

# Swashbucklers & Scoundrels

You are pirates, preferring to spend your time with grog and the ocean waves rather than the rules of polite society. Perhaps you're awaiting the hangman's noose for something you didn't (or did) do, or maybe you don't want to marry a nice man and settle down. You've got your hands on **REDBEARD'S TREASURE MAP** and if you can find it you will be rich beyond your wildest dreams! But things are never that easy

## Players: Create Characters

1. Choose a style for your character: **Brash, Deft, Flashy, Quick, Sneaky, or Smart**
2. Choose a rank for your character: **Captain, First Mate, Bo'sun, Cabin Boy, Gunner, Quartermaster**
3. Choose your number, between 2 and 5. The higher your number, the better you are at being a scoundrel but the less effective you are as a classic swashbuckler.
4. Give your character a memorable pirate's name or appellation appropriate for their role and history. Greenbeard, Jenny Sparrow, One-Eyed Pete, One-Legged Jack, Salty Lil, Wooden-Spleen Kate.

**You have:** Typical pirate clothing, a boy or girl in every port, a rapier or cutlass, a brace of pistols, and a ship (shared between the crew), **possibly** a friends among other pirates, a privateer's licence.

**Player goal:** Get your character involved in dashing pirate adventures. Find the hidden treasure, avoid walking the plank, steal from the rich and keep it for yourself, sail the ocean waves with no master but yourselves.

**Character goal:** Choose one or create your own: **Atone for Past Sins, Get Rich or Die Trying, Hide my Noble Background, Avoid the Law, or Be Dashing**

**HELPING:** If you want to help when someone else rolls, say how you try to help and make a roll. If you succeed, give them **+1d**

## Rolling the Dice

When you do something risky, roll **1d6** to find out how it goes. Roll **+1d** if you're prepared and **+1d** if you're an expert. (*The GM tells you how many dice to roll, based on your character and the situation.*) **Roll your dice** and compare each die result to your number.

If you're **SWASHBUCKLING** (swinging from rigging, in a daring sword-fight, flirting with rapier wit), you want to roll **over** your number.

If you're a **SCOUNDREL** (stealing, shooting, raiding, cheating, flirting with dangerous charm), you want to roll **under** your number.

If **none of your dice succeed**, it goes wrong. The GM says how things get worse somehow.

If **one die succeeds**, you barely manage it. The GM inflicts a complication, harm, or cost.

If **two dice succeed**, you do it well. Good job!

If **three dice succeed**, you get a critical success! The GM tells you some extra effect you get.

If you roll **your number exactly**, you **ARE ALSO NOT LEFT-HANDED!** You get special insight into what's going on. Ask the GM a question and they'll answer you honestly. Some good questions:

*What should I be on the lookout for? Who is \_\_\_\_\_ working for? Is \_\_\_\_\_ a red herring? How can I best trick \_\_\_\_\_?*

You can change your action if you want to, then roll again.

## GM: Create a Swashbuckling Adventure

Roll or choose on the tables below.

### A Threat...

- |                                |                           |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. The Black Pearl             | 4. The Flying Dutchman    |
| 2. The Royal Navy              | 5. The Island Governor    |
| 3. The Pirate Lords of Tortuga | 6. The East India Company |

### wants to...

- |                     |                       |
|---------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Steal            | 4. Attack             |
| 2. Kidnap / Ransom  | 5. Protect            |
| 3. Control / Occupy | 6. Discover / Recover |

### the...

- |                            |                       |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Navy Officer            | 4. Stolen Pirate Ship |
| 2. Governor's Son/Daughter | 5. Undiscovered Tribe |
| 3. Pieces of Eight         | 6. Shipment of Rum    |

### which will...

- |                           |                   |
|---------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Start a Pirate War     | 4. End Piracy     |
| 2. Enrage the Authorities | 5. Make them Rich |
| 3. Cause a Mutiny         | 6. Fix Everything |

## GM: Run the Game

Play to find out if the characters buckle their swash and save the day. Introduce the threat and show evidence of its badness. Before a threat does something to the characters, show signs that it's about to happen, then ask: *What do you do?*

Call for a roll when the situation is uncertain. Don't pre-plan outcomes—let the chips fall where they may. Use failures to push the action forward. The situation always changes after a roll, for good or ill.

Ask questions and build on the answers. *"Have any of you seen the Dread Pirate Bob before? What happened? Did you fight him, or did you woo him and leave before he woke?"*