

Armadas

Armada Second Edition

With revised rules and balanced game-play

A turn based, multi-player, board-less, pure strategy, miniatures game
of nautical battle using Looney Pyramids
by Dan Isaac

Description:

Fleets of warships do battle on the open seas. Which commander can navigate his Armada to victory through the ensuing skirmish?

Equipment:

2 or more trios of Looney Pyramids per player

Each player should have the same number of trios.

Each player should have pieces of a distinct color, or set of colors.

[See the "Alternate Rules - Alternate Setup" section for variant equipment options.]

A few chits or markers of some sort to represent damage on the ships

A flat unobstructed playing area of any shape that is at least 20 inches (50 cm) in diameter

Goal:

Sink all enemy fleets.

[See the "Alternate Rules - Alternate Goals" section for variant goal ideas.]

Setup:

Each player must set aside one trio of their pieces. These will be used when moving the ships, and firing the cannons.

Each player then sets their remaining pieces in a grouping near them on the table in any configuration they choose.

- Each piece should be lying flat, and should not overlap any other piece.
 - Each piece should be at least 12 inches (30 cm) away from all opponent pieces.
- [See the "Alternate Rules - Alternate Setup" section for variant setup options.]*

Play:

Each player's turn consists of that player performing up to three Actions with their ships.

The choices of Actions are as follows:

- Move one ship which has not yet moved this turn.
- Fire a shot from a ship which has not yet fired its maximum count of shots this turn.

Moving a Ship:

As one Action, a ship can move up to a maximum number of Steps based on its size.

Large ships can move a maximum distance of up to two (2) Steps as one Action.

Medium ships can move a maximum distance of up to three (3) Steps as one Action.

Small ships can move a maximum distance of up to four (4) Steps as one Action.

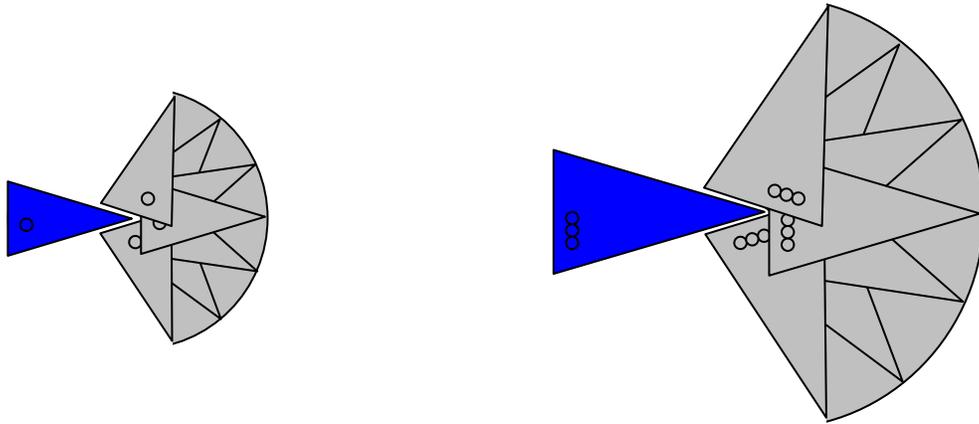
Each Step is made by placing a piece of the same size as the ship such that the center of the new ships Stern (base of the pyramid) touches the Bow (point) of the ship being moved.

Orient the new ship in the direction that you wish it to move and place it down.

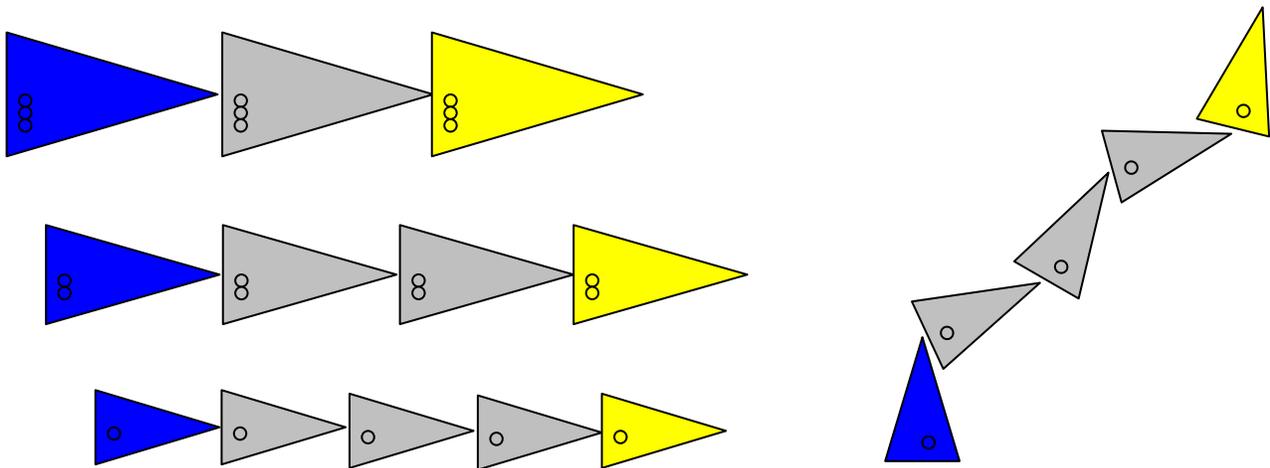
Then remove the original ship from the old position. *[See Illus. 1]*

Continue this process until you have either gone as far as you wish, or until you have traveled the maximum number of Steps allowed based on the size of the ship. *[See Illus. 2 & 3]*

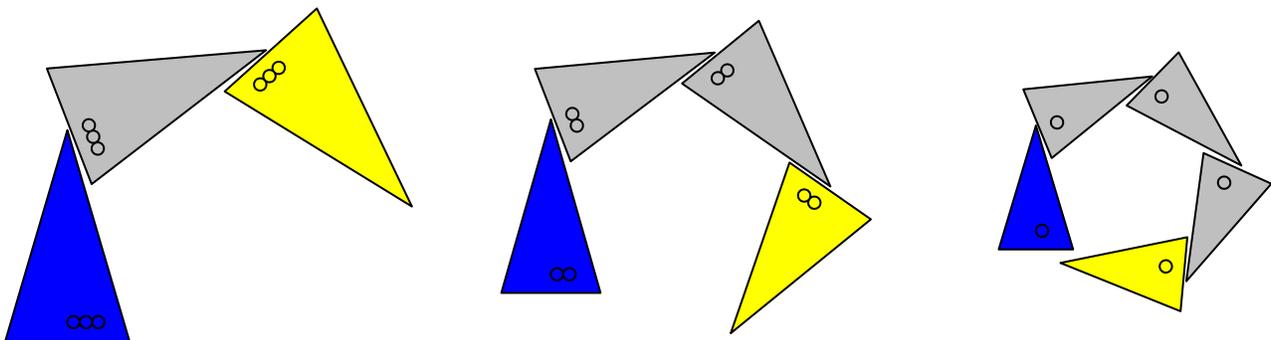
Any damage counters which the ship had acquired should also be moved to the new ship location.



Illus. 1 – Ship Movement – Single Step Examples
*[Blue pieces indicate the initial ship position.
 Gray area indicates the possible positions for the ship after one step.]*



Illus. 2 – Ship Movement – Straight Distance (left) & General Movement (right) Examples
*[Blue pieces indicate the initial ship position.
 Gray pieces indicate individual steps and possible stopping points.
 Yellow pieces indicate the furthest step that the ship can make.]*



Illus. 3 – Ship Movement –Turning Radius (top)
*[Blue pieces indicate the initial ship position.
 Gray pieces indicate individual steps and possible stopping points.
 Yellow pieces indicate the furthest step that the ship can make.]*

Ship Movement: (continued)

A ship must travel in Steps as listed above. It must move in increments of its size.

No partial-size moves are allowed. Only moves that are a number of full Steps up-to the maximum number are allowed. (e.g. A small can move the length of one, two, three or four small sizes, but not partial steps. – No two and a half size moves.)

If a ship would come into contact with another object or the edge of the playing surface during a move, then that move is not allowed.

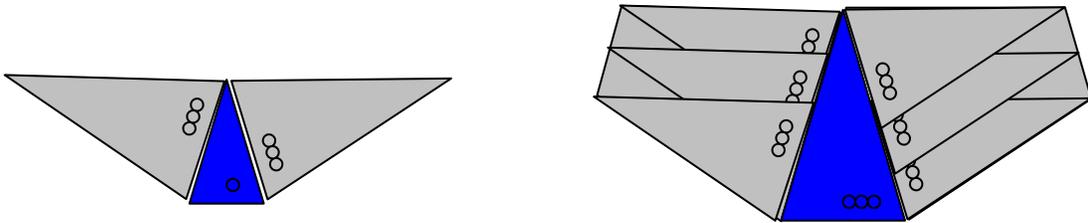
*** Note: It will be impossible to orient the new ship in some directions, such as at a 90 degree angle or straight back, as the new ship would overlap upon the original one. Also, it is possible to have a ship in a position such that there are no possible valid directions that it may move. (Its path could be blocked by another ship, or an obstacle such as the edge of the playing field.) In these cases that ship is stuck and cannot currently be moved.*

Firing a cannon:

During a turn a ship can only fire its cannons up-to a specified number of times based on its size, and each shot requires one turn action. A Small ship may only fire once (1) per turn, a Medium may fire up to twice (2), and a Large up to three (3) times in a single turn.

All ships can fire cannons at objects up to a distance of one Large away, but only in specific directions.

To fire a cannon, Use a Large piece (regardless of ship size) such that the entire base side of the large touches one of the two long sides of your ship. The Large piece indicates your possible target area. If the object you wish to shoot lies in the area covered by the Large piece, and is not obstructed by anything, then you can hit that target.



Illus. 4 – Firing a Cannon – Cannon Range Examples

[Blue pieces indicate the ship position.

Gray area indicates where the cannons can reach.]

When a ship is hit with cannon fire, it takes one point of damage. A ship is destroyed (sunk) when it has taken damage equal to its size. So a Small ship is sunk the first time that it is hit. But a Medium ship will not sink until the second time that it is hit, and a Large can survive until the third hit. You can use some form of chit's or other markers to indicate ships that have already taken some damage. The damage stays with that ship the remainder of the game until it is sunk. Make sure to move the counters along with the ship whenever you move it.

Fiddly bits:

If there is any question about whether something is possible from a given situation (e.g. if something is within cannon range, if you can move without hitting something, etc) then the answer is No, you can not do it.

In general, ships should not be moved or jostled outside of actually moving them as part of your turn actions. If something does get moved accidentally, you should make your best attempt to put it back in its original position, but there is no penalty for this happening.

Alternate Rules:

Armada s can be seen as a framework for playing a miniatures battle game using the Looney Pyramids. As such, it is open to a variety of house rules. The above rules describe the basic game. Feel free to experiment with the rules so long as all players agree upon the changes prior to the start of each game. Below are some suggestions and examples of alternate game-play to consider.

Alternate Setup:

So long as each player sets aside one extra trio of unused pieces for movement and cannon shots, any combination of ships can be used at the setup.

Some examples:

- 1) Decide on the specific counts for each size ship, and each player use the same sizes of ships.
 - Eg: 1 Large, 2 Medium, & 4 Smalls
- 2) Agree on a total number of ships per player, but each player selects which sizes they will use.
 - Eg: 8 ships of any size combinations
- 3) Decide on a point value per ship size, and a total maximum fleet point value. Players then create their own fleet of ships totaling up to no more than that set total fleet point value.
 - Eg: S=2, M=3, L=4 – 14-point of ships per player
- 4) Experienced players could be handicapped by decreasing the number of ships or points that they begin the game with.

Alternate Goals:

Instead of playing until an entire fleet is destroyed, there are a number of alternate mechanisms players can agree upon for determining a winner.

Some examples:

- 1) Destroy over half of a players ships (or point values worth of ships)
- 2) Mark one of each players ships as a flag-ship. When it is sunk, that player is out of the game.
- 3) Sink a set number (or point values worth) of opponent ships.

Alternate Game-play:

In addition to the various Setups and Goals, players could also choose to change the basic game by modifying the playing surface, modifying certain rules, using unbalanced fleets, and/or playing through pre-defined scenarios.

Some examples:

- 1) Playing Surface: Obstructions can be setup on the playing surface to represent islands, reefs and shores which are not traversable. Or perhaps can only be traveled by smaller (shallow-draft) ships.
- 2) Scenarios: One player is attempting to transport some shipment (one of their ships) from one marked location on the table, to another marked location without being sunk.
- 3) Home Bases: Each player is attempting to be the first to cross over and dock at the other players' home base.
- 4) Firing Ranges: Firing ranges of the ships could be limited to match the ships size. (Instead of always a Large range.)
- 5) Rear Cannon: Ships could be equipped with rear cannon, instead of only being able to fire from the sides. (Perhaps only useable on Large ships, or with cannons based on the ship size.)
- 6) Ramming: You could add rules for causing damage to another ship by moving into its location with one of your ships. (Perhaps also causing damage to your ship as well. Perhaps damage based on the sizes of the ships. Etc.)
- 7) Pickup and Deliver: Place additional Small and Medium pieces around the board in upright orientations. Pickup the pieces with your Medium and Large ships and deliver them back to your Home Base.
- 8) Point Based game: Left-over points, after initial fleet construction, could be used as armor on a particular ship (extra damage before sunk), or to repair one point of damage to a ship, or to take one extra action on a turn.

Historical Notes:

Armadas is an updated version of my original game (Armada) which took 4th place in the Spring 2005 IGDC4 (Icehouse Game Design Competition # 4) and was then published as Editor's Choice in Hypothermia #16. The design competition had a restriction of using only a single-stash (5-trios total), which I implemented by having the piece size indicate the controlling player. However, my implementation of that caused imbalances between the two sides. Those issues (and a couple other minor items) have been rectified with these updated rules.

The major differences in this version of the game are as follows:

- Equipment:

Multiple trios per-player, rather than a single stash per game.

Color (instead of size) indicates a pieces owner.

- Number of players:

Multiple trios and color identifiers allow for the support of multi-player.

- Setup:

Players start with identical fleets, thus balancing the fleet strengths.

- Movement:

Most ships gain an extra step of movement. (L=2, M=3, S=4)

This allows the larger ships to be a bit more maneuverable, and thus more useful.

“Thank You”s:

The original Armada has been out for over 10 years now, and during that time it has gained the attention of quite a number and variety of people. Some have come to be huge fans and proponents of the game, enhancing it and creating their own house rules and variants. (Some of which are included in the above revised rules & alternate suggestions.) Others have seen it as inspiring, and a unique standout for the category of miniatures with Icehouse games. Some have helped spread the game by creating pages and forums documenting the rules on a variety of websites; even converting it to other languages. And there have been yet others who were not such fans of the game due to some fairly obvious imbalances between the fleets in the original rules. These last have also helped to urge me to correct the longstanding issues with the base game. To all of these people, as well as all of the ones who find, enjoy, and enhance this game in the future, I would like to give a big “Thank You”.

Here are a few specific people that I would like to thank for the above reasons, and others:

David Artman, Christopher Van Lenten, Daniel Sellers, Russell Grieshop, Greg Lescoe, Carlton “Kermit” Noles, Kory Heath, Ryan McGuire, Robert Brimer, Niall Bole, Christopher Hickman, Mike Peterson, David “DangerMouse” Morgan-Mar, & Russ Williams.

And of course, a special “Thank You” goes out to Andy and the entire Looney Labs clan for the Pyramids, and everything they have done to bring this gaming system to the world; providing me and many others with years and years of fun, creativity, and enjoyment.