

README FILE

Merchant of the Seas

Version 0.6.2

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INSTALLATION

1. Click the "Merchant of the Seas v0.6.2.zip" link and save to your computer.
2. Unzip the file by right-clicking it and selecting "Extract All."
3. Double-click the "Merchant of the Seas" application to launch.

You may also visit [Kyle Pittleman's page](#) and play it embedded on a webpage. You will need to install the [Unity Web Player](#).

DESCRIPTION

The goal of this game is to provide a fun way to test economics students' skill at comparative statics (shifting supply and demand curves).

The player takes on the role of a merchant at the height of the Roman Empire, trading six different goods across six different cities. Throughout the game, market shocks will appear at the top of the screen. If you can interpret the market shocks correctly, you will have a much easier time making money.

INTERFACE

See the following page for a screen shot and a list of all points of interest.

- A. This is the Shocks window. The latest market shock will be displayed here.
- B. This is the Turns window. It indicates the current turn number. To progress to the next turn, click the "End Turn" button in this window.
- C. This is the display for each city, with the city name at the bottom. Underneath the city name describes what the city *supplies* (and thus what you can buy). Below that indicates what the city *demands* (and thus what you can sell).





- D. This is your Inventory window, displaying your current gold and the goods currently in your ship's hold. In this game, the player has just 2 units of fish and 26 gold. There is no limit to how much your ship can carry.
- E. This window will only display something if you are in a hex adjacent to a city. While adjacent to a city, it will display buttons which allow you to purchase two different goods with their current prices and buttons which allow you to sell two other goods with their current prices. Note these prices are for the docked city only; prices will probably be different in other cities.
- F. This is your ship. Click it to move it.
- G. These purple hexes are possible places your ship can go this turn. Click one to go there.

HOW TO PLAY

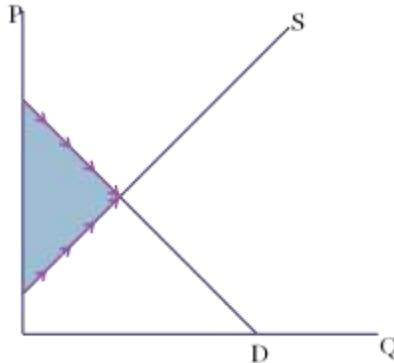
You are represented by a ship, placed randomly in the Mediterranean Sea when you begin. To find your ship, use the arrow keys or the WASD keys on your keyboard. To change the camera angle, move your mouse while right-clicking. Moving the mouse wheels zooms in and out.

Click on your ship to reveal possible places you can move in a turn (the purple hexes). Click a purple hex to move there. To proceed to the next turn, click "End Turn" in the upper left.

Buying and selling requires you are adjacent to a city. Trading options will appear in the right-handed side window. When you buy something, the price will increase for each unit (supply curve slopes up). When you sell something, the price will decrease for each unit (demand curve

slopes down). These changes in prices are permanent (they will not automatically move back to the starting prices).

The profit you earn is thus the difference between supply and demand.

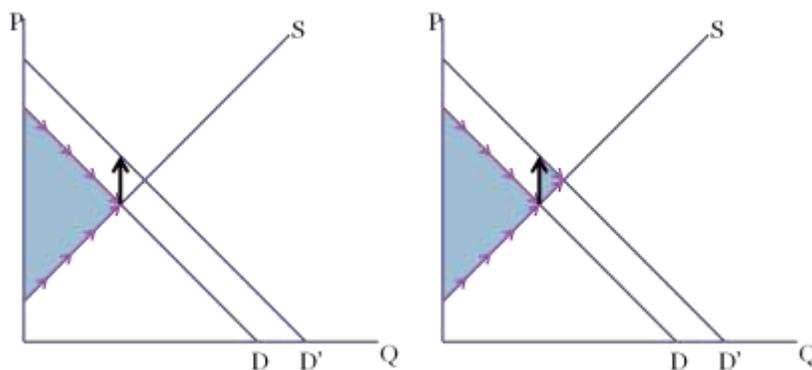


The center window displays shocks. These shocks are reflected by an increase or a decrease in the price of a good a city is selling or buying. They will always affect only either the supply or demand curves in the market for a particular good. Like the change in price when buying or selling, these changes are permanent.

Milo is playing Merchant of the Seas when this shock appears: “A religious movement preaching the virtues of drinking alcohol becomes popular in Byzantium and New Carthage.” Both Rome and New Carthage supply wine and both Byzantium and Salamis demand wine. Milo is near Rome. Buying from New Carthage and selling at Byzantium would require him to backtrack.

Milo, however, knows this sort of shock shifts demand and thus the price that wine sells for will increase. Since supply won't change, there's no reason to waste money traveling backwards; it will cost the same amount to buy the wine as it did before. He also knows that he must sell it in Byzantium since it's the only place where he can sell his wine that caters to this new interest in his product.

A shock changes the profit opportunities. The fastest way to complete the game is to correctly interpret these market changes.



Your goal is to turn your starting 100 gold into 1,000 gold in as few turns as possible.

DISCLAIMER

For educational purposes only. This is a work in progress and subject to change. Not for sale or distribution.