

All Hands On Deck

Prerelease Edition

2-5 Players; Ages 8+

Overview

Ahoy, mateys! All Hands on Deck! is a card game of fortune and strategy in which players build ships and launch them into sea battles. Amass a fortune of points by winning others’ ships and stealing their treasure so you can become the most impressive mariner on the high seas.

Setup

Deal 12 cards to each player from a shuffled deck. Place the remaining cards face-down in the center of the table as the draw pile. The shortest player begins by taking the top card.

Phase 1: Recruiting

The objective of the Recruiting phase is to combine your 12 cards into three ships and launch them. Each player begins their turn by drawing a card. If they choose, they may then launch a ship. They must discard a card face-up in the discard pile to end their turn. Play proceeds clockwise.

The “Aargh!” Rule

When a card is discarded, players can demand to reserve it as their draw card by hollering “Aargh!” like a seasoned old pirate. If more than one player “Aargh!”s the card, the “Aargh!”-er whose turn is closest wins. Be sure to say it like you mean it: all “Aargh!”s are final--there are no “Aargh!”-backs. The card is then set aside from the discard pile toward the player. Players may only have one card reserved at a time. On that player’s next turn they pick it up as their draw card. Cards are “Aargh!”-able until they are covered up by another player’s discard.

Launching a Ship

A ship is generally made up of one shipmaster card and three crew cards of the same suit. The color and symbol on the card indicate its suit:



Shipmasters are designated by a ship icon in the upper left corner. Crew cards have a number or other symbol in that corner.



To launch a ship, place your shipmaster card on the table, face-up, then place their crew cards on top, face-down (leaving the suit and status of their shipmaster visible). You may only launch one ship per turn. Once a ship is launched, the shipmaster & crew cannot be changed; however, a player may look at the crew cards of their launched ships at any time during the Recruiting and Naval Battle phases.



When a player launches their third ship and discards their last card, they have launched their fleet. The first person to do so receives 50 bonus points. Recruiting continues once more around the table, giving all other players one last turn. Once the last player discards, any players left with unlaunched cards (“in hand”) must set them aside, face-down, until the Reckoning Phase.

Phase 2: Naval Battles

The first player to launch their fleet begins the Naval Battle phase. This player must attack with all three ships and may select their battles in any order.

Selecting your Opponent

Suits are allied into two groups:

Mariners		Marauders	
	Navy		Merchant
	Pirate		Raider

Mariners (Navy & Merchants) will honorably never attack other Mariners, but may attack either type of Marauders (Raiders & Pirates). The Marauders’ code prevents them from attacking other Marauders, but they may attack either suit of Mariners

Privateers may attack and be attacked by any ship (including other Privateers).

Attack!

Leaving the shipmaster on the table, the attacking player picks up their crew and identifies which ship they will attack. Together, attacker and defender each reveal one crew card at a time, proceeding from weakest to strongest. The card with the higher dueling level wins each contest. If the battle is tied after three duels, the winner is decided by the rank of the shipmasters:



- (3 sails) Admiral beats a Captain or a Privateer.
- (2 sails) Captain loses to an Admiral but beats a Privateer.
- (1 sail) Privateer loses to an Admiral or Captain.

If both the crew and shipmasters are tied, both ships sink, along with any treasure they hold.

The winning player takes both ships and places each in a face-up pile in front of them. Ships that have engaged in battle are no longer in play. Treasure cards are set aside, face-up and rotated, to be reckoned separately. After the first three battles, play advances around the table and each player may select one of their remaining unused ships to attack an opponent. A player may opt to pass instead of attack, but if they pass, that player can no longer attack in this round, though their ships may still be attacked. Play continues until either all ships have fought, all players

have passed, or there are no more possible battles on the table (e.g., all remaining ships are allied suits).

Phase 3: Reckoning

When all possible battles have been played or all players have passed, any unplayed ships and their treasure belong to the player who launched them. These, along with ships and treasure secured in battle, are counted for points: Each ship is worth 25 points. Add to that the total value of any treasure captured, along with 50 bonus points for the player who launched their fleet first. Finally, subtract the value from all red or white flags left in your hand at the end of the Recruiting phase. No player shall receive negative points; the lowest score you may get in a round is zero. Once points are tallied and recorded, the round is complete!

Winning the Game

Rounds proceed until a player reaches enough points to claim the fame of the Spanish Main (500 points).

Types of Cards

Shipmasters



Shipmaster cards, indicated by a ship icon in their upper left corner, include Admirals, Captains, and Privateers. Admirals and Captains cannot act as crew.

Privateers

Privateers may serve as either a shipmaster or a crew member. When used as a shipmaster, their crew may come from any combination of crew cards from all other suits, including other Privateers; they may not have Captains or Admirals in their crew. Privateers have no allies and may attack or be attacked by any ship, including other Privateers.



When serving as a crew card, Privateers may be used in ships of any other suit.

Crew Cards

A strong Crew will defend their ship well. The top number in the upper left corner of each crew card indicates its dueling level. Privateers can serve as crew on any ship at a dueling level of 6. All crew cards must be of the same suit as their shipmaster unless the ship is led by a Privateer.

Treasure Cards

Treasure cards, identified by the white flag in the upper left corner, are worth extra points to the player who keeps or captures that ship. Beware: that value counts against you if the card is left in your hand at the end of the Recruiting Phase.



Jewels, Gold, Silver



Carrying Jewels, Gold, and/or Silver earns you extra points but also makes a ship more vulnerable by giving up crew slots to cards with no dueling level. These cards may only be stowed in a Merchant or Privateer ship.

Governor's Daughter

Not all treasure is silver and gold, mate! The Governor's Daughter is worth an extra 20 points, plus she employs a surprise attack: She always duels first and she always wins her duel. She may be found on a Navy or Privateer ship.



Special Abilities

The Black Spot



Each deck includes two Black Spot cards which can take the place of one crew card on Pirate or Privateer Ships. When attacking or defending, the Black Spot will conquer any other ship, regardless of other duels' outcomes; however, if two battling ships both contain a Black Spot they both sink, taking all treasure to the depths with them. If a ship containing a Black Spot is raided, the raiding party

takes any treasure on board and makes a clean getaway. If there is no treasure aboard, the ships must battle and the Black Spot wins.

Ruth

This Piratical Maid-of-All-Work provides a morale boost to her crew. She duels at 1 and each other crew member receives +1 to their dueling level. She may be included on a Pirate or Privateer ship.



Spy



The Spy may sneak aboard an enemy ship and peek at the crew before attacking. She may spy only once; the player may then choose whether to attack that ship a different ship. Or, if they did not launch their fleet first, they may pass. After using the Spy, the player cannot attack with a different ship until the Spy's ship is out of play. When her ship attacks she duels at a 2, but when her ship defends she duels at a 6. She may serve on a Raider or Privateer ship.

Lady

This Lady is not prepared to defend herself in a battle, but her well-paid crew will duel for her. Your strongest crew card fights their own battle; then when the Lady is played last, that dueling level applies to her as well. More than one Lady may be found on the same ship, in which case their crew mate duels for each of them. A Lady may only be found on a Merchant or Privateer ship.



Raider Ships

Raiders use a different tactic when on the offensive: They plunder all treasure cards on board the enemy ship (Governor's Daughter, Jewels, Gold, and Silver) and each party keeps their own ship; both ships are then out of play. If the defending ship holds no point cards, the ships must battle as usual. The Raiding party is not an optional step and no battle is allowed when point cards are handed over. If a Raider ship is attacked, it behaves as a usual defending Ship.

Game Variants

This is your game now, so you're not bound by these rules. They’re more like guidelines anyway. Have some fun and see what alternate rules you can come up with on your own. Below are some ideas to get you started. If you use any house rules, make sure they are all agreed upon before the first round is dealt.

Prize Crews

If a player has an Admiral, Captain, and Ship’s Cook, along with one more Crew card, all in the same suit, this constitutes a unique ship called a “Prize Crew,” which has extra strength in sea battles and is the only circumstance under which a Captain can serve as Crew. This is the only time when a Captain may serve in a crew slot (face down in launched ship). The fourth card in a Prize Crew may include Treasure, any crew card, or the Black Spot (if they match the suit) or a Privateer.



When a Prize Crew enters a battle, the player may reveal it at any time in the ship’s contests. A Prize Crew beats any regular crew except one that includes a Black Spot. If two Prize Crews face each other in battle, the fourth, unique card comes into play and the one with the highest dueling level wins. If two Prize Crews’s fourth cards are tied, both Ships sink

A Privateer may fill the last crew slot in a Prize Crew, but cannot replace the Admiral, Captain, or Cook to complete a Prize Crew.

Alternate “Aargh!”-ing

Instead of letting the next player take precedence, try playing with the first to shout “Aargh!” win the card reservation. Or, maybe decide that the most enthusiastic “Aargh!” wins. All players can cast a vote on who’s is the most pirate-like.