

Using Black Seas in *Swashbuckler!*

Warlord Games' very popular game of fighting ships in the golden age of sail is a great game, achieving a brilliant balance of historic accuracy and playability. I have sometimes used it to resolve sea battles in *Swashbuckler!* games - here are conversion rules for doing so.

Please note that Black Seas is the property of Warlord Games Ltd.

SHIP PROFILE

The rules for Black Seas cover a wide range of ships, so it should be possible to identify one from their fleet listings that covers the ship you want to represent.

CREW SKILL LEVELS

Black Seas requires a crew skill test (p.9 of the core rules) for a number of situations and in the game crews have one of three levels of skill: Green, Normal or Veteran. For these rules, we will add a fourth level, Seasoned, for the most elite and highly-skilled crews.

Seasoned crews add +1 to all their rolls in addition to the bonuses for Veteran crews.

Skill tests are used in five areas. Work out the skill of your *Swashbuckler!* crew in Black Seas terms as follows:

MANOEUVRING

Calculate the average of the Sailing skill of the crew and the captain, then consult this table:

Covers tests for		Average Sailing skill	Black Seas crew rating
Tacking	Evading entanglement	10 or less	Green
Evading collision	Crossing a sandbank	11-12	Normal
Grappling	Avoiding a shoal		Veteran
Disentangling		15+	Seasoned

E.g. If a ship's crew have a Sailing skill of 10 and the captain has a Sailing skill of 16, the average is 13, making the crew count as Veteran for these manoeuvres.

LEADERSHIP

For these tests, treat it as a *Swashbuckler!* Leadership skill test for the ship's captain.

Covers tests for
Choosing a gunnery target other than the closest target
Changing direction or level of sail after a "Quarterdeck hit" critical result
Ignoring the effects of a "Crew hit" critical result
Ignoring the rules of engagement to attack a smaller ship

SHOOTING

Calculate the average of the Artillery skill of the crew and the gun-captain, then consult this table:

Average Artillery skill	Black Seas crew rating
3 or less	Green
4	Normal
5-9	Veteran
10+	Seasoned

MUSKET FIRE

Calculate the average of the Longarm skill of the crew and the marine captain, then consult this table:

Average Longarm skill	Black Seas crew rating
4 or less	Green
5-6	Normal
7-9	Veteran
10+	Seasoned

REPAIRS AND FIRE-FIGHTING

Calculate the average of the Handyman skill of the crew and the officer supervising the work, then consult this table:

Covers tests for	Average Handyman skill	Black Seas crew rating
Fighting fires	5 or less	Green
Making repairs	6	Normal
	7-9	Veteran
	10+	Seasoned

BOARDING ACTIONS

Since these directly involve the player characters, it's best to resolve these as a series of Heroic Encounters as described in *Swashbuckler!* (p.97).

PLAYER CHARACTER CASUALTIES

For every 5 Ship Points of damage that the Players' ship takes, all Characters aboard should make a luck roll to avoid damage or take 1d10+3 damage, to which only Vigour and Armour Ratings apply (as *Swashbuckler!* p.100).