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OVERVIEW

In Open Ocean, your goal is to rebuild the Reef and create the highest scoring combination of colorful creatures!

You will be competing with other players for cards as they are passed around the table. Each turn vou will:

PICK a card from your current hand **PLAY** the card you picked into your Reef **PASS** the remaining cards clockwise to the next player

You score points by placing your cards in a matching and connecting grid pattern to build your Reef.

You will also have the opportunity to attract additional cards from the Ocean, a shared pool of cards in the center of the table.

With a little planning and strategy, you can shift the tides in your favor.

At the end of three rounds, everyone will total up the points in their Reef, and the player who earned the most points wins!

Let's get started!

TABLE SET UP







THIRD PLAYER REEF









FIRST PLAYER REEF

SOLO or TWO players?

The Rules and Set Up for Solo and Two player games can be found on pages 20-21 of the rulebook!

SETUP (3-5 players)

Remove all the cards from the box and locate the following:

6- double-sided Starter Coral Cards 1 - double-sided First Player Card

1. CHOOSE A STARTER CORAL

Each player should choose one Starter Coral and place it on the table in front of them. Return any remaining Starter Coral back to the box.

2. FIRST PLAYER

Give the First Player Card to the player who last saw a fish (dead or alive).

3. TYPHOON SHUFFLE!

Remove Habitat Bonuses, Event Cards, and any Variant Cards you are not using. Shuffle the remaining cards together to create the deck. (PRO TIP: Put all the cards face down on the table and swirl them together like a typhoon, then stack them neatly into a deck!)

4. DEAL STARTING HANDS

Deal six cards face down from the deck to each player.

5. SET UP THE OCEAN

Deal eight cards face up into the center of the game area to create the Ocean.

You are now ready to begin!

THE OCEAN

The Ocean is a shared pool of cards in the center of the table.

There should always be eight cards face up in the Ocean. If there are ever fewer than eight, deal new cards from the top of the deck until there are eight.

REFRESHING THE OCEAN

If there are ever NO FISH CARDS in the Ocean at the end of any round, discard all cards in the Ocean and deal eight new ones from the deck to replace them.

ATTRACTING CARDS

All players have a chance to Attract the cards in the Ocean to their Reef when they play a card from their hand.

If your Action Attracts a card from the Ocean, you MUST connect it to the card you just played. A new card is then dealt into the Ocean to replace it immediately.

If you are unable to attract a card, your turn ends after playing your card.

PLAYING A TURN

Open Ocean takes place over three rounds of play, consisting of five turns each. Each turn follow these 4 steps:

1. PICK CARDS

PICK one card from your current hand you wish to **PLAY** this turn. Place it face down in front of you.

2. PLAY CARDS

Once each player has chosen their card, begin with the First Player and proceed in clockwise order. Reveal and **PLAY** your card, placing it into your Reef. Resolve the Action indicated by the icon at the bottom of the card.

3. PASS CARDS

After each player has **PLAYED** their card and resolved their Action, players **PASS** their remaining hand (including the First Player Cards) face-down to the player on their left.

4. REPEAT!

Players pick up this new hand of cards and the next turn begins. If there is only 1 card remaining, all players discard their last card face up into the discard pile and end the round.

ENDING A ROUND

Once all cards are chosen and played, the final cards are discarded, and hands are empty, the round is over.

Refresh the Ocean if needed. Deal a new hand of six cards to each player and the next round begins! (After completing three rounds, proceed to "Ending the Game.")

THE CARDS

Each card in *Open Ocean* consists of a few main parts:



CARD PLACEMENT ICONS

The number in the upper left is the point value of the card at the end of the game. The arrows surrounding the number indicate how the card connects to other cards in your Reef.





SURROUNDING PLACEMENT

A card may be placed into any of the eight surrounding spaces.



Cards must share an edge with another card to be connected

ACTION ICONS

Most cards in *Open Ocean* have an Action that you get to take when you are playing the card from your hand. This Action is represented by the icon in the lower right corner of each card. Here are all the Action you can take! *(They are listed on the player aids for quick reference!)*



ATTRACT one Tiny Fish from the Ocean to your Reef and connect it to this Sun Card.



EXCHANGE the Dolphin for any one Fish card in another player's Reef, and **PLAY** it immediately into your Reef, taking any Actions on the new Fish.



ATTRACT one Medium Fish from the Ocean and connect it to this Tiny Fish.



SWAP the Shark for one Fish card in the Ocean. **PLAY** it immediately into your Reef, taking any Actions on the new Fish.



ATTRACT one Big Fish from the ocean. Connect it to the Medium Fish you just played.



REFRESH the Ocean. Take one of the new cards and **PLAY** it, taking any actions on the new card. Then connect the Sea Turtle to it.

SUN CARDS

Coral and anemones are home to the reef's life-sustaining algae—which give them their brilliant color—and are reliant on the sun.



ICON - Each Sun Card has the Sun icon indicating its point value and placement direction arrows.



PLACEMENT - Each Sun Card MUST connect to another Sun Card in your Reef. It may be placed in ANY of the eight spaces surrounding another Sun Card.



ACTION - Each Sun Card Attracts one Tiny Fish from the Ocean when played; the Tiny Fish must be connected to that Sun Card

CONNECTING - You may connect another Sun Card or a Tiny Fish directly to a Sun Card already in play.

CORAL













STARTER CORAL

Starter Coral are unique because you may not expand your Reef below them. They count as one point when scoring, and do count towards your Rainbow Reef Bonus.

RAINBOW REEF BONUS

Players score bonus points at the end of the game for having a variety of colors of coral in their Reef. The more colors you collect, the bigger the bonus at the end!

COLORS BONUS

1 = 0 points

2 = 1 point

3 = 3 points

4 = 6 points

5 = 10 points

6 = 15 points

Example: This purple coral may be played into any of the spaces surrounding the blue coral, but may not be connected below the Starter Coral.



ANEMONE







PROTECTION -

Anemones connect to other Sun cards and Protect all fish in the surrounding them from being removed from your Reef. This is indicated by the pink border.

Example: All of the fish surrounding the anemone are protected. The second Banggai cardinalfish is not protected because it is not in a surrounding space..



FISH CARDS

Hundreds of fish make their homes in the coral reef and feed on the algae and plankton found there. Together they form a vibrant connected ecosystem.



ICON - All Fish Cards have the blue icon indicating their point value and placement direction arrows.



PLACEMENT - All Fish Cards MUST border the card they are connecting to in your Reef. They cannot be connected diagonally.

ACTION - Some Fish Cards let players **Attract** another Fish Card from the Ocean.

CONNECTING - Players may connect a Fish Card in **order** (Sun-1-2-3) or to a **School** already placed in your Reef.

TINY FISH

Tiny Fish are always represented by a group of three fish in art and icons.











PLACEMENT - PLAY bordering a Sun Card *or* School bordering the same type of Tiny Fish.



ACTION - Attract one Medium Fish from the Ocean to your Reef if available and connect it to this Tiny Fish.

MEDIUM FISH

Medium Fish are always represented by a group of two fish in art and icons.











PLACEMENT - PLAY bordering a Tiny Fish *or* School bordering the same type of Medium Fish.



ACTION - Attract one Big Fish from the Ocean to your Reef and connect it to this Medium Fish.

BIG FISH

Big Fish are always represented by a single fish in art and icons.







PLACEMENT - PLAYbordering a Medium
Fish *or* School bordering
the same type of Big Fish.

ACTION - NONE

SPECIAL CARDS

Many other species make their homes in the reef, not all of them friendly. Sharks and Dolphins patrol the shallow waters in search of prey, and Sea Turtles ride into the reef on the current, bringing with them new life to the ocean!



ICON - Special cards that are placed into your reef have a white point value and no arrows, to indicate new cards can't connect directly to them.



PLACEMENT - Cards with point icons are placed in your Reef bordering another card.

Cards with no point icons are placed into the Ocean.

ACTION - Special cards let players take cards from the Ocean or another player's Reef.

DOLPHINS





ACTION - Exchange the Dolphin for any one Fish card in another player's Reef, and PLAY it immediately into your Reef, taking any Actions on the new Fish.



PLACEMENT - Dolphins are given to the player whose fish you are taking. They may be placed anywhere in their reef bordering another card.

Only other Dolphin cards may be directly connected to a Dolphin in your reef.

Note: Players may NOT take a Fish Card from the Ocean with a Dolphin's Action.

SEA TURTLES



SHARKS









ACTION - Refresh the Ocean, then take any one of the new cards, and **PLAY** it into your Reef, taking any Actions on the new card.



ACTION - Swap the Shark for one Fish Card (not Sun, Dolphin, or Sea Turtles) in the Ocean, and **PLAY** it immediately into your Reef, taking any Actions on the new Fish



PLACEMENT - The Sea Turtle is placed into your Reef, bordering the card you took from the Ocean with it.

Each player may only play up to three Sea Turtles per game. Players may not connect new cards directly to the Sea Turtle. **PLACEMENT** - Sharks are placed into the Ocean. If there are ever three sharks in the Ocean, at any time, they immediatey trigger a Feeding Frenzy. (all player actions resolve before a feeding frenzy is triggered)

FEEDING FRENZY - each player discards their highest value unprotected Fish card from their reef. Then refresh the Ocean.

Note: A player may play a Sea Turtle and then choose another Sea Turtle from the Ocean and play it immediately.

Note: The value of a fish for FEEDING FRENZY is determined by the printed value on the card.

BUILDING YOUR REEF

Your Reef begins with your Starter Coral and will expand in a connecting grid pattern as you **PICK** and **PLAY** cards from your hand each turn.



Starter Coral are unique because they represent the bottom of the sea floor. When placing cards into your Reef, you may never expand below the Starter Coral.

PLACING CARDS

You may **PLAY** a card into your Reef, by connecting it to another card in your Reef. Cards may not be moved except by the Action of another card. If a card ever becomes disconnected from your reef, it remains where it was played. It is still considered part of your reef and counts in final scoring. You may reconnect it but are not required to.

REEF CONNECTION RULES

1. SUNS MUST CONNECT TO SUNS

Sun cards must connect to another Sun Card to be played into your reef. They may be connected in any direction including diagonally.

2. FISH CARDS CONNECT IN ORDER

Fish Cards may be connected in order from smallest to largest off of a Sun Card when **PLAYED** into your Reef. The easiest way to remember the order is Sun-1-2-3

Fish cards must always border the card they are connecting to, and may not be placed diagonally.

3. FISH MAY SCHOOL BY TYPE

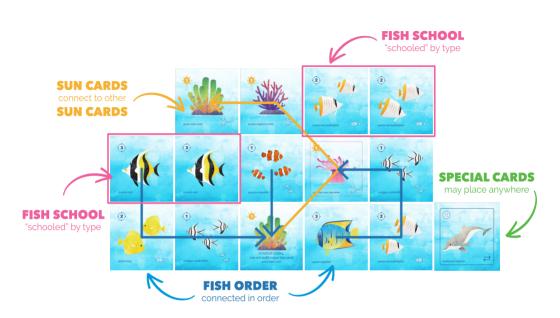
Fish may also be connected by type to form a School. To create a school, place a Fish Card into your Reef bordering a Fish Card with matching name and artwork.

Fish in Schools score **bonus points** at the end of the game! Each Fish in a School is **worth +1 extra point when scoring**.

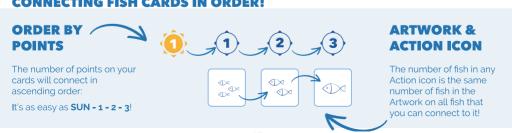
4. SPECIAL CARDS

Dolphins and Sea Turtles are special cards. Dolphins may border any card in your Reef after their Action is resolved. Sea Turtles must border the card you took using their Action.

EXAMPLE REEF



CONNECTING FISH CARDS IN ORDER!



ENDING THE GAME

Once everyone has **completed three rounds of play,** the game is over and players total their scores.

SCORING

Each player totals their score counting up the points they earned on the cards placed into their Reef. Total up points by:

BASE POINTS - Total the number of points printed on the cards in your Reef.

SCHOOLS - Add +1 point for each Fish card in your Reef that is in a School.

RAINBOW REEF BONUS - Total the number of different color coral in your Reef and add the bonus to your score.

BONUS GOALS - If you are playing with any additional bonus goals, add your completed goal points to your score!

After everyone adds up their score, the player with the **highest score wins!**

If there is a tie, the tied player who had **the** largest reef wins!

If there is **STILL** a tie, **both players share the win.** Nice job!

RAINBOW REEF BONUS

COLORS BONUS

1 = Opoints

2 = 1 point

3 = 3 points

4 = 6 points

5 = 10 points

6 = 15 points



Example: Walt is scoring his reef. He counts up

25 base points (from point values)

- 4 points from schools (2 schools of 2 Fish cards)
- 1 point from Rainbow Reef Bonus
- points from bonus goals

His final score is **30**!

MORE WAYS TO PLAY!

There are many ways to enjoy Open Ocean with your friends and family. Crabs, Habitat Bonuses, and Event Cards let you tailor the experience to the whoever you are playing with! Some of these additional cards make play easier, some make it more aggressive!

RAINBOW CORAL





PLACEMENT - Rainbow Coral follow the same placement, action and connection rules as other Sun Cards.

SCORING - Rainbow
Coral count as one of any
color Coral when scoring
bonuses at the end of the
game. This makes it easier
for players to achieve the
Rainbow Reef Bonus!

GREAT WHITE SHARK





ACTION - Take any Fish card from the Ocean, **PLAY** it into your Reef and take any Actions on the new Fish

Then immediately trigger a Feeding Frenzy!

PLACEMENT - The Great White is placed into the Ocean. It immediately triggers a feeding frenzy when it enters the Ocean, even if it enters from the top of the deck. (all player Actions resolve before the feeding frenzy is triggered)

Note: The Great White can trigger a feeding frenzy unexpectedly, or players can use it very agressively!

CRAB VARIANTS

CRAB VARIANT #1 (less aggressive) -

Remove 5 sharks from the deck and replace them with 5 crab cards. Less sharks means that there will be less feeding frenzies that get triggered, and players won't have to part with their hard earned creatures as often!

CRAB VARIANT #2 (player advantage)-

Crabs may be used is as an "advantage card" for players in a normal game! Each player needing an advantage will receive 1-2 crabs before the cards are dealt, and place them beneath their starter coral.

A player may use a Crab card at any point during the **PLAY** phase, even if it is not currently their turn. To use a Crab, the player announces that they are "crabbing something new!"

The player then **DISCARDS** the card they chose for the turn, and take ANY card from the ocean, and **PLAY** it into their Reef (if necessary) and take any Actions on the new card. Finally they flip over the Crab card to indicate it has been used.

CRABS





ACTION - Take ANY card from the Ocean, and **PLAY** it, taking any Actions on the new card

PLACEMENT - Crabs are placed into the Ocean.

Optional Rule: If there are ever 2 Crabs in the Ocean it immediately triggers the "Crab Rave - Whenever two crabs are placed into the Ocean, each player may move one fish in their Reef to a new legal location."

Note: When playing with Crabs as a player advantage, they are not placed into the Ocean!

HABITAT GOALS

Habitat Goals are bonuses that care about the placement of a specific Fish bordering other cards, or the number of a type you have collected. Each goal will only score once per player, no matter how many times it is achieved. There are 2 ways to play with goals:

PRIVATE - Deal each player 1 -2 Habitat Goals face down. Players look at their goal in private. If at the end of the game a player has achieved their goal, they score the bonus points indicated.

PUBLIC - Deal 3 Habitat Goals face up to one side of the Ocean. Each player may attempt each goal and if at the end of the game a player has achieved one or more goals, they score the bonus points indicated.





Example: A player scores the goal on the left by having a pearlscale butterfly bordering a red fan coral, and scores the goal on the right if they have collected four Angelfish in their reef!

EVENT CARDS

Event cards add additional variability to each round in Open Ocean. These cards are shuffled and placed face down near the ocean cards. At the beginning of each round, one card is revealed and the event goes into effect immediately and remains in effect until the end of the game.





FRIENDLY VARIANTS

These additional variants make the game less agressive. To play with a variant rule simply place the rule out as a reminder in the center of the table next to the Ocean.





HOW TO PLAY 2 PLAYER!

Remove all the cards from the box and locate the following:

6- double-sided Starter Coral Cards 1 - double-sided First Player Card

1. CHOOSE A STARTER CORAL

Each player should choose one Starter Coral and place it on the table in front of them. Return any remaining Starter Coral back to the box.

2. FIRST PLAYER

Give the First Player Card to the player who last saw a fish (dead or alive). Give the Second player card to the other player.

3. TYPHOON SHUFFLE!

Remove Habitat Bonuses, Event Cards, and any Variant Cards you are not using. Shuffle the remaining cards together to create the deck. (PRO TIP: Put all the cards face down on the table and swirl them together like a typhoon, then stack them neatly into a deck!)

4. DEAL STARTING HANDS

Deal six cards face down from the deck to each player.

5. SET UP THE OCEAN

Deal eight cards face up into the center of the game area to create the Ocean.

A two-player game of *Open Ocean* takes place over three rounds of play, consisting of five turns each. Each turn follow these 5 steps:

1. PICK CARDS

PICK one card from your hand you wish to **PLAY** this turn, and place it face down in front of you.

2. PLAY CARDS

Once each player has chosen a card, reveal and **PLAY** your card beginning with the First Player. Place it into your reef, and take the Action indicated by the icon at the bottom of the card, if possible. If a chosen card is unplayable, it is discarded face up.

3. DISCARD A CARD

After the second player has **PLAYED** their card, they choose 1 card in the Ocean and **DISCARD** it, then deal a new card from the top to the deck into the Ocean to replace it.

4. PASS CARDS

Now, pass your remaining hand including the First and Second Player Cards face-down to the other player.

5. REPEAT!

Players pick up this new hand of cards and the next turn begins. If there is only 1 card remaining, each player discards their last card face up into the discard pile and ends the round.

ENDING A ROUND

Once all cards are chosen and played, the final cards are discarded, and hands are empty, the round is over.

Refresh the Ocean if needed. Deal a new hand of six cards to each player and the next round begins! (After completing three rounds, proceed to "Ending the Game.")

SOLO MODE SETUP

1. CHOOSE A STARTER CORAL

2. REMOVE DOLPHINS & SHUFFLE

Remove all the Dolphins, First & Second Player Tokens, Variant Cards, and Event Cards from the main deck and return them to the box. Set aside the Habitat Bonuses and then shuffle the cards.

3. DEAL CARDS

Deal yourself nine cards, and then deal eight cards into the Ocean.

4. SET UP HABITAT GOALS

Shuffle the Habitat Goals together and then deal them into three facedown piles below your Starter Coral. Turn the top card of each pile face up. These will be your goals as you play.

Now you are ready to start!

HOW TO PLAY SOLO

1. PLAY A CARD

PICK one card in your hand, **PLAY** it, and take any actions immediately.

2. DISCARD CARDS

DISCARD one card in your hand, then choose 1 card in the Ocean and **DISCARD** it. Finally deal a new card from the top to the deck into the Ocean to replace the card you eliminated.

3. COMPLETING GOALS

Once you complete a goal, remove it from the top of the stack and place it facedown below your Reef. Then reveal the next goal card in the stack.

4. ENDING A ROUND

Once you have played and discarded all cards in your hand (this should take five turns), deal yourself a new hand of nine cards and begin a new round.

5. ENDING THE GAME

After you have completed three rounds the game ends. To score your reef, average the level you achieved for goals & points together to see how well you fared!

•		•	
goal	point	level	
3+ goals	30+ points	1 = fringing ree	f
5+ goals	35+ points	2 = patch reef	
7+ goals	45+points	3 = barrier reef	
9+ goals	50+ points	4 = coral atoll	

THANK YOU!

I would like to thank everyone who has helped me bring this game to life. I literally could not have done it without all of you, and I hope it is the first of many games we make together. I hope you and your friends & families enjoy *Open Ocean* for years to come.

I would especially like to thank my wonderful wife Allison and my kids Walt & Lily for the endless playtests, thoughtful critiques, sharing my dream with me, and helping me make the space to pursue it.

PLAY TESTERS

Walt, Lily, Allison, Mark, Jeff, Lauren, Graham & Mia Bodkin, James Neumann, Colleen Eversman, David Ha, Owen Gage, Luke Peichel, George Moore, Jackson Lomax, Noah Muth, Kaitlin Muth, Spencer Versteeg, Scott Post, Jeffery Bennett, Neal Anderson, Kevin Behrens, Kevin Robledo, Aidan & Beckett Lenthe, Nathan & Rachel Klein, Ron & Peggy Pritzke, Adam Hoppus, Felipe Hernandez, Le'Spencer & Lauren Woodie-Walker, Shane & Kay Dubble, Tim Tantrow

SHARE YOUR REEF!

I love seeing how creative the reefs that people build are so please send photos my way and tag me **@featherstonegames** on instagram!

If you enjoyed Open Ocean and want to be notified about other upcoming games please check out

HOUSE RULES!

My family and I come up with house rules and new cards all the time. This is space for your ideas.

Rainbow Reef (Lily, 7) - If a player has all six colors of coral in their Reef at the end of the game, they score 20 bonus points. (...this evolved into the Rainbow Reef Bonus later in development!)

Coral Clusters (Ellen & Margo Enebo) - You can "school" coral together by color to earn bonus points for coral! (this ended up being a great event card!)

Solo EXTREME! (Jim Cohen) - Try and collect 5 of each type of creature in the pairing on the Habitat Bonus cards that care about placement. For example, try and get a total of 5 Pearlscale Butterflyfish and Red Fan Coral in your reef.

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HOUSE RULES!

RULES TRANSLATIONS

Thanks to the help of some wonderful backers these rules have been translated into multiple languages! Scan to explore available PDF translations on our website:

https://featherstonegames.com/open-ocean-game







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In memory of my dad, who taught me how to make things, then reminded me that life is too short not to make time.