

Trafalgar FAQ

The Sailing Phase (pages 10-16)

- **Q:** When exactly do you apply inertia? **A:** Inertia is applied before a vessel moves, and is not counted as part of the ship's movement allowance for the turn.
- **Q:** Do you have to use all your movement? **A:** The answer to this question lies on page 12, under 'Manoeuvres' – you must move your full allowance. The only way to slow down is to use backing sails. If you wish to stop completely, then you must employ backing sails in one turn, and then you can stop (after inertia, of course) in the following turn (that's on page 14).
- **Q:** How can a vessel become stationary, when do I place the marker, when do I remove the marker and what are the implications if a marker is on the ship? **A:** A vessel becomes stationary when it is Taken Aback (pg 11), comes to a Full Stop (pg 14), has been involved in a collision (pg 16) or is grappled in a boarding action (pg 29). The Stationary marker is placed immediately. At the start of its next move, you must decide what to do (usually anchor or move off), in which case you replace or remove the marker. If you choose to do nothing and drift, then leave the marker in place to remind you to act next turn.
- **Q:** If you Fire as She Bears and then, while completing your movement, end up in irons, is it okay that you've fired already but then have a May Not Fire counter placed next to the ship? **A:** It may feel odd, but it is possible.
- **Q:** Boarding actions from accidental collisions: when a ship bumps into another and they get entangled, which side is considered the attacker? This matters for certain options (grenades and grape shot, just to name two) **A:** The ship that moved and did the 'bumping' is the attacker.
- **Q:** Should collisions between ships cause below waterline hits, in the same way as colliding with rocks? **A:** I'm not going to compromise the rules as written, but I do advocate a house rule to remedy the 'un-historicalness' of this situation. The rules simply assume that all collisions are the same. In reality, collisions with rocks would cause below waterline hits, but collisions between two vessels would only cause low hits. As long as both players agree to use this alternative method of allocating damage, there shouldn't be any problems.

The Gunnery Phase (pages 17-23)

- **Q:** If firing is simultaneous, does that mean that I don't have to apply the effects of damage (such as losing heavy cannons, etc) before returning fire? **A:** Actually you do – the confusion comes from the word 'simultaneous', which is an error. Firing in Trafalgar isn't actually simultaneous – it assumes instead that a ship holding the weather gage will fire a fraction of a second before its enemy, thus receiving an advantage in a broadside exchange. The only exception is that a ship that is sunk may return fire with whatever guns it had left before the fatal damage was struck – this represents the fact that ships are rarely just blown out of the water; they sink quite slowly. This is one aspect of the game that many players like to 'house rule' – however, it simply requires a different tactical approach, with careful positioning and well-timed use of the Fire As She Bears rule to compensate for losing the weather gage.

- **Q:** Do you still get critical hits with chaser shots? **A:** By the letter of the rules, yes you do. However, with hindsight I should have given chase guns the 'Fixed Guns' rule, in the same way as for gunboats and the like.
- **Q:** Is it compulsory for the French to aim high? **A:** Nope, they're just better at it than everyone else.
- **Q:** On pages 20-21 it says that light cannon can only score a maximum of 3 on the critical hit tables. However, if raking get +1 to the roll, making it a 4 – is that right? **A:** Correct. The rules assume a 'normal' maximum. It would have been confusing to say 'a maximum of 4 on a D3' before explaining the modifiers, however it could be clearer.
- **Q:** If you are raking a target ship and you get a critical which leads to an Below Waterline hit, do you take -1 or -2 off the save for raking? **A:** Yes.
- **Q:** If I'm bow raking an enemy and the Foremast is already destroyed, are the hits lost or carried on to the next mast? The same question for the Mizzen with stern rakes. **A:** Yes! As another example, if you inflict 5 hits on a foremast that can take 3 points of damage, the mast is destroyed and the spare two hits are lost. However, if in a subsequent turn the foremast is hit again, then the hits are allocated to the mainmast.
- **Q:** Is it possible to reduce a ship's save so much that it can't possibly save, or can a vessel always save on a 6? **A:** Yes, you can completely negate a vessel's saving throw with negative modifiers.
- **Q:** Can a ship fire high AND low with different sets of cannon? **A:** If you mean can you split fire (i.e. 4 dice are aiming high and 4 dice are aiming low), then no.
- **Q:** If you aim high and destroy the mizzenmast, the damage stops there, right? You don't carry it over to the next line and the main mast? **A:** Yes. Masts are separate locations, unlike the decks on low locations which are multiple levels of the same location.
- **Q:** If I roll four hits against a mast, one of which is a critical, does it matter what I order I apply the damage in? If the regular hits destroy the mast, do I still get to roll on the critical hits table? **A:** Definitely – in the case of masts it's the only fair way to do it, because it makes a difference as to whether or not the mast can be repaired later.
- **Q:** Are critical hits only scored on the 'natural roll' of a 6 on a D6, or can a +1 modifier to hit turn a roll of 5 into a critical hit? **A:** Only natural rolls of 6 count. Of course, you can't score a critical if you needed a 6 to hit in the first place.
- **Q:** Can you get critical hits on forts? **A:** Yes, but obviously only the Low Locations table is used, and result 4 will have to be discounted, while any 'below waterline' damage will be ignored.

The End Phase (pages 24-25)

- **Q:** Can a vessel have more than one Ablaze marker on it at once? We got confused when we sent the crew to tackle the blaze, but the ship got set on fire in the following turn – do we still get to put the fire out at the end of that turn, or do we just put one of the fires out? **A:** You only ever have one blaze counter at a time – in your example, the most recent result would take precedence, so you would have to choose whether or not to divert the crew again, and treat it as a brand new fire in the End phase.

- **Q:** Do I have to ‘brace for impact’ in the End phase, or is it optional if I am planning to board the other vessel? **A:** No you don’t – it’s optional in that instance.
- **Q:** Can I still brace for impact even if my rudder has been shot out by a critical hit? **A:** When a rudder is shot out, a ship ‘may not make any turns or manoeuvres’, so that rules out bracing for impact too. Of course, the other ship may still brace for impact as usual.

Admiralty (pages 26-27)

- **Q:** Say you have a small fleet of a 4th rate and a squadron of 6th rates. The 4th rate will be your flagship, since it is the highest rate, and will have a Captain on board. But the lead vessel of the frigate squadron will automatically get its captain promoted to post-captain, thus making him a Commander (since he’ll be the highest rank in the fleet). Is this correct? **A:** No; by the letter of the rules, your flagship must be the largest ship in the fleet, and the commander must have the highest Command value. Ergo, if you want your fleet commander to be a post-captain on board a frigate, you can’t purchase a fourth rate. If you want the fourth rate to be your flagship, then you must purchase a Rear-Admiral or Admiral to command it.

Advanced Rules (pages 27-30)

- **Q:** If a boarding upgrade allows you to roll an extra D6, is this score added to the original D6, or do you roll all the dice together and choose the highest result, before adding or subtracting modifiers? **A:** The latter is correct – you only ever count one of your dice for the final rating.
- **Q:** Can Repairs (page 30) be used to spread repairs between masts freely, allowing you to restore two masts to functionality over two turns, by repairing just a single point on each? **A:** Yes, as all masts are separate locations. The only time you can’t repair a ‘destroyed’ mast is when it was taken out by a result of 4+ on the high locations critical table.
- **Q:** Can repairs to low locations be assigned between decks to restore lost cannons? **A:** No – the low area is a single location, and points must be repaired in reverse order, starting at the bottom.

The Fleets (pages 32-62)

- **Q:** Can a British ship with a Master Gunner re-roll 1s to hit when firing twice? **A:** No, the re-rolls aren’t applied. Firing twice is a special shot called ‘rapid firing’, and is therefore not a normal shot.
- **Q:** Can a British ship with a Master Gunner re-roll 1s to hit when ‘Firing as She Bears?’ **A:** ‘Fire as She Bears’ is considered to be a normal shot, but with a -1 to hit penalty, so yes – the Brits get the re-roll.
- **Q:** If a ship is set ablaze during the Gunnery Phase, in the End Phase when they check for damage they announce that the crew is fighting the fire, so they add 1 to the die roll on the Blaze Table. It also means that they cannot fire, change sail or board next move as the crew are fire fighting and not enough are available to man the guns etc. Does this apply to the British as they are allowed to remove the May Not Fire marker at the end of the move after a successful Command check. **A:** It does apply to the British fleet – the rules deliberately do not ask for a ‘May Not Fire’ counter in this instance – the devil is in the detail!

- **Q:** The Spanish fleet list says that they automatically exchange 2 light guns for 2 heavy guns giving them a gunnery factor of 2/6/2, they are also allowed to purchase the overgunned upgrade to make them 2/8/2, Am I reading this correct? If I am should the Santisima Trinidad stats on page 126 read 2/6/4 as she also has two extra carronades onboard or, as she is also overgunned, should it be 2/8/4? **A:** The overgunned entry in the Santisima Trinidad rules are misleading – it's not the same as the normal overgunned upgrade, and instead she has extra light cannons and carronades. She gets a 4/6/4 rating, rather than the usual Spanish maximum of 3/8/2. That gives her one extra dice total than would be possible in the normal rules, in addition to her special rules.
- **Q:** Can American Frigates with Master Gunner rapid fire? The entry says 'ships of the line' but the U.S. is the only fleet where you can put a Master Gunner on a Frigate. **A:** The rule is deliberate – frigates can treble shot but they can't rapid fire. The good news is that the cost of Master Gunner in the fleet list is a copy and paste error – it should have been 25 points, and this has been added to the errata (I know 25 points seems a bit high, but I deliberately wanted the US fleet to pay a premium for this upgrade; firstly they have more ships, albeit smaller ones, than most other fleets, and secondly they're faster and more manoeuvrable, making treble shotting very useful).
- **Q:** Red hot shot wasn't that common historically, and seems a bit too powerful in the game – has there been a mistake. **A:** Kind of – it should be 'one use only' (see errata). Red Hot Shot is more of a fun addition than a strictly historical one, but despite what people believe there were (rare) occasions when it was used at sea. However, some very good suggestions I've heard for house rules include loading it before a battle like double shot, and even having a chance of setting fire to the firing vessel if you roll more 1s than 6s when using it!
- **Q:** I find the pricing of Marines and Grenades a bit confusing; Grenades are 5pts cheaper than Marines and provide a bigger bonus to the boarding roll. Is this correct? **A:** This was partly an oversight on my part, admittedly, but not enough of a problem to warrant a change, especially as it appears in several places with differing points costs. Just play it as is (though I confess you'd be mad not to take grenades before taking Marines).

Scenarios (pages 88-94)

- **Q:** According to the victory conditions in the 'Assault on Diamond Rock' scenario, I'd presume that Fortresses, Martello towers etc. count as 'ships' when breaking a fleet, striking etc Is this right? **A:** Yes, they do count as ships.

Errata

- Pages 9, 12 & 142: On the Wind Strength table and the Full Sail section, the roll on the Foremast Damage table should be at -1, not +1.
- Page 16, 'Collision with Solid Object': Vessels that run aground on floating debris left after a ship sinks are not actually stuck in place for the remainder of the game – after the debris is removed, they are free to move off.

- Page 19: The example of firing states that the cannon hit on 4s. As the range is clearly under 10cm, the ship would be hitting on 3+.
- Page 22: it says a ship ablaze must take a Command check to fire in the Gunnery phase. This also applies, of course, to Fire as She Bears shots, which are taken in the Sailing phase.
- Page 23: The example for mortars is wrong, since the maximum range of a mortar is stated as 20cm, you cannot guess 25cm.
- Page 25: At the end of the first paragraph under ‘Brace for Impact’, change the last sentence to: *Players may not deliberately collide with an enemy vessel unless they are planning to declare a boarding action – they must take the following measures if at all possible.*
- Page 29: On the Boarding Modifiers chart, there should be a -1 penalty to the defender’s boarding total if their ship is crippled.
- Pages 39, 56, 135 and 145 list the Hemmema as both a frigate and an unrated vessel – it should be a frigate.
- Page 38: Gunboats and Gunbrigs cannot have carronades, only a heavy cannon.
- Pages 40 & inside back cover: Block Sloops should have a movement allowance of 3cm, not 2cm per turn.
- Page 58: The text under the Commanders entry should read: Your flagship may upgrade its Captain to one of the following ranks at the cost indicated: Post-Captain (if not already part of a squadron) (+15pts); Rear-Admiral (+30pts) or Admiral (+45pts).
- Page 58: The Master Gunner upgrade should be 25 points, not 35 – see FAQ for reasons why.
- Page 62: The Red Hot Shot rules should have the line ‘one use only’ added to the end of the entry. Red Hot Shot can only be used once per game, and applies to all the shots fired by a single vessel in that Gunnery phase.
- Pages 90 & 94: At the bottom of the Fleet Disposition section, the options text in italics should read: ‘A coastal fortress may take a single mortar in addition to its normal armament for +10 points, and/or Red Hot Shot for +30 points.’
- Page 118: The Trafalgar scenario map has the wind pointing to the northwest, whereas it should be pointing to the southeast. A thousand apologies for this fundamental error!
- Page 126: Add a line to the Santisima Trinidad rules: If the Santisima Trinidad is present in a Spanish fleet, then the player foregoes the option to upgrade one of his 1st rates with additional guns from the ‘options’ section of the fleet list.
- Page 139: The damage locations for the Martello Tower are incorrect – it should have a single row of 10 boxes, after which point it is destroyed.