



# PIRATES™

YE OLDE  
CORE RULES



BY: MATT DEMILLE  
ROLE-PLAYING GAME RULEBOOK

NEW DIMENSION  
GAMES

FOR Disney and Meier,  
great Captains...

# Pirate Adventures

## Gazetteers

- G1) The Spanish Main
- G2) The Barbary Coast
- G3) The Seven Seas
- G4) Hellish Havens
- G5) The Bloodiest Yarns
- G6) Endless Enemies
- G7) Untold Tales
- G8) Legendary Wars
- G9) New Worlds

## Caribbean Adventures

- C1) The Forbidden Gold
- C2) The Fabled Treasures
- C3) Blood and War
- C4) Love and Duty
- C5) The Lost Treasures
- C6) Drake's Inferno

## Mediterranean Adventures

- M1) The Lost Kingdom
- M2) New Crusades
- M3) Holy Wars

## Open Seas Adventures

- O1) The Devil's Fleet
- O2) Master's Voyage

## Novelettes

- N1) Treasure Island
- N2) Captain Blood
- N3) Howard Pyle
- N4) The Sea Hawk

# PIRATES RULEBOOK



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*A*vast there!

*Ohhh . . . It's fifteen men  
on the dead man's chest  
Yo-ho-ho and a bottle of rum!  
Ohhh . . . Drink and the devil  
had done for the rest  
Yo-ho-ho and a bottle of rum!*





# Foreword

*Avast there! Ye've come seekin' adventure with salty old pirates eh? Well, ye've sure set yer course for the right waters. For this 'ere game isn't fer any a' them lubbers who think we pirates be dead. Ye've got yerself a pirate's heart, I know it. The call a' the sea is strong and ye've answered at last yer true calling. Whatever the rest a' the world may think of us, you know and I know that there's grand adventure ahead. So keep a sharp eye open matey, and read on.*

*Ahh, but what will you be a' readin? This 'ere game be the bounty of all gamers, fer just as sure as there's gold in the glint of me eye so do I know the rugged lot o' gamers well! Some claim to be heroes but they be only out fer gold. Some wear the mask of a wiser man but they only be proven how well they can kill their enemies. Ahh, there be pirate blood in us all, I says. Truth to tell. And this 'ere game be the new world we've all been seekin' all this time, where the captain wants us to fly our true colors, to kill our mateys if they need killin', to set our course fer gold for that's what we all be seekin', and to cut any throats we need to ta get it!*

*Yes mateys, we've all been shackled by the laws a' the old gaming world too long. And when them laws don't please us no more they just make more o' them 'stead a' fixen 'em! Or some new king takes the throne, a' promisen new fortunes but only gives us more a' what we got before. The old gaming world ain't no place for a self-respectin' pirate. Now this 'ere game is weighin' anchor and takin' us all to a better place, a new world that we can plunder as we please with precious few rulelubbers and dim-witted governors a' holden us back.*

*So, are ye ready fer the voyage? Here be the fleet, my friend; three books like three ships ta start just as ol' Columbus did his blessed self. This 'ere flotilla be stocked full a' rules, Players' Characters and Captains' treasures. Together, that is with you a' joinin' our crew, we should strike fear into the hearts a' all them bloomin' blowers that already be a plunderin' the world. So if ye be ready, let's start this journey together...*



# TABLE OF CONTENTS



## TABLE OF CONTENTS



### CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

<b>The intrigue</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Inspiration</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Pronoun note</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>About this book</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>About this game</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Golden Rules</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Abbreviations</b>	<b>14</b>

### CHAPTER 2: PLAYING THE GAME

<b>Role-playing</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>The basics</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Game Campaigns</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Adventure Points</b>	<b>19</b>
<i>Earning Adventure Points</i>	20
<i>Using Adventure Points</i>	21
<i>Only Player Characters</i>	21

### CHAPTER 3: THE ADVENTURE

<b>Ability Checks</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Movement</b>	<b>23</b>
<i>Running</i>	23
<i>Swimming</i>	23
<i>Climbing</i>	23
<i>Falling</i>	23
<i>Hiding</i>	24
<i>Stealth</i>	24
<b>Searching</b>	<b>24</b>
<i>Searching Checks</i>	24
<i>Searching again</i>	24
<b>Overland journeys</b>	<b>25</b>
<i>Traveling</i>	25
<i>Hunting, foraging and starving</i>	25
<i>Sleepless nights</i>	25
<b>Dirty deeds</b>	<b>27</b>
<i>Lockpicking</i>	27
<i>Pilfering</i>	27
<i>Disguise</i>	27
<i>Torture</i>	27
<b>Poisons</b>	<b>28</b>
<i>Making poison</i>	28
<i>Using poison</i>	28
<i>Curing poison</i>	28
<b>Games</b>	<b>29</b>

### CHAPTER 4: CROSSING SWORDS

<b>Fighting basics</b>	<b>30</b>
<i>Initiative</i>	30
<i>Defense Score</i>	30
<i>Attack Rolls</i>	30
<b>Blood and death</b>	<b>30</b>
<i>Healing</i>	31
<i>Slow death</i>	31
<i>Certain death</i>	31
<b>Critical Attacks</b>	<b>31</b>
<i>Critical Hits</i>	31
<i>Critical Misses</i>	31
<i>Expanded Critical Hits</i>	32
<i>Expanded Critical Misses</i>	32
<b>Fighting tactics</b>	<b>34</b>

### CHAPTER 5: SHORE LEAVE

<b>Purchases</b>	<b>36</b>
<i>Gold</i>	36
<i>Availability</i>	36
<i>Selling</i>	36
<i>Bartering</i>	36
<i>Services</i>	37
<b>Random situations</b>	<b>37</b>
<i>Pilfering</i>	37
<i>Whores</i>	38
<i>Crew</i>	38
<b>Shoppes and merchantiles</b>	<b>39</b>
<i>Clothing</i>	39
<i>Equipment</i>	41
<i>Weapons</i>	42
<i>Armor</i>	43
<b>Livestock</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>At the wharfs</b>	<b>44</b>
<i>Purchasing ships</i>	44
<i>Provisioning ships</i>	44
<i>Repairing ships</i>	44
<i>Selling ships</i>	44
<i>Modifying ships</i>	44
<i>Scrapping ships</i>	45
<i>Goods from ships</i>	45
<i>Goods aboard ship</i>	45
<i>Food aboard ship</i>	45
<b>Naming ships</b>	<b>45</b>

# TABLE OF CONTENTS



## TABLE OF CONTENTS



<b>CHAPTER 6: THE PIRATE CREW</b>		<b>Setting sail</b>	<b>60</b>
<b>The captain and the crew</b>	<b>46</b>	<i>Daily movement</i>	60
<i>The captain</i>	46	<i>Navigation</i>	60
<i>Playing the crew</i>	46	<i>Reefs</i>	60
<i>Crew Levels</i>	46	<i>Storms</i>	60
<i>Crewmen</i>	46	<i>Encounters</i>	60
<i>Crew contributions</i>	47	<b>Nautical tactics</b>	<b>61</b>
<i>Acquiring crew members</i>	47	<i>Charting a course</i>	61
<i>Morale</i>	47	<i>Maneuvering</i>	61
<i>Mutiny</i>	48	<i>Riding the storm</i>	61
<i>Dividing up the plunder</i>	48	<i>Cleaning the ship</i>	62
<b>Articles</b>	<b>48</b>	<i>Careening the ship</i>	62
<b>Details</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>Naval battle</b>	<b>64</b>
<b>Flags</b>	<b>53</b>	<i>Combat Rounds</i>	64
<i>Designing flags</i>	53	<i>Cannon</i>	64
<i>Royal Navy flags</i>	53	<i>Ship damage</i>	64
<i>Infamous flags</i>	54	<i>Sinking ships</i>	65
 		<i>Critical hits</i>	65
<b>CHAPTER 7: ALL SHIPS AT SEA</b>		<i>Critical misses</i>	65
<b>A gazetteer of ships</b>	<b>56</b>	<i>Broadside tactics</i>	65
<i>Barque</i>	56	<i>Ramming</i>	66
<i>Brigantine</i>	57	<i>Fleeing and giving chase</i>	66
<i>Dutch fluyt</i>	57	<b>Mass Melee</b>	<b>67</b>
<i>Frigate</i>	57	<i>Calculating Mass Melee</i>	67
<i>Galleon</i>	57	<i>Player Characters in Mass Melee</i>	67
<i>Man-O-War</i>	58	<i>Surrender</i>	68
<i>Mariner</i>	58	<i>Boarding tactics</i>	68
<i>Merchantman</i>	58	<b>Attacking towns</b>	<b>69</b>
<i>Naval sloop</i>	59	<i>Fortifications</i>	69
<i>Navy snow</i>	59	<i>Fort damage</i>	69
<i>Schooner</i>	59	<i>Approaching by land</i>	70
<i>Sloop</i>	59	<b>Victorious pirates!</b>	<b>70</b>





# TABLE OF CONTENTS



## TABLE OF CONTENTS



### CHAPTER 8: PIECES OF CHARACTERS

<b>Creating Characters</b>	<b>72</b>
<b>Ability Scores</b>	<b>72</b>
<b>Nationality</b>	<b>76</b>
<i>British</i>	76
<i>Dutch</i>	77
<i>French</i>	77
<i>Spanish</i>	77
<b>Aging</b>	<b>77</b>
<b>Defense Score</b>	<b>78</b>
<b>Details</b>	<b>78</b>
<b>Name</b>	<b>79</b>

### CHAPTER 9: BACKGROUNDS ON ACCOUNT

<b>History</b>	<b>80</b>
<i>Wealth</i>	80
<i>Legacy</i>	80
<i>Royalty</i>	80
<b>Fears</b>	<b>81</b>
<b>Trademarks</b>	<b>81</b>
<b>Reputation</b>	<b>82</b>
<b>Histories</b>	<b>83</b>
<i>Career before piracy</i>	83
<i>Life before piracy</i>	83
<i>Reason for piracy</i>	83

### CHAPTER 10: A PIRATES LIFE FOR YOU

<b>Character Classes</b>	<b>84</b>
<i>Buccaneer</i>	84
<i>Coasta Guarda</i>	85
<i>Gentleman</i>	85
<i>Huguenot</i>	86
<i>Madman</i>	86
<i>Musketeer</i>	86
<i>Priest</i>	87
<i>Rogue</i>	87
<i>Sailor</i>	88
<i>Scourge</i>	88
<i>Sea Hawk</i>	88
<i>Swashbuckler</i>	89
<b>Non Player Characters</b>	<b>89</b>

### CHAPTER 11: BEING WORTH YOUR SALT

<b>Skill Points</b>	<b>90</b>
<b>Trades</b>	<b>90</b>
<b>Proficiencies</b>	<b>91</b>
<b>Specialties</b>	<b>92</b>
<b>Saving Throws</b>	<b>93</b>

### CHAPTER 12: DEAD MEN TELL YOUR TALE

<b>Experience</b>	<b>94</b>
<i>Earning Experience Points</i>	94
<i>Experience Level</i>	94
<b>Notoriety</b>	<b>95</b>
<i>Earning Notoriety Points</i>	95
<i>Notoriety Level</i>	95
<i>Losing Notoriety</i>	95
<b>Privateering</b>	<b>97</b>
<b>Retirement</b>	<b>98</b>
<i>Life after retirement</i>	98
<i>Fame</i>	98

### CHAPTER 13: BEING GAME CAPTAIN

<b>The Captain's role</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Quality Game Captains</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Tricks of the trade</b>	<b>103</b>
<b>Knowing the material</b>	<b>104</b>
<i>Sourcebooks</i>	104
<i>Adventures</i>	104
<i>Gazetteers</i>	104
<i>Novelettes</i>	104

### CHAPTER 14: RUNNING AN ADVENTURE

<b>Beginning an Adventure</b>	<b>106</b>
<b>Non Player Characters</b>	<b>106</b>
<b>Rumors and legends</b>	<b>107</b>
<b>Encounters</b>	<b>107</b>
<b>Maps</b>	<b>108</b>
<b>Handouts</b>	<b>108</b>
<b>Soundtracks</b>	<b>109</b>
<b>Concluding an Adventure</b>	<b>109</b>
<b>Variations</b>	<b>109</b>

# TABLE OF CONTENTS



## TABLE OF CONTENTS



### CHAPTER 15: CREATING AN ADVENTURE

Designing Adventures	110
Good advice	114

### CHAPTER 16: A ROGUES GALLERY

Statistics	116
Townfolk	116
<i>Child</i>	116
<i>Innkeeper</i>	117
<i>Merchant</i>	117
<i>Official</i>	117
<i>Priest</i>	117
<i>Sailor</i>	117
<i>Whore</i>	117
Guards	118
<i>British regiment</i>	118
<i>Dutch soldier</i>	118
<i>French infantry</i>	118
<i>Spanish guard</i>	118
Pirates	119
<i>Captain</i>	119
<i>Crewman</i>	119
<i>Piratess</i>	119
<i>Quartermaster</i>	119
Other NPCs	119

### CHAPTER 17: PIRATE PLUNDER!

Plundering	120
Valuables	120
<i>Food</i>	120
<i>Goods</i>	120
<i>Slaves</i>	121
<i>Weapons</i>	121
Gold	121
Jewels	121
Special treasures	123
<i>Trinkets</i>	123
<i>Miscellaneous</i>	123
<i>Papers</i>	124
<i>Artifacts</i>	125
<i>Magic</i>	126
<i>Other treasures</i>	127

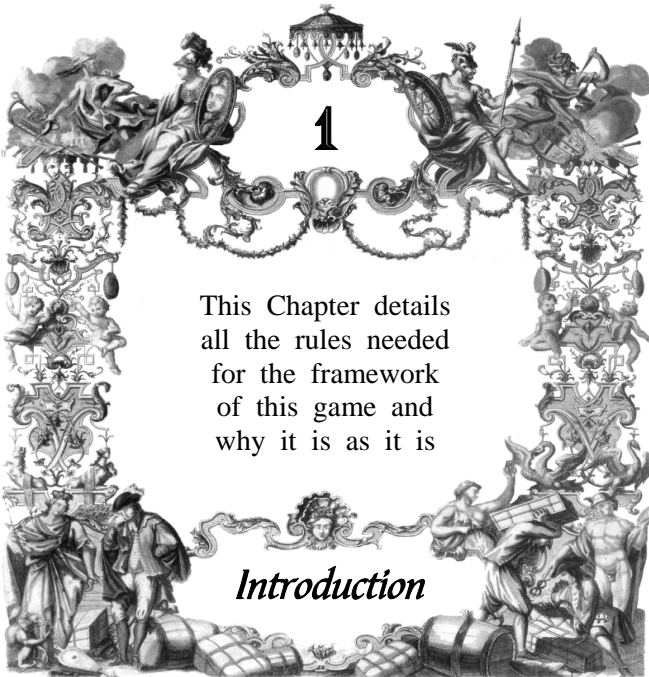
### CHAPTER 18: AN UNCERTAIN WORLD

Why such rules?	128
Outline	129
Reminders	129
In town	130
On land	130
At sea	131
In caves	131
Encounters	132



# CHAPTER ONE

DEAD MEN TELL NO TALES FOR TALES ARE TOLD BY THOSE WHO SEIZE THE TREASURE OF LIFE



This Chapter details all the rules needed for the framework of this game and why it is as it is

## Introduction

**THE INTRIGUE:** Crimson horizons, lush tropical jungles steeped in mystery and magic, galleons filled with gold, fencing duels, broadside battles, digging up buried treasure, swinging from ship-to-ship, running your friends through, card games by lantern light below decks, exploring booby-trapped pirate caves, bewitched treasures, bar brawls, piecing together old maps, forcing enemies to walk the plank, and the tranquil blue waters of the Caribbean—exciting, isn't it?

Ever since pirates sailed off over the horizon, leaving tales of their daring exploits behind, they have been prominent in popular culture and the romances, their villainy all but forgotten in the light of their promise of adventure, their charisma, and the romantic lure of their brutal paradise. Such adventures have called to the hearts of all free-spirited folks for centuries—there's something magical about piracy, something that calls to us as surely as the sea calls out to the sailor.

We have all come to love pirates in the movies, children's stories, plays, video games and amusement parks. We have actively sought every possible means of re-living those great adventures of history and romance. And now, this role-playing game offers us a unique opportunity to **become** those pirates and truly live the adventure!

**INSPIRATION:** Each and every role-playing game is based upon some sort of literature, printed or unprinted, published or unpublished, filmed, or dreamed. Each fantasy and fantasy game is inspired somehow, somewhere, by someone. As for Pirates, many different forms of literature and entertainment inspired me to write this game.

These fantasies, be they books, games or films, have had in part, great or small, a hand in developing this book and indeed all the rules of the game itself. So in addition to tribute are these inspirations mentioned in order to provide for the newcomer to the pirate world perhaps 'suggested reading', or 'suggested playing or viewing'.

These sources of inspiration are detailed in their order of influence, indeed as much as they gave me not only expose to the pirate genre, but how much their particular ideas served as a basis for my own—what I saw, what I favored, and what I would include in this game.

Pirates of the Caribbean: That classic ride at *Disneyland* forms some of my earliest memories. First vanishing into the darkness beneath the talking skull and crossbones, to sailing through the misty waters between the galleon and the fort, the haunting words of the pirates echoed in my mind for over a decade, until I at last returned to the park, old enough to understand what was going on. Already involved in role-playing games, even before I stepped off the boat, my thoughts were racing: "What a perfect adventure for a role-playing game!" And so, each time I return to the happiest place on earth, the first thing that I do is run straight for the *Pirates of the Caribbean!* I demand a front seat and sing along to "Yo-ho!" as I drift through the flooded caves. I can never get enough of that ride! And each time I've sailed the Caribbean waters beneath *New Orleans Square*, I'm reminded of just how much the pirate genre has to offer the role-playing game world. Too many rides I suppose, and it got into my blood. Ahh, a pirate's life for me!

Curse of the Black Pearl: Of course when I heard that a movie was finally being made of the classic *Disneyland* ride, I knew in my (black) heart that it would be pure magic! Indeed, it was meant to be.

# INTRODUCTION

DEAD MEN TELL NO TALES FOR TALES ARE TOLD BY THOSE WHO SEIZE THE TREASURE OF LIFE

Just as I felt that a certain trilogy of fantasy films would justify the more serious-minded way I wrote my own fantasy game setting, so did I know that the (first) *Pirates of the Caribbean* film would establish the dark, brutal world of piracy in all its whimsical fun with a fanciful marriage of history and horror. It wasn't a film I was expecting nor could I know what to expect, except that it would renew my own self as well, being far ahead of my own ideas. I wasn't let down. The film was all I could have wanted and much more, simultaneously justifying my own blending of fact and fiction for pirates, of sailors and the supernatural, while ever showing me the best proportions for how to tell such tales myself. This movie encouraged a greater horror element in my work, improved the pacing, and balanced all such factors in a genre that is normally left marooned on an island of history.

Sid Meier's Pirates!: Back in the mid-eighties a classic computer game was developed. This really introduced me to the real world of pirates. A timeless game that has blessedly been re-made for newer game systems since, this game I played so often that I'd wear out the disk and have to replace it. The adventure was endless! The unique approach to how this game was set up made it truly one of the first (and best) computer role-playing games. However, compared to table role-playing games, it was still limited, and there were many things that I wanted to do in that game that were not options. And so, when I decided to write a Pirates role-playing game, all my memories of sailing *Sid Meier's* Caribbean returned to me, and just as tirelessly as I played his game did I write the original rules of this one.

Captain Blood: The classic movie and the book it was based upon are among my favorites of the genre. Indeed, how could a game about pirates be written without recognizing author *Rafael Sabatini*, who in one foreword to this novel was accurately described as writing the quintessential pirate story? Similarly, could anybody ever best in swords or in style that legendary swashbuckler (and indeed real-life rascal) *Errol Flynn*, who personified Blood on film? Countless screenings of his pirate films took place during the writing of this game.

Cutthroat Island: The big-budget pirate movie made in the mid-nineties that may have been disliked by most and cut the throat of its studio, but I enjoyed it. Its most powerful score, breathtaking scenery, spectacular climax-battle and surprisingly accurate depiction of countless aspects of the pirate world make this film just too good to be forgotten. A wonderfully whimsical and carefree romp through the pirate world, this film is my favorite way of having a voyage into the Caribbean without going back to *Disneyland*.

Captain Hook: That classic villain and arch-enemy of Peter Pan is my favorite pirate character of all time! Just watching a few seconds of him on screen gets my blood pumping and my creative juices flowing. Especially *Disney's* depiction of the captain, with his *Errol Flynn* looks and over-the-top personality, a delightfully sinister and unforgettable villain, he is a role-model for me whenever I sit down to compose more adventures and characters for this game.

Lego pirates: I grew up building *Legos*. I love them. Always will. And so, already into the pirate genre from my affore listed inspirations, I was delighted when *Lego* developed their pirate toy line. I've attended game conventions where they have *Lego* pirate ship battles. And to this day I still have the original ship in my writing room, assembled more than ten years ago and never going to go down! Just glancing at that ship makes me smile and think about pirates and all their adventures...

Ron-Paul Laffite: A friend I met in 2002, at first on business terms, but who quickly became a great friend of both myself and my parents, as this real-life incarnation of pirate fantasy is physically their age, and will ensure that they, like he, retain the ageless soul of every young lad and lass who enjoys pirate stories. His house and yard with such decor as to rival *Disneyland's* best, this member of the *Seattle Seafair Pirates* is their heart and soul as well, says I. A spittin' image of Henry Morgan, collector of pirate memorabilia, and the most fun and free-spirited person I've ever met, he opened my eyes to just how much fun piracy can be!

# CHAPTER ONE



DEAD MEN TELL NO TALES FOR TALES ARE TOLD BY THOSE WHO SEIZE THE TREASURE OF LIFE

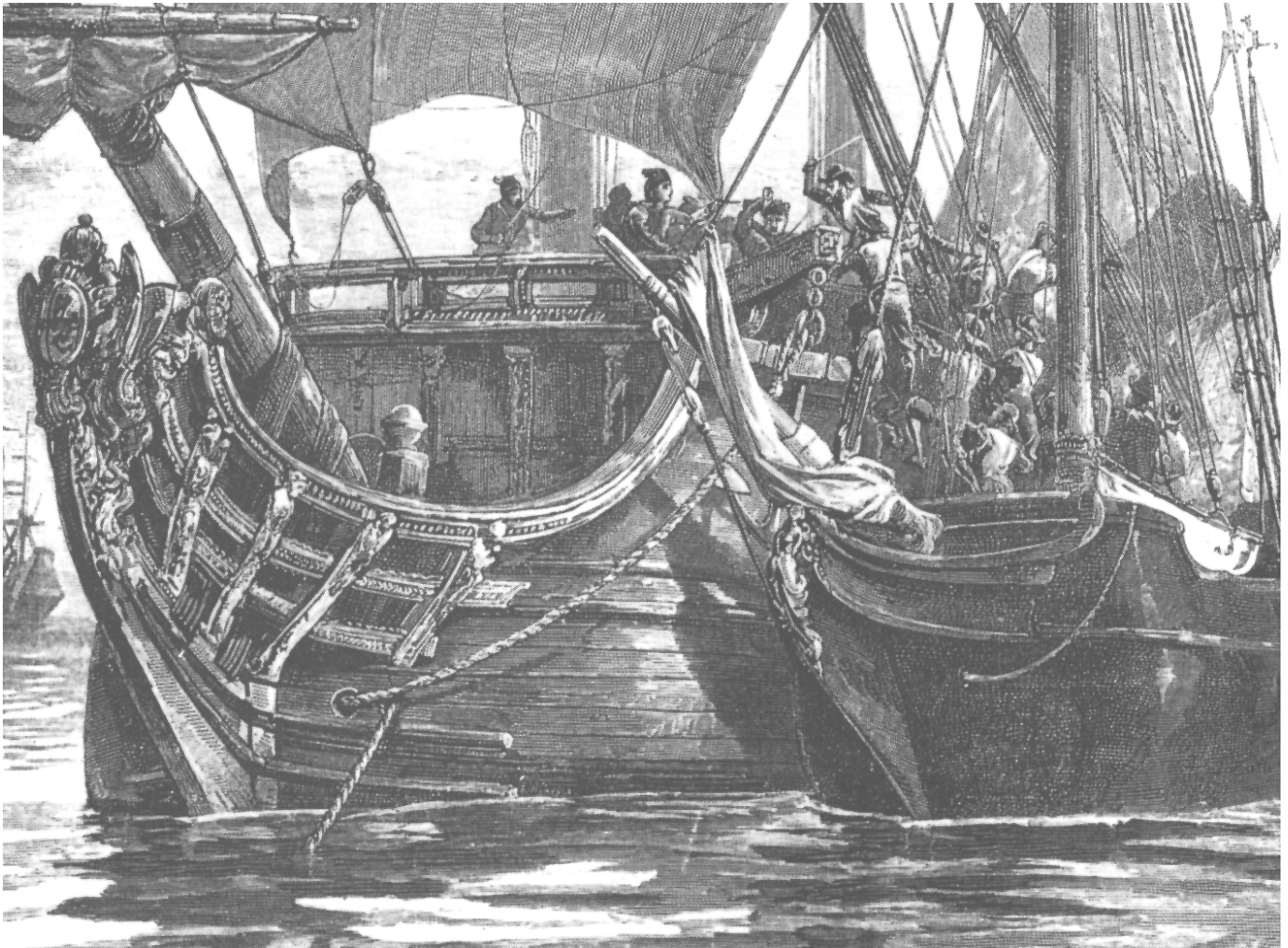


**PRONOUN NOTE:** The male pronouns ('he', 'him', 'his') are used throughout this 'ere book. Though women may be bad luck at sea, they're right fine for this 'ere game, and we're not be tryin' to exclude 'em, nor even imply their exclusion. Centuries of use have made these 'ere pronouns neutral, and they're use provides for clear and concise written next—nothing else does.

**ABOUT THIS BOOK:** Within these pages are all the numbers, statistics and rule procedures that are universal to Pirates, the basics around which all Characters and their stories of high adventure are built. The rules in this book dictate the game's proportions, but it is the imagination of all the players who make it complete. Indeed, the numbers balance the events of the adventure, keeping things fair as a game, but ever leaving the fancies, fears,

dreams and desires of the participants to explain why the numbers of the dice fall where they do. A rule system can only account for so much. As it is, these rules are streamlined, keeping within themselves a careful balance of maintaining enough detail while at the same time not being too cumbersome—if one cannot keep all the rules at a comfortable level of consideration, there are simply too many rules.

**ABOUT THIS GAME:** What is a role-playing game anyway? That will be described in detail later. For now, the question is "What makes a role-playing game?" And the answer to that is many rulebooks, and many supplemental materials, especially dice and clean paper. Once you have the materials to play, then all you need is your imagination.



# INTRODUCTION



DEAD MEN TELL NO TALES FOR TALES ARE TOLD BY THOSE WHO SEIZE THE TREASURE OF LIFE



Required materials: When sitting down to play, it is essential that you have the following:

- 12-sided dice
- Rule Book, Player's Book and Captain's Book
- Blank paper and writing utensils

Suggested accessories: Aside of the above, the following is a list of suggested playing aids.

- Pre-designed adventure material
- Ship and Character Record Sheets
- Calculator
- Secluded game room

**GOLDEN RULES:** In the free world of role-playing games, there are countless 'ifs', 'buts' and uncertainties, which can often cause confusion. But Pirates is a sanctuary from stress, from confusion and chaos, and for that reason, misunderstandings about the game and the rules that apply to them are explained below *for all* . . .

Good rolls: Given the complex nature of RPG rules, various systems are devised for various rolling purposes. This often leaves Players wondering if it is better to roll high or low. In Pirates, a golden rule is that 'higher is always better for whomever is rolling'.

Extreme rolls: Given the many modifiers applicable to dice rolls, Players are often given false hope or unfair denials about whether their extremely high or low rolls count. In Pirates, a golden rule is that 'the roll of 1 always fails and the maximum number to be rolled always succeeds', despite all modifiers to the dice.

Overlooked rules: One rule that must be considered now and not later is that no other rules can be either—if a rule is overlooked, the proportions of the consequences must be accepted and players must imagine however they can the 'why'. For once a ruling is made, the game cannot be reversed in order to correct any oversight. The better way to play an RPG is to move along at a casual pace, so that rules are not overlooked in the first place.

*For Players . . .*

Acceptance: In such a diverse universe as a role-playing game, so vivid in play and so heavily reliant on discretion with rules, very often do times arise when rules and 'what is fair' are in debate, simply because an RPG does not try to recreate reality, but is only a drama play, and more often than not, when there is unrest with the rules, it is because people expect more of them than they should. It is better to simply accept what happens, and remember, the dice are impartial, and things could have gone either way. If every detail about 'reality' were to be argued in a role-playing adventure, the very vivid nature of the game could allow anyone to argue until the ends of time, and thus, the game would go nowhere. Use your skill, hope for the best, and accept wherever things happen to end up. That's all any of us can do.

Enthusiasm: Role-playing is not just a game, but a shared fantasy, and thus, far more than any mere 'game', Players are encouraged to show enthusiasm, to 'go the extra mile' so-to-speak in order to make the fantasy better. What the fantasy the game offers is precious and personal, but relies on the actions of others to create it. When Players show a lack of interest, it's devastating to the private fantasies ongoing in the thoughts and dreams of others present. Role-playing games are physically very passive, so it takes extra effort on the part of the Players to bring things to life, indeed to not let their passive 'activity' drag down their thoughts as well. And everyone contributes to the game differently—it is not so much 'what' someone does to add to the fantasy, but that they do something at all. So, for the common good of your game group, put forth your own creative enthusiasm to help enrich the fantasy of the role-playing adventure.

Responsibility: The rules in this Book have been set aside for the Players because they so closely concern their Characters, and little else. Thusly, if a rule is within these pages, it is the responsibility of the Players, and not the Game Captain, to remember it, calculate it, and consider it during game play.

# CHAPTER ONE

DEAD MEN TELL NO TALES FOR TALES ARE TOLD BY THOSE WHO SEIZE THE TREASURE OF LIFE



*For Captains . . .*

**Be fair!** This is the most important rule of all. For in a fantasy world so desperately clinging to the proportions of mere game rules, surrounded by the hopes and dreams of imaginative players, the Game Captain truly wields ultimate power. Indeed, the Game Captain must remain neutral, for regardless of his own preferences and visions for the fantasy, his will and the reality for the Players' Characters is all but inseparable—only the dignity to remain fair keeps them apart, to live and die by the rules, the Game Captain to make fair decisions based not on his own fancies but what makes the best story for all involved. In a game that relies so heavily on discretion, where rules and rolls are easily replaced by the mere judgment or mood of a man, a Game Captain's power is easily abused. This must not be. That is one rule that the Game Captain cannot defy.

**Keep secrets:** This is the Captain's Book, and so nobody else has a right to look at it. Though inevitably, through time, Players will try their hand

at being Game Captain, sneak a peak at these pages, or simply through trial and error come to these secrets, and eventually every statistic will be known to them. But then, any game, no matter fun, is traded in time, and people move on. But the Game Captain should, in order to preserve the excitement of adventure for his Players, do whatever he can to prevent prying eyes into his book, indeed, to sustain the element of surprise and surprises yet to come as long as he may.

**Responsibility:** The rules in this book have been set aside for the Game Captain because they so closely concern the secrets he reveals to the Players and their Characters as they merit them. Thusly, if a rule is within these pages, it is the responsibility of the Game Captain, and not the Players, to remember it, calculate it, and consider it during game play.

**ABBREVIATIONS:** Throughout these rules many terms are abbreviated. Their abbreviations are summarized below. These abbreviations apply throughout all Pirate gamebooks.

Table 1: Abbreviations

Game term	Abbreviation
Role-playing game	RPG
Game Captain (Game Master)	GM
Player Character	PC
Non Player Character	NPC
Brawn (Ability Score)	B
Agility (Ability Score)	A
Endurance (Ability Score)	E
Girth (Ability Score)	G
Wits (Ability Score)	W
Intuition (Ability Score)	I
Charisma (Ability Score)	C
Luck (Ability Score)	L
Defense Score	DS
Damage	DMG
Movement Rate	MOVE
Hull Points	HP
Morale	M
Experience Points	XP
Notoriety Points	NP
Creation Points	CP



# Pirates

## Book 1

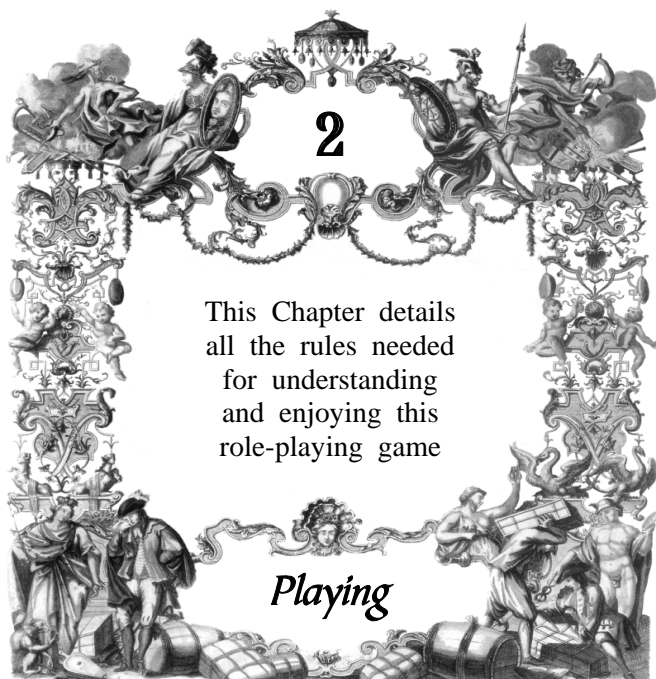
*The Rule Book*





## CHAPTER TWO

A PIRATE'S LIFE IS ONE OF FREEDOM AND FORTUNE EARNED BY DANCING WITH THE DEVIL



**ROLE-PLAYING:** A role-playing game is like a stage play, unrehearsed, and with no audience. Role-playing games are far more sophisticated than classic board and card games, because the entire adventure takes place in the collective imagination of all who participate. Thus, it is more than just a game, it's a group storytelling session, a marriage of romantic fantasy, classic games and improvisational theater shared by all. Indeed, it is an experience. Before any rules are explained, it shall be told just how to have that experience.

To play is the thing: A role-playing game requires no gameboard, for all its action takes place inside the players' imaginations. Each player is like an actor, playing the role of a fictitious character, just like on the stage, in an ongoing performance that is both interactive and unrehearsed. The 'rules' of the game only impose realistic, fair proportions of uncertain things such as battles. And while much of the game revolves around numbers, the dice and the rules, the true game is the interaction between the players; the psychology, the narrative, the dialogue, and most of all the performances, be they dramatic, suspenseful, comedic or inspirational. Indeed, as one famous, fictional character once said, "The Play is the thing."

Role-playing games, because of the proportions of its basic rules alone involves a great deal of time, commitment, and intelligence, but more than that, its need for drama demands mature players who can overcome 'stage fright', are willing to put forth a great amount of themselves, and have a versatile enough mind to play effectively in all this game's varying situations. Indeed, a 'good move' in a role-playing game is not necessarily the best tactic, for the rules already account for the wisdom and cunning of the characters, but the 'best moves' are those that are memorable ones, for indeed, the only true treasure that the Players can take with them is the experience of playing—the thrill, the memories, the excitement—the fun!

As the time-honored proverb goes, "You get out of it what you put into it". Indeed, the more enthusiastically an RPG is played, the more vivid becomes the story each of the players is participating in. Thusly, unlike other games where the players compete against each other, a role-playing game encourages all its participants to work together, their individual additions working to create a common, self-perpetuating story.

Winning and losing: One thing that must be made very clear is that role-playing games have no definitive end where someone can be declared a 'winner'. Instead, a role-playing game goes on indefinitely. An adventure can end, but the same characters simply go on to another adventure. Even a character's death is not the end, for a Player can just make up a new character, to rejoin the game at the next opportunity the Game Captain provides.

Role-playing games can have a wide range of outcomes as well, which are mostly shades of gray. For example, the Characters may escape from an Admiral's frigate, but will have failed to steal his gold. Some would argue that they 'failed', while others would say that escaping the brig of a pirate-hating Admiral is a victory in itself.

In a role-playing game, nobody definitively 'wins' or 'loses'. Instead, such labels can only be applied to the experience of the game itself. As in life, one 'wins' if he enjoys himself. It's that simple. On the other hand, if someone was a 'poor sport', or indeed 'tried to win' in any conventional manner, he may be considered the ultimate loser.

# PLAYING THE GAME

A PIRATE'S LIFE IS ONE OF FREEDOM AND FORTUNE EARNED BY DANCING WITH THE DEVIL

The participants: At the beginning of the game, one player must be decided upon to become the 'Game Captain'. This player becomes unlike any of the others, for it is he that becomes responsible for creating the atmosphere and story around the rest of the Players. Thusly, the one who is chosen to be the Game Captain should be qualified for this role beyond question. While there can be any amount of Players, of varying ability, the Game Captain is alone, and needs to be a 'cut above the rest' so-to-speak, for the game is only as good as the Game Captain makes it (or allows it to be). Listed below, in their order of importance, are the qualifications of he whom **should** be Captain.

Table 2: Passage Of Captaincy

Priority	The player is the ...
1	Fairest with the rules
2	Most devoted to the game
3	One with the greatest imagination
4	Most able with time to prepare
5	Most learned in pirate history and lore
6	Best storyteller
7	Most experienced role-player

As for the other Players, they are all going to fall into the same capacity as each other, that of a 'Player'. While the Game Captain is also a player in this game, the term 'Player' is reserved for the others. For these 'Players' will assume fictitious roles to play, indeed to participate in the adventure that the Game Captain creates for them.

Each 'Player' will create a 'Character', a persona he will adopt while playing the game, much like an actor adopts a role on stage. This character, this 'alter ego' if you will, is a player in the fantasy story, a part the Player indeed plays with all the imagination and wits he has. Through his Character, a Player will experience the trials, pleasures, terrors and rewards of the interactive story that is the role-playing game.

The group of Players hence becomes a group of Characters, all operating in the same story, as if they were all on stage together, with the Game Captain as their director, watching them, calling for changes in scenery, and even offering advice from time to time.

Thus, unlike other games, everybody works together, in every sense, to create an exciting and dramatic (and hopefully enlightening) story, where the only competitors are to be found in the chance of the dice.



Game reality: The game world and its adventures may just appear as a lot of paper and ink, to us, but to the people actually in that world, it is much more real. Indeed, it **is** real.

So must the players themselves believe. They must place themselves in that 'game reality' if they are to have any enjoyment at all—one can read about a pirate's ghost, but if the person cannot imagine it, indeed feel that cold breath, smell the salty air about him, it's not going to ever be anything more than mere words.

As we players sit around the game table, scoffing, laughing and eating, the characters in the game's reality are having a harrowing adventure indeed! We must join them, at least in our imagination, if we are to share that experience.

Moreover, game reality defines the **difference** between players and fantasy characters. Truly, because a Player may know something, his Character may not. Remember that in a role-playing game, 'to play is the thing', not 'to win'. Keeping focus on game reality is the only way to keep the game balanced, fair and fun.

## CHAPTER TWO

A PIRATE'S LIFE IS ONE OF FREEDOM AND FORTUNE EARNED BY DANCING WITH THE DEVIL

**THE BASICS:** Role-playing games are extremely advanced and complex as far as tabletop games are concerned, therefore the basics of game structure are (re)explained below.

**Attitude:** It is important to remember that this is a game about pirates, and has been designed and balanced accordingly—even experienced role-players should be more ruthless, flamboyant and cunning than ever—a pirate's attitude will serve one best!

**Rounds, Turns and time:** Unlike most conventional table games, a role-playing game does not revolve around set turns and rounds. Instead, the one who is the Game Captain simply narrates the adventure at his own pace, and whenever he is not (speaking) the Players can speak as they will, their initiative and their volume proportional to how active their own Character is. However, there are moments when time is critical, such as in battle, and at those times, the game is indeed organized into Rounds and Turns. One 'Round' is one sweep around the game table, wherein each Player gets one 'Turn'. Note that Rounds and Turns reflect events, not necessarily measurable lengths of time.

**The dice:** It is important to remember that this is a **role**-playing game, not a **roll**-playing game. The dice are indeed heavily involved, but they have limited uses, and not the most important ones at that. The dice are overshadowed by the interactive story that a role-playing game is.

The dice are used in many ways, and those unfamiliar with a role-playing game may find these methods confusing at first, so each of the various uses of the (ten-sided) dice are explained.

A *single* roll calls for one dice to be rolled. Many modifiers may be applied to such a roll.

A *total* roll is when a number of dice are rolled and simply added together. For example, a range of 3-36 would call for a single dice to be rolled three times, and its rolls added together. Similarly, some rolls may call for odd ranges, for example 1-4. Know that all such ranges given within these rules are attainable by the dice provided. Furthering the above example, one could roll a single dice and counting 1-3 as '1', 4-6 as '2', 7-9 as '3', and 10-12 as '4'.

**GAME CAMPAIGNS:** Role-playing games can be played in two ways. The first is a simple 'one-shot adventure'. However, in a role-playing game, Characters can live on to have **many** adventures. When the same Character has more than one adventure, the game becomes a 'Campaign'.

The same Character(s) having multiple adventures is the basic skeleton of a Campaign. A Campaign can have many, many adventures, and added to them various levels and depth of story the Game Captain may develop for the Player Characters, turning the game from a simple, serial adventure, into the legacy of the Characters' lives.

Campaigns become self-perpetuating. For as the same Characters continue to have adventures, accomplish feats, find treasures and make sacrifices, questions, relationships, and trials will create themselves. So much story detail comes out of nowhere. But that is the beauty of role-playing.



# PLAYING THE GAME

A PIRATE'S LIFE IS ONE OF FREEDOM AND FORTUNE EARNED BY DANCING WITH THE DEVIL

The goal of a Campaign: Be the Campaign simple or complex, short or carried out over years, a successful Campaign is one that focuses on the Player Characters, gives them a chance to develop, indeed gives them a stage and a story within which to develop, and to triumph. Indeed, if a Campaign helps shape Characters to be as memorable as real people, it is a triumph in itself.

Time range: So much of role-playing games, and especially their storytelling aspect rely on discretion, of rules, and of budgeting time. It is so easy to want to act out every little detail of a Character's life. But like any good story, a certain pace must be established in order to keep the game interesting. As this is a game and not a novel, establishing that pace is done numerically.

Provided on Table 3 is the Experience Level a Character should have achieved after an approximate amount of playing time. This is based on how difficult the game is (and XP is to acquire), how much time between rolls and rules is filled in with storytelling, and altogether how fast (or slow) someone should come closer to Final Level in order to appreciate it.

If the game is noticeably distant from the proportions of Table 3, then it is not properly paced, and should either slow down a little, adding a little more story depth, or pick up its pace and not be so bogged down in detail.

**Table 3: Campaign Level Ranges**

Experience Level	Total hours of play
1	5
2	10
3	20
4	30
5	50
6	70
7	100
8	200
9	300

Ending a Campaign: As a rule, a Campaign ends when the entire party is destroyed, or retires. But so long as one Character carries on the story, the Campaign goes on. Moreover, so long as one Player wishes to keep going in a Campaign, the

Campaign will continue, unless the Game Captain himself decides to end it.

When a Campaign ends, and everyone makes new Characters, at the Game Captain's option alone the world may 'reset', as though the last Campaign never took place.

In any event, when a Campaign ends, so are **all** things attributed to it, including Player Characters, Non Player Characters, and all things they have achieved or changed in the world—the Players will have the stories, the memories, the fun, but the game begins anew.

**ADVENTURE POINTS:** As Pirates is a game whose theme and genre is so widely misunderstood and unknown, each Game Captain will eventually settle into one mood or another but thereafter find it difficult to keep his crew of Players on that decided course, and so in order to help him, the incentive of 'Adventure Points' comes into play.

Adventure Points are awards that are outside the normal rules of play, enhancing all others. One can only earn these Points for role-playing within the chosen theme of his Captain's pirate game. So, depending on the Game Captain, one could earn Points for being a deep, romantic role-player or being a rowdy ruffian, playing serious or silly.

Ask yourself, is it always the strongest, largest, and most menacing characters who are left alive at the end of a good tale of high adventure? Strategy, good moves and knowing the rules can only perpetuate one's survival (and story) so long. Nor should merely the lucky enjoy themselves while good performances are lost to chance.

Adventure Points help bind the game together, indeed, offering the assurance that the more one role-plays (in this role-playing game), the better off he will be, until such a point comes when luck is surpassed, and memorizing the rules almost seems insignificant, and in some ways they will be. After all, quite often, once the arguing is over, they're more like 'guidelines' than actual rules.

Adventure Points are a special point system awarded periodically throughout play in direct proportion to how much one offers to the game in terms of performance, storytelling, and imagination, indeed enhancing the chosen theme. These Points have a great influence on rolls and rules alike.

# CHAPTER TWO

A PIRATE'S LIFE IS ONE OF FREEDOM AND FORTUNE EARNED BY DANCING WITH THE DEVIL

**Earning Adventure Points:** Adventure Points are only awarded at the end of an Adventure, and then only by the Game Captain's judgment. For as they are not necessary for any rule or aspect of play, the Captain is under no obligation to award them to anybody. Indeed, he should **only** award them in accordance to how much he felt that each Player helped his chosen theme of piracy and style of game, be it serious, silly, historical, hysterical, factual or fantastic. Each individual Player can receive up to a maximum of 3 Adventure Points at the conclusion of any single Adventure (a good 20-30 Encounters or about 8 total hours of playing time). Table 4 provides **suggested** awards.

**Table 4: Earning Adventure Points**

Points	Contribution
3	Died in fitting fashion
2	Added scenes that enhanced the theme
2	Played in costume
1	Never argued with the Game Captain
1	Described dice rolls in fitting fashion
1	Never broke character

*Dying in fitting fashion* not only helps one endure the loss of a Character (for it's going to happen eventually and probably often), but it also helps others brace themselves for the same loss. For when one dies, if he at least manages to go out a such a way as to remind the Players why they are playing a pirates game, indeed in a way befitting the theme, everyone will have more fun. If a fitting end was at least partially the design of the Player, such as starting a suicidal fight (in a reckless game) or getting shot for pulling down the captain's pants (in a comical one), he should be awarded 3 Adventure Points.

*Adding scenes* is normally the task of the Game Captain, the storyteller, the one at the helm of this game, who decides on what course to take towards having fun. However, he doesn't know the depth of each Player's greed for how they believe the game should feel and play out, and so when they aid him, offering simple scenes that enhance the chosen theme of their Captain, it adds a great deal to the adventure. Simple scenes such as talking by the fireside about the lost treasure to be found on a distant island, romancing the governor's

daughter (in a serious game) or making her carry her own luggage through the muddy streets (in a comical one)—such little details give greater life to the Characters that are at the heart of the story. Any Player whose contributions of simple scenes that enhanced the game's theme by evoking sweat, laughter, or whatever the case may be should be rewarded with 2 Adventure Points.

*Playing in costume* adds a great deal of atmosphere for others, but more than that, **being** in costume truly enhances one's overall performance, as they feel more like their Character. So, for both the direct and indirect enhancement of the game, those who play in a costume befitting the theme should be rewarded with 2 Adventure Points.

*Never arguing with the Game Captain* will not only improve one's chances of gaining additional Adventure Points on other counts, but may also be seen as acceptance of game's chosen theme. It is so easy to stray from, that if one makes it to the end of an Adventure without getting into a heated debate, he has done well. Normal, calm debate is always acceptable, as Game Captains can be in error and should be corrected, so long as things remain civil. But if one can avoid 'the argument', he should be rewarded with an Adventure Point.

*Describing dice rolls* adds a great deal of colour and excitement to the game. While the random nature of dice disallows for truly structured story, at the same time it helps **create** storylines. But the details they add to an existing story aren't recognized unless people make an effort with them. If a Player's performance is memorable for the colourful descriptions he adds to dice rolls, indeed explaining why they fell as they did, he should be rewarded with an Adventure Point.

*Never breaking character* is wonderful in a role-playing game. Players have to overcome a good amount of strange-fright in order to create a memorable character, and when someone defies the theme of the game it can make that persona look rather naked. And while there is little that can be done to keep insubordinate crew in line, their Game Captain can always tip the scales of points (and plunder) in the favor of those who help tell the tale along with him. Indeed, those who do not break character should be rewarded with an Adventure Point.

# PLAYING THE GAME

A PIRATE'S LIFE IS ONE OF FREEDOM AND FORTUNE EARNED BY DANCING WITH THE DEVIL

Using Adventure Points: Just how do Adventure Points affect the game? Indeed, just how do these Points ensure that the performer succeeds where the one who knows the rules best does not? How can luck itself be surpassed in a game of dice? Adventure Points are, at a Player's option, applied to various aspects of the game, including the modification of dice rolls, thus taking luck out of the equation and replacing it with earned favor. Favoritism, yes, but proven to have been earned.

*Modifying dice rolls* is a favored use of Adventure Points. After a dice falls, a Player may apply Adventure Points to it to change its result one way or the other. One can modify any roll he himself or the Game Captain rolls—one cannot alter the rolls of another Player. When a roll is changed, it is changed by 1 on the dice for every 1 Adventure Point spent. Note that this changes the dice **roll**, not add a bonus, therefore, no matter how many Adventure Points are spent, a dice cannot be pushed beyond its natural range, neither below '1' or above '12'. Also note that in the case of Critical rolls for both attacks, a Critical 'Hit' must be lowered to a miss entirely or else it will remain Critical (the reverse is true with a Critical failure). And, Adventure Points must be applied to the **last dice** rolled—once a new dice falls, any previous roll can never be altered by any amount of Adventure Points (or any amount of whining or arguing about it).

*Saving one's life* is a use of Adventure Points one might refer to as 'hero power'. For even as Players are sitting around a table imagining their Characters' adventures, the Characters themselves, in the Game Reality, are dealing with far more trying and involving challenges than mere rules and rolls. Indeed, the Characters are far more aware of the world in which they are adventuring, and may not do something as oversighted as a Player may think is best by tacticals alone. If a Player's Character dies, he can immediately spend 3 Adventure Points to have somehow avoided his fate. However, these points must be spent at that very moment—once any other Turn is taken, the opportune moment has passed. An alternative is to spend 2 Adventure Points in advance, so that the next time one makes a **decision** that will certainly doom his Character, the Character himself will have the presence of

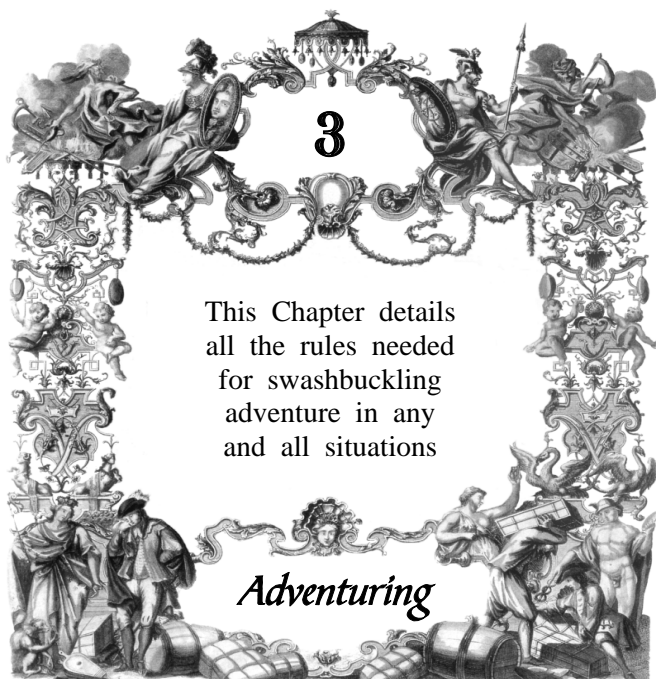
mind **not** to make that choice. In this case, the situation must be life or death, nothing less. For example, choosing to attack a Spanish galleon in a longboat is, even though grim, still an uncertain prospect. But if there is a cursed treasure chest that withers a hundred years of youth off anyone who touches its contents, that would indeed merit this ruling. In any such instance, the Game Captain informs the Player outright that his choice would have been perilous. The 2 Adventure Points, long spent, have now served their purpose to save the Character's life. Note that once Adventure Points are so invested they may not be 'refunded'.

*Acquiring greater Characters* is the ultimate use of Adventure Points. Where often only the 'toughest' Characters survive to the end, in Pirates, the toughest can also be the toughest Players, who have earned their strength, not with lucky rolls or even Experience Points, but doing justice to having great Characters by knowing the pirate world, by adding to the theme that brings people to a life of piracy as opposed to other, more sober games, indeed by earning Adventure Points and using them to create Characters dice alone cannot. For when a Character dies or is retired with no chance of returning to action, indeed when that Character Sheet is given up, any amount of one's current Adventure Points can be traded in one-to-one for Creation Points.

Only Player Characters: It is important to note that only Player Characters can earn and use these Adventure Points. They are the protagonists in the story, and as powerful as any NPCs may be statistically, they are not 'the story'. NPCs can only benefit from what Adventure Points that the Players choose to spend on their behalf (if any). Moreover, these Points are awarded to the **Player**, not his Character, and thus even if one dies, he can use his saved Points with his other Characters.

# CHAPTER THREE

HISTORY IS WRITTEN IN THE BLOOD OF THE WEAK SO WHET YOUR BLADE WITH A GRAND TALE



This Chapter details all the rules needed for swashbuckling adventure in any and all situations

## Adventuring

**ABILITY CHECKS:** A pirate's adventure is filled with unexpected challenges, indeed, challenges too numerous and diverse for any system of rules to account for individually. That is why most challenges are dealt with by a single rule, that of 'Ability Checks', a simple and fair way to account for all the unpredictable events that may arise within an adventure.

When to make Ability Checks: An Ability Check is made whenever a Character wishes to attempt something whose outcome is uncertain, has at least some measure of difficulty, and is not dealt with by any other rule. For example, opening a door would not require an Ability Check, as it is a simple task that anyone can do. Running somebody through with a sword would not require an Ability Check either, as combat is dealt with in great detail in the next Chapter. However, forcing open a stuck door or leaping between rooftops while trying to slash somebody with that sword would indeed require Ability Checks.

How to make Ability Checks: To make an Ability Check one needs but make a simple dice roll. The Game Captain will decide which of a Character's Ability Scores most closely applies to the task at

hand. For example catching a falling body would utilize one's Brawn Score, while hearing somebody sneaking up on him would utilize one's Intuition Score. Then, the Player of the Character needs to roll a single dice, standing a chance in 12 equal to his Ability Score of success. It is easiest to see this chance as needing a total of '13' or more from one's Ability Score and a single dice roll.

A Game Captain can freely apply modifiers to any Ability Check to account for varying factors. For example, swinging between ships may be a normal Agility Check, but if it were attempted during a hurricane, he may feel that a -2 or even a -4 penalty should be applied to the roll, and may do so. Note that no penalty nor any bonus will change the Experience Point award for any Ability Check.

Provided below on Table 5 are sample Ability Checks and suggested modifiers for them, should modifiers be an option that the Game Captain uses.

Table 5: Common Ability Checks

Accomplishment	Ability	Modifier
Stack dead bodies	Brawn	+1
Force open a stuck door	Brawn	+0
Force open a sealed door	Brawn	-2
Swing between ships	Agility	+2
Change ships in a storm	Agility	-2
Walk a tightrope	Agility	-3
Make a floor 'slippery'	Endurance	+0
Eat spoiled food safely	Endurance	-2
Win a 'beauty' contest	Girth	+1
Feign death for 1 Round	Girth	+0
Recount a full speech	Wits	+1
Read weathered writing	Wits	+0
Memorize a single page	Wits	-2
Hear a PC call for help	Intuition	+3
Hear an NPC call for aid	Intuition	+1
Eavesdrop on tavern talk	Intuition	+0
Notice a trap just in time	Intuition	-2
Awaken when threatened	Intuition	-3
Woo a lovely lady	Charisma	+1
Tell a convincing lie	Charisma	+0
Pass for a gentleman	Charisma	-2
Fall onto something soft	Luck	+1
Your cell left unlocked	Luck	+0
Name mistaken by guards	Luck	-1

# THE ADVENTURE



HISTORY IS WRITTEN IN THE BLOOD OF THE WEAK SO WHET YOUR BLADE WITH A GRAND TALE



Combined Ability Checks: Sometimes Characters will combine their efforts in an Ability Check. When this is done, the highest Score is used for the Ability Check, with the total number of additional Ability Points adding to the roll.

**Table 6: Combined Ability Checks**

Help	Ability Check bonus
20+	+4
14-19	+3
8-13	+2
1-7	+1

Movement: There are many tight and desperate places in a pirate's adventure where one's swift movement will become very important. Movement is not **always** considered, though. For example, one's movement is not important for walking around town. However, if one were fleeing the Governor's guards, then his movement would need a fine rule indeed! Thus is one's Movement Rate determined and set. However, this is only a base score, for there are many different situations to which this score will be applied:

Running: If ever one wishes to run as fast as he can, he can in a single Turn run a distance equal to his Movement Rate. If he wishes to go faster, he may make an Endurance Check. If this Check is successful, he will gain a bonus distance equal to his Girth Score multiplied by 5'. If this Check fails however, the Character becomes winded, and does not move **at all** that Round!

Swimming: All pirates are assumed to know how to swim. What comes into question is just how fast and far they can swim. When swimming, one must make an Endurance Check each Round. Success indicates that the Character can move up to a distance of 40', with +5' for each Skill Level he has with swimming, and -5' for every 30 Weight he is carrying (rounded down). Failure indicates that the Character is exhausted and went under, and can re-attempt his Endurance Check each Round thereafter, but if he runs out of breath before he does so, he will drown. How long one can hold their breath is indicated on Table 53.

Climbing: Characters are always climbing up and around things. Whenever they attempt to climb something difficult, such as a cliff or a wall, they must make an Agility Check. Success indicates that the Character can climb up to 10' that Round, with +5' for each Skill Level he has with climbing, and -5' for every 50 Weight he is carrying (rounded down). Failure indicates that the Character is exhausted or slips, and falls . . .



Falling: Characters have a marvelous (and to the Game Captain vastly amusing) tendency to fall off of things. Whenever a Character slips and falls, he will suffer when he hits as if he were struck in combat, the Base Damage 1 point for every 10' fallen (rounded up). One will suffer no Damage if they land in something soft, such as water, a wagon full of feathers, etc.



# CHAPTER THREE

HISTORY IS WRITTEN IN THE BLOOD OF THE WEAK SO WHET YOUR BLADE WITH A GRAND TALE

**Hiding:** You're a coward! You don't get to roll for something like this! You can't hide, matey, at least not behind them dice! If the situation is that bad, at least try to do something with it, such as a Stealth Check . . .

**Stealth:** Often are Characters sneaking about. If someone wants to tiptoe, sneak through the shadows, creep up behind someone or otherwise practice the art of stealth, he may. The Player rolls a single dice. If the result is 8 or greater, the Character managed to creep along for 1 Round without attracting attention. Several factors can influence this roll, as explained below.

*Distractions* of all kinds, such as bar brawls, a whore or a war serve to distract those who may be watching one sneaking about, granting them a bonus of +1 to their roll.

*Darkness and shadows* helps conceal someone, granting them a bonus of +2 to their roll.

*Background noise* helps conceal someone's footsteps and breathing, offering them a bonus of +2 to their roll.

*Strong light* such as sunlight or chandeliers makes it hard to hide in shadows, offering up a penalty of -1 to this roll.

*Silence* makes one heard and noticed all too easily. If the scene is silent, such as in a house at night or on a deserted street, one suffers a penalty of -3 to his roll.

**SEARCHING:** Searching comes into play quite often, and in a wide variety of circumstances—a Character may search a cave for cryptic writing, a group may search a room for a hidden map, one may even search a town for a specific person's residence.

**Searching Checks:** Whenever someone wishes to search for something, he simply describes to the Game Captain where he's looking. If something is indeed hidden there, he will find it. However, this can be quite time consuming. So instead of trial and error, a Player may opt to make a 'Searching Check'. This is a secretive roll made by the Game Captain which summarizes all a Character's efforts for searching a single area, room, or person.

The Game Captain will roll a single dice, not disclosing its result to anyone. If the result is 10 or higher, the Character will have found any and all secrets in his sought area. The Game Captain will so inform the Player. However, if the roll was too low, or there was nothing to be found in the first place, the Player will simply be informed that he finds nothing, leaving the mystery to him.

Many factors apply to a Searching Check, including any bonus from having a high Intuition Score (see Table 56). However, the best way to search for anything is as a group. If multiple Characters combine their efforts for a single roll, they gain a bonus according to their numbers, as shown on Table 7.

Table 7: Group Searching

Searching party	Bonus
10+	+3
5-9	+2
2-4	+1
1	+0

**Searching again:** Once a Searching Check has been made by a Character, he may not make another Searching Check for that area or individual—he is convinced that there is nothing there. The Player can of course still rely on his own intuition, making guesses and asking questions of the Game Captain. For if there is indeed something to be found, specific questions will always find it (there is something to be said for skill and savvy).



# THE ADVENTURE



HISTORY IS WRITTEN IN THE BLOOD OF THE WEAK SO WHET YOUR BLADE WITH A GRAND TALE



**OVERLAND JOURNEYS:** A pirate's life can be painful and brutal. Some aspects of the adventure are far from pleasant, one of which is forcing one's way through a steaming jungle or rugged mountain pass. Pirates prefer the sea and the sure feeling of a strong ship beneath them, but when they must travel overland, they do so rather well.

**Traveling:** Whenever a party sets out inland, their speed will be measured in leagues traveled each day, just as if they were aboard a ship. A person travels at a base speed of 3 leagues a day, modified by many factors.

*Roads* make for clear, unobstructed travel, increasing one's daily movement by +2.

*The terrain* greatly affects one's speed; clear hills or beaches grant +1 leagues each day, while rugged terrain such as jungles, swamps and ocean headlands penalize this speed by -2.

*Burdens* slow one down, their total carried Weight divided by 40 (rounded down) the number of leagues reduced from their speed.

*Wounds* tax one's strength and slow them down. If one is wounded at all, his daily speed will be reduced by -2.

**Table 8: Traveling**

Roll	The day's travel
11-12	Clear weather; gain 1-3 leagues
5-10	No occurrences
3-4	Foul weather; lose 1-4 leagues
2	Lost; lose 1-12 leagues
1	Disease; poison level 1 to each person

**Hunting, foraging and starving:** Pirates have a tendency to become separated from their ship, and are forced to wander through steaming jungles and highlands for days, weeks, even years at a time! When lost or marooned, one's immediate and most important concern is food and water. Sometimes, but not always, the lands and seas provide bounty for the desperate adventurer.

Each day a group may attempt to forage or hunt for food and water. A roll is made on a single dice. If the result is 8 or greater, the party (no matter how large or small) has found enough food and water to last them for a day. If successful, this roll may be made again, and again,

and so food may be gathered and kept. However, once this roll fails, it cannot be attempted again for 1-12 days.

*Coasts* provide bounties of fish, turtles and other sealife, increasing this roll by +2.

*Swamps and mountains* provide foul and even poisonous bounty, penalizing this roll by -3.



Each day a Character goes without food he suffers a loss of -1 to one of his Ability Scores, but each day without water is a -1 to all of them! If ever any Score reaches 0, he dies. Once he finds sustenance, he regains all his points.

**Sleepless nights:** Sometimes a Character will need to stay awake all night, perhaps even for days at a time. Some Characters can naturally go a day or even two without sleep (see Table 53). However, for anyone to push beyond their limits, they need to roll a 6 on the D12, this roll penalized by -2 for every extra day without sleep.

# CHAPTER THREE



HISTORY IS WRITTEN IN THE BLOOD OF THE WEAK SO WHET YOUR BLADE WITH A GRAND TALE



# THE ADVENTURE



HISTORY IS WRITTEN IN THE BLOOD OF THE WEAK SO WHET YOUR BLADE WITH A GRAND TALE



**DIRTY DEEDS:** Ahh, a pirate's life! There's a little evil in all of us, and pirates have all the fun with their fiendish and foul deeds! The more common occasions that call out to the scoundrel in us are explained below.

**Lockpicking:** Locks are found on chests, doors, cabinets and more. Well, if one doesn't have the keys, he can always attempt to pick the lock. This calls for a single roll of the dice. If the result is 12, the Character managed to pick the lock. This roll is increased by several factors.

*Lockpicks* are the tools of this trade, and thus add +4 to one's roll.

*Skill* with picking locks will add +1 for each Skill Level one has.

**Pilfering:** Whenever a Character attempts to pick someone's pocket or in some similar act take something, he must make a 'Pilfering Check'. This is a roll on a single dice. If the result is 10 or greater, the Character was successful. If one is Skilled in Pilfering, his Skill Level is the bonus to his roll. If the roll fails however, he stumbled, slipped, or was somehow caught in the act, allowing his intended target and any NPCs who wish to get involved (such as the guards) the chance to roll for Initiative before the thief can gain any distance.

However, what kind of wealth floats around in the pirate world? Indeed, when one makes a successful Pilfering Check, just how much gold or jewels or other wealth will he get? This is normally up to the Game Captain's own discretion, and should be merely 1-3 gold, at best. However, Players can steal his authority as well, and **choose** what they intend to pilfer, that is if they have the presence of mind to select their target with care and cunning, indeed declaring before their roll what their objective is, gaining a bonus to their roll if they limit their success to specific booty.

*Going for a purse* adds +1 to one's roll and guarantees him 1-12 gold if successful.

*Going for jewelry* is more difficult, penalizing one's roll by -3, though success will grant one a prize worth 10-100 gold. Moreover, if this roll for the value of what one pilfered was '11' or '12', he still took a value of 100, but gets a bonus roll,

thus allowing him to roll again in like manner, up to a maximum number of bonus rolls equal to his Pilfering Skill Level.

*Going for larger objects* such as a pistol or a spyglass will penalize one's Check, indeed by -1 for every 5 Weight they have (rounded up).

**Disguise:** Sometimes Characters will try to disguise themselves and skulk about town, or the tavern, or even their own ship. In any event, when one is in disguise, normally he may pass without being noticed or cared too much about. However, if he ever passes close to someone who may recognize him (for who or what he is), they may make an Intuition Check to see through the deception. And, there are some people a Character will wish to avoid more than others:

*Foreigners* can spot someone of a different country easily. If someone is not of the Nationality he is masquerading as, others gain a bonus of +1 to notice him. This bonus will be negated however if the disguised Character can speak the native language at Skill Level 2.

*Guards* are trained to spot scoundrels, and so gain a bonus of +2 to their Intuition Checks.

*Crew* members notice their mates (and former mates) well, and gain a bonus of +1 (if former mate) or +3 (if current mate) to notice the Character in disguise.

**Torture:** Torture can happen to anyone. Just make sure it doesn't happen to **you!** For in the pirate world there are countless cruel devices and cunning instruments to apply pain . . . slowly—or suddenly! Whenever torture is employed, the Game Captain will select a number from 1-12, or simply roll it, to determine the magnitude of the torture. This one number will determine many things, including the chance in 12 that the victim will give in and divulge whatever information is demanded, the Base Damage he will suffer if he does not, and the Notoriety Points earned by the Character who is commanding the torture. There are many factors that may aid someone's roll to resist torture.

*Love* can give someone tremendous strength of will, for if the information one is withholding protects a loved one, he will gain +3 to his rolls to resist even the most terrible torture.

# CHAPTER THREE



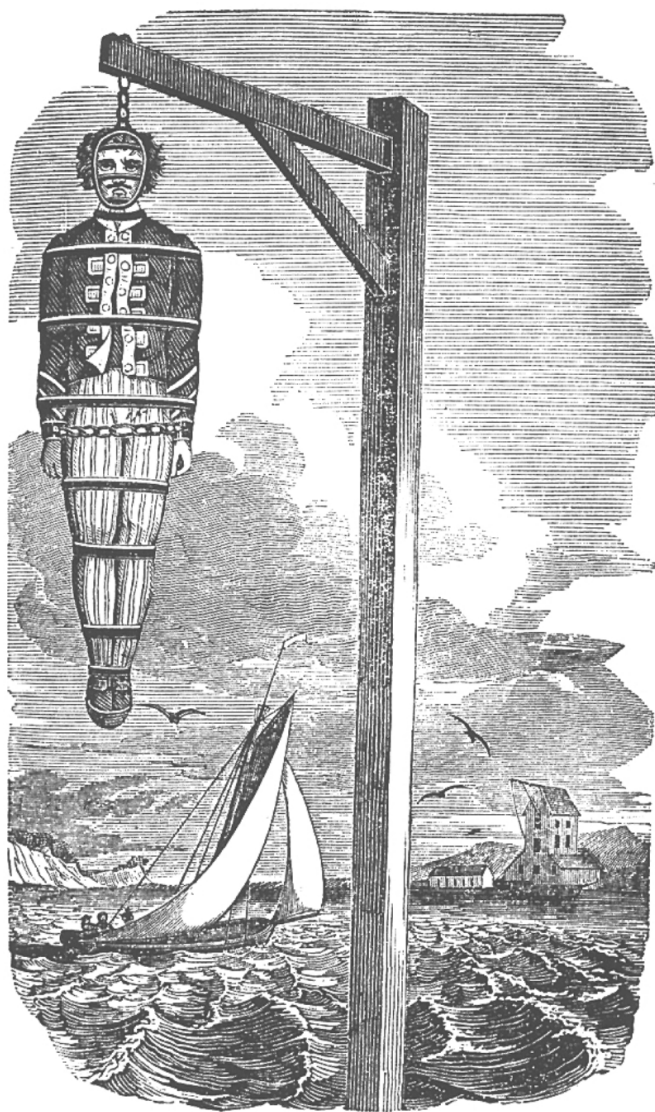
HISTORY IS WRITTEN IN THE BLOOD OF THE WEAK SO WHET YOUR BLADE WITH A GRAND TALE



*Patriotism* can give someone strength, for if the information one is withholding is essential to his king, he will gain +2 with his rolls to resist any and all torture.

*Fears* are a quick key to open the doors to another's mind, and if a Character has a Fear of his own and it is employed in torture, he will suffer a penalty of -1 to resist.

*Selfishness* can make someone give into torture rather easily, for indeed, if the Character is an NPC, and the information being bled out of him would hinder another (including a PC) but not necessarily himself, he will 'suffer' a penalty of -2 to his roll to resist the torture.



**POISONS:** Pssst! Poisons be the blood o' the pirate world! No tale of gold, betrayal, bounty and backstabbing tastes quite right without a little poison to spice things up.

Making poison: While anybody can use poison, only those Skilled with poison can make it. The ingredients can be anything, as is the time involved in mixing it. However, when used, only then will a poison be known to be effective or not—the Skill Level of he who made the poison is its chance in 6 of being effective.

Using poison: To apply poison, the intended victim must either be unaware—asleep, unconscious, the poison put into his drink, etc. If someone attempts to outright poison someone, he must either make a successful Attack Roll (such as with an envenomed blade), or a successful Stealth Check (such as to dribble the poison on his plate). In any event, once a poison is applied, the victim will lose 1 Ability Point per Skill Level of the poison's creator at regular time intervals, rolled when the poison is contracted on Table 9. If ever any Ability Score reaches 0, the Character will die.

Table 9: Poisons

Roll	Poison's speed
11-12	Every week
9-10	Every day
4-8	Every 1-12 hours
2-3	Every hour
1	Every Turn

Curing poison: Poison may be cured in a number of ways. Firstly, one Skilled in medicine may cure it, standing a chance in 6 equal to his Skill Level, penalized equally by the Skill Level of the poison itself. There are other cures as well, including antidotes made by the poison's maker, potions made by mystics, and other remedies that may arise during the pirate's adventures. In any event, when poison is neutralized, one instantly regains 1 point to each Ability Score, and will regain one additional point every 1-12 hours (re-rolled at each interval).

# THE ADVENTURE



HISTORY IS WRITTEN IN THE BLOOD OF THE WEAK SO WHET YOUR BLADE WITH A GRAND TALE



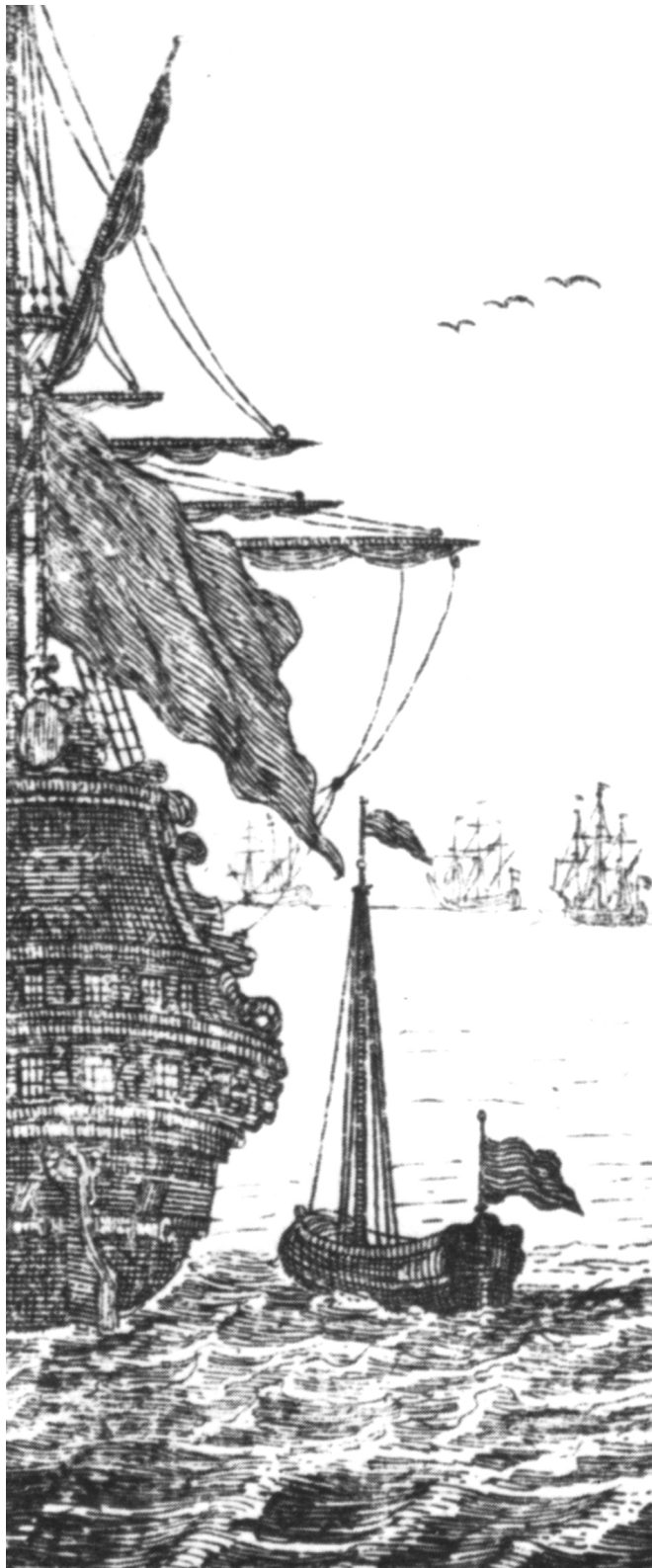
**GAMES:** Pirates love their games and their gambling. Whenever there's gold, treasure or pride at stake, the rule for gambling is that however much gold one risks in the game, multiplied by the number of players, is however much he stands to win. As a rule though, no NPC will risk more than 1-12 gold in a single day, unless an adventure's storyline and Encounters specifically state otherwise.

**Card games:** In the game of poker (and other card games) pirates are always eager to risk their hard won gold. Whenever cards are played, the game is summarized by a dice roll. Each participant rolls a single dice. The Character with the highest total wins. If rolls are tied for the highest, those Characters re-roll against each other.

**Arm wrestling:** The tough competition of arm wrestling is a classic game among pirates. When two pirates compete, they each roll a single dice, adding the result to their Brawn Score. The Character with the higher total wins. If the results are tied, they are re-rolled.

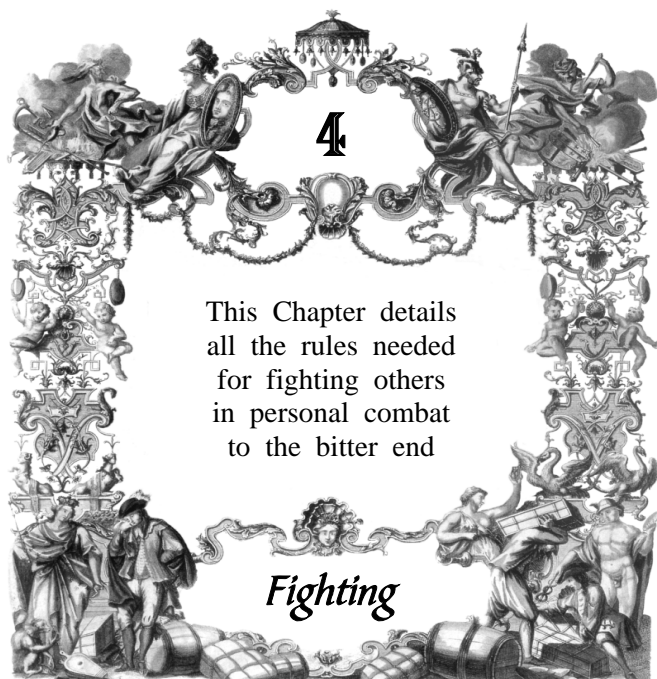
**Pirates poker:** In this dangerous game, one places his hand on the table and spreads his fingers wide, then he jabs repeatedly between his fingers with a dagger. The faster he goes, and the closer to his hand he comes, the better he plays. To play this, one rolls a single dice and adds the result to his Agility Score. If the total is 16 or greater, he wins. If not, he hits himself, suffering a normal wound (of -1).

**Drinking contests:** Yo-ho-ho and a bottle of rum! One of the greatest spoils is that of drink. Even moreso, since water spoils easily on a ship, alcohol is more commonly used for every meal. And when pirates aren't on duty, they're usually quite intoxicated. And, the more competitive ones, or those who just pride themselves on holding more liquor, hold contests to see who can outdrink their mates. To win such a contest, each person needs to roll a single dice, adding the result to his Girth Score. The one with the highest total wins, while all others fall unconscious.



# CHAPTER FOUR

IT'S UNWISE TO CROSS BLADES WITH A PIRATE BUT THAT'S THE WAY TO BECOME A GOOD ONE



This Chapter details all the rules needed for fighting others in personal combat to the bitter end

## Fighting

**FIGHTING BASICS:** In spite of the great naval battles that make the pirate genre what it is, most combat in this game will take place on a smaller scale, involving the Player Characters against a few adversaries, hand-to-hand, or sword-to-sword. The Player Characters will have to fight quite often. Whenever a sword is drawn, a punch is thrown, or a pistol is cocked, these rules for fighting are called upon.

**Initiative:** Personal combat—that is amongst people rather than ships—is divided into Rounds. Each Round, each Character receives one Turn. At the beginning of a battle (and sometimes during one), Characters must be defined as to which ‘side’ they are on, and each side makes an ‘Initiative Roll’. The side with the highest roll gets to take Turns that Round, while all others can only trust to their scores and luck to survive until the next Initiative.

This roll favors the Player Characters in two ways: They gain the benefit of any tied result, as well as a bonus to their roll equal to the highest Experience Level amongst them.

If hasty Players from the same side throw multiple dice for Initiative, the Game Captain is to count the first one that hits the table, or the lowest result of them all (at his discretion).

**Defense Score:** Everyone, both Player Characters and NPCs alike, all have a ‘Defense Score’. When attacking, this is the total that any attacker needs to achieve on his dice roll to hit someone.

**Attack Rolls:** The most common method of fighting is simply to attack. When one does, he makes an ‘Attack Roll’. This is the roll of a single dice. If the total equals or exceeds the target’s Defense Score, the attack was successful, and Damage is applied. Modifiers to Attack Rolls are many, including:

*Defense Score* will offer a bonus if it is high enough, according to Table 60, as one is good (or lucky) enough to maneuver himself into better positions to attack from.

*Proficiency* with the weapon one is using will offer him a bonus equal to his Skill Level.

*Leadership* will grant one a bonus assuming that his leader is present, whether he actually gives instructions to others or simply inspires them all, either way his Skill Level offering a bonus to all under his command according to Table 72.

*Adverse conditions* such as fighting in water, being blinded or using one’s odd hand will affect anyone’s roll when such situations apply, as explained later in this Chapter.

**BLOOD AND DEATH:** There is always a limit to how much pain one can take, how much blood they can lose, and just how much punishment they can endure, but just what one’s own limit is, well, no living man knows . . .

**Wounds:** Whenever anyone is hit by a successful Attack Roll, the attacker will roll a single dice and add the result to the weapon’s Base Damage, including any bonus’ from Brawn. Likewise, the victim will roll a single dice and add the result to the total of his Girth Score and ‘Guard’ factor of armor. If a victim’s total is less than his attacker’s, he has been killed by the blow. If the victim’s total equals or exceeds that of his attacker, he is wounded, and so he will still suffer a cumulative penalty to all such rolls to avoid dying in the future until healed, based on the nature of the wound he received. There are three general types of wounds, each listed and explained below.

# CROSSING SWORDS



IT'S UNWISE TO CROSS BLADES WITH A PIRATE BUT THAT'S THE WAY TO BECOME A GOOD ONE



*Bruises* inflicted by blunt weapons, fists and feet inflict a penalty of -1.

*Cuts* and slashes and scrapes from swords and other blades inflict a penalty of -2.

*Gunshot* wounds and burns from explosives and fire inflict a penalty of -3.

**Healing:** All wounds will remain until healed. And, wounds heal very slowly; the total of one's penalty from wounds is the full number of days he must remain at complete rest in order to heal enough to take 1 point off that total. Thus, the greater one's wounds, the longer he must wait to heal each such point, healing faster as his wounds close up.

**Slow death:** Pirate weapons are often crude and a good deal of the time they do not kill their targets outright, but suffer one a slow death over time, as wounds fester and poison him. When one 'dies', if his Endurance Score is equal to or higher than his total penalty from all his wounds at that time, he may not die at that moment, but rather the Player will roll below on Table 10 to determine just how long it takes for things to go dark. This roll is aided by one's bonus from having a high Girth Score. Note that this roll is only made for Player Characters and key NPCs—normal crew who go down in battle are only red shirts, after all.

**Table 10: Slow Death**

Roll	The Character dies . . .
12	Another day; gains 10-120 Experience
10-11	Some other time; it's just a flesh wound
9	After 1-6 Rounds if his killer is not dead
7-8	When he fails a now daily Luck Check
5-6	As soon as the battle is finished
2-4	Instantly
1	In a horrific way that leaves no body

**Certain death:** There are times when rules and rolls fly in the face of common sense regarding if one lives or dies, and in such instances, common sense should prevail. For if anyone—Player Character or NPC alike—should be in a situation that spells certain death, the Game Captain should rule that all rolls and their modifiers are void, and that the Character's only hope is to make a Saving Throw, indeed if there is even any Saving Throw for it.

**CRITICAL ATTACKS:** The natural extremes on any and all Attack Rolls of '12' and '1' always evoke great excitement or great concern, and for good reason, as they result in 'Critical Attacks', as explained below.

**Critical Hits:** Whenever a natural '12' is rolled on an Attack Roll, the attack succeeded despite all penalties to the roll, and indeed was so successful as to merit a 'Critical Hit'. The attacker must then roll on Table 11 to determine the result of the hit. If this roll results in an implausible effect, use the next **highest** result on that chart until a plausible result is found.

**Table 11: General Critical Hits**

Roll	Critical result
12	Death!
11	All of the target's armor is destroyed
10	Target knocked off nearest height
9	Arm lost
8	Hand lost
7	Leg lost
6	Foot lost
5	Eye lost
3-4	Target stunned; attacker receives free Turn
1-2	Penalty from wound is doubled

**Critical Misses:** Whenever a natural '1' is rolled on an Attack Roll, the attack failed despite all bonus' to the roll, and indeed was so disastrous as to merit a 'Critical Miss'. The attacker must then roll on Table 12 to determine the result of the miss. If this roll results in an implausible effect, use the next **lowest** result on that chart until a plausible result is found.

**Table 12: General Critical Misses**

Roll	Critical result
12	Fall over; next Turn getting back to feet
11	Runs out of gunshot (guns only)
10	Attacker falls off nearest height
9	Compromising position; enemy gets a Turn
8	Weapon lost (flung, disarmed, etc.)
7	Weapon breaks or explodes
6	Hits own self
4-5	Hits friend or ally
1-3	Defender's choice!



# CHAPTER FOUR



IT'S UNWISE TO CROSS BLADES WITH A PIRATE BUT THAT'S THE WAY TO BECOME A GOOD ONE



**Expanded Critical Hits:** The Critical Hit results provided on Table 11 are generic and thus suitable for all conditions and situations. Of course, pirates and role-players alike have a habit of taking a fight into the most unusual of locations and situations. To this end, alternate versions of the Critical Hit Table are provided.

**Table 13: Critical Hits Aboard Ship**

Roll	Critical result
12	Gruesome death; 1-6 enemies surrender
11	Cannon fire; kills enemy plus 1-6 more
10	Stray shot hits the enemy captain!
9	Sets enemy ship afire; 3-36 Hull Points
8	Sets enemy ship afire; 1-12 Hull Points
7	Leg or arm lost; attacker's choice
6	Eye, hand or foot lost; attacker's choice
4-5	Chased up high into the rigging
1-3	Knocked overboard; 1-3 Rounds to return

**Table 14: Critical Hits Up High**

Roll	Critical result
12	Death!
11	Arm, leg or eye lost; attacker's choice
10	Penalty from wound is doubled
6-9	Falls to hard surface; 1-6 Base Damage
4-5	Drops his weapon to places far below
1-3	Falls to water; 1-6 Rounds to return

**Table 15: Critical Hits In Caverns**

Roll	Critical result
12	Horrifying death; +3 to next Initiative
11	Death!
9-10	Arm, leg or eye lost; attacker's choice
6-8	Hand or foot lost; attacker's choice
4-5	Target trips; attacker gets +3 to next attack
1-3	Breaks enemy's weapon

**Table 16: Critical Hits In Water**

Roll	Critical result
12	Death!
11	Catches current; can flee without any roll
10	Hit and go under; +4 to next Initiative
6-9	Penalty from wound is doubled
4-5	Water stings wound; increase penalty by 1
1-3	Blood attracts 1-12 sharks (at sea only)

**Expanded Critical Misses:** The Critical Miss results provided on Table 12 are generic and thus suitable for all conditions and situations. Of course, pirates and role-players alike have a habit of taking a fight into the most unusual of locations and situations. To this end, alternate versions of the Critical Miss Table are provided.

**Table 17: Critical Misses Aboard Ship**

Roll	Critical result
12	Chased up into the rigging
11	Runs out of gunshot (guns only)
10	Falls overboard; 1-4 Rounds to return
9	Cornered; enemy gets free Turn
8	Weapon breaks or explodes
7	Caught in anchor chain and it's dropped!
6	Hits powder kegs; kill 1-6 fellow crewmen
4-5	Hits own self
1-3	Hits friend or ally

**Table 18: Critical Misses Up High**

Roll	Critical result
12	Drops weapon to places far below
11	Runs out of gunshot (guns only)
10	Agility Check or fall to your death
6-9	Falls into water; 1-6 Rounds to return
4-5	Falls to hard surface; 1-6 Base Damage
1-3	Hits friend or ally

**Table 19: Critical Misses In Caverns**

Roll	Critical result
12	Trips; -3 to next attack
11	Runs out of gunshot (guns only)
10	Causes cave-in; 1-6 random people buried
6-9	Ricochet (guns only); hits random target
4-5	Hits own self
1-3	Hits friend or ally

**Table 20: Critical Misses In Water**

Roll	Critical result
12	Blood attracts 1-12 sharks (at sea only)
11	Exhausted; Endurance Check or drown
10	Hits friend or ally
6-9	Weapon lost (powder wet for guns)
4-5	Caught on bottom; underwater 1-6 Rounds
1-3	Hits own self

# CROSSING SWORDS



IT'S UNWISE TO CROSS BLADES WITH A PIRATE BUT THAT'S THE WAY TO BECOME A GOOD ONE.



## CHAPTER FOUR

IT'S UNWISE TO CROSS BLADES WITH A PIRATE BUT THAT'S THE WAY TO BECOME A GOOD ONE

**FIGHTING TACTICS:** Pirates are willing to take the fight anywhere, and win any way they can. Now, the countless ways a battle can go are as complex as the rigging on a Spanish galleon, but since this is an abstract game, details and tactics thereby are in the rules kept to a minimum. Still, there are some reasonable factors to consider for all the kinds of one-on-one fighting.

**Changing weapons:** It does not take a Turn for a man to switch weapons in battle. However, it does take one Turn to re-load a single firearm (double-barreled pistols still count as only one firearm).

**Ferocity:** Pirates are especially infamous for their frenzied attacks, brutal tactics and sheer ferocity when forced to seize their treasure rather than have the cowardly give it up without contest. Indeed, sheer intimidation is all that can keep many crews together. As it is, one may choose to fight more on the offensive rather than the natural defensive, a worthwhile gamble for those whose aggression is greater than their fear.

A Player may voluntarily lower his Character's Defense Score in order to gain a bonus to his Attack Rolls. This is, in essence, one throwing caution to the wind and blazing ahead recklessly. For every 1 Defense Score lost, a Character will gain +1 to all of his Attack Rolls. However, such changes remain in place for the duration of the fight, and cannot be changed one way or the other until then. Furthermore, the Attack bonus is reduced by 1 each time the ferocious Character is wounded (though the loss to Defense Score **remains**), as he is not pacing himself well enough and is getting exhausted.

In addition, one who has already committed himself to such bloodlust may, in the heat of battle, take this even further, increasing his Attack bonus (and subsequently lowering his Defense Score) by 1 more each time he lands a Critical Hit. However, the reverse of this will also hold, that he shall lose 1 to his Attack bonus (but **not** gain anything to his Defense Score) with each Critical Miss.

If for any reason one's frenzied Attack bonus is reduced to zero, the Character collapses, unconscious and exhausted.

**Multiple attacks:** It is always good strategy to have multiple weapons. If one is skilled enough, he can use two weapons at the same time—one in either hand. Of course, one can always attack with his hands alone if he wishes. In any event, two attacks carry certain advantages and disadvantages.

If one attempts two attacks (his second being from his other hand), he must declare so before rolling his first Attack Roll. That first roll will suffer a -4 penalty. Only if this attack hits will he have disabled his opponent enough to attempt a second attack with his other hand.

In any event, the Attack Roll made with one's odd hand suffers a -2 penalty (though one who is ambidextrous does not suffer this penalty).

**Dueling:** Fine is the art of fencing or dueling in any form, with a calm, cool and collected fighter patiently controlling the chaos while waiting for the opportune moment to strike. If both a Character and his opponent are using melee weapons, he can choose at any time to begin dueling rather than merely hacking and slashing. This forfeits his Turn to his opponent who can attack at once, but if that attack fails to hit, the Character gets his Turn after all, beginning a back-and-forth duel that does not return to Initiative until somebody lands a blow. In addition, each Round that the duel returns to the one who chose to begin it, a cumulative +1 bonus builds for each combatant's Attack Rolls. Once a hit is landed, whether it kills one's opponent or not, both such bonus' are negated.

**Throwing pistols:** Usually, pirates begin a boarding party (and other fights) by drawing pistols, firing them, then throwing them as blunt projectiles and then quickly drawing new ones, thus never taking the time to re-load. Because this is done so often, the Game Captain may rule that Characters may fire pistols on one Round, and then for the next Round throw the pistol as a blunt object (for 0 Base Damage) but in that same Round be able to draw a new weapon, be it a pistol, cutlass, or anything else. This oft-practiced pirate attack does not require any special rolling, but at the same time does not allow one to attempt any other tactics, such as attempting multiple attacks.

# CROSSING SWORDS



IT'S UNWISE TO CROSS BLADES WITH A PIRATE BUT THAT'S THE WAY TO BECOME A GOOD ONE



Disarming: If one wants to disarm his opponent, he must take one Turn in combat to do so, standing a chance in 6 equal to his Skill with the weapon he himself is using for success. If his opponent is skilled with that same weapon, it equally penalizes one's chances. For example, Salty Smee, who wields a longsword at +3 would stand a 3 in 6 (or 6 in 12) chance of disarming his Spanish opponent from his cutlass. However, if that Spaniard was Skilled with a longsword at +1, then Salty Smee would only stand a 2 in 6 (or 4 in 12) chance of success.

Lunging: A daring move which is normally tried here and there in the normal, abstract Attack Roll, one may wish to use this maneuver more often than is wise by the rules of engagement. For if one does, he can lunge forward with a rapier (only), gaining a +2 bonus to his Attack Roll. But should he miss, he will grant his opponent a free Turn to do as he will.

Grenades: Such weapons are almost common amongst pirates. However, while their inclusion would certainly blow up countless enemies, they would also do grave damage to the 50% fictional and 'cinematic' aspect of the game. This is all too clear after watching the 'oil flask' bombs that commonly ruin the romance of medieval fantasy adventure games. But of course, a Game Captain can allow his crew of Players to have such weapons if he likes. The 'grenades' used by pirates are small iron balls filled with about 5 ounces of gunpowder, inset with a hollow wooden fuse and sealed with wax. In game terms, such an item has a base chance of 6 in being found (or made), costs 15 gold, and weighs 10. One can throw such a one-use weapon up to 10' for every Brawn Point he has, but he still must make a normal Attack Roll. If the grenade hits its target the poor sod will suffer 1-12 Damage. And, even if it misses up to a margin of 3, he will still suffer 1-6 Damage. Anything less means he will have escaped entirely.

Fighting in water: Quite often are pirates battling in water, either in a flooded cave, a sinking ship, or in the shallow water (and spilled rum) just off the pier. In any event, all Attack Rolls made

within the water suffer a penalty of -2. If one is Skilled at swimming, his Skill Level is the bonus to this roll, thus +2 swimming canceling the initial penalty, a +3 offering a +1 to attack.

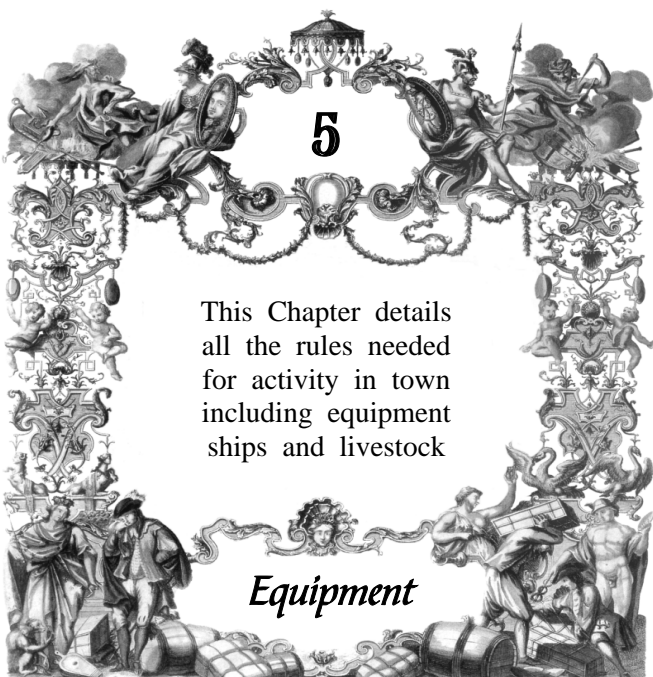
Blind fighting: There will be times when combatants cannot see one another, such as fighting in a suddenly darkened room, a cave, or even fighting blindfolded! Whenever one is deprived of sight, both his Defense Score and his Attack Rolls suffer a penalty of -3.

Fortitude: At any time a Player or Game Captain can choose to forgo the required rolls for Girth when the Character(s) they are playing happen to be struck, allowing not only for a faster combat round by eliminating a roll, but providing them with a basis for better strategy as well. For when one does this, he makes one such roll to last him for the duration of the battle, counting against every blow that is landed against him thereafter, though normal penalties for wounds still apply. If one rolls well, it may be a sign that he's in good health these days, etc. Similarly, if one rolls low, perhaps he shouldn't have had all that rum the previous evening...

Fleeing: Discretion is the better part of valor, indeed! Instead of attacking, one may use their Turn in battle to attempt to flee the carnage. One stands a chance in 12 equal to his Defense Score of fleeing from the battle up to a distance equal to his Modified Movement Rate. However, if one is outnumbered, his chance to escape is penalized by -4, as is his distance penalized by a random loss of 10'-120'. And, should one's attempt to flee fail, one enemy will get a free Turn to attack him!

# CHAPTER FIVE

THE GOLDEN BLOOD OF PIRACY ALL FLOWS BACK TO THE BOTTOMLESS HEART OF CIVILIZATION



This Chapter details all the rules needed for activity in town including equipment ships and livestock

## Equipment

**PURCHASES:** Money is for spending! And there are all kinds of goods, weapons and services that Characters will need or desire. However, before one rushes out to spend their gold, a few rules about purchases need to be made clear.

**Gold:** Different types of coins are worth different amounts in different lands, according to the king and country that covets them. Most coins in the pirate world are silver, and some are gold, but they are all simply called 'gold' in game terms.

However, if one wishes to be specific about them, they may indeed, with different types of coins increasing the Availability of items both in ports and aboard ships that fly their same flag, but also lowering Availability where a different flag flies, according to Table 21. The first modifier listed is for the country's own, the second modifier for all other ships and harbors, as they tend to reject foreign coins.

Another thing to consider about gold is how much it burdens the person (or the ship) that keeps it. For no matter their crest or king, every 100 coins (rounded down) has 1 Weight. Gold of any kind aboard ship, be it in coins, ingots or bullion will also take up 1 space in the cargo hold for every 1000 gold value kept there.

Table 21: Coin Values

Type of coin	Nation	Domestic	Foreign
Crowns	Britain	+3	-2
Daalders	Holland	+2	-2
Doubloons	Spain	+2	-0
Ducats	Holland	+1	-0
Guineas	Britain	+2	-1
Louis d'ors	France	+2	-3
Nine deniers	France	+0	-1
Pieces of eight	Spain	+3	+1

**Availability:** Everything and anything that can be purchased has a chance of 'Availability', ranging from 1-12. This chance must be rolled whenever one seeks to purchase an item. This roll is aided by the Level of the town in which one is seeking goods. If the Check fails, the item is not available to that Character nor anyone else until after 1-12 days have passed (and new goods have arrived).

**Selling:** Very few things are ever bought new in the pirate world, as that requires commissioned work and high prices. Indeed, many things are traded outright, with gold value as a measurement. To this end, if anything is sold in town, it will run for the same price as listed throughout the following pages.

**Bartering:** If someone wishes to barter for a lower price on a purchase (or even raise the price of what he's selling), he may attempt to do so by rolling on Table 22. Note that one may only barter for an item once, regardless of the outcome. If this results in an item no longer being up for sale, it is the same as if a roll for Availability failed.

Table 22: Bartering

Roll	Price change
12	Better by 10-60%
11	Better by 10%
10	Better by 10%
8-9	Better by 5%
5-7	No change
3-4	Price 20% worse
2	Price 40% worse
1	No longer interested in purchase

# SHORE LEAVE



THE GOLDEN BLOOD OF PIRACY ALL FLOWS BACK TO THE BOTTOMLESS HEART OF CIVILIZATION



**Services:** There are all kinds of services available in towns and cities. Table 23 below lists the more common services that remain available to pirates and other outcasts in most settlements. Note that these prices are not fixed, as prices and the quality of services changes everywhere one goes.

**Table 23: Services**

Service	Cost of service
Appraisal	1 gold per gem or jewelry piece
Bank	10% of treasure being kept
Carriage	2 gold for 5 leagues of distance
Doctor	10 gold per Damage treated
Guide	3 gold per day (includes food)
Inn room	1 gold per person (includes food)
Marriage	10-100* gold
Porter	10 gold per week (includes food)
Proper burial	10-60 gold
Tailor	5 gold per set of clothes
Translator	10 gold per page
Whore	1-12 gold per person per night

\* - Rolls of '11' and '12' indicate that the marriage is favored by the church for whatever reason and thus is performed free of charge.

**RANDOM SITUATIONS:** Provided below are charts for offering quick answers to all kinds of questions in town, and the maximum statistical changes that such situations can make towards the game, barring the exceptions of prepared adventure material. Note that all of these charts are optional to use, for they expand on rules detailed elsewhere in this book. Indeed they are a gamble, offering better rewards but also greater risks. A Player can choose to use these charts while others prefer to stay with the more simplified rules. NPCs will not use these charts, as they are of little consequence and thus demand little attention to detail.

**Pilfering:** "We're in town, there's fools everywhere and I'm going to get some easy money." This is a common way for pirates to spend their time in town. So, if someone goes out looking for a target that is possible to pilfer without having to resort to fighting, Table 24 below will reveal what he finds, plus the modifier to his Pilfering Check. If one doesn't like this target, he cannot get such a prime prize for another 1-3 hours. Note that as the result of '12' offers additional rolls, if a '12' is rolled again it continues to add to the group.



# CHAPTER FIVE

THE GOLDEN BLOOD OF PIRACY ALL FLOWS BACK TO THE BOTTOMLESS HEART OF CIVILIZATION

**Table 24: Picking Pockets**

Roll	Unaware NPC	Modifier
12	Group; 3 rolls on this chart*	+4
11	Unguarded nobleman	+3
10	Gentleman	+3
9	Drunkard	+2
8	Merchant or porter	+2
7	Priest or Clergyman	+1
6	Whore	+1
5	Laborer	+0
4	Tradesman	+0
3	Town guard or officer	-1
2	Sailor or another pirate	-2
1	Someone picks his own pocket	NA

**Whores:** “I’m going to go and get myself some action of another kind.” Historical, true to form, and what happens in most games whether they say it or not. So, if someone wants to have a whore, a good question is how good is she (or he)? And, truly, how does this affect one’s Character? Indeed, will it turn out to be a whore, or horror? One roll on Table 25 can determine that. Of course, it costs 1-12 gold per ‘chance’ (this is the same roll).

**Table 25: Playing With Prostitutes**

Roll	Prostitute’s quality
12	Perfection; 1-12 Experience Points!
10-11	Fiery lass; +1 Endurance for the next day
7-9	Typical streetwalker
5-6	Saucy wench; effective wound of 1-3
4	Diseased streetwalker; loss of -1 Girth
2-3	Fertile flame; Character spawns a child
1	Opposite gender in disguise!

**Crew:** “We’re going to let the crew have fun in town to raise their Morale.” The normal expense of 1-12 gold for each crewman to spend a day in port and thus raise Morale by +1 can be increased in excitement, profit, and risk alike with one roll on Table 26. And indeed, one such roll may be made by the Player of the crew’s captain for each separate day that his men are let loose in the streets. Whatever is rolled on the dice determines not only how they spend their time, but also the amount of gold spent doing it, and the Modifier to their Morale which may be more or less than the standard of +1.



**Table 26: Parties In Port**

Roll	The crew spends their time...	Morale
12	Doing everything imaginable	+2
11	Gambling	+2
10	Settling old scores	+2
9	Singing pirate songs—yo-ho!	+1
8	Drinking up, me hearties—yo-ho!	+1
7	Searching their souls at church	+1
6	Wenching	+1
5	Winning bar brawls	+1
4	Telling stories	+0
3	Lounging around	+0
2	Losing bar brawls	-1
1	In prison for petty pirate crimes	-1

# SHORE LEAVE



THE GOLDEN BLOOD OF PIRACY ALL FLOWS BACK TO THE BOTTOMLESS HEART OF CIVILIZATION



**SHOPPES AND MERCHANTILES:** In towns and villages, Characters can visit many merchants, shoppes and stores to purchase all manner of equipment. All significant goods are detailed throughout the following pages.

**Backpack:** A backpack will reduce one's carried Weight by 10, but only one can be worn.

**Blunderbuss:** This is a heavy, cumbersome rifle, its barrel widening towards its end. A powerful rifle indeed, but without the range of the musket. Such a gun has 1 shot and then requires a separate Turn in order to re-load.

**Boarding axe:** This is a short handled, crude axe designed to sever boarding ropes, but is equally useful for severing the limbs of those who come across on them.

**Book:** This is a small book with a non-specific number of pages, useful as a personal journal or as an adventure log.

**Buckler:** A small, round shield designed for duels, its small size effectively very large at a distance but quite cumbersome at close range, its 'Guard' thus not counting against anyone whose Attack bonus exceeds the shield wearer's own.

**Candle:** A single candle lasts anywhere from 1-12 hours. If one wishes to acquire larger candles, he may simply lump costs and Encumbrance together.

**Canteen:** A canteen will hold approximately a week's worth of water. However full a canteen is does not affect its Encumbrance.

**Captain's coat (or hat):** This is a lavishly designed coat (or big hat) that signifies nobility or great leadership. Such a coat (or hat) will increase a captain's Charisma Score by 1 while he wears it (to a maximum of 12).

**Chain:** A length of chain is better used as a weapon, perhaps with some deadly device on its end for grappling, choking, bashing, whipping, ripping, tearing or gouging.

**Cloak:** A full cloak is useful for thwarting blows from both stabbing and slashing attacks, granting a bonus of +1 to one's Girth roll when enduring a blow from any bladed weapon, but at the same time penalizing his Agility Checks by -1.

**Club:** A 'club' can be anything, from a belaying pin to a legbone.

**Compass:** Compass' come in various sizes and shapes, though this never changes their statistics, always offering a +1 bonus to Navigation Checks.

**Cutlass:** The cutlass has a short, wide blade and a thick, firm handguard. Of all swords, the cutlass hits the hardest, cuts the deepest, and is by far the most intimidating.

**Dagger:** A dagger is a short blade no more than a foot in length.

**Explosives:** A Character can set a fuse as long as he wishes (measured in Rounds it will take to reach the keg). When this explodes, it will blast everyone in the area for an automatic hit of 5-16 Damage, at a radius of 50'-160' equivalent to the damage. Multiple kegs that are set together will increase the total Damage, but not the blast radius.

**Eye patch:** If ever a Character loses an eye, he may cover it up, though the penalty to both one's Intuition and Charisma remain.

Table 27: Clothing

Clothing	Found	Cost
Captain's coat (or hat)	11	10
Cloak	5	8
Eye-patch	12	2
False arm	3	12
False eye	1	15
False teeth	2	30
Fencing gloves	8	2
Hook	10	6
New clothes	12	3
Pegleg	10	4
Secret cache	1	6
Uniform	2	10



# CHAPTER FIVE



THE GOLDEN BLOOD OF PIRACY ALL FLOWS BACK TO THE BOTTOMLESS HEART OF CIVILIZATION



# SHORE LEAVE

THE GOLDEN BLOOD OF PIRACY ALL FLOWS BACK TO THE BOTTOMLESS HEART OF CIVILIZATION

**False arm:** A wooden arm, enabling the Character to replace a lost arm. However, it's still not as effective, restoring 1 Point Brawn lost thereby.

**False eye:** A single eye glass orb that fits in an empty eye-socket. While this does not restore one's vision, it will restore 1 Charisma lost thereby.

**False teeth:** False teeth can be taken out just as easily as clothing can be taken off. These teeth (usually those of another person) can restore the loss of 2 Charisma for comeliness (from Table 61).

**Fencing gloves:** These thick gloves are good for grabbing rapiers and other slashing weapons and diverting them, thus increasing one's Defense Score by +1 against all bladed attacks, but at the same time penalizing his Agility Checks by -1.

**Gunshot:** This is a collection of small, metal pellets or balls used to load pistols, muskets, and blunderbuss rifles. This is a non-specific amount of gunshot, which will only run out if one rolls the result of '11' on Table 12, 17, 18 or 19.

**Helmet:** Normally worn in addition to Spanish armor, a helmet will grant a bonus of +1 to one's Charisma Checks when dealing with the Spanish. A helmet lower one's Defense Score by -2 unless he is used to it by Coasta Guarda training (and thus Character Class).

**Hook:** If a Character loses a hand, he may replace it with a hook or similar device. Such a tool will restore 1 Brawn Point lost thereby.

**Hourglass:** An hourglass is a pair of twin glass cups connected by a thin tube and contained within a wooden or metal frame. When tipped up-side-down, the sand runs steadily through the neck, requiring exactly one hour to change ends.

**Lantern:** A lantern requires oil, but so long as one has oil, a lantern will burn indefinitely, providing adequate light for a radius of 50'.

**Lock:** A lock and key. If specified, a Character can acquire multiple keys at no additional cost.

Table 28: Equipment

Item	Found	Cost	Weight
Backpack	10	3	3
Book	11	4	2
Candle	12	1	2
Canteen	12	3	10
Compass	11	10	1
Explosives	6	40	30
Hourglass	9	8	10
Lantern	12	4	6
Lock	12	5	4
Lockpicks	3	5	2
Oil flask	11	2	10
Parchment (5 sheets)	11	1	1
Pen and ink	11	1	3
Pocketwatch	4	20	1
Rations (10 days)	12	1	20
Rope (10')	12	2	2
Rum (1 bottle)	12	2	10
Sack	12	1	4
Scroll case	8	2	1
Spyglass	10	25	7
Tinder box	12	3	1
Torch	12	1	4

**Lockpicks:** This is a set of cunning tools, which adds +4 to one's Lockpicking Checks. However, if the roll is a natural '1', the lockpicks break.

**Longsword:** A nice medium between the cutlass and the rapier, longswords come in a wide variety of lengths and designs for weight, strength and balance, from the thrusting 'spadroon' to the more elegant 'saber', they all none-the-less have a fine heft, are light enough to swing readily, and heavy enough to cut deeply—these swords add a bonus of +1 to each and every Attack Roll.

**Machete:** Though it can be used as a weapon the same as any sword, a machete is primarily used for cutting one's way through the jungle. If the first in line uses a machete, a traveling party will gain +1 to their daily speed (in a jungle)

**Musket:** This long, thin rifle possesses great range and accuracy, though it inflicts less damage than its cousin, the blunderbuss. Such a gun has 1 shot and then requires 2 separate Turns to re-load.

# CHAPTER FIVE

THE GOLDEN BLOOD OF PIRACY ALL FLOWS BACK TO THE BOTTOMLESS HEART OF CIVILIZATION

**New clothes:** Characters' clothes are often being burned, shredded or lost, and need replacing.

**Oil flask:** Oil is required to fuel a lantern. However, it also makes a wonderful, short-range explosive, inflicting a base Damage of 4 points!

**Parchment:** Five sheets of paper, used for making notes (especially for the Players' benefit).

**Pegleg:** If one loses a leg, he may replace it with a wooden or 'peg' leg. This will restore 1 Agility Point lost thereby.

**Pen and ink:** This small package includes a long, feathered quill and a small vial of ink. This ink will last indefinitely.

**Pike:** A pike is a long, wooden pole tipped with a blade or other device.

**Pistol:** The flint-lock is the standard pistol in the world. An additional 10 gold to the cost will make it a double-barreled pistol, though this reduces a pistol's chance of being available by -2. Such a gun has 1 shot (per barrel) and then it requires a separate Turn in order to re-load (each one).

**Pocketwatch:** Far less cumbersome and longer lasting than an hourglass, a pocketwatch is favored for keeping track of time. However, watches do stop after some time—unless a Player specifically states that his Character winds his watch that day, if he checks it, there is a 1 in 12 chance that it has stopped some time ago.

**Rapier:** The most refined and elegant of swords, the rapier is a sleek, stabbing weapon used most often for honorable duels and fencing. Evolving from the medieval broadsword, all the power is in the point of the blade, which has a very long reach indeed—these swords add a bonus of +1 to all Attack Rolls made against a target who is also using a sword or any other melee weapon.

**Rations:** Whenever one travels inland, he should take good store of food with him. One purchase of rations will last one man approximately ten days.

Table 29: Weapons

Weapon	Found	Cost	Weight	Damage
Blunderbuss	8	18	14	9
Boarding axe	12	3	10	5
Chain	12	1	12	2
Club	12	1	8	1
Cutlass	10	10	10	7
Dagger	12	2	5	3
Gunshot	12	1	5	NA
Longsword	8	8	9	5
Machete	5	4	7	4
Musket	6	25	12	7
Pike	7	2	8	4
Pistol	9	20	5	6
Rapier	10	6	6	3

**Rope:** Rope is sold in lengths of 10'. Rope can support up to 200 weight easily. After that, every additional 50 Encumbrance is the cumulative 1 in 12 chance that the rope breaks.

**Rum:** Rum hardens the nerves and warms the spirit. Each bottle will negate -1 penalty worth of wounds for 1-12 hours.

**Sack:** If carried, a sack will reduce one's carried Weight by 20, but takes a free hand to carry.

**Scroll case:** This is a small tube, usually made out of wood or ivory. They are water tight, fire proof, and can safely hold up to 5 pieces of paper.

**Secret cache:** This is an article of clothing, such as a hollow shoe or pegleg, containing a small, secret compartment for keeping valuables safe. These can hold up to 5 gold or jewels, or a single piece of parchment. The weight of all things hidden in such a cache remains. The total number of caches one has on him past the first is the cumulative chance in 12 that all of them can be easily spotted. For example, 4 caches would have a 6 in 12 chance.

**Spanish plate:** This heavy suit of smooth armor makes for the best protection possible against pistol shots and swords. This armor does not include its matching helmet. This armor vest will lower one's Defense Score by -4 unless he is used to it by Coasta Guarda training (and thus Character Class).

# SHORE LEAVE

THE GOLDEN BLOOD OF PIRACY ALL FLOWS BACK TO THE BOTTOMLESS HEART OF CIVILIZATION



Table 30: Armor

Armor	Found	Cost	Guard	Weight
Buckler	1	10	1	30
Helmet	3	12	1	10
Spanish plate	1	90	4	45
Thick clothing	9	7	1	15
Wooden armor	2	15	2	20

**Spyglass:** A spyglass allows clear sight of objects miles away. A spyglass will add +1 to Navigation Checks, and +3 to Intuition Checks made for seeing things far away.

**Thick clothing:** A person may wrap himself tight in coats, leather, belts and breeches, becoming well cushioned against most blows. Thick clothing will lower one's Defense Score by -1 unless he is not a he, but a woman indeed.

**Tinder box:** Flint, steel, various powder and other instruments are sold together in a small box, a 'tinder box' as it were.

**Torch:** A torch will burn for approximately an hour. In that time, a torch will provide adequate light for a 30' radius.

**Uniform:** The perfect copy of a single type of uniform known in that town. If one wishes to buy a foreign uniform, it will cost an additional 1-12 gold and take an equal number of days to make.

**Wooden armor:** Small patches of wood and leather making a crude but effective guard against blades. Wooden armor will lower one's Defense Score by -2 if he is male and -3 if female.

**LIVESTOCK:** Animals of various sorts are available in most towns and hamlets. Table 31 displays the more common animals purchased by pirates, their 'Intelligence', their Movement Rate, and the carrying capacity (in Weight).

Table 31: Livestock

Animal	Cost	Found	Int.	Move	Carry
Burrow	20	10	2	100'	35
Horse	70	9	3	300'	40
Monkey	20	3	7	70'	3
Mule	30	10	2	80'	40
Parrot	10	5	6	150'	1
Snake	30	8	1	20'	0

**Beasts of burden:** The carrying capacity given for each animal is how much Weight it can carry before it slows down. Each time that capacity is equaled again, the animal slows down 20'.

**Food:** Animals need to eat just as people do. Any animal with a Capacity of 30 or more requires food and water in equal shares as that of a person.

**Training animals:** If an animal is trained for certain tricks, it requires the difference of the animal's Intelligence and 10 in weeks to learn the trick. Table 32 displays the more common tricks of an animal, and the minimum Intelligence required.

Table 32: Training Animals

Trick	Intelligence	Cost
Very basic speech	5	120
Dance	7	100
Pilfer/retrieve items	7	80
Play dead	4	50
Attack	1	40
Respond to own name	3	10

# CHAPTER FIVE

THE GOLDEN BLOOD OF PIRACY ALL FLOWS BACK TO THE BOTTOMLESS HEART OF CIVILIZATION

**AT THE WHARFS:** At the docks, the spits and sandbars, the jungle ends and forests of masts and sails rise up into the winds. Among the docks and even the beach seamen may make inquiries about vessels to be bought and sold, where to repair them, and who to see to provision them.

**Purchasing ships:** When a Character or party has enough gold, they may purchase a ship of their own! Table 33 lists the average prices for all types of ships throughout the pirate world.

**Table 33: Purchasing Ships**

Ship	Found	Cost
Schooner	10	1500
Naval sloop	7	2500
Navy snow	6	2800
Sloop	9	3200
Dutch fluyt	5	4000
Barque	10	6000
Brigantine	9	7000
Mariner	5	10000
Merchantman	4	12000
Frigate	3	22000
Man-o-war	2	24000
Galleon	1	30000

**Provisioning ships:** At the wharfs alone supplies for ships may be bought and sold. Table 34 displays the common provisions for ships and their average prices. The 'size' of an item represents how much space it takes in the hold of any ship.

**Table 34: Provisions**

Provision	Found	Cost	Size
Anchor	11	30	50
Cannon (1 gun)	6	80	50
Cannonballs (1 salvo)	7	6	5
Charts	10	500	0
Flag (same as town)	10	30	10
Flag (foreign)	8	80	10
Flag (pirate)	6	100	10
Food (10 days, 1 man)	12	1	1
Longboat	12	75	350
Mast (replacement)	4	500	0
Oars (full ship)	5	100	100
Spare sails	11	200	300
Weapons*	10	600	200

\* - Used for boarding parties and attacking towns. If an individual Character seeks a specific weapon, he must roll for its Availability as normal.

**Repairing ships:** If not sunk to the bottom of the briny, a ship may pull into a friendly port and get repaired. The cost of repairing a ship is equal to 10 gold per Hull Point of damage. Hull Points are repaired at the random rate of 1-12 each day.

**Selling ships:** The condition of any vessel weighs heavily if one tries to sell it. Normally, nobody will buy a ship until it is fully repaired. However, if stressed circumstances demand that a ship be sold, every Hull Point worth of damage will lower the cost listed on Table 33 by 30 gold.

**Modifying ships:** At extensive expense, a ship may be modified to become stronger or have greater capacity for guns or cargo. Any ship can be modified a number of times up to its Value, plus one more for every Skill Level of shipwright one has. Note that if a skilled shipwright has already modified a ship, one cannot modify it further unless he has a higher Skill Level, and then only by the difference.

Normally, there are no people in any harbor or port—not even the shipwrights themselves—who will modify ships, for they either tend to believe that their tried and true designs are the best, or they simply cannot figure out how they can be improved upon. In any event, only one with the Shipwright Skill can produce such changes, and he must oversee their daily work. Indeed, if there is nobody amongst a pirate crew to plan such changes, they cannot be done by the townsfolk.

The various prices and required time for any and all possible modifications to ships are provided below on Table 35.

**Table 35: Modifying Ships**

Modification	Price	Building time
Additional cannon mount	500	10 days
10 more crew capacity	1000	20 days
More sail; +1 to speed	2000	30 days
Extra 100 cargo space	3000	40 days
Armor; +10 Hull Points	1000	50 days

# SHORE LEAVE



THE GOLDEN BLOOD OF PIRACY ALL FLOWS BACK TO THE BOTTOMLESS HEART OF CIVILIZATION



**Scrapping ships:** Sometimes ships will become too badly damaged to be worth repairing, and yet sail into port barely afloat. Ships can be sold as scrap, at one tenth their normal cost. For example, a war-ravaged barque could still be sold for 600 gold.

**Goods from ships:** There are all kinds of goods carried aboard ships and traded in town. As a rule, each ton of 'goods' is the same as far as the space it takes up in a ship's cargo hold, that of 100, and their base value, that of 100-1200 gold. Table 36 displays the modifier to the dice roll to determine that value whenever one tries to buy or sell these more commonly traded (and plundered) goods, as well as how long it will take for that price to change (and thus be re-rolled).

**Table 36: Trading Goods**

Price	Nature of the goods	Time
+5	Medicine	1 month
+4	Tobacco	1-3 weeks
+4	Tea	1-3 weeks
+3	Rare plants	1-12 weeks
+3	Sugar or flour	3 months
+2	Clothing, cotton or silk	1-6 weeks
+2	Books	1-4 weeks
+2	Glass	1 month
+1	Rare animals	1-12 weeks
+1	Spices	2 weeks
+0	Rum, ale, beer or brandy	1 week
+0	Hides	1 month

**Goods aboard ship:** Normally, goods sit quiet in the cargo hold of a ship, but there will be times when greedy pirates will try to store more of them elsewhere (usually because the hold is full). They may argue that the goods are individually small items and so can be stuffed into every nook and cranny. However, no such strategies will work, for in order for any goods to be of any value to merchants, they must be preserved from the rigors of the sea, and thus kept in those cumbersome barrels and crates that fit **only** in a ship's hold.

**Food aboard ship:** Given the vast amounts of food (and water) used in sailing, it is easy for this to become a mathematical nightmare. However, a simple formula that is tried and true helps one's

voyage through these rules remain smooth and swift. Quite simply, total up all the days worth of food purchased, usually ranging into the thousands, and then each day at sea deduct the total amount of crewmen from it.

**NAMING SHIPS:** Ships must have a name. The Players should collaborate on this choice and take a long time with it, for it is a group decision that will either make them proud or make them cringe. Just like their Characters, they should try to come up with one that compliments the game and is fun to hear passed around the table.

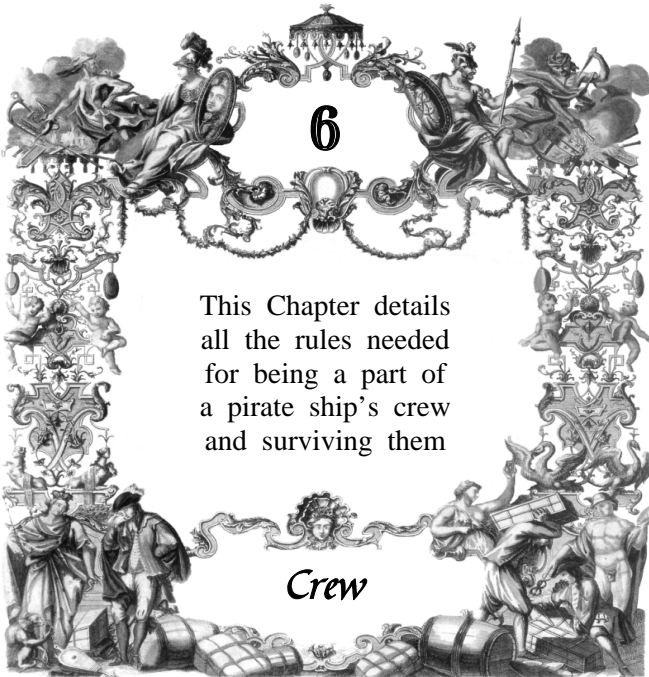
Ships taken by pirates can be named anything, really. Proven names are ones that either express the crew's goals, or reflect the era. For a ship is a pirate's home, church and future all in one. And, just as the ship is the whole of each man's world, its name is a summary of the entire crew's world.

In order to help the group choose their ship's name, a list of examples has been provided below, names from history, literature, stage, screen, and the playtesting of this game itself.

- Black Pearl*
- Bristol Packet*
- Cacafuego*
- Cinco Llagas*
- Dark Lady*
- Dauntless*
- Defyance*
- Discovery*
- Golden Dragon*
- Goldrunner*
- Hispaniola*
- Interceptor*
- Kudo Jahmakka*
- Lady Elizabeth*
- Morning Star*
- Nemesis*
- Nightingale*
- Old Testament*
- Pride of Devon*
- Reaper*
- Revenge*
- Royal Fortune*
- Queen Anne's Revenge*
- Wicked Wench*

# CHAPTER SIX

THE PIRATE CREW IS A SMALL COUNTRY WITH A KING AND A GOVERNMENT UNTO THEMSELVES



This Chapter details all the rules needed for being a part of a pirate ship's crew and surviving them

Crew

**THE CAPTAIN AND THE CREW:** This game sails into the often uncharted waters of combining a conventional party of Player Characters with vast amounts of NPC crewmen. But whether the Player Characters are merely members of the crew or the captain and his officers, the rules for life aboard a ship are the same.

**The captain:** Every ship has a captain. This captain will either be a full-fledged NPC (complete with Character Record Sheet) or a Player Character indeed! Depending on this critical issue, the game will play differently.

If no Player Character is captain, adventure storylines will run normally, with the ship's cargo, course and crew counted for the Players by the Game Captain, and their decisions and destination chosen by the NPC captain. However, if a Player Character assumes the captaincy, all of the ship's statistics become his responsibility, including food, setting course, maintaining morale, etc.

More importantly, it must be clarified that there is a difference between the Player and his Character who is the captain. Simply put, they are two separate people, though this line is easily crossed by both captain and crew alike. For instance, the Player of a Character captain may

begin to command the other Players, which he cannot do. Likewise, the other Players may tend to rely upon the Player of their Characters' captain for decisions, which are not his responsibility. The game suffers when this line between Player and Character is blurred, so be careful to maintain it, for the game is best when the Players all offer suggestions to the Player of the Character captain, and those suggestions simply become that particular Character's decision, to the benefit of all.

**Playing the crew:** All hands aboard a ship save for the Player Characters themselves will, in terms of storytelling and attention to detail, serve only as 'cannon fodder'. Indeed, all of the 'red shirts' are treated merely as numbers—they do not have Character Record Sheets, nor do they even need names (first or last). The crew is played simply as one large group, wherein the Player Characters interact according to their immediate situation or station (as crewmen themselves or as officers).

**Crew Levels:** All NPCs that make up the crew are counted both by their sheer numbers, and by their own Experience Levels. This matters most in the chaos of battle and boarding parties, which are explained in the next Chapter. However, when crewmen are considered for shares of treasure, they are, unless specified otherwise, counted according to their Level, indeed their value to the crew.

**Crewmen:** While crewmen are mostly considered and calculated according to their Level, occasions may arise when common sense will demand an answer to a number of questions, such as what a particular Ability Score might be, or what Skills they may have. Rather than roll up statistics for hundreds of crewmen, NPCs are simply determined at the moment of need what statistics they have, by rolling on Table 37. For example, the PCs go ashore in a longboat with 6 extra men. Cannibals are hiding in the trees, and everybody needs to make an Intuition Check to notice them in time. So, what are the Intuition Scores of the NPCs who are with the Player Characters at that time? A roll here can decide that easily enough. Furthermore, a different roll can determine their Defense Scores, or their Skill with those longswords...

# THE PIRATE CREW



THE PIRATE CREW IS A SMALL COUNTRY WITH A KING AND A GOVERNMENT UNTO THEMSELVES



**Table 37: Crewmen**

Roll	Level	Ability	Skill	Defense
12	6	9	4	10
11	6	8	3	9
10	5	7	2	8
9	5	6	2	8
8	4	5	2	7
7	4	4	1	7
6	3	4	1	6
5	3	3	1	6
4	2	3	1	5
3	2	2	0	5
2	1	2	0	4
1	1	1	0	4

**Crew contributions:** Table 37 above is tempting to use for determining what various Skills the crew members have for contributing to a ship's common functions, such as navigation or medicine. Alas, this only adds up to overly complex notes and endless rolls for the Game Captain, as crewmen are ever changing, by choice or by death. One can simply roll once on Table 37 for the entire crew for each Skill, this roll gaining a bonus of +1 for every 20 Levels of crew aboard (rounded up). This whole can be re-rolled when new crew are gained.

**Acquiring crew members:** If a Player Character is captain of a ship, he faces the constant challenge of acquiring new crew members (of pirates willing to die for him) as old ones die, desert, or simply scatter to the winds after dividing up the treasure.

Generally, new crew cannot be gained unless plunder is divided (nobody wants lesser shares). To gain new crew before dividing plunder lowers the entire crew's Morale by -1 for each new person (not Level) who signs aboard.

When crew are sought, the captain's name is what matters: his Notoriety Level, +1, is the mount of Levels he can gain from a town, but he cannot roll more times than a town's Level.

What Levels are acquired are free for the ship's captain to decide. For example, if he has 20 men to choose from, he may select to have ten 2<sup>nd</sup> Level men, or perhaps ten 1<sup>st</sup> Level men along with two 5<sup>th</sup> Level men. The only limitation in this choice is a single roll on Table 37 to determine the highest Experience Level available of them all.

**Morale:** Morale is extremely important! Morale is a constantly changing score that is the captain's duty to keep track of. Table 57 displays the Morale a crew has when first assembled, by the captain's Charisma Score. That score rises and falls like the waves, by many factors, each described below. But no matter what happens, no Morale can exceed 60.

*Dividing up the ship's plunder* always re-sets Morale according to the captain's Charisma Score.

*Plundering a town* brings out the best in pirates' spirits, and they aren't soon to forget it, raising the Morale by a bonus equal to the Level of the town multiplied by 2.

*Capturing a ship* always boosts the crew's spirits, increasing Morale by a bonus equal to the Value of the captured ship.

*A day in port* will help raise the spirits of the crew, as they get to squander their hard won gold, increasing Morale by +1. However, each day in port for each man costs the ship 1-12 gold.

*Sheer time elapsed* will wear upon a crew, who ever wish to divide the plunder, each passing month thus costing 1-12 Morale.

*Going without food* makes a crew angry and eventually mortally afraid, and each successive day lowers Morale by a progressive -1, thus, the third day in a row without food would lose -3 to their Morale, totaling a loss of -6 thus far.

*Sailing through storms* strikes fear into a crew, and hatred for the captain unless driven by great need, reducing Morale by -2 each day.

*Making less speed* than is at least favorable, indeed less than 5 leagues a day, will cause the crew to grow wary, anxious, and bloodthirsty, reducing Morale by -3 for that day.

*Losing a battle* will cause great despair and lack of trust in the competency of the captain, reducing Morale by -10.

**Table 38: Crew Morale**

Morale	Crew status	Rolls
50-60	Jolly	+2
30-49	Happy	+1
20-29	Pleased	+0
10-19	Wary	-1
5-9	Unhappy	-2
1-4	Angry	-3
0	Mutiny!	NA



# CHAPTER SIX



THE PIRATE CREW IS A SMALL COUNTRY WITH A KING AND A GOVERNMENT UNTO THEMSELVES



**Mutiny:** If ever a crew's Morale reaches 0, they will mutiny. When this occurs, the first order of business will be to dispose of the captain and all men who are loyal to him. This is usually done by setting them adrift in a longboat with meager supplies, but pirate crews are also known to simply maroon them or kill them outright. Next, pirates will elect a new captain, and their Morale will be determined by his Charisma Score.

When mutiny occurs, for the sake of the game's story, Player Characters (not loyal to the previous captain) will always be nominated for the new captaincy.

If it is a Player Character being deposed however, he may duel the Character (PC or NPC) who would take over, and if victorious, gain newfound respect from the crew as a sudden bonus to Morale equal to his own Charisma Score, thus raising himself above the level of mutiny.

**Dividing up the plunder:** When the ship's plunder is counted and divided, each crewman receives one share for each Level he has. The captain and each of his officers (Player Characters) will receive two shares per Level unless specified otherwise in the ship's articles of agreement.

**ARTICLES:** Most pirate ships have a written agreement drawn up that applies to the entire crew, including the captain. These 'articles of agreement' are made known when one signs on, and are usually sworn over a Bible, a skull or an axe. Such articles are far and above more democratic, fair and appealing than any treatment by any Royal Navy. These agreements are so widespread and standard that they are almost always the same, though some differences occur. Whenever a new captain is appointed, new articles are written, or at least the old ones are updated.

If the new captain is a Player Character, he can decide upon the articles by his own initiative, preferably using those explained below as a guideline. If the new captain is an NPC, the Game Captain chooses what articles are used on his ship.

In any event, each article carries with it a modifier to the crew's initial Morale, as displayed on Table 39.

Table 39: Articles Of Agreement

Article included	Morale
Division	+8
Compensation	+6
Separation	+4
Punishment	+2
Chivalry	+2
Cowardice	+2
Marooning	+0

**Chivalry:** This provision is favored by crews made up of more civilized men, stating that should any of them molest a youth or a woman (or a man) against their will, they shall receive punishment as if they had violated any other article.

**Compensation:** One of the most favored and fair practices amongst pirates, this provision entitles a man to compensation for lost limbs and other wounds when treasure is divided, though this compensation is made before the rest of the plunder is divided into shares.

*A right arm or hand* is worth 600 gold, though this may only be received once, if one loses his right hand first and his right arm later.

*A left arm or hand* is worth 500 gold, though this may only be received once, if one loses his left hand first and his left arm later.

*A right leg or foot* is worth 500 gold, though this may only be received once, if one loses his right foot first and his right leg later.

*A left leg or foot* is worth 400 gold, though this may only be received once, if one loses his left foot first and his left leg later.

**Cowardice:** This provision clearly states that the pirate crew is bound together in a brotherhood, to share alike in life and death, struggle, and fortune. Consequently, if someone hides in battle or refuses to fight, he has disbanded from the rest of the crew, and can suffer a variety of punishments, depending on how severe his treachery.

*Taking ships* involves boarding parties that need every available man, and not taking part in such a fight will earn a man countless lashes while tied to the mast, effectively wounding him for an injury penalty of 1-6.

# THE PIRATE CREW

THE PIRATE CREW IS A SMALL COUNTRY WITH A KING AND A GOVERNMENT UNTO THEMSELVES



*Taking towns* involves sheer numbers, and not taking part in a landing raid can earn a man enough lashes to permanently lower a random Ability Score by -1. Roll one dice, with Brawn as 1, Agility as 2, and so on down, with the results of 9-12 being the Player's choice.

*Inland adventures* are almost exclusively designed for Player Characters, and should one refuse to participate, he can, at the option of the other Player Characters alone, lose his claim to any share of whatever treasure is found on that particular expedition.

Division: While it remains the decision of the captain alone as to **when** the ship's plunder is to be divided up, this provision in the ship's articles specifies exactly how much each man receives, in accordance to their participation. The total treasure is counted according to its gold value, to then be divided in various stages of agreement, explained below in the order they are to take place.

First and foremost, all money necessary to fit, rig and provision the ship is deducted and put to its proper use.

Second, any 'compensation' is given to those who have suffered the loss of limbs and wounds otherwise specified in the articles.

Finally, the treasure is divided up amongst the crew. Total the Levels of the crew, doubling the Levels for all officers (which indeed includes the captain). Then divide the remaining treasure by this factor, the result being the total 'shares' to be given out. For each crewman will receive 1 share per his Level (thus officers receive 2 per Level due to their doubled factor). The captain keeps the ship as his own property.

Once treasure is divided up, if each man's share is at least equal to his Level multiplied by 100, the crew's Morale will re-set at this point. If not, those who were paid less than they feel they deserved shall be free to go their separate ways when they next put into port.

Marooning: This is a provision that can override the normal clause of punishment, for indeed it is far worse than the quick and merciful death of hanging. Indeed, if anyone amongst the crew violates any other article, they stand a chance in 6

## CHAPTER SIX

THE PIRATE CREW IS A SMALL COUNTRY WITH A KING AND A GOVERNMENT UNTO THEMSELVES

equal to the normal Morale modifier of the article violated of being marooned! If they are not marooned, the criminal is simply punished normally (which usually means being put to death). Being marooned involves a slow death, a torture for both the Character and his Player alike. For the person is left alone on a deserted island with only the clothes he wears, a Bible, a full canteen, and a pistol with **one** load (intended to be reserved for the ultimate conclusion of suicide). If it is a Player Character who is marooned, that Player cannot play nor generate a new Character until the other Player Characters (and thus the game) return to him. If he chooses to kill himself, he suffers a loss of 1-6 Creation Points when making his new Character.

**Punishment:** This is a standard provision in articles, that if anyone amongst the crew violates any other article, they shall, at the behest of the crew, be put to death. The manner of execution varies from ship to ship—hung from the yardarm, keel-hauled, drawn-and-quartered, but the end result is always the same—inescapable death!

**Separation:** This provision concerns pirate crews that have possession of multiple ships, and who gets shares of treasure captured while they are apart. For if a crew or partnership involves two or more ships, if they should be separated, they are to settle matters as soon as they are reunited (to minimize the chances of anything being hidden away). There are several ways this can be accomplished, but must be decided when crews unite or when ships divide.

*Division of Fifths* means that any ships that claimed a prize in the absence of the other divide amongst themselves three-fifths that take, while the absent ships get to divide the remaining two-fifths.

*Division by Captain* means that any treasure gained while the ships were separated is to be divided into a number of shares equal to the Levels of the respective captains.

*Division by Claim* means that any plunder acquired while ships were separated is not to be divided at all, the spoils going to whomever fought to win it, and that is all. However, whenever this occurs, it lowers the other crew's Morale by -5.



**DETAILS:** The pirate's life is an exciting mixture of fact and fiction. When role-playing such a character, a lot of details are easily overlooked. Provided below are simple guidelines to help both Players and Game Captains alike have a better understanding of what the pirate crew is like. However, keep in mind that these are storytelling aids, nothing more.

**Dress:** Pirates dress in what they can get—wearing the blood-stained coats of Royal navy is both mocking them but also because they are of good weave. Shoes are constantly stolen from the dead. For the most part, clothing is light due to the heat of prime pirate waters, and going barefoot is better for having to swim so often and avoid footrot. Altogether, the motley look of a pirate crew is a fashion statement of scavenging and sheer necessity. Those pirates who dress more formally do so at great expense and for particular reasons.

# THE PIRATE CREW



THE PIRATE CREW IS A SMALL COUNTRY WITH A KING AND A GOVERNMENT UNTO THEMSELVES



Officers: Pirate crews had many officers, much like any naval vessel, though they were deposed and replaced far more often. For the sake of more opportunity for Player Characters, if the captain of the ship is an NPC, he should select the Player Characters his officers, usually the ones with the highest Experience Levels. If Levels are tied for highest, the tie is broken either by a fight between them, or simply totaling their Ability Points to see who is the 'better man'. The various types of officers are explained below in the order of their priority, both in terms of election and authority.

*Quartermaster* is one who elected and operates much in the same manner as the captain, and has almost as much power, though his duties are different. The quartermaster is very much the 'strong man of the ship', overseeing all hands from the quarterdeck (where the wheel is). He usually leads the crew into battle, settles any and all disputes, administers punishment when necessary, divides up the plunder, and speaks on the crew's behalf when they dislike their captain's decision.

*Cooper* is the one who is the most skilled at making, sealing and storing barrels and other containers, which is essential for food and water, entitling him to an officer's status but unfortunately not to an officer's share of treasure.

*Sailmaster* is the one person aboard ship who is in charge of navigation and sailwork, and thus must have the highest Navigation Skill Level (aside from the captain) to maintain his place.

*Boatswain* is the one person aboard ship who sees to the vessel's maintenance, and thus must have the highest Shipwright Skill Level (aside from the captain) to maintain his place.

*Gunner* is the one person aboard ship who is in charge of commanding the cannons, and thus must have the highest Gunnery Skill Level (aside from the captain) to maintain his place.

*Surgeon* is the one person aboard ship who sees to the wounded and the curing of disease, and thus must have the highest Medicine Skill Level (aside from the captain) to maintain his place.

Trial: Most offenses and differences between pirate crews are decided by trial on deck, with all the crew present, usually presided over by the quartermaster or some other officer.

Food and drink: One cannot exaggerate how bad the food is aboard a pirate ship. Hardtack and swill are the daily rations. Hot food is rare, and lucky crews may get a piece of cheese on Sunday. No joking! This is why pirates live it up when they plunder a ship or town. Also, their excessive drinking of rum is not a tale of sheer debauchery, but that rum is safer to drink than the ill water stored aboard any ship.

Sleeping conditions: Ships are usually smaller than one may think, especially for pirate crews who rely on speed and being able to harbor in shallow coves, away from larger naval vessels. This makes for cramped quarters. Usually, only the captain has a cabin, and it is small and tight with no wasted space. Most of the crew, pirates or otherwise, sleep where they work—on deck or below, or with the pigs, or even in the rigging.

Religion: Most pirates find a greater evil in world politics than any religious text ever spoke of. Indeed, given the persecution of the various churches in Europe, pirates find far greater freedom and understanding amongst one another as far as religion is concerned that it quickly beomes a non-issue amongst them. Pirate crews are often comprised of several major religions all tightly packed together, and they encourage and support one another—because they have to in order to survive—and the irony is that they became that much stronger for it.

Music: Pirates are fond of music, both for revelry and for battle. They often have a small band aboard to play at whiles, and even to use dramatic music and drums to intimidate their enemies during a confrontation. Such men are sometimes treated with the same respect (and even a share of treasure division) as the officers themselves.

Honor among thieves: There isn't any! Just as we know how quickly gamers will stab one another in the back, so are pirates equal opportunists. Life aboard a pirate ship is tough—you can count on one another when things are tight (as one another must in order to survive), but everyone is always watching their own back.

# CHAPTER SIX



THE PIRATE CREW IS A SMALL COUNTRY WITH A KING AND A GOVERNMENT UNTO THEMSELVES



# THE PIRATE CREW



THE PIRATE CREW IS A SMALL COUNTRY WITH A KING AND A GOVERNMENT UNTO THEMSELVES



Married men: Most pirates look very favorably upon marriage. Indeed, so great is their respect for married men (and women) that such prisoners are usually spared, provided that they can prove their troth. Those that are taken prisoner are treated with greater respect than normal captives, and even protected by many a ship's articles of agreement, in that mistreating or molesting them is viewed in the same regard as violating women and children. Wives of pirates often stay on land while their husbands roam the seas for months at a time. Few pirates or sailors or any kind take their wives aboard ship, given the superstitious nature of sailors that women are bad luck at sea.

Gambling and games: Generally, gambling is not at all allowed aboard pirate vessels, as the loss of gold and other wealth quickly leads to dissension, disputes and low morale, and thus, as there is no gambling, there is for pirates no point for games at all (and no time for them anyway). However, pirates will often practice and tutor each other in the ways of games and gambling for taking money from others when in port. But even then, such 'training' must be overseen by the quartermaster.

**FLAGS:** Aye, ya seen 'em before, but know ye their tale? The flag o' death that flies in blood-red skies ain't no governor's jeweled jacket nor some spoiled pretty-lady's petticoat! The ol' Jolly Roger has a meanin', and a mean one, say I...

Designing flags: The classic pirate flag, black with a white skull or some other easily recognizable symbol of death, is meant to let victims know that their end is at hand. Players are most likely going to wish to design a pirate flag of their own. Some guidelines towards making better (or at least more historically accurate) flags are provided below.

*The name* is important. While each pirate captain tends to have his own flag, they are all recognizable by the single name of 'Jolly Roger'. From an evolution of French words, the 'joli rouge' meant 'pretty red' (as in blood) and soon 'jolly rogue' referred to pirates who were doing well. Hence, it is considered dishonorable or unlucky among pirate brethren to make any such flag until one's career is prospering.

*Symbols* that are easily recognizable from a distance are often used by flag makers, especially amongst pirate crews. There are a few commonly used symbols among pirate flags. While the skull and crossbones clearly represents death, game players may wish to be a little more creative with their flags, such as using an hourglass (representing that a victim's time is running out), the captain's weapon of choice (warning the enemy captain exactly how he shall be killed should he resist), or even drink (toasting to the devil himself).

*Red flags* are as frightening as flags can be for other vessels. For while a black flag threatens death to those who did not surrender, a red flag means death to whoever sees it, whether they surrender or not! Such flags are rare, however, as pirates themselves needed to spare their strength for when the navy comes looking for them...

Royal Navy flags: Many are the privateers, pirate ships flying the flag of European Royal Navy, their colorful banners merely masking the same greed and bloodlust that is openly displayed on the Jolly Roger of countless pirate ships. But deceitful are the privateers, as much to their 'lords' as to their prey, for they will often have their own Jolly Roger ready to fly if the need arises, telling who they are exactly and thus what their intentions are to those foolish enough to resist, while the main flags of Europe's licensed pirates, indistinguishable from the main navy vessels, change with the times.

*English flags* remain white with a red cross, derived from the classic crests of Knighthood and the Christian Cross, though the classic 'Union Jack' sometimes fills the upper left corner.

*French flags* are either solid blue or a field of white, either way decorated with a gathering of their Royal rymbol the Fluer de Lys, leaves, the crown itself, or a combination thereof.

*Dutch flags* are, for the most part, a simple design of three even, horizontal stripes, the top one solid red, the middle one white, and the bottom one a lush or dark green.

*Spanish flags* remain the same for centuries, a four-square field of two red boxes and two white ones, each square bearing the gilded symbol of a lion, a single crown or three crowns, depending on the lineage of the king at the time.

## CHAPTER SIX

THE PIRATE CREW IS A SMALL COUNTRY WITH A KING AND A GOVERNMENT UNTO THEMSELVES

Infamous flags: The Jolly Roger indeed is a warning that the end is near, and it is a wiser thing to surrender at the sight of such a flag than to even consider doing battle. And for those who don't surrender, well, they just made this flag more terrifying still. Some of the more infamous flags are explained throughout the following pages.



Barthamel Roberts: A seaman who became the greatest pirate of his day, this captain began his career in 1720. According to history, 'He could not plead want of employment, nor incapacity of getting his bread in an honest way, but frankly own'd, it was to get rid of disagreeable superiority of some masters he was acquainted with—and the love of novelty and change'.



Edward England: Once the British Royal Navy drove him from the haven of the Caribbean in 1718, this captain made himself a scourge of the African waters. His unusual kindness towards prisoners, however, proved to be his undoing—he was deposed for freeing a captured merchant and he died a beggar on Madagascar. His flag, the classic 'skull and crossbones', became his true and most enduring legacy, beyond even his very name.



Emanuel Wynne: The flag of this pirate is the most famous of flags depicting the popular hourglass to inform a victim that their time was running out. However, like it does for all pirates, Wynne's own time ran out eventually. This flag solidified the use of the hourglass in flag folklore and history alike, though it came about at the end of the pirate era, after countless such flags were flown. It is often remarked that the flag of Wynne, more than anything else, told pirates themselves that their own end—the end of the era of pirates altogether—was drawing near...



# THE PIRATE CREW



THE PIRATE CREW IS A SMALL COUNTRY WITH A KING AND A GOVERNMENT UNTO THEMSELVES



Henry Every: Amongst the most famous of all pirates, this captain captured such treasure that his exploits made him a hero to every unemployed seaman, renegade and vermin in both England and in the Colonies (both in the Caribbean and elsewhere). In the eyes of the poor, history says that he ‘raised himself to the dignity of a king, and was likely to be the founder of a new monarchy’, though history best remembers his flag.



Jack Rackham: His true name of ‘John’ Rackam is forgotten for the more colorful title he gave himself and history approved of so fashionably. For this pirate often wore bright cotton clothing to match his flair for the flamboyant. He was in his career voted into Charles Vane’s captaincy, and went on to raid, pillage and plunder the West Indies until his capture in 1720—a humiliating end indeed. For his romance with the woman pirate Anne Bonny is how his honor died, cowering with his men while she and one other woman fought alone, and so history has chosen to remember his style above all else, and his flag best of all.



Stede Bonnet: Retired from the army, Stede Bonnet was rather heavy-set though well manicured—he even wore a gentleman’s powdered wig. ‘Dandy’ is a word that describes him well. Ed Teach, the infamous ‘Blackbeard’ thought as much, as he burst into laughter upon first seeing this foppish, former farmer of a pirate in 1718, shortly before the terrible Teach took Bonnet’s ship and burned his flag for pity that it evoked fear only in the hearts of men. To Blackbeard and other pirates, sea-thieves were either lesser or greater than men, for they seized their own destiny.



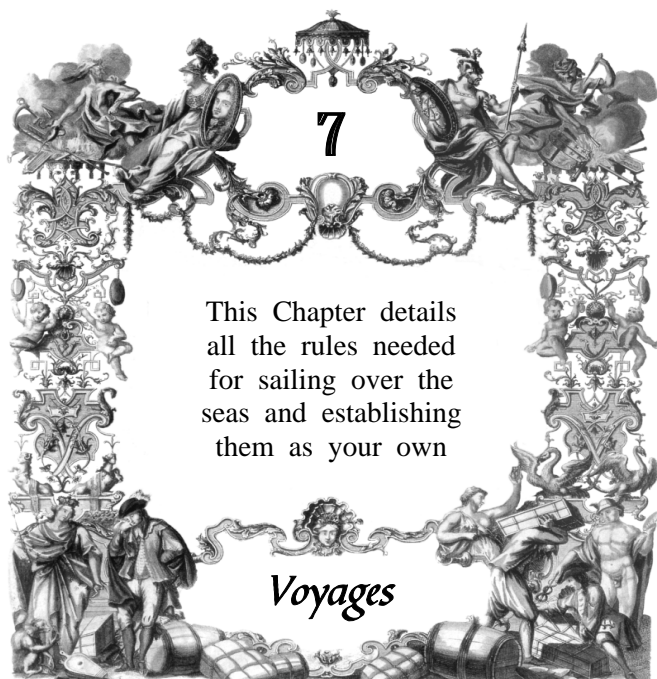
Thomas Tew: A man of modest reputation from the Americas, this pirate spent as much time inland as he did at sea, wining and dining politicians and men of import, until in 1692 he turned his ship towards Bermuda. There he found the gateway to the Caribbean which he would mercilessly plunder, an aggressive attitude that his flag displayed well. Though he left the New World only a few years later, pirate lore tells of his death in the Old World, where God caught up with him.





# CHAPTER SEVEN

LOST VOICES OF THE SEA EVER CALL TO SPIRITS UNBOUND BY LAND AND LONG TO JOIN THEM



This Chapter details all the rules needed for sailing over the seas and establishing them as your own

## Voyages

**A GAZETTEER OF SHIPS:** Throughout the following pages are detailed the various ships that sail the world in the heyday of pirates. These are all the tried and true designs, and other ships of different names are simply variants of these base types. New types of ships are only brought into the game for an Adventure's specific needs.

**Value:** Each ship has a 'Value', which is an overall value of the vessel, accounting for size, cargo capacity, speed, etc.

**Crew:** This double figure shows (first) the number of crew required to man the vessel, with each man less the penalty to rolls on Table 40, and (second) the maximum number of men the ship can hold.

**Speed:** This lists the number of leagues that the ship can travel in a day. This is a base score, which is modified by many factors each day.

**Guns:** This displays the total number of cannon the ship can fire a salvo at a single target.

**Battle:** This score is what an enemy needs to equal or exceed on a single dice in order to hit it with a cannon salvo.

**Hull:** This score is the number of Hull Points that the ship has when it is fully repaired and functional.

**Cargo:** This figure is the maximum amount of cargo that the ship can carry, using its hold, its deck, even its rigging.

**Special capabilities:** Each class of ship possesses special traits that sets it apart from all others, which cannot be otherwise achieved by high scores or rolls.

**Suggested Nationalities:** Each class of ship has one or more Nations that build them better, or perhaps even designed them in the first place, altogether ensuring that if the ship is purchased in a port of any Nation listed, it will be able to have one additional modification beyond its Value for every 3 Experience Levels of its captain (rounded up).

## Barque

**Value:** 4  
**Crew:** 8/100  
**Speed:** 12 leagues  
**Guns:** 16  
**Battle:** 9  
**Hull:** 150  
**Cargo:** 4000

The fast and sturdy workhorse of the times, this vessel is the chosen combat craft for many pirate captains. She is a two-masted ship that carries on her mainmast either square or fore-and-aft sails, or a combination thereof, which makes her immensely versatile—the square sails drive her best in quartering winds while the fore-and-aft sails are effective to sailing windward. This vessel is about eighty feet long. A fine ship indeed, one of the first choices for pirate crews requiring a fine balance between size and speed.

**Special capabilities** for a barque are known by a close-knit crew, the efficient use of space in this ship's design allowing for fast maneuverability in a broadside, thus granting its men +1 to their first roll for inflicting casualties in a Mass Melee.

**Suggested Nationalities** for a barque include England and France.

# ALL SHIPS AT SEA



LOST VOICES OF THE SEA EVER CALL TO SPIRITS UNBOUND BY LAND AND LONG TO JOIN THEM



## Brigantine

**Value:** 3  
**Crew:** 8/100  
**Speed:** 15 leagues  
**Guns:** 10  
**Battle:** 8  
**Hull:** 140  
**Cargo:** 4500

Similar to a barque, a brigantine is built for slightly better speed, but the trade-off is that she has less of a capacity for battle. Almost the exact same size and shape—about seventy feet—she has some gunports replaced with rigging and longboats.

*Special capabilities* for a brigantine are used by a clever captain, knowing the deceptive nature of such a ship's size versus its speed, granting this vessel +1 to rolls involving fleeing from a battle.

*Suggested Nationalities* for a brigantine include England alone.

## Dutch fluyt

**Value:** 3  
**Crew:** 12/160  
**Speed:** 10 leagues  
**Guns:** 14  
**Battle:** 4  
**Hull:** 130  
**Cargo:** 8000

Round sterned, broad beamed, two-masted and flat bottomed, the Dutch fluyt is expensive to build, cheap to man and renowned for her cargo capacity—half again that of similarly sized vessels with sleeker lines. The English and the French both have their own adaptations of this design, and fluyts range the world's sea lines under all flags. However, those that sail pirate waters are routine prey for buccaneer captains.

*Special capabilities* for a Dutch fluyt are to be found in its shallow draft, enabling it to carry large amounts of cargo through shallow waters, indeed gaining +1 to the chance of avoiding hitting reefs when sailing through them, though if such a ship indeed runs aground, it suffers a similar increase of 1 to the dice rolled to determine the damage to this wide-bottomed ship.

*Suggested Nationalities* for a Dutch fluyt include Holland alone, hence their name.

## Frigate

**Value:** 7  
**Crew:** 12/180  
**Speed:** 12 leagues  
**Guns:** 25  
**Battle:** 10  
**Hull:** 500  
**Cargo:** 10000

A smaller cousin of the man-o-war, the frigate is the first choice for pirate hunters in unfriendly waters. Fitting more men in value for her size, a frigate's greatest value is for the almost inevitable battle against boarding parties. The noble, it not purposeful design of such a ship usually makes its message clear before any flag is flown.

*Special capabilities* for a frigate are apparent to all who dare engage in a boarding party, as these warships hold more men below decks for fighting-reserve, effectively adding +1 to rolls on Table 42, with a result of '13' or '14' indicating that beyond the normal loss of Hull Points, no additional damage is suffered at all.

*Suggested Nationalities* for a frigate include England and France.

## Galleon

**Value:** 10  
**Crew:** 20/300  
**Speed:** 10 leagues  
**Guns:** 20  
**Battle:** 7  
**Hull:** 400  
**Cargo:** 20000

Galleons demand the attention of all other ships by their presence alone. The largest, most glorious ships ever built, their sheer size is their greatest asset—they are so large, galleons can sail most anywhere they please.

*Special capabilities* for a galleon are employed by those who use them for carrying vast amounts of treasure, the seeming bottomless holds of such a ship ever hungry for more gold, adding +1 to rolls on Table 81 when plundering other ships, however, suffering a similar penalty of 2 when (and if) one's own galleon is plundered.

*Suggested Nationalities* for a galleon include England and Spain.

# CHAPTER SEVEN

LOST VOICES OF THE SEA EVER CALL TO SPIRITS UNBOUND BY LAND AND LONG TO JOIN THEM



## Man-O-War

**Value:** 8  
**Crew:** 15/190  
**Speed:** 12 leagues  
**Guns:** 28  
**Battle:** 8  
**Hull:** 600  
**Cargo:** 10000

Somewhat smaller to a merchant ship in her three-masted, square-rigged profile, the man-o-war is much more sturdily built. At three hundred and sixty tons, this hundred and ten foot vessel serves mainly as the scout of a major fleet. She is the backbone of many squadrons dispatched to protect cargo vessels, especially in the Caribbean. Her presence on the scene is usually enough to send pirates fleeing.

*Special capabilities* for a man-o-war are apparent to all who come close enough to do battle with them, as these ships can maneuver their guns faster and to a greater arc than all others, gaining +1 to roll Critical Hit results on Table 43.

*Suggested Nationalities* for a man-o-war include England alone, the pride of their fleets.

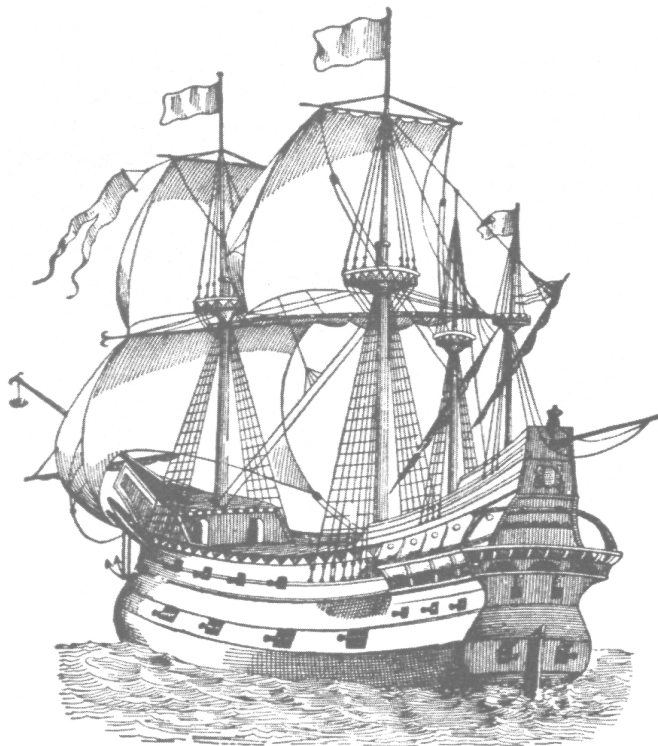
## Mariner

**Value:** 4  
**Crew:** 20/200  
**Speed:** 10 leagues  
**Guns:** 16  
**Battle:** 5  
**Hull:** 260  
**Cargo:** 9000

Commercial vessels are most commonly named thus, as 'merchant ships' or 'mariners'. These are larger ships, usually three-masted, square-rigged passenger and cargo ships. With finer lines and more sails than the Dutch fluyt, this two hundred and eighty ton vessel can sail from Europe to the Americas in a month.

*Special capabilities* for a mariner lie in its common use as a tradeship, as ports tend to welcome business from such captains more than most others, increasing the chance of Availability for items in town bought by its captain by +1.

*Suggested Nationalities* for a mariner include England, France and Holland.



## Merchantman

**Value:** 5  
**Crew:** 20/250  
**Speed:** 10 leagues  
**Guns:** 12  
**Battle:** 4  
**Hull:** 220  
**Cargo:** 12000

Larger adaptations of mariners were built to compensate for the growing number of colonies in the New World, and the name 'merchantman' became synonymous with these larger ships; the mariner became a trade ship, the merchantman a supply ship. Roughly the same in all respects, merchantmen often carry more precious goods than others, and thus seldom do they travel without an escort. They're a fine prize for pirates—if they are rugged enough to attack two ships to their one.

*Special capabilities* for a merchantman lie in its common use as a tradeship, as ports tend to welcome business from such captains more than most others, increasing the chance of availability for items in town bought by its captain by +1.

*Suggested Nationalities* for a merchantman include England and Holland.

# ALL SHIPS AT SEA



LOST VOICES OF THE SEA EVER CALL TO SPIRITS UNBOUND BY LAND AND LONG TO JOIN THEM



## Naval sloop

**Value:** 2  
**Crew:** 8/120  
**Speed:** 16 leagues  
**Guns:** 12  
**Battle:** 7  
**Hull:** 120  
**Cargo:** 3500

Spreading clouds of canvas from one mast, the Naval sloop is bigger and more heavily armed than her pirate counterpart. Designed from the keel up for combat, she is sharp ended, and thus faster. At a hundred and fifteen tons, this sixty-five footer also uses oars with a full crew, adding the ability to swing about quickly for combat in light winds.

*Special capabilities* for a Naval sloop are best exploited by those with gold and aggression, as they are designed to mount more cannon, allowing for 1 additional modification beyond its normal Value if all modifications total are gun mounts.

*Suggested Nationalities* for a Naval sloop include England and Holland.

## Navy snow

**Value:** 2  
**Crew:** 8/80  
**Speed:** 16 leagues  
**Guns:** 8  
**Battle:** 8  
**Hull:** 120  
**Cargo:** 2000

At a distance, only the fore-and-aft trisail, flying behind her mainmast distinguishes the Navy snow from a square-rigged brigantine. Royal navies favor such a sail plan for this ninety ton, sixty foot patrol vessel since it allows a square mainsail to be set at the same time as the trisail, offering added speed. With a small crew even at maximum capacity, she's formidable for her size, mounting more guns than her appearance may suggest.

*Special capabilities* for a Navy snow are best exploited by those with savvy and skill, as they are designed to support more sails, allowing for 1 additional modification beyond its normal Value if all modifications total are extra sails.

*Suggested Nationalities* for a Navy snow include England alone.

## Schooner

**Value:** 1  
**Crew:** 6/50  
**Speed:** 18 leagues  
**Guns:** 6  
**Battle:** 4  
**Hull:** 60  
**Cargo:** 1200

Distinguished by her two small masts, rigged with fore-and-aft sails and by the narrowness of her hull, the schooner or 'pinnace' is a favorite of many pirate captains. Her great speed allows quick escape, and her shallow hull enables her to find her way into the most secluded coves, away from the larger ships of privateers and pirate hunters. But at a good hundred tons, she's also big enough to carry a sizable crew of bloodthirsty men.

*Special capabilities* for a schooner are not seen by many, as such ships are good for hiding in coves and secret harbors, therein standing a 5 in 12 chance of being unable to be found each day.

*Suggested Nationalities* for a schooner include France and Holland.

## Sloop

**Value:** 2  
**Crew:** 8/90  
**Speed:** 20 leagues  
**Guns:** 10  
**Battle:** 6  
**Hull:** 100  
**Cargo:** 3000

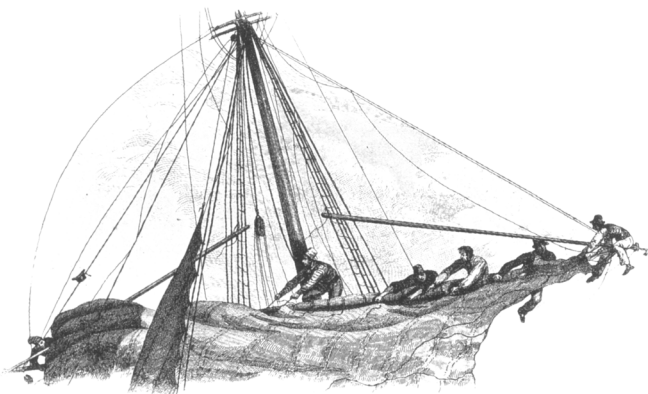
Greatly favored by smugglers, the swift sloop is an ideal vessel for pirates. A rapier-like bowsprit almost as long as her hull enables her to mount a parade of canvas that makes her even more nimble than schooners and snows. Though not as shallow in draft as the schooner, this hundred ton ship draws only eight feet of water carrying close to a hundred men, enabling the sloop to maneuver in channels and sounds where pirates make their lairs.

*Special capabilities* for a sloop are not seen by many, as such ships are good for slipping over the horizon, at sea standing a 1 in 6 chance of avoiding entirely any ship they have sighted.

*Suggested Nationalities* for a sloop include England, France and Holland.

# CHAPTER SEVEN

LOST VOICES OF THE SEA EVER CALL TO SPIRITS UNBOUND BY LAND AND LONG TO JOIN THEM



**SETTING SAIL:** Once the Player Characters are signed onto a ship (or snuck aboard), and there's a destination, all that's left to do is hoist the sails and roll the dice.

**Daily movement:** Each ship will move a maximum number of leagues in a single day, according to the type of ship that it is. However, each day out at sea, the Game Captain must roll to determine the fortune of that day's voyage. This roll is modified by a few factors. But unlike most rolls, a natural '12' does not necessarily remain a 12, but a natural '1' indeed remains a 1.

**Morale** greatly effects a ship's efficiency and thus its speed, according to their general modifier from Table 38.

**Oars** on either side of the ship, also called 'sweeps', are normally used for short distances, but if used for daily travel they will add +1 to the roll though at the cost of -2 Morale.

**Table 40: Sailing**

Roll	The day's voyage
12	Good weather; sail an extra 1-12 leagues
9-11	Smooth sailing
8	Bad food; loss of 10-120 total days' worth
7	Troubled crew; loss of 1-6 Morale
6	Storm
5	Reefs
2-4	Possibly lost; Navigation Check required
1	Encounter

**Navigation:** Whenever a ship has drifted off course, the crew must steer themselves back in the right direction, and so make a 'Navigation Check'. One

must have someone aboard Skilled in Navigation to attempt this, or else he is automatically lost. The highest Skill Level of Navigation among everybody on board is the chance in 6 of staying on course. If ever a ship strays off course, it will encounter a storm or a reef that cannot be avoided.

A *compass* aboard the ship adds a bonus of +1 to a Navigation Check.

A *spyglass* aboard the ship adds a bonus of +1 to a Navigation Check.

*Charts* aboard the ship add a bonus of +2 to this roll, yet this is a double-edged sword, for the absence of charts will penalize this roll by -1.

**Reefs:** Reefs, corals, sandbars and headlands are all dangers to ships. Reefs can be anywhere, even in the open sea (and especially in the shallow waters of the Caribbean). If reefs are encountered, they are usually rounded, thus negating all movement for that day (having to navigate the reefs with the ebb and flow of the tides). However, if a captain wishes to maneuver through reefs, he takes his own chances, and the chances are these: his ship's Value is the chance in 12 that he runs aground. If this occurs, he will suffer 5-60 Hull Points worth of damage for each point to his ship's Value—the larger the ship, the deeper it rests in the water, and thus the greater risk of shipwreck.

**Storms:** Storms can occur at any time, anywhere. When a storm comes up, the Game Captain rolls a single dice to determine its 'Magnitude', which in turn determines several things about it. A storm's Magnitude is first and foremost the chance in 12 it cannot be avoided, the 10s of leagues required to round it if it can be avoided, and the number of rolls for losses of Hull Points for passing through (with applicable effects from Table 42).

**Encounters:** Anything can be an Encounter, even a reef or a storm, or another ship. Indeed, when the ship has an 'encounter', this truly means that the Game Captain is to present some sort of challenge for the ship, be it great or small, but a challenge none-the-less. This may be a prepared Encounter from an Adventure's notes, something made up on a whim, or simply some other effect rolled from Table 40.

# ALL SHIPS AT SEA

LOST VOICES OF THE SEA EVER CALL TO SPIRITS UNBOUND BY LAND AND LONG TO JOIN THEM



**NAUTICAL TACTICS:** When it's time to raise the sails and put to sea, the galley of this game better be ship-shape and commanded by a Game Captain who knows where he's going and what he is looking for, and most of all what choices both he and his crew of Players will make to get there.

**Charting a course:** The daily business of working a ship is always hard for a seaman, but it need not necessarily be so for a Player nor his Game Captain, as they can just sit back and watch the waves roll by, waiting to spend their mental energy on capturing other ships and plundering towns and treasures! The daily rolls on Table 40 for the calculation and recalculation of speed

versus days can be taken either as a simulation for the monotonous life at sea, or they can be streamlined and made a lot quicker. In this manner, the crew has a few options.

*Maintaining speed* indicates that when a roll of '12' is made, the favorable winds do not count just for that one day, but the crew can choose to ride them for a while, indeed holding until a roll of '1', '2' or '3' comes up, for at this time the wind changes, and the ship **must** sail through the storm or reef, for the wind blew them there.

*Distance factor* can be used instead of the option above, in this instance the extra leagues rolled (for one day) are simply reduced from the overall distance to travel.

**Maneuvering:** A ship can increase its speed by many different means, from 'tacking' (turning so that the bow is brought across the wind), to 'wearing' (turning so that the stern is brought across the wind), and simply being vigilant enough to slightly change direction as often as the winds and currents in order to take in their maximum push. Normally, since most captains are competent in their trade, the rules assume they are doing this already, hence gaining the maximum speed listed for their type of ship. But if one wishes to be more specific, he may gamble on the speed his ship will gain. To do this, one simply states that his ship is 'tacking', 'wearing' or whatever name he gives to his maneuvering, and this order will hold until he says otherwise. The ship will then gain a number of leagues each day equal to the **captain's** Shipwright Skill Level (if any), but as he is caught in the wind and current, both storms and reefs are unavoidable if rolled on Table 40.

**Riding the storm:** There are a few options open to a captain that he may employ to help his ship pass through any storm with suffering less damage than usual.

*Reefing the sails* involves minimizing the canvas catching the storm's wind, effectively reducing a storm's Magnitude by -1 for every 3 leagues worth of daily movement reduced from the vessel each day.

*Catching the wind* involves deliberately turning the ship so that the full force of the storm fills all

## CHAPTER SEVEN

LOST VOICES OF THE SEA EVER CALL TO SPIRITS UNBOUND BY LAND AND LONG TO JOIN THEM

the sails, increasing the vessel's speed dramatically but at great risk, effectively adding 2 leagues each day but at the cost of 1-6 additional Hull Points worth of damage.

*Hugging the land* involves staying in sight of the shore, a calculated risk which involves using headlands and mountains to block the winds, but with the added risk of running aground on reefs and shoals unseen in the stormy waters, effectively reducing a storm's rolls for Hull Point damage by -1 for every 1 in 12 chance one wishes to risk of sinking his ship outright.



Cleaning the ship: Ships of all kinds require daily cleaning, such as scrubbing the deck of algae, changing ropes so they don't fray, and countless other jobs. At any time, the Players may decide to clean the ship and set about it, which ultimately is a gamble for modifiers to future rolls. If they are not in command of their ship, they can persuade an NPC captain to clean the ship if they can make a successful Charisma Check, though only one

such Check is allowed each week. Cleaning the ship will use enough crew to reduce a ship's speed by -2 leagues on any given day, but this will serve to counter the result of the next roll of '6' on Table 40, and if the next result happens to be another '6', this counter will maintain, indeed until another lower result occurs.

Careening the ship: A more thorough means of maintenance, this involves beaching the ship so the crew can examine the entire hull, patch it, and clear out such problems as teredo worms that bore holes in the wood—even the smallest holes are perilous, and as such they are patched with a mixture of tar, tallow and sulfur, while rotten planks are replaced entirely with whatever wood the land offers. Seams are recaulked, barnacles are burned off, and the ship is generally given an overall cleaning. Taking the time to do this is extremely dangerous, as a beached ship offers a pirate crew absolutely no defense.

Careening a ship is a detail that is the Player's option alone, one that gambles on greater speed and strength for the pirate vessel, against which the Game Captain must offer up the consequences of what happens when they go too long without such maintenance.

A ship can find a suitable place to beach pretty much anywhere, and it is simply a matter of waiting for the tide to go out. The Value of the ship is the number of tide changes (intervals of six hours) that it takes to clean a ship, as well as the chance in 20 that the ship is seen by another vessel passing close-by, who will either investigate and attack (if they are strong enough), or simply report it to the nearest authorities (who will subsequently send ships that **can** investigate and attack). However, if a crew is allowed to careen their ship unmolested, they can do a number of things, as described below.

*Food* can be purified and preserved better by cleaning its storage, increasing Morale by 1-6.

*Repairs* can be made for a number of Hull Points in one day (four tide changes) equal to the highest Shipwright Skill Level amongst the crew.

*Grapeshot* can be made by salvaging enough material every 1-4 tide changes to prepare one salvo (freeing up the 5 men required by Table 45).

# ALL SHIPS AT SEA



LOST VOICES OF THE SEA EVER CALL TO SPIRITS UNBOUND BY LAND AND LONG TO JOIN THEM





# CHAPTER SEVEN

LOST VOICES OF THE SEA EVER CALL TO SPIRITS UNBOUND BY LAND AND LONG TO JOIN THEM



**NAVAL BATTLE:** Few things are as spectacular as ships doing broadside battle, nor as exciting as crews swinging from ship-to-ship and swarming into each other with swords and clubs and fists and feet flailing in every direction!

**Combat Rounds:** Battles at sea are divided up into Rounds. In each Round, each individual ship has one Turn. With that Turn, a ship may (by order of the Player commanding it) fire upon another ship, attempt to flee, or attempt to board another vessel.

At the beginning of each Round, each Player who controls at least one ship will roll a single dice for an 'Initiative Roll'. The Player with the highest roll gets to take his ships' Turns first. After that, the Player with the lesser roll gets to take Turns for each of his own ships.

If Initiative Rolls are tied, all the action happens at once, and all results are totaled at the end of the Round.

**Cannon:** Whenever a ship fires upon another, the Player responsible for that ship will make an 'Attack Roll'. This is an entire salvo from all the cannons that the ship can fire.

Each cannon requires at least one man to operate. However, more men per cannon adds a modifier to one's Attack Roll, as the cannon is loaded faster and more easily moved in place.

When an Attack Roll is made, one Player rolls for the entire crew's salvo. If this roll equals or exceeds the 'Battle' factor given for the ship, all of the cannon fired hit their target. However, if this roll fails, all it did was scare the fish.

**Table 41: Cannon**

Crew per cannon	Attack Roll modifier
5+	+2
4	+1
3	+0
2	-1
1	-2

**Ships damage:** Each ship's structural strength is measured by 'Hull Points'. Whenever a ship is hit by a cannon salvo, the number of cannon firing upon it are the number of Hull Points that are subtracted from the ship's total. For every 10 Hull Points destroyed (rounded down), the victim must roll on Table 42 to determine what damage his ship has endured. If a ship reaches 0 Hull Points, it is destroyed, and sinks.

**Table 42: Ship Damage**

Roll	Damage to the ship
12	No damage beyond normal Hull Points
10-11	1-12 Levels worth of crewmen killed
8-9	1-3 cannon destroyed
7	1-12 additional Hull Points lost
6	Longboat <b>or</b> anchor lost (roller's choice)
4-5	Sail damage; -1 league to base speed
3	Lost a mast; -3 leagues to base speed
2	10-120 additional Hull Points lost
1	Hold hit; 1000-12000 in treasure lost!
0*	Hull drawing water; sinks in 1-12 Rounds

\* - This can only occur from the penalty applied to being fired at when fleeing.

# ALL SHIPS AT SEA



LOST VOICES OF THE SEA EVER CALL TO SPIRITS UNBOUND BY LAND AND LONG TO JOIN THEM



**Sinking ships:** When a ship is reduced to 0 Hull Points, it begins to sink, disappearing beneath the waves within a number of Rounds equal to 1-12 plus the ship's Value. Salvaging anything off of a cannon requires 1 man per ton per Round. And, all crewmen who are moving things from a sinking ship cannot take part in the fighting for that particular Round.

**Critical Hits:** Whenever a salvo is fired and a natural '12' is rolled, the attack was so successful that it merits a 'Critical Hit'. The Player of the attacking vessel rolls on Table 43 to determine the critical result. If this roll results in an implausible effect, such as hitting cannon when there are no cannon left to destroy, then use the next **highest** result on the chart until a plausible result is found.

**Table 43: Critical Salvos**

Roll	Critical salvo
12	Hit's powder hold; enemy ship destroyed!
9-11	Enemy needs time to recover; loses Turn
7-8	3-36 additional crewmen killed
6	1-12 additional cannon destroyed
4-5	Triple normal Damage
1-3	Double normal Damage

**Critical Misses:** Whenever a salvo is fired and a natural '1' is rolled, the attack failed regardless of all modifiers applied to the roll, and indeed was such a blunder that it merits a 'Critical Miss'. The Player of the attacking vessel rolls on Table 44 to determine the critical result. If this roll results in an implausible effect, such as losing cannon when there are no more cannon left to lose, then use the next **lowest** result on that chart until a plausible result is found.

**Table 44: Critical Blunders**

Roll	Critical blunder
12	Attacker's choice
9-11	Backfire; 1-12 crewmen killed
7-8	Disabled; enemy gets free Turn
5-6	Backfire; 1-12 cannon blow up
4	Ship afire; lose 1-3 Turns
3	Ship afire; 2-24 Hull lost or lose 3 Turns
2	Hits allied ship (if there is one)
1	Defender's choice!



**Broadside tactics:** When the guns are primed, cannons loaded and hundreds of men ready to cut each other to pieces, the tension alone can be enough to kill a man, and Players will look for every possible advantage they can get to ensure victory, and for the creative captain there are as many options in battle as there are flags to be fired on. A crew can employ any number of the following tactics in a Round, with cumulative effects. Table 45 displays each tactic, its modifier to one's Attack Roll, and the number of spare crew (who cannot be involved in **anything** else during that Round (including sailing the ship and fighting back if boarded) required to carry out such a tactic. Those tactics whose results are marked with an asterisk ('\*') can have cumulative effects.

**Table 45: Broadside Tactics**

Tactic employed	Attack	Crew
Using the wind	-0	10
Musketry	+1*	20*
Grapeshot	-1	5
Hot coals	-2*	5*
Hooks	-2	0
Doubling the guns	+1	15

# CHAPTER SEVEN

LOST VOICES OF THE SEA EVER CALL TO SPIRITS UNBOUND BY LAND AND LONG TO JOIN THEM

*Using the wind* involves refitting the sails for battle, or unfurling ‘battle sails’ as it were, to flow with the wind and encircle enemy vessels or to simply outrun them, effectively reducing one’s chance of being hit by cannon by -1 during the next Round.

*Musketry* involves men crouching out of sight and then suddenly standing up with muskets to shoot enemy crewmen, usually those operating the guns. This can only be done if either ship tried to board the other on the last Turn but failed to do so. Thus so close, this tactic will add +1 to the Attack Roll for every 20 men (rounded down) that are participating in it. This Attack Roll of cannons (with musket assistance), if it results in killing any enemy crewmen (by any results on Table 42), will bring down an additional 1-12 of them.

*Grapeshot* is a generic term referring to any sort of scrap metal that can be placed into a cannon and fired, included chain links, nails and even coins! When cannonballs are replaced with grapeshot, it will tear the enemy to pieces, shredding both crew and ship more than the storm of splinters created by a normal salvo. This will effectively reduce the enemy’s next Initiative Roll by -1. If the enemy rolls a natural ‘1’, this penalty thus reducing their roll to ‘0’, they will not get to do anything that Round at all!

*Hot coals* require an extra Round to prepare (regardless of how many guns are being used so), as the men are bringing up burning coals from below decks (usually from the galley) to stuff into their cannons. Every 5 men who do this (rounded down) will penalize the Attack Roll by -2 but add a 10 Damage to that salvo. If a Critical Salvo is rolled for effective ‘double’ or ‘triple’ Damage, the hot coals (no matter the men) will add a factor of one, thus increasing the damage results to ‘triple’ or ‘quadruple’ Damage respectively.

*Hooks* are thrown to the enemy ship to tie it to one’s own vessel, which is both a blessing and a curse. Indeed, if an attack is successful by such a tactic, the enemy gets a +1 to their Attack Roll that Round (if they lost Initiative). Thereafter the two ships are tied together, preventing either from fleeing unless cut loose. It takes 2 total Rounds to cut ships apart, regardless of who is doing it.

*Doubling the guns* is often misunderstood. No ship actually has double the amount of guns listed (accounting for both sides). Rather the number of cannon for any ship is the physical total of guns aboard. A crew simply rolls them from side-to-side as a ship rounds on an enemy. To ‘double’ the guns means to spare some men for the sole duty of moving the massive cannons more quickly and efficiently between salvos. When engaged in battle against a ship on either side, this tactic can also be used to gain an Attack Roll against both on the same Turn.

Ramming: Sometimes a desperate or brutal captain may wish to attack simply by ramming his enemy’s ship! If he attempts this, a normal roll is required as if firing a cannon salvo, and if successful, the attacking ship’s Value is the number of rolls that must be made to see how much damage **both** ships suffer. After a ramming, either ship can easily be boarded.



Fleeing and giving chase: If at any time a captain decides to tuck tail and run, he may, but a chase may ensue.

The Value of the smallest enemy ship is his chance in 12 that he can escape—the faster one’s enemies, the more difficult it is to flee. If a ship fails to flee, one enemy vessel receives a free Turn to do as they will. If they fire and hit, the cowardly ship’s roll on Table 42 suffers a -3, thus potentially sinking it! Or, they may give chase.

Whenever one ship chases another, it is usually a long and drawn out event, as they compete for the winds, skip past reefs and try

# ALL SHIPS AT SEA

LOST VOICES OF THE SEA EVER CALL TO SPIRITS UNBOUND BY LAND AND LONG TO JOIN THEM

various tactics against one another. What it all boils down to is a roll between the ships, and the one with the higher total between a single roll and their ship's 'Speed' factor proves to be the faster vessel in this instance. There are several factors which can modify this roll.

*Dumping cargo overboard* will add +1 to the roll for every 1000 total value of cargo (rounded down) that is lost.

*Using oars* or 'sweeps' works well for these short distances, adding +1 to the roll for every 30 crew (rounded down) that will not be involved in the first Round of broadside battle, as they come up from the oars and then prepare to fight.

**MASS MELEE:** It's not (usually) the ultimate goal of ships to destroy their targets, but rather to capture them. Cannon salvos soften up one's enemies, making a 'boarding party' much to their advantage. When a captain decides to move in, he spends his ship's Turn to do so, and then makes a single roll, needing equal to or above the enemy ship's 'Battle' factor for this maneuver to be successful. If one cannot get his own vessel close enough, his enemy gets a free Turn to act as he will. However, when one does indeed come close enough, the crew will throw boarding hooks and ropes and drag the ships so close together that men walk or jump across or swing from deck-to-deck, until the crews converge in a mass melee!

**Calculating Mass Melee:** When Mass Melee begins, the total Levels worth of men are counted for each side in battle. Each Round, every 100 Levels worth of men (rounded up) effect one roll on a single dice. The resulting roll is the number of total Levels worth of men detracted from the other side. Unlike other forms of combat however, there is no Initiative Roll for mass melee—it's all happening at once. There are several factors that can add (or subtract) from this roll.

*Morale* greatly effects how well a crew fights, their modifier from Table 38 applied outright.

*Leadership* guides men through the clouds of smoke and chaos, their roll modified from their captain's Leadership Skill, as listed on Table 72.

*Weapons* are always in the hands of pirates, but if they are supplied with good weapons, they

will gain a bonus of +1 to their rolls thus (though this only applies once for each roll, regardless of how many purchases one makes from Table 34).

**Player Characters in Mass Melee:** Player Characters and major NPCs are not counted amongst the Levels of men in calculating Mass Melee. Instead, they are dealt with separately, under the normal rules for individual combat. For once a Round of Mass Melee has been 'finished', with the deaths all calculated and told, each Player Character will then receive a normal, personal fight with whatever target(s) they choose, be it one crewmen with randomly rolled statistics (from Table 37), five such crewmen, or even the captain himself, though specific targets such as officers and nobles may or may not require a Searching Check in order to find amidst the chaos (for sometimes they hide). After each Player Character's battle is finished, all major NPCs (those with full Character Record Sheets) receive 1 Round only for the same (with which they usually attack the PCs or their captain).



# CHAPTER SEVEN

LOST VOICES OF THE SEA EVER CALL TO SPIRITS UNBOUND BY LAND AND LONG TO JOIN THEM

**Surrender:** Rarely are boarding parties going to fight to the last man. Instead, they fight until it is clear who the winner will be, indeed when their morale is broken. This can happen at any time for a number of different reasons.

*If the captain surrenders* his men will surrender as well. NPC captains will not surrender unless a Character could have killed them—the attacker, after a successful, fatal blow, can choose to ‘pull the attack’ and thus let the fallen live. This leaves an enemy alive to gain information from, and earns the respect of enemy crewmen, leaving the victor with a much greater gathering of potential pirates to recruit from.

*If the captain is killed* his men will either break or fight like madmen. A single roll will be made, and if the result equals or exceeds the fallen captain’s Experience Level then all his crew will drop their weapons and surrender. However, if the result is less than their dead leader’s Experience Level, they will fight on, gaining 1 free Round of Mass Melee to brutalize their enemies with a bonus of +3 to their roll, a bonus which will also remain for the rest of the fight!



*If a crew is being slaughtered* by sheer numbers, they might surrender even while their captain still battles on: At the beginning of each Round, however many 20s of Levels of men outnumber their enemies is the chance in 12 that they surrender. This roll is modified by the crew’s Morale (from Table 38), as well as any bonus from their captain’s Charisma (Table 57).

**Boarding tactics:** Boarding parties are a contest to see who stays in Hell longer. Indeed, they are a chaotic storm of bloodthirsty, desperate men in a killing frenzy, though more ruthless or experienced captains can find ways to focus their crew’s aggression into more effective boarding tactics. One can employ any **one** of the following tactics with which to board an enemy vessel. Table 46 displays these tactics along with the modifier to one’s chance in 12 of effectively boarding another ship.

**Table 46: Boarding Tactics**

Tactic employed	Modifier
Boarding axes	+2
Swinging between ships	+3
Playing dead	+3
Stealth approach	+4

*Boarding axes* are used to scale the sides of larger ships and then hack their enemies to pieces, the most common boarding tactic.

*Swinging* from ship-to-ship can only be done if the ships are brought so close together, either by ramming or hooks (from Table 45).

*Playing dead* involves a crew pretending to be more beaten down than they really are to lure an enemy into boarding them, then rise up and fight like the dead come back to life! However, if this ‘boarding’ fails, the wary enemy will get a free Turn to fire their cannons on the immobile enemy, and with +4 to their Attack Roll.

*Stealth* involves a pre-selected amount of crew circling around their enemy, perhaps in longboats or even just by swimming, and boarding from the blindside. These sneaky men cannot offer any aid of any kind to their comrades while attempting this tactic, and, if successful, they are the only ones who can fight during the first Round of the Mass Melee that begins thus.

# ALL SHIPS AT SEA



LOST VOICES OF THE SEA EVER CALL TO SPIRITS UNBOUND BY LAND AND LONG TO JOIN THEM



**ATTACKING TOWNS:** The greatest conquests for pirates are towns—the larger the better! If a pirate crew is brave enough to attack a town, the same rules as for naval battle are utilized.

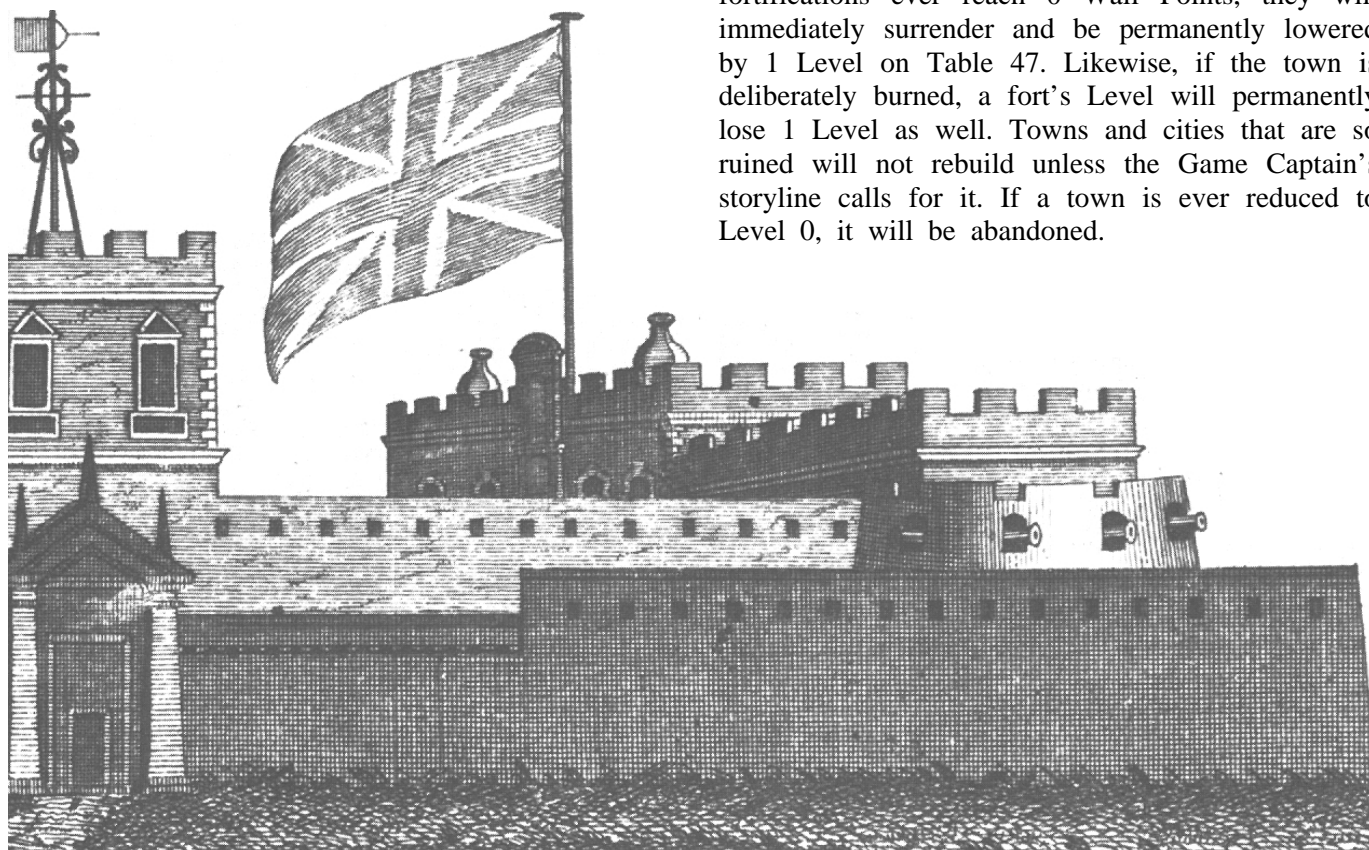
**Fortifications:** Larger cities and colonies often have fortifications guarding all roads into them, their harbors in particular. If a town has fortifications, they will number anywhere from 1 to 10, this measurement similar to a ship's Value. Note that the strength of a town's fortifications will not always be proportional to the size and value of the town itself. Table 47 displays the strength of fortifications by the number of cannon they have, the size of their garrison (in total Crew Levels), and the strength of their walls by 'Walls' which is the equivalent of Hull Points. All fortifications have a 'Battle' factor of 10.

Note that most tactics normally available to ships (Tables 45 and 46) cannot be used against a fort, save for 'using the wind' and 'musketfire', however, a fort can use any tactics against a ship.

Table 47: Fortifications

Level	Cannon	Garrison	Walls
10	8 rolls	5 rolls +70 x10	1200
9	7 rolls	5 rolls +40 x10	1000
8	6 rolls	5 rolls +20 x10	900
7	5 rolls	4 rolls +12 x10	800
6	5 rolls	3 rolls +9 x10	700
5	4 rolls	2 rolls +6 x10	600
4	3 rolls	1 roll +6 x10	500
3	3 rolls	1 roll +3 x10	400
2	2 rolls	10 rolls	300
1	2 rolls	5 rolls	200

**Forts damage:** Each fort's structural strength is measured by 'Wall Points', which are proportional to a ship's Hull Points. Whenever any fortifications are hit by a cannon salvo, the number of cannon firing upon it are the number of such Wall Points that are subtracted from the fort's total. For every 10 Wall Points destroyed (rounded down), the fort must roll on Table 48 to determine what damage has been done to the bulk of its defenses. Should fortifications ever reach 0 Wall Points, they will immediately surrender and be permanently lowered by 1 Level on Table 47. Likewise, if the town is deliberately burned, a fort's Level will permanently lose 1 Level as well. Towns and cities that are so ruined will not rebuild unless the Game Captain's storyline calls for it. If a town is ever reduced to Level 0, it will be abandoned.



# CHAPTER SEVEN

LOST VOICES OF THE SEA EVER CALL TO SPIRITS UNBOUND BY LAND AND LONG TO JOIN THEM

**Table 48: Fort Damage**

Roll	Damage to the fortifications
10-12	No damage beyond normal Wall Points
6-9	1-6 crewmen killed
3-5	1-3 cannon destroyed
2	10-120 additional Wall Points lost
1	Vaults hit; 100-1200 in treasure lost!

**Approaching by land:** Most forts are built to guard a harbor, and so are most attacks waged from the sea. However, sometimes pirates will approach by land. If the garrison outnumbers the attackers, they will leave the fort and fight on land. However, a large band will have to try and gain the gate or scale the walls. Such victories are only attained by defeating the field defenders through normal rules for mass melee, with each Round that the invading army is outside giving the fortress an automatic hit with a cannon salvo upon the lot of them—each cannon destroys 1 Level worth of men.

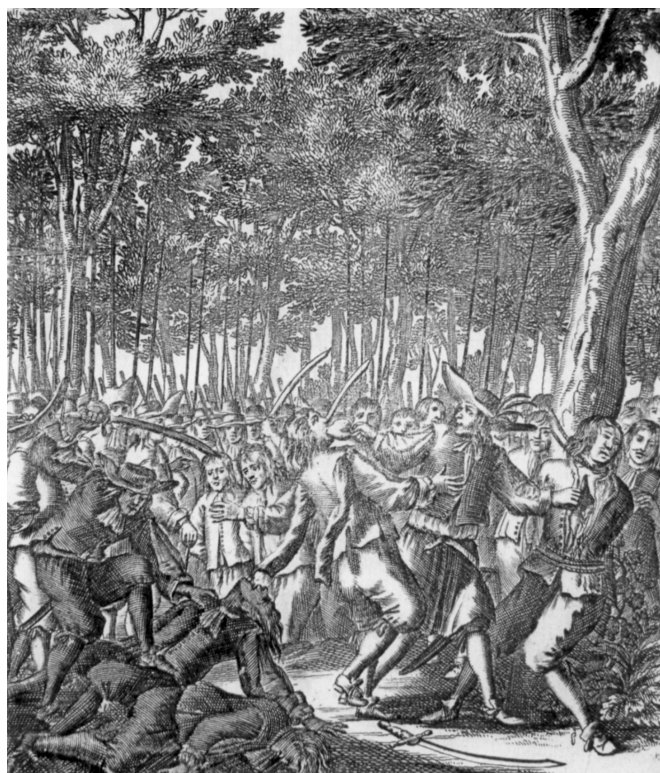
**VICTORIOUS PIRATES:** Pirates tend to live short, brutal, profitable lives, and so the capture of a ship, a town, or some other sizable plunder isn't going to lead to a fair division of treasure in an orderly manner, but to utter chaos and drunken celebration! This is fun for the crew, but usually a nightmare for those in command.

Whenever a pirate crew wins a battle, there is a chance in 15 equal to the Level of the town multiplied by 3 or the direct Value of the ship taken that the crew becomes overly excited and thus calls for a roll on Table 49 to determine the consequences of their behavior.

If the Player Characters are in command of the ship, they can take preventive measures for any of those situations listed on Table 49. The column of 'Avoid' lists how much gold must be pre-paid to the crew to prevent any one particular situation, be this gold sacrificed directly or indirectly, such as lying in an extra supply of rum or hiring them whores. The situations to be avoided must be specified ahead of time. If something that is indeed been 'avoided' is rolled, then nothing occurs, though the gold has been spent and used and thus that situation can now happen again...

**Table 49: Victorious Crews**

Roll	Victorious crew behavior	Avoid
9-12	Crew is obedient and efficient	-
8	The first 100-600 value of gems taken are lost due to the pirates busting them into pieces like coins, not realizing their value	100
7	A key NPC (if any) is killed before the PCs can meet him or learn anything from him	200
6	They take only gold and jewels and throw all other plunder into the deep, to be lost forever	300
4-5	They execute 1-12 captives and/or new crewmen from the captured vessel or town	500
2-3	They burn the captured ship or town into nothingness, after it's been fully plundered	700
1	All plunder is accidentally lost due to the potent combination of rum, machismo, and gunpowder!	1000





# Pirates

## Book 2

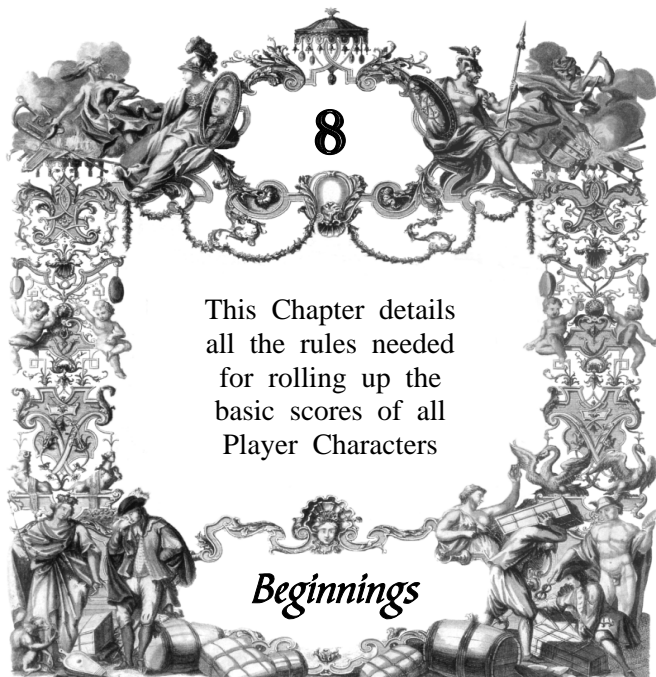
*The Players Book*





# CHAPTER EIGHT

WHAT MANNER OF MAN BRAVES SEAS OF BLOOD AND HAS ENEMIES THAT DRINK THEIR OWN?



This Chapter details all the rules needed for rolling up the basic scores of all Player Characters

## Beginnings

**CREATING CHARACTERS:** Charted well on Table 50 below is the course one should follow to complete their Character. The various elements of Character creation are provided in the same order.

**Table 50: Character Creation Steps**

Step	Creation process
1	Roll for Ability Scores
2	Select Nationality
3	Determine age
4	Calculate Defense Score
5	Determine height, weight and age
6	Roll for comeliness (if at all)
7	Determine handedness
8	Determine starting wealth
9	Apply Inheritance Roll (if any)
10	Acquire Trademarks (if any)
11	Roll for starting Notoriety
12	Select Character Class
13	Determine initial Skill Points
14	Select Skills
15	Determine Saving Throws
16	Buy equipment (if you can afford any)
17	Calculate Movement rate
18	Review statistics for errors
19	Cheat everything you can get away with!
20	Name the Character

**Creation Points:** Most elements of a Character will be determined by rolling dice. However, Characters are better balanced by each Player's bonus of 10 'Creation Points', to apply as they wish. Note that there are several instances where the application of Creation Points will involve changing dice rolls, so they should either be used at that time, or the Player must keep an accurate record of his dice as they rolled—one cannot backtrack, such as going back to alter one dice result of the three for a single Ability, as only the final Score is known.

**Lost Characters:** Characters die often in this game, for a pirate's life is usually a short and brutal one, though the game should remain fun. To this end, when making up a new Character, a Player will receive a number of bonus Creation Points equal to the Experience Level of his former one, no matter if that lost Character died, retired, or disappeared into the netherworld. Note that the old Character must be forever gone—these bonus points are not awarded until the former Character Sheet is cast down into Davey Jones' Trash Can.

**Re-rolls:** During Character creation, each Player is allowed to re-roll one dice or statistic. However, this re-roll must be made at the time the statistic is first determined—if the Player moves on to the next roll for his character, the previous statistic cannot be altered.

**ABILITY SCORES:** Each Character possesses eight Ability Scores, each ranging from 1-12. To determine each of these scores, the Player will roll a single dice three times, and the middle-result will be his Ability Score. For example, if one rolls the results of '3', '5' and '6', his Score would be 5. Note that this does not involve 'averaging' the rolls, but simply taking the middle result.

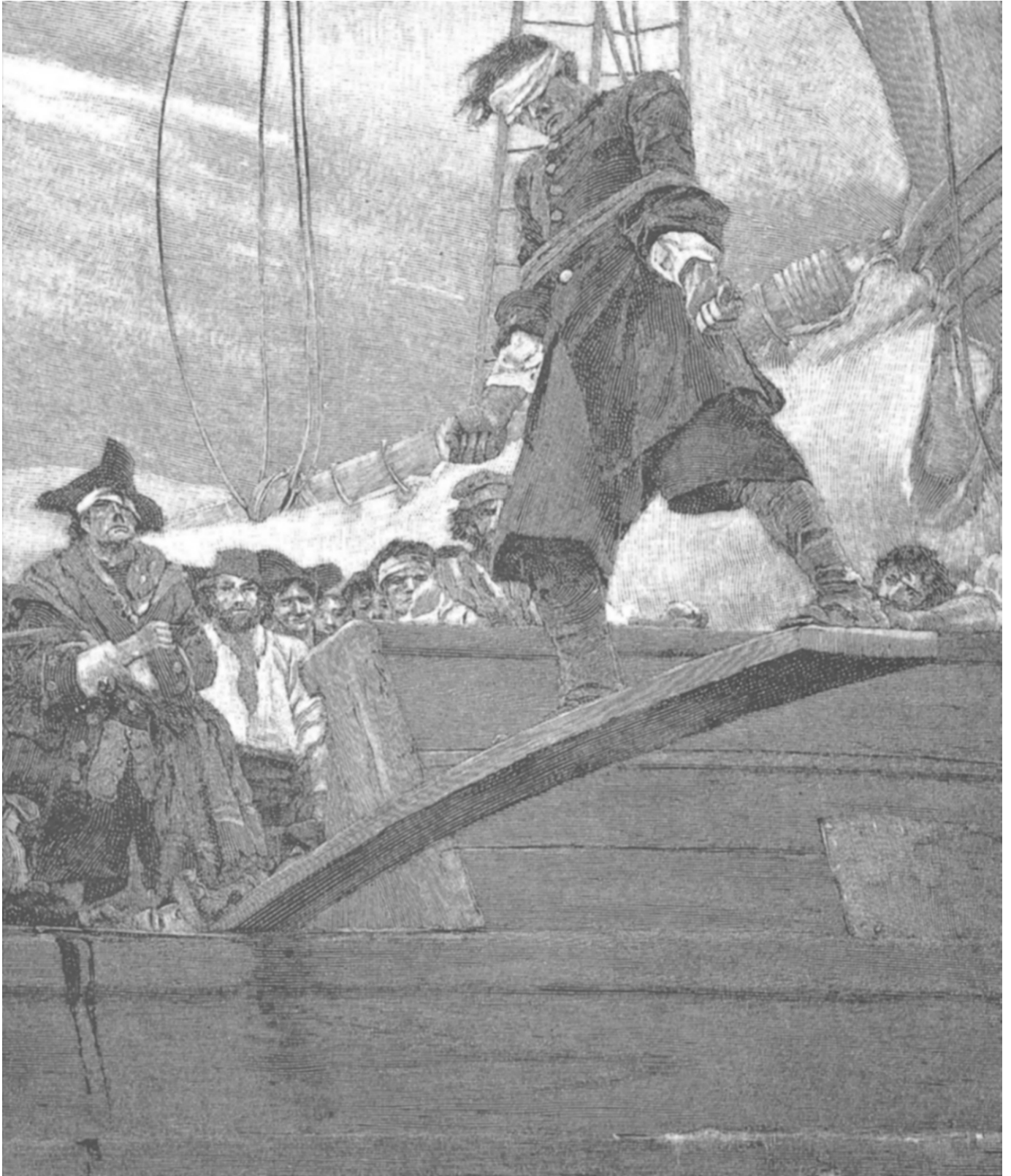
If two numbers tied, the Ability Score will be the **lowest** of the numbers. For example, if one rolls the dice for the results '4', '7' and '7', his Ability Score would be 4.

If one spends 3 Creation Points, he may re-roll one dice in a set of three, or all three. In either case, if the new result is lower, he will keep his previous result (though the Creation Points are still lost to him).

# PIECES OF CHARACTERS



WHAT MANNER OF MAN BRAVES SEAS OF BLOOD AND HAS ENEMIES THAT DRINK THEIR OWN?



# CHAPTER EIGHT

WHAT MANNER OF MAN BRAVES SEAS OF BLOOD AND HAS ENEMIES THAT DRINK THEIR OWN?

**Brawn:** This Ability measures the raw muscle, brute strength and physical power of the Character. The 'Maximum lift' listed below indicates the maximum number of Weight that a Character can lift for a single Turn.

Table 51: Brawn

Score	Melee Damage	Maximum lift
12	+5	300
11	+4	280
10	+3	260
9	+2	240
8	+1	220
7	+1	200
6	-	180
5	-	160
4	-	140
3	-	120
2	-	100
1	-	50

**Agility:** This Ability measures the coordination, timing and reaction speed of the Character. Higher Scores grant a bonus to Attack Rolls made with missile weapons, as well as a bonus to one's Defense Score.

Table 52: Agility

Score	Missile Attacks	Defense Score
12	+3	+4
11	+2	+3
10	+2	+3
9	+2	+2
8	+1	+2
7	+1	+1
6	+1	+1
5	-	+1
4	-	-
3	-	-
2	-	-1
1	-	-1

**Endurance:** This Ability measures the stamina, fortitude and physical constitution of the Character. This Score determines both the number of days one can go without sleep before needing to roll as well as the number of Rounds one can hold his breath before he suffocates or drowns.



Table 53: Endurance

Score	Days without sleep	Holding breath
12	2	9
11	2	8
10	1	7
9	1	6
8	1	5
7	1	4
6	0	4
5	0	3
4	0	3
3	0	2
2	0	2
1	0	1

**Girth:** This Ability measures the physique of the Character, indeed how well his weight matches his size—Characters with high Scores are either lean or muscular, while those with lower Scores are a

# PIECES OF CHARACTERS



WHAT MANNER OF MAN BRAVES SEAS OF BLOOD AND HAS ENEMIES THAT DRINK THEIR OWN?



little soft and soggy. High Scores will keep one alive longer when hit in combat, but also provide bonus' to rolls dealing with prostitutes (Table 25) and when rolling for a slow death (Table 10).

**Table 54: Girth**

Score	Prostitutes	Slow Death
12	+3	+2
11	+3	+2
10	+2	+1
9	+2	+1
8	+2	+1
7	+1	-
6	+1	-
5	+1	-
4	-	-
3	-	-
2	-1	-
1	-1	-

**Wits:** This Ability measures the Character's overall worldly knowledge, comprehensive skills and quick thinking. Both the 'Maximum Skill Level' and 'Maximum languages' listed below indicate the maximum Level the Character can have with any Skill or the total languages they can have any Skill with, regardless of the Skill Points spent.

**Table 55: Wits**

Score	Max. Skill Level	Max. languages
12	6	8
11	5	7
10	5	6
9	4	5
8	4	4
7	3	4
6	3	3
5	3	3
4	2	3
3	2	2
2	2	2
1	1	2

**Intuition:** This Ability measures the Character's overall use of his senses, his observations and his natural 'feeling' for things. Higher Scores grant a bonus to Searching Checks, as well as a bonus to a Character's Defense Score.

**Table 56: Intuition**

Score	Searching Checks	Defense Score
12	+4	+3
11	+3	+3
10	+3	+2
9	+2	+2
8	+2	+1
7	+1	+1
6	+1	+1
5	-	-
4	-	-
3	-1	-
2	-1	-
1	-1	-1



# CHAPTER EIGHT

WHAT MANNER OF MAN BRAVES SEAS OF BLOOD AND HAS ENEMIES THAT DRINK THEIR OWN?

**Charisma:** This Ability measures the Character's presence, how persuasive he is, and how strong is his personality overall. This Score determines both the bonus to the group rolls of all men under the Character's command, as well as the Morale they have when the Character first takes the captaincy of that group (and after dividing plunder).

**Table 57: Charisma**

Score	Acquiring crew	Base crew Morale
12	+3	30
11	+3	30
10	+2	25
9	+2	25
8	+2	20
7	+1	20
6	+1	15
5	+1	15
4	-	10
3	-	10
2	-	5
1	-	5

**Luck:** This Ability measures the innate, natural good fortune that the Character seems to have—a Character with a high Luck Score tends to escape battles easier, is dealt better hands, or just seems to have Lady Luck riding on his shoulder instead of a parrot (or maybe that's an angel's mortal guise). High Scores provide bonus' to rolls when finding good pockets to pick (Table 24) and when seeing how well one's crew behaves, if he is captain, when they party in port (Table 26).

**Table 58: Luck**

Score	Finding purses	Crew parties
12	+2	+3
11	+2	+2
10	+1	+2
9	+1	+1
8	+1	+1
7	+1	+1
6	+1	-
5	-	-
4	-	-1
3	-1	-1
2	-1	-2
1	-2	-3

**NATIONALITY:** The pirate world is an interesting and exciting place, colored by people from all over the old and new worlds alike. Ahhh, but what part of the world will **you** be from? Indeed what is your Character's heritage? His blood? One must select a Nationality for his Character.

The most common Nationalities of pirates are explained below. However, one can be from any part of the world, though any other Nationality than those explained below will merit no statistical changes, for good or ill. For example, one could be a German pirate, but his scores would not be modified one way or another for it.

One does not need to choose the subcategory of any Nationality. For example, one could simply be 'British', but being Irish specifically would be optional. Of course, if he does, he must also take both the pros and cons of it.

No matter one's Nationality, he will gain the Skill of his native language at Skill Level 2, at no loss of any points.

**British:** All such men from the isles are diverse yet the same, for British Characters are especially proud of their heritage and their honor, despite the harsh laws of their land. Yet it is a land well learned and educated, granting such Characters 3 bonus Skill Points.

*Englishmen* are most often outcasts from the oppression of the church, surviving by wits alone, indeed gaining +1 to their Wits Score. However, they suffer -1 to their Intuition. If they chose this to -2, they will gain Religion at Skill Level 2.

*Scotsmen* are more aggressive than anyone else, gaining +1 to Attack Rolls in melee combat. However, they also suffer -1 to their Wits Score. And, one can push both of these modifiers to +2 and -2 respectively if he is a Buccaneer Class.

*Irishmen* are known for their luck, and indeed gain +1 to their Luck Score. Still, they are even better known for holding their liquor, gaining +1 to their rolls in all drinking contests. However, they also suffer -1 to their Agility Score.

*Welshmen* are commonly quiet but very proud, and this makes them cunning indeed, gaining them +1 to their Intuition Score. In addition, they gain one re-roll for determining their starting money. However, they suffer -1 to their Brawn Score.

# PIECES OF CHARACTERS

WHAT MANNER OF MAN BRAVES SEAS OF BLOOD AND HAS ENEMIES THAT DRINK THEIR OWN?

**Dutch:** More often traders and merchants than adventurous souls, Dutchmen are indeed a strong presence in the seafaring world, the sons and daughters of wealthy and learned men, granting such Characters two re-rolls when rolling their starting wealth.

**Farmers** are often turned to piracy when the government seizes their profits, and while they may lose their land they never lose their eye for good bargains, gaining +1 to rolls for Bartering. And, if this roll thus becomes '13', they can get a better price by 30%! However, they lose 2 Skill Points.

**Merchantmen** are seafaring men who know the wide world's many ports, able to make an Intuition Check to see if any port will fire upon whatever ship they are sailing on. And, if they are indeed in such peril, they gain 3 Turns to act before all else is considered. However, they lose 3 Skill Points.

**French:** Allied as often as they are at war with other nations of Europe, French Characters are cunning and versatile, their hearts in two worlds at once, indeed the Old and the New, with such hard journeys granting such Characters +1 to one Ability Score.

**Parisians** are from the city of Paris and all others are beneath them, proven by their +2 to roll for comeliness. However, they suffer -2 to their Charisma Score. One can choose for this penalty to be -3 and so gain +1 to Luck Score.

**Artists** are more dignified than most others, gaining 2 bonus Skill Points. However, they also gain the disdain of other pirates, suffering -1 to Charisma. If one chooses for this to be -2, he will gain 1 additional Skill Point.

**Lovers** are concerned with romance just as much as gold, gaining +1 to their Charisma Score. Moreover, they gain +1 to rolling for (and around in bed with) prostitutes. However, they suffer -1 to their Brawn Score.

**Spanish:** Their country naming the 'Spanish Main' itself, Spaniards are among the most populous people in all worthwhile pirate waters, with extensive families and deep roots, granting such Characters one re-roll when rolling starting wealth, as well as +1 to one Ability Score.

**Portuguese** are commonly considered to be survivors of the Iberian blood of the Mediterranean Sea, great sailors who gain 3 Skill Points to spend on Navigation and Shipwright Skills. However, they suffer -1 to both their Brawn and Girth Scores.

**Latinos** are generally named so because of the Roman origins of the language and Spain's close ties with the Catholic Church, gaining them 3 Skill Points to spend on Religion and Politics Skills. However, they suffer -2 to their Wits Score.

**AGING:** Men are mortal, and time drastically changes their strength. As an optional rule, Characters may have their Ability Scores modified according to their age. Using Table 59 below, one's Ability Scores are modified (for good and bad) according to their age bracket. When one enters into a new age bracket, his modifications from the previous bracket are nullified, and the new modifiers are then applied.

Table 59: Aging

Age	Modifications
10-16	+1 Agility, -2 Wits
17-24	+1 Brawn, +1 Girth, -1 Wits
25-32	+1 Brawn, +1 Girth
33-39	+1 Brawn, +1 Charisma, -1 Endurance
40-49	+1 Wits, -1 Endurance
50+	+2 Wits, -1 Endurance, -1 Brawn, -1 Girth, -1 Intuition



# CHAPTER EIGHT

WHAT MANNER OF MAN BRAVES SEAS OF BLOOD AND HAS ENEMIES THAT DRINK THEIR OWN?

**DEFENSE SCORE:** Each Character has a 'Defense Score', which determines how difficult he is to be hit in battle.

One's Defense Score is determined by adding their Brawn, Endurance and Luck Scores together and applying the total to Table 60. After one's primary Defense Score is determined, any bonus\* from high Agility and Intuition are applied.

Table 60 also displays an 'Attack Bonus'. This is a bonus to one's Attack Rolls, resulting from his exceptional defensive abilities—he is capable and confident enough in battle to see opportunities others would miss, and has the skill to take them.

**Table 60: Defense Scores**

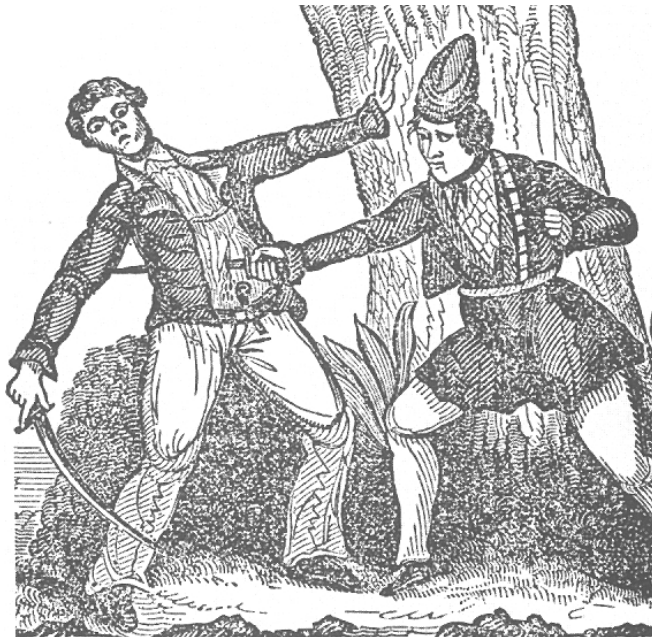
Total Scores	Defense Score	Attack Bonus*
28-36	10	+2
24-27	9	+1
20-23	8	+1
15-19	7	-
10-14	6	-
6-9	5	-
4-5	4	-
1-3	3	-

\* - This bonus applies after one's Defense is totaled by his three Ability Scores, not all other modifiers.

**DETAILS:** The rest of the Character to determine is those special details that make him unique. These details should be weighed carefully, as they will turn out to be more important than one may at first believe.

**Height:** A Player is free to choose the height of his Character, up to 6'2" tall. If he wants to be taller, he will have to roll high on Table 61 (explained later in this section).

**Weight:** A Character weighs proportionate to his Ability Scores. Body weight is measured not by pounds, but the same Weight system used for equipment. One has a base 100 Weight, increased by 10 for every Brawn Point they have. And, for every Point that one's Girth exceeds their Brawn they will reduce 10 from their weight. The reverse of this is also true—every Point that one's Brawn exceeds their Girth adds 20 to their Weight.



**Comeliness:** What a Character looks like is up to the Player. However, extreme comeliness can be an advantage (or disadvantage). For every 2 Creation Points one spends, he may roll once on Table 61, using both dice and adding the results together. If the total is 12 or less however, though stuck with the physical fault, the Player receives the compensation of his 2 Creation Points returned.

**Table 61: Physical Features**

Roll	Physical Feature	Modifier
20-24	Player's choice	NA
19	Extraordinarily tall	6'2" + 1-3 inches
18	Incredibly muscular	+2 to Brawn
16-17	Very beautiful	+2 to Charisma
15	Extremely lean	+1 to Girth
14	Good teeth	+1 to Charisma
13	Bald	No modifier
12	Terrible body odor	-1 to Charisma
11	Bad skin	-1 to Endurance
9-10	Rotten teeth	-2 to Charisma
8	Horribly ugly	-3 to Charisma
7	Missing fingers	-1 to Attack Rolls
6	Missing a hand	-1 to Brawn
5	Missing a foot	-1 to Agility
4	Missing an eye	-2 to Intuition
3	Missing an arm	-2 to Brawn
2	Missing a leg	-2 to Agility

# PIECES OF CHARACTERS

WHAT MANNER OF MAN BRAVES SEAS OF BLOOD AND HAS ENEMIES THAT DRINK THEIR OWN?

**Handedness:** A Player can choose for his Character to be right or left handed. However, if he wishes to be ambidextrous, he will roll a single dice. If the result is 10 or higher, he is indeed dual-handed. If not, he will be right handed. However, one can spend 1 Creation Point for a re-roll here, though he must live with whatever the new result is, or he can spend 3 Creation Points outright in order to be ambidextrous.

**Movement Rate:** Each and every Character has a Movement Rate. This begins with a base of 100'. This rate is increased by 10' for every point that his Endurance Score exceeds his Brawn Score. Then, this rate is reduced by 10' for every 20 Weight that he carries (rounded down).

**NAME:** Last but certainly not least, the Character must have a name. The Player is encouraged to take a long time with this choice, in order to come up with the best name possible, one that both compliments the game and is fun to hear passed around the table.

One should avoid choosing silly names (even among pirates), such as 'Doomed Dickhead' or 'Polkadot Man', as it can spoil the mood for the other Players. That is not to say that pirates don't have silly names, only that names should be within the context of the genre.



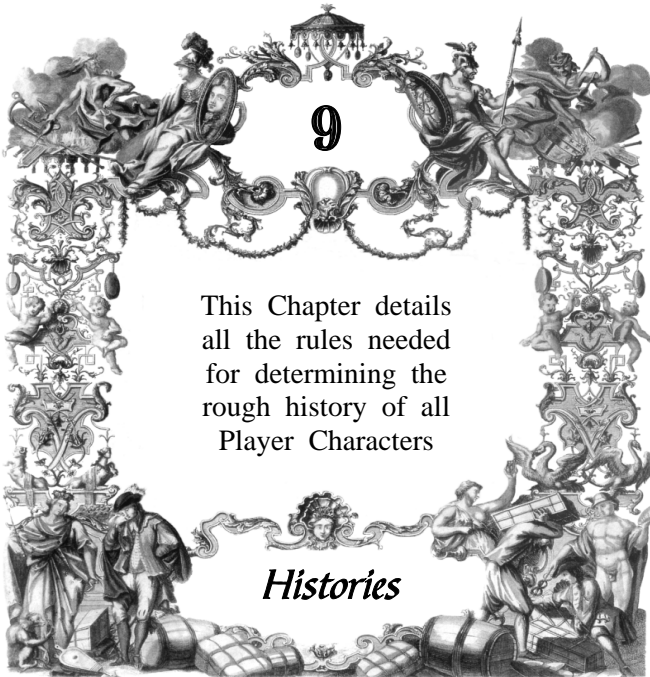
In order to help one choose their Character's name, a list of examples has been provided below, names from history, literature, stage, screen, and the playtesting of this game itself.

*Morgan Adams*  
*Captain Barbossa*  
*Peter Blood*  
*Anne Bonney*  
*Dawg Brown*  
*Howell Davis*  
*'Mad Jack' Deacon*  
*Sir Francis Drake*  
*Laffite der Wee*  
*Edward England*  
*Don Diego de Espinosa*  
*Hollis 'the Hawk'*  
*Sir John Hawkins*  
*Captain James Hook*  
*Louie la Rue*  
*Rebecca 'Scarlet' Cunningham*  
*Elliot Montolban*  
*'The Naked Spaniard'*  
*'Blind' Pew*  
*'Calico' Jack Rackam*  
*Mary Read*  
*'Rusty Rugged Robbie'*  
*Bartholomew Roberts*  
*The Dread Pirate Roberts*  
*Jeremy Pitt*  
*Ze Purple Pyrate*  
*Captain Sidney*  
*'Long John' Silver*  
*Sinbad*  
*Captain Jack Sparrow*  
*Elizabeth Swan*  
*'Blackbeard' Edward Teach*  
*'Bootstrap' Bill Turner*  
*Charles Vane*  
*'One-Eyed' Willy*  
*Yellowbeard!*



# CHAPTER NINE

WHEN THE FALSEHOODS OF SOCIETY ARE STRIPPED AWAY WE'RE ALL REVEALED AS PIRATES



This Chapter details all the rules needed for determining the rough history of all Player Characters

## *Histories*

**HISTORY:** Most pirates are what they are because of sheer need. Whatever colorful story the Player makes for his Character is up to him, whether he's a former slave, an escaped prisoner, or anything else. Indeed, Players are **encouraged** to come up with some sort of background for their Character, as it adds interest to the game and even serves as a guideline later on for role-playing ideas.

**Wealth:** The first aspect of the Character's history he must surrender to complete chance, that of how much money he begins his adventures with. This is determined by rolling a single dice. That's the Character's beginning number of gold coins (from his native country).

However, if the Player wants more, he can roll again, and add the result to his total. This the Player may do as much as he wants! However, if ever a roll is '1', '2' or '3', the Character begins with **no** gold at all! Thus this becomes a gamble, the stakes rising with each roll, testing the good sense of the Player to quit while he's ahead.

One can however gain a re-roll to save a low roll by spending 3 Creation Points. However, if the new roll is again 1-3, well, nobody said a pirate's life was an easy one . . .

**Legacy:** Many pirates are the sons or daughters of other pirates, or even wealthy landowners or state officials. While one's starting wealth already accounts for what fortune one may have from any source, new Characters may (at the Player's option) be the rightful heirs of past Characters. For each Creation Point one spends, he rolls on Table 62 to determine what manner of wealth was not only willed to him, but managed to reach him.

There are, however, certain factors that must be considered if one is to inherit the wealth of another Character. First of all, if the game is Campaigned, the previous Character must exist within the same Campaign. Second, only the Player of the previous Character can decide who (if any) are rightful heirs to his fortune. In addition, the game must have progressed enough years in time to allow the son or daughter to be born and come of age (when they were conceived is a trifle of importance). If the new Character is of the same age (a brother, etc.) and thus his appearance will not hinder the game chronologically, he must spend 3 Creation Points instead of 1 to roll on Table 62.

Note that, whenever something is rolled on Table 62, for it to exist and be awarded it must be written on the previous Character's Record Sheet! If it is not on that Character sheet, the Player re-rolls. If one should roll gold marked with an asterisk (\*), he may roll again, and if the result is gold, he continues to gain, but if the result is anything else, it does not apply.

**Table 62: Inheritance**

Roll	The Character inherits
12	Player's choice
10-11	Ship; one ship of maximum 1-12 Value
8-9	Treasure; 1 exotic treasure of choice
6-7	Gold; 100-1200 coins
3-5	Gold; 50-600 coins*
1-2	Fame; 5-60% of relative's Notoriety Score

**Royalty:** If a Player wants his Character to be of royal heritage, he must spend 3 Creation Points and it will be so. Royalty can be very important in a Character's adventures, especially if he ever considers becoming a privateer. However, it is an uncertainty at best, and should only be taken in the interests of future storytelling.

# BACKGROUNDS ON ACCOUNT

WHEN THE FALSEHOODS OF SOCIETY ARE STRIPPED AWAY WE'RE ALL REVEALED AS PIRATES

**FEARS:** The world is vast, filled with wonders and strange ideas, and sailors being a superstitious lot find many things both to covet, and to fear.

A Player may gain Creation Points for his Character by taking one Fear from Table 63. If he rolls to determine what this fear is, he will gain 3 Points. If he selects this fear, he will only gain 2 Points. One may only do this once at first, but he may also select or roll again for an additional fear (and thus gain additional Creation Points) whenever he gains an Experience Level—the more death one experiences, the more he will realize how much there is to be afraid of.

Whatever one's fear may be, the result is the same, that whenever in the presence of one's fear, he will suffer a penalty to his Ability Checks, as indicated on Table 63. One may also overcome his fears, reducing the penalty by spending Skill Points, one level at a time, as if he were buying a Skill in reverse. For example, a penalty of -2 could be reduced to -1 by spending 2 Skill Points, and thereafter eliminated entirely by spending 1 additional Skill Point.

Table 63: Character Fears

Roll	Character's fear	Penalty
12	No fear	-
11	Fire	-1
10	Strange or unknown noises	-1
9	Utter darkness	-2
8	Utter silence	-2
7	Heights (higher than any mast)	-2
6	Animal with scores (shark, etc.)	-3
5	Skeletons and human remains	-3
4	Storms at sea	-3
3	Magic	-4
2	Curses	-4
1	Roll twice on this chart	-

Note that if someone rolls a '1' and thus must roll twice on Table 63, not only can he roll a '1' again and thus have more than two fears, but if he should roll the same fear more than once, its initial penalty simply acquires a further -1 rather than the entire penalty all over again. Also note that additional Creation Points are not gained for such subsequent rolling.



**TRADEMARKS:** How has pirate life shaped the Character? Through his long (or short) trials and ordeals, along his lengthy (or quick) road to the seas of piracy, what strange quirks have developed within one's heart and mind, or even within one's God-given flesh? A Player can choose to have any one of the Trademarks described below.

**Drunkard:** The Character is a problem-drinker. He gains +1 to his rolls when engaging in all drinking contests, but he automatically loses 1-12 gold each time he goes into town as a result of a weakness for visiting the taverns. Furthermore, if there is rum or other drink on board the ship he sails, he must **fail** an Endurance Check, and thus get sick and have no desire to break into a barrel, or he will drink up and share it around with others, costing the ship 1 of its tons of such cargo.

**Fanaticism:** The Character is a religious zealot. He gains +1 to his Charisma Checks when dealing with any NPCs associated with the church, but he automatically loses 1-12 gold each time he goes into town as a result of his tithing. Furthermore, if he wishes to claim any treasure that is of another religion, such as a native charms and potion, he must make a Wits Check in order to put his good sense above his blind devotion to the Bible.

# CHAPTER NINE

WHEN THE FALSEHOODS OF SOCIETY ARE STRIPPED AWAY WE'RE ALL REVEALED AS PIRATES

**Landlubber:** The Character is uncomfortable at sea. He gains +1 to his rolls for Availability in town, but he also suffers a penalty of -1 to all of his Endurance Checks while at sea. One has the option of losing this Trademark each time he gains an Experience Level.

**Lustful:** The Character has a weakness for women. He gains +1 to his Charisma Checks when dealing with any NPC female, but he automatically loses 1-12 gold each time in port as a result of playing with prostitutes (though he does not necessarily need to roll on Table 25). One has the option of losing this Trademark if he gets married.

**Memory:** The Character has an uncanny memory. He gains +1 to his Wits Checks when trying to remember anything, but he also suffers a penalty of -1 to all of his Intuition Checks, as he is often oblivious to the immediate moment. One has option of losing this Trademark each time he gains an Experience Level.

**Music:** The Character tends to sing often, whether he's good at it or not, but none-the-less sailors usually like such a distraction at sea. He gains +1 to his Charisma Checks whenever dealing with any of his NPC crewmates, but he automatically loses 1-12 gold each time he goes into town as a result of having to replace his instruments, which are easily damaged at sea. One has the option of losing this Trademark whenever the crew divvies up plunder, as they will have become used to his charm, and only gold will make them forget it.

**Slow:** The Character is 'slow', mentally that is. He gains +1 to his rolls to resist torture, but he also suffers a penalty of -1 to all of his Wits Checks. Furthermore, opponents will think him either mad or an easy target, thus choosing him if there is ever a question of who they will attack.

**Superstitious:** The Character is deeply superstitious. He gains +1 to all of his Intuition Checks, but he also suffers a penalty of -1 to his Wits Checks when dealing with magic. One has the option with each Experience Level of increasing both factors above by 1, or of losing this Trademark entirely.



**REPUTATION:** Based on who and indeed what a Character is, the world at large may fear his flag to be raised to the top of a pirate mast, for he could do more damage than most daring fools who seek silver and gold under the Jolly Roger. Using Table 64, calculate the Notoriety Score with which the Character will begin his pirate career. Notoriety and its applications are explained in Chapter 12.

Table 64: Starting Reputation

Points	Character aspects
1-6	Roll once for each Creation Point spent
7	Royalty
5	Has an inheritance of any kind
1	Every 20 initial gold rolled up normally
1	Each Ability Score that is 9 or higher

# BACKGROUNDS ON ACCOUNT



WHEN THE FALSEHOODS OF SOCIETY ARE STRIPPED AWAY WE'RE ALL REVEALED AS PIRATES



**HISTORIES:** Countless men (and women) turn to the brutal life of piracy, and for an equal number of diverse and interesting reasons. Ahhh, but what might those reasons be? The pirate world is often more brutal than one realizes, and so he might wish to have a little help in designing a history for a Character, be it a PC or NPC.

A quick and simple method to determine the history of a pirate is to use Tables 65, 66 and 67. One may simply take ideas from them, or let the roll of the dice decide for him. If one opts to use these charts for proportional ideas for the wealth he began his career with, using the rules in the Player's Book, then these charts provide ideas for storylines, but no statistical changes to the rules already established. However, if one is daring enough to let the dice choose for him, then and only then will he gain any statistical benefit offered in parenthesis.

If one chooses the latter, begin by rolling two dice and applying the total to Table 65.

**Table 65: Career Before Piracy**

Roll	Career prior to piracy
24	Nobility (Royalty costs 1 Creation Point)
22-23	Navy officer (10-120 points for Table 77)
21	Priest (religion now a Suggested Skill)
20	Politician (+1 to Wits)
19	Doctor (medicine now a Suggested Skill)
18	Shipwright (this is now a Suggested Skill)
17	Solicitor (+1 to Wits)
16	Merchant captain (+1 to Intuition)
15	Navigator (this is now a Suggested Skill)
14	Gunner (this is now a Suggested Skill)
11-13	Sailor (gains 1 extra Skill Point)
10	Shipboard cook
9	Prison guard (-1 to Charisma)
8	Tavernekeeper (-1 to Girth)
7	Executioner (-1 to Luck)
6	Laborer (-2 to Charisma)
5	Prostitute (-2 to Luck)
4	Gravedigger (-2 to Wits)
3	Beggar (-2 to Endurance)
2	You were worthless!

Once one's former career has been established, roll (or choose) again, this time using only one dice on Table 66.

**Table 66: Lifestyle Before Piracy**

Roll	Livelihood before becoming a pirate
12	Inheritance (bonus 1000-12000 gold)
10-11	Government funded (bonus 500-6000 gold)
9	Wealthy lifestyle
6-8	Standard wages
3-5	Hard work
2	Thievery
1	Charity of others (must roll 7 or better for beginning gold instead of 4)

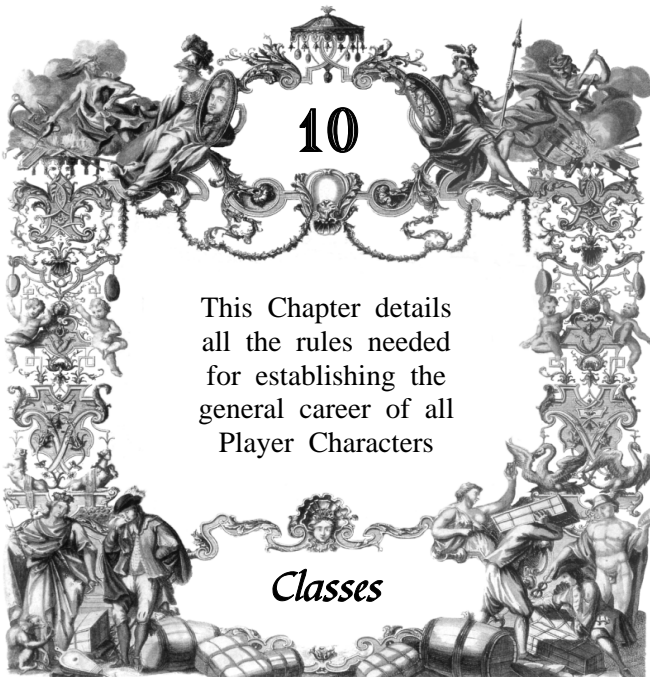
Now at last, once one's former livelihood has been noted, roll (or choose) again, this time using three dice and applying the total to Table 67.

**Table 67: Reason For Piracy**

Roll	Reason for turning pirate
34-36	Greed!
33	Uncontrollable adventure-lust
32	Searching for one's long-lost lover
31	Disapproved of the politics in Europe
30	Earning a fortune to marry with
29	Learned of political criminals and framed
28	Knew pirate-life is better than a sailor's
27	Government created a scapegoat
26	Found a map to buried treasure
25	Aboard a merchant vessel taken by pirates
24	Has pirate treasure as a family heirloom
23	Burning the world to ease a broken heart
22	Escaping the oppression of Europe
21	Searching for long-lost family
20	Fleeing debt in the Colonies
19	Exploring the pirate world as a chronicler
18	Was in a crew that decided to mutiny
17	Criminal family whose blame transferred
16	Seeks personal vengeance outside the law
15	Framed for a crime and sold into slavery
14	Found religious freedom amongst pirates
13	Arrested for heresy
12	Family's estate seized by the crown
11	Was a rebel in Europe sold into slavery
10	Business went under and needs livelihood
9	Caught stealing food to feed family
8	Orphaned by war and sought a new life
7	Shipwrecked and rescued by pirates
3-6	Press gang!

# CHAPTER TEN

RASCALS AND SCOUNDRALS AND VILLAINS AND KNAVES TO ROLL UP ME HEARTIES YO-HO!



This Chapter details all the rules needed for establishing the general career of all Player Characters

## Classes

**CHARACTER CLASSES:** Pirates, corsairs, renegades, journeymen—they all come in endless varieties. In this game, they are categorized as seven different types of Character ‘Classes’. When a Character is first created, the Player must select one Class, and that is what the Character is and will remain for the rest of his life.

**Creation Points:** Some Classes are less common than others. This lists the amount of Creation Points that are required to attain the Class.

**Nationality:** Specific Classes of Characters come from specific countries. This lists what Nationality one must be to attain the Class.

**Prime Requisite:** Each Class uses one Ability Score more than others. If one’s Prime Requisite is the highest Score of all eight Abilities, the Character will be able to gain 4 Adventure Points after a single Adventure instead of 3.

**Defense Score:** Some Classes are better at fighting than others. This lists a modifier to their Defense Score, based on how fierce and rugged that kind of Character usually is.

**Wealth:** Some Classes tend to be more wealthy than others. The bonus (or penalty) listed here is applied to one’s rolls when determining their beginning wealth.

**Special abilities:** Each Class possesses special traits that set them apart from all other Characters, which cannot be otherwise achieved by high scores or rolls.

**Suggested skills:** Each Class has certain skills that they tend to have more than other Character, and/or are better at. Any Skills listed for a Class the Character will gain a bonus of +1 Skill Level to, but only **after** they attain the Skill normally (thus a minimum Skill Level of 2).

**Selfish excuses:** Different Classes lend themselves to different extremes of behavior, which should be used and abused by Players. Indeed, this describes what kind of actions, ideas, and overall stupidity is actually **in** character for each Class. Thus, anything described herein cannot be punished by the Game Captain for being ‘out of character’ or breaking the game’s protocol. However, these are excuses for when Players get carried away, not encouragements, and thus doing these things does not necessarily entitle one to Adventure Points or any other bonus that is freely offered by the Game Captain.

## Buccaneer

**Creation Points:** 0  
**Nationalities:** Any  
**Prime Requisite:** Brawn  
**Defense Score:** +0  
**Wealth:** +0

Most pirates are buccaneers—rough, rowdy, ruthless men whose strongest loyalty is to whatever gold they find on their dead enemies. They began as hunters from the Caribbean land of Hispaniola, but when driven out of their camps and colonies by the Spanish, they began hunting people and ships instead, and thus began a profession in their own right, one whose code is born of brutality and vengeance. Such folk enjoy setting fire to ships, plundering towns, getting drunk—they always have a good time at the expense of others. Buccaneers seldom question orders, from their captain or from

# A PIRATES LIFE FOR YOU

RASCALS AND SCOUNDRELS AND VILLAINS AND KNAVES TO ROLL UP ME HEARTIES YO-HO!

God, and tend to just go where the winds take them, enjoying the spoils of their hard adventures when they can, and working like a dog the rest of the time, indeed they are the classic pirates that everybody imagines, knows, and fears.

*Special abilities* of Buccaneers are found in their abilities with weapons, for having lived only by being stronger and deadlier than anyone else, Buccaneers learn well with weapons, and are thus able to attain any Skill Level with them, regardless of their Wits Score.

*Suggested skills* for Buccaneers are those of all kinds of swords, daggers, flint-lock pistols, and any and all blunt weapons.

*Selfish excuses* for Buccaneers involve the cold and brutal murder of anyone and everyone they choose, save for fellow shipmates.

## Coasta Guarda

**Creation Points:** 4  
**Nationalities:** Spanish  
**Prime Requisite:** Intuition  
**Defense Score:** +0  
**Wealth:** +1

The Spanish have always held the strongest influence on the sea in the days of pirates, made even stronger by the 'Coasta Guarda'. These are men in the service of the Spanish crown who, in addition to whatever life of piracy they may lead, take every opportunity to seek and destroy the enemies of their king. Coasta Guarda are rather shifty, distrustful individuals, ever finding their loyalty to the king and their loyalty to their gold a constant struggle, both within their own hearts, and amongst any crew they join.

*Special abilities* of Coasta Guarda are their always being treated with favor by the Spanish, including always being welcomed aboard a Spanish ship or into a Spanish town, where at the worst they will receive a fair trial for their crimes (and opportunity to pay for them with gold).

*Suggested skills* for Coasta Guarda include gunnery, all weapons (for they are almost always professionally trained), and languages.

*Selfish excuses* for Coasta Guarda involve the taking of any treasure no matter what it takes, even if it means betraying other Player Characters.



## Gentleman

**Creation Points:** 4  
**Nationalities:** British or French  
**Prime Requisite:** Girth  
**Defense Score:** -2  
**Wealth:** +3

Pirates prey upon the wealthy, and it just so happens that every once in a while, one of those wealthy people who cross their path give in to the Siren's Call, indeed becoming pirates themselves, for whatever reason. Pale fops, damsels in distress, damsels in bad moods—anyone can become such a pirate! Gentlemen (and women) are usually smarter and more refined than other pirates, but they learn the ways of sword and cannon quickly, priding themselves on proving that they can master this new world or at least be respected amongst their shipmates, or simply do so in order to survive.

*Special abilities* of Gentlemen come from their protected lives, for as the whole of the pirate world is new to them, they can carefully choose what they want to be, able to eventually change

# CHAPTER TEN

RASCALS AND SCOUNDRALS AND VILLAINS AND KNAVES TO ROLL UP ME HEARTIES YO-HO!

into a different Character Class for the rest of their life, keeping all current statistics but re-setting their Experience Points and Level alike at 0.

*Suggested skills* for Gentlemen include politics, languages, medicine, longswords and linguist.

*Selfish excuses* for Gentlemen involve making obviously dumb decisions that directly endanger the other Player Characters.

## Huguenot

**Creation Points:** 2  
**Nationalities:** French  
**Prime Requisite:** Endurance  
**Defense Score:** -1  
**Wealth:** +0

Many men flee their home countries for many reasons. Those that most commonly flee France are the Huguenots, men from a poor background who can reestablish themselves in the New World. So long as they have food and opportunity such men are usually content, and quiet. Huguenots tend to avoid trouble as often as possible, preferring to run and return later to fight on their own terms.

*Special abilities* of Huguenots come from their ability to hide many talents, learning faster than they appear, often to surprise their comrades later. Such Characters find their cost for Proficiency Skill Levels maintained at 3, so that each Proficiency Level thereafter only costs 3 Skill Points.

*Suggested skills* for Huguenots include appraising, forecasting, and gambling.

*Selfish excuses* for Huguenots involve running away from trouble, even if that means deviating from the carefully planned Adventure.

## Madman

**Creation Points:** 6  
**Nationalities:** Any  
**Prime Requisite:** Luck  
**Defense Score:** +0  
**Wealth:** +0

There are pirates lusting and murdering for gold, there are privateers claiming to be toiling for king and country but truly lusting and murdering for gold, and then there are those rare few who are toiling for the voices in their head, throwing gold overboard, and murdering because the squid

was cooked bad that day. Whatever the case may be, such Characters are hopelessly and irredeemably insane, though they may at times appear and act what is considered to be 'normal'. Madmen are, as a rule, unpredictable, unless one predicts that they will do something unexpected.

*Special abilities* of Madmen are in their ability to survive without any special abilities—they do not get one that is unique to them, though they can choose one from that of another Character Class, and can change this choice each time they earn an Experience Level if they forfeit the Ability and Skill Points gained therefrom.

*Suggested skills* for Madmen are any that no other Player Character in the game currently has.

*Selfish excuses* for Madmen involve any aspect of character that is comical, in the true fashion of a gamer gone too long without blood or sleep.

## Musketeer

**Creation Points:** 5  
**Nationalities:** French  
**Prime Requisite:** Agility  
**Defense Score:** +1  
**Wealth:** +2

Once mere soldiers on the battlefield using the crude, evolving muskets, a select few of these fighters became the elite guards of French nobility. Rarely do such men encounter pirates, least of all become one, for their duties keep them in the safe havens and homes of their charges. Musketeers are such in name only, for when they do indeed take to the sea, these gentlemen prove that the elegant sword is swifter and more deadly than crude cannon and unreliable pistols.

*Special abilities* of Musketeers are gained from their extensive training in fencing, fighting, dueling and being cunning in general, allowing one to roll a separate Initiative for himself in normal combat should his group's Initiative Roll fail, and if he bests the Initiative of his enemies, he may indeed go first, though his foes will still receive their normal Turns after his.

*Suggested skills* for Musketeers include rapiers, longswords, politics and stealth.

*Selfish excuses* for Musketeers involve actions that are selfishly keeping Experience Points saved for their own advancement.

# A PIRATES LIFE FOR YOU

RASCALS AND SCOUNDRAIS AND VILLAINS AND KNAVES TO ROLL UP ME HEARTIES YO-HO!



## Priest

**Creation Points:** 7  
**Nationalities:** Any  
**Prime Requisite:** Wits  
**Defense Score:** -2  
**Wealth:** +3

Sometimes Priests will venture into the pirate world, usually to try and convert them or save them from their heathen ways, but end up realizing what pirates knew all along—the rules of right and wrong are not as clear as once believed, especially with the oppression of the church, the inquisition, and other institutions. Facing such shattering truths, holy men often end up returning home, but those brave few who remain in the pirate world offer a unique form of assistance. Priests are very revered

and respected by pirates, for most seamen are very pious men, and pirates most of all, and so rather than converting such men or ‘saving’ them, priests accomplish the most by assisting them against the true evils of the world.

*Special abilities* of Priests come from their faith alone, indeed to overcome any fear, thus negating any unique rules for any Encounter that wrests control of the Character from his Player.

*Suggested skills* for Priests include religion, chiseling, disguise, languages, politics and torture.

*Selfish excuses* for Priests involve any action, idea or conversation that takes more time to finish than any others at the table may prefer.

## Rogue

**Creation Points:** 0  
**Nationalities:** Any  
**Prime Requisite:** Agility  
**Defense Score:** -1  
**Wealth:** -1

All pirates are rogues, but those cunning, skulking, deceptive vermin who like to live like rats, who enjoy causing pain and feel safe in the shadows are so low that they are either looked down upon by other pirates, or praised for their abilities. Those pirates whose ways are the worst and whose tales are the toast of those who never raise a glass are such men as these. Rogues always act out of their own self-interest, and have little (if any) loyalty to anybody.

*Special abilities* of Rogues come from their uncanny luck, devious thoughts and sheer skill earned from a hard life of surviving on their own. Rogues have three distinct abilities. First, they can always make an Intuition Check to notice someone picking their pocket. Second, they can make a Luck Check to instantly escape should they fail a pilfering attempt of their own. And third, Rogues can vanish in the shadows, effectively enough to be unable to be found, standing a 1 in 12 chance of success for every Experience Level they have.

*Suggested skills* for Rogues include disguise, gambling, lockpicking, pilfering, and skulking.

*Selfish excuses* for Rogues involve anything that is sadistic or outright evil, for they are a pirate’s pirate, and have no morals.



# CHAPTER TEN

RASCALS AND SCOUNDRALS AND VILLAINS AND KNAVES TO ROLL UP ME HEARTIES YO-HO!



## Sailor

**Creation Points:** 1  
**Nationalities:** Any  
**Prime Requisite:** Brawn  
**Defense Score:** -1  
**Wealth:** -1

While most pirates quickly become expert seamen, those who are seasoned sailors before they turned to piracy have an advantage on the open sea, knowing the ways of the 'true world' better than those that hide upon it. Like most sailors, such Characters as these tend to be hard, poetic, and superstitious, victims of the freedom they crave so much. Sailors are at home on a ship, and can't wait to leave port to feel the wind in their face.

*Special abilities* of Sailors are not of seafaring itself, for that is sheer skill, but rather their time spent in town, indeed their ability to maximize that time, gaining a bonus to several different rolls. First, they gain +1 to any benefits (but not the roll itself) on Tables 24, 25 and 26. Second, they gain a bonus to determine the Availability of items, for they know where to shop; +1 on Table 27, +3 on Table 28, and +2 on Table 31.

*Suggested skills* for Sailors include navigation, shipwright, sewing and swimming.

*Selfish excuses* for Sailors involve gaining the benefit of the doubt in debates over rule-calls, even those made by the Game Captain himself.

## Scourge

**Creation Points:** 6  
**Nationalities:** British or Spanish  
**Prime Requisite:** Girth  
**Defense Score:** +2  
**Wealth:** +0

The most ruthless pirates of all, these men are irredeemably heartless, unbelievably cold and utterly evil, loving bloodshed as much as they do gold. Such captains keep control of their crew through intimidation rather than true leadership, and are often far worse in reality than their reputation speaks of, for normal men cannot find words enough to tell of their exploits, as such stories make the blood run cold and even the rum to lose its strength. Scourges are villains not only to the world at large but even to other pirates.

*Special abilities* of Scourges are spawned by their black hearts, for such Characters love fighting so much that they do not suffer a penalty from their wounds—unless a blow kills such a man, he's going to shrug it off.

*Suggested skills* for Scourges include gunnery, leadership, intimidation, poisons, torture, and all manners of weaponry.

*Selfish excuses* for Scourges involve starting fights and even wars, regardless of how stupid or suicidal it may seem at the time.

## Sea Hawk

**Creation Points:** 5  
**Nationalities:** British  
**Prime Requisite:** Wits  
**Defense Score:** +1  
**Wealth:** +2

These are special men in the Royal Navy, whether they are aboard one of the king's vessels or not, loyal to the British kings, and ever seeking to spread their influence throughout the world



# A PIRATES LIFE FOR YOU

RASCALS AND SCOUNDRELS AND VILLAINS AND KNAVES TO ROLL UP ME HEARTIES YO-HO!

while furthering their own agendas. Some openly declare themselves while others keep their identity secret. Sea Hawks are always however, regardless of their tactics, proud and courageous men.

*Special abilities* of Sea Hawks come from their favor from the English king, for all such Characters are always paid monthly in the amount of 1-12 crowns, +1 per Experience Level of the Character, and +1 for each rank he attains (in the Royal Navy), this money able to be collected in any British settlement or from any British ship.

*Suggested skills* for Sea Hawks include leadership, forecasting, gunnery, navigation, and shipwright.

*Selfish excuses* for Sea Hawks involve any and all actions that would bother their king or captain's enemy, no matter the potential consequences.

## Swashbuckler

**Creation Points:** 3  
**Nationalities:** Any  
**Prime Requisite:** Charisma  
**Defense Score:** +2  
**Wealth:** +0

Among the rowdy, rugged lot of pirate crews, some men are exceptional and tend to take all the glory and earn the greatest reputations—and the greatest respect from their crewmates. These tend to be Swashbucklers—flamboyant, colorful men of great charisma, bravado, courage and skill above all. Swashbucklers are clever but reckless, cautious when it's wise but daring when necessary.

*Special abilities* of Swashbucklers come from their charisma and their luck (which encourages them to be more even more flamboyant), for they are favored by the most widespread reputations, such that they are not penalized by their current Notoriety Level when earning any Notoriety Points, and so their reputations grow faster than those of anyone else.

*Suggested skills* for Swashbucklers include leadership, rapiers, longswords, climbing, swimming, and shipwright.

*Selfish excuses* for Swashbucklers involve any romantic, gay or outright silly actions, flying in the face of reality, history and common sense alike.

**NEW CHARACTER CLASSES:** Inevitably, the idea of modified or entirely new Character Classes will be raised. The Classes are by no means complete, and it is entirely the option of the Game Captain to craft new rules for them, or even make up new Classes entirely. This is not encouraged, for changing Classes easily disrupts the balance of the game. Moreover, the Classes that are already provided are designed to be generic, and thus more specific careers can easily be drawn out of them by being descriptive. For example, if one wished to be an Inquisitor, he could choose the 'Priest' Class and simply describe the blood-red robes of the Spanish Inquisition when he flies into battle. No rules can ever be complete, for the whole point is to challenge one's imagination, and thus no complete set of Character Classes could ever be anticipated by the Game Captain sitting there in his comfy chair—after all, nobody ever expects the Spanish Inquisition . . .

**NON PLAYER CHARACTERS:** So many other games define everything in their world with the rules set down in their core books. However, in Pirates, only those rules presented in Book 1, the Rule Book indeed, apply to all of **this** game. The rules presented in this volume, the Player's Book, are used with discretion, applying only to the Players, their Characters and those that have a specific part to play in their story. All others, background characters indeed, do not necessarily adhere to the bulk of the rules that make up Player Characters.

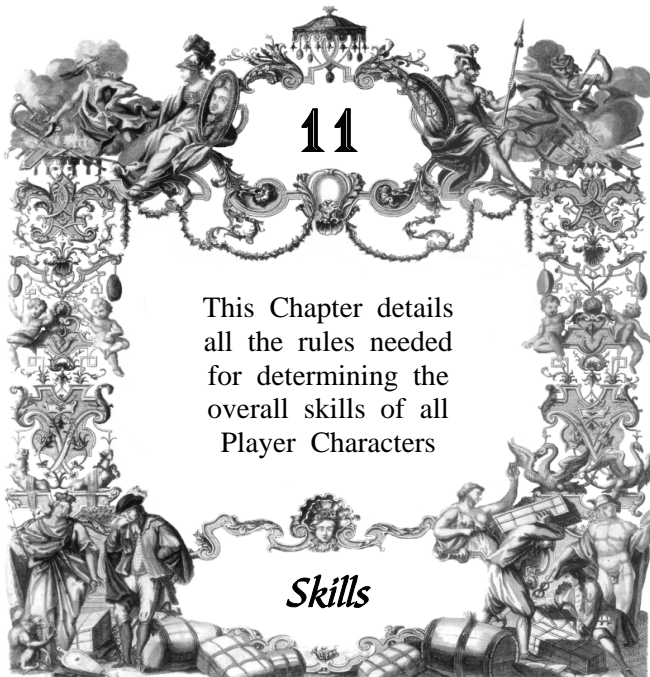
Understanding Character Classes: It is important to remember that a Character Class represents an **exceptional** individual. Most people in the world have no Character Class at all. Indeed, only the Player Characters and the exceptional NPCs that they meet and might join with, and indeed their enemies, have such a classification.

Common folk: Most common folk, having no Character Class, do not advance in Levels—they are all Level 0, and will always remain that way.

# CHAPTER ELEVEN



LIVE BY THE SWORD AND DIE BY THE SWORD UNLESS YOUR WIT IS SHARPER THAN YOUR STEEL



This Chapter details all the rules needed for determining the overall skills of all Player Characters

## Skills

**SKILL POINTS:** Each Character possesses skills that make him more valuable to his mates. These skills are determined by spending 'Skill Points'. Each Character will begin with 0-20 Skill Points. The Player will roll a single dice and add the result to his Wits Score, and then apply the total to Table 68. Once this has been determined, the Player can acquire an additional Skill Point for every 2 Creation Points he spends.

Table 68: Skill Points

Total	Initial Skill Points
22-24	20
19-21	17
16-18	15
12-15	12
9-11	8
2-8	4

**TRADES:** There are many skills a pirate may have learned in his lost life as a law-abiding subject of king and country. All such Skills are measured according to a 'Level'. Each Skill Point spent gives a Character one Level with any such Skill. All these Skills operate as their Level being the chance in 6 that one can perform some action that others who do not have such skill cannot.

**Agriculture:** The Character is knowledgeable in farming and plantlife. His Skill Level is the chance in 6 of finding enough food to sustain up to 10 people for one day. Any number of Checks may be made until one fails, and then no more may be made for the remainder of that day.

**Appraising:** The Character has knowledge of gems, jewels and precious stones. His Skill Level is the chance in 6 that he can identify the exact value of any ornate treasure.

**Forecasting:** The Character is good at predicting the weather. His Skill Level determines two things. First, it is his chance in 6 of predicting the weather accurately, and second, how many days ahead he can accurately measure it.

**Linguist:** The Character is accomplished at learning and adapting languages. Given the vast and diverse cultures that create the world's overall climate of cultures and languages, a sailor may become adapt at learning a wide variety of mixed languages and slang rather than specific and proper speech. Indeed, learning the various dialects becomes almost a way of life at sea. One's Skill level is his chance in 6 of being able to understand the motley, mixed speech of anyone at a given time. However, while this ability certainly allows one to understand and speak any language he encounters, he cannot read nor write them at all. Furthermore, if one wishes to read and write any particular language, he must spend the normal Skill Points to do so, as if he is completely new to the language. As a bonus, however, linguists are so valued amongst pirate crews that anyone with such ability has a right to an extra share of treasure.

**Medicine:** The Character is (or was) a doctor, with skills in binding wounds, treating illness, bleeding, anatomy and more. His Skill Level is his chance in 6 of removing a number of wound penalty equal to his Skill Level, **or** neutralizing a poison, **or** curing a disease. One such Check may be made for each individual, once each day. And, should any such Check fail, the treated person suffers an effective blow of 1 Base Damage.

# BEING WORTH YOUR SALT

LIVE BY THE SWORD AND DIE BY THE SWORD UNLESS YOUR WIT IS SHARPER THAN YOUR STEEL

**Navigation:** The Character is an accomplished navigator. His Skill Level is the chance in 6 that he can negate any roll of '4' on Table 40.

**Religion:** The Character is well versed in the Bible, and can use this to keep a crew calm and more friendly than they may be otherwise. His Skill Level is his chance in 6 of raising the crew's Morale by an amount equal to his Skill Level. Whether successful or not, another such roll may not be attempted until the crew's Morale drops to the next lowest bracket of Morale on Table 38.

**Sewing:** The Character is better at sewing than most others, and that's saying a good deal, given the inventive nature of pirates with this necessary trade. His Skill Level is the chance in 6 that his stitching clothes (and people) has of countering any single loss to crew Morale by an equal factor.

**Shipwright:** The Character has some knowledge in the design and building of ships. His Skill Level is the chance in 6 that he can make a modification to a single ship in any given port. If he can, his Skill Level also adds to the total number of modifications that may be made to any ship. Note that if two or more Characters are so skilled, only one Skill Level may be applied to any single ship.



**PROFICIENCIES:** These are the skills that one learns in order to survive as a pirate. All such Skills are measured according to a 'Level'. These Levels cost more the higher they are, indeed the Points required equal to the new Level acquired, as new tricks become increasingly more difficult to learn. For example, a Proficiency of Level 3 would cost a total of 6 Points (1+2+3). One must spend Points to gain each and every such Skill Level (i.e. one cannot 'jump' Skill Levels)

**Chiseling:** The Character was (and perhaps still is) a money exchanger, and is good at trimming the edges off the crudely shaped coins for 'balance', though the extra metal chiseled off remains 'on the floor', and thus in his pocket when he buys things. His Skill Level is the bonus to rolls this 'chisler' makes for the Availability of all purchases.

**Climbing:** The Character is apt at climbing. His Skill Level provides an equal bonus to Attack Rolls made while climbing, as well as +5' to his Movement Rate in such conditions.

**Disguise:** The Character is good at concealing his identity in a number of ways, including changing his voice, makeup, and just throwing costumes together. His Skill Level is the penalty to others' Intuition Checks to see through the deception.

**Gambling:** The Character has good luck and good skills, and may even be pretty good at cheating, all helping to make him better at cards and other games. His Skill Level is the bonus to his Gambling Checks.

**Gunnery:** The Character is skilled at using cannons, either mounted on ships or in forts. His Skill Level is the bonus he and all others under his command gain when firing cannons. Note that if two or more Characters are so skilled, only one Skill Level will apply to their group for all rules, from normal salvos to tactics.

**Lockpicking:** The Character is skilled at fingering locks and making picks out of the simplest (and most easily hidden) materials. His Skill Level is his bonus to making Lockpicking Checks.

# CHAPTER ELEVEN



LIVE BY THE SWORD AND DIE BY THE SWORD UNLESS YOUR WIT IS SHARPER THAN YOUR STEEL



**Loving:** The Character is good at gaining the favor of the opposite gender. Whether he is womanizing, wenching or wooing prostitutes or even nobles, the Character's Skill Level is his bonus to rolls on Table 25.

**Pilfering:** The Character is a rascal indeed, his talents including picking pockets and cutting purses. His Skill Level is the bonus to his Pilfering Checks. In addition, if the Character is a Rogue, his Skill Level is his bonus to his Luck Check to escape if he fails.

**Poisons:** The Character can mix poisons. His Skill Level determines two things—the maximum Poison Level he can make, and the bonus to any Stealth Check he makes to apply it.

**Politics:** The Character is good at dueling in the political arena, parrying accusations and cutting his enemies with deep words and scathing remarks. His Skill Level is his bonus to rolling for any promotion benefits on Table 78.

**Running:** The Character is swift and sure footed. His Skill Level provides an equal bonus to Defense Score while fleeing, as well as +10' to his Movement Rate on the ground.

**Stealth:** The Character is good at sneaking about, using the shadows and silence to his advantage, and to the disadvantage of others. His Skill Level is his bonus to Stealth Checks.

**Swimming:** The Character is swift in the water. His Skill Level provides an equal bonus to Attack Rolls made while in the water, as well as +5' to his Movement Rate in such conditions.

**Torture:** The Character is exceptionally cunning and cruel, heartless and filled with sinister ideas to make captives talk. His Skill Level is the bonus to his Torturing Checks. One can also lend their ideas to another, thus able to apply this bonus to any such Check made in his presence. However, if multiple Characters skilled in torture contribute ideas, only one Character's bonus may apply to any one roll.

**Weapons:** The Character is skilled with some sort of weapon. When this Skill is taken, the Player must specify which type of weapon the Character is skilled at (rapiers, pistols, grenades, brawling, daggers, etc.). His Skill Level is the bonus to both his Attack Rolls and Damage with such a weapon.



**SPECIALTIES:** There are some skills that are so valuable or strange that they seem more a blessing than something that was simply studied. All such Skills are measured in Levels, though their cost differs depending on the next Level being gained. Table 69 displays all the points one must sacrifice for each individually listed Skill Level.

Table 69: Special Skill Costs

Skill Level	Current cost to the Character
4	3 Skill Points and 2 Ability Points
3	2 Skill Points and 1 Ability Point
2	1 Skill Point and 1 Ability Point
1	1 Skill Point

# BEING WORTH YOUR SALT



LIVE BY THE SWORD AND DIE BY THE SWORD UNLESS YOUR WIT IS SHARPER THAN YOUR STEEL



**Intimidation:** The Character, through appearance or actions, is capable of making himself so terrifying that others tend to surrender to him immediately! One's Notoriety Level is the chance in 12 that the fearsome villain can make his enemies surrender. However, just how many surrender in a single Round, indeed for a single Skill Check, depends on his Skill Level, as shown on Table 70. Still, even then one cannot intimidate Player Characters, nor anyone who has this same Skill of equal or higher Level than himself.

**Table 70: Intimidation**

Skill Level	How many total Levels surrender
4	1-12
3	1-6
2	1-4
1	1-3

**Language:** The Character is able to speak another language, such as English, Spanish, perhaps even the language of the Aztecs or the Mayans. His Skill level determines just how well he can speak, as shown on Table 71.

**Table 71: Language**

Skill Level	Language ability
4	Can forge the language flawlessly
3	Can read and write the language
2	Speaks the language fluently
1	Speaks the basic language

**Leadership:** The Character is an accomplished leader, either through natural ability or through experience. Good strategy, good politics, and good planning make for an effective crew. If the Character is the captain, his Skill Level offers a bonus to the crew, as shown on Table 72.

**Table 72: Leadership**

Skill Level	Cumulative crew benefit
4	+1 to Attack Rolls
3	+1 to Initiative Rolls
2	+5 to Base Morale
1	+1 to Attack Rolls

**Skulking:** The Character is good at keeping to the shadows, diverting attention from himself, and speaking in such ways as people don't remember him. His Skill Level determines the chance in 12 that he can go unnoticed or simply forgotten by otherwise watchful eyes. However, just how many overlook him depends on his Skill Level, as shown on Table 73. Still, even then one cannot disinterest or so avoid Player Characters.

**Table 73: Skulking**

Skill Level	How many people overlook him
4	Everybody who can see him
3	Large gathering (public square)
2	Small gathering (tavern commons)
1	One specific individual

**SAVING THROWS:** There are some situations where all of one's skill, savvy and luck all apply, and indeed would make the rules far too complex to account for otherwise. These situations one can escape by way of a 'Saving Throw'.

Each and every Character has Saving Throws. However, one's Skill Levels will better these scores. There are no other modifiers to these rolls.

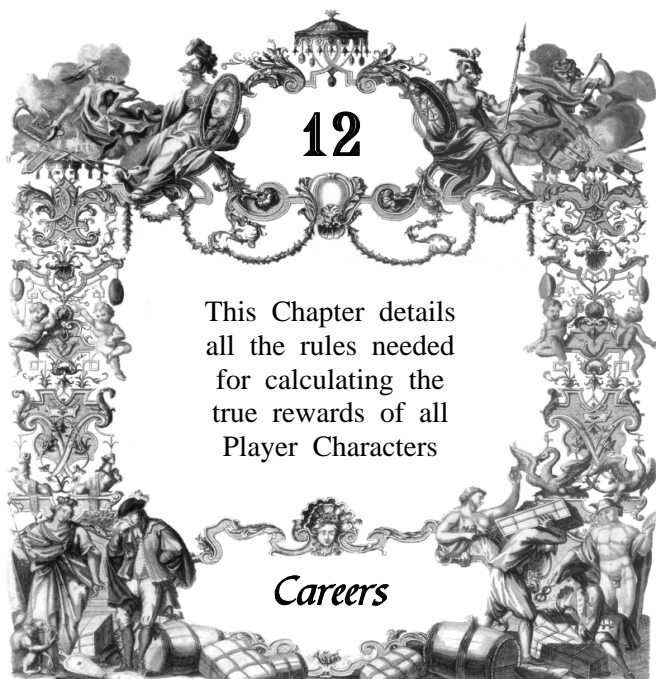
Table 74 displays the general situations one can escape by rolling a Saving Throw. As a rule, these are always life-and-death situations—if one is forced to make a Saving Throw it means that he will die if he fails! To succeed, one must roll equal to or above the number listed on Table 74. Whenever involved in such a situation (and indeed rolling to survive it), one may apply any one Skill of his choosing to his Saving Throw, provided that the Game Captain agrees that such a skill would help him, the Skill's Level the bonus to his roll.

**Table 74: Saving Throws**

Situation	Save
Plague	6
Sinking ship	7
Explosions	8
Falling off a great height	9
Cave-in	10
Tortured 'to death'	11
Swim great distances	12

# CHAPTER TWELVE

THOSE THAT DIE WILL BE THE LUCKY ONES AND THOSE WHO GO UNKNOWN THE WEALTHY ONES



This Chapter details all the rules needed for calculating the true rewards of all Player Characters

## Careers

**EXPERIENCE:** Adventure for a pirate is endless, and Characters are always learning new skills and honing old ones. When Player Characters manage various achievements, they earn 'Experience Points'. The more Experience Points one has, the more successful his adventures.

Earning Experience Points: As Players, we can only imagine what the adventure may behold, and our Characters are equally anxious! The priceless adventure that awaits! Well, those adventures that make a better pirate are explained below.

*Sailing* across the sea or traveling overland may be dull and boring, but there's a lot to learn along the way, from learning the stars to handling a ship, to knowing which foods are healthy and which are poisonous. Each day of travel, at sea or on land, a Character will earn 1 Experience Point.

*Ability Checks* bring Characters through all sorts of tests and trials. Whether leaping from cliff to cliff or wooing a lady, whenever a successful Ability Check is made, the Character earns a count of Experience Points equal to the difference of what he rolled and what he needed.

*Skills* offer up Experience Points depending on what type of Skill is used. Whenever a Trade is successfully used, the Character earns Experience

Points equal to what he rolled. Whenever one is successful with any kind of roll that was aided by a Proficiency he will gain a number of additional Experience Points equal to his Skill Level. Alas, no Experience Points at all are gained for using Specialty Skills.

*Searching* Checks involve all kinds of thought, from guessing the depth of a wall to the cunning of an enemy, from counting footsteps to reading the writing on the wall. So well can clues and treasures be hidden that finding them is proof indeed of one's skill, a successful Searching Check earning a Character 10 Experience Points. Note that for a Group Searching Check no Experience Points are awarded.

*Beating* an enemy is a rather difficult learning experience. Whenever one wins a fight, whether he kills the individual, forces him to surrender, makes him run away or simply beats him into submission, the victor will gain a number of Experience Points equal to the total number of hits (not the number of Attacks) that it took to finally finish him off, multiplied by 5.

*Plundering* ships and towns is the life of a pirate indeed! Those Characters who enter such an ordeal and survive (were in harm's way and are left standing at the end) will earn, in addition to the awards for any individual accomplishments made during the sacking, a number of Experience Points equal to the ship's Value multiplied 5, or the town's Level multiplied by 10.

*Challenges* that have unique rules laid out in an Adventure's text, such as booby traps or swindling a governor, always offer insight and encourage cunning, giving one who passes their tests a random 5-60 Experience Points.

Experience Level: Whenever one gains enough Experience Points, he will advance to the next 'Level'. Whenever he does, he must roll a single dice. If the result is **higher** than his new Level, he will gain the number of Ability and Skill Points listed on Table 75. If the result is equal to or less than his new Level, he may opt not to advance and re-set his Experience Points to the minimum required for the Level he was before, for once one reaches Level 10, one can no longer advance and thus cannot gain any additional points.

# DEAD MEN TELL YOUR TALE



THOSE THAT DIE WILL BE THE LUCKY ONES AND THOSE WHO GO UNKNOWN THE WEALTHY ONES



**Table 75: Experience Levels**

Level	Experience required	Abilities	Skills
10	12000	3	3
9	9000	3	2
8	6000	2	3
7	4000	2	2
6	3000	2	1
5	2000	1	3
4	1000	1	2
3	600	1	1
2	300	-	2
1	100	-	1

**NOTORIETY:** This is a score that measures the Character's reputation on the high seas. The higher one's Notoriety Score, the better known (and more feared) a pirate he is.

**Earning Notoriety Points:** Notoriety Points are earned by those actions that reflect one's reputation in the wide world, as the stories of the pirate spread with accounts of his greater and greater exploits on the high seas. Certain actions earn certain amounts of Points, as explained below.

*Raping women* (or men) may be a common pleasure for pirates, but it's still heinous to the world at large, with any such despicable act earning the Character 1-3 Notoriety Points.

*Starting a brawl* in the tavern or any other place where seafarers are likely to see grants the Character 1-4 Notoriety Points.

*Escaping a town* when outnumbered by the pursuing guards merits 1-6 Notoriety Points.

*Torturing captives* not only gains information and spreads a story as a warning to others, the magnitude (1-12) of the torture is also the amount of Notoriety Points earned by the Character who carries out the deed.

*Killing a man* earns Notoriety Points equal to the Experience Level of the dead.

*Helping take ships* always earns one a great reputation. The ship's Value is the increase to the Notoriety Score of each Character who participated in the battle. If the ship is set afire or otherwise destroyed, the Points will be multiplied by 2. Furthermore, whether the ship is destroyed or not, the Points awarded to the captain will be multiplied by 3.

*Helping take towns* makes for an even greater reputation than plundering ships. The town's Value multiplied by 2 is the increase to the Notoriety Score of each Character who participated in the battle. If the town is set afire or otherwise destroyed, the Points will be multiplied by 3 instead. Furthermore, whether the town is destroyed or not, the Points awarded to the captain will be multiplied by 5.

*Dividing plunder* spreads a captain's reputation far and wide. Whenever plunder is divvied up, the captain will receive a number of Notoriety Points equal to 1 for every 100 gold that each crewman walks away with (rounded down).

**Notoriety Level:** Notoriety is measured in 'Levels', similar to that of Experience Levels, though this is a separate score. Table 76 displays the number of Notoriety Points one must total before they achieve each such Level. However, the Level a Character currently is penalizes the Notoriety Points he earns, as greater reputations require singularly greater deeds. For example, at 4<sup>th</sup> Level, one would need to do something worth 5 Notoriety Points in order to earn 1 Point. Table 76 also displays the 'Hostility Modifier' that modifies the chance of unfriendly ships and towns of opening fire on that Character, should he be the captain.

**Table 76: Notoriety Levels**

Level	Notoriety	Fame status	Hostility
10	100	Legendary	-6
9	80	Infamous	-5
8	60	Dreaded	-4
7	50	Famous	-3
6	40	Terrible	-2
5	30	Rugged	-1
4	20	Noteworthy	-1
3	15	Branded	-1
2	10	Promising	-0
1	5	Seaworthy	-0
0	0	Unknown	-0

**Losing Notoriety:** Reputations fade with the passing of time, as one's fame may be overshadowed by the exploits of another, or he might simply be forgotten. Each month, one's Notoriety Score will lower a random 1-6 Points.



# CHAPTER TWELVE



THOSE THAT DIE WILL BE THE LUCKY ONES AND THOSE WHO GO UNKNOWN THE WEALTHY ONES



# DEAD MEN TELL YOUR TALE



THOSE THAT DIE WILL BE THE LUCKY ONES AND THOSE WHO GO UNKNOWN THE WEALTHY ONES



**PRIVATEERING:** Many pirates are actually employed by various kings to plunder and destroy their enemies. Such pirate captains are known as ‘privateers of the crown’. As unofficial members of a king’s navy, privateers sail pirate waters furthering their own ends while helping do the king’s dirty work. If a Player Character captain wishes to privateer, he may find this to be the wisest decision of his career.

**Letter of marque:** When one wishes to become a privateer, he must be approved by a governor. If he has any crimes towards that crown, he must pay for them, at a cost decided upon by the Game Captain. This cost is purely the Game Captain’s discretion, and is encouraged to be less for better role-players, though should still be higher than most captains can afford at the time—their first adventures as a privateer tend to pay for their commission. As a rule of thumb, one’s Notoriety Score multiplied by 100 is a good cost for clearing one’s name (though this does not affect one’s Notoriety Score).

Once a Character is commissioned, he will be given a ‘letter of marque’, a official document that registers him in the royal navy, and gives him authorization to attack enemy ships and towns.

**Ranks and titles:** The more damage one does to a king’s enemies, the greater rank and title he will be awarded. A privateer needs to keep a running total of all enemy vessels and villages he plunders or destroys. Whenever one has enough points, he may go before a governor, and see if he will be promoted. This calls for a Charisma Check, and if successful, one will be awarded title equivalent to however many points he has earned. If this Check fails, the captain must wait, and cannot stand to be promoted again until he has earned more points.

Once one is indeed promoted, he will, according to Table 77, receive a bonus of +1-6 to his Charisma Score when considering the initial Morale of any crew he gathers together.

Note that on Table 77, all titles above Admiral have two separate scores. These are titles of royalty. One cannot earn titles of royalty unless he is royalty. If he is not, he must achieve the greater amount of the listed points.

*Gold of a king* is always useful to a governor when bartering with enemy officials. For every 100 coins of an enemy country one turns over to the governor he will receive 1 point.

*Taking enemy ships* is always favored by the governor, earning the captain a number of points equal to the ship’s Value.

*Plundering enemy towns* earns great admiration in the eyes of the governor, earning the captain a number of points equal to the town’s Level multiplied by 3. However, if the town is burned and destroyed, it is not as useful to the king, thus reducing the multiplier to 2.

**Table 77: Promotion**

Title	Total points	Rank bonus
Duke	1000/1600	+6
Marquis	800/1200	+5
Count/Earl*	650/1000	+4
Viscount	500/800	+3
Baron	400/600	+2
Admiral	300	+1
Colonel	200	-
Major	100	-
Captain	40	-
Ensign	10	-

\* - The title of ‘Count’ is used in the mainland of Europe while the title of ‘Earl’ is used only in Britain; the two are the equivalent of each other.

**Promotion benefits:** In addition to title, each time a privateer is promoted, he may receive additional favor of the governor, as rolled on Table 78.

**Table 78: Promotion Benefits**

Roll	Governor’s reward
12	Player’s choice
11	The entire crew pardoned by the crown
10	New ship of the captain’s choice*
6-9	Payment to the captain of 100-1200 gold
1-5	No additional reward beyond the new title

\* - A new ship can only be of a Value equal to or less than one’s rank. For example, a Major is the ‘third’ rank up, so his promotional gain could only be a ship of Value 3 or less.

# CHAPTER TWELVE

THOSE THAT DIE WILL BE THE LUCKY ONES AND THOSE WHO GO UNKNOWN THE WEALTHY ONES

**Advantages for the privateer:** To the privateer goes many advantages that other pirates cannot dream about. Firstly, command is a benefit of higher ranking officers, the captain able to give orders to anyone in the royal navy that is of lesser rank. This may include the releasing of prisoners, should the captain go before the governor and make a successful Charisma Check (one Check required for each prisoner). Second, safe harbors are those of the king the captain works for, as well as anyone they are **allied** with, negating the normal chance of being fired upon.

**Multiple ranks:** Some (though very few) privateers are ambitious enough to be in the service of more than one king at a time! This is possible if the countries are not at war with one another. If one earns multiple titles, he must keep separate scores for his worthiness in the eyes of each king—titles in one country mean little (if anything) in another.

**The pirate crew:** Privateering may be grand and glorious for the captain, but pirate crews don't follow titles—they follow **gold**. For even if pirates are glorified and even pardoned, what does that mean to the rest of the world? The injustices that forced them to be pirates in the first place can easily recur, and there's still no trusting even the captain himself! Indeed, drunk with power and dazzled by the flag of a king a captain is even more likely to lead a crew into battle and death, and all for what? The glory of a fat king sitting on his throne back in the Old World?

Pirate crews are at best wary of privateering, and it is difficult for a captain to maintain Morale. For the privateer's Charisma Score, increased by his rank bonus (from Table 77) is the maximum Morale his crew can have at any time.

**RETIREMENT:** Few Characters survive long enough to decide what they want to do with their hard won gold, to say anything of considering retirement. However, those clever few that quit while they're ahead enjoy a longer life, and the Player enjoys knowing what became of them. If a Player decides to retire a Character, his pirate days may be over, but for the Player's curiosity of the further adventures of his Character are covered.

**Life after retirement:** Once a Player decides to retire a Character, he is no more. The Player may keep the Character's Record Sheet as memorabilia, but that Character cannot be played again.

A retired Character may be encountered again as an NPC, however, this is purely at the discretion of the Game Captain, and it is only to occur in the best interests of his adventure's storyline.

Should a retired Character be killed, his estate can only be acquired by future Characters through the normal means of rolling for an inheritance (as from Table 62).

**Fame:** This is a separate score applied to retired Characters only, a summary of their exploits on the high seas. The Player will pour down through Table 79 and total every applicable score his Character accomplished in his pirate career. The total, divided by 20 (rounded down), is the number of bonus Creation Points one will receive when they roll up their new Character.

Table 79: Fame

Fame	Accomplishment
10-100	Highest Level of Notoriety ever attained
90	Titled as a Duke*
80	Titled as a Marquis*
70	Titled as a Count or an Earl*
60	Titled as a Baron*
50	Achieved the rank of Admiral*
40	Achieved the rank of Colonel*
35	Lost four limbs/extremities
30	Achieved the rank of Major*
20	Achieved the rank of Captain*
20	Marries into Nobility
15	Lost three limbs/extremities
12	Escaped declared execution
10	Achieved the rank of Ensign*
8	Lost two limbs/extremities
5	Became married
4	Lost one limb/extremity
1	Every 1000 gold to his name
-10	Each time captured for his crimes

\* - Only the highest rank attained in each country counts for Fame.



# Pirates

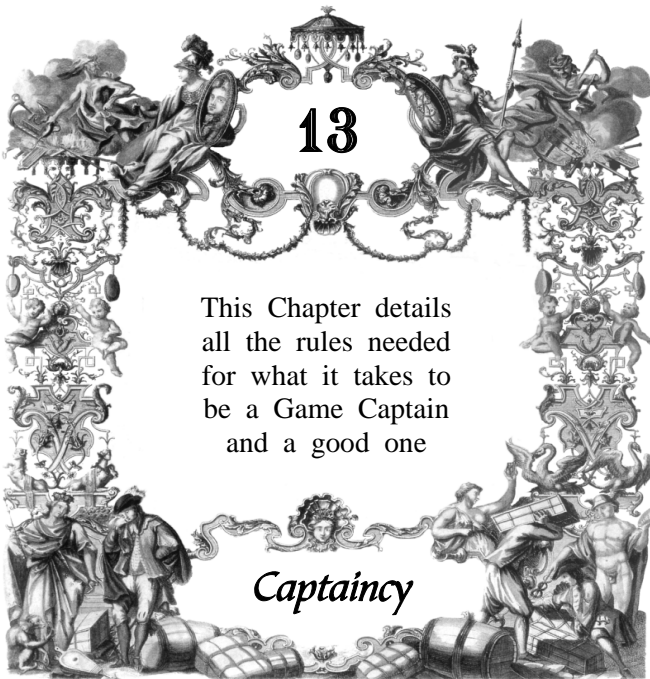
## Book I

*The Captain's Book*



# CHAPTER THIRTEEN

A PIRATE'S MOST TERRIBLE ENEMY AND MOST HELPFUL FRIEND IS THE ALWAYS THE CAPTAIN



The Game Captain prepares (to any extent) the adventure ahead, almost like a movie script he is to direct. He may draw up maps, write descriptions or key areas, prepare Handouts, etc. When his tale is ready to be told, and the Players are ready with their Characters, the adventure begins.

The Game Captain always begins the adventure, telling the Players where their Characters are, and what is about them. And whenever the party is not doing anything, it is the Game Captain's task to move events along, sometimes (and sometimes not) in harmony with the party. The Game Captain keeps in mind events going on 'behind the scenes', and considers what is to come.

The Game Captain's task thus is not to guide or help the Players, but to present them with the opportunity to **play**. He must remain fair and impartial, presenting challenges and storylines, and watching how the Players move their Characters through his imaginary world.

**THE CAPTAIN'S ROLE:** The Game Captain is the most important participant in the game. He is the narrator, the story designer, the referee, the mediator and the creator all in one. The game belongs to the Game Captain—the Players are guests aboard his ship. He is not their adversary, nor their friend. The Game Captain is all powerful and impartial, the great judge who, like God, presents choices and situations, and then watches as the Players and their Characters take their lives, and their story, in whatever direction they will. The Game Captain may be amused, he may be disappointed, he may be surprised. The role of the Game Captain is a busy one, preparing the adventures, and a demanding one, in presenting them, but his task is at the same time the most rewarding—while Players gain the satisfaction of their own Characters' success alone, the Game Captain watches the entire game come together, knowing that it was his efforts, his designs, that created this great fantasy for so many.

**The Game Captain's task:** The Game Captain is like a storyteller, narrating a sequence of events from which the Player Characters are 'free', and able to interact with at will, using the rules of the game to effect the Game Captain's story.

**The title of Game Captain:** He who is accepted as the Game Captain should be treated with respect. He sacrifices his chance to play and adventure in order to provide others with that opportunity. It's a noble sacrifice. Players who argue with or seek to change the Game Captain aren't showing him the respect he deserves. However, it is the Game Captain's task as well to remind the Players of this. Remember, as Game Captain, it is **your** game, and your word is law. If others disrespect your title, then **they** should try making the sacrifice of being Game Captain.

**QUALITY GAME CAPTAINS:** There is much more to being the Game Captain than simply memorizing the rules or probing through this gamebook. For upon the shoulders of the Game Captain is the greatest burden of a game, indeed its quality. Anyone who is a true Game Captain is concerned about how to do it well. However, know right away that there is no 'correct' way to be a Game Captain. Like an art form, a Game Captain's quality is made up of his individual strengths, blending to form his own, unique style. It is a play of passions, likes and dislikes. What is 'good' is what everybody likes. To help the Game Captain recognize his own strength, and what more

# BEING GAME CAPTAIN

A PIRATE'S MOST TERRIBLE ENEMY AND MOST HELPFUL FRIEND IS THE ALWAYS THE CAPTAIN

people like in role-playing games, the time tested and honored practices of favored Game Captains are explained below.

Be a storyteller: A role-playing game is like an interactive novel. And like any story, the quality of the experience depends mostly on the ability of the storyteller. The Game Captain must be a storyteller first, and a rulemaster second.

More than anything else, the Game Captain should be descriptive, speaking with fluid, unencumbered narrative to describe in detail the fantasy setting around the Player Characters. With words alone, from describing the color of the sunset, to the foul stench of a pirate's cave, the Game Captain should concentrate on the details that bring the fantasy world to life.

In addition, any techniques a normal storyteller might use to interest or excite a crowd the Game Captain should feel free to use—if a ghost's footsteps echo in the hall, the Game Captain might clomp his feet on the floor beneath the table. The Game Captain should do everything that he can with his voice, expressions, hands and immediate surroundings to both describe and (to a certain extent) enact the events unfolding around the Players' Characters.

Also, the Game Captain should consider not to be non-descriptive. One should try not to sound like an adding machine, simply throwing out numbers and expecting them to constitute a story. The Game Captain should clothe as many naked numbers as he can with at least a little bit of description, or at least read the result with a reaction and not just the number itself.

One can tell the quality of a story by the interest of its audience—the more the Players see, hear and feel the world you create for them, the more energy they will offer to the game in turn, and thus the interactive story builds upon itself. The more the Players believe in the make-believe the better is the storyteller, and the better the game will be for it.

Preparation: A quality Game Captain is one who is prepared. Beyond the basics of gaming materials, this means the adequate preparation of an adventure, organized notes, and both the ability and

willingness to take the game impromptu in whatever direction the Players may (wish to) go. There is no telling how far a party will go in a single game session, and one should always 'over prepare', having enough material to last longer than the party could possibly go as far as time and distance.

Improvising: Non-existent rules is a fear for many Game Captains. However, know that there are not rules for everything—there shouldn't be. All the rules that are important to delivering a Pirates adventure are included already (from ten years of playtesting). If there arises a situation with no rule to cover it, trust that it is a situation either not befitting a pirate story or one that's better resolved **without** a dice roll. At any time where a rule seems to be missing, simply bridge the gap between rules and reality with your ability as a storyteller. If the Players need the security that solid rules offer, always remember that the Game Captain's own judgment of a situation and story as a whole is as solid, and as 'fair', as any rule could be. And, if that's not enough, remind your Players under the ominous hint of what enemies could hear them that this book is more what you would call 'guidelines' than actual rules...

Never back up: The Game Captain should be careful to set such a pace that everyone (especially himself) can play comfortably, without having to hold reigns on the rules. If one goes too fast, mistakes will be made. But when mistakes **are** made, one cannot back up the game in order to 'reply them right'. Instead, one need simply recognize that the game's pace is not allowing everyone to consider all that they should, and slow down a little, thus allowing more attention to be paid to all things. As for the awkward moment of the made mistake, the Game Captain should simply use his best storytelling ability to 'cover it up', explaining **why** things happened as they did, and move on, taking care not to make the same mistake twice.

Keep the game balanced: Role-playing games have so many detail rules, so many things left to discretion, that a balance is difficult to maintain.

## CHAPTER THIRTEEN

A PIRATE'S MOST TERRIBLE ENEMY AND MOST HELPFUL FRIEND IS THE ALWAYS THE CAPTAIN

Unlike cards and other conventional games, where the rules are absolute, the abstract nature of a role-playing game lends itself to interpretation and innovation. The rules themselves set the proportions for the game, but that is all. And while a Game Captain is encouraged to be a storyteller and a judge, he must never let his opinion dictate what the carefully balanced rules already have. There is a place for storylines, and a place for rules, and they should not interfere with each other. The balance of rules and story must be carefully maintained at all times.

Maintain control: Remember, **you** as the Game Captain run the game—nobody else does. One should not let the Players become the Game Captain. As a mediator, the Game Captain should always listen to disputes and misunderstandings, and make as fair of judgments as he possibly can. But no matter how much a Player ‘knows the rules’, or no matter ‘how good a Game Captain he is’, remember (and remind others if needs be) that you are the Game Captain **now**, and whatever you must decide upon, **your** decision is final.

Dealing with poor Players: Alas, despite the best intentions of the Game Captain, Players can be ‘poor sports’ and ruin your game in countless ways, and you as the Game Captain must be prepared to meet their unreasonable attitudes while at the same time maintain the game’s fun for everyone else. Here’s how.

*Unreliable Players* are those who arrive late, or don’t arrive at all, don’t bring the snacks they were supposed to, or otherwise let you down time after time. Such people give the illusion that the game isn’t worth playing—their lack of interest is like poison to others who have already set aside a good amount of their time to cooperate towards making a good game. The best way to deal with such poor Players is to set a definitive starting time for the game, and stick to it. It is important to be reasonable about what time is set to accommodate **everybody**’s schedule. But those who agree to it, and still slack, should simply not be allowed to participate that session, or at least for some short allotment of time as a sort of ‘slap on the wrist’, and during that time, their Character

should be run as an NPC, gaining only half a normal share of Experience Points and treasure or (if the Player was exceptionally late or notorious for being so) nothing at all.

*Greedy Players* are indeed a problem in role-playing games. Because of the (discretionary) nature of these games, most Players will, at some point, want **power**! Most often this comes from the false belief that a Player ‘need not prove himself’ with a new Character, having had other Characters in the past that were far greater. Or, simply, one may just have a greedy nature, and want more of everything. Greed for power, greed for insurance against loss, these things are a matter of insecurity. The best way to deal with Players poisoned with greed is to tell them directly that what they want is unreasonable and beyond the proportions of **your** game—other Game Captains may have been generous or lenient, but in your game some things come only with blood, sweat and tears. Normally, the simple black-and-white of



# BEING GAME CAPTAIN

A PIRATE'S MOST TERRIBLE ENEMY AND MOST HELPFUL FRIEND IS THE ALWAYS THE CAPTAIN

the rules sets someone straight. However, those who want more should be starved—instead of catering to whatever outrageous expectations, the Game Captain should do the opposite, giving proportionally less, so that, after time, a Player is appreciative of anything that he can get, hopefully around the comfortable proportions the game should normally have . . .

*Poor sports* occur simply because human nature is so competitive. If somebody feels angry or cheated, about the rules or anything else, the Game Captain should stop the game immediately and try to resolve the situation. First, one should try to calm the Player down, listen to his side of the story, and make an impartial decision upon it. The Game Captain should remind the Player (and himself) that everybody is simply trying to enjoy themselves, and possibly trying to live their personal fantasies that poor sportsmanship so easily disrupts. Grouches come in an endless variety. Unfortunately, everyone more than likely plays the game with friends. If there is no choice, one should consider the sanctity of his social circle above the game. After all, it is **only** a game.

*Sleepy Players* can be anybody, no matter how good (or bad) a Player they normally are. People have bad days. People have hard times. And anyway, role-playing games are very physically passive, and so it's only natural that folks get a little sleepy. But then there are those Players who seem to do nothing **but** sleep. Those who never seem to show enough interest to merely keep participating nobody should try to change. **They** won't change, no matter what the Game Captain (or anyone else) does, or how much anyone wants them to. If there is a really good Player who is just off schedule, it can help to change the game's starting and ending time to better suit him (and if it's okay with everyone else). If a person is just 'out of it' that day, the Game Captain should cut him a little slack. But if a Player just comes to the game to sleep, one shouldn't involve him in the first place.

*Silly Players* are the worst of all. Role-playing games require a great deal of effort, enthusiasm and passion to reach their true potential. But it is all too easy to indulge the social setting and turn a carefully constructed story and shared fantasy

experience into a comedy. Humor is fine, and well rewarding, but it has its place. If someone is just being too silly and disrupting thereby, it's like a spark that starts a fire, soon to consume the other Players into silliness. Unfortunately, there's no way to stop someone from being goofy. It is usually best to just sit back and let the Player's silliness lead his Character into trouble he cannot handle . . .

**TRICKS OF THE TRADE:** Provided below are some time-honored techniques a Game Captain might consider using to enhance the game. However, these 'tricks of the trade' are suggestions only, and are not at all necessary for playing a quality game.

Players' notes: Often at the game table will Players keep notes of the many things that their Characters have seen and heard. However, as educated and responsible as this may be, and as good of a 'game move' as keeping notes may be, it is not to be in Pirates. As a rule, the Game Captain should allow Players to write things down only if their Character actually carries parchment and pen.

Paraphrasing: There is always a great deal more taking place in a role-playing game than any rules or the attention of any Game Captain could ever consider. Players are enthusiastic about their Characters' adventures (or should be), but can easily get carried away, wishing to describe every meal, sing every campfire song, count the bricks on a dungeon wall . . .

A role-playing game should have a good pace. Like a novel, sometimes things must be greatly 'paraphrased', in a manner of speaking. In this, the Game Captain should focus his attention and description only on things that are important, or those that add that 'something extra'. But if things are getting bogged down and moving too slow, 'simplify and summarize' is best. For example, the Game Captain would describe **one** camp scene, and refer to that style or hint at it while he summarizes a month's journey.

Now don't be mistaken. The Game Captain should encourage all the detail and depth his Players can offer. He just shouldn't let things become repetitive. There is a fine line between



# CHAPTER THIRTEEN

A PIRATE'S MOST TERRIBLE ENEMY AND MOST HELPFUL FRIEND IS THE ALWAYS THE CAPTAIN

welcoming imaginative additions to the story, and letting the Players forget they are playing a game that should (and needs to) progress. If Players are simply enjoying getting into the story, the Game Captain should sit back and let them indulge themselves, but keep a mind to move things along eventually, and when he does, paraphrase things to make up for the lost time.

Like a bad novel that drags on, the endless conversations never advancing the plot, the author taking twelve pages to describe a single room, so can a role-playing game overkill on description and depth. The Game Captain, for his part, should paraphrase as much as possible and speak only of what is important (to the story), and hopefully set an example, and the pace, for the Players.

**Atmosphere:** The Game Captain (or the Players) might wish to add atmosphere to the game room, giving it more of a pirate mood. Playing by candlelight, playing pirate music, dressing up in costumes, or simply just playing by the fire adds a great deal to the game. The more atmosphere one can surround the game with (or rather, the more one can distance themselves from the modern, mundane world) the better.

**Coins:** A common hassle in role-playing games is the marking and erasing and rewriting of one's gold and other coinage for simple and small amounts, such as the price of a room at an inn, or a single coin dropped into a wishing well. To make for quicker and easier play, the game might use fake coins at the game table, standing-in for small amounts of coinage used by the Characters. Thusly, instead of a Player having to mark up his Character Sheet for simply buying a room, he could just reach into his gold pieces at the table and toss a few away (wherever they are kept).

**Handouts:** Adventures are sometimes supplemented with pictures, and a Game Captain will naturally want to share them with the Players, not only to help them visualize those specific scenes and people, but just because it's fun. However, the Game Captain would have to cover the rest of the page with paper, or simply ask the Players 'not to notice' the all-important text. Either way, it's

awkward. What a Game Captain may consider doing is photocopying those pictures before the game, so he can simply pass them out to the Players during play (and maybe even enlarge them for better viewing). He might even copy them onto parchment or burn the edges.

**KNOWING THE MATERIAL:** It is important for a Game Captain to be familiar with the way adventure material and game paraphernalia are organized in Pirates. It is, after all, the Game Captain alone who will read and prepare the adventure ahead, so he must know what he wants.

**Sourcebooks:** Aside of the three gamebooks that make up the core rules, there are other books that detail different realms of the pirate world. These books provide both a gazetteer of information about a setting, as well as many advanced rules to bring it to greater life.

*The Caribbean Sourcebook* details the most classic pirate setting of all, the Spanish Main and its surrounding waters.

*The Mediterranean Sourcebook* details the oldest pirate setting of all, the waters of southern Europe and northern Africa.

*The Open Seas Sourcebook* details all of the far-flung, forgotten and newly discovered waters, from the Americas to Madagascar.

**Adventures:** These books are a collection of adventures, complete with a beginning, end, and all the Encounters, Handouts and other material that is necessary to play out these stories. Each booklet of Adventures is alphabetically coded according to the Sourcebook that it takes place in, such as 'C' for 'Caribbean Adventures'.

**Gazetteers:** These books are collections of open-ended Encounters, detailed settings and other useful information that may be incorporated into any ongoing adventure. This series is alphabetically numbered with a 'G' for 'Gazetteers'.

**Novelettes:** These books are classic pirate novels translated into games. This series is alphabetically numbered with an 'N' for 'Novelettes'.

# BEING GAME CAPTAIN

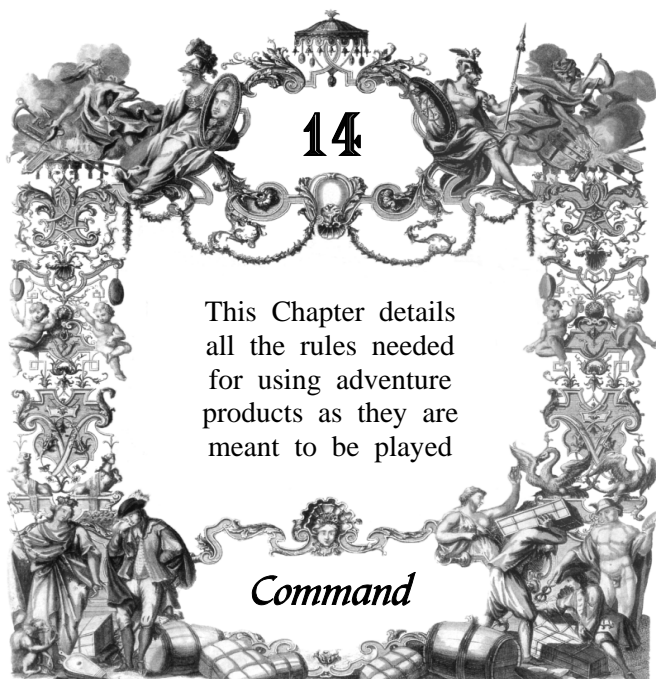


A PIRATE'S MOST TERRIBLE ENEMY AND MOST HELPFUL FRIEND IS THE ALWAYS THE CAPTAIN



# CHAPTER FOURTEEN

IT TAKES A TOUGH AND CUNNING CAPTAIN TO SAIL THROUGH A CREW'S STORM OF QUESTIONS



14

This Chapter details all the rules needed for using adventure products as they are meant to be played

*Command*

**BEGINNING AN ADVENTURE:** The game begins even before everyone sits down to play. Ideally, the Game Captain will have time to read the adventure, or at least skim through it, so he has an idea of what he will be running, and how better to run certain portions of it. Moreover, while the Game Captain is preparing his notes, the Players on their way to the game are likely to be imagining what their Characters will be facing, dreaming up schemes and strange strategies they want to try, etc. The Game Captain should be ready to begin when everyone else is.

Gathering the crew: When everyone finally sits down to play, the first thing that must be done, before anything else, is to determine whose Characters will start the game and whose will not. Normally, all Player Characters can begin the game. But as a rule, those who have not used their Character before **must** wait to join the existing party—the party cannot simply be assumed to have ‘met them along the way’. Even though a great deal of time can pass between adventures for the Characters, perhaps at times even years, it is a formality and a fair playing practice for a new Character to wait for a proper introduction for him,

to be provided by the Game Captain, according to the adventure story he is telling.

Background: Each adventure opens with a narrative that briefly explains, as best as the Player Characters could know, the legacy of the adventure they are about to embark upon. The background is to be read aloud to signal the beginning of the game, a prologue if you will, setting the stage for everything that is to follow.

**NON PLAYER CHARACTERS:** Part of the adventure are the characters that the party will meet, the Non Player Characters. These roles the Game Captain will play, switching instantly from one to the other. Of course, these Characters will never be developed as fully as the Player Characters themselves, but there is still much to consider when using them.

What are NPCs?: Anyone the party meets in the fantasy world is an NPC, from the innkeeper of whom they only know the name (and perhaps the worth of his ale), to one of their shipmates with all the statistics they have themselves. NPCs are everywhere. The Game Captain must be ready to ad-lib a different persona at any time.

When to use them: NPCs should be used only to advance the game’s storyline. While the Player Characters are constantly encountering NPCs (in town, in the tavern, passing travelers on the road, etc.) the Game master need only portray those that have significance. For example, the innkeeper and patrons are only ‘background color’, perhaps nothing more than a mention in the tavern’s description. However, if a Player Character approaches one of those travelers at the table, and that hooded stranger begins to ask about local legends of flooded pirate caves off the coast, that traveler just became an NPC . . .

How much detail?: It is often misunderstood how much detail should be given to NPCs. Some Game Captains tend to overplay them dramatically, going so far as to write up statistics for such simple folk as a shipwright, thus crowding the game so much that the Player Characters can’t seem to breathe or

# RUNNING AN ADVENTURE

IT TAKES A TOUGH AND CUNNING CAPTAIN TO SAIL THROUGH A CREW'S STORM OF QUESTIONS

ever get out of town to actually **adventure**. On the other hand, some Game Captains don't like to bother with NPCs so much, or have such stage fright for portraying them, that there becomes a lack of personalities in the world, making it seem like a flat sea with a few distant sails to sight, which it is not. Detail for NPCs is easy to abuse, but easy to handle, once one gets the feel for it.

The detail that goes into any NPC is directly proportional to his importance to the story. For example, when bartering for a musket with a greedy guard, the Game Captain might describe the guard as 'James', perhaps with a wry smile and hefty purse, adding realism to the scene and a sense of distrust for him, thus intensifying the bartering a little bit. But that's all James needs. He doesn't need Ability Scores, even if the party tries to trick him. Now, if his price for that musket was joining the party on their adventure, he certainly **would** need a lot more than a name, wouldn't he?

In all, the Game Captain should elaborate just enough on NPCs in order to advance the game's story. One shouldn't go into needless detail or worry about what's 'not listed' for an NPC. They aren't the main characters after all. Center stage is reserved for the **Player Characters**.



**RUMORS AND LEGENDS:** At the beginning of any adventure, and often times during one as well, the party will have the opportunity to gather rumors and legends concerning the adventure ahead. Rumors are greatly summarized, as their exploration could take up more than half a game's playing time if they were actually role-played out. Of course, the Game Captain may feel free to add a little description as to where each legend came from, but whether it was offered by a drunk at the tavern, from a captain on the wharf or even a summary of endless hours studying old ledgers in some candlelit room at the governor's estate, the rules for rumors and legends are always the same.

Whenever rumors are sought, the Game Captain will roll secretly on the Table provided for such information in the Adventure. He will not disclose the results of his rolls, but simply read the summarized information that is provided. Each Adventure specifies how many rumors the party may acquire through all of their searching.

All rumors and legends are marked in parenthesis whether they are true, false, misleading, etc. This is for the Game Captain's knowledge only, and for the Players to discover, the hard way—the **exciting** way...

**ENCOUNTERS:** The majority of an adventure's text is made up of 'Encounters'. 'Encounter' is a catch-all term for any event that befalls the party, any important NPC they meet, or any room or area where something significant may occur. Indeed, Like any good novel, all is summarized until the next important scene, which in a role-playing game are its Encounters. As a rule, if something is not detailed in an Encounter, it is not significant enough to the story to merit role-playing action. For instance, eating is essential, but one need not even describe the inns the party stays at along the road, unless they meet a dark, secret-sharing stranger at one, then that particular inn becomes an Encounter.

Running an Encounter: Encounters almost always include a boxed narrative, describing the physical environment, any sounds or feelings, and anything and everything that is crucial to the party's passing every obstacle presented there—often these

## CHAPTER FOURTEEN

IT TAKES A TOUGH AND CUNNING CAPTAIN TO SAIL THROUGH A CREW'S STORM OF QUESTIONS

descriptions are a game in themselves, that of spotting clues (or hearing them), however subtle, sneaky or obvious they may be. The Game Captain should read this boxed text aloud to the Players when the Encounter begins.

Following the boxed description of an Encounter are notes that are for the eyes of the Game Captain alone, detailing all essential elements to the Encounter, such as where treasures are hidden, how NPCs might react to specific actions, etc. This information should be revealed as Players discover it through trial and error, but never outright confirmed. For instance, the party may indeed find a tripwire running across the floor, and the Game Captain will say so, but he should not say “You have found **the** booby trap in this room”—the Players should still be left guessing if there is another one.

It is a good idea for the Game Captain to use boxed descriptions to his fullest advantage—to practice his storytelling ability, read deep into them to help maintain his focus for the themes of the overall adventure, and while the Players digest what they have heard, glance over his notes.

Different types of encounters: There are three different types of Encounters, or rather, there are three different ways in which they may be presented in an adventure's text.

*Story* related Encounters are presented in their chronological order or in the ideal order that they occur. It is not unusual for story based Encounters to be skipped, come early, or even recur.

*Exploration* Encounters are those areas wherein something significant may occur, such as treasure being found, a battle being fought, or something as simple as writing on the wall. Such Encounters usually begin their boxed description with a short summary of the journey to that area. For example, the party may explore the broken headland for hours, seeing nothing but the surf and the clefts, but nothing would need be described, mapped or even considered—they would just ‘jump’ from one significant area, indeed one Encounter, to the next, while the Game Captain quietly calculates the elapsed time and distance between the Encounters, which is usually hinted at in the Encounter area's description.

*Mapped* Encounters are those that are used in accordance with a map. Many indoor settings utilize a graphed map, as part of their peril involves confusing directions, distinctive shapes or sizes to hallways and rooms, etc. Such Encounters are numerically keyed to the map, and are played whenever the party arrives at them, whatever order that may be in.

**MAPS:** Some adventures include maps of certain areas, especially caverns and ruins. These are used when direction, distance or sheer complexity of a floorplan is essential to some peril or challenge, such as remembering one's way when fleeing a collapsing ceiling, or escaping a dungeon. Maps are always drawn as a ‘graph’, in simple squares. This is not to say that the actual maze or other realm is so basic in design, but the Map, like all other rules in a role-playing game, generalizes the world, in this instance for the ease of relating the dimensions to the Players as their Characters explore. Indeed, Players will wish to map their way, and as a rule, the Game Captain should allow them to do so only if their Characters are carrying parchment and pen—one parchment per piece of paper used at the table. And, when relating directions, the Game Captain should use ‘lefts’ and ‘rights’, unless the party has a compass, or someone with the Skill of Direction Sense, and then use such instructions as ‘north’ or ‘south’, which are of course far easier to follow.

**HANDOUTS:** One way the game is made more vivid for Players is the use of ‘Handouts’. These papers are more colorful renditions of texts and pictures in the Adventure booklet, which are to be passed out to the Players. For example, the Game Captain may describe a message scratched on a wall, and the Handout for it would depict the writing as it appears, cave wall and all, and so the Player's may have the fun visual of looking at exactly what the writing looks like (and have the option of copying it down rather than the Game Captain reading it aloud slowly). Handouts are often essential to the adventure. And, would you rather have a map simply marked on a Character Sheet as ‘Map B’, or wouldn't a Player prefer to clutch the burned scroll in his own hands?

# RUNNING AN ADVENTURE

IT TAKES A TOUGH AND CUNNING CAPTAIN TO SAIL THROUGH A CREW'S STORM OF QUESTIONS

**SOUNDTRACKS:** Some adventures include a digital recording that supplements the Adventure. The first and last tracks are always music keyed to the adventure's theme, to serve as both a beginning and a conclusion, like the credits in a film. The bulk of the tracks are the audio renditions of various scenes in the adventure, such as songs, spoken warnings, strange sounds Players may prefer to hear rather than have described, etc. Many tracks are Encounters' boxed descriptions narrated with sounds and music, which the Game Captain may wish to use instead of reading them himself. Boxed texts that are duplicated on any recording simply display the track number beside the boxed text itself. All recordings are entirely optional in use, and are not necessary for play.

**CONCLUDING AN ADVENTURE:** The last part of an Adventure will be for 'summing things up' so-to-speak. This information will account for the party's return journey, 'what happens now', and long-term results of the party's victories (and failures) that need not necessarily be played out.

**VARIATIONS:** In the vast seas of role-playing games, the Pirates system is like a ship in the midst of a clashing storms, holding to its charted course, indeed its rules, lest the ideas, expectations and demands of the players sink the ship as one rule after another is cast overboard. For even as role-playing is a game where one can literally try anything, there is no end to the rules that can be written to cover any given situation or attempted action. However, more often than not, this leads to trouble, for it is all too easy for any players (both Game Captains and Players alike) to begin to let rules substitute for storytelling, sometimes with good reason, for rules should dictate success and failure, life and death, but when rules dictate the success or failure of one sewing up the sleeves of their shirt, it's gone way too far. That is where the edge of the map is, so-to-speak—the rules are to go so far and no farther—for there be monsters called chaos and argument out there.

The rules, like the rigging of a ship indeed, are tried and true. A full decade of playtesting has made them so. However, each Adventure that is written ever has the opportunity to change those

rules, by supplementing them, and by adding details to them. However, one must be able to recognize the difference between what new rules generate adventure, and which ones have the potential to cause the game to begin sinking.

Adventures and all other kinds of products will offer an endless variety of rule modifications, but only for isolated Encounters. For example, a terrific rainstorm could be described, and the Game Captain's notes may include that certain Critical Misses from Table 17 have their effects replaced with the unfortunate attacker falling overboard (and to his certain death). This is a good example of what prepared adventure material is supposed to do, indeed to add flesh to the skeleton of the rules. However, just as a town guard is slain and the victor (or survivor) returns to his safehouse, so must all of the variations in rules offered by any prepared adventure material be left to that specific Adventure, so that when it is over, the core game remains as it always was known.

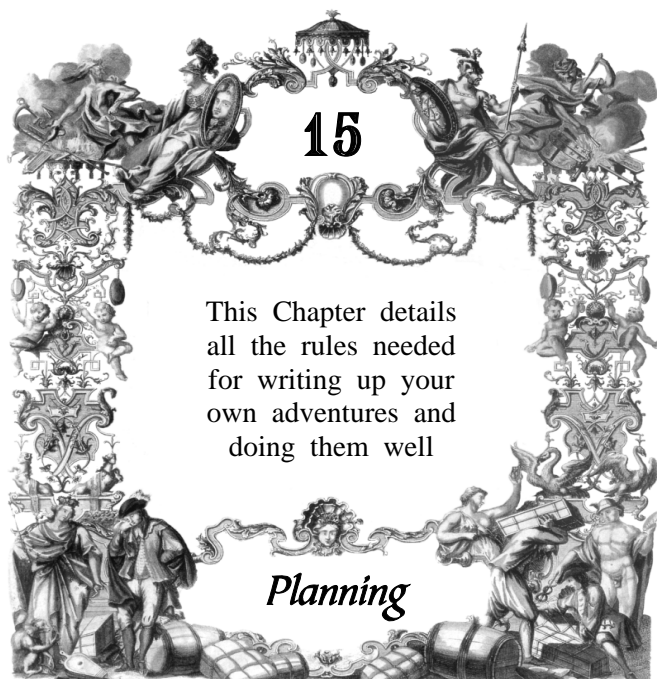
Now, few Adventures make such exceptions, and those that do have a strong reason for it. But all the same, change and innovation are encouraged for all rules, but only so long as the balance is maintained. Role-playing games would have never been made in the first place if someone didn't expand upon boardgames. So do not fall into the trap of believing that the Pirate rules are some sort of Holy Scripture. They are not. However, they work and work well, and one should be hesitant to employ any rule changes.

One can trust all the published changes, as they are the work of the game designer himself. But changes suggested by others the Game Captain should not take lightly. Consider them well, but do not accept them outright simply because they 'sound good'. One must be critical and careful, but also open-minded. There is no better advice for the uncharted waters of everybody's preferences than to simply maintain your own—what is **your** game all about, and how will the altering of any rule effect the role-playing that your storytelling creates?

An even greater responsibility faces the Game Captain who would write his own adventure material, for he must be careful not to upset the balance of the rules and role-playing by his own preferences, but that is a different tale . . .

# CHAPTER FIFTEEN

THE FIRES OF ADVENTURE ARE STARTED BY UNHOLY MEN WITH HEARTS AS BLACK AS ASH



This Chapter details all the rules needed for writing up your own adventures and doing them well

## Planning

**DESIGNING ADVENTURES:** Eventually you will want to design your own Adventures, be they simple episodes or great, historical voyages or tales worthy of a Flynn-film. Now, it would be easy to ‘just make an adventure’ by throwing dice and enemy captains at the Player Characters. However, that doesn’t constitute much of a plot. To design a **good** Adventure there are many things to consider for ensuring an exciting and altogether rewarding game for everybody involved, and you the Game Captain especially.

Writing an Adventure takes time and effort. There’s no way around that, so accept it now. A large part of being Game Captain is coming up with new Adventures, certainly, but the actual time that is involved is only half the sacrifice one must make—first and foremost one must be prepared to commit such a good deal of time, and effort, and emotion, for writing, and anticipating the actions, reactions and ideas of the Players should not and will not be easy.

Provided on Table 80 is an outline of the various elements that make up an Adventure for the Pirates game. They are listed in their order of importance and how the Game Captain should approach them, and are explained in the same order throughout this Chapter.

Table 80: Creating Adventures

Step	Adventure element
1	Choose a setting
2	Create a scenario
3	Structure the story
4	Chart the party’s course
5	Create Non Player Characters
6	Write the Encounters and Introductions
7	Create rumors and legends
8	Draw up the Handouts
9	Review the Adventure
10	Fill in final details

**Choosing a setting:** When designing an Adventure, the first thing that must be done, before anything else, is to decide where in the world the adventure is going to take place. Once that it decided, you can begin to think about what towns the party will set sail from, indeed will they be sailing at all or what terrible jungle will they have to trek through? Decide the setting, then narrow it down to what region, what island, what town or cove—narrow it down as much as you can.

It is suggested that, when choosing a setting, you pick a place (town, island or wherever) that you are generally familiar with, unless you are willing to do a little bit of research. If you know a setting well, you can make it seem more real. Although, if there is a place you are enchanted with and just want to use for your Adventure, feel free to use it, but it is strongly recommended that you do a little bit of reading on it so that your depiction of the harbor or town is accurate enough not to dishonor what the Players may already know about it.

And be familiar with **all** the locations that you wish to use, not just the starting location. Your setting is ‘Point A’ and ‘Point Z’ and everything in-between. If you’re not familiar with an island or part of the sea that may become involved in the journey, try to work around it, or take the time to learn a little about it and plan to sidetrack there.

**Creating a scenario:** Every Adventure has a plot that moves all its events and characters. The setting can help decide what that plot will be, however, usually it is just the whim of the Game Captain. Indeed, you can take almost any plot and

# CREATING AN ADVENTURE

THE FIRES OF ADVENTURE ARE STARTED BY UNHOLY MEN WITH HEARTS AS BLACK AS ASH

the Players will build upon it with their role-playing and their exploits. Sometimes it is even better to have as simple a scenario as possible, given how many unexpected turns the Players will take—the more simple the plotline, the easier it is to steer the Adventure's course back towards it. To help stir your imagination, some of the more time-honored scenarios are explained below.

*Treasure hunts* are the classic pirate story. In such a story, somehow the PCs learn of a great treasure and race towards it, usually fighting off backstabbing crewmates and villainous competitors who follow them to where 'X marks the spot'. Old treasure maps, fabled native temples, lost pirate caves and stranded treasure ships are all good possibilities for a treasure hunt.

*Royal ransoms* are often paid as pirates kidnap officials and noblemen and hold them for ransom, but sometimes either the ransom or the captured individual doesn't make it to their destination, and they become available for the Player party—will they help the damsel in distress reach her home and collect an honorable reward, or will they hold the goods themselves and fight off the pirate hunters when they come?

*Family treasures* are often lost in the wide world of piracy, and lost family members, most likely people the PCs never knew, suddenly enter into their lives and tell a tale of a fabulous treasure that they can all seek together!

*Escapes* from dungeons and slave galleys make for dramatic and desperate adventures. Usually they begin with the PCs being captured, and then having to fight their way to freedom, perhaps capturing their own ship in the process. But such a scenario should not be used unless the PCs have little to lose—Players will get madder than hell if their equipment or (especially) their ship is taken from them just to give an Adventure a storyline.

*Lost pirates* offer unique opportunities for introducing major NPCs and finding strange locales. In such a story, the Player Characters begin lost, either at sea or inland, and have many adventures and make many friends and enemies along their long journey back to civilization. The party may be enslaved by a brutal captain, or make a secret ally in a enemy governor's daughter,

or have a carriage chase from a plantation or stow aboard an enemy ship. The misadventures of the lost pirates can be just as humorous as they are desperate.

*Rescues* are classic, with at least one Character, preferably a Player Character, out to save someone, such as his lover, his lord, or someone of great importance. Usually this has the promise of a great reward or courtship to follow.

*Revenge* is a bitter and beloved scenario, and absolutely **must** involve a villain—somebody has murdered someone close to the PCs, preferably someone they hold dear but never a Player Character himself, and the party sets out to avenge him. In order for such a scenario to motivate the Players, you usually need to have the murdered person be of value to them beyond sentimental value—you cannot trust pirates to care that much about anyone. But a grandfather who had a map that is now in the possession of the murderer promises revenge **and** a reward for it...

*Old enemies* are dangerous but exciting. If the party has captured someone before, **he** may be the one seeking revenge. It is a good idea to use such a scenario long after someone has been captured, thus giving him time to amass a crew and track down the Player Characters.

*Pirate hunters* make for an easy and lengthy adventure. In such a story, a prominent NPC appears who is hell-bent on capturing or killing certain Player Characters. Such a scenario should be used only if the PCs have done some dastardly deed that wouldn't go unpunished by anyone, or they have high Notoriety Scores and thus attract the attention of pirate hunters. But once the hunter, usually armed with a bigger and better ship than the PCs appears and declares war on them, a classic cat-and-mouse game begins as the PCs try to elude the hunter while at the same time gathering strength for the inevitable showdown. Such adventures usually call for numerous major NPCs to be introduced, as the party gathers allies to stand against their nemesis.

*Royal commissions* always make for a clean, easy start and simple scenario—the PCs are promised a reward if they go and fulfill a mission, usually for a governor. Such missions often involve capturing or killing an enemy of the crown,



# CHAPTER FIFTEEN

THE FIRES OF ADVENTURE ARE STARTED BY UNHOLY MEN WITH HEARTS AS BLACK AS ASH

sacking a specific town, or retrieving information from an enemy. Whatever the case may be, the PCs have the advantage of surprise, and so obstacles are neatly stacked before them as they fight through one enemy after another until they achieve their mission and return to collect their reward.

*Explorations* involve the party making a long journey, usually inland, to simply chart a region or perhaps search for some artifact. Usually this is done at the behest of a governor or other official, but just as easily can be done at the whim of the PCs themselves.

Structuring the story: Once you have the plot decided, you should make a rough outline of your Adventure, deciding only key Encounters and Characters. You should end up with a list of ‘things to write’, preferably in the order the party will encounter them, with lots of ‘filler to be added between them’. It is here that you should size up the Adventure’s challenge and decide if it’s going to be too easy or too difficult. Now is the time to adjust it.

Charting the party’s course: Most every Adventure will involve sailing from one island or land to another. Rather than slow down the game during play to chart how far it is from one place to another, you should do this when writing up the Adventure to begin with. Plot every course the party is likely to take based on where the Adventure’s plot and clues could lead them. That way, when it comes time to weigh anchor, the distance to the next harbor is already determined and the game will enjoy smoother sailing.

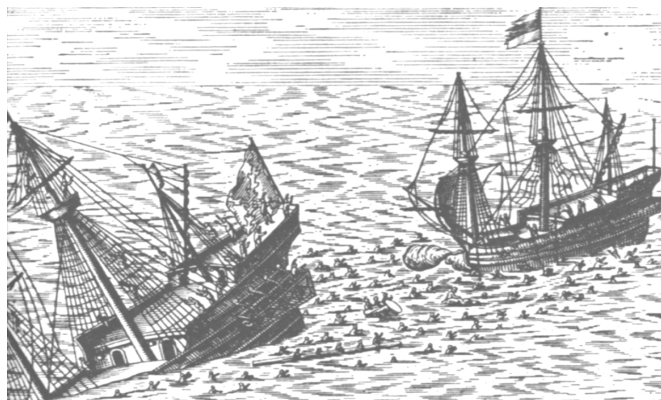
Creating NPCs: Most Adventures will have a cast of Non Player Characters, from villains to lady loves, from scoundrels in the street to secret informants. Write up statistics for each Character that is likely to join the party on their adventure or do battle with them, as you never know just how large a role major NPCs will come to play, and so you must be prepared for anything. For all other NPCs simply assign what scores they will need in order to do their part in the story.

Writing Encounters: Encounters make up the bulk of an Adventure. One Encounter after another delivers the carefully planned storyline to the Players. Fortunately, writing Encounters is a relatively simple task.

Each Encounter presents either an obstacle, an insightful situation, or a chance to gain power, or any combination of the three. Each Encounter should have an boxed description or narrative that informs the Players of all the important facts about the scene that their Characters would be immediately aware of. Whatever surprises are in store for them within the Encounter’s notes should be hinted at in the narrative or alluded to earlier in the Adventure. As a rule, anything that is critical to the Adventure must be relatively simple to discover.

Encounters can be anything really, from an abandoned ship at sea, to a drunkard in the ally selling phony treasure maps. But whatever an Encounter involves, it should somehow be significant to the Adventure’s plot, or at least offer some obstacle to overcome—events and situations that do not involve any real challenge or uncertain outcome for the Characters, or could easily be solved by rolling dice, should not take the Adventure’s time with bothering with an entire Encounter—when Players hear a prepared narrative they should expect some sort of dramatic or well planned scene to further the adventure. Make sure your Encounters justify their excitement.

Generally though, anything you think up that ‘needs to happen’ will constitute a good Encounter. However, there are some pitfalls to avoid, as explained below.



# CREATING AN ADVENTURE

THE FIRES OF ADVENTURE ARE STARTED BY UNHOLY MEN WITH HEARTS AS BLACK AS ASH

*Introductions* should always be written from a neutral perspective, in that you should avoid saying “Your ship . . .” or “The captain is going to . . .” and similar phrases that imply ownership of a vessel, as you never know if the PCs are going to be part of the crew or in command—a lot can happen in very short amounts of time. A good idea is to write multiple Introductions accounting for the various possible situations of the party—in command, looking for a ship to join, enslaved, etc.

*Ships at sea* are always an exciting Encounter. But be sure that any ship encountered has a captain with full personal statistics, a fully detailed crew, and combat statistics, as you never know when the Players will wish to do battle.

*Key Characters* can appear anytime, anywhere. When introducing a major NPC, be sure that the Encounter is unavoidable so that the party does not pass him by.

*Booby traps* will always make Characters tense and anxious, so be sure to have the trap’s statistics, triggers and effects specified in solid notes, because someone’s life could easily be lost with the simplest roll.

*Shipboard Encounters*, like Introductions, should be written from a neutral perspective concerning ownership or command of the vessel that the PCs are aboard.

Creating rumors and legends: A pirate adventure isn’t all broadside battles and sword duels. There’s usually an air of mystery or superstition that lingers in the shadows and haunts the Characters’ thoughts. Stories abound. Rumors fly. Legends give birth to countless tales and mysteries that may or may not be true. These rumors and legends are a large part of the adventure.

After all the Encounters and Characters have been designed and organized, you should go back through them and decide which elements of the adventure you wouldn’t mind the Player Characters knowing beforehand, as well as which perils and secrets you may want to conceal better. Don’t change the Encounters themselves, but rather, make up Tables for rolling rumors and legends, filled with many true stories that can give the Players an advantage, as well as many falsehoods that can cause them to go astray.

When structuring a rumor Table, maintain a good balance of truth, in that you should have both true and false rumors to be found. Sometimes the truth will outweigh the falsehoods. However, because this is a game still, and rumors are partially what the Players will base their strategies on, the false rumors should never outnumber the true ones.

Once you have a good collection of true and false rumors, place them in a numerical order according to their value, with the most valuable (and thus truthful) rumors with higher scores, and the less valuable and more misleading stories lower down. These numbers are what must be rolled to attain the rumors.

Finally, decide how many rolls the party should receive, based on how many people are willing to talk to them, how difficult the more valuable rumors would be to attain, how well documented things are, etc. You may wish to allow opportunities for bonus rumors if Characters meet certain criteria, such as a PC being a former member of the lost ship’s crew, or perhaps heir to the wealth spoken of, etc.

Drawing up Handouts: Handouts are always an entertaining addition to a game, presenting the Players with something they can see and touch, making one part of the adventure that much more involving. When designing an Adventure, you should look for opportunities to make Handouts and incorporate them into Encounters and the plot. Normally, Handouts are a copy of a piece of paper, such as a treasure map, a ransom note, a critical page from an old ship’s log, the summarized entries from a diary, etc. Handouts can be almost anything really, and you are encouraged to ‘push the envelope’ so-to-speak, always surprising your Players with inventive and well constructed Handouts. Just be careful not to overuse them—only those elements of the adventure that are easier to read rather than remember should be made into a Handout.

Reviewing your work: Before the Adventure is truly finished, before all the finer details are added, review the large black-and-white structure of the Adventure to make sure that all is in order.

# CHAPTER FIFTEEN

THE FIRES OF ADVENTURE ARE STARTED BY UNHOLY MEN WITH HEARTS AS BLACK AS ASH

Correct plot holes so your story doesn't sink! Make sure all NPCs are present and accounted for. Check and review as many things as you can.

After reviewing your Adventure you should have a feeling of confidence, indeed that everything is 'shipshape'. That is when you know you are finally finished.

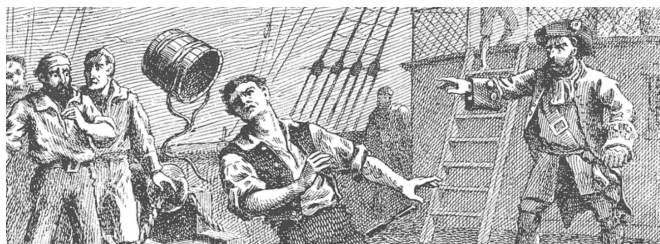
Now, it is possible that your Adventure may be vastly different than how you first envisioned it. But don't be discouraged by this. In fact, be **encouraged** by this. A concept is always good, but the final product, having been reshaped by extensive thought and ideas coming together is almost always better than the original design. If you feel you haven't written quite what you wanted, just remind yourself that the Adventure hasn't been played yet, and you don't know how much the Players will **like** what you've created for them. Besides, they're not going to know about what wasn't included anyway.

Filling in final details: Once an Adventure is finished, you should go back and work on it some more. Add some names to some NPCs. Add another narrative or two. Just add some more details to make the game more involving. They may not seem necessary, but you can never be too prepared.

**GOOD ADVICE:** There are countless ways to improve the quality of an Adventure. Provided below are proven ways to ensure greater quality in your adventure. These are not necessary, but they can do you no wrong either.

Research: Since Pirates is a game based on history, it always enhances an Adventure by doing a little research. It's a relatively simple task. Just check out a book on pirates from your local library and skim through until you find references to towns or lands in your Adventure. You'll likely find a treasure trove of names, practices and elements of a pirate's life that you can work into your descriptions, even into you plotline itself. Historical facts stand out in a game, and they always make the Adventure feel more real. If that appeals to your Players, research a quick and easy way to increase the fun of the game for them.

Involve the Player Characters: Most likely you will be designing your Adventure for Characters you already know. You may wish to tailor the Adventure to involve them much deeper than simply being 'adventurers'. You can take anything on a Character Sheet and work it into the story. For instance, if a Player Character is a woman with dark, lush hair, in the tavern description you might include a mysterious stranger asking about 'the woman with the raven hair'. Going deeper still, a Player Character may be William Williford Wellington IV. The Adventure may begin with the funeral of WWW III, killed by the notorious pirate Captain de Vore. Instantly the Players are motivated to seek this nefarious marauder . . .



Build the story: Try to combine the elements of your new Adventure with the results of a previous journey. For instance, don't have a pirate hunter appear just to offer up a battle, but rather, have Captain Courageous be pursuing the party because they sacked the town of Petit Goave. When the actions of the Player Characters return with consequences or rewards it makes the fictitious world in which they adventure much more involving. Build story on top of story. Develop the storyline and thus give the Players greater opportunities to develop their Characters.

Weigh your ideas carefully: Now, there are good ideas, and then here are **good** ideas. Good ideas are not necessarily those that are highly original or really 'cool', but those that are good for an Adventure's story. Indeed, good ideas aren't just novelties, but they're things that enhance the story, the game, the experience. For example, a pirate in the tavern who 'knows all the rumors' and charges 50 gold apiece for them may sound like a good idea—at first. After all, that way the party can learn all kinds of valuable information and

# CREATING AN ADVENTURE

THE FIRES OF ADVENTURE ARE STARTED BY UNHOLY MEN WITH HEARTS AS BLACK AS ASH

they won't get it easily. But think about it, really. Is one guy going to know **all** the rumors? How could he? And what tavern character is going to trust to others' believing in them so much that they'd pay a year's earnings in gold for them? Good ideas have two aspects to them—are they neat ideas, and do they serve a good purpose as well? Some really cool ideas may have to be discarded, for after some thought, they may have been placed in an adventure only **because** they were cool, but after all really only detract from the adventure's quality.

Originality: Always try to be original. That's not to say that everything you create has to be exceptional or unique, for indeed many classic ideas, as well as those Players simply prefer, should be used time and time again. But one should always try to do things at least a little differently each time around. In one's own journey of writing an Adventure, he should avoid the pitfalls of copying others, or relying too much on the inspiration of others just to finish the Adventure. Indeed, one can always find a new way to present old ideas, especially in fantasy. Borrow ideas from others, pay homage to inspiration, and deliver classics to Players, certainly, but always add original ideas along with them. At least, always try to do so.

Reasonable challenges: When designing booby traps and puzzles there are really no rules, and so a Game Captain must be very, very careful to remain reasonable and fair. Indeed, traps and puzzles are like little games within themselves, and their rules must be clearly defined. Fighting is always directed by the same rules. Everyone knows them. But all challenges have few traits similar to each other. The Game Captain must keep this in mind when designing them, to provide an adequate amount of clues for the Players to have a even have a chance at solving a puzzle. Any amount of dice may be involved, and even new rules invented just for that one trap. A good rule that keeps all these things in balance is to keep these challenges 'reasonable', in that they have one purpose and one purpose only, that they're not too outrageous to be passed or solved, and most importantly, that

they **can** be overcome, by a reasonable effort on the part of the Players—after enough time anyone could guess a riddle, but who is going to know the number of jewels kept in Captain Cutthroat's coat pocket two hundred years ago? The Game Captain must remember that the Players do not necessarily know what **he** knows.

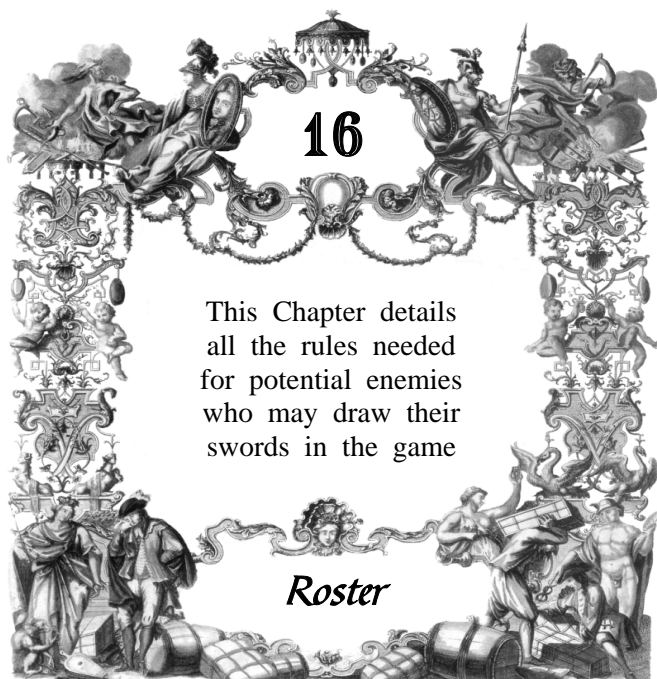
Never too much: One should be careful not to overdo anything. All an Adventure's Encounters, clues, challenges and rewards should be 'just enough' to tell the tale. Remember, Players (and Game Captains) can only consider so much, and between game sessions remember only so much. Also, a lot of details should be left open for the dice and impromptu role-playing to account for. And not everything has to be exceptional.

Balance adventures: A good Adventure is one that is well balanced, in that it maintains a good variety of Encounters. An Adventure shouldn't be all fighting, or all booby traps, etc. But exploring deeper still, even if there is a good balance of fighting encounters, they shouldn't all be against the Spanish, for instance. The Game Captain should try to include as many different enemies, treasures, puzzles, perils and traps as he can while giving them all (at least the appearance of having) a good reason to be there, corresponding to each other, and the plot that brings them all together.

Rules and story: The functioning rules of this role-playing game are important to use as guidelines, but must be kept abstract as well—not only do they keep the game fair, but they are carefully balanced, proportioned, and playtested. It is all too tempting to apply new rules to compliment one's ideas for a story, but that must not be. Indeed, no new rules should be made, save for booby traps and puzzles. But at the same time, one must not become submerged in the rules and hope that the set proportions, numbers and procedures of the game rules alone can tell a story. It is the Game Captain's job to interpret rules into the story's realities, to take the skeleton of the numbers and give them the flesh of details. Rules and stories must maintain a delicate balance to create the experience that a role-playing game is to be.

# CHAPTER SIXTEEN

FRIEND AND FOE ARE ONLY TITLES THAT CAN CHANGE AS QUICKLY AND EASILY AS THE WIND



This Chapter details all the rules needed for potential enemies who may draw their swords in the game

## Roster

**STATISTICS:** The various victims, allies and adversaries that can be found amongst NPCs will always need certain statistics accounted for. All of these scores are explained below, but many are all subject to change, according to the deciding factor of the NPC's Experience Level, ranging from 1-6. When each NPC is encountered, roll for his Level on a single dice, adding the result to all scores marked with an asterisk (\*).

**Group number:** This is how many such NPCs are likely to be encountered at a single time in their most common setting (guards in a fort, prostitutes in a tavern, etc.).

**Ability Scores:** This lists the NPC's Ability Scores in the same order as they would appear on any Character Sheet; Brawn, Agility, Endurance, Girth, Wits, Intuition, Charisma, and Luck.

**Defense Score:** This is the individual's effective Defense Score, totaled from all factors normally applied, including Abilities, Skills and Weight.

**Survival:** This is the individual's effective Girth for avoiding death when struck, totaled from all factors normally applied, including Girth and armor.

**Attack Rolls:** This is the individual's effective modifier to his Attack Rolls with his main weapon, totaled from all factors normally applied, including Skills but not high Defense Scores, for this added calculation is left to your option.

**Base Damage:** This is the individual's effective Base Damage, totaled from all factors normally applied, including his weapon, Skills and Brawn.

**Morale:** This is the number that one must equal or exceed on a single dice each time he is wounded in battle, or else he will attempt to flee each and every Turn he has thereafter.

**Movement Rate:** This is the individual's maximum Movement Rate, totaled from all factors normally applied, including Abilities and equipment.

**Treasure:** When someone is killed or incapacitated, they are usually looted as well. Each victim will have treasure on their person to constitute **one** roll on Table 81, using the 'People' column, modified by the number given under this listing. When they have gold, it is **all** that they have, including secret caches, hollow shoes and the like.

**TOWNSFOLK:** These are simple people that are normally not fought, but in the event that someone tries to rob, rape, slap or stab them, their statistics are ready for battle (even if themselves are not).

## Child

**Group number:** 1-3  
**Ability Scores:** B2, A5, E3, G1, W2, I3, C5, L4  
**Defense Score:** 6  
**Survival:** 1  
**Attack Rolls:** Brawling +0  
**Base Damage:** 0  
**Morale:** 2\*  
**Movement Rate:** 110'  
**Treasure:** -6

Children are just that, all the young lads and lasses that scurry about the streets and wharfs, dodging around pirates, perhaps offering to be their cabin-boy, or perhaps offering to sell them useful information . . .

# A ROGUES GALLERY



FRIEND AND FOE ARE ONLY TITLES THAT CAN CHANGE AS QUICKLY AND EASILY AS THE WIND



## Innkeeper

**Group number:** 1  
**Ability Scores:** B3, A2, E3, G1, W4, I5, C5, L3  
**Defense Score:** 4  
**Survival:** 1  
**Attack Rolls:** Pistol +1  
**Base Damage:** 7  
**Morale:** 4  
**Movement Rate:** 100'  
**Treasure:** +0

Innkeepers are always having to settle disputes between gamblers, thieves and drunks, and thus they usually have a pistol on their person and a blunderbuss behind the bar, and if they're Level 5 or higher a partner in the crowd with pistol ready!

## Merchant

**Group number:** 1-3  
**Ability Scores:** B3, A1, E3, G3, W6, I6, C7, L2  
**Defense Score:** 5  
**Survival:** 3  
**Attack Rolls:** Brawling +1  
**Base Damage:** 1  
**Morale:** 2  
**Movement Rate:** 100'  
**Treasure:** +0

Merchants often do business with pirates, for the money is good, though they have sharp eyes and wits, and are not too trusting, and if they are Level 4 or higher they will have a pistol hidden on them and can speak any language.

## Official

**Group number:** 1-3  
**Ability Scores:** B2, A1, E3, G4, W8, I7, C6, L3  
**Defense Score:** 5  
**Survival:** 4  
**Attack Rolls:** Rapier +1  
**Base Damage:** 4  
**Morale:** 4  
**Movement Rate:** 110'  
**Treasure:** -3\*

Officials can really be any kind of government officer, including tax-collectors, harbormasters and even governors themselves, usually rather pompous and wearing powdered wigs.

## Priest

**Group number:** 1-4  
**Ability Scores:** B1, A1, E3, G4, W7, I5, C8, L7  
**Defense Score:** 5  
**Survival:** 4  
**Attack Rolls:** Brawling +0  
**Base Damage:** 0  
**Morale:** 2\*  
**Movement Rate:** 120'  
**Treasure:** -2

Priests are always there to help your prayers, to offer a sermon, to hear your confession, and to take your money, though they can also help with curses and spells—depending on an Adventure's context—while nobody else ever can.

## Sailor

**Group number:** 1-12  
**Ability Scores:** B5, A4, E5, G5, W2, I5, C2, L1  
**Defense Score:** 6  
**Survival:** 5  
**Attack Rolls:** Brawling +1\*  
**Base Damage:** 1\*  
**Morale:** 3  
**Movement Rate:** 100'  
**Treasure:** -3

Sailors come in an endless variety but are all the same as well, being tough, hardy men whose largest concerns are where they will be sailing next and aboard whose ship, and enjoying themselves in the meantime.

## Whore

**Group number:** 1-6  
**Ability Scores:** B1, A4, E3, G6, W2, I5, C7, L1  
**Defense Score:** 4  
**Survival:** 3  
**Attack Rolls:** Dagger +0  
**Base Damage:** 3  
**Morale:** 2  
**Movement Rate:** 120'  
**Treasure:** -2

Whores are in every port and town, and these practitioners of the oldest profession know pirates rather well, too well, for if they are of Level 4 or higher their dagger will be hidden on them.

# CHAPTER SIXTEEN

FRIEND AND FOE ARE ONLY TITLES THAT CAN CHANGE AS QUICKLY AND EASILY AS THE WIND

**GUARDS:** These are the standard soldiers that keep order in the streets and aboard ships, their statistics provided to battle those of the Characters should they need to (even if they don't want to).

## British regiment

**Group number:** 1-4  
**Ability Scores:** B4, A5, E4, G7, W3, I6, C2, L1  
**Defense Score:** 7  
**Survival:** 7  
**Attack Rolls:** Longsword +2 / musket +1  
**Base Damage:** 7 / 8  
**Morale:** 7  
**Movement Rate:** 90'  
**Treasure:** -3

British guards are usually English, as are most of the colonies and people they protect, with well disciplined skill and dedication to duty, though with some exceptions.

*Royal guards* rarely put to sea, unless they are the escort of nobility, these highly skilled men with +4 to use their swords.

*Scottish guards* are few, and are rather different in style and form, with only +1 to attack with swords instead of +2, but with Survival of 8.

## Dutch soldier

**Group number:** 1-3  
**Ability Scores:** B3, A5, E4, G6, W5, I5, C4, L2  
**Defense Score:** 6  
**Survival:** 6  
**Attack Rolls:** Longsword +2 / pistol +1  
**Base Damage:** 7 / 6  
**Morale:** 5  
**Movement Rate:** 110'  
**Treasure:** -2

Dutch guards are more of a formality than a necessity, given that their maritime captains are better at avoiding trouble and then haggling their way out of it, and so such guards tend to be rather lax and easily surprised.

*Royal guards* for the Dutch are rarely needed, but their preferred weapon of choice is a rapier instead of a longsword, their Base Damage 3.

*Merchant captains* are both businessmen and fighters at the same time, keeping a hidden pistol on them, with +2 to attack with it instead of +1.

## French infantry

**Group number:** 1-3  
**Ability Scores:** B4, A6, E4, G6, W3, I4, C3, L1  
**Defense Score:** 6  
**Survival:** 6  
**Attack Rolls:** Rapier +3 / pistol +1  
**Base Damage:** 6 / 7  
**Morale:** 4  
**Movement Rate:** 100'  
**Treasure:** -3

French guards are often soldiers called from the fields of their endless wars with other countries and put into service, making for guards who are loyal mostly to the others at their post rather than who or what they are supposed to be protecting, though there are some exceptions.

*Royal guards* are usually musketeers, in title if not in truth, though they have had such formal training all the same, gaining a +4 bonus to attack with rapiers instead of +3.

*Cavaliers* are either nobles or gentlemen who serve a brief period in order to gain favors at court, though their comfortable lives have allowed for good health, giving them Survival of 7.

## Spanish guard

**Group number:** 1-6  
**Ability Scores:** B3, A4, E4, G4, W3, I5, C1, L2  
**Defense Score:** 5  
**Survival:** 9  
**Attack Rolls:** Cutlass +0  
**Base Damage:** 7  
**Morale:** 6  
**Movement Rate:** 80'  
**Treasure:** -1

Spanish guards are well supplied, wearing full armor, helmet, and wielding a cutlass, thus they tend to let a battle come to them, for they move slower and are better at defense.

*Conquistadors* are fully armored explorers and treasure hunters, indeed the 'conquerors', carrying in addition to their normal weapons a blunderbuss which they use at +1 instead of +0.

*Inquisition* are enforcers of the church, their armor adorned with blood-red cloaks, fighting with +1 instead of +0 with a cutlass, and with a Defense Score of 7 instead of 5.

# A ROGUES GALLERY

FRIEND AND FOE ARE ONLY TITLES THAT CAN CHANGE AS QUICKLY AND EASILY AS THE WIND

**PIRATES:** There are countless pirates out there, all different, though the following categories offer up standard-setting statistics for them, should the Characters try to pick the wrong pocket or perhaps challenge their own captain for command.

## Captain

**Group number:** 1  
**Ability Scores:** B5, A5, E6, G9, W6, I9, C5, L4  
**Defense Score:** 10\*  
**Survival:** 9  
**Attack Rolls:** Longsword +4\* / pistol +2\*  
**Base Damage:** 9\* / 8\*  
**Morale:** 11  
**Movement Rate:** 110'  
**Treasure:** +0\*

Captains are the most ruthless and cunning of pirates—they have to be to keep their command, and so no matter the size of such a pirate's crew or ship, one should be prepared to fight the devil himself if they draw swords!

## Crewman

**Group number:** Any  
**Ability Scores:** B6, A5, E5, G6, W3, I6, C1, L3  
**Defense Score:** 8  
**Survival:** 6  
**Attack Rolls:** Cutlass -1\* / pistol +1  
**Base Damage:** 6\* / 7  
**Morale:** 9  
**Movement Rate:** 90'  
**Treasure:** -2

Crewmen come in endless varieties, religions, persuasions, skin colors and shirt colors, preferring the short and brutal life of piracy to the slow and false death of civilization, these renegades, rouges and thieves both unpredictable and uncontrollable.

*English* pirates sometimes enter battle with a surprising amount of caution, willingly suffering -1 to their Initiative Roll but gaining +1 to their attack roll made that Round if they win.

*French* pirates sometimes use a rapier, their Base Damage thus at 3 instead of 7, but increasing their attack bonus to +2 instead of +1 and their Movement Rate at 100' instead of 90'.

*Spanish* pirates sometimes fight with religious fervor, increasing their Survival to 7 instead of 6.

## Piratess

**Group number:** 1-3  
**Ability Scores:** B2, A7, E5, G6, W3, I6, C4, L2  
**Defense Score:** 7\*  
**Survival:** 6  
**Attack Rolls:** Longsword +2\* / pistol at +1  
**Base Damage:** 7\* / 7  
**Morale:** 10  
**Movement Rate:** 130'  
**Treasure:** -1

Pirates are just as easily women as men, but not so easily do they live, having to fight harder in order to survive, and so if one crosses swords with a piratess, be it a lovely lady, wild woman, wench or wanton murderer, one had best be prepared to fight to the end.

*Disguised* women have the element of surprise, allowing their enemies to assume they are as slow or as heavy as males, thus gaining +1 to their first Initiative Roll if they are fighting alone.

*Scarlet* women are so named for their rather outlandish and brazenly sexual outfits, using love as their ally and lust as a distraction, gaining +1 to their Defense Score against all male opponents.

## Quartermaster

**Group number:** 1  
**Ability Scores:** B8, A5, E6, G8, W4, I6, C4, L3  
**Defense Score:** 9\*  
**Survival:** 8  
**Attack Rolls:** Cutlass +1\* / brawling +3  
**Base Damage:** 9\* / 4  
**Morale:** 9  
**Movement Rate:** 100'  
**Treasure:** -2

Quartermasters remain the strong-man aboard a pirate ship, the second-in-command who divvies up treasure and settles all disputes, a position lending itself to larger, more intimidating men, who usually have a temper to match, one which their massive frame is barely large enough to hold.

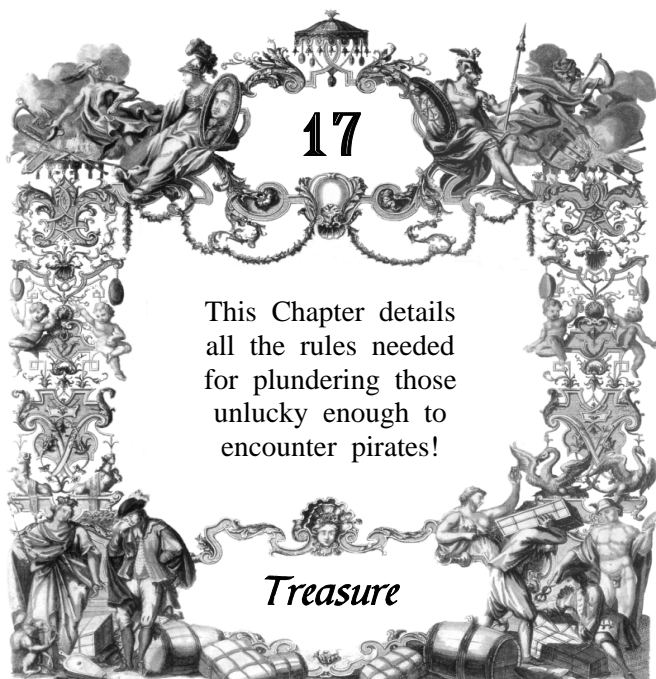
**OTHER NPCs:** There are certainly other NPCs out there to encounter, such as natives, historic characters and others, but these are dealt with in the Sourcebooks and subsequent Adventures that detail their own regions of the world.



# CHAPTER SEVENTEEN



BEWARE OF UNGUARDED GOLD AS IT'S NOTHING BUT THE DEVIL'S SHINING TEETH CURSING YE



This Chapter details all the rules needed for plundering those unlucky enough to encounter pirates!

## Treasure

**PLUNDERING:** Ahh, treasure! Whenever a ship is boarded, whenever a town is sacked, the pirates grow richer . . . and richer! Whenever treasure is acquired, the rules provided below will determine what treasures are indeed recovered.

**Limitless wealth:** The treasures provided throughout these pages are by no means the limit of what can be found—a Game Captain is encouraged to be ever inventive about what valuables are taken from ships and towns. The rules provided throughout this Chapter are merely guidelines, and should be relied upon only as such, or used simply for plunder in a Simple Game—prepared Adventures should not have their treasure rolled up, but carefully chosen in order to benefit the story, who they belong to, etc.

**Value:** Each treasure has a Value, determined by its source—the Value of a ship or the Level of a town. When the ship or town is plundered, the treasure's Value thus is the total number of rolls that are to be made on Table 81 to determine exactly what types of treasures are recovered. Additional rolls are made on subsequent Tables throughout the rest of this Chapter to determine the exact nature of each treasure.

Table 81: Plunder!

Roll	Ships	Towns	Others	People
12	+3 rolls	+5 rolls	Special	Special
11	Special	+2 rolls	Special	Special
10	Jewels	Special	Special	Jewels
9	Gold	Jewels	Jewels	Gold
8	Gold	Jewels	Jewels	Gold
7	Gold	Gold	Jewels	Gold
6	Valuables	Gold	Gold	Gold
5	Valuables	Gold	Gold	Gold
4	Valuables	Gold	Gold	Nothing!
3	Valuables	Valuables	Gold	Nothing!
2	Valuables	Valuables	Valuables	Nothing!
1	Nothing!	Valuables	Nothing!	Nothing!

**Plentiful treasures:** It is important to note that when ships and towns are plundered, the treasures taken are indeed that—**treasures!** The rules in this Chapter do not account for normal, plentiful treasures such as clothes, ropes, pottery and the like. Such plentiful goods do not require any rolls to be there as they are found in abundance.

**VALUABLES:** The most common treasures found are those of normal valuables such as tradegoods and weapons. A roll on Table 82 will determine the nature of the plundered valuables.

Table 82: Plundered Valuables

Roll	Valuables	Size	Value
9-12	Goods (1-12 tons)	100	100-1200
7-8	Weapons	200	600
6	1-12 Slaves (Level 1)	10-120	100
1-5	10-120 days of food	100	100

**Food:** When food is found as a treasure it is found in amounts of 10-120 total days worth of both food and water, well packaged and preserved in barrels, boxes, sacks and stores.

**Goods:** There are all kinds of goods carried aboard ships and traded in town. As a rule, 'goods' are always the same as far as the space they take in a ship's cargo hold. However, if you or your Players wish to have a little more detail added to your game, you may roll on Table 83 to determine the exact nature of the plundered goods.

# PIRATE PLUNDER!



BEWARE OF UNGUARDED GOLD AS IT'S NOTHING BUT THE DEVIL'S SHINING TEETH CURSING YE



**Table 83: Plundered Goods**

Roll	Nature of the goods
12	Medicine
11	Tobacco
10	Tea
9	Rare plants
8	Sugar or flour
7	Clothing, cotton, or silk
6	Books
5	Glass
4	Rare animals
3	Spices
2	Rum, ale, beer or brandy
1	Hides

**Slaves:** Either in the event of battle or as a direct result of freeing them, 1-12 slaves have escaped their captivity. Happy to be freed, these men will offer to join the pirates. These men do not count against the normal amount of crew available when recruiting men from a captured ship or town.

**Weapons:** Weapons (and sometimes armor) are kept aboard any ship that can afford them. Or, if a treasure is found, it is sometimes found with the remnants of those who fought for it or died defending it. In any case, the general category of 'weapons' includes enough arms for all of a ship's crew as effectively as if 'weapons' were normally purchased (from Table 34). If a Character wants a specific weapon from a cache of weapons, he must make a normal Availability Check for it, and, as is normal, if the Check fails, then no such weapon is there to be taken.

**GOLD:** It be gold they're after! When ships and towns are plundered, coins of all kinds are taken from the people. Using Table 84, two single rolls are made to determine what gold has been found. The first is a roll added to the ship's Value or town's Level (or the NPC's Level) to determine how many coins are found, and the second roll to determine what country the coins are crested for. Note that if a 'country's own' is rolled for any pirates, then these coins will always be 'pieces of eight', as they are the most widespread coins and easiest for pirates to divide up equally.

**Table 84: Plundered Coins**

Total	Gold	Roll	Coin type
24	5 rolls x10000	12	Gold bullion
23	3 rolls x10000	11	Pieces of eight
22	1 roll x10000	10	Crowns
21	5 rolls x1000	9	Doubloons
20	3 rolls x1000	8	Daalders
19	1 roll x1000	7	Ducats
17-18	5 rolls x100	6	Louis d'ors
15-16	3 rolls x100	5	Deniers
13-14	1 roll x100	4	Guineas
10-12	1 roll x10	3	Country's own
6-9	3 rolls	2	Country's own
1-5	1 roll	1	Country's own

**JEWELS:** From Mayan stones to a duke's royal ring, jewelry and raw gems are a precious prize for pirates, glimmering brighter than gold itself!

**The value of jewels:** When found, all 'jewels' will have a random value of 100-1000 gold, be it many lesser stones or a single jewel worth a great deal. If the result is '11' or '12', roll again and add the total. Continue thus until a '1-10' adds the last bit.

**Jewels:** When jewels are found, roll on Table 85 to determine the type of gems arrrrrr found and what type of jewelry that they adorn. Roll these details at your discretion or simply choose them.

**Table 85: Jewels And Jewelry**

Roll	Gem type	Roll	Jewelry type
23-24	Diamond	23-24	Crown
21-22	Emerald	21-22	Crucifix
20	Star sapphire	20	Tiara
18-19	Ruby	18-19	Pendant
17	Sapphire	17	Statuette
16	Opal	16	Small weapon
13-15	Pearl	13-15	Necklace
12	Jade	12	Hook (hand)
10-11	Pure gold	10-11	Ring
9	Topaz	9	Broach
8	Onyx	8	Bracelet
6-7	Pure silver	6-7	Plate/dish/cutlery
5	Crystal	5	Ear rings
4	Aquamarine	4	Teeth
3	Turquoise	3	Cuffs
2	Amber	2	Buttons

# CHAPTER SEVENTEEN



BEWARE OF UNGUARDED GOLD AS IT'S NOTHING BUT THE DEVIL'S SHINING TEETH CURSING YE



# PIRATE PLUNDER!



BEWARE OF UNGUARDED GOLD AS IT'S NOTHING BUT THE DEVIL'S SHINING TEETH CURSING YE



**SPECIAL TREASURES:** The glow of gold may fill a pirate cave and gems may gleam like the anxious eyes of pirates themselves, but there are treasures whose value is not measured in coin, but in their cunning design, their age, or perhaps even their magical power! These are 'special treasures'. When such treasures are found, you need to make two rolls, one on Table 86 to determine what type of treasure is found, and then again on its subsequent Table (87, 88, 89, 94 or 96) to determine exactly what the special treasure is.

**Table 86: Special Treasures**

Roll	Treasure category	Table
11-12	Magic	96
9-10	Artifacts	94
7-8	Papers	89
4-6	Miscellaneous	88
1-3	Trinkets	87

## Trinkets

Trinkets are all those little surprises that pirates keep tucked away, special little devices that might save their lives or take the life of another. Pirate trinkets, though made by men, cannot be copied or rebuilt as one does not know quite how they work.

**Table 87: Trinkets**

Roll	Pirate trinket	Weight
10-12	Antidote	2
8-9	Skeleton key	1
4-7	Poison	2
3	Crooked compass	2
1-2	False pocket	-

**Antidote:** Contained in a small vial, this is a special antidote of highly advanced medical knowledge or magics of the New World, able to cure any poison within an individual. Such a vial has enough antidote to be used 1-6 times (rolled when first discovered).

**Crooked compass:** This is a specialized compass that detaches into two separate pieces, their needles ever pointing towards each other. Such items are often used to ensure a flawless trail back to a

specific point (where one half of the crooked compass is left). It is assumed that both pieces of such a compass are found together, so that the Character may use them to advance his own designs.

**False pocket:** This is a special purse designed to fit into the interior of one's clothing, thus making it impossible to pilfer. The hidden pocket itself weighs nothing, and can hold up to 2 Weight inside of it. When found, roll a single dice, for such a pocket will have either 10-120 coins (roll of 5-10) or 1-12 jewels (roll of 11-12) inside of it.

**Poison:** This is a small vial of extremely lethal poison, brewed by the strong venoms and/or magics of the New World. Such poison will have a strength level of 3-8 (1 roll divided by 2 +2), and may be used 1-6 times (rolled when first discovered).

**Skeleton key:** A skeleton key can be anything from a fancy brass key shaped like a lion's head to a heavy key-shaped piece of stone. But regardless of its size, shape or ornamentation, a skeleton key can open any lock on the roll of 4 or better on a single dice. However, if the roll is a natural '1', the key breaks.

## Miscellaneous

There are many treasures that pirates keep and prize. Those of the most extreme variety and value are detailed below.

**Table 88: Miscellaneous Treasures**

Roll	Treasure	Weight
11-12	Blessed crucifix	1
9-10	Family ring	-
6-8	Painting	30
1-5	Rare spice	1

**Blessed crucifix:** This is a crucifix, plain or lavish in design, that is so blessed that it glows, brimming with divine strength! The Christian Character who wears this treasure will gain a bonus of +2 to his Girth when rolling to survive a successful Attack Roll.

# CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

BEWARE OF UNGUARDED GOLD AS IT'S NOTHING BUT THE DEVIL'S SHINING TEETH CURSING YE



**Family ring:** This is a ring that bares the crest of a specific family of great wealth and/or lineage. You must decide the family when this treasure is rolled. For he who wears such a ring is considered part of that family, and gains all such privileges.

**Painting:** This is a precious painting worth a staggering 1000-12000 gold!

**Rare spice:** This is a small vial or pouch containing a very rare spice. If mixed with a crew's food, it will be used up, but will increase their Morale by +1-12.

## Papers

Old, tattered parchments in bottles, tattooed scalps, carvings on bones, engravings in wood or even on a sword's blade, maps and messages come in many forms and have many things to say.

**Table 89: Paper Treasures**

Roll	Papers found	Weight
9-12	Treasure map	1
8	Title deed	2
7	Pardon	2
4-6	Charts	4
1-3	Ship's log	20

**Charts:** This is a treasure to all sailors and to captains especially, a set of advanced charts, showing secret passages, channels and reefs. When found, decide what part of the world the charts are for, and then roll on Table 90 to determine what sort of help they offer.

**Table 90: Navigation Charts**

Roll	Chart details . . .	Bonus
11-12	Reefs	+2 to avoiding reefs
7-10	Currents	-2 to storm Magnitude
1-6	Channels	+3 leagues of speed

**Pardon:** These are pardon papers from a nobleman or even a king! And, fortunately for whoever found them, the names of those whom are to be pardoned have been left blank. Such papers are commonly in the possession of privateers who may wish to pardon men who join their crew. When found, roll twice on Table 91, first to determine which country the papers are from, and second the maximum number of signatures available on it.

**Table 91: Pardon Papers**

Roll	Country	Signatures
11-12	Spain	Enough for the entire crew
7-10	England	10
3-6	France	5
1-2	Holland	1

**Ship's log:** This is the logbook of an old ship. Such books are worth a great deal to government scribes who try to put the pieces of mysterious lost ships together, and can sell for 200-2400 gold in any town.

**Title deed:** These papers are legal documentation proving the ownership of some valuable land or property, which one can easily sign upon. When found, roll twice on Table 92, first to determine the type of property found, and second its value in gold (in the case of ships the maximum ship Value available for such a price is what is promised by the papers). Of course, the exact location of the unclaimed property is for the Game Captain to decide, though it should be in Europe or a port that is part of the seafaring realm where the title deed has been discovered.

# PIRATE PLUNDER!



BEWARE OF UNGUARDED GOLD AS IT'S NOTHING BUT THE DEVIL'S SHINING TEETH CURSING YE



**Table 92: Title Deeds**

Roll	Property	Value
12	Plantation	20000
8-11	Docked ship	10000
4-7	Farm	5000
2-3	Shoppe	3000
1	Taverne	1000

**Treasure map:** This is a weathered, torn, burned, or otherwise decrepit paper, though still legible and still showing the location to some hidden treasure! Such maps as these are not as elaborate as those Handouts prepared for Adventures, but lead to rich caches none-the-less. When the treasure is found it can potentially be of any amount—roll continuously on Table 81 on the ‘others’ column until a result of ‘nothing’ occurs. But before then, make 3 rolls on Table 93 to determine the specifics of the map; the Value of the hoard it leads to by a bonus to its rolls for Table 81, the language it is written in, and the number of pieces it is in—these pieces are found with subsequent results of this ‘maps’ being rolled up again in different locations (but remain as pieces of the **same** map, and thus ‘pieces’ needs not be rolled for these subsequent pieces).

**Table 93: TREASURE MAPS**

Roll	Treasure value	Language	Pieces
8-12	+3	Spanish	1
5-7	+2	English	2
3-4	+1	French	2
1-2	+0	Dutch	3



## Artifacts

The treasures of the world are often those of an older world, plundered from natives and other strange peoples. They are often of extremely high value, but also may have latent powers whose value cannot be weighed in gold...

**Table 94: Artifacts**

Roll	Artifact	Value	Weight
11-12	Idol	1000-12000	20
8-10	Mask	500-6000	10
5-7	Medallion	300-3600	1
1-4	Jewelry	100-1200	5

**Idol:** This is some sort of small idol, such as a golden head or a small statuette. He who wields such a treasure will be seen as a god in the eyes of its people, finding them to obey such simple commands as can be made through gestures (unless one speaks the native language) should he make a Charisma Check (for each command). However, if ever such a Check fails, the natives will become doubtful of one’s divinity. If another Check fails before one succeeds, the natives will know the idol holder (and his companions) not to be divine, and will attack him!

**Jewelry:** Though as lavish as jewelry crafted by Europeans, the necklaces, rings, tiaras and ear-rings of natives carry a different value, that of the blessings of their gods, with such jewelry granting one a bonus of +1 to his Luck Checks.

**Mask:** This is an ornate mask, usually made of gold and/or studded with jewels. When discovered, you must decide which culture that the mask belongs to. Merely possessing such a treasure among the natives will earn their respect, however, wearing it will allow one to participate in forbidden rituals, offering insight to the magics of older worlds. This will effectively increase one’s Wits and Intuition Scores by +1 (to a maximum of 12) for 1-12 weeks after taking part in such strange ceremonies. Note that such a mask cannot be passed around between Characters—natives are very wise and will recognize this, and then disallow **all** outsiders from witnessing their rituals.

# CHAPTER SEVENTEEN



BEWARE OF UNGUARDED GOLD AS IT'S NOTHING BUT THE DEVIL'S SHINING TEETH CURSING YE



**Medallion:** This is an ornate medallion with special religious significance. When found you must decide which culture it belongs to. For when worn in their presence, a successful Charisma Check (with the appropriate modifiers) will gain help from them, as listed on Table 95.

**Table 95: Religious Favor**

Modifier	Help desired
-3	Canoes
-2	3 men as porters, guides or fighters
-1	Refuge in their camp for 1 day
-0	10 days worth of food (for 1 man)

## Magic

The world is ripe with colorful new foods and lands, but filling the shadows are old and mysterious magics. Some of their charms and treasures can pass their power on to pirates, who may use their magic to further their own ends...

**Table 96: Magical Items**

Roll	Magical item	Weight
12	Water of youth	2
10-11	Recipe book	10
8-9	Charm	-
7	False eye	-
5-6	Potion	3
4	Loadstone	-
1-3	Medicine	2

**Charm:** This is a pinch of magic powder, a small skull medallion, a ring, a jewel, or some other sort of talisman that carries special power. He who rightfully owns such a charm will gain a bonus of +3 to their Save Checks against all magic.

**False eye:** This is a special jewel or even a piece of glass, enchanted by strange magics or spirits, which can replace a person's own lost eye, allowing him to see again.

**Loadstone:** A loadstone is a small stone, a powerful charm that tends to bend the will of the fates in favor of whomever possesses it, granting a bonus of +2 to his Luck Checks and +1 to Ability Checks made with his Prime Requisite.

**Medicine:** This is a pouch containing magical herbs, or a vial containing a magical draught. Either will serve to effect miraculous healing when it is used. Such medicine can only be used once and then it is used up. A roll on Table 97 will determine its maximum effects.

**Table 97: Magical Medicine**

Roll	Cumulative effects
12	Restored to life if dead up to one day
8-11	All poisons cleansed and purified
1-7	All wounds healed

**Potion:** This is a vial or bottle of some strange liquid concocted by a witchdoctor or other shaman, which will grant strange powers to whomever drinks it. Such potions must be fully consumed to have any effect at all.

**Table 98: Potions**

Roll	Potion's magic
11-12	Berzerker
9-10	Truth
7-8	Courage
5-6	Blood
3-4	Love
1-2	Sleep

*Berzerker* rage is induced by this wild mixture of rare plants, offering one a bonus of +3 to his Attack Rolls and Defense Score for one battle.

*Blood* that is enchanted and consumed will make the Character stronger, permanently increasing his Girth Score by +1 (to a maximum of 12).

*Courage* is strengthened by this powerful mixture, negating one's penalty from wounds for the next hour. This will also give one a bonus of +6 to his rolls to resist torture during that time.

*Love* potions will make whomever drinks them unable to resist any temptations from someone of the opposite sex for the next 1-12 hours.

*Sleep* is induced by strong chemicals, making one utterly unable to be wakened for 11-22 hours.

*Truth* serum is a strange concoction that will relax one's mind so that they cannot make up lies or imagine things, thus anything that they speak will be the truth to the best of their knowledge. This magic will last for 1-4 hours.

# PIRATE PLUNDER!



BEWARE OF UNGUARDED GOLD AS IT'S NOTHING BUT THE DEVIL'S SHINING TEETH CURSING YE



Recipe book: This is a book of magic. It is valuable to historians, who will pay 30-360 gold for it. However, if your game is played in a setting that has magic detailed in its Sourcebook, this book of magical recipes will have spells for one such type of magic, and thus any native can attempt such magic.

Water of youth: This is a jug full of water from the fabled 'Fountain of Youth'. There is enough water in such a jug to effect 1-12 people (rolled when found). Those who drink of this water can only be so effected once, for it will reduce 1-12 years off their age (with applicable effects from Table 59).

Table 99: Recipe Books

Roll	Maximum spell Casting value
10-12	8
7-9	7
4-6	6
1-3	5

## Other treasures

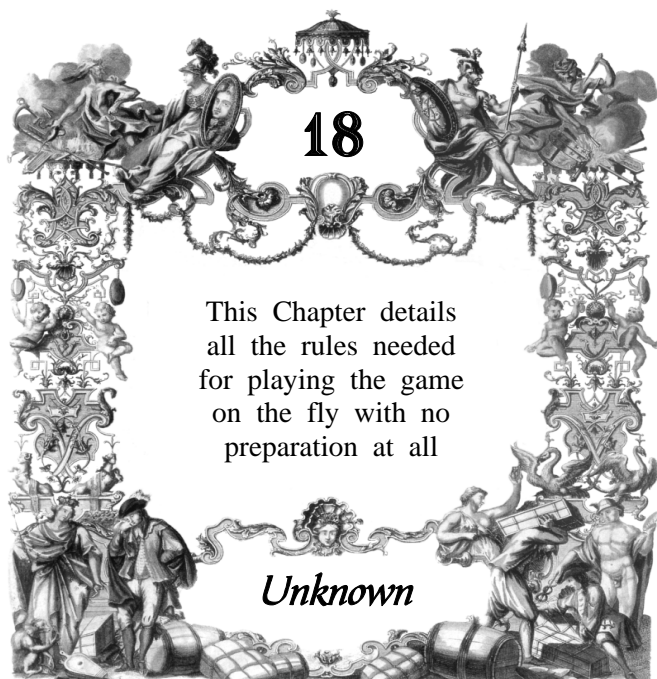
There are countless treasures waiting to be found. Aside from those special treasures detailed in this Chapter, the Game Captain is encouraged to invent new ones to suit his Adventure's needs. There is no end to the treasure out there...





# CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

FAITH! IT'S AN UNCERTAIN WORLD AND WHAT AWAITS YOU THE DEVIL HIMSELF ONLY KNOWS



18

This Chapter details all the rules needed for playing the game on the fly with no preparation at all

*Unknown*

**SIMPLE GAMES:** All role-playing games are indeed games, after all, and for all their carefully crafted storylines that strive to make them deep, personal experiences of rich character development, they can still be played as a simple roll-for-roll, rule-for-rule, random, fun, good game.

Pirates can indeed be played that way. Perhaps everyone is just tired, or brain-dead, or 'out of it'. Perhaps all the Adventures have been played and there's no time to make one. Or perhaps everyone just wants to 'play some Pirates'. In any event, for all of this game's emphasis on preparation, it is entirely possible to play the game with absolutely no preparation at all, making it up as you go.

Such a game is called a 'Simple Game' and is indeed just that. Instead of playing out a story, the players just sit back and let the Game Captain dance with the dance, and lead them along on a randomly generated series of events, sailing around and attacking other ships and towns, counting and dividing their plunder, and letting the rules make all the tough decisions about when, where, and why. Sure, such a game session may not have the depth of a well structured Adventure, but it can be a lot of good, silly fun, and Pirates is designed to do that just as well as anything else.

**WHY SUCH RULES?:** One may ask, why even have rules for playing the game in an impromptu manner? Indeed, why impose regulations on a game which by its very playstyle shuns the formal design of prepared adventures with more whimsical storytelling? The answer, however, is indeed neither impromptu nor whimsical—**Fair Play**.

**Balancing Simple Games:** Now, certainly most Game Captains who desire to be free of the confines of pre-designed adventures and test their storytelling skill have the best of intentions, but the dice usually have their own designs. Creating adventure hooks, NPC personalities and Encounters on the spot is only half the challenge of a Simple Game. The other half, often overlooked in the haste of such a game, is the balance of fair play. However, when these rules are used, there will be less grievances between Players and their Game Captain. Consider this: A great Game Captain is running a great story, and it's very much all fun and games . . . until somebody dies. Then, the question of whether that many Spaniards should have been encountered so close together comes up, a question that easily leads to disputes, doubt, hostility or simply guilt, none of which helps the game. However, if the frequency or proportions of a challenge are influenced by the dice, both the Players and the Game Captain can blame the dice and remain a team, as they always should be.

**Other uses:** These guidelines open up many other doors as well, allowing one to play the game in many different ways, indeed helping one find their preference rather than restricting it.

These rules can serve as a training tool for a Game Captain who wishes to try his hand at Simple Games. He may use these rules at first, and as he grows in storytelling and rule balancing ability, he can gradually use them less. Or, they may simply lift many ever-present burdens from his mind while he's concentrating on the story.

These rules can allow multiple Game Captains as well. Normally, one person must remain Game Captain because he knows the adventure's secrets, or on the other side of the coin he couldn't be unbiased towards his own, personal Character in a completely impromptu game. However, when the

# AN UNCERTAIN WORLD

FAITH! IT'S AN UNCERTAIN WORLD AND WHAT AWAITS YOU THE DEVIL HIMSELF ONLY KNOWS

frequency of battles, the cunning of traps and the difficulty of challenges are all determined by dice, then anyone can take over the position of Game Captain at any time, even in the middle of a voyage (and indeed, pirates switched captains quite often) Note that, if this is done, the current Game Captain's 'Character' is for all intents and purposes run as an NPC whose rolls are made in the open!

Finally, these rules are just a nice middle ground between the commitment of Campaigns and total rule anarchy. Use them as you wish.

**OUTLINE:** There are several major differences between a normal Pirates game and a Simple Game, as explained below.

**Game Captains beware:** When deciding to do a simple 'war' game such as this, the Game Captain should consider the situation carefully, indeed, he will have much more to consider than he may expect. For in a Simple Game, there are no notes for the Game Captain to rely upon. Indeed, everything will be impromptu, and for the Game Captain, the task of translating rolls into realities does not diminish, and so the Game Captain must be very good at 'thinking on his feet' so-to-speak. The game will move faster, and story demands might very well remain, and so the Game Captain will have to continue to come up with impromptu descriptions, names, and other story details much faster than he normally would.

**Tables:** Because these rules are not normally used, the Tables that make up their proportions are not included in the normal numerical sequence, and are instead coded alphabetically.

**Let the dice fall where they may:** In such a simple game as this, almost everything is determined at random. Throughout the Rulebooks, everything is designed so that it can be determined randomly, such as what treasure a guard may have, what occurs during a day's voyage, etc. Instead of using these rolling ranges for model proportions, the Game Captain should just rely upon them. Indeed, he should let as many things as possible be determined at random. For once, let the rules do all the work as much as possible, while everybody

just 'let the dice fall where they may'. However, if you use this system to run your game, you are bound to the results of the dice, no matter how ridiculous they may seem. Indeed, the absence of storytelling is not just a lack of depth, but a lack of order, but that is what we want here, right? The most infamous of pirate adventures had very little (if any) order—they went where the winds of fortune took them—where their dice took them. And so, you cannot stop and say "Oh, that really makes no sense, I'm going to re-roll it." Like your Players, you as the Game Captain are going to have to go on this voyage with your Players, and see what surprises await you all . . .

**REMINDEERS:** What rules make a 'Simple Game', anyway? While most rules are looked up according to the needs of specific situations, there still are a handful of rules and charts that form the basis of the game. Those rules have been identified below as a reminder for the Game Captain as to what dice, charts and rulings he should rely on in order to dictate the basic ebb and flow of events in his Simple Game.

**Challenges:** The universal rolls of **Ability Checks** should be used for any important task that does not have its own individual rule.

**Sailing:** Use the **time passage** of Table 40 every day at sea.

**NPCs:** The limitless potential of impromptu NPCs demands hard decisions, so one should rely on Crewmen by the ranges provided on Table 37 or the basic statistics for **archtypes** in Chapter 16 for any encounters with others that have statistical importance.

**Plunder!:** Plunder should always be determined at random, using all the **charts** provided throughout Chapter 17.

**Extreme situations:** These can always be resolved with **Saving Throws**, however, as such Checks result in death whenever failed, do not call for them unless no other rule will suffice.

# CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

FAITH! IT'S AN UNCERTAIN WORLD AND WHAT AWAITS YOU THE DEVIL HIMSELF ONLY KNOWS

**IN TOWN:** Any time that the Characters are in town, they may find adventure, or adventure might find them. When in town, everything that the Characters do, such as buying all their equipment, or visiting the governor, or recruiting new crew, will measure a 'Round'. Each Character (or group of Characters) will chance an Encounter roll every 1-12 Rounds (if they are apart roll individually).

Use the following chart for towns who fly the same flag as the Characters' ship or their allies.

**Table A: Encounters In Welcome Towns**

Roll	Encounter
11-12	1-6 Levels of pirates looking to join
10	Prostitute offers a 'free one' (Table 25)
8-9	No Encounter
7	Fight breaks out with 1-6 NPC sailors
6	Fight breaks out with 1-4 NPC pirates
5	NPC pickpocket attempt
2-4	Guards attack
1	Plague requires Saving Throw (or death)

Use the following chart for towns who fly the flag of any of the Characters' enemies.

**Table B: Encounters In Foreign Towns**

Roll	Encounter
12	1-4 Levels of pirates looking to join
11	No Encounter
9-10	Fight breaks out with 1-6 NPC sailors
8	Fight breaks out with 1-4 NPC pirates
7	NPC pickpocket attempt
2-6	Guards attack
1	Plague requires Saving Throw (or death)

Use the following chart for towns who fly the flag of the Jolly Roger or no flag at all.

**Table C: Encounters In Pirate Towns**

Roll	Encounter
10-12	1-12 Levels of pirates looking to join
9	Prostitute offers a 'free one' (Table 25)
8	No Encounter
7	Challenged to a game of some sort
6	NPC pickpocket attempt
4-5	NPC challenges for current duty (if any)
3	Royal Navy attack (Tables M & N)
1-2	Plague requires Saving Throw (or death)

**ON LAND:** Any time that the Characters journey overland, there is no telling what they will come across. When on land and away from civilization, each passing hour will measure a 'Round'. The group (or individual if he is alone) will chance an Encounter roll every 1-12 Rounds, whether riding, marching, or sitting still at camp.

Use the following chart for the beach, the headlands, and everywhere indeed where the waves wash adventure ashore.

**Table D: Encounters On The Coast**

Roll	Encounter
12	Find an old cache of 'valuables'
7-11	No Encounter
6	Tide change traps them for 6 hours
2-5	Ship sights them and investigates
1	Storm assaults the ship if anchored there

Use the following chart for treks through the jungles of the world.

**Table E: Encounters In The Jungle**

Roll	Encounter
10-12	No Encounter
8-9	Normal Navigation Check or become lost
4-7	Fight of any nature
2-3	Disease spoils all carried food
1	Disease requires Saving Throw (or death)

Use the following chart for trudging through the swamps of the world.

**Table F: Encounters In The Swamps**

Roll	Encounter
11-12	Normal Navigation Check or become lost
7-10	Fight of any nature
3-6	Disease spoils all carried food
1-2	Disease requires Saving Throw (or death)

Use the following chart for expeditions into the mountains of the world.

**Table G: Encounters In The Mountains**

Roll	Encounter
9-12	No Encounter
4-8	Normal Navigation Check or become lost
1-3	Saving Throw against falling (or death)

# AN UNCERTAIN WORLD

FAITH! IT'S AN UNCERTAIN WORLD AND WHAT AWAITS YOU THE DEVIL HIMSELF ONLY KNOWS

**AT SEA:** Any time that the Characters weigh anchor and fill their clouds of canvas with the wind's great breath of adventure, they enter into the worldwide arena of the sea where they can cross swords with anybody else. When at sea, each day measures a 'Round'. Each ship will have an Encounter roll each Round, indeed each day out at sea, whether the waves break against their bow or against the sides of their hull. This roll gains a bonus of +1 if any of the Player Characters are in command, but also suffers a penalty of -1 if the captain, be he a PC or NPC, is Level 0.

Use the following chart for the open sea, be it the Caribbean, Mediterranean, or anywhere that the horizon is clear.

**Table H: Encounters On The Open Sea**

Roll	Encounter
10-12	No Encounter
8-9	Ships (Tables M & N)
7	Reefs
5-6	Storm
2-4	Royal Navy ships (Tables M & N)
1	Roll twice on this chart

Use the following chart for known routes, indeed anywhere within a day's sail of a town.

**Table I: Encounters In The Known Routes**

Roll	Encounter
12	No Encounter
9-11	Ships (Tables M & N)
7-8	Reefs
6	Storm
2-5	Royal Navy ships (Tables M & N)
1	Roll twice on this chart

Use the following chart for pirate waters, indeed anywhere that does not fit the above charts.

**Table J: Encounters In All Pirate Waters**

Roll	Encounter
8-12	No Encounter
7	Ships (Tables M & N)
5-6	Reefs
4	Storm
2-3	Royal Navy ships (Tables M & N)
1	Roll twice on this chart

**IN CAVES:** Any time that the Characters dare to enter into caverns, ruins, temples or other places of mystery, they are almost certainly seeking for great riches, but also they are risking great peril. When in any 'cave' setting, every 10'-120' explored will measure a 'Round'. Each individual Character (or group of Characters) will have an Encounter roll each Round. This roll gains a bonus of +1 if anyone amongst the group has been there before, but also suffers a penalty of -1 if the group has been deliberately given false information or rumors regarding what is there.

Use the following chart for dank caves, secret lairs, and everywhere indeed where treasure may be hoarded by pirates.

**Table K: Encounters In Pirate Caves**

Roll	Encounter
12	Treasure cave (value 1-12 for Table 81)
11	Simple tunnel
10	Flooded tunnel; must swim or row
9	1-6 pirates
8	Trap; +3 to rolls for defeating it
7	Maze of tunnels; Searching Check to pass
6	1-12 pirates and their captain
5	2-24 pirates
4	All the pirates (Table N)
3	Trap; Searching Check to round
2	Trap; no way around
1	Challenge; no way around

Use the following chart native shrines, ruined temples, and cursed palaces of doom.

**Table L: Encounters In Lost Temples**

Roll	Encounter
12	Treasure room (value 7-18 for Table 81)
11	Maze of halls; Searching Check to pass
10	Mass Melee; 5-60 Levels of natives
9	Trap; Searching Check to round
8	Trap; no way around
7	Challenge; Searching Check to round
6	Challenge; no way around
5	Trap; -3 to rolls for defeating it
4	Mass Melee; 10-120 Levels of natives
3	Trap; cannot turn back
2	Challenge; cannot turn back
1	Challenge; everyone sealed in until passed

# CHAPTER EIGHTEEN



FAITH! IT'S AN UNCERTAIN WORLD AND WHAT AWAITS YOU THE DEVIL HIMSELF ONLY KNOWS



**ENCOUNTERS:** In Simple Games the amount of battles will be far greater, though this does not mean that Encounters such as booby traps and other challenges cannot occur. They can, but they still must be prepared, for they rely upon rules and rolling ranges not presented in the rulebooks. Indeed, when Royal Navy are encountered, what is the total strength of their forces? Or, if what is the complexity and consequences of a trap?, or the riddling words of an ancient curse? The following system answers these questions.

**Ships:** Prepared adventures can afford the time and attention to detail required to fully load a ship with crew, cargo and strength, should the meeting



turn into a battle. Indeed, whenever a sail is sighted, it demands that there are statistics for battle ready, should the Players choose to attack. And so, whenever a ship is encountered, separate rolls on the following chart will be able to answer the successive questions of the ship's flag, build, and finally their intentions.

**Table M: Sighting Sails**

Roll	Flag	Build	Intentions
12	Pirate	Galleon	Battle!
11	Spain	Man-O-War	Battle!
10	Spain	Frigate	Battle!
9	Spain	Merchantman	Battle!
8	Spain	Mariner	Battle!
7	France	Barque	Sailing on
6	France	Brigantine	Sailing on
5	Holland	Dutch fluyt	Sailing on
4	England	Sloop	Sailing on
3	England	Naval sloop	Trade
2	England	Navy snow	Trade
1	Other	Schooner	Joining up

If a ship enters battle, roll three separate times on the chart below. This will determine first the total crew Levels (the breakdown of actual men is up to the Game Captain), next the number of guns ready for battle (up to the maximum allowance for the ship's build), and finally how many Rounds of battle between both broadsides and boarding parties must pass before the captain will dare show himself, and when he does, he will be a standard NPC that is appropriate to the ship's flag.

**Table N: Fighting Sails**

Roll	Crew Levels	Total cannon	Captain
12	600	28	0
11	500	24	0
10	400	24	0
9	300	20	1
8	200	20	2
7	150	16	3
6	100	12	4
5	80	10	5
4	60	8	6
3	40	6	Hiding
2	30	4	Hiding
1	20	0	Hiding

# AN UNCERTAIN WORLD



FAITH! IT'S AN UNCERTAIN WORLD AND WHAT AWAITS YOU THE DEVIL HIMSELF ONLY KNOWS



**Traps:** Prepared adventures allow for exquisite detail with traps, detail that cannot be made up on the spot and be calculated as fair, so in a Simple Game all the cunning of traps will be determined with the dice. All the Game Captain needs to decide is that there **is** a trap and what its purpose is (such as blocking a cave entrance, safeguarding a treasure, etc) and perhaps describe the scene a little, but the hidden devices are all as unknown to him as they are to the Players. This rule does not interfere with the normal rules for Searching Checks to find such devices. However, when passing through a trapped area, a roll must be made to determine how difficult the trap is to defeat. This is a roll on a single dice, gaining +1 if the Character is a Rogue, and losing -1 if the Character is wounded.

**Table O: Defeating Traps**

Roll	The trap...
12	Is both solved and disarmed
9-11	Is solved; everyone can pass in safety
6-8	Requires an Agility Check to pass safely
3-5	Trap automatically sprung!
2	Trap hits also with poison of 1-6 strength
1	Trap sprung on 1-12 party members!

If any trap is in any way activated, the Game Captain will roll a single dice to determine the effective total Damage done to the Character(s), requiring a normal roll with Girth against wounds to survive it (though armor does not count).

**Challenges:** Prepared adventures allow for lavish detail with challenges of all kinds, detail that cannot be made up on the spot and yet still be calculated as fair, and so in a Simple Game all the strange challenges will be determined with the dice. All the Game Captain needs to decide is that there **is** a challenge of some sort (those wonderful things worth 5-60 Experience Points if passed) and what it is there for (such as blocking a secret gate, guarding a sacred treasure, being a judgment of worthiness, etc), and perhaps describe the scene a little, but the secret steps to pass it are all as unknown to him as they are to the Players and their Characters. When attempting to pass any sort of challenge, the Player of the one attempting it

must choose a number from 1 to 4, this being his chance in 6 of succeeding, but also the penalty to the Game Captain's subsequent roll to determine the consequences if he fails...

**Table P: Passing Challenges**

Roll	The challenge...
12	Is solved correctly for the entire party
10-11	Is solved correctly for that one individual
9	Isn't solved; +1 to next person's attempt
7-8	Isn't solved; nothing happens
6	Isn't solved; that person cannot try again
5	Knocks the Character out for 1-12 days
2-4	Claims the Character's life
1	Claims the lives of everybody present!

For example, if someone chooses a '2', he stands a 2 in 12 chance of success, thus needing a roll of '11' or '12' on a single dice in order to pass the challenge, but at the same time, having chosen a '2', if he fails, the Game Captain will roll on Table P with a penalty of -2.



# INDEX



## INDEX



Ability Checks	22	Non Player Characters	89, 106
Ability Scores	72	Notoriety Points	95
Adventure Points	19	Pilfering	27, 37
Attack Rolls	30	Poison	28, 92
Availability	36	Privateering	97
Bartering	36	Ramming	66
Blind fighting	35	Reefs	60
Boarding parties	67	Repairing ships	44
Campaigns	18	Rounds	18, 64
Cannon	64	Running	23, 92
Character Classes	84	Saving Throws	93
Climbing	23, 91	Scrapping ships	45
Creation Points	72	Searching	24
Crew	38, 46	Selling	36
Crew Levels	46	Selling ships	44
Critical hits and misses	31	Services	37
Critical salvos and blunders	65	Ship Damage	64
Death	30	Sinking ships	65
Defense Score	30, 78	Skills	90
Disguise	27, 91	Sleep	25
Destroying towns	69	Starvation	25
Dual weapons	34	Stealth	24, 92
Dueling	34	Storms	60
Encumbrance	79	Surrender	68
Experience Points	94	Swimming	23, 92
Falling	23	Torture	27, 92
Fears	81	Treasure	120
Fighting in water	35	Trademarks	81
Fleeing	35, 66	Traveling	25
Foraging	25	Turns	18
Fortifications	69		
Grenades	35		
Handedness	34, 79		
Healing	31		
Hiding	24		
Hunting	25		
Initiative	30, 64		
Jolly Rogers	53		
Letter of marque	97		
Livestock	43		
Lockpicking	27, 91		
Lost	60		
Mass Melee	67		
Modifying ships	44		
Morale	47		
Movement Rate	23, 79		
Multiple attacks	34		
Mutiny	48		
Nationality	76		
Navigation	60, 91		



# TABLES



## TABLES

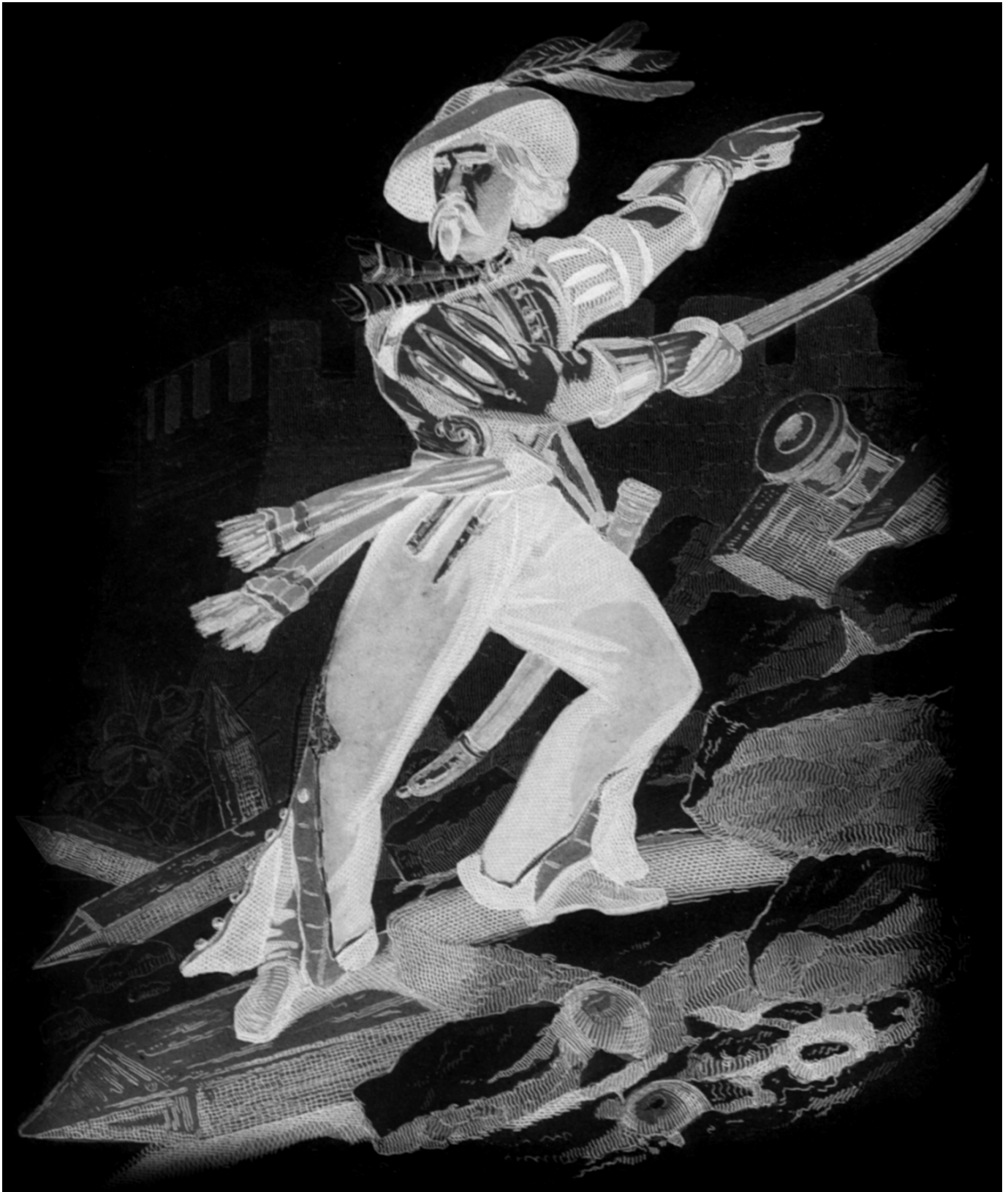


Abbreviations (1)	14	Naval battle, broadside tactics (45)	65
Ability Checks, common (5)	22	Naval battle, boarding tactics (46)	68
Ability Checks, combined (6)	23	Naval battle, cannon (41)	64
Ability Scores, Brawn (51)	74	Naval battle, critical salvos (43)	65
Ability Scores, Agility (52)	74	Naval battle, critical blunders (44)	65
Ability Scores, Endurance (53)	74	Naval battle, ship damage	64
Ability Scores, Girth (54)	75	Notoriety Levels (76)	95
Ability Scores, Wits (55)	75	Passage of captaincy (2)	17
Ability Scores, Intuition (56)	75	Physical features (61)	79
Ability Scores, Charisma (57)	76	Poisons (9)	28
Ability Scores, Luck (58)	76	Promotion, levels (77)	97
Adventure Points (4)	20	Promotion benefits (78)	97
Aging (59)	77	Sailing (40)	60
Armor (30)	43	Saving Throws (74)	93
Articles of agreement (39)	48	Services (23)	37
Bartering (22)	36	Ships, modifications (35)	44
Campaign level ranges (3)	19	Ships, provisions (34)	44
Clothing (27)	39	Ships, purchasing (33)	44
Coin values (21)	36	Ships, tradegoods (36)	45
Creation, Adventures (80)	110	Skills, Skill Points (68)	90
Creation, Characters (50)	72	Skills, Special Skill Costs (69)	92
Crew, Morale (38)	47	Skills; intimidation (72)	93
Crew, statistics (37)	47	Skills; language (72)	93
Critical hits, general (11)	31	Skills; leadership (72)	93
Critical hits, aboard ship (13)	32	Skills; skulking (73)	93
Critical hits, up high (14)	32	Slow death (10)	31
Critical hits, in caverns (15)	32	Starting reputation (64)	82
Critical hits, in water (16)	32	Training animals (32)	43
Critical misses, general (12)	31	Traveling (8)	25
Critical misses, aboard ship (17)	32	Treasure (81)	120
Critical misses, up high (18)	32	Treasure, valuables (82)	120
Critical misses, in caverns (19)	32	Treasures, goods (83)	121
Critical misses, in water (20)	32	Treasures, coins (84)	121
Defense Score (60)	78	Treasures, jewels (85)	121
Equipment (28)	41	Treasure, special treasures (86)	123
Experience Levels (75)	95	Treasure, trinkets (87)	123
Fame (79)	98	Treasure, miscellaneous (88)	123
Fears (63)	81	Treasure, papers (89)	124
Fortifications, statistics (47)	69	Treasures, navigation charts (90)	124
Fortifications, damage (48)	70	Treasures, pardon papers (91)	124
Group Searching (7)	24	Treasures, title deeds (92)	125
History, career before piracy (65)	83	Treasures, treasure maps (93)	125
History, life before piracy (66)	83	Treasure, artifacts (94)	125
History, reason for piracy (67)	83	Treasures, medallions (95)	126
In town, pilfering (24)	38	Treasure, magic (96)	126
In town; prostitutes (25)	38	Treasures, medicine (97)	126
In town; partying (26)	38	Treasures, potions (98)	126
Inheritance (62)	80	Treasures, recipe books (99)	127
Livestock (31)	43	Victorious crews (49)	70
		Weapons (29)	40



# PIRATES

DRINK UP ME HEARTIES YO-HO!





# PIRATES

## PLAYER CHARACTER

### Names

Player's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Character's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Nationality: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_ Defense Score: \_\_\_\_\_

### Abilities

Brawn: \_\_\_\_\_

Agility: \_\_\_\_\_

Endurance: \_\_\_\_\_

Girth: \_\_\_\_\_

Wits: \_\_\_\_\_

Intuition: \_\_\_\_\_

Charisma: \_\_\_\_\_

Luck: \_\_\_\_\_

### Stature

Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Year born: \_\_\_\_\_

Height: \_\_\_\_\_

Weight: \_\_\_\_\_

Handedness: \_\_\_\_\_

Scars: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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### Legacy

Experience Level: \_\_\_\_\_

Experience Points: \_\_\_\_\_

Notoriety Level: \_\_\_\_\_

Notoriety Points: \_\_\_\_\_

Fame status: \_\_\_\_\_

Titles: \_\_\_\_\_

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### Skills

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### Equipment

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Unused Skill Points: \_\_\_\_\_ Movement Rate: \_\_\_\_\_

# PIRATES

CAPTAIN'S  
LOG BOOK

## Names

Game Captain: \_\_\_\_\_

Current adventure: \_\_\_\_\_ Date begun: \_\_\_\_\_

Party Captain: \_\_\_\_\_ Quartermaster: \_\_\_\_\_ Ship: \_\_\_\_\_

## Characters

## Special notes

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) \_\_\_\_\_
- 5) \_\_\_\_\_
- 6) \_\_\_\_\_
- 7) \_\_\_\_\_
- 8) \_\_\_\_\_
- 9) \_\_\_\_\_
- 10) \_\_\_\_\_
- 11) \_\_\_\_\_
- 12) \_\_\_\_\_

## Sailing

## Group skills

Ship's speed: \_\_\_\_\_

Destination: \_\_\_\_\_

Distance: \_\_\_\_\_

Crew Morale: \_\_\_\_\_

Total food: \_\_\_\_\_

Days traveled: \_\_\_\_\_

General notes: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

