

# Pirate Squad!

***PIRATE SQUAD! Pirate Squad is a role-playing game designed expressly for young players with short attention spans who demand action and fun. There is a lot of die rolling and some amusing shopping and number-crunching. Characters can be generated in 30 seconds.***

*Copyright (c) 2005 by Jason Morningstar. Pirate Squad is provided under the Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 2.5 Creative Commons license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/2.5/>)*

## **WHAT YOU NEED**

Each participant should have access to a pencil, paper, and a set of polyhedral dice - one of each, from D4 up to D12. Also snacks and beverages.

## **CHARACTER GENERATION**

Each character has one each of D4, D8, and D12 to represent aspects of themselves - Swashbuckler, Sailor, and Explorer.

(Example: I want to make a grizzled captain type character, so I choose Sailor D12, Explorer D8, and Swashbuckler D4. Let's hope I have someone along to keep me out of harm's way in a fight!)

Each character has a D6 and a D10 to describe stuff - a weapon, an object, or a trick.

(Example: For my salty sea-dog, I choose a trick (Salty Dog) at D10 and a cutlass at D6.)

Everyone has fifteen Hit Points. Damage reduces these directly.

## **RESOLUTION MECHANIC**

All characters can fight, sail, and sneak around at varying levels of skill. Difficulty is reflected by a target number, typically 2, 4, or 6. Higher numbers are certainly possible for daring feats.

Roll against Swashbuckler to hit in combat. A 2 or better is needed to hit a weak foe, a 4 or better to hit an average foe, and a 6 or better to hit a tough foe. Obviously, if you assign D4 to Swashbuckler, direct combat will prove a challenge, if not impossible.

Roll against Sailor to do stuff with ships and the sea. Like fighting, the difficulty of sailing tasks will vary from 2 to 6 - or even higher!

Roll against Explorer to sneak around and be a thief. You need a 2 or better to move silently, a 4 or better to pick a lock or climb a wall, and a 6 or better to disarm a trap or jump a chasm.

## **EQUIPMENT THAT NEEDS TO BE ASSIGNED A "STUFF" DIE**

Hand weapons, like a cutlass, do their die in damage - either D6 or D10. A "cutlass" could also be an axe or other weapon. Other weapons rated at D4, D8, or even D12 might be found as booty!

Guns can damage a foe from a distance, doing their die in damage, but only half the time. If the Swashbuckler roll is odd, it does not count! If it is even, it actually hits! A "gun" could also be throwing knives, a crossbow, or other ranged weapon.

Armor reduces damage taken by a roll of its die. Thus, if you are hit for 7 points of damage and have armor, you can roll your armor die and reduce damage taken by that amount, possibly all the way to zero. D10 armor is powerful stuff! Armor makes you sink like a stone, though, so it is usually only worn by land-lubbers and palace guards.

Some expensive gear affords a +1 bonus to a specific activity, effectively bumping the die up one rank. Your D4 Explorer becomes D6, for example, when sneaking in boots of Spanish leather. A character can carry a total of four pieces of "stuff" with dice assigned to it - tricks, objects, weapons, and the like. If a character acquires a cool bit of booty with a die assigned to it (D6 musket, for example), it counts toward this total, as do the two items each character starts with. A player can mix and match as needed, but no character can ever carry more than four.

## **OTHER EQUIPMENT**

Anyone can do D4 damage with their fists or a dagger, if they have no better weapon. Ropes, picks and shovels, and other equipment can be purchased, but has no "stuff" die associated with it. There is no limit to the amount of regular stuff you can carry.

## **SHIPS**

Ships can be listed - and - acquired - as objects. They are a special class of objects, though, because so much pirate adventure occurs on and around them. Ships are like characters, and have hit points and aspects. Instead of Sailor, Explorer, and Swashbuckler, ships have Speed, Agility, and Guns. The die of a ship selected as an object owned by a character is its highest die which can be assigned to any of the three traits. The other two dice are always a D4 and a D6, and you can put them anywhere you like. For a high seas battle, roll contests of speed, then Agility, then the captain's Sailor aspect. For each victory, roll the ship's Guns once and apply damage accordingly. After this is done, the ships must grapple for boarding!

## TRICKS

There are six tricks. Any character can choose to assign a "Stuff" die to gain a trick, and a pirate can use both the D6 and D10 for different tricks.

### TRICK LIST

*FIRST AID* restores its die in hit points to the person the pirate chooses. This trick can be used once per battle, and can only assist one person.

*LUCK* allows you to add your die to another person's roll, before they make it! Or reduce an opponents roll by the same amount, before they make it. Can be tried every turn, instead of taking another action.

*PIRATE'S ROAR* causes one enemy to hesitate for every 2 points rolled. Victims cannot take any action for a turn when they are frightened and uncertain. Can be used once per battle.

*DARING* allows you to perform a dazzling feat or heroism and bravery that might normally be difficult or impossible! This could be swinging down from the mizzen mast, sweeping up the Governor's daughter, and landing her safely in the crow's nest - anything fun and dramatic that does not involve fighting.

*SON OF A GUN* does triple a ship's die in damage but can only be used once per battle! Roll the ship's die, then multiply the result by three. Anyone aboard the target takes the straight, pre- multiplication Son-of-a-Gun die in damage as well - a powerful trick for sea captains!

*SALTY DOG* allows a sea captain to re-roll any Speed, Agility, or Gun roll. Can be used once per battle.

### BOOTY AND ADVANCEMENT

A pirate seeks be booty, such as fine Italian swords (+1, which makes a D6 cutlass a D8 sword), dazzling pirate costumes (+1 die size for attempting tricks), and flagons of rum (with a one-time healing effect of various die sizes). Gold pieces-of-eight can also be won! Gold can be used to buy equipment, like ships, ropes, lock-picks, lanterns, and ten-foot poles.

Gold can also be used to increase any die one size after each adventure, up to D12. 100 gold doubloons equal a one die increase. Gold can also be used to buy increased hit points. 20 gold doubloons increase permanent hit point total by one.

## **APPENDIX A: OPPONENT EXAMPLES**

All opponents need a 4 or better to hit an adventurer.

### *VERMIN*

Attack with D4, Pirates automatically hit one per attack, but they come in swarms

Rat or spider: Bite 1 point, 1 HP

Jungle bat: Bite 2 points, 2 HP

### *RABBLE*

Attack with D6, Pirates need a 2 or better to hit, travel in packs

Ship's cat: Bite D4, 4 HP

Attack dog: Bite D6, 6 HP

Dockyard thug or highwayman: Axe D8, 8 HP

### *AVERAGE*

Attack with D8, Pirates need a 4 or better to hit.

Pirate: Cutlass D6, 1 trick, 8 HP

Soldier: Sword D8, 6 HP

### *SEASONED*

Attack with D10, Pirates need a 6 or better to hit.

Pirate Chief: Pistol D8, Cutlass D8, 2 tricks, 15 HP

Royal guard: Musket D10, Halberd D6, armor D6, 12 HP

## APPENDIX B: EQUIPMENT LIST

### 1 Gold Piece:

Candle  
Waterskin  
Whistle  
Loot sack

### 5 Gold Pieces:

Food for a week  
Waterproof case  
Firestarter  
Shovel for digging (+1 die size)  
Bandage (Heals D4 one time)  
Island map

### 10 Gold Pieces:

Lantern  
Sea map  
Rope  
Grappling hook for climbing (+1 die size with rope)  
Hammer and spikes  
Parchment, ink and quill  
Musical instrument  
Healing salve (Heals D6 one time)  
Dinghy (D4, D4, D4, 2 HP)

### 20 Gold Pieces:

Increase hit point total by one!  
Fancy clothes  
Pet cat, weasel, owl, or hawk  
Cloak for hiding (+1 die size)  
Gloves for climbing (+1 die size)  
Spanish boots for sneaking (+1 die size)  
Visit to the doctor (Heals D12 one time)

### 50 Gold Pieces:

Bear trap  
Spyglass  
Lock-pick (+1 die size)  
Italian sword (+1 die size)  
Treasure map!  
Sailboat (D6, D4, D4, 6 HP)

### 75 Doubloons:

Schooner (D8, D6, D4, 12 HP)

### 100 Gold Pieces:

Increase Swashbuckler, Sailor, or Explorer by one die size!  
Guard Dog (D8 attack, Bite D6, 6 Hit points, loyal)  
Clipper (D10, D6, D4, 18 HP)