



How to Play Paper Battleship



by mjasperse

My family loves playing games, especially logic and strategy games. At extended family reunions at least half of our time is spent playing games. There are a few games that are designated as our classic family games, and every adult family member has a copy of the game. Paper Battleship is one of those classic games. My grandparents even played Paper Battleship by mail while dating long distance.

Paper Battleship is similar to the traditional game Battleship. However, they differ in a few ways. Paper Battleship is flexible and can be played anywhere, not requiring the traditional game boards. Instead of playing with only two people, Paper Battleship allows many people to play together. Players can also fire multiple shots on a turn, increasing the game's complexity. Paper Battleship is a fun, logical,

strategic game for groups to play.

Players: 2 or more

Ages: 12 and up

Time: 40 - 60 minutes

Goal: Players have ships marked on a grid. Each player calls out coordinates to discover and sink their opponent's ships. The last person with undiscovered ships wins.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
A	3												A
B													B
C			B ¹	B ²	B ⁴			C ¹		C			C
D		3	B			2				C			D
E			B					C					E
F			B				C			4			F
G	4		B		1								G
H	1							2		2			H
I		4		3									I
J		3		D	D	D						S	J
K												S	K
L													L
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	

	5 long 3 shots	4 long 2 shots	3 long 1 shot	2 long 1 shot
Name	Battleship	Cruiser	Destroyer	Sub
Player 1	3, 4			
Player 2	4			
Player 3	1		4	
Player 4		1, 1	1	

Step 1:

Each player has a sheet with a grid.

[Click here for the printable grid.](#)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
A													A
B													B
C													C
D													D
E													E
F													F
G													G
H													H
I													I
J													J
K													K
L													L
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	

	5 long 3 shots	4 long 2 shots	3 long 1 shot	2 long 1 shot
Name	Battleship	Cruiser	Destroyer	Sub

Step 2:

Each player starts with four ships. Each ship takes up a certain number of spaces or coordinates on the grid. Each ship has an associated number of shots.

- Battleship - 5 spaces - 3 shots
- Cruiser - 4 spaces - 2 shots
- Destroyer - 3 spaces - 1 shot
- Sub - 2 spaces - 1 shot

Step 3:

Each player marks each individual ship on the grid, according to its number of spaces. Ships must be placed in a straight line. The ship's line of coordinates can be horizontal, vertical, or diagonal. Make sure other players do not see your grid (see image above).

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
A													A
B													B
C			B							C			C
D			B						C				D
E			B					C					E
F			B				C						F
G			B										G
H													H
I													I
J				D	D	D					S		J
K												S	K
L													L
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	

Step 4:

Gameplay starts when one player call out shots, or coordinates, to discover where their opponents' ships are placed. The player call out as many shots as they have according to the ships they have. It is to their advantage to call out all of their shots instead of just some of them. This is called the first round and completes the player's turn.

seven shots saying, "Round 1, seven shots: C3, C8, G5, H1, L12, E10, E11"

Tip: It is helpful to record on your grid what shots were called each round. A good way to do this is by writing the round number in the space for each coordinate called (see image above).

Example: Player 1 has all of their ships and calls out

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
A	³							
B								
C			¹ B	²	⁴			¹
D		³	B			²		
E			B					C
F			B				C	
G	⁴		B		¹			

Step 5:

If a player's ship was marked on a space that was called out as a shot, then their ship has been hit, or has taken damage. Once all the spaces for a certain ship have been hit, the ship sinks. The player no longer gets to call out the shots, associated with that ship.

Note: A player can shoot at and damage their own ship, if necessary.

Hits are different than shots. A ship sinks based on its number of spaces that are hit, not on its number of shots. A ship doesn't sink until all of its spaces have

been hit. A ship can have received multiple hits, without sinking. Even when a ship has received hits, it can still fire all of its designated shots. It is only when all of a ship's spaces are hit, that it sinks and can't fire its shots.

Example: Player 1's battleship takes up five spaces. A battleship has three shots. Player 1's battleship has received three hits in rounds 2, 3, and 5. Because only three of the battleship's five spaces have been hit, it has not been sunk, and can still fire all three of its shots.

Step 6:

After a round of shots has been called, all players report if they had any hits on their ships. Each player must share what type of ship was hit and how many times it was hit. The player should NOT disclose the specific coordinate that was hit. If none of their ships were hit, a player would report having no damage.

Example: During round 1, Player 1 calls out shots at C3, C8, G5, H1, L12, E10, and E11.

write down the round number, under the specific ship that was hit. If a ship gets hit more than once, put down two of that round number in the box (see image above). Knowing where someone was hit can help you see where their ship might be and where to fire.

	5 long 3 shots	4 long 2 shots	3 long 1 shot	2 long 1 shot
Name	Battleship	Cruiser	Destroyer	Sub
Player 1	3, 4			
Player 2	4			
Player 3	1		4	
Player 4		1, 1	1	

Player 2 reports "No damage,"

Player 3 reports "One hit on my battleship."

Player 4 reports "One hit on my destroyer and two hits on my cruiser."

Tip: It is helpful to keep track of when an opponent's ship gets hit. When other players report damage,

Example: Player 4's cruiser was hit twice in round one. Write "1, 1" in their cruiser box.

Step 7:

Each player takes a turn, or a round, calling out their shots.

Step 8:

Once all of a player's ships have been sunk, they are out of the game.

Step 9:

The last player with at least on ship left wins.

Note: It is possible that players will have overlapping ships. If the last two players come down to this, they tie.



Very nice, this is really a great idea. Thank you for sharing!