Players: 3 - 8 / Playing Time: 30 - 45 min.

Beware the Curse of The Black Spot!

Before ye lies a sack of 60 golden doubloons, a king's ransom and a good day's haul. Each of the crew be entitled to a share, equal to his rank and station aboard. And each pirate aboard has a unique talent for prying coins from the hands of his shipmates.

Take all ye deserve, but no more than prudence allows… for the treasure be curst! Within the sack lay coins bearing The Black Spot. To hold such a treasure too tightly be death itself. Best find someone else's pocket to line it with, lest ye find yer pirating days at an end.

Object:
Draw coins from the bag and steal from other Pirates to gain the most valuable Stash of treasure. But beware *The Black Spot*, for if ye end the game with it in yer Stash, ye lose.

Equipment:
8 Crew cards: A player's crew assignment will change each Round, giving all players access to their unique abilities. Pirates include: *Captain, First Mate, Pilot, Bosun, Gunner, Cook, Lookout & Cabin Boy.*

Name:
The title of yer Crew position

Rank:
The order in which you play each phase of a Round, starting with the Captain (Rank #1) and ending with the Cabin Boy (Rank #8)

PILOT

3

DRAW 3, KEEP 2.
Steal Phase: May look at up to two coins before deciding which coins to Steal.
(from multiple players if ye wish)

Draw directions:
How many COINS you draw from the bag during the DRAW phase.

Cheat:
A special talent unique to that Pirate. Use your Cheat to better your chances or scuttle your opponents. Most are used during the STEAL phase, but not all.

60 Dubloons:

(57) coins valued 1 through 5
(see page 6 for value distribution)

(1) Lead Slug:
-5 value

(2) Black Spots:
You lose if you end the game with one

50 Pirate's Code cards:
These are cards that allow you to break the rules and put the screws to other Pirates. The hourglass shows when you may play the card in red type. If not played by the end of the game, the cards count as gold toward your final score. Their value is shown in the doubloon on the bottom. *Note: If forced to discard, one may not play 'Any Phase' cards in reaction; they are lost.*

Players start the game with two or three cards (see below). Additional cards are acquired through the Bosun's cheat or by paying Jacques Pierre.

1 Phase Order card & 1 Jacques Pierre card:
Set on one side of the table. You will place coins in front of Jacques to pay for extra Pirate's Code cards.

A bag to hold the Loot

When card may be played

Gold Value

Setup:
Shuffle the Pirate's Code cards and deal three to each player, face down. For 7 or 8 players, deal only two Pirate's Code cards to each player. Place the remaining cards face down, next to Jacques Pierre.

Set aside a Black Spot coin and a number of coins, randomly selected, equal to the number of players minus 1 (i.e., for 5 players, add 4 other coins). Ensure that neither the other Black Spot nor the Lead Slug are in this group. Put the rest of the coins into the bag and shake well.

Place all the set-aside coins, face down, in the middle of the table, shuffling them so no one knows which is The Black Spot. Have each player choose a coin from the pile and reveal them all at once. The player with **The Black Spot** will be Captain for the first Round and places the Captain crew card in front of him.

All players then turn their coin face down, hiding its value from view. This coin will start each player's Stash pile. The Captain shuffles the remaining seven Crew cards and deals them out at random, face up, one card to each remaining player (any extra Crew cards are not used for this Round).

PLAYING THE GAME:
There are five phases in a Round of play:
Draw Coins, Steal, Pay Jacques, Cut and Run & All Hands on Deck.

DRAW COINS
Starting with the Captain, each player draws from the bag in order of their Rank *(the number in the upper left of the Crew card)*. Follow the Draw directions on your card. A Pirate MUST Draw all the coins per the instructions on his card, if possible. Place these coins face–down into your Stash pile. You can look at your own face–down coins at any time. Once all Players have completed their Draw, move on to the Steal phase.

STEAL

Each Pirate must STEAL at least one coin from another player's face-down Stash, if possible. As in the Draw phase, the Captain goes first; then, in order of rank, each player takes a turn, stealing one coin from either the player seated on his Right, the player on the Left or from the Captain. Anyone may Steal from the Captain.

NOTE: For many Pirates, the STEAL is modified by their CHEAT ability, allowing them a certain benefit. *For example, the Captain Steals two coins instead of one. The Bosun may Draw a Pirate's Code card instead of Stealing a coin.* However, a STEAL and a CHEAT are different. This is important when a Pirate has a Steal or Cheat canceled by another player. For example, a Pirate's Code card that cancels a CHEAT does not cancel a Pirate's STEAL, but simply means he can only steal a single coin instead of being able to act on the red 'Cheat' text of his card. However, canceling a Pirate's STEAL will also cancel his CHEAT if it would activate during the Steal phase.

PAY JACQUES (Optional)

After the Steal phase, a player may draw a Pirate's Code card by paying Jacques Pierre a coin with a value of ② or more. The coin is revealed, then put face-down in front of the Jacques Pierre card. Only one card can be drawn in this manner per player, per Round. If you pay with a higher-value coin, you receive no additional cards, nor do you receive change. At the end of the phase, place this Round's gold behind the card, as there are ways to take the monkey's gold from either location by playing cards.

There is no limit to the number of cards a Pirate may have in his possession. The only other way to draw Pirate's Code cards is to use the Bosun's CHEAT. And yes, the Bosun may draw one card with his Cheat and another by paying the monkey.

CUT & RUN (skip this phase in Round 1)

Here, players will decide to either 'Stay In' to gain more treasure or 'Cut & Run,' believing they currently have enough gold in their Stash to win the game. Players may not 'Cut & Run' if they have a Black Spot in their Stash.

Declare your intentions by taking one coin from your Stash and hiding it in your closed fist. To 'Stay In,' keep the coin face-down; to 'Cut & Run,' place the coin in your palm, number side up. Reveal your decision as a group by opening your fists and showing your coins.

NOTE: Once a player has Cut & Run, he is safely out of the game. But they must wait until the end of the game to see if their choice was wise. They do not choose further Crew Assignments, draw coins, Steal or play cards, nor can they be stolen from or affected in any manner. They simply count their treasure, keeping the total a secret until the game ends.

ALL HANDS ON DECK

1. Pick a Captain

Players who 'Stayed In' during 'Cut & Run' select 1 or 2 coins from their Stash pile and push them forward, face down. These coins are revealed simultaneously. The player revealing the highest total becomes the Captain for the next Round. Revealed coins are not lost, but become important information for players. Being Captain is often desirable at the beginning of the game, but can be less so at the game's end.

In case of a tie, the involved players flip over another coin to resolve. If tied players have revealed all their loot and are still tied, then the Captaincy goes to the player who had the highest Rank from the previous Round.

The only time a player does not have to reveal any loot is if he has none. A Black Spot or Lead Slug may *only* be shown if the player has no other coins. Black Spots are counted as zeroes. The Lead Slug counts as a Minus 5.

NOTE - The Gunner's CHEAT: If he drew only 1 coin during the Draw phase, his Cheat activates in this phase, after coins are revealed but before a Captain is determined. Therefore, the Gunner's swap of coins can alter the outcome of who becomes Captain.

2. Choose Crew Positions

Once the Captaincy is determined, all Crew cards (including any unused ones) are put in the middle of the table. The player who revealed the next-highest value coin(s) chooses his Crew Assignment. Players continue to select Crew Assignments in order from highest to lowest coin totals shown. Resolve ties the same way as with the Captaincy. If the tie cannot be resolved (i.e., all coins are revealed and still tied), then the Captain assigns a position to the players involved in the tie.

After the new Crew Assignments are made, all coins are turned face down and returned to the player's Stash. **Start a new Round, beginning with the DRAW phase.**

CAPTAIN

DRAW 2, 3 or 4

Steal Phase: Must steal an additional coin.

The 2nd coin doesn't have to be from the same pirate.

ENDING THE GAME:

Play continues until the bag is empty - or there is only one player left. When the last coin is drawn from the bag, the game ends immediately. The Black Spots are revealed and those players holding them are out of the game.

If the only players left in the game at the end of a 'Cut & Run' are holding Black Spot coins, they are eliminated and the game ends. If, however, there is only one player remaining and that person does *not* have a Black Spot, he *may* take one final turn as Captain. If a Black Spot is drawn, it is revealed and the player is eliminated.
If he or she survives the final draw, that player must 'Cut & Run' and the game ends.

All players not eliminated by a Black Spot then reveal their treasure and count up! The highest total value of treasure wins. Include the gold value of any Pirate's Code cards remaining in your hand, in addition to your coins, at the end of the game.

In case of a tie, draw from the remaining pieces in the bag. If The Black Spot is drawn, that person is eliminated; otherwise, the highest coin wins. Continue until a clear winner is determined. Should there be no coins left in the bag, resolve the tie by comparing coin values, where the most number of the highest-value coin determines the winner.

CUT & RUN STRATEGY

Knowing when to 'Stay In' is as important as knowing when to 'Cut & Run.'
To help you decide when you've pushed your luck far enough and may have enough gold to win, try dividing 148 (the total gold value of the coins) by the number of players, taking into account the other variables below.

COIN DISTRIBUTION:

16 ①Coins, 14 ②Coins, 11 ③Coins, 9 ④Coins, 7 ⑤Coins
Total Coin Value: 148 Gold

PIRATE'S CODE CARDS:

(25) worth 1 Gold, (10) worth 2 Gold, (7) worth 3 Gold, (5) worth 4 Gold, (2) worth 5 Gold
Total Card Value = 96 Gold
PLUS (1) Pieces of Eight card: Gold value equal to 2 times the number of 1 Coins held.

MINUS: (-)5 for the Lead Slug
and any Gold remaining with the monkey

THE CREW & THEIR TALENTS

Captain's Cheat: Steal Phase
Must Steal an additional coin. The 2nd coin doesn't have to be from the same Pirate.

With the Captain's Draw and Cheat ability, he will get the most gold per Round. Of course, any player may Steal from him, which makes him a target. As the bag holds fewer and fewer coins, being the Captain increases the odds of picking up a Black Spot – and being stuck with it if everyone else suddenly leaves the game.

First Mate's Cheat: Steal Phase
May give a coin to an active player instead of Stealing one.

The First Mate often has the second richest Draw. His Cheat is a good way to get rid of a curst coin by giving it to a 'friend.'

Pilot's Cheat: Steal Phase
May look at up to two coins before deciding which coins to Steal.

By looking at the coins first, the Pilot can pick and choose the best coins she sees to Steal. Of course, armed with that knowledge, she can choose different ones as well. One thing's for sure, she can Steal without fear of a curst coin.

Bosun's Cheat: Steal Phase
May Draw a Pirate's Code card instead of Stealing a coin.

Choosing the Bosun is the only way to get a card for free. Remember, a Pirate's Code card has a gold value in addition to its ability, making this Cheat a very shrewd one.

Gunner's Cheat: All Hands on Deck Phase
If he Draws only 1 coin, he may swap one of his face-up coins during the next All Hands phase for any other face-up coin.

The Gunner is crafty. Play him well and you can swap your lowest coin for the highest coin on the table – or make a sneaky bid for the Captaincy by arranging to have the highest total. Or the lowest, if that's your plan.

Cook's Cheat: Steal Phase
After Stealing, he may exchange 1 coin from his Stash for a new one from the bag. He may draw the new one before putting his in the bag.

It needn't be a coin you just stole; it's one from your Stash. An easy way to raise the value of your Stash – or rid yourself of a curst coin without making an enemy.

Lookout's Cheat:
Steal Phase: Cannot be given a coin. Any Phase: Cannot have Pirate's Code cards played directly upon him (though cards that affect all Pirates still can affect the Lookout).

If you are feeling comfortable with your Stash of gold, but want to 'Stay in' for a while more, the Lookout can keep the villainy of others largely at bay.

Cabin Boy's Cheat: Any Phase
Cannot be stolen from.

Concerned mostly with holding onto a stack of very high-value gold coins? Rest easy knowing that none can take them from you.