

Adapting Black Powder to small unit action and rules for using Gun Boats or Small Ships

As these are small unit actions the command system for **Black Powder** needs to be adapted. Assign an overall commander for the force and allocate a command rating. This individual is the only person who can issue a **Rally on Me** or **Follow Me** order. For each of the units, determine a command rating for the officer commanding. These officers can issue normal orders but cannot issue a **Rally on Me** or a **Follow Me** order. Roll for each unit as if it were a brigade with the overall commander being able to take command of a unit or allow a reroll of a failed command roll if he is within 6" of a unit. (He can only use this ability on 1 unit per turn but not if he is leading a unit, fighting in hand to hand combat or carrying out some other action.)

In small unit actions, it is not likely that a unit would simply disappear. If the result of a break test is break, the unit will:

- Turn and flee a full move directly away from the enemy and will end with its back to the enemy. If on a vessel the unit will jump overboard either back into the boats it came from or into the water in an attempt to swim away. It will continue fleeing both in its own turn and in the enemy turn until it leaves the table or is rallied.
- If the enemy follows up and is able to fight on that turn, the unit takes casualties but does not fight back.
- The unit's officer can try to rally the unit once after the initial turn on which it fled. If successful the unit rallies on the spot but is classed as disordered for that turn. If it fails to rally on the first turn and continues fleeing, then only the overall commander/general may try to rally the unit. He must carry out a **Rally on Me** order but deducts 1 from his command rating.

RULES FOR GUNBOATS, SMALL SHIPS OR SIMILAR CRAFT

I have created rules for the use of the gunboat in line with **Black Powder** but they can be used for other similar games.

Vehicle	Move	Armed with	H T H	Shoot	Morale	Stamina	
Gunboat	12	2 Artillery or 2 Machine Guns Or 1 of each	3*	As Carried	4+	4	*Represents crew's ability to defend the boat

- Ships, gunboats or similar river craft cruise in coastal waters or down rivers up to 12" per move
- If a ship, gunboat or river craft fails its command roll it suffers a temporary break down in its engines or a loss of wind to the sails and moves down stream or with the tide at ¼ of its last speed and cannot shoot that turn
- If a ship, gunboat or river craft scores 12 on its command roll then roll 1D6 and check the outcome on the chart for the effect

Boat Blunder Chart

Score	Effect
1	Runs Aground! – The boat hits a sand bar and then comes to a halt unable to move. The crew needs to roll 5+ on 1D6 to free it!
2	Go Astern! - The boat reverses or comes about - make one move astern at ½ speed.
3	Run out of Steam/loses the wind! - The boat glides to a halt and needs to pass a command to move again.
4	Dead Stop! – the boat travels ¼ speed ahead and then halts: no firing is possible for this move whilst the crew pick themselves up off the deck
5	Stop the Boat! – the boat travels ½ speed ahead then stops
6	All Ahead Full! - The boat makes up to 3 moves ahead and its crew will engage the enemy if possible. Roll one D6 - 1-2 = 1 move: 3-4 = 2 moves: 5-6 = 3 moves.

When a ship or boat suffers disorder or as a result of a break test, roll 1D6 on the vehicle reliability chart:

Reliability Chart –

Score	Effect
1	Catastrophic mechanical failure/ Masts shot away or broken! - the ship is unable to move for the remainder of the action other than drift down stream/in the direction of the tide at ¼ speed or anchor where they are.
2	Engine Problems/Masts damaged! – the ship is unable to move. It will drift down stream/in the direction of the tide at ¼ speed until the damage is repaired on a 4+
3	Reduced Speed! – due to an engine malfunction/ sail damage the ship’s maximum speed is reduced by ½ for the rest of the action
4	Control Problems – The ship’s steering is damaged and it moves in a random direction which may run it aground needing 5+ to free it. Otherwise this continues until the crew roll a 4+ to regain control
5	Low Ammo! – One of the weapons carried by the ship is low on ammo and cannot fire until a 4+ is rolled to reload it.
6	It’s Broken/Out of Ammo! - One of the weapons carried by the ship cannot fire for the remainder of the action.

Shooting the Guns

Gun boats may carry up to two pieces of artillery. These count as field artillery (these are not large ships) with the normal range for such guns. However, unlike other artillery they can move and fire since they are placed on a moving ship. The rules are as follows

- The Guns can normally only fire to the port or starboard side of the ship.
- If a ship mounts a bow or stern chaser, then such guns may fire in an arc 180 degrees from the bow or stern but it takes one full move to turn (lay) the gun to the desired firing location before it can fire.
- If the ship moved 4” or less or is anchored when its guns wish to fire then they do so at no penalty.
- If the ship moved more than 4” when the guns wish to fire then they suffer a -1 penalty to their score to hit.

Resisting and taking Damage

The Ship is considered to be a unit in its own right including its crew and any artillery carried. Thus the ship itself is the target not the crew or guns it carries.

In terms of the Black Powder Rules, Gun Boats have a Morale (Saving Throw) of 3+ and Stamina of 4 (the number of hits it can take). This represents the protection given by its wooded sides and its size in comparison to a unit of infantry or cavalry.

Repair

If the ship is more than 12" from the enemy, its crew may opt to spend the move carrying out repairs.

Whilst doing so they may not shoot or fight the enemy. They make a command and if they score 7+ they will restore D3 stamina points (roll a D6 and divide by 3 for the score, so a 6 is 2 stamina points) but can never return the ship fully to its starting level of Stamina. If repaired during the battle it can only ever be a maximum of 1 less than its starting value – full recovery will need time at anchor and possibly the use of a dockyard.

Break Tests for Ships' Crews

- Once a ship has lost all of its stamina its crew become shaken and must take an immediate Break Test.
- Each time the boat takes additional damage beyond its stamina it must take a break test.
- Once a boat reaches zero stamina, for each additional point lost deduct -1 from the break test die score.

Break Test Results

Dice Score	Result
4 or under	Ka Boom! – If the damage was caused by Artillery fire, then the boat sinks; if by small arms, the crew have taken so many injures that they must withdraw the ship from the combat and will not return.
5	Let's get out of here! – The boat withdraws directly away from the enemy for two moves. If this means it leaves the table it cannot return. It must also roll on the reliability chart.
6	Withdraw! - The boat withdraws from the enemy for one move. If this means they leave the battle they may return if they pass a command roll. If they withdraw they must throw on the Reliability Chart.
7 +	Fight the Ship! – The crew passes their morale check and can carry on as normal