

PIRATA
CODEX





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Welcome Aboard!

Welcome aboard! You are about to set sail as a pirate captain with your own ship and crew to claim the Pirate Throne. But, beware – other pirate captains have stepped up to challenge you, and they won't hesitate to cheat and lie in order to steal victory away from you!

During the game, you and the other captains race around the board struggling to be the first to complete a full lap. To do so, you will use your ship's crew to wager for the right to sail, battle your opponents for the right to resolve your ship location's effect, and engage in all kinds of skulduggery with your cards.

Components Overview

1 Map

1 Map extension

25 Tiles

1 Dice board

1 Dice bag

83 Action cards

8 Variant Cards

6 Cheat Sheets

6 Player Bags

50 Crew dice

1 2 3 4 5 6

3 Special Crew dice, being:

Pirate King die

1 1 1 6 6 6

Mermaid die

1 1 6 6

Cursed Die

2 3 4 5

1 This rulebook

1 Tile Legend

8 Captain coasters

6 Plastic ships

6 Wooden ships

6 Cups

25 Coins

1 Starting Captain Token

1 Tuckbox

3 Action dice, being:

Sail die

1 1 1 2 2 2

Pirate die

x x o o o o

Treasure die

x x x o o o

6 Battle dice

△ △ △ △ △ △

Setup



In a **two player game**, check the setup adjustments in the **Phantom Mode** section at the end of this rulebook.

1. Lay the **map** open between all players. For a longer game, attach the **map extension** to it.
2. If playing for the first time, give the **Starting Captain** token to any player at random, and place tiles on the map exactly as shown in the setup image.

In subsequent games, instead deal the **tiles** face down among players as evenly as possible. Then, whoever has the Base tile (the one marked **Start/End**) takes the **Starting Captain token** clockwise side up. Finally, starting with that player and with the Base tile, players take turns clockwise placing one of their tiles face up on any empty slot of the map they choose. Once all slots have a tile, return the remaining tiles to the game box.

3. Give each player a captain coaster of their choice, a Battle die and a ship in the coaster's border color, plus a cup, five Crew dice, and two coins. Then place the ships on the Base tile.

Coasters with no colored border may be used with any ship of an unclaimed color. Also, ships come in wooden and plastic versions – use whichever you prefer.

4. Place the remaining Crew dice in the **Dice bag**. Set the **Special Crew dice** along with the **Sail die**, the **Pirate die**, and the **Treasure die** on their slots on the **Dice board**. Place the bag, the board, and any remaining coins next to the map.
5. If playing for the first time, shuffle the **Action cards** into a deck, deal six cards to each player's hand or seven cards if playing with the map extension, then place the deck face down near the map. Return all unused components to the game box.

In subsequent games, do as instructed above with the **Action cards**, but then proceed with three drafting rounds. In each round, players simultaneously select cards from their hands to pass to the next player clockwise – three cards in the first round, then two, then one.

Variant cards are not used in a normal game, nor are the abilities written on the back of the Captain coasters. Whenever you want to shake things up a bit, check how they work at the Variants section at the end of this rulebook.

You are now ready to play – from here on, players are always referred to as **captains!**

Suggested First Game Setup



Goal



Be the first to sail your ship completely around the map, returning to the Base tile.

Gameplay

Play rounds until a ship reaches the Base tile. Each round has three phases:

1. **Betting phase**, in which bids are made on hidden dice to gain coins and sailing rights.
2. **Sail phase**, in which ships move and a battle is fought for resolving a tile effect.
3. **Action phase**, in which most Action cards are played to outmaneuver opponents.

Note that the Dice board features an overview to remind you of this structure and other rules.

1. Betting Phase



Every captain fills their cup with all of their Crew dice, plus any Special Crew dice they have. They cover it with their Captain Coaster, shake it, then place it down with the coaster on the bottom, keeping the results hidden. Captains may peek at their own dice at any time but must keep them secret.

Then, starting with whoever has the Starting Captain token and going in the direction the token is indicating (clockwise or counterclockwise).

Captains take turns betting on the total **quantity** of dice showing a chosen face value between 2 and 6 among **all** captains' dice.

Dice showing 1 are wild – they always count as whichever face value is bet on.

- To make a bet, declare aloud a **quantity** then a **value**.
(Example, “four 3s” means at least four dice showing 3 or 1.)
- The first bet's **quantity** cannot exceed the captain count.
(Example, three dice if playing with three captains.)
- All following bets must be higher than the previous one in its **quantity**, **value**, or both.

You may decrease the **value** if you increase the **quantity**, but you may never decrease the quantity.

(Example: if the captain before you declared “four 3s”, you must bet on at least five dice of any **value**, or on at least four dice of a **value** that is at least 4.)

On your turn, you must do one of the following:

- A. **Make a bet** as instructed above, passing the turn to the next captain. This is the only option if no other bet has been made yet.
- B. **Make an exact bet**, declaring “exactly” before saying the **quantity** and the **value** – when doing this, the **quantity** and the **value** may be the same as in the previous bet. Then, reveal all dice and:

- If you were right, you win and everyone else loses. Additionally, gain one Crew die from the Dice bag.
- If you were wrong, you lose, the previous captain wins, and everyone else survives. Additionally, you are out of the next Betting phase and will be treated as one of the losers the next round. To easily remember that, leave your cup upside down with all your dice visible on top of it.

- C. **Declare aloud “Liar!”**, accusing the previous bet to be wrong. Then, reveal all dice and determine the winner:

The bet was correct if there is at least the **quantity** of the face **value** of the bet among all the captains.

- If the bet was wrong, you win, the previous captain loses, and everyone else survives.
- If the bet was correct, you lose, the previous captain wins, and everyone else survives.

If you are alone in a Betting phase because everyone else had to skip it, you win by default.

Betting Phase Example

Anne, Bob, and Chris all roll their Crew and Special Crew dice.

They then start betting:

Anne starts, "three 6s"

Bob continues, "four 2s"

Chris continues, "four 6s"

Anne continues, "eight 6s"

Bob continues, "nine 5s"

Chris then calls that out, "liar!"

All dice are revealed, being:

Anne's Dice:



Bob's Dice:



Chris's Dice:



There are five 5s and three 1s, counting as a total of eight 5s.

As a result, Chris wins, Bob loses, and Anne survives.

Wrong bets:

Example 1 - Lower face value when keeping the same quantity.

Anne: three 6s

Bob: three 5s

Example 2 - Lower Quantity

Anne: Three 5s

Bob: Two 6s

2. Sail Phase



The winner of the Betting phase:

- Gains one coin.
- Takes the Starting Captain token.
- Rolls the Sail die (possibly rerolling it, see Rerolling further ahead)

Then, the winner and the survivors of the Betting phase:

- Move their ships forward as many tiles as indicated by the Sail die.
- Battle among themselves (see Battles further ahead), with the winner of the battle resolving the effect of the tile their ship is on (see the Tile Legend booklet).

Aye, only **one** tile is resolved **each round**!

If a ship has reached the Base tile after a full lap around the map during this phase, skip the Action phase and resolve the Game End.

3. Action Phase



Everyone gets a last moment to play and purchase Action cards (see Action Cards further ahead).

The game cannot end in this phase – if part of an effect would make a ship finish its lap around the map, that is ignored.

Once no one wants to do that anymore, the captain whose ship is furthest behind can move their ship forward until they reach a tile with another ship – to do so, they must return one of their Crew dice to the Dice bag for each tile by which they want to move forward. If several captains share last place, they must either all take this option or all decline it.

General Rules

Here are the remaining rules of the game, mostly concerning what happens during Sail and Action phases.

Rerolling

Once per round, during the Sail or the Action phase, you can spend **one coin** to reroll a die you have rolled.

Battles

Whenever an effect instructs two or more captains to battle (or **duel**, which is just a battle between two captains), they all roll their Battle dice.



beats

beats

If the battle is looking for a winner, eliminate everyone except those with the best result.

If the battle is looking for a loser, eliminate everyone except those with the worst result.

In either case, repeat this until a single captain remains.

Battle Example

Anne	
Bob	
Chris	

Anne	
Bob	

Anne	
Bob	

Anne, Bob, and Chris all roll their Battle dice.

Anne gets a 

Bob gets a 

Chris gets a 

The battle is looking for a winner, so Chris is out, with Anne and Bob rolling again – if the battle was instead looking for a loser, it would end with Chris losing.

Anne gets a 

Bob gets a 

The battle continues, with Anne and Bob rolling again.

Anne gets a 

Bob gets a 

The battle ends with Bob as the winner.

Action Cards

These come in two types, indicated by the color of their borders – gold and silver.

- During each round, you may play up to one gold and one silver Action card.
- Gold cards may be played during Sail or Action phases.
- Silver cards may be played during Action phases.

There is no turn order when playing Action cards – they are played on a first come, first served basis. Whenever you play one, resolve its effect then discard it. Captains with their ships on the Base tile are immune to Action cards' negative effects.

Note that each Action card has an icon showing the general nature of its effect:



moves ships.



involves attacking.



provides defense or ways to expand your crew.

Also, if an Action card has a  in its upper-right corner, there is no other like it.

Acquiring Action Cards

At any point during the Sail and Action phases, you can spend **two coins** to draw an Action card into your hand. You can do this for free if you have no cards in hand. If the Action card deck ever depletes, shuffle its discard pile to form a new deck.

Crew and Special Crew Dice

There is only one Special Crew die of each kind. Whenever you gain one, take it from whoever has it – this often involves winning a battle against them.

You cannot have more than ten dice among Crew and Special Crew dice. If you go beyond that, return Crew dice to the Dice bag until you are within this limit.

You must always have at least one Crew die. If you are about to lose your last one, instead lose a non-Cursed Special Crew die in your possession, or, if you have none, simply lose nothing.

The **Cursed die** works differently than the other dice – for all your bets, instead of counting as a die of its value, it negates all dice in your cup of that value (example, if it is a 5, then your bets treat you as having zero 5s). For other captains' bets, however, it works as a normal die. At any point during the Sail and Action phases, you can return two Crew dice to the Dice bag to pass the Cursed die to another captain you choose.

Game End

The game ends at the end of a Sail phase in which one or more ships have reached the Base tile after completing a full lap in the map. If it was just a single ship, its captain is unchallenged and wins right away. If there were two or more, however, they engage in a final battle!

The Final Battle



First, all captains in the final battle may gather more Crew dice as follows:

- Exchange each Special Crew die for **two** Crew dice.
- Optionally spend two coins for **one** Crew die.

Ignore the limit of ten Crew dice per captain.

If the game runs out of Crew dice, use anything as placeholders.

Finally, they begin engaging in a series of battles (yes, the final battle is actually many battles), with the loser (or losers, see below) of each battle losing one Crew die. The following rules are also observed:

- Anyone who rolls a  is automatically a loser, even if there is a tie. Therefore, battles end as soon as one or more captains roll, with them losing one Crew die.
- Anyone who loses their last Crew die is out of the final battle. If everyone that is left loses together, they reroll their battle dice – the final battle needs a definitive winner.

- Once per battle, a captain still in the final battle may spend one coin to reroll their Battle die.
- Once per battle, a captain still in the final battle may play one Action card that explicitly mentions it can be used in the final battle.

The winner of the game is the last captain among those in the final battle to still have at least one Crew die left in their cup!

Final Battle Example



Anne, Bob, and Chris all arrive at the Base tile together.

After spending coins and Special Crew dice:

Anne has one Crew dice.

Bob has two Crew dice.

Chris has two Crew dice.

Then, in the first battle:

Anne gets a 

Bob gets a 

Chris gets a , losing one of their Crew dice.

Then, in the second battle:

Anne gets a 

Bob gets a 

Chris gets a 

The second battle continues, since there was no clear loser yet:

Bob gets a , losing one of their Crew dice.

Chris gets a , losing their last Crew dice and being eliminated.

Then, in the third battle:

Anne gets a , which would make them lose their last Crew dice, but...

Bob gets a , which would also do that, and thus, the battle is rerolled.

The third battle continues:

Anne gets a , losing their last Crew dice and being eliminated.

Bob gets a , winning the final battle and the game!

Pirate Etiquette

To play like a real pirate, also keep the following rules in mind:

- If you drop any of your dice, cards, or coins off the table, you lose them – except for the Cursed die and your Battle die. If you drop any of those two or any other game component (like your cup, the Sail die, or a coin from someone else) you lose one Crew die instead.
- Never show which or how many dice you have, except when forced to (such as at the end of Betting phases). In all other moments, leave them inside your cup and lie to anyone who asks.
- Slam your hand on the table with a thumbs-up whenever you just increase the last bet's quantity by one. In all other situations, bellow your bet aloud for everyone to hear – captains and neighbors alike!
- The many possible combinations of cards, tiles, and actions can sometimes create rule ambiguities. When an unclear situation happens, any captain may shout “**Parlay!**” and defend their interpretation of the rules. If unanimous agreement is not reached, every captain must choose a side; supporting either the caller or the opposition. All captains must now take part in a battle. The game proceeds according to the interpretation that the battle's winning captain supported.

Variants

These are extra rules which you may use in your games. Decide which will apply before you begin setting up the game. We recommend you play your first few games with normal rules before implementing these.

Captain Abilities

Each captain can use the ability written on the backside of their Captain coaster.

Variant Cards

Include one or more of these during setup, either at random or by choice – each includes rule changes that override normal rules.

Merchant Ships (Fan-inspired)

Setup:

Place 1 Merchant Ship and 1 Navy Ship on random tiles, not the base tile. Use unused player ships as markers. If all ships are used by players, use anything else as placeholders.

Interaction:

When you end up on a tile with either one of the ships, resolve the following **after** the tile event has been resolved.

Merchant Ship (Optional):

Perform either one of these actions once.

- Barter: Buy 1 Action Card for 1 coin instead of 2.
- Raid: Roll your battle die
 -  = Victory! Draw 1 Action Card and gain 1 coin **OR** gain 3 coins
 -  = Merchant escapes, no reward
 -  = You lose all your coins

Navy Ship (Mandatory):

Roll your battle die

-  = Gain 4 coins
-  = Navy retreats, nothing happens
-  = You lose 2 crew dice

Phantom Mode (Two-Player Rules)

A two-player game of Lying Pirates incorporates a third captain known as the Phantom, which will be controlled according to a special set of rules

Setup



In step 3, give the Phantom its own full set, and **before step 5**, shuffle only the silver Action cards and deal the Phantom six of them in a face-down pile, or seven if playing with the map extension.

Gameplay



The Phantom follows all normal rules, with the following exceptions:

- During Betting phases in which both players are participating, skip the Phantom's turns – it never makes bets, though its dice still count for the total.
- During Betting phases in which only one of the players is participating, the other player gets to play as the Phantom, taking turns for them as usual.
- At the start of Action phases, the Phantom plays the top Action card of its pile (if there is any left). If the card's effect only targets a single player, the two players battle, with whoever loses becoming the target.
- Although it is you who rolls the Phantom's dice for them (since, well, they don't exist), you cannot spend coins for rerolling their dice.

- The game end does not trigger if the Phantom's ship reaches the Base tile – the game continues as normal, with it continuing moving forward around the map. If it later catches up with one of the players' ships, the Phantom sinks it and the other player wins the game. If the Phantom catches up with both players' ships, however, they are both sunk simultaneously, and the Phantom wins!

Extra Help & Quick Reference

Merchant Ships

Used with Merchant & Navy Encounters. Place unused player ships on random tiles during setup. Interact with them in the Sail Phase—barter or raid based on ship type.

Game Variant Cards

Change or add to base rules. Agree on which to use before starting. Only chosen variants apply and override base rules if there's a conflict.

Kraken Meeple

Used with specific Game Variant cards. Follows movement and attack rules on the card. Place it on the map when summoned. It can cause battles or penalties.

Betting Direction & Starting Captain Token

Arrows show betting direction. Passed to the betting phase winner.

Fan-Inspired Content

Optional cards, tiles, or variant cards based on community feedback. Marked with . Remove if playing core rules only. If rules conflict, resolve with holding a Pirate Parley, page 22.

Captain Coasters (Abilities)

Optional abilities on coaster backs. Add small gameplay twists. Best for returning players or added strategy.

The Cursed Die

Affects betting. Matching numbers on your Crew dice do not count for you. Other bets are unaffected. Pay 2 Crew dice to pass it during the Sail or Action phase.

Sacrifice Crew to Move

After Action Cards are played (or not), the last captain may sacrifice 1 Crew die per tile to move forward until reaching another ship. Tied players must all move or none can.

Phantom Rules (2-player mode)

Use a neutral phantom captain. Follow the 2-player section for setup and rules.

