Pirates! GOLD

INSTRUCTION MANUAL

LICENSED BY SEGA ENTERPRISES LTD. FOR PLAY
ON THE SEGA™ GENESIS™ SYSTEM.

EmuMovies

MICRO PROSE
ENTERTAINMENT · SOFTWARE

WARNING: READ BEFORE USING YOUR SEGA VIDEO GAME SYSTEM.
A very small percentage of individuals may experience epileptic seizures when exposed to certain light patterns or flashing lights. Exposure to certain patterns or backgrounds on a television screen or while playing video games may induce an epileptic seizure in these individuals. Certain conditions may induce undetected epileptic symptoms even in persons who have no history of prior seizures or epilepsy. If you, or anyone in your family, has an epileptic condition, consult your physician prior to playing. If you experience any of the following symptoms while playing a video game - dizziness, altered vision, eye or muscle twitches, loss of awareness, disorientation, any involuntary movement, or convulsions - IMMEDIATELY discontinue use and consult your physician before resuming play.

"Handling Your Cartridge" Instructions:

• The Sega Genesis Cartridge is intended for use exclusively for the Sega™ Genesis™ System.
• Do not bend it, crush it, or submerge it in liquids.
• Do not leave it in direct sunlight or near a radiator or other source of heat.
• Be sure to take an occasional recess during extended play, to rest yourself and the Sega™ Cartridge.

Warning to owners of projection televisions: Still pictures or images may cause permanent picture-tube damage or mark the phosphor of the CRT. Avoid repeated or extended use of video games on Large-screen projection televisions.

Pirates Gold is MicroProse Software's trademark for its game of swashbuckling on the Spanish Main.

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WELCOME TO PIRATES! GOLD

Avast there! Prepare to set sail for *Pirates! Gold!* Ye have chosen a perilous living, and adventure and blood and treachery and death lie afore ye. But so too do glory and treasure beyond the dreams of avarice — if ye be brave enough to take them!

Pirates! Gold is a game of swashbuckling on the Caribbean Sea in the 16th and 17th Centuries. You are a pirate captain, seeking to make your fortune in the world's most dangerous profession.

You start young, in command of a tiny ship crewed by a small but loyal group of sea-dogs; your goal is to retire rich and powerful and famous. You may end up respected and happy, or you may end your days in a dark, damp dungeon or sleeping forever in Davey Jones' Locker!
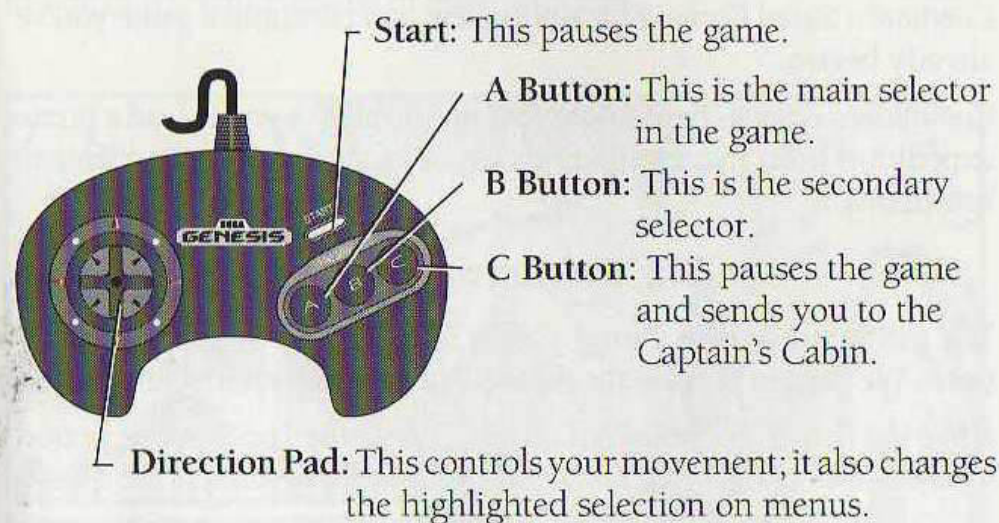
Good luck to ye, Mate, an' may your days be filled wi' adventure and glory and *Pirates! Gold!*

YOUR SEGA GENESIS MACHINE

GETTING STARTED

1. Move the power switch on your Sega Genesis to OFF. Never insert or remove a game cartridge when the power is on.

2. Make sure a controller is plugged into the port labeled *Control 1* on the console.

3. Insert the game cartridge into the slot on the Genesis. Press firmly.

4. Flip the power switch to *on*. The Sega logo appears. If it doesn't, begin again at Step 1.

THE CONTROLLER-

Start: This pauses the game.

A Button: This is the main selector in the game.

B Button: This is the secondary selector.

C Button: This pauses the game and sends you to the Captain's Cabin.

Direction Pad: This controls your movement; it also changes the highlighted selection on menus.

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GETTING STARTED

To begin play, insert your *Pirates! Gold* cartridge and turn on your Sega Genesis game machine as described on the previous page. If all is well, the Sega logo will appear, and you'll hear the Sega theme, then the screen will change to the *Pirates! Gold* Title Screen. Press **Start** to go to the Main Menu.

On the Main Menu, use your **Direction Pad** to highlight your menu choice; press the **A Button** to make your selection.

THE MAIN MENU

Start New Career: This option starts a new game of *Pirates! Gold.*

Continue a Saved Game: This option lets you continue a game you've already begun.

Command a Famous Expedition: This option allows you to lead a pirate expedition from history. Famous expeditions are described later in this manual.

THE CONFIGURE SCREEN

The Configure Screen allows you to set the game to your specifications. We suggest you use the default options for your first few games.

Historical Period: For your first games, choose the 1660s, a fine period for swashbuckling. (The historical periods are described later.)

Nationality: You can play an English Buccaneer, a French Buccaneer, a Dutch Adventurer, or a Spanish Renegade. In general, English is the easiest, then French, then Dutch, and finally, Spanish is the hardest nationality to play. For your first game play an Englishman.

Family Name: Put in any name you like. Use the **Direction Pad** to highlight the letters, press the **A Button** and **B Button** to change letters, press the **C Button** to change a letter from lower to upper case

Difficulty Level: "Apprentice" is the easiest, "Swashbuckler" the hardest. For your first game, choose Apprentice.

Special Ability: Your pirate can be an expert in any one of the following:

Skill at Fencing: Your pirate is an expert swordsman.

*Skill at Navigation:* Your pirate's ship travels faster than other ships.

Skill at Gunnery: Your ship's cannon-fire is accurate and deadly.

Wit and Charm: Your pirate can beguile government officials — and the ladies.

Skill at Medicine: Your pirate will remain healthy longer than other pirates.

STARTING PLAY

The next thing you see are some information screens. Press the **A Button** to flip through them. After an opening swordfight, you'll find yourself in one of the many towns of the Caribbean.
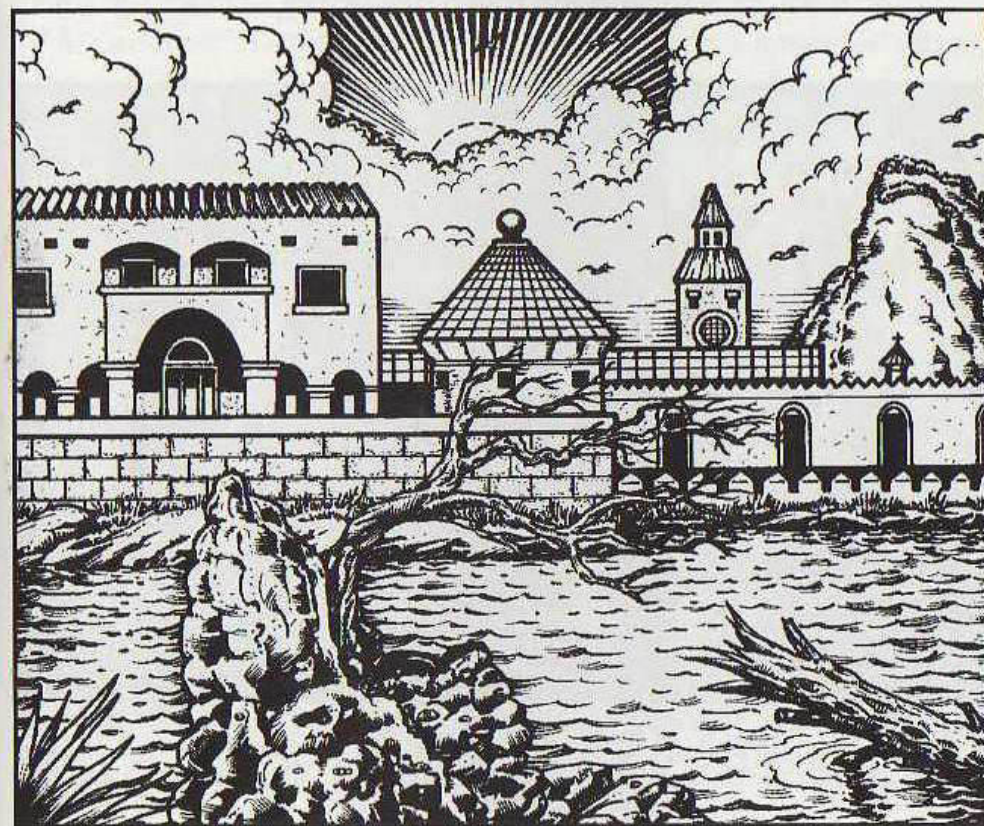
Towns of the Caribbean

In the towns you sell plundered goods, buy goods to trade elsewhere, recruit men, repair your ships, duel Evil Spaniards, and get special jobs and rewards from the towns' governors.

If you've been attacking a nation's ships, towns of that nationality may refuse you entry.

*Getting In:* When you first approach a town by land or by sea, you'll be given the following choices:

Sail into Harbor: Pick this to sail openly into the town.

March into Town: Pick this to march openly into the town.

Attack Town: Pick this to attack the town. See the sections "On the Land" and "Attacking a Town from the Sea."

Sneak into Town: Pick this to attempt to sneak into the town.

Leave Town: Pick this option if you decide not to enter the town.

Port Royale
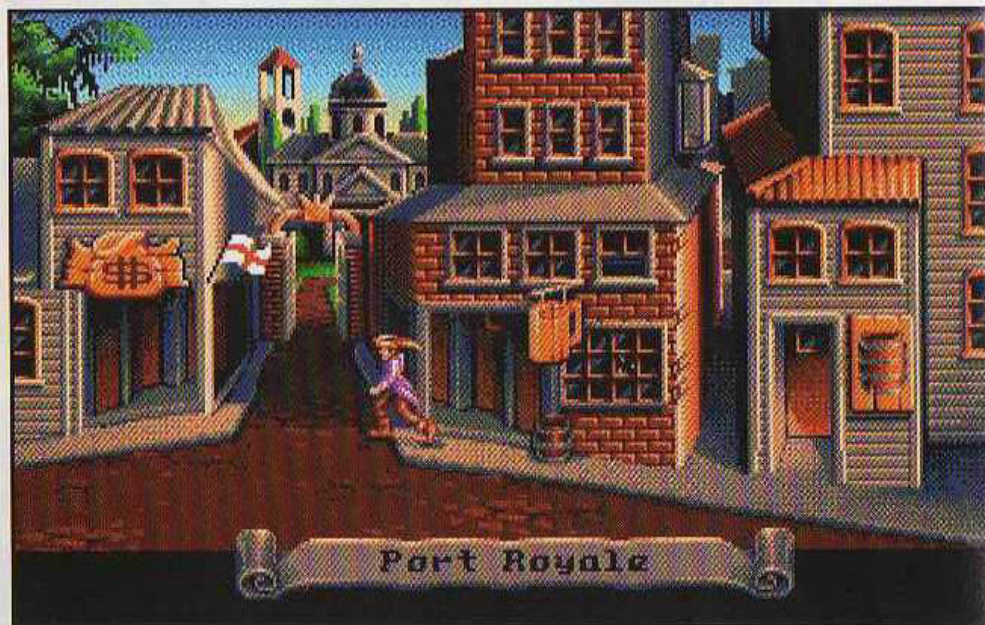
The Town Screen

Each of the buildings on this screen represents a location to which your pirate can go. Press the **Direction Pad** until he's in front of the building, then press the **A Button**. Some buildings may be closed to you in certain towns; if so, your pirates won't be allowed in.

The Governor's Mansion

This building is the town's center of government. These are the more important functions of the governor:

Offer Pirate Amnesty: If your pirate is at war with a nation, the governor may give him a chance to buy forgiveness.

Offer Letter of Marque: A Letter of Marque is a document stating that your pirate is a privateer, a semi-official member of the country's navy. With a Letter of Marque, your pirate may be rewarded for attacking the country's enemies.

Promotion/Land: If a governor is pleased with your pirate, he may give him land or a promotion. The higher your rank and the more land you have, the better your score when you retire.

Offer Secret Mission: The governor may ask you to undertake a secret mission.

The Governor's Daughters: If you charm or marry a governor's daughter, she may be able to give you valuable information from the gossip she hears around court. A wife increases your score when you retire.

The Tavern

The tavern is a good place to recruit men and pick up local gossip.

Recruiting Men: In general, the bigger your crew, the better. The more men you have, the better the chances of enemy ships surrendering.

You need eight men to crew each ship in your fleet and you need four men for each cannon. You also need men to fight battles when you board an enemy ship or attack a town.

However, all of those men have to be fed. And the more men you have, the more ways the plunder has to be split. Each man's share will be smaller, and you'll have to take a lot more treasure to keep your men happy.

THE MERCHANT

You buy and sell goods at the merchant's shop. The price of food, goods, sugar, and the other commodities can vary from town to town; you can make a profit buying low at one town and selling high at another.

The merchant's screen shows his warehouse. The goods the merchant has available are on the left side of the screen; your current cargo, money and hold-space is on the right.

To make a transaction, move the **Direction Pad** up or down until the item you want to buy or sell is highlighted. Then move it left if you want to sell that item, right to buy. Press the **A Button** to buy or sell one ton at a time; press the **Start Button** to buy or sell all the items you can.

When you're finished here, click on "Continue" to return to town.

THE SHIPWRIGHT

At the shipwright's you can get damaged ships repaired; you can also sell ships and cannon. (You can't buy cannon or ships; you have to capture them.)

THE BANK

At the bank you can divide your treasure with your crew. Your portion of the loot is hidden in your secret treasure cave. This money counts heavily toward your happiness when you retire.

When you divide the plunder, the ships in your fleet are divided too. If you continue your career, you start out with the same ship you began the game with. (Sell all cargo and excess ships before dividing the plunder.)
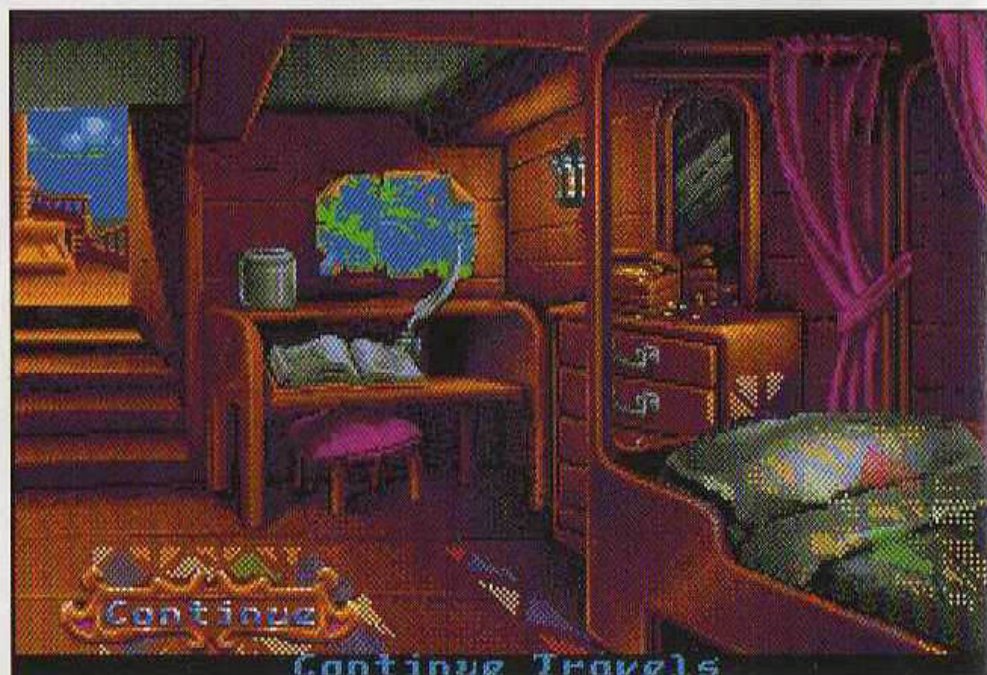
TOWN GATES

Go to the gates when you're ready to leave town.

THE CAPTAIN'S CABIN

The Captain's cabin contains a lot of important game information. Press the **C Button** to go to the Captain's cabin; press it again to go back where you came from.

In the cabin, press the **Direction Pad** to highlight the area you are interested in, then press the **A Button**.

Save Game — The Bunk: Choose the bunk when you want to save your game.

Crew Status — The Door: Choose the door when you want to check the status of your crew, ships, and cargo.
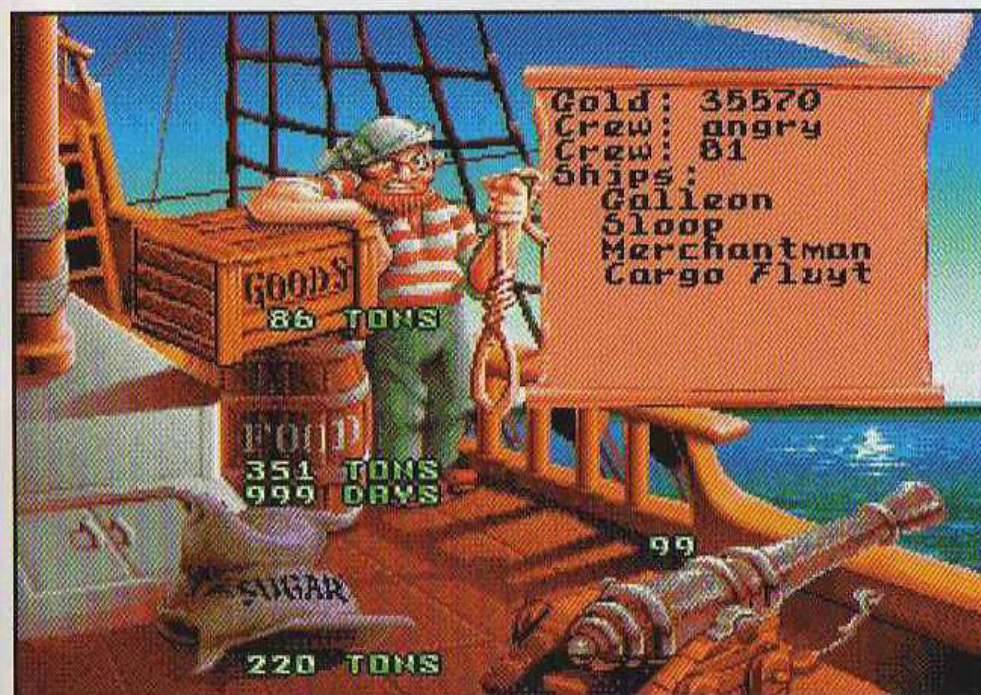
Map Case — Treasure Maps: Choose the map-case to flip through your treasure maps.

The Book — Ship's Log: Choose the Ship's Log to review your ship's recent activities.

The Mirror — Personal Status: Choose the Personal Status screen to see how your pirate is doing and to check his relations with the various governments.

WALL MAP — MAP OF THE CARIBBEAN

Choose the map to see a map of the Caribbean. The map screen is divided into two parts: the map and the town list. Your position on the map is marked by a skull and crossbones.

The Town List: Scroll through the town list using your **Direction Pad**, then press the **A Button** when you've reached the town you want to know about. Any information you know about the town will appear in the text box.

The Map: Press the **B Button** and a sword-shaped cursor will appear on the map. Use your **Direction Pad** to move the cursor over a town, then press **Button A**. Everything you know about the town appears in the text box. (Some towns may not appear on the map until you go to them or buy information on them.)

Press the **C Button** to leave this screen.

SAILING THE CARIBBEAN

You'll spend most of your time in *Pirates! Gold* sailing the Caribbean: looking for fat treasure ships to plunder, going to far-away towns, and traveling to tropical islands seeking buried treasure.

CONTROLLING YOUR SHIP

Push the **Direction Pad** left to make your ship turn left; push it right to turn right. To enter a town, simply send your ship into the town. To go ashore, send your ship into the shore; after a second the landing-party will appear and leave the ship.

Press the **B Button** to raise or lower your sails. If you hold the **B Button** down, you'll go into "Turbo" mode: time will pass quickly.

Winds: Ships move slower when sailing into the wind; they move faster when the wind is diagonally behind them. Each ship has different sailing characteristics; see "Ships of the Caribbean" for details. If you've got more than one ship under your command, you'll move at the speed of the biggest ship in your fleet.

In general, the winds blow in a westerly direction in the Caribbean. Wind speed and direction is shown by the clouds moving across the map.

Hazards: Several bad things can happen to you while at sea:

Shoals: Shoals are extremely shallow water where rocks wait to tear the bottom out of your ship. Shallow-draft ships can usually sail right over shoals, but deeper-draft ships might founder.

Storms: The clouds on the screen represent storms. Your ship can be blown far off course if it gets caught in a bad storm. The higher the difficulty, the more you are affected by storms.

Starvation: If you run out of food, your crew will begin to desert, and they'll eventually mutiny.

Mutiny: Your crew will mutiny when they haven't been paid or fed for a long time. To keep your command, you'll have to fight the leader of the mutiny.
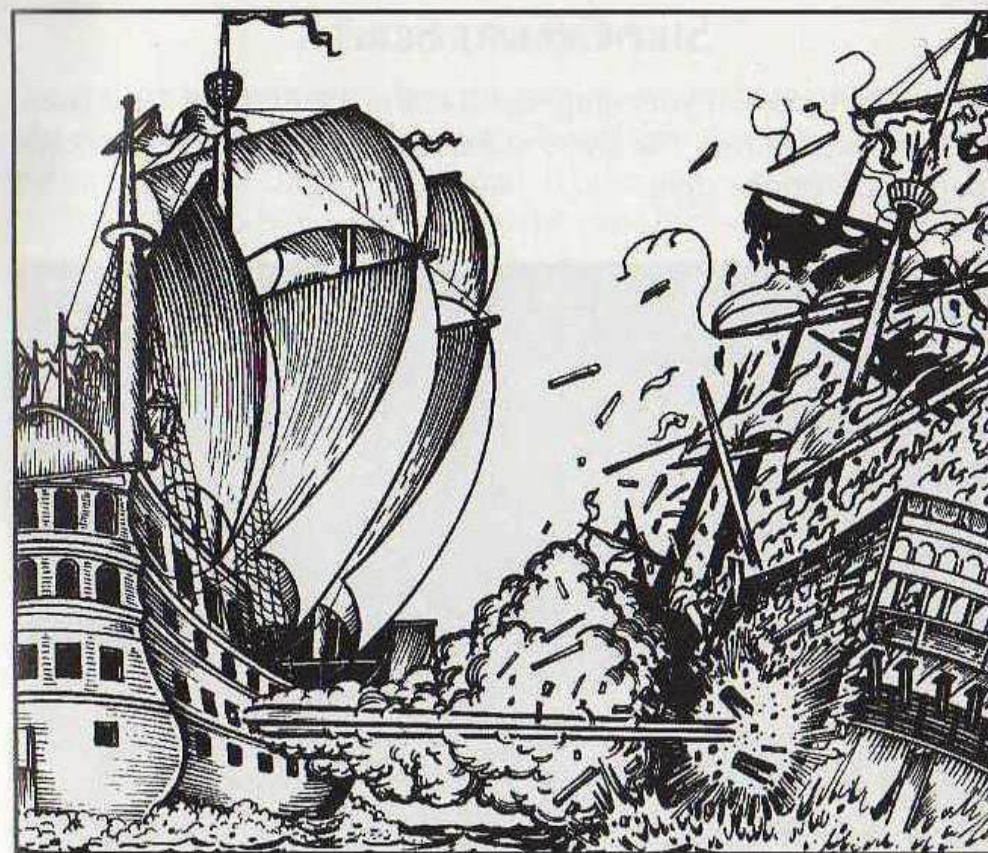
SHIP COMBAT

There are three stages to ship combat: sighting, combat, and plunder.

Sighting: Your lookout will report that there's another ship in the area. As you sail closer, you'll learn more about the unknown vessel, until you're finally close enough to hail the vessel for news — and close enough for cannon-fire.

You can break off the contact before combat occurs, but the other ship may choose to fight you whether you like it or not.

Choose Your Ship: If you've got more than one ship in your fleet, you must choose which ship to go into battle with.

Ship Combat Screen

After you've chosen your ship, the scene changes to the "Sea Battle Screen" (see below). The ships' statistics are listed below the battle map, yours on the right.

Ship Controls

Steering: Push left on the **Direction Pad** to turn your ship left, and push right to turn right.

Firing Your Cannon: Press the **A Button** to fire a broadside. You can't fire another until your ship's cannon are reloaded.

Full/Battle Sails: Press the **B Button** to change sails. Full sails make your ship sail faster, but they're easily damaged by cannon-fire. Battle sails are harder to damage, but your ship moves slower. When the battle begins, your ship has "Battle Sails" set.

Pause: During battle you can pause the game with the **Start Button**.

Ending the Battle

Generally, a battle ends in a boarding action, when the two ships crash into each other and your crew leaps aboard the other ship to fight the enemy crew. But the battle can end in other ways, as well.

The battle ends in a draw when the two ships are too far apart to continue the fight, or when the sun sets, allowing one ship to sneak away in the darkness. If you run away, you might lose one of the ships in your fleet to the pursuing enemy.

And if you far outnumber the enemy crew, they might just surrender at your approach, making a boarding action unnecessary.

Boarding Action

When your ship and the enemy's ship crash into each other, your men will storm the enemy ship and battle their crew in hand-to-hand combat, and you'll take on the enemy captain in a bitter one-on-one swordfight.
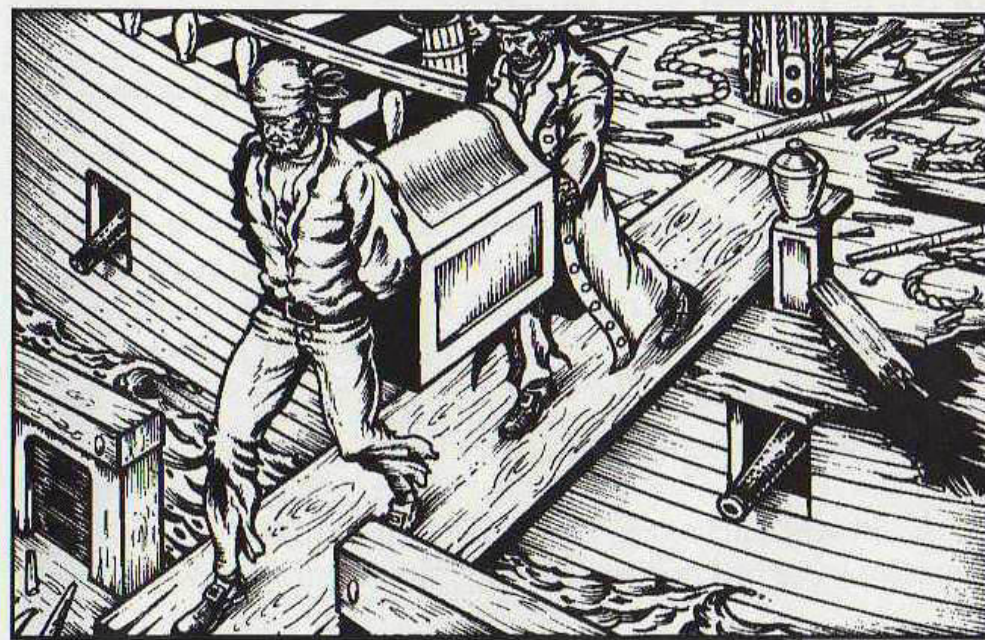
Victory

When you capture the enemy ship you can add it to your fleet or, if your crew is small or the ship is slow, you can simply plunder and sink it.

Plundering the Ship: If you choose to sink the enemy ship, you'll want to take her cargo first. This process is exactly like the one you use in the Merchant's shop in a town.

Attacking a Town from the Sea

To attack a town, sail up to it and choose that option when the Enter Town menu appears.

In a fight against a fort, your objective is to batter the fort with your cannon, then land your ship close to the town and take it by storm. If you land too far from the town, your men will refuse to leave the ship, fearing that they'll be cut to pieces by cannon-fire before they can reach the safety of the town.

If things aren't going well during your assault, you can end the combat by heading for the open sea.

If you capture a town, the town's gold will be yours. In addition, you can take all of the cargo your holds can carry.

Swordfighting

To survive as a swashbuckler, you'll need steady nerves, sharp wits and quick hands.

Choosing Your Weapon

You have three weapons to choose from: the rapier, cutlass and longsword.

The Rapier: The rapier is a long, thin, flexible weapon. It is quick and responsive, but does less damage than heavier weapons.

The Cutlass: A very heavy, curved sword with a mean edge but short reach. It does a lot more damage than the rapier, but it is far slower.

The Longsword: A medium-length straight-edged blade. It's heavier than the rapier but lighter than the cutlass.

Fencing

After you've picked your weapon, the battle begins. You and your opponent advance toward each other (press left and right on the **Direction Pad**); when you're in range, you can begin trading blows.

Attacks

The Thrust — **A Button**: The thrust is the basic attack form of fencing, in which you thrust your sword straight at your opponent. It's a quick attack, but does less damage than a slash.

Press the **A Button** to thrust at mid-level. To thrust high or low, press up or down on the **Direction Pad** at the same time.

The Slash — **B Button**: The slash is a slower attack than the thrust, but it does more damage.

Press the **B Button** to slash at your opponent's middle. To slash high or low, press up or down on the **Direction Pad** at the same time.

Defense

The Parry — C Button: To parry, press the **C Button**.

Enemy Captain — VS — Captain Sydney
1 — Longsword — 203 — Rapier

The Course of the Fight

Only a few of your battles are man-to-man duels; most of the time you will be leading your crew against the enemy's forces. As you duel the enemy leader, your crewmen are also fighting. Your crew's success will depend upon how well *you* are doing. If you are beating the enemy captain handily, your men will take heart and fight far more effectively.

Take a look at the diagram above. You and your opponent are on the top half of the screen; below each figure are his force's statistics.

Morale: Your hits against the enemy leader, and his against you, affect the two sides' morale. The lower their morale, the more men the side loses in combat. If your morale is bad enough, you might just surrender.

Retreat and Surrender

If you're losing, you can retreat from battle by moving backward off the screen. (This is bad for your reputation, but at least you'll "live to fight another day.")

Your enemy will surrender if he's panicked and you inflict enough damage on him; he'll also surrender if your men have wiped out his entire force and then you wound him. You will surrender under the same circumstances.

On the Land

You'll want to lead landing parties ashore to search for buried treasure, to find a lost relative or to attack a town on foot. To send off a landing party, guide your ship into land.

Controlling the Landing Party

Use the **Direction Pad** to move the landing party about on land. To get back on the ship, move the landing party icon back to the ship icon.

As always, press the **Start Button** to pause; press the **C Button** to pause and switch to the Captain's Cabin.

Searching: When the party gets to a place where you think buried treasure or a lost relative might be hidden, press the **A Button** to search. Several days will pass, then you'll learn the results.

Entering a Town by Land

When your landing party reaches a town, a menu will come up offering you various options. If you march or sneak into the town, you'll switch to the Town Menu. If you attack the town, you'll go to Land Combat.

Land Combat

In Land Combat, your men face the soldiers defending the town. Your objective is to defeat the soldiers and march into the town.

Spanish Defenders — 75 — 0 — Sydney's Party — 71 — 114
Terrain: Clear — Terrain: Cover

CONTROLLING YOUR MEN

In land combat, your party is split into two or three groups.

Selecting a Group: Use the **B Button** to shift control from one group to another. A box appears around the selected group, and their strength, weaponry and morale appear below.

Moving a Group: To move a group, select it and use the **Direction Pad.**

Fire Combat: If they aren't moving, your groups will shoot their muskets whenever they're in range of an opponent. After your pirates fire, they'll take several seconds to reload.

Melee Combat: Whenever your group moves into an enemy group, your pirates will fight the enemy. The two troops will be locked in battle until one side runs away.

If your men retreat from battle, they'll be out of your control as they run to safety. If you're lucky, they'll "rally" when they reach cover. You can then give the men new orders; however, once a group's morale breaks, it's likely to break again as soon as it gets more damage.

THE ENEMY

Your enemy might have any or all of the following at his command:

Soldiers: Enemy soldiers are typically better with muskets than your sailors, but their morale is lower and they're not as good in a melee.

Cavalry: The enemy horsemen are faster than your sailors, and their melee can be devastating when they charge into combat. However, they have no muskets and can't fight at a distance.

Enemy Ships: The enemy ships ferry men from the fort to the battlefield. In addition, ships can fire broadsides at your men.

Enemy Forts: The forts will fire cannon at your men.

TERRAIN

There are three types of land on the battlefield: open, woods, and swamp. Each type of terrain has various effects on the fighters:

Open: Open terrain is easy to move through. It provides no defensive bonuses and does not block sight.

Woods: Woods slow movement. Woods provide a defensive bonus. Groups can hide in woods.

Swamp: Swamp slows movement and does not block sight.

DEFEAT

If all of your men retreat off the map, you've lost and you find yourself outside the town once more. If your men have been wiped out, you're captured.

VICTORY

The battle is over when one of your groups makes it into the town. If you've thrashed the soldiers, the town will surrender, otherwise you have to duel the captain of the guard.

If you beat the captain, the town is at your mercy.

TREASURES OF THE CARIBBEAN

There are extraordinary treasures waiting to be found in the Caribbean:

INDIAN TREASURES

When they first came to the Caribbean, the Spanish plundered the ancient Indian towns of Central and South America. It is rumored that not all of this wealth made it back to Spain; some say that there are secret troves of gold and jewels hidden in the Caribbean!

Perhaps *you* will be the one to find these hidden treasures...

THE SILVER TRAIN

Spain has many silver mines in South America. Indian slaves work these mines day and night, bringing forth tons of the precious metal to fill the Spanish war chest. Each year a "train" of mules, slaves and soldiers carry the silver from one South American port to the next to be picked up by Spanish galleons for transport back to Spain.

If you could capture just one of these trains, your fortune would be made... .

THE TREASURE FLEET

After years of losing her wealth to pirates and privateers, Spain now sends her treasure-ships in fleets guarded by powerful galleons.

Each year the fleet moves westward along the Spanish Main, picking up treasure and trade goods from the Spanish ports. When its holds are full to bursting, the Fleet sails north through the Florida Channel and then back to Spain.

If you could capture the Treasure Fleet in port or at sea, you would be rich beyond the dreams of avarice... .

WINNING PIRATES! GOLD

As a fine young pirate, your ultimate goal is to complete the "Ten Great Quests" and become the most famous pirate who ever lived. These quests are secret: you'll have to learn what they are by experimenting. You can have a full, exciting career as a pirate without completing the Ten Great Quests, but you get a hefty bonus if you do complete them all. Good luck!

SHIPS OF THE CARIBBEAN

There are nine basic ship types in *Pirates! Gold*. Each ship has the following characteristics:
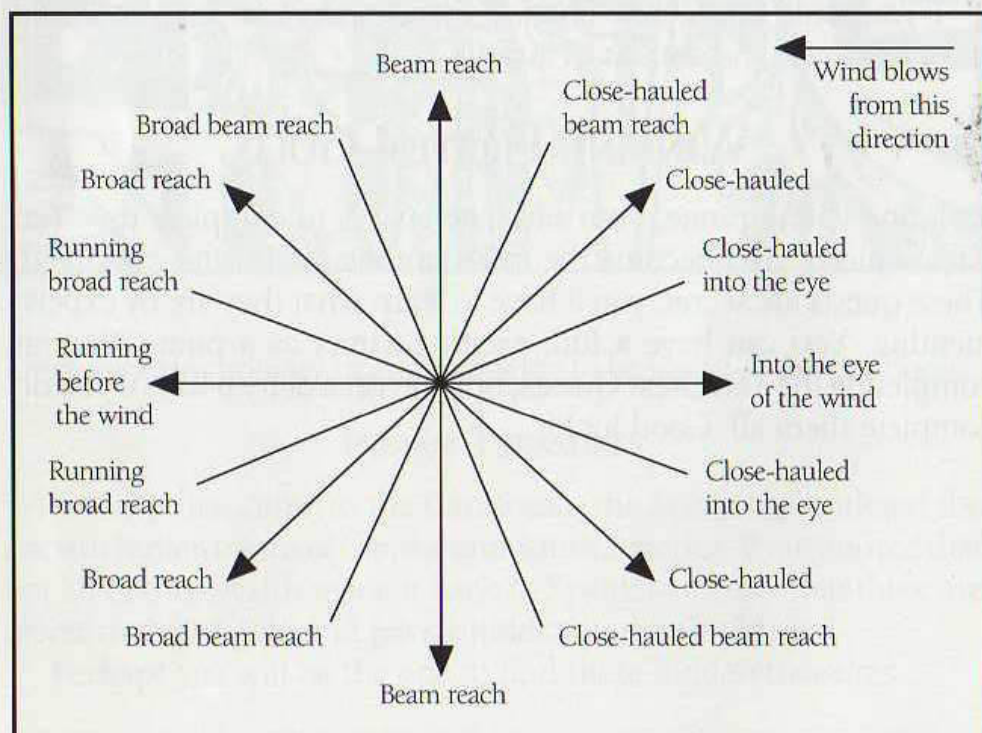
Speed: Given in leagues (about 2.5 miles) per four hours (a standard "watch" or tour of duty). The first number is best speed in light wind, the second is best speed in strong wind.

Best Point of Sailing: This refers to the wind direction in which the ship makes its best speed. See the diagram below for details.
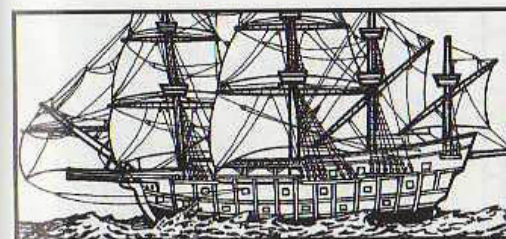
Cannon: The first number is the average number of cannon found on that vessel; the second is the maximum cannon the ship can fire.

Crew: The first number is the typical crew size for the ship; the second is the maximum number of men the ship can carry.

Cargo: The amount of cargo, in tons, the ship can carry.

Beam reach
Broad beam reach
Close-hauled beam reach
Wind blows from this direction
Broad reach
Close-hauled
Running broad reach
Close-hauled into the eye
Running before the wind
Into the eye of the wind
Running broad reach
Close-hauled into the eye
Broad reach
Close-hauled
Broad beam reach
Close-hauled beam reach
Beam reach

SPANISH GALLEON

7/15 Leagues	*Best Speed*
Broad Reach	*Best Point of Sailing*
22/36 Guns	*Cannon*
275/288 Men	*Crew*
160 tons	*Cargo*

Galleons are the largest sailing vessels on the Spanish Main. They're slow-moving and unmaneuverable, but can carry quite a large amount of cargo and a great number of men and cannon.

SPANISH WAR GALLEON

7/15 Leagues	*Best Speed*
Broad, Running Reach	*Best Point of Sailing*
30/32 Guns	*Cannon*
250/256 Men	*Crew*
140 tons	*Cargo*

War galleons are faster and more maneuverable than regular galleons, and with slightly smaller cargo space. Warships are often crewed by disciplined soldiers.
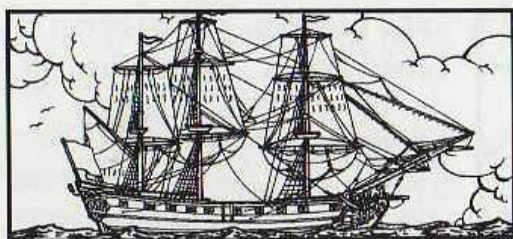
FAST GALLEON
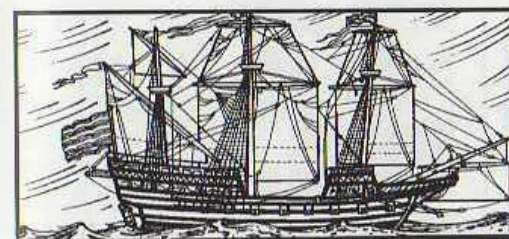
9/12 Leagues	*Best Speed*
Broad, Running Reach	*Best Point of Sailing*
24/28 Guns	*Cannon*
215/224 Men	*Crew*
120 tons	*Cargo*

The "fast" galleon is faster in light winds than other galleons. It is also more maneuverable than the larger galleons.
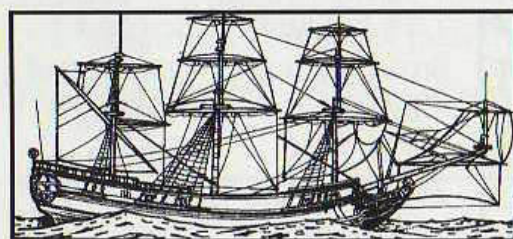
FRIGATE

9/12 Leagues	*Best Speed*
Broad, Running Reach	*Best Point of Sailing*
26/28 Guns	*Cannon*
190/224 Men	*Crew*
120 tons	*Cargo*

Frigates are powerful warships. They make exceptionally good pirate-hunters — and, if you're lucky enough to capture one, great pirate ships, as well!
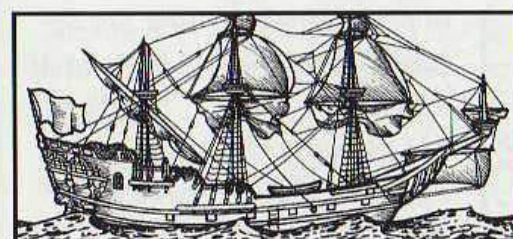
MERCHANTMAN

9/12 Leagues	*Best Speed*
Broad Reach	*Best Point of Sailing*
8/24 Guns	*Cannon*
30/200 Men	*Crew*
100 tons	*Cargo*

Merchantmen are fairly fast and maneuverable, with a good-sized cargo space. Some merchantmen have been converted to pirate ships; these ships are extremely dangerous.

CARGO FLUYT

9/12 Leagues	*Best Speed*
Running Reach	*Best Point of Sailing*
8/20 Guns	*Cannon*
18/160 Men	*Crew*
80 tons	*Cargo*

These Dutch cargo vessels are smaller but more economical than merchantmen, able to be manned by a very small crew. These ships are fragile and unsuited to combat.

BARQUE
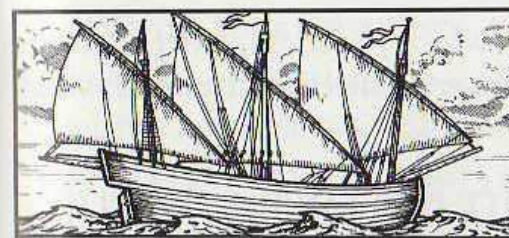
9/12 Leagues	*Best Speed*
Broad Beam Reach	*Best Point of Sailing*
5/16 Guns	*Cannon*
24/128 Men	*Crew*
60 tons	*Cargo*

These small, maneuverable craft carry oars, allowing them to row into the wind.
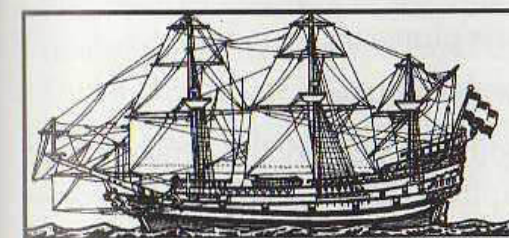
SLOOP
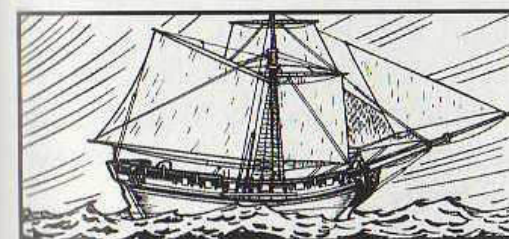
9/10 Leagues	*Best Speed*
Broad, Broad Beam Reach	*Best Point of Sailing*
5/12 Guns	*Cannon*
10/96 Men	*Crew*
40 tons	*Cargo*
Shallow Draft	

A small, extremely maneuverable ship, fast in light winds but slow in heavier winds. Sloops have very shallow drafts. They can be rowed directly into the wind.

PINNACE

9/10 Leagues	*Best Speed*
Broad Beam, Beam Reach	*Best Point of Sailing*
5/8 Guns	*Cannon*
10/64 Men	*Crew*
20 tons	*Cargo*
Shallow Draft	

A very fast, maneuverable, shallow-draft vessel, often used for small cargo trading along rivers and coastal towns. Though small and fragile, these ships' speed and maneuverability make them dangerous foes.

FAMOUS EXPEDITIONS

An expedition is a short scenario in which you attempt to recreate the exploits of a famous pirate from history. The expedition ends when you divide the plunder.

JOHN HAWKINS AND THE BATTLE OF SAN JUAN DE ULUA (1569)

Forces: One galleon, one merchantman, four pinnaces, 308 men.

Political Situation: Spain is at war with France and England

Your Prospects: You have a formidable squadron, but your flagship is slow and unmaneuverable. You must decide on peaceful trade or warlike raids. Peaceful trade means you can use the smaller Spanish ports to reprovision, but you won't make much money. Warlike raids offer greater profit, but you'll be hard-pressed to find a friendly town where you can recruit men and sell booty.

Historical Chronicle: John Hawkins was an English merchant-privateer who made a number of trips to the Caribbean.

In '57, Hawkins was surprised and attacked at anchor in Vera Cruz by a large Spanish force of galleons. He eventually made his way back to England on the pinnace *Minnion* with only 15 survivors.

FRANCIS DRAKE AND THE SILVER TRAIN AMBUSH (1573)

Your Forces: One merchantman, one pinnace, 73 men.

Political Situation: Spain is at war with England

Your Prospects: Only a man with foolhardy bravery like Drake would dare attack the mighty Spanish Empire — at the peak of its power — with just 73 men on two small ships. A more cautious man would adopt a trading strategy, building his wealth and crew before turning to piracy.

Historical Chronicle: Drake made many daring attacks against the Spanish in the 1570s. During his colorful career, he sacked Nombre de Dios, captured the Silver Train and numerous Spanish ships, and circumnavigated the globe. The grateful English government made him an Admiral of the Fleet.

PIET HEYN AND THE TREASURE FLEET (1628)

Your Forces: Four fast galleons, two sloops, 700 men.

Political Situation: Holland is at war with Spain and allied with England. France and England are at war with Spain.

Your Prospects: You command a powerful if cumbersome squadron. The Treasure Fleet is an excellent goal; it's late in the season: you'd better start hunting the Fleet off Havana or in the Florida Channel. Otherwise, you might want to pick on some medium or large Spanish towns.

Historical Chronicle: In 1628, the Dutch captain Piet Heyn sailed for the West Indies with a powerful war fleet. After a terrible battle, he captured the Treasure Fleet off the coast of Cuba. He took 46 tons of silver, bankrupting the Spanish government.

L'OLLONAIS AND THE SACK OF MARACAIBO (1666)

Your Forces: One sloop, five pinnaces, 400 men.

Political Situation: France is at war with England and Spain, and allied to Holland. England and Holland are at war.

Your Prospects: Your force is strong in men, but weak in ships. Therefore, like L'Ollonais, your best prospects lie in attacking towns, not in sea-battles.

Historical Chronicle: A French pirate, L'Ollonais gained a reputation as one of the most ferocious and inhuman scoundrels who ever lived. During his career L'Ollonais sacked Maracaibo and Gibraltar, torturing and murdering many Spanish and Indians in the process. He was clubbed to death during a raid on an Indian village.

HENRY MORGAN, THE KING'S PIRATE (1671)

Your Forces: One frigate, two merchantmen, one barque, two sloops, one pinnace, 600 men.

Political Situation: England and France are at war with Spain.

Your Prospects: You have a formidable force for land or sea fighting. Your immediate difficulties are procuring enough food to keep your men fed and enough plunder to keep up their morale.

Historical Chronicle: Henry Morgan was one of the most successful pirates in the business. He sacked Puerto Principe, Gran Granada, Puerto Bello, Maracaibo, Gibraltar and Panama. Unlike most pirates, Morgan was smart enough to quit while he was ahead. He retired to Jamaica, where he died of too much drink at the age of 53.

BARON DE POINTIS AND THE LAST EXPEDITION (1697)

Your Forces: Five frigates; one sloop; 1200 men.

Political Situation: France is at war with England and Spain.

Your Prospects: Your force is the most powerful ever seen on the Spanish Main. You are free to select the target of your choice and strike. The real question is: how much treasure can you carry off? This expedition is a pleasant romp.

Historical Chronicle: In 1697, France was at war with Spain. De Pointis gathered a huge force of French soldiers and Caribbean buccaneers and privateers and attacked the wealthy town of Cartagena. Victorious, de Pointis sailed back to France with 20 million livres of treasure in his holds.

This was the last great pirate expedition in the Caribbean.

HISTORICAL TIME PERIODS
THE SILVER EMPIRE — 1560-1600

The Spanish Empire reaches its peak in this era, built on mountains of silver bullion from New Spain (Mexico) and Peru. The other powers, England and France, are constantly at war with Spain. Holland is a Spanish province in revolt (and has no towns in the Caribbean in this time period).

Spain owns all of the towns in the Caribbean but one: the only non-Spanish town is the struggling French colony of St. Augustine in Florida. A few additional French and English privateering bases exist in the Florida Keys and Bahamas, appearing and disappearing with the seasons.

MERCHANTS AND SMUGGLERS — 1600-1620

Spain begins her long slide into decay. France and England have become powerful naval forces, and Holland has wrested its freedom from Spain. A long period of peace breaks out in the Caribbean, making privateering difficult, but trade easier. (Tobacco is now an important trade good.)

The Spanish colonies are still rich and powerful, but England and France have growing colonies of their own in the Indies. Holland as of yet has no possessions in the New World, but many Dutch ships trade throughout the Caribbean, mostly basing their expeditions from the Spanish town of Trinidad.

THE NEW COLONISTS — 1620-1640

Europe is ablaze with a series of bloody civil and political wars, driving many refugees to the dubious safety of the New World. The Caribbean colonies have grown tremendously, and French and English towns begin to rival the older Spanish colonies. The Dutch have one colony now, Curacao, right in the middle of the Spanish Main.

The Great Powers are more or less constantly at war with one another. Trade is good, but perilous, and there are plenty of opportunities for privateering among the warring nations.

WAR FOR PROFIT — 1640-1660

The Thirty Years' War, begun in 1618, is degenerating into famine, plague and starvation across Europe, and the English Civil War is just beginning.

With Spain in turmoil, privateers and freebooters pillage and plunder the Spanish Caribbean. Non-Spanish colonies are growing everywhere, fueled by boatloads of refugees. The Dutch are making a fortune trading among the new colonies.

THE BUCCANEER HEROES — 1660-1680

Spain continues to decline in military power and influence, while England, France and Holland grow. The colonial empires begin a regular series of wars with each other. All of the countries employ privateers and buccaneers to do their fighting for them. Trade is quite good in these years, as all major powers have wealthy colonies lusting for merchandise from far away.

PIRATES' SUNSET — 1680-1700

This is a difficult time to be a pirate. The major powers have put together big fleets of heavily-armed ships to track down the few remaining swashbucklers. France is the only power who still issues Letters of Marque.

Unless he's extremely lucky in avoiding the warships of the major powers, a pirate's life is likely to be nasty, brutish, and short. The road to wealth in this time is through trade — or through becoming a pirate-hunter for the Spanish.

PLAYING TIPS

Informants: When you meet a governor's daughter, she might decide to become your informant. Visit her often: she'll have important information on the location of the Silver Train and Treasure Fleet. Warning: if the governor loses his job, however, he'll return to Europe, taking your informant with him!

Lost Relatives: Find all the lost relatives you can! They often know where hidden treasure can be found.

Growing Old: The older you get, the more difficult it is for you to swordfight. You'll want to have more men with you when you attack, because it will be tougher to win. Eventually, you'll grow too old to continue and you'll be forced to retire, so don't waste time while you're young!

Selling Ships: Sell your cargo before selling your excess ships.

Gossip: You can learn of goings-on in the Caribbean at the tavern and by "Hailing" other ships for news. This news is recorded in your "Ship's Log" in the Captain's Cabin. The things you learn can be very useful. For example, if a city has been hit by disease, it will probably be weak. If gold has been discovered, it will be rich. If the city has a new governor, then any informants in the city are gone. And if one country has gone to war with another, you can probably purchase a Letter of Marque from one of the countries and get rewarded for attacking the other.

Large Crews: It is really tough to keep a big crew happy for more than a year. You'll have to keep getting bigger and bigger treasures, plunder really rich cities, capture fat Spanish Galleons, and so forth. Once your crew begins to desert (taking your money with them!), either grab some big treasure fast, or divide the plunder immediately. When you divide the plunder, you lose some time while you refit for the next mission, but you'll get a bigger slice of the treasure.

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