



TRIVIA PIRATES

~ CREATED BY ~
AJAY POONIA & BHUSHAN PATEL

RULEBOOK

THE LORE

(Or 'The Part You'll Probably Skip')

A LONG TIME AGO, CATS RULED THE WORLD.

Just take our word for it.

No documentation exists to confirm its reliability. The cats meant to write it down, but alas, lacked opposable thumbs.

At the heart of their empire was the island of Catlantis – home to history's most trivia-obsessed (and insufferable) cats. Curious and fiercely competitive, they hoarded mountains of pride alongside staggering amounts of trivia. And eventually, under the sheer weight of it all, Catlantis sank.

All that knowledge and ego spilled into the water, a curse on the high seas forever. Prouder and pettier, the survivors refused to drown. Their curiosity turned feral.

THEY BECAME THE TRIVIA PIRATES.

MEET THE TRIVIA PIRATES



NOTORIOUS C.A.T.

Social media swagster.
Livestreams sabotage.



CATTAPPA

Smooth-talking schemer.
Wins silently.



CHAIRMAN MEOW

Unimpressed genius.
Actively avoids teamwork.



MEOWSTER MIND

Order-obsessed perfectionist.
Forever seeking snacks.



PURLOCK HOLMES

Part detective, part drama-stirrer.
Generates rumours.



CLEOCATRA

Spiritually superior guru.
Sips matcha, balances chakras.



THE GAMEMASTER – CAPTAIN CAT SPARROW

An ancient know-it-all cat trapped in a parrot's body; too loud to ignore, and far too clever to trick.

WHAT'S IN THE BOX



TREASURE MAP X1



THINK CARDS X18

*Make it Easy x6, Letter Count x6,
Two Guesses x6*

**COINS
X70**



*60 (+10 extra for when some
inevitably get lost!)*



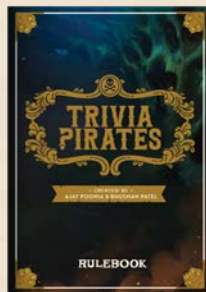
**SINK
CARDS
X34**

*Loot Question x8, Scrap Question x6,
Piggyback x6, Shield x3, No Pass x3, Wildcard x8*



**SHIPS
X6**

**RULEBOOK (D'uh!)
X1**



QR CODE X1
To access the webapp

If you're reading this rulebook, it means one or all of these:

You're willing and eager to become a Trivia Pirate.

You've been tricked into this by someone you trusted.

You're a cat (explains a lot).

So, sharpen your claws and lick your paws!

CONTENTS

This rulebook is divided into 3 parts:

- **Essential reading:** The only pages you actually need to play (pages 4-11)
- **FAQs:** For the Qs that are A F (pages 12-17)
- **TL;DR:** A quick reference for the various phases (page 24)

The rest is for your reading pleasure.

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1. SET-UP



- Choose a gamemaster, by any means – democracy, dictatorship, thumb-wrestling, et al. (If the gamemaster also wants to be in a team, see page 20).
- Place the **Map (A)** on a table, mattress, floor, or trampoline. The map is aerodynamically designed to be compatible with almost any flat surface.
- Pick your team on the map – a team can have a minimum of 1 player and a maximum of as-many-as-you-can-fit-in-the-room-and/or-discuss-things-without-being-eavesdropped-upon. Sit with your teammate(s) – the game is Trivia Pirates and not Trivia Pilates.
- Place your **ship (B)** at its starting port (non-USB).
- The gamemaster gives each team **3 Think Cards (C)** (one of each type, see page 15) and **10 coins (D)**.
- Go to the **Trivia Pirates webapp (E)** via the QR code (or game.triviapirates.com). Select the topic(s) and difficulty level(s). Here, too, standard rules of democracy, dictatorship, and thumb-wrestling, et al., apply.
- To determine the first direct team, the gamemaster deals 1 Sink Card to each team. The team with the Sink Card that has the highest power (most ) becomes the direct team. In a tie, the tied teams are re-dealt until a winner emerges. Statistically, there is a 0.00093% chance this process will continue indefinitely, but it's a risk we're willing to take.

2. OBJECTIVE

You're a pirate cat on the high seas, racing your rivals to claim the legendary **Chest of Questionable Glory**.

To get ahead, you must answer trivia and survive sabotage.

If you manage to reach the chest first and **cannot be backtracked**, you win. Whether victory feels noble after betraying your friends is between you and your conscience.

3. GLOSSARY



“The word “glossary” is derived from the ancient Greek word “glossa” via Latin “glossarium”, which directly translates to “Why do people never read this part?””

DIRECT TEAM: The first team that gets to answer the question – not the one that has the best direction in life.

SINK CARDS: Attack/Defence cards bought with coins, to **sink** your opponents.

THINK CARDS: Lifelines for one-time use that help you **think** about the answer. As the old pirate saying goes – think or swim* (*waterbody not included with game).

BOARD MOVES: Coin-powered board actions used to benefit yourself or attack rivals. Not to be confused with ‘bold moves’ that one makes on a romantic interest. Board Moves can be made boldly. But making bold moves boardly is just bad grammar.

4. HOW TO PLAY

The game is played over a series of questions. Each question has three phases, repeated until a team wins. It's a lot like modern capitalism, except that everyone gets to have fun.

But first, buy Sink Cards: Before the question, teams can buy as many Sink Cards as they like at a standard market rate of **2 coins per card** (not adjusted for inflation). Teams can't choose the Sink Cards. The gamemaster shuffles the deck and deals from the top. As the sayings go – you must play the cards you are dealt; when life gives you lemons, make hay. There are many more of these, but we don't have all day.

Once you are all at the starting port and have your coins, Think Cards, Sink Cards, and Inflated Egos (not included in the game – please bring your own), you're all set to sail.

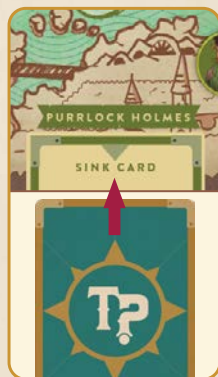
The teams must agree (eventually) on topic(s) to play and difficulty level(s). The gamemaster then shares the QR code with the teams (or casts the questions onto a larger common screen) and proceeds to reveal the questions in the webapp. Tingly stomach feelings start.

PHASE 1: REVEAL QUESTION

PHASE 1.1: PLAY SINK CARDS *(see page 14)*

Direct team: **Neither answer nor play a Sink Card immediately.** Wait for the timer on the screen to run out. Look around, observe, and strategise. Who looks like they know the answer? Who seems like a threat? Who's wearing the cutest top?

Other teams: You have until the timer runs out to play Sink Cards and wreak havoc. You can play only one card (unless playing Wildcard, see page 15). Place it **face down on your notch on the board.**



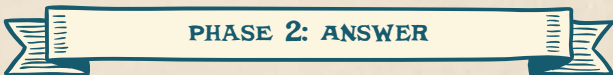
PHASE 1.2: BATTLE OF THE SINK CARDS

Once the time is up, teams flip their played Sink Cards.

Direct team: You can now counter the highest-power card with an equal- or higher-power card. Even if no other teams play a Sink Card, you may still play one if you want its effect (see page 14).

If multiple teams have played Sink Cards of the same power, and you cannot (or choose not to) defend yourself, **you pick which card takes effect**. You may base this decision on strategy, spite, or simply which team looks better because they are twinning. The effect is applied immediately.

Banish all losing cards to the bottom of the gamemaster's deck, never to be seen again until... well... they re-emerge. Every team whose Sink Card lost the battle gets **1 compensatory coin** from the gamemaster. Because you're worth it!



PHASE 2: ANSWER

PHASE 2.1: THINK CARDS TO THE RESCUE *(see page 15)*

The question is first answered by the team that possesses it after the Battle of the Sink Cards is resolved. When it's your turn to answer, you can play one or all of your Think Cards before answering. All used cards are discarded. Think of these as lifelines used in dire straits (not the band).

PHASE 2.2: ANSWER OR PASS

Answer if you know, or take your best guess! If you cannot answer or answer incorrectly, the question passes clockwise to the next team. This continues until a team gets it right, or the last team also passes/answers incorrectly. Once done, exhale.

On a correct answer, you **move 1 step forward on the map and get 3 coins** from the gamemaster.

PHASE 2.3: MERMAID

When a team reaches or crosses the Mermaid (step 3 on the map)

- All other teams get 1 coin each. Is she a Mermaid or Oprah?
- The team that reached the Mermaid may exchange any or all the Sink Cards they have for an equal number of Sink Cards dealt by the gamemaster from the top of the deck.



NOTE: *The Mermaid's actions take effect before Phase 3. If a cruel twist of fate (or a jealous rival) backtracks you to step 3, it does not re-trigger Mermaid actions.*

PHASE 3: MAKE BOARD MOVES

Before the next question, teams can use coins to make board moves (see page 16) that could help them and/or hurt their rivals, potentially endangering friendships.

- Each move mentions a coin cost. Teams can pool coins. Extended parleys, sabotage, and mutiny are all par for the course.
- If you want to counter a move, you must play an equal number of coins.
- A move can be made against a team only once per board move phase. No stacking the same move against a team, because, as fun as the game is, everyone wants to go home eventually.
- The gamemaster takes all the coins spent on board moves, as tax for being a cutie (not to be confused with CUTE cess).

Once board moves have been made, teams can buy Sink Cards to get ready for the next question.

- Whoever answered correctly, the team to their left is the new direct team.
- If no one answered correctly (shame on all of you), the new direct team is to the left of the previous direct team (e.g., if it was Team 1's question and nobody answered correctly, the new direct team is Team 2).

WINNING THE GAME

A team wins when **they reach the treasure chest** (step 6) and **cannot be backtracked successfully** in the Board Moves phase. But like – you're all winners, folks.

If the team that reaches the chest can still be backtracked, the game is not over yet!



TIE-BREAKER: *If two teams reach the chest on the same question as a result of a Piggyback, the tie is resolved by counting who has more coins. If the coins are equal, count the number of Sink Cards. If still tied, count the Think Cards. If the tie is still unresolved, say 'arr!' and split the treasure. Or duel with kitchen spatulas, whatever fits your group's dynamics.*



TREASURE CHEST

(or 'The Chest of Questionable Glory')

An elusive Catlantian relic pursued obsessively by the Trivia Pirates.

No one has opened it yet, and everyone holds a firm but conflicting opinion of its contents – ranging from the answer to everything to a 200-year-old tuna sandwich!

5. FAQs

SINK CARDS

Q. How do I get Sink Cards?

You can buy Sink Cards at the start of the game and between questions (after Phase 3) for 2 coins per Sink Card.

Q. Can I choose the cards I want?

No. The gamemaster deals them from the top of the deck. Buying Sink Cards is a strategic investment. Remember, investments are subject to market risks, but as a famous advertisement was once misheard: 'Sink Cards Sahi Hai.'



TITLE

ACTION

CARD
POWER

Q. When do I play them?

Opponents: You can play one card. If you do, place it face down on the notch. Flip the card when the time is up.

Direct team: You play your card after the opponents' cards are flipped.

Q. Which Sink Card takes effect?

Each card has a power indicated by the number of  – the card with the highest power wins the Battle of the Sink Cards.

Q. What happens when there is a tie?

If multiple cards with the same power are played, the direct team decides which team's card will take effect.

Q. What about the teams whose card loses the battle?

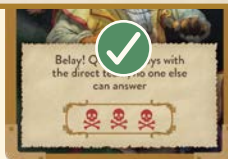
Every team whose Sink Card was played but didn't take effect receives 1 compensatory coin, which they may save for a rainy day or pool and commit mass sabotage in Phase 3.

Here are a few possible scenarios in the Battle of the Sink Cards with Team 1 as the direct team.

SCENARIO 1



TEAM 2



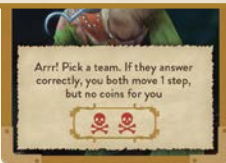
TEAM 5

Team 1 doesn't play a card. Team 5 plays a higher-power card and wins the battle.

SCENARIO 2



TEAM 4



TEAM 5



TEAM 6

Teams 4, 5, and 6 play equal-power cards. Team 1 has to choose one of the cards.

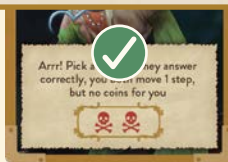
SCENARIO 3



TEAM 2



TEAM 3



TEAM 1

Team 1 counters with an equal-power card and wins the battle.



Jolly Roger  is a corrupted form of the French "joli rouge" (pretty red), referring to early red flags with the skull and bones flown by French privateers.

Q. How do Sink Cards work?

Here are examples in which you are Team 1 (the direct team) and Team 3 is conspiring against you.

Loot Question : If Team 3 knows the answer to your question and wants to answer before you, they can play this card to become the direct team. If Team 3 answers correctly, they move forward and get the coins. Team 4 will become the direct team for the next question. If Team 3 answers incorrectly, the question passes clockwise, starting from Team 4. As the saying goes, 'Loot me once, shame on you. Loot me twice – excuse me, that's not allowed.'

Scrap Question : If Team 3 thinks your question is too easy, they can play this card so you get a new question. If, however, you find your question too hard, you can play this card. A fresh Sink Card battle begins for the new question. All scrapped questions are carbon neutral and recycled responsibly.

Piggyback : If Team 3 thinks that you know the answer to your question, they can play this card to bet on your answer by announcing their target when flipping. If you answer correctly, both you and Team 3 move forward, but only you get the coins. If you answer incorrectly, Team 3 does not get to answer on the pass. You too can play this card, if you think a rival knows the answer (and doesn't mind letting you move forward). But you don't answer, and it doesn't change the passing order. If, however, a team before your target team answers, your card is wasted. In the words of a pop star that went something like, 'Bring your Piggyback (Yeah!) so that them other boys don't know how to act. (Yeah!).'

Card Shield : Team 3 can play this card to prevent any teams' lower-power cards from taking effect. You can play this card to shield yourself (or significant others) from loots, scraps, piggybacks, and no passes. It protects your question, but may cause awkward silences on the ride back home.

No Pass : No Pass is like Card Shield, but with extra spice. Team 3 can play this card on your question if they want the question to

end with your answer. You too can play this card to prevent the question from passing to a team that has (inadvertently) indicated they know the correct answer. No Pass is a good way to prevent a question from passing, but it's a bad way to travel by train.

Wildcard  **if paired, 0 otherwise:** It's the Captain Planet of Sink Cards. A Wildcard gets activated only when paired with another Wildcard. A pair can be played as any other Sink Card, with a power of 4. Play only one Wildcard and reveal the second when flipping your card. A single Wildcard only helps in getting a compensatory coin, as it has 0 power. If Team 3 plays a Wildcard pair as a Loot Question, you can counter with your Wildcard pair as a Card Shield (or any other card). If that happens, Team 3 gets a compensatory coin; the lasting emotional damage is free. If multiple rivals play a Wildcard pair, they must all agree on the same effect for the direct team to choose.

THINK CARDS

Q. What are the types of Think Cards?

Make it Easy: Get the first letter of the (first word of the) answer.

Two Guesses: Get two attempts to answer. Only two. This isn't a CA exam.

Letter Count: Get the exact number of letters in the answer.



Q. How many Think Cards do I get?

Each team gets 3 Think Cards (one of each type).

Q. When can I use them?

You can use them just before you answer a question (including on the pass).

Q. Can I use all my cards on one question?

You can use all the cards on a single question or across multiple questions – the decision is yours!

Q. Can I get more Think Cards if I run out of them?

Think Cards are a one-time resource – they can neither be reused, nor bought, nor replenished, nor traded, nor willed back into existence. Once you're out of Think Cards, you're left with just your own thoughts to guide you *gulp*.

Q. Can multiple teams use the same Think Card on the same question?

Make It Easy and Letter Count can be played only once on a question. If either has been used on a question by a team, other teams cannot play these cards.

BOARD MOVES

Q. What are the board moves on the map?

There are four of them: two to gain an advantage after you answer a question, and two to sabotage rivals.

Backtrack (5 coins): Send a rival team one step back on the map.



Double Move (5 coins): If your team just answered correctly, move an extra step forward.

Extra Turn (3 coins): If you just answered correctly, you become the direct team for the next question. Sucks to be the team to your left!

Freeze (3 coins): Prevent a team from playing Sink Cards or answering the next question. They are skipped as a direct team (or in the passing order), but are allowed to express their resentment vocally. They can join back after the answer is revealed (in Phase 3).

Q. When do I play these moves?

Any team can initiate playing a move after a question is answered (and before the next question is revealed) in exchange for coins. Cue the narrator; chaos ensues.

Q. Can a rival stop me if I try to backtrack them?

Yes, any move can be countered by a rival team(s) with an equal number of coins. If you spend 5 coins to backtrack Team 3, they can pay 5 coins to stay exactly where they are.

Q. I don't have enough coins. Can I join hands with a rival to take down another rival?

Of course, teams may pool coins to play or counter a move. Feel free to backstab your friends to gain an advantage. You can always make new friends.

Q. Can a rival hurt me with two backtracks in a single phase?

No, a specific move can be made against a team only once per Board Move phase – even if the initial move was countered. However, teams can play a different move against the same team, or the same move against a different team. Mix and match your moves for the perfect sabotage. Or just do things to watch the world burn. The choice is yours.

Q. What happens to the coins used for board moves?

All coins played to initiate or counter a move are taken by the gamemaster. This happens before teams buy Sink Cards, and the next question is revealed.

6. THE GAMEMASTER'S ROLE

The gamemaster is the keeper of trivia, peddler of coins, and meddler of voyages. So, choose the gamemaster wisely to

Set up the game: Determine the first team, give out coins and Think Cards, and sell Sink Cards

Run the webapp: Reveal questions, lifelines, and answers

Manage the vault: Give coins for Sink Cards that lost and for correct answers, and handle Mermaid payouts

Collect toll: Take all coins played in each Board Move phase

Handle cards: Sell Sink Cards during the game and take back Think Cards after they've been used

In sum, the gamemaster enforces the rules, controls the pace of the game, and ensures (odour and) order.



THE CAPTAIN'S OATH

(the gamemaster may choose to say it out loud in a pirate accent)

*I shall ensure the winds of trivia blow fair for all,
giving no hints, regardless of favours offered to me.*

*I shall guard the vault vigilantly and dispense
coins justly, except during loo breaks.*

*In case of disputes, I promise impartial resolution.
Mutineers shall be banished to the least
ventilated part of the premises.*

7. PIRATES' CODE OF CONDUCT

- Teams must keep their coins visible at all times. This is a game, not a real estate transaction; don't hide the coins under the table.
- Teams cannot trade cards for coins or vice versa among themselves. The only thing you may trade between teams is casual jibes, good vibes, and other rhymes.
- Teams must not answer out of turn, give a hint or the answer to another team, whisper answers aloud, or think out loud. Punishment for violations shall be decided and enforced by the gamemaster.
- Transactions with the gamemaster's vault are not allowed once a question is in play. Bribery is also not permitted. You are pirates, not politicians.
- Use of any external device, digital or otherwise, to look for answers is prohibited. As many spiritual leaders have said, look within yourself for answers.
- The teams, in conjunction with the gamemaster, may decide the penalties for flouting the rules. The more emb..arr..assing, the better.

Enjoy the voyage!



CATLANTIS

(or 'The Golden Empire of Trivia')

An erstwhile feline civilisation, home to trivia-obsessed and egocentric cats. At its zenith, it was the seat of knowledge, curiosity, and an unhealthy amount of confidence.

It was trivia paradise – or it would have been, if the cats weren't...well, catty.

8. VARIANTS

Below are a couple of game variants that players may enjoy trying.

PLAYER AS GAMEMASTER

- To play while acting as the gamemaster, do not tap 'Reveal Answer' until it is your turn. When other teams answer, write down (or remember) their guesses.
- Once you have attempted the question, reveal the answer to yourself and retrospectively give coins and move the first team that gave the correct answer.
- This delayed reveal ensures the gamemaster can compete fairly without accidentally seeing the answer before their own attempt.

COMPETITIVE GAME

While the base game is fun as it is, some players prefer that the direct team not be the one to resolve ties in the Battle of the Sink Cards. This variant is, thus, suited for more competitive game settings. If two or more opposition teams play cards of equal power, the winner in the Battle of the Sink Cards is determined by resolving a priority hierarchy:

- **Map advantage:** The team further ahead on the Treasure Map wins.
- **Recent momentum:** If tied on the map, the team that moved forward most recently wins.
- **Resource edge:** If still tied, the team holding the most coins in their possession wins.

In a rare case where two teams are on the same step on the map, moved on the same question (via Piggyback), and have the same coin count, the tie is resolved with a coin toss.

Here are a few possible scenarios in the Battle of the Sink Cards with Team 1 as the direct team.

SCENARIO 1

TEAM	CARD	MAP ADVANTAGE	RESULT
TEAM 2	LOOT	STEP 3	Team 2 will win since it was ahead on the map
TEAM 3	LOOT	STEP 2	

SCENARIO 2

TEAM	CARD	MAP ADVANTAGE	RECENT MOMENTUM	RESULT
TEAM 2	SCRAP	STEP 3	Moved on the last question	Team 2 will win since it moved most recently
TEAM 3	SCRAP	STEP 3	Moved 2 questions ago	

SCENARIO 3

TEAM	CARD	MAP ADVANTAGE	RECENT MOMENTUM	RESOURCE EDGE	RESULT
TEAM 2	SCRAP	STEP 3	Moved 2 questions ago	5 COINS	Team 3 will win since it has 6 coins
TEAM 3	PIGGY-BACK	STEP 3	Moved 2 questions ago	6 COINS	

9. CREDITS

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Many, many thanks to our infinitely patient friends-turned-playtesters and playtesters-turned-friends!

Follow us on social media for the latest updates and endless trivia

INSTAGRAM: @triviapiratesgame

X: @trivia_pirates

FOR MORE FAQs AND GAME VARIANTS, AND TO FIND
LOCAL GROUPS TO PLAY WITH, VISIT

WWW.TRIVIAPIRATES.COM

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AJAY POONIA

“ This game was built with a lot of love by fun people, for fun people (and their friends). For us, Trivia Pirates is proof that curiosity has a place in the board games universe. Good luck and may the best team win (or be conspired against and battered with board moves – you’ll enjoy it either way). ”



BHUSHAN PATEL

10. THE TL;DR VERSION



6 *TL;DR is urban slang for 'too long, didn't read', used most often on Reddit, which is, well, kind of ironic, because, like, you...haven't Reddit?*

Teams can buy Sink Cards

1

2

The gamemaster reveals the question

3

All except the direct team can play a Sink Card, face down, before time runs out

4

The direct team can counter with or play their Sink Card or resolve ties

5

The question is answered by the team that has the question in its possession (can now use Think Cards)

6

For a correct answer, the team moves 1 step forward and gets 3 coins. For an incorrect answer, the question passes to the next team

7

Teams can now make board moves

And so on till one team claims the treasure chest, or spoilsports make feeble excuses to leave ('I have work tomorrow, yaaa')

Scan the QR code to watch the explainer video
or visit triviapirates.com/how-to-play

