

# Seaweed Assault Online Manual

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<http://www.randomterrain.com/atari-2600-memories-program-seaweed-assault.html>

## What kind of game is Seaweed Assault?

It has been said that Seaweed Assault is like a cross between Centipede and Yars' Revenge.

### Related links:

[Seaweed Assault is Finally Finished](#)

[Download Seaweed Assault ROM Here](#)

[The Seaweed Assault Cartridge was Sold Here](#)

## Story

Your name is Captain Nalad Modnar and you are part of an advanced underwater civilization. It's your duty to patrol your section of the ocean in a semi-organic submarine called the Manatee. Highly aggressive seaweed surrounds you and it keeps trying to replicate faster than you can shoot. Use your torpedoes to blast any bits of seaweed that appear before they clog up your sector and spread to others, making it nearly impossible for anyone to travel. Don't let the seaweed strangle your civilization to extinction.

## Controls

### Attract Mode and the Title Screen

Attract mode displays the title screen for 10 seconds, then switches to a computer-controlled gameplay demo. This attract mode sequence repeats until you are ready to play. If you move the joystick up, down, left, or right while the title screen is displayed, a sound effect will be played so you can adjust the volume on your TV before the game starts.

**Tip:** If you use the Stella emulator, Alt + P will make the title screen look better.

### Starting and Restarting the Game

The game can be started with the reset switch or by pressing and releasing the fire button on the left controller. Press the reset switch while playing if you want to restart the game and return to the title screen.

## **Right-Handed or Left-Handed Play**

Most Atari 2600 games only allow right-handed play. Seaweed Assault offers another option for left-handed players. Any time during the attract mode sequence, press the select switch to toggle between right-handed (**RH**) and left-handed (**LH**) play. For right-handed play, the fire button of a classic-style joystick should be in the top left corner. For left-handed play, a classic-style joystick should be rotated clockwise so the fire button is in the top right corner. When you toggle between them, **RH** or **LH** will be displayed. If you accidentally start the game with the incorrect controller configuration, press the reset switch to return to the title screen and select the correct configuration.

## **Pause**

To pause the game on an Atari 2600, flip the COLOR/BW switch. To pause on an Atari 7800, press the pause button. You can also pause the game by pressing the fire button on the right controller. To resume play, press and release the fire button on the left controller. Remember, you must release the fire button to resume firing torpedoes (this feature keeps you from shooting something you may not want to shoot).

The pause feature displays random colors to help protect your television. Only the score and Manatee are shown during pause to prevent cheating. The Mantee is displayed during pause so you'll know your exact position when you resume play.

## Manatee Movement

The Manatee is capable of full 8 directional movement (up, down, left, right, and diagonally). The fire button can either be pressed and released for each torpedo or held down for auto-fire. There is no rapid fire because a string of torpedoes would have an explosive chain reaction and destroy the Manatee.

## Manatee

The Manatee is a semi-organic submarine that moves by using two flippers in the back that flap a little, but mostly undulate in a similar way to how certain types of stingrays and skates undulate the edges of their pectoral fins. Below are two example videos.

The Manatee has thick, gray, shark-like skin that is self-repairing. Whenever the Manatee is damaged, it will use a unit of health energy to automatically repair itself. The Manatee needs at least one unit of health energy to stay healthy, so when you are down to four units, the Health Energy Indicator will turn yellow and when you are down to one unit, it will turn red, alerting you that any more damage will end your mission. But don't worry, the Manatee starts out with 16 units of health energy and more units can be earned and uncovered. (The Health Energy Indicator is located on the bottom of your view screen within the Manatee's Communications Panel.)

The Manatee uses the Communications Panel to inform you of necessary information. The Manatee can sense the seaweed getting more aggressive. For every 20 pieces of seaweed you shoot, the Manatee will let you know that the seaweed is getting more

aggressive by making the shade of the Communications Panel a darker green. When you shoot 100 pieces of seaweed, the darkest shade will change back to its lightest shade to let you know that the rate of reproduction has increased. The Manatee sends this information to Central Command and when 100 pieces have been shot, they reward you with a homing health canister to prepare you for the new reproduction rate. The Manatee can detect that the canister is near and will let you know by making the Communications Panel blink blue. The Communications Panel also displays your score and shows your high score during auto-play.

The Manatee's skin has bioluminescence for damage and for absorbing energy. When damaged, the skin will blink red and when absorbing energy, the skin will blink blue.

## **Wrothopods**

Wrothopods are a protected species of cephalopod that travel deep to feed on parasites that attach to mature seaweed (they have a symbiotic relationship). Like many sea creatures, wrothopods are bioluminescent (they can emit various shades of colorful light). Wrothopods are a little cranky and have a hammerhead similar to a hammerhead shark, so stay out of their way. Just like with the seaweed, if the Manatee touches a Wrothopod, the Manatee will have to use a unit of health energy to repair itself.

To discourage poaching, no torpedo can harm a Wrothopod. The damage will be transferred back to the vessel of origin. In other words, if you shoot a Wrothopod, you'll hurt the Manatee instead. Although torpedoes cannot harm Wrothopods, the experience isn't pleasant, so a Wrothopod will go from cranky to furious if shot.

When one is furious its skin will change to a reddish color and it will dart at you faster.

## Seaweed

The Manatee will be damaged if you bump into the mature seaweed that has closed in on you or the seaweed offspring that keep popping up. The offspring may look passive, young and stupid, but don't get too close. They are sticky and will try to hold onto the Manatee until every bit of health energy has been used up. Keep your distance and use your torpedoes to clear a path.

**Warning:** Every time you shoot 100 bits of seaweed, the mature seaweed will start to panic a little and increase the rate of reproduction. The background color behind the score will get a little darker each time you shoot 20 bits of seaweed so you'll know how close you're getting to 100. Once you shoot the 100th piece of seaweed, the score bar will flash and you'll start on the next 100.

## Mature Seaweed Tentacles





Mature seaweed strands are big, mean, virtually indestructible, and almost as sentient as animals. These giant strands can reach and grab (similar to the tentacles of an octopus). If you let the Manatee hover in one spot for too long (about a second), one of the mature seaweed strands, let's call them tentacles from now on, will sniff out your position, reach up from the depths and try to grab the Manatee and do a little damage.

Mature seaweed tentacles are very tough and cannot be harmed by your torpedoes. The only way to avoid being grabbed by a mature seaweed tentacle that is coming up after you is to move the Manatee left or right (the mature seaweed will lose your 'scent'). Remember, moving up or down will not help; you must move left or right to escape. When it loses your 'scent,' it gets angry and shoots to the top of the screen forming a temporary wall that can damage the Manatee if bumped into.

Don't worry. If the Manatee is grabbed by a mature seaweed tentacle, it won't be a deadly encounter unless you are almost out of health energy. As you'll read in [Tip #1](#) below, mature seaweed tentacles can unintentionally help get you out of sticky situations, so they're not all bad.

## Scoring

The more bits of seaweed you shoot with the same torpedo, the more points you'll get. The points build up like this:

**1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10**

If you shoot more than 10 bits of seaweed with the same torpedo, each one past the 10th bit of seaweed will be worth 10 points. For example, if you'd shoot 10 individual bits of seaweed, you'd only get 10 points, but if you'd shoot 10 in a row with the same torpedo, you'd get 55 points. And if you'd shoot 30 bits of seaweed separately, you'd only get 30 points, but 30 shot with the same torpedo would get you 255 points.



You have a little dilemma. Do you let the seaweed build up for more points or do you keep the area clear so it will be easier to avoid the [Wrothopods](#) and reach any [homing health canisters](#) that drop? There's also [salvage to find](#) behind the bits of seaweed, which adds to the dilemma.

## Tips

### Tip #1: **Don't Struggle**

Struggling once you're tangled in a patch of seaweed is usually a bad idea. Just sit still and shoot and see if that clears a path. If you have enough health energy, you may need to shoot, move a little, shoot again, move a little and so on until you can get free. If that doesn't help and your health energy isn't too low (and no seaweed is below the Manatee), you can wait and see if a [seaweed tentacle](#) can pull you out of there. There are various ways to get out of sticky situations, but panicking and wildly struggling to get free is never a good idea.

### Tip #2: **Larger Targets**

Horizontal shooting is easier. Beginners should mostly shoot left or right until learning the retreat and return technique below.

### Tip #3: **Retreat and Return**

Lining up a shot becomes easier once you get used to moving a little, then coming back so you're in the right spot. For example, if you're trying to shoot left or right, move up or down a little and come back to that spot. With a little practice, you'll be able to line up the Manatee with one or two tries. (If

shooting seaweed was easy, they would send down a monkey with a snorkel and a waterproof BB gun.)

## Homing Health Canisters

Shoot 100 bits of seaweed and a homing health canister will be dropped by your leaders for your hard work. Homing health canisters are supposed to move toward the Manatee, but they are made in a hurry, so they aren't exactly top-quality. That means homing health canisters will often be defective and drop straight down.

Defective or not, homing health canisters will weaken the deeper they fall. Get to them as quickly as possible. A health canister glows blue at full strength and is worth 3 units of health energy and 50 points. When it turns yellow, it's worth 2 units of health energy and 25 points. When a health canister is about to give out, it turns red and is worth one unit of health energy and 10 points. If your Health Energy Indicator is full, any extra health energy will be converted to points.

### Summary

**Blue:** Worth 50 points and 3 units of energy. If your health is full, you'll get an extra 25 points. If your health is down a notch, you'll get 10 extra points. If your health is down 2 notches, you'll get 5 extra points.

**Yellow:** Worth 25 points and 2 units of energy. If your health is full, you'll get an extra 10 points. If your health is down a notch, you'll get 5 extra points.

**Red:** Worth 10 points and 1 unit of energy. If your health is full, you'll get an extra 5 points.

**Reminder:** Remember, every time you shoot 100 bits of seaweed, the mature seaweed will start to panic a little and increase the rate of reproduction. The background color behind the score will get a little darker each time you shoot 20 bits of seaweed so you'll know how close you're getting to 100. Once you shoot the 100th piece of seaweed, the score bar will flash and you'll start on the next 100.

## Corroded Homing Health Canisters

You'll never know where or when, but sometimes a long lost Corroded Homing Health Canister will be trapped behind a bit of seaweed. When you shoot that bit of seaweed, the Corroded Homing Health Canister will be released and it will take around 3 seconds for its sensors to activate. If you can salvage it in time, you'll get one unit of health energy and 10 points.

Since every Corroded Homing Health Canister has damaged circuits, if you don't salvage it before the sensors have activated, it will use its last bit of energy to home in on the Manatee and try to ram it, causing damage that will take one health unit to repair.

The bad news is that you can't shoot it or outrun it. The good news is that it can get caught up and lost in the bits of seaweed again, so if a Corroded Homing Health Canister comes after you, try to get some seaweed between it and you.

Corroded Homing Health Canisters make a sound while trying to activate which confuses mature seaweed tentacles and makes it harder for them to sniff out your 'scent,' so they will hesitate before going after you.

## 1,000 Point Energy Burst

Any time you earn 1,000 points, you are showing your worth to your leaders, so they will use their most expensive piece of technology and send down an energy burst that will instantly fill your health energy (the seaweed will temporarily turn blue as the energy surges down through your sector). And it's not just a one-time bonus. Your leaders will send down an energy burst at 2,000, 3,000, 4,000, 5,000 and so on.

## About This Game and Special Thanks

Seaweed Assault was made with [batari Basic](#) (a BASIC-like language created by Fred "batari" Quimby that helps the average person make Atari 2600 games). This game started out as an [example program](#) and was made by Duane Alan Hahn (Random Terrain) using hints, tips, code snippets, and more from [AtariAge](#) members such as batari, SeaGtGruff, RevEng, Robert M, Atarius Maximus, jrok, Nukey Shay, supercat, GroovyBee, and bogax. Thanks also goes to those who posted in the [Seaweed Assault thread](#) in the batari Basic forum at AtariAge.

This game would not exist without [batari Basic](#) by Fred "batari" Quimby and [Visual batari Basic](#) by jwierer. Visual batari Basic's various editors and useful features make the whole process faster, easier, and more fun.

Sound effects were created by hunting down sounds with [Tone Toy 2008](#) and shaping/altering those sounds using VbB's [Music and Sound Editor](#).

Name of semi-organic submarine (the Manatee) [suggested by Christophero Sly](#).

Wrothopod name influenced by something Mili said in the AtariAge chat room:

- Mili: but its wroth it to be on there
- Random Terrain: The Wroth of Mili!
- Mili: Fear my Wroth RT

[Schizophretard](#) suggested many ideas to improve the game, suggested improvements to the manual and provided additional text to make things clearer, and also did a lot of testing on real hardware.

Zach [suggested an improvement](#) to make the left-handed feature easier to understand.

Thanks also goes to [L-Tyrosine](#). It gives me a little more energy and helps me to focus and get things done. It's not a cure for my problems, but as you can see, this game is finally finished. Not something that would have happened before taking L-Tyrosine. There's hope that the other games I started years ago will get finished now.



## Play the Game

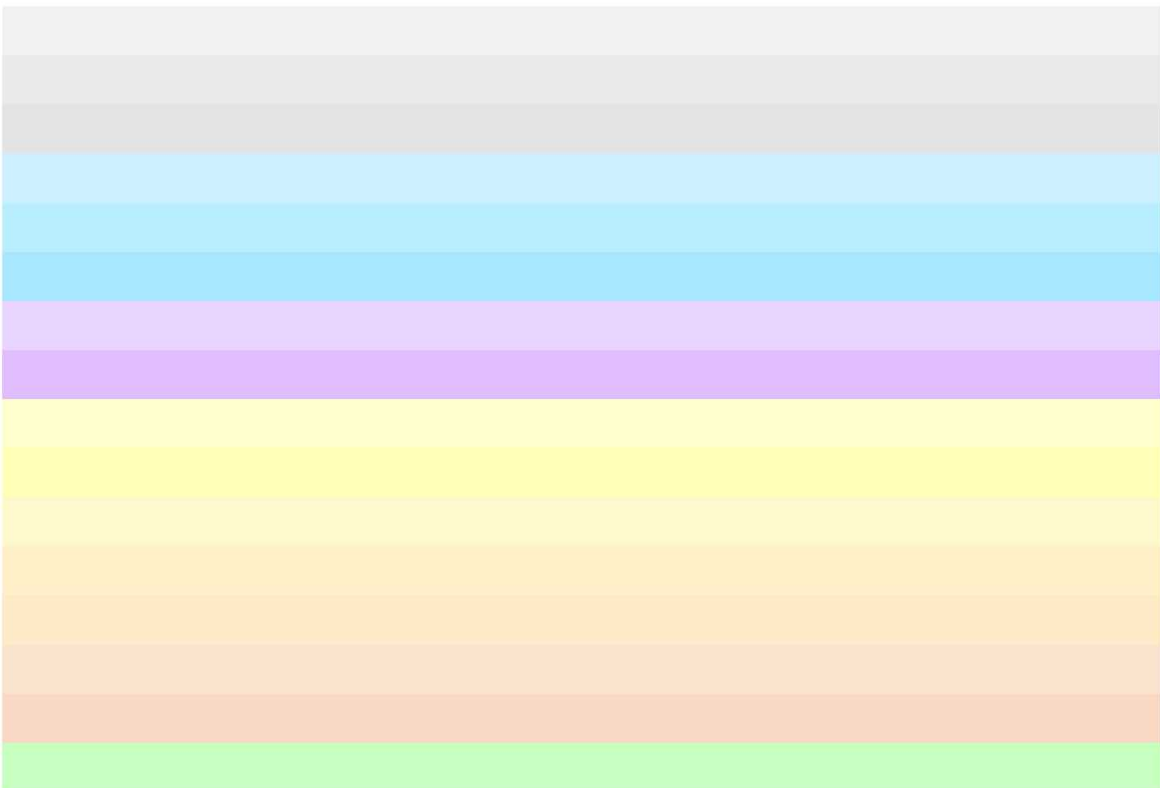
You can download the latest .bin file at AtariAge to use with an emulator or [Harmony cartridge](#):

<http://www.atariage.com/forums/topic/173190-seaweed-assault/>

Thanks to Paulo Peccin at [javatari.org](#), you can play Seaweed Assault right here online for free. [Click here](#) to jump up to the top of this page if you'd like to play online.

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### Background Color Changer





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