
EXPLORERS
OF THE NORTH SEA
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INTRODUCTION

Explorers of the North Sea is set in the latter years of the Viking Age. As ambitious sea captains, players seek out new lands to settle and control. They will need to transport their crew among the newly discovered islands to capture livestock, construct outposts and fulfill various other goals. So ready the longships, there are new horizons to explore!

AIM OF THE GAME

The aim of Explorers of the North Sea is to become the most prestigious Captain through clever planning and navigation. Players gain Victory Points *(VP)* by controlling Islands, delivering Livestock, raiding Settlements, constructing Outposts and destroying Enemy Ships. The game ends at the dawn of winter. At this point, the player with the most Victory Points is declared the winner!

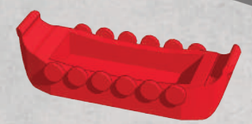
COMPONENTS



48 Tiles



26 Livestock
(In 6 Types)

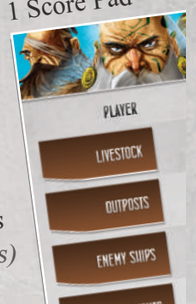


4 Longships
(In 4 Colours)



11 Captain Cards

28 Vikings
(In 4 Colours)



1 Score Pad



2 Double-sided Starting Boards



14 Settlement Tokens



12 Enemy Ships



1 Winter Token



20 Outposts
(In 4 Colours)

SETUP

To setup Explorers of the North Sea, follow these steps:

1. Choose 1 of the Starting Boards and place it either side up, within reach of all players. Make sure there is a good amount of space in front of it for placing Tiles. The Starting Board consists of 3 fixed Tiles and a large area containing the Mainland. *The Starting Board pictured below is recommended for first time players.*

2. Place all Livestock, Settlement Tokens *(numbers facedown)* and Enemy Ships (*ships faceup)* behind the Starting Board. *Be sure to shuffle around the Settlement Tokens and Enemy Ships.*

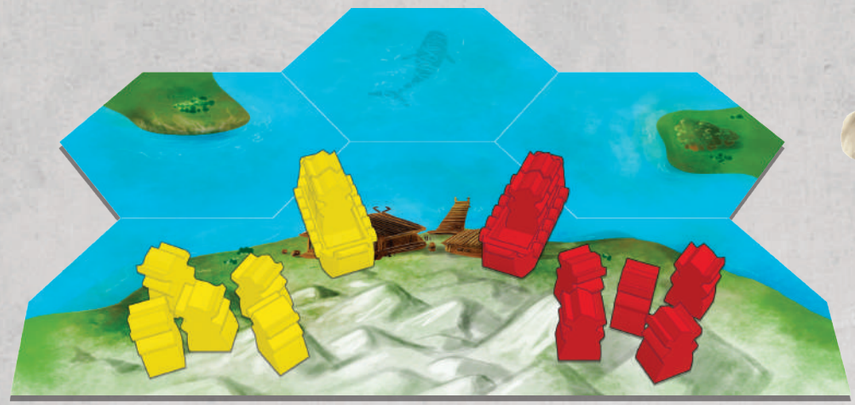
3. Shuffle the 48 Tiles and deal 3 facedown to each player. Place the remaining Tiles facedown in a stack to the side of the playing area. Players may only look at their own Tiles.

4. Shuffle the Captain Cards and deal 2 to each player. Each player chooses 1 and places it faceup in front of them. All other Captain Cards are returned to the box. Each Captain has a unique scoring bonus for the end of the game *(see pages 12-14).*

5. Give each player 1 Longship, 7 Vikings and 5 Outposts in their chosen colour.

6. Players place their Longship with 2 Vikings on board, on the Starting Board. These must be placed along the shoreline of the Mainland. Players also place their remaining Vikings onto the Mainland, ready to explore.

7. Randomly select a starting player. Give the player to their right *(anti-clockwise)* the Winter Token.





GAMEPLAY OVERVIEW

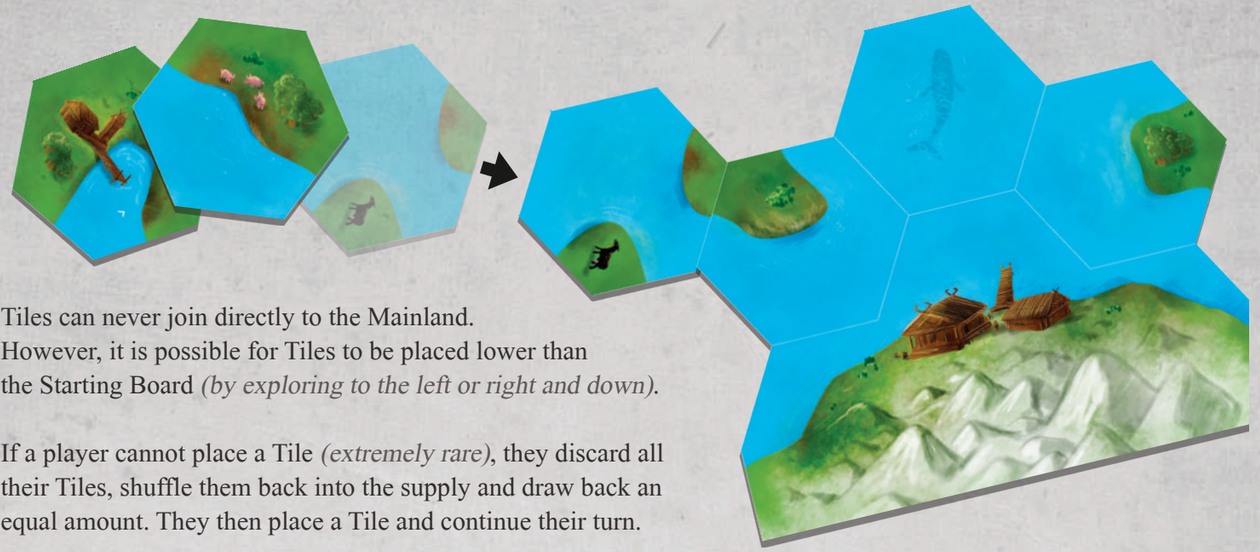
Proceeding clockwise from the starting player, each player takes their turn in full. On their turn, players first place 1 Tile from their hand. After doing so, they may take up to 4 actions. Once they have taken all desired actions, they draw a new Tile *(if available)*, adding it to their hand. This continues until the player holding the Winter Token has no Tiles left in their hand.

Throughout the game, players will sail their Vikings among newly discovered Islands. On their journeys they can construct Outposts, raid Settlements, destroy Enemy Ships and fight for control of each Island. They can also capture Livestock and deliver them back to the Mainland to please the Chieftain.

PLACING TILES

Before taking any actions, players must first place 1 Tile from their hand.
Tiles must be placed using the following rules:

- They must share at least 1 edge with either the Starting Board or any other Tile.
- All edges must match up to surrounding Tiles *(land to land and sea to sea)*.



Tiles can never join directly to the Mainland.
However, it is possible for Tiles to be placed lower than the Starting Board *(by exploring to the left or right and down)*.

If a player cannot place a Tile *(extremely rare)*, they discard all their Tiles, shuffle them back into the supply and draw back an equal amount. They then place a Tile and continue their turn.

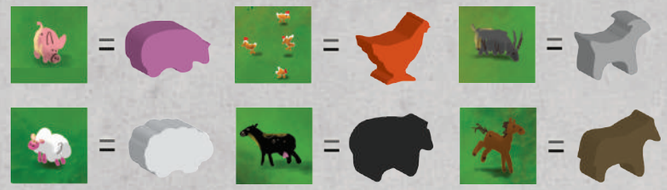
PLACING TOKENS

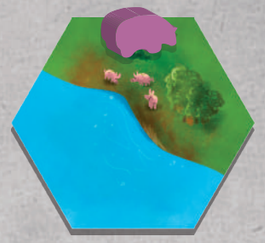
When placing a Tile, players will also need to place 1 Livestock, Settlement Token, or Enemy Ship.
Each Tile has an illustration indicating what should be placed.

Placing Livestock

When placing Livestock, take 1 from the supply, matching the illustrated type.
Place the Livestock over the illustration on the Tile.
Note: Only 1 Livestock is placed, regardless of how many are illustrated on the Tile.

There are 6 different Livestock types in varying quantities:
6 Pigs, 5 Chickens, 5 Goats, 4 Sheep, 3 Cattle and 3 Horses.





1 Pig is placed onto a Tile with Pigs



1 Settlement Token is placed onto a Tile with a Settlement

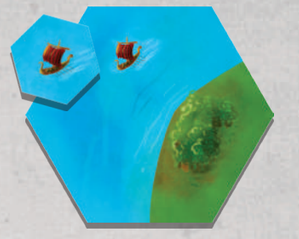
Placing Settlement Tokens

When placing Settlement Tokens, take 1 at random from the supply and turn it over to reveal its military strength *(printed number)*. Place the Settlement Token on the Settlement illustration on the Tile.

Placing Enemy Ships

When placing Enemy Ships, take 1 at random from the supply, without turning it over.
Place the Enemy Ship over the illustration on the Tile.

Players are not permitted to know what is on the backside of each Enemy Ship until it has been destroyed (See page 7).



1 Enemy Ship is placed onto a Tile with a Ship

After placing their Tile and adding any required Livestock, Settlement Tokens or Enemy Ships, the current player may take up to 4 actions. Players may perform the same action multiple times if they choose. Actions can be taken in any order.

The available actions are:

1. Load Longship
2. Unload Longship *+ Deliver Livestock*
3. Move Longship *+ Destroy an Enemy Ship*
4. Move Vikings *+ Raid a Settlement*
5. Transport Livestock
6. Construct an Outpost *(costs 2 actions)*



1. Load Longship

Each player's Longship may carry up to 3 Vikings or Livestock *(of any combination).*
As 1 action, players may load any number of their Vikings or Livestock onto their Longship.

When loading Longships, the following rules apply:

- All loaded Vikings and Livestock must first be located on 1 piece of land, on the same Tile as their Longship.
- Livestock cannot load themselves onto a Longship. They must either be moved along with at least 1 Viking, or have at least 1 Viking present on land when being loaded.



2. Unload Longship

As 1 action, players may unload any number of Vikings or Livestock from their longship, onto land.

When unloading Longships, the following rules apply:

- All Vikings and Livestock must be unloaded onto 1 piece of land, on the same Tile as their Longship.
- Livestock cannot unload themselves from a Longship. They must either be moved along with at least 1 Viking, or have at least 1 Viking on board the Longship when being unloaded.

+ Deliver Livestock:
Players score Victory Points for delivering Livestock back to the Mainland. When players unload Livestock to the Mainland, they are immediately placed onto their Captain Card (this does not require any additional actions). These will be scored at the game's end. Players score increasing amounts of Victory Points for delivering sets of unique Livestock types. Scoring Livestock will be explained in detail later.



3. Move Longship

Players will need to move their Longships to transport Vikings and Livestock among the Islands.
As 1 action, players may move their Longship to a connected sea space on an adjacent Tile.

When moving a Longship, the following rules apply:

- Longships cannot sail themselves. To move their Longship, players must have at least 1 Viking on board.
- Longships cannot cross land. They must be moved into connected sea spaces.
- There are no limits to how many Longships may be on the same Tile.
- Longships with less than 2 Vikings cannot move into a sea space containing an Enemy Ship.

+ Destroy an Enemy Ship:
Players score 1 Victory Point for each Enemy Ship they destroy. To destroy an Enemy Ship, players must move their Longship (with at least 2 Vikings on board) onto the same sea space of the same Tile. The Enemy Ship is immediately destroyed (this does not require any additional actions). However, players may lose 1 Viking on board their Longship. This is decided by the icons on the reverse side of each Enemy Ship. There are 2 possible outcomes:

 *= No Vikings die*

 *= 1 Viking dies*

Players should turn over the Enemy Ship to discover their fate. If no Vikings die, the current player places the Enemy Ship on their Captain Card and continues their turn. If 1 Viking dies, the current player must remove a Viking from their Longship and place it on their Captain Card, along with the destroyed Enemy Ship. It will remain there for the rest of the game. Players score increasing amounts of Victory Points for any Vikings they lose. Scoring Viking deaths will be explained in detail later.



4. Move Vikings

At times, Vikings will need to leave their Longship and travel by land. *Perhaps to raid a nearby Settlement or capture some Livestock.* As 1 action, players may move 1 or 2 Vikings from 1 land space to a connected land space on an adjacent Tile.

When moving Vikings, the following rules apply:

- Vikings cannot swim across sea spaces. They must be moved into connected land spaces.
- There are no limits to how many Vikings of any colour may be on the same Tile.

+ Raid a Settlement:
Some Tiles contain Settlements. When drawn, a Settlement Token is placed, revealing the Settlement's military strength (2 to 5). To successfully raid a Settlement, players will need to move an equal or higher number of their Vikings onto the Settlement (a Settlement with a military strength of 4 will require 4 or more Vikings to be raided). Settlements are immediately raided once there are enough Vikings of the current player present (this does not require any additional actions). Vikings on board Longships or across sea do not count towards the raid.
Once raided, the current player places the Settlement Token facedown on their Captain Card. These will be scored at the game's end. Raided Settlements score Victory Points equal to their military strength.



5. Transport Livestock

Often players will need to transport Livestock across land before loading them onto their Longship. As 1 action, players may transport 1 Livestock with 1 Viking, from 1 land space to a connected land space on an adjacent Tile.

When transporting Livestock, the following rules apply:

- Livestock cannot move themselves. They must be accompanied by a single Viking.
- Livestock cannot swim across sea spaces. They must be moved into connected land spaces.
- There are no limits to how many Livestock of any type may be on the same Tile.
- All Livestock can be moved by any player. However, players cannot steal Livestock from opponents' Longships.

6. Construct an Outpost

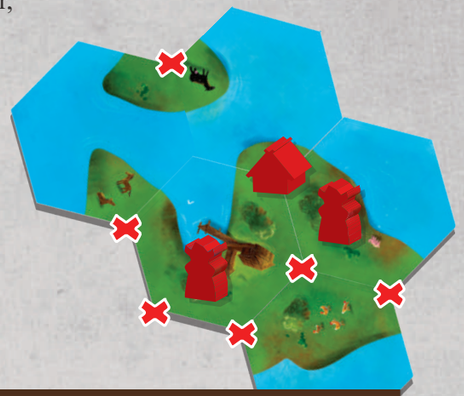
At the game's end, players score Victory Points for each completed *(completely surrounded by sea)* Island they control. The most effective way to control Islands is by constructing Outposts. Scoring Islands will be explained later. As 2 actions, players may construct an Outpost on a point where 3 Tiles are joined by land.

When constructing an Outpost, the following rules apply:

- Each Tile can only be connected to 1 Outpost of any player colour.
- Players must have at least 2 Vikings present on land, immediately surrounding the Outpost's location. These Vikings can be on any of the 3 connected Tiles *(even 2 on the same Tile)*.
- All 3 Tiles must be placed before an Outpost can be constructed.
- Players are limited to constructing just 5 Outposts. Once they are built, they cannot be moved or removed.

Each constructed Outpost scores players an increasing amount of Victory Points at the game's end *(2 VP for the first, 3 VP for the 2nd, 4 VP for the 3rd, and so on)*. As mentioned earlier, they also contribute to the control of Islands at the game's end. Scoring Outposts and Islands will be explained in detail later.

Example:
Red has 2 Vikings surrounding the point where 3 Tiles join by land. They spend 2 actions to construct an Outpost. All players (including Red), may no longer construct Outposts adjoining to these 3 Tiles (as shown by the ✖'s). This rule is not restricted to Outposts on the same island either (note the top left ✖ on the illustration).



DRAWING TILES

Once the current player has taken all desired actions *(up to 4)*, they end their turn by drawing a new Tile to their hand. If there are no Tiles left to draw, they do not draw one. If this is true, there are only a few turns left to play.

END OF THE GAME

The game ends immediately after the turn where the player holding the Winter Token has no more Tiles in hand. This should be exactly 48 turns *(there are 48 Tiles)*. However, some players may forget to place a Tile on their turn. In this situation, it is possible for the game to end with 1 or more players still having a Tile in their hand. Once the last player has taken their turn, the game is over and scoring takes place.

SCORING

Players should use the supplied score pad to calculate their scores.

There are 7 areas to consider:

1. Delivered Livestock
2. Constructed Outposts
3. Destroyed Enemy Ships
4. Raided Settlements
5. Viking Deaths
6. Controlled Islands
7. Captain Cards



Record each player's score in the 7 areas, before adding up their totals. The player with the highest total is the winner! In the case of a tie, the player who lost the most Vikings in glorious death is the winner. If still tied, the player who raided the most Settlements is the winner.

1. Delivered Livestock

Players score increasing amounts of Victory Points for delivering sets of unique Livestock types. 1 Livestock of any type is worth 1 VP. A set containing 1 of each type is worth 21 VP *(1+2+3+4+5+6)*.

Each set can only contain 1 of each type. If players deliver multiples of the same Livestock type, they simply count towards different sets. Players can have as many sets as they choose.

SCORING

For example, one player collected all the Livestock shown below, scoring a total of 28 VP:



= *21 VP (1+2+3+4+5+6)*

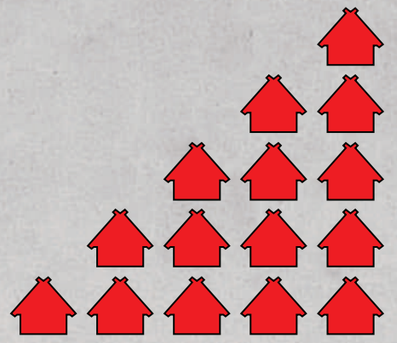
= *6 VP (1+2+3)*

= *1 VP*

2. Constructed Outposts

Players score increasing amounts of Victory Points for each Outpost they construct.

The first constructed Outpost of each player scores 2 VP. Each additional Outpost scores 1 VP more than their previous one.



= *2 VP*

= *5 VP (2+3)*

= *9 VP (2+3+4)*

= *14 VP (2+3+4+5)*

= *20 VP (2+3+4+5+6)*

3. Destroyed Enemy Ships

Players score 1 Victory Point for each Enemy Ship they have destroyed during the game.

4. Raided Settlements

Players score Victory Points equal to the military strength of each Settlement they have raided. Players should turn all their collected Settlement Tokens faceup and add their total to the score pad.



5. Viking Deaths

Players score increasing amounts of Victory Points for every Viking that dies while destroying an Enemy Ship. This is equal to dead Vikings, squared.

= 1 VP (1x1) = 4 VP (2x2) = 9 VP (3x3), etc

6. Controlled Islands

Players score Victory Points for each Island they control. *Note: Only completed Islands (totally surrounded by sea) are scored.* Control is determined by players' influence on each Island. The player with the most influence, controls the Island. In the case of a tie, all tied players score the Island in full.

Influence is calculated as follows:

Each Viking = 1 influence

Each Outpost = 2 influence

Vikings on board Longships do not have any influence on Islands.

After determining influence, the controlling player *(or players)*, score 1 VP for each Tile the Island covers.

For example, Red has an influence of 5. Yellow only has 2. The Island covers 5 Tiles. As the controlling player, Red scores 5 VP.



7. Captain Cards

During setup, each player was dealt a Captain Card. These allow players to score additional Victory Points in a particular area. Captains and their scoring bonuses are listed on the following pages.

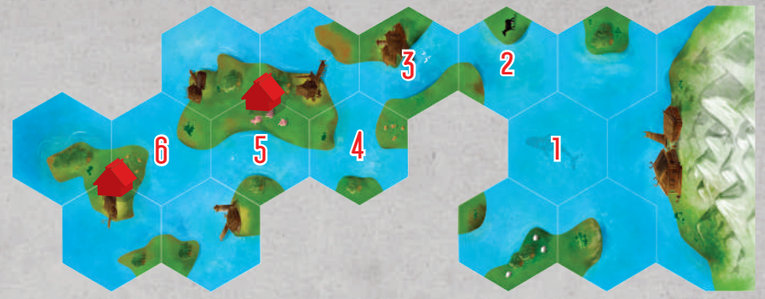


Archer

Gain 1 additional VP for each Tile laying between the Mainland and your farthest Outpost

In the example below, you would score 6 VP.

Players must always use the shortest route possible.





Barbarian

Gain 1 additional VP for each Enemy Ship you destroy

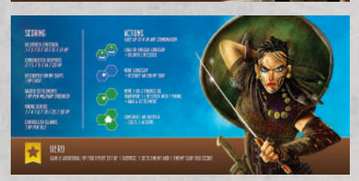
For example, if you destroyed 3 Enemy Ships, you would score 3 VP.



Cartographer

If you control more than 1 Island, score your second largest Island twice.

If you control less than 2 Islands, you score no Victory Points for your Captain. If your 2 largest Islands are an equal size, you score 1 of them twice.



Hero

Gain 2 additional VP for every set of 1 Outpost, 1 Settlement and 1 Enemy Ship you score.

For example, if you constructed 4 Outposts, raided 3 Settlements and destroyed 5 Enemy Ships, you would score 6 VP (3 sets).



Huntsman

Gain 2 additional VP for every matching pair of Livestock you deliver.

For example, if you delivered 3 Pigs, 4 Sheep and 1 Cow, you would score them as usual, plus score another 6 VP for your Captain (3 pairs).

7. Captain Cards *(continued)*



Queen
Gain VP equal to your influence on 1 Island you control, minus players in the game. The Queen does not lose Victory Points if the sum is below zero.
For example, if you had an influence of 8 on 1 Island you control and there were 3 players in the game, you would score 5 VP.



Scout
Gain 1 additional VP for each complete Island you do not control, where you have 1 or more Vikings present.
For example, if you have Vikings on 4 Islands controlled by any of your opponents, you would score 4 VP.



Shieldmaiden
Gain 1 additional VP for each Island you control.
For example, if you controlled 3 Islands, you would score 3 VP.



Trader
Gain 2 additional VP for every 3 Livestock you deliver.
For example, if you delivered 7 Livestock you would score 4 VP.



Tyrant
Gain 1 additional VP for each Settlement you raid.
For example, if you raided 4 Settlements, you would score 4 VP.



Watchman
Gain 1 additional VP for each Outpost you construct.
For example, if you constructed 5 Outposts, you would score 5 VP.

The following rule adjustments apply when playing solo:

Setup

- Do not draw any Tiles during setup.
- Remove the Queen and Scout Captain Cards.
- Shuffle all remaining Captain Cards and deal 2 faceup in front of you.
- The Winter Token is not required.

Gameplay Overview

Each turn you will be drawing 3 new Tiles to your hand. Before taking any actions, place 2 of the 3 Tiles in any order you choose. After placing these, discard the 3rd Tile and take up to 4 actions as normal. Discarded Tiles cannot be used for the remainder of the game.

End of the Game

The game ends once there are no new Tiles left to draw.
This should be exactly 16 turns. Scoring then takes place.
The goal is to try beat your previous high score.

Scoring

All scoring works the same, except for Captain Cards. You will only score Victory Points for your lowest scoring Captain Card.
For Example, if you scored 8 VP for your Hero, but only 5 VP for your Shieldmaiden, you would score 5 VP.

Note on scoring Islands: Even if you only have 1 influence on an Island, you still control and score it.

