

# Oceania

## Scout exploration variant

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### *Introduction*

The objective of this variant is to add a bit more strategy, reduce a bit the randomness of the game and make the reserve tiles more useful.

### *Rule Clarification*

**Surrounding:** I just want to clarify the surrounding rules because in the rule book, it is really not clear. There are 2 conditions that could create a surrounded area that you will fill up with reserve tiles:

- A) An area of the board has 1 empty space surrounded by tiles or any side of the board.
- B) An area is surrounded by tiles with all land sides. In other words, there are no dotted line that allows you to explore this area with a ship. So the only way to fill it up is with reserve tiles.

### *Rules changes*

**Game Setup:** First remove from the reserve tiles the 4 tiles that only contain water and set them aside. Shuffle all the reserve tiles together and make some stacks face down. Shuffle all sea tiles and make some stacks face down. Personally, I prefer placing all the sea tile in the top cover of the box and the reserve tiles in the bottom of the box.

**Scout exploration:** During your turn, instead of exploring with the ship, you can explore with one of your scout currently on an island. Scouts explore adjacent tiles if connected by land. When you explore with a scout, you draw a reserve tile. If the tile cannot be placed, you place the tile in front of you and end your turn. You cannot place scouts when you explore with scouts.

Each scout can explore multiple times if there are more than 1 land connection but you can only explore once per turn. If the tile is split in 2 small islands, you can only explore the side where the scout has been placed. In other word, you cannot cross water to explore with scouts. If a new placed reserve tile contains water path, you cannot place the ship on this tile unless the path is connected with the rest of the paths which leads to one of the 3 sides of the board.

**Playing From your hand:** You do not get any penalty for playing a tile from your hand. So you do not need to lose any scout when you do so. When you explore by ship or scout, you can play any kind of tiles, sea or reserve, from in front of you.

**Surrounding areas:** If you surround an area you can fill up the gap with any tiles from the reserve tiles including the all water tiles set aside. You just look at the reserve tiles, pickup what you need and just shuffle them back face down. Sometimes you can make combos: you could explore the land with a scout which close an area and allows you to fill it up with reserve tiles of your choice.

**Top border incomplete islands:** On the top row of the board, you can place tiles so that land is connected to the top of the board. Theses islands are considered incomplete and do not score. You can screw people over by making a large island connect to the top of the board and become incomplete.

**Game end:** The game ends when no more exploration is possible (by ship or scout).