

MERCHANTS & MARAUDERS



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS v.1

Didn't I already answer that?

WINNING THE GAME

Q: When a player announces that they have won, do ALL players get another turn or only the players who have not yet received their turn?

A: Only the remaining players, so that in the end, everyone has had the same amount of turns.

ACTIONS

Q: Must I spend all three of my actions.

A: No, you may pass actions as you please

Q: It says I can spend Gold freely from my stash when in home-port. Must it be part of an action or is enough just being there?

A: Only once you take the "Port" action.

SEA-ZONES

Q: **Nassau:** If I draw two or more of the same kind of good in Nassau, is the price then 1 Gold each?

A: Yes

Q: **Nassau:** How much gold do you earn for selling goods in demand?

A: 6 as per normal rules

Q: **Cartagena:** It says that you can find a Merchant without making a "scouting roll" - how does that work?

A: As you select the Scout action you declare that you wish to find a Spanish merchant. You may then find it without making any scouting roll. There must still be a Merchant Token present and when found you remove it from the board as normal.

Q: **St. Maarten:** How many Cargo Cards would you draw on the second turn if you chose to stay in port and purchase goods for 2 consecutive turns?

A: 3 as per normal rules

Q: **Havana:** What does it mean that I should draw a 4th card and keep if it's a hit?

A: It means you draw 4 cards rather than 3 when making a merchant raid. If the 4th card has a "Hit" icon on it you put it with the other three cards and if not you discard it. You then continue the raid as normal.

CAPTAIN POWERS

Q: **Pepijn van Avezaath:** He may have an extra cargo card on board. Does this mean that he can have six cargo cards on a galleon or is 5 cargo cards the maximum?

A: He can have 6 Cargo Cards and may even have 1 Cargo Card on a ship with a destroyed cargo location

Q: **Alexandre Villon:** He may enter any port. So, that means, he may enter a port of a nation he has a bounty from. Right?

A: Yes, as well as ports that his nation is at war with and even ports affected by the "Plague" Event Card.

Q: **Alexandre Villon:** He has to pass an *Influence* check to take a port action in an illegal port. Does this count as an action? How often is he allowed to attempt that check during one turn? Is he allowed to attempt the check in one port, then enter another port and attempt it again?

A: The roll allows him to take the action. So if it fails, no action is spent. He may attempt once per port, per turn. Under normal circumstances that means he can only try once. However if he has the "Perfect Navigation" card he may be able to reach a different port and try again there.

Q: **Christian Marquis:** Isn't it unrealistic to have such a supremely handsome captain in a pirate game?

A: No

Q: Thomas Nelson: Do played Glory Cards constitute as discarded cards?

A: No. Thomas Nelson may take any cards that get discarded either due to hand size limits, deaths or retirements - but not played cards (even though they are put into a discard pile).

Q: Frederico De Silva's ability states "May have two rumors, and may re-roll *Influence* checks when acquiring rumors." If he is successful at acquiring a rumor, may he immediately take another rumor action to attempt to acquire another in the same port on the same turn?

A: No. He may still only try to acquire a rumor once per "port" action.

Q: Can a Captain always enter his home port regardless of Event Cards, Bounties or Wars?

A: Yes a Captains home-port is never closed.

SHIP MODS

Q: Do you always reveal the ship mod when taking a "port" action or can you leave it hidden if you don't want the option of buying it?

A: You always reveal it

Q: When buying a new ship and I have to redistribute my old ship mods - can I place one in my current port if it does not have one, and may I buy it the same turn?

A: You can place it there, but you cannot buy the same turn as it is not revealed until a new "Port" action is taken there.

Q: Can I buy the Extended Cargo ship mod. even if my Cargo value is 5 (as with the Galleon) - for instance to ensure that another player can't buy it.

A: No, you cannot.

Q: Can I use the Reinforced Hull Ship Mod during Merchant Raids?

A: Yes

Q: Is the price to repair Reinforced Hull always 3 Gold or is it modified by Captain Special Abilities and ports which allow cheap repairs?

A: It always costs 3 Gold.

CLAIMING/BUYING/SELLING SHIPS

Q: When buying a Frigate or Galleon, do you have to have the 35 Gold up front or is it enough with 30 Gold as you sell your old one for 5?

A: You do not need 35 Gold up front. You trade in your old ship as part of the deal.

Q: When purchasing a new ship or capturing a new ship, are special weapons transferred over? And what about crew - does your crew remain at the previous level or does it automatically get bumped up to the level of the new ship?

A: You may transfer Special Weapons, and your Crew stays at its current level (unless the current level is higher than the new ship's Crew value)

Q: When claiming an enemy ship after a battle, what state is the ship in?

A: You claim the enemy ship in its current state including damage and any Ship Mods. it may have had. Crew however you bring along from your previous ship.

Q: The rules don't mention the ability to transfer Crew to a captured ship - can I?

A: Yes, the rules aren't clear on this. When you claim a ship you fill it with Crew from your old ship.

NPCs

Q: Hunting Player Captains: For a French Naval ship, is a player with 3 Spanish Bounties more preferable than one with 2 Spanish Bounties?

A: Yes

Q: What about a French Naval ship and two players - one with 2 Spanish Bounties and one with 1 Dutch and 1 English?

A: The two are tied as far as the French Naval ship is concerned.

Q: Does the amount of Gold or cargo determine ties for Pirate ships attacking non-pirate players?

A: Yes. This is a case where players may be forced to reveal how much Gold they have onboard. If it's obvious who has the most, or it can be resolved by general questions like "Do you have more than 15 Gold?" then that is fine.

Q: Does for instance a Dutch Naval ship have a Scouting skill of 5 when scouting for a Player with 5 French, Spanish or English Bounties?

A: No, the Dutch Naval Captain would have a scouting skill equal to the value printed on his card. However, if the Dutch Naval Captain was scouting for a player with 5 Dutch bounties, then his Scouting skill would be 5.

Q: When do the newly drawn NPCs enter the game?

A: At the end of the entire turn (i.e. when all players have performed their actions).

Q: If a player's ship is in port, is that ship considered to be in the "sea zone"?

A: Yes. For the purpose of NPC movement, the ports and any players there are considered to be in the Sea-Zone.

COMBAT

- Q:** If both players choose to Flee, are they automatically successful and does combat end without rolling?
- A:** Yes, generally there is no need to roll. However players may still use their “Chasers” Ship Mod prior to the escape. If this does not sink a player (destroys the ship’s “Hull”) then both manage to escape and combat ends.
- Q:** If my “Masts” are destroyed I can only select the shoot action. But what do I do if my “cannons” also are destroyed.
- A:** The battle continues. Each round you still select the Shoot action to see if you win the *Seamanship* roll or not. While you can’t inflict any hits it still has an impact on the amount of hits your opponent inflicts. The reason for finishing the battle is that certain cards as well as the actual hit-location of the cannon-fire can still have some relevance to the outcome of the battle.

RUMORS

- Q:** If you want to achieve a rumor card, you either need a scout or port action. But do you need the whole action? In other words if I have a port-rumor card, may I still do other port activities in the same action, and if I have a scout-rumor card, may I hunt a merchant vessel and do the rumor card in the same action?
- A:** It’s in the nature of the “Scout” action that you select one thing to scout for, where with the “Port” action you don’t have to choose which activities to perform - they all become available. So to be clear:
- Rumor at sea: Take a “Scouting” action to scout for the rumor and nothing else (Unless you spend a new action of course).
 - Rumor in a port: Take a “Port” action - Checking if the rumor is true can be done alongside your other port activities.
- Q:** Can I check to see if a rumor is true, and then, regardless of the outcome, attempt to discover another rumor in the same turn at the same port?
- A:** Yes. Seeing if a rumor is true and acquiring a rumor are separate from each other. You may even try resolve a new rumor if it just happens to take place in the same port.
- Q:** How does the “Myriad of Goods” card work?
- A:** Before buying goods you play the card and see if the rumor is true. If successful you draw any 5 cards not ‘in demand’ (including from the discarded Cargo Cards). These are the cards for the sale this turn in *Petite Goave*.
- Q:** If I find a rumor to be true but die in the process of the resolving it’s effect, do I still get a Glory Point?
- A:** No, you would have to survive the card in order to “resolve it”.
- Q:** What happens if Crew Combat during a rumor ends up as a tie?
- A:** The rumor fails and is discarded. Your Captain survives.

EVENT CARDS

- Q:** “Attack on *San Juan*”: When *San Juan* changes nationality, do merchants from the new nation give +3 plunder value instead of Spanish merchants?
- A:** No. The bonus to the Plunder Value of Spanish Merchants remains unaffected.
- Q:** Clemency: Can a player pay 5 Gold to remove a bounty on his turn, before a Naval ship in the same Sea-Zone can make its “Scouting” check?
- A:** Yes. Keep in mind though, that under normal circumstances the player would have to remove all bounties to avoid being scouted for.
- Q:** Clemency: If a clemency card is drawn, can a player acquire a new bounty that turn and then dismiss it later the same turn (by paying the Clemency cost)?
- A:** Yes it can be used on bounties acquired the same turn.
- Q:** Storms: How long do they last and who do they affect?
- A:** The storm only lasts the turn it is drawn, but the entire turn (i.e. has effect on all players during their upcoming moves).
- Q:** “Too Quiet”: It says to Draw and resolve the first card before drawing and resolving the second. It also says if two storms are drawn then only the largest takes effect. Do I ignore the move icons on the smallest storm as well?
- A:** No, you ignore the “effect” of the small Storm card, not the move icons. So you move NPCs according to the icons regardless of what cards you may draw.
- Q:** “War & Peace”: If war begins and you are in an enemy port would you be immediately kicked out at the start of your turn or are you allowed to stay and do a port action?
- A:** You may stay and perform port activities. You just can’t enter the ports.
- Q:** “Plague”: Would the Plague card prevent someone with forged documents to enter port?
- A:** Yes.

MISSIONS

- Q:** “Letter of Marque”: Can I claim the Letter of Marque mission if I have a Bounty from Spain (but am in the port because it is my home port or I have some special ability that allows me to be there).
- A:** No
- Q:** “Letter of Marque”: Is the +3 Gold bonus I get part of the 12+ plunder needed to score a point?
- A:** No, it is a bonus you receive from the nation you work for, not part of the plunder on the ship.

- Q:** French Merchants Must Die – Must I defeat 3 French ships to complete the mission or can it be considered complete after your 1st win?
- A:** While you earn 5 Gold every time you defeat a French merchant, the mission is not complete till you defeat three.

- Q:** The “Gather Information” Mission lets me draw a rumor when completed. If that rumor is “Desperate Employer” may I play so it on the “Gather Information” mission?
- A:** No.

MERCHANT RAIDS

- Q:** Can I spend my Special Weapons at any time?
- A:** No. You spend them after having rolled your *Seamanship* skill. Once you start manipulating the cards you can no longer spend more Special Weapons.
- Q:** The Merchant Track only has room for 8 tokens. What do I do if more than 8 Merchant Tokens are removed from the board?
- A:** The Merchant Tokens are re-distributed at the beginning of the next turn. However, if more Merchants are found before that, they are simply placed amongst the 8 other tokens. Then, before drawing the next Event Card, you re-distribute all the Merchant Tokens.
- Q:** If your cargo is full, can you throw existing cargo overboard to take cargo from a merchant raid?
- A:** Yes, you may choose between the cargo already on board and the cargo you plunder.
- Q:** When I exchange a card, may I first draw and then decide which card to exchange?
- A:** No. You pick the card you wish to exchange and then you draw the new card.

GLORY CARDS

- Q:** “Survivor”: Part of the text on the card reads “3) Keep Rumor or Mission cards”
It sounds like the player is allowed to keep only one or the other, but not both. Is that correct?
- A:** No, the player may keep both Rumors and his/her Mission.
- Q:** “Perfect Navigation”: With enough successes, may I do two “port” actions in two different ports?
- A:** Yes, as long as they are different ports.
- Q:** “Loose Cannon” - Do I still get to inflict damage even if I have no cannons? Does it work when damage is being inflicted by Long Guns
- A:** Yes and Yes

- Q:** Specialists: If I play a Specialist Glory card, fail the *Leadership* roll and then can't or won't pay 2 Gold - what happens?
- A:** If you play it and don't fulfill what is needed to hire the specialist (succeed the roll or pay the Gold) the card is discarded.

- Q:** Stash in any port - Can you only deposit Gold or can you retrieve Gold as well?
- A:** Only deposit.

- Q:** “Escort”: Can I use the “Escort” card offensively?
- A:** No. You can only play the card if you are attacked.

- Q:** “Escort”: If the Naval ship defeats the player, may I plunder the player's ship?
- A:** No. The Naval ship fights in your place while you sail on. You are not part of the battle.

- Q:** “Escort”: What bounties does an attacker get when I use the Escort card?
- A:** The player who attacks you gets a Bounty from your nation. If he defeats the Naval ship he also gets a bounty from the Naval ships nation.

- Q:** “Fast Learner”: Can I use the Fast Learner card on all cards?
- A:** No, to duplicate the effect of another card you must live up to the requirements of the card. So think of it this way: the Fast Learner card turns into the card you duplicate.

DEMAND TOKENS

- Q:** Are Demand Tokens recycled back into the game (i.e. put into the pool with the other tokens), or do they leave the game?
- A:** Tokens are recycled so that Demand Tokens go back into the pool and can possibly re-enter the game on a letter draw.
- Q:** When exchanging Demand Tokens (after selling in demand) does the Token go back in the pool prior to drawing a new one?
- A:** No, the current Token is replaced with one from the pool. This means you remove the Demand Token, place a new one from the port, and then place the old Demand Token back into the pool.

ERRATA

STRATEGY TIPS

RUMOR CARDS:

The first print run Rumor Cards “Indian Treasure”, “Marooned” and “The White Lady” incorrectly have an Influence icon on them, indicating that you need to roll Influence to see if they are true. Just like all other rumors at sea, these three Rumors are supposed to have a Scouting icon.

CARGO LIMIT IN PORT:

On page 8 of the first print run rules it says, that while in port there is no limit to how many Cargo Cards you may have. This is incorrect and the limit should be 6, regardless of your ship’s Cargo capacity, Captain special abilities or any other factors.

CLAIMING SHIPS:

On page 15 of the first print run rules it gives a list of things you can transfer to the new ship. Crew is missing from that list. In other words you may bring a long what Crew you have left to the new ship (without exceeding the Crew value of the new ship obviously).

CAPTAIN NATIONALITY

In the rules it says that Captains have the same nationality as the port they are from. While this generally is true it is worth clarifying that Captains keep their initial nationality even if the port changes nationality during the game (as the port of San Juan can do due the “Attack on San Juan” Event Card).

GENERAL TIPS:

- Upgrading your ship is not always a must.
- Try avoid sailing with too much Gold on board.
- Pay attention to the effects of Sea-Zones.
- Keep your Glory Cards in mind, pick up Missions and Rumors, and incorporate them into your other plans.
- Keep an eye out for Captains with damaged ships. They might be worth attacking.

PIRATES:

- Always have Special Weapons handy. They are nice to have in Naval battles and *essential* when performing Merchant Raids.
- Stay within striking range of merchants so that you force them to either play safe or take chances
- The effects of **Cartagena**, **San Juan**, **Old Providence** and in part **Havana** can be very important to a pirate.

MERCHANTS:

- Keep an eye on when pirates are out of range and take advantage of it.
- Small, steady investments in Ship Mods and Special Weapons can act as a slight deterrent to pirate attacks. However, if you start feeling too much pressure, then be sure to upgrade to a Galleon.
- **Cartagena**, **Caracas**, **St. Maarten** and **Santo Domingo** are important ports for selling/buying goods.

MERCHANTS & MARAUDERS



CUTTHROAT VARIANT

Designers Note: This variant is designed for groups seeking more frequent player vs. player battles. It should not be regarded as a “fix” but more of an attempt to accommodate the expectations and wishes of some groups – an attempt to make sure everyone gets the pirate game they deserve.

The variant has two parts which can either be used together or separately.

OFF-TURN SCOUTING

A player may “Scout” for the active player immediately after the active player moves into his Sea-Zone (including moving from port out to sea.) Upon making an off-turn *Scouting* attempt, the player flips his Captain card as a reminder, and then flips it back upon his next turn. If the *Scouting* roll is successful, the active player is found and a battle occurs. If the active player survives the encounter he may continue his turn.

Action Penalty: Any player who makes an off-turn *Scouting* attempt has two actions less on his next turn.

CIRCUMSTANTIAL RULES:

- A Captain cannot make an off-turn *Scouting* attempt if his card is flipped (i.e. if he already has made an off-turn “scouting” attempt).
- Off-turn *Scouting* occurs prior to any NPCs present in the same Sea-Zone.
- If the active player moves into a Sea-Zone with multiple player Captains, each of them declares in turn order if they wish to make an off-turn *Scouting* attempt. Those who do, roll their *Scouting* skill, but only the Captain with the most successes finds the active player. Resolve ties by counting ‘pips’ – if still tied, the players re-roll. All Captains who attempt the off-turn *Scouting* receive the two action penalty.

REDUCED MANEUVERABILITY FOR GALLEONS

Reduce the Maneuverability of Galleons to 1. This makes them more on par with the Frigate for PvP engagements, and an even poorer choice as vessels for piracy.