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## CHAPTER 1 - THE BASICS

### Introduction

Welcome to exciting and fast paced World War II naval action! The war between the U.S. and Japan in the Pacific during the Second World War saw the ultimate evolution of the battleship concept, and eventually its replacement by the aircraft carrier as the principle capital ship in all navies.



Whether you are a fan of majestic battleships or powerful carriers, Naval Thunder: Battleship Row gives you the opportunity to recreate the famous battles in the Pacific, or to create your own to find out what could have happened if things had gone just a little differently. This product also serves as the core rules used for all the forthcoming Naval Thunder products covering the various theaters of naval combat during the Second World War.

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

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



### What You Need to Play

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

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

## Dice Terminology

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

## The Ship Data Card

This is a sample of the ship data cards used when playing Naval Thunder: Battleship Row. It may look complicated at first, but it’s actually quite simple once you know how to read it.

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

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

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

The class section provides a variety of information needed to move, shoot, resolve damage, and determine the ship captain’s willingness to stay in the fight. Towards the upper right corner you will find the armor value (AV) of the ship. The ship’s armor value is a number generated by applying a calculation to the ship’s historical armor data, considering armor type, armor scheme, and armor thickness by location. An armor value of 4 represents an unarmored destroyer, while an armor value of 20 represents a heavily armored battleship.

Atago						256	
Takao class Heavy Cruiser (8+)							
Hull	54						
Speed	9	FC	JPN	AV	9		
Move Step	Cruiser	CMD		SAV	3		
Shoot Step	Cruiser	Crew		AA/ASW	9 / 0		
Main Battery Layout							
Size	Guns/Turret	# of Turrets	Arc of Fire				
8" / 50	2	[2]	F/P/S				
8" / 50	2	[1]	P/S				
8" / 50	2	[2]	A/P/S				
Secondary Battery Layout							
Size	Guns/Turret	# of Turrets	Arc of Fire				
5" / 40	2	[2]	P				
5" / 40	2	[2]	S				
Gun Data							
Size	S	M	L	X	Pen	Dmg	
5" / 40	14	28	42	56	6	5	
5" / 40	7	14	21	28	2	2	
Torpedo Data							
Size	S	M	L	Mount	No.	Arc	
24"	5	10	15	Quad	[2]	P	
24"	5	10	15	Quad	[2]	S	
Aircraft							
	F	DB	TB	LB	R	Fit Ops	
Max					1	1	
Current							
Orders							
Turn	Movement	Main Battery	Torpedo				
1							
2							
3							
4							
5							
6							
7							
8							
9							
10							
11							
12							

Below the armor value is the ship's secondary armor value (SAV). This alternate armor value is used when the ship is being attacked by bombs or torpedoes. Below the secondary armor value is a box labeled AA/ASW. The number in front of the slash is the ship's anti-aircraft defense rating, while the number after the slash is the ship's anti-submarine warfare rating.

At the top of the middle column in the class section is the ship's fire control type (FC). There was a big spread in the quality of fire control systems during World War II. The type of FC system the ship carries will have a big impact on the accuracy of its shooting.

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

The next three sections provide all the necessary details about the guns the ship carries. The main and secondary battery layout sections show how the guns are arranged on the ship and are used to determine which guns may be brought to bear on a target during the course of the game. Below that is the gun data section, which provides the game statistics for all the types of gun the ship carries.

Gun Data						
Size	S	M	L	X	Pen	Dmg
8" / 50	14	28	42	56	6	5
5" / 40	7	14	21	28	2	2
Torpedo Data						
Size	S	M	L	Mount	No.	Arc
24"	5	10	15	Quad	[2]	P
24"	5	10	15	Quad	[2]	S

Below the gun data is the torpedo section with all the information you need on the ship's torpedo armament. In addition to size, range, and layout information, the torpedo section also shows the type of torpedo mount. This can be single, double, triple, quadruple, or quintuple. Only one attack roll is made per torpedo mount, but mounts with more torpedoes gain a bonus to hit and have the chance of scoring multiple hits.

Underneath the torpedo information is a section showing how many flights of aircraft the ship carries and their type. In this case the cruiser has only 1 flight of reconnaissance aircraft, but carriers might have many flights of several different types. The flight operations (Flt Ops) box is used to track whether the ship has sustained too much damage to be able to launch or recover aircraft.

Finally at the bottom of the data card is space for you to write the ship's movement and shooting orders.

## **Setup**

**Select a Time Period** - The rate of technological advance during World War II was so rapid that equipment considered state of the art at the outbreak of war was obsolete by the end. For this reason, these rules divide World War II into two phases, the early war (1939 - 1942) and the late war (1943 - 1945).

In some places, minor changes to the rules are necessary to reflect the state of naval warfare during either the early or late war period. Where there are rules that apply only to the early war period, or only to the late war period, that fact will be specifically called out.

To help determine which ships are appropriate to play for a given year, refer to the Year Available entry on the ship data sheet.

Choose a year between 1939 and 1945 for the battle to take place. Only the rules that apply to that year, and ships available at that time may be used.

**Force Selection** - You and your opponent should each build a fleet from different fleet lists (unless you want to try some hypothetical civil-war scenarios). A fleet can be built either to a specified combat value point limit, using historical orders of battle, or in whatever way you agree upon.



When building a fleet from scratch, there are three rules you must follow.

- You are limited to a base number of 2 destroyers/destroyer escorts per fleet. You can earn the ability to take additional destroyers by taking ships of other kinds. Each heavy cruiser or battlecruiser you take allows you to include an additional destroyer in your fleet. Each battleship you take allows you to include two additional destroyers in your fleet.
- Carriers are also limited by the composition of your fleet. You may never have more carriers in your fleet than your combined total of battleships and battlecruisers. The only exception to this rule is if you have no battleships or battlecruisers in your fleet, you can still take 1 fleet carrier. Escort carriers count as  $\frac{1}{2}$  a fleet carrier for this rule.
- You may only include land-based aircraft in your fleet if your fleet also includes at least 1,000 points of battleships and/or battlecruisers. See Chapter 7 - Optional Rules for details on land-based aircraft.

You are, of course, free to ignore these requirements if both you and your opponent agree to it. However, playtesting has shown these rules tend to make for more enjoyable games.