



NAUTILÙS

The board game
for real sailors



Game instructions



#1 | Historical background

Nautilùs illustrates an old sailor game from the 18th century, which was popular to play amongst sailors during the crossings of the Pacific. The game combines old myths and yarns of the sea. Ahoy!

#2 | Game materials

- 1 Nautilùs board
- 16 marbles (in four colors each) representing your sailors
- 1 Moby Dick marble (white)
- 1 Moby Dick dice
- 104 playing cards
- 4 info cards

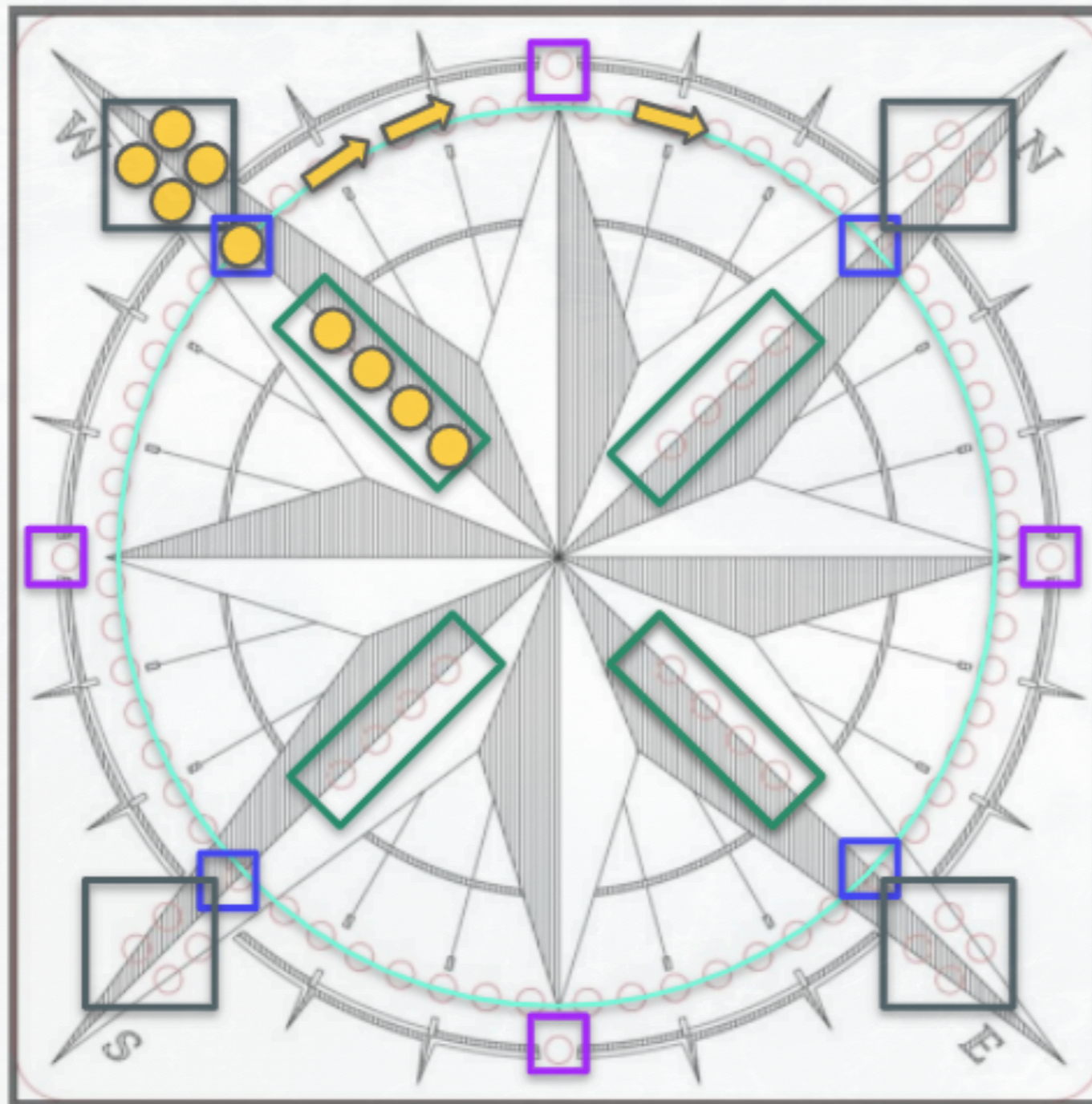
#3 | Game preparation

Nautilùs in its classic version is played with four players, divided into two teams. The two team members sit diagonally opposite each other (one team occupies North and South, the other team the West and East). Each player chooses a color and plays with the corresponding four marbles, which are placed in the whirlpool (see #5). The player who has been at the sea for the last time starts dealing as the dealer.

#4 | Game variants

In addition to the 4-player version, there is also a 2-player version and a fast version to play Nautilùs. You can find the rules for those variants under #11 and #12. If you are playing Nautilùs for the first time, we recommend the (fast) 4-player version.


#5| Game Board



 = Whirlpool (sailors are being placed here at the beginning of the game)

 = Starting position

 = Cave

 = Safe harbour

#6 | Game objective

The goal of Nautilùs is to bring all eight (two times four) sailors from the whirlpools to the safe harbors as a team. At the same time you try to beat the sailors of the other team and prevent them from reaching their safe harbors - and also Moby Dick will interfere with you on the way. You move your sailors with the playing cards (see #8). Numerous special cards allow the players a variety of further actions. The team that is the first to place its eight sailors in their safe harbor wins the game.

#7 | Gameplay

1. **Dealing:** Before the game begins, the 104 playing cards (not including info cards) need to be shuffled. Each player receives five cards, which are being used to play one round of the game.
2. **Exchange 1 card with your team partner:** After the cards have been distributed to the players - and before the start of the round - each player needs to say out loud if he or she has a card in his or her hand to bring one of his or her sailors to the starting field (i.e a "1" or a "12", read more about it in section #8) or not. (Each player says either "I can bring a sailor to the starting position." or "I cannot bring any of my sailors to the starting position."). After this has happened the team partners exchange a hand card face down with each other. Important: You are not allowed to agree on which card you will exchange or which card you would like to receive.
3. **The game round:** Nautilùs is played clockwise. The player sitting to the left of the dealer starts the game. Each player can play only one card at a time in his or her turn (unless a specific card requires otherwise). One round ends when all players have played their five cards.
4. **Moby Dick:** As soon as any player plays a Nautilùs card for the first time during the game, Moby Dick is placed one step behind the starting position of that player. From that moment on, Moby Dick is part of the game and at the end of each round, a die (1-6) is rolled (you decide who rolls) and Moby Dick then moves the corresponding steps clockwise. Any sailors that are in the way of Moby Dick's movement are placed back in the whirlpool.

Remaining gameplay: In each of the following rounds, the dealer changes to the next player clockwise and five cards from the deck (now with 20 fewer cards) are distributed to the four players again. This process is repeated until the deck is empty. Important: In the fifth round, six cards are dealt to each player instead of five (the first dealer, therefore, deals two rounds until all cards have been used). After that, the 104 cards are shuffled again and the rounds start over from the beginning. Continue now with „#9 - Important rules" and you are ready for your first Nautilùs game!

#8 | Playing cards

Name	# in deck	Explanation
1	11x	Place one of your sailors on the starting field or move 1 field forward.
2	7x	Move one of your sailors 2 steps forward.
3	7x	Move one of your sailors 3 steps forward.
4	7x	Move one of your sailors 4 fields backwards.
5	7x	Distribute 5 steps between your sailors and / or the sailors of your team partner.
6	7x	Move one of your sailors 6 fields forward.
7	8x	Move 7 steps forward. All sailors on the way (including your own) are sent back into the whirlpool.
8	7x	Move 8 steps forward or force the next player to skip their turn (he or she must then discard a card from the hand).
9	7x	Move one of your sailors 9 steps forward.
10	7x	Move one of your sailors 10 steps forward.
12	11x	Place one of your sailors on the starting position or move 12 steps forward.

Name	# in deck	Explanation
Nautilus	4x	The last turn of the previous player is undone and the same card needs to be used by the player who played Nautilus (if possible). When the Nautilus card is played for the first time, Moby Dick comes into the game and is placed one field behind the starting field of the player who played the first Nautilus card.
Compass goes crazy	7x	Swap the places of any two sailors (including your opponents' or Moby Dick) on the board.
Look through the TELESCOPE	1x	All players but you have to play with open cards until the end of the round.
STORM approaches	1x	Each player passes their cards to the player to the right of them. The player who played STORM now plays another card.
Rogue COMMANDERING	1x	Look at the cards of the player to your left and play the turn for him or her.
Time for SEE TRADE	1x	Exchange a card with your teammate (card must be traded face down)
MOBY DICK appears	3x	Clockwise, Moby Dick moves forward to the next sailor, takes his place and sends him back into the whirlpool.

#9 | Important rules

1. A sailor cannot be skipped by another sailor (except with a "7") - not even those of the team partner or your own. However, Moby Dick can be skipped by sailors.
2. If you land on a field with another sailor, you hit this sailor and send it back into the whirlpool (also your own ones or those of your team partner).
3. Cards **must** be played if this is possible (even if you hit your own seafarers in this case). Also special cards must be played if possible.
4. If it is not possible to play a card, you pick a card and discard it from your hand.
5. If you land on the field with Moby Dick, you "ride" on it to the next sailor clockwise and hit him. This sailor is sent to the whirlpool and Moby Dick is placed on that same field where that sailor was placed. Then your sailor, which rode on Moby Dick, is placed one field behind Moby Dick.
6. A cave can be used to protect a sailor from Moby Dick (Moby Dick is never allowed to enter the cave, he only moves on the circle). It also allows you to let other sailors pass by. However, sailors can be beaten in the cave if another player moves into the same cave. The cave cannot be used as an intermediate step, it is only allowed to reach it with your last step of your movement. Sailors in a cave can still be exchanged with a compass.
7. In the safe harbor, sailors cannot be skipped either. It is therefore a good idea to "clean up" the harbor with a 5, for example. As soon as a sailor reaches the final position (the last free space) in the safe harbor, the sailor may no longer be moved from there.
8. As soon as you have all your four seafarers in the harbor, you continue playing with your team partner's sailors.
9. If you don't have a suitable card to move your seafarer to the safe harbor, you may have to move it beyond the starting field and the sea journey starts again from the beginning.
10. The last sailor of a team (the 8th sailor) must be moved exactly to the last free position in the safe harbor (you must reach that position with the last step of your movement. E.g. a 5 might not work in this case if you would have steps left).

#10 | FAQs

1. **What happens if after a Nautilùs card a second or even third Nautilùs card is played?**

This is best explained by an example: Player A plays a 12 and places a sailor on the starting field, player B plays the Nautilùs card, reverses player A's action and places his or her own sailor on his starting square. Now player C plays another Nautilùs card and reverses player B's action, thus putting back player B's sailor's and restoring player A's action. Player A's action is restored, i.e. the navigator is placed back on the starting field. Now player C must use the function of the 12 for him - or herself and moves a sailor 12 steps or places a sailor on the starting field.

2. **Can I move backwards into the safe harbour with a 4?**

Yes, a 4 can be used to move your sailor backwards into the safe harbour as soon as you have passed the starting position (a sailor cannot be moved directly from the starting position into the safe harbour unless it has already been moved from there before). However, you cannot move backwards out of the safe harbour with a 4.

3. **Can you be beaten in the cave?**

Yes, but only if another sailor lands exactly on the cave as describe in #9. You can not use the cave as an intermediate step to beat a sailor.

4. **Can Moby Dick move into the cave?**

No, Moby Dick always stays on course and cannot be switched into the cave by a compass.

5. **Where does Moby Dick appear for the first time?**

Moby Dick appears one step behind the starting position of the player who played the first Nautilùs card. If Moby Dick is not yet on the board, a Moby Dick card, or the die, has no effect.

6. **What happens if you are riding Moby Dick, but there are no other sailors on the board?**

In this case, you ride Moby Dick once in a circle (60 steps) and then place your sailor one step behind Moby Dick.

7. **What happens if a Nautilùs card is played after a Moby Dick card?**

The Moby Dick action of the previous player is canceled, but the Moby Dick card must be used by the player who played the Nautilùs card. Therefore, the initial situation does not change.

8. **What happens if Moby Dick is on the starting position of a player and this player play a 1 or 12 to place a sailor on the starting position?**

As usual, you ride with Moby Dick and beat the next sailor.

9. **Can sailors be removed from the safe harbour?**

No, once in the harbour, a sailor cannot be removed or exchanged. However, the turn in which you brought a navigator into the safe harbour can be reversed by a Nautilùs card (unless it was the eighth sailor if the team, then the game ends immediately).

#11 | 2-Player Mode

Nautilùs can also be played with only two players. In this variant, both players start with 8 sailors each in two opposite whirlpools (one player chooses north and south, the other player west and east). Each player chooses two colours and receives the corresponding eight marbles and places them in the whirlpools. The player who has been at the sea for the last time begins dealing as the dealer.

Changes to the 4-Player Mode:

1. **Dealing:** Before the game begins, the 104 playing cards (not including info cards) are shuffled well. Each player receives eight cards, which are then used to play a round. If a player does not have 1 or 12 in his or her hand, he or she may shuffle his or her cards back into the deck and draw eight new cards.
2. **Game round:** The player sitting to the left of the dealer begins. Each player can only play one card at a time card at a time. The round ends when all players have played their eight cards.
3. **IMPORTANT:** You can divide your cards among your eight sailors as you wish. It is not necessary to alternate colours.

Rest of the game: In the following rounds, the dealer changes between the two players and eight new cards are drawn from the deck (now with 16 fewer cards) and the next round begins. This process is repeated until there are no cards left in the deck. In the seventh round, the remaining eight cards are distributed to the players (each player receives 4 cards). Then the remaining 96 cards are shuffled and another eight cards for the round are taken from the shuffled pile of cards. The rounds continue with the reshuffled deck.

Changes - Action cards:

Name	Anzahl	Erklärung
Time for SEA TRADE	1x	Swap a card with your opponent. The player who plays SEEHANDEL asks for the desired card and the opponent answers if he or she has this card in his or her hand ("Do you have a 7?", "No". "Okay, then do you have a Nautilùs card?" and so on, until a card is chosen that the opponent can give him).

#12 | Quick game

For a quick round of Nautilus, all four players start with only three sailors each. The goal is still to bring all seafarers in the team to the safe harbor. **IMPORTANT:** the game is not won until ALL the sailors of a team are in the final position at the safe harbour. In addition, you may not move your teammate's seafarers until your seafarers are in their final position (i.e. they must be "cleared"). Otherwise, the same rules apply as in the 4-player variant.





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Additional Information - Further FAQs & special situations

In this section we give you the official answers to the most tricky game situations in Nautilùs.

IMPORTANT: You do NOT have to read this section before playing for the first time and it should not prevent you from playing first - we have designed the instructions so that you can quickly get into the fun of the game =). The rules are easy to learn and it's more important to us that you enjoy the game before you spend too much time learning the rules - most things come from play and logical thinking. This section is only required if you are unsure about a game situation and are looking for the official answers.

PS: We are fans of house rules or additional rules - feel free to share them with us. We always enjoy seeing how you interpret Nautilùs. If you have any further questions about the rules or other game situations that are not listed here, please send us an email to info@nautilusgames.de. We will try to answer them as soon as possible and include them in the article.

Questions about the NAUTILÙS card:

Q: Nautilùs is played for the first time by player A. Moby Dick is therefore brought into play. The next player also plays a Nautilùs card. Will Moby Dick be moved again then?

A: Moby Dick remains in its first position in this case. The Nautilùs card has already been played for the first time. Thus, Moby lands behind the starting square of the player who played the first Nautilùs.

Q: Player A must discard a card because no action can be taken (or because an 8 was previously played and he/she had to pass). Can the next player use the discarded card when playing a Nautilùs card?

A: Yes, he or she can. The player can then use the discarded card's action.

Q: Can the Nautilùs card undo the previous player's skip caused by the card 8 of the previous player?

A: No, the skipping of the player cannot be reversed in this case. However, as described above, the discarded card can/must be used to perform an action.

Questions about card "4":

Q: The playing card "4" can be used to go backwards to safe harbour once the starting position has been passed. Does the starting position also count as *passed* if you have only moved one step forward?

A: Yes, you can move into the safe harbour with the "4" card from the position 1, 2 or 3 steps after the starting position.

Q: Does the starting position also count as passed if the seafarer was swapped with a compass to the starting field?

A: The rule of the compass is that all seafarers are always swapped forward in the clockwise direction. Thus, in the case of a compass exchange to the starting field, the sailor has crossed at least 1 complete round. However, the card 4 can only be used to move into safe harbour when the sailor is placed 1,2, or 3 steps after the starting space. From the starting space itself, only a 1, 2, 3, or 5 (if shared with other sailors) can be used to move forward to the safe harbour.

Q: Can you move into the safe harbour with a 4 from the starting field if you have already sailed one complete round with a sailor (you are exactly on the starting field after 60 steps)?

A: No, you can not. From the starting space itself, only a 1, 2, 3, or 5 (if shared with other sailors) can be used to move forward to the safe harbour.

Questions about card "5":

Q: With a 5, can you also split the steps several times between a single sailor (e.g. walk 2 to beat another sailor or travel with Moby Dick and then move on another 3 afterwards)?

A: No, with a 5 each sailor may only be "touched" once. If you decide to let a seafarer take 2 steps, the remaining 3 steps must be divided between other seafarers.

Q: Can you also go less than 5 steps with a "5"?

A: No, this is impossible. With a 5, all 5 steps must always be used up. If 5 steps cannot be divided between you and your partner's sailors, the 5 may not be played or must be discarded.

Q: Does a 5 have to be played if you don't have any seafarers on the field yourself and you can move with your team partner's sailors?

A: Yes, in this case the player must play 5, since an action can be performed with this card.

Questions about card "8":

Q: Can the skipping function also be played if you don't currently have a seafarer on the field?

A: Yes, in this situation the 8 can be used to make the next player skip their turn. If no other cards can be played, the 8 must be used to make the next player skip their turn (the 8 cannot simply be discarded).

COMPASS:

Q: Can sailors be swapped from the whirlpool to the playing field?

A: No, sailors can never be swapped from the whirlpool or the safe harbour.

Q: Can a sailor in the cave be swapped with Moby Dick?

A: No, Moby Dick can never be swapped into the cave. If there is only one sailor in the cave left on the field besides Moby Dick, the compass card cannot be used.

Q: Can a sailor in a cave be swapped with a compass card?

A: Yes, this is possible (unless the case with Moby Dick, which is described above, applies).

Q: Can sailors, who are swapped to the starting position, directly go into the safe harbour?

A: Yes, the compass swaps seafarers forward in the clockwise direction. Thus, the sailor swapped to the starting space can use a 1, 2, 3, or 5 (if shared with other sailors) to move forward into safe harbour.

Q: The playing card "4" can be used to go backwards to safe harbour once the starting position has been passed. Does the starting position also count as passed if the seafarer was swapped with a compass to the starting field?

A: The rule of the compass is that all seafarers are always swapped forward in the clockwise direction. Thus, in the case of a compass exchange to the starting field, the sailor has crossed at least 1 complete round. However, the card 4 can only be used to move into safe harbour when the sailor is placed 1, 2, or 3 steps after the starting space. From the starting space itself, only a 1, 2, 3, or 5 (if shared with other sailors) can be used to move forward to the safe harbour.

STORM:

Q: Can the card "Storm" also be played if not all players have cards in their hands?

A: Yes, that is possible. All remaining cards are passed once to the right and the game continues normally.

CAVE:

Q: Can a sailor in the cave be swapped with Moby Dick?

A: No, Moby Dick can never be swapped into the cave. If there is only one sailor in the cave left on the field besides Moby Dick, the compass card cannot be used.

Q: Can a sailor in a cave be swapped with a compass card?

A: Yes, this is possible (unless the case with Moby Dick, which is described above, applies).

SAFE HARBOUR:

Q: Can a Nautilus card be played after the last sailor of a team has reached the safe harbour?

A: No, as soon as the last sailor has reached the final position in safe harbour, the game ends.

Q: Are seafarers allowed to "drive back and forth" between the positions in the safe harbour (e.g. use a 6 to drive 2 spaces in the safe harbour forward, then 2 back and then 2 forward again)?

A: No, this is not possible. You can only move forward in the safe harbour, never backwards.

MOBY DICK:

Q: Will Moby Dick be kicked out if you pass it with the card "7"?

A: No, Moby Dick can never be kicked out. In that case you would just be standing in front of Moby Dick.

FURTHER QUESTIONS:

Q: Is it allowed to discard a card when you still have a card in your hand that you could play?

A: No, as described under point 3 of the important rules: Cards must be played if this is possible (even if you beat your own sailors, for example). Special cards must also be played if possible. The players have to be careful here to avoid cheating ;-).

Q: Which cards can be played if you don't have a sailors on the field?

A: The following cards can be played without a sailor on the field: "5" if your partner has marbles on the field (or you can move your sailors in the safe harbour), **Moby Dick, Compass, Sea Trade, Commandeering, Storm, Nautilus, Telescope**, and the "8" to let the next player skip their turn. And of course the card "1" or "12" to move a sailor to the starting field.

Q: As soon as you have all of your own sailors in safe harbour, you continue playing with the team partner's seafarers. Can you play with your partner's seafarers beforehand?

A: No, this is only possible with the card "5" or with the "Compass". Otherwise, you cannot use your cards to move your partner's sailors.

2-Player Variant:

NAUTILUS:

Q: Nautilus is played for the first time by player A. Moby Dick is therefore brought into play. Behind which of the two colors can Moby Dick be placed?

A: The player can choose, behind which starting position Moby Dick should be placed.

SEA TRADE:

Q: Is there a limit to how many times the opponent can be asked before the matching card is found?

A: No, there is no official limit. You are welcome to use your own house rule if you wish (for example, ask a maximum of 3 times).