

Fun naval warfare rules for Warhammer Ancient Battles Siege and Conquest

# BATTLE SPEED!.. ATTACK SPEED!.. RAMMING SPEED!

While primarily designed for *Warhammer Ancient Battles*, there is no reason these rules could not be adapted for any Ancients or Medieval game system with a simple adaptation to the

combat system to allow for boarding actions. These rules do not pretend to be a grand set of naval rules – the scale and parameters are designed for 28mm and for actions on a 6' x 4' or larger gaming area. Within these parameters, the action is concentrated on the engagement phase of sea battles or landing actions. The grand strategic manoeuvre of fleets is missing, given the scale, however these maybe recreated given a smaller scale or a larger table (the floor of a hall perhaps?).



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A square rigged cog sails ready for battle

**S**hips and boats are treated as structures; they have a toughness rating and damage points in the same way as a siege tower or a fortification from the *Siege and Conquest* supplement. They may also move if they have sufficient crew to do so. In 28mm scale, boats and ships should typically be about six to twelve inches in size.

## SHIP MOVEMENT

The ship will have move in relationship to the wind. This is generally decided by the scenario or can be randomly determined using a D6.

- 1 Wind blows from top right corner
- 2 Wind blows from top left corner
- 3 Wind blows from left board edge
- 4 Wind blows from bottom right corner
- 5 Wind blows from bottom left corner
- 6 Wind blows from right board edge

This is always in relation to the set up position of the fleets, so no one player can have the wind behind him at the start of the game.

The speed is compared to the profile for the ship when the wind is in these quadrants. So the wind blowing from behind the vessel (in the rear quadrant) gives maximum speed while the wind blowing towards the vessel (in the front quadrant) gives the slowest speed. Most ships would have oars in addition, so rowing speeds are given as well. Ship descriptions include the rough period of their introduction.

## Carvel (Late Medieval)

The Carvel emerged in the 14-15th Century. Its superior maneuverability comes from its combination of lateen (triangular) and square sails. Their sail rig and the lack of oars meant increasingly heavier broadsides of cannon could be carried.

## Dhow (Dark Ages)

The Dhow uses triangular sails, known as Lateens. While not as powerful as square sails moving with the wind, they are more efficient at different angles to wind, allowing greater maneuverability

at all points of the wind. The Lateen rig is derived from the word 'Latin' which is believed to refer to the Byzantines. The Lateen sail rig's use became widespread in the Moslem world.

The Chinese Junk has a similar sail pattern to the Dhow, except each sail is lengthened and strengthened with battens of bamboo.

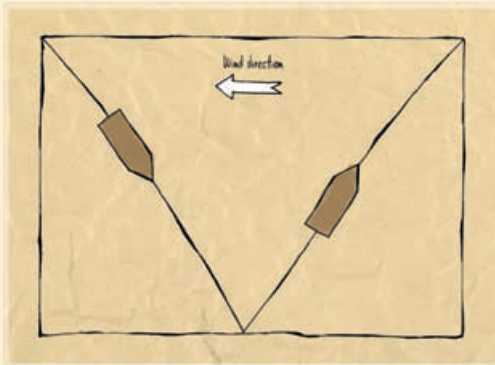


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Roman marines ready for boarding

# RULES

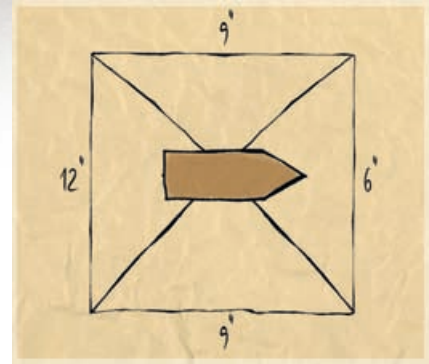
## MOVEMENT - THE REALISTIC MODEL (OPTIONAL RULE)



### Tack and Wear

Technically, sailing directly into wind (the front quadrant) should result in no movement. Players are free to use this realistic model to move their ships upwind (alternatively zig zagging) or they can assume (as we do) that ships are automatically tacking and wearing and this is taken into account with their low movement rate into wind (which is far, far simpler!).

A ship which wishes to sail into wind has to do so in a series of zig zag movements, known as Tack and Wear. Ships can do this because the vessel is pushed by the wind in the direction of the sail, not the wind and the resultant movement in the water is relative to the direction the ship is in the water and the force of the sail.



**Carvel (Rowing Speed = Crew Bonus)**

of the test means the manoeuvre cannot be completed. Ships under oar follow the same rules, except wind direction is irrelevant.

Ships may choose to halve their sail, slowing down all movement rates by half. This may be accomplished in two turns or in a single turn with a leadership test. From half sail, the sail can be cut completely, halting the ship's movement. This follows the same sequence as halving sail.

### CREW

Each ship has a minimum crew size (this being is the minimum required for handling the sails). For a galley under oars, a far greater number of crew are required if the ship is to move at any decent speed. The speed under oars is dependant upon the amount of crew it has, based on a multiple of the minimum crew size. In game terms, a galley requires a crew four times as large as that of a similar sized sailing vessel to move at full speed. Crew may be taken from the army lists (for example Viking warriors would serve as oarsmen) or taken from here.

### Square sailed ship (Biblical)

The square sailed ship is typical of light merchant ships down the ages, from the earliest vessel such as the Pentekonter through to the Viking longship and Medieval cog.

### Greek Bireme (Early Classical)

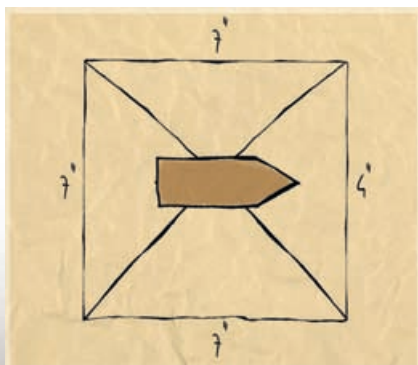
The bireme was designed primarily for speed and would be typically fitted with a ram. Similar designs of galley were used up until the 16th Century, before finally being replaced by Carvels and Galleons. Some medieval versions, such as the Lanterna, had a Lateen rig (use the Dhow sail pattern but with the bireme's row speed) and had a large cannon on their prow.

### Large trading ship (Biblical)

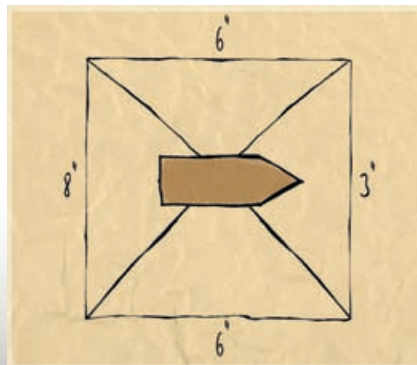
This is the typical sailing pattern for a large vessel such as a large merchantman or a Byzantine Dromon warship. It can also be used for poorer, less seaworthy vessels.

### TURNING

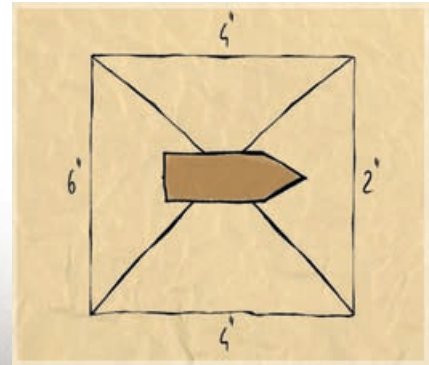
A ship under sail may turn up to 45 degrees with no penalty to movement; the turn can be made at any point during the move. It can turn up to 90 degrees on a successful leadership test but has to halve its movement for that turn. On a second successful leadership test, a ship may remain stationary and turn a full 180 degrees in either direction or to cross against the wind direction. Failure



**Dhow (Row Speed = 1" + Crew Bonus)**



**Square Sail (Row Speed = 1" + Crew Bonus)**



**Large Trader (Row Speed = Crew Bonus)**

# RULES

## SAILOR/MARINER

6 Points

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	LD
Sailor	4	3	3	3	3	1	3	1	6

Equipment: Armed with a hand weapon.

Options: May have light armour (+ 2 points).

## GALLEY VE SLA

4 Points

	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	LD
Sailor	4	2	2	3	3	1	3	1	5

Equipment: Armed with an improvised hand weapon.

Options: None. Hey, these are slaves, right? Slave crew are levy and fail to charge on a '1'.

This is generally a Hollywood myth – you'd want the best trained rowers to power your ship, not slaves! However we give the option as late medieval galleys were rowed by prisoners and a few players may wish to live the myth (and skimp on costs for their crew!).

### Movement under oar

Ships or boats under oar move their full distance irrespective of the wind. The speed of a rowing ship is equal to its base rowing speed plus 1 for every additional set of rowing crew (based on the minimum crew for the vessel) up to a bonus of +3 (in a similar way to rank bonus).

All oar powered ships can move 'at the double'. This represents the crew working flat out (at ramming speed!) allowing the ship to move double distance in a straight line and perform a charge (ram attack). Normally such strenuous speeds cannot be maintained for long periods, so are impractical for sea

voyages (thus virtually all oar powered vessels have sails) but we assume that they can be maintained for the duration of a battle.

Rowing crew cannot shoot or fight, but as ships tend to stop when they fight, rowing crew can choose to join the fight and leave their positions.

Example: A medium sized Viking long ship has a row speed of 1". This is with a minimum crew of four. With 16 men aboard (four times the minimum size), the vessel may move at 4" or 8" if going flat out. If the crew is reduced to 12, the vessel may move at 3" or 6" flat out.

### Figure movement aboard ships

Figures on ships and boats move normally, they move according to the settlement rules – moving 'on the double' as skirmishers but no unit may fast march. Rowers cannot row and move in the same turn, naturally. Crossing from one boat to another costs half a unit's move, including pursuit. Figures on the shore move in accordance with the main rules.

### RAMMING

Oar power is universally used on vessels with a ram. Ideally the rammer should attack into wind, so the oppo-



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Carthaginian veterans ready their spears against Roman boarders

# RULES



rules apply – missile troops in aft or fore castles can all fire exactly like towers can from the main siege rules. Siege weaponry fires normally against ships. Cannons have to hit the ship on the first guess distance, there is no 'bounce' once a cannonball rolls off ship.

## FIRE

The use of fire is an option in the siege equipment rules. Fire can be used aboard a ship but it is a grave danger to the ship it's on. Each turn fire is used on ship, roll a D6. On a "1" a fire breaks out aboard that ship. Use the fire rules from the main siege section.

## *A raid on an enemy harbour*

nent cannot maneuver away easily (as the Persians found at Salamis 480BC). Ships under the power of sail do not ram very well, basically because usually both the attacking and target ship rely on the power of the same wind, so there is no great impact speed (which is what you need if you want to ram effectively).

If one ship or boat moves into another ship or boat at an angle greater than 45 degrees, by accident or design, it counts as a Ram. If the ship strikes another ship at 45 degrees or less, it counts as coming alongside. The two ships are moved alongside each other and boarding can take place (a successful leadership test is required to grapple, halting the movement of both ships while the fight takes place); No damage is done.

The procedure for working out damage due to Ramming is:

- 1) Work out the bonus for the number of rowers. Add this to the basic strength of the ram (4 for a basic ram or wooden hull and 5 for a reinforced ram).
- 2) The ship inflicts a number of attacks on the enemy hull equal to the number of wounds the attacking vessel originally had. These hit on a 3+ and wound normally (comparing the strength of the ram with the toughness of the vessel).

## SHOOTING

Shooting at crew aboard ships is at a -1 (soft cover). Shooting at the ships themselves is a large target. Standard



***Crash! Two cogs slam into each other, prepare for boarding!***

## RAMMING EXAMPLE

A Greek Bireme rams a small Persian merchant vessel. The Bireme has eight wounds, a full compliment of crew and a reinforced ram. It has eight attacks of which six hit and three wound, crippling the enemy vessel.

Note: Ships began to be built with flood compartments after the first rams were introduced – a ship will usually not sink because of a single ram hit. Galleys tended to settle in the water rather than fully sink, making their salvage more likely.

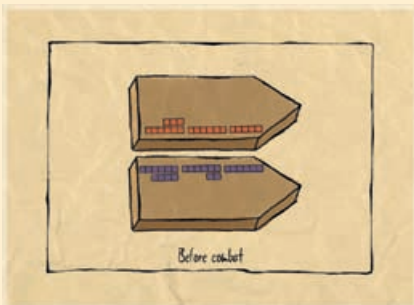
## BOARDING

Some of the larger naval battles had great similarities with land battles. A successful leadership test is required to come alongside and board.

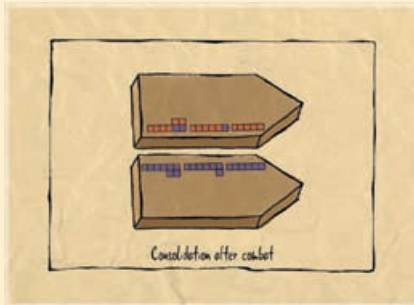
Once ships are alongside, models are assumed to be touching even though it is not always possible to bring the two ships that close together. Models are lined up as best they can against each other.

Both sides benefit from the defended obstacle rule (at -1 to hit), unless there is a significant height difference, in this case the higher is attacked (at -2 to hit). This will apply until one side wins a combat, at which point it is assumed

## BOARDING IN PRACTICE



Two ships are locked in hand to hand combat after blue makes a successful leadership to grapple.



Blue wins the combat but red refuses to break. Blue may move figures over to red, taking the place of the slain.

the attackers have a bridgehead on the other ship. Like with assaulting a fortification, the winner may replace the positions of defenders killed in combat with his own men from the winning unit.



*Two galleys come alongside*

### PANIC, FLEE AND PURSUIT

Panic, flee and pursuit is worked out as normal, except a unit won't jump overboard to escape its pursuers. Models can flee below decks (if applicable) - if it cannot flee, the unit will surrender (is removed). Pursuing units crossing from one ship to another halve their movement.

If all the defending units on a ship are panicking or are below decks, the ship surrenders automatically.

### SHIP HULL DAMAGE

Ships accumulate damage as a result of shooting and ramming actions.

The amount of damage a ship can take and the amount of minimum crew it requires is dependant on its size.

When a ship loses all Hull points it is counted as having become waterlogged and cannot move. If players wish to keep track of a vessel, each turn it sinks if a 1 is rolled.

### HOW MANY MODELS?

A ship can hold troops much in the same way as a tower, as many models as can comfortably be placed onto the model. If the model has a below decks, an equal number may be 'below'. Siege engines can be mounted aboard the ship, space permitting. A maximum number of siege engines equal to half the ship's wounds can be mounted. Light engines count as one engine, heavy (stone thrower) engines count as two for space and siege towers and trebuchets count as three. As always, let history be your guide.

### SCENARIOS

Scenarios can pretty much used straight from the *WAB* rule book or from *Siege and Conquest*. Pitched battle for example can be adapted straight for naval warfare. Modify placement of units by placement of ships, starting with the

smallest boats and working your way up.

### TERRAIN IN SEA BATTLES

Obviously most terrain cannot be applied to sea battles but terrain can be rolled for. Treat woods and difficult terrain as shallows and treat steep hills as a small island. Ignore all other results.

### GOING FURTHER

Naturally the house rules are only a starting point. Further rules can be grafted on, such as for example creating a distinction between the different nation's ships for different eras. Points cost for the ships themselves have been ignored - if you're fighting a naval battle, you'll need ships! We recommend ships of equal wounds be used by each side for a standard equal points scenario.

*These rules were originally to be in the WAB Siege and Conquest supplement but space prohibited their inclusion. Its only take five years for them to see the light of day finally! Have fun with these as we have had with them. Ramming speed!*



*Running the enemy to ground, or are these galleys about to disembark a landing party?*

Ship	Size	Example	Min Crew	Damage	Model Length
Very Small	-	Dingy	1 Man	T7	3W - Up to 3"
Small	-	Large sampan	2 Man	T8	6W - 3-6"
Medium	-		4 Man	T8	8W - 7" to 12"
Large	-		6 Man	T8	10W - 13" to 15"
Huge	-		8 Man	T8	12W - 16" plus