

# Aquatica

(Updated using the new version of the rulebook from April 2020 – Changes to “Scouting”)

## Set-Up:

1. Place out the game board, and put the Purple Manta Rays “effect side/belly side up” in a general supply.
2. Separately shuffle the Ocean Character cards and the Location cards and place their decks on their indicated spaces.
  - For both decks, flip the top 6 cards face-up into the 6 spaces provided on the board.
3. (Advance Mode) Randomly choose 4 Goal tokens to place over the 4 pre-printed Goals at the top of the board.
  - For new players, simply use the pre-printed Goals on the board and don’t use the Goal tokens at all.
  - Details for Advance mode are on page 26 of the rulebook, and details on the Goal tokens are on page 28.
4. Each player chooses a color and takes the 6 “Starting” Character cards and 4 Mantas (effect side up) in that color.
5. Each player takes a player board as well. Choose a 1<sup>st</sup> player.
6. (Beginner Mode) Give the 1<sup>st</sup> player King card #1. Give the 2<sup>nd</sup> player King card #2, and so on. Add this King card with the 6 Starting Character cards. These 7 cards made up each player’s starting “hand” of character cards.
  - Advance mode – Shuffle all King cards, lay out 1 more than the number of players face-up, and select 1 in reverse turn order. (See info on Advance mode on page 26 in the rulebook.)

## Game Flow:

- Aquatica is played over a number of turns until 1 of 3 end-game triggers occur (see End Game for these 3 triggers.)
  - When the End Game is triggered, all players get 1 more turn before the game ends.
- On a player’s turn, they must play 1 Character card from their hand (Main Action) and carry out the effects of the card to the fullest they can (exception “Scouting” – see below.) When they are done taking actions, play passes clockwise.
- In addition to the Main Action of playing a Character card, a player can do any number of “additional actions” they wish.

## Card Anatomy:

- **Character Cards**
  - These are sea people/creatures that will help you during the game (Recruit area is at the bottom of the board.)
  - If the card is a “Starting” character card, there will be a symbol in the upper right corner.
  - The ability of the Character card will be shown at the bottom. When playing cards during your Main action, you must do all of the “ability” you can. See “Game Effects” below for details on Character card effects/abilities.
  - There are 3 kinds of Character cards – Starting, Ocean (ones you recruit), and your King.
- **Location Cards**
  - Represent locations you can “Buy” with Coins or “Conquer” with Power (Trident icon).
  - At the top of each Location card is the amount it will take to “buy” or “conquer” the card.
  - Along the left side of the card shows several circles with effects/power/coins in them. Some of the circles are empty and provide nothing. The circles are called “Depth Circles”. (Some locations have no Depth Circles.)
  - At the very bottom of the card shows points this card is worth if it is in its owner’s Scoring Pile at the end of the game (see details on that below.) There might also be a Manta symbol (which you earn immediately when the card is completed “raised” to this level (see “Raising Locations” below). Lastly, there is an icon that represents the “type” of Location this card is (Shark Bay, Sunken Ship, Ocean Volcanoes, and Decayed Civilizations.)
  - During the game, when you obtain a Location card, you must have an opening for it in 1 of the 5 slots on your player board. Take the card, slide it into the slot, and push it until the 1<sup>st</sup> “depth circle” is shown in the notch.

## Mantas:

- Each player starts the game with 4 of their own color Mantas “effect side” up. Players can acquire additional Mantas as the game progresses by “Raising” a Location card (with a Manta icon at the bottom) all the way up.
- When the Manta’s “effect side” is face-up, this Manta is ready to be used for its ability (any time on your turn.)
- When a Manta is used, flip it over to its “tired” side.
- In order to use a Manta again, you must use an ability to flip it back over (most common is the Character card Matrona.)

## Resources:

- **Resources in the game are virtual.** There is nothing to collect. Just keep track of them as you earn them on your turn.
  - They are added together from Depth Circles, Character Cards, and Mantas on a single turn.
- **Resources do not carry over from turn to turn. They are lost when your turn ends.**
- **Coins/Power (Trident)** – Find Coin/Power in some location Depth Circles, Character cards, and on Mantas. Use Coins to recruit new Character cards and buy Location cards. Use Power to conquer location cards.

## Turn Actions:

- **Main Action**
  - On your turn, you must play 1 card from your hand face-up to your discard pile, and carry out the shown ability to the fullest possible (except “Scouting”).
  - Cards won’t come back into your hand until you play the “Matrona” card, or until another ability allows for a card to be recalled from your discard pile.
- **Flipping Mantas (additional action)**
  - You can do this action before and/or after your “Main Action.” You can do this action several times in one turn.
  - If you have a Manta “effect side up,” flip it over to its tired side and either “collect” the virtual resource shown or perform the ability shown.
- **Exploiting Location Depths (additional action)**
  - You can do this action before and/or after your “Main Action.” You can do this action several times in one turn.
  - As explained above, most Location cards have a number of “Depth Circles” along the left side of the card. When a Location card is taken, it slides onto your player board so that the top Depth Circle is showing in the notch.
  - You can only “exploit” the top Depth Circle shown on a Location card on your player board. In order to gain the effect/resource, simply slide the chosen Location card up 1 Depth Circle, covering the circle you are “exploiting.”
  - If the Depth Circle has a resource, it will provide Coins or Power this turn in order to Recruit, Buy or Conquer cards (as discussed below.) If the Depth Circle has an effect, use the effect before or after your Main Action.
  - Some Depth Circles are empty. These can’t be used for any purpose and thus can’t be exploited. The **only way to get past an empty Depth Circle is by using a “Raise” ability** (see details below) gained from somewhere else.

## Game Effects/Abilities:

- **Recruiting New Character Cards (word “Recruit”)**
  - Choose 1 of the face-up Character cards at the bottom of the board, pay the cost in coins shown below the card, and place the newly recruited Character into your hand.
  - Slide the cards to the left to fill in the gap, and then flip over the top card from the deck into the last spot.
  - There is no limit to the number of Character cards you can have, and you **are allowed to own 2 or more of the same Character card**.
- **Buying Location Cards (Coins)**
  - Choose 1 Location card on the board, and “pay” the number of coins shown at the top of the card (remember coins are virtual so just subtract from what you have allotted this turn.)
  - Take the Location card and slide it into an empty slot on your player board (doesn’t matter which one) until the top Depth Circle is showing in the notch.
  - If the Location card doesn’t have Depth Circles, slide it all the way up. This is called a “Fully Raised” Location.
- **Conquering Location Cards (Trident)**
  - Using the same concept as Buying Location cards with Coins, use the Power icon to conquer Location cards.
  - Note: The 4 Locations in the very top row on the main board are -1 Power to Conquer (as shown on the board.)
- **Raising Locations (arrow pointing up)**
  - Raising a location is different from “Exploiting” which was mentioned before.
  - Exploiting is sliding up 1 Depth Circle in order to use the ability/resource in the circle. The ability of “**Raising**” **allows you to move up any Depth Circle, even if it is empty, but you don’t get to do the ability!**
  - If you “Exploit” a Location card to earn a “Raise” ability, then you must use this Raise ability **on other Location cards. You can’t use the “Raise” ability on the same card you exploited to get the ability in the first place.**
  - You are allowed to split up a Raise ability if allowed to do more than 1 raise, or you can apply it all to 1 Location card. (Again, you can’t “Raise” a card that you exploited to earn the Raise ability.)
  - When all Depth Circles are covered (and the Location is fully in the slot), this is called “Fully Raised.” If a Manta is shown at the bottom of the Location card, take the Manta shown from the general supply now, effect side up!
- **Scoring Fully Raised Locations (Treasure Chest)**
  - If you have a “Fully Raised” Location card, you can remove it from your player board and flip it face-down in your Scoring Pile by using this ability. (Only way Location cards will be worth points at the end of the game.)
- **Scouting for New Location Cards (word “Scout”)** – New rule changes as of April 2020
  - This action is optional, even if you are able to carry it out.
  - Discard all the Location cards from the top row on the main board, and move all the cards from the middle row up to the top row. If there are more than 4 cards being moved up, discard Location cards of your choice until 4 remain. Now, refill the middle row with 6 cards from the Location card deck. (This is how Locations are refilled.)

## Achieving Goals:

- There are 4 Goals at the top of the main board players can achieve in order to score points at the end of the game.
- When you fulfill the requirements of a Goal, place 1 of your color Mantas (doesn't matter if used or not) onto the leftmost empty space of the matching completed Goal. (Note the earlier you do this, the more points you will earn.)
- You can't place a Manta earned from the general supply (purple) in the Goal area, only 1 of your 4 Starting Mantas!
- Placing a Manta in the Goal area is optional. Even if you fulfill a Goal, you are not required to claim it right away. You can claim it at a later time, but it might be for fewer points if another player completes the same Goal too.
- You can only claim each Goal once.
- The Pre-printed Goals are:
  - Have 10 Character cards in your hand (not discard pile). Your King Character card counts.
  - Have 4 Locations cards of the same type on your player board and/or in your Scoring Pile.
  - Have 3 or more Location cards in your Scoring Pile.
  - Have 5 or more "tired" Mantas at the same time.

## End Game:

- Players keep taking turned until 1 of the 3 end game triggers occur. When the end game trigger happens, all players get 1 final turn and then the game officially ends.
  - One player has claimed all 4 Goals.
  - The Location card deck has run out.
  - The Character card deck has run out.
- Perform Finally Scoring as followed:
  - Earn 1 point for each Character card (including your King) still in your hand (not in the discard pile.)
  - Earn the points shown on Location cards in your Scoring Pile. (Cards on your player board don't score anything.)
  - Points above your Mantas in the Goal area.
- Most points is the winner. Ties broken by more Mantas, then by whoever has the King card with the lowest number.