JOLLY ROGER

THE GAME OF PIRACY & MUTINY

INTRODUCTION

Jolly Roger is a fast, rowdy, and easy to learn card game. You and the other players are the crew of a pirate ship. As appropriate for a pirate, your greatest desire is gold, and you will do anything to reach your goal.

Every turn, the Captain chooses a destination for the ship. When the ship attacks, players will (more or less!) cooperate to win, playing Crew cards from their hands to win the battle and take the prize. Treasure gained is shared between all pirates, but your gold is never secure until you bury it at Treasure Island...

Unrest is always brewing, though – each time the Captain makes an important choice, it is possible for one of the other players to call "Mutiny!" to try to overthrow him and become the new Captain. And when the mutiny begins, you'll need to decide how to use your cards during the Mutiny and the looming battle. How much will you cooperate when you assault an enemy, and what will you keep to yourself, to be ready when the next mutiny starts?

The players' final goal is to collect the highest amount of gold and become the richest pirate in Tortuga!

GAME COMPONENTS

— Rules Booklet
— 150 cards:
    — 68 Crew cards (47 normal Crew cards and 21 special characters)
    — 35 Destination cards (8 Fort, 8 Merchant Ship, 8 Settlement, 8 Pirate Port, 3 Treasure Island)
    — 46 Prize cards
    — 1 Reference card

SETUP

(1) First, divide the cards according to their type (Crew, Destination, Prize).
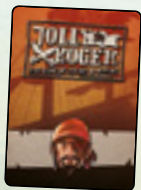
CREW

PRIZE

DESTINATION

Do not shuffle the Captain and Quartermaster cards with the other Crew cards – temporarily place them aside.

CAPTAIN

QUARTERMASTER

Shuffle the other Crew cards. Draw as many Crew cards as the number of players minus one, and add the Captain card. Shuffle those cards again and give one card facedown to each player. The player with the Captain card shows his card and leaves it face–up on the table, while the other players keep their card secret.

Then, distribute extra Crew cards facedown to each player:

PLAYERS	EXTRA CREW CARDS
4–5	5
6–7	4
8–10	3

In addition, give one extra card to the Captain. In this way, all players have the same number of cards in their hand.

Finally, place the remaining cards in a facedown stack on the table: this is called the **Crew deck**.

(2) Next, take the Destination cards. Remove the cards not appropriate for the number of players (as indicated by a little red flag, in the **upper right corner** of some cards).

Example: If six players are in the game, use all Destination cards, except those marked with 5- (five players or less) or 8+ (eight players or more). Destination cards without numbers, and those marked with 7-, and 6+, are used.

Then sort them in **five stacks**, facedown, one next to the other: Fort, Merchant Ship, Settlement, Pirate Port, and Treasure Island. Shuffle the cards in each stack.

(3) Next, shuffle the Prize cards and place them in a facedown stack to form the **Prize deck**.

(4) Finally, keep the **Reference card** at hand. This card show the range of skills needed to conquer a prize when you reach a destination (also shown on the back of each different type of Destination card).

PLAYER 1: PIRATE

PLAYER 2: QUARTERMASTER

CREW AND PRIZE DECK

DESTINATION DECKS

REFERENCE CARD

PLAYER 3: CAPTAIN

PLAYER 4: PIRATE

HOW TO PLAY

Jolly Roger is played in rounds. Each round is divided into three phases:

1. APPOINTMENT

2. VOYAGE

3. PUNISHMENT

The Captain calls the start of each phase and the start of a new round.

HAND LIMIT

During the game, players are limited to the maximum number of Crew cards they can keep in their hand:

PLAYERS	CARDS
4–5	7
6–7	6
8–10	5

If a player's hand size exceeds this limit during the game, he must immediately discard the extra cards.

1. APPOINTMENT

Handling a pirate crew is not an easy task, and no Captain can do this alone!

At the start of each round, the Captain must designate one foreman, called the **Quartermaster**, by placing the Quartermaster card face–up in front of the chosen player.

The Quartermaster is an important role on the ship, and the Captain must consider this appointment with care. If the Captain is unhappy with his choice, he can appoint a new Quartermaster in the next round!

After the Quartermaster is appointed, any player who has no Crew cards can draw one card free.

2. VOYAGE

This is the main phase of the game. Each round, the Captain must **select the ship's destination** from the five available locations: Fort, Merchant Ship, Settlement, Pirate Port, and Treasure Island.

Tip: Forts, Merchant Ships, and Settlements provide you with booty, if you win the battle – try to attack one of them as soon as possible! The other two possible destinations are usually visited later in the game:

— *The Pirate Port allows players to draw extra Crew cards. Visit the port when your crew needs reinforcements.*
— *Treasure Island allows players to hide their booty and make it safe. A Voyage to Treasure Island requires one Map.*

PRIZE TARGET CARDS

FORT

MERCHANT SHIP

SETTLEMENT

❶ Number of Prize cards, if defeated

❷ Skills required: 🚢 Navigation 💥 Guns ⚔ Melee

❸ Player number: **5-** 5 or less **7-** 7 or less **6+** 6 or more **8+** 8 or more

The final destination for the Voyage is up to the Captain: when he has made up his mind, he announces his choice. He takes the first card of the chosen Destination stack and places it, face down, in front of him.

Note: If a Destination stack is empty due to previous voyages, that destination cannot be chosen anymore.

Tip: Before making his choice, the Captain may talk with the Quartermaster or any other player to choose the best destination for the pirate ship. Note, on the back of the Destination cards (and on the Reference card), you can see the range of skill values needed to conquer these prizes (from the minimum to the maximum in each category – Navigation, Guns, Melee).

RANGE OF VALUES

The prizes reflect the difficulty of the destination: Forts are the most difficult – and valuable – target; then Settlements, and then Merchant Ships.

ATTACKING A PRIZE TARGET

To get gold, jewels, and hostages, pirates must assault one of three different types of prize targets (Fort, Merchant Ship, or Settlement). When the Captain selects a prize target as destination of the Voyage, the players decide how to cooperate to make the attack successful.

The Quartermaster organizes the attack and asks all players to help, by providing the skills required through the play of Crew cards.

The Quartermaster must always play the first card in an attack. Then, any player who wants to help conquer the prize (including the Captain and the Quartermaster) can play one or more additional Crew cards from their hand,
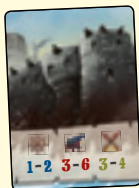
CREW CARDS

❶ Number of Crewmen

❷ Skill:　　　🛳 Navigation　　　🔫 Guns　　　⚔ Melee

❸ 🏴‍☠️ This symbol indicates a pirate with more than one skill.

EXAMPLE

The Captain decides to assault a Fort. The Quartermaster calls the other pirates to battle, and they play a total of five cards.

The cards are grouped together and the symbols are counted.

The total values of the skills are: Navigation 3, Guns 4 and Melee 2. The Fort card is now revealed, turning it face-up.

There are enough Navigation and Guns skill points but the Melee value is not high enough to win the battle (two instead of three). Therefore, the attack has failed.

placing the cards face-up in the middle of the table. Any player (except the Quartermaster) may decide to pass without playing a card.

There is no specific order in which to play Crew cards. This game step occurs simultaneously, with all players joining in any order they want, once or multiple times, as they prefer.

When the Quartermaster thinks enough cards have been played, or nobody wants to play more, the Quartermaster reveals the Destination card.

The Destination card indicates the amount of Navigation, Guns, and Melee skill points required to conquer the prize. The Quartermaster groups the played Crew cards by skill type (Navigation, Guns, and Melee), then sums the total value of each skill, by counting the symbols (or adding the numbers in the top left corner).

— If the sum of **each** skill type is **equal to**, **or higher** than, the corresponding number on the Destination card, the attack is a **success**.

— If the sum of **one** (or more) skill type is lower than the corresponding number on the Destination card, the attack **fails**.

Note: One type of Crew card has multiple skills and can count for any one type (only *one* skill of the three can be used). If this card is played, the Quartermaster can decide which skill to use after he sums the skill values provided by the other cards.
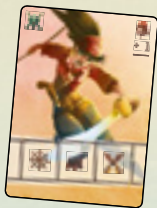
After the attack is over (whether it is successful or not), all played Crew cards are discarded face-up on the Crew Discard pile, next to the Crew deck.

Place the Destination card used during the Voyage phase in a separate Destination Discard pile, to keep track of the number of game rounds played.

DISTRIBUTING PRIZES

If the attack is a success, the Quartermaster draws the number of Prize cards indicated on the conquered Destination card from the Prize deck, and displays these cards **face-up** on the table.

Most Prize cards are worth Gold (one to three, as indicated), some are worth nothing (Rum), and some are special (Jewels, Hostage).

— First, the Captain has the privilege of choosing one card for himself.

— Then, the Quartermaster distributes the other Prize cards, as equally as possible (in terms of number of cards, not the value of the cards), among all the players, including himself.

If there are not enough Prize cards, it is possible some players will not get a card, while other players get one. No player can receive a second card until everybody has one card.

Examples

— *If there are 5 cards to distribute among 4 players, anyone gets 1 card and one player gets 2 cards.*
— *If there are only 3 cards to distribute among 4 players, 3 players get one card and one player gets nothing.*

The distributed Prize cards are visible to everyone. Players keep their Prize cards face-up, unless they can reach Treasure Island and bury them there (after the treasure is buried, the Prize cards will be flipped facedown).

PRIZE CARDS

GOLD

❶ Value in Gold

SPECIAL

When the attack fails, obviously, there are no prizes to distribute.

Tip: Prize cards with "Rum" barrels are not worth anything as treasure, but they are still useful to get extra Crew cards in the Pirate Port.

PIRATE PORT

❶ Number of Crew cards to draw (per player)

❷ You can exchange one Prize card to get one more Crew card

TREASURE ISLAND

❶ One Map { } is required

❷ Bury { } your Gold here

❸ Only the Old Sailor has the Map!

PIRATE PORT

Sometimes, your crew needs to recover from battle, and the Captain can lead his ship toward a Pirate Port. Voyaging to the Pirate Port has no special requirements.

In the Pirate Port, the players start a quest for new crewmembers. The Quartermaster draws the top Pirate Port card from the appropriate stack and looks at the number of Crew cards to distribute to each player, as indicated on the card. For each player, he randomly draws the indicated number of cards and gives them to him, without looking at them.

Then, each player can exchange one Prize card (any type, including Rum) to get one extra Crew card. The exchanged Prize card is discarded face–up to the Prize Discard stack.

The last thing you can do in a Pirate Port is ransom hostages and sell jewels.

— If a player has a **Hostage** card, he can discard it to draw two new cards from the Prize deck, the value of the ransom.

— If a player has a **Jewels** card, he can discard it to draw one new card from the Prize deck, representing the value of selling these precious stones (or are they just glass baubles?).

At the end of the phase, place the Pirate Port card in the Destination Discard pile, to keep track of the number of game rounds played.

TREASURE ISLAND

The last possible destination for your pirate ship is Treasure Island.

When the Captain decides to go to Treasure Island, it is mandatory for at least one player to play a specific Crew card: the "Old Sailor" (note the Map symbol on his card).

If someone plays the "Old Sailor" card, Treasure Island can be reached. If nobody can or wants to play this card, Treasure Island cannot be visited, and the Captain must choose a different destination.

BURYING PRIZES

On Treasure Island, all players with face–up Prize cards can bury their Gold. To bury your treasure, flip the Prize cards face down in front of you. Prize cards with Rum bottles can also be buried (as a decoy), if you want.

Tip: Burying your prizes is very important. When buried, prizes cannot be lost during a mutiny.

After players have buried their prizes, the Map card is discarded to the Crew Discard stack.

At the end of the phase, place the Treasure Island card in the Destination Discard pile, to keep track of the number of game rounds played.

3. PUNISHMENT

The Captain has to keep the morale of his crew as high as possible. What could be better to improve moral than asking the Quartermaster to select a poor fellow and severely whip him in front of the entire crew?

At the end of a round, the Captain has the option to issue punishment or not. This is never mandatory.

The Quartermaster may not refuse to execute punishment, although he may advise the Captain on whether to do it or not.

The Captain can suggest somebody to punish, but the final decision is up to the Quartermaster, who can punish any player (except himself and the Captain).

To execute the punishment, the Quartermaster randomly draws one Crew card from the hand of his victim. That Crew card is then discarded face–up to the Crew Discard stack.

END OF THE ROUND

After the Punishment phase is completed, a new round begins, with the Captain confirming his confidence in the current Quartermaster or appointing a new one and continuing with the other phases.

SPECIAL CREW CARDS

There are many Crew cards in the game. Most of them only indicate one Skill value and a certain number of Crewmen. Other cards, however, are Special and have a specific effect in the game. These cards are unique (except "Traitor," which has two copies, and "Old Sailor," which has three copies).

The special effect for most Special Crew cards is used only during a certain phase or situation of the turn (for example, during a mutiny); some can be played at any time. Special cards must be discarded after use.

You can also use Special Crew cards as a normal Crew card during a mutiny, adding the indicated number of Crewmen to their faction's total (normally, one). After the mutiny, these cards remain in the game and are redistributed together with the other Crew cards (except "Powder Monkey," "Cutthroat," and "Sea Dog," which are discarded).

A summary and explanation of the Special cards is found on pages **14** and **15**.

MUTINY

There is no good pirate game without the opportunity for mutiny, and *Jolly Roger* is no exception!

STARTING A MUTINY

When a player is unhappy with the current Captain and how he commands the ship, he can start a mutiny to try to overthrow him.

You can start a mutiny immediately **after** any decision by the Captain:

— After the Captain appoints or re–appoints the Quartermaster
— After the Captain selects a Destination
— After the Captain orders Punishment or refuses to order it

In any case, the mutiny occurs before any action by the Quartermaster – the Voyage is immediately interrupted, and the Destination is not reached; Punishment is not inflicted.

IMPORTANT: During each game round, only *one* mutiny attempt can be declared.

A mutiny is primarily directed against the authority of the Captain. Therefore, the Captain is the only player who cannot initiate a mutiny – It is unusual, but possible, for the Quartermaster to start a mutiny.

To start a mutiny, you must shout "Mutiny!" and play one Crew card, which you place face–up in front of you. You are now the First Mutineer.

In no specific order, each player can play one or more Crew cards, either to support the Captain and his authority or to help the First Mutineer overthrow the Captain.

The Captain and the First Mutineer can also play cards, of course. When played, all cards are placed face–up (visible to all) in front of either the Captain or the First Mutineer.

Tip: You are not forced to take sides in a mutiny – you may decide to remain neutral, without playing any card, or delay your support until the very last moment of the mutiny...

During the course of the mutiny, the Captain and First Mutineer sum the number of Crewmen who are with them, keeping track of the support they receive. The number is indicated in the top right corner of Crew cards and by the individual characters shown (from one to five). Most special characters (unless otherwise indicated) count as one Crewman. The Captain and Quartermaster cards also count as one Crewman.

Players may always ask for a current count of supporters for either faction, before deciding to play another card or not.

Note: Players may *not* change their mind once they have chosen a side – they cannot play cards to support both factions in a mutiny! You are free to decide when to stop playing cards, of course!

As long as players want to play more cards, the mutiny continues. When all players pass and cannot (or do not want to) play another card, the mutiny is over.

WINNING THE MUTINY

Sum the total number of Crewmen on the cards played to support the Captain and compare it with the total Crewmen on the cards played to support the First Mutineer. The faction with more Crewmen wins the mutiny. The Captain wins any ties.

— If the First Mutineer wins, he becomes the new Captain and he takes the Captain card.
— If the Captain wins the mutiny, he simply stays in charge.

The new or confirmed Captain immediately appoints a new Quartermaster or confirms the previous appointment.

THE CUTTHROAT CARD

The mutiny can be interrupted if a player plays the "Cutthroat" Crew card. This Crew card immediately ends a mutiny by killing the Captain or the First Mutineer, at the player's choice.

Tip: The First Mutineer can use the Cutthroat card to start a mutiny – ending the mutiny immediately thanks to its special effect. The help of a Cutthroat gives you a very fast path to becoming the new Captain!

DISTRIBUTING PRIZE AND CREW CARDS

The (new or confirmed) Quartermaster gathers the **losers'** Prize cards (except the ones they buried).

Note: If a player did not play any card, he remained neutral in the mutiny: he is not considered a loser, and the Quartermaster does not take away his Prize cards.

After giving the Captain the opportunity to select the first Prize card, the Quartermaster redistributes the Prize cards he collected as equally as possible among **all** players (losers included).

Remember the distribution of cards must be as equal as possible regarding the *number* of cards, not their *value*.

EXAMPLE

CAPTAIN SIDE

+1   +1   +1   +3   = 6

MUTINEERS' SIDE

+1   +1   +3   = 5

The Captain has 6 Crewmen on his side, against 5 Crewmen on the Mutineers' side. The Captain wins.

Then, the Quartermaster gathers all the Crew cards played during the mutiny – except the Captain and Quartermaster characters (which are assigned as soon as the mutiny ends), and "Powder Monkey," "Cutthroat," and "Sea Dog" (which are discarded). He shuffles these Crew cards and redistributes them, face down, as equally as possible among all the players.

CONTINUE PLAYING

After the end of a mutiny, the game always continues with the (new or confirmed) Captain selecting a new Destination or confirming the previous choice. Remember, a new mutiny can only begin at the start of the next round.

OTHER RULES

BRIBES

Pirates do not have very strong morality! In *Jolly Roger*, players may try to influence each other.

It's possible (and absolutely encouraged) to bribe other players by giving them Crew or face–up Prize cards – or by promising to do so.
Remember, however, nobody can be forced to accept a bribe or to respect a promise, if cards are promised for the future!

SHUFFLING STACKS

When the Crew stack is depleted, shuffle the discarded cards and form a new facedown stack.
The Prize stack and Destination stacks are never re–shuffled. If they are depleted, these cards cannot be drawn.

WINNING THE GAME

The game ends after 10 rounds have been played, or when the Prize stack is depleted, whatever happens first.

Use the Destination cards in the Destination Discard stack to keep track of the number of rounds.

When there are not enough Prize cards to distribute, the Quartermaster must still distribute the last available cards as equally as possible.

After the 10th Voyage has been completed, or the last Prize cards are distributed, it is still possible to declare one last mutiny attempt, if one has not already taken place in the round.

The game is over at the end of the round.

— When the game is over, all players reveal all their Prize cards (buried or non–buried) and count their value in Gold.

— Unsold jewel cards have a value equal to a card drawn at random. If there are no more Prize cards to draw, they have a value of one Gold.

— Unransomed hostages have a value of one Gold.

The player with the most Gold wins the game. In case of a tie, the number of "Rum" cards break the tie. If the number of "Rum" cards is also the same, all the players with the most Gold win.

VARIANT RULES

HIDDEN PRIZES

When a voyage ends with a successful attack and the pirates win prizes, the Captain draws the Prize cards and keeps them secret.
He chooses one card and then gives the rest to the Quartermaster who, after looking at the cards, distributes the prizes normally, *without showing them*. The cards remain hidden until the end of the game — Only the owner can look at them. A player can show his Prize cards if he wants, but he is never required to do so, except when discarding Prizes to draw Crew cards in a Port.

Prize cards drawn in Port when ransoming Hostages or selling Jewels are also kept hidden.

> *Tip:* Differently from a normal game, all Prize cards will be face down during the game, so be careful not to mix your unburied Prize cards with the cards you buried in Treasure Island! Place a coin or any kind of token on your buried cards as a reminder.

CAPTAIN'S GOLD

When in Port, if the Captain discards one Prize card, each player draws one Crew card, instead of just the Captain.

THREE–PLAYERS GAME

If you don't have enough players and you still want to play a game of *Jolly Roger*, use the normal rules as a 4–player game, except that there is no Quartermaster. Everything handled by the Quartermaster is handled by the Captain instead, and all cards and rules referring to the Quartermaster are considered to refer to the Captain instead.

SUMMARY OF SPECIAL CREW CARDS

BOATSWAIN
Play when the ship arrives at Treasure Island. You can designate a player, who must guard the ship and cannot bury his Prize cards. The designated player can bribe another player (with cards or promises) to take over this job and guard the ship in his place.

CARPENTER
Play after distributing Prize cards. You discover a hole in the hull. To repair the hole, you may ask for a face—up Prize card to begin the necessary repairs (any card will do). If nobody wants to give you one Prize card, you can claim one card from the Captain or the Quartermaster, your choice.

COOK
Play when you start distributing Prize cards. You have first choice of a Prize card, before the Captain, who now gets the second choice.

CUTTHROAT
Play to start (or during) a mutiny. Kill either the Captain or the First Mutineer – your choice. The mutiny immediately ends. Discard this card to the Crew Discard stack.

FIRST MATE
Play after the Quartermaster has revealed the Destination card. You may add or subtract one Melee skill point from the Destination card.

LOOKOUT
Play after the Captain has chosen a Prize Destination. You reveal the Destination card before players start to play Crew cards.

MASTER MARINER
Play after the Quartermaster has revealed the Destination card. You may add or subtract one Navigation skill point from the Destination card.

OLD SAILOR
Play when the Captain chooses the Treasure Island as a Destination to allow the ship to go there. If nobody plays this card, Treasure Island cannot be visited, and the Captain must choose a different destination.

POWDER MONKEY

Play during a mutiny to add 5 Crewmen supporting your faction. After the mutiny, discard this card to the Crew Discard stack.

SEA DOG

Play this card to force a neutral player to be on your side during the mutiny. That player must immediately play at least one Crew card for your faction. After the mutiny, discard this card to the Crew Discard stack.

SECOND MATE

Play anytime. Randomly steal one Crew card from the hand of two different players, and add them to your hand.

SHARP-SHOOTER

Play after the Quartermaster has revealed the Destination card. You may add or subtract one Guns skill point from the Destination card.

SMART KID

Play after all pirates have buried their prizes on Treasure Island. Randomly take one buried Prize card from another player. You do not have time to bury that Prize card and must keep it face–up until the next voyage to Treasure Island.

STOWAWAYS

Play anytime. Discard to draw two cards from the Crew deck and add them to your hand.

SURGEON

Play anytime. You become the new Quartermaster, until the Captain appoints a new one. Place the Quartermaster card in front of you to indicate your new role.

TRAITOR

Play immediately after another card (normal or special) is revealed. The effect of that card is canceled and that card is discarded.

SUMMARY OF GAMEPLAY

1. APPOINTMENT
2. VOYAGE
3. PUNISHMENT

CAPTAIN

— Appoint Quartermaster (same or new)

— Select Destination type

— Order Punishment (optional)

Mutiny is possible AFTER each decision of the Captain, but only once per round.

QUARTERMASTER

— Collect Crew cards (when attacking a Fort, Merchant Ship, or Settlement).

— Distribute Prize cards (after a successful attack or mutiny), face–up: first choice for Captain, the rest split as equally as possible.

— Distribute Crew cards, facedown: in Pirate Port (as indicated by the Port card) and after a mutiny (as equally as possible).

— Execute Punishment, by randomly drawing & discarding 1 Crew card from another player.