

Pirates & Plunder

Being a set of rules for role-playing in the age of Swashbucklers, Buccaneers, Freebooters and Corsairs

Introduction

Pirates & Plunder is a role-playing game set in the Caribbean sea during the 17th century. Players can take on the roles of pirates, traders, soldiers, sailors, rogues and anything else they might come up with.



Character Creation

Characters in **Pirates & Plunder** have five attributes; Strength, Dexterity, Intelligence, Perception and Charisma. Each of these is rolled for randomly using 1d6+2. This gives a range from 3 to 8, with 5 being average. Alternatively, if the GM agrees, characters can be built by distributing 30 points between the five attributes.

In addition to these five attributes, each character has two figured stats; Hit Points and Movement. Hit Points are equal to the characters Strength plus ten. Non-player characters' Hit Points are equal to their unmodified Strength (the PC's are, after all, the heroes of the story). The character's Movement rating is equal to his Dexterity.

STRENGTH is a measure of the characters physical power and overall health. It is used to determine the success or failure of feats of strength and endurance. It is also used in hand-to-hand combat.

DEXTERITY is a measure of the characters agility and hand-and-eye coordination. It is used for feats of stealth, balance and fine manipulation. It is also used in ranged combat.

INTELLIGENCE represents the characters reasoning ability, general knowledge and mental will power.

PERCEPTION measures the characters sensory acuteness and attention to detail. It is used to determine how well the character notices the world around him. It is also used to determine success in games of chance, like cards or dice (Intelligence would be used for games of strategy, like chess or backgammon).

CHARISMA is a measure of the characters force of presence, physical appearance and natural leadership ability. It is used to lead followers, effect the opinions of others, and to get people to do things they might not otherwise do.

HIT POINTS are a record keeping statistic used to measure the characters **current** health, as opposed to his overall health which is represented by Strength. Hit points are lost in combat and due to injury, illness and disease. They can be regained through medical treatment and rest. Loss of hit points effects the characters other attributes, as follows; For every 25% of the characters starting HP lost, the characters attributes are EACH reduced by one (to a minimum of one). As the character heals, his attributes will return to their normal levels.

***Example;** A character with 16 HP that loses 6 in combat has each of his other attributes reduced by one (6 is more than 25%, but less than 50% of 16). If he had lost 8 points, his attributes would be reduced by 2.*

Note; the effects of lost HP in combat do not take effect until the battle is over. It is assumed that adrenaline (aided by a healthy dose of rum, perhaps) will keep characters going during combat.

Characters reduced to zero HP's usually die, but may become unconscious at the referee's option.

MOVEMENT represents how far the character can move in a single one-second combat turn, in yards. Characters can swim at half their Movement speed.

Character Creation Summary						
Strength	Dexterity	Intelligence	Perception	Charisma	Hit Points	Movement
1d6+2	1d6+2	1d6+2	1d6+2	1d6+2	Str+10	Dex

Character Creation Example; Robert is creating his first character. He rolls 1d6+2 for each of the five main attributes and comes up with the following;

Strength = 5, Dexterity = 8, Intelligence = 4, Perception = 6 and Charisma = 8

Adding 10 to his Strength, his character gets 15 Hit Points. His Movement is 8.

Robert decides this character will be a French buccaneer named Louis Valeur. His below-average intelligence indicates that he's not very likely to rise to a ship captains rank. Considering his Dexterity and Charisma, Roberts decides that Louis is a gambler as well as a bit of a ladies man. Aboard ship, he would make a fine Master Gunner with his Perception of 6. His leadership abilities (Charisma = 8) will serve him well in boarding battles, as well.

Action Resolution

Whenever a character performs an action that has a chance of failure, the player must roll an **Action Roll (AR)**. The basic procedure is to roll 1d10 and add the result to one of the character's attributes. Exactly which attribute to use will depend on the situation, and will be determined by the referee.

Example; Robert's character, Louis Valeur, has just beaten "Red Leg" Emille in a card game, winning all of Emille's money. As one might imagine, Emille is a bit upset about this and accuses Louis of cheating. If Louis tries to avoid a fight by rationally explaining to Emille that he lost fair and square, he might roll an AR using Intelligence. If he tries to charm Emille by buying a round of rum, he might roll a Charisma AR. If he tries to make a quick getaway by jumping over the tavern's second floor railing, catching the chandelier swinging out a nearby window, he'd have to roll a Dexterity AR. And should he decide to fight it out hand to hand, it would be a Strength AR.

Action Rolls can be Un-opposed or Opposed. Un-opposed rolls are used when the chance of success or failure is based entirely on the character's ability. For example, breaking down a door is an Un-opposed Strength AR. Finding a piece of a treasure map stuck to the bottom of a chair would be an Un-opposed Perception AR. Un-opposed AR's are performed by comparing the players AR roll to a difficulty level set by the referee. If the players roll equals or exceeds the difficulty level, the character succeeds. Standard difficulty levels are; Easy = 5, Moderate = 10, Difficult = 15, Impossible = 20.

Opposed AR's are used when another character or non-player character is actively trying to thwart your character's attempts. In this case the two opposing parties roll their AR's, and the highest roll wins. For example, Louis and Emille's card game would have been an opposed Perception AR, with the referee rolling Emille's AR.

Example; Continuing the above example, Louis attempt to charm Emille with a round of rum would be an opposed Charisma AR. Since Emille has a Charisma attribute of 4, Louis has a good chance of winning. If Louis decided to try the daring escape instead, the referee would probably require two separate Dexterity AR's, one to jump the rail and catch the chandelier and one to successfully swing out the window. Both would probably be at Difficult level, requiring a 15 or better. Spectacular, perhaps, but dangerous....

Combat

Whenever it becomes necessary to resolve Action Rolls in a specific order, Combat Turns come into effect. Each Combat Turn is one second long. At the beginning of each Combat Turn you must first determine the order that the characters (including NPC's) act by rolling an Action Roll for initiative. This AR may be based on Dexterity or Intelligence, based on the situation. Characters then act in order from the highest roll to the lowest. In the event of a tie, both characters act simultaneously. This order remains in effect until combat ends.

The currently acting character then decides what he will do. There are four choices; Perform a hand-to-hand attack, perform a ranged attack, perform some other action, or do nothing.

Hand-to-Hand Combat

When a character attempts a hand-to-hand attack his target can try to Block, Riposte (counter-attack), or do nothing.

If the target blocks, the contest is resolved with an opposed Strength AR. If the attacker wins, he strikes the target. If the target wins, he blocks the attacker. A target that blocks cannot move later in the Combat Turn, even if he hasn't yet acted.

If the target performs a riposte, the contest is resolved with an opposed Dexterity AR. If the attacker wins, he strikes the target. If the target wins, he strikes the attacker. A target that performs a riposte cannot move later in the Combat Turn, even if he hasn't yet acted.

If the target elects to do nothing, the attack becomes an Un-opposed Strength AR. The referee should set the difficulty appropriately. If the attack succeeds, the target is hit. A failed attack has no effect.

The effects of any successful strikes take place immediately.

Ranged Combat

When a character attempts to hit a target with a ranged weapon, the target can Dodge, Counter-fire, or do nothing.

If the target dodges, the contest is resolved with an opposed Dexterity AR. If the attacker wins, the target is hit. If the target wins, the shot misses. A target that dodges is immediately moved two yards in any direction (at the controlling players choice), and cannot move later in the Combat Turn.

If the target has a ready ranged weapon at hand, he can perform a counter-fire. In this case, both characters roll Un-opposed Dexterity AR's. The difficulty of the AR depends

on the circumstances (see below). Either or both characters can succeed. A target that performs a counter-fire cannot move later in the Combat Turn, even if he hasn't moved yet.

If the target chooses to do nothing, the attacker rolls an Un-opposed Dexterity AR. The difficulty is based on the circumstances (see below). If the attacker succeeds, the shot hits. A failed attack has no other effect.

The effects of successful attacks take place immediately.

Ranged Attack Difficulties	
Target at Short Range	5
Target at Medium Range	10
Target at Long Range	15
Target Dodging	+5
Target Firing a Counter-strike	+5
Target Behind Cover	+5

Thus, a medium range shot at a target behind cover and dodging, would be at difficulty level of 20 (10+5+5=20).

Damage

When characters take damage in combat, the damage is first applied to any armor they may be wearing (see Weapons and Armor section). Any remaining damage is applied to the characters Hit Points. If the characters Hit Points are reduced to zero, the character is dead (or unconscious, at the referee's option).

Each time a character suffers damage, roll a Strength AR against the amount of damage taken. If the roll is less than the amount taken, the character falls unconscious for 1d10 minutes for each point he missed the roll by.

The long term effects of HP loss detailed above in the Character Creation section do not take effect until Combat Rounds are completed.

Hit Points normally heal at a rate of one per day. This can be doubled for each day the character is under the care of a physician and the physician rolls a successful Intelligence AR. However, each time the physician fails the roll, the patient loses one HP *permanently*.

Pegs, Patches and Hooks; If a character takes a single wound that takes half or more of his starting HP in damage, the character has received a severe wound that may result in the loss of a body part. Roll 1d10 to determine the effect.

1 - 2	No Effect
3	Loose Left Hand
4	Loose Right Hand
5	Loose Left Leg
6	Loose Right Leg
7	Loose Left Eye
8	Loose Right Eye
9	Loose Left Ear
10	Loose Right Ear

Each loss of a hand permanently reduces Dexterity by 2 and Strength by 1. Each loss of a leg reduces Dexterity by 2 and Movement is halved. Each loss of an eye reduces Perception by 1. Each loss of an ear reduces Perception by 1. Loosing both of any appendage or organ will cause the character to be retired.

Weapons and Armor

On the following weapon charts, the To-Hit modifier is applied to the characters AR when attacking. The Parry modifier is applied to both Block and Riposte AR's. Damage for hand-to-hand weapons is based on the attacking characters Strength AR. For ranges, where an AR is listed it is a Strength AR. Reload times are in one-second Combat Rounds. Costs are in Reales and Pesos (see Currency and Income section).

The Break number is the 1d10 chance, each Combat Round, that the weapon will break (or misfire, if a firearm) and become useless.

Hand-To-Hand Weapons						
Weapon	To-Hit	Parry	Damage	Range	Break	Cost
Dagger/Knife	+2	-1	AR+1	0	1	5r
Rapier	+3	+3	AR+2	0	1-3	23p
Cutlass	0	+1	AR+4	0	1	2p
Smallsword	+1	+2	AR+3	0	1	17p
Broadsword	0	+1	AR+5	0	1	3p
Infantry Pike	+1	-3	AR+4	3	1-2	1p
Boarding Pike	+3	-2	AR+3	2	1-2	1p
Boarding Axe	+1	+1	AR+3	0	1	2p
Belaying Pin	+2	-2	AR+1	0	1	--
Native Spear	+3	-1	AR+3	1	1-4	--

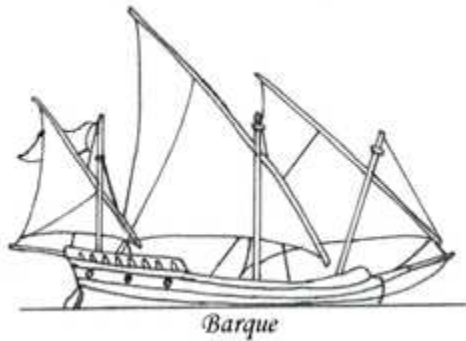
Ranged Weapons									
Weapon	To-Hit	Damage	Range	Short	Medium	Long	Reload	Break	Cost
Knife (thrown)	+1	AR+1	AR	1-2	3-5	6+	--	--	5r
Native Spear (thrown)	+1	AR+2	ARx2	1-6	7-12	13+	--	--	--
Native Bow	+2	AR+2	ARx4	1-12	13-24	25+	1	1-3	--
Pistol*	+1	1d10	10	1-3	4-6	7-10	10	1-3	27p
Musket*	+2	2d10	50	1-12	16-24	25-50	20	1-3	16p
Musketoons*	+3	1d10+5	30	1-10	11-20	21-30	15	1-3	11p
Blunderbuss*	+4	1d10+5	20	1-6	7-12	13-20	15	1-3	11p

*Treat these weapons as Belaying Pins if used in hand-to-hand combat.

Armor in this era was becoming less and less common. It will almost never be encountered aboard ship, but may be worn by soldiers on land. The listed strength is the amount of damage the armor will absorb. Any damage exceeding the armor's Strength is applied to the character.

Armor Type	Armor Table Strength	Cost
Padded Cloth/Hides	6	3r
Leather	8	1p
Steel Breastplate	10	17p
Steel Helmet	+2	7p
Shield	+3	1p

Ships and Sea Travel



There was a bewildering variety of ship types, sizes and rigging configurations in the 17th century. The following lists describe the types most commonly encountered in the Caribbean. The ratings given are averages for the specified ship type, but ships of the era were built individually and by hand, so variations are likely to be found. Therefore, at the referees option individual ratings may be increased or decreased slightly. There are nine basic ship types included here. Each ship type has the following ratings.

MANEUVER represents the ships overall agility. It modifies the crews Intelligence AR's when performing tricky maneuvers, such as passing through treacherous reefs or avoiding running a-ground during storms. It also modifies the crews AR for targeting the ship in combat.

SAIL represents the ships quickness to respond to the wind. It effects the ships overall speed, and modifies the crews AR to close or increase range in combat. An asterisk (*) indicates that the ship can move under oar power.

HULL is equivalent to a characters Hit Points. It represents the amount of damage that the ship can take before sinking. Damage to the ships hull will degrade the ships Maneuver and Sail ratings as well.

SIZE modifies an opponents attempt to hit the ship in combat. It represents how large of a target the ship is.

CREW lists the minimum number of men required to sail the ship. Also listed is the maximum number that can be carried.

CARGO lists the maximum tonnage of cargo that the ship can carry.

GUNS lists the maximum number of cannon that can be carried by the ship. Merchant ships commonly carry fewer than this amount. Naval ships usually have the maximum. Pirates try to have as many as they can.

COST is the average cost, in pesos, to purchase a ship of this type.

Ships of the Caribbean								
Ship	Maneuver	Sail	Hull	Size	Crew	Cargo	Guns	Cost
Galleon	-2	-3	120	+1	275/285	160	36	8000p
War Galleon	-1	-2	120	+1	250/255	140	32	9000p
Fast Galleon	0	-1	100	0	215/225	120	28	7500p
Frigate	+1	0	80	0	190/210	120	28	7500p
Merchantman	0	0	50	0	45/195	100	24	5500p
Fluyt	0	+1	40	-1	25/175	80	20	4500p
Brigantine	+1	+2	50	-1	55/165	70	18	4000p
Barque	+2	+2*	40	-1	40/130	60	16	3500p
Sloop	+3	+3*	30	-2	10/90	40	12	2500p



Boats; Boats differ from ships in that they are coastal vessels, not designed to operate in the open sea. Some are small enough to be carried aboard ships. They are shallow draft vessels and can navigate rivers and lakes. In most other respects, they operate like ships.

Boats of the Caribbean								
Boat	Maneuver	Sail	Hull	Size	Crew	Cargo	Guns	Cost
Pinnace	+4	+1*	20	-3	8/60	20	8	1500p
Coastal Boat	+3	0*	15	-3	4/30	10	0	1000p
Launch	+4	-3*	5	-4	1/20	0	0	500p
Canoe	+4	*	5	-4	1/10	0	0	--

Note; Canoes do not have sails. They operate on oar power only.



Sea Combat

The Sea Chase

When two ships encounter each other at sea, a sea chase may occur. There are three possible ranges; Long, Medium and Short. All encounters normally start at long range.

Each turn, roll an opposed Intelligence AR for each captain, modified by their ship's Sail Rating. The winner can choose to increase or decrease range. If one or the other ships increases range beyond long range, it escapes and the encounter is over. Otherwise, each ship can try to fire at the other.

Cannon Fire

The number of cannon that a ship carries must be divided in half, with each half making up a broadside. Broadside can fire in a 90° arc to port and starboard of the ship. At the ship-owners option, two cannon can be placed in the ships bow to fire forward as "chasers". Chasers can fire in a 45° arc forward.

Cannon can be loaded with one of three types of shot; round shot, chain shot and grape shot. The entire broadside must be loaded with the same type of shot.

Round shot is designed to batter down the hulls of opposing ships. Chain shot is designed to damage the rigging and sails of the enemy. Grape shot is used to cause crew casualties on the enemy ship.

To fire a broadside, Roll an opposed Perception AR for each ship. This AR is modified

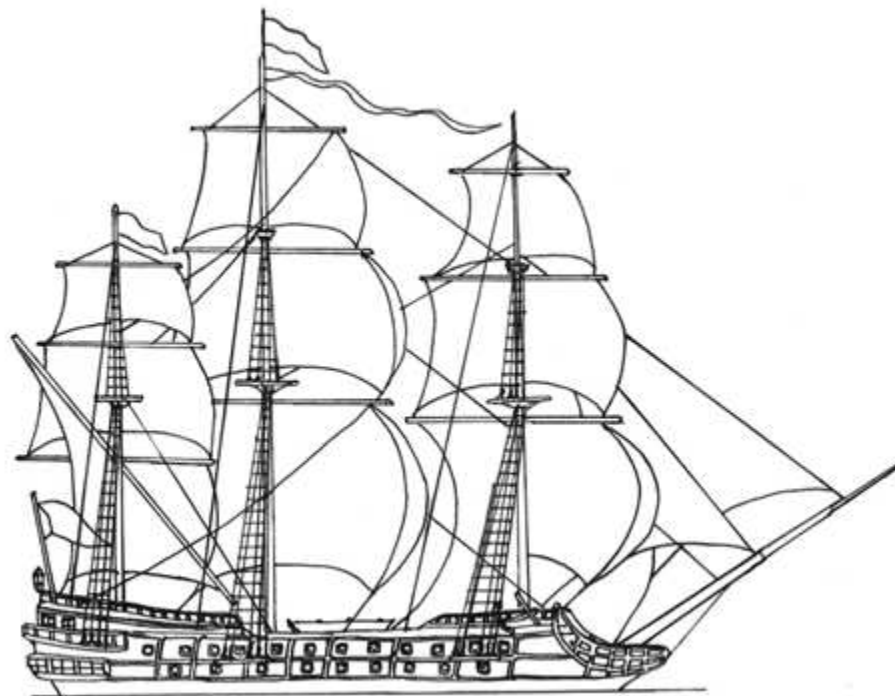
by the target ship's Size Rating and both ship's Maneuver Ratings.

If the AR fails, the shot misses. If the AR succeeds, the target is hit. Roll 1d10 for every two cannon firing. The result is the amount of damage done. Exactly how this damage effects the opposing ship depends on the type of shot fired.

Round Shot; Apply all damage points to Hull Points. If the ship's Hull Points are reduced to zero, it sinks. Additionally, for every 10 damage points inflicted reduce the ship's Maneuver Rating by one. For every 20 damage points inflicted reduce the ship's Sail Rating by one, and reduce the crew by 10%. Round shot can be fired out to long range.

Chain Shot; For each 10 damage points inflicted, reduce the Sail Rating by one. For every 5 damage points inflicted, reduce the Hull Points by one. Apply 10% crew casualties per 20 damage points inflicted. Chain shot can be fired at medium or close range.

Grape Shot; For every 10 damage points inflicted, apply 10% crew casualties. Reduce Hull Points by one for every 10 damage points inflicted. Reduce the Sail Rating by one for every 20 damage points inflicted. **Note;** Grape shot can only be fired at close range.



Merchantman

Grappling and Boarding

Grappling is accomplished by coming to close range. Then an opposed Intelligence AR is rolled by the opposing ship's captains. Whichever captain succeeds can decide whether the grappling attempt succeeds or fails.

Should the attempt succeed, a boarding battle can ensue. Boarding battles can be fought out using the basic combat rules, but those rules are designed for small scale encounters. In battles where there are many combatants, the following abstract system can be substituted.

The abstract boarding combat system uses a series of opposed Intelligence AR's between the officers leading the combatants. Each sides AR is modified by +1 for every 10 men involved. The side that loses the AR has lost the round, and suffers 1d10 casualties.



Each round, all PC's involved may become wounded. Roll 1d10 on the following chart to determine whether anything happens to them. Apply the effects immediately.

Boarding Battle PC Injury Table	
1-6	No Effect
7	Hit by Cutlass (1d10+4 damage)
8	Hit by Pistol (1d10 damage)
9	Hit by Boarding Axe (1d10+3 damage)
10	Hit by Blunderbuss (1d10+5 damage)

For each round that a side loses, they must also make a Charisma AR for leadership to maintain control of their crew. The difficulty levels for this AR are as follows.

Boarding Battle Leadership Difficulty Table	
Outnumber the enemy by 3 to 1 or more	5
Outnumber the enemy by 2 to 1 or more	10
Outnumber the enemy	15
Outnumbered by the enemy	20
Pirate or Privateer crew	+5
Naval crew or Marines	+10

If the leadership AR succeeds, the battle will continue. If it fails, the NPC's on that side surrender. The PC's can, of course, continue to fight if they choose...

Land Combat

Historically, pirates spent more time fighting on land than at sea. Most small scale encounters can be handled using the basic combat system. But when bigger battles occur, like Henry Morgan's attack on Panama, the following abstract system can be substituted.

The land combat system is essentially the same as the abstract boarding combat system. It uses a series of opposed Intelligence AR's between the officers leading the combatants. Each sides AR is modified by +1 for every 10 men involved. The side that loses the AR has lost the round, and suffers 1d10 casualties.

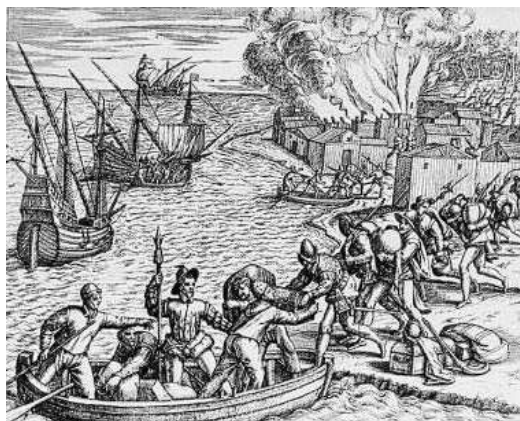
Each round, all PC's involved may become wounded. Roll 1d10 on the following chart to determine whether anything happens to them. Apply the effects immediately.

Land Battle PC Injury Table	
1-6	No Effect
7	Hit by Sword (1d10+3 damage)
8	Hit by Pistol (1d10 damage)
9	Hit by Infantry Pike (1d10+4 damage)
10	Hit by Musket (2d10 damage)

For each round that a side loses, they must also make a Charisma AR for leadership to maintain control of their crew. The difficulty levels for this AR are as follows.

Land Battle Leadership Difficulty Table	
Outnumber the enemy by 3 to 1 or more	5
Outnumber the enemy by 2 to 1 or more	10
Outnumber the enemy	15
Outnumbered by the enemy	20
Pirate or Privateer crew	+5
Army Soldiers or Marines	+10

If the leadership AR succeeds, the battle will continue. If it fails, the NPC's on that side surrender. The PC's can, of course, continue to fight if they choose..



The Pirate Crew

The crew of a sailing ship in the 1600's (be it pirate or otherwise) was made up primarily of ordinary seamen. Although many seamen had a specialty (gun crewman, sail handler, etc.) most were simple laborers that did whatever jobs their officers assigned to them. They were also expected to have some skill with weapons. Naval ships usually carried marines who did most of the hand to hand fighting, but naval (and merchant) seamen were not exempt from combat. Of course, aboard a pirate or privateer ship everyone is skilled in combat.

The most important positions aboard a sailing ship are as follows;

CAPTAIN -The captain of a ship had to possess the qualities of leadership and courage. Aboard a naval or merchant ship, the captain's power was absolute in time of chase or action, and he could discipline anyone who disobeyed his orders. He also had life and death power over anyone taken prisoner.

The background of many pirates was as a sailor in one of the European navies, and from their service under aristocratic commanders, they developed a strong hatred of their incompetent and abusive style. A pirate captain had to be cut from a different mold, because previous experience had taught most that life at sea was harsh enough without an inexperienced or cruel leader making it worse.

He was elected as a sort of president of this shaky democracy, someone already respected for their leadership and navigation skills who would be level-headed and decisive in the heat of battle.

It was during engagements that this pirate of pirates would be expected to rise above and help bring victory, but in most other occasions on ship, he was more or less another voting member, delegating most of the everyday tasks to the quartermaster or other junior officer. In these times, he was to be an even-tempered father who maintained the barest level of discipline necessary to hold the family venture together.

This father could be voted out and even thrown off if he became passive or wavering, went against the majority vote, became too brutal, or simply no longer performed his duties to the liking of the crew.

FIRST MATE - Although common aboard naval or merchant ships, few pirate ships had this position as the captain's right-hand man and the one who would assume his role if he were killed in battle or could no longer perform his duties. This was often considered the job of a lieutenant in a regular navy, and most pirate crews chose a quartermaster instead of a First Mate.

QUARTERMASTER - Out of their distrust of dictatorial rule, pirates of the Golden Age placed a large portion of the captain's traditional role and power into the hands of an elected quartermaster who became second-in-command and almost a co-captain

through his representing the best interests of the crew.

As a foreman, he was in charge of maintaining order, distributing rations and supplies, delegating work, and guarding and dividing plunder. In fighting, the quartermaster decided what ships were worth it and often led any boarding party, ultimately deciding what loot to keep. When discipline or punishment was necessary, only he could give it, but even then it was with the agreement of the captain or the vote of the crew.

In the worst of situations, he was a sheriff enforcing fairness in duels or a judge presiding over jury trials for serious crimes committed among the crew. For all his hard work, the quartermaster received a larger portion of any plunder and would often be asked to command any highly valued ship taken in battle.

SAILING MASTER - This was the officer who was in charge of navigation and the sailing of the ship. He directed the course and looked after the maps and instruments necessary for navigation. Since the charts of the era were often inaccurate or nonexistent, his job was a difficult one.

BOATSWAIN - This position may be compared to the modern chief petty officer. A ship of any size would require the boatswain to oversee several junior officers who would share his responsibility for the crew's morale and work efficiency as well as the maintenance and repair of the hull, rigging, lines, cables, sails, and anchors.

MASTER GUNNER - A master gunner would be the leader of any separate group manning the artillery. His special skill would be in aiming, but he would oversee the four to six men required to take the gun through the steps of loading, aiming, firing, resetting, and swabbing for the next load. He would also work to ensure the gun crew's safety in avoiding dangerous overheating or excessive recoiling of the weapon. A master gunner would help to coordinate the timing and accuracy of the individual crews, especially when a broadside was ordered.

CARPENTER - There could probably be no more highly regarded artisan on a ship when the continuation of your life and livelihood depended on the soundness of the wood around and beneath you. A person in this apprenticed trade would use their skill to not only repair battle damage to masts, yards, hatches, and the hull, but to keep the ship's leaky seams in check with wooden plugs and oakum fibers. He would often have separate quarters combined with a workspace. Each carpenter would usually have an assistant in apprenticeship.

SURGEON - Yet another highly valued position, surgeons would often be grabbed from crews of captured ships, although they would not be ordinarily be expected to sign the articles.

He would be expected to deal with colds, fevers, or sexual diseases with an assortment of mercurial medicines or other current treatments, and the carnage of battle often required amputations in hopes of saving the wounded.

It seems that the ship was possibly more valued than life or limb when there is no

mention of substitute carpenters, but for lack of a surgeon, a carpenter or even a cook would be asked to fill in. A carpenter would be certain to have the similar tools and cutting experience, but a cook as a surgeon would be quite a stretch.

COOPER - Most everything not in a crate or canvas bag was in a barrel. Using steel hoops and strong wood, the cooper would make containers to keep gunpowder dry, food free of pests, and water and spirits from leaking into the bilge. With a changing environment and the constant shifting of the cargo, the hoops and staves of the barrels required constant upkeep to remain intact and tight.

COOK - More often than not, a cook would be a disabled pirate who was allowed to stay on ship if he could make food that didn't kill crew-members. Perhaps it was felt if they survived his cooking, he could make something to help heal as a stand-in surgeon.



Articles of Agreement

The experience of most pirates in previous naval or merchant service was under harsh conditions and even harsher commanders, leaving an indelible impression and desire to create a more secure and equitable environment aboard ship.

In the second half of the 17th century, buccaneers began operating under a set of rules called the Chasse-Partie, or Charter Party, which for a season even held legal weight in the Jamaican court system. This later grew into the Articles of Agreement, which basically explained the standard operating procedures for all pirates involved. To "go on the account" usually meant that a person signed the articles and was declaring their membership with a group of pirates.

The most common elements of articles of agreement are:

- ✓ Who was voted CAPTAIN, if the ship's owner was not among them to be in charge...
- ✓ Which AREA to sail in search of fortune...
- ✓ The TERMS and conditions of service clearly stated...
- ✓ DIVISION of plunder among crew members...
- ✓ INTOLERABLE behaviors, such as fighting, gambling, open flame or disciplines for broken rules...
- ✓ COMPENSATION for disabling injuries such as loss of eye, hand, arm, or leg (losses of right hand or arm were compensated with more as more pirates were right-handed)...

Each pirate would sign or make his mark and then swear an oath of honor while his hand was on either a Bible, crossed pistols or a human skull, or while sitting on a cannon.

Punishments for infractions were always swift and rarely without exception, an attitude carried over from their previous time aboard a sailing vessel. The quartermaster would deliver the punishment determined by the captain or vote of the crew, which might be legs in irons, flogging, or keel hauling. More serious crimes were answered with marooning or death...

Articles of Agreement for the Revenge, commanded by Captain John Phillips:

Article One; Every man shall obey civil command; the Captain shall have on full share and a half in all prizes. the Master, Carpenter, Boatswain, and Gunner shall have one share and quarter.

Article Two; If any man shall offer to run away, or keep any secret from the Company, he shall be marroon'd with one bottle of powder, one bottle of Water, one small Arm, and shot.

Article Three; If any Man shall steal any Thing in the Company, or game, to the value of a piece of Eight, he shall be Marroon'd or shot.

Article Four; If at any Time we should meet at another Marrooner (that is, Pyrate) that man shall sign his Articles without Consent of our Company, shall suffer such Punishment as the Captain and Company shall think fit.

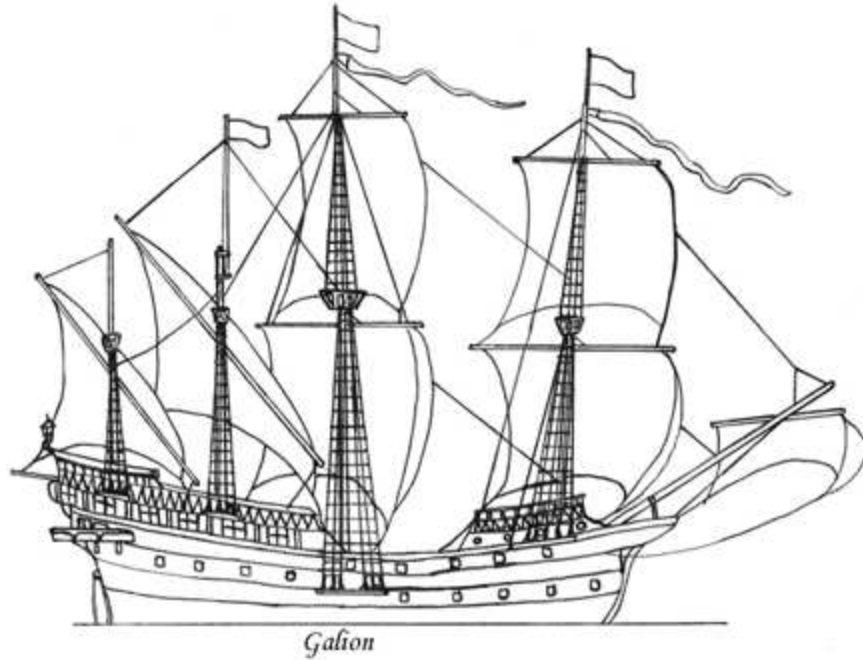
Article Five; That man that shall strike another, whilst these Articles are in force, shall receive Moses's Law (that is 40 Stripes lacking one) on the bare Back.

Article Six; That Man that shall snap his Arms, or smoak Tobacco in the Hold, without cap to his Pipe, or carry a candle lighted without lanthorn, shall suffer the same Punishment as in the former Article.

Article Seven; That Man that shall not keep his Arms clean, fit for an Engagement, or neglect his Business, shall be cut off from his Share, and suffer such other Punishment as the Captain and Company shall think fit.

Article Eight; If any man shall lose a joint in time of Engagement, shall have 400 Pieces of Eight: if a limb, 800.

Article Nine; If at any time you meet with a prudent Woman, that Man that offers to meddle with her, without her Consent, shall suffer Death.



Currency and Income

Pirates & Plunder uses Spanish coinage as the basic units of currency. Spanish coinage was by far the most common in the Caribbean during the era, and was familiar to one and all. The following charts will explain the exchange rates.

Gold Doubloon: Equal to four pesos, or thirty-two reales. Relatively rare, the doubloon was a sought-after prize.

Silver Peso: Actually short for 'Peso de Ocho' (Piece of Eight), which referred to the fact that it is worth eight reales. The peso was the most common coin of the day, roughly equivalent to the modern US dollar. The English shilling, French livre and Dutch guilder are all about equal to the peso.

Silver Real: Equal to 34 maravedi. Commonly called 'bits'. The reference to the modern US quarter being 'two bits' comes from the real, as two reales is 1/4th of a peso.

Copper Maravedi: This was the smallest coin of the day, similar to the modern US penny.

Employment and Wages

The following shows the average annual incomes for different professions in the early 17th century. The difference in income between the upper and lower classes is quite clear. Values are in Doubloons (d).

Annual Income	
Profession	Income
Nobleman	6,500d to 35,000d (depending on rank)
Colonial Governor	1,300d to 6,500d (depending on colony significance)
Gentry	1,300d to 6,500d (depending on acreage of land)
Office-holding Lawyer	1,200d
Army Colonel	480d
Navy Captain / Army Major	316d
Yeoman Farmer / Plantation Owner	50d to 300d (depending on acreage of land)
Army Captain	195d
Physician	160d
Justice of the Peace	85d
Army Lieutenant	100d
Army Sergeant	72d
Lower Clergyman	12d to 60d (depending on size of parish)
Navy Midshipman	38d
Skilled Craftsman	40d
Sculptor / Painter / Calligraphist	25d to 130d
Skilled Laborer	25d to 30d
Apothecary	13d to 20d
Army Soldier	20d
Unskilled Laborer	16d
Navy Seaman	15d
Agricultural Worker	13d to 17d
Teacher (Male)	16d
Subsistence Farmer	8d
Teacher (Female)	10d
Woman Laborer	7d
Militiaman	5d
Servant	1d plus room and board

While the crews of naval and merchant ships were generally paid wages based on the values listed above, pirates and privateers operated under a system of shares. At the end of a voyage the income generated during the cruise would be divided into equal shares, which were then distributed among the crew based on their position. The number of shares that each crew position drew varied from ship to ship, and was usually spelled out in the ship's Articles of Agreement (see the Pirate Crew section).

A typical division of shares would be as follows;

Captain and Quartermaster (or First Mate, if present) - two to five shares.

Sailing Master, Boatswain, and Gunner - one-and-one-half to two shares.

Other officers - one-and-one-quarter to one-and-one-half shares

Sailors - one share.

If one lost a limb or became a cripple in the common service, one received extra shares

Okay, now you know how much money you earn. What do you spend it on?

Fees and Fines	
Item	Price
Baronet Title	1,400d
Gentry Woman's Dowry	140d to 11,000d
Theatre, General Admission	6m
Theatre, Gallery Seat	15m
Theatre, Balcony Seat	2r

Food and Lodging		
Item	Price	Notes
Meat per Pound	12m	
Whole Pig	5p	
Whole Chicken	6m to 12m	
Dozen Eggs	1r	
Butter per Pound	25m	
Loaf of Bread	6m to 12m	
Wine per Pint	6m to 12m	cheap, watered down variety
Ale per Quart	6m	
Tea per Pound	3d	
Bottle of Rum	2r	
Bottle of Wine	4r	fair quality (european) vintage
Bottle of Good Wine	3p to 5p	excellent quality (european) vintage
Excellent Meal	3p	excellent, four course meal
Good Meal	11r	meat, vegetables, bread and fruit
Common Meal	2r	potatoes or beans, bread, broth
Poor Meal	1r	broth and stale bread
Good Lodging	11r	a fine, well sheltered room
Common Lodging	2r	a dry place to sleep
Poor Lodging	12m	a cot in a common dormitory
Brothel	4r to 3p	lodging (and company), for about an hour...



Item	Clothing Price	Notes
Ladies Skirt, Cotton or Linen	13r	common middle or lower class garment
Ladies Skirt, Wool	3p	finer middle class garment
Ladies Skirt, Worsted Wool	5p	upper middle class garment
Ladies Skirt, Silk	11d to 40d	garment of noble-women or gentry
Ladies Corset or Bodice	3p	
Ladies Silk Bodice	8d to 16d	
Ladies Over-skirt, Cotton or Linen	6r	
Ladies Over-skirt, Wool	3p	
Ladies Over-skirt, Silk	8d to 13d	
Ladies Stockings, Cotton or Wool	4r	
Ladies Stockings, Silk	3d to 4d	
Ladies Chemise, Linen or Cotton	3p	a long, shirt-like garment
Ladies Chemise, Silk	11d to 22d	
Gentlemans Shirt, Linen or Cotton	11r	
Gentlemans Shirt, Silk	4d to 11d	
Gentlemans Breeches, Linen or Cotton	11r	
Gentlemans Breeches, Wool	17r	
Gentlemans Breeches, Silk	7d to 13d	
Gentlemans stockings, Cotton or Wool	4r	
Gentlemans Stockings, Silk	3d to 4d	
Gentlemans Waistcoat, Linen or Cotton	3p to 8p	
Gentlemans Waistcoat, Wool	1d to 5d	
Gentlemans Waistcoat, Silk	27d to 133d	
Gentlemans Coat, Wool	4d to 7d	
Gentlemans Coat, Silk	67d to 200d	
Gentlemans Cravat, Cotton or Linen	5r	lace edging drastically increases price
Gentlemans Cravat, Silk	1d to 3d	lace edging drastically increases price
Gentlemans Wig	1d to 16d	
Plumed Hat	1d	
Simple Hat	2p	
Straw Hat	6r	
Sailors Cap	6r	
Leather Boots	2d	
Good Shoes	3p	
Common Shoes	2p	
Belt	1p	good, leather sword-belt
Sailors Jacket	2p	
Sailors Shirt	6r	
Sailors Breeches	4r	
Grooming Kit	7d	Razor, wash basin, linen, soap, cologne, comb, small shears, small chamber pot.



