

PRIMA'S OFFICIAL STRATEGY GUIDE

AGE of SAIL II

WRITTEN BY THE
AGE of SAIL
DEVELOPMENT TEAM!

Capo
II
Halifax



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AGE of SAIL™ II

Prima's Official Strategy Guide

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Foreword from the Designers of "Age of Sail II"

Age of Sail II is the sequel to TalonSoft's best-selling *Age of Sail*, shipped in 1996. The original *Age of Sail* was ahead of its time, bringing to the market an exciting simulation of ship-to-ship warfare glorified by the likes of Hornblower and Nelson.

The game's designs and concepts were influenced by the miniatures games of the mid 1970's, the forerunner of modern naval war gaming. The experience was that of hard fought battle blended with the visual excitement of hand painted ship models raking each other, slamming into enemy ships, conducting boarding actions, etc.

Until the mid 1980's, tabletop miniatures were the only way to visually re-create combat in this era. When the chance came to do *Age of Sail*, visions of a "perfect" gaming experience flooded into TalonSoft. However, the technology of the time limited the final result. Lack of true 3D graphics equated to fixed view models; panning and true zooming were not available; the graphical limit of a 16-point compass for maneuvers eliminated the ability to show smoothly turning battle formations; limited animations detracted from the overall presentation.

Current technology has permitted us to fully exploit the original vision and deliver an experience true to the times. *Age of Sail II* features a fully functioning 3D environment with total camera control. The ships are beautiful, fully 3D models, complete with individually puffing sails, unique damage texturing, falling masts, and fire. Smoke hangs thick around these battle ships as they pound away at each other, slicing and turning to maneuver into a favorable firing position.

Age of Sail II may be classified as a military strategy game in computer game terminology but it is actually a military tactical simulation. We wanted to leave multiple paths for the player to pursue to victory, allow the player to easily command multiple units simultaneously and capture the excitement of real naval battle. Hence, the game is non-linear; it is not scripted and gameplay is in "real time" with a player interface that is simple and comfortable. Orders can be given using a mouse, menu items, and/or the keyboard. Less common and more complex tasks use buttons, additional keys and/or menus and many may be automated. The game is played using a smoothly and easily shifting isometric or camera view. A continuous zoom feature shifts players from a more distant view for navigation purposes to a more close-up "battlefield" view for use during combat, and anything in between.



Foreword

Ship's captains had absolute power ("Ye swabs me deck or ye tastes me whip!") on ships of this era. Extensive efforts are made to capture a sense of that power. Each player directly commands one ship at a time, although additional ships may also be more loosely controlled and individual ship control may be changed during a game. It is possible for a player to personally sail his own ship and also lead squadrons of other ships into large battles. During the battle parts of the game, the player leads his or her crews as captain of a ship and, possibly, as admiral of a squadron or fleet.

Immersing the player in the era while allowing the player the freedom of individuality was always a priority. There are many ship types of varying sizes and riggings available for use and players can be of many different nationalities. A character development system was created to allow the player to be rewarded in his/her quest: The ultimate goals are a legacy of prestige, fame, glory, and social position.

As with all of our wargames, emphasis was placed on historical accuracy, without sacrificing any of the fun factor. The game's background is enhanced by an historical treatment that requires no player effort and does not interfere with the enjoyment of the game. The "Great Age of Fighting Sail" really existed during a most incredible seagoing era and players can enjoy splashing around in our model of the time and place. The ships we include existed, guns performed as they do in the game and empires were made and lost on the tossing waters of the bounding main.

The end result is a gaming experience approaching the original design vision and immersing the player in a glorious era of naval combat, the Age of Sail.

Jim Rose

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Introduction

Age of Sail II takes you back to a time between the American Revolution and the War of 1812, an era of great naval battles and evolving naval tactics. In this game, you command historical sailing ships and participate in naval battles that forever altered the course of Western history. As you learn the ropes and become a great naval commander, you'll mourn your losses and swear vengeance for the deaths of your valiant crewmen.

Chapter 1 of this guide, "Living in the Age of Sail," provides historical background information to help both seamen and landlubbers understand the trials and tribulations of commanding a sailing ship into battle. You'll find a glossary of period terminology and a brief rundown of ship designs, so you can tell your vessels from the enemy's.

Chapter 2, "Discussion of Tactics in *Age of Sail II*," covers the era's naval war tactics and how to apply them to your gameplay. Because the battles in *Age of Sail II* are so realistic, the tactics that proved effective historically often are equally appropriate in the game against AI or human opponents.

Finally, Chapter 3, "Discussion of Historical Scenarios in *Age of Sail II*," offers details of the 115 scenarios included in *Age of Sail II*, including the history of each and how they transpired in long-ago reality. Play the scenario as it actually was fought, or adapt your own tactics to see if you can do better: Replay history—or reshape it!

I hope you find this guide as informative and enjoyable as *Age of Sail II* itself. Now grab your compass and telescope and let's set sail!

— Ashton Fletcher

Living in the Age of Sail

Glossary of Terms

It has been said that the past is a foreign country. Terms commonly used by our English-speaking ancestors have become obsolete, specialized, or have changed in meaning. Even the maritime vocabulary that remains in use today is sure to be unfamiliar to the land-lubbers among us.

This glossary will help those who might feel a bit bewildered by the nautical jargon used in the late 18th and early 19th centuries.

aback: The situation of a ship's sail when the wind presses upon its forward surface. Individual sails might be set aback to slow or stop a ship or hold it in position.

abaft: The posterior part of a ship, or some point nearer the stern than any given ship part, such as *abaft the foremast*. The opposite of *afore*.

abeam: A point at a right angle to the ship's mainmast. *Abaft the beam* is a position between the direct line abeam and the stern, and *before the beam* is between the beam and the head or bow.

able seaman: A prime seaman, usually in his late teens to mid-30s, who could work the sails over 100 feet up in the rigging in a raging sea. Such crewmen also served as gunners, could join boarding parties, and performed most tasks aboard a sailing ship. Able seamen received a premium in pay for their skills and knowledge.

aboard: The inside of a ship. Any person who enters a ship is said to *go aboard*; but an enemy entering in time of battle is said to *board*. To *fall aboard* is to strike against another ship. To *haul aboard the main tack* is to bring the clew of the mainsail down to the chesstree.

about: The situation of a ship *immediately* after it has tacked, or changed its course, by *going about*. Once a ship did so, it was *standing on the other tack* (going in a new direction).

abreast: Synonymous with *abeam*. (See *line abreast*.)

