

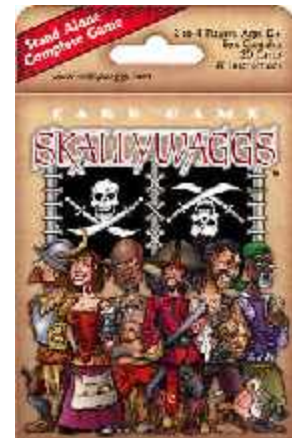
Yo ho ho and a bottle of rum

Pevans reviews *Skallywaggs*

Avast, ye swabs! Who's looking for a fine crew of piratical dogs? Ah-harr: it's you, me hearty! Or it is if you're playing *Skallywaggs*. The aim of the game is to put together a crew of pirates. And "put together" is the appropriate term as each pirate comes in three parts. Three cards, to be accurate: a head, torso and legs.

Each turn is pretty straightforward: players draw two cards and then play as many as they like from their hand. They can also swap cards with cards on the table – the 'commons'. A pirate can be made from any head, torso and legs. The complete pirate is laid on the table – in anybody's crew. That's because some cards have special powers. These can be very useful, but some of them are bad news. So dump them on someone else and let them suffer!

Apart from pirates, about a fifth of the cards are Event cards. These let players do all sorts of useful things: swap bits of pirates around, get extra cards or send pirates to Davy Jones's Locker. All of which makes for a pretty interactive game as players eye up their opponents, do some damage and build up their own crew.



Once a player has enough seaworthy pirates (some cards prevent pirates going to sea), they announce that they are sailing. If they still have enough pirates at the end of their next turn (guess what happens in the meantime!), they win. If not, the game continues until someone manages it.

The guys behind the game are graphic artists, so it's no surprise that the artwork and production are excellent. The game turns out to be a bit more complex than at first appears. The interplay between the cards gives players all sorts of options and tactics. For gamers, it's more substantial than a filler, but not a huge challenge. It's also good fun! And full of fascinating piratical facts.

Skallywaggs was designed by Ben Crenshaw and is published by Bent Castle Workshops. It is a card game for 2-4 players and takes about 1 hour to play. It is available in games shops in the UK.

Pevans rates it 8/10 on his highly subjective scale.

This review was first published in *Games International*.
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