS

Located just offshore in cooler climates, kelp forests are a source of food and shelter to many underwater dwellers. On Earth, strands of kelp can grow up to 130 feet; in a fantasy world, giant kelp may grow far beyond that limit, forming forests stretching across a wide region and blocking transit between different locations. Real-world kelp normally grows in water around 40 feet or so deep; but again, kelp forests may be located in deeper regions in a fantasy world. Kelp does require sunlight to grow, however, so it will not be found too deep—unless, of course, the DM creates a kelp-like plant that is not sunlight dependent. Kelp does not have roots or leaves, but rather, a *holdfast* and a *blade*.

Kelp forests can be beautiful places, especially compared to the dark emptiness of much of Underwave. Sunlight streams in from

above, casting a diffuse light. The slowly waving strands of kelp can be subtly hypnotic. Life is everywhere—kelp provides food for many species, and those species, in turn, provide food for others. The growths vary in density, creating thick groves where movement is severely hindered and open meadows where the plants are only a foot or two high.

While merfolk often harvest and cultivate kelp beds, it is the kelp elves who are most at home here. Kelp elves gain a +2 racial bonus on Hide and Spot checks when inside a kelp forest.

Kelp forests often seem magical to surface dwellers, but real magic can be found within them as well. Animated and carnivorous kelp, similar in statistics to the assassin vine, are often found in kelp beds located in the wilds. Many species of normal animals have magical or giant cousins—dire otters, huge crabs, and other species are found in these forests. Merrow often lie in wait along well-traveled paths, and locathah tribes sometimes conduct raids among the rippling strands. Merfolk and kelp elves sometimes war over particularly rich or well-placed forests. The blade of the giant kelp is two-edged; food and foes exist here in abundance.

CORAL REEFS

Coral is essentially the accumulated exoskeletons of small, colonial animals. Over time, the continual growth of the colony leaves behind an immense accumulation of these skeletons, forming vast reefs or atolls. A coral reef is a collective composed of many different species; however, the reef can be treated simply as a geographic feature, rather than an organism, for most purposes.

Different varieties of coral can be found in a wide range of environments, but large coral reefs are likely to be found only in tropical or near-tropical regions—unless the DM creates species of “cold coral” or “northern coral” for his campaign world. This is one reason for the divergence of aquatic elves into two subcultures—cold-water dwelling aquatic elves took to the kelp forests, while their tropical relatives made their homes among the reefs.

A large reef can stretch as far as 1,200 miles and can be located from 1 to 100 miles of the shoreline, depending on conditions. The largest reefs take millions of years to grow. If you

want such large reefs in your world, and your world is not that old, do not worry—the acts of gods and ancient magic are more than sufficient reasons to ignore this limitation.

Coral reefs play a major role in Underwave. Coral is one of the best building materials for construction underwater. Coral elves use their skills to shape the reef around them, subtly altering it to provide chambers and passages. A few of them even become a part of the reef, in a way, entering into a symbiotic relationship to become reef warriors (see page 12). Merfolk, on the other hand, prefer to simply cut the coral and build constructions from it as they see fit, often destroying large portions of the reef in the process, though some societies are careful to treat the reef as a renewable resource.

The area around a reef is swarming with life of all sorts. No matter where one looks, something is crawling, swimming, floating, or scurrying. Food is plentiful, both for herbivores and carnivores. Even the air above the reef is filled with birds, which make quick dives to feed on the creatures that live near the surface. The colors of the reef and its inhabitants are brilliant, almost gaudy. Many of the smallest organisms display incredible patterns and designs.

Not all is benign, of course. The coral elves, for example, tend to be suspicious at best toward outsiders, and their reef cities can be killing zones for invaders. Sahuagin are also common predators of the reef, using their mutants to infiltrate elven communities and then conducting deadly and genocidal raids. At least one reef city in Underwave was completely conquered by sahuagin, with their mutants acting as infiltrators to prevent merfolk traders from suspecting anything was wrong until they were deep inside. This subterfuge lasted more than three months. Beyond such intelligent threats, the rich reefs lure sharks, giant octopi, and many other creatures.

Reefs that lie just below the surface may often destroy passing ships, especially vessels exploring an area for the first time. This is just one of the many ways surface ships voyage to the bottom of the sea.

HYDROTHERMAL VENTS

At the deepest reaches of the sea, there is an apparent desert. The seafloor is impossibly distant from sunlight, and the darkness, cold, and

pressure are such that this might as well be an alien world. Even the vastest desert has oases, though, and these oases of the depths are called hydrothermal vents, or deep-sea hot springs.

On the ocean floor, cracks in the world's crust expose the molten interior. Superheated gasses and boiling water are vented into a place where crippling cold is the rule everywhere else. This searing chemical soup provides a basis for a surprisingly rich ecosystem, with life forms never seen anywhere else.

Giant tubeworms, albino crabs, and odd creatures that seem more plant than animal thrive in this environment. Those beings who live in the depths—deep merfolk, aquatic drow, and others—seek out these places. Depending on the cultures involved, vent zones can be “neutral territory” where all are tolerated, or the sites of bloody battles for dominance and control.

Many parts of the Underdeep (see page 85) contain such rifts. These islands of heat and life in the dark barrens are among the most likely places for communities to grow. Even more than on the ocean floor, these are areas of heavy conflict.

A number of isolated communities have developed near rifts. A band of deep merfolk, for example, might find one and settle there, rather than continue their nomadic existence. Over time, they cultivate and tame it, learning to farm and shepherd the odd life forms. Volcanic rocks provide building material. A large rift could support a decent-size town. These cultures, however, grow in near-total isolation. Only occasional visitors pass through. In the vastness of the ocean floor, these tiny dots of life are lost. The lonely outposts may possess any odd customs, strange habits, or curious behaviors the DM wishes.

Alternatively, the DM may make these places more common in his world with no concern for issues of geology. This would create a culture akin to an archipelago society on the surface, with the cold voids between rifts taking the place of stretches of sea between islands.

These vents have one other important characteristic. The searing heat, crushing pressure, and bitter cold create a mix of extreme conditions, all focused in a small area, which can stress the fabric of the physical uni-

verse. Hydrothermal vents, like some parts of the Underdeep (see Elemental Vortices, page 93), are places where the walls of the world grow thin and where things from beyond can push through. Legends say that the dragon turtles were spawned from one such vent, and other myths tell of strange romances between beings of elemental fire and water that could only occur in these places.

THERMAL CURRENTS

Over time, masses of water move throughout the ocean waters. Gravity, wind, temperature, and salinity variation drive these movements. The surface currents can move rather quickly, up to about five miles per hour, but underwater currents are much slower. The overall effect on navigation and sea travel is minimal. There are also, however, more temporary sea currents driven by extreme variations in temperature or salinity. Volcanic activity in the deep ocean can superheat bodies of water and cause the heated water to rise rapidly toward the surface and force cooler water to sink beneath it. Ocean water dissolves the minerals and salts distributed into surrounding water by eruption or shifting earth. The now-heavier water sinks back to the seafloor.

The movement and shifting caused by extreme conditions can do a great deal of damage to marine life. Significant changes in the salinity or temperature of the water can kill animals unable to adapt to or avoid abrupt changes, and intelligent aquatic races are affected just as easily as simple fish. This sudden mixture of extreme conditions is deadly, but it is also rare. Intelligent creatures may, however, artificially create conditions to cause such extreme conditions, as a weapon of war or as a trap against intruders.

If an extreme condition is stable, such as a that caused by a hydrothermal vent, a fast, steady current may result. Such currents are similar to surface rivers in that they can cause a navigational impediment and potential dangers. Clever undersea creatures may also learn to use stable currents for travel, communication, or defense. A fast-moving current of hot water could be used to carry messages or undersea vehicles. It might also be redirected to isolate a settlement or prevent intrusion by enemies.

UNDERSEA DUNGEONS

An undersea dungeon is any structure, whether originally on the surface or aquatic, situated beneath the waves and occupied by creatures that did not create it. There are many possible types, some of which are not structures in the usual sense. However, the traits that such structures share allow them to be considered as a group. Undersea dungeons may be broadly classified as either surface or aquatic, referring to the original nature of the structure.

Any structure that was originally on the surface and has become an undersea dungeon must have been submerged at some point in its history. This is also the point at which its creators are forced to abandon the structure, if they had not already done so. Most of the undersea dungeons from the surface are actually sunken ships, but it is not unknown for a port city to slip partly or even completely into the sea. It is also possible for other structures to be submerged in the sea, whether through natural or magical cataclysm. Ancient towers or other lone buildings built on cliffs overlooking the sea might, over time, be brought crashing into the sea by the erosive forces of wind and water. Also, any surface structure built wholly or partly underground, such as normal dungeons, might find the land itself slipping into the sea and carrying the entire dungeon with it, completely intact.

Shipwrecks: Humans and others have sailed the seas for all of their history and much of their prehistory. Unfortunately, anything that can float can also sink, and the entire ocean, from just offshore to the deepest trenches, is spotted with the hulks of surface vessels. Some are rotting skeletons, collapsing at a touch; others seem to have sunk mere hours before. Some contain treasures of interest to surface dwellers and aquatics; others contain deadly dangers. Many contain both.

The chapters on ship construction and designs provide many ideas for vessels that may be found at the bottom of the sea, but that is just the beginning. Take a deck plan and mutate it. Split it in half, leaving just the rear portion of the ship available for exploration. Turn it upside down, with an entry into the interior through the huge breach in the hull. Stand it vertically and sink it halfway into thick mire.



Surface areas and conditions that are particularly hazardous to ships (stormy areas, iceberg-laden seas, regions with magical effects) may produce undersea graveyards of lost ships, often stretching over an area of several square miles. These regions are magnets for treasure hunters—and those who would prey on them.

Shipwrecks have another common function: shelter for outcasts of various sorts. Since the travel lanes used by Flatlanders do not always correspond to areas of dense habitation in Underwave, shipwrecks can often be found in the barren wastes far from any cities or settlements. As such, those who desire privacy or isolation often take up residence in these places. Necromancers, in particular, enjoy shipwrecks, because they often come complete with raw materials—skeletons or even mostly intact corpses to animate and control. PCs seeking an item known to have been lost in a shipwreck centuries ago may venture underwater to find a land of rotting ships, ruled over by a powerful necromancer who has a virtual army of undead at his command—undead harvested from the rotting corpses of lost sailors.

Shipwrecks can be used to introduce a wide range of “lost items” into the campaign, and to

provide a chance for characters to make use of bardic lore and Appraise. Those copper coins scattered along the sea floor might be worth 10 times their weight in gold to a collector. That intact piece of pottery is a relic of an ancient dynasty and worth thousands in gold. Wine from a millennia past, sculptures from a lost empire, an ornate carving that shows the way to a forgotten city—all can be found by scavenging the seafloor. A quest to find such items is a good way to get surface PCs involved in underwater activities.

Atmosphere is important, as well. Play up the oddities of the wreck, and blend the familiar with the alien. A ship’s wheel is now encrusted with barnacles. A brightly colored octopus uncoils itself from the remains of a cook stove. A seemingly intact logbook explodes into a cloud of rotted fragments at the first touch. The ship’s figurehead displays one well-preserved half and another that is rotted into a monstrous aberration.

Shipwrecks are also known, at least by aquatic folk, to be a source of an unpleasant hazard: barnakills. Barnakills are mutated barnacles, the mutation often being the result of the fear and pain associated with a



shipwreck. In a magical world, such death agonies can cause a range of environmental effects.

Barnakill (CR 4 hazard): Barnakills resemble normal barnacles, except for their slightly reddish tint. Anyone touching a colony of barnakills must make a Fortitude save (DC 17) or be infected. The infection does not manifest immediately. A day later, the character experiences severe itching around the point of contact that is so painful it deals 1 point of temporary Dexterity damage. The next day, the skin around the point of contact erupts with barnakills, dealing 1d3 points of temporary Constitution damage and 1d4 points of temporary Dexterity damage per day. The character dies if his Constitution score is reduced to 0. A *remove disease* spell cures the infection once it has sprouted. A *freshen water* spell kills the parasites if they have not yet broken through the skin, as soon as the itching begins. A Wilderness Lore check (DC 15) is needed to recognize a barnakill infestation.

Lost Cities: Adventurers hope to discover lost riches in the submerged sections of an ancient city. Port cities are centers of trade and when they slip into the sea they take their wealth with them. It is this lost wealth that adventurers hope to recover. Of course, the intelligent aquatic races might also seek to explore such lost surface treasures—entire bands or tribes of aquatic races might be discovered occupying a sunken structure that was once a rich port

city. Cities that have sunk beneath the sea are not only treasures for adventurers, but also for explorers and scholars. Sunken cities sometimes hold valuable information as to the history, culture, and lore of lost peoples until they are again discovered by those courageous enough to explore the depths.

Ancient towers, underground tunnel complexes, or any other sort of surface dungeons that are consigned to the sea find their roles much the same as they were on land. Though the structures themselves might suffer damage from the force of the fall or movement

that brought them undersea, they eventually serve as dungeons again. Many creatures of the sea seek out dark places in the sea to hide, or use aquatic caves or sunken structures as lairs. Of course, unless intelligent creatures find these transplanted dungeons, they retain whatever treasures they held while still on land, in addition to whatever the beasts of the sea bring to them.

In many ways, aquatic dungeons that have always been aquatic are much simpler than those that sink into the sea. Whether a natural cavern complex or a structure built by one of the intelligent marine races, truly aquatic dungeons fulfill exactly the same roles as surface dungeons. They might be used as elaborate vaults or tombs, or simply be the remains of a dead aquatic civilization. Such aquatic dungeons are designed in the same manner as surface dungeons and are occupied by sea creatures. The most interesting dungeons take into account their aquatic nature in the design of traps and structures. After all, a simple pit trap is no threat at all in an aquatic dungeon, but ink clouds may create a long-lasting navigational hazard, and a small amount of blood released into the sea may alert nearby predators and drive them into feeding frenzies (see Bloodcoral, page 87).

AQUATIC CIVILIZATIONS

Forests of kelp guarded by the brave aquatic elves, beautiful and foreboding coral castles patrolled by the regimented sahuagin, and the

abundant hunting waters of the mischievous merfolk: aquatic civilization is more than a random encounter with locathahs or tritons. It represents the lairs of these creatures—the villages, towns, and cities of the undersea world. The lairs of intelligent, social marine creatures are more than gatherings of creatures for hunting and spawning. The civilizations of the sea are as varied and as abundant as the kingdoms of the land in their own way. Just as with surface cultures, aquatic civilizations develop around abundant resources and safety. Finding an area of good hunting where the society is safe from other predators can be difficult, but once an abundant food supply is secured and a defensible home found, aquatic civilizations may flourish. Most aquatic civilizations are established within the shallow areas of the sea where light reaches. In such areas the water is relatively warm, plants can grow, fish are abundant, and the larger and more dangerous predators are rare.

Aquatic civilizations are usually established on the undersea slopes of volcanic islands or on the continental shelf. The deep sea is both lightless and cold, making it difficult for most intelligent sea life to survive. Hunting is scarcer there, and larger predators compete for food in the depths. On a continental shelf there is ample room for building and growth and it is possible to develop some agriculture to supplement the society's food supply.

Once permanent dwellings are established in the sea, the population of such undersea cities may grow significantly larger than almost any other concentration of intelligent marine life. While a nomadic tribe of locathahs normally does not grow larger than 200 or so adults, DMs may wish to establish entire cities, settled in favorable locations and populated by thousands. Such large communities allow for a greater variety of undersea adventures within a civilized—though perhaps hostile—environment. Whatever the size of the settlement being developed, the recommended generation method is described in the DMG, pages 137–140.

When using this town generation method to create an undersea city, DMs must remember to consider the dominant race. Most races that establish a city develop a power center with an alignment matching the racial alignment, though circumstances may certainly affect this.

Also, as noted in the DMG (page 133), aquatic terrain tends to be more hazardous than many civilized lands. At the DMs discretion a +4 modifier may be added to the highest-level NPC when generating an aquatic settlement. This has the effect of increasing the average level of NPCs in that community, to reflect the greater dangers faced by an undersea community. Aquatic civilizations are considered isolated, with no more than a handful of inhabitants who are not of the dominant race.

Another important consideration is the economy of aquatic civilizations. Most surface settlements are established in order to access trade or natural resources and aquatic settlements are no different. A settlement with access to significant natural resources, such as food and trade goods, tends to grow much larger than those with fewer advantages. Furthermore, cities established for the purpose of trade are more likely to be mixed communities, and open to different races of intelligent life. Population size, racial integration, and available resources have significant effects on the culture of any city. A DM who considers the effects of these factors when designing aquatic civilizations is able to create a more realistic and playable environment.

THE UNDERDEEP

There are oceans beneath the world. Adventurers know of the endless complexes that seem to fill the world as if the earth were termite-ridden wood. They are a seemingly infinite maze reaching everywhere, leading from man's puny diggings to the deep pits of the dwarves to even deeper places, home to beings that have not seen sunlight in the memory of a thousand generations of elves. What few are aware of, though, is that there are even deeper places, that beneath the bottom of the sea there are dark passages, vast caves, and the remnants of the cities of races so ancient and so forgotten they do not exist even as shadows of myth.

Entire systems of lost caves, sunken and buried cities, and deliberately built subsurface constructions are found in the Underdeep, and it lures aquatic-born

adventure seekers as surely as the air-filled caves above attract those of the surface. Of course, particularly daring and resourceful (or foolish) landfolk might find their way to the Underdeep as well, perhaps becoming the first in generations to visit the dwarves of Sunken Mountain, or trade in Silentdark, or fight their way through the palace of Rennial the Rift Lich.

GENERAL CONDITIONS

The Underdeep is dark and cold. Only a few areas of the Underdeep have any light at all, and this usually comes from phosphorescent fungi. Most of this vast region is shrouded in absolute and eternal darkness. For obvious reasons, torches and lanterns are useless. Beings with *darkvision* are the only ones who can traverse these places without some other means of illumination—even low-light vision is useless here. The cold is intense, as well, usually just over the freezing point of saltwater.

The pressure is likewise unbearable. Most of the Underdeep is several miles below the surface, and pressure effects deal 1d6 points of damage per 100 feet of depth. Anyone without protection from pressure is immediately crushed as soon as he fails a single Fortitude save. Thus, *improved water breathing*, a *ring of aquatic survival*, or similar magic is necessary to explore the Underdeep. Of course, those who dwell in the Underdeep are aware that outsiders, especially Flatlanders, survive in their domain through the use of magic, which provides everything from light to breath. *Dispel magic*, whether discharged from magic traps or as the first spell cast in combat, is a very common spell in the Underdeep.

The Underdeep is also three-dimensional. So are most cave complexes, of course, but most of their inhabitants move through them in two dimensions, ascending or descending only with difficulty. In the Underdeep, however, ambush is as likely to come from above or below as from ahead or behind.

A last issue to consider is sound. As noted in the section on skills, sound travels much farther underwater than it does in air. Aquatic beings gain all the listed benefits to the Listen skill but do *not* suffer penalties to discern the direction of sounds—they are natives, and they are accustomed to it. Thus, any party “sneak-

ing” through the Underdeep might find they are not nearly so crafty as they originally thought.

ADVENTURE LOCATIONS

Most of the Underdeep seems to be a series of eternally dark tunnels branching and connecting like the veins and arteries of a dead god. However, within this emptiness, there are also countless points of interest, excitement, and danger. Some of these are detailed below. The descriptions are kept generic, so DMs may place them easily within their own campaign world. Almost none rely on the concept of the Underdeep itself—that is, you do not have to have an entire aquatic underworld to use these adventure locations. They can be placed anywhere beneath the ocean’s floor. The only exception is Silentdark, which is designed to serve as a center for an Underdeep campaign.

SUNKEN MOUNTAIN

A long time in the past—long enough that the event itself is fuel for myth—a great cataclysm swept the land. Continents twisted. Rivers tore free and settled in new paths. Cities were drowned and lakes were emptied. And the mountains of a large island chain vanished in a day as a great hollow was formed in the seabed beneath them.

By blind fate or the will of the gods, the centermost mountain collapsed into the hollow mostly intact—with the inhabitants, thousands of dwarves, all alive. The secure doors built into the fortress-city, designed to keep invaders out, also served to keep out much of the inrushing sea, and hasty construction work supplemented by magic kept out the rest. When the first week of frantic activity was over, a large portion of the city remained dry and secure.

Other issues were resolved in time. The trapped air would last for months, and in those months, dwarven alchemists created fungi that could produce oxygen. The mountain had always been mostly self-sufficient, with a food supply based on fungus and great, sluglike fungus-eating herbivores. The dwarves stoically accepted their lot while wondering if the upper world still existed at all. Months passed. Then there was a knock on one of the doors.

A little dwarven ingenuity and one makeshift airlock later, they opened the door and admitted

the leader of a merfolk scouting party that was surveying the vastly changed undersea world. These were deep merfolk, with little knowledge of the surface world, and the great air-filled caverns, intricate stone carvings, and other creations were doubly wondrous to them. But most important was the metal! Everywhere, the dwarves used forged metal—even as simple nails and eating utensils.

Thus, the dwarves found a place in Underwave. The area around Sunken Mountain is considered neutral ground, and merfolk, sea elves, tritons, and locathah all come to trade. Food, crafts, gold and treasure scavenged from shipwrecks, and other wealth flow into the dwarven hold; cunningly crafted weapons and tools, most imbued with the *waterbane* enchantment, flow out.

On the surface, the clan that dwelled in the Lost Islands is mourned every decade in a somber ritual. Below the surface, they thrive unknown to those above. The current population of Sunken Mountain is roughly 5,000. The leader is Yorn Fornvine (Ftr 5/Ar 11), and he has ruled the mostly peaceful kingdom for slightly more than a hundred years.

Items that grant *water breathing* or otherwise enable the dwarves to leave their kingdom, even briefly, are of tremendous value in Sunken Mountain, worth at least twice the standard market price.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

Merfolk who live near a major human seaport have long remained neutral in an ongoing war. Now, however, they are offering to harass the boats of the town's enemies and otherwise aid the war effort, in return for payment in the form of *rings of aquatic survival*. Why do merfolk need such rings? They are not saying. PCs might be asked to investigate, leading them to discover that the merfolk need them to buy weapons from Sunken Mountain. This adventure hook can also work for aquatic PCs: They have been asked to make this deal in order to get the rings, but not to let surface-folk learn of the dwarves.

The PCs might hear of a lost artifact, buried centuries ago when a cataclysm destroyed an island peak. A powerful dwarf king might hire or ask the PCs to retrieve it from the seabed. This adventure has two major elements: the



first, finding Sunken Mountain and dealing with the inhabitants; second, recovering the artifact (if the dwarves can be convinced to give it up). Unfortunately, as is the way of such things, the artifact was in the section of the mountain flooded during the initial catastrophe. This can be used to set the PCs on a long quest through the Underdeep.

BLOODCORAL PASSAGES

This is not an actual location but a phenomenon often encountered near places in the Underdeep that are currently or formerly inhabited. Bloodcoral is not named for its color (it is white), but for the hideously sharp ridges it forms as it grows; ridges that remain deadly even after the coral dies. Dwellers in the Underdeep often find they cannot guard every possible passage leading to their territory, so they often protect only the major entrances and line the remainder with bloodcoral.

The walls of passages are seeded with small bloodcoral colonies that are fed and tended over the course of years, until the passages are lined with a thick layer of the

stuff. Then the feeding ceases and the coral dies, but the hard shell remains. The result is a passage that can be a lethal impediment to the unwary. Most Underdeep folk are hesitant to seal off any passage completely, for any reason—one never knows when he might need a way to travel that no one else is watching.

Anyone swimming down a bloodcoral passage that is unaware of the danger is likely to accidentally brush against a wall. A Swim check determines if this happens. The amount of damage dealt depends on travel speed. Identifying bloodcoral requires a Wilderness Lore (underwater) check at DC 15, Knowledge (Underdeep) at DC 10, or Knowledge (oceans) at DC 25.

Speed	Damage	Swim Check DC
Walk	1d4	10
Hustle	2d6	15
Run	4d6	20

Races that maintain bloodcoral passages often keep pet sharks on hand, sending them into the tunnels after intruders have conveniently reddened the waters.

Once the nature of the coral is known, the Swim check to avoid the damage gains a +4 circumstance bonus. Make a check once every 15 minutes of undisturbed travel, or once a round when in combat, if the character is within five feet of a bloodcoral-lined wall. If a character is shoved directly into bloodcoral, by a bull rush, a merfolk tail slam, or some other maneuver, he takes 2d4 points of damage plus the attacker's Strength bonus. Heavier armor protects against bloodcoral: An armor bonus (artificial or natural) of +4 or greater halves all damage.

ADVENTURE HOOK

The PCs have managed to run afoul of some sahuagin—not hard to do. Attempting to flee their pursuers, they dive deep into a series of tunnels leading away from the sahuagin settlement. Unfortunately, the tunnels are lined with bloodcoral and extend a considerable distance. The sahuagin pursue, their high natural AC keeping them relatively safe from the coral. The PCs must use their wits to succeed in a battle where even the walls are lethal. The encounter is even more dangerous if the sahuagin are accompanied by sharks.

THE DROWNING PIT

Members of the thieves' guilds in coastal cities often arrange for troublemakers to "have dinner with the merfolk." None of them suspects, however, that aquatic races have taken advantage of an odd magical leftover to do much the same with their own problems.

Some time in the distant past, a powerful wizard wanted to be left alone to pursue his work. Since he was concerned with studies of water magic, the sea was a good choice, but he did not want to bother with *water breathing* spells, or the difficulties of maintaining a good library underwater. So he called in some favors from some powerful elementals and created a cavern, 500 feet in diameter and about 40 feet high. The cavern was located deep below the ocean floor and filled with breathable, self-renewing air (introduced through a small, permanent gate to the Elemental Plane of Air). At the top of this bubble was a narrow shaft, roughly 20 feet in length and five feet wide, which opened onto the seafloor. While the wizard lived, he carefully controlled access to his domain, but since his death, anyone and anything can fall through into the air-filled cavern—except for the sea itself, of course. Since the entire cavern is a magical construct, *dispel magic* only works if it can cover the entire cavern in a single casting.

With the original inhabitant gone, the cavern remains an oddity, an air-filled cavity located in the deepest depths of the sea. Some of the local inhabitants have found a use for this place as a means of punishing criminals or enemies via a slow and cruel death. The pit is located in a region with little else of value, between cities of sahuagin, merfolk, and sea elves. Every so often, one of these races brings a condemned criminal or captured enemy to the entrance to the shaft and tosses him in. The more merciful races simply allow the fall to do the killing; the more vicious often bind the victim and lower him within 15 feet or so of the ground, then drop him. The sadistically inclined then wait around the rim, listening to the screams, pleas, and eventual gasping death of their victim. Even the less sadistic usually wait, simply to make sure there is no escape. While the Drowning Pit is not the most efficient means of death, it is dramatic and feared, and thus has a meaningful deterrent and symbolic effect. Sea elves use it only for the worst criminals; it is

viewed as the ultimate exile from their culture, condemning the criminal not merely to die, but to die “on land.”

The pit contains, in addition to a large number of skeletons, the remains of the wizard’s mansion and laboratory. Parts have been ransacked by victims looking for some means of escape, but most of it is intact, due in no small part to the many constructs the wizard kept as guards. The treasures that lie deep within are many; certainly, they include powerful elemental summoning and control items, new spells with an aquatic focus, and exotic treasures from the deep sea and the elemental planes.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

For aquatic PCs, being dumped into the Drowning Pit is an adventure in itself. There are many ways the creative and imaginative antics of typical PCs could anger someone sufficiently to condemn them to this particularly unpleasant death. Once dropped in, they have to battle against a literal deadline in order to find some way to escape. The limited mobility of merfolk makes this especially challenging for them.

For flatlander PCs, this place is a blessed refuge, not a deathtrap. The area around the mansion is a safe place to rest, recover spells, and so on. Globes with *continual flame* cast on them provide steady, if dim, illumination. The mansion of the wizard is a worthy adventure goal, but first, a sea elf dropped from above claims he was captured by sahuagin and sentenced to die. He begs the PCs to help him escape and exact revenge. Is his story true? Or was he condemned by his own people for unthinkable crimes? Only the DM knows for sure.

DEEP DROW

The extent of civilizations beneath the ocean is often startling to flatlanders. Most of them are aware of life undersea only by hearsay, or by the occasional encounter with a group of merfolk or sea elves trailing after a ship or engaging in trade at a port town. The fact that there are cities and empires vaster and older than anything of the surface is unknown to all but a few scholars. And yet, even they do not know the whole of it. For example, while a few sages know of the dark elves, and a few beyond that are aware of their underground cities, it is unlikely anyone on the surface is aware that the

sea elves have their own dark reflections, and that, in the deepest part of the Underdeep, they have made their homes.

The full extent of deep drow civilization is unknown; few who encounter it return, and none who encounter it are in a position to do much touring. The deep drow keep their existence as secret as they can—they prefer to be the whisper of a legend. Their origin is unknown; they may be aquatic offshoots of the drow, or they might be the evil cousins of aquatic elves. No one has asked them, and it is not clear if they even know.

Deep drow are identical to aquatic elves, except for the following.

- Spell resistance 11 + class level
- +2 racial bonus on Will saves against spells and spell-like abilities
- Spell-Like Abilities: 1/day *dancing lights*, *darkness*, and *faerie fire*. These abilities are as the spells cast by a sorcerer of the drow’s character level.
- Darkvision up to 120 feet. This replaces elven low-light vision.
- Light Blindness (Ex): Abrupt exposure to bright light (such as sunlight or a *daylight* spell) blinds drow for one round. In addition, they suffer a –1 circumstance penalty on all attack rolls, saves, and checks while operating in bright light.
- Pressure Sensitivity (Ex): Deep drow are highly adapted to life in the deepest parts of the ocean. If they ascend to within 200 feet of the surface, they must make a Fortitude save (DC 15) every 15 minutes or take 1d6 points of pressure damage.

Characters may encounter deep drow outposts or colonies anywhere in the Underdeep, but it is unlikely they will simply stumble upon them. The communities are well hidden and well defended. It is much more likely that they will be stalked and hunted by a small band of deep drow far from the nearest base, looking for slaves or simply a chance to kill. Assuming the PCs survive, they can begin the hunt for their attackers’ homeland.

Deep drow worship a chaotic evil goddess who takes the form of an immense hybrid drow-crab. This is known only because a few deep drow killed outside their hidden realms have carried icons depicting this being. Very little else is known of their culture or society, or how closely, if at all, it resembles traditional drow culture. What is known is that deep drow are bloodthirsty, sadistic, and extremely patient. They do not act in haste or out of blind rage, but plot carefully, often taking months to fully envision and execute a plan.

They seem to be engaging in a long, slow takeover of the Underdeep. Each century, the territory they hold expands, and now their newest settlements are getting close to the ocean floor, at least in the deeper reaches of the sea. How long will it be before they spill out in an open assault on the other races? Those few among the merfolk who know of the problem fear that it will not be long.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

Communities at the edge of a mighty merfolk kingdom are being destroyed. Entire villages disappear in a single night, leaving no survivors. The PCs are asked to investigate, or perhaps a relative or close friend of one of the characters was lost in one of the raids. At first, sahuagin are suspected, but the precision and thoroughness makes that seem unlikely (not to mention the lack of partially eaten bodies). The only clue is a small piece of jewelry depicting a half-crab/half-elven monstrosity. Sea elf sages may recognize the symbol and point the PCs towards the regions of the Underdeep leading to rumored deep drow settlements.

If flatlander PCs have battled drow in the past, let them encounter something new the next time they face a drow raiding party deep in the underground caverns: One of the drow killed has webbed fingers and greenish hair, and his garments and weapons are made of unknown materials. Further investigation reveals that the nearest drow city rests on the shore of a great underwater lake, but the water in the lake is salty, and beneath the lake is a passage that leads to a cave system that extends under the ocean. This is also a good way to lead surface PCs into the Underdeep in general.

SILENTDARK

Gorathal looked at the odd being in front of him. "You have the pearls?"

"Yes," said the being, his face hidden by spell. He held one out, a perfect sphere shimmering in every color that could be named. "You have my payment?"

"Not here. I would not carry such as you demand this far. Bring your pearls to Silentdark, and there you shall have your payment. Don't worry—he'll still be alive when you get there."

Wherever there is civilization, there is trade. The Underdeep is sparsely populated compared to the surface or the ocean floor, but it still depends on trade. Given the vast distances and equally vast hostility between many of the cultures of the Underdeep, it is hardly surprising a neutral ground has emerged at a nexus of many different cavern systems. Silentdark is a trading town built into a single large cavern about two miles across and a quarter mile high. Some have said it is the economic heart of the Underdeep, with the blood of commerce pumping in and out of the dozens of tunnels leading into the city from elsewhere.

There are two main sections of Silentdark, downtown and uptown. Downtown spreads along the bottom of the cavern, while uptown is built into the ceiling. Downtown is the first stop for travelers and traders, while uptown is for residents. A continual flow of goods and beings fills the space between. Most buildings in downtown are accessed via their roofs, while the uptown buildings typically feature portals built into their floors. The buildings in uptown are generally made of light material, such as coral and pumice harvested from undersea volcanoes. A surprising amount of construction features wood; shipwrecks are often carved up and brought here, the contents sold in downtown and the structure alchemically processed and used for building.

Law in Silentdark is simple. Anyone doing something that might harm the town's neutrality or reputation as a safe haven is expelled or killed as the situation warrants: One passage from Silentdark leads to the Drowning Pit. Anyone who is free when they enter Silentdark shall leave it free; anyone enslaved when they

enter is expected to leave it enslaved. Vendettas end at the borders of the town.

A mayor always rules Silentdark. Sometimes the most powerful residents choose the mayor; other times he simply seizes power. Either way, the mayor rules because having a mayor helps keep order and maintain profitability. If a mayor does not serve these ends, his career and life quickly end. The current mayor is Nerrith Darkreef, a merfolk (Pal6/B110/Ftr1, AL LE) who rules with rigid discipline and a touch of creative sadism. Under his reign, Silentdark has become a somewhat grimmer place, but the residents accept that he keeps order and that is all that matters.

Since most beings who venture to Silentdark have low-light vision or *darkvision*, the cavern is kept only dimly lit, in deference to those visitors who are sensitive to light. Individual buildings may be lit more brightly on the inside, or they may be shielded against all light.

Survival in Silentdark is not cheap—double all prices for standard food and lodging expenses, even in the cheapest parts of town. Nearly all goods and services are at least 10 to 40 percent more expensive in the town.

POINTS OF INTEREST

The Bazaar: Located in the center of downtown, this is a region perhaps half a mile across that is perennially packed with itinerant traders. This is where anyone with something to sell and no fixed abode sets up shop. Most trading stalls are weighted to the sea floor, with large signs and displays on the tops, so that those swimming overhead can quickly find the goods they seek. The most popular stalls are often surrounded by a sphere of eager customers trying to squeeze past each other.

The Fish Market: Crudely and sadistically named, this is one of the most infamous parts of downtown. The Fish Market is the place of business for slave traders and buyers. Slave trading has always been legal in Silentdark, but it has been encouraged or discouraged to various degrees, and it has never been as popular as now, under the rule of Nerrith. Security in this area is extremely tight, and many of the buyers are of races rarely seen elsewhere in the Underdeep. These include magically protected air-breathing races, such as mind flayers and beholders seeking the most exotic specimens for reasons dark and arcane.



Illanial's Symposium: This large structure in uptown is run by Illanial, an aquatic elf (Wiz14, N), as a center for all beings to meet for the peaceful exchange of knowledge. Illanial believes that knowledge is the ultimate good, transcending all other values, so he constructed his symposium in Silentdark to have access to the learning of deep drow, sahuagin, and others. A good being at heart, he has become concerned at how far Nerrith is tilting the balance in Silentdark and has started making plans for change. Because he is an elf, these plans might not unfold for a long time.

Flatland Hostel: Built into the highest parts of uptown, this three-story structure immediately catches the eye of any surface dwellers who make it to Silentdark, as it is built to resemble a common inn in any large seaport. This is a bit of a deception: The front door is decorative only, for example, and the smoke from the chimney is a simple illusion. The intent is to make it clear to visitors from the surface that this is a home away from home. Entry is actually through the floor, passing through a magical portal that keeps the water out. Inside is an air-filled inn, three stories tall, with a large common room, a fire roaring in the fireplace (actually a small bound fire elemental), and other accoutrements familiar to landfolk but utterly alien to the rest of the populace.

The owner is Roy Garindson (Ftr 8/Rg 6, CN), a retired adventurer, who decided to settle in Silentdark for reasons he will not discuss. Once here, he took advantage of the fortune he had earned adventuring to procure the magic necessary to build the inn. His customers are about 50 percent surface dwellers and 50 percent inhabitants of the Underdeep who want an "exotic experience." Surface food—beef, bread, beer, and so on—is available at outrageous prices (about 10 times list price), but the most popular items are native seafoods prepared "flatlander style." Cooked fish is an acquired taste for many, but it is considered a sign of sophistication.

Rennial's Fortress: Aquatic elves live a long time, and can pursue their passions, whatever they may be, for centuries. There are some, though, for whom even the lifespan of an elf is not enough. Rennial, called the Rift Lich, is one such. His original desire, to know all that could be known about magic, consumed him utterly. With each answer he found, he

found two new questions. With no way to complete his quest in life, he chose unlife. Five centuries ago, he turned his back on both life and death, becoming one of those trapped between them. Driven out of his homeland, he wandered far until he found a canyon perhaps two miles deep. At the very base of the canyon was a deep drow fortress. Without hesitation, he slew the inhabitants, taking the castle for himself.

Over time, he has expanded on the original fortress, burrowing deeper into the rock below, reaching new regions of the Underdeep. Every so often, a group of deep drow attempt to seize the fortress, but they have yet to prove a match for his power. Centuries of plotting have given Rennial a hold on countless events in the Underdeep, all mostly without anyone suspecting he is behind them. He is the power behind Nerrith of Silentdark, for example, and intends to ultimately turn the town from a neutral ground to a city that serves only him. His agents are everywhere, and many do not know whom they truly serve. If a group of eager young merfolk is offered an outrageous sum to return a "trivial" item from a shipwreck, the odds are good it will ultimately end up in the hands of the Rift Lich.

The area surrounding the fortress is well patrolled. Water elementals, sharks, and lesser undead of all sorts fill the region. No area within a mile is safe from Rennial's scrying devices, and the caverns below the fortress are likewise patrolled and secured. It is always possible, of course, that there is a forgotten passage or lost tunnel somewhere that connects directly to the fortress, but it's not likely and there is no way to count the fools who have tried to find one.

One of the most interesting features of the rift surrounding the fortress is the incredible abundance of shipwrecks. Rennial feels he owns the terrain "clear to the sky," and he uses his powers and his followers to destroy any ship that passes over the castle. The seas surrounding his castle are thought to be haunted or cursed, and wise sailors take the long way around, rather than tempt the "ghosts of the sea."

Rennial's fortress is best suited as the climax of a long campaign, either by surface-dwelling PCs or aquatic ones. (Rennial has powers in the surface world as well; his reach extends far.) After a long quest to find the mastermind

behind their troubles, the characters will ultimately reach this place. A frontal assault would be monstrously stupid, but maybe that unknown passage really does exist, or maybe there is a way to trick their way in.

Elemental Vortices: Pressure transforms coal into diamonds. It can also strain the substance of creation, warping and twisting reality itself. In the most isolated parts of the Underdeep, where the full weight of the world's oceans crushes down, rents open in space. Usually microscopic and transient, they can be abruptly enlarged by a sudden release of energy surging through them.

At any point in the Underdeep (except the Drowning Pit and other air-filled spaces), it is possible to accidentally open a rift to the Elemental Plane of Water. There is a chance of this happening whenever an arcane spell that involves water or ice is cast (*water breathing*, *control water*, and *wall of ice* are all good examples of this type of magic). A Spellcraft check (DC15) is needed to avoid this outcome. A roll of 1 is always a failure: The spellcaster has gathered a bit too much power or channeled it incorrectly, and has possibly forced open a gate. The base chance on a roll to open a gate is equal to the level of the spell, modified as follows.

Area	Modification
Tight corridor or passage	-10%*
Small cavern (<100 ft. across)	-5%
Large cavern (100 to 1,000 ft. across)	—
Huge cavern (>1,000 ft. across)	+5%
Civilized region**	-3%
Caster is aquatic native***	-4%

* This may make it seem impossible to open a gate at all in a tight passage. True, it is rare. However, there are legends of spells beyond 9th level that truly epic heroes may wield, and such mighty sorceries can have many odd effects.

** Cities, outposts, fortresses, tribal gathering places—anyplace where beings regularly meet tends to be a bit more stable. Vortices usually open only in distant places.

*** If the caster is deliberately trying to open a vortex (see below), this modifier may be ignored.

Once a vortex has opened, roll on the following table to determine its size.

Roll	Size
01–05	Fine
06–10	Tiny
11–20	Small
21–80	Medium-size
81–90	Large
91–95	Huge
96–00	Colossal

The size of the vortex is the maximum possible creature size that can pass through it, from either side. The duration of a vortex is 2d4 rounds.

Example

Thrug, a half-orc sorcerer of some power but not much intellect, has managed to make his way to the Underdeep. Pursued by some deep drow, he swims into a large cavern and tries to seal off a passage with a wall of ice. He fails his Spellcraft check, and the DM rolls to see if he has accidentally opened a vortex. He cast a 4th-level spell, so there is a base 4 percent chance. Thrug has cast the spell from within a large cavern, and is far from a civilized region, so there are no modifiers. The DM rolls a 2 and the water near Thrug begins to ripple and distort. Two more rolls reveal a Medium-size vortex that lasts for 5 rounds. Demonstrating the intelligence and forethought for which he is known, Thrug decides to take his chances on the Plane of Water rather than deal with the drow, and enters the vortex.

While a vortex is open, there is a base 15 percent chance per round of something coming out. This can be any elemental entity of the appropriate size. It may be friendly, hostile, or curious; the DM should make a judgment based on the situation. Likewise, PCs may enter the vortex and journey to the Elemental Plane of Water. If the DM does not wish this to happen, he can rule that the vortex is one-way only.

Elemental vortices add another element of uncertainty and randomness to adventuring in the Underdeep. However, the DM should moderate their use if they start showing up too often. On the other hand, the DM may permit arcane casters to deliberately forego the initial Spellcraft check in an effort to force a vortex open. In any case, the DM is well

within his rights to make sure something suitably interesting is waiting for the PCs.

The Burning Caves: Centuries ago, a young black dragon named Denorro fled from a group of adventurers eager for a new trophy. He swam deep into the stagnant mire of his home and entered a passage he had noticed once but ignored. Hours later, he was still swimming, traveling far from his original home. A small deep drow outpost was the first thing he encountered; his victory was easy and the treasure was rich. No scent of other dragons reached him—this was an unclaimed land. Well, now he would claim it.

Exceptionally intelligent and cunning for one of his kind, Denorro has grown immense—a great wyrm who now rules a large section of the Underdeep. His long occupation has turned the waters around him sharply acidic—all those without resistance or immunity to acid must make a Fortitude save or suffer the listed damage.

Region	Save DC	Damage
The Fringes	10	1d4/hour
The Maze	15	1d6/hour
The Sanctum	20	1d6/turn

The Fringes: These are the outermost reaches of Denorro's territory. This is where the first line of his defense—assorted mercenaries and slaves—waits for invaders. Denorro considers this an easy way to increase the size of his hoard, as those who invade are usually well armed and well equipped.

The Maze: Over the years, Denorro has had slaves alter the caverns surrounding his lair, creating a twisting maze of dead ends and deadly endings. Scrying devices placed around the maze enable him to enjoy watching intruders traverse it. This also gives him an idea of what abilities they possess.

The Sanctum: The innermost section of Denorro's lair is a cave large enough for him to move comfortably in. It contains a number of passages leading out and back in again. Denorro can flee down one tunnel, navigate its twists and turns, and emerge from an unexpected direction.

Denorro often uses *polymorph self* to travel to new regions of the Underdeep, or even to

the societies that inhabit the ocean floor, sizing up sources of wealth and possible threats. When he finds a location with treasure but little risk, he reverts to his true form.

Denorro's form has altered over the years. His tail now resembles that of a shark, and his feet have become more akin to flippers. The horns of his skull now angle back and away, and his overall look is sleek and streamlined. This has the side effect of increasing his swimming speed. In the unlikely event that Denorro has the opportunity to fly, he does so very poorly, as his wing muscles have become accustomed to the motions used for swimming. Denorro has not seen the surface world in a thousand years, and has little desire to do so.

Denorro and Rennial are aware of each other, but their territories are vastly separated. As two of the great powers of the Underdeep, they keep a watch on each other's activities, but there is little chance of them coming into direct conflict. This suits them both just fine.

Denorro has the statistics of an average great wyrm black dragon, with the following exceptions: Intelligence 24, Wisdom 24, Swim 90 feet, Fly 100 feet.

NEW MONSTERS

This section presents a variety of new monsters appropriate to nautical or undersea campaigns. The names, stat blocks, and special ability descriptions are designated as **Open Game Content**. The descriptive text is designated as closed content.

AQUATIC TEMPLATE

Add this template to any creature to create a sea-dwelling variant. An aquatic red dragon is certainly *possible* in a magical universe, but such oddities should be reserved for special encounters. Likewise, avoid applying this template to mundane creatures when their roles can be filled by natural sea life—you do not need aquatic wolves when there are sharks, barracuda, or piranha with which to harass the players. This template is added to any creature affected by the *aquatic form* spell.

The aquatic template has the following effects.

- The creature gains the Aquatic type descriptor.
- The creature can breathe water and survive underwater indefinitely. Whether or not it can still breathe air is up to the DM.
- The creature gains a swim speed at a rate equal to 100–150 percent (DM's discretion) of its normal speed. If it could previously fly, it may now swim at its flying speed. A creature with a swim speed can move through water at the listed speed without making Swim checks. It gains a +8 racial bonus (though the DM may choose to adjust this) on any Swim check to perform some special action or avoid a hazard. The creature can always take 10 on Swim checks, even if rushed or threatened. Creatures can use the run action while swimming, provided they swim in a straight line.
- Regardless of the nature of the creature's attack types, it suffers no penalties when attacking underwater with a natural attack. Weapon attacks follow the normal rules. Furthermore, fire- or heat-based attacks work normally, or are transformed to more logical attack forms. For example, an aquatic red dragon may produce a magical field that flash-boils the water in an area equivalent to a normal red dragon's breath weapon, producing the same general effect without requiring an underwater fire. However, if a DM prefers to simply have mutant fire-breathing underwater dragons, there is no reason (other than his players' ability to maintain suspension of disbelief) not to have them.
- The creature can use all of its skills and feats without penalty (except for those that do not function normally underwater; see page 14). If the creature used to be a land-based creature, such as a dwarf who was the subject of an *aquatic form* spell, the creature may use its existing skills on land without penalty. However, the creature still suffers problems with vision and sound on land.

ABYSSAL SHARK

Gargantuan Outsider (Aquatic)	
Hit Dice:	25d8+175 (288 hp)
Initiative:	+2 (–2 Dex,+4 Improved Initiative)
Speed:	Swim 40 feet
AC:	23 (–4 size, –2 Dex, +19 natural)
Attacks:	Bite +32 melee
Damage:	2d8+11
Face/Reach:	20 ft. x 40 ft./10 ft.
Special Attacks:	Swallow whole
Special Qualities:	Damage reduction 20/+2, Scent, Underwater Sense, Size Change, Poison Immunity, Cold Immunity, Frightful Presence, Improved Grab, Ranged Bite
Saves:	Fort +21, Will +17, Ref +12
Abilities:	Str 33, Dex 7, Con 25, Int 8, Wis 16, Cha 14
Skills:	Hide +8, Intimidate +16, Listen +31, Move Silently +26, Spot+31, Swim +39, Wilderness Lore +31
Feats:	Improved Initiative, Track, Power Attack, Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Bull Rush
Climate/Terrain:	Any aquatic under ground
Organization:	Solitary
Challenge Rating:	18
Treasure:	Double standard, but no scrolls, potions, or other items that would be digestible
Alignment:	Always chaotic evil
Advancement:	26–31 Hit Dice (Gargantuan)

The abyssal shark is a creature of something beyond nightmare. It is spawned in the deepest oceans of an unknown plane of evil, and it occasionally finds its way to the Underdeep. It is doubtful more than one or two of these creatures exist on the material plane at one time, and sometimes a century or more can pass between sightings. The beast prowls the black caverns of the Underdeep without

pause, always moving, always eating, delighting in the fear it leaves in its wake.

In physical appearance, it resembles a whale-size shark, colored obsidian black, with teeth of purest white. Swimming in the darkness, it seems to be nothing more than a set of gargantuan jaws gliding toward the terrified victim. Its hide is featureless; even its eyes are simple ovals of jet set in deepest black.

The abyssal shark is a creature of simple intelligence and drives. It exists to cause fear, cause pain, and cause death, usually in that order. It cannot be reasoned with or bargained with. It wants nothing but fresh victims.

When an abyssal shark is sighted near any inhabited parts of the Underdeep, all feuds are off. Every creature inhabiting the cold blackness, from deep drow to aboleth, will work together to kill the beast.

COMBAT

In a feeding frenzy, the abyssal shark darts among its prey, snapping at everything within reach. The creature is relentless and pursues its prey to the ends of the Underdeep.

Frightful Presence (Ex): Whenever an abyssal shark successfully attacks, its frightful presence ability affects all those with fewer Hit Dice or levels than the shark has. A character can resist the effects with a successful Will save (DC 24). A character who succeeds at the saving throw is immune to that creature's frightful presence for one day.

Underwater Sense (Ex): An abyssal shark can locate creatures underwater within a 30-foot radius. This ability negates the effects of *invisibility* and poor visibility. It is less effective against creatures without central nervous systems, such as undead, oozes, and constructs; an abyssal shark can locate such creatures only within a 15-foot radius. Abyssal sharks are not fooled by figments when underwater.

Size Change (Su): This power allows the abyssal shark to traverse the narrow passages of the Underdeep, a task that would be otherwise impossible. At will, it may become a Medium-size creature, changing its size modifier to AC to +0 and granting it a +12 bonus on Hide checks. The creature's Strength is reduced to 18, its hit points to 25, and its

bite damage to 1d6+4. The abyssal shark is very vulnerable during this time (relatively speaking) and avoids conflict. Given that it is a black shark in black water, this is not too difficult. It only shrinks when it is sure no one is watching.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, the abyssal shark must hit with its bite attack. If it gets a hold, it can attempt to swallow the opponent.

Swallow Whole (Ex): An abyssal shark can try to swallow a grabbed opponent of Huge size or smaller by making a successful grapple check. After swallowing an opponent, it can use its Cleave feat to bite and grab another opponent. The swallowed creature takes 2d12+12 points of crushing damage and 12 points of acid damage per round from the shark's stomach. A swallowed creature can also cut its way out by using claws or a small to large slashing weapon to deal 50 points of damage to the stomach (AC 16). Once the creature exits, muscular action closes the hole; another swallowed opponent must again cut his own way out.

Ranged Bite (Su): By taking a full attack action, an abyssal shark can use its bite as a ranged attack against any target it can sense within 50 feet. It can grab and swallow with this ranged bite just as if it were engaging in melee. Very often, the first indication of an attack by an abyssal shark is some luckless soul being bitten in half with no visible cause. This attack triggers the creature's frightful presence ability.

Skills: The abyssal shark is darkness swimming through darkness. If its mouth is closed and there is no light source, it receives a +8 racial bonus to Hide checks.

Abyssal sharks speak Aquan and Abyssal.

Abyssal sharks do not hoard treasure, but they do accumulate indigestible gems and magic items in their stomachs.

CORAL GOLEM

Large Construct	
Hit Dice:	10d10 (55 hp)
Initiative:	-1 (Dex)
Speed:	15 feet, swim 40 feet
AC:	20 (-1 size, -1 Dex, +12 natural)
Attacks:	2 slams +16 melee
Damage:	Slam 1d8+9
Face/Reach:	10 ft. by 5 ft./15 ft.
Special Attacks:	None
Special Qualities:	Construct, magic immunity, damage reduction 10/+1, regeneration 5, swimming, aquatic native, reefseeming, water dependency
Saves:	Fort +3, Will +3, Ref +2
Abilities:	Str 28, Dex 9, Con —, Int —, Wis 11, Cha 1
Climate/Terrain:	Any aquatic
Organization:	Solitary or pair
Challenge Rating:	11
Treasure:	None
Alignment:	Always neutral
Advancement:	11–15 HD (Huge)

A coral golem is a massive, somewhat humanoid figure composed of still-living coral, animated by spells known only to aquatic spellcasters. The exact form of the creature depends on the race of the caster—merfolk golems are tailed, while aquatic elf golems are bipedal. They are identical in game terms, since their motive power is magical, not physical. Since the coral that composes the coral golem is still living, it is not unusual to see crabs crawling along it or fish darting in and out of crevices in its torso.

It is crudely formed at best, a rough outline, unfinished and incomplete. It does not have obvious eyes, just two deep holes (which, more often than not, house a moray eel or similar beast). Its hands are misshapen lumps with two or three thick fingers and a crude thumb.

Depending on the coral in the region in which it was built, it may be dully or brightly colored; it always resembles the reef it was formed in.



COMBAT

Coral golems are used mostly in closed spaces, where their limited speed is not a disadvantage. Their reefseeming ability enables them to remain nearly invisible until it is time to attack. Usually, they are told to guard a particular passage or door and assault anyone attempting to pass through it.

Construct: Immune to mind-influencing effects, poison, disease, and similar effects. Not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, energy drain, or death from massive damage.

Magic Immunity (Ex): Golems completely resist most magical and supernatural effects. *Repel vermin*, *antilife shell*, and *antiplant shell* all affect them normally, since they are collective entities composed of both animal and plant matter. *Diminish plants* deals 4d6 points of damage to a coral golem.

Regeneration (Su): As long as the coral golem is still alive it can heal itself rapidly. Only crushing weapons and fire do normal damage to it. These attacks are neither common nor especially effective underwater.

Swimming (Ex): As constructs, coral golems do not have skills. However, treat them as if they had Swim +8 for all Swim checks.

Aquatic Native: A coral golem is considered an aquatic native for all purposes. Furthermore, its slam attacks suffer no penalties underwater.

Reefseeming (Ex): The coral golem can blend into a reef composed of the same or similar types of coral as itself. Detecting a motionless coral golem requires a Spot check (DC 28).

Water Dependency (Ex): Out of water, the coral golem weakens rapidly. It cannot regenerate and takes 1d4 points of damage per round.

The coral golem costs 75,000 gp to create, which includes 1,000 gp for the body. Assembling the body requires a successful Craft (coral sculpting) check (DC 17). The creator must be at least 16th level and be able to cast divine spells. Completing the ritual drains 1,600 XP from the creator and requires *animate objects*, *bless*, *freedom of movement*, *commune*, *prayer*, and *regenerate*.

DROWNED DEAD

Medium-size Undead (Aquatic)	
Hit Dice:	2d12+3 (16 hp)
Initiative:	-1 (Dex)
Speed:	30 ft., swim 50 ft.
AC:	11 (-1 Dex, +2 natural)
Attacks:	Slam +2 melee
Damage:	Slam 1d6+4
Face/Reach:	5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Qualities:	Undead, improved grab
Saves:	Fort +0, Ref -1, Will +3
Abilities:	Str 18, Dex 8, Con —, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 1
Feats:	Toughness
Skills:	Swim +16, Spot +6, Move Silently +5, Hide +6, Listen +7
Climate/Terrain:	Any aquatic
Organization:	Gang (2-5), squad (6-10), or mob (11-20)
Challenge Rating:	1
Treasure:	None
Alignment:	Always neutral evil
Advancement:	3 HD (Medium-size)



Drowned dead are the rotted corpses of sailors who died at sea, usually due to sheer mischance. That they died through no fault of their own, but from bad luck or someone else's incompetence, has filled them with a hatred of all who cross the seas and live. The drowned dead lurk near the surface in well-traveled parts of the sea, waiting for anyone who might fall from a ship (they attempt to sink small vessels, especially lifeboats, but will not climb onto ships). When such a person is found, they grab him and hold him underwater until he drowns. Such victims are likely to become drowned dead. In areas of the sea where shipwrecks are common, small armies of hate-filled animate corpses may lurk just below the waves.

Drowned dead normally do not have treasure. At the DM's discretion, however, one or two might still have some jewelry remaining from when they were alive.

HIPPOCAMPUS

Large Beast (Aquatic)	
Hit Dice:	4d8+12 (30 hp)
Initiative:	+1 (Dex)
Speed:	50 ft., swim: 90 ft.
AC:	14 (-1 size, +1 Dex, +4 natural)
Attacks:	2 hooves +7 melee; bite +2 melee
Damage:	Hoof 1d6+4; bite 1d4+2
Face/Reach:	5 ft. by 10 ft./5 ft.
Special Qualities:	Scent
Saves:	Fort +7, Ref +5, Will +2
Abilities:	Str 18, Dex 13, Con 17, Int 2, Wis 13, Cha 6
Skills:	Swim +8, Listen +7, Spot +7
Climate/Terrain:	Any aquatic
Organization:	Domesticated
Challenge Rating:	2
Treasure:	None
Alignment:	Always neutral
Advancement:	—

The hippocampus is a creature that has been domesticated by merfolk and aquatic elves for as long as either species can recall, but wild herds still remain. They are sometimes called merhorses, for they have the fore-bodies of large horses with the tails of fish. In the place of manes, they have dorsal fins that are often



brightly colored. The horse torso is usually white, but can be gray, brown, or patterned, much like surface horses. The fish tail is usually emerald green.

The statistics for this creature represent a well-trained, heavy specimen such as a merfolk knight might ride.

SHIP CONSTRUCTION

The sailing ship is a staple of any fantasy campaign, with wind in the sails, the smell of the salty sea air, and menacing storm clouds on the distant horizon. Life on the high seas can offer both excitement and danger. Before you can set sail to adventure, though, you need a ship. This section presents new rules for designing and constructing a variety of boats and ships. These rules allow DMs and players to create both historical and fantasy ships that can be seamlessly incorporated into an ongoing campaign. All text in this section is designated as **Open Game Content**.

GETTING STARTED

The first step in the construction of a sailing vessel is to answer two simple questions: “What kind of vessel do I want?” and “What do I need it to do?” Do you need a small vessel for travel on local riverways or do you require a cargo ship for extended voyages across the sea? Do you need only a very simple ship or a fantastic vessel such as a submarine or other equally distinct craft? By answering these questions before you begin, the process of

putting the pieces together becomes much easier and quicker. To help you develop a better idea of what each type of ship is best suited for and how they are typically used, the following is a list of the most commonly used sea vessels on the waters of most fantasy settings.

COMMON VESSELS

Barge: Typically ranging from 10 to 50 feet in length, a barge can carry up to four tons of cargo for every 10 feet of length. The drawback of barges is their lack of durability and seaworthiness, making them useful only in relatively calm, shallow waters. Barges are often used to transport passengers and cargo across large rivers or lakes.

Caravel: With strong construction, caravels average 70 feet in length and 20 feet in width. They are multi-level castles of the high seas that carry a standard crew of 40 men and support up to 10 tons of cargo. With large quarters in the fore and aft sections of the vessel, caravels are the choice of many voyagers for long, overseas trips.

Cog: Cogs range from 75 to 90 feet in length and 20 to 30 feet in width, making them far more stable on the seas than a typical cargo ship. Large can support some 60 crewmembers,

and also boast a large cargo capacity of up to 150 tons. Many cogs are also equipped with stern castles that are used as shelter during rough weather or during combat.

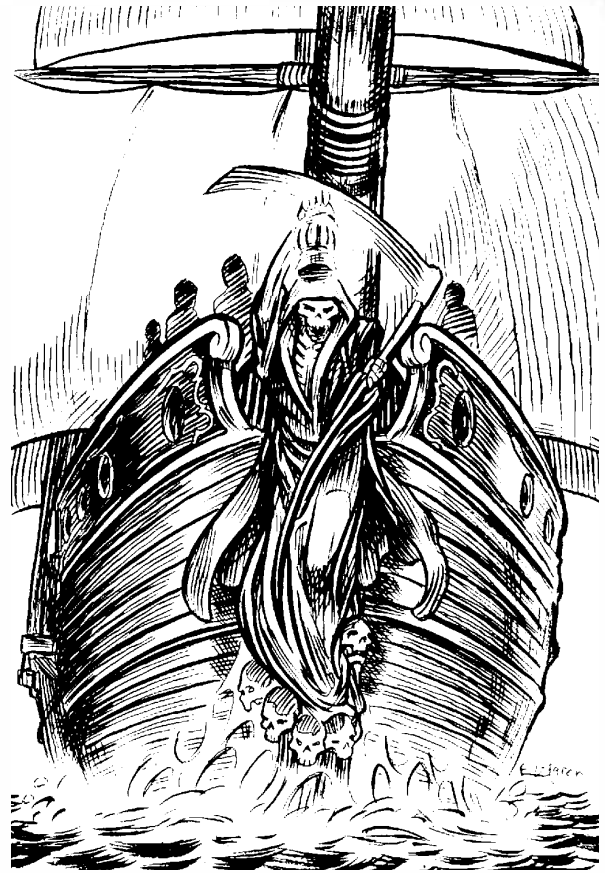
Fishing Boat: These are the most common sea vessels on the waters near civilized areas. Available in a variety of shapes and sizes, the average fishing boat is 30 feet in length, six feet in width, and boasts a small single mast and sail. Though diminutive, fishing boats can be very stable and are often used for short sea voyages. They can support up to 1,000 pounds of cargo. Crews can utilize a small covered area near the bow for shelter during harsh weather.

Great Galley: Virtual fortresses on the high seas, great galleys average 130 feet in length and 20 feet in width. With numerous oars to power these aquatic juggernauts, as well as up to three masts, great galleys are deceptively fast and maneuverable for their size. In addition to speed, great galleys have sufficient cargo capacity for 200 tons of cargo and 200 passengers, crew, and soldiers.

Longship: A design popular for its seaworthiness and stability, the longship averages 60 feet in length and 22 feet in width. Typically carrying a crew of 50 while providing space for an additional 120 passengers, a longship's only flaw is that it does not boast a large cargo area; it can hold only 10 tons. Making use of oars, sails, and sleek lines, longships are favored for long overseas voyages or coastal raiding.

SHIP HULLS

The first and most decisive step in ship construction is the selection of a hull. A ship's hull, in most cases, is the deciding factor of what a vessel's primary function will be. Smaller hulls, though less expensive and sometimes easier to maneuver, limit the number of propulsion, armor, cargo, and artillery options you can choose from. Larger hulls support multiple forms of propulsion, more artillery, more cargo, and larger crews. Larger vessels are also quite expensive; they take longer to construct and can be difficult for low-level characters to obtain. It is important to have a good idea of what you need from a sailing vessel and what your long-term plans are for it. Listed below are several hull classes to choose from



Size: This almost always determines the primary function of the vessel. For instance, Small vessels are designed for very short journeys on local waterways, such as rivers and lakes. Colossal ships, on the other hand, are used for seaworthy warships and troop transports designed for long journeys on dangerous waters. Listed below are the average lengths and widths of vessels from each size category. Note that the dimensions of these hull classes do not match those for creatures of the same size categories. The rules for ship combat are described in Chapter 6 (see page 155).

Hull Sizes

Type	Average	
	Length	Width
Small	10 feet	10 feet
Medium	30 feet	10 feet
Large	30 feet	15 feet
Huge	75 feet	20 feet
Gargantuan	90 feet	25 feet
Colossal	130 feet	30 feet

Cost: Cost includes the basic materials needed for construction only, with additional modification costs (propulsion, artillery, etc.) handled separately. This is the average price, which may vary depending on the

SHIP HULLS

Size	Cost	Hardness	Hull Thickness	Hit Points	Speed	Propulsion Slots	Artillery Slots	Cargo	Crew	Time
Small	50 gp	5	2 inches	20	+20 ft.	5	2	500 lb.	2	1 week
Medium	350 gp	5	2 inches	20	+10 ft	15	8	1,000 lb.	3	2 weeks
Large	700 gp	5	3 inches	30	0	25	12	8 tons	6	3 weeks
Huge	5,000 gp	5	4 inches	40	-10 ft	30	18	10 tons	45	1 month
Gargantuan	10,000 gp	5	5 inches	50	-15 ft	35	20	150 tons	60	3 months
Colossal	15,000 gp	5	6 inches	60	-20 ft	40	24	200 tons	200	4 months

CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS

Material	Hardness	Hit Points	Average Thickness	Speed Penalty	Cost Modifier
Wood	5	10/inch	2-6 inches	-10 feet/3 inches	+1,000 gp/3 inches
Iron	10	30/inch	2 inches	-15 feet/1 inch	+10,000 gp/1 inch
Mithral	15	30/inch	2 inches	-5 feet/1 inch	+20,000 gp/1 inch
Adamantite	20	40/inch	2 inches	-10 feet/1 inch	+30,000 gp/1 inch

availability of resources in the campaign or specific location.

Hardness: The standard rules for the hardness of objects apply to sea vessels (PHB 136). This entry lists the hardness of the ship's hull. The hardness ratings of other structures, such as the deck, masts, and sails, are described in Chapter 6. This entry assumes that the hull is constructed of wood. Other materials are described below.

Thickness: This entry lists the average thickness of the ship's hull. Typically, several inches of sturdy wood are used for sea vessels, but in some rare cases other materials may be utilized. The table breaks down the variables based on the thickness and material used in the construction of a ship's hull.

Hit Points: This is the amount of damage a 5-foot section of hull can sustain before it is holed. Hit points are based on the material used in construction and the thickness of the hull. Rules for breaching hulls are provided in Chapter 6 (see page 163).

Speed: This is a modifier to the number of feet the vessel can move in a round. Smaller hulls are much lighter than larger ones and can move faster with similar propulsion.

Propulsion Slots: This is the number of propulsion slots the hull is capable of supporting. While smaller hulls are more maneuverable, larger hulls are capable of utilizing multiple sources of propulsion.

Artillery Slots: This is the number of artillery slots the hull is capable of supporting. Smaller vessels have little to no artillery due to their size and inability to support the necessary structural reinforcements. In a fantasy campaign, smaller vessels may be more likely to utilize magical defenses and artillery, as they are usually easier for the hull to support.

Cargo: This is the amount (in pounds or tonnage) of cargo the hull is capable of supporting. Generally, larger hulls have some sort of hold in which to store supplies and cargo. Smaller hulls might utilize ship castles for storage or simply secure cargo to the main deck.

Crew: This is the number of crewmembers required to effectively operate the vessel while at sea. This number includes the captain or pilot of the vessel.

Time: This is how long it takes to construct the hull, with consideration to daylight available, proper resources, and available materials. Naturally, if circumstances allow for extra workers or other such advantages, DMs may choose to reduce the construction time.

PROPULSION SYSTEMS

Type	Slot	Cost	Hardness	Hit Points	Speed	Time
Sail, Small	5	25 gp	1	2	10 feet	3 days
Sail, Medium	10	50 gp	1	2	25 feet	1 week
Sail, Large	15	100 gp	1	2	40 feet	2 weeks
Oars (one set)	5	25 gp	5	30	10 feet	1 week
Towing Harness, Medium	5	100 gp	2	20	creature's speed	3 weeks
Towing Harness, Huge	10	200 gp	2	30	creature's speed	4 weeks
Towing Harness, Colossal	15	300 gp	2	40	creature's speed	5 weeks
Engine, Steam	35	50,000 gp	10	320	80 feet	8 weeks

Utilizing alternative materials on larger ships can become very costly and may require the consent of the DM concerning the availability of materials needed. In most fantasy campaigns, shipbuilders lack the knowledge and technology necessary to construct metal ship hulls. The DM may allow metal plating added to ship hulls primarily of wooden construction, however. The construction cost modifiers for various materials are listed in the table. The cost modifier for wood construction applies to hulls thicker than the average based on the hull's size.

PROPULSION

After the hull is selected, you must choose a method of propulsion. This selection determines how—and how fast—the vessel moves. Each hull size category has a number of propulsion slots that may be used. Naturally, smaller ships have fewer options while larger ships possess many.

The propulsion slots represent the size and weight of a chosen propulsion mechanism, as well as its compatibility with specific hull sizes. Take care when selecting propulsion systems and make sure to choose the most effective method for the vessel. Listed below are several types of propulsion systems and descriptions for each.

SAILS

These are the primary means of propulsion for most seagoing vessels. Sails are constructed of heavy cloth or canvas and have a hardness of 0 and 2 hit points. A sail's Armor Class is based on its size.

Sail Size	AC
Small	5
Medium	3
Large	1

Multiple sails stack to a limited degree for purposes of movement speed. However, the more sails are added, the less efficient each one is. The bonus to speed granted by each sail after the first is halved. For example, a Colossal galley (–20 feet) with a large sail (40 feet) and two medium sails (12 feet each) has a base speed of 44 feet.

OARS

This method of propulsion is very common on galleys, warships, and longships, among others. A “set” of oars is a variable number based on the size of the ship deployed to both port and starboard. Oars are hardness 5 and have 10 hit points per size category of the ship's hull. The base cost of oars is also adjusted by the ship's hull size.

Small	–20 gp
Medium	–10 gp
Large	—
Huge	+10 gp
Gargantuan	+20 gp
Colossal	+40 gp

Oars and sails typically do not stack for the purposes of movement speed. To continue the previous example, the Colossal galley might also have three sets of oars. However, if the galley is under full sail, the oars will not increase the galley's speed—it is already moving as fast as it can and rowing isn't going to speed it up.



Oars are still very useful, however, as they make a ship much more versatile. A ship that is becalmed can deploy oars to move despite the lack of wind. Also, if a ship's sails are damaged, the oars can be used to maintain the ship's combat readiness. Finally, oars are sometimes superior for close-in maneuvering. The distance a ship must travel before making a 45° turn is reduced by 10 feet if it is propelled by oars.

TOWING HARNESS

Some vessels are pulled by aquatic creatures, just as a draft horse pulls a wagon. The size of the towing creature must be equal to or less than the size of the harness.

STEAM ENGINE

This marvel of gnomish ingenuity may not be available in many fantasy campaign worlds. Once steam engines are common in a setting, other methods of propulsion are soon made obsolete. While expensive, they allow very high speeds and require much smaller crews than sails or oars.

PROPULSION TABLE

Type: This lists the name of the system and gives a general idea of what it can do. Due to their slot costs, some types of propulsion are restricted to certain hull sizes.

Slot Cost: This is how many propulsion slots are used by the system. Remember not to exceed the hull's slot total and to halve the speed bonus of any additional sails after the first.

Cost: This gives the average cost of the propulsion system. Prices may vary depending on availability of materials necessary for the construction of the system.

Speed: This is the speed of a ship using the listed propulsion system. The numbers are the movement rate for the vessel in feet per round. For example, a Huge longship is equipped with a large sail (15 slots) and three sets of oars (15 slots). The sail grants a base speed of 40 feet and the oars a secondary speed of 30 feet. The Huge hull has a speed penalty of -10 feet, so the longship has a speed of 30 feet when under sail and 20 feet when the oars are deployed.

SHIP CASTLES

Type	Cost	Hardness	Hit Points	Speed Penalty	Time
Wood	500 gp	5	10/inch of thickness	-5	1 week
Stone	1,000 gp	8	15/inch of thickness	-10 feet	2 weeks
Stone, Reinforced	1,500 gp	9	20/inch of thickness	-15 feet	3 weeks
Iron	3,000 gp	10	30/inch of thickness	-10 feet	3 weeks
Mithral	5,000 gp	15	30/inch of thickness	-5 feet	4 weeks
Adamantite	6,000 gp	20	40/inch of thickness	-10 feet	4 weeks

SHIP WEAPONS

Weapon	Cost	Hardness	Hit Points	Slot Cost	Damage	Critical	Range	Crew	Time
Catapult, Heavy*	800 gp	5	200	6	5d6	-	200/100 ft.	5	3 weeks
Catapult, Light*	550 gp	5	100	4	3d6	-	150/100 ft.	2	2 weeks
Bomb, Acid	250 gp	-	-	-	4d6	-	200/100 ft.	-	-
Bomb, Fire	300 gp	-	-	-	5d6	-	200/100 ft.	-	-
Bomb, Shrapnel	200 gp	-	-	-	2d6	-	200/100 ft.	-	-
Ballista*	500 gp	5	75	6	3d6	x3	120	1	2 weeks
Ram*	2,000 gp	20	340	6	special	x3	-	10	4 weeks
Crossbow, Heavy	50 gp	5	10	1	1d10	x2	120 ft.	1	1 week
Crossbow, Repeating	250 gp	5	10	1	1d8	x2	80 ft.	1	1 week
Cannon*	5,000 gp	10	280	8	6d6	-	300/100 ft.	3	2 weeks

* Only hulls of Large or greater size can support these weapons.

Time: This is how much additional construction time is needed to install the propulsion system on the ship. If circumstances such as aid or magic increase the workers or improve work conditions, the construction time can be reduced at the DM's discretion.

SHIP CASTLES

Ship castles are common on many classic sailing vessels. Designed to serve as personnel quarters, storage, or fortified positions for soldiers and weapons, ship castles add a new level of defense to the main deck of large vessels.

Ship castles are usually placed on either the front or rear of the ship, and in some cases on both. The decoration of a ship castle directly reflects its primary function and like any other cabin or area of the ship. Ship castles are very effective protection, but the additional heavy construction limits the vessel's speed. Only Large or greater hulls are capable of supporting ship castles.

MAGICAL ARMOR AND PROTECTIONS

Magical defenses are often even more effective than a reinforced hull. All of the existing armor special abilities from the core rules (DMG 180) can be added to a ship's construction. Apply the standard rules for the costs of these enhancements. Double the cost for Huge or larger hulls.

WEAPONS

The excitement as the ballista fires into an opposing vessel, the sound of the cannons firing, the rush of wind that follows the catapult's release—these are all classic elements of seafaring adventures. Listed below are several examples of weapons that can be added to a seafaring vessel, along with their game statistics. If two numbers are separated by a slash in the Range entry, the first number is the weapon's range increment and the second is the *minimum* range to the target.

When adding artillery to Small vessels, reduce the additional time by two weeks. For Medium-size hulls, reduce the time by one week.

Ballista: The ballista is essentially a very large crossbow. It makes attacks with a straight attack roll (1d20) with no modifications (no character base attack bonuses, ability modifiers, etc.) except for range. Loading and cocking a ballista is 3 full-round actions.

Bomb, acid: Unlike most of its kind, this bomb is made of smooth, thick ceramic. Inside the ceramic globe is a large amount of acid, which is released when the bomb, launched from a catapult, strikes a hard surface. The bomb has a blast radius of 10 feet and deals 4d6 points of acid damage. Those caught within the blast radius must make a successful Reflex save (DC 20) or take full damage from the bomb. A successful save allows those in the radius to take half damage. The bomb also deals half damage to the section of deck or hull covered by the blast radius.

Bomb, shrapnel: This horrid creation is designed to not only cause significant damage to an opposing ship, but also a great amount of collateral damage to anyone in the blast area. The bomb deals 2d6 points of damage within its 30-foot blast radius. Those caught in the blast radius may make a Reflex save (DC 20) for half damage. Half of the damage is fire damage and the other half is piercing damage.

Bomb, fire: This bomb functions like an acid bomb but features alchemist's fire instead of acid (PHB 113).

Cannon: Forged of thick iron and powered by gunpowder, cannons are devastating weapons of war capable of reducing ships to splinters. A cannon deals 6d6 points of damage to anyone within its 20-foot blast radius. Characters caught in the blast area may make a Reflex save (DC 20) for half damage. A cannon requires four full rounds to reload. A cannon requires four full rounds to reload and fire. This weapon may not be available in many campaigns; consult the DM before arming your ship with it.

Catapult, heavy: A heavy catapult is a

large engine capable of throwing rocks or heavy objects with great force. When fired, one of the crew makes a Profession (siege engineer) check (DC 20). If successful, where the object actually lands is determined by rolling 1d12 and consulting the deviation (10 ft. to 16 ft.) diagram (DMG 68). The center is the desired target. If the check is failed, the DM secretly rolls and consults the same deviation diagram. The result is now where the catapult is actually aimed. This new result is used as the center to determine the actual deviation of the attack.

For example, a catapult is used to attack a stone tower. The Profession (siege engineer) check fails, so the DM rolls 1d12 and gets an 11. By consulting the diagram, she determines that the actual target is 10 feet from the desired target, behind and to the left. Now, a crewmember rolls 1d12 and gets an 8. After consulting the Deviation (10 ft. to 16 ft.) Diagram to see where the object goes, the DM ascertains that it falls 10 feet short and to the left of the actual target, which is 20 feet to the left of the desired target.

Loading the catapult and preparing it to fire takes the full crew 8 full rounds. Initially aiming (or reaiming) takes 10 minutes in addition to loading and preparation time. Three to four crewmembers can operate the device in three times this time. Fewer than three crewmembers cannot operate the device.

Catapult, light: This is a smaller, lighter version of the heavy catapult (see that entry for how to operate it). Two crewmembers can load and prepare this weapon in 5 full rounds and aim (or reaim) in 5 minutes. One person can crew the engine, but it takes three times the time to aim and prepare.

Crossbow, heavy: This weapon is usually mounted on a castle or bulwark. See the core rules for a description (PHB 98).

Crossbow, repeating: This weapon is usually mounted on a castle or bulwark. See the core rules for a description (PHB 99).

Ram: These weapons are mounted on the prow of a ship and designed to inflict severe damage on an enemy ship's hull during a ramming attack. A ram doubles the damage inflicted by a ramming attack and inflicts no damage on the ramming ship.

MAGIC WEAPONS

Magic can greatly improve a ship's offensive capabilities. With enhancements ranging from magical arrows and shocking ammunition to battering rams with sunder abilities, the possibilities for magical weaponry are endless. When purchasing or creating magical ship weapons, use the standard rules for creating magic items in the core rules (DMG 241).

SHIP QUALITIES

Once the hull has been selected, it is time to customize the ship. What makes this ship different from other vessels on the sea? Ship qualities distinguish your ship from others of similar construction. They resemble character feats in the d20 System because they give a vessel the special touches that set it apart from other vessels of the same type.

All ships begin with one ship quality. Additional qualities may be purchased, but it is a timely and expensive process. Choose wisely when determining ship qualities during the construction process.

BUILT TO LAST

The ship is designed to take more damage than many ships of its type, making it harder to sink.

Benefit: The hull's hit points are increased by 5 per inch of thickness.

BULL OF THE SEA

The ship has been reinforced for ramming speed attacks.

Prerequisite: The vessel must be able to use a battering ram and have one equipped.

Benefit: On a successful ramming attack, the ship deals an additional 1d6 points of damage.

CLEVER CONSTRUCTION

Clever engineering and design allows the ship to support an exotic propulsion system.

Benefit: The ship can be equipped with a paddlewheel or other unusual propulsion system.

FIRE TESTED

The vessel is more resistant to fire than other ships of its kind.

Benefit: The vessel's hull and deck have a resistance score of 10 against all fire effects.

GRACE UNDER PRESSURE

The submarine has been reinforced to withstand increased depth pressure.

Prerequisite: The vessel must be a submarine.

Benefit: The vessel is better suited for undersea travel. The vessel has a +20 circumstance bonus on Fortitude saves to resist damage from pressure.

ICE QUEEN

Special treatments make the vessel resistant to the effects of cold.

Benefit: The vessel possesses a resistance of 10 against all cold effects.

IMPROVED BUOYANCY

The ship is designed carry to the weight of heavier construction materials better than most vessels of its type.

Prerequisite: The vessel must have a Large, Huge, Gargantuan, or Colossal hull and be constructed from alternative materials (iron, mithral, adamantite).

Benefit: The vessel is designed to be more buoyant in the water. The movement penalty due to alternative materials is reduced by up to 5 feet. The penalty may not be reduced below 0.

MIGHTY OARS

Special construction makes the oars more durable than most of their type.

Benefit: The ship's oars have +5 hardness.

OCEANWORTHY

The ship is streamlined and built to withstand the elements during long journeys.

Prerequisite: The vessel must have a Large, Huge, Gargantuan, or Colossal hull.

Benefit: The ship is well suited for long journeys. Add a +4 circumstance bonus to any saves, skill checks, etc., that involve the operation of the vessel in poor weather.

REINFORCED SAILS

The ship's sails are built to withstand high winds and damage from artillery more effectively than other sails of their type.

Prerequisite: The vessel must have a Large, Huge, Gargantuan, or Colossal hull.

Benefit: The ship's sails receive an extra 10 hit points. This bonus applies to any other sails that may later be added to the ship.

SEA SCRAPPER

Though small, this ship is ready for a fight.

Prerequisite: The vessel must have a Small or Medium-size hull.

Benefit: Add 5 to the vessel's artillery slots.

SEA SKIMMER

A vessel with this quality is capable of moving quicker than others of its type.

Prerequisite: The vessel must have a Small or Medium-size hull.

Benefit: The vessel's speed is increased by 5 feet.

STORM RIDER

Engineering secrets make the vessel resistant to electricity.

Benefit: The ship possesses a resistance score of 10 against all electricity effects.

TOUGH OLD GIRL

The vessel is tougher and more rugged than the average ship of its type.

Benefit: The hardness of the ship's hull and deck is increased by 2.

TRANSPORT

The ship is designed to hold a little more cargo.

Prerequisite: The vessel must have a Large, Huge, Gargantuan, or Colossal hull.

Benefit: The vessel has been designed to hold more cargo than other ships of its kind. Add 10 tons to the ship's maximum cargo capacity.

WAR DOG

The ship is designed to carry additional artillery.

Prerequisite: The vessel must have a Large, Huge, Gargantuan, or Colossal hull.

Benefit: The ship is designed to make use of more artillery than other ships of its design. Add 10 to the ship's maximum artillery slots.

WAVE RIDER

This ship can ride the waves faster than other large vessels.

Prerequisite: The vessel must have a Large, Huge, Gargantuan, or Colossal hull.

Benefit: The vessel's speed is increased by 10 feet.

ADDING SHIP QUALITIES

Ship qualities can be added for a base price of 1,000 gp each, plus 1,000 gp for every size category of the hull above Small. The time required to add a new ship quality is two weeks, plus one week for every size category above Small. For example, adding a ship quality to a Huge hull would cost 4,000 gp and would require five weeks to complete.

Hull Size	Number of Sailors	Green Crew per Day	Average Crew per Day	Veteran Crew per Day	Elite Crew per Day
Small	2	4 sp	6 sp	7 sp	9 sp
Medium	3	6 sp	9 sp	11 sp	13 sp
Large	6	13 sp	18 sp	22 sp	27 sp
Huge	45	101 sp	135 sp	168 sp	202 sp
Gargantuan	60	135 sp	180 sp	225 sp	270 sp
Colossal	200	450 sp	600 sp	750 sp	900 sp

EQUIPMENT AND PROVISIONS

Once your ship is constructed, you'll need to furnish and outfit it for travel. Food, furniture, and other mundane supplies can be found in the core rules (PHB 108 and DMG 112).

HIRING A CREW

No ship can sail without a crew, and sailors do not work for free. In addition to sailors, a ship needs a cook and at least one officer other than the captain. Each separate siege weapon on board also requires an artilleryist, an NPC with the Profession (siege engineer) skill. The basic costs per day for a ship's crew are summarized below:

Hiring	Per Day
Artillerist	4 sp
Captain	6 sp
Officer	5 sp
Sailor	3 sp
Ship's Cook	2 sp

Artillerist: A 1st-level expert with 4+ ranks in the Profession (siege engineer) skill. He can direct the firing of a ship's siege weapons.

Captain: A 2nd-level expert with 4+ ranks in the Profession (sailor) skill. He is knowledgeable in the day-to-day operations of a ship.

Officer: A 2nd-level expert with 4+ ranks in the Profession (sailor) skill. Officers serve in various positions under a captain. Navigator and boson are examples of officers.

Sailor: A 1st-level commoner with 3+ ranks in the Profession (sailor) skill.

Ship's Cook: A 1st-level expert with 4+ ranks in the Profession (cook) skill. A ship's cook is also skilled at rationing a ship's stores and ensuring that a crew's diet is healthy. A ship needs one cook for every 20 sailors.

The bulk of a ship's crew is made up of sailors. A ship with sufficient resources can afford to hire a crew of sailors more skilled than the normal 1st-level commoners. A poorer captain may find himself forced to rely on an inexperienced crew. There are four levels of competency for a ship's crew: green, average, veteran, and elite. Each level assumes an average Profession (sailor) skill level different from that of regular sailors, and the crew's quality affects a captain's ability to pilot his ship. The typical number of sailors for each of the ship hull classes and the daily costs for a crew of a given quality are summarized above. The number of sailors listed does not include the captain, one officer, and the appropriate number of cooks and artilleryists.

SHIP DESIGNS

This chapter presents 20 ship designs complete with illustrations and deckplans. Some of these designs are generic ship classes, while others are fully detailed ships that can be easily incorporated into any campaign. The chapter also includes a template for making any vessel a ghost ship. The names and game statistics of the ships are designated as **Open Game Content**. The descriptions and backgrounds of the ships are closed content.

AHNKEN-ATHI'S FLOATING PALACE

Colossal Ship

Propulsion: Oars (8 sets)

Speed: 55 ft. (oars)

Crew: 250

Cargo: 400 tons

Hull

Armor Class: 5

Hardness: 5

Hit Points: 120

Deck

Armor Class: 5

Hardness: 5

Hit Points: 20

Towers

Armor Class: 5

Hardness: 9

Hit Points: 160

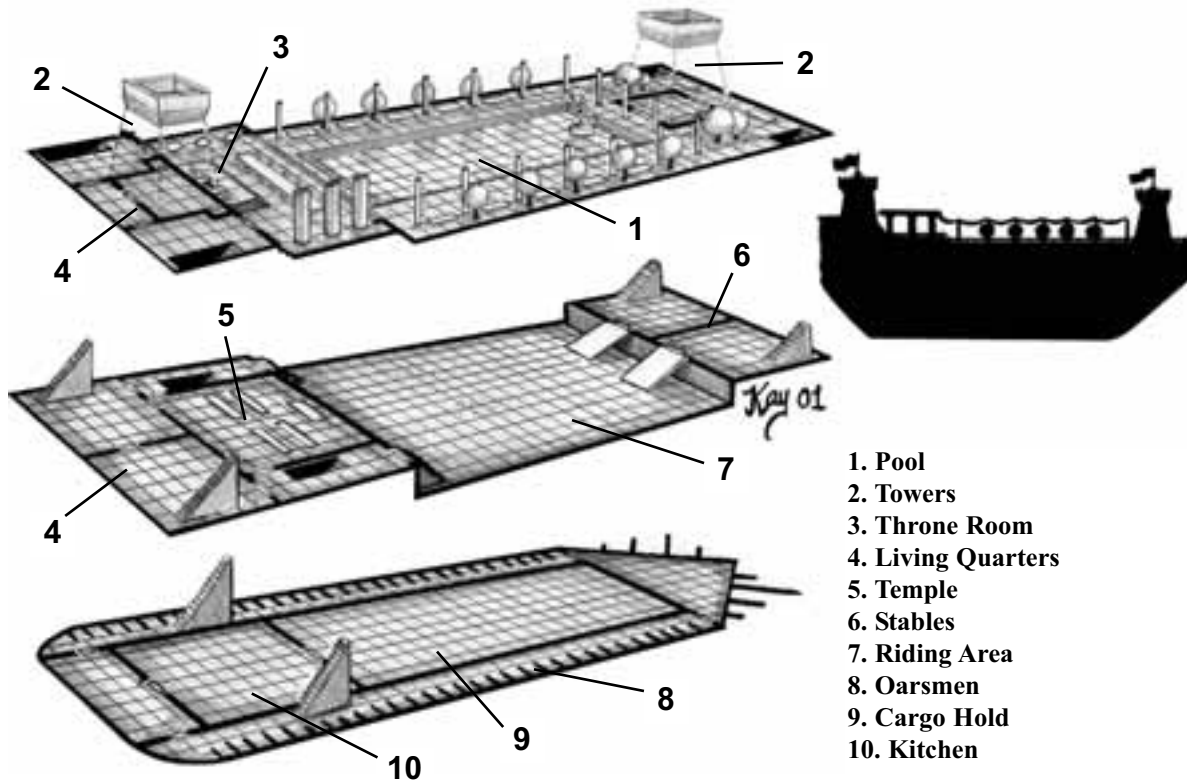
Weapons: 4 heavy catapults (fore, aft, port, starboard)

Ship Qualities: Bull of the sea, fire tested, transport x20

Cost and Construction Time: 143,726 gp, and 47 months, 1 week

Many years ago Ahnken-Athi, ruler of a distant land, found himself lost in a strange but powerful dream. Surrounded by his wife, children, concubines, and most loyal ministers, the king danced, feasted, and held forth over visiting dignitaries in an opulent palace that held all of the comforts of his own, yet was strangely unfamiliar. A wide, glistening pool of water spread before him, and he was visited by the Goddess of Life and the God of the Underworld.

In this dream, the gods said the palace would serve him in this life and in the hereafter. As such, it would have to be a movable palace, unrestrained by firm foundations, yet strong enough to serve as the home of a future deity. Ahnken-Athi asked the gods how this could be, a palace that was a physical representation of the wealth and power of his kingdom, and yet could be moved on a whim. "Let the waters be your foundation" was their reply. Ahnken-Athi took their words to heart and began the plan-



1. Pool
2. Towers
3. Throne Room
4. Living Quarters
5. Temple
6. Stables
7. Riding Area
8. Oarsmen
9. Cargo Hold
10. Kitchen

ning and construction of one of the most impressive—and expensive—floating monuments to the pleasures of this world and the hereafter.

The people of his distant kingdom had little practical experience with travel on the ocean. Their civilization reached hundreds of miles along the length of a fertile river valley, and merchants came from far away lands to trade at their cities along the coast, but the extent of their nautical experience was limited to the calm flowing waters of their river. As such the floating palace is, in effect, a huge shallow-draft barge powered by scores of oarsmen. The palace would fare poorly in any but the calmest of seas, although rumor has it that Ahnken-Athi's last voyage in the floating palace will be across the ocean to the place where the sun sets.

No expense was spared in making the floating palace the richest and most comfortable ship in history. Broader than two merchantmen and almost twice as long, the huge wooden vessel dwarfs the small skiffs that ply the waters of the great river. The huge size of the vessel and the calmness of the river on which it travels gives the decks the stability of a land-based

building, allowing for constructions (such as guard towers) that would be impractical on narrower, ocean-going vessels.

Although the ship's shallow-draft construction allows room for only three decks, every inch of space is used to ensure that the floating palace is opulent enough for the king and his family. The uppermost deck includes a raised throne room, a large pool for swimming and bathing, lavish quarters for the king and his wives and children, a formal garden (including tree-lined tiled walkways on either side of the pool), and two three-story towers, fore and aft, manned by 80 of Ahnken-Athi's finest warriors. The second deck holds a stable and riding area for the king's prize mare and stallion, another floor of family living quarters, and a temple dedicated to the God of the Underworld and the Afterlife. The below-decks areas are set aside for the banks of oarsmen and their living spaces, cargo (including everything the king may need in the afterlife, much of it in iconic form to save space), and the ship's large kitchen. The ship typically carries only enough provisions for a week, but food is continually brought to the ship from nearby settlements as it makes its way up and down the great river. Even the oarsmen, who strain mightily to

move the massive ship, eat as well or better than many high priests or ministers left behind in the city.

Untold thousands of gold pieces in value are added to the ship in the form of gold-gilt columns, master-crafted statuary, flawless inlaid tile work in and around the pool, large silk curtains for the raised throne room, and the tapestries and painted murals that adorn almost all interior walls. One of the most expensive pieces is the 15-foot-tall statue of the Goddess of Life, situated at the far end of the pool from the throne room. The beautiful statue, carved from pure white marble, is decorated with gold- and silver-woven cloth, pearls, and sparkling star-sapphire eyes. As a whole, the statue is priceless. If it were broken up into its components, it would be worth close to 100,000 gold pieces.

The royal family typically cruises up and down their sacred river twice a year, once during the late spring planting season and again during the fall harvest. As the ship makes its way along the river, Ahnken-Athi's subjects stop their work and line the banks of the river, cheering their king and throwing flowers into the water to glorify the passage of the popular ruler. Ahnken-Athi has been known to order the ship stopped on a whim to host lavish feasts for individuals and families selected from among the cheering throngs. Whether this is an act of generosity or cunning public relations is the subject of some debate, but it certainly does not hurt the King's reputation among his people.

The listed price for the floating palace does not include the cost of its lavish furnishings.

ASSAULT BARGE

Large Ship

Propulsion: Medium sail, oars (3 sets)

Speed: 25 ft. (oars)*, 20 ft. (sail)

Crew: 12–20

Cargo: 1,000 lb.

Hull

Armor Class: 5

Hardness: 5

Hit Points: 60

Deck

Armor Class: 5

Hardness: 5

Hit Points: 20

Mast

Armor Class: 5

Hardness: 5

Hit Points: 150

Weapons: Heavy catapult (fore), six heavy crossbows (3 port, 3 starboard)

Ship Qualities: Fire tested

Cost and Construction Time: 1,925 gp, and 4 months, 1 week

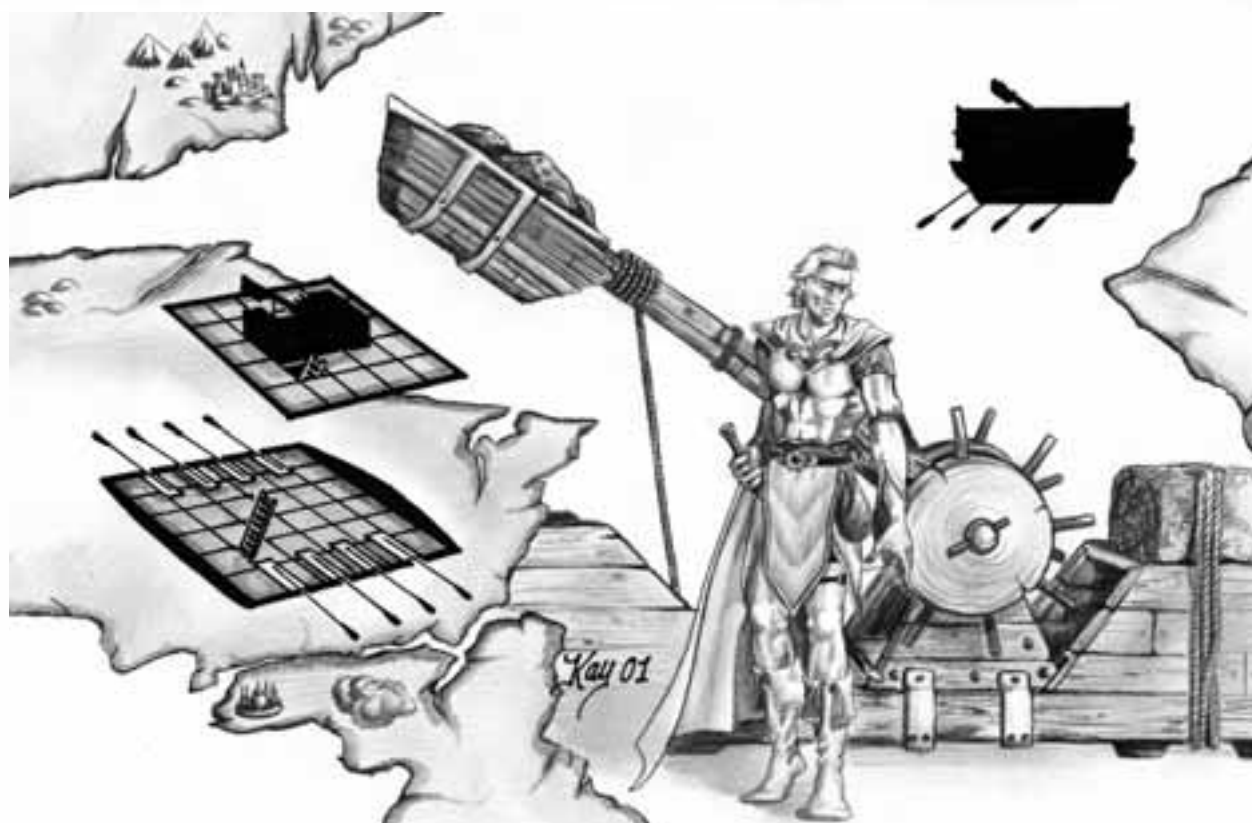
* Only two sets of oars can be used at a time.

Siege-craft extends to the waterways with the development of the assault barge. This large, shallow-draft, stable platform enables siege engineers to attack fortified cities from what has traditionally been their least-defended quarter: the waterfront. While too unwieldy and difficult to control to be seaworthy, the assault barge is perfectly suited to riverways, lakes, and swamps. With the ability to mount archers, catapults, onagers, or ballistae, assault barges can be a deciding factor in any siege.

In effect, the square assault barge is nothing more than a floating siege tower. It is a two-deck barge that mounts weapons that are protected by wooden palisades on the upper deck, and carries oarsmen, archers, and engineers on its lower deck. The lower deck is also used to store ammunition for the larger weapon as well as supplies for the crew during extended operations.

The assault barge has four rowing stations on each facing, allowing oarsmen to quickly change the facing of the main weapon, and giving the barge great agility in calm waters. Wooden shutters that can be lowered to protect the crew from enemy fire shelter each side of the lower deck; the sides of the barge not in immediate danger are usually left open to allow the free flow of fresh air. Access to the upper deck is via two hatches and ladders. The palisade on the upper deck is tailored to the specific weapon mounted on the barge, giving the weapon the maximum protection possible while not restricting its field of fire. The barge can also be used to transport troops onto the shores of rivers or lakes, usually under cover of darkness.

Securing the assault barge so that it becomes a longer-term weapon platform can be accomplished in a number of ways. Each corner of the barge is equipped with a winch and several hundred feet of rope. Using powerful cross-



bows, these ropes can be driven into the nearby shoreline or trees and tightened to secure the barge against the current of any but the swiftest of rivers. In relatively low-risk areas, this operation is carried out by engineers in order to ensure a more secure platform. If the barge is deployed into a high-intensity combat area, standard anchors can be lowered to secure the platform to the lake or river bottom. Another option is to “lower” the barge downstream by ropes from one or more vessels or from shore-based engineering crews who are out of range of enemy fire.

Assault barges are rarely deployed individually. Rather, they are used in groups of up to 10 or more, depending on the strength of the city or fortification under siege and the skill of the assaulting engineers (not to mention the depth of the general’s purse). The barges can be deployed separately in order to spread enemy fire, or secured together to create a larger mobile fortress. Other creative uses have been found, including using the barges to unload cargo or troops from deep-draft vessels, as temporary armed bridges, or as mobile docks and repair platforms for other ships. One large port city has used assault barges with heavy chains strung between them to restrict access to their waters, ensuring that no vessel can make a

hasty and unopposed entrance—or exit—from the tightly controlled harbor.

BARBARIAN LONGSHIP

Huge Ship

Propulsion: Large sail, oars (3 sets)

Speed: 45 ft. (oars), 40 ft. (sail)

Crew: 45

Cargo: 10 tons

Hull

Armor Class: 5

Hardness: 5

Hit Points: 40

Deck

Armor Class: 5

Hardness: 5

Hit Points: 20

Mast

Armor Class: 5

Hardness: 5

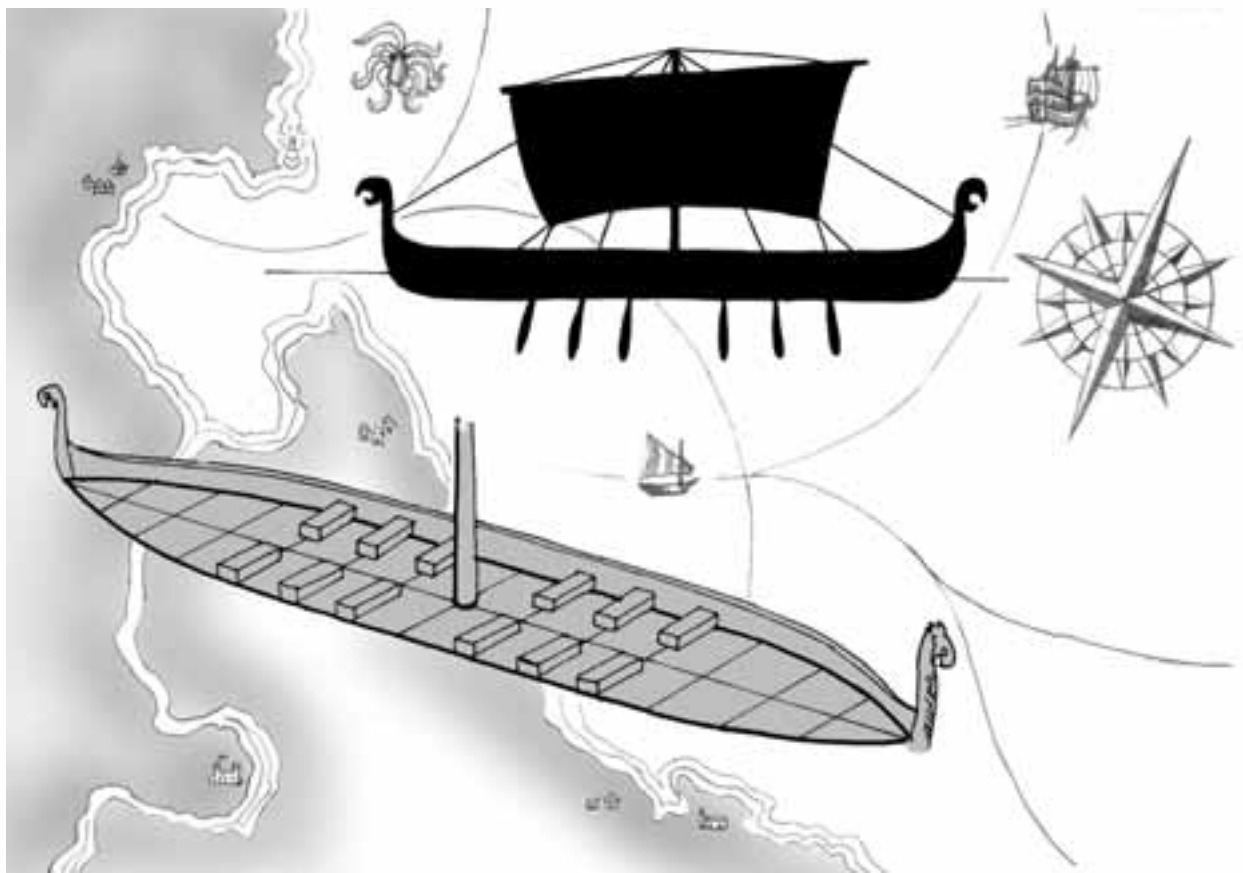
Hit Points: 300

Weapons: None

Ship Qualities: Oceanworthy, wave rider

Cost and Construction Time: 9,205 gp, and 3 months, 2 weeks

Sweeping down from the cold, forbidding north, the barbarian longship is a feared site to coastal towns. These longships



serve a variety of purposes for the wild northmen, but their most common use is as raiders that deliver howling bands of berserker warriors on to civilized shores. This design functions quite well across a variety of roles, making it the ship of choice for barbarians of all races. Humans, orcs, dwarves, and even sea elves with a taste for banditry all commonly employ it in their fleets. Many barbarian chieftains own personal longships that they use to ferry their household warriors and followers into battle.

The longship was developed to meet two design goals: swiftness and ease in deploying troops for coastal raids. It is built for speed above all else. As a ship designed for raiding, the longship must be able to quickly ferry warriors to the site of a raid and extract them before the local lord can organize a determined defense against the raiders. The longship's shallow hull allows it to slide up on to a beach without any worry of running aground or breaking up in the shallows. Larger troop ships must deploy smaller rowboats to ferry troops back and forth from the shore. The longship can slide up on to the beach under full speed of its oarsmen. These same oarsmen can

then simply grab their shields and weapons, leap over the longship's low bulwarks, and rush forward to attack. Once the raid is over, the crewmen load up their spoils and then push the longship off the beach, rowing away from shore to return to sea. The longship's unique design allows it to quickly reverse its direction. The oarsmen stand up, reverse their seating, and begin rowing in the opposite direction.

Longships are built low enough that cavalry can leap over the side and rush forward to attack. Many of these vessels carry a barbarian household's horses on raids, allowing ambitious attackers to swarm inland to strike at poorly defended, unsuspecting targets. While longships usually attack settlements within sight of the coast, some wily barbarian chieftains beach their longships within a few miles of a settlement and use their horses to launch an attack overland. Barbarians often use this tactic to throw an enemy off balance or to confuse any potential pursuit, particularly from warships.

The longship can overtake most other vessels, particularly trade ships. Many barbarian captains swoop down on lumbering galleys and swarm aboard them with their battle-hungry

reavers, putting to the sword any crew foolish enough to resist. The longship has enough cargo space that a raiding crew can load up the choicest bits of cargo.

The longship's great speed is also its primary defense against other ships. Longships lack catapults, ballistae, and other weapons usable against attacking ships. Against a heavily armed and armored opponent, flight is often the longship's best and only option. While its hull is sleek and fast, it often crumples before a strike by a heavy catapult or stout ram. The barbarian reavers represent the longship's sole source of firepower. Unless the raiders count a mage, sorcerer, or cleric amongst their number, they typically lack any weapons that can pose a real danger to a warship. When faced by an attacking ship and unable to flee, the longship's best bet is to bear down on the enemy at full speed in hopes of grappling and boarding, allowing its fierce oarsmen to defeat the enemy crew in hand-to-hand combat.

Just as barbarians are fearless raiders, they are courageous explorers. The unknown territories beyond the horizon beckon to them with an irresistible lure. Many barbarian chieftains depart on months-long voyages in search of new targets for raids and fresh markets for trade and other commerce. Barbarian mercenaries often seek out new employers in this manner, ranging far and wide to peddle their services. Fierce northlands barbarians turn up in the oddest places, usually as a result of an enterprising mercenary captain seeking out new markets for their warriors. Times of peace often prompt barbarian warriors to look elsewhere for excitement and booty.

Not all barbarians who range far from home seek work. Some simply seek new markets for their goods. Loading up on trade goods, these captains sail forth to exotic ports, returning laden with bizarre spices and unique trinkets that they sell for thousands of gold pieces. Just as a barbarian longship hitting the beach heralds war, one docked in a civilized port signals the arrival of goods and items from the world over.

Orcs primarily rely on longships to raid civilized lands. Most of these warlike humanoids care little for commerce or even mercenary work. Orcs often purchase or steal longships from their human barbarian neighbors, though

in some cases orc warriors ally with a human captain to serve as shock troops on raids to civilized lands. With their innate toughness, orcs can actually endure longer, more strenuous voyages than human captains, allowing them to range much farther than human traders. Though only a tiny minority of orc captains bothers with trade, those who do can reach markets that few other captains can access.

Dwarf longship captains generally pursue trade over raids. Dwarves use longships to ferry goods from their forbidding, arctic homes to civilized lands that pay a premium for quality dwarf craftsmanship. Though they usually raid settlements only as part of a larger campaign against an enemy, dwarves are fierce enough fighters that few pirates dare raid their longships. Some dwarves even manage to mount cannons or ballista on their longships despite the structural difficulties in refitting a longship to carry weapons.

Elf sea barbarians pose a vicious threat to all sea-going traders. With their innate ability to work magic, elf barbarians send few longships to sea without a powerful wizard aboard. Even heavily armed and armored warships are little more than cannon fodder for an elf wizard prepared to launch *disintegrate*, *acid fog*, or *fireball*.

Longships are open-deck vessels that lack a lower hold or any other enclosed space. Accommodations consist merely of hard, flat benches for the oarsmen. The crew stashes any cargo beneath their feet or in the stern. Barely three feet stretches from the longship's keel to its top plank. Crewmen sitting at their benches receive half cover against all attacks from those outside the ship, unless they fire from a high enough angle to ignore this cover. The entire crew works the oars and serves as troops in combat.

The longship's prow is often decorated to resemble a dragon or other fierce creature. Barbarian chieftains often adopt a distinctive color scheme or headpiece to distinguish their ships from others.

The longship deploys its sails when possible, though near shore it relies solely on its oars. Some barbarians disdain the use of sails, feeling that real warriors row rather than rely on the wind.

SHIPS IN SERVICE

Longships often have aggressive, warlike names that represent the crew and captain's martial skill and bravery. These ship names are common to human ships unless otherwise noted: *Air Runner* (elf), *Death's Galley* (orc), *Dwarf Stomper* (orc), *Goldbearer* (dwarf), *Hammer of the North*, *Ice Reaver*, *Pillager* (orc), *Seahawk*, *Star Runner* (elf), *Wave Chopper* (dwarf), *Wave Dragon*, *Wind Razor* (elf).

VARIANT: BARBARIAN KNORR

Huge Ship

Propulsion: Large sail, oars (3 sets)

Speed: 35 ft. (oars), 30 ft. (sail)

Crew: 45

Cargo: 20 tons

Hull

Armor Class: 5

Hardness: 5

Hit Points: 40

Deck

Armor Class: 5

Hardness: 5

Hit Points: 20

Mast

Armor Class: 5

Hardness: 5

Hit Points: 300

Weapons: None

Ship Qualities: Oceanworthy, transport

Cost and Construction Time: 9,205 gp, and 3 months, 2 weeks

Barbarians who prefer trade to raiding often use the knorr as their primary transport. Though much slower than the longship, the knorr can carry double the cargo load, allowing it to make much more profitable trading runs to distant ports. Knorrs are rarely used in raids. Ironically enough, knorrs on trading missions represent one of the most common targets for longships on the prowl for sea-going targets. As with the longship, the knorr is defenseless save for its crew. Given that knorrs are crewed by barbarians, that doesn't leave knorrs as defenseless as it sounds.

Dwarves sometimes use knorrs to combat pirates. The dwarves pile trade goods aboard a knorr and crew it as normal. However, a dwarf wizard assigned to the ship uses illusions and other magic to conceal cannons and dwarf warriors who wait patiently in the knorr's

expanded cargo area. When the inevitable orc attack strikes, the raiders find themselves riddled with crossbow fire and pounded by cannons. More than a few pirates have met their end pouncing on a "defenseless" dwarven knorr.

BLADE-SAIL FAST TRADER

Huge Ship

Propulsion: Blade sail

Speed: 60 ft.

Crew: 45

Cargo: 5 tons

Hull

Armor Class: 5

Hardness: 5

Hit Points: 40

Deck

Armor Class: 5

Hardness: 5

Hit Points: 20

Mast

Armor Class: 5

Hardness: 5

Hit Points: 300

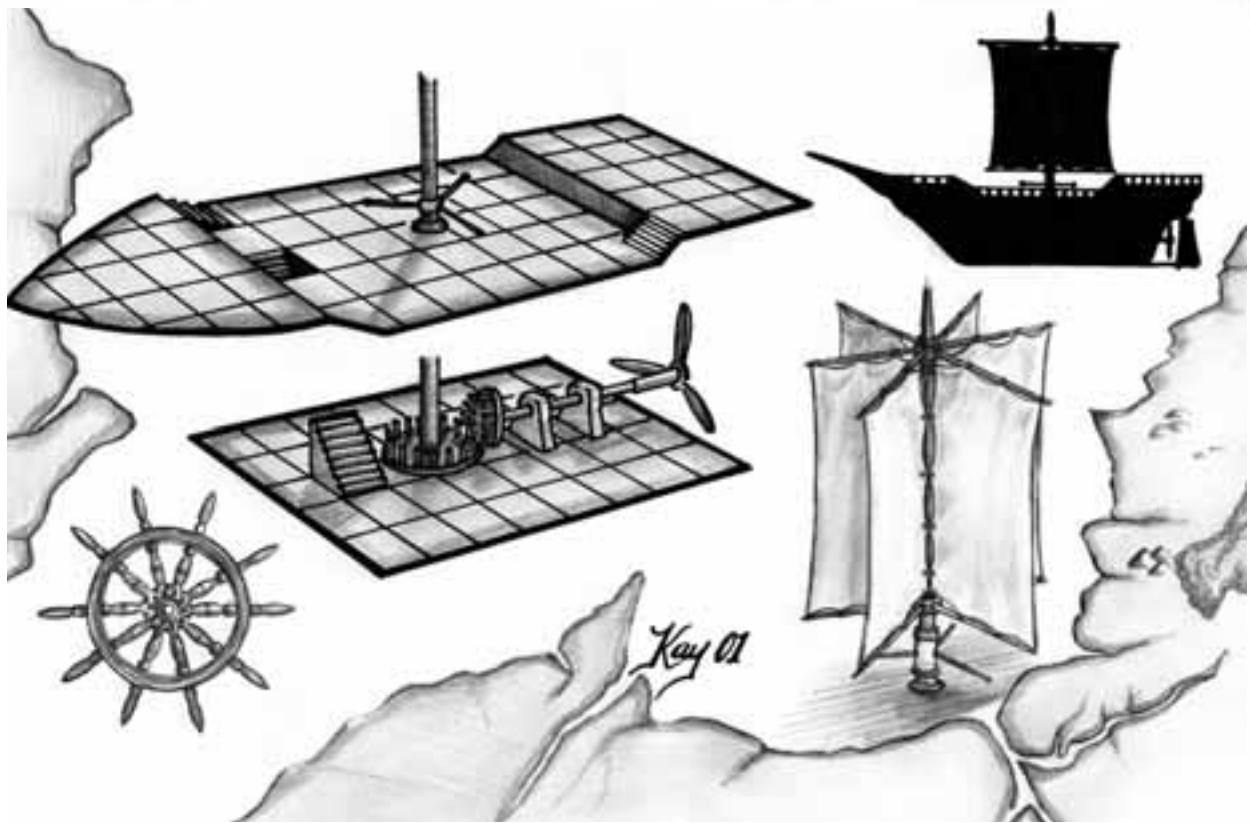
Weapons: None (18 slots for pirate hunters)

Ship Qualities: Clever construction, ocean-worthy

Cost and Construction Time: 20,000 gp, and 3 months

Long-distance trade offers the greatest potential for profit. The ability to transport perishable goods across large distances has been a risky proposition since conventional transport vessels are at the mercy of the winds or the endurance of exhausted oarsmen. A new form of wind propulsion, the blade-sail, has enabled a handful of secretive (and wealthy) merchants to open the long-distance trade routes to their unusual vessels, reducing both the transit time and uncertainty of transoceanic voyages.

The ships themselves are not unusual, appearing to be standard merchantman hulls inside and out. The difference—and advantage—lies in the propulsion system. Blade-sails are vertically mounted blades or wings, usually four blades arranged around a rotating mast, which are capable of catching the wind no matter which direction it may be blowing from. The secret of this unique arrangement is closely guarded, and some say that even those who construct these marvelous vessels do not know exactly why it works, only that it does.



Blade-sails are complex, expensive, and time-consuming to construct. The entire system (mast, gearing, and propeller) costs 15,000 gp and takes an additional two months to build. A dual blade-sail system, though extremely rare, can be built for an additional 7,500 gp and takes an additional three weeks to complete. Each blade-sail mast reduces the amount of cargo space by half (this accounts for the amount of space below deck required for the drive train, gears, and other mechanisms and structures.)

When a blade-sail is readied for departure, the central mast, held in check by iron pegs that prevent it from turning, is released. Strong deckhands push at crossbars to start the mast and blades spinning. Once the blades begin to rotate, they catch the wind and the crewmembers remove the crossbars and engage a geared drive shaft below deck, which turns one or more propellers. The gearing is usually a 10/1 ratio, which means that each single turn of the mast turns the propeller 10 times, ensuring that even gentle breezes will produce a fair amount of thrust. In a stiff breeze, a blade-sail can fairly fly across the waves. Blade-sails are also quite agile, being able to change direction without the associated sail wrangling that standard vessels require. A blade-sail equipped mer-

chantman with a trained crew can make transoceanic voyages days or weeks faster than conventional ships of similar tonnage.

No advantage comes without cost, and a blade-sail is no exception. These drives are very temperamental, and the friction created by the rotating parts, if untended, can cause the drive to violently seize up or start fires below-decks. The key areas that must be tended to with lubricating grease and water at all times are the iron collar that mounts the mast to the deck and the drive shaft where it passes through the hull to power the ship's propellers. These areas must be manned at all times, and crewmen who fall asleep at their posts are dealt with severely. Despite constant supervision, blade-sail systems are still experimental enough that most vessels are equipped with oars or backup sails, just in case.

The below-deck drive system also requires a great deal of space since the crew must be able to access the gearing and drive mechanisms along its entire length. Ships plying the longest routes often carry spare drive shafts, masts, and blades, further reducing the amount of cargo that can be carried. This shortfall is balanced by the speed of the vessels, ensuring that while they carry less cargo, they can

carry time-sensitive (and valuable) cargoes or passengers.

An emerging role for blade-sail equipped vessels is as fast commerce raiders or pirate hunters. Since most blade-sail vessels only have one main mast mounted on their merchantman-size hulls, they are able to devote more deck space to weapons and marines. Most blade-sail merchantmen prefer to go lightly armed, however, using the extra space and weight for cargo, relying on their speed and maneuverability to escape pursuers.

COG

Huge Ship

Propulsion: Large sail, oars (3 sets)

Speed: 25 ft. (oars), 20 ft. (sail)

Crew: 45

Cargo: 20 tons

Hull

Armor Class: 5

Hardness: 5

Hit Points: 40

Deck

Armor Class: 5

Hardness: 5

Hit Points: 20

Mast

Armor Class: 5

Hardness: 5

Hit Points: 300

Castles

Armor Class: 5

Hardness: 5

Hit Points: 40

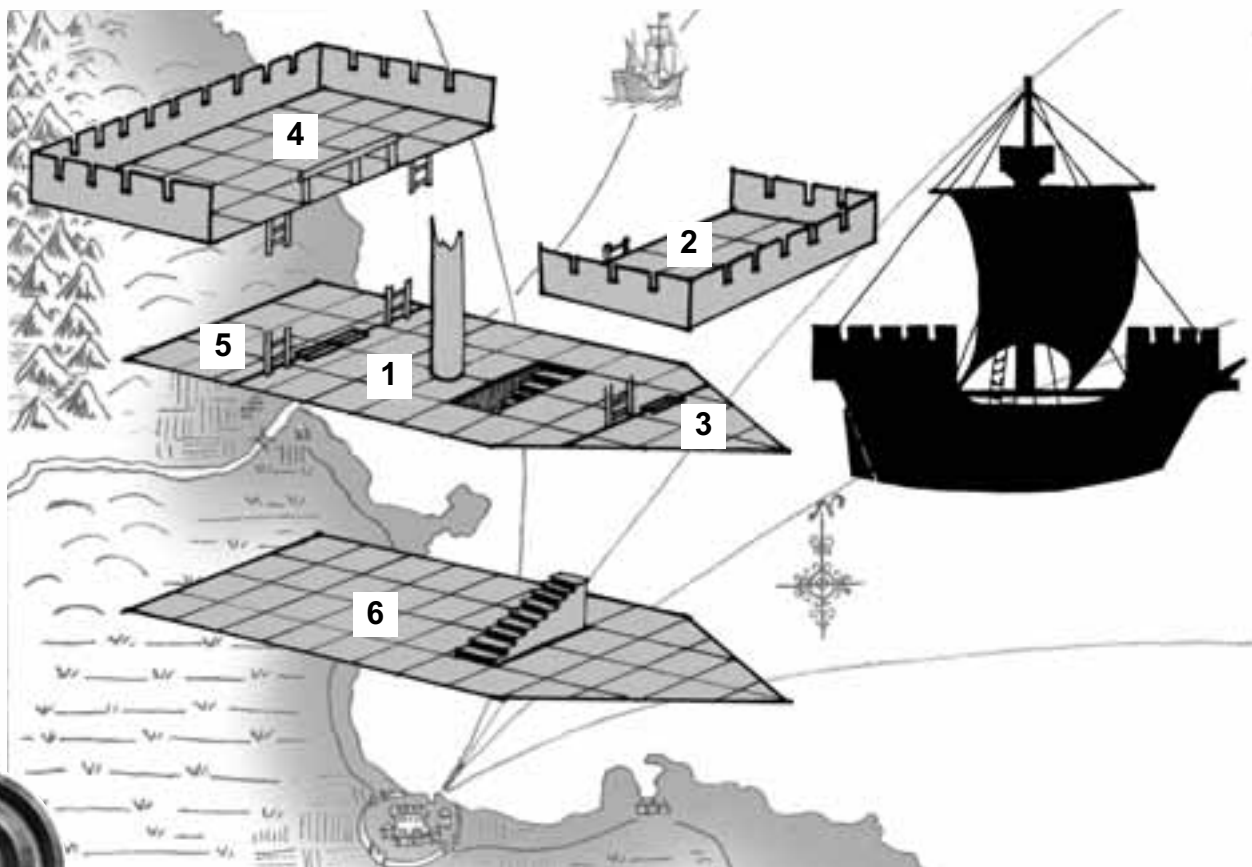
Weapons: None

Ship Qualities: Oceanworthy, transport

Cost and Construction Time: 10,205 gp and 4 months

The cog is the natural evolution from the longship's basic design. While historically the cog came after the longship, there's no reason why the two ship designs cannot coexist in a fantasy campaign. In particular, the slower but more advanced cog provides a good contrast as the ship of choice for civilized nations in comparison to the barbarian's preference for the faster yet more primitive longship.

Cogs incorporate a number of improvements into their basic design in comparison to the longship. The most important of these advances are the cog's sterncastle and foreccastle. By adding raised platforms at both ends of the hull, a cog gives its marines and sailors a



better arc of fire against enemy ships. Archers pelt the enemy below with arrows and bolts while marines lob burning oil and stones upon the enemy. A longship in close contact with a cog stands at a severe disadvantage.

The second improvement found in the cog is its use of a rudder. Unlike the longship, the cog is not a double-ended vessel. Instead, its aft is flattened to allow for the installation of a single rudder. The rudder gives the cog much better maneuverability in comparison to the longship. While the longship has the advantage in landing actions, the cog is designed primarily as a sea-fighter, losing all pretense of a landing or raiding ship. Furthermore, the cog's oars serve only as an emergency back up to its sail.

Like the longship, the cog lacks any heavy artillery such as catapults or ballistae. The cog relies on its crew and marines to provide firepower against attacking ships. Heavily armed troops use crossbows and thrown projectiles to disable and sink opposing ships and often resort to boarding actions when pressed in at close range.

Most cogs carry a supply of acid, fire, and shrapnel bombs. While these weapons are not included in the total cost listed for the vessel, most cogs carry 5 fire bombs and 5 shrapnel bombs, for a total cost of 2,500 gp. If a cog expects heavy combat it typically carries three or four times this ammo load. Rather than firing these projectiles with a catapult, the marines aboard a cog hurl them from the fore-castle at enemy ships, usually after the cog has closed in.

The cog is a workhorse of most civilized nations. As a cheap, easily built ship it fills a wide variety of roles. Merchants commonly use the cog because of its small crew and high capacity, cutting costs of labor while increasing the potential profits from a trade run. The stubby, stout cog can be seen in ports across the world. In addition, the cog's raised fore-castle gives it some capacity to fight off pirates and other predators.

Cogs are also commonly used in warfare, particularly in regions where the catapult, ballista, and cannon have not yet gained common usage among navies. Obviously, an unarmed cog is little more than a target for a heavily armed and armored battleship. However, the cog readily

takes to simple modifications to bring it into line with the naval technologies and expectations of a campaign. Both stern and forecastles can take on ballista or catapults, allowing the cog to engage more heavily armed ships on somewhat even terms.

Most fantasy races readily take to the cog as a common ship type. Halflings and gnomes often employ it due to its forecastle, which allows them to even the odds in combat against larger, stronger races. As a mainstay of medieval shipping and navies, the cog is likely to be the default ship in a campaign that seeks to stick close to European technological levels. On the other hand, if you prefer the more exotic, fantasy-inspired designs presented here, the cog could be a poor man's ship of last resort or a simple unarmed trading vessel. Not every merchant can afford to purchase an exotic ship crafted from exotic materials and infused with magic. For the common sailor, the cog represents the typical seagoing vessel.

DESIGN

The cog's design is only moderately more complicated than the longship's. Its two castles, both fore and aft, serve as its primary distinguishing characteristics.

1. Deck: Sailors typically occupy the main deck area, attending to the rigging and when necessary manning the oars. In a boarding action, the marines may mass here to repel attackers or to prepare an assault of their own, supported by missile fire from the castles.

2. Forecastle: This structure serves as the primary attack platform when the cog engages enemy vessels at range. Marines and archers mass here, ready to pepper their opponents with fire from above. The forecastle has wooden crenellations that grant all standing behind them half cover against missile fire. In addition, archers and bombardiers attacking an adjacent ship gain a +2 circumstance bonus to hit enemy ships due to their superior angle, allowing them to fire upon the enemy deck.

3. Cabin: This enclosed deck area below the forecastle is typically used to store ammunition, rope, weapons, and other critical supplies that must be kept close in battle. Furthermore, the ship's cook often sets up a galley here.

4. Sterncastle: Set lower than the forecastle, this structure serves as an auxiliary battle platform. Typically, the captain and other officers observe the ship and issue orders from here. In addition, the steersman keeps his station here as he directs the cog. Combatants standing atop the sterncastle gain the same cover and attack bonuses provided by the forecastle. While the sterncastle stands lower than the forecastle, it still provides the same cover and superior arc of fire. When engaged from behind, the captain and his officers usually abandon the sterncastle, allowing the marines and archers to engage the enemy unhindered.

5. Cabin: Situated beneath the sterncastle, this enclosed space serves as the captain's quarters and office. A long desk covered with charts covers one wall, while a small bed and sea chest occupies another.

6. Hold: The area below decks serves as the primary cargo space and quarters for the crew. Hammocks hang from the deck above, while boxes, bales, and crates of cargo are stacked to the ceiling here. Most supplies necessary to keep the cog functioning on a daily basis are kept above in area 3, but spares and extra stores of food and water can normally be found here.

SHIPS IN SERVICE

Cogs cover a vast array of uses, and thus follow no particular naming convention. As the workhorse of the sea, cogs fulfill a wide variety of roles and serve most land-dwelling humanoid races that venture across the ocean. The following categories list names according to the common roles filled by cogs.

Merchant Ship: *Cloud Gatherer, Far Wanderer, Longwind, Sea Maiden, Seastar, Dawn Sprinter, Voyager*

Warship: *Avenger, Defender of the West, Indomitable, Ironfist, Pursuer, Royal Hunter, Warspite*

Dwarf Cogs: *Anvil of the Sea, Hearthhome, Ironsail, Silverwave*

Elf Cogs: *Eagle Wind, Moon Chaser, Oaksides, Sealeaf*

Gnome Cogs: *Gem of the Sea, Glitterrock, Pirate Dodger, Sea Sprite, Sun Child*

Goblin Cogs: *Backstabber, Gutripper, Guttersnipe, Rat Runner, Skulker, Floating Wreck*

Halfling Cogs: *Alef's Burrow, Nomad, Seafoam, Traveler, Wanderer*

Hobgoblin Cogs: *Bloodspear, Punisher, Sea Tyrant, Warbringer*

Ogre Cogs: *Crusher, Hulk Wrecker, Sea Club, Spiker*

VARIANT: THE FANTASY COG

Huge Ship

Propulsion: Large sail, oars (3 sets)

Speed: 25 ft. (oars), 20 ft. (sail)

Crew: 45

Cargo: 20 tons

Hull

Armor Class: 5

Hardness: 5

Hit Points: 40

Deck

Armor Class: 5

Hardness: 5

Hit Points: 20

Mast

Armor Class: 5

Hardness: 5

Hit Points: 300

Castles

Armor Class: 5

Hardness: 5

Hit Points: 40

Weapons: 2 light catapults (fore, aft)

Ship Qualities: Oceanworthy, transport

Cost and Construction Time: 11,205 gp and 5 months

This is the stat block for a cog modified to survive the much more lethal oceans of the typical fantasy setting. It includes more firepower than the standard cog. While the standard cog seeks to close with the enemy in order to allow its marines to rain fire upon targets, this cog carries two light catapults, one each in the sterncastle and forecastle, allowing it to pelt enemies with heavier, longer ranged missiles. Marines and archers still use their castles as firing platforms, but their role now is to provide supporting fire and to disrupt the crew of enemy ships. Marines still toss explosives and fire bombs on to enemy ships, particularly when the enemy comes too close for the catapults to remain effective.

In a fantasy game where magic and sea monsters are both common, this version of the cog replaces the historical version presented above.

DRAGON TURTLE-CLASS TROOP TRANSPORT

Gargantuan Ship

Propulsion: 2 medium sails, dual paddlewheel

Speed: 40 ft. (paddlewheel), 32 ft. (sails)

Crew: 60

Cargo: 150 tons

Hull

Armor Class: 5

Hardness: 5

Hit Points: 40

Deck

Armor Class: 5

Hardness: 5

Hit Points: 20

Masts

Armor Class: 5

Hardness: 5

Hit Points: 150

Weapons: 2 ballistae (fore, aft), 2 light catapults (fore, aft)

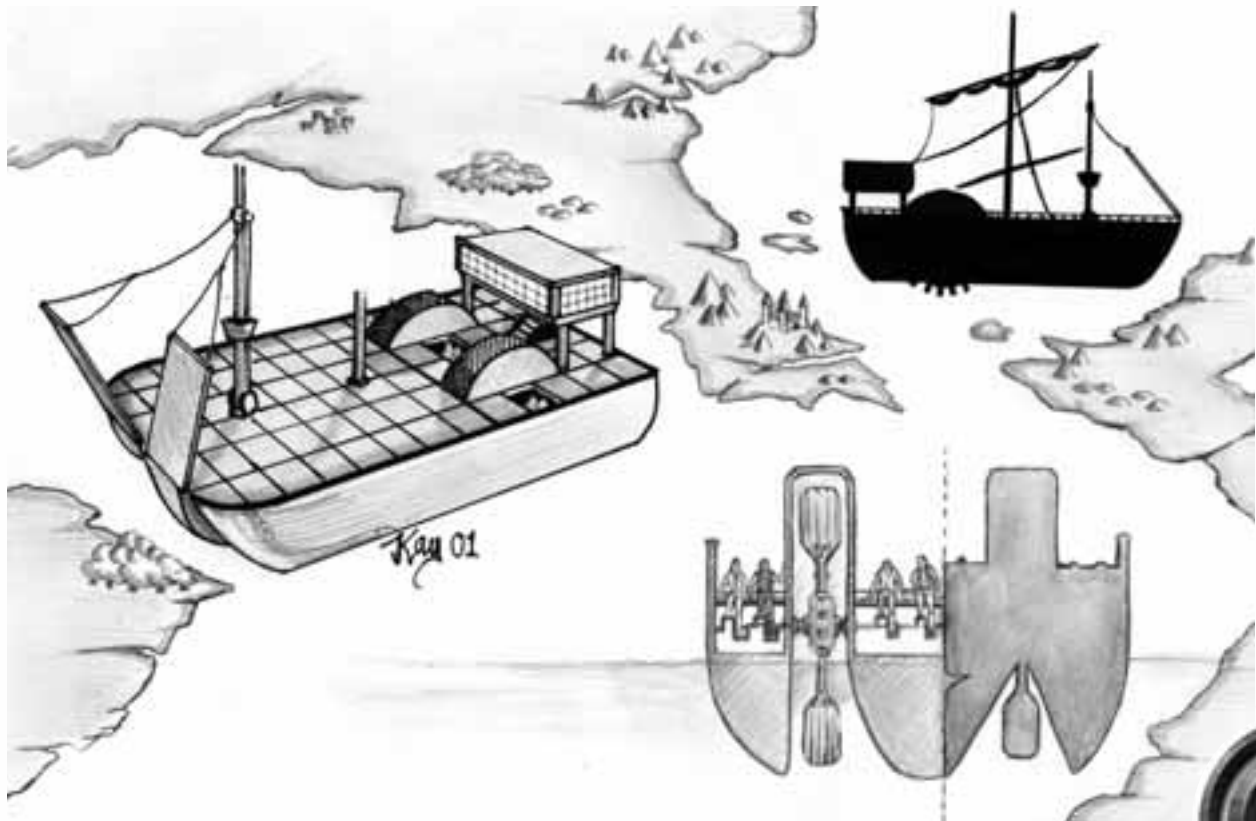
Ship Qualities: Oceanworthy, wave rider

Cost and Construction Time: 27,200 gp, and 7 months, 1 week

Invasion by sea offers many advantages, most notably the speed with which troops can be deployed and the advantage of surprise gained by an unexpected attack from the water. A wise military commander always considers the possibilities of large bodies of water not only for defense but also for offense. With the advent of large, shallow-draft transports it has become feasible to mount true amphibious operations that can involve enough troops to turn the tide in any engagement. One purpose-built vessel is the Dragon Turtle-class troop transport.

At first glance, the Dragon Turtle appears similar to many other transports, however a closer inspection reveals substantial differences. The ship is built around its unique dual paddlewheel propulsion system that helps beach the vessel so that it may disembark its troops. Dual paddlewheel systems are expensive (10,000 gp) but provide as much propulsion as three banks of oars while taking up less space (10 propulsion slots) and require fewer crewmen to operate. The complex system does add another month to construction time, however.

The hull is the most distinguishing feature of the vessel, as it is actually three rather narrow hulls decked over with wooden planks, a design that reduces the amount of cargo space



available, but makes the ship stable and light—perfect for beaching operations.

The interior spaces of the tri-hull ship are given over to storage space for weapons and provisions for the vessel's troops, as they are too narrow to be used for crew or troop quarters. These hulls are lined with cork to help the ship maintain its buoyancy should it suffer a breach during beaching operations. The crew and troops bunk on an open upper deck that is laid across the lower hulls and roofed over during rainy weather with nothing more elaborate than tarps or skins stretched across poles. More expensive versions of the Dragon Turtle have fully enclosed upper decks and staterooms for the captain and ranking officers, usually as part of the raised wheelhouse located aft of the paddlewheels.

Once the vessel is within sight of a suitable shore for disembarking the troops, the sails are struck and twenty strong crewmen take their place at the pedals of the dual paddlewheels in order to power the vessel onto the beach. Lower body strength and endurance is typically greater than arm strength, giving this propulsion method an edge over conventional rowing. Despite this advantage, paddling is used only if the winds are not favorable to driving the ship onto the beach using its sails, or if there is a danger of damage to the sails and rigging of the vessel. It does give the Dragon Turtle a surprising punch in ship-to-ship combat, however, as its three hulls are capped in metal to protect them from damage during beaching. This has the added benefit of turning them into deadly rams.

As the vessel nears the shore, deck-mounted artillery and archers unleash a hail of fire to clear enemy troops from the beach. When the Dragon Turtle runs aground, the forward ramps (which double as boarding ramps during naval combat) slam onto the beach, and the ship's troops disembark under covering fire from the ship. Once all troops are on shore, the crew manning the paddlewheels change their facing and power the vessel off the beach and out of harm's way. If the beach appears to be secured, however, the ship can remain to provide shelter and logistical support, offloading supplies for the soldiers on shore.

DRUID LAIRSHIP

Huge Ship

Propulsion: Magic (water elementals)

Speed: 60 ft.

Crew: 4

Cargo: 10 tons

Hull

Armor Class: 5

Hardness: 7

Hit Points: 40

Deck

Armor Class: 5

Hardness: 5

Hit Points: 20

Weapons: *Flaming ram* (fore)

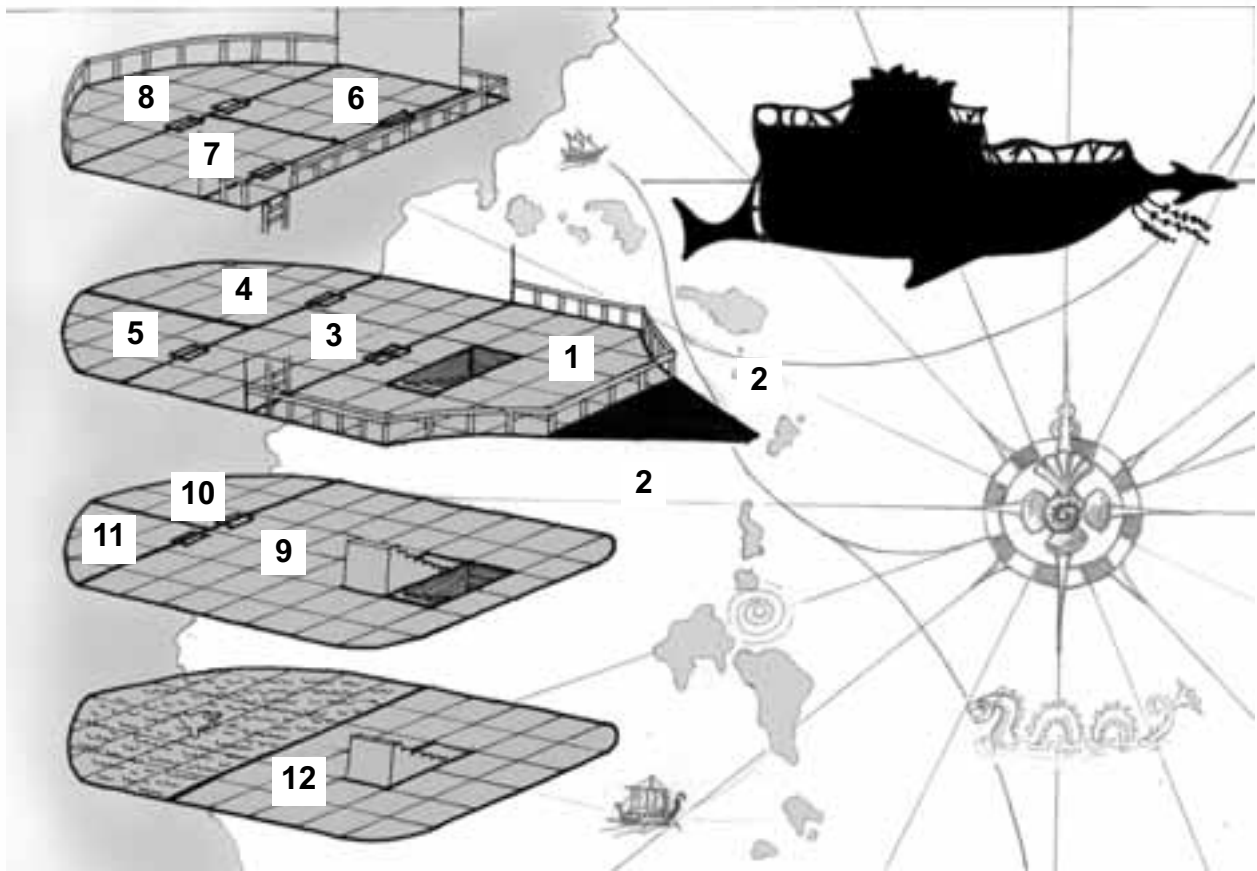
Ship Qualities: Fire tested, oceanworthy, tough old girl

Cost and Construction Time: 112,500 gp, and 7 months, 1 week

Most druids who make their lives on the oceans are of oceanic races such as sea elves, locathah, merfolk, and others native to the watery depths. However, among coastal communities, druids who tend to the sea sometimes arise from human, elf, lizardfolk, and even halfling communities. These druids tend to the surface of the ocean, looking after those creatures that dwell on the ocean but do not necessarily live within it. Sea druids are the bane of those who despoil the oceans and a welcome boon to those mariners and fishermen who respect the sea and make proper sacrifices to the gods.

A lairship serves as a sea druid's home upon the waves. It carries his retinue of followers and allows him to travel between the islands, coastal towns, and isolated beaches that he claims as his domain. The lairship is a gift from the gods, formed from driftwood, seaweed, seashells, and other natural materials. A pair of Huge water elementals carry the lairship, allowing themselves to be fitted into special harnesses that allow them to propel the craft.

The lairship patrols the druid's chosen territory under his command. While this craft is by no means the largest or swiftest ship at sea, any mariner with more than a few years experience avoids crossing paths with a previously unknown lairship. The druids' ability to change weather, call upon tidal waves, and summon monstrous sea creatures makes them terrible foes. Furthermore, their sometimes-dogmatic interpretation of their deities' teachings can



often prompt them to persecute and destroy sailors who are merely going about their business.

Good sea druids usually try to aid travelers and work against pirates and other raiders. They view the sea as a world open to all who do not victimize others or violate the natural order.

Neutral druids are often seen as cold and uncaring. To these sea druids, the ocean is a cruel environment that tests the strength and cunning of all sailors and creatures. Neutral druids only seek out and attack those who despoil the sea, but they otherwise only rarely involve themselves in the affairs of men. Pirates and other dangers are not a concern to a neutral druid.

Evil sea druids often view those who dwell on land with hatred and contempt. They readily ally with pirates and seagoing orcs, often plotting to destroy all ships and traders that do not offer up gold, gems, and other sacrifices to the druid and his god. Some evil druids attempt to destroy ports, sink all ships, and drive all who do not reverse their lords back to the shore.

DESIGN

The lairship often looks rather ramshackle to the casual observer, but an experienced sailor can see that it is quite durable.

1. Deck: This large, open-air deck serves as the druid's main command area. Long reins run from the deck to the harnesses built for the elemental. The druid or one of his comrades command the elemental from here. Should anyone attempt to take control of the ship, the elementals attempt to pull him overboard.

2. Elemental Pens: Long reins of seaweed run down to this area from the deck. At first glance, it appears as if the reins run down into the water, but a few minutes of observation reveals the outline of a pair of water elementals who swim here, pulling the lairship along behind them. The large ram is often decorated with a nautical motif. Some are designed to look like leaping dolphins or fearsome sharks. At the druid's command, the ram becomes cloaked in fire as a *flaming* weapon.

3. Common Area: This room serves as a meeting area, storage room, and dining area for the druid's crew. The crew of a

lairship typically consists of younger druids, locathah, and other followers of the druid's deity.

4. Storage: This room usually holds foodstuffs and other supplies necessary for the day-to-day working of the lairship. With a druid aboard, most lairships have little need for long-term food supplies, as the druid can often call upon the bounty of the sea to nourish his crew. When the druid must leave the ship for any reason this room stores rations and water for the druid's followers.

5. Galley: The ship's cook holds court here, preparing meals for all aboard. Though lairships are often crude and primitive in appearance, many druids have such a knowledge of animals, plants, and spices that their cooks are second to none on the high seas.

6. Druid's Quarters: This large room serves as the druid's private sanctuary, study, and bedroom. A large bed, bookcases laden with volumes concerning nature and sea lore, and nautical tools such as maps, star charts, and other navigational aids can be found here. In addition, furniture designed for non-human visitors, such as perches for birds, are also common.

7. Visitor's Quarters: Similar in size and comfort to the druid's cabin next door, this room serves as living space for either the druid's top lieutenants or for important guests and passengers traveling aboard the lair ship.

8. Shrine: This open-air, upper deck serves as the druid's personal chapel to his deity. A small idol or holy symbol stands here, as do prayer mats, incense, and other common religious items. The druid also uses this area to accept visitors not normally capable of coming aboard, such as krakens, sea birds, and whales. Normally, the druid holds rituals and worship services in area 1.

9. Lower Deck: This area serves as a combination storage area and dormitory for the druid's crew. Hammocks hang from the ceiling here, while crates and boxes of supplies are stacked around the stairs leading up to area 1 and down to area 12.

10. Private Quarters: This room serves as the private room for the officers and other experts who serve under the druid. This

room holds a pair of bunk beds, chairs, and a small desk. Usually, the navigator shares this room with the junior druids who serve aboard the ship.

11. Storage: Goods and items considered too important and valuable to leave stacked in area 9 are kept here. The door to this storage room is normally kept locked. Treasure, holy relics, and other important items are often found here.

12. Deep Deck: This dark, damp deck serves as an easy point of access for creatures native to the sea. A large, open pool of water gives access to the ocean's depths. Sea elves and locathah use this entrance to board the ship, while the druid often exits the lairship via this deck when he chooses to use his polymorph ability to take the form of a large fish, octopus, or shark. The magics that infuse the hull prevent the open water from flowing into the lairship and sinking it. Given the predatory nature of sahuagin and other creatures, most druids keep a strong guard here or recruit a school of dolphins or similar allies to travel with the lairship.

SHIPS IN SERVICE

Lairships are usually given a name based on the druid's attitude toward the sea and his role on the waves. Many druids do not name their lairships, seeing them as little more than a simple tool no more worthy of a name than a hammer.

Good Druids: *Aveear's Temple, Eye of Arrgan, Protector, Sea Warden, Wave Guardian*

Neutral Druids: *Balance Keeper, Defender, Judgment Bearer, Silent Sentinel, Watcher on the Waves*

Evil Druids: *Ice Shark, Neptune's Fury, Prowler, Sea Fang, Sea Wolf, Typhoon, Vengeance*

CREATING A LAIR SHIP

Druids gain lairships and the elementals that power them from their deities, usually in return for years of service and devotion to the gods. To gain a lairship, a druid of at least 10th level must embark on a quest to gain his god's favor. The druid must face the challenges of this quest alone, and most of them lead the druid into the oceans. A druid may have to destroy a nest of marauding orc pirates, reestablish a long-lost

shrine to his deity, or destroy all shipping in a given region of the sea for a specified time period. The druid must face a series of encounters and challenges that test his abilities. The druid must embark on this quest alone, but he is allowed to find new allies among the creatures he meets. Often, the druid draws his crew from among these newfound allies.

DWARF IRONBACK

Gargantuan Ship

Propulsion: Steam engine

Speed: 55 ft.

Crew: 30

Cargo: 150 tons

Hull

Armor Class: 5

Hardness: 15

Hit Points: 60

Deck

Armor Class: 5

Hardness: 5

Hit Points: 20

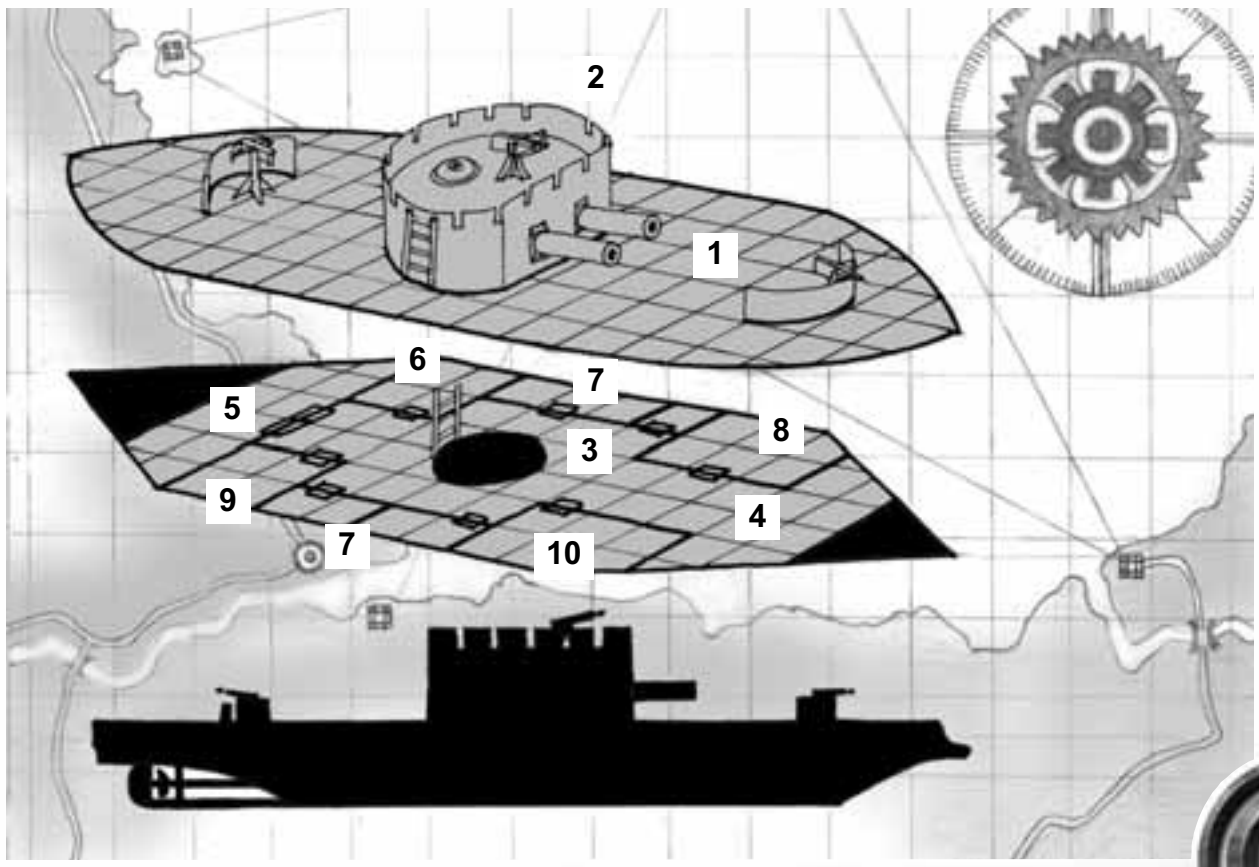
Weapons: 2 cannons (turret), ballista (turret), repeating crossbow (fore, aft)

Ship Qualities: Turret*, war dog

Cost and Construction Time: 115,750 gp, and 7 months, 3 weeks

Special: The turret is a uniquely dwarven innovation. This special quality may be purchased for iron, mithral, or adamantite ships of dwarven make. It may hold a total of 16 artillery points worth of weaponry and may attack into any fire arc.

A mithral and steel, steam-powered monstrosity, the dwarf ironback represents a combination of stubborn dwarf craftsmanship and gnomish engineering. The ironback is a low, unwieldy ship forged of metal. A powerful steam engine propels it through the water with surprising agility, while its mithral hull allows it to shrug off all but the most devastating artillery volleys. A pair of powerful cannons gives the ironback tremendous firepower. While sporting only two guns, these weapons are housed with a turret that gives the ironback the ability to deal with attackers from all quarters. As most dwarven navies are rather small and the ironback is expensive enough to make entire fleets of the ships impossible, the ironback is designed to take on several enemy ships at once. The turret allows an ironback to slice into the midst of an enemy formation, blasting cannonballs in all directions while soaking up the enemy's comparatively pitiful catapult and ballista fire.



The ironback protects dwarven trade routes, typically rivers and coastal areas frequented by cogs, longships, knorrs, and other trade vessels commanded by dwarven captains. While an individual ironback represents a powerful military asset, most dwarf cities or clans cannot afford to field more than a few of them at a time. The tremendous amount of mithral necessary to build the ironback's hull means that building a new ship requires an investment of both tremendous amounts of time and money.

Ironbacks often sail with small fleets of trading vessels. An ironback is often relied upon to defend up to a dozen other vessels, leaving the ship and its crew taxed to their limit. Pirate fleets that target dwarf shipping often commit two separate squadrons to an attack, one to lure away an escorting ironback and the other to strike at the exposed fleet. As a result, ironback captains tend to be rather conservative, preferring to lurk in the midst of their charges and keeping clear lines of fire for their turrets in all directions.

In times of dire need, such as a full-blown invasion by sea or the depredations of a large, well-organized pirate fleet, a dwarf nation may bring its ironbacks together into a single fleet supported by wooden longships. Though rare, this formation represents a powerful collection of firepower. The longships act as scouts and troop carriers, sweeping across the sea in search of a suitable target for the ironbacks' fury. Once a target comes into view, the ironbacks attempt to circle the target, usually forcing the enemy to split his firepower in several directions while the ironbacks use their turrets to all target and destroy the same enemy ship. The longships provide support, grappling and boarding damaged enemy ships or racing up to drop troops on to an ironback that the enemy threatens to board.

Though equipped with a ram and ballista, most ironback captains avoid sailing too close to the enemy. The ram is a weapon of last resort, used only after the cannon ammunition is gone and flight is not an option. The ballista provides close support in attacks. Most captains rely on it for dockside security.

Ironbacks rarely journey far from the coast. The interior has little space for food, supplies, and comfortable bunks. Most captains prefer to dock for the night, allowing the crew to

sleep ashore while elite guards watch over the ironback. In regions where ironbacks are common, dwarves usually build a series of naval bases that serve as supply depots and stopover points for merchant ships and the ironbacks that protect them. Often, ironbacks are deployed singly or in pairs along particular stretches of a waterway. As merchant fleets travel, they swap over from the protection of one ironback to another along their route.

Ironbacks also fulfill a similar role in the waterways beneath the earth. A dwarf cavern adjacent to a subterranean sea often uses ironbacks to patrol the coast and ward off any amphibious attacks from the depths of the Underdeep.

DESIGN

The ironback's interior is a cramped, hot place. Though most dwarves are well accustomed to such tight environs, humans, elves, and others find journeying in an ironback unpleasant at best.

1. Deck: The ironback's deck is flat and usually featureless. Some captains paint the ship's hull a dull blue in order to camouflage it from aerial observers. A tower shield protecting a tripod-mounted repeating crossbow stands both fore and aft. These weapons are primarily used to guard the ship while it is in port or, if the situation is dire, to repel boarders.

2. Turret: This squat, stout-looking weapon holds two dwarven cannons. Ladders run alongside the turret, allowing the crew to scramble from the deck to the turret roof. The turret's crenellations provide half cover to those standing atop it. In addition, a tripod ballista provides a heavy weapon for use against boarders. A hatch in the center of the turret's roof provides access to the interior of the ironback.

3. Turret Undercarriage: This area is a tangled, confusing mass of gears, struts, and cases. The crew here rotates the turret, working together to spin it to a proper heading. The turret snaps into place as it turns, allowing it to point in one of 32 particular headings. Dwarf captains often order the crew to position the turret in units of clicks, such as six clicks to the right, as the turret makes a loud, distinctive snap as it moves from one position to the next. Outside of combat, the crew spends much of its time lounging here. Off-duty dwarves usually

play cards, dice games, or simply pass the time in conversation. When possible, the crew usually heads above deck for fresh air. Even dwarves often find the interior of the ironback cramped and uncomfortable compared to their mines and holdfasts.

4. Bridge: The captain, pilot, navigator, and ship's wizard normally occupy this area. Periscopes allow the captain to survey the battle, while long, slender pipes allow him to belch commands to the turret and engine room. However, many captains prefer to stand in the turret during battle, personally overseeing the cannons and relaying maneuvers to the pilot.

5. Engine Room: This small, cramped area is often as hot and damp as a tropical jungle. The chief engineer and his small crew toil here, monitoring the engine and keeping a watch on the twin screws that propel the ironback forward. A voice tube allows the engineer to communicate with the turret and the bridge.

6. Storage: This chamber holds food, water, spare tools for engineering, and other supplies. Given its proximity to the engine room, few dwarf captains choose to store gunpowder or other volatile supplies in this area.

7. Bunk Rooms: If necessary, the crew can rest here in shifts on the hard, flat bunks stacked three high in this cabin. If the ironback spends several nights out to sea, the crew usually sleeps in shifts, keeping roughly the same number of dwarves on duty at all hours of the day and night. These rooms are little more than cramped closets with small niches that hold a thin mattress, pillow, and blanket mounted into the walls. Only dwarf-size or smaller creatures can sleep comfortably within them.

8. Officers' Quarters: The captain, navigator, ship's wizard, and chief engineer share this cabin. In addition, it serves as a study, strategy room, and quarters for dignitaries and other passengers. The four beds here are each large enough to host a Medium-size creature. In addition, a small table and chairs here allow for strategy sessions and the occasional card game.

9. Galley: This cramped area holds a small stove for cooking. Cabinets also hold food and other supplies for a voyage. As most ironbacks spend no more than a day at sea, the crew usually subsists on hardtack and iron rations. This

room is often pressed into service as storage space, and some designs eliminate the galley.

10. Storage: Gunpowder, weapons, armor, and ammunition are all kept here. During battle, dwarves run from here to the turret, passing along powder bags and cannonballs to keep the turret guns firing. Battleaxes, crossbows, shields, and studded leather are common armaments for dwarf marines.

SHIPS IN SERVICE

Most ironbacks are given a name that befits their role as pirate hunters and defenders. Dwarves also often name their ships after great heroes or the clan or dwarf that sponsored the ironback's construction. Examples include: *Aegear Swiftaxe*, *Battle Maiden*, *Defender*, *Ogar's Thunderer*, *Orc Hunter*, *Pride of Tulin*, *Relentless Hunter*, *Retribution*, *Seahammer*, *Stolar Hammerhand*, *Vigilant*, *Wave Crasher*, *Zegen Truegold*.

DEEP CRAWLER

Colossal Ship (Submarine)

Propulsion: Magic

Speed: 100 ft.

Crew: 6

Cargo: 1 ton

Hull

Armor Class: 5

Hardness: 15

Hit Points: 70

Deck

Armor Class: 5

Hardness: 15

Hit Points: 35

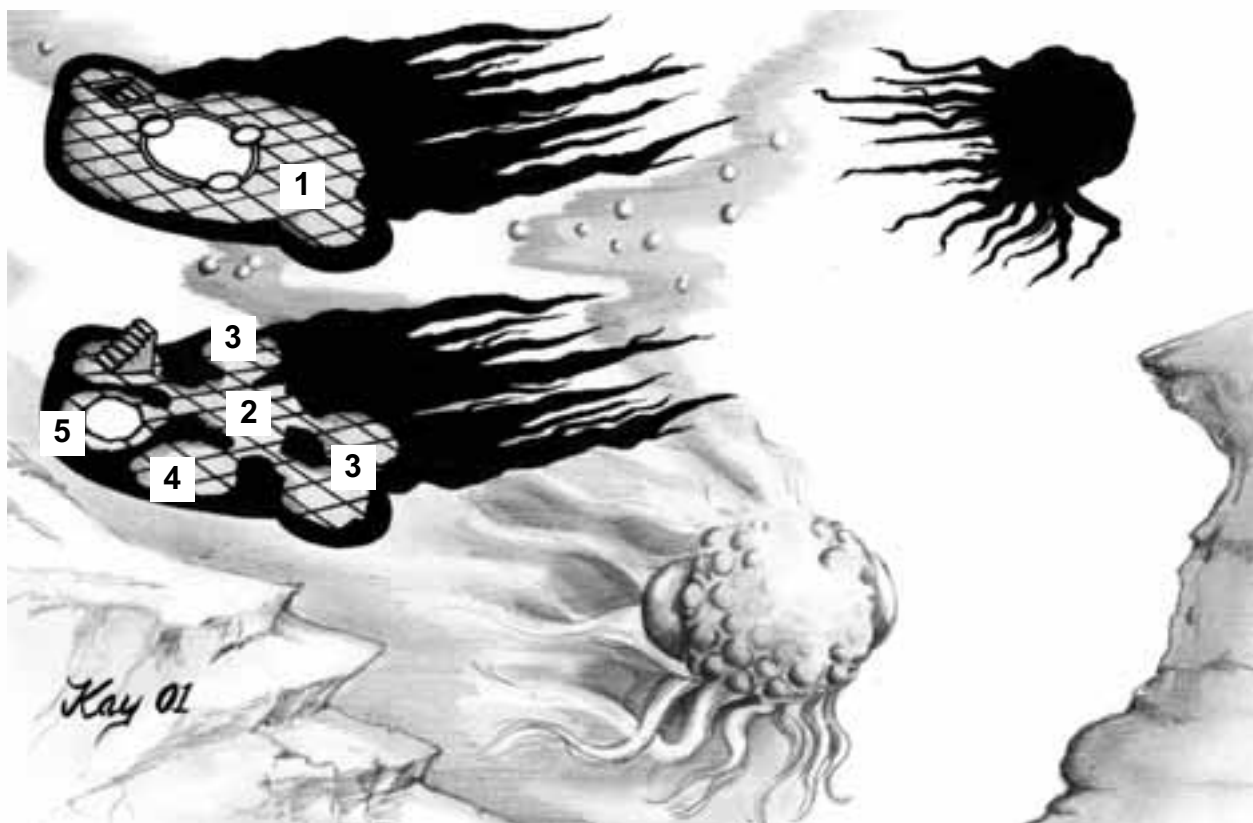
Weapons: Ram, 3 psionic cannons

Ship Qualities: Bull of the sea, grace under pressure, oceanworthy

Cost and Construction Time: Unknown

DESCRIPTION

Gliding through the murky waters like a strange and terrible predator, the deep crawler and her crew stalk the ocean in search of defenseless vessels ripe for the taking. The deep crawler is an alien magical vessel that breaks or ignores many of the rules detailed in the chapter on ship construction. It is a useful example of a unique ship that exceeds the limitations of the rules but can be easily incorporated with them.



Deep crawlers are creations of the mind flayers and are constructed of a strange pseudo-organic material of unknown origin. The material may be mineral, metal, or something else entirely. Human sages and wizards have been unsuccessful in their efforts to secure samples of the substance for study. Deep crawlers always seem to escape capture and leave no trace or fragment behind in the wake of violent encounters. Regardless of its source or nature, this material seems to respond to the psionic abilities of the mind flayer race. The crawler moves and maneuvers with no apparent means of propulsion or steering.

The exact number of crawlers in service is unknown, as are the names of the ships or their crews, but it is almost certain that more than one crawler is active in the darkest depths of the sea.

1. Control Circle: This room serves as the master control area for the crawler. Spartanly decorated, the room is dimly lit by the glow of three five-foot circles mounted onto a larger circle in the floor. The smaller circles are covered in the arcane language of the mind flayers and serve as the control circles by which the alien creatures operate the crawler.

The crewmembers utilize their mental abilities and the control circles to move and control crawler. By using the first circle, a mind flayer can move the ship through the ocean as easily as a captain would control the helm of a sailing ship. Controlling the ship requires complete concentration and is considered a full-round action. The vessel has no visible windows or portholes, but the control circles grant a telepathic link with the strange ship, and the controllers navigate by a psionic form of echosense.

The second circle controls the crawler's weaponry. The crawler is equipped with three cannon bays mounted on the underside of the crawler. Unlike conventional cannons, these weapons are powered by the amplified psionic energy of the mind flayer in the second circle. Just like controlling the crawler, firing the psionic cannons requires a full-round action. A mind flayer can fire each cannon a number of times per day equal to his Intelligence modifier. The game statistics of these weapons are identical to those for conventional cannons.

The third circle controls the environment of the crawler. By using the circle's psionic amplifiers, a mind flayer can raise or lower the temperature of any chamber in the crawler, supply

a breathable atmosphere, or close off areas of the crawler by telepathically manipulating the hull material.

2. Foyer: This foyer serves as a small cell for relaxation, study, and meditation. A small table and narrow chairs are the only furnishings. The mind flayers use the chamber as a central meeting place. Shadowy recesses and curving shelves are filled with books, scrolls, and other items of use during long voyages.

3. Quarters: Simply decorated, these rooms serve as the private quarters of the crewmembers. Each room houses two crewmen.

4. Treasure Room: With so many exploits and so much to gain, the crawler's crew use this room to store all of their ill-gotten gains. The passage to the chamber is kept sealed by the mind flayer in the third control circle on the main deck. There are usually 2d10 x 100 gp in the room and at least 1d6 random minor magic items, 1d4 random medium magical items, and one major magic item.

5. Moisture Pit: The moisture pit serves two key purposes. First, it is a source of comfort, because mind flayers require moisture to remain comfortable and healthy. Second, the

pit is used as a dining area. The crew keeps 1d4 humanoids bound and submerged to the neck in the waters of the pit.

IRON WHALE

Huge Ship (Submarine)

Propulsion: Steam engine

Speed: 25 ft.

Crew: 20

Cargo: 10 tons

Hull

Armor Class: 5

Hardness: 10

Hit Points: 90

Deck

Armor Class: 5

Hardness: 5

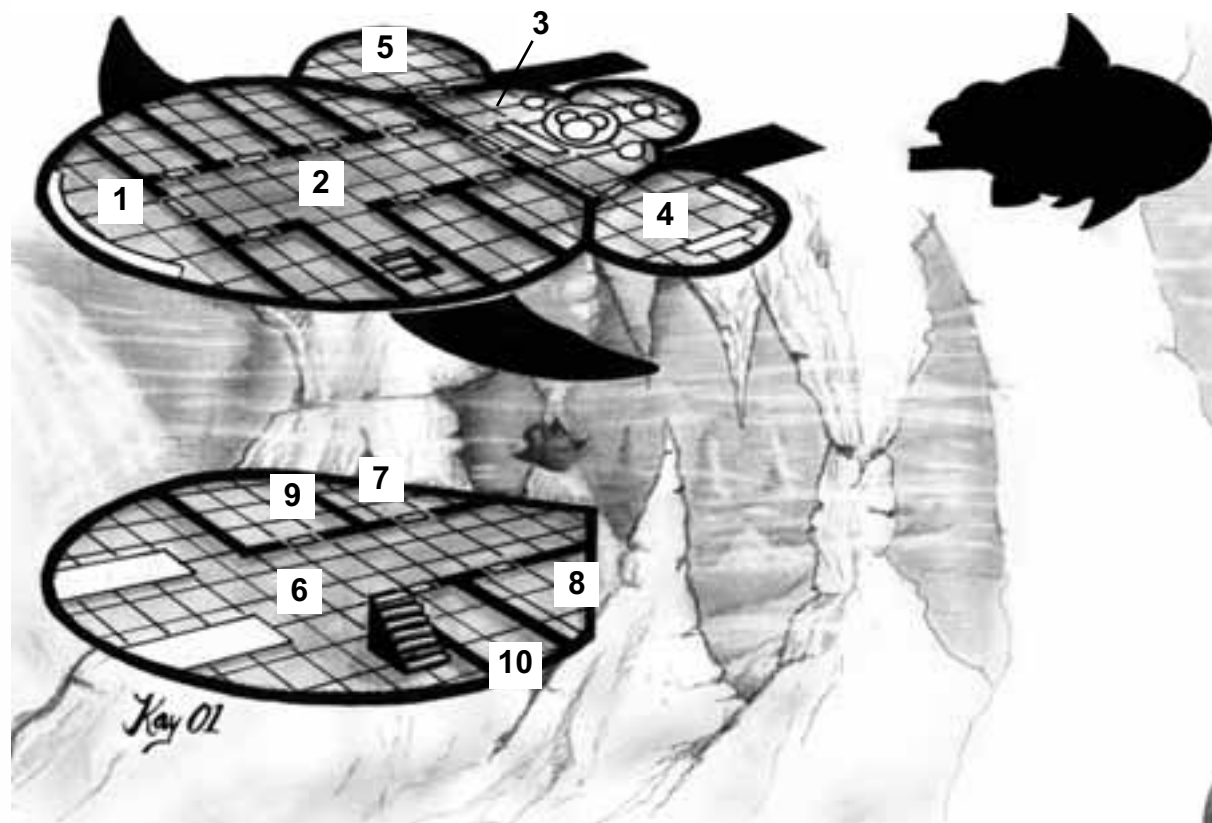
Hit Points: 20

Weapons: 2 torpedo launchers (fore)

Ship Qualities: Clever construction, grace under pressure, oceanworthy

Cost and Construction Time: 103,000 gp, and 7 months, 1 week

Sturdy iron construction, sound mechanics, powerful weaponry, and the magnificent power of steam make the *Iron Whale* a formidable vessel for any subsurface voyage. Originally constructed by the royal gnomish house of



Gobstern to serve as discreet escorts for cargo vessels on long voyages, the *Iron Whale* is the latest charter in a proud line of gnomish submarines. Her current captain is Glinda Gesselute (Ftr2/Exp 8), the daughter of Gobstern's head engineer, Vesselbo Gesselute. Vesselbo was the designer of the first gnomish submarine some 45 years ago. Since those first voyages, the technology and construction quality has improved, and crew safety is at an all-time high.

The *Iron Whale*'s current duty is to serve as escort to the royal family's private ambassadorial ship. With Captain Gesselute at the helm, the *Iron Whale* has successfully protected the royal vessel from three attempted assaults and is prepared for more.

1. Bridge: Comfortable and spacious by gnomish standards, the bridge of the *Iron Whale* is the command center of the vessel's daily operations. Designed with comfort and accessibility in mind, the bridge features three station chairs that each control or monitor a particular function of the sub's operation.

Station one controls the navigation of the *Iron Whale* with a control wheel that (through a series of rods, clockwork gears, and pulleys) operates the main rudder beneath the sub.

Station two monitors the status of the steam engine and controls the speed at which the *Iron Whale* travels. Multiple pressure gauges and an emergency cutoff valve are also accessible. This station only handles the basic functions of the engine. Detailed operation and maintenance occur in area 3, the engine room.

Station three of the *Iron Whale* controls the primary firing system of the torpedo launchers. Like station two, this controls only the basic functions of the system; all torpedoes must be manually loaded in area 6, the torpedo room.

2. Crew Quarters: Designed to house two gnome crewmembers comfortably, these quarters are typically Spartan in decoration. Each of the crew quarters is usually furnished with two beds, one desk, and two small chests for personal effects.

3. Engine Room: The heart and soul of the *Iron Whale*, the engine room is a marvel of gnomish technology and a wondrous sight

to many. In the center of this large room, a complex contraption of iron construction noisily generates the steam used to propel the *Iron Whale*. The steam engine of the *Iron Whale* requires no magic and runs on seawater and a blazing fire that is maintained by three to four crewmen who stoke the fire with coal. Water is pumped directly into the engine from the outside by use of a clockwork valve system.

There is typically enough coal on the *Iron Whale* to maintain steam for one month of steady travel. In the event of an emergency, there is always at least one spellcaster on board who uses magic to supply the necessary heat to maintain the steam engine.

4. Parts Room: This room is merely used to store extra parts and tools needed for repairs to the steam engine while at sea.

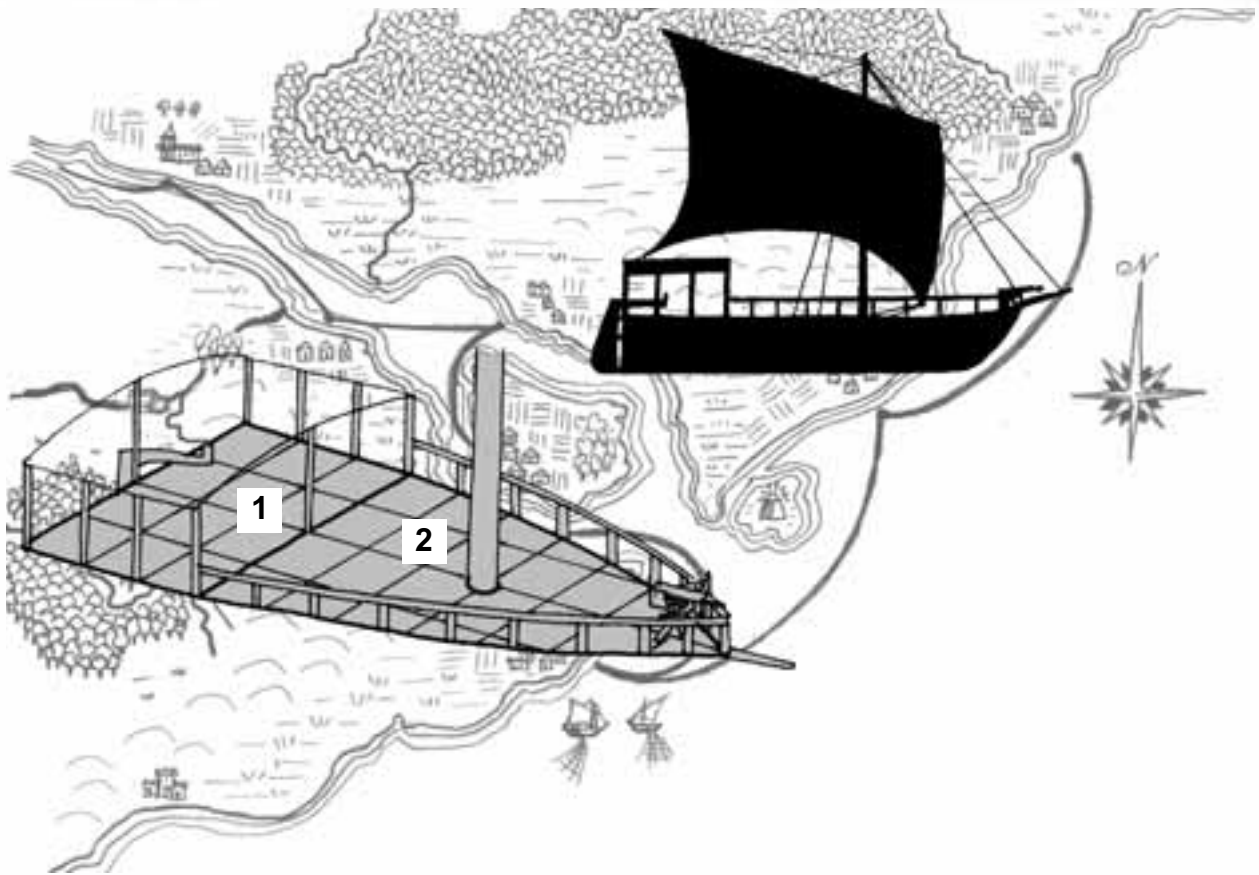
5. Kitchen: During long journeys, this small kitchen is used to prepare simple meals. The kitchen features a small table and a stove that utilizes steam from the engine exhaust system.

6. Torpedo Room: The center of the *Iron Whale*'s defenses, the torpedo room is filled with two large chutes that exit the underside of the sub and operate on a high-pressure valve system to prevent flooding. The torpedoes are loaded with the aid of a small winch attached to the ceiling. The torpedoes are fired from the bridge, but there is also a manual firing system located in the torpedo room. The game rules for torpedoes are exactly the same as those covering cannons, with the same range and damage.

7. Armory: This area is for the storage of any personal weapons the crew uses, as well as spare ammunition for the *Iron Whale*'s torpedo launchers. On average, there are always 15 torpedoes in storage at any given time and up to 25 personal weapons.

8. Water Closet: Using a system similar to the one in the torpedo room, the water closet makes use of a valve system that removes wastes from the sub without risk of flooding.

9 and 10. Supply Rooms: Used primarily for food and water storage, these supply rooms are simple, with iron walls and a sturdy door with no lock. The *Iron Whale* stores up to a month's supply of dry rations, food, and water for extended voyages.



KEELBOAT†

Large Ship

Propulsion: Large sail, oars (2 sets)

Speed: 40 ft. (sail), 30 ft. (oars)

Crew: 6

Cargo: 8 tons

Hull

Armor Class: 5

Hardness: 5

Hit Points: 45

Deck

Armor Class: 5

Hardness: 5

Hit Points: 20

Mast

Armor Class: 5

Hardness: 5

Hit Points: 300

Weapons: Ballista (fore)

Ship Qualities: Built to last

Cost and Construction Time: 1,350 gp, and 2 months, 1 week

Keelboats are common sites on rivers and coastlines that host even a modicum of traffic. A small, cheap design, the keelboat serves as a short-range transport in a variety of roles, from

exploration to trade. While its size prevents it from functioning as a major cargo carrier, it serves as the ideal transport for adventuring parties and small groups of travelers who need plenty of space for their gear and a reliable, steady boat.

Keelboats are common in frontier areas where simple, reliable transport is at a premium. Many expeditions utilize them to cross lakes, travel up or down rivers, and conquer other aquatic obstacles. With its small crew, the keelboat is cheap to maintain, and it's also small enough that an expedition can carry one overland for short distances. In frontier areas, the keelboat serves as a workhorse transport.

Keelboats rarely deploy for battle, though some enterprising bandits take to mounting light artillery on them to ambush and seize small river ships, particularly other keelboats. The design presented here is typical for a frontier area and sports a ballista in order to help ward off bandits, river trolls, and other hazards.

DESIGN

The keelboat's simple, no frills design keeps its price down but also prevents it

from sporting any exotic features. Keelboats are built for durability and utility, and as such tend to be austere, simple design.

1. Pilot's Deck: The keelboat's aft is usually covered with a raised tarpaulin, providing a comfortable, shaded area on deck. The pilot guides the keelboat's simple rudder from here.

2. Main Deck: During a keelboat's travels, passengers, cargo, and gear crowd this area. A short mast holds a single sail, and should the keelboat journey on calm days benches and oars take up the slack. In areas known to harbor bandits and monsters, keelboats usually include a ballista mounted on the prow.

SHIPS IN SERVICE

Few keelboats acquire any level of infamy or fame. Like rowboats and other small craft, keelboats usually go without names. Some are given names of personal significance by their owners, pilots, or crews.

LAWBRINGER

Huge Ship

Propulsion: Large sail

Speed: 40 ft.

Crew: 45

Cargo: 10 tons

Hull

Armor Class: 5

Hardness: 7

Hit Points: 40

Deck

Armor Class: 5

Hardness: 5

Hit Points: 20

Mast

Armor Class: 5

Hardness: 5

Hit Points: 300

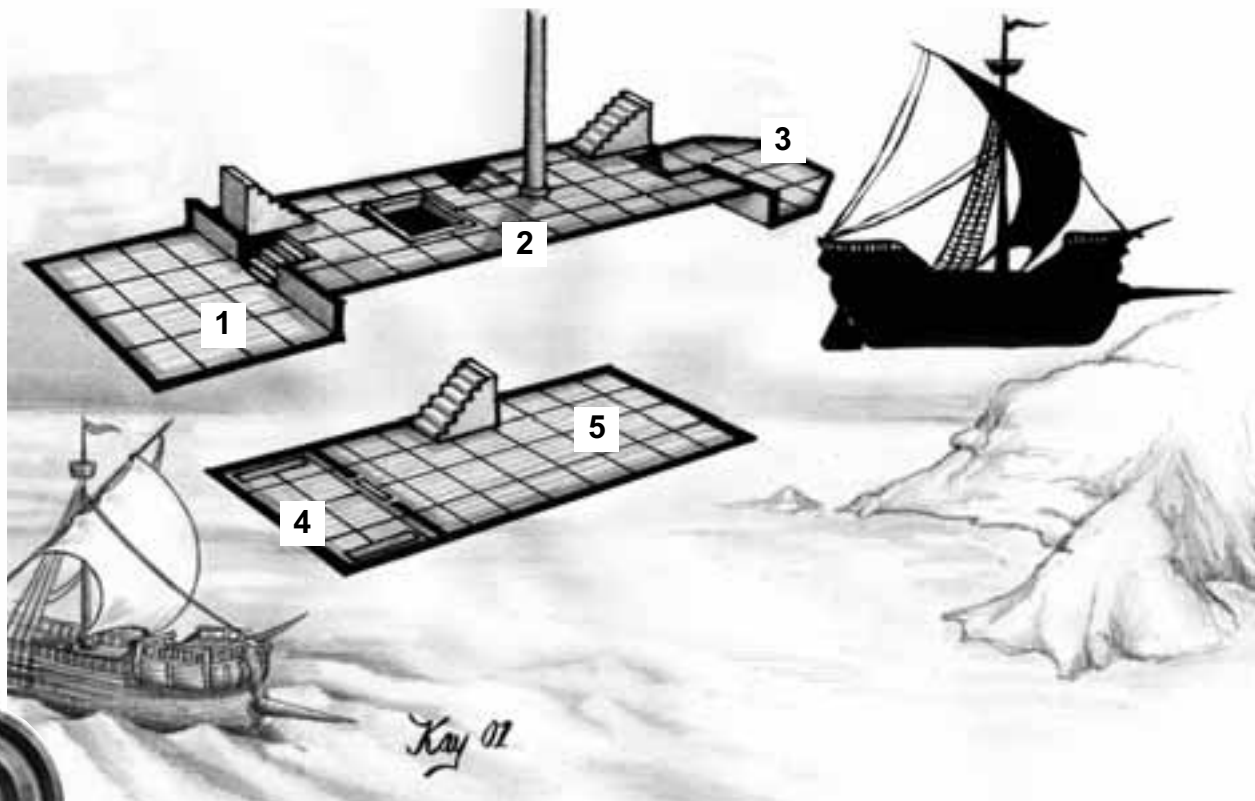
Weapons: Ballista (fore), heavy catapult (aft), ram (fore)

Ship Qualities: Bull of the sea, tough old girl, wind rider

Cost and Construction Time: 16,400 gp, and 6 months, 1 week

Patrolling the coastal regions as a beacon of law and justice on the seas, the sight of the *Lawbringer's* proud sails and regal presence strikes fear into the blackened hearts of any seafaring villain.

Constructed by the Church of Valorous Glory five years ago, the *Lawbringer* is currently captained by Father Reginald Emberheart (Clr7/Pal8), a seasoned war veteran and trusted cleric. Emberheart's mission is as much per-



sonal as it is his duty: He hopes to one day find the *Chained Maiden*, a slave ship, and her captain, Ralkin Mudwater. Several years ago, Emberheart's family fell victim to a slaving raid led by the *Chained Maiden* while he was away on church business. Unfortunately, he has not seen the slavers since. Emberheart and the *Lawbringer* patrol the waters in hopes of one day administering the justice that has eluded them for so long.

With an accomplished crew of clerics, paladins, and professional seamen with strong religious ties, the *Lawbringer* serves two primary purposes. First, it is a patrol ship that works diligently to keep undesirable elements away from peaceful harbors and to eliminate pirate activity in the area. The *Lawbringer's* second mission is to occasionally act as a ship of mercy in times of conflict, giving aid to the fallen vessels of brothers-in-arms and administering clerical aid to the wounded or dying. The ship is capable of serving as a seafaring hospital if necessary.

1. Captain's Quarters: The personal quarters of Father Emberheart, this room is modest in decoration, reflecting the simple demeanor and desires of the cleric. A bed rests near the far wall of the cabin and a large desk sits along the left side. The desk is typically covered with religious texts and harbor reports giving descriptions of known pirate or slave vessels in the immediate area, as well as ink, quills, and a small oil lamp for evening reading.

The room's most prominent feature is the large stained glass window set into the far wall, above the bed. The masterfully crafted glass is a depiction of Emberheart's deity in a scene of honor and glory. The blue shades and silvered lining create a beautiful illumination in the cabin.

2. Main Deck: The nerve center of the *Lawbringer's* daily operation, the main deck also serves as a place of discussion and respect, and acts as a visible holding area for hooligans accused of piracy or other wrongdoings. Most of the crew spend a significant amount of their time on the main deck, tending to the sails and other such duties. On clear nights, crewmen sleep on the deck under the stars, breathing in the salty sea air.

The deck is typically covered with rope, extra supplies, and artillery ammunition, and houses a cage that is used to hold captives. The cage is constructed of heavy-duty iron and has one door on the front. A successful Open Locks check (DC 25) is required to open the padlock that secures the cage door.

There is a five-foot high crawlspace between the decks. This space covers the length of the ship and is used to store extra supplies, weaponry, and artillery ammunition.

3. Chapel: A rarity for seafaring ships, the *Lawbringer* supports a small chapel to Emberheart's deity. The large cabin features pews, a podium, and a small marble statue of the god. Father Emberheart leads most of the regular prayers, but allows his fellow shipmates to speak if the mood strikes them. If possible, the crew participates in a prayer ceremony every day, unless a situation dictates that their attention be diverted elsewhere.

4. Cargo Hold: Located on the lower deck of the ship, the cargo hold serves as a storage area for food, water, and medical supplies that the crew needs on a journey. At any given time, the cargo hold has enough food and fresh water for the crew to survive comfortably for 30 days, if rationed properly.

The cargo hold also acts as a small kitchen area for quick meals prepared while on open waters. This kitchen is very modest, with only a small table that serves as a preparation area. Most of the crew eat dry rations or fruits while voyaging, but the kitchen is occasionally used when Emberheart entertains a visiting captain or ally.

5. Infirmary: The infirmary is a welcome sight to wounded seaman rescued by the *Lawbringer's* crew. A spacious cabin with up to 20 small, one-man cots for the wounded, the infirmary also has two small tables that are used for operations, treatment, or divine ceremonies.

Father Almon (Clr5) acts as the *Lawbringer's* primary healer and directs all of the crew's healers in treatment methods during battle. He also tends to any injuries the crewmen receive by way of combat or accident.

At all times, the *Lawbringer* has at least two healing kits (PHB 110) and 10

potions of cure light wounds on board. There is a 40 percent chance that Father Almon has at least two *potions of cure moderate wounds* as well, in addition to any materials needed for a *raise dead* spell. (Though he is unable to use the spell himself, he keeps the necessary materials on board).

SAHVAGIN CORSAIR

Large Ship

Propulsion: 2 medium towing harnesses, oars (3 sets)

Speed: 50 ft. (sharks), 45 ft. (oars)

Crew: 6

Cargo: 18 tons

Hull

Armor Class: 5

Hardness: 5

Hit Points: 50

Deck

Armor Class: 5

Hardness: 5

Hit Points: 20

Towing Harness

Armor Class: 5

Hardness: 2

Hit Points: 20

Weapons: 2 ballistae (fore, aft)

Ship Qualities: Transport

Cost and Construction Time: 1,975 gp and 4 months

SAHVAGIN RAIDER

Large Ship

Propulsion: 2 medium towing harnesses, oars (3 sets)

Speed: 50 ft. (sharks), 45 ft. (oars)

Crew: 6

Cargo: 8 tons

Hull

Armor Class: 5

Hardness: 5

Hit Points: 50

Deck

Armor Class: 5

Hardness: 5

Hit Points: 20

Towing Harness

Armor Class: 5

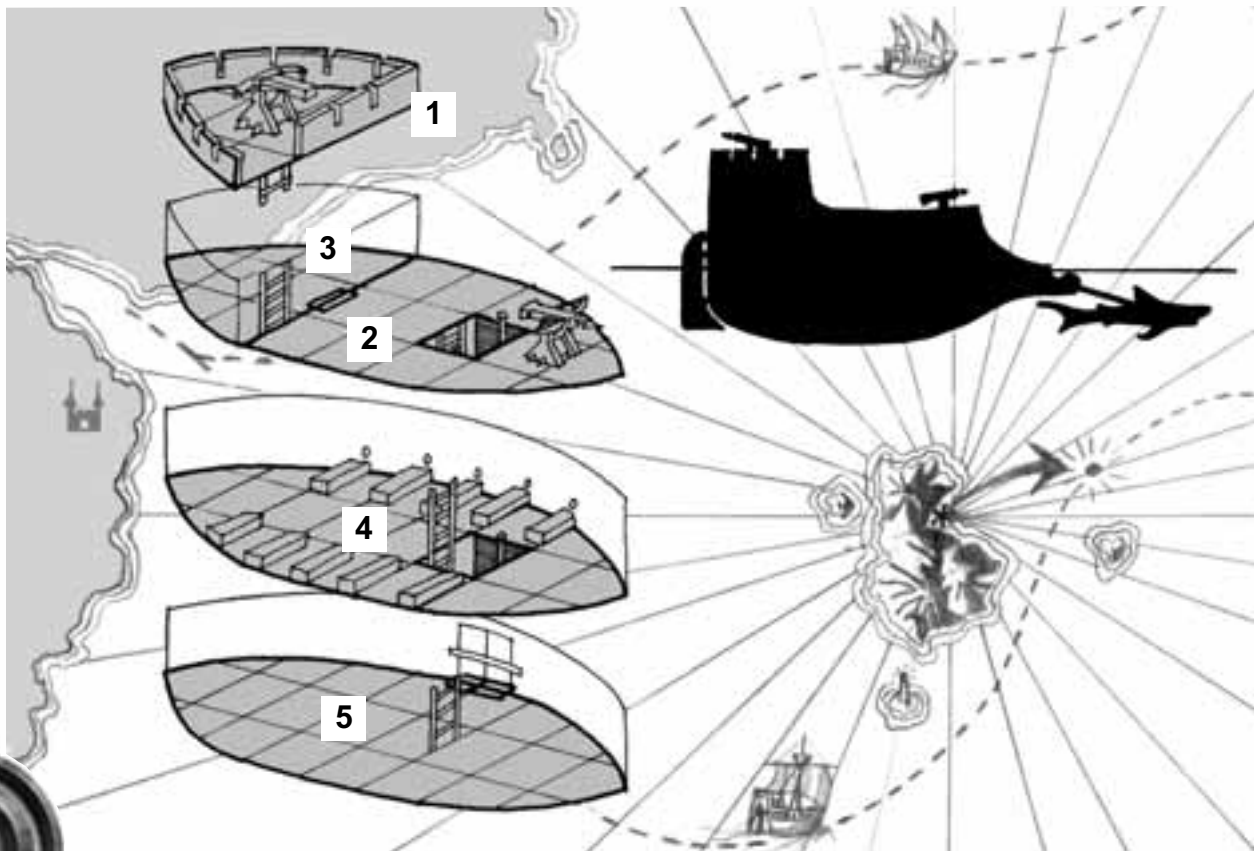
Hardness: 2

Hit Points: 20

Weapons: 2 ballistae (fore, aft), light catapult (fore)

Ship Qualities: Sea scrapper

Cost and Construction Time: 2,525 gp, and 4 months, 2 weeks



Sahuagin Crownship

Large Ship

Propulsion: 2 huge towing harnesses, oars (3 sets)**Speed:** 60 ft. (sharks), 45 ft. (oars)**Crew:** 6**Cargo:** 8 tons**Hull**

Armor Class: 5

Hardness: 5

Hit Points: 50

Deck

Armor Class: 5

Hardness: 5

Hit Points: 20

Towing Harness

Armor Class: 5

Hardness: 2

Hit Points: 20

Weapons: 2 ballistae (fore, aft)**Ship Qualities:** Clever construction**Cost and Construction Time:** 2,175 gp, 4 months and 2 weeks

Most landlubbers find it odd that an aquatic race such as the sahuagin makes use of ships. Mariners and merchants, however, are all too familiar with the sleek, fast ships these creatures use. Sahuagin deploy their raiding vessels to support attacks on warships, bolster the firepower of parties sent to attack coastal settlements, and transport booty and goods won as a result of their attacks.

Sahuagin raiding ships are small, three-decked craft normally pulled by a small school of sharks. When sharks are unavailable or if the ship is laden with goods, sahuagin warriors man oars mounted on the ship's middle deck. The sahuagin rarely use these craft and most sea devil settlements lack the craftsmanship, resources, and cunning to construct ships. Usually, the appearance of sahuagin craft indicates that a powerful chieftain has arisen amongst these creatures, one who has the political and martial might necessary to gather several settlements of the evil sahuagin under his rule.

Sahuagin also sometimes use captured ships from human, elf, and other fleets. After taking and repairing the ship, sea devil warriors attempt to use it as a decoy. A favorite sahuagin ploy is to set the ship adrift while running a distress signal in the hopes of luring a human vessel into the area. Once the would-be rescuers

draw near, the sahuagin burst from the lower decks and overwhelm their prey.

Sahuagin usually build and store their ships on small, abandoned atolls or islands that they have scoured clear of humanoid life. The sea devils build docks, collect building material, and complete their ships on shore. As most sahuagin loathe leaving the water, this task often falls upon slaves or captured sahuagin warriors from other clans. Guard or overseer duty on these work details draws only sahuagin of the lowest social and military rank, as the sahuagin consider this sort of work to be beneath any proper warrior. When the sahuagin in a region begin to attack shipping and towns en masse, these crude shipyards rank among the first targets for experienced admirals.

While sahuagin hate to leave their watery realm, they recognize the value of their crude ships enough to overcome their racial disdain for those that must use boats and ships to travel the ocean. Their shark allies willingly tow these vessels, a sign to the sahuagin that their vicious deities approve of their use of ships.

Sahuagin deploy three similar ship designs. All use the same basic hull design but each includes a few different pieces of equipment that help it fulfill its role.

The sahuagin corsair is a troop transport and treasure ship. It includes expanded cargo space and usually ferries troops into battle or follows behind an attacking force, ready to carry off treasure, food, and captives. Sahuagin warriors ride the corsair to the site of a raid and then swim beside it on the return trip after filling it with the spoils of war.

The sahuagin raider boosts the sea devil's firepower on the open seas. Mounting a catapult in addition to the twin ballistae found on other sahuagin designs, this ship provides supporting fire against human warships and settlements. The raider usually moves up close to the fighting in the first waves, providing cover for the warriors that ride within and raining fire upon the enemy's fortifications and troops.

The sahuagin crownship serves as a personal chariot for priests, nobles, and other important sahuagin. Similar in design to the raider, it lacks that warship's catapult but is instead pulled by a school of extraordinarily

large sharks, granting it better speed and close-combat abilities than the other sahuagin ship designs.

All sahuagin ships work closely with formations of warriors, usually providing supporting fire or cover against enemy attacks. In the typical large-scale sahuagin attack, the crownships serve as rallying points and command centers. Sahuagin commanders use that design's superior speed to rapidly deliver elite warriors to hard-fought sections of the battle or to move from one area to another, monitoring the sahuagin's progress. Raiders move in close and provide ballista and catapult fire in support of the warriors. These ships also pursue and attack enemy ships, usually in squadrons of three assigned to a single target. One on one, the sahuagin raider is little match for most human warships. The corsairs lurk behind the lines, providing supporting ballista fire; they stand by to ferry troops away in a retreat, move forward to provide extra fire in hotly contested areas, or sweep in after the battle to collect slaves and treasure. Service aboard a ship is usually reserved for disgraced or young sahuagin warriors. While lacking skill, these eager soldiers often burn for a chance to prove their valor, making sahuagin captains tenacious, reckless commanders.

DESIGN

Each of the three sahuagin designs shares the same general layout with only a few minor differences.

1. Top Deck: This raised platform holds a single ballista. Its elevated position provides it with an excellent arc of fire in all directions. Sahuagin lookouts usually man this position. Wooden crenellations ring this deck, giving all Medium-size or smaller creatures that stand here half cover against enemy missile fire.

2. Main Deck: Sahuagin warriors usually mass here during an attack, ready to swarm on to an enemy ship. A crude ladder gives access to area 1, while a portal in the deck fitted with ladders and ropes leads below. All three sahuagin designs have a ballista mounted here.

3. Captain's Cabin: The commander of the ship or any VIPs traveling aboard use this room as personal quarters. A small wooden tub full of seawater allows the captain to relax in comfort. Charts and maps cover the walls,

as the captain usually doubles as a navigator. Most crownships also feature a small shrine to the sahuagin deities here, as many clerics use these vessels when they accompany a sahuagin fleet.

4. Rowing Deck: This small, cramped deck holds benches for the rowers who propel a sahuagin ship in the absence of a shark escort. Aboard the crownship, which lacks oars, this deck serves as living quarters for the priest or noble's personal retinue.

5. Storage Deck: This deck holds supplies and booty taken on raids. Located below the waterline, on the corsair this deck is significantly larger to accommodate extra cargo.

SHIPS IN SERVICE

Disdainful of their ships, sahuagin rarely bother to give them colorful monikers. Usually, a sahuagin admiral uses a simple scheme to name his ships based either on the captains' names or a numbering system. Thus, most ships have simple names such as Trorak's Ship or First Fleet Ship Eight.

VARIANT: SAHUAGIN DEEPSHIP

As a race that dwells beneath the waves, most sahuagin tools and weapons are designed to function underwater. The sahuagin navy is no different. While the three most common designs function only above water, the sea devils do employ some simple submarines. These deepships use the same statistics and plans as the corsair, with a few key differences. Obviously, oars do not function underwater. The rowing deck combines with the storage deck to form one large area. In addition, most sahuagin deepships move the ballista mounted in area 2 to a position beneath the ship, allowing it to fire upon enemies that approach from below.

Deepships transport goods between sahuagin settlements and serve a similar role to the corsair's in attacks on sea elf, locathah, and merfolk settlements. Service aboard a deepship carries no special honor or shame. The sahuagin sometimes use deepships to strike at human shipping, firing the ballistae at enemy ships from below in order to breach their hulls. A human ship under attack in this manner may not realize anything is amiss until well after the ship has begun to take on water.

Deepships are much more common than the surface-going sahuagin ship designs. The design for those three ship types is based on the basic form of the deepship, rather than the other way around.

SALVAGE VESSEL

Huge Ship

Propulsion: 2 large sails

Speed: 50 ft.

Crew: 45

Cargo: 20 tons

Hull

Armor Class: 5

Hardness: 5

Hit Points: 40

Deck

Armor Class: 5

Hardness: 5

Hit Points: 20

Masts

Armor Class: 5

Hardness: 5

Hit Points: 300

Weapons: None

Special: 2 salvage cranes with diving bells

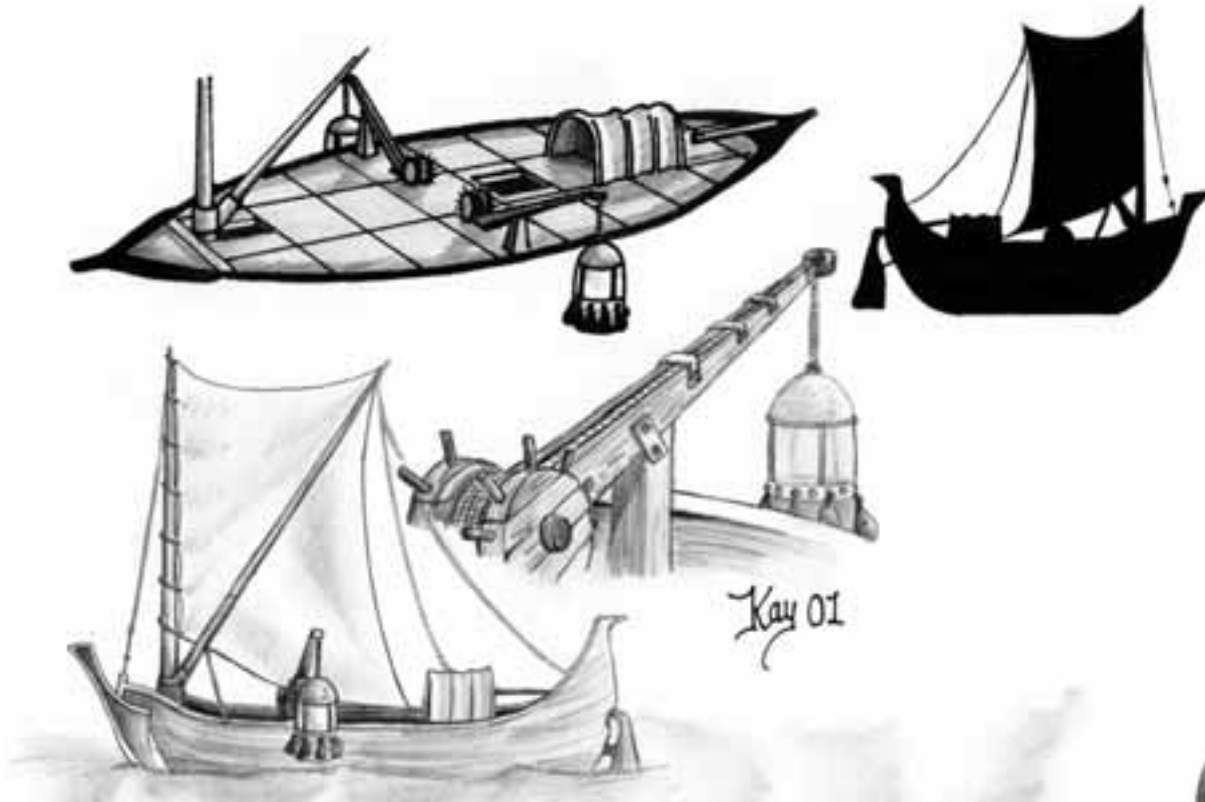
Ship Qualities: Transport

Cost and Construction Time: 6,900 gp and 3 months

Ocean voyages are treacherous, even during the best of times. Sudden storms, vicious beasts, pirates, fires on board—there are a hundred ways that even the sturdiest of vessels can meet its doom on the high seas. While the majority of lost ships may be carrying nothing more valuable than bulk cargo, passengers, troops, or other mundane cargoes, occasionally a ship laden with treasure, tax revenue, magical artifacts, or other desirable goods is lost. These highly sought after cargoes lie useless and out of reach on the floors of oceans and lakes worldwide—except to those who have a salvage vessel.

Salvage vessels are large, wide-hulled, shallow-draft ships designed for stability in a wide range of sea conditions and an ability to operate in shallow waters. Many variations in layout are found around the world, but all typically have hulls constructed from the hardest available woods for durability. Some are even plated in thin sheets of metal to keep them from becoming victims of the jagged reefs that have claimed countless vessels over the ages.

Salvage operations can be carried out in a variety of ways, from free diving in shallow waters to the net dragging of smooth ocean floors.



Larger salvage vessels, however, make use of a new invention—the diving bell. This device, resembling a large barrel or bell, is heavily weighted by cast lead blocks arranged evenly around its open bottom. A heavy-gauge rope connects the bell to a large crane with a winch and pulley system that is operated from the deck of the salvage vessel and can be used to raise the bell from depths of up to 200 feet in less than two minutes.

Crewmen on deck or in rowboats use “looking boxes,” long cylinders or boxes of wood fitted with clear glass bottoms and open tops, to search the seafloor for likely salvage sites. In clear water and good light, these 10 gp boxes will give a good view of the ocean floor up to 200 feet deep. Once a likely site is located, divers seated on benches arranged around the inside of the bell are lowered over the side of the salvage vessel and into the depths to a position just above their target. The crew of the diving bell notifies the deck crew to stop lowering them by tugging on a string attached to a bell on the deck of the ship.

Using belt-mounted weights to secure them to the bottom, brave divers gather as much booty as possible, depending on their fellows who remain in the bell to help them back into the chamber before they run out of air. The length of time that divers can stay on the bottom is limited to the length of time they can hold their breath. The pressure at these depths makes it impossible to draw a breath through a hose, requiring the divers to return to their bell frequently. The bell itself holds enough air to sustain four people for up to 30 minutes. Should the divers require a rapid ascent to the surface, they can pull an emergency release handle that releases the bell’s weights and rope, causing the air pressure to shoot the chamber to the surface in seconds. This is a last resort, as any imbalance in the bell can cause it to tip over, stranding the divers hundreds of feet from the surface.

Another method of salvage is net dragging, in which the salvage ship sails or is rowed across relatively smooth ocean floors dragging a large, heavy net in an effort to snag treasure or other booty from the depths. These nets, costing as much as 50 gp each, represent one of the greatest recurring costs involved in salvage work as they often snag on wrecks, coral outcrops, or other protuberances. An added

bonus of net dragging is the large assortment of fish, turtles, shellfish, and other sea life that it provides for the plates of the hungry crewmen.

A single salvage crane assembly takes up as much deck space as a ballista or large catapult (6 artillery slots), takes an additional week per crane to build, and costs 500 gp. Diving bells cost 350 gp and take a week to build.

SLAVE SHIP

Gargantuan Ship

Propulsion: Large sail, small sail, oars (3 sets)

Speed: 45 ft. (sails), 40 ft. (oars)

Crew: 60

Cargo: 150 tons

Hull

Armor Class: 5

Hardness: 7

Hit Points: 50

Deck

Armor Class: 5

Hardness: 5

Hit Points: 20

Mast (large)

Armor Class: 5

Hardness: 5

Hit Points: 300

Mast (small)

Armor Class: 5

Hardness: 5

Hit Points: 50

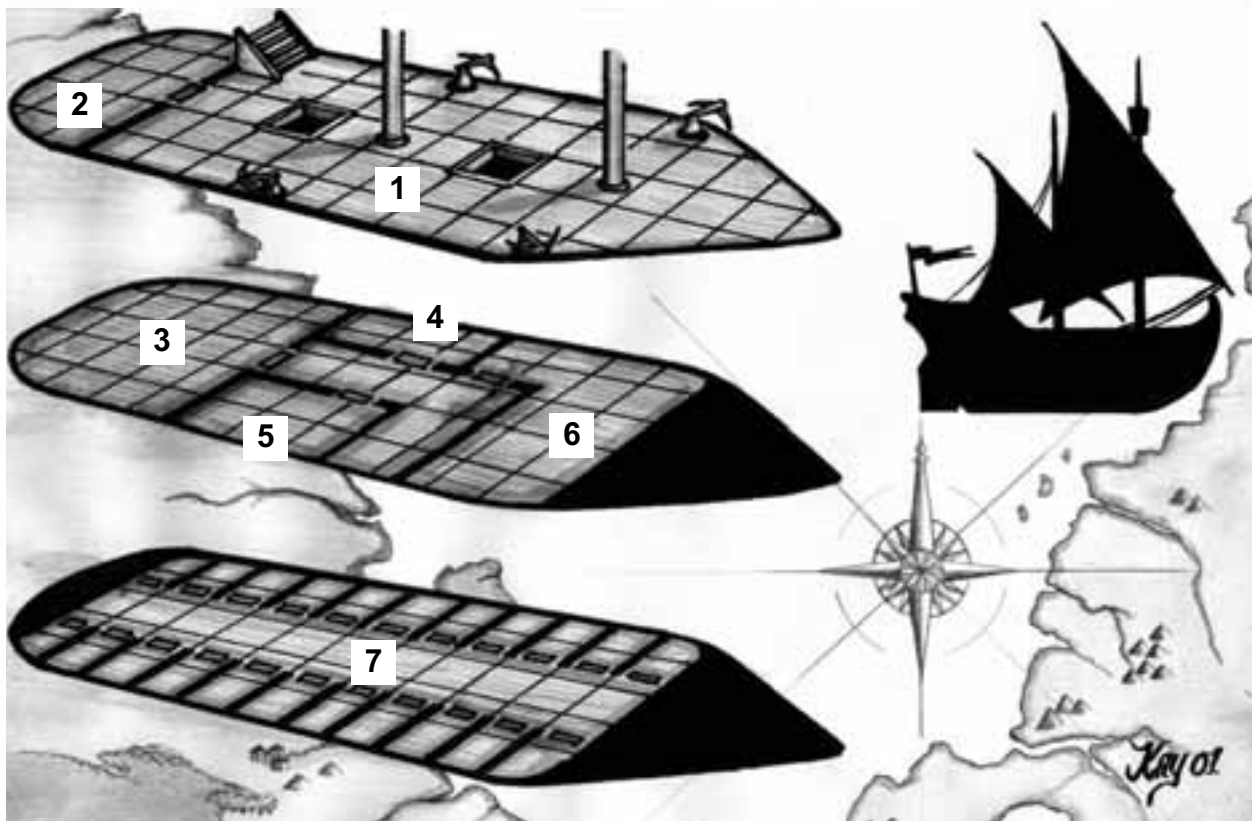
Weapons: Ballista (fore), 2 light catapults (fore, aft), heavy catapult (aft)

Ship Qualities: Tough old girl, wind rider

Cost and Construction Time: 18,285 gp and 8 months, 3 days

Sailing the coastlines as a grim symbol of oppression and evil, slave ships prowl the waterways in search of victims. These ships are designed to serve as both floating fortresses and transport for their cargo of flesh. They offer comfortable cabins, kitchens, and spacious holding areas for their grim cargo. Many slave galleys are constructed or modified with features that make them deceptively fast, allowing for quick escapes and speedy voyages. Slave ships are also usually well equipped for battle, armed with an array of catapults and a deadly ballista.

The sight of a slave ship on the horizon strikes fear into seafarers and residents of coastal villages alike. These vessels and their crews raid



the coastlines, and those captured by press gangs soon find themselves manacled in the darkness of the ship's hold. After a brief voyage, the captives are sold in the slave markets to the highest bidder.

DESIGN

1. Main Deck: For many, the main deck of a slave ship is a brief, terrifying sight as they are dragged to the lower decks, taunted by the malicious crew. In addition to serving as the staging area for combat actions and the operation of the ship, the main deck also serves as living quarters for most of the ship's crew.

When the sails are furled, 10 oars extending from the sides of the main deck can serve as the slave ship's secondary source of propulsion. The ship's weapons are also mounted on the deck. The ship also features an armory where a variety of personal weapons are used by the crew in boarding actions.

2. Captain's Quarters: The flesh trade makes most captains of slave ships wealthy indeed. While most captains invest their profits back into their vessel, their quarters are usually a reflection of their appetite for luxury and fine things. Many will be well stocked with personal collections of antiques, fine weapons, aged

wines, and jewelry kept under lock and key. The door to the captain's quarters is always locked and the captain typically holds the only key on his person.

The cabin is furnished with a fine bed, the walls are adorned with finely crafted tapestries, and thick rugs cover most of the blackwood floor. Along one wall is a small desk covered with documents and nautical maps, as well as ledgers for tracking profits and expenses of the slave operation.

3. Armory: This large room below the main deck is used to house a majority of the slave ship's artillery ammunition, personal weaponry for the crew, and the tools required for ship and artillery maintenance. A large workbench runs along the far wall. An expert crewman typically handles all repairs and supervises routine maintenance efforts.

At any given time there are 20 to 30 personal weapons stored in the armory, ranging from short swords to repeating crossbows. One to 10 of the weapons are masterwork items and one to five of the items are magical. All of the magical weapons are either kept under lock and key or trusted to a select few of the ranking members of the crew.

4. Storage: The slave ship is a coastal vessel, and the storage area for food and other such supplies is not as large as on other vessels of the same size. Typically, there is enough food for the crew to eat regularly for one week. The ship rarely remains at sea this long—usually only when it is avoiding patrols.

5. Water Closet: This water closet is larger than most: It can accommodate up to five occupants at one time. The toilets all line the far wall of the cabin and empty out directly into the ocean, preventing any unpleasant conditions on longer journeys.

6. Kitchen/Dining Area: One of the large areas on the lower decks, this serves as both a kitchen and small mess hall for the crew. The kitchen is modest and the mess hall consists of several tables and benches that can accommodate roughly 30 crewmembers at a time.

7. Holding Area: This is the grizzly hold where the slaves are kept. The entire lower deck is filled with cells that measure roughly 5 by 10 feet. The walls of the cells are wooden, but this is not a concern: This is the lowest deck of the ship and a rupture of the walls would surely flood the entire deck, killing any slaves

trapped in the cells. The front wall is constructed of sturdy iron bars with a single locked door. An Open Locks check (DC 20) is required to pick these locks.

SHIPS IN SERVICE

Slave ships either have dark and grim names or cheerful (and usually ironic) ones chosen to mask their true nature. Examples include *Chained Maiden*, *Flesh Merchant*, *Benefactor*, and *Liberty's Call*.

TRITON CHARIOT

Large Ship

Propulsion: Huge towing harness, oars (3 sets)

Speed: 50 ft. (orca), 45 ft. (oars)

Crew: 6

Cargo: 8 tons*

Hull

Armor Class: 5

Hardness: 5

Hit Points: 45

Deck

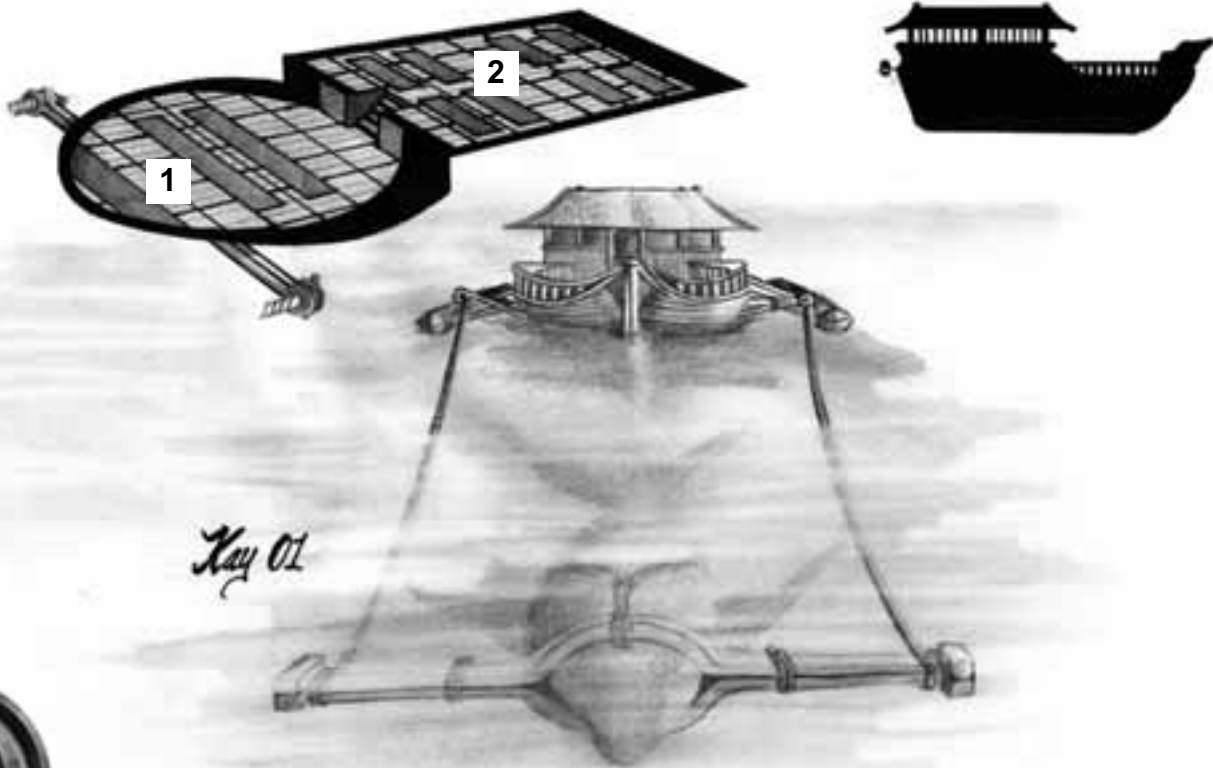
Armor Class: 5

Hardness: 5

Hit Points: 20

Towing Harness

Armor Class: 16 (orca's AC)



Hardness: 2
Hit Points: 30

Weapons: 4 heavy crossbows (fore, aft, port, starboard)

Ship Qualities: Built to last

Cost and Construction Time: 1,175 gp, and 3 months, 2 weeks

Constructed by the mysterious tritons, these chariots of the waves are used to carry troops and supplies across the waters. Rather than using the power of the wind, triton chariots are towed by large aquatic creatures, such as whales.

In the proud triton tradition, most chariots are decorated with tribal markings of heroism and glory, each giving thanks to the gods of the ocean. Coral and kelp materials are commonplace in the construction process, making the chariot perfect for aquatic travel. Though an effective method of travel, most chariots are not equipped for long trips overseas, but rather are limited to short journeys.

One of the more interesting features of the chariot is the large towing harness that provides the primary source of propulsion for the chariot. A triton harness is typically constructed of corals and thick kelp roping, allowing it to withstand the strength of the great beast that bears it.

One advantage of the harness is that it allows tritons to effectively use their *summon nature's ally* ability. If a triton crew should ever need to unharness the creature, the whale can easily be dismissed and more easily harnessed when summoned again.

In the event of the towing creature's death or release, most chariots are still capable of utilizing five oars that extend from the open area of the front of the platform. These oars provide a secondary speed of 40 feet.

DESIGN

1. Chariot Platform: The nerve center of the chariot, this area is used by the chariot commanders. With humble decoration and sparse cover (half of the platform), this is where the chariot commander navigates, handles the towing creature, and keeps a watchful eye out for any hazards. Small tables and chairs are placed under the covered section, where nautical maps and other such materials can be more effective-

ly used. Toward the front of the platform, a single elevated chair allows the commander to comfortably take the reins to guide the towing creature.

Two heavy crossbows are mounted on the platform for easy access in the event of attack from the front or beams of the chariot. In addition, armor plating aids in defense against hostile forces or harsh weather conditions.

Most platforms measure from 20 to 25 feet in width and 30 feet in length, connecting directly to the passenger/cargo area of the chariot.

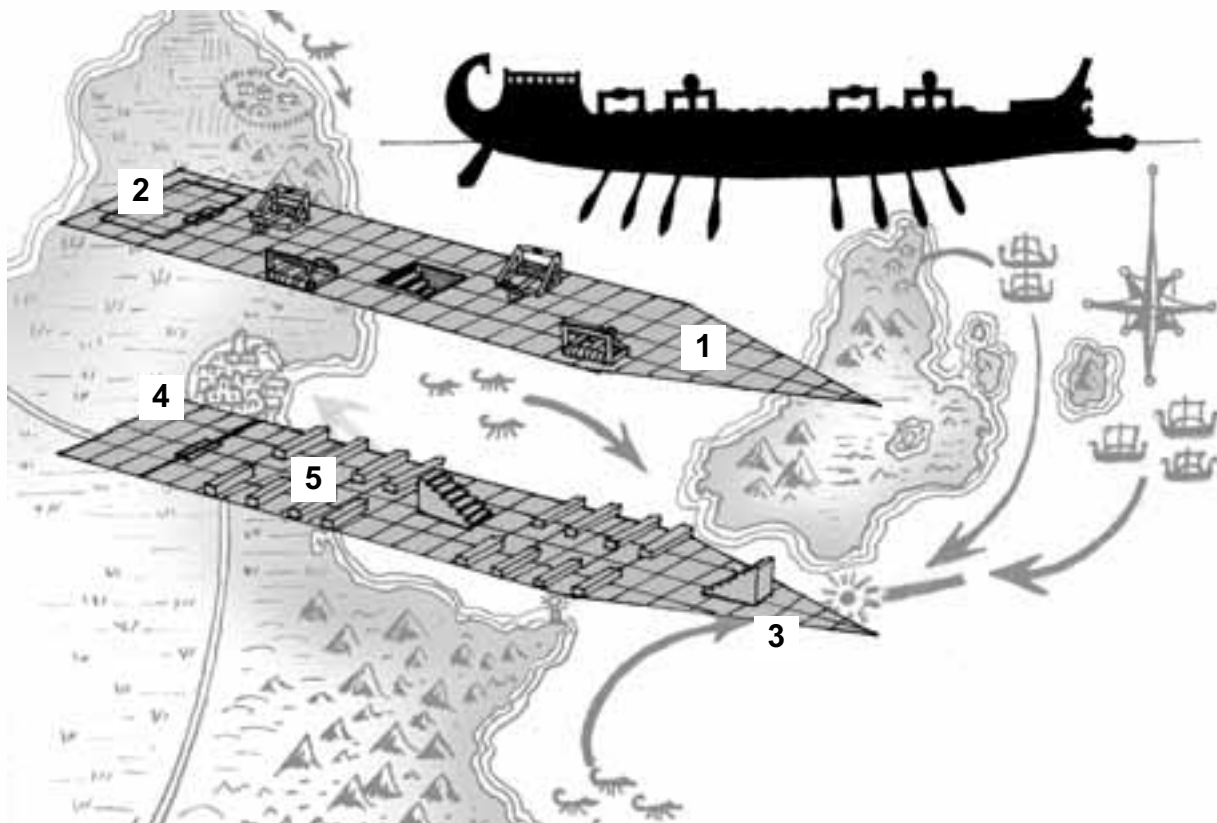
2. Passenger Area: Measuring 25 feet in width and 35 feet in length, this larger area is typically used for passengers and cargo. In many designs, this section houses troops or extra weapons and supplies to be delivered in times of war. The passenger area is capable of supporting eight tons of cargo or passengers comfortably, with thick kelp banding used to secure the cargo. Two heavy crossbows are mounted onto small openings in the port and starboard sides of the chariot's stern.

If necessary, a chariot can travel both on the surface and underwater. A commander simply allows the towing creature to pull the chariot under the surface. While underwater, a chariot moves at half its normal speed. The chariot cannot use its oars underwater—the towing creature is the sole means of propulsion. If the creature is slain or released, the chariot floats to the surface unless prevented from doing so.

Tritons are perfectly capable of surviving indefinitely under the surface, but other non-aquatic races need to take precautions for undersea travel through the use of magic items, spells, or potions. Additionally, any cargo onboard needs to be tied down and properly sealed to protect against water damage.

* Orcas are typically used to pull chariots. It is possible to use other sea creatures, either natural or magical, as long as the creature can be trained or persuaded to pull a chariot safely.

** Triton chariots are large enough to carry eight tons of cargo, but they can only do so if the oars are deployed to assist the draft beast. As a result, the chariot cannot travel underwater while carrying a significant amount of cargo.



WAR GALLEY

Colossal Ship

Propulsion: Oars (8 sets)

Speed: 90 ft. (oars)

Crew: 200

Cargo: 200 tons

Hull

Armor Class: 5

Hardness: 5

Hit Points: 90

Deck

Armor Class: 5

Hardness: 5

Hit Points: 20

Weapons: 4 heavy catapults (fore, aft, port, starboard), ram (fore)

Ship Qualities: Bull of the sea

Cost and Construction Time: 21,720 gp, 10 months and 1 week

A war galley relies on dozens of oars for propulsion and a massive ram as its primary weapon. War galleys use their great speed to rapidly close with the enemy and deliver a devastating blow with their rams. Typically, this type of ship never ventures far from shore, instead hugging the coastline as it travels and stopping at coastal settlements for the night.

Galleys fulfill several roles in areas where sailing ships are rare or unsuitable to the local seas. In comparison to a sailing ship, a galley requires a much larger crew to man its oars, creating much higher overhead in the form of salaries for a galley's captain. Thus, most merchants prefer to move their goods via other methods. In combat, the galley relies on speed to close with the enemy. However, its reliance on rowers makes it difficult for the galley to maintain a high rate of speed for long. In addition, the galley's large crew also makes it less suitable for military use than other ship designs.

Galleys flourish in regions of shallow water and little wind. While sailing ships generally outperform galleys, the galley's rowers ensure that it can always move under power. The galley's large crew also makes it well suited to fend off pirate attacks and threats.

In combat, galleys bear down upon the enemy with their rams. Most galleys batter other ships into tinder, slamming into them with the full force provided by their rowers. Others collide with enemy ships in hopes of storming and seizing them, bringing to bear the galley's contingent of archers and marines to overwhelm the enemy. The galley's major vulnerability is

its oars. During a ram attack, a galley that misses its mark may sometimes end up shearing off its oars on the enemy ship as it sweeps past it. A galley without oars is a sitting duck deprived of its main weapon.

Galleys used for trade have a cramped storage space tucked beneath the rower's deck to hold goods. As mentioned above, galleys fare poorly as traders in comparison to sailing ships. The typical galley crewmember is a highly trained, well-paid professional sailor. Some fleets utilize slaves as rowers in an effort to cut costs, but usually at least one rower on each bench of oarsmen must be a trained professional capable of coordinating his row's efforts. In order to maneuver effectively the galley's rowers must time their strokes perfectly, requiring precision and skill beyond most slave labor. Furthermore, using slaves in place of regular rowers undercuts one of the galley's advantages—its large, battle-ready crew.

The galley's basic design is simple enough that most races capable of putting ships to sea could design their own version. Races that do not take readily to the sea might make extensive use of galleys, particularly those that do not travel far from shore. Dwarves and orcs prefer galleys because of their inexperience with sailing. Orcs in particular make extensive use of galleys, as they prefer to bring their superior strength and skill in melee to bear against their foes. Orc war galleys employ wild charges against the enemy, seeking to grapple and board. During these attacks, even the rowers abandon their stations in order to take up arms against the enemy.

DESIGN

1. Deck: This upper deck serves as the galley's primary combat platform. The catapults mounted here rain fire upon enemy ships as the galley closes to ramming distance. Marines and archers stand by to launch an assault should the galley grapple or ram an enemy vessel. Trading galleys usually have decks crowded with crates, boxes, barrels, and other supplies. On some ships, the cook sets up shop on the top deck and prepares meals here. Sometimes, if a voyage is long enough, livestock including cattle and chickens are kept here until they are slaughtered for their meat.

2. Officer's Quarters: This room serves as the captain's office and living space or, if the gal-

ley serves as transport for a VIP, houses any important persons. A church official, noble, or other figure might employ a galley as his personal transportation. The galley's large crew serves both to manage the galley and to protect their human cargo. In addition, since galleys stay close to shore they usually are not far from a settlement they can flee to in the face of a determined enemy attack.

3. Foredeck: This area usually holds a drummer who keeps the beat for the oarsmen. His steady, slow rhythm helps keep the individual rowing benches in time with one another, allowing the galley to make steady progress.

4. Cabin: This secondary room serves as a chamber for those who can afford to pay more than passengers consigned to the hold at area 6. In addition, VIPs not normally attached to the galley are often quartered here.

5. Rowing Deck: This crowded, hot, and cramped area holds the many rows of oarsmen that power the galley. Each bench holds two or three rowers, each of whom pulls a separate oar mounted in ports or on an outrigger built into the galley's hull. On some ships, all the rowers on a given bench work the same oar. Usually, the oarsmen sit along benches while working, but in others the rowers stand up in order to gain the proper downward angle necessary to work the oars. Usually, these oarsmen stand, push off their left legs, and drop back into a sitting position with each stroke.

Some galleys dispense with the upper deck and keep their rowers on the top deck, exposed to the elements. These galleys are not normally used in battle, as the rowers are far too exposed to enemy missiles, but many merchant galleys use this design. Conditions aboard these ships are miserable for passengers and crew, as supplies, officers, and rowers are all crowded together on a single deck. On these ships the captain's quarters are often no more than a wooden shack or hut erected on the deck.

6. Hold: This long, low chamber serves as the primary storage space for cargo. While the ceiling here is barely three feet high, those who purchase passage on a galley are usually squeezed into the hold. For obvious reasons, travel by galley is usually reserved for those too desperate or poor to seek out other options. Some galleys allow passengers

to walk along the deck, but they typically just get in the crew's way.

SHIPS IN SERVICE

Galleys usually have names reflective of their speed and might in combat. Trading galleys have titles similar to those used with other ships, such as cogs. Examples include *Sea Charger*, *Swift Eagle*, *Thunderbolt*, *Trident*, *Wave Cleaver* (Orc) *Bone Cracker*, *Eye Gouger*, *Head Smasher*, *Toothpuller*, *Warmaster*

THE FANTASY WAR GALLEY

The galley presented here is based on historical designs. In a fantasy world, magic can augment the galley's capabilities and allow it to compete on a much more level playing field against sailing ships. The following example galley depicts how an orc horde may modify the basic galley design presented previously.

Orc galleys are crude ships built for toughness and endurance. Though often unable to weather even the lightest storms, orc war galleys make for tough bulls of the sea, hammering other ships and disgorging waves of blood-thirsty orc warriors. Some orc galleys utilize slaves, though generally these ships do not participate in combat. While orcs are lazy, they are smart enough to realize that an unmotivated, poorly trained crew of rowers seriously hinders a galley's combat capabilities.

Orc bards serve as drummers aboard an orc galley, using their special bardic music abilities to draw a better effort out of the oarsmen. A bard may use *Inspire Confidence* to grant the galley a bonus of 10 feet to its speed as long as he performs for the rowers.

Unlike standard galleys, the orcish version uses ballistae rather than catapults as its primary heavy weapons. As the orcs prefer to fight at close range, they usually find ballistae more useful in combat than catapults, which are only effective at long range. When the orc galley is attacking sailing ships, the ballistae are effective weapons against their sails.

The orcs employ a unique ram design that allows them to more easily board enemy ships. The deck around the ram is covered with a reinforced wooden roof, granting protection to the orcs who stand beneath it. Once the orc

ship rams an enemy vessel, the orc marines can swarm down the ram and on to the enemy ship without taking heavy missile fire.

ORC WAR GALLEY

Gargantuan Ship

Propulsion: Oars (7 sets)

Speed: 80 ft. (oars)

Crew: 100

Cargo: 150 tons

Hull

Armor Class: 5

Hardness: 5

Hit Points: 80

Deck

Armor Class: 5

Hardness: 5

Hit Points: 20

Weapons: 2 ballistae, ram

Ship Qualities: Bull of the sea

Cost and Construction Time: 14,315 gp, and 6 months, 3 weeks

WARSHIP

Colossal Ship

Propulsion: 2 large sails, 2 small sails

Speed: 40 ft.

Crew: 200

Cargo: 200 tons

Hull

Armor Class: 5

Hardness: 5

Hit Points: 90

Deck

Armor Class: 5

Hardness: 5

Hit Points: 20

Masts (large)

Armor Class: 5

Hardness: 5

Hit Points: 300

Castles

Armor Class: 5

Hardness: 5

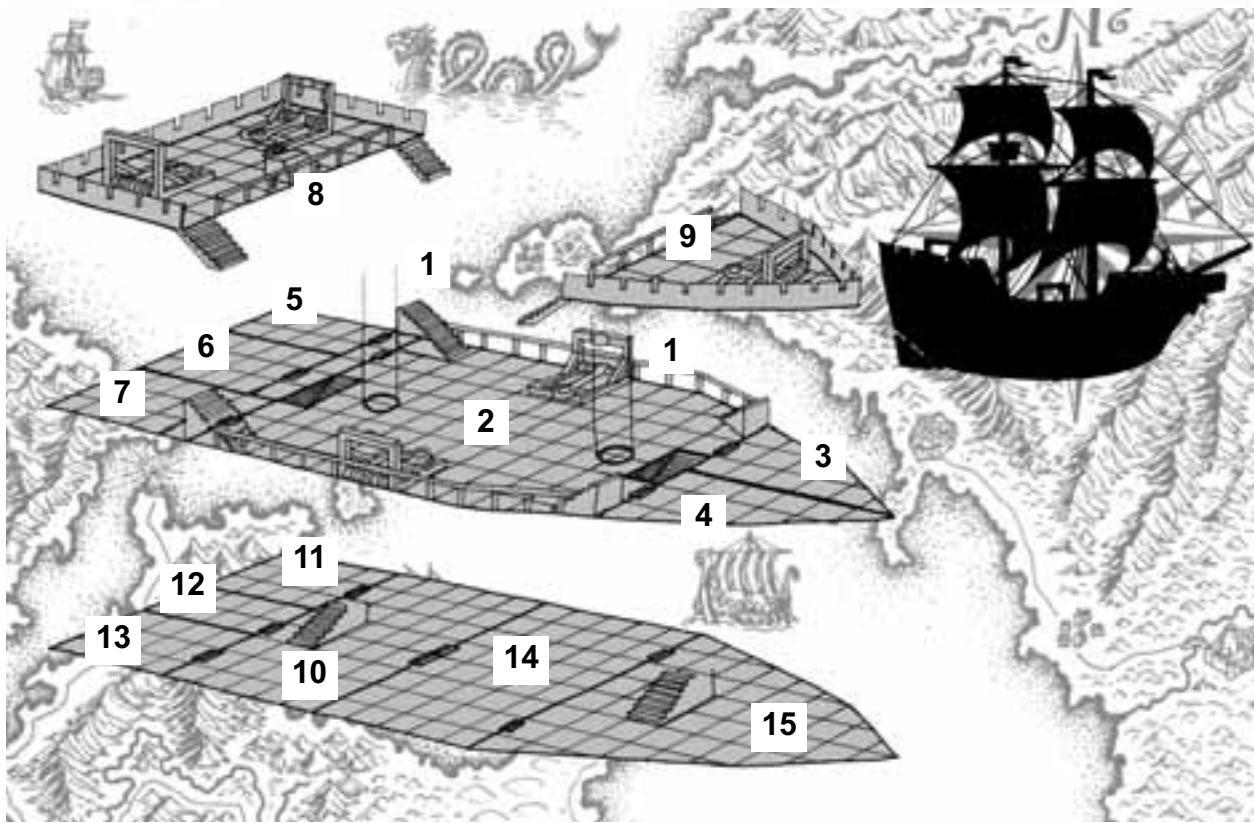
Hit Points: 90

Weapons: 2 heavy catapults (fore, aft), 3 light catapults (fore, port, starboard)

Ship Qualities: Reinforced sails, wave rider

Cost and Construction Time: 26,500 gp, and 8 months, 1 week

Built specifically for fighting, the warship bristles with weapons and armor. A heavily modified version of the cog, the warship incorporates that design's sterncastle and forecastle,



but rather than archers and marines the warship relies on five catapults, three light and two heavy, to batter enemy ships into submission. Warships are built and designed for combat. Unlike other ship designs that usually serve several roles, the warship rarely sees service outside of the military. While it may be pressed into other roles, such as transporting troops or cargo, warships are usually too expensive and too important to divert to other uses.

While a warship relies on its catapults, it also carries a large contingent of marines. Creatures such as krakens, giant octopi, and sahuagin raiders can quickly close on a warship, rendering its catapults useless. However, against other vessels the warship tries to keep its foe at long range, using its speed and ranged weapons to knock out an enemy ship. In areas where warships see heavy service, longships, cogs, and similar designs are rarely used in combat.

As its name implies, the warship's primary duties are to defend fleets of traders and transports, deal with pirates and other oceanic threats, and hunt down enemy shipping. Among pirates, a warship serves as an ideal vessel because its weapons outclass any merchant ship and its size allows for the storage of treasure, booty, and other spoils. Usually, war-

ships carry enough food and water to survive for extended periods at sea. Unlike galleys and other less seaworthy vessels, a warship can voyage far from shore. Its design allows it to cover a wide area of the sea, making it effective against not only shore-based pirates and raiders but also against oceanic humanoids such as sahuagin or merfolk, sea monsters, and other threats from the deep.

Most races that have extensive maritime dealings employ warships. Those humanoids that lack the technical know how to construct them usually attempt to seize warships for their own use. However, the complicated rigging and sails used by the warship often baffle ogres, orcs, and other races that lack a strong engineering or technical tradition. It isn't uncommon to see an orc warship moving with its masts bare or hewn off and crude holes punched high in its hull for oars.

DESIGN

1. Crow's Nest: Perched atop the warship's main mast, this small platform serves as an observation post while the warship sails the open seas. Normally, a sharp-eyed, experienced sailor keeps watch from here, looking for signs of sea monsters, enemy ships, or other potential threats. During

battle, a crossbowman usually snipes at the enemy from this position.

2. Main Deck: Two massive, heavy catapults dominate this area. Outside of combat, sailors swarm over this area, looking after the rigging, adjusting sails to the captain's specifications or in response to the changing wind conditions. The catapults normally are kept unprepared for combat, as their ammunition could easily interfere with the crew's activities when the warship hits rough seas.

3. Forward Cabin: This room serves as quarters for any VIPs or officers who travel with the warship. If no such guest is aboard ship, the junior officers share it as a sleeping area. Normally, this room is outfitted with a single large, comfortable bed, desk, and dresser. If this room is outfitted for the officers, it features several bunks or hammocks. While cramped, this area is luxurious compared to the general quarters below deck.

4. Storage Area: This chamber holds rope, spare sails, and other important supplies necessary to keep the warship under sail. As the warship has no other means of propulsion, any supplies needed to keep the rigging in good order are always kept close at hand.

5. Wizard's Quarters: This small but comfortable room is normally reserved for the ship's wizard. In combat, the wizard provides extra firepower and useful spells such as *levitate* or *invisibility* to support the marines and catapult crews. Outside of combat, the wizard's magic takes on more practical roles, such as using *mend* to repair sails or rope. As wizards require plenty of rest to maintain their craft, they generally receive their own berth.

6. Captain's Quarters: This well-appointed room serves as the captain's personal domain. Normally, this room serves as both living and dining space for the captain. In addition, the captain often meets with his officers here to discuss orders or plan an attack.

7. Weapon Storage: This chamber holds ammunition for the ship's catapults, armor, shields, longspears, crossbows, cutlasses, and other weapons. During an attack, the off-duty marines rush here to ready their weapons while sailors stand ready to ensure a steady supply of ammunition from this area to the cata-

pults. If sahuagin or other aquatic creatures launch a surprise attack against the ship, this area often serves as a rallying point for the crew as both sailors and marines rush to retrieve weapons to repel the boarders.

8. Sterncastle: This raised deck serves as the ship's command center during most actions. The pilot guides the ship from a large wheel here, while the captain looks over and directs the crew working above deck. The two light catapults mounted here supplement the heavy catapults located on the deck. During a close ship-to-ship action, crossbow-armed marines stationed here snipe at the enemy crew.

9. Forecastle: Smaller than the sterncastle, this area holds a forward mounted light catapult that covers the warship's forward arc. This deck normally swarms with marines during an attack, as it is open enough to allow archers plenty of clear firing lines on enemy ships.

10. Hold: This area serves as a mess hall and meeting area for the crew. Long wooden tables and benches bolted to the floor provide seating for the crewmembers. A separate table serves the officers, wizards, clerics, and other elite members of the warship's complement.

11. Galley: The ship's cook or steward prepares meals here. A small stove, pots, pans, and other cooking utensils crowd this place.

12. Storage: This normally locked room contains important gear and items normally kept off-limits to the rank and file crew, such as the warship's supply of rum.

13. Officer's Quarters: The ship's senior officers use this room as their quarters. While much more comfortable than the crew's quarters, this room is still rather cramped and stuffy. Several bunk beds line the room, while a small table and several chairs are set in the center.

14. Crew Quarters: This large chamber serves as the living space for the enlisted sailors and marines assigned to a warship. Hammocks dangle from the ceiling here while sea chests and other personal effects are arranged on the floor.

15. Storage Hold: This large, forward chamber serves as the primary storage space for the warship. Crates of hardtack, barrels of water, and boxes of general supplies fill this area.

SHIPS IN SERVICE

As warships are usually too expensive to construct and crew for anything short of a country to field them in large numbers, most warships are given names according to a particular nation's customs. Some countries turn to their history for ship names, christening them in honor of national heroes, deities, or other important figures. Some vain monarchs bestow their own name to particularly impressive or expensive ships. Generally speaking, nations make an effort to use at least some sort of naming scheme in order to make their warships easily distinguishable from merchant shipping or independent vessels. Examples include: *Avenger*, *Indomitable*, *Pursuer*, *Royal Savage*, *Sea Dragon*, *Sea Flame*, *Warspite*

VARIANT: WIZARD'S WARSHIP

This version of the warship is designed specifically to support a contingent of wizards or sorcerers. It uses the same deck design as the standard warship, but it converts areas 3, 4, and 13 to extra lodging for the spellcasters aboard the ship. Furthermore, the crow's nests atop each mast are expanded and armored, giving spellcasters an excellent perch to pour spells and enchantments down upon enemy ships. Ballistae replace the standard warship's catapults, as the wizards aboard this ship provide it with long range firepower and often order the ship to close with the enemy in order to use their spells to better effect. As ballistae lack a minimum range, they are much better suited to a close assault role.

The wizard's warship incorporates a magical hull into the basic design that counts as *+1 spell resistance (15)* armor. As a fleet's wizards often attract the enemy's own magical resources, the reinforced hull often marks the difference between victory and defeat. In addition, should the situation aboard a wizard's warship grow dire, the spellcasters aboard the ship can unleash spells such as *fireball* and *lightning bolt* within the ship in hopes that the magic destroys the enemy but leaves the vessel unharmed.

VARIANT: HOLY WARSHIP

This variation on the warship's basic design serves clerics, paladins, and other holy travelers. Equipped with an altar dedicated to the ship's patron god, holy warships often sail on

crusades or expeditions in the name of a church or other religious organization. Pirates who operate under the blessing of a dark deity often use this ship design to prowl the shipping lanes, extracting tribute from hapless merchants and striking out at heretic vessels. Holy wars on the water often involve the clash of entire fleets dedicated to one god or the other. In these struggles, this version of the warship is a common combatant.

Holy warships dedicated to beneficial gods often seek out and destroy ghosts ships and other undead or demonic threats to shipping. With their special armament and defenses, these ships make excellent tools for destroying the fell powers on the high seas.

The holy warship uses the same deck plans as the standard warship. Its equipment is slightly different, with the forecastle-mounted light catapult replaced with a *+3 holy ballista* and the heavy catapults replaced with light ones. This weapon serves as the primary tool against demons, devils, and undead. A wooden platform built beneath this ballista allows it to rotate in a 360° arc of fire.

Holy warships are often bestowed with a *hallow* spell, granting all areas of the ship the benefits provided by that spell. In addition, most churches include a secondary *bless* or *aid* effect with the *hallow* spell.

Holy warships produced by evil churches use *unholy* rather than *holy* weapons and use a *bane* effect in place of *bless*.

VARIANT: ELF WARSHIP

Elven warships place a premium on speed and close ranged hitting power to overcome their foes. While the sails on an elf ship are light and easier to destroy than the thick, heavy ones found on most other warships, the clever elf mariners are experts at rigging their ships for maximum speed. The elf warship can easily sail circles around most other designs, raking its foes with catapult and ballistae fire while dancing away before the enemy can muster a counter-volley.

Elves make two common modifications to the typical warship design. They change the armaments to better fit their fighting style, removing the two heavy catapults, shifting the sterncastle light catapults down

to the main deck, and installing two ballistae where the light catapults once stood. The fore-castle's light catapult remains in place. More importantly, the elven warship has the Wind Rider ship quality rather than Reinforced Sails. While the elven ships are easier to cripple, their swift speed makes it difficult for most enemy vessels to hit them.

VARIANT: DWARF WARSHIP

While the dwarves rarely take to sea travel, those that do rely on heavily armed and armored warships to protect their gold- and mithral-laden traders. Dwarf battleships use four heavy catapults to deliver a devastating volley of fire to enemy ships. Once the enemy closes, the dwarves rely on their tough, heavily armored marines to repel boarders or claim enemy ships.

The dwarf warship uses the same basic design presented above. However, it lacks the fore-castle-mounted light catapult and replaces the catapults mounted on the sterncastle with heavy versions.

VARIANT: ORC WARSHIP

Clumsily chopping through the waves, the orc warship is a lumbering, relentless combatant. Orcs lack the shipbuilding skills necessary to construct warships. In particular, the complex rigging and sail structure necessary to give the warship its speed lies quite beyond the grasp of most orc artisans. Thus, when orcs use warships they often employ captured or stolen vessels that have been modified for their uses. The first order of business for any self-respecting orc captain is to chop down the warship's masts, bore holes in the hull, and install rowing benches and oars. To many orcs, relying on the wind rather than strong arms, a stout back, and heavy oars is cowardly and a sign of supreme weakness. Furthermore, most orc captains prefer to close with and board their targets, primarily merchant vessels. Thus, the orc warship carries a slightly different arsenal. Orc captains remove the fore-castle's catapult and one of the catapults mounted on the sterncastle. In their place, orc engineers mount a massive, iron-headed ram on the warship. Finally, the orcs hammer additional armor plating to the hull, slowing down the warship but slightly boosting its protection.

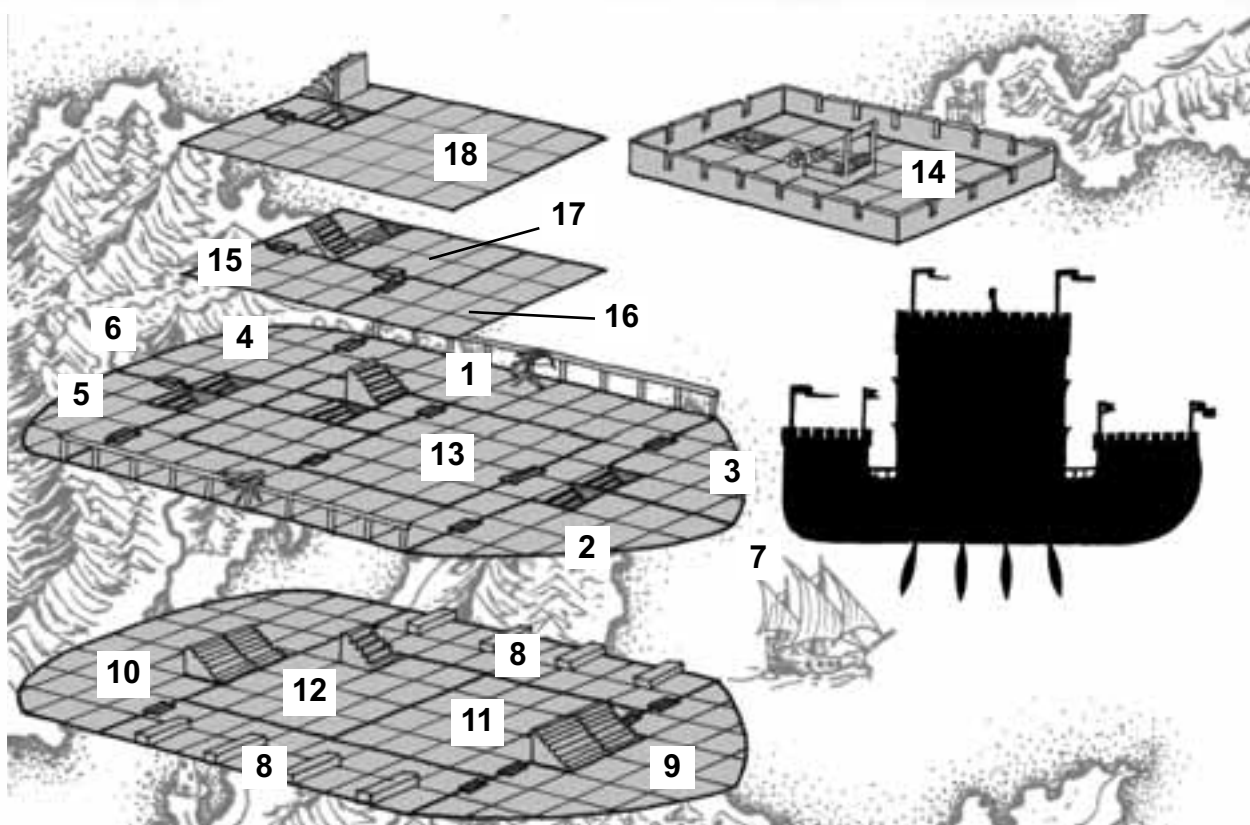
Orcs prefer to soften up a target with the catapults before closing in for the kill with the ram. Against faster ships, they use their artillery to hammer their target's sails or oars, hoping to cripple it before closing in for a ramming attack.

Orc warships use the same deckplans outlined above with a few modifications. First, area 14 is converted into a rowing deck with long, wooden benches installed for the orcs or slaves who work the oars. The captain simply takes whatever room strikes his fancy, usually one below deck in order to shield him from the sun. The crew sleeps in areas 10, 11, 12, and 13, with sailors, officers, and marines sprawled across the floor. Obviously, without masts the orc warship lacks the crow's nests found on other versions.

VARIANT: GNOME WARSHIP

As an inventive, curious race, gnomes can't help but make improvements to ship designs they inherit or adopt from other races. Most gnome captains immediately replace the catapults aboard a warship with cannons or other superior weaponry. Gnomes also use their small size to make their warships much more comfortable, placing wooden platforms in the living areas aboard ships to double the floor space available. Thus, gnome warships can carry more marines, helping compensate for the gnome warriors' small size and lower strength.

The gnome warship removes all five catapults aboard the standard designs and mounts in their place two cannons on the sterncastle and a single, forward-mounted cannon on the fore-castle. In addition, raised platforms installed in areas 13 and 14 double the floor space available there, allowing the gnome warship to carry a crew 25% larger than that found on other ships. These extra crewmen are often marines charged with aiding in launching and repulsing boarding actions.



WIZARD'S TOWERSHIP

Huge Ship

Propulsion: Oars (6 sets)

Speed: 60 ft. (oars)

Crew: 45

Cargo: 20 tons

Hull

Armor Class: 5

Hardness: 10

Hit Points: 60

Deck

Armor Class: 5

Hardness: 5

Hit Points: 20

Weapons: 2 ballistae (fore, aft), heavy catapult (fore)

Ship Qualities: Spell resistance, transport, wave rider

Cost and Construction Time: 36,510 gp, and 5 months, 1 week, 2 days

Special: A towership's hull is enchanted to resist hostile magic. The ship has SR 15 against all spells directed against it. Dropping this feature reduces the towership's price to 27,510 gp, reduces its construction time by one week and two days, and eliminates its spell resistance. The cost of the ship includes the alchemist's lab installed in the tower.

Towerships give a mage who wishes peace and solitude an easy escape from the demands of civilization. The sea presents a formidable obstacle to wisdom seekers, adventurers, rivals, and others who might seek out a wizard and interrupt his studies or experiments. Other wizards, particularly those fascinated by exotic cultures and travel, use towerships as mobile headquarters that give them a secure, familiar environment while still allowing them to explore foreign lands and seek out hidden or lost knowledge.

A tower ship is a squat barge with a wooden tower built into its structure. The tower serves as the wizard's abode, giving him a cramped but manageable space to conduct his work. The towership is designed to move along coastal waters, though if the situation demands travel across the open sea, the ship includes a large harness usable with a large sea creature or water elemental. Towerships owned by a good wizard might gleam in the sunlight or in the glow of eye-catching illusions. One under the command of a necromancer might boast hideous, twisted sculptures of leering gargoyles and howling demons. Most towerships openly announce their masters' intentions and outlook.

The towership serves as a mobile base and laboratory for a wizard, sage, and even occasionally a cleric. Its steel construction not only absorbs punishment from attackers but also contains the dangerous experiments carried out by wizards. Originally designed by a dwarf shipwright as payment to a sea elf wizard who had rendered him a critical service, the towership soon caught the attention of a few wizards who concentrated on sea magic and the study of the ocean depths. A few royal navies, especially those that rely on magicians to support their squadrons, use towerships as battle platforms for cadres of wizards and as payment to lure mercenary spellcasters into their service. The towership's central structure gives a wizard an excellent vantage point of enemy ships, allowing him to rain spells down on ships and to catch view of the opposition from a comfortable, stable platform.

Few pirates bother raiding towerships, as their expense dictates that only the most accomplished mages own and operate them. Still, towerships are often floating treasure troves of magic and gold, promising a satisfying payoff for those corsairs brave and skilled enough to pillage one.

Clumsy, slow, and specialized in design, few others besides wizards employ the towership. Some clever merchants make use of the design in hopes that the mere presence of a ship reputed to host a mighty spellcaster will deter pirates. Some rich nobles use towerships, attracted to the design by the privacy, comfort, and living space it offers. In general, though, most serious sea captains and traders avoid this design. As a slow, expensive craft it fulfills a specific niche and little else. Some wizards even prefer regular ships refitted to meet their needs.

DESIGN

The towership can be broken down into two separate parts. The central tower serves as the wizard's quarters and work area. Most wizards spend the vast majority of their time here, engrossed in study or plotting their travels. The rest of the ship is given over to the crew. Good wizards typically employ trusted, experienced sailors and often augment the crew with summoned planar creatures, golems, or apprentice wizards. Evil wizards often use magic to *charm* or otherwise force sailors into service. A few towerships commanded by

necromancers boast undead crews, while others are staffed by minor demons or devils compelled to serve the towership's commanding mage.

1. Deck: The upper deck hosts a pair of ballistae, one mounted to the starboard and the other to port. Some wizards install ladders on the sides of their tower, allowing the crew access to the tower roof from here.

2. Captain's Quarters: While the wizard is the commander of the ship, most mages hire on a professional sea captain to oversee and direct the crew. This room serves as the captain's sleeping quarters, office, and personal dining room.

3. Storage: This storage area holds rope, tools, and other supplies commonly needed on deck.

4. Storage: The aft storage area serves as a larder. Foodstuff, rum, and spices are kept here, giving easy access to these supplies for those working in the galley.

5. Galley: The ship's cook works here, preparing meals for the crew and the wizard. A small stove stands here, as do cabinets for cooking gear and expensive spices too valuable to keep in the general larder.

6. Aft Deck: This raised area hosts the ship's wheel. During the day, the captain spends most of his time here. While the tower obstructs the helmsman's view, the towership includes hollow tubes that allow the captain to issue orders to the rowers and receive reports from the fore deck.

7. Fore Deck: The raised deck here includes a lookout point and observation area.

8. Rowers: Low, flat benches line this room. The oarsmen who provide the towership's power work here. Under a good wizard, this room is cramped, hot, but staffed with well-paid, professional sailors. Evil wizards often use orcs, goblins, or slaves to man the oars.

9. Storage: Any items meant for long-term storage or supplies too bulky to keep in the smaller storage areas above are stored here. Water barrels, crates of crossbow bolts, ballista ammunition, weapons, armor, and other important but rarely used gear fills this area.

10. Crew Quarters: Hammocks dangle from the ceiling here, while tables, chairs, and other comforts crowd the floor. The crew both sleeps and takes meals here. If slaves or humanoids man the towership, they often sleep at their places by the oars while overseers or slavemasters sleep here.

11. Hold: Most towerships engage in limited trade at best, with most wizards viewing it as little more than a side diversion to help fund their travels. This area often serves as extra storage space, particularly on longer voyages.

12. Wizard's Hold: This room, sealed off from the rest of the below decks area, serves as the wizard's personal storage area. Wizards who engage in the trade of magical weapons, armor, and other items often store their goods here.

13. Dining Room: This small room holds a dining table and chairs. The wizard usually takes his meals here. Depending on his attitude toward the sailors who crew his ship, the wizard may often dine with the captain and other officers.

14. Guest Cabin: The wizard's apprentice, personal servant, or guest uses this smaller cabin.

15. Sitting Room: This chamber is often carpeted and furnished with a few comfortable, plush chairs and a small table. The wizard spends his free time here, either with the captain, guests, or his apprentices.

16. Master Cabin: This large, well-appointed chamber serves as the wizard's private bedroom and study. The north end of the room usually has a desk and small bookcase, while a large bed, armoire, and dresser occupies the lower end.

17. Apprentice's Cabin: If the wizard has an apprentice or two aboard ship, this room serves as a miniature dormitory. Otherwise, most wizards use this area as an extension to room 16. In some designs, this chamber combines with that area to form a single, large room.

18. Laboratory: This area serves as the wizard's primary workspace. It includes the tools and chemicals that comprise an alchemist's lab, several workbenches, bookcases, and usually a clear central area to allow for summonings and

other magical experiments. Some wizards install windows in this room to allow a steady flow of fresh air while others loath the interference of sunlight or ocean air in their work.

19. Tower Roof: Accessible either by a trap door in the ceiling just outside the door to room 18 or a series of ladders or ropes mounted on the side of the tower structure, the tower's roof offers an excellent view of the surrounding sea. A heavy catapult mounted on a rotating platform provides the towership with its primary source of firepower aside from the wizard.

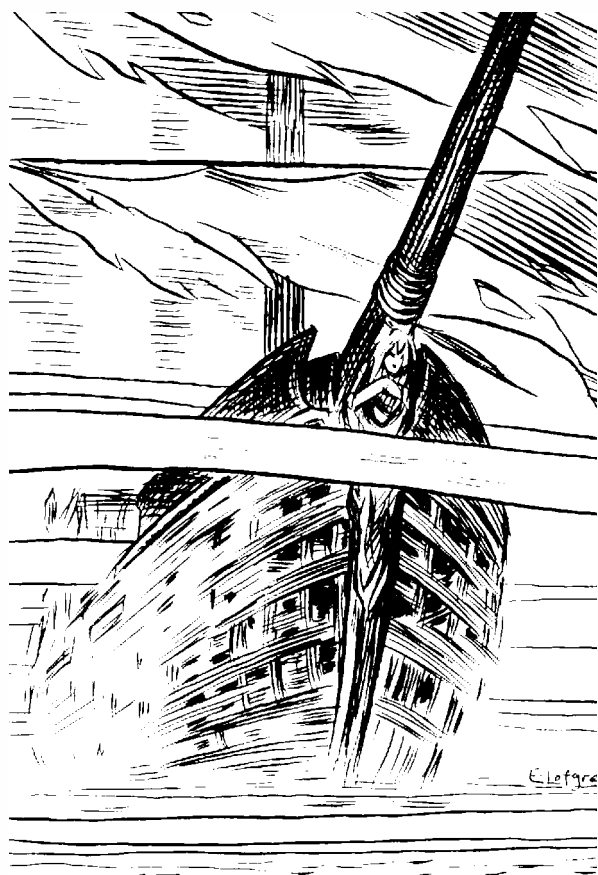
SHIPS IN SERVICE

A towership usually gains a name attached to the wizard who owns it. Those commanded by necromancers and crewed by skeletons, zombies, and worse are often referred to as sea crypts. Examples include: *Abyssal Voyager*, *Alger's Floating Fortress*, *Dendrilla's Water Flower*, *Erret's Rune*, *Feldomar's Star*, *Seahorse*, *Sea Strider*, *Star of the Sea*, *Watermaster*

GHOST SHIP

Gliding across the ocean waves, the spectral ghost ships are the bane of all mariners. Unlike pirates, they strike not for gold and glory but merely to spread terror and death. These haunted ships often prove to be difficult foes to destroy, for few navies can command the magical and divine resources needed to combat a flotilla of the unliving. Furthermore, sailors are a superstitious lot and many abandon a region and seek work elsewhere when a ghost ship appears and begins raiding the shipping lanes. Pirates take prisoners for ransom, recruit captured sailors to crew their ships, or allow their victims to sail on after claiming their cargo. A ghost ship offers a fate worse than death, as ships overwhelmed by a spectral vessel often rise again from the depths in service of the undead lords.

Ghost ships usually arise as the result of a dark god's curse, a powerful ritual completed by a necromancer or evil high priest, or the capricious whims of fate. A ship adrift at sea whose sailors die of starvation often arises again as a dead vessel crewed by zombies. Common lore of the sea also holds that a captain who destroys his vessel and kills his crew through foolhardy decisions or arrogance in the face of ill omens gains the atten-



tion of dark gods and returns again as the captain of a doomed, undead ship.

GAME STATISTICS

“Ghost” is a template that you can add to any ship type. A haunted ship is a vessel possessed by the spirits of the dead that now voyages across the seas, seeking fresh victims to despoil and destroy. In these rules, “base ship” refers to the ship design to which you have chosen to apply the ghost template.

Hull Size: The ghost ship is the same size as the base ship.

Hardness: Ghost ships are usually rusted, rotten hulks. Their decrepit condition usually causes the material from which they are made to lose much of its capacity to absorb damage. Divide the base ship’s hardness by two, rounding down.

Hit Points: While the ghost ship is a much easier target, it is tremendously difficult to sink. Most ghost ships are waterlogged wrecks that are barely sea worthy. However, the ship can absorb tremendous amounts of damage before it finally falls beneath the waves.

Much like a zombie, the ghost ship can soak up a lot of damage because no single part or section is critical to the continued functioning of the whole. Double the base ship’s hit points for hull, deck, masts, and castles.

Speed: For a decrepit hulk, a ghost ship moves with surprising speed and agility. Propelled by the unholy magics that gave it unlife, the ghost ship moves at 1.5 times the base ship’s speed. Tireless zombies man the oars on some ships, while others rely on dark magic that ensures their sails are always filled with a strong wind.

Weapons: Ghost ships use all the normal weaponry mounted on the base ship, though artillery and other weapons are normally crewed by skeletons or zombies.

Crew: A ghost ship’s crew consists of undead creatures. The following table provides guidelines for the crew’s composition based on the desired CR of the ship. Assume that the listed crew roster lists all undead available to board enemy ships or attack intruders. Non-combatant skeletons and zombies fulfill all mundane tasks aboard ship, such as crewing heavy weapons, manning the oars, or setting the sails. These creatures never attack. They simply fulfill their duties in a mindless manner, paying no attention to the living.

CR	Crew Composition
6	Wight (captain) and 12 zombies or 18 skeletons
8	Wraith (captain), 3 ghouls
10	Mohrg (captain)
12	7th-level ghost (captain), 4 allips
14	Devourer, 2 4th-level ghosts, 12 zombies
16	11th-level ghost (captain), 10 ghosts, 10 ghouls

To create a ghost ship of the appropriate CR, stock the ship with the creatures under the desired CR and all lower ones. For example, the combat-ready crew of a CR 14 ghost ship consists of the monsters listed above under CR 14, 12, 10, 8, and 6. As a rule of thumb, the creatures listed under each CR have an EL equal to the listed CR –2. Of course, the creatures listed under CR 6 represent an EL 6 encounter. This table provides guidelines for stocking a ghost ship and should not be viewed as a canonical definition of what sort of undead infests a ghost ship. Also, if the PCs take on the



denizens of a ghost ship in a series of separate encounters, be sure to award them XP based on the EL of the individual encounters.

Ship Qualities: The ghost ship gains the benefit of the ship qualities possessed by the base ship. In addition, the ghost ship gains the following qualities:

Ghostly Fog: A thick, soupy fog surrounds the ghost ship, reducing visibility and blocking the sun. The fog blocks all vision beyond 5 feet and grants all creatures half concealment. The ghost ship maneuvers normally in the fog, though its undead crew is hindered by it. This fog extends in a radius around the ship determined by its size.

Size	Fog Radius
Small	25 feet
Medium	50 feet
Large	100 feet
Huge	200 feet
Gargantuan	500 feet
Colossal	1,000 feet

Turn Resistance: All undead aboard a ghost ship gain +4 turn resistance. This bonus stacks with an undead creature's innate turn resistance.

Ghost ships fulfill no necessary role on the high seas. They are merely uninhibited marauders that seek out the living. Ghost ships usually attack without provocation or reason. They care little for targeting rich or well-appointed vessels. Instead, they merely strike at the nearest ships at hand, often wandering the seas and destroying those targets that present themselves. However, this mindless pattern of attack draws a ghost ship inexorably closer to trade routes and other target-rich areas. As ghost ships seek out targets, they naturally tend to follow their prey and the density of traffic into the most populous areas.

Most haunted ships act alone, but occasionally a particularly strong, intelligent undead captain may take several lesser ships under his command. These flotillas are a double threat to mariners: Not only do they draw strength from their numbers, but they also enjoy the experienced, clever direction of an experienced and intelligent undead captain.

Evil clerics sometimes form alliances with the denizens of a ghost ship, particularly when a cleric and a ship share the same patron deity. Under the command of a dark priest, a ghost ship becomes a terrible weapon of

evil. Many evil sects freely employ undead as sailors, creating them to man the oars and fulfill many menial duties aboard ship. Some sects buy, steal, or capture ships, crew them with zombies and skeletons under the command of an intelligent undead creature such as a wight or ghastr, and then return the ship to the seas. These ships in some ways are more dangerous than traditional ghost ships, as they operate under the direction of a central commander that coordinates their activities over wide areas.

DESIGN

Ghost ships use the layout and design features of the original ship from which they arose. Most ghost ships show signs of severe damage, as most sank and then arose again at the command of a forgotten, malevolent demigod or demon prince. Some ghost ships fly the flag of a blasphemous sect or evil deity. Regardless of how a ghost ship adorns its masts, its clammy fog cloud is an unmistakable herald of its approach.

Seaweeds and other debris from the ocean floor adorn a ghost ship, as it sunk into the depths before rising again to maraud the sea. Some ships undergo drastic changes as part of their transition to a ghost ship, taking on a more

demonic, ghastly appearance. The ship's sails turn into human skin that runs with blood, the ship's planks warp and twist, the figurehead transforms into a demonic or undead creature.

Some ghost ships repair battle damage with bones and trophies claimed from their victims, giving the ghost ship the appearance of a large, undead beast. Some ghost ships sail with small swarms of animated whales, krakens, and other undead creatures. Even the natural denizens of the sea are victims for a ghost ship.

Ghost ships sometimes strike at small coastal villages, slaughtering the inhabitants and leaving behind a battered ruin populated by the walking dead. Such attacks are rare, but when a ghost ship appears in a region many villages fortify their walls or hire on mercenaries to defend them.

SHIPS IN SERVICE

Ghost ships do not normally have names or distinguishing characters. Any ghost ship that operates in a region for a long time tends to acquire a reputation for its terrible acts. As a side effect, mariners tend to grant ghost ships ghoulish names such as *Blood Reaper*, *Death Bearer*, *Ghost Runner*, or *Hellship*.



SHIP COMBAT

This chapter presents complete rules for resolving naval engagements and boarding actions. These rules are based on the standard d20 System rules for movement and combat, and provide a lot of detail and tactical options for both players and DMs. These rules are not intended as a realistic simulation of sailing or naval combat. The level of detail provided is significant, however, and the rules are best suited to small engagements, such as combat between a ship crewed by the player characters and one or two enemy vessels. Because the rules are fully integrated with the standard combat rules, they can also be used for combat between ships and aquatic creatures, such as merfolk, sahuagin, or krakens. The text in this section, with the exception of the italicized fictional accounts, is designated as **Open Game Content**.

BATTLE ON THE HIGH SEAS

The orcish warship, her slaves straining at the oars, her blood red sails billowing before the strong tailwind, cut through the choppy, gray-green sea. On the bow, the ballista crew stood

ready, waiting for the signal from the boson. A boarding party crowded the starboard rail, grappling hooks and ropes at the ready, their cruel eyes bright with anticipation of the impending battle.

Two hundred yards away, the merchant vessel raced at full sail, the captain anxiously watching the warship from the aft deck. His ship was sleek and agile, but lacked the power of a full rowing galley. Fortunately, he was not alone. The accompanying mercenary captain gave the order to bring his longship about. Before those orcs would lay hands on any cargo, they'd have to get past Pike's marines....

ENCOUNTER DISTANCE

Naval engagements often begin at very long ranges. Encounter distance is determined according to the core rules (DMG 59). On the open ocean, visibility is very good and spotting distance is $1d10 \times 1,000$ ft. (5,000 ft.). For the purposes of spotting difficulty, a small sail reduces the DC by 2, a medium sail by 4, and a large sail by 8.

SHIP SPEED

A ship's speed is based on its hull size and propulsion system. This rule is a gross generalization that ignores a host of factors such as wind speed and direction, cargo weight, and ocean currents. Nevertheless, the goal is to simulate tactical ship movement as simply as possible.

A ship can increase its speed 5 feet per round until it reaches top speed. A ship can also decelerate by up to 10 feet per round. The speeds and other game statistics of a variety of ships can be found in the ship designs chapter (see Chapter 5).

In some situations, deceleration may be involuntary. Should a ship pull in its oars or lose a sail, its speed decreases by 10 feet per round until the adjusted speed is reached. For example, a galley with a medium sail and active rowing crews has a speed of 40 feet per round. If the captain orders the oars to be pulled in, the galley's speed drops to 30 feet the first round and 25 feet the second round (the top speed of the ship under sail).

TURNING

Ships can turn while sailing. Each 45° turn to port or starboard must be preceded by forward movement based on the ship's hull size.

Hull Size	Turn Rate
Small	5 feet
Medium	10 feet
Large	15 feet
Huge	20 feet
Gargantuan	50 feet
Colossal	100 feet

Diagram 1

A Huge sailing ship moving 20 feet per round wants to make a 90° change of heading to starboard. This requires two rounds of movement. On the diagram, **A** indicates the ship's original position, and the arrow projecting from its bow indicates the direction of sail. In round one, after 20 feet, the ship turns 45° starboard, changing its position and heading to **B**. During round two, after another 20 feet of movement, the ship makes a second 45° turn to starboard. Point **C** indicates the sailing ship's final position and heading.

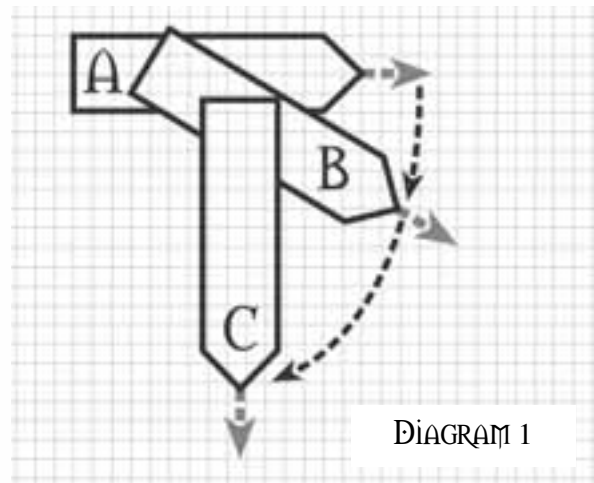


DIAGRAM 1

Instead of executing a turn, which changes direction of travel, a ship can drift port or starboard but maintain its current heading. For every 10 feet of drift, subtract 5 feet from the ship's current speed. A 5-foot drift does not slow a ship down. A ship's movement rate cannot be reduced below 5 feet per round due to drift (see diagram 2.)

Diagram 2

A sailing ship is heading due east at 20 feet per round. The captain needs to adjust the ship's position, but not its heading, and orders a starboard drift. Point **A** indicates the ship's starting location. In the first round, the vessel drifts 10 feet starboard, reducing its speed to 15 feet per round and changing its position to **B**. In the second round, the ship increases its speed by 5 feet (to 20 feet per round) and drifts a sharp 30 feet starboard. This reduces the ship's forward speed to 5 feet (the minimum) and changes the ship's position to **C**. In the third round of maneuvering, the ship increases its forward speed to 10 feet and executes a 5-foot starboard drift to end up in position **D**.

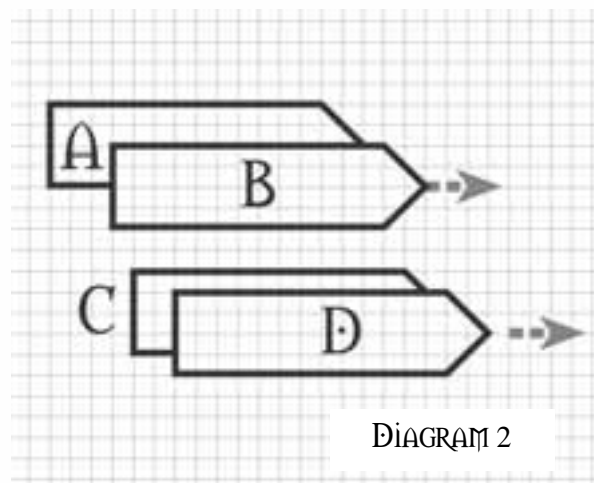


DIAGRAM 2



MANEUVERING

Before ships and the sailors on them can do battle, they must move within range. A skilled captain with a disciplined crew can outrun or outmaneuver an enemy ship, avoiding combat entirely. On the other hand, an able pursuer can, through superior knowledge of currents and the wind, close on and engage even a faster vessel. Most sea battles start with a cat and mouse game; opposing captains and their crews work furiously to squeeze every knot of speed out of their ships. The rules in this section are intended to simulate the movement and maneuvering of opposing ships. There are six crucial pieces of information needed for each ship involved:

- * The ship's speed
- * The captain's Profession (sailor) skill
- * The captain's Charisma modifier (if any)
- * The percentage of the ship's crew on duty
- * The crew's quality modifier
- * The current sea/weather conditions

SHIP COMBAT SEQUENCE

The normal combat sequence is altered slightly to take ship movement into consideration. The following text is an amended and abridged version of the combat sequence described in the core rules (PHB 118).

1. Combatants start the battle flat-footed. Once a combatant has acted, he is no longer flat-footed.
2. Determine whether or not a surprise round is required. Combatants not surprised roll initiative as normal, but any unsurprised captain automatically has an initiative one greater than the highest non-captain's initiative result. Command totals are generated for unsurprised captains. Ships are moved in order of command totals (from highest to lowest). A surprised captain's ship continues its present heading at its present speed. All other unsurprised combatants act in initiative order, from highest to lowest.
3. Anyone who has not yet rolled initiative does so. All captains have an initiative one greater than the highest non-captain's total. The first regular round begins.

4. Generate command totals and move ships.
5. Combatants act in initiative order.
6. When everyone has taken a turn, repeat steps 4 through 6 until combat ends.

COMMAND TOTALS

Maintaining command of a ship during movement and maneuvering is a standard action that does not provoke attacks of opportunity. The captain stays busy observing the ship, its crew, and its enemies, as well as issuing commands and taking reports from various crewmembers and officers. A captain's command total is determined at the beginning of each round by a Profession (sailor) check that includes additional modifiers. The captain adds his Charisma modifier, the on duty modifier, the crew quality modifier, and any modifiers for weather and sea conditions to his Profession (sailor) check.

To determine the on duty and crew quality modifiers, consult the following tables. A ship with less than 10 percent of its crew available for duty cannot sail.

Crew On Duty	On Duty Modifier	Crew Quality	Modifier
> 80%	+0	Green	-2
41-60%	-2	Average	+0
21-40%	-4	Veteran	+2
10-20%	-6	Elite	+4

Each captain generates a command total. The command totals are then compared to each other and to DC 25. Determine the difference between each command total and DC 25. For each point above 25, the captain can increase the ship's speed by an additional 5 feet. An exceptionally poor command total can reduce a ship's speed. For every point that a command total falls below 10, the ship's speed is reduced by 5 feet. A ship can always move 5 feet. Finally, it is time to move the ships.

DECLARATION AND MOVEMENT

Starting with the lowest command total, each captain declares his intentions for the round. Ship movement occurs in descending order of command totals, beginning with the highest, at the beginning of the round. All ships travel their full speed. This process enables captains with superior command totals to react to the declarations of captains with lower totals. The normal rules for acceleration and deceleration do not affect speed adjustments that result from command totals. During battle, a ship's captain and crew work as quickly and as hard as possible to maximize their vessel's capabilities.

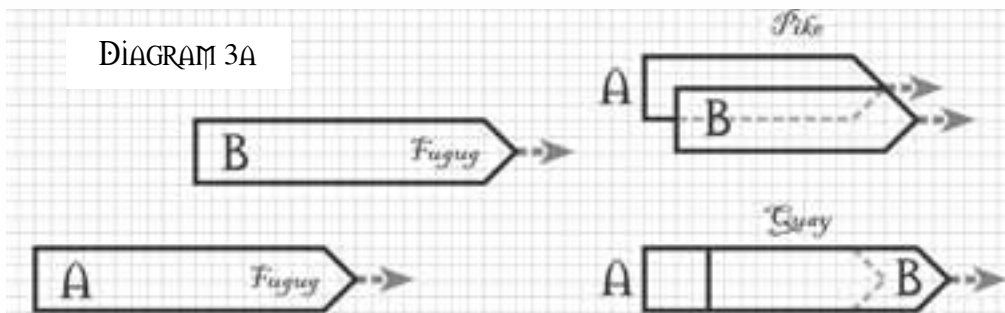
Example

Three captains are engaged. Fugug leads an orcish warship with rowers. Pike is in charge of a mercenary longship without rowers. Quay commands a sailing ship with a crew stricken by illness, preventing about half of the sailors from working. See the chart below that summarizes their game statistics. At the beginning of the engagement, Quay is 100 feet from Fugug, and Pike is 40 feet to Quay's port.

The captains generate command totals. Fugug rolls an 18, Pike a 6, and Quay a 12. Their respective command totals are 29, 17, and 23. Fugug's warship moves 70 feet, Pike's moves 25 feet, and Quay's sails 20 feet. Pike orders his crew to slow 10 feet and drift 10 feet to starboard. Quay orders his crew to maintain heading. Fugug issues commands for his warship to drift 40 feet to port (see diagram 3A).

Diagram 3A

Fugug moves first. His warship drifts 40 feet to port, which subtracts 20 feet from this round's speed of 70 feet. The orcish vessel advances 50 feet. Quay's sailing ship continues ahead 20 feet. Pike's longship drops speed to 15 feet per round, and drifts 10 feet to starboard, subtracting another 5 feet from his speed. The mercenaries' longship moves ahead 10 feet.

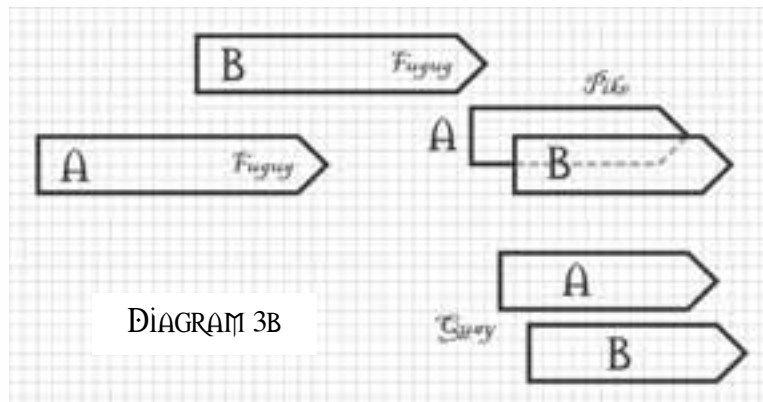


Captain	Ship Type	Starting Speed	Profession (sailor)	Charisma Modifier	On Duty Modifier	Crew Modifier
Fugug	warship	50 ft.	9	+2	+0	+0
Pike	longship	25 ft.	6	+3	+0	+2
Quay	sailing ship	20 ft.	8	+1	-2	+4

The second round of naval combat begins and new command totals are generated. Fugug's luck holds, while Pike's and Quay's take a turn for the worse. Fugug rolls another 18, Pike rolls a 3, and Quay rolls a 5. The command totals are 29, 14, and 16, respectively. Pike orders his crew to accelerate to 20 feet per round and drift another 10 feet starboard. Quay, not wanting to be rammed, orders a sharp drift 25 feet to starboard. Fugug wants to come alongside the sailing ship, but does not want to be trapped between Quay and Pike. The orcish captain decides to take out the mercenaries first. He orders a 35-foot drift to port (see diagram 3B).

Diagram 3B

Fugug again moves first. With a 35-foot port drift, he reduces his 70-foot movement rate to 55 feet. Fugug surges forward, his bow coming even with Pike's port aft. The sailing ship commanded by Quay moves 10 feet forward and 25 feet to starboard. Pike sails 15 feet ahead and drifts 10 feet starboard.



Round three begins. New command totals are generated. They are 20 for Fugug, 18 for Pike, and 30 for Quay. Pike, figuring that Fugug is trying to engage him directly, holds his course and speed, waiting for the orcs to come to him. Fugug orders that oars be brought in and that the ship drift 5 feet starboard. Quay, taking

advantage of the situation, drifts 5 feet back to port, increases speed, and surges ahead (see diagram 3C).

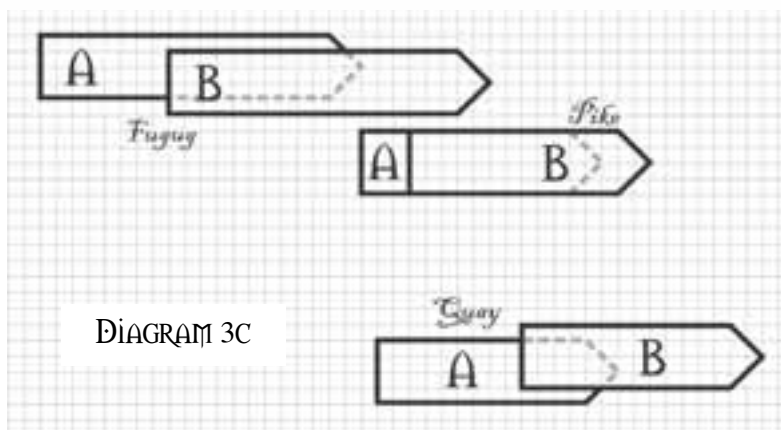
Diagram 3C

Quay's ship surges forward 40 feet and drifts 5 feet to port. Since Fugug ordered the oars brought in, his speed drops by 10 feet per round. The warship sails ahead 40 feet with a 5-foot drift to starboard. Pike holds his course, sailing on another 15 feet. Pike's and Quay's ships are now within range for boarding attempts.

Pike knew Quay couldn't outrun the warship, and so ordered his crew to cut speed and move starboard, hoping to shrink the distance between his longship and Quay's sailing ship. The distance between the warship and the merchant vessel narrowed steadily. Quay fancied that the orcs were close enough to catch a whiff of their stench. Recklessly, boldly, Fugug gave the command to surge forward and to port, maybe to drive his warship between Pike and Quay like a wedge.

"Fire!" the orcish boson cried, and the ballista crew followed the command. The heavy projectile fell low, crashing into the aft hull. The merchant captain watched through his spyglass as the orcs reloaded and adjusted the ballista's aim. They'd be going for the sails. Once the proper trajectory had been set, fire would follow.

The orcish captain was no fool. He did not want to pilot his ship between Quay and Pike, which would mean fighting off boarders from both sides at once. The warship sliced hard to port, its bow bouncing across Pike's wake, while Pike moved again to starboard. The orcs were making ready to attack the mercenaries. Should they win that battle, Quay's ship would be an easy target.



SHIP WEAPONS

The procedure for firing both heavy and light catapults is briefly described on page 106. The process is somewhat complicated, but the guidelines below simplify the steps. Remember that a catapult's payload lands somewhere, even if not on target. If there are people or objects in the impact zone, they are damaged. A catapult does not fire a single rock; such a projectile would be too heavy to load or else too small to inflict full damage. Rather, the basket of a catapult is loaded with several rocks or other heavy objects. Thus, the individual projectiles spread a bit during flight and rain down on the impact area. Both types of catapults affect a 5-foot radius around the impact point. A person in the center of the impact area can make a Reflex save (DC 15) for half damage. Individuals outside the impact but within the radius can make a Reflex save (DC 15) to avoid all damage entirely. Aiming a catapult from the deck of a ship at a moving target is difficult at best. The Profession (siege engineer) check's DC is 25 instead of the normal 20. The steps involved in firing a catapult are as follows.

1. Artillerist chooses a desired impact point.
2. Artillerist makes a Profession (siege engineer) check (DC 25). If this check succeeds, go to step 5. If it fails, go to step 3.
3. DM secretly determines a new impact point using the Deviation (10 to 16 feet) Diagram (DMG 68). Go to step 4.
4. Determine actual impact point using the Deviation (10 to 16 feet) Diagram. Go to step 5.
5. Apply damage.

Firing a ballista is simpler. A ballista attack is resolved with a straight attack roll (d20) using no modifiers except those for range.

An artillerist can add his Wisdom modifier to his attack roll if he directs the firing of the ballista.

A ballista is usually fired at an enemy ship's sail. In this case, you don't have to worry about deviation: the sail's AC is modified for its size, and a failed attack roll simply indicates a miss. However, direct-fire weapons may also be fired at the ship's deck or hull. In this case, the bolt may miss the section the artillery crew was aiming

for but still strike the ship somewhere. Use the variant rules for firing into a crowd (DMG 65) to resolve this possibility. In ship combat, this rule is pretty simple.

1. If an attack with a direct-fire weapon misses, determine the path of the errant missile.
2. Roll on the direct fire path to determine the direction of deviation. If the weapon was fired at an enemy ship's hull, long results typically mean the shot has gone high and short results mean it has gone low.
3. Roll on the direct fire deviation table to determine the amount of deviation. This determines whether the attack struck the ship, and if so, its point of impact.

Example

Fugug's ballista crew fires their weapon at the center of the Quay's hull at the waterline, and the shot misses. The DM rolls on the direct fire path table and gets a 16, so the shot went wide right. Next, the DM rolls on the direct fire deviation table and gets a 9, so the shot deviated 1/10 the distance between the attacker and target. Fugug's ship is 200 feet away from Quay's, so the deviation is 20 feet. Since Quay's ship is 80 feet long, the bolt hit the ship about midway between the target point and the stern.

DAMAGE TO SHIPS

The rules for damaging ships presented here are derived from the d20 system core rules: specifically, the rules for damaging objects. A ship is constructed of several different components. For the purposes of combat, the important ones are the sails, the deck, and the hull. Each 5-foot section of these structures is a potential target in ship combat. These compo-

nents are treated as objects, and this determines the way damage is dealt to them. In the d20 System core rules, a number of unique characteristics apply to objects.

- The Armor Class of an object is adjusted by its modifiers for size and Dexterity. Every 5-foot section of a ship's hull or deck is treated as an individual target, so the size modifier is always +0. In the core rules, inanimate objects are considered to have Dexterity 0, so a -5 Dex penalty is applied. Based on these modifiers, any given 5-foot section of a ship's primary structural components will be AC 5. See the construction rules (Chapter 4) for exceptions based on alternative materials. A small sail is AC 5, a medium sail is AC 3, and a large sail is AC 1.

- Objects have a hardness rating. This rating is subtracted from all damage dealt to the object. Wood is hardness 5, so all damage dealt to a conventional ship's hull, deck, or masts is reduced by 5.

- Objects have hit points based on their composition and thickness. Wooden objects, such as the standard structural components of ships, have 10 hit points per inch of thickness.

- Objects are immune to critical hits and subdual damage.

- Objects take half damage from personal ranged weapons, such as bows and slings. Divide the damage dealt by 2 before subtracting the object's hardness rating. Siege weapons, such as catapults and ballistae, do full damage to objects.

- Objects take half damage from acid, fire, and lightning attacks, quarter damage from cold attacks, and full damage from sonic attacks. A ship's sails are particularly vulnerable to fire and take full damage from fire attacks.

There are two ways to break or breach objects. These rules use both to resolve damage to the structural components of ships. First, you can reduce the object's hit points to 0. For example, if a boat's hull is two inches thick and has 20 hit points, a catapult strike for 25 points of damage will put a hole in it.

Second, sudden force applied to an object can break or breach it, even if its hit points are not

reduced to 0 by the attack. The attacker makes a Strength check; if the result matches or exceeds the object's Break DC, it is broken or breached. When an object has lost half or more of its total hit points, its Break DC is reduced by 2. Of course, an object that has lost all of its hit points is broken, regardless of whether or not its Break DC has been bested.

Siege weapons, such as catapults and ballistae, are not powered by characters or creatures with Strength scores, but they can still deliver a great enough impact to break or breach the structural components of a ship. Rules for resolving this are provided below.

The following sections list the three primary structural components of ships and present rules for resolving damage to them. Rules for repairing damage to each component are also provided.

SAILS

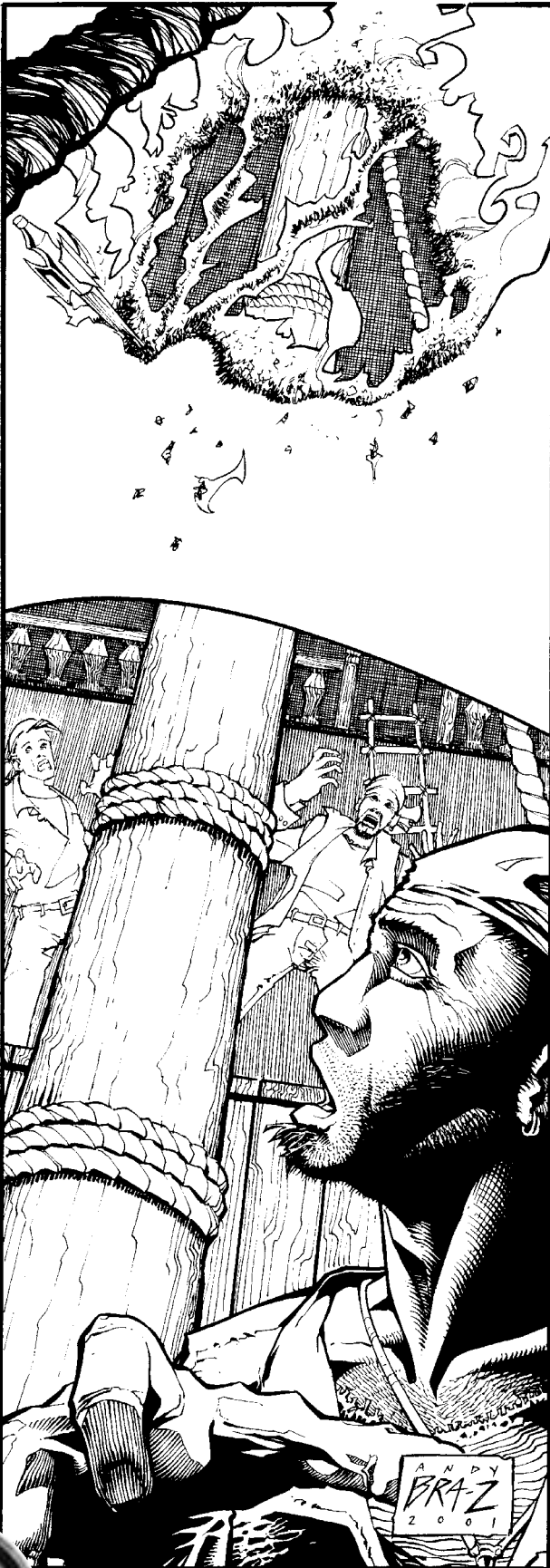
Damage to its sails can slow or stop a ship. An average sail is made of durable cloth. Standard sails have a hardness of 0 and 2 hit points, so they are extremely easy to pierce. A single hole or tear in a sail is typically not a danger, however.

Several tears in a sail may cause the material to rip apart under the pressure of the wind. Each tear in a sail counts as a cumulative 6 points of Strength. Each round a damaged sail is in use, make a Strength check against Break DC 23. If the Strength check succeeds, the sail tears apart and is useless. A ship that loses a sail has its speed reduced accordingly.

Example

Fugug's ballista crew has hit one of Quay's medium sails three times, yielding an effective Strength of 18 for the Strength check against Break DC 23. A d20 roll results in a 19, which is added to the +4 Strength modifier. Quay's sail shreds, reducing his ship's speed by 25 feet.

Repairing a single tear in a sail requires a Craft (shipmaking) check (DC 10). The base time required for the task is 10 minutes (100 rounds), but a sailor can attempt to do it more quickly. For every minute by which this time is reduced, the DC is increased by 2. A sail that has been shredded cannot be repaired. Rigging a new sail requires one crewmember and 5 minutes for a small



sail, five crewmembers and 10 minutes for a medium sail, and 10 crewmembers and 15 minutes for a large sail. Crewmembers repairing a sail or rigging a new sail do not count for the purposes of determining the ship's command total.

DECK

A ship's deck presents three main targets: enemy sailors, a mast, or the deck itself. Attacks against sailors are resolved using the standard combat rules. A typical mast is AC 5 and has a hardness of 5. Its hit points and Break DC are based on the size of the sail it supports.

Size	Hit Points	Break DC
Small	50	18
Medium	150	23
Large	300	30

A broken mast cannot be repaired and typically cannot be replaced outside of a shipyard. A ship that loses a mast loses the sail, and its speed is affected as described previously.

A 5-foot-square section of deck is AC 5, and has a hardness of 5, 50 hit points, and a break DC of 26. Every hit point of damage dealt by siege weaponry in a single attack (after hardness is subtracted) counts as 3 cumulative Strength points for a break attempt.

The collapse of a section of the deck renders the adjacent decking structurally unsound. Anytime significant weight or force is applied to an adjacent section (such as by a crewmember walking on it or a weapon striking it), make a check for the adjacent section using the original Strength score. If this section collapses, all the squares adjacent to it become unsound.

Example

Quay returns fire with the ship's heavy catapult and ballista. The catapult crew aims for the deck where the orcish ballista is located. The ballista crew fires at the warship's single mast. The catapult aims true, striking the deck for 12 points of damage after hardness is subtracted. This yields a Strength 36 break attempt against Break DC 26. A d20 roll yields a 14, which is sufficient to pierce the deck when modified by the +13 Strength bonus. The ballista falls through the hole made by the catapult's missile. Each 5-foot section around this collapsed area is now structurally unsound. If one of these sec-

tions is damaged or forced to support any significant weight, a new Strength check is made with a +13 bonus against Break DC 26.

The ballista bolt fired at the same time as the catapult hits the mast for 7 hit points of damage after hardness is subtracted. A Strength 21 check against Break DC 23 is made, but fails. The mast is damaged, but unbroken.

A collapsed section of the deck can be repaired with a Craft (shipmaking) check (DC 12). The base time required for the task is 10 minutes (100 rounds), but a sailor can attempt to do it more quickly. For every minute by which this time is reduced, the DC is increased by 2. If a section is repaired, the areas adjacent to it are no longer considered structurally unsound. Crewmembers assigned to repairs are not counted as crew for the purposes of determining command totals.

HULL

Finally, the ship's hull can be targeted. The goal is to pierce the hull at or close to the waterline, thus causing the ship to take on water and slowly sink. Each 5-foot-square section of hull is AC 5, modified by any magic bonus provided by the ship's construction (see Chapter 4). A wooden hull has hardness 5 and 10 hit points per inch of thickness, but alternative materials may have different values. To determine if a section of the hull is breached, follow the same procedure described above for mast and deck hits. The Break DCs for hull materials are: Wood 28, Iron 33, Mithral 35, Adamantite 40.

The severity of the breach depends on the size of the weapon used in the attack. The following table lists a range of attacks and the breach severities they cause.

Breach Severity	Attacks
Minor	Attacks by Medium-size or smaller creatures
Moderate	Attacks by Large or Huge creatures, light siege weapons (light catapult, ballistae)
Major	Attacks by Gargantuan or Colossal creatures, heavy siege weapons (heavy catapult, cannon)

A ship with a hull breach begins to take on water, and a ship can only take on so much water before it founders and begins to sink. The rate at which a ship takes on water is measured in buckets. A "bucket" is simply a convenient name for an abstract volume of water that a single crewman can bail in a minute (10 rounds).

Minor: A minor breach creates a small hole or tear in the hull, and the ship begins leaking slowly. A minor breach admits one bucket of water a minute.

Moderate: A moderate breach creates a larger hole or tear in the hull, and the ship begins leaking much more quickly. A minor breach admits five buckets of water a minute.

Major: A major breach creates a severe hole or tear in the hull, and the ship begins taking on water very quickly. A major breach admits 10 buckets of water a minute.

When a ship has taken on more buckets of water than it can handle, it founders and begins to sink. The amount of water a ship can handle is based on the size category of its hull.

Size	Buckets
Small	10
Medium	20
Large	50
Huge	100
Gargantuan	500
Colossal	1,000

Crewmembers can be assigned to bail water, and a single crewmember can bail one bucket of water each full minute he is working. A single crewmember can prevent a ship from taking on any water from a minor breach, but 10 crewmembers are necessary to prevent a ship that has suffered a major breach from taking on water. Crewmembers assigned to bail are not counted as crewmembers for the purposes of determining command totals.

A ship that takes on half its allowance of water is crippled. Its top speed is halved and its captain suffers a -4 circumstance penalty on his Profession (sailor) checks to determine command total. A ship that takes on its full allowance of water is foundering. The ship loses 10 feet of speed per round until it is dead in the water. The ship can no longer move under its own power and begins

sinking. The ship has taken on enough water that it is past the point of no return, and bailing will no longer save it. The amount of time it takes for the ship to sink is based on its size.

Size	Time
Small	5 rounds
Medium	1 minute
Large	5 minutes
Huge	10 minutes
Gargantuan	30 minutes
Colossal	1 hour

FIRE!

Fire is an especially dangerous hazard to a ship. Most vessels are constructed almost entirely of wood. The sails and the ropes used to control them are flammable. A ship's fresh water supply is limited, and is not stored for firefighting purposes. True, the ocean itself can be used to extinguish a flame, but seawater must be hauled onboard using buckets and ropes. The basic mechanics of catching on fire are provided in the core rules (DMG 86), but these apply only to characters and their equipment.

A ship subjected to fire attacks, such as alchemist's fire, a burning ballista spear, or a catapult basket full of hot coals, is not allowed a Reflex save to avoid catching fire. However, the ship's structural components—except the sails—take half damage from fire. The damage dealt by the attack determines whether a fire starts. Also, an untended fire may spread and grow in size and intensity. A fire attack on a ship is divided into two sections: the initial damage and the possible resulting secondary damage.

If a modest section of a ship—a 5-foot-square section of deck, a mast, or a sail—is exposed to fire, the DM should make a fire check. Roll 1d20 and add 1 for each point of fire damage inflicted (after subtracting hardness, if applicable). If the total is equal to or greater than 15, a fire has been started and secondary damage results. Otherwise, the initial fire attack burns itself out as normal.

Example

An orcish boarder lobs a vial of alchemist's fire at Pike's marines. The vial hits the deck, shatters, and blazing liquid spreads. The alchemist's fire deals 2 points of damage, which is negated by the deck's hardness. The

DM rolls 1d20 for a fire check and the result is a 12. The wood is not set aflame, but the alchemist's fire burns normally. In the second round, the alchemist's fire burns for another 3 points of damage. A second fire check is made, and this time the DM rolls a 16. The 5-foot-square section of deck is now burning on its own.

If secondary fire damage results from a successful fire check, the burning structure's hardness is no longer applicable and it takes full damage from the blaze. The burning structure suffers 1d6 points of damage every round directly to its hit points. If the conflagration is left unchecked, the fire may spread. The DM makes a fire check each round (DC 20), adjusted by damage as normal.

A success means the fire spreads to another adjacent area and its damage is increased by 1d6 (maximum 5d6). Determine the direction the fire spreads based on wind direction or use the grenade-like weapons diagram (PHB 138). Remember that fire spreads upward as well as horizontally.

Example

A section of deck on Pike's longship is ablaze. A new combat round begins. The DM determines that the deck section suffers 4 points of damage directly to its hit points. He then makes a fire check, adding 4 to the roll. The total is 20, so the fire spreads. Using the grenade-like weapons diagram, the DM determines that the fire spreads to the 5-foot section that supports the mast. The next round, the blaze deals 2d6 points of damage. If left unchecked, the fire probably moves up the mast to the sails.

Of course, fire can be fought. Water or sand can be thrown onto the flames, or materials such as tarps or cloaks can be used to try to smother the flames. An appropriately equipped firefighter makes a Reflex save (DC 15). If successful, he has extinguished a single 5-foot-square section. The blaze still deals 1d6 points of damage per section. So, for example, a blaze reduced from 10 sections to nine sections still deals 5d6 points of damage; a blaze reduced from five sections to four deals only 4d6 damage. If more than one person battles a blaze in a single section, use the highest Reflex save bonus and grant a +2 circumstance bonus on the save. Firefighters are not counted as crew for the purposes of determining command totals.

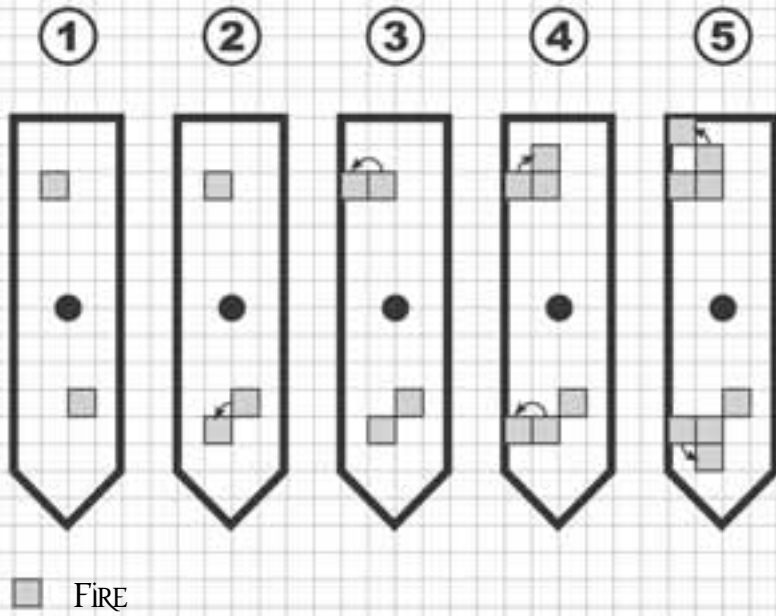


A ship's deck may have multiple fires (see diagram 4). Each fire is tracked separately until spreading causes them to join. At that point, treat the previously distinct fires as a one larger blaze, but remember that the damage cap is still 5d6.

Diagram 4

There are two fires causing secondary fire damage aboard the ship, one fore and the other aft. On round one, the bow fire inflicts 1 point of damage and the aft fire 4 points. Two fire checks are made; the adjusted totals are 5 and 21 respectively. The bow fire spreads, increasing that fire's damage to 2d6. Round two begins. The bow fire deals 11 points of damage; the aft fire deals 5 points of damage. Amazingly, the bow fire does not spread, but the aft fire does. Round three begins and the fires each deal 8 points of damage. Fire checks are made, and both conflagrations spread. The bow fire continues its trek toward starboard, while the aft flame spreads back to port. Round five starts with two 3d6 blazes burning on the ship. The bow fire deals only another 8 points of damage, while the aft blaze deals 12 points. Both fires spread further. By the end of round five, half the starboard aft is in flames and much of the bow is being consumed as well.

DIAGRAM 4



The ballista crew knew their job well. A heavy spear tore through the mainsail of Quay's ship and became twisted in the heavy fabric. Under the pressure of the wind and its weight, it would do further damage, but the captain could not afford to strike the sail in order to remove the spear. Besides, a torn sail was the least of his problems.

On the warship's deck, the orcs reloaded the ballista, but this time the spear's tip had been soaked in pitch. One orc touched a torch flame to the projectile. Tongues of fire sprang to life, feeding on the pitch, and the boson gave the order. The second spear that hit the mainsail was ablaze. Threads of flame raced up the sail from the point of impact and danced out along the crossbeams and guy lines. Sailors raced to the edges of the ship, pitching buckets tied to ropes overboard to haul water back on deck. The fire had to be contained, or all was surely lost.

Fortunately, Quay would have a break from the ballista attacks. Pike's marines were between him and the orcs now. Beastly war cries ripped the salt air as orc warriors tossed grapple lines at the longship's port bulwarks. The marines readied their weapons, awaiting Pike's command to engage the enemy. Both wooden deck and salty brine would soon be stained red with blood...

RAMMING AND BROADSIDING

A brave (or foolish) captain uses his entire ship as a weapon. There are two ways to do this: ramming or broadsiding. Ramming involves sailing bow-first into the enemy ship. Broadsideing, a somewhat safer tactic, involves scraping the bow along one of the enemy ship's sides. No attack rolls are necessary for ramming and broadsiding: If a ship's movement allows it to make contact with the target ship, it can ram or broadside.

To determine the damage dealt by a ramming attack, the DM must determine the relative speed of the attacking and target ships. If

Damage	Reflex Save DC	Ramming Ship's Command Total	Rammed Ship's Command Total
1d6	10	-2	-1
2d6	12	-3	-1
3d6	14	-3	-2
4d6	16	-4	-2
5d6	18	-4	-3
6d6	20	-5	-3

the ships are moving directly toward one another, their current speeds are added together to determine the relative speed. If the ships are moving in the same direction (e.g., the attacking ship is ramming the target from behind), the target ship's speed is subtracted from the attacking ship's speed. If the ramming ship is crashing into the target ship's side, the target ship's speed is ignored.

Ramming inflicts 1d6 points of damage for every 10 full feet of the ships' relative speed. This base damage is modified by the ships' size.

Size	Damage Multiplier
Small	x1/2
Medium	x1
Large	x2
Huge	x3
Gargantuan	x4
Colossal	x5

This damage is applied to the hull at the waterline. Unfortunately, the ramming ship also takes the base damage modified by the size of the target ship. Only large ships with reinforced bows typically attempt ramming.

Broadsiding does half as much damage to both ships, but has the added benefit of automatically snapping any oars still deployed on the side scraped at the time of impact. Oarsmen whose oars are broken this way must make Reflex saves (DC 15) to avoid taking 1d6 points of damage themselves.

Both maneuvers may also knock down crewmembers and impose a penalty on the following round's command total. Characters knocked down normally take no damage unless they fall 10 feet or more. For combat purposes, a knocked-down character is prone until he has a chance to stand back up.

Example

Fugug's warship broadsides the mercenary longship. The orcish warship is Colossal and the longship is Huge. The ships' relative speed is 20 feet, so the attack deals 2d6 points of damage. The result is 8, and this is halved (for the broadside) for 4 points of damage. This result is multiplied by 5 for the Colossal hull of the warship, so Pike's ship takes 20 points of damage. The base damage is multiplied by 3 for the Huge hull of the longship, so the warship takes 12 points of damage. Breach checks are made normally for this damage.

BOARDING

The best way to wage a naval battle is to actually gain control of the enemy ship and its cargo. To do this, it is necessary to close with and then board the enemy ship to defeat its crew. A boarding crew is typically armed with hooks attached to ropes. These are thrown at the enemy ship to grapple the ship's rail, thus fixing the distance between the two vessels and preventing escape.

Actually boarding an enemy ship is simply a matter of movement. Jump skill is important, but characters can also swing on ropes. The crew of the enemy ship is unlikely to allow boarders an easy time of it. Boarders suffer attacks of opportunity as normal, and those trying to repel the boarders may also go after the ropes or even try to board their enemy's ship. Combatants do not count as crew for the purposes of determining command totals.

Anyone struck while moving across the space between two ships runs the risk of falling into the sea. If swinging on a rope, use the appropriate guidelines under the Climb skill (PHB 64–65, PHB). Jumpers have a rougher time. If hit while leaping from one ship to another, a character must make a Reflex save (DC 20) or fall into the sea.

A ship's bulwarks and castles provide cover for combatants positioned behind them. Bulwarks provide one-quarter cover (+2 cover bonus to AC, +1 cover bonus to Reflex saves) and castles provide one-half cover (+4 cover bonus to AC, +2 cover bonus to Reflex saves).





The relative size of the vessels also has a dramatic effect on boarding actions. For every size category difference between the ships, boarders from the smaller ship suffer a -2 circumstance penalty on applicable skill checks (e.g., Climb checks to swing across on a rope, Jump checks, etc.). For characters attempting to Climb from the deck of a smaller ship to a larger one, treat the distance of the climb as 5 feet per category of difference in size. Characters on the taller ship also gain a $+1$ bonus on attack rolls for high ground.

Boarding actions often require the DM to handle large numbers of PCs, most of them sailors who are 1st-level commoners. The DM can organize NPC combatants into squads. A squad is a group of NPCs with identical stats that attack as a team. Determine the attack bonus for an individual member of the squad normally, and then add $+1$ for every member of the squad beyond the first. For example, a five-member squad of 1st-level commoners has an attack bonus of $+4$: A 1st-level commoner has a base attack bonus of $+0$, but the squad gets a $+1$ bonus for each member of the squad after the first. If all members of the squad have weapons with an enhancement bonus, it is applied to the total attack bonus.

NPC squads always attack other squads. If the members of the opposing squads have different Hit Dice, the weaker squad suffers a circumstance penalty on its attack rolls. The penalty is -1 for each step of difference between the Hit Die type and -1 for each point of difference between the number of Hit Dice.

Each round, the DM rolls initiative and makes a single attack for each squad. A successful hit drops one member of the enemy squad, and one additional enemy is defeated for every 5 points by which the attack result exceeded the squad's AC. If a squad is broken or disrupted, individual members can regroup and join other squads.

Example

A five-member orc squad is attacking a seven-member squad of Pike's men. All of the NPCs in the squads have AC 12 ($+2$ armor). Pike's men have a base attack bonus of $+0$, while the orcs have a base attack bonus of $+3$. For five members, the orcs' attack bonus is increased to $+7$. Pike's squad has an attack bonus of $+6$. However, the orcs' Hit Die type ($d8$) is two steps larger than the soldiers' ($d4$), so the attack bonus of Pike's squad is reduced to $+4$. Pike's squad attacks the orcs; the DM makes the attack roll and gets a total result of 18. Pike's squad drops two orcs: One because the attack was successful and another because the attack result was at least 5 greater than the orc squad's AC 12. The orc squad can attack next, but they're down to three members and their attack bonus drops to $+5$.

SWASHBUCKLING

Pike sprang into action, leaping from his ship's forecandle toward the orcish warship. One hand gripped his scimitar while the other reached out and caught a guy line. Reflexively, he wrapped the rope about his wrist and slashed with the blade at the same time, cutting the line. Now free to swing, his momentum carried him over the orcish warship's deck. He split an orc's skull with a sharp chop from his blade, and then let go of the rope, somersaulting through the air to land on the warship's aft deck.

No naval adventure would be complete without swashbuckling action. Unencumbered by heavy armor, saber in one hand, and a dagger clenched between gritted teeth, combatants leap this way, roll that way, and swing from

ropes while attacking. Not even disarming a swashbuckler removes the threat he poses, for everything from a belaying pin to a gaff to a mop becomes a weapon in a swashbuckler's able hands.

A staple of swashbuckling is swinging on ropes. Swinging from a rope to a desired location is based on a character's Climb skill. To safely arrive where a character desires at the end of a swing, he must make a Climb check (DC 10). The destination cannot be more than 5 feet higher than the character's starting elevation. For each foot that the destination is higher than the character's starting elevation, add 1 to the DC.

If the Climb check fails, the character does not land where he wants. He can choose to let go of the rope. In this case, treat the character as a grenade-like weapon to determine where he lands (PHB 138). The character is considered a missile weapon with a range increment of 20 feet. The character can also opt to hang onto the rope and swing back to his starting point during the next round. This requires a Climb check (DC 10) to arrive on target. Finally, the character may simply choose to drop off the rope anywhere along the return path. Again, treat the character as a grenade-like weapon to determine where he actually lands in relation to the point where he releases the rope. If the character drops more than 10 feet, he takes damage from the fall.

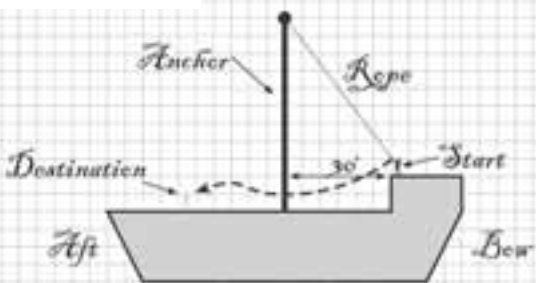
The distance a character can swing is limited. From a standing start, the character can swing twice the distance between his starting point and the rope's anchor. The maximum distance is increased by 1/4 if the character has a running start of at least 10 feet. The character suffers normal attacks of opportunity for moving through an enemy's threat area.

Diagram 5

Pike is standing atop the forecastle of Fugug's ship, holding a rope attached to the mast. He wants to swing toward the stern of the ship. Pike's starting location is 30 feet from the anchor. He can swing a total of 60 feet from a standing start, or a total of 75 feet with a running start. Pike chooses a destination 60 feet away and swings. He succeeds at a Climb check (DC 10) and lands in the midst of the enemy.



DIAGRAM 5



It is possible to execute a charge attack at the end of a swing. Movement distance is limited as normal for a swing, and the character must move at least 10 feet in order to charge. The character gains a +2 bonus on his attack roll. If the character's attack fails, he falls from the rope. Treat the character as a grenade-like weapon with a range increment of 20 feet to determine where he lands in relation to his desired destination.

Example

Pike swings 60 feet toward the orcish boson to make a charge attack. His attack roll fails, so he falls from the rope. Sixty feet is treated as three range increments. A d8 is rolled, resulting in a 7. The d6 roll to determine distance off target results in a 5, plus 3 for the range increments, meaning Pike lands 8 feet to the boson's right flank. Since the boson was only 2 feet away from the starboard rail, Pike falls overboard.

In all cases, a character who is swinging is treated as if he were climbing. Attacks against him are made as if he were stunned, and he cannot use a shield. If damaged while swinging, he must make a Climb check (DC 10) or fall. Treat a character who falls while swinging as if he were a grenade-like weapon with a range increment of 20 feet.

A player interested in creating a swashbuckling character needs to pay special attention to appropriate skills and feats. Good skills for a swashbuckler include Balance, Climb, Jump, Swim, Tumble, and Use Rope. Feats such as Ambidexterity, Dodge, Expertise, Improved Disarm, Improved Initiative, Improved Trip, Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Mobility, Quick Draw, Spring Attack, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Finesse, and Whirlwind Attack are especially appropriate.

Furthermore, a number of new feats pre-

sented in this book were designed specifically with the swashbuckler in mind (see page 18).

SEA CONDITIONS

The wind affects sea conditions more than any other single factor. In accordance with the core rules (DMG 87), there are seven categories of wind speed, ranging from light to tornado. The stronger the wind, the more violent the sea becomes. Precipitation only complicates matters further. Sea conditions affect ship movement, command totals, and ranged attacks, and can pose additional danger in the form of swells that swamp a ship's deck, possibly washing sailors overboard.

Ship movement, even for non-sailing ships, is affected by sea conditions, though sailing ships suffer the most from adverse weather. Winds of strong or greater force may cause damage to the hull, sails, and masts, or make it difficult to control the direction of travel. Consult the following table for a summary of modifiers and hazard chances. Effects on ranged attacks are listed in the core rules (DMG 87).

Command Total: This is a penalty applied to the command total each round to determine how far a ship can travel. Rough seas make it more difficult to get extra movement from a ship, and this imposes limits on the speed at which a ship maneuvers. During exceptionally harsh weather, a ship's crew is busy trying to maintain control of the rigging and rudder, taking time and effort away from the attempt to achieve peak performance.

Loss of Control: If the captain's command total is equal to or less than the listed number, the crew temporarily loses control of the vessel. An out-of-control ship turns to either starboard or port for the round. A ship with sufficient movement may find itself sailing in a tight circle, turned back on its path by the raging winds and turbulent seas.

Structural Damage: This is treated as siege weapon damage, and occurs once every minute to the sails (if any), the mast (halve the damage if the sails are not deployed), and the hull at the waterline. Exceptionally violent weather can

WEATHER EFFECTS

Wind Force	Command Total	Loss of Control	Structural Damage	Wave Hazard	Wave Strength	Wave Size
Light	+0	–	–	–	–	–
Moderate	+0	–	–	–	–	–
Strong	–2	10	1d6	1–6	18	Medium
Severe	–4	12	2d6	1–10	22	Large (tall)
Windstorm	–6	15	3d6	1–14	26	Huge (tall)
Hurricane	–8	20	4d6	1–18	30	Gargantuan (tall)
Tornado	–10	25	5d6	automatic	34	Colossal (tall)

shred a ship's sails, snap the mast, and cause a ship to take on water at an alarming rate.

Wave Hazard: Every 1d10 rounds after a storm starts, check to see if a wave washes across the ship's deck. The Wave Hazard column indicates the range on 1d20, and the roll is modified by the ship's size category.

Size	Modifier
Small	+4
Medium-size	+2
Large	+0
Huge	–1
Gargantuan	–2
Colossal	–4

Wave Strength: A wave travels 40 feet over the course of one round and automatically hits everything in its path. Unsecured objects and characters may be swept overboard. A wave has an effective Strength that indicates how much weight it can move (in the case of unsecured objects) or how hard it is to resist (in the case of characters or creatures).

A character hit by a wave makes an opposed Strength check. If the character's check equals or exceeds the wave's result, he is safe. Otherwise, he is knocked off his feet and swept along the length of the wave's path. If the character strikes something immovable, he suffers 1d6 points of damage for every size category of the wave. If the character does not strike anything, he can make a Reflex save (DC 14, +2 for every size category of the wave above Medium-size) to grab on to something. If the save fails and the wave's path reaches the edge of the deck, the character is swept overboard. An unsecured object whose weight is less than the wave's Strength is swept away.

Wave Size: A wave's size varies, depending on sea conditions. Consult the core rules (PHB 131) and use the appropriate face to determine how big a wave actually is. For example, hurricane-force winds produce waves that are 20 feet tall and 20 feet wide. Note that waves extend below the surface a number of feet equal to their height, so they can also pose a hazard for submarines and creatures swimming near the surface.





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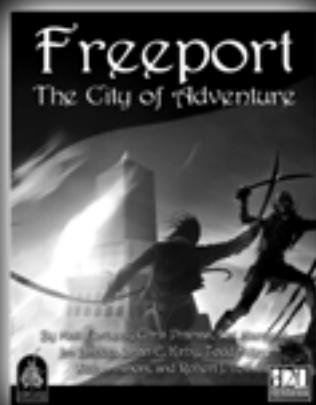
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