

This article provides some unofficial rules and guidelines for taking your games of The Lord of The Rings onto the high seas of Middle-earth and exploring other ways to play the strategy battle game.

# ALL AT SEA, PART ONE

## *Ship Rules for The Lord of The Rings*

### GETTING YOUR FEET WET

Ship battles in The Lord of The Rings game function much like battles on land, and the basic mechanics of the game remain in effect. Ships move in the Movement Phase. Their crews shoot in the Shooting Phase and fight boarding actions in the Fight Phase. Characters can even use Might to influence rolls in the same way as the normal game.

### WHEN IS A BOAT A SHIP?

According to naval tradition, a ship is a

vessel that carries other boats, like gigs and long boats, whereas a boat does not. The rules and guidelines published here are for ships exclusively. Please refer to the river rules published in *White Dwarf* 290 for details on using small boats in your games.

The ships of Middle-earth use two main types of propulsion: sails and oars. Most of the Free Peoples use sail exclusively, while the Corsairs of Umbar use a combination of sail and oar power.

The ships of Middle-earth also vary in size and shape. The smaller the ship the more maneuverable it is, but in turn, smaller ships are less durable. On the following page is a chart that outlines the general guidelines for ship size, including the ship's length in inches, minimum and maximum crew sizes, defense values, and batter points. This information determines how the ship moves, how many crew it takes to man the ship, how powerful the ship is in a ram, and how much damage the vessel can take before sinking.





So there you have it – after a year of collecting, the guys have managed to amass substantial armies for The Lord of The Rings (not to mention quite a bit of terrain).





Please note that these general guidelines are designed to help players incorporate ships into their games of The Lord of The Rings. Other ship designs are possible, if both players agree to the rules. A ship's beam (width) can be only as wide as half the ship's length. For example, the maximum width of an 18" boat would be 9".

Ship Size	Length	Ship's Complement*	Max. Crew Point Size	Defense**	Batter Points
Small	8-12"	5/25 models	150 points	8	8
Medium	12-24"	8/40 models	300 points	8	16
Large	24"+	10/50 models	500 points	9	24

\*The Ship's Complement column indicates the minimum and maximum number of models that can crew a ship.

\*\*Corsairs of Umbar ships add +1 to their defense value due to the metal used in their ships' construction.

#### Notes

- Cavalry models are generally not found on ships, unless they are being ferried by a transport ship, and even then, the Riders will dismount for the sea voyage. In short, cavalry cannot fight on ships.
- Large creatures like Trolls take up a lot of room and count as five models toward the maximum number of models allowed on a ship. Large Creatures can fight on ships but cannot be used to sail the ship.

## 1. SHIP'S COMPLEMENT

The Ship's Complement is made up of Mariners who are responsible for operating the ship as well as Warriors (or Marines) who are charged with fighting and protecting the ship should it be boarded. Mariners can take part in defending their ship. However, the Marine forces on board know little about how to sail the vessel they are stationed on.

The Ship's Complement can include most of the models you can find in any of The Lord of The Rings rules manuals and supplements. Please use the following guidelines to work out your Ship's Complement.

- A Ship's Complement must include at least one Captain or named Hero to lead it.
- Evil Ship's Complements cannot include Gollum, Mûmakil, or Fell Beasts. Grima Wormtongue can be included only if Saruman is in the same Ship's Complement.
- A Ship's Complement taking Heroes that have rules related to a specific location always count as being "Beyond the Borders of Their Realm."
- Named Heroes can be taken only once.
- An Evil Ship's Complement can include up to one Troll.
- A Good Ship's Complement cannot include Gwaihir or any Ents.
- No more than half of the total points of the Ship's Complement can be spent on Heroes.
- No more than a third of the total models of the Ship's Complement can be armed with missile weapons. Note that troops like Trolls that can use terrain features as missile weapons cannot do so at sea.
- Up to a third of the total points of the Ship's Complement can be spent on Siege Engines.
- At least a third of the total models of the Ship's Complement must be Mariners. Descriptions, points costs, and statistics for Mariners can be found at the end of this article.





Regardless of size or movement type, a ship must have models that act as its crew in order to move. The crew are the Mariners responsible for operating the ship. Each turn, the controlling player must nominate a number of Mariners equal to or greater than the minimum crew size to operate the ship and do nothing else. For instance, a small ship has a minimum crew of 5. If the small ship contained 12 sailors, 7 could shoot missile weapons (if they had any), while the remaining 5 Mariners crewed the ship. It is important to remember that Marines and Siege Engine crews cannot operate the ship.

If, at any time, a ship has less than its minimum number of Mariners, the following penalties apply.

- Ships with fewer than the minimum number of Mariners move at half speed.
- Ships with fewer than half the minimum number of Mariners (round down) may not move at all and are Adrift (see below).

In summary, models designated as crew in a given turn cannot shoot or fight. They are too busy making the ship move. Thus,

each turn, it is vitally important to nominate which models are acting as crew and which are not. Separate your crewmen visually from the rest of the Ship's Complement by moving them such that they touch a mast, rudder, or wheel.



## 2. SHIP MOVEMENT

Ships of each type and size have different rules for movement, speed, and turning.

**Sailing Ships.** Sail-powered boats are the most common ships in Middle-earth. The direction of the wind is pivotal to sailing ships, and good Captains keep one eye on the enemy and the other on the weather. Even the worst imaginable shift in the wind can be turned into an advantage by an old sea dog!

**Crew.** Remember that each sailing ship requires a minimum number of Mariners to steer the ship, trim the sails, and carry out the Captain's orders (see above).

**Speed.** All sailing ships move up to D6+8" each turn but are subject to the Sailing Special Rules. Elven ships add +2 to their sailing speed.

**Maneuvering Under Sail.** Changing course while under sail is a little tricky, even more so for larger ships.

**Turning Radius.** A single turn consists of pivoting the ship up to 45° and no more.

**Move Before Turn.** Sailing ships cannot turn on a dime. Therefore, before doing any maneuvering, a ship must first move a minimum distance. The minimum distance a ship must move before turning and between turns is listed on the Turning Chart.

**Number of Turns.** Some ships are more maneuverable than others. Smaller craft have an easier time of turning (they aren't trying to redirect all that mass!). Note that the limitations count per 10" of movement (or fraction thereof). Thus, should a ship move over 10", it may use a second allotment of maneuvers. For example, if a medium ship moved 14" in 1 turn, it could start off by moving 2", turn up to 45°, move another 2", turn again up to 45°, move 6" in a straight line (at which time it has moved 10" and is eligible for another set of maneuvers and could make two more turns), turn a third time, move 2", turn a fourth time, move 2". The smaller the ship, the more turns it may make.

### TURNING CHART

Ship Size	Move Before Turn	Turns per 10" of Movement
Small	1"	3
Medium	2"	2
Large	3"	2

### SAILING SPECIAL RULES

**Wind Direction.** For our purposes, boats are always positioned with the wind at one of three relative directions: bow on, abeam, or astern. During a sea battle, it is important to mark down the direction of the wind if there are any sailing ships in play (wind direction rules follow on the next page). Sailing ships can move faster when the wind is astern, and there are movement penalties when ships turn into the wind (bow on).

**Wind-Aided Movement.** When a sailing ship begins its turn with the wind astern, it may move an additional D6" (i.e., 2D6+8" instead of the usual D6+8").

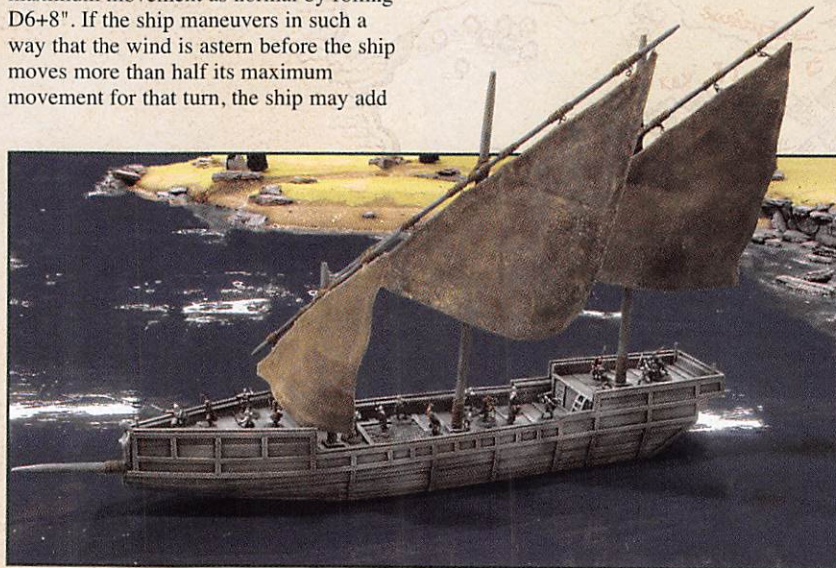
A sailing ship that does not begin the turn with the wind astern may maneuver to take better advantage of the wind. Determine maximum movement as normal by rolling D6+8". If the ship maneuvers in such a way that the wind is astern before the ship moves more than half its maximum movement for that turn, the ship may add

an additional D3" of movement to the end of its move.

**Sailing into the Wind.** Any sailing ship that starts the turn facing into the wind (bow on) moves up to 8" instead of D6+8". Any ship that turns into the wind (bow on) loses D6" from its remaining movement (if any) and may not make any other maneuvers that turn.

### DETERMINING WIND DIRECTION

As the Captain of any sail-powered ship will tell you, keeping an eye on which direction the wind is blowing is the key to victory. The wind can be a fickle friend and is apt to change just when you most need it at your back. Charts for determining wind direction are on the following page.







## WIND DIRECTION CHART

Nominate a table edge as north, roll a D6, and note the results before play begins.

D6	Wind Direction
1	The wind is blowing from the northern table edge.
2	The wind is blowing from the southern table edge.
3	The wind is blowing from the western table edge.
4	The wind is blowing from the eastern table edge.
5	Both players roll a D6. The higher-scoring player may choose the direction of the wind.
6	The wind conditions are unusual. Roll another D6. If the result is 1-3, the winds are light. Deduct 2" from the maximum movement of all sail-powered ships. If the result is 4-6, the winds are strong. Add 2" to the maximum movement of all sail-powered ships. Roll again for wind direction. If this result is rolled again, the results are cumulative. Continue rolling until a wind direction is established.

### Wind Direction During the Game

At the start of each game turn after the 1st, roll 2D6. On a double, the wind conditions change. Roll on the Changing Winds Chart and apply the results. Roll to check for wind change at the start of each turn, regardless of how many wind changes there have been.

## CHANGING WINDS CHART

D6	Wind Direction Change
2-3	The wind dies down. Deduct 4" from the movement of all sail-powered ships. Note that this result lasts this turn only, and then conditions return to normal.
4-5	The wind changes direction 180°.
6-7	The wind changes direction 90° in a clockwise direction.
8-10	The wind changes direction 90° in a counter-clockwise direction.
11-12	Gusts. Add 4" to the maximum movement of all sail-powered ships. This result lasts this turn only, and then conditions return to normal.

## ROWED SHIPS

The rules for oar-driven ships are relatively straightforward. The dreaded Corsairs of Umbar make great use of oar power and use galley slaves to row the vessels. If a ship has oars and sails, the Captain can decide at the beginning of his Movement Phase to use his sails (and therefore his ship counts as a sailing ship that turn) or his oars and use the rules set out below. A Ship Captain cannot switch the means of propulsion halfway through his turn.

**Crew.** Remember that each rowed ship requires a minimum number of crew to steer and keep the vessel's rowers in order.

**Speed.** All oar-driven ships can move up to 5" a turn but can gain more speed with the *Double Time* special rule.

## OAD-DRIVEN SPECIAL RULES

**Double Time.** Before moving an oar-powered ship, the controlling player may call for a burst of frenzied rowing in order to go very quickly in a straight line either to ram an enemy or to get out of a tight spot. When the ship is moving at *Double Time*, only one turn may be made. See the chart below to determine the additional movement afforded by moving at *Double Time*.

## DOUBLE TIME

Ship Type	Add'l Movement
Small	+D6+3"
Medium	+D6+2"
Large	+D6+1"

**Note.** You cannot call for *Double Time* movement 2 turns in a row. After the initial burst of speed, the rowers need a turn to recover their strength or to replace exhausted or dead slaves.



## MANEUVERING BY OARS

Oar-driven ships get one free turn of up to 45° each round. Any additional turns cost oar-driven ships 2" of movement. Unlike sailing ships, oar-driven ships do not need to travel any distance between turns and can turn on the spot at the start of their Movement Phase.

Remember that the wind has no effect on oar-driven ships, unless they are being used as sailing ships on a given turn. In addition, ships with oars can be rowed backward up to 5" a turn.

## ADRIFT

Drifting occurs when a ship does not use any method of propulsion or does not have enough Mariners to crew it and therefore is "dead in the water." When a ship drifts, it moves D3" in the direction of the wind.

There are many reasons a ship may be Adrift. The number of crew could be below half the minimum complement. The crew could be too busy fighting or shooting ranged weapons to sail the ship properly.

## ATTACKING SHIPS

The ships of Middle-earth do not have batteries of cannons, and very few ships actually have any Siege Engines mounted on them. Those few ships that do have Siege Engines will often mount a catapult or bolt thrower on their deck. These weapons are fixed in a forward position to fire from the ship's bow. Unless the weapon can swivel like the Avenger Bolt Thrower, all Siege Engines have a fire arc of 45°.

If Siege Engines are used, ships count as Battlefield Targets in determining scatter. The Siege Engine operator can choose to target the ship or the crew. If the shot hits the ship, remember to roll on the Batter Chart to see if a wound is caused. If the shot hits any crew (which is possible with catapults), then those models follow the normal rules for being hit with a Siege Engine.

## RAMMING SPEED

Ramming is favored method of attack used almost exclusively by the Corsairs of Umbar, whose ships are designed to ram. Other vessels may attempt to ram. However, ramming is viewed as a desperate tactic, as the ramming ship can easily damage itself as badly as its enemy.

A ship attempting to ram can do no more than a single turn of 45° or less in the turn it intends to ram the enemy ship. The two factors that determine whether damage is caused are distance traveled (the build-up of momentum!) and the size of the ship.

A ship's Base Strength for a ramming attack is listed on the Ship's Base Strength

Chart. For every inch traveled before striking the target, the ramming ship adds +1 to its Base Strength up to a maximum Strength of 10.

Thus, a medium ship that has traveled 4" to hit its target would strike at S7! If the ram wounds successfully, determine how many automatic batter points are caused to the target ship's hull.

### SHIP'S BASE STRENGTH

Ship Size	Base Strength
Small	2
Medium	3
Large	4

### BATTER POINTS INFLECTED

Ship Size	Traveled 0-6"	Traveled over 6"
Small	D3	D3+1
Medium	D6	D6+1
Large	D6+1	2D6

**Crushing Your Own Ship.** The ship doing the ramming also places itself in great danger. If the ships are the same size or the ship being rammed is smaller, the ramming vessel only takes a hit on a roll of 5+. If the ramming ship is smaller, it will take damage on roll of 3+.

If the ramming ship takes a hit, use the same Strength value generated by the ram to see if any damage is caused. Should the roll to wound succeed, the collision causes D3 Batter Points to the ramming ship's hull.

**Rams.** Any ramming ship that has a specially fitted ram on its prow may reroll a failed to wound roll. Additionally, the ramming ship will take a hit itself only on a roll of 6, regardless of relative sizes of the ships.

**Getting Stuck in.** Anytime a player makes a ram that successfully wounds an enemy ship, the two vessels are Grappled together. To free a ship, its crew must attempt to Cut Loose and Shove off (see below).



## 3. BOARDING ACTIONS

If you are lucky, a Siege Engine might immobilize a ship or even sink it. However, more often than not, the way to take out a ship is by sailing close enough that your Marines can leap aboard the enemy craft. This dangerous maneuver is called a boarding action, and any ship that is touching an enemy vessel may attempt such an attack. In these hotly contested combats, enemy decks may be swept clear of foes, and captured ships can be manned by your own loyal Mariners to rejoin the fight on your side.

### GETTING SHIPS IN CONTACT

For game purposes, there are two ways in which you can come into contact with an enemy ship for a boarding action: Headlong or Alongside.

**Headlong.** When the bow of one player's ship makes contact with an enemy vessel's bow or stern or approaches the enemy's side from a right angle, it is said to have made

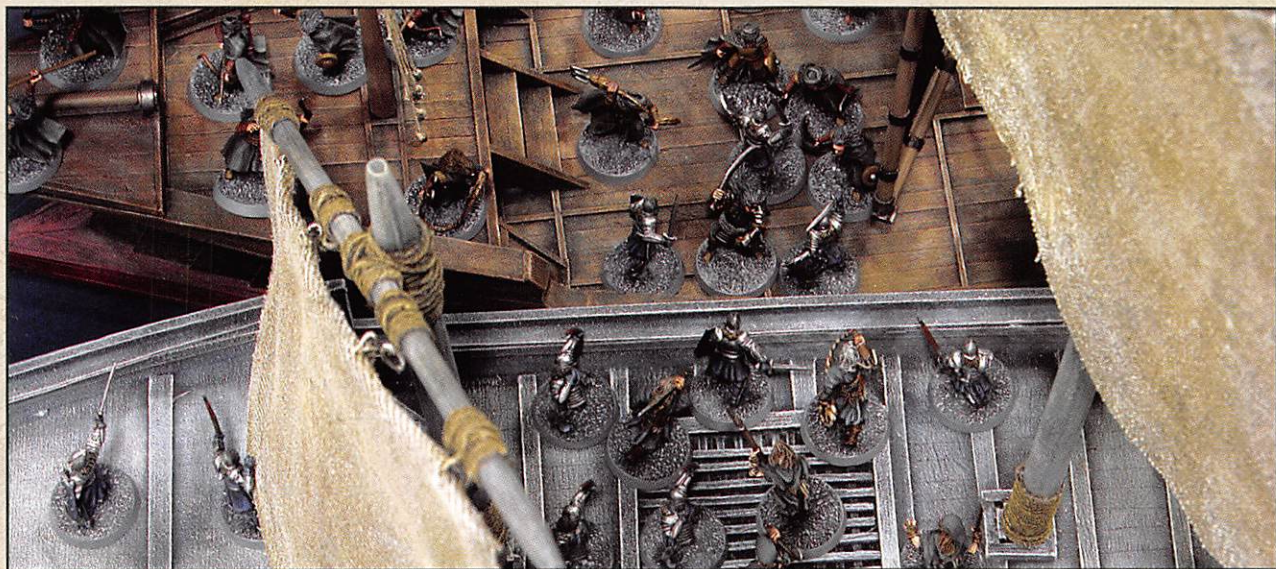
Headlong contact. This position makes for an ideal ram, but the crew will have less room to board from the bow of its ship.

**Alongside.** Any contact that is not Headlong is said to be Alongside and generally indicates that the sides of both ships are touching. When ships make Alongside contact, realign both boats after all movement is completed to maximize the amount of hull-to-hull contact without changing the point at which the ship's first made contact.

**Grappling.** As an attacking ship nears its target – whether in a Headlong or Alongside fashion – grappling hooks and gaffs are thrown to tie the ships together. Only when the attacking ship approaches Alongside are the ships realigned to maximize the hull-to-hull contact at the point of impact.

As soon as the ships touch, they are Grappled. Ships that are Grappled are lashed together and count as Adrift unless they Cut Loose.





**Cut Loose.** Cutting Loose or disengaging Grappled ships involves lots of rope cutting and casting off all the hooks and gaffs connecting the ships together. In order to Cut Loose, a ship must meet one of the following three conditions.

- There are fewer than half of the enemy crewmen on board your ship at the end of the Fight Phase. If so, the crew may Cut Loose on a D6 roll of 4+.
- A larger ship may attempt to Cut Loose from a smaller one as long as there are at least two models who are neither engaged in combat or are not part of the minimum Ship's Complement. These two models will Cut Loose successfully on a D6 roll of 2+.
- If all the foes on the enemy ship have been slain, the ship may automatically Cut Loose. Once a ship has successfully Cut Loose, it will Shove off.

**Shove off.** After a ship Cuts Loose, the crew Shoves off with poles and gaffs, and the ship moves up to 4" in any direction nominated by the controlling player.

**Prepare for Boarding!** When the ships are Grappled (and perhaps realigned if they made contact Alongside), both players are allowed to readjust their onboard models up to 1" to prepare for the upcoming boarding action. Defenders reposition models first.

Note this extra movement takes place only when ship are grappled at the beginning of the Movement Phase and before any of the crew models use their normal movement. This extra movement allows Captains to get their toughest fighters up front or to move yellow-bellied cowards a little further away.

## FIGHTING THE BOARDING ACTION

Boarding actions are resolved in the Fight Phase. It is possible that boarding actions are occurring on the water while regular combats are being resolved on land. Either

way, follow the rules for fighting as described in *The Lord of The Rings* rulebooks, with the following change for trapped fighters.

Trapped fighters who are up against the side of the ship may choose to jump over the edge and take a swim test instead of taking double wounds. If outnumbered and trapped by more than three models (double the models for a Troll), the winner of the combat can choose to do double wounds or push the trapped fighter over the edge and into the water.

## ADDITIONAL RULES

As stated in the introduction to this article, the guidelines published here are not intended to be the definitive rules for ship combat in *The Lord of The Rings*. As such, players will encounter situations not covered by the rules listed here and will be forced to improvise. Use *The Lord of The Rings* rules as a guide for any unusual situations that might come up in your games. The Jumping and Climbing rules may prove particularly useful.

Here are some additional rules that might help to cover some of these unusual situations. When in doubt, both players may make a case as to how to resolve the situation and either seek out a third party to make a ruling or roll a die to decide which player's interpretation will resolve the situation.

**Leadership at Sea.** When it comes down to it, boarding actions are very brutal affairs. No quarter is given or asked, as the crews are fighting for their lives. As such, neither Good nor Evil models take courage tests until their forces are reduced to a quarter of their original strength. However, fighters still need to take courage tests if attempting to engage Terror-causing models. If a model flees from a Terror-causing model, reaches the edge of the ship, and still has movement left, take an

immediate courage test. If passed, the model stops at the edge. If failed, the model jumps into the water to escape.

**Swinging.** In typical swashbuckling fashion, models can choose to swing onto their opponent's boat and avoid the fight at the ship's gunwales. Up to three models can choose to swing onto the enemy ship each turn and can swing up to their maximum movement allowance. Take a jump test with a +1 to the die score.

**Prize Ship.** If you capture an enemy ship intact, you can take it as a Prize Ship and use it to rejoin the battle. As long as the captured vessel is manned with at least the minimum required crew, the ship can be used as normal.

**Launching Boats.** Ships can carry boats, the maximum length of the boat that can be carried is equal to the beam of the ship. A large ship can carry up to three boats; a medium ships can carry two; and a small ship can carry one. Boats may come in handy for rowing ashore, scouting out small islands, or getting into places where larger ships cannot go (e.g., shallows or rocky coastlines). Launching a boat takes two crew who may do nothing else that turn. The larger ship cannot move more than 5" on the turn the boat is launched. It takes an entire turn to lower a boat, which may not move on the turn it is launched (but it may Shove off). On subsequent turns, the boat and its crew are subject to the boat rules listed in *White Dwarf* 290.

## MODELS IN THE WATER

Warriors and Heroes may attempt to swim through deep water. Indeed, if they have been tipped into the water as a result of a boat sinking or losing a fight, they'll have no other choice. Swimming models are moved in the controlling player's Move Phase. Roll a D6 for each swimming model and consult the Swimming Chart.



The only way a model can leave the water is if he makes landfall (highly unlikely in the middle of the sea) or makes contact with a side of a ship. If the latter, the model will have to make a climb test to get back in the ship.

## JUMPING IN

Models may jump into the water in the same way that they would jump a gap (see the main rulebook). If a model falls into the water from more than twice its height for any reason, it takes damage from falling in the normal way.

## SWIMMING CHART

D6	Result
1	<b>Sink.</b> The model is overcome by the weight of his wargear and drowns. Remove the model as a casualty.
2-5	<b>Swim.</b> The model may move up to half its move distance through the water. If it reaches a bank or a boat, it may not move further this turn. Models must make a climb test to pull themselves out of the water and onto a boat.
6	<b>Swim Strongly.</b> The model may make its normal move through the water. If it reaches a bank or a boat, it may not move further this turn. Models must make a climb test to pull themselves out of the water and onto a boat.

Armor can adversely affect a model's ability to swim. The chart below represents the ability of a model wearing armor (including special kinds of armor, such as Dwarf armor) to swim. Apply the following modifiers to the Swimming Chart.

Mod.	Armor Type
+ 1	Model is wearing no armor or mithril armor.
- 1	Model is wearing heavy armor or Dwarf heavy armor.
-2	Model is carrying a shield and wearing heavy armor or Dwarf heavy armor.

Swimming models may not lie down, shoot, or carry burdens but can fight as normal.

## SHIP CAPTAIN

Ship Captains are the Masters and Commanders of their vessels. A Ship Captain has the power of life and death over the men in his command. One Hero must be nominated as the Ship Captain, and he can use his Might Points to call a Heroic Movement for his ship in the same way you would for models on foot. Heroic Movements can very useful to slip out of an opponent's trap or to initiate a boarding action.

## MARINERS

Toughened by the elements, Mariners are a hardy bunch and are experienced in the nautical arts. Many of the races of Middle-earth maintain a naval fleet. The Grey Havens, Dol-Amroth, Umbar, and other much darker places have ships to do their bidding.

## THE FREE PEOPLES

### SHIP CAPTAIN

Points Value: 50 for Elven/40 for Human

	F	S	D	A	W	C	Might: 2
Elven	6/3+	4	4	2	2	5	Will: 1
Human	4/4+	4	4	2	2	4	Fate: 2

### WARGEAR

All wargear options available to Captains of Men and Elven Captains are available to Ship Captains. Of course, Ship Captains may not ride horses, for obvious reasons.

### SPECIAL RULES

**Mariner.** A Ship Captain counts as a Mariner in the Ship's Complement.

### ELVEN MARINER

Points Value: 7

	F	S	D	A	W	C
Elven Mariner	6/-	3	3	1	1	5

### WARGEAR

Elven Mariners are armed with hand weapons and have no other equipment.

### SPECIAL RULES

**Mariner.** An Elven Mariner counts as a Mariner in the Ship's Complement.

### HUMAN MARINER

Points Value: 5

	F	S	D	A	W	C
Human Mariner	3/-	3	3	1	1	3

### WARGEAR

Human Mariners can be armed with any of the following weapons at the point costs shown.

<i>Sword or Two-Handed Weapon</i>	<i>free</i>
<i>Throwing Spear</i>	<i>1 pt</i>

### SPECIAL RULES

**Mariner.** An Human Mariner counts as a Mariner in the Ship's Complement.





Examples of Human Mariners converted from Wild Men of Dunland models

## THE FORCES OF DARKNESS

### CORSAIR CAPTAIN

Points Value: 40

	F	S	D	A	W	C	Might: 2
Captain	4/4+	4	4	2	2	4	Will: 1 Fate: 2

#### WARGEAR

All wargear options available to Captains of Men are available to Corsair Captains. Of course, Corsair Captains may not ride horses, for obvious reasons.

#### SPECIAL RULES

**Mariner.** A Corsair Captain counts as a Mariner in the Ship's Complement.



### CORSAIR OF UMBAR

Points Value: 5

	F	S	D	A	W	C
Corsair of Umbar	3/5+	3	3	1	1	3

#### WARGEAR

Corsairs of Umbar can be equipped with any of the following at the point costs shown.

<i>Sword or Two-Handed Weapon</i>	<i>free</i>
<i>Throwing Spear</i>	<i>1 pt</i>
<i>Bow</i>	<i>1 pt</i>
<i>Armor</i>	<i>1 pt</i>

#### SPECIAL RULES

**Mariner.** A Corsair of Umbar counts as a Mariner in the Ship's Complement.



Examples of Corsairs of Umbar. More of these ruthless brigands can be seen in White Dwarf 294.



To accompany the rules in the previous article about doing battle on the rivers and seas of Middle-earth, here are a few step-by-step instructions for constructing ships of your own.

Tolkien's world offers many opportunities for the tabletop battle gamer to find adventure on the high seas and rivers of Middle-earth. From the Black Fleet of the Corsairs of Umbar, to the White Ships of Dol-Amroth, to the elegant Swanships of the Elves, to the humble raft that the Hobbits use to cross the Brandywine River, battles involving the waterways of Middle-earth can be many and varied.

[Note that rules for small boats can be found in *White Dwarf* 290, and rules for larger craft are in this issue.]

## THE NAVIES OF MIDDLE-EARTH

The power of the navies of the Free Peoples of Middle-earth has waxed and waned over the years. At one time, they held dominance over the Corsairs and the ocean. However, as the Third Age draws to a close and the time of War of The Ring is at hand, the ships of the Free Peoples are few. The Corsairs of Umbar are a constant threat. The Elves have all but abandoned their havens, and their Swanships are a

rare sight indeed. The once great Navy of Gondor is in decline. Many of its ships now sit empty and rotting at anchor in the Port of Pelargir. Only the Port of Dol Amroth and its fleet of White Ships are as powerful as they have ever been. Their numbers, sadly, are too few to keep all the sea routes protected. The dreaded Corsairs of Umbar, allies of Mordor, commenced their terror raids again.

## MODELING SHIPS

In this article, we take a look at how to build a ship of Gondor and one of the ships of the Corsairs of Umbar. Although these modeling projects are advanced ones, don't let the large size of the ships discourage you. The supplies you'll need are generally inexpensive and easy to come by. Also, although these ships are involved projects, their large size actually makes work a little easier – certainly easier than painting the pupils on your Gollum model! So take up the shipwright's mantle and join us on the seas of Middle-earth!

# ALL AT SEA PART TWO

## How to Build Ships for The Lord of The Rings

### BUILDING A GONDOR SHIP

**Nick Davis:** I decided to build a ship from the Navy of Gondor. The people of Gondor have a natural enmity with the Corsairs of Umbar, and I thought that a Gondorian vessel would have plenty of opportunities to engage the enemy in battle. I settled on building a large three-masted ship, one of the fleet's workhorse vessels that is used to patrol the Gondorian coast and the River Anduin.

### MATERIALS

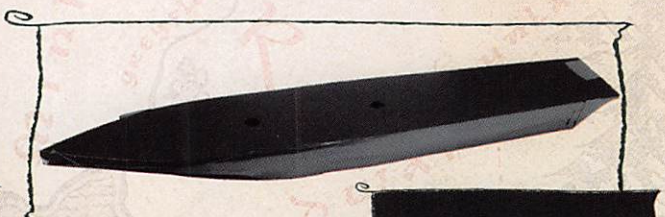
- 3-mm Balsa Sheet
- 5-mm Balsa Sheet
- Toothpicks
- Matchsticks
- Craftsticks
- 3-mm Balsa Rod
- 1/4" Dowels
- 1/2" Dowels
- 1/4" Dowel Rod
- 1/4" Foamcore
- 1/2" Foamcore
- 1" Insulation Foam
- String
- Glue
- Duct Tape

### TOOLS

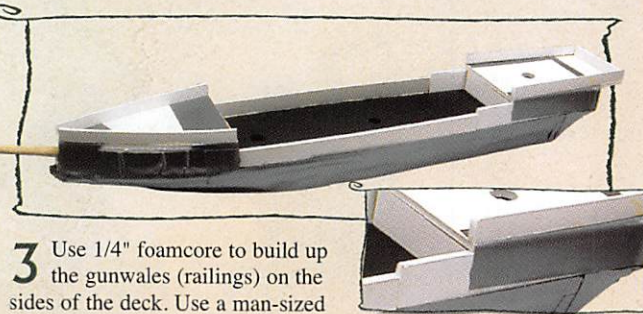
- Hobby Knife
- Ruler
- Pencil
- Model Saw
- Sandpaper



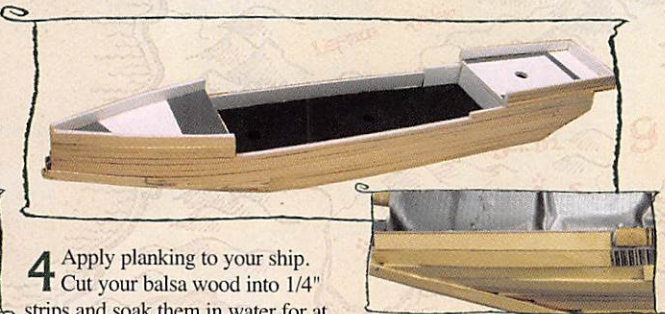
**1** After you decide on your ship's size, cut three ship shapes out of 1/4" foamcore, each one slightly smaller than the last. Cut out some 1" blocks of insulation foam to use as spacers. Glue the blocks to the bottom of the largest ship shape, the medium shape to the bottom of these blocks, and so on, until you have the basic structure of your hull (see above).



**2** Now take duct tape and block off the sides of your ship. The tape will help form the basic shape of your hull and also strengthen the construction of your vessel. Also at this stage, decide where you are going to put the masts and cut holes in the top of the deck to fit your dowel rods.



**3** Use 1/4" foamcore to build up the gunwales (railings) on the sides of the deck. Use a man-sized miniature from the game to make sure the ship's gunwales are appropriately sized. I built a poop deck and forecastle on my ship to add a more height. Use duct tape again to finish off the frame of the fore and aftcastles.



**4** Apply planking to your ship. Cut your balsa wood into 1/4" strips and soak them in water for at least 10 minutes (you can leave them in water overnight or longer if you like, though). Soaking the wood helps make it supple. Work around your ship and glue the strips of balsa wood in place with super glue. Cut the wood to size as you go. Make sure to keep the planks parallel to each other.

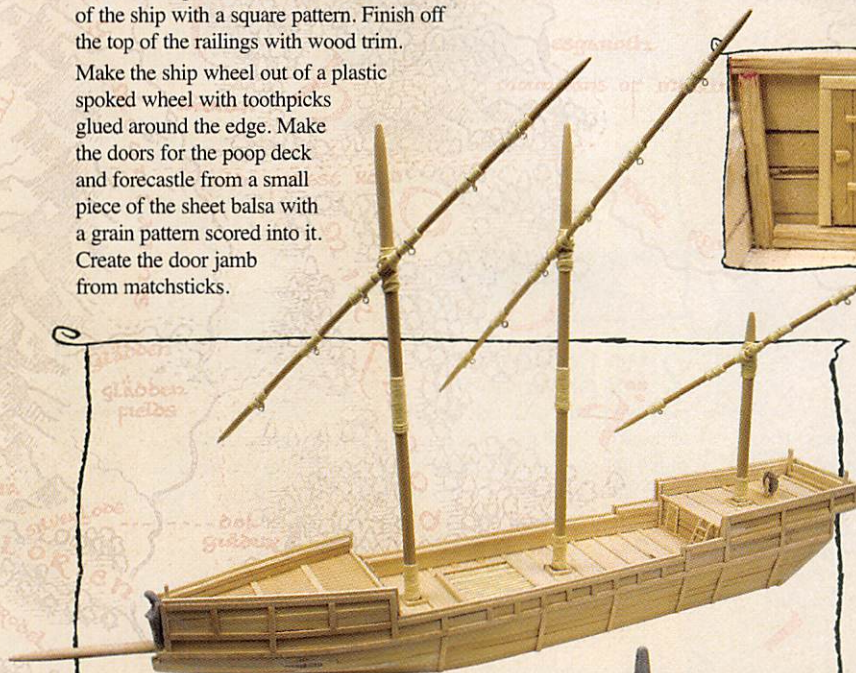
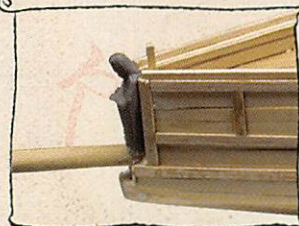


**5** Once the planking is complete and the super glue is dry, use sandpaper to smooth the edges of your ship.

Now you can begin adding details to your ship. Create a bowsprit by sanding one end of a 1/2" dowel rod to a nice taper and attaching it to the front of the ship. If you like, you can make a figurehead from a statue from the Osgiliath ruins sprue.

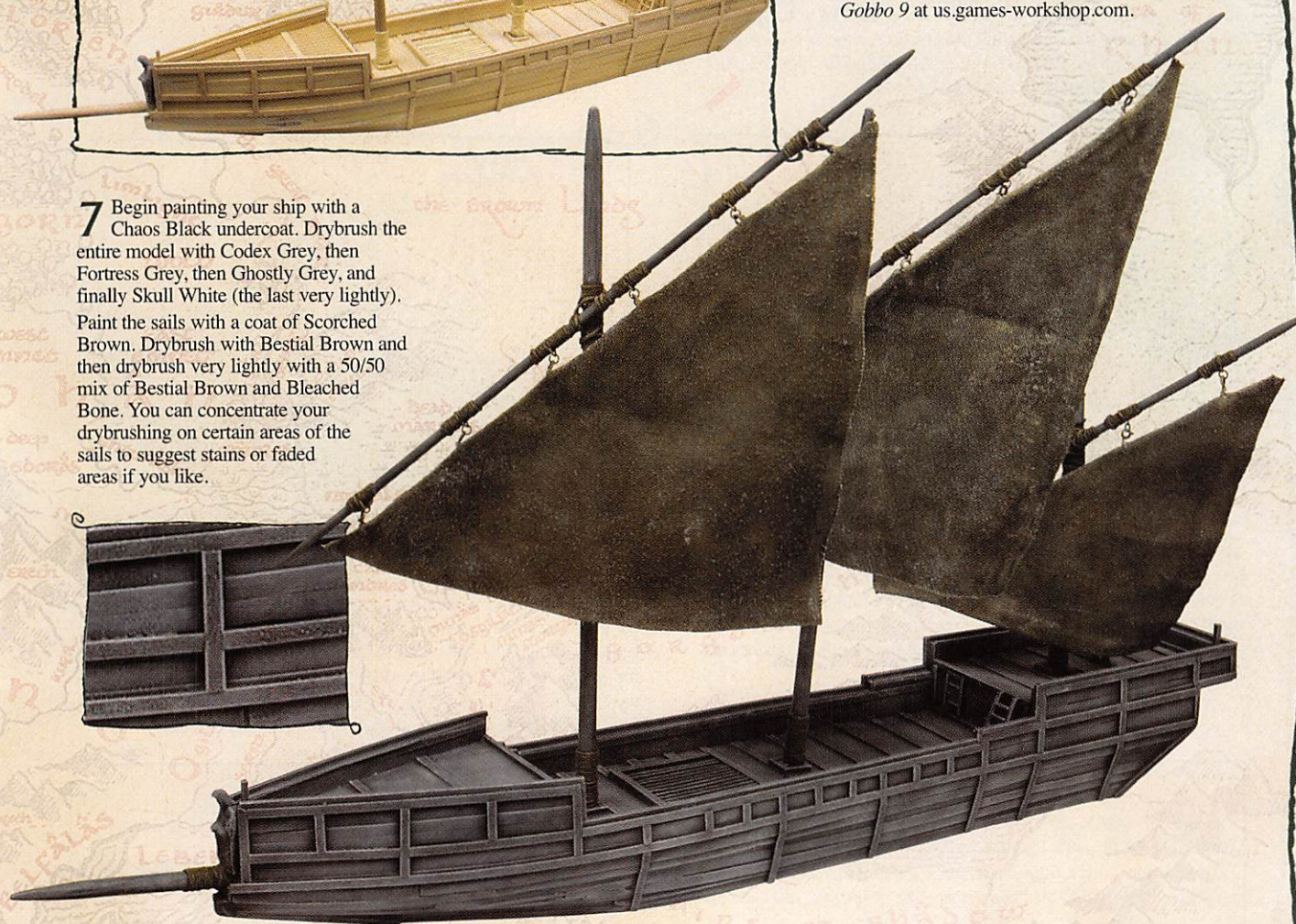
Use 1/4" strips of balsa to detail the outside of the ship with a square pattern. Finish off the top of the railings with wood trim.

Make the ship wheel out of a plastic spoked wheel with toothpicks glued around the edge. Make the doors for the poop deck and forecabin from a small piece of the sheet balsa with a grain pattern scored into it. Create the door jamb from matchsticks.



**6** Now it's time to add masts. Create the masts themselves out of 1/2" dowels and the gaffs from 1/4" dowels. Tie the gaffs to the masts with string. Paint the string with watered-down white glue to strengthen the join. Use string to tie the eyes in place for the sail hooks. You can also add a boom to the foot of each sail for added realism. For details on how to make sails, check out *Black Gobbo 9* at [us.games-workshop.com](http://us.games-workshop.com).

**7** Begin painting your ship with a Chaos Black undercoat. Drybrush the entire model with Codex Grey, then Fortress Grey, then Ghostly Grey, and finally Skull White (the last very lightly). Paint the sails with a coat of Scorched Brown. Drybrush with Bestial Brown and then drybrush very lightly with a 50/50 mix of Bestial Brown and Bleached Bone. You can concentrate your drybrushing on certain areas of the sails to suggest stains or faded areas if you like.





## BUILDING A CORSAIR SHIP

**Mark Gregory:** It was quite a challenge to build a ship for The Lord of The Rings game, and I was given the task of building a Corsairs of Umbar ship. Many of the techniques are similar to those used in the construction of the Gondor ship, but I used a few additional methods, some of which you may find useful.

For reference, I looked at some of the pictures in *The Art of The Return of The King* and some other books about ships, weapons, and warfare.

### MATERIALS

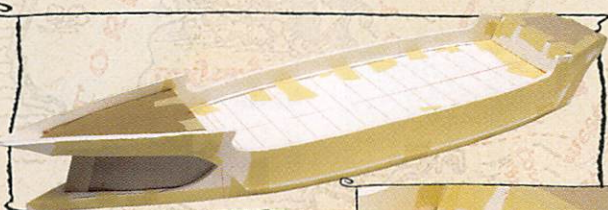
- Foamcore
- Thin Cardboard
- Masking Tape
- Balsa Wood
- Aluminum Foil
- Plasticard
- Wood Dowels
- Paper
- Thin Cloth
- String or Thread
- White Glue
- Super Glue

### TOOLS

- Hobby Knife
- Ruler
- Pencil
- Model Saw
- Scissors
- Sandpaper

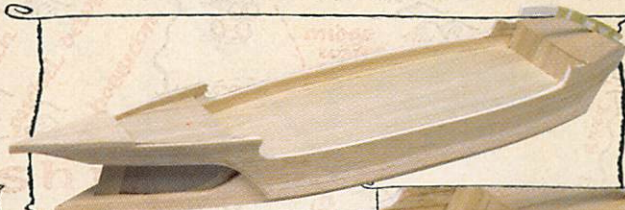


*The Corsairs of Umbar are a plague on the trade routes near the realm of Gondor. These ruthless brigands lash out at passing vessels in lightning-fast raids and then retreat without a trace only to return when an enemy vessel is vulnerable.*



**1** Draw out a rough plan for your ship on paper. If necessary, you can blow it up on a photocopier.

You can see part of the original drawing on the top of the deck. The plan shows the centerline of the ship and the distances out to the gunwales. Create the basic frame for your ship out of cardboard and foamcore. Use masking tape to hold everything together. At this stage, it is easy to make adjustments to the overall fit of the pieces by releasing the tape and fine-tuning the position of the component pieces. When you are satisfied with the shape and fit, glue the parts together with super glue to create a solid frame.



**2** Once the super glue dries. Use balsa strips to make wood planking on the deck and the sides of the hull. Bend the strips carefully to follow the outer line of the ship's hull. Again, soak the strips in water before you bend them into place. Glue them down with super glue. The planking, in addition to giving your model an authentic look, will hide any gaps or other unsightly parts of your frame.



**3** To suggest that the bow is armored for ramming, wrap a few pieces of thin cardboard in crumpled aluminum foil and glue these pieces in place on the ship's prow. Start at the bow and overlap the plates as you work your way aft to create a look that suggests water-tight seals and a serrated cutting ram. In this shot, you can also see how the direction of the wood grain of the planking matches the lines of the ship for a clean, aqua-dynamic look.



**4** Create the tiller and rudder assembly much as you did the rest of the ship. Create a rough frame out of foamcore and masking tape and then cover it with balsa wood strips. To help your planking line up on an irregular shape like this one, make sure you start applying the planking at the same point on all sides of the object. For example, begin by placing one plank on the starboard side (that's the right side, for all you landlubbers) of the tiller and then another on the port side to match it. As you work your way down to where the tiller meets the rudder, make sure the port and starboard seams stay even.

### TIPS FOR ASPIRING SHIPWRIGHTS

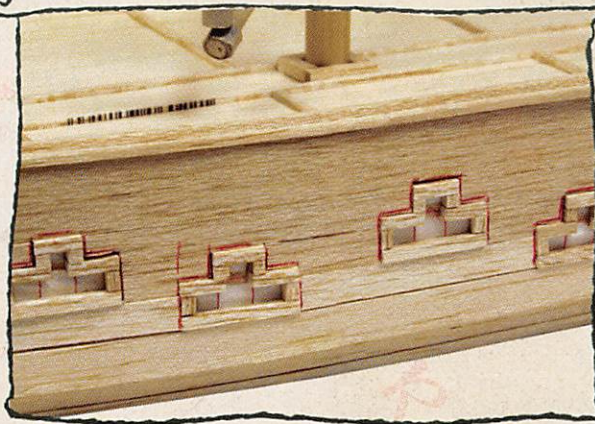
**Reminder: SOAK YOUR BALSA WOOD!** Soaking balsa wood in water can make it extremely pliable. Even pieces of wood as large as 1/2" thick can be shaped a bit after you soak them in water for a few days.

To give your sails a little shape, place a thin wire next to the edges of the sails, apply some glue to the edge of the sail, and fold the edge over to glue the wire into the "hem." Once the glue dries, you can bend the sail into any shape you please.

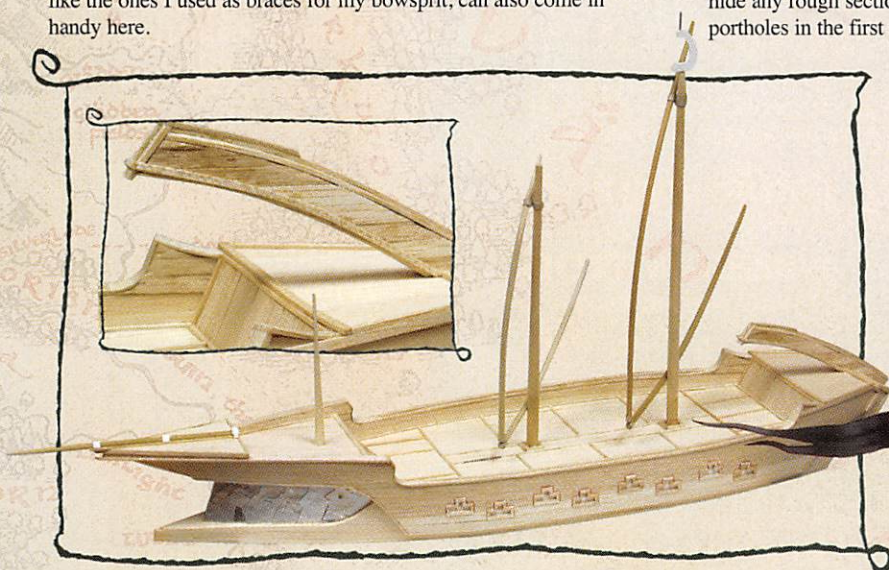
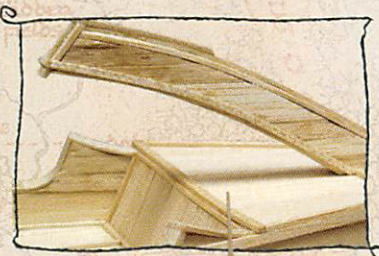




**5** Detail the bow of your vessel with thinner strips of balsa wood and other assorted bits of wood you may have laying around. I used an old paintbrush handle for the bowsprit. Pieces of plasticard, like the ones I used as braces for my bowsprit, can also come in handy here.



**6** If you like, you can cut portholes into the side of your ship. Add some balsa wood trim to neaten up the holes you cut. The trim will help your ship look neat and consistent and will hide any rough sections or mistakes you make in cutting the portholes in the first place.



**7** Now, it's time to put the final details on your ship. Use dowel rods to create masts, gaffs, and booms to support your sails. You can also add balsa strips running athwartships (from port to starboard) on your deck to break up the large flat surface.

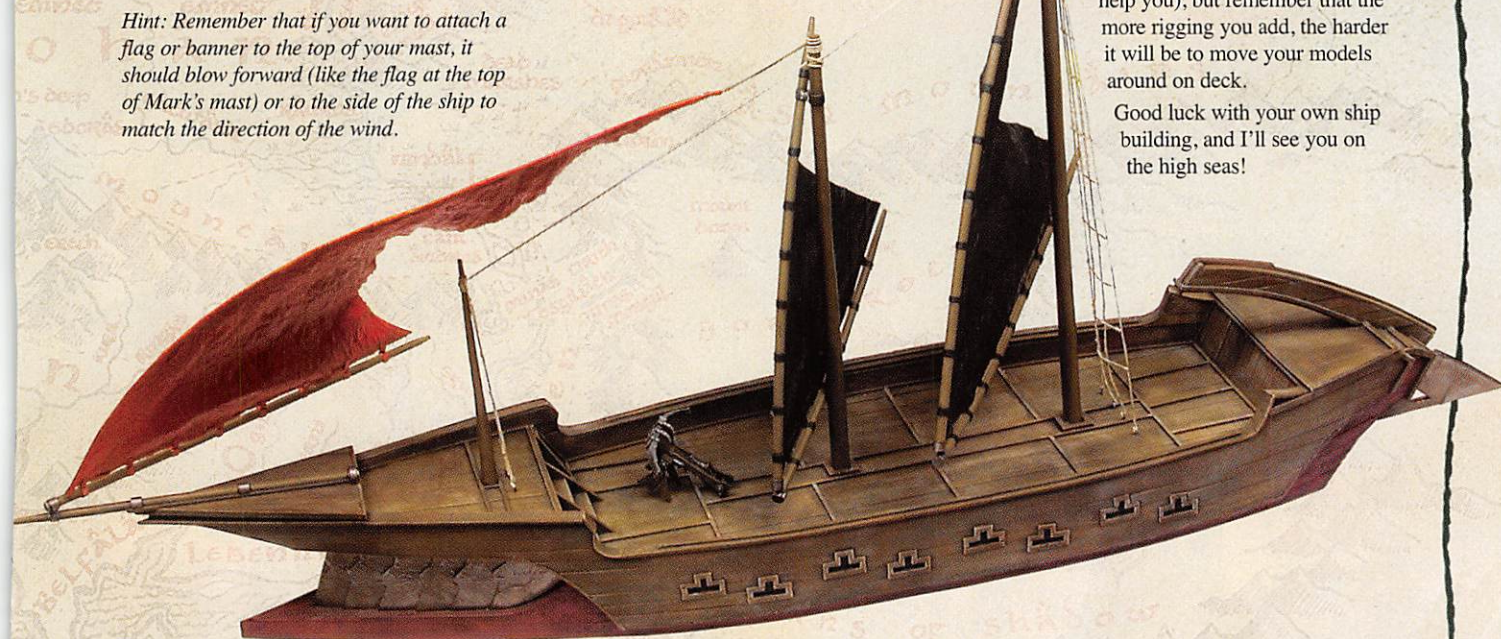
There are several ways to create sails. The simplest way is to make sails like unit banners: stiffen paper or cloth with watered-down white glue. Using glue to harden the sails helps to give them shape. See

*Black Gobbo 9* for more information on making sails.

Create rigging out of string or twine treated with watered-down white glue as Nick described above in making his Gondor ship. You can be as realistic as you like in rigging your ship (reference books can help you), but remember that the more rigging you add, the harder it will be to move your models around on deck.

Good luck with your own ship building, and I'll see you on the high seas!

*Hint: Remember that if you want to attach a flag or banner to the top of your mast, it should blow forward (like the flag at the top of Mark's mast) or to the side of the ship to match the direction of the wind.*







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