



# How to Play Teaching Guides: #12 Reef Encounter

This guide is intended for use by owners of the game looking for a quick outline with a recommended order and structure with which to teach the game. To hear a sample explanation or to learn the game yourself listen to episode #12 of The How to Play Podcast available at [www.howtoplaypodcast.com](http://www.howtoplaypodcast.com)

## 1 The Hook - What the Game is About

*"Welcome to Reef Encounter. A deep sea adventure of combating corals. In this game your major objective is to grow the biggest corals by playing adjacent matching colored tiles together and to have your colored corals the strongest by the end of the game.*

*I will teach you how to meet these goals of growing the largest corals and having the strongest corals by explaining the functions of the six major components in the game: polyp tiles, larva cubes, shrimps, parrotfish, algae cylinders and coral strength tiles.*

*Using these six different components you will learn how to grow a large coral, eat it, and make those tiles worth the most points to make you the winner of the game"*

## 2 The Meat - How to Play the Game

### ● The Six major components of the game

1. Polyp Tiles
  - 1.1 Played adjacent to each other on the board to form corals
  - 1.2 5 different colors
2. Larva Cubes
  - 2.1 Must be played to add polyp tiles to the board
  - 2.2 Must use a matching color of the tiles used
  - 2.3 When adding tiles you can grow a coral or start a new coral

3. Shrimps
  - 3.1 Mainly used to mark which corals are owned by which player
4. Parrotfish
  - 4.1 When you have a coral large enough you will eat the coral
  - 4.2 Some of the tiles from your coral will go in your fish for scoring
  - 4.3 Can eat one coral a turn
  - 4.4 Will only eat a maximum of four corals the whole game
5. Coral Strength Tiles (CST's)
  - 5.1 Ten tiles on the deep sea board
  - 5.2 Mark how strong each color coral is compared to each other color
  - 5.3 Important for growing corals and for scoring your polyp tiles
6. Algae Cylinders
  - 6.1 Allow you to flip Coral Strength Tiles
  - 6.2 Allow you to lock down CST's so they no longer flip
7. Example of how they all work together
  - 7.1 Use an orange larva cube to play orange polyp tiles on the board to build an orange coral
  - 7.2 Use Shrimp to mark your coral
  - 7.3 Feed the tiles to your parrotfish
  - 7.4 Get Algae cylinders to flip over Coral Strength Tiles to sides where Orange is stronger than other colors and lock down those tiles

## **Examples of Playing a Turn**

1. Sample Turn #1 - Play Tiles
  - 1.1 Use a larva cube to play some tiles to the board to make a coral
  - 1.2 Mark that coral as yours with a shrimp
  - 1.3 Choose 1 of 5 refill sections on the deep sea board to get more tiles and a cube
2. Sample Turn #2 - Do Nothing
  - 2.1 Many times its a good play not to add tiles or do anything
  - 2.2 Pass the Actions
  - 2.3 Choose 1 of 5 refill sections and turn is over

3. Most common actions during a turn
  - 3.1 Play tiles with a larva cube
  - 3.2 Add or move a shrimp
  - 3.3 Refill with one of five lots to choose from
4. Order of Turn Actions
  - 4.1 Must eat a coral at beginning of the turn if you want to
  - 4.2 All other actions you choose to do in any order you choose
  - 4.3 Refill with one of five lots

## **Details of Turn Actions**

1. Eating Corals - must do, if you do it, at beginning of your turn
  - 1.1 Only 1 coral per turn
  - 1.2 Wont do this most turns (max of 4 per game)
  - 1.3 You get all of the tiles minus four in your parrotfish
  - 1.4 Want corals to be at least 5 tiles big
  - 1.5 After 1st coral, shrimp goes on deep sea board
  - 1.6 For 2nd-4th corals shrimp go in parrotfish
2. Add Polyp Tiles
  - 2.1 Must use larva cube
  - 2.2 Up to 4 tiles of same color of cube
  - 2.3 Orthogonally adjacent to build corals
  - 2.4 Deep Water - may not be played in
  - 2.5 Starfish give you bonus tiles
  - 2.6 Cannot merge two corals of same color claimed by shrimps
  - 2.7 Can consume other polyp tiles
    - 2.7.1 You can play over other tiles to take them
    - 2.7.2 Your color must be stronger than tile played over
    - 2.7.3 You take consumed tile to put in front of your screen
    - 2.7.4 Important to keep seperate as consumed tiles are used for many useful abilities
    - 2.7.5 Getting consumed tiles is good, more on this later

3. Placing Polyp Tiles (again!)
  - 3.1 Can play a second set of tiles with another cube
  - 3.2 For a second color usually
  - 3.3 On a turn you will play 0,1 or 2 groups of tiles
4. Add ONE Shrimp to a tile on the board
  - 4.1 Add one shrimp to claim your corals
  - 4.2 Keeps other players from stealing a coral you played tiles for
  - 4.3 Allow you to eat that coral
  - 4.4 Protect coral from being merged with a coral of the same color
  - 4.5 One shrimp per coral
  - 4.6 Protect some of tiles from consumption
    - 4.6.1 Tile shrimp is on and adjacent tiles can't be consumed
5. Move or Remove shrimps
  - 5.1 Can move shrimps already on board to any tile you want
  - 5.2 Can remove shrimps from board
6. Get and Use an Algae Cylinder
  - 6.1 Algae Cylinders flip Coral Strength Tiles
  - 6.2 Want to flip them for two reasons
    - 6.2.1 So you can consume other tiles
    - 6.2.2 Makes the stronger tiles be worth more points
  - 6.3 Costs one consumed tile
  - 6.4 Four “flipping colors” on CST’s, (blue, purple, red, green)
  - 6.5 Choose a color all tiles marked with that color flip
  - 6.6 If you have eaten one coral you may lock down
  - 6.7 Lock down one tile, all other CST’s of that “flipping color” flip
  - 6.8 Only one lock down per turn
  - 6.9 Locking down Coral Strength Tiles is very important to winning the game, as it greatly affects your score
7. Exchange Larva Cube for a polyp tile of the same color
8. Exchange Consumed tile for a Larva Cube of the same color
9. Refill by choosing one of the five lots of polyp tiles and a larva cube

## ● Consumed Tiles - Yummy!

1. Three “SuperPowers” of Consumed Tiles
  - 1.1 Trade in for a larva cube of the same color
  - 1.2 Trade in to get and use an algae cylinder to flip and lock CST’s
  - 1.3 Allows you to play more than 4 tiles of the same color in one action
2. Important to consume tiles so you can have these “Superpowers”

## ● Game Recap

1. Each turn you can:
  - 1.1 Start by eating a coral if you wish
  - 1.2 Take the other actions, if you want in any order: Lay Tiles, Add or move shrimp, Flip CST’s, exchanges
  - 1.3 Select one of the five refill choices
2. End of Game
  - 2.1 Game can end one of three ways
    - 2.1.1 All 10 CST’s are locked
    - 2.1.2 One player has eaten four corals
    - 2.1.3 Nowhere to play a tile, out of polyp tiles or out of larva cubes
  - 2.2 End of game final coral eat
    - 2.2.1 Players who didnt end the game may eat one coral -5 tiles (instead of the usual -4)
3. Scoring
  - 3.1 Each tile in parrot fish worth between 1 and 5 points
  - 3.2 Check value of each color of coral
    - 3.2.1 Each colored tile is worth 1 point + 1 point for each color it is stronger than
    - 3.2.2 For Example, Pink is stronger than yellow and black, 1+2, Every pink tile is worth 3 points
  - 3.3 Add up value of all tiles in parrotfish, most points wins

### 3

## The Hamster - How to Win the Game

1. Protect any coral you build with Shrimps
2. Consider carefully which tile to put your shimp on
3. Dont be afraid to do nothing on a turn to rebuild
4. Get involved with locking down CST's
  - 4.1 Look for ways to get more consumed tiles
  - 4.2 Consider eating tiles from your own corals
  - 4.3 Eat your first coral so you can start locking down tiles
5. The bigger your corals get the more vulnerable they are
6. Pay attention to when the end of the game is coming
  - 6.1 Try not to have corals uneaten by end of game
  - 6.2 Remember you can only eat one coral per turn
7. You don't need 4 corals to win, 2 or 3 good corals may be sufficient
8. Good luck and Have fun!

#### Credits:

Game Design: Richard Breese

Game Publisher: Z-Man Games

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Teaching outline based upon How to Play Podcast Episode #12

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