

LOOT

THE PLUNDERING PIRATE CARD GAME
2-8 PLAYERS • AGES 10 & UP

RULES OF PLAY

OBJECT

The object of the game is to be the player with the most gold coins when the deck is depleted and one player is out of cards.

CONTENTS

25 merchant ships The number of gold coins on each card indicates the value of its cargo. The combined value of all merchant ships is 100 gold, divided as follows: 5 twos, 6 threes, 5 fours, 5 fives, 2 sixes, 1 seven, and 1 eight.

48 pirate ships 12 each in 4 different colors. The twelve ships of each color are divided into varying levels of attack strength, measured by the number of skull-and-crossbones on the card. The breakdown is as follows: 2 ones, 4 twos, 4 threes, and 2 fours.

4 pirate captains (one in each color)

1 admiral

SET UP

The game may be played either by 2 to 5 individual players or as a partnership game for 4, 6, or 8 players. The rules for partnership play are explained at the end of the standard rules.

Shuffle the deck and deal 6 cards to each player. (Look at your cards but keep them secret from opponents.) Stack the remaining cards in a face down draw pile in the center of the playing area.

HOW TO PLAY

The player to the left of the dealer starts and play continues clockwise.

Start each turn by looking around the playing area to see whether you have captured any of the merchant ships in play. (See “Capturing Merchant Ships,” on the reverse side.)

Then, take ONE of the following actions:

- ☠ **Draw a card** from the deck.
- ☠ **Play a merchant ship** in front of you.
- ☠ **Play a pirate ship** to attack a merchant ship or strengthen your attack on a merchant ship.
- ☠ **Play a pirate captain** to strengthen your attack on a merchant ship.
- ☠ **Play the admiral** to defend your own merchant ship.
- ☠ If you can take no other action you must discard a card.

DRAW A CARD

Take the top card from the draw pile and add it to your hand. This ends your turn and play passes to the left.

Note: *No hand limit.*

PLAY A MERCHANT SHIP

Play a merchant ship face up onto the table in front of you. The card should be placed with the keel (the ship’s bottom) facing towards you. Your ship is now “at sea” and can be attacked by pirate ship cards. However, if it is not attacked before your next turn, you automatically win the card.

Note: *You may have multiple merchant ships in play at the same time.*

PLAY A PIRATE SHIP

Pirate ships are used to attack merchant ships. If your attack strength (as determined by the number of skull and crossbones shown on the card) remains the strongest until the beginning of your next turn, you have captured the ship.

To attack a merchant ship, select a pirate ship card from your hand and place it face up next to any merchant ship card in play. Place the pirate ship keel (bottom) facing towards you to indicate that you played it.

A merchant ship can be attacked by several players, including the ship’s owner, who may do so in order to keep of it. If you are the first player to attack a merchant ship, you may play a pirate ship of any color. However, other players may only attack that merchant ship with a color not yet used against it.



PLAY A PIRATE CAPTAIN

Each colored pirate fleet has one pirate captain that may be used to strengthen your attack on a merchant ship locked in battle. What makes a pirate captain special is that it is stronger than all other pirate ships combined.

To play a pirate captain, place the card face up on top of a matching colored pirate ship you played in a previous turn. If more than one pirate captain is played against the same merchant ship, the pirate captain played last wins the battle.

Remember: *Only you can play a pirate captain on top of a matching colored ship that you previously played.*

PLAY THE ADMIRAL

The admiral has the same strength as a pirate captain, but can only be played to defend your own merchant ship. To play the admiral, place the card face up on top of one of your own merchant ships. As long as an opponent doesn’t attack that ship with a pirate captain, you win it at the start of your next turn.



For example, if you play a merchant ship and your opponent attacks with a 4 skull-and-crossbones blue pirate ship, you can play the admiral even though you have not played a pirate ship first. The admiral would win the ship unless your opponent were to play the blue pirate captain on her next turn. Then she would win, since the last to play a captain or the admiral always wins a battle.

TIED ATTACK STRENGTHS

If a merchant ship is attacked by several pirate ships of equal strength, it remains in play until one player wins the battle by adding attack strength.

You may increase your strength during later turns either by adding more pirate ships of the same color or by playing the pirate captain of the same color ship you originally played. But beware: If two pirates are locked in battle over a merchant ship for too long, weaker pirate ships may join the battle and eventually take the ship for themselves!

NOTE: *Attack strength is measured by adding together all skull and crossbones on same-colored pirate ships attacking a merchant ship.*

CAPTURING MERCHANT SHIPS

You have captured a merchant ship at the beginning of your turn if it is:

- ☠ Your own merchant ship that you played on your last turn, and it has not been attacked by pirates, or
- ☠ Any merchant ship where you have been able to retain the highest attack strength (the most skull and cross bones or the last played pirate captain or admiral) since your last turn.

Collect any won merchant ships in a face-down pile in front of you, then discard any involved pirate ship, pirate captain and/or admiral cards in a face-up pile next to the draw pile.

GAME END AND SCORING

The game ends when the draw pile has been depleted and one player is out of cards. Any uncaptured merchant ships left in play are placed in the discard pile.

Total all of the gold coins from the merchant ships you've won, then deduct the number of gold coins from merchant ships still in your hand at the end of the game. The player with the highest score wins.

NOTES

- ☠ When the draw pile has been depleted, you may only play or discard a card. However, merchant ships may never be discarded.
- ☠ If you run out of cards before the draw pile has been depleted, the game does not end. You must simply draw on your next turn.

PARTNERSHIP PLAY

For 4, 6, or 8 players. Two players play together as a team against others.

Partners sit next to each other. You must play your own hand, and you may not exchange cards with your partner. However, you may look at your partner's hand, and may talk, strategize and coordinate play.

Play your turns in normal seat order and follow the standard rules for what to do in a turn. However, only the first player on each team checks for conquered merchant ships at the start of his turn. Also, you and your partner attack merchant ships as a team rather than as individuals. This means that if your partner has attacked a ship with a pirate ship, you may only increase the strength of that color, not attack with another.

When playing the admiral, you may choose to defend either your own or your partner's merchant ship.

The game ends when the deck has been depleted and both players of a team have played their last cards. (The first partner to run out of cards when the deck is depleted sits out for the remainder of the game.)

Score according to the standard rules. The team with the most gold wins.

A WORD FROM GAMEWRIGHT

We've talked about making a pirate-themed game for years but wanted to wait until the right one came along. From the moment we first played Loot, we knew we had found our buried treasure! Renowned game inventor Reiner Knizia has created a highly clever card game that is at once simple to learn and fast to play, while engaging those looking for strategic challenge. We're particularly fond of the team play version, where you and a partner get to look at each other's cards and conspire moves. We find that the game's even more fun when everyone talks in pirate accents when playing. Give it a try and you'll be hooked!

Game by Reiner Knizia
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