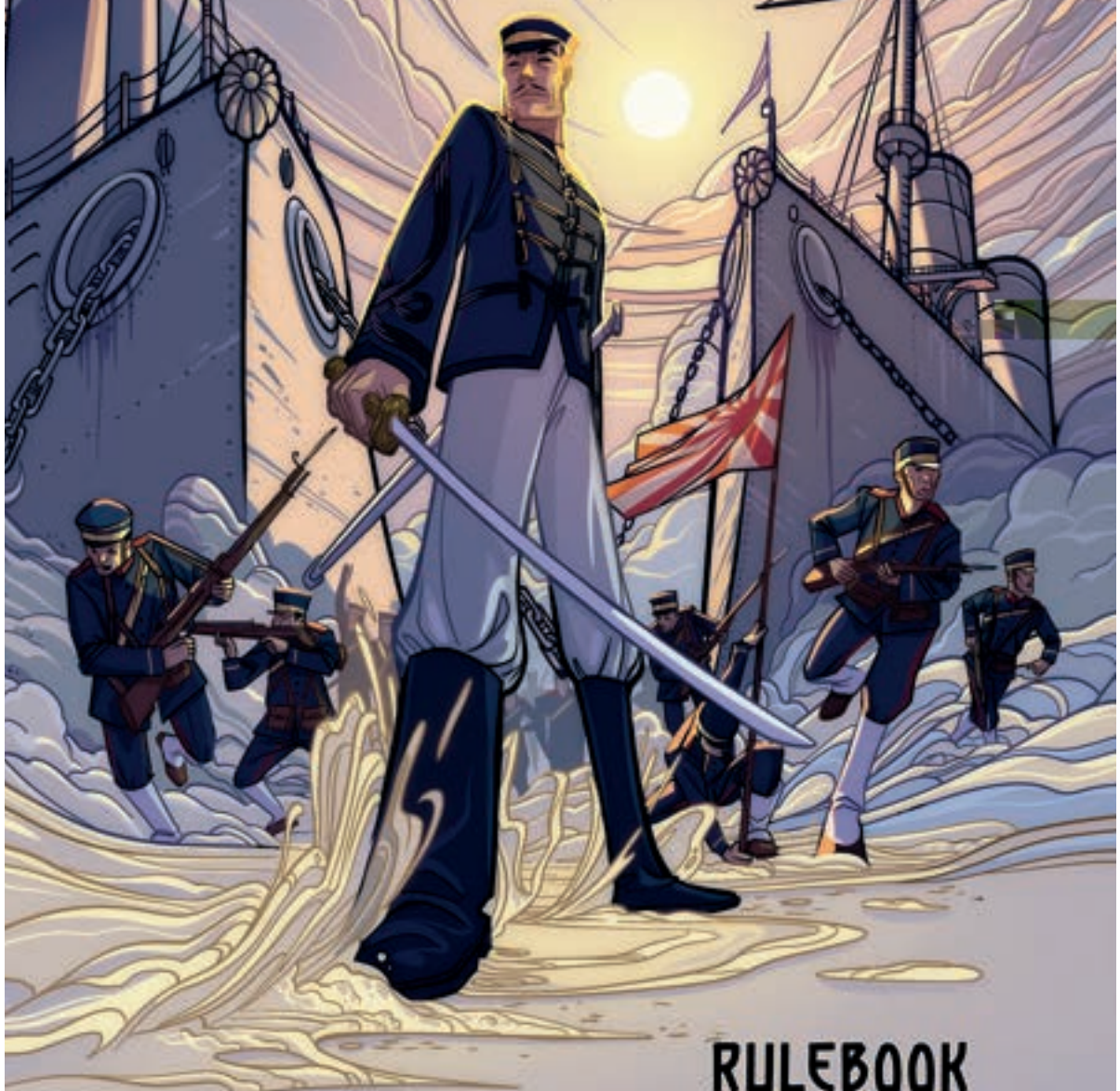


# PORT ARTHUR



**RULEBOOK**

## 1. Introduction

*Port Arthur* is a simulation of the Russo-Japanese War of 1904 and 1905, focusing on the naval battles. This game is for two players, one controlling the Japanese forces (**Japan**) and the other the Russian forces (**Russia**). It covers on the naval strategy of the whole war, so victory depends on the ability of each side to dominate the key maritime zones. Regardless of how many enemy ships are sunk, a player will not win if they cannot control these areas. The sea route connecting Japan to the land battlefield, i.e., the Liaodong Peninsula and Manchuria, is the key to winning the war. The game takes a maximum of six turns and should last about an hour for experienced players.

## 2. Game Components

The box contains the following items:


- 1 gameboard
- 2 cardboard sheets of die-cut counters and game turn track
- 6 wooden meeples
- 6 dice
- 1 Rule Book
- 1 Player Aid

## Gameboard





The gameboard represents Japan, its neighboring countries (Korea, Manchuria, North China, and Siberia) and the seas that border them. In addition to the maritime zones where the naval units are deployed and fight each other, several tracks on the board are used to record different types of information during the game.

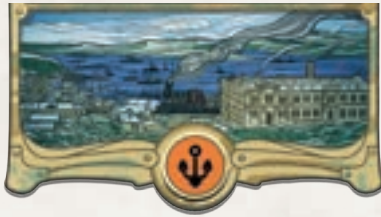
### Maritime Zones

There are six **maritime zones** that organize player movement and control of the seas. The zones that are separated by white dotted lines are adjacent. Thus, the “Sea of Japan” and the “Pacific Ocean” are adjacent, but the “Tushima Strait” and the “Philippine Sea” are not.

Each maritime zone is marked with the number of **Control Points (CPs)**  that the player controlling it earns. Depending on the maritime zone, the CPs are different for the Japanese or the Russians. For example, Japan scores no CPs for controlling the Pacific Ocean area, but Russia scores two CPs.

### Ports

There are four **ports** on the gameboard: Japan , Port Arthur , Vladivostok  and Diego Suarez  (the latter represents the neutral ports which historically also included Shanghai and Manila). Ships in port are placed in the corresponding **harbor** spaces on the gameboard.



There is no limit to the number of ships in a harbor space. The harbor of Japan is on the edge of the gameboard in the “Philippine Sea” maritime zone.

Only the Japanese player can use the port of Japan. The port of Japan is adjacent to all maritime zones except the “Yellow Sea” zone.

Russia may use the other three ports. However, during the game, Port Arthur may lose its port status.

Port Arthur is adjacent to the “Yellow Sea” maritime zone, Vladivostok is adjacent to the “Sea of Japan” zone, and Diego Suarez is adjacent to the “East China Sea” zone. All the ports have a **shipyard** space, except Diego Suarez. However, during the game, Port Arthur may lose its shipyard. There is no limit to the number of ships in a shipyard space.



### Troop Transport

The transport of Japanese troops for the invasion of Manchuria is represented abstractly by two **landing spaces** in the “Yellow Sea” and “Tsushima Strait” maritime zones.



### Tracks

On the gameboard, the **CP Track** is used to record the players’ scores. The **Manchuria Track** is used to show the progress of the Japanese Army on the mainland and its victories against the Russian Army. The **Game Turn Track** is on a separate board. Markers are used to indicate progress on the different tracks.

### Markers



CP Track



Manchuria Track



Game Turn Track

### Turn Marker

This marker is used to record the passage of time on the Game Turn Track.



### CP Marker

This marker is used on the CP track to indicate the relative difference between the CPs of each side.



## Japanese Army Markers

These markers (6 Army meeples) are used on the Manchuria Track to indicate the progress of the Japanese Army on the mainland and its victories against the Russian Army.



## Initiative Marker

This marker indicates which player has the initiative (lead) each turn. The Japanese have the Initiative Marker at the beginning of the game (turn 1).



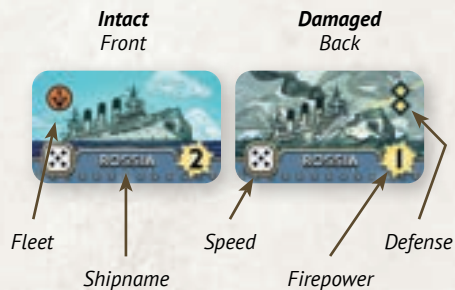
## Port Arthur Blockade Marker

This marker indicates that the Japanese have successfully blockaded Port Arthur. When this occurs, it is placed in the "Yellow Sea" maritime zone.



## Counters

50 counters each represent a Japanese or Russian ship with the following information:



## Nationality

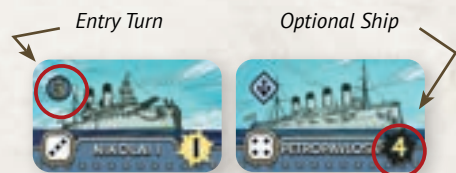
Japanese counters are red, Russian counters are blue.

## Front and back

The front of a ship counter shows the ship intact with its full crew. The back of the counter indicates that the ship has been damaged or poorly maintained. All ships start the game intact but may become damaged due to combat or lack of maintenance. Damaged ships can be repaired in the shipyards to make them intact again.

## Entry Turn, fleets and optional ships

The Russian Baltic Fleet enters in the middle of the game. The Entry Turn (4 or 5) is indicated in the upper left corner of the counters. A blue anchor icon indicates that the ship belongs to the Port Arthur fleet, an orange anchor icon to the Vladivostok fleet. The two Japanese ships and the one Russian ship with their firepower on a black background are optional ships (see Rule 10).



## Firepower

Firepower represents the number, caliber, and effectiveness of each ship's guns. It may decrease if the ship is damaged.



## Defense

The defense factor only appears on the back of the counters (damaged ships). It represents the number of hits the ship can sustain before it sinks.

## Speed

This number represents the speed of the vessel. It may decrease if the ship is damaged. It is used to calculate the speed of a squadron.

# 3. Game Set Up

After deciding who will play Japan and who will play Russia, set up the game.

1. **Japan:** Place all Japanese ship counters faceup (intact side) in the harbor space of the port of Japan. Place the six Army meeples, the Initiative Marker, and the Port Arthur Blockade Marker next to the gameboard.
2. **Russia:** Place the ship counters faceup (intact side) in the corresponding harbors according to their fleet (♠ : Port Arthur, ♣ : Vladivostok). Place the ship counters of the Baltic Fleet in the corresponding boxes of the Game Turn Track (4 or 5, depending on the number on the counter).
3. Place the Turn Marker on space 1 of the Game Turn Track. Place the CP marker on the central space of the CP track.

## Game Set Up



## 4. Victory Conditions

Each game lasts six turns. If, at the end of turn 6, the Japanese do not have an Army meeple in the Mukden box of the Manchuria Track, Russia automatically wins. Otherwise, the winner is determined by the position of the CP marker on the CP track: if the marker is on the Russian side, Russia wins; if it is on the Japanese side, Japan wins; if the marker is in the center, the game is a tie.

When one side gains CPs, the CP marker is moved on the track by the number of CPs towards its side. If this side loses CPs or if its opponent gains CPs, the marker is moved in the opposite direction. The maximum number of CPs that can be reached is 5. If additional CPs are scored, they are not counted. The Japanese may not play the blockade of Port Arthur as long as the Russian player has 5 CPs.

## 5. Sequence of Play

Each of the six game turns is divided into six phases (phase 1 is only played in turns 4 and 5). When all phases have been completed in order, the turn is over and the next turn is played. At the end of Turn 6, the winner is determined.

Description of the Phases:

### 1. Arrival Phase of the Baltic Fleet

Only in turns 4 and 5, the ships belonging to the Baltic Fleet are placed in the harbor of Diego Suarez.

### 2. Sortie Phase of the Japanese Fleet

The Japanese take all, some, or none of their ships out of the port of Japan.

### 3. Sortie Phase of the Russian Fleet

The Russians take all, some, or none of their ships out of the ports of Vladivostok, Port Arthur and/or Diego Suarez.

### 4. Operations Phase

Both sides attempt naval operations with their squadrons.

### 5. Scoring Phase

Each player performs the following actions simultaneously and in this order:

- Control of maritime zones.
- Blockade of Port Arthur.
- Disembarkation of troops/sinking of troop transports.

### 6. Return to Port Phase

Each player performs the following actions simultaneously and in this order:

- Completion of repairs.
- Return to port.
- Maintenance.
- Advance the turn marker and, on turn 6, determine victory.

## Fleet Sortie Phases

During their respective sortie phases, each side may put its ships to sea from its ports. The sorties are not mandatory, and each side may put all, some, or none of its ships to sea. The ships remaining in port may move during the following operation phase.

## Sortie from a port

The Japanese always set out to sea first. Intact or damaged ships may enter any maritime zone adjacent to the port they are in (Japan: “Tsunami”, “Pacific Ocean”, “Sea of Japan”, “Philippine Sea” and “East China Sea”; Port Arthur: “Yellow Sea”, Vladivostok: “Sea of Japan”; Diego Suarez: “East China Sea”). Japanese vessels are not required to enter the same maritime zone together. Russian ships may enter an area where Japanese ships are already present.

Intact ships may move one additional maritime zone. The presence of enemy ships in the departure or arrival zone has no effect.

If the Port Arthur Blockade Marker has been placed in the “Yellow Sea” zone, Russian ships leaving Port Arthur may not move an additional zone.

Ships placed in the shipyard spaces may not set out to sea.

## Example of play



## Repairs

Damaged ships can be moved into the shipyard space of their port. They may not sail or participate in naval operations during that turn. There is no limit to the number of ships in a shipyard space.

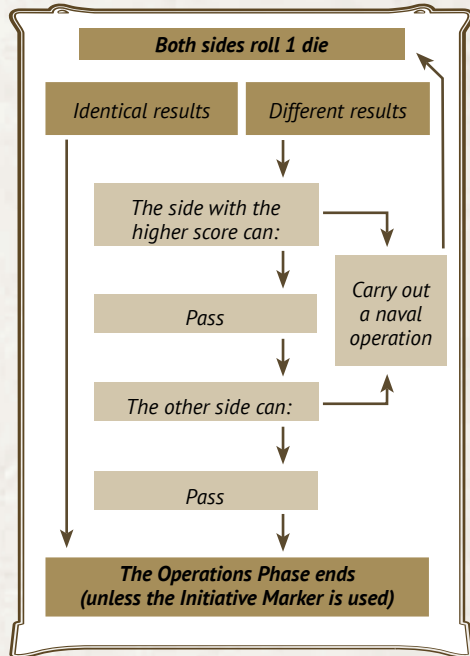
**Reminder:** Diego Suarez does not have a shipyard. Port Arthur may lose its shipyard if the Hill 203 space on the Manchuria Track is occupied by an Army meeple.

## Japanese Troop Transports

The Japanese have six Army meeples at the start of the game. During the Sortie Phase, the Japanese may place one Army meeple on each of the two landing spaces at the start of the Manchuria Track in the “Yellow Sea” and “Tsushima” sea areas. It is not mandatory to place any Army meeples.

# 6. Operations Phase

Once the Sortie Phases are completed, the Operations Phase begins. In this phase, the same cycle is repeated until both sides pass or roll a double and then do not use the Initiative Marker.



## Determining the first player in the Operations Phase

Each side rolls one die. The player who gets the higher score can carry out a single **naval operation (NAVO)** of either movement or battle, or pass. In the latter case, the other side may in turn perform a naval operation. If the other side passes, the Operations Phase ends immediately. It is not possible to declare a NAVO and carry out neither movement nor battle; this is equivalent to passing.

If the dice results are identical, the Operations Phase ends immediately. However, the side with the Initiative



Marker can ask to re-roll the dice. It then passes the Initiative Marker to the other side, which, in the event of a new tie, may in turn ask for a new roll of the dice (and so on in the event of multiple ties).

## The first player NAVO

### Ship Movement

All the ships of one side in a maritime zone constitute a squadron. There can only be one squadron of the same camp per maritime zone. During the Operations Phase, any ship or group of ships that enters a maritime zone where there are already ships of the same side is integrated into the squadron already there. Ships in port are not part of any squadron.

**The Fog of War:** at the beginning of the game, players can agree to only be able to look at the top ship of a squadron, but not the other ships lower in that stack.

#### A. Between maritime zones

Ships can only move to one adjacent maritime zone. All ships in a squadron must move together (it cannot be split up or have ships left behind). The side making the NAVO chooses which squadron it wishes to move.

In order to move the squadron, a movement check must be performed. To do this, the speed factor of the slowest

ship (i.e., the lowest number) in the squadron is taken as **the speed of the entire squadron (SS)**. The player rolls one die. If the result is less than or equal to the SS, the squadron may move to an adjacent maritime zone. The player has therefore carried out a NAVO, and so the cycle begins again. Both sides roll one die to see who can carry out a new NAVO (one side can therefore carry out several NAVOs in a row).

If the die result is higher, the squadron remains stationary and the other side can immediately carry out a NAVO. If the other side also tries to move and fails, the cycle begins again and both sides each roll a die to see who can carry out a new NAVO.

#### B. From a maritime zone to a port

A squadron may return to a port adjacent to the maritime zone it is in. A movement check is required as in A above, with the same consequences. A squadron that has returned to a port may leave it in a subsequent NAVO.

#### C. From a port to a maritime zone

A squadron may move out of a port to an adjacent maritime zone. A movement check is required as in A.1 with the same consequences. It is not mandatory to include all ships in port in the exiting squadron.

### Naval Battle

A squadron from one side conducting a NAVO can engage enemy ships in the same maritime zone. It is not sufficient for two squadrons to be in the same zone to start a battle, a NAVO must be carried out.

The player conducting the NAVO is the attacker, the other is the defender.

The naval battle is fought by following these steps:

1. Determination of the first and second players
2. The first player fires
3. The second player fires

**Note:** any Army meeples that may be present on the landing spaces do not participate in the naval battles taking place in the “Yellow Sea” and “Tsushima” areas.

#### A. First and second players

The first player is the one whose squadron has the highest SS. In case of a tie, the defender is the first player.

If the second player has the Initiative Marker, they may use it to become the first player, regardless of the SS of their squadron, in which case the Initiative Marker passes to the other side (who may not use it immediately to become the first player again).

#### B. First player fires

The first player adds up the firepower of all the ships in their squadron to determine the **squadron firepower (SFP)**. Then they choose to roll one to six dice.

**If the sum of the dice results is less than or equal to the SFP:**

- The number of hits on target is equal to the number of dice rolled (i.e., from 1 to 6 hits).

- If two dice have an identical result, they also inflict a critical hit.
- If three or more dice have identical results, the number of critical hits is equal to the number of identical dice minus one. Critical hits are scored in addition to normal hits on target.

**If the sum of the dice results is greater than the SFP:**

- The number of hits is the number of dice whose sum, in decreasing order, is less than the SFP (thus from 0 to 5 hits).
- There are no critical hits.

#### Distribution of damage

Critical hits are distributed by the side that fired the shot, and hits on target by the side of the targeted squadron. Critical hits are applied first.

**Critical hit:** this result allows the side that fired the shot to flip an intact enemy ship over to its damaged side or to sink a damage ship, regardless of its defense factor. A damaged ship can only be sunk if there are no intact ships left in the targeted squadron.

**Hits on target:** the targeted squadron must apply the number of hits received as follows with all possible combinations:

- Flipping an intact ship onto its damaged side (back) counts as one hit.
- Sinking a damaged ship counts as the number of hits equal to its defense factor.

All hits must be applied, even if a ship has to be sunk using fewer hits than its defense factor. It is possible to sink a ship even if there are still some intact ships in the squadron.

### C. Second player fires

The second player follows the same procedure with the remaining ships in their squadron. Ships sunk by the first player no longer participate in the battle.

### D. End of the naval battle

When both squadrons have fired, the battle ends. The ships that were sunk are permanently removed from the game. It is possible that both squadrons still have ships in the area after the battle. A squadron may engage in several naval battles or be the target of several attacks in successive NAVOs (as long as it has remaining ships).

**Operations Phase Summary:** the side that decides to conduct a **naval operation (NAVO)** must perform one of the following actions:

- Move ships to an adjacent maritime area or to a port.
- Engage in a naval battle using its ships against enemy ships in the same maritime zone.
- Pass. In this case, the other side may in turn conduct a NAVO. If the other side passes, the operations phase ends immediately.

## Example of a Naval Battle



The two squadrons were in the “Yellow Sea” zone and the Japanese decided to engage in a naval battle during their NAVO. Japan is the attacker, Russia the defender. Japan has the Initiative Marker.

The Japanese squadron has an SS of 5, the Russians, 4. Japan will be the first player.

- **First player fires:** Japan’s SPF is 28. They decide to roll six dice. The results are 1, 1, 2, 4, 4 and 5 for a total of 17, less than the SPF. The shots therefore cause six hits on target and two critical hits (two 1s and two 4s).
- **Applying the results:** Japan applies the critical hits to the Tsesarevich and Retvizan, which are flipped to the damaged side (back). Russia distributes the six hits on target as follows: the Poltava, the Diana and the Sevastopol are flipped to the damaged reverse side (three hits) and the Poltava is sunk (using the last three hits). There are more optimal hit distributions.
- **Second player fires:** Russia’s SFP has been reduced to 19. They decide to roll six dice. The results are 4, 4, 5, 5, 5, and 6 for a total of 29, thus more than the SFP. The shots therefore cause 3 hits on target ( $6+5+5=16 < 19$ ), but no critical hits. The Japanese decide to flip the Azuma, the Iwate and Yakumo to the damaged side (back) (three hits).

## 7. Scoring Phase

Both sides perform the following actions simultaneously and in this order:

- Control of maritime zones.
- Blockade of Port Arthur.
- Disembarkation of troops / sinking of troop transports.

### Control of maritime zones

A zone is controlled by one side if it is the only one with ships in it. An area with no ships or with ships from both sides is not controlled and yields no CPs. Each side scores CPs for the areas it controls. Each side receives a different number of CPs for certain areas.

*Example: "Pacific Ocean" gives 2 CPs to the Russian side but none to the Japanese side.*

The maritime zones "Tsushima", "Yellow Sea" and "East China Sea" are the most important in the game. If a player controls one of the three, they score 1 CP; if they control two, they score 3 CP; if they control all three zones, they score 6 CP.

The marker on the CP track is moved according to the difference in CPs between the two sides, towards the side that has scored more.

*Example: if the Japanese score 6 CPs and the Russians 4 CPs, the marker will move two spaces towards the Japanese.*

### Blockade of Port Arthur

If Russia does not control the "Yellow Sea" maritime zone, Japan may place the "Port Arthur Blockade" marker in this zone and then lose 1 CP. Maintaining the blockade costs the Japanese 1 CP each turn. This is not mandatory. If Russia has a score of 5 on the CP track, the blockade cannot be set up. If Russia regains control of the "Yellow Sea" zone, the blockade is lifted and the Japanese do not lose any CPs from it.

### Disembarkation of troops / sinking of troop transports

If Russia controls the "Tsushima" and/or "Yellow Sea" maritime zones, the Army meeple(s) located on the corresponding landing spaces at the beginning of the Manchuria Track are removed (the transports have been sunk). Otherwise, one or both landings are successful and the Army meeple(s) are placed on the Manchuria Track. Each landing space is treated independently of the other.

### Sinking of troop transports

Russia scores 1 CP if one transport is sunk and 3 CPs if both transports are sunk (in addition to the CPs scored for control of

the “Yellow Sea” and “Tsushima” zones). These Army meeples are available to the Japanese player the following turn.

### Disembarkation of troops

The Army meeples that have not been destroyed are placed on the Manchuria Track on the first empty space starting with the Yalu space, with one meeple per space. The occupation of certain spaces triggers the following effects:

- **Hill 203:** Port Arthur loses its shipyard. When this happens, any damaged ships in the shipyard are transferred, still damaged, to the Port Arthur harbor.
- **Port Arthur:** This is no longer a port. All Russian ships in the harbor are sunk. The Japanese score 1CP for the turn of the fall of Port Arthur.
- **Mukden:** the Japanese must occupy Mukden before the end of the game, otherwise Russia wins the game.
- **Siping:** if an Army meeple is placed on the Siping space, the Japanese roll one die. On a result of 1, 2 or 3, they score 1 CP otherwise none. Japan rolls one die each turn that Siping is occupied.

**Note:** there are seven spaces on the Manchuria Track and only six Army meeples. The Japanese cannot occupy all the spaces on the track. It is therefore impossible to occupy Port Arthur and Siping at the same time.

## 8. Return to Port Phase

Each player performs the following actions simultaneously and in the order given below. Afterwards the turn marker is moved forward one space.

### Completion of repairs

Ships that were in a shipyard space are transferred to the harbor space of the same port on their Intact side.

### Return to port

All the Japanese ships return to the harbor space of the port of Japan. All Russian ships return to port depending on the maritime zone they are in (“Tsushima”, “Pacific Ocean” and “Sea of Japan” return to Vladivostok; “Yellow Sea” and “East China Sea” return to Port Arthur or Diego Suarez; “Philippine Sea” return to Diego Suarez).

### Maintenance

Russian ships returning to ports without a shipyard (Diego Suarez and Port Arthur following the occupation of the Hill 203 box of the Manchurian track), are flipped to their damaged side (back). Ships already damaged remain damaged. Ships already in ports without a shipyard are also flipped to their damaged side.

## 9. Initiative

One side always has the initiative, represented by a marker. At the beginning of the game, Japan has the initiative. When one side uses the initiative, it immediately passes to the other side (and the marker is flipped to the corresponding side). It can be used in two different ways:



### Operations Phase

If there is a tie in the dice roll to determine who can conduct a NAVO, the Operations Phase ends immediately. However, the side with the Initiative Marker can force a reroll of the dice. They then pass the Initiative Marker to the other side, who, if there is a new tie, may in turn request a new roll of the dice (and so on if there are multiple ties).

### Naval Battle

If, at the start of a naval battle, the 2nd player has the Initiative Marker, they may use it to become the 1st player, regardless of the SS of their squadron.

### Arrival of the Baltic Fleet

At the beginning of turn 4, Russia automatically receives the Initiative Marker. If they already have it, no change is made.

## 10. Optional Rule: Mines

Historically, the Japanese were unable to completely blockade Port Arthur and tried to close the harbor with mines. These mines eventually sank two Japanese ships and one Russian ship.

To use this option, both players must agree to it.

### Additional ships

During the game set-up, the three ships sunk by the mines can be added to the fleets of both sides. In this case, the *Petropavlosk* is placed in the Port Arthur harbor, the *Hastuse* and the *Yashima* in the harbor of the port of Japan.



### Attack on Port Arthur

From the first day of hostilities, the Japanese attempted to neutralize the Port Arthur Fleet at anchor by launching an assault with destroyers and torpedo boats.

Before the start of the first turn, Japan rolls one die and divides the result by two, rounding down to the nearest whole number (1 becomes 0). Then Japan chooses an equal number of ships from the Port Arthur Fleet, which are flipped over to their damaged side (back) and placed in the Port Arthur shipyard space.

## Detonation of the mines

If the Port Arthur Blockade Marker is placed in the “Yellow Sea” zone during the Return to Port Phase, both sides’ squadrons returning to port from that zone may be hit by mines. Each side rolls one die and compares the result to the speed of its squadron. If the result is equal to or less than its SS, the squadron reaches the port without damage. If the result is greater than its SS, the number of ships that hit mines is equal to the difference between the die roll and the SS. The owner of the ships decides which ones are hit.

*Example:* if a squadron with an SS of 4 rolls a 5, one of its ships will hit a mine.

## Damage caused by mines

If the ship is already damaged, it sinks and is removed from the game. If it is undamaged, it is flipped to its damaged side. The owner then rolls one die. If the result is higher than the ship’s defense factor, it sinks, otherwise it can return to the port in a damaged state.



## Credits

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## The Russo–Japanese War of 1904–1905

The war between Japan and Russia, February 8, 1904 - August 9, 1905, was the result of a collision between two imperialist projects in the Far East. Ten years earlier, Japan, whose fleet and army had been greatly modernized, waged a victorious war against China. Japan seized Port Arthur at the tip of the Liaodong Peninsula in Manchuria. However, the European powers forced Japan to return Liaodong to China before Russia took possession in 1897. Railways were built to link Port Arthur to Siberia, and the city of Harbin became the Russian HQ in the de facto protectorate of Manchuria.

Fearing that Tsar Nicholas II had further ambitions in the Far East, the Japanese decided to strike first. Admiral Togo ordered a raid on Port Arthur on February 8, 1904 where his destroyers and torpedo boats sank two battleships and a cruiser. At the same time, the Japanese army landed at Chemulpo (Incheon) in Korea. General Kurapatkin arrived in Harbin to take the lead. While Togo's fleet tried to blockade Port Arthur, the First Japanese Army engaged the Russians on the Yalu River on the Korean border at the end of April and the Second Army moved into the Liaodong Peninsula in early May. The Japanese victory at Nanshan at the end of May enabled them to isolate Port Arthur, while the victory at Te-li-Ssu in mid-June pushed the Russian forces back from southern Manchuria. On August 10, the Russian squadron at Port Arthur was defeated in the Battle of the Yellow Sea. The Japanese army then began the siege of the city at the end of August. The Battle of Liaoyang at the beginning of September forced the Russians to continue their retreat towards the north. Faced with these various defeats and to reverse the course of the war, the Tsar decided to send two squadrons of reinforcements which left the Baltic ports on October 15. However, during the autumn,

the Japanese eroded the defences of Port Arthur, which capitulated on January 2, 1905. Between February 19 and March 10, the biggest land battle of the war raged at Mukden. Russia experienced another defeat and retreated, despite the very heavy Japanese losses.

With the war almost over, Admiral Rozhdestvensky's reinforcements, exhausted by a journey of more than seven months at sea, arrived in sight of Japan. Rozhdestvensky was trying to reach Vladivostok when Admiral Togo's ships intercepted him at Tsushima on May 27, 1905. This final disaster brought about the destruction of the Russian fleet. Peace talks began a few weeks later under the direction of the USA. They ended with a clear decline in the prestige of Russia and consequently of the Tsar.

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