



naval battle rules:
**the seas
of cerilia**
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introduction

Otto van Riede, captain of the Brechlen, fixed his gaze on the pirate cog that fled before him. He'd combed the Krakennauricht for a week, searching for the Icedrake, and now he intended to run her to ground.

His lookouts had sighted the cog an hour after sunrise, beating her way into the bitter north winds that raked the inlet in late autumn, and van Riede had immediately turned in pursuit. For two hours, the Brechlen had slowly closed the gap, as van Riede ordered every yard of canvas in the roundship's sail lockers crowded onto the masts. Now, the cog was only three or four cable lengths ahead and quickly racing into dangerous shallows.

Van Riede smiled; the pirate vessel would have to turn and fight or run herself aground. "Sound general quarters," he ordered. "Archers to their stations! Clear the catapults! And ready a boarding party—I mean to hang every last one of those scurvy dogs." As his officers and crew clattered to their stations, readying the Brechlen for a fight, van Riede folded his arms and nodded. "Keep an eye on her, helm. She'll be turning any moment now. . . ."

The sea plays a vital role in the lives of Cerilians of every culture. Anuirean expansion under the Ruele emperors hinged on the nation's naval power. The love for sea exploration runs through the blood of the Khinasi, just as it did their forebears, the Basari, and the Masetians. The sea provides the trade-oriented Brechts with their livelihood, helps the Rjurikians communicate across their vast northern holdings, and lets the battle-minded Vos—with their fast drakkars—launch brutal sneak attacks on their enemies.

No BIRTHRIGHT® campaign would seem quite complete without details for war and trade by sea. Because many Cerilian realms depend on the sea for communication, trade, and warfare, a regent who rules a coastal domain might find the quality of his fleet far more important than that of his armies. In fact, his ability to protect shipping may prove the deciding factor in his success or failure as a ruler.

The Seas of Cerilia expands the BIRTHRIGHT domain and War Card rules to include maritime guidelines for players and Dungeon Masters (DMs). This booklet includes information about movement on the water, types of ships, sea trade routes, and naval battles. It also offers maps illustrating the maritime areas surrounding Cerilia. The "Cerilian Navies" section helps players adapt the BIRTHRIGHT maritime rules to existing campaigns with notes on the fleets and sea trade routes available to Anuirean, Khinasi, and Rjurik kingdoms.

This guide also adds a naval dimension to the normal BIRTHRIGHT War Card system by offering a naval battle mat for war at sea, naval War Cards, wind cards, and cards describing naval war magic. Before reading further, players and DMs should re-read the normal land-based war rules in the BIRTHRIGHT Rulebook. (It might be helpful to review some common nautical terms as well.)

Note: Most of the material in *The Seas of Cerilia* first appeared in *Cities of the Sun*, the BIRTHRIGHT campaign expansion for the land of Khinasi.



movement at sea

In terms of game play, moving on the water does not differ much from moving on land. Instead of crossing a number of provinces each War Move or action round, a player character (PC) may move his forces a number of *maritime areas*.

the maps

The maps on the inside cover of this book and on the opposite page partition the waters of Cerilia into the maritime areas mentioned above. A ship can move one to four areas per day, depending on its speed and the weather.

There are four types of maritime areas: coastal waters, rivers and lakes, sea areas, and ocean areas.

coastal waters

Ships must enter *coastal waters* in order to dock. The coastal province of Cerilia includes coastal waters along its shoreline. Ships can move directly from one coastal waters area to another by sliding along the shoreline, or they can leave the province's coastline and head out into an adjacent sea area.

rivers and lakes

Ships can move along major *river*s or *lakes* just as described above, traveling from one province directly to an adjacent province on the same river. The mouth of a river is considered coastal waters as well as river waters, so a ship sailing down a river and out to the coastal waters has to count the last province of the river only once.

sea areas

All coastal waters lie adjacent to one or more *sea areas*: stretches of open water. Ships at sea can move to adjacent sea areas, landward to coastal waters, or farther out into ocean areas.

ocean areas

Ocean areas, bordered by sea areas and other ocean areas, can take up to a week to cross.

Unlike coastal waters or sea areas, which count as one space each for purposes of movement, ocean areas can be three to five spaces or more. (The number appears in the area's space on the "Ocean Areas of Cerilia" map on the next page.)

Ships in an ocean area check their progress each day to see how much of the area they crossed. For example, say a ship attempts to cross an ocean area five spaces wide. Assuming that the ship averages two spaces a day with favorable winds, it remains in the ocean area for two days and exits on the third.

weather

The winds are a sailor's greatest friend and most dangerous enemy. Sailing directly into a strong wind proves a difficult task, requiring endless cycles of tacking (changing a ship's course by angling it into the wind). Even when the wind blows from a favorable quarter, it may be too weak or too strong to help much. After all, a racing vessel's sleek hull and sails mean nothing if the ship is becalmed or caught in a raging storm.

Wind comprises two factors: strength and direction. The DM determines both randomly at the beginning of a voyage using the tables in this section. The wind retains its direction for 1d4 days at a time before a new check is needed, but the wind strength varies from day to day.

wind strength

On the first day of the voyage, the DM rolls 2d6 and refers to **Table 1: Wind Strength**. This assigns the current winds a strength category, such as *moderate*, *strong*, and so on. After the first day's 2d6 check, the DM refers to the "Next Day" column in Table 1 to find the appropriate die roll for subsequent wind strength checks. For example, an initial 2d6 roll of 8 indicates moderate winds. According to the table, the next day's check calls for a 3d4 roll instead of a 2d6 roll. This adjustment makes it more likely that the wind will continue to be moderate the following day.

Table 1: Wind Strength

Die Roll	Wind Strength	First Day	Next Day
2	Calm	2d6	1d4+1
3	Calm	2d6	1d6+1
4	Light	2d6	2d4
5	Light	2d6	2d4
6	Light	2d6	2d6
7	Moderate	2d6	2d6
8	Moderate	2d6	3d4
9	Strong	2d6	3d4
10	Strong	2d6	1d6+6
11	Gale	2d6	1d6+6
12	Storm	2d6	2d6*

* In the case of storms, do not check the wind strength the next day, but after the storm blows itself out (in 1d4 days).

Calms reduce a ship's movement to 1d2-1 areas, regardless of its normal speed. Oared vessels (longships, knarrs, and drakkars) can ignore calms and move at their rowing rate (listed on each ship's naval War Card) instead. There is a 50% chance that fog could accompany a calm, which can make a ship run aground. (See "Shipwrecks.")

Table 2: Wind Direction

2d6	Spring/Summer	Fall/Winter
2	East	South
3	East	South
4	South	East
5	South	East
6	South	North
7	West	North
8	West	North
9	West	West
10	North	West
11	North	West
12	East	South

Gales are treated the same as strong winds, except that they also alter a ship's intended course by moving the vessel 1d3 areas in the direction the wind is blowing, or 1d3-1 areas if the captain's player succeeds in a Seamanship proficiency check. However, players must carry out gale movement *after* the ship has conducted its normal movement—a ship in a gale almost never ends up where it wanted to be! Gales may cause shipwrecks, too.

Storms resemble gales—but worse. A ship cannot maneuver at all in a storm; it is simply blown 2d4 areas per day in the direction the wind blows. Storms blow out after 1d4 days and naturally they, like gales, can cause shipwrecks.

wind direction

In Cerilian waters, the wind generally blows out of the west in spring and summer, and from the north in fall and winter. This is a fairly crude approximation; actually, different parts of the continent experience varied wind patterns.

For convenience, players should assume the wind always blows from one of the four cardinal points of the compass. The wind maintains its direction for 1d4 days before the DM checks it again, using Table 2.

The wind direction is always *the direction the wind is blowing from*. So, a westerly wind comes from the west and blows toward the east. (This distinction is a convention of nautical and meteorological use.)

movement allowance

The movement of a sailing vessel depends on its Maneuverability Class and the wind's speed and direction. Even a swift ship cannot make much headway sailing into a strong wind. Once a player finds a ship's Maneuverability Class (MC) on the vessel's War Card, he should refer to Table 3 on the next page. Using the line appropriate for wind strength and whether the ship is sailing into, with, or across the wind, a player can find the number of areas a ship can move on its first turn.



Table 3: Ship Movement Allowance

Winds	Ship Maneuverability Class (MC)			
	A	B	C	D
Light				
Into	1	1	1	0
With	2	1	1	1
Across	3	2	1	1
Moderate				
Into	1	1	0	0
With	3	2	2	1
Across	4	3	2	1
Strong				
Into	1	0	0	0
With	4	3	2	2
Across	5	4	3	2

Example: A strong wind blows from the north. A galleon (MC B) sails east, or across the wind. It can move four areas in one day of sailing. If the ship turns into the wind, it cannot make any headway at all.

If a ship's course carries it northeast, southwest, or in any other noncardinal direction, players should "round off" its heading to a clean north, south, east, or west—whichever is closest to correct—for simplicity's sake.

The diagram below offers an illustration of normal movement at sea.



Diagram 1: Movement at sea.

A Khinasi dhouira (MC B) sets sail from Ariya with a south wind of moderate strength. It moves across the wind, sliding along the coastal waters of the provinces of Kouzir and Azédas to Adaba in its first day of sailing. The next day, the wind falls to light strength. The dhouira turns south (now into the wind) and sails to the area adjacent to Adaba. On the third day, the wind dies entirely. The player's roll for his movement in a calm (1d2-1) yields him a rate of 1. So, the dhouira can move one area south of the Isle of Ghosts—where it is attacked by pirates and sinks. End of voyage.

proficiency checks

Successful proficiency checks can increase a ship's speed. If the pilot or navigator succeeds in a Navigation check, *and* the captain or deck chief succeeds in a Seamanship check, the ship gains a +1 bonus to its day's movement allowance. A player can attempt both checks if his PC serves as both captain and navigator.

changing course

A ship begins a journey with the movement allowance indicated on Table 3 for the first move of the day. For instance, if a vessel sails east with a southerly wind in its first move, it is going across the wind and gains the proper movement allowance.

A ship cannot gain extra movement if it takes a more advantageous course after its initial move of the day. However, it can change course as often as desired and travel in any direction, as long as it moves only up to the movement allowance it received on its first move this turn.

There is one exception to this rule: Ships that turn into the wind after a downwind (with the wind) or crosswind course end their moves after one area of sailing into the wind, no matter how much of their movement allowances they have left.

rivers

Regardless of the wind direction, ships move one area per day when sailing upriver and two areas per day when sailing downriver. The wind strength does not matter except in a storm, when ships sailing along rivers cannot move at all until the storm abates.

oared vessels

Longships, knarrs, and drakkars are oared vessels, which can ignore the wind and use their rowing rates (listed on each ship's naval War Card) instead of their sailing rates. (Gales and storms still have their normal effects, of course.) In light or moderate wind, oared vessels can row to supplement their normal sailing and move one extra area (or portion of an ocean area).



shipwrecks

Bad weather at sea can prove dangerous: Light craft, especially, can founder or run aground. Foundering happens due to rough seas in gales or storms—a ship takes on too much water and goes under. Grounding occurs when a ship hits a rock, shoal, or coastline and breaks apart.

seaworthiness checks

To prevent either type of shipwreck—foundering or grounding—a player must make a successful seaworthiness check. All ships have a seaworthiness rating ranging from 1 to 20—the higher the rating, the better. (Vessels' ratings are listed in Table 4 in the next section.) To make a seaworthiness check, a player rolls 1d20 and compares the result to the ship's rating or the captain's Seamanship proficiency score, whichever is higher. Rolls less than or equal to the ship's seaworthiness rating (or the captain's Seamanship score) succeed.

However, the seaworthiness check receives a 1-point penalty for every area the ship was driven by the winds in a gale or storm. So, a ship blown three areas off course suffers a -3 penalty to its seaworthiness rating (or the captain's proficiency score) for the check.

Seaworthiness checks also reflect a ship's ability to withstand unusual stresses or attacks at sea, such as a whale ramming the vessel. The galleon pictured on the cover, with a seaworthiness rating of 15, might have a hard time surviving its bout with the dragon turtle—unless its captain is quite a proficient seaman!

foundering

Any vessel at sea in a gale or storm risks foundering. After a ship moves in these wind conditions, the player must make a seaworthiness check. Ships that fail will sink after 1d10 hours of battling the elements. If the vessel has smaller craft aboard, the crewmembers can abandon ship and take their chances in the boats. PCs should have an opportunity to save themselves, but if they are 800 miles out with no boats, they will find themselves in some serious trouble.

grounding

Grounding may occur when a ship enters coastal waters in fog, a gale, or a storm. A check for grounding succeeds if a player rolls a 1d20 result lower than the ship's seaworthiness rating or the pilot's Navigation proficiency score—whichever is lower. If the ship fails, it runs aground. Should it ground on a marshy coast or sandy shoals, the crew can refloat it after 1d6 days of work. Otherwise, the ship will never sail again. If the ship grounds on a rocky coastline, the collision smashes it to splinters and it sinks immediately. Again, PCs should have every chance to save themselves.

ships of cerilia

Of the five human cultures of Cerilia, three maintain major seafaring interests, and a fourth—the Rjurik—has minor interests. Only the Vos are not considered a true seapower, but even they build their own vessels for raiding or trading across short stretches of water.

Most demihumans (and many awnsheghlien) live in landlocked domains, and so have not developed navies. Also, the insular nature of such peoples gives them little motive to begin sea travel—they have no desire to trade with humans. Given the opportunity, elves and goblins might prove adept seafarers.

types of vessels

Table 4, at right, lists the ships used most often by Cerilian captains. Their descriptions appear below. Certain other sea craft, such as galleons or men o' war, are seen too infrequently to mention or are used only in isolated areas.

caravel

The precursor of the galleon, the caravel is a two-masted, square-rigged vessel. However, the galleon has replaced it as the Anuirean warship of choice. The caravel can carry 3 GB of cargo and one unit of soldiers.



coaster

A variety of small fishing vessels and fast traders make up the category of ship called coasters. These one- or two-masted vessels are rigged fore and aft—in other words, with triangular sails. Too small to act as warships or carry any significant amount of cargo (less than 1 GB), coasters can transport a small party or serve courier duty.



Table 4: Ships of Cerilia

Ship	Availability	Cost	MC	Hull	Seaworthiness
Caravel	Anuirean	6 GB	B	2	16
Coaster	Anuirean, Brecht	2 GB	A	1	15
Cog	Rjurik, Brecht	5 GB	C	2	17
Dhoura	Khinasi	4 GB	B	2	16
Dhow	Khinasi	2 GB	A	1	14
Drakkar	Vos	8 GB	D (2)	2	13
Galleon	Anuirean	15 GB	B	4	15
Keelboat	All	1 GB	C (1)	1	10
Knarr	Rjurik	6 GB	C (1)	2	16
Longship	Vos, Rjurik	3 GB	C (2)	1	14
Roundship	Brecht	12 GB	B	3	18
Zebec	Khinasi	17 GB	A	3	15

Availability lists the races that commonly build this type of vessel. Exceptions may arise, of course.

Cost tells how many Gold Bars it takes to build the ship. (1 GB = 2,000 gp.)

MC means the ship's Maneuverability Class. Oared vessels sometimes use their rowing rates (in parentheses) instead of sailing normally.

Hull describes how many hits of hull damage the ship can withstand. This figure measures a ship's strength and size. (A ship with 3 hull points has three "hits" on its War Card.)

Seaworthiness indicates how well the vessel can avoid shipwrecks.

Caravel. The precursor of the galleon, the caravel is a two-masted, square-rigged vessel. However, the galleon has replaced it as the Anuirean warship of choice. The caravel can carry 3 GB of cargo and one unit of soldiers.

cog

The two-masted, square-rigged cog resembles a caravel but has a broader beam. It tends to be slower and more seaworthy. Cogs are still popular with the Rjurik, but roundships are replacing them in Brecht waters. Cogs have a cargo capacity of 3 GB and can carry one unit of troops.



dhoura

The standard Khinasi merchantman, a dhoura is a two- or three-masted vessel rigged fore and aft. Unlike Brecht or Anuirean shipwrights, the Khinasi do not incorporate forecastles or sterncastles (built-up structures at the far front and back of a ship) on the raised upper decks in their designs, but a dhoura may feature an afterdeck-house. Dhouras have a cargo capacity of 2 GB and can carry one unit of soldiers.

