

Cursed Hope

by Alexandros Kapidakis

Earth, 1662 AD. The sea breeze. The creaking of wood, the yells of the crew. This is your life now, the life you chose. Hunted by the royal navies of the old world, you absconded with their ship and set sail for beautiful new lands, far removed from their laws and cannons. They won't let you go so easily though, they won't let their star commander slip through their greedy fingers. You will need allies, and a place to settle down. Be careful, the waters here are treacherous, the weather unpredictable. Influence enough regions and you might just make it...

Cursed Hope is a deck construction and hand management game for 1 or 2 players. You will first build a deck from the available Hero cards and then play through the Story cards in order to reach your objective. It is part of the "Hope" series of games.

Components

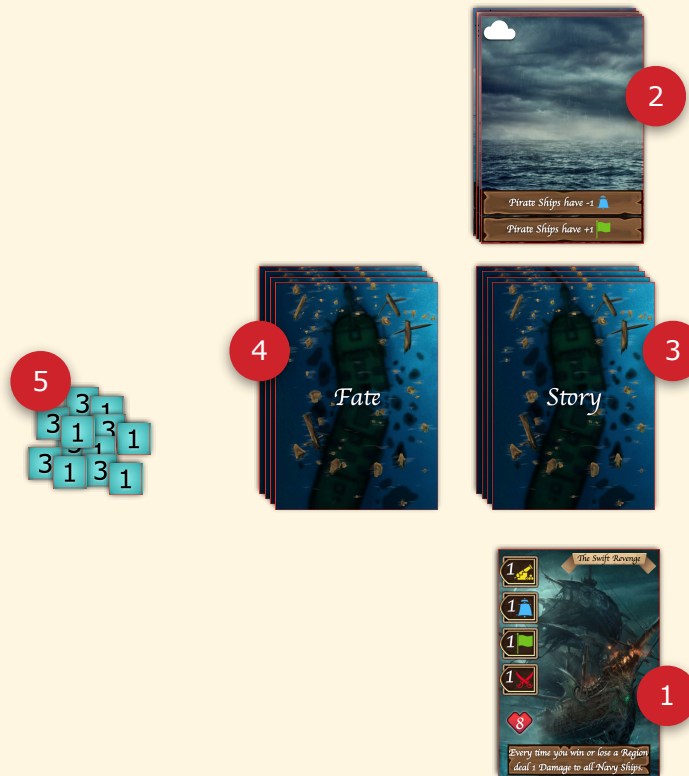
- 36 Story cards
- 45 Hero cards (Pirates)
- 10 Scenario cards: 3 Pirate Ships, 7 Weather
- 17 Fate cards
- 30 double-sided tokens (used for anything that needs tracking)

The diagram illustrates the components of the game with arrows pointing to specific features on the cards:

- Navy Ship**: Skills (5), Life (4), Nation (Portugal), Ability (2 Damage, Pirate Ships have -1).
- Region**: Influence track, Skills (5), Life (5), Nation (Portugal), Ability (4).
- Ugly Muj Sharmar**: Skills boost (+1), Ability (+1 Damage against Navy Ships), Life (+2).
- The Hateful Sea**: Skills (0), Life (2), Ability (1), Scenario (The first time you destroy a Navy Ship in a round, gain an action).
- Stay the Course**: Weather ability (-1, Draw an additional Fate card).

Setup

1. Choose and take one of the *Pirate Ships*.
2. Shuffle all the *Weather Scenario* cards and create a face up deck.
3. Shuffle the *Story* cards into a face down deck and place it below the *Weather* deck. If playing solo, choose and remove all the *Navy Ships* from one Nation.
4. Choose a difficulty and remove the corresponding *Fate* cards. Then, shuffle the rest into a deck and set it to the left of the *Story* deck.
 - Easy: remove a "-4", a "-3" and a "-2" *Fate* card
 - Medium: remove a "-3", a "-2" and a "+1" *Fate* card
 - Hard: remove a "0" and two "+1" *Fate* cards
5. Set the tokens aside in a pile.



Player Decks

Solo

Shuffle all *Hero* cards into a deck. Draw 3 cards, add one of them to your deck and remove the other two from the game. Repeat this until all cards have been drafted. Your deck should have 15 cards.

2 players

Shuffle all *Hero* cards into a deck. Remove the top card of the deck from the game, and give one card to each player. Then, deal 3 cards to each player: keep one, give one to your teammate and remove the last one. Repeat this until all *Hero* cards have been drafted. Players can discuss their strategy. Each player's deck should have 15 cards.

Before starting the game: Shuffle your deck and draw 3 cards.

Gameplay

The game is played in rounds, and each round has the same structure.

Firstly, draw 2 *Story* cards per player and add them to the *Story* row (to the right of the *Story* deck). There is no limit on how many *Story* cards the *Story* row can have. If the *Story* deck is depleted and you need to draw from it, immediately lose 1 Influence from each revealed *Region*.

When you reveal a *Region*, place a token on the grey spot of its Influence track.

Then, players take up to 3 actions in alternate turns. You must take an action or pass for the rest of the round. **Every time you need to perform a test, as a last step, draw the top card of the *Fate* deck and modify your skill value accordingly.** Players always win in a tie, and their skill value can never go below 0. If the *Fate* deck ever has 1 or 0 cards left in it, shuffle the discard pile into a new deck.

Available actions:

- **Attack a Navy Ship.** Choose whether to use 🏴‍☠️ or 🚢 and perform a test. If you succeed, place 1 Damage on that Navy Ship. If the amount of Damage on them equals their Life value, remove the Navy Ship from the story row. Most Navy Ships have extra rules, so read them carefully.
- **Influence a Region.** Depending on where the token is on the Influence track, you will either test ✂️ or 🚩. If you succeed, move the token one spot up. When the token moves out from the top of a Region, set that Region aside as won. Most Regions have passive abilities that are always active, so don't forget them.
- **Recruit a Pirate.** Draw the top card from your deck and add it to your hand. You don't have a hand limit. If your deck is ever depleted, shuffle your discard pile into a new deck.

Pirates: all Hero cards are Pirates. You can play a Pirate from your hand adding them to your Ship. You choose on which side of the Ship the Pirate will go, adding a different Skill boost. Each side can have only one Pirate, and at the end of the round discard all played Pirates. You may replace Pirates. Pirates also have abilities. **To activate an ability from a Pirate you must discard the card.** Played Pirates to your ship don't contribute their ability, only their skill boosts. Repair: remove 1 Damage from your Ship.

When all players have passed, **each Navy Ship attacks**. Each player suffers all the Damage from each Navy Ship.

Then, move one Navy Ship below each Region. If there are more Regions than Navy Ships, players choose where each Navy Ship goes. If there are more Navy Ships than Regions, don't move the leftover Navy Ships.

Each Region with a Navy Ship below it loses 1 Influence, so move the token one spot down on the Influence track. When the token moves out from the bottom of a Region, set that Region aside as lost.

Then, **change the Weather** by discarding the top card of the corresponding deck. If the Weather deck is ever depleted, turn the discard pile into a new deck, without shuffling it.

Lastly, **draw 1 Pirate from your deck** and begin a new round.

Game End

To win you simply must win 5 Regions!

You will lose if all Pirate Ships have been destroyed, or when you have lost 3 Regions.

Example of a round

1. It's the start of a new round. 2 Story cards are added into the Story row. It's a Navy Ship and a new Region.
2. Joan is playing solo, and she will now take her 3 actions. For her first action, she will Recruit a new Pirate, and immediately play her to her Ship, adding 2 🚩.
3. Seeing it's not a good time to attack the Navies as she has -1 🚢 from the weather and -1 🏴‍☠️ from the first Region, she will try to Influence the Regions. So she plays this Pirate, adding 2 more 🚩.
4. For her second action she will Influence the first Region. She has 6 🚩 (1 from her Ship +4 from her Pirates +1 from the weather) and she discards this Pirate so she wouldn't need to draw a Fate card. She succeeds in the test and moves the token one spot up.
5. For her third and final action she will try to Influence the same region again. She draws this Fate card and succeeds, but takes 1 Damage as the weather is Rain. She wins the Region, removing it from the Story row. Then, she will activate the ability of her Pirate Ship to deal 1 Damage to each Navy Ship, destroying the French and Portuguese Ships.
6. She will now pass, so the remaining Navy Ship will deal 3 Damage to her Pirate ship. Then, it will Influence the remaining Region, moving the token one step down.

