

## ***Sailing***

Sailing is the fine art of manning the sails in hopes of making the ship go faster. The better a pirate performs at sailing, the faster the ship can go. In battle, sailing provides movement tokens for the battle navigator. This is one of the most (if not, the most) important stations on a ship, so it pays to learn and master it.

The sailing puzzle itself is very similar to Dr. Mario with a few twists. Combinations of two sailing pieces at a time fall from the top of the board in three different colors. White pieces represent the wind, blue pieces represent the water, and yellow pieces are the ropes. The colors don't really hold any special significance in the game, but it's always nice to know where things come from.



Anyway, the point of the game is to line up 4 pieces of the same color either vertically or horizontally, clearing them and earning points. Use the up/down arrow keys to rotate pieces, the left/right arrow keys to move pieces left and right, and the space bar to drop pieces quickly. While clearing pieces four at a time will probably earn you a Fine or Poor rating, the real skill lies in chaining clears together to multiply your score. I'll discuss chaining later in this document.

In addition to clearing pieces, there are platforms composed of several colored outlines. If you can line up sailing pieces of the correct colors on the platform, the platform will clear, gaining you many points. When all of the platforms on the board have been cleared, a new sailing board is generated. Sadly, there is no bonus for clearing all the platforms on the board except getting a fresh board to clear. Platforms can also be part of chains, and I'll discuss chaining them as well.



As with all of the duty puzzles, speed is a factor. Faster sailing will ultimately gain a higher score. In other words, taking the time to build huge chains may not be the best way to earn points (especially in the beginning of the puzzle) since you are losing points for not clearing anything in a long time. In addition, efficiency (i.e. wasting pieces by not clearing them) plays a small role, though it usually has little effect on a sailor's score. The key to good sailing is making chains fast.

## ***Chaining Basics***

The key to forming chains is to remember that the sailing pieces that fall from the top of the screen are linked together. If you leave half of the piece hanging off the edge, it will still stay connected to the rest of the piece as shown.



However, if the other half is broken, the remainder will fall below.



In the case above, the other piece will fall and form a group of four pieces below, clearing them as well and earning a Double chain.



A Double chain will, unsurprisingly, double the score you get from the pieces broken during the Double. So, in the example above, the sailor would earn credit for 1 clear during the single plus 2x 1 clear for the double, for a total of 3 clears. In other words, the chain gave you many more points than if you had cleared the pieces separately. Other sizes of chains will multiply the score similarly (i.e. a Triple chain will triple your score, etc).

The chain names, in order of appearance, are:

Double (2x)

Triple (3x)

Bingo (4x)

Donkey (5x)

Vegas (6x)

All chains after this appear as Vegas. At this time, I'm not sure whether the multipliers increase or stay the same for consecutive Vegases.

## ***Forming Repeatable Chains***

Doubles are easy to form since you can use the two sailing pieces you get easily enough. In order to form Triples or above, however, you'll need to learn how to form Repeatable Chains, or those that don't require your dropped sailing pieces directly to be set off.

Let's start with an example. I'll start by building up a few of one color vertically.



Now, I'll place another piece so that the edge sticks out. This will eventually fall to produce a Double.



Next, I'll build the next part of the chain (the Double). It needs something to fall on, so I'll put down a piece of the same color to fall on.



Finally, I repeat the process again, making sure that the falling pieces create a group of four. Notice that I once again leave a piece hanging over the edge that matches the color below.



This process can be done over and over again to build progressively larger chains as shown.



And by merely clearing the first part of the chain...



...the chain is set off, earning you a massive score!



In the case above, the sailor would get the following score:

- 1x one clear (the original blue clear at the right)
  - 2x one clear (the yellow one to the left of the blue)
  - 3x one clear (the white one to the left of the yellow)
  - 4x one clear (the yellow one to the left of the white)
  - 5x two clears (the white and blue ones at the left side clear together)
- In total, this adds to an equivalent 20 clears worth of points!

## ***Forming a Trash Pile***

While you're setting up your chain, you are very likely to get pieces you don't need. In these cases, you'll need to place them somewhere. You can either use them to fill up part of a platform (if you can) or place them in a stack of unwanted pieces called a Trash Pile. In the example above, I formed a sort of trash pile to the right of my chain (composed of mostly yellow and white pieces that don't clear anything). It is recommended that you set up your trash pile so that you can clear singles or doubles rather than just mixing pieces randomly.



Your trash pile serves two purposes. First, it allows you a place to put unwanted pieces that don't fit into any platforms or chains. Second, it allows you to form minor clears to keep your score up while you form the larger chains.

## ***Chaining Platforms***

Clearing platforms earns a sailor many more points than clearing pieces. Therefore, it is desirable to include platforms inside chains to multiply the high score. The example chain below includes a platform.

First, fill in part of the platform (but not all of it) so that dropping a piece or two will clear it.





Next, set the piece that will fall to clear the platform. In this case, when the upper platform clears, the piece will fall onto the lower platform and clear it as well. This piece can also come from a repeatable chain as described above.



Finally, fill in the rest of the platform and set off the chain. Dropping the white piece will clear the upper platform, cause the hanging yellow piece to fall, and clear the lower platform in a Double chain. This results in a score equal to that of clearing three platforms individually (1x one platform in the single plus 2x one platform in the double).



When including platforms in chains, pieces and platforms do not clear simultaneously as they did with pieces alone. Instead, platforms will clear first (and simultaneously, if there's more than one), then when there's no more platforms to clear, any groups of four pieces clear simultaneously.

Let's see an example of a longer chain using platforms.





Placing a white piece at the indicated point will set off the chain. How many points would this produce?

1x one 4-piece clear (the indicated vertical group)

2x one 4-piece clear (the white vertical group to the right of the first)

3x one 6-piece platform (the upper yellow platform)

4x one 6-piece platform (the lower platform, which clears before the vertical white group does)

5x one 4-piece clear (the yellow horizontal group at the bottom) plus one 5-piece clear (the white vertical group at the bottom)

6x one 4-piece clear (the blue vertical group at the bottom)

This results in a Vegas chain worth 14 4-piece clears, 5 5-piece clears, and 7 6-piece platforms.

A chain like that should give you those sparkly sails almost immediately.

