



Small Ship Actions in Victory at Sea

VAS has always been aimed primarily at surface actions featuring cruisers and battleships. Because of the scales involved, in particular in defining the weapons carried by ships, smaller vessels such as destroyers and frigates tend to be very “samey”, with limited levels of distinction between them. There is also the point that “weak” guns (which are basically the main armament for light cruisers and below) don’t cause critical hits. A VAS battle fought out solely between destroyers may be entertaining to a point but can also be a rather stale experience. The following rules and formula tables allow players to define destroyers and other smaller ships in more detail for actions fought solely between ships of this type (at present there are no plans to extend this principle to include bigger ships)

Revised Scales

Ground Scale

VAS currently uses an (undeclared) ground scale of 1” to 1000 yards. The revised scale in this variant is 1” to 333 yards (6” to one nautical mile)

Time scale

The combination of ground scale and ship speed/movement calculation results in a time scale of 2 minutes per turn. To reflect the inevitable “inertia” of warfare I recommend treating each turn as 5 minutes for scenario planning purposes.

Damage Points

Damage points are calculated as follows:

- 2000 tons or less 1 point per 50 tons
- 2000-5000 tons 40 plus 1 point per 100 tons over 2000
- 5000 tons plus 70 plus 1 point per 200 tons over 5000

Small craft of under 50 tons, such as MTBs and PT boats have 1 damage point.

Speed

Ship maximum speed in inches is calculated as the ships speed in knots divided by 5, rounding up (so the K Class destroyer, with a speed of 36 knots, moves up to 8" per turn).

Turning

Ships may turn after half their movement and then again at the end of their movement. If they delay their first turn until after the half movement point they may not make a second turn at the end of movement. There is no "agile" trait in DC!

Target Number

Target numbers are based on length:

>250'	4+
>120'	5+
<120'	6+

Armour

Smaller ships tended to be very lightly armoured, if at all. Ships will generally have armour values 1 greater than their VAS rating, so destroyers have an armour value of 2+, whilst light cruisers have 3+.

Crew

Divide crew numbers by 10.

Gun Data

Gun ranges are determined using the scale above. To reflect their poorer performance as gunnery platforms, ranges are reduced by 25% for destroyers. Each individual gun mount or turret is treated separately, in the same way as capital ship turrets in regular VAS. Example gun types are shown below

Typical Gun Types – per gun

Type	Range	AD	DD	Notes
5.9"	50"	1	5	
5", 4.7"	50"	1	4	
4.5"	45"	1	3	
4"	40"	1	2	
3"	30"	1	1	

Gunnery Modifiers (3"/75mm guns or larger)

Gunnery in DC! Uses the same basic system as standard VAS. The current VAS gunnery modifiers are replaced by the following::

Target stationary	+1
Target speed >7"	-1
Range 0"-10"	+1
Range 10"-20"	0
Range 20"-30"	-1
Range 30"- 40"	-2
Range 40"+	-3
Radar	+1 at targets over 30"
Improved Fire Control	+1 at targets over 30"
Night	-1
Bad weather	-1

Natural die rolls of 1 are a miss

Natural die rolls of 6 are a hit at 10" or less EXCEPT when firing at Small Craft

Critical Hits

Change the current system as follows. Roll a d6 for each hit scored. A critical hit is caused on a roll of 5+. Use the current critical hit tables. Treat torpedo mounts as turrets for the purposes of critical hits; in addition, if a torpedo tube mount is lost through a critical hit and its torpedoes have not yet been fired roll a d6. On a 6 the torpedoes explode. The ship is treated as if it has just been hit by one of its own weapons.

AAA

Current ship's AAA AD values and ranges are tripled. AAA ADs may be split between Small Craft or Aircraft within a turn. Small Craft are hit on a roll of 5 or 6 out to 10", or a 6 at ranges up to 20".

Dual Purpose Guns

Many destroyers and cruisers employed High Angle gun mounts that allowed their heavy guns to be used as Dual Purpose AA weapons. If a mount is noted as DP in the notes column of the ship stat sheet the mount can be used for AA fire (although not in the same turn as it is used against surface targets). The entry will read DP1 or DP2. The number denotes the increase in AAA AD that the mount allows. For scenarios set in 1943 or later, Allied ships may use VT fuses. If so the number is increased by 1.

"Secondaries"

Some ships may have "secondaries" – small calibre guns fitted to engage surface targets rather than air targets (example: 2pdr "pom pom" bow chasers on some RN destroyers and corvettes for anti-e boat missions). These are treated as AAA but obviously cannot use their ADs against air targets.

Aircraft

Use the original AD values of aircraft (or divide post-Supplement ADs by three). Each “flight” now represents an individual aircraft. The limit on attacking aircraft going against a single ship target is increased to 6. Each Bomb damage hit is resolved by rolling a number of d6 equal to the bomb’s DD. This is the number of hits caused. One critical is scored for each roll of 5+

Torpedoes

The original system is replaced completely. Torpedoes are represented individually. Each torpedo is now represented by a marker that shows the position and direction of the torpedo, plus its impending movement. Marker lengths are equal to half the effective speed of the weapon. For example, a British Mk8 torpedo has a speed of 45 knots. This equates to a movement of 9”. Its marker is therefore 4.5” long.

When a torpedo is fired it is placed alongside the firing ship and pointed to show the direction of travel of the torpedo.

Ships are moved before torpedoes. If a ship moves across a torpedo marker during the first half of its movement resolve the torpedo attack immediately. **EXCEPTION** - if a ship passes through a torpedo marker that has not yet moved there is no attack – the torpedo has to travel a certain distance before it is armed. If it passes across a marker only in the second half of its movement the torpedo misses (it has passed by the track of the ship by the time the torpedo gets there). After ship movement has been resolved torpedo markers are moved. Place a new marker in line with and in contact with the original marker, then remove the original marker. If the newly placed marker passes across a ship resolve the attack..

Then, at the end of the turn place another marker in contact with and in line with the marker that is currently on table, but do not resolve any attacks if ships are now in contact (this happens in the following turn).

If a torpedo attack resolution is required roll a d6. The torpedo hits on a roll of 4+. Modifiers are as follows:

Target speed >7”	-1
Target stationary	+1

If a hit is scored the marker is removed.

Torpedo Damage

Torpedo hits could be devastating for small ships such as destroyers. The Torpedo Table shows the number of d6 rolled for damage. Roll this number of dice, add the scores of the dice and this is the number of damage points caused. One critical hit is scored for each die roll of 5 +. This may be increased if the ship is hit amidships. Roll a d6 to determine the hit location and effect of the hit:

Die Roll	Location	Effect
1-2	Forward	Standard damage, speed reduced by 1d3
3-4	Midships	Multiply damage points inflicted by 2. Roll a d6. for ships with Armour values of 2. On a roll of 4+ (5+ for US destroyers) the ship's propulsion system has been disabled. The ship stops.
5-6	Aft	Standard damage, speed reduced by 1d3. Roll a d6 for each of propulsion and steering. If the die roll <i>exceeds</i> the ship's Armour Value the propellers are disabled and the ship stops or rudders are disabled and the ship cannot steer (reduce Turn to 1, which may be executed on a d6 roll of 4+ in mid-turn ONLY)

Example 1. A US destroyer is hit by a Japanese Type 92 torpedo. The hit location is forward. Six d6 are rolled for a total of 21. Three of the dice rolled score 5 or more, so the ship takes 3 critical hits. The ship takes 21 points of damage. A d6 is rolled for speed reduction and the score halved. The die roll is 5, so ship speed is reduced by 3.

Example 2. HMS Kelly is hit by a German G7 torpedo fired from an S boat. The hit location is midships. Five d6 are rolled for a score of 12. This is doubled to 24. Only one die rolled equals or exceeds 5 so Kelly takes one critical hit. A d6 is rolled for propulsion, for a score of 6. Kelly loses all power and comes to a stop.

Typical Torpedo Stats

	Marker Length	Endurance (markers)	DD
British Mk8	4.5"	5	6
UK Mk 15	4.5"	5	6
German Type G7a	4.5"	5	5
Japanese Type 92	4.5"	5	6
Japanese Type 93	5"	13	8
Generic 18" torpedo	4.5"	3	5
Generic 21" torpedo	4.5"	5	6

Endurance = number of markers that are placed. Once that number of markers have been placed the torpedo has reached the end of its run.

NB: These are based on short running torpedoes. In reality they could be set for longer distances, but ran at much lower speeds. An expanded set of tables may be generated that allows for longer running weapons.

EXAMPLE SHIP STATS FOR DESTROYER COMMANDER!

J, K AND N-CLASS DESTROYER STATS

Speed: 8"
Turning: 2
Target: 4+
Armour: 2+
Damage: 34/11
Crew: 19/7
Special Traits: Radar
In Service: 1938+

Weapon	Range	AD	DD	Special
A Mount (2x 4.7")	50"	1	4	
B Mount (2x 4.7")	50"	1	4	
X Mount (2x 4.7")	50"	1	4	
AAA	15"	3	-	
Forward Torpedoes		(5)		
Aft Torpedoes		(5)		
Depth Charges	3"	4	2	Slow-Loading

Length: 357 ft.
Displacement: 1,690 tons
Speed: 36 kts.
Crew: 183

ZERSTÖRER 1934-CLASS DESTROYER

Speed: 8"
Turning: 2
Target: 4+
Armour: 2+
Damage: 52/18
Crew: 33/11
Special Traits:
In Service: 1934

Weapon	Range	AD	DD	Special
A Mount (1x 5")	50"	1	4	
B Mount (1x 5")	50"	1	4	
X Mount (1x 5")	50"	1	4	
Y Mount (1x 5")	50"	1	4	
Z Mount (1x 5")	50"	1	4	
Secondary Armament	12"	1	1	Weak
AAA	12"	3	-	
Forward Torpedoes		(4)		
Aft Torpedoes		(4)		
Depth Charges	3"	3	2	Slow-Loading

Length: 363 ft.
Displacement: 3,155 tons
Speed: 37.5 kts.
Crew: 325

FLETCHER-CLASS DESTROYER

Speed: 8"

Turning: 2

Target: 4+

Armour: 2+

Damage: 45/15

Crew: 32/11

Special Traits: Radar, Sub Hunter

In Service: 1930

Weapon	Range	AD	DD	Special
A Mount (1x 5")	50"	1	4	
B Mount (1x 5")	50"	1	4	
X Mount (1x 5")	50"	1	4	
Y Mount (1x 5")	50"	1	4	
Z Mount (1x 5")	50"	1	4	
AAA	21"	6	-	
Forward Torpedoes		(4)		
Aft Torpedoes		(4)		
Depth Charges	3"	6	2	Slow-Loading

Length: 376 ft.

Displacement: 2,500 tons

Speed: 36.5 kts.

Crew: 329